

THE IMPORTANCE OF BIRDS

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EXT. A MOUNTAINTOP - DAY

The tops of tall pines sway in a ghostly, moaning wind.

The sun descends into a terrible yet beautiful sea of orange smog haze. A large raven stares down with shining eyes at a long line of cars snaking their way up the mountain.

POPPA BEAR, a big, hairy, scary old man (Walt Whitman on steroids) stands like a statue, with his hands on his hips. He glares at the cars. Like Zeus about to hurl a thunderbolt.

The Raven CROAKS and soars down the mountain.

POPPA BEAR
Give em Hell, they deserve it.

INT. A CAR - DAY - CONTINUOUS

A family of tourists: Mom, Dad, and two kids merrily sing:

FAMILY
She'll be coming around the
mountain when she comes..

SPLAT! A mess of bird poop explodes on their windshield.

DAD
Oh my God!

EXT. MOUNTAINTOP - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Poppa Bear roars with laughter.

POPPA BEAR
Bull's-eye!

SPENCER, a wild-eyed youth, leans out the window of an old Chevy van parked nearby.

SPENCER
What's the delivery system?

Poppa Bear hefts a water balloon in his hand.

POPPA BEAR
A condom, with a pin prick in it,
so they don't bounce off.

SPENCER
And the recipe?

POPPA BEAR

Tartar sauce, glue, and a tad of sulphur powder to give it that realistic smell when they try to clean it off.

He launches another bomb in the air.

INT. CAR - DAY - CONTINUOUS

A carload of tourists chatter in Japanese. BOOM! A bird bomb smacks their windshield and they all scream. An old lady shakes her fist at a raven flying by.

EXT. MOUNTAINTOP - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Poppa Bear wipes tartar sauce off his hands with a rag.

SPENCER

Some tourists actually care about nature...

POPPA BEAR

Then they should walk up here, or ride a bike. The Sequoias have survived for 3,000 years, but the smog is killing them! It's crawling up higher and higher, the animals have nowhere left to go, the Pika's gonna die, and the wolverine and the marmot...

SPENCER

It's kind of boring when you rant.

POPPA BEAR

I know! That's why I advocate violence! You don't wake people up by talking them to sleep! A good slap in the face is worth a thousand words.

SPENCER

Hey, that guy has a "stop Global Whining" bumper sticker.

Poppa Bear grabs two bird poop bombs and whips them down the mountain as hard as he can.

POPPA BEAR

Deny THAT asshole!

SPENCER

Oh! He had his window open!

POPPA BEAR

Thank you Jesus! It's not going to get any better than that. Let's go.

He jumps in the van.

SPENCER

Let's watch the sunset. This could be the last one we ever see. The mission could be dangerous.

POPPA BEAR

It's not a 'mission', it's not going to be dangerous. We're just messing up some machinery.

SPENCER

The only thing you can't prepare for is the unknown.

He stares out at the sunset.

POPPA BEAR

Shut up and drive.

EXT. MEADOW - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

The sunset falls on **SWIFT ARROW**, a handsome young Indian with long hair. He wears a Ranger uniform, and speaks to a disinterested group of tourists.

SWIFT ARROW

Native Americans lived cooperatively with grizzlies for thousands of years. But the Gold rush brought the bear into conflict with man. The California Grizzly was spotted in Sequoia National Park, in 1924, and then was never seen again. Our State flag has an extinct animal on it. From this we learn that you can love something and still...

A **KID** with chocolate covered fingers points and yells.

KID

Hey! There's a bear!

Everyone looks, there is much noise and fumbling for cameras. The crowd hurries toward a bear on a nearby hill, digging for insects in an old log.

SWIFT ARROW

Let's give him his space, he's a wild animal, let's let him be wild.

The bear runs away. The tourists pursue him, taking pictures.

Poppa Bear yells from the van.

POPPA BEAR

Swift Arrow! Let's go get a beer.

SWIFT ARROW

Just a second.

He takes his shoes off and stands in the dirt.

SWIFT ARROW (CONT'D)

If feet never breathe, they die.

SPENCER

Really?

Spencer strips off his shoes and socks. Poppa Bear leans away in disgust.

POPPA BEAR

Christ almighty!

SPENCER

He's right. My feet are dead.

POPPA BEAR

Get in the back, I'm driving! Get these shoes out of here. Swift Arrow, see if you can beat us to the Sentinels!

But the Indian is already gone.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)

Sneaky bastard.

EXT. MOUNTAIN TRAIL - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Swift Arrow runs a forest path, his hair flowing in the wind, his Ranger hat under his arm.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Poppa Bear hits the gas and peels out. Spencer falls in the back of the van with a THUMP! The van squeals down the mountain, hugging the road around windy curves.

EXT. MOUNTAIN TRAIL - DAY -CONTINUOUS

Swift Arrow races down a trail. He hurdles a downed log.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Poppa Bear curses under his breath and struggles with the steering wheel. The curve of the road forces him to slow down. Coming into a straightaway, he sees four giant Sequoias straddling the road.

POPPA BEAR

He's not there! We beat him!

Swift Arrow steps from behind one of the Sequoias and waves.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)

Son of a bitch! I swear he changes into a deer when he's out of sight!

Spencer opens the door to the van and Swift Arrow hops in.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)

I know, I'm buying.

INT. DIVE BAR - NIGHT

A small bar with a log cabin theme. A few people are playing pool, drinking at the bar, or playing pinball.

Poppa Bear throws cash on the bar, and walks across the room carrying three big beers.

Swift Arrow and Spencer look at a map on the table.

POPPA BEAR

The bird is there. Two nests. The Willow Flycatcher is endangered, no way they can legally cut there.

SWIFT ARROW

I checked, they have permits.

POPPA BEAR

With money you can get permits. By the time you document and prove an endangered bird was there, they've destroyed the habitat.

SPENCER

I'm in!

POPPA BEAR

You'd be in if I told you to light yourself on fire. I need someone else who isn't an idiot. You're an idiot. Passionate but an idiot.

SWIFT ARROW

I do my part. I talk, I teach.

POPPA BEAR

And do they listen? Every year you have to put down bears because people can't be bothered to throw away their garbage. Bears get food, get "aggressive" and you have to shoot them. People don't care. Or they don't care enough. We are the people who care and we have to act.

SPENCER

Let's do it!

POPPA BEAR

Shut up Spencer.

SWIFT ARROW

Let's do it.

Spencer pours beer for everyone and lifts his glass to toast.

SPENCER

To the Wrecking Crew!

POPPA BEAR

This is not the Wrecking Crew.

SPENCER

This is classic Wrecking Crew. I read all about you guys, you were legends, you were heroes.

POPPA BEAR

That was a long time ago, most of those guys are dead or fishing in Canada or something. This is just a little operation..

SPENCER

Operation **Phoenix**. Can we call it that? Phoenix cause this is the new Wrecking Crew.

POPPA BEAR

I'm not getting back into that stuff, this is a one time thing.

SPENCER

Please let us be "The Wrecking Crew." Just once.

POPPA BEAR

Okay. Okay.

SPENCER

Let's do the pledge.

POPPA BEAR

Jesus, you did read up on us.

SPENCER

We are the Wrecking Crew...

SWIFT ARROW

This is what we do.

POPPA BEAR

We destroy....to create...

SPENCER

Justice.

ALL TOGETHER (WHISPERING)

We are the wrecking crew, this is what we do, we destroy...to create justice.

They clink together their beer glasses.

SPENCER

When do we do it?

POPPA BEAR

Soon. We need a night with no moon.

INSERT:

Close up of the Sun, a circle of bright yellow against blue.

The sound of birds singing.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

More birds singing, getting louder now, more insistent.

Poppa Bear is asleep. Sunlight streams through the window onto his face. He growls deep and turns over. A cat comes and sits on his head.

POPPA BEAR

Okay. Okay.

He rises. First he feeds three cats. Then he feeds a dog.

EXT. POPPA BEARS HOUSE - PORCH - DAY - CONTINUOUS

A cute little house that is built in a pyramid shape. It looks like a ski lodge. There is a porch three quarters of the way around it.

Poppa Bear comes out on the back porch and puts down hay for two goats that are sleeping on the deck. The goats immediately jump up and trot over to their hay.

POPPA BEAR

Morning ladies! Pea don't be a bitch, let Bowie have some!

A blue Jay SQUAWKS insistently from tree branches above.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)

All right!

He pours birdseed into a bird feeder.

He opens a gate and lets the goats go down to the lower yard and graze. The dog races around herding them.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)

Keep them off the flowers Arcturus!

EXT. POPPA BEARS HOUSE - BACK YARD - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Poppa Bear walks down near the river flowing behind the house. He fills a hummingbird feeder with bright red liquid.

He takes off his slippers and sits with his feet in the water. Taking out a pad of paper he writes down the date.

"March 3rd"

Watching for birds, he writes down each kind he sees.

"Acorn Woodpecker, Tufted Titmouse, Mallard, Turkey buzzard, Scrub Jay." A tiny hummingbird zips up to the liquid feeder and drinks. He writes down "Calliope Hummingbird".

POPPA BEAR
Good morning Flutter.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY - LATER

Poppa Bear enters. He puts a pinch of fish food in a little bowl by his bed. A goldfish gobbles greedily.

POPPA BEAR
Morning King Neptune.

He pulls closed the shades and shuts out the sun. Now he lays down and goes back to sleep. Cats wrestle on the blankets covering his feet.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)
Knock it off. It's nap time!

He closes his eyes. The phone rings and we hear Spencer shouting into the answering machine.

SPENCER
We are the Wrecking Crew this is what we do...

Poppa bear growls, picks up the phone.

SPENCER (CONT'D)
No moon tonight. Is operation Phoenix a go?

POPPA BEAR
It's gonna be operation dead idiot if you don't shut up. Come over around midnight.

SPENCER
Woo! We are the Wrecking Crew...

Poppa Bear hangs up the phone.

EXT. COW FIELD - NIGHT

Spencer drives the van. He's got black camouflage makeup smeared all over his face. He looks like a crazy raccoon.

The van bumps along a dirt road. Bright cow eyes shine in the headlights. The van stops, Poppa Bear and Swift Arrow jump out, with bags over their shoulders.

SPENCER

Let's go over it again.

POPPA BEAR

Just sit here and watch the road,
Al Jolson.

SPENCER

Al Jolson is my code name?

POPPA BEAR

You don't know who Al Jolson is?

SPENCER

A spy?

POPPA BEAR

Like James Bond. Your mission is to
sit here. If you see lights of a
car, get on the walkie talkie and
let us know.

SPENCER

That's it?

POPPA BEAR

That's it.

Spencer turns on his headlamp and a dim red light illuminates the area in front of him. Poppa Bear and Swift Arrow slink away fast into the darkness.

EXT. FIELD - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Swift Arrow and Poppa Bear stop in front of a couple of bulldozers and other heavy moving equipment.

POPPA BEAR

I'll take care of these.

Swift Arrow runs off. Poppa Bear opens the bulldozer's gas tank. He pulls a bag of sugar from his bag and pours it down.

EXT. COW FIELD - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Spencer stares into the night. With one hand he activates Google search on his cell phone, enters "Al Jolson". A picture of a singing man in blackface comes up on the screen.

SPENCER

What the Hell?

Something comes up and looks in the van's window . Spencer jumps. It's a cow.

EXT. FIELD - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Swift Arrow opens a generator and rips out its wiring.

EXT. FIELD - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Poppa Bear pulls the oil dipstick out of a bulldozer and places a plastic tube ending with a funnel into the hole.

He pours sand into the funnel.

EXT. COW FIELD - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Spencer sees car lights. He picks up his walkie talkie.

SPENCER

Oh crap! You guys, there's a car coming! Get out of there!

POPPA BEAR

Calm down. It will take them at least five minutes to get down that road, I'll be out of here in one. Hey Kemosabe, get back to the van.

SWIFT ARROW (V.O.)

Roger that.

EXT. FIELD - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Swift Arrow runs into the woods.

Poppa Bear moves to another bulldozer and squeezes Super glue into the lock on its door.

EXT. COW FIELD - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Spencer sees two more lights pop on and start to move.

SPENCER

Poppa Bear, there's more lights,
looks like ATVs. Do you see them?

EXT. FIELD - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Poppa Bear turns and shields his eyes from a bright light.

POPPA BEAR

I see them.

SPENCER

Run Poppa Bear run!

POPPA BEAR

No can do. I got bad knees.

Two big guys dismount from ATVs. **TWEEDLE-DEE AND TWEEDLE-DUMB**. They look like twin "Mr. Cleans", with bald heads and big arms. One carries a baseball bat.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)

Well look at this sweet couple.
Tweedle Dee and Tweedle Dumb.

TWEEDLE-DEE

We're gonna kick your ass old man.

Poppa Bear takes hold of a small tree cut off at waist height, and rips it roots and all out of the ground.

POPPA BEAR

I'M NOT OLD!

He roars, and walks straight at the two men, brandishing the tree like a caveman. Tree and baseball bat WHOOSH! through the air and collide with a CRACK! The man's baseball bat breaks in half. Poppa Bear grabs him by the throat, and the man is knocked off his feet, flat on his back. His eyes bulge with surprise.

His partner, Tweedle-Dumb, punches Poppa Bear in the side once, twice, to get him to let go. Poppa Bear sweeps the man's legs with one of his own.

EXT. COW FIELD - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Swift Arrow arrives back at the van.

SPENCER

Poppa Bear is in trouble!

The Indian looks and sees the lights in the woods. He immediately turns and runs back into the darkness.

EXT. FIELD - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Tweedle-Dumb struggles to hold Poppa Bear in a bear hug. His partner punches the old man in the face two times. Poppa Bear shrugs it off and flexes his muscles. He bursts free. Both men grab an arm and try to force him down.

Suddenly THUMP! something hits the old man in the back of the head. He slumps to the ground.

Poppa Bear sees the silhouette of **THE CEO** (chief executive officer) He holds the uprooted tree Poppa Bear pulled up.

CEO

Go back to the Sixties Grandpa. What did you accomplish? You messed up a couple of machines. And yourself. We'll have the machines running again in a day. I don't think you're going to heal so fast. When you put flesh and blood up against metal and money, this is what happens. These machines are just cogs inside the bigger machine. I'm a cog too, so are these guys. But you? You're not a cog. You serve no function. You are sand in the gears. You slow down the progress of the machine for two seconds and then you get washed out and thrown away. Bye bye. Really, I didn't think people still did this shit. Get this caveman out of here.

TWEEDLE-DUMB

Where to?

CEO

Anywhere. I don't care.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Swift Arrow runs through the darkness. In the distance, he sees two men loading Poppa Bear onto the back of an ATV.

He gets close enough to see the men's faces before they peel out and speed away into the night.

He gives up and stands under the trees breathing hard.

EXT. FOREST CLEARING - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Poppa Bear wakes up lying in a clearing.

A large owl hoots WHO?

CLICK. Poppa bear's eyes appear in the illumination of a lighter's flame. He stares into the light, unblinking.

CLICK. The flame leaps up again.

POPPA BEAR
Come on, dammit.

CLICK, the flame flickers.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)
Ow!

He shakes his burnt thumb. There is a silence. He CLICKS the lighter one more time. The flame leaps up.

He brings his face in close to it. With his palm down, he passes his other hand over the flame. He yells in pain. The light goes out.

In the darkness, he begins to roar like an animal.

The owl flies away.

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Poppa Bear's shouts, become a woman shouting.

Halfway down a long dim hallway, light spills from a room, casting a bright rectangle on the facing wall.

At the end of the hall, a doctor talks to a young woman.

CASSANDRA is a sophisticated urban warrior. Smart and powerful in a perfect suit, she is nonetheless at this moment a mess. Her eyes and face are wet, and she wraps her arms around her head as if fending off an attack of birds. We can't clearly hear what she and the doctor are saying.

The doctor tries to touch her but she won't allow it. She pulls herself together, cleans her face, adjusts her dress and walks up the hallway. She enters the hospital room.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Poppa Bear sits up in the bed, staring blankly into space.

Swift Arrow and Spencer sit in chairs nearby.

CASSANDRA

I hate to say I told you so, but I told you so. No, wait. I love to say I told you so. What I hate is never being heard, never being listened to until it's too late. Do you know how boring it is to see you in a hospital bed again? And to hear that stupid name again after all these years? The Wrecking Crew. Are you kidding me? Well you really wrecked something this time. You wrecked your life. Look at yourself. Oh yeah, you can't. Because you're BLIND. You stupid old man.

POPPA BEAR

I'm not old!

CASSANDRA

You're old and stupid and stubborn.

POPPA BEAR

But I'm a handsome son of a bitch!

He holds his arms out wide and smiles.

She takes a handful of jello from the tray of food beside him and mashes it all over his face. He yells, she yells, Swift Arrow jumps up to pull her back.

A **NURSE** rushes in.

NURSE

What's going on here? This patient
needs rest and quiet!

Swift Arrow escorts Cassandra out of the room.

The nurse wipes jello from Poppa Bear's face.

NURSE (CONT'D)

My God. Who was that woman?

POPPA BEAR

That's my daughter. Isn't she
beautiful?

INT. HOSPITAL STAIRWELL - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Close up of Cassandra's face. Behind her head, the cold
cement wall of the stairwell, bleak and grey.

SWIFT ARROW

I'm sorry.

CASSANDRA

There's no telling him not to do
anything, ever. When I was ten, he
went to jail for five years because
of "the Wrecking Crew" I thought he
was dead.

SWIFT ARROW

Why did you think he was dead?

CASSANDRA

Because my mother told me he was
dead. She was that mad. Their
marriage was always on the rocks.
But it was an unsinkable ship. She
loved his passion. He was willing
to die to save the Condors. Have
you seen how ugly condors are?

SWIFT ARROW

It's good to have you home.

CASSANDRA

I've lived longer in New York now
than I did growing up here. Home
isn't so cut and dried anymore.

SWIFT ARROW

Here's a vote for home being here.

He comes close and kisses her. She doesn't resist.

SWIFT ARROW (CONT'D)

What did the doctor say? Will his
sight return?

CASSANDRA

No. And when it sinks in, he won't
go through the 'stages of grief"
he'll skip to mad.

They hear a CRASH! from the hall.

POPPA BEAR

I want out! I want to go HOME!

INT. CAR - NIGHT - HOSPITAL PARKING STRUCTURE

Cassandra is in the driver's seat. Poppa Bear is in the
passenger's seat. Swift Arrow and Spencer are in the back
seat. She starts the car.

POPPA BEAR

Who's driving?

CASSANDRA

I am.

POPPA BEAR

No way.

CASSANDRA

Don't start.

POPPA BEAR

You haven't driven for 20 years.

CASSANDRA

Yes I have.

POPPA BEAR

When?

CASSANDRA

Occasionally. I have business out
of town.

POPPA BEAR

And you take taxis and limos.

CASSANDRA

Sometimes I drive.

POPPA BEAR

Like when?

CASSANDRA

Like now. When I'm in the middle of nowhere, and I have to.

POPPA BEAR

Swift Arrow, you drive.

CASSANDRA

This is my rental car. I'm driving.

She hits the gas. Poppa Bear grabs at the wheel.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

Get away!

She swats at his hands. They CRUNCH into a pillar.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

Oh. My. God.

INT. CAR - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

They drive down the road in silence. There's a big dent in the grill of the car.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

If anybody says anything before we get home, I'm driving us straight over a cliff.

EXT. POPPA BEAR'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The car's engine cuts off, we hear the river flowing. A dog barks inside the house. Spencer jumps out, runs around and opens Poppa Bear's door.

POPPA BEAR

I can open the door myself!

He heads up the ramp to a gate that blocks off the porch. Everyone follows him. He fiddles with the latch on the gate and it opens. He waves his hand. A motion detector light comes on, illuminating the area.

Poppa Bear pulls his keys out of his pocket and opens the front door. A small dog comes running out, barking.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)

The mighty Arcturus!

Poppa bear kneels and the dog licks his face.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)
 Oh good boy, those are good kisses.
 Why does my house smell like
 Woodstock?

BOB, a poker-faced old Indian comes out of the kitchen.

BOB
 No one else here is old enough to
 remember Woodstock, old man.

POPPA BEAR
 I'm not old! Bob, what are you
 doing here in my house?

BOB
 Watching your animals. Eating your
 food.

Bob holds up a pipe.

BOB (CONT'D)
 I've got medicine. Supposed to be
 good for glaucoma. Might help you
 out. Let's go on the porch.

He escorts Poppa Bear out the back door.

CASSANDRA
 Anyone hungry? I can fix something.

EXT. BACK PORCH - NIGHT

Bob and Poppa Bear smoke deep.

BOB
 You had a lucky day.

POPPA BEAR
 What?

BOB
 The same day this happened to you,
 a man fell in the river and
 drowned. This time of year the
 water is so cold the muscles of the
 strongest swimmer freeze up, and
 they sink like a stone. Feel
 better?

POPPA BEAR

Better than dead? Don't know.
I keep trying to open my eyes. I
keep forgetting. It's bad Bob. It's
real bad. Every moment I have to
fight the panic. It's coming up
like acid from my stomach.

BOB

I have felt large fear like that.
I'm sorry my friend. What can I do?

POPPA BEAR

I fought two men. Big bald guys. A
third guy came up and hit me on the
back of the head. That's the guy
that blinded me. I want him here.

He holds out his hands in a strangling gesture.

BOB

I'm on it.

POPPA BEAR

Thanks Bob. Good to hear your
voice.

Bob puts his hand on Poppa Bear's shoulder. Poppa Bear puts
his hand on top of his friends.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

A big hand reaches toward a "Newton's Cradle" (those clicky
clacky balls which swing on string and knock together) These
balls are bright gold yellow. The hand pulls back a ball and
starts their perpetual motion. CLICK CLACK. A smaller hand
reaches in and stops the balls.

CEO

Please don't touch that Leonard.

TWEEDLE DEE (AKA LEONARD)

Yes, Mr. Lawrence.

He sits down on a couch. The CEO sits at his desk. He reaches
out and starts the gold balls in motion.

CEO

It was a gift from the Emperor of
Japan. They're real gold. If
civilization collapses, I'll just
grab my balls and run!

He looks out the window at an amazing view of Central Park.

DANNY, a neat little man in a suit, enters.

CEO (CONT'D)

What's up?

DANNY

The gentleman you had an encounter with..the guy you hit with a log. He went blind. Apparently it's permanent.

CEO

That's unfortunate. Can we pay his medical bills?

DANNY

That would be admitting culpability. His daughter has money. She's a lawyer. Famous for winning environmental cases.

CEO

Are we going to have a problem?

DANNY

No.

CEO

Who's the guy?

DANNY

They call him Poppa Bear. He's an old environmental activist. A monkey-wrencher. The leader of a group called "the Wrecking Crew."

CEO

The Wrecking Crew? That guy must be a dinosaur.

DANNY

You know what happened to the dinosaurs.

CEO

Like the Grizzlies out there in California. They were big, but they didn't have the survival instinct. The Goldrush population in California went from 14,000 to 250,000.

(MORE)

CEO (CONT'D)

They killed the grizzlies for gold. They didn't need to go extinct. But they fought inevitable change. If they'd been like the black bear, they would have survived. Plenty of black bear around, you see them in the parks all the time. They cooperate with humans, they coexist.

TWEEDLE DEE

They eat our garbage.

CEO

What?

TWEEDLE DEE

Black bears eat our garbage. They're scavengers. Not hunters. Maybe the Grizzlies didn't want to survive by eating our garbage.

CEO

That's a romantic way of looking at it Leonard.

DANNY

Yes, well, if you hear anything from this guy or his daughter, pass them to legal. Don't say anything. Don't apologize. Don't talk about it. It didn't happen, the guy doesn't exist. You with me Michael?

CEO

Yeah sure.

DANNY

That goes for you too Leonard.

Leonard mimes locking his lips and throwing away the key.

DANNY (CONT'D)

And tell the other guy.

TWEEDLE DEE

Ron. He's manning security back in the California office.

CEO

He should be back within a year and a half or so. We'll be done with that place by then I imagine.

(MORE)

CEO (CONT'D)

He's living on my boat on the lake there. It's a nice new place to get away to on the weekends. Though I didn't expect to spend my nights hunting Grizzlies.

He smiles.

DANNY

Well maybe you shouldn't go back there for awhile. Just to be safe.

CEO

From what? A blind old man?

TWEEDLE DEE

They say a wounded animal is the most dangerous kind.

Tweedle-Dee's eyes FILL FRAME and then morph shockingly fast into the eyes of a Bear, howling with rage and pain.

TRANSITION

EXT. DARK WOODS - NIGHT

A bear tied to a tree fights off two attacking dogs. Their teeth snap and tear. The bear roars and shakes his head.

A shadowy figure stands looking on and laughing.

The dog's heads go bald, their faces become the cartoonish image of Tweedle-Dee, and Tweedle-Dum.

The Shadowy figure points a wand at the bear and the bear's eyes fade away, replaced by fur and bone.

The bear's roar becomes a scream.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Darkness. Screaming. Cassandra turns on a lamp. She's in her pajamas, next to Poppa Bear on a big queen bed. She shakes him awake.

POPPA BEAR

Margaret. I dreamed I was blind.

CASSANDRA

It's Cassandra Dad.

POPPA BEAR
Turn on the light!

CASSANDRA
It's on Dad.

He moans like the damned.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT - LATER

Darkness. Screaming. Cassandra turns on the light. Poppa Bear wakes up.

POPPA BEAR
Oh God, Margaret. Horrible. I
dreamt I was blind.

CASSANDRA
Dad, it's Cassandra.

POPPA BEAR
Turn on the light!

CASSANDRA
I can't. The power's out Dad, those
stupid idiots at the power company
were working on the line and blew
the whole block.

POPPA BEAR
Can you find a candle?

CASSANDRA
Just go back to sleep.

POPPA BEAR
All right. I love you Margaret.

INSERT

Close up of the Sun, a circle of bright yellow against blue.
The sound of birds singing.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Sunlight falls across Poppa Bear's face. He opens his eyes.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Poppa Bear shuffles quietly into the room. Spencer is asleep on the couch. Swift Arrow and Bob are sleeping on the floor under blankets.

EXT - HOUSE - DAY -CONTINUOUS

Poppa Bear and Arcturus the dog, head across the yard. The dog runs in circles around his master who moves slowly and unsurely down toward the river. Poppa Bear stumbles and falls on the rocks. He gets up.

A bird sings nearby. A small notebook falls from Poppa Bear's pocket onto the rocks. It lies open, revealing the written list of birds from yesterday.

At the river, he stands on a large rock by the water's edge. He looks directly at the sunrise . His face is lit warmly orange. He takes off his shoes. Arcturus licks his feet.

Poppa Bear ties Arcturus to a tree with his leash.

POPPA BEAR

Sorry. Bob will take care of you.

He takes off his pants, his shirt, his underwear. He stands shivering at the edge of the river. His toes cling to the surface of the rock and he teeters on the edge.

A hummingbird flies up. She hovers face to face with him. His blind eyes are wide, the hummingbird's wings beat fiercely.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)

Okay. Okay.

He steps down from the rock. Sitting on the ground to put on his pants, he endures Arcturus licking his face relentlessly.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY - LATER

Cassandra wakes to see the other side of the bed empty.

EXT. FRONT PORCH - DAY - CONTINUOUS

She comes onto the porch, and sees her Father sitting in a rocking chair. Arcturus lies beside him, asleep. Poppa Bear's head is tilted weirdly, mouth and eyes open.

CASSANDRA

Dad?

Beside him she sees an open, empty medicine bottle.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

Dad! Dad!

She shakes him. There's no reaction. He smirks, and laughs.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

You son of a bitch! Damn you!

POPPA BEAR

Relax, I took a couple pain pills, my muscles were killing me. There were only two pills left. Remember we used to play that game where I'd pretend I was dead?

CASSANDRA

I remember you repeatedly traumatized me as a kid.

POPPA BEAR

You thought it was funny.

CASSANDRA

No. **You** thought it was funny.

POPPA BEAR

Someday, it'll be real, and you'll laugh instead of cry. I prepared you. That's called Tough Love.

CASSANDRA

The sun has risen, the birds are doing their thing, It's time for the Bird Show. Let's get down to our spot in the lower yard.

POPPA BEAR

I'm blind. I'm not doing the bird show.

CASSANDRA

We always do the Bird Show when I come home, we're doing it.

POPPA BEAR

I'm going back to bed.

She runs inside and comes back out pointing a water gun.

She squirts him in the face.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)

Hey!

CASSANDRA

Time for the Bird Show!

She squirts him again.

POPPA BEAR

Knock it off!

He THUMPS on the side of the house with a big heavy hand. She squirts him mercilessly. He waves and growls like King Kong on top of the Empire State building, warding off planes.

Cassandra notices **MRS JONES**, their middle aged neighbor, on her porch. She's holding a broom but not sweeping.

CASSANDRA

Pipe down. Mrs. Jones is watching.

POPPA BEAR

Call the Police!

CASSANDRA (TO MRS JONES)

He's kidding!

Mrs. Jones goes inside her house and closes the curtains. Swift Arrow, and Bob come out onto the porch.

SWIFT ARROW

What's going on?

CASSANDRA

Tough love, tough love!

She squirts her dad in the face, forcing him down the porch.

POPPA BEAR

Get her off of me Swift Arrow!

CASSANDRA

Time for the Bird Show!

SWIFT ARROW

Maybe he doesn't feel up to that right now.

POPPA BEAR

I don't.

CASSANDRA
 With the proper motivation,
 anything is possible. Tough love.

She shoots him with the water gun.

SWIFT ARROW
 What's tough love?

CASSANDRA (TO POPPA BEAR)
 When it rains, my ankle aches with
 sharp sudden pains. When that
 happens I think of you.

Poppa Bear stumbles down the ramp.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)
 You're faking it, you came up that
 ramp in the dark last night!
 Remember when I was a teenager, and
 I broke my ankle and you made me
 walk back up the ski slope?

POPPA BEAR
 I didn't know it was broken. I
 figured if you could make it up the
 hill, it must not be that bad.

CASSANDRA
 Tough love!

She squirts him. He growls. Groping his way along, he heads
 down the ramp. Cassandra whispers to Swift Arrow.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)
 He's a fighter. That's what he
 knows. He needs to stay mad. (to
 Poppa) You need some help?

POPPA BEAR
 NO!

EXT. LOWER YARD - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

They sit in a swinging chair which hangs from a tree in the
 middle of the yard.

She looks up into the air and calls out:

CASSANDRA

Let the Bird Show begin! You may not be able to be a birdwatcher anymore, so you'll have to be a bird listener! I looked it up online, a good birder knows up to 150 birds by sound. It's easier to find them that way. You know how hard it is to spot birds in the trees. Come on. You can learn how to do this.

A loud, aggressive bird sounds out with a SCREECH.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

There's an easy one. What is it?

A Scrub Jay stares down at them. It sees a cat wandering in the grass and SCREECHES at it.

Poppa Bear is quiet. A family of California Quail walks across the lawn. Two adults and many little birds. The adult calls out.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

How about that one? You know it. Chi-cag-o. Chi-cag-o.

POPPA BEAR

The bird show is over Cassandra. I don't remember the first time we did it. But this is the last time.

CASSANDRA

Ok. Well, now you can tell me then.

POPPA BEAR

Tell you what?

CASSANDRA

What is the Importance of Birds?

Suddenly an image penetrates the pitch black of his experience. He sees her as a little girl, and himself as a young man. It is as if he is looking down a dark tunnel to a place where there is still light.

YOUNG CASSANDRA

What is the Importance of Birds?

POPPA BEAR

You tell me.

YOUNG CASSANDRA
They're beautiful. They sing. They
sing nice. They fly. Which is it?

POPPA BEAR
You tell me.

She sighs, exasperated, and puts her hands on her hips.

YOUNG CASSANDRA
Dad!

MARGARET, a sunshiney young woman, waves from the porch.

MARGARET
It's time for lunch. Come on!

A goat on the porch butts her from behind. She swats the animal with a dish-towel.

POPPA BEAR
I want to always remember this
moment? Don't you?

YOUNG CASSANDRA
Yes!

POPPA BEAR
Let's take a picture.

She holds out her 'invisible camera' at arms length.

They both smile.

YOUNG CASSANDRA
CLICK!

Back to the present. Poppa Bear is silent. Cassandra waits for an answer.

POPPA BEAR
Take me back inside. I don't want
to be out here. I don't want to
hear the birds.

Trees in sunlight, birds singing everywhere. The light changes slowly across the trees, then shifts, as night is falling, and it becomes darker. The sound of birds is replaced with the happy humming of crickets. The front porch light comes on as do lights within the house.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Cassandra enters down the hall. Bob and Swift Arrow sit on the couch watching TV playing on low volume.

BOB
Is he sleeping?

CASSANDRA
Finally. Till the nightmares start.

She sits down between the two men. Swift Arrow is looking through a photo album.

SWIFT ARROW
Look at all the animals you made me shoot.

She flips the pages. There are many images of animals. Birds, bears, a coyote, etc.

CASSANDRA
Aren't I horrible?

SWIFT ARROW
You ruined me. It's a hundred times harder to get a good shot with a camera than a gun. I've wasted thousands of hours of my life. It becomes an obsession. I see something beautiful and I want to capture it.

Looking at her.

CASSANDRA
EW. You guys want to play Scrabble?

SWIFT ARROW
It's one in the morning.

CASSANDRA
I'm awake.

BOB
I'm in.

CASSANDRA
No Indian words. You make them up and I don't know the difference.

BOB

You insult my ancestors by calling me a liar.

CASSANDRA

Your ancestors know better than anyone you're a liar. They're dead, they could be anywhere, watching.

Bob looks nervous. They start mixing up the Scrabble tiles.

SWIFT ARROW

Do you really believe that?

CASSANDRA

No. But he does, that's what matters.

SWIFT ARROW

What are you a lawyer or a psychologist?

CASSANDRA

Both. That's why I get paid the big bucks. Ghost!

She points across the room. Both of the men look.

BOB

I will defeat you by using small words in the perfect spots.

CASSANDRA

I hate that.

They pick their letters.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

Thanks for being here. He'd never say it, but he needs us all now.

BOB

Fucking "Q"

CASSANDRA

Except maybe you Bob.

INSERT

Close up of the Sun, a circle of bright yellow against blue.

The sound of birds singing.

INT. BEDROOM- DAY

Poppa Bear has a pillow over his face. The sun is shining on it. He lifts his arm and pulls the pillow off fast. The sun shines on his face.

POPPA BEAR
Unbelievable.

EXT. PORCH - DAY

Poppa Bear is in his rocking chair. Cassandra brings coffee.

CASSANDRA
Ok. Let's talk about the case.

POPPA BEAR
What case?

CASSANDRA
Your case. Our case. We can't get your sight back but I'm sure we can get a ton of money.

POPPA BEAR
From who? I don't know who did it.

CASSANDRA
The specific person doesn't matter. The company did this to you. The Horizon Corporation.

POPPA BEAR
I was on their property, the law is on their side.

CASSANDRA
Doesn't matter. The law is blind, remember? Cases are decided on emotion. This looks bad, feels bad. You're the hero of the story, fighting to save an endangered bird. That's not a story the company wants told over and over. They'll settle.

POPPA BEAR
I don't care.

CASSANDRA

You're depressed. You're in a dark place, no pun intended. We'll talk about this later. When you get mad, you'll change your mind.

POPPA BEAR

Who says I'm not mad?

CASSANDRA

What are you planning? Something stupid like what got you into this situation in the first place? Good luck. Cause I'm not going anywhere. You can't see me, but I can see you. I'm watching you like a hawk.

She walks away. He drinks his coffee.

She comes up close behind him.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

Like a hawk!

He spills his drink on himself.

POPPA BEAR

Bitch! Ninja bitch.

She leaves.

Bob walks out onto the porch.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)

Good morning Bob.

BOB

How'd you know it was me?

POPPA BEAR

The smell. It's either you or the ghost of Bob Marley.

BOB

Good music, good name. I was reading the paper. Remember someone drowned the day you had your troubles? It wasn't some dumb tourist, it was Charlie Nolan's brother, Terry.

POPPA BEAR

What?

BOB

He was hiking, slipped and fell in the river, far as they can tell. The viewing is Saturday. You want to go?

POPPA BEAR

I never want to go to those things, but it's Charlie's brother, we have to.

BOB

I will prepare Food of the Gods as an offering.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Close up of Bob's old hand setting Ambrosia on the table. Someone reaches in to steal a cherry off the top.

Bob slaps Poppa Bear's hand. Poppa Bear sticks his finger in his mouth and cleans it off.

He's dressed in a bad fitting suit and his tie is crooked.

Cassandra enters, dressed nicely, and straightens his tie.

CASSANDRA

C'mon, let's go.

She takes him by the arm.

POPPA BEAR

I can walk alone.

CASSANDRA

You can, but not right now, because you're too slow and we're late.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

Everyone piles into the van. Poppa Bear, Cassandra, Spencer, Bob and Swift Arrow. Cassandra is driving.

POPPA BEAR

Don't kill us.

CASSANDRA

Shut up Stevie Wonder, leave the driving to me, you're in charge of the music.

He reaches for the radio dial. She pulls out fast. Poppa Bear's hand veers away from the radio to steady himself.

POPPA BEAR

Christ!

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - DAY

Big Band music plays loudly on the radio.

CASSANDRA

Next!

POPPA BEAR

Everybody loves big band.

CASSANDRA

Anyone?

No one speaks up.

POPPA BEAR

Why couldn't I have gone deaf
instead of blind, then I wouldn't
have to hear your voice.

CASSANDRA

I wish you were deaf too! Then you
wouldn't want to listen to this
crap music.

Suddenly she screams and hits the brakes.

POPPA BEAR

What was it? Did we hit it?

There is a dead squirrel lying in the road.

She gets out of the car and runs to the squirrel.

SWIFT ARROW

Squirrel. It was already dead.

POPPA BEAR

You braked for road kill?

SPENCER

She's out of the van.

BOB

She's with the squirrel.

POPPA BEAR
Get me out there.

Cassandra stands by the dead squirrel. Bob and Swift Arrow bring Poppa Bear.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)
What are you doing?

CASSANDRA
Someone's going to run over him,
and then another car and another,
till he looks like a mess of
flattened tomatoes on the road.

POPPA BEAR
Somebody move the squirrel off the
road.

Bob takes it by the end of its tail and lifts it.

CASSANDRA
Don't you see the irony? We're
going to a funeral and yet we're
going to leave this creature to rot
by the road. Doesn't he deserve any
respect at all? We should bury it.

They look at the dead squirrel's almost comical face.

POPPA BEAR
Get in the car and drive, or I'm
going to drive.

She starts to cry.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)
Is she crying?

BOB
She's crying.

POPPA BEAR
Stop it, you're a grown woman. Do
you do this in court?

CASSANDRA
No better way to win a jury.

POPPA BEAR
Damn it. Swift Arrow, there's a
shovel in the back of the van.

Swift Arrow goes to retrieve the shovel.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)
This is ridiculous. We're late!

Swift Arrow starts to dig a hole.

CASSANDRA
Not there, over here, underneath
the tree, it's a nicer spot.

Poppa Bear shakes his head.

INT. FUNERAL HOME - DAY

An open casket is in the front of the room. A large group of people mills about, talking in hushed tones.

Double doors open. Poppa Bear and crew stand in the doorway. Like a Western when the gunslinger pushes through the swinging doors, everyone stops talking and stares.

POPPA BEAR
Is everybody staring at me?

BOB
Yep.

Bob lifts his hand and gives the Vulcan "Live long and prosper" sign at the crowd.

INT. VIEWING - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

Poppa Bear and Cassandra stand over the casket.

POPPA BEAR
Are you crying now?

CASSANDRA
No, I didn't know him.

POPPA BEAR
It could have been me. Would you be
crying if it were me?

CASSANDRA
Nope.

POPPA BEAR
You cried over a dead squirrel, you
wouldn't cry over me?

CASSANDRA
 You would have died doing something
 stupid. I would have been pissed.

POPPA BEAR
 How's he look?

CASSANDRA
 Bad. There's Charlie.

She leads him across the room. **CHARLIE** is shaking hands.

POPPA BEAR
 Sorry for your loss Charlie.

CHARLIE
 Thanks. I'm sorry for YOUR loss.
 Cassandra! Long time no see!

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
 You keep getting taller and
 skinnier.

CASSANDRA
 No, you're shrinking in your old
 age Charlie.

CHARLIE
 Time, and cold water swimming will
 both do that to a man.

CASSANDRA
 Sorry Charlie, we brought Ambrosia.

She hands him a dish.

POPPA BEAR
 I spiked it with Scotch, don't
 throw it away with the other ones.
 Will Pat's be open tonight?

CHARLIE
 Of course. Pat offered to have the
 viewing over there.

POPPA BEAR
 With any of the old gang it would
 be appropriate. I'd expect to be
 laid out on the pool table.

CHARLIE
 See you there.

EXT. GARAGE BAR - NIGHT

In the garage of a house is a full bar, with pool table and juke box. **PAT**, an elvish little man, pours drinks. Poppa Bear, Cassandra, Bob, Spencer, and Charlie are there.

They raise their glasses and CLINK them together.

CASSANDRA
Here's to your brother.

CHARLIE
To Terry.

POPPA BEAR
No offense, but this was the
easiest viewing I've ever been to.

Charlie laughs.

CHARLIE
I can't believe he's gone.

SPENCER
Maybe he isn't.

SWIFT ARROW
Maybe there is a God. Who knows?

BOB
Terry does.

POPPA BEAR
There has to be a God. Cause I'm
going to kick his ass.

CHARLIE
Here's to kicking God's ass. If
anybody can do it, you can Poppa.

They drink.

BOB
I had a friend who lived in
Pennsylvania by the Amish, told me
a story about a guy there who was a
real aggressive atheist. Hated the
Amish. When a tragedy would happen,
a horse and buggy hit by a car or
something, this guy would drive by
the funeral processions and yell
"where's your God now?"

CASSANDRA

What an asshole.

BOB

One time after he yells this out, an Amish fella shows up at the atheist's house. He's got an ax and a piece of wood. The Amish says "when asked 'where is God?' Jesus said "split a piece of wood and I am there." Then the Amish guy splits the piece of wood. The atheist says " I still don't see God." The Amish guy picks up the two pieces of wood and slams them on both sides of the atheist's head. And the atheist died. The Amish guy said "Now do you see God?"

SPENCER

What happened to the Amish guy? Did he go to jail?

BOB

Nope. They couldn't get prints off the log, and none of the Amish community turned him in.

CASSANDRA

That's a really disturbing story. What's the point, what's the moral?

BOB

Don't fuck with the Amish?

POPPA BEAR

I'll drink to that.

CASSANDRA

You'll drink to anything.

He lifts his glass.

Their glasses CLINK together.

CHARLIE

Is that a true story?

BOB

Not at all.

They drink.

POPPA BEAR
Don't fuck with the Amish!

Charlie fills up their glasses again. Spencer refuses.

CHARLIE
This is an Irish wake young man,
you're shirking your duty!

POPPA BEAR
You're not Irish.

CHARLIE
No, but the booze is.

SPENCER
I'm driving the van home.

CASSANDRA
No, you're not, I am.

SPENCER
I've got orders.

CASSANDRA
From who?

SPENCER
That's classified. Drink. You need
to take a break from being
responsible.

POPPA BEAR
To being irresponsible!

They drink. (except Spencer)

CASSANDRA
Who says?

SPENCER
Who says what?

CASSANDRA
Who says what you said?

SPENCER
What did I say?

POPPA BEAR
To forgetting what we said!

They drink (except Spencer)

SPENCER

Well, anyway, it's official now.
You've had too much to drink, I'm
driving.

CASSANDRA

But...

SWIFT ARROW

Your objections are overruled.

POPPA BEAR

To lawyers and women not talking!

They drink. She thinks, can't come up with anything. She shrugs and sticks out her glass. Charlie fills them up again.

CASSANDRA

Here's to me finally kicking your
ass at foozeball this year.

POPPA BEAR

Bring it. I'll still beat you.

CASSANDRA

You are insufferably cocky.

POPPA BEAR

I'm not cocky. I'm just that good!

CASSANDRA

Wait a minute. I haven't drunk this
much in a long time. This guy is
infamous for pranks. (Poppa Bear)
You guys swear you won't let this
man paint my face or shave my head
if I black out?

BLACK OUT

INT. ATTIC - NIGHT

A trapdoor opens and light shoots up, illuminating the ceiling of a dark attic.

Cassandra's head pokes up through the hole. A little tipsy, she carefully climbs up into the attic.

She pulls the chain on a dusty light bulb, and sits next to an old trunk. She opens the trunk. Inside are pictures of Poppa Bear with Margaret, his wife. Pictures of a wedding, and in front of an old car.

Pictures of the couple and a little girl that looks a lot like Cassandra. There's an old dress, and letters tied together with a ribbon. She finds a little wooden box and opens it. The tinkling melody of a music box plays "Let me call You Sweetheart"

POPPA BEAR

Be careful, there are emotional
landmines in there.

His head pokes up through the attic trapdoor.

He climbs up into the attic.

CASSANDRA

You need help?

POPPA BEAR

It was always dark in here, I'm
used to it.

He sits beside her.

CASSANDRA

I can't believe these love letters
are 40 years old, they look like
they were written yesterday.

She puts a letter in his hand. He sniffs it.

He sees a quick FLASHBACK of he and his wife. In the back yard hanging laundry in the sun. He grabs her from behind and smells her neck and hair. She laughs.

POPPA BEAR

Wow. Still smells like her.

CASSANDRA

Wish I had what you guys had.

POPPA BEAR

You're not dead yet.

CASSANDRA

What I've learned about love is
love conquers all, except money,
geography, wandering eyes and other
body parts, religion, race, and
boredom. My only sure relationship
advice after 39 years is "get
double prints."

POPPA BEAR

Good advice. Unless you suddenly go blind. Then what are all those photos worth? Every picture is now a door without a key.

CASSANDRA

Aww.

POPPA BEAR

Don't aww! me. I've got Viking blood in my veins. I was blinded in battle. It's all good.

CASSANDRA

It's all good? Really?

POPPA BEAR

Well, it is what it is. Listen, I had love for 40 years. You may not get that. Love is like flying. The first successful flight by the Wright brothers only lasted 12 seconds. Then BOOM! Crash. People who've never flown see only the crashed attempts on the ground. But we who have been up there know, the bruises, the broken bones, and even the heartbreak of death are all worth the seconds, minutes, or years of flying. So what I'm saying is, if you find love, don't worry about whether it's going to last for 40 years. It didn't feel like forty years. It felt like five minutes. Love is timeless, 12 seconds or 45 years it's the same.

CASSANDRA

Twelve seconds huh? Sounds more like my sex life than my love life.

POPPA BEAR

Eww. You're still my little girl in my head. I deny the reality of you ever having sex.

CASSANDRA

That's right we never even had the sex talk did we?

POPPA BEAR

We did. At the ice skating rink.

CASSANDRA

You telling me if I ever have sex
I'm going to get a disease and die
does not constitute a sex talk.

POPPA BEAR

That's all you needed to know.

He touches the old dress in the trunk.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)

Let's put these things away now.

CASSANDRA

Ok. Time for bed. Tequila is
singing a lullaby in my head. I'm
going to sleep like the dead. Hey
that rhymed!

He closes the lid of the trunk and blocks out the light.

BLACKOUT

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Cassandra wakes with the sun coming through the window on her
face. Which is painted blue. She covers her eyes and moans.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

She grabs her toothbrush and puts toothpaste on it, still
half awake. Finally she looks in the mirror.

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Poppa Bear and Bob sit in the backyard, coffee cups in hand.

There is a scream from inside the house.

POPPA BEAR

Let the bird show begin. I think I
hear an Eastern loon!

Poppa Bear brings his coffee cup to his lips. There's another
scream from the house. A flock of Swallows scared by the
sound take off into the air.

INSERT TITLE "SUMMER"

Starlings soar and dive in the sky, doing aerial acrobatics.

EXT. BACK YARD - DAY

Bob, Cassandra, and Poppa Bear sit by the river.

CASSANDRA

Before the Birdshow begins, and we try to recognize some of the voices of our fine feathered friends, let's hear from an old bird whose voice should be unmistakable. Bob. Start the show with one of your stories. Something about birds.

BOB

High in the Himalayan mountains lived a wise old man. Now and then, he ventured down into the local village to entertain the villagers with his special knowledge and talents. One of his skills was to "psychically" tell the villagers the contents in their pockets. A few young boys from the village decided to play a joke on the wise old man and discredit his special abilities. One boy came up with the idea to capture a bird and hide it in his hands. He knew of course, the wise old man would know the object in his hands was a bird. The boy devised a plan. Knowing the wise old man would correctly state the object in his hands was a bird, the boy would ask the old man if the bird was dead or alive. If the wise man said the bird was alive, the boy would crush the bird in his hands, so that when he opened his hands the bird would be dead; if the wise man said the bird was dead, the boy would open his hands and let the bird fly free. So no matter what the old man said, the boy would prove the old man a fraud. The following week, the wise old man came down from the mountain into the village.

(MORE)

BOB (CONT'D)

The boy quickly caught a bird and cupping it out of sight in his hands, walked up to the wise old man and asked, " Old man, old man, what is it that I have in my hands?" The wise old man said, "You have a bird." And he was right. The boy then asked, "Old man, old man tell me, is the bird alive or is it dead?" The wise old man looked at the boy and said, "The bird is as you choose it."
And so it is with your life.

CASSANDRA

Let the bird show begin!

They sit quietly, looking and listening around them.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

Do you recognize any of the voices around you?

POPPA BEAR

My annoying daughter.

CASSANDRA

Come on.

POPPA BEAR

There are birds all over the place. Sounds like a million of them. It's just a mess. I can't hear anything.

CASSANDRA

Listen for a Scrub Jay. Remember how he screams at the cats. Can you pick him out of the noise?

Poppa Bear listens. He zeroes in on a nearby bird voice. It is a Scrub Jay shrieking shrilly about something or other.

POPPA BEAR

There he is!

Poppa Bear points in the direction of the Scrub Jay.

CASSANDRA

Good. How about a Crow? The cranky crow, with his limited vocabulary, and his self-important tone. Do you hear Mr. Crow?

POPPA BEAR

I'm not going to call him Mr. Crow.
That's stupid. The correct name is
the American Crow.

CASSANDRA

Well do you hear an American Crow?

A crow CAWS! From a nearby tree.

POPPA BEAR

Maybe I do and maybe I don't.
Sounds like an American Crow, but
it could be a Northern Mockingbird
imitating an American Crow. I
wouldn't know the difference.

CASSANDRA

It's a crow, I can see it.

POPPA BEAR

I can't, so all of this is
pointless.

CASSANDRA

You're just being contrary.

POPPA BEAR

Sorry I'm not all rainbows and
lollipops, but in case you forgot I
don't exactly have anything to be
happy about. I'm locked in a pitch
dark room forever, and I'm alone!

She punches him in the crotch.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)

OW! Why'd you do that?

CASSANDRA

Do what? I'm not here. You're
alone.

He staggers around. Recovering. Cassandra ignores him.

BOB

Tough love?

CASSANDRA

Tough love. Have you ever heard a
Mockingbird imitate a crow, Bob?

POPPA BEAR

Ugh!

BOB

I've heard them be a Bluebird, a Bald Eagle, a Kingfisher, frogs, car alarms...

POPPA BEAR

Son of a bitch!

CASSANDRA

What does a Northern Mockingbird sound like? When it's not imitating another bird.

BOB

Hmm. Like this.

He puckers his lips.

CUT TO:

EXT. TREE - NIGHT

A Northern Mockingbird stands on a branch singing. A long, intricate call of whistles, and trills. As soon as the call is done, it starts again.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Cassandra is in bed, trying to sleep. She reaches to the floor, picks up a shoe and throws it at the window. THUMP.

CASSANDRA

Shut up!

There's a knock on her door. She turns on the light, confused, listening. The knock comes again.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

Come in.

Bob opens the door.

BOB

Are you asleep?

CASSANDRA

No, there's a Mockingbird Cassanova outside my window. What's up?

BOB

It's about your dad. I kind of feel like I'm being a tattler.

CASSANDRA

Spill it.

BOB

He's been sneaking out and going over to the garage bar. Comes home stinking drunk. I'm afraid he's going to fall and hurt himself, or get hit by a car.

CASSANDRA

And he sneaks back in like that, without me hearing him?

BOB

He's a pretty competent drunk. It's getting worse though. I just found him passed out in the driveway.

Cassandra rushes to get up.

BOB (CONT'D)

No hurry, I already brought him into his bed. His face was covered with mud, but the dog is licking it off.

CASSANDRA

Ok, good. I'll give him the Cash treatment.

BOB

What's that?

CASSANDRA

Well, one of Johnny Cash's Ex wives used to have a similar problem with the Man in Black. He'd come home drunk as a skunk and pass out. She took a little meat tenderizer hammer and tap tapped on all his joints. While he was passed out.

BOB

What does that do?

CASSANDRA

You'll see. Tough love.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Bob and Cassandra are eating breakfast. There's another plate of food set out.

CASSANDRA
Your breakfast is getting cold.

MOANING in the other room. Poppa Bear comes shambling out.

Cassandra turns on a tape deck playing "Ring of Fire" by Johnny Cash. She winks at Bob.

POPPA BEAR
Oh my God, my body hurts all over.

CASSANDRA
You're getting old. Guess you can't drink like you used to.

POPPA BEAR
I'm not old!

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A TV plays silently in the dark room.

Middle-aged women in ugly spandex, being led in exercises on the beach. Smiling with great effort.

The channel changes, flip, flip, flip.

The flickering white light from the screen illuminates Bob's face as he sits on the couch. Slouching and sleepy. Poppa Bear enters and sits down. He reaches out and feels around on the coffee table.

BOB
I've got it.

POPPA BEAR
Jesus!

BOB
I watch the TV on mute. Otherwise the demons will talk in my head and make their thoughts my thoughts.
Ads.

POPPA BEAR

You're a strange man Bob. What are you watching?

Bob looks at the TV.

BOB

Now it's that ad with the momma polar bear and her baby stranded on a piece of ice because we've melted all the glaciers. They have to swim farther and farther to find food. The momma swims away leaving the baby behind. She probably never will come back. I gave money once to one of those eco groups. Now they hunt me on the telephone. I get many letters. Starving kids, rain forest being clear cut. I can't afford to give any more money. I want to help save the world, but I don't know what to do.

POPPA BEAR

Why do things have to be so terrible in the world, do you think?

BOB

You know how in a dream sometimes you pinch yourself to see if you're awake? Maybe that's what all this pain is for. When the pain gets big enough, humanity will wake up?

Bob laughs.

POPPA BEAR

What's funny?

The images on the TV have changed to Benny Hill.

BOB

Benny Hill is chasing ladies with big boobs. He's patting that old bald man on the head.

POPPA BEAR

Bob, have you been looking for the guy who did this to me?

BOB

No. I thought with Cassandra here, you might forget about that.

POPPA BEAR

You know where her name came from? Cassandra was a Roman chick who could see the future, but the Gods cursed her so no one would believe her prophecies. All those years I fought for environmental causes, I knew eventually that mankind would kill this world. Everything beautiful is going to die because of something ugly that lives in us. That's our fate as human beings. And my personal fate is wrapped up in hate, and anger and violence. People like me don't die in their sleep. You don't melt down a sword to make spoons.

BOB

I was with you till the spoon thing.

POPPA BEAR

Find the guy who did this to me, so I can break his face Bob.

BOB

Fair enough.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Bob, Swift Arrow and Spencer sit in the van in front of a large office building. There is the icon of a rising sun on a golden horizon.

SPENCER

That's where the Horizon company lives. At least this tentacle of the octopus. They're based out of New York city. They're just renting this building until their big local project is finished. This is where the "Wrecking Crew" strikes next.

SWIFT ARROW

Nobody said we're the Wrecking Crew. We're just trying to find somebody. No 'wrecking."

SPENCER

We know the two big bald dudes.
They'll know who the third guy was.
We just go in and look for them.

SWIFT ARROW

They've got a security desk at the
entrance. They're not just going to
let you in.

SPENCER

That's right. The bald dudes were
security. That's how we find them!

He spots a taco truck in the parking lot. He opens his wallet
and takes out ten dollars.

SPENCER (CONT'D)

How much money do you have?
How much? You too. (to Bob)

Swift Arrow and Bob check their wallets.

SWIFT ARROW

20 dollars.

BOB

11 dollars.

Spencer grabs their money.

SPENCER

20,11,10, 41 dollars. Ok.

He jumps out of the van.

SWIFT ARROW

What are you doing?

SPENCER

We are the wrecking crew. This is
what we do. We destroy to create
justice. Just back me up. I've got
a plan. Move up there by the
entrance, keep the motor running.

He runs over to the taco stand and starts buying food.

BOB

His plan is to buy tacos?

EXT. TACO STAND - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

Spencer loads up with Mexican food. He notices the cooks hat which has the caterers business name "Dos Burros" and a logo of two mules.

SPENCER

Trade you my IPOD for your hat.

The cook looks confused.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING LOBBY - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

Spencer enters wearing the Dos Burros cap.

His arms are full of food.

SPENCER

Delivery for fifth floor.

He walks past the **SECURITY GUARD** at the security desk and heads for the stairs.

SECURITY GUARD

Hey wait a minute!

SPENCER

Gracias!

INT. OFFICE - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

Spencer walks down a hallway of cubicles.

A pasty faced man in a suit sits in front of his computer.

SPENCER

Congratulacions! Ganas un gratis burrito!

He throws the burrito in the pasty man's face and it explodes all over his shirt and cubicle.

INT. LUNCH ROOM - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

Workers sit around a table chatting. Spencer enters and places a bowl of chips in the center of the table.

SPENCER

Gratis nachos y guacamole!

He sprays guacamole sloppily all over the place. In the faces of the workers, across the table, on the walls. By the time the workers can react, he is gone.

INT. MEETING ROOM - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

A long table, with serious looking business people. A man at the head of the table stands in front of a graph on a tripod. Spencer bursts in the door.

SPENCER
Gratis comidas!

He takes the marker from the hand of the presenter and writes on the graph.

SPENCER (CONT'D)
Hacemos dinero!

An older, serious-faced gentleman is hit in the chest with a 64 ounce soda. It explodes all over him.

SPENCER (CONT'D)
Complimenes de el Wrecking Crew!

He runs out of the room. The soda drenched **WET OLD MAN** picks up the phone and pushes a button.

WET OLD MAN
Security!

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - PARKING LOT - DAY- MOMENTS LATER

Swift Arrow and Bob sit in the van, right in front of the building. Spencer runs out covered with guacamole. Tweedle Dumb, one of the bald security guys, is right behind him.

SPENCER
Go! Go! Go!

Swift Arrow gets the van rolling. Spencer jumps in. Tweedle Dumb gets the door slammed in his face by Bob. The van zooms out of the parking lot. The bald guy stands there wiping guacamole off his shirt.

Spencer holds up a name tag.

SPENCER (CONT'D)
I got him!

CLOSEUP NAME TAG- Ronald Larson

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

The sun sets on the river. Golden light falls on Poppa Bear sitting with Cassandra.

CASSANDRA

Let the bird show begin! The finale before dark. What do you hear?

Many birds are singing, flying, chirping melodies.

POPPA BEAR

Noise. I wish they'd all shut up.

Cassandra walks in the house. She comes back out with a shotgun. She points it up. BOOM! All the birds fly away.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)

What the fuck!?

CASSANDRA

No more birds. I don't want your convalescence to be disturbed. You need peace and quiet.

The neighbor, Mrs. Jones, gazes fearfully out of her house.

There's a knock at the door. **JIM**, a slow moving Mayberry type sheriff is on the front porch.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

Don't call the police, Mrs. Jones, they're already here!

Mrs. Jones quickly closes her curtains.

JIM

Shooting your gun like that is disturbing the peace Cassandra.

POPPA BEAR

What peace Jim? This is America, we're always at war somewhere. What's up? You need more weed?

JIM

I'm here in an official capacity.

POPPA BEAR

You gonna arrest me?

JIM
Just want to ask a few questions.

POPPA BEAR
Do I need my lawyer?

Cassandra stands behind him with her arms crossed.

JIM
No, no. Hi Cassandra.

CASSANDRA
Hi Jim.

JIM
Uh, where was I? You were in that gang the Wrecking Crew right?

POPPA BEAR
It wasn't a gang. It was a non-profit nature conservancy organization.

JIM
Not a gang, huh? I heard you guys used to force litterers to eat their garbage?

POPPA BEAR
That was a successful program. We had a very low recidivism rate.

JIM
Right. Well. We had an incident at the Horizon building, involving Mexican food, and violence.

POPPA BEAR
Was it a food fight Jim?

JIM
It was a civil disturbance. Hijinks. The perpetrator yelled the Wrecking Crew slogan about wrecking things, and justice. You know.

POPPA BEAR
Wasn't me. I think what you got there is a copycat. Though I don't recall me and my associates using food in any of our activities.

JIM

Aha. Well. If you know the perpetrator, ask them not to do anything like that again. They had their fun and no one got hurt. The guy got away, they don't know who it was. I have a good idea. I'm not gonna push it though.

POPPA BEAR

Really? Sounds like a cut and dry case of assault with a deadly taco.

Jim sighs.

JIM

Thanks for your time.

POPPA BEAR

No problem, Jim.

The Sheriff walks away.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)

Do they issue you officers taco proof vests?

JIM

Ha. Ha.

The Sheriff gets in his car and drives away.

POPPA BEAR

Well? Cassandra?

BOOM! She shoots off the shotgun again.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)

You're gonna give me a heart attack.

CASSANDRA

Who was it? Swift Arrow, Spencer? You want one of them to get messed up like you did? Or to have a criminal record?

POPPA BEAR

I can't control what people do.

CASSANDRA

Yes you can. Those guys are the boys you didn't have.

POPPA BEAR
Simmer down.

CASSANDRA
If somebody gets hurt because of
your stupidity, I'm gonna give you
the Cash treatment times ten.

POPPA BEAR
The Cash treatment? What's that?

CASSANDRA
Oh when I do it you'll know. You'll
wish you were dead!

POPPA BEAR
Did you hear that?

CASSANDRA
What?

POPPA BEAR
I think I heard a Red Breasted
Nuthatch!

CASSANDRA
You're a Red Breasted Nuthatch!

He smiles and takes a "mental picture" of her in her rage.

POPPA BEAR
CLICK!

CASSANDRA
Take a picture of this.

She gives him the finger.

POPPA BEAR
CLICK!

He takes another picture. She storms off.

EXT. BY A LAKE - DAY

The serene surface of a wide lake under warm sun.

Poppa Bear and Cassandra sit on the shore. Breeze comes
across the water and blows through their hair. Arcturus the
dog sleeps beside them. It is quiet and peaceful.

POPPA BEAR
Still hate me?

CASSANDRA
Yep.

POPPA BEAR
This was a good idea. I'm glad we came. When I get someplace like this, far away from people, from the noise, I almost feel like...

Suddenly there is the BOOM! of a gun going off. Arcturus jumps up and starts barking.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)
What the Hell? You brought the shotgun here?

CASSANDRA
No. Wasn't me.

Cassandra spots two guys walking along the water some distance away, carrying shotguns. They are laughing.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)
Two idiots hunting.

POPPA BEAR
There's nothing in season here now!
Hey assholes!

He starts walking in their direction. Arcturus barks madly, running around in circles.

CASSANDRA
Dad, they've got guns.

POPPA BEAR
Hey assholes! You can't hunt here!

The two men move away, up the hill. Poppa Bear pursues them.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)
Help me catch up with them.

Poppa Bear keeps moving, he trips and falls on the rocks. Arcturus whines and licks Poppa Bear's bleeding hand.

CASSANDRA
They're going away.

POPPA BEAR

Help me!

CASSANDRA

Ok. Hop up.

She turns around and picks him up, in a Fireman's Carry. She takes off across the rocks towards the men. The hunters keep moving away, faster and farther. Arcturus runs back and forth up to the heels of the men and back.

POPPA BEAR

Hey! Hey!

Cassandra struggles heroically under his weight. She bounds from rock to rock, her muscles straining. She grunts loud with the effort. The hunters look back, freaked out. They are winded and irritated.

HUNTER #2

I'm not running away from a blind guy and a chick.

They stop walking.

Poppa Bear and Cassandra catch up with the men. She sets him on the ground.

POPPA BEAR

What are you guys hunting?

HUNTER #2

Nothing. We're just messing around.

POPPA BEAR

Do it on your own property. You're scaring away the habitat here.

CASSANDRA

You're breaking the law.

HUNTER #1

Are you game wardens?

POPPA BEAR

Nope.

HUNTER #1

Then piss off.

POPPA BEAR

Ok.

Suddenly he reaches out toward the man and grabs his gun.

HUNTER #1

Hey!

Poppa Bear empties the gun of ammo and smashes it on the rocks. The hunter throws a punch. Poppa Bear takes it on the chin, then grabs the man's hand and spins him around. Arcturus bites the man in the ass, tearing his pants.

The second hunter jumps to intervene and Cassandra karate kicks him in the stomach. He goes down with a grunt. She takes his gun and hands it to Poppa Bear. Poppa Bear empties the chambers and smashes this gun too.

HUNTER #2

You guys are crazy!

The two hunters hightail it out of there. Cassandra and Poppa Bear sit on the ground, catching their breath. Arcturus wags his tail. Cassandra starts to laugh, and her father joins in.

POPPA BEAR

We should do this more often.

His hand comes to rest on the broken barrel of one of the guns. He picks it up and throws it into the rocks.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)

Man I hate guns. When I was young, my Dad took me hunting with the men. It was winter. The forest was as still as a cathedral. Being a child, I didn't understand. I thought they were being quiet so as not to disturb the holy silence which was all around us. I saw a deer, and instinctively, I pointed. You see something, you say "look!", because it's so beautiful, you want to share it. They shot it dead. Not like the silent arrow of the Indian, the kill followed by a prayer of thanks, but Boom! with thunder. Everything sacred, everything magic was shattered. Their laughter echoed through the trees. My father said "you're not a man till you kill something." I always felt just the opposite is true. It wasn't anything I was taught. It was how I learned I was.

CASSANDRA

Me too.

POPPA BEAR

I'm glad.

Poppa Bear pets Arcturus, who's still panting.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)

Good job boy! He was a great little warrior huh? That's the most action he's seen in years. He's gonna sleep for a week, I'm sure.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Poppa Bear is asleep on the bed. Arcturus sprawls beside him. The dog wakes up and licks his lips. He looks around.

Jumping down from the bed he trots down the hall to his food dish. It's empty. He heads back toward the bedroom. He licks Poppa Bear's fingers.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)

Ok. Ok.

Poppa Bear takes a pinch of fish food and drops it in King Neptune's bowl. The fish rises to the surface and gobbles.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

Poppa Bear takes out a container full of dog food.

He walks across the room toward the dog dishes. Arcturus gets under his feet and he trips and falls. Dog food sprays all over. The dog screams out in pain and holds his leg up.

POPPA BEAR

Damn it! Arcturus, Arcturus, are you ok? Where are you?

Arcturus lays down on the other side of the room, panting.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)

Arcturus!

He kneels on the floor, picking up dog food.

Cassandra hurries in.

CASSANDRA

What happened? Are you ok?

POPPA BEAR
I'm fine. Check on Arcturus.

She crosses to the dog and checks him out.

CASSANDRA
He's ok. He's just dramatic.
Let me help you.

POPPA BEAR
I don't need your help!

CASSANDRA
The food isn't spilled over there,
it's over here, so apparently you
do need my help.

POPPA BEAR
We need to get rid of all these
animals. I can't take care of them.

CASSANDRA
I'll help you.

POPPA BEAR
How long? Are you going to stay
here for the rest of my life?

CASSANDRA
You lived hard in the Sixties, you
shouldn't last all that long.

POPPA BEAR
I don't want you here. I don't want
to live like an invalid. We need to
get rid of these animals.

CASSANDRA
Ok.

She picks up the phone. Turning on the TV, She puts on a
football game.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)
Listen to the game, I'll take care
of it.

POPPA BEAR
What are you going to do?

CASSANDRA
Don't worry about it.

She exits the room, dialing the phone. Arcturus licks at Poppa Bear's fingers. He pulls back his hand.

Cassandra reenters the room.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

Ok. We'll see you soon. Thanks so much Yolanda!

She hands Poppa Bear a bag of chips.

POPPA BEAR

What's going on?

CASSANDRA

Yolanda will take two of the cats, Keats and Jackson. I thought I'd start with the cats because I know they were mom's thing not yours.

POPPA BEAR

Good. Maybe this house will stop smelling like a nursing home.

CASSANDRA

Dog next?

POPPA BEAR

Whatever. No one's going to want this pain in the ass mutt.

Arcturus steals potato chips out of Poppa's hand. Poppa Bear drinks his beer. He watches the game. He cranes his head to hear Cassandra talking in the next room. When she reenters, he pretends not to notice.

CASSANDRA

Mike will take the dog.

POPPA BEAR

Mike who?

CASSANDRA

Mike Jenkins. Says they can help keep his cows in the field.

POPPA BEAR

Yeah, right. The only thing this dog will keep is his ass on the couch.

CASSANDRA

Well, he's Mike's problem now.

She grabs the dog by the collar. He yelps.

POPPA BEAR
What are you doing to him?

CASSANDRA
Putting him on the porch. Mike's
coming to pick him up.

She puts him outside. He scratches on the door.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)
You got a problem with that?

POPPA BEAR
Nope. Let's get it done.

CASSANDRA
Now the goats.

POPPA BEAR
Good luck with that.

CASSANDRA
I have a few ideas who to call.

She takes out the phone book and looks through it. Arcturus barks on the porch. She goes to the back bedroom. A toilet flushes. She comes back.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)
I flushed the fish down the toilet.

POPPA BEAR
What? You flushed King Neptune!?

CASSANDRA
You said all the animals.

POPPA BEAR
I can take care of a fish!

CASSANDRA
Well now you don't have to.

There's a knock at the door. She opens the door and Bob is there. She puts her finger over her lips.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)
Yolanda! That was fast! Here's the
cats. You don't need a carrier.
They're tame. Arcturus, stay out!

She pushes him with her foot. She exits out to the front porch. Reentering, she heads to the closet and grabs a big bag of cat food. She opens the door and hands out the food.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)
 Arcturus, Stay out! Here's food,
 you don't need kitty litter if
 you're gonna keep them outside.
 Hope the coyotes don't get them.

She closes the door. Bob stands looking clueless. She reaches in his pocket and nabs his cell phone. Dials it. The house phone rings. Poppa Bear gets up and makes his way across the room to it. Cassandra answers it.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)
 Hello. Yes. This is she. Yes we
 are. Oh Mike called you? Great. I
 was just looking for your number.
 We have two goats.

POPPA BEAR
 Who is that?

CASSANDRA
 Earl Masters.

POPPA BEAR
 Masters?

She puts her hand over the phone.

CASSANDRA
 Shh! Yes. Hello. We have a big goat
 and a little goat. A Nubian and a
 Nigerian Dwarf. I don't know.
 They're used to sleeping in their
 own room with blankets and pillows.
 I don't know. I've eaten venison...

POPPA BEAR
 What's he saying?

She puts her hand over the phone.

CASSANDRA
 People eat goats around here?

Poppa Bear gets up and heads toward her.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)
 He just wants to eat the Little
 goat. Is that ok?

Poppa Bear grabs the phone.

POPPA BEAR

Masters! You're not eating my goat!
You can eat shit! Hello? Hello?

He gets an "aha" look on his face. Cassandra takes the cat from Bob's arms and hands it to Poppa Bear.

CASSANDRA

We're not getting rid of the animals. Ok? You'll learn how to take care of them.

She opens the door and lets Arcturus back in. He runs to Poppa Bear and jumps up. Poppa Bear crouches and lets the dog lick his face.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

CLICK!

She takes an imaginary picture of Poppa Bear's face.

INSERT TITLE "FALL"

EXT. SEQUOIA FOREST ON MOUNTAIN - DAY

An Eagle soars with massive wings spread high above the Earth. He looks down with sharp eyes at the land below.

Bob, Cassandra and Poppa Bear sit among giant Sequoias.

BOB

A man found an eagle's egg and placed it under a brooding hen. The eaglet hatched with the chickens and grew to be like them. He clucked and cackled; scratched the earth for worms; flapped his wings and managed to fly a few feet in the air. Years passed. One day, the eagle, now grown old, saw a magnificent bird above him in the sky. It glided in graceful majesty against the powerful wind, with scarcely a movement of its golden wings. Spellbound, the eagle asked, "Who's that?" "That's the king of the birds, the eagle," said his neighbor. "He belongs to the sky. We belong to earth—we're chickens."

POPPA BEAR

In my dreams I can still see. I dream of being a bird and flying. Above the mountain, above the water. I follow the river to the sea. My last thought is "I am a bird". And then, no more thoughts. A bird doesn't think about being a bird. A bird doesn't have a word for bird. He doesn't have a name for himself. No word for tomorrow. No word for yesterday. When I die, my last thought will be "I am a bird" The rest is flying.

BOB

I love it up here, it smells like Christmas all year long.

CASSANDRA

This is a whole new neighborhood, we should hear a lot of new voices. Let the bird show begin!

They look and listen around them. There is a long, complicated, flutelike call with a high pitched last note. A tiny gray and white bird sits in a nearby tree. Cassandra opens a little notebook and flips the pages.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

I know this one, Yep! It's the Warbling Vireo! He says, to caterpillars, (imitating birdcall) If I see you, I will seize you, and I'll squeeze you till you squirt!

The bird sings again.

POPPA BEAR

I hear that. A Warbling Vireo.

They look around some more. Cassandra sees a beautiful, brightly colored yellow bird with a red head.

CASSANDRA

Dad look! A Western Tanager! He's beautiful, those colors are amazing! Isn't he magical?

She turns to him and remembers.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

Oh God. I'm sorry. I got excited.

POPPA BEAR

Don't worry about it. I don't miss
the birds up here. It's the trees.
I miss seeing the trees.

BOB

If it's any consolation, unlike the
birds, which have eyes, the trees
can't see you either. But the
Grandfathers feel that you are
here. When the sun is on your face,
you feel what they feel.

They sit taking in the sun, and listening to the birds.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

The sound of birds subtly changes from 'mountain birds' to
the small chattering birds, and California Quail whose voices
carry through Poppa Bear's window.

INSERT

Close up of the Sun, a circle of bright yellow against blue.

Sunlight falls across Poppa Bear's face. He opens his eyes.
He squints against the bright light shining on his face.

POPPA BEAR

I can see! Margaret I can see!
Margaret!

He looks next to him on the bed and sees a rotting female
corpse. Long brown hair frames a chalky white skull.

He looks out the window at the sun and sees a shadow passing
slowly in front it, an eclipse occurring. The orange glow
coming through his curtains is swallowed up by black.

A shadowy figure with no face hides halfway behind the
bedroom door, in his hand hangs the long tree limb that took
Poppa Bear's sight. The shadowy figure steps forward and
lifts the tree limb to strike.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)

No!

He is shaken awake by Bob.

BOB

Wake up. You're dreaming.

EXT. BACK PORCH - NIGHT

Bob's face is illuminated by a flame. He lights a joint and puts it in Poppa Bear's hand.

BOB
Sacred fire.

POPPA BEAR
I could see again. The man was there. The third man. He came to take my sight away. I never saw his face Bob. I don't have anything real to hate. He's like a ghost. I'm in Hell Bob. I'm on fire. I want to find this man and burn him with the fire I feel.

BOB
Tomorrow I will assemble the Wrecking Crew. Sleep. Don't dream.

EXT. STARBUCKS PARKING LOT - DAY

Swift Arrow, Bob and Poppa Bear sit in the van.

Spencer comes out of the store, carrying a drink. He opens the van door and piles in.

SPENCER
He's in there.

POPPA BEAR
What took you so long?

SPENCER
Had to order something so I didn't look suspicious. There was a long line. Pumpkin Spice latte, special through Halloween. Want some?

POPPA BEAR
Get me in there Swift Arrow.

SPENCER
Let's go! "We are the wrecking crew, this is what we do, we destroy to create justice!"

POPPA BEAR
Calm down Captain Chaos. Stay and
drink your latte. That's your job.

Poppa Bear and Swift Arrow walk toward the coffee shop.

SPENCER
Got it. They also serve who only
stand and wait.

BOB
Shhh.

INT. STARBUCKS - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

Poppa Bear and Swift Arrow stand near the door. Swift Arrow
scans the room.

SWIFT ARROW
He's not here.

POPPA BEAR
Bathroom.

Outside the bathroom door.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)
Don't let anybody in. Tell them
it's out of order. I'm just going
to talk to him.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY -CONTINUOUS

Tweedle-Dumb sits on the toilet in the handicapped stall.

POPPA BEAR
Hello?

TWEEDLE-DUMB
Yeah?

Poppa feels the wall of the big stall.

POPPA BEAR
You know it's illegal to use a
handicapped stall if you're not
handicapped.

TWEEDLE-DUMB
Fuck off.

Poppa kicks in the stall door.

POPPA BEAR
Remember me?

He grabs the guy by the shirt and slams him into the wall.

TWEEDLE-DUMB
Fuck off!

POPPA BEAR
You got a limited vocabulary. You should work on that, it makes you come across as dumb.

He head butts the guy in the face.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)
I want to know who was with you that night. Who hit me in the back of the head? Who hit me?

Tweedle-Dumb grabs Poppa Bear by the throat and jumps up, trying to pull up his pants with his other hand.

EXT. BATHROOM - DAY - CONTINUOUS

A **MAN** gestures toward the door and speaks to Swift Arrow.

MAN
Are you waiting?

Tweedle-Dumb and Poppa Bear CRASH through the bathroom door and out amidst the tables of coffee drinkers. Shouts and chaos. They twirl and stagger this way and that.

POPPA BEAR
Who hit me?

He squeezes Tweedle-Dumb in a merciless bear hug. The bald guy fights to breathe.

TWEEDLE-DUMB
Fuck.....off.

POPPA BEAR
This is how I hug those trees.

He squeezes even tighter. Tweedle-Dumb's face goes red, he groans and lurches, knocking over a table. Coffee flies, patrons flee. Tweedle-Dumb struggles mightily to escape.

Suddenly he blacks out and keels over like a falling Sequoia.
Swift Arrow grabs Poppa Bear and hurries him out.

SWIFT ARROW
Quick, before the cops get here.

EXT. POPPA BEAR'S HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - DAY

Sheriff Jim knocks on the door.

POPPA BEAR
We're down here Jim!

Cassandra and Poppa Bear are sitting down by the river.

Sheriff Jim walks up to them. A big goat is giving him the evil eye and heads in his direction.

CASSANDRA
Don't show fear and she won't butt you. Better take your hat off. She doesn't like hats.

Jim looks at the crazy eyed goat, and takes off his hat.

POPPA BEAR
We're watching the bird show, Jim.
What kind of birds do you see?

JIM
I see a looney bird. That's all I see, and it's you.

POPPA BEAR
What did I do now?

JIM
You know exactly what you did.

Poppa Bear's face is messed up with a black eye and other scrapes and bruises.

JIM (CONT'D)
What happened to your face, huh?

POPPA BEAR
I was born ugly, don't rub it in.

JIM

This is serious. There's no doubt who it was this time. "A blind madman, looked like Grizzly Adams."

POPPA BEAR

Someone really said that? I loved that show.

JIM

I got papers for you. A restraining order. Stay away from that company and anyone that works for them. Just cause you're blind doesn't mean you can't be dragged to jail.

POPPA BEAR

If it comes to that you better bring a couple of deputies, cause you've gone soft Jim.

JIM

I'll bring my shotgun.

POPPA BEAR

Well you better not miss cause you're only going to get one shot.

JIM

I'm not gonna miss with a shotgun! You.. Oh you're a stubborn old man.

The goat makes a noise and charges at Jim. He takes off.

POPPA BEAR

Wonder what that was about?

CASSANDRA

Shut up. You think I believed for a minute you fell down and did that to your face? If somebody has an affair in this town, everybody knows the next day. You think no one is going to talk about a WWF wrestling match in the coffee shop?

POPPA BEAR

It was great. Wish you could have seen it. Wish I could have seen it.

Silence. A bird sings.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)

What's that? A Starling? The silent treatment huh? Your mother didn't talk to me for a month once. I got in a fight with some off duty cops. She wasn't as upset as she let on. I think it kind of excited her.

CASSANDRA

No. She didn't like it. She lived afraid you weren't going to come home some night. One day you didn't. Five years. You know how long that was for her? For me? Her spirit is here now. You feel it? I'm gonna leave you with her so you can get the silent treatment from a professional.

Cassandra storms off.

POPPA BEAR

She's not silent. I can hear her.

A hummingbird swoops down and beats its wings by his ear.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)

Ok ok!

INSERT TITLE "WINTER"

A crow high in a Pine Tree looks into the distance. Snow falls. The crow CAW CAW CAWS! Wind is the only answer.

EXT. MEADOW - DAY

Bob, Cassandra, and Poppa Bear, stand in a forest clearing. A meadow stretches in front of them. They are dressed for colder weather. Bob lights a pipe before he speaks.

BOB

An 80 year old man was sitting on the sofa in his house along with his 45 year old highly educated son. Suddenly a crow perched on their window. The Father asked his Son, "What is this?" The Son replied "It is a crow". After a few minutes, the Father asked his Son the 2nd time, "What is this?" The Son said "Father, I have just now told you" It's a crow".

(MORE)

BOB (CONT'D)

After a little while, the old Father again asked his Son the 3rd time, what is this?" At this time some expression of irritation was felt in the Son's tone when he said to his Father with a rebuff. "It's a crow, a crow". A little after, the Father again asked his Son the 4th time, "What is this?" This time the Son shouted at his Father, "Why do you keep asking me the same question again and again, although I have told you so many times 'IT IS A CROW'. Are you not able to understand this?" A little later the Father went to his room and came back with an old tattered diary, which he had maintained since his Son was born. On opening a page, he asked his Son to read that page. When the son read it, the following words were written in the diary:-
 "Today my little son aged three was sitting with me on the sofa, when a crow was sitting on the window. My Son asked me 23 times what it was, and I replied to him all 23 times that it was a Crow. I hugged him lovingly each time he asked me the same question again and again for 23 times. I did not at all feel irritated I rather felt affection for my innocent child". While the little child asked him 23 times "What is this", the Father had felt no irritation in replying to the same question all 23 times and when today the Father asked his Son the same question just 4 times, the Son felt irritated and annoyed.

CASSANDRA

Let the bird show begin! Today, we're listening for birds that live in and around meadows, a whole other world. Meadowlarks, Red tailed hawks screaming out "killll!" as they terrorize mice down below.

POPPA BEAR

Shh. I hear one.

Two birds sit on the telephone lines. One calls soft and sad.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)
Mourning Dove. He says "who are
you, you, you?"

BOB
Sounds sad.

POPPA BEAR
He's in mourning.

CASSANDRA
For who? Isn't that his mate right
there?

POPPA BEAR
No. He's just met her. He's trying
to pick her up. "who are you, you,
you?"

BOB (SINGING)
Who are you? Who who, who who.

CASSANDRA
I really want to know.

Poppa makes guitar mouth noises for the classic "Who" song.

The Mourning Doves fly away. Their wings flap in the air.

POPPA BEAR
There they go. Two by two like the
parade to the Ark. There's someone
for everyone. Even Porcupines find
a mate. Even Bob!

He thumps Bob on the shoulders.

CASSANDRA
What's your point?

POPPA BEAR
No point. I'm like the birds. I
just sing to sing.

He smiles. Birds sing. The three sit there, looking and
listening for birds.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

Cassandra and Poppa Bear pull up to the house. Swift Arrow is
chopping wood.

SWIFT ARROW

I hope you don't mind, I got a start on this for you.

POPPA BEAR

I think I can safely say my woodsplitting days are over. I'm gonna miss that. Unless you want to hold the logs for me, Cassandra?

CASSANDRA

Die.

He heads into the house. Cassandra stands watching Swift Arrow chop wood.

SWIFT ARROW

What?

CASSANDRA

I'm just standing here. Is that ok with you?

SWIFT ARROW

Sure. How was the bird show?

She grunts. He sets up a log and splits it.

CASSANDRA

Let's go camping. I want to go camping.

SWIFT ARROW

When? This weekend?

CASSANDRA

Right now. Tonight. You always say you want to take me camping, so take me camping.

SPENCER

Uh, Ok.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - NIGHT

A tiny tent in a mountain wilderness.

Inside, Cassandra is shivering.

CASSANDRA

Why did you take me above the treeline, it's freezing.

SWIFT ARROW

Don't be a baby, it's not winter yet and we came in the car, it's not really camping if you come in the car. We're fifty feet from the road.

CASSANDRA

And a car with an engine I could turn on and within minutes. Miracle. Heat.

SWIFT ARROW

Look, here's our sleeping bag, It's a great big super warm one.

CASSANDRA

One sleeping bag?

SWIFT ARROW

Better for keeping warm. Body warmth.

Swift Arrow begins to take off his clothes.

CASSANDRA

You're not going to sleep naked.

SWIFT ARROW

This is the way of my people.

CASSANDRA

Shut up.

He takes off his pants and slips into the sleeping bag.

SWIFT ARROW

Don't worry, I'll keep nine inches between us.

CASSANDRA

Very funny. Was this whole trip just to have sex with me?

SWIFT ARROW

No. I like camping too.

She climbs on top of him. They kiss. She notices his necklace. A piece of leather with five claws on it.

CASSANDRA

I've never noticed this before.

SWIFT ARROW

It's bear claws. Of the five bears I've killed. Bears that became dangerous in the park because people let them get food.

CASSANDRA

Why would you want that job? I thought you loved bears.

SWIFT ARROW

I do. That's why I had to kill them. These aren't trophies, they are memorials. I died five times, each time I shot a bear. Some rangers try to disconnect themselves emotionally from the killing. Not me. I want to be the one to shoot them, because it's painful and the bear deserves someone that feels for it. Someone who knows it's wrong should shoot the bear. Not someone who thinks they are doing the right thing. The spirits of the five bears go with me. When I talk to people about not feeding the bears. I tell them about these spirits. They seem to feel the spirits of the bears then.

CASSANDRA

I bet. I can feel them now.

SWIFT ARROW

This is a small space for us and five bears.

CASSANDRA

If there weren't five dead bears watching us I might have told you I love you.

SWIFT ARROW

I can ask them to step outside.

CASSANDRA

No, It's exciting to think of them watching.

SWIFT ARROW

That's kind of creepy.

CASSANDRA
So turn out the light.

He does.

SWIFT ARROW
I love you Cassandra.

CASSANDRA
You're just saying that. You've
said it since we were little kids.
How do you know it's real?

SWIFT ARROW
It's always been real. I could have
waited to say it, but I didn't want
to die with regrets.

CASSANDRA
Oh come on! When you were a little
kid, you were thinking about not
dying with regrets!? I know you're
spiritual and all that crap, but
come on!

SWIFT ARROW
I remember my father told me "Love
means nothing in tennis, but
everything in life."

CASSANDRA
That is the stupidest thing I've
ever heard.

SWIFT ARROW
I'm going to have the priest say it
at our wedding.

CASSANDRA
Whoa! Whoa! Don't make me run down
the mountain naked!

Laughter in the darkness.

INT. POPPA BEAR'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Through the window a small mountain looks like a golden
pyramid as the setting sun hits it.

Poppa Bear slurps soup annoyingly.

POPPA BEAR
Is the mountain golden?

CASSANDRA
It's always golden at this time.

POPPA BEAR
I can't believe I never got around
to climbing that mountain. It's
right there.

CASSANDRA
You've been saying that for twenty
years. Let's go climb it.

POPPA BEAR
I'm blind. I'm not climbing any
mountains. It's impossible.

CASS
Ok. It's impossible. Let's go to
the bar to drown your sorrows.

POPPA BEAR
Really?

CASSANDRA
Sure, why not?

POPPA BEAR
Sounds good to me.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - DAY

Cassandra parks the car along the road. The mountain towers
above. They get out of the car.

POPPA BEAR
I don't hear music and I don't
smell meat cooking. Where are we?

CASSANDRA
At the base of that beautiful
golden mountain you've been talking
about climbing for 20 years. Today
your dream comes true. You're going
to climb it.

He reaches for the car door. CLICK/BEEP, she locks it with
the key remote.

POPPA BEAR
You're crazy if you think you're
going to get me up that mountain.

She laughs madly.

CASSANDRA
Then I'm crazy! Cause you're going.

POPPA BEAR
Make me.

CASSANDRA
I thought you'd never ask. Actually
I knew you'd ask. That's why I
brought this.

She takes out a tazer and presses its button. A sharp loud
RATTLE erupts into the air.

POPPA BEAR
What the fuck is that?

CASSANDRA
Remember when you made me walk up
the ski slope with a broken foot?
You said a person can do anything
if they have the right motivation.
This is your motivation, and that
is your mountain.

She presses the taser against his butt. He convulses and
yells out loudly.

POPPA BEAR
You bitch!

CASSANDRA
Move forward.

POPPA BEAR
No.

CASSANDRA
Bad monkey. No banana.

She zaps him on the arm.

POPPA BEAR
Aaaaagh!

He takes a step forward.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - DAY - CONTINUOUS

They are halfway up the mountain on a dusty trail. Poppa Bear is sweating and cursing. **DIANE**, A middle aged woman, 'powerwalks' down the trail toward them.

Poppa Bear stops.

CASSANDRA

Keep moving!

Cassandra zaps him. He howls with rage, but refuses to move. She zaps him again, longer, and he falls to his knees, grimacing and screaming.

DIANE

Oh my God, what are you doing? Stop that. That is elder abuse!

POPPA BEAR

I'M NOT OLD!

He roars at the woman like a wounded bear. She runs away.

EXT. MOUNTAIN TRAIL - DAY - LATER

They are a hundred yards from the top. Poppa Bear sways on his feet. He's huffing and puffing.

POPPA BEAR

I can't go any further.

CASSANDRA

Come on, you're almost there.

POPPA BEAR

You've said that five times. Liar!

CASSANDRA

I'm not lying this time. Come on.

He starts again. After a few moments, they reach the top.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

You did it! You're at the top!

POPPA BEAR

Oh my God.

CASSANDRA

Are you having a heart attack?

POPPA BEAR

It's a miracle. I can see you.

CASSANDRA

Shut up.

POPPA BEAR

It's true. Maybe it was the taser, maybe the exertion. Something must have fallen back into place! I can see you! I can see everything! I can see the ocean!

He points toward the distant water.

She grabs him and starts to shout excitedly, jumps up and down. She starts to cry with joy and relief. She embraces him and squeezes hard.

CASSANDRA

Oh God! I'm so happy! I prayed, and I never pray, I don't really believe in God. But I knew you didn't deserve what happened to you. I told God you were good, that you tried all your life to save his beautiful world and that he owed you. Goddammit God! I said. You owe him big time. He came through! There is a God. There must be.

POPPA BEAR

Cassandra.

CASSANDRA

Yeah?

POPPA BEAR

I lied.

CASSANDRA

No. No. You saw the ocean. You pointed at the ocean!

POPPA BEAR

The sun sets in the West. I can feel it on my face.

CASSANDRA

No.

He feels the tears on her cheeks.

POPPA BEAR

I'm sorry. I'm an asshole.

He smiles.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)

I CAN see you though.

In the darkness of his vision, flashes the memory of Cassandra, as a little girl, with tears on her face.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)

You're a little girl crying over a dead cat. Mr. Tibbles. Your first pet, and pets die, you love them awhile, and then they die. And you have to explain to a little crying girl why, why? I couldn't stand to see you hurting, so I tried to make you tough. It worked didn't it?

CASSANDRA

I didn't hurt any less, I just didn't let you know. You took away your pain. Not mine.

POPPA BEAR

You're right. After your mother died, I had to take care of you and you were so delicate. When you were sad or upset I didn't know what to do. I felt powerless. I couldn't protect you from the pain and heartbreak of life. I tried to make you tough, like a boy, strong like a man, because I was weak. I was afraid.

CASSANDRA

I know. And I knew. Little girls are smarter than little boys.

POPPA BEAR

So they say. I can see you. You are beautiful. CLICK!

He takes a mental picture of her. She holds her hand out at arms length.

CASSANDRA

Let me get both of us. CLICK!

POPPA BEAR
Whew. I'm tired. Maybe I really am
getting older.

CASSANDRA
Naagh. Can't be.

POPPA BEAR
You're right.

They sit holding each other on top of the mountain.

CASSANDRA
Uh. I just realized we're going to
have to walk back down this
mountain in the dark.

POPPA BEAR
No problem.

CASSANDRA
I knew you could make it.

POPPA BEAR
The taser was pretty brilliant.

CASSANDRA
No hard feelings?

POPPA BEAR
Tough love is good love.

They hug. Over her shoulder, he grins.

EXT. POPPA BEARS HOUSE - NIGHT

Cassandra drives up to the house in a rental car. Swift Arrow
sits in the passenger seat.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Poppa Bear crouches inside the front door. Grinning. The
doorknob turns. He places a taser on the metal doorknob and
pushes a button. Electricity sparks. From the other side of
the door comes a shrill scream of pain. Then silence.

Cassandra enters rubbing her hand.

POPPA BEAR

Revenge is sweet. That was for the mountain. Here's your bag. Have a nice trip.

CASSANDRA

You're lucky I'm leaving, or I'd kill you.

POPPA BEAR

Big kiss.

He puckers up. She picks up the dog and it licks his lips.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)

Ugh. Bitch. Hurry up. Don't miss your flight. Have fun.

CASSANDRA

Are you going to be ok?

POPPA BEAR

I've got Tonto.

He gestures toward Bob who's standing behind him.

BOB

I'll take him walking by the cliffs. No more hassles.

CASSANDRA

Sounds good. Bye. We'll call when we get there. We'll be back in a couple of days. Just a short trip. I don't trust you here alone yet.

POPPA BEAR

Love you.

CASSANDRA

Hate you!

She's out the door.

INT. AIRPLANE - NIGHT

Cassandra looks out the window at the sprawling canopy of lights. Swift Arrow is asleep. She nudges him awake.

SWIFT ARROW

Looks like the mothership from Close Encounters.

CASSANDRA

Plenty of aliens from every country. It's the melting pot. When we get in the terminal, follow me. I'll get us out quick.

INT. AIRPORT TERMINAL - NIGHT- MOMENTS LATER

The organized chaos of an airport terminal. Cassandra moves fluidly through the crowd. Swift Arrow struggles to keep up.

EXT. AIRPORT TERMINAL - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Cassandra bursts through the automatic doors. She hails a cab and jumps in it. When Swift Arrow comes out a second later, she waves to him from the taxi. He rushes over.

INT. TAXI - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Swift Arrow's face behind the glass of the cab's window. A billion lights flash and blink over his reflection.

CASSANDRA

What do you think?

SWIFT ARROW

I feel like the ball in a pinball machine.

INT. NEW YORK APARTMENT - NIGHT

CLOSE UP of multiple door locks unlocking. Cassandra swings open the door and turns on the light to reveal a posh and sleek New York apartment.

CASSANDRA

Home sweet home.

SWIFT ARROW

It looks like you. The City you.

He slumps into a chair and takes off his shoes.

SWIFT ARROW (CONT'D)

I'm exhausted.

CASSANDRA

Oh no, this is the city that never sleeps. Some friends texted me. They want to meet up for drinks.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Swift Arrow comes out of the bathroom, dressed in jeans and a flannel shirt. Cassandra is in a sleek black dress.

CASSANDRA

We're not going to a square dance. Here, let's pick something for you.

She opens a closet to reveal expensive looking men's suits.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

Here. And this and this.

She hands him a shirt, coat and pants.

SWIFT ARROW

Whose clothes are these?

CASSANDRA

An associate.

SWIFT ARROW

Ugh. Smells like it was pissed on by a male goat in rut.

CASSANDRA

Hmm. Maybe that's what they put in that expensive cologne.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Cassandra and Swift Arrow walk into a bar full of shining mahogany surfaces and beautiful people. Everyone yells out in greeting when they enter. Cassandra takes a bow. Swift Arrow half waves, awkwardly.

SWIFT ARROW

These people are all your friends?

CASSANDRA

This is my bar, these are the regulars. THOSE are my friends.

Hands wave from a back booth. A group of friends, male and female, sit around the table eating and drinking. **MARSHALL** and **TONY**, a gay couple, **JEFF**, and **LUCY**.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

Here they are, the usual suspects.

MARSHALL

Yay! We finally get to meet the Marlboro man!

CASSANDRA

The Marlboro man was a cowboy, not an Indian. And don't embarrass yourself staring at his butt, because it is a nice butt.

MARSHALL

I'm married honey, I see nothing.

His boyfriend puts an arm around him.

CASSANDRA

Swift Arrow, this is Marshall, Tony, Jeff, and Lucy. Everyone, Swift Arrow.

EVERYONE

Hello!

CASSANDRA

Wow. Scary Greek chorus.

JEFF

We want to know everything about Cassandra's tragic and embarrassing childhood. We need dirt. Tell us, did she poop her pants as a kid?

LUCY

We heard you were her first kiss. Is that true?

CASSANDRA

I think drinks are going to be necessary here.

TONY

This is going to be painful and messy.

JEFF

Like Cassandras relationships.

CASSANDRA

This is my second family. These people didn't just happen to me. I chose them. How sick must I be?

JEFF (TO SWIFT ARROW)

But enough about us. Tell us a little about you.

MARSHALL

Tell us everything!

Everyone starts to talk at once.

INT. BAR - NIGHT - LATER

Cassandra is at the bar. At the table across the room, Swift Arrow talks and everyone is enjoying him. Lucy comes up and sits next to Cassandra.

CASSANDRA

I wanted another drink. The waitress is blind.

LUCY

Uh huh. So what's the problem with this one?

CASSANDRA

There's no problem.

LUCY

Exactly. So what are you going to MAKE the problem? The counselor has no rebuttal. What a rare occurrence.

Cassandra points at her shotglass on the bar. The bartender fills it up. She looks across the room at Swift Arrow who is smiling. He waves. She waves back.

INT. SUBWAY - NIGHT

Cassandra and Swift Arrow sit in a moving subway car.

SWIFT ARROW

This place isn't so bad. It's just people. People are either good or bad. I either like them or I don't. And it seems like there's people here to like after all.

(MORE)

SWIFT ARROW (CONT'D)

I know I couldn't live without the forest, but maybe I could spend half the year there, and half here? The winter here? Everything's asleep in the mountains now anyway.

CASSANDRA

Hmm.

SWIFT ARROW

That's all you've got to say?

The subway car comes to a stop. The doors open.

Cassandra jumps up.

CASSANDRA

Come on.

INT. SUBWAY STATION - NIGHT

They walk the mazelike underground tunnels of the subway.

They stop in front of a subway map.

CASSANDRA

I think you'd hate it here. And you'd blame me for making you come here, even though I didn't.

SWIFT ARROW

Cassandra, you were named after a woman who could see the future. But you can't. Sometimes the future is what you decide is going to happen.

CASSANDRA

You think you could hack it here? If I weren't with you, you couldn't even find your way home.

SWIFT ARROW

Ten bucks. I bet you ten bucks.

CASSANDRA

Ok. Let me see if I have a ten.

She reaches in her pocket. Coins spill out on the ground. Swift Arrow bends to grab them. When he stands back up, Cassandra is gone.

She peeks around a corner, watching him. He turns to the map on the wall, considers it and then launches out in a direction. She tails him, keeping out of sight.

INT. SUBWAY WALKWAY - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Cassandra watches him go up some stairs. A saxophone blasts out terribly next to her. An old man does a shuffling dance playing four notes over and over. When she looks again, Swift Arrow is gone.

Cassandra runs. When she reaches the top of the stairs she sees an empty train platform.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

Shit.

EXT. SUBWAY ENTRANCE - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Swift Arrow comes up from the subway onto a dark, ominous looking street. He moves down the sidewalk quickly.

Soon he realizes he's being followed. He glances over his shoulder. Two guys quicken their pace to catch up with him.

MUGGER

Buddy! Do you know what time it is?

Swift Arrow looks at his watch.

MUGGER (CONT'D)

It's time for you to give me your wallet.

He flashes a gun. Swift Arrow pulls out his wallet and hands it over. The muggers take the wallet and run.

SWIFT ARROW

Great.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Bob and Poppa Bear are asleep on the couch.

The TV flickers. On mute. The phone rings.

BOB

Hello?

SWIFT ARROW

Dad, it's me. I'm lost in the city.
I'm alone.

BOB
Where's Cassandra?

SWIFT ARROW
We got separated.

BOB
Call Cassandra, she'll give you
directions

SWIFT ARROW
I don't have her number I never use
this phone.

There's a BEEPING on the line.

SWIFT ARROW (CONT'D)
The phone is dying! It's almost out
of juice.

BOB
Don't be afraid. You're going to be
all right. Swift Arrow, you are not
alone. Ask your brother for help.
Do you hear me?

SWIFT ARROW
I hear you. Dad...

The phone goes dead.

BOB
I lost him.

POPPA BEAR
He'll be ok. He's been out in the
wilderness alone. I didn't know he
had a brother in New York.

BOB
Of course he does.

EXT. SUBWAY - NIGHT

Swift Arrow counts change. He sees a homeless man with a cup.

SWIFT ARROW
Brother, can you spare a dime?

HOMELESS MAN
Very funny.

SWIFT ARROW

I was robbed and I'm a dime short
of the fare.

HOMELESS MAN

Here you go.

The man gives him a dime.

SWIFT ARROW

Oh, thank you, thank you.

He embraces the man.

Swift Arrow hurries away.

HOMELESS MAN

Good luck!

Swift arrow waves back to him.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Bob and Poppa Bear sitting on the couch. The phone rings.

Poppa Bear answers the phone.

POPPA BEAR

Looks like you lost another man!

CASSANDRA

It isn't funny. It's three in the
morning. He doesn't know the city.
I called him but he doesn't answer.

POPPA BEAR

He called us and his phone died.

CASSANDRA

Where was he?

POPPA BEAR

Don't know. I don't think he knew.

CASSANDRA

Oh my God. What do I do?

POPPA BEAR

Just wait. He'll be ok. He'll find
his way home.

CASSANDRA

I did this. I always do this. Why did I have to ruin it? Why am I such a bitch?

POPPA BEAR

Must be my fault. Your mother was a saint. See what happens to saints? They suffer and die. We bitches and assholes live on.

CASSANDRA

I need to know he's all right.

POPPA BEAR

He's ok. I promise.

CASSANDRA

You don't know that.

POPPA BEAR

Yes I do. It's a father promise. And father's never lie. Don't worry he's got a brother in the city.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Swift Arrow comes up out of the subway in a scary part of town. He sees some black guys hanging out on the stoop of their building. He speaks to the closest one.

SWIFT ARROW

Brother, can you help me? I'm lost.

They all just stare at him.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

Cassandra is crying. She hears loud music outside. Looking down at the front of the building, she sees a long car painted crazy, full of black guys. The car stops and Swift Arrow hops out. He shakes hands with **DWIGHT** a tall black guy.

SWIFT ARROW

Thanks guys, I appreciate it.

DWIGHT

No problem my brotha!

SWIFT ARROW

If you're ever lost in the woods,
maybe I can return the favor.

DWIGHT

You'll never catch me in the
motherfucking woods. That shit is
scary. Peace.

The car leaves. Cassandra runs out the front door.

CASSANDRA

I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry.

They kiss. He pulls back and looks into her eyes.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

I love you. Are you ok? Say
something.

SWIFT ARROW

Where's my ten dollars, bitch?

Snow begins to fall on the embracing lovers.

We hear the faint strains of "O Tannenbaum" coming up.

The camera tilts up toward the white sky and snow falling
down. When it tilts back down, following the snowfall,

We CROSSFADE to

EXT. SEQUOIA FOREST - DAY

A little House Finch, with red face and breast sits on the
branch of a towering Sequoia. Carolers are singing. Cassandra
sings along. Poppa Bear moves his lips, but can't be heard.

CAROLERS

Oh Christmas tree, Oh, Christmas
tree, how loyal are your needles!
You're green not only in the
summertime, No, also in winter when
it snows. Oh Christmas tree, Oh
Christmas tree, How loyal are your
needles!

ANN, a cheerful ranger, stands in front of the group.

ANN

Merry Xmas everyone! General Grant, the nation's official Christmas tree welcomes you to the 112th annual X-mas bird count! Or he might if he could talk. More data has been collected through the efforts of Xmas bird counts than any other comparable research project in the world. The National Audobon Society thanks you and the birds thank you. As scientists, information is our best tool and our best weapon. We all know where we're going, we've got our checklists, binoculars, bird books, and our eyes, and ears wide open.

She looks at Poppa Bear.

ANN (CONT'D)

Let the Bird Count begin!

Everyone starts walking different directions.

CASSANDRA

You want to drive around in the car, Dad? It would be easier than walking the trails.

POPPA BEAR

No way! I'm going out in the field. I'm not sitting in the car like I'm crippled.

ANN

I'm glad you could make it, Poppa. We can use your expertise.

CASSANDRA

He's not an ornithologist, he's an 'ornery'tholigist, I always say.

POPPA BEAR

Yeah. You always say that. Good to be here, Ann.

She gives him a hug.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)

I'm gonna get my hat, it's colder than I thought.

He moves around the van to the passenger seat.

ANN (TO CASSANDRA)
I'm going to do a catch and release
and band some birds, so check in
with me later.

Poppa comes back. Ann is organizing papers on her clipboard.

POPPA BEAR
Cassandra?

CASSANDRA
I'm here.

POPPA BEAR
Let's go! Man that was great when
Ann hugged me. It's nice to know I
can still appreciate beautiful
breasts without seeing them.

Silence.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)
She's still here huh?

Ann moves away.

CASSANDRA
Now she's gone.

POPPA BEAR
Let's go find some birds!

EXT. WOODS - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

People are spotting birds. Couples, families, pointing, with binoculars, and taking pictures. When a bird is spotted, they mark it down on their checklists.

Cassandra and Poppa Bear look and listen. A bird calls.

POPPA BEAR
Another warbler. Over there.

A man near them has an iPod. Cassandra moves to him and silently motions, asking him if she can use the device. She takes it and pushes a button. The call of a disturbed bird is heard.

CASSANDRA
What's that one Dad?

POPPA BEAR
That's a 'Steve Jobs'. You can't
fool me. I can do a better call.

He purses his lips and makes the sound of a bird in distress.
After a moment, other birds respond.

CASSANDRA
Hear they come!

EXT. WOODS - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

Cassandra and Poppa Bear walk along a trail.

POPPA BEAR
Thanks for getting me out of my
cave. Hibernating too long isn't
good for a bear. Thanks for giving
me someone to fight who I didn't
want to kill.

CASSANDRA
You never wanted to kill me?

POPPA BEAR
I didn't say that. It's been nice
to have you here. If I'd known a
serious injury would bring you home
I would have cut off a few fingers
with the chain saw awhile ago.

CASSANDRA
You helped me too. Things are good
with Swift Arrow. We're going to
give it a shot.

POPPA BEAR
I used to put you two together in
the playpen when you were babies.

CASSANDRA
Oh for the love of God, don't tell
that story again.

POPPA BEAR
You pooped your diapers and Swift
Arrow made this face.

CASSANDRA
Titmouse!

She sees a bird and points.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

Poppa Bear sits on a log, blowing over a cup of hot chocolate. Ann and Cassandra make their way toward him.

Cassandra has something in her hands.

CASSANDRA

Dad. Put your cocoa down for a minute and hold out your hands. Just do it.

He does.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

I know this day has been bittersweet for you. All these beautiful birds that everyone else can see and appreciate but you. Spread open your fingers.

POPPA BEAR

Why?

CASSANDRA

Do it.

He does. She places a tiny bird on top of his hand. Carefully, she puts its legs between his fingers. Then she pushes his fingers together so he is holding the bird.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

Keep your fingers tight together. Think about all the birds everyone else can see, and you can't.

People gather in an circle around him.

POPPA BEAR

You're starting to bum me out.

CASSANDRA

Right now, you're doing something most people won't get to do in their lifetime. The endangered bird you fought to protect, the one you were blinded fighting for. The Willow Flycatcher...You're holding one in your hand right now.

The little bird looks up at Poppa's sightless eyes.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

CLICK!

She takes a mental picture.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

The great Viking warrior Poppa Bear crying. I think I'll post this one on the internet.

Cassandra takes his other hand and gently guides a finger to touch the bird on the head.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

Merry Xmas Dad. He's been banded so they can keep track of him. When you're ready, let him go.

Poppa Bear releases the bird and it flies up into the trees.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

There he goes!

Poppa Bear stares sightlessly up. The sun warms his face.

He smiles.

INSERT TITLE: "SPRING"

A hummingbird feeding on a bright flower.

EXT. BY THE RIVER - DAY

Bob, Cassandra, and Poppa Bear sit on a bench by the river.

BOB

The story of the hummingbird is about a huge forest being consumed by a fire. All the animals in the forest come out, and they are transfixed as they watch the forest burning, and they feel very overwhelmed, very powerless, except this little hummingbird. It says, "I'm going to do something about the fire! So it flies to the nearest stream, it takes a drop of water and it puts it on the fire, and goes up and down, up and down, up and down, as fast as it can.

(MORE)

BOB (CONT'D)

In the meantime, all the other animals, much bigger animals, like the elephant, with a big trunk, could bring much more water, they are standing there helpless. And they are saying to the hummingbird, "What do you think you can do, you're too little! This fire is too big! Your wings are too little, and your beak, so small, you can only bring a small drop of water, at a time. But as they continue to discourage it, it turns to them without wasting any time, and tells them, "I'm doing the best I can."

Brilliant sun shines on the green of life everywhere.

Poppa Bear Breathes deep.

POPPA BEAR

I smell so many flowers, It feels like I'm drunk.

CASSANDRA

Spring has definitely sprung. Let the Birdshow begin! Today we're listening for a feathered friend who comes in spring. The Blackcapped Chickadee, also known as "The Cheeseburger bird" Because he says "Cheese..burger."

Poppa Bear drinks his coffee, he seems tired and grumpy. Cassandra looks around for birds. Woodpeckers squawk at the top of a telephone pole.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

I spy Robins. Hear them?

A squirrel chatters and runs in the trees above.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

A raccoon! You don't usually see them during the day.

POPPA BEAR

Knock it off. It's very irritating.

CASSANDRA

What?

He points.

POPPA BEAR

Woodpeckers fighting over the plaza suite at the top of the telephone pole. Don't know which one drilled that hole, but there's arguments over it every morning. Big fat grey squirrel up above, jumping from tree to tree. California Quail in the bushes saying Chi-ca-go, Chi-ca-go. Like they do. Twitter of a titmouse over here, looking for love. A crow telling Indian secrets to his friend. There's always at least two.

Two crows fly over.

CASSANDRA

Are you ever going to tell me?

POPPA BEAR

What?

CASSANDRA

What is the importance of birds?

POPPA BEAR

In jail, they gave me ten minutes a day outside. There was a picnic table, some sad looking grass, and a patch of sky 10 feet wide by 20 feet long. All I paid attention to was that chunk of sky. I laid on my back on the picnic table and gazed at that rectangle in the sky, like I was laying on my back looking up out of my grave. I kept asking myself, why did I end up here? For birds? What is the importance of birds? I guess I was praying. One day, while I was laying there, a giant Raven flew through that patch of sky. Soaring, high, free, beautiful. And then I knew that they are important because they are beautiful. That was the answer, for me. The importance of birds is that if there weren't any birds, I wouldn't want to be alive.

CASSANDRA

Well, there are birds.

They are both quiet, listening to the songs of many birds.

She takes and holds his hand.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

Oh. I forgot, me and Spencer and
Swift Arrow are going into town to
see that Art exhibition.

BOB

I'll stay here with you, we'll play
'Battleship!'"

POPPA BEAR

No way, you move the damn boats.

CASSANDRA

We didn't think you'd want to go,
it's paintings, so...

POPPA BEAR

Don't bullshit a bullshitter.
You're going to that rally.
The one you've been writing a
speech for. I heard you practicing.
Why are you trying to keep it a
secret?

CASSANDRA

It's against the company that shall
not be named. We didn't think it
would be good for you to go.

POPPA BEAR

What are they doing?

CASSANDRA

They want to tear down all the old
oaks in Montgomery park, for a
giant shopping center.

POPPA BEAR

Mother fuckers! I'm going!

CASSANDRA

But...

POPPA BEAR

I want to hear your speech. I'm
going!

CASSANDRA

Are you going to be...

POPPA BEAR

I'm going!

BOB

He's going. I can't believe you think I move the boats. What's the point of playing a game if you cheat?

POPPA BEAR

I can hear you moving the boats, I've got superhuman hearing now. I hear everything. I hear you in the middle of the night eating my cookies.

BOB

Well, I cooked them!

POPPA BEAR

Yeah, but you've got your share of cookies and I've got mine. And you drink out of the milk jug with your mouth. I feel the crumbs on the opening.

BOB

So you must be drinking from the jug too!

POPPA BEAR

So what? It's my refrigerator!

BOB

You want more coffee? I'm going back in.

POPPA BEAR

Sure. Don't sulk.

Bob walks up toward the house.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)

You wouldn't know it, but he's a very emotional person.

EXT. PARK - DAY

People are gathered in a city park. Beautiful old oaks provide dappled shade from the bright sun. Poppa bear, Swift Arrow, Bob and Spencer stand toward the back of the crowd. Sunlight beams down on Poppa Bear's face and he smiles.

SPENCER

Do you want to find some shade?

POPPA BEAR

No. I like it.

Cassandra walks on stage and approaches the podium.

SPENCER

Here she comes.

CASSANDRA.

Look around you. After all we've done to the Earth, Spring comes anyway, bearing flowers, as if she is the one who needs to ask forgiveness. Blue Jay, Green grass, yellow-blue-pink flower. We need a permit to stand here and have this gathering. We had to ask permission. But these ancient trees, these silent grandfathers need no permit to be here. Why should they ask our permission to stand, to remain gathered, quietly whispering their old stories to each other? I don't know what they are saying, but I hear their voices. I hear their voices, as the men who want to tear them down cannot. They don't want much, these trees. Leave us alone, they say. Let us live. Even their silent fingers reaching for the sun tell us, they desire life, light, warmth. Even those deaf to their voices can see this. I ask you, do we really need more than these trees, another place to buy diapers, and denture cream, pork rinds and pickles? Seeing how human beings devastate this beautiful world through greed, ignorance, and apathy, I have over the years felt deep anger, sadness, despair, helplessness, powerlessness and even hate. Hate for the destroyers, hate for the mindless corporations, hate for the digging, tearing machines of death. And hate for the men behind it all. The faceless cowards.

(MORE)

CASSANDRA. (CONT'D)

But coming back here, to my
childhood home, coming back to this
magical place of river, wind,
mountain, flowers and ancient
trees, I was overwhelmed by a
feeling I haven't had for some
time. Peace. I remembered words I
had read written by the great poets
of nature who were my heroes. John
Muir, Walt Whitman, Robert Frost.
The warriors of words who forged
the path I try to follow myself.
And I realized that they fought
because they loved. They were not
fueled by rage or lust for
vengeance against the nature
killers. They were able to feel the
great gift of love which nature is,
fully, openheartedly and in the
spirit with which the gift was
given unto them, they desired to
pass it on. They fought because
they loved, and they were
passionate because they had love.
Whatever comes after, love comes
first. Love is the foundation of
everything worthwhile. I didn't
come here because I hate the men
who would destroy these trees. I
came because I love these trees and
would not see them destroyed.
Whether it's oceans, trees, birds
or people, I fight for things
because I love them. I'm not saying
not to fight. But if in the heat of
the miserable, terrible battle,
that feeling of peace and love in
our hearts is replaced by confusion
and anger, and hate, then we've
already lost what we were fighting
for. Fight with love. With love and
for love. Love of trees, oceans,
birds, people, art, wisdom, beauty.
Show those we fight that our love
of these things, these beautiful,
meaningful, miraculous things, is
more real and more rewarding than
their love of money, power, oil,
dominance, appliances, guns, cars.
Fight with love, for love. That's
how we win. Now and in the future.
Thank you.

Cassandra leaves the stage to huge applause.

A fat man takes to the podium, and tries to quiet the crowd.

FAT MAN

Ladies and gentleman, the next speaker, the next speaker.. May I have your attention. Ladies and gentleman...the next speaker is the CEO of the Horizon corporation. Please welcome, Michael Laurence.

The crowd BOOS!

CEO

Good afternoon. That young lady is a hard act to follow. But I'll do my best. She made a beautiful speech. And despite what you may think of me, I like beautiful things too. My wife, my kids.

He gestures toward his human props.

CEO (CONT'D)

...art, music. If I could have been a rock star or a painter, I would have loved it. But I AM a creator.

The crowd boos.

POPPA BEAR

I recognize that voice. It's him.

SPENCER

Him who?

POPPA BEAR

The guy who hit me from behind. That's the guy who blinded me.

SWIFT ARROW

Are you sure?

POPPA BEAR

I've never been more certain of anything in my life.

Spencer disappears into the crowd. Poppa Bear stares with hatred at the speaker.

CEO

I am a creator. What I create is jobs. Trees may give us oxygen, but man doesn't live by air alone.

(MORE)

CEO (CONT'D)

If we have no jobs, no money to provide for our families, having beautiful trees to look at isn't going to lessen the hunger in our children's bellies. Money may not be beautiful. But the look on your children's faces when they feel safe and provided for...that is beautiful. That is peace. What I create is peace of mind.

Suddenly Spencer runs on stage and grabs the microphone from the man's hand.

SPENCER

Don't listen to him! He's a liar!
He kills endangered species. He
breaks the law, he buys the law.
This guy blinded Poppa Bear!

Tweedle-Dee, Tweedle-Dumb and other security guards grab hold of Spencer and drag him to the ground. Spencer knocks over the podium and it smashes.

SPENCER (CONT'D)

We are the Wrecking Crew! This is
what we do. We destroy to create
justice!

He keeps repeating the mantra as he struggles. The crowd picks up on it. Their voices get louder.

Tweedle-Dee pulls out a taser and shocks Spencer, who writhes in pain on the ground. The crowd gets louder and surges forward. The mantra of the Wrecking Crew becomes simply a roar of "Destroy, destroy!"

People swarm the stage. The CEO and his bodyguards flee out the back. The enraged crowd begins smashing everything in sight. The stage collapses. It's pandemonium. People are getting trampled.

Poppa Bear, in the middle of the madness yells out STOP! His lips are moving, but no one can hear him above the din. The CEO tries to escape in his limo. The crowd batters it with rocks and sticks, windows smash.

Tweedle-Dee drives them away. He almost runs over a woman, but Bob rushes in and pushes her out of the way. The madness continues as the camera pulls back from the scene, up into the air, to a higher perspective. The sound of chaos fades out as we fade to black. In the blackness there is the sound of a bird singing.

INT. JAIL CELL - DAY

Through the bars of a jail cell window, a bird in a tree is singing. Spencer lies on a cot, staring out the window. Sheriff Jim sits at his desk, shuffling paperwork.

JIM

You are certainly up shit's creek without a paddle this time son. I don't think you even have a canoe. With these new Homeland security terrorism laws, they could charge you as a terrorist for farting in Walmart. You don't go up against the money son. The money decides everything. Who we go to war with, who gets to be president, what you can say, and where you can say it. Homeland security. Can you believe that name? My grandfather went to war to save the world from a bunch of goosestepping psychos defending and expanding their homeland. When the whole retarded ass backward, corrupt system collapses in a year or two, they'll let ya out of jail. All the resources will be going to those FEMA camps they'll use to control the rabble rousers. After the fall, find your way to our compound, and you'll be welcome. Hell, you can help us blow up the bridges into town! But for now, you're shit out of luck. You don't fight the money. Not while money still means something. Your bail is set at 100,000 dollars. Who's going to come up with that?

CASSANDRA

I am. It's already taken care of. Let him out.

Cassandra walks in the door. Poppa Bear and Bob are with her.

JIM

Really?

CASSANDRA

I do big cases against big corporations and get big money. I don't do it for the money, but the money allows me to do it. So when fuckers in suits try to hold me down and fuck me with their big dicks, they end up holding their chopped off dicks in their hands.

The CEO, his lackey Danny, and the two bodyguards, Tweedle-Dee and Tweedle-Dumb, have also arrived and hear this speech.

JIM

I'm simultaneously excited and terrified by you. You're a Hell of a woman Cassandra.

Bob stands inches from the big men, smiling up at them unnervingly, without fear. They don't like it.

Jim opens the door to the jail cell. Spencer steps out.

CEO

What's going on here?

JIM

This chicken has been sprung. He's flying the coop.

CEO

No. That chicken is going to have his head cut off. And there's not a damn thing you can do about it. I've held back all this time. No more. That young man has no future. He's fucked. Because of you.

He points at Poppa Bear.

CEO (CONT'D)

You're not afraid of jail. You thrive in a survival environment, because you're a fighter. And you've got nothing to lose. This boy is a clown. And he's got his whole life ahead of him. Or he did. Now he's got nothing, and he's going nowhere, but to jail. He's going to suffer. And you'll suffer knowing it's your fault, and you can't help him. You have no idea who you're dealing with.

Cassandra holds back Poppa Bear.

CASSANDRA

I'm dealing with no one. Your corporation is powerful. You are not. You are a tentacle of that corporation. A tentacle caught in a trap. A stinky, ugly PR nightmare of ill will, and negative narratives. The public in this town hates you. Wasn't that made clear to you by the riot in the park? Your corporation is pulling their tentacle out of here, and if the cancer of this situation starts climbing up that tentacle, they will just cut it off, they won't let the disease spread back to the main body in NY. Money is the only thing that matters to the monster. You cost the monster money, it will cut you off and leave you wriggling on the bottom of the ocean as rotting meat, that no other company will touch, no matter what shore you wash up on. Spencer isn't a warrior. My father is, but this isn't his kind of fight. I am a warrior, and I will kill you with a thousand cuts. Now go away.

CEO

Ok. I guess I lose. But what have I lost? A little money? A little pride. I'll get them back.

He takes out his wallet and removes a thousand dollar bill. He folds it in half.

CEO (CONT'D)

I'll take a trip to the ocean. A vacation. Cerzeva by the sea, watching the sunsets, every day for a month. Every day so different, the colors, the textures.

He puts the folded up bill in Poppa's pocket.

CEO (CONT'D)

Take a trip to the ocean, on me, old man. Enjoy the sunsets. And as you do, ask yourself, between you and I, who lost the most?

The CEO and his gang leave.

CASSANDRA

Come on. Let's get out into the
fresh air, it smells like bullshit
in here.

JIM

Have a nice day.

EXT. RIVER - DAY

Poppa Bear is sitting by the river, with the 1,000 dollar
bill in his hand.

Bob walks up to him.

BOB

Let's go for a ride.

POPPA BEAR

Where?

BOB

Anywhere. You can stick your head
out the window like a dog. It'll
feel good.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Bob and Poppa Bear sit in the same park where the rally
occurred. All evidence of the previous events has been
cleared away. The sun is shining and birds are singing in the
trees.

Hasidic Jewish men sit at nearby tables playing chess.

POPPA BEAR

What are we doing back here?

BOB

Evil spirits appeared here
yesterday, I'm just making sure
they're gone.

He shakes a rattle near Poppa Bear's head.

POPPA BEAR

Get that thing out of my face.

BOB

There is a story of a young shaman...His father, who was a great shaman, on his deathbed told his son 'sometimes all the greed and envy and fear in the world will fill people's hearts and they will be possessed by a demon. At these times, you must remember that your soul is something that no one can destroy. So then the Dad died. The orphaned shaman used to lead the village children to school. He had learned the ways of nature, and all the children loved to go thru the woods with him. In the woods lived a demon who could not stand the joyful noise of the children, and so he possessed the body of a hermit. As a monster now, the hermit attacked the children. The shaman reached into the demon and held its heart, which was black with all the fear and envy and greed of the world. The heart twitched like a fish out of water, but the shaman held onto it until it was quiet.

Silence.

POPPA BEAR

So you're saying I should shove my hand into the guy's chest, grab his heart and squeeze it until it stops beating? Sounds good to me.

BOB

I don't think that's exactly the message.

One of the Hasidic Jews comes near them.

HASIDIC JEW

I couldn't help but overhear your story. I believe it's about the Baal Shem Tov, a Jewish mystic.

BOB

No. It happened to a shaman.

HASIDIC JEW

I'm quite sure it's a story about
the Baal Shem Tov.

POPPA BEAR

Hey Reb Tevye. My friend says the
story is about a shaman, it's about
a shaman. Go fiddle on a roof. Go.

The Hasidic Jew goes back to his chess game.

BOB

Come to think of it, maybe that WAS
a story about the Baal Shem Tov.

EXT. PORCH - DAY

Poppa Bear is sitting on the porch, holding the 1,000 dollar
bill. Cassandra comes up the stairs with groceries.

CASSANDRA

Dad! I got the sardines you like.

He doesn't respond. She goes in the house.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

The table is covered with papers and drawings. Spencer, Bob
and Swift Arrow stand around the mess.

They look like caught criminals.

SWIFT ARROW

Oh hey, back so soon.

CASSANDRA

What's all this?

SPENCER

Hear me out. Your dad is very
depressed. I think, we think, there
should be one more Wrecking Crew
mission. Things don't feel
finished. Justice has not been
achieved. I call it Operation Blind
Vengeance. It would take all of us.

POPPA BEAR

I'm listening.

Poppa Bear has stuck his head in the door.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

Cassandra is looking down at all the papers. There are words and arrows and drawings...

CASSANDRA

I don't know Dad, it's hard to describe. I see a rowboat, rifles, flowers.

SPENCER

Those are Sacred Datura flowers.

CASSANDRA

Ropes, walkie talkies, duct tape.

POPPA BEAR

Sounds ambitious.

SPENCER

Everything is open to discussion. I defer to you, Poppa Bear, you're the leader of the Wrecking Crew. I mean you can be, if there is a Wrecking Crew.

POPPA BEAR

If we do anything, you have to do it my way. You have to listen to me, and you have to be disciplined.

SPENCER

You got it.

Poppa Bear puts out his hand.

POPPA BEAR

We are the Wrecking Crew...

One by one, each person puts in their hand.

EVERYONE

...this is what we do. We Destroy to create JUSTICE!

They throw their hands up in the air, and ROAR!

Everyone shakes hands and hugs, except Spencer, who karate kicks in the air against invisible foes. He accidentally kicks over the TV And it falls with a CRASH!

POPPA BEAR

What was that? Did you just break
my fucking TV? Spencer? What did I
just say about discipline?

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

The CEO and his bodyguards jog down the road.

Suddenly Tweedle-Dumb grabs his chest and falls to the
ground. The CEO kneels over him.

CEO

Ron, are you ok?

The CEO yells out and grabs at his neck. There is a dart
sticking out of it. He slumps over. Tweedle-Dee draws his gun
and looks around frantically. There is no one in sight. He
runs into the woods.

Poppa Bear's van backs out fast from a side trail. The back
doors open. Bob and Spencer rush out, grab the CEO, and drag
him into the van.

Cassandra jumps out of the drivers seat.

POPPA BEAR

Get the other guy off the road, put
him in the bushes!

Spencer and Bob grab Tweedle-Dumb and carry him away.

Swift Arrow steps out with his bear tranquilizer gun.

SWIFT ARROW

I'm going after the other one. I've
always wanted to hunt a white man!

CASSANDRA

I'm going with you!

SWIFT ARROW

No way, it's too dangerous. He's
got a gun.

CASSANDRA

I didn't ask your permission.

SWIFT ARROW

Ok. Keep up. If you can.

He takes off into the woods.

CASSANDRA
Oh, I can keep up.

She sprints after him.

Bob slams the door of the van shut and Spencer guns the motor. Poppa Bear grins in the passenger seat.

POPPA BEAR
Woo!

EXT. WOODS- DAY - MOMENTS LATER

Tweedle-Dee runs frantically through the trees. He stops, holds up his gun. Listens. Then begins running again.

Elsewhere, Swift Arrow kneels to look for signs of the man's trail. He finds something. Cassandra watches him, excitedly. She's breathing hard.

CASSANDRA
This is really turning me on.

SWIFT ARROW
Yeah?

CASSANDRA
Yeah.

They kiss.

Swift Arrow moves them forward again.

EXT. FOREST - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

Tweedle-Dee exits the woods to find himself on the edge of a roaring river. He considers whether he can make it across.

He is shot in the leg with a tranquilizer dart. He yells, and grabs it. Wildly, he shoots his gun all directions.

Cassandra and Swift Arrow hide behind a big tree, pressed together. Cassandra starts kissing him again.

Tweedle-Dee staggers and falls unconscious, into the river.

CASSANDRA
Oh. Oh. Oh.

Swift Arrow drops his gun, runs out and jumps into the river.

He swims strongly to Tweedle-Dee, fighting the water.
Grabbing him from behind, he pulls the man up on shore.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

Are you ok?

SWIFT ARROW

Yeah.

CASSANDRA

Oh my God, you're like a fucking
Tarzan man! Who jumps in the
fucking river like that? I wouldn't
expect you to jump in for me like
that are you fucking crazy, wow
that was impressive.

SWIFT ARROW

Call those guys, tell them to pick
us up. We're behind the Houston
ranch. There's a road.

She starts to dial the phone.

EXT. LAKE - DAY

The CEO wakes up sitting in a rowboat, in the middle of a
lake, with Poppa Bear. His arms are tied behind his back. The
thousand dollar bill he gave to Poppa Bear has been taped
over his eyes. It's dark all round, except for the light of a
lantern between them. The CEO moans.

POPPA BEAR

Good morning! Well almost.

Poppa Bear reaches forward, finds the CEO's face and rips off
the tape covered bill. The CEO yells.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)

The sun should be coming over the
mountains any minute now. A
beautiful sight, if you can see.
Are you a good swimmer? With your
hands tied, I mean?

Poppa Bear takes hold of the gunwales and rocks the boat. The
CEO fights to not fall in the water.

CEO

I didn't mean to blind you.

POPPA BEAR

Shh.

CEO

I was defending my property!

POPPA BEAR

Shut up or I'll punch you in the mouth. If you're squawking I know where to punch.

The CEO shuts up.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)

I don't want to fight with you. I gave up fighting years ago. I left the battle to save Mother nature to younger men, fresh, and strong. Not tired like me. I came all the way out here to the boonies to get away from you. People like you. All people really. Society. Civilization. The machine that eats everything. I came here to get away from all of it. But you followed me. You wouldn't let me alone. Nature is my church. I just wanted to be left alone to pray in my church. You came into my church and shit on the altar. So I had to fight again. Look around. Do you see my friends?

The CEO looks around the lake.

CEO

I don't see anyone.

POPPA BEAR

They're all around us. The American Coot, the Ruddy Duck, you don't know their names, the California Gull, Yellow Rumped Warbler, you don't know their faces, Cedar Waxwing, Great-tailed Grackle, you don't know their voices. My friends are all around us. But you don't see them. So who's blind here? The birds are my friends, the trees are my friends, the river, the mountain, wouldn't it be betraying my friends who don't even know they are dying not to fight for them?

CEO

I have a family that needs me, that loves me. I have money. I can give you a lot of money. Off the books.

POPPA BEAR

Shut up! Now is not the time for you to talk. That was yesterday, when you were at the podium, when you were in control. I didn't come here for money. I came here for revenge.

CEO

Oh God.

POPPA BEAR

Relax. I'm not going to kill you. If I killed you, they'd just replace you with some other asshole.

He holds up a purple white flower.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)

This is the sacred Datura. The Indians around here used it to initiate their male children into manhood. It brings madness, horrible fear. A nasty trip. They put the kids in wooden cages, to keep them from running off cliffs and such. The best part is what it does to your eyes. You go blind. For 24 hours or so. Probably feels more like...forever. They ground it up and gave it to them in a tea. It leaves a bitter taste in your mouth.

The CEO licks his lips.

CEO

No .

POPPA BEAR

Take a good look around. It should kick in any second now.

Poppa Bear reaches out and puts his hand on the CEO'S chest.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)
 Pitter-patter, pitter patter. See
 how I can put fear in your heart?
 Like you put anger in my heart. But
 I can't put love in there. I can't
 make you love nature like I do. I
 could have made you blind. But I
 can't make you see.

The sun rises over the mountains. Poppa Bear feels it on his face and smiles. He pulls out a big knife. The CEO struggles.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)
 Don't move or I'll cut you.

He feels behind the man and cuts the rope binding his hands.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)
 Relax. The taste on your lips isn't
 the Sacred Datura. It's goat piss.

Poppa Bear stands up in the boat, and waves toward land. Cassandra yells from the shore.

CASSANDRA
 Hello!

Poppa Bear turns in her direction.

POPPA BEAR
 It's a nice spot. Stay here with my
 friends and enjoy it for awhile.

He jumps in the water and swims toward shore. The CEO stares after him. He takes hold of the boat's oars, but doesn't start rowing yet. Birds sing, a breeze ripples the water and sunlight dances on the water's surface.

The swimming figure of Poppa Bear gets smaller in the distance.

EXT. POPPA BEAR'S HOUSE - DAY

Cassandra comes out carrying a mug. She heads down to the river, where Poppa Bear is sitting alone.

CASSANDRA
 Here's your coffee. Sorry I wasn't
 here at dawn, I had to finish
 packing. How's the bird show?

POPPA BEAR

There's a Blue Heron in the river.

Cassandra looks upstream and sees a Blue Heron.

CASSANDRA

He's not making any noise. How'd you know he was there?

POPPA BEAR

I have no idea.

CASSANDRA

That's pretty miraculous.

POPPA BEAR

I've become accustomed to miracles around here. Mostly little feathered ones. Once, a rare bird dropped by. Tall, skinny, with a loud song. It migrated from back East.

CASSANDRA

Oh yeah? What's it's name?

POPPA BEAR

They call it the Toughlove.

CASSANDRA

Are you going to be ok here alone?

POPPA BEAR

I'm not alone. Bob will be around, and Spencer, and Swift Arrow, when he's not over there in the big city with you. Looks like the Wrecking Crew are now baby-sitters.

CASSANDRA

More like zookeepers.

POPPA BEAR

I'm sure going to miss you. But it will be blissfully quiet around here. I've never heard a bird scream "You're a jerk!" at me.

CASSANDRA

They haven't known you long enough. Call me, whenever.

POPPA BEAR

Call me.

CASSANDRA

You call me.

She hugs him and starts to cry.

POPPA BEAR

Don't make me wish I had a boy.
C'mon, men don't like clingy women.
Buck up. Go kick some corporate
ass. I love you girl.

CASSANDRA

I love you Dad. Goodbye for now.

POPPA BEAR

See ya.

She backs away, takes a few steps and then turns and watches him sitting there.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)

Stop staring. Get out of here.

Silence.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)

I know you're there. I can sense a
Blue Heron up the river, I sure as
Hell can feel you hovering over me.
Go!

CASSANDRA

I'm going to have Spencer put a web
cam in the trees so I can see you
sitting here, from wherever I am.

POPPA BEAR

No. Do not! You're a creepy
stalker. Go away or I'm going to
start throwing stones. I mean it.

She turns and walks away.

POPPA BEAR (CONT'D)

If you love me, you'll let Swift
Arrow drive the car to the airport.

CASSANDRA

Fuck off!

POPPA BEAR

Some people just weren't meant to drive. Some people are supposed to be passengers.

CASSANDRA

Double fuck off.

POPPA BEAR

See, how I do? Now you **want** to leave. Tough love bitch!

CASSANDRA

Tough love asshole!

She notices Mrs. Jones, peering out her window at them. She waves and smiles. Mrs. Jones closes the curtains. Cassandra laughs and smiles.

POPPA BEAR

CLICK!

He takes a mental picture.

CASSANDRA

CLICK!

She takes one too. Poppa Bear sitting by the river with his dog. The picture freezes and then CROSS FADES TO:

EXT. NEW YORK CITY - DAY

The city waking up under the sun.

INT. NEW YORK CITY. HIGH RISE OFFICE - DAY

The CEO sits at his desk. He's staring at his gold "click clackers" bouncing back and forth. His phone rings. He puts it on speakerphone.

CEO

Yeah.

DANNY

It's Danny. Everything's good. The deal is going through. The meeting will just be for show. You don't need to be there. I can handle it.

CEO

I want to talk to the committee, I have some questions.

DANNY

What about?

CEO

The deal doesn't smell good to me.

DANNY

It smells like money. That's good. I know it's pretty, but that land is going. Michael it's like a piece of raw meat surrounded by wolves. We're just the wolf that got to it first. If we don't eat it, the next wolf will.

CEO

I just want to talk to the committee.

DANNY

If you resist this, the committee will override you. The stock holders expect results. You don't have a choice. Ok. I'll talk to you later. They're coming back in.

The phone goes dead. The CEO stands and looks out his floor to ceiling window. It is Spring. Far below in Central Park, the trees are bright, living green. Tiny figures of people are everywhere. Running in the grass, picnicking, flying kites. A man throws a frisbee for his dog, a couple walks hand in hand.

The CEO looks down like Zeus. He goes back to his desk and hits REDIAL on the phone.

CEO

Danny.

DANNY

What?

CEO

I want to meet with David and you before the meeting.

DANNY

What are you going to do Michael?

CEO
I don't know. And I like the
feeling.

DANNY
Michael...

The CEO hangs up on him. He goes back to the window and continues looking down at the park. The sun shines on his face. He smiles.

The tiny figures of a couple holding hands moves through the park, far below. The camera Zooms closer to reveal it is Swift Arrow and Cassandra.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

CASSANDRA
How long are you in for?

SWIFT ARROW
Two weeks or so.

CASSANDRA
I thought you were only going to be
here in the winters.

SWIFT ARROW
I want to catch another concert in
the park.

CASSANDRA
I guess civilization has something
to offer after all.

SWIFT ARROW
The music, the pizza, the art and
the girls.

CASSANDRA
Hey!

SWIFT ARROW
The girl. Do you miss the birds and
their songs?

CASSANDRA
We have birds here, just different
kinds of birds. Let's see. Let the
Bird show begin!

She throws her arms open wide. They look and listen for birds. On the sidewalk under their feet is the memorial for John Lennon, with the word "Imagine". A young man with a guitar sits on a bench nearby. He sings. Birds sing with him.

MAN

You may say I'm a dreamer, but I'm
not the only one
I hope some day you'll join us
And the world will be as one.

Through the credits we see and hear different birds singing in the park, along with the guitarist singing "Imagine"

THE END