



FLYING *Episode Descriptions:*

In six hour short episodes, acclaimed filmmaker, Jennifer Fox, maps the world of female life and sexuality today -- from the dramatic turns in her own life to the stories of women around the globe that shed light on the universal issues all women face. Filmed over five years, Jennifer travels to over seventeen countries in search of what it means to be a free woman. Employing groundbreaking camera techniques, the series creates a new type of documentary language and storytelling that mirrors the special way women communicate.

Chapter One: NO FEAR OF FLYING

Living the Free Life...

USA (NYC, Wyoming), Lapland, South Africa (Capetown)

Meet Jennifer and her family of female friends. All are in different predicaments: Ladawn is going through a seven-year divorce that leaves her struggling to support her two girls. Mindy is broken up with her rock-star boyfriend (although they still have sex) only to decide to marry him because she wants to have a baby. And Pat, a professional blues singer, is diagnosed with a brain tumor, leading to an operation and the painful after affects. Jennifer herself spends a lot of the time traveling the world for work: she is free and “single” and struggling with “commitment phobia”. She has a secret married lover in South Africa but also decides to take a new boyfriend, a Swiss man named Patrick. Meanwhile, unable to pay the rent, Ladawn moves her girls back to the Indian reservation she grew up on in Wyoming. In New York, it is time for Mindy’s wedding and they are going to have the after-party in Jen’s loft. Patrick arrives for the event. Later, Jen discovers she is pregnant by Patrick and questions how she will continue her globetrotting career. After an early miscarriage, Jen realizes she now wants a child, but is it too late? Her mind is left reeling: what is this strange modern life she is living?

Chapter Two: TEST PILOTING

TICK TOCK The Biological Clock... The Single Woman

USA (NYC, Wyoming, Philadelphia), Britain (London), France (Paris), South Africa (Johannesburg, Capetown)

After the miscarriage, Jennifer’s biological clock rings an alarm. Jennifer fought for sexual freedom her whole life in lieu of family and security, but now wonders if she missed some essential female experience? Jen canvasses her friends about the dilemma. She returns to her mother for guidance —only be reminded that all three women who raised her – her mother, aunt, and grandmother -- told her never to marry, because men control you forever. But being a single woman has it’s own problems. She is confronted with what it feels like to be the only unmarried, childless sibling. No matter how free she thinks she is, she can’t shake the other message she was raised with: that women need a husband to have children. Meanwhile Jen watches as her girlfriend, Mindy gives birth to a baby girl. Jen decides enough is enough: she will stop using birth control with her two men and let fate decide. She takes off around the globe to see how women from other cultures are dealing with the issue. What she finds is that many women are raising children alone, and don’t seem to miss a man for anything except occasional sex! Maybe Jen can change her beliefs and go solo too?

Chapter Three: EXPERIENCING TURBULENCE

The Price of Sexual Freedom

USA (NYC, Mass, San Fran, Phila), India (Bombay, Calcutta, Nagpur)

Jennifer returns home to New York to a shocking message: her lover’s wife has found out about the affair and her lover can’t see her anymore. Her friends all weigh in on the price and morality of relationships with married men. Meanwhile, Jen must pull herself together because Patrick is arriving for a vacation. They spend a week together and she tells Patrick everything, but still mourns for her lover. She goes to visit her friend Paula, who helps her face the guilt she feels over her lover’s marriage. Back in New York, she is introduced to Paromita, a 32-year old community organizer from India, who invites her to visit. She flies off to a rural Indian village, where she clashes with Paromita, her family, and friends over sexual values. While Paromita, like Jen, has decided not to have children, Paromita seems more at peace with the decision. Paromita leads Jen on a surprising, sometime hilarious, exploration of the sexual rules in Indian culture, making Jen reflect on her own “free” values. Paromita advises her to give up her Lover and marry the good man, Patrick. She flies home to discover she is pregnant by Patrick for the second time; but this time she is ready to have a baby...



Chapter Four: CRASH AND BURN

The things all women share....

USA (NYC), Russia (Moscow & suburbs), Britain (London); Cambodia (Phnom Pen and Poi Pet)

Jen miscarries again. Heartbroken, she tries to consult her mother but to no avail. She heads for Russia where she meets Svetlana, a divorced ex-Party leader, whom she confides in about her miscarriage. Sveta, who had two daughters, confesses to having her first sexual pleasure years after marriage in an affair. Jen reveals her own struggle to have pleasure after being sexually abused at thirteen by a teacher who tricked her into having sex. Sveta convinces Jen that she must fly to see Patrick on her way home. But in Zurich, Patrick fails to understand her sadness over the miscarriage. On the flight home, Jen meets Sabrina, a young British woman, going to see her girlfriend trying to become an actress in the Big Apple. But on arrival Sabrina finds her girlfriend trapped in a bad man situation. In the aftermath, Jen decides she must break up with Patrick. Jen flies off to Cambodia, where she meets Chanthol, who runs a shelter for trafficked women and girls. Jen discovers that many of the prostitutes had also been tricked into losing their virginity, leaving them unmarriageable. Here, women are divided into 'good girls', ripe for marriage and motherhood, and whores -- the same values Jen's mom and Gram imposed on her growing up. Now Jen must fly to Africa for work, but her ex-lover has written that he just wants to be "friends"...

Chapter Five: WALKING AWAY FROM THE WRECK

The secret of male power...

South Africa (Johannesburg, Capetown), Pakistan (Islamabad & Afghanistan Border), Somali Exiles in England (Manchester & Sheffield)

Jen arrives in South Africa to teach and finds her Lover is separated from his wife. The two can be together openly. Things look promising since Jen must be in Africa a lot for work now. Jen leaves her lover briefly to fly to Pakistan where she meets Muslim women opposing the oppressive rules of male domination. Her new friend Shazia is unable to marry, because working and leaving the house, men see her as "tainted". They go to the villages where women tell how their husbands and brothers police their lives. Jen is happy to be with such an open man, but when she returns to Africa to teach again, her lover begins to be jealous. Jen visits her girlfriends Theresa and Lucilla -- who also were sexually abused as girls -- and discusses the feeling of being "bad" that leads to compromising relationships as adults. Jen again must continue her journey. But her lover apologizes and they plan a vacation when Jen returns. She continues to England to meet Amina, a Somali woman fighting FGM (female genital mutilation). To Jen's surprise, she discovers that the old women circumcise the young girls to make them pliant for their future husbands. Jen realizes that her mother and Gram also tortured her emotionally -- like Amina's grandmother tortured her physically -- to insure Jen was marriageable to a man. She flies to South Africa for the launch of the film project, only to find her lover's jealousy has escalated. Jen must break up with him or destroy herself. Is it Patrick who allowed her freedom and accepted her sexuality -- not her lover?

Chapter Six: BREAKING THE SOUND BARRIER

Female Life Backwards: New Technology for the "new woman"

USA (NYC, Massachusetts, Philadelphia, Wyoming, San Francisco)

Patrick and Jen renew their relationship and realize that time is running out to have a child. They decide to try IVF -- In Vitro Fertilization. With Patrick in Zurich, Jen rushes into IVF alone in New York. Her midwife friend Paula comes to the rescue. Meanwhile, still ill from the effects of the brain tumor operation, Pat is thrilled to soon be a "Granny. Pat tries a new cure, and begins to sing again. Mindy and George question whether Jen can be a mother with her lifestyle. As Jen prays to get pregnant, Mindy discovers that she is about to have a second child and wonders if she can handle being a single parent again with George touring so much. In Wyoming, divorced Ladawn goes back to work, but draws support from her close relationship with her children, which Jen hopes to emulate. In New York, Patrick arrives for the big day of retrieval and implantation. All goes well, but suddenly Jen's Gram is hospitalized. As her mother and aunt gather around her dying grandmother, Jennifer is finally able to forgive and see her roots in these three women. When the IVF fails, another internalized myth falls away as she learns that her female identity doesn't depend on having a child. Against all odds, she loves Patrick, but it doesn't mean she must give up her self. Will she use another woman's egg to get pregnant? Or adopt? As a free woman, she can make up her own rules and her own type of family....

At the series end, all the main characters are revisited in an epilogue with some surprising twists.

