

"THE GIRL"

A Short Screenplay

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THE GIRL

OVER BLACK

It takes several ticks of a clock - the mechanical type, such as <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qgsy8BEsLzq> - to metamorphose into traffic sounds of horns, brakes and tires.

FADE IN:

INT. CAR - DAY (IDLING)

Our perspective is through a windshield to a hot, sunny day.

Traffic is stop-and-go in four lanes, each direction. Cars dart from lane to lane. Blaring horns, inaudible curses and fist-shakes are detectable from drivers in surrounding cars.

CLOSE-UP - PROFILE OF MAN'S FACE, AT THE WHEEL, THIS VEHICLE

PETER, 60, is clean-shaven, receding hairline, deep furrows in his brow. At a horn o.s., he awakens from a micro-sleep, and starts his car forward a little before it stops again.

ANGLE ON Peter, one hand lazily on the wheel, as he adjusts glasses that slip down. He wears a windbreaker over a shirt and tie, despite the heat, to hide a bit of middle-age gut.

He wiggles the A.C. controls to eke out some air. No luck. His car radio spits out static, so he taps the SCAN button.

As it moves through ads, news, a talk show, and more news, we see an attaché case on the passenger seat. Peter's some sort of executive. He sets the radio when it finds a tune.

He fingers his signal lever and checks over a shoulder, but thinks better of it. His eye catches the car clock blinking on 5:59, and he checks his watch to compare. Wipes a brow.

Through the windshield, and above the multitude of slow-moving cars, large arrowed road signs point left and right.

EXT. EXPRESSWAY - DAY

Peter is visible at the wheel of a sedan, among the traffic.

INT. PETER'S CAR - DAY (TRAVELLING)

With a minor jolt, Peter nudges the car in front of his.

PETER

Shit.

The other car blares a horn, and swerves into the next lane.

Peter creeps his car forward, but bounces it to a squealing halt at something on the road before him. He slams it into park, and a chorus of horns greet his exit from the vehicle.

EXT. EXPRESSWAY/PETER'S SEDAN - DAY

Peter stands at the front corner of his car to see.

Something has been run over: Almost flattened, and immobile on the asphalt, it's in a sort of fetal position, blanketed in silt and bits of brush, with tire tracks that crisscross.

Peter reels as the mass squirms like a snake, before it goes stationary again. He circles around, and leans in to look:

Cloth folds are now visible within the dirt. There may be a head and limbs, but they're small, pre-adolescent in size. We can't make out a torso. It seems too mashed to be alive.

PETER

Is that a person in there?

He tugs gently at an edge of fabric, and locks into a stare.

Till a truck roars by in the next lane to snap him out of it. He straightens and rubs his chin, and leans at his hood to ponder, before he turns to cars passing in the next lane.

PETER (CONT'D)

Hey. Stop! Gimme... wait a sec!

Drivers and passengers ignore him. Even a cop in a highway patrol car one lane over doesn't acknowledge Peter's waves.

He checks his watch, and slides along to his door. He lifts the handle to enter, but gives one last peek at the shape on the road - it's still motionless but seems to have... grown.

Squinting, Peter returns to hover over the thing: What may be a slender arm or a leg trembles, and he lurches in shock.

PETER (CONT'D)

Holy Mother of...

Now truly alarmed, he darts left to right to wave cars down, but the occupants' faces are frozen, bland, expressionless - like mannequins. They merely stare forward, and ignore him.