

DUPLEX

written by

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EXT. AIRPORT PICKUP - DAY

JIM (early 20's) scruffy, approaches the side of the terminal curb driving a medium size Uhaul moving truck. He waits behind a car in front of him watching undetected from a distance:

JENNIFER (early 20's) beautiful, nose ring, tattoo on her arm, wearing sunglasses. She takes one last drag of a cigarette and throws it to the ground. She shares a laugh with a young handsome traveler beside her. She sees Jim and drops two large bags of luggage on the curb.

She walks into Jim's arms and they share a romantic kiss. Both wear wedding rings.

JENNIFER

I missed you so much honey.

JIM

I missed you too.

Jim notices the young traveler's examination of thier behavior and matches his intruding stare. The traveler retreats his attention off into the distance. She jumps up on Jim and they kiss. She looks to the moving truck.

JENNIFER

What's going on?

JIM

It's a surprise.

JENNIFER

Honey.

JIM

Come on. I'll tell you in the car.

Jim picks up her luggage and places it in the back of the nearly over flowing moving truck.

JENNIFER

Why do you have all of our stuff in the back.

Jim notices they are holding up traffic.

JIM

Hop in I'll tell you.

Jennifer snags the keys from his hand.

JIM
Hey.

JENNIFER
I'll drive.

JIM
Ok.

INT. MOVING TRUCK -MOMENTS LATER

Jennifer drives the moving truck through the streets with Jim in the passenger seat. She drives with one arm and holds Jim's hand on her lap. MUSIC plays on the stereo.

JIM
How was the flight?

Jennifer strikes a match and lights a cigarette.

JENNIFER
You want one.

JIM
Yeah, sure.

She hands him her cigarette and lights a new one for herself.

JIM
So..

JENNIFER
Fine, good, boring. Ok, so tell me! Why are you driving this?

JIM
I bought us a house.

JENNIFER
You bought a house? Without talking to me.

She removes her hand from his lap and places both hands on the steering wheel.

JIM
I knew you would be mad. But honey, don't worry. Once you see it you will love it.

JENNIFER
How much?

JIM

150. My brother came out and helped me close the deal.

JENNIFER

That doesn't make me confident.

JIM

Honey, it was a steal. I couldn't pass it up. The realtor said he has not seen this good of a deal in years. He said it's probably worth 215.

JENNIFER

Then why so cheap?

JIM

The realtor said the guy lost his job and couldn't afford it anymore.

JENNIFER

Well what if you lose your job!

JIM

It will be ok.. We paid cash.

JENNIFER

You used my money that my parents left me!

JIM

Your money? What do you mean your money? It's our money.

JENNIFER

(screaming)

I can't believe you Jim. I was going to use that for us to travel.

JIM

We are still going to travel.

Jennifer squeezes the steering wheel.

JENNIFER

You had no right taking that money and using it without asking me.

JIM

Honey, just wait until you see the place. Besides, it's an investment more than anything.

JENNIFER

It's not about that Jim. I'm fucking pissed off because you didn't ask me. You just did it. Probably because the realtor talked you into it. And of course the realtor is going to say it's a good idea.

JIM

Give me a little more credit than that. I called my dad and he looked at it. He said it was a great deal. I had to move fast or someone would snatch it up. That is how it works when you find a steal.

JENNIFER

You called everyone else but me.

JIM

It was a surprise.

JENNIFER

Don't surprise me with something by using my money to buy it.

JIM

So that is what this is about. Your money.

JENNIFER

I am so pissed at you right now I could scream.

She presses the eject button on the cd player halting the music. The cd ejects and she flings the cd out her half cracked window.

JIM

That's very dramatic of you. Nice job.

Jim tosses his cigarette out the window. Jennifer abruptly pulls the moving truck into a parking lot.

JIM

What are you doing?

JENNIFER

I'm starving and craving fast food.

The moving truck pulls into a fast food drive through.

JIM

I don't think were going to fit.

JENNIFER

I'm not going in.

They wait in line behind a large black Cheve diesel truck. The Cheve truck has novelty fake balls hanging below the bumper and a gun rack attached to the back of the cab.

Jim struggles to pull his cell phone from his pocket.

JIM

Here look.

He shows her a picture on his cell phone of the front of the house.

The right half of a two story beautiful white house.

JIM

It's got three bedrooms. Three bathrooms a master bedroom with a huge closet. You got your own sink.

She holds up the phone and examines the picture.

JENNIFER

150 hugh?

JIM

Yeah and it has a hot tub on the back porch.

JENNIFER

Why did you only take a picture of half of the house.

JIM

It's a duplex.

JENNIFER

A duplex. You bought a duplex.

JIM

Yeah well the right half. What's wrong with a duplex?

Jennifer tosses the phone on his lap and speeds forward a

couple feet. Jim's head hits the back of his head rest as he fumbles for the phone.

JENNIFER

So you waited while I was gone to do this didn't you.

JIM

There is nothing wrong with a duplex. What?

JENNIFER

I wanted a house together. Not another apartment home.

JIM

It is a house. We won't even see the neighbors. It's all very private.

JENNIFER

It's a duplex Jim. I know what a duplex is.

JIM

You will see Jen. I wouldn't have bought the place if it wasn't comfortable and I know your going to like it.

(beat)

It has a park right next door and a neighborhood swimming pool. They have neighborhood barbeques which is perfect for us to meet people.

JENNIFER

So it's a kids neighborhood.

JIM

Yeah. Perfect place for us to start a family.

JENNIFER

I told you I'm not sure about kids. At least right now.

JIM

You said you wanted kids.

JENNIFER

I said maybe someday.

JIM

Well yeah, not right away.

JENNIFER

I said I don't know if I want kids.

JIM

What do you mean. You said maybe not right now.

JENNIFER

No. Maybe like, I'm not sure if I want kids.

JIM

At all?

JENNIFER

I don't know. But certainly not right now.

JIM

You know I have always wanted kids.

JENNIFER

We never really talked about it.

JIM

Never talked about it. I said what do you feel about having kids.

JENNIFER

You never said you wanted them. I said maybe.

JIM

Wasn't it obvious.

JENNIFER

No. I thought we were on the same page.

JIM

Well I guess we are not on the same page. Why don't you want kids.

JENNIFER

I don't know. I just don't feel good about brining another person into this world. It's over populated and polluted.

JIM

That's fine. But someday you are going to want to.

JENNIFER

Well I don't know. I guess I don't know how I'll feel about it then.

JIM

I can't believe this. That is one of the very few things you are supposed to talk about before you get married. Somehow we fucked up that minor detail.

JENNIFER

Stop it! I'm not getting into this right now with you. I need to be peaceful right now.

EXT. FAST FOOD DRIVE THROUGH -LATER

The moving truck waits behind the Cheve truck.

JENNIFER

This is getting ridiculous.

JIM

It's been like ten minutes.

JENNIFER

That truck is exactly like my ex-boyfriends truck.

Jim looks to her unpleased.

JENNIFER

It does! I'm not kidding he had those same stupid fake balls hanging from his bumper.

JIM

Is it him.

JENNIFER

No. It's not the same truck.

Jennifer rolls down her window and waves her arm.

JENNIFER

Come on!

She honks her horn. The DRIVER can only be identified as a large man wearing a cowboy hat.

The Driver holds his large hand out the window and raises his middle finger sternly.

JIM

Fuck you too.

JENNIFER

Hurry up asshole I'm starving.

A hand from the drive through window hands the Driver two bags of food. The Cheve truck pulls forward.

The moving truck pulls ahead. Jennifer hands the person exact change and they take their food and drive off. Jennifer holds a milkshake between her legs and plucks fries from the bag.

Jim leans over and taps her on the side of the shoulder for a kiss. She resists.

JIM

Fine.

He turns away from her and looks out his window.

JIM

Turn here.

He points to the left.

JIM

I said turn here. Slow down!

JENNIFER

(shouting)

I heard you

EXT. FOUR WAY STOP - MOMENTS LATER

They follow the black cheve truck to a stop sign. The truck stops at the stop sign and does not move. No other cars in sight.

JIM

Great, he's fucking with us.

JENNIFER

This guy is a fucking asshole.

She honks the horn at the black cheve truck. A hand from the truck flicks a cigar out the window. Jennifer honks the horn.

JIM
Honey chill out.

She slaps and pounds the steering wheel in rage. Jim watches in astonishment.

JIM
Jen, Jen, Just relax.

He puts his hand on her arm. She slaps his hand away.

She lays on the horn.

The Cheve truck revs it's engine and peels its tires out leaving a black streak on the cement and smoke in the air.

Jim and Jennifer cover their noses with their sleeves.

Jennifer blows through the stop sign speeding up to the rear of the Cheve truck.

JIM
What are you doing.

The moving truck rides ridiculously close to the back of the Cheve truck.

JIM
Don't ride his ass.

The Cheve truck taunts them by pumping the brakes. The brake lights from the Cheve truck flash on and off.

The Cheve truck halts to a complete stop. The moving truck nearly slams into the back of the Cheve truck but misses by a couple feet.

JIM
Jen, fucking knock it off.

She throws a milkshake over her roof splattering the side of the Cheve truck.

She drives past him up the road. The Cheve truck is left behind.

JIM
What the fuck is wrong with you.
You are acting fucking crazy.

Jennifer covers her mouth laughing devilishly.

JIM
You better drive and hope he
doesn't catch us.

Jim looks in the rear view mirror for any sign of the truck
from behind.

JENNIFER
Relax babe.

JIM
I'm serious move it.

The moving truck speeds down the country road at 65 mph.

The Cheve truck screams through the country road with
strawberry milk shake splattered across the hood. The
window wipers smear the milkshake across the windshield.

Jennifer looks into her rearview mirror seeing no other
vehicles.

JIM
Take this next right.

JENNIFER
You have to tell me. I don't know
where to go.

JIM
Take the next right.

JENNIFER
This one.

JIM
Yes. Take a right.

The moving truck takes a right onto another country road.

JIM
You can slow down now.

Jennifer looks into the rearview mirror and sees the Cheve
truck approaching fast.

JENNIFER
He's behind us.

Jim looks through the mirror.

JIM
Fuck. Ok don't do anything. Just
let him pass.

JENNIFER
He's right behind us. Jim.

JIM
Yeah, he is fucking pissed you
threw a milkshake all over his
truck.. Just drive.

The truck pulls in behind them and rides their ass.

JIM
Just let him pass, pullover.

JENNIFER
I'm going to.

The moving truck pulls to the right and drives slowly on the side of the road. The Cheve truck pulls along side them and cuts them off forcing them into the ditch.

JENNIFER
What the fuck is he doing.

JIM
Fuck!

The door of the Cheve truck opens a large figure gets out.

JIM
Go, Go, Now!

Jennifer punches it and speeds around the truck.

The moving truck drives its top speed, 75 mph.

JIM
He is going to catch us in two
fucking seconds.

She looks through the rear view mirrors.

The Cheve truck is directly behind them. It slams into their bumper from behind.

JENNIFER
What the fuck.

She turns to Jim, her face in tears bawling.

JIM
Just keep your eyes on the road.
I'm going to call 911.

Jim struggles in his pocket for his phone. The Cheve truck bumps them again. She loses control and veers towards a Deer Crossing Sign on the side of the road. She swerves the

opposite direction crossing the yellow line. An oncoming car speeds at them head on. Jennifer SCREAMS.

Jim drops the phone from his ear. He grabs the wheel and turns it back into the lane.

JENNIFER
(crying)
That mother fucker!

A police officer in his car radaring up ahead in the ditch.

JIM
Slow down there is a cop.

She brakes.

JENNIFER
I am. Shit.

They speed past a police car on the side of the road. The cops lights flash. The police officer waves both vehicles in.

The police car pulls behind the black Cheve truck and moving truck.

JENNIFER
Thank God. Do I stop?

Jim and Jennifer look at each other nerve racked.

The flashing police car parks behind the Cheve truck.

JIM
He's not pulling us over. Keep going.

JENNIFER
Jim, I don't want to drive anymore.

JIM
The house is like a half mile up this road. We are almost there.

He places his hands on her shoulders to comfort her.

EXT. WHITE DUPLEX - MOMENTS LATER

Jennifer drives the moving truck approaching the white duplex in the beautiful neighborhood. The plain white duplex has a large driveway with a basketball hoop. Two young boys ride bikes down the sidewalk.

JIM

Pull into the garage.

Jim presses a garage door button sitting on his seat. The moving truck enters the garage and comes to a halt.

He presses the button to close the garage door.

Jennifer fixes her runny mascara.

JENNIFER

I'm sorry.

JIM

So am I.

JENNIFER

I'm just really overwhelmed. I just got off the plane. You show up in a moving truck.

JIM

I know.

JENNIFER

That car would have killed both of us. I'm sorry for acting so crazy. I'm just starving and moody and I don't know what the fuck going on with me.

JIM

(laughing)

Your not pregnant are you.

JENNIFER

Shut up.

She quickly rolls down the window. Digs for her cigarettes only to discover an empty pack.

JENNIFER

I need a beer. God damn it's hot in here.

Jennifer opens the truck door, exits and slams the door.

EXT. DUPLEX BACK YARD - MOMENTS LATER

The couple walks through a gate to a small backyard with a swing set and a hot tub.

JIM
Look at the hot tub.

A Neighbor Boy (8) chases a German Shepherd in the shared duplex back yard. An older Woman (40's) watches over the boy and sits on the porch off the kitchen talking on the phone while knitting a red sweater. The older woman takes notice and waves to them, Jim and Jennifer return the friendly gesture.

Jennifer stands off by herself quietly.

Jim cracks open a beer and takes a drink.

JIM
It's cold.

He hands Jennifer a beer.

JIM
So... What do you think?

JENNIFER
It's everything a person should want.

JIM
What? You don't like it? You love hot tubs.

JENNIFER
It's not very private. Everyone can see you.

JIM
We will get one of those lattices or a wall for some privacy.

She takes a seat on the swing set. He sits down next to her.

JIM
Honey, what's wrong. You don't like it...? It's a smart investment and we get to live in it.

JENNIFER

I don't want to become one of those women.

She nods to the woman across the way talking on the phone and knitting.

JIM

What women?

JENNIFER

A suburban house wife. The ones that all live the same little lives, knitt sweaters and gossip all day. They get their dream house and have kids. Then before you know it you have lost your identity completely. I'm exactly like everyone else. You know how many times my mother has asked me when I am going to have kids. She never even asked me if I wanted to have kids.

JIM

Honey, I don't think you have to worry about being like everyone else.

(beat)

Where else do you want to live then?

JENNIFER

Don't you see. It's not about where I live. I don't want everyone else's life. Boring! I can already tell you the next 15 years of my life. We have a kid, you go to work each day eight to five, but we can't just have one kid he/she needs a sibling so we have another. Maybe two more. The kids grows up to be either football players or cheerleaders. You get a raise, we get a bigger house. I stay home and watch the kids. And before you know it we are both arguing with them at the dinner table because one of them wants to get a hotel room for their senior prom. That's not me.

JIM

It doesn't have to be like that.
You say it like you don't have a
choice.

JENNIFER

Sure. Say that now. It starts
with this house. I don't want to
have this kid just because
everyone says that's what I'm
supposed to do next.

JIM

Have this kid?

JENNIFER

Have a kid.

JIM

No, you said: have this kid. I
specifically heard you say: have
this kid.

JENNIFER

I meant have a kid. Jim this
isn't some Freudian slip.

JIM

Why are you getting so defensive.

JENNIFER

I'm not! Stop it. Alright. I'm
not pregnant if that is what you
are getting at.

JIM

Cause you would tell me if you
were.

JENNIFER

Of course I would. How did we get
side tracked to this?

JIM

I don't know? You said you had the
munchies and you felt moody.

JENNIFER

(interrupts)

I did not say munchies!

JIM

You did in the truck. And now you slip and say "I'm not going to have this kid." You tell me, what to think.

She takes his hand.

JENNIFER

I would tell you. Let's stop this.

JIM

Ok, I believe you.

Jim stands and pulls a pack of cigarettes from his pocket. He draws one out and lights it, takes a drag. He hands a cigarette to Jennifer. She declines.

He looks awkwardly to her unopened beer lodged between her legs.

JIM

Aren't you going to open your beer?

She looks up at him like a nervous kitten.

JENNIFER

Not right now.

JIM

Here you can have a drink of mine.

He nuzzles his intruding beer up close to her lips. She grabs the beer from him and splashes it in his face.

A look of betrayal in his face as the beer rolls down his cheeks.

JENNIFER

I'm sorry.

He wipes the beer off his face and walks away.

JENNIFER

Babe?

She chucks the unopened beer from between her legs at the fence. Beer gushes out like a sprinkler.

The neighbor woman halts her conversation and they share a glance.

EXT. DUPLEX DRIVEWAY - DAY

The moving truck parked the driveway of the duplex. Kids ride their bikes down the street.

The Neighbor Boy (8) shoots baskets on the basketball hoop in the shared driveway.

Jennifer opens the back of the truck and pulls out the two large bags of luggage. Jim attempts to relieve the heavy bags from her hands.

JENNIFER

I can do it.

He abandons his thoughtful gesture.

The basketball bounces out of control to Jim. He bounces it back to the Neighbor Boy.

JIM

Let's just get the stuff we need for tonight.

She looks at all the moving boxes in the truck.

JENNIFER

We need to make some friends.

A familiar sound of a LOUD diesel truck. The couple looks to each other.

The Cheve truck with strawberry milkshake splattered drives towards them down the neighborhood street.

JENNIFER

Shit.

Jim closes the back of the moving truck.

The Cheve truck stops in front of their house idling.

JIM

Let's go inside.

JENNIFER

No, I'm not going to show him we are scared.

JIM

Are you fucking kidding me. Get inside the house right now.

JENNIFER

Shut up, don't swear in front of the kid. And don't tell me what to do. Besides, he already knows where we live.

JIM

Fine. You two can stay out here alone. I'm going inside to call the police.

JENNIFER

Fine, be a pussy.

Jim drops the luggage and heads towards the house. Looking behind him as if she is going to follow him. He turns around and grabs her arm.

JIM

This is not the time to act tough.

Jennifer flings his arm away and approaches the Neighbor Boy.

JENNIFER

Hey hun, why don't you go find your mom.

She begins ushering the boy into the garage. The Cheve truck pulls into the shared driveway.

Jennifer stands behind Jim.

JIM

What is this psycho doing?

JENNIFER

Go kick his ass.

The truck pulls into the shared driveway slowly. The Neighbor Boy waves to the Cheve Truck from inside the garage.

Jim and Jennifer move out of its path. The dark tinted windows conceal the Driver's identity. The diesel truck pulls into the garage opening. They remain fixed on the truck inside the garage.

The automatic garage door closes shut.

FADE OUT.