

THE ROAD TO DAMASCUS

FADE IN:

INT. GREYHOUND BUS - DAY

Jack sits, looking out the window as the bus rolls along the California countryside.

EXT. LONESOME HIGHWAY - DAY

Lettuce fields and rolling hills paint the landscape where JACK ANDREWS, (30's) dark haired, slim, chiseled, with a fu-man-chu beard is hitch hiking. He is dressed in Jeans, boots and work shirt. His meager belongings are stuffed into a duffle bag which is strapped over his shoulder.

Jack walks along the busy road hoping for someone to pull over, no one does.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Jack sits in the back of a pick up truck driven by farm workers. The truck approaches the crest of a hill revealing the awesome Los Angeles Basin in the foreground.

FADE TO:

EXT. LOS ANGELES - CITY STREET - NIGHT

Jack wanders along the run down neighborhood. Drunks, junkies, hookers and street vermin decorate the debilitated neighborhood.

Jack stops at the entrance of a sleazy hotel. He inspects it for a moment, then enters..

INT. CHEAP HOTEL - NIGHT

Jack enters the lobby of the dusty, damp, cheap hotel, still carrying his belongings. He moves to the front desk.

A creepy HOTEL CLERK, smoking a cig and playing a solitary game of chess sits behind the desk.

JACK

I need a room.

HOTEL CLERK

Twenty three dollars a night or ninety dollars a week, paid in advance.

Jack pulls some money out of his pocket and puts it on the counter. The clerk counts the money.

HOTEL CLERK
(CONT'D) (cont'd)
(continuing)
Whew, Rockefeller.

He produces a clip board.

HOTEL CLERK
(CONT'D) (cont'd)
(continuing)
Sign here.

Jack signs the paper, the clerk throws a key on the counter.

HOTEL CLERK
(CONT'D) (cont'd)
(continuing)
Room three - seventeen. You get two towels a day, and new sheets once a week. If I catch you selling crack out of your room, I throw you out. I catch you pimpin' out of your room, I throw you out. If I catch you runnin' numbers, workin' a meth lab or fuckin' with that PCP shit, I throw you out -- Any questions?

JACK
Yeah, what time is breakfast?

HOTEL CLERK
Very funny. A regular Lenny Bruce.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Jack enters the depressing room. He throws his stuff on the bed. He moves into --

INT. HOTEL ROOM - BATHROOM - CONTINUED

Jack turns on the light. He looks at his face in the mirror and closely inspects his fu-man-chu.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - BATHROOM - LATER

Jack is in the tub taking a hot bath and enjoying every moment. His beard, absent from his face.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Jack sits across the desk from an EXECUTIVE.

EXECUTIVE

I'm sorry, but company policy prohibits us from hiring anyone who has been convicted of a felony.

JACK

I'll work harder than any two men you hire, I promise you.

EXECUTIVE

I understand, but there's really nothing I can do.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Jack sits at the counter sipping a cup of Joe. He reads the classified section of the news paper, circling different job opportunities.

VIVIAN the waitress, (30's) a petite, pretty woman who carries an equally petite yet fiery voice walks by.

VIVIAN

More coffee?

Jack says nothing. He merely moves his cup up to indicate he does. Vivian pours.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

In the job market, huh?

For the first time, Jack looks up at Vivian.

JACK

I think out of the job market is more like it.

VIVIAN

Don't you want anything to eat.

Jack eyes the bacon and eggs SIZZLING on the grill.

JACK

I'm fine.

VIVIAN

So, what is it that you do?

JACK

Nothing, that's why I'm looking for a job.

VIVIAN

What is it that you want to do?

JACK

I just need to make a living.

VIVIAN

I'm gonna be a Private Eye.

JACK

Is that so?

She pulls a brochure from her apron and shows it to Jack.

VIVIAN

The A-1 Private Detective Academy. You give them four thousand dollars and six weeks of your time and they will turn you into a genuine State certified, licenced PI.

JACK

You?

VIVIAN

That's right.

JACK

Kind of like Phillip Marlowe.

VIVIAN

Kind of. It'll be a while though. I only have a thousand dollars saved up. Plus I'm still paying off my beauty school loans.

Beat. Both seem a bit nervous. Jack looking at her pretty face.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

(continuing)

I went to beauty school too.

Jack keeps staring at her eyes. Beat.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)
(cont'd)
(continuing)
Didn't much care for it though.

JACK
Be patient, Rome wasn't built in a day.

VIVIAN
I guess not. It's a pretty big place. At
least I think it is, I never been there
myself.

JACK
(beat)
I'll just take the check.

She slaps the check on the counter.

VIVIAN
My name is Vivian.

JACK
I know.

She looks dumbfounded.

JACK (CONT'D)
(cont'd)
(continuing)
Your name tag.

VIVIAN
Oh. Some private eye, huh?.

JACK
Jack.

VIVIAN
Jack?

JACK
Well, Jonathan -- But call me Jack.

A COOK yells.

COOK OS
Vivian, pick up!

VIVIAN

Well, Jack, maybe I'll see you around
here again sometime?

JACK

Yeah, maybe.

INT. TINY BATHROOM - DAY

Jack pulls up his pants and tucks his shirt in.

EXT. BATHROOM - CONTINUING

Jack exits the bathroom which is connected to a small office.
He carries a sample bottle of urine which he hands to DELL
JOHNSON 40's a simple man who exudes an air of authority,
sitting at his desk.

Dell holds the bottle up to the light and inspects it. He
then places a piece of dated tape over the cap, seals it and
puts it in a desk drawer.

DELL

You been keeping clean?

JACK

Absolutely.

DELL

Where you staying?

JACK

The St. Dennis Hotel.

DELL

Downtown?

Jack nods.

DELL (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

(continuing)

That place is a shit hole, not meant for
humans.

JACK

It fits into my budget.

DELL

You staying out of trouble?

Jack nods "yes".

DELL (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

(continuing)

You have three years of parole. You fuck up, you go right back in -- Understand?

JACK

Yes, Sir.

DELL

I have the right to search you at any time. I can give you a drug test at any time. If you're not staying where you say you are, I can send you back. If you fail a drug test, I can send you back. If you hang around with known criminals I can send you back -- Is that clear?

JACK

Very.

DELL

Good. Have you found a job yet?

JACK

You see, that's the thing. I've been trying and trying and, shit, every time they see that I'm a felon -- You know how it is.

DELL

What kind of work are you trying to get?

JACK

Anything that offers a little dignity and a paycheck.

Dell writes on a piece of paper.

DELL

Give this man a call, he's got work.

INT. EVERCLEAN INC. - OFFICE WAITING ROOM - DAY

Jack nervously fills out an application on a clipboard.

A Gum chewing BEN TROMANTANO (30's) Italian, with slicked back hair, dressed in a dark suit enters from the far office.

BEN
Jonathan?

JACK
Yes, Sir.

BEN
(shakes hand)
Ben Tromintano Come on in.

Jack follows Ben.

INT. BEN'S OFFICE - ONE MINUTE LATER

Ben sits at his desk, across from Jack. Ben reads Jack's application.

BEN
So you want to sell Everclean Vacuum Cleaners, do ya?

JACK
Yes, Sir, I really do.

BEN
Why?

JACK
(beat, shifts in chair)
Frankly, Sir -- The money.

BEN
No previous sales experience, Jonathan?

JACK
You can call me Jack.

BEN
No sales experience?

JACK
No.

BEN
It says here that you are a convicted felon.

JACK
That's right

BEN
Convicted of what?

JACK
If you don't mind, that part of my life
is over. I'd rather not talk about it.

BEN
Convicted of what?

JACK
A few different things -- Robbery mainly.

BEN
Just get out?

JACK
Yes, Sir I did.

Ben leans back in his chair. He studies Ben, still chewing
his gum

BEN
Did you ever get raped in the joint?

Jack registers an expression of discomfort.

BEN (CONT'D)
(cont'd)
(continuing)
You watch these movies on HBO, they're
always showing how white guys are always
getting raped in prison. I was just
curious if it's true.

SILENCE. The tension grows thick.

BEN (CONT'D)
(cont'd)
What makes you think you can be a
successful Everclean salesman?

JACK
In all honesty, I don't know. But I'll
tell you this, I have nothing. No money,
no job, no wife, no home, no family. I'd
say that makes me the hungriest salesman
you'll have.

Beat. Ben lets out a huge smile.

BEN

I love that shit! You're right. I'll take a poor uneducated scrub in rags who's hungry over some uptight, anal retentive college educated ass hole any day of the week. I was just like you when I started in this business, I had nothing. Look at me now.

Beat. Jack looks around the shabby office.

BEN (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

(continuing)

You start tomorrow. Eight AM is the sales meeting, eight thirty you hit the streets.

He hands Jack a large three-ring binder.

BEN (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

(continuing)

Read this tonight, it'll tell you everything you need to know.

He pulls a stack of index cards from his drawer and tosses it to Jack.

BEN (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

(continuing)

Leads from our telemarketing department -- Should last you a few days.

JACK

Thanks.

BEN

Wait before you thank me.

JACK

I'll see you at eight.

Jack begins to leave.

BEN

(continuing)

Jonathan.

Jack stops and turns.

BEN (CONT'D)
(cont'd)
(continuing)
Is that your only suit?

JACK
This is it.

BEN
Make sure it's pressed.

JACK
Yes sir.

Jack exits.

EXT. SUBURBS - DAY

Jack steps out of a city bus, binder in hand and begins to walk down the street of a quiet residential neighborhood.

EXT. SUBURBS - A SHORT TIME LATER

Jack stares at a nice two story single family home from across the street. A mini van pulls in the driveway.

A woman in her early forties exits the van and moves into the house. Jack only watches.

INT. EVERCLEAN - BEN'S OFFICE - MORNING

Ben stands by the large marker board. He gives a pump session to the five salesmen including Jack.

BEN
(referring to sales board)
What the fuck is this shit? It's the
fourteenth of the month and we've only
sold twenty two units? When I was on the
street I would move that many by myself.
You guys, I'm telling ya -- You better
fuckin' wake up, because there is a whole
bunch of poor, hungry mother fuckers out
there who are just waiting to come in
here and take your jobs. And believe me,
if this shit keeps up, they're gonna get
them.
(beat)
Now, speaking of poor, hungry mother
(MORE)

BEN(cont'd)

fuckers, I want everybody to say hello to Jack.

ALL SALESMEN
(in unison)
Hello, Jack.

BEN
This is Jack's first day out on the street, I'm sure he's going to do a great job. He's got the makings of one of Everclean's finest. Mikey?

MIKEY (30's) an innocent looking preppy salesman stands up.

MIKEY
Yes, Sir.

BEN
(continuing)
I want you to lead us this morning.

MIKEY
It would be my pleasure.

Everyone lines up behind him like a chorus. He starts to sing a song to the melody of "We Are the Champions"

MIKEY (CONT'D)
(cont'd)
We pay our dues --
And time after time --
We get rejected --
But we're still feeling fine.
Cause we are the best --
A number one --
And no one will ever defeat us cause
we're second to none

All the sales men chime in.

ALL SALESMAN
We will go from door to door to door to door --

EVERYBODY
We're E - ver clean salesmen, my friend
And we'll keep on selling till the end --
We're E - ver Clean salesmen
E - ver Clean Salesmen --

MIKEY
No time for dirty rugs --

EVERYBODY
We're E - ver Clean salesmen --

MIKEY
We're the best.

EVERYBODY
Yes we're E - ver clean salesmen my
friend...

They continue with the song. A victorious looking Ben approaches Jack. Jack seems bewildered.

BEN
Make me proud!

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Jack knocks on the front door, vacuum cleaner in hand. A House Wife answers.

JACK
(cheerful)
Hello, M'am. My name is Jack Andrews, and
I represent the Everclean Vacuum Cleaner
Compan...

HOUSE WIFE
Not interested.

She slams the door in his face.

EXT. ANOTHER HOUSE - A FEW MINUTES LATER.

A man answers the door.

JACK
Good afternoon, Sir my name is --

SLAM!
The door closes.

ANOTHER HOUSE.

SLAM!

AND ANOTHER

SLAM!

No one gives Jack the time of day.

ANOTHER HOUSE

Jack knocks.

LESTER a queen of some 50 years old dressed in a night gown answers.

JACK

Good afternoon, Sir -- Sir. My name is Jack Andrews and I am here today to introduc...

LESTER

(interrupting -very seductive)
Don't say another word, Jack Andrews.
Just come in and demonstrate that sucking power for me -- Mano a Mano.

Beat.

Jack reaches for the door handle and SLAMS it himself.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

Jack stands outside of the house that he was staring at the day before. The mini van still parked in the driveway.

Jack approaches the front door. He KNOCKS.

A woman, LUANNE (40,s) attractive, conservative, opens the door.

LUANNE

Can I help you?

JACK

Good afternoon, Mrs. O'Neil, I represent the Everclean Vacuum...

LUANNE

(interrupting)
You must be mistaken, I haven't been Mrs. O'Neil for some time now.

JACK

(beat)

Oh. So, then I take it that Russell
O'Neil doesn't live here?

LUANNE

Not anymore.

JACK

Hmm. Well, do you know where I could find
him?

LUANNE

I could give you his address, but I
hardly think that he would be in the
market for a vacuum cleaner.

JACK

Well, if I don't follow up and my boss
finds out -- Well you know how they are?
They spend a lot of money to get these
leads.

LUANNE

Sure. Hold on, I'll write it down for
you.

She leaves. A moment later she returns and hands him a slip
of paper.

LUANNE (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

(continuing)

Here you go, but like I said, you'll be
wasting your time.

JACK

Thank you very much, I appreciate it.

LUANNE

Have a nice day.

JACK

By the way, you wouldn't be interested in
a free demonstration, would you?

LUANNE

Maybe some other time.

She shuts the door. Jack walks off.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Jack walks along the street looking at the addresses on the buildings. He stops in front of number 320, it's a ratty building, on par with his hotel. He enters.

INT. NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

A hip disco.
Trendy patrons all dressed to kill.
Lights flashing, MUSIC BLARING.

THE DANCE FLOOR
is packed with gyrating men and women, all wearing an odor of sex.

Suddenly, the dancers part like the Red Sea as a well dressed MAN IN A WHEELCHAIR rolls on the dance floor. He looks suave and debonair, and his control of the chair is brilliant. The MUSIC dictating his movements.

The wheelchair reaches the far end of the floor and the man spins it around to face the crowd -- The chair becomes a throne.

Two sexy vixens approach the throne, each grabbing one of the man's hands as he stands up.

The women escort the man always moving to the MUSIC, bumping and grinding.

The onlooking crowd is in awe. They CLAP and CHEER the man's every movement.

Finally the women lead the man over to a large king sized bed. They land on it simultaneously.

The women begin to kiss and seduce the man as the entirety of the crowd cheers him on.

CROWD
Go -- Go-- Go -- Go--

The crowd's CHANT slowly fades into a LARGE MUFFLED KNOCKING SOUND.

INT. RATTY APARTMENT - DAY

A loud and obnoxious KNOCK continues.

RUSSELL O'Neil (the Man in the wheelchair) (40's) looking quite awful with an unkempt beard and dirty clothes (a mess) is sleeping in bed. The apartment is filthy, almost unlivable. There is garbage strewn about.

Russell is awakened by the LOUD KNOCKING.

RUSSELL
Hold you fuckin' horses.

The KNOCKING continues.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)
(cont'd)
(continuing)
I said shut up, I'll be there in a minute.

Russell crawls up out of bed using only his arms. He manages to grab a wheelchair which is close by. With one swoop move, he flings himself into the chair and heads for the door.

He opens the door and finds Jack standing on the other side..

RUSSELL (CONT'D)
(cont'd)
What?

Jack keeps silent, Russel studies him.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)
(cont'd)
(continuing)
Do I know you?

JACK
Uh, Good afternoon, Mr. O'Neil, my name is Jack --

RUSSELL
I'm not interested.

Russell slams the door shut. Jack knocks again. Russell opens once more.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)
(cont'd)
Don't you understand the words "I'm not interested"?

JACK

Yes, Sir, I do. It's just that I --

RUSSELL

Do you work for the state?

JACK

Well, no, Sir, I don't.

RUSSELL

You lying mother fucker. Get away from me. You bureaucrats are all the same, trying to take away what little we have left.

JACK

Look, I don't work for the state, okay?

(beat)

Don't you know who I am?

RUSSELL

No, who the fuck are you?

Jack seems surprised.

JACK

I'm -- Just a guy.

RUSSELL

If you're one of them faggots who think you can have an easy time just because a guy is in a wheelchair, you're mistaken.

JACK

I sell vacuums. I came to sell you a vacuum.

RUSSELL

Do I look like the kind of person who uses a vacuum.

JACK

Actually, no.

RUSSELL

Then why are you wasting my time?

Jack looks past Russell and notices the filthy conditions of the apartment.

JACK

Well, for one, you can get your rug
vacuumed for free.

Russell looks back and gazes at the pig sty he calls home.

INT. RUSSEL'S APARTMENT - LATER

Jack is in the midst of his demo.

Jack and Russell have to shout above the LOUD REV of the
vacuum in order to be heard..

JACK

Notice how it digs deep down in the
carpet and lifts up the grime that has
been there for years.

RUSSELL

You missed a spot.

JACK

What?

RUSSELL

You missed a spot?

JACK

I can't hear you.

RUSSELL

(pointing)

I said you missed a spot you stupid cock
sucker!

JACK

Oh, sorry.

Jack vacuums over the spot. He turns off the machine.

JACK (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

(continuing, speaks softer)

Now is that an impressive household
appliance or what? The best part about
it, is that you can own it for no money
down. Assuming your credit is approved of
course.

RUSSELL

Get the fuck out.

JACK

What?

RUSSELL

You heard me douche bag, take that piece of shit vacuum cleaner and get the fuck out of my house.

JACK

It's an Everclean.

RUSSELL

I don't give a shit if it's a fucking Coupe de Ville, Get the fuck out before I kick your ass out.

JACK

But..

RUSSELL

Now, you sonofabitch. Go! Go! Go!.

JACK

Okay, I'm going.

Jack hastily grabs his things and heads for the door. He is half way out when he hands Russell a card.

JACK (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

Here's my card, if you have any questions...

SLAM!

Another door closed in his face.

EXT. DINER - DAY

Vivian walks out of the diner after her shift. Jack stands outside waiting.

JACK

Hey, Phillip Marlowe.

VIVIAN

Hi.

(beat)

What are you doing here?

JACK

I'm casing out the joint.

VIVIAN
Sounds kind of risky.

JACK
Guess what, I got a job.

VIVIAN
Well, congratulations.

JACK
I want to celebrate. Can I buy you a
steak?

VIVIAN
Now?

JACK
See, the thing is -- I'm kind of new in
town and, well, who wants to celebrate
alone?

VIVIAN
I look terrible, I would have to go home
and change and...

JACK
Are you kidding me? You look great just
the way you are.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Jack and Vivian sit in a semi-trendy restaurant. The waiters
dressed in eclectic outfits.

VIVIAN
It's kind of ironic, don't you think?

JACK
What is?

VIVIAN
I'm a customer dressed like a waitress,
and she's a waitress dressed like a
customer.

Jack looks around the room.

JACK
For my money, I'll take the customer
dressed like a waitress.

She blushes.

VIVIAN
So how many vacuums did you sell?

JACK
Let's just say it was my first day.

The WAITRESS walks over and places the food on the table.

WAITRESS
Can I get you anything else?

JACK
I'm fine.
(to Vivian)
Are you fine?

VIVIAN
I'm fine.

JACK
I guess we're fine.

The waitress walks away.

VIVIAN
Do you think it will take long before...

JACK
(interrupting)
Excuse me one second.

Jack closes his eyes and says a silent prayer of Grace. A short while later he opens his eyes again.

VIVIAN
You're a good Christian boy.

JACK
I'm just trying to get on His good side.

VIVIAN
I was never one who was much for church.

JACK
Neither was I. It just kind of found me
if you know what I mean.

Jack tears into his steak. He eats it with passion, savoring every bite. Vivian watches in amazement.

VIVIAN

I guess you really love steak.

JACK

Sorry. It's been a while since I've had one.

She studies him.

VIVIAN

Where are you from?

JACK

From around here.

VIVIAN

I thought you said that you were new in town.

JACK

I've been gone for a long time is what I meant.

VIVIAN

Oh, where were you?

Jack slows down his chewing, this is a tough question.

JACK

(beat)

Prison.

Vivian stares at Jack.

A long beat.

JACK (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

(continuing)

I was twenty four years old when I went in. I'm thirty one now.

VIVIAN

I'm sorry.

JACK

There's no need to be sorry. Maybe it's what God wanted for me.

VIVIAN

That doesn't make sense. Why would He want you in prison?

JACK

To make me a better man.

A slight smile comes across her face.

VIVIAN

(beat)

Did it work?

JACK

Too early to tell.

She begins to eat, he follows suit.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Jack walks Vivian down the street.

JACK

You know, I've never been on a real date before.

VIVIAN

You're kidding.

He shakes his head "no".

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

(continuing)

You've never been in love?

JACK

I didn't say that. I was in love once. Angela Williams. She sat in front of me in tenth grade algebra class. Man, she was so beautiful. Every time she walked into the room, I thought my heart would explode. Needless to say, I flunked that class.

VIVIAN

What happened with the girl?

JACK

I never did get the nerve to ask her out. I dropped out of school that summer -- Never saw her again.

VIVIAN

That's too bad.

JACK

(beat)

I had a really good time tonight.

VIVIAN

Me too.

JACK

Would it be safe to call this a date?

VIVIAN

Without looking it up in the dictionary,
yeah, I'd say so.

JACK

Well, good. Then I'm looking forward to
the next one.

VIVIAN

Me too.

They stop at a parked car.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

(continuing)

This is it. Are you sure I can't give you
a ride?

JACK

I'll be fine.

VIVIAN

Well, good night.

JACK

Good night.

Jack leans over and gives Vivian a simple, yet meaningful
kiss.

She climbs in the car and shuts the door, starts the car and
drives off. Jack stands there and sees her off as he soaks
the whole thing in for a moment.

INT. EVERCLEAN - SALES OFFICE - DAY

The sales group is in the middle of it's song, this time led
by MEL (50's) a worn out, tired looking salesman who looks
like he's a left over from the glory days of the aluminum
siding sales profession.

MEL

No time for dirty rugs --

EVERYONE

We're Ever - clean salesmen --
We're the best.

They all begin to clap.

BEN

All right you maniacs, lets get out there
and bring home the bacon.

Everyone begins to disperse. Ben, still chewing gum, stops
Jack as he is about to leave.

BEN (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

(continuing)

Jonathan.

JACK

Yes, Sir.

BEN

How's it going out there?

JACK

It was a tough first day.

BEN

You've got to take control of these
mother fuckers. Dangle the worm in front
of their pathetic loser faces, and when
they bite, don't let them off the hook --
You know what I mean?

JACK

I think so.

BEN

(Points to his head)

It's all up here. It's all mental. Pump
yourself up, get out there and bring home
a couple of winners.

JACK

I'll try.

BEN
 (points again to his head)
 You will.

Jack nods.

JACK
 I will!

BEN
 That's the attitude. Now go get'em.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Jack approaches the front door and knocks. A large, miserable looking housewife answers.

JACK
 Hi, my name is Jack and I represent.

SLAM! The door closes.

EXT. ANOTHER HOUSE -DAY

CUT TO:

A SERIES OF CLOSE UPS OF JACK'S FACE AT DIFFERENT DOORS.

JACK
 Hi!

Slam!

JACK (CONT'D)
 (cont'd)
 Hello!

Slam!

JACK (CONT'D)
 (cont'd)
 Good afternoon!

Slam!

EXT. NICE HOUSE - DAY

A dejected Jack approaches the door and tries one more time. An ELDERLY WOMAN answers the door. Jack puts on his best fake smile.

JACK

Good morning, M'am, I represent the
Everclean Vacuum Cleaner Company. I'm
here today to introduce you to our newest
model, the EC 2000.

ELDERLY WOMAN

Oh, Really?

JACK

Yes, M'am.

Jack winces as he waits for the door to close.

ELDERLY WOMAN

(beat, happily)

Won't you please come in.

INT. ELDERLY WOMAN'S HOME - DAY

Jack sits next to the Elderly Woman on the sofa. They are
looking at a photo album. The Elderly Woman painstakingly
describing every photo.

CUT TO:

JACK

on a ladder, changing the batteries of a smoke detector as
the elderly woman watches close by.

CUT TO:

JACK

removing a huge pipe from under the sink as the Elderly Woman
hands him a monkey wrench.

EXT. ELDERLY WOMAN'S HOUSE - DAY

Jack walks away from the house, dejected. The Elderly Woman
then runs after Jack and hands him a plate of chocolate chip
cookies. She gives him a kiss and sends him on his way.

INT. RUSSELL'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Jack walks up to Russell's apartment door and knocks.
No answer.
He tries again.
Still no answer.

VOICE O.S

He's not home.

Jack turns to see YOUNG LADY (30's) with a bad attitude approaching the apartment next door carrying groceries. She fumbles for her keys and unlocks her door.

YOUNG LADY

He never is at this hour. He's usually out by the bus station pan handling. That's normally where he is anyway.

JACK

Are you a friend of his?

YOUNG LADY

(She laughs)

Are you kidding?

Jack shakes his head "no".

YOUNG LADY

(CONT'D) (cont'd)

(continuing)

He has no friends. The guy is a first rate ass hole -- Excuse my French.

She realizes she may have offended him.

YOUNG LADY

(cont'd)

(continuing)

Anyway, you can find him by the bus station.

JACK

Thanks.

She begins to enter her apartment.

JACK (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

(continuing)

By the way, you wouldn't be interested in a free demonstration of the New Everclean EC 2000 Vacuum Cleaner, would you?

YOUNG LADY

Yeah right.

She closes her door.

EXT. BUS STATION - DAY

RUSSELL harasses a pedestrian.

RUSSELL
Spare a quarter -- fifty cents?

The pedestrian continues on.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)
(cont'd)
(continuing)
You rotten piece of shit. How in the name
of God can you just ignore me? I hope you
suffer a stroke!

Someone else walks by.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)
(cont'd)
(continuing)
Spare a quarter -- fifty cents?

No response.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)
(cont'd)
(continuing)
Go ahead, ignore me. But God is watching
you, you miserable leech!

A ONE DOLLAR BILL appears in front of Russell's eyes. It
stops him cold.

JACK O.S.
You know my Momma always told me you
catch more flies with honey than you do
with vinegar.

Russell snatches the bill. He looks up and sees Jack.

RUSSELL
Yeah, well your Momma was an idiot.
Besides,
(waves bill)
my method seems to be working fine.

JACK
Really?

RUSSELL

Shouldn't you be out trying to peddle that piece of shit vacuum you carry around?

JACK

I'm just on my way home.

RUSSELL

Good for you. Now get going, you're interrupting the flow of business.

A man walks by.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

(continuing)

Spare a quarter, fifty cents?

No response.

JACK

Tell you what, I was going to stop and grab a cup of coffee, let me buy you a cup.

RUSSELL

What for?

JACK

I feel like having a cup of coffee, figured you might want one.

RUSSELL

I never drink the shit, it's poison. However if you feel that strongly about it, I'll let you buy me a drink. But if you try anything, I'll kick your fuckin' ass, got it?

Jack looks down at Russell in the wheelchair.

JACK

Yeah, I got it.

RUSSELL

Well, let's go mother fucker, I don't have all day.

JACK

Sorry.

Jack gets behind the wheelchair and begins to push.

RUSSELL

There's a good spot right up the road,
I'm a regular, they love me there.

INT. ATHENIAN BAR - DAY

Jack pushes Russell into the dingy bar. The BAR TENDER takes notice. He speaks with a Greek accent.

BAR TENDER

Get out! Get that crazy sonofabitch outta
here, now.

RUSSELL

I have money.

BAR TENDER

I don't give a shit if you are J. Paul
fucking Getty, you are eighty sixed for
life -- That means until you're dead.
And then after that too.

JACK

Hey man, we just want a drink.

BAR TENDER

If you want a drink, you can stay. If you
want to drink with him, leave. This crazy
bastard does nothing but cause trouble.

RUSSELL

Hey, why don't you suck my non
functioning dick.

BAR TENDER

That's it, mother fucker -- I call the
police.

RUSSELL

Relax Aristotle, we're leaving.

EXT. CITY PARK - DAY

Jack drinks a cup of coffee, as Russell enjoys a forty ounce
bottle of Colt 45 malt liquor. They watch a bunch of kids
playing basketball.

JACK

I thought you said they loved you there.

RUSSELL

The bar tender on the night shift is
crazy about me.

Russell takes a big swig of beer.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

(continuing)

I don't know how the Ghetto boys drink
this shit all day long, it tastes like
cow piss.

(beat)

How many vacuums did you sell today?

JACK

None.

RUSSELL

What kind of job is that anyway, selling
vacuum cleaners door to door?

JACK

You got to take what you can get.

A woman walks by with a stroller.

RUSSELL

You must be a real loser.

(yells to woman)

Spare a quarter, fifty cents.

The lady ignores him.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

(continuing)

Go ahead, keep walking -- Fat ass!

JACK

Hey, take it easy, man. She's got her kid
with her.

RUSSELL

I don't give a rat's ass.

JACK

Kids are sacred, man. You have to be
respectful to their innocence.

RUSSELL
You got kids?

JACK
No.

RUSSELL
Then how the fuck would you know?

JACK
I just know, that's all.

Long beat.

RUSSELL
I got a kid. Haven't seen him in years.

JACK
Why not?

RUSSELL
Just haven't, that's all.

JACK
I'm sorry to hear it.

RUSSELL
(beat)
Go ahead, ask.

JACK
Ask what?

RUSSELL
The question every one is curious about.
How the hell I ended up in this fucking
chair. Go ahead, ask me.

JACK
Okay, what happened?

RUSSELL
I got fucked over, that's what happened.
I was one of the Sunday faithful. I gave
my time, I gave my love, hell, even gave
my money to God. I would run up to the
altar on Sundays to pay my tithe, and
this is how He rewarded me.

JACK

Job was faced with a lot of the same
challe --

RUSSELL

(interrupting)

If one more person mentions the name Job
to me, I'm gonna hang myself. Besides,
Job is just a made up story, in a made up
book.

JACK

Maybe.

Russell takes one last swig and tosses his bottle on the
ground.

RUSSELL

I want to go home.

Jack is in deep thought.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

(continuing)

Hey, I said take me outta here.

Jack snaps out of it.

JACK

Yeah, sure.

Jack picks up the bottle that Russell discarded and tosses it
in a garbage can. He then starts to push Russell down the
path. He seems preoccupied.

RUSSELL

What the fuck is wrong with you?

JACK

Nothing.

They walk off.

RUSSELL

Come on, you push like a girl.

INT. JACK'S ROOM - NIGHT

Jack lays on his bed in his dingy room and reads a Zig Ziglar
sales book. He hears faint MUSIC emanating from the street.

He looks out the window and sees a small store front church across the street which is highlighted by a bright, glowing neon sign which reads "In His Presence Christian Church".

INT. IN HIS PRESENCE CHURCH - NIGHT

Several of societies dregs sit on folding chairs in this makeshift house of worship as the REVEREND BILL (40's) Latino, dressed in a ten gallon hat and cowboy boots, gives a sermon.

REV. BILL

The fact of the matter is, that we are all born with sin. Sinners from the very moment we come out of our Momma's wombs. Sinners from before the time we were even in our Momma's wombs.

Jack walks into the church and takes a seat in the back row, unnoticed.

REV. BILL

(CONT'D) (cont'd)

(continuing)

When we were just thoughts in our Mommy and Daddies minds, we were sinners in the eyes of the Lord. And does it end there? I think everyone in this room is privy to that answer -- No! And why is that? Why? Because we are human, less than perfect. We are not God. The only man ever to walk on this beautiful green earth of ours, free of sin, was Jesus Christ. Free of sin! Free! Never thought of a sin, never committed a sin, but most of all, and lucky for you and me, never judged a sinner. Never! When the Jews were about to stone Mary Magdalen to death for crimes of the flesh, it was Jesus Christ Himself who saved that poor woman. He told those angry men, he said "Let he who is without sin cast the first stone." Do you know there was not a man in the group with a rock left in his hand. The only man worthy to pick up a stone and use it was Our Lord and Saviour Himself. But did he stone her? No, Sir, he did not. He told that poor woman to go thy way and sin no more. He forgave her! Forgave her! Forgave her! And he forgives you, just like He forgave Mary Magdalen. But you

(MORE)

have to ask for it, you have to earn it.
He ain't just gonna spread it out on you
like some sort of magical cure all rain
fall, you have to ask. And Jesus says,
"Ask, and it shall be given unto you;
seek, and you shall find; knock, and it
shall be opened unto you."

FADE TO:

INT. EVERCLEAN SALES OFFICE - DAY

Ben is finishing up his meeting. He erases the results from
the sales board.

BEN

The bad news is, that we had a piece of
shit month and you guys should be ashamed
of yourselves. The good news is, that the
month is over and we start fresh from
right now.

The salesmen look dejected.

BEN (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

Let's write everybody up, let's work 'em,
lets work 'em hard.

Ben paces like a football coach at halftime in the locker
room.

BEN (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

(continuing)

Let me tell you something, enthusiasm and
excitement is what sells vacuums. You
have to be excited and enthusiastic to
get the customers excited and
enthusiastic. Whatever you project
reflects back at you. It's catching, it's
contagious. If you project it, they will
catch it.

The salesmen seem to be in a trance.

BEN (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

(continuing)

Everyone of you in this room has the
power to make it happen. But you have to

(MORE)

BEN(cont'd)

do it. That street out there... it's your stage. It's your opportunity to shine. So get infectious. It's winning time. LET'S WIN!

(beat)

Okay, here we go, I'm gonna sweeten the deal.

Ben moves to the marker board and begins to write.

BEN (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

(continuing)

If any one of you sells me fifteen units between now and the end of the month, I give you fifty, no, strike that. I'll give you an extra one hundred dollars per unit, paid in cash. You have the chance to earn five grand this month.

Everyone CLAPS and CHEERS.

BEN (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

So let's go out there and KICK SOME ASS!
I want salesmen looking for customers,
not customers looking for salesmen.

INT. BEN'S OFFICE - DAY

A KNOCK on the door. Ben who is sitting behind his desk, yells.

BEN

It's open.

Jack enters.

JACK

You wanted to see me?

BEN

Have a seat.

Jack sits.

BEN (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

(continuing)

How's it going out there?

JACK

Not very good. I can't even get the people to listen to me half the time.

Ben just stares, chewing his gum.

JACK (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

(continuing)

Maybe I'm not cut out for this. Maybe I should just get a job, you know, something physical, where people won't have to judge me.

BEN

Not cut out for it, huh?

JACK

I mean, I've tried. I've really tried, but I just can't sell.

BEN

How long have you been working here?

JACK

This is my third day.

BEN

Three days, three days... You tried this for three days and it's not working out? What are you a faggot? I thought you were a convict. What the fuck did they teach you in the joint anyway? No one likes a quitter. I know I don't. And if you walk away from this job a quitter, it's going to set a negative pattern that will last for the rest of your life -- Because you're walking away a loser instead of a winner...

JACK

I mean, I want to win.

BEN

Then take a deep breath, collect yourself, get an attitude adjustment. Get pumped up and go out there and fight. Fight like a man. And most of all, Jonathan... Take Control.

Jack gets caught up in the "ether".

JACK

I'm gonna win, I'm gonna win.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

A WOMAN opens the door, Jack is on the other side.

JACK

Good afternoon, M'am. My name is Jack and I represent the Everclean Vacuum Cleaner Company. I'm here today to give you a free demonstration of our newest model, the EC 2000.

SLAM. The door closes.

Jack is about to walk away, but then he has a change of heart. He takes a deep breath and knocks again. The woman answers.

WOMAN

Look, I'm not interested.

JACK

Well, hell, Lady, I'm not interested either -- Why should I be? It's your carpet that has years of filth, grime and germs imbedded in it, and it's you who works so hard to try to keep it clean -- Why should I be interested, it's you who should be.

WOMAN

I just don't have the time right now.

JACK

Look, all I need is ten minutes to show you how much easier and cleaner your life can be, ten minutes.

EXT. THE SAME HOUSE - ONE HOUR LATER

Jack comes running out with his vacuum and brief case. He runs to the side walk, raises his arms and lets out a big YAHOOO!

INT. RUSSELL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Russell opens the door and Jack walks in carrying two handfuls of groceries.

JACK
It's your lucky day my friend.

RUSSELL
What the hell are you doing?

Jack walks right over to the disgusting kitchen area and begins to unpack the groceries.

JACK
Sharing the wealth.

RUSSELL
What did you do, find a quarter laying on the ground?

JACK
Not only did I make my first sale today, but I also made my second and my third -- Set a new office record -- The old record was two in one day -- I think I might have a real knack for this line of work.

RUSSELL
Get out!

JACK
What do you mean?

RUSSELL
I mean get out. I don't trust you.

JACK
What's not to trust, I just filled your fridge -- Probably the first time in years it's had any food in it.

RUSSELL
I don't give a shit. There's something shady about you. I can see it in your eyes.

JACK
That's ridiculous.

RUSSELL

Take your charity and get the fuck out.

JACK

Hey man, this is not charity, you're my friend.

RUSSELL

I ain't your God damned friend. I don't even know who the fuck you are.

JACK

(beat)

I brought you some whiskey.

RUSSELL

Let me see.

Jack walks it over to Russell who grabs the bottle from him.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

(continuing, reads label)

Tennessee Sour Mash.

(beat, stares at Jack)

I guess we don't have to be friends to drink together. Go get a couple of glasses so we can celebrate your new found success.

JACK

I don't drink. Besides, I have a date tonight.

RUSSELL

A date, huh? With a woman?

JACK

Of course.

RUSSELL

So your not a butt slammer after all?

JACK

No, Sir.

Russell raises the bottle.

RUSSELL

Well here's to the vacuum business.

He takes a swig.

JACK
Praise Jesus.

EXT. CATHOLIC CHURCH - NIGHT

Vivian's car pulls into the parking lot of a small church.
Jack and Vivian step out and begin walking toward the church.

JACK
This is kind of an odd place to be going
on a second date, don't you think?

VIVIAN
Trust me, you're going to love it.

JACK
You'll get no complaints from me, I
attend services whenever I can.

VIVIAN
This is not exactly a service.

They approach the front door to the church, Jack begins to
open it but it is locked.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)
(cont'd)
(continuing)
This way.

She leads him a bit further until they reach a staircase
which leads down.

JACK
Are you sure this is the right way?

VIVIAN
Relax, just follow me.

They walk down a flight of stairs and reach another door.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)
(cont'd)
(continuing)
Are you ready?

JACK
Well, now I'm not so sure.

VIVIAN

Here we go.

Vivian opens the door which leads into the hall in the church basement. The room is packed, mostly with older church going type women and a few men. The atmosphere is festive, full of excitement.

A FAT LADY jumps up and yells.

FAT LADY

BINGO! B, I, N, G, O. B, I, N, G, O.

People CHEER. Jack looks at Vivian.

VIVIAN

I hope you feel lucky!

INT. CHURCH HALL - A FEW MINUTES LATER

A large Lotto type machine with many balls in it spins as numbers are drawn. A PRIEST calls out the numbers as they come up, he wears a headset microphone.

Jack and Vivian sit next to each other at a long table. They watch attentively.

PRIEST O. S.

N-17. B-5. B-26. O-11.

MRS. HICKEY (60's) very Blanche Dubuot, dressed like it's Easter Sunday sits next to Vivian.

VIVIAN

Hi. Mrs. Hickey how are you tonight?

MRS. HICKEY

Rather well, thank you, Vivian. Who is your gentleman caller?

VIVIAN

Oh, I'm sorry, this is my friend, Jack.
Jack, this is Mrs. Hickey.

JACK

Hello.

She grabs Vivian's hand and whispers in her ear..

MRS. HICKEY

Congratulations dear, looks like you're going home a winner tonight one way or another.

Vivian blushes.

VIVIAN

(blushes)

Jack and I are just goo...

MRS. HICKEY

(interrupting)

Jack, sweetheart, is this your first time here?

JACK

Yes, M'am.

MRS. HICKEY

Well, I hope it is not your last. This makes for wonderful entertainment.

JACK

I'm a little confused, how can they allow gambling in the church?

VIVIAN

See, it's not really gambl..

MRS. HICKEY

(interrupting)

This is not gambling, honey. Gambling is when you give your money to the Mafia. Here, it all goes to the Priest.

VIVIAN

She means the church.

MRS. HICKEY

Exactly.

INT. CHURCH HALL - LATER

The Priest calls out numbers. Vivian and Jack and Mrs. Hickey are completely caught up in the game. They mark their cards with special ink blotters.

PRIEST

O-6. O-11. I- 12.

VIVIAN
I can't take this anymore.

PRIEST O. S.
B-21.

JACK
What do you mean?

VIVIAN
I mean the fricken excitement is killing me.

PRIEST
N-33.

JACK
Well, just relax girl, it's only a game.

VIVIAN
How can I relax at a time like this?

PRIEST
B-7.

JACK
Easy, just relax, like me.

PRIEST
O-9.

Jack marks square O-9. On his card.
He pauses.
His eyes light up.
He looks at Vivian with a shocked grin.
He jumps up and yells.

JACK
BINGO! B-I-N-G-O. B-I-N-G-O.

Vivian jumps up and hugs him and SCREAMS. Everyone in the room looks pissed, another game down the drain.

PRIEST
We have a winner.

A LOSER remarks to her friend.

LOSER
I bet he doesn't even belong to this parish.

VIVIAN

I had a feeling about you. You see that.
I just knew that you would win, I don't
know why.

JACK

What did I win.

INT. JACK'S ROOM - NIGHT.

All is dark. Jack and Vivian enter, Jack flicks on the
lights. He is carrying a gigantic thirty five pound frozen
turkey.

VIVIAN

Too bad Thanksgiving is not for another
ten months.

Jack puts the turkey up on a makeshift mantle, like it's a
trophy.

JACK

That is one proud bird?

VIVIAN

A true symbol of pride.

JACK

I may not even eat it. I think I'll just
stuff it.

VIVIAN

Why would you stuff it, if you're not
going to eat it?

JACK

No, I mean stuff it, not Stuff it.

VIVIAN

Oh.

(beat)

I don't get it.

JACK

Stuff it, you know, like a stuffed animal
type thing.

VIVIAN

Now I get ya. No one ever accused me of
being the sharpest blade on the plow.

JACK

Can I get you something to drink?

VIVIAN

Sure.

JACK

All I have is water. I don't really have a fridge or anything.

VIVIAN

Water's fine.

Jack grabs a bottle of water and opens it. He hands it to Vivian. She sits on the bed, the only thing to sit on really. He opens his own bottle and sits next to her.

JACK

I haven't had a chance to buy any glasses yet.

VIVIAN

This 'll do.

JACK

(holds up his water)
Here's to....

VIVIAN

New beginnings.

JACK

To new beginnings.

They tap bottles in a toast and drink. Beat.

JACK (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

I have something for you.

Jack reaches for the night stand and grabs a Raymond Chandler novel, he gives it to Vivian.

JACK (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

(continuing)

Phillip Marlowe, the greatest PI there ever was.

VIVIAN

This is the nicest thing anyone has ever given me, thank you.

JACK

When I was away, I would spend all my time thinking about what it was going to be like when I got out -- I never on my best day imagined that it would be this good.

Vivian puts her bottle on the floor, she takes Jack's bottle and does the same.

She strokes his face, Jack seems frozen, nervous.

Vivian lightly begins to kiss his lips with small caressing pecks.

Jack still remains frozen. A single tear runs down the length of his cheek.

VIVIAN

What's wrong?

JACK

I'm afraid to make a mistake.

VIVIAN

There are no mistakes.

JACK

I haven't been with someone since I was just a kid.

VIVIAN

Just relax, accept what ever it is you are feeling, and let that take over.

Jack takes her advice. He stares at her and then he makes the move. He kisses Vivian with a passion only known by a man in love.

FADE TO:

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Russell wheels down the sidewalk as he drinks from a bottle of booze. Hookers, drug addicts and street vermin are all around.

FADE TO:

INT. JACK'S ROOM - NIGHT

Before long, both Vivian and Jack are entangled in physical love making. Pure emotion is the by-product. The two lovers are silhouetted by the glare from the neon sign emanating from the church across the street.

FADE TO:

EXT. STREET CORNER - NIGHT

Russell sits passed out in his chair. His bottle of booze, now empty, resting on his lap.

FADE TO:

EXT. CITY STREET - SUNRISE

The streets are quiet now. All night life has ventured indoors to escape the morning light.

INT. JACK'S ROOM - MORNING

Jack and Vivian lay sleeping in bed thoroughly rested and at ease.

A KNOCK at the door forces the couple to wake from their slumber.

Another KNOCK and Jack is on his feet putting on his clothes, Vivian follows suit.

VIVIAN

Who is it?

JACK

I have no idea.

The KNOCKING continues as Jack makes his way to the door. He opens the door and finds Dell, his Parole officer standing in wait.

DELL

Good morning, Jonathan.

JACK

What can I do for you?

DELL

I'm coming in.

A beat. Then Jack moves to the side as Dell enters the room.

Dell wanders about the room, snooping. He stares at Vivian, who is just about finished dressing, she looks uneasy.

JACK
This is my friend Vivian.

DELL
(to Vivian)
Did you spend the night?

VIVIAN
(sarcastically)
No, I just came over to borrow some clothes.

JACK
This is Dell, my parole officer.

VIVIAN
Is there a problem?

DELL
Just doing my job.
(to Jack, still snooping)
I talked to your boss, says you're doing all right

JACK
As good as can be expected I guess.

Dell picks up the turkey.

JACK (CONT'D)
(cont'd)
(continuing)
Bingo prize.

DELL
Gambling is a parole violation.

JACK
Just supporting the local parish, that's all.

DELL
(to Vivian)
How good of a friend are you?

VIVIAN

Real good, thank you very much. Why are you doing this?

DELL

Because it's my job, and I have the right to.

VIVIAN

Just because you have the right to do something, doesn't mean you should.

DELL

I am a parole officer. I have one hundred and seventy two parolees that I am responsible for. Eighty five percent of which are going to end up back on the inside in two years or less. So not only do I have a right to exercise my authority, but it is my obligation to the people of the State California do so.

(beat; to Jack)

Keep up the good work.

JACK

I will.

Dell makes his way to the door. He stops.

DELL

And Vivian. It also breaks my heart to watch a good man rot in prison.

VIVIAN

Oh.

Dell leaves, shuts the door.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

(yells after him)

It was nice meeting you.

JACK

I'm sorry about that, I had no idea.

VIVIAN

That's okay, it was an exciting ending to a wonderful night.

JACK

It was more than wonderful, it was perfect -- I won a turkey.

They both laugh, then kiss. They make their way to the bed and begin making love once again.

FADE TO:

JACK AND VIVIAN

Still lying in bed sleeping the afternoon away.

The phone RINGS several times. It finally wakes the two lovers.

VIVIAN

What time is it.

Jack looks at the clock, it reads 3:00.

JACK

Man, it's three o'clock in the afternoon.

He picks up the phone.

JACK (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

(continuing)

Hello.

(beat)

I see.

(beat)

No, no. I'll be there right away.

He hangs up the phone.

VIVIAN

What is it?

JACK

Get dressed.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Jack and Vivian walk down the corridor, they stop at a nurses station. A Young NURSE is on duty.

JACK

Excuse me, where can I find Russell O'Neil?

NURSE

Are you here to take him home?

JACK

That's right?

NURSE

Thank God. Room six-nineteen.

INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR - LATER

Jack wheels Russell down the hall along with Vivian and a hospital volunteer.

RUSSELL

They had no right taking me here.

JACK

They found you barely alive, face down, blocking the main entrance to the bus terminal.

RUSSELL

So? You think it's the first time I passed out?

JACK

They said that if they didn't pump your stomach, that you could have died from alcohol poisoning.

RUSSELL

What the fuck do they know about alcohol poisoning, I'm the expert, I'm Irish, remember?

JACK

Just the same, you could have died.

RUSSELL

Well, they should have done me a favor and left me.

VIVIAN

That's terrible.

RUSSELL

Who the fuck is this?

JACK

Vivian, say hello to Russell.

VIVIAN

Hi, Russe...

RUSSELL

Shut up, I'm not in the mood.

Jack gives Vivian a "Don't mind him look".

JACK

Well, don't worry, we'll get you home in a jiffy. Vivian has a car.

RUSSELL

Don't get the wrong idea here, I didn't call you because I needed you. They wouldn't let me out a here unless someone picked me up.

INT. HOSPITAL - A FEW MINUTES LATER

The elevator doors open, the group exits and heads for the front door.

VIVIAN

I'll go grab the car and pull it in front.

JACK

Okay.

RUSSELL

And hurry up, I don't have all fuckin' day.

Vivian stops and turns.

VIVIAN

What did you say?

JACK

He's a little impatia...

RUSSELL

I said I don't have all fucking day.

VIVIAN

Listen you sorry son of a bitch. I don't even know you. The only reason why I'm here is because Jack says that you are a friend of his. Now I came down here out of the goodness of my heart, with my car,

(MORE)

VIVIAN(cont'd)

burning my gas, wasting my time. So either you wise up and start showing some respect, and a little common courtesy or you can wheel your sorry drunk Irish ass all the way home by yourself! Got it?

Beat.

RUSSELL

Now that's a woman!

INT. VIVIAN'S CAR - DAY.

Vivian and Russell sit in the front seat and Jack and an empty wheelchair occupy the back as the car moves on down the road.

Russell and Vivian are in the middle of singing. Jack finds this odd.

RUSSELL/VIVIAN

"Oh - you, Chitty Chitty Bang Bang,
Chitty Chitty Bang Bang we love you.
Have to Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, Chitty
Chitty Bang Bang we love you..."

INT / EXT. CAR - DAY

The SINGING continues as the car pulls in front of Russell's building.

RUSSELL

This is it.

Jack immediately gets out, pulls Russell's wheel chair out and unfolds it. He opens Russell's door.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

Thanks for the lift, Vivian.

VIVIAN

It was my pleasure.

Jack lifts up Russell and places him in the chair.

JACK

Do you want me to help you up?

RUSSELL

Why, do you think I'm handicapped?

JACK

No --- Well, yeah -- I was just wondering if you needed help that's all.

RUSSELL

Well, I can take care of my self.

JACK

Okay, see ya later.

RUSSELL

Yeah.

Russell starts to wheel himself toward the building. Jack gets in the car and it drives off.

Vivian's car quickly makes a U-turn and pulls in front of the building once again.

Jack get's out of the car and runs up to Russell who is not yet inside.

JACK

Hey. You know, Vivian and I are going out for some good ole fashioned fun tonight, and ah, well, she suggested that you come along.

RUSSELL

What the hell am I going to do with you two.

JACK

You see, that's just it. She has this waitress friend who she works with, and if you want to, we can invite her to come along too.

RUSSELL

Waitresses are whores.

JACK

(dead pan)

Vivian is a waitress.

RUSSELL

That's what I heard.

JACK

Look, do you want to come or not?

Russell contemplates.

INT. RUSSELL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jack paces nervously in the living room.

JACK

They're going to be here any minute, you better hurry.

RUSSELL O.S.

Put a cork in your ass will ya.

Russell comes wheeling out of the bedroom. He is wearing a jacket and a tie. His hair and beard still unkempt. He basically looks like a bum in a suit.

RUSSELL

(continuing)

Who gives a shit if they're here any minute.

JACK

Hey, Man, you look good.

RUSSELL

Yeah, well, I'm taking this tie off. The fucking thing is choking me.

JACK

No man, it looks good. You might want to comb your hair though.

RUSSELL

Don't push it, you're lucky I'm not wearing a vomit stained shirt and a jock strap.

A KNOCK on the door.

JACK

That must be them.

Jack makes his way to the door and opens it. Vivian enters followed by MIRANDA, late 30's, largish woman dressed for the Kentucky Derby.

VIVIAN

Hi.

JACK

Hey there.

Jack and Vivian kiss.

VIVIAN

This is my friend Miranda.

MIRANDA

I finally get to meet the mystery man.

JACK

Nice to meet you. Let me introduce you to my friend Russell -- Russell, Miranda, Miranda, Russell.

MIRANDA

Good evening to you.

RUSSELL

Yeah, yeah. Nice tits, where we goin'?

VIVIAN

(to Russell)

Aren't you going to say hi to me?

RUSSELL

Yeah, Hi and thanks for the ride today -- I'm starving, can we go now?

A beat.

JACK

Well, I'm ready, are you ready?

VIVIAN/MIRANDA

Yeah. Sure.

They start to leave.

MIRANDA

Russell, do you want some help?

RUSSELL

I've been in this chair for seven years, do you really think I need help?

MIRANDA

(beat ready to cry)

Ahh, no. I guess not. I'm sorry.

RUSSELL

Good. Let's get going.

They all begin to exit.

INT. ITALIAN RESTAURANT - NIGHT.

Jack, Russell, Vivian and Miranda sit in a nice, dimly lit, quiet Italian Restaurant. Dinner has ended. Jack seems a bit uncomfortable with the whole situation.

VIVIAN

If you think about it, the coincidences are frightening. Lincoln's secretary was named Kennedy. Kennedy's -- was named Lincoln. Both Lincoln and Kennedy had Vice Presidents named Johnson.

RUSSELL

So what!

VIVIAN

Wait, that's not all. Lincoln was murdered in a theatre and his killer ran into a warehouse. Kennedy was shot from a warehouse and his assassin ran into a theatre.

MIRANDA

What do you think this all means?

VIVIAN

I'm not sure yet, but it seems to me that these "Coincidences" are more than just coincidences, if you know what I mean.

RUSSELL

That is the biggest crock of shit I have heard so far tonight.

Russell pours himself the last of what's left in the bottle of wine and holds it up in the air.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

(continuing)

Waiter, uno mas por favor.

MIRANDA

That's Spanish.

RUSSELL

What?

MIRANDA

"Uno mas", that's Spanish. This is an Italian restaurant.

RUSSELL

Italians, Mexicans, they're all a bunch of spics in my book.

JACK

Maybe we should get going.

RUSSELL

What for? I just ordered a bottle of wine.

MIRANDA

Hey, I have an idea, why don't we go bowling?

VIVIAN

Yeah, that sounds like fun, I haven't been bowling in ages.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

What do you say?

JACK

I don't know...

MIRANDA

Ah, come on, it'll be fun. What do you say, Russell?

RUSSELL

Take a good look at me, do I look like a bowler to you?

JACK

Maybe that's not such a good idea.

Silence takes over.

VIVIAN

Hey, how about an old fashioned road trip? I haven't done that in years.

RUSSELL

You mean a road trip with drugs and
broad and booze and bank hold ups?

VIVIAN

Yeah, except no drugs, booze or hold ups,
and we're replacing the broads with a
couple of ladies.

MIRANDA

You know, I always wanted to see San
Francisco.

JACK

It sounds great, but I have a lot work to
catch up on.

VIVIAN

Ah, come on. It's the weekend.

RUSSELL

What kind of work can you have to catch
up on? You're a fucking vacuum salesman
for Christ's sake. It's not like you have
to turn a report in to the CEO in the
morning.

JACK

Yeah, well, I just don't think it's a
good idea.

VIVIAN

Come on, Jack, Please!

MIRANDA

Yeah, Jack, it will be fun, where's your
sense of adventure?

Jack eyes Russell who gives him a mysterious grin.

RUSSELL

Yeah, Jack, where is you sense of
adventure? Be a man, grow a set of balls.

EXT. RUSSELL'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Russell is being wheeled out by Miranda who holds a duffle
bag. Jack and Vivian sit in the car waiting.

JACK

Are you sure you want to do this?

VIVIAN

I'm sure -- But if you feel that you
don't want to go away with me, if it's...

JACK

(interrupting)

No, no! I am happy spending time with
you, it's Russell.

VIVIAN

I thought he was your friend.

JACK

(beat)

He is.

Russell and Miranda reach the car. They open the door and
enter.

MIRANDA

All packed!

RUSSELL

Let's get this heap of shit moving.

Russell slowly climbs in the car. Jack gets out and puts his
chair in the trunk. He looks nervous. He closes the trunk and
moves to the car.

JACK

(to Vivian)

Do you want me to drive?

VIVIAN

Nope just hop in and enjoy the ride
sailor.

Jack steps in the car and shuts the door.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

Ladies and gentlemen, this ride is about
to begin.

EXT. CAR

burning rubber as it begins it's voyage.

INT. VIVIAN'S CAR - MOVING DOWN CALIFORNIA HWY - NIGHT

Vivian is driving a car of sleeping passengers down a lonely road. Soft music PLAYS on the radio. An open Bible rests on Jack's lap.

IN THE BACK SEAT

Miranda's sleeping head lies on Russell's shoulder. His slumber seems restless and fitful.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT

POV: GUN MAN

as he enters the store, pistol in hand. The Cashier and Russell are in his sight.

GUN MAN

Empty the fuckin' drawer, Man!

The Cashier puts his hands up, then complies.

RUSSELL

Take it easy pal!

GUN MAN

Shut the fuck up!

(to Cashier)

Faster, Mother Fucker, I don't have all day!

CASHIER

I'm going as fast as I can.

RUSSELL

(calmly)

Please! Just stay calm.

The gun man cocks his gun and sticks it in Russell's face.

GUN MAN

You want me to stay calm? Huh?!

No answer.

INT. MOVING CAR - SUNRISE

Russell snaps out of his sleep.

RUSSELL

Huh!

Vivian is the only one awake.

VIVIAN

You okay?

He looks around nervously. He notices Miranda who has been resting on his shoulder. He shoves her toward the other side of the car, it doesn't wake her.

RUSSELL

Where the hell are we?

VIVIAN

I'm not sure. Somewhere in the San Joaquin Valley I think.

Jack opens his eyes. Vivian leans over and kisses him.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

Good morning.

JACK

Good morning.

RUSSELL

Not this early, please.

JACK

Where are we?

RUSSELL

San Joaquin Valley. Where else can you see two hundred illegal aliens pissing on fresh lettuce.

JACK

(to Vivian)

Are you tired? I can drive if you want me to.

VIVIAN

No, I'm fine.

(beat)

Do me a favor, Jack. Reach in the glove box and get my hand cream. This dry air is murder on my skin.

Jack opens the glove. He looks in to find the cream. He spots a small caliber pistol and takes it out.

JACK
(extremely nervous)
What is this doing in here?

VIVIAN
Protection.

Russell spots it from the back seat. He gets upset.

RUSSELL
Put that fucking thing away!

JACK
Protection from what?!

RUSSELL
I said put that fucking thing away!

Jack quickly puts it back and closes the glove box.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)
(cont'd)
(continuing; to Vivian)
What the hell are you doing with that thing?

JACK
Yeah, why do you have a gun, are you crazy?

VIVIAN
You guys are over-reacting, My God! I'm going to need it for when I become a P.I. anyway.

RUSSELL
Yeah, well just keep that fucking thing locked up!

JACK
I don't know why you would drive around with a gun.

VIVIAN
I'm sorry. I had no idea you guys were so gun sensitive.

Miranda wakes up.

MIRANDA
Hey, where are we?

RUSSELL/JACK
San Jauqin Valley.

EXT. HIGHWAY - LATER

The car is pulled over to the side of the road. Jack is under the hood toying with the engine.

JACK
Try it now.

Vivian cranks the engine. No luck. Russell wheels around the car nervously, Miranda sits by the curb.

RUSSELL
Check the connections.

JACK
I did.

RUSSELL
Well, check 'em again.

MIRANDA
Maybe it's out of oil.

RUSSELL
Do you know anything about cars?

MIRANDA
No.

RUSSELL
Then zip it.

Jack climbs out from under the hood.

JACK
As far as I can tell, we're screwed.

RUSSELL
Ahhh, fuck! What do we do now?

VIVIAN
Why don't we turn lemons into lemonade.

MIRANDA
Huh?

VIVIAN

We set out to have a good time, so lets have a good time.

RUSSELL

Don't get me wrong here, I'm glad you've been so nice to me and all -- But what the fuck are you talking about?

Vivian opens the trunk of her car, it is loaded with coolers and blankets and assorted picnic gear.

VIVIAN

I say, it's a great day for a picnic.

EXT. DESERT ROADSIDE - NIGHT.

A bright shining blaze illuminates the dark desert sky. Jack, Russell, Vivian and Miranda are hovered around the fire.

Miranda tugs on her ear.

VIVIAN

Sounds like...

Miranda holds up two fingers in a "V" formation.

JACK

Two...

Miranda shakes her head "no"; continues holding up her two fingers.

VIVIAN

"V"...

Miranda excitedly shakes her head in agreement.

RUSSELL

Vagina!

MIRANDA

Now why would you say that word?

RUSSELL

"Blue Suede Vagina", that's why!

JACK

There is no such song as "Blue Suede Vagina".

RUSSELL
Well, there should be!

MIRANDA
It was "Viva Las Vegas".

JACK
Yep, that's definitely a good one.

VIVIAN
Okay, my turn.

Vivian holds up two fingers.

RUSSELL
Vagina!

VIVIAN
(a bit upset)
No, "two words".

RUSSELL
How am I supposed to know.

Again, Vivian holds up two fingers.

MIRANDA
Two words....

Vivian tugs on her ear.

JACK
Sounds like...

Vivian clasps her two hands together and puts them in front of her body and sways them.

JACK (CONT'D)
(cont'd)
Snake?

Vivian shakes her head "no".
Beat, she thinks.

She then cups her hands over both ears and makes a weird face.

MIRANDA
Guppy!

Vivian motions for them to continue on that train of thought.

JACK
Tadpole!

RUSSELL
Bull frog!

MIRANDA
Lily pad!

Vivian continues with the weird face.

RUSSELL
It's a fish!

Vivian nods an excited "yes". She begins to make big swooping gestures with her arms.

MIRANDA
Swimming fish!

JACK
Barracuda!

Vivian continues with even more exaggerated swooping moves.

MIRANDA
A big fish!

Vivian becomes even more excited.

RUSSELL
A big fucking vagina fish!

JACK
A whale!

Vivian can hardly contain her excitement. She points to her nose to indicate they are correct.

MIRANDA
Sounds like whale...

JACK
Pail, hail, Gail, sale, tail...

RUSSELL
Jail!

MIRANDA
Jail House Rock!

Vivian jumps up with excitement.

VIVIAN

That's it!

RUSSELL

Why the hell didn't you just make a motion on your ass like you had a tail?

VIVIAN

(beat)

I guess that would have been easier, huh?

Vivian walks over to Jack and gives him a kiss.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

(continuing)

Anyway, that was for my man. I'm glad you're out honey.

RUSSELL

Out of where?

VIVIAN

Jail. He just got out, you didn't know that?

JACK

Ahh, no, he didn't.

(to Miranda)

Can you pass me a marshmallow?

RUSSELL

No, I didn't. What were you in for?

JACK

I don't want to talk about it.

VIVIAN

(To Jack)

I'm sorry, I thought he knew.

JACK

It's all right, pass me that stick.

Vivian hands Jack a stick and he puts a marshmallow on it holds it over the fire.

MIRANDA

I've always been attracted to dangerous men.

JACK

I'm not a dangerous man, okay?

Jack seems nervous. He is not paying attention.

RUSSELL

Then what are you, tough guy? Why were you in the can?

JACK

I just made some mistakes that's all. End of conversation.

The marshmallow is in flames. Jack throws it all into the fire.

JACK (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

(continuing)

I'm going for a walk.

Jack stands up and storms off.

INT. VIVIAN'S PARKED CAR - LATER

Vivian sits with her head on Jack's shoulders in the front seat of the car. SOFT MUSIC from the radio plays in the B.G.

VIVIAN

I didn't mean to embarrass you back there, I thought he knew.

JACK

Forget it. You had no way of knowing.

VIVIAN

Well, either way, I'm sorry.

JACK

Apology accepted.

VIVIAN

(beat)

Why can't you tell me why you were in prison?

No answer.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

Whatever it is, Jack, it won't change how I feel about you.

JACK

And how is that?

VIVIAN

(she hesitates)

I'm in love with you. I have been from the first moment I laid eyes on you.

JACK

No one has ever said that to me before.

VIVIAN

Have you ever said it to anyone?

JACK

Not until right now.

They kiss.

JACK (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

(continuing)

I love you. I can't tell you why I was in prison just now. You'll understand soon enough.

EXT. CAMP SIGHT - NIGHT

Russell sits in his chair staring at the fire, sipping some booze. Miranda sits on a stump right by him.

RUSSELL

So what, are you hoping to get some?

MIRANDA

From you? Not hardly!

RUSSELL

I've met broads like you before, you're all the same.

MIRANDA

How's that?

RUSSELL

Trampy!

Miranda climbs on top of Russell's chair seductively as if she is about to seduce him. She slowly takes the bottle from Russell's hand and in a instant, tosses it into the fire.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

(continuing)

No! No! What the hell did you do that for? You dumb bitch!

Russell wheels as close to the fire as he can get trying unsuccessfully to grab the bottle.

MIRANDA

It's gone.

RUSSELL

Ohh, shit! Why the hell would you go and do something like that?

MIRANDA

When you start paying more attention to a bottle then to the company you're keeping, then something's got to be done.

RUSSELL

I told you, you're not company, you're a tramp.

MIRANDA

Russell, I'm a lady and if you start treating me like one, I might start making you feel like you're a man.

RUSSELL

And how do you plan on doing that? I'm not a man! My dick doesn't work, I am less than a man.

MIRANDA

You really think that your manhood depends on weather or not your dick works? That's really screwed up.

RUSSELL

It goes deeper than that. I haven't been a man in seven years.

(beat, Miranda stares)

I lost my family, and men don't lose their families, not real men. They fight

(MORE)

RUSSELL(cont'd)

for them, till the death if they have to,
but they don't lose them. That's why I'm
not a man.

Miranda picks up a stick and uses it to retrieve the bottle
from the edge of the fire, She picks it up and hands it to
Russell.

MIRANDA

If you have a family, you can never
really lose them.

She gives Russell a peck on the cheek and walks away.

Russell pours the remaining contents of the bottle on the
ground.

EXT. CAMP SIGHT - SUNRISE

Everyone lies sleeping around the now extinguished fire.
Russell's sleep is fitful.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE NIGHT

The robbery is in progress. The gunman has the pistol pointed
at Russell's head. He then takes the gun and points it back
at the cashier who continues handing over the cash.

GUN MAN

Hurry up!

As the cashier adheres to his demands, Russell quietly picks
up a bottle from a shelf. He raises the bottle and is about
to strike. The Gun Man turns toward Russell and

WHACK!

The bottle explodes
as Russell hits the man, sending him and the gun falling to
the floor.

Russell jumps on top of the man.

RUSSELL

Give it up, punk!

A struggle ensues. The Gun Man regains some of his senses.
He fights back.

Russell repeatedly bangs his head on the floor.

GUN MAN

Stop it!

Russell continues his assault.

GUN MAN (CONT'D)
(cont'd)

I said stop it.

Russell ignores him
The Gun Man reaches for the pistol.
BANG!
The gun goes off.
Russell's face goes blank.
The Gun Man doesn't move an inch.
In agony, Russell reaches for the Gun Man's mask and pulls it
off his head.
He falls back to the ground with the Gun Man's mask in his
hand.
He looks up and into the Gun Man's eyes.
All goes dark.

EXT. CAMP SIGHT - NIGHT

Russell snaps out of his sleep. To his surprise he sees Jack,
already awake, staring at him.

JACK
Everything okay?

RUSSELL
(beat)
Yeah, fine.

EXT. ROAD SIDE - DAY

A tow truck pulls up to the car. Jack, Russell, Vivian and
Miranda await it's arrival.

MIRANDA
If you had a cell phone, why didn't you
just call a tow truck yesterday?

VIVIAN
I don't know. I thought it would be kind
of cool to spend a night in the
wilderness. It worked out great, don't
you think?

No one says a word.

EXT. RUSSELL'S BUILDING - DAY

Miranda walks with Russell toward the front of his building.
Jack and Vivian wait in the car.

MIRANDA
Can you make it in okay?

RUSSELL
I'll be fine. I've been doing this for seven years.

MIRANDA
Okay, I'll see you later.

Miranda turns and walks away. Russell yells after her.

RUSSELL
Hey!
(Miranda stops and turns)
What you said about never being able to lose your family, is that true?

Miranda walks back toward him.

MIRANDA
I believe it is.

RUSSELL
Thanks.

Miranda leans over and kisses him.

MIRANDA
Your welcome.

INT. VIVIAN'S CAR - DAY

Jack and Vivian watch the action.

VIVIAN
He seems a little down, is something wrong with him?

JACK
Nahh, he's okay.

INT. EVERCLEAN - SALES OFFICE - DAY

Ben stands in the middle of the sales office holding court. All the salesmen are in attendance with the exception of Jack.

BEN
All right listen up everybody. We have two days left in the month and we are
(MORE)

BEN(cont'd)

eight machines behind schedule. Lets pound on every fuckin' door in the city if we have to. And if that doesn't work, lets pound on 'em twice.

MIKEY

Ben, eight machines in two days? That seems impossible.

BEN

Nothing is impossible my friend. When Hannibal faced the Roman army at Cannae, he was out numbered by fifty thousand men. When the battle was all over, all eighty seven thousand Roman soldiers were dead. Hannibal's army only lost six thousand, and Hannibal emerged victorious. Nothing is impossible. You have to use your mind, your strength and your perseverance and you can overcome any odds.

(beat)

And where the hell is Jack, has anybody seen him?

MEL

I haven't seen Jack in almost a week.

BEN

Well, if anybody sees him , tell him to get his ass in here. Shit the guys on the verge of winning the bonus and he disappears. That's it, get your asses out there and bring home the bacon boys.

INT. DELL'S OFFICE - DAY

Dell sits across from Jack. He reads a file.

DELL

Your looking good young man.

JACK

Thanks.

DELL

Is there anything you want to discuss?

JACK

Not that I know of.

DELL

Are you having any problems?

JACK

No, I'm cool.

DELL

All right then, I'll see you next month.

JACK

Sure thing.

(beat)

Hey, Dell --

DELL

Parole Officer Johnson --

JACK

Parole Officer Johnson -- Do you think it would ever be possible for me to make up for what I did.

DELL

You paid your debt to society, son. Right now, your responsibility is to yourself. Any other course of action could be very detrimental to all parties.

JACK

I guess you're right.

Jack gets up.

JACK (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

(continuing)

I'll see you next month.

DELL

Yeah, see you next month.

EXT. JACK'S BUILDING - DAY

Jack comes walking up to his apartment, and to his surprise finds Russell lying in wait for him. Russell seems intense, while Jack seems a bit nervous.

JACK

What are you doing here?

RUSSELL

What the fuck do you think I'm doing, I'm waiting for you.

JACK

I've been trying to find you since the trip, where have you been?

RUSSELL

Laying low.

JACK

Okay --

RUSSELL

Aren't you going to invite me up?

JACK

Yeah, sure, but I'll tell you now, it's not much to look at.

RUSSELL

That's okay, I don't plan on doing too much looking.

JACK

(beat)

Are you all right?

RUSSELL

I'm fine. Are you okay?

JACK

Me, yeah. Yeah, I'm okay.

INT. JACK'S ROOM - DAY

The door opens and Jack walks in, closely followed by Russell.

JACK

Can I get you something to drink? I only have water. I can run down and pick up a bottle if you want.

RUSSELL

I quit drinking.

JACK

Get out of here. Since when?

RUSSELL

Since our little trip. In fact, I don't think I ever been this sober my whole life.

JACK

Well, praise Jesus. That sure is a victory. Alcohol and drugs, they are like chains which keep you bound.

RUSSELL

Really?

JACK

Yeah.

RUSSELL

How would you know that?

JACK

I just know that's a-- Is there something wrong?

INT. VIVIAN'S CAR - DAY

Vivian drives down the road, singing along with the radio. She rubs her hands together, and notices that they are dry. She reaches into the glove box for her hand cream. Instantly she notices that the gun is gone.

She pulls over to the side of the road and frantically searches the entire car.

VIVIAN

Where the fuck is it? Oh my God!

INT. JACK'S ROOM - DAY

The conversation continues.

JACK

I'm getting a little thirsty. Do you want some water?

No answer.

RUSSELL

What kind of name is Jack?

JACK

What do you mean?

RUSSELL
I mean what kind of name is it?

JACK
(beat)
Just a name, that's all.

RUSSELL
It's a nickname, isn't it?

No response.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)
(cont'd)
(continuing)
It's funny you know -- You never told me
your last name. How come?

JACK
I thought I did.

RUSSELL
Is it because your name is Jonathan Evan
Andrews.

JACK
Russell, man ...

RUSSELL
Oh, man, you almost had me fooled. A
body full of muscles, a nice clean cut
hair style -- Shit, you just about look
respectable. Not like the junky I ran
into seven years ago.

JACK
I wanted to tell you.

RUSSELL
Oh, you did? What did you want to tell
me, Jack? Did you want to tell me that
you're the guy who took my legs, all the
while I'm watching you walk around? Did
you want to tell me that you're the guy
who took my dick, while I watch you fall
in love with Vivian? Did you want to tell
me that you are the guy who took my
family while I watch you start your own.
Or did you want to tell me that you are
the guy who took my future, while you
(MORE)

RUSSELL(cont'd)

embark on yours? What exactly is it that
you wanted to tell me?

Russel pulls out Vivian's pistol and points it at Jack.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

You piece of shit.

JACK

I never wanted it to happen, it was an
accident.

RUSSELL

There are no accidents. You made the
choice.

JACK

It wasn't all my fault.

RUSSELL

You pulled the fucking trigger, you
destroyed my life.

JACK

(explodes)

Well you had to play the hero, didn't
you. Nothing would have happened if you
just minded your own business.

RUSSELL

What?

A long beat. The two men stare at each other for what seems
to be an eternity.

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT

A car pulls into the parking lot.

INT. CAR - CONVENIENCE STORE LOT - NIGHT

RUSSELL O'Neil, (30's) clean shaven, well dressed, puts the
car in park. He turns to a pregnant Luanne looking a few
years younger who sits next to him.

RUSSELL

Okay, tell me again.

LUANNE

Tooth paste, white bread and super chunk
peanut butter.

RUSSELL
I thought you hated Super Chunk.

LUANNE
Well, I like it now.

RUSSELL
I think your raging hormones are making you crazy. The only good thing about pregnancy is that I don't have to go in there and buy tampons.

She pouts.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)
(cont'd)
(continuing)
Don't be like that honey, you know I love you.

Luanne cracks a smile.

LUANNE
Just make sure it's super chunk.

They kiss.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT

Russell walks into the empty store. A PAKISTANI CASHIER stands behind the counter.

CASHIER
Good evening sir.

RUSSELL
How are you doing? Can you tell me where the peanut butter is?

CASHIER
Second aisle over on the right.

RUSSELL
Thanks.

Russell walks over to the counter and eyes a selection of peanut butter. No "Super Chunk".
He walks back to the counter.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

(continuing)

Don't you guys carry super Chunk?

CASHIER

What ever is there is all we have.

A MASKED GUN MAN

enters the store, pistol in hand. The Cashier and Russell are in his sight.

GUN MAN

Empty the fuckin' drawer, Man!

The Cashier puts his hands up, then complies.

RUSSELL

Take it easy pal!

GUN MAN

Shut the fuck up!

(to Cashier)

Faster, Mother Fucker, I don't have all day!

CASHIER

I'm going as fast as I can.

RUSSELL

(calmly)

Please! Just stay calm.

The gun man cocks his gun and sticks it in Russell's face.

GUN MAN

You want me to stay calm? Huh?!

No answer.

The Gun Man then takes the gun and points it back at the cashier who continues handing over the cash.

GUN MAN (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

Hurry up!

As the cashier adheres to his demands, Russell quietly picks up a bottle from a shelf. He raises the bottle and is about to strike. The Gun Man turns toward Russell and

WHACK!

The bottle explodes
as Russell hits the man over the head, sending him and the
gun falling to the floor.
Russell jumps on top of the man.

RUSSELL

Give it up, punk!

A struggle ensues. The Gun Man regains some of his senses.
He fights back.
Russell repeatedly bangs his head on the floor.

GUN MAN

Stop it!

Russell continues his assault.

GUN MAN (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

I said stop it.

Russell reaches for the gun
The Gun Man reaches for the pistol.
They struggle over the fire arm.
BANG!
The gun goes off.
Russell's face goes blank.
The Gun Man doesn't move an inch.
In agony, Russell reaches for the Gun Man's mask and pulls it
off his head.
He falls back to the ground with the Gun Man's mask in his
hand.
He looks up and into the Gun Man's eyes.

IT IS JACK

looking a few years younger, much skinnier and with longer
hair and a beard.

Jack gets up and looks down on Russell's lifeless body.

Luanne enters the store. When she sees what has happened, she
lets out a BLOODY SCREAM.

Jack in a panic, puts his mask back on and runs out of the
store.

INT. JACK'S ROOM - DAY

Back to Jack and Russell. The silence in the room is haunting.

JACK

When I went in the joint, I was full of anger and of hate and of rage -- For some stupid reason, I even hated you. I hated myself, I hated everybody. But I got saved -- saved by God, and I tried to turn it all around --- Into something positive. All I could think about was how I took your life from you, and how I was going to find a way to give it back, to make good for what I did. I didn't know how -- When I came here that first day, I swear to God I was gonna tell you -- But you didn't recognize me, man. And I got scared.

RUSSELL

(beat)

You don't deserve anything more than I have.

JACK

Your right. It's payback time.

Jack removes his shirt, He tosses it on the bed, he turns around and walks backwards toward Russell.

JACK (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

(continuing)

Hit my spine.

A long beat. Russell sticks the gun in Jack's back. The moment seems eternal.

JACK (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

Do it. In the name of Jesus, I beg you to set me free.

Russell doesn't blink.

JACK (CONT'D)
(cont'd)
(continuing)
Do it.

RUSSELL'S FINGER
slowly pulls the hammer back.
He begins to squeeze the trigger.
Beads of sweat pours down from Jack's face and CRASH on the floor.
The look in Russell's eyes is one of fear and commitment.
THE FINGER keeps squeezing.
Everything is tense.
THE FINGER releases itself from the trigger.
Russell gently lets the hammer back down.

RUSSELL
I'm better than that. I'm better than
you.

Vivian comes storming in. She notices the unusual atmosphere.

VIVIAN
What's going on?

Russell tosses the gun on the bed, then wheels himself past Vivian. Without a word he makes his way to the door and exits.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)
(cont'd)
(continuing)
Jack, what's happening?

JACK
Go home, Vivian.

VIVIAN
What? What are you doing with my gun?

JACK
I said go home! Go on, get out of here!

VIVIAN
Why are you doing this, Jack. I love you.
No matter what it is, we'll handle it.
Together.

JACK

Yeah? Well, I don't love you. Now don't make me throw you out.

Vivian eyes the gun on the bed. Jack reaches for it and stuffs it in his pants.

JACK (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

(continuing)

This stays.

VIVIAN

Jack, don't.

JACK

What? Do you think I am going to kill myself? I'm too much of a coward, believe me.

Jack makes his way to the door.

JACK (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

Get on with your life -- It's doesn't include me.

Jack exits the small room. Vivian yells.

VIVIAN

Where are you going? Jack! Jack! Where are you going?

No answer. Vivian breaks down in tears.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Jack walks down along the sidewalk of the seedy neighborhood. He looks distraught.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Russell wanders along, deep in thought. He wanders past a bar. A sleazy women stands in the door way.

SLEAZY WOMAN

Hey, Big Shot -- Why don't you come in and buy me a drink.

Russell ignores her an continues wheeling past her.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Jack sits at a bar. He downs a shot of booze as if it were his Saving Grace. He yells out to the bar tender.

JACK

Hey, -- One more down here.

INT. JACK'S ROOM NIGHT

Vivian reads a newspaper clipping with the headline "SHERMAN OAKS ROBBERY VICTIM CLINGS TO LIFE"

She continues reading. We see the mention of Jack and Russell's names in print.

EXT. LIQUOR STORE - NIGHT

Jack sits across from a liquor store, eyeing it, scoping it out, all the while drinking from a bottle of booze.

INT. IN HIS PRESENCE CHURCH - NIGHT

The Reverend Bill is up at the podium giving a sermon. The usual neighborhood dregs are in attendance.

REV. BILL

Now, let's not candy coat this -- Saul, who we know as Paul, was the meanest SOB of them all. He made it his own personal mission to have all the Christians killed, he felt it was his right, his duty. But what Paul did not know, was that his job was going to require him to travel -- That his mission -- was going to lead him down the road to Damascus.

CUT TO:

THE BACK OF THE CHURCH

Russell wheels himself into the makeshift worship hall. And listens to the Reverend Bill.

REV. BILL

(continuing)

And it was on the Road to Damascus that Jesus shined a light on Saul. He shined a light on him and said "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" And he blind him with that bright light. But it was his

(MORE)

REV. BILL(cont'd)

blindness that allowed Saul to see more clearly than he had ever seen his whole life. He took the worst that mankind had to offer, and made him among the greatest of men.

Russell listens intently.

REV. BILL

(CONT'D) (cont'd)

(continuing)

You see, we are all on our own personal road to Damascus. And Jesus, He's hitting us all with the same light he hit Saul with. Now if a man like Saul can change, and be forgiven, just think what that same light can do for us. Now pray with me. Join hands and pray -- Dear Lord, I know I have been a sinner, I know I have sinned against you, let you down. But I ask you this day Dear God, to change me. Change me like you changed Paul on the Road to Damascus and to wipe away the sins that I have committed until right now -- To make me blind to my old ways and enlighten me to my new...

Russell slowly begins to wheel himself out of the church.

EXT. IN HIS PRESENCE CHURCH - NIGHT

Russell exits the church and heads down the road. A LOUD SCREECH is heard as a car pulls on to the side walk directly in front of Russell and stops. Vivian jumps out.

VIVIAN

Russell, I need your help.

RUSSELL

Fuck off.

VIVIAN

I'm worried about Jack, he took the gun, I scared of what he might do.

RUSSELL

What ever happens to him, he deserves it.

VIVIAN

Russell, please! I know what happened. I know everything.

RUSSELL

Then you know he has no right to be walking the earth.

VIVIAN

I know that he loves you.

(beat)

I know that I love him.

(beat)

Please Russell, let's not let another life go to waste. It's time we all start to live again.

A long beat.

RUSSELL

He took the gun?

VIVIAN

Yes.

RUSSELL

(beat)

Shit!

Russell rolls toward the car.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

(continuing)

Which way did he go?

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Vivian and Russell cruising the streets looking for Jack.

RUSSELL

I don't know Vivian. The guy can be anywhere.

VIVIAN

Let's just look a little more.

RUSSELL

We've been driving around for almost two hours. Who knows where the hell he is.

VIVIAN

(dejected)

Maybe you're right. I'll take you home.

They drive past the liquor store. Russell notices Jack walking into the store. He remains calm and doesn't mention it.

RUSSELL

There's nothing more we can do tonight.

INT. LIQUOR STORE - NIGHT

Jack walks in to the empty store. The only other person inside is the OLD CASHIER who sits behind the counter and fills out a crossword puzzle.

OLD CASHIER

Good evening.

Jack does not respond. He walks around the store making believe he is searching for something. That cashier returns to his puzzle.

Jack eyes the cash register from afar. He pulls out the gun and holds it in his hand.

After a long hesitation, he begins to approach the cashier, one slow long step at a time.

After several steps

HIS LEG

bangs into Russell's chair which blocks his path.

RUSSELL

What the fuck do you think you're doing?

JACK

Go home Russell.

RUSSELL

Put the gun away.

JACK

This has nothing to do with you.

RUSSELL

Wrong ass hole, it has everything to do with me. Now put the fucking gun away!

Jack tries to push past him.

JACK

Get out of my way.

RUSSELL
You'll have to kill me first.

JACK
Don't make me.

The cashier tries to look over at the action to see what is going on.

RUSSELL
Don't make you? Are you saying that you will? Then go ahead and shoot me right here mother fucker, because I won't watch you throw your life away after all that has happened -- That would kill me anyway, only slower. So just shoot my fat crippled ass right now.

Jack stares at Russell.
A long beat.
Finally, Jack hands the gun over.

JACK
If I could take it all back, I would give my life to do so.

RUSSELL
I know you would. I know you would.
(beat)
Come on, let's get out of here. I can't stand the sight of all this booze, it's making me crazy

Jack begins to walk out of the store. Russell yells after him.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)
(cont'd)
Hey! What the fuck do you think this is?
I want you to push my ass out of here.

JACK
Sorry.

Jack runs back and begins to push Russell toward the exit.

OLD CASHIER
Can I help you with something?

RUSSELL

Yeah, how about helping us by putting on some deodorant. I can smell your BO from here.

JACK

He's just joking.

EXT. LIQUOR STORE - NIGHT

Jack pushes Russell out of the store.

Vivian steps out of her car and just stands there.

RUSSELL

If you don't go over there and make nice with that girl, I'm gonna kick your fucking ass.

Jack steps out from behind Russell's chair. He slowly walks toward Vivian. Then in an instant, the both run toward each other and into each other's arms.

They Kiss.

Lovers reunited.

They turn and see Russell standing right next to them.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

I need a favor.

INT. VIVIAN'S HOUSE - DAY

Vivian gives one last snip, spins Russell around in his chair and hands him a mirror. His beard is all shaved and he has a very clean, respectable looking haircut. Jack watches from across the room.

VIVIAN

What do you think?

RUSSELL

I don't know.

(to Jack)

What do you think?

JACK

Man, that's a good looking haircut.

RUSSELL

What about my teeth, I used some of that special whitener?

Russell exposes his yellow and grey stained disgusting pair of chompers.

JACK

Man, that's a good looking haircut.

EXT. LUANNE'S HOUSE - A BEAUTIFUL SUNDAY AFTERNOON

Vivian's car is parked in front of the house. Russell is in his wheelchair. He is very neat and trimmed, wearing a fine suit.

Jack and Vivian stand by him.

JACK

Do you want our help?

RUSSELL

No sir. This one is all mine.

Russell wheels his way up the walk and approaches the front door. There is one problem, there are three steps leading up to it. He is stuck. He turns around toward Jack and Vivian.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

Maybe a little assistance wont hurt.

Jack looks at Vivian, then he runs up to the front door and rings the bell.

JACK

You'll be fine.

RUSSELL

Thanks.

Jack runs back to the car where he and Vivian get in.

Luanne answers the front door.

A long silence.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

Luanne.

LUANNE

It's been a long time, Russell.

RUSSELL

I know.

LUANNE

You look well.

RUSSELL

It's a struggle, but I think I have a handle on things.

LUANNE

What are you doing here?

RUSSELL

I don't know. I just thought I could...

ERIC, a seven year old adorable boy squeezes through the door, baseball and gloves in hand.

ERIC

Mommy, will you play a game of catch with me.

LUANNE

I can't right now, Honey. Go back inside.

Eric notices Russell.

ERIC

Hi!

RUSSELL

Hi there.

ERIC

Who are you?

LUANNE

This is a friend of mine.

ERIC

I'm Eric

RUSSELL

Hi Eric, my name is Russell.

ERIC

Russell, do you want to play baseball
with me?

RUSSELL

I would love to, but I'm in a wheelchair,
My legs don't work.

ERIC

That's okay, you don't need your legs,
you can just use your arms -- I'll show
you how to play.

Russell looks up at Luanne, searching for some sign of
permission. She gives a reassuring nod.

RUSSELL

I'd love to play.

The boy is very excited.

ERIC

Here, you take this glove, because it's
for a grown up.

Eric speeds off to the front lawn. Russell follows him with
lightning speed.

ERIC (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

(continuing)

Don't be afraid, I won't throw hard,
okay?

RUSSELL

I'm not afraid. You can throw as hard as
you want.

Eric tosses the ball to Russell who catches it and throws it
right back. For the first time, Russell looks completely
happy.

CUT TO:

JACK AND VIVIAN

who sit in the car watching the action.

VIVIAN

I think he'll be all right for a while,
what do you think?

JACK
I think he'll be better than that.

VIVIAN
And what about you?

Jack stares at her.

JACK
I've got you don't I?

VIVIAN
I think you'll be fine.

JACK
Me too.

Vivian pulls away, leaving Russell and Eric as they continue with their warm game of baseball, and the long, slow process of bonding between father and son.

FADE OUT: