

**MY GIRL**

Written by  
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Setting: MADISON, PENNSYLVANIA 1972

**CLOSE UP OF VADA**

**VADA**

(to camera)

I was born jaundiced. Once I sat on a toilet seat at a Truck stop and caught hemorrhoids. And i've learned to live with this chicken Bone that's been lodged in my throat for the past three years, so I knew Dad would be devastated when he learned of my latest affliction.

(to Harry)

Dad, I don't wanna upset you, but my left breast is developing at a significantly faster rate than my right. It can only mean one thing. Cancer. I'm dying.

**HARRY**

(ignoring Vada)

O.K. Sweetie, hand me the mayonnaise out of the fridge.

**FRONT OF SULTENFUSS' HOUSE**

Vada closes front door and goes down the steps to a group of boys

**VADA**

All right, who's in raise your hand.

All the boys raise their hands except Thomas J

**BOY**

Are you coming or not Thomas J?

**THOMAS J**

I don't think so.

**VADA**

I knew he wouldn't come.

**THOMAS J**

I can't, I have to go home.

**BOY#2**

Yeah, to play with his DOLLS.

**VADA**

Leave him alone! Come on, let's go.

Group of boys enters house lead by Vada

Once inside, the group is suddenly stopped

**VADA**

(to boy#2)

Hey, you didn't pay me!

**BOY#2**

How do I know you were gonna show us one?

**VADA**

You're such a baby.

**BOY#2**

All right, here.

Boy reaches inside his pocket, gets money out and gives it to Vada

**VADA**

All right, follow me and don't say a word.

They walk towards two large doors, stop, and Vada turns around

You ready?

They enter the coffin display room, and move over to the coffin in the middle of the room

You sure you wanna see it, or is someone gonna go yellow belly?

**BOY#3**

I'm not chicken!

**VADA**

Okay. Lean forward.

A tense moment as the coffin lid is flung open by Vada and

the boys gasp as they look inside

**GIRL#1**

It's empty!

**BOY#2**

You're so weird!

**BOY**

I want my money back!

**VADA**

I was afraid of this.

They begin to move into another part of the house

**BOY#2**

Of what??

**VADA**

Well, sometimes when we get 'em, they're not completely dead, you know, like when they cut a chickens head off and it still runs around crazy.

**BOY#3**

You're full of shit.

**VADA**

I bet she's roaming around this house somewhere.

They open the door into the living room, where Grammoo is in her rocking chair

There she is, in the rocking chair.

Pause, then Grammoo begins to rock the chair gently. The boys all gasp and then all exit very quickly

**VADA**

Hi Grammoo.

Vada seats herself upon Grammoo's lap

**HARRY**

(in distance, from  
downstairs)

Vada would you bring down my cigarettes?

Vada gets up and begins to leave

**VADA**

Seeya later.  
(kisses Grammo on forehead)

**BASEMENT, HARRY & ARTHUR WORKING ON MR. LAYTON**

**HARRY**

Did I tell you, he was my woodshop teacher.

**ARTHUR**

You took woodshop?

**HARRY**

Yeah, I made a tie rack.

**ARTHUR**

I made a tie rack.

Vada comes down the stairs and stops just before the corner that would allow her to see the corpse of Mr. Layton

**VADA**

Ahem.

**HARRY**

Vada, just put 'em on the stool.

Vada places the packet on a stool

**VADA**

Daddy guess what I beat Thomas J in monopoly yesterday.

**HARRY**

(completely ignoring Vada's comment)

Ya, that rack holds six ties.

**ARTHUR**

I still have mine.

Vada recognizes Arthur's voice

**VADA**

Arthur!!

**ARTHUR**

Vada!!

**VADA**

I beat Thomas J in monopoly yesterday.

**ARTHUR**

Good for you baby.

**VADA**

Once you put the hotels on board walk and  
Park Place he puts a shoe in your way.

**ARTHUR**

I like to buy off all the railroads.

Harry is slightly annoyed at Vada distracting them

**HARRY**

Vada, we're trying to work here.

**CAMPER PULLS UP OUTSIDE SULTENFUSS HOUSE**

**BASEMENT**

**VADA**

Cruella deville stole all the puppies, she  
was gonna make a fur out of 'em!

**HARRY**

(to Arthur)

Hand me the canula.

Vada begins to sing doo-wah-diddy-diddy, Arthur joins in

**HARRY**

(annoyed)

**VADA!**

**VADA**

Dad?

**HARRY**

I'm embalming my high school teacher, don't  
sing.

(beat)

All right Arthur, just a slide of the  
needle.....

(fades out as Vada climbs  
stairs)

Vada climbs stairs and stops to read patient note, **CAUSE OF  
DEATH - CANCER OF PROSTATE**

**HARRY**

(to corpse)

One nice model C-501 bronze stainless eternal  
journey, yeah, you look like a champion.

**OUTSIDE SULTENFUSS' HOUSE DAY, STRANGE WOMAN GETS OUT OF CAMPER, WALKS UP TO DOOR AND RINGS BELL, VADA ANSWERS**

**STRANGER**

Is Mr. Harry Sultenfuss in?

**VADA**

Sure, come on in.

Vada and strange woman make their way to a desk in the foyer, and sit down

So, have you had the unfortunate experience of recently losing a loved one?

**STRANGER**

(puzzled look)

Could I see your Dad, just for a second?

Vada runs across to call downstairs

**VADA**

**DAD, SOMEBODY'S HERE!!**

Vada runs back to the desk

He's downstairs working on Mr. Layton. Prostate Cancer. Once it hits your prostate, you're a goner.

**STRANGER**

Oh.

Harry enters

**HARRY**

How may I... Help you?

**STRANGER**

I'm Shelly devoto. We spoke, the other day regarding the make up artist job.

**HARRY**

Oh yes.

**SHELLY**

It's still available I hope?

**HARRY**

I think it's still available.

**SHELLY**

I'm a licensed cosmetologist, I worked for two years, at the "Dino Raphael" Salon, all my customers cried when I told them I was leaving.

**HARRY**

Uhh, Miss devoto...

**SHELLY**

I have a wonderful disposition, I put people right at ease.

**HARRY**

Uhh, Miss devoto, these people are already at ease. This is not a Beauty Parlor, it's a Funeral Parlor.

**SHELLY**

They're dead?

**HARRY**

Yes they are.

**SHELLY**

Stiffs??

**HARRY**

(for want of a better word)  
Deceased.

**SHELLY**

The add just said "Makeup Artist"

Doorbell rings

**HARRY**

Ahh, excuse me a second will you?

(opens door)

Hi George, this is a twelve-fifty-eight, I didn't want the burnished handles.

(door closes off scene)

Vada looks out the window at Shelly's camper

**VADA**

Is that your camper?

**SHELLY**

Yes it is.

**VADA**

That's really cool.

Grammoo walks past in a fixed stare

**SHELLY**

(to Grammoo)

Hello.

Grammoo keeps walking as if she hadn't heard

**VADA**

She's shy.

**SHELLY**

Oh.

Harry is standing at the door directing the men with the coffin

**HARRY**

Just put it back in the display room fellers.

**MEN**

Okay Harry.

The men move off, Vada walks over to Harry

**VADA**

Daddy, how come that coffin's so small?

**HARRY**

They come in all sizes honey, just like shoes.

**VADA**

Is it for a child?

Harry hesitates

**HARRY**

Of course not.

**VADA**

Then who's it for?

Small pause while Harry thinks of a reply

**HARRY**

Short people, very short people.

Shelly walks over to Harry

**SHELLY**

Excuse me, what about the job?

**HARRY**

Pardon?

**SHELLY**

I need the job.

**HARRY**

Oh, You still want it? Even though uhh...

**SHELLY**

Ohh, oh sure it's no big deal, you see all my former clients will eventually die, and all your clients used to be alive, so they have something in common.

**HARRY**

You'd be doing hair and makeup and answering the phone.

**SHELLY**

Okay Mr. Sultenfuss, you got a deal.

**HARRY**

Great, you can start right away. Call me Harry. Now, umm, is this what you'd normally wear for work? Don't get me wrong, I like it, very much, but the....

**SHELLY**

I promise i'll take good care of these people, they deserve it, they're dead, all they've got left is their looks.

Harry and Vada exchange weird looks

**OUTSIDE SHOPPING MALL-AREA DAY**

Vada and Thomas J are riding their bikes through town

**THOMAS J**

Hey look at this, no feet!

**VADA**

Oh wow, a real evil canieval.

Vada and Thomas J ride up through a garage

**PSYCHO MECHANIC**

**WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING IN MY GARAGE, GET**

**OUTTA HERE!!!**

Vada and Thomas J arrive outside the entrance to the Doctors surgery, Vada enters and climbs stairs, she passes a small boy in a wheelchair in the corridor, Vada enters room

**INSIDE DOCTOR WELTY'S WAITING ROOM**

**NURSE RANDALL**

Hi Vada, what's wrong today?

**VADA**

I'm very sick.

**NURSE RANDALL**

Okay, take a seat, i'll check if the doctor can see you.

She picks up phone and whispers something inaudible to the doctor

**NURSE RANDALL**

Okay, he'll see you, why don't you go in?

Vada opens door to doctors surgery and enters

**OVER DR WELTY'S SHOULDER, CLOSE UP OF VADA HAVING HER EAR EXAMINED**

**VADA**

Well, what is it? I can handle it.

**DR WELTY**

You are perfectly healthy.

**VADA**

That can't be, I have all the classic symptoms.

**DR WELTY**

Sweetheart, did they bring Mr. Layton to your house today?

**VADA**

Yes.

**DR WELTY**

Vada you've gotta stop this, there's absolutely nothing wrong with you!

Vada gets up in a mood, puts hat on, and walks to the door, stopping and says with condescending intonation...

**VADA**

I'll just have to get a second opinion.

**OUTSIDE DOCTORS SURGERY DAY**

Vada emerges from the building and gets on her bike

**THOMAS J**

So, what'd he say was wrong with you?

Vada is turning and beginning to ride away

**VADA**

The whole medical profession is a crack.

Thomas J is trying to catch up

**THOMAS J**

Hey wait up for me!

**BIKE RIDE DOWN MAIN STREET IN TOWN**

**VADA & THOMAS J ARE SINGING**

Vada slows down, stops and looks at a person on a ladder painting a house

**VADA**

Hey look!

Thomas J stops also

**THOMAS J**

At what?

**VADA**

That's Mr. Bixler, let's go talk to him.

**THOMAS J**

I don't wanna talk to a teacher, it's summer!

**VADA**

Hi Mr. Bixler!

Mr. Bixler turns around and sees Vada and Thomas J

**MR. BIXLER**

Mademoiselle Sultenfuss and the amazing Dr. J! How's the summer treating you?

**VADA**

It's okay. Mr. Bixler, I finished all the books for summer reading.

**MR. BIXLER**

Really? Already? The summer's just begun.

**VADA**

Yes, and now I'm reading War & Peace for fun.

**MR. BIXLER**

No wonder you're my prize pupil. What about you Thomas J?

**THOMAS J**

I haven't started yet.

**MR. BIXLER**

Better get on his case Vada.

Mr. Bixler gets down off his ladder

**VADA**

Mr. Bixler, how come you're painting this old house?

**MR. BIXLER**

Well I just bought it, now I'm fixing it up.

**VADA**

This is one big house for one single person.

**MR. BIXLER**

Well, you never can tell...

(Vada gets worried look on her face)

I might get a pet.

(Vada's expression relaxes, she smiles)

**VADA**

How are you gonna get the money for this old house if you're not working?

**MR. BIXLER**

Well I'm gonna teach creative writing this summer, so, I'm doing some work.

**VADA**

How much does it cost?

**MR. BIXLER**

Thirty five dollars.

**VADA**

What do you get for that?

**MR. BIXLER**

Me, two hours a week, talking about poetry.  
This an interrogation Vada?

**VADA**

No. Well, guess i'll go home and finish off  
War & Peace.

**MR. BIXLER**

It's summer! You're kids! Go play!

Vada and Thomas J ride off down street

**SIDE ON SHOT OF VADA AND THOMAS J RIDING DOWN STREET,  
CAMERA IS MOVING WITH THEM**

**THOMAS J**

Wanna go to Gray's orchard and pick some  
peaches?

**VADA**

No, I'm going home.

**THOMAS J**

Why? It's not dinner time yet.

**VADA**

Dinner time?? You're like a dog! You just go  
home to eat.

Vada accelerates leaving Thomas J in her tracks

Don't pee on the hydrant!!

**VADA'S BEDROOM**

Vada puts a record on to play.

(song is "Wedding Bell  
Blues")

She then opens a drawer and picks up a class photograph,  
with Mr. Bixler enhaloed in a heart shape. Music begins to  
play and Vada sings along the first few bars whilst looking  
at the photo longingly

**SULTENFUSS' DINING ROOM TABLE NIGHT, VADA IS LYING ON THE  
FLOOR SPRAWLED OUT, HARRY AND PHIL ARE HAVING A  
CONVERSATION, AND GRAMMOO IS SITTING STARING INTO SPACE,  
SHELLY ENTERS**

**SHELLY**

Excuse me Harry, I finished Mr. Layton's hair. He kinda looked.....

(she sees Vada lying down  
sprawled out on the floor)

Harry, what's wrong with her??

**HARRY**

Oh, she's just pretending. Vada, get up here and eat your broccoli!

Shelly moves over and crouches down next to Vada

**VADA**

(very sick sounding voice)

I think it's my prostate.

All of a sudden, Grammo begins to sing

**GRAMMOO**

I got rhythm, I got music, I got my man who could ask for anything more? I got daisies, in green pastures, I got my man, who could ask for anything more?

As this is being sung, Shelly slowly looks up with a VERY weird expression, this is too much for her

**OUTSIDE FRONT OF HOUSE, VADA AND THOMAS J SITTING ON STEPS  
DAY**

Shelly exits house and closes door behind her, and then crouches down beside Vada and Thomas J

**SHELLY**

Who's winning?

**VADA**

I am.

As Vada and Thomas J continue to play, three Vada-aged girls come up to the end of the Sultenfuss' driveway

**GIRL#1**

Look, there's Vada and her little BOYFRIEND  
(very mocking voice)

**VADA**

He is not my boyfriend!

**GIRL#2**

I bet she kissed him on the lips!

**VADA**

Do you think I kissed that ugly old thing?

**THOMAS J**

Yeah anyway.

**GIRL#2**

Come on let's go.

**GIRL#1 & GIRL#2**

Judy's father owns the movie theater and we get to see all the movies WE want for free.

**JUDY**

Maybe you can come some time.

**GUY#2**

Eeeuw, don't invite HER, she'll have to bring her boyfriend.

The two girls begin to walk off, Judy follows slowly looking guilty and embarrassed by her friends

**GIRL#2**

(together)

Vada and Thomas, sitting in a tree, K-I-S-S-I-N-G, first comes love, then comes marriage, then comes Thomas J in a baby carriage.

Judy wanders off screen, looking sorry for Vada

**SHELLY**

You know Vada, you shouldn't let those girls upset you.

**VADA**

I'm not upset. I will never play with those girls. I only surround myself with people who I find intellectually stimulating.

Thomas J looks at Shelly and smiles, he is proud to be the friend of such an intelligent girl

**SHELLY**

(to Vada)

Want a piece of chocolate?

Vada shakes her head

**SHELLY**

Thomas J?

**THOMAS J**

I'm allergic to it.

**SHELLY**

To chocolate?

**VADA**

He's allergic to everything.

**SHELLY**

Chocolate?

**VADA & THOMAS J**

**TO EVERYTHING.**

Shelly notices a ring that Vada is wearing on her right index finger

**SHELLY**

Ooh, that's a pretty ring you're wearing.

**VADA**

It's a mood ring, it tells what mood I'm in.

**THOMAS J**

It doesn't work, it always stays black.  
(NOTE ring is BLACK)

**VADA**

It's only black when you're around 'cause you put me in a bad mood.

**SHELLY**

Maybe black means you're happy?

**VADA**

I don't think so.

(pause)

Shelly, how can I get thirty five dollars?

**THOMAS J**

She's crazy, she wants to go to school over the summer.

**VADA**

It's not a real school, it's a writing class, I wanna be a writer.

**THOMAS J**

She only wants to do it because her sweetie

pie's the teacher.

Vada is annoyed that Shelly now knows her little secret and pushes Thomas J

**VADA**

Shut your big fat mouth!

**SHELLY**

I think you'd make a fine writer, did you ask your Dad?

**VADA**

He won't give it to me.

**SHELLY**

Well you don't know that. Ask him.

**SULTENFUSS' LIVING ROOM, GRAMMOO AND HARRY WATCHING TV,  
VADA ENTERS**

Vada passes Grammo and Harry who are watching a TV show, she then seats herself next to Harry

**VADA**

Daddy, can I have thirty five dollars?

**HARRY**

That's a lot of money for a little girl.

**VADA**

It's for school, for summer writing class.

**HARRY**

(engrossed with TV show)

Any more soda left?

Vada pours Harry another soda

**VADA**

Shelly thinks I'd be a good writer.

**HARRY**

Last month you wanted to play the violin.  
Then you wanted to be a ventriloquist.

Harry keeps his gaze fixed the entire time upon the TV screen

**VADA**

Dad?

**HARRY**

(referring to TV)  
I love this guy!  
(he laughs)

**VADA**

Dad??

**HARRY**

What?

**VADA**

The money?

**HARRY**

Ahh, maybe next summer.

**VADA'S THOUGHTS**

He forgot about the time I wanted to be a  
magician, I was really great at making myself  
disappear.

**FOYER OF SULTENFUSS' HOUSE, VADA BOUNCING BASKET-BALL,  
ARTHUR ENTERS**

**VADA**

Wanna play?

**ARTHUR**

No, I gotta go to the cemetery, keep your  
head up. Don't look at the ball, look at me.

Arthur grabs ball and begins to dribble it properly as a  
demonstration

See. You were looking at the ball. All right?  
Keep your head up. Gimme some skin,

They both give each other five i.e. Slap each others hands,  
Arthur exits. Vada continues bouncing the ball, which  
accidentally veers off and goes down the stairs into the  
basement

**SCARY MUSIC**

Vada goes very slowly down the stairs, and peeks round the  
corner, she is clearly very scared of the basement and the  
corpses contained in it, she then rushes down and grabs the  
ball. As she turns around, Shelly, who is upstairs walking  
through the house and sees the door ajar, slams it shut  
unaware that Vada is down there. Vada runs up the stairs and  
tries to open the door, she can't, drops the ball and starts

to yell out for help and bang on the it. Shelly hears the noise and comes to the door. Vada, overcome with fear, sits on a step, covers her ears and begins to sing doo-wah-diddy-diddy. Shelly yanks the door open and sees Vada crouched on the step

**SHELLY**

Vada? VADA?? What happened??

**VADA**

(extremely frightened and timid)

My ball, I lost my ball.

**SHELLY**

(picking Vada up onto her feet)

Come on sweetie.

The two exit the scene

**SHELLY PUTTING MAKEUP ON DEAD LADY, BASEMENT OF SULTENFUSS' HOUSE**

**SHELLY**

Excuse me Harry?

**HARRY**

Uh huh?

**SHELLY**

Could you take a look at Mrs. Porter?

**HARRY**

Yeah.

Harry gets up from his desk, moves over to Mrs. Porter and observes Shelly's work, he looks unimpressed

Didn't I give you a picture of what she looked like?

**SHELLY**

Yeah,

(searches pockets, eventually pulling out a photo)

Harry compares photo with Mrs. Porter's face

**SHELLY**

You don't like it?

**HARRY**

This was the Reverend Porter's wife, you have her looking like a two dollar hooker.

**SHELLY**

(a little offended)

I think she looks nice! Her lips are very thin so I used the gloss to give them a more sensual quality, and her eyes just needed a little definition, and her hair, I'm sorry, nobody wears this hairdo anymore in 1972.

**HARRY**

She did. This photo was taken a month ago at the church food drive.

**SHELLY**

I just wanted to get past this "old school Marm" image.

**HARRY**

That wasn't an image. She WAS an old school Marm.

(beat)

Fix it.

Harry begins to leave

**SHELLY**

Harry?

(Harry stops and turns around)

I was just wondering, if there is anything wrong with Vada.

**HARRY**

What do you mean??

**SHELLY**

Well the other night at dinner...

**HARRY**

Oh that, she just likes to play.

**SHELLY**

I don't think so, I think she's confused about death.

**HARRY**

She was raised in a funeral home, she knows a thing or two about it.

**SHELLY**

Harry, I really think she.....

**HARRY**

(annoyed)

She's a perfectly happy eleven year old girl,  
look, don't give me any advice about my  
daughter, okay?

**OUTSIDE FRONT OF HOUSE, VADA AND THOMAS J ARE TURNING A  
SKIPPING ROPE AND PHIL IS JUMPING IN IT PUFFING AWAY, VADA &  
THOMAS J ARE SAYING A RHYME THAT GOES WITH SKIPPING GAMES,  
SHELLY PULLS UP IN HER CAMPER**

**VADA**

There's Shelly!

Vada and Thomas J stop turning the rope leaving Phil  
standing there exhausted, and run over to Shelly's camper,  
Shelly gets out

**SHELLY**

Hi.

**VADA**

Can we look around in your camper?

**SHELLY**

Sure. I'll give you the royal tour.

Vada and Thomas J rush inside the camper

(surprised at Vada and Thomas  
J's eagerness to get inside)

Woah! Gosh!

Thomas J seats himself at the drivers seat and makes "vroom  
vroom" noises, Vada sits at the table, selects a book from a  
small bookshelf on the side, and begins to read it

**THOMAS J**

Wow, this is the coolest thing, like you  
really eat and sleep here?

**SHELLY**

Uh huh.

**THOMAS J**

I'm gonna drive us to Liverpool.

**SHELLY**

Liverpool?

**VADA**

Big Ringo fan.

**SHELLY**

Ohh, right. Would you like a soda?

**VADA**

I would.

**SHELLY**

Thomas?

**THOMAS J**

Yes please.

Thomas uproots himself and sits opposite Vada at the table

**THOMAS J**

What are you reading?

Vada makes a gesture at Thomas J with her finger up to her lips implying that he should be quiet

Shelly notices Vada reading the book

**SHELLY**

Oh! You shouldn't be looking at that, it's a little too old for you.

She takes the book away from her

**VADA**

Did you read ALL these books?

**SHELLY**

Uh huh.

**VADA**

What are they about?

**SHELLY**

Mostly love, and romance.

**THOMAS J**

Eeeeeuuww, gross.

**SHELLY**

They're just fun to read.

Shelly hands the soda around

Here, cheers.

Everybody takes a mouthful of drink

**VADA**

Are you married?

**SHELLY**

No, I'm divorced.

**VADA**

Daddy said it's bad when people get divorced.

**SHELLY**

Well, sometimes married people just find out they can't live with each other.

**THOMAS J**

Mine aren't divorced.

Thomas J gets up and reaches for the cookie jar

Shelly, can I have a cookie?

**SHELLY**

With bottle of soda in mouth  
Hmmmph gurgle gurgle...

Thomas pulls out a few bank notes of largish denomination

**THOMAS J**

Hey, where are all the cookies??

Vada sees the money and the expression on her face shows she has an idea

**SHELLY**

Well, I guess you found my secret hiding place.

**THOMAS J**

What are you saving for?

**SHELLY**

Nothing in particular, just putting it away for a rainy day.

Cuckoo clock goes "Cuckoo." Lunch time, 12 o'clock

**THOMAS J**

I'm supposed to be home at noon for lunch, thanks Shelly.

Thomas J leaves

**SHELLY**

Bye. Well Miss Vada, what d'you say we head back?

**VADA**

Can I use your bathroom first?

**SHELLY**

Sure.

**VADA**

You don't have to wait, daddy'll be mad if you're late.

**SHELLY**

Okay.

Shelly exits and Vada enters toilet with a VERY guilty look on her face

**SUMMER WRITING CLASS, FOCUS ON MR. BIXLER**

**MR. BIXLER**

The great way, is not difficult for those with no preferences, with the absence of both love and hate, everything becomes clear and undisguised. That was written by a Chinese Philosopher in the year 600. Now why would I choose to bring that up in a creative writing class? Because, the absence of judgment helps us to appreciate reality. In other words, I want you to listen to your classmates writing, with a clear and open heart, okay? So who's gonna go first?

**GUY**

I got one.

He gets up

I sang a song for you to hear, I painted a picture for you to see, I picked a rose for you to smell, I planted grass for you to touch, But you did not hear my song, You did not see my picture, You did not smell my rose and YOU did not touch my grass.

Woman

Maybe she was outta town?

**GUY#2**

That's not funny, his poem is about futility,  
we toil in unrewarded obscurity.

**MR. BIXLER**

Now, I hear judgment, let's not forget the  
part about the open heart...

The door at the back of the room opens and Vada enters  
holding a writing pad and pen looking nervous

Vada, is there, something I can do for you?

**VADA**

(very nervous)

I paid the money.

**MR. BIXLER**

For this class?

**VADA**

Uh huh, I wanna be a writer.

**MR. BIXLER**

Vada, this is an adult writing class.

**JUSTIN**

Hey, I think it's real beautiful. She want's  
to be a writer.

**MR. BIXLER**

Vada, you sure you wanna do this?

Vada nods her head

**MR. BIXLER**

Welcome to the class, go find a seat.

The class applauds

Okay ahh, who's next?

**RONDA**

I experienced something with my boyfriend the  
other day, and I wrote a few words down.

**MR. BIXLER**

The floor's yours Ronda.

**RONDA**

He covers me like a blanket, from the cold,

dark night, As I look into his eyes, I know  
it's right, To touch, To feel, I know he's  
real, Flesh all a mush, Flesh ALL a mush, I  
can't fight it, There's no point, I wake up in  
Lighter joint.

Several looks glance around the room. Vada raises her hand

**MR. BIXLER**

Uhhh, va, uhh, Vada.

**VADA**

I wrote a poem too.

**MR. BIXLER**

Please.

**VADA**

Loads of ice-cream by Vada Sultenfuss  
I like ice-cream a whole lot, It tastes good  
when days are hot, On a cone or in a dish,  
This would be my only wish, Vanilla, chocolate  
or rocky road, Even with pie a la mode.

That's all I got so far.

**JUSTIN**

I hear that Vada, Flesh all a Mush or Rocky  
Road, it's about desire.

**MR. BIXLER**

Vada that's... It's very sweet, and it rhymes  
and that's also good but, you're not  
expressing to me what's in your soul. I want  
you to show me how you see the world, your  
fears, your desires, your innermost secrets.

**VADA'S THOUGHTS**

My fears and secrets. I'm afraid I killed my  
mother.

**OUTSIDE SULTENFUSS' HOUSE, THEN INSIDE ON SHELLY AT DESK,  
TUBA IS BEING PLAYED IN THE BACKGROUND**

Shelly gets up smiling when she hears the music and  
proceeds to the living room

Shelly pokes her head in the door to see Harry playing a  
tune to Grammoo on his tuba

**HARRY**

(sung, to Grammoo)

Can not do without, Harry's wild about me.

**SHELLY**

Excuse me Harry, I'm sorry, I just wanna let you know that the flowers were delivered. And the room's all set up.

**HARRY**

Thanks, listen I wanna apologize for the other day downstairs, about Vada, I was a little harsh.

**SHELLY**

I shouldn't stick my nose in other people's business. It's just that I like Vada, very much.

**HARRY**

After my wife died, Grammo moved in here to help take care of Vada. They were very close, but lately as her mind's been wandering more and more, Vada's been acting kinda crazy. I'm sure she'll snap out of it though.

**SHELLY**

I'm sure she will.

**VADA AND THOMAS J AT THEIR FAVORITE SPOT, EDGE OF LAKE WITH VERY LARGE BEAUTIFUL WEEPING WILLOW JUST UP THE BANK A LITTLE FROM A SMALL PIER WHERE TWO FISHING POLES ARE SET UP, ONE HELD BY VADA AND THE OTHER BY A HOLDER AS THOMAS J HANGS UPSIDE DOWN FROM THE TREE**

**THOMAS J**

Nothing's biting today.

**VADA**

Maybe they had a big breakfast.

**THOMAS J**

(hanging from tree)

I'm gonna be an acrobat when I grow up.

**VADA**

Big deal, I can do that too.

(Thomas J's reel begins to click)

Thomas J, you got something!

**THOMAS J**

Oh no!

(he jumps down from the tree)

**UUH.**

**VADA**

Hurry!

**THOMAS J**

I'm trying.

**VADA**

Reel it in.

(Thomas J reels the fish in)

He's only tiny, throw him back.

**THOMAS J**

I don't like touching fish, how do you pull the hook out without touching it?

Thomas J puts his foot on the fish and pulls

**VADA**

You're hurting him, don't kill him!!

The hook is out of the fish's mouth and sitting on the pier

Vada then removes the hook from the fish's mouth {minor error in film} and in the process pricks herself

**VADA**

Ouch! Darn hook!

Vada puts the fish back

**VADA**

I'm bleeding, did he get away? Go look.

Thomas J looks and sees the fish, dead, floating on top of the water

**THOMAS J**

Yeah he got away. Come on let's go.

**VADA**

Hey, we can become blood brothers.

**THOMAS J**

Naah, I don't wanna.

**VADA**

You could pick that scab on your arm.

**THOMAS J**

It's a mosquito bite.

**VADA**

It'll bleed.

**THOMAS J**

If I do it, can we go?

**VADA**

Uh huh.

**THOMAS J**

Okay, OW!

Thomas J picks the scab on his arm which begins to bleed

**VADA**

Okay, rub them together.

They rub their cuts together

**VADA**

Now we're blood brothers for life.

**HARRY IS TYPING UP A DEATH NOTICE IN HIS STUDY, SHELLY ENTERS**

**SHELLY**

Hi.

**HARRY**

Oh Hi, what can I do for you?

**SHELLY**

Nothing, I was just wondering what you were doing.

**HARRY**

Oh, I'm just typing up a funeral notice, you know when someone dies people want it in the paper usually, it's a service we provide for the family.

**SHELLY**

Oh right, right,

(she picks up the newspaper).

Bader Lorenzo Died June 22  
1972 Devoted husband to  
Nicolette. Cherished father of  
Babritzio and Heidi, In lieu  
of flowers, please send  
donations to the holy names  
society.

**HARRY**

I wrote that.

**SHELLY**

No kidding?

Harry gives Shelly a matter-of-fact look

**SHELLY**

Oh it's good, "In lieu of" I love that word  
lieu.

**HARRY**

I prefer it to "instead", it has more  
dignity.

**SHELLY**

In lieu... "instead".... No contest.

**HARRY**

It's no big deal.

**SHELLY**

You have to learn how to take a complement.

(Shelly turns the newspaper  
over)

Movies, movies, ahhhh, "Love Story" at the  
drive in, I cried my eyes out, did you see it?

**HARRY**

I haven't been to the movies in AGES.

**SHELLY**

I love going to movies, especially at the  
drive in. I don't think there's anything more  
romantic than going to the drive in.

(subtle HINT)

I'll let you get back to work.

Shelly begins to exit with a look of failure on her face

**HARRY**

I do enjoy playing bingo, if you'd like to  
join me for a game tomorrow night at church  
you're welcome to.

**SHELLY**

(considers for a moment)

Okay.

Harry resumes typing

**VADA IS RUNNING THROUGH FOYER AND BEGINS TO PASS BATHROOM  
WHERE SHELLY IS PUTTING ON MAKEUP**

**SHELLY**

Hi Vada.

**VADA**

Are you going out somewhere?

**SHELLY**

No.

**VADA**

So how come you're putting lipstick on?

**SHELLY**

A girl's always gotta look her best.

**VADA**

I think lipstick looks fake, no-ones lips are  
that color.

**SHELLY**

Have you ever tried any?

**VADA**

No.

**SHELLY**

Come here, sit down.

Vada enters bathroom and sits down on the closed toilet  
seat, Shelly brings up a stool and sits down in front of  
Vada. Vada gets some lipstick put on her

**SHELLY**

Now, first we blot.

Vada blots her lips on some tissue

**SHELLY**

Take a look. I think it looks real nice on  
you.

Vada looks in Shelly's mirror

**VADA**

Shelly, do you think I'm pretty?

**SHELLY**

Yes, Vada I think you're very pretty. You've

got these great big sparkling eyes, the cutest little nose, an amazing mouth.

**VADA**

The boys at school don't think I am.

**SHELLY**

They'll come around. Close your eyes, I wanna bring out the gorgeous color in them. The first rule in applying eye makeup, is you can never wear enough blue eye shadow.

**VADA**

Do you like putting makeup on people?

**SHELLY**

Uh huh, i've been trying to get out to Hollywood for years to do makeup for all the stars, I haven't gotten there yet.

(she finishes her work)

All right, open your eyes.

Vada opens her eyes and looks in the mirror

**VADA**

Shelly, I would definitely hold off on that Hollywood thing.

**VADA EXITS HOUSE THROUGH FRONT DOOR, RAUNCHY MUSIC IS PLAYING AND SHE DOES A GROOVY WALK TO THE STEPS WHERE THOMAS J AWAITS HER, SHE LIES DOWN LENGTH WAYS ACROSS THE STEP AND LOOKS AT HIM**

**THOMAS J**

Your lip bleeding?

**VADA**

No.

**THOMAS J**

What's wrong with your eyes?

**VADA**

A girl can never wear enough eye shadow.

**THOMAS J**

Where's your bike?

**VADA**

Oh, in the garage. Walk me over.

The two enter the garage, where a large black hearse is

parked

**VADA**

It's only a garage, come on.

Vada notices that one of her streamers on her bike is gone

**VADA**

Hey, one of my streamers is gone! It probably fell off in here.

Thomas J walks over to a model of a head

**THOMAS J**

Hey look at this!

**VADA**

That was Grammo's. It's a phrenology chart, they used to study the bumps in your head to see if you had a good personality or not. Come here, i'll diagnose your head.

**THOMAS J**

No, I don't wanna.

**VADA**

Come on, it's fun.

Vada examines Thomas J's head and then compares it with the chart

**VADA**

Hmmmm, interesting.

**THOMAS J**

What?

**VADA**

You have no personality.

**THOMAS J**

Hey, where does it say that?

**VADA**

Never mind.

Thomas J knocks the lid off a small box and reveals a photo

**THOMAS J**

Is that your Dad?

**VADA**

Yes.

**THOMAS J**

Who's that with your Dad?

**VADA**

It's my mother.

**THOMAS J**

Do you remember her?

**VADA**

No. Grammoo said she's in heaven.

**THOMAS J**

What do you think it's like?

**VADA**

What?

**THOMAS J**

Heaven.

**VADA**

I think, everybody gets their own white horse, and all they do is ride and eat marshmallows all day, and everybody's best friends with everybody else, when you play sports, there's no teams, so nobody gets picked last.

**THOMAS J**

But, what if you're afraid to ride horses?

**VADA**

It doesn't matter, 'cause they're not regular horses, they got wings, and it's no big deal if you fall, you just land in cloud.

**THOMAS J**

That doesn't sound so bad, come on, we'll never find that streamer.

As they leave, Vada turns back and grabs the photo, then returns to Thomas J

**HARRY'S BEDROOM, HARRY IS DRESSING AND GETTING READY FOR HIS DATE WITH SHELLY**

The tune "Moonglow" is playing on the radio

**PHIL**

Well well well, what's going on in here?

**HARRY**

Nothing, I'm dressing.

**PHIL**

Oh, you're dressing, uh huh, Harry Harry  
Harry Harry, don't you know it's not nice to  
lie to your big brother?

Phil then proceeds to give Harry a noogie

**HARRY**

**HEY! WATCH THE HAIR!! THIS SHIRT GIVES!!! ALL  
RIGHT!!!!**

Phil stops

I'm going out with Shelly.

**PHIL**

Oh yes, oh that's great.

**HARRY**

I'm very nervous.

**PHIL**

Why?

**HARRY**

The last date I had was twenty years ago.

**PHIL**

That's true. Harry Harry sit down, let me  
fill you in on today's women, since the last  
time you dated, something happened, "The  
Sexual Revolution", now before that, you used  
to have to hold a door open for a woman, pull  
her chair out, pick up the check, no more no  
more, you wanna know what else is missing?  
**BRAS!**

**HARRY**

Oh come on.

**PHIL**

Harry, I'm serious, trust me Harry this  
woman's lifting us in, you gotta treat her  
like every Tom Dick and Harry.

**HARRY**

Are you sure about all this?

**PHIL**

Did you not tell Vada I'm a womanizer huh?

**HARRY**

Oh, I'm running late. Shelly'll be here any minute.

**PHIL**

Oh she's picking you up, good you're on the right track.

**HARRY**

No, she's just driving over here, then we're taking my car. How do I look?

**PHIL**

Like a Sultenfuss. Go get 'em.

Harry runs down the stairs and passes Vada on the way

**HARRY**

Goodnight Vada.

**VADA**

Dad, why are you dressed up to go to bingo?

**HARRY**

Ahh, I just wanna look nice.

**VADA**

You never cared before.

**HARRY**

Well Shelly's coming over, we're gonna go together.

**VADA**

Why?

**HARRY**

She likes to play bingo.

**VADA**

Can I go too?

**HARRY**

Naah, I think you'd better stay here and keep Grammo company.

Harry leaves and then Vada makes a decision, she goes out the door

**OUTSIDE THE SENNET'S HOUSE, VADA IS CREEPING ALONG NIGHT**

Vada approaches the Sennet's house and signals through the window for Thomas J to come outside, which he does

**THOMAS J**

Vada? Vada?? Where are you??

Vada springs up from her hiding place

**VADA**

Here.

**THOMAS J**

Don't DO that!!

**VADA**

Sorry.

**THOMAS J**

What do you want? My mom will skin me alive if she finds I'm out here.

**VADA**

Let's go to the church, they're playing bingo tonight.

**THOMAS J**

I told you i'll get in trouble.

**VADA**

Pacifist!

**THOMAS J**

I am not.

**VADA**

Bed wetter!

**THOMAS J**

I stopped that!

**AT THE CHURCH, FOCUS ON THE BINGO ANNOUNCER WHO IS CALLING OUT THE NUMBERS**

**HARRY**

Don't worry, there's a strategy to bingo. For instance, on a given night anybody can win, but I play the odds, when choosing bingo cards, I use a range of theories from the laws of probability to avoiding duplicate number

systems. This way you get much more activity.

**SHELLY**

(hopeful)

Does it make it easier to win?

**HARRY**

No. Just, more activity.

Harry then pulls a seat out and sits down in it, cutting Shelly off, who has to pull her own seat out and sit down

**HARRY**

(as he sits down, to the person next to him)

Hi Carl.

#### **OUTSIDE THE CHURCH NIGHT**

Vada and Thomas J are walking up to the church

**THOMAS J**

They're not gonna let us in Vada, we're kids.

**VADA**

We're not gonna bet, we're just gonna watch.

**THOMAS J**

Watch bingo? I don't even like to play bingo.

**VADA**

Duck!

Vada and Thomas J are ducking behind a counter on one side of the church, Harry and Shelly are quite clearly visible on the other side of the room

**SHELLY**

(in the distance, as a number is announced)

Oh great!

**THOMAS J**

Hey there's your Dad and Shelly.

**VADA**

Ssshhhhh, I don't want them to see me.

**SHELLY**

(in the distance again, as another number is announced)

Aarrggh.

**CLOSE UP OF HARRY AND SHELLY**

As Shelly looks around the bingo table, she notices that everyone around her is chronologically advantaged in a big way

**SHELLY**

I just had a terrible thought Harry.

**HARRY**

What's that?

**SHELLY**

I'm gonna be putting makeup on some of these people very soon.

**HARRY**

Why d'you think these seats were empty.

**OUTSIDE**

**THOMAS J**

Can we go yet?

**VADA**

Go???

**THOMAS J**

You know I'm not allowed outside my myself after dark.

**CLOSE UP AGAIN**

**SHELLY**

Oh, I'm just not lucky Harry.

**HARRY**

Look, it's not always luck, I mean, depending upon the placement of the numbers, a guy with 10 cards could win just as easily as a guy with 100.

**SHELLY**

Kinda like men.

**HARRY**

Oh, how do you mean?

**SHELLY**

You can be in a room with 100 men, and not like any of them, or you can be in a room with

just one man, and he's exactly the one you want.

Harry and Shelly are about to kiss each other, Vada sees this and doesn't look too happy about it

**VADA**

(in semi-deep fake voice)

**BINGO!**

**BINGO ANNOUNCER**

We have a winner. Will the winner please raise their hand?

**CARL**

There was no bingo, it came from outside.

**VERNON**

How could someone outside get a bingo?

**CARL**

Someone outside didn't get a bingo, someone outside yelled bingo you moron!

**VERNON**

Who are you calling a mowon?  
(false teeth)

**VERNON'S WIFE**

Put a lid on it Vernon!

**CARL**

Put a lid on it?? If you weren't 200 years old, I'd kick your wrinkled ARSE!!

The two old men then have a fight, Harry attempts to break it up

**HARRY**

Hey fellers fellers, it's just a bingo game.

Meanwhile, Shelly has found it all rather amusing

**OUTSIDE**

**VADA**

We can go now.

Vada and Thomas J run off down the street

**VADA'S BEDROOM NIGHT, VADA IS LYING ON HER BED THINKING**

As she hears Harry's car approaching, she goes to her window and looks out it through the venetian blinds

**OUTSIDE STOPPED CAR**

Harry gets out of his side, comes round to the other side and then hesitates before deciding to follow his brothers advice and let Shelly get out herself, which she does, eventually

**SHELLY**

I had a good time tonight.

**HARRY**

I haven't had a bingo partner in ages.

They walk up to Shelly's camper

**SHELLY**

Would you like to come in and see my house?  
Just for a minute.

**HARRY**

Okay, sure.

They enter, Vada continues to watch them from her room

**INSIDE CAMPER, HARRY AND SHELLY ENTER**

**SHELLY**

Home sweet home.

**HARRY**

It's nice.

**SHELLY**

I did it myself. I read a magazine article about how to maximize small spaces.

**HARRY**

Well it certainly looks bigger that it seems.

**SHELLY**

You can look in the bathroom if you want.  
People are always curious about that, like what happens when you flush.

Harry moved toward the back of the camper and looks in the bathroom, and then flushes the toilet

**HARRY**

Yeah.

**SHELLY**

Are you mad at me?

**HARRY**

No, why?

**SHELLY**

I don't know, tonight you just seemed a little cool, not opening car doors and...

**HARRY**

Oh, that was Phil, trying to give me advice on dating 70's women. Look I'm so out of touch, I haven't dated women in ages, not since my wife died.

**SHELLY**

What happened to her?

**HARRY**

Ahh, complications during child birth, she died two days after Vada was born.

**SHELLY**

Did she ever see Vada?

**HARRY**

I brought the baby into the room a couple of times, she opened her eyes, yeah, yeah I think she saw Vada. It was.....

Harry looks at the item that he picked up and was fiddling with to calm his nerves

Did I ruin this?

**SHELLY**

Dance with me?

**HARRY**

Here?

**SHELLY**

This is where we are.

**HARRY**

Is there enough room?

Shelly moves an object from the floor, which creates more room

**HARRY**

I haven't danced in.....

**SHELLY**

In ages, I know, me neither.

They begin a slow dance

**HARRY**

Rock?

**SHELLY**

See, you're not that out of touch.

(they dance)

You're good.

**HARRY**

At Widdman High I was considered a pretty hot date, I did a killer frugue.

Shelly smells Harry's neck

**SHELLY**

What are you wearing?

**HARRY**

Old Spice, Phil says it's a timeless classic.

They continue to dance

**SHELLY**

Do you want to?

**HARRY**

Want to what?

**SHELLY**

Kiss me.

**HARRY**

Yes.

**SHELLY**

Good.

They then have a long kiss

**SHELLY**

Good at kissing, and dancing, I'm very optimistic.

They then kiss again, this time interrupted by the clock

cuckooing

**HARRY**

I ahh, better go.

**SHELLY**

It's only eight o'clock.

**HARRY**

Goodnight Shelly.

**SHELLY**

Goodnight.

Harry exits the camper followed by Shelly who stands at the door

**OUTSIDE CAMPER NIGHT, HARRY HAS JUST GOT OUT OF SHELLY'S CAMPER**

**SHELLY**

Well, I guess it's official we had a date, maybe we can play bingo again sometime.

**HARRY**

I'm tired of bingo, maybe we should try that drive in of yours.

**SHELLY**

Goodnight.

Harry waves

**VADA'S ROOM**

Vada finishes watching, and goes to bed

**SUMMER WRITING CLASS DAY**

**MR. BIXLER**

Before the class started, Ronda and Justin wanted to lead the class in a group meditation.

**WOMAN**

Ooooh that's really cool.

**JUSTIN**

Okay what we're gonna do is, send our vibes out into the group.

Justin turns on some kind of tape deck which begins to play

weird music

**RONDA**

Everybody hold hands, and close your eyes.  
Relax your muscles and take deep breaths.

**JUSTIN**

Now, try to feel what the other person is  
feeling, without speaking any words, send out  
your vibe, and receive the vibes around you at  
the same time. Can you feel it?

**RONDA**

Okay, open your eyes. What did everybody  
feel?

**GUY**

I felt Mrs. Hunsaker's strength.

**OTHER GUY**

I can feel that Ronda is one with the Earth,  
she's so cosmically in tune.

**RONDA**

So right on, that's exactly what I sent out,  
and I felt like, you were full of inner peace  
and harmony.

**MR. BIXLER**

Vada, what did you feel.

**VADA**

I felt Justin's hangnail.

**JUSTIN**

No Vada, that's not what we're looking for, a  
hangnail is insignificant. What's in my soul,  
feel my aura.

**VADA**

I don't think I'm allowed to.

**JUSTIN**

I tell you what, let's try it again, hold  
hands.

**VADA'S THOUGHTS**

Grammoo once had a hangnail on her big toe.  
It got infected and traveled to her vocal  
chords, it ruined her singing voice, I don't  
think Grammoo thought it was insignificant.

**VADA'S ROOM, VADA LYING ON BED THINKING**

Vada gets out of bed and goes down corridor to see Grammo, she seats herself cross legged next to Grammo on her bed and takes her hands in an attempt to do some spiritual healing

**SUPERMARKET DAY, VADA AND HARRY ARE SHOPPING**

**HARRY**

Lettuce, watch out for the rust when you get lettuce.

Suddenly Shelly appears behind them and calls out

**SHELLY**

Hey, I thought I recognized you two, hi Vada.

**VADA**

Hi.

**HARRY**

I'm just picking some things up for the barbecue.

**SHELLY**

Yeah, me too, mind if I tag along?

**HARRY**

Not at all. Lot of potatoes!

**SHELLY**

It's for Shelly's famous potato salad.

**HARRY**

I'm looking forward to that.

Vada, who is pushing the shopping trolley behind Harry and Shelly, obviously does not like the idea of Harry & Shelly, and she rams her cart into Harry

**HARRY**

HEY, OUCH, damn it!! Vada, watch what you're doing.

**VADA**

Sorry.

**SHELLY**

You know this is gonna be my first 4th of July picnic in a long time.

**HARRY**

Really?

**VADA**

(picking up large can of  
prunes)

Dad, didn't you say you needed prunes REAL  
bad?

**HARRY**

Ahh, Vada, just put anything you want in the  
cart, anything at all.

(to Shelly)

I don't know what's gotten into her today.

Vada begins to throw cans of every description from the  
shelf into the shopping trolley at regular intervals, not  
giving a stuff what they contain

**VADA'S THOUGHTS**

I used to like to play with my Ken and Barbie  
dolls, Ken was my favorite. Then one Christmas  
I got them a camper, and all they wanted to do  
was hang out in it by themselves. So I wasn't  
too upset when they took that wrong turn and  
went over a cliff.

**CLOSE UP OF AMERICAN FLAG DAY, HARRY - PLAYING TUBA,  
SHELLY, PHIL & VADA SINGING "STAR SPANGLED BANNER" AND  
GRAMMOO STANDING NEXT TO THEM WATCHING**

**MUSTANG PULLS UP NEXT TO SHELLY'S CAMPER, IT STOPS AND TWO  
MEN GET OUT**

**HARRY COOKING MEAT PATTIES ON BARBECUE, WHICH ARE BEGINNING  
TO LOOK CHARRED, PHIL IS STANDING NEXT TO HIM**

**PHIL**

Harry Harry Harry Harry Harry, I told you to  
use fewer briquettes and now look what you've  
done. You've cremated them.

**HARRY**

That's what I do. Do you wanna do it??

**PHIL**

No, no no....

**HARRY**

Look if you think you know how, why don't you  
pre-measure the briquettes in little packages,  
put out a product, support me for a while!

Phil exits scene, Shelly comes up behind Harry

**SHELLY**

How's it going chef?

**HARRY**

Okay.

Vada is seen turning her head to look at Harry and Shelly, she doesn't like Harry and Shelly standing so close together, she decides to make her move and pushes in between Harry and Shelly

**VADA**

Are they ready yet?

**HARRY**

No, sweetie, not yet.

Shelly begins to brush Vada's hair with her fingers, which Vada does not like and she shakes her head to get Shelly off

**VADA**

When?

**HARRY**

Soon honey, soon.

Shelly again tries to fix up Vada's hair  
(which there doesn't appear  
to be anything wrong with)  
And Vada shakes her off again

**VADA**

When??

**HARRY**

In a minute, look it's hot, sweetie you'll  
burn your nose, look out.

Vada backs off, followed by Shelly

**THE TWO MEN THAT GOT OUT OF THE CAR ARE PROCEEDING UP THE  
SULTENFUSS' DRIVEWAY**

**FOCUS ON PHIL, HARRY, VADA, SHELLY AND GRAMMOO AT THE TABLE  
OUTSIDE, SHELLY SAYS A SEMI-GRACE**

**SHELLY**

Rub a dub dub, thanks for the grub, yay God.

**HARRY**

I'll second that.

**VADA**

Hey Shelly, like seafood?

**SHELLY**

Uh huh, why?

**VADA**

See food!

Vada opens her mouth and displays half chewed BBQ cuisine to Shelly

**SHELLY**

(laughing)

That's attractive.

Shelly's glance moves to behind Grammoo on the other side of the table and beyond, where the two men are standing looking around

**SHELLY**

(under her breath)

Oh shit! Excuse me...

Shelly gets up and moves off to talk to the men, Vada and Phil turn so they can see what is going on, Harry can already see, Grammoo just sits staring into space

**MAN**

Hey Shelly, who lives here?

(pointing at hearse)

The Addams Family?

**SHELLY**

Danny, what are you doing here?

**DANNY**

What am I doing here????? What am I doing here?

**SHELLY**

(to other man in background)

Hi Ralph. Oh Danny, how'd you find me here?

**DANNY**

You told everybody where you were going, I'm here for the motor home.

Scene shifts to Vada, Phil and Harry for a moment

**PHIL**

These two people do not have a good relationship.

**SHELLY**

(in background)

No! I bought it, I paid for it...

Scene shifts back to close up of Shelly and Danny arguing

**SHELLY**

I've been living in it for over a year, the camper is mine.

**DANNY**

Excuse me, MUTUAL ASSET, that's what the lawyer said, it's supposed to be "OUR MUTUAL ASSET", not "Shelly's recreational vehicle". Gimme the keys.

**SHELLY**

Keep your voice down!

**DANNY**

What?

**SHELLY**

The boss is watching us...

**DANNY**

(sarcastic)

I'm impressed.

**SHELLY**

God I guess i'll have to introduce you now.

**DANNY**

Yeah, all right...

Shelly and Danny walk over to the table where the rest of the family are seated, Ralph follows close behind

**SHELLY**

(Talking to Danny, pointing at the people respectively)

This is Harry, Phil, Grammo and Vada Sultenfuss...

**DANNY**

Vada Sultenfuss?? Tough break.

**VADA**

(matter-of-fact)

I like my name.

**SHELLY**

(to the Sultenfuss')

This is Danny and Ralph, they own the Dino Raphael salon in Detroit.

(pointing at Danny)

We used to be married.

**VADA**

(extremely hopeful, to Danny)

Are you here to take Shelly back?

Danny shakes his head at Vada, then Harry gets up and walks round the table

**HARRY**

Uhh, it's nice to meet ya. Uhh, we got burgers and hot dogs here if you'd care to join us?

**DANNY**

Can't stay, I'm just here because my wife.....

Shelly quickly interjects

**SHELLY**

Ex...ex, ex...

**DANNY**

My \_\_EX\_\_ wife seems to have ripped off my camper.

**HARRY**

Shelly?

**SHELLY**

Honestly Harry, he got the mustang, I promise.....

**DANNY**

I don't think so, I got a copy of the property settlement right here.

Danny pulls out a piece of paper

Ahh Shit, this is my lease..... Damn it, I keep forgetting things, I'm getting senile.

**HARRY**

Danny?

**DANNY**

**WHAT?**

**HARRY**

Okay, I know you've suffered a terrible loss, and there's really nothing anyone can do to comfort you, but I urge you to focus on the times you had with the camper, the trips you took, the sights you saw, those days are gone now, but they'll live on in your heart forever.

**DANNY**

(to Shelly)

This guy bonking you?

**SHELLY**

(disgusted)

Danny that's a real bonehead thing to say!

**HARRY**

(to Danny)

Look, you're not gonna take Shelly's camper.

**DANNY**

Oh.. Oh.. Oh no?? Oh?

**HARRY**

It's her home! It's where she lives!!

**DANNY**

Oh really, okay fine look, go cook,

(to Shelly)

Gimme the goddam keys.

Danny tries to grab the keys from Shelly

**SHELLY**

Stop it! That hurts!!

Harry is now VERY annoyed

**HARRY**

Danny.....

As Harry says "Danny" for a second time he plants his fist in Danny's stomach with force, winding him and shutting him up

**FOCUS ON VADA AND PHIL'S FACES, WHICH ARE STARTLED**

**FULL SCENE, SHELLY IS GAPING, DANNY IS BENT OVER WITH RALPH HOLDING HIM UP, VADA AND PHIL WATCHING CLOSELY AND GRAMMOO STARING INTO SPACE**

**RALPH**

What'd you do that for??

**HARRY**

Who are you?

**RALPH**

I'm his brother.

**HARRY**

Oh then you'll probably be visiting us here quite often.

**RALPH**

**WHY??**

**HARRY**

Because if he ever tries to take Shelly's camper again, I'm gonna bury him in my front yard.

Ralph looks rather disturbed by this

**FOCUS ON VADA AND PHIL, VADA STILL GAPING**

**PHIL**

(quiet voice, to Vada)  
Your father is a savage.

Vada looks up at Phil, Phil looks back and nods

**ROAD IN FRONT OF SULTENFUSS' HOUSE, DANNY AND RALPH IN CAR, SHELLY LEANING OVER WITH HER HEAD IN WINDOW NIGHT**

**SHELLY**

Bye Ralph.

The car with Danny and Ralph in it pulls away and Shelly waves

**SHELLY**

(to Harry)  
Well, you were pretty great!

**HARRY**

Is it really your camper?

Shelly makes gesture with her right hand suggesting "sort of"

Suddenly a sky rocket screams up in the sky and then explodes, Harry and Shelly look up and watch the fireworks

**SHELLY**

Can we see it from the back yard?

**HARRY**

You can get the general idea...

They move off to the back yard...

**HARRY**

Yep, there they are... They always look the same every year...

**SHELLY**

Pointing upwards Look...

**HARRY**

Did you ahh, love him?

**SHELLY**

I would never marry anybody I didn't love.

**VADA AND PHIL SITTING ON SEAT-SWING WATCHING FIREWORKS**

**VADA**

He must like Shelly, I never saw him hit anyone in his life.

**PHIL**

He likes her.

**VADA**

Does he love her?

**PHIL**

Probably.

**VADA**

Do you like her?

**PHIL**

Yes I do, and I think she's very good for your father.

**VADA**

Why?

**PHIL**

After your mother died, he was sad all the time, but before that, he was pretty funny.

**VADA**

Really?

**PHIL**

Now when I see him with Shelly, sometimes he seems like the old Harry.

**VADA**

My Dad was funny?

**PHIL**

Well he wasn't one of the Marx brothers, but he made me laugh.

**VADA'S THOUGHTS**

My Uncle fought in the Korean war, he had a steel plate put in his head, Daddy said he didn't come back the same, one night, he picked up a radio station from Oklahoma in his teeth, it was really neat.

**DR WELTY'S SURGERY, LOOKING AT VADA WHO HAS HER MOUTH OPEN WITH A TONGUE HOLDING STICK DOWN HER THROAT**

**VADA**

Aaaaaaaaaahhhh.

**VADA**

(with stick in mouth)

Carnnk yu sheeee ik??

Dr. Welty removes stick from Vada's mouth

**VADA**

Can't you see it?

**DR WELTY**

No.

**VADA**

It's there.

**DR WELTY**

Vada there is no chicken bone stuck in your throat.

Vada looks at the Dr.'s certificates up on the wall

**VADA**

Dr. Welty, are you sure those are yours?

**WAITING ROOM, NURSE RANDALL IS DEMONSTRATING A SYRINGE TO  
THOMAS J, HOW TO USE IT AS A WATER GUN**

**NURSE RANDALL**

So you fill it with water like this, and what have you got? A water gun.

**THOMAS J**

Cool, can I get one for Vada?

**NURSE RANDALL**

Oh yes, yes.

She gets another one out of her drawer

Thomas, let me ask you a question. Does Vada ever tell you why she comes down here so much?

**THOMAS J**

Cause she's dying.

**NURSE RANDALL**

Do you think she is?

**THOMAS J**

No.

**NURSE RANDALL**

Why do you think she says that?

**THOMAS J**

Cause she gets scared of all those dead people in her house, and you know that saying, If you can't beat 'em, join 'em, well if she's one of them, she won't be as scared.

**NURSE RANDALL**

You know what I think? I think Vada's very lucky to have a friend like you.

Nurse Randall hands Thomas J another syringe

**THOMAS J**

She's my best friend.

The door to the doctor's surgery opens and Vada exits

**NURSE RANDALL**

Miss Vada, how are you feeling?

**VADA**

As good as can be expected.

**CORRIDOR OUTSIDE DOCTORS WAITING ROOM**

**THOMAS J**

Hey Vada, guess what we got?

**VADA**

What?

Thomas J begins to run, and as he passes Vada he squirts his syringe at Vada

**THOMAS J**

**THIS!!**

(squirt)

**VADA**

**HEY YOU!!!!**

(squirt)

I'm gonna get you!!!

(squirt)

I'll get you!!!!

Vada at this point is unarmed, and she chases Thomas J down the stairs

**FOREST DAY, VADA AND THOMAS J ARE RUNNING THROUGH IT FIRING THEIR WATER GUNS AT EACH OTHER AND YELLING AT EACH OTHER, HAVING FUN**

Suddenly Thomas J stops in his tracks

**THOMAS J**

Woah!!

**VADA**

What?

**THOMAS J**

Pointing There's a beehive right there!

**VADA**

So?

**THOMAS J**

Stand back.

Thomas J stands a pace back behind a branch on the tree and

begins to squirt the beehive

**VADA**

Are you crazy, you'll get stung!!

**THOMAS J**

You're right, let's knock it down.

**VADA**

What do you want it for anyway?

**THOMAS J**

For their meat.

The two start throwing rocks at the hive, which gets damaged and eventually falls to the ground

**THOMAS J**

Got it!

**VADA**

My mood ring! It fell off! I gotta find it!

They begin to search for Vada's mood ring

Suddenly bees begin to swarm, luckily Thomas J notices in time

**THOMAS J**

They're alive!! Run for your life!!!

Vada just stands there looking, Thomas J comes back and grabs her arm, this wakes her up and they begin to run

**THOMAS J**

Run faster they're after us!!

**VADA**

I am running faster!!

**THOMAS J**

Hurry!!!

They have run to the spot with the weeping willow and the pier, they run out on to the pier

**VADA**

Jump in the water!!

**THOMAS J**

But I have my clothes on!

**VADA**

Do it!

**UNDER WATER VIEW OF THEM BOTH, HOLDING THEIR BREATH**

**INSIDE VIEW OF FRONT DOOR TO SULTENFUSS' HOUSE, VADA ENTERS  
DRENCHED**

**HARRY**

(in the distance, from  
upstairs)  
Vada is that you?

**VADA**

Yes..

**HARRY**

Hey guess what? We're going to the carnival  
tonight, be ready to go in 10 minutes.

Vada likes this news, she hurries up the stairs

**HARRY**

Shelly's coming with us.

Vada is now not so happy

**CARNIVAL NIGHT, FERRIS WHEEL IS SPINNING, MANY PEOPLE ARE  
SCREAMING IN A TYPICAL CARNIVAL MANNER, SLOW ZOOM ON HARRY,  
SHELLY AND VADA**

**SHELLY**

So Vada, what's your favorite ride?

**VADA**

I like the freak show.

**HARRY**

I know, I know, let's go on the "sit on the  
bench and rest" ride.

**SHELLY**

I don't think that that roller coaster agreed  
with your bad stomach. You know Vada you have  
to watch what you eat here, I remember one  
time I went to a carnival with my cousins  
David and Frank, and they both ate hot dogs,  
and the next day they came down with  
nephritis.

**VADA**

Nephritis? It's a kidney disease, you don't

get it from hot dogs.

**SHELLY**

Well, I'm no doctor. All I know is, the next day they had really high fevers, and their faces got very fat. They baffled medical science, they were in a magazine.

Vada and Harry give Shelly a "yeah RIGHT" look

**SHELLY**

They were!! "Popular Mechanics", no "Popular Science". I don't know, popular.

**HARRY, SHELLY AND VADA ARE STANDING AT A STALL WHERE OBJECT IS TO GET A BALL IN FISH BOWL**

**SHELLY**

Oh look they're trying to hit that poor thing.

**HARRY**

Watch you don't knock out a fish.

**SHELLY**

Perfect.

**HARRY**

I don't know which ball's mine.

Vada gets a ball in a bowl

**VADA**

I won, I won!!!

**SHELLY**

Oh great!!

**ATTENDANT**

Hooray, we have a winner,  
(picks up fish in plastic bag)

There you go little girl.  
(gives fish to Vada)  
See how easy it is folks!

Shelly inspects fish, holding it along with Vada

**SHELLY**

Oh Vada, that's a gorgeous goldfish.

Vada notices something on Shelly's hand

**VADA**

Where'd you get that ring?

All of a sudden Shelly looks up with a guilty look

**VADA**

(extremely hopeful)

Did you win it?

Harry and Shelly exchange looks, Harry smiles, followed by Shelly

**SHELLY**

Vada we have something to tell you. Harry?

Harry sits down on table and looks at Vada in a matter-of-fact way

**HARRY**

Vada we have some good news, Shelly and I are getting married.

Vada's expression begins to change from hopeful, to horror, but then she drops her fish

**VADA**

Oh my fish!!!

Vada quickly bends over to pick up the fish

**HARRY**

We're having the wedding sometime near the end of the summer.

**VADA**

Not acknowledging Harry's comment You'll be okay little fish.

**SHELLY**

Vada? Would you like us to get you another goldfish?

**VADA**

(angry)

NO!, He's fine.

(less angry, talking to fish)

Fish are very resilient animals you know.

Don't worry, I won't get another fish.

Shelly and Harry exchange worried looks, Vada doesn't seem to have understood

**ANNOUNCER**

**THE BUMPER CARS!! THE BUMPER CARS!! FOR JUST  
50 CENTS A HALF DOLLAR, FIVE DIMES, 10  
NICKELS, WE HAVE A RIDE THAT'S GUARANTEED TO  
REARRANGE ALL OF YOUR INTERNAL ORGANS.**

**SHELLY**

Oh bumper cars, oh you can't go to a carnival  
and not ride the bumper cars.

**HARRY**

I fall asleep at the wheel.

**VADA**

(malicious grin)  
I'll ride on the bumper cars with you!

**SHELLY**

Oh great Vada, come on...

They run off leaving Harry to carry the teddy bear and the  
fish

**SHELLY**

(to the attendant)  
Uhh, two.  
(to Vada)  
I got the blue one!!

Vada runs in past Shelly and seats herself in a car

**VADA**

**NO!**

**SHELLY**

Yes!!

Shelly gets in the blue one

**SHELLY**

(pointing at Vada)  
I am gonna get you.

Vada straps herself in, Shelly turns around and gives Vada  
the thumbs up, Vada looks VERY intent on brutally murdering  
something now, and she returns the thumbs up, as she does  
so, music begins to play and the power is turned on, the  
song is "Bad Moon Rising"

**HARRY**

Vada, keep your hands on the wheel!!

Vada rushes straight at Shelly and rams into her at top speed, so that Shelly's car is spun around a little, Shelly screams, this is all in good fun, at the moment. Then Vada rams her again, and again, and again, and again, and eventually, Shelly does not look too pleased, she can't escape Vada

**HARRY**

Careful Vada, careful.

**HARRY**

Shelly LOOK OUT!

**WWHHAAMMM**

Shelly and Vada pull up along side each other, Vada gives Shelly a satisfied but still spiteful grin

**VADA IS RIDING HER BIKE ALONG HER STREET TOWARDS THE CAMERA, SHE STOPS AND DISMOUNTS OUTSIDE THOMAS J'S HOUSE**

Vada rings the Sennett's doorbell, and Mrs Sennett answers

**MRS. SENNETT**

Hi Vada.

**VADA**

Hi, can Thomas J come out?

**MRS. SENNETT**

Sure, come in.

Thomas J is coming down the stairs

**THOMAS J**

Hi Vada.

**VADA**

Hi, wanna ride bikes?

**THOMAS J**

Sure.

**MRS. SENNETT**

Ohh, did you make your bed?

**THOMAS J**

Yes.

**MRS. SENNETT**

You're sure?

**THOMAS J**

It's made.

**MRS. SENNETT**

Come here, you've got a milk mustache.

Mrs. Sennett wipes Thomas J's lip

**THOMAS J**

Come on, let's go.

**VADA**

Bye Mrs. Sennett.

**THOMAS J**

Bye Ma.

**MRS. SENNETT**

Have fun kids.

The two exit the house

**OUTSIDE FRONT OF SENNETT'S HOUSE, VADA AND THOMAS J ARE  
WALKING DOWN THE STAIRS**

**VADA**

I'm running away.

**THOMAS J**

Where you running to?

They get on their bikes and begin to ride off

**VADA**

California, I'm going to Hollywood to live  
with the Brady Bunch.

**THOMAS J**

I wanna live with them too.

**VADA**

No, you can't, they have enough kids, you'll  
have to live with the Partridge Family.

**THOMAS J**

Really?

**SOMEWHERE ON A PATHWAY IN A LIGHT FOREST, VADA AND THOMAS J  
ARE RIDING THEIR BIKES**

Thomas J stops and then does Vada

**THOMAS J**

That's it.

Thomas J goes and sits down on the river bank, Vada follows with an annoyed look

**VADA**

Get up!?

**THOMAS J**

I'm tired of running away. Besides, we past this place two times already. We're not getting nowhere.

Vada sits down next to Thomas J

**THOMAS J**

Why are you running away?

**VADA**

My Dad gave Shelly a ring.

**THOMAS J**

Wow, was it a decoder ring?

**VADA**

You're such a retard, it was an engagement ring.

**THOMAS J**

They're getting married?

Vada nods her head

**THOMAS J**

So now you'll have a mother.

**VADA**

I don't like her.

**THOMAS J**

I do, she's real funny.

**VADA**

He likes her better than me.

**A TREE DUSK, THOMAS J AND VADA ARE UP THE TOP OF IT**

**THOMAS J**

I'm hungry, I can't last any longer.

**VADA**

Then go home, baby.

**THOMAS J**

I have to anyway, my mom will be worried.

**VADA**

Leave then, some friend you are.

**THOMAS J**

You can come to my house for dinner?

**VADA**

No, I'm hiding out.

**THOMAS J**

Okay, seeya.

Thomas J climbs down from tree, and leaves

**DISSOLVE INTO NEXT SCENE**

**VADA STILL IN TREE NIGHT, SHE LOOKS AROUND AND THEN DECIDES TO GET DOWN**

Vada jumps down, and we can now see that the tree was on the Sultenfuss' front lawn

**INSIDE VIEW OF FRONT DOOR, VADA ENTERS AND CLOSSES IT**

As soon as Vada has entered, she waits for someone to come running and ask her if she's all right, where she's been, they were so worried etc., Nothing happens, all she can hear is the noise that the TV is making. So she opens the door again and slams it. Still nothing. She decides to give up, and go find Harry, she walks to the living room where the TV is on, Harry and Grammo are asleep in their chairs

Vada begins to ascend the stairs, depressed

**VADA'S THOUGHTS**

In social studies we learned some people stole the Limburg baby right out of his house, I think i'll sleep with my window OPEN tonight.

**OUTSIDE SULTENFUSS' HOUSE, A LOUD HIGH PITCHED SCREAM IS HEARD**

**VIEW OF CORRIDOR LEADING TO BATHROOM**

**VADA**

**OH MY GOD!!!**

Vada bursts out of the bathroom and screams down the stairs

**VADA**

DADDY!! Daddy daddy!!!! Daddy!?!?!?!?

Vada runs into a room where Shelly is

**VADA**

Daddy??!?!?!?

**SHELLY**

Vada, Vada, what's the matter?

**VADA**

Where's Daddy?

**SHELLY**

Well he just left, what's wrong?

**VADA**

I'm hemorrhaging.

**SHELLY**

What do you mean you're hemorrhaging?

**VADA**

(very weak, scared voice)

I don't want, I don't need your help....

Vada tries to run away, but Shelly stops her

**SHELLY**

Vada, did this happen in the bathroom?

Vada nods her head

**SHELLY**

How old are you?

**VADA**

I'm eleven and a half.

**SHELLY**

It's okay, come on upstairs, we have to have a little talk.

They exit

**VADA'S BEDROOM, VADA AND SHELLY SITTING ON BED**

**VADA**

My Mommy and Daddy did THAT?

**SHELLY**

It's actually a very beautiful thing, and  
look there wouldn't have been a Vada.

**VADA**

I think it should be outlawed.

**SHELLY**

Believe me, some day, you'll feel  
differently.

Door bell is heard ringing

**VADA**

Oh, that's probably Thomas J, I don't wanna  
see him. It's not fair. Nothing happens to  
boys.

**OUTSIDE FRONT DOOR OF SULTENFUSS' HOUSE, VADA OPENS DOOR**

**THOMAS J**

Hi Vada, can you come out?

**VADA**

I dunno..

**THOMAS J**

Please, it's real hot, maybe we can go  
swimming?

Vada is angered by this, she comes storming out

**VADA**

**NO!**

Vada pushed Thomas J hard enough to make him fall over, she  
is angry

Get outta here!! And don't come back for five  
to seven days!!!

Vada runs inside and slams the door, leaving poor Thomas J  
sitting on the porch looking startled

**FUNERAL ROOM OF SULTENFUSS' HOUSE, PIPE ORGAN IS BEING  
PLAYED, MANY PEOPLE ARE SEATED AND THERE IS AN OPEN COFFIN  
UP THE FRONT**

**LIVING ROOM, VADA IS READING A BOOK, AND WATCHING GRAMMOO**

**TO BE SURE THAT SHE DOESN'T WANDER OFF, VADA PUTS THE BOOK DOWN**

**VADA**

Grammoo, I'm going to the bathroom, i'll be right back.

She then gives Grammoo a little kiss, and makes her way out of the living room to the bathroom, closing the door behind her, as she goes to enter the bathroom she hears giggling coming from the next room, so she goes to investigate. Harry and Shelly are kissing and giggling. As she is watching this, Grammoo gets up, enters the funeral room and makes her way to the front, when she gets there, she picks up a rose, takes a look at the dead man, and begins to sing into the rose as if it were a microphone

**GRAMMOO**

It's quarter to three, there's no-one in the place, just you and me.

As this is being sung, Vada hears and turns around with an OH SHIT look on her face, Harry and Shelly also hear it and make off for the funeral room, Vada quickly retreats into the room where Harry and Shelly were, closing the door behind her

So santa-macho, I got a little story you oughtta know, we're comin' my friend, to the end of a brief episode, so make it one for my baby and one more for the road.

**HARRY**

I'm so sorry, it's all right ma, I'm very very sorry.

**ROOM IN SULTENFUSS' HOUSE, HARRY BURSTS IN, CLEARLY HE IS VERY ANGRY**

**HARRY**

Grabs Vada by the shoulders

Now what were you thinking, huh? HUH???? It's your responsibility to watch her!! Do you have any idea how upset those people are in there???

Vada breaks free from Harry's grip, and walks briskly out of the room. Shelly looks back at Harry expectantly

**WEEPING WILLOW TREE DOWN AT THE LAKES EDGE, VADA AND THOMAS J ARE SITTING UNDER IT RESTING QUIETLY**

**VADA**

Why do you think people want to get married?

**THOMAS J**

Well when you get older, you just have to.

**VADA**

I'm gonna marry Mr. Bixler.

**THOMAS J**

You can't marry a teacher, it's against the law.

**VADA**

It is not.

**THOMAS J**

Yes it is, cause then he'll give you all A's and it won't be fair.

**VADA**

Not true.

**VADA**

(nervously, uncertain)

Have you ever kissed anyone?

**THOMAS J**

Like they do on TV?

**VADA**

Uh huh.

**THOMAS J**

No.

**VADA**

Maybe we should, just to see what's the big deal.

**THOMAS J**

But, I don't know how.

**VADA**

Here, practice on your arm like this.

Vada brings her forearm up to her mouth and starts to kiss it, Thomas J follows

**THOMAS J**

Like this?

**VADA**

Uh huh.

(they kiss their arms for a  
while)

Okay, enough practice.

**VADA**

Close your eyes.

**THOMAS J**

But then I won't be able to see anything.

Vada raises her fist

**VADA**

Just do it.

**THOMAS J**

Okay, okay.

**VADA**

Okay on the count of three.

**CAMERA SWITCHES ANGLES TO GIVE A CLEAR SIDE ON OF THOMAS J**

**VADA**

One.

**VADA**

Two.

**VADA**

Two and a half.

**VADA**

Three.

Vada leans forward and kisses Thomas J on the lips, they  
both look surprised, Vada then sits back against the tree,  
long pause

**VADA**

Say something it's too quiet.

**THOMAS J**

Umm, Ummmmm

**VADA**

(agitated)

Just, hurry.

Thomas J stands up and begins to say something along the

lines of...

**THOMAS J**

On political agents to the flag of the United  
States of America,

Vada stands up and joins in

**THOMAS J & VADA**

And to the republic for which it stands, one  
nation, under God, individual, with liberty  
and justice for all.

When they finish, they both still look a little  
uncomfortable

**ROAD DAY, VADA AND THOMAS J ARE WHEELING THEIR BIKES BACK  
DOWN IT**

**VADA**

You better not tell anyone.

**THOMAS J**

You better not either.

**VADA**

Well, let's spit on it.

**THOMAS J**

Okay.

Both of them raise their hands to their mouths and spit on  
them, they then shake hands and when finished wipe them off  
on their trousers

**VADA**

Seeya tomorrow.

**THOMAS J**

Okay, seeya.

(Vada starts off down the  
road)

Vada?

**VADA**

What?

**THOMAS J**

Would you think of me?

**VADA**

For what?

**THOMAS J**

Well if you don't get to marry Mr. Bixler.

Vada smiles, and gets on her bike

**VADA**

I guess.

As Vada rides off, Thomas J smiles

**BACK IN THE WOODS WHERE VADA AND THOMAS J HAD FOUND THE BEEHIVE**

Thomas J comes across the beehive, inspects it and then kicks it, he waits and then once he is adamant that there is no danger, he begins to search for Vada's mood ring, he searches, and as he does so, bees begin to swarm, he finds the mood ring, and by the time he notices that there are bees everywhere, it is too late..

**THOMAS J**

(as he finds the mood ring)

Yes!

**THOMAS J**

(reacting to the bees)

Ow, ahh, NO!, Get away!!!

We see Thomas J's glasses fall off onto the ground

**OUTSIDE FRONT DOOR, SULTENFUSS' HOUSE, POLICEMAN PRESSES DOORBELL, HARRY ANSWERS**

A policeman enters, takes his hat off and explains what has happened to Thomas J to Harry, who becomes clearly very distressed

**VADA'S ROOM, VADA IS FEEDING FISH, HARRY ENTERS**

**HARRY**

Hi Vada.

**VADA**

Hi.

**HARRY**

What are you doing.

**VADA**

Feeding my fish.

**HARRY**

Is that the fish you won at the carnival?

**VADA**

Yes.

**HARRY**

He's getting big.

(sad pause)

Vada, come here and sit down for a minute.

Vada sits down next to her Dad

**HARRY**

Vada, something happened to Thomas J last night, he stepped on a beehive.

**VADA**

(beginning to look worried)

I told him not to tease those bees. Did he get stung?

Harry nods

**VADA**

Maybe I should go over and yell at him.

**HARRY**

No sweetheart, you can't.

**VADA**

(looking very worried)

Why not?

**HARRY**

He was allergic to bees.

**VADA**

(extremely worried)

He's okay isn't he?

**HARRY**

(shakes head, near tears)

There were just too many of 'em.

When Vada hears this, her eyes begin to flood with tears and the expression on her face changes movingly, it looks as though she just lost the most special and important part of her life. And she has

**VADA RUNNING UP STAIRS INTO DOCTORS OFFICE**

**VADA**

Dr. Welty!!!? Dr. Welty??

**DR WELTY**

Vada, what's wrong sweetheart?

**VADA**

I can't breathe, I'm suffocating.

**DR WELTY**

Oh, wait relax now, let me look, let me look,  
come up here and we'll have a look.

Dr. Welty lifts Vada up onto bed

**VADA**

It hurts, it hurts so bad, make it stop.

**DR WELTY**

What Hurts Vada?

**VADA**

The bee stings! I can't breathe!

**OUTSIDE SULTENFUSS' HOUSE, HARRY AND ARTHUR ARE BRINGING  
THOMAS J IN ON A STRETCHER**

**INSIDE, CORRIDOR OUTSIDE VADA'S ROOM, SHELLY IS CLIMBING  
STAIRS CARRYING A TRAY OF FOOD, SHE STOPS OUTSIDE VADA'S  
ROOM**

**SHELLY**

Knocks Vada?

View shifts to inside Vada's bedroom, where she is curled  
up in a little ball on her bed

I'm leaving some food for you by the door, in  
case you get hungry.

Vada remains where she is, the doorbell rings

**DOWNSTAIRS, SHELLY OPENS DOOR TO REVEAL JUDY**

**SHELLY**

Hi.

**JUDY**

Hi, is Vada home?

**SHELLY**

Yes she is, but she's very upset, so she's

not seeing anyone.

**JUDY**

Oh, I'm Judy, I go to school with her, I wanted to tell her I'm sorry about Thomas J.

**SHELLY**

Well maybe she'll feel better in a couple of days.

**JUDY**

Will you tell her I came by?

**SHELLY**

Sure.

**JUDY**

Thank you. Bye.

**SHELLY**

Bye.

Shelly closes the door

**PEOPLE ARE ENTERING THE FUNERAL ROOM**

**REV**

Hi Harry.

**HARRY**

Ahh, Reverend Miles.

**REV**

The Sennetts want to thank you for taking care of things so quickly.

**THE FUNERAL ROOM IS FILLING UP, WITH THOMAS J AT THE FRONT IN A COFFIN**

**CORRIDOR OUTSIDE VADA'S ROOM, SHELLY STOPS OUTSIDE IT**

**SHELLY**

(knocks)

Vada? I see you took your tray in,

Vada is looking out her blinds at all the black cars and people dressed in black entering her house

Maybe you should come down for the funeral, sometimes it helps. Vada?

**HARRY'S STUDY, HARRY IS LOOKING AT A PIECE OF PAPER, SHELLY**

**ENTERS**

**SHELLY**

She won't come out. It's been a whole day.  
You have to do something Harry.

**HARRY**

The funeral's starting.

Shelly is now very emotional

**SHELLY**

Open your eyes, she's eleven years old! Her  
only friend in the world is dead.

**HARRY**

I know that, but what do you want from me?

**SHELLY**

Stop hiding Harry, you run Harry. When I  
first came here, the idea of working with dead  
people, didn't exactly thrill me, but when I  
saw a family lived here, I thought, "if I'm  
living without a family, at least I can work  
with one, and maybe once in a while i'll be  
invited in for supper."

**HARRY**

Yeah, and when those suppers are disrupted  
because there's a car crash, or there's a  
fire, or a little boy steps on a beehive.

**SHELLY**

I'm not asking you to stop feeling for those  
people. But life isn't just death Harry, don't  
ignore the living, especially your daughter.

Arthur enters

**ARTHUR**

Excuse me Harry, Shelly, the minister's about  
to begin.

**HARRY**

Thank you Arthur.

Shelly exits

**FUNERAL ROOM, MINISTER IS WALKING UP THE FRONT**

**MINISTER**

We are here to honor Thomas James Sennett. He

was born, May 7 1961, in Madison,  
Pennsylvania, and he was survived by his  
loving parents, Charles and Susan Sennett.....  
(fades as camera changes)

**CAMERA IS ON VADA, WHO IS SLOWLY MAKING HER WAY OUT OF HER  
ROOM**

The minister is heard to say this in the background

**MINISTER**

The family has asked me to say a few words  
before we proceed. No words that I could say,  
would begin to describe the loss and grieving,  
one word that keeps ringing in my ear is  
Why?. Why would God choose to take this  
little boy from us? I can't give you an answer  
to that question, but I can tell you that God  
has chosen Thomas J for some very special  
reason, we must find solace in knowing that  
Thomas J is now in Gods care. In that face,  
there is no sorrow such as....

The ministers words fade into the very moving music

**CAMERA IS ON VADA SLOWLY DESCENDING THE STAIRS AND LOOKING  
INTO THE FUNERAL ROOM, THE MUSIC, SCENE AND ACTIONS OF  
CHARACTERS IS GETTING TO THE POINT OF MAKING THE VIEWER CRY**

Vada stops and sits on a step where she can look through  
and see Thomas J lying in his coffin, she begins to cry

**BACK IN FUNERAL ROOM, VADA ENTERS AT THE BACK AND BEGINS TO  
SLOWLY MAKE HER WAY UP TO THE FRONT**

**MINISTER**

....disciples began to chastise them, and  
Jesus said "Let the children come to me, do  
not hinder them, for the Kingdom of God  
belongs to such as these.

(the minister notices Vada  
coming around the front of the  
room)

He laid his hands on their heads before he  
left that place, let us pray in silence.

Vada has made it right up to the coffin, which she leans  
over and crying, says the following

**VADA**

Wanna go tree climbing Thomas J?

**CAMERA DOES A CLOSE UP OF THOMAS J'S BEE STING COVERED FACE**

**CAMERA GOES BACK TO PREVIOUS SHOT INCORPORATING VADA AS WELL**

**VADA**

His face hurts, and where is his glasses? He can't see without his glasses! Put his glasses on!

(Harry and Shelly are rapidly approaching Vada, Shelly takes hold of her and tries to pull her away)

Put on his glasses! He was gonna be an acrobat.

**HARRY**

He's gone sweetheart. He's gone!

**VADA**

Get away, get away!!

Vada breaks away from Harry's grip and runs out of the room, followed closely by Harry and Shelly

**OUTSIDE THE HOUSE, VADA IS RUNNING DOWN THE STEPS, FOLLOWED CLOSELY BY HARRY**

**HARRY**

Vada wait! Vada! Vada!!

Harry stops running after Vada as she sprints off down the road

Vada arrives at Mr. Bixler's house

**MR. BIXLER**

Vada! I was just on my way to your house. Are you all right? I'm so sorry about Thomas J.

Vada covers her ears and begins to sing "doo-wah-diddy-diddy"

**MR. BIXLER**

Okay, okay we don't have to talk about him, Vada, Vada we don't have to talk about him, it's okay. We won't talk about him all right?

**VADA**

(crying)

Justin and Ronda say that I should tell people what I feel.

**MR. BIXLER**

(nods)

Come here, sit down over here.

The two of them sit down on Mr. Bixler's porch

Vada is clearly in a lot of pain and she wants it to stop

**VADA**

Mr. Bixler,

(emotional pause)

I love you.

**MR. BIXLER**

Oh, Vada...

**VADA**

I love you like my Dad loves Shelly. I wanna live here.

**MR. BIXLER**

Pause as he takes all this in I think your Dad would miss you.

**VADA**

No he wouldn't, I can't go home.

A woman appears at Mr. Bixler's front door

**SUZANNE**

I'll be ready in a second, I just can't seem to find my other earring....

**MR. BIXLER**

Suzanne, this is Vada.

**SUZANNE**

(comes over to Vada and crouches)

Vada, hi, I'm really sorry.

**MR. BIXLER**

Could you just give us a minute?

**SUZANNE**

Yeah.

Suzanne goes back inside

**VADA**

Who's that?

**MR. BIXLER**

That's Suzanne.

(pause)

She and I are gonna be married this Fall.

As soon as Vada hears this, she reacts, shaking her head and backing off

**VADA**

No....

**MR. BIXLER**

I...I was gonna bring her to class next week. I wanted to hear your poem. Oh Vada, please honey I cared for him too, Vada please! Vada, Vada sweetheart don't.....

**VADA**

Get away from me!

Vada runs off down the road

**WEeping WILLOW, VADA AND THOMAS J'S FAVORITE SPOT, VADA IS UP HIGH IN THE TREE**

Vada is climbing around in the tree, clearly trying to get somewhere of significance

**VADA'S THOUGHTS**

Why do you think people wanna get married?

**THOMAS J'S VOICE**

When you get old, you just have to.

Vada pulls out her photo of her mother

**THOMAS J'S VOICE**

Who's that with your Dad?

**VADA'S THOUGHTS**

It's my mother.

**THOMAS J'S VOICE**

I'm gonna be an acrobat when I grow up.

(pause)

Vada, would you think of me? Well if you don't get to marry Mr. Bixler.

**VADA'S THOUGHTS**

Now we're blood brothers for life.

Vada gets out to the end of a branch, and makes a daring jump to another, had she fallen she would be dead

**OUTSIDE SULTENFUSS' HOUSE, POLICEMAN CLIMBS STEPS AND RINGS DOORBELL, SHELLY ANSWERS**

**POLICEMAN**

Shelly I'm sorry but we haven't found her yet.

**SHELLY**

It's dark, she can't be alone in the dark.

**POLICEMAN**

We'll keep looking.

**SHELLY**

We, no, we've been looking since this morning, her teacher called, and he said that she went there first.....

**POLICEMAN**

I know, I know you told us.

**SHELLY**

But I....

Shelly is cut off as the door opens and in walks a very shaken Vada

**SHELLY**

Vada. Are you okay?  
(Vada nods)  
Oh God.

Shelly embraces Vada

**VADA'S ROOM, SHELLY AND VADA ARE SITTING ON VADA'S BED, SHELLY IS BRUSHING VADA'S HAIR**

**VADA**

I should have told Thomas J that he was my best friend.

**SHELLY**

I'm sure he knew.

Shelly puts a nightie on Vada

**VADA**

Shelly, I stole some money from your cookie jar, to pay for the writing class.

Shelly ponders this for a moment

**SHELLY**

It's okay sweetheart.

**VADA**

I'll pay it back, besides, I don't think i'll ever go to class again.

**SHELLY**

I'll tell you what, you dedicate your first book to me, and we'll forget about the whole thing.

**VADA**

I will I promise.

**SHELLY**

Okay, get in to bed.

Vada gets into bed and extends her arms to Shelly, they hug each other, Vada has finally accepted Shelly

**SHELLY**

Goodnight.

**VADA**

Goodnight.

Shelly exits and turns off the lights

**DOWNSTAIRS, HARRY ENTERS**

**SHELLY**

(sitting on stairs)

She's in.

**BACK IN VADA'S ROOM**

Harry enters, walks over and kisses Vada, then turns around and begins to exit

**VADA**

Did I kill my mother?

**HARRY**

What??

**VADA**

The bees killed Thomas J, and I killed my mother.

**HARRY**

No, no.

Harry pulls up a chair and sits down next to Vada

**HARRY**

No sweetie that wasn't your fault, things like that aren't anybody's fault, it just happened.

Vada pulls out the photo of Harry and Vada's Mom from under her pillow

**VADA**

I found this.

**HARRY**

I forgot about that picture, where did you find it?

**VADA**

In the garage.

**HARRY**

Ahh, that little Chevy was your mothers favorite car.

**VADA**

What was my mama like?

**HARRY**

She was pretty, and kind, she had your eyes. Oh boy did she love to laugh. Sometimes when you laugh, you sound just like her.

**VADA**

Really?

**HARRY**

Uh huh. You know what your mother did when she found out she was gonna have you? She came home and painted this whole room pink. She was so sure she was gonna have a little girl.

**VADA**

Do you miss her?

**HARRY**

Yes, I did, very much for a long time, and even now, I get a little sad when I think of a pretty flower or a sunset that your mother

would have liked.

**VADA**

I think every time I see a climbing tree i'll think of Thomas J.

**HARRY**

That's good, memories are good sweetheart. Vada, I'm sorry; I was trying to keep it from you, I just couldn't. You're a good girl, and I want you to be happy; don't be an old grump like me.

(Vada puts the photo back under her pillow, Harry gets up and kisses her)

Seeya in the morning.

Harry begins to leave room

**VADA**

Daddy, it's not so bad to be like you.

**A CAFE IN TOWN, HARRY IS EATING, MRS. SENNETT COMES AND KNOCKS ON THE WINDOW**

Harry makes his way out of the cafe to talk to Mrs. Sennett

**HARRY**

Mrs. Sennett, how are you doing?

**MRS. SENNETT**

Some days I think i'll be okay, others, well I have to force myself even to get out of bed, I know it's crazy, but sometimes I think he's just away at summer camp. How's Vada?

**HARRY**

Oh she's doing much better. Ahh she's just inside.

(walks over to entrance)

**VADA!**

Vada, who is inside talking to someone, hears and comes outside

**VADA**

Mrs. Sennett.  
(she runs and gives her a hug)

**MRS. SENNETT**

Vada. I've been wanting to come over to see you,

(she reaches inside her purse and gets out something, it is Vada's mood ring)

Thomas J had this on him, I thought you might like to have it.

Vada slides the ring onto her finger, the ring is BLUE

You were such a good friend to him, I hope you'll still come by and visit me.

**VADA**

I will, I promise.

Mrs. Sennett looks at Harry as if to say good-bye, and then walks off slowly

**VADA**

Mrs. Sennett.

(she stops and turns around to look at Vada)

Thomas J will be all right, my mother will take care of him.

**MRS. SENNETT**

Thank you Vada.

She then turns and walks off

**SUMMER WRITING CLASS, FOCUS ON MR. BIXLER**

**MR. BIXLER**

(reading from book)

Encased in talent, like a uniform, the rank of every poet, is well known. They can amaze us like a thunderstorm, or die so young, or live for years alone. My advice to you on our last class, be a thunderstorm.

**JUSTIN**

What exactly do you mean by that?

**MR. BIXLER**

I mean, be dangerous

(Vada enters the back of the room)

And unpredictable. And make a lot of noise.

Mr. Bixler sees Vada

**MR. BIXLER**

Vada.

As Vada is noticed, she goes around getting hugged by everyone

**JUSTIN**

Hey, we missed you man! Gimme a hug!

Vada gives Justin a hug, she then proceeds towards Mr. Bixler

**MR. BIXLER**

I was hoping you'd stop by today.

Vada and Mr. Bixler hug each other

**VADA**

I can't stay, I just came to read my poem.

**MR. BIXLER**

We'd love to hear it.

**VADA**

Weeping willow with your tears running down,  
Why do you always weep and frown, Is it  
because he left you one day, Is it because he  
could not stay, On your branches he would  
swing, Do you long for the happiness that they  
would bring, He found shelter in your shade,  
He thought his laughter would never fade,  
Weeping willow stop your tears, There is  
something to calm your fears, You think death  
as if you forever part, But I know he'll  
always be in your heart.

There is a long pause as it sinks in, everybody remains silent, then just before the scene changes, the Temptations song "My Girl" begins to play

**OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL, VADA COMES OUT THE DOOR AND DOWN THE STEPS WHERE JUDY AWAITS HER**

**VADA**

Hi Judy.

**JUDY**

Hi Vada.

**VADA'S THOUGHTS**

Things are a little better these days; I finally swallowed that chicken bone, Judy and

I are gonna be in the same home room and the  
republican party just re-nominated Mr. Nixon.

Vada and Judy ride off down the road on their bikes, the  
camera angle rises and the credits begin to roll as the song  
My Girl plays

**THE END**