

KNIGHT'S LAW

Screenplay by

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EXT. TMCC, DANDINI CAMPUS - DAY

It's graduation day. The weather is nice.

We see the Truckee Meadows Community College Dandini Campus main entrance sign surrounded by colorful flowers and prominently featuring the US and Nevada flags on the flagpole as cars stream past.

Near the east entrance to the Red Mountain Building, cars drop off grandparents, some using various DME - wheelchairs, walkers, etc.

Families hug their grads who are in various stages of graduation dress. Some take cell phone photos, while others chat with smiles all around, and still others head straight into the Student Center.

The TMCC Gecko Mascot greets them by the doors and gives everyone enthusiastic pats on the back, fist bumps, high-fives etc.

INT. TMCC STUDENT CENTER - DAY

The auditorium floor in front of the stage is full of roughly 35 grads of all ages in caps and gowns seated and listening to the commencement speech in progress.

Parents, family and friends sit in the stadium seats set up alongside.

A large video monitor overhead captures the action at the podium.

The COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER is speaking at the podium, which sits next to a table with a stack of diplomas.

Sitting with the grads, ANNIE NG, hands crossed on her lap, listens to the Commencement Speaker, who is nearing the end of his speech. We see Annie's left lower arm prosthesis for the first time.

COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER

You can be proud of this institution, and the excellence and the dedication of your teachers here. As you're starting or rebuilding your careers, remember they too were once students like you, uncertain of what the future may hold.

One very young athletic looking boy (Ball Cap Guy) in the student section, sitting to Annie's left, has ditched his mortarboard and proudly wears his Raiders baseball cap backwards instead, with the tassel crudely pinned to it. He's not really listening.

An attentive Graduating Grandmother sitting to his left tweaks her hearing aid.

Annie's mom, MARIE NG, is watching from the bleachers with anticipation as all parents do, and with great pride in her daughter.

She and Annie make eye contact and wave at each other, both excited.

The Commencement Speaker looks professorial, tidy, and in control.

COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER (CONT'D)

But they had a plan for their life,  
an idea of where the road was  
headed. So graduates, as you go out  
into the world, your family, your  
friends and society all expect you  
too to have a plan for your life.

Students fidget with their tassels, their caps, their programs. But not cell phones. Those are forbidden.

COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER (CONT'D)

'I have a dream,' you say. Well,  
dreams are good and useful, and  
they have their place, but dreams  
are not a Plan.

Marie Ng holds up her cell phone and takes a photo.

COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER (CONT'D)

'Be a leaf in the river' some too-  
often-quoted Eastern sage once  
said.

(snorting)

But drifting aimlessly from whim to  
whim as you age is no way to go  
through life. That's actually  
terrible advice. Discard that  
ridiculous philosophy! It will  
leave you stranded over and over  
again.

Annie listens respectfully.

COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER (CONT'D)

You actually need to paddle your  
leaf folks. If you don't take  
control of your life, and be  
responsible for your actions, your  
life will take control of you. It's  
that simple.

The Commencement Speaker pauses, gazes out over the restless  
grads, wondering if anyone has actually heard a word he's  
said.

COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER (CONT'D)

In closing, I'd like to say...  
(with enthusiasm)  
...Truckee Meadows Community  
College class of 2024,  
congratulations on your  
achievements! It's time to wake up!  
Or is it "woke?"

The speaker is amused by his attempt at humor.

Some courtesy laughter and applause from the grads. Some  
groans.

The Speaker pushes the microphone out of the way to just the  
right position, turns off the reading light, closes his  
leather bound notebook, adjusts his cap, turns crisply on his  
heels and marches off the stage as the grads and audience  
applaud.

Ball Cap Guy flashes a shaka hand gesture to Annie and bobs  
his head up and down with enthusiasm.

Annie ignores him and applauds as the grads rise.

The Class President and College President climb up to the  
podium to hand out diplomas.

A recorded version of Pomp and Circumstance begins it's  
monotonous loop as the front row stands to receive their  
diplomas, and start climbing the stage.

DISSOLVE TO:

It's Annie's turn.

COLLEGE PRESIDENT

Josh McNally. Bachelor's Degree,  
Accounting. ... Annie Ng. Associate  
of Arts, Aviation Technology.

Annie collects her diploma and holds it up with a big smile as she looks up at Marie.

Marie claps enthusiastically.

MARIE

Woo hoo! That's my girl!

The awards continue.

COLLEGE PRESIDENT

Patty Nolan. Architectural  
Drafting.

FADE TO:

EXT. TMCC PARKING LOT - DAY

Annie and Marie walk towards Annie's car. They happen to see the Commencement Speaker walk up to his Nissan Leaf EV just as he notices his right rear tire has gone completely flat.

COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER

(throwing up his hands)

Aw, nuts!! I can't believe this.

Annie looks at Marie, kind of chuckles.

ANNIE

(to Marie)

Looks like the river is controlling  
the Leaf.

Annie approaches the Commencement Speaker.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Can I give you a hand?

COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER

(noticing Annie's  
prosthesis)

Thanks, I'll call AAA. I don't even  
know where the spare is in this  
thing.

ANNIE

Probably in the trunk.

Commencement Speaker pops the trunk. Sees nothing, shrugs. Annie points to the carpeted floorboard.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Usually under the floorboard.

She lifts up the hinged floorboard, revealing the spare tire.

COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER

Thanks.

(impressed)

What did you say your name was?

ANNIE

I didn't. I'm Annie. Annie Ng.

That's my mom, Marie.

COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER

Nice to meet you both. How did you get injured might I ask?

Annie is not bothered any more by people's natural curiosity.

ANNIE

Didn't. I was born this way.

COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER

Ah. What is your degree in Annie?

He fiddles with his phone, only half listening.

ANNIE

Aviation.

COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER

Why that?

ANNIE

My dad was a pilot. Seemed interesting.

COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER

Let me guess. Adventure calls, you want to see the world, right?

ANNIE

Yeah, I guess.

COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER

(rudely)

There are other ways to do that.

Annie isn't sure what to say.

COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER (CONT'D)

Travel agent. Airline customer service. Aviation journalist. National aviation organizations. Want me to go on?

ANNIE

Yeah. No. I know. Just kinda had my heart set on flying, so...

COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER

Well, best of luck with that. I've got to get going.

(flashes his phone and taps the screen)

Triple A.

ANNIE

Thanks.

Annie turns and heads to her car.

She and Marie hop in Annie's beat up BLACK WRX.

Annie's license plate is a custom Nevada plate, which reads FLYGIRL.

EXT. ROAD TO ANNIE'S HOME - DAY

Annie and Marie Ng head towards home in her WRX.

We hear her noisy tuned exhaust, kind of mellow as the car glides towards home.

'Sugar' by Robin Schulz is queued up on Annie's stereo.

The left turn signal blinks at double speed even though she's not turning left. She just forgot to turn it off.

INT. ANNIE'S WRX - DAY

Annie cruises along, cheap sunglasses on, life is good.

MARIE

That was such a nice graduation honey. I'm so proud of you. Good speaker. 'Make a Plan. Be in control.' It's good advice.

Marie rubs Annie's shoulder affectionately.

Annie turns up the music.

Without even looking at the speedometer, Marie senses Annie is speeding.

MARIE (CONT'D)

Honey, are you speeding?

ANNIE  
(backing the speed off)  
Moo-om, I'm only going...a couple  
over.

BMW Guy pulls alongside in an expensive new sexy BMW coupe,  
looks over, makes hand signal that her blinker is flashing.

ANNIE (CONT'D)  
What's he want?

MARIE  
Is your blinker on?

Annie groans, flips off the BMW Guy with her right hand, and  
turns off her freakin' blinker with her left.

She fails to see a police car hiding alongside the road.

Marie buries her head in her hand, embarrassed. How can this  
be my child?

The BMW pulls gradually ahead.

EXT. ROAD TO ANNIE'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

The police cruiser pulls in behind Annie's WRX as the BMW  
pulls away, the popcorn lights come on, the siren blares  
once.

INT. ANNIE'S WRX - CONTINUOUS

Annie sees the lights in her rear view mirror. She pounds the  
steering wheel.

ANNIE  
Ah crap. I can't believe this.

MARIE  
You were speeding.

Annie hits the right turn signal, slowly pulls over, shaking  
her head as the BMW speeds off ahead of her.

INT. SEXY BMW - DAY

BMW Guy looks in his rear view mirror, watches Annie get  
pulled over, laughs, shakes his head.



INT. ANNIE'S WRX - CONTINUOUS

Annie pulls to a stop on the shoulder, buzzes the window down, and watches in her driver's side rearview mirror as the police cruiser follows her over and parks behind with all it's lights on.

Annie's right blinker is still on.

MARIE

Honey, just be good, do what the officer says, don't pick a fight.

Annie watches in the mirror as a FEMALE COP in dark glasses walks up to the driver side window.

FEMALE COP

Driver's license, registration and insurance.

Annie pulls her license out of a well-worn MAN'S WALLET with an Viking Air Freight logo badge on the front flap. It was her dad's.

FEMALE COP (CONT'D)

No registration or insurance?

ANNIE

Can't afford it right now.

Marie grits her teeth. Annie looks straight ahead.

FEMALE COP

That's no excuse. You use the roads, you need to help pay for them. If everyone was like you we'd be driving on dirt roads.

Annie is silent.

FEMALE COP (CONT'D)

You drove right by me. Didn't you see me?

ANNIE

Nope. Apparently 'the Beemer' didn't either.

FEMALE COP

Know why I'm pulling you over?

ANNIE

Yeah, I guess.

FEMALE COP

Young lady, you were speeding.  
You're not alone out here. Could be  
kids. Defenseless little animals.  
Whatever. Life's not a race. You  
need to drive the posted speed  
limit. That's why we have these big  
speed limit signs posted all along  
here. For everyone's safety, not  
just yours. Maybe you didn't see  
those either.

Annie buttons up, looks straight ahead, heeding mom's advice  
with difficulty.

Cop peers in the back seat. Sees the diploma, graduation gown  
and mortarboard.

FEMALE COP (CONT'D)

You graduate today?

ANNIE

Yeah.

FEMALE COP

This your mom?

ANNIE

Yeah.

FEMALE COP

(to Marie)

Big day, huh mom.

Marie smiles nervously.

MARIE

Yes ma'am.

FEMALE COP

Well congratulations. To you both.

Annie keeps looking straight forward.

Cop takes off her sunglasses.

FEMALE COP (CONT'D)

Can you look at me?

Annie looks up.

FEMALE COP (CONT'D)

Take off your sunglasses please.

Annie does as told, looks up at the Cop.

FEMALE COP (CONT'D)

Be careful. And get your registration and insurance up to date. You will be paying a pretty big fine when you renew. Nothing I can do about that. Or, you can have your license revoked. Your choice.

Cop hands Annie her driver's license back.

FEMALE COP (CONT'D)

I'm not going to give you a ticket this time, just a verbal warning.

ANNIE

Thank you officer.

FEMALE COP

Next time you and I might not be having such a nice day. But I want you - you both - to continue to have a nice day the rest of today. While you're at it, have a nice life.

Cop puts her sunglasses back on, walks back towards her cruiser, looks over Annie's beat car.

She sees the custom license plate, the right turn signal blinking double speed, taps the trunk a couple times with her fingers, shakes her head, and walks back to her cruiser.

FADE TO:

EXT. ANNIE'S SUBDIVISION - DAY

Annie's noisy WRX cruises slowly through the streets towards home.

It's a modern recently built American subdivision, cookie cutter homes, crammed together, with hardly any yard. Life is normal here.

Almost.

We see a mom mowing her lawn.

We see the mailman in USPS uniform shorts and lime green socks, move up the street in his mail Rover, get out at each house to stuff the mailboxes.

We see a man in an electric wheelchair walking his cat on a leash.

EXT. ANNIE'S HOUSE - DAY

Annie pulls into their driveway, nice and carefully. Revs the engine, and shuts it down - with a backfire.

Mailman has already hit Annie's house, and continues down the line.

Annie and Marie hop out of the WRX. Annie grabs her cap, gown, and diploma out of the back seat.

Annie opens the mailbox, grabs the mail. One letter falls to the ground. She snatches it up, reads the return address.

ANNIE  
(interested)  
Hmmm.

MARIE  
Whatcha got?

ANNIE  
Viking Air Freight.

Annie rips the envelope open, reads excitedly.

At first.

ANNIE (CONT'D)  
(reading)  
'Dear Ms. Ng, thanks for your inquiry. Currently Viking Air Freight does not have any positions open that you would qualify for. Best of luck with your job search and your aviation career aspirations. Sincerely yours, James Worthy, Executive Manager, VAF Ltd.'

Marie sees the disappointment on Annie's face.

MARIE  
Where dad worked.

ANNIE  
(discouraged and angry)  
Yeah. Think I need to pay Mr. Worthy a little visit.

MARIE

I'm sorry honey. Keep trying.  
Something will open up.

Annie thumbs through the other mail. She pulls out a business letter also addressed to her.

ANNIE

Liberty University in Las Vegas.  
That flight school.

Annie opens the envelope and reads.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

(reading)

"Dear Ms. Ng. Thank you for your interest in Liberty University. We have accepted a few students with disabilities in the past. But without testing your particular abilities in one of our training aircraft, we are unable to determine if you would qualify for our flight training program. We welcome you to visit our campus, however, and meet in person with a flight examiner for an evaluation. We also have a financial aid officer available Monday through Friday if you'd like to set up an appointment with her. Keep in mind we have many other programs in the aviation industry you may be interested in. Hope to see you soon. Sincerely, Gail Esposito, Enrollment Advisor."

Annie folds up the letter.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Well, at least they didn't slam the door in my face.

MARIE

Might not hurt to go down there if nothing opens up around here.

ANNIE

Yeah.

Marie puts an arm around Annie's shoulders, as much as for physical support as to comfort Annie.

MARIE

Come on, lets go inside. Don't get discouraged. You graduated today, honey. I'm so proud.

Annie tries to smile.

They head inside.

FADE OUT.

INT. ANNIE'S HOUSE, GARAGE - AFTERNOON

Marie and Annie sort and put Francis Ng's things in various labeled boxes. He passed away a few years ago.

There's a sand rail, a crude dune buggy essentially, half way through a rebuild.

Francis' tools and tool boxes are neatly organized and clean.

A workbench has parts in various stages of disassembly.

Marie closes up a box and sets a tape gun on top. She stands upright, her back aching. Her body is aching a bit too.

MARIE

(wiping her brow)

Let's take a breather honey.

They step back from sorting and packing. Marie looks tired.

ANNIE

What are we going to do with all this mom?

(looking at the rail)

I can't finish it without dad.

MARIE

Yeah. I don't know. Clive says sell it on Craig's List, give it away, or chuck it.

ANNIE

Boy, that's big of him.

MARIE

By the way, did you get your registration and car insurance updated yet?

A FRAMED B&W PHOTO OF FRANCIS sits on the work bench. He's sticking his head out the cockpit window of a DC-3 cargo plane, wearing American Optical Aviator sunglasses.

Annie picks it up and looks at it adoringly.

ANNIE  
(distracted)  
I will, promise.

Marie looks at the photo with Annie.

MARIE  
Dad looks so young. What kind is it honey?

ANNIE  
DC-3. Can I keep it?

MARIE  
Absolutely, you should have it.

ANNIE  
You sure you don't want it, like, on the mantel or something?

MARIE  
No, not really.

ANNIE  
Because of Clive? He wouldn't like that?

MARIE  
Probably not.

Annie looks right at Marie, interrogation mode.

ANNIE  
Why are you with him anyway?

MARIE  
I need to move on, you know, with my life. I need to move on.

ANNIE  
He's been here the last three nights. Is he moving in with us?

MARIE  
Well, yes, honey, he is. I was going to tell you.

ANNIE

Jesus mom. You didn't even ask me.

Marie knew Annie would take it badly, feels bad.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

I can't stand his "fatherly"  
advice, always prying into my life.  
He'll never be my dad.

Annie spies a brown leather glasses case on one of the tool boxes, picks it up, and opens the case which contain the pair of AO AVIATOR SUNGLASSES in the photo of Francis.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

(smiling at the discovery)  
His sunglasses. Can I keep these  
too?

She puts them carefully back in the case.

MARIE

Yes, absolutely.

ANNIE

Thanks mom.  
(making a promise)  
I won't wear them until I solo.

Marie smiles, knows how much her daughter's dream still matters.

Annie realizes she was rude to her mom.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

I'm sorry if I was cross. It's your  
life, you know what's best for you.  
I still love you, always will.

Marie gives her daughter a hug.

MARIE

I know honey.

FADE TO:

INT. ANNIE'S BEDROOM - AFTERNOON

Typical 22 year-old girl's room, girly colors, girly stuff, quite nicely done actually. Annie's got those skills.



She's managed to fit into her interior design scheme many origami paper airplanes, all the same design, hanging from the ceiling on fishing line.

A Star Wars X-Wing pilot's helmet from Disneyland sits on her desk.

A Top Gun poster hangs dominantly on the wall.

Annie sits cross-legged on her bed, reading 'A Gift of Wings' by Richard Bach, rap music on quietly in the background.

CUT TO:

EXT. ANNIE'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

A pickup truck pulls into the driveway next to Annie's WRX.

INT. ANNIE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Annie hears the truck, puts down her book gets up, peeks out the window, sees it's CLIVE heading for the house.

She walks to her bedroom door, closes it, then sits back on her bed, pretending to read.

INT. ANNIE'S HOUSE, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Clive comes in the front door and moves purposely down the hallway. He knocks on Annie's door.

INT. ANNIE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

ANNIE  
(through the door,  
nervously)  
Go away Clive.

INT. ANNIE'S HOUSE, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

CLIVE  
(concerned)  
I heard you quit your delivery job  
last week.

INT. ANNIE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

ANNIE  
Yeah, so?

INT. ANNIE'S HOUSE, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

CLIVE  
So what are you going to do now?  
You got a "degree" but you don't  
have any job skills. You going to  
work at McDonalds?

INT. ANNIE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Annie stretches the truth a bit.

ANNIE  
I'm interviewing for a job  
tomorrow. Besides, who died and  
left you in charge, Clive? You act  
like you own the place.

Not realizing what she just said.

INT. ANNIE'S HOUSE, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

CLIVE  
Uh, you're dad?

INT. ANNIE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

ANNIE  
(snapping)  
He sure as hell wouldn't have left  
you in charge.

INT. ANNIE'S HOUSE, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Clive gives up. realizes this is going nowhere.

CLIVE  
I'm just trying to help here.

INT. ANNIE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

ANNIE

Well, you're not. And just to be clear, Clive, if you move in, I move out. Mom won't like that.

INT. ANNIE'S HOUSE, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

CLIVE

That's a really great plan Annie. No job, no money, no place to live. Oh, and no friends really. When's the last time a friend came over?

No response from Annie. Just silence behind the door. Clive shakes his head, leaves.

INT. ANNIE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Annie waits until she's sure he's gone.

ANNIE

Asshole.

EXT. RENO-TAHOE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, CARGO TERMINAL - DAY

On the tarmac, a few FedEx, UPS, and DHL cargo jets load and unload freight.

EXT. ENTRANCE TO AIR CARGO TERMINAL - DAY

Annie's WRX pulls quickly into the Air Cargo terminal driveway.

EXT. AIR CARGO TERMINAL - DAY

Annie's WRX pulls up in front of the Viking Air Freight Ltd. main office, parks.

The engine revs and it backfires as she gets out.

She heads inside like she owns the place.

She carries the rejection letter in her hand.

INT. VAF CARGO OFFICE - DAY

Annie walks up to the receptionist, determined. The Viking Air Freight Ltd. logo sign is on the wall behind her desk.

The door to James Worthy's office is half open.

ANNIE

Is Mr. Worthy in?

RECEPTIONIST

I'm sorry, did you have an appointment?

ANNIE

No.

(waving the letter)

Just this rejection letter.

JAMES WORTHY, overhears the conversation through his half-open office door.

RECEPTIONIST

You are?

ANNIE

Annie Ng.

JAMES

(through his half-open door, with a glimmer of recognition)

I can take this Lois. Why don't you come in to my office Ms. Ng.

INT. JAMES WORTHY'S OFFICE - DAY

James is seated behind his desk.

Annie sits in front, leaning forward.

Photos of various cargo aircraft from over the decades hang on the wall. A couple certificates are on display.

Wood plane models on stands sit on the shelves and his desk. A few military plane models as well.

There's one photo of pilot James in his Air Guard flight suit, along with his radar operator, standing in front of their Nevada Air National Guard RF-4C Phantom.

Annie is determined to prevail.

ANNIE

So the fact that my dad flew freight pretty much his whole career for you doesn't count for anything?

JAMES

I'm sorry Annie, we just don't have anything for you right now. I have sixteen people on my waiting list. It's a popular place to work. I have hiring practices to follow. We move heavy freight. With you're disability? I'm just not sure it's a fit.

(beat)

Please, try to understand where I'm coming from.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Aviation is not a university, no legacies.

ANNIE

An internship maybe? In the office?

JAMES

Sorry. No interns.

Annie has run out of options and loses steam. James can see this.

JAMES (CONT'D)

(trying to help)

What is your plan, Annie, what is your goal?

ANNIE

I want something around freighters. Work my way up, pay for flying lessons.

JAMES

Got any flight time?

ANNIE

No logbook time. Ground school at TMCC.

James changes tack, more personal.

JAMES

Fly with your dad?

ANNIE

He took me up a few times. When he was off-duty, he pretty much stayed away from airplanes.

JAMES

Did you like it? Were you scared?

Annie has to think about this. She's not entirely transparent.

ANNIE

I felt safe with him.

JAMES

Were you and your dad close?

ANNIE

Yeah. We were.

JAMES

I'm sorry for your loss. He was a good man.

ANNIE

Thanks.

James thinks a minute, he wants to be very realistic and honest.

JAMES

I get a lot of young folks coming in. Hollywood, the books - they kind of romanticize flying. It's not always like the movies.

Annie listens. James lightens up a bit.

JAMES (CONT'D)

You watch the Top Gun movies?

Annie feels more at ease. She's taking a liking to James.

ANNIE

About a hundred times.

James smiles, knows how the stars can win young girl's hearts.

JAMES

Look, I know a guy near here you should talk to.

(MORE)

JAMES (CONT'D)

He was a pilot with Kalitta, flew their Reno route now and then, but mostly flew the overwater stuff. We'd have lunch, got to be friends a bit anyway.

ANNIE

(not excited)  
Dad flew domestic, never international.

JAMES

Yeah that's right. Well, Lawrence, this pilot, quit flying for us cold turkey four years ago. Weird spur of the moment thing. He was on layover in Indonesia. Something bad happened I guess, he never told me what.

ANNIE

I don't really see how that matters to me.

JAMES

I'm just saying you should talk to some folks who may have other opinions about flying, that's all.

Annie listens, sort of.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Lawrence works with disadvantaged kids up at Tahoe, some kind of boat program. Since he's in the area, why don't you give him a jingle?

(beat)

Things have changed Annie. It might not be what you think. Maybe see if it's what you really want.

This is not what Annie came to hear.

James pulls out a pad, looks at his computer address book, copies down some info, and hands it to Annie.

JAMES (CONT'D)

I know it's not much help, but it's all I have.

Annie looks the note over not expecting much.

She looks briefly at the note, folds it up with the letter of rejection in her good hand, then with her prosthetic hand points to the framed photo of pilot James and his RF-4C Phantom photo recon jet fighter.

ANNIE

RF-4C Phantom. Used to have a squadron here. You fly those?

JAMES

Yeah.

ANNIE

'Unarmed and unafraid.' No missiles. No guns.

JAMES

Yeah.

A bit of silence.

JAMES (CONT'D)

You know you will need a Class 2 medical, right?

ANNIE

Yeah. I know.

James lets that sit. Annie sees the "interview" is over.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Thanks for your time.

Annie pockets the papers, gets up, walks out.

James watches as Annie leaves, a glint of admiration in his eye, but also feels frustrated he couldn't help her more.

EXT. AIR CARGO TERMINAL - DAY

Annie stands by her WRX, dials Marie on her cell phone.

INT. ANNIE'S HOUSE, DAD'S HOBBY ROOM - DAY

Marie is sorting and boxing more of Francis' stuff up. She's tired, and a bit out of breath.

Her cell phone rings.

She sits down, looks at the Caller ID, sees it's Annie, and picks up.



MARIE  
Hi honey, how'd it go?

EXT. AIR CARGO TERMINAL - CONTINUOUS

ANNIE  
Not good.

INT. ANNIE'S HOUSE, GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

Marie is as disappointed as Annie.

MARIE  
I'm sorry honey. Don't give up.  
Just keep after it, something will  
work out, okay? Dad is up there  
somewhere, watching, I know he is.

EXT. AIR CARGO TERMINAL - CONTINUOUS

ANNIE  
Dad's gone mom. I'm flying solo  
now.

Marie says something, Annie listens, but we don't hear what  
it is.

ANNIE (CONT'D)  
(beat, discouraged)  
Yeah. Love you too.

Hangs up.

Annie hears a jet engine idling, walks over to the chain link  
fence that separates her from her dream. The rampies  
disconnect the Tug and drive it out of the way.

A rampie gives the all clear to the cockpit crew.

Annie grips the fence and watches as the jet freighter  
throttles up and begins to taxi out.

A blast of wind from the jet's twin engines ruffles her hair.

ANNIE (CONT'D)  
Damn.

INT. ANNIE'S BEDROOM - DAY

Annie folds fresh laundry on her bed from out of a laundry basket. It's obvious by the boxes and bags she's moving out.

There's not much left on her desk.

Her mostly closed door slowly opens.

It's Clive, he holds some shirts on hangers.

Annie doesn't notice him.

She picks up a few last things off her desk to go in a box, turns around, sees him, gasps, drops the items, and freezes.

ANNIE

Jesus Clive! You scared the crap out of me!

CLIVE

I'm sorry, I didn't mean to startle you honey.

ANNIE

Don't call me that. What do you want?

CLIVE

Your mom said we should talk, you and me, like adults, see if we can work out our differences.

ANNIE

We don't need to talk. I'll be gone by tomorrow.

Clive lingers.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Why don't you go hang up your stuff.

Clive knows he's been shut out.

CLIVE

Right.

He heads towards Marie's bedroom with his shirts.

FADE OUT.

INT. ANNIE'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Annie is done packing stuff. The desk and shelves are pretty bare except for her backpack and her messenger bag on the bed. All the origami planes are still hanging.

The Top Gun poster is conspicuously gone.

She looks at the note from James with Lawrence's contact info up at Tahoe, stuffs it in an outside pouch, takes one last look at her bedroom, and heads out.

INT. ANNIE'S HOUSE, HALLWAY - EVENING

Annie heads down the hallway, backpack and messenger bag slung over her shoulder.

INT. ANNIE'S HOUSE, KITCHEN BACK DOOR - EVENING

Marie, in her bathrobe, leans against the counter by the back door.

Annie enters the kitchen from the hallway, backpack and messenger bag slung over her shoulder. She sees Marie, a bit startled that her mom is waiting for her there.

ANNIE

Mom?

MARIE

Done packing sweetie?

ANNIE

You didn't have to wait up.

MARIE

I know.

ANNIE

Where's Clive?

MARIE

He's still out. Says he'll be late.

ANNIE

I don't think I'll stick around to say goodbye.

They're silent for a moment.

MARIE

Do you have a place to stay?

ANNIE  
I'll find something.

Marie looks concerned.

They look at each other, both knowing it would come to this at some point, just maybe not so soon, or under these circumstances.

ANNIE (CONT'D)  
Um, mom, I know things are tight,  
but can I borrow some money? I  
promise I'll pay you back when I  
get a job.

Marie grabs her purse off a counter, digs in to her billfold, and hands Annie some cash.

MARIE  
(a bit annoyed)  
Here, it's the best I can do.

It's not much. Annie takes the money.

Marie then takes a GOLD NECKLACE with a gold heart from around her neck and hands it to Annie.

MARIE (CONT'D)  
Take this with you.

Annie takes the necklace hesitantly.

ANNIE  
It's the one grandma gave you,  
isn't it?

MARIE  
My seventh birthday. She said it  
would give me superpowers. And that  
it would protect me all my life.  
(beat)  
Go ahead, put it on.

Annie puts down her bags and puts it on.

ANNIE  
And has it?

MARIE  
Yes. Most of the time. Got me  
Francis didn't it? And you.

Annie smiles.

ANNIE

And Clive.

MARIE

Honey, I'm doing the best I can.

Annie feels bad she salted that wound.

ANNIE

I'm sorry, that was mean.

Annie feels the necklace.

MARIE

So where next?

Annie slings her bags.

ANNIE

Think I'll head up to South Lake first. Talk to a retired pilot up there that James wanted me to visit.

MARIE

I'm glad you're getting some advice.

ANNIE

Then, before I run out of money, I think I'll head on down to Las Vegas, talk to those folks at Liberty. Maybe see about a student loan.

MARIE

Ok. Keep working the open doors honey, even if they're open just a crack.

ANNIE

Yeah.

MARIE

Where will you stay tonight?

ANNIE

I don't know. Something'll be open.

MARIE

(worried)

Call me, don't text? I need to hear your voice.

ANNIE  
I will. Promise.

They take one long last look at each other.

MARIE  
My little bird is leaving the nest.  
(beat)  
Give me a hug.

Annie gives Marie a hug and a kiss.

ANNIE  
Love you.

MARIE  
Love you too honey.

Annie leaves.

Marie catches the door, closes it quietly and locks it and looks out the window as Annie gets in her car.

Marie heads slowly back towards her bedroom.

FADE OUT.

EXT. HIGHWAY 395 - NIGHT

Annie's WRX veers onto Highway 50 south of Carson City and past a highway sign giving the distance to South Lake Tahoe.

EXT. SOUTH LAKE TAHOE, QUALITY INN - NIGHT

Annie pulls into the entrance, gets out, goes inside.

INT. QUALITY INN REGISTRATION DESK - NIGHT

We hear a TV on in the back office. Annie walks up to the registration desk and rings a bell. QUALITY INN GAL comes out to the desk.

QUALITY INN GAL  
Can I help you?

ANNIE  
What's your best rate for the night?

QUALITY INN GAL  
\$129 dollars.

Too much for Annie.

ANNIE  
Anything less expensive around  
here?

QUALITY INN GAL  
(pointing left)  
Motel Six. Two blocks that way.

Annie leaves.

INT. MOTEL SIX REGISTRATION DESK - NIGHT

Annie walks up. A receptionist is picking something out of his teeth.

ANNIE  
What's your best rate?

MOTEL SIX RECEPTIONIST  
Ninety-nine.

ANNIE  
What happened to six? Anything  
cheaper around here? Like the  
cheapest.

MOTEL SIX RECEPTIONIST  
Probably the Pinewood. Near  
Stateline.

ANNIE  
Sounds great.

Annie walks out.

INT. PINWOOD INN, ROOM 18 - NIGHT

Annie throws her backpack and messenger bag on the bed. It's hot inside.

She tries the thermostat to cool the room. Broken.

Tries the TV. Broken.

Tries the lamp - it flickers.

Tries the water in the sink - comes out brown at first, then clearer.

Looks at the bed, looks kinda nasty.

EXT. PINWOOD INN PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Annie throws her backpack and messenger bag in the front seat. The back seat and passenger seats full of her stuff. A look of frustration on her face tells us she knows this is messed up.

She climbs in the driver's side.

INT. ANNIE'S WRX - NIGHT

Annie checks her bank balance in her phone banking app. Phone screen shows she's got \$4,421.65 in her checking account.

Annie grabs a pillow and blanket from the back and tries to get comfortable for the night. She falls asleep.

FADE TO:

INT. ANNIE'S WRX - MORNING

The sun wakes Annie up. She rubs a crick in her neck, looks in the mirror. What a mess. Need coffee.

Annie fires up the WRX, heads out, looking for coffee.

EXT. COFFEE SHOP PARKING LOT - MORNING

Annie pulls in to the coffee shop, parks, revs the engine, shuts it down, gets out, goes inside with her messenger bag slung.

As she walks in, TWO PUNKS drink coffee, smoke weed at an outside table. She hardly notices.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - MORNING

Annie waits for her coffee.

She dials Marie, phone on speaker.

MARIE (O.S.)  
Hi honey, where are you?

ANNIE  
I'm at South Lake. Just ordered a coffee.



MARIE (O.S.)

Oh it's good to hear you honey. Did you get some sleep? Someplace safe I hope? You sound tired.

ANNIE

(yawning)

Yeah mom, safe.

MARIE (O.S.)

Okay. So, you going to visit that pilot today?

ANNIE

Yeah, that's the plan.

MARIE (O.S.)

Let me know how it goes, okay?

ANNIE

I will mom. Promise.

(beat)

Bye. Love you.

Annie hangs up, her coffee is ready. She pockets her phone, she scoops the coffee up and finds an open table by the window.

She unslings her messenger bag, takes out her laptop computer, sets it up and starts surfing her social media.

Something out the window by her car catches her eye.

EXT. COFFEE SHOP PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Punk 1 stands next to Annie's WRX. He's watching out as Punk 2 wriggles under the steering wheel, attempting to hot wire the ignition. The WRX fires up.

We just see Punk 2's legs, belt around his knees, underwear hanging out.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - CONTINUOUS

Annie knows exactly what's up. She runs out of the coffee shop towards her car.

EXT. COFFEE SHOP PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

ANNIE

Hey! That's my car! Get the hell  
away!

Punk 2 wriggles behind the wheel, throws the car in reverse.

PUNK 1

(seeing Annie rushing the  
car)

She sees us! Come on, let's go! Go!  
Go! Go!

Punk 1 throws Annie's backpack out of the front passenger  
seat, piles in, the door slams as the WRX peels away and  
races away down the street.

Annie stops running.

ANNIE

God. Dammit!

She picks up her backpack and brushes it off.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Fuck!

FADE TO:

EXT. BACK ROAD - DAY

Annie looks through her stuff, abandoned on the roadside, to  
see what's missing, if anything.

TWO POLICE OFFICERS are with her. Their cruisers are parked  
nearby.

The Star Wars X-wing pilot's helmet and the Top Gun poster  
lie in the dirt.

The framed photo of her dad looking out the cockpit window of  
the DC-3 has fallen out of a broken box. The glass on the  
photo is cracked.

Annie brushes dirt and road grit off the broken photo.

OFFICER 1

Excuse me ma'am. Where would you  
like us to take you?

Annie lowers the picture, totally frustrated and in shock.

ANNIE  
(dazed)  
I don't really know.

FADE OUT.

EXT. USED CAR DEALERSHIP - DAY

Wide shot.

It looks like the worst kind of used car dealership you can find.

Annie is standing in the parking lot next to a pile of all her stuff.

Officer 1 and his cruiser are parked at the curb.

Officer 1's radio goes off, it's another call from dispatch. Something about a domestic dispute.

OFFICER 1  
(responding to dispatch)  
Got it, thanks. On my way.  
(to Annie)  
Gotta go. You gonna be okay?

ANNIE  
Yeah, I guess. Thanks.

OFFICER 1  
Good luck huh?

Annie tries to smile.

Officer 1 walks around to the driver's side of his cruiser, and climbs in.

His cruiser pulls away and disappears.

Annie looks at various vehicles, and stops at a beat Dodge camper van, "Just In - Adventure Calling - \$2999 - Won't Last." That one catches her eye.

A group of idle car salesmen see she's interested. One chewing a toothpick elbows another. Go get her.

USED CAR SALESMAN walks over to the van and Annie.

USED CAR SALESMAN  
This one will be gone by the end of the day, guaranteed.

ANNIE

Right. Open her up, I want to look around.

Used Car Salesman unlocks the doors and slides the cargo door open. Annie looks around, nods in approval. This could work ok.

FADE TO:

INT. USED CAR DEALERSHIP - DAY

The Used Car Salesman points out places to initial or sign.

USED CAR SALESMAN

Initials here - As Is and No Warranty.

Annie initials.

USED CAR SALESMAN (CONT'D)

And one final signature, right here.

Annie signs.

USED CAR SALESMAN (CONT'D)

Comes to \$3291.75 with all Uncle Sugar's taxes and the fees.

Annie writes a check and hands it over.

USED CAR SALESMAN (CONT'D)

I need to see your driver's license.

Annie pulls out her license and hands it over.

Used Car Salesman writes her license number on her check.

USED CAR SALESMAN (CONT'D)

Did you get some insurance lined up?

ANNIE

(unconvincingly)  
I will.

USED CAR SALESMAN

Good enough. I saw all your stuff. You gonna live in that thing?

ANNIE

Maybe.

USED CAR SALESMAN

A lot of you kids are doing that these days. The whole #VanLife thing, right? I can't keep them on the lot. If I even get one.

ANNIE

(not impressed)

Really. Are we done?

Used Car Salesman finishes folding up the papers and stuffing them in a folio envelope with the lot's logo, and "No Warranty" and "AS IS" check boxes (checked in red) printed on the cover. He hands her the folio, and the keys.

USED CAR SALESMAN

She's all yours.

EXT. USED CAR DEALERSHIP - DAY

Annie hops in the beat camper van, fires it up, takes out the crumpled note James gave her, plugs the address into Google Maps and heads towards Tahoe Keys.

FADE OUT.

EXT. TAHOE KEYS - DAY

Annie drives in to the parking lot near the dock. She parks, gets out and walks down to the dock.

A big banner hangs on a fence, 'Tahoe Youth Expeditions - Get Out!' plus the phone number.

There is an EZ-Up set up near the dock, with lunch stuff on a table.

She watches as a mixed group of eight kids middle- and high-school age paddle up in their kayaks, along with a Boston Whaler, piloted by LAWRENCE.

The Whaler pulls up to the dock alongside the kayaks.

Lawrence, mid-70s, African American, thick silver hair sticking out from under a blue watchman's cap, hops out of the Whaler cat-like, very nimble for his age, and secures the Whaler with dock lines.

Counselors BILLY and ANDY, paddle up between the kids, jump out and help secure kayaks as the kids climb out all excited and talking amongst themselves.

BILLY

(loudly)

Ok guys, tie up your kayaks, gather up your gear and meet at the EZ-Up for lunch.

The kids carrying PFDs and paddles pass Annie and head up hungrily for lunch. She approaches Lawrence.

ANNIE

Lawrence?

LAWRENCE

Have we met? You look vaguely familiar. Press?

ANNIE

Nope. Just plain Annie. Got your name from James Worthy. Said I should talk to you about flying. Wondering if you'd have a little time today or tomorrow?

LAWRENCE

(sizing her up, a bit inconvenienced)

Ah yes, James, a blast from the past. Know him well. My pleasure young lady.

They shake hands.

Andy and Billy come join Lawrence and Annie.

LAWRENCE (CONT'D)

Annie, meet Billy and Andy, our program counselors.

ANDY AND BILLY

Hi. Howdy.

LAWRENCE

(to Billy and Andy)

You guys grab a quick bite then load the Whaler for the supply run over to camp, okay? I've got to run up to the office.

BILLY

Sure.

Billy and Annie head for the Easy Up and lunch.

Lawrence seems to be thinking three steps ahead, not really focused on Annie.

ANNIE

Um...

Turning to Annie.

LAWRENCE

Love to talk Amber.

ANNIE

Annie.

LAWRENCE

Annie. We're kinda busy right now, we're taking the kids over to our beach camp tomorrow for a week, got tons of prep still. Just tag along with Billy and Andy. We'll chat somewhere along the way.

Annie's a bit put off, but understands.

ANNIE

Sure. Yeah. Whatever.

Lawrence spins and is about to run off, but stops in his tracks and spins back, puts a finger in the air.

LAWRENCE

Wait. A thought.

LAWRENCE (CONT'D)

(looking Annie intensely  
in the eye)

Say, we need to make that a supply run here pretty quick, why don't you join us, spend the night? You have a sleeping bag I assume? We can chat over at camp.

It's his eyes, like tractor beams. She's caught, like happens with lots of folks Lawrence encounters.

ANNIE

Sure, I guess. Sounds great.

LAWRENCE

Correct answer. Why don't you go grab some lunch with the guys, get your stuff, and give them a hand loading up ok?

ANNIE

Sure. Glad to help. I guess.

FADE TO:

EXT. LAKE TAHOE - AFTERNOON

The loaded Whaler with Lawrence, Billy, Andy and Annie cuts swiftly along the beautiful west shore of Lake Tahoe.

Andy drives the boat.

We see Billy's guitar case on top of the camping stuff.

They stay close to the shore as the afternoon westerlies have kicked up.

They pass by the entrance to Emerald Bay.

They watch an Osprey circle near the entrance.

LAWRENCE

(pointing and yelling)  
Osprey.

It's too loud to hear much. Annie smiles and nods.

A YELLOW PIPER J3 CUB cruises lazily down the shoreline from the north, and passes right overhead, and continues down the shoreline.

ANNIE

Piper Cub!

Lawrence winks and smiles at her. Annie watches the Cub with interest.

The camera zooms out to a wide shot as the Whaler cruises up the coast.

FADE OUT.



EXT. TAHOE BEACH CAMP - LATE EVENING

The Whaler is moored stern in to the beach, engine up, a stern line attached to a corkscrew auger in the sand, and a bow line attached to an anchor.

Several tents for the kids are set up at the top of the beach.

A camp kitchen lies ready for action once the kids arrive.

Annie, Lawrence, Billy sit around the campfire, holding empty mugs. Annie is sitting next to Lawrence.

Andy pours each hot chocolate from a pot, then adds a squirt of whipped cream on top.

LAWRENCE

Andy is our resident hot chocolate expert. Makes his from real chocolate, not powder.

ANNIE

(sipping carefully)  
Paradise. Ooh, hot.

BILLY

You forgot the sprinkles Andy.

ANDY

Bite me.

Billy takes a sip, puts his mug down to cool, then starts playing his guitar softly - 'The Water Is Wide,' a Stephen Bennett tune he knows.

They sit quietly, listening to the music a bit.

Annie breaks the silence.

ANNIE

Why did you quit flying, Lawrence?

LAWRENCE

Good question. Not one that is easily answered.

(beat)

I think towards the end of my flying career we became more cockpit managers, not pilots. Mostly running computers, autopilot settings, stuff like that.

(MORE)

## LAWRENCE (CONT'D)

The planes mostly fly themselves these days, almost from take-off to landing. We pushed buttons mostly, hardly touched the flight controls. It wasn't really flying anymore.

## ANNIE

(optimistically, half joking)

So if that trend continues there's actually hope for someone like me? It's like sitting at a computer. Maybe one day we'll even fly planes from our iPhones.

## LAWRENCE

Ha! And you are all welcome to it, Annie. Not my cup of tea.

They listen to the music a bit.

## ANNIE

Lawrence, what happened to you in Indonesia?

## LAWRENCE

How'd you hear about that might I ask?

## ANNIE

James told me something bad happened. Didn't know what. Then you quit.

Lawrence pauses, thinking just how to tell the story best. He is a superb story teller. Mesmerizing. It's storytelling in it's most primitive and powerful form - around the campfire.

Billy stops playing his guitar, to listen. Andy listens too, they've never heard this story either.

## LAWRENCE

I wouldn't say it was a bad experience per se. In hindsight anyway.

(beat)

I was on a three-day layover in Jakarta. I've always been interested in boats, heard the Indonesian fishermen used some interesting dugout canoes. So I went to one of the beaches where they fished.

Lawrence brings the scene back into his mind, like he was there yesterday.

LAWRENCE (CONT'D)

There were four dugouts, so I went over for a look. This Indonesian fisherman comes over, and we start talking, his English was broken but okay. I tell him of my interest in wooden boats. One thing leads to another, he asks if I'd like to take one out. Of course I say yes.

Lawrence pauses a bit, bringing it back.

LAWRENCE (CONT'D)

So we push it out, he hands me a paddle and off I go. It's quite heavy but moves okay. I get out quite a ways, and suddenly the boat gets grabbed in a very strong rip tide. I paddle perpendicular to the current to get out of it, but the boat is just too damn heavy.

It's obvious by his expression and a slight trembling of his lip, that this was a very scary moment.

LAWRENCE (CONT'D)

The rip carries me directly towards a sheer rock cliff, waves smashing against the wall. I know if I can't get out of the rip, pretty soon the canoe and I will be dashed to pieces.

Lawrence rubs his chin with his hand, has a stressful grin of sorts.

LAWRENCE (CONT'D)

So it's decision time. If I stay with the canoe, I'll die for sure. If I swim, I might drown.

He lets the gravity of his decision sink in.

LAWRENCE (CONT'D)

I decide to swim.

Billy, Andy and Annie are mesmerized.

LAWRENCE (CONT'D)

So I laid the paddle down very calmly in the bottom of the boat.

(MORE)

LAWRENCE (CONT'D)

I took off my sneakers, one at a time, tied the laces together and hung them around my neck. To this day I don't know why on earth I chose to do that.

(beat)

I jump in the water, and start swimming perpendicular to the rip. I swim and I swim and I swim. But for the life of me I can't get out of it.

(beat)

Eventually I'm totally exhausted, I start flailing, and I'm sucking down salt water. I know I'm going to drown. At some point I must have passed out. Or drowned.

Annie's jaw drops, OMG.

LAWRENCE (CONT'D)

The next thing I know I'm lying on the beach, sneakers still around my neck. The fisherman is shaking my shoulder, trying to get me to wake up. I cough up a bunch of seawater, he helps me up and leads me over to an enormous feast he and all the fishing families have set up on the beach.

Lawrence's face breaks into a delightful grin.

LAWRENCE (CONT'D)

And I partake in one of the most sumptuous meals I've had in my entire life.

Lawrence laughs, bites his lip, shakes his head, still amazed to this day at the memory.

ANDY

Wow.

ANNIE

So that made you quit flying?  
Nearly drowning? Really?

LAWRENCE

Something saved my life that day. I knew then clear as crystal I better do something to repay the debt, and to pay for my selfish ways, before my time really runs out.

(MORE)

LAWRENCE (CONT'D)

So I quit flying freight, and started working with kids and boats, maybe try to help them avoid some of the mistakes I made early in life. Tahoe seemed like a good place to do that.

ANNIE

Like what kind of mistakes?

LAWRENCE

I think when I was young, I tended to think my tiny world was the center of the universe. My whole world was made up of Me, and my dreams. I wasn't really helping anybody else. After awhile that got kind of lonely.

They're all quiet, digesting the wisdom.

LAWRENCE (CONT'D)

I had my life all planned out. Thought I did anyway. But the Universe landed me here instead. Helping these kids.

Lawrence chuckles, bites his lip, feels thankful.

Then Billy starts strumming Marley's 'Redemption Song' - instrumental.

LAWRENCE (CONT'D)

How apropos, Billy.

ANDY

Sappy.

ANNIE

(listening)

No. It's perfect.

Annie rubs Lawrence's shoulder, reassuringly.

Billy adds a few vocals to the song as he plays. He's got a good voice.

BILLY

(singing softly)

Old pirates, yes, they rob I,  
Sold I to the merchant ships  
Minutes after they took I  
From the bottomless pit

(MORE)

BILLY (CONT'D)  
But my 'and was made strong  
By the 'and of the Almighty...

Billy continues with the instrumental tune.

FADE OUT.

EXT. TAHOE KEYS - DAY

Annie, Lawrence, Billy and Andy are gathered at Annie's camper van. The driver's door is open and Annie is about to get in.

LAWRENCE  
Hope I didn't discourage you young lady.

ANDY  
Yeah, don't listen to Lawrence.  
He's a sour old fart.

Billy laughs, pushes Andy.

BILLY  
Shut. Up.

LAWRENCE  
(to Andy)  
You just earned yourself a pay cut young man. Rations cut to bread and water.

ANNIE  
Camper van diet.

They all chuckle some more.

LAWRENCE  
If flying is still your dream,  
young lady, pursue it with vigor.

Annie smiles. It is. A moment of silence.

ANDY  
So, um, where you headed next in this beast? What's your plan?

ANNIE  
So, yeah, right, a plan. I think I'm going to head up to Graeagle, camp out a few nights. I need to think.

(beat)

(MORE)

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Then I'm going to head to Las Vegas, check out a flight school down there, before I run out of money and need a job.

LAWRENCE

You're young, why plan? Take off for a year in your van. Work odd jobs. Live on peanuts and beans. Live free as the wind before life and work tie you down.

ANDY

(referring to Lawrence)  
What I'm talking about. Don't listen.

ANNIE

Yeah. Be the leaf, right?

LAWRENCE

(winking at Andy)  
Well, just an idea. Wherever the road leads you young lady, you are always welcome back here. Give us a hug.

Hugs all around.

ANNIE

Thanks Lawrence.

BILLY

Good luck Annie.

ANNIE

Gonna miss you guys. And I hardly even know you.

ANDY, BILLY AND LAWRENCE

Yeah. Bye. Be safe.

ANNIE

'Kay.

Annie hops in her van, feels like they've known each other forever, wipes a tear, waves one more time as the Andy and Billy look on. Lawrence heads quickly off to his next task.

Annie fires up the van and drives off towards Graeagle.

FADE OUT.

EXT. HIGHWAY 89 NORTH - DAY

We see a drone shot of Annie's van as it heads north towards Graeagle, passing a highway sign indicating the mileage to Graeagle.

INT. ANNIE'S VAN - DAY

Annie eats tortilla chips, wags her head in rhythm to a Brett Dennon song 'See the World.'

Then we see through her windshield a generic sedan pulled over, with a flat rear tire. The car has a handicap plate.

A very ELDERLY MAN with a cane standing behind the car waves to Annie for help.

Annie looks concerned, puts the chips down, pulls over, and backs up in front of the sedan.

She checks her mirror, and climbs out to see what's up.

EXT. HIGHWAY 89 NORTH - CONTINUOUS

We see Annie approach the Elderly Man, who looks distressed.

ELDERLY MAN

Oh thank God you stopped. My cell phone has no service. Can you please call someone for help for us?

Annie looks at the flat tire.

ANNIE

I think I can fix this, done a few before. Can you pop your trunk open?

ELDERLY MAN

Oh thank you!

As the Elderly Man opens the driver's door, Annie peaks in and we see a very elderly lady, sitting in a daze.

The Elderly Man pops the trunk open.

Annie moves some stuff out of the way, accesses the spare tire compartment, pulls out the jack and toolkit and the spare tire.

DISSOLVE TO:



Annie has trouble cranking off the last lug nut. Elderly Man sees she's having trouble.

ELDERLY MAN (CONT'D)  
Here, let me help.

Together, they break the nut loose. Annie, embarrassed she needed help, puts the tire iron down, pulls the flat spare off the hub, puts it aside, and mounts the spare tire.

DISSOLVE TO:

Annie lets the car with fixed flat down off the jack, puts the tools away and closes the trunk.

ANNIE  
Ok, you're all set. Anything else you need help with?

ELDERLY MAN  
(grasping Annie's right hand)  
I don't know how to thank you young lady.

The Elderly Man pulls out his wallet.

ELDERLY MAN (CONT'D)  
Can I buy you dinner?

ANNIE  
No, no, no. It's my pleasure. Where you guys headed?

ELDERLY MAN  
Quincy, friends there.

ANNIE  
I'd recommend getting that flat spare fixed as soon as you can.

ELDERLY MAN  
Yeah, we'll find a shop up there.

ANNIE  
Well you drive safe. Take care.

They shake hands, Annie climbs in her van as the Elderly Man looks at her with appreciation.

We see Annie's van pull out without signaling.

FADE OUT.

EXT. MOVIN' WEST RV PARK - EVENING

Annie's van pulls up to the check-in hut.

Annie gets out, goes inside the hut.

INT. MOVIN' WEST RV PARK, CHECK-IN DESK - EVENING

SUSIE hands Annie her check-in packet and a map of the park.

SUSIE  
(circling Annie's  
campsite)

You are right here back by the two  
little cabins. Bathroom and shower  
right outside here to my left. John  
and I are on until six, let us know  
if you need anything okay?

ANNIE  
Thanks Susie.

EXT. MOVIN' WEST RV PARK - CONTINUOUS

Annie hops back in her van and proceeds toward the back of  
the RV park.

She pulls in to her designated spot, gets out, stretches her  
arms, looks around and breathes in the fresh mountain pine  
air.

FADE OUT.

INT. ANNIE'S VAN - SUNSET

Annie pours water out of a jug into a small teapot, and puts  
the teapot on the counter near the burner.

She pulls a stick lighter out of a drawer, turns on the  
burner, and tries to light it. Nothing. She turns off the  
burner.

She points a finger in the air, remembers something the sales  
guy showed her.

She finds the propane tank inside a cabinet, and opens the  
valve.

She goes back to the stove, turns on the gas again and successfully lights the burner. She smiles, and puts the teapot on the burner.

FADE TO:

EXT. MOVIN' WEST RV PARK - CONTINUOUS

We see the lights on in Annie's van.

The sun goes down through the pines.

INT. ANNIE'S VAN - NIGHT

Annie snuggles up in her bunk with her hot tea and a blanket. She checks her bank balance on her phone. \$765.73 left.

She picks up her book, 'Jonathon Livingston Seagull,' and pours herself into the book.

FADE OUT.

EXT. GRAEAGLE FROSTEE - NEXT DAY

Annie pulls in to the Frostee, opens her door, climbs out and dials home.

She watches as a large passenger van pulls in. A large group of tourists gets out and gets in line at the order window.

Marie's phone rings, no answer. Annie hangs up.

Annie sees the line is now too long to wait. She pulls up Google Maps on her phone.

ANNIE

(talking to her van)

You ready for adventure babe?

Beckwourth. 'Aerodrome de Nervino.'

Sounds interesting.

Annie buckles up, shuts the door and pulls out of the parking lot a bit too quickly. An car driving by has to swerve, and honks.

Annie hits the brakes

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Shit! Sorry.

This time she pulls out more carefully, and heads north out of Graeagle.

INT. ANNIE'S CAMPER VAN - DAY

Annie munches more tortilla chips out of the bag as she heads towards Portola, adjusts her volume up, rocks out to James Taylor, 'Stretch of the Highway.'

EXT. HIGHWAY 70 - DAY

Annie turns right onto Highway 70 at Blairsden. A sign shows the distance to Portola.

ANNIE

Ok babe, should be just the other side of town.

EXT. BECKWOURTH AERODROME - DAY

Annie spies the tiny airport, and swerves in the entrance road without signaling.

Overhead a yellow Piper J3 Cub approaches the airfield, but she doesn't notice.

She winds her way around to the front of Herb Bishop's Nervino Aviation hanger and office.

Looks deserted.

She shuts off the motor, jumps out, walks around, sees nobody.

The wind partially fills a lonely orange wind sock near the runway.

A few planes of various types and conditions are tied down on the tarmac.

She hears the faint sound of the yellow Cub and looks up.

She watches the Cub as it enters the traffic pattern, turns on final and lands in a short distance.

The Cub taxis up to the fuel station by the Nervino Aviation hanger, the engine shuts down.

The right side doors pop open, and an older pilot, GEORGE, hops out.

Annie is curious, walks up for a closer look, but not close enough to interfere as George sets up a ladder and starts the refueling process.

He notices Annie, says nothing, keeps on with the refueling. Once the fuel starts flowing, George looks over at Annie, curious.

ANNIE  
Nice Cub. Yours?

GEORGE  
Yep, all mine. Paid for too.

ANNIE  
Where you in from?

GEORGE  
Sonoma Skypark.

ANNIE  
Gotcha. This place is deserted.  
Anyone actually work here?

GEORGE  
Ghosts mostly.  
(beat)  
So what brings you to the  
Aerodrome?

ANNIE  
Just driving by, that's all.  
Thought I'd peek around.

George digests that.

GEORGE  
Sure there isn't something else  
you're here for?

Annie begins to experience the laser-like and observant mind of George, says nothing right away anyway.

George finishes pumping fuel, puts the cap on, climbs down off the ladder and stows the fuel hose.

ANNIE  
Like what?

George folds and puts the ladder back in its place.

GEORGE  
I'd guess you are a bit of a wing  
nut.

Annie walks carefully closer.

ANNIE

Oh I don't know, what gave you that idea?

GEORGE

No one just pulls into the Beckwourth Aerodrome for a peek around. I saw you swerve off the highway when I dropped into the pattern. You're a dead giveaway.

ANNIE

Huh.

GEORGE

Yeah, plane spotter. Aircraft enthusiast. Dead giveaway. And you forgot to signal.

Annie smiles a tiny bit, intrigued.

ANNIE

Huh.

George checks his watch, then looks at her left hand as she puts it on her hip.

GEORGE

You fly?

ANNIE

Nope.

GEORGE

Say, I'm in no hurry. I sell rides, helps pay for the fuel. See this beautiful country from the air. Clear your mind. Fly with the hawks. You interested?

It's a really tiny plane. Looks kind of primitive. She doesn't know a thing about this guy. The thought actually going up in it kind of scares her, which surprises even her.

ANNIE

Um, no. No thanks. I kinda gotta get going.

George is ready to go, but he hesitates.

GEORGE

Say, what's your name?

ANNIE  
Annie. Annie Ng.

George walks to the front of the plane to swing the prop.

GEORGE  
I'm George. Just plain George. Come  
on down to the Skypark if you ever  
want a ride. I do Tahoe tours.  
Change your life, I promise.

ANNIE  
(thinking probably not)  
Sure, okay.

George swings the prop, the engine fires quietly.

GEORGE  
Forty dollars for forty minutes...

Annie smiles.

George climbs in, buckles up, and puts on his headset.

He winks at Annie and taxis out.

Annie watches as the Cub rolls out onto the runway and takes  
off into the afternoon sky.

Annie dials Marie.

No answer.

FADE OUT.

EXT. RENO, HIGHWAY 80 EAST - DAY

We see the van drive into Reno.

EXT. ANNIE'S HOUSE - EVENING

Annie slowly approaches her house in the van. She sees  
Clive's truck parked there.

She drives slowly by, deciding it would not be a good idea to  
drop in.

She continues past and heads towards downtown Reno instead.

EXT. CIRCUS-CIRCUS HOTEL - EVENING

Annie pulls the van into the parking garage. Without signaling.

INT. CIRCUS-CIRCUS CHECK-IN DESK - EVENING

Annie, with backpack and messenger bag slung over her shoulder, walks up to an open counter and talks to REGISTRATION GUY.

ANNIE

What's your best rate?

REGISTRATION GUY

\$39 dollars. Plus \$14 resort fee.  
Plus \$25 reloadable club membership  
card.

ANNIE

Resort fee? I don't want the club  
card thing.

REGISTRATION GUY

They're not optional. The card gets  
you 25% off all meals. You  
literally pay it off in two meals.  
Parking is free.

ANNIE

Gee thanks. I'll need it for a  
couple of nights.

Annie is not in the mood to battle, she pulls out some cash from her backpack and uses most of it to pay.

INT. CIRCUS-CIRCUS HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Annie's backpack and messenger bag are on the bed. She has a bag of fast food and a large fountain drink on the desk where she sits.

The TV is on some talking head channel.

She munches the lousy burger, barely watching the TV. She's tired from a long day and lots of driving.

After a few bites, she feels nauseous, throws the burger and fries in the bag, and the whole thing in the trash.

Annie checks her bank balance on her phone. \$532.89 left.



She sits, staring at nothing. She rubs the gold heart necklace absent mindedly.

Her phone rings. She drops the necklace, picks up the phone, but doesn't recognize the number.

ANNIE

Hello?

HOSPITAL NURSE (O.S.)

Hello is this Annie Ng?

ANNIE

Speaking.

HOSPITAL NURSE (O.S.)

I'm calling to tell you your mother Marie has been admitted to the hospital.

Annie is suddenly alert.

ANNIE

What? What for?

HOSPITAL NURSE (O.S.)

Chest pain. Trouble breathing. We're just running some tests now. Got her started on oxygen. Blood test. Chest x-ray. Very possibly an MRI. And maybe a needle biopsy. We think there could be a mass obstructing her airway.

ANNIE

A needle biopsy?! A mass? Like, a tumor?

HOSPITAL NURSE (O.S.)

We're not sure, we need to find that out.

ANNIE

Where exactly is she? Is anyone with her?

HOSPITAL NURSE (O.S.)

She's in Renown downtown, Emergency Room. A gentleman she knows just arrived. We're waiting for a room assignment.

ANNIE

Okay, thank you for letting me know. I'll be right there.

Annie hangs up, grabs Sarah's fleece, her phone, her messenger bag and heads out.

INT. HOSPITAL ER - NIGHT

A CNA shows Annie the way to Marie's ER cubicle, and opens the privacy curtain for Annie.

Clive is sitting in a chair, silent.

Annie ignores him completely, goes to Marie and grabs her hand.

ANNIE

Mom, what's wrong, what's going on?  
Why didn't you answer my calls or texts?

MARIE

(wheezing)  
I didn't know how to tell you.

ANNIE

They can operate, right?

CLIVE

We still don't have the test results. And they need to run more. That's all we know so far.

Annie turns to Clive, she really doesn't want him here.

ANNIE

(to Clive, politely angry)  
Um, Clive, can you just give mom and me some time alone?

Clive knows this is not the time or place to fight Annie.

CLIVE

Sure.  
(to Marie)  
I'm going to go now honey, I'll be back later ok?

MARIE

Go get some sleep. I'll be okay. Come back tomorrow, ok?

CLIVE

Ok. Bye babe.

Clive squeezes Marie's hand, gives her a kiss, then ducks out without looking at Annie.

Annie looks into Marie's eyes. She sees resignation there. This is not good.

ANNIE

I love you mom. We can make it through this.

MARIE

I was dreaming right before you got here. I saw your father. He looked so handsome, just like the day I met him.

Marie smiles slightly through dry chapped lips.

ANNIE

Mom, don't talk like that. You are not going anywhere. I need you here.

Marie squeezes Annie's hand.

Annie pulls some Chapstick out of her messenger bag, and puts it on Marie's dry lips.

Then Annie grabs a plastic cup with water and a straw from off the bedside table.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

You should drink something, you need to stay hydrated.

MARIE

I wish it were wine.

Marie drinks a little, her eyes saying thank-you.

Annie just looks at Marie, just being present, no words coming to mind that can help.

Annie hugs Marie and sobs.

INT. CIRCUS-CIRCUS HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Annie sits on the floor. She cries. She thinks of Lawrence.

She unties her Converse sneakers, takes them off, carefully ties the laces together, hangs the pair around her neck, closes her eyes and cries more.

FADE OUT.

INT. CIRCUS-CIRCUS CHECK-IN DESK - MORNING

Annie talks to the Registration Guy.

ANNIE

I'll need it for two more weeks. My mom's in the hospital, she's dying. Can you cut me a deal?

REGISTRATION GUY

No deals. \$39 dollars a night.

ANNIE

Fine.

She hands him her debit card.

FADE OUT.

TWO WEEKS LATER

EXT. MOUNTAIN STREAM - DAY

Annie hikes off trail, following a nice mountain stream uphill.

It takes a little bushwhacking, but not much.

She finds a nice pool, with a little waterfall, and stops there.

She takes off her backpack, pulls out a folding camp shovel, and Marie's urn.

Annie digs a hole.

The necklace Marie gave her hangs loosely as she digs.

Annie places the urn gently inside the hole, then fills the hole over, covering it with needles and leaves.

She sits, reaches into her backpack, pulls out a book of Emily Dickinson poetry, finds the bookmarked page and reads out loud.

## ANNIE

I dwell in Possibility  
by Emily Dickinson

I dwell in Possibility -  
A fairer House than Prose -  
More numerous of Windows -  
Superior - for Doors -

Of Chambers as the Cedars -  
Impregnable of eye -  
And for an everlasting Roof -  
The Gambrels of the Sky -

Of Visitors - the fairest -  
For Occupation - This -  
The spreading wide my narrow Hands  
To gather Paradise -

Annie puts the book down, sits quietly, and listens to the sounds of the forest and stream, satisfied she has fulfilled Marie's final wish.

FADE OUT.

EXT. ANNIE'S HOUSE - DAY

Annie pulls the van up to her house and parks on the street. Clive's truck is in the driveway.

Annie gets out and walks in.

EXT. ANNIE'S HOUSE, BACK PATIO - DAY

Annie enters the patio. Clive is seated in patio furniture, smoking a cigar, drinking a beer and grilling a large Porterhouse steak.

Clive looks surprised, but he's got a buzz on, doesn't try too hard to get up.

CLIVE

Oh hey Annie.

ANNIE

Hi Clive. I need you to pack up your stuff and be gone by the weekend.

CLIVE

You kicking me out?

ANNIE  
Either I do, or the cops do.

CLIVE  
Shit Annie.

ANNIE  
Your choice Clive.

CLIVE  
Shit.

He knows there's not a thing he can do.

CLIVE (CONT'D)  
I'll be gone by tomorrow.

FADE OUT.

INT. ANNIE'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Annie is sitting at the kitchen table, munching some fast food.

She has a bottle of wine open, and drinks from a plastic cup.

The photo of Francis sits on the table, facing Annie.

She checks her bank balance on her phone. \$338.55 left.

She munches more, sips a nearly empty glass of wine, and looks at Francis, as if he were there with her.

ANNIE  
I wish we could talk dad.

Then Francis sticks his head out the DC-3 window further and starts speaking.

FRANCIS  
So, you have no money. No job. No place to live. Quite a mess you're in, Annie.

ANNIE  
(shocked and amazed)  
Dad??

FRANCIS  
What were you afraid of?

Annie knows he's talking about George, at the Aerodrome. She searches her soul for an answer, and answers back.

ANNIE

I was afraid to go up with him. I had the chance to fly. But I got scared. I don't know why.

FRANCIS

You still have the chance.

Annie can't speak.

Francis fades back into the original still photo.

ANNIE

Dad?

But he's done.

INT. ANNIE'S BEDROOM - DAWN

Annie lies in her bed, in her nearly empty room, in her jammies. She can't sleep.

She turns on her light and tries reading her book. It doesn't help.

She puts the book down and looks up at the origami airplanes moving a little.

She smiles, then gets up, with newfound energy, opens the window shade and lets in the morning light.

She looks at the photo of Francis on her desk, picks it up, looks at it and smiles a little bit more.

FADE TO:

EXT. SONOMA SKYPARK - DAY

Annie pulls the van up to the flight operations office.

There's a dusty old red Jeep parked in the one and only handicap parking place. Looks like it's been there awhile.

There's an older 22' camping trailer parked on the other side, also looks like a relic from the past.

She climbs out, glances at the Jeep, raises an eyebrow.

She starts for the office, but sees the yellow Cub parked on the grass, and George working on something under the right wing.

She heads his way instead.

EXT. SONOMA SKYPARK TARMAC - DAY

George doesn't notice Annie approaching.

He still doesn't take notice when she stops nearby and watches as he finishes screwing on a new latch catch on the right side flip-up window.

ANNIE

Excuse me, know where I can find a  
guy named George around here?

George keeps working, he doesn't like to be interrupted.

GEORGE

So the original catch is a bad  
design. Keeps breaking, and I have  
to keep replacing it. I'm trying a  
new design.

(pleased)

Fabricated it myself.

ANNIE

Clever.

George gets up to address the lady properly.

GEORGE

Annie if I recall. What brings you  
here? Was it something I said?

George puts his tools back in his tool bag. He misses a ring compressor that he had pulled out to get to the other tools.

ANNIE

Yeah, in fact it is. "Forty bucks  
for forty minutes." And your ring  
compressor is still lying on the  
grass.

George takes note of her comment, sizes her up, bends down, and puts the ring compressor in his bag.

GEORGE

You seemed a little, shall I say,  
reluctant last time we met.

Annie can't argue that.

ANNIE

I want to fly.



GEORGE

Why don't you just sit in the cockpit for a minute, see if it's really what you're interested in.

ANNIE

Ok, sure.

George helps Annie into the front seat of the Cub.

Annie takes it all in. She's slightly scared, and she's slightly thrilled.

GEORGE

Well?

Annie puts her hand on the control stick and moves it around, playing with the feel of the control surfaces responding stiffly.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Try the throttle, here, with your left hand.

Annie tries the throttle, it's a bit awkward.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

We can work on that.

ANNIE

(hopeful)

Really?

GEORGE

You interested in a scenic ride? Or are you looking for say an introductory lesson? That's eighty dollars, I let you take the controls.

Annie relaxes a bit, begins to smile a bit. Her heart is racing.

ANNIE

(super quietly)

Intro.

GEORGE

Beg your pardon?

ANNIE

(louder)

Intro lesson.

George sees something interesting developing here. Maybe it's the hand. Maybe it's a new challenge.

GEORGE  
(realizing why she's here)  
You want to be a pilot, don't you?

ANNIE  
(biting her lips, hiding a tiny smile)  
Maybe.

GEORGE  
You want to be a really good pilot?

ANNIE  
Yeah.

GEORGE  
Then you came to the right place.

Then he devises a very risky plan.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
Look, I'm starving, need to get a deposit over to the bank. You mind driving while I eat a sandwich?

ANNIE  
No, not at all.

George helps Annie out of the Cub. Then he grabs an ancient metal Superman lunch box off the back seat, closes the bottom door, then drops the top window and latches it shut.

GEORGE  
See, all fixed.

ANNIE  
What's in the box?

GEORGE  
That's my lunch box. Never seen one of these before?

Annie relaxes a bit, feels her confidence and her wit returning.

ANNIE  
No. Looks old. You have that thing in kindergarten?

GEORGE  
 Maybe. Let's go.

CUT TO:

INT. ANNIE'S CAMPER VAN - DAY

Annie, sitting in the driver's seat, has the van's engine running, rap music on.

George hops in with his lunch box, winces at the bad music.

Annie turns the music down out of courtesy.

George doesn't say anything, just starts collecting data while eating his sandwich half out of the baggie.

ANNIE  
 Let me guess. Baloney sandwich?

GEORGE  
 Head out that way. Turn left at the stop sign.

Annie drives away from the field, pulls up to the aforementioned stop sign, barely stops, and turns left without signaling.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
 Ever use a signal?

ANNIE  
 There's nobody out here. You eat. I'll drive.

George observes, raises an eyebrow, but stays silent as Annie drives towards town, following George's instructions.

GEORGE  
 Take this road straight into town.

A speed limit sign saying 35 flashes by. We see on the speedometer that Annie is doing 47.

George taps the speedometer.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
 This thing work?

ANNIE  
 I don't know, I guess.

George just raises his eyebrows, says nothing, takes another bite of his sandwich.

EXT. SONOMA - CONTINUOUS

They enter a more congested part of town.

GEORGE

Up ahead, Bank of America, on the right. Park in front, I'll just be a minute.

EXT. SONOMA, BANK OF AMERICA - CONTINUOUS

Annie parks the van in front of Bank of America, without signaling.

George finishes his last bite, takes a drink of Coke, and hops out.

INT. ANNIE'S CAMPER VAN - CONTINUOUS

Annie tries a couple of different stations on the radio. Tunes in some classical, changes it. Some jazz, changes it. Finds the rap again, keeps it there. Turns it back up.

George comes out of the bank, hops in.

Annie turns the rap music down a bit.

George says nothing.

GEORGE

Ok, back to the field. You remember the way?

ANNIE

I think so.

EXT. SONOMA, BANK OF AMERICA - CONTINUOUS

Annie backs the van out, but fails to see a convertible VW Bug coming. She hits the brakes hard.

VW BUG DRIVER honks at Annie from his Bug.

VW BUG DRIVER

(shouting and gesturing)  
Hey, watch where you're going!

INT. ANNIE'S CAMPER VAN - CONTINUOUS

ANNIE

Oops, sorry. Didn't see him. Sorry.

Annie backs out more carefully this time, and they head back the way they came. Rap still playing low on the radio.

EXT. STREETS OF SONOMA - DAY

Annie and George, in the van, come to a four-way intersection with stop signs. Annie has forgotten which way to turn.

ANNIE

I forgot, left or right?

GEORGE

Straight. Speed limit is 35. Keep it there.

EXT. 8TH STREET EAST - DAY

On a long open stretch of road, a jacked up Ford pickup truck going faster than the speed limit quickly catches up.

INT. ANNIE'S CAMPER VAN - CONTINUOUS

Annie looks in her mirror, sees nothing but grill closing in.

ANNIE

Jesus, I think it wants to eat us. Maybe I should speed up.

GEORGE

Hell no. Alpha male, probably jacked on testosterone or Viagra, maybe both. And probably well armed. Don't piss him off. Just let him pass.

EXT. 8TH STREET EAST - CONTINUOUS

Black exhaust comes out of the truck's tailpipe as the driver romps on it and passes.

INT. ANNIE'S CAMPER VAN - CONTINUOUS

Annie and George look at the driver as the truck passes.

A platinum blonde wearing oversize sunglasses smiles and waves from behind the wheel.

ANNIE  
(looking at George)  
Alpha male?

GEORGE  
Watch the road. Keep driving.

Annie keeps driving, still chuckling.

They drive on. One of Annie's favorite songs comes on.

ANNIE  
Great song. Can I turn it up?

George has seen enough.

GEORGE  
No. Pull over.

ANNIE  
Right here?

GEORGE  
Right here. Pull over.

Annie pulls over, no signal.

ANNIE  
Oops, I forgot to signal.

GEORGE  
Turn on your flashers. And turn off that damn music. What is that anyway? K-Anger 105?

Annie looks around for the emergency flashers, finds them, turns them on.

ANNIE  
It's rap, George, my music. Would you rather have Lawrence Welk on?

GEORGE  
Turn it off. And turn off the engine.

George is serious. Annie shuts off the radio and the engine.

It gets quiet.

George chooses his words carefully.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
So you really want to be a pilot,  
like your dad?

ANNIE  
Yeah, whatever, that's the idea.

GEORGE  
Hope he drove better than you.

George pauses, knowing his next words will be zingers.

Annie listens carefully.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
Annie, you're not ready to fly a  
plane.

ANNIE  
What?

GEORGE  
It's the same I've observed with  
most kids from your generation. Too  
much time buried in your tech.  
Laptops, smart phones. Things  
sticking out of your ears. You're  
all unaware of your unawareness.

ANNIE  
What's that supposed to mean?

GEORGE  
If you can't drive a car  
responsibly, and you're oblivious  
to your surroundings, which you  
are, you shouldn't even think of  
flying a plane. For the last twenty  
minutes, you've been driving like  
crap. Surprised we didn't get in a  
wreck.

Annie is dumbfounded. Doesn't know what to say.

ANNIE  
What-ever. Can we just get back and  
do the intro lesson?

GEORGE  
Lesson's over. That was your intro  
lesson. On the house.

Annie's brain works the problem a bit more, sees what's been  
going on with this little trip to the bank.

ANNIE  
So I'm guessing you didn't really  
have to go to the bank.

GEORGE  
Nope.

George figures he's said enough. Annie looks straight forward.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
Let's go.

EXT. 8TH STREET EAST - CONTINUOUS

The van's turn signal comes on, it merges carefully into the traffic lane and proceeds at the speed limit back to the Skypark.

FADE TO:

EXT. SONOMA SKYPARK, FLIGHT OPS OFFICE - DAY

Annie signals properly as she pulls the van up to the flight ops office.

INT. ANNIE'S CAMPER VAN - CONTINUOUS

Annie shuts off the engine. George grabs his lunch box.

ANNIE  
How'd I do?

GEORGE  
Better.  
(beat)  
You learn anything today?

Annie is seriously bummed. She wonders about the validity of her whole career path now.

ANNIE  
Yeah. I guess. Are we done?

GEORGE  
Yep.

Annie just wants to get out of here. But George isn't quite finished.

George gets out, but talks to her through the open door.



GEORGE (CONT'D)  
What's your flight plan Annie?

ANNIE  
(annoyed)  
Why does everyone keep asking me that? Jesus.  
(beat)  
I don't really know George. Seems like the harder I try to reach my goal of flying, the farther away I get. Maybe I'll just fly freakin' drones. Maybe that's all I'll ever be qualified for.

George sees she's down.

GEORGE  
Ever hear of Knight's Law?

ANNIE  
Nope.

GEORGE  
"Life is what happens while you're making other plans."

ANNIE  
Yeah. Don't I know.  
(beat)  
Maybe I don't want to be a pilot George. Maybe I'm not cut out for it. I probably can't even pass the medical.

GEORGE  
Look, Annie, not much that's truly good and worthy comes easy in life.

Annie is very discouraged.

ANNIE  
I gotta go.

George shuts the door and watches her go, wondering if he was too hard on her.

EXT. STREETS OF SONOMA - NIGHT

We see Annie's van parked on a side street, lights inside slightly visible.

INT. ANNIE'S CAMPER VAN - NIGHT

Annie sits on her bunk, eating a power bar, thinking. She looks over at a ledge where her dad's picture with the broken glass is propped up.

ANNIE

Dad? Are you there?

This time the photo of Francis stays frozen in time. But in her mind she hears his voice again.

FRANCIS (V.O.)

What are you afraid of?

She ponders that for a moment or two.

Then she sees her book, 'Jonathon Livingston Seagull,' and feels the need to open it to a random page.

She reads.

AUTHOR (V.O.)

"We can lift ourselves out of ignorance, we can find ourselves as creatures of excellence and intelligence and skill. We can be free! We can learn to fly!"

Annie puts the book down and thinks about everything that's happened.

FADE OUT.

EXT. SONOMA SKYPARK, FLIGHT OPS OFFICE - DAY

Annie pulls up to the flight ops office and parks next to the Jeep and the trailer.

She jumps out cautiously, looks for the Cub, but it's not in sight. Her stomach is filled with butterflies.

No sign of George.

Annie walks inside to the pilot's lounge.

INT. PILOT'S LOUNGE - DAY

Annie looks around, nobody home.

She sees a well-stocked bookshelf, walks over to it, scans the titles.

All aviation themes. Manuals, fiction and nonfiction books, in no particular order.

One oversize book sticking out catches her eye. It's a thin children's book. She pulls it out, looks at the cover.

It's titled 'Ann Can Fly.'

She smiles and puts it back on the shelf.

She heads towards the hanger where George keeps the Cub.

INT. GEORGE'S HANGER - DAY

Annie open the side door to the hanger. The lights are bright and the floor is immaculately clean. The Cub is inside with inspection ports off, engine covers open, etc.

No sign of George.

She sees an ancient soda machine just inside the door she came through. Machine says \$.25 cents for a bottle of pop.

Next to the soda machine is a folding work table with several parts on it, and a rubber mallet.

Annie's thirsty.

She takes a quarter out of her pocket, drops it in the coin slot, she opens the glass door, grabs a bottle, and ... it won't come out. She tries a couple other bottles. Nothing.

We hear the flush of a toilet, the bathroom door opens and George comes out, not noticing Annie.

He walks purposely towards the Cub, stops, puts his hands on his hips and figures out what to do next.

Annie approaches.

ANNIE

Excuse me. Your soda machine ate my money.

George doesn't even look at her.

GEORGE

It's been doing that for years.  
Easy money.

He grabs a rag off the rolling mechanic's toolbox, wipes off some greasy engine part, puts it and the rag back.

ANNIE

Say, I'm looking to take some flying lessons. Like, in an airplane? Know anyone around here who might take me on?

George looks at her nonchalantly, picks up a rubber mallet, and walks over to the soda machine.

Annie follows. Wonder what he's up to now?

George looks at the soda machine, gives it a whack in just the right spot, and pulls out a bottle, pops the cap off in the bottle cap remover, hands the bottle to Annie.

GEORGE

Works fine.

She's used to can's, never seen a bottle from a machine. It looks really old.

ANNIE

How old is this thing?

GEORGE

(not listening)  
Sport Pilot Certificate.

ANNIE

Pardon?

GEORGE

That's how you are going to become a pilot.

Annie puts the disgusting bottle on the table covered with parts, makes a face.

ANNIE

Um, explain?

GEORGE

You have a valid driver's license?

ANNIE

Yeah, so?

George looks straight at Annie.

GEORGE

Show me.

Annie groans. She pulls her wallet out of her back pocket, takes out her driver's license and hands it to George.

He checks it out carefully.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
 Hmm. That's you. Looks current. Not a fake. Surprised they gave you one.

ANNIE  
 Very funny.

He hands it back to Annie.

GEORGE  
 Code of Federal Regulations, Title 14, Chapter I, Subchapter D Part 61, Subpart J - Sport Pilots.

ANNIE  
 Yeah? So?

GEORGE  
 If you hold a valid driver's license and a Sport Pilot certificate, you may, quote, "operate any light-sport aircraft for which you hold the endorsements required for its category and class." Unquote.

He watches Annie for a reaction.

ANNIE  
 Say that again.

GEORGE  
 The Sport Pilot rule gives you the ability to utilize a driver's license in lieu of a medical certificate. AND if we can prove that you can safely operate a Light Sport Category aircraft...

George nods to the Cub.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
 ... then we can get you certified as a real bonafide Light Sport aircraft student pilot.

Annie hesitates at first, then begins to light up.

ANNIE  
 Oh my God. Why didn't I ever think of that?

(MORE)

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Somewhere in ground school we covered it I'm sure, but I've been so focused on flying freighters, and passing the medicals, I just never really paid much attention to the Sport license. That's my foot in the door?

GEORGE

Could be.

ANNIE

George, you're a genius!

GEORGE

We're not there yet by a long shot. After six lessons, I'll know if I can turn you into a safe Sport pilot. After that, it's up to you to see how far you can take it. Might even help your driving.

ANNIE

Very funny. When do we start?

GEORGE

As soon as I'm done with the annual. Should probably get signed off over the weekend. So, maybe early next week? That work for you?

ANNIE

Sure.

GEORGE

Show me your hand.

Annie shows George her good hand, not knowing why George would ask.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

No, your other hand. I need to see what we're up against.

Annie shows George her prosthetic hand. He takes it in his hand.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Open.

Annie opens the fingers. George puts a finger between Annie's two prosthetic fingers.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
Squeeze.

Annie pinches carefully she thinks.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
Ahh! Let go!

ANNIE  
Sorry, no feeling so I have to  
guess.

GEORGE  
Whew. Good grip. Plenty of grip.

George rubs his chin, then begins to develop a lesson plan.

Then Annie sees a problem.

ANNIE  
Just one problem.

GEORGE  
And?

ANNIE  
You said six lessons. Eighty bucks  
a lesson. I don't have that kind of  
money.

GEORGE  
Right, starving student.

George thinks a minute. Then an idea strikes.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
You good with tools? Know a bit  
about fixing old cars? You seemed  
to know what a ring compressor is.

ANNIE  
I'm okay. I helped dad a lot on his  
sand rail. He taught me some stuff.

GEORGE  
You like 'Let's Make a Deal?'

ANNIE  
Never heard of it.

GEORGE  
TV game show.

ANNIE

Ok...?

GEORGE

You know that Jeep out front?

ANNIE

Yeah, the one illegally parked in the handicap spot?

GEORGE

Blew a jug, I think.

ANNIE

Yeah?

GEORGE

Think you could fix that for me?

ANNIE

You helping?

GEORGE

Nope. But if you fix that jug for me, I'll comp you six lessons.

Annie thinks about it. She's not sure she's up to the task.

ANNIE

You don't make anything easy, do you?

GEORGE

Deal or No Deal?

ANNIE

Isn't that some other TV game show or something?

GEORGE

Yeah.

ANNIE

What, you sit around watching TV all day?

GEORGE

Gotta keep my brain active, you know?

(still waiting for an answer)

Well? Do we have a deal?



ANNIE  
I'll think about it.

George looks pleased with himself.

GEORGE  
Say, you want to learn a few things about this bird? Help me finish the annual? Jeopardy's not on 'til six.

ANNIE  
Ha. You sure I wouldn't just get in the way?

GEORGE  
I want you to get in the way. That's how you learn. Ask me a bunch of really stupid questions too.

Not waiting for an answer, George picks up a well-worn inspection report off a tool cart, waves it at Annie and walks over to the engine. He puts on his readers, which are on a chain around his neck.

Annie resigns to George's persistence, and joins him by the engine.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
Ok good. We'll start with this. This is the Inspection Report. It's a checklist. We go through this item by item. Right now, I'm right here, Inspection Group B, Item 24: "Inspect intake seals and hoses for leaks and clamps for tightness."

We see Annie listening carefully as George points out the intake seals and hoses in the engine compartment.

ANNIE  
What's an intake?

George looks at her over the top of his readers and raises his eyebrows. Realizing there's going to be lots to teach here, he gets very patient.

GEORGE  
(pointing)  
That's the intake and that's the seal. Keeps unwanted stuff out.

Annie inspects the seal.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
Look good to you? No cracks, no  
gaps?

ANNIE  
(inspecting)  
Ah, yeah. The intake seal. Looks  
good to me George.

They continue.

GEORGE  
Should be done by the end of the  
week. Then we fly.

FADE OUT.

ONE WEEK LATER

EXT. SONOMA SKYPARK TARMAC - DAY

George and Annie have the Cub rolled out onto the grass  
tarmac. George introduces Annie to the pre-flight walk-around  
and to checklists.

Annie has her cheap sunglasses on.

GEORGE  
Those the best sunglasses you have?

ANNIE  
I have dad's good ones in my  
backpack. But I promised myself I  
wouldn't wear those until the day I  
solo.

GEORGE  
What if you don't solo?

ANNIE  
I'll cry, then I'll do some serious  
retail therapy.

GEORGE  
On what? You're almost broke,  
you'll have to shoplift.

ANNIE  
Ha ha.

He changes topic to checklists, a good place to start the  
lessons.

GEORGE

So, this is our checklist Annie. We'll use it for our preflight walk-around every time we want to go fly the plane. Even once you have it memorized, you still use it. Memories fail. That causes accidents. I still use it every time I fly. If I remember.

Annie listens carefully. George hammers the point home a bit more.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

We don't fly our airplanes like we drive our cars. Which is usually badly.

Annie grits her teeth in embarrassment.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

If we did, there would be carnage in the skies.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Everything we do has a checklist. Just like the Inspection Report we did for the annual. For the walk-around, we start on the starboard side, with the landing gear attachments, here.

George points those out.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

How do they look to you, Annie? Anything damaged or missing? See any brake fluid leaks?

ANNIE

No leaks. Looks good to me.

GEORGE

Good. Check.

They continue down the list, and we go into a sequence of training events over time...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. GEORGE'S HANGER - DAY

Annie sits in the front seat of the Cub, she tries to find the best way to handle the throttle, but the red round ball is hard for her to grab and operate. It doesn't seem safe.

She looks at George, to see if he has a better way.

George shakes his head, no good. He rubs his chin, thinking. Gets an idea.

DISSOLVE TO:

George fabricating an extension out of aluminum.

DISSOLVE TO:

George bolting on the extension coated in rubber tubing to the throttle handle to make gripping it easier for Annie's prosthetic, while she looks on approvingly.

DISSOLVE TO:

Annie tests it out, it works! And she grins. Much easier.

GEORGE

Like I said Annie, easy in a Cub.  
Not so easy in a Boeing.

ANNIE

Yeah.

GEORGE

And we're not out of the woods yet.  
An FAA Inspector is going to have  
to sign this mod off before we fly  
with it.

ANNIE

So many ways to fail, so few ways  
to succeed.

GEORGE

You're catching on kid. Better get  
used to hearing "No" for an answer.  
This is the government we're  
dealing with.

DISSOLVE TO:

A female FAA INSPECTOR sits in the front cockpit of George's Cub, tries the modified throttle handle, makes sure it has full range of motion. It does.

George and Annie watch the FAA Inspector work. George is carrying the maintenance logbook.

FAA INSPECTOR  
It ain't pretty but it works  
George. I think we can sign that  
off today.

GEORGE  
You make everything so difficult  
Sandy. Jesus.

The FAA Inspector climbs out of the cockpit.

George hands the Inspector the maintenance log book.

The FAA Inspector pulls a pen out of her pocket and signs off the modification in the logbook.

FAA INSPECTOR  
(turning to Annie)  
Good luck young lady. We need more  
women in the cockpit. Girls do  
tech, right? I hope to see you  
someday wearing the stripes.

ANNIE  
Thanks.

They all shake hands.

The FAA Inspector leaves.

George turns to Annie.

GEORGE  
Now the real work begins. You ready  
to go fly?

ANNIE  
(swallowing)  
Yeah. Okay.

George sees hesitancy.

GEORGE  
You scared?

ANNIE  
A little.

GEORGE  
Let's go. Pull the chocks and grab  
a strut. She won't roll herself  
out.

They pull the wheel chocks, grab the struts and start rolling  
the Cub out of the hanger.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CUB COCKPIT - DAY

GEORGE  
Ready?

ANNIE  
No. Yeah.

GEORGE  
Here we go!

We see from George's POV in the back seat as George pushes  
his throttle forward, the Cub rolls down the runway and  
quickly gets airborne.

Annie sits stiffly, looking around as the Cub leaves the  
safety of the ground, which is flying by underneath. It's a  
bit scary, but it's thrilling, like her first ride on a  
roller coaster.

George pats Annie on the shoulder.

Music cues: "Learning to Fly," Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SONOMA SKYPARK TARMAC - DAY

George and Annie stand by the nose of the Cub. George holds  
his arms out straight like wings and talks her through the  
maneuver. He banks his arms hard to the left, demonstrating a  
steep bank, then swinging through horizontal and banks his  
arms hard to the right.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CUB COCKPIT - DAY

We see from George's POV in the back seat as the Cub banks  
hard right, then rolls left and into a hard left bank, and  
back again to a hard right bank.

George rubs Annie's shoulder.

GEORGE  
 (over the intercom)  
 Good job kid. Getting better every  
 day.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SONOMA SKYPARK TARMAC - DAY

George and Annie sit under the wing of the Cub as George illustrates a steep spiral dive with his hand, and the correct technique to get out of one.

GEORGE  
 If you get into a spiral dive,  
 level your wings first, then pull  
 out of the dive. Very important.  
 Otherwise if you keep pulling back  
 on the stick without rolling level  
 first, you'll drill a new hole in  
 the ground. Come on, let's try one.

They get up and head towards the cockpit.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CUB COCKPIT - DAY

We see from George's POV as the Cub performs a dizzying left steep spiral dive. It's the world that seems to be spin, not the Cub.

Annie struggles to right the plane. She's intuitively pulling the stick back, which is wrong.

She panics, screams a little, and lets go of the stick.

ANNIE  
 HELP!

GEORGE  
 (over the intercom)  
 I got her. Roll her level first,  
then level out. Just like I told  
 you.

George expertly takes the controls and returns the Cub to horizontal flight.

Annie grabs her head with both hands and shakes in disappointment. That was a very dangerous screwup.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
Come on, get it together. Let's go  
land.  
(beat)  
You got the helm.

Annie musters her confidence and takes the controls.

ANNIE  
Ok. I got her.

INT. CUB COCKPIT - DAY

George's POV. Annie throttles back and enters the traffic pattern over the Skypark.

ANNIE  
(over the radio)  
Sonoma Skypark traffic, Piper Cub  
24 Echo is entering downwind runway  
9 on the 45.

GEORGE  
Good radio work. Now stick the  
landing.

EXT. SONOMA SKYPARK RUNWAY - DAY

We see the Cub bank onto the crosswind leg, then onto final approach.

On final, Annie skids the Cub slightly to bleed speed and lose altitude.

Annie drops it in, but bounces into the air, then back down again for a rough three-point landing.

GEORGE  
(over the intercom)  
A bit rough.

ANNIE  
(intercom)  
I flared too early.

GEORGE  
(intercom)  
Yep. Let's go around again. Last  
one, then we'll call it a day.



Annie advances the throttle and the Cub roars back into the air for another try.

Music (Tiom Petty) fades.

FADE OUT.

TWO WEEKS LATER

EXT. GEORGE'S HANGER - SUNRISE

The sun comes up over the horizon. It's very quiet and very still.

It's time for Annie to solo, but she doesn't know it yet.

George and Annie push the Cub out of the hanger.

Annie opens the doors, climbs in, puts on her cheap sunglasses, buckles in waits for George, who she assumes will be swinging the prop as usual. But George doesn't go to the prop. Instead he comes up to Annie, and hands her Francis' leather glasses case with his AO Aviators inside.

GEORGE

Thought you might want these today.

Annie looks confused.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Found them in your messenger bag.

Annie takes the glasses case, still looking for more clues.

ANNIE

But these are for when I solo.

GEORGE

Yeah.

ANNIE

Today?

GEORGE

I've taught you pretty much everything I know.

ANNIE

Don't I wish.

GEORGE

You have demonstrated beyond a doubt that you can safely operate this Light Sport aircraft.

This is a big moment for both of them, they understand the significance. They stand by quietly for a brief moment, say nothing.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

You ready?

ANNIE

Yeah.

GEORGE

Sunglasses.

Annie takes off her cheap sunglasses, hands them to George. Puts the AO's on. Hands George the case back.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

You sure you're ready?

ANNIE

Hell yeah. How do I look?

GEORGE

Women, always worried about their looks.

ANNIE

Well?

GEORGE

You look young and foolish.

ANNIE

You're worthless George, you know that?

GEORGE

Go fly the plane. And be careful with her okay? No loops, no barrel rolls, no Lomcováks - just a nice smooth climb-out, gentle 60 degree banks in the pattern. Watch your altitude...

ANNIE

...And my speed...

GEORGE

Exactly. Do three touch-and-goes,  
and bring her home. In one piece  
please. And don't get too low on  
final. You have a tendency to do  
that.

ANNIE

Got it.

(beat)

I think dad would have liked you  
George.

GEORGE

Stay focused Annie. Flying a plane  
requires your full and undivided  
attention. Scan your instruments  
now and then, but keep your head  
out of the cockpit. You're never  
alone up there.

ANNIE

Wisdom for life?

GEORGE

Roger. Window?

ANNIE

(hopeful)

Open?

GEORGE

It'll mess up your hair.

ANNIE

I like the wild look.

GEORGE

Okay, why not.

Annie pulls the bottom door closed and latched, but leaves  
the upper window latched under the wing.

George unclips a handheld radio from his waist.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

(shows her the handheld)

I've got this, so call if you need  
to, but mostly I'm just going to  
listen okay?

ANNIE

Okay.

George walks out front and swings the prop.

The engine cranks up softly and smoothly.

INT. CUB COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS

Annie tests the flight controls, looks up to make sure no one is landing, and taxis out onto the runway.

She pushes the throttle forward with her left hand.

EXT. SONOMA SKYPARK RUNWAY - CONTINUOUS

The Cub roars off down the runway and into the air.

INT. CUB COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS

Wind blows Annie's hair as she gently banks the Cub around, her face is serious.

EXT. SONOMA SKYPARK RUNWAY - CONTINUOUS

George takes off his sunglasses, wipes a tear as he watches Annie climb into the morning sky, glad no one sees him crying tears of joy. He never gets tired of this special moment.

Annie sticks a nice three-point landing, coasts down the runway.

Annie throttles up, takes off, climbs, banks left into the next attempt.

George gives Annie a call on the handheld as she turns downwind to base.

GEORGE

Ok, that was good Annie. Let's try another.

ANNIE (O.S.)

Roger that.

The Cub turns base, then final, looking fine once again.

She slips the Cub, but too much, and gets too low.

GEORGE

Too low. Too low...

Annie makes a very wobbly, bouncy landing. Not very good.

INT. CUB COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS

Annie shakes her head as she rolls down the runway.

ANNIE  
(over the radio)  
Aaah! That was terrible!

The Cub rolls to a stop. Annie is shaken. Not sure she's up for another landing like that.

George just watches, patiently.

The Cub sits idling for a good minute or two.

INT. CUB COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS

Annie pushes the throttle forward with determination and takes off again.

EXT. SONOMA SKYPARK RUNWAY - CONTINUOUS

George gives a mini fist pump.

EXT. SONOMA SKYPARK - CONTINUOUS

The Cub enters base leg, then final approach.

The Cub does a gentle slip, not too much, then straightens out and does a nice smooth landing with maybe just a bit of an extra bounce.

Annie's Cub slows down, she pulls off the active runway and taxis up to the hanger.

George walks towards the hanger.

George and the Cub arrive in front of the hanger simultaneously.

Annie swings the tail with a rev of the engine, stops, and shuts down the motor.

She takes off her headset, unbuckles her belts, puts her sunglasses up on her hat, pops open the bottom door and climbs out. She looks at George for comments.

ANNIE  
How was my driving?

GEORGE

First landing was ok. Pretty much stuck it. Second not so good, you came in a bit low, probably slipped a bit too long, too heavy on the rudder. The third, much better.

ANNIE

Yeah, second one was kinda scary.

GEORGE

That's okay, any landing you walk away from is a good one. Give me a hug. You did good kid.

George gives Annie a reassuring hug.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Give me your hat.

ANNIE

My hat?

George wags his fingers, come on, hand it over.

Annie hands over her cap.

George produces a cheap plastic Jr. Pilot set of wings out of his shirt pocket, pins the wings on the side of her cap, and hands it back too her.

GEORGE

Here you go Junior Birdman. You earned your cheap plastic wings today.

ANNIE

Awww.

Annie looks at her wings, puts her cap on, and looks great.

George nods approvingly.

FADE OUT.

EXT. SONOMA SKYPARK TARMAC - SUNSET

George and Annie sit under the wing of the Cub, drinking sodas from cans.

ANNIE

Nice sunset.

They're quiet a minute. George zeroes in on the exact thing Annie's got on her mind.

GEORGE  
First solos can be nerve wracking.

ANNIE  
Yeah.

GEORGE  
Scared yourself pretty good, huh?

ANNIE  
Second landing, yeah.

GEORGE  
It happens. That's flying for ya.  
Hours and hours of boredom,  
interrupted by a few minutes of  
sheer terror.

Annie chuckles.

They're quiet for a minute. George is thinking of how to say something delicately.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
Right now your on top of the  
mountain Annie. You've just soloed,  
the biggest moment in a pilot's  
career. Everything's good. You  
probably see yourself flying that  
jet freighter, right?

ANNIE  
Yeah. I kinda do.

GEORGE  
Being a professional pilot is the  
hardest job to get and the easiest  
job to lose. You know what I mean?  
(beat)  
Just want you to be clear on that.

His seriousness kind of pops her balloon.

ANNIE  
Yeah. I know. I have a really long  
way to go still don't I?

GEORGE

You've got to just keep chipping away at your dream, Annie, like a beaver taking a tree, one bite at a time 'til you drop that sucker. Some trees are bigger than others, take more chompin.' You picked a big tree.

ANNIE

It's who I have to be George.

GEORGE

It was that way with me too.

They watch the sunset some more.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

So you're heading off to Las Vegas once you finish your cross country?

It's almost like a good-bye.

ANNIE

Yeah, that's the idea. See if Liberty University will accept me. I need the student loan as much as anything.

GEORGE

(cautiously)

I sure could use a hand around here.

ANNIE

Yeah you could.

GEORGE

Pay is lousy. Food is worse.

ANNIE

My kind of place.

George gets up.

GEORGE

Think about it.

Annie says nothing.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Enough said, let's put this baby to bed.



George grabs the left strut.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
Grab the other strut.

As they back the Cub in the hanger for the night, their conversation continues.

ANNIE  
George, if I did work here ... and build up my hours, you think I could ever be a flight instructor, you know, like you? Help folks learn how to fly?

GEORGE  
All depends on you, and how determined you are to succeed. Getting waivers for the medical exam has always been pretty tough on folks - but the FAA is evolving with the times. Professional flying, in it's current form, is essentially an exclusive boys club. But there's a growing pilot shortage, they need to make some changes. Kids like you can be a big part of that.

This gives Annie hope.

ANNIE  
So much has happened, it's been crazy lately, how I even got here. I didn't plan any of this.

GEORGE  
Things are working out okay, though, huh?

ANNIE  
Yeah. But, um, I'm almost out of money. Where will I stay? Everything around here must cost a fortune.

GEORGE  
Trailer's yours.

Annie grimaces, the thing looks gross.

ANNIE  
Boy that just tops off the food and pay package.

GEORGE

Hey, some folks retire in those things. Maybe some day soon I will too.

Annie plays it cool on the outside, but she's doing summersaults on the inside.

ANNIE

You read me like a book, George.

George shrugs.

More quiet.

GEORGE

Bad things and hard things happen to all of us along the way Annie. Things we never expected, never planned for, can't control. But good things happen too. Good things happen too.

Annie smiles.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

In a few days you've got your first solo cross country. You ready?

ANNIE

(without conviction)

Yeah. I mean, I think so.

GEORGE

What do you mean 'I think so?' Haven't I taught you anything?

ANNIE

(with conviction)

I mean hell yeah!

GEORGE

That's more like it. Going to be breezy this whole week. You scared?

ANNIE

A little.

GEORGE

Good.

They have the Cub almost all the way in to the hanger.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
Keep pushing, all the way into the  
corner.

Annie is a bit enthusiastic with her pushing.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
Easy now, nice and slow, life's not  
a race to the finish...watch your  
wing tip.

Annie slows down. They back the Cub all the way into the  
corner, then talk more as they chock the wheels.

ANNIE  
Hey George, did you ever think of  
starting a flying club?

GEORGE  
You mean right here, with fly-in  
pancake breakfasts and all that?

ANNIE  
Yeah, exactly! A pancake breakfast  
fly-in! With lots of people, kids  
and families and stuff.

GEORGE  
Would I have to learn how to cook?

ANNIE  
It's just pancakes and sausage  
George. I think we could manage.

GEORGE  
We?

ANNIE  
Yeah, you and me George. I think we  
could handle it. Bring a little  
life to this place.

GEORGE  
Does that mean you're accepting my  
generous offer of employment?

ANNIE  
How could I refuse? It's quite a  
hospitality package you've put  
together.

GEORGE  
Welcome to the world of semi-  
professional aviation.

They walk past the soda machine and the table covered in parts, and the rubber mallet.

ANNIE

We'll need a new soda machine  
George.

George picks up the mallet off the table, gives the soda machine a whack, puts the mallet back, opens the door, pulls out a bottle, pops the cap off in the bottle cap remover.

GEORGE

What's wrong with this one?

Annie makes a face.

ANNIE

It's filled with disgusting ancient  
artifacts George.

George, being a perfect gentleman, hands her the bottle.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

No thanks.

George takes a swig, thinking it's not bad.

GEORGE

Let's shut this show down. I'll get  
this door, you get that one.

They walk to their respective hanger doors and start pulling them closed.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Did you ever hear the story of  
Jonah?

ANNIE

Can't say I have. Probably old.

GEORGE

So this Israeli guy Jonah gets orders from God to go to a city called Ninevah, and tell the people there to stop being so nasty to Israel, otherwise he'll trash their city. So Jonah hops in a small boat with some sailors and heads out across the sea. But Jonah doesn't really want to go to Ninevah, they are after all the enemy, and he's afraid they'll just kill him when he shows up.

(MORE)

GEORGE (CONT'D)

So he says to heck with Ninevah,  
I'll go to Tarshish instead. They  
have nice food, maybe a spa, stuff  
like that.

Annie's listening.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

But suddenly a huge storm brews,  
and the sailors fear for their  
lives. Jonah suspects God is mad at  
him, and tells the sailors I'm so  
sorry guys, it's all my fault, if  
you all want to live, you better  
toss me overboard. So they do and  
leave him behind floating in the  
water. After a little bit, this  
huge fish comes along, probably a  
whale, and swallows Jonah. For  
three days and three nights, Jonah  
is stuck inside the fish. After the  
third day, God tells the fish to  
spit Jonah out. And wouldn't you  
know it, Jonah washes up in  
Ninevah!

ANNIE

Seriously?

GEORGE

Yeah. So, long story short and  
humbled by the experience, Jonah  
carries out his original orders and  
tells the folks of Ninevah to  
change their evil ways or else. And  
they do, they change their ways.  
And everyone lived happily ever  
after.

Annie and George push the hanger doors closed, like the  
curtains of a theater.

ANNIE

Knight's Law?

GEORGE

Something like that.

The doors bang closed.

INT. GEORGE'S HANGER - NIGHT

George and Annie walk towards the back door.

GEORGE  
Big day tomorrow.

ANNIE  
Oh yeah? What's up? Don't I get a day off?

GEORGE  
You're fixing my Jeep's busted jug, remember? Deal's a deal.

ANNIE  
I can't fix it all by myself George.

GEORGE  
You can't or you won't?

Annie scowls.

ANNIE  
George, that's not fair. What if I run into a two-handed move I just can't make?

George ponders this new challenge. He's learning too.

GEORGE  
(resigned)  
Ok. I'll observe from a distance and make smart ass comments. I'll lend a hand but only if you get stuck. Deal?

EXT. SONOMA SKYPARK HANGER - NIGHT

George and Annie's voices trail off.

ANNIE (O.S.)  
You're learning George.  
(beat)  
I'll need you to get me a manual.

GEORGE (O.S.)  
What am I, your mommy? Get it yourself.

ANNIE  
Thanks for the help.

ANNIE (CONT'D)  
Goodnight George.

GEORGE  
Goodnight Annie.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
Don't forget the lights.

The lights in the hanger go off.

END

Roll credits

Cue music: 'The Riddle,' Five For Fighting.

Followed by 'The Aviators,' Helen Jane Long