

TRIGGERS

Written by

Marnie Mitchell-Lister

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Jrsygrl65@aol.com

FADE IN:

EXT. BOURNE BRIDGE, CAPE COD, MASSACHUSETTS - DAY

Traffic into Cape Cod is backed up. Typical for a beautiful summer day.

INT. PARKER FAMILY CAR - DAY

In the back, SEAN (9) and DANNY (14), tap hand held devices while their father NATE (50), CEO in a Hawaiian shirt, taps the steering wheel and sighs as the car inches forward.

He looks at JENN (48), natural beauty marred by stress as she stares out the window, not really focussed on anything.

NATE

Did I make a bad call, coming here?

She turns, forces a smile.

JENN

No. I'll be fine.

On the radio, a new song begins. Nate turns it up.

NATE

Now this is an oldie but goodie.

JENN (V.O.)

It's amazing what can trigger your memory; an object, a smell. As we drove into Cape Cod, a place I haven't been in over thirty years, I had a trigger.

Jenn stares at a sign for "SANDWICH ROAD" as they pass by it.

JENN (V.O.)

It wasn't the familiar streets, it was a song, Van Halen's "Dancing in the Street". Suddenly I wasn't a forty-something mother of two. It was nineteen eighty two, I was fourteen and on my way to see my summer friends for the last time.

EXT. FALMOUTH HEIGHTS INN - LATER SAME DAY

Jenn waves to Nate and the boys as they pull away.

JENN (V.O.)

The boys went fishing so I decided to explore the neighborhood.

Jenn walks down a tree lined street, passing Cape Cod style homes, most with large, inviting front porches.

JENN (V.O.)

Although this particular town was new to me, it felt just like the one from my childhood, the one off Sandwich Road. The smell of cut grass, summer blooms and salt water brought a powerful trigger.

FLASHBACK - 1982

EXT. CAPE COD STYLE HOME - DAY

Kids run through a sprinkler in the front yard while adults talk, laugh and play cards on the large porch.

JENN (V.O.)

My parents rented the same house every year and in July and August, Cape Cod was our home. Quite a culture shock from city life.

Six TEENS, Jenn (14) included, congregate behind the house. They gasp in excitement as PAUL (15) reveals two joints.

JENN (V.O.)

It felt safe here. While parents drank and played cards, teens were allowed to stay out late, go places unsupervised. We were free.

No adult notices the six teenagers head down the street or that RACHEL (3), takes off on her tricycle after them.

BACK TO PRESENT

EXT. FALMOUTH HEIGHTS NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Jenn continues on. Kids ride past her on bikes, people relax on porches, waving to anyone who walks by.

JENN (V.O.)

My sister Rachel adored me, wouldn't let me out of her sight. During the school year I'd help take care of her but in the summer, forget it. I became a different person, too cool for my family. The older I got, the meaner I got and at fourteen I was horrible.

A pack of teens walk down the street, oblivious to everyone and everything around them as they covertly share a joint.

JENN (V.O.)

My heart aches when I think about
how mean I was to Rachel that day.
At home I can shut it off, busy
myself with laundry or dishes. Here
however, there was no escape.

The teen's faces morph into Jenn (14) and her friends.

JENN (V.O.)

I saw myself in that pack, heading
to our secret beach. The only
access was through the woods.

Suddenly Jenn stops. Up ahead is a wooded area with a beach just beyond it.

RACHEL (V.O.)

Jenn! Wait for me!

Jenn's head whips around in search of the phantom voice.

JENN (V.O.)

The memory was so vivid, her voice
so clear it echoed in my head. I
felt like I was going to break
down, right there in the middle of
the street. I needed a diversion.

Jenn scans her surroundings and realizes she's front of a house, garage sale in progress. Various items fill tables in the driveway and yard.

JENN (V.O.)

I wandered in, watched people sift
through worthless junk in hopes of
finding treasure. I actually began
to relax until I was hit by another
trigger.

She spots an old red tricycle, now used as a decorative planter, displayed on the front porch.

JENN (V.O.)

This one sent a bullet straight to
my heart.

FLASHBACK - 1982

EXT. SANDWICH ROAD - DAY

RACHEL (O.S.)
Jenn! Wait for me!

Woods up ahead, Jenn and her friends see Rachel approaching on her tricycle, her three year old legs pumping hard as she tries to catch up. They laugh, walk faster.

RACHEL (CONT'D)
Please Jenn, wait!

JENN
Go home Rachel! Stop following me!

Simultaneously they begin to run. It doesn't take long to lose her as they quickly enter the woods.

EXT. BEACH - NIGHT

Jenn and her friends sit around a small fire. A boom box plays "Dancing in the Streets". Jenn takes a hit off a joint.

PAUL
Hold your breath Jenn.

She holds her breath then breaks out in a coughing fit. Their hysterical weed induced laughter is cut short by loud voices coming from the other side of the woods.

EXT. STREET - MOMENTS LATER

At the edge of the woods they watch as people search and yell Rachel's name. Jenn sees her MOTHER (40), runs toward her.

JENN
What's going on?

MOTHER
Jenn! Please tell me Rachel is with you!

Jenn shakes her head no. Her Mother is distraught.

JENN (V.O.)
They searched for weeks but never found Rachel or the tricycle. It was like she just vanished.

BACK TO PRESENT

EXT. GARAGE SALE

A LITTLE GIRL (6) curiously watches Jenn as she stares at the tricycle, basket filled with moss and ferns. When Jenn sees the little girl a flash of recognition comes over her.

JENN

Is the tricycle for sale?

LITTLE GIRL

I'll have to ask my Mom.

She studies the little girl intently, watching her as she enters the house, screen door slamming behind her.

JENN (V.O.)

She looks like Rachel. I was torturing myself. I felt like I ripped off a scab and had a fresh wound all over again.

Moments later the little girl comes out.

LITTLE GIRL

My Ma says it's not for sale.

JENN

Okay. Thanks.

Jenn reaches the sidewalk, hesitates. She turns to get one more look at the little girl, but she's gone.

A LARGE WOMAN (42) and her PLUMP DAUGHTER (16), pass Jenn as they stroll into the garage sale.

They look at items on the tables appearing uninterested until the woman sees the tricycle. She barrels over, aggressively picking it up.

LARGE WOMAN

How cute is this?

Her daughter shrugs, barely giving it a glance.

LARGE WOMAN (CONT'D)

I think it's pretty old.

She turns it over, moss and ferns fall out of the basket onto the ground. Her daughter rolls her eyes and walks away.

When no one is watching, the woman shoves some ferns back in the basket, places the tricycle on the porch and quickly walks away from the mess.

On the ground, mixed with moss and broken ferns is a dirt-encrusted tag that once hung from the basket.

Barely visible under the dirt is the name "Rachel".

FADE OUT