

Director: Joshua Brand

NORTHERN EXPOSURE

"Pilot"

#78701

Written by

Joshua Brand

and

John Falsey

REV. FINAL DRAFT

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(78701)

NORTHERN EXPOSURE - "Pilot"

5/7/90

CAST

REGULARS

JOEL FLEISCHMAN

MAGGIE O'CONNELL *

MAURICE MINNIFIELD

HOLLING VINCOEUR

SHELLY

CHRIS

ED

GUEST CAST

MARILYN

RUTH-ANNE *

RICK PEDERSON

STEWARDESS

BUSINESSMAN

PETE GILLIAM

TEENAGER

PATIENT #12

LOGGER

WIFE

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

1 INT. PLANE - NIGHT

1

We slowly PAN an aisle of seats, past darkened rows of sleeping passengers.

JOEL (O.C.)

Don't get me wrong, I'm not kidding myself. Anchorage isn't New York City but it's not Cambodia, right? Do you have any idea how many Chinese restaurants there are in Anchorage? Five. Fourteen movie theaters, two practically kosher delis and if we're talking about freezing our buns off, the median temperature is only five degrees lower than Frenchlick, Indiana, despite the differential in precipitation.

A STEWARDESS passes into frame as we HOLD on JOEL FLEISCHMAN who reaches out, stopping her. He's twenty-seven, verbal, quick-witted, a quintessential New Yorker who's never been west of the Mississippi. A ruddy-faced, beefy BUSINESSMAN sits next to Joel, magazine in his hands.

JOEL

(to Stewardess)
One more ginger ale and another...
(indicating businessman)
...Scotch for the businessman.

*

Stewardess reaches across Joel, picks up three liquor bottles off the Businessman's tray and exits.

JOEL (CONT'D)

So, anyway, it's not as if Alaska was in my game plan. But the fact is I always felt medicine was for me ever since I played 'doctor' with Katie Kaplan in the second grade.

Businessman looks at Joel, who smiles.

JOEL (CONT'D)

I had the desire, the grades, I didn't have the bucks. Do you have any idea what it costs to go through medical school? A lot. I know what you're thinking -- scholarship, right? Let's face it, Jewish doctors are not exactly an endangered species.

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED:

Stewardess returns with the scotch and ginger ale.

STEWARDESS
Three dollars, please.

JOEL
(reaching into pocket)
So, seventy-five scholarship
applications later, seventy-four
turn downs -- only one comes
through. Alaska.

BUSINESSMAN
(despite himself)
Whatdya mean?

Stewardess leaves.

JOEL
Well, the State agreed to finance my
medical education to the tune of
125,000 dollars and in return I
agreed to be their indentured slave
for the next four years.

Beat, as Joel eyes the Businessman, waiting for a reaction.
None comes.

JOEL
What?

BUSINESSMAN
Have you ever been to Alaska?

JOEL
Of course, of course -- what kind of
a schmuck do you think I am?
(pulls photo out of wallet,
hands to Businessman)
...Elaine -- she's a third-year law
student at N.Y.U. -- we came out
last summer and we loved the place.
Well, not loved, but we agreed that
it's definitely doable.
(pulls out brochure)
We've rented a brand-new
two-bedroom condo on Chicataqua
Lane: Olympic pool, sauna,
racquetball and tennis courts -- the
whole schmear -- not to mention
PGA-approved 18-hole golf course,
which in the winter is perfect for
cross-country skiing.

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED: 2

1

Joel smiles, nods expectantly, eyeing the Businessman as he holds the photo of Elaine in one hand, the brochure in the other, looking from one to the other, weighing them.

JOEL
So, whatdya think?

Businessman stares at photo of Elaine, burning a hole through it.

BUSINESSMAN
Not bad.

Joel grabs the photo of Elaine from him.

BUSINESSMAN
Do you hunt?

JOEL
No.

BUSINESSMAN
Fish?

JOEL
I've eaten them.

Businessman smiles, hands the brochure back to Joel.

JOEL
What're you saying? What're you trying to say? You trying to tell me something?

BUSINESSMAN
Good luck.

Joel nods, gauges the Businessman, who sips his scotch, then clicks off his overhead light. Eyes darting, Joel leans back... A long beat, then he clicks off his overhead lighting, throwing the plane into darkness.

DISSOLVE TO:

2 EXT. AIRLINE TERMINAL - ANCHORAGE

2

Over the din of airplanes, we see Joel, bags in hand, golf clubs over his shoulder, exit the terminal.

JOEL
(calling)
Taxi!

Joel continues as two cabs fly by. He sees another cab and lets out a ferocious whistle.

3 ANOTHER ANGLE 3

As the taxi passes out of frame, then stops, and pulls back into view. The trunk pops open. On Joel tossing stuff into the open trunk --

CUT TO:

4 INT. HALLWAY - DAY 4

Joel sits with his suitcases and golf clubs on a hard wooden bench in a long empty hallway. We see a man, PETE GILLIAM, a mid-thirties yuppie, approaching.

GILLIAM

(cheerful)

Joel! Sorry, it's been crazy.

They shake, Pete picks up the golf clubs, enters his office. Joel stands, grapples with the suitcases.

GILLIAM (O.C.)

Great seeing you again. How was the flight?

As Joel enters the office.

CUT TO:

5 INT. OFFICE 5

Joel sits across from Gilliam, who sits behind his desk.

JOEL

I'm gonna need a day or two to get settled in at the condo -- phone, cable, that sort of thing.

GILLIAM

(studying paperwork)

Uh-huh, uh-huh.

JOEL

You know, before I check in at the hospital.

GILLIAM

(smiling, looking up)

I've got some very exciting news, Joe.

JOEL

Joel. Really?

Gilliam bends down, reaching into lower desk drawer.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED:

5

GILLIAM (O.C.)

Have you ever been to the French Riviera?

JOEL

In France?

Gilliam rises up with folder.

GILLIAM

My lady and I were doing Europe. Did the Riviervas -- French and Italian -- then jumped up to Scandinavia -- she's Danish, a model -- before jumping down to Zermat... It's in Switzerland.

JOEL

Sounds pretty good.

GILLIAM

You'd think. Actually it was incredibly unbelievably disappointing.

JOEL

Really? Why?

GILLIAM

Because, Joel, after you've experienced Alaska -- and I'm talking about the Real Alaska -- everything pales in comparison.

Joel nods, impressed.

GILLIAM

Which brings me to my big surprise.
(smiling)
We don't need you.

JOEL

What are you talking about?

GILLIAM

You're expendable, Joel. You're superfluous.

JOEL

You're yanking my chain, right?

GILLIAM

(smiling)

Nope. We over-funded and at present have more physicians than we need.

(CONTINUED)

*

5 CONTINUED: 2

5

JOEL
(stunned)
This is great news.
(standing)
I mean, that is just -- that's
incredible! So what you're saying
is you don't need me.

GILLIAM
(smiling)
That's right.

JOEL
(beside himself, sitting)
This is incredible news.

GILLIAM
So we've decided to set you up in
Cicely.

Joel looks up confused, smile fading.

GILLIAM
(smiling)
Situated in the area we Alaskans
refer to as the Alaskan Riviera.

On this, Gilliam opens the folder, turns it to Joel.

GILLIAM
Ideal weather, breathtaking
scenery -- shopping, dining -- Aspen
has nothing on this place.

JOEL
(studying brochure)
Where is this Cicely?

GILLIAM
A bus ride from Anchorage.

JOEL
Uh--huh, uh-huh...

GILLIAM
We've arranged for lodging, an
office facility and the city is
extremely excited.

JOEL
Uh, huh. Uh, huh... what if I don't
like it?

GILLIAM
Then you leave.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: 3

5

Joel looks at him. A beat.

JOEL

So, what you're saying is, if I don't like it, I can leave?

GILLIAM

Absolutely.

Joel takes brochures.

JOEL

It does look pretty.

GILLIAM

It's gorgeous. I don't mean to be rude, Joel, but I have a meeting and you have a bus to catch.

Gilliam stands, Joel stands.

GILLIAM (CONT'D)

We'll take care of your bags. Maurice Minnifield, the head of the Cicely Chamber of Commerce, will be there to welcome you and help get you settled in. Great seeing you again, Joel.

Gilliam exits. Joel stands a moment, then,

JOEL

Pete!

CUT TO:

6 INT. OUTER OFFICE

6 *

JOEL

My ticket.

GILLIAM

No flies on you.

(hands Joel ticket)

We'll talk. How is that pretty lady of yours?

JOEL

She's fine, thanks.

GILLIAM

You're a lucky guy. Give her my love.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

6

Gilliam heads down the corridor. We HOLD on Joel as he smiles, looks down at brochures and ticket.

CUT TO:

6A EXT. BUS TERMINAL - DAY 6A

As Joel, relaxed, boards along with other passsengers. The door closes and the bus rolls out of the terminal. We see the Alaskan skyline in the b.g.

7 OMITTED 7 *

7A EXT. DOWNTOWN STREET - DAY 7A *

We see the skyline of Anchorage in the background as a bus approaches over the hill. As the bus passes out of frame, we:

CUT TO:

8 INT. BUS 8

Almost filled. *

9 ANGLE - JOEL 9

Relaxed, looking out the windows. *

DISSOLVE TO:

10 OMITTED 10 *

10A TRACKING ANGLE BUS 10A *

Past cascade mountain lake.

CUT TO:

11 INT. BUS 11

Half filled. We see Joel looking across to lake. As he gets up to change seats: *

11A TIGHTER JOEL 11A *

sitting by window, he cranes his head to get full view of lake and mountains as tighter Joel becomes Joel's POV.

DISSOLVE TO:

12 THRU OMITTED 12 THRU *

14 14

14A EXT. BUS - FRONT ANGLE 14A *

1/4 filled. As the bus moves down a two-lane highway we hear O.C. a loud blaring HORN.

CUT TO:

- 14B INT. BUS 14B *
- 1/4 filled. Joel sits, looking concerned, a MAN sleeping on his shoulder.
- 14C JOEL'S POV 14C *
- Out front windshield. As a logging truck barrels down the highway toward the bus, HORN BLARING.
- 14D ANGLE - FROM REAR OF BUS 14D *
- As bus slides off road as logging truck zooms past camera.
- DISSOLVE TO:
- 14E EXT. BUS - ONE LANE ROAD 14E *
- As the bus passes by.
- CUT TO:
- 14F INT. BUS 14F *
- We see three Native Americans scattered about the bus. We don't see Joel's face, but his leg is sticking into the aisle.
- 14G CU JOEL 14G *
- From floor as he studies map. The bus jolts to a stop as Joel is thrown forward, bumping his head against the seat in front of him.
- 14H ANGLE 14H *
- Joel looking up.
- 15 EXT. BUS - AFTERNOON 15
- The bus is stopped, engine idling in the middle of nowhere. We hold a few beats. The driver appears around the rear of the bus. He slams shut the luggage compartment, gets in the bus, doors close. Then the bus takes off in a cloud

(CONTINUED)

- 15 CONTINUED: 15
of fumes, revealing Joel on the far side of the road,
standing under a bus-stop sign -- golf clubs and luggage
around him.
- CUT TO:
- 16 ANGLE - TREETOPS - LATER 16
Lush, green. Woodpecker hammering away as the sun sinks.
- 17 ANGLE - JOEL 17
sitting on suitcase eat a candy bar, directly under the
"BUS-STOP" sign. His foot tapping, checking his watch. He
squints up at the treetops. He picks up a rock and throws
it up at the trees. The woodpecker's hammering stops. Joel
sits. Beat, as the hammering starts up again. *
- 17A ANGLE - WOODPECKER'S POV 17A *
18 ANOTHER ANGLE 18
He exhales, stands, moves into the open road and peers
down it. Then sits again. *
- 18A ANGLE - JOEL 18A *
takes out NY Times and begins to read. Hear a truck in the
distance. As Joel looks up. *
- 19 Omitted (19-21) 19 *
22 ANGLE - TRUCK 22
As the driver's window is rolled down, revealing Ed the
Indian, eighteen years old.

ED
Dr. Fleischman?

JOEL
(hesitantly)
Yeah?...

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED:

22

ED
(smiling)
Hi. I'm Ed.

On Joel --

CUT TO:

23 INT. PICKUP TRUCK - DAY

23

As Ed the Indian and Joel bounce down the one-lane blacktop, in the middle of nowhere.

ED
Do you like black music?

JOEL
Huh? Yeah, sure...

Ed the Indian reaches back, pulls a cassette-carrying case up to the front seat.

JOEL (CONT'D)
So, how do you know Mr. Minnifield?

ED
I work for him. What about rap?

JOEL
What about it?

ED
(indicating cassette)
Are you into it?

JOEL
Not particularly.

He puts the cassette down, holds up another, smiling.

ED
Richard Berry, R & B.

He slips in the cassette. We hear: "Louie, Louie." *

ED
(singing, softly)
'Louie, Louie...'

Ed turns, smiling to Joel. *

24 ANGLE - JOEL

24

staring, as Ed softly sings.

ED

You're a doctor, right?

JOEL

Yeah. Where are we?

ED

Not like Doctor Toni Grant.

(Joel looks confused)

She's on the radio. She helps you with your personal problems.

(beat, quickly)

'He's in sinus tach, give me an X-ray stat: cervical, spin, chest and abdomen. Call ortho for his leg and give thoracic a call. Tell them we've got a penumo-thorax, possibly secondary to fragment.'

(beat, smiling)

St. Elsewhere. I loved that show.

CUT TO:

25 EXT. TRUCK - AFTERNOON

25

As it drives on, then abruptly stops, in the middle of nowhere.

CUT TO:

26 INT. TRUCK

26

As Ed gathers up his tapes, opens the door and climbs out, shutting the door behind.

ED

See you.

27 ANOTHER ANGLE - JOEL

27

Ed starts walking off as Joel slides quickly across the driver's seat.

JOEL

Hey! You! Where you going?!

ED

(over shoulder)

Home.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED: 27

JOEL

What're you talking about? You've
gotta take me to Mr. Minnifield.

Ed stops, turns, smiling, points up the road.

ED

You can return my box to me later. *

On that, Ed vanishes into the woods.

28 ANGLE - JOEL 28

Looking around, panicked. A beat, and with great
difficulty he grinds the truck into gear.

CUT TO:

29 EXT. TRUCK 29

As it lurches down the road, gears grinding.

CUT TO:

30 INT. TRUCK 30

Joel, driving, leaning forward -- tense, alert.

31 JOEL'S POINT OF VIEW - NOTHING BUT TREES 31

CUT TO:

32 EXT. TRUCK (FROM REAR) 32

As it screeches to a stop. Gears grind, and it backs up.

33 JOEL'S POINT OF VIEW - MAILBOX 33

With the name Minnifield on it, on the side of a dirt road.

34 ANOTHER ANGLE - TRUCK 34

As it turns onto the dirt road.

CUT TO:

35 INT. TRUCK 35

Joel, bouncing hard, as the truck rolls down the rocky dirt
road, hands clenched around the steering wheel.

36 JOEL'S POINT OF VIEW

36

As the truck approaches a clearing and a ramblin two-story log house. An Alaskan flag flaps on a pole in front of the house. A large satellite dish looms on the roof.

*

CUT TO:

37 EXT. TRUCK

37

stopping in front of the house. Joel exits the truck, looks around. Silence.

We TRACK him up to the steps toward the front door. Then:

MAURICE (O.C.)
(loud, calling)
Dr. Fleischman!

38 ANGLE - JOEL

38

stopping, turning.

39 JOEL'S POINT OF VIEW - MAURICE MINNIFIELD

39

Backlit, standing on the roof of opposite building hoisting flag.

*

40 ANGLE - JOEL

40

confused.

*

JOEL
Minnifield?

41 ANGLE - MAURICE

41

Rappelling down the face of the building and starting toward Joel.

*

41A ANGLE

41A *

on Joel,

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

42 INT. MAURICE'S LIVING ROOM

42

A spacious room decorated like a hunting lodge: stone fireplace, moose head mounted above it. There is an astronaut's helmet with NASA and MINNIFIELD emblazoned on the front, next to Joel. We hear a shower turn off.

43 ANGLE - JOEL

43

sitting in an oversized chair, taking in the room and the helmet.

MAURICE (O.C.)

What part of New York you from, son?

JOEL

Flushing.

44 ANOTHER ANGLE

44

As Maurice enters buck naked, carrying his clothes.

MAURICE

What part's that? The Bronx?

JOEL

Queens. Do you know New York?

45 ANGLE - MAURICE

45

dropping his clothes on the couch, he drops to the floor, begins to do PUSHUPS.

MAURICE

Can't say I do. I've only been to New York once. For a Parade.

JOEL

Macy's Day?

MAURICE

Ticker-tape. We were riding down Fifth Avenue in an open Caddy.

(stopping in mid-pushup,
with gravity)

I was an astronaut, son.

46 TWO SHOT - JOEL AND MAURICE

46

JOEL

Really? No kidding?

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED:

45

Maurice resumes pushups. Joel watches him, Maurice's face reddening, muscles straining.

JOEL

Ever go into Outer Space?

MAURICE

I took my ride. By the way, let me be the first to take this opportunity to welcome you, Joel. When I heard that we had a crack at a Jew doctor from New York city, well, as I'm sure you can imagine -- I jumped. You boys do outstanding work.

JOEL

Thanks, I guess...

On that Maurice stops, stands.

MAURICE

Lot of opportunity in this corner of the world, Joel.

Maurice then sits on couch across from Joel, begins to dress.

MAURICE

When I came here twenty years ago, it was nothing but untouched natural surroundings that hadn't seen a white man since time began. First thing I did is I bought fifteen-thousand acres of land. The second thing I did was start a newspaper and radio station. Why? Communications.

Maurice stands, putting on blue jeans.

MAURICE

A man's got something to sell, something to say, you better let the world know about it. And, by golly, I had both. Still do. Now we're finally getting things right. We've got an outstanding town that's ready to step up, and we've got resources -- wildlife, land -- just crying out to be fondled. And now, Joel, we've got you.

47 ANGLE - MAURICE

47

dressed, standing, he pulls a cigar out of a beautiful cigar box.

MAURICE

C'mon, son. Let's do it.

Maurice heads to the door. Joel follows.

CUT TO:

48 EXT. CADILLAC (MOVING SHOT) - DAY

48

Baby blue, top down, white leather interior, racing down the road. Maurice is driving, Joel, wind plastering back his hair, holds on. Joel's luggage sticks out of the back seat.

MAURICE

(smiling, over wind)

What do you think?

JOEL

(over wind)

About what?

MAURICE

(over wind)

The car.

JOEL

(over wind)

It's fast.

Maurice laughs heartily.

MAURICE

(over wind)

Nothing like the feel of a V-8 vibrating under your ass.

(Joel looks at him)

This is what a car is supposed to be. Not like those rice cookers you can put your boot through. That's what screwed it all up, Joel.

JOEL

(over wind)

Screwed what up?

MAURICE

The U.S. of A. We were at the top of our game until the turban dwellers squeezed us in '72. This car's got a hearty appetite, no doubt

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

48 CONTINUED:

48

MAURICE (cont'd)
 about it. America can't live on
 just lean cuisine.
 (patting stomach)
 Our belly's too big. Now, we're
 reined in, like a stallion with a
 bit in its mouth. Except for this
 baby, Joel,
 (pounds dashboard)
 and Alaska.

On Maurice speeding up, Joel pinned against the white
 leather,

CUT TO:

49 EXT. TOWN - DAY

49

A dinky town set against a breathtaking backdrop of
 snow-peaked mountains in the middle of nowhere. A single
 traffic light swings in the wind. A banner is strung across
 the street, welcoming visitors to the Summer Wonderland
 Festival.

50 ANGLE - CADILLAC

50

As it pulls up Joel's office. Maurice turns off the
 engine. *

JOEL
 (looking around)
 Is this it? Is this the town?

MAURICE
 This is it.

JOEL
 Where's the rest of it?

MAURICE
 It's coming, son.
 (looking off)
 Burgers Kings, Shopping Malls, 31
 Flavors -- it's all gonna be here.
 Maybe not today or tomorrow, but
 it's coming. I can guarantee you
 that.

Maurice climbs out of the car, strides erect and
 purposefully up the sidewalk, Joel following qu
 Maurice stops at a door, flings it open.

51 INT. OFFICE

51

A large, empty space with a couple of rooms off to the side, in dire need of extensive repair: It's a pit. Maurice, bathed in light, looms in the doorway, Joel beside him, a step behind, as we see a cat scurry across the floor.

52 TIGHT SHOT - MAURICE

52

squinting.

MAURICE

Son of a ---.

53 ANOTHER ANGLE - MAURICE AND JOEL

53

stepping into the room, Maurice casually kicking a folding chair out of his way.

MAURICE

I told that Ed I wanted him to throw a new coat of paint on.

JOEL

This place needs more than a paint job, if you ask me. *

MAURICE

Son, I had no idea that this wouldn't be taken care of before you got here.

JOEL

Before I got here?
(beat, sinking in)
This is my office?

MAURICE

A few curtains...
(flips light switch, nothing happens)
...a couple heads on the walls, a table to operate on and you're in business.

MAURICE

Here, have a seat...
(moves a chair upright with his foot)
...relax, get a feel for the place, while I find out what the hell Ed has been up to.

Maurice exits.

- 54 ANGLE - JOEL 54
 exhales deeply, runs his hand through his hair. He leans his head back, closes his eyes, rubbing his temples with his fingers. He HEARS something. He stops rubbing, opens his eyes.
- 55 JOEL'S POINT OF VIEW - LARGE INDIAN WOMAN 55
 standing in an inner doorway, staring stoically at him.
- JOEL
 Who are you?
- MARILYN
 Marilyn. I'm here for the job.
- CUT TO:
- 56 EXT. OFFICE - DAY 56
 As Joel bursts through the door, looking left then right, he begins to move quickly down Main Street, passing people on the sidewalk. A few more steps, then he starts to run. We TRACK him until he reaches a Sporting Goods Store with rifles and hunting and fishing gear in the window.
- 57 ANOTHER ANGLE 57
 as Joel stops, opens the door, poking his head in.
- JOEL
 Phone!
- VOICE (O.C.)
 Try the Bar.
- On Joel continuing quickly down the street --
- CUT TO:
- 58 INT. HOLLING'S BAR - DAY 58
 Pool table, dart board, booths and tables and a long bar. Twenty men: tough-looking loggers, trappers, fishermen and Indians play pool and eat.
- 59 ANGLE - FRONT DOOR
 bursting open, Joel appears, panting.
- 60 JOEL'S POINT OF VIEW - THE PATRONS
 not bothering to look up.
- 61 ANGLE - JOEL
 panting, stopped dead in his tracks.

62 ANOTHER ANGLE

62

as Joel composes himself, gently closes the door and walks to the back of the bar.

63 ANOTHER ANGLE

63

He approaches a pay phone hanging on a wall across from the men's restroom. He reaches deep in one pocket for a handful of coins, then into another pocket for a crumpled piece of paper. Unfolding the paper, he cradles the phone and dials. A few rings, then he pumps in a half-dozen coins.

JOEL

Pete Gilliam...

(beat)

Pete, Joel Fleischman. I'm in Cicely, I've taken a long look around, checked out the place, thought about it long and hard and I want out... No, I don't have my contract with me. I'm at a pay phone in a bar in the middle-of-nowhere.

(beat)

What?... It says what?... Hey, you -- you told me if I didn't like it I could leave! Well, I don't 'don't like it!' I hate it!! And I demand to leave!!!...

(louder)

You're not the one who's supposed to spend the next FOUR YEARS OF HIS LIFE IN A GODFORSAKEN HOLE-IN-THE-WALL-PIGSTY WITH A BUNCH OF DIRTY, PSYCHOTIC, REDNECKS!!

64 ANOTHER ANGLE

64

as we see the patrons, looking up.

65 ANGLE - JOEL

65

realizing, he turns his back to them, continuing on phone.

JOEL

(yelling, sotto)

I am a graduate of Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons! I finished my residency at Beth Zion Hospital, one of the finest medical facilities in New York city if not the world, and I will under no conditions spend the best years of my life in the worst place on earth!! And if you think ---

*
*
*

66 ANGLE - JOEL

stopping, looking at the phone, clearly being hung up on.

67 ANOTHER ANGLE

as the patrons look and listen to Joel with interest. A toilet flushes and a three-hundred pound bear of a MAN slides past Joel into the bar as Joel punches in numbers on the phone. A beat, then --

JOEL

(excited)

Collect call from Joel.

(beat, downshifting sweetly)

Hi, honey. Well, I'm here...oh, yeah, it's lovely, it's...listen, sweetheart, would you take a quick run through my contract and see if there's any stipulation as to actual location of medical practice?... Well, such as, you know, suburban Anchorage. Do you think you could do that for me? Today. I miss you, too... The number?

(reading number off phone)

907-555-7823. Thanks. I'll wait for your call. Me, too.

68 ANOTHER ANGLE

Joel hangs up. He exhales. He looks up.

69 JOEL'S POINT OF VIEW - THE PATRONS

staring at him.

70 ANGLE - JOEL

forced ease, smiling weakly.

JOEL

(to patrons)

Women...

71 TRACKING ANGLE - JOEL

moving through the room to the long bar where he takes a seat, smiles at Holling Vincoeur.

72 ANGLE - HOLLING VINCOEUR

The owner. Sixty-two, rugged. He approaches Joel from behind the bar.

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED:

72

JOEL
Stomach's a little sour. How about
a seltzer.

HOLLING
Seltzer?

JOEL
Yeah... You know seltzer -- water
with bubbles in it.

73 ANOTHER ANGLE

73

Holling exits frame as Ed the Indian enters.

ED
(to Joel)
Oh, hi. Say, have you heard the new
Milli Vanilli?

JOEL
No.

ED
It's gone platinum.

Ed smiles to Joel who just looks at him, as Holling enters
with seltzer.

ED
(to Holling)
Maurice wants to know if you got the
sixteen cases of lemon-lime for me
and Festival, Holling.

HOLLING
I couldn't get lemon-lime so I got
orange.

ED
Oh, okay. That'll do.

HOLLING
I was gonna give Maurice a call to
let him know about the change
myself.

73A ANGLE - HOLLING'S POV

73A *

of Maurice leaning on Caddy.

*

74 ANOTHER ANGLE

74

Holling resumes business as Ed and patrons all REACT to this
last statement.

*

(CONTINUED)

74 CONTINUED:

74

ED
You're going to call Maurice?

HOLLING
(nonchalant)
I'm thinking about it.

JOEL
(to Holling)
Happen to have a couple of aspirin?

Holling gets the aspirin.

ED
I don't think you should do that,
Holling.

HOLLING
Do what, Ed?

ED
Call Maurice.

HOLLING
And why's that?

ED
It will set him off and the next
thing you know he's blowing your
brains out and we'll have to bury
you, which will ruin the Festival
for me and everybody.

Joel looks from Holling to Ed, back to Holling as he pops
four aspirins into his mouth.

HOLLING
(beat)
I'll take that into consideration,
Ed, but there's a time for
everything and in my opinion it's
time for me and Maurice to settle
things once and for all.

ED
Well, I hope you don't do that.

Ed exits as Joel stares at Holling.

CUT TO:

75 OMITTED

75

76 INT. BAR - NIGHT

76 *

Crowded, noisy, lively music on the jukebox: the dinner and darts set. We TRACK Holling across through the crowded room to Joel, sitting on a stool, next to the pay phone, hunched over working on a NY Times crossword puzzle in pen. His luggage next to him. *

HOLLING

You've been perched here for a couple hours now, thought you might have worked up an appetite.

JOEL

Oh...Thanks. What do I owe you?

HOLLING

My pleasure.

JOEL

(putting his hand out)
Joel Fleischman.

HOLLING

(shaking)
Holling Vincoeur. Pleased to make your acquaintance.

Beat.

JOEL

I guess you heard when I was -- before -- anyway, no offense intended. I was a little upset.

HOLLING

(nodding)
You haven't heard back from your Attorney yet, huh?

JOEL

Well, as I'm sure you know, it takes time to sort out these complex legal issues... Besides, she's got finals.

HOLLING

(nodding, turning)
Well, best of luck...

JOEL

Excuse me, Mr. Vincoeur --

HOLLING

Holling.

(CONTINUED)

76 CONTINUED:

76

JOEL

Mind if I ask you a personal
question? Why is Maurice gonna kill
you?

HOLLING

Well, it's a long story.
(beat, pointing)
See that young lady over there?

77 JOEL'S POINT OF VIEW - SHELLY, 18 YEAR OLD INDIAN GIRL

drop-dead, beautiful, waiting on tables.

HOLLING

She quite something to look at,
isn't she?

JOEL

She sure is.

HOLLING

Miss Northwest Passage. Maurice brought her down to marry him. At that time, Maurice and I were best of friends. Like most folks, he and Shelly spent a lot of time in this establishment. One day, Shelly appeared at the bar without Maurice and said if I wanted her, she was mine. I did. Well, Maurice hasn't stepped in here since, and said if I ever tried talking to him again, he'd blow my brains out.

JOEL

(under his breath)

Wow...

Joel looks from Holling to Shelly, back to Holling.

JOEL (CONT'D)

And you haven't talked since?

HOLLING

Not yet.

(beat)

Can I get you something else?

JOEL

No, thanks, this is fine.

Holling nods, walks off. Joel stares off at Shelly as he bites into his hamburger. In the b.g. we SEE MAGGIE CASEY, twenty-eight, pretty, enters. We SEE her stop Holling, talk to him.

The phone RINGS. Joel grabs it.

JOEL

(quickly)

Hello?

(pissed)

Just a second.

(beat, calling out)

Clem Tillman, telephone.

78 ANOTHER ANGLE - MAGGIE

approaches Joel.

MAGGIE
Dr. Fleischman?

JOEL
(ignoring, impatient)
Clem Tillman!

MAGGIE
I'm Maggie Casey.

JOEL
Yeah, so?

MAGGIE
So, I've been looking for you.

JOEL
(scanning the bar, thinking)
What kind of name is Clem, anyway?
What's it short for? Clemton,
Clemlock?

MAGGIE
Look, I really haven't got the time
to --

Clem, the TRUCKER appears.

JOEL
You Clem?

Clem nods.

JOEL
(handing him receiver)
It's about time. Let's try to keep
it short, Clem. I'm expecting a
very, very important long distance
call.

Clem eyes Joel, takes the phone.

MAGGIE
Look, if you'd rather spend the
night here than at my place, don't
let me get in your way.

(CONTINUED)

78 CONTINUED:

78

JOEL
 (snickering)
 Where'd you go to trade school?
 (off Maggie's angry look)
 Look, I don't want to tell you how
 to run your business, lady, but this
 petulant, aggressive attitude is a
 real turn-off.

MAGGIE
 (with bite)
 Look, buddy --

JOEL
 (looking her up and down)
 And second of all, I'm engaged to be
 married to a knockout that I'm madly
 in love with. So, why don't you do
 yourself a favor and take your
 business someplace else.

Beat, as Maggie glares at him with contempt and disdain.

MAGGIE
 I'm not a hooker, you jerk, I'm your
 landlord.

Maggie heads for the door. On Joel,

CUT TO:

79 INT. CABIN - NIGHT

79

rustic, one-bedroom, electically furnished. The furniture
 is second-hand. Door opens, Maggie enters, jaw-set, turns
 on a light, passes CAMERA, exiting into kitchen. We HEAR
 the outside kitchen door open.

80 ANGLE - FROM INSIDE CABIN

80

illuminated by porch light, Joel, at the truck, unloading
 gear.

JOEL
 (calling out, unloading)
 Look, I wasn't trying to be rude.
 If you'd been direct there wouldn't
 have been any misunderstanding.
 (staggering toward door)
 By the way, I appreciate your help
 with the luggage.

As Joel enters, we HEAR the outside kitchen door slam shut.
 A beat, and Maggie re-enters, arms loaded down with firewood
 and a green plastic bag. She walks directly to

(CONTINUED)

80 CONTINUED:

80

the fireplace, begins to make a fire.

JOEL

(indicating fire)

Good idea, it is a little nippy.
But what do you do for heat?

MAGGIE

(making fire)

This is the heat. And there's a
wood-burning stove in the kitchen.

JOEL

What do you do for wood?

MAGGIE

Chop it.

81 ANGLE - JOEL

81

wanting to break the ice, he walks deeper into the cabin.

JOEL

(friendly)

You know, this place really is
charming in a sort of, you know,
that sort of way -- although I'm not
really big on the great outdoors, I
can see how a lot of people... so,
what, the state pays you to rent
this place out to me?

MAGGIE

(standing)

Maurice pays me. *

JOEL

Interesting profession...

MAGGIE

It's an investment. I fly.

JOEL

Oh, a stewardess -- flight
attendant. Which airline?

MAGGIE

I have my own plane. I'm a pilot.

JOEL

(surprised)

Oh.

(CONTINUED)

MAGGIE

(dryly)

It's not a 747. I run an air taxi.
There's clean linens in the closet.

JOEL

Great. Does the phone work?

(she nod)

Just in case I get hungry, want to
order in some take-out.

Joel smiles, she remains stoic. Joel puts his hand out to
her, shakes it.

JOEL

Listen, again, sorry about the
brouhaha. I'm leaving tomorrow and
if I don't get a chance to say
goodbye, thanks for your
hospitality.

MAGGIE

Good-bye.

Maggie turns, heads toward door. Joel notices the Hefty
trash bag, picks it up.

JOEL

What about this?

MAGGIE

(exiting)

Drop it out back. I reset the trap
in the kitchen.

Joel, with a look of confusion, looks in the bag, recoils,
flinging the bag. He throws the door open.

82 JOEL'S POINT OF VIEW - MAGGIE

82

in truck, engine loud.

JOEL

(yelling over engine)

It's a gigantic dead rat!

MAGGIE

(smiling)

Yeah.

Maggie drives off. On Joel,

CUT TO:

83 INT. JOEL'S CABIN - NIGHT

83

Lights out. We HEAR the scurry of little rodent feet as the CAMERA moves off the floor onto the foot of the bed and slowly up the blanketed outline of Joel's body, stopping on Joel's face, eyes as wide as saucers, following the SOUND of the scurrying feet. Long moments and we HEAR the loud SNAP of a trap, and the scurrying feet sounds stop.

On Joel, relaxing, closing his eyes,

FADE OUT

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

84 EXT. CABIN - MORNING 84 *

We HEAR: *

JOEL (O.C.)
 (horrified)
 Oh god oh god oh god oh god --

85 Omitted (85) 85 *

86 EXT. CABIN 86

A cabin in the middle of nowhere as the front door opens and Joel appears. He steps off porch, turning left, then right, not knowing where or how to dispose of the rat.

JOEL
 (relieved)
 Oh god.

He looks up, looks around.

87 JOEL'S POINT OF VIEW - A FOREST 87

that goes on forever. Mountains rising to the heavens.

JOEL
 (queasy, insecure)
 Oh, god...

CUT TO:

88 EXT. TOWN - DAY 88

One road leading into town. Empty, then a solitary figure in soft focus emerges in the distance, running towards town. Then slowly, the figure reveals himself to be Joel.

89 EXT. GENERAL STORE 89 *

Joel running, in a sweatshirt, pants and sneakers. Sweating, face red, he runs into town. Exhausted, he stops running, panting as he walks towards the General Store. He opens the door.

A little bell over the door rings as Joel enters and goes directly to the refrigerated section. He grabs two containers of orange juice, ripping open one, guzzling as he approaches the check-out counter. RUTH-ANNE, sixty-five year old proprietor, stands behind the counter. We HEAR a song from David Byrne's "Rei Momo" album coming from the radio. As the song ends, we HEAR the disc jockey, CHRIS STEVENS...

RUTH-ANNE
Did you run all the way into town, Doctor Fleischman?

Joel nods, guzzling.

RUTH-ANNE
That's a seven-mile run.

Joel nods.

RUTH-ANNE
You must be a serious runner.

ANGLE - JOEL

satiated.

JOEL
Not since the seventh grade.

RUTH-ANNE
(impressed)
Just the juices then?

JOEL
Yeah, -- no, a bagel and cream cheese.

RUTH-ANNE
What's a bagel?

JOEL
(looking around)
I'll take the beef jerky instead.

CHRIS (O.C)
(southern accent)

This is Chris Stevens coming to you on KBEAR radio from Cicely, Alaska, in the heart and soul of Arrowhead County and you were listening to a cut off of David Byrne's 'Rei Momo' album. This morning we're starting our annual countdown toward the Summer Wonderland Festival. On a sorry note, Ray Onetka's prize dogfish, Bonnie, passed away last night. As you all know, Bonnie was two-time defending champion of the Ugly Fish Contest. On a happier note we'd like to congratulate Greg and Marsha Weed on their ninth wedding anniversary, Annie O'Shea on her sixth birthday, and we here at the Minnifield Communications Network would also like to extend a hearty welcome to New York City's Joel Fleischman -- Arrowhead County's very own physician. This one's for you, Doctor Fleischman.

On that we hear Frank Sinatra belt out "New York, New York." Joel looks at the radio.

(CONTINUED)

90 CONTINUED:

90

RUTH-ANNE

Try the spicy one. That's six dollars and forty cents.

JOEL

(handing over money)

I heard a rumor out there on the road that the first bus out of here leaves today.

RUTH-ANNE

Today? No, I haven't heard that. Would you like a schedule?

Joel nods.

CUT TO:

91 INT. JOEL'S OFFICE

91

"New York, New York" still plays on the radio as Joel enters. An assortment of twelve PEOPLE and one BEAVER sit quietly against a wall. Joel stops short at the sight of them. The office has been spruced up, furniture in place.

JOEL

What are you all doing here?

MARILYN

They're waiting to see the doctor.

JOEL

(to everyone)

Well, I am the doctor, but I'm very sorry I can't see any of you because I'm not staying.

Beat. No response. Joel pulls out a bus schedule.

JOEL

See, I've got a bus schedule so although I'm a doctor, I'm not really the doctor and I think it might be improper for me to establish relationships -- doctor-patient -- in a situation that's... that's, uh... going nowhere.

Beat. No response. No one moves.

JOEL

Anyway, it was nice meeting all of you. I wish you the very best.

(CONTINUED)

91 CONTINUED:

91

Beat. No one moves.

JOEL (CONT'D)
Suit yourselves.

He turns, walks, stops.

JOEL (CONT'D)
(to Marilyn)
There is no job.

On that, Joel turns, exits.

92 EXT. JOEL'S OFFICE

92

He closes the door behind him. He considers, shakes his head, exhales, then re-enters office.

93 INT. OFFICE

93

Joel moves quickly down the line of patients pointing, CALLING OUT numbers one through twelve as he exits into office room. *

94 INT. JOEL'S OFFICE

94

He sits behind desk.

JOEL
Number One!

A few beats, then patient Number #1, robust, rugged man enters, sits.

JOEL
What's your problem?

PATIENT #1
I'm feeling achy and I'm hot.

JOEL
How long?

PATIENT #1
'Bout three years.

Joel gets up, touches Patient #1's cheek.

JOEL
You do feel a little warm. Let's get a temperature.
(stopping; to Patient #1)
How the hell am I gonna get your temperature without a thermometer?

(CONTINUED)

94 CONTINUED:

94

On that, Marilyn enters, tray of medical basics in hand.
She sets down tray, hands Joel thermometer.

JOEL
(shrugging)
There's no job.

Marilyn exits, serene. Joel sticks thermometer under man's
tongue.

JOEL
Take a seat out there for a few
minutes.

Patient #1 exits.

JOEL
Number Two!

Patient #2, a teenager enters, sits holding a beaver in her
lap.

JOEL
Hello.
(indicating beaver)
What's that?

TEENAGER
It's a beaver.

JOEL
Really? I've seen those before on
P.B.S. Cute.

Joel leans down to look at beaver as a MAN knocks on door.

JOEL
(looks up, annoyed)
What number are you?

MAN
Twelve.

JOEL
Then go out there, Number Twelve and
wait your turn like everybody else.

Number Twelve, turns, exits.

JOEL
(to Teenager)
So, anyway, what's your problem?

TEENAGER
I think his teeth hurt.

(CONTINUED)

94 CONTINUED: 2

94

JOEL
The beaver's?

TEENAGER
Yeah, he hasn't been gnawing on any wood lately.

A knock on the door, Joel looks up, see Patient #12 again.

JOEL
(angry)
Look, Number Twelve, I told you to sit down and wait your turn like everybody else. If you can't do that, I'm gonna ask you to leave.

Patient #12, looks down, exits.

JOEL
(to Teenager)
I'd like to help you with the beaver, but I'm not a dentist.

TEENAGER
Couldn't you just look at him?

JOEL
(beat)
All right. Lift his lip.

She does, revealing the full-figure of his enormous teeth.

95 ANGLE - JOEL

95

bending down, he looks at beaver, then eyes widening past beaver to expanding pool of blood in the doorway.

JOEL
Oh my god...

96 ANOTHER ANGLE

96

as Joel moves to doorway, hops the pool of blood into outer office.

97 INT. OUTER OFFICE

97

as he quickly follows trail of blood to Patient #12 who sits, ha folded in lap, waiting, his left leg now soaked with blood.

*
*

98 ANGLE - JOEL

98

*

(CONTINUED)

98 CONTINUED:

98

JOEL
Number Twelve, you're bleeding all
over the floor!!

CUT TO:

99 INT. JOEL'S OFFICE - EXAMINING ROOM - DAY

99

99A CLOSEUP - BULLET

99A

JOEL (O.C.)
I've seen this caliber before.

PULL BACK TO SHOW: THE EXAMINING ROOM

Patient #12 lies on old, wooden operating table, pants off,
legs dangling. Joel holds the bullet in a pair of calipers.
Marilyn stands next to them, holding a stainless-steel bowl. *

JOEL (CONT'D)
Saturday night special, but nowadays
you see it seven days a week.

Joel turns, drops the bullet into the bowl. It pings. He
applies a gauze pad.

JOEL
Gun of choice for your basic pimps,
drug dealers and pre-AK 47
gangsters.

Joel picks up a bandage.

MARILYN
I'll wrap him.

JOEL
I'll wrap him.

Marilyn shrugs, exits with bullet.

JOEL
So what happened?

PATIENT #12
My wife shot me.

JOEL
Why?

PATIENT #12
She said, "loud doesn't work with me
anymore."
(off Joel's look)
We've been married seventeen years.

(CONTINUED)

99A CONTINUED:

99A

We HEAR a KNOCK on the door, it opens and Ed enters.

ED

Excuse me, Doctor Fleischman.

(to Patient #12)

Oh hi, Walter.

PATIENT #12

Hello, Ed.

ED

What happened to you?

PATIENT #12

Edna shot me.

ED

Man, oh man...

JOEL

(annoyed; to Ed)

What are you doing here?

ED

Maurice wants to talk to you.

JOEL

Yeah, well, tell him to take a number. I've got people out there.

ED

Okay, I'll wait.

Ed exits. On Joel, wrapping Walter:

CUT TO:

100 EXT. LAKE - DAY - JOEL'S POINT OF VIEW

100

Serene, beautiful, quiet. MAURICE sits in a rowboat, rifle cradled in his arms. A golden retriever sits poised, erect, behind him. We HEAR the WHIRR of an outboard motor.

101 ANGLE - JOEL AND ED

101

approaching in a boat, Ed seated in the back, steering.

102 ANOTHER ANGLE - ED'S BOAT

102

as he cuts the engine and the boat drifts up to the rowboat. Maurice takes hold of it.

MAURICE

Hop in, Joel.

Joel climbs out of the boat and into the rowboat, rocking it as he does.

102 CONTINUED:

102

Joel climbs out of the boat and into the rowboat, rocking it as he does.

as it re-starts, heads back for shore. As the sound of the engine recedes:

MAURICE
(looking to the sky)
Ever do much hunting, Joel?

JOEL
Only on the lower East Side.
(Maurice looks at Joel)
For bargains.

Maurice squints back up at the sky, brings a duck whistle, dangling around his neck, to his mouth and blows. Long moment of pristine silence.

MAURICE
What I value most in life is friendship. I've never believed the written word was necessary when a rock-steady handshake would do. A man's word is his honor. I'm talking about loyalty, son, commitment. I believe your people refer to it as "The Ethics of the Fathers." Do you get my drift?

JOEL
Well, I'm sure I will.

MAURICE
You signed a contract, Joel, but more important than that, you gave your word. And I intend to hold you to that word within the bounds of the law or, if need be, without the bounds of the law.

JOEL
Are you threatening me?

Maurice looks from the sky to Joel.

MAURICE
The reason you're in Cicely is because I wanted a doctor here --

JOEL
(shocked; indignant)
I don't believe this! --

(CONTINUED)

103 CONTINUED:

103

MAURICE

-- and if you have any notion of running, there's the matter of \$125,000 that the good people of Alaska paid for your medical education. As far as I'm concerned, Fleischman, that's my money.

104 ANGLE - MAURICE

104

glaring at Joel, steely-eyed.

JOEL

(controlled rage)

I don't know who you think you're talking to, Minnifield, but I'm not some putz just off the caribou farm. I'm from New York City. I've walked down 42nd Street at midnight. I've ridden the Lexington Avenue Line at two a.m., I've stiffed cabbies, so don't you try this strong arm cowboy crap with me 'cause it doesn't do squat!

105 TWO SHOT - MAURICE AND JOEL

105

eyeball to eyeball.

106 ANOTHER ANGLE

106

We HEAR the sound of ducks overhead and in one rapid motion the gun comes up, pointing at Joel. Joel screams. Maurice fires directly over Joel's head. Joel clamps his hands over his ears. The dog turns, barks. We HEAR a far-off splash into the water. The dog leaps into the water, swimming strongly, swiftly.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

107 INT. HOLLING'S BAR - NIGHT 107

A full crowd of diners and drinkers, engrossed in serious talk.

108 ANGLE - BOOTH 108

Chris Stevens, 27, the radio D.J., sits across from Maggie and Ed the Indian.

MAGGIE

(to Chris)

He said he's going to do it?

CHRIS

(southern accent)

That's what he said.

MAGGIE

Not that maybe he'll do it, or that he's thinking about doing it, but that he's actually going to do it?

CHRIS

What Holling said to me, Maggie, was the following: "I am going to talk to Maurice."

(beat)

It left little room for doubt.

ED

(shaking head)

Maybe there's something you can say on your radio show that'll talk him out of it.

CHRIS

I don't think that would work, Ed.

Suddenly, they all look up, then become quiet.

109 ANGLE - HOLLING 109

standing in front of them, holding food.

(CONTINUED)

109 CONTINUED:

109

HOLLING
(aware of silence)
Everything all right here?

Concurrences, as Holling places the food on table.

HOLLING
Enjoy.

110 ANOTHER ANGLE

110

Their eyes follow Holling as we TRACK him past booths and customers, all of whom stop in mid-sentence and stare up at Holling as he passes by.

111 ANOTHER ANGLE

111

Marilyn sits in a booth with her two children.

MARILYN
(calling)
Holling.

Holling stops.

MARILYN
Odds are five to one Maurice is going to blow your brains out when you talk to him tomorrow.
(beat)
Should I take it?

HOLLING
(considering)
Five to one... pretty good odds.

We TRACK Holling to bar, then down length of bar where he stops, looking at Joel who sits at the bar, nursing a beer, reading the paper.

HOLLING
(wiping off bar)
As you were saying, Joel...

JOEL
Listen to this...
(reading)
"Arrowhead County extends a hearty welcome to Joel Fleischman, a Jew doctor from back East who we know will be with us for a long time to come."

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

111 CONTINUED:

111

JOEL (cont'd)
(angrily)
There's a Constitution in this country and a Bill of Rights that implicitly states that an individual can live any place he pleases. Hey, I'll pay that state back its money with interest, but I'll be damned if I'm gonna let myself be shaken down by a right-wing nut who thinks he can keep me here just because he's got friends in high places, a souped-up Caddy, and a 10-gauge shotgun with a telescopic scope!

HOLLING
(taking it in)
10 gauge, huh...

Joel looks back at paper as Holling moves off. A tap on Joel's shoulder, he looks up.

112 OMIT (112)

112

113 JOEL'S POINT OF VIEW - A "LOGGER"

113

stands over him.

LOGGER
I want to buy you a drink.

JOEL
Thanks, but I don't --

The Logger pours his drink into what's left of Joel's beer.

JOEL (CONT'D)
-- drink.

LOGGER
(clinking glasses)
To Walter.

JOEL
Who?

LOGGER
My buddy. You took the lead out.

JOEL
Oh, yeah. Number Twelve.

They drink. Joel grimaces.

(CONTINUED)

113 CONTINUED:

113

LOGGER

Uno mas...

JOEL

Hold that thought.

Joel, wanting to escape, gets up, moves across room to Maggie, Ed and Chris. They look up. Joel sits down next to Chris. Joel looks back at Logger who looks back at Joel.

JOEL

(fake smile)

Talk like you know me.

On their expressions,

DISSOLVE TO:

114 INT. BOOTH - LATER

114

Joel sits across from Maggie. Ed and Chris are gone. The bar has thinned out. A bunch of empty glasses on the table.

JOEL

So, anyway, after med school, me and Elaine moved into her place in the Village while I did my residency. Elaine's from Brooklyn, Canarsie -- you're from --

MAGGIE

Grosse Point.

JOEL

Michigan. Right, right. Grosse Point -- what an ugly name for a rich city. So anyway, you left college, came out here with the mountain climber --

MAGGIE

He was a graduate student writing a book about mountain climbing...

JOEL

The book, right -- "Mountain of something, something?"...

MAGGIE

(matter of fact)

"Mountain of My Misgiving."

Joel starts to laugh.

(CONTINUED)

*

MAGGIE
Something funny about that?

JOEL
(laughing)
No, no...

MAGGIE
(defensive)
It was published, okay?

JOEL
(straight up)
So whatever happened to him up there
on the mountain?

MAGGIE
He never actually climbed it. He...
left...

JOEL
(confirming)
He dumped you.

MAGGIE
No, he didn't "dump me," not that
it's any of your business. He
happened to be wildly in love with
me.

JOEL
You got cold feet, huh?

MAGGIE
(annoyed)
No, I did not get "cold feet." I
liked him okay. I just didn't love
him, okay? Besides... he's dead.

JOEL
Dead? Dead as in deceased?

Maggie nods.

JOEL
Oooh...

MAGGIE
What do you mean, "oooh"? I didn't
kill him.
(beat)
We were on a glacier. I went for a
hike. He decided to take a nap.
And froze.

(CONTINUED)

114 CONTINUED: 2

114

Maggie looks at Joel who looks back.

MAGGIE

I can't believe I told you that. I never tell anyone that. Hypothermia's one thing, but a nap on a glacier. It was such a ridiculous way to die.

OMIT (115)

116 ANGLE - JOEL

116

leaning in, staring intently.

MAGGIE

What?

JOEL

(leaning in)

You have the reddest lips I've ever seen in my life. Elaine has red lips, but I've never seen red like that, I mean, except maybe on a birthday balloon.

*

MAGGIE

You're drunk.

JOEL

Not only that, you're good-looking. Not great looking, but definitely pretty in a clean sort of way.

MAGGIE

I'm getting the check.

JOEL

Not only that, but you're --

117 ANGLE - JOEL

117

as he stops...

118 ANGLE - MAGGIE

118

looking at him.

119 ANGLE - JOEL

119

as a wave of nausea hits. As he rises quickly:

CUT TO:

120 INT. NEAR MEN'S ROOM

120

Maggie stands, casually leaning against a wall, as we HEAR the sound of Joel wretching.

HOLLING (O.C.)

C'mon, now, give me one more.

Beat. Then another wretch. Silence.

MAGGIE

Everything all right in there?

121 OMIT (121)

121

CUT TO:

122 INT. MAGGIE'S BEDROOM - DAY

122

Joel wakes up in Maggie's bed, in Maggie's room, in Maggie's house. He sits up, hung over, clearing his head, pulls a high heel shoe out from underneath him. He looks at it, holding it, thinking.

*

CUT TO:

123 EXT. MAGGIE'S PORCH - DAY

123

*

Where RICK PEDERMAN, strapping, handsome, sits at the table, drinking coffee, reading paper. He notices Joel standing in the doorway holding a high heel shoe.

*

RICK

Morning.

*

Long beat.

*

JOEL

Where am I?

RICK

Maggie's. She had a mail run this morning.

*

JOEL

(nodding; beat, pointing to cinnamon roll)

Mind if I --

RICK

(pushing plate over)
Help yourself.

(CONTINUED)

123 CONTINUED:

123

Joel sits, takes a bite of the roll.

JOEL

Who are you?

RICK

Rick.

(pushing keys to him)

She left the keys to her truck.

(smiling)

She didn't think you'd feel much like jogging into town today.

JOEL

(nodding; beat)

So, the bed I slept in last night, is that the same bed Maggie slept in last night?

RICK

No. We sleep in the other room.

JOEL

Oh.

(realizing)

Oh.

Rick smiles. Beat.

JOEL

So, I guess I was pretty out of it last night?

RICK

(smiling)

Yeah.

JOEL

It's been a very rough twenty-four hours.

RICK

Must of been.

JOEL

I didn't say or do anything that's, you know, out of line, did I?

RICK

No, just unbelievably embarrassing. You kept going on about how green Maggie's eyes were, how long her legs were, her boobs, her lips, her butt...

(CONTINUED)

123 CONTINUED: 2

123

Rick smiles, sips his coffee, goes back to his paper. On Joel, wanting to crawl into a hole.

CUT TO:

124 EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

124

As Joel, driving Maggie's truck, pulls up, his luggage, golf clubs, etc., protruding out of the back. We SEE that other cars and PEOPLE from the surrounding towns have begun to filter in for the Festival. Joel gets out of the truck, begins to walk down the sidewalk.

125 TRACKING SHOT - JOEL

125

as he passes Ed and OTHERS standing in a group, talking.

ED

Dr. Fleischman?

JOEL

Yeah, what?

ED

Point of information: if a man tells you he's going to kill you before he kills you, is that voluntary manslaughter, involuntary manslaughter or just a fair warning?

Beat.

JOEL

How the hell should I know?

ED

Well, you're a doctor.

Joel, shaking his head, keeps walking. As he approaches his office he is stopped by Ruth-Anne, who hands him a flier.

RUTH-ANNE

Hope to see you at the Festival.

Joel grunts, takes the flier, enters the office.

CUT TO:

126 INT. OFFICE

126

Marilyn, exiting the Examining Room, is heading to Joel's office as Joel enters.

(CONTINUED)

126 CONTINUED:

126

JOEL

Hey!

(approaching)

This is the last time I'm ever gonna
have to say this to you, Marilyn:
There Is No Job.

Marilyn smiles.

JOEL

And will you please stop smiling at
me. You are constantly...

(surprised)

What's he doing here.

MARILYN

She did it again.

126A INT. EXAM ROOM

126A *

Patient #12 lies on his stomach in the Examining Room, a
bloody towel over his left shoulder. Joel moves quickly
into the Examining Room, shutting the door. He lifts up the
towel.

JOEL

Oh, for godssake... what'd she use
on you, a butcher knife?

PATIENT #12

Steak. She snuck up behind me.
If I didn't bury the gun, I'd be
dead by now.

On that the door flies open and Patient #12's WIFE,
wide-eyed, vibrating, appears. Marilyn stands behind her.

WIFE

Gimme the keys!

PATIENT #12

Like hell I will!

WIFE

Gimme the keys, Walter. It's my
truck!

JOEL

Who're you?

PATIENT #12

Over my dead body!

MARILYN

#12's wife.

(CONTINUED)

126A CONTINUED:

126A

WIFE

If that's the way you want it,
Walter!

On that she charges him. Joel stops her. Patient #12 tries to move off the table. Marilyn pushes him back down, holding him down.

JOEL

What is the problem here?!

WIFE

Him! He's the problem.

(to Walter)

You've gnawed through my nerves like
a rat through plaster, Walter and
I've had it!

PATIENT #12

That's right. Lay it off on me. *

WIFE

I'm gonna finish you!

PATIENT #12

Come on! Come on! You want to
do it. Let's do it. *

JOEL

Shut up!

They both keep yelling.

JOEL

(louder)

SHUT UP!

They stop.

JOEL

This is my office. People get
sick, people get shot, people get
hurt and I haven't got a problem
with that. That's fine, that's life
-- I wouldn't have it any other way.

(to Wife)

Do you realize how close you came to
killing this man? If you hadn't hit
the tip of the scapula and bounced
off a rib or two, you could've
punctured his aorta or gone through
his lung. Or if he had really bad
luck you could have

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

126A CONTINUED: 2

126A

JOEL (cont'd)
gone right through the muscle itself
which would have strangled his
heart. And if by some stroke of
luck that didn't finish him off,
you might've severed his spinal
chord, and left him belly up, like a
bug on its back.

A beat, Joel looks at Patient #12 and his wife, who look
confused and horrified.

WIFE
I had no idea it was this
complicated.

JOEL
Well, it is.
(beat)
So, I ask you again. What has this
man done to deserve a cardiac
tampinod?

A beat, Wife starts to cry.

WIFE
I'm invisible.

PATIENT #12
I told you, -- I don't --

Joel stops him with a raised hand.

WIFE
He never listens to me. He never
hears me. He doesn't see me unless
I shoot him or stab him. I've tried
kindness, I've tried anger, I've
tried crying, I've tried laughter.
I'm at the end of my rope, Walter.
If I don't kill you, I don't know
what I'm gonna do.

JOEL
#12?

PATIENT #12
I don't listen to her because no
matter what I do, it's wrong. She
didn't want me to drink in bed, I
don't drink in bed. You don't want
me to run around with the boys, then
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

126A CONTINUED: 3

126A

PATIENT #12 (cont'd)
you complain I'm home too much. So,
I've tuned you out.

JOEL
(long beat)
Well, what do we do now?
(beat)
As far as I can tell, we've got
three ways to go -- divorce,
separation, or you can start talking
to each other. How many hands do I
see for divorce? Separation?

Marilyn raises her hand.

JOEL
Well, then...

The phone rings.

JOEL
Is that a telephone? *

It rings again.

JOEL
That's definitely a telephone. *

He moves to the door, stops.

MARILYN
I took care of it.

Joel moves to door, stops. *

JOEL
(to patient)
Start talking.

On that, he enters his office. *

CUT TO:

127 INT. OFFICE - DAY

127

Joel enters, answers phone on desk.

(CONTINUED)

128 ANGLE - JOEL

128

on automatic pilot, he puts the phone down gently on the desk as Elaine drones on.

128A EXT. OFFICE - DAY

128A

The door blows open and Joel, a man possessed, races across the street, jumps in Maggie's truck.

128B LONG ANGLE - TRUCK

128B

Joel sitting motionless for a long beat, suddenly begins to flip out -- writhing, banging on the steering wheel, dashboard, punching up at the ceiling. As townspeople watch him, we HEAR his muffled screams coming through the rolled-up windows.

128C ANOTHER ANGLE - TRUCK

128C

As Joel, spent, collapses draping his head and arms over the steering wheel.

128D ANOTHER ANGLE - TRUCK DOOR

128D

As it opens, and Joel climbs out, sits down on the running board staring at the ground, lowering his chin into his cupped hands. A long beat, then Marilyn's feet enter frame. Joel looks up.

MARILYN

They're still talking.

Off Joel's expression.

MARILYN

I'll stitch him up?

JOEL

No.

(beat)

I'll do it.

Joel stands, turns, walks toward the office, Marilyn several steps behind him.

*
*

OMIT (129-135)

CUT TO:

136 EXT. LAKE FRONT

136

A sloping, expensive green meadow stretching to a broad lake filled with campers, pickup trucks, late model cars with their owners cooking on outdoor barbecues, sitting in beach chairs as the smoke rises from grills. Kids running, playing. Boats in the water and in the middle of the meadow is a bandbox with COUNTRY MUSICIANS playing and a

(CONTINUED)

136 CONTINUED: 136

banner welcoming the people to the Summer Wonderland Festival. Sounds of LAUGHTER, and MUSIC and the smell of an outdoor barbecue all blend together.

137 ANGLE - CHRIS STEVENS 137

sitting on the back of an open pickup truck, soda in hand, laughing with a group of townsmen, one of whom mimes casting a fishing rod.

138 ANGLE - MAGGIE 138

laughing as she dances with Rick. They change partners. *

139 ANGLE - ED THE INDIAN 139

dancing with Ruth-Anne. Ed, sunglasses and walkman on, dances like an urban black kid to the beat of his own music.

140 ANGLE - MARILYN 140

cooking fish on a grill, while her kids play tag and her five Huskies stand attentively staring up at the fish.

141 ANGLE - HOLLING 141

standing with Shelly and listening to several Indians. Holling nods, stubs out a cigarette.

142 ANGLE - MAURICE 142

moving up from the dock to the bandbox. He climbs the bandbox, standing in front of a microphone as the music dies down.

MAURICE
(over loudspeakers)
The town of Cicely welcomes you all
to the ninth annual Arrowhead County
Summer Wonderland Festival.

Cheers.

MAURICE
This year we are proud to announce
that we have attracted celebrants
from as far away as Ninilchik --
three hundred miles as the crow
flies.

More cheers.

(CONTINUED)

142 CONTINUED:

142

MAURICE

I have a couple of announcements to make. KBHR, the flagship of the Minnifield Communications Network, can now be heard over six outlying townships from seven A.M. to nine P.M. daily, excluding Sundays, on your 57 A.M. band.

Maurice smiles broadly to little reaction.

MAURICE

For those of you who lose track of dial numbers, just check the entertainment section of the Cicely News and World Telegram which is published weekly and on sale here today.

Maurice smiles even more broadly.

143 WIDE ANGLE - CROWD

143

People listening as over the ridge we SEE Joel, hands thrust in pockets, coming down through the meadow, taking a seat by himself, on a tree stump, off from the crowd as Maurice continues.

MAURICE

I am proud to say that I am proud to be an Alaskan. And I am proud to be here to celebrate that fact.

A CHEER goes up. Maurice leans down as someone whispers to him.

MAURICE

(quickly)

The hammer throw scheduled for two-thirty has been pushed back to three o'clock which means we're gonna flip the Big Sweat and the Beard Pull. So sit back, enjoy the food, the fellowship, and have a helluva good time!
(arms raised)
North to the Future!

Maurice, arms pumping, smiling, descends the bandbox into the crowd.

144 ANOTHER ANGLE

144

As Ed sits down next to Joel. Joel looks up. Ed has a hamburger in one hand, hot dog in the other.

(CONTINUED)

144 CONTINUED:

144

ED
Mooseburger or Caribou dog?

JOEL
(beat)
Mooseburger.

Ed hands Joel the burger. Joel bites, chews.

PATIENT #12 (O.C.)
Doctor Fleischman...

Joel turns, sees Patient #12, and his wife. #12 moves stiffly.

JOEL
Oh, no --

WIFE
No, no. We're getting along fine.

PATIENT #12
We just wanted to thank you for getting us to break the ice.

WIFE
After seventeen years it gets pretty thick.

JOEL
Well, I'm glad I could help.

PATIENT #12
Me and the wife and everybody here are real happy that you're with us, I mean, you're a real doctor.

A beat. Joel is touched.

Walter extends his hand. Joel shakes it. Walter shakes Ed's hand. Walter leans back, smiles at Edna, who hugs him. Walter winces from the pain. They move off. A beat.

ED
What time is it in New York City now?

Joel looks down at his watch. A beat.

JOEL
Around midnight.

(CONTINUED)

144 CONTINUED: 2

144

ED
(nodding, thinking)
So, I guess maybe you and your
fiancee could be coming back from
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ED (cont'd)
 a movie right about now. Maybe
 stopped by a little cafe for a cup
 of Espresso, picked up the Sunday
 edition of the New York Times, and
 some fresh, hot bagels for breakfast
 tomorrow.

JOEL
 (wistfully)
 Sounds about right.
 (catching himself)
 How do you know about bagels?

ED
 I saw "Manhattan." I think Woody's
 a genius.

CUT TO:

- 145 TRACKING ANGLE - HOLLING 145
 walking toward the lake, a gathering crowd following behind.
- 146 ANGLE - MAURICE 146
 sitting at a folding card table by the dock, going over
 Festival business. A .357 Magnum rests on the table as
 Holling's legs come into frame. Maurice looks up.
- 147 MAURICE'S POINT OF VIEW - HOLLING 147
 People in the background, looking, waiting to see what
 happens.
- 148 TWO SHOT - HOLLING AND MAURICE 148
 as Holling sits next to Maurice, both facing off into the
 lake. Maurice's hand goes to his gun. Holling looks down,
 spits, then looks off into the golden sunlight. A long beat
 as they both stare into the distance, the gun between them.

HOLLING
 (looking off;
 matter-of-fact)
 I got nothing to say to you,
 Maurice.

Beat. Holling turns to Maurice. Maurice stares off.

HOLLING
 But I'm saying it anyway.

A beat. Maurice looks at Holling.

149 OMITTED 149

150 OMITTED 150

150A MAURICE POV 150A

As Holling lowers his head we rack focus and reveal Shelly in the b.g. watching them.

150B ANGLE MAURICE 150B

staring at Shelly for a moment.

150C ANOTHER ANGLE 150C

MAURICE
How's she doing?

HOLLING
She's fine. I miss you, Maurice. I miss you bein' around. Things turned upside down.

MAURICE
Gravity.
(off Holling's look)
It keeps you planted. Up in space, you got no gravity, it takes you off your feet and you just float around. Is that what it's like, Holling?

HOLLING
What?

MAURICE
Being in love?

CUT TO:

151 TWO SHOT - JOEL AND ED 151

ED
How do you like the Mooseburger?

(CONTINUED)

151 CONTINUED:

151

JOEL

A little gamy.

ED

You'll get used to it.

Joel looks at him. Ed hands him a napkin and smiles. Joel begins to wipe his face as CAMERA cranes up and away revealing the continuing festivities against the golden hues of a late afternoon summer Alaskan sun.

FADE OUT.

THE END