

CLOSEOUT

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INT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL: SECURITY CAMERA FOOTAGE

Security camera grade footage cycles through four different perspectives from four different cameras posted throughout the mall. Pick your favorite muzak to accompany the ...

CAMERA A-a high angle, very wide shot of the mall interior. County Gardens Mall is a relic of the 80s, clean but dated. It's single concourse is hardly populated. A lone janitor buffs the floors, a young lady stands next to a kiosk, two mall walkers pass an old man, who sits with his head in his hands on a bench next to a fountain--the mall's centerpiece. In a distant corner, near an entrance sits a defunct carousel. Many stores are vacant. "Going out of Business" and "Clearance" signs hang from the ceiling. A man in a large winter coat and sweatpants enters the mall from the entrance near the carousel.

CAMERA B-tighter camera trained on a nearly deserted small food court. "Panda-monium", a Chinese food eatery, is the sole open vendor. The establishment's proprietor, a middle aged Asian man wearing a franchise standard golf shirt, suspenders and a visor is plating a tray of samples for a younger female employee (his daughter). She wears a similar outfit, and waits for her tray on the customer's side of the counter. The man in the winter coat enters frame and approaches the Panda-monium.

CAMERA C-a medium shot down an artless, "employees only" corridor. Two mall security guards are seated at snack table working on a jigsaw puzzle.

EXT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL: SECURITY CAMERA FOOTAGE

CAMERA D-a wide shot from outside the mall at the Carousel entrance. A post-prime Dodge Omni idles in the fire lane by the door.

INT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL: SECURITY CAMERA FOOTAGE

CAM A-The wide shot catches a small piece of the man at the Panda-monium counter. He is noticeably nervous.

CAM B-The nervous man pulls a shotgun from his sweatpants and aims at the man behind the counter. The worker awaiting the sample tray runs away in panic. The man behind the counter flees to the back of the store.

CAM C-Both security guards are studying the floor trying to find a missing puzzle piece to their nearly completed puzzle. One guard rises with missing puzzle piece.

EXT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL: SECURITY CAMERA FOOTAGE

CAM D-The Dodge Omni idles in fire lane.

INT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL: SECURITY CAMERA FOOTAGE

CAM A-Nobody is visible in the mall except for the gunman. He is yelling.

CAM B-The Gunman fires a shot into the air and then two into the register.

He begins to furiously slam the butt of his shotgun onto the register. The gun discharges and sends a shower of ceiling tile onto the counter.

CAM C-One of the security guards sprints from table down the corridor out of frame. The second guard stands holding the puzzle piece he has found.

EXT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL: SECURITY CAMERA FOOTAGE

CAM D-Gunman runs to the Omni holding a fistful of money. He leaves a trail of fallen change behind him. He quickly gets in and the car speeds away.

INT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL: SECURITY CAMERA FOOTAGE

CAM A-The responsive security guard sprints across the mall towards the Panda-monium.

CAM B-The guard arrives at the Panda-monium and assesses the gunshot damage with flashlight in hand. He is ready to kick ass.

CAM C-The other guard stands with his puzzle piece staring down the corridor. He walks slowly towards the table and places the piece in it's proper place.

EXT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL: SECURITY CAMERA FOOTAGE

CAM D-Lifeless mall parking lot.

INT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL BACK OFFICE - DAY

The security guards from the security camera footage sit among the clutter of a small office located deep within the mall's back hallways. SCOTT SCHAEFER, the guard who responded to the gunshots, is a tall and well built man in his late 20's. JAMES WILLIAMS, who stuck with the puzzle, is shorter but still fit and is also in his late 20's. SGT.

DEWAR, an overweight man in his late 50's with white hair and a large white mustache sits at an appropriately small and disorganized desk, sifting through a stack of manilla folders.

SGT. DEWAR

It ain't from me that all this is coming from, O.K? You'll need to get your driver's licenses out and that orange card they gave you after you finished the course.

The two guards fish for wallets.

SGT. DEWAR (CONT'D)

You're going to have to write down those numbers on this paper, if I can find it here.

Sgt. Dewar pulls two carbon-copy papers from a folder, looks them over, and slides one each to the gentlemen seated across from him seated across from him.

SGT. DEWAR (CONT'D)

Driver's license number at the top there and then the permit number at the bottom. And then sign it.

The two begin work on the forms in front of them.

SGT. DEWAR (CONT'D)

Now I'm going to say it because I'm not sure that you two understand. This don't make you the James Gang.

JAMES

But, my name is James.

SGT. DEWAR

Shut up.

Scotty leans close to James.

SCOTTY

Please, do not mess this up for me.

Working swiftly, Scotty finishes filling out his form, signs it and slides it back to Sgt. Dewar. He turns his attention back to James.

James has stopped writing on his form and has picked it up to study it.

SCOTTY (CONT'D)  
If you can't spell James, just mark  
your "X"

JAMES  
I like to fully understand  
something before I sign it.

James continues his deliberation.

This is taking some time.

Scotty snatches the contract from James, puts it on the desk,  
and forges James's signature.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
I'm in.

Sgt. Dewar collects the forms and returns them to a manilla  
folder. He then opens a desk drawer and retrieves two  
holstered nine millimeters and slides them across the desk.

Scotty and James reach out to take the guns. Sgt. Dewar  
urgently reaches out and grabs the their outstretched hands.

SGT. DEWAR  
Don't fuck this up.

Sgt. Dewar releases the wrists. The guards collect their  
pistols. Scott makes quick work of attaching the gun to his  
belt. James holds his gun in his lap.

INT. MALL BACK HALLWAY-DAY

Scott waits alone in the hallway as James exits Sgt. Dewar's  
office. James exits office to find Scott's pistol drawn in  
his face.

JAMES  
Stop it.

Scott lowers his GUN, but remains enamored with it. He  
doesn't holster it.

SCOTTY  
You want Chinese?

JAMES  
Ali wanted me to pick up lunch from  
the Burger King.

SCOTTY  
So we go to Burger King.

They proceed down the hallway towards a set of double doors. Scotty continues diddlin' his gun.

JAMES

You have to put that back in its strap.

SCOTTY

It's called a holster dumbass.

JAMES

We're thirty feet from office. It's crazy we got these in the first place. You and I are not the sort of people who should have guns.

SCOTTY

You mean the sort of people that are in inventory control?

JAMES

I mean the sort of people that work at a mall.

With this statement, Scotty stops walking. James continues until he notices Scotty has stopped. James turns and looks at Scotty who draws his pistol at James head. James looks to say something, but turns and waits for Scotty to catch up. Scotty lowers his pistol and proceeds.

SCOTTY

Ain't nothing wrong with working at a mall.

James remains quiet, refusing Scotty's bait for a reoccurring argument.

SCOTTY (CONT'D)

(whispers to himself, but loud enough for James to hear) Ain't nothing wrong with working at the mall. Man's gotta make living somehow. I mean I just get up, put on my badge, nowadays I get my gun,

Scotty and James have arrived at the double doors. They pause and James allows Scotty to finish his murmuring. Scotty returns his gun to its holster.

SCOTTY (CONT'D)  
start the coffee, smell the milk,  
its still good, maybe one more day,  
pour the coffee in the go cup, and  
drive to the mall, cause that is  
what I have been sworn to protect,  
the mall, I protect the mall its  
partons, employees and inventory.

After a quiet beat, they open the double doors and enter into  
the mall's main concourse.

INT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL-DAY

The mall is empty. The scene is similar to the security  
camera footage. Drab tones dominate the dated environment.  
Synthesized beats accompanied by familiar watered down  
saxophone melodies saturate the soundscape. Scotty and James  
continue.

SCOTTY  
Willis said they were going to fix  
the carousel before we close.

JAMES  
And who told him?

SCOTTY  
I don't ask him those kind of  
questions. He was right about the  
Panda-monium.

JAMES  
They're not gonna fix the carousel.

SCOTTY  
I heard they were.

JAMES  
Scott, in less than a month you, me  
Willis and that carousel won't  
work. So why would they fix it?

SCOTTY  
Because it would be nice.

James pauses to carefully select his words.

JAMES  
Who's going to ride it. There is no  
one here.

SCOTTY

I'm here. You're here. Huan Xu's here. Willis is supposed to be here. Your girlfriend, Ali's gonna be here in about a half hour, maybe she would enjoy an operational carousel at the job-place. Sgt. Dewar is...

JAMES

Dewar is not gonna ride the carousel he's...my point being, no one under the age of fifty is going to step foot in this mall unless you're employed here or you're Huan Xu's bastard child, or you're gonna rob him.

SCOTTY

Your attitude is poor. I hope they fix it.

JAMES

Yeah well...

SCOTT

I'm just trying to be happy doing my job.

At this point Scotty snatches James's pistol, turns and kicks open the double doors of the mall's main entrance. He bolts into the sunlight, both guns drawn in a blaze of glory.

Sunlight overexposes the shot.

DISSOLVE TO  
TITLE CARD

INT.COUNTY GARDENS MALL-MUGS ON MUGS AND MORE KIOSK-DAY

James and ALLISON HILLS are at mall kiosk that features items that a customer can personalize with a photo which can be taken right there at the kiosk Allison is seated on a stool by the register. James leans on the counter near a shelf of sample items; a couple of mugs, a pint glass, a calendar, a hat etc. all featuring his or Scotty's face. A prominently placed T- Shirt shows Scotty in hunter attire kneeling next to a large dead deer with an impressive antler spread. A compound bow rests on the deer's shoulder.

Allison and James are finishing their meal from Burger King. James swabs ketchup with his fries, Ali is wearing a Burger King crown.



ALI

Now that it's on your hip, I don't know whether to laugh or run.

JAMES

You want to touch it, don't you?  
Come here.

James leans as if to offer the gun, but pulls away.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Absolutely not.

James points to his badge.

JAMES (CONT'D)

9002 Certified. You got to pay the cost to earn your piece, toil away like Scotty and I did at a week of nights at Firearm Safety Class. This robbery is the best thing that's ever happened

ALI

I think its adorable how excited he gets.

JAMES

Mmh hmmm.

They quietly nibble on their fries.

ALI

How's progress on your 7 step Program Towards Financial Glory?

JAMES

Bad. Not much on the horizon.

ALI

Did you call Jeff's dad to talk about that apprenticeship thing?

JAMES

No. And I don't think I'm going to. I thought about it and I need to look for something long term that I'd actually enjoy doing.

ALI

So what are you going to do?

JAMES

With the thirty-seven dollars in savings, suicide has to be close to number one.

James's dead pan delivery is unsettling.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Maybe try to be a Pro wrestler.

ALI

Mr. Kreese said I can transfer to the Mugs on Mugs and More at Commerce Palace.

JAMES

But Ali, your true passion lies in neurosurgery...

ALI

Right now my true passion lies in getting the fuck out of my parents house.

JAMES

Well your commitment to the Mugs on Mugs blows my mind.

James's walkie talkie crackles with Scott's urgent voice.

SCOTTY (O.S.)

Hey partner. I'm about to blow this Frogger high score out the damn pond. But, I'm going to need all your quarters on deck pronto. Come back.

Ali giggles at Scott's energy. James notices, but ignores Scott's call.

SCOTTY (O.S.)(CONT'D)

Gators, Jimmy James. I'm at the gators!

ALI

Do you not have any quarters?

James is confused as to why Ali wants Scott to set the high score on Frogger.

JAMES

I got quarters.

James leaves Ali and heads for the video arcade.

SCOTTY (O.S.)  
There coming so fast Jimmy. So  
fast! Croc bastard...

The walkie breaks off with a loud crackle.

INT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL-BY THE FOUNTAIN-DAY

WILLIS, a fifty year old black janitor, is cleaning around the centralized mall fountain. He pulls quarters from the fountain, examines the markings and tosses them back.

WILLIS  
(murmurs to himself)  
So many Vermonts, and Delawares,  
and both the Carolinas. Not one  
fucking Oregon...

Willis continues to clean murmur and search, Scotty approaches.

SCOTTY  
Did you already get your check?

WILLIS  
You know I got mines.

SCOTTY  
We're leaving from out front in  
five.

WILLIS  
I'll be there.

EXT. SOUTHERN STREETS-DAY

Mall security Rav 4 travels down a road cleared on both sides for a development that never came. The occasional structures they pass, omit an air of anonymous and unpleasant commerce.

WILLIS (V.O.)  
No no no no no I'm out. You ain't  
gonna catch me doin' nothing after  
this. That place closes I'm out. I  
been at the gardens since they cut  
the ribbon. I tied up the ribbon. I  
handed the clippers. Sheyut.

SCOTTY (O.S.)  
Willis, you got to roll your window  
down.

INT. RAV 4-DRIVING DOWN A SOUTHERN STREET-DAY

Scotty drives while Willis cranks the window down holding his half smoked cigarette. James sit in the back seat and stares out the window.

WILLIS

So now on the weekends Jean-Pierre's gonna be taking the grandbabies and me and mama are gonna go and take the 1981 gentleman's brown Sportster RV to the parking lot Harrah's. Finishing breakfast a hundred feet from the doors when they open Saturday morning.

JAMES/SCOTTY (TO HIMSELF)

Gentleman's Brown?

SCOTTY

I wish I was retiring.

WILLIS

SHIT son, you've got to earn that. When your young you got to work. you just keep on working and your gonna get to where your going. You see you got to keep puttin one pant on in front of the other, oh oh oh spot right there, thats a good spot...

15 INT. EZ MONEY CHECK CASHING-DAY

Check cashing establishment is small and dirty. Plexi-glass protects the employees from down & dirty patrons. James, Scotty, and Willis wait in line.

WILLIS

It was me and Ghilenne pulling up to the Walmart and she says she never pull up to the front because there ain't gonna be no spot but I said you're gonna get a spot today so pull up front. She was like no and I say just do it. So she pulls up front and I says whats that right there and she was like where and I said look right there I told you I told and she...

SCOTTY

Willis, you're up.

Scotty motions toward the counter. Willis approaches the window with check in hand.

WILLIS

Uh oh. Here we go. Gonna get paid on.

Willis places check into bullet-proof carousel.

JAMES (TO SCOTTY)

Hey will you do me a favor on the way back.

EXT. JUNIOR COLLEGE PARKING LOT-DAY

Rav-4 is parked in an empty parking lot. Willis and Scotty are in the front seats. James is absent. Willis is furiously scratching away at losing lottery tickets. Both Scotty and Willis sneak sips of malt liquor from cans. James exits the junior college carrying a large white package.

INT. RAV 4-DAY 17

Scotty peers through the rear-view mirror at James rifling through his newly acquired collegiate material. Willis scratches the final losing ticket and throws them down in disgust.

WILLIS

Motherfuckas!

SCOTTY (TO JAMES)

How much is it gonna cost?

JAMES

Costs sixty five bucks just to apply.

James tosses his booklet aside and reaches into the front seat to grab a Bud can from Willis.

JAMES (CONT'D)

And then its another four hundred dollars for most of the ones I want to take.

WILLIS

Four...Goddamn, time for making money not spending it. Your too old for school.

JAMES

Maybe.

WILLIS

Shit, maybe! Maybe I go back to school with you, be a doctor up in this motherfucker Dr. Willis Mc D.L.T. Esquire.

Willis takes a long pull from his Bud.

WILLIS (CONT'D)

Shit!

SCOTTY

They got the kind of classes to make you an architect.

JAMES

Pretty much. Enough to get me started.

SCOTTY

You gonna do it?

JAMES

It would be nice. Its a lot of money though.

SCOTTY

Get loans right?

JAMES

Can of worms...

WILLIS

Sheyut! Government ain't in the business of givin' free money. You gots to believe in yourself. Plant your feet in the ground and reach up your hands for the star!

INT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL-BY THE FOUNTAIN-DAY

Scotty and James sit on a bench. Next to James is a large closed book with I.M. Pei written in large type on the spine. He is leaning over to take a look at Scotty's reading material, a Maxim.

JAMES

Did you hear back from Commerce Palace?

SCOTTY

Yeah. They don't need me. They're overstaffed.

JAMES

You wouldn't be able to carry your piece anyway.

SCOTTY

I know. But I still haven't heard back from Andersen's. And that's the real deal Holyfield security. When Bon Jovi came into town he asked for Andersen's.

JAMES

Really.

Allison Hills approaches the bench.

ALI

Boys.

SCOTTY

Hi Ali.

JAMES

Mrs. Hills have you left those cup unmanned?

ALI

I have. Being that its payday, I've come to ask permission to accompany you two to golf-n-stuff this evening and take in a couple events of the in the sextathalon.

JAMES/SCOTTY

No.

ALI

Please?

JAMES

No way. Your not ready. What goes on there may offend a nice young lady like you.

SCOTTY

The swearing alone may rob a lady of her virginity.

JAMES

And there's also the nudity. We  
perform the various contests  
classic Grecian style.

Scotty flips the page of his magazine.

SCOTTY

(re:the magazine)

Damn.

ALI

Let me see.

Scotty shows Ali the MAXIM model de jure

SCOTTY

RACK em.

ALI

Wow.

SCOTTY

Hell yeah wow.

ALI

So can I go?

James takes this in and looks over to Scotty for his  
approval. Scotty is back to looking at his mag. James looks  
back to Ali.

JAMES

If you come you have to buy us a  
pizza and the beer and you got to  
wear a skirt.

Alison smiles.

ALI

I'm not buying the pizza.

James squints and considers his options.

JAMES

Ok. You can go.

ALI

Or the beer.

JAMES

Whatever.



ALI

And I ain't going to change.

SCOTTY

Yes, you are.

EXT. GOLF N' STUFF - NIGHT

High and wide establishing shot of Golf n'stuff. Rav-4 enters fairly full parking lot and parks.

INT. GOLF N' STUFF-LOBBY-NIGHT

Scotty, James and Allison (looking hot wearing a skirt) enter a small but busy amusement park complex. Bells, whistles and flashing lights fill the room. James carries a professional wrestling style belt draped over one shoulder.

The group quickly proceeds to the counter where SCOOTER, (15-18 year old male) uniformed in red vest, white collar shirt, unhooked bowtie, with his golf-n-stuff issued visor cooly cocked to the left. He is busy assisting two 14-16 year old girls. Upon seeing James and Scotty, Scooter stands to greet with enthusiasm.

SCOOTER

GENTLEMEN and LADDIEEESS?

James presents the belt high above his head, pauses for effect, and walks toward the counter. As he approaches Scooter produces a board with columns for scoring the six events of the sextaphalon, as well as the history of winners. Scotty has apparently never won. The board is placed in front of the slurpee machine. James drops the belt at the counter and Scooter takes the belt and displays it above the scoreboard.

SCOOTER (CONT'D)

Ah ah, Scotty GNS policy, you gonna have to check your heat here at the door.

Scotty complies and hands over his belt and holstered gun. Scooter then puts the pistol in a cubby surrounded by children's jackets and purses. Scooter hands Scotty a number. Scooter then acknowledges Ali. He pulls the bill of his visor to the other side and then tips it towards Ali.

SCOOTER (CONT'D)

Damn.

Scotty is at the counter purchasing the required tickets.

JAMES  
Ali. Don't touch.

SCOOTER  
Nice to meet you, sweetheart.

ALI  
Charmed.

JAMES (TO SCOTTY)  
We square?

SCOTTY  
Three Code Reds Scooter, and then  
we're square.

JAMES  
To the carts!

EXT. GOLF N' STUFF - GO CART TRACK - NIGHT

The three wait in a dense line of kids 10 years younger than they are. The boys position themselves to obscure Allison from the majority of the GNS patrons. She pours bourbon from a 5th into a fountain soda cup full of Code Red.

ALI  
Scotty, hand me yours.

They exchange the cups.

E/I. GOLF N' STUFF PARK-NIGHT 22 MONTAGE:

A. ALLISON SITS ALONE ON A PICNIC BENCH NEAR THE GO CART TRACK. SHE SIPS HER BOURBON AND SODA. SHE WATCHES SCOTTY AND JAMES RACE.

B. JAMES UNBUCKLES AND GETS OUT OF THE GO-CART RAISING HIS HANDS IN VICTORY.

C. ALLISON WATCHES THE PAIR AT THE BATTING CAGES.

D. THE THREE REVEL IN A HOTLY CONTESTED SKEEBALL MATCH

E. SCOTTY LEANS DOWN TO TOSS A SKEEBALL. JAMES LEANS IN CLOSE TO WHISPER SOMETHING INTO HIS EAR. SCOTTY, FOCUSED, ROLLS. THE ROLL IS A FAILURE. JAMES RAISES HIS ARM SKYWARD, VICTORIOUS.

F. BOURBON REFILLS ALL AROUND.

G. SCOOTER MARKS ANOTHER WIN FOR JAMES ON THE SEXTATHALON LEADER BOARD.

H. JAMES AND SCOTTY ARE AT THE POP-A-SHOT MACHINE. ALI'S INTEREST HAS WANED.

I. JAMES VERSUS SCOTTY AT MORTAL KOMBAT II.

J. JAMES VERSUS MECHANICAL ARM WRESTLING MACHINE. HE IS NO MATCH FOR THE ROBOT STRENGTH OF HIS RIVAL.

K. SCOTTY VERSUS THE MECHANICAL WRESTLING MACHINE. THE BATTLE IS HOTLY CONTESTED ROBOT WINS IN THE END. A VERY LOUD BUZZER SOUNDS AND CARRIES THROUGHOUT...

J. JAMES HOLDS HIS BELT HIGH ABOVE HIS HEAD AS THE THREE EXIT GOLF N STUFF. THE DOOR CLOSES BEHIND THEM. THE BELLS WHISTLES AND BUZZER

ABRUPTLY CUT TO:

23 INT. JAMES AND SCOTTY'S DUPLEX-JAMES'S ROOM-MORNING 23

Their place is clean and sparse furnished with hand-me-downs from another era. The small two bedroom apartment sports a small kitchen, living room, and office, which is empty except for Scotty's weight bench and various work-out necessities.

Scotty is preparing for a workout.

A poster describing eighty types of shots graces the otherwise barren white walls. There are no dirty dishes in the sink.

INT. JAMES AND SCOTTY'S DUPLEX - JAMES'S ROOM - MORNING

James and Ali lie in bed. Ali is asleep, James whispers into her ear, trying to wake her. The sextaphalon title belt sits displayed on a nightstand very near Ali's head.

JAMES

Hey. Hey.

Ali reluctantly opens her eyes.

ALI

What?

JAMES

You like that?

James looks toward the belt. Ali recognizes the belt.

ALI

Yeah, its pretty impressive.

JAMES

I know.

ALI

What time is it?

JAMES

8:35. Coccoa Bombs time.

James springs from the bed and exits the room

INT. JAMES AND SCOTTY'S DUPLEX - MORNING - CONTINUOUS

James proceeds to the kitchen and passes Scotty's room. Scotty is at the bench press counting his reps.

JAMES

You keep working at it tiger. Maybe  
someday you could get yourself a  
belt like mine.

INT. SEMINAR CLASSROOM-DAY

STANLEY STEVENS is leading a seminar in front of a dozen high schoolers seated at desks. It is obvious this is a television set mocked up to look like a classroom. Mr. Stevens speaks with an enthusiastic but boring tone.

MR. STEVENS

So young people its time we take your average, above average. You already have the will, I'm gonna give you the tools to turn that will into A... Plus.

O.S. VOICE

Dr. Stevens. Dr.Stevens. There is an scholastic emergency in the operating room. Report immediately.

MR. STEVENS

Lets see what's going on over there.

Mr. Stevens quickly walks to another portion of the stage which is dressed to mimic a doctor's office. The set dressing attempt is poor. A box meant to look like a first aid kit sits on top of the doctor's office bed. On the wall is a chalkboard which reads "contents in your first "A" kit". Below the "contents" is a circle marked "GOOD" and a square marked "BAD".

MR. STEVENS (CONT'D)

Question. Which of these shapes do you think is good and which one is bad?

TABITHA a young female student sitting in the middle of the class room raises her hand.

MR. STEVENS (CONT'D)

Yes, Tabitha?

TABITHA

The circle is the good one and the square is bad.

Mr. Stevens pauses for suspenseful effect.

MR. STEVENS

That is absolutely correct.

INT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL - BOOKSTORE - DAY

James is enjoying a slurpee while watching the video on a small TV/VCR combo unit in a sparse bookstore. The bookstore is clearly going out of business. A large sign hangs from the ceiling and states in large block letters: "We're not going anywhere!". An obese white woman, KATHY (40ish), sits behind the counter in a folding chair. Her breathing is labored and audible.

Her dated clothes and spectacles betray her support of public television. She probably owns more than one cat. The video continues in the background.

MR. STEVENS

(audio from TV)

...and why do you think the circle is good? Because the two are "associated". You see the word "GOOD" is written right here under the circle...

James picks up the box and takes a look at it's title: "Where There's a Will There's an A+". He flips it over to read the description on the back. After a moment of inspection, James finds it is priced at \$200.

JAMES

Damn.

KATHY

I know right.

Onscreen, Mr. Stevens holds a large pen above his head.

MR. STEVENS

You see you now have a pen that will only be "associated" with good thoughts. Good feelings. Good ideas. Young people, this is your good ideas pen.

INT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL-THE MANDARIN-DAY

Scotty is leaning on the counter discussing the morning's events with Huan Xu the Mandarin owner/operator as seen in the security camera footage.

SCOTTY

You know I thought I saw something. You think it was a chipmunk.

HUAN XU

On Tuesday. South entrance. Where the Easter Bunny display is going.

SCOTTY

Your sure chipmunk. Not squirrel not cat not wombat. Chipmunk. Cause you hunt squirrel...just it is so different than...

HUAN XU

Chipmunk!

SCOTTY

Alright. I'm gonna head to the office and begin filing the necessary paperwork to assemble the dragnet. If you see or hear anything, I mean anything, Huan Xu, Call us immediately.

HUAN XU

Yeah I...

SCOTTY

Don't be a hero. Leave this to the trained pros.

Scotty grabs a sample from the tray.

EXT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL IN FRONT OF THE FOOD COURT ENTRANCE

A van from Encino Hills retirement community is parked deploying seniors from the center. James and Scotty assist the process.

JAMES

Its like if I'm a "C" student after the program I'm straight "A's".

SCOTTY

This van stinks.

MRS. SCHAEFFER, a seventy-five year old, slightly overweight grandmother, steps out from the van. She carries a small tupperware container for Scotty. She hands the box to Scotty.

MRS. SCHAEFFER

I made these yesterday for you boys. They're snickerdoodles.

SCOTTY

Snickerdoodles. I love snickerdoodles.

Mrs. Schaeffer leans and hugs Scotty.

MRS. SCHAEFFER

And how are you James? Hanging in there?

JAMES

Aces, Mrs. Schaeffer.

She hugs James.

INT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL - BY THE FOUNTAIN - DAY

James, Scotty and Mrs. Schaeffer sit at a bench by the Fountain of Dreams. James has snickerdoodles crumbs about the corners of his mouth and the empty tupperware container sits on his lap.

JAMES

Its not like a study program, its like a program to study studying. Cause my English is pretty good, and my math's alright but I could probably use some tips.

MRS. SCHAEFFER

Good for you James, where are you planning to study?

JAMES

Well there's some introductory level courses down at junior poly-tech.

SCOTTY

Its expensive though.

JAMES

But its gonna be worth it.

SCOTTY

Well. I don't know about that.

JAMES

Well.

The group is silent. James is curious then noticeably upset at Scotty's dismissive remark. James casts a glance behind Mrs. Schaeffer's head.

MRS. SCHAEFFER

Oh look, they're fixing the carousel!

The three look across the mall and notice a mechanic repairing the carousel.

MRS. SCHAEFFER (CONT'D)

Now that is nice thing. If that thing is fixed before I leave today, I'm gonna get on ride it.



JAMES

Whatever money is spent throughout the schooling you're gonna get back because you get a higher wage with your degree.

SCOTTY

Mm hm. Sounds good. Grandma it probably won't be fixed today. But if they do I'm gonna ride it with you.

JAMES

Maybe I don't want to work security for, man what the fuck was that?

Upon hearing this obscenity, Mrs. Schaeffer slaps James across the back of the head.

MRS. SCHAEFFER

Watch your mouth.

JAMES

Yes ma'am.

Scotty jumps and runs off.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Was that a squirrel?

MRS. SCHAEFFER

Looked like a chipmunk.

INT. COUNTY GARDENS-MALL MUGS ON MUGS AND MORE - NIGHT

Ali is closing up shop. James is seated on a stool, Ali is untying the kiosk curtains.

JAMES

I'm not spending my life driving around seniors to look for a car they think was stolen. Where does he get off.

ALI

Scotty's just saying that it is a big decision and its a lot of money.

Scotty's voice crackles through the walkie.

SCOTTY O.S.  
 Could really use your help by the  
 gumball dispenser. Need your help  
 to corner this little bastard.

ALI  
 Go help him. I'm leaving.

JAMES  
 Coming over later?

ALI  
 Can't tonight.

James shrugs and unenthusiastically proceeds to the gumball dispenser.

INT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL-NIGHT

Wide Interior establishing shot of the mall. It is empty all stores are closed the lights are dim.

INT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL-NIGHT

James is crouched holding a broom by an ATM machine near the entrance.

Scotty stands behind James, who is poised to strike with the broom beneath the machine. With one quick poke James pins the squealing chipmunk.

JAMES  
 I got him.

SCOTTY  
 Alright slide him to your right and  
 I'll bag him.

JAMES  
 Its not gonna slide. The machine's  
 feet are blocking me. If I slide  
 anyway he's gonna get out. Start  
 sliding the machine and I'll hold  
 him.

Scotty moves to the right of the machine.

SCOTTY  
 Hold on.

JAMES

Hold on for what? Move the fucking machine

SCOTTY

I'm not gonna be able to...hold on

The two are silent for a beat.

BLAM BLAM BLAM! Scotty fires three shots from his pistol. Dust, drywall, cracked pieces of faux tile splinter and cover James. James is stunned. He composes himself, and jumps up to head for the mall exit, he shoves Scotty out of his path. Scotty turns to follow James out and holsters his weapon along the way. The two exit the mall.

EXT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL-NIGHT-CONTINUOUS

Upon hearing Scotty approach from behind, James turns to approach him again.

JAMES

You're a fucking 10-year-old with that fucking thing. That's just immature Scott. Fucking unbelievably immature.

SCOTTY

I'm just handling my shit.

JAMES

Like a 10-year-old.

SCOTTY

10-year-old? I ain't the one looking at damn school. You're trying to go back to school and we've been out of school for 10 years.

JAMES

Dumb ass.

James shoves Scotty. Scotty shoves back.

SCOTTY

Do not touch me again.

James punches Scotty in the face. Scotty retaliates with a punch that sends James to the asphalt. James stands up and locks into combat with Scotty. The fighting is sloppy but Scotty is eventually victorious. Scotty is on top of James offering quite the drubbing.

James cries and Scotty desists and leaves. James lies defeated on the ground. We hold on James, who is fetal on the ground, sobbing.

The RAV4 pulls up beside James. He pulls himself from the ground and proceeds to get into the backseat.

INT. JAMES AND SCOTTY'S DUPLEX-DAY

James is seated on the couch, clad in nothing but some boxers, the sextathalon belt, and a Burger King crown on his head. A Burger King bag and a bookstore shopping bag lie beside him on the couch. His eye is blackened, his lip is split, he has various other bruises about his head and body. Goddamn! Scotty fucked him up. He is hoisting a Miller High Life. His gun lies beside him on the couch.

He is watching "Where there's a will there's and A+". Onscreen, we see "session two", written in a late eighties font. The graphic is accompanied by peppy synthesized music. A subject heading "preparing for the big game/test" appears. The title fades out and Stanley Stevens appears in his classroom.

MR. STEVENS

The toughest question on the test  
is the one you don't know the  
answer to. Now I'm gonna let that  
soak in for a minute. The...  
hardest... question... on... the...  
test... is... the... one... you...  
don't... know... the... answer to.  
Young people we are gonna remedy  
that virus today. Let's step and  
see what I have in my first A kit.

Mr. Stevens walks over to the kit on the examination table.

BEHIND HIM "1=GOOD IDEAS PEN" IS WRITTEN ON THE CHALKBOARD.

MR. STEVENS

We already got our good ideas pen,  
which reinforces the power of  
positive associations and  
next...what do I got right  
here?...anybody...Jeff?

JEFF

Its like a cloth.

MR. STEVENS

No. Anybody else?...young people this is a sweatband. And why am I gonna put this on right now? I'm gonna need this to keep the sweat out of my face. Because I'm gonna sweat. My brow is gonna pour sweat. Why? Because studying is hard work. The only way to get the answers to questions you don't know is to study so hard you can answer it. Whatever level you have been studying at, double it, then double that.

James is stoic as he watches the program.

INT. JAMES AND SCOTTY'S DUPLEX-DAY

A: C.U. JAMES SIGNS COLLEGE APPLICATION

B: C.U. JAMES FILLS OUT THE CHECK TO POLYTECH FOR SIXTY-FIVE DOLLARS

C: M.S. JAMES LICKS AND SEALS ENVELOPE

INT. MALL MUGS ON MUGS AND MORE KIOSK-DAY

Ali is ignoring a customer, who is a short, middle aged, fat, balding man with glasses. He is wheeling an oxygen tank and breathes audibly. The customer stands between Scotty and Ali.

Allison is irritated. Scotty sports a faint bruise beneath his left eye.

ALI

Where's James?

SCOTTY

At the house.

ALI

Why?

SCOTTY

He was supposed to come in but he didn't.

ALI  
Is he sick?

SCOTTY  
No.

FAT CUSTOMER  
(awkwardly interrupting)  
I got something here, I was wanting  
to get on one of those sweatshirts?

Fat customer pulls a piece of tattered notebook paper out of his jacket pocket, hands shaking, and unfolds it to show Ali a sketch of himself riding a winged dragon, carrying a magical staff in his right hand and a glowing orb in his left. Ali finds the uncomfortable facial expression of the customer's sketched self peculiar.

ALI  
Are you serious?

FAT CUSTOMER  
No.

He says this but he is clearly heartbroken. He stands, awaiting Ali's retraction of her harsh statement.

ALI  
Yeah, we can do this.

The Fat Customer is relieved.

ALI (CONT'D)  
You want a sweatshirt?

FAT CUSTOMER  
Yes please.

ALI  
Ok.

FAT CUSTOMER  
When will it be ready.

ALI  
Tomorrow.

FAT CUSTOMER  
Fantastic.

The Fat Customer skitters off.

Ali refocuses.

ALI  
So, what happened.

SCOTTY  
We had a disagreement last night.

ALI  
That's where the bruise came from.

SCOTTY  
Yeah.

ALI  
I imagine James has a few bruises  
of his own.

SCOTTY  
He does.

ALI  
And that's what's wrong with him?

SCOTTY  
It is.

ALI  
So are you alright?

SCOTTY  
I'm okay.

INT. JAMES AND SCOTTY'S DUPLEX-DAY

James is asleep on the couch. His phone rings. James awakens  
and answers the phone.

JAMES  
Hello.

INT. MALL BACK HALLWAY-DAY

Ali is speaking to James on her cell phone.

ALI  
How's your face?

JAMES  
Handsome.

ALI  
Seriously.

JAMES  
Seriously? Its bad.

ALI  
Are you still in for dinner?

JAMES  
(guttled)  
I guess so, yeah.

ALI  
Mom was thinking eat at eight so  
can you be there at seven thirty.

JAMES  
Yeah.

uncomfortable pause.

ALI  
You should see what you did to  
Scotty's hands.

INT. MALL BACK OFFICE-DAY

Scotty is clocking out, and is approached by second shift guards HENRIETTA and HUDSON. Henrietta is in her mid-forties. Her five foot frame resembles a miniature overweight Achy Breaky era Billy Ray Cyrus. HUDSON, her partner, is a slightly taller replica of Henrietta.

HENRIETTA  
Your boyfriend kiss you too hard  
last night.

Scotty avoids conversation and leaves the room.

HENRIETTA (CONT'D)  
Faggot.

INT. JAMES AND SCOTTY'S DUPLEX SCOTTY'S ROOM-EVENING

Scotty enters the duplex and finds James on his bench pressing iron. He enters the kitchen, rinses his go cup and places it next to the coffee maker and tosses his keys on the counter. James's strained breathing is audible over the clinking weights on the bar. Scotty proceeds to the office and observes James's final set. James finishes his final set and sits up on the bench awkwardly avoiding eye contact with Scotty. Scotty crosses and offers James an open bottle of Miller High Life.



SCOTTY  
You gonna be alright?

JAMES  
Yeah.

INT. JAMES AND SCOTTY'S DUPLEX BATHROOM- EVENING

James is combing his hair at the mirror in preparation for dinner with the hills. He is deciding which angle reveals the least amount of damage to his face. It's pretty bad all over.

EXT. HILLS HOUSE-DUSK

RAV4 pulls in front of large two story house with landscaped lawn. RAV4 is stationary for a moment, then pulls away to reveal James. James makes the long walk up the path to the front door and rings the bell.

INT. HILLS HOUSE FOYER-DUSK

The doorbell resounds through the empty marble tiled foyer. The tasteful and elegant decor reveals the established affluence of James's hosts. A well dressed Ali, enters frame and opens the front door.

JAMES  
Good evening, peach.

James smiles and moves to kiss Ali, who recoils from the new additions about his face.

ALI  
Damn.

JAMES  
Yeah. Thank you. I know.

ALI  
Does it hurt.

JAMES  
No. Not really.

Ali is stunned by the injuries.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
Can we go inside?

ALI  
Yeah.

## INT. HILLS DINING ROOM-NIGHT

Saturday dinner at the Hills household is a formal affair. Mr. and Mrs. Hill sit with Ali and James around a table designed to seat ten. Mr. Hill, a gray-haired, fit man in his late fifties, sits at the head of the table. He wears an oxford shirt unbuttoned at the top and slacks, both of which are remnants of his required work attire. Mrs. Hill, a well dressed, very attractive woman in her late forties, sits to her husbands left. The table is set with china, crystal and more forks than James can understand.

ALI

Pretty good lentil salad, mom.  
These carrots are delicious.

JAMES

Yeah. They are good...where'd you  
get them?

MRS. HILLS

At the grocery store.

JAMES

Okay.

MRS. HILLS

Busy at the mall today?

ALI

Not really. Three weeks till it  
closes and its already a ghost  
town.

MRS. HILLS

Well I'm gonna sneak over there in  
about a week see if I can't scare  
up some deals...

ALI

Mom, there is nothing in that mall  
you are gonna want.

MRS. HILLS

Well you never know.

MR. HILLS

What happened to your face, James?

JAMES

My friend hit me. a lot.

MR. HILLS

Why?

INT. ALI'S CELICA-NIGHT

Ali drives James back to his house.

JAMES

...yeah I was pissed.

ALI

But you didn't yell anything.

JAMES

No I shoved him. Discharge a firearm six inches from your ear, and see if you react rationally.

ALI

Well did he get him?

JAMES

Yes, whatever that's not the point...he fired a handgun next to my head...who does that?...He's crazy.

ALI

Yeah, but why did he hit you?

JAMES

Because I hit him.

ALI

And then he beat your ass.

JAMES

No. No. It was pretty even, I just got hit the face more.

ALI

Did you guys talk about it today?

JAMES

Yeah kinda. I'm trying to be the bigger man here and let it go.

ALI

That's noble.

They drive in silence for a moment.

ALI (CONT'D)

What are you two doing tomorrow?

JAMES

Probably what we did last Sunday  
and the Sunday before that.

EXT. DOUGLAS LAKE-MORNING

Scotty and James stand in a john-boat with their hooks in the water. The two are motionless and intent on capturing dinner. Scotty feels a bite, breaks the silence and begins reeling in the fish.

SCOTTY

Gaff! Get the gaff qui que!

James's disgust is apparent, he hasn't had a bite all morning. Scotty pulls his third catch of the morning aboard the boat.

EXT. DOUGLAS LAKE BOAT RAMP-MORNING

Scotty backs the RAV4 with unoccupied boat trailer down the ramp. James attempts to align the vessel with the trailer.

INT. RAV 4-DAY

Scotty and James proceed home. Scotty drives, naturally, James occupies the shotgun.

SCOTTY

Shit, James, quick check that cooler.

JAMES

What?

SCOTTY

No seriously, I got a bad feeling,  
check the cooler.

James leans back and inspects the cooler.

JAMES

What am I looking for?

SCOTTY

You are looking for reason why I  
caught three fish and you're a  
bitch.

JAMES

Good stuff bro. When we get back we got put up the boat quick, cause I need the rav.

SCOTTY

Where you gotta go?

JAMES

I'm gonna go get a haircut.

SCOTTY

Okay, fine. Be back in time so we can get to my grandma's.

Scotty lets the conversation taper off and then...

SCOTTY (CONT'D)

Let me ask you a question. If we took those three fish from the cooler and we placed them all in a row ass to mouth. James, I ask you, how long would the train of fish would be?

JAMES

Not very big.

SCOTTY

Indeed, but how long would your little fish train be? What I'm getting at here is, I'm like this big,

Scotty demonstrates the size of his train.

SCOTTY (CONT'D)

And you are, well, show me how big you are James, with your hands, show me.

INT. COMMERCE PALACE-SKILLZ HAIR CUTLERY-DAY

James peruses the gentleman's hair styles in the Skillz three ring binder. He looks up as his name is called.

INT. COMMERCE PALACE-MALL THOROUGHFARE OUTSIDE SKILLZ

James exits the barber shop with a smart new cut. The opulent mall bustles with commerce. Modern and clean. Signs advertise a host of amenities attractions. The camera loses James as he walks into the crowd.

INT. COMMERCE PALACE-QUILLZ-DAY

The Quillz specialty shop offers upscale desk/business accessories. James is deliberating between pens. He is approached by a Quillz salesman. The salesman, 50, is a conservatively well dressed black man.

SALESMAN

Can I help you?

JAMES

I need to talk to someone about a pen, but like a really good pen.

SALESMAN

Perhaps you would be interested in our hemisphere line...there's gold trim, white and black gold, platinum of course, is this a gift?

JAMES

No its for me. Let me get a feel for that platinum, that platinum hemisphere.

SALESMAN

Uh huh.

The salesman retrieves the pen from inside the display case and hands it to James. The salesman provides a slip of paper for doodling. James hefts the pen for weight and begins to scribble "good ideas" on the paper.

JAMES

How much is this one.

SALESMAN

The hemisphere platinum retails at eleven hundred dollars.

JAMES

Uh huh.

James hands the pen back to the salesman.

JAMES (CONT'D)

You got something like, cheaper?

SALESMAN

Well, how much are you looking to spend?

JAMES

Well do you have anything that  
looks like that but costs less than  
eleven hundred?

SALESMAN

I think I know what you're looking  
for.

INT. RAV 4-DAY

James holds a blue plastic box and gold lettering which reads "Prestige Pens". He opens the box to reveal the pen and operating manual. The lettering on the pen is marked "The Baronial" and the manual is titled "The Baron of Class". James thoughtfully inspects the pen and envisions acts of greatness accomplished with its company.

EXT. ENCINO OAKS RETIREMENT COMMUNITY-DUSK

A sign marked: Encino Oaks Retirement Community--"Let go of your spirit!" stands before a manicured landscape leading to the building.

SCOTTY V.O.

We're going to see Agnes Schaeffer.

INT. ENCINO OAKS RETIREMENT COMMUNITY MAIN LOBBY-DUSK

James and Scotty stand before the main desk. Scotty carries a cooler containing the day's catch. Katy, mid 20's, is an attractive administrative worker at the facility, and assists the gentlemen.

KATY

I know who you two are here to see.  
Sign the book and I'll give you two  
a pass.

Scotty signs the log while Katy fills out two passes. James turns and takes in his surroundings. She hands the two visitor stickers to the boys and they affix them to their chest.

SCOTTY

Mrs. Katy, when are you gonna let  
me take you back "free hat night"  
up at the Spicy Pete's?

KATY

Ah ah Mr. Schaeffer last time I  
visited Spicy Pete's with you, I  
didn't make it back to my bedroom.

Scotty and James turn and proceed down the hallway to Agnes's

SCOTTY

Alright, well, you didn't lose my  
number did you?

KATY

I didn't lose it I just don't need  
anymore free hats.

INT. ENCINO OAKS RETIREMENT COMMUNITY HALLWAY-DUSK

James and Scotty continue walking toward Agnes's room. The  
door to the room across the hallway is open. Game show banter  
is heard from television sets within residents rooms. A  
conversation is heard in the hallway from the adjacent room.

ELDERLY WOMAN O.S.

And do you know who this is? This  
is your granddaughter, Vanessa. Do  
you remember, Vanessa?

James peers inside the room. An elderly gentleman lies on a  
bed with an empty, emotionless stare. His elderly wife sits  
with him on the edge of the bed. A mother and daughter stand  
next to the bed. The two have arrived at Agnes's room, Scotty  
knocks on the door, James is turned and transfixed on the  
actions in the room across the hall.

INT. ENCINO OAKS RETIREMENT COMMUNITY MRS. SCHAEFFER'S ROOM

Mrs. Schaeffer answers the door, and greets the boys.

MRS. SCHAEFFER

Hello boys, come in.

SCOTTY

Hey grandma.

MRS. SCHAEFFER

Go put the fish in yonder by the  
hotplate.

Scotty enters and hugs Mrs. Schaeffer and proceeds to the  
kitchen with the cooler. James is still distracted with the  
room across the hall. Scotty drops the cooler off and heads  
back toward Mrs. Schaefer.



MRS. SCHAEFFER (CONT'D)  
James, honey, you going to come  
inside.

James turns and enters the room, revealing his injuries to Mrs. Schaeffer. Mrs. Schaeffer folds her arms and looks at him disapprovingly.

MRS. SCHAEFFER (CONT'D)  
Now, you're gonna tell me what  
happened to your face before you  
come in this room.

JAMES  
Oh this? Yeah, your grandbaby hit  
me.

Scotty returns to Mrs. Schaeffer's side to receive a forceful slap to the mouth.

SCOTTY  
He hit me first.

MRS. SCHAEFFER  
You probably deserved it.

Mrs. Schaeffer turns and heads toward the kitchen.

MRS. SCHAEFFER (CONT'D)  
Now lets go see what we got in  
here.

INT. ENCINO OAKS RETIREMENT COMMUNITY MRS. SCHAEFFER'S ROOM  
LATER THAT NIGHT

The three sit around a very small table designed to accommodate two. The plates have already been served and slices of white bread coupled with county crook butter sits I the middle of the table. Everyone joins hands and bows their heads for prayer.

MRS. SCHAEFFER  
Heavenly father, thank you for  
providing this meal and bless this  
food to the nourishment of our  
bodies. Thank you for keeping my  
boys safe on their travels here and  
please watch after them on their  
way home.

(MORE)

MRS. SCHAEFFER (CONT'D)  
 Lord, please continue to watch over  
 Miss Winterbottom in 219 and Mr.  
 Robert on the third floor and  
 comfort their families and Lord,  
 just please, just make holy  
 business wash over all those  
 afflicted with illness and disease  
 and heartache and separations and  
 the loneliness. And God please  
 watch over these boys in their time  
 of transition. They need focus,  
 Lord,

Mrs. Schaeffer squeezes James's hand for emphasis. At this,  
 James peeps in Mrs. Schaeffer's and then Scotty's direction.

MRS. SCHAEFFER (CONT'D)  
 And guidance and clarity Lord. And  
 we sure do appreciate it Lord. And  
 we're gonna give you the praise,  
 the honor and the glory for it to  
 god the father, god the son, and  
 god the holy spirit. Amen.

SCOTTY  
 Amen.

JAMES  
 Amen.

James appears affected by Mrs. Schaeffer's prayer.

INT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL-DAY 59

Various shots of the mall which appears even more empty than  
 before.

A. A STORE CALLED "THE RAMBLER: CUSTOM JEAN JACKETS" IS  
 CLOSED. BEHIND THE CHAINED GRATE A SIGN STILL HANGS THAT  
 READS, "WE'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE!"

B. THE CAROUSEL IS NOW OPERATIONAL AND IS SPINNING AND  
 UNOCCUPIED. WILLIS SITS ASLEEP IN A FOLDING CHAIR BESIDE THE  
 MACHINE.

C. UNOCCUPIED EASTER BUNNY DISPLAY. THE EMPTY BUNNY THRONE IS  
 SURROUNDED BY A CHEAP PLASTIC FAUX GARDEN ARCH. LARGE BUNNY  
 EGGS IN SOFT PASTEL COLORS FLANK THE DISPLAY.

INT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL SGT. SGT. DEWAR'S OFFICE-DAY

James and Scotty sit across from Sgt. Dewar at his desk.

SGT. DEWAR

Ya'll ain't gonna like this one bit. But it don't matter cause if you want these final two weeks of paychecks, you going do it.

JAMES

Sounds good to me.

SCOTTY

You not gonna try to take my piece back are you?

SGT. DEWAR

Shut up. Now listen. You know there's gonna be cut-backs. Fifteen days till we close and management's not gonna be sending extra help to pick up the slack around a holiday. Now look, you're not the only ones that are gonna have double duty. Shit I got Willis out there putting kids on a carousel, I can barely trust him with a mop.

There is quite an uneasy pause.

SGT. DEWAR (CONT'D)

Now listen, Henrietta and Hudson gotta to do it everybody's gotta do it.

JAMES

You gotta do it?

SGT. DEWAR

I ain't gonna do it. Alright, one of you is gonna take this bunny costume in this here box next to the desk, and head down to the display and hold them goddamned kids on they lap while they listen to them kids tell them what they want the bunny to bring them for the happy holiday.

The boys stare at Sgt. Dewar in disbelief and shift their focus to the box.

SCOTTY  
No.

SGT. DEWAR  
Do it.

INT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL BREAKROOM-DAY

James and Scotty stand over the box.

SCOTTY  
Well good luck with all that.

JAMES  
Hell no, we gonna switch off. Take turns.

SCOTTY  
Well you're first.

JAMES  
You're not getting out of this, you're gonna wear it too.

SCOTTY  
Well we'll see.

JAMES  
Ah ah. You will take your turn.

SCOTTY  
Alright. Lets go ahead and see how she looks on you.

JAMES  
You gonna have to give me a little time alone for this.

INT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL CORRIDOR-DAY 62

Scotty stands in the hallway waiting for James to appear and model his handsome new attire. The door opens and James appears, dressed to the neck in the costume. He carries the bunny head.

JAMES  
I need some help.

James walks over to Scotty and hands him the head.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
It snaps in the back.

Scotty takes the head and James turns, so that the head can be properly attached. Scotty snaps on the dome.

INT. MALL-DAY

Scotty and James enter the main corridor. The two pause momentarily and a deflated James accepts his fate and proceeds toward the Easter display.

INT. JAMES AND SCOTTY'S DUPLEX-EVENING 64

Scotty enters apartment and slaps the mail on the coffee table, and crosses to attend business with the go cup. Ali and James enter, Ali goes and turns on the television. James continues to the bathroom. Ali sits on couch and begins to sort through the mail. She pauses and inspects a piece from Poly-tech, James exits the bathroom and finds Ali in the process of opening the envelope.

JAMES

What's that?

ALI

Some official business from Poly-tech Junior College.

JAMES

That was quick.

ALI

Quick for what?

JAMES

I told you there was gonna be some changes, Allison. I can't just sit around anymore.

ALI

Huh?

JAMES

Open it.

Ali opens the envelope and reads the letter aloud.

ALI

Dear Mr. Williams, we received your application and course selection requests, and Poly-tech certainly respects and encourages your academic pursuits in the field of architecture.

(MORE)

ALI (CONT'D)

Unfortunately the check submitted for the application processing fee was not honored by your financial institution. Regretfully the application deadline for the summer term has passed. We appreciate your interest and encourage you to reapply for our fall term. Sincerely Edna Jackson, Admissions associate.

The room is silent.

After a moment Ali rises and crosses to turn the television off. She stands and stares at James. Scotty opens a high life.

SCOTTY

That's tough bro. Shit.

Scotty walks to pick up the letter and return to the kitchen table.

ALI

You're unbelievable.

JAMES

Must be like a bank error or something. I know I had that money in there. I thought I had in there.

ALI

You thought you had it in there?

JAMES

You know how the bank is. Hidden surcharges and fees... Bullshit really.

ALI

You're a mess.

JAMES

How am I a mess?

ALI

Forget it.

JAMES

No no no no. You tell me why I'm a mess. You can't just say that.

ALI

It embarrasses me. You are an embarrassment.

James is stunned, silent now.

JAMES

Ok.

ALI

James, open your fucking eyes, your almost thirty, the fucking mall security job you whine about is gone in two weeks. You've done shit about a job after that. You try to go to school but you bounced your damn fee check. How were you gonna pay for classes, work study through campus security. Even if you did get in, how were you gonna get there? Me and Scotty taking shifts hauling around your clueless ass?

SCOTTY

Nah, now I can't take you everyday, bro.

Scotty's errant comment helps to depressurize the room. Ali calms down, James is beaten, he stares at his feet.

JAMES

Uh, I fucked up. I'm sorry. I don't know what else say.

Ali recognizes her tirade has laid waste to James. She understands she has his undivided attention.

ALI

James, wherever your head is, or wherever you work shit out, its just not real life...

Ali tails off and shakes her head.

ALI (CONT'D)

I'm sorry baby but I need you to wake up. And be better.

Ali stares at James for a moment then returns to the couch and cuts on the television. The sound of cartoons fills the room. James stands with a ten yard stare.

INT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL IN FRONT OF THE FOOD COURT ENTRANCE-MORNING

A small collection of employees have gathered to receive instruction regarding the final clearance promotion. James, Scotty, Huan Xu, Willis, Allison, Sgt. Dewar, Henrietta and Hudson (dressed for a rodeo), and the rest of the mall employees are present.

Harvey Katzenjammer, 35, is sharply dressed, neatly groomed, and OBVIOUSLY managerial. He proceeds quickly to the front of the assembly to address the group.

HARVEY

Good morning everyone, good to see all of these smiling faces here so early. For those of you that don't know me, my name is Harvey, but please let's just call me Harvey. I'm here today as a representative of J. Lawrence properties. Thanks for coming out this morning, I'm gonna make this quick. I know everyone is busy and has to get to work and I got a lot on my plate this morning too. Want to start with discussing couple of the promotions we're gonna implement to make sure your merchandise gets off the shelves in these final days at the mall. For starters we have placed some pretty big ads in the Herald and the Sentinel. Those will start to circulate on Thursday and run through the weekend. Tomorrow we gonna put up some more signage around the mall to grab the motorist's eye. But the biggest promotion is gonna happen this Saturday. Folks, we are gonna put on a little fair, and have some amusements out there in the parking lot. Our C.E.O has been gracious enough to lend us his hot air balloon to take guests on a hundred foot ride into the clouds. That's all gonna happen Saturday.

At this Willis steps forward.

WILLIS

And who's gonna clean up after all that mess?



HARVEY

Well, that task would remain responsibility of the County Gardens grounds maintenance employees.

HENRIETTA

And who's gonna run the Ferris wheel.

HARVEY

Uh, well now this ain't no Maggie Valley fun time park come to County Gardens we're talking about a couple booths and maybe a pony.

HENRIETTA

Well, who's gonna run them booths.

HARVEY

Once again, I, Sgt. Sgt. Dewar will designate...

Sgt. Dewar stands and addresses the crowd.

SGT. DEWAR

Yeah, we're gonna work all that out in the next couple days, he was just here to let all y'all know what to expect in the next couple days. You have anything else you want to add Harvey?

HARVEY

Just proud to part of this team, and say how pleased I am all y'all decided to stick this out with us to the end. Thank you for your time and I'm gonna see all y'all on Saturday.

WILLIS

Goddamnit!

EXT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL, FOOD COURT ENTRANCE-DAY

James and Scotty stand at the drop off lane in front of the mall. They are assisting the group of disabled adults out of their bus, who have arrived for their field trip to the mall. James is in his uniform, Scotty is dressed to the neck in the bunny costume, but still has his piece holstered at his side.

Scotty is disgusted with the visitors, and is of little use to James who is coordinating with the caretaker to help escort the group inside.

JAMES

It doesn't matter what they ask for, your answer is always "yes". Don't get clever and start telling them why they can't have it, messing with people's minds. Let them believe what they want to believe. Good morning Brian.

Brian, 29, mentally disabled person, acknowledges James as he exits the bus.

BRIAN

Good morning Mr. James.

JAMES

You should really have the head on, your sending mixed messages all half dressed.

SCOTTY

Shut up James. I can step around this bus and they'll think I left earth.

JAMES

Look, if you're not gonna help just go inside and sit and wait.

SCOTTY

I need your help to put this bunny head on anyway.

Scotty turns and heads inside. James continues assisting the group.

INT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL CORRIDOR NEXT TO CAROUSEL-DAY 67  
James and Willis sit in plastic folding chairs next to the operating controls of the spinning carousel which is occupied by a few of the special visitors.

JAMES

So when did you know that Guelinne was the woman you were destined to spend your life with?

WILLIS

Soon as I put that baby in her.

JAMES

Yeah but how did you know before all that, that she was the one?

WILLIS

The one? Shit. Wasn't no "one" about it. She came at me, and told me I put the baby in her, and I was the daddy and I better take care of this baby or she'll see my ass back in court, and with my prior offenses, that shit can't happen, so, came time for me to be a man and raise on them kids. So there you go. I got kids, older than you James.

JAMES

So love didn't have much to do with it...?

WILLIS

Of course love had something to do with it. You not hear all that talk about the baby? Shit.

JAMES

No its just that, some things will come around...like with Ali...not exactly what I have foreseen...but its like, maybe things are a lot more important than I thought and I might be pretty mixed otherwise...

WILLIS

Listen, you better do like I did and do what she says.

JAMES

...you know I dropped the ball with all that school stuff, but you know its like lesson learned, okay, I know better, and next semester's right around the corner and I can apply for fall, I mean its a little more expensive but, I just gotta buckle down and do it. Just hard work it. You know, set some goals, and stuff like that. Use my study guide, and apply some of techniques and start using my pen, better.

From across the mall Scotty appears, walking quickly toward the carousel. He approaches James and Willis.

SCOTTY

Take this head off me James, I'm going on break.

JAMES

No way. Not here. They're gonna see you. You'll kill the illusion.

SCOTTY

I'm not playing, James, get it off me. These people are bugging me out.

WILLIS

What the hell's your problem.

James begins to take the bunny costume off of Scotty.

JAMES

Scotty's scared of the challenged.

SCOTTY

I ain't scared of shit. Its my break time.

JAMES

Man relax Scotty. Can't you see they're just like you and me.

At this point the head of the costume is off, and Scotty turns to address the two.

SCOTTY

They ain't like me brother. They ain't like me.

INT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL, LEARNING LIMITED STORE-NIGHT

A tight shot of Krueger's cake beneath a plastic cover, decorated with plastic mice reading books, books and pencils, reads "Thanks for a great seven years". A small group has gathered in front of Learning Limited at the behest of Kathy Finklestien. The mall is closed and tonight *this* store will shutter for the last time. She has prepared lemon squares and Grammy Finklestien's froggy doodles for the group. Kathy begins cutting the cake and placing pieces on small Styrofoam plates.

Once is everyone is served, she addresses the group. Scotty, Allison, James are present with other employees.

KATHY

Does everybody have a piece. Sorry about the forks.

ALI

Yeah, I think so.

KATHY

Well, I just got these treats together for y'all cause y'all been like my family these last seven years, and its always been my dream to own a bookstore and sell books. We're kindly at loss as to our next move, I mean we all kinda knew when the Lawrence company went and put up that Commerce Palace one exit away, I mean everybody wants to go to that Chapman Commons, that maybe our days was sort of numbered and I know they don't even know what they're going to do with this property Just seems that they crunched the numbers and it's better this place sits empty than for it to be operating. And maybe we should've been thinking about today back...but you know my hindsight is about twenty twenty. You know Dale, with his back and all can't, we was thinking about maybe hobby shop, you know Dale loves them little trains. But we just worked out that today is day that grate's gonna shut for the last time and we just want y'all to know that we love you and hope it all works out for you, and you get on through this mess, and thank y'all.

EXT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL-DAY

Daytime mall establishing shot. Willis is staking a cheap paper sign, which details the upcoming fair, into the ground near the road.

INT.COUNTY GARDENS MALL, MUGS ON MUGS & MORE KIOSK-DAY

Scotty is leaning against the kiosk counter. He is talking to Ali.

SCOTTY

That has got to be the most ridiculous thing I have ever done. You won't believe what some of these kids ask for, this one little boy ask for an eighteen wheeler. I said eighteen wheeler?! Come on, you got your class C? He says no, and I said forget it you ain't getting no eighteen wheeler!

ALI

No you didn't.

SCOTTY

How stupid is it for parents to send their kids to sit on some stranger's lap in a costume?

ALI

Its harmless.

SCOTTY

I don't think you gonna get me back in that suit. That's crazy.

ALI

You just gonna leave it to James?

INT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL, EASTER BUNNY DISPLAY-DAY

James sits in the easter bunny costume at his throne. There is no one else around.

INT.COUNTY GARDENS MALL, MUGS ON MUGS & MORE KIOSK-DAY

Scotty and Ali continue their conversation.

SCOTTY

Probably. I know I'm not gonna have to put up with this shit at Andersen's.

ALI

You know for sure if you're going there or not?

SCOTTY

Yeah, they called me the other day and told me they were gonna put me on but I still got like a week of orientation and training, but whatever, its all paid, you know its cool, it all worked out.

ALI

That's good. Good for you. You think you could get James on over there?

SCOTTY

I don't know. Maybe we could see in a couple weeks but I don't know if James would want that. You got him this job. He hates it. I was hoping he'd go ahead and sort something out for himself.

ALI

Yeah, I guess sometimes he isn't worth all that trouble.

SCOTTY

Now I ain't saying all that.

ALI

Well, I guess I am.

EXT. COUNTY GARDENS PARKING LOT-DAY

The promotional festival is in full swing. The activities take up a postage stamp portion of the massive parking lot. The fair area is designated by lines of red, white and blue triangle flags, tied to stanchions, flapping in the wind.

James Williams, clad in his bunny costume, sits on his throne on the display which has been relocated to a corner of the fairgrounds. The hot-air balloon is present, as promised and a tractor idles with a trailer of hay in tow. A table stands nearby, displaying store bought desserts, intended to resemble a bake-sale. There is little more than Entenmman's doughnuts on the table. A face painting booth is unmanned. A small p.a. system flanks another table sparsely covered with audio equipment. D.J. Double-Stuff rocks the fair.

Scott Schaeffer, sits alone, on the platform of a dunking booth.

Except for a group of three older ladies and two mothers with children in line for the easter bunny, no one has come to the fair.

Henrietta stands guard at the entrance.

A Mazda Miata approaches the backside of the dunking booth. Stacy drives, and Tammy (both sixteenish), shouts from the passenger's seat, attempting to get Scotty's attention. Tammy's tongue is purple, due to the slurpee she is sipping on.

TAMMY

Hey!

Scotty pretends not hear the youth. Tammy proceeds to light a white filtered cigarette.

TAMMY (CONT'D)

Hey, dunking booth man.

SCOTTY

You talking to me, sweetheart?

TAMMY

What are y'all doing?

SCOTTY

Its a fair!

TAMMY

What kind of fair is this?

SCOTTY

Promotional fair. It's like...  
promotions...

At this point a SUV, filled with young ladies of the same age as Tammy, approaches the Miata from behind, and lays on the horn. One of the girls, yells from the SUV to Tammy.

GIRL IN SUV

Man, what in the hell are y'all  
doing?

TAMMY

I'm just talking to the man in the  
booth.

GIRL IN SUV

Well come on!



TAMMY

Stacy is my tongue purple from this slushee.

Tammy exposes her tongue to Stacy.

STACY

Yeah, give me a drag of that cigarette.

Tammy holds the cigarette and Stacy takes a drag.

TAMMY

Man, I don't think you could pay me enough to sit up there and look stupid in a dunking booth.

SCOTTY

Well they're paying me double-time to sit up in this booth, so there you go.

TAMMY

Y'all's fair don't look like much of a fair.

SCOTTY

Y'all going to need to run on.

SUV lays on the horn again.

TAMMY

Alright y'all hold on one second.

GIRL IN SUV

Come on y'all. Let's go.

TAMMY

Alright look here, Mr. Dunking booth man, its nice to meet you, and you have fun with your fair.

The two automobile, catch wheels and scream away from mall.

EXT. PARKING LOT BUNNY BOOTH-DAY

James, dressed as the bunny, is attempting to restrain a severely distraught child long enough for the picture. Once it is taken, James releases the child and it bounds off for his parents. Little Teddy, approaches the Bunny with his mother. Little Teddy, 6, is the portrait of the make-a-wish foundation child.

He is bald, from the chemo, and wears a ball cap which reads "slugger" to mask the effects. He steps in and James places him on his lap.

JAMES

Hey, well hello there little champion, what's your name?

TEDDY

Theodore. But the doctors call me Teddy Bear.

JAMES

Oh yeah. What can I bring you for Easter?

TEDDY

Well first of all I want thank you for the shoes you gave me last year.

JAMES

Did you like them.

TEDDY

I love them. Don't you recognize them.

JAMES

Of course I do.

TEDDY

Well this year I want something different.

JAMES

Well I'll see what I can do, what would you like?

TEDDY

Well I'm supposed to ask for throwing stars and they would be really nice, but I really want something else.

JAMES

What'll it be teddy?

TEDDY

I'm not supposed to ask this but, I wondered if you could give me a donor, with healthy marrow, so I wouldn't be sick anymore and I could go home and sleep at my house, and play with Little Joe, my dog.

James is blown away.

TEDDY (CONT'D)

Can you tell me you'll do it Mr. Bunny, I don't want to be sick anymore I want to get good.

JAMES

Uh, I'll see what I can do.

TEDDY

But am I gonna be helped?

At this Teddy's mother attempts to draw his attention toward the camera for the picture.

TEDDDY'S MOM

Look this way Teddy, look at the camera.

TEDDY

Please Mr. Bunny, say you'll do it. I don't want anything else.

TEDDDY'S MOM

Over here Teddy, come on try to work up a smile.

JAMES

Let's get this old picture taken, Teddy.

TEDDY

I love you.

At this Teddy puts his arms around James's neck and hugs him. Teddy's mom intervenes and begins to pry the sick child from the bunny's neck. Behind the action we see the hot-air balloon begin its ascent with pilot and two passengers.

TEDDDY'S MOM

Come on Teddy Mr. Bunny's very busy. Come on honey.

(to James)

Sorry about this. Come on.

JAMES

That's okay. Happy Easter.

Teddy's mom pry's the child away and exits.

EXT. FAIRGROUNDS INSIDE HOT AIR BALLOON BASKET UP IN THE AIR

Sgt. Dewar, his wife and the balloon operator stand in silence and overlook the dismal scene below. D.J. Doublestuff is rendered impotent at this elevation.

MRS. DEWAR

Wow, you can see for miles up here.

She looks to her husband for recognition, he is quiet for a moment then releases a sigh and inaudibly mutters to himself.

SGT. DEWAR

Oh, goddamn.

OPERATOR

That's three minutes Mr. Sgt.  
Dewar, but there ain't anybody down  
there in line, you want to head  
back down?

SGT. DEWAR

Not yet.

Hold on Sgt. Dewar's gaze.

INT. RAV 4, SOMEWHERE IN THE GARDENS PARKING LOT-NIGHT

James and Scotty have completed tasks for the day and are exiting the mall parking lot.

JAMES

I don't want tacos. I had tacos  
with Ali for lunch yesterday.

SCOTTY

Well then lets just get a pizza, we  
can roll past Momma Leone's on the  
way home. How much beer we got  
left? We still got six right?

JAMES

Nah, I drank all them last night.

SCOTTY

What?

Scotty shifts his gaze in James direction, and simultaneously rear ends an idling Honda Civic.

SCOTTY (CONT'D)

Shit.

Scotty steps out of the Rav to assess the damage. The Civic sits motionless momentarily and speeds off.

SCOTTY (CONT'D)

Well how about that?

Scotty gets out of the car, shuts the door. And steps in front to look at the bumper. Scotty looks to James in the car.

SCOTTY (CONT'D)

There's a little bit of paint, but its not bad.

Scotty then turns, and looks toward the direction the Civic drove.

INT.JAMES AND SCOTTY'S DUPLEX JAMES'S ROOM-NIGHT

James is on the phone with Ali.

JAMES

Hello Allison.

ALI

Hey.

JAMES

How's it going?

ALI

Its fine. What's up?

JAMES

I was just sitting around balancing my checkbook.

ALI

That's hysterical.

JAMES

Wait. Wait. Hold on. I'm just kidding. Come on. Seriously I thought a lot about what you said and you are right about everything.

Ali's unresponsive, James is uncomfortable

Ali is silent.

JAMES (CONT'D)

...I get caught up in the moment  
and I get so focused on one thing  
that it really drains other areas  
in my life that don't seem  
important at the time, but are  
important, and I'm really about to  
turn over a new leaf and I really  
want things to be alright between  
us. So let me take you to dinner...

Ali is silent.

ALI

Okay.

JAMES

Tomorrow?

ALI

Okay.

JAMES

Eight o'clock. And wear something  
tight. On your ass.

ALI

Yeah, okay.

JAMES

Buh-bye.

ALI

Bye.

James hangs up.

INT. COUNTY GARDENS, JEWEL OF THE MALL- DAY

James is deliberating with MRS. COHEN, 62, over a collection  
of bracelets, necklaces and rings. She is a thin, bright  
woman, clad in stylish but mature clothing. Her store shows  
no signs of the impending mall closure.

JAMES

So what's like? What's you know,  
nothing like too fancy, but like,  
what do you get...or what would you  
get for somebody just to let them  
know that they are special?

MRS. COHEN  
You've met Mr. Right, have you?

JAMES  
Huh? I just need like a piece of jewelry, that will make someone feel special.

MRS. COHEN  
Well how special are we talking?

JAMES  
Special like I'm an idiot and I screwed up but I still want you around to put up with me.

MRS. COHEN  
Alright look at these.

Mrs. Cohen directs James to a display case.

JAMES  
Damn. Those are nice.

MRS. COHEN  
Yes they are.

JAMES  
And these are available at any of your stores around town.

MRS. COHEN  
Yep. They're not closing.

JAMES  
How much is that one?

MRS. COHEN  
Three ninety nine.

JAMES  
Uh huh. But if I get that, or if I get approved for that store credit card it'll work at any of the locations. And they'll have this necklace at the other ones?

MRS. COHEN  
Yes.

JAMES  
Let me get one of those applications.

Mrs. Cohen gives James the application.

MRS. COHEN

You filling it out now? You want a pen.

JAMES

(proud)

No thank you Mrs. Cohen. That I have covered.

James produces the Baronial box from his pocket, and pulls out the pen.

JAMES (CONT'D)

And if I fill this out could I get that necklace today?

MRS. COHEN

No. Your application has to get approved by the system. They'll let you know in about seven to eight weeks.

JAMES

What? So I can't get anything?

MRS. COHEN

Not unless you got the cash for it honey.

INT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL CORRIDOR NEXT TO CAROUSEL-DAY

Close up of quarter being placed in slot of novelty dispenser. Close up of hand turning crank.

INT. OLIVE GARDEN-NIGHT

James and Allison are having dinner at the garden. The food sucks and the service is terrible. Ali's wine glass has been empty far too long. James is sharply dressed. Ali is still in her work attire. Ali is attempting to find the waitress. The entrees appear half eaten. Both continue to pick at their plates.

ALI

Where did that waitress go?

JAMES

Really feel like I've been talking a lot over here, do you want to say anything?



ALI

Why do you wanna keep talking about this? Yea, what you did pissed me off, and if you do it again it'll piss me off again. But, look, you've got to stop pressing the issue. There's nothing else to say about it.

JAMES

So I just want to make sure everything is cool between us.

ALI

Yes James, everything is fine.

James swishes his wine and sniffs it. He shoots Ali a coy look, and retrieves a vending machine bubble toy with a plastic necklace from his pocket. He places it on the table, covering it with his hand.

JAMES

(re: wine)Delicious. You know a really special girl such as yourself deserves a treat every once in a while.

He opens his hand and reveals the bubble, pops it open and begins removing a cheap plastic golden necklace with a plastic Uzi charm.

ALI

What is that.

James holds the necklace to display the Uzi emblem.

James stands and walks behind Ali. He places the necklace around her neck and fastens it. He leans down and kisses the top of her head. He slides his hand along her shoulder-line as he returns to his seat.

JAMES

A sign of things to come.

ALI

Just what I always wanted.

JAMES

May I? It looks beautiful on you.

Ali touches the Uzi.

ALI

Thank you.

JAMES

How was that chicken parm?

ALI

It was really terrible.

Voice over begins with shot of James attempting to process Ali's comments, and a shot of Ali looking for the waitress to refill her wine glass.

INT. ANDERSEN'S SECURITY HEADQUARTERS-NIGHT

Scotty and five other male students (19-50s) sit at individual desks in a classroom. The instructor stands next to a television tethered to the top of an A/V cart. There are fifteen empty desks. Fluorescent lights berate the barren walls.

INSTRUCTOR

Now lets be honest with our selves, gentlemen, this isn't a job for anyone seeking glory. Its not a daily hot pursuit. This ain't cops. This is Andersen's Security. You are reactionary force. And the purpose of this orientation is to teach you the tools and techniques that you will need to utilize when reaction is necessary. Alright, open up your manuals to page 27

At this point Scotty flips to page 27, and reads the chapter heading "pressure points". Insert of chapter heading accompanied with a poorly drawn human outline with asterisks around neck, underarms, penis and ankle.

The instructor allows a moment for the students to find the relevant pages.

SCOTTY

(murmurs to himself)

Fucking awesome.

INSTRUCTOR

Now that's where we're headed. Come on flip back to page one, and let's get cracking.

## INT. JAMES AND SCOTTY'S DUPLEX-NIGHT

James arrives home alone. He walks into the apartment carrying a doggie bag from the Olive Garden cuts on the lights. He turns to look out the door and wave to Ali. She has already departed. He goes to the refrigerator, drops off the leftovers and cracks a miller.

## INT. JAMES AND SCOTTY'S DUPLEX-NIGHT-A LITTLE BIT LATER

James has slipped into his evening wear which includes the Septathalon title belt and is seated on the couch with his note pad and the baronial. He grabs the remote and starts "Where there's a will there's an A+"

Stanley Stevens voice is heard from the screen. James settles in ready to focus and take notes.

## INT. SEMINAR CLASSROOM-DAY

Stanley Stephens stands in the mock doctor's office he is clad in a white lab coat, he wears the vintage doctor's mirror on his forehead and holds a very long q-tip swab in his hand. Tabitha, lies on her back on the doctor's table. Her jeans are lowered to her ankles.

MR. STEVENS

Thank you Tabitha, you may return to your seat.

Tabitha sits up on the table and pulls her jeans back up to her waist, and returns to her seat. Mr. Stevens smiles.

Behind him, the chalkboard, has four items listed: 1 good ideas pen, 2 sweatband, 3, frisbee-TAKE A BREAK!, 4 safety razor, number five is listed but has left blank.

MR. STEVENS (CONT'D)

So folks that's four items now in your first "A" kit. And it seems as if its almost complete, except for one item. Young people, I got a surprise for you...

The class reacts to Mr. Steven's proposition, warmly. Mr. Stevens walk over to the chalkboard.

MR. STEVENS (CONT'D)

Class there is no five.

Mr. Stevens erases the number five from the chalkboard and smiles at his revelation.

MR. STEVENS (CONT'D)  
Surprised? As we close this session, I want to drive home my final point. Sometimes you may have what it takes before you know you have what it takes. As you travel down this golden avenue we call education...learning, you may find that you possess the knowledge and skills to attack the situation before you think you can. Careful not to pass it up young people, should you hit that covered bridge of anxiety, you have gone too far. Time to back up, perhaps a number three is in order, go toss the frisbee.

The students giggle and smile at one another.

MR. STEVENS (CONT'D)  
Always remember you had what it takes, but now you have the tools, right there in that kit, to turn will into an A Plus

INT. JAMES AND SCOTTY'S DUPLEX-NIGHT

James sits on the couch, listening to Mr. Stevens wrap it up, the peppy synth kicks in and the credits roll. James's note pad is completely blank, save a nicely written "good ideas".

INT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL BREAKROOM-DAY

James and Scotty have arrived for work. Scotty holds the Easter bunny costume head, deliberating over for the day.

SCOTTY  
Nope. I'm not doing this today.

JAMES  
Its your turn.

SCOTTY  
I don't give a shit, bro, I'm not wearing it.

JAMES  
Grow up. Its part of your job. Its your turn in the barrel.

SCOTTY

It ain't part of my job. It may be part of your job. What I was learning last night...this is some Busch League bullshit to put up with.

JAMES

What the hell are we gonna tell Sgt. Dewar?

SCOTTY

Tell Scotty and James decided if the mall needs a bunny, its gonna be James in the costume.

JAMES

Why are you doing this?

SCOTTY

I'm doing it because I take my job assignment seriously and a bunny costume ain't got nothing to do with it.

JAMES

Scott, it's your job.

SCOTTY

No, its your job.

JAMES

Fine. Just give to me.

SCOTTY

I'm sorry bro, but I just can't wear it. I can't.

James shakes his head and grabs the box with the suit and begins to suit up for a pleasing afternoon of bunny work.

EXT. JAMES AND SCOTTY'S DUPLEX-EVENING

Scotty sits at the kitchen table writing on several sheets of typing paper while sipping on High Life. He is wearing his work pants and belt with gun attached. James is sitting on the couch watching TV. Its a local "Live at 5" type of show during a cooking segment. The on screen personality is offering instruction regarding casserole preparation.

JAMES

We got any bacon, or flour.

SCOTTY  
I doubt it.

JAMES  
Sure would be cool if you did, then  
we could have ourselves a  
casserole.

The two sit in silently for a few moments. There is a knock  
at the door.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
It's open!

SCOTTY  
Bring your ass!

Ali enters and tosses her keys and purse on the coffee table.

ALI  
Scotty. James.

JAMES  
Allison.

SCOTTY  
Hey.

Ali walks to the fridge to retrieve a High Life. She pulls  
the final bottle from the box.

ALI  
James you're out of beer.

The sound of the final beer opening is heard. Ali shuts the  
fridge and walks behind the couch.

After a beat of casserole instruction from the local anchor,  
Ali takes a slug of her brew.

ALI (CONT'D)  
Will you go get some more.

James hangs his head playfully in exhaustion from the day and  
Ali's request. He contemplates his options but eventually  
gives in.

JAMES  
Okay.

James gets up and grabs his keys.

ALI

And will you pick up some cheese-  
its too?

JAMES

I'll be back.

James walks to the door and leaves.

Ali crosses and sits on the couch to take in the on screen cooking. After a beat of casserole instruction, she casts a curious glance behind her and catches Scotty working diligently at the kitchen table.

She weighs her options.

Ali stands and walks back into the kitchen and stands behind Scotty.

ALI

What are you working on?

SCOTTY

Badges.

ALI

What's this one here.

SCOTTY

That's my favorite. Just like a regular badge shape, but instead of a symbol or anything like that just says justice across the front. I mean you could put like your number at the top if you had to.

Proud of his work, Scotty leans back in his chair, finishes his beer, and stands up collecting four other empty bottles.

Ali scans over the pictures while Scotty discards the empty bottle and leans against the counter. Ali moves over to lean on the counter beside Scotty.

ALI

Do you draw other stuff?

SCOTTY

No not really. There was nothing on  
TV

The two stand comfortably close to one another.

ALI

You could've learned to make a  
casserole if you were watching TV

SCOTTY

I already know how to make that  
casserole.

Ali slowly reaches for Scotty's gun, glancing back in forth between the gun and Scotty's face. Scotty does not stop her. From her position to his side, her hand is backwards, she begins to move in front of Scotty. Her hand now rests on the safety snap of his holster.

They are now face to face.

SCOTTY (CONT'D)

Take it. Take it out.

While looking at Scotty, Ali unsnaps his holster. Ali pulls out Scotty's gun. She slowly turns around so that Scotty and Ali are facing the same direction.

Ali brings the gun up to firing position. Scotty caresses and stabilizes her outstretched arms.

SCOTTY (CONT'D)

Pull the trigger. It's ok.

EXT SCOTTY & JAMES' DUPLEX

We see the exterior of the duplex at night. It is dark and quiet.

Then

POP!

We hear the gunshot go off and see a shimmer of light from the muzzle blast through the window.

INT. KRUEGER'S GROCERY STORE-NIGHT

James pushes his grocery cart down the booze isle of a brightly lit pristine grocery store.

EXT. JAMES AND SCOTTY'S DUPLEX-EVENING

RAV 4 pulls into driveway. James gets out of car carrying groceries.



He walks over to neighbor's porch and pulls a flower from their planter. He walks back across his yard and enters.

INT. JAMES AND SCOTTY'S DUPLEX-EVENING

Ali is seated watching TV while Scotty continues working on his badge drawings. James walks over into kitchen and puts groceries on the table and grabs two beers from the sack. He walks back to the couch leans over it and presents Ali with the flower he plucked from the yard.

Ali takes the flower.

James walks around the couch, sits and opens a beer and hands it to Ali. He opens his beer and settles in his seat.

After a moment Ali leans and rests her head on James's shoulder.

James looks above the television to notice a bullet hole in the wall.

He sits up and intently stares at it.

He then looks down and recognizes Scotty's belt and gun holster on the coffee table.

JAMES

What the hell happened there?

James turns to look at Scotty. Scotty sits drawing at the table. His belt is missing.

INT. RAV 4-DAY

Scotty is driving Willis and James to get their checks cashed. James is in the backseat, very solemn.

WILLIS

Goddamn things already spent, I  
can't cash the muthafucka fast  
enough, garnishes n shit. Sheyut.  
Need a hit. Come on now lord, if  
luck be a lady let lady luck be  
tonight. Sheyut I got my numbers  
right, I'm on need them shits to  
hit son. Call Guilenne have her  
pick my Warbucks ass up, and y'all  
can get smart with the floor  
polisher, run out that goddamn  
carousel. First thing I'd do...

INT. RAV 4-DAY

James and Scotty have dropped Willis back by the mall and are now driving down the highway, on their way to an afternoon at Golf-n-stuff.

The two are uncomfortably silent. Hold on Scotty and James until

EXT. GOLF N STUFF PARKING LOT-DAY

Slam.

The door of the RAV4 slams.

We see James exit the RAV4 quickly and proceeds with no apparent regard for Scotty. Scotty casually exits the RAV4.

There are no other cars in the parking lot and the park appears dead.

EXT. GOLF N STUFF PARK GO-CART TRACK-DAY

LOW ANGLE SHOT SIDE MOUNTED ON JAMES'S GO-CART SCOTTY IS TEN FEET AHEAD.

OVERHEAD SHOT FINISH LINE SCOTTY CROSSES FIRST, CONTINUES OUT OF FRAME. JAMES SLOWLY PETERS IN AND STOPS ON FINISH LINE, UNBUCKLES HIS HARNESS AND LEAVES.

EXT. GOLF N STUFF PARK BATTING CAGES-DAY

Scotty is connecting with whatever he pleases. James observes blankly.

INT. GOLF N STUFF-LOBBY NEXT TO POP A SHOT-DAY

Scotty is beating James severely at the pop-a-shot. Scotty is in the zone sinking every shot.

James's frustration becomes more apparent as he begins to throw the basketballs with ridiculous force. He begins to recognize Scotty's superior skills, and almost on beat James turns and attempts to block Scotty's shot. James barely makes contact with the basketball and slaps Scotty's forearms.

Scotty reacts immediately and shoves James, with much force, to the floor.

James rolls over and immediately heads for the door. Scotty turns and looks to Scooter who shrugs off the event. Scotty pulls another quarter from his pocket and begins another round of pop-a-shot.

EXT. GOLF N STUFF ENTRANCE-DAY

James exits in a fit of rage. He kicks over the trash can and flips a bench in front of the doors. Still blind with fury, he proceeds to attack the RAV4. A few poorly placed kicks land in the passenger side door. He opens the door and grabs his gun belt. James turns and begins walking back toward the entrance of Golf-n-stuff. Halfway to the door he draws the pistol and drops the belt in the parking lot. He reenters Golf-n-stuff.

INT. GOLF N STUFF-LOBBY-DAY

James enters and passes Scooter at the concession stand. He is changing the syrup in the fountain drink dispenser and does not see that James is carrying a gun. Scotty is focused on his game and does not feel James approaching.

James walks the length of the game room, while chambering a round.

James opens fire.

He shoots four times, aiming at the basketballs which rest in the game's ball retrieval compartment.

Scotty jumps backwards, noticeably frightened, and shields his face with his arms.

The shooting stops.

Scotty picks himself up off the floor and cast James an exasperated look. The sound of a wounded basketball deflating is heard, coupled with the bells and whistles of the game.

Both men are out of breath.

Scotty looks past James to Scooter, who is staring motionless at the counter.

Scotty returns focus to James, who still has his gun leveled at the machine.

Scotty slowly approaches James.

(SCOTTY)

James. I think you should give me  
your gun.

JAMES

Yeah. I'm all done with it for today.

Scotty stares at the gun and slowly places his hand over the barrel and directs James's aim toward the floor. James slowly allows the gun to be taken from him.

Scotty now holds the gun.

Scotty takes the clip out of the gun and releases the round in the chamber

At losing his pistol, James is noticeably weakened and Scotty throws his arm over his shoulder to support him. James hangs his head and the two slowly proceed out of the video arcade. Scotty looks to address Scooter.

SCOTTY

Hey Scooter, is there any reason to tell anybody about what just happened?

SCOOTER

Nah. I don't reckon so.

Scooter retrieves Scotty's gun belt from the coat check cubbies and places it on the counter.

As Scotty and James approach the counter, Scotty reaches out and takes his gun belt and the two exit Golf-n-stuff.

EXT. GOLF N STUFF ENTRANCE-DAY

Scotty and James proceed toward the RAV4. A Dodge Caravan is parked between the rav and the entrance. Mom is unloading five seven year olds. Its a birthday party.

Scotty and James make it to the RAV4 and get inside.

INT. RAV 4-DAY

Scotty takes a deep breath and rests his head on the steering wheel. James is beginning to compose himself and exhibits an air of clarity.

SCOTTY

Dude, you are about to make things real serious.

JAMES

You know what fucks me up?

James waits Scotty to recognize the question. The silence makes Scotty lift his head.

SCOTTY

What?

JAMES

I can bang my head against it, I don't want to believe it, and I'm not gonna accept it, but that's doesn't matter, because the truth of the matter is nothing's gonna change. Everything's always gonna be the same.

INT. ARMY RECRUITMENT OFFICE-DAY

James, wearing a tattered T-shirt and jeans, sits in a generic office chair looking at an Army brochure. The office, situated in a strip mall, is decorated with Army related posters and paraphernalia. Behind James a large window looks out into the strip mall parking lot. It is a bright day. The pedestrian traffic is light. The RECRUITER, a clean shaven large man in his 40s sits across a desk from James.

RECRUITER

In the Active Duty Army you are required to leave your hometown environment to serve in the Army in a full time position. You have full time employment with a place to live, and benefits you can use throughout your military enlistment. In the Army Reserve you return to your hometown after initial training and train one weekend a month plus two weeks per year, and serve when needed. Both options offer a variety of job choices and incentives. Mr. Williams which path are you leaning toward.

JAMES

Active duty.

RECRUITER

Alright.

At this point the recruiter flips a page from and jots something down on the paper.

RECUITER (CONT'D)

Enlisted Soldiers make the Army a powerful, adaptable force that can respond to any threat. They work together with Officers to achieve mission success even in the harshest of conditions. While Officers give orders, Enlisted Soldiers show initiative in order to get the job done. Responsibilities of Enlisted Soldiers depend on their specific Army job – called a Military Occupational Specialty (MOS). Enlisted Soldiers live the Seven Core Army Values every day – on the job and off: Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity and Personal Courage.

JAMES

Is the paperwork here? Can I sign up now?

RECUITER

Are you sure you want to commit to this decision now?

JAMES

Yeah I've already thought about it.

RECUITER

Alright. There's a couple things you can sign to take care of right now, we also will work out a date to take your ASVAB.

JAMES

What's the ASVAB?

RECUITER

The Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) is a multiple-choice test that helps you better understand your strengths and is one of the things that helps identify which Army jobs (Military Occupational Specialties) are best for you.

JAMES

Alright.

There's is a pause for a moment.

RECUITER

Alright. Give me one second.

Recruiter reaches down and opens a desk drawer and removes a packet. He clips it to his clipboard, leans over the desk and presents the contract to James. James takes the clipboard and places on the desk. He then begins to fish in his pockets.

RECUITER (CONT'D) You looking for a pen?

JAMES

Nah, its just.

James continues fishing in his pockets.

RECUITER

There's a pen clipped right there  
to the board.

James finds the baronial and unleashes its power.

JAMES

I got it right here.

James signs documents. He hands the clipboard back over to the recruiter. The recruiter has to sign as witness. James is left in silence for a moment.

EXT. COUNTY GARDENS PARKING LOT-MORNING

C.U. of James's face while he drives the RAV 4. He has his the steering wheel pulled completely to the left.

VERY W.S. of the RAV 4 doing donuts in the mall parking lot.

INT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL BREAKROOM-DAY

James and Scotty are preparing for the day. Scotty straightens his hat and shines his badge. James, all business, dresses like a bunny, to the neck. Scotty exits, James continues dressing.

INT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL CORRIDOR-DAY

James ambles down the hall, holding his bunny head.

INT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL MUGS ON MUGS AND MORE KIOSK-DAY

James approaches the kiosk where Ali stands, bored and customer-less.

ALI

Hey.

JAMES

Hey Ali.

Ali studies James's solemn demeanor.

ALI

What? Is something going on?

JAMES

I'm in a bit of a melancholy mood  
Ms. Hills.

ALI

And why is that?

JAMES

I've been hit with a bit of clear  
thinking and what has become clear  
is not appealing.

Ali is put off by James's cryptic conversation starter.

ALI

James, what are you talking about?  
Why are you being strange?

JAMES

I sat down and made a list the  
other day. And I tried to determine  
who was my favorite person in the  
whole wide world. And you are my  
favorite person in the world. Ali I  
am gonna tell you...I love you. I  
do.

ALI

What made you come over here and  
tell me this right now? What is  
going on?

JAMES

Its been on my mind lately, and I  
wanted you to know...I saw you this  
morning and I just had to tell you.

ALI

OK, that's sweet. Uhm. I love you  
too.

JAMES

Great.



James nods and puts his bunny hat on then turns his back to Ali.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
Can you snap me in?

Ali snaps the hat, and James begins his procession toward his throne.

INT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL BREAKROOM-DAY

James sits on the bench with his leg crossed. His shift is done and he is taking off his rabbit footie. James stops undressing and crosses to Sgt. Dewar's office. He stops at the partially opened door and peers in at Sgt. Dewar.

INT. SGT. DEWAR'S OFFICE

Sgt. Dewar is counting out pills and putting them in his daily dispenser. He notices a large bunny standing at his door.

SGT. DEWAR  
Can I help you with something,  
James?

JAMES  
Hey Sgt. Sgt. Dewar. Yeah...can I  
ask you...can I come in and sit  
down for a minute.

SGT. DEWAR  
Uh...yeah...come on in.

James enters Sgt. Dewar's office, and sits in the chair next to his desk. He fidgets until comfortable in his seat and eventually rests his head on his hand.

There is a moment of silence.

JAMES  
Will you help me take this head  
off.

SGT. DEWAR  
Yeah.

James stands and comes around to Sgt. Dewar. He takes off the head and James returns to his seat.

SGT. DEWAR (CONT'D)  
What's on your mind James?

JAMES

Uh, what are you doing after all this?

SGT. DEWAR

Lawrence properties is going to give me some token bullshit H.R. position over at the corporate building. I'm gonna sit behind a desk just like this one.

JAMES

Really? I figured you'd be all set like Willis living the good retired life in the RV and all that.

SGT. DEWAR

Willis? He ain't retiring from shit. Clown ain't got no money.

JAMES

Nah, he's all the time talking about the RV and heading up to the casino. Doublin it.

SGT. DEWAR

Casino. Yeah. That cat gambles away every cent he's got. Not two weeks goes by without him showing up in here begging for more money. He must be into me for about five hundred. What did you come in here for, James?

James is a little taken aback by the Willis revelation. He collects himself and continues.

JAMES

Yeah...I'm thinking I'm gonna probably do something like...you were in the military? Right?

SGT. DEWAR

Yeah.

James takes a moment to figure out what he wants to ask.

JAMES

Well its just, after careful review of my options,

James pauses.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Well there's not a whole lot going on for me, after everything shuts down here, what do think like, joining up with a branch of the military, like as an option for me.

Sgt. Dewar never breaks his poker stare at James, but pauses to weigh his answer.

SGT. DEWAR

Would you prefer my answer or the military answer.

JAMES

Let's try the military answer, sir.

SGT. DEWAR

Well that one goes like this, first off, the military is very practical machine, it's not a kind place for young men, especially for those waiting for an epiphany that will never come. The first thing you'd learn there, is to live with who you are.

James is dumbfounded. Sgt. Dewar observes the impact of his answer.

SGT. DEWAR (CONT'D)

Now, do you want my answer.

James is excited by the prospect of a second opinion.

JAMES

Yes, sir.

SGT. DEWAR

It's the same.

The sound of a locker slamming is heard from the break room, somebody is knocking about, James and Sgt. Dewar sit, locked in silence. Scotty appears with a knock at the door.

SCOTTY

Hey when you get done, I'm out in the car.

JAMES

Alright.

Scotty walks off, James looks back at Sgt. Dewar.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
Thank you. James rises.

SGT. DEWAR  
Yeah, no problem.

James exits Sgt. Dewar's office.

INT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL CORRIDOR-DAY

James is clad in his civies. He walks down the hallway to head home.

INT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL CORRIDOR NEXT TO CAROUSEL-DAY

W.S. FROM CAROUSEL AREA OVER WILLIS REVEALS COUNTY GARDENS  
MAIN CORRIDOR MUGS ON MUGS AND MORE KIOSK IS CLEARLY VISIBLE

Willis sits, slouched in a chair next to the spinning,  
unoccupied carousel. James appears from the corridor and  
begins walking toward Ali's kiosk. The two interact, but  
their dialogue is inaudible. They finish the conversation and  
James approaches Willis, his demeanor is obviously sullen.  
His head is down. Willis takes note of his mood.

WILLIS  
Uh oh, they he go, chin up son,  
ain't but one days to go.

James looks in Willis direction, but continues walking toward  
the door without response.

WILLIS (CONT'D)  
Come on now, James one more day, you  
and me son, step up to the hot  
nickels, gonna double it all, son!

At this point James is past Willis and near the door. Willis  
statement causes James to pause. He turns around and  
approaches Willis.

JAMES  
You're so full of shit. You don't  
have any money.

Willis, agitated, studies his feet.

WILLIS  
(mumbling)  
One more day. One more day. We all  
gonna be free...

James turns and leaves the building

WILLIS (CONT'D)  
(mumbling)  
We all gonna get out of this mess.

Willis walks back to his chair and buries his head in his hands.

INT. ALI'S CELICA-DUSK

Ali turns into Burger King parking lot. She pulls into a space near the RAV4. Camera follows her as she gets out of the car.

EXT. BURGER KING PARKING LOT-DUSK

Ali walks toward Burger King entrance, and enters. Scotty and James are visible through the glass.

INT. BURGER KING-DUSK

Ali enters and proceeds through the lobby directly toward Scotty and James. Scotty and James are seated in a booth. James has nearly finished his meal. He swabs his final fry, eats it, and falls back into the booth to enjoy his frosty after dinner sundae. Scotty has barely touched his food. Scotty doesn't appear to want to make eye contact with James. Conversely, James appears comfortable.

Ali approaches the booth.

JAMES  
Good evening, miss hills.

ALI  
Hi.

SCOTTY  
Hey.

JAMES  
Oh Jesus, my manners, please have a seat.

James stands and assists Ali into the booth so she would sit next to the window.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
What would you like?

ALI

No. I'm not hungry. Besides you guys are already done.

JAMES

That's ridiculous. You've got to eat something. We'll wait.

ALI

Get me a diet coke.

JAMES

Very good.

James leaves the two. As soon as James is out of earshot Scotty leans in to address Ali.

SCOTTY

He pulled a gun on me yesterday. At the Golf-n-stuff.

ALI

What?

SCOTTY

Not really me, but he shot up some basketballs at the pop a shot machine I was working on.

Ali stops and studies Scotty for a second, then cuts a glance at James, getting the diet coke.

ALI

You're serious?

SCOTTY

Yes.

The two are silent, Ali stares at her belt buckle, Scotty looks toward James and returns his gaze to Ali.

SCOTTY (CONT'D)

I think we've twisted him up into something that can't be undone.

James returns with the soda.

JAMES

One diet coke.

ALI

Thank you.

James returns to work on his sundae. The three are quiet and uncomfortable.

JAMES

So before you arrived Ali, Scotty and I were discussing some of training he's been going through at Andersen's. They're gonna take his gun away.

SCOTTY

Yeah its real corporate over there. They got like a whole thick booklet of behavior codes, and there instances where you ain't even supposed to get involved with apprehension. Like shoplifting and stuff like that.

Allison is avoiding eye contact with everyone.

JAMES

What sort of uniforms do they got you in over there?

SCOTTY

Its not really as official as the Garden's look.

James nods attentively.

JAMES

Mmh.

James savors a bite of his dessert.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Say Ali, when they got you starting over at the other Mugs on Mugs and More?

Ali reacts to James's question as if she's been lifted from a fog.

ALI

Wednesday. I mean I start next Wednesday.

JAMES

So you looking forward to the change?

Ali pauses for a minute.

ALI  
You know what I got go. I've got go  
now.

JAMES  
What are you talking about? Where  
are you going?

ALI  
I don't feel well I need to go. I  
need to go.

Ali begins to move down the booth, Scotty shakes his head at  
her actions.

JAMES  
Okay.

James moves to allow Ali to exit the booth. We follow Ali out  
of the Burger King.

EXT. BURGER KING PARKING LOT-NIGHT

Ali continues toward her car. She has started crying. She  
continues to the Celica

INT. ALI'S CELICA-NIGHT

Ali now sits in her and sobs.

INT. BURGER KING-DINING ROOM-NIGHT

Scotty and James sit in the booth. James looks out the window  
toward Ali's motionless car. Scotty's half eaten burger and  
fries have been pushed away from him. James finishes his  
sundae.

INT. JAMES AND SCOTTY'S DUPLEX-DAY

C.U. OF SCOTTY PUTTING ON HIS BADGE.

C.U. OF SCOTTY BUCKLING GUN-BELT

C.U. OF SCOTTY SNIFFING THE MILK

C.U. OF COFFEE POURING INTO GO CUP



## INT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL BREAKROOM-DAY

James sits on bench staring at bunny costume box. He reaches and begins to open it. It pains him to think his final day of work will be spent behind a bunny mask.

Scotty watches from across the room, while fastening his gun belt. He is deliberating over today's chores.

SCOTTY

Let me wear that one for you today.  
The bunny outfit.

James looks at Scotty.

SCOTTY (CONT'D)

Man, you shouldn't have to wear  
that thing, its the last day.

JAMES

Nah, I'll do it.

SCOTTY

Look bro, I am sorry about all that  
shit. I don't want explain why I  
feel like me do it. I got to do it.  
Just let me do it.

JAMES

Okay.

## INT. COUNTY GARDENS-HALLWAY OUTSIDE OF SECURITY OFFICE

Scotty enters first and heads towards the Easter display. James enters ten steps behind, cinches up his belt, and proceeds after Scotty. We hold on the duo until they have exited into the main area of the mall.

## EXT. COUNTY GARDENS PARKING LOT-DAY

James assists Dr. Custer, who is searching for his car, believed to be stolen. Dr. Custer, is ancient.

DR. CUSTER

It was here. It was right here. I  
parked it right in...it was one of  
these spaces...

JAMES

Dr. Custer, remember the last this  
happened we found it over in the A  
lot. You sure its not over there?

DR. CUSTER

But I parked over here this morning.

JAMES

Sometimes your daughter will drop you off over here at the food court. You sure Stacy didn't drop you off on this side.

There is a pause.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Did someone drive you this morning?

DR. CUSTER

I parked over here.

JAMES

Tell you what lets do. Let's get in the RAV4 and we'll roll over to the other side and see if it was moved on accident.

James loses his train of thought as Ali's Celica pulls into the lot. James watches Ali park, get out of the car, and begin walking toward the mall. Dr. Custer has begun to mumble incoherently, and ambles in confusion toward the highway. Ali approaches and meets James.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Mrs. Hills. Good morning. 'Bout an hour late. Yeah?

ALI

What's it matter? It's the last day. No Easter bunny today?

JAMES

Actually Scotty volunteered to handle the bunny responsibilities.

ALI

Oh that was nice of him.

JAMES

Yeah.

Awkward silence.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Hey Ali I need you to tell me something.

ALI

What?

JAMES

Allison, I need you to tell me you  
didn't fuck Scotty...

James allows the request sink in.

JAMES (CONT'D)

I need to hear you say it.

Ali contemplates her options.

Behind James's head a Honda civic rolls up and parks in front  
of the entrance.

ALI

I didn't fuck Scotty.

JAMES

Okay.

James cuts his glance toward Dr. Custer.

Two gentlemen step out of the civic and make their way into  
the mall.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Don't walk to far, Dr. Custer.

He returns his attention to Ali.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Now I need you to admit to me you  
did.

Ali hangs her head.

ALI

I feel terrible. Really, James. I  
don't know what to do.

JAMES

Its okay. I forgive you. I honestly  
do.

James looks toward Dr. Custer who has wandered back closer to  
them. He begins to get Dr. Custer and put him in the RAV4.  
Once James starts for the doctor, Ali walks toward the mall.  
James helps Dr. Custer into the passenger's seat and shuts  
the door. As he walks around the RAV4, he notices the civic  
idling in the fire lane in front of the entrance.  
Something about the civic is familiar.

A. SECURITY CAMERA FOOTAGE HIGH ANGLE VERY WIDE SHOT OF MALL INTERIOR. NO MALL PATRONS ARE VISIBLE. ALI WALKS TOWARD HER KIOSK. THE BUNNY DISPLAY IS BARELY VISIBLE IN THE DISTANCE. SCOTTY SITS WITHOUT A PATRON.

B. SECURITY CAMERA FOOTAGE TIGHTER SHOT OF FOOD COURT AREA.

C. SECURITY CAMERA FOOTAGE MEDIUM SHOT OF EMPTY BREAK ROOM

D. SECURITY CAMERA FOOTAGE FROM MALL ENTRANCE TO MALL PARKING LOT. HONDA CIVIC IDLES IN FIRE LANE BY THE FRONT DOOR. RAV4 IS PARKED IN THE DESIGNATED SECURITY SPOT. JAMES STANDS AT REAR OF RAV 4, STARING AT IDLING CIVIC.

EXT. COUNTY GARDENS PARKING LOT-MORNING

James is still next to the RAV4, but now has full recognition of the situation at hand.

James goes to approach the driver of the civic.

JAMES  
Excuse me. Hey.

The driver of the civic is completely focused on the doors. He is unaware of James's presence.

James eventually steps to the passenger's side window of the civic and taps to get the driver's attention.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
Hey.

The driver turns and upon seeing the security guard, fumbles to throw the car in gear, and races away from the parking lot. James watches the car leave, waits a moment and gathers himself and then heads toward the door.

He draws his weapon and enters the building.

INT. COUNTY GARDENS MALL IN FRONT OF THE FOOD COURT ENTRANCE-MORNING

James enters the building cautiously, apparently nothing is awry. He grabs his walkie-talkie.

JAMES  
(into walkie-talkie))  
Hey Scotty.

James waits for a moment. There is no reply.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
Scotty? No reply.

James passes Willis, asleep at the operational carousel, he continues toward the fountain at the center of the mall. Ali sits at her kiosk, unaware of James's excited state.

James cautiously continues, carefully eyeing each of the remaining opened stores.

The food court is deserted.

He continues to the Jewelry Store, where he notices a man inside the shop eyeing the cases. The customer's left arm is awkwardly straight. Mrs. Cohen enters from the back and addresses the customer.

MRS. COHEN  
Can I help you find something.

Upon Mrs. Cohen's statement, the customer looks at his feet and shies away from the proprietor.

CUSTOMER  
Ah, no. No thanks. I'm just looking.

Upon noticing the suspicious customer, James steps to the side of a large mall directory, attempting to obscure himself. He understands what's happening and his breathing has become heavier.

He slowly brings both hands to his gun. He very quietly attempts to chamber a round. The round chambers with an audible click.

The mall directory sign explodes in front of him. Glass sprays in every direction. James recoils, and hits the ground, momentarily in shock, but quickly shakes it off. A second blast is heard and James jumps to his feet. James breaks in a hunkered run toward the Mugs on Mugs and More kiosk.

James looks into the Jewelry Store to identify the shooter. He is missing but Mrs. Cohen's body is still on the floor. Is she shot dead or just taking cover?

James makes it to Ali's kiosk. She is laying on the floor--in shock.

James grabs Ali by the collar. A shot shatters Mugs on Mugs and More's equipment. He drags her to the other side to offer some sort of cover.

Ali slumps, nearly catatonic, hair in face. James is now alert. He sits upright with his back to the Mugs on Mugs and More.

Faint muzak is heard coupled with distant rapid footsteps with some low moaning and wails. James gathers his verve and moves to peer over the counter of the Mugs on Mugs and More in order to locate one of the assailants. James looks and find a different gunman than the jewelry store perpetrator, shouldered behind a large planter. The gunman fires a few wild shots toward the main exit. The gunman, wild eyed and nervous, is now freaking out. After firing, the gunman stands, and makes an ill-conceived attempt at escape.

Two steps into his flight, the gunman's throat explodes, sending him gurgling to the floor. A second bullet pops his chest open.

Scotty, still clad in full bunny regale, runs full speed down hallway toward the source of the commotion.

The gunman from the jewelry store, steps from behind a column and opens fire on the bunny.

Scotty slides and takes cover behind the fountain.

As Scotty slides into the wall he discharges his empty clip. It falls and he immediately loads his second and chambers a round.

Scotty takes a moment to gather himself.

From where James has taken cover, he can see a 3/4 profile of the bunny.

The sound of the gunman loading more shotgun shells is heard. This makes Scotty feel he has an opportunity to strike.

Scotty opens fire as he stands.

James watches Scotty fire five shots until he is dropped by a shot.

The mall is quiet, save the muzak.

James peers over at Scotty, who lies motionless in a pool of blood.

After a beat a cough comes from the gunman's direction, followed by excruciating moans.

Ali is in shock.

James cautiously rises from behind the kiosk and sees the gunman, lying shot, but alive on the ground. His shotgun lies a few feet from his body.

GUNMAN  
(screaming)  
I can't feel anything...I can't  
feel anything.

James looks back toward Scotty's dead body and begins to walk toward the moaning gunman.

James paces back in forth processing the thought of his dead best friend and starts with purpose toward the gunman.

The gunman starts to scream at the sight of an armed James. He attempts to drag his wrecked body toward the shotgun.

James arrives before he can reach the gun. James impedes his attempt by stepping on his forearm.

HIGH WIDE SHOT REVEALS ENTIRE MALL JAMES AND GUNMAN IN CENTER OF FRAME

Mall muzak echoes throughout the otherwise empty corridor.

James empties his clip into the defenseless gunman. The shots ring out until the clink of empty clip is heard. On the "CLINK" of the empty chamber...

CUT TO BLACK