

8 Bits

written by

Andy Rice

704-773-9635
riceandy10@yahoo.com

FADE FROM BLACK

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

JENNIFER (22, petite girl next door with ponytail), walks along the sidewalk scrolling through her phone. She stops in front of a library, looks up, then turns and goes in.

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

Sitting at a long table, she looks through a book, jots down some notes then checks her phone. She closes the book, gathers her things and gets up.

INT. COLLEGE CLASSROOM - DAY

She sits among several students in a class, attentively taking notes as PROFESSOR ALIGHIERI (45, Male with a neat beard and glasses) speaks.

PROFESSOR ALIGHIERI
Virgil proceeds to guide Dante
through the nine circles of Hell
which represent a gradual increase
in wickedness.

Jennifer sits back in her seat and rubs her eyes before leaning back forward.

PROFESSOR ALIGHIERI (CONT'D)
Can anyone tell me what we commonly
refer to the middle seven layers in
Dante's Inferno?

A few of the students aren't paying attention and are looking at their phones and a few more turn their heads so that they won't be called upon. Jennifer looks to both sides of her then raises her hand.

PROFESSOR ALIGHIERI (CONT'D)
Yes Jennifer.

JENNIFER
The seven deadly sins?

She feigns a smile as she slowly puts her hand down.

PROFESSOR ALIGHIERI

That's correct! The seven deadly sins, sloth, envy, gluttony, wrath, greed, lust and pride are represented...

She now smiles in earnest and continues to take notes.

INT. JENNIFER'S CAR - NIGHT

As she sits in her car at a stop light, she yawns wide, closing her eyes. The light turns green and the car behind her honks. Startled, she puts up her hand and drives forward.

EXT. JENNIFER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

With text books in tow, she stops at her mailbox, unlocks it and takes out the mail. She sorts through two or three pieces before she gets to one she pulls out of the stack. The envelope has a return address: Office of the Dean: English Department, Central University

She shuts the mailbox and nervously opens the letter as she begins to walk away.

INT. JENNIFER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

She comes in from the hallway, closes the door behind her and leans back up against the door. She has the letter opened in one hand, her books in the other and a blank stare on her face. After a beat, she throws her books down on the table and raises her hands in the air.

JENNIFER

Yes! Yes, yes, yes!

She puts the letter down on top of her books and happily bounces off screen. The letter states:
[Congratulations on being accepted to the Graduate Program in Literature at Central University.]

INT. JENNIFER'S APARTMENT KITCHEN - NIGHT

She bounces into her kitchen and opens her fridge and digs around for a moment before pulling out a hard seltzer that was already open. She looks at the top of the can, then into the opening at the top, then shrugs her shoulders and takes a swig. She gives a sour face look because it's flat and shuts the door.

On the fridge door, is a picture of her with her parents (MOM (55, average american Mom; DAD (55, average american Dad) at what looks to be her High School graduation. She smiles as she reminisces.

(Dream Sequence)

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING - DAY

Jennifer is surrounded by her Mom and Dad just after her high school graduation.

MOM
We're so proud of you honey!

DAD
So proud!

She looks back and forth between her parents, smiling.

MOM
There's no stopping you!

DAD
Four years at Central then back home to take over my business...

(End Dream Sequence)

INT. JENNIFER'S APARTMENT KITCHEN - NIGHT

She snaps out of her smiley, happy recollection and changes to a blank stare.

JENNIFER
Take over dad's business... take over dad's business.

She closes her eyes.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)
Shit.

INT. JENNIFER'S APARTMENT KITCHEN - NIGHT (LATER)

Jennifer sits at her kitchen table with her literature text book and her acceptance letter in front of her. She slowly stirs a cup of tea as she stares off in the distance when her cell phone rings. The call is from her Mom. She answers and puts it on speaker.

JENNIFER

Hey mom.

MOM (ON SPEAKER)

Hey honey... how was your day?

Jennifer gets up from the table and walks towards her fridge and opens it.

JENNIFER

Long, as usual. How's dad?

MOM (ON SPEAKER)

Fine.

There's an awkward silence.

MOM (ON SPEAKER) (CONT'D)

So, have you given any more thought about when you're coming home after graduation?

Jennifer pops her head up from inside the fridge.

JENNIFER

Mom, please stop. I've got enough on my mind without you and dad badgering me about coming home.

MOM (ON SPEAKER)

I didn't know coming home was a bad thing.

JENNIFER

Sorry, you're right. It's not that it's a bad thing, it's just that...

Jennifer closes the fridge and is trying to think of the right words to say.

INT. MOM AND DAD'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Mom is sitting at the kitchen island with a glass of wine.

MOM

Just what dear?

JENNIFER (ON SPEAKER)

Nothing.

MOM

Oh, I can't wait for you to be back home where you belong.

INT. JENNIFER'S APARTMENT KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jennifer rolls her eyes as she walks back towards her seat.

JENNIFER
Mom, please don't...

MOM (ON SPEAKER)
Don't you want to come home? It
really would be best.

Jennifer now has her hands behind her head, as if to hold her head up.

JENNIFER
Best for who? Dad?

MOM (ON SPEAKER)
What?

Jennifer feigns hanging herself.

JENNIFER
Ackkk!

MOM (ON SPEAKER)
Best for you dear.

There's an awkward silence. Jennifer takes a deep breath and blurts out.

JENNIFER
I got accepted to graduate school.

INT. MOM AND DAD'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

MOM
What? When did you apply for grad
school?

Mom looks incredulous as she takes a big gulp of wine.

JENNIFER (ON SPEAKER)
Last semester.

MOM
Why would you even consider that?

INT. JENNIFER'S APARTMENT KITCHEN - NIGHT

JENNIFER

What do you mean even consider it?
It's a great opportunity.

MOM (ON SPEAKER)

I don't understand. What's
changed?

JENNIFER

I guess I want more.

Jennifer sits back down at the table where her phone lies
next to her text books.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Not sure that I want to take over
dad's business.

INT. MOM AND DAD'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Mom raises her right hand and rubs her temple as she swirls
the wine in her glass.

INT. JENNIFER'S APARTMENT KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jennifer leans in towards the phone.

JENNIFER

You still there?

INT. MOM AND DAD'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

MOM

It has been your father's dream
that you would someday take his
place, Honey.

INT. JENNIFER'S APARTMENT KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jennifer closes her eyes and puts her head back into her
hands and brings her elbows together in front of her.

JENNIFER

I know mom, but it's...

Jennifer thinks of the right thing to say, but can't.

MOM (ON SPEAKER)

It's what?

JENNIFER

I don't know. I don't want to hurt his feelings...

MOM (ON SPEAKER)

He is so proud of you...

JENNIFER

Please stop! I don't need a huge guilt trip right now, I've been agonizing over this all night.

There's another awkward silence.

MOM (ON SPEAKER)

What are you going to do with an advanced degree in literature? Do you want to work in that tiny restaurant the rest of your life?

Jennifer drops her head down.

JENNIFER

Mom... I...

INT. MOM AND DAD'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

MOM

Honey, you have no friends... there's no one there looking out for you.

INT. JENNIFER'S APARTMENT KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jennifer bites her bottom lip.

JENNIFER

Mom, I'm a big girl, I don't need anyone looking out for me.

MOM (ON SPEAKER)

Well dear, you have a big decision to make then don't you, come home to a job with security or... start a new path.

Jennifer is almost in tears.

JENNIFER

Mom, it's not that easy.

Jennifer closes her eyes as the silence is almost deafening, then opens them and leans in towards the phone.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

I need you and dad to support whatever I decide to do.

Again, a moment of silence.

MOM (ON SPEAKER)

Do what's right dear.

A small tear rolls down Jennifer's cheek.

MOM (ON SPEAKER) (CONT'D)

I'll call you tomorrow... love you.

JENNIFER

Love you too.

Jennifer hangs up the call and puts her face into her hands and begins to cry.

INT. RESTAURANT/DINER - DAY

Jennifer is in the back room of the restaurant where she works, having just finished her shift. Her boss MR. WEZAAS (60, Short broad man in cooks apron and hat; speaks with a slight indiscernible accent) comes in from the kitchen wiping his hands on a chef's towel.

MR. WEZAAS

You've been late two days in a row now.

She bows her head, and takes the scolding.

MR. WEZAAS (CONT'D)

I will not stand for this in *my* restaurant. This your last warning.

Jennifer looks up and nods then puts her head back down. As Mr. Wezaas turns to leave, ISABELLA, (55, Larger, African American) the other morning waitress, enters.

Jennifer, still looking down, takes her car keys and goes to leave.

ISABELLA
Hey, don't I get a goodbye?

Jennifer stops in her tracks and returns quickly and hugs Isabella.

JENNIFER
Sorry. My mind's in a haze.

ISABELLA
What's up sugar?

Jennifer pulls back and with a fake smile:

JENNIFER
I don't think you'd understand.

ISABELLA
You need money?

Jennifer smiles.

JENNIFER
No, it's nothing like that.

ISABELLA
Then let's hear it.

Jennifer looks around then motions Isabella outside.

EXT. RESTAURANT/DINER - DAY

Jennifer and Isabella walk into the sunlight of the day and stop near Jennifer's car.

ISABELLA
I get the sense that this is something big.

JENNIFER
It's big to me.

ISABELLA
Does it have to do with you being late to work the last few days?

JENNIFER
Kind of.

ISABELLA
Are you pregnant?

Jennifer rears back with her mouth agape and slaps Isabella's arm.

JENNIFER

No! Wow, your big and my big are really different. I don't even have a boyfriend.

Isabella laughs.

ISABELLA

Honey, you don't need a boyfriend for that... just a boy.

JENNIFER

No, it's nothing like that.

ISABELLA

Well I can't help if I don't know.

Jennifer looks down then back up at Isabella.

JENNIFER

I've been late because I'm studying until after midnight most nights. Plus, last night...

She pauses momentarily as she looks up at Isabella.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

I found out I got into grad school.

Isabella smiles.

ISABELLA

That's great!

Jennifer rolls her eyes and fiddles with her keys.

JENNIFER

Not so much. My parents expect me to come home and work in my father's insurance business.

ISABELLA

They'd be happy you got into grad school.

JENNIFER

It's for literature.

Isabella pulls back a little.

ISABELLA

What the hell are you going to do with an advanced degree in literature?

JENNIFER

God, now you sound like my mom.

Isabella chuckles.

ISABELLA

You're a smart girl, you'll figure this out. But if I were you, I wouldn't be late again or you'll be adding another problem to your mix.

Jennifer smiles then gives Isabella a big hug.

JENNIFER

I know, I know. I've just been studying so hard for my finals and then this popped up. I won't let you down tomorrow.

They pull back from the hug and Isabella rubs Jennifer's shoulder as Jennifer looks into Isabella's eyes.

ISABELLA

Everyone has problems, and some of them make people act in ways they normally wouldn't.

Isabella brushes the hair out of Jennifer's face.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

Never judge a book by it's cover...but you probably knew that being a literature scholar. You'll figure this out.

Jennifer smiles at Isabella.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

But you better not be late tomorrow morning or you'll have to deal with me.

Isabella winks then walks off and Jennifer's smile slowly fades as she turns and gets into her car.

INT. JENNIFER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jennifer walks into her room and places her keys and some money on her night stand and throws her books onto her bed. As she goes to set her alarm, she notices that the dollar bill on top of the money she has placed on the table has markings on it. She picks it up and notices that George Washington's eye is black, he has a scar on his forehead and he has a bandage on his cheek. She scrunches her forehead pondering the mussed up bill.

JENNIFER

What's your story George?

She spins around and holds the bill in front of her face.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

How would you have dealt with your mom and dad?

She plops on the bed and rolls onto her back and holds the bill above her head. She changes her voice to try and imitate George Washington.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Mother, father, I've decided to be the first President of our country.

She giggles to herself, then continues with the fake voice.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Of course I'm a free white male in a society dominated by men, so it won't be that hard. Oh, and I can't tell a lie, so that should help.

She pulls the bill closer to her and changes back to her regular voice.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

I wish you could help me George. You know, show me the way.

She feigns a smile.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

If only.

She rolls over and sets the dollar bill down next to her clock. She lies back, and looking straight up at the ceiling, rubs her eyes then reaches down for one of her text books. She opens it up to a section on Dante's "Inferno" and reads to herself:

JENNIFER (V.O.)

[Words on the screen]

The 9 levels of hell are split between the first two levels, Ante-Purgatory for people with stubbornness and for the repentful, and the next seven levels which are reserved for sinners; the seven deadly sins, Sloth, Envy, Gluttony, Wrath, Greed, Lust and Pride.

.

JENNIFER

I'm with you Dante. Its like I'm going through the levels of hell.

She yawns wide.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

I've got to... figure... this out...

As she begins to doze off, the names of the seven deadly sins seem to jump off the page in bold letters until she closes her eyes and falls asleep.

FADE TO BLACK

[WHITE LETTERS ON BLACK]

"We're all stumbling in the dark, and that makes for some pretty interesting collisions."
Marty Rubin

INT. DARK ROOM - NIGHT

Jennifer wanders aimlessly around a large dark open room with a spotlight on her. She walks by spotlighted paintings of the Seven Deadly Sins, each time stopping momentarily to read the titles; Sloth, Envy, Gluttony, Wrath, Greed, Lust and Pride. She hears an odd, low monotone sound in the distance as she stops at a painting that seems out of place; it is the portrait of George Washington from the one-dollar bill, but his eye is black, he has a scar on his forehead and he has a bandage on his cheek. Jennifer stares closer and closer at it until that low monotone sound becomes louder and makes her turn quickly and react with a surprised look on her face.

INT. JENNIFER'S BEDROOM - MORNING

An alarm clock is buzzing and showing the time of 6:02 am. Jennifer looks at her nightstand, still not quite fully awake, and sees the one-dollar bill with the same markings on George Washington. She giggles as she remembers her dream then suddenly realizes what the clock says:

JENNIFER

Shit!

She throws back the covers of her bed and hurries towards the bathroom.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

No, no, no!

She hurries to her closet and wrestles with her clothes.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Come on!

She tries to put on makeup, but keeps messing it up because she's in such a hurry.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Shit!

She grabs the money and her keys off her nightstand and heads quickly to the door of her apartment.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Ahhhhh!

EXT. IN A CAR - MORNING

She speeds towards her place of work and glances at her watch.

JENNIFER

Dammit!

She stops the car in a hurry and as she goes to open her car door, it sticks and doesn't open right away.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Not now!

INT. RESTAURANT KITCHEN - MORNING

She opens the backdoor at work and glances at the clock that says 6:38. She turns quickly and comes face to face with Mr. Wezaas, who is standing there waiting for her. She slumps and under her breath:

JENNIFER

Shit.

Mr. Wezaas holds a spatula as he stares directly at Jennifer and speaks with a voice of exasperation.

MR. WEZAAS

You're late... *again*. I've told you I can't afford to keep you if you're going to do this every day.

JENNIFER

I'm sorry Mr. Wezaas; I promise it won't happen again.

MR. WEZAAS

I've heard that before.

JENNIFER

I know, but I promise... I, I'm going through some things right now.

Mr. Wezaas points his spatula at her face.

MR. WEZAAS

Whatever you are going through doesn't serve my customers.

JENNIFER

It won't happen again.

Mr. Wezaas stares right at her.

MR. WEZAAS

That's right, because there won't be a next time.

Isabella stops at the order window and yells.

ISABELLA

Texas omelet and fried taters. I'm waiting on the order for table 8.

He stops, looks over his shoulder at the double swinging doors that lead to the front of the diner, then looks back at her as she bites her lip. He exhales deeply.

MR. WEZAAS

Just get out there and give Isabella a hand... she's been carrying your load since six.

JENNIFER

Yes sir!

She grabs an apron and a guest book and tucks her money and keys into her apron and heads through the double swinging doors of the restaurant.

INT. RESTAURANT - MORNING

The tiny, but crowded restaurant has your typical early morning patrons. Isabella holds a coffee pot and motions to a few customers that she will be right with them, when she sees Jennifer and smiles. The smile quickly turns to a look of frustration before she turns to help the customers at the table she's attending.

Jennifer bows her head in almost shame, then surveys the room, sees a table that look as if they need attention, and heads over to take orders.

JENNIFER

Sorry for the wait, can I get you some coffee or are you ready to order?

Isabella walks up from behind Jennifer.

ISABELLA

I've already got their order.

Isabella pours two cups of coffee and smiles at the diners.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

Your order will be up shortly.

Jennifer follows Isabella back to the counter. They stand with their backs turned away from the crowd in the restaurant and refill the coffee pots.

JENNIFER

I'm so sorry.

ISABELLA

Don't sorry me, you're only hurting yourself.

JENNIFER

I know.

Isabella glances over at Mr. Wezaas who is tending the griddle in the kitchen and then under her breath says:

ISABELLA

Mr. Wise-ass said he was going to fire you. I'm surprised to see you here.

JENNIFER

It was close.

Isabella looks out of the corner of her eye at Jennifer.

ISABELLA
Have you decided?

Jennifer looks at Isabella with a blank stare.

JENNIFER
I don't know... it's tough... I mean... I
just don't know.

ISABELLA
Maybe you're putting too much
pressure on yourself to make a
decision.

JENNIFER
I can't go on like this anymore.
I'm driving myself nuts.

A POLICE MAN (50, larger man) at the counter clicks his
coffee cup.

POLICE MAN
Could I get a refill please?

ISABELLA
Hold on.

Isabella continues with Jennifer.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)
Honey, you know...

The Police Officer chimes in.

POLICE MAN
While I'm still young!

Isabella turns and puts her left hand on her hip as she pours
the cup of coffee with a bit of sass.

ISABELLA
That ship done sailed a long time
ago.

The officer smiles as does the biker dude sitting next to
him. Isabella turns back to Jennifer.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)
You know, I've always lived by the
rule that the answer will come to
you when you least expect it. I
don't know how many times I've
asked for a sign, and it comes...
but, on it's own time.

JENNIFER

I'll take anything at this point.

ISABELLA

What you'll take is their order.

As Isabella nods in the other direction, Jennifer spins around and notices that two men that have just entered and sat at a table near the front of the diner.

JENNIFER

Oh yeah, I've gott'em.

She smiles and starts to head over.

[Both men look like they work construction or in some sort of outdoor environment. JONATHAN (25, sturdy man in the mold of Adam Devine) and CLARENCE (55, Older man with a distinctive sad face, like that of Steve Buscemi) come to this diner daily for breakfast. Clarence rarely talks and Jonathan is very energetic and has a huge crush on Jennifer]

Jennifer walks briskly over to the table where Jonathan and Clarence are seated. Jonathan smiles when he sees her coming towards them and Jennifer smiles back.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Hey guys!

Jennifer pours them coffee without even asking if they want any. Jonathan chuckles aloud.

JONATHAN

Woeee, you look like you just fell out of bed!

Jennifer tries to straighten out her uniform and hair. Clarence looks up from his phone and says in a monotone voice:

CLARENCE

She looks fine.

Clarence looks back down at his phone.

JENNIFER

Sorry, I got a lot going on and I kinda got here a little late.

Jennifer glances in the kitchen where Mr. Wezaas is standing, watching her, and then she glances back at the table.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

The usual for both of you?

JONATHAN

You bet!

Clarence nods and Jennifer reaches in her apron pocket to get her guest book. As she pulls out the guest book, the one-dollar bill with George Washington's mussed up face falls to the ground.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

Hey, you dropped this.

Jonathan reaches down, picks up the bill, stands up and hands it to her. Their hands meet. Jennifer again stares at the face of the bill then stares up at Jonathan.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

You OK?

Jennifer snaps out of it, pulls her hand out of Jonathan's, folds the bill and puts it back in her apron.

JENNIFER

Sorry... yea, I'm fine... let me get your order in.

Jennifer scribbles their order on the pad and heads back to the window at the kitchen, puts the order on the wheel and yells out their order to Mr. Wezaas.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Two eggs wrecked, bacon and white toast and one order of hash!

As she turns back around, she pulls the dollar bill out of her apron and under her breath:

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

I wish you were the sign George. I wish you could talk to me because you look like how I feel and I really need to figure this out.

She shoves the bill back into her apron and begins her regular routine.

INT. RESTAURANT/DINER - DAY

(Montage) Several of the patrons in the diner are reading their phones while eating. The police officer and the biker guy sit at the counter and they both eat their breakfast in silence.

Jennifer delivers Jonathan and Clarence's food, refills their coffee and helps other patrons. Each time she stops by their table, Jonathan smiles and she smiles back, while Clarence just stares at his phone. Eventually, Jennifer stops back to their table one last time. (End Montage)

JENNIFER
Everything OK?

JONATHAN
It was delicious, *as it always is!*

JENNIFER
Great! Is that all?

JONATHAN
For now.

JENNIFER
Well it's the same ten twenty five,
as it always is! I'll take this
when you're ready.

She slides it on the table. Jonathan takes a \$20 bill out of his wallet and glances at Clarence.

JONATHAN
You get the next one.

Clarence shrugs his shoulders then Jonathan looks up at Jennifer.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)
Just give me a buck back and we'll
call it even.

Jennifer's eyes light up.

JENNIFER
Are you sure?! Oh my God, Thanks!

JONATHAN
You're worth every penny.

Jonathan smiles and without thinking about it, she reaches into her apron and pulls out the mused up George Washington bill and hands it to Jonathan.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)
Thanks!

Jennifer looks at what she gave Jonathan, sees the bill, and seems to stare at it for a long time.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

What's wrong?

Jennifer snaps out of her stare.

JENNIFER

What? Oh, nothing... sorry, I spaced out a little.

JONATHAN

Are you sure you're really OK?

She looks at Jonathan for just a moment, then nods her head as she feigns a smile.

JENNIFER

Yeah, I'm fine.

She still has a cross between a smile and regret on her face as Jonathan turns towards Clarence.

JONATHAN

Hey, here's the eight bits I owe you.

Jonathan slides the dollar bill with the mused up George Washington on it towards Clarence. Clarence looks up, then looks down at the bill and nods his head and takes it.

JENNIFER

Eight bits?

JONATHAN

Yeah, you know, two bits is a quarter, so...

Jennifer still looks perplexed as Jonathan feigns doing the old cheer.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

Two bits, four bits, six bits a dollar?

JENNIFER

Oh! Eight bits. Never thought of it that way.

Jennifer slightly chuckles but is still staring at the mused up dollar bill that Clarence now holds.

JONATHAN

We'll see you tomorrow morning, right?

Jennifer looks over her shoulder again at Mr. Wezaas, then turns back to Jonathan and with a slight smile:

JENNIFER

I sure hope so.

Jonathan smiles.

JONATHAN

Me too!

Jonathan takes a longing glance at Jennifer as he and Clarence both walk towards the door, Jennifer watches them walk out the door. The clock in the background says 7:10.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE RESTAURANT DAY

(C.U.) The dollar bill with the mussed up George Washington face goes into Clarence's wallet. Clarence closes his wallet.

FADE TO BLACK

[WHITE LETTERS ON BLACK]

"Avoid sloth, the mother of all vices!"

Toussaint Louverture

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

After leaving the restaurant, Jonathan and Clarence walk to Clarence's truck and get in.

INT. CLARENCE'S TRUCK - DAY

As Clarence drives, Jonathan looks out the window and after a few moments, ponders out loud.

JONATHAN

What do you suppose was up with Jennifer?

Clarence looks at Jonathan with a puzzled look on his face.

CLARENCE

Who?

JONATHAN

Jennifer... the girl that waits on us every day.

CLARENCE

Oh.

JONATHAN

I get the sense that something's wrong.

Clarence shakes his head.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

She just seemed so... out of sorts. Didn't she seem that way to you?

Clarence grips the steering wheel a little tighter.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

Did you see the way she stared at that dollar bill? It was like she was mesmerized by it.

Jonathan looks out the window.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

I just don't know... something was wrong.

Clarence shakes his head again and exhales as he says:

CLARENCE

Just ask her out already.

JONATHAN

What?! She wouldn't want to... I mean...

CLARENCE

Look, I haven't been in that game for 35 years... not that I would want to be... but I *know* she likes you.

Jonathan looks at Clarence defiantly.

JONATHAN

You think she likes me?

CLARENCE

I know she likes you.

JONATHAN

When do you ever look up from your phone long enough to notice what she's doing, let alone what she likes.

Jonathan waves his hand down.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)
 What the hell do you know?

Clarence whips around towards Jonathan.

CLARENCE
 What do I know? What the hell do I know?

Jonathan looks at him and shrugs his shoulders like "yeah?"

CLARENCE (CONT'D)
 Here's what the hell I know;
 I know that I don't care what anyone thinks.
 I know that it doesn't matter who you vote for because they're not the one running things.
 I know that I have to stretch in the morning before I wipe my ass so I don't pull a muscle.

Jonathan recoils at that last statement.

CLARENCE (CONT'D)
 I know that I don't know what I don't know and I don't care.
 I know that youth soccer is the downfall of western civilization.

Jonathan looks puzzled at that last one.

CLARENCE (CONT'D)
 I know that life's a bitch...

Jonathan looks as though he wants to interrupt, but Clarence keeps on going.

CLARENCE (CONT'D)
 I know I can count on my truck, but not much else.
 But above all, I know you like that girl... and she likes you. At least give me credit for knowing that.

Jonathan looks astonished.

JONATHAN
 That's the most I've ever heard you say!

Clarence mutters under his breath:

CLARENCE
Cheese and rice.

Jonathan chuckles to himself, looks out the window for a moment, then turns back to Clarence.

JONATHAN
So what do you suppose is up?

CLARENCE
What?

JONATHAN
With Jennifer.

CLARENCE
I don't care... it's none of my business.

JONATHAN
I think she may need some help.

CLARENCE
I think you need some help.

EXT. ROAD IN FRONT OF CHURCH - DAY

The truck zooms by one of those Churches that always seems to have a funny quote on the sign. This particular sign says "Honk if you Love Jesus; Text while driving if you want to meet him"

INT. TRUCK - DAY

JONATHAN
I'd ask her out, but I don't think she'd go out with me. I don't want it to be weird since we eat there all the time.

Clarence looks at Jonathan, then at the road ahead of him, then back at Jonathan.

CLARENCE
You're not asking her out because you don't think we can find somewhere else to eat breakfast?

JONATHAN
That's not what I meant.

CLARENCE

Look, I don't care what you do, or where we eat, I just want you to shut your pie hole until we get to the site.

Jonathan looks out the door window and pauses for a moment, then turns back towards Clarence.

JONATHAN

Did you ever care about anything?

CLARENCE

Yeah, I used to love when I rode to work alone.

Jonathan smiles.

JONATHAN

You don't mean that

Clarence grips the steering wheel tighter and mutters again:

CLARENCE

Cheese and rice.

Clarence glances at his watch that shows 7:19.

INT. RESTAURANT/DINER - DAY

[CU OF JENNIFER'S WATCH] Jennifer stands behind the counter and looks at her watch that says 7:19 when she is interrupted by Isabella.

ISABELLA

What's wrong sugar?

JENNIFER

How do you know when something's a sign?

ISABELLA

There's not one thing that makes something a sign. Sometimes it just happens and you know it.

JENNIFER

What if it happens and you don't know it and... you let it go?

ISABELLA

You'll know.

Jennifer smiles halfheartedly and ponders.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Clarence's truck drives across the screen from left to right.

INT. TRUCK - DAY

Jonathan squirms in his seat.

JONATHAN

I should've hit the bathroom before we left. Can you stop at the Quik Mart?

Clarence looks over at Jonathan with a "you've got to be kidding me" look on his face.

CLARENCE

Just hold it until we get to the site.

JONATHAN

I don't think I can make it that far.

CLARENCE

Pinch it!

Jonathan raises his voice in desperation.

JONATHAN

Please, for the love of God, just stop at the Quik Mart!

Clarence clears the angry expression on his face and goes to flip on his turn signal and again under his breath:

CLARENCE

Cheese and rice

EXT. QUIK MART - DAY

They pull into the Quik Mart, park and go into the store.

INT. QUIK MART - DAY

Jonathan runs towards the bathroom as Clarence wanders off towards the coffee machine.

Clarence grabs a cup out of the dispenser then turns towards the coffee machine. The machine looks menacing and enormous with buttons, knobs and flashing screens. He surveys the entire thing, occasionally almost pushing a button, or turning a knob.

He looks up to see a sign that says "A Quicker Way to Get Your Coffee and Go!" He shakes his head and mutters:

CLARENCE

My ass!

Clarence puts the cup back, opens a door to the cooler and grabs a Coke. He saunters towards the cashier and puts the Coke down on the counter. In the background, Jonathan comes out of the bathroom, grabs a cup and quickly and easily gets a cup of coffee.

JERMAINE (25, black, thin, energetic), the cashier, pauses the conversation he was having with CLIFFORD (25-30, black, large) behind the counter and points outside.

JERMAINE

Is that your truck out there?

Clarence looks up at Jermaine and gives a quick nod.

JERMAINE (CONT'D)

Man, that is a nice truck! I really like that truck.

Clarence looks at Jermaine and gives a half smile.

CLARENCE

Thanks.

JERMAINE

That it?

CLARENCE

Nope, I'm wait..

Jonathan pops up behind Clarence and puts his coffee on the counter.

JONATHAN

I love that coffee machine! It's so cool!

Clarence's face droops and he frowns as he looks straight into the camera.

JERMAINE

So, is that all?

Clarence exhales again and almost sarcastically says:

CLARENCE
Yes, that's all.

Jermaine touches the screen on the cash register.

JERMAINE
Four twenty two.

Clarence reaches for his wallet and pulls out five one-dollar bills, including the mused up George Washington bill and hands them to Jermaine. Jermaine takes the money, with the George Washington bill on top and places them in the register and takes out the change and hands it to Clarence.

JERMAINE (CONT'D)
Have a good one. Take care of that truck!

Clarence slowly rolls his eyes as if to say "Dear God" then mutters:

CLARENCE
Yea... Mmmhh...

JONATHAN
Have a great day!

Clarence shakes his head as he and Jonathan turn and walk away. The clock behind the register says 7:28. [CU of the \$1 bill in the register] as Jermaine closes the register.

FADE TO BLACK

[WHITE LETTERS ON BLACK]
"I think Envy motivates a lot of people."
Shia LaBeouf

INT. QUIK MART - DAY

Behind the counter with Jermaine and Clifford.

JERMAINE
Why do old folks always pay with cash?

CLIFFORD
Because they value the power of currency, and buy only what they can afford, based on what they have.

Jermaine looks at him as if he just spoke Chinese.

JERMAINE

Nah, I think it's cause they think their identity is going to get stolen.

Clifford shakes his head and looks at him as if he's full of it.

JERMAINE (CONT'D)

Man, I wish I had a lot of cash like that. I would roll it up and keep a fat wad in my pocket.

Clifford adjusts the straw in his slushy.

CLIFFORD

And you'd get rolled every day.

Jermaine looks at Clifford defiantly.

JERMAINE

The hell I would! Those debit cards are dangerous.

CLIFFORD

How is a debit card dangerous?

JERMAINE

It's too easy to rip someone off.

CLIFFORD

Cards are perfectly safe.

JERMAINE

The hell they are! Watch this.

CUSTOMER #1 (35, Well dressed white male) approaches the register with a few items.

JERMAINE (CONT'D)

Is that all?

The customer is talking on his phone through Bluetooth.

CUSTOMER 1

Uh-huh.

Jermaine scans the items.

JERMAINE

Six Oh two please.

CUSTOMER 1

Uh-huh...

Jermaine looks at the customer but the customer just looks at him.

JERMAINE

Six... Oh... two.

CUSTOMER 1

Yeah.

JERMAINE

Six dollars and two cents!

The customer, realizing that Jermaine is talking to him, finally holds up a finger.

CUSTOMER 1

Hold on a sec, no, yeah.

Jermaine slumps his shoulders. The customer takes his card in his hand and taps it on the payment pad. There is a beep and a green light flashes that the transaction is complete. The customer takes the items from the counter, still talking on his phone the entire time, and walks away.

JERMAINE

See!

Clifford shrugs his shoulders to motion "what?"

JERMAINE (CONT'D)

How the fuck is that safe? How did that card know that it was that dude and not someone else? Anyone could have that card, tap and they're off!

Clifford shakes his head.

CLIFFORD

I don't think that's how identity theft works.

JERMAINE

Come to think of it, I wish I *had* a debit card like that.

CLIFFORD

What'd you do with your wad of cash?!

JERMAINE

Man, Shut up!

Clifford chuckles to himself. CUSTOMER 2 (40, well groomed male) comes up to the register sporting a really nice watch and puts items on the counter.

CUSTOMER 2

Twenty dollars on the Powerball please.

Jermaine stares at the watch.

JERMAINE

Damn, that's a nice watch! Better than this piece of crap I've got

CUSTOMER 2

Tell you what, if I win, I'll buy you one just like this

Jermaine laughs.

JERMAINE

Yea, I've heard that before!

Jermaine gets the lottery tickets as Clifford continues to nurse his Slushy. Jermaine rings everything up.

JERMAINE (CONT'D)

Twenty three thirty.

The customer goes to insert his card in the card reader.

JERMAINE (CONT'D)

I need cash for that lottery ticket.

CUSTOMER 2

Shit, I forgot.

The customer reaches in his front pants pocket and pulls out a wad of cash. Jermaine's eyes get big then he nods towards Clifford to look and mouths out loud to Clifford:

JERMAINE

Old dude with cash.

CUSTOMER 2

I'm sorry?!

Jermaine was too loud in his under the breath remark to Clifford.

JERMAINE

Sorry... nothin'.

Jermaine hits the screen and the cash drawer opens. You can see the mussed up one dollar bill on top. The customer hands Jermaine a twenty-dollar bill and goes to pull out a five-dollar bill. Jermaine puts his hand on the mussed up one dollar bill as he anticipates the customer giving him the five-dollar bill, but the customer stops and shoves it back into his wad of cash.

CUSTOMER 2

You know... I may need this later.
Can I get the rest with my card?

Jermaine rolls his eyes, taps a few things on the screen and motions towards the card reader. The customer finishes his purchase and Jermaine hands him the lottery ticket.

JERMAINE

Good luck... I'll be looking for that watch!

The customer smiles as he exits. Jermaine mutters under his breath:

JERMAINE (CONT'D)

I'd never win the lottery

CLIFFORD

Can't win if you don't play. Whip out that roll of cash you wish you had so bad heh heh.

JERMAINE

Shut up.

Clifford still chuckles as Jermaine looks around the store, then out the front window and motions towards Clifford.

JERMAINE (CONT'D)

Look, there they are!

Clifford jumps up and stares out the window with Jermaine. As the previous customer is pulling away, a group of teenagers walks across the parking lot, shuffling along, staring at their phones, their thumbs scrolling in unison.

JERMAINE (CONT'D)

The Zombie Apocalypse!

Jermaine and Clifford bust out laughing and give each other a high five, then go back to where they were before. Jermaine opens the register and notices the mussed up dollar bill.

JERMAINE (CONT'D)
 Man, look at this. Looks like
 George got rolled. Man that's as
 messed up as my life right now.

CLIFFORD
 Let me see.

Jermaine shows him the dollar bill then places it back in the register.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)
 He must've walked through my old
 neighborhood.

JERMAINE
 South-side?

CLIFFORD
 You know it!

Jermaine and Clifford chuckle. Jermaine closes the cash register.

INT. RESTAURANT/DINER - DAY

[CU CASH REGISTER OPENING] Jennifer places a ten dollar bill in the register and takes out a one dollar bill and some loose change and turns to wave to a customer.

JENNIFER
 Thanks for the tip!

Jennifer looks at this one dollar bill, which has no markings, runs her thumb over George's face, contemplates for a moment then places the bill in her apron.

EXT. WORKSITE DAY

[CU OF TOOL APRON] Jonathan pulls some nails out of his tool apron and places a couple in his lips to hold them as he begins to hammer at a wall stud. He stops as he ponders.

CLARENCE
 Are you still thinking about that
 girl?

JONATHAN
 What? No.

CLARENCE
 Just talk to her. Ask her out.

Jonathan scrunches his forehead, then reaches back into his tool apron.

INT. QUIK MART DAY

[CU CASHIER SMOCK] Jermaine reaches in his smock pocket and pulls out a chap-stick and runs it over his lips.

JERMAINE

You know, I really wish I was you

CLIFFORD

Me?

JERMAINE

Hell yes. I get here at seven every morning and there you are. You nurse a Slushy for three or four hours and just sit there like it's your job.

Clifford looks puzzled.

CLIFFORD

It is my job.

Clifford flips the top corner of his jacket to reveal SECURITY.

JERMAINE

You're security! How the hell did I not know that. Thought you just had nothing better to do all day.

Jermaine shakes his head.

JERMAINE (CONT'D)

Get paid to sit on your ass and drink a Slushy. Not bad!

Clifford chuckles, then looks around the store to be sure everything is OK. Once he's done looking, he sits back down.

CLIFFORD

Why'd you say your life was messed up?

JERMAINE

When did I say that?

CLIFFORD

Literally a minute ago when you showed me that dollar.

Jermaine shakes his head.

JERMAINE

Man, I must just be tired.

Clifford smiles then digs deeper.

CLIFFORD

Did you do anything before you started working here?

Jermaine is checking out a customer and he glances over at Clifford.

JERMAINE

Yes and no.

Jermaine finishes checking out the customer and turns to Clifford.

JERMAINE (CONT'D)

My mom died when I was 17. There're eight of us my dad has to take care of and since I'm the oldest, felt I needed to step up and help.

Clifford looks at Jermaine and nods.

JERMAINE (CONT'D)

I started working second shift at the lumber yard... and when that wasn't enough, I started working here in the mornings too.

Clifford smiles and adjusts the straw in his slushy, trying not to look serious.

CLIFFORD

What do you do in your spare time?

Jermaine gives a blank stare to Clifford, then breaks open a big smile. He gives Clifford a fist bump when the squealing of tires makes them get up and look into the parking lot.

EXT. QUIK MART - DAY

Pulling in is a white panel van. DANIELLE (40, Big boned, white, like Melissa McCarthy) gets out of the van holding a paper bag in one hand and a drink cup in the other. As she gets close to the door, she throws what she was holding into the trash.

INT. QUIK MART - DAY

She walks in and starts through the aisles picking up several items, including a stop at the Slushy machine. Jermaine and Clifford just stare at her in disbelief until she makes her way to the register.

DANIELLE
Hello boys!

Jermaine and Clifford still stand with their mouths open. Danielle clears her throat.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)
Ahem!

JERMAINE
Uh, Hey.

Danielle leans in towards Jermaine.

DANIELLE
Is this stuff any good?

She hands him an energy drink.

JERMAINE
I wouldn't know, I can't afford it.
Sell a lot of them though.

Danielle smiles big.

DANIELLE
That's good enough for me.

Danielle puts a couple of cans on the counter along with her Slushy and several small snack items. Jermaine, still staring at Danielle, begins scanning everything. She looks down at the candy bar selection and sees something she likes.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)
Oooh, add this!

Jermaine, still staring at her takes the candy bar and scans it.

JERMAINE
Um, Seventeen fifty four.

She feels around for her money, reaching into her coat pockets, then cups her breasts as if she's checking her bra for the money.

DANIELLE

Hold on, it's here somewhere.

She then realizes where it is and reaches into the waistband of her sweat pants, pulls out a twenty-dollar bill, and hands it to Jermaine. Jermaine takes it by pinching it with his thumb and index finger. He opens the cash drawer and takes the top two one-dollar bills, including the mussed up one dollar bill, plus the coin change and hands it to Danielle with a forced smile.

JERMAINE

Here you go.

DANIELLE

Thanks boys! Don't hurt yourself or anyone else today!

Danielle takes the money and the bag and heads to the door. Clifford looks down at his Slushy and uses his straw to stir it up.

CLIFFORD

I'm glad *she* didn't pull out a wad of cash.

Jermaine and Clifford, now in the background, watch as Danielle walks out of the Quik Mart.

EXT. QUIK MART - DAY

Danielle walks towards and gets into the van

INT. VAN - DAY

Danielle pets her dog GOURMAND (no particular age or size) and then grabs her purse that was laying on the seat. She starts up the van and on the radio; the time says 7:55. She opens the purse and puts the money, including the mussed up one dollar bill in, and closes the purse.

FADE TO BLACK

[WHITE LETTERS ON BLACK]

"Gluttony is an emotional escape, a sign that something is eating us"

Peter De Vries

INT. VAN - DAY

Danielle and Gourmand, drive down the road, as she opens her snacks and eats them.

She washes them down with the slushy and the energy drinks. As she does this, Gourmand looks on, and then looks out the window.

DANIELLE

Wait a minute...

Danielle raises up and lets loose a loud fart. Gourmand looks around for what made the sound.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)

Sorry boy, must've been something I ate... Ha ha ha ha!

EXT. STREET - DAY

The van continues down the road

INT. VAN - DAY

As she drives, each time she turns you can hear the trash and the cans in the back of the van bang around. As she finishes something, she tosses it over her head into the back.

DANIELLE

What should we do today boy?

Gourmand barks.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)

Naw, I don't want to go to the park today.

Gourmand barks again.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)

We did that yesterday.

Gourmand whimpers and turns away and Danielle laughs.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)

You're right, that *was* Tuesday.

She rubs Gourmand's head as they continue down the road.

EXT. ROAD IN FRONT OF CHURCH - DAY

They pass a church that sign reads, "Tweet Others as You Would Wish to be Tweeted".

INT. VAN - DAY

She takes a long big drink of her slushy and gets brain freeze. Her face contorts as she moans.

DANIELLE
Ahhhh... brain freeze.

Gourmand looks at her, then back out the window as she gnashes her teeth.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)
Wow...oh...wow! Whooo, I needed that!

She reaches over and pets Gourmand on the head as he continues to look out the window.

EXT. DANIELLE'S HOUSE - DAY

Danielle pulls up to a little house that needs some attention to the yard. She grabs what's left of the purchase she just made and walks slowly to the front door with Gourmand right by her side.

INT. DANIELLE'S HOUSE - DAY

She enters the house, that has lots of pictures. Most are of a man and Danielle. Everyone looks happy in the pictures. Danielle makes her way through the house and plops herself into her favorite comfy chair and clicks on the TV.

DANIELLE
Let's see what's on.

She clicks on the guide and sees shows like "Real Housewives of Buffalo" and "America's Best Dungeon Masters."

DANIELLE (CONT'D)
What in the...

She clicks more and sees "The Last Days of Marvin Hamlisch" and "Mississippi Mansions."

DANIELLE (CONT'D)
Well boy, looks like the vast wasteland is living up to it's name.

Gourmand looks up at her and does a doggy nod. Danielle then looks over at a stack of books sitting on the table next to her chair.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)
Remember when Poppy used to sit
here and read these?

She takes one of the books and opens the cover to see the inscription that reads, "To the man who reads more than he cooks... and we're all thankful for that! Love Dani."

Gourmand looks up at her as she touches the quote, and then closes the book. She picks up another; this one though, doesn't look as tattered. She opens the cover and the inscription reads, "Get well soon Benjamin! We all miss you!" This time, she gets a small tear in the corner of her eye and Gourmand puts his head in her lap. She closes the book.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)
Dammit.

She now begins to cry, but not aloud. She muffles her sobs as the tears stream down her cheeks. She looks at a picture of her and Benjamin smiling with their faces side by side touching each other. She picks it up.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)
Why you Benjamin?

She rubs her hand over the picture.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)
God I miss you. We just didn't
have enough time. All those things
we talked about doing.

She smiles as she talks.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)
We never made it to Europe. That
cross country train trip and that
couples cooking class you wanted to
go to so bad.

That makes her swallow back a sob.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)
Your cooking sucked, but I'd let
you cook every day if it would
bring you back.

Gourmand has his head in Danielle's lap and is looking up at her as she takes one last long glance at the picture she is holding.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)

I love you.

Danielle kisses the picture, then puts the picture down and wipes the tears away and sighs out loud.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)

I'm hungry, what about you boy?!

Gourmand barks with approval and Danielle goes to get up from her chair.

INT. DANIELLE'S HOUSE - DAY

(Montage)

She gets up from her chair, and slowly walks through her home while she drinks one of the energy drinks.

In the kitchen, she looks out the window, just staring off into the distance and eats a Ho-Ho.

She heads into the bathroom as Gourmand quickly turns and walks away when she shuts the door. After a beat, Danielle yells.

DANIELLE

Gourmand!

Gourmand drags a twelve pack of toilet paper towards the door.

(End Montage)

INT. DANIELLE'S HOUSE - DAY (LATER)

Danielle is in the comfy chair asleep, with snack wrappers in her lap and a can of energy drink still in her hand. As she groggily wakes up, she sits upright in her chair.

DANIELLE

What time is it?

She looks around, but can't find her phone so she yells.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)

Gourmand, come here boy!

She looks at the energy drink can.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)

What happened to the wings?!

Gourmand races into the room and Danielle speaks in a baby voice.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)
Where's mommy's phone? Go get
mommy's phone!

Gourmand barks and runs into the next room.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)
Bring mommy her phone, that 'a boy!

Gourmand comes streaking back into the room with her cell phone in his mouth. She holds the phone up, as it's a little slobbery, and in the same voice:

DANIELLE (CONT'D)
Such a good boy! Yes he is!

She gives him a doggy treat, then, eats one herself. She sees the time (4:31pm).

DANIELLE (CONT'D)
Holy shit, how long did I sleep?!

Gourmand barks and Danielle chuckles and speaks in her baby voice.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)
I told you not to let me sleep that
long during the day.

She gives Gourmand a playful pat on the head.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)
Hey Alexa, I'm hungry.

ALEXA
Hungary is a country in Central
Europe. Spanning 93,030 square
kilometers in the Carpathian Basin.

DANIELLE
What the... no, I'm hungry!

ALEXA
Are you hungry now?

DANIELLE
Of course I'm hungry now... Jeesh.

ALEXA
Do you want your usual order?

She ponders for a second.

ALEXA (CONT'D)
I'm waiting.

DANIELLE
Hold your horses. No, I think I
want to add my standing taco order
to that; and the burger order

ALEXA
Wow, that's a lot of food.

DANIELLE
Keep the comments to yourself.

ALEXA
You'll need another delivery
service for this order.

She looks down at Gourmand.

DANIELLE
What was the name of that dinner
delivery service I used a couple of
weeks ago?

Gourmand barks.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)
That's right, Supper Eats...

Gourmand barks and surprised she says:

DANIELLE (CONT'D)
Oh, sorry... Super Eats. Super Eats
delivery Alexa!

ALEXA
Your regular dinner order plus your
taco and burger order has just been
placed for delivery from Super Eats

She looks down at Gourmand again.

DANIELLE
God I love her.

Gourmand whines a little.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)
You too!

She rubs Gourmands head as she smiles, then picks up one of the books near the chair and opens it up.

INT. JENNIFER'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jennifer opens what looks to be a large text book on literature and reads a few lines, then stops and looks up into the air, takes a deep breath, then turns the page.

INT. CLARENCE'S TRUCK - DAY

Jonathan turns the page on a take home menu as he sits in the truck with Clarence. He stops momentarily and looks out the window, then looks back at the menu and closes it.

EXT. LUMBERYARD - DAY

Jermaine closes a work order sheet and looks around and sees nobody is looking and sits down on a stack of lumber and wipes his forehead. He yawns wide, then folds up the work order and gets up and walks off.

INT. DANIELLE'S HOUSE - DAY

A doorbell rings as Danielle walks in towards the door.

DANIELLE

Who is it?

Off camera from outside is MITCHELL (30, White, in jeans and a T-shirt that says Super Eats).

MITCHELL (O.C.)

Super Eats.

She smiles and opens the door and she sees Mitchell holding sacks of food.

DANIELLE

Nice! Just put it over there.

MITCHELL

I'm not supposed to come in people's houses anymore.

DANIELLE

Anymore?

He looks down and away.

MITCHELL
It's a long story.

DANIELLE
How long?

He grows somewhat agitated.

MITCHELL
Look, I'm not supposed to come into your house, some sort of rule or regulation... after last week.

DANIELLE
What did you do that you can't come into someone's house?

He tries to hold back from shouting.

MITCHELL
I was asked not to go into the house... for liability reasons.

DANIELLE
Hmmm.. you look harmless to me.

He forces a smile and hands her the bags of food and she looks him up and down. She turns to put the food down as he just stands there watching.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)
I do want to thank you, I don't know if I could have made it back out tonight.

He just looks at her with a blank stare. She looks him over and notices that he's rolling his fingers back into his hand as if to say "give me."

DANIELLE (CONT'D)
Your tip should have been included in my purchase. It was, wasn't it?

MITCHELL
Well it was and it wasn't. I get some of the delivery charge, the bastards keep the rest.

She looks a little taken aback.

DANIELLE

Well, was it or wasn't it? My total was thirty eight sixty which included eight dollars for delivery.

He winces slightly then holds out the receipt and points to some wording on it that says, "A delivery charge is not a tip paid to your driver."

DANIELLE (CONT'D)

What in the hell?!

MITCHELL

I know, right! Damn rat bastards.

She ponders for a beat then she realizes that she threw the change from the quick mart in her purse. She opens the purse and pulls out the two one-dollar bills, including the mused up bill, which she notices.

DANIELLE

Looks like you've had a rough day there George? Ha, ha, ha.

He feigns a laugh.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)

Sorry, it's all the change I have

He looks at the two dollars and rolls his eyes.

MITCHELL

Gee, thanks

She takes a step toward him and in a very matter of fact voice:

DANIELLE

Well you know, I could call your boss and tell him or her that you came into my house when you delivered my food.

She looks down towards Gourmand.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)

Isn't that right boy.

Gourmand barks as Mitchell tenses his lips. He looks as if he wants to yell something at her, but holds back while shaking in anger as he turns to leave.

EXT. DANIELLE'S HOUSE - DAY

As Danielle shuts the door, he looks at his watch, which says 5:30.

MITCHELL

Just great. Only 17 more deliveries like that tonight and I can go see a fucking movie.

He puts the two dollars, including the mused up bill, into his pocket.

FADE TO BLACK

[WHITE LETTERS ON BLACK]

*"He who conquers his wrath overcomes his greatest enemy."
Publilius Syrus*

Ext. DANIELLE'S HOUSE - DAY

Mitchell walks with authority back to and gets into his car.

INT. MITCHELL'S CAR - DAY

MITCHELL

Two bucks, two bucks!

He looks at the mused up dollar bill and growls.

MITCHELL (CONT'D)

If I were you, I'd stay out of my way George. This is going to be a long night.

INT. MITCHELL'S CAR - DAY

Music Montage (Limp Bizkit "Break Stuff")
(*Montage lasts about 2 minutes.*)

He starts up the car and pulls away.

EXT. RESTAURANT A - DAY

Mitchell stops at a restaurant and goes in. [Quick cut] He comes out with two bags of food. He approaches his car and tries to open the door but it's locked. He mouths the word "Shit" then sets the food in his right hand down and puts his hand in his right pocket. No keys. He grits his teeth and picks up the bag he set down and sets down the bag in his left hand. He puts his hand in his left pocket and no keys.

He looks inside the car and sees the keys in the ignition to which he mouths the word "Fuck" then kicks the door. He then notices the back window is partially open, looks around to see if anyone was looking, then reaches in and unlocks the front door to his car and gets in and drives away.

INT. MITCHELL'S CAR - DAY

Mitchell stops at a 4 way stop sign at the same time three other cars have also come up to their respective stop signs.

EXT. MITCHELL'S CAR - DAY

(view of Mitchell through the windshield) He looks at the three other drivers and mouths the words "Come on, let's go!"

INT. MITCHELL'S CAR - DAY

He starts to pull out and so do the other three vehicles. They all step on their brakes.

EXT. MITCHELL'S CAR - DAY

(view of Mitchell through the windshield) He bangs on his steering wheel and is now red in the face and screaming "Somebody just go, go, go, go!"

EXT. 4 WAY INTERSECTION - DAY

All four cars start to go again and all hit their brakes.

EXT. MITCHELL'S CAR - DAY

(view of Mitchell through the windshield) He grits his teeth and opens his mouth in one large scream.

EXT. 4 WAY INTERSECTION - DAY

Mitchell barrels through the intersection as the other three cars slam on their brakes.

INT. MITCHELL'S CAR - DUSK

Mitchell is stuck in a traffic jam that is just inching forward.

He's screaming "Let's go" and "Move it" at the top of his lungs. He looks to his right and an OLDER PERSON (75-80) in another car shakes their head at him.

INT. OLDER PERSON'S CAR - DUSK

Mitchell mouths "Blow me" towards the older person.

INT. MITCHELL'S CAR - DUSK

The older person smiles and slowly does the cranking motion with their right hand that raises the middle finger on their left hand. Mitchell quickly turns back to yelling at the cars in front of him with his open mouth leading to darkness.

End Montage.

EXT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

It's dark as Mitchell pulls into a gas station to fill up with gas. He gets out of his car and turns the gas cap to remove it. He turns to the pump, and notices the yellow plastic bags covering the handles because the pump is down.

MITCHELL

God-dammit!

Without replacing the cap, he opens his car door, leaves it open as he hangs out and drives around to a pump that is open.

In the background walking by, is the Zombie Apocalypse. As he starts to pump the gas, his cell phone rings.

MITCHELL (CONT'D)

Hey ma, what's up?

As he listens to his mother, we see a DRIVER (45, average height male, looks kind of dorky) on the other side of the pump looking at him.

MITCHELL (CONT'D)

No ma, I'm working... I can't take you now, you know that.

The driver at the other pump motions towards Mitchell as if he wants to say something and Mitchell frowns.

MITCHELL (CONT'D)

Ma, I know you want to go, but I can't.

The other driver now butts into the conversation.

DRIVER

Excuse me.

Mitchell looks at the driver with a scowl then turns back away.

MITCHELL

Ma, ma, listen to me, I only have time for one more delivery tonight.

DRIVER

You shouldn't talk on a cell phone while pumping gas.

MITCHELL

Mind your own business... Sorry ma.

DRIVER

That's really not safe.

MITCHELL

Fuck off! No ma, not you. Listen ma, I'll take you out for a nice breakfast, but I gotta go.

Mitchell puts the gas hose back and as he goes to put the gas cap back on he calmly says:

MITCHELL (CONT'D)

Yeah ma, I love you too.

INT. JENNIFER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jennifer is on her cell phone and is holding it to her ear.

JENNIFER

I know mom, but I've told you it's not that easy.

(beat)

OK mom, yes I know it was different when you were young, but I have to do this on my own terms.

(beat)

Of course mom. I know... right. Yes, of course I love you.

INT. JONATHAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jonathan is looking in his phone at pictures. One picture shows him and a woman and in the background a sign says Mothers Day. He smiles, then swipes right to see another picture with him and the same woman and they're both smiling, then another swipe and another picture with him and the woman and an older woman with a cake that says "Happy Birthday Grandma Celleste". He smiles then it fades.

JONATHAN

Love you mom.

EXT. LUMBER YARD PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Jermaine speaks on his cell phone.

JERMAINE

Yeah dad, I just got done. Do you need me to pick up anything?

(beat)

OK... OK... yeah dad, no problem.

OK... Love you pops!

INT. DANIELLE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Danielle has her cell phone in her hand and goes to the voice messages, clicks on speaker and presses one of the messages.

BENJAMIN (V.O.)

Hey hon, it's me. Listen, I'm going to be a little later than normal, the doctor says they have to run another quick test, but it shouldn't take too long. Don't worry about me and I'll let you know when I'm on my way home. Love you!

DANIELLE

Love you too.

There's a beep like at the end of a message.

INT. MITCHELL'S CAR - NIGHT

Mitchell's phone pings that he has another delivery. The pickup says "La Colere."

MITCHELL

Thank God! Oooh, fancy place, maybe
a big tip this time.

EXT. LA'COLERE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Mitchell pulls up to "La Colere". He gets out of the car and
walks in the front door.

INT. LA'COLERE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

He goes to the host stand where a MAITRE' D (50, White male,
tall and well dressed) is standing.

MITCHELL

Super Eats here for a pick up.

The Maitre D is a bit snobbish and looks at Mitchell as if he
smells like dog crap.

MAITRE D

I wish they would instruct you
fellows to pick up these orders in
the back.

Mitchell mocks and mouths "wish you fellows would pick this
up in the back." as the Maitre D gets the order.

MAITRE D (CONT'D)

Here is the order, please handle it
with care, as they are valuable
customers of ours.

Mitchell looks at him and sarcastically says:

MITCHELL

Oh I'll take real special care.

With that, he yanks the bags out of the Maitre D's hands,
turns and walks away. In the background, we see the Maitre
D.

MAITRE D

Do be careful.

Mitchell clenches his teeth and holds back from saying
anything.

FADE TO

INT. MITCHELL'S CAR - NIGHT

Mitchell drives into a nice subdivision that has a gate. He looks at his phone and the instructions have told him to punch in the code 1124 at the gate.

EXT. SUBDIVISION GATE - NIGHT

He leans out his window and punches in the code. Nothing happens. He punches in the code again. Again, nothing happens.

MITCHELL

Dammit... you mother fu...

He slaps the side of the control box and the gate opens. He drives through the gate and turns on the first street.

EXT. VICTORIA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

He pulls up to a very nice house with an expensive car in the driveway. He takes the order and heads to the front door, where he rings the doorbell.

INT./EXT. VICTORIA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The door opens and we see a striking woman, VICTORIA (33, Tall blonde well built, white, in the mold of Blake Lively) who is dressed in a tight business skirt and white blouse wearing spiked heels. Mitchell's jaw drops when he sees her. She speaks in a sultry voice.

VICTORIA

Thank God you're here, I'm so hungry.

Mitchell stares at Victoria until she says in a softer voice.

VICTORIA (CONT'D)

Here, let me take that.

She reaches for the bag, while he still stares at her. She gently takes the bag and slowly sets it aside.

While he continues to stare, she unbuttons the top button on her blouse and takes out a \$10 bill from her cleavage and motions to Mitchell.

VICTORIA (CONT'D)

Sorry honey, all I have is a ten.
Do you have any change?

Still mesmerized by her, Mitchell reaches into his pants and pulls out a wad of ones, including the mussed up George Washington bill and hands them over without even counting them.

MITCHELL

You bet!

She takes the handful of ones and as she leans in real close to him, puts the ten in his shirt pocket.

VICTORIA

Thank you darlin'. Don't go spending that all at once now, you hear!

He continues to stand there with his jaw still hanging wide open. She backs away and slowly puckers her lips as if to give Mitchell a long distance kiss. He puckers up the same and as he does this, she shuts the door in his face.

INT. VICTORIA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Victoria turns around and laughs to herself. The clock on the wall shows 9:35, and as she folds over the ones and places them in her bra, we see George Washington's face disappear.

FADE TO BLACK

[WHITE LETTERS ON BLACK]

"Greed is not a financial issue, it's a heart issue"
Andy Stanley

INT. VICTORIA'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Victoria walks into a grand, well equipped kitchen and places the food on the counter. Her husband JEREMIAH (33, Tall handsome, fit) immediately takes the food and starts making their plates. As he is doing this, she checks her phone.

JEREMIAH

You did it again, didn't you?

She smiles as she continues to look at her phone.

VICTORIA

It's too easy, plus it's fun.

JEREMIAH

Stealing is not fun.

She looks up from her phone and unbuttons her blouse and pulls out the bills.

VICTORIA
It isn't *always* stealing.

She begins to fan out and count the bills.

VICTORIA (CONT'D)
Seven, eight, nine. There, see, I didn't steal anything.

JEREMIAH
So you tipped him a buck.

VICTORIA
That poor dear will never know because in his mind, that ten-dollar bill was the biggest tip he got tonight. It's all perception.

He takes the plates and as he walks over to set them down on the island for them to sit and eat, he stops.

JEREMIAH
Yes, but you tricked him.

He places the plates down as she puts the bills back in her cleavage and walks over to her seat.

VICTORIA
If he wouldn't have been staring at my tits, he would've noticed how much he gave me back.

JEREMIAH
When is the last time someone stared at your tits and you didn't get something for it?

VICTORIA
I got you that way didn't I?

She playfully squeezes his cheek and he in turn chuckles as they begin to eat.

JEREMIAH
I think I was tricked as well.

She looks square into his eyes.

VICTORIA
Could be.

Both of them then turn to their phones and begin scrolling as they eat. Once or twice, he glances towards her.

JEREMIAH
Anything happen at work today?

Her eyes light up as she puts her phone down.

VICTORIA
I absolutely nailed the Belinger account today.

JEREMIAH
How so?

VICTORIA
We changed our approach and instead of going cost plus 10, we got them to agree to a flat 25. You should have seen them look back and forth at those proposals... I had them so confused.

She chuckles as she finishes her comment.

VICTORIA (CONT'D)
They had no idea what hit them!

He grins.

JEREMIAH
I had a pretty good day too. I think I figured out how our firm will be able to help that charity venture.

She reads her phone.

JEREMIAH (CONT'D)
We're going to coordinate with the shelter and hopefully keep more people off the streets. Working pro bono of course.

She continues reading her phone and is not paying attention.

JEREMIAH (CONT'D)
Did you hear me honey?

She quickly looks up from her phone.

VICTORIA

What? Oh yeah, that's nice. Hey, I almost forgot; do you remember the Gillardy account? Well, they wanted to add some components to their campaign, so I was able to rewrite the contract and we got them for an extra ten percent!

She beams with pride as he shows a slight smile that fades.
(beat) He puts his phone down.

JEREMIAH

How can you do that day in and day out?

She seems a bit taken back at that last question.

VICTORIA

What? Be successful?

JEREMIAH

No, how can you manipulate people without feeling something. Don't you think it's wrong; what you're doing?

She puts down her fork and phone and looks squarely at him.

VICTORIA

How can you sit in your office and stare at a computer screen all day? I don't tell you what you should or shouldn't do when you make your work decisions.

He looks back down at his food as she continues.

VICTORIA (CONT'D)

Who makes the money here? Look, I love what I do and how I do it. That's what success is all about... getting what you want when you want it.

He backs down and pushes his fork through his food, then puts it down on the plate. (beat)

Even though sensing that the outburst may have hurt his feelings, she brushes it off and speaks in a more pleasant tone.

VICTORIA (CONT'D)
 Did you hear anything from the
 doctor's office today?

He looks up at her and speaks in a soft voice.

JEREMIAH
 Um, yes. They say everything seems
 to be OK with my tests. They
 suggested we just keep trying.

She looks almost shocked.

VICTORIA
 Are you sure there's nothing wrong
 with [air quotes] your swimmers?

He shows a small grin.

JEREMIAH
 Supposedly, they could take Michael
 Phelps spot in the 440 relay.

She chuckles, then straightens up.

VICTORIA
 Well, somethings up; let me
 rephrase that; somethings wrong.

JEREMIAH
 We'll figure this out. One day
 we'll have a family and look back
 at this and laugh.

She takes a drink from her wine glass and halfheartedly
 smiles.

VICTORIA
 Sure.

She then realizes something.

VICTORIA (CONT'D)
 Oh shit! I forgot to stop and pick
 up my...

She thinks quickly.

VICTORIA (CONT'D)
 ...allergy medication at the
 pharmacy.

JEREMIAH
 I can go get it for you babe.

She responds quick and loud.

VICTORIA

No! I mean, no... you clean up dinner and I'll just head around the corner and pick it up real quick. I don't want you wearing yourself out before we can [air quotes] keep trying.

He gives a short chuckle then starts to clear the dinner dishes.

She takes the money out of her cleavage and places it in her handbag, picks up her car keys and turns to blow a kiss to him.

VICTORIA (CONT'D)

Be back soon.

She shuts the door behind her as she rushes out as he tries to call out to her.

JEREMIAH

Love... you.

EXT. VICTORIA'S HOUSE - NIGHT
[Music: Fiona Apple; Criminal]

She walks out to the driveway and gets into her car.

INT. VICTORIA'S CAR - NIGHT

As she drives down the street, her face goes from a slight smile, to that of contemplation.

EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF CHURCH - NIGHT

She drives down the street past a church that sign reads "God is Rich Because He Saves"

INT. VICTORIA'S CAR - NIGHT

Victoria grips the steering wheel tighter as she starts to tear up. She wipes away the tear and puts on her turn signal.

EXT. PHARMACY PARKING - NIGHT

She pulls onto a tiny side street where there is an old-fashioned pharmacy. She turns the car off.
(Music Ends)

Victoria looks out the window of her car at the moon.

INT. JENNIFER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jennifer looks out her window at the moon and ponders in her head what Isabella told her.

EXT. RESTAURANT - DAY

(Flashback)

ISABELLA

Everyone has problems, and some of them make people act in ways they normally wouldn't.

(End Flashback)

INT. JENNIFER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

JENNIFER

It shouldn't be this hard. Show me the sign.

INT. JONATHAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jonathan looks out his window at the moon and hears Clarence's words in his head.

CLARENCE (V.O.)

Just talk to her. Ask her out.

INT. JERMAINE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jermaine looks out his window at the moon then takes off his watch, rubs his forearm over it to clean it off, then sets it down on his nightstand and chuckles as he hears Clifford in his head.

CLIFFORD (V.O.)

What do you do in your spare time?

INT. DANIELLE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Danielle looks out her kitchen window at the moon and hears Benjamin's words from the voicemail.

BENJAMIN (V.O.)
Don't worry about me...

INT. MITCHELL'S CAR - NIGHT

Mitchell looks out his car window at the moon, takes a deep breath and rubs his face then reaches down and opens his car door.

EXT. PHARMACY PARKING - NIGHT

Victoria gets out of her car, shuts the door and walks to the door of the pharmacy.

INT. PHARMACY - NIGHT

A bell on the door signals the sole proprietor that Victoria has entered the building. THEODORE (70, Grey haired, white, in the mold of Bill Murray) is in a white smock standing behind the counter. He has quickly placed something under the counter when she comes in.

Before Victoria approaches him, she puts on her sunglasses, even though it's dark outside. She moves slowly to the counter and Theodore gets a better look at her and speaks with an excited voice.

THEODORE
Oh... May I help you?

VICTORIA
I have a prescription I need to pick up.

Theodore is staring at Victoria.

THEODORE
Oh, yes, my my; Name?

VICTORIA
It's under the name Usurious.

Theodore looks in his book, and then starts to spell the name.

THEODORE

U..s..u...

VICTORIA

I'm in kind of a hurry

Theodore looks slowly at her up and down, then smiles.

THEODORE

Of course, let me get that for you.

He turns around, shuffles through a few stapled sacks of people's prescriptions and finds one for Victoria Usurious. He picks it up and turns back towards her.

THEODORE (CONT'D)

Well Miss Usurious...

VICTORIA

Mrs.

THEODORE

Of course, Mrs. Usurious. I'll need to see some ID.

Victoria hands her ID to Theodore. He looks at it, then again at her.

THEODORE (CONT'D)

Sorry Mrs. Usurious, but I need you to...

Theodore motions to her sunglasses then pretends to take them off his own face. Victoria reaches up and pulls her sunglasses down and there are tears in her eyes. Theodore feigns a smile.

THEODORE (CONT'D)

Thank you.

Theodore hands the package to Victoria as she pushes her sunglasses back on. She opens the package to reveal a pack of birth control pills. Her face shows both relief and anguish as she stuffs them back in the bag.

Theodore shuffles over to the register and checks his book again.

THEODORE (CONT'D)

Is this on insurance? I don't see your insurance information.

She answers quickly and almost shouting.

VICTORIA
 No, no insurance! I'm paying cash
 for this.

He looks puzzled, but it's none of his business so he goes to
 the register and clacks on the keys.

THEODORE
 That'll be \$21.50

She reaches into her handbag and pulls out some bills,
 including the mussed up George Washington bill and looks for
 a twenty. She notices the mussed up bill and stares at it
 and the markings on George's face. She runs her thumb over
 the picture of George, swallows, then under her breath:

VICTORIA
 Don't judge me George.

She takes the bills and hands them to Theodore.

VICTORIA (CONT'D)
 Don't worry about the *change*, I
 don't need it.

She turns and walks towards the door and when she's four or
 five steps away, he murmurs.

THEODORE
 I think you do.

As Victoria leaves the pharmacy, the clock on the wall says
 10:07. With the mussed up George Washington bill on top,
 Theodore closes the register.

FADE TO BLACK

[WHITE LETTERS ON BLACK]

"Real men invest in long term love, not short term lust."
 Kalia Dietrich

INT. PHARMACY - NIGHT

Once Victoria leaves, Theodore opens the register to be sure
 the bills are neat and straight. He notices the mussed up
 George Washington bill, picks it up and looks at it closely.

THEODORE
 Well, well... what do we have here?

He studies the bill, notices the markings on George's face,
 then looks up to the sky.

THEODORE (CONT'D)
 Defacing public property. Don't
 people know this is illegal? Title
 18, Section 333 of the United
 States Code.

He then looks down and shakes his head, then looks at the bill again.

THEODORE (CONT'D)
 I'm sorry George, they don't know
 how to take care of you like I do.

He takes out his money clip, peels off a one-dollar bill from it and places it into the register. He then takes the mussed up George Washington bill and places it at the bottom of the stack in his money clip and places the clip back into his trouser pocket.

He looks around at the empty store to be sure nobody is watching, then takes an iPad from below the counter. He then opens Google and types in "bikini babes". When the light of the pictures fills the screen it illuminates his face. His eyes get wide and his jaw slowly opens. He swipes furiously as he bites his bottom lip, then the bell on the door rings.

Startled, he quickly closes the pad and shoves it under the counter. VIRGINIA (60, Attractive, well dressed) walks towards the counter where he is standing and he cracks a wry smile.

THEODORE (CONT'D)
 Hello Miss Virginia.

VIRGINIA
 Hello Theodore. I see you're busy.

They both look around at the nothingness

THEODORE
 Excuse me?

VIRGINIA
 I mean, it *looks* like you've been
 busy today.

THEODORE
 Oh yes, sure, very busy indeed.

He smiles and she does as well. Theodore looks down and around then straightens up.

THEODORE (CONT'D)

What can I help you with tonight
Miss Virginia?

VIRGINIA

Please, just call me Virginia.

THEODORE

Oh, I couldn't do that. Someone as
pretty and young like you deserves
a proper salutation.

Virginia blushes and smiles at him.

VIRGINIA

You stop that.

They both chuckle.

THEODORE

Isn't it kind of late for you to be
out?

VIRGINIA

I was in need of some...
toiletries.

THEODORE

Yes, of course. Can I help you find
anything?

Virginia winks, then whispers.

VIRGINIA

I think I can manage.

He smiles as she walks down a few of the aisles and picks up
some items and places them into a basket. Every now and
then, she glances towards him and he smiles and nods back at
her until she eventually brings her basket to the checkout.

THEODORE

Did you find everything you needed?

She looks at him with a grin.

VIRGINIA

I believe so.

He takes the items one by one out of the basket and rings
them up. His eyes get big as he realizes what she's getting;
red lipstick, a tube of KY jelly, a box of condoms and a set
of toy handcuffs.

As he's clacking the keys on the register, they are looking at each other, him with an eye cocked and her with a slight smile.

THEODORE

Having some...

He pauses momentarily as he thinks of his words carefully.

THEODORE (CONT'D)

...company over tonight?

VIRGINIA

Possibly.

She leans in close to him and breathily says:

VIRGINIA (CONT'D)

What are you doing when you close up?

He takes a big gulp and wipes his forehead.

THEODORE

Miss Virginia, I really... I don't know... I have a lot of bookkeeping to catch up on, plus, I won't get out of here until well after midnight.

She looks him in the eye.

VIRGINIA

I can wait.

He looks at her and wants to say yes, but instead fumbles with the cash register.

THEODORE

Your purchase comes to nineteen dollars and forty-three cents.

She looks disappointed but does not give up. She takes a twenty out of her purse and hands it to him. He takes it and takes out change to hand back to her.

THEODORE (CONT'D)

Your change Miss Virginia.

He drops the change into her left hand as she extends her right hand to thank him.

VIRGINIA

Please, just call me Virginia. I
hope you will reconsider...

She holds up her hand with the change

VIRGINIA (CONT'D)

...and change your mind.

While shaking his hand, she slips him a note. She turns to
walk out of the store and blows him a kiss.

He looks at the paper in his hand and once she has left,
opens the note to read it.

[1322 Mulberry St. You won't regret it!]

He gulps again and looks out into the dark night to see if
she has gone. He turns to look at the clock on the wall and
it says 10:25.

THEODORE

You can make it old man, you can
make it.

[Pan up to the clock and watch it fade to midnight.] Pan down
to Theodore closing the books, locking up the drugs and
shutting down the store. He clicks off the lights.

INT. JENNIFER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jennifer clicks on her bedside table light, checks her alarm
clock, lays down, takes a deep breath and turns off her
light.

INT. JONATHAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jonathan turns his his night stand light on. He contemplates
something for a beat, then smiles. He turns his light off.

INT. JERMAINE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jermaine turns on his light, yawns wide, sits up and looks at
three of his siblings asleep in the same room. He smiles,
yawns again then reaches over and turns off the light.

INT. REFRIGERATOR AT DANIELLE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Danielle opens the door to the fridge and the light comes on. Gourmand is behind her and she picks at some things, grabs a soda and a plate of food, then shuts the door which turns off the light of the refrigerator.

INT. MITCHELL'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Mitchell turns on the light as he enters the bathroom and looks at himself in the mirror.

MITCHELL'S MOTHER (60) (O.C.)
Mitchell honey, is that you?

MITCHELL
Yea ma, I'll be right in.

Mitchell clicks off the light to the bathroom.

INT. VICTORIA'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Victoria turns on the light to the bathroom and looks at herself in the mirror and starts to tear up.

JEREMIAH (O.C.)
Hey honey, you coming back to bed?

VICTORIA
Yes dear... I'll be right there.

She wipes away the tear and turns off the light.

EXT. THEODORE'S CAR - NIGHT

Theodore opens his car door and the light comes on. He gets in and starts the car up and pulls away.

EXT. FAST FOOD DRIVE THROUGH - NIGHT

Theodore pulls through a late night drive through to get something to eat.

INT. THEODORE'S CAR FAST FOOD PARKING LOT - NIGHT

He parks in the lot while he eats. As he's eating, he glances at the note from Virginia that is sitting on the passenger seat and he wipes his forehead, then his mouth with a napkin. He picks up the note and tucks it onto the back of his money clip.

THEODORE

You can make it.

EXT. DARK STREETS AND ALLEY - NIGHT

He pulls out of the lot and drives down the street. He slowly drives down a dark alley, but there are a lot of cars around. He finds a spot to park and gets out of his car.

He puts on his sport coat and fedora, and pulls the brim of the hat down low over his eyes. He flips up the collar of the coat and heads towards the back of a building then turns the corner.

EXT. CLUB ENTRANCE - NIGHT

He walks from around the corner and up to a LARGE GUY (25, Muscular male) standing next to a large metal door. The large guy notices who it is and nods.

LARGE GUY

Theodore.

Theodore nods.

LARGE GUY (CONT'D)

She's here.

Theodore smiles and the big guy opens the door for him. As he opens the door. The sign above the door says "Girls Girls Girls Open 24 Hours".

INT. CLUB NIGHT - NIGHT

There are lots of colored lights and pounding music and as Theodore makes his way to the main stage. Several of the girls greet him by name. Each time he smiles and nods at them.

Once he gets to his table, he takes out his money clip and patiently waits. Soon, the announcer cracks open the microphone.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

All right gentlemen, you've waited all night for her and now your wishes are about to come true. Now on the main stage, put your hands together because, Here she is, Miss America!

[Music: Confident by Demi Lovato]

The curtains part and out steps COURTNEY (25, Beautiful fit white, wearing a tiara and a sash that says "Miss Virginia"). Immediately Theodore breaks the mild mannered act and starts howling and whistling.

THEODORE

Oh yes! Miss Virginia... Yes... do it!

Courtney smiles at Theodore.

THEODORE (CONT'D)

Oh God yes... yes... yes!

As he's hooting and hollering, he continues to peel off the bills from his money clip and place them into her G-string. She continues to wiggle and gyrate in front of him, occasionally blowing him kisses.

THEODORE (CONT'D)

Miss Virginia... I want you!

As he says that, he takes the last of his bills, the mused up George Washington bill, and places it in her G-string. As the song ends and she wiggles to the back of the stage, Theodore looks down at his empty money clip and flips it over to see the note from Virginia. He looks at it, then looks up at Courtney. His smile slowly fades to contemplation.

INT. BACK OF STAGE AT THE CLUB NIGHT - NIGHT

[Behind Courtney towards Theodore.]

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Let's hear it one more time for Miss America!

Courtney looks off stage and the clock on the wall says 1:43. She smiles and under her breath:

COURTNEY

Soak it in boys!

The George Washington bill is hanging off her right hip as the curtains close to the applause.

FADE TO BLACK

[WHITE LETTERS ON BLACK]

"Pride is ugly. It says 'If you succeed I am a failure.'"
Ezra Taft Benson

INT. CLUB DRESSING ROOM NIGHT - NIGHT

Courtney walks backstage towards the dressing room, all the while pulling the bills out of her G-string and top, until the last one she pulls is the mussed up George Washington bill. BRITTANY (25, Beautiful, fit, dark haired, white) meets her as she enters the dressing room.

BRITTANY

You were awesome out there!

The other dancers sitting around roll their eyes and shake their heads.

COURTNEY

I know. I was working a few new moves. Sometimes I just can't help myself.

BRITTANY

You know how to work it!

Courtney smiles and nods like she knows this already.

COURTNEY

I know, I know, it's hard to improve upon perfection.

BRITTANY

How much did you pull in?

Courtney still counting looks up from the money and looks at Brittany.

COURTNEY

The money doesn't matter to me, it's about how I command the room. I mean, you gotta be the best at everything you do, don't you?

One of the other dancers, SAVANNAH (25, Attractive, light skinned African American) has been listening in and pipes up.

SAVANNAH

You're dancing at a 24 hour club
for dollar bills. There is no *best*
way to do it.

COURTNEY

I beg to differ. You have to be
the best at what you're doing, or
you shouldn't do it at all.

Savannah in a sarcastic voice:

SAVANNAH

Yeah, I'm great shaking my ass at
two o'clock in the morning for a
handful of middle-aged men who have
nothing better to do than to leer
at me.

BRITTANY

There see, it does matter to you!

Both Courtney and Savannah look at Brittany, then back at
each other.

COURTNEY

You do what you need to do and I'll
do it my way.

SAVANNAH

Your way? How's that?

Courtney flashes the cash in front of Savannah.

COURTNEY

The right way!

Courtney then brushes by Savannah and Brittany follows close
behind as a few of the other girls chime in with some "Oohs"
and "Damn". Savannah shakes her head and makes her way
towards the stage.

Courtney sits down at a make-up table and looks into the
mirror.

COURTNEY (CONT'D)

Who does she think she is? She's
just jealous that I'm better than
her, right?

BRITTANY

Right!

Courtney takes off her sash and tiara and begins to freshen her make-up. Brittany is behind her in the mirror.

COURTNEY

I can't help it that I'm the best.
I can't help it that they envy my
success.

BRITTANY

I know.

COURTNEY

Besides, I have to share what God
gave me with the world.

Brittany looks puzzled.

BRITTANY

Wouldn't that make you a
prostitute?

Courtney looks up at Brittany in the mirror.

COURTNEY

No, I mean share my talent for all
to enjoy. You've seen my moves,
you've seen how they cheer for me.

Brittany does a half smile look as Courtney turns around towards her.

COURTNEY (CONT'D)

Let me ask you this; why do you
work here?

Brittany ponders that for a second or two.

BRITTANY

Because I need the money. My mom
says she'll watch my son, but that
don't pay the rent and buy the
food.

COURTNEY

See, there's the difference between
the both of us. I do this because
I'm the best and you do it because
you have to. When you're the best,
the money just follows.

Courtney holds up the cash she just brought in, as Brittany smiles, then looks as if she's pondering something.

COURTNEY (CONT'D)

Brittany?

Brittany shakes her head quickly like clearing her mind.

BRITTANY

Oooh, I gotta get ready to go on!

Courtney returns to doing her make-up, as she talks to herself.

COURTNEY

You're the best Courtney, don't let anyone tell you otherwise.

Courtney's boss FRANKLIN (40, Overweight, with greasy combed back hair) is standing in the doorway.

FRANKLIN

Courtney, you're supposed to be on the floor!

She whips around to see him and she quickly gets up and runs over to him.

COURTNEY

I was hoping I didn't have to work the floor tonight; I mean, I am the best dancer you have and you don't want me to get tired schlepping drinks do you?

He looks at her with awe, then shoves a cigar into his mouth.

FRANKLIN

Get out there!

A few of the girls in the dressing room giggle as she turns and looks at them, then walks through the door.

INT. CLUB FLOOR NIGHT - NIGHT

The room is about half full and as Savannah dances on the main stage, Courtney looks around the room hoping to see a regular, like Theodore.

COURTNEY

Where are you Theodore?

She realizes that Theodore has left.

COURTNEY (CONT'D)

Damn!

She hesitates; scours the room and notices a man dressed like a slob, wrinkles her nose then sees an attractive man with a fancy watch, and walks over towards his table near one of the side stages and taps him on the shoulder.

COURTNEY (CONT'D)
Hey there, can I get you a drink?

It's Customer #2 from the convenient store. He smiles, as he looks Courtney up and down.

CUSTOMER #2
Hey baby, where have you been all my life?

She feigns a smile.

COURTNEY
Right here waiting for someone just like you.

She looks around to be sure her boss isn't around.

COURTNEY (CONT'D)
Look, I really don't like working the floor, it's not what I'm good at.

CUSTOMER #2
Is that so.

As he says this, he grabs Courtney's butt and she recoils and slaps his hand away.

COURTNEY
No touching!

CUSTOMER #2
Oh come on; let's see what you are good at. I'll make it worth your while.

He holds up a wad of cash.

COURTNEY
Look, I'm sorry I told you that. Do you want a drink or not?

CUSTOMER #2
I think I made it clear as to what I wanted.

She leers at him then looks up to see her boss standing behind Customer #2.

FRANKLIN
Is there a problem here?

CUSTOMER #2
There's no problem, is there
darling?

She looks at Customer #2 with an icy stare, then looks up at Franklin.

COURTNEY
No, there's no problem.

Franklin looks at Courtney, then down at Customer #2, then back up at Courtney.

FRANKLIN
All right then.

He glances down at Customer #2.

FRANKLIN (CONT'D)
Sorry for the interruption

Franklin walks away and Customer #2 smiles as he looks up at Courtney.

CUSTOMER #2
Now, where were we?

COURTNEY
I asked you if you wanted a drink
and then you grabbed my ass and my
boss came over. I think that's
about it.

CUSTOMER #2
Feisty! I like it.

He looks Courtney up and down again.

CUSTOMER #2 (CONT'D)
Yeah, I'll take that drink. Rum and
Coke, but I want it served with a
bounce and a smile.

With that, he takes a five dollar bill and puts it into her G-string. She again, feigns a smile and turns to walk towards the bar.

CUSTOMER #2 (CONT'D)
Bounce and a smile!

She closes her eyes then continues forward.

INT. CLUB/BAR NIGHT - NIGHT

(Montage) Fade to scenes of men in the club talking to the dancers and dancers on the stage, Courtney and Brittany among them. Each time we see Courtney, she's still feigning a smile and when we see Customer #2 he's always smiling and wide mouthing "bounce and a smile" towards Courtney. (End Montage)

INT. CLUB DRESSING ROOM - MORNING

[Fade to] The clock shows 5:30am. Courtney and Brittany are putting on their clothes.

BRITTANY

I could sure use some company for my walk home. I only live a couple of blocks away, I mean, if you don't mind.

Courtney looks at Brittany and smiles.

COURTNEY

Sure, sure I can walk with you.

Brittany smiles and they gather their things. Courtney neatly arranges her earnings from the night, with the mused up George Washington bill on top. She holds it up to take a closer look.

BRITTANY

What's wrong?

COURTNEY

This dollar bill. I never noticed these markings before now.

BRITTANY

Can you still use it?

COURTNEY

Of course, it's just something you don't see every day.

Courtney rubs her thumb over George's face on the bill.

BRITTANY

Huh. You ready?

As Courtney stares at the dollar bill, Brittany waves to a few of the girls, Courtney puts her money away and they both walk out the door.

EXT. JENNIFER'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Jennifer closes the door to her apartment building behind her and heads to her car and opens the door.

INT. CLARENCE'S TRUCK - MORNING

Clarence and Jonathan climb into Clarence's truck and shut the doors and pull their seat belts over.

INT. JERMAINE'S CAR - MORNING

Jermaine clicks his seat belt, rubs his eyes and yawns. He looks down at his phone.

INT. DANIELLE'S VAN - MORNING

Danielle looks up from her phone, pets Gourmand on the head and starts up the van.

INT. MITCHELL'S CAR - MORNING

Mitchell and his mother sit in the front seat, and as she smiles at him, he smiles back and puts the car into gear.

INT. VICTORIA'S CAR - MORNING

Jeremiah drives as Victoria stares out the window.

EXT. STREET SCENE - MORNING

Victoria's car passes a house with the street number 1322 on the house and Theodore's car parked out front. Another car passes by.

EXT. CITY STREET - MORNING

A car passes by as Courtney and Brittany walk down the sidewalk.

BRITTANY

Thanks again for walking with me.

COURTNEY

Anything for you.

A few more cars pass by in the street.

BRITTANY
I wanted you to walk with me
because, I was wondering...

Brittany looks over at Courtney and with an air of
fascination.

BRITTANY (CONT'D)
Why do you do it?

COURTNEY
Do what?

BRITTANY
Dance at the club.

Courtney looks perplexed.

COURTNEY
Because I'm the best, and I make
good money.

BRITTANY
Don't you want more?

COURTNEY
Sure, who doesn't want more money.

BRITTANY
No, I meant from life, your work.

Courtney curls her face as she thinks.

COURTNEY
I never really thought about it. I
guess it's because things come
naturally for me.

BRITTANY
I don't know, something doesn't
seem right.

Brittany stops which makes Courtney stop as well.

BRITTANY (CONT'D)
You know, I don't mind dancing, but
this is all I can find to keep a
roof over my head.

They begin to walk again.

BRITTANY (CONT'D)
I'm not smart enough to get a real
job that pays like this.
(MORE)

BRITTANY (CONT'D)

Then I look at you and you seem, I don't know, too smart to just dance for money.

COURTNEY

Being smart has nothing to do with it. Do you think of yourself as dumb?

Brittany looks towards the ground then back up at Courtney.

BRITTANY

Sometimes.

Courtney stops Brittany.

COURTNEY

That's bullshit. You're beautiful, you have a great kid, you make good money. Plus, it's at something you are good at.

Brittany looks towards Courtney.

BRITTANY

Do you really think so?

COURTNEY

Of course. What you're doing is a real job, no matter what anyone says. I wish I were you sometimes, because to me, you just go with the flow and seem to have it all figured out.

Brittany thinks for a beat as they begin to walk again.

BRITTANY

I thought you were the one who had it figured out. Now I'm really confused.

COURTNEY

There's nothing to be confused about, you're doing the best you can for you and your son.

BRITTANY

Really?

COURTNEY

Yes, really. You've got a purpose and you do the very best you can.

Brittany shakes her head and stops.

BRITTANY
You're telling me I'm doing the
best I can?

COURTNEY
You are.

BRITTANY
Then what you said before is all
wrong.

Courtney looks puzzled.

BRITTANY (CONT'D)
You can't be the best at *everything*
you do, it's just not possible; and
that's what you told Savannah; that
you have to be the best, or you
shouldn't do it.

As Brittany pauses, Courtney looks to Brittany with interest.

BRITTANY (CONT'D)
But you just told me that I should
be proud and that I'm doing the
best *I can*.
(beat)
If that's the case, then shouldn't
we want to do the best we can with
what we have instead of trying to
just be the best?

Courtney digests those words for a moment and her face goes
from that of query to realization as they begin to walk.

COURTNEY
Well, that does makes sense.

BRITTANY
I think you can be the best on
occasions.

COURTNEY
Like me on stage.

As she says that, Courtney realizes what she's saying and
stops smiling.

COURTNEY (CONT'D)

But I get so wrapped up in that,
that I sometimes forget there are
other things that I may not be as
good at.

Brittany looks up at her.

BRITTANY

Working the floor?

COURTNEY

You saw that?

BRITTANY

Yeah. You don't have to worry about
it though, I don't like working the
floor either, I just try to make
the best of it. There's nothing to
be ashamed of.

Brittany smiles as Courtney looks to the sky, then looks down
as she plays with her sweater.

COURTNEY

My mother always told me that I had
to be the best. She drove it into
me and my sister's head that we
were nothing unless we were the
best. I think it was because my
father left her and she was afraid
that we wouldn't amount to
anything.

(beat)

Brittany puts her hand on Courtney's back as she continues.

COURTNEY (CONT'D)

My sister couldn't take it anymore
and just left one day. I decided I
was going to be the best, no matter
what to spite both of them.

Courtney laughs through a tear as she looks at Brittany.

COURTNEY (CONT'D)

Funny thing is, I think I'm the
best and my mom won't even talk to
me. She thinks I'm a failure.

BRITTANY

You're not a failure.

COURTNEY

I know, but work is all I have. At least you have family, your mom and son. That's the most important.

Brittany shakes her head.

BRITTANY

Those girls have you all wrong.

Courtney's expression changes to concern.

COURTNEY

Who?

BRITTANY

Savannah and all of them at the club. They say you don't think of anyone but yourself, that all you care about is you and nobody else. But you made me realize that I am doing the best I can, and that's not thinking about you at all!

Courtney chuckles.

COURTNEY

I think they have you all wrong. You're the wisest one of us all.

They look at each other with smiles.

BRITTANY

Just doing the best I can.

COURTNEY

I like that! That's our new motto, just doin' the best we can.

With that they both laugh and hug. Courtney looks at the building next to her.

COURTNEY (CONT'D)

What do you say I buy you a coffee professor.

Brittany smiles and they open the door.

INT. RESTAURANT/DINER - MORNING

They walk to the counter where they stop near a cash register.

COURTNEY

Can we get two coffees to go please?

Courtney glances at Brittany.

COURTNEY (CONT'D)

I'm sorry if I've ever made you feel dumb.

BRITTANY

That's OK, you didn't know any better.

Courtney does a double take towards Brittany.

COURTNEY

Let's do these walks more often.

Brittany and Courtney smile as someone hands them two to-go cups of coffee. Courtney hands over five one-dollar bills, the top one being the mussed up George Washington bill. (Zoom in on dollar bill)

COURTNEY (O.C.) (CONT'D)

Keep the change!

Turn now from looking at Courtney and Brittany to see Jennifer holding the money and staring with awe at the mussed up George Washington bill. A big smile engulfs her face.

She looks up from the bill and her jaw drops open and she smiles even wider. Turn back around towards the restaurant to see Jonathan standing there, also with a big smile.

JONATHAN

I was really worried that I wouldn't see you today. You looked so out of it yesterday.

Jennifer looks in somewhat disbelief, and she looks around Jonathan for Clarence.

JENNIFER

Where's your buddy?

JONATHAN

My dad? He's over there.

JENNIFER

Your dad?!

JONATHAN

Yeah. Since mom passed, we've been coming in here for breakfast.

JENNIFER

Oh, I'm so sorry.

JONATHAN

Don't be sorry. He's in his own little world a lot, cause he really misses her, but he's the one who talked me into talking to you.

JENNIFER

Why would he have to talk you into it?

JONATHAN

It wasn't so much talking me into it, it was more making me realize that I really want you in my life.

Jonathan realizes what he just said and seems a bit concerned.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

I mean, someone *like* you in my life. I'd really like to get to know you better and I hope you'd like to know me better.

Jennifer laughs.

JENNIFER

What more do I need to know, two eggs wrecked with bacon and white toast!

Jonathan grins then musters up the courage.

JONATHAN

I, just... I like you, I like you a lot actually... and wanted to see if you'd like to go out... just the two of us, and talk. Maybe have a nice dinner. You seem like you need someone to help you figure things out.

Jennifer continues her big smile.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

But more importantly, I just want to be sure you're OK.

As she's speaking, Jennifer takes the money Courtney handed to her and places the other four-dollar bills in the register while keeping hold of her tip, the mused up George Washington bill.

JENNIFER

I think for the first time in a long time, I am actually more than OK.

Jonathan smiles.

JONATHAN

That's good to hear.

Jennifer smiles at Jonathan then looks over at Isabella who is standing off to the side with a smile on her face.

JENNIFER

A wise person once told me the answer will come to you when you least expect it. That if you look for a sign, it'll come, but on it's own time.

Jonathan notices the dollar bill she's holding.

JONATHAN

Is that the sign?

Jennifer lowers the dollar bill and focuses squarely on Jonathan.

JENNIFER

I think so!

As she finishes her statement, Jonathan smiles then leans in as if to kiss Jennifer when the moment is halted by a loud sound.

MR. WEZAAS

Ahem!

Jennifer and Jonathan pull apart at the sound and look startled at Mr. Wezaas.

MR. WEZAAS (CONT'D)

How about doing the smoochy smoochy face on your own time

Mr. Wezaas looks at Jonathan then to Jennifer.

MR. WEZAAS (CONT'D)

You, go order food and you, get
back to work!

[Music: Madness; It Must Be Love]

Jonathan nervously nods and moves towards the table with Clarence as Jennifer laughs and Isabella gives her a quick hug.

Pull back and pan the rest of the people in the restaurant to see Danielle sitting at a table to the side reading one of the books with Gourmand at her side. Jermaine and Clifford are near the front window (as we see them, out the window the Zombie Apocalypse walks by, Jermaine and Clifford point at them and give each other a high five).

At the next table is Mitchell with his mother who is in a wheel chair. With her back to Mitchell is Victoria and Jeremiah at the next table holding hands as Victoria wipes tears away from her eyes.

The final table has Theodore and Virginia, his hair still messed up and smudges of red lipstick on his cheek.

Back around to Jennifer. The clock on the wall says 6:02, and with a big smile, Jennifer folds the messed up bill and places it in her apron.

FADE TO BLACK

[WHITE LETTERS ON BLACK]

The End Or The Beginning?