

Fix

by Mark Lyons

BLACK:

Heavy gasps and pants. A little 'yelp' here and there.

JENNIFER (V.O.)

Dear Mom:

Moaning. Sounds like sex.

JENNIFER (V.O.)

I know what you're thinking...

FADE IN:

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

JENNIFER, late 20's, pants; her face red and sweaty. Takes deep breaths over and over.

She grips onto the sink, her legs spread open.

She's alone and wears a regular house skirt.

The moans and gasps are in pain. She's in labor and having a contraction. Tears drip down her cheeks.

JENNIFER (V.O.)

How could I let myself get into this?

Her voice is shrill and heartless. But in the mirror, her screams are weak and strained.

JENNIFER (V.O.)

It's easy when you have nothing or no one to live for.

She grips the sink tighter. Bites and draws blood from her lower lip.

JENNIFER (V.O.)

It's easy when you've been lonely for so long.

The pain subsides and she relaxes. Crouches to the ground. She has almost no belly whatsoever.

JENNIFER (V.O.)

The drugs didn't tear me from my family and friends. It was having no family and friends that led me to drugs.

Jennifer still gasps for air. She stands and limps out the bathroom and down the hallway towards her --

LIVING ROOM

-- bare and grungy.

JENNIFER (V.O.)

A lot of pain in the world can be avoided if everybody just had somebody there for them.

She tries to get to the phone, but doubles to the floor in pain and yells.

She reaches out and manages to grab the receiver.

JENNIFER (V.O.)

Just somebody who's there to talk you through. My Zoloft prescription has very poor grammatical skills.

She dials and listens for the ring. Instead, an annoying BEEP! and an even more annoying computered voice.

OPERATOR (filter)

We're sorry. Your phone has been temporarily disconnected. For more information, please contact your local service provider.

She closes her eyes in disgust and slams the phone down.

She cries and punches her fists into the carpet. The rug burns bruise and redden her knuckles.

JENNIFER (V.O.)

Good. A large part of me didn't want an ambulance there.

The pain arrives again with a vengeance and Jennifer screams. Tears jut down her face.

She crawls as quick as she can back down the hallway and into the --

BATHROOM

JENNIFER (V.O.)

I already know it's not going to survive anyway.

She grips onto the sink and lifts herself off the floor. The pain's unbearable.

JENNIFER

Ooohh, GOD!!

She closes her eyes and pushes.

Nothing.

She gathers herself and pushes even harder.

Still nothing.

She stares at her sickly self in the mirror.

JENNIFER (V.O.)

That's when I felt the bulge between my legs.

It catches her by surprise. She gathers herself and pushes one more giant time.

Her tortured face reddens and freezes. Her vagina stretches its limits.

She lets out another scream.

A SPLAT hits the bathroom floor and a mess lies between her legs.

The umbilical cord stretches from up Jennifer's skirt down to the tissued puddle on the floor.

She falls back against the bathtub and relaxes. Tries not to look at the pale fetus sitting in front of her.

The most volatile and pathetic looking thing in the world, covered in blood and shrivelled brown tissue. Dead, infected tissue.

She glimpses and notices, with a pang of pity, that it still writhes the slightest little bit.

JENNIFER (V.O.)

That was the worst part. Knowing that he was still alive. I wasn't figuring on that.

Surprised, she takes large gasps of air again. Not to ward off the pain, but an anxiety attack.

She calms herself, but manages an even deeper depression.

JENNIFER

(whisper)

Tyler.

TYLER is five inches long and almost a pound, his eyes squinted shut.

He tries to cry, but only faint grunts come. His skin is flaky, half-formed, and eyes sunk in.

Jennifer manages to stand, the umbilical cord still hanging, connected to Tyler.

She drudges around the medicine cabinet. Tosses her aspirin and Zolofit and Vicodins and Nyquil and Klonopins and Robitussin out of the way.

Finally, she finds a small pair of scissors.

She bends down and struggles to cut the grotesque rope hanging out of her.

It's tough and the scissors are a bit too small, but she manages to rip through the jerky-like cord.

She tosses the scissors into the sink and looks at Tyler, who still writhes and flinches.

She takes a deep breath, composes herself, lifts Tyler off the floor and cradles him into her hand, the umbilical cord still dangling out of his small stomach.

JENNIFER (V.O.)

I didn't realize I was pregnant until I was five months. By then, I knew it was too late to save him. There was just too much coke. Too much heroin. Too many pills.

She walks over to the toilet.

JENNIFER (V.O.)

Thinking back on it now; yes, I do realize I had morning sickness in the beginning. But I thought it was just too much rum.

Jennifer gently places Tyler into the toilet water. Tears well in her eyes.

Tyler sinks to the bottom of the toilet. Bubbles from his little nose and tiny mouth climb back to the surface.

JENNIFER (V.O.)

Tomato juice and vodka made the sickness go away. God, I hope no pregnant woman ever figures that out.

She presses the handle down and the toilet flushes.

Tyler spins around and around and disappears down the drain. His umbilical cord chases after him.

Water fills the toilet again. Remnants of the blood and brown tissue float in the new water. They spin in slow circles.

Jennifer softly closes the toilet lid and turns back around to the slimy mess in front of the sink.

LATER

Jennifer soaks blood and clear liquid off the bathroom floor into a mop.

JENNIFER (V.O.)

I wasn't going to name him. I thought he was already dead when he was inside me. I don't know why I did name him when I saw that he was breathing. I guess because he existed, even if for a brief moment, to me.

LATER

The floor spotless, Jennifer cleans the scissors in the sink and sets them back in the medicine cabinet.

JENNIFER (V.O.)

Even if nobody else in the world knew about him. Not even my customers.

LATER

Jennifer yells and howls as she stands over the toilet.

Afterbirth and the rest of the placenta drop out of her into the toilet water in blue hueish blasts. An easy clean up.

JENNIFER (V.O.)

They can't even tell what they're banging their cock up against.

LATER

The toilet flushing behind her, Jennifer cleans the sink and closes the cabinet mirror.

She looks at her tired and strained face. Blood vessels broken around her eye sockets from strain.

JENNIFER (V.O.)
That, or they just don't care.

She splashes her face with water.

LATER

Jennifer applies heavy make-up to her cheeks and chin, and eyeliner to her eyes.

Her hair is mussed into her neo-punk tradition.

JENNIFER (V.O.)
Nope. Tyler is just another loner
secret buried deep inside my heart
that no one will ever talk out of me.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

Jennifer walks in, clean and refreshed, like nothing happened. She wears a revealing skirt and blouse.

She casually walks over to the couch and sits down.

JENNIFER (V.O.)
Loneliness. It's a very sad thing. I
can honestly say I wouldn't be this way
if I weren't so alone in the world.

She grabs a notebook and writes, feverishly: **'Dear Mom, I know what you're thinking...'**

JENNIFER (V.O.)
I don't blame you if you hate me. It
was a despicable thing I did. I hate
myself for it. And I know how the rule
goes; 'You have to love yourself before
you can start to get better.'

She writes more. **'I didn't realize I was pregnant...'**

JENNIFER (V.O.)

But that's bullshit. In all honesty, this is the first time I've ever actually hated myself. And this is the first time I feel that I have to get better.

LATER

Jennifer gathers her tiny purse with a long strap on it. Her cash purse.

JENNIFER (V.O.)

And I know what you're thinking now.

She checks herself in a mirror. She cups and lifts her breasts so she can barely glimpse her areolas.

JENNIFER (V.O.)

'There I go back out onto the street to peddle myself off again.'

She smiles at herself. Purses her lips. Happy with her recovery.

JENNIFER (V.O.)

And you're right. But I'm not going to do it for or on drugs this time. This time, I'm going to do it because if you want to talk to me, I have to get my phone turned back on.

She walks out. The door softly shuts behind her.

JENNIFER (V.O.)

And if you don't want to talk to me...

SLAM CUT TO BLACK.

JENNIFER (V.O.)

Then I'm going to do it because I have to go out and leave my phone number on job applications next week.