

Screenplay

EXT. SIDEWALK NEXT TO FOOTBALL FIELD. DAWN.

Sprinklers spray onto an empty field already settled with morning dew. The sun's early rays refract off the spraying water. A light wind blows over birds singing.

JAMES RICHARDSON, 13, African-American, walks by the field on the sidewalk. He wears a gray sweater, black basket-ball shorts, decent Nikes, and a black du-rag on his head. Behind him, he pulls a red wagon filled with boxes of various candies: SKITTLES, PEANUT M&MS, SOUR PATCH KIDS, ect.

BEGIN TITLE CREDITS:

EXT. SANTA BARBARA COURT HOUSE. STILL MORNING.

James pulls his wagon on a nearly empty street. A homeless man stops James to talk to him. The man pulls out a dollar and James hands him a skittles in exchange.

EXT. SANTA BARBARA PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

James comes to and stops at a bus stop. An old lady sits on the bench knitting.

On the library lawn landscapers trim hedges and cut grass while maintenance staff wash and clean the library's windows.

A Hispanic gardener with a weed-whacker waves James over to him.

The bus arrives as they finish their exchange. James runs back and picks up his wagon with both hands. He enters the bus behind the old lady.

INT. BUS. CONTINUOUS.

James reaches into his sweater pocket and pulls out a bus token. He then looks at the people riding while inserting the token. He sees the bus is mostly full. He takes off his du-rag and stuffs it in his pocket. At the front of the bus, he holds up his wagon, stands up strait, and speaks:

JAMES

Hello and good morning ladies and gentlemen. My name is James Richardson and today I'm selling candy to do something positive and stay off the streets. I have

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JAMES (cont'd)  
Skittles, peanut and regular M&Ms,  
Sour Patch Kids, Snickers, and  
Juicy Fruit and Winterfresh gum.  
Gum is 50c and candy is a dollar.  
Thank you for your donation today  
and the positive effect on the  
community. God bless you all.

James carries his wagon down the isle. Most passengers ignore him as he passes. A woman in business attire drops a dollar into the wagon with a big smile. James hands her a Snickers. The old lady who was knitting hands James a five-dollar bill.

OLD LADY  
God bless, soney.

James rounds the back of the bus. It is full of sleeping homeless men. The buss stops. James leaves.

EXT. STEARNS WHARF. DAY.

James leans against a bicycle sign at the entrance of the wharf. His wagon is in front of his feet. Surfers and girls in bikinis pass by and head for the sand. Cyclists and skaters zip by on the cement.

James watches people playing frisbee and tanning on the sand. He sees people laughing under umbrellas. Then he watches seagulls flying away from the water but heading nowhere because of the wind.

He pulls up his wagon's handle and leaves.

END TITLE CREDITS.

EXT. SHADY STREET. DAY.

James pulls his wagon along the middle of the street under a thick canopy of tall trees.

EXT. SUPERMARKET. DAY.

James stands with his wagon in front of the entrance to a large supermarket chain. He yawns.

A BUSINESS MAN approaches the market, rapidly talking on his phone.

(CONTINUED)

BUSINESS MAN  
Uh-huh. That sounds great  
Gerald...Well tell them to get on  
that. We only have so big a  
window...

The man locks eyes with James as he nears the door. James holds up his wagon and smiles.

JAMES  
S'cuse me sir. Would you like some  
candy.

The man stops in front of the automatic doors.

BUSINESS MAN  
Sorry Gerald. I'm going to have to  
call you back... Whadju say?

JAMES  
I said, do you want any candy?

BUSINESS MAN  
Okay. No I got it. See you at the  
office... Bye-bye.

The man hangs up and walks into the store. James watches him.

EXT. SUPERMARKET. LATER.

The man walks out with a shopping bag holding two items. One is hair gel. He pulls out the second: a pack of MARLBORO LIGHTS. He packs it, opens it, and lights the first one.

James has been watching the parking lot.

BUSINESS MAN  
Hey kid. How much is the gum?

JAMES  
50 cents.

BUSINESS MAN  
mm-hmm. And the skittles and M&Ms?

JAMES  
Dollar.

BUSINESS MAN  
Huh. Here's a buck. I'll take two  
gum, Winterfresh.

(CONTINUED)

The two exchange goods.

BUSINESS MAN (CONT'D)  
Been selling much out here?

JAMES  
Not really.

BUSINESS MAN  
Hm. Thought so.

He starts chewing a stick of gum while still smoking.

BUSINESS MAN (CONT'D)  
It's bad locationing. I mean,  
you're right in front of your  
biggest competitor.

JAMES  
Oh-no. I asked permission. They're  
letting me sell here.

BUSINESS MAN  
Exactly. They know you pose no  
threat to their business.

JAMES  
No sir. It's for a good cause. I'm  
doing something positive...

BUSINESS MAN  
Okay. Spare me the pitch. I get it.  
It works. It's sad though. You're  
getting killed on pricing.

JAMES  
What do you mean?

BUSINESS MAN  
Well, you've got M&Ms and Skittles  
for a dollar. In there those are  
only 85 cents. Your gum's too  
expensive too. The packaging on  
them even says they're only 35  
cents. See the problem?

JAMES  
I do, sir. Unfortunately, I can't  
set the prices.

BUSINESS MAN  
Well, I'm sure you're not supposed  
to. But who's the one actually  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BUSINESS MAN (cont'd)  
selling out here is all I'm saying.  
So, how are you going to compete?

JAMES  
I don't know.

The man chuckles.

BUSINESS MAN  
You don't know. Sounds great kid.  
I'm sure many businesses go in with  
that model and do perfectly fine.

He stomps out his cigarette and starts to walk away.

JAMES  
Well what would you do?

BUSINESS MAN  
Me? Well I've never sold candy but  
I assume it's like everything else.  
To be competitive you got to do  
what the other guy isn't willing to  
or get the fuck out. S'cuse my  
language.

JAMES  
No, it's fine. My mom swears all  
the time.

BUSINESS MAN  
I'm sure she does... If you really  
want to sell like crazy you should  
try in front of the gas station.  
Everyone knows their candy's  
already 25 cents more than it  
should be. Once you've done that  
you can take your profit and,  
instead of just handing it to your  
basketball coach, or whoever, use  
it to buy more candy from the  
manufacturer. Then you can lower  
your prices to something more  
competitive and pull out more  
profit. You know. Really fuck the  
competition. Tell me, is there a  
prize for the person who sells the  
most candy?

JAMES  
yes.

(CONTINUED)

BUSINESS MAN  
And I bet you want that prize.

James nods.

BUSINESS MAN (CONT'D)  
Well, as long as you bring the  
goods who cares if the candy you  
sold was actually theirs.

James contemplates this.

BUSINESS MAN (CONT'D)  
And even after that, with the  
skills you learned, I bet you could  
pull your buddies together and have  
them selling product all over town.  
Before you know supermarkets will  
be begging for mercy. You know.  
Really...

JAMES  
Fuck the competition. I get it now.  
Thanks.

BUSINESS MAN  
No problem. You know, you're lucky  
I was using my lunch break to get  
some smokes and hair gel. Normally,  
I give this kind of advice for a  
fee. But for you, it's pro bono.

JAMES  
Pro bono?

BUSINESS MAN  
Nothing. You'll understand on your  
court date.

James still looks confused.

BUSINESS MAN (CONT'D)  
Now, since I want to see you  
succeed I figure I'll give your  
sales a shot in the arm.

He reaches into his wallet and hands James a \$20. James' eyes widen. He takes the money.

JAMES  
Thank you. What do you want?

(CONTINUED)

BUSINESS MAN  
Nothing. I don't eat candy.

JAMES  
Thank you sir.

BUSINESS MAN  
Don't mention it. Although, I do  
need to make sure that you open 20  
of those candies.

JAMES  
What?

BUSINESS MAN  
Oh. You didn't think I was just  
giving you that money did you?

James doesn't know what to say.

BUSINESS MAN (CONT'D)  
No. I am purchasing twenty candies  
that I don't want. So open them.

JAMES  
But why? What am I supposed to do  
with all that candy?

BUSINESS MAN  
I don't know. Eat it. Toss it. If  
you can find someone willing to buy  
open candy then I guess that's  
their problem. I just can't have  
you monkey hustling me and keeping  
that 20 for yourself. No, not after  
all that good advice I gave you. So  
go ahead. Open them.

James lowers to his knees slowly. He's still not sure if the  
man is joking. James picks up an M&Ms and looks at him. The  
man nods for James to continue. James tears off a corner of  
the packet.

BUSINESS MAN (CONT'D)  
And don't take too long. Time is  
money as they say. To bad we can  
never buy more time. HA HA! Sorry.  
Little business joke.

James does not look at the man but continues to open  
candies. He rips one Skittles pack so hard that all the  
contents clatter onto the bed of the wagon.



James continues to rip candy while the man looms over him. He looks at what he is doing as if he is actually ripping up his own pride to shreds.

EXT. STREET. LATE AFTERNOON.

James pulls his wagon with many opened candies, their contents scattered all over the bed. In the boxes he still has several unopened candies.

James chews a Snickers as he passes a bus bench with a sleeping hobo. The hobo gets up.

HOBO

Hey kid? What can I get for a  
quarter?

James looks at him a moment, then decides some thing.

He takes all the boxes and places them side by side on the bench. The hobo looks confused but says nothing. James takes the quarter and walks off. The hobo looks after him still amazed.

HOBO

Thanks, kid.

With his now empty wagon James walks towards the setting sun.

THE END.