

THE SKOOKUMCHUCK CONSPIRACY

by

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&

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[Script Excerpt: Pages 1-3]

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THIRD DRAFT  
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INT. REPORTER'S OFFICE - DAY

Framed newspaper articles on the wall:

OGOPOGO HOAX REVEALED

SO CALLED "U.F.O." EXPLAINED

HASSLE-FREE AUTO INSURANCE: MYTH!

JENALEE (V.O.)

I didn't just land this job overnight. Six years of university, 80 cups of coffee a day, and sleeping with the boss has gotten me pretty far in the newspaper business.

These articles lead to:

JENALEE HARRISON, early 30's, dark Goth, cynical frown above a neck brace, types by punching two fingers at her keyboard. Her desk is littered with tabloid magazines, rag-mags, and a copy of the National Post.

BERNIE MACKELROY bursts through the door from the bullpen. Early 40's, he reeks of small time editor, big time ego. He shuts the chaos behind him and tosses a hand-bound book onto Jenalee's desk.

MACKELROY

Got something for ya. Asshole's called me every day for a week. I tell him I'm busy, he calls twice a day and mails me this.

JENALEE

You know how much interest our publicly funded private insurance corporation earns on every driver dollar?

MACKELROY

You're not depressed are you? You look depressed.

JENALEE

This is important, Bernie. This is truth.

MACKELROY

Jena, no one's asking you to chase ghosts this time. Just go up there, take a couple photographs and convince this psycho to leave me alone.

JENALEE

Bernie this is a real story.

(MORE)

JENALEE (CONT'D)

Not like the garbage we force-feed  
our readers.

MACKELROY

So sell it to the Post.  
(indicating the binder)  
Take three days, half a column.  
Here's a hundred bucks.

JENALEE

I'm not sleeping in the car again.

Bernie reconsiders, and relents another hundred bucks.

MACKELROY

Have you lost weight?

JENALEE

I want this story, Bernie.

MACKELROY

We'll talk when you're back.  
(then, off Jenalee's  
scowl)  
I love it when you're angry.

Bernie winks, exits.

JENALEE (V.O.)

They say journalism has its ups and  
downs. But they never worked for  
"The Radical".

Jenalee lifts the hand-bound book. On its cover is an  
intimidating sketch of a Sasquatch beneath a title: "THE  
SKOOKUMCHUCK CONSPIRACY."

EXT. HIGHWAY IN THE KOOTENAYS - EVENING

Jenalee's dented Buick weaves down the single lane highway.

JENALEE (V.O.)

Tabloids are just a stepping stone.  
Least that's what they tell you when  
they hand you your certificate.

INT. BUICK - DRIVING

Jenalee drives while consulting a map. Empty Starbucks cups,  
fast food, and Post-Its litter the interior along with the  
book, a camera, and an overnight bag.

Frustrated, she checks the rear-view mirror before removing  
her neck brace.

JENALEE (V.O.)

And when you're twenty one, eager to circulate up to the big time - that's what you believe. Until you suddenly hit thirty two, and realize that all that shit you had to write is actually being read.

A hand-painted roadside flashes by: "SKOOKUMCHUCK AHEAD".

JENALEE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Welcome to the big time.

EXT. SKOOKUMCHUK - EVENING

On a road signed "MAIN STREET": old commercial shanties rot on either side of the single lane town. No street lamps, the town is cradled in darkness.

INT. BUICK - CONTINUOUS

Jenalee drives toward a large public house at the end of main street hedged behind a host of 4x4's.

JENALEE (V.O.)

My plan was simple: find a liquor store, get a room, and lock myself in. But in my life, things rarely work as planned.

Jenalee parks between two 4x4's. Ahead of her -

SKOOKUMCHUCK PUB

Towers over a dilapidate sign that reads: "LADIES NIGHT". BANJO COUNTRY MUSIC can be heard from inside.

JENALEE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

But I had to look at the bright side: chances were in this town I could probably land a date.

INT. SKOOKUMCHUK PUB - MOMENTS LATER

Taxidermal trophies peer down from high walls onto rustic bar tables sporting cards, Keno and Kokanee. Huddled around these tables are Locals (think hairy loggers) dressed in Mack Jackets. They turn as:

THE FRONT DOOR OPENS

Jenalee enters, freezes. ALL MUSIC STOPS as the door SWINGS SHUT behind her.

JENALEE (V.O.)

I don't frighten easily. It's one of my strengths.