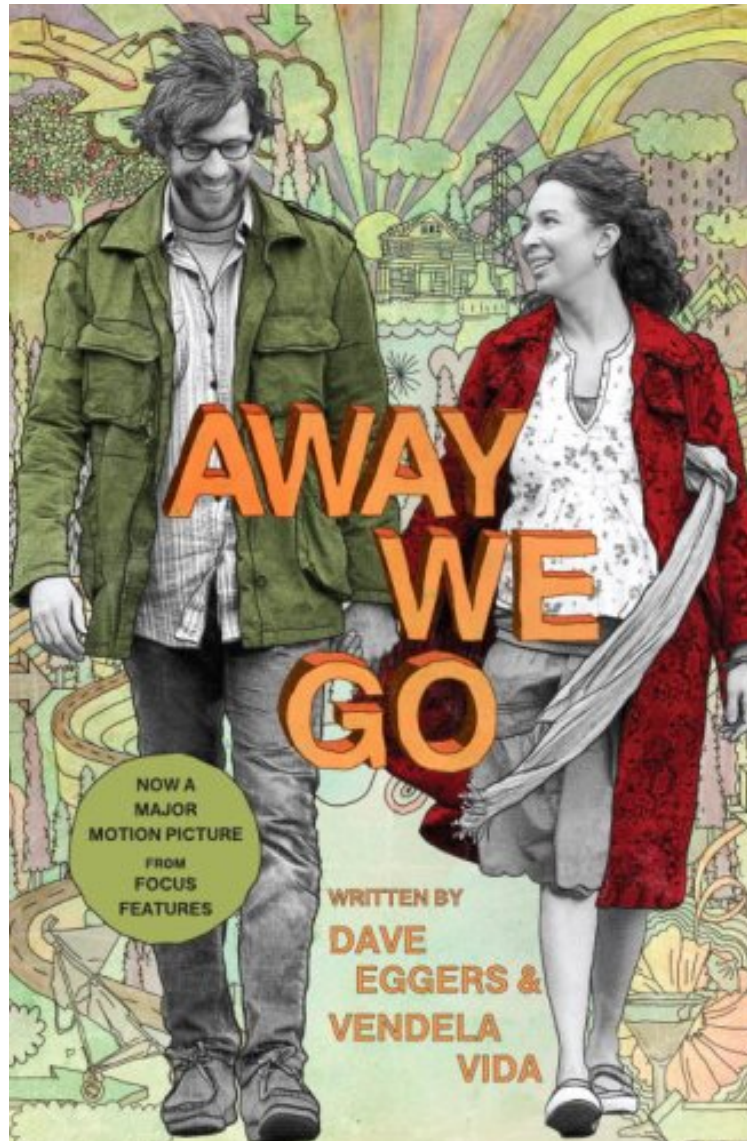


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Away We Go: A Screenplay

Dave Eggers, Vendela Vida

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Dave Eggers, Vendela Vida : Away We Go: A Screenplay before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Away We Go: A Screenplay:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. How fun to read the screenplay for my favorite movie!By Jen JacksonFirst of all, I'm not a hipster...but boy do I love this movie.I had always wanted to read the screenplay and I'm so glad I did. You really find out more about Verona's family and you can read the original ending as well as the movie ending.I had the characters in my head the entire time I read the book. Sometimes in the movie, I didn't catch

some of the dialogue and it was great to be able to read what they were saying. If you love this movie then you will LOVE the screenplay. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Useful By Michael T. Jackson If you are a fan of Dave Eggers and/or an aspiring screenwriter, I highly recommend this. It provides insight into how words typed on a paper were transformed into a film. My only complaint would be that as there are differences between this draft and the final film, it would have been nice to see the notes made by the writers and director, and how the movie became what it is. 2 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Hmm... By Liz W. Some people criticize the film *Away We Go* as being smug. I haven't seen the movie, but I assume that the same can apply to the screenplay. Do I think the screenplay is smug? No, the word I would choose instead is pretentious. To me, it seems like the authors were trying to impress us with this off-beat couple. Verona, who seems to have a chip on her shoulder the size of a small log, despises people like the Performance Mom in the lobby. She practically sneers at her in "unmitigated disgust." I count self-righteousness to be one of the worst sins, and it seems Verona has a heavy dose of it. It would be okay if there were a reason for her righteousness - is she insecure? Does she have a superiority complex? If so, can this please be addressed? The problem is, the Performance Mom seemed like a deliberate caricature - in fact, every one of the people they meet seem to be distorted, grotesque. The authors are clearly trying to be clever. Note to the authors: don't intentionally try to be cute or make people laugh, because these moments work better when they are unplanned. Let the audience decide what they think is cute or funny. This is a common writer's mistake, I must admit - this is the authors' first screenplay, and the desire to impress readers is understandable. Other things that I felt the script is lacking: Why are Burt and Verona together? What does she see in him? I am still intrigued by the movie's trailer, where the actors who actually play Burt and Verona seem to breathe more life into the characters than the screenplay does, so I still plan to see the movie. Here's hoping it's not in vain!

The first original screenplay by Dave Eggers and Vendela Vida, *Away We Go* is the new movie directed by Academy Award winner Sam Mendes. Longtime couple Verona (Maya Rudolph) and Burt (John Krasinski) are expecting a baby, and the impending child's only living grandparents are moving to where else Belgium. So Burt and Verona head out on the road, across America, looking for the right place to call home. Along the way they encounter a succession of strange and hilarious friends and relatives (played by a cast that includes Jeff Daniels, Catherine O'Hara, Maggie Gyllenhaal, Josh Hamilton, Allison Janney, and Jim Gaffigan), most of whom have no idea what they're doing. In the end with and despite the help of those they meet on their journey Burt and Verona come closer to an understanding of their own definition of home and family.

About the Author Dave Eggers is the author of *What Is the What* and *Zeitoun*, among other books. Vendela Vida is the author of books including *And Now You Can Go* and *Let the Northern Lights Erase Your Name*. Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved.

Int. burt and verona's house--bedroom--night We are moving silently through a small house. We see fishing gear, snowshoes, paintings of skeletons. It's a messy, ramshackle, but still somehow charming place. We arrive in the bedroom, where we see a woman, about 30, lying in bed, her head propped up by four pillows. She's wearing a negligee. It's very dark--we see only her silhouette. VERONA Burt? Now we see that there's a man under the covers, busying himself with her nether regions. BURT (from under the sheets) What? VERONA Don't. There's some shuffling from Burt. BURT Why? VERONA Come back up. I want to kiss you. More shuffling in the bed. BURTC'mon. I want to do this. I'm staying down here. VERONA (sighing) Okay. Verona tries to enjoy herself. VERONA (CONT'D) Just don't blow. BURT What? VERONA Don't blow. BURT Why would I blow? VERONA I don't know why you do anything you do, Burt. Just don't blow. BURT (from underneath) Now stop moving. You're gonna love it. VERONA Okay. No more talking. Burt settles in for the task at hand, then pauses. VERONA (CONT'D) What's wrong? BURT Nothing. VERONA Why'd you stop? BURT (thoughtful pause) I'm trying to figure out the best way to say what I'm about to say. VERONA Why do you have to say anything? BURTRona, you taste different. You know that? Verona sits up, sighing. VERONA No. How would I know that, Burt? (trying to pull him up) Get up here. I'm not talking to the top of your head. You want me to shower? Burt emerges from under the covers and stares at Verona. BURT No, you don't taste dirty, just different. Kind of . . . fruity. (something occurring to him) You know, a woman can taste different depending on various cofactors. Verona sits up. VERONA I don't want to hear this. And I thought we agreed you wouldn't use the word "cofactor." BURTI said I wouldn't misuse it. All I'm saying is that from what I've read about vaginal flavor-- VERONA Jesus! BURT From what I've read, abrupt changes happen when a woman's either menopausal . . . (registering a new, momentous thought) Or . . . Verona slugs him. He falls off the bed. int. burt and verona's car--driving--night It's November, the remains of snow on the ground. Verona and Burt have just gone to the drugstore for pregnancy tests--they've bought three--and are driving home. Verona's driving, with Burt in the passenger seat. burt farlander is 33, white, tall, looking like he could be either an assistant professor or a lunatic shooting people from a tower--there's that funny-crazy look in his eyes. He's very straightforward and earnest, but also eccentric--the type of guy who's never done drugs, but has often gone camping nude. He reads widely but not deeply enough, and has many strange hobbies, which he indulges for short periods of time but with utter seriousness. The last such hobby was bear-tracking. Like his father, he works in the insurance business. verona de tessant is 34 and of mixed

race--her mom was white, her father black. Her parents were both academics who taught at the University of South Carolina. She's cute, funny, and has problem hair, which she's constantly trying to tame with various styles and accessories--braids, curls, pins, a scarf--though the results vary. Still, her beauty and sense of humor are alluring and inspire many admirers. She's a medical illustrator and has the necessary combination of the artistic and the exacting. Of the pair, she is the more socially presentable and stable, and finds herself apologizing for her partner at least once a week. Still, she is devoted to him and he to her.

VERONA Nope. I can't wait.

BURT What?

VERONA I'm pulling over.

BURT We're ten minutes away. No.

She pulls over.

BURT (CONT'D) What're you . . . ext. highway shoulder--night Verona is already out of the car and pushing down her jeans.

BURT At least get off the shoulder! Sounds of urine hitting gravel.

BURT (CONT'D) It'll be less accurate out here.

VERONA What?

BURT You're supposed to do this in a bathroom. The air out here is different. The alkaline . . .

VERONA The alkaline? The alkaline? Just . . . please. I'm done. Hold this on the end here. Verona hands him the stick. He holds it at a distance, the way you would a steaming pot, while she pulls up her pants.

VERONA (CONT'D) Lay it flat.

BURT Lay it flat? Like on the road? Should I lay it on the road?

VERONA No . . . on the dashboard or something. Verona gets back in the driver's seat.

int. burt and verona's car--night They're in the car, staring at the stick, which has been placed on the dash.

VERONA It's time. Turn on the light.

Burt turns on the light. It's far too dim to see anything.

VERONA (CONT'D) That's the light? That's your interior light?

BURT What? Yes that's my interior light! What's wrong with my interior light? You've never had a problem with my interior light before . . .

VERONA Just-- Shut up. Turn on the headlights.

She gets out and slams the door.

ext. highway shoulder--in front of the car--night They're crouched on the gravel of the shoulder, both bathed in the white light of the headlights.

VERONA Damn. I can't tell. Go do a control sample. Here.

She hands him a second stick from the package.

BURT No. This is insane. Let's do it in the bathroom.

Verona gives him a look. Burt turns away from the car. Sounds of urine hitting gravel.

VERONA Okay, now bring it over here.

BURT But you said not on the road.

VERONA I don't care what I said. We need the light.

Verona lays Burt's stick next to the other one on the road. Her movements are meticulous, precise. Burt reads the instructions while they're waiting.

BURT So basically, one line is nothing, two lines is . . .

Verona holds up both test sticks to the beam of the headlight. It's an intimate moment, and the tone changes from madcap to ethereal. Verona looks at Burt, wide-eyed.

VERONA Holy mother of God.

ext. colorado town--first light of dawn We see a quick montage of local landscapes--mountains, trees, valleys, snow-capped peaks, ex-urban sprawl. This is where our couple lives. The montage blends seamlessly into a new, strange kind of landscape. The sun is rising over a hill. It's beautiful but also stark and perhaps even eerie, given that the hill is caramel-colored.

int. burt and verona's bedroom--first light of dawn--months later (march) We back up a few inches and realize that the camera has lined up so Verona's belly--five months pregnant--looks like a small round mountain, and the sun appears to be rising behind it. Burt appears in close up behind Verona's belly.

int. burt and verona's bedroom--morning--later We hear vague sounds of scraping. Verona wakes up, turns over, sees Burt sitting up, with a knife and a piece of wood. The wood is about six inches long, and very sad-looking, like a wooden carrot.

BURT They. I'm glad you're up.

VERONA What are you doing?

BURT What does it look like? I'm cobbling.

Verona laughs.

BURT (CONT'D) I want to be a dad who knows how to carve stuff out of wood. I want our kid to get up in the morning, put on her hip-waders, walk out to the back porch, and find me cobbling.

VERONA You're not cobbling. And why would she be wearing hip-waders?

BURT (he briefly considers answering the second question but realizes he can't, so moves onto the first) I am cobbling. Look. I've got a knife and this wood and I'm making a toy . . . (looking at the shapeless blob of wood). . . stick. I'm cobbling.

VERONA You're not. That's not what it's called.

BURT Of course it is. How would you know? You don't have one of these. (indicating the knife)

VERONA Burt, cobbling is shoes. That's why the people who make shoes are called cobblers. You're not cobbling. You're carving. Or whittling.

Burt thinks for a while. It dawns on him that she's right. This takes some of the appeal out of it for Burt. He stops carving. He rests his pathetic wooden worm/stick on Verona's stomach.

BURT Look, she likes it. I saw her kick.

VERONA No you didn't.

BURT I can do other things, too. I just bought a book about knots. Three hundred knots, and I'm gonna learn them all. And I'm gonna build a kiln.

Verona goes into the bathroom.

VERONA Remember we go to your parents' house this afternoon.

Burt calls from the other room.

BURT (O.S.) I was thinking--we really have to get some bigger bats.

No response from Verona. He reenters the room and stands in the doorway.

BURT (CONT'D) I know the reasonable part of you agrees with me.

VERONA We're fine, Burt. You already set up your whole apparatus.

Burt moves into the living room while getting dressed. Behind him, just inside the front door, Burt has set up a bat-holder, where he keeps three bats for home protection--one standard aluminum bat, one plain wooden bat, and one much-more-threatening wooden bat with three nails driven through it.

BURT I need more weapons if something happens to you two.

VERONA What would happen to us?

BURT Good. I knew you'd be with me on this. I'm gonna price some crossbows on the way home. I have that family defense class today.

Burt emerges from the bedroom wearing camouflage pants and boots. He's clearly trying to look like a commando, but the jerry-rigged result is unconvincing.

VERONA Does anyone else there dress like that?

Burt moves into the living room, looking for something in the cluttered living room.

BURT Where are those goggles you had?

VERONA My airbrush ones? You can't use them.

He finds them hanging from the lamp on Verona's drafting table and grabs them.

BURT Thanks. (putting them on) I'll be back at three. Might be later if we get into some empty-hand offense. See you guys.

He leans down to kiss Verona's lips passionately and her stomach gently, and then

walks out the door and down the hallway.ext. burt and verona's house--morningWe follow Burt out the door, where we see that they live in a small ranch house, one step up from a trailer, attached to a small grungy yard. He gets into a crumbling old Volvo and drives off.int. burt and verona's car--morningBurt is driving and listening to a Teach Yourself Mandarin tape. He enthusiastically repeats some phrases.TAPE(first in English, then in Mandarin)Do you own a boat?BURT(repeats the Mandarin version while continually scraping the frost fromthe inside of his windshield)TAPEAre you happy with your current insurance carrier?(then in Mandarin)BURT(repeats the Mandarin version)TAPEWhat kind of boat do you own?int. house--verona's office/studio--midmorningThe sounds of huffing and puffing. We think for a second that Verona's exercising, or in labor. Then we see Verona reclining on a couch staring at the TV.On the TV a prenatal exercise video is playing. On screen, there are three women doing supra-geeky aerobic routines. They look like they're direct from 1986, with headbands and leg-warmers and poofy hair. The decor is ridiculous--as if they're exercising in a Price Is Right living room interior.Verona is talking on the phone.VERONAI wish you could see this, Grace.int. grace's office--phoenix--midmorningWe see Grace, Verona's sister, on the other end of the phone.grace is striking-looking: caramel-skinned, thin, curvy. She's immaculately dressed, projecting an air of sophistication and professionalism. She paces around her office at work--a resort in Phoenix, dramatic desert view--with a hands-free device attached to her ear.VERONAYou want to hear the rhyming couplets?You'll get much more from your pelvic floorWhen you pass on the bagelAnd do one more kegelGRACE(laughing)No!VERONAYou like that? Jesus. Grace, tell me: Do I have to be uncool for the rest of my life?Verona uses a remote to mute the TV. She grunts while getting off the couch.GRACEWhat are you doing? You're talking to me while you're exercising?VERONANo, just watching it. I've got this subdural hematoma thing due Friday. Trying to finish it before we go out tonight.Verona sits down at her drafting table, and we see that her studio is a cramped and messy place--full of illustration board, canvases, hundreds of markers and small paint containers. All over the walls are unsettling photos of people and animals mid-surgery. A skeleton hangs in the corner.Verona takes a brush in her hand and resumes working while still on the phone. We see that Verona is working on an illustration of one step of a brain surgery. It's a craniotomy--a flap of skin has been peeled back and a portion of skull removed, revealing the subject's brain.GRACE(surprised)Out? You two? Where?VERONADinner at Burt's parents.GRACE(gently mocking, given this constitutes a big night out for Burt and Verona)Oooh!(now sincerely)They must be out of their minds excited.VERONAYou know them. I think they're actually happy to be the only set of grandparents. To have the baby to themselves.GRACEDon't say that.(wistful)You're lucky to have them so close.VERONAI know, I know. Believe me, we're gonna lean pretty hard on them.GRACEYou know I'd be there if I could. I hate that I'll be so far away. I'll just have to come and take her on her first big adventure.VERONAWhat? When?GRACERight away. I'm going to take her to Barcelona and show her where I lost my virginity.VERONAShe's a fetus, Grace.GRACEWho do you think she'll look like?VERONAI hope she doesn't have Burt's . . .GRACEFacial hair?VERONA(laughs)Feet.GRACETHose square feet.VERONALike seal flippers.Laughing, Verona lets her brush drift a bit.VERONA (CONT'D)Oh shit. I just gave this guy's brain a vulva.int. karate-type studio--dayBurt is now in a class with a dozen other men, lined up in neat rows. The instructor is a Navy SEAL-type, also wearing goggles. Behind him are inflatable models of a wife and two small children. The wife is wearing a halter top and the children both have (real) iPods attached to them.INSTRUCTORWill you be there to defend your family?BURT(in unison with the others)I will!INSTRUCTORDo you have the skills to prevent them from being taken from you, leaving you bereft and emasculated?BURT(in unison with the others)I do!With that, the instructor steps over to Burt and gives him a roundhouse kick to the side of the head. Burt goes down. We see the instructor from Burt's perspective, hovering over him, the inflatable family in the background.INSTRUCTORNot yet you don't.(walking away)And not in those pants.