

# LAUNDRY DAY

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BART

This isn't a bus station, kid. You gonna get something?

KID

Uh, ok, sure. PBR?

The Kid fumbles in his pockets. Bart regards him.

BART

We have what's on tap and what's up there on the wall.

The Kid holds out an I.D. card.

KID

I'm legal.

Bart waves it away. Reaches into the cooler without looking.

BART

Let's make it easy on both of us. You get a... Amber. Four bucks.

KID

Oh, okay. Uh, hold on.

He pulls out the ziplock full of change--

BART

For the love of-- Ok, forget it, punk. The pieces of shit win. No one drink minimum for you today.

He walks away before the Kid can reply. The Kid sheepishly slouches down and faces the room.

He accidentally makes eye contact with a SCOWLING female gutterpunk, aka GUTTERFEMME, 21, tattoos & piercings, tank top under overalls. She isn't scowling at him, though: she's looking past him to the guy on his other side (ETHAN). The Kid quickly averts his eyes.

PAN TO: ETHAN looks up. Mid-20s with a wide open, appealing face. Skinny and earnest. Tattered second-hand army jacket. Soft flat cap. Sad starter moustache. He gives the Kid a nod.

ETHAN

Hey Bart, I'll take another Miller.

Bart GRUNTS and puts it in front of him.

As Bart turns around, Ethan hands the beer to the Kid.

ETHAN (cont'd)

Welcome to Czeck's, kid. First one's on the house.

KID

Thanks, man!

The Kid looks over as NATALEE storms in. 20s, not well taken care of, she's a street performer and looks it. Catholic-girl skirt, camisole over a sleeveless black-&-white striped shirt, tat of James Woods on bicep. Eye-shadow smeared. She's frazzled and full of tension.

She bee-lines to the bar. Nobody pays attention.

She tries to get Bart's attention, but her throat's dry, she only makes a RASPING SOUND. She swallows, composes herself.

NATALEE

Ummm... Bart? Hey, Bart?

Bart's at grill station. He's smoking. Turns around. Reacts with mild surprise at her and her state.

BART

Oh hey. Gimme a minute.

He turns back. Natalee leans across the bar.

NATALEE

(loud whisper/hiss)

Bart... Bart! We gotta talk, man...!

Bart waves her off without looking. The Kid is unnerved.

NATALEE (cont'd)

BART GODDAMMIT!

Bart turns and gives her a "WTF" shrug, spatula dangling.

ETHAN

Hey Natalee... What's up?

Natalee looks at him for the first time. Gives him a rote peck on the cheek. On stage, Dee's eyes flick over.

NATALEE

Hey Ethan. Now's a bad time.

She turns away. The Kid relaxes, sips his beer.



She tries to pull her off and slips, falling over. She lands with them on the floor.

FREEZE on Natalee's face and ZOOM IN slowly.

MATCH DISSOLVE TO:

9 **INT. BART'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - EARLIER** 9

Natalee's sleeping face. Crumpled clothes for a pillow.

She's lying on a battered hide-a-bed sofa, under a black leather duster. Her BARE FEET stick out the bottom.

She STIRS, winces, smacks her lips. HER EYES OPEN. SITS UP and THROWS THE DUSTER OFF. She's only wearing bracelets, earrings, and a paper wristband from a club.

Now alert, she looks at herself with growing panic. She stands and PACES, chewing at her fingernails.

She finds her TALL BLACK LEATHER BOOTS. Picks them up, trying to figure something out. Looks out the window, then around at what's clearly a bachelor pad. Sees a CONDOM on the floor by the wall. Frowns.

She puts her boots on.

Now incongruously naked except for giant black shit-kickers, the tension flows out of her. DEEP BREATH. Rolls her head. Shakes her limbs, CLOMPS her heels. The panic is gone.

Cell phone. Autodials. While it rings she lights a butt she finds in an ashtray. Grabs clothes off floor and couch. Same ones as when we met her.

10 **INT. BART'S BATHROOM** 10

Puts toilet seat down and sits. Ashes in the sink. Drums her fingers on the phone anxiously.

NATALEE

Fucking pick up already, Bart...

She pees, hangs up, wipes, looks, REACTS. This time it takes a major breath and effort to remain calm. REDIALS.



16 **EXT. FRENCHMEN STREET - DAY**

16

A nightclub district with bars and cafes. Natalee walks toward an empty lot, but there's a SKIFFLE BAND setting up there. The singer, AURA, calls out to her.

AURA

Sorry, hon! The first corner on Decatur is open, I think.

Natalee nods, resigned.

AURA (cont'd)

Hey Nat girl the NOPD's been chilling people 'bout permits. They took Two Quarters to OPP. Be on your toes.

NATALEE

What? He's harmless. Fuckers.

Nat waves thanks. Aura shrugs. Dee passes unseen on a bike.

17 **EXT. URSALINES PARK - DAY**

17

\*

A MAGICIAN holds court and does card tricks. Natalee sighs and walks past. \*

**ANOTHER INTERSECTION**

She turns the corner but a HUMAN STATUE is in the doorway arch that's the primo spot. She's got a small crowd throwing money. Nat huffs, turns around, and goes back.

18 **EXT. WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK - DAY**

18

On the edge of the park, Natalee removes A LONG BATON, the lunch pail, and a WASH CLOTH from her pack. Places them in a semi-circle around herself. \*

Opens the lunch pail. Removes lipstick, applies it as she scans the park. Seeds the pail lid with cash. \*

Natalee picks up the baton, pours lighter fluid on the ends, lights it, and starts TWIRLING. Some tourists stop to watch.

Nat spins it around her neck. The tourists APPLAUD. Money is put in the hat. More stop. Natalee offers a strained smile. She can't completely focus.



BEATRIX

Hey Nat!

NATALEE

Hey Beatrix. Wendy leave a check for me? I covered some shifts during Bayou Fest.

BEATRIX

(rummaging)

Not that I know of.

NATALEE

Fuck, it's been a month, I need that money.

BEATRIX

She's probably just drunk. I'll remind her.

NATALEE

You rock.

BEATRIX

(holds up a pill, pops it)

Ethan just dropped off something to help me get through this double.

NATALEE

Where'd he go, baby?

BEATRIX

Bar next door, I think.

NATALEE

Thanks, hon.

22        **INT. THE BAR NEXT DOOR**

22

Mostly empty. Big window onto the street. Nat enters.

NATALEE

Hey, you seen Ethan?

LAZY BARTENDER

(not looking up)

Courtyard.

\*

23        **EXT. THE BAR NEXT DOOR - REAR COURTYARD**

23

Nat emerges onto a narrow poorly-lit back patio. It's empty.

NATALEE

Ethan...?

Ethan emerges from the Men's Room. He seems taller, tougher, better groomed, and distinctly cooler than in the opening scene. *We are seeing him through Natalee's eyes.*

She runs into his surprised arms, shedding her backpack and gear. He slides his hands down to her hips.

ETHAN

Hey... Hey... What's wrong? Let make you feel better.

He pulls a JOINT from a PILL BOTTLE from one pocket, sticks it between her lips, lights it. She inhales, closes her eyes.

NATALEE

Ahhh... Bart was out when I woke up, his stash was cashed, couldn't work without the po-po hassling me.

He starts nuzzling her neck, pulling her forward, towards the bathroom.

NATALEE (cont'd)

You know I'm Samson in these boots, right?

ETHAN

(muffled on her skin)  
Delilah?

NATALEE

No, Samson. I think Bartmmph--

Ethan's put a full-on, open-mouthed kiss on her. After a beat, she returns it.

ETHAN

Enough about your boyfriend.

He grabs her ass, lifts her up. She puts a knee on his hip and he carries her into the bathroom.

NATALEE

Slow and gentle, baby...

The door SLAMS behind them.

24

**INT. THE BAR NEXT DOOR - SOME TIME LATER**

24

Ethan and Natalee go back into the bar. She nudges her bra strap. Ethan sits at the bar. She stays standing, nervous.

NATALEE

Guess I should go. Lesley wants to get a drink.

ETHAN

Okay.

NATALEE

Hey, uh, I think I need a favor...

ETHAN

(misunderstanding)

Sure.

He pulls half a joint from his pocket and slips it to her.

NATALEE

Oh. Uh, thanks, man.

She exits.

25

**EXT. SIDEWALK CAFE - A LITTLE LATER**

25

Natalee sits down next to LESLEY, 30s, wearing business attire. A tat sleeve peeks out from her cuffs.

LESLEY

Oh my god, dear, you don't look so good.

NATALEE

I don't know what the fuck is going on with my life anymore.

LESLEY

Tell me about it!

NATALEE

I... Lesley, in all the years we've been friends, what's the one thing you know about me?

LESLEY

(laughing)

Oh, I dunno... You never take those boots off?

NATALEE

(well-practiced)

Right! I work, 'rassal, fuck,  
fight, drink, and dance in my  
Natalee King Coles.

LESLEY

Yup yup. So you only take them off  
for...?

NATALEE

I don't. I don't take them off.

She lights a cigarette.

LESLEY

You can't smoke here.

NATALEE

We're outside, ay-kay-ay, the  
smoking section.

LESLEY

They signed a "smoke-free" pact.

Lesley shrugs and smiles. Natalee doesn't.

NATALEE

Fucking non-smoking sections. In  
New Orleans! There should be one  
place left in America where a grown-  
ass man can do something bad for  
herself.

LESLEY

Preach it, sister.

NATALEE

(abruptly)

There's a chance Bart raped me last  
night.

LESLEY

(sitting up)

What! Don't joke about that.

NATALEE

I woke up with my boots off.

LESLEY

Holy shit, Natalee, that's not  
evidence. What about physical  
damage?

NATALEE

Some soreness. And spotting this morning. Dried.

Lesley slumps back, disturbed.

LESLEY

And? That's not enough.

NATALEE

You don't believe me?

LESLEY

You need proof before you ruin a guy's life! Don't be a Jeanette!

NATALEE

What--?! Jeanette really was raped!

LESLEY

C'mon, Nat. She owed him money, he got her fired, she got her gorillas at the bar to run him outta town.

Nat stands up slowly, picks up her backpack.

NATALEE

Lesley, I was there that night. She came to me.

She walks off.

LESLEY

Natalee! Don't be a drama queen!

The waitress arrives with their drinks. Lesley looks up and shrugs. Takes both drinks.

26

**EXT. AROUND THE CORNER**

26

Natalee turns the corner and slows her stride. Takes a deep breath. Dee passes on a bike. Neither notice the other.

Nat takes two balls from her pocket and juggles them in her left hand as she pulls out her phone.

NATALEE

Where the fuck is everybody when I need them?

Hits redial yet again and continues walking.

27

**EXT. URSALINES PARK - A LITTLE LATER**

27

\*

The magician is gone. Natalee, finishing a po' boy, pumps her fist and quickly sets up. Seeds the hat with some bills.

NATALEE

Hellooooo good people of New Orleans...

\*

\*

\*

DISSOLVE TO:

Nat spins her fire baton. Passers-by are more annoyed than enticed. Nat looks down at the pail and sees only her bills.

\*

GutterFemme skulks up with 2 GREASY FRIENDS and a dog on a rope leash. The dog looks embarrassed.

GUTTERFEMME

Hey lady, that's pretty cool. Do you think you could help us with a few bucks for beer?

NATALEE

(not stopping)

You fucking kidding me? I'm working and you want charity for nothing?

GUTTERFEMME

(unfazed)

Can you help us get fucked up then?

NATALEE

Oh that's fucking perfect. Get out of here, yer scaring business away.

GUTTERFEMME

(looking in hat)

Some business.

NATALEE

If you got cash, go to the Bar Next Door and find Ethan. Just go away.

GUTTERFEMME

Okay. Jesus Christ.

Her pals leave. She lingers until Nat's in mid-trick, then STEALS THE MONEY from the pail.

\*

Nat reacts but can't stop fast enough. They're halfway down the block.

NATALEE

Motherfucking gutterpunks!

She unleashes a HAIR-RAISING SCREAM. People in every direction scatter.

28 **EXT. FRENCHMEN STREET - MINUTES LATER**

28

Natalee marches up the street. Upset, overwhelmed. \*

At the vacant lot, the skiffle band is on break, sitting on their instruments. Aura sees Nat and runs up, concerned.

NATALEE  
(not stopping)  
This isn't a good time, Aura.

AURA  
What's wrong? You look like you need a friend.

NATALEE  
A friend, a shower, and a gun.

AURA  
Sister, if you're serious, I can hook you up.

She's serious. Natalee stops.

NATALEE  
..With which?

29 **EXT. FRENCHMEN DELI - MINUTES LATER**

29

They sit on an overturned Times-Picayune box across from the vacant lot. Swing their legs and pass the half joint.

NATALEE  
...So it's the boots. Not just the blood, or how my body feels. It's the fucking boots I believe. I'd never take them off before crashing out like that. The boots don't lie.

AURA  
I believe you.

NATALEE  
It's-- What?

AURA  
I believe you. You need to do something about it.

NATALEE

Like go to the cops, say pretty  
please and beg for a free rape kit?

AURA

Nah fuck the cops. Go to the  
Dauphine Clinic.

NATALEE

Ugh I can't. And it wouldn't  
matter.

AURA

You can't or you won't? Gotta get  
it on record.

A homeless man with a cane, TWO QUARTERS GEORGE, walks up.

TWO QUARTERS GEORGE

Excuse me, ladies, do you have two  
quarters I could--

AURA

Not now, George.

NATALEE

Not now George.

TWO QUARTERS GEORGE (cont'd)

Sorry ma'am.

The gals pause, realizing at the same time.

AURA

George, they said--

NATALEE

--you were in OPP?

TWO QUARTERS GEORGE

Nah, that was last week. Excuse me,  
ladies.

He doffs his cap and moves along. Natalee turns back.

NATALEE

There's no physical evidence.

AURA

You don't know that until you're  
examined.

NATALEE

It won't matter. I had sex with him  
that afternoon.

AURA

Oh. Well you'll have to lie about that.

NATALEE

And I was drunk, and on X, and I didn't wake up.

AURA

Lie about that too. It's important.

NATALEE

Aura, I love you but you're a retard. This is, ya know, "he-said she-said" and there's no leg.

A car of DRUNK TRANNIES cruises by. They have Tollhouse cookies. The gals duck as COOKIES EXPLODE around them.

AURA

Then we get our own revenge on him.

NATALEE

No. I'm not even sure what happened.

AURA

You said you were sure.

NATALEE

I was sure until I talked to you.

AURA

Well I'm sure.

She pulls on her wallet chain. Instead of a wallet, dangerous-looking BRASS KNUCKLES swing out of her back pocket.

NATALEE

Put that away. I don't even know where Bart is.

(gets up)

Fine, I'll go to the stupid clinic.

30

**EXT. DAUPHINE WOMENS CLINIC**

30

A converted storefront. Wicker basket of condoms hangs by the door. A RED CROSS and a Christian cross over it.

Nat's approaching when she sees DEE, the singer from Czeck's band, walking in her direction. *Dee has the hair, makeup, and demeanor of an over-the-hill Jersey tramp: Nat's POV.*

NATALEE

Oh fuck.

Nowhere to turn or hide. Damn.

They cross paths in front of the clinic.

DEE

(smacking gum)

Ah hey. Lookit you.

NATALEE

(feigning surprise)

Oh! Hi, Dee.

They both do an awkward half-stopping, half-turning.

DEE

(smirking)

Earth to Nat...

NATALEE

Sorry. Just pondering the stuff  
that men don't tell us.

DEE

Oh, I'm sure if it was really  
important they'd tell us.

NATALEE

Dare to dream. Well, I gotta run.

DEE

(smirking)

Not going in?

NATALEE

Uh, what? No, I'm going to work.

DEE

Me too. Playing Czeck's on your  
boyfriend's shift later.

NATALEE

(Eureka!)

That's right! He follows Freddy on  
Wednesdays.

DEE

(winking)

You're welcome.

She grabs a handful of condoms from the basket and saunters off. Nat is relieved. She turns back, but Dee is there.

But Dee suddenly TURNS BACK. Nat hesitates. Another awkward moment, but both decide to reverse direction. As they pass:

NATALEE  
Forgot something.

DEE  
Want a sandwich.

31

**EXT. FRENCHMEN STREET - DUSK**

31

\*

Aura is leaving the Deli with a soda when Natalee walks up.

NATALEE  
Fuck it. His shift at Czeck's  
begins soon. I'll meet him there.

AURA  
Oh goody!

Aura pulls her chain and the brass knuckles re-appear. Then she pulls on the other end of it, and a SWITCHBLADE emerges.

NATALEE  
(wagging finger)  
No violence!

Aura gives her a puppy-dog face.

NATALEE (cont'd)  
..Yet.

Aura smiles and puts the knife away. Nat isn't having as much fun.

NATALEE (cont'd)  
Dee's band is playing. So at least  
there's that.

AURA  
She's cool but what she's doing is  
wrong.

NATALEE  
No, I know, Bart explained, I said  
it was okay. It's Ethan that's  
wrong for cheating on her.

AURA  
She's just using him cuz he's a  
dealer.

NATALEE  
Some dealer.  
(they chuckle)  
At least he's cute.



Bart glances back.

BART  
Oh hey. Gimme a minute.

He moves over to the cooler, starts stacking.

NATALEE  
Bart... I gotta talk to you... Bart! We  
gotta talk!

Bart waves her off. Natalee frowns.

NATALEE (cont'd)  
BART GODDAMMIT!

Without turning around Bart gives her an impatient shrug.

ETHAN (O.S.)  
Hey Nat. What're you doing here?

Natalee gives him a rote peck on the cheek.

NATALEE  
Hey Ethan. I could ask you the same  
thing, but now's a bad time.

She looks back at the entrance. Makes a decision. Pulls out her phone, starts to dial.

FREEZE FRAME: Natalee frowns at her phone, holding a button down. Seated beside her, Ethan thinks hard. The Kid is being clipped from behind by a charging Gutterfemme.

SNAP INTO MOTION:

GUTTERFEMME  
You gypping motherfucker!

WHAM! Ethan is tackled to the floor.

ETHAN  
The werewalrus! It's a set up!

Old Man Dillard slaps away. Natalee looks down and recognizes the Gutterfemme.

NATALEE  
Hey! Get off him you goddamn thief!

She gets one hand on the Gutterfemme but slips in the beer, falling on the pile. The Gutterfemme PUNCHES her in the head. Natalee GRABS HER HAIR. Her face is smooshed by a hand.



He KNOCKS on a door with a sign "Mad Scientist at work! KEEP OUT!"

ETHAN

Boba! Hey, Bobes! Get up, Bobesy, today's the big day! I gotta that deal going, so I gotta get into my room.

\*  
\*  
\*

No reply. He KNOCKS some more.

\*

BOBA (O.S.)

Duuuuude... we're not done in here man. That bluebell diesel knocked us tits up.

\*  
\*  
\*

ETHAN

Good shit, right?

\*

BOBA (O.S.)

Nah dude I'm sick and shit. Flipped my turtle right the fuck over. Get me some groceries man. And leave the good shit by the door.

\*  
\*  
\*

ETHAN

Oh. Uh, okay. I'll just--

\*

BOBA (O.S.)

Add it to my tab, bro.

Ethan nods. Per usual. Puts a baggie by the door. Notices his shirt is on backwards, and turns it around.

\*

36

**LIVING ROOM**

36

\*

He sits down with a box of Lucky Charms. Picks up the old bowl on the floor, shoos the cat away, and pours cereal in it. Eats.

\*  
\*  
\*

Forgotten on the table, his phone flicks from 2:39pm to 2:40pm. It BUZZES.

\*

INSERT: TEXT MESSAGE: "Dee: ZIPPERS!"

\*

He glances at it, unperturbed. Goes back to reading the box.

On the table by the phone is a woman's fascinator hat.

\*

37

**EXT. CREOLE COTTAGE - FRONT - DAY**

37

Ethan unlatches a gate and enters an overgrown path.

38

**EXT. CREOLE COTTAGE BACKYARD**

38

Two hippies lounge in rusty lawn chairs by a radio.

ETHAN

Karl, Kylie. Sup dawgs.

KYLIE

(getting up)

My man Ethan.

They do the two-slap hippie shake.

KYLIE (cont'd)

(sitting down again)

We smoked that whole O-Z listening  
to O-Z this weekend.

Everybody laughs. Ethan produces some baggies.

ETHAN

Right on. Well I got new blueberry  
sour diesel. And chocolope chronic.  
And if you have a reason to  
celebrate, Dutch Mountain Kind.

KYLIE

Dutch Mountain...?

ETHAN

Hybrid of Mount Cook and Dutch  
Dragon. Sort of an up but not too,  
with a mellow sorta  
(high whistle)  
I got this super-shwag because I'm  
doing a big-ass deal with Paley  
today.

The guys stop in shock. Unlit joint hangs from Karl's mouth.

KYLIE

Woah. Brah so I hope you got yer  
shit together cuz Paley don't play.

ETHAN

He's gonna hook me up with the  
freshest west coast and I'll  
distribute for him in the triangle.

KYLIE

I knew this guy, worked at DOA with Big Mike, Mike's cousin did a deal with Paley and this other guy and it went bad and that other guy just straight up disappeared.

ETHAN

This is career-making, man. Get me a promotion. Going upstairs.

KYLIE

Damn dude, you all serious and shit. Career path. Nice.

Ethan does a goofy but charming pantomime of adjusting his tie and smoothing his hair. Kylie looks at his joint.

KYLIE (cont'd)

This is the blue, right? This tastes like, uh, brickweed, man.

ETHAN

That's what I smoke myself.

KYLIE

Ya sure? Your last batch was so weak we're re-upping just to stay high.

ETHAN

I swear, bro. This is my home brew.

KYLIE

(grabs two baggies)  
Okay, man. 2 eighths.

ETHAN

That'll be, uh, 105, gentleman.

KYLIE

Don't forget, last time we had less than the total. But you had that extra jay and I was short, and Karl had that twenty. So we were gonna square up next time.

Kylie takes some cash from Karl, combines it with his own, and presses it into Ethan's hand.

KYLIE (cont'd)

Here ya go, bro. One fifteen.  
(takes, pauses)  
And... cough... the change cough... brah?

ETHAN

Right!

Ethan peels off a twenty, pauses uncertainly. Kylie takes it.

KYLIE

(reclining)

See ya, bro.

Ethan stands awkwardly. They ignore him. He looks at the wad of cash, pockets it, and leaves.

39

**INT/EXT. CAFE NEGRECT - SOON AFTER**

39

Spacious but poorly maintained. It hasn't opened yet.

Ethan enters. Behind the bar, WILLOW sets down a couple cases of beer with a SLAM. She's a tall, angry, beanpole.

WILLOW

Goddamn it's about time!

ETHAN

Hi, Willow!

WILLOW

I'm carrying cases myself when I should be counting the drawer!

ETHAN

I'm sorry, I'll get the rest.

WILLOW

You're such a tool. Fucking christ.

Ethan isn't bothered, seems to think she's kidding. He walks to the pile of cases, grabs a couple.

ETHAN

I've got this major deal with--

WILLOW

Holy shit! Did I ask you to blather at me?

He starts hauling the beer into the coolers.

WILLOW (cont'd)

Not so fast. I want a quarter of your finest.

Ethan puts down a case, rummages pockets, produces a baggie.

ETHAN

That's--

WILLOW

(snatching the baggie)  
I'm docking you 15 minutes. I'll  
take the rest out of your tips.

ETHAN

(struggling)  
Er, don't you mean, take it out of  
your tips?

WILLOW

(snaps)  
Okay that's it, you're finished for  
the day! Go home!

ETHAN

What?! For how long?

WILLOW

Until I change my mind.

She goes back to the register. Ethan puts the case in the cooler and slinks away.

40        **EXT. CAFE NEGRECT**        40

Ethan sheepishly exits. Looks around. Sighs.

He digs in his pockets. Can't find what he wants. Frowns.

41        **INT. ETHAN'S APARTMENT**        41

He enters, looks around. Goes into the kitchen. His cell is still on the counter. He grabs it.

"4 NEW MESSAGES FROM DEE."

He grabs a bong and does a hit, standing at the counter by the woman's fascinator hat.

42        **INT/EXT. BARREL BOTTOM - LOWER DECATUR STREET**        42

He walks along. His belly rumbles. He rubs it.

LUCKY (O.S.)

Yo candyman!

Ethan looks up. LUCKY waves.

\*

ETHAN

Hey Lucky dawg what up.

Quick 2-beat handshake.

LUCKY

Trix needs you inside.

Lucky winks. Ethan nods. Cool. That means business. \*

43

**INT. BARREL BOTTOM**

43

Ethan huddles with Bartendrix at the end of the bar.

ETHAN

This is perfect pick-me up. Tastes like Booberry cereal.

BEATRIX

No way. I used to get boxes of that shit shipped to me from Portland.

She sniffs the bag.

Beatrix (cont'd)

Hmm, I don't smell it, but I gotta try it. Also, I need a coupla pills to keep me alert through this shift.

ETHAN

I think I got something for that. Oh yeah, here ya go.

He finds some pills. She hands over some cash.

44

**EXT. LOWER DECATUR - DAY - SOON AFTER**

44

Ethan walks and whistles the horn line to some hippie classic of the public domain.

STOVEY (O.S.)

Yo Eat-man!

Ethan turns. STOVEY-- a 250lb, 6'4" young black man-- waves from the doorway of a closed restaurant.

ETHAN

Ayy Stovey, what up bro.

They exchange a different handshake, one with 4 beats that ends with a snap. Ethan steps into the shade with him.

STOVEY

Mmm mmm, I hear you got the cannibal kush, son.

ETHAN

That's the tip of the iceberg. Choco-chronic, blue diesel, Himalayan arugula.

STOVEY

Well hell, let's do a pu-pu platter. An eighth of each.

Ethan fumbles with baggies in his pockets.

Stovey (cont'd)

So, yo, straight up, you got business with Paley?

ETHAN

Sure do. He got the hookup, I got the connects.

Stovey rolls his eyes and tries to be avuncular.

STOVEY

You're a good kid, Ethan, ya work hard and all, but don't be messing around upstairs. Paley don't play.

ETHAN

Yeah, but it's my step up.

STOVEY

People get hurt. You oughta be in college or something. What you wanna do with your life?

ETHAN

This. Right now, doing what I'm doing...

(hands baggies to him)

...is the thing that makes me happy. It's my calling. ...Oh, and this is 90 bucks.

STOVEY

That's your calling, 90 bucks?

ETHAN

I, just want my piece. Prove myself, go full-time, move up to powder.

[more]

ETHAN (cont'd)  
Comfortable cash, a good woman,  
respect. Like what you got with  
music.

STOVEY  
My bass might, at the worst, get me  
puked on. You could end up feeding  
catfish. Lookit, your baggies ain't  
even labeled.

ETHAN  
You can sorta tell by the color.  
That's the choco.

STOVEY  
(opens and sniffs one)  
Smells like schwag.

ETHAN  
Aw, it's okay. Not fragrant this  
season.

Stovey pulls out a sticker sheet of little fleur-de-lises. He sticks one on the shwag and another on an identical bag.

He gives Ethan the stickers and a \$100 bill. Ethan takes them and hands him back a \$20.

STOVEY  
I owe ya ten. Why not give me ten  
bucks of the Maui and call it even?

ETHAN  
Good idea. Here.

STOVEY  
No, Ethan, I tricked you, Gotta be  
on your toes, brah. You don't give  
me anything if I owe you.

ETHAN  
(laughing)  
Right! Nice one. You had me going.

He doesn't get it. Stovey is frustrated. Hands him a ten.

STOVEY  
Eths, how much powder fits in this  
baggie?

ETHAN  
(squinting)  
Uh. An eighth? No, a sixteenth.

STOVEY

Powder's in METRIC, Ethan. You just ain't a details man, and details are the devil. I knew my old lady was fooling around with her manager cuz she bitched about little details of him. When people are intimate, details get under the skin, become huge.

ETHAN

It's a big opportunity, man. Don't jinx it with negativity.

He winks, smiles. Stovey is concerned but shrugs.

ZZZRT-- Ethan looks down at his phone.

TEXT MESSAGE: "DEE: FASCN8R! ZIPPERZ!"

Ethan still has no idea what this means.

45

**INT. THE BAR NEXT DOOR**

45

Ethan messily finishes a slice of honey-glazed Hawaiian. Sips a beer. His stomach makes an UNHAPPY NOISE.

ETHAN

Oh shit.

LAZY BARTENDER

What?

ETHAN

I'm lactose intolerant.

He jumps off the stool in a panic. Bartender throws him a roll of paper towels.

LAZY BARTENDER

No tee-pee back there.

Ethan uses the roll to salute with gratitude and runs out to the back courtyard.

46

**EXT. BAR NEXT DOOR COURTYARD - SOON AFTER**

46

Ethan emerges, sweaty and pale, from the Men's Room, tucking his shirt in.

NATALEE (O.S.)

Ethan...?

Ethan looks up. Natalee is older, sadder, and more burnt-out-looking. We're seeing her through Ethan's eyes.

ETHAN

Oh hey. Is something wrong?

She runs into his arms, embracing him. Surprised, he hugs her back, awkwardly patting her back.

ETHAN (cont'd)

Hey... Hey... You okay? Wanna toke?

He fumbles out bags of weed from various pockets. A joint falls to the ground. He grabs at it.

NATALEE

This day is already so fucking fucked!

ETHAN

Here, mellow out, Nat.

He sticks the joint between her lips, lights it. She inhales, closes her eyes.

NATALEE

Ahhh... Bart was out when I woke up, then I couldn't find a spot to work without the po-po hassling me.

(hands joint back)

This shit is schwag, man.

He takes it back.

NATALEE (cont'd)

So, uh... Wanna fuck?

She steps up, kisses him, accidentally stepping on his foot.

ETHAN

Ow!

NATALEE

Don't fucking touch my boots! You know how I feel about my boots!

The storm passes. She smirks and pushes him into the Men's Room.

Ethan and Natalee go back into the bar. Ethan is ruffled but unperturbed. Natalee looks annoyed.

NATALEE

Ok well I gotta go. Aura and I are gonna go fuck shit up.

ETHAN

Okay.

NATALEE

Well, gimme the rest, already.

He pulls the rest of the joint from his pocket and slips it to her. She exits. Ethan watches her, confused and concerned.

His phone buzzes. TEXT MESSAGE: "DEE: FASSIN8 4 ZIPPRS!?!". He starts to type a response when someone TAPS his shoulder. He turns-- it's the GUTTERFEMME.

LAZY BARTENDER

Hey, no dogs! Wait outside.

\*

He points at the door where her posse is huddled in the doorway. They slink out.

GUTTERFEMME

Can I talk to you outside real quick?

48 **EXT. THE BAR NEXT DOOR - MOMENTS LATER**

48

In a doorway, in plain view of traffic and passersby, Gutterfemme holds out some cash. Ethan holds out a few bags of weed. She takes the one with a fleur-de-lis sticker on it and hands over the cash.

49 **EXT. A&Z CONVENIENCE STORE - LOWER DECATUR**

49

Ethan exits, chomping a Hubig's pie. Two Quarters George walks by and stops.

TWO QUARTERS GEORGE

Say by any chance do you have two quarters?

Ethan gives him a dollar bill. George scowls. Drops it.

\*

DEE (O.S.)

George! You know better.

\*

\*

Dee pulls up on a bicycle, skids to a semi-controlled stop. Shakes her hair out. ROCK STAR. *More glamorous than usual.*

\*

\*

TWO QUARTERS GEORGE

Sorry, ma'am.

He picks up the dollar and leaves. \*

DEE

Ethan, I've been looking all over for you!

Ethan MUMBLES incoherently, mouth full of pie.

DEE (cont'd)

Did you get my messages? I need my fascinator hat because the producer from the Squirrel Nut Zippers is coming to my gig tonight to scout me for their next album. \*

ETHAN \*

No, no, sorry. You gotta gig tonight or something?

DEE

I told you, we're covering for Duane. Bart's shift. That guy is a damn pain.

ETHAN

I thought you liked Bart.

DEE

Maybe once upon a time. He's got this way of like, smiling, but, ya know, not smiling, that's just so frickin' irritating.

ETHAN

Huh.

DEE

Don't worry about it. It's just, ya know, the little details you pick up on with people you work with.

ETHAN

Huh.

Gears are slowly starting to turn in Ethan's head.

DEE

Wow, a real Oscar Wilde.

ETHAN

Guess what? I have a meeting with Paley.

DEE

Oh baby, I'm sure you'll do great. Just don't go high. \*

ETHAN

Don't worry, I haven't smoked enough yet to be high.

DEE \*

If he asks if you use the stuff, tell him you feel it's important for a salesman to appreciate the product as a customer too. That's what I told Walgreens when they fired me for stealing cosmetics.

ETHAN

Oo that's good.

She kisses him on the cheek. Gets on bike. \*

DEE

Come by Czeck's for my show.

ETHAN

Wouldn't miss it.

DEE

Your pie made me hungry. I'm going to Verti Mart.

She rides off.

50

**EXT. CZECK'S - SOON AFTER**

50

Ethan stands on the corner, nervous. He takes the joint from his pocket, looks around, puts it back. Chews his nails.

A canary yellow PEDICAB pulls up in front of him. In the back is a well-groomed heavy-set man, 50s, MR GOAT, sipping a pink daiquiri. A lapdog sits next to him.

MR GOAT

You Ethan?

He has a deep voice and a minor lisp. He doesn't get out.

ETHAN

You... You Paley?

MR GOAT

Hell no. I'm Mr Goat. Get in.

Ethan wasn't expecting that. He looks at the driver--  
tracksuit, 20s, wiggery (MATT)-- who just shrugs. Ethan gets  
in, sits backwards facing Goat.

51

**EXT. TRAVELLING THROUGH STREETS**

51

With a couple grunts from the Driver, they pull into traffic  
and ride through the French Quarter.

ETHAN

This is a real honor. Who are you?

MR GOAT

I speak for Paley is all you need  
to know. He likes you, kid, but we  
do have concerns.

ETHAN

I'm ready to step up. He'll be  
impressed.

MR GOAT

Worry about impressing me right  
now.

ETHAN

Sorry.

MR GOAT

Don't say sorry.

ETHAN

Sorry, I'll stop. Oops, sorry.

Mr Goat just stares. He's not paid enough for this.

MR GOAT

We ain't a hunnert percent sure yer  
ready to "step up" as you say.

ETHAN

I'm not?

MR GOAT

How much have you moved today?

ETHAN

About... uh yeah, about two ounces.

MR GOAT

And how much have you smoked?

ETHAN

Oh, uh... Dunno.

MR GOAT

We get nervous when the salesman  
smokes more than the customers.

ETHAN

I think it's important to talk  
about the product as a fan--

DRIVER (O.S.)

WOAH!

K-THUNK. The pedicab RUNS OVER SOMETHING and the left side  
POPS INTO THE AIR. Expressionless, Mr Goat watches half his  
daiquiri go flying into the street.

VOICE (O.S.)

OW!

The cab lands with a stuttering CRASH. Ethan, facing  
backwards, sees that they've just run over someone who was  
thrown from a freak bicycle/pedicab/mule carriage accident.  
Before he can react--

MR GOAT

Right. Anyway. So here's what's  
gonna happen. I'm gonna hook you up  
with about a batch of stuff.

ETHAN

(swallowing)

I want powder.

Mr Goat raises his eyebrows.

MR GOAT

Schwag, chronic, powder, potpourri,  
you get what we decide. And you  
sell it. And you bring us 3 grand.

ETHAN

(looking into street)

That's a cool bike.

MR GOAT

Focus.

ETHAN

No prob. Three grand. All over it.

MR GOAT

...In 24 hours. I'll meet you at the same corner tomorrow.

ETHAN

One day? Ohhhh. Shit. Okay.

A51 **EXT. CZECK'S - LATE AFTERNOON**

A51 \*

The pedicab pulls up. They're in front of Czeck's again.

MR GOAT

Meeting's over. We'll get the stuff to you.

ETHAN

You need my address?

GOAT

We got a guy, we call 'im the Werewalrus, he takes care of shipping and receiving. Stay in the bar. He'll give you this.

He hands Ethan a playing card: the King of Hearts.

ETHAN

Great! I won't let you down.

Mr Goat just stares at him. Ethan swallows and exits the pedicab. Watches it roll away.

\*

52 **INT. CZECK'S**

52

Ethan enters. Bart is out from behind the bar, has a wiry drunk, FREDDY (50s), in a bearhug.

BART

Dammit get the fuck outta here!

He shoves Freddy hard toward the door. Ethan jumps out of his way. *Bart is much better groomed than his prior appearances.*

FREDDY

Fuck you! I'm going to the bar next door!

(drunkenly switches gears)

Oh hey Ethan, how's business?

ETHAN

Howdy, Mr Freddy.



ETHAN

(sotto voce, but proud)  
Paley, I mean Mr Goat, said they'll  
bring me something here.

Freddy double-takes. Strokes his grey stubble.

FREDDY

Shit, kid. Movin' on up.

ETHAN

Damn skippy. Gotta move 3 grand of  
whatever they bring me by tomorrow.

He grins. Freddy considers him with concern.

FREDDY

Ethan... Phew. You on it?

ETHAN

It's, well, it's slightly more than  
my usual day, but I'm gonna hustle.

FREDDY

Remember Buffa's?

ETHAN

Sure. You were 86'd and my shift  
manager, at the same time.

FREDDY

Let's pretend that job was dealing,  
and you're cashing out for the  
night.

(grabs a napkin)

First list the sales.

ETHAN

Oh, like you're still my manager?  
Ok. First there was Karl and Kylie.

FREDDY

Not your roommate?

ETHAN

Oh. Uh. Yeah. Sort of. On credit.

Freddy writes on the napkin.

MATCH DISSOLVE TO:

The napkin now has a list of people, with lots of question  
marks, arrows, cross-outs, and the word "credit" all over.

FREDDY

So that's everyone. At 40 an eighth.

(new napkin)

Now let's reconcile the drawer.  
Empty your pockets.

Ethan digs. Wads of loose cash fall out of every one.

ETHAN

Uh.

He makes a pile of bills and starts to organize them. Freddy stops him. Holds up a napkin that says "\$1600"

FREDDY

Unless you keep Benjamins wadded up like jizz rags, you're not even close. Maybe half at best.

ETHAN

(shaken)

I... uh... um...

BART

(calling)

Hey put your cash away. What're you, stupid?

Ethan puts the money back in his pockets by the fistful.

FREDDY

What's really going on, Ethan?

ETHAN

I, I've got a reputation. This is my shot.

FREDDY

This is going to get you shot. How do you know they're not setting you up? The guy could bring you bad shit. Or stolen shit. Or tell the other dealers. Or bring real shit but be a narc.

Ethan hadn't considered this.

FREDDY (cont'd)

I'm not saying it's so. Let's say you're right. What happens if it's all on the level, and you don't have 3 grand tomorrow night?

Ethan goes pale. Drinks with a trembling hand.

ETHAN  
"Paley don't play."

FREDDY  
Dang straight.

ETHAN  
Fuck fuck fuck!

Bart comes over.

BART  
What the fuck's the matter with you  
two?

ETHAN  
I have 24 hours to move three  
thousand dollars worth of schwag.

BART  
(whatever)  
Well, you're in the right city.

He walks off. Ethan pulls a deep breath.

ETHAN  
I don't think he likes me.

FREDDY  
He may be a dick, but if some  
serious shit goes down in here,  
he's your closest cop.

Freddy claps him on the back, gets up, and leaves.

Ethan sits in his seat, shaking. The band makes a NOISE.

DEE (O.S.)  
Hey you came to my show?

Ethan JUMPS in his seat. Dee gestures toward the back.

55

**INT. CZECK'S BACK OFFICE - MINUTES LATER**

55

\*

Dee pulls the door closed. Ethan goes to kiss her, she gently  
pushes him back. He offers a joint.

DEE  
I can't, I might be pregnant. If  
it's yours, I might wanna keep it.  
[more]

DEE (cont'd)  
My career's dead, might as well  
start a family, right?

ETHAN  
"If"...?

DEE  
Point is, I don't have to do  
anything. But if you don't wanna  
keep it, I need to borrow \$200  
bucks for the clinic.

ETHAN  
I have 24 hours to raise three  
grand for Paley or I'm gonna wash  
up on the Riverwalk in the morning.

DEE  
Jesus. Really? Okay, never mind.  
I'm sure the band'll spot me.

She checks her hair, makeup in a mirror. Ethan slinks out. \*  
She pulls out her necklace, does a bump.

56

**INT. CZECK'S BAR - A LITTLE LATER**

56

The band plays. At the bar, ETHAN looks up as the Kid pulls  
out a bag of change. He doesn't notice Gutterfemme.

BART  
For the love of... Forget it, punk.  
You win. No one drink minimum for  
you today.

Ethan gives the Kid a nod, gestures at Bart.

ETHAN  
Hey Bart, I'll take another Miller.

Bart GRUNTS and pours. Ethan hands the beer to a surprised  
Kid. Behind them, Dee begins to sing.

ETHAN (cont'd)  
Welcome to Czeck's, kid. First  
one's on the house.

KID  
Thank you, sir!

NATALEE storms in. Bee-lines to the bar. Tries to get Bart's  
attention. Ethan tries to get her attention. Too subtle.

NATALEE

Ummm... Bart? Hey, Bart?

Natalee leans across the divider. Ethan leans toward her.

NATALEE (cont'd)

(whisper/hiss)

Bart... We gotta talk... Bart!

Bart waves her off. Ethan clears his throat.

NATALEE (cont'd)

BART GODDAMMIT!

Bart turns and gives her a "WTF" shrug, spatula dangling.

ETHAN

(too casual)

Hey Natalee... What's up?

Natalee sees him, pecks his cheek distractedly.

NATALEE

Hey Ethan. Now's a bad time.

Ethan looks from Bart to Nat and back. Hmmm. Wheels turning.

FREEZE FRAME: Ethan's pondering face. Behind him, the Kid's glass is in mid-air, beer erupting upwards, as the GutterFemme slams past him.

SNAP INTO MOTION:

Ethan falls over. Old Man Dillard hits the floor. The Kid's glass breaks.

GUTTERFEMME

You cheap fucking sonuvabitch  
lowlife scammer!

ETHAN

--the fuck--!!

Ethan holds up his arms to protect himself. From the floor, he hears Dee STUTTER AND STOP SINGING.

NATALEE (O.S.)

Hey! Get off him you fucking thief!

Ethan looks at her-- the Gutterfemme smooshes Natalee's face with a hand.

BART (O.S.)

DAMMIT! NOT ON MY WATCH PEOPLE!

Ethan looks up to see a pissed-off Bart come around the bar.

BART (cont'd)  
 LAST CHANCE. I DON'T GET PAID  
 ENOUGH TO WIPE YOUR DUMB ASSES.

Suddenly Bart is on a knee and snarling in Ethan's face.

BART (cont'd)  
 Don't think I'm going to help your  
 skinny ass, punk.

Bart is pushed. Ethan turns his head to see from where.

It's DEE. Her hand rises to her mouth.

Old Man Dillard rolls away.

CLOSE ON: Dee's face.

MATCH DISSOLVE:

57 **INT. DEE'S BEDROOM - THAT MORNING**

57

Dee sleeps. Opens her eyes. Frowns. Rolls over. The other side of the bed is empty.

She sits up, groggy, mumbling--

DEE  
 ...Bart? Can we talk?

She lies back down. Throws her arm over empty place next to her. Snores.

**LATER**

Dee wakes. Bart is sleeping beside her. She puts a leg over him. He rolls over.

**LATER**

Dee wakes. Bart is gone again. She rolls over and stares at something under her dresser-- an unopened bag with "Walgreens" on the side.

58 **INT. DEE'S BATHROOM**

58

Dee pees, one hand between her legs. Pulls out a pregnancy stick. Bad news.

DEE

Gahdammit. Be wrong, be wrong, be wrong.

She throws the stick at the trash.

59 **INT. DEE'S BEDROOM**

59

Dee sits at a wobbly card table in front of a worn laptop. She reads ReverbNation.com: DEE LISHIZ AND THE WHOLE GLORIES

A graph: "Fan activity: DOWN 80% over last 6 months"

She closes the window with a GRUNT. Behind it is an ad for the show AMERICA'S X-TALENT. "Coming to New Orleans!"

DEE

Pfft. Losers.

She closes that window. Behind it is Pitchfork.com. An ad: "Alt-Country Divas Dress for Success!" Hmmm.

CHIMES. She opens her email. From "Czeck's Booking"... Subject: "Last minute: Can you play tonight in Duane's slot?"

DEE (cont'd)

Oh- My- GOD! She's got some nerve.

Dee closes the laptop. Gets up. Clears throat.

DEE (cont'd)

(running scales)

LalalaLALALALA!

(opens closet)

Never playing that shit-hole again.

(scales)

LALALALAlalalalala...!

60 **INT. DEE'S LIVING ROOM**

60

In the mirror, she examines her face. Slowly turns her head side to side while methodically distorting her face.

61 **INT. DEE'S KITCHEN - SOON AFTER**

61

Unlike her nondescript bedroom, her kitchen is a bourgeois paradise. Knitted pot-holders and doilies, a breadmaker, exotic cast-iron pans on the walls, a wine rack.

Dee enters and opens the fridge. It's empty but for condiments and beverages.

DEE

Well, poop a doop. Eating out again today I guess.

Her iPhone's alarm RINGS. She looks at the oven's clock.

DEE (cont'd)

Oh oh oh! Gotta go gotta go!

She throw open a kitchen cabinet to reveal not dishes but BOXES OF CDs. Her CDs. Hundreds of unsold copies.

She grabs 2 of each, stuffs them in her purse.

She opens a drawer: stacks of bumper stickers on top of silverware. She grabs some, stuffs em in her purse too.

A FRANTIC COMMOTION AT THE DOOR-- Bart bursts into the room. He's covered in FLOUR and is more than a little pissed off.

DEE (cont'd)

Bart! What the heck?! Where were you this morning?

He passes her without a word. She tries to stop him and gets flour on her arm.

DEE (cont'd)

Dammit, I'm late for O-Z! What's going on?

BART (O.S.)

Showering!

DEE

You left a mess everywhere!

She wipes her arm on a doily. Gets an idea.

Opens another drawer, full of jewelry. Pulls out a necklace, puts it on. The medallion opens, and she does a bump of cocaine out of it. That's more like it!

SMASH CUT TO:

62

**EXT. FRENCH QUARTER - DAY**

62

Dee rides her bike through the streets, weaving around cars, mule carriages, walking tours, and riffraff. She's got a shit-eating grin and rides like Evel Knievel.

63

**EXT. WWOZ OFFICES - FRENCH QUARTER - SOON AFTER**

63

A hand-carved sign-- "WWOZ community radio - NOLA" -- swings above the door, which is in a pedestrian mall on a busy street.

Dee runs up to the door, STUMBLING over her wildly impractical platform sandals. She opens it but a HUGE GUARD blocks it.

GREG THE GUARD

You have an appointment with O.Z.?

DEE

Yes, I'm DJ Pillar's extra-special guest today. I'm a little--

CATERPILLAR (O.S.)

She's cool, Greg.

The Guard steps aside. DJ CATERPILLAR (30s) is scrawny, wears a suede coat with tassels, a wide-brim hat, and a moustache.

DEE

(placating)

Pillar, how are ya, ya look great, so sorry, things were crazy--

CATERPILLAR

I got a Fess live jam on with 3 minutes left, so I'll make this brief. I offered you a live performance with interview on my show today and you no-call/no-show'd me. You always talk about being ready for the big time but yer just another New Orleans lifer.

DEE

But I AM ready--

CATERPILLAR

You embarrassed me-- and yourself-- in front of the whole city.

DEE

But it's not too late--

CATERPILLAR

Just gimme a couple of yer CDs. I'll put em in the station library.

DEE

(fumbling in purse)

OK this is the latest, and this is my best-seller, and this is your favorite, remember? And here's--

Caterpillar grabs two without looking.

CATERPILLAR

It's really too bad this is how you let it go down.

He closes the door on her. She's devastated.

She pulls the remaining CDs from her purse and SMASHES THEM on the sidewalk. The Guard looks on, stone-faced.

\*  
\*

Dee realizes she's being watched. Pulls herself together. Gives the Guard her most defiant look. He slowly raises his hand... and sticks a FINGER UP HIS NOSE.

\*

She stomps off in a huff.

64

**EXT. FRENCH MARKET - SOON AFTER**

64

The French Market is across the street from WWOZ.

Dee-- phone jammed on her neck-- fumbles with her bike lock.

DEE

Bart, pick up, dang it. Caterpillar totally screwed me over! Like he's doing me such a huge favor. I've paid my dues! I did 3 years at Czeck's and 4 at the Barrel and I TOTALLY outgrew that pig-sty and Offbeat said I'm AWESOME and HIS SHOW SUCKS!

\*  
  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

(deep breaths, teary)

I got 5 albums, I'm on the wrong side of 40, got no manager, I'm OVERDUE, dammit. This town craps on songwriters. Fact. Only gig I been offered this week is at Czeck's covering for Duane. Screw that. I have dignity.

\*  
\*  
  
\*  
\*

(deep breath)

I quit.

Hangs up. She throws it in her basket. The phone BZZZs: "NEW VOICEMAIL" but she doesn't see, as she's wiping tears away with a trembling hand.

Deep breath. Pulls it together. Hops on the bike.

65 **EXT. NEW ORLEANS STREETS - DAY**

65

Dee rides shakily past/between cars, mule carriages, pedicabs, and pedestrians with the tunnel vision of a local. \*

DEE (V.O.)  
(pre-recorded)  
Hey baby, you've reached Dee Lishiz  
and the Whole Glories, check out my  
website!

--BEEEEEEEEEP--

BART (V.O.)  
(filtered a la voicemail)  
Hey. So... Put up your flyers and  
ran into Neville Marsalis, Jr,  
outside Port in a Storm. He knows  
Jimbo Walsh and says his sound  
mixer is in town tonight and  
looking for a good show away from  
the hoopla.

Dee wipes her tears away. Pulls herself together. \*

BART (V.O.)  
Told him to come by tonight. Gonna  
be dead, could use more business.  
Yer on the Czeck's schedule with a  
question mark by your name.  
(to someone else, fading)  
HEY FUCKO... NO FERRETS!--  
(cuts off)

She stands on the pedals and rides away. \*

66 **INT. SKIRO'S - SOON AFTER**

66

Skiro's is a bar/cafe/laundromat/liquor store/convenience store. And an Indian restaurant. Decor: idiosyncratic.

At the check-out counter, Dee hands the CLERK (30s, bored) her ELECTRIC BILL (from Entergy). \*

DEE  
Uh, just \$25 towards the balance.

Clerk rolls her eyes, processes it. Dee is ashamed.

TEXAN DANCER (O.S.)  
 Ohhhhmigod! Are you... Are you...  
 Dee from the Whole Glories?!

Dee turns. A pie-eyed tourist-- one of the dancers from the opening scene-- stares at her with effusive delight.

DEE  
 (stunned)  
 Y-Yes! That's me!

TEXAN DANCER  
 The hubby and I saw yous at that festival last weekend n' we thought y'all were just delightful! Oh, DEE-lightful, haha!

DEE  
 (eating it up)  
 We had a blast! Love the riverwalk.

TEXAN DANCER  
 You... are... SO! Talented! My stars, I think I bought both your CDs. My husband was fit to be tied but you know who wears the pants.

She winks horribly. Dee is like a girl on Christmas morning.

DEE  
 That's SO sweet of you! I have 5 CDs, actually, so... Oh.

She pulls a shattered corner of a jewel case from her purse.

TEXAN DANCER  
 Oh, it's okay, dear.  
 (looks around)  
 Say dear, want a toot?

She waggles a small vial of white powder. Dee squints. What?!

67

**INT. SKIRO'S BATHROOM**

67

Dee does a bump from the tourist's vial.

DEE  
 I totally shouldn't be doing this.

TEXAN DANCER  
 Rock and roll! I saw Phish at Jazz Fest! You're the best!  
 [more]

TEXAN DANCER (cont'd)  
My friends will be so jealous that  
I partied with a rock star!

DEE  
Tell them about my website!

As the Dancer does a bump, Dee slips out, literally high from the encounter.

68

**EXT. SKIRO'S - SOON AFTER**

68

Dee is at a table on the sidewalk. Across from her is Stovey. He regards her warily as she concludes a speech.

DEE  
...So you see, I don't need radio  
airplay, I've got "word of mouth"  
and "grassroots support," which the  
internet says is music's future!

STOVEY  
One tourist, Dee.

DEE  
Give the people what they want--  
and they want me! So I'm taking  
Duane's gig at Czeck's tonight.

STOVEY  
I quit.

DEE  
You can't quit, the band's about to  
take off. Don't throw away years of  
work.

STOVEY  
Why should I work for tips when all  
my other gigs are AT Tip's?

DEE  
(trump card)  
I'm going to be a mother! You don't  
quit on a mother!

STOVEY  
I got my own family, good luck with  
yours.

DEE  
Stovey! Quitting's for quitters!  
What about the BAND?!

STOVEY

The "band" is just you and whoever  
you got sitting in. And Czeck's?  
I'm out. I've hung my shoes.

Stovey holds up his hands and leaves.

DEE

STOVEY! ...Poop.

She stands up. SLAPS her iced coffee off the table into the  
street. Folks at other tables stare.

DEE (cont'd)

This coffee is crap. I'm going  
gluten-free! Yoga! Pilates!

She raises a fist and marches off. Confused CLAPPING from the  
patrons.

69        **EXT. WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK - TRAVELING - SOON AFTER**        69        \*

Dee takes the turn onto Frenchmen Street like a kamikaze  
pilot. Passes Natalee without seeing.

70        **EXT. FRENCHMEN STREET**        70        \*

Dee locks her bike and takes in the 9 bars/clubs on the  
street. Fixes her hair. Boosts her boobs. Big smile.

71        **INT. BARREL BOTTOM**        71

BEATRIX

Sorry, hon, it's not you. It's your  
music. Come back when you draw.

72        **INT. D.O.A.**        72

DOA MANAGER

After the last time we gave you a  
shot? You got a nerve.

73        **INT. CAFE NEGRECT**        73

WILLOW

Look, I got no time to deal with  
this, our barback no-showed. Plus  
ain't got no room in the schedule.  
Try the Barrel Bottom.

74

**EXT. FRENCHMEN STREET**

74

Dee exits Cafe Negrect. Two Quarters George walks by.

TWO QUARTERS GEORGE

Excuse me, ma'am, by any chance  
would you have two quarters to  
spare?

DEE

Hi, George. Sorry. \*

(idea!) \*

Hold on, I got something better. \*

(opens up necklace)

Bump? \*

George recoils.

TWO QUARTERS GEORGE

No, ma'am. Have a lovely day.

He hurries on, disgusted. Dee shrugs. \*

A74

**EXT. THE DAUPHINE WOMENS CLINIC**

A74

Dee hurrys towards it when she sees Nat heading her way. *Nat  
looks like a junkie who's been living in the street.* \*

DEE \*

Crapola. \*

Nowhere to turn or hide. Damn. They cross paths in front of  
the clinic and do an awkward half-stop, half-turn. \*

NATALEE \*

(smacking gum) \*

Hey Dee, can I borrow some money? \*

DEE \*

Very funny. \*

NATALEE \*

Men suck ass, ya know? \*

DEE \*

Sure, sometimes, but the world must  
be peopled. \*

NATALEE \*

Ugh don't remind me. \*

(smirking) \*

Not going in? \*

DEE \*  
Uh, nah, going to work. \*

NATALEE \*  
Still playing shitholes? \*

DEE \*  
Yup. Same shithole as Bart, \*  
tonight. \*

NATALEE \*  
That's right! \*

She runs off. Dee glances in but moves past the clinic. \*

Hears something behind her. She looks back-- Nat has reversed \*  
and is coming her way. Dee sighs and TURNS BACK. \*

As they pass again: \*

DEE NATALEE  
Need to eat. Got a thing.

As Dee passes the Clinic, she grabs a brochure from the \*  
basket, flips through it, stops on a page. \*

CLOSE: A "Services" price list. "Pregnancy Termination: \$200" \*

B74 **EXT. FRENCHMEN STREET - SOON AFTER** B74 \*

She walks. A flyer is shoved in her face. \*

MATT (O.S.)  
Ma'am, America's X-Talent is  
coming! Sign up now!

DEE  
Why's everyone calling me "Ma'am"?!  
I'm only-- Matt?!

Incongruously, a "wigger" kid, MATT-- 20s, tracksuit, do-rag,  
bling-- hands out flyers in an American's X-Talent t-shirt.

MATT  
Oh shit. Sup, sis.

DEE  
Matt, what are you doing?

MATT  
Step off, yo!

DEE

Little brother, don't make me slap  
the white off your face!

MATT

I'm sorry, I'm working!

DEE

(sniffs)

You smoking weed--?

MATT

No!

DEE

--cuz we had a deal!

MATT

I know, sis! Only just sold a  
little.

DEE

(throws up her hands)

What did we discuss?

MATT

I know, I know, I'm sorry. I just  
needed some extra scratch.

DEE

You have three priors. And selling  
drugs is wrong.

MATT

Your boyfriend is a dealer!

DEE

Oh. That's different. Doesn't mean  
it's okay.

MATT

Fine. Anyway, listen. My girl's  
pregnant.

DEE

(forced smile)

That's... just wonderful.

MATT

No, it isn't. She's Catholic, she's gonna keep it, I got eight shifts a week at the ferry dock, handing out flyers in the sun for \$50, peddling that stupid cab, no plan, no prospects.

DEE

At least you have each other.

This comment resonates. She swallows. He misses it.

MATT

Yeah, she's my only ho. But we've only been back together a couple months. Last time she cheated on me.

DEE

As revenge for you cheating on her.

MATT

I know. I'm a piece of shit. Dee, you're the only one of us who got out. Who has a shot at being something.

DEE

Come--

MATT

No, I'm serious. Dad's gonna disown me when he hears I'm a baby daddy. Been looking for a reason. Don't tell him you saw me, okay? Just make us proud.

He hugs her. She's stunned.

MATT (cont'd)

Back to work. Love you.

DEE

Love you too. I'll make you proud.

She walks off. Matt goes back to peddling.

#### **AROUND THE CORNER**

As soon as he's out of sight, she BURSTS INTO TEARS.

Fumbles for her phone, hits AUTODIAL.

DEE (cont'd)  
 (sniffing)  
 Hey Ethan, I might be pregnant. And  
 I don't know who the father is  
 because I've been two-timing you  
 with Bart. I'm a terrible person. I  
 don't deserve you. I'll break it  
 off with him, let's start a family.  
 We'll raise it together and..  
 (frowns)  
 Wait a dang minute.

She looks at the phone. DEAD BATTERY.

DEE (cont'd)  
 CRAAAAAAAAAAP!

75 [omitted] 75 \*

76 **INT. BAR NEXT DOOR** 76 \*

Dee walks in. Looks around the familiar place. Ugh.  
 Daydrinkers ignore her.

She sees Lazy Bartender has his phone plugged in. \*

DEE  
 Can I charge my phone for a minute?  
 Just checking messages.

She gets a nod, so plugs in. Listens. Her faces changes.  
 Angst gives way to elation. [It's Bart's voicemail] \*

DEE (cont'd)  
 I'm going to be famous. I knew this  
 was going to work out! And this  
 solves my other problem-- rock  
 stars don't have kids!

She strikes a rock star pose. Yeah!

SMITTY, 50s, walks in carrying an instrument case and cables.  
 Salt-and-pepper hair tied back in a rat tail. Genial face.

SMITTY  
 Dee, how are you? You look happy!

They hug. Dee talks a mile a minute.

DEE  
 I'm doing fucking wonderful. When  
 you're done here, want to go down  
 the street for my gig at Czeck's?

SMITTY

Er, what happened to Stovey?

DEE

He's too good for Czeck's.

SMITTY

Standard pay?

DEE

Someone from the Squirrel Nut  
Zippers will be there.

SMITTY

(at attention)

Oh? Scouting?

DEE

Yes. And I want my "A" band.

Dee gives her biggest smile. Smitty smiles back.

77

**EXT. FRENCHMEN STREET**

77

\*

Dee unlocks her bike, phone tucked by her ear.

DEE

Bart, listen, when you get this,  
call whoever and tell him to tell  
the Zippers guy to send him to  
Czeck's tonight. I'm doing Duane's  
slot!

\*

She hangs up. Flurry of typing. Hits SEND. Shuts it with a  
SNAP. She hops on her bike.

\*

78

**EXT. A&Z CONVENIENCE STORE - FRENCH QUARTER**

78

Dee rides. Spots Ethan exiting A&Z with a Hubig's pie. *Ethan  
is more child-like usual.* He gives Two Quarters George a  
dollar but George drops it with a huff and leaves.

\*

DEE

Ethan, I've been looking all over  
for you!She stops. Kisses him on the cheek. Ethan MUMBLES  
incoherently, mouth full of pie.

\*

DEE (cont'd)  
EE-NUN-SEE-ATE, dear. You sound like a gutterpunk. Did you get my texts? \*

He nods. \*

DEE (cont'd)  
And...?! \*

He shakes his head. \*

DEE (cont'd)  
For Pete's sake! Do you have my fascinator hat for tonight's show? The producer from the Squirrel Nut Zippers is coming to my gig to scout me for their next album. How did you not get that from my messages? \*

ETHAN  
I dunno. \*

DEE  
So? \*

ETHAN  
So what? \*

DEE  
Have you seen my hat?! Holy cow! \*

ETHAN  
No, sorry. Haven't seen it. Guess what? I got that meeting with Paley. \*

DEE  
Oh baby, I know you'll do great. Everybody likes you. Just don't go high.

ETHAN  
I've only had a handful of bonghits.

DEE  
If he asks if you use the stuff, tell him you feel it's important for a salesman to appreciate the product as a customer too. That's what I told Walgreens when they hired me.

ETHAN

Brilliant.

She gets on her bike. \*

DEE

Come by Czeck's, I could use the support.

ETHAN

That's where I'm meeting him.

She rides off.

DEE

(to herself)

You're a rock star. You're a rock star. You're a rock star.

ROUSING MUSIC BEGINS...

79

**EXT. FRENCH QUARTER**

79

Dee rides through the street, determined. \*

80

**INT. DEE'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN**

80

She pours two fingers of Jameson in a coffee mug and SHOTS IT BACK. Booyah. Rock star time.

**BEDROOM**

Dee throws HATS on the bed. She squints at them. Frowns. Looks around. Grabs her phone and texts.

Starts on the shoes.

**LIVING ROOM**

As Dee tunes her guitar, she sings a country song absently.

She packs her guitar into a gig bag. Pulls LYRIC SHEETS from the bag's pockets. Satisfied, puts them back.

Capo. Cables. Tuner pedal. Speed winder. Extra strings.

Counts out guitar picks. Puts 1 in each pants pocket.

**BEDROOM**

Changes blouse. Changes boots. Changes earrings.



DEE

Ugh. No.

She drags the amp inside with both arms.

THE MUSIC PATHETICALLY STAMMERS TO A STOP. Mood: broken.

**A MINUTE LATER**

Dee exits to find Officer Douvert WRITING HER A TICKET.

DEE (cont'd)

Come on! I'm loading in! I'm the  
goddamn band here!

OFFICER DOUVERT

Quotas, honey. Bayou Festival week.

DEE

That was last week.

OFFICER DOUVERT

No, that was Festival of the Bayou.

GUTTERFEMME

Hey lady, can I have a dollar for a  
beer?

Dee points at her and glares at the Cop.

OFFICER DOUVERT

What? She ain't parked bad.

She slaps a ticket on her car. Radio crackles to life:

POLICE RADIO

Unit six-one. Altercation at  
Barracks and Royal with mule,  
biker, pedicab.

(she shrugs)

Also, brass band seen setting up on  
corner of Frenchmen and Chartres.

Her eyes go wide and she hauls ass down the block.

A BAND OF MUSICIANS exits Czeck's, bickering.

BASSIST

I made him ring the Z twice.

GUITARIST

Four dollars for three hours of  
playing. Each!

BASSIST

Hey, it's more than last time.

Dee looks like she might hang herself. Matt passes.

DEE

Hey! Gimme one.

MATT

It's \$50 to sign up.

DEE

Great I can't even afford to be exploited.

Dee sighs and gets in her car.

**A LITTLE LATER**

Dee runs down the street as fast as her boot-heels will let her. Passes Aura, waiting outside with a tight look on her face, and turns into the bar.

83 **INT. CZECK'S STAGE**

83

Her band has beaten her to the stage. They're set up and ready, and she's a sweaty mess. Just great.

84 **INT. CZECK'S BAR - CONTINUOUS**

84

She catches Bart as he comes out of the back office.

DEE

Bart, why the hell aren't you answering the phone?

BART

You too? Everybody's busting my balls today.

DEE

Where were you this morning?

BART

Really? I'm working! Holy shit, Dee. I hadn't come home yet, okay? I passed out at Barrel Bottom.

DEE

You should've called.

Bart rolls his eyes and goes behind the bar.

85

**INT. CZECK'S STAGE - CONTINUOUS**

85

She strides over to the band, shifting into boss mode.

SMITTY

(smiling)

Nice of you to join us.

Guitarist ROBBIE, 30s, is skinny and Italian. Her drummer, ANKLES, 20s, is hipsterish and cynical.

ANKLES

Smitty says a producer is coming.  
Who are the Zipping Squirrel Nuts?

DEE

(fast, breathless)

He is and they're great and we are  
going to be AMAZING goddammit so I  
want EVERYBODY'S A-game. None of  
that chitlin shit. We could make  
HISTORY tonight.

WIDE: The band members look around the mostly-empty dive bar with professional skepticism.

Smitty leans his bass on his amp and pulls out a glass bowl.

SMITTY

Let's get professional.

ANKLES

Is that the purple stuff from last  
time?

SMITTY

Nah just some brickweed I got from  
Kylie.

Dee's been setting up her gear. She turns around.

DEE

You got it from one of Ethan's  
customers instead of him?

SMITTY

Kylie got it from Ethan? Shit.  
That's fucked up.

He lights up. Dee casually gets close to Ankles.

DEE

(sotto voce)

Ankles, you gotta bump?

ANKLES

Nah, I got out of the distribution business. Ware said there's too much competition, shit was cheaper than chalk.

DEE

No, I'm offering. Who's Ware?

ANKLES

The WereWalrus.

DEE

And I thought "Ankles" was ridiculous.

Suddenly-- A COMMOTION at the bar-- They look to see:

POV OF BAR: Freddy is attempting to CLIMB ONTO THE BAR as Bart and several patrons pull him down.

FREDDY

I'M FREE! I'M FREE!

BACK AT STAGE:

SMITTY

Ankles is out of the biz, but I got some pills from the bartender at Barrel Bottom if you want them.

DEE

(offended)

Ugh, no thanks. Gonna go freshen up for the producer.

The guys exchange knowing glances. Dee crosses the room. Taps Ethan, he gets up and follows her. \*

In passing, she spots the Gutterfemme at the ATM machine. \*  
Dee POV: she's frantic, checking and re-checking her pockets.

86 [omitted] 86

87 [omitted] 87

88 **INT. CZECK'S STAGE - A LITTLE LATER** 88

On stage, the band is ready. Dee consults a binder.

ANKLES

So where's this guy?

DEE

He'll be here. Let's get warmed up.  
I always mess up the second line to  
"Down So Long," let's do it first.

She's the boss. They start playing. The dancers stand up and start swaying.

Dee sings. She's earnest but not great. The years have left her voice pretty ragged.

DEE (cont'd)

*I been down so long..*

Dee POV: Gutterfemme pushes. Dee borks the next line.

FREEZE FRAME: Dee's shocked face. Behind her, Ethan and Old Man Dillard are being plowed to the floor.

SNAP INTO MOTION:

CRACK-- The Kid's beer stein shatters.

Dee looks at the band, but they haven't missed a beat.

DEE (cont'd)

*Ain't heard no voice since Sunday..*

The two Dancers go to watch, DELIGHTED. The Kid just gapes from his stool.

TEXAN DANCER

Don't worry, kid, this happens all the time.

(gestures)

As long as Bart the Sheriff is here, you're safe.

She sees Gutterfemme.

DEE

Godammit.

89

**INT. CZECK'S BAR - CONTINUOUS**

89

Pissed, she jumps off the stage. She doesn't see Bart come out from behind the bar.

FISTFULS OF CASH EXPLODE FROM HIS POCKETS like a cash cannon. Dollars in all denominations fly into the air.

DEE

Oh gosh!

Bart off lands in a puddle of spilled beer.

The Gutterfemme grabs at the cash. The dancer does too. Ethan and Natalee see and start reaching. Old Man Dillard gets serious air as he jumps for the fluttering bills.

B89 **INT. CZECK'S DOORWAY**

B89

A SPECTACLED MAN (age: ?!) enters unseen. Spectacles wears a long coat and tightly holds a BRIEFCASE. He stares at the pandemonium. Impossible to tell if he is a gangster, a local drunk, a lost tourist, or what.

Spectacles pulls out a phone. Calmly DIALS.

B89 **INT. CZECK'S BAR - CONTINUOUS**

B89

On the floor, Bart SPUTTERS, chokes.

CLOSE ON: His wet, bruised, dirty, confused face. A \$10 bill lands on it.

MATCH DISSOLVE:

90 **INT. BAR NEXT DOOR - DAWN**

90 \*

Bart's sleeping face. Clean, peaceful. The first and last time we'll see him in anything like a state of grace. The \$10 bill is now a \$5. WIDE TO REVEAL--

Bart is passed out on the bar. The end of a long night in this 24-hour dive. Only 2 other customers, and a veteran, seen-it-all BARTENDER, who puts a shot down next to Bart's head with a BANG. Bart jerks awake. \*

VETERAN BARTENDER  
Your change, Bart.

BART  
--I'm awake!

He sits up, looks around. Shakes his head.

BART (cont'd)  
Fuuuuuck.

VETERAN BARTENDER  
A shot for the road. Kalhua and  
Fireball.

Bart shoots it, grimaces.



BART

Fuck you. Let's open this thing.

They scramble for the couch, throw the cushions everywhere. YANK the fold-out bed out. The frame hits Bart in the head.

He falls over, moaning.

NATALEE

The girls at the bar got me RILED!  
Woo!

She throws up into the ficus.

BART

Get up there and have a mint. I can  
smell the Jager.

She crawls onto the bed. Shakes her head woozily.

Bart crawls up, rolls her over, straddles her. She pulls her shirt off.

They go at each other's pants. After some fumbling they realize the futility and switch to their own pants.

Bart pulls his pants down, then has to put one leg on the floor to get that pant leg off, then has to switch legs to get the other off. He finally throws them across the room.

NATALEE

Wrap that shit!

She throws a condom at him. He rips it with his teeth, spits out the wrapper, flips it over a couple times, puts it on.

Gets between Nat's legs, grabs her by the hips, moves her over, pulls her panties off, lies on her, starts humping.

BART

Ugh-- fuck-- jesus my foot-- move  
this way-- better-- shit-- yes--

He abruptly STOPS. Looks down-- her head is over the side of the bed.

BART (cont'd)

Nat?

He lifts her head-- she's out cold. He freezes. Looks around. Lifts one arm; it falls limp. He pulls her glove off it.

BART (cont'd)  
 (slurring)  
 Blah. Fucking leather.

He reaches down and PULLS OFF THE CONDOM. Throws it onto the ficus. Reinserts himself. Starts humping away again.

He lifts one of her legs into the air by his head. He is surprised and disgusted as her boot rubs against his face.

BART (cont'd)  
 Precious shit-kickers.

Still humping, he unzips the boot, then unlaces it. Pulls. It doesn't budge. Finds another zipper, pulls on it. Boot comes loose. He starts to fling it, then places it on the floor.

BART (cont'd)  
 UHHHH.

Bart comes.

BART (cont'd)  
 Fuck.

He lowers the leg. Looks down.

BART (cont'd)  
 Nat? Natalee. Nat. Get up.

He gets off her. Sees one boot is still on. Pauses. Starts unlacing it.

BART (cont'd)  
 I'm too fucking nice.

His phone's ALARM goes off.

BART (cont'd)  
 Fucking day.

93 INT. BART'S BATHROOM

93

He turns on the shower. Nothing. Bangs the pipe. Nothing.

BART  
 Really?

94 EXT. BART'S APARTMENT - DAWN

94

Bart closes his door, checks that it's locked, leaves.



Car windows roll down at once, FOUR DRUNK TRANNIES lean out. They eat Tollhouse cookies, having a grand ol' time.

TIARA TRANNY

Look out, honey! Don't ride drunk!

They break up. Bart is not amused.

BART

Move the car!

The trannies stop laughing.

TIARA TRANNY

What. The. Fuck. Jenny, hold me back, I'm going to fuck this bitch UP!

BART

Seriously, I have to get to work!

TIARA TRANNY

I think the Mayor of Barracks Street doesn't know who he's messing with.

She shifts gears, and the car lurches.

BART

Jesus Christ. Thank you.

TIARA TRANNY

No hard feelings, sugar. Come here a second, I have a question.

She leans out the window. Bart comes over.

BART

What?

TIARA TRANNY

Where can I get a hit of POWDER!!

POW! Tiara Tranny hits him in the face with a BAG OF FLOUR. The trannies HOWL and peel out.

Bart looks like an albino mime. He blinks slowly. Flour crumbles off him.

BART

Mother. Fucker.

He locks his bike back to the carriage hitch.

BART (cont'd)  
(on phone)  
Freddy, I need another fifteen.

He opens the gate, and enters.

99 **INT. DEE'S BATHROOM**

99

Bart enters the bathroom, calling over his shoulder.

BART  
Showering!

DEE (O.S.)  
Gotta go make an ass of myself on  
the radio. Bye!

Door SLAMS O.S. Bart gets under the spray. Glares like a cat  
in a bath. Cannot believe this shit.

100 **INT. DEE'S KITCHEN - SOON AFTER**

100

Bart's now extra-scrubbed and clean. Hair slicked back. The  
shower seems to have mellowed him out, but it was hasty: he's  
still got flour around his ear and in his nostrils.

He checks his phone. "3 MISSED CALLS. From: Work"

BART  
Yeah yeah.

Dee has left a stack of flyers on the table with a note.

He squints at it: "HAND THESE OUT PLEASE!! :-)"

101 **EXT. DEE'S APARTMENT - FRENCH QUARTER - MINUTES LATER**

101

He exits the gate, flyers in hand. Dumps them in the trash.

Unlocks his bike, looks both ways, and rides off. Coming down  
the block behind him is the pedicab with Mr Goat and Ethan.

102 **EXT. FRENCH QUARTER STREET - CONTINUOUS**

102

Bart takes the corner steeply, standing on the pedals as he  
pumps.

A MULE CARRIAGE

is pulling out. It swings wide to go around a PEDICAB moving sluggishly down the middle of the narrow street.

Bart swings wide to go around the carriage BUT-- the mule abruptly sidesteps into his path--

CARRIAGE DRIVER

Woah!

BART

Fuck!

Bart tries to go up on the sidewalk but BALCONY POLES BLOCK HIM so he stops the bike and gets off.

SQUISH. Bart has stepped into a mule patty. EWWW

He rolls off it-- A PEDICAB DRIVEN BY MATT PASSES.

SPLAT. A splash of pink daiquiri lands on Bart's head.

Looks, but from his angle he can't make out who is in the pedicab.

The Carriage Driver and Passengers scream at each other. The Woman Passenger sees him.

WOMAN PASSENGER

He's got coke in his nose!

He wipes his nose, confused. Flour on his fingers.

CARRIAGE DRIVER

I'm calling the cops!

He makes a decision: run. Limps off at top speed.

CARRIAGE DRIVER (O.S.) (cont'd)

Hey! Asshole! Get back here! I know what you look like!

He rounds the corner. Pulls out phone. "6 MISSED CALLS - From: WORK"

He smells himself and winces. Walks back as fast as possible while dialing.

103

**EXT. DEE'S STREET - FRENCH QUARTER**

103

He turns the corner-- almost there. He can see Dee's gate.

BART  
(on phone)  
I'm coming, I swear, but need  
another twenty. Don't fucking ask.

SQUIRREL (O.S.)  
Yo, Bart!

Oh fuck. Bart hobbles double-time.

Across the street, SQUIRREL (40s), a very dodgy-looking dude  
in a stained apron, smokes by the service door to a  
bar/restaurant called Port in a Storm. He hollars--

SQUIRREL (cont'd)  
Hey! I just served Neville Marsalis  
Jr! What's that giant stain on ya?

BART  
No time!

SQUIRREL  
Neville's eating with Jimbo from  
the Squirrel Zippers! And my name's  
Squirrel! How about that!

Bart fumbles for his keys at the gate. Grits teeth.

BART  
Amazing.

SQUIRREL  
Hey that's where Dee lives! I told  
Neville Marsalis and Jimbo to send  
a scout or a producer or something  
to check her out cuz she's great!

Bart drops his keys. Sweating. Panic.

SQUIRREL (cont'd)  
Tell her I told them to do that,  
okay? I'm looking out! Hey, you  
still at Czeck's? You need any  
barbacks over there?

The gate finally opens.

BART  
Sorry can't hear you! Bye!

The gate SLAMS behind him.



DRUNKS

Hi Bart!

BART

Freddy WHAT THE FUCK is going on?

Freddy leans back, no problemo.

FREDDY

Well it was like this. The band showed up fucked up from last night, kids were horsing around, and I was getting really uptight, and they were getting uptight, and I realized, woah, I was making them uptight and they were making ME uptight and this was a situation where being uptight was only going to create a lot of conflict and conflict just hurts everybody, man, like on the inside, ya know. Just really bad juju, plus I wasn't feeling the energy space. So I called you, but it took you like 2 hours to get here, what gives?

\*  
\*

\*

Bart stares at him in slack-jawed disbelief.

FREDDY (cont'd)

Anyway, I figured maybe you could help me with crowd control while I serve, and we can split the tips...?

BART

The key.

He holds out his hand.

FREDDY

What?

BART

The key. Hand it over. I'm starting my shift early. You're relieved.

Several emotions wash over Freddy-- shock, embarrassment, disgust, disbelief... Then he LAUGHS.

FREDDY

Shit! Okay! I'm getting fucked up!

The drunks CHEER.



FREDDY

Messages for the manager.

BART

What the fuck. Dude, no wonder you're always in trouble with her.

FREDDY

Huh?

BART

Someone asks for the manager, you're the manager. You settle it yourself. If it's a complaint, nobody has to know.

FREDDY

Huh.

BART

Boss thinks I'm the perfect employee.

Freddy laughs. Bart smirks.

FREDDY

Why do you have flour in your ear?

BART

Gay mafia attack.

A COASTER FLIES BY THEM. Freddy's drunk friends are throwing things. Freddy goes over. Bart checks: is he reprimanding them? Nope, he's laughing and high-fiving. Bart watches them do a shot and rolls his eyes.

Pulls out his phone, makes a call.

BART (cont'd)

Hey Dee. I put up the flyers you gave me. You know yer on the Czeck's schedule with a question mark by your name? I ran into Neville Marsalis, Jr at Port in a Storm. Says Jimbo's sound mixer is looking for some hoopla. Told him to come by tonight.

(looking O.S.)

HEY FUCKO... NO FERRETS!--

115        **INT. CZECK'S DOORWAY - LATER**

115

Bart changes a trash bag. Mr Goat quietly slips inside.  
Speaking in a low voice:

MR GOAT

Might be a visitor here tonight.

BART

Dude. You know I don't give a shit.

MR GOAT

Don't interfere. Just let us work.

BART

As long as you buy a drink.

Bart walks off. Mr Goat pops a candy in his mouth and exits.

116        **INT. CZECK'S BAR**

116

Order has been restored, with the sole exception of Freddy  
and his FRIEND, who are getting hammered.

Bart tends bar. With only a handful of people to bother him,  
he's finally relaxed a little.

Willow-- Ethan's boss from Cafe Negrect-- enters.

WILLOW

Bart, you the manager?

BART

Why yes, I'm the manager.

WILLOW

Morgan at Kramer's asked me to tell  
other managers: Reality Bites is  
back.

BART

Um. The movie?

WILLOW

The old cash-for-charge scam.

BART

Oh right. How's that work again?

WILLOW

They charge cash transactions to a  
stolen card and pocket the money.

BART

Well, I appreciate the warning.  
I'll keep a close eye out.

WILLOW

(flirty)  
Say, what ya doing after work?

BART

Oh, I dunno. I'll find ya.

They shake. She frowns and looks at her hand.

BART (cont'd)

Don't worry. Just juice from the  
trash bags.

**LATER**

Bart hands chips to a drunk. Hears YELLING from the street.

BART (cont'd)

Hey Freddy, can you watch the bar  
for a minute? Gonna check that out.

Freddy is blotto. Looks up. Takes an effort to focus on Bart.

FREDDY

(slurring)  
Sure thing. The back will be here  
when you get bar.

Bart shrugs and leaves his post.

117

**EXT. CZECK'S - DUSK**

117

\*

Bart looks up and down the street. Nothing unusual.

Bart shrugs, wipes his hands, turns back to the bar--

His feet are knocked out from under him by a DOG. A dog from  
the bar earlier. He falls, landing on the leash.

Two Quarters George sees and hurries over.

TWO QUARTERS GEORGE

Are you okay?

THE HERD OF GUTTERPUNKS APPEARS around the corner. They point  
and run over.

BART

Get away from me, you dirtbags!

Gutterfemme hangs out a distance away. Watching. Alert.

GUTTERFEMME

Cops! Cops!

Sure enough, an NOPD car is pulling up.

Bart tries to stand but the gutterpunks grab the leash and he goes down again. They run away, knocking Two Quarters George to the ground.

TWO QUARTERS GEORGE

Oh, excuse me!

Officer Douvert TROTS UP as Bart gets to his feet.

OFFICER DOUVERT

You okay sir? Were you mugged by them?

BART

Uh, don't think so.

He looks down. His pockets spilled on the sidewalk. Besides a lighter and cigarettes, there's a BAG OF WEED and a JOINT.

He freezes, looks at the Cop, who stares back.

OFFICER DOUVERT

Well well.

BART

I'm the manager at Czeck's. I came out to see about the commotion.

OFFICER DOUVERT

It's just not your night.

The Cop pulls out her CUFFS. Bart sighs. Busted.

But she steps past him, pushes George up against the building, and CUFFS HIM.

TWO QUARTERS GEORGE

Excuse me, sir? I believe maybe--

OFFICER DOUVERT

You have the right to remain silent..

George gives up and slumps. Not again.

The Cop's back is turned, so Bart grabs the joint and moves toward Czeck's.

Something catches his eye-- a GOLD VISA CARD on the sidewalk, half hidden under a trash can. Bart hesitates, then grabs it. \*

BART

Finally, something goes my way.

He goes inside, not looking back as Two Quarters George is stuffed into a police car.

118

**INT. CZECK'S DOORWAY - CONTINUOUS**

118

Bart enters to see Freddy CLIMBING ONTO THE BAR. People laugh, having a grand ol' time. He runs over and pulls him down.

FREDDY

I'M FREE! I'M FREE!

BART

Jesus, Freddy, can't I get a moment of peace today?

FREDDY

That's it! It's showtime!

Everybody knows what that means-- Half yell "YES!" and half yell "NO!" as Freddy starts to TAKE OFF HIS OVERALLS.

Bart shoves Freddy towards the door.

BART

No way, Freddy! You're 86'd!

FREDDY

What! For how long?!

BART

Forever! Or your next shift! Or I change my mind!

Bart puts him in a bearhug and drags him to the door. Ethan enters, freezes at the sight. Bart gives him a curt nod.

119

**INT. CZECK'S BAR - LATER**

119

Behind bar, Bart rings up a sale. Pauses. Slips the credit card out of his pocket. Nobody's looking, so he runs it. \*

*BRRT.* TRANSACTION ACCEPTED. A receipt is spit out. Bart's eyebrow twitches. He crumples up both copies. Trash. \*

He folds Old Man Dillard's cash in half, puts it in his back pocket.

**LATER**

Ethan and Freddy work out something on a napkin.

Bart runs the card, pockets some cash. Faster now.

A119      **INT. CZECK'S DOORWAY - LATER**      A119

Dee enters, sweaty and harried. Freddy leaves.

B119      **INT. CZECK'S BAR - SAME TIME**      B119

Bart runs the card, takes the cash. Has the rhythm down.

**LATER**

The opening scene. The Kid sits down between the Gutterfemme and Ethan.

Bart runs the card like a veteran grifter. His pockets bulge with cash. The trash is filled with crumpled receipts.

Natalee enters, upset. She bee-lines to the bar. The only one who sees is Dee, singing on stage.

Natalee stops at the chain in the bar's gap. Starts to talk but her throat catches. Swallows and composes herself.

NATALEE

Ummm... Bart? Hey, Bart?

At the grill, Bart turns. Mild surprise.

BART

Oh hey. Gimme a minute.

He turns back. Natalee leans over the chain.

NATALEE

(whisper/hiss)

Bart... Bart! We gotta talk, man...!

Bart waves her off without turning around.

The Kid is unnerved by Natalee's energy. Ethan peeks over.

NATALEE (cont'd)

BART GODDAMMIT!

Bart gives her a "WTF" shrug, spatula dangling.

ETHAN

Hey Natalee... What's up?

Natalee gives him a rote peck. On stage, Dee notes them.

NATALEE

Hey Ethan. Now's a bad time.

Ethan looks from Bart to Nat and back. Hmmm. Wheels turning.

THE BEER IS KNOCKED OUT OF THE KID'S HAND BY THE GUTTERFEMME  
TACKLING ETHAN--

He falls off his stool. He lies next to Old Man Dillard.

Natalee JUMPS out of the way. The Kid's beer SMASHES.

GUTTERFEMME

You cheap fucking sonuvabitch  
lowlife gypper!

Bart double-takes, stunned.

120      **INT. CZECK'S STAGE - SAME TIME**      120

Dee fumbles a line of lyric. The Dancers stop and stare. The band keeps playing.

121      **INT. CZECK'S BAR - CONTINUOUS**      121

ETHAN

The werewalrus! Ahh! It's a set up!

Ethan tries to wrestle Gutterfemme off him but she outweighs him and he's got no leverage.

Old Man Dillard SLAPS and HOWLS. Natalee grabs Gutterfemme.

NATALEE

Get off him you fucking thief!

She tries to pull her off and SLIPS, falling on them. The Gutterfemme PUNCHES her in the head. Natalee GRABS HER HAIR. She YELLS.

Underneath, Ethan wiggles desperately. Old Man Dillard HOWLS under him. On stage, Dee stares.

OLD MAN DILLARD

Help! Help!

The Kid stares, gape-mouthed. The two Dancers look on, DELIGHTED at the fracas.

TEXAN DANCER

Don't worry, kid, this happens all the time.

(gestures at bartender)

As long as Bart-the-sheriff's here, you're safe.

Bart SLAMS HIS TOWEL on the bar.

BART

DAMMIT! NOT ON MY WATCH PEOPLE!

He PULLS OUT A BASEBALL BAT and unhooks the chain. Beat. He puts the bat away and steps forward.

BART (cont'd) (CONT'D)

LAST CHANCE. I DON'T GET PAID ENOUGH TO WIPE YOUR DUMB ASSES.

He leans down and grabs the Gutterfemme's jacket with both hands. But he pauses-- face to face with Ethan.

BART (cont'd) (CONT'D)

(low, snarling)

Don't think I'm going to help your skinny ass, punk.

Ethan is stunned.

122 INT. CZECK'S STAGE - SAME TIME

122

Dee can't just watch.

DEE

Godammit.

123 INT. CZECK'S BAR - CONTINUOUS

123

Dee jumps off the stage and runs over.

CASH EXPLODES FROM BART'S POCKETS. Dollars in all denominations fly into the air.

DEE

Oh gosh!

Dancer2, running at the money, bumps Dee from behind.

DEE (cont'd)

OOF.

The credit card hangs halfway out of Bart's back pocket.

The Gutterfemme reaches up to grab at the cash. Ethan and Natalee see and start grabbing. Old Man Dillard gets serious air as he jumps for the fluttering bills.

124      **INT. CZECK'S DOORWAY - SAME TIME**      124

Unseen, in the entrance, stands the Spectacled Man. He takes the scene in, and calmly pulls out a phone. DIALS.

125      **INT. CZECK'S BAR - CONTINUOUS**      125

On the floor, money floats down around Bart.

BART

Oh shit...

Bart scrambles to his feet and the rest of his cash falls out and lands in front of Ethan in a wad. Ethan grabs it all and stuffs it in his pants.

NATALEE

AURA! Where the fuck are you?!

126      **EXT. CZECK'S - SAME TIME**      126

Aura has wandered away and is talking to a WOMAN IN BODY PAINT selling tamales on a bicycle cart. Aura spins the brass knuckles on her finger as she flirts and laughs.

127      **INT. CZECK'S DOORWAY - CONTINUOUS**      127

The Spectacled Man watches the melee from the doorway, phone to his ear.

HIS POV-- cash flutters as Old Man Dillard, the Dancers, and everyone on the floor jump and grab for it.

128      **INT. CZECK'S BAR - CONTINUOUS**      128

The Kid tries to pull Ethan up.

Dee gets to her feet, dazed. The band hasn't stopped playing. Dee sees the Spectacled Man-- OH SHIT! IT'S HIM!

She speed-hobbles over on a broken heel.

129 **INT. CZECK'S DOORWAY - CONTINUOUS**

129

Dee hastily fixes her hair.

DEE

(forcing a smile)

Oh my goodness! Hello! Welcome to the show! Thanks for coming! We're just getting the kinks out! Ha ha!

He stares at her, phone by ear.

DEE (cont'd)

I dunno who yer calling but hang out, have a beer, ya know? Catch the rest of the set before calling anyone with hasty judgments. We're just getting warmed up!

She gives him a huge fake smile. He slowly lowers the phone.

130 **INT. CZECK'S DOORWAY - SAME TIME**

130

Across the room, Ethan sees Spectacles and freezes. Gutterfemme uses the moment to get in a kidney punch.

Ethan GRUNTS and rushes over, passing Natalee, who picks her soap up and tries to wipe it with a napkin.

BART

Everybody who has grabbed money, that's MINE and give it back now!

Nobody pays attention to him, except Natalee, who stares with growing decisiveness.

131 **INT. CZECK'S DOORWAY - CONTINUOUS**

131

ETHAN

Are you, I mean, uh, Werewalrus?

Ethan pulls out a King of Hearts. Bart looks over and shouts. \*

BART

Who said "Werewalrus"?!

They ignore him.

DEE

Ethan, this is the guy who knows  
the guy from the Squirrel Nut  
Zippers--

ETHAN

I'm ready to do business, sir.

SPECTACLES

I'm not ready to make a deal.

ETHAN

What do you mean?

DEE

What do you mean?

Spectacles pulls out a copy of OFF-BEAT magazine.

SPECTACLES (cont'd)

I just paid \$2 for this from a guy  
on the corner. Turns out it's free  
in every bar. I just wanna know  
where the Spotted Cat is.

\*

Devastated, Ethan and Dee point the same direction.  
Spectacles nods and leaves.

DEE

(shouts after him)

At least take some CDs!

She hits Ethan in the shoulder. He recoils.

ETHAN

Wait, what if that was him and he  
changed his mind?

DEE

Exactly! Go after him and get him  
back!

ETHAN

Wait what?

BART

You idiots just trashed my bar!

They turn to face a steaming Bart.

ETHAN

I was attacked!

DEE

I tried to break it up.

BART

You fucking cold-cocked me to save  
this scrawny dickweed.

132 INT. CZECK'S BAR - SAME TIME

132

Unseen by anyone, ONE OF THE DRUNKS at the bar slowly picks up his briefcase, crosses to the exit, and leaves it by the trash as he leaves. Tucked in the handle is a King of Hearts.

133 INT. CZECK'S DOORWAY - CONTINUOUS

133

NATALEE

(exploding from nowhere)

Don't talk about him like that, you  
pig!

They turn to her, startled.

DEE

What--

NATALEE

(to Bart)

You're a fucking LIAR and a RAPIST,  
Bart, and I'm going to tell the  
world unless you admit it!

BART

What?! You're fucking psycho!

DEE

You can't talk to my boyfriend like  
that!

ETHAN

I'm your boyfriend!

NATALEE

He raped me after I passed out.

Ethan's got whiplash. Dee pauses, wide-eyed. Bart snaps--

BART

The fuck you talking about, you  
homeless bitch! I let you crash on  
my couch for free and this is how  
you repay me!

NATALEE

Just cuz I need a place at the  
moment doesn't mean I'm just shit!

ETHAN

Y-Y-You're... homeless?

Dee nods quietly to Ethan as Bart goes off--

BART

You got NO grounds for accusing anybody, NO business being in here, NO job, NO life, and NO proof!

NATALEE

(quiet, strong)

You never listen. You never should've have taken my boots off.

Ethan takes an involuntary step back in shock.

ETHAN

Oh shit. Dude. You're fucked.

BART

(turning on him)

And how do you know what that means, you little fuck?

ETHAN

Everybody--

DEE

But you were fucking him, right?

NATALEE

Why the fuck does that matter?

BART

EVERYBODY OUT OF MY BAR! Starting with you and your boyfriend!

(to Gutterfemme)

And you too. Gimme my money, before I call the fucking cops.

Gutterfemme peels a DISGUSTING BILL off the floor. She holds it up and beer and slime drip off of it.

OFFICER DOUVERT (O.S.)

No need to call the "fucking cops."

Everyone spins toward the door. She strides in.

BART

Finally! A cop when I need one.

OFFICER DOUVERT

Found this driver's license  
outside. Anybody here a "Missy  
Goldenberg"?

She holds up the license-- it has GUTTERFEMME'S PHOTO.

GUTTERFEMME

That's mine! It was stolen along  
with my credit cards and iPhone.

NATALEE

Of course she has an iPhone.

OFFICER DOUVERT

Hey, anybody forget their  
briefcase?

She holds it up. Confused beat as everyone stares.

ETHAN

Oh that's mine. Thank you, officer.

He takes it from her. Hugs it to his chest with both arms as  
if this is the normal way to carry it, tries to look casual.

Natalee sees the gold card sticking out of Bart's back  
pocket. SHE GRABS IT. He spins around--

BART

What the fuck!

NATALEE

Ha! "Missy Goldenberg"!

GUTTERFEMME

What the fuck?!

BART

Arrest her! And her!

NATALEE

Where'd all that cash come from,  
Bart? Huh? Tell the officer!

Bart LUNGES AT HER but she throws the card to Gutterfemme.

GUTTERFEMME

I want this guy arrested!

OFFICER DOUVERT

Do you have proof?

DEE

Check the balance on the ATM.

BART

This is bullshit. I'm in charge here!

ETHAN

If you're innocent, you got nothing to lose by letting her check.

He's out-numbered. The cop nods at Gutterfemme.

She goes to the ATM. Ethan quietly pops the briefcase's latches and peeks. It's filled with bags of WHITE POWDER.

GUTTERFEMME

OVERDRAWN BY \$3500! All withdrawals made from this bar today!

NATALEE

It's an old scam. Bart turned your credit into cash and then lost it on the floor like a fucking retard.

She snorts. Bart fumes.

OFFICER DOUVERT

Well, it's a good thing I stopped in here, isn't it?

(to Bart)

Put 'em out. Wrists.

BART

You can't be fucking serious.

She pulls snaps handcuffs onto him. Behind everyone, Ethan pats the cash in his pocket and slowly steps backwards towards the door and EXITS with the briefcase.

\*  
\*

BART (cont'd)

I'm the manager here. Without me there's nobody to run the place!

Freddy enters, cackling.

FREDDY

Woah. What's going on HERE?

\*

DEE

Freddy! Can you work Bart's shift?

FREDDY

Why the fuck not!

Freddy goes over to the bar.

BART

Fuck you, Dee. We're through. No more gigs here ever again!

Dee heads back to the stage.

134 **INT. CZECK'S STAGE - CONTINUOUS**

134

The band never stopped playing.

DEE

Whatever! Fuck it! Rock stars don't have kids! Woo!

SMITTY

Dee, was that the guy?

DEE

Nah. But he's coming soon. Let's make it a good night, I gotta get me \$200.

\*

She resumes singing. Smitty and the boys shrug.

135 **INT. CZECK'S DOORWAY - SAME TIME**

135

GUTTERFEMME

Let's go. I'm pressing charges.

BART

This is bullshit! I'm a pillar of the community!

The Cop escorts them out.

136 **INT. CZECK'S BAR - CONTINUOUS**

136

Freddy is confused.

FREDDY

What the fuck just happened?

Everyone but the band is now at the bar. Natalee joins them.

THE KID

Excuse me. Is... um... Is this normal for this bar?

OLD MAN DILLARD  
It's okay for a Wednesday.

A loud BZZZZT from offscreen.

FREDDY  
Hey kid. Your laundry's ready.

PULL BACK WIDE as the Kid heads to the laundromat area.

NATALEE  
Jameson, Freddy.

FREDDY  
On the house, sugar.

He puts out shot glasses.

One for her. One for Old Man Dillard. \*

Two for the Dancers. Four for the band. \*

One for himself. Cheers. \*

**FADE TO BLACK**