

This movie is set in 1994 AD

Robert Johnson's "Malted Milk" begins to play.

EXT LARGE PROSAIC SUBURBAN HOUSE-DAY

It's a pristine fall day in an affluent neighborhood. The sun is bright. The trees show the fruit of spring. A shiny white BMW is parked on the street dead center in front of the house.

All is calm.

A WOODEN CHAIR BURSTS THROUGH THE CENTER UPSTAIRS WINDOW AND CRASHES TO THE GROUND!

CUT TO:

BLACK SCREEN-music continues

Stark white text on a pitch black screen hard cuts through the requisite credit front title cards.

FINAL CARD: METROPOLIS, IL - hold as we start to hear sex sounds fade in over "Malted Milk's" strums...

CUT TO:

INT. SUBURBAN BEDROOM-MIDDAY.

ECU--Flesh on flesh. Indistinguishable. Sounds/music continue.

CUT TO:

ECU--Kissing. Camera pans down, breasts...

ECU--Man's hand on woman's leg. He begins to lift up skirt.

WIDE--As our couple continues to passionately embrace on the bed in a large bedroom, NOAH, dressed in a plain suit holding a briefcase that is dead weight in his left hand watches the entangled couple from the foot of his own fucking bed with a blank expression. The couple continues.

The man begins to lay the woman back. She opens her eyes and sees NOAH.

NOAH'S WIFE

Damn it!

She begins to flail as she tries to cover herself with the blanket on the bed.

In the suddenness and commotion Noah's wife knocks her lover off the far side of the bed CRASH then STILL leaving her sitting up in the bed facing off with Noah, ridged. Nobody moves. There is a stark upright wooden chair just behind Noah. Noah reaches back with his free hand and grabs the top of the chair.

The lover sits up, unhurt, on the far side of the bed. NOAH'S WIFE Looks at her lover. NOAH looks out the window.

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All is calm.

A WOODEN CHAIR BURSTS THROUGH THE CENTER UPSTAIRS WINDOW AND CRASHES TO THE GROUND (same shot as opener but now we hold...)

The house and neighborhood are quiet once again.

We hear footsteps...

Noah stomps out of the front door and heads for the beemer.

He gets in and drives away...

CUT TO:

I/E RED TOYOTA 1989 PICKUP TRUCK

Noah, disheveled, in his suit but without his tie, rides on the passenger side of a red pick-up. We realize "Malted Milk" is from this truck ride, playing on bad old truck speakers. Noah has a bottle of dark brown whiskey in his hand. His eyes twitch as he tries to track the trees rapidly passing by.

CHUCK (40 male) is at the wheel. We presume Noah has been picked up as a hitch hiker. Chuck is wearing a trucker hat that say's "#1 DAD".

CHUCK
Do you like this stuff?

NOAH
Where did I land?

CHUCK
God's country. Do you like this
music, guy?

NOAH
Sure.

CHUCK
Niiiiice. Are you thirsty or hungry
or something?

NOAH
No, I'm fine.

CHUCK
Anything?

NOAH
No, I'm fine.

NOAH smiles at Chuck, then looks back outside at the passing
trees. He smiles. He vomits all over the side of the truck.
As he does he starts to laugh. Chuck begins to laugh.

CHUCK
Hungry now?

NOAH
(Laughing) I could eat some bar b
que.

DRIVER
OK That's more like it. You're
buying.

NOAH
Sure.

"Malted Milk" comes to a close, fading out as the truck
rambles away...

FADE IN:

EXT. THE PIG'S END-EVE

Slow wide push into: NOAH and the DRIVER as they eat
sandwiches and drink beers at the outside tables of The Pig's
End. A five foot plaster pig statue holding an empty pitcher
of beer in one hand and an empty tray in the other stands
next to the front door (simply a screen door).

Smoke billows out of a chimney jutting the side of the establishment. The restaurant is sparsely populated.

NOAH

That's the best and the worst of it: No one's looking for me.

CHUCK

Must be nice?

NOAH

I think it is. What's your name?

DRIVER

Chuck.

NOAH

Chuck.

The continue to eat.

CHUCK

You liking that?

NOAH

I am.

CHUCK

More to drink.

(to waitress)

Miss, please, if you could, lets have us another round.

NOAH

So where did I land, Chuck?

CHUCK

You sir have traveled to the fair town of Metropolis, Illinois. Home of The Pig's End Bar B Que eatery, The Fantastic Pinball Machine Plant. The Magic Factory, that's my very own theater group, now playing at the main stage at Metropolis Community School For Further Education. Barbara's Fine Biscuits Fixin's and etc., And... If you venture to city hall you will find a 40 foot plaster statue of Superman, keeping watch over all of us. Making the streets safe and our town a bullshit tourist attraction.

NOAH

A giant statue of superman in front
of city hall?

CHUCK

Giant. Superman. Statue. I've seen
you vomit but i don't know your
name...

NOAH

I was there on the side of the road
bumming rides because I sold my
car. I sold my car because it
belonged to my wife and I and I
left my wife 5 days ago. And I
left my wife because she hurt my
feelings.

CHUCK

Happens don't it?

NOAH

Yes it does. I'm not depressed,
schizophrenic or even sad.
Humanity sucks Chuck. There's no
way around it. And at the end of
the day you know how that makes me
feel.

CHUCK

Your going to have to tell me.

NOAH

Pissed. Not sad or mopey. Just a
little pissed.

CHUCK

So you've come to a new town to
start life anew.

NOAH

No. I am pulling up roots. I plan
on one night here. Then I will
continue to follow my boyhood dream
and wonder the Midwest. I am going
to buy a car here I though. Under
the watchful eye of the man of
steel.

CHUCK

Fuck yeah. Do you just have
several thousand dollars on you
right now, that you hitch hike
around the country with?

NOAH
I'm fine there Chuck.

CHUCK
(Big Smile)
Well... You could by something
fancy, with a sun roof perhaps?

NOAH
Perhaps.

CHUCK
How much are we talking about?

NOAH
Chuck, you will never see me again
after today. Just tell people you
picked up a hitch hiker who had won
the lottery.

CHUCK
Ok.

NOAH
Do you know a place where I could
stay the night?

CHUCK
What are you in the mood for?

NOAH
Anything that would be considered
"run of the mill".

CHUCK
Well, then I suggest, on the basis
of pure luxury, The Palace Inn on
Rosewood. They got Showtime, an
empty jacuzzi, and, if you get the
itch, a host of channels catering
to lonely men on vague missions.

NOAH
Thank you. Have a few more on me.

He drops a 50 on the table.

NOAH (CONT'D)
Point me in the direction of the
Palace Inn please.

CHUCK, beer in hand, points the way.

NOAH (CONT'D)
Thank you sir.

CHUCK
Is this good bye?

NOAH
Yes it is. It has been a pleasure.

CHUCK
That it has. Perhaps I will see
you again in the future?

NOAH
We've already talked about that.

Noah walks away.

CHUCK
(yelling as Noah walks
away)
What's your name?

NOAH
(yelling back)
I haven't thought of a new one yet.

The waitress comes over to the table where Chuck sits. And
starts to clear the table.

WAITRESS
You good here?

CHUCK
One more please.

CUT TO:

INT. LIQUOR STORE-NIGHT

NOAH purchases many bottled pints of bottom shelf whiskey,
and a toothbrush. Pays the cashier. Leaves.

CUT TO:

INT. PALACE INN FRONT DESK-NIGHT

Noah approaches the front desk. Through an open door to a
back room he sees the flicker of a TV screen on the walls.
The room is a mess. Something like ALF or Full House is
overheard. Noah rings the bell. The TV immediately shuts
off.

Noah hears the creak of a chair as someone slowly rises. The CLERK approaches the desk. He barely 5'5", bald, thick glasses. He is sharply dressed, with a "Hi, My Name Is: Neil" name tag sticker stuck to his breast pocket. He approaches Noah with a smile.

NEIL

Hi...

(Overlapping)

NOAH

Hi, how are you?

CLERK

How many nights?

The two stare at each other for a moment.

NEIL

I'm fine. How many nights?

NOAH

Probably just one.

NEIL

Probably just one or one?

NOAH

Just one.

The Clerk pulls a key off a board behind him

NEIL

I'll need to see an ID and a credit card.

NOAH

Yeah, I don't have either.

The CLERK turns and puts the key back.

NEIL

Sorry sir, yo got to have an ID and a credit card.

NOAH

Right. How much is a room here.

NEIL

That, really doesn't matter sir. I can't...

NOAH

If you could?

NEIL
(pointing to a rate card
on the counter)
This plus whatever special channels
you order.

NOAH
I'll give you triple... that.

They stare at each other.

NEIL
Just one night?

NOAH
One night.

NEIL
OK

He turns and grabs the key again. Noah puts cash on the table.

NEIL (CONT'D)
Number 12. The last one in the
row. There's ice and pop in the
vending machines down the hall to
my right. There's some magazines
and a pinball machine down that way
as well. No noise, no animals, no
alcohol...

NOAH
What?

NEIL
No alcohol pal.

NOAH
OK

NEIL
And no special friends.

NOAH
Right.

NEIL
If you need any thing Dial 0.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM-NIGHT

Noah settles into his hotel room.

He walks into the bathroom. It is moderately clean. He flips the light on, then off, then on. He checks out the shower.

He sits on the bed and turns the lamp on and off several times.

He turns the TV on. Mystery Science Theater 3000's take on MANOS: THE HANDS OF FATE! is on. He turns the TV off. He turns the TV on again.

Noah opens his brief case. It is full of full and half full pints And a dirty short glass with an etching of a rodeo around it. He pulls out the glass and three various bottles. He pours a hefty drink. He sits back on the bed and begins to watch Sesame St.

He downs his drink.

He gets up, grabs a bottle and walks out the door, leaving everything in the room on.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE PIG'S END-NIGHT

NOAH sits at a table throwing rocks into the plaster pig's empty beer mug. The bottle of whiskey sits finished on the table beside him.

Head lights shine on the pig as Noah is about to pitch a pebble. A car pulls into to lot above The Pigs End, CAR DOORS OPEN & Robert Johnson's "Last Fair Deal Gone Down" screeches through the car's factory speakers. Two men step out. They have not seen Noah. The car idles and the music plays.

Noah squats below the table, still keeping an eye on the two men.

The two guys at the top of the hill sit on the hood of the car. Moonlight catches the badge of the driver. Noah sees that it is a police car.

SHERIFF
(barely audible due to the
music)
Watch this.

OTHER GUY

What?

SHERIFF

WATCH THIS.

The sheriff whips his pistol from his holster and fires it off. A cluster of condiments explode off a table in front of Noah. The Sheriff starts to laugh.

Noah is splattered with BBQ sauce and Mustard. He thinks he might have been shot. He begins to shake. He quickly stands and begins to walk toward the car with his hands up.

NOAH

Don't shoot.

The two men on the car continue to laugh. They do not notice Noah. The sheriff fires another round.

Noah dives behind the pig.

They notice.

SHERIFF

What the hell was that?

OTHER GUY

It was somebody.

SHERIFF

I think so.

The Sheriff gets off the hood and returns to his car. The music stops. He digs around and then emerges with a large shotgun.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

(Mockingly)

Hello.

The gentleman on the hood begins to laugh.

Noah is calming down and begins to smell the sauce he is covered in. He takes a taste.

The Sheriff takes aim and blasts the whiskey bottle off the table. The other guy continues to laugh.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

(playing to his audience)

Hands up. And step slowly towards me.

OTHER GUY
Pop one off on that pig.

SHERIFF
I ain't shooting the pig.
(to Noah)
Come on out.

Noah puts his hands up and slowly stands.

NOAH
Uh... I'm not armed.

SHERIFF
I would fucking hope not.

The Sheriff relaxes his aim on the shotgun. He approaches Noah.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)
Looking for some Bar B Que?

NOAH
No.

SHERIFF
What the hell are you doing here.
Its late.
(to guy on hood)
What time is it?

OTHER GUY
LATE.

SHERIFF
It's late.

NOAH
I know. I was just hanging out.

SHERIFF
Who are you?

NOAH
I'm just in town for the night.
I'm staying at The Palace Inn.
There wasn't much going...

SHERIFF
They got some fine television
available at The Palace Inn.

NOAH
Yeah, I suppose they...

SHERIFF

How about you start back there.
You're a pain in my ass if you lurk
about town. I start getting phone
calls and, well, I'd rather not
have to deal with you again.

NOAH

OK

SHERIFF

Very well.

Noah begins to walk away.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Sorry about the bottle.

NOAH

It was empty anyway. My clothes
though... They were clean. And my
face, my face was clean.

SHERIFF

Well.

NOAH

Yeah.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET BY THE PIGS END-NIGHT

Noah walks back in the direction of the inn. As he gets some distance away he hears a fierce shotgun blast followed by faint laughter. He takes a few more steps and sees a porch light through the trees on the side of the road. He walks along the road, keeping an eye on the house. As he nears. He sees an old man sitting on the front porch smoking a pipe. The old man is staring at Noah as he passes. Noah stares back. The old man gives Noah a casual thumbs up.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM-NIGHT

Noah enters the hotel room. An infomercial blares on the TV. He turns the TV off.

Then back on. He flips through the channels until he finds an adult channel.

A screen comes up asking if he would like to purchase the movie. He presses yes. A porn music intro begins.

He turns the lights off in the bedroom. He walks into the bathroom. The movie starts into some bad porno dialogue

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL BATHROOM-NIGHT

Noah takes his clothes off. He begins to vigorously scrub the BBQ stains out of his shirt and pants.

PORNO GIRL (O.S.)

Hey.

PORNO GUY (O.S.)

Hey. You come here often?

PORNO GIRL (O.S.)

No.

NOAH

(mouthing it)

No.

PORNO GIRL (O.S.)

Yeah, it's really cool here. I like the decorations. Is there always this many girls in this place?

PORNO GUY (O.S.)

Yeah. That's why I like it here.

PORNO GIRL (O.S.)

I see.

Noah gives up on getting the stains out of his shirt. He stands and hangs them over the shower curtain rod. He switches from the bath spigot to the shower. He sticks his face in the water and washes off.

PORNO GUY (O.S.)

Can I buy you a drink?

PORNO GIRL (O.S.)

Of course. I was hoping...
Well...I think you can do more than that for me.

PORNO GUY (O.S.)

Oh yeah?

PORNO GIRL (O.S.)
Yeah. Do you know of a more
private place we could go to?

Noah towels off his head.

PORNO GUY (O.S.)
I think I know a place.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM-NIGHT

The "film" begins into some grotesque kissing sounds. Noah walks in from the bathroom. He takes a quick look and shuts the set off. He goes and sits on the bed in the dark.

After a moment he rolls over and goes to sleep.

EXT. HOTEL ROOM-DAY

Establish The Palace Inn in the daytime.

INT. HOTEL ROOM-DAY

Noah is awoken by the telephone ringing. He answers it slowly.

NOAH
Hello.

NEIL (ON PHONE)
Sir.

NOAH
Yeah.

NEIL (ON PHONE)
Yeah, uh, good morning. You are
about 20 minutes past checkout.
Are you going to check out or are
you going to stay... Uh because

INT. PALACE INN FRONT DESK-DAY

Neil is the back office watching Full House (or ALF).

NEIL

Because sir you only said one night
and if you are going to stay 2
nights I wish that...

INT. HOTEL ROOM-DAY

NEIL (ON PHONE)

...you would have brought that up
when you...

NOAH

Don't worry about it Neil. I'll be
out in five minutes.

INT. PALACE INN FRONT DESK-DAY

Neil is quiet for a few beats.

NOAH(ON PHONE)

Neil?

NEIL

OK. I'll see you in a few.

Neil hangs up.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM-DAY

Noah hangs up. He goes into the bathroom and pulls his
clothes off the curtain rod.

Now dressed he puts a half empty whiskey pint in his
briefcase. Closes it. And walks out of the door.

CUT TO:

INT. PALACE INN FRONT DESK-DAY

Noah approaches the front desk. A dot matrix printer is
screeching away as it prints. Noah immediately rings the
bell. Noah hears Neil quickly rise from his mysterious place
in the back room. Neil approaches the desk. Both gentlemen
are wearing the same clothes they had on when they met. The
printer stops. Noah's is covered in BBQ sauce stains. He
tears the printed document from the printer. And takes a
look. Neil sizes Noah up.

NEIL
I see you ordered a film last night.

NOAH
Yes, that's true.

NEIL
That will be 12.50.

NOAH
OK

Noah digs out the money. The change is problematic.

NEIL
OK. Thank you. That's it. Have a great day.

NOAH
Thanks. Uh, Neil. Do you know of any used car lots around. Anything?

NEIL
There are several.

NOAH
Any that you recommend

NEIL
Jack's is the closest. It's like, a half mile west. Down Smothers Rd. Just make a right when you see Smothers.

NOAH
Thank you.

CUT TO:

EXT. JACK'S CAR LOT-DAY

Noah is the with Jack, who escorting him around a modest lot.

JACK
Well, what exactly are you in the market for. We'll start there. Some folks got something real specific in mind when they come in. Anything you seen on television or in the paper you interested in. We got a fair amount in stock here.

NOAH
You got anything with a sun roof?

JACK
I'll do you one better.

CUT TO:

EXT. JACK'S CAR LOT-NEAR NOAH'S CAR-DAY

Jack shows off an old convertible.

JACK
Well, now take a look at this right here. Ain't too much to it. Runs good. I drove it around for a week before I put it on the lot. It's the bicentennial edition which will give you a little more horsepower and some extra legroom.

NOAH
I'll take it.

JACK
Well there yo go. That works for you then.

NOAH
That works for me.

JACK
Good. Good. If you'll just step back into my office we can take care of a few items.

NOAH
I'll give you < censor beep > cash

JACK
(stumped, happy)
that'll do.

Noah pulls the \$\$\$\$ from his pocket.

NOAH
Keys?

JACK
Exhaust pipe. I'll take care of the paperwork.

NOAH
Thank you sir.

JACK
Thank you.

Noah gets in and drives the car off the lot.

CUT TO:

INT. WAFFLE HOUSE-DAY

Noah stops by the Waffle House for a sandwich before he leaves town. As he approaches the counter he keeps glancing back at his new car like a proud papa. He sits and is quickly greeted by an old lady wearing a Waffle House uniform skirt. An outfit she should not be wearing. She pulls a note pad out from a pocket in her apron.

OLD LADY
What can I get for you?

NOAH
I'll take a grilled cheese and, uh,
make that a grilled cheese with
bacon and a side of fries and a
coffee.

CHUCK
(from outta nowhere)
I knew I'd see you again!

Chuck approaches Noah from a booth and sits next to him. He brings with him a cup of coffee.

NOAH
Chuck. How are you.

CHUCK
I am very well.
(to old lady)
Hera, honey put my bill on this
guy's tab.

HERA
(to Noah)
Is that all you want?

Noah hesitates

CHUCK
Is that all you'll need, guy?

NOAH

Yes.

Hera tears off the page she has been writing on and puts her notebook back into her apron pocket. She walks away.

CHUCK

And another cup for me please.

(to Noah)

So how ya been? I saw the new ride. I thought you were skipping town?

NOAH

Yeah, well I am. I just stopped by here to eat.

CHUCK

You picked a fine spot. I'm glad I got to see you again because I was thinking--you should really stay in town a couple of days and see the sights. I mean, stay for my show, your life quest can wait a couple of days right?

NOAH

Your show?

CHUCK

Yes, Noah. My show. The Magic Factory theater group. I am putting together a little performance piece that I think the folks will enjoy. I can't really divulge all of the details yet (honestly that's because I don't know them all myself) but I think it will a hell of a show.

NOAH

Starring yourself?

CHUCK

Vanity is not my vice, friend. I am still looking for that special someone. In fact I'm going out of town on auditions tonight. Now you certainly cannot go with me, but I would like to offer you two front row comp tickets for the show on Friday.

NOAH
Thanks man, but...

Hera brings Noah his coffee.

NOAH (CONT'D)
(to Hera)
Thank you.
(to Chuck)
But I really don't think I'll be
around that long. I've had my
look. I think I've seen it all.

CHUCK
You never see it all.

NOAH
You know what I mean.

CHUCK
No, I don't.

NOAH
Anyway... I don't think I'll be
able to make it to your show. I
appreciate the offer.

CHUCK
You'll be missing a treat. A real
treat.

NOAH
Probably so.

CHUCK
What was it you did back in
wherever you came from.

NOAH
I was in business.

CHUCK
Wow. A business man. And what
type of business was it. If you'll
tell me. I know you like to act
mysterious.

NOAH
I sold clock radios chuck.

Chuck stares at Noah. He cracks a smile.

CHUCK
You didn't sell clock radios.

NOAH

Yes I did.

CHUCK

So be it.

NOAH

Listen Chuck. I'd kinda...

CHUCK

...like To be left alone. OK, OK.
I see. I'll be over here then.
I'll let you be.

Chuck gets up and begins to go back to his booth. There are script pages, two briefcases and a tape recorder with a microphone cluttered about the table.

CHUCK (CONT'D)

Hera, honey, I'll take my coffee in
my office if you please.

Chuck plops down in his booth.

Noah tries to enjoy his coffee but he is acutely aware of Chuck. Chuck switches between uninterested stares out the window and restless glances at Noah. The restaurant is quiet.

Hera brings Noah his coffee.

CHUCK (CONT'D)

Thank you darlin'.

Hera brings Noah his food.

NOAH

Thank you.

Noah begins to eat as Chuck looks straight ahead and drinks his coffee. Noah get a few bites in when:

CHUCK

Listen. I'm sorry. I'm little
nosey sometimes. I apologize.

NOAH

It's fine. I just want to enjoy my
grilled cheese.

CHUCK

Right. Guy, you really should stay
a few days in town. I could show
you a few more sights.

(MORE)

CHUCK (CONT'D)
There's allot to see. Stay till
Friday, see the show, then be on
your way.

NOAH
I really would like to just leave
tonight. I'm trying to have a
little adventure here.

CHUCK
Right. And what better place to
indulge than Metropolis Huh?

NOAH
Chuck. I'm leaving today.

CHUCK
OK. I'll tell you what. Let me
take you out for some pie after you
buy my lunch here. This pie is
crazy good. Seriously. Let me by
you some pie.

Noah contemplates the offer.

NOAH
OK. Buy me pie.

CHUCK
You got it.
(to Hera)
Sweetie, I'll take two cheese-
burgers to go.

Chuck smiles at Noah.

CUT TO:

EXT. WAFFLE HOUSE-DAY

Noah leads Chuck to the convertible. Chuck is carrying his
briefcases, a disheveled folder and a white takeout sack with
grease stains on it.

CHUCK
Here, we'll take my car. I got to
put this stuff in it anyway. I'm
around back.

NOAH
Alright.

The two walk to the back of the Waffle House. Chuck drops all the stuff in his hands in the bed of his truck and then approaches the passenger side door to unlock it. He looks in the window and, as if he is hiding something, quickly changes his plans.

CHUCK

Actually guy we can just walk there.

NOAH

Sure.

Chuck starts off in the direction of the Pie Shop. Noah follows. Chuck stops and waits for Noah to catch up. When Noah gets to him the two continue. We see the Pie Shop is right across the street.

CUT TO:

INT. PIE SHOP-DAY

Noah and Chuck sit together at a small table. They each have a half eaten sliver of pie in front of them. Besides Noah and Chuck the population of the pie shop is all teenagers coupled off and awkwardly enjoying each others company over pie. It is the middle of the day but there is definitely a friday-night-after-the-ball-game-vibe here. The kids are sexy. The boys are squeaky clean and the girls have their absolute prettiest girl next door faces on. Lips are red. "*Dream a Little Dream*" by the Mamas and Papas is playing from a small radio. A very attractive twenty something young woman waits tables wearing an outfit which is a derivative of Hera's from the Waffle House. This is HELEN. She attends each table with grace. Enjoying the giddy infatuation that radiates from each table. Noah is enamored

CHUCK

Good pie.

NOAH

Yes it is.

Chuck becomes aware of Noah's stolen glances. He looks back at the waitress.

CHUCK

What have we got back there. Oh yes. She's the best.

The waitress sees the two looking at her and assumes they are trying to get her attention. She starts over to their table.

CHUCK (CONT'D)
Oh... Look alive. Your hair's fine.

NOAH
Thank you.

HELEN
Everything alright here guys?

NOAH
Everything is just fine.

CHUCK
It's fantastic Helen. In fact its
so fantastic my friend here would
like to have a whole pie to go.

Noah quickly looks up from a sip of coffee.

NOAH
What? No. I would not like a
whole pie to go.

CHUCK
What are you doing? Don't
embarrass me. Take the pie. Its a
present.
(to Helen)
We would love a pie to go, sweetie.

HELEN
What kind?

CHUCK
Yes, what kind. What kind friend?

NOAH
Whatever you'd like.

CHUCK
He'll take the lemon custard one.

HELEN
OK. I'll be right back.

NOAH
Thank you for the pie.

CHUCK
It is my pleasure. I'm sorry I
can't persuade you to stay longer.
Can I tell you one more thing
about myself please friend?

NOAH
Uh, sure, Chuck.

CHUCK
Do you know what people end up
calling me when they relax and get
cozy with me?

Chuck waits waits way too long for an answer. Prompting Noah
to finally say...

NOAH
No. I don't.

CHUCK
Chuckles.

Quiet in the pie shop. Until...

Helen brings the pie to the table.

HELEN
Here you go guys.

CHUCK
Thank you sweetie. How much do I
owe you.

HELEN
<beep> dollars.

Chuck digs for his wallet

CHUCK
Here's <beep>.
(he throws Noah a wink)

HELEN
Thank you.

CHUCK
It's our pleasure.

Helen walks away.

CHUCK (CONT'D)
She's the best.

NOAH
Listen Chuck it has been fun but I
am afraid I have to leave you.
Thank you for the pie.

Noah rises to leave. He picks up his briefcase.

CHUCK
Wait sit down. Finish your coffee.

NOAH
I am full Chuck. Time to move on.

Noah make's his way the door. He realizes he forgot the full pie Chuck bought for him. He returns to the table. Chuck is holding it out to him.

CHUCK
That would have really hurt my feelings.

NOAH
Goodbye Chuck...chukckles

CHUCK
Good bye new friend.

Noah makes towards the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET BY PIE SHOP AND WAFFLE HOUSE-DAY

Noah walks to his car. He get's in and places the pie on the passenger seat. He starts the engine. Noah backs out of the lot and drives off.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROAD OUTSIDE OF TOWN-SUNSET.

Noah's car approaches a stark/lonley gas station from very far off. The landscape is desolate. There is no sign of life at the station.

CUT TO:

EXT. GAS STATION-DUSK

After a long approach Noah pulls into the station. A sign notes that the station is full service only. After waiting only a few moments Noah honks his horn.

He honks again.

He then gets out of his car and tries to pump the gas himself. He lifts the nozzle and puts it in his car.

He flips the lever on the gas pump. He tries to pump the gas. It does not work.

He looks at the station's store. A large neon sign says "OPEN". Noah walks towards the shop.

When he enters he immediately notices a dead man behind the counter. Blood is everywhere. In the man's hand there is a gun. The clerk has killed himself.

Noah approaches the counter. There is a pink envelope on the counter top. "To Helen" is neatly written on it. Under the name is an address: "212 Cleveland Blvd."

Noah looks curiously at the dead man and then out to his car.

He reaches over the counter, careful not to touch the dead body, and authorizes his pump.

He walks out to his car and pumps his gas.

No cars pass the station. Noah keeps glancing at the shop.

Noah finishes filling up his car. He screws the gas cap back on. Noah then reaches into his car and grabs the pie. He walks back into the shop. He takes the "To Helen" envelope and leaves the pie in its stead.

He then exits the shop. He gets in his car and starts the engine. He pulls out, makes a U turn and goes back from the direction he came.

CUT TO:

EXT. PALACE INN FRONT DESK-NIGHT

Noah approaches the front desk and rings the bell. Neil emerges from his back room. He stops and takes a curious look at Noah.

NEIL

What can I do for you?

NOAH

Well, I'd like a room.

NEIL

You would?

NOAH

Yeah. I'll pay whatever... I mean
I just want to stay for a while.

(MORE)

NOAH (CONT'D)
I'm not to sure how long. Could
you do that for me?

NEIL
I'm sure we could make some sort of
arrangement.

Neil goes back to his office and returns with a pen and a
small piece of paper. He approaches the counter and begins to
write on it. As he writes:

NEIL (CONT'D)
How about we start with this much
down

He points to a figure on the paper.

NEIL (CONT'D)
And then we'll settle up when the
time comes.

NOAH
OK. I can live with that.

Noah puts his briefcase up on the counter and opens it,
counts off some bills and hands them to Neil.

NEIL
I'll even give you the same room.

NOAH
Thank you.

Noah closes his briefcase. Neil hands Noah the keys.

NEIL
And don't forget. If you need
anything, dial 0.

NOAH
Got it.

Noah leaves and heads for his room.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM-NIGHT

Noah enters his old hotel room and sets his briefcase down on
the bed. He sits beside it. He opens his briefcase and
pulls out the letter "To Helen". Noah lays back on the bed.
He takes a good hard look at the letter.

He flips it over and runs his finger along the seal. He does not open it. He flips it around.

NOAH

To Helen.

Noah places the envelope on the pillow next to him. He shuts his eyes. He opens them again. He cannot sleep. He sits up and pulls a pint of whiskey from his briefcase. He sits on the edge of the bed and drinks.

CUT TO:

INT. IDEAL SUBURBAN (OBVIOUSLY NOT NOAH'S) HOME-NIGHT.

A young woman (20-25) struggles against an unidentifiable man. She is being drug down the carpeted stairs of her home. Her hands are bound and she is gaged, with a blind fold on. The blindfold is soaked with tears. The man gets to the door of the home. He pulls her head close to his mouth as he leans towards her. It is Chuck. He speaks to her calmly.

CHUCK

Now listen. I need you to be real quiet when we go outside. OK Can you do that for me? I really want this to work and if you carry on like a maniac well it's not going to work. I will kill you sweetie. If it's you or me it's going to be you. Alright honey? Now stand up. There you go.

Chuck helps the young woman to her feet. He grabs a rolled up jacket that he brought with him and dropped by the door on the way in. He puts the jacket on the woman's shoulders. It covers up her hands and hides most signs of the struggle. He leaves the blind fold on.

He takes a gun out of his pocket and slips it into the coat. He has the young woman feel it.

CHUCK (CONT'D)

See. Now, I like you allot. You are exactly what I'm looking for. So don't ruin this for the both of us. Put your head down and walk where I lead you.

Chuck puts his arm around the young lady and opens the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. IDEAL SUBURBAN HOME-NIGHT.

He leads her outside to his car, parked in the somewhat secluded driveway. He walks her to the passenger side door and opens it. The young woman's shoulders begin to shake as she breaks into a violet sob.

CHUCK

Shh.

He gently helps her into the cab of his truck.

CHUCK (CONT'D)

I'll be right back.

He shuts the door as quietly as he can and walks around to the drivers side. He opens the door and gets in.

CHUCK (CONT'D)

See. Now I need you to crouch down
in the floor there.

He helps her down onto the floorboard of the truck. Her crying continues.

CHUCK (CONT'D)

I brought this for you.

He pulls a pillow out from behind the cab seat and tucks it behind her back. She settles in.

CHUCK (CONT'D)

We aren't going far. You can call
me Chuckles if you want to.

Chuck starts the truck up and pulls it out of the driveway.

FADE OUT.

INT. HOTEL ROOM-DAY

Noah awakes to sirens from police cars driving down the street. There is a half pint of whiskey next to his table. Noah sits up in bed and rubs his eyes. He checks the clock on the night stand. He looks at his hands to access how jittery It is 11:15AM.

CUT TO:

INT. GOODWILL TYPE THRIFT SHOP-DAY

Noah shops in a Goodwill type store but in this store the household goods & things you put on a wall/shelf type stuff is ridiculously highbrow. Gallery grade. The clothes are busted, boring, bad. Noah approaches a very typical youngish THRIFT STORE GUY.

NOAH
Is there a place i could try these
on?

THRIFT STORE GUY
Yeah, there in the back.

NOAH
Thanks.

CUT TO:

INT. THRIFT SHOP DRESSING ROOM-DAY

Noah undresses and puts on the new clothes. He looks much better. He balls up his old clothes and walks out of his booth.

CUT TO:

INT. GOODWILL TYPE THRIFT SHOP-DAY

Noah approaches the cashier. She starts to reach for the clothes under Noah's arm.

NOAH
No, it's what I'm wearing here.

APATHETIC THRIFT STORE CASHIER
Did you get the pants off the blue
rack?

Noah turns and looks back at the racks.

NOAH
Uuuh, Yes.

APATHETIC THRIFT STORE CASHIER
\$5.50

Noah digs out his wallet and pays.

CUT TO:

EXT. THRIFT SHOP PARKING LOT-DAY

Noah gets in his car. He throws his old clothes in the back of the car. He drives towards town.

CUT TO:

EXT. PIE SHOP-DAY

Noah sits in his parked car outside of the pie shop. He watches Helen inside. He is holding the letter in his hand. He settles in to watch her for a while.

He reclines the seat slightly. He turns on the radio. He is switching through stations when

TAP TAP TAP!

He switches off the radio and sit up. He looks out his driver side window and sees a man's hand with a billy club. He rolls down the window and as soon as he does he hears

SHERIFF
Hey ya, fella.

NOAH
Sir.

SHERIFF
What exactly are you doing here.

NOAH
Contemplating buying a pie.

SHERIFF
I bet. Listen, either buy a pie or leave. No loitering here. It makes folks uncomfortable.

NOAH
Well, alright. I'll buy a pie then.

SHERIFF
It is good pie.

NOAH
Yes it is.

The sheriff notices the pink letter in Noah's hand. The name and address are faced down so he cannot see it.

SHERIFF
Got a friend?

NOAH
(realizing the Sheriff has
seen the envelope)
Yes I do.

SHERIFF
That's nice. Enjoy your pie.

The Sheriff opens the door to Noah's car and pulls it as wide as it will go. He walks to his police car parked directly behind Noah, gets in and drives off.

Noah stands up out of his car, letter in hand, and shuts his door. He starts towards the shop and then notices that the few customers in the shop, along with Helen, are all staring at him. Noah continues towards the front door and enters.

CUT TO:

INT. PIE SHOP-DAY

As Noah enters the patrons in the shop turn away and continue eating. is playing. Helen is standing staring right at him holding a coffee pot. Noah gives an embarrassed nod and then sits at a nearby table. He puts the letter, face down, on the table. Helen approaches.

HELEN
What was going on out there?

NOAH
Friend of mine.

Helen looks at him caustically.

NOAH (CONT'D)
It was regarding a parking ticket.
Nothing big.

Noah smiles.

Helen's face breaks into a sympathetic smirk.

HELEN
That sucks.

NOAH
It happens.

HELEN

You want some coffee or something?

NOAH

Yeah coffee sounds great. Do you have any sandwiches or anything like that. Something not pie.

HELEN

No. Its just a pie shop.

NOAH

Oh. Well, I'll take two slices of Lemon pie.

HELEN

OK.

Helen walks off to retrieve the coffee and pie. Noah's gaze is steadied with infatuation. He finally looks away and then to the letter laying on the table. As he is looking at the letter. Helen slips his cup of coffee and pie by it.

HELEN (CONT'D)

Got a sweetheart?

Noah looks at her quizzically. Helen looks at the letter.

NOAH

Oh. No.

There is a beat of silence as Helen waits to hear a cordial explanation about the pink envelope and Noah tries to think of something to say.

HELEN

OK.

NOAH

Thank you.

HELEN

No problem.

Helen leaves Noah's table and starts to assist other customers. Noah begins to eat his pie. He takes the first couple of bites and then his gaze returns to the pink letter on the table in front of him. He pushes his pie aside and grabs his briefcase from the floor beside him and places it on the table. He opens it and puts the card in, on top of a litter of whiskey pints. He shuts his case and returns it to the floor. He pulls his pie in toward him and begins to eat again. He watches Helen as she serves the other customers.

Helen notices him looking at her and approaches his table.
Noah collects himself.

HELEN (CONT'D)
And how are things here?

NOAH
Things here are fantastic.

HELEN
You need anything?

NOAH
No. Thank you. Well actually...can
you sit down here for a second, I
mean will it get you fired or
anything?

HELEN
No.

Helen sits in the seat next to Noah. She has done this
before.

NOAH
You know...listen... I know you
don't know me and well, I'll
probably just scare you by asking
but, I am new in town and I would
like to see some sites and I think
your very attractive and charming
and I would like to see some sites
with you if that's OK.

HELEN
OK.

NOAH
OK?

HELEN
Sure. I get off at 7.

NOAH
OK.

Helen gets up and grabs the one empty pie dish from Noah's
table and walks to another table.

Noah is a little baffled that it was so easy and he is quite
impressed with himself. He downs his coffee and grabs his
briefcase. He stands to leave. Drops a 10 on the table and
heads for the door. As he walks out...

HELEN

7 o'clock.

Noah turns around and looks at Helen and smiles. He glances around and then walks over to the counter where she is ringing up a customer. Noah waits patiently for her to finish with them.

NOAH

Can I ask you one question real quick.

HELEN

Because your not from around here.

Noah is taken back that she knew what he was going to ask. Helen smiles at him.

NOAH

7 o'clock

HELEN

Right.

Noah turns and leaves.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM-DAY

Inductive Montage:

A: Tight on exterior Hotel room #12

B: Tight on open briefcase. Whiskey but no letter.

C: Tight on To Helen letter on pillow

D: Tight on TV speaker showing a small piece of TV. A Rikki Lake (or something like it) is on. Make-overs is the topic.

E: Wide Noah lays on the bed staring up into the ceiling. The pillow with the Letter is next to him.

Beat.

KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK!

Noah sits up on the bed.

NOAH

Who is it?

CHUCK
It's your good buddy Chuck.

Noah is confused.

NOAH
Just a second.

He puts the letter in the briefcase and shuts it. He goes to the door and opens it a crack. It is painfully bright compared to his hotel room.

CHUCK
Hey ya pal.

NOAH
What's up?

CHUCK
I heard you were still here.

NOAH
Yeah I decided you were right.
That I needed to indulge and spend
a few fine days here in Metropolis.
See it all.

CHUCK
I thought you would come around.
Listen I didn't come by to bother
you...

NOAH
How did you know I was here Chuck?

CHUCK
Small town, kid.

NOAH
I guess.

CHUCK
I had some pie.

Chuck smiles.

NOAH
Right.

CHUCK
So friend, I didn't come around to
bother you.
(MORE)

CHUCK (CONT'D)

I just wanted to extend another invitation to my play AND invite you to an exclusive gathering. A game among the elite of the community. It's tonight, now I know you got plans with a certain someone but we go pretty late. Real late.

NOAH

What do you guys play?

CHUCK

Anything you can put money on. Poker mostly but we get adventurous, "Go Fish" sometimes.

NOAH

All right, I mean, we'll see.

CHUCK

Here, I've written down the number you call when you are ready to come.

Chuck hands Noah a piece of paper.

NOAH

OK.

CHUCK

Now, you have a great day.

NOAH

You as well.

Chuck leaves. Noah shuts the door and returns to the bed. He sets the piece of paper with the number on it on the pillow where the To Helen letter was. Applause come from the show on TV.

CUT TO:

EXT. PIE SHOP-NIGHT

Noah pulls up to the Pie shop. He sees Helen sitting alone in the shop by a window. She sees him and stands up and heads towards the door. Noah gets out of the car and goes to greet her.

Helen says good by to another waitress inside then steps outside. Noah sees that she has dolled up for the occasion. He approaches her.

NOAH
Hello.

HELEN
Hi.

NOAH
You look fantastic.

HELEN
Thank you.

the two head towards the car. Noah opens the door for her.

NOAH
Where are we headed?

HELEN
I thought we could stop by the
liquor store and then head over
to...Have You seen the Superman?

NOAH
No. I haven't

HELEN
I thought we could go there. Are
you hungry?

NOAH
Are you hungry?

HELEN
Yes.

NOAH
Yeah me too.

HELEN
We'll grab a hoagie at the liquor
store.

NOAH
OK.

HELEN
Pull out and head north, into town.

Noah puts the car in reverse and heads up the road into town.

CUT TO:

INT. LIQUOR STORE-NIGHT

Montage:

A: Meat coming out of slicer

B: Beer fridge opening.

C: old timey cash register ringing up

CUT TO:

EXT. SUPERMAN SQUARE-NIGHT

Helen and Noah sit on a park bench eating their subs and drinking brown bagged beers. They are dwarfed by a well lit 20 ft. plaster statue of Superman. We don't see the statue as a whole (It's a real thing btw) but from the angles we KNOW there's an oppressive CIVIC STATUE right next to them. It's weird. The square is barren save Noah and Helen.

NOAH

You come here often.

HELEN

No one comes here often. They've seen it.

NOAH

Its cool.

HELEN

Not really. Its more sad than cool. How's your sandwich.

NOAH

Its good.

HELEN

Where did you come from?

NOAH

I'm from about 80 miles north of here.

HELEN

What are you doing here.

NOAH

I'm on an adventure.

HELEN

Oh.

They sit in silence for a moment.

HELEN (CONT'D)
Do you have a job?

NOAH
I did. I quit.

HELEN
Why?

NOAH
Well, I left my town. I was
relocating.

HELEN
Why?

NOAH
I caught my wife in bed with some
jackass and I bolted. I got in the
car and drove off. I called into
work the next day, and told them to
forget that I worked there.

HELEN
Do you have enough money to do this
thing?

NOAH
I do.

HELEN
Your feelings were pretty hurt?

NOAH
Yeah.

HELEN
Can you blame her?

NOAH
What?

HELEN
Are you able to put it all on her
or are you self evaluating and
blaming yourself and shit?

NOAH
I'm trying to just erase the event
and situation. Total new start.
Think I can do it?

HELEN

No.

NOAH

Enough about me.

HELEN

Your interesting. What do you plan on doing now?

NOAH

What about you?

HELEN

My hopes and dreams?

NOAH

Sure?

HELEN

I want to manage, own one of those Japanese steak places where they cook the action right there in front of you. That's what I want to do.

NOAH

That's nice.

HELEN

I'm taking a correspondance course in business management through the Junior College. They send you a degree after you send in this test. And I figure after that (I've been saving up money) I would hit the road and find a city with one of those restaurants and try and weasel my way in.

NOAH

See, now that's a plan. That's good.

HELEN

Thank you. What are your plans?

NOAH

Well I got this small thing I'm working on now, here in town, but beyond that... Nothing much.

HELEN

What is it that you are working on now?

NOAH

It's like a little scavenger hunt.

HELEN

Can I play?

NOAH

Not right now. I've kinda got to go it alone for a bit.

HELEN

OK.

NOAH

You could help me with one thing though. Helen, where exactly do you live?

HELEN

What the hell kind of creepy question is that?

NOAH

Yeah I'm sorry. Let me rephrase it. Do you live at 389 Cleveland Blvd.?

Helen looks at him a minute.

HELEN

No.

NOAH

You don't?

HELEN

No. I don't.

NOAH

Well.

HELEN

Why?

NOAH

I'd rather not say.

HELEN

Why not?

NOAH

Because.

HELEN

What?

NOAH

I just rather not say.

HELEN

Being vague is bullshit you know? I sit here and tell you my hopes and all that and you just sit there like some witty mystery man. You suck man. You do. I'm just here to get to know you. And you dance around like you got some secret that's worth keeping.

Helen downs her beer.

NOAH

You know what your right. I suck. I'm sorry. Here's the mystery.

HELEN

Thank you.

NOAH

So I left town the other night...I do think this is a secret worth keeping by the way, so seriously can i trust you?

HELEN

Why not?

NOAH

What kind of answer is that? Why not? Because I don't even know you.

HELEN

Then why not trust me?

Noah sits and thinks about this for a moment. He downs his beer.

NOAH

Forget it.

HELEN

All right. What shall we talk about?

NOAH
Any interesting superman history.

HELEN
Every Halloween the city dresses
Superman up like some sort of
monster. Last year it was
Frankenstein.

NOAH
Really.

HELEN
No.

NOAH
Oh.

HELEN
It's a good idea though.

NOAH
It is a good idea.

HELEN
I think you have sadness pretty
much all around you.

NOAH
Maybe so.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM-NIGHT

Noah enters his room. He sits on the bed and opens his
briefcase. He removes the To Helen letter and a pint of
whiskey. He opens it and takes a swig. He puts it on the
night-stand and then heads to the bathroom.

INT. HOTEL BATHROOM-NIGHT

Noah is washing his face. The telephone rings. He looks at
himself in the mirror, quickly dries his face off and goes to
answer the phone.

INT. HOTEL ROOM-NIGHT

Noah walks over and picks up the phone.

NOAH
Hello?

CHUCK
Hey fella. How are you.

NOAH
What's up?

CHUCK
I just wanted to offer a very special personal invite to tonight's festivities. We could use another player. Competitive Yatzee's on tap tonight.

NOAH
Well, Chuck I've kind of settled in for the night...

CHUCK
Nonsense friend. Come on out. Seriously.

NOAH
OK.

CHUCK
Here's directions. You got a pen?

Noah opens his briefcase and pulls out a pen.

NOAH
Yeah go ahead.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOUSE LINED ST.-NIGHT.

Noah slowly drives down the Street. All of the houses are dark except for one that is exceptionally bright. Five cars are in the drive way. A police car is one of them. Noah pulls in front of the house and parks his car on the Street. He gets out and slowly approaches the door. In his hand is a six pack of beer. He does not have his briefcase.

CUT TO:

INT. MIKE'S HOUSE-NIGHT

Four unidentifiable men are playing cards around a old kitchen table.

The table is littered with poker chips, cards and junk food wrappers. Smoke fills the air. a woman works over a stove in the background.

The doorbell rings.

SHERIFF

Our friend has arrived.

Chuck rises and heads towards the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. MIKE'S HOUSE-NIGHT

Noah takes his finger off of the door bell and waits. He hears foot steps approaching the door and then some unlocking of the door. The door opens and Chuck is standing there.

CHUCK

Well, good evening sir. Come on in. And let me take those off your hands.

Chuck takes the beer from Noah.

CHUCK (CONT'D)

Did you have trouble finding it?

NOAH

No. It was pretty easy.

Noah follows Chuck through the living room into the kitchen. The house is full of outdated decorations. Everything seems to be brown or tan.

CUT TO:

INT. MIKE'S HOUSE (KITCHEN)-NIGHT

Noah enters the kitchen. The kitchen is acutely "girly". It's primary color is pink in varying shades. Nearly every decoration in the kitchen (pictures, appliance covers, etc.) includes a bow.

Everyone turns around and looks at Noah as he enters. They are quiet. Noah sees that the Sheriff who he had met twice before is there along with two other young Gentlemen (30-35), casually dressed sit at the table. The woman pulls a large pot off the stove and sets on the counter and then turns to look at Noah.

CHUCK
I'd like you to meet a few folks
here friend.

He points to the two casually dressed young men.

CHUCK (CONT'D)
This here is Mike

MIKE
How are you?

Noah shakes Mike's hand.

NOAH
Fine.

CHUCK
And to his left is Steve.

STEVE
Hello.

CHUCK
And I believe you have met our man
the Sheriff.

SHERIFF
I believe we have.

The sheriff rises and shakes Noah's hand.

NOAH
Hello sir.

SHERIFF
Pull up a seat.

CHUCK
And here is Lily, Mike's pride and
joy.

LILY
It's very nice to meet you.

NOAH
You as well.

LILY
You want some chili?

NOAH
No thank you.

MIKE
Eat some chili. It's good.

STEVE
Eat the chili.

NOAH
OK. I'll have some chili.

CHUCK
Now we're getting some where. Pull
up a seat and put in, friend.

Lily begins to get chili together for all the guys at the table.

NOAH
What are you playing?

SHERIFF
Shams. You know it?

NOAH
I do. It's <beep> to get in.
Leave your money on the counter.
There and grab your chips.

Noah looks over to the kitchen counter and sees a lose pile of bills and a stack of chips that have been counted out for him. He rises and digs bills out of his pocket. He has brought a significant amount more than he needed with him. He put the \$ on the counter and scoops up his chips.

The Sheriff gathers the cards from the previous game and begins to shuffle.

SHERIFF
Ante up.

All of the gentlemen at the table count out chips and slide them to the center of the table. Noah watches and the counts out his share and pushes into the pile.

The Sheriff begins to deal the cards.

Lily starts to place bowls of chili next to each of the card players. They each respond with a cordial thank you.

Mike stands and goes to the refrigerator and grabs a beer for everyone. He hands the first to Lily and then disperses them around the table and sits back down.

Noah rubs his eyes and is noticeably tired. Chuck watches him. Noah sips his beer.

Lilly exits the room. Noah watches her out. Steve watches Noah.

NOAH

How do you guy's know each other
were you old school buddies or

MIKE

We are in Chuck's theater group.

STEVE

Actors, if you will.

MIKE

We are highly supportive of the
man's work. And we do all we can
to make sure everyone gets to
experience it.

STEVE

We just finished a tour of
elementary schools. We were doing
a piece Chuck wrote called "Fire
Hurts"

MIKE

It was about safe sex.

CHUCK

No it wasn't it was about fire
safety. Stop Drop and roll etc.

NOAH

Was it a hit?

MIKE

10 year olds man.

CHUCK

It was fine.

They finish the hand.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MIKE'S HOUSE (KITCHEN)-NIGHT

Noah has three beers beside him. The men continue to play in
silence. It is very late. Lily is not in the room and has
presumably gone to sleep. They finish a hand.

NOAH

Is there a lady's room I could use?

MIKE

There sure is. Down this hall,
last door.

NOAH

Thank you.

Noah gets up from the table and walks down the hall.

CUT TO:

INT. MIKE'S HOUSE (BATHROOM)-NIGHT.

Noah flips on the light. He looks at himself in the mirror.
He splashes water on his face and walks over to pee.

CUT TO:

INT. MIKE'S HOUSE (KITCHEN)-NIGHT

The Sheriff is looking down the hall towards the bathroom.
Chuck is looking at the sheriff. Mike and Steve are looking
at their cards. The Sheriff looks back at Chuck. Chuck
smiles.

CUT TO:

INT. MIKE'S HOUSE (BATHROOM)-NIGHT

Noah washes his hands and turns off the light. He opens the
door and stops. Straight across the hall. In a room with
the door wide open is the kidnapped Girl. She is tied down
to a chair and gaged. She is no longer blindfolded and tears
are streaming down her face. Noah stands in the doorway of
the bathroom and stares at her. He is horrified. He looks
away and closes the door and turns back on the light. He
sits on the edge of the tub.

KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK.

NOAH

YEAH!

SHERIFF

Time to come out son.

NOAH

What the hell is going on?

SHERIFF

I think we need to have a heart to heart.

NOAH

I disagree.

CHUCK

It's all fine believe me.

NOAH

I, uh, I don't think it is.

Noah has stood up and is pacing around the small bathroom.

CHUCK

I can open the door.

NOAH

You might have to.

There is a sound of a key in the door. And then the door opens slowly.

CHUCK

Hi.

NOAH

Hi.

The door to the room has been shut and Chuck and the Sheriff are standing in the doorway to the bathroom.

SHERIFF

It's time we had a heart to heart.

The Sheriff reaches for Noah, grabs him by the arm and pulls him to his feet and out of the door. Noah walks in front of him to the kitchen. The Sheriff then goes to grab Noah by the arm again. Noah slaps his hand back. The Sheriff shoves Noah into the kitchen. Noah falls onto the kitchen table and knocks it over.

CUT TO:

INT. MIKE'S HOUSE (KITCHEN)-NIGHT

Noah sits up. He backs against the counter and collects himself. His nose is bleeding and he has chilli all over his shirt.

NOAH

This is the second shirt you owe me.

Chuck enters behind the Sheriff.

Mike and Steve are standing up, having dodged Noah's entrance.

Above Noah's head on a small, kitchen TV/VCR combo plays a surveillance tape. It is of a gas station. It plays static images on a loop. It shows a few shots of a clerk stocking cigarettes. Then of him sitting in a stool behind the counter. Then it shows Noah standing in front of a bloody mess at the counter and then Noah exiting. It plays these images in a continuous loop.

All but Noah watch the small screen.

Chuck looks at Noah.

CHUCK

You might want to have a look at this.

Noah slowly stands and backs up to where he can see the TV screen. He shows no emotion.

NOAH

I had nothing to do with that.

MIKE

We know.

NOAH

What do you want?

CHUCK

First of all I want you to understand that i have done nothing to that girl. I have not hurt her in anyway.

NOAH

That explains the tears.

CHUCK

This is all for the show. OK. She will be returned safe and sound when my show is over on Friday. I also want you to know that she has only seen one face here. And that's your's.

NOAH

Ok.

CHUCK

You've got to come to the show friend. You've just got to.

NOAH

Your blackmailing me so I would go to your play? Seriously?

CHUCK

Well, that's not all of it. I told you vanity was not my vice. You do have a small part to play.

NOAH

Which is?

CHUCK

You have to come to find out.

Noah stands in silence for a beat. Mike and Steve begin to pick up the mess.

NOAH

And now what?

CHUCK

You're free to go.

NOAH

What?

CHUCK

Well kinda. Your car may not work at the moment. But we are more than happy to get you to any appointments.

Noah has the crushing realization that he has absolutely zero agency. He has been cornered and caught.

NOAH

(sarcastically cordial)

Can any of you gentlemen bare the chore of giving me a ride back the hotel and I guess I will see you Friday.

Bad, long, creepy silence...

CHUCK
Mike will give you a ride home.

CUT TO:

INT. MIKE'S CAR-DRIVING-NIGHT

Close on Noah staring intently forward at whatever the headlights are illuminating. SUDDENLY CLEVELAND ST. Noah clocks the street sign.

NOAH
SHIT! MIKE can we turn around and go down that street? Right there, back there?

MIKE
(casual)
Uuuuuh yeah, sure. Why?

NOAH
It's part of my scavenger hunt.

Mike does the proper maneuvering to get redirect the car. No more talking.

EXT. CLEVELAND ST. DRIVING-NIGHT

We pop out of the car but can see Noah looking around at the houses as Mike strolls down the lane. Can't see much in the dark but porch/door/street/window illumination reveal the street is populated with small homes. No sidewalk. Grass is not uniformly cut.

INT. HOTEL ROOM-NIGHT

Inductive Montage:

- A. Tight on To Helen envelope, lights come on.
- B. Cap unscrewed off whiskey bottle.
- C. Cheap paper cup fills up with whiskey.
- D. Tight on Helen envelope, lights go off.

INT. MIKE'S HOUSE-NIGHT

Tight on Kidnapped Girl's face, lights go out.

EXT. 389 CLEVELAND ST.

Tight on house raggedy house numbers 389. Porch light goes out.

CUT TO:

BLACK

HARD CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM-DAY

Noah wakes up with the sun in his face. He checks his watch. It is 4pm.

NOAH

Damn.

His chili covered clothes are on the floor beside the bed. His paper cup is on the night stand beside the bed. He sits up and rubs his eyes. He stands and grabs his paper cup. He walks to the bathroom.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL BATHROOM-DAY

Noah is washing out his cup. He squirts a little hand soap in it and rinses it out. He fills it up and takes a drink. He repeats. He takes a look at him self in the mirror.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM-DAY

The bed is unmade, Noah's clothes are still on the floor. We hear LATE IN THE DAY show on the TV (Rikki Lake-ish). We hear Noah in the shower. The Rikki lake show is about teens out of control. We never see the show. Just the empty hotel room.

RIKKI

Now do you think that you are cool or something when you do this--the drugs.

TEEN GUEST

No not really. It's just stuff I do with my friends and stuff.

RIKKI

Do you realize that what your doing
is destructive?

TEEN GUEST

I don't care.

RIKKI

Well, we've got someone here that I
think will be able to help you.
I'd like to welcome Sergeant
Jefferson to the show.

The audience applauds.

SERGEANT JEFFERSON

(yelling)

Now you listen to me. I want you
to sit there and be quiet and
listen to what your going to do for
me.

TEEN GUEST

(censored by bleeps)

Shut the --- up. You don't even
know me.

Audience applauds. Sergeant Jefferson begins to yell louder.

Fist fight follows. Shouting. Beeps. J. Springer type shit.

CUT TO:

INT. GOODWILL TYPE THRIFT SHOP-DAY

Noah is again shopping for clothes. He is wearing his chili
stained clothes. He slowly sifts through the racks. He
picks out a black polo type shirt and some new Khaki pants.

CUT TO:

INT. GOODWILL TYPE THRIFT SHOP-DAY

Noah approaches the counter. The same girl that rang him up
the day before is there. He is again wearing the clothes he
is about to buy. She stares at him for a beat.

APATHETIC THRIFT STORE CASHIER

What you have on?

NOAH

Yeah.

APATHETIC THRIFT STORE CASHIER
Blue rack?

NOAH
Sure.

APATHETIC THRIFT STORE CASHIER
\$5.50

Noah pays her and leaves.

CUT TO:

EXT. METROPOLIS ST.--DUSK

Noah walks down the street.

CUT TO:

EXT. CLEVELAND BLVD.--DUSK

Noah walks down Cleveland Blvd., trying to read the house numbers as he goes. He has the pink To Helen letter in his left hand.

He sees 389.

He has only brought a pint of booze (which fits in his back pocket) He takes out the pint and takes a pull.

Noah approaches the house. As he gets there he stops and collects himself. And then knocks on the door.

He waits.

He knocks again.

He waits.

He leaves the porch and goes to look in a window. He can't see much. The mobile home is very cluttered.

Noah walks around back. No one is there. Noah folds the letter (this is the first time he has physically disturbed/interacted with the letter) and puts it in his back pocket with the booze.

CUT TO:

EXT. BIG JOHN'S SUPERMARKET-NIGHT

Noah stands next to a pay phone . Beside the phone facing the street is a 20 ft. Fiberglass statue of Big John, a lumberjack type fellow. He puts a quarter in and begins dialing a number. He hangs up. He waits. He retrieves the quarter from the machine and reinserts it. He begins to dial numbers. He hears ringing. The line rings 4 times and a machine picks up. It is Noah's voice.

NOAH'S VOICE ON THE MACHINE

Hi this is Noah and Megan please
leave a message.

Noah starts to laugh. He slams the phone on the receiver. He laughs harder. His face tightens. The laughs turn into crying. Tears roll down his cheeks. He starts jerking the phone away from the phone booth. He rips the handset off and throws it at Big John. It hits Big John in the face, puncturing a hole in it's shell.

NOAH

(to Big John)

WHAT!?

INT. PIE SHOP-NIGHT

Helen is in the Pie Shop cleaning off tables. There is no one in the place. The door opens and Noah walks in.

HELEN

Hello.

NOAH

Are you open?

HELEN

Yes.

NOAH

Slow day?

HELEN

Yes. Pie?

NOAH

No, thank you. I came here to see
if you wanted to go grab some
dinner again.

HELEN

Sure.

NOAH
Right. Well...

Beat

NOAH (CONT'D)
OK. You still get off at 7?

HELEN
It's 8:45 at night

NOAH
right

HELEN
I get off at 10.

NOAH
That's a little late for dinner.

HELEN
I'll be hungry.

NOAH
I'll be here at 10.

HELEN
Very good.

NOAH
Yeah.

The two stand there in silence for a second. Helen looks at Noah with a confused expression. Noah awkwardly takes a seat in the shop.

HELEN
Do you want pie?

NOAH
No.

HELEN
What do you want?

NOAH
I got no place to be. And your the only person around who seems to have an interest in me that's not psychotic.

Helen walks over and has a seat across from Noah.

HELEN

Are you feeling chatty today?
Because last night you were trying
to be mysterious and it was pissing
me off.

NOAH

Yeah. Last night some interesting
things happen to me.

HELEN

Don't be cryptic.

NOAH

Helen, you really don't know what
your talking about.

HELEN

OK.

NOAH

Last night after we parted ways I
went back to me hotel room. While
there, I received a phone call from
some guy I met named Chuck, he was
the guy I was with when I...

HELEN

I know who he is.

NOAH

I got a call for him and he invited
me over to some guys house to play
cards and while I was there i saw a
kidnapped girl, my car was disabled
and, and basically now I'm stuck
here in this town.

Helen is quiet. She can't believe it.

HELEN

Are you serious?

NOAH

Yes.

The door to the shop opens and an elderly couple walks in.
Helen gets up and greets them.

HELEN

Just sit anywhere.

Noah sits while Helen takes the order from the older couple.

OLD MAN
I think I'll just have a slice of
pecan.

OLD LADY
And I'll have the same.

HELEN
Anything to drink?

OLD LADY
2 decafs.

HELEN
I'll be right back.

As she goes to get the pie a younger couple walks in.

HELEN (CONT'D)
(to Noah)
Why don't you just come back at 10.

NOAH
OK.

Noah gets up to leave. Helen greets the new customers.

NOAH (CONT'D)
Can I borrow your car til 10?

Helen processes.

HELEN
Ok.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM-NIGHT

The lights are out. Noah is not there.

Beat.

The phone starts to ring. It rings 4 times and stops.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROAD OUTSIDE OF TOWN-NIGHT.

Noah is driving back towards the Gas station in Helen's Celica (or Supra...)

CUT TO:

EXT. GAS STATION-NIGHT

Noah pulls up to the gas station where he found the dead man. There is police tape all around the pumps and the station. He pulls up the tape and walks under it towards the shop.

He enters the shop.

CUT TO:

INT. GAS STATION-NIGHT

Noah notices that the dead man is gone and the bloody mess is cleaned up. Noah hears an electric adding machine coming from a room behind the counter. He walks back to take a look.

He sees a light coming from a closet sized room with the door open. The noise is coming from there. He walks towards it. A young man (18-25) sticks his head out. He is startled.

YOUNG MAN

Hello. Can I help you?

NOAH

Excuse me.

YOUNG MAN

What can I help you with.

NOAH

I uh was curious about a, well was there an incident here a few days ago?

YOUNG MAN

Who are you?

NOAH

I am a friend of the deceased.

YOUNG MAN

You knew Chester?

NOAH

He was a friend. I heard there was an accident here and I wanted to check it out.

YOUNG MAN

Yeah. It was a pretty big deal. Still is. We had to call in this special company to clean the place up and we are closed until whenever. I'm just here balancing the books. The quiet is kind of nice.

NOAH

You the manager?

YOUNG MAN

Yeah.

NOAH

Are the police still involved in the case.

YOUNG MAN

Oh yeah. They're trying nail down what happened. There was this suicide at first, but we also got this weirdo on surveillance tape that seemed to be hanging around. I think they're just trying to figure out what he was doing here. He stole some gas too. You could lose your license if they catch you doing that.

NOAH

I don't even have a license.

YOUNG MAN

That seems about right.

NOAH

You've seen the tape?

YOUNG MAN

Oh yeah. I saw it. It was pretty gruesome. I only saw it once but I think there are some bootlegs of it already out there.

NOAH

Really?

YOUNG MAN

Yeah, I mean I'm not really sure where to get one but I could find out. I could probably find you one if you really want one.

NOAH

No, I don't need one. Thank you.

YOUNG MAN

No problem.

Noah turns to leave. And then turns back.

NOAH

Did you know the, uh, Chester? Did you know him?

YOUNG MAN

I hired him.

NOAH

Did he seem like a likable guy.

YOUNG MAN

No not really?

NOAH

OK. Thank you again.

YOUNG MAN

No problem.

NOAH

Could I fill up?

YOUNG MAN

I think so. Pull around.

CUT TO:

EXT. GAS STATION-NIGHT

Noah goes to his car and pulls it by the pump. He opens the gas cap. The young man steps out from the shop.

YOUNG MAN

Cool car.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROAD OUTSIDE OF TOWN-NIGHT.

Noah heads back into town.

CUT TO:

EXT. PIE SHOP-NIGHT

Helen sits on a bench outside the pie shop waiting for Noah.

She is looking down at her restaurant management textbook. Police lights flash on her face. She looks up and sees the sheriffs car, with the broken light, passing by her. She looks back down at her book. Headlights shine in her face and then turn off. Noah steps out of his car.

NOAH

Hey.

HELEN

Hey.

NOAH

Where would you like to go to eat?

HELEN

Waffle House is the only thing open. Can you talk about what's happening?

NOAH

Yeah. It's all sordid. And its a hell of a long story.

HELEN

The place is open 24 hours.

CUT TO:

INT. WAFFLE HOUSE-NIGHT

Helen sits across a booth from Noah. They both have mostly eaten, greasy cheeseburgers in front of them.

NOAH

So now I'm not sure what is happening. I'm not sure how much of my story is true.

HELEN

Why, are you on drugs?

NOAH

No.

HELEN

Do you still have the letter? I could show you where Cleveland St. is.

NOAH

I went. There was no one home.

HELEN

You thought it was for me?

NOAH

It was a start.

HELEN

Have you read it?

NOAH

No. I don't really care what the guy wrote. He was sad and all of that I'm sure.

HELEN

Why did you take it?

NOAH

I took the note because I wanted to find the person who gets it and give it to them. I thought that that could be something I did. Something I did for this guy who just shot himself in the face and made a mess of the gas station. And really, what I really wanted to know was, who gets that letter? Who gets that letter you write, a minute before you kill yourself?

HELEN

How do you know that he didn't write it earlier, like the day before.

NOAH

Don't go sideways on me please. Are you listening?

HELEN

I am.

NOAH

Who did he feel like he should
spill is tragically depressed guts
to? Who did he have to get a last
word in with? Why write it down?
Why not not kill yourself and just
call them up? Who did he think
would listen or who did he think
would care?

HELEN

I don't know.

NOAH

Me either.

They both sit in silence for a beat.

NOAH (CONT'D)

And now I got this other thing with
the kidnappers, death threats and
such. So, I haven't gotten to
spend as much time pondering the
subject as I might have liked.

HELEN

Are you going to the play.

NOAH

Oh yes.

HELEN

Why?

NOAH

Helen, I have nothing to lose. My
wife sleeps with other men. I quit
my job. I don't trust anybody. I
can get pretty close to the fire
because I don't have that much to
burn off. So I'm going to get as
close as i can. I'll be there
tomorrow and I will unwittingly put
on a hell of a show. And honestly
I think if I skipped town they
really would find me and kill me.
Three days ago I probably would not
have cared and I would have
welcomed a little mystery, but
today I feel like staying alive.

HELEN

What time is it?

NOAH
Midnight.

HELEN
OK.

NOAH
Do you have something to do?

HELEN
No.

NOAH
OK.

The two sit in silence picking at food and drinking their coffees.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM-DAY

The hotel room is very clean. Noah has made the bed and thrown all of his trash away. The TV is off. His briefcase is on the bed. The "To Helen" envelope is on top of the case. The shower is overheard.

CUT TO:

EXT. PALACE INN-DAY

Noah walks out of his room, turns and locks the door. He walks towards the Hotel Office.

CUT TO:

INT. PALACE INN FRONT DESK-DAY

Noah walks in the lobby and sets his briefcase down. He approaches the desk and rings the bell. Neil stirs from his room and walks to the desk.

NEIL
Yes sir?

NOAH
I believe it's checkout time Mr. Neil. I have not seen it all but I have seen enough.

Neil goes back to the back and rummages through his desk. He returns with the scrap of paper he wrote the figures on when Noah checked back in. He holds it up for Noah to see.

NOAH (CONT'D)
Very well.

CUT TO:

INT. GOODWILL TYPE THRIFT SHOP-DAY

Noah browses the tie section.

CUT TO:

INT. GOODWILL TYPE THRIFT SHOP-DAY

Noah approaches the counter. He has a "new" shirt with a tie on.

APATHETIC THRIFT STORE CASHIER
Big day?

NOAH
Yes. Big day.

CUT TO:

EXT. SUPERMAN SQUARE-DAY

Noah sits on the base of the Giant Statue of Superman. He eats a large sandwich and has a Big Gulp 44 oz. orange soda in his other hand. He eats it slowly. He checks his watch.

CUT TO:

EXT. SUPERMAN SQUARE-A FEW HOURS LATER

Noah is laying down on the base of the statue taking a nap. He checks his watch.

CUT TO:

EXT. SUPERMAN SQUARE-DUSK

Noah gathers his big gulp and sandwich wrapper and gets up to leave.

CUT TO:

EXT. METROPOLIS COMMUNITY SCHOOL FOR FURTHER EDUCATION-NIGHT

Noah stands in the middle of an empty parking lot. There is no one else there.

CUT TO:

INT. METROPOLIS COMMUNITY SCHOOL FOR FURTHER EDUCATION-NIGHT

Noah sits in the empty theater. He checks his watch. He gets up and walks towards the stage. He walks up the stage steps and walks behind the curtain. He stays back there for a moment and then he opens the curtains. There is nothing on the stage--no scenery, no props. Noah then hears a door open to the theater. He looks out and sees two gentlemen quickly bring the kidnapped girl in and take her down a hall off from the front door. Chuck then enters. He walks forward. Noah stays on stage.

CHUCK

Your going to have to come down from there. Show doesn't start for an hour.

Noah does not answer.

CHUCK (CONT'D)

Did you hear me? You're going to have to get down.

Noah jumps down from the stage.

CHUCK (CONT'D)

And I'm afraid your going to have to leave.

NOAH

No.

Chuck takes a step towards Noah.

CHUCK

Please.

NOAH

Why.

CHUCK

Pre-show secrets.

Noah slugs Chuck in the face. Chuck falls back into a theater seat.

CHUCK (CONT'D)

Get out.

He stands back up and walks quickly towards Noah. He gets in his face.

CHUCK (CONT'D)

GET OUT.

NOAH

What is happening?

CHUCK

GET OUT.

NOAH

What is happening?

CHUCK

Get out.

NOAH

Shut up.

Chuck pulls out a gun and points it at Noah. Chuck collects himself.

CHUCK

I will kill you. I will kill you.

NOAH

Why?

Noah is hit with a billy club from behind. He falls lifeless to the floor. The Sheriff is standing behind him.

FADE OUT.

INT. METROPOLIS COMMUNITY SCHOOL FOR FURTHER EDUCATION-NIGHT

Noah is propped up in a seat in the auditorium. He is still out. Helen is beside him, shaking him. Many people are filing into the auditorium.

HELEN

Wake up. Wake up. Are you all right?

Noah stirs.

HELEN (CONT'D)

Were you drinking? How long have you been here?

NOAH
My head hurts.

HELEN
Have you been drinking?

NOAH
No.

HELEN
What happened?

NOAH
I got hit in the head.

HELEN
By Chuck?

NOAH
I don't know, it doesn't matter.

HELEN
Lets leave.

NOAH
No. I don't think that's a good idea.

HELEN
Will they hurt you.

NOAH
They might.

HELEN
What a mess.

NOAH
You don't have to stay.

HELEN
If I leave I won't see what happens.

The house lights dim. The crowd hushes and gets settled. The place stays dark for a moment and then carny music starts to play. The curtains slowly open and the stage lights come on. On stage tied to her chair and blind folded is the Kidnapped Girl. As the stage lights come fully up a tremendous amount of laughter is heard from the speakers. The crowd unwittingly cracks a smile.

The music continues to play and at every cry or sudden movement a laugh track is played. The crowd starts to laugh along.

Noah sits in his seat horrified. Helen looks over to him.

NOAH

That's her. That's the girl.

At that moment Mike and Steve wheel out a video monitor on a tall cart and place it behind the girls head. Mike pushes lay as he walks away.

The screen flickers and then shows Noah's face live there in the audience. Noah quickly looks around. The laugh track thunders. The live footage quickly cuts to a tape of Noah when he first saw the Kidnapped Girl--he steps out of the Hall and then quickly disappears back into the bathroom. The laugh track continues. The video cuts back to a live feed.

Noah is growing restless.

The footage of his first discovery comes on the screen and plays again. Then the live feed is restored.

Noah stands.

NOAH (CONT'D)

Stop it! Let her go. She's real.
She's all tied up and she's real.
This is real.

The laugh track drowns him out as he speaks. He starts towards the stage. Mike and Steve come out and hold him back.

MIKE

Settle down fella.

Silly Benny Hill type music begins to play as Mike and Steve try to handle Noah. The laughing continues.

The audience has stopped laughing and most sit quietly trying to figure the situation out.

Helen stands

HELEN

Let him go. Leave him alone.

Mike and Steve are surprised at this addition. Steve pulls out a syringe from his pocket and discreetly sticks it in Noah's side. Noah winces, tries to maintain for a few moments and then goes somewhat limp.

Helen begins to cry.

HELEN (CONT'D)
Oh, my god. Oh, my god.

Mike runs up to her as Steve pulls Noah away backstage.

MIKE
You have got to be quiet.

HELEN
Shut up. Help. Please.

Mike takes out a syringe and then grabs Helen and pulls her close. He sticks her in the side. She continues to cry and then becomes very quiet and limp.

The laugh track roars.

Mike pulls Helen backstage.

As soon as he has her out of sight the music stops the curtains quickly close and the house lights come on. The audience sits in their seats.

The Sheriff enters from outside. He stands at the back of the room and addresses the audience.

SHERIFF
I just want assure you folk that everything that happened here was all planned and cleared with me before it played out. I know this progressive theater stuff can get wacky but it all just show-business. I hope you enjoyed it. Have a nice evening.

CUT TO:

INT. DIM SCHOOLROOM-DAY.

Noah is lying on the floor of a dim schoolroom. Morning sunlight is just starting to make it's way into the room. He is handcuffed to a desk. He stirs and then quickly stands, not realizing that he his handcuffed. He jerks the desk up and it slides and hits him in the leg.

NOAH
Ow!

He falls to the floor in pain.

NOAH (CONT'D)

Hello!

Noah investigates his restraints and realizes he's not going anywhere without his desk. He slowly stands and picks up the desk. He starts to move towards the door.

SHERIFF

Don't go to far.

We see the sheriff sitting behind the teacher's desk.

NOAH

I'll just be out here in the restroom. Won't take but five minutes.

SHERIFF

I'm afraid I've got to keep you here for a few moments. Till our friend Chuck gets back.

NOAH

You know what? That's not going to work for me. I really would like to go.

Noah starts towards the front of the room, towards the teachers desk.

SHERIFF

It's not going to happen.

NOAH

Why? WHY? Leave me alone.

SHERIFF

Shh. Quietly son. There's no one looking for you. You might as well get comfortable.

Noah continues towards the front dragging his desk behind him.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Have a seat son.

NOAH

Just a minute.

Noah nears the desk. The sheriff quickly stands

SHERIFF

SIT DOWN.

Noah slings his desk over his head and slams it on the sheriff. The Sheriff tries to draw his gun.

There is a loud crack as the desk breaks, the Sheriff's skull breaks, and the gun goes off. The Sheriff drops lifeless to the floor.

Noah begins to shake. He is now only cuffed to the seat portion of the desk. He was not shot. He stands for a moment trying to collect himself.

The sheriffs blood begins to pool under the desk and Noah sees it run under the desk towards him.

Noah walks around to the other side of the desk. He sees the dead sheriff on the floor. He kneels down and finds the Sheriff's keys. He pulls them off the sheriff's belt and finds the hand cuff key.

Noah uncuffs himself. He reaches back and takes the handgun out of the sheriffs hand.

He stands and walks slowly towards the door.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY-DAY

Noah exits his room and finds himself in large hallway with a bright door leading outside. Noah cautiously makes his way towards the door, staying close to the wall. As he almost reaches the door Steve runs out of a room across the hall from where he came. Steve runs quickly past Noah and out the front door. The light from the open door is blinding.

Noah stands still until the door shuts. He then decides to investigate where Steve came from. He turns and heads back.

He slowly makes his way back down the hall.

CUT TO:

INT. ANOTHER SCHOOLROOM-DAY

Noah walks in a smaller classroom and sees Chuck standing behind the Kidnapped Girl. She is still in her chair but she is not moving. Chuck is messaging her shoulders. He does not look up as Noah enters.

CHUCK

I thought I might see you again.

Noah stops just as he walks in the room and leans against the wall. Behind him is a poster of a cat barely hanging on to a tree branch. The words "HANG IN THERE" are written on it. Noah sees that the girl is either very sedated or dead.

NOAH
I think I killed your friend.

CHUCK
I heard. But he's not my friend.
He was an associate.

NOAH
How's your princess?

CHUCK
Oh, she's dead. Yeah, I killed
her.

Noah is more deeply saddened than enraged.

NOAH
Why.

CHUCK
She was making allot of noise.

NOAH
What now?

CHUCK
I'll probably have to kill you
since you saw it all.

NOAH
I'm afraid I can't let you do that.

CHUCK
WHY NOT? There's no one looking
for us friend. What does it
matter? That's the best and worst
of it.

NOAH
Your right about that.

They both aim their guns at each other.

CHUCK
What I think is interesting about
you Noah is that you keep trying.
You've had some hard times and I
respect that.

NOAH
I do what I have to.

CHUCK
Why?

The two just stare at each other.

CHUCK (CONT'D)
Perhaps if I had that special
someone?

NOAH
Perhaps.

CHUCK
Here, let me help the world out a
bit.

Chuck shoots himself in the head and drops.

Noah stands and looks at him.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY-DAY

Noah walks across the hall with the sheriffs gun into the
classroom where he killed the sheriff.

The hallway is empty for a bit.

Noah walks back across the hallway without the gun but with
the desk he was handcuffed to and the handcuffs. He walks
into the room where Chuck is.

The hallway is empty for a bit.

Noah walks out of the room and towards the front door. He
walks quickly but slows as he approaches the door. Just as
he gets there. The doors start to shake as if someone is
trying to get in. Noah approaches the doors with caution.

He stands in front of the shaking doors but does not go out.
The doors stop shaking. Noah waits a beat then slowly opens
the door.

He looks out a crack in the door and as he does, Helen, who
had turned around to leave, turns back around.

HELEN
There you are.

NOAH
Yes. Here i am.

Noah steps outside.

CUT TO:

EXT. METROPOLIS COMMUNITY SCHOOL FOR FURTHER EDUCATION-DAY

HELEN
They told me you were going to be
OK. That you were in on the whole
thing.

NOAH
No, not really.

HELEN
Is there something wrong?

NOAH
Yes. There are many things wrong.
But let's not stay here any longer.

HELEN
Where do you need to go? Are you
hurt?

NOAH
No. I've got one last thing on the
agenda.

EXT. IN FRONT OF 389 CLEVELAND ST.-DAY

Noah and Helen sit in Helen's car and look at the house.

HELEN
Do you think anyone is home?

NOAH
I'll will have to go and see.

HELEN
What are you going to say?

NOAH
Not much.

HELEN
Good luck.

Noah gets out of the car and walks towards 389 Cleveland St. He looks back at Helen and then knocks on the door.

There is no answer. He knocks again.

Still no answer.

Noah walks over to the window and looks inside. He sees no one.

He looks back at Helen. She is watching intently.

NOAH
I'm going to go around back.

HELEN
Sounds good.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEHIND 389 CLEVELAND ST.-DAY

Noah walks carefully around the trailer. As he rounds the corner he sees a woman (40-45) dressed in a house robe. She is not attractive. She is sitting in a fold out lawn chair reading.

NOAH
Hello.

WOMAN
Hello, what can i do for you?

The woman sets her book down and approaches Noah.

NOAH
I think I have something of yours.

Noah holds out the letter. The woman looks at it.

NOAH (CONT'D)
Is this yours?

WOMAN
Yes. I believe it is.

She takes it and looks it over.

THE HELEN
Where did you get this?

NOAH

Do you know a guy named Chester who worked at a gas station about a half hour south of here.

She tries hard to recollect. This surprises Noah.

THE HELEN

I don't think so.

NOAH

You don't know anybody who works at a gas station.

THE HELEN

No. Not really.

She sits back down and opens the letter.

She takes a moment and reads it.

NOAH

Is it for you.

THE HELEN

Yes.

NOAH

OK. Very good.

He turns to leave.

THE HELEN

Would you like to know what it says?

NOAH

No. But I would like to know why it's yours.

THE HELEN

I evidently met Chester about a month ago, at a restaurant. I remember it. We were in the lobby both waiting for a table and we struck up a small conversation. We talked for less than five minutes.

NOAH

That's it.

THE HELEN

That's it. Did he give this to you?

NOAH

No. He's dead. He killed himself
and I found him and I found this
letter. So I came to give it to
you.

THE HELEN

He's dead?

NOAH

Yes.

THE HELEN

Well thank you. Thank you for
bringing this to me. You did a
good thing.

NOAH

Helen.

THE HELEN

Yes.

NOAH

Are you some sort of angel or
something? Are you supernatural in
anyway?

THE HELEN

What?

NOAH

I just want to know if I was
unwittingly in some sort of
supernatural mixup. I think you
owe it to me to tell me.

THE HELEN

I'm just a middle aged lady.

NOAH

Really?

THE HELEN

What is it you need?

CUT TO:

EXT. IN FRONT OF 389 CLEVELAND ST.-DAY

Noah gets in the passenger side of the Celica.

HELEN

So.

NOAH

I found her.

HELEN

How did it go?

NOAH

She met the guy once.

HELEN

Once?

NOAH

At a restaurant. She didn't even know his name.

HELEN

Why the note?

NOAH

Last grasp at some humanity I guess.

HELEN

I guess. Who would you write that note to?

NOAH

I don't know.

HELEN

Do you want to know what i think about who you would write to?

NOAH

Go ahead.

HELEN

I think you're lonely. And I think you'd write it to me if it were today. And you don't really know me. So I think you know more about it than you let on. Your just a guy who got dumped and your sad and you really need someone to hang out with. Your blessed isolation has become your curse.

NOAH

So what now?

HELEN
Yes, what now?

NOAH
Do you have to go to work or
anything?

HELEN
No.

NOAH
Day off?

HELEN
Yes.

NOAH
I don't think I'm going to stay
here much longer.

HELEN
Understandable.

NOAH
Do you want to come with me?

HELEN
I'm glad you asked.

THE END