

The Birthday List

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. TRAIN, PRESENT DAY - DAY

A British Rail train rattles slowly into London Waterloo on a grey Autumn day.

INT. TRAIN - DAY

CU: A great pair of legs in a truly frumpy pair of shoes.

The legs belong to JENNY COLLINS, who'd look younger than her forty four years if she didn't dress like her mother.

She's reading a book. Highlighting occasional typos and grammatical errors with a red pen.

The train stops at the platform.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM, PRESENT DAY - DAY

A typical interview room. Jenny sits opposite a smartly dressed younger MAN and points to the application form on the table between them.

JENNY

Now here it should indicate a missing letter but it reads as a possessive apostrophe instead. It's an easy mistake to make.

The man stares at her.

MAN

You do realise this is a voluntary position?

JENNY

That's no excuse for shoddy grammar on an application form.

He's stunned.

MAN

No one's ever complained about our application form before.

JENNY

Oh.

MAN

We'll let you know, Mrs Collins. And if you haven't heard in a couple of weeks, you can assume it's a no.

It's clearly going to be a no.

INT. TRAIN - DAY

The train pulls out of Waterloo.

Jenny sits staring at her diary. "Interview" is neatly written under Thursday September 18th 2014. She marks a firm red cross over it.

A stylish professional YOUNG WOMAN sits down opposite and gets straight to work on her tablet.

Jenny looks from her old fashioned diary to the tablet. From her sensible shoes to the woman's elegant heels.

EXT. AUSTEN AVENUE, SURREY, UK. - DAY

Middle class suburbia. Detached homes with SUVs outside.

Jenny opens the door of number 12.

INT. NUMBER 12 - CONTINUOUS

The otherwise immaculate hallway is blocked by a backpack dumped on the floor. Clothes strewn all over it.

CHRISSEY (O.S.)

Agh!!

Jenny closes the door.

CHRISSEY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

MUM! Have you seen my Hollister shorts?

Jenny looks to the top of the stairs where twenty two year old CHRISSEY appears in her underwear, all blonde highlights and hysteria.

Jenny removes her shoes and puts in a pair of equally dowdy slippers. She slides the backpack to one side.

JENNY

Have you tried the Floor-Drobe?

INT. CHRISSEY'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

A shrine to Topshop, Jack Wills and every other over-priced fashion store.

Clothes and accessories spill from the wardrobe across the entire floor. No carpet is visible.

Chrissy kicks a bare foot into a random pile.

CHRISSEY

I only bought them yesterday!

Jenny appears in the doorway. Weary.

JENNY

It's probably best not to take new clothes. It'll be dusty and...

Chrissy's distracted by three skimpy bikini's on her bed.

CHRISSY

Which one should I wear for my first selfie? I want Damon to be totally affected.

JENNY

I thought he was, and that's why he's with Laura now.

CHRISSY

He just needs to see what he's missing.

Jenny calmly folds items and places them tidily onto the wardrobe shelves.

JENNY

So we're paying twelve hundred pounds for you to make you're ex-boyfriend jealous?

CHRISSY

That's totes cheap for a gap year. And on my CV it'll say I like taught underprivileged...whatsits.

JENNY

Children?

Jenny comes across a pair of Hollister shorts. Chrissy hugs her.

CHRISSY

You're the best!

Jenny hugs her back, a mixture of love and despair.

INT. NUMBER 12, LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

A perfectly co-ordinated room. Scatter cushions that match the curtains and books everywhere: in bookcases, on side tables and piled by the sofa. All neatly stacked.

LUCKY, a Jack Russell terrier sits in a basket, hoarding a pair of Jenny's frumpy shoes.

RICHARD(46) hastily closes the "Telegraph" appointments section as Jenny enters. He looks stressed.

JENNY

Cup of tea?

He nods and opens the Financial Times.

RICHARD

What's all the noise about up there?

JENNY

Our daughter's going to Uganda for six months to teach netball. I emailed you about it, remember?

RICHARD

I thought she was going to do something closer to home.

JENNY

She needs to see the world. She went to a local University and seems to think Africa will be like the Med'. We should have done more long haul with her.

RICHARD

We did School fees instead.

Jenny plumps a perfectly plumped cushion.

JENNY

My interview was today.

RICHARD

Hmm?

JENNY

There were five mistakes on the application form.

RICHARD

They're looking for a charity shop assistant, Jenny, not an Editor.

JENNY

I know.

He raises his paper.

She sits on the edge of the sofa so as not to disturb the plumped cushions.

JENNY (CONT'D)

I can't believe we're going to Florida tomorrow.

RICHARD

You used to think Florida was  
touristy.

JENNY

After eighteen years of Eurocamp  
I'm ready to be a tourist.

RICHARD

We agreed Pumpkin's education was  
the priority.

JENNY

Life's an adventure, Richard...or  
it should be.

He looks over his paper at her.

RICHARD

I like camping.

JENNY

I know. I'm just excited you're  
taking me away for my birthday.

RICHARD

It's a business trip, darling.  
Eric and I have a deal to sign.

JENNY

We'll make time for us. We haven't  
been away alone since before Chrissy  
was born.

RICHARD

What about Wales?

JENNY

Your parent's house. It doesn't  
count.

Chrissy prances in, interrupting them. She sports a low  
cut, too short, flouncy dress with stilettos.

CHRISSY

I'm ready!

Richard looks at her proudly. Jenny rolls her eyes at the  
shoes.

CHRISSY (CONT'D)

Where are your hiking boots?

CHRISSY (CONT'D)

Packed.

RICHARD

Are you sure you want to do this,  
pumpkin?

Chrissy ignores him and takes a pouting selfie.

JENNY

It'll be the making of her.

INT. CAR, DAY

Jenny drives into Terminal 4, London Heathrow. She reels off information to Chrissy, who sits in the front seat, texting and ignoring her.

JENNY

Keep your passport somewhere safe.  
Hide money in your socks. Don't  
under any circumstances offer to  
bring anything back for anyone  
and...

CHRISSY

Mum, I'm not a kid.  
(beat)  
Did you pack my trainers?

JENNY

Well you can hardly teach netball  
in flip-flops.

CHRISSY

Netball? I thought I was turtle  
watching.

JENNY

That was Costa Rica and it costs  
a lot more. You know what your  
father's like about money.

Chrissy nods in agreement.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Now, do you remember that Aikido  
block I taught you?

Jenny tries to demonstrate while driving.

CHRISSY

From the "beat your attacker"  
course?  
(beat)  
Except you never go anywhere to be  
attacked.

JENNY  
(to herself)  
You could've stopped at anywhere.

Chrissy studies her mother.

CHRISSY  
You should do something, mum.  
Women your age don't have to stay  
at home any more.

JENNY  
Thanks.

CHRISSY  
Trish's mum drives a taxi.

JENNY  
(Disappointed)  
Great.

CHRISSY  
Oh BTW, I borrowed your sarong.

JENNY  
My new one? From the boutique in  
town I've waited ten years to have  
a reason to go into?

CHRISSY  
You can't put expensive next to...  
(struggling)  
Mumsy. It'll look silly.

JENNY  
It's the first nice thing I've  
bought for myself in ages.

CHRISSY  
So why waste it on some boring old  
trip with Daddy? When it matches  
my eyes.

JENNY  
It's a very important conference  
and Eric's your father's biggest  
client.

CHRISSY  
Eric's a bore who objectifies women.

JENNY  
His fiance Lena doesn't seem to  
mind.

CHRISSY  
Lena? Not another mail order bride?

JENNY

I hear they're very accommodating.

Jenny pulls up outside departures. A handsome but grungy DUDE who looks like he hasn't been near a shower, ever, stands holding a mis-spelled placard: "Uganden Netball."

Jenny tuts and looks him over, suddenly doubtful.

CHRISSY

OMG! Sic.

Jenny mis-reads it as horror.

JENNY

Maybe there's another Ugandan  
Netball tour?

She rifles in her bag for the paperwork but Chrissy's already snapping with her phone.

CHRISSY

Damo's gonna die when this hottie  
hits my Instagram page!

Jenny does a, WHAT? Chrissy's out the car.

CHRISSY (CONT'D)

Later's Mum.

Jenny watches her go, proud but pained, as her child disappears with barely a backward glance. Her eyes water, she blinks the tears away, sits up straight and starts the engine.

JENNY

Love you too.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Homely and feminine but less tidy.

Richard's bedside table is clear. Jenny's is loaded with books.

Richard sits in bed reading "Be a Better Financial Advisor." Jenny lies beside him, staring at the ceiling and petting Lucky who sits on her.

JENNY

I need to do something, Richard.

RICHARD

Hmm? I thought you were going to  
volunteer.

JENNY

Maybe I should just get a job?

He snorts with laughter.

RICHARD

You don't know what it's like.

JENNY

(crushed)

I know I had Chrissy straight after graduation, but I do have a first class English degree.

(quietly)

Not just a financial diploma.

RICHARD

It was all I could get in six months, if you remember. Half an undergrad degree wasn't worth much.

She sighs, rolls over and puts on an eye mask that reads "Not Tonight."

INT. NUMBER 12, BEDROOM - DAY

Jenny lies, mouth open, lightly snoring, eye patch askew.

The bedside clock reads 7am.

Lucky bounds in and jumps on the bed, waking her. Richard hands her a cup of tea and a book shaped present.

RICHARD

Happy birthday, darling.

She sits up, groggy.

JENNY

Forty five. Oh god.

Richard's phone bleeps. He checks it while Jenny pets Lucky.

RICHARD

Oh Christ!

He starts pacing.

JENNY

What is it?

RICHARD

Eric and Lena have split up.

JENNY

But you said she was the one.

RICHARD

She was. Until she saw the pre-nup.

JENNY

Why doesn't he try someone his own age?

RICHARD

He's wealthy, he doesn't need to.

JENNY

So they're not coming?

She's momentarily pleased but Richard turns away, texting.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Richard?

Another beep. He reads the message. Sits on the bed.

RICHARD

Eric's in shock. He needs a break. And a friend. And I need him to sign for another year. I have to go.

He trails off.

JENNY

So...you and Eric are going?

He doesn't respond. She blinks back tears.

JENNY (CONT'D)

I even bought new underwear.

RICHARD

How much did that cost?

JENNY

I thought it might help us...you know...

It's awkward.

RICHARD

Look, I know it's been a while...and with the recession, well it's been hard.

She looks away.

JENNY

At least something has.

He ignores her.

RICHARD

It's a little embarrassing but  
Eric won't mind sharing a room.

JENNY

He's lead guitarist of one of the  
greatest rock bands in the world.  
I expect he's seen more than your  
smalls before.

He tries to touch her but she pulls away. She starts to  
unwrap her present. He gently takes it from her.

RICHARD

You might want to leave that.  
(beat)  
We'll go away next year. Once  
business picks up.

She can't look at him.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Just you and me. Devon in the spring  
is glorious.

JENNY

I didn't renew my passport for  
Devon.

RICHARD

At least now that dreadful aunt of  
yours needn't come and house-sit.

JENNY

Ulna's done a lot for us, Richard.

RICHARD

I practically had to fumigate the  
place last time she stayed.

JENNY

You used a disinfectant wipe on  
your desk. It's not quite the  
same thing.

He stiffens.

RICHARD

This isn't what I want either but  
my hands are tied. And at least  
if Chrissy calls, or needs  
something...you'll be here.

Jenny looks around at her house like it's a prison.

JENNY

I'm always here.

EXT./ INT. NUMBER 12, - LATER

The front door opens as a TAXI pulls up.

Richard fusses with his bags.

Jenny stands in the doorway in a frumpy dressing gown and matching slippers.

He's oblivious to her anguish as he pats his pockets.

RICHARD

Passport, tickets, contract...

JENNY

Remember when we did the student trip to Paris for New Year?

He pats his pockets.

RICHARD

Three pounds for a coffee, how could I forget. Awful place, Paris. Full of frogs.

JENNY

Isn't Eric French?  
(In a French accent)  
Eric?

RICHARD

He's the right kind of French. He went to Eton.

She touches his arm, vulnerable.

JENNY

Do you ever wish we'd done things differently?

He sighs. It's the closest to a smile we've seen.

RICHARD

(softer)  
No. Of course not. Do you?

She shakes her head. He kisses her cheek.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

I'm sorry.  
(beat)  
I'll see you in a week.

He's gone. She quietly closes the door. Months of hopes dashed right there.

Lucky, gives her a sad look.

KITCHEN:

Clean and simple but dated.

Jenny flicks on the kettle and opens a cupboard. Boxes of herbal tea are stacked by colour.

Her present lies on the table. A note on it reads "Sorry."

She unwraps the book "Exploring Florida."

Jenny turns the blender on and HOWLS. Lucky hides under the table.

LATER:

The kitchen clock reads 8.30am. The blender still WHIRRS.

Jenny sits on the floor, red eyed, surrounded by tissues.

Her mobile phone RINGS, it flashes LIZZIE. She answers.

JENNY

(nasal)

Hello.

INTERCUT LIZZIE, glamazon air hostess, perfect hair, teeth and nails.

LIZZIE

Happy birthday! Just wanted to say, have a fab holiday and shag your lovely husband silly.

Jenny lets out a sob.

LIZZIE (CONT'D)

Bastard. What's he done this time?  
Found a caravan site that's cheaper?

JENNY

He's gone without me.

LIZZIE

Where are you?

JENNY

On the kitchen floor.

LIZZIE

Don't move.

EXT. NUMBER 12 - DAY

A flashy RED CONVERTIBLE pulls into the drive. Lizzie hops out, resplendent in her bright, Virgin, uniform and matching heels.

INT. NUMBER 12, KITCHEN - DAY

Jenny sits at the kitchen table, sifting through a box of photos of herself backpacking around the world. Young, happy, free.

The front door SLAMS and Lizzie bursts in, brandishing miniature vodka bottles and a carton of orange juice.

LIZZIE

(Off Jenny)

Oh luvvie. Nevermind, the Cavalry's here with crew's emergency supplies!

She mixes the vodka and orange and hands one to Jenny, who sips and grimaces.

LIZZIE (CONT'D)

Oh come on. We used to have vodka jelly for breakfast at Uni. Now, what have we got here?

Lizzie pulls a tattered piece of paper out of the box and opens it. It's a list. Her face lights up.

CU list: It reads, Climb Mount Kilimanjaro; Trek Tibet; Visit the Taj Mahal; Drive Route 66. Most items are ticked.

LIZZIE (CONT'D)

It's one of your old lists, Jen! God, you used to make these all the time.

Jenny turns it over in her hands then crumples it and throws it towards the bin.

LIZZIE (CONT'D)

You stopped making them when you met Richard. Men are life-suckers, I warned you on your wedding day.

JENNY

Only because you caught Bob...

LIZZIE

DON'T SAY HIS NAME!

JENNY

Your ex-husband, shagging my cousin in the toilets.

LIZZIE

Are they still married?

JENNY

(nodding)  
Three kids.

Lizzie finishes her drink and re-loads them both.

LIZZIE

Bastard. Good luck to her.

They drink. Jenny gazes into space.

JENNY

I'm a forty five year old housewife.  
Going nowhere.

LIZZIE

Where do you want to go?

JENNY

Anywhere.

Lizzie sits up. Excited.

LIZZIE

Where's your suitcase?

JENNY

Upstairs. Still packed. Idiot.

LIZZIE

Listen to me. I'm on a flight to  
New York at twelve. I'll get you a  
seat.

Jenny looks at the kitchen clock, wide eyed. It reads  
9am.

JENNY

A seat?

LIZZIE

A crew companion seat. For free. A  
Birthday treat from me to you.

JENNY

New York? No, I can't.

LIZZIE

New York's one place you haven't  
been.

She hands Jenny a piece of paper and a pen.

LIZZIE (CONT'D)

Let's make a list.

JENNY

I'm too old.

LIZZIE

Come on. A birthday list!

JENNY

Of all the things I wanted and didn't get? Pass me a sharp knife, it'll be quicker.

LIZZIE

No. Of all the things YOU'RE going to give yourself this year. All the things you still want to do.

Jenny thinks about it, drinks some more.

LIZZIE (CONT'D)

Sod new year's resolutions. This is birthday resolutions!

Lizzie finishes her drink and picks up a photo of Jenny on the top of Mt. Kilimanjaro, proud.

LIZZIE (CONT'D)

Where's that bad ass bitch who wasn't afraid of anything?

JENNY

Technically its bad arse bitch, this side of the Atlantic.

(sadly)

And Richard's forgotten she ever existed.

LIZZIE

Richard has? Or you have?

Lizzie hands her one of her old passports.

LIZZIE (CONT'D)

Look at these stamps and visas.

Jenny flicks through lovingly.

JENNY

Memories. They're little books of my life.

LIZZIE

Let's see the latest edition.

Jenny hands her a pristine passport. Lizzie flicks through the empty pages.

LIZZIE (CONT'D)

You're a blank page.

EXT. NUMBER 12 - DAY

Lizzie's car pulls away from the house.

Jenny stands in the doorway, watching her go. If she was miserable before, she's really on the edge now.

INT. NUMBER 12, - DAY

KITCHEN:

Jenny picks the crumpled list off the floor and looks at it. She mixes another drink.

BEDROOM:

Jenny lies on the bed next to her packed suitcase. One hand holding a cocktail the other stroking her suitcase.

Lucky snuggles into her, then BARKS as someone noisily OPENS the front door.

Jenny tries to jump up but falls off the bed.

JENNY  
(Hopeful)  
Richard?

HALLWAY:

Jenny peers down over the bannisters, her face falls when she sees her aunt ULNA looking up at her. Ulna's old, partially deaf and slightly deranged.

ULNA  
Jenny love, have I got my dates  
mixed up again?

JENNY  
I'm sorry, Ulna, I should have  
called you...I'm not going after  
all.

Ulna drags an old carpet bag in. Attached to it is a scruffy collie, who promptly cocks his leg against the hall table.

JENNY (CONT'D)  
Ulna!

The dog stops as Ulna turns.

ULNA  
What's that dearie?  
(Bashes her ear  
with her hand)  
I think my batteries are flat.

JENNY  
I thought we talked about Lassie's  
bathroom TRAINING?

Ulna looks outside, confused.

ULNA  
No, it's not RAINING.

Jenny comes downstairs and speaks to her close up.

JENNY  
It doesn't matter. I'm not going.  
You don't need to dogsit.

Ulna's crestfallen.

ULNA  
But Lucky and Lassie get on so well.

Lucky goes over to sniff Lassie, who bares his teeth nastily.

JENNY  
Hmmm.

ULNA  
Trouble is, I've rented my flat out. Three hundred quid for one bedroom on Brighton sea-front. It's madness but I couldn't say no.

JENNY  
But...

ULNA  
I'm always making money me. I'll pop my things in the guest room.

INT. NUMBER 12, KITCHEN - LATER

Jenny reads the job ads in the local paper. Ulna's shuffling around in old lady's slippers, making a mess of mixing elaborate cocktails.

ULNA  
I don't normally drink before ten.  
But as it's your birthday.

Jenny swigs the cocktail, past caring.

JENNY  
I can't possibly go. I mean, it's ridiculous.

ULNA  
She's a good friend, that Lizzie.

Ulna pulls a present out of her bag.

ULNA (CONT'D)  
Happy Birthday.

Jenny opens the present. It's the same pair of slippers that Ulna's wearing. She gulps.

JENNY  
Lovely. Thank you.

ULNA  
Well, you're still wearing the ones I bought you two years ago. And a change is as good as a rest.

Jenny looks down and realises she's right.

Ulna looks over Jenny's shoulder to the paper where Jenny has ear-marked a charity job.

ULNA (CONT'D)  
I had a job at the charity shop once. You'll meet lots of wonderful people like me.

Jenny discretely crosses out the charity shop job.

JENNY  
(Despondent)  
Trouble is, I've got a big hole in my CV called motherhood.

ULNA  
Still like books?

Jenny nods.

ULNA (CONT'D)  
Go and work at the library.

JENNY  
Is that all that's left for me?

Ulna rummages in her bag and pulls out a self-development book: "Be your best you" by Arnie Adams. She hands it to Jenny.

ULNA  
Try this. It changed my life. I would never have come out the closet without Arnie.

JENNY  
(stunned)  
You're a lesbian?

ULNA

Yes love.

(surprised)

I thought I put it in my Christmas card?

Jenny stares at the buff, bronzed image of Arnie Adams, smiling back at her from the front cover.

She looks back at the paper.

JENNY

I don't even understand what half these companies are looking for. Maybe I should ask Richard...

Ulna SLOPS her cocktail down.

ULNA

It's not about Richard. Just this once Jenny, let it be about you.

JENNY

(resigned)

I'm a mother and a wife. It stopped being about me years ago.

Ulna pushes the Arnie Adams book closer to Jenny.

ULNA

Arnie says, if you want something different, you've got to DO something different.

Jenny's bolstered by the alcohol in her bloodstream.

JENNY

Maybe.

ULNA

Now what time was that flight?

Jenny looks at the clock. It reads 10.30am. She downs her drink then stands, woozy but determined.

ULNA (CONT'D)

I'll call a cab.

EXT. AIRPORT - DAY

A TAXI SCREECHES to a halt outside departures. Jenny stumbles out, like a drunken deer in the headlights.

She staggers through the doors then re-appears.

The CABBIE hands her a battered suitcase and a large bag. She takes them, turns around and walks SMACK into the glass doors.

INT. AIRPORT - DAY

CHECK-IN

Lizzie's closing up the desk and walking away as Jenny zig-zags across the concourse, struggling with her bags.

JENNY

(tipsy)  
Lizzie!

Lizzie takes her in.

LIZZIE

Jesus!

INT. AEROPLANE - DAY

Lizzie leads the tipsy Jenny on board just before the doors close. Jenny turns right but Lizzie yanks her left and guides her into a business class seat.

JENNY

Am I allowed?

LIZZIE

It's your birthday!

JENNY

Should I tell Richard?

LIZZIE

Screw Richard. What he doesn't know can't hurt him.

LOU SCHAEFFER, a silver fox, occupying the seat next door, looks up from his ipad, intrigued.

Lizzie tries to take Jenny's handbag. It's loaded with books. Jenny grips it.

LIZZIE (CONT'D)

It's just for take off, Madam.

ALAN a pristine and very camp senior steward, approaches them.

ALAN (to Jenny)

Can I see your boarding card, madam?

Jenny fumbles around. Lizzie steps in.

LIZZIE

Leave it, Alan.

JENNY

I'm quite happy to go back to economy.

Lizzie pushes her down into her seat.

LIZZIE

You're not bloody going anywhere.

Alan purses his lips.

ALAN

Could I see you in the galley, Elizabeth?

He minces off. Lizzie follows him, mimicking his mince.

GALLEY:

Alan stands arms crossed, authority stamped all over his pinched features. His skin is perfect, almost dewy.

LIZZIE

Sod off, Alan.

ALAN

Might I remind you that I am the senior steward on this flight.

LIZZIE

Tell you what, save your breath and tattoo "I stole your job" on your forehead.

ALAN

The promotion came down from head office.

LIZZIE

Yeah, my arse...or perhaps it was yours?

He bristles. Lizzie peers at his jawline.

LIZZIE (CONT'D)

You've got pimples under that foundation.

ALAN

It's tinted moisturiser!

She walks away. He sneaks a mirror out of his pocket and checks.

LATER

BUSINESS CLASS

Jenny sits propped up in her flatbed, a pile of books and a bottle of champagne by her side.

Lou's iPad lies untouched as he watches her finish another book.

LOU

I've never seen anybody read that fast.

LIZZIE

Sorry...I love books.

LOU

Don't apologise, so do I. You should try Schaeffer's bookstore on Broadway.

JENNY

Oh, I will.  
(not really)

He nods towards her pile of books.

LOU

Anything you'd recommend?

JENNY

Only if you're into small, outspoken English authors.

LOU

I never let size get in the way of a good read.

JENNY

(laughs)  
I mean they're not well known. Only recently published, but absolutely brilliant.

LOU

Mind if I take a look?

She passes him two books.

INT. AEROPLANE - LATER

Alan speaks into the tannoy.

ALAN  
 Duty free offers today include  
 Clinique's tinted moisturiser,  
 excellent for...

Lizzie walks past, he scowls at her.

ALAN (CONT'D)  
 (Off Lizzie)  
 Wrinkles and old bags.  
 (beat)  
 I do apologise, I mean wrinkles  
 and under eye bags.

INT. AEROPLANE - LATER

Jenny and Lou both sit reading.

Lizzie appears with another bottle of champagne and looks  
 at them.

LIZZIE  
 Oh my God it's a bookworm  
 infestation! Where's the party?

Lou smiles. She offers him champagne but he shakes his  
 head.

LOU  
 Milk and cookies for me, please.

LIZZIE  
 We're celebrating here!

LOU  
 In my experience that stuff gets  
 you into trouble. Milk and cookies  
 makes things right.

LIZZIE  
 (sotto)  
 You've obviously never been married  
 to a cheating bastard.

She holds the bottle out to Jenny.

LIZZIE (CONT'D)  
 Madam?

JENNY  
 I think I've had enough.

LIZZIE  
 One. You can never have enough  
 champagne on your birthday. And  
 two, it's free.

She hands Jenny a pen and paper.

LIZZIE (CONT'D)  
Let's get started on that list.

Jenny stares at the pen and paper.

JENNY  
I'm not that woman anymore.

LIZZIE  
Bollocks. You're just stuck in  
your mother's wardrobe.

Jenny looks at her clothes and then at Lizzie.

JENNY  
I'm scared...I couldn't take the  
disappointment.

LIZZIE  
Let me inspire you.

Lizzie writes, "Travel somewhere new and totally  
unexpected."

Jenny puts a tick beside it. Lizzie crosses it out.

LIZZIE (CONT'D)  
This doesn't count. It has to be  
somewhere else new and unexpected.  
You can do this, Jen'.

Jenny starts to believe her. Ideas begin to form.

LATER

Lizzie and Jenny, both drunk, swig champagne as Jenny's  
list becomes increasingly outlandish.

Jenny scrawls: Climb a mountain.

Lizzie scribbles: Have sex with a stranger.

JENNY  
I do that every month. Richard and  
I barely know each other these  
days.

They laugh but Jenny turns melancholy.

JENNY (CONT'D)  
He's going to kill me.

LIZZIE  
Don't tell him. That's where I  
went wrong with Bob.

Jenny stares into space.

JENNY

I want to make a difference. Help someone.

Lizzie taps the pad.

LIZZIE

Get it on there.

Jenny swigs more champagne then lets out an ENORMOUS BURP. She and Lizzie dissolve into laughter.

She realises Lou is smiling and blushes.

JENNY

I'm so sorry.

LOU

Not at all, my mother used to say the same thing.

A MAN across the aisle gives up trying to snooze and tries to get Lizzie's attention.

MAN

Excuse me, could I have some more champagne?

She sizes him up. He's unattractive.

LIZZIE

No. Go to sleep.

Jenny's in the groove of writing now.

JENNY

Get a job. That should be top of the list.

LIZZIE

No, top of the list is definitely, a new wardrobe.

LATER

Jenny asleep, empty champagne bottle on her table. The list on her lap now reads:

Travel somewhere new and unexpected.

Get a job.

Stand up for myself.

Learn a new skill.

Get a new wardrobe.

Make a new friend.

The writing becomes messier - related to her champagne consumption.

Have sex with a stranger.

Help someone.

Climb a mountain.

Dance under the stars.

ON LIZZIE as she staggers down the aisle, passing it off as turbulence.

She fastens the seatbelt of an ATTRACTIVE, latino-looking BUSINESSMAN, brushing his groin as she does so.

Alan passes the snoring Jenny. She rolls over and her list slips to the floor. He picks it up and reads it.

ALAN  
(disdainful)  
Some people...

He places the list on her side table, in full view of Lou.

LATER:

Jenny wakes, hungover, wondering where she is. Lou smiles at her.

LOU  
Shoulda had the milk and cookies.

JENNY  
Ugh.

She sits up. He hands her the books back.

LOU  
These are great.

JENNY  
I don't feel well.

Lou nods towards her list.

LOU  
You're going to need your strength  
to get through that lot.

Embarrassed, Jenny hides the list and stumbles to the bathroom. Alan intercepts her.

ALAN

If you could return to your seat  
Madam. We're landing now.

JENNY

Now?

He nods, enjoying her discomfort.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Because...

She turns green and VOMITS over him.

INT. HOTEL, MANHATTAN - DAY

RECEPTION

A large, flashy hotel. Business people and tourists mingle  
around the foyer.

Lizzie sweeps in, pulling her wheeled bag, heels clicking  
elegantly across the marble floor.

Jenny stumbles behind, dragging her old suitcase, out of  
place.

LIZZIE

Welcome to the big bad apple.

Jenny takes it in, impressed despite her hangover.

The hot male receptionist, LUIGI, winks at Lizzie.

LUIGI

Back so soon beautiful? Missed me  
too much, huh?

Lizzie plays along.

LIZZIE

Always, Luigi.

He hands her a key, already mentally undressing her.

LIZZIE (CONT'D)

Oh and this is my colleague, Jenny.  
She's from head office. Same deal  
with the room, yeah?

LUIGI

Sure, sure.

Lizzie blows him a kiss and turns to find the latino  
passenger from the flight right behind her, eyeing up her  
rear. She smiles brazenly at him and says loudly.

LIZZIE  
Room 432. Perfect.

He gets it.

ROOM 432

Simple but tasteful. Lizzie takes off her hat and jacket while Jenny crashes on the bed. A clock reads 3pm.

JENNY  
I need a cup of tea.

LIZZIE  
You can't have tea, you're in  
America. We'll go out to...  
(trying to think)  
Starbucks.

The phone RINGS, Lizzie answers.

LIZZIE (CONT'D)  
Hello..  
(suddenly sultry)  
I see. Yes. What number?

She hangs up, pleased.

LIZZIE (CONT'D)  
Listen er...why don't you relax,  
you know, shower and  
(Off Jenny's shoes)  
Change.

JENNY  
Where are you going?

LIZZIE  
I have to...grab something. Back  
soon.

JENNY  
Oh.

Lizzie puts her jacket and hat back on and checks her reflection in the mirror.

LIZZIE  
Doors to manual.

She leaves.

MONTAGE OF JENNY:

Passed out on the bed: The clock reads 5pm.

In the power shower: Six nozzles turn on at once. One hits her right in the privates, catching her unawares.

JENNY

Oh, how rude!

In the complimentary bath robe: Drying her hair, making an effort.

Opening her suitcase: She realises her clothes are for Florida not Autumn in New York.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Oh dear.

At the Mirror: She looks at herself in her M&S sundress with co-ordinating cardigan and sandals. Ridiculous.

In front of the TV: Flicking through channels, bored. The clock reads 6pm.

By the window: Reading the Arnie Adams book. She puts it down and stares out the window at New York below. Terrified. The clock reads 7.30pm.

She turns the Arnie Adams book over. The back cover reads: "Befriend your fear in three easy steps."

She looks out at New York again.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Oh for God's sake, just do it  
Jenny...

She picks up her coat.

EXT. NEW YORK - NIGHT

Jenny shivers as she hurries along Broadway, dressed for summer under her coat.

She tries to cross the road, looks the wrong way and nearly gets hit by a car.

She buys a hot dog from a street vendor.

VENDOR

Stand near the fire if you're cold.

JENNY

Thanks.

She warms her hands while he squirts ketchup onto her hotdog

VENDOR

You got far to go?

JENNY

The end of the street and back.

He looks at her like she's crazy.

INT. DEPT STORE - NIGHT

LADIES WEAR.

Upmarket store with over-zealous assistants eyeing up Jenny who is clearly only inside to warm up. She rifles longingly through a rack of cashmere sweaters.

SALES ASSISTANT

Would you like to try that on?

JENNY

Umm...

The sales assistant whips it out of her hands.

SALES ASSISTANT

Great. Let me put it into a room for you. Try it in pink too? It'll bring out your cheekbones.

JENNY

I have cheekbones?

The assistant knows she's hit a soft spot and keeps picking up items for Jenny who starts to get into it.

FITTING ROOM

The sales assistant shows Jenny into a plush room with huge mirrors, a velvet chair and a chandelier.

The rails on the walls are laden with clothes for Jenny in true make-over style. Jenny's mouth drops open.

SALES ASSISTANT

Take your time. Can I get you something to drink?

JENNY

I'd murder for a cup of tea.

JENNY

Trying on clothes she'd never normally wear. Enjoying new colours and textures. Feeling free.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Now I know why they call it retail therapy.

She wears a sexy but sophisticated blue dress as the sales assistant brings her a second pot of tea.

SALES ASSISTANT  
That looks beautiful.

JENNY  
(resigned)  
My husband hates blue.

She comes back to reality. Jet lag takes its toll. She looks around at the piles of clothes around her, suddenly exhausted. The sales assistant tries to drive the sale.

SALES ASSISTANT  
Okay. So what can I start wrapping for you?

JENNY  
Nothing.

SALES ASSISTANT  
You should take the dress.

Jenny touches the fabric, stops at the price tag, then lets it fall from her fingers.

EXT. DEPT STORE - NIGHT

Jenny steps back onto the street. It's colder. She shivers and tries to remember which way it is.

JENNY  
Left or right?

She walks left, then right, then left again. It starts raining.

EXT. NEW YORK - NIGHT

The hot dog vendor on Broadway high fives his BUDDY, who takes over from him.

VENDOR  
Okay Buddy. It's all yours.

He turns his collar up and disappears into the night. Jenny approaches, pleased she's found him.

JENNY  
Oh thank god. Hello again.

He turns. She sees it's not him.

JENNY (CONT'D)  
Oh no!

She hurries back the other way. Stores are closing. She passes the department store, shivering, and tries the door.

The sales assistant from before closes it in her face, meaningfully.

LATER

The rain pelts down. Jenny's mascara has streaked down her face and she's a sodden mess. She stumbles from door to door, looking for shelter.

EXT. SCHAEFFERS BOOK STORE - NIGHT

An old-fashioned building stands amidst the high rises. It's dark wooden windows cast a glow out onto the street and a COUPLE walk out with hot drinks in their hands.

INT. SCHAEFFERS BOOK STORE - NIGHT

Jenny tumbles inside. It's warm and buzzy, people gather for a late night book reading, coffee in their hands from a Starbucks concession in the corner.

She staggers to the Starbucks counter.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Two hot chocolates and two paninis please.

SERVER

Extra whipped cream with the chocolates?

JENNY

Extra everything. It's still my birthday.

BOOK READING

A serious, older AUTHOR reads the closing paragraph of her latest blockbuster. The AUDIENCE gawp at the final twist and clap as she finishes.

At the back, Jenny snores lightly in a comfy armchair. A Hot chocolate warming each hand, a panini on each foot. Mascara still streaked down her face. It's not her best look.

Lou Schaeffer gently takes the cups out of her hands. She wakes.

LOU

The reading was that good, huh?

Jenny comes to, immediately embarrassed. The Paninis slide off her feet.

JENNY

Where am I?

LOU

Schaeffers book store.

He holds out a hand.

LOU (CONT'D)

Lou Schaeffer. From the plane?

She shakes it.

JENNY

Lou Schaeffer of, you should visit  
Schaeffer's bookstore?

LOU

I happen to think we have the best  
milk and cookies this side of the  
Hudson.

She laughs.

LOU (CONT'D)

But we're about to get better.  
I'm going to stock those books of  
yours.

JENNY

Are you sure America's ready for  
outspoken English women?

LOU

I look forward to finding out.

They smile.

LOU (CONT'D)

Well, er...

He holds out his hand.

JENNY

Jenny. Jenny Collins.

LOU

I'm glad you came, Jenny.

She can't help but tell the truth.

JENNY

Actually I was lost...and about to  
catch hypothermia.

LOU

Where are you staying?

JENNY

That's just it. I can't remember  
the name. I was whisked inside  
and...am clearly a completely stupid  
woman...

Frustration pours out of her. He watches and smiles.

LOU

Why don't I have my driver run you  
up and down to find your hotel?

EXT. HOTEL - NIGHT

A sleek Limo pulls up outside. The hotel valet opens the  
doors and Jenny emerges, feeling like a princess but looking  
far from it. Mascara still streaks her face.

JENNY

(to the chauffeur)

Thank you.

People stare at her. She smiles at them, assuming it's  
because of the limo.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

Jenny sweeps in, genuinely glad to be there, feeling a  
million dollars.

JENNY

(to the doorman)

Thank you.

More people stare.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Jenny enters and flicks on the light, waking Lizzie who's  
asleep in bed.

LIZZIE

Agh!

Jenny catches sight of her mascara streaked reflection.

JENNY

Agh!

She groans. Lizzie sits up.

LIZZIE

What happened to you?

JENNY

As if you care. YOU abandoned me!

Lizzie takes in Jenny's bedraggled appearance.

LIZZIE

Don't be such a drama queen. Seat  
nine D required my...attention.  
(Off her appearance)  
And it looks like you had fun  
...sort of.

JENNY

You said we'd have fun TOGETHER.

Lizzie's tired and all bonked out.

LIZZIE

What are you my mother?

That hurts and it shows on Jenny's face.

LIZZIE (CONT'D)

Oh relax. It was one night, and  
look, you went out, by yourself.

JENNY

On my birthday.

LIZZIE

I thought you were out ticking off  
your list.

JENNY

My what?

LIZZIE

You know...sleep with a stranger?  
Nevermind. So what did you do?

JENNY

I met Lou Schaeffer. Seat 15b.

LIZZIE

The Silver Surfer?

JENNY

He has an amazing bookstore.

Lizzie closes her eyes and pulls the duvet up around her.

LIZZIE

Books? I should have known. It's  
those bloody shoes.

Jenny disappears into the bathroom and closes the door.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

The same bathroom door opens.

Lizzie walks out in full uniform. Her heavily made-up face seriously pissed off. She noisily ZIPS up her trolley bag, waking Jenny.

JENNY

What's going on?

LIZZIE

That Sod Alan, changed my rota.  
I'm on an overnighiter to Bangkok.

JENNY

We're going to Bangkok?

LIZZIE

Just me.

Jenny's awake now. Panicking.

JENNY

You're leaving me?

LIZZIE

You're still on the same flight  
home. Here's your e-ticket number.

She hands Jenny a scrap of paper.

LIZZIE (CONT'D)

And I've lent you a couple of  
jumpers, so you don't freeze to  
death.

JENNY

You can't go!

LIZZIE

I need this job, Jen'. It's not  
like I sit around reading all day  
while someone else foots the bill.

Ouch.

JENNY

Well I could have screwed my way  
around the skies too, you know.  
But who would have done the school  
runs?

LIZZIE

Look, I'm sorry, I have to go.

Jenny tears up.

JENNY

I should never have come. What about the room? I can't afford this. Richard will kill me.

LIZZIE

It's all pre-paid. I'll sort it out with Luigi. What's another blow job between friends?

Jenny's ashen, deflated. Lizzie hugs her, hard.

LIZZIE (CONT'D)

You don't need someone to hold your hand.

Jenny tries to hold onto her, afraid. Lizzie pulls away.

LIZZIE (CONT'D)

Come on. You've got two whole days in New York.

JENNY

(mumbles)

Alone.

Exasperated Lizzie rummages in Jenny's bag, pulls out the list and hands it to her.

LIZZIE

For God's sake, live a little!

LATER

Jenny looks out the window. The street below is teeming with people but she feels alone.

She stares at the list.

LATER

Jenny tries to make Lizzie's trendy jumper look good with her conservative summer wardrobe.

She puts on her sensible shoes. Tucks the list into her bag.

EXT. HOTEL - DAY

Jenny ventures outside the hotel and looks up at the high rises that dwarf her. She clutches a map in her hand.

EXT. 5TH AVENUE - DAY

Jenny walks along, taking it all in, loosening up a little.

A CRAZY GUY in a loincloth and Indian Head-dress walks past. He winks at her. She stares straight ahead. Speeds up.

INT. SCHAEFFERS BOOK STORE - DAY

Jenny wanders around, coffee in hand, one eye on the books one eye looking for Lou.

She finds him shaking the hand of a dashing motivational speaker, ARNIE ADAMS, who's just finished a talk. He's promoting his new book. "Heart to Heart."

ARNIE

(A light southern drawl)

Thanks for coming folks, step up if you'd like me to sign your book and remember, if you wanna change what you're getting, change what you're doing.

The crowd clap half-heartedly. A COUPLE OF OLDER WOMEN fawn over him, everyone else disperses quickly.

He calls after them.

ARNIE (CONT'D)

I hope I'm gonna see y'all at my event tomorrow...

Lou sees Jenny and moves towards her.

LOU

Hey there.

JENNY

Hello. There.

LOU

Seen the sights already?

She shakes her head.

JENNY

I've never really been into the touristy stuff.

LOU

And yet you have so much of it in London. You know, I'd like to open a store on Regent street.

JENNY

That's expensive milk and cookies.

They smile at each other.

LOU  
How's that list coming on?

She blushes.

JENNY  
That was just a stupid joke.

LOU  
Don't let Arnie hear you say dreams  
are stupid.

Arnie approaches and slaps Lou's back, interrupting them.

ARNIE  
Hey Lou, what happened to that  
lifesize cut out of me in the front  
window?

LOU  
I'll get someone on it.

He pulls out his phone and moves away.

LOU (CONT'D)  
Excuse me.

Arnie swoops straight in on Jenny, pumping her hand.

ARNIE  
Arnie Adams, Transformational guru,  
speaker and life changer.

JENNY  
Jenny Collins...Not really anything.

ARNIE  
Great! Can I interest you in a  
copy of my new book?

JENNY  
I'm still reading the first one  
thanks.

His ego switches into overdrive.

ARNIE  
A fan, awesome! Have a free ticket  
to my one day event tomorrow?  
It's gonna be AWESOME!

JENNY  
Umm, actually I...

He gives her his best James Bond look.

ARNIE  
You're from Australia right?

JENNY  
England.

ARNIE  
Great! First time in New York,  
Janie?

JENNY  
Jenny. As it happens, yes.

ARNIE  
Man, I could listen to that accent  
all day.

Lou re-enters the conversation.

LOU  
Well maybe you should play tour  
guide? This lady's got a list and  
I've a feeling she needs an  
adventure.

Jenny blushes. Arnie slaps him again.

ARNIE  
You're setting me up you old dog.  
(quietly)  
I don't need that anymore. I got  
women crawling all over me...

Arnie gestures around but even the older women previously  
fawning over him have left.

ARNIE (CONT'D)  
But okay, let's do it.

He throws an arm around Jenny, she stiffens but he's already  
leading her towards the door.

JENNY  
Really, there's no need.

ARNIE  
Sure there is. I owe Lou big time.  
He gave me my first book deal.

JENNY  
He's a publisher too?

ARNIE  
Sure.

Arnie waves to Lou and calls back over his shoulder.

ARNIE (CONT'D)

Give Martha my love.

Jenny tries to look back at Lou but Arnie's beefy shoulder obscures her view.

JENNY

Martha?

ARNIE

Lou's wife. Been married thirty-five years. They are the sweetest couple.

JENNY

(heart sinking)

Of course.

EXT. EMPIRE STATE BUILDING - DAY

Jenny and Arnie stand looking out over Central Park. He talks non-stop and points things out but we don't hear him. She drinks in the view, something stirring within her.

EXT. TIMES SQUARE - DAY

Jenny and Arnie stand in the middle of the action. She laughs at something he mutters in her ear.

EXT. BATTERY PARK - DAY

Arnie takes a photo of Jenny with the Statue of Liberty in the background. She's beaming. The happiest we've seen her. When she turns around he zooms in on her bottom.

EXT. NEW YORK STREET - DAY

Arnie buys Jenny a hot dog with all the trimmings.

ARNIE

Now here's a real treat...open up.

She reluctantly opens her mouth. He eases the hot dog in, a little turned on.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

Jenny stands at the elevator, room key in hand. Arnie looks hopeful.

JENNY

What a day. Thank you Arnie.

He pulls a ticket out of his pocket.

ARNIE

So you'll come tomorrow?

She's put on the spot.

JENNY

Oh, er...Of course.

ARNIE

Great. Well, I'll see ya.

She holds out her hand but he launches in for a hug. She goes left but he forces her right so their hearts are close to each other.

ARNIE (CONT'D)

Heart to heart, right?

She nods embarrassed and pulls quickly away when the elevator arrives.

JENNY

Bye then.

She gets in the elevator and waves as the doors close, flushed and alive.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Jenny bursts into the room and flops happily onto the bed. She reaches into her bag and pulls out her phone.

The first message is from Chrissy. It reads: OMG2htNoplTTYL Cxx.

JENNY

What?

The second is from Richard: Terrible flight. Tropical storm. Disaster. Richard.

She sighs.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Jenny sits sipping tea at the window, watching morning commuters stream along the street below.

Her list is in front of her. She smiles and ticks off: Make a new friend.

She opens Arnie's book and reads a page.

JENNY

You don't get what you want, you get what you are.

She stands up and looks at herself in the mirror. She's wearing a sensible pair of Capri pants, her frumpy shoes and a mumsy blouse.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Oh dear.

She opens the wardrobe, takes out Lizzie's other sweater and holds it up against her. It's trendy, glittery and way out of her comfort zone.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

The elevator doors open to reveal a pair of mid-heels. Pan up to quite passable M & S trousers, Lizzie's jumper and Jenny's smiling face as she walks towards Arnie.

It's a big improvement on yesterday's outfit. He does a double take.

ARNIE

Janie? Hey, look at you! You ready for a whole day of Arnie Adams?

JENNY

(Not totally sure)  
It's Jen...oh never mind...Of course.

He puts an arm around her - lets it slip a little too low.

INT. HOTEL - DAY

A smart-ish conference area. About twenty SENIOR CITIZENS wait outside the closed double doors. Lifesize cut-outs of Arnie advertise his seminar. He tries to brazen it out as Jenny looks at his pitiful audience.

ARNIE

These are the front runners. There'll be tons more. I need to get prepped, so at ten you take their tickets, open the doors and let 'em in. Got it?

JENNY

Oh...I'm...umm...

ARNIE

Thanks Babe.

She reacts. He addresses the group.

ARNIE (CONT'D)

Hey folks great to see ya, thanks for coming. We got a great show for ya today.

They take a moment to recognise him. A couple adjust their hearing aids.

ARNIE (CONT'D)

(to Jenny)

So you run to the front, lead 'em in dancing like...

(he waves his hands like a hysterical fan)

And get 'em all excited, okay?

Jenny's not okay but Arnie's distracted by a gothic looking girl, NESSY, spilling out of her top towards him.

ARNIE (CONT'D)

(whispering to Jenny)

Okay I'm outta here. She's kind of an intense fan.

JENNY

I thought men loved that kind of thing?

ARNIE

Hey, I changed her life once. She needs to move on.

He disappears as Nessy sidles alongside, eyeing Jenny up like she's competition.

NESSY

S'up.

JENNY

Sorry?

NESSY

(Suggestive)

You and Arnie?

JENNY

Me? No! I'm just helping.

Nessy brightens.

NESSY

Sweet, cos me and Arnie got a connection.

JENNY

You're dating?

NESSY

Nah. We met in rehab. We're like that.

(MORE)

NESSY (CONT'D)  
 (crossing her middle  
 finger over her  
 index finger)  
 And like that.  
 (trying to cross  
 them the other way)  
 And sometimes, like that.  
 (with effort, pulling  
 her bent middle  
 finger behind her  
 bent index finger  
 and jiggling like  
 doggy style)

Jenny's wide eyed.

JENNY  
 Lovely.

Nessy turns to address the seniors.

NESSY  
 If you need the bathroom go NOW.  
 And Coffee and biscuits get served  
 AFTER the seminar so stay AWAKE!

She looks at one OLD WOMAN who's dozing in her wheelchair.

NESSY (CONT'D)  
 Y'all got your tickets?

Most of the seniors raise their tickets.

NESSY (CONT'D)  
 (to Jenny)  
 Ready?

Loud MUSIC, something like "I gotta feelin'" pumps from  
 inside the room. Nessy grabs Jenny's hand, throws opens  
 the doors and does the crazed fan run towards the stage.

Jenny tries to keep up.

NESSY (CONT'D)  
 Get your hands up!

Jenny tries to simultaneously run, wave and die of  
 embarrassment. She looks back at the seniors. Two have  
 fallen over. The rest micro-jog towards the stage.

Arnie stands on the stage, clapping, gyrating and looking  
 unnaturally orange from cheap foundation.

ARNIE  
 Hello New York!

Nessy's at the front, mesmerised by Arnie. Her hysterical fan dance has turned into erotic gyrations aimed at his crotch.

Jenny sneaks back and helps the two fallen oldies get up. She eases one of them in a seat.

JENNY

Are you a big fan of Arnie's?

OLDIE

Honey, I'll listen to anyone for a free coffee.

A couple of HOMELESS PEOPLE sneak in at the back. The room is less than half full, but Arnie's mic' booms as though it's a stadium crowd.

ARNIE

I SAID HELLO NEW YORK!

His microphone screeches. A couple of oldies remove their hearing aids.

ARNIE (CONT'D)

Are you ready to change your life?

CROWD

(weak)

Yeah!

JENNY

Umm

ARNIE

Are you ready to talk heart to heart?

CROWD

YEAH!

ARNIE

Then let's do it.

His Mic' screeches again. Jenny covers her ears.

LATER:

Twelve people are left in the audience and two of them are asleep. The homeless people get up and leave. Jenny sits at the front, checking her watch. Nessy stares at Arnie, enraptured.

ARNIE (CONT'D)

Okay grab a partner, let's do an exercise. How about a volunteer up here to work with me?

Nessy's on her feet before he can finish, but...

ARNIE (CONT'D)

Janie, why don't you come on up here.

JENNY

Me?

Nessy glares at her.

ARNIE

Janie's come all the way from England to see me speak, people.

JENNY

(under her breath)

Hear me speak.

ARNIE

Can I get an AMEN for that?

CROWD

(weak)

Amen.

ARNIE

Come on Janie, be the change you wanna see.

Jenny drags herself onto the stage, wanting to die. He hugs her, heart to heart, too close.

She catches Nessy pulling hate faces at her.

ARNIE (CONT'D)

So Janie, what would you love to create in your life?

JENNY

(Very British)

Umm...

ARNIE

(playing to the crowd)

Is that slang British for something?

JENNY

Its English for, I'm not quite sure.

ARNIE

Well you'd better get sure, cos we're gonna talk...

(deepens his voice)

Heart to heart.

He sits her on his stool, takes her hand and places it on his heart then takes his hand and places it far too close to her left breast.

ARNIE (CONT'D)

Feel that Janie?

JENNY

(Uncomfortable)

Yes.

Jenny tries to get his hand more central but he moves with her. His fingers gently massage her peripheral breast.

ARNIE

What love needs light, Janie?

JENNY

Sorry?

ARNIE

Don't apologise cos you're foreign,  
or your female. What do you want?

Janie stares at him, appalled.

JENNY

How about some respect?

ARNIE

Respect, people. Can I get an  
Amen to that?

CROWD

(more interested)

Respect!

The response of the crowd buoy her up.

JENNY

I'd like to be appreciated not  
taken for granted.

CROWD

Taken for granted!

The crowd start to clap but Arnie holds up a hand.

ARNIE

Janie, you can only let someone  
take you for granted.

Nessy throws herself at the stage.

NESSY

Take me for granted, Arnie!

Arnie's hand slips over Jenny's breast.

JENNY

Okay, that's enough , thank you.

She escapes off the stage. Arnie's on fire and oblivious.

ARNIE

Yeah! Another life changed. Let's get someone else up here.

LATER

Arnie tries to get the last stragglers to sign up to his programme.

ARNIE (CONT'D)

Walk away and regret this day.

They walk away.

Nessy piles the unsold books into boxes. Jenny hovers by the door.

JENNY

I should go. I'm on an early flight tomorrow.

She yawns and slips an aching foot out of her heels. Nessy sidles up to Arnie.

NESSY

I'll stay and help you pack up.

ARNIE

(to Nessy)

Actually honey, would you grab me some water? There's a machine just down the hall.

Nessy's thrilled. He called her Honey. She races out. Arnie moves in on Jenny.

ARNIE (CONT'D)

You were fantastic today.

JENNY

Really? I felt like a bit of a disappointment up there.

Jenny tries to back away but he pins her against a desk.

ARNIE

No. You just need more one on one help.

JENNY

One TO one?

He grabs her by the shoulders and starts to massage her.

ARNIE

Can you feel that energy between us, Janie? That...connection?

His hand slips over her heart/breast again.

JENNY

Umm...

ARNIE

Stop running FROM and start running towards.

She tries to make sense of that. He's breathing heavily.

ARNIE (CONT'D)

Feel that?

Her phone goes. She reaches for her bag.

ARNIE (CONT'D)

Leave it. We're on to something here.

JENNY

I'm a mother. I never leave it!

He moves closer. She grapples for her phone.

ARNIE

Feel your power.

She answers and then sees it's Richard.

JENNY

(to Richard)

Damn! I mean, hello?

Arnie's caught in the throes of something.

ARNIE

It's like electricity.

INTERCUT RICHARD - sheltering from a tropical storm at a beach bar.

RICHARD

Jenny?

JENNY

Yes, hello, how are you?

ARNIE  
(Hand back over her  
heart)  
Release it. I can handle it.

She tries to push Arnie's hand away. He's undeterred.

RICHARD  
Awful didn't you get my text?

JENNY  
(Thinking)  
Umm...

RICHARD  
Disaster?

JENNY  
That normally means you didn't get  
an aisle seat.

ARNIE  
(lost in himself)  
Bliss, Joy...er...more bliss...

RICHARD  
Eric didn't sign.

JENNY  
What?

RICHARD  
I'm on the next flight home.

JENNY  
WHAT!

RICHARD  
We need to sell the house.

JENNY  
Sell the house!

ARNIE  
Yeah, sell me the farm!

She puts a hand over Arnie's mouth.

RICHARD  
We don't have a choice. He's gone  
bust. I haven't been paid for six  
months.

Arnie's still groaning and writhing, his hand slips over  
Jenny's breast.

ARNIE  
Doesn't it feel good?

She pushes him away.

JENNY  
Arnie!

RICHARD  
Jenny?

JENNY  
Schwarzenegger. Arnie  
Schwarzenegger. On the TV. We  
really must see Terminator again.

RICHARD  
Are you even listening?

JENNY  
How did this happen?

RICHARD  
I trusted him...I've been a fool.  
I'm sorry darling. I'll explain  
when I get home tomorrow.

Jenny freezes. Absolute panic.

JENNY  
Tomorrow!

Arnie's back. He takes her free and now limp hand, and  
slides it inside his shirt.

ARNIE  
These clothes are breaking our  
flow.

She's in shock.

RICHARD  
I should be in time for supper.  
We got some big changes to make.

JENNY  
Supper? You want me to cook supper  
while you're selling the house?

Arnie's fingers undo her top button.

JENNY (CONT'D)  
(To Arnie)  
Stop!

ARNIE  
Let it out, Janie.

She presses MUTE on her phone, grits her teeth and does a perfect Aikido block that catches Arnie on the jaw.

He staggers backwards.

JENNY

Like that?

He feels his jaw, turned on by her aggression.

ARNIE

I've helped women like you before,  
Janie.

JENNY

(tougher)  
My name is JENNY!

He advances. She braces and performs an Aikido kick straight to his stomach.

He flies back, trips over a box of books and hits his head on a table. He's out.

Shocked by her strength and slightly shaking, she un-mutes her phone. Richard's rambling.

RICHARD

The ISAs are gone. I should have  
known biotechs would crash...

Nessy bursts back in with water. She sees Arnie on the floor and takes in Jenny's unbuttoned top.

JENNY

(To Richard)  
This is too much. I can't talk  
now.

She hangs up and thinks on her feet.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Nessy, I tried, but he wouldn't.  
He's too in love with you.

NESSY

F'real?  
(lovingly)  
I knew he'd come back.

Jenny nods, convincingly.

JENNY

He keeled over with the emotion of  
it all.

Nessy runs to kneel by his side. Jenny has a wicked thought.

JENNY (CONT'D)

You know the best way to wake a man up, Nessy?

NESSY

Oh yeah. I learned in rehab.

Nessy unzips his flies. He starts coming round. Jenny walks to the door. Proud of herself.

JENNY

You get what you are, Arnie. A big lech.

INT. SCHAEFFERS BOOK STORE - NIGHT

It's late. Jenny stands in the bookstore, comfortable shoes back on, flicking through a book entitled, "Losing Everything."

A TEENAGE GIRL mistakes her for staff.

TEENAGER

(Shyly)

Excuse me? Could you help me?  
I'm trying to find something for  
my Mom and I have no idea where to  
start.

Jenny smiles kindly.

JENNY

I know just the thing.

Jenny pulls out "Women's Wisdom" and hands it to her.

TEENAGER

(Thrilled)

Thanks!

Lou approaches Jenny as the teenager walks off.

LOU

You believe in paying it forward?

He pulls "Gift from the Sea" off the shelf and hands it to her.

LOU (CONT'D)

On me.

JENNY

Oh, I couldn't.

LOU  
That's so British.

JENNY  
Actually, I've already read it.

He laughs.

LOU  
You're one step ahead of me.

There's an awkward moment.

JENNY  
I should go. I'm on an early flight.

LOU  
Hold on a second.

He disappears, then re-appears with MARTHA, his gorgeous older wife who radiates love and kindness.

LOU (CONT'D)  
Martha meet Jenny Collins. She's the gal I was telling you about. I expect she's read every book in this store.

Martha gives Jenny a motherly hug. Being embraced by such genuine love brings tears to Jenny's eyes.

MARTHA  
It's so nice to meet you, Jenny. How are you Dear?

JENNY  
I'm...  
(the truth hits)  
Not sure I want to go home.

LOU  
Boy, I wish we had this effect on all our customers!

Jenny puts on a brave face.

MARTHA  
Jeez, if only we were hiring!

Lou smiles at Jenny. A kindred spirit. He places a business card in her hand and squeezes it.

LOU  
Email me any more interesting authors you find.

His ASSISTANT appears from behind.

ASSISTANT

Mr Schaeffer I have J.K.Rowling on  
line one.

He nods a goodbye to her and pecks Martha on the cheek.

JENNY

(To Martha)

Were you always this happy together?

MARTHA

Are you kidding? The first twenty  
years were hell.

(beat)

Come on, I'll walk you out.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Jenny's bags are packed. She sits looking out of the  
window. Her list is in front of her.

She ticks off "Stand up for myself" and "Help someone."

A text comes through from Richard : Sorry for the shock.  
Estate Agent coming tomorrow. Need to clear out your old  
books.

Her eyes water.

JENNY (CONT'D)

My home, my books, what's next?

INT. JFK AIRPORT, DAY

4am. Jenny's in the queue for Virgin flight VS004 to London  
Heathrow.

She reaches the desk and is horrified to find Alan on the  
other side.

He recognises Jenny immediately.

ALAN

Someone get a sick bag. NOW!

JENNY

I'm very sorry about your shirt.

ALAN

So's Giorgio Armani.

JENNY

I'd be happy to wash it for you?  
There's very little vinegar won't  
rub out.

ALAN  
Your brain included. Passport  
please.

He snatches her passport.

Her mobile phone beeps. A message flashes up from Richard.

CU Message: At airport. Agent at 4. Home by 6. Let's talk  
then.

JENNY  
Shit!  
(to Alan)  
Is the flight on time?

He taps the keyboard. An evil glint in his eye.

ALAN  
(mock surprise)  
I'm so sorry Madam you appear to  
have been bumped.

JENNY  
What?

ALAN  
Your seat has been re-assigned.  
(He taps a key)  
Very recently.

She's shell-shocked.

JENNY  
But I have to get back. My  
husband's gone mad!

ALAN  
And yet it's him I feel sorry for.  
Let's see, I can get you on a flight  
via Denver with one of our code  
share partners.

JENNY  
Denver? Isn't that heading the  
wrong way?

ALAN  
(Off her outfit)  
It's all heading the wrong way as  
far as you're concerned...but if  
you'd rather wait, then the next  
free seat on this flight is in two  
weeks!

JENNY

Two weeks! What time does the  
Denver flight get to London?

He taps on the screen again.

ALAN

Four thirty pm.

She tries to do the math in her head.

JENNY

How is that...nevermind, I'll take  
it.

Alan hands her a boarding card with a nasty smile.

ALAN

Jolly good. The gate closes in  
five minutes.  
(gleeful)  
Have a nice run, I mean flight.

INT. AEROPLANE - DAY

Passengers sit quietly in their seats.

TANNOY ANNOUNCER

We'd like to welcome y'all aboard  
this flight to Denver. Our doors  
are now closed and we are ready...

It cuts out. A flustered STEWARD re-opens the door. Jenny  
climbs the stairs, red in the face, sweating, panting,  
hair a mess, comical.

The Steward couldn't care less.

STEWARD

Quickly please.

Jenny reaches the doorway and falls into the plane flat on  
her face.

INT. AEROPLANE - DAY

GALLEY

The plane lurches left. A cup of coffee falls off the  
side in the galley.

AISLE

The Steward retreats with the trolley, fighting to get it  
back to the galley.

The SEATBELT lights ILLUMINATE. PASSENGERS exchange worried looks.

BACK OF THE PLANE

Jenny sits in the last row, next to the toilets. She jerks around in the turbulence, totally green.

Someone can be heard VOMITING in the toilet.

In the seat next to her the large gold earrings of a wealthy older WOMAN vibrate as she snores, mouth open.

LATER

The ride smoothes out. People sigh with relief as the seat belt sign goes off.

Jenny bolts for the loo. An air hostess appears out of it, vomit splattered down her jacket. Jenny retches.

AIR HOSTESS

The door doesn't shut properly so you need to wedge it with your foot.

JENNY

Okay

AIR HOSTESS

And the seat falls down so if you're going to puke, hold it with your hand.

JENNY

(She just wants to get in there)  
Wedge the door, hold the seat.

AIR HOSTESS

And if the light goes off push the button on the left...And the automatic flush goes every thirty seconds so watch out for splash back.

She points at her splattered jacket. Jenny retches again. The air hostess gets out of her way.

INSIDE TOILET

Jenny bends over the toilet. One leg extended back wedging the door, one hand holding the seat up, the other reaching out to press the light switch which keeps turning off. She VOMITS and then leans aside strategically as the auto flush kicks in.

OUTSIDE TOILET

Jenny exits, pale but unscathed. The Air Hostess, with clean jacket on hands her a wet wipe.

AIR HOSTESS (CONT'D)

It's quite a skill isn't it, puking  
on a plane?

Jenny sits down and thinks about it. She pulls her list out of her pocket and ticks off "Learn a new skill."

The air hostess hands her a glass of water.

AIR HOSTESS (CONT'D)

And people think the mile high  
club is tricky.

LATER:

Jenny checks her watch continuously as the plane skims along the runway at Denver. The wealthy older woman next to her quietly observes.

TANNOY ANNOUNCER

We'd like to apologise for our  
late arrival into Denver and wish  
y'all a safe onward journey.

Jenny unbuckles her seat belt, desperate to get off.

WOMAN

You late for somebody?

JENNY

My husband.

The woman laughs.

WOMAN

Then it must be a first husband.  
They're always the worst.

INT. DENVER AIRPORT - DAY

It's the worst we've seen Jenny look, and she doesn't care. She runs through the airport, boarding card in hand, pushing past people until she arrives at GATE 32.

A large African- American WOMAN in an American Airlines uniform mans the gate.

JENNY

(panting)  
Wait! I'm here.

The woman looks around, surprised. Jenny laughs, hysterical with relief.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Thank God! I thought I was going to miss it. We were late because of the turbulence.

The woman stares at her.

WOMAN

Can I help you?

Jenny waves her boarding card at her.

JENNY

The flight to London. I'm here. I made it.

The woman smiles at her kindly and points at the board.

WOMAN

The next flight is at twelve and it's going to Toronto.

Jenny thrusts the boarding card at her.

JENNY

No, look. Nine a.m to London Heathrow.

(off the woman's face)

Wait, did they change the gate?

The woman glances casually over the boarding card.

JENNY (CONT'D)

(Urgently)

Please! I need to get on that plane.

The woman pushes the card back to her.

WOMAN

Quit hustling. You got plenty of time.

JENNY

I have?

WOMAN

Your flight leaves at nine TONIGHT.

JENNY

Whaa...he said I'd be back by four thirty.

WOMAN

And with the stopover in  
Minneapolis, you will be. Four  
thirty pm tomorrow.

Jenny's mouth drops open. She snatches the ticket back  
and looks at it. The woman's right.

JENNY

That sod!

She collapses onto the desk.

WOMAN

Look on the bright side. You get  
to spend a day in Denver.

JENNY

While my husband gets rid of  
everything I love!

WOMAN

Now that ain't right.

JENNY

He doesn't know I'm here.

The woman's enthralled.

WOMAN

He doesn't?  
(impressed)  
Damn girl!

JENNY

It's all Lizzie's fault...and that  
stupid list.

The woman hands her a tissue.

WOMAN

List?

Jenny pulls out the crumpled list and shows her. The woman  
is Mrs Positivity on a particularly positive day.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Girl, you're on an adventure!  
This is what we all should be doing.  
You gotta feel proud of yourself.

JENNY

The only thing I feel is stupid.

WOMAN

Women like you change the world!  
(MORE)

WOMAN (CONT'D)  
 (She's on her soapbox  
 now)  
 You're like Thelma and Louise.

JENNY  
 Didn't they commit suicide?

WOMAN  
 Sure, but they went out and did  
 something first!

Jenny's not buying it. The woman points out the window.

WOMAN (CONT'D)  
 Look at that. The world is your  
 lobster.

JENNY  
 Oyster.

WOMAN  
 Whatever.

She taps "Climb a mountain" on Jenny's list.

WOMAN (CONT'D)  
 You can be in the Rockies in an  
 hour and a half from here.

Jenny looks at: Climb a mountain.

The woman is busy with her own pen and paper.

WOMAN (CONT'D)  
 Damn. I'm gonna make me a list.

INT. DENVER AIRPORT, COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Jenny stares hopelessly at the drinks menu. There's no one else in the queue but the SERVER taps her fingers on the counter.

JENNY  
 Umm...

SERVER  
 Ready yet?

Jenny looks at her mobile phone. Her finger hovers over Richard's name, she pushes the button.

JENNY  
 I think I'm going to need a cup of  
 tea. Two sugars.

SERVER

We only got coffee. Tall, Venti or Grande?

JENNY

Normal?

SERVER

Wanna try our new whipped cream soy lattaccino?

Jenny nods blankly as Richard answers.

JENNY

Richard, it's me. There's something I have to tell you.

She takes a deep breath.

INTERCUT RICHARD UNDERNEATH A PALM TREE.

RICHARD

Jenny I'm just leaving the airport.

JENNY

I did something really stupid.

RICHARD

The damn flight was full so I'll have to wait until tomorrow.

JENNY

I took a free...

She realises what he's just said.

RICHARD

You got something free?

JENNY

So you won't be home until tomorrow?

RICHARD

Yes, about six.

JENNY

(relieved)

Thank God. I mean, lovely.

RICHARD

Have you cleared out your books? The agent says buyers want "clutter-free."

JENNY

I don't want to lose my books. Or my home.

RICHARD

Jenny, I haven't paid the mortgage for three months.

JENNY

Pay it from our savings account.

RICHARD

I did, for the three months before that.

JENNY

What? But, you're a financial manager!

RICHARD

Because you got pregnant! I hate numbers.

JENNY

(shocked)

It takes two to make a baby, Richard.

RICHARD

Then why do I always feel like such a bloody disappointment.

(mimicking her)

We should have done more long haul Richard.

JENNY

(shaken)

I'm sorry. I didn't realise.

RICHARD

All I wanted was to provide for you and Chrissy. I don't want you to have to go out to work.

JENNY

But what if I want to?

RICHARD

It's too late Jenny. Just get tidying. The agent will be there soon.

Jenny gulps.

JENNY

About that...

RICHARD

And I've talked to my parents about moving into their cottage.

JENNY

In Wales?

RICHARD

As long as we help with the sheep.

The phone cuts out.

JENNY

Richard?

Jenny stares at it, dazed.

The server sprays fake cream liberally onto her latte.

JENNY (CONT'D)

No...No...No....

SERVER

It's just cream.

INT. BUS - DAY

Jenny gazes out the window of an express coach with neutral seats and PASSENGERS who are mostly asleep.

Mountain peaks are visible in the distance. The list is in her hand. She ticks off "Travel somewhere new and unexpected" with a sigh.

EXT. ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK. - DAY

Clear blue skies and crisp Colorado sunshine.

Hikers and tourists mill around as the bus pulls into a car park by the visitors center.

The doors open and a pair of feet in hiking boots step down. They're Jenny's.

They look incongruous against her M&S trousers and Lizzie's jumper.

She looks around. Her frumpy shoes poke out of her shoulder bag as she turns to the BUS DRIVER.

BUS DRIVER

You gonna be okay?

JENNY

Of course. Thanks for your help.  
I'll be back here at five.

He nods and waves.

BUS DRIVER

Take it easy. Watch out for the bears.

Jenny smiles like he's joking. He pulls off.

She looks at the mountains in front of her, takes a deep breath, pulls out her mobile phone and dials.

INTERCUT: INT. HOUSE - DAY

KITCHEN

Lassie's eating food out of Lucky's bowl. Lucky cowers in the corner.

LOUNGE

The place is a MESS. Ulna lies across the sofa, blissfully snoring, covered in food wrappers and dog hair. Her HEARING AID hangs out of her ear. Lucky paws at it until it falls out. He begins to chew it.

Lassie's nearby HUMPING a cushion. The phone RINGS and RINGS. Ulna stirs.

The ansaphone kicks in.

JENNY (O.S.)

Hello? Hello? Ulna? It's Jenny.  
Please pick up.

Ulna picks up.

ULNA

Jenny love?

INTERCUT JENNY

JENNY

Oh thank god.

INT. AEROPLANE - DAY

Richard settles into his seat, dials Jenny's number and leaves a message.

RICHARD

Jenny, it's me. Someone had a heart attack at the gate so I'm on the flight after all. See you at home. Looking forward to a decent meal.

EXT. ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK - CONTINUOUS

Jenny's still on the phone.

JENNY

Bye Ulna, thank you and remember,  
don't answer the door. Yes and  
leave the floor too...bye.

She hangs up and approaches the guide hut but there's a long queue.

She grabs a pull out map from a stand and heads up a trail.

As she walks away, people disperse to reveal a sign that reads: BEAR SIGHTINGS - PLEASE LEAVE YOUR NUMBER IF YOU ARE HIKING ALONE.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - DAY

Jenny's reached a look-out point on the trail. She's high up and in the dazzling sunshine the view is spectacular.

She drinks it in. A slow smile spreading across her face.

EXT. ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK - DAY

Jenny's sitting on a rock, at another viewpoint, taking a photo with her phone. She tries to send it to Lizzie but she's got no reception.

She puts her phone in her bag and opens up a packet of BACON CRISPS. They smell great.

Nearby a BEAR forages around in some bushes. He stops and sniffs the air.

Unaware, Jenny munches away. She checks her watch. It reads 2pm. She looks up the trail.

JENNY

Maybe a bit higher.

She heads off.

The bear follows it's nose. As she rounds a corner they come face to face.

The bear, shows its teeth.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Oh God! Aghh! Don't scream!

It sniffs in her direction, picking up the bacon scent.

Jenny backs slowly away.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Don't scream and don't run. Isn't that what they say? Never run.

The bear pads towards her. She SCREAMS.

She throws the crisps at it and runs for her life.

MONTAGE JENNY

Jenny runs straight off the trail and down the hill. She tumbles, gets up and keep running, hopelessly unfit. The bear pads behind.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Leave me alone!

Jenny splashes through an icy cold river. Her phone and frumpy shoes fall out of her bag into the water. She grabs the phone but her shoes float to the side. The bear picks them up and chews them.

JENNY (CONT'D)

No! I love those shoes.

The bear tosses them aside and starts to cross the river.

JENNY (CONT'D)

All right keep the shoes.

Jenny runs aimlessly, sometimes up the mountain, sometimes down the mountain. Breathless, tired and very lost.

JENNY (CONT'D)

I want to go home.

Jenny's shivering and covered in mud. The bear has given up. She's lost and the light's fading. She tries her damp mobile phone, it's dead. Her watch reads 4pm.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Oh shit!

She looks around trying to decide which direction to go in. She climbs up on an old tree trunk to get a better look but it's loose and slides out from under her.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Aghhhh!

She rolls down the hill, wailing.

NEARBY

DUSTIN a well-worn but handsome cowboy rides a SKEWBALD across a ridge. He hears Jenny's cry and turns his horse around.

On JENNY

A THUD, followed by a painful sob tells us Jenny's reached the bottom of the hill.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Ow!

She huddles next to a tree, shivering with cold.

A NOISE coming through the foliage makes her scream. She panics and starts to run.

JENNY (CONT'D)

The bear!

Dustin rides out on his horse, swerving at the last moment to avoid trampling her.

COWBOY

Whoa!

Jenny crouches in the undergrowth, arms over her head.

JENNY

Don't eat me!

He jumps down off his horse, a wry smile on his face.

DUSTIN

I already had lunch.

She peers through her hands, realises it's a man and flails towards him.

JENNY

Oh God, help me!

His horse backs up, spooked by her. She keeps on coming.

DUSTIN

Whoa!

She lands on him, knocking his cowboy hat off so we can see just how handsome he is. She grips him, shaking.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)

Easy now.

INT. NUMBER 12, RICHARD'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Neat and orderly piles of paper. The desk clock reads 6pm.

Ulna's on the phone. A chewed hearing aid half in her ear as she rocks back on Richard's chair.

She rests her feet up on his desk, messing up his papers.

Lassie puts his paws up on the desk, begging for her attention. She's too busy shouting down the phone.

ULNA

What? Are you selling crazy PAVING  
or double GLAZING?

EXT. NUMBER 12 - NIGHT

A taxi pulls up outside. Richard gets out, pleased to be home.

INT. NUMBER 12, HALLWAY - NIGHT

Richard opens the door to a mound of post that Ulna hasn't picked up. He steps straight into a pile of dog poo.

RICHARD

Jenny!

He hears Ulna shouting.

ULNA (O.S.)

I haven't even got a patio!

Lucky runs towards him, launches at him. Richard catches the whimpering dog and cradles it.

RICHARD

What on earth...

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Ulna slams the phone down as Richard walks in, with Lucky still in his arms.

Richard SCREAMS

Ulna SCREAMS

Lassie bares his teeth and charges at Richard who snatches a thick book from the shelf and swipes him with it.

RICHARD

What are you doing here?

ULNA

Looking after my niece's property.

RICHARD

Where's Jenny?

ULNA

She's gone away for a few days.

Richard's stunned.

RICHARD

Because we have to sell?

ULNA

Because she's a free spirit. Always has been. You used to love that about her.

RICHARD

Things are difficult right now.

ULNA

You might get a call from the estate agent. Lassie bit him.

Richard groans.

The phone rings.

ULNA (CONT'D)

You get that, I've had enough for one night.

She shuffles out. Richard stares after her and then finally snatches up the phone.

RICHARD

Jenny?...oh, Pumpkin...

EXT. RANCH - NIGHT

Dustin rides into a simple but well lit mountain ranch. Jenny sits behind him, arms gripping him like she'll never let go, a blanket draped around her. She's still dazed.

A large open barn with a mixture of hay bales, machinery and an old BUICK TRUCK face the main timber building.

Stables and small wooden cottages lie off to one side. A fire pit burns brightly and a cluster of cowboys sit around it.

Dustin pulls up by the stables, jumps down then lifts her off. She starts shaking.

JENNY (CONT'D)

(pleading)

I have to get home. Please...

DUSTIN

You're a long way from home Ma'am.

KAYA, a young native American woman in a long skirt runs out, looking worried.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)

Kaya, take her inside. Fetch her some clean clothes and get her warm.

Kaya puts an arm around Jenny's shoulder. Jenny takes a step but her knees buckle. In one swift move Dustin sweeps her up into his arms and carries her inside.

INT. RANCH, BEDROOM - NIGHT

A homely bedroom with a fire and a couch at one end. A large bed with a woven Indian quilt rests at the other. A huge wooden armoire decorated with intricate carvings dominates one wall.

Dustin carries Jenny in, fast asleep and lays her on the bed.

LATER

Kaya sits by the crackling fire sewing as Jenny stirs.

JENNY

Where am I?

KAYA

Drowsy Creek Ranch.

Jenny remembers, checks her watch, frantic. It reads 6pm.

JENNY

Oh my God!

She throws back the covers, then realises she's in her underwear, and it's not her best M&S.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Agh! Where are my clothes?

She covers herself with the quilt.

KAYA

Ruined.

Kaya points to a pile of clothes on the bed.

KAYA (CONT'D)

For you, but Mr Dustin says hot bath first.

Jenny tries to stand up and drag the quilt with her.

JENNY

I don't have time. I have to leave, NOW! My flight's at nine.

Woozy, Jenny grabs on a cowgirl shirt from the pile on the bed. Kaya hurries out.

MOMENTS LATER:

Jenny's got the cowgirl shirt on but the buttons are done up unevenly. Her bare legs are on full display as she struggles to get a foot in the jeans.

Dustin enters without knocking.

DUSTIN

Now Ma'am...  
(off her shapely  
legs)  
Whoa!

He dips his hat over his face to preserve her modesty. She tries to cover up but one foot's in the jeans and she tumbles to the floor.

JENNY

Bloody hell!

Hat still over his eyes but, ever the gentleman, he holds out a hand to help her up. She grabs the quilt instead, drapes it around her and stands straight.

JENNY (CONT'D)

I have to get to the airport.

He slowly raises his hat. She sees how ruggedly handsome he is. He sees her determination.

DUSTIN

No Ma'am, not tonight.

He means business.

JENNY

I am not the queen!  
(suddenly sounding  
like the queen)  
Please call me a taxi.

DUSTIN

Taxis don't come up here.

JENNY

Fine. How much to drive me?

He shakes his head.

DUSTIN

You should rest.

Jenny glares at him.

JENNY

I need to get dressed.

He shrugs and heads for the door.

DUSTIN

Have it your way. But you're not  
leaving tonight.

INT. RANCH, HALLWAY - NIGHT

A pair of cowboy boots creep across the thick wooden  
floorboards.

They belong to Jenny and she's decked out in her new  
borrowed wardrobe. Denim jeans that show off her thighs,  
a check shirt and a poncho shoved in her bag.

KEYS hang on hooks by a door. Jenny rifles through them,  
puts a set into her bag and slips outside.

EXT. RANCH, BARN - NIGHT

A full moon illuminates the hay bales and machinery in the  
open barn.

Jenny sidles up to the old Buick and tries the door.

It opens and she gets in. She sighs at the old dashboard.

JENNY

No GPS, damn.

She pulls the bunch of keys out her bag and inserts several  
before one fits.

She turns it. The engine doesn't start but the LIGHTS  
come on.

She SCREAMS.

Silhouetted in the FULL BEAM is Dustin, mounted on  
horseback, blocking her way.

She turns the lights out, breathless and embarrassed.

Dustin dismounts, opens the door and holds his hand out.

She places the keys in his palm, humbled.

JENNY (CONT'D)

You don't understand. I have to  
get that flight.

DUSTIN

Follow me.

INT. RANCH, OFFICE - NIGHT

A cosy timber room, illuminated by an oil lamp and a computer screen showing live CNN feed that reads: DENVER AIRPORT AT STANDSTILL DUE TO SECURITY ALERT.

Jenny reads it, mouth open.

DUSTIN

Nobody's going nowhere tonight.

JENNY

Anywhere.

DUSTIN

Excuse me?

She regrets correcting him.

A new HEADLINE runs across the bottom of the screen: ALL FLIGHTS CANCELLED.

Jenny crumples.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)

Get yourself a hot bath and something to eat. It might fix things.

JENNY

I need a miracle not a hot bath.

He turns to her, annoyed.

DUSTIN

You could have died out there. Bears, Mountain Lions, who knows what would have got you if Hypothermia hadn't.

She gulps.

JENNY

Sorry. I...

DUSTIN

Damn British, s'posed to be so polite.

He walks out. She stares after him.

INT. RANCH, BATHROOM - NIGHT

A traditional timber bathroom with a feminine touch. Jenny sobs quietly in an old clawfoot tub, bubbles concealing her modesty.

Kaya looks around the door, nervously holding out a mug of hot chocolate.

KAYA

I bring you something to drink.

Jenny wipes her face quickly.

JENNY

Thank you. Sorry about earlier.

Kaya nods and hands her the chocolate.

KAYA

Mr Dustin always knows best.

JENNY

How irritating.

Kaya doesn't understand.

KAYA

You in trouble?

JENNY

Big trouble. With my husband and Mr Dustin.

KAYA

Bears can be scary, but most of the time they just cross. They don't eat you.

Kaya leaves Jenny to work out her subtle wisdom.

INT. RANCH, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jenny sits on the bed, despondent. Her phone suddenly beeps - it's dried out - she scrambles for it. She has fifteen missed calls and five messages.

JENNY

Oh hell.

She dials her voicemail.

RICHARD (O.S.)

Jenny, it's me. Someone had a heart attack at the gate so I'm on the flight after all. See you at home. Looking forward to a decent meal.

JENNY

Oh no.

She plays next message.

RICHARD (O.S.)

(On voicemail)

Is this a joke? Your aunt has trashed the place and her dog has pissed on my desk.

(shouts to Ulna in the background)

Will you please LEAVE!

Jenny deletes the message. Another plays.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

You'll be pleased to hear your Aunt has devalued our house by at least a hundred thousand!

(SQUELCH)

There's dog crap everywhere! Who's going to pay for this?

Jenny deletes the message and tears up as the last message breaks up as it plays.

CHRISSY

(tearful)

Mum? Where are you? I've had an accident and I'm on my way home.

Will you pick me up? I'm on flight...

The phone dies. For good.

She puts her head in her hands.

JENNY

What am I doing here?

There's a knock at the door.

DUSTIN (O.S.)

You decent?

She tries to compose herself as he enters.

JENNY

Umm...

DUSTIN

Hungry?

(off her face)

Everything okay?

JENNY

I...

Angry tears roll down her cheeks before she can answer fully.

He's calm.

DUSTIN

It's the shock. You'll be fine.

JENNY

I won't be fine. I'm about to lose everything, and I can't do anything about it from here.

She pulls the list out of her bag, crumples it and throws it across the floor.

JENNY (CONT'D)

All because of this stupid, stupid list. I hate adventures!

He picks it up, opens and reads it.

DUSTIN

Whatever you were trying to find. It ain't out there on the mountain.

JENNY

Isn't. And, I know.

He reaches in his shirt pocket for a pen and ticks off: Climb a mountain. Then hands it back to her.

DUSTIN

Adventures are like roping steer. You never know if it's going to work out until the end.

She looks up at him. He tips his hat.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)

Food's outside when you're ready.

INT. NUMBER 12 - EARLY MORNING

LOUNGE

A harrassed Richard in comical apron and washing up gloves, scoops dried dog poo off the carpet and scrubs it.

RICHARD

Ugh!

Ulna appears bag in hand, Lassie on a leash, ready to leave.

ULNA

Now you know how Jenny feels.

RICHARD

I've made my fair share of compromises.

She fiddles with her hearing aid.

ULNA

Eh?

RICHARD

(Louder)

I hope you realise me selling the house is a last resort.

ULNA

Don't make excuses, Richard. You've always been crap with money.

RICHARD

All right, I'm sorry your shares nose-dived and your portfolio's worthless. Okay?

Ulna laughs.

ULNA

You give up too easily, that's your problem. I didn't sell those shares like you said and it took a while but they came back. In fact they tripled.

He's stunned.

RICHARD

Shit!

He treads in another pile of dog poo.

ULNA

You want to discipline that dog of yours.

RICHARD

My dog?!

Ulna raises a hand to quiet him.

ULNA

Jenny is my only niece and I won't see her miserable.

RICHARD

I'm not trying to make her miserable.

Ulna eyes him up, then nods and pulls out her cheque book.

ULNA

How much do you need?

RICHARD

Sorry?

ULNA

To tide you over.

(beat)

I'm a very wealthy woman since you stopped managing my affairs.

The Doorbell RINGS. Richard just stares at Ulna. She waves at the door then begins to write a cheque.

ULNA (CONT'D)

Well, go on then!

FRONT DOOR

Richard opens the door, still shell shocked.

Chrissy barges right past him, in drama queen mode, too busy with her exaggerated limp to notice him.

CHRISSY

OMG mum it was totes awful. I HAD to come home. I thought I was going to like, DIE. Thank God Damon picked me up. Did you get my text?

Chrissy disappears into the kitchen. Richard's still at the door, mouth open.

Ulna walks out and hands him a cheque.

ULNA

We'll talk about repayment when you've sorted yourselves out.

He looks at the cheque, his eyes widen.

ULNA (CONT'D)

She loves you, you know.

(beat)

I'll see you on the Christmas tree.

She pauses for Lassie to pee on the gatepost.

RICHARD

Right, er, looking forward to it.

He closes the door. Chrissy's still ranting from the kitchen.

CHRISSY (O.S.)

There was no pool and NO WIFI!  
I'm going to campaign for those poor Africans, no one should live like that.



JENNY  
(thinking about it)  
A well meaning friend. A vindictive  
air steward and a crazy list.

Dustin watches her.

DUSTIN  
A little crazy every now and then  
never hurt nobody.

JENNY  
Anybo...

She stops herself. Dustin notices.

DUSTIN  
(off her outfit)  
You can keep your new wardrobe.  
Tick it off your list.

JENNY  
(being terribly  
English)  
Oh I couldn't.

Dustin pokes some old rags in the fire. It's Jenny's old  
clothes.

DUSTIN  
Then you're gonna get mighty cold.

Jenny stares at the fire.

JENNY  
You're burning my clothes!

DUSTIN  
It's an old Cherokee tradition.  
Bears can smell fear.

Jenny looks at them all, unsure if it's a joke.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)  
At least now you won't need an  
adventure to release your inner  
cowgirl.

The cowboys laugh. Jenny blushes.

Kaya comes out with a tray of beers and snacks. She's  
particularly cold to Cowboy 1.

Jenny watches as Kaya walks away.

JENNY

Don't the women ever sit out with you?

COWBOY 1

Kaya used to like fun. Now she likes to sit inside.

Jenny looks up at the stars that blaze overhead.

JENNY

Really?

COWBOY 1

We've been married six years and I'm always doing something wrong.

JENNY

So you've stopped trying to do anything right?

COWBOY 1

Well, I...

JENNY

You can let her slip further away from you. Or you can find what brought you together in the first place and hold onto that.

The other cowboys sip their beer, thoughtful. Even Jenny's surprised at her own forthrightness.

JENNY (CONT'D)

As a friend of mine says, if you keep doing what you're doing, you'll get what you're getting.

Dustin watches her, intrigued.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Or, to quote the Dalai Lama: Be the change you want to see.

COWBOY 2

Dolly who?

COWBOY 1

Was she on Oprah?

JENNY

It means, if you assume your wife is dull, then that's what she'll be. But if you treat her like she's fun and intelligent, she'll reflect that back to you. Make sense?

COWBOY 1

(mumbles)

Guess so. I used to take her dancing  
all the time.

COWBOY 2

Me too man. Women love to dance.

Dustin kicks his boots like he's heard enough. He slopes  
away. Jenny watches him.

JENNY

I think I finally understand.

INT. RANCH, OFFICE - NIGHT

Jenny sits in the leather chair, her hand on the phone,  
her eyes on a photo of Dustin in front of her. He's  
younger, his lean, muscular frame in action as he ropes a  
steer.

She dials her home number.

INT. NUMBER 12, LOUNGE - NIGHT

It's 4am but the TV is on. Richard swigs from a half empty  
bottle of whisky while Lucky snores in his lap.

The phone rings.

RICHARD

Jenny?

INTERCUT RICHARD AND JENNY.

JENNY

Richard.

RICHARD

Where the hell are you?

JENNY

Colorado.

RICHARD

Colorado! What are you doing?

JENNY

Trying to get home.

RICHARD

What the hell's going on?

JENNY

It was a mistake.

RICHARD  
You just walked out!

JENNY  
I had a chance to go somewhere, to do something.

RICHARD  
Because you didn't come to Florida?

JENNY  
Honestly, if you HAD taken me to Florida, this never would have happened.

RICHARD  
So it's my fault? Again?

JENNY  
No. I'm not blaming you.

RICHARD  
Is it the Menopause? Oh god I should have realised.

JENNY  
And done what, set up a Menopause saving account?

RICHARD  
Look, I'm sorry I didn't tell you before.

JENNY  
So am I. I would have helped...somehow.  
(awkward pause)  
Did Chrissy call?

RICHARD  
She's here.

JENNY  
She's home already? Is it serious?

RICHARD  
A sprained ankle.

JENNY  
You're joking.

RICHARD  
She thinks you've abandoned us.  
The house is a tip!

JENNY

That's the problem, you two see me just as a mother and a housekeeper and I've started to believe that's who I am.

RICHARD

No...

JENNY

Yes. We've become boring. We're stuck in a rut.

RICHARD

We can change things.

JENNY

Things don't change. We change.

RICHARD

Jenny, don't go all Shirley Valentine on me. You've got responsibilities.

She looks at the phone.

JENNY

What about my responsibility to myself?

She hangs up.

RANCH OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Dustin stands in the doorway watching Jenny.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Sorry. I should have asked.

DUSTIN

S'okay. I didn't mean to interrupt.

JENNY

You didn't. We were done.

She stares past him, clearly troubled.

The sound of a guitar wafts through the air.

DUSTIN

Sounds like you need to take some of your own advice. And maybe I do too. Those boys spend too much time with me.

JENNY

I didn't mean to...

He looks at her properly for the first time.

DUSTIN

My wife died three years ago. I guess they gave their attention to me, instead of their wives.

JENNY

I'm sorry.

DUSTIN

Don't be. You gave me an idea.

The guitar music gets livelier. Someone whoops. Dustin holds out his hand. She looks at it in surprise.

EXT. RANCH - NIGHT

A black velvety sky and a blanket of stars.

Sparks from the fire leap out as heels kick the dirt in a rowdy dance.

A ranch hand plays the guitar as Dustin leads Jenny. The other cowboys fling their wives around.

It's sweaty, whooping, hollering fun and everyone's laughing.

Dustin and Jenny get closer as the dances progress. She's pressed up against his chest, holding his hand, being twirled.

LATER

Dustin takes the guitar and slows the tune, calling the end of the evening.

The cowboys and wives stagger away, arms around each other.

Jenny sits opposite Dustin and watches him play across the embers of the fire.

Their eyes meet. They smile.

INT. RANCH, BEDROOM DOORWAY - NIGHT

Jenny and Dustin stand outside her bedroom door.

JENNY

I haven't even said thank you.

He smiles and dips his hat.

JENNY (CONT'D)

I'm sorry about earlier, with the truck.

He nods and thinks.

DUSTIN

It's okay to get lost once in a while. Reminds us who we are. Don't beat yourself up cos' you did something different and it didn't work out exactly.

She leans in and kisses his cheek.

JENNY

Thank You Dustin, for everything.

Their eyes lock. Slowly he removes his hat. His arm reaches around her waist. They kiss.

Finally they pull apart. She opens her door. He hesitates.

DUSTIN

You know, if this is about that list...

JENNY

Forget the list.

(beat)

This is about a particularly big spider in my bathroom.

INT. RANCH, BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jenny watches, squeamish, as Dustin removes a large spider.

INT. RANCH, BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Dustin and Jenny sit next to each other on the large couch by the fire, laughing and sharing stories, animated.

INT. RANCH, BEDROOM - DAWN

Light filters through the curtains.

Jenny and Dustin lean against each other on the couch, fast asleep.

A horse NEIGHS outside. Jenny opens an eye and smiles.

Her list lies in Dustin's lap. He's ticked off "Dance under the stars."

She watches him sleep and smiles as she takes a pen and ticks "Sleep with a stranger."

JENNY

You might not understand that one, Lizzie.

INT. RANCH, KITCHEN - DAY

Staff filter in and out picking things from a huge wooden table loaded with fruit, pancakes and maple syrup and grits.

Jenny walks in and sits. Happy, relaxed.

Kaya brings out a plateful of pancakes and places it in front of Jenny.

KAYA

Sleep well?

Jenny laughs.

JENNY

Blissfully, thank you.

Kaya looks pleased.

KAYA

It's the mountain air.

Jenny smiles to herself and starts to eat.

KAYA (CONT'D)

Miss Jenny, I don't know what you said to the men last night. But thank you.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - DAY

Craggy peaks rise up in the distance. Sun glints off a river as Jenny and Dustin meander alongside on horseback.

She sighs and takes it in.

DUSTIN

Still wanna go home?

She nods.

JENNY

If there's one thing I've learned, it's running away doesn't solve anything.

DUSTIN

You can't outrun yourself.

JENNY

That's pretty deep for a cowboy.

DUSTIN

Yeah, well I tried for a long time, and it don't work.

JENNY

After your wife passed away?

He nods.

DUSTIN

You know, whatever's going on with you and your husband, you still have time, and that's even better than a bath for fixing things.

JENNY

He blames me for a job he hates and I'm tired of trying to be the perfect wife and mother.

(beat)

We've lost sight of each other.

DUSTIN

We see what we want to see. Isn't that kinda what you said?

They share a look. She knows he's right.

The horses stop and drink from the river. She watches the sun dance on the ripples.

He studies her, then gives a wicked grin.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)

Course if it doesn't work out...

INT. RANCH - DAY

BATHROOM

Jenny showers, deep in thought.

BEDROOM

Jenny potters about the room in a large robe. She opens the doors of the armoire and to her delight discovers it's stuffed with old books and manuscripts.

LATER

Jenny sits on the bed, a pile of manuscripts spread around her. She's so engrossed she doesn't even hear the door open.

Dustin stands with a tray of tea, watching her.

DUSTIN

I don't know if this is how you like it...

He brings the tray in and places it on her bed. The tea is horrendously milky. She takes a sip and tries not to pull a face.

JENNY  
Lovely, thank you.

DUSTIN  
What's all this?

She suddenly looks embarrassed.

JENNY  
I shouldn't have pulled so many out but these are brilliant native American stories. They're inspiring, mind blowing. Women would love them.

Dustin starts to put the books back in the armoire.

DUSTIN  
They're old.

JENNY  
So no one's allowed to read them?

DUSTIN  
The ranch owner's a little sensitive.

JENNY  
(sensing the change  
in him)  
Could I talk to him about it?

DUSTIN  
He doesn't talk about it.

JENNY  
But these are really good. They could be put together in a collection.

She shields the manuscripts that remain on the bed but he shakes his head.

DUSTIN  
They're his property.

He tries to take them but she holds on.

JENNY  
Please? Just let me speak to him about these four. They're incredible.

His mouth twitches with irritation.

DUSTIN

Can't you take no for an answer?

Sensing his anger, she relents.

He puts the manuscripts away, locks the armoire and heads for the door.

JENNY

Do you really think the author  
wanted them to be hidden away?

He heads for the door.

JENNY (CONT'D)

I think this woman wrote them  
because she had something to say.  
Wisdom to pass on. He has no right  
to...

He holds a hand up and turns around, icy cold.

DUSTIN

Stop right there.

Jenny wants to make things right between them.

JENNY

But Dustin...

He cuts her dead.

DUSTIN

We should get going to the airport.

INT. BUICK - DAY

Dustin drives Jenny to the airport in an awkward silence.  
Both angry, both sorry.

DUSTIN

I'm glad you came, Jenny.

JENNY

So am I.

(beat)

Will you talk to the ranch owner  
about the manuscripts?

DUSTIN

You already did.

Dustin hands her a bag. She opens it. The four manuscripts  
are inside.

JENNY

But these are...

He nods. Jenny's eyes widen.

JENNY (CONT'D)

It's your ranch?

He nods.

DUSTIN

And you're right. She wanted them  
to be shared.

(beat)

I just couldn't let go.

Jenny stares at him.

JENNY

Your wife?

He nods, finally emotional.

DUSTIN

Make her proud Jenny. She deserves  
that.

JENNY

Arnie says you have to let go of  
something to make room for  
whatever's next.

DUSTIN

Who's Arnie?

Jenny pulls Arnie's book out of her bag and hands it to  
him.

JENNY

Take it. With a pinch of salt.

He smiles.

She leans over and kisses his cheek.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Thank you for finding me. I was  
so lost.

DUSTIN

Not lost, just forgotten, like the  
manuscripts.

INT. DENVER AIRPORT - DAY

Jenny walks in, taller, hopeful. The manuscripts in one  
hand, her list in the other.

The only thing unchecked is: Get a job.

She walks to the Virgin check-in desk, takes a deep breath and pulls out her credit card.

COUNTER CLERK

Yes Ma'am?

JENNY

London please. Via New York.

EXT. 5TH AVENUE, NEW YORK - DAY

In a sea of harried New Yorkers and eager tourists Jenny stands out as she strides along in her cowgirl outfit.

The bag of manuscripts swings in her hand. She radiates confidence. People stare at her. She doesn't care.

The same CRAZY GUY from earlier, in the loincloth and Indian head-dress, walks past and whistles at her outfit.

She HIGH-FIVES him.

JENNY

Yee-ha!

INT. SCHAEFFERS BOOK STORE - DAY

The usual buzz. Customers mill around.

Jenny moves through the store, looking for Lou. The bag of manuscripts clutched in her hand.

She passes a pile of Arnie's book "Heart to Heart, Master your Destiny." She smiles and picks up a copy.

ON LOU with an AUTHOR at a book signing event.

ON JENNY from his POV. She gives a small wave. He walks towards her.

LOU

Looks like you found your adventure.

JENNY

Turns out the real adventure's on the inside.

He nods sagely.

LOU

Careful, you're starting to sound like Arnie.

She takes a deep breath.

JENNY

Do you have time for some milk and cookies? I have a proposition for you.

EXT. NEW YORK SKYLINE - DAY

The city lights up as day turns to night.

INT. AEROPLANE - NIGHT

GALLEY

CREW mill around preparing for the passengers.

Alan's wearing his neck tie a little too jauntily, with a dash of blusher.

Lizzie appears, buttoning up her blouse and straightening her dishevelled hair.

ALAN

Look what the cat dragged in.  
Where's your neck tie?

Lizzie feels around her neck and then smiles.

LIZZIE

Connecting Captain Lewis's hand to the cockpit rail. He likes to be "strapped in" for the ride.

She winks at his outraged expression.

ALAN

How you ever got a job with Virgin amazes me.

DOORWAY LATER

Lizzie welcomes passengers on board.

Jenny appears in line and hands her boarding pass to Lizzie, whose mouth drops open as she takes in the cowgirl outfit.

LIZZIE

What the hell...???

JENNY

Long story.

The friends hug.

TANNOY ANNOUNCER

Welcome on board this Virgin flight to London Heathrow.

BUSINESS CLASS

Jenny gets comfy in seat 12b. Lizzie's still in shock.

LIZZIE

Have you got something to change into?

JENNY

Only happy memories.

Jenny waves the crumpled list at Lizzie.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Thank you. This list was the best thing that ever happened to me.

She opens it to show her ticks to Lizzie but Alan approaches.

Jenny dips her head so her face is hidden under her cowboy hat.

ALAN

Good evening Madam shall I take your hat?

Jenny looks up. His face falls.

JENNY

Why? You think it doesn't suit me?

Alan sucks in through his teeth and straightens his tie.

ALAN

I should have known from the outfit. This has gone far enough! Boarding pass please?

Jenny hands it to him.

For a moment he's all superior.

ALAN (CONT'D)

I'm afraid I'm going to have to ask you to...

CU: Jenny's boarding pass - it reads SEAT 12b.

He stares at it, mortified. Lizzie bursts out laughing.

Another STEWARD titters in the background.

Jenny clicks her fingers.

JENNY  
 (in her best cowgirl  
 twang)

Well bust my buns before noon. If  
 you don't hurry your hide and fetch  
 me some Champagne, fast, your boss  
 is going to hear all about your  
 whiney little ass. Y'hear?

Alan scuttles off.

LATER

Jenny is surrounded by exquisite food, champagne and books.  
 Alan approaches meekly.

ALAN  
 Is there anything else I can get  
 for you Madam?

Jenny thinks about it.

LIZZIE  
 A pen and paper. I need to make a  
 new list.

INT. CAR - DAY

Lizzie's car pulls up in the drive of number 12. Jenny's  
 in the front seat in a smart new outfit. She takes a deep  
 breath.

LIZZIE  
 Sure you'll be okay?

Jenny smiles at her, confident.

JENNY  
 Like you said, I don't need to  
 hold anyone's hand.

INT. NUMBER 12 - DAY

HALLWAY

Chrissy's rucksack lies abandoned on the floor. Dirty  
 clothes surround it.

Richard picks them up, cringing as he touches her smalls.

A T-shirt and a lacy thong waft down from upstairs, followed  
 by Chrissy's voice.

CHRISSEY (O.S.)  
 And Mum always separates the hand  
 wash stuff.

Her sweet smiling face appears over the bannisters.

CHRISSY (CONT'D)

Thanks Daddy.

He tries to smile back but he's traumatised by having to touch his daughter's lacy thong.

As he walks towards the kitchen, the front door opens.

He turns to see Jenny in her smart new outfit and fabulous heels. Gone is the old suitcase and in its place, is a trendy wheeled bag. He takes it in.

RICHARD

Finally.

JENNY

It was only meant to be a weekend break.

RICHARD

You've been shopping.

JENNY

I needed some new clothes.

She steps inside. He senses her confidence.

RICHARD

I didn't think sitting around reading required a new wardrobe.

Jenny smiles calmly at him.

JENNY

You'd be surprised what sitting around reading requires.

He's floored. She walks past him to the:

KITCHEN

She puts the kettle on, seemingly unaware of the surrounding mess.

RICHARD

You can't just walk back in and pretend nothing's changed.

JENNY

I'm not. Something has changed. Me.

He's slightly nervous.

RICHARD

We may not have to sell the house.  
I think there's a way...

JENNY

I'm not going back to how things  
were, Richard. And neither should  
you.

RICHARD

What does that mean?

JENNY

(softening)

It means I'm sorry you gave up  
your Agricultural Management degree.

He shakes his head.

RICHARD

Don't be. We have a beautiful  
daughter.

She moves towards him.

JENNY

Who's an adult and she needs to  
get a job. So now's your chance  
to start fresh.

(beat)

And it's my chance too.

He turns pale.

RICHARD

You want a divorce?

JENNY

No. I want a rethink. I want  
equality...and respect.

He thinks about it as Chrissy enters, earphones blasting  
out, no limp whatsoever.

CHRISSY

(delighted)

Mum!

She hugs her mother. Jenny hugs her back.

CHRISSY (CONT'D)

Thank god you're back. Dad's crap  
at Spag bol and he shrunk my jumper  
in the wash and he can't even work  
the dishwasher and...

RICHARD

(Hurt)  
Pumpkin...

JENNY

And he's never done it before. So  
give him a break.

Chrissy stares at her mum's outfit.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Things are going to be different  
from now on.

(beat)

How's your ankle?

Chrissy remembers to do a small limp.

CHRISSY

Fine. Damon's taking me out  
tonight.

JENNY

A sympathy date? Oh no!

CHRISSY

Duh. He and Laura broke up. Told  
you the bikini shot would work.

Jenny's mouth drops open. Chrissy spies her mum's fab new  
shoes.

CHRISSY (CONT'D)

OMG what size are those? They  
would so match my outfit.

JENNY

Great, get a job and buy your own.  
And...

She takes the washing out of Richard's hands and dumps it  
into Chrissy's surprised arms.

JENNY (CONT'D)

I love you, but it's time you did  
your own washing.

CHRISSY

What?

Richard perks up.

RICHARD

And vacuumed your room. I don't  
know how your mother copes with  
all this!

He and Jenny share a conciliatory glance.

CHRISSY

Wash? Vacuum? That's more than I had to do in Uganda!

JENNY

Then maybe next time you won't quit so easily.

CHRISSY

Next time?

JENNY

I'm doing the hike Kilimanjaro expedition in April. Coming?

Chrissy really looks at her mum, impressed.

CHRISSY

Like, seriously?

JENNY

Like, it's on my list.

Richard's nervous.

RICHARD

Jenny, we do have to talk about money.

Jenny smiles at him.

JENNY

Don't worry, I've got it covered.

He's astounded.

CHRISSY

(curious)

What did you DO in New York?

Jenny puts an arm around them both.

JENNY

Let me tell you about the most amazing bookstore I found.

LATER

BEDROOM

Richard checks himself out in the mirror, wearing nothing but his underpants and Jenny's cowboy hat. He pulls his best John Wayne face.

Jenny enters in her dressing gown.

Embarrassed, Richard tries to cover up.

Jenny opens her gown to reveal sexy tassled underwear, cowgirl style.

They smile at each other. A fire is re-ignited.

EXT. SCHAEFFERS BOOK STORE, REGENT'S ST. LONDON - DAY

A large book store with traditional wooden windows displaying colourful books of all shapes and sizes.

People queue to get into the hubbub.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Jenny sits opposite Lou, wearing the sophisticated blue dress from p.32.

A contract rests on the desk between them.

Lou finishes the last page of a book titled "Native American Women's Wisdom."

He looks up at Jenny, beaming.

LOU

You certainly have an eye for a bestseller. Think you can replicate this with African stories from Kilimanjaro tribes?

She nods.

JENNY

Thank you for taking a chance on me.

LOU

I don't take chances, Jenny. I know something good when I see it.

He picks up a pen and signs the contract.

LOU (CONT'D)

Congratulations, your trial period's over. You just made Editor.

Jenny whoops with delight.

She opens a folder to reveal her original list. She ticks off "Get a job" and smiles.

LOU (CONT'D)

Have copies been sent to Dustin?

Her smile broadens.

JENNY

With a hefty royalty cheque.

Martha knocks and enters.

MARTHA

Come downstairs you two. It's quite the opening day! I just love this new London store.

Jenny stands up and the two women hug.

MARTHA (CONT'D)

We are going out to celebrate tonight and I am so looking forward to meeting Richard.

Jenny's face falls.

JENNY

Oh Martha, didn't Lou tell you?

Martha shakes her head.

JENNY (CONT'D)

(proudly)

He's on an agricultural management course. In Wales.

Martha's impressed. Lou checks his watch.

LOU

Jenny, you all set to meet your new team?

Jenny grabs a tablet from her desk.

JENNY

Of course.

Martha points at the sensible shoes Jenny's wearing.

MARTHA

Er honey...

Jenny laughs and slips into some killer stilettos. The three of them exit, chatting happily.

FADE OUT.