

GRAVESTONES

or

THE GRAVESTONES OF BEYER COUNTY

Written by Alan Nafzger

www.screenplay.biz

Copyright, 2015

FADE IN:

EXT. FRATERNITY HOUSE - AUSTIN TEXAS - DAY

FRANK BEER (23) is just moving out of his fraternity house. It isn't one of the University of Texas mansions, but one of the run down houses for middle class men.

Several FRATERNITY MEMBERS are cleaning and decorating for a party that we can assume will be later that night. In the front yard they are putting up plastic palm trees and palapa umbrellas. They have a portable tropical Tiki bar that they have managed to assembled under a thatch hut. There are several signs out in the yard with a word and an arrow, "drinks" and "pool" and a "beach" sign. Only block from the University, there isn't a pool and there isn't a beach.

Several FRATERNITY BROTHERS help FRANK load his things. They seem to load a few things and then drink a beer. They load a few things and then the drink another beer.

FRATERNITY BROTHER

I don't know what we will do without
"Beer".

FRANK chuckles a bit. Several FRATERNITY MEMBERS don't understand the context and look worried when they hear they might not have beer. They turn and see that FRANK BEER is leaving.

FRANK BEER

I'm sure you will be just fine without
me.

FRATERNITY BROTHER

Where are you going anyway?

FRANK BEER

Family farm back in Beyer County.
Beyerville.

FRATERNITY BROTHER

I thought you were going out to
California.

FRANK BEER

I do have a job in San Francisco but it doesn't start until January.

FRATERNITY BROTHER

What are you going to do?

FRANK BEER

I'm gonna help my dad farm and then I'm off.

FRATERNITY BROTHER

Must be nice a few months off to find yourself.

FRANK BEER

No one ever "found themselves" in Beyerville Texas unless they are broke down; I promise you.

He has put all of his things in the back of his '82 puck up truck. A futon, some rolled up posters, a guitar, an empty bottle of champagne (a keep sake), a computer, a stack of Civil Engineering magazine, his graduation cap and gown. Mostly there are clothes.

FRANK calls his DOG (German Shepard) and the dog loads up into the passenger seat.

All the FRATERNITY MEMBERS stop decorating and line up to shake his hand and wish him "good luck".

FRATERNITY BROTHER #2

Are you sure you don't want to stay for the party and leave tomorrow?

FRANK BEER

No, I better get going. Yawl, don't need me anymore.

OPENING TITLES FLASH:

EXT. UNIVERSITY - AUSTIN TEXAS - DAY

FRANK, before leaving town, drives through the campus. He stops outside a sorority house, maybe he is thinking of

saying "goodbye" to someone. There are SOME GIRLS returning to the house from their morning jog.

GIRL

You are Maria's friend.

FRANKS is startled. He was watching the girl who had been jogging. A different GIRL surprises him.

FRANK

That's me. Yea.

GIRL

Maria is inside you want me to go get her?

FRANK

No I've got to get out of here.

GIRL

You graduated?

FRANK

Yes, I did.

FRANK looks at his watch. When it looks like the OTHER GIRLS might still approach him, he pulls away. Obviously someone jilted someone. FRANK looks lovelorn.

GIRL

Bye.

FRANK drives past the Littlefield Fountain; again he stops his truck and sits a short time. He reads, "BREVIS A NATURA NOBIS VITA DATA EST AT MEMORIA BENE REDDITAE VITAE SEMPITERNA." Translation - "A short life hath been given by Nature unto man; but the remembrance of a life laid down in a good cause endureth forever."

CUT TO: At the Texas state science fair, we see JO (16) with a complicated machine. People fill by and we can see she is telling them about it. She has a great smile and tons of enthusiasm. In the background we can see her parents and a person we might assume is a teacher.

BACK TO:

FRANK drives and stops again at the LBJ Presidential Library, the University of Texas Tower, the football stadium and the baseball stadium. He stops outside the student center and also the world's largest dormitory building.

CUT TO: Theater. At the science fair, JO's name is called and she walks to the stage and collects her trophy and it appears to be an invitation to the next level. We see a logo that suggests that she is going to the Nation Science Fair.

BACK TO:

FRANK stops at Scholz's Beer Garten. He puts the truck in gear and goes inside. He walks past a sign that says, "Scholz Garten Since 1866".

FRANK drinks one last "college" beer.

FRANK turns down Sixth Street in the middle of the day.

OPENING TITLES END:

FRANK finds Hwy 290 West and begins driving home.

EXT. BEYERVILLE - TEXAS - AFTERNOON

Beyerville is a small Texas town, with a German-American populace. FRANK drives past a sign at the edge of town, "Welcome to Beyerville, the Most German Town in Texas." On the sign are several cultural icons from Germany - beer mugs, wheat shafts, a smiling woman with large breasts, a Doberman Pinscher, an Accordion, a man in a Bavarian Alpine hat. Also on the sign are large Catholic and Lutheran churches. The sign totally summarizes the city.

FRANK drives past the school and the Court House and by the shops downtown.

FRANK stops at the town's drive-in where the kids have gathered after school. He orders a large soda. The dog beside FRANK is asleep but awakes. The dog seems to notice something wrong and gets up to look around. Four MEXICAN MEN have untied the tarp and are liberating FRANKS nice racing bicycle.

It is FRANK's bike that is stolen, not his camera or his computer or his clothes.

Frank'S DOG is barking like crazy but the window is only cracked and the dog can't bite the thief. The dog is biting what he can of the window.

FRANK gets out of his truck, just in time to see a MEXICAN national up in the back of his truck liberating his bicycle. The MEXICAN gets it down and pedals away. The OTHER MEXICANS scatter like quail. FRANK could run him down and he climbs into his truck; he considers chasing the thief in his truck.

FRANK's truck is blocked in by cars in the drive-thru lane. It is after school and "happy hours" for sodas.

FRANK takes a step to release the dog but hesitates.

FRANK

Can I get out?

The young man in the pickup truck behind him does put it in reverse but the car behind him will not back up. Nor will the car behind this truck back up. FRANK seems stuck.

The town's entire TEEN AGE POPULATION seems to be watching. No one moves to help or says a word. It is like FRANK is a stranger passing through town.

This is unsettling for FRANK, who was raised in the town and has been gone for only 5 years.

FRANK gets back in the truck, drinks his soda and waits for the drive-thru crowd to die down. He backs out of his space and gets back on the road.

The town's first policewoman, MILI DORNBERG (23), pulls behind FRANK. The one corner of the blue tarp, that he placed over the bed of his truck, has come loose and the tarp is flopping about. She approaches the vehicle and smiles. MILI is attractive and single. She may have pulled him over just to have a closer look at him.

MILI

I just want to let you know your tarp has come loose in that back corner.

MILI gestures to the back passenger side.

FRANK

Oh, thanks. Some Mexican at the drive-in stole my bike.

MILI

Really, just then. Why didn't you call us. 911 you know.

FRANK

That is too much of a hassle. I just want to get home. I've been driving all day. You know what I mean?

FRANK gets out to walk back there and tie it down, but MILI is already there and has secured it.

FRANK

Thanks.

MILI

Not a problem, you are good to go. But come by the station and fill out of complaint and I will do what I can to get your bike back.

FRANK

I'm just going up the road a bit.

MILI

You moving out this way.

FRANK

My folks have a farm.

MILI

You are home from school?

FRANK

I am so glad to be done with school.

MILI

Feels good huh?

FRANK

Sure does.

MILI

Maybe I will see you around.

MILI walks backward to her patrol car. They obviously are interested in one another.

FRANK

Sure. Thanks again.

EXT. FARM HOUSE - WEST OF BEYERVILLE - LATE AFTERNOON

FRANK arrives at the farmhouse. It is like any other German farmhouse. One unique identifying aspect is that it has an antique plow in the center of a circular drive.

FRANK goes side and learns no one is home. He returns to the truck. FRANK lets the dog out of the truck he and brings his clothes into the house. He places the clothes in his bedroom.

FRANK drives the truck to the tractor barn and finds a place for his other things and covers them with a tarp.

FRANK discovers a strange looking machine and is clearly puzzled. It is his sister's science project but he doesn't know that at the time.

This machine is for the most part a rear tine rototiller but it has tons of electronic equipment on it. The rotors have been replaced with something similar to 18-inch satellite dishes attached and pointing down. There is a laptop atop it.

FRANK takes some of his things into the farmhouse and then drives around the farm looking for the FAMILY.

His father's name is NICKOLAUS (65). His mother's name is RUTH (55). His sister is JO.

We see a large wheat farming operation. There is a modest farmhouse but very large barns, grain silos and modern expensive farm equipment. We see expensive tractors, planters and harvesters.

FRANK doesn't find anyone, but we do learn it is a large farm. There are four or five locations were there used to be houses. Basically, there are brick fireplaces that remain. The houses are gone. The land around the homes has been turned into wheat.

At the edge of the farm there is a grove of trees. FRANK sees someone in the trees. He drives near the trees and stops the truck he peers into the trees. He hears a sound and he gets out and follows it. FRANK feels that he is definitely following someone. FRANK reaches a clearing and stops. We see a fireplace were a building once stood.

Near dark, FRANK returns to the farmhouse. He watches television and finally falls asleep on the couch.

INT. FARM HOUSE - NIGHT

Later, FRANK is asleep on the couch. JO rushes inside and jumps on him. JO wrestles with her older brother. FRANK is injured by the blows, clearly she knocks and wind out of him and his ribs are probably bruised.

JO

Oh, I'm so sorry. I didn't mean to hurt you.

FRANK

Well, you did. I can't breathe.

There is a nervous moment when FRANK finally gets his breath. He manages to hug her. RUTH enters the home.

FRANK

You have grown two inches since Christmas.

JO

Tallest girl in my class.

RUTH

Smartest girl in her class.

FRANK

Well, I knew that already.

RUTH

Almost three years high school, 98.6 average. The nearest junior has 93.2.

JO

Mom...

RUTH

Well, that is what I was told.

NICKOLAUS enters the room. He is in his Sunday suit. This is such a rare sight on a Saturday night, FRANK is someone awed. NICKOLAUS says nothing.

FRANK

Where yawl been?

RUTH

Austin. We went by your fraternity house and they were about to have a party. We were going to stop but we didn't see your truck and didn't want to interrupt.

FRANK

I'm done with all that, mom.

NICKOLAUS goes directly to the bedroom to change clothes, but he never emerges. He has probably has worked the first half of the day and then has been in Austin the last half of the day. NICKOLAUS is an odd character; he disappears and it probably going to bed.

JO sees FRANKS cap and gown on the kitchen table.

JO

You graduated?

FRANK

Yep.

JO jumps on and hugs FRANK again. FRANK winces in pain and holds his ribs.

MOM

Frank! Why didn't you invite us?

FRANK

Mom, I just wanted out of there without all the fan fair, parking, eating.

MOM

Well, I'm angry now. You could have at least invited your family.

JO

I would have come.

FRANK

What were yawl doing in Austin?

RUTH

You sister got an award.

(pause)

Best Science Experiment in Texas.

FRANK

Really? The science fair.

JO humbly nods her head and shakes her trophy. It is an impressive looking trophy, but not so big she can't pick it up easily.

FRANK

What on?

Radar.

FRANK

You built a radar?

Ya, and it actually works.

FRANK

No plane crashes yet?

RUTH

It's not that kind of radar. It's a ground radar. Ground penetrating radar.

FRANK

(to Jo)

Gee, no wonder you won.

(pause)

Really proud of you.

This time FRANK hugs JO.

Jo gets some milk from the refrigerator and cookies from a jar. She sits at the table.

RUTH

She is going to Washington D.C. in three weeks.

FRANK

That is excellent. You will be rich someday.

RUTH

Mr. Nash says her invention might be worth a lot of money.

FRANK

You have to have it patented.

RUTH

It is. Patent pending.

FRANK

Your teacher did that or you did?

RUTH

They both did.

What about you? Now that you graduated what are you going to do?

Well, that is a very good question.

There is a moment of hesitation.

FRANK

San Francisco. You are looking at a civil engineer for the city of San Francisco.

JO

(to Frank)

You are kidding?

(to Mother)

That is so cool.

RUTH

No, that is way too far, honey!

FRANK

Mom, it is cool. It is a dream job and I will move up.

JO

When do you leave?

FRANK

January.

RUTH and JO are less enthused the longer that think about it.

RUTH

Well, okay. You know what you are doing.

(pause)

But what will your father say.

JO

He won't say a thing. Watch, mom. He won't care.

RUTH

(to Jo)

Your father will care. He might not say anything but he does care.

(to Frank)

Oh, congratulations. But I wish you would let us know these things.

JO

(to Mother)

Mom, he just told you.

(to Frank)

How long have you known.

FRANK

A few months now.

JO

Oh.

Even JO now disapproves of the secret.

RUTH

Well you are here now. That is all that matters.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - MORNING

RUTH has a breakfast ready for JO and FRANK.

FRANK

Where is dad?

RUTH

Ate and gone already. You know your father.

FRANK

I thought I saw someone down by the grove.

RUTH

Are you sure?

FRANK

There was definitely someone down by the grove last night.

JO

Probably hunters.

RUTH

You shouldn't go wondering at night.

(pause)

You know that is not your father's land but they never say anything to people that wanted to hunt in there.

(pause)

What's a few rabbits?

JO

Pigs. There are wild hogs in there.

FRANK

No orange vest. They didn't have a vest.

JO
Oh, that don't matter. Rule or common
sense around her never seem to stick.
(pause)
They have dogs?

FRANK
No.

JO
Might not have been hunters.

FRANK
One guy. Hunter.

JO
Oh, well that seems odd. They pretty
much make a party out of it. So, who
knows?

FRANK
How is Otto?

RUTH makes a face at FRANK that maybe this boy isn't the
best topic to bring up.

JO
(unemotional)
I don't go with him anymore.

RUTH
She has a new boyfriend now. A nice
boy. Rolph.

ROLPH TEICHMÜLLER (17) is JO's new boyfriend. His father
owns an earth-moving company.

FRANK
This new fella, Rolph, know how to
read?

JO chuckles.

JO
Yes. Of course.

FRANK

No football without a helmet?

JO smiles. Evidently her previous boyfriend momentarily ran into a football game without his helmet. Pause.

RUTH

I know Rolph's parents from church. I think it is so nice two young people from the same religion can date.

FRANK

So why don't you show me how your machine works.

JO

I can do that.

RUTH

Take those flowers by your grandparent's grave, please.

RUTH points to some flowers in a vase on the table.

EXT. CITY DUMP - MORNING

JO and FRANK have loaded "the machine" into the back of her pickup truck. They enter the city dump. JO waves at the man on a bulldozer who is burying the day's trash. Evidently they have an arrangement that JO can test her machine there.

JO and FRANK drive to an old part of the dump. They unload the machine from the truck.

JO

I had a old TV and an old VCR hooked up to it, but learned that the actual radar was reading more than the TV could display. So I switched all that out and wrote a computer program.

FRANK

Where did you get the radar?

JO

It was in the trash out at Raytheon.

FRANK

No kidding?

(pause)

That stuff is classified. Someone might be in trouble. I wouldn't tell anyone that.

JO

Too late.

FRANK

Oh, well.

JO pulls the cord on the rototiller engine and it starts right up. Of course it noticeably vibrates.

FRANK

How do you compensate for the vibrations?

JO

Well, there are shock absorbers between the frame and the transponders. But mostly, that is all built into the software.

FRANK

Okay, lets see what it will do.

The computer comes up and the program begins to work. We begin to see images - buckets, water hoses, forks and radios.

FRANK

That looks like a baby horse.

JO

Oh.

JO hits some keys and zooms into the horse.

JO

It's a toy.

JO points to the screen. She has zoomed in on one of the hooves. JO's machine is incredibly accurate.

FRANK
Made in the USA?

JO
It's is plastic and 35 cm deep at the
top.

FRANK
You can read print?

JO
Well it is engraving probably, part of
the mold. Let's dig it up?

FRANK
Okay.

JO goes to the truck and returns with a shovel.

JO
I'm the engineer. You are the digger.

FRANK chuckles and begins to dig. After a short time Frank exposes a spring rocking horse. It was probably new in the 1960s. The springs and the frame are gone but the plastic horse is what they have found.

It is threatening rain so JO drives her machine up the ramp and into the back of her truck. JO places a tarp over her machine. FRANK spends a few minutes looking at the plastic horse.

EXT. BEYERVILLE CEMETERY - DAY

In the pouring rain, JO gets out and runs to the grave. She takes out the old flowers and replaces them with the new flowers. She does this quickly. However, JO and FRANK sit there for a minute.

JO
You know that day he was dying?

FRANK
I had a test.

JO
Mom and Dad didn't understand.

FRANK

I know, I heard about it.

JO

You didn't get to see him at the end.

FRANK

I know grandpa. I'm sure he was cussing and throwing things.

JO

Well, he was cussing that is true.

(pause)

Seems like when grandma was dying you were gone too. She asked for you. Wanted to tell you something.

FRANK

I was there for the funerals.

JO

We can't talking about the funerals.

FRANK

I know; I just can't face death like that. Of course I loved them but funerals just suit me better I think.

JO

I hope you have a crowd in you're your hospital room that last day.

FRANK ponders his last day. He looks out into the rain at the grave.

FRANK

They are dead. What does it really matter.

JO

It matters to a lot of people. But you are immune apparently.

Suddenly, a Camaro slides into the cemetery in the mud and gravel. They are four teenage boys in the car. They are

flipping the bird out the window. They are shouting obscenities at JO.

JO puts her truck in gear and leaves.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

JO drives and doesn't mention or seem affected at all. We can assume that this has happened before and JO is accustomed to it.

FRANK

What was that about?

JO

Nothing they are just jerks.

FRANK

Well, it was more than that.

JO

You don't know what it's like to be a girl. A young girl and have to go to school with trash like that.

FRANK

Well, that is true.

(long pause)

Hey, you okay?

EXT. DOWNTOWN - DAY

We see some sidewalk construction. FRANK walks around it, into the street for a moment. WORKERS are pouring new concrete in a section. FRANK has studied to be a civil engineer and he pays more attention than others would.

The construction looks strange; most of the city's sidewalks look very old and worn. There are many cracks, but this new section is going to be perfectly square and pristine. FRANK thinks "the entire downtown area could use new sidewalks".

Several old men notice that FRANK is studying the sidewalks. The OLD MEN are drinking beer.

An OLD MAN nudges OLD MAN #2 and gestures to FRANK. They look suspiciously at FRANK.

FRANK enters the local store and buys a newspaper. Outside when he emerges the old men eye him closely.

OLD MAN

You are back to live here?

FRANK

Only until January. I have a job then.
San Francisco

OLD MAN

You are done with college?

SENILE OLD MAN

Opitz's oldest son died there. AIDS.

OLD MAN

You aren't here to make trouble.

FRANK

Why would I make trouble?

OLD MAN

Your sister is making trouble.

FRANK

You must be kidding. She has her head
in so many books; how can she be any
trouble?

OLD MAN

All those books she has been reading is
going to lead to trouble.

FRANK

What sort of trouble?

OLD MAN

Community trouble.

SENILE OLD MAN

If she is smart she won't leave the
farm.

OLD MAN
How long were you gone?

FRANK
Five years.

OLD MAN
Your grandfather died.

FRANK
Yes, I know.

OLD MAN
You were at the dump with your sister?

FRANK
Yes. How is that any of your business?
You just sit here all day and talk
about people?

OLD MAN
She will be off to college and we will
be free from her in a year.

OLD MAN #2
She is going to Austin to college?

FRANK
I don't know she won a science award
and that might take her farther.
(pause)
I wouldn't mind.

OLD MAN
We wouldn't mind either.

OLD MAN #2
Farther the better.

FRANK
What has she done to you old-timers?

SENILE OLD MAN
It's not that; its what we old-timers
are going to do to her.

The SENILE OLD MAN makes a fist and punches his palm. Obviously he isn't all together mentally, but he wants to fit into the group of OLD MEN.

OLD MAN

Her grades can suffer because of all this?

FRANK

Her grades aren't any of my business. She is doing fine without any help that I now of.

OLD MAN

Your father is too busy to deal with this?

FRANK

What in the hell are you talking about?

There is a long pause. It seems clear FRANK is wasting his time standing there.

FRANK

Well, if you aren't going to tell me what is going on. I'm going to leave you to it.

(sarcastically)

Have a nice day.

INT./EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

MILI drive up to the police station. Perhaps she is finished work for the day. She waves at FRANK to cross the street. No one is in ear shot of the two.

MILI

Mr. Beer! Would you mind stopping by for a minute.

FRANK

You know my name?

MILI

I ran your plates when you had I hope you don't mind.

FRANK

No, I don't mind. You are taught to do that I'm sure.

MILI

Well, we are supposed to do that before we get out of the car. But I remember you from high school. You seem harmless enough.

FRANK

Yes, I'm just a regular teddy bear.

MILI

You know I noticed that.

FRANK

High school?

MILI

I was a freshman when you were a senior.

FRANK

(smiling)

Oh, I see.

There is an odd moment, as they walk into the building. Now there are people clearly listening to them. Inside the police station, there are both a German and an American flag. FRANK notices and looks a bit concerned.

MILI

That was a gift from our sister city in Germany.

FRANK

I didn't know what had a sister city.

MILI

Well, it's true. We can't too small for things anymore.

FRANK

The population hasn't changed; has it?

MILI

No, but around here we now have an entirely progressive pro-growth

FRANK

Are you sure someone didn't see another city had a sister city and now we must also?

MILI

Well, you are probably right. But certain things have changed.

FRANK

You need to file a complaint so we can get your bicycle back.

MILI and FRANK sit at a desk. She retrieves a police form and begins to complete it. She completes his name and his family farm address from memory.

MILI

Phone number?

FRANK

940-555-2519

MILI

Will you please describe your bicycle?

FRANK

Trek, 24 Speed, Road Bike with Carbon Forks

She types something into Google and she sees road race photos.

MILI

You are a regular Lance Armstrong?

FRANK shrugs his shoulders.

MILI

Color?

FRANK

Blue.

MILI
Serial number?

FRANK
I don't know.

MILI
Okay, that doesn't matter, I doubt
there is another one in this entire
county of any color.
(pause)
These people drive tractors on the
road, but I've never seen anyone out on
a bike like that.

FRANK
I would have thought maybe someone.

MILI
Nope, no one.
(pause)
Well, thanks. That just about does it.

FRANK
Will I be hearing from you?

MILI
One way or another I'm sure.

FRANK
About my sister. She isn't liked at the
school. I wouldn't know.

MILI
You have been talking to those old men?
(pause)
They hate everyone and everything.
Don't worry.

CITY MAYOR enters the room.

MILI
(sarcastically)
It is the burgermeister.

MILI stands and shakes his hand.

MILI
Mr. Mayor

MAYOR
Mili, can you spare a minute?

MILI
(to the Mayor)
Certainly.
(to Frank)
I'll be seeing you.

MILI leaves the building; she and the MAYOR will speak on the sidewalk.

FRANK sits at the desk for a minute and doesn't walk out. He sees on MILI's desk some reports of damage to sidewalks and photos. It appears that someone has smashed and cracked the concrete and removed a rectangular object from underneath the sidewalk. He doesn't touch the photos.

FRANK leaves the police station.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - VERY EARLY MORNING

It is very early morning. FRANK and his DOG are asleep. Frank's DOG awakes. The DOG whines and gives a slight alert bark. FRANK slowly gets out of bed and walks to the window and there, leaning against the antique plow, is his bicycle.

Evidently MILI has recovered it and returned it because she has parked her car on the highway and is just now returning to get into it. FRANK watches her drive away.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - EARLY MORNING

FRANK has ridden his bicycle into town from the farm. He has lightweight biking clothes and a helmet.

We see from FRANK'S POV that MILI and the MAYOR are in the center of the town square. Now, there is a second place in the sidewalk to repair. In the middle of the night, someone has again destroyed the concrete and retrieved a rectangular object from underneath the surface. The mayor notices FRANK as he rides past and points accusingly.

MILI
He had nothing to do with it.

MAYOR
I'm not so sure.

MILI
He arrived after the first incidence.

MAYOR
His sister.

MILI
Well that is an entirely different
situation.
(pause)
Are you sure you don't know what was
here? There is a rectangular hole here.

MAYOR
I have no idea but you need to catch
whoever is doing this. This is costing
the city a lot of money. And it is
embarrassing.

FRANK stops his bike several blocks from the square and is watching from that distance. When MILI and the MAYOR leave, FRANK rides back and examines the damage. He has a puzzled and concerned look on his face.

INT. SCHOOL LIBRARY - DAY

It is the last day of school before the summer break. JO is in the library. She seems to be in a rush. She has several books.

LIBRARIAN
This is the last day of school. You
can't check out any books.

JO
I checked with Mr. Windischmann, my
science teacher, and he said he checked
with you. And you said I could.

LIBRARIAN
Well, you can't.

JO
But you said.

LIBRARIAN
That was before.

JO
Before what.

LIBRARIAN
You know.

JO
Well, I need these books.

LIBRARIAN
You can't have them.

JO
But it is in the school policy book
that students not graduating may check
out books in the summer. I read it. It
has always been that way. I'm a junior.
I checked books out last year.

There is a long pause. The LIBRARIAN is clearly upset.

LIBRARIAN
Well, you can complain to whomever you
want but those books are not leaving
this library with you. I don't care how
many science fairs you win. You don't
really amount to much around here.

JO
I don't have time to argue with you
Nazis. I have to take a test.

The LIBRARIAN is enraged at being called a "Nazi" but
primarily she looks around to see if anyone heard.

INT. OUTSIDE THE PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY

JO is sitting in the office waiting to see the PRINCIPAL.

INT. CLASS ROOM - DAY

The SUTDENTS are taking a test. JO enters late. She has been in the PRINCIPAL's office. The TEACHER does not look amused.

JO walks to the TEACHER's desk and hands her a note from the PRINCIPAL. It is an admit to class note.

JO stands waiting for her copy of the test. The TEACHER doesn't acknowledge her and returns to averaging grades.

JO

May I have my test?

TEACHER

You are late.

(pause)

If you are late, then you can't take the test.

JO

Why? I have a note. Generally you guys understand.

TEACHER

This note looks forged. You really aren't that smart are you?

JO

I'm not trying to be smart. I'm just trying to take my test.

TEACHER

I only have one test.

JO

Yes.

TEACHER

Someone could have sent you the questions and you could have looked up the answers.

JO

What?

TEACHER

This is why if you are late, you can't take a test.

JO

I don't have a phone.

TEACHER

No you don't have it now.

JO

Did you see anyone with a phone out texting?

TEACHER

That doesn't matter.

(pause)

You can't take the test.

JO

You have to let me take the test.

TEACHER

Okay, be here 8th period.

JO

I have another test.

TEACHER

This is the only time I offer make-up tests.

JO

(whispering)

You Nazi Bitch.

JO didn't mean for the class to hear but the jaws of the students class drop. JO, who was once turns to the class...

JO

Has anyone noticed what I've noticed?

(pause)

Raise you hand.

(pause)

No one?

There is a long pause. JO contemplates telling the entire class about her "secret" but refrains. She feels that she needs to gather more evidence. Instead she reverts to name-calling.

JO

This entire city is chock full of Nazis? Nazi bitches and Nazi Assholes. You will NOT believe what I ...

The TEACHER violently grabs JO by the arm and drags her out into the hallway.

FEMALE STUDENT

Too bad she was in line to be the homecoming queen.

MALE STUDENT

She can kiss that good-bye.

FEMALE STUDENT

Oh, well.

With the TEACHER out of the room the STUDENTS, instead of cheating, seem to be discussing what is wrong with JO. Most could care less about their grade. They care more about the drama and some of them care more about the politics of the situation.

INT. OUTSIDE THE PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY

The PRINCIPAL's office door is closed. We hear shouting and even a crashing sound. JO leaves the office with a sheet of paper. JO is enraged and she is walking fast. We see through the door that the principal is picking up his phone off the floor. Evidently, the crashing noise was the phone thrown against the wall.

EXT. FARM - MORNING

It is harvest time, summer. FRANK returns to the farm on the bike. JO is leaving to combine (harvest) the wheat and NICKOLAUS is fueling grain truck. The grain truck is used to bring the grain from the combine in the field to a storage area. The farm has several huge grain silos.

NICKOLAUS walks to repair some machinery, a wheat elevator use to move the grain from the truck into the silos.

FRANK's contribution is to drive the truck into the field and bring back the wheat, when the combine is full.

They have citizen band radios in each farm vehicle.

FRANK
(into the radio)
Jo.

JO
Not ready yet. I just started.

FRANK
What is the story with the sidewalks
downtown?

JO doesn't respond.

FRANK
Jo, can you hear me? What is the story
with the sidewalks?

JO doesn't respond.

FRANK
What you won't answer?

FRANK drives the truck to the end of the row. He gets out and signals to JO to stop. She doesn't. FRANK waves frantically. JO makes another row - down and back - before she stops. She looks angry or distracted.

It is a very large field. FRANK stands in the hot sun for the ten minutes for JO to return. JO might be thinking of something else, but of course FRANK thinks this behavior is odd and it is.

JO stops the combine. She is robotic and doesn't wave or acknowledge FRANK. FRANK pulls the truck near the combine. JO begins moving the wheat from the combine into the back of the grain truck.

FRANK climbs up, but JO doesn't immediately open the door for him. FRANK tries but the door is locked. After a time,

JO unlocks the door. The machinery is loud and rather than shout FRANK squeezes inside the cab and closes the door. He and his sister are in close proximity.

FRANK

What is going on with you?

JO

Nothing.

FRANK

There is. You used to be the sweetest and smartest creature. Now you are getting suspended from school. You won't talk to anyone. People in town really dislike you.

FRANK

What is going on?

JO

Nothing.

FRANK

What is the story with the sidewalks downtown?

JO

Yes.

FRANK

Someone is digging up the sidewalk.

JO

They are modernizing everything. Pretending to be a real town.

FRANK

No, it is vandalism.

JO

So what does that have to do with me.

FRANK

I was there in front of the bank and I could see something was taken from under the sidewalk.

JO
What can I say?

FRANK
Well, you are the only person I know of
with a ground-penetrating radar.

JO
Don't know anything about it.

The grain is finished being transferred. An indicator beeps
and a light flashes on the combine's dashboard.

JO
The grain tank is empty.

FRANK dismounts and returns to the grain truck. JO pulls
back the arm. FRANK is totally flabbergasted at his sister,
the puzzle.

FRANK drives the grain truck to the silo. And speaks to his
father while the truck is unloaded.

FRANK
Do you have any idea what is going on
with Jo?

NICKOLAUS
She is a teenager with something eating
at her. You were like that at one time,
with them trying to force you to play
football.

FRANK
This is something different.
(pause)
More serious.

NICKOLAUS
I know.
(pause)
Just do what you can to keep her under
control.
(pause)
And hope it passes.

FRANK
She is stubborn.

NICKOLAUS
She is like your mother.

INT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

JO is out on the combine. FRANK runs upstairs to JO's room. He nervously looks through her books and through her desk. He looks under her mattress. He goes through her papers and her mail.

The only items of interest that he discovers are three books, Hebrew for Dummies, Jewish Cemeteries in Texas and Ground Penetrating Technologies. Any mystery fan in the audience will consider these books clues.

JO calls him on the radio.

JO
Grain tank.

FRANK is startled and he runs down stairs to the grain truck. He speeds off to the field.

INT. SILO - DAY

FRANK returns with a load of wheat. NICKOLAUS unloads it into the silo.

INT. TRACTOR BARN - DAY

Again while JO is on the combine and NICKOLAUS is unloading the wheat from the truck, FRANK goes to the tractor barn. He fires up the laptop on JO's machine. He looks through the files and he finds maps of downtown.

The maps show strange rectangles under various sidewalks. The two locations downtown were the objects have been previously removed are darkened. Clearly JO is involved in the vandalism.

Again JO uses the radio to call for the grain truck.

EXT. CHURCH - MORNING

It is Sunday morning. With non-believers wanting to sleep late Sunday morning, there are very few cities that ring the church bells still. The audience might find it odd that Beyervilles' Lutheran and the Catholic churches still ring the bells Sunday.

JO and FRANK, RUTH and NICKOLAUS arrive at church, but the sidewalk leading to the church is torn up. The concrete is shattered like in the other incidences. Also similar to the other downtown occurrence, there are obvious holes where rectangular objects have been removed. They exit the sidewalk and walk on the grass soaked with the morning dew.

FRANK

(to Jo)

Someone is at it again.

RUTH

Oh, they are fixing the sidewalk. Why didn't they begin repairs in the middle of the week?

FRANK

(to mother)

This isn't repairs. It is vandalism.

RUTH

Oh, my! Who would destroy church property?

FRANK

(to Jo)

Same people who have been working downtown.

RUTH

Working?

FRANK

There have been other sidewalks torn up.

RUTH is distraught. NICKOLAUS is unaffected. FRANK and RUTH are looking and studying the vandalism. JO and NICKOLAUS are matter of fact about it and walk into the church without much fuss. The PRIEST is waving at them to come enter the church.

PRIEST

Come on in.

(pause)

We had some vandalism last night.

(pause)

The police were already here.

The BEER FAMILY enters the church.

FRANK

(to Jo)

You hear that. The police were already here.

JO doesn't seem phased or nervous.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL PARKING LOT - AFTERNOON

There is a line of vehicles snaking through the parking lot. There are several fire trucks and several convertibles. The most common entry however is a tractor pulling a flat bed trailer. These flat bed trailers are decorated.

INT./EXT. CAFÉ - AFTERNOON

It is Friday afternoon. JO drives from school to a café where she meets FRANK, RUTH and NICKOLAUS. While the STUDENTS position and organize the floats in the parade, the BEER FAMILY sits at a café.

RUTH

What time do you have to be back at school, dear?

JO

I don't.

RUTH

You aren't going to be in the parade?

JO

Nope.

RUTH

Why not?

JO
I'm just not.

RUTH
Oh, my. This isn't normal.

JO
Mom, you have no idea what is normal.

NICKOLAUS and FRANK say nothing. NICKOLAUS eats and looks straight ahead, not looking at JO. FRANK watches JO and tries to get a clue about what is going on.

The FAMILY walks out into the parking lot in front of the café. From the back of their truck, they take some lawn chairs and RUTH and NICKOLAUS sit. JO and FRANK stand as the parade begins.

In the distance, we hear a police car siren. And then we hear a fire engine's siren. Several sirens are heard from the direction of the high school. Everyone clears the streets.

The parade passes by the BEER FAMILY. RUTH waves at everyone in the parade. NICKOLAUS watches the parade but is motionless.

The football team rides on three fire trucks, each with a sign - Offence, Defense, and Special Teams.

The cheerleaders float passes. They have been throwing out candy. But when they pass the BEER FAMILY one cheerleaders stops the others from throwing candy. The candy is thrown to the left and to the right.

RUTH
That was rude.

FRANK
Girls, mom. Always feuding with each other.

RUTH
We never fought like that when I was in school. I don't remember anything like that.

Finally, the HOMECOMING QUEEN and her court pass the BEER FAMILY. The QUEEN has been waving and smiling; the other girls are smiling and waving. Suddenly, when the QUEEN notices JO, her face drops. The QUEEN's smile disappears and we see her middle finger. The QUEEN flips off JO and her FAMILY.

JO's RUTH is mortified. She seems to be gasping for air and has nothing that she can say. NICKOLAUS calmly gets up from his chair.

NICKOLAUS

Mother, come on. We are not staying.

RUTH stands up and NICKOLAUS folds her chair and puts it in the back of their pickup truck.

RUTH

Kids, I'm sorry. We aren't staying.

JO

Good.

FRANK

I will ride home with Jo.

RUTH and NICKOLAUS get in their truck. JO and FRANK get in her truck. They leave before parade is finished.

FRANK

Who was that?

JO

She's a bitch. A major bitch.

FRANK

Why did she do that?

JO

Nothing will happen to her.

(pause)

They control the entire school.

FRANK

Who?

There is a long pause. JO contemplates saying, "Nazis" but she thinks better of it.

JO
Assholes.

FRANK
It always seems that way.

JO
No, this time I know it for a fact.
(pause)
Evidence? I have evidence.

FRANK
What?

JO
Never mind.

JO refuses to talk. She only drives.

FRANK
You won't even talk to me?

JO
I'm your brother.

FRANK
Are there some battles you just have to
fight on your own?

JO
Sure.

FRANK
Well this is something like that.
(pause)
Well, you know I'm here if you need to
talk.

JO
It's not about talk.

JO gives her brother a reassuring smile.

INT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

JO and ROLPH have a date. ROLPH arrives to pick JO up.
FRANK answers the door and invites the boy in.

RUTH

Rolph, you look so nice. Where are you
two going?

ROLPH

Football game, dance.

JO comes downstairs in her jeans. She isn't dressed up.

JO

We will be home late; don't wait up.

FRANK

Don't worry we will.

RUTH

You aren't going to the dance like that
are you?

JO

Oh, I almost forgot. Silly me.

JO winks at ROLPH and runs back upstairs. She brings back a
dress in a dry cleaner's plastic wrap. She doesn't stop
after descending the stairs and she flies out the front
door. ROLPH gives RUTH a nervous wave and follows JO.

FRANK goes to the window and looks outside. We see ROLPH's
pickup truck. It is pulling a flat bed trailer.

FRANK

Since when does someone take a trailer
on a date?

RUTH

Maybe he has been working?

FRANK

He cleaned up didn't he?

RUTH

He is nice boy. Don't worry Jo knows
what she is doing.

NICKOLAUS arrives home after a day of work. He washes his hands and sits at the table. He looks very tired and he looks very worried.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL STADIUM - NIGHT

The school's football team is hosting a game they are expected to win. The entire city seems to be in attendance. The teams are on the field warming up.

JO and ROLPH walk through the stadium. It seems clear they are trying to be seen. Especially they want to be seen by the principal. They walk past him several times. Nothing is said. Finally, ROLPH takes out his shirttail.

The PRINCIPAL notices and stops ROLPH.

PRINCIPAL

Rolph! Stick in you shirttail.

ROLPH

Okay, yes sir.

ROLPH sticks his shirt into his pants. And ROLPH and JO walk on.

JO

Okay, we can leave now.

(pause)

I thought he would never notice.

They look calm but make a bee-line to the exit.

In the parking lot, we learn that FRANK has followed them on his bicycle. Out of sight, FRANK is sitting on his bike waiting.

EXT. TEICHMÜLLER EARTH-MOVING COMPANY - NIGHT

There is a sign on the gate, "Teichmüller Earth-Moving" and a phone number. The lot is full of heavy equipment. There are several bulldozers and a backhoe in a lot. ROLPH has the keys to a very large backhoe.

EXT. STREETS OF BEYERVILLE - NIGHT

JO drives ROLPH's truck and flat bed trailer. ROLPH drives the backhoe. He has attached a medium sized wrecking ball to the backhoe.

We see them driving through a deserted town. In the residential area, very few house lights are on. Downtown is totally empty. Literally everyone is at the football game.

FRANK has managed to follow them on the bike. There aren't headlights and the bike is silent.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - NIGHT

JO directs ROLPH were to position the backhoe and wrecking ball. They crack and remove some of the sidewalk. JO and ROLPH have an efficient system of hand signals. They communicate efficiently and silently. The only noise they make is the crashing of the wrecking ball and the sound of the backhoe engine.

FRANK is parked on his bike in the shadows.

It appears that JO and ROLPH are going to wreck the entire downtown sidewalks. JO has a map and guides the destruction.

They place dozens of what appear to be headstones on the flat bed trailer. JO places a strap around them and ROLPH gently (skilfully) places them on the trailer. No excavation crew in the history of the county has done so much work in such a short time.

When the last of the downtown sidewalk is broken and what seems to be the last headstone is removed, FRANK ride up quickly.

Just then in the faint distance, we can hear the school song that is played at the end of the game. We can see the lights of the football field.

ROLPH deposits the last headstone in the trailed.

FRANK
The game is over.

JO jumps out of her skin; she is trembling in fear and can't breathe, she was so frightened. ROLPH is perfectly still. They is a long pause.

JO
I know we just heard.

FRANK
Gravestones?

JO tries to understand how her brother has caught them.

JO
Yes.

FRANK
These aren't yours.

JO
They aren't theirs either.

FRANK
Why are you digging them up?

JO
They are Hebrew.

JO points to one headstone.

JO
Here, Hana Jager. 1887-1932.
(pause)
I learned a bit of Hebrew.

FRANK
How did they get here?

JO
Good question.

FRANK
There aren't any Jewish families around here that I know of.

JO
Exactly. They were here obviously.
(pause)

Where did they go?

ROLPH looks at the football field and he sees cars leaving the parking lot and entering the highway. They will be arriving in downtown in a matter of minutes.

ROLPH

We need to leave.

(pause)

Now.

FRANK puts his bike on the flat bed trailer and gestures for them to leave. FRANK gets in the passenger side of the

ROLPH puts the backhoe in gear and rockets out of the area. JO is slower but she follows him out of the area.

INT. ROLPH'S PICKUP TRUCK - NIGHT

JO and FRANK are ridding in a pickup truck following ROLPH in the backhoe.

FRANK

They are stones for Christ's sake.

JO

You said for "Christ's sake"?

FRANK

What?

JO

They are Jewish.

FRANK

I understand that. You don't know where they come from. They might have been bought. Legally.

JO

You don't know.

FRANK

I do know.

JO

There was a Jewish cemetery.

FRANK

Where?

JO

Well they didn't bring them from another town. It doesn't make sense.

(pause)

First, they don't believe in being buried next to other faiths. They might be in a large cemetery but there will be a special section for Jewish people.

(pause)

Second, they used them because they were cheap or free. Before 1940, there was a wood sidewalk around the square. After 1940, concrete. Think about it. World War II. Germans. Jews.

FRANK

You are a German yourself.

JO

I'm not a Nazi.

FRANK

You have ruined your senior year over this? We don't even know what happened.

JO

All those stones were taken from a Jewish cemetery and they were laid down and covered with concrete. I know that. You know that.

FRANK

Yes, paving stones.

JO

I guess that is what you call it. Like a foundation.

FRANK

Less concrete would be needed.

JO

Okay. I see. Of course.

EXT. EARTHMOVING COMPANY - NIGHT

ROLPH parks the backhoe and locks the gate.

He runs to get in the cab of the truck.

By the time ROLPH gets to the truck, FRANK has his bike off the trailer.

JO
Come with us.

FRANK
No this is your idea of a "date" and I don't want to interfere.

JO
Come on.

FRANK
No you kids have fun.
(pause)
I will see you tomorrow.

EXT. FARM - NIGHT

At the hay barn, JO and ROLPH are lifting the gravestones onto a front-end loader. They then drive them into the barn and stack them neatly. They are lifting them and stacking them by hand and they are very heavy. JO is incredibly tenacious and doesn't whine or balk at the physical work.

FRANK arrives on the bike at the hay barn. He looks at the farmhouse. It seems RUTH and NICKOLAUS are sleeping. Frank's DOG is calmly watching them work.

Just as FRANK arrives they are placing a blue tarp over dozens of stones. JO and ROLPH are about hide the tarp under hay bails.

FRANK pulls the tarp back and we see over 80 headstones.

JO
I brought them here.

FRANK

What for?

JO

Dunno. It just felt right.

FRANK

You didn't have any other place.

JO

Convenient.

FRANK

Where did you get them all?

JO

There was a road; it is under the baseball field and runs over toward the water tower. Most of them came from there.

FRANK

You dug up the baseball field?

JO

Of course.

FRANK

Gee, no wonder.

JO

There isn't any proof.

There is a long pause.

FRANK

Monday, I will go to the land office and find out where these came from.

FRANK turns to walk back to the house. The DOG follows him.

JO

Can I go?

FRANK

School.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL PARKING LOT OCTOBERFEST - DAY

FRANK rides his bike to the festival. He locks his bike and walks around the party. For a small town, this is a large gathering.

The residents of Beyerville are celebrating their German Heritage Saturday. Oktoberfest is an ethnic festival. There is a stage and tables set up. There is a huge carnival with spectacular rides.

The parking lot of the high school is full of German culture, food, travel, and history of Germany. We also see food booths, crafts, musical acts and art from Switzerland, Austria, Liechtenstein, South Tyrol, and other German-speaking communities around the world.

There is a sign at the gate, "Free admittance to the Oktoberfest if you are wearing complete ethnic German attire." And, there are many local citizens wearing authentic German costumes.

German cuisine is also featured. Many well-known German restaurants and food services in the area are present at the fest. The major breweries have booths. And a large sausage maker has a booth.

The local polka band plays some traditional German traditional music.

The MAYOR takes the stage.

MAYOR

Wilkommen. Welcome to the largest gathering of a common heritage and faith in the state of Texas.

(pause)

Every year we throw one of the biggest parties in Texas, Oktoberfest.

We cut to the city limits sign, "population 5,816."

MAYOR

As of the last census 2010, Beyerville has a 58% German population, which is the largest European percentage in a any Texas county area.

We see the German faces in the crowd.

MAYOR

We drink together and we eat together.
And, we vote together.

There is a bit of laughter in the crowd. Of course every ethnic city like this is controlled almost totally by politicians from the ethnicity. There isn't much the minority groups can do. The majority ethnic group can simply dictate the rules.

MAYOR

I've just been told that the five largest wheat producers in Texas live just West of Beyerville. We have the most fertile land and the hardest working people in the state.

Already there is a good number of drunk people in the crowd. Some of the applause and cheering is border on

MAYOR

We have some to mouth-watering German sausage, scrumptious apple strudel, hearty cheeses and homemade bread, cakes and pies. I hope you have brought your "guten apetit."

We see a wide assortment of food served from booths. And, we see people eating at tables.

MAYOR

There is beer. Twenty-seven beer venders are here - from the major labels to the small independent brewers. There are even some microbreweries to try.

We see a variety of beers, sold from booths and brought by waitresses to tables. It looks similar to the beer festivals held in Europe.

MAYOR

Tonight we have a musical group "Black Forest Dance Band" that is their name, all the way from Muenster Germany.

Every year, some of you may know, we fly a group in to entertain and they take the stage at 9:00 tonight. And I hear they are very very good.

The crowd applauds.

MAYOR

So, stay all day and let us be your host for food, drink and good healthy German fun. You are very welcome.

The band plays another historic German song.

FRANK sees MILI across the parking lot; he waves enthusiastically and walks over to her. She seems happy to see him as well.

MILI is dressed in an authentic German police uniform. She is on duty, armed with her pistol and walking around the fair.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - DAY

It is still Saturday. There are many visitors to the city. Traffic isn't at a normal level. Many have left the festival and have driven downtown. There are several antique stores. A candy and an ice cream shop are downtown.

The sidewalks are all destroyed and we see many visitors navigating the holes where the stones used to be.

The ambiance of the historic downtown has been destroyed. The property owners all appear in shock. Many appear to be apologizing to visitors.

EXT. CAFÉ - DAY

It is Sunday after Church. The BEER FAMILY is eating Sunday dinner. Several young men, THREE BROTHERS, are sitting at a table opposite JO and making obscene gestures at her with their fist and their mouth.

Without alarming their parents, FRANK points to one of the BROTHERS and then points to the back door.

The BROTHER calmly walks through the kitchen and out the back door. He is followed by FRANK.

Outside the restaurant, the BROTHER and FRANK are about to fight. But the other men from the table arrive and begin beating FRANK. FRANK is on the ground being kicked.

Good fortune has it that NICKOLAUS happened to notice the BROTHERS leaving their table.

NICKOLAUS unleashed hell's fury on the three men. While he hasn't said much or played much of a role in the film, this scene is totally his. He forces the much younger BROTHERS to withdraw.

After the fight, FRANK and his NICKOLAUS sit leaning against the wall. They do not speak. FRANK can't speak because he is physically injured. NICKOLAUS doesn't speak because it isn't his nature.

After a time, JO sticks her head out the back door. She is hesitant to look, but when she sees they are okay, JO returns to the table with her mother, RUTH.

RUTH is oblivious to what has happened. She is having a wonderful time with her food and the people all dressed up and out in public.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

It is Monday, FRANK is riding into town. He is on a part of the highway without a shoulder. Cars should move over to avoid hitting him. One white pickup however, clearly doesn't plan on moving over. By some miracle, FRANK gets an eerie feeling and drives into the ditch before he is run over. He is thrown from his bike into the grass. He isn't injured but certainly effected by the event.

The white pickup is distinctive with a fuel tank in the bed. The purpose of it is to refuel tractors in the field. There aren't very many white trucks with this distinction in this small city.

INT. COUNTY TAX AND LAND OFFICE - DAY

It is Monday, FRANK has arrived into town.

An EMPLOYEE brings some old record books out of storage.

FRANK

If you are looking for plot numbers you have to check against several sources, but it is a lot easier when you have computers.

(pause)

I hope you can help me.

EMPLOYEE

What's the name?

FRANK

Beer.

EMPLOYEE

It should be on the next page.

The EMPLOYEE shows FRANK a tax ledger. There are maps between the pages.

EMPLOYEE

It's all here.

(pause)

This land was bought in 1921 by I assume your grandfather.

FRANK

No.

(pause)

It is another plot of land. Larger and next to the current highway.

EMPLOYEE

I don't find it.

(pause)

Oh, here. 1940. This land.

The EMPLOYEE points to a map of the Beer farm.

EMPLOYEE

Five thousand acres at \$7.50 per acre.

FRANK

Can I see a land transaction from this year from another part of the county.

The land to the east isn't as good but just in comparison.

The EMPLOYEE turns several pages. He runs his finger down the page until he finds something similar.

EMPLOYEE

Wheat farmland two-hundred acres at \$37 per acre.

FRANK

Really?

EMPLOYEE

Your grandfather must have been quiet a negotiator. Look, his land was back here. And he bought this here.

FRANK

I know these parts. I was born here. He "really" improved his position.

The EMPLOYEE points on a map.

FRANK

Now there was a cemetery west of town.

EMPLOYEE

Oh, that is easy.

The EMPLOYEE flips back to the map of the Beer farm. He points to the South East corner of the map. There clearly written is "Cemetery".

FRANK

Do you have a map from the 1940s with the buildings on this property?

EMPLOYEE

There is a map.

FRANK

Can I have a copy? Yes. If you can fit on the Xerox machine.

FRANK takes several of the papers to the copying machine. There is a building on the neighbour's

property. It is just across the property line.
It is marked "Synagogue".

BEFORE the EMPLOYEE returns the records to the shelves.

FRANK

What was the name of the family my
grandfather bought the land from?

The EMPLOYEE answers without looking it up.

EMPLOYEE

Benjamin Reuter.

FRANK

I'm sorry. While I'm here can I have a
copy of the two farms on the east and
two farms on the west of my father's
place?

EMPLOYEE

Sure.

(pause)

All bought in 1940. Wolfe, Bäumlner,
Jäger, Quint.

FRANK

And who owned them before then?

EMPLOYEE

Markovic, Pasternak, Rosenberg, Shafir.

FRANK

Thank you.

INT. DOWNTOWN - DAY

The OLD MEN are sitting on benches in front of the store.

A LAWYER arrives in a car with a group of BUSINESS TYPES.
They stop the car to speak with the OLD MEN.

LAWYER

Can you tell me where the Beer farm is?

OLD MAN

There isn't any one here by that name.

LAWYER

Are you sure? Their daughter won the state science fair.

OLD MAN

Oh, that isn't this town. That girl is from the next town.

OLD MAN #2

Go over there and ask.

A WOMAN overhears the conversation. She waits until the OLD MEN aren't looking and she waves the LAWYER over to her. We see her pointing in the direction of the farm as if she is giving directions.

EXT. FARM - DAY

FRANK is waiting for JO when she arrives home from school. JO is driving fast. She slides into the drive gravel flying. She practically runs to FRANK to find out what he has learned.

FRANK

During the war, actually before the war... before Pearl Harbor. The synagogue was destroyed and the graveyard also. A Jewish man they assumed was killed, never found his body.

JO

If we can find it...

FRANK

Of course they used the gravestones to reinforce the road. They paved over the stones. Some were laid down to ...

JO

What happened to the people?

FRANK

They moved off. Dad was a boy. Granddad was involved, no doubt. Our land was at the back. It's not very good land.

JO looks at the back of their farm and she then looks at the front.

FRANK

This land at the front belonged to Jews. In fact, almost all the land West of town was owned by Jews. You a threat to dad's, our farm, if these people ever come back and want this land back, we might have to give it back. Along with about five other farms.

JO

Well, I can't worry about that.

FRANK

Everything from the edge of town out to the Zimmermann place.

(pause)

Our farm. Our families farm!

JO

I kind of figured.

FRANK

You need to find a place to put these, so they are never found.

JO

I found fourteen here, under out drive.

FRANK looks at the drive and the house and the barns, tractors and the silos.

JO

Where was the cemetery?

FRANK

What do you need all this stones for?

JO

I'm curious.

FRANK

Curious hobby if you ask me.

JO

It isn't a hobby. They were human beings. There is a dead guy buried around here somewhere.

FRANK

Do you know what these people think of you?

JO

Well, I'm not exactly the homecoming queen am I?

FRANK

No, you aren't. You might have been...

JO

Forget all that. I don't care one iota.

FRANK points to the corner of their farm nearest town.

FRANK

Down in that corner. It was down there.

JO turns and begins running to the barn. She loads up her machine into her pickup and heads down to that location.

Later, we see JO running her machine over the corner and of course she finds graves. She begins to map them.

EXT. FARM - LATE AFTERNOON

The LAWYER and BUSINESS TYPES arrive at the farm. He is about to drive up to the farmhouse, but he stops when he see's JO with her machine. The LAWYER walks out into field.

We see the LAWYER look over JO's shoulders at the computer screen. He waves for the BUSINESS TYPES to come see the machine working.

They look amazed. JO is mapping the Jewish graveyard.

JO

This is a Jewish graveyard. It was destroyed in the 1940s. The gravestones scattered about town. I found them and they lead me here.

BUSINESSMAN

This is amazing.

JO

Yes. It is. And you want to buy this technology.

LAWYER

Let's go up to the house.

JO

Let me finish mapping this row.

(pause)

Go up to the house and talk to my parents. My brother and mother will talk to you.

The BUSINESSMEN begin to return to their car.

JO

I will load the machine up and bring it to the barn.

(pause)

I'm five minutes behind you.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

On the dinning room table there is a check for a substantial amount. There are more than a few zeros in the number. There is also a stack of papers that looks like a contract.

FRANK is upstairs changing clothes. He looks out the window and the LAWYER's car is just out of the drive on the highway.

FRANK

(shouts)

Yahoo.

His voice tells us that he is more excited than JO. JO might be in some sort of daze. Maybe she is simply humble.

FRANK runs down the stairs.

FRANK

Jo and I are going into town. We are going to the drive in.

(pause)

She hasn't had a decent ice cream. All that dating and Rolph has never bought her an ice cream.

(pause)

Am I right.

JO

(smiles)

No. He never did, that is true.

FRANK

What may I ask what you two have been doing?

RUTH looks curiously. NICKOLAUS even looks up. JO looks embarrassed. FRANK is talking about digging up stones, but there is the implementation that JO and ROLPH have been fooling around.

FRANK

The ice cream is on me.

(pause)

It's not every day your baby sister sticks it in the eye of those people in town.

JO chuckles.

EXT. DRIVE-IN - NIGHT

JO and FRANK are having large fancy ice cream dishes.

FRANK

There isn't anything you can do about it.

JO

It's like you see a hungry man and you walk by because you think he is lazy and you have your own problems and all.

(pause)

But when it's a child hungry you just can't walk past. Understand?

FRANK

We weren't even born.

JO

They paved the roads and sidewalks with gravestones. Now that is wrong. I don't know exactly how wrong.

FRANK

They are just stones.

JO

It was only when folks started talking non-stop about a few holes in the baseball field, that I thought "no way". You would think aliens had landed.

FRANK

I understand but why you?

(pause)

We never had anything to do with Jews.

(pause)

Have you ever met one?

JO

No, I've lived here my entire life and we evidently killed one and forced the others to sell their land.

(pause)

So I never had the opportunity.

(pause)

I don't know why.

FRANK

You better figure out. Don't you think?

JO

It made me feel bad. I kept thinking it was wrong.

FRANK

They aren't even our people.

JO

What if someone took our grandparent's headstones and placed them down so they wouldn't get their feet muddy.

(pause)

I know it was wrong but I had to do it.

FRANK

You tore up the church sidewalk.

JO

They shouldn't have laid the headstones down.

FRANK

Jo, stop thinking about this.

JO

Why not?

(pause)

I asked the priest and he said no.

(pause)

I did it and he said nothing.

FRANK

He knows you did it.

JO

Yes. I imagine he has figured it out.

FRANK

Everyone has figured it out and they aren't happy about it.

JO

There isn't anything I can do about the haters. The priest is on my side.

FRANK

Who else?

JO

A lady in the cafeteria. She's been giving me extra of whatever I compliment her on. Like if I say, "That chicken sure is good", then I get extra.

FRANK

That doesn't mean she is on your side.

JO

She's sympathetic.

FRANK

How do you know that?

JO

She winked at me and smiled.

FRANK

Just don't do it anymore.

JO

It was wrong, don't you see?

FRANK

It will end in tears. I'm warning you.

(pause)

What about those men from the café?

JO

The Wolfe brothers?

FRANK

Their farm was Jewish at a time.

JO

Good! I hope they lose it.

FRANK

Well they aren't going to just let this go. Clearly they are willing to fight for it.

(pause)

Their grandfather is dead. Our grandfather is dead. Everyone involved is dead.

(pause)

Why should you care about their dead and put everything your father has build here?

JO

Well you know the answer to that.

FRANK

What?

JO

There isn't anyone to look after them.

There is a long pause. FRANK notices the pickup that almost hit him and ran him off the road. The white truck, with the fuel tank in the bed, pulls into a parking spot and the occupants order something. The occupants aren't clear; there is a lot of glare on the windshield.

FRANK reaches under his seat and feels around. There is a pistol under his seat and he is only confirming it is there.

FRANK

Who is that in white truck?

JO

One of the Wolfe brothers. I don't know which one.

(pause)

It doesn't matter. They are dumber than a stump.

JO looks at FRANK. She glances down to his feet.

FRANK

What?

JO

What are you doing?

FRANK

I dropped my spoon.

JO

They won't do anything here.

FRANK

You are done mapping the cemetery?

JO

Yep.

INT./EXT. FARM - NIGHT

FRANK and his DOG are asleep. The DOG wakes and gives an alert bark. FRANK gets up and looks out the window. He sees figures running away in the dark. FRANK appears mad. He runs downstairs and opens the door to let out the DOG.

FRANK
(to the dog)
Chew their ass!

The DOG runs enthusiastically into the night. After a moment, we hear two gunshots.

FRANK runs to the nearest vehicle a front-end loader. And he drives in that direction. We see a vehicle on the highway turn on their light and speed away.

We see FRANK find his dog in the dark. The lights of the front-end loader fall on the DOG, who has been killed. FRANK lifts the DOG and places him into the bucket. He returns to the farmhouse.

The lights of the front-end loader fall on a large Star of David painted on the door of the hay barn. NICKOLAUS and JO are looking at it. RUTH arrives.

There is a long pause.

NICKOLAUS, without a word, goes to the tractor barn and comes back with a power washer. He pours some acetate in the tank. He immediately begins removing the paint.

It is freezing cold. JO and RUTH watch NICKOLAUS for a very long time. Finally, JO takes her RUTH inside the farmhouse. RUTH can't understand.

RUTH
(five times)
I just don't understand

FRANK digs a hole with the front-end loader. The ground is hard and frozen at the surface. He buries his DOG.

FRANK is, of course, visibly angered.

INT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

JO leaves the farm for school.

INT. BARN - DAY

FRANK spends more time on the laptop on JO's machine. He brings a flash drive and copies all the maps and data from JO's efforts.

INT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

FRANK brings the flash drive back to his computer. He spends a healthy part of the day studying the maps. He learns there are only four more

EXT./INT. HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

FRANK walks into the school and walks past the mascot in front. He specifically looks at the concrete underneath it.

MR. WINDISCHMANN (60) is at the front of his class. FRANK looks in the door but doesn't interrupt. FRANK sits in the hall way and waits for between classes.

MR. WINDISCHMANN

Electrical energy is the energy newly derived from electrical potential energy. When loosely used to describe energy absorbed or delivered by an electrical circuit (for example, one provided by an electric power utility) "electrical energy" refers to energy which has been converted from electrical potential energy. This energy is supplied by the combination of electric current and electrical potential that is delivered by the circuit. At the point that this electrical potential energy has been converted to another type of energy, it ceases to be electrical potential energy. Thus, all electrical energy is potential energy before it is delivered to the end-use. Once converted from

potential energy, electrical energy can always be called another type of energy (heat, light, motion, etc.).

MR. KERMIAR

I don't believe we have met. I'm Mr. Kermiar, the other science teacher.

FRANK

I'm Frank Beer.

MR. KERMIAR

Josephine's brother, if I'm not mistaken. Can I help you?

FRANK

Oh, I'm waiting on Mr. Windischmann.

MR. KERMIAR

Sure. He is tired and about ready to retire.

FRANK

Oh, he isn't well?

MR. KERMIAR

He is okay, just retiring.

FRANK

I didn't know. You will be giving him a party.

MR. KERMIAR

One always deserves a rest and few people deserve it more than he does.

FRANK

I'm sure.

MR. KERMIAR

We have enough trouble with the media snooping around. You know what I mean?

FRANK

No, I don't.

MR. KERMIAR

Talk to people around here and you'll find out.

FRANK

I've been here the last five months. I'm perfectly aware.

MR. KERMIAR

I know these people and I can tell you...

The bell rings and students begin to change classes. FRANK enters the classroom to speak with MR. WINDISCHMANN.

MR. WINDISCHMANN

Good to see you. What happened?

FRANK

I was in a fight?

MR. WINDISCHMANN

Aren't you a bit old for that.

FRANK

It was a situation.

There is a long awkward pause.

FRANK

I took chemistry and physics with you.

MR. WINDISCHMANN

Boy how time flies. Just the last five years it seems has been a very long time.

FRANK

I've meant to come visit with you, but the only time I've been home was during your vacation.

MR. WINDISCHMANN

You graduated? Jo said you have a civil engineering degree.

FRANK

Yes.

MR. WINDISCHMANN

That is great. I hope to see you put to good use.

FRANK

San Francisco.

MR. WINDISCHMANN

Really? What a great city!

FRANK

Thanks. I hope I can handle it.

You can handle it.

(pause)

We don't make people here in Beyerville designed to fail. Any you always liked building things.

(pause)

Your bridge is still up there.

A model bridge FRANK built is still on the top shelf of a bookcase in the classroom.

FRANK

I hope so.

MR. WINDISCHMANN

You are here about Jo?

FRANK

I sure appreciate everything you did for Jo.

MR. WINDISCHMANN

She bought me boat. I really didn't want anything.

FRANK

Really. I didn't know.

MR. WINDISCHMANN

I told her to keep the money that it was for her college.

FRANK

She is fine. Don't worry about that.

MR. WINDISCHMANN

I wasn't going to buy a boat until I retired. But, my wife told her what I wanted and she surprised me with the exact one.

FRANK

I'm glad. You deserve some fishing time.

MR. WINDISCHMANN

I'm going fishing in it this afternoon in fact. Might go everyday. Come with me?

FRANK

Oh, I don't know.

EXT. BOAT - DAY

It is a modest boat (Sun Dolphin Pro 102) with a small outboard.

FRANK

I wanted to speak with you about my sister.

MR. WINDISCHMANN

We could have talk about her at school. You didn't have to come out here you know.

FRANK

It's nice out here and well I needed to work up my nerve.

MR. WINDISCHMANN

People don't take kindly to what she is doing.

(pause)

But I think she is performing admirably.

(pause)

I even thought about giving a talk to my classes one day, but then I thought the whole thing might smooth over by itself.

FRANK

It hasn't smoothed over and it won't either.

(pause)

She has been subjected to the most vile insults and I'm not sure she is stable. You know how girls are so in need of friends.

MR. WINDISCHMANN

Everyone needs friends and she has friends. She has probably made more like minded friends because of this.

FRANK

I don't know any of them.

MR. WINDISCHMANN

Me. You know me.

FRANK

That boy. Rolph?

MR. WINDISCHMANN

He is a good kid.

(pause)

She leads him everywhere.

(pause)

And he follows.

FRANK

You think someone would harm her?

MR. WINDISCHMANN

Well, I hope not.

FRANK

She sort of told me she wants to take the head stones that are under the school mascot.

(pause)

She seems to have made some calculation
these the last four stones.

MR. WINDISCHMANN
How does she know that?

FRANK
We found the old cemetery location.

MR. WINDISCHMANN
And she mapped out the graves?
(pause)
And she has every stone, except these,
she thinks?

FRANK
Well, can you dissuade her?

MR. WINDISCHMANN
I only asked her to wait until the time
is right.

FRANK
There isn't going to be a right time
for this sort of thing.

MR. WINDISCHMANN
There is a time in her mind. And now,
these are the last ones? So, naturally
she will feel rushed to get it done.

MR. WINDISCHMANN ponders what to do.

MR. WINDISCHMANN
Christmas. Or New Years one. I'm
thinking Christmas.
(pause)
You might hint to her this is the best
time.

FRANK
No. You need to help me persuade her
not to do anything more.
(pause)
To leave the stones.

MR. WINDISCHMANN

She will not do that.

FRANK

I'm only suggesting that you explain the risks. The down side.

MR. WINDISCHMANN

She knows the downside; trust me.

FRANK

I'm not so sure.

MR. WINDISCHMANN

And how are things going at home?

FRANK

Mother and father. They are oblivious. There are eighty something stones in the hay barn and father hasn't noticed.

MR. WINDISCHMANN

Or he has chosen not to notice, perhaps.

FRANK

Maybe that is it.

(pause)

Well, they saw the check and they want her to go to college in the East. So, they think she can do no wrong.

MR. WINDISCHMANN

So everything is normal. Good.

IN. FARMHOUSE - DAY

RUTH is cooking. We can see out the window NICKOLAUS is already on his tractor. JO and FRANK are at the kitchen table.

FRANK

Why don't you meet me after school. I'm making arrangements for someone to come haul off the stones.

JO
No you aren't.

FRANK
Well, come with me and we will arrange
it together.

JO
I have to help father after school. And
if you touch the stones I will never
speak to you again.

FRANK
Maybe we will find a solution. Later.
Okay?

JO
I'm not going anywhere.
(pause)
I thought you were going to San
Francisco?

FRANK
Anything just to piss people off, huh?

JO
Why should I chicken out and let my
brother do things for me?

FRANK
We will talk later.

JO
There isn't anything to talk about.
(pause)
I'm not going and you aren't going to
do anything with the grave-markers. I
will scream bloody murder.
(pause)
You are wasting your breath.

FRANK
You have only a few stones remaining to
collect?

JO
Maybe?

JO gives him a suspicious look.

RUTH brings them their breakfast.

INT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

It is 2 am, Christmas morning. There is a light snow outside. FRANK is sleeping. His DOG wakes up and whines. FRANK wakes up. JO is sneaking out of the house. She starts her truck and backs up to hook up to a flatbed trailer. She then slowly eases out of the driveway.

FRANK dresses and goes downstairs.

NICKOLAUS greets him at the bottom of the stairs. He says nothing.

FRANK

Dad.

NICKOLAUS

Jo, just left.

FRANK

It's under control.

NICKOLAUS

Roads are slick. Just see that you both are safe.

FRANK

Not a problem. I have a plan.

(pause)

Go back to bed.

EXT. THE ROAD TO THE HIGH SCHOOL - NIGHT

FRANK starts his pickup and slowly drives into town. He parks in a strategically important position and cuts his light. He is positioned to see someone leaving town in the direction of the high school. After a time, the backhoe speeds by followed by JO's truck and the trailer.

ROLPH and JO pull up to the mascot and begin to lift the mascot off it's concrete base. JO wraps a heavy lifting strap around the mascot. She hooks the other end to the

backhoe's shovel. They carefully lift it and set it to the side.

FRANK follows them with the lights off. When just in sight of the high school, FRANK pulls halfway off the road and turns on his flashers. He kills the engine and lifts the hood.

JO and ROLPH continue their work.

After a time, MILI arrives in her police car. She is making her usual patrol and finds FRANK by the side of the road. She turns on her police lights.

JO and ROLPH are startled, but the lights don't progress.

JO and ROLPH begin working again.

We see MILI and ROLPH talk. They push FRANK's truck all the way off the road. FRANK gets a gift wrapped box out of his truck and he gets into the police car.

FRANK

I meant to bring it to you today, but some stuff happened.

MILI

That is okay, you didn't have to do this.

(pause)

Well, actually I got you something too. We need to go by my apartment. That okay?

FRANK

Of course.

MILI glances at the high school in the far distance. She glances back. The police car pulls a U turn and heads back into town.

MILI

So, you have insomnia too?

FRANK

Sometimes.

MILI

You don't seem like the type to be out at 2 am on Christmas Eve.

FRANK

Well, I was hoping to run into you.

MILI

What were you doing out by the high school?

FRANK

Well, I drove around in town a bit. Asked myself where would she patrol.
(pause)
And then I ran out of gas.

MILI

That doesn't seem like you.

FRANK

I've ran out of gas in every vehicle I've ever driven. Go-carts. Tractors. Trucks. Sooner or later it just happens.

MILI

Hum?

FRANK

Generally, thinking about something else.
(pause)
Obviously. And here you are.

MILI

Oh! You were thinking about me tonight and ran out of gas.

(pause)

That is too cute!

(pause)

I don't mind telling you, you are about the most eligible bachelor in this town.

FRANK

I would like to run out of gas with you sometime.

MILI

I will take that as a compliment.

FRANK

Well, good. We see things eye to eye?

MILI

Maybe we are on the same page.

EXT. MILI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

MILI and FRANK arrive at her apartment.

MILI

Don't steal my police car.

MILI leaves the car engine running and she runs inside.

When MILI is inside, FRANK sees JO pass in front of him returning to the farm with four headstones on the trailer. ROLPH, driving the backhoe, turns to return to his home.

MILI emerges with a big smile and a decorative gift bag.

MILI

Okay, here you go.

FRANK reaches into the sack, and pulls out a T-Shirt.

FRANK

Civil Engineers Make the Grade!

(pause)

Wow. You know that is very cool. I don't have anything like this.

FRANK hesitates but after a few seconds he kisses her.

FRANK

Okay, open yours.

MILI opens the box and inside is a custom-made "Beyerville Police Badge" steel bottle opener. MILI is a little confused. It looks identical to her badge.

FRANK
It's a bottle opener.

MILI
I will put it to good and often use.

FRANK
Take me home and I will get us some
beer.
(pause)
Oh, you are on duty.

MILI
Actually, I'm not. No one is. Christmas
Eve and all. I'm on call.

MILI holds up her cell phone.

MILI
I just couldn't sleep so I was driving
around.

FRANK
Okay. Well. Then.

MILI
Let's go.

EXT. FARM - NIGHT

When they arrive at the farm, the light in the barn is obviously on.

MILI and FRANK pull up in front of the farmhouse. FRANK runs inside.

The light goes out in the barn. JO walks out and freezes. She thinks perhaps she is caught. JO doesn't move.

FRANK brings back four beers and returns to the police car.

JO appears relieved.

MILI uses her new bottle opener to open two.

FRANK
Merry Christmas.

MILI
Merry Christmas to you too.

They drink and kiss.

JO sneaks into the house.

There is a long pause as we focus on the police car.

INT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

It is Christmas morning. The police car is gone from in front of the house. NICKOLAUS, RUTH, JO and FRANK are exchanging gifts. NICKOLAUS leaves the room.

FRANK
Mom, you parents ever say anything about Jews?

RUTH
Jews? We don't have any Jews living here. Do we?

FRANK
Well I was just curious, because we did at one time.

RUTH
I'm ten years younger than your father. That must have been a very long time ago. Ask your father.

JO
He doesn't know anything.

RUTH
Well, why don't you ask some of the people that were around at the time.

FRANK
Like who.

RUTH

The oldest woman in the community that I know of is Natascha Fromm. She is at the nursing home and they say she is doing great.

The conversation is over; NICKOLAUS returns to the room. FRANK is thinking of who else to ask.

INT. NURSING HOME - DAY

FRANK and MILI enter the nursing home. He walks reading the card on each room. FRANK reaches the room. MILI waits in the hallway.

MRS FROMM is in bed. She is staring at the ceiling.

FRANK

Good morning, Mrs. Fromm.

(pause)

My name is Frank Beer and I'm Nickolaus' son. Remember me?

MRS. FROMM

Who's son?

The elderly lady seems confused.

FRANK

Nickolaus. we lived west of town.

(pause)

My grandfather was Emil. Emil Beer.

MRS. FROMM

I know Emil. He's dead.

FRANK

I'm his grandson.

MRS. FROMM

Nicholaus?

FRANK

I'm his son, Frank.

MRS. FROMM

I don't recall. It has been so long. I don't know.

FRANK

Do you remember who stole your spinach?

MRS. FROMM

Yes. It was the Beer boy who stole from my garden.

FRANK

I was the one who stole them.

(pause)

I wanted them for my rabbits.

MRS. FROMM

You are Frank?

FRANK

Yes.

(pause)

Mrs. Fromm, do you remember the Jews?

MRS. FROMM

Sure, I remember. Such smart handsome boys.

(pause)

Zachary owned a bicycle and had such nice black eyes. All us girls wanted to marry him.

FRANK

What happened to them?

MRS. FROMM

They are gone. What is the use of talking about them?

FRANK

What happened to them?

MRS. FROMM

Zachary?

FRANK

Zachary and the others.

(pause)
The usual thing. They went to a larger city.

FRANK
What year was that? Do you remember?
(pause)
At the beginning of the war or at the end?

MRS. FROMM
Near the end of the war, I think. I don't know.
(pause)
They went to California.

FRANK
Are you sure?

MRS. FROMM
Maybe they went to New York.

FRANK
Who knows what happened to them?

MRS. FROMM
They were here and they were gone. All of them gone.

FRANK
There were some fires. Homes burned?

MRS. FROMM
Zachary hid in Therese Best's father's barn. For two or three day. It was a big secret.
(pause)
All the girls argued where he would stay.

MRS. FROMM
I guess he ran away. But I never sold out the Jews like the others.

FRANK
Sold out to who?

MRS. FROMM
Everybody.

EXT. FARM EAST OF BEYERVILLE - DAY

FRANK AND MILI are driving East of town toward her grandfather's farm. MILI is not in uniform.

MILI
Did you find out anything from Mrs. Fromm?

FRANK
I'm not sure. A Jewish boy she liked was hiding in the barn of one of her friends. She thought he was running away like kids do sometimes.
(pause)
I want to talk to your grandfather.

MILI
Grandpa was a teenager when the war started. He was just a child you understand.

FRANK
Well, your grandfather might know something. Will you take me to him?

MILI
What do you need this for?

FRANK
What?

MILI
All this?

FRANK
As if I know. My sister got me into it and then it sort of happened. I don't know why.

MILI
The more they don't let you do something, the more they want to hide something the more you want to know?

FRANK

Exactly.

MILI

You are just contrary.

FRANK

No, the truth. Just the truth.

MILI

A philosopher?

FRANK

Just a civil engineer, looking for a cemetery.

MILI

(sarcastic)

And justice for all.

There is a long pause.

MILI

I'm sympathetic. Don't get me wrong.

(pause)

Turn here.

FRANK

Thanks?

FRANK gets out of the car and goes into a building.

They arrive at the farm.

MILI

Grandpa, this is Frank Beer. He wants to talk to you.

Grandfather is sitting on a restored antique tractor. Apparently, he isn't allowed to drive it but just sits there thinking.

FRANK

What happened to the Jews?

GRANDPA

Sure, I remember. Why do you want to know, now? They weren't your people.

FRANK

But I have their farm now and I want to know since when?

GRANDPA

Don't be asking me. I mind my own business. And, I don't care about other folks. So, there.

FRANK

Since when have you owned this farm?

GRANDPA

A long time now.

FRANK

But you were born here.

GRANDPA

I was born East of town like your daddy was.

FRANK

When did the Jews leave?

GRANDPA

How do you know they left?

FRANK

I don't know but I will.

GRANDPA

I don't think you know anything about what didn't happen.

FRANK

What do you mean?

GRANDPA

Stop asking me and look closer to your own farm.

MILI's BROTHER comes up behind FRANK and sucker punches him in the back of the head. MILI screams and gets between the two men. She helps FRANK to stand and they get back in the pickup.

BROTHER

We don't appreciate people who don't mind their own business.

MILI

(to brother)

You didn't have to do that.

(to Frank)

I'm sorry. Grandpa is old and he is just protecting him.

BROTHER

And stay away from my sister if you will never see San Francisco.

INT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

RUTH and NICKOLAUS and JO are watching television. FRANK arrives. JO and FRANK go into a different room to speak.

FRANK

I spoke to Mrs. Fromm and to Mili's grandfather.

JO

Well.

FRANK

Nothing really. They were too young.

JO

No one is willing to talk about it but everyone is mad at me.

FRANK

It was a very long time ago.

JO

They know but they won't say.

FRANK

Mili said she read the history of the city and she didn't mention anything.

JO

Go on.

FRANK

Her grandfather said I should look around closer to home and maybe they didn't leave at all.

JO

Ask Dad?

(pause)

Or Mother?

FRANK

Or maybe he meant what he said, "look".

JO

The Synagogue.

EXT. FARM - MORNING

JO and FRANK get up very early and JO has a map. They leave the farmhouse on a large John Deere Gator 4x4.

They arrive at a grove of trees. They navigate through the trees. It isn't part of the Beer land and JO and FRANK are quiet and cautious. They frequently scan the horizon for the neighbours.

They come upon a former building.

JO

This was the synagogue?

FRANK

Nothing else around.

JO

Pretty small.

FRANK

Very small.

It was 75 years ago but the building was clearly burned.

JO
Let's go and come back tonight with the
radar.

JO clearly has the creeps and walks rapidly to their ATV.
They return to their farm.

FRANK
At night? Why at night?

EXT. TREE GROVE - NIGHT

JO drives her truck with the machine in the back very close
to the grove of trees. She unloads it as carefully as
possible. FRANK has a rifle. They both have hand-held
radios.

They progress through the trees, presumably on a deer trail
until they reach the site. JO begins to map the site.

FRANK
I'm going to fire this in the air a few
times if it looks like they want to
come down here.

JO
Why? Why don't we just leave.

FRANK
If they think someone is down here
hunting, they won't come in here.

JO
Why not?

FRANK
Would you?

JO
Oh, they won't want accidentally shot.
Smart. Good okay I won't worry.

Someone has a flashlight out at the neighbor's farm. The
light appears to be moving toward the grove.

FRANK
(to radio)
They are out, getting ready to walk
over here. I'm going to fire.

FRANK fires the weapon three times. The lights stop moving. There is a pause. Then the flashlight is turned off. Whoever has been out at the neighbors goes back inside the house. Then even the house lights go out.

JO
(into the radio)
Frank!
FRANK!
(pause)
You better come here.

Even through the trees, the light from JO's computer can be seen from a distance. FRANK arrives. JO looks as if she has seen a ghost.

JO points at the screen. There is a skeleton. The bones are not arranged in an logical way. It appears to have been thrown into a pit. It isn't a grave. FRANK doesn't speak.

JO hits a few keys and we see fairly clear images of each item. In the pit also are some books, a Torah scroll, a Ner Tamid (eternal light), a Shofar, a Tzedakah Box (charity box) a Menorah and a Luchot (Ten Commandments tablets).

FRANK moves back to the edge of the trees to see if anyone is coming. The neighbour's farm looks dark and almost abandoned.

INT. TRACTOR BARN - NIGHT

NICKOLAUS is in the tractor barn. He has an engine disassembled and is cleaning the parts. The parts are out on a table. In a tool room there is a tank with cleaning solution. But NICKOLAUS steps into the tool room with some parts and this puts him out of sight.

JO and FRANK enter the barn. They are not aware their NICKOLAUS can overhear their conversation.

JO and FRANK have been arguing outside, but the cold has forced them inside the barn.

NICKOLAUS does not come out of the tool room but listens.

FRANK

Grandpa's land was back were we grow
oats now.

JO

Yes. I saw that. In the photocopies.

FRANK

And you saw he bought this land in
1940?

JO

Yes.

FRANK

What happened?

JO

I don't know I wasn't born.

FRANK

You don't have any idea?

JO

I have an idea.

FRANK

He bought this land for \$7.50 per acre.

JO

Straight talk. You can't going to hurt
my feelings.

FRANK

Land East of town, not near as
productive, was selling for well over
\$30.

JO

So?

FRANK

All five farms, maybe others, were owned by Jews. Those two west of us and the two farms between here and town.

JO

Yes.

FRANK

So what happened?

JO

We practically stole it. A court would say we did steal it.

FRANK

Five families over 27 people. There are documents to prove it.

NICKOLAUS continues to work cleaning the engine parts.

FRANK

I'm surprised that we haven't all been sued by now.

(pause)

It that happens, all we can count on is to get that oats land.

JO

No one will claim it after all this time. They already would have tried to take it back.

FRANK

Honestly, I doubt your gravestones will matter all that much. That is not what I'm saying.

(pause)

Things have changed and you dig up a body, that will be it; this farm will be gone.

JO is contemplating what to do about the discovery of the body.

FRANK

Why do you think they are treating you this way?

JO

They think the gravestones will attract attention. Of course that is obvious.

FRANK

A dead body will be worse.

(pause)

They won't overlook that.

EXT. HAY BARN - NIGHT

The hay barn burns. The fire department comes from town but it is too late.

FRANK

It was arson.

MILI

You can't prove that. Can you?

FRANK

In 1940, we paid almost 1/4th of the value for the Jewish farms. And the deeds were transferred. And now they are afraid they are going to lose them.

(pause)

There was a Jewish cemetery over there at the corner.

(pause)

There is some other evidence too.

MILI

It's easy to cast the blame on others.

FRANK

I think, my grandfather took Benjamin Reuter's land after they murdered him. And I don't know what happened to the other Jews. Maybe they moved and maybe they didn't.

MILI

When did all this happen? I've never heard this story.

(pause)

There have to be some traces.

FRANK

The gravestones. JO has been the one digging them up. There are over 80 headstones from the cemetery, and she hid them in that barn.

(pause)

The Jews won't over look this when it all comes out. All five of these farms are threatened if the Jewish families will sue.

EXT. HAY BARN - DAY

The barn has totally collapsed the metal exterior; it is smouldering. There is a two foot lump in the rubble were the stones were stacked.

FRANK

You want me to stay and rebuild it.

NICKOLAUS

No. Too cold now. I will wait until it warms up.

EXT. FRANK'S BEDROOM - FARMHOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

It is New Year's Eve. FRANK is packing up to leave for his job in California.

JO is helping him but things are uneasy. JO looks worried sick. FRANK is a bit frazzled himself. JO looks like she wants to have a talk.

But, NICKOLAUS comes in and picks up a box.

FRANK

Don't do that, dad. We can handle it.

NICKOLAUS

Nope. I'm going to help.

NICKOLAUS takes the box downstairs and puts it in the back of FRANK's pickup.

JO

You sure you can't stay and help rebuild the barn?

FRANK

Dad said no.

JO

Can you help me decide what to do?

FRANK

That is up to you. You are the one dating an archaeologist. This is your deal?

JO

No, I don't want that responsibility. I can't.

FRANK

That is right. In less than a year, you will be 2000 miles away at some yankee college.

JO

M.I.T.

FRANK

Like I said...

There is a long pause. JO hands him a "Disney Princes" flash drive.

FRANK

What do you want me to do with this?

JO

That is up to you, big brother.

FRANK puts the drive in his pocket. ROLPH arrives at the farm. JO runs downstairs to greet him.

FRANK watches them from the window. JO runs back inside.

JO
Mom, Rolph and I are going for a
hamburger. Okay?

RUTH
You two don't want to eat here.

JO
Mom?

RUTH
Oh, okay. Sure. Of course, honey.

JO is happy and runs back out and gets in ROLPH's truck.

FRANK and his NICKOLAUS load his things in the truck. They
put a blue tarp over the bed of the truck to cover his
things.

The sun is setting.

EXT. FARM - MORNING

FRANK showers, dresses and comes down to the kitchen table.
JO is absent. NICKOLAUS and FRANK are eating breakfast.

NICKOLAUS
Call, when you get there.

RUTH
Don't leave until your sister gets up.
She will want to say good-bye.

FRANK
Of course.

NICKOLAUS stops eating. He leans his head back to listen.
There isn't any noise from upstairs. They assume that JO
was out late and is still sleeping.

We hear a police siren out on the highway and then it
stops. FRANK takes his plate to the sink and looks out the
window. We see a police car with its lights on. It is MILI
and she has turned down the road to their farm.

FRANK runs upstairs frantically. JO is not in her room or
in the bathroom.

FRANK runs downstairs and out on the porch.

MILI

I found her about thirty minutes ago,
out by the high school. We took her to
the hospital. She was beaten. It's bad,
and...

(pause)

Raped.

FRANK

She was with a boy named Rolph.

MILI

He is dead. Beaten to death and
stabbed.

FRANK walks back into speak with his PARENTS.

FRANK

Jo has been hurt and she is at the
hospital. Get a coat and I will take
you down there.

RUTH is in a panic. NICKOLAUS is surprisingly calm. He gets
RUTH's coat and helps her outside.

FRANK drives his parents into the hospital. He follows MILI
in her police car.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

FRANK, MILI, RUTH and NICKOLAUS sit in the waiting room.
RUTH is hopelessly shaking and weeping. NICKOLAUS has his
arm around her consoling her.

The DOCTOR comes out of emergency room. FRANK stands up.

DOCTOR

(to Frank)

Brother?

FRANK

Yes, I'm Frank. How is she?

DOCTOR
She will be okay. She wants to see you.

FRANK leaves the waiting room to see JO.

DOCTOR
(to parents)
You two can go in and see her, in a
minute. Only two at a time right now.

The DOCTOR remains in the waiting room. As FRANK is walking he turns and we see the DOCTOR explaining her injuries. The DOCTOR points to his neck, his face, his left arm and right leg.

JO has been stabbed in the neck. JO is seriously beaten. Her jaw is broken and one eye is swollen completely shut. Her lip is split. Her left arm and right leg are broken.

JO's jaw is wired shut. She is mumbling and communication isn't efficient.

JO
(mumbling)
Mom and dad okay?

FRANK
What?

JO
Mom and dad.

FRANK
They are out there. Yes.

JO
Ok?

FRANK
They aren't going to like seeing this.

JO
I guess I don't look like the
Homecoming Queen?

FRANK
What?

JO
Homecoming Queen.

FRANK
Oh, no you aren't the Homecoming Queen
today.
(pause)
But you are strong and contrary.

JO
I'm a Beer.
(pause)
Yes, you are.
(pause)
Proud of you.

JO
I think I hurt their hand.
(pause)
I think Rolph is dead.

FRANK
He is. I'm afraid. I'm sorry.

JO
I had to crawl out to the road.

FRANK
Hurt huh.

JO
Duh.

JO stops talking and she looks at the wall.

FRANK
Jo. We love you.

JO
I know, I love your guys too.

FRANK
Well, I'm going to talk the police.

JO
No, you better just let it go.

FRANK
That is not going to happen.

JO
This was my fault.

FRANK
This is not your fault.

JO
You have to be in San Francisco.

FRANK
Not for a few days. I will call them.

JO
No you go.

FRANK
Maybe.

JO stops talking and she looks at the wall.

FRANK
I'm going to prepare Mom and Dad for
this. You can see them in a minute?

JO
Sure.

We see FRANK walking out and then talking to RUTH and NICKOLAUS. NICKOLAUS supports RUTH and they walk into the emergency room.

FRANK reaches into his pocket and pulls out the Disney Princess flash drive. He hands it to MILI. She places it in her shirt pocket.

FRANK sits in the waiting room. He is clearly contemplating his next move. MILI sits beside him, with her hand on his back, consoling him.

EXT. FARM - DAY

FRANK is pulling the metal from the rubble. A one-ton truck from Teichmüller Earth-Moving pulls into the drive. It is pulling a trailer with wrought iron fencing and lumber.

FRANK stops moving the rubble. He takes a paper out of his pocket and hands it to ROLPH's father, MR. TEICHMÜLLER. Frank points to the corner of the farm where the cemetery used to be.

We see JO in the hospital. There are many flowers in her room. RUTH and NICKOLAUS are visiting with her. They bring her some gifts to help her pass the time.

MR. TEICHMÜLLER has a measuring tape. He is placing out wooded stakes.

We see the DOCTOR and NURSES joking and trying to get a reaction from JO. Her response is polite but it isn't a sincere chuckle. She feigns a smile.

We see FRANK with the head stones on the front-end loader. He has the high-pressure washer and is cleaning them.

We see JO hobbling around the hospital. She struggles to get down the hall to the soda machine.

The EMPLOYEES building a wood frame to pour concrete for a fence around the outside of the cemetery.

A concrete truck arrives. The EMPLOYEES are setting the iron fence panels in the wet concrete. We see MR. TEICHMÜLLER welding the sections of wrought iron together.

JO is released from the hospital.

FRANK arrives at the cemetery with a load of headstones. He makes some measurements after consulting one of JO's maps.

FRANK has a shovel and he begins to place the stones in the ground.

RUTH and NICKOLAUS are bringing JO home. We can see JO's face as they return to the farm. She looks out the window. We can see that JO isn't destroyed by the recent events, but she might appear melancholy.

We see the cemetery is complete.

We see JO's face when they arrive. She is of course elated.

RUTH and NICKOLAUS pull up to the cemetery. FRANK and MILI and MR. TEICHMÜLLER are there. JO hobbles out of the vehicle and she is barely able to walk around.

He can't bend down to pick up a stone.

JO
(to Frank)
Can you hand me that stone?

JO places the stone on top of a headstone.

END CREDITS:

For more screenplays by Alan Nafzger please visit
www.screenplay.biz

