



MANAGEMENT

Written and Directed by
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CREDITS ROLL

MUSIC: "COWBOY" by Kid Rock, as we see a SERIES OF SHOTS:

- 1 INT. FRONT DESK/ LOBBY AREA - DAY 1
- C.U. on a large, breakfast buffet plastic cereal dispenser being filled with Fruit Loops from an industrial-sized Fruit Loop box. The cereal slowly piling up, ready to do its job.
- A plastic sack of orange juice being lowered into a cafeteria-style orange juice dispenser.
- Fruit being arranged semi-artfully into a large plastic bowl.
- Various pre-packaged breakfast goodies, (Cinnamon Delites, Pecan Twirlers, Blueberry Blazes...) being lined in rows on a theoretically white table cloth.
- PULL BACK to reveal MIKE CRANSHAW, late 30's, cigarette dangling from mouth, hair like a rain forest, nametag crooked and yet a genuine sweetness beneath it all, performing these early-morning chores with the enthusiasm of a dead squirrel.
- 2 EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT - DAY 2
- Mike on a step ladder in a parking lot of a small, two-story L-shaped motel. He is replacing a stolen letter on the motel's welcome sign, in this case the "B" in the phrase: "FREE HBO"
- 3 INT. FRONT DESK/ LOBBY AREA - DAY 3
- Mike, cigarette in mouth, smiles pleasantly as he gestures several motel guests from the front the desk area toward the complimentary continental breakfast spread.
- 4 INT. BACK ROOM OFF THE LOBBY - MOTEL - DAY 4
- Mike, shirt off, in a room behind the front desk area, struggling with a chin-up on a bar he's jammed into a doorway, all the while keeping an eye on Regis and Kelly, which plays on an old TV.
- MUSIC FADES as he completes his 5th chin-up and calls it a morning. As Regis drones on, his mother, TRISH CRANSHAW, early 60's, chipper and vital, sticks her head in from the lobby.

5 CONTINUED:

5

BUSINESSMAN

No, I gotta head over to Vegas then up to Salt Lake.

TRISH

If it's not one thing, it's another.

Mike, as is his habit, completely ignores this conversation.

6 INT. MIKE'S CAR - DAY

6

Mike drives his beat-up 2-door Buick along a commercial strip that could be anywhere in America. He pulls into the parking lot of "FLAGSTAFF FOO-YUNG, \$5.95 ALL-U-CAN-EAT"

*

7 INT. FLAGSTAFF FOO-YUNG - DAY

7

Mike at a darkened corner table reading *National Geographic*, mouthful of Lo Mein. A waitress starts to clear his plate--

MIKE

(polite)

I'm not quite finished yet.

She smiles, he smiles, he chews...he reads.

8 EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT - DAY

8

Mike's car pulls back into the lot. As he parks and gets out he looks through the glass door into the lobby and sees a woman checking in. He pauses, perhaps interested by her hair, which is long and well-groomed, and possibly the only thing he can really see of her.

9 INT. FRONT DESK/LOBBY AREA - DAY

9

Mike enters from the lot, the small "entrance bell" sounding. Trish smiles to him from behind the desk, as he subtly attempts to check out the WOMAN checking in. She is mid-30's, pretty but all-business, in a pants-suit that seems to match her emotionally-curt personality.

WOMAN

One night, preferably something on the upper level.

TRISH

Smoking?--non-smok--

WOMAN

Non-smoking.

MIKE

Yeah. Not always, but...often.
(she just looks at him)
There should be another cup in the
bathroom.

SUE

I actually have to get back to work.

MIKE

Oh.
(pause)
What do you do?

SUE

I sell paintings.

MIKE

Really? I love paintings. What kind?

SUE

Like that.

She is pointing to a generic wall-hanging of hounds chasing a
fox.

MIKE

Wow. So you sell them to, like--?

SUE

Companies, offices. Hotels.

MIKE

Nice. So you're in town doing that?
(she just nods)
For just tonight?

SUE

I have presentations tomorrow, then fly
out the next morning.

MIKE

What's the name of your company? That
you work for?

SUE

I'm not really interested in this, Mike.

MIKE

I'm just asking because I've been trying
to convince my parents to buy some new
art for this place.

MIKE

I was wondering if I could snag your cell phone number, or email or something, before you leave.

SUE

(a look, and then:)
I don't think so, Mike.

MIKE

Why not?

SUE

Not my style.

MIKE

But we...you know, I touched your butt.

SUE

I know, Mike, and it was nice, but I think that's all she wrote.

Mike stands there, shocked, as she heads for the door.

25 INT. LAUNDRY ROOM - DAY

25

Mike, having sought refuge, stands by a dryer breathing deep, pissed, bummed, confused. The machines WHIRL LOUDLY. After several moments he looks up and sees Sue standing at the door, holding the handle of her rolling suitcase. She watches him, then closes the door behind her and approaches. He waits. She is inches away, watching him, then she cups her hands on his face and kisses him. It ends; she pulls back, considering...and then she kisses him again. This time it is passionate, deep, generous and needy; and it lasts, soon becoming a tangle of hands and arms and legs seeking legs. Soon both their shirts are off, with both sets of pants heading south. It's sloppy, chaotic and ultimately kinda hot...sex as a contact sport full of uncoordinated lust and deep emotional needs--all on the edge of a dryer.

*

26 EXT. LAUNDRY ROOM - PARKING LOT - MINUTES LATER

26

The laundry room door opens onto the lot and Mike and Sue exit, both showing the signs of their frivolity but trying not to. Standing right next to the door is Jerry, smoking his morning cigarette. Mike almost has a heart attack, as Sue rolls her suitcase to the rental car, places it in the trunk and opens the driver's side door. She attempts to give Jerry a smooth smile.

SUE

Thanks for the wonderful hospitality.

(CONTINUED)

28 INT. FLAGSTAFF KARATE STUDIO - FLOOR - NIGHT

28

Mike, in robe with yellow belt, stands among nine students, all practicing their mae geri snap kick in front of a wall mirror as a high-pitched instructor, sort of a Ritchie Cunningham with a goatee, shouts at them to find their *chi*. Mike, who is not particularly flexible or agile, is nonetheless working out his anger and sadness with significant chopping and kicking efforts.

29 INT. FLAGSTAFF KARATE STUDIO - CORNER - NIGHT

29

*

Behind a partition designating the men's changing area, Mike puts on street clothes next to a tall, lanky 24-year-old computer expert named JED. They both wear tighty-whitey's.

*

*

JED

Mike, brew tonight?

MIKE

Not tonight, Jed.

JED

Why not, you said last week we'd blow it out this week.

MIKE

I know--

JED

So what's the deal?--I want us to puke.

MIKE

Why?

JED

'Cause I like puking, it's like karate, it's fucking cathartic.

MIKE

I know, man, but I got some thinking to do tonight.

JED

About what?

MIKE

...Gotta figure out what it's all about.

30 CONTINUED:

Mike hurtles himself at the phone, speaking at it before he has the chance to change his mind--

MIKE

Yes hi I'd like to book a one-way cash ticket from Phoenix to Baltimore for as fast as fucking possible!

--off Mike, intense, listening to the next question--as:

MUSIC INTENSIFIES--CUT TO: SERIES OF SHOTS--

31 INT. BALTIMORE AIRPORT- DAY 31

Mike standing still on a horizontally moving escalator as it glides him beneath a WELCOME TO MARYLAND! sign. *

32 OMIT 32 *

33 OMIT 33 *

34 OMIT 34 *

35 I/E. TAXI CAB - DAY 35 *

Mike sits stone-faced in the cab's backseat. C.U. on the meter: \$43.60 And rolling. *

36 EXT. CORPORATE BLISS - DAY 36

Mike, eating a Taco Bell burrito, walking up to a small, two-story building in the middle of a perfectly suburban office park. He looks at the nameplates on the building's facade, one of which says, CORPORATE BLISS. He enters--

MUSIC FADES

37 INT. CORPORATE BLISS - RECEPTION AREA - DAY 37

Walls adorned with many paintings of foxes and hounds. Mike approaches a 20-something blond RECEPTIONIST.

MIKE

Hi, I'm here to see, ah, Sue Clemmons.

RECEPTIONIST

Is she expecting you?

MIKE

I left a couple messages.

MIKE
Why?

SUE
Because I barely even know you.

MIKE
But we--

SUE
It's like a *violation*.

MIKE
I wasn't trying to--

SUE
Well you did, OK? You are. You're violating my personal space and you're violating my personal *life*. I've got half a mind to call the police.

MIKE
Please don't do that.

SUE
(beat)
I have to be somewhere. I'm late.

MIKE
It's five o'clock.

SUE
I know.

MIKE
What are you late for?

SUE
I have an event.

MIKE
What kind of event?

SUE
Indoor soccer practice.

MIKE
...Can I come?

SUE
No.

MIKE

...Why not?

SUE

Because it's fucking ludicrous. I let you touch my ass and then you fly across country and--

MIKE

It was more than just an ass-touch.

She's forced to concede this.

SUE

You still can't stay.

MIKE

Can I stay for just tonight?

SUE

I've got things to do.

MIKE

How much stuff can you *do* in one night?--

SUE

I do a *lot* of stuff. It may not be "interesting," but I do it.

MIKE

Like what? Do you go out with friends?

SUE

I don't have friends, Mike.

MIKE

...OK. So what *do* you do?

SUE

I pass out vouchers. See that girl over there? She works for Burger King.

MIKE

OK.

SUE

And she gives me vouchers every week. Which I pass out.

Mike looks over to where one of the 20-something's juggles a ball with her feet. He looks back at Sue...utterly honest:

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED:

41

SUE (cont'd)
 C'mon you guys, it's the only thing
 that's not gonna cause an immediate heart
 attack.

One guy raises his hand and she dispenses.

SUE (cont'd)
 Mike?

Mike, still in his tight Umbros, now dutifully hands out
 Gatorades leftover from practice. The homeless men nod their
 thanks.

SUE (cont'd)
 OK then.

HOMELESS VOICE
 Thanks, Sue.

She turns and leaves. Mike follows.

42 EXT. PARKING LOT - SUE'S CONDO - NIGHT

42

Sue and Mike get out of her car in front of a line of
 recently-built suburban "townhouses" in what is essentially,
 if not technically, a gated condo complex. Both are nervous
 as they approach her entrance.

MIKE
 It's nice.

SUE
 Thanks. Been here two years.

43 INT. LIVING ROOM - SUE'S CONDO - NIGHT

43

They enter; Sue turns on a light and we see a fairly small
 one-bedroom unit, the wall-to-wall carpet fastidiously
 vacuumed, the kitchen area immaculate, trinkets and framed
 photos arranged perfectly on a side table. It's nice but
 she's about 10 years shy of being a spinster. She turns to
 him:

SUE
 I'm too tired to make love.

MIKE
 OK. Me too. The soccer wore me out.
 (pause; light)
 You want me to touch your butt?

(CONTINUED)

43 CONTINUED: (2)

SUE
...Fine.

44 INT. BEDROOM - SUE'S CONDO - DAY 44

Mike and Sue lie side-by-side beneath covers. Mike is awake, watching Sue sleep. Sun shines in through a window. After a moment he spots some breath mints on the bedside table. He furtively pops one, then leans over and kisses Sue forehead. He looks at her for a reaction; there is none. He then leans and kisses her cheek; still nothing. And now her lips, very gently. Far from a smooth operator, he's making it up as he goes along. He kisses her lips again. And then...her lips reciprocate. She's kissing him back, eyes still closed, and yet we realize she's awake, consenting and they're on their way to making love.

*
*

45 INT. BREAKFAST NOOK - SUE'S APARTMENT - DAY 45

Sue and Mike sit side-by-side sipping orange juice and nibbling very dark, German spelt bread. Beat.

SUE
So is your return ticket all set?

MIKE
...I don't actually have one.

SUE
(incredulity)
You don't have a return ticket?

MIKE
I bought a one-way.

SUE
Why?

MIKE
I don't know.

SUE
That's unacceptable, Mike.

MIKE
I know--

SUE
You need to buy one--

SUE
Zoo's suck.

MIKE
We'll do something else.
(she considers...beat)
Do you have a boyfriend, Sue?

SUE
...No.

MIKE
Did you used to?

SUE
Yes.

MIKE
What was his name?

SUE
Jango. He's a punk. Ex-punk.

MIKE
A punk like--?

SUE
Like a rock punk.

MIKE
Oh. So do you still hang out with him?

SUE
He moved away. Last month.

MIKE
Did he want you to go with him?

SUE
...Yes.

MIKE
(a nod...and then:)
Why'd he leave?

SUE
He's the VP of a yogurt company. He went
to run their Pacific Northwest
operations.
(pause)
I hate the fact that you smoke.

MIKE
Me too. It's like...insane.
(pause)
How about kids?

*
*

SUE
What about them?

*
*

MIKE
Do you want 'em?
(no answer)
Sue?

*
*
*
*

SUE
...Yes.

*
*

MIKE
Me to. I think.

*
*

They walk; she stops, turns to him:

SUE
Why are you even here, Mike? I mean, do
you think you, like, "like" me or
something?

*

MIKE
Yes.

SUE
Why?

MIKE
You have style.

SUE
No I don't.

MIKE
Yeah you do.

SUE
You're wrong--

MIKE
You give away 30 percent of your income.

SUE
You would too if you made more.

47 CONTINUED: (3)

MIKE
...Right.

48 EXT. BUS STATION - BALTIMORE - DAY 48

Mike and Sue stand by the bus. He's about to get in.

MIKE
I'll pay you back for the ticket.

SUE
Don't worry about it.

MIKE
Do you think I'll ever see you again?

SUE
No.
(he is speechless)
We're not right for each other, Mike.

MIKE
But--

SUE
You live two-thousand miles away.
(pause)
With your parents. At a motel.

MIKE
You're being a jerk.

BUS DRIVER (O.S.)
OK, buddy, all aboard.

Mike looks to the driver, who sits in the idling bus. Mike and Sue regard each other. She speaks very quietly:

SUE
I wouldn't be good for you anyway.

MIKE
Why not?

SUE
I'm not good with people.

MIKE
It's not true--

SUE
Yeah it is--

JERRY

Hi.

MIKE

Everything OK?

JERRY

Yep.

MIKE

Where's Ma?

JERRY

Hardware store.

MIKE

I got an appointment at 3 today. Just so you remember I won't be--

JERRY

I got you.

And with that he's gone, into the back room. Mike looks after him, then looks out front to see if the coast is clear. He then looks at his watch, puts down his magazine and determinedly picks up the phone. He dials and waits...

MIKE

Ah, hey, Sue, it's Mike again, trying not to call too much but I just wanted to make sure you got the poem I sent last week. The, ah, the sorta elongated haiku thing.

(glancing around nervously)

Anyway, you know my home number, or of course the front desk. Seriously though, you should give a call, 'cause I'm definitely around.

(as Marissa enters--)

Anyway...talk to you soon; I hope. Bye.

Marissa walks by, staring at him as he hangs up embarrassed and pissed at himself. She leaves as Mike's attention is suddenly diverted by something out in the parking lot: His POV on his Mom near the entrance to the lot, standing with eyes closed as though trying to regain her balance. He quickly gets up--

*

Mike hurries over to where Trish is still trying to regain composure--

52 CONTINUED:

MIKE
Management.

30-SOMETHING WOMAN (O.S.)
Who?!

MIKE
Welcome gift. From management.

The door is opened by a 30-SOMETHING WOMAN whose demeanor is perhaps warmer than Sue's but who is far less willing to tolerate Mike's oddness.

30-SOMETHING WOMAN
I'm sorry?

MIKE
I'm Mike, from management, and I have a complimentary welcome gift for you.

30-SOMETHING WOMAN
What is it?

MIKE
Wine.

30-SOMETHING WOMAN
I don't drink.

MIKE
...Would you like some seltzer?

30-SOMETHING WOMAN
No.

MIKE
Fruit?

30-SOMETHING WOMAN
I'm really very busy.

MIKE
(pause)
Do you like Neil Young?

30-SOMETHING WOMAN
Please leave me alone.

She slams the door. Off Mike, alone--

54 INT. BEDROOM - JERRY AND TRISH'S HOUSE - DAY

54

Mike stands at his Mom's bedside. She is quite weakened but still has the remnants of her vitality.

MIKE
How're you doin', Ma?

TRISH
Don't pity me, Mike.

MIKE
I'm not.

TRISH
Good.

MIKE
So does that mean you're good?

TRISH
I'm fine. Just feeling a little weak. *

MIKE
You have bone cancer, Mom.

TRISH
Everyone's got bone cancer, Michael.

He's not sure how to respond to this one, so he doesn't.

TRISH (cont'd)
How's the motel?

MIKE
It's fine.

TRISH
How's the weekend looking?

MIKE
Pretty good. There's a flower convention downtown, so...

TRISH
Good.

MIKE
...You know that appointment I've been doing for the last three Wednesday's, that I didn't wanna tell you about?

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED: (2)

MIKE
I'll try.

She looks at him lovingly, and pats down a particularly
unsettled strand of his hair.

*
*

TRISH
You're a good son, Mike.

55 EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT - DUSK

55

Mike stands alone in the lot smoking a cigarette, lost in
thought. After a several moments, a generic rental car pulls
in and parks. Mike looks up as *Sue gets out*. She looks at
him. He stares back.

SUE
I thought you were gonna quit smoking.

MIKE
I did.

SUE
But not forever?

MIKE
...What are you doing here?

SUE
Work.

He takes this in as she takes a suitcase from the trunk.

MIKE
Did you get my haiku?

SUE
The elongated one?

MIKE
Yeah.

SUE
Yes.

MIKE
How come you didn't call me back?

SUE
I've been busy.

She walks up to him, suitcase in tow.

(CONTINUED)

57 CONTINUED:

SUE
(not looking at him)
The reasons people do what they do.

MIKE
(beat; letting it go)
Are you *liking* your work these days?

SUE
It's OK.

MIKE
But not great?

SUE
Not really.

MIKE
You should quit.

SUE
You think it's that easy?

MIKE
No, but--

SUE
Do you like *your* job?

MIKE
No--

SUE
OK then.

MIKE
(pause)
What would you do if you *could* choose something else? Like your fantasy job.

SUE
I don't really do fantasies--

MIKE
I know, but, if you *could*. If someone said, "You can do whatever you want for the rest of your life, Sue." What would it be?

(CONTINUED)

SUE

These are for you. I guess there's a big flower convention coming to town so stores are really stocking up.

TRISH

That's nice of you.

MIKE

Sue flew in from Baltimore just this afternoon.

SUE

I was actually in St. Louis last night.

TRISH

What do you do, Sue?

SUE

I sell corporate decorative art.

This elicits an utterly blank stare from Trish.

TRISH

(pause)

I've met you before.

MIKE

She actually once stayed at the motel, Mom. That's how we met.

This time Trish's stare is mixed with suspicion.

TRISH

Oh.

(a forced smile)

And where are you from. Originally?

SUE

Columbia, Maryland.

MIKE

Sue gives away thirty per cent of her income, Ma'.

TRISH

...Do you come from a good family?

Mike looks nervously from Trish to Sue.

SUE

Not really.

(CONTINUED)

SUE
May I talk to my son in private for a moment?

Sue glances at Mike, who nods apologetically. Sue leaves.

TRISH
I like her.

MIKE
Really?

TRISH
She's logical, in an emotionally-annihilated kind of way. But that's OK. Underneath that there's a heart of....

MIKE
Gold?

TRISH
No, I wouldn't say gold, but there is a heart. Maybe made of leather. But nice leather. High quality, durable, probably very soft; over time.

Mike looks pleased.

TRISH (cont'd)
She'll be good for you when I'm gone. If you can keep her.

MIKE
Ma', don't talk like--

TRISH
Stop whining, Michael, I'm on my way out and we all know it. Needless to say, what would make me happy is for you to find a little something for yourself before my check-out time, just so I know it's not you and your father alone here walking around like robots.

MIKE
Dad's not a robot, Ma'.

TRISH
Sure he is, but I was more talking about you. Unless you find something to...lift yourself out.

MIKE
She liked you.

SUE
No she didn't--

MIKE
She did, she told me.

SUE
It doesn't matter anyway.

Mike decides to ignore this as Sue resignedly stares out the window.

MIKE
Your Dad sounds like a real asshole.

She looks at him, a small smile.

SUE
Yeah.

Mike drives...and then:

MIKE
Is that why you dated the ex-punk guy?
To get away from the whole hippie-dad
thing?

SUE
What are you, Dr. Ruth?

MIKE
I'm just saying, if your Dad was hands-
off, then maybe you dated an older punk
guy because he was more...

SUE
More what?

MIKE
...Aggressively hands-*on*?

SUE
(pause)
I don't really think about things that
way, Mike.

They drive in silence.

SUE (cont'd)
Your father seems nice.

60 INT. ROOM 221 - THE MOTEL - NIGHT

60

Mike and Sue sit up in bed eating from a tub of Breyer's ice cream and watching TV images of a bombed-out resort hotel in Iceland's capital. We catch glimpses of some of the destruction and human suffering, which is brutal. After several moments, Mike mutes the sound. *

MIKE

It's all so messed up. *

Silence a moment, and then:

SUE

Whenever I see this kind of stuff, it's like I have to remind myself to just breathe. Like I literally have to instruct my heart to request additional air. I just tell myself--
(doing it, eyes closed)
Breath, Sue. Just keep breathing... *

After several more seconds she slowly opening her eyes... *

MIKE

Can I ask you something?

SUE

Sure.

MIKE

Why'd you let me touch your butt that time? I mean...why'd you even have the idea?

SUE

(pause)
Because normal sex sucks, Mike. Right? Not always, but often. At least for some of us. Normal sex sucks.

Mike absorbs this...then sort of just nods. Then he gently takes her hand in his... Beat.

MIKE

Do you like Neil Young?

SUE

(pause)
I do, actually. *

He smiles...as they sit, eating ice cream, watching the muted images of destruction on TV... *

DICK #1
You got mice infestation.

MIKE
Where?

DICK #2
In your rooms.

MIKE
You saw a mouse?--

DICK #1
Yeah--we saw a mouse plus I saw like 10
mouse poop pellets in the bathroom.

MIKE
I'm sorry for the inconvenience, sir--

DICK #2
Fuck that, we're not paying for the room.

Mike, aware that Sue is watching, tries to stay strong.

MIKE
Well I'm sorry but that's not how our
policy works--

DICK #1
We don't care about your policy, we're
not paying for your shitty little room.

MIKE
I'll tell you what I'll do, I'll give you
a voucher for half-price next time you--

DICK #1
(in Mike's face)
Fuck you. Gimme the thing I signed.

MIKE
...No.

DICK #1
(grabbing Mike's shirt)
You think I'm messing around?--Gimme the
fucking thing!

SUE
Excuse me, this is *not* how you solve
problems--

MIKE

It happens sometimes.

He cleans his nose and straightens up the papers...

SUE

I'm sorry I'm going.

He keeps cleaning, not answering, as an elderly couple enters and heads for the breakfast nook.....

SUE (cont'd)

I'll stay in better touch this time?

MIKE

Whatever you say.

SUE

Mike--

MIKE

I have to attend to the fruit bowl.

(extends his hand formally)

It was nice to see you again.

SUE

Don't be like this.

But Mike stands, hand out, waiting. She reluctantly shakes
and he turns and walks to the breakfast area, leaving her
there with her suitcase. Her POV on Mike tidying the fruit
bowl, trying not to bleed on the bananas. His hair is
tousled, his shirt untucked. She watches...

*
*
*
*

SUE (cont'd)

I could love you.

She's spoken loud enough that the elderly couple takes
notice. They watch attentively, awaiting his response.

*
*

SUE (cont'd)

Mike?

He stops with the fruit, blood again trickling from his nose,
but still doesn't answer. Silence. After a moment, Sue
turns and leaves, suitcase in tow.

FADE TO:

But after that first handful, they're not quite sure what to do with the ash remnant on their hands. Jerry discreetly wipes it on his pants leg. He then carefully takes from his pocket two delicate-looking necklaces.

JERRY

Meant to give these to you earlier.
They're your mom's favorite two pieces of jewelry. As you know, she was a necklace woman.

He hands them to Mike, who lets each one dangle from a hand.

JERRY (cont'd)

(re: the first)

You ask me, that one's kinda tacky, but she loved the hell outta it. And God knows it costs a lot. The other one's the one *I* like. Happens to be on the cheaper side, but that's not why.

MIKE

They're nice.

JERRY

I thought you should have 'em. Not sure why, 'cause I wouldn't want you to start wearing 'em, but...I thought you might enjoy.

MIKE

Thanks, Dad.

Jerry nods; beat.

JERRY

I also had some guy call me wantin' to buy the motel.

MIKE

...To buy *our* motel?

JERRY

Yeah.

MIKE

...You gonna do it?

JERRY

No.

MIKE

No I won't--

JACK

How long you been in the pawn business,
pal?

MIKE

The *porn* business?

JACK

The *pawn* business, goddammit, the *PAWN*
business--

MIKE

Oh. I'm *not*--

JACK

OK then so don't tell me you ain't gonna
start cryin' 'cause that ain't nothin'
but a sure-as-shit sign that someone's
about to start motherfrickin' cryin'.

Mike just stares at him, annoyed...but then he is suddenly
forced to suppress a swell of emotion.

JACK (cont'd)

You see what the frick I mean!?

MIKE

...How much can you give me?

JACK

(scrutinizing the necklace)

Well now let's see...let's seedy-beety-
seedy-see. Let's just give this little
fricker a shitsy-bitsy-looksy-tooksy...

(still scrutinizing)

Let's just give her a little suss-fuss-
bus-pus....let's give this little pussy
some pus as opposed to some puss...

Mike is looking at this guy like the largest loser on earth.

JACK (cont'd)

I'll give you five-hundred bucks.

MIKE

...Really?

JACK

Not a red ant cent more.

*

Mike tries to maintain balance, the nausea overwhelming. *

MIKE

But...why?

RECEPTIONIST

She loves him. Plus he's gonna let her run the not-for-profit yogurt fund.

MIKE

(beat)

Do you, ah, do you have a forwarding address, or like, a phone number?

RECEPTIONIST

I'm sorry, I don't.
(Mike closes his eyes)
Are you all right, sir?

MIKE

Yeah I just, I walked here; from the Baltimore bus station. *

He takes out his wallet and checks its meager contents. He then looks back at her.

MIKE (cont'd)

Listen, I don't have a credit card and I'm on a budget these days, so....can help me book a cheap plane ticket and I could, you know, give you cash? *

RECEPTIONIST

You don't have a *credit card*? *

He shakes his head; she regards him...and actually believes him; she then glances around to see if anyone's watching: *

RECEPTIONIST (cont'd) *

Where do you wanna go?

MIKE

Washington State.

MUSIC KICKS IN:

The Clash's *JUNKIE SLIP* over the following SERIES OF SHOTS: *

82 INT. ABERDEEN FOO YUNG RESTAURANT - DAY

82

Mike has found the Aberdeen equivalent of his favorite Flagstaff all-U-can-eat buffet, where he now sits in a gloomy corner eating Lo Mein and reading the local Want Ads. After a moment a 30-something Chinese guy, AL--wry, slightly hip-hop--approaches with a can of Diet Coke and a glass.

*
*
*

AL

Here.

MIKE

Thanks.

AL

(off Mike's duffel)
New in town?

MIKE

Yeah.

AL

Looking for a job?

MIKE

Yeah.

AL

Wanna work *here*?

MIKE

...Seriously?

AL

Why the fuck wouldn't I be serious?

Mike looks at Al, not sure how to respond. Al extends hand--

AL (cont'd)

Al.

MIKE

Mike.

AL

Nice to meet you.

MIKE

You too.

AL

You stink, dude.

(CONTINUED)

83 CONTINUED:

MIKE

No.

BETTY

If you steal, I kick ass. *

MIKE

I understand.

AL

Cool. Dad? *

Yu just stares at Mike. *

BETTY

He too will kick ass. *

MIKE

Absolutely.

84 INT. ABERDEEN FOO YUNG RESTAURANT - DAY

84

Mike, in a red, polyester bow tie and matching vest, stocks a glass-doored refrigerator with Cokes and Sprites as Al sits at the cash register doing nothing.

MIKE

Thanks for helping me; it means a lot. *

AL

No problem, man. I been trying to get my folks to hire someone American 'cause we catch less bigot bullshit that way. Plus I hate working the mornings. *

MIKE

Why?

AL

I smoke a lotta pot and I like sleeping in. ...Plus I'm a people person. *

MIKE

Cool.

AL

So why'd you come to Aberdeen?

MIKE

This girl I'm in love with moved here to be with her ex-boyfriend. *

(CONTINUED)

MIKE

Damn.

AL

What?

MIKE

I mean the guy must be a total stud.

(Al regards him quizzically)

I'm not sure I ever satisfied Sue in bed.

I'm not a sexual superman, Al.

AL

Dude, you're probably fine.

MIKE

You're just saying that.

AL

That's true but whattayou want me to say,
that you're right?

MIKE

No, but--

AL

Look, chicks these days don't want sexual
supermen, they want, like, hard-workers,
you know?--guys who *hustle*. And you look
like a hustler, Mike. So to speak. I
mean you came all the way to fucking
Aberdeen, dude, that's gotta count for
something.

(looking through binoculars)

Oh shit, he's got a pool shaped like a
Rottweiler!

*

But Mike has suddenly been distracted by something else--

MIKE

Al, check it out.

Al aims the binoculars to where Mike is pointing. His POV of Sue and JANGO SMITH, early 50's, an ex-punk: Dockers, blazer, no tie; buzz cut, tattoos crawling up his neck from beneath a pressed oxford. Sue and Jango are getting out of a big, shiny pickup truck and heading toward the front door. Al lowers the binoculars and looks at Mike, who looks like a small, lost child.

JANET

Back in my day, we used to have a trick called The Cranberry.

(Mike waits for more)

Basically, it entails clenching a handful of cranberries between your buttocks, then standing above your partner and--*carefully*--dropping them *one* at a time into his or her mouth, after which you squat down low and allow the partner to segue into some good ole oral. Now, if you're a *man* and you get a ball-blow from someone with ass-moistened cranberries in their mouth, you'll *reap* the reward, which is that your orgasm will be--as we called it--an "Asian Sunrise Squirt," which can only be compared to the sensation of skydiving completely naked into a shimmering Hawaiian waterfall. *

Off Mike, absorbing this last part, and then: *

MIKE

What if you're a *woman* getting oral sex from someone with cranberry mouth? *

JANET

With *ass*-cranberry mouth?

MIKE

Yes.

JANET

Well, to be honest, that's really only good if you have a uterine infection. The berries sort of clear out the bad bacteria.

87 INT. KITCHEN - ABERDEEN FOO YUNG - DAY

87

Al eats an egg roll. Mike enters.

AL

So how did it go?

MIKE

It was good.

AL

She tell you about the cranberry thing?

MIKE

Yeah.

(CONTINUED)

MIKE
I'm positive I can do it, Stan!

*

STAN BALL
*That's the Michael I've come to know over
8 hours, that's the Mike!!*

*

Stan now slides open the plane door and signals for Mike to stand. The need to shout is now imperative:

*
*

STAN BALL (cont'd)
I'LL COUNT FROM 10 AND THEN WE'RE GONE--
JUST AS DISCUSSED! I LINE US UP OVER THE
TARGET AND WHEN I SEPARATE IT'S YOUR JOB
TO STAY ALIGNED! AND MIKE?

*
*
*
*
*

MIKE
YES?!

STAN BALL
I WANT YOU TO FUCKING ENJOY THIS!!

MIKE
I WILL.

STAN BALL
I DIDN'T HEAR YOU, MIKE!!

MIKE
I'LL ENJOY IT.

STAN BALL
I DIDN'T FUCKING HEAR YOU, MIKE!!

MIKE
(screaming)
I'LL FUCKING ENJOY IT, STAN!!!

Stan gives him the thumbs up and Mike faces the door; Stan stands behind, clutching him piggy-back style. Stan peers out the door, then looks to the pilot, who's watching the coordinates...finally giving Stan the thumbs-up.

*
*

STAN BALL
10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1--

Stan and Mike jump, as we get a C.U. on MIKE'S FACE, screaming with a mix of total fear and unadulterated seize-the-day abandon, the likes of which we haven't seen from him. *He's a total fucking animal--*

MIKE
(weak)
Why'd you do that?

SUE
I think we should call an ambulance--

JANGO
Who the fuck jumps into people's pools?!

SUE
Here, let me help you--

JANGO
He's a fucking psycho!

MIKE
I think I'm dying--

SUE
Oh my God--

As Mike passes out--

JANGO
It's only bee-bee's, let me at him--

SUE
Oh my God, oh my God--

JANGO
C'mon, Sue--move out of the way!--

As Jango pulls Mike out and starts mouth-to-mouth...

*

FADE TO:

91 INT. ABERDEEN MEDICAL CENTER - DAY

91

Mike on a hospital bed, unconscious. After a moment he comes to, peering around, trying to figure out where he is. And then he sees Sue, sitting quietly in the corner, having been there for some time. She stands.

MIKE
Where am I?

SUE
The Aberdeen Medical Center. It's one of the best care facilities south of the Puget Sound and north of Oregon.

(CONTINUED)

SUE

(pause)

He put me in charge of the Pacific Northwest sector of his company's nonprofit yogurt fund. There are people out here in need. It's a chance for me to do some good.

MIKE

And to sit by his *Rotweiller* pool.

SUE

It was my day off.

Mike grimaces from the pain and the hurt. She soothingly touches his hand. And then Al walks in.

AL

What's up, dude?! When you told me you needed the day off I didn't think you were gonna try and fucking *kill* yourself!

MIKE

Sue, Al; Al, Sue.

SUE

Hi.

AL

You're Sue?

SUE

Yes.

AL

Why're you driving my boy here crazy?

SUE

I'm not.

AL

He told me you let him touch your ass the first time you met him.

SUE

Who are you? *

MIKE

Al got me a job and a place to live.

AL

We're like blood brothers, Sue. *

(CONTINUED)

AL
A bull's eye like a bull's eye?

JANGO
No, just a regular bull's eye.

MIKE
Why were you a punk?

JANGO
(honest reflection)
Why was I a punk...?
(staring into the biosphere)
I think *initially* it was an attempt to
subvert the quest for order that my
father smothered me with as a child. I
didn't wanna just rage against the
machine, I wanted to *fuck* the machine.
But eventually that anger morphed into
the wellspring of what had become a
cohesive *world movement*, whose goal it
was to align ourselves with certain
entropic forces which we felt were at the
core of the entire fucking *universe*.

*
*
*
*
*
*

Mike and Al stare at him.

JANGO (cont'd)
Do you guys like Chicken Marsala?
(calling toward the kitchen)
Sue?!

Sue appears at the door to the kitchen.

JANGO (cont'd)
Are you starving?

SUE
I'm OK.

JANGO
What do you say I give these guys a quick
dog demo and then I'll start the Marsala?

*

SUE
...Sure.

JANGO
(with pride)
Sue's the greatest.

Off Mike and Al, watching this interaction.

Al watches, dumbfounded, while Sue screams, horrified--

SUE

Jango, make it stop!

JANGO

Good job, Mikey, doing great, just keep provoking it!!

--as the chaos continues...

CUT TO:

94 INT. DINING ROOM - JANGO'S HOUSE - NIGHT

94

Jango, Sue, Mike and Al sit around an elegantly set table sipping wine and eating Chicken Marsala. CLASSICAL MUSIC. *

JANGO

Basically, for me, dog-work is a thrill, an adrenaline rush, if you will, that's otherwise hard for me to replicate in the world of yogurt.

AL

Especially now that you're not a punk.

JANGO

(re: his heart)

I'm still a punk in here, Al, make no mistake, but there's less need to call myself a punk in a world where the very notion of punkdom has been commodified for the mass-market. *

AL

But why do you sell yogurt? *

JANGO

Because punks like yogurt, too, Alvin. Excuse me-- *

He reaches into his mouth and carefully takes out his two false front teeth, carefully placing them beside his plate.

JANGO (cont'd) *

Chicken's the worst. Gets stuck right in the crevice here.

He points to the space between the two fake teeth, where there is indeed a large chunk of chicken.

(CONTINUED)

AL
Hey Sue, Mike and I are gonna go to the
Cowboy Club after this, if you wanna join
us. They got great dancing.

Sue looks at him, then at Mike, then toward the kitchen.

SUE
I'll think about it.

Al and Mike kinda dancing together to honky-tonk music at a
near-empty "club"--really just a few tables, a jukebox and
two colored lights aimed at a patch of parquet dance floor--
the only other occupant of which is a single woman with huge
hair swaying drunkenly by herself. They yell over the music--

*
*
*

AL
--and what I'm trying to say is that
China is not only gonna kick America's
economic ass, it's going to *invade your*
whole fucking country! I'm talking annex
and motherfucking *occupy!*

MIKE
All I can say is I hope you treat our
cats better than you treat your own!

AL
Mike.

*

MIKE
Al.

*
*

AL
Mike.

*
*

MIKE
Al.
(pause)
I'm totally fucking with you.

*
*
*
*

Mike smiles and Al insists on receiving a high-five...as he
eyeballs the lonely woman swaying on the dance floor.

AL
You think she's hot?

*

MIKE
She's OK.

*

SUE
Your lovemaking's more...*mature*.

*

MIKE
I *did* get some advice. From this woman who comes into the restaurant. She wanted me to do this cranberry thing but it's not really my style.
(Sue is staring at him)
But she's the one who told me about that other thing.

*
*
*

SUE
It was nice.

MIKE
Thank you.
(pause)
Sue?

SUE
Yeah?

MIKE
What are you doing here?

SUE
In this cemetery or in Aberdeen?

MIKE
Both.

SUE
...I'm not sure.

Mike suddenly looks down, having noticed something--

MIKE
Oh, man--

Still wearing his suit coat, Mike has discovered that something has fallen out of its pocket.

SUE
What is it?

MIKE
It's...my Mom. It's her ashes.

SUE
What?

SUE
I think it's all the flowers.

AL (O.S.)
Hey, are you guys through yet?!

They look over to see Al, naked, several headstones away, having just finished making sweet love to the lonely swaying woman from the club.

Mike and Al set tables for the lunch rush.

MIKE
I was thinking we should start donating the leftover lunch buffet food to that homeless shelter over on Scrantz Avenue.
(pause)
And using recycled-cardboard take-out containers.

*
*
*

AL
Whatever the fuck you say, Mike.

MIKE
(beat)
Did you know Aberdeen is building the country's largest biodiesel fuel plant?

*
*
*

AL
...Cool.

MIKE
We should find a way to get in on that.

AL
Did you know that when Kurt Cobain was a kid, he spray painted "God Is Gay" on that bridge over Monroe Street?

MIKE
...Cool.

*

The front door opens and Jango and a 40-something PUNK walk in, followed by two large, snarling GERMAN SHEPHERDS. The punk walks up to Al and blocks him, as Jango walks straight up to Mike and HEAD-BUTTS him.

*

MIKE (cont'd)
Oww!--

*

98 CONTINUED:

AL

If we ride smooth we're golden.

MIKE

OK then. Let's do it.

They mount the bike...and slowly pedal off through the darkened streets of Aberdeen.

99 EXT. JANGO'S HOUSE AND PROPERTY - NIGHT

99

Mike and Al pull up on the double-bike, parking it on Jango's front lawn. Al stays on his seat but Mike dismounts, walks around, steps onto the wagon and sits behind the keyboard, using an amp as stool. He turns on the power, tests a couple keys, then takes out and attaches a small clip-on microphone, which is also rigged to the amp. He clears his throat, takes a composure moment...and begins playing, his singing at first soft, not quite on par with Neil Young:

MIKE

*There's colors on the street
Red, white and blue
People shufflin' their feet
People sleepin' in their shoes*

100 INT. - JANGO'S DEN - SAME

100

SOUND OF SEX PISTOLS. Sue lies stomach-down on the floor, as Jango sits atop her giving her a "karate chop" massage, which looks more irritating than relaxing. They both wear headphones plugged into the same bedside I-Pod. Sue's eye catches a framed photo of a SNARLING PIT BULL on the wall.

101 EXT. JANGO'S HOUSE AND PROPERTY - SAME

101

Mike gaining confidence and momentum:

MIKE

*But there's a warnin' sign on the road
ahead!
There's a lot of people sayin' we'd be
better off dead!*

ANGLE on Sue, hearing something, letting her wire slip off:

MIKE (O.S.) (cont'd)

*Don't feel like Satan, but I am to them!
So I try to forget it, any way I can!*

ANGLE on Mike, totally getting into it:

103 INT. BASEMENT - ABERDEEN FOO YUNG - DAY

103

Mike slowly descends from the kitchen to his basement apartment, which is small but which he's managed to make cozy in his Mike sort of way: a KURT WARNER poster, a GOD'S GREEN EARTH recycling poster, a pile of *National Geographic's*, one of which he picks up as he lowers himself down onto a thick mattress on the floor. But after a moment he's interrupted from the door at the top of the stairs:

BETTY

Mike! You have visitor!

*

MIKE

Ah--OK.

A moment later Sue descends the stairs. Mike sits up as she regards his swollen face with sadness..... He smiles humbly.

*

*

MIKE (cont'd)

You shoulda' seen it two days ago.

(exagerrating)

Out to here.

SUE

I'm sorry he did that. It's my fault.

MIKE

It was worth it.

She tries to smile, not answering.

MIKE (cont'd)

I've been leaving you messages.

SUE

I know.

MIKE

How did Jango find out about the cemetery?

SUE

I told him.

MIKE

Why?

SUE

Because the way I've been handling things, with both of you, is unfair. And I shouldn't do it anymore.

*

*

*

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SUE

The kind that's not an unguided missile.
You can't stalk people around the country
just because you're feeling a lonely.

*

MIKE

That's not why I stalked you--

SUE

So then why--because I have a nice butt?

MIKE

Yes!--

SUE

Well that's not sufficient either; being
in love isn't based just on what you
need. It's gotta be more selfless.

MIKE

Oh, like, save everyone in the world
except yourself? Is *that* how love works?
Being a *martyr*?

SUE

That's not what I do--

MIKE

Yeah it is. You're so busy being
"selfless" that you end up treating
yourself like shit. Is *that* what you
mean by "sufficient"?

(pissed)

You're the unstable one, Sue.

*

SUE

(pause; quiet)

At least I don't live in a motel.

MIKE

No--you live with a rich yogurt dick
who's obsessed with killer dogs.

(she stares at him icily)

I mean you think *that's* what's gonna make
you happy? A gap-toothed ex-punk who
treats you like his puppy?

(no answer)

Oh but I guess that's better than living
back east in a sanitized nursing home for
lonely yuppies.

SUE

Is that really what you think of me?

103 CONTINUED: (4)

SUE (cont'd)
I need someone who knows what they're
doing with their life.
(he just looks at her)
Jango has that.
(pause)
I'm sorry.

Mike is broken. But then, after several moments, the
devastation becomes a slow build...to fury: *

MIKE
Can you leave now? Please?
(pause)
I want you to leave.
(eruption:)
*GET OUT OF MY HOUSE RIGHT NOW, SUE,
FUCKING "SUSAN"--GET OUT!!*
(she doesn't move)
*I'M SERIOUS, GET THE FUCK OUT OF MY HOUSE
RIGHT THIS FUCKING FUCKING INSTANT!!!*

She looks at him through her tears, not wanting it to end
this way, but he remains steadfast...and so she turns, and
slowly walks up the stairs.

104 EXT. A HILL - DAY

104

Mike and Al stand on this elevated earth overlooking a lake,
at the side of which Sue and Jango are having their wedding
ceremony. Mike stoically looks through binoculars: ANGLE on
Jango kissing Sue as a crowd of ex-punk types applauds and
another SEX PISTOLS' tune cranks up in the distance. *

AL
I wish I had that fucker's bee-bee gun
right now.

MIKE
(distant)
...Yeah.

AL
They going on a honeymoon?

MIKE
Don't know.

AL
Probably waiting 'til yogurt season's
over. *

This gets a look from Mike, but not a comment. He re-raises
the binoculars: His POV on a table gorgeously covered with
mini-yogurt cups patiently awaiting the wedding guests...

(CONTINUED)

MIKE

It's not as though she wants me around here anyway.

AL

I know, but--

MIKE

I wonder how much it costs.

They watch the weddin...and then Al turns to him--genuine: *

AL

I consider you my friend.

(no answer)

So while I'm in no way encouraging monkhood, if you ever do need money...I can get it for you.

MIKE

How?

AL

By stealing from my parents.

MIKE

I'm not stealing money from your parents, Al.

AL

You wouldn't be. I would.

(pause)

It's totally up to you, but if that's what you want...I'm here for you.

Mike thinks for several moments...then looks up at Al: *

MIKE

(honest, eye-to-eye)

You're the best friend I ever had.

They hug--genuine and real...

CUT TO:

105 INT. UNFURNISHED ROOM - DAY

105

STRAIGHT SHOT OF MIKE, in total silence, **HEAD SHAVED**, IN A BRIGHT ORANGE BUDDHIST MONK ROBE sitting on a bed in an otherwise unfurnished room--

MUSIC FADES IN as we see the following SERIES OF SHOTS:

114 EXT. - GARDENS - TU HIEU BUDDHIST MONASTERY - DAY

114

Mike walks along an exquisitely tranquil garden full of green and shady sal trees. With him is TRUC QUOC, 38, a patient Buddhist instructor who runs the apprentice monk program. He is a calm, gentle, rather Americanized guy.

TRUC QUOC

Michael, the progress you've made in your four months here has been remarkable.

MIKE

Thank you, Father.

TRUC QUOC

And needless to say, your immersion into the duties of carrot-chopper and broom-chief has been full and complete.

MIKE

Thank you.

TRUC QUOC

But some worries have arisen.

MIKE

Such as what, Father?

TRUC QUOC

Well, first of all, you're not supposed to call me father.

MIKE

Oh.

TRUC QUOC

But that's OK. I'll admit I've grown fond of it.

(pause)

An aspiring Bodhisattva, such as you, must seek to produce a heart that does not *dwell*.

MIKE

Of course, Father.

TRUC QUOC

Your heart, Michael, if I may say, *does* dwell.

MIKE

No it doesn't.

(CONTINUED)

TRUC QUOC
You need to move on. To fully become
someone.

MIKE
But how?

TRUC QUOC
(beat)
My parents died when I was five, Mike.
Two months later my uncle and I moved to
America. I was forced to let go of
everything I knew. Everything. To
simply..let go. In order to move on.
(pause)
Sometimes in life you must do that. To
get to the next stage.

MIKE
...Move on?

TRUC QUOC
Yes.

Mike looks around the garden, taking this in.

MIKE
Where are you from?

TRUC QUOC
Vietnam. Hau Nghia province. My parents
were killed in the war.

MIKE
By the Americans?

TRUC QUOC
Yes. And yet look at me. I moved here.
Life is odd.

MIKE
...I'm sorry.

TRUC QUOC
(gentle; honest)
It's not your fault.

Mike absorbs....

TRUC QUOC (cont'd)
Let go, Mike. Let go and move on.

MIKE (cont'd)
You don't even like it here. This was
Mom's thing.

JERRY
Why do you say that?

MIKE
'Cause it's true. She loved people, she
loved running things, it made her feel
alive. But that's not you, Dad. You're,
like, not a people-person. You should
let it go. Move on.
(pause)
Otherwise you're just gonna rot.

JERRY
....Sell it and do what? *

MIKE
Anything. You still got time. You'd
have money. Just, you know...move on to
the next stage.

JERRY
What do you need, Mike, a loan?

MIKE
No. I just wanted to say.....that this
doesn't have to be it.
(pause)
And that I love you.

Jerry looks at him for a long moment....then slowly takes a
look around the lobby, perhaps considering life without it.

118 INT. ROOM 221 - THE MOTEL - NIGHT

118

Mike enters the darkened room where he first met Sue. He
turns on a light and looks around. The bed is made, the room
is as spotless as it's gonna get. Mike looks around, perhaps
touching the pillow...the bedspread. He peaks into the
bathroom, his eye catching two plastic-covered cups... *

And then he sits on the bed...and just sits. He's not
meditating, not depressed, not happy; just sitting.... *

119 INT. MIKE'S APARTMENT/ROOM - DAY

119

Mike in his 2nd-story apartment throwing out junk that hasn't
been touched in years. *

119 CONTINUED: (2)

SUE (V.O.) (cont'd)
I think that in some weird way, you
taught me that: to commit, fully, to
what's important.

*
*
*
*

119F Sue, at a kitchen table, writing.

119F

Anyway, so I just wanted to say thank
you. For coming into my life. Even if
it was only for a little while.

*
*
*

Mike, seated on his bed, reading the letter.

*

SUE (V.O.) (cont'd)
I really do hope you're happy. You
deserve it. Goodbye, Mike. ...Sue.

*
*
*

Off Mike--lost in thought; and then, maybe, a small, sad
smile.

*
*

120 INT. FLAGSTAFF FOO-YUNG - DAY

120

Mike and Jerry sit at Mike's old table, sipping large bowls
of soup in silence. After a moment:

JERRY
So I thought about what you said the
other day.

MIKE
Oh yeah?

JERRY
Yeah.
(he sips the soup)
I think you had a point.

He takes another sip of soup, then reaches into his breast
pocket and takes out a folded piece of paper.

JERRY (cont'd)
That being said, this is yours.

He hands the paper to Mike, who starts to unfold.

MIKE
What is it?

JERRY
Deed for the motel. Signed over to you.

MIKE
What do you mean?

MIKE

...Didn't work out. I think we weren't,
you know, meant for each other.

Jerry looks at him, perhaps for the first time in years, like
a father who knows best for his kid.

JERRY

I dunno, Mike. Things change. In life.

MIKE

...What do you mean?

JERRY

You're not the same guy you were.

Mike absorbs. Jerry looks at his soup; takes a sip...

JERRY (cont'd)

Good soup.

He takes another soup sip...and then C.U on Mike, hearing
this last line....then looking down at the deed...

121 EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT - DAY

121

Mike just stands there, looking up at the two-story motel,
studying it, deep in thought.

ANGLE on the motel sign, which now says: WE ARE CLOSED.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR MANY YEARS OF FINE PATRONAGE.

ANGLE on Mike, still surveying the building, his eyes
inspired. After a moment he sort of nods to himself...

MIKE

You can do this, Mike.

After a moment he sees Jerry exiting the lobby in rather
tight-fitting shorts that seem to date from 1970. He holds a
dusty basketball. Mike watches as Jerry approaches.....Beat.

*

*

JERRY

So I'm gonna hit the gym.

MIKE

Oh yeah?

JERRY

Yeah. They got a senior citizen hoop run
from three to five.

(off Mike's look)

I'm borrowing your ball.

(CONTINUED)

MIKE

Mike. From management.

(she looks at him with
suspicion)You sell insurance to deaf people and you
used to be married to a dick named
Dennis.Mary's eyes grow wide....and then she carefully calls back
toward the living room.

MARY

Sue! There's someone here for you! He
says he's Mike! From management!Silence a moment....and then Sue, still pregnant, steps to
the door. She and Mike regard each other intensely. *
*

MARY (cont'd)

Do you know him, Sue?

SUE

Yes, Mom. I know him.

MARY

(to Mike)

I own a gun.

And with this, she steps out of the way and heads back into
the house, as Sue steps out, letting the screen door shut
behind her. They stand together on the stoop. Beat.

MIKE

Hi.

SUE

Hi.

MIKE

...How's your baby?

SUE

So far so good.

MIKE

I, ah, got your letter.

SUE

I'm glad. I wasn't sure. *
*

MIKE

I hope it's OK that I'm here. *

(CONTINUED)

SUE
(beat)
What're you gonna do now?

MIKE
With my life?

SUE
Yeah.

...He takes a piece of paper from his pocket and hands it to her.

SUE (cont'd)
What is it?

MIKE
The deed to the motel.

She looks up at him; he takes out another piece of paper.

MIKE (cont'd)
And this is my application for nonprofit status.

(pause)
It's a copy.

SUE
Why do you need nonprofit status?

MIKE
'Cause I'm turning it into a homeless shelter.

(pause)
With multiple housing units upstairs.

(pause)
And midnight basketball.

(pause)
Or indoor soccer.

SUE
...Are you serious?

MIKE
(he nods...)
I've got the rooms, the beds, the clock radios... I have a basketball.

(pause)
I also called Al; he says he might come down and be the cook.

SUE
So it'll be like an Asian-themed--?

MIKE
Really?

SUE
(she nods, and then:)
You wanna hear it?

MIKE
Sure.

She clears her throat, closes her eyes....then speaks shyly.

SUE
"Mike, oh Mike, my man
Keeps showing up, like UPS
Sue, you're such a bitch"

She looks up....

SUE (cont'd)
It's elongated, so there's a little more.

MIKE
"My noble risk. My leap of faith. He
is, down deep, my love"

Mike is near tears. He looks up at her; so is she.

MIKE (cont'd)
...Breathe, Sue. Just keep breathing.

She keeps crying...and tries to breathe: Deep, slow breaths,
slowly regaining some composure.....

She now looks out onto the quiet street before them; Mike
half turns, looking also. Beat....

SUE
It's nice, no?

MIKE
...Yeah.

Beat. After a moment, Sue very casually lets her hand rest
upon Mike's left buttock, not squeezing, not pulling, just
there. They are side-by-side, her hand on his butt, facing
the street, and they just remain there like that,
simple.....as the--

CAMERA BEGINS TO PULL BACK, into the street and up...as they
just stand, quite still...and the CAMERA RECEDES, UP AND
AWAY...as the beginning chords of Neil Young's *Keep on
Rockin' in the Free World* FADE IN....

(CONTINUED)