

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

FADE IN ON AN AERIAL SHOT OF A SMALL TOWN IN INDIANA, IOWA,
KANSAS, WISCONSIN...CREDITS ROLL.

YOUNG MAN'S VOICE

Okay, I'm sitting there on
this park bench in New York.
You ever been to New York?
Shit. You haven't even been
to Cincinnati. Hell, I don't
know why I'm telling you all
this. You provincial stuffed
peppers have about as much
class as a crustacean. You
know what a crustacean is?
It's a lobster and that's
what I'm digesting while I
sit on this park bench.
Digesting a five hundred
dollar dinner at 21. You know
about 21? The most famous
restaurant in the world. It's
so important and famous, the
only way to get a reservation
is to be an: a. millionaire,
b. a movie star, c. a head of
state, you know what a head
of state is? That's a
president or king or in
Russia, that's a premier. I
mention Russia because the
guy who attacked me on that
park bench was Russian. KGB.
You know what that is? Good.
The less you know the better
off you are when it comes to
the KGB. They'd just as soon
kill you dopes as look at
you. This guy attacks me. But
I'm carrying an Uzi machine.
Blew that Russian to Kingdom
Come. Gone like a snowflake
on a blacktop in August. I
get up off the bench, take my
secret papers on over to the
United Nations, give them...

(MORE)

YOUNG MAN'S VOICE (CONT.)

...over to my contact there
and go back to my penthouse
apartment suite and nail the
shoes off some girl who's so
in love with me I don't even
gotta tell her my name or
give her a lift home.

CU. YOUNG MAN

He's leaning back in a chair, wearing a white uniform. He's good-looking in a delicate, frail way. Fresh, young face, slight build. Big shot expression on his face. He's leaning back in a chair, looking cool and calm as a glass of iced tea. His name is JIM DODGE.

JIM

For every light on Broadway
there's a heart I busted. I'm
not a bad guy, I'm just busy.
I'm fighting crime, I'm
kicking ass. I'm making money
hand over fist. I barely got
time for sex let alone love.
Any female that gets the hots
for me, and believe me when I
blow into the Big Apple,
they're line up ten, twelve
deep in the baggage area at
the airport there, any woman
that comes looking for
anything more than about
twenty five minutes of
straight, unfiltered sexual
ecstasy is looking to fall
right on her ass.

Suddenly, violently, Jim falls out of frame as the chair he's sitting on is kicked out from under him.

INT. DOG KENNEL

Jim's on his rear end on the floor. A six foot six slab of a man, OTIS HORTON, is standing over him. Mad as all hell. We see that Jim's wearing grey uniform overalls and black work shoes. Otis is wearing blue overalls. Crisp and sharp. He's obviously a supervisor. He stands before a wall of dog cages. Jim has been bullshitting the dogs.

OTIS

That's it, pal! Last straw!

He reaches down and grabs a still-stunned Jim by the collar and rips him to his feet.

OTIS

I'm paying you to clean
cages, not chit-chat with the
hounds...

JIM

I was...

Otis whips him out the open door.

CU. DOGS

They watch Jim's expulsion with a sympathetic curiosity.

EXT. VETERINARY COMPOUND

A humble cinderblock compound in the middle of the open country. Agricultural fields on four sides. A gravel parking lot. Nothing else. A side door flies open. A long beat and Jim is hurled out the door. He's in his underwear and shoes. He picks himself up and turns to face the door. He's hit in the face with his shirt and pants.

JIM

You think you can find
anybody who'll have as good a
relationship with the dogs as
I have?

(pause)

Once I leave, I'm never
coming back, no matter if you
apologize to me or not.

A kiddie lunch box is hurled at his head. He ducks it. He stares at the door in disbelief.

EXT. SMALL TOWN

A small town in the midwest. A farm town. Main drag commercial section. Bucolic beauty.

EXT. STREET. SIDEWALK. JIM

He's sitting on a bench outside the Tru-Value. Three young boys, seventh graders, are with him. One on either side, one standing.

BOY 1

What're you gonna do with the
cash, Jim?

Jim shrugs. Very cool and affected.

BOY 2

Why don't you buy a Ferarri?

Jim slowly looks at the kid. An ever so slight shake of his head.

JIM

They don't start in the winter. I'll probably just invest it overseas someplace. I'm in no hurry. I have everything a man needs.

He reaches in his pocket for a pack of Marlboros. He offers one to BOY 2, who declines with a raised hand.

JIM

You afraid it'll make your teeth yellow?

Jim takes out a ciggie and slides it behind his ear. He puts the cigarette pack back in his pocket. He leans back on the bench.

BOY 3

You just bought the animal hospital, how come you sold it so quick?

Jim rolls his shoulders and squints into the afternoon sun.

JIM

I had a tax problem.

INT. CAFE

The town resturant. Breakfast and lunch joint. Jim's at the counter, nursing a cup of coffee. Next to him is a burly old FARMER. He's having his lunch. A middle-aged WAITRESS is behind the counter fiddling with her next order.

JIM

Hey, Lorraine?

Lorraine turns to him. Loads another plate on her arm.

JIM

When are you gonna start serving sashimi?

LORRAINE
Maybe when I find out what it
is.

She loads another plate.

JIM
It's special Japanese fish
you eat raw.

Lorraine has no time for him. She steps out from behind the counter and delivers her order to a booth. The farmer looks at Jim.

JIM
You ever had sashimi?

The farmer shakes his head slowly.

FARMER
Nope. I lost two toes on my
left foot fighting the
Japanese so that Americans
wouldn't have to eat their
fish raw.

Jim stares at him.

JIM
That's what I hate about this
place. Nothing changes.
You're still fighting World
War II.

He stares at Jim.

FARMER
No. I'm having my lunch.

Jim picks up the thick, heavy coffee cup and sips it. The farmer goes back to his lunch.

EXT. GAS STATION

Jim's sitting out in front of the shiny, new station with the OWNER, a middle-aged man with a proud beer gut. They're sitting on lawn chairs.

OWNER
I'd hire you in a minute if I
hadn't already fired you so
many times.

Jim looks at him. The owner plucks a hair out of his ear, looks at it, flicks it away.

OWNER

You ever think of leaving town?

Jim looks at his shoes.

OWNER

There's thousands of people in South Bend that don't have any idea how full of shit you are.

Jim nods.

OWNER

I'd like to tell you to get on the ball, but I don't think that'd make any difference. Are you religious?

Jim shrugs.

OWNER

Every now and then, Our Dear Lord mixes up a batch of babies that don't ever amount to a stack of burnt matches.

Jim looks at him, a little confused by the bluntness.

OWNER

You've been alive twenty years, my friend. That's plenty of time for most people to find a place for themselves.

JIM

I'm not like everybody else.

The owner nods affirmatively. There's a long pause.

JIM

How about if I work for you for nothing?

A car pulls in. The owner lifts himself out of the chair.

OWNER
I'm afraid not, Jimmy. Think
about South Bend.

He shuffles over to the car.

INT. CAR

A very attractive young girl's sitting in the new Mustang.
She smiles at the owner and looks across at Jim.

CU. JIM

He looks at her. He raises a hand.

CU. GIRL

She looks right through him. Barely sees him.

CU. JIM

Wearing the sunglasses, cigarette hanging out of his mouth.
Suddenly the glasses are slapped off his face from the left
and the cigarette slapped out from the right.

EXT. JIM'S HOUSE

A squat bungalow in town. Jim's on the porch with his father.
He's in his late fifties, balding, nice front porch hanging
over his belt. A working man. His name is BUD. He's on the
porch. Jim's on the steps. One step down from Bud.

CU. BUD

Looking down at Jim with a scowl.

BUD
You got fired, didn't you?

CU. JIM

Still a little stunned from the double swats.

JIM
Who said that?

EXT. PORCH. JIM AND BUD

Jim is trying to sell smoke. Bud isn't buying.

BUD
Hubie Marshall called.

JIM

And...?

BUD

And he said he fired you.

JIM

And you believe him?

BUD

Damn straight I do.

JIM

He's got his nerve. For the record, Dad, I resigned.

Bud double whacks Jim again.

INT. HOUSE. KITCHEN. LATER

Bud, Jim, Jim's Mom, DOTTY, Jim's younger brother CAL and his older sister, PENNY. Dotty's slight and retiring, Cal is in his early teens, a bruiser like his old man. Penny's in her early twenties, a cranky priss on the road to Old Maid City. The family is sitting around an old oak table eating macaroni and cheese and hot dogs. Jim's in the dog house.

DOTTY

Luther Bettenhauser's boy's doing much better.

PENNY

What's wrong with him?

DOTTY

He fell off his grandfather's silo.

CAL

He's got brain damage.

DOTTY

He does not.

CAL

He does, too! Hoover Fey said his tongue's gonna hang out the side of his mouth for the rest of his life, and when he dies and they bury him, at the funeral, they're gonna put a mask on him.

PENNY

Do I have to listen to this
while I eat?

CU. BUD

He looks at Jim.

CU. JIM

Sneaks a look at Bud.

INT. KITCHEN

The conversation resumes.

DOTTY

Why don't we talk about
something else?

PENNY

Josie Roy moved to New York.

JIM

Not quite. I saw her today.

PENNY

I don't know how you could. I
heard at the bank today that
she got tired of taking care
of her father, told him to
jump in the lake and left for
New York City.

JIM

I saw her today. At the gas
station, in her car.

PENNY

I'm gonna take Lou Selby's
word over yours any time.

JIM

Lou Selby's a drunk.

DOTTY

He is not!

PENNY

Boy, for a guy who just lost
his umpteenth job, you sure
are handy with the tongue
sword.

CAL

You got canned again?

Jim groans. The whole family knows his business.

DOTTY

He didn't get canned.

BUD

He got fired.

Cal holds his hand up in the air.

CAL

Five.

Jim scowls at him.

PENNY

Now you're not just an obnoxious slug, you're a freeloading obnoxious slug.

JIM

I'm not twenty-two living at home.

PENNY

I pay rent.

JIM

So do I.

BUD

He did pay rent.

JIM

You're dropping my rent?

BUD

Hell, no. You're not paying rent because you don't have a job and you don't have any money. You're out of school and living in this house, you pay rent.

PENNY

Why don't you save us all a lot of grief and just pack your bags and leave?

JIM
Why don't you?

PENNY
I don't need to. I have a
respected job and a savings
account and a car that's
almost paid off. I'm not a
weight on anybody's
shoulders.

DOTTY
You found yourself earlier,
that's all. Jim'll find
himself.

BUD
He'll find himself a job or
he'll find himself a new
place to live.

CU. JIM

He looks at Bud. He's never heard him so firm.

EXT. MANSION

The biggest house in town.

INT. MANSION. LIVING ROOM

ROGER ROY, the father of the girl we saw at the gas station,
is sitting in the vast living room with two other MEN.
Roger's handsome, aristocratic, a small-town millionaire. An
informal business meeting is underway.

ROGER
I don't want any goddamned
Japanese auto plant around
here.

MAN #1
It means jobs.

ROGER
I don't need jobs. This is
your governor using my town
as a political chip and I
resent it.

MAN #2
There could be specific
benefits to you personally.

ROGER
I don't need any benefits.
And I don't need an auto
plant here.

INT. FOYER

Josie comes in the front door.

CU. ROGER

He hears the front door close.

ROGER
Excuse me.
(calls)
Josie?

INT. FOYER

Josie stops, sighs, weary.

JOSIE
Yeah?

ROGER (OC)
Come on in here.

Josie drops her head. She can't escape. She shuffles into the living room, stopping at the door.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Entry. Josie leans against the door jamb.

HER POV

Roger's turned toward her. The other two men turn to her.

ROGER
This is my daughter, Josie.
Honey, these men are from the
Governor's office.

CU. JOSIE

A half-hearted smile.

JOSIE
Pleased to meet you.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Roger and the men stand up. Josie pushes off the jamb and enters. Her sexuality doesn't escape the government geeks.

ROGER
Bill Hallwell.

Josie steps forward, puts her hands on his hips and kisses him on the cheek. She holds the kiss longer than one would even if they knew the person, which she does not.

CU. ROGER

He's startled.

JOSIE

She breaks the kiss and turns to the other man. He's nervous and as shocked as Roger. She glances back at Roger.

CU. ROGER

He doesn't know how to react. He knows she's doing it to annoy him.

CU. JOSIE

She turns back from Roger with an angry look. This isn't a joke to her. She's making a point. She's at war with Roger.

CU. MAN #2

He smiles sheepishly.

MAN
Dave Hockner.

He leans forward for his kiss.

CU. JOSIE

She stares at him.

JOSIE
My pleasure

She turns to her father.

CU. DAVE

He's left with his expectant mug hanging in the wind.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Roger tries to cover his outrage. The men are completely flustered. Josie is cool as marble.

JOSIE

I don't want to interrupt
your meeting. It was very
nice meeting you. Daddy?

She kisses his cheek.

CU. DAVE

He looks Josie up and down as she kisses Roger.

HIS POV

The threadbare seat of her jeans. Behind the few remaining strands of fabric we see bare skin.

CU. DAVE

Eyes wide.

INT. JOSIE'S ROOM. LATER

A huge, expensive dump. Clothes, records, books, papers, money, art everywhere. Josie's laying on her bed in a t-shirt and panties. MUSIC'S PLAYING. The only light is from the TV. Josie's watching a Japanese horror movie. The door opens and Roger walks in. She glances up at him. He flips the lights on, walks to the stereo and dials the volume down. He turns off the TV.

ROGER

After twenty years a child
generally outgrows the need
or desire to shock her
father.

JOSIE

After twenty years a father
generally outgrows the need
or desire for his daughter.

ROGER

Why don't you grow up?

JOSIE

Why don't you let me?

ROGER
I'm stopping you?

JOSIE
Am I in college? Am I
married? Am I out of this
claustrophobic little town?

ROGER
Do you want to be?

JOSIE
Do I want to be? Are you
deaf? Are you stupid? Are you
insane?

ROGER
You are one ungrateful
little..You have everything.
You have...

JOSIE
Opportunity?

ROGER
You want to throw everything
away? Turn your back on what
I've built for you?

JOSIE
Yes.

ROGER
You're not ready to go
anywhere. You're not ready to
leave.

JOSIE
I will leave.

ROGER
Not until you're ready.

The conversation halts.

JOSIE
I can't be everything to you.
It's killing me.

Roger doesn't respond. He exits.

CU. JOSIE

She puts her hand to her face and closes her eyes.

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF TOWN. MORNING

Farmland, a 7-11 and, a big, beautiful, new K-Mart.

EXT. HIGHWAY

A dirty, road-weary late seventies Ford sedan is parked on the shoulder of the two lane highway running past the K-Mart.

EXT. CAR

Two young men, NESTOR PYLE and GIL KINNEY. Nestor's behind the wheel. Gil's beside him. They're looking out Nestor's window to the K-Mart. They're in their early twenties. A pair of grubby losers. Grown-up motorheads. Spandex crooks. The car's filthy with travel debris. These men live in their car. Nestor looks at Gil. Gil smiles. He holds out his two fists. Nestor makes two fists and taps the top of Gil's fists. Gil does likewise with Nestor. Their private salute. The SOUND OF AN ALARM CLOCK COMES UP AND CROSSES THE CUT.

D.J.
(hyper-echo screaming)
It's eleven minutes past
seven...

EXT. JIM'S HOUSE

Early morning. We HEAR THE RADIO. LOUDER.

D.J.
This is Nowhere Man with
nothing you ever wanted to
hear. None of the hits, none
of the time. More
commercials, less music...

A SONG COMES ROARING IN.

CU. ALARM CLOCK

A big, stupid giant numeral digital clock radio. MUSIC is blaring into an old microphone.

INT. BEDROOM

The mike runs into a guitar amp and out an assembly of mismatched speaker boxes. The noise is horrible. The room is a warehouse of false life starts. Musical instruments, an old, inoperative computer. Four old TV sets. A pile of antique transistor radios. Signs and posters, stacks of comic books, baseball cards, telephone books, a toilet with a snake plant growing out of the bowl. A huge hamster Habitrail

colony, an ant farm, a parrot in a cage. An elk head. A huge photo mural of Jim as a child. A giant photo of Maynard G. Krebs. JIM's sleeping in a hide-a-bed.

CU. JIM

Sleeping soundly. His back to us. A beat and he rolls over. We see that he's wearing a blue, water-filled facial mask and a single hair curler on his bangs.

INT. BEDROOM. DOOR

Bud whips the door open. His face is half-shaven. One side is clean, the other is white with shaving cream. He's in a rage.

BUD

JIM!

CU. JIM

No response. Sleeping like a baby.

INT. ROOM

Bud steps in and grabs an old wooden shaft golf club. He draws it back and slugs the mike and the radio. WHACK! The speakers feedback, howl and yowl.

CU. JIM

Still no response.

CU. WALL SOCKET

Bud pulls on the amp.

INT. ROOM

It's silent except for the parrot. It's shrieking.

BUD

JIMMY!

Bud rips the covers off Jim. He still doesn't awaken.

BUD

JIM!

Bud grabs a glass of water beside the bed and splashes Jim. He giggles but doesn't wake up.

CU. BUD

He's furious, lips curled under, teeth gritted. Thinking.

INT. HALLWAY

Bud storms out of the room. Dotty comes out of the bedroom in her robe.

DOTTY

Is Jim up?

Bud doesn't answer. He marches into the bathroom and slams the door. Dotty doesn't understand what's going on. She walks to Jim's room and looks in.

HER POV

The hide-a-bed is folded up. The parrot's reciting FDR's Pearl Harbor speech.

EXT. SMALL TOWN

A beat-up pickup truck cruises through town.

INT. TRUCK

Bud's driving. Jim's sitting next to him. He's wearing a second-hand Botany 500 suit from 1962, a narrow tie and a black straw hat.

JIM

I really should get a car. I hate to impose on you like this.

Bud throws him a chilly glance.

JIM

I feel pretty good today. How about yourself?

Jim smiles at his father. It doesn't work.

JIM

The reason the alarm was piped into my stereo was so that I'd be sure to hear it. Getting a job and restoring your faith and pride in me is A-number one priority with me right now.

BUD

Your priority oughta be making something of yourself.

JIM
That's right up there.

BUD
When I was your age, I
couldn't wait to get out of
my folk's house.

JIM
I love living at home. That's
funny you felt that way.
There's a lot of warmth,
there's a lot of love...

BUD
You'll get that when you
start a family of your own.

JIM
I can't start a family, Dad.
I don't even have a job.

EXT. K-MART

The store's opened. A few cars are in the parking lot. Bud's
truck pulls in and stops in front.

INT. TRUCK

Jim looks out at the store.

JIM
I'm not sure this is a great
place for me to work. It's a
long way from home.

BUD
You'll get a car.

JIM
That's a big responsibility.

BUD
I gotta get to work. Out.

JIM
Do I have to walk home?

BUD
I guess so.

Jim is confused. He can't imagine walking that far.

JIM
That's a long way.

BUD
Three miles and some.

JIM
Okay.
(pause)
Let's say I don't get the
job. Are you going to be
angry?

BUD
If you don't get the job,
you're on a bus to Chicago.

Jim stares at him.

BUD
Uncle Stu's offered to put
you to work at his garden
shop.

Jim is shocked.

JIM
I don't know a thing about
gardening.

BUD
I guess you'll have to learn.

JIM
Dad, I'm confused. It seems
like you want me out of your
life.

BUD
No, I want you out of my
house.

Jim's hurt. He opens the door and gets out of the truck.

EXT. K-MART

The truck pulls away.

CU. JIM

He watches the truck pull away. He's hurt and confused. All
he wants to do is live at home forever and he doesn't
understand why everybody wants him out.

CU. DOOR

A sign reads -- C.D. MARSH, MANAGER. OC we HEAR A MUFFLED SNEEZE.

INT. OFFICE

Jimi's sitting across a steel desk from C.D. Marsh, a heavy set man in a short sleeve dress shirt and tie. Jim has just sneezed. He smiles sheepishly. Leans forward, and with his sportcoat sleeve, wipes a dot of spit off C.D.'s desk. He sits back.

JIM

Hay fever season.

C.D. looks at him queerly.

JIM

I understand you're hiring.

C.D.

I'm looking for a night cleanup man.

JIM

Are there any management positions open?

C.D.

No.

JIM

Nights?

INT. JOSIE'S ROOM

MUSIC'S PLAYING. The room is bright with sunlight. Josie's in the bathroom. We see a sliver of her in the B.G. through the open door.

CU. JOSIE

She's doing her eyes.

CU. VANITY

An assortment of makeup, an open purse and a snub-nose .38.

EXT. JIM'S HOUSE. EVENING

A limousine is parked in front of Jim's house.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Bud and Dotty are at the front window, looking out.

BUD
What do you think?

DOTTY
It must be somebody
important.

Jim strolls into the room, ready for work. Bud turns to him.

JIM
What're you looking at?

BUD
There's a limousine parked
out front.

JIM
It's mine.

Dotty and Bud stare.

JIM
How good's it going to look
if, on my first day at work,
my folks drive me? It's worth
the twelve fifty. It's a
little treat to myself for
getting the job.

He leans across and kisses Dotty. She's speechless. He holds
up a Playmate cooler.

JIM
Thanks for the lunch, Mom.
(to Bud)
This time, Dad, we're gonna
be talking dinosaurian pride
in the son, okay? Six months
from now, I'm gonna be Lord
God Beast Master King Emporor
Almighty Poobah of the K-
Mart. See you in the morning.

He exits.

INT. K-MART. TOY SECTION

Gil and Nestor are standing in the aisle. Gil's fiddling with a display model toy gun attached to a shelf by a piece of twine. Nestor's scoping the place.

GIL

You ever notice how the
batteries are always dead in
the display toys?

Nestor isn't paying attention to Gil. He's spotted something. He elbows Gil and points to the back wall. Gil looks.

THEIR POV

A surveillance camera. CAMERA MOVES around to a side wall and another camera. A beat and CAMERA MOVES again to the front wall and yet another camera. Another beat and CAMERA MOVES off the front wall, across the store and down to a CLOSE-UP of Gil. He's not paying attention. He's playing with the gun. It lets out a burst of light and sound. He looks up and smiles.

GIL

The batteries are okay. I
didn't have it turned on.

CU. NESTOR

An annoyed stare.

CU. GIL

He points the gun into CAMERA and fires.

EXT. TOWN

WIDE ANGLE LENS MOUNT SHOT from the hood of the limousine running down the main drag. As though the President were riding in it.

EXT. TOWN. LIMOUSINE

Local kids on their bikes are peddling their little legs off to see who's in the limousine. Fifteen little bikes in hot pursuit. The kids are yelling at Jim to open the window.

INT. LIMO. JIM

He's very pleased with himself. He's dressed in a suit and tie. He lowers the window. We HEAR A BOY'S VOICE.

BOY
JIM! WHERE YA GOIN!?

Jim looks out the window. Looks forward.

HIS POV

The back of the LIMO DRIVER'S head.

CU. LIMO CONSOLE BUTTONS

Jim presses an electric window button.

INT. LIMO, BACKSEAT, LOOKING FORWARD

The glass privacy partition between the front and back seats goes up.

EXT. LIMO. CU. JIM

He hangs his head out the window.

JIM
(yells)
I'M GOING TO PARIS, FRANCE ON
AN F-14 TO HAVE A PEACE
MEETING WITH THE VICE
PRESIDENT OF I-RAN! THEN I'M
TAKING THE PRINCESS OF
AUSTRIA TO VENICE, ITALY FOR
A HIGH-SPEED GONDOLA RIDE AND
A BIG SPAGHETTI DINNER!

He gives the kids the thumbs-up.

INT. K-MART. WOMEN'S SECTION

Women's clothing. Josie steps into the shot from the CAMERA RIGHT making a CLOSE-UP. She's nervous about something.

INT. DRESSING ROOMS

Josie walks into the dressing room area. She has an outfit over her arm. She looks over her shoulder and slips into a dressing room. She closes the door and locks it.

INT. DRESSING ROOM

Josie slips her purse off her arm and looks at the outfit. She examines it closer.

HER POV

A plastic security device affixed to the fabric.

CU. JOSIE

She's thinking hard, making a decision. She wads up the outfit, picks up her purse, opens it and jams the outfit into it. A moment of personal revulsion. She slumps down on the bench and clutches the purse to her breast.

EXT. K-MART

The limousine glides into the parking lot and up to the front of the store.

INT. K-MART

SHOPPERS and CHECKERS look out at the limousine arriving.

THEIR POV

The driver opens the door for Jim. He steps out, straightens his tie, looks around, knowing full well he's being observed. He reaches into his pocket and takes out his wallet. He extracts the proper fare and hands it over to the driver. He returns his wallet, reaches into his front pocket and brings up his change. He picks out a few coins and gives them to the driver as his gratuity. OVER we HEAR a PA ANNOUNCEMENT.

PA

Attention, shoppers. The store will be closing in five minutes. Five minutes before closing.

CU. JIM

SEVERE UP ANGLE. Russian heroic. Proud, arrogant and princely. He's looking up.

HIS POV

The big, red K-MART sign on the building. DISSOLVES TO...big red sign in the same lettering, same size, JIM-MART.

CU. K-MART CUSTODIAN

A chubby, round-faced man with a cigar stump mashed in his cheek. He's staring sternly.

CU. JIM

He's dressed in a grey uniform with a name tag that reads "DARNEL".

INT. STORE. BACK ROOM

Jim is standing before the custodian.

CUSTODIAN
You a slacker?

JIM
I'm a Presbyterian.

The custodian scowls.

CUSTODIAN
Are you lazy?

JIM
No, sir.

CUSTODIAN
Last guy that wore that
uniform was a lazy slacker,
and I fired his no-good butt.

JIM
Do I get my own uniform?

CUSTODIAN
You work out, you'll get a
new name patch.

JIM
I am allowed to have this
uniform laundered?

CUSTODIAN
Huh?

JIM
It smells like Darnel.

INT. STORE

The store is empty. Closed. The shoppers have all gone home.
It's dark outside. The lights are on. We HEAR the CUSTODIAN'S
VOICE.

CUSTODIAN

After you clean the mens and ladies crapper and sweep up the loading dock, clean my coffee maker and wax my desk, you come out here.

INT. STORE AISLE

The custodian and Jim are walking down the aisle.

CUSTODIAN

You sweep the aisle starting with the lowest number first, ending with the highest number. You do the up and downs, leaving your debris in the cross aisles.

JIM

Start in aisle one?

CUSTODIAN

Right. Up and down. Then you do your cross aisles. That will leave you with four debris piles in the cross aisles.

JIM

Okay.

CUSTODIAN

Then you bring your dust bin into play. Pick up the debris, load it into the dust bin, take the dust bin to the loading dock and empty it into the receptacle. Then...

INT. STORE. CU. CUSTODIAN'S INDEX FINGER

DOLLY SHOT on the finger running down the top of the coffee shop counter. As it travels, it's collecting grease, straw wrappers, ashes, dirt, etc.

CUSTODIAN (OC)

You'll wipe down the counter with the disenfectant cleaner, scrub the grill tops and empty the grease catcher underneath the grill. Straighten up what's crooked behind the counter...

INT. STORE. COFFEE SHOP

The custodian wipes his index finger on a napkin and drops it on the counter top.

CUSTODIAN
...And don't eat nothing
because you're not being paid
to eat. Any questions?

JIM
Not right offhand.

CUSTODIAN
You think you can handle it?

JIM
I'll give it one hell of a
try.

CUSTODIAN
Did I mention about wiping
down the cash registers?

JIM
I don't believe so.

CUSTODIAN
You do that immediately after
you straighten up the garden
tools.

JIM
Anything else?

CUSTODIAN
Scrape the gum off the
underside of the lunch
counter and make sure there's
an extra roll of toilet
tissue in the supervisor's
parlor.

JIM
Right.

CUSTODIAN

And that'll take you up to
quitting time. If you find
yourself with a little time
to spare, go to the candy
section and organize the
cashew nuts so no broken ones
are up against the glass
case. Nobody wants to buy
busted-up cashew nuts.

JIM

Not me, anyway.

The custodian starts walking toward the door. Jim tags along.

JIM

Hey, despite our age
differences, I think it's
going to be a lot of fun
working with you.

CUSTODIAN

You ain't working with me,
you're working for me.

JIM

Still, I think I'm going to
enjoy being around you.

CUSTODIAN

I'm gonna be home in bed.

Jim stops cold.

JIM

You're not gonna be here?

CUSTODIAN

Hell, no.

JIM

I'm gonna be here by myself?

CUSTODIAN

Yep. And you stay out of the
food and the candy and the
ladies undergoods.

JIM

Nobody told me I'd be here
alone.

The custodian unlocks a switchbox by the door and begins turning off the lights.

JIM
What're you doing?

CUSTODIAN
Saving money.

JIM
You're turning off the lights?

CUSTODIAN
You got light in every third aisle. When the sun comes up, you turn all the lights off. You understand?

Jim is stunned and scared. The custodian unlocks the door and lets himself out.

CUSTODIAN
I'm locking the door. When Everett Bier comes by at seven to open up, he'll let you out.

JIM
You're locking me in?

CUSTODIAN
I'm locking you in.

JIM
What if there's a fire?

CUSTODIAN
The fire department'll come.

He closes the door and locks it.

CU. JIM

He's terrified.

JIM
Shit...

EXT. PARKING LOT

The custodian walks to the single car parked in the vast lot. Jim is pressed against the window watching the custodian

leave like a child on the first day of school watching his mother pull away.

CU. JIM

He's scared. The first time he's seen anything but confidence from him. All the bravado and bullshit drains away and he is truly alone. We can't be sure if he's frightened to be alone in the face of some unknown danger or frightened to be with himself. We do get a glimmer of the serious side of Jim Dodge and must realize that the man who communicates well with monkeys and kids has deeper thoughts.

OVER JIM

Past Jim to the parking lot. The custodian's car is pulling out of the lot.

EXT. K-MART

On the car. It pulls out onto the highway.

EXT. K-MART

WIDE. Across the vast parking lot. We see Jim against the glass. Arms spread, palms to the glass. A giant structure and a tiny figure trapped inside.

CU. JIM

Watching the car leave. Looks over his shoulder.

HIS POV

The vast, darkened, empty store.

CU. JIM

Looking with great trepidation around the store. Behind him in the windows appears the giant face of a toddler.

CU. TODDLER

Adorable four-year old girl studying something with great intensity. She shakes her hand furiously and smiles. She stops.

CU. HER HAND

She's holding a tiny replica of a K-Mart. It's filled with water. Plastic snowflakes are drifting around inside.

CU. JIM

He's straining to keep his eye on the lights. Presses his face against the glass.

HIS POV

The lights are tiny and dim.

EXT. HIGHWAY

Straight down the road. The car turns off the highway and we're left with nothing but black.

EXT. K-MART

WIDE. A beat and all the lights go on.

EXT. K-MART. EXTERIOR SIGN

The big sign in front flickers and pops back on.

INT. LOADING DOCK

The lights go on.

INT. C.D. MARSH'S OFFICE

His overhead lights go on.

CU. CANDY COUNTER

Down the display cases. The lights, one after the other, go on.

CU. FRENCY FRY HEAT LAMP

The infra-red warming light over the french fry tray goes on.

CU. LAMPS

Eight different lamps are turned on.

CU. MISC. LIGHTS

All variety of lights go on all over the store. Watch display cases, jewelry cases, rack overheads, fish tanks.

CU. TELEVISION SET

A big screen TV goes on.

INT. STORE ELECTRONIC'S DEPARTMENT

A wall of televisions. All of them are on.

INT. STORE

WIDE AND HIGH. All the lights are on.

CU. EMPLOYEE TIME CLOCK

It reads 9:04 PM.

INT. ELECTRONICS DEPARTMENT

Jim carries a floor speaker over to the sales desk. He takes it behind the counter and sets it on the desk. He picks up a PA mike. Puts it to his mouth and clicks it on. He blows into it.

INT. STORF

BACK TO FRONT. WIDE. We HEAR JIM BLOWING INTO THE MIKE.

INT. STORE

LOW, LOOKING DOWN AN AISLE. We HEAR JIM...

JIM'S VOICE

Test one, two, three. Test
one, two, three, four, five,
six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven,
twenty, thirty, a million, billion,
strillion, infinity.

(clears his throat)

Good evening.

CU. HAMSTER CAGE

Hamster peering out the bars of his cage.

JIM'S VOICE

I'd like to welcome you all
to ladies night at Club K-
Mart. I'm James Leo Dodge,
but you can call me Jim.

INT. STORE

FRONT TO BACK. WIDE AND HIGH.

JIM'S VOICE

As I look out upon your
beautiful faces, I realize
that as the only man here
tonight, you could also call
me Lucky.

CU. JIM

He closes his eyes and begins to sing.

JIM

YOU'RE SITTIN' THERE YACKING
RIGHT IN MY FACE
COMING ON EXACTLY LIKE
YOU OWN THE PLACE
YOU KNOW, IF SILENCE WAS
GOLDEN YOU COULDN'T RAISE A
DIME
BECAUSE YOUR MIND IS ON
VACATION AND
YOUR MOUTH IS WORKING
OVERTIME...

INT. STORE. AISLE. LATER

Jim's voice has been replaced by MOSE ALLISON. YOUR MIND IS
ON VACATION is playing. Jim's sweeping the aisles.

CU. CASSETTE PLAYER

A homemade cassette is in the player. The little wheels are
going around.

CU. EQ

The colored bars are jumping.

INT. STORE. ELECTRONICS DEPT.

The speaker is up on the desk playing into the store PA mike.

CU. DUST BROOM

ON THE FLOOR LEADING THE BROOM. Turns a corner, follows Jim's
feet. Turns another corner and exits FRAME.

INT. STORE. CROSS AISLE

Jim is pushing his broom down a cross aisle. He leaves a pile
of debris and cuts down an up and down aisle.

INT. STORE. ANOTHER AISLE

Jim is pushing one broom, pulling another.

INT. STORE. LOADING DOCK

Jim comes out onto the loading dock with a large, plastic trash can. He dumps it into a large rubbish bin. He wipes his brow and looks at his watch.

CU. WATCH

It reads 9:15 PM. Only fifteen minutes have passed.

EXT. K-MART

Gil and Nestor's car pulls up. The headlights are doused, the engine is cut and the car coasts to a stop on the side of the road.

CU. NESTOR

He's behind the wheel. He looks out.

HIS POV

The fully lit store.

INT. CAR

Nestor looks at Gil. Gil looks at his watch.

NESTOR

Why ain't they closed?

Gil looks across him. He has a McDonalds bag in his lap.

GIL

I don't know.

(looking in the bag)

How come there ain't no cars?

Gil eats a french fry.

NESTOR

That better not be one of my fries.

GIL

It's one that fell out in the bag. If it falls out of the bag, it's public property.

NESTOR

Since when?

GIL

Since forever.

He hands Nestor a cheeseburger and an order of fries. Nestor opens his cheeseburger.

NESTOR

Maybe they ain't open.

GIL

How come all them lights are on?

NESTOR

I don't know.

Nestor opens his bun and peels the pickles off. He flips them in the car ashtray.

GIL

Why do you put the pickles in the ashtray?

NESTOR

I don't like to eat 'em.

GIL

You can't flip 'em out on the road?

NESTOR

Flip 'em on the road, a raccoon gets the scent, goes out to gobble them and gets spattered by a car.

GIL

So?

NESTOR

So, I like raccoons.

GIL

I put my butt in the ashtray, it catches the pickles on fire and they stink up the car.

NESTOR

Next time you order me a
burger, tell them to hold the
pickles.

GIL

That takes six minutes.

NESTOR

So?

GIL

So, when you're dying and
there's one last thing you
want to think about, you'll
wish you had those six
minutes back.

NESTOR

Give me the bag.

Nestor reaches into the ashtray and plucks the pickles out.

GIL

Maybe they're doing
inventory.

NESTOR

What's that?

GIL

Something they do at stores.

NESTOR

Maybe they got a clean-up
dick in there.

GIL

Is that a problem?

NESTOR

Depends on how much the guy's
got on the ball.

INT. STORE. MEN'S DEPARTMENT

Jim's dressed himself in a flashy golf outfit. He's checking
himself out in the mirror.

INT. STORE. AISLE

Jim rides down the aisle in the golf outfit, riding a bike
from the toy department. He turns down a cross aisle.

INT. STORE. LUNCH COUNTER

Jim pulls up and parks the bike. He walks around behind the counter. He's talking to himself.

JIM
Work is important. It's what
we're here on the planet for.

A microwave oven BUZZER SOUNDS.

JIM
Dinner's ready, kids.

Jim pops the door open and takes out a turkey dinner.

JIM
Fabulous.

He sets it on the counter.

JIM
Something to drink?

He fills himself a Coke. He walks around behind the counter. He takes a stuffed monkey out of the bike basket and sets it on the counter. He switches it on.

JIM
Hello.

The monkey answers back in a tinny computer voice.

MONKEY
Hello.

JIM
What's your name?

MONKEY
Monty.

JIM
I'm Jim.

MONKEY
What do you like to do?

Jim takes a bite of turkey as he thinks seriously about the question.

JIM
What do I like to do?

MONKEY

Do you want to play?

JIM

Let me answer the first question. What do I like to do? Well, I'll tell you what I don't like to do. I don't like working here. But I don't have much choice. I've been fired everywhere. I have not found my niche in life.

MONKEY

Hello.

JIM

I'm aware of it. A lot of people aren't. I'm not crazy.

(pause)

I'm talking to a stuffed monkey, wearing a golfing outfit, eating turkey in an empty store.

(another pause)

I'm just scared. I don't like to be alone.

MONKEY

Do you have a banana?

Jim turns the monkey off. He continues eating in silence.

EXT. STORE. NESTOR AND GIL'S CAR

It's still parked across the street from the K-Mart.

INT. CAR

Gil's sleeping. Nestor's listening to the radio, watching the store. He looks at his watch.

INT. STORE. C.D.MARSH'S OFFICE

Jim's sitting behind C.D.'s desk, feet up, on the phone.

JIM

Dad, I didn't call to wake you up. I didn't know you were going to be sleeping. I was just calling to say goodnight. God, be a grouch. Can I talk to Mom?

(pause)
Mom? How's it goin'? Huh? I finished all my janitor stuff and there isn't much to do. I finished most of it. I'm saving some stuff for later. But it's no problem. It's easy. I was thinking about Christmas. Huh? Gifts. I'm in a store, you know. And I'm getting a lot of gift ideas.

(pause)
All right. Sure. Sleep tight. Okay. I'll see you in the morning. I love you, too.

He hangs up. He covers his mouth as he yawns big.

INT. STORE. LUNCH COUNTER. LATER

Jim's now wearing pajamas and a robe. The tags are still on them. He's standing at the sink brushing his teeth.

CU. LIGHT PANEL

Jim shuts down the lights.

EXT. STORE

Two thirds of the overhead lights go out.

EXT. NESTOR'S CAR

Nestor and Gil are both sleeping.

INT. STORE. SPORTING GOODS SECTION

Jim has set up a camp cot, inflated and laid an air mattress on it and has gathered sheets and blankets from housewares. He's sitting on the cot, setting an alarm clock. He rests it on the floor beside the cot and slips under the sheets and blankets.

INT. STORE. BACK LOOKING FORWARD

We see headlights in the parking lot, approaching the store. They pull up close and stop.

CU. JIM

He's sound asleep.

EXT. STORE

Nestor's car's in front.

INT. CAR

Nestor and Gil are studying the store.

NESTOR

Somebody must have went while
we were sleeping.

GIL

I wasn't sleeping. I was just
resting my eyes.

NESTOR

What do you think?

GIL

Looks ready.

NESTOR

You took care of the alarm
this afternoon?

GIL

I think so.

NESTOR

You're not sure?

GIL

No, I did.

NESTOR

You're sure?

GIL

Pretty sure.

NESTOR

Did you stick the little
piece of paper clip in the
arm switch?

GIL

I think so, but I'm not 100%
sure.

NESTOR

How can you partly sure?

GIL

I don't know. We've done this
twenty times. It's all kinda
runs together. I'm sure I
did. Yeah, I did.

NESTOR

You're sure?

GIL

Positive.

(pause)

Let's say 99.999999999999%
sure so I don't look like an
asshole if I'm wrong.

NESTOR

Okay.

EXT. K-MART

Nestor backs up and pulls around the side of the building. He
cuts the engine and the lights.

INT. STORE. BACK LOOKING OUT

Another set of headlights appear.

EXT. STORE

A police car has pulled up in front. An OFFICER gets out and
walks to the window.

INT. NESTOR'S CAR

Parked alongside the building. Nestor sticks his gun in his
belt. Gil reaches into the backseat for a tool bag.

NESTOR

Good luck.

GIL

Thanks.

They both get out.

CU. JIM

Sound asleep. Suddenly there's a SHARP POUNDING ON THE WINDOW
OF THE STORE. Jim's eyes pop open. A beat and he leaps out of
the cot.

EXT. STORE

The OFFICER is looking in the window. He beats his night stick on the window again.

INT. STORE

Jim strips off the pajamas. Down to his underwear.

JIM
My uniform! Shit!

He dashes down an aisle.

INT. STORE. ANOTHER AISLE

Jim streaks past in his shorts. He crashes into an aisle end display of motor oil, toppling it, stubbing his toes, banging his shins. He suppresses a yelp and continues.

EXT. STORE

Nestor and Gil are heading up the side of the building. They hear the Officer RAPPING ON THE WINDOW. They stop dead in their tracks.

INT. STORE. FRONT WINDOW

The Officer's whacking the window, peering in.

INT. STORE. MEN'S CLOTHING DEPT.

Jim rips through the clothing racks, looking for his uniform. Clothes fly everywhere.

JIM
I'm fired, goddamn it!

He locates the uniform. Grapples with it.

JIM
Fold your clothes! Fold your clothes!

He stuffs his legs into the jumpsuit. Throws his arms into the sleeves and yanks the zipper up. He squeals in pain and fumbles with the zipper. He carefully unzips himself. GROANS and slumps in pain. A beat and he rezips.

JIM
My broom...

EXT. K-MART

The officer is at the door. He has his flashlight out and is shining it in the store.

HIS POV

The harsh light of his service lamp scanning the store. It finds Jim walking up the aisle with his broom. He's in his uniform and bedroom slippers.

CU. JIM

He stops and squints. The flashlight is all over his face. It goes out.

HIS POV

The Officer.

INT. STORE

Jim walks to the door.

JIM

Officer Don? You scared the
crap outta me. I thought you
were the custodian.

OFFICER

(through the door)
What're you doing in there,
Jim?

JIM

I work here now. For a minute
there, I was sure I was
fired.

OFFICER

You wanna let me in?

JIM

I'd love to, but I don't have
a key. I'm locked in until
seven AM. What's going on?

OFFICER

You seen Josie McClellan?

JIM

I went to high school with her, Officer Don. You know that.

OFFICER

You seen her recently?

JIM

A couple days ago.

OFFICER

She come in the store?

JIM

I don't know. I work nights. Why?

OFFICER

She's missing.

JIM

No shit?

OFFICER

The old man called a couple hours ago. I'm covering this side of town. I seen the front sign on. Front sign's never on.

JIM

That's my fault. So, what's the poop? Kidnap?

OFFICER

She's probably just out screwing somebody the old man doesn't approve of.

JIM

Is she like that?

OFFICER

She's got a wild side.

JIM

I'd check out the foul play.

OFFICER

Nah. We don't get that kind of stuff here.

EXT. STORE. SIDE. NESTOR AND GIL

They're at the side of the building. Nestor peeks around the corner. He quickly pulls his head back.

NESTOR
Cop.

GIL
Cop?

NESTOR
Cop.

GIL
We ain't done anything yet.
They come later. Something's
ass-backwards.

NESTOR
Let's get the fuck outta
here.

GIL
What about the car?

NESTOR
Fuck the car.

GIL
But it's all paid for.

NESTOR
Shit. We gotta get it around
behind. He sees it, we're
stuffed.

EXT. STORE

Jim's leaning against the glass, talking through the door to Officer Don.

JIM
Did you check the library?
Maybe she fell asleep reading
or something.

OFFICER
That don't happen. I'm gonna
hit the road.

JIM

What's your hurry? We don't get to talk much, you being on nights and me previously being on days.

OFFICER

I gotta keep checking.

JIM

So, what do you know. I'm a janitor.

EXT. BUILDING

Nestor and Gil are pushing the car along the side of the building.

INT. STORE

Jim's still talking.

JIM

I bet if I took off the weather strip on the bottom of the door, I could slide a piece of pizza under there for you? I can microwave it up in no time.

OFFICER

I gotta roll, Jimmy.

JIM

You're sure?

OFFICER

Yeah. There's only three of us on duty.

JIM

It's lonely in here.

OFFICER

I'll bet. Listen, Jimmy, don't screw around and get fired again.

JIM

No way.

OFFICER

You gotta start clamping onto something.

JIM

This is probably it. I sense career. Not as a janitor. This is a temporary thing to learn the business from the ground. I've been promised a management position with company headquarters in New York.

OFFICER

Is that bullshit?

JIM

Is it a trick pissing with a boner?

OFFICER

I ain't had a boner in three years.

JIM

I'm sorry to hear that.

EXT. STORE. BACK

Nestor and Gil push the car around behind the store. There's a slight incline behind the store. The car begins to pick up speed. Nestor whispers to Gil.

NESTOR

Slow it down!

GIL

I can't!

EXT. STORE. FRONT

The Officer and Jim wrap up the conversation.

JIM

I'm glad you came by. I was totally crashed out. But I'm wide awake now.

OFFICER

Take care, Jimmy.

He starts for the car.

JIM

Officer Don?

The Officer stops and turns.

JIM

You know if the custodian
ever comes by and checks up
on people?

OFFICER

I wouldn't put it past him.

He continues to the car.

EXT. STORE. BACK

The car is moving at a serious clip. Nestor and Gil are holding on in a hopeless attempt to stop it. Their feet scrape along the pavement as the car speeds off the paved area below the store into a wooded field.

EXT. K-MART

The police car pulls out, clearing FRAME. We HOLD on the store for a long beat. All the lights go back on.

EXT. FIELD

The car comes to a rude halt against a tree.

CU. GIL AND NESTOR

They look down the hill at their car. Very puzzled.

THEIR POV

The car is stopped at the bottom of the hill. Between the car and Gil and Nestor is a tree. There is no apparent explanation for how the car got past the tree that stands between it and Gil and Nestor.

INT. STORE. CU. COFFEE CUP

Pour shot.

INT. STORE. LUNCH COUNTER

Jim sips his coffee.

INT. STORE. DRESSING ROOM. FLOOR

Price tags, hangers, pins, paper. It's dark except for angled bands of light coming through the door louvers. We MOVE up from the floor to a woman's hand languidly in the air. Slowly up the arm to Josie. She's sleeping peacefully. MUSIC COMES UP LOUD. Her eyes open.

INT. STORE

Jim is blasting music through the PA. He's running wild through the store. Dancing his fears away. Up and down the aisles like a dervish. He's wearing stove mitts., a wig, galoshes, a man's hat.

EXT. STORE. FIELD

Gil and Nestor are standing at the car.

GIL

Let's go hit the store and worry about this later.

NESTOR

Say we have to blow somebody away? Say you didn't neutralize the alarm...?

GIL

What's neutralize mean?

NESTOR

(puzzled, after
a pause)

I don't know.

(continues)

What I meant was, say you didn't wreck the alarm?

GIL

So, we blow somebody away, so, the alarm goes off. Yeah? So what?

NESTOR

So, the fuckin' car's in the woods.

GIL

Yeah?

NESTOR

So, if we have to break fast outta here, how do we do it?

Gil thinks.

GIL

All right, good point. We get the car out now.

CU. JOSIE

A look of horror and she rears back.

INT. STORE. AISLE

Jim hurtles into a standing display of batteries.

EXT. STORE. FIELD

Gil and Nestor are trying to back the car around the tree that's behind the car. Mud's still flying, the engine's still howling. They're making very limited progress.

INT. STORE. JIM

He's laying on his back in a sea of batteries.

HIS POV

Up, the ceiling and then Josie. She looks down at him.

CU. JIM

Stares up at her.

INT. STORE

Josie stands over Jim.

JOSIE
Are you all right?

JIM
I'm fine, thanks. And you?

JOSIE
What're you doing here?

JIM
I work here.

INT. STORE. AISLE. LATER

Josie's in the aisle, leaning against a shelf.

INT. STORE. NEXT AISLE OVER

Jim's putting his uniform on.

JIM
What're you doing here?

CROSS AISLE

Jim flashes past Josie.

JOSIE'S POV. REPLAY

Jim flashing past. Sees her.

JIM'S POV. REPLAY

He sees Josie.

JOSIE'S POV. SLO-MO REPLAY

72 frames per. Jim goes past. A look of bewilderment on his face. Befuddled.

JIM'S POV. SLO-MO REPLAY

Josie's placid, curious face runs through FRAME.

CU. JIM. SLO-MO REPLAY

Big smile as he approaches the cross aisle, head turn as he passes and forward to CAMERA with a startled look after he passes.

INT. STORE. AISLE. REAL TIME

Jim coasting rapidly away from CAMERA. He turns on the skates.

HIS POV. REAL TIME

Josie steps into the up and down aisle as CAMERA PULLS AWAY.

CU. JIM

Moving with him as he sails backwards down the aisle. He's totally stunned to see her. To see anyone.

CU. JOSIE

Watches Jim fly backwards down the aisle. Puzzled.

CU. JIM

Still staring. The back wall of the store is coming up fast.

INT. STORE. CROSS AISLE

Jim sails through the intersection.

NESTOR

How?

INT. STORE

Jim's coming down an aisle doing a wheelie on a dirt bike. He's now wearing a wedding veil.

INT. DRESSING ROOM

Josie's at the door. She's cautious and confused about the music. She listens.

EXT. STORE. FIELD

Nestor's gunning the engine. Gil's in front, pushing. The earth is moist and soft. Mud is flying all over hell.

INT. STORE. JIM

He's playing a cash register like a piano. He's in a sweat and has loosened his uniform.

INT. STORE. DRESSING ROOM AREA

She creeps down the narrow corridor and looks out into the store.

INT. STORE

Jim pulls off the galoshes and drops off his uniform. He's only wearing the wedding veil and his undershorts.

INT. STORE. CU. JOSIE

She looks across the store. We HEAR JIM'S approaching CRIES. She leans back into the shadows.

HER POV

Jim flies around the end of the closest aisle. He's on roller skates. Dancing, moving, screaming.

CROSS AISLE

Josie is standing in a cross aisle.

INT. ADJACENT AISLE

Jim rounds a corner, hauling maximum ass, clips an aisle, spills a yard or two of shelf contents and motors on.

OVERHEAD

We see Jim dressing in one aisle. Josie waiting in the next one over.

JOSIE
You dressed?

JIM
Almost.

JOSIE
Are you high?

JIM
Me? No way. I say nope to
dope.

EXT. JOSIE'S HOUSE

A police car's parked in front.

EXT. HOUSE. FRONT PORCH

Officer Don's at the door with Josie's father.

OFFICER
We checked all over, sir.

FATHER
Keep looking.

INT. STORE. WOMEN'S DEPT. LATER

Josie's sitting in the shoe department chairs. Jim's sitting on a shoe salesman's stool.

JIM
Cops are looking for you.

JOSIE
Yeah? How do you know?

JIM
Officer Don came by and told
me.

JOSIE
So you don't have a key to
the door?

JIM
No.

JOSIE
They lock you in?

JIM
Yep.

JOSIE
Nice job.

JIM
Are you gonna tell me how you
got in here?

JOSIE
Door.

JIM
Not since I've been here?

JOSIE
What do you think?

JIM
Nothing. That's why I asked.

JOSIE
I came in about five.

JIM
Somebody with your money does
their own shopping?

JOSIE
What's my money?

JIM
You're only the richest
person in town.

JOSIE
And we've met?

JIM
I know who you are.

JOSIE
Funny. I don't know who you
are.

JIM

We went to school together.
Same year. I can name ten
classes we were in together.
We stood next to each other
at graduation.

Josie stares. She doesn't remember a thing.

JIM

That's the way it is.

JOSIE

Maybe I have seen you.

JIM

You've seen me. you just
never looked at me.

Josie slides down in the chair. She smiles.

JOSIE

How long have you been
working here?

Jim looks at his watch.

JIM

Five hours.

JOSIE

First day?

JIM

Yep.

JOSIE

You like it?

JIM

Hate it.

JOSIE

You gonna quit?

JIM

No.

JOSIE

If you hate it...

JIM

I don't have a lot of career
opportunities.

JOSIE
Are you retarded?

JIM
Sort of.

Josie's taken aback. There's a long pause.

JIM
I've been canned alot and
this is sort of the last stop
for me. If I lose this one,
I'm out of the house and on a
bus North.

JOSIE
You live at home?

JIM
Yeah. So do you.

JOSIE
Hate it?

JIM
Love it.

JOSIE
Really?

JIM
Wouldn't change it.

JOSIE
You've gonna be fifty and
living at home?

JIM
You never know. Probably not.

JOSIE
You like this town?

JIM
I haven't seen much else. But
I don't really want to. I
like it. You?

JOSIE
Hate it. Resent it. If I
could, I'd destroy it.

JIM
You must own half of it.

EXT. STORE

Gil and Nestor are both in the car, backing up the hill. It's slow going. The car fish tails, stops and slides slowly down.

INT. STORE. LUNCH COUNTER. LATER

Josie's sitting at the counter, nursing a cup of coffee.
Jim's behind the counter at the microwave.

JIM
I was getting really tired of
being with myself. I'm a
people person.

JOSIE
What're you cooking?

JIM
Turkey.

The bell rings and Jim takes the turkey dinner out of the microwave. He sets the hot plate before Josie. She stares at it. Jim gets her a fork, knife and napkin.

JIM
Where were you hiding?

JOSIE
Who says I was hiding?

JIM
You weren't?

JOSIE
No.

JIM
You got locked in.

JOSIE
So?

JIM
They announce closing time.
The lights to out. It's kind
of hard to get locked in a
store.

JOSIE

I guess I must be naturally good at it.

JIM

So, why are the cops looking for you?

JOSIE

My father probably thinks I'm missing.

JIM

Sounds good.

JOSIE

Sounds true.

He slides up on the counter. Josie takes a reluctant bite of the pathetic meal.

JIM

I think my Dad poured the cement for your pool.

Josie doesn't respond.

JIM

He's a cement contractor.

She still doesn't respond.

JIM

Good man.

No reply. She just eats. Very carefully.

JIM

My mother's a homemaker. She works part-time at Christmas as Hoenickers. My sister works at the bank. I have a brother in grade school and I'm working here.

Josie looks up at him.

JIM

I used to work at the animal research place.

JOSIE

Do you always talk a lot?

JIM

I guess so. I like talking to people.

JOSIE

Maybe you should be in sales.

Jim nods. Not a bad idea.

JIM

I've had dreams about you.

JOSIE

(sarcastic)

I'm flattered.

JIM

Not recently. In school. You were the ultimate.

JOSIE

Were?

JIM

To me. Then.

JOSIE

You don't have a key? You weren't bullshitting?

JIM

If you want to go, use the phone. Call your Dad. No, I don't have a key.

JOSIE

Where's the phone?

JIM

Pay phone in front. Private phone in the office.

JOSIE

Don't you have work to do?

JIM

I got all night.

JOSIE

It's gonna take you six hours to clean up the batteries.

JIM

You want to be alone?

JOSIE

I guess so.

Jim slides off the counter.

JIM

You're trespassing. Remember that.

JOSIE

If getting locked in a discount store's trespassing, what's roller skating in your underpants?

JIM

Let me think about it.

Jim walks away. Josie waits a moment and then turns to watch him walk away.

CU. JOSIE

She turns back. She's a bitter girl. And she's out of ideas.

EXT. STORM FIELD

Nestor's driving. Gil's pushing. The car edges up the hill. Nearly makes the top, loses traction, the wheels spin and Nestor jams on the brakes.

NESTOR

You all right?

Gil leans on the car. He's exhausted.

NESTOR

Hold on. I'm getting out to help.

Gil takes a deep breath and braces himself behind the car.

NESTOR

Got it?

GIL

Got it!

Nestor opens his door and climbs out.

NESTOR

PUSH!

The car starts sliding back.

GIL

Oh, shit!

NESTOR

PUSH!

Nestor tries to hold the car back. He slides with it. He tries to jump back in but he can't make it. He holds onto the door.

EXT. CAR

It slips back down the hill, rolls over Gil and takes Nestor down with it.

EXT. FIELD

The car crashes into the trees at the bottom of the hill. Gil sits up, delighted that he wasn't killed.

EXT. CAR. NESTOR

He's holding onto the car door. Frustrated and angry.

INT. STORE. LOADING DOCK

Jim's in the loading dock. He empties a small waste basket into the trash bin.

INT. STORE. LUNCH COUNTER. JOSIE

She's still sitting at the counter. She doesn't know what to do with herself.

INT. STORE. JIM

He comes out of the backroom area with the empty waste basket. He looks for Josie. He's very interested in her. But cautious. He crosses to the dressing room area.

INT. DRESSING ROOMS

Jim deposits the waste basket at the end of the dressing room corridor. He starts back down the corridor. He stops. Thinks for a moment. He pushes open a dressing room door with his foot. He takes a quick look inside.

HIS POV

Empty except for a few hangers.

INT. DRESSING ROOM AREA. JIM

He comes out of the dressing room with the hangers. He goes to the next room. Opens it the same way. Looks in.

HIS POV

Empty except for a bra.

INT. DRESSING ROOM AREA

Jim comes out of the room with the bra hooked on the end of one of the hangers. He goes to the next room. Peeks in.

HIS POV

Josie's purse and jacket.

CU. JIM

Looking in the door. A quick glance to the store. He steps in. He picks up the jacket. Looks at it. Feels the fine leather. Looks at the nicks and marks. Looks for its history. He lays it down and picks up the purse. He has an overwelmine desire to open it and look inside. He can't do it. He lays it back down.

INT. STORE. ELECTRONICS DEPT. JOSIE

She's studying Jim's cassette. She flips it around and pops it in the machine. She finds PLAY and hits it. A beat and MUSIC COMES UP BIG. She looks up and around, trying to figure out how the sound is so large.

INT. STORE. DRESSING ROOM AREA

Jim exits into the main store as he HEARS THE MUSIC.

INT. STORE. JOSIE

She's moving lightly to the music.

INT. STORE. BATTERY DISPLAY

Jim kneels down and starts gathering up the batteries. He looks down the aisle.

HIS POV

A mess.

CU. JIM

He looks across the store.

HIS POV

Josie moving to his music.

CU. JIM

A sigh. She's his dream.

CU. JOSIE

She closes her eyes and rolls her head back. She likes the song very much.

CU. JIM

He's picking up batteries. He's unconsciously moving to the music.

CU. JOSIE'S HAND

Tapping on her leg.

ECU. JIM'S EYEBROW

Moving up and down to the music.

ECU. JOSIE'S MOUTH

Lips moving ever so slightly as she tries to follow the lyric.

ECU. JIM'S SHOE

Inside the torn open sole of the sneaker, we see his toes tapping to the beat.

CU. JOSIE'S HIPS

Swaying gently. Between her legs in the B.G. we see Jim's hazy form.

CU. JIM

He's moving more overtly now. He's forgotten about Josie.

CU. CASSETTE PLAYER

Josie turns the music off.

CU. JOSIE

She turns around and looks to Jim.

CU. JIM

He stops moving. He looks to Josie.

CU. JOSIE

She speaks to Jim.

JOSIE

If I call my father, he'll
have to call your boss to
open up the store. Will that
be a problem?

CU. JIM

He stands up. He doesn't understand why she's changed her
mind so suddenly. Of course it will be. But he just shrugs.

CU. JOSIE

She looks at him.

CU. JIM

He shrugs again.

JIM

If you wanna go, call. It's
all right.

INT. STORE

Josie walks toward Jim.

JOSIE

I don't know why I'm here.
It's really sort of
pointless. But I don't want
to get you fired.

JIM

I'm probably going to get
fired anyway. Later, if not
sooner.

JOSIE

If you want me to help you
straighten up the place...

JIM
Thanks, but no. It's okay.
Just call. It's fine.

Josie reaches Jim.

JOSIE
You'd let yourself get canned
so I can go home and sleep?

JIM
If you want to go...

JOSIE
I thought you said this job
was so important.

JIM
Immediately, maybe. But over
the course of my whole life,
probably not.

JOSIE
Do you have any idea where
your life's going?

JIM
That's a heavy question.

JOSIE
Where's the office?

Jim points to the left and behind.

JIM
Do you have any idea?

Josie smiles.

JOSIE
Complete.

She walks away. Jim's intrigued.

JIM
Really?

JOSIE
Really.

She heads across the store.

INT. OFFICE

Josie walks in, crosses to the desk and sits down.

INT. STORE

Jim continues to stack batteries.

INT. OFFICE. JOSIE

She dials the phone. She slows as she gets to the sixth number. She presses it with great trepidation. She holds her finger over the seventh number.

CU. JOSIE'S FINGERS

On the button but not pushing. We HEAR A RECORDED MESSAGE.

RECORDING

The time allotted for you to
dial has been exceeded.
Please hang up and dial
again.

CU. JOSIE

Thinking hard. Deciding.

CU. RECEIVER BUTTON

Josie's finger comes into FRAME and pushes the button down.

INT. STORE. JIM

He steps back from the battery display. He reaches forward and straightens a bent corner. Steps back again. Glances to the side.

HIS POV

Josie's in cosmetics. Idle, wasting time. Sniffing perfume samples.

INT. STORE. JIM

Full figure. He calls to Josie.

JIM

Did you call?

CU. JOSIE

She doesn't answer. She hears him. She just doesn't know what to say.

CU. JIM

Waits for her reply.

JIM

Yes?

(pause)

No?

No reply. He exits FRAME.

CU. JOSIE

She's sitting on a makeup stool, looking at herself in a counter mirror. Jim approaches from behind. She's waiting for him. She knows he's coming.

INT. STORE

Jim walks up to the cosmetics counter.

JIM

I guess you didn't call.

Josie shakes her head, no.

JIM

It's none of my business, but I think you're fighting something.

JOSIE

Yeah?

JIM

Yeah. Part of me is pissed off that you're involving me and part of me feels for you.

JOSIE

I know what part feels for me.

Jim resents the remark.

JIM

Why don't you go home?

JOSIE

If I'm bothering you why
don't you ignore me?

JIM

Ignore you? Do you know what
you make me feel like?

JOSIE

I can't imagine.

JIM

You make me feel filthy.

JOSIE

It's not intentional.

JIM

You know how many hours we
spent together in school? No
more than five or six feet
apart? I know you saw me. I
know that somewhere in your
memory is a picture of a
scrawny little asshole with a
home kitchen haircut drooling
on his desk looking at you.

Josie holds up a perfume mister. She points it at him and
gives a little squirt. He leans back from the mist.

JIM

Thanks.

JOSIE

You like it?

JIM

No.

JOSIE

You like perfume?

JIM

(anxious to get back
to his original topic)
Not personally.

JOSIE

You think it's wrong for a
woman to mask her natural
scent with something from
Revlon?

JIM
I haven't thought about it.

JOSIE
If I was sweating, would you
touch me?

JIM
(after a pause)
I'd touch you if you were
covered with spiders.

JOSIE
So, why are you insulting me?

JIM
I didn't think I was.

JOSIE
You were just telling the
truth?

JIM
As far as I could see it.

Josie turns away. Looks at herself in the mirror.

EXT. STORE. FIELD

The car is coming up the hill backwards. Gil's pushing from
the front. They seem to be making better progress going
backwards.

EXT. STORE

The lights are blazing. One by one they go out.

INT. STORE. HOUSEWARES AISLE

Josie's gathering candles off the shelf. Jim's watching from
down the aisle.

CU. JIM

He has no idea what she's up to.

CU. SHELF

Pillows are grabbed off the shelf.

CU. SHELF

Quilts are pulled off.

INT. STORE. AISLE

Josie lugs the pillows and quilts down the aisle.

CU. TIME CLOCK

It reads 2:10 AM.

INT. STORE. ELECTRONICS DEPT.

All the equipment is on. The red lights glow. The television sets are all on and showing different programs. The VRC's are playing through half the sets. Josie has arranged all her candles in a large serving bowl on the floor. They're lit and glowing. Josie and Jim are sitting on the quilts and pillows.

JOSIE

Like a skein of loose silk
blown against a wall
She walks by the railing of a
path in Kensington Gardens...

CU. JIM

He's listening, watching, enormously curious.

JOSIE (OC)

And she is dying piecemeal of
a sort of emotional anemia...

CU. JOSIE

Chin resting on her arms, resting on her knee, looking into the candle light. Not looking at Jim.

JOSIE

And round about there is a
rabble, of the filthy,
sturdy, unkillable infants of
the very poor. They shall
inherit the earth.

She turns to Jim.

JOSIE

In her is the end of
breeding. Her boredom is
exquisite and excessive. She
would like someone to speak
to her, and is almost afraid
that I will commit that
indiscretion.

She is finished.

CU. JIM

Wonders what she means. Nervous under her stare.

CU. JOSIE

Sad smile.

JOSIE

That's me.

CU. JIM

He's afraid to react out of fear of appearing stupid.

CU. JOSIE

She looks away.

JOSIE

Her boredom is exquisite. And
it is. Are you bored?

JOSIE AND JIM

Jim shakes his head.

JIM

No.

JOSIE

(looks at him)
Not at all?

JIM

Sometimes.

JOSIE

Now?

JIM

No.

JOSIE

Yesterday?

JIM

No. But you are.

JOSIE

I am.

JIM

Why?

JOSIE

Because I'm here. In this store. In this town.

JIM

Why don't you leave?

JOSIE

My father won't let me.

JIM

Why?

JOSIE

He's afraid.

JIM

Of what?

JOSIE

Losing me. He lost my mother and my brother.

Jim doesn't have a reply.

JOSIE

I'm his daughter and I'm his wife.

Jim is shocked.

JOSIE

Emotionally. It's clean. It's just difficult. I'm trying to go forward. He's trying to go backward. He's not bad, he's just lost.

JIM

A long time?

JOSIE
(thinks)

Ten years?

JIM

In school...

JOSIE

Grade school. You know what?
I don't want to sacrifice
myself anymore.

JIM

This is really kinda funny.
You're a prisoner looking to
escape. I'm a parolee looking
to get back in.

JOSIE

It's just getting worse,
isn't it?

JIM

What?

JOSIE

I couldn't wait to grow up. I
always wanted to be older
than I was. Now I'm here and
guess what? It's fucked.

JIM

Is it?

JOSIE

Isn't it?

JIM

I'm working nights at a
K-Mart. You're asking the
wrong guy.

JOSIE

Love is such a suave
preoccupation. It's the
ultimate act of selfishness.

JIM

How so?

JOSIE

Because it has to be
reciprocal.

JIM

You're losing me.

JOSIE

You love and you're not loved
back, what is it?

JIM
For me? Normal.

JOSIE
Drop the pathetic loser
bullshit. Unanswered love is
hatred. The A side is "I'm
Loving You". The B Side is
"Go Fuck Yourself".

JIM
Are you really this pissed
off, or is this a game?

JOSIE
I'm really this pissed off
and I'm leaning on you
because you can't run away.

JIM
You came here to talk to me?

JOSIE
I didn't even remember you.
This just came up.

JIM
And the B Side is "Go Fuck
Yourself".

JOSIE
You're presuming there's an A
side.

JIM
Sorry.

JOSIE
You're not in it as deep as I
am.

JIM
I don't think so.

JOSIE
No?

JIM
Not even close.

JOSIE

Yours just hasn't hit yet
because you're hiding out.
You're telling yourself
you're fifteen.

JIM

Is that a fact?

JOSIE

You're roller skating in your
shorts. Then an hour later
you're having a mature
conversation. Unless you're a
schizophrenic.

JIM

Maybe so.

JOSIE

If we had a baby and we gave
it up, half of your jeans and
half of my jeans would leave
this town. Any satisfaction
in that?

JIM

That's a bizarre thought.

JOSIE

Some of my chromosomes will
be out there moving around.
That's better than nothing.

JIM

You got a car. You can't get
in it and drive?

JOSIE

Nope.

JIM

Why not?

JOSIE

If I leave, he'll just find
me and bring me back.

JIM

Have you ever left him
before?

JOSIE

No.

JIM

Why not?

JOSIE

Because I love him.

JIM

And you can't talk to him?

JOSIE

I can talk. He won't listen.

JIM

Then you gotta do it. If he follows you, he follows you.

JOSIE

I'm tired.

JIM

What're you going to do in the morning?

JOSIE

I don't know. What're you gonna do?

JIM

Go home and go to bed.

JOSIE

And be back tomorrow?

JIM

If I'm not canned.

JOSIE

And if you are?

JIM

I guess I get your wish.

He grins.

EXT, K-MART. WOODS. CAR

Nestor and Gil are taking a breather. They're sitting on the hood of the car. Nestor's smoking a cigarillo.

GIL

Is Mike Tyson married?

NESTOR
(thinks)
I don't know.

GIL
I think he's not.

NESTOR
Probably.

GIL
How's your pecker?

NESTOR
It wasn't my pecker. It was
my upper thigh.

GIL
It's okay?

NESTOR
Hurts a little.

GIL
You gotta watch those bumpers
next time we try pushing this
thing up the hill.

NESTOR
Just clipped me. I didn't see
it.

GIL
I'm sorry.

NESTOR
It wasn't your fault.

There's a long pause.

GIL
In your heart of hearts, you
think we'll ever get this
thing up the hill?

NESTOR
Yeah. I do. I got out of high
school. I can get a car up a
hill.

GIL
I never got out of high
school.

NESTOR
It don't make much
difference.

GIL
You go to college?

NESTOR
No. You?

GIL
Nope.

NESTOR
You feel like pushing?

GIL
I was thinking awhile back,
is it possible, if you're
pushing something as heavy as
a car, is it possible to push
so hard that you blow your
intestines out your ass?

Nestor thinks.

NESTOR
Maybe we oughta break into
the store and get some rope
and get the car out and then
go back and break in again.

GIL
That's a plan.

NESTOR
You wanna vote on it?

GIL
Sure.

INT. STORE. JOSIE

Josie's riding a mechanical kiddie horse. She's sitting on it
backwards, rocking slowly, thinking. MUSIC'S PLAYING.

INT. STORE. JIM

He's emptying the wastebaskets under the check-out counters.
He glances at Josie.

HIS POV

It's terribly erotic. Unintentional but undeniable.

CU. JIM

He catches a breath and continues his chore.

CU. JOSIE

Rocking IN AND OUT OF FOCUS. A lost, vacant look on her face.

EXT. STORE

Josie rocking in the window. Jim in the BG emptying baskets.

EXT. HILL

Gil and Nestor trudge up the hill.

NESTOR

You got your gun?

GIL

If it ain't a gun, I got six
bullets in my dick.

NESTOR

(chuckles)

You got a good sense of
humor.

GIL

My Dad did work as a clown.
Or so I'm told.

NESTOR

That's a good line of work.

NESTOR

That's what it's all about.

GIL

Truth.

He holds out his hand. Nestor slaps it.

INT. STORE. JOSIE

The horse ride ends. The horse sinks to a stop. Josie looks
over at Jim.

JOSIE

You know why little girls
like horses?

CU. JIM

He stops in mid-trash dump. He's annoyed by the question. A beat and he finishes pouring. He sets the backset down and turns to Josie.

JIM

Do all rich people think poor
people exist to be played
with like toys?

CU. JOSIE

She doesn't understand what he means. She does. She just doesn't show it.

JOSIE

I didn't say anything about
playing with you. Is that
what you're thinking about?
You think I want to play with
you? Or are you thinking you
want to play with me?

INT. STORE

Jim goes to the check-out counter.

JIM

You know what I mean.

JOSIE

I asked a question.

JIM

Yeah, right. Innocent
question. Sure.

JOSIE

I just asked why little girls
like horses.

JIM

Isn't it time for you to go
home? Or run away? Or
evaporate?

JOSIE

You want me to tell you why?

JIM

I want you to dry up and blow
away.

JOSIE

Really?

JIM

Really.

JOSIE

I would if I knew how.

JIM

If you won't leave, why can't you shut-up?

JOSIE

You're pissed?

JIM

I'm a janitor trainee. You're an heiress whose biggest problem in life is an overbearing father.

JOSIE

That's enough.

JIM

How many men have you had in your life?

JOSIE

That's none of your business.

JIM

You've made my life your business.

JOSIE

I'm sorry. I need somebody to talk to.

JIM

Take a hundred grand and buy somebody with big ears.

JOSIE

I'm serious.

(pause)

What's your name again?

JIM

Sap.

JOSIE
No, really.

JIM
It's Jim.

JOSIE
Thank you.

JIM
You're really welcome.

JOSIE
Howcome we're the only ones
who stayed behind?

JIM
We're not the only ones.

JOSIE
Just about.

JIM
We covered this.

JOSIE
There's a connection between
us.

JIM
We're mammals.

JOSIE
I rode horses hoping I'd fall
and die.

JIM
That's cute.

JOSIE
You thought I meant something
else.

JIM
I admit, I did.

JOSIE
You thought it was about
saddle rub. I guess that's a
reason.

JIM
If it worked for men, I'd
have a horse.

JOSIE

It never worked for me
because I was always too
angry. I'm a very angry
person.

JIM

And you talk a fuck of alot.

JOSIE

Thanks.

JIM

Well, really. Do you know
what it's like for me to
watch you ride a kiddie horse
and talk about sex like you
do? Before tonight the most
exciting thing I did was tell
grade schoolers. that I work
for the Defense Department.

JOSIE

Why do you do that?

JIM

Everybody's gotta feel like
something.

JOSIE

I haven't been talking about
sex.

JIM

Is that a fact?

JOSIE

Yes.

JIM

Everything that comes out of
your mouth is sexy.

JOSIE

That's your interpretation. I
can't control that.

JIM

Swear on something you
believe that you haven't been
trying to heat me up.

JOSIE
I don't believe in anything.

JIM
Cross you heart, then.

JOSIE
I don't have a heart.

JIM
Cross your ass. You have an
ass. I can see it through
your jeans.

JOSIE
That's pretty crude.

JIM
Deny that you don't know that
the seat of your pants is
like gone.

JOSIE
They're comfortable.

JIM
For you. They make me
nervous.

JOSIE
That's your disease.
(pause)
What's the point?

JIM
The point is, I don't like
somebody playing with my
head. I'm a grunt. It's all I
can do to maintain a shred of
dignity. I don't need some
perfect beauty fattening me up
for the kill.

JOSIE
You know what your problem
is?

JIM
From A to Z?

JOSIE

Your problem is you think so little of yourself that you think everybody looks down on you. You know the truth? I think you're very interesting.

JIM

Some people think head lice is interesting.

JOSIE

I don't mean it like that.

JIM

How do you mean it?

JOSIE

You asked me how many men I've been with?

JIM

Why am I interesting.

JOSIE

You wanna know a secret?

JIM

I wanna know why you think I'm interesting.

JOSIE

Zero.

JIM

I'm interesting because I'm a zero?

JOSIE

No. Zero men.

JIM

Zero men?

JOSIE

I'm as pure as angel spit.

Jim's leaning on his broom. It gives and he falls to the floor upon hearing this bit of news.

EXT. K-MART

Gil and Nestor are at the back door. They're at work on the security system.

INT. STORE. CU. JOSIE

She's looking up at the front door.

JOSIE

James?

CU. JIM

He's still thinking about what she's said. He's cleaning up the trash he spilled.

JIM

If what you say is true, then
I'm more experienced than
you. By two times.

CU. JOSIE

She's staring at the door.

HER POV

The red security light is off.

CU. JIM

He's feeling pretty good.

JIM

I was eighteen. First time.
Second time was not all that
long ago. Maybe two years. I
remember it like it was
tomorrow.

CU. JOSIE

She's concerned.

JOSIE

James? I think we have
company.

CU. JIM

His smile drops faster than a sailor's pants in home port.

INT. STORE

Josie slides down off the horse.

JOSIE
That light up there was red
until a second ago.

JIM
I think that's the alarm.

JOSIE
Somebody's coming in.

JIM
Oh, shit...

JOSIE
Your boss?

JIM
Shit. I gotta hit the lights.

He dashes across the store to the manager's office.

EXT. K-MART. BACK DOOR

Gil and Nestor are compromising the lock, having disarmed the security system.

GIL
Howcome we can't get a car up
a hill but we can bugger a
fifty thousand dollar
security system?

NESTOR
Howcome Einstein flunked gym?

GIL
I don't know. Howcome?

NESTOR
I don't know.

EXT. K-MART. FRONT

The lights go out.

INT. STORE. JOSIE

It's dark. She waits for her eyes to orient.

JIM (OC)
Now what?

JOSIE
I should hide.

There's a tremendous crash as Jim rams into a gumball machine, knocking it over, breaking its glass globe and spilling gumballs across the floor.

JOSIE
You alright?

JIM (OC)
Shit!

JOSIE
What'd you do?

JIM (OC)
I killed a gumball machine.
Watch your step.

Another CRASH!

EXT. K-MART

Gil and Nestor are still working on the lock.

NESTOR
What's the matter?

GIL
It won't open.

NESTOR
Oh.

INT. STORE

Jim feels his way over to Josie. We HEAR GUMBALLS CRUNCH UNDER HIS FEET.

JIM
Where do you want to hide?

JOSIE
Where's the dressing room?

JIM
Somewhere back in that black
void of hell and fear.

JOSIE
Are you scared?

JIM
You couldn't pry my buttocks
open with a crowbar.

JOSIE
That's a beautiful image.

EXT. K-MART

Gil succeeds in compromising the lock. He slowly opens the door.

GIL
Open sesame.

NESTOR
After you.

Gil slips inside.

INT. STORE

Jim and Josie hurry down a dark aisle.

JIM
I'm thinking it might not be
a stiff idea if I hide, too.

JOSIE
You can't hide. You work
here.

JIM
If it's my boss and he sees
what I've done to this place,
I'm not working here. If it's
not him, I'd prefer to be
hiding.

JOSIE
Of course it's him. Unless.

JIM
Oh, shit. What?

JOSIE
What if it's my father?

JIM
I can handle that.

INT. STORE. LOADING DOCK

It's dark. Gil and Nestor are inside. They're at the time clock. Nestor strikes a match. He leans over and looks at the time cards. Gil takes a cigarette out of his pocket and lights it off the match.

NESTOR
There's an open card.

GIL
What's that mean?

NESTOR
It can only mean one thing.
Either somebody forgot to
punch out or there's somebody
in here.

GIL
Which do you think it is?

NESTOR
I hope it's the first one.

GIL
Which was that again?

NESTOR
Somebody forgot to punch out.

GIL
Right. I like that one.

NESTOR
In case I'm wrong...

He takes a large and angry pistol out of his jacket.

INT. DRESSING ROOM

Josie and Jim are huddled in the corner.

JOSIE
When I was little and I got
scared I wet my pants.

JIM
Really?

JOSIE
Sick, huh?

JIM
Have you been scared
recently?

JOSIE
No.

JIM
Great.

INT. STORE

Gil and Nestor walk into the store itself. They're both
armed.

GIL
(whispers)
Somebody was cooking corn
dogs.

NESTOR
Yeah.

GIL
You like corn dogs?

NESTOR
Not especially.

GIL
I think they look freaky.

NESTOR
I don't mind the look.

GIL
No?

NESTOR
No. You take the left. I'll
take the right.

They both head in the same direction.

NESTOR
You take the right. I'll take
the center.

Gil goes left. Nestor goes right.

INT. DRESSING ROOM

Still huddled in the corner. Whispering.

JOSIE
There's somebody walking
around in the store.

JIM
I'm sorry to say, I'm scared
shitless.

JOSIE
Don't get scared yet. We
don't know who it is.

JIM
I can't help it. I have an
over-active imagination.

JOSIE
If it was my father, wouldn't
he call out my name?

JIM
Oh, shit.

JOSIE
So would your boss.
(pause)
You know what this means?

JIM
Would you think less of me if
I asked you to hold me?

JOSIE
I was going to ask you the
same thing but I was afraid
you'd accuse me of trying to
turn a poor person on.

JIM
You're kidding. I'm serious.
If I go nuts and start
screaming, we're dead
kittens. When I go, I go big
and I go until a parent or
guardian calms me down. Dig?

Josie puts her arm around him.

JOSIE
Maybe we should lie under the
bench.

JIM
Good idea.

JOSIE
You want to be on top?

JIM
I'm heavier than you. You get
on top.

INT. STORE

Gil and Nestor reach the front of the store.

GIL
Nothing?

NESTOR
Negatory.

GIL
Check the office. I'll scope
out the dressing rooms.

INT. DRESSING ROOM

Josie is laying on top of Jim. Her legs are on either side of his. Her elbows are around his ears. Her chest is practically in his face. She's watching the space beneath the door.

JOSIE
This isn't as uncomfortable
as I thought it'd be.

JIM
If I wasn't so fucking
scared, I'd be in heaven. You
know what?

JOSIE
Huh?

JIM
I love you so much I'd die if
you asked me.

JOSIE
I might not have to.

JIM
I'm as serious as I've ever
been.

JOSIE
It's just because of our
position.

JIM

It's years, Josie. It's years of dreaming about you. Listen to me. I'm scared to death and I'm talking like a parrot on diet pills. I don't care if I get killed by whoever's out there. I've had it. I've had enough life. This is it.

JOSIE

Shh.

JIM

You have no idea how great this is.

JOSIE

Shh!

JIM

Tell me you love me even if you don't. Fake me out for just a second. Just say it and then take it back or spit in my face, just let me hear it.

JOSIE

Shut-up.

JIM

Not until you tell me you love me.

JOSIE

Then you'll shut up?

JIM

Cross your ass and my heart.

Josie presses her lips to his.

CU. THEIR HIPS

She grinds her hips against his, pressing forward and up.

CU. LIPS

She breaks the kiss and drags her lips to his ear.

JOSIE
(breathy and soft)
I love you.

She slowly pulls away.

JOSIE
How's that?

Jim's head rolls to the side. He's passed-out cold. She pats his cheek.

JOSIE
Jim?

He's gone. She shakes his face.

JOSIE
Shit.

INT. STORE. NESTOR

He walks into the dressing room area.

INT. DRESSING ROOM

Josie hears the footsteps. She buries her head in the crook of Jim's neck.

INT. STORE. NESTOR

He opens the first door and looks in. He sees nothing. He walks to the second and last.

INT. DRESSING ROOM

Josie's watching the bottom of the door.

HER POV

Two feet planted before the door.

ECU. JOSIE

She's in complete terror. She closes her eyes.

CU. DOOR

It opens slowly.

CU. JIM'S HAND

It's laying on the floor. The door opens over it. Pinching it severely.

ECU. JIM'S EYES

They open in alarm.

ECU. HIS MOUTH

Josie squeezes her hand over his mouth.

CU. NESTOR

He scans the room.

CU. JOSIE

She keeps her hand over Jim's mouth. Her eyes are squeezed shut.

INT. DRESSING ROOM

Nestor backs out and closes the door. It's stuck on Jim's fingers. He has to jerk it closed.

CU. JOSIE AND JIM

She relaxes. She keeps her hand over his mouth.

INT. STORE

There's tremendous CRASH! as Gil rams another gumball machine.

INT. DRESSING ROOM. CU. JOSIE AND JIM

She takes her hand away from his mouth.

JOSIE

He's in the front. Let's run
for the back.

She rolls off him and scrambles to her feet. She gives him a hand up. They open the door and dash out.

INT. DRESSING ROOM HALLWAY

Josie and Jim come out of the dressing room and run to
CAMERA. MUSIC STING! They freeze in horror.

CU. NESTOR

Gun held up to his face. Smiling.

NESTOR

Evening.

CU. JOSIE AND JIM

Jim collapses.

INT. STORE. SHOE DEPARTMENT. LATER

Jim and Josie are lying face down on the floor. Gil and Nestor are standing over them. The candles are still burning.

CU. JOSIE'S ASS

Nestor slips the pointy toe of his boot under the threads running across Josie's bottom. He yanks his foot up, breaking the threads and exposing even more of her rump.

CU. JOSIE

Her eyes are closed.

CU. JIM

He's just as scared.

CU. NESTOR AND GIL

He gestures for Gil to take a look.

GIL

Nice.

NESTOR

Excellent.

(to Josie)

You got a tattoo?

CU. JIM

He thinks they're talking to him.

JIM

No, sir.

CU. GIL

Suddenly very angry.

GIL
Not you asshole!

CU. JOSIE

She's angry.

JOSIE
I'm a missing person. The
whole city's looking for me.

INT. STORE

Gil and Nestor exchange looks. They laugh.

GIL
You're hiding out?

JOSIE
Yes. And I'd appreciate it if
you'd let us sit up.

NESTOR
What about a tattoo?

JOSIE
I don't have one.

GIL
You owe me a buck.

NESTOR
Two bucks. I borrowed one off
you at Burger King yesterday.

GIL
Really? I don't remember.

JIM
Excuse me. Are you going to
shoot us in the back of the
head?

NESTOR
We haven't decided. Who are
you?

JIM
You don't want to know.

GIL
He wouldn't have asked you if
he didn't want to know,
butthead.

JIM
You better shoot me.

CU. JOSIE

She looks at Jim.

CU. JIM

He gives her a wink. Nestor's gun COMES INTO FRAME AND RESTS AGAINST THE BASE OF JIM'S NECK.

INT. STORE

Nestor's straddling Jim.

NESTOR
You want me to shoot you?

JIM
Not really. But for your own sake, you better do it.

GIL
You want to explain a little bit?

JOSIE
He's a little crazy. He's my brother. He's not right.

JIM
She's lying. She doesn't know me either.

NESTOR
Somebody better start talking normal or you'll get your wish.

JIM
I'm a member of the Mellin drug cartel.

GIL
What's that?

JIM
I'm a Columbian national. And you dumb sons of bitches have walked right into a sixty million dollar drug transaction.

NESTOR
That's so fresh out of the
bull, it's steaming.

JIM
Shoot me and find out.

GIL
That's the shittiest bluff
I've ever heard.

CU. GUN

Nestor pulls the hammer back.

CU. JIM

He's sweating. He closes his eyes, expecting his next breath
to be his last.

CU. JOSIE

She's completely terrorized.

CU. NESTOR

He's getting a little nervous.

NESTOR
You making a drug transaction
by yourself?

INT. STORE

Nestor kneels beside Jim. He brings the gun around to his
ear.

JIM
In about ten minutes this
place is gonna be alive with
the meanest, ugliest, most
impatient animals you two
small timers have ever seen.
They'll find you in the
nearest ditch with your guts
tied around your necks. Can
you dig what I'm saying?

CU. NESTOR

He looks up at Gil. Could it be true?

CU. GIL

He's not sure.

GIL
Who's the girl?

CU. JOSIE

She's hip to the game.

JOSIE
I'm his hostage.

CU. JIM

He smiles.

CU. NESTOR

Still holds his position.

NESTOR
Is that true?

JIM
Her old man's with the DEA.

NESTOR
What's that?

JIM
Drug Enforcement Agency,
asshole. The deal doesn't go
down, she's pig feed.

CU. JOSIE

She makes a face.

CU. GIL

He doesn't buy it. But he's nervous.

GIL
Bullshit!

CU. JIM

Thinks.

JIM
Blow her away.

CU. JOSIE

She looks at Jim like he's crazy.

CU. JIM

He makes his move.

JIM

You don't want to do it, give
me your gun, I'll do it
myself.

INT. STORE

Nestor backs away from Jim.

GIL

Bullshit!

NESTOR

We'll see. Roll over.

Jim rolls over. He sits up and holds out his hand.

JIM

Give me the gun.

GIL

No way, man.

JIM

Then you do it. I don't need
her anymore. She was only
useful in getting me through
customs with my load.

NESTOR

I don't like this, Gil.

GIL

This sucks. It's not worth
it.

JIM

Do it.

NESTOR

Alright.

CU. JIM

He's not sure Nestor won't.

CU. NESTOR

He bends over Josie.

NESTOR
This is nothing personal.

CU. JOSIE

She screams.

JOSIE
JIM!

CU. JIM

He smiles.

CU. NESTOR

He's looking at Jim. He won't do it.

CU. JIM

He looks outside.

JIM
Forget it, man. They're here.

INT. STORE

Nestor jumps to his feet. He backs away. Gil turns to the front of the store.

GIL
Forget it!

JIM
It's too late.

NESTOR
We didn't want this.

JIM
Put the guns down.

He holds his hand up to the window.

JIM
There's infrared scopes
trained on your heads.
(yells)
HOLD YOUR FIRE!

(yells at Nestor
and Gil)
Do it!

They drop the guns.

JIM
Back up!

Jim quickly retrieves the guns. He holds them on Nestor and Gil.

JIM
Hands up.

Nestor and Gil put their hands up.

JIM
Josie? It's all over.

Josie sits up. She shrieks with joy.

JOSIE
That was great!

She throws her arms around him and kisses him. Nestor and Gil look to the window.

JIM
I've got a big surprise for
you dopes.

NESTOR
We got a surprise for you,
too.

JIM
Lay it on me, dickhead.

GIL
Them guns aren't loaded.

CU. JIM

His great, huge grin droops.

CU. JOSIE

Her smile fades.

CU. NESTOR

His smile grows.

CU. GIL

Likewise.

CU. JIM

A thought occurs to him.

JIM

I have an idea.

CU. JOSIE

She looks up at him.

CU. JIM

He smiles again. A concilliatory smile.

JIM

How about a truce? You're full of shit. I'm full of shit. I'll throw on a few corn dogs and we'll get to know one another. What do you say?

INT. STORE. LATER

The lights are on. Gil and Nestor are at the counter. Josie's a few stools down from them. Jim's behind the counter. He serves Nestor and Gil the corn dogs.

JOSIE

So, what's the word on you two? You married?

Nestor and Gil stare at her. They don't care for the question.

JOSIE

You're obviously hack crooks
if you can't pull off a
department store job. What
were you looking to steal?
Hairspray?

GIL

There's lots of valuable
stuff in here. TV's, stereos,
VCRs.

NESTOR

Electric typewriters.

The remark strikes Jim as funny. He laughs. Nestor snarls at
him.

JIM

Sorry.

GIL

(to Josie)

You got a job?

JOSIE

Nope.

GIL

Then don't knock ours.

JOSIE

Crime isn't a job.

NESTOR

Bullshit, lady.

JOSIE

It's a sickness.

GIL

Survival's a sickness?

JOSIE

You can't work?

GIL

I can work, I choose not to
work.

NESTOR

Same here. What do you get
for it? Shit.

GIL

It's like digging a hole in the sand. The faster you dig, the faster the hole fills in, you get it?

JOSIE

You ever kidnap anybody?

CU. JIM

He anticipates where she's going. He doesn't like it.

INT. STORE

Gil polishes off his corn dog and flips the stick across the counter into a wastebasket.

NESTOR

Kidnapping's bullshit.

GIL

We don't do it.

JOSIE

Why not?

GIL

We just don't.

JOSIE

Why?

NESTOR

You know how there's beer and there's lite beer? They're both beer but one's good for you and the other isn't?

CU. JIM

He looks at Josie with a smile.

CU. JOSIE

She catches the look and returns a smile.

GIL AND NESTOR

They have no idea how misinformed they are.

NESTOR
We're into lite crime. If
Bud's murder and Bud Lite's
breaking and entering, we're
Bud Lite guys.

INT. STORE

Josie and Jim try to follow the logic.

JOSIE
Shoplifting's say, Lean
Cuisine?

Gil and Nestor confer silently.

NESTOR
Exactly.

JIM
What would a piece of
sugarless gum be?

Gil and Nestor think.

GIL
Stealing a pair of rental
shoes from a bowling alley.

JOSIE
You guys want to make a
fortune?

Jim doesn't like what she's going to say. He doesn't like
events are turning. He's worried. For her.

JOSIE
(to Jim)
How much money do you think
my father has.

JIM
I don't care how much money
your father has.

He walks around from behind the counter.

JOSIE
Where're you going?

JIM
I got work to do.

NESTOR

Don't forget, man, the store
is technically still being
robbed.

JIM

Blow it out your ass.

Jim walks away and disappears down an aisle.

GIL

What a drip.

JOSIE

He's a nice guy.

NESTOR

Stupid.

JOSIE

No. But listen. My father
owns this town.

GIL

Sure. And you're shopping
here?

JOSIE

I'm not shopping here. I got
locked in. I wanted to get
picked-up for shoplifting.
Get arrested, right?

Gil and Nestor exchange looks. None of this makes sense to
them.

JOSIE

I fell asleep in the dressing
room. When it came right down
to getting caught lifting
clothes, I had to take time
to think it over. While I was
thinking, I fell asleep. I
woke up and the store's
closed and locked.

GIL

Why would you want to get
caught?

JOSIE

Humiliate my father.

NESTOR
Yeah. You're crazy.

JOSIE
I want to get away from him.

GIL
Try a bus.

JOSIE
It's not that easy.

NESTOR
I don't get it and I don't
want to get it.

JOSIE
Kidnap me.

GIL
Kidnap yourself, weird bitch.

JOSIE
Shut-up, white trash. I'm
serious.

GIL
Don't call me that.

JOSIE
I'll call you worse and
you'll deserve it. Kidnap me
and you'll get alot of money.

GIL
That's a federal rap.

JOSIE
You're already spent. You
think that matters? What's up
ahead for you if you're
robbing stores now?

GIL
Ask the janitor to kidnap
you.

JOSIE
He's too honest.

NESTOR
What are we?

JOSIE

By admission, thieves.

GIL

It's possible to be an honest thief.

JOSIE

Get lost. Theft is a dishonest act. Think about what you'd do with a million bucks.

GIL

I'd buy a million lottery tickets.

JOSIE

Incredible.

NESTOR

I'd buy a house for my family.

JOSIE

Okay. Take me out of here, call my father, tell him you've got me. I split, work out a ransom thing, get the money, I'll call him from where ever I am and tell him I'm okay and deny that I was kidnapped and you take the money and split to Mexico.

GIL

Where you can't drink the water?

JOSIE

Go to Canada. Go to Baton Rouge. Wherever you want. It's easy.

NESTOR

Until we get nailed.

JOSIE

You think you won't get caught robbing discount stores?

GIL

Not so far.

JOSIE
You ever do time?

NESTOR
Nope.

JOSIE
Luck. The longer you do it,
the faster you draw out your
luck.

GIL
Like you know anything.

JOSIE
How long have you been doing
this?

NESTOR
Robbing stores?

JOSIE
Yeah.

NESTOR
(after a pause)
This is the first one.

INT. STORE

Jim's sitting in the shoe department. He's worried and he's depressed. He got a taste of something and now it's gone. He's realizing what a loser he is.

INT. STORE. COUNTER

The conversation continues.

JOSIE
If this is your first job,
how'd you work the alarm?

GIL
I know how they work.

JOSIE
How?

NESTOR
His brother's a cop.

GIL
My sister.

NESTOR

Yeah.

JOSIE

And she teaches you how to compromise alarm systems?

GIL

If that means break-in, yeah.

JOSIE

Bullshit. You don't know what you're doing. You got lucky.

NESTOR

Is that true?

There's a considerable pause as Gil considers his response.

GIL

I got it off TV.

JOSIE

You're two losers drifting around watching TV, decide to rob a store. How'd you get the guns?

NESTOR

They're mine.

JOSIE

Where'd you get 'em?

NESTOR

You know how easy it is to come by a gun?

JOSIE

If you got money.

NESTOR

I guess I had money.

JOSIE

From where?

NESTOR

What's it to you?

JOSIE

I don't believe any of this.

NESTOR

I worked.

JOSIE

Where?

NESTOR

Packing plant in K.C.

JOSIE

How long?

NESTOR

Three years.

JOSIE

And you decided to become a criminal?

NESTOR

I guess so.

JOSIE

You read it in a comic book?

GIL

He split. This isn't any of your business. Nosey-ass bitch.

JOSIE

I'm not talking to you.

NESTOR

I don't owe you anything, lady.

JOSIE

My name's Josie.

GIL

That's a dog name.

JOSIE

(ignores him)
You had a family?

NESTOR

I said I did.

JOSIE

And you just left?

NESTOR

It happens all the time.
That's why they got planes,
you know. What do you care?

JOSIE

Small town?

NESTOR

What's small?

JOSIE

What made you leave?

NESTOR

You ask alot of questions.

JOSIE

It's a good way to get
answers.

NESTOR

(to Gil)

You wanna split? This is
going nowhere.

GIL

What about the car?

JOSIE

You got a car?

GIL

No, we're walking cross
country. Idiot.

(to Nestor)

We'll grab some chain and the
janitor. The three of us
oughta be able to do
something.

INT. STORE. AISLE

Jim's picking up goods from the floor and returning them to
their place on the shelf. Gil comes down the aisle. He kicks
stuff aside and passes Jim.

GIL

(as he passes)

You gotta help us pull our
car outta the shit.

Jim watches him pass.

JIM
Don't kidnap her, man. It's a
trap. She's desperate.

Gil turns but doesn't stop. He walks backwards as he speaks.

GIL
I wasn't born Tuesday.

JIM
She's confused.

GIL
Who isn't?

He grins and winks. He turns and continues on his way.

CU. JEWELRY CASE

Nestor's hand reaches in and scoops up a display of watches.

CU. JOSIE

She's still at the counter. Staring out the window, thinking.
She glances up at the clock.

HER POV. STORE CLOCK

It reads 4:06.

INT. STORE. BACKROOM

Nestor and Gil have loaded their loot into store suitcases.
Jim's sitting on a crate watching them.

JIM
I'm not helping you with your
car.

GIL
Think again.

JIM
Beat the shit out of me, kill
me. I don't care. I'm not
doing it. I'm not a criminal.

Josie walks in.

JOSIE
Can I go with you guys?

GIL
Fuck off. For the tenth time.

JOSIE

Please?

JIM

What do you want to go with them for? You'll be an accessory to their crime.

JOSIE

So?

JIM

Why break the law and go somewhere with these morons?

Gil grabs Jim by the shirt front and throws him to the ground.

NESTOR

(to Gil)

Cut it out.

JOSIE

I have money.

GIL

And what's to keep us from just taking your money and not you?

JOSIE

I guess I'll just have to trust you.

JIM

You don't know these guys. You don't know anything about them.

GIL

(to Jim)

You call the cops and I'll kill you.

JIM

Then you better do it because I'm calling the cops.

Gil looks at Nestor. Nestor shakes his head. Nobody's getting killed.

EXT. STORE. LOADING AREA. LATER

Gil and Nestor and Josie exit the store.

JOSIE
Where's your car?

GIL
We're parked in the woods.

INT. STORE. LADIES DRESSING ROOMS

A rope spans the narrow hallway. It's tied to the door knobs on opposing changing room doors. The doors open in.

INT. CHANGING ROOM. JIM

He's sitting on the bench in the changing room. He feels abandoned even though he's not sure he'd go with the others if they'd asked him to. In some small way, Josie's forced his hand. He can't go back to what he was.

EXT. WOODS

Josie's in Gil and Nestor's car, they're behind rocking the car. Josie's racing the engine.

GIL
PUT IT IN FORWARD!

JOSIE
IT IS!

GIL
REVERSE

Josie through it in reverse.

GIL
FORWARD!

She puts it in forward. The car climbs out of the rut it's made for itself. It rolls back.

GIL
ONCE MORE! FORWARD!

Josie guns the engine again and the car leaps out of the rut, catches dry ground and roars down the rest of the incline.

EXT. HIGHWAY

A four lane highway is at the bottom of the hill. Gil and Nestor's car rumbles through the underbrush and emerges onto the highway with a bone-rattling CLUNK!

EXT. HILLSIDE

Gil and Nestor exchange triumphant high fives, ass bumps and head-knocks. They head down through the underbrush.

GIL

We did it.

NESTOR

Robbed our first discount department store.

GIL

No problem.

NESTOR

We got us a career, huh?

GIL

And we can set our own hours.

NESTOR

Yup.

GIL

You got it.

NESTOR

Toyota.

They reach the bottom of the hill and the highway. With big, happy smiles they at the the empty highway. They wait several long beats, holding the big smiles. It's slowly dawning on them that Josie's gone. In their car. With their merchandise.

INT. STORE. JIM

He's laying on the bench, looking up at the ceiling. He's talking to himself.

JIM

This is what you are, man.
Professional night janitor.
This is your life, James
Dodge. But! You can die
knowing that one of the
world's great beauties, one
of your generations' quickest
minds and most intriguing
personality laid on top of
you, kissed you and opened
her heart to you. And then
took a breeze with two
hillbillies and a suitcase
full of old lady jewelry.
But! You had the moment and
sometimes in life, a moment
is all you get. Her boredom
was exquisite.

(pause)

Everything about her was
exquisite.

CU. JOSIE

She standing in the open door. Smiling.

JOISE

Except her attitude.

CU. JIM

His eyes open with alarm. He screams.

INT. DRESSING ROOM

Jim jumps up off the bench to face Josie.

JOSIE

I'm back!

JIM

What happened?!

JOSIE

I've decided that the only
realistic way to get out of
town is to have you marry me.

CU. JIM

He stares at her like she's crazy.

INT. STORE. AISLE

Jim walks down the aisle. Josie walks behind. It's as though he's trying to get away from her.

JOSIE

We'll elope and then I'll
tell my father.

JIM

Your crazy.

JOSIE

Absolutely. You don't want to
marry me?

JIM

I don't even know you.

JOSIE

This solves your problems,
too. You won't have to live
alone. You'll live with me.
You won't have to work,
either.

Jim stops and turns to Josie.

JIM

I don't want to live off
someone. I don't want to get
married. This isn't any kind
of answer. This is just
hysteria and I don't want to
determine the rest of my life
based on a moment of
hysteria. You're the most
magnificent woman I've ever
met and I've only met a few
but you don't love me and I'm
not sure I love you.
Eventually, you'll be in
another department store in
the middle of the night
hitting on some other janitor
trainee to help you get away
from me.

Josie takes offense to the remark.

JOSIE

That's a nice thing to say.

JIM
Isn't there a grain of truth
in it?

JOSIE
I don't know.

JIM
I'm not your answer. I'm just
another problem dressed-up as
a solution.

EXT. STORE. LATER

The sun is coming up. The lights are off. Nestor and Gil's
car is parked in the lot. The custodian's car pulls into the
lot.

INT. STORE. AISLE

It's cleaned up.

INT. STORE. FOOD COUNTER

It's also been cleaned up.

CU. WATCH DISPLAY

The watches are all put back.

CU. LUGGAGE DISPLAY

The suitcases are back and on the shelves.

INT. STORE. CUSTODIAN

He unlocks the door and walks in.

CUSTODIAN
Dodge?

EXT. HIGHWAY

Gil and Nestor walk down the highway.

GIL
Was Kansas City all that bad?

NESTOR
They got a good baseball
team.

GIL
The Chief's suck.

NESTOR

A couple draft picks away.
What are you getting at?

GIL

I don't know. I kind of miss
the place.

NESTOR

You only been gone a couple
weeks.

GIL

Feels like a lifetime though,
huh?

NESTOR

I don't know, I haven't been
through a whole lifetime yet.
I don't know it feels like.

EXT. TOWN. KIDS

Up early. Leaning on their bikes in the town square.

THEIR POV

Jim and Josie come down the main street.

EXT. SQUARE. KIDS

One cups his hand to his mouth.

KID

Hey, Jim!

EXT. STREET. JIM AND JOSIE

They continue down the street. Jim waves to the kids.

CU. KID

He recognizes Josie.

KID

You captured her, Jim! The
cops are looking all over for
her!

INT. POLICE STATION

Roger Roy is slumped in a chair. He's been up all night. The
CHIEF OF POLICE is on the phone.

CHIEF

Thanks, Bob. Let me know if
you hear anything.

The Chief hangs up the phone. A beat and the police station
door opens. Jim and Josie walk in. The Chief chokes on his
coffee. Roger looks up and sees Josie. It doesn't register
right away.

JOSIE

Hi, Dad.

He slowly rises. He's not angry. He smiles. Tears rush into
his eyes. He blinks them back and rushes Josie. He folds her
into his arms.

CHIEF

Jim?

JIM

Hi, Henry.

ROGER

Where have you been?

CHIEF

She was with you all night?

JOSIE

It's a long story.

JIM

Sir? It's none of my business
but Josie has to be able to
choose what she's going to do
with her life.

Josie's father looks at Josie. Josie looks away.

JIM

She told me she loves you an
awful lot and that as much as
she wants to leave, she can't
so I think you should help
her out a little. She oughta
be in college or working on a
career. Just because you
don't see her everyday
doesn't mean she's gone.
That's just my opinion. I'm
sorry if I was a part of
anything that caused you
misery.

He looks at Josie with an affectionate smile. She realizes how much she actually has fallen for him. But it's too late. She gives him a sad smile.

JIM
Maybe I'll run into you
sometime.

He crosses to the door and exits.

EXT. JIM'S HOUSE

He shuffles up the front walk. BUD is coming out the door to get the paper. Jim tosses it to him.

JIM
Morning, Dad.

BUD
(puzzled, after a pause)
You walk home?

JIM
Yep.

BUD
How was work?

JIM
Hated it. Quit.

BUD
You quit?

JIM
Yep.

Bud glares at him.

JIM
And I'm leaving home.

Jim goes into the house. Bud stands on the porch with the newspaper. He's startled. He turns and hurries into the house.

INT. HOUSE. STAIRS

Jim walks up the stairs.

BUD (OS)
Jim!

Jim stops on the stairs. A beat and he turns.

CU. BUD

Puzzled, confused.

BUD

What're you talking about?

CU. JIM

He's amused. After all of Bud's harping on Jim's living at home, he seems upset that he wants to leave.

JIM

I'm going up North to see
Uncle Jeff.

CU. BUD

He wants to recind all his threats to throw Jim out.

BUD

What brought this on?

CU. JIM

He shrugs.

JIM

It's time.

CU. BUD

He's upset.

BUD

Maybe you oughta think it
over a little bit. I only
brought it up as an option
for you.

CU. JIM

He smiles.

JIM

I thought about it.

He turns and climbs the rest of the stairs.

CU. BUD

He's stunned by the news.

EXT. BUS STATION. THAT EVENING.

A tiny section of a commercial building serves as the bus station. A Greyhound is waiting in an alley beside the building. Jim, Bud, Dotty, Cal and Penny are standing outside the bus station, saying their farewells to Jim.

DOTTY

I think you're crazy to leave so fast.

PENNY

Don't be a jerk and embarrass the whole family.

CAL

Send me something.

BUD

You got enough money?

JIM

Yep. I'll pay you back for what you gave me.

BUD

Don't worry about it.

Dotty hugs Jim. A teary, sloppy, rib-crushing hug. Penny kisses him carefully on the cheek. Cal shakes his hand. Bud gives him a quick, manly hug.

BUD

You better run.

DOTTY

If you stop and use the restroom, be sure and put paper down on the seat.

JIM

(nods to Dotty,
continues)

I'll call you when I get there.

He boards the bus. The family steps away. The bus blows a plume of black exhaust into the alley and pulls out of the alley.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE. KIDS

They push off on their bikes and chase after the bus.

INT. BUS. JIM

He's sitting at the window. He looks out on the town he's seen every day for his twenty years. He hears the boys' voices. He looks down.

HIS POV

Through the bus window, half a dozen pre-teen boys peddling furiously to keep up with the bus. They're yelling for Jim.

INT. BUS. JIM

He opens the window.

EXT. STREET. BOYS

Peddling alongside the bus.

BOY
HEY, JIM! WHERE'RE YA GOIN'?

CU. JIM

Hanging his head out the window, big smile.

JIM
UP TO CHICAGO TO WORK IN MY
UNCLE'S NURSERY! I'M GONNA BE
PLANTING FLOWERS AND
SPREADING COW MANURE!

He waves goodbye to them. The bus pulls ahead.

EXT. STREET

The boys are deeply puzzled by the response. They stop peddling and coast as they ponder the first bit of truth they've ever gotten from Jim Dodge.

EXT. STREET. BUS

It pulls off into a glorious Midwestern sunset.

END