

JULES and PAUL are talking on the street. PAUL is having an ANXIETY ATTACK and JULES is trying to calm him down. They are both smoking cigarettes. As they speak, we see EXTREME CLOSE UPS cut quickly along their dialogue. We're jumping through the colorful credit sequence in between these quick tableaux. We never get a good look at either PAUL or JULES. Many of the close ups center around JULES' FINGERS as they glide across his IPHONE.

PAUL

I have no idea what I'm doing with my life.

JULES

Dude, we've got to do something. Howabout-

PAUL

I'm broke, Jules.

JULES

Dude, I gotcher back, man.

PAUL

I think I'm having an anxiety attack...

JULES

Why don't we, Dude, why don't we go see a movie...

PAUL

I don't know, what's playing...?

JULES

Oh! Dude! AMERICAN SPIRIT BLUES is playing!

PAUL

Fuck that movie.

JULES

C'mon, let's go see it!

PAUL

Maybe I should apply to grad school again...

JULES

Oh, shit! It's playing right now!

CHARLES MINGUS blasts full throttle. JULES takes off running. THIS IS NOT IN SLOW MOTION. This is the first time we get a good look at him. We move alongside him at different depths, watching him sprint with a cigarette in his mouth. He looks almost as if he's running away from someone. FULL SPEED AHEAD. Paul, reluctant to play along runs half-heartedly, ditching his cigarette as he trots behind. JULES, at full speed, is running away from something other than PAUL.

Along the way, they outpace JEANNETTE, who is running in dress blacks, nervous and sweating. She's been running for a while. JULES takes notice of her, but PAUL, ever the tortoise, turns around and runs backwards to get another look at her. HE wants to know why SHE looks so worried, when FUCK! he knocks over a garbage can and almost topples to the ground. JEANNETTE flies past him moments before JULES arrives at the ARTHOUSE MOVIE THEATRE.

The CHARLES MINGUS comes to an abrupt halt, as if the band fizzled out and stopped playing. JULES ditches his cigarette.

We begin ONE LONG SHOT the moment JULES walks through the door. JULES approaches the BOX OFFICE. HE starts buying two tickets from a MUSTACHEOED MOVIE THEATRE MANAGER. While the MUSTACHEOED MOVIE THEATRE MANAGER processes JULES' credit card, JEANNETTE runs through the door, gasping in line behind JULES. With one glance at JEANNETTE, THE MUSTACHEOED MOVIE THEATRE MANAGER tells us the size and species of the bug up his rectum. PAUL runs in through the doors, almost collapsing. THE MUSTACHEOED MOVIE THEATRE MANAGER gives JULES the tickets, and he walks over to the ailing PAUL, pulling him along inside. We almost miss this exchange behind them:

JEANNETTE

I'm so sorry!

MUSTACHEOED MOVIE THEATRE MANAGER

Young lady, sorry is a skirt worn in India.

JEANNETTE

What the fuck does that even mean?

MUSTACHEOED MOVIE THEATRE MANAGER

It means you're fired!

JEANNETTE

You're a dick! I fucking hate working here!

As JULES and PAUL disappear into the dark theatre, where MINGUS is playing, PAUL puts a cigarette behind his ear.

JEANNETTE exits the MOVIE THEATRE LOBBY.

JEANNETTE

FUCK.

We follow HER down the street. This isn't the first time this has happened to her, so she can take the humiliation with a certain rough fortitude. She's pissed, but she's not a wreck. After a few moments of walking she pulls out a cassette walk-man with some ipod earbuds. When she presses play, "MONEY" (Beatles version) rolls along from the beginning. JEANNETTE doesn't recognize it at first, but soon she catches on. SHE whips out the tape and throws it on the ground, crushing it with her heel and kicking it into the street. If we're lucky, the tape gets wrapped around her ankle and a quick bit plays out. WE cut to her walking a little later, when the light is getting just a little darker.

JULES and PAUL walk out of the MOVIE THEATRE, into the young night. They light cigarettes as soon as they can, and stroll aimlessly down the block. JULES is buried in his IPHONE, while PAUL takes in the scene.

PAUL

That movie sucked.

JULES

Yeah, it was really bad.

PAUL

It wasn't even the worst movie...

JULES

I know, it could've at least royally sucked, but that shit was just boring.

PAUL

Movies like that make me feel like I'm wasting my life.

JULES

Well that's because you are.

PAUL

I need a fuckin job, man, I'm going out /of my mind.

JULES

/Aw, come on, dude, bullshit. Dude, so many people in the world would love to do what you're doing right now.

PAUL

I'm doing nothing.

JULES

Right on...

PAUL

I'm accomplishing nothing.

JULES

Dude, quit fucking complaining! What are the fucking odds that you or I would ever happen at all? That we can even to do nothing is beyond fucking lucky.

All of the sudden we are in a LIQUOR STORE where PAUL is buying a FORTY with QUARTERS and DIMES. JULES continues as if no time has passed:

JULES

When you had a job you kept whining all the time, “Oh shit! Oh shit! I need a vacation! I need to vegetate!” Dude, vegetation does not make you some fucking bum. Vegetation lets you go with the flow, just goooo with the floooooow...

PAUL

I’m fucking broke, Jules.

JULES

Yeah, so what? I can help you out if you need.

PAUL

What, you gonna pay my rent? You gonna pay my fucking student loans? You think I can ask you...I mean dude, you could’ve started with this forty.

NOW we’re on a SEE-SAW in a PLAYGROUND. PAUL is nursing his forty on one end, JULES is lighting a cigarette on the other. There are no kids around, and a HOMELESS LADY sleeps on a bench within view. No time has passed, and we continue:

JULES

So where are you going to apply?

PAUL

I don’t know, I was thinking Costco.

JULES

Oh, come on, dude...

PAUL

WHAT?

JULES

You don't have to go that far...

PAUL

Nobody's hiring right now!

JULES

At least work at a coffee shop or something...

PAUL

I need a job, Jules, I need a job, I don't care how cool the job is, I just need a job and I need the job and I need the job to pay regularly and decently.

JULES

Have you tried sending your resume to any libraries?

NOW we're in an DARK, DIRTY FILM NOIR ALLEY. PAUL, having just finished his FORTY, throws it in the air. Before it smashes, he lights another cigarette. JULES is already smoking. Again, no time has passed and the conversation continues:

PAUL

No, everybody's full up.

JULES

What about High School Libraries?

PAUL

Dude, do you realize how many people got Library Science degrees in the last three years alone? Do you know how many people had the same idea at once?

JULES

Still, someone's got to be hiring. It's a big fucking city with a ton of libraries.

PAUL

Everybody thought they wanted to work in a library for the rest of their life.

JULES

What about Junior High Libraries?

PAUL

The year we got out of college had the biggest per-capita graduating class in history. Fucking everybody went to college. Well, almost, right, almost everybody...

JULES

You sound like you think that's a bad thing...

PAUL

WORLD HISTORY dude.

JULES

So good, a bunch of us are educated.

PAUL

Dude, what are we supposed to be doing with our time now that we can all read fuckin' Philosophical Investigations in motherfuckin' Hindi?

JULES and PAUL walk out of frame.

JEANNETTE wakes up on the floor in her MOVIE THEATRE uniform. SHE was sleeping on a rug with her pillow, but no blanket, and the early morning sunlight has crept in. SHE takes a shower, dresses, brushes her teeth and flosses. JEANNETTE cooks breakfast and makes KILO COFFEE on a stovetop percolator. SHE washes her dishes, SHE takes out the trash, SHE sits alone at her kitchen table. JEANNETTE'S APARTMENT is one room, well furnished and decorated with kitsch items found in neighborhood alleys and thrift stores. Everything is neatly arranged and orderly. Nothing is left unattended. Throughout this sequence, we've been listening to HER leave this message on HER MOTHER'S voicemail:

JEANNETTE

Umm, Hi, mom, it's me. Listen, I was calling because I was wondering if I could maybe come home for a little while soon, I was I guess hoping maybe you could help me pay for a ticket. Umm... anyway, give me a call back, I'll have my phone on all day. Okay, love you, bye.

JEANNETTE hangs up the phone. SHE rolls a cigarette. Poorly. Just as SHE lights it on her stovetop, her cell phone rings. SHE answers:

JEANNETTE

What the fuck am I supposed to do?

PAUL signs his name on a job application and shakes hands with a COSTCO MANAGER. The TWO smile vacantly before PAUL walks out of the store. HE shudders in the parking lot. Thunder. It begins to rain. PAUL is still wearing the vacant smile. HE leaps in front of an SUV and is killed on impact. A SOCCER MOM runs out of the SUV and starts swearing at him for getting in her way. PAUL wakes up mid-handshake with the COSTCO MANAGER.

PAUL

Really can't wait to hear from you.

PAUL walks outside where JULES is waiting for him. JULES holds up two cigarettes and the pair smoke as they walk away.

JULES

How'd it go?

PAUL

They don't give you health insurance until you've worked there for ninety days.

JULES

How was the break room coffee?

PAUL

What if my appendix bursts during my 89th day on the job?

JULES

What do you feel like doing tonight?

PAUL

I don't know. Drinking. Getting mugged, maybe. Why?

JULES

I think we need to get you out of the apartment, get you perambulating again. There's a free show at the bottle tonight...

PAUL

I don't like hanging out with you at the bottle.

JULES

Why not?

PAUL

Because, you don't go to listen to music.

JULES

What the fuck is that supposed to mean?

PAUL

You don't go for the music, dude. You know what I mean.

JULES

Who the fuck are you so “Holier-than-thou?”

PAUL

Waitamminute, waitamminute. Aren’t you supposed to be walking dogs right now?

All of the sudden we are in SOME DOG OWNER’S APARTMENT. JULES is scrubbing SOME DOG OWNER’S carpet while PAUL plays fetch.

JULES

So what if that’s why I go out to shows? That’s why everybody goes to shows!

PAUL

Do they let you eat the food in the refrigerator?

JULES

No.

PAUL

Do you ever scam a beer every once and a while?

JULES

No...

PAUL stops playing fetch, JULES stops scrubbing. The dog sits obediently.

PAUL

Principles...

JEANNETTE is reading a thick beige academic tract with “PRINCIPLES” written in maroon Futura letters. SHE takes a break and rolls a cigarette poorly at her kitchen table. Before SHE finishes, WE jump to JEANNETTE rolling a cigarette poorly outside the EMPTY BOTTLE. WE jump around through the night, watching JEANNETTE listen to various NOISE BANDS. WE follow her from beer to beer. WE watch her take the last of her money out of the ATM. She rolls more cigarettes, each without outstanding success. JEANNETTE is alone, except for the occasional cuts to her looking past the camera, talking to an UNSEEN FIGURE:

JEANNETTE

I liked their last album, but I don't have the internet at home, so I haven't been able to steal their new one yet.

I love coming to this place.

I'm always working when the best shows are happening.

I just got fired yesterday.

I'm working on my bachelors in Anthropology.

This is my only Indulgence.

What's your name?

This band is terrible.

I said this band is terrible!

Yeah I want to get out of here.

I want to get out of here, let's go.

ALL OF THE SUDDEN JEANNETTE is laying in some strange bed next to some STRANGE STRANGER. SHE wakes up to the sound of someone banging away at a DRUM SET in the other room. At first SHE thinks she's still at the BOTTLE, until

SHE realizes that SHE is completely naked. OH FUCK... THE DUDE IN BED WITH HER is also naked, face down in his pillow. SHE sneaks out of the bed, gets dressed and sneaks out the bedroom door. Through the door, SHE finds herself in the KITCHEN, where PAUL is playing the DRUMS. JEANNETTE thinks she might almost get away unnoticed when PAUL stops playing.

PAUL

Hello.

JEANNETTE

Uh, hi.

PAUL

I'm Paul, Jules' roommate.

JEANNETTE

Hi, Paul, I'm, uh, Christine.

PAUL

No you're not.

JEANNETTE

Yes I am.

PAUL

No, you're Jeannette. You told me last night.

JEANNETTE

I was obviously lying.

PAUL

Sorry if I woke you up. You want some coffee?

JEANNETTE

What time is it?

PAUL

Two thirty.

JEANNETTE

FUCK, I'm late for class.

PAUL

It's sunday.

JEANNETTE

Have you seen my coat?

JULES is grumbling from his bedroom. JEANNETTE gets more anxious.

PAUL

You have class on sundays?

JEANNETTE

Sorry, this is awkward...awkward. I'd just like to get my things and go.

PAUL

Have you checked in Jules' room? I think I saw it in there this morning.

JEANNETTE

Wait, you were in the room this morning?

PAUL

I had to get my drums out.

JULES enters, groggy, hungover, wearing only JEANNETTE'S COAT. HE pours himself some coffee.

PAUL

There it is.

JULES

There's what?

JEANNETTE

My coat!

JULES

Oh this is yours?

JEANNETTE

I don't mean to be...I need to get going...I've got class...

JULES

Oh, here.

JULES takes off the coat, leaving him and his fruit-of-the-looms exposed in the kitchen. HE throws the coat to JEANNETTE and nickels fly out of her pockets, showering the DRUMS and the kitchen floor.

JEANNETTE

You all can keep those.

JEANNETTE struggles to unlock the door. SHE finally makes it out, leaving PAUL alone with ALMOST NAKED JULES.

PAUL

...Does that kindof hurt your feelings/ 'cause that would definitely hurt my feelings if that had happened to me.

ALMOST NAKED JULES

/Yeah, no, I'm not going to lie that really kinda sorta hurt my feelings a little bit.

A BRIEF pause.

PAUL

You want to smoke a bowl?

JULES

Yeah, sure, why not?

JEANNETTE makes it out into the street. SHE walks as if SHE'S being followed. SHE is! SHE looks back to see that SHE is being followed by noneotherthan...HERSELF! OTHER JEANNETTE is caught in the act of espionage and gives up. SHE shrugs. OUR JEANNETTE shakes her head. THEY decide to turn around and leave a somewhat more graceful first impression.

PAUL and CLOTHED JULES are smoking pot in the kitchen. PAUL is drumming. WE NEVER ONCE SEE ANY DRUGS IN THE WHOLE FILM. ONLY THEIR EFFECTS.

JULES

At least I'm off my antidepressants.

PAUL

Yeah, and my anxiety is way down lately.

JULES

Do you think I'll ever hear back from her?

PAUL

Mmm...Short answer, no. Long answer...

JEANNETTE walks in through the front door.

JEANNETTE

Listen, I just wanted to apologize. That was very rude of me just then and I don't normally, well I don't normally do anything I've been doing lately, or at least, well, anyway, I just wanted to say that I'm sure you two are both very nice people and I'm sorry if you found any of my behavior rude. Yes. Okay. Well... I'ma gonna go...

JULES

You want some of this?

JEANNETTE

Yes. Very much.

JEANNETTE takes a hit, no doubt cleverly concealed by the magic of cinema.

JEANNETTE

I'm not sure if this is cashed.

JULES

Go ahead and kill it.

JEANNETTE

Yes, this is definitely cashed. Johnny Cashed in point of fact.

JULES looks at PAUL. NEITHER OF THEM know what to do next.

PAUL

Um, so do you want to Jam?

JEANNETTE

I don't play anything.

JULES

Neither do I.

PAUL

Right, right, so let's jam.

THE THREE WAIL on any and every instrument. What WE hear is JOHN COLTRANE'S MY FAVORITE THINGS. JULES, JEANNETTE and PAUL appear as though THEY APPEAR to be pushing the physical limits of their ability to make loud noise. THEY ALSO APPEAR to be having a great deal of fun.

JOHN COLTRANE continues. NOW the THREE are skipping through the streets, leaping as if THEY were in some grand ballet. THEY teepee a statue of CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS. NOW THEY are running through the streets, knocking people over as if THEY were defensive linemen on a football team. THEY sit quietly reading books in a library. NOW THEY are sprinting through the streets, wearing military fatigues and waving flags that belong to fictional countries. THEY stand on a roof and light molotov cocktails. THE THREE look at each other. THEY shake their heads. THEY wind up walking through the ZOO when the COLTRANE stops.

PAUL whistles "RAINDROPS KEEP FALLIN' ON MY HEAD."

JULES

I think all this speculation is getting us nowhere.

JEANNETTE

Still, it's a compelling argument...

JULES

But even if the world was being run by lizard people, what could we do?

JEANNETTE

Well, I mean, come on, we'd be powerless to stop them.

PAUL

I can't believe you two are even debating this.

JEANNETTE

I think there's a whole wikipedia entry about the lizard people conspiracy.

PAUL

I think I'm gonna go check out the primate house.

JULES

Tell your mom I say hi.

PAUL walks off, leaving JULES and JEANNETTE alone.

JEANNETTE

Are you a cop?

JULES

Why do you keep asking me that?

JEANNETTE

This feels like a setup.

JULES

Let's move to Costa Rica together.

JEANNETTE

I guess I was being indirect.

JULES

Or Burgundy. Let's move to Burgundy!

JEANNETTE

So who are you and stuff?

JULES

Oh. Shit. I don't know.

JEANNETTE

Neither do I.

JULES

Know who you are?

JEANNETTE

I know damn well who I am. I'm talking about you, stranger.

JULES (And JULES' BRAIN)

Listen. Jesus. Fuck. I just met you, and that's a really hard question to answer because on the one hand I could paint one picture and on the other hand the grass could be way greener, right? Really this all feels like one long first impression to me, do you know what I mean? I hope so (jesusgod why aren't you saying anything right now, lady?) blah blah human condition blah blah Wittgenstein blah. That's the best I can do right now, because although I'd love to tell you all about me, all I really got is a bunch of questions (bullshit.)

JEANNETTE

I can't tell if that was incredibly deep or incredibly shallow.

JULES turns his head and coughs.

JEANNETTE

I don't do this often, Jules.

JULES

You really should.

JEANNETTE

I'm too busy with school.

JULES

Didn't you say you had class today?

JEANNETTE

I was obviously lying.

JULES

Obviously.

JEANNETTE

But hey, we're hanging out. And who knows, someday, when I meet the man, woman, lizard person of my dreams, I'll hope, at the very least, that it will be as much of an adventure as you and I are having right now.

JULES

Yeah...look at us...?

THEY lock eyes. At first it's AWKWARD. Then it's SERIOUS.

JEANNETTE

So let's just agree to hang out if we want to hang out, okay?

JULES

Yes...lets...

JEANNETTE

You sound apprehensive.

JULES

I just have no idea what any of that meant, I'm sorry.

JEANNETTE

Sorry. Neither do I, I guess.

JULES

I think you just said you wanted to hang out again sometime.

JEANNETTE

Yeah, that's what I said! Yeah!

JULES

Yeah! Let's...High Five!

JEANNETTE

Yeah!

The PAIR high-five.

JULES

...does that mean we're done hanging out for the day now?

JEANNETTE

I don't know, does it?

JULES

That's really not up to me.

WE'RE in the PRIMATE HOUSE with PAUL. WE face his back. JULES, alone, slides next to him. The TWO watch the APES intently.

PAUL

What was that thing the Billy the Kid said?

JULES

"I never stole a horse from a man I didn't love."

PAUL

These apes are amazing, why don't we ever go to the Zoo?

JULES

I think Jeannette asked me out on a date.

PAUL

Oh, you mean Christine? That's good, because you've already slept with her.

JULES

I'm actually kind of nervous.

PAUL

God, working at the Zoo would be an awesome job.

JULES

I bet you get to feed the tigers.

PAUL

And pet the meercats...

JULES

You should apply.

PAUL is in a tiny office. HE hands a freshly completed application form to a MUSTACHEOED ZOOKEEPER. THEY shake hands.

PAUL

Really can't wait to hear from you.

HE means it this time.

JEANNETTE is at the UNIVERSITY CASHIER'S OFFICE. SHE takes a furtive swig from her flask while waiting for her appointment. Inside, there are INSPIRATIONAL POSTERS on the wall, though the CASHIER is far from inspirational.

JEANNETTE

Isn't there some emergency work study job available?

CASHIER

I'm afraid not.

JEANNETTE

I'm waiting on a check from my dad.

CASHIER

That's a good thing.

JEANNETTE

No, it's not, I haven't spoken to him in months.

CASHIER

Have you thought about applying for any scholarships?

JEANNETTE

I don't have time, I'm too busy actually going to college.

CASHIER

All that hard work I bet you could get a scholarship.

There is a LONG PAUSE between the two of them.

JEANNETTE

Okay, well thanks for your help.

CASHIER

Any time, dearheart.

PAUL signs his name on yet another application. This time it is for a position at a MEXICAN RESTAURANT. HE shakes hands with the manager.

PAUL

Espero que usted me llama.

PAUL walks out of the MEXICAN RESTAURANT. JULES is waiting for him with a pair of cigarettes, which they quickly ignite.

JULES

How'd it go?

PAUL

I think they figured out I don't speak spanish. Dude, I'm never going to find a job in this economy. I think I'm going to have to move to Cambodia.

JULES

You want me to buy you a forty?

PAUL

It's three in the afternoon!

JULES

I'm just saying, is all...

PAUL

Thanks, dude, but no.

NOW JULES and PAUL are in a grocery store. PAUL is shoplifting cheeses. JULES is on the lookout with a baguette, trench coat and sunglasses. The conversation continues as if no time has passed:

JULES

Is it me or have you been getting responsible lately?

PAUL

You're the one with a job.

JULES

Hey man, we all scraping by. Both of us gettin' pennies on the dollar for our youth. Growin' old doing the same shit to our kids...

PAUL

You want the gruyere or the chevre?

JULES

Why not both?

PAUL

Why not?

JULES

I've been thinking more about JEANNETTE...

NOW JULES and PAUL are sitting on someone's FRONT STOOP, eating baguettes and stolen cheese. JULES has ditched the trench coat, now PAUL is wearing the sunglasses. BOTH OF THEM are smoking cigarettes. Again, the conversation continues as if no time has passed:

PAUL

Of course you have.

JULES

I think I'm in love with her.

PAUL

Oh wait, you mean Christine? Yeah, I mean, you've known her for like 48 hours.

JULES

Yeah, but you just, you just know after 48 hours.

PAUL

You know what I think? /I think romance is a literary movement.

JULES

/Oh yeah, what's that?

PAUL

A dead literary movement, from a dead time.

JULES

Oh yeah? What time are we in now?

AN OLD LADY opens the door to the stoop with a broom. THEY look up at HER. SHE is startled to see THEM.

PAUL

Do you mind if we eat our lunch on your stoop?

NOW JULES and PAUL are on the street, walking away from the stoop. JULES is taking huge bites out of the baguette. PAUL is chewing on the end of the sunglasses. THEY pass by a flock of SQUAD CARS.

PAUL

What do you know about her?

JULES

I know she's a student at DePaul.

PAUL

Do you know what she's studying?

JULES

Anthropology.

PAUL

Very good...

JULES

Wait, are you quizzing me?

PAUL

Yeah, why?

JULES

'Cause it's a little wierd that's why.

PAUL

Dude, you got to get to know this woman. How else you gonna treat her right?

LATER, JEANNETTE arrives at her apartment. SHE empties out her all of her school work into a pile on the rug. SHE takes a shower and cooks some dinner. Ramen. SHE reads her textbooks and folds her laundry. SHE pours over pages and pages of notes. While this is happening, SHE calls her MOM again.

JEANNETTE

Hi, dad, it's me again. Still wondering about the money. I checked the cashier office's hours online, and I think I can make it there in between classes. I'm getting an A in my meme class. Woohoo! Memes! I think I'm going to have to drop a class, though, I'm taking 21 hours and the limit is 18. I had today off though. I spent the whole day picking up job applications around town. The whole day... wow, this is a long message. So um, anyway, gimme a call when you get this.

JEANNETTE hangs up. The phone rings again, instantaneously.

JEANNETTE

...dad?

It's not JEANNETTE'S DAD, it's PAUL.

PAUL

No, actually, it's Paul.

JEANNETTE

...Paul?

PAUL

Yeah, so anyway Jules asked me to ask you when you have class and stuff.

JEANNETTE

Why is he having you call me? Didn't we just hang out today?

PAUL

That's what I said! (See, dog, that's what I said!)

JEANNETTE

Tell him I'll call him.

PAUL

Thanks, I will.

JEANNETTE

Tell him it might be a while, I'm really busy, I've got a paper due and seven billion pages to read and then I got to go to work...

PAUL

Didn't you just get fired?

JEANNETTE

Yeah... and I need to find another job or I'm fucked for tuition.

PAUL

...Shit, sorry.

JEANNETTE

I thought we spent the whole afternoon talking about this.

PAUL

You told Jules, and Jules told me, but I wanted to act surprised so you wouldn't think Jules tells me things you tell him. But I'm right there with you, sister, I just found out this week that they won't let me defer my student loans anymore.

JEANNETTE

Who's they?

PAUL

The man.

JEANNETTE

Figures.

PAUL

...anywho, if you find any jobs that you don't want, you just sendum my way.

JEANNETTE

...thanks...I will...

PAUL

Peace flowing like the great river.

PAUL hangs up the phone.

JEANNETTE

...Hello...?

JULES is making something massive out of paper mache.

JULES

Did she sound like she liked me?

PAUL

Look at you, all twitterpated. How's the art project coming along?

JULES

Terrible.

PAUL

...What is it?

JULES

It's supposed to be the Incan god of fertility. I should have made her an ashtray.

PAUL

Speaking of which, mind if I bum a smoke?

JULES

I... quit smoking...

JULES and PAUL are walking down a residential street, smoking cigarettes.

PAUL

Do you ever feel like we could be spending our time in a more meaningful and productive capacity?

JULES

No.

PAUL

Is it common for people our age to wonder about that, or is it, like, wanting to get a tattoo? Do you think that this is a phase, or is this a generational thing?

JULES

Mmm. Tough call. Why do you ask?

PAUL

I have this feeling I could be accomplishing something. I don't know what it is yet. I can't put my finger on it and it's driving me nuts.

JULES

You've been on that kick for a few days now.

PAUL

Yeah man, ever since I got that letter from my bank.

JULES and PAUL start APPEARING in front of these VARIOUS LOCALES:

JULES

Have you thought about applying to a comic shop?

PAUL

Yes.

JULES

What about a record store?

PAUL

Yes.

JULES

What about the movie theatre?

JULES and PAUL are standing in front of the CHEAP ASS MOVIE THEATRE. THEY look at each other. No way. Still, why not see a movie? IN THE DARK THEATRE, during a quiet moment of high tension, JULES' iPhone rings.

JULES

Oh, fuck, it's her!

PAUL

Answer it! Answer it!

An AUDIENCE MEMBER shushes JULES and PAUL.

JULES

Shutup Shutup Shutthefuckup. Hello?

JEANNETTE

Do you have any more of those groceries left?

JULES

Groceries?

THE AUDIENCE MEMBER stands up and stares at JULES.

JEANNETTE

Yeah, groceries. Those groceries we had yesterday? With Paul?

JULES

(She talks in riddles. What the fuck?)

PAUL

What's she talking about?

JULES

(Groceries.)

PAUL

Whoa. She wants to buy your groceries together?

JULES

Yeah, which grocery store do you want to go to?

JEANNETTE hangs up.

JULES

She hung up.

THE AUDIENCE MEMBER locks eyes with JULES.

NOW JULES and PAUL are walking away from the MOVIE THEATRE.

PAUL

Call her back! Call her back!

JULES

Groceries. Was that some kind of code?

PAUL

Find out! Call her back!

JULES

I'm dialing! I'm dialing!

PAUL

Groceries. Sounds kind of domesticated, don't you think?

JULES

This is moving way too fast.

PAUL

Can't hurry love.

JULES

You just have to wait.

PAUL

Love don't come easy.

JEANNETTE PICKS UP

JULES

It's a game of give and take. Oh, fuck, hello?

JEANNETTE

I think I'm going to have to drop out of school.

JEANNETTE and JULES are alone at a NOODLE JOINT. SHE is not touching her food. HE is wolfing it down, as sweetly and reassuringly as possible.

JEANNETTE

I don't have anyone to talk to.

JULES

You can talk to me.

JEANNETTE

I am talking to you.

JULES

Yeah and I think that's really cool.

JEANNETTE

I don't have anyone to talk to except my mother.

JULES

What happens if your dad does send you the money?

JEANNETTE

I still can't afford food or rent. Or books, fucking books cost hundreds of dollars a semester and when you sell them back they give you fucking pennies on the dollar. I could start working a full time job selling my books online for a fair price.

JULES

So why don't you?

JEANNETTE

Because I need my books for school.

JULES

Couldn't you read them at the library?

JEANNETTE

I need my books. I love my books. They're my books.

JULES

...oh.

JEANNETTE and JULES are on a FIRE ESCAPE. JULES lights a cigarette.

JULES

If I could lend you money, I would. I can keep taking you out to noodle joints though. And you can totally keep the leftovers, by the way...

JEANNETTE

What have I been doing with my life?

JULES

You sound like my roommate.

JEANNETTE

I don't have friends. I'm in college and I don't have any friends.

JULES

Hey! Fuck you!

JEANNETTE

What? I don't.

JULES

I'm your friend. Fuckin', I assume Paul is your friend.

JEANNETTE

You guys are acquaintances. I only just met you. Who the fuck is Paul? I don't know. I don't really know either of you.

JULES

What difference does that make?

JEANNETTE

Mind if I bum a cigarette?

JULES

Do you smoke?

JEANNETTE

I would if I could afford it.

JEANNETTE and JULES are picking up quarters from a WATER FOUNTAIN.
BOTH are smoking cigarettes. THEY both keep an eye out for onlookers.

JULES

Look, I doubt you're seeking perspective from a stranger on all the crazy shit going on in your life, but from what I can gather it's either take some time off of school to make money for school or keep going to school and spend the rest of your life working to pay off debt from school...

JEANNETTE

That's pretty much how I look at it.

JULES

...So it sounds like you've got yourself something in that's in very high demand.

JEANNETTE

What's that?

JULES

It sounds like you've got yourself a dilemma...

JEANNETTE

Aso.

JULES

...and dilemma has only one currency by which it may be exchanged.

JEANNETTE

And what might that be?

JULES

A solution.

JEANNETTE

Oh, really? You know, I hadn't thought of that. They should've had you around in Troy when the Greeks invaded.

JULES

There's one thing to keep in mind, though.

JEANNETTE

What's that, Tiresius?

JULES

A solution can only exchange one dilemma for another.

JEANNETTE and JULES are making out on JULES' couch. PAUL, wearing an apron and nursing a cigarette in his mouth, walks in with a tray of warm cookies and a carton of soy milk.

PAUL

Dude, let's sell drugs.

A LIGHTBULB goes out somewhere in the APARTMENT.

JULES

What?

PAUL

Let's sell drugs, let's sell drugs.

JULES

Where the fuck did this come from?

PAUL

I'm broke. She's broke. You're almost broke. We're up to our asses in debt. I can't get a job, she can't get a job... the whole thing is rigged, man. It's like on the wire, dude. The game. We're in the game wether we like it or not. C'mon, it's gotta be better than fucking working, otherwise it wouldn't be illegal, right?

JEANNETTE

That's terrible reasoning!

PAUL

Or, maybe... just maybe... it's not.

JEANNETTE

That's not even an argument!

PAUL

No, really. Let's sell drugs.

JULES

...Paul...man...do you even know where we could get them? What kind of drugs are we even talking about here?

PAUL

Cannabis Sativa. Strictly Cannabis Sativa.

NOW the THREE are strolling through an INDOOR ARBORETUM. At some point in the exchange JEANNETTE stops to smell a flower. JULES follows in pursuit.

PAUL

I've been researching all of this on wikipedia. Drug laws, distribution practices, money laundering, body disposal, the works. I've even seen the BBC Traffik mini-series all the way through. I think we could make it as drug dealers, dudes.

JEANNETTE

I suppose you could grow it yourself...

PAUL

It's going to be legal in like, eighteen months anyway.

JULES

Yeah, but it's not legal now.

PAUL

You're too worried about consequences. I'm talking about action.

JEANNETTE

What the fuck does that even mean?

PAUL

It means it's time for us to take responsibility for our lives!

JEANNETTE

Have you thought about this at all practically?

PAUL

I've thought about this so practically...! Basically, it seems like kung fu, you know, it's all about the method.

JULES

How much money do you think we could make?

While PAUL speaks, his narration is matched onscreen with a SESAME-STREET ARITHMETIC LESSON.

PAUL

Well, if you figure that on average in this economy, the standard eighth of an ounce goes from anywhere between 55 and 70 dollars. Scaled up to a full ounce, the gross is between 440 or 560. If we sell a single kilogram, that's roughly 35.27 ounces, we stand to gross nineteen thousand seven hundred and fifty two dollars.

"ALMOST 20 THOUSAND DOLLARS" flashes on the screen.

PAUL

...and eighty eight cents.

JULES and JEANNETTE are stunned.

JEANNETTE

Count me in.

PAUL

Dig it.

JULES

Alright, Fitzcarraldo, where do you plan on getting this shit?

PAUL

...I hadn't thought of that.

NOW the THREE are in an ALLEY. JEANNETTE is in a dumpster digging for day-old bread, and PAUL is leaning against the wall, reading a discarded newspaper. JULES is keeping an eye out, eating a large baguette and drinking a juice box.

JEANNETTE

How do you boys feel about sourdough?

PAUL

HOLY FUCK, they legalized pot in Michigan!

JULES

Really?

PAUL

Really really. "Effective immediately the Michigan State Police will no longer prosecute offenders for the possession of less than 2.5 ounces and 12 plants." All we'd need is a doctor's note and a Michigan State Driver's license...

JEANNETTE

How long is the drive to Michigan?

JULES

About an hour and a half to the border.

PAUL

Dude, doesn't your Mom live in Holland now?

JULES

Absolutely not...NO!

PAUL, JEANNETTE and JULES are on a Kindergarten Playground. JEANNETTE is playing hopscotch. PAUL is flying a kite with some YOUNGSTERS. SCHOOL has just gotten out, and PARENTS are picking up their KIDS. JULES is on the phone with ETHEL (his mother). ETHEL is unpacking groceries in her cozy KITCHEN.

ETHEL

JULIAN! I haven't heard from you in weeks! How are you?

JULES

Hey mom...

ETHEL

What's wrong, you've got that guilty sound...

JULES

Nothing's wrong. I was actually thinking of coming up and visiting soon.

ETHEL

You don't have to /do that, really, I'll be back in town for the holidays soon.

PAUL

/Tell her I miss her zucchini bread.

JULES

I want to see your new place.

PAUL

Zucchini Brrrrr-hmmm...!

JULES

And Paul wants to come up and eat some of your Zucchini bread.

ETHEL

Oh! Paulie! How's he doing? Does he have a job yet?

JULES

Oh, crap, mom, I've got a call from work on the other line, I've got to go, see you this weekend, okay? Goodbye.

JULES hangs up. HE is immediately pelted by a HAIL OF DODGEBALLS. When JULES gets his bearings, HE sees JEANNETTE accompanied by a SMALL ARMY of kindergartners. JULES chases THEM ALL away, while PAUL, alone, flies his KITE. WE follow the string up, revealing a TRIANGULAR OWL KITE.

WE THEN follow the string back down, only now it's being held by JEANNETTE, who is alone with JULES in a BIG BASEBALL FIELD. JEANNETTE is reading from a book titled "NINETEEN WAYS OF LOOKING AT WANG WEI." From the moment the KITE SEQUENCE begins, WE hear this narration from JEANNETTE:

JEANNETTE

Dans la montagne tout est solitaire,
On entend de bien loin l'écho des voix humaines,
Le soleil qui penetre au fond de la foret
Reflète son éclat sur la mousse verte.

JULES

What does that mean?

JEANNETTE

On the mountain everything is solitary, One hears from far off the echo of human voices, the sun that penetrate to the depths of the forest reflects its ray on the green moss.

JULES

What does that mean?

JEANNETTE

It means what it sounds like.

JULES

But it means something, right? There's something more to it than just that.

JEANNETTE

It's just a poem about real things.

JULES

I don't get poetry.

JEANNETTE

What's there to get?

JULES

It just seems like an exercise in making the world seem more complicated.

JEANNETTE

To the contrary, I think that poem was really simple. The sun shines through the forest, lighting up the moss, making it green...

JULES, still holding on to the KITE, kisses JEANNETTE.

JEANNETTE

See, it's simple, really.

JULES kisses JEANNETTE again. The KITE falls to the ground, kicking off a TRAVEL MONTAGE. JULES, JEANNETTE and PAUL drive on the open road in JULES' beat up car. THEY smoke cigarettes, sleep, and watch the world go by. All WE hear is a cover of "HOLLAND" by Sufjan Stevens, sung by a woman with a beautiful beautiful voice. So beautiful, in fact, that you wouldn't think it was a cover at all. This is the first quiet, grey, autumnal moment in the picture.

When THEY arrive in HOLLAND, WE see windmills, giant wooden shoes, Wal-marts and dilapidated homes. THEY drive through a forested area, where THEY approach a modest house with a small driveway. The sun is setting, and in the cool blues of dusk, the house seems warm and inviting. ETHEL opens the door to greet the TRAVELERS, who rush into the house. SHE lights a cigarette.

JEANNETTE

This place is beautiful!

ETHEL

Thanks. I'm Ethel by the way.

JEANNETTE

Jeannette.

ETHEL

Julian has told me absolutely nothing about you.

JEANNETTE

Good!

PAUL

Did you bake us some zucchini bread?

ETHEL

PAULIE! PAULIE Paulie Paulie! Yes yes, go in the kitchen. It's still warm.

JULES

Hi, mom.

ETHEL

It's good to see you. How long are you three planning on staying?

JULES

Just for the weekend. Do you know if the DMV is open on Saturdays?

ETHEL

...uh, I think so, why?

JULES

My license is about to expire.

ETHEL

Why didn't you just get a new one in Illinois?

THE FOUR sit around ETHEL'S kitchen table, eating zucchini bread and drinking milk. They all smoke, and eventually JEANNETTE stands up and investigates the kitchen. The walls are covered in framed newspaper front pages, with headlines about the liberation of Paris, the first moon landing, Obama's election, etc...

PAUL

I missed this so much.

ETHEL

I made you another one to take home.

PAUL

Will you marry me?

JULES

I think I need to go to the doctor.

ETHEL

Why? What's wrong?

JULES

I've been getting migraines again.

ETHEL

Maybe you should cut back a little.

PAUL

That's what I tell him!

JULES

I think I just need to get a new prescription.

JEANNETTE stops cold in front of a headline about Tiananmen Square.

JEANNETTE

Where did you get these?

ETHEL

Oh, I used to work at a newspaper.

JEANNETTE

/Which one?

JULES

/The Tribune.

ETHEL

Back when it was still a paper.

JEANNETTE

What did you do?

ETHEL

I was an editor, nothing spectacular. When times got rough, I was one of the first staff members offered early retirement.

JEANNETTE

I'm sorry...

ETHEL

No, no, I got off easy. A whole bunch of my colleagues who stayed on got next no no severance. At least I got a pension...

PAUL

You should start a zucchini bread bakery!

ETHEL

You should get a job of your own.

PAUL

I love you.

ETHEL

I love you too, Paulie.

JEANNETTE

How long have you all known each other?

ETHEL, JULES and PAUL exchange three quick, silent glances. WE move to the couch, where all FOUR sit, just as ETHEL opens a dusty picture book. The photos eventually melt away to a series of home movies, which ETHEL narrates:

ETHEL

Julian and Paul were born at the same hospital within a week of each other. They grew up playing together, Paul staying overnight at least three nights a week. They played baseball, started a band and worked dozens of odd jobs together.

WE land in the flash of a photo of PAUL and JULES in tuxedos. The montage becomes increasingly realistic and engaging.

ETHEL

They took each other to prom, and no one batted an eye. On the night of Paul's graduation from high school, his parents died in a car accident. That summer he came to live with us. That was my favorite summer. The two were planning on going to the same college, but since I could afford to send Jules to Northwestern, they were separated for the first time.

JEANNETTE

Where did you go to school?

PAUL

State.

JEANNETTE

Oh...

ETHEL

Paul paid his own way too...

PAUL

I still am...

ETHEL

You just need to find the right job, that's all. Something you can apply yourself to.

JULES

I'm going to bed...

ETHEL

Couch.

JULES

Mom...

ETHEL

You too, Paulie.

PAUL

I brought a sleeping bag.

JEANNETTE

Where am I going to sleep?

JEANNETTE lays awake, still in her coat, atop the bedding in THE GUEST ROOM. There are paper mache sculptures by JULES, along with more headlines and a wall of books. There is no way JEANNETTE is going to sleep.

SHE creeps out of the room in the middle of the night. JULES and PAUL are snoring on the couches. The light is on in the kitchen, and a thin cloud of smoke trails out. JEANNETTE pokes her head in, where ETHEL is waiting.

ETHEL

Can't sleep either?

JEANNETTE

I thought I'd steal another bite of zucchini bread.

ETHEL

Sit down, I'll get it for you. So how do you know Julian?

JEANNETTE

I don't, really.

ETHEL

You want some soymilk too?

JEANNETTE

Sure.

ETHEL

I know Julian very well. Let me tell you, he's a nice boy.

JEANNETTE

That's what I gather.

ETHEL

But you know what? He's not right for you.

A CLOCK shaped like a CAT meows on the wall behind JEANNETTE.

JEANNETTE

How do you mean?

JEANNETTE looks at the MEOWING CAT CLOCK.

ETHEL

Julian is no good for you. I can tell.

JEANNETTE

I really don't feel comfortable with this...

JEANNETTE looks back at ETHEL. SHE finds that ETHEL has become JULES, dressed exactly as his mother. ETHELJULES speaks with PAUL'S voice.

ETHELJULES

I think you'd be better off with Paul.

PAUL WAKES UP, panting.

PAUL

God...dammit.

JEANNETTE

I'm sorry, did I wake you up?

JEANNETTE is in her coat, with a plate of Zucchini bread.

PAUL

No, I just had a, um, I had a dream and...

JEANNETTE

I'll let you get back to bed, sorry for waking you...

PAUL looks and sees that JULES is not lying on the couch any longer.

PAUL

What time is it?

JEANNETTE

Four thirty. Go back to sleep.

JEANNETTE leaves. PAUL is alone. HE sinks into his sleeping bag.

NOW PAUL and JEANNETTE are sitting in a hospital waiting room beside each other. JEANNETTE is pouring over Anthropology notes. PAUL starts leafing through Seventeen Magazines. JULES sits in his DOCTOR'S EXAMINING ROOM.

JULES' DOCTOR

So what's ailing you?

JULES

My migraines are coming back. And my anxiety. My migraines are giving me anxiety attacks which make my migraines worse, and makes me anxious even when I don't have migraines because I know how bad my migraines can get.

JULES' DOCTOR

Any phantom smells? Blurry vision? Memory problems?

JULES

Do I have a tumor? /Oh no, I think I'm getting another migraine.

JULES' DOCTOR

/Jules, Jules, It's not a tumor. You don't have a tumor.

JULES

Good, cause I don't know what I'd do if I had a tumor...

JULES' DOCTOR

Dude. Chill...

PAUL and JEANNETTE are taking a quiz together. JULES runs in, clicks his heels, and runs out of the waiting room. INTERPLANETARY MUSIC by SUN RA blasts the moment his heels meet in mid air. JEANNETTE and PAUL run after.

JULES is standing behind a tall municipal counter. A MUSTACHEOED CIVIL SERVANT looks him SQUARELY IN THE EYE.

JULES

FIVE WEEKS?

THE MUSTACHEOED CIVIL SERVANT glowers in a way that only TEDDY ROOSEVELT could. NOW JEANNETTE and PAUL are on a SAND DUNE with JULES.

JEANNETTE

FIVE WEEKS?

JULES

He said that the application will only be turned down if the paperwork is incomplete, though. You guys, maybe this is a chance to take a step back and analyze-

PAUL

I can wait five weeks.

JEANNETTE

Yeah, I can wait five weeks.

PAUL

That gives us time to raise more capital and invest in improving distribution.

JEANNETTE

Marketing too. Now's the perfect time for us to start branding. I'll put out feelers on craigslist and try to cobble together a focus group to start brainstorming.

JULES

How are we going to pay for that? How are we going to pay for the grass?

PAUL

Bake sale!

JEANNETTE

How's your health insurance?

JULES

I just aged out.

JEANNETTE

Do you have life coverage...?

PAUL

Bake sale!

JULES

We have to get more aggressive in our fundraising paradigm. If we're serious about providing an efficient service with low cost, high quality merchandise, we're going to have to invent new strategies for growth. I think we need to sell every last thing we own.

"ST. LOUIS BLUES" by LOUIS ARMSTRONG plays as PAUL walks down the streets of Chicago with a SNARE DRUM in his hands. ARMSTRONG WAILS as PAUL shows up in a pawn shop, where the MUSTACHEOED PAWNBROKER takes a look at his wares. THEY shake hands and PAUL leaves.

JULES alphabetizes and carefully conditions his entire record collection.

PAUL walks back in the direction of the PAWN SHOP, now with a FLOOR TOM.

JULES fills milk crates with BUBBLE RAP. JEANNETTE investigates a record.

JULES fills milk crates with RECORDS, alone.

PAUL carries his BASS DRUM into the PAWN SHOP. HE knocks shit over.

JULES fills his car with record boxes.

PAUL walks his CYMBALS down the street. HE is stopped by a STRANGER.

JEANNETTE drives JULES car toward the RECORD STORE.

PAUL receives a LARGE WAD of CASH from the STRANGER.

JULES is CRYING in his EMPTY ROOM.

JEANNETTE receives a LARGE WAD of CASH from the MUSTACHEOED RECORD STORE CLERK. SHE counts the bills in front of HIM.

PAUL and the STRANGER part ways, the STRANGER carrying the CYMBALS.

JEANNETTE drives the now empty car back to JULES. It's getting late.

JULES is frozen in place. The TEARS have dried on his FACE.

JEANNETTE parks the car, gets out, walks calmly, but swiftly, to the front door of JULES and PAUL'S apartment, buzzes JULES, waits, gets buzzed in, walks up his staircase, arrives at his door and bites her nails.

JULES, melancholy, opens the door.

JEANNETTE pulverizes JULES with affection.

PAUL practices drums on pots and pans. JEANNETTE and JULES are obviously having sex in the other room. JULES' Iphone starts ringing. PAUL is at first quietly bothered by it, and then decides to see who it is. It's ETHEL. HE picks up.

PAUL

Uh, hey, Mom.

ETHEL

Paulie, don't fuck with me. Is Julian there?

PAUL

Um, he's in the shower.

ETHEL

Riddle me this, Batman. Why did my son get an envelope from the Michigan Department of Community Health? Why does this envelope contain an identification card from the Michigan Medical Marihuana Program?

PAUL

...Off the record?

JULES is on the phone, in JEANNETTE'S coat, alone in the BATHROOM.

JULES

I can explain.

ETHEL

Make it quick.

JULES

My doctor prescribed it.

ETHEL

Dr. Wojokowski? He's known you since you were a baby!

JULES

I didn't go to Dr. Whoa, I went to a new doctor.

ETHEL

So what you're telling me is that you came to Michigan with the express purpose of obtaining a legal license for the use of Medical Marijuana. I can see now what motivates you to visit your mother these days. Did you lie to your Doctor?

JULES

No! It wasn't even my idea!

ETHEL

Oh, so whose was it? Don't tell me it was Paulie...

JULES

No, it was Dr. Banerji! Dr. Banerji said it was an alternative to my debilitating migraine medication.

ETHEL

I'll debilitate you pretty soon if you don't get straight with me.

JULES

Mom! If I want drugs I can get drugs. What, you want I should meet some drug dealer in an alley and risk getting stabbed or worse?

ETHEL

Son, I interviewed Kissinger. Do you really think that's going to fly?

JULES

Seriously, Mom, listen. This isn't about getting stoned, this is about my life.

JEANNETTE and PAUL are sitting on the floor of the LIVING ROOM. PAUL is reading THE CHICAGO READER. The ROOM is EMPTY. JEANNETTE does homework.

PAUL

Ooh, free silent movies next week.

JEANNETTE

He's been talking to her for an hour. He's 25, he can't make decisions for himself?

PAUL

It's his mom!

JEANNETTE

What, he needs her permission?

JULES comes out of the BATHROOM. HE locks eyes with JEANNETTE, then PAUL. Then JULES mopes into his BEDROOM. JEANNETTE shoots PAUL a hopeless glance. PAUL shrugs. JULES, fully clothed, reenters impossibly fast.

JULES

I've got to go back to Michigan. Alone, this time. If you two come it will totally arouse suspicion. I think she'll come around if I make it seem like I'm compromising. I think that will also give me time to shop around, get as much product as I can. In the meantime, Paul, I need you to walk my dogs while I'm gone. And J?

JEANNETTE

Yeah?

JULES

I need your seed money.

PAUL and JEANNETTE are in a MOVIE THEATRE. On the SCREEN, a SILENT MOVIE plays out. In it, JEANNETTE, melancholy, waits in line in a USED BOOK STORE. A STROH VIOLIN wails a deep lament. At the front of the line, SHE greets a MUSTACHEOED BOOK CLERK, who, seeing how blue his client appears, gives an understanding nod. THE MUSTACHEOED BOOK CLERK hands JEANNETTE a fan of singles, which SHE counts immediately. JEANNETTE casts a mournful look at the MUSTACHEOED BOOK CLERK and, downtrodden, walks out of the USED BOOK STORE while the CAMERA IRISES IN. The CREDITS roll and the lights come up in the MOVIE THEATRE.

PAUL

What do you want to do now?

JEANNETTE

Nothing. I want to do nothing.

PAUL

You look like you could use some Ice Cream...

JEANNETTE

I can't even afford a soft serve.

PAUL

Wierd.

JEANNETTE

What?

PAUL

Just got a strange sense of deja vu.

PAUL and JEANNETTE are at a DAIRY QUEEN. PAUL pays the CASHIER and sits across from JEANNETTE.

PAUL

They're not hiring.

JEANNETTE

Figures.

PAUL

How deep in the hole are you?

JEANNETTE

30,000.

PAUL

Wow. Fuck.

JEANNETTE

It'll be 70 by the time I graduate. If I graduate.

PAUL

You'll graduate...

A LONG, AWKWARD PAUSE.

PAUL

...So what did you think of the movie?

JEANNETTE

I don't know if I want to go to college anymore. I've already spent all this fucking money I don't have, for a degree that will only ever really amount to a hobby or some pleasant fucking dinner conversation...

PAUL

There are plenty of jobs for...Anthropologists...

PAUL nurses his SUGAR CONE.

JEANNETTE

I'm gonna go, you know what? I'm gonna go, thanks for the Ice Cream.

JEANNETTE gets up and leaves. WE follow her out of the DAIRY QUEEN on to the STREET. As SHE walks OTHER JEANNETTE passes by confidently in nicer clothes and a heavy back pack. JEANNETTE doesn't notice OTHER JEANNETTE at first, but when SHE does, SHE stops dead in her tracks. JEANNETTE watches OTHER JEANNETTE walk farther and farther away, until SHE disappears behind some distant corner. Then EVERYTHING BUT JEANNETTE stops moving. SHE carries a vacant expression, as if lost in an unfamiliar place. The MOMENT breaks when PAUL plows in to her at full speed.

JEANNETTE

OW, PAUL, what the fuck?!

PAUL

JULES IS ON HIS WAY BACK!

JEANNETTE

Already?

NOW JULES, JEANNETTE and PAUL are sitting on the couch, LOOKING AT THE CAMERA (THE MERCHANDISE). THEY'RE expressions betray a sense of AWE. NONE of them are smoking.

PAUL

How much is that?

JULES

2.5 ounces.

JEANNETTE

How much of the money did you spend?

JULES

All of it.

JEANNETTE

Where's the calculator?

JEANNETTE pulls out a CALCULATOR. DURING THE FOLLOWING DIALOGUE, JEANNETTE'S MATH is subtitled in BRIGH FUTURA NUMBERS.

PAUL

What are we going to call it?

JEANNETTE

No one replied to the branding focus group invitation on craigslist.

PAUL

No one responded on LinkedIn or Facebook either. I bet if we found a subtle way to let potential focus group participants know what it is we're actually branding, we might be able to generate a few more hits...

JEANNETTE

Wow, you really made the money stretch. With 950 bucks you got 1200 dollars worth of street-retail product...

JULES

Wholesalers.

JEANNETTE

How much was gas here and back?

JULES

40 bucks.

JEANNETTE'S ARITHMETIC begins to get specific, reading:

Profit Margin \$310 / 3 Partners = \$103.33 Net Gain Per Partner. My Rent = \$400/103.33 = 3.87 Necessary Shipments Per Month. 1 shipment = 20 clients at .125 Ounces Per Client. Total Minimum Clientele = 80 customers.

PAUL

Is it any good?

JULES

It's a motherfuckin' Klingon Bird of Prey.

JEANNETTE

We're going to need to move a whole fuck ton of this in order to make a living.

PAUL

How much?

JEANNETTE

80 units of 1/8th of an ounce. Unless...

Over the next few lines JEANNETTE'S MATH reads:

\$75 per .125 oz * 20 Clients Per Shipment = \$1500, -990 in expenses = \$510 / 3 Partners = \$170 Per Partner Per Shipment.

PAUL

80 is totally achievable. Especially with repeat clients.

JULES

Yeah, but it means we have to step up service while keeping distribution costs low. We'll need to look into free and creative packaging solutions.

PAUL

If we distro on our bikes, that almost eliminates the cost of delivery.

JULES

Delivery service, I hadn't thought of that...

JEANNETTE

How dishonest are you two capable of being?

NOW JULES and PAUL are sitting in a CLASSROOM with JEANNETTE in front of the BLACKBOARD. SHE pulls down a projection screen with a POWER POINT PRESENTATION projected on it. This may be imaginary.

JEANNETTE

If we can provide an array of price-differentiated product at anywhere between 60 and 75 dollars per unit, we can drastically increase profit margins and increase the consumer credibility index enormously. The only catch is we've only got one product to sell, so by getting a little creative with labeling and by talking up the higher priced units, we can sell the same weed to different customers at a plastic price index. We can milk these cows according to how fat they look.

JULES

...I think we should call it "HIGH-LARIOUS."

"35 TRIPS TO MICHIGAN LATER" appears on the screen. WE cut to a MONTAGE of PAUL, JULES and JEANNETTE riding colorful BICYCLES through interesting SUMMER TABLEAUS of the CITY OF CHICAGO. The MONTAGE is cut to "BIKE" from PIPER AT THE GATES OF DAWN by PINK FLOYD. During the line "You're the only girl that fits in to my world" WE either see JULES and JEANNETTE in some romantic moment or PAUL quietly fawning over JEANNETTE. Each time we see them, THE THREE are wearing different thrift store clothes. The idea is to tell a story that their enterprise is more successful than any of them could ever have imagined, and they have reached some semblance of a busy plateau. If WE make it to the Music Concrete tag at the end of the song, the MONTAGE should end with PAUL mass-producing DIY packaging for their product while JEANNETTE and JULES clean their bike parts together. A DISPOSABLE PHONE rings and PAUL answers in BEATNIK slang:

PAUL

BeBop Collard Greens. This is Rolando speaking. Are you a cop? ...Okay, are you recording this conversation in any way?...Great, how may I help you?

JULES

Can you hand me the toothbrush?

PAUL

Okay, and your address?

JULES

Thanks.

PAUL

Great to hear from you again too. We'll be there in...

JEANNETTE

35.

PAUL

...Thirty-five minutes. See you then.

PAUL hangs up.

JULES

I really wish you wouldn't answer the phone like that.

PAUL

Like what?

JULES

Just, let them bring it up, okay? Don't just give it away.

PAUL

It's not like anybody cares, anyway. I'm just trying to be charming.

JULES

Yeah, well, if we get busted you won't be so charming anymore, right?

JEANNETTE

Jules...

PAUL

Dude, we're fine. That was Esmerelda just then.

JEANNETTE

Oh! I love Esmerelda! I think she's having a fourth of July barbecue next week, we should go to that. You guys want to make some pierogi?

JULES rights his BIKE. He grabs a WATERPROOF CAMPING BAG.

JULES

I'm ready to go. What's her address?

PAUL

2605 W. Iowa avenue. Block /north of Chicago.

JULES

/Yeah, I know where that is...

JULES leaves. JEANNETTE and PAUL notice his absence.

PAUL

What's his deal?

JEANNETTE

He's mad because I told him I wanted I didn't want us to be monogamous.

PAUL

You been steppin' out?

JEANNETTE

Hasn't Jules?

For a BRIEF MOMENT, PAUL and JULES are in the observation deck of a SKY-SCRAPER. After this line, we return to JEANNETTE and PAUL:

JULES

Dude, we're totally going steady.

PAUL

...I don't think so.

JEANNETTE

He won't tell me either way.

PAUL

What about you?

JEANNETTE

What about me?

PAUL lunges at JEANNETTE, SHOWERING HER with KISSES. At first SHE is STUNNED. Then SHE is RESPONSIVE. Finally, JEANNETTE rejects PAUL.

JEANNETTE

Paul...

PAUL

Sorry.

JEANNETTE

No...it's...

PAUL

I should probably go...

JEANNETTE

No. Wait.

PAUL

Yeah?

JEANNETTE

I'll go.

PAUL looks down. JEANNETTE grabs a backpack and leaves. PAUL stares at all the packaging he's put together. He's thinking: "What the fuck is wrong with me?"

JEANNETTE walks out of the APARTMENT BUILDING. SHE stops, takes a look around. She's thinking: "What the fuck is wrong with me?" SHE turns around, heads back upstairs and into the APARTMENT. SHE opens the door, stops, makes eye contact with PAUL and rushes toward him.

JULES knocks on the door of 2605 W. Iowa. ESMERELDA opens it up.

ESMERELDA

Oh, hey, Jules, I wasn't expecting you.

JULES

Here I am.

ESMERELDA

Come in.

ESMERELDA'S apartment features ornate furniture, eclectic instruments and esoteric works of art. In spite of these possessions, SHE is still very young.

JULES

So, I've got High Hopes, that's 60, totally mild, decently dense. Then I've got Pie High for 70, very similar to Hopes, but a bit more intense. Then I have our signature brand, High-Larious. It comes with a hand-thrown ceramic jar.

ESMERELDA

How much is that?

JULES

75.

ESMERELDA

I'll take it.

JULES

Awesome.

ESMERELDA

Do you have an honest Abe on you?

JULES

I'm sorry?

ESMERELDA

A five.

JULES

Oh, yeah, here you go.

ESMERELDA hands JULES eighty dollars. HE hands her five and the opaque jar.

ESMERELDA

You want some of this?

JULES

...yeah, okay, sure.

JEANNETTE rises up from behind the couch. SHE pours herself a glass of water.

JULES

You know what? maybe not.

ESMERELDA

Are you sure?

JULES

Yeah, on second thought, I should probably be making a few more deliveries.

PAUL, dressing, looks out the window.

ESMERELDA

Alright. You know we're having a barbecue here next week, you should come.

JULES

Oh yeah, when?

ESMERELDA

Saturday, the fourth.

JEANNETTE approaches PAUL, they kiss.

JULES

Oh yeah, Jeannette was talking about that.

ESMERELDA

You both should come. Paul too. It'll be fun.

JULES

Sure thing. I will see you later.

ESMERELDA

Thanks.

Back at the APARTMENT:

JEANNETTE

I'm leaving Chicago. I'm moving in with my dad.

PAUL

When?

JEANNETTE

In a few weeks.

PAUL

What about school?

JEANNETTE

There's a community college by where he lives. I can get some credits out of the way cheap and look at going back to school next year.

PAUL

I thought you didn't get along with your dad.

JEANNETTE

Not him, really, just his wife. I hardly used to hear from him, but he made the offer. I haven't told Jules.

PAUL

Fuck.

JEANNETTE

Let me tell him, okay?

PAUL

I love you.

JEANNETTE

What?

PAUL

I love you.

JEANNETTE

No, you don't.

PAUL

Yes, I do. I don't love anyone, or anything, but it's been killing me, not telling you.

JEANNETTE pulls out a cigarette, puts it in PAUL'S mouth and lights it.

JEANNETTE

Any last words?

JULES is riding his bike down the the STREET. HE is concentrating hard, trying not to think about how shaky things are between HIM and JEANNETTE. Almost as if he's summoning her, JULES' phone rings. Still pedaling, HE answers.

JULES

What's up?

JEANNETTE

What are you doing right now?

JULES

I'm riding to the Mopery for the next delivery. What's up?

JEANNETTE

You're biking?

JULES

Yeah, something on your mind?

JEANNETTE

We can talk about it later.

JULES is frustrated, not paying attention when HOLY FUCK SOMEONE OPENED THEIR CAR DOOR IN FRONT OF HIM. JULES tries to stop, but his FIXED GEAR BIKE has NO BRAKES. HE FUCKING FLIPS OVER HIS HANDLEBARS and ROLLS to the FEET of the MUSTACHEOED PLAINCLOTHES POLICE OFFICER who opened the door. LITTLE OPAQUE JARS are LITTERED across the street. ASIDE from a nasty scrape on his face, JULES is fine, and HE stands up and rights his BIKE in a state of confusion.

MUSTACHEOED PLAIN CLOTHES POLICE OFFICER

Holy fuck, are you alright brother?

JULES

I'm fine, damn, I think /I'm fine. Have you heard of the bike lane?

MUSTACHEOED PLAIN CLOTHES POLICE OFFICER

I'm so sorry, I wasn't thinking. Let me help you pick up your things...

JULES

Thanks...

THE MUSTACHEOED PLAIN CLOTHES POLICE OFFICER starts picking up the LITTLE OPAQUE JARS and stuffing them into JULES' backpack, still on his back. JULES' iPhone rings, but HE ignores it. Only NOW does he recognize that the MUSTACHEOED PLAIN CLOTHES POLICE OFFICER is wearing a bulletproof vest. as the MUSTACHEOED PLAIN CLOTHES POLICE OFFICER stuffs the camping bag, he seems OBLIVIOUS to its contents.

JULES

You know what, I can take care of this myself.

MUSTACHEOED PLAIN CLOTHES POLICE OFFICER

No, please, it's the least I can do.

JULES

No, it's fine, let me-

MUSTACHEOED PLAIN CLOTHES POLICE OFFICER

Do you need to get to a hospital?

JULES

What?

MUSTACHEOED PLAIN CLOTHES POLICE OFFICER

You're bleeding. Here, lock up your bike, let me take you to the ER.

JULES

No, I'm fine, it's just a scrape.

MUSTACHEOED PLAIN CLOTHES POLICE OFFICER

Oh, shit, sorry, this one broke...

JULES looks at the BROKEN JAR. HE can't tell if it's empty or not.

MUSTACHEOED PLAIN CLOTHES POLICE OFFICER

You don't look too good, brother.

JULES' iPhone rings again.

JULES

I think my girlfriend is breaking up with me.

MUSTACHEOED PLAIN CLOTHES POLICE OFFICER

Aww, shit. Sounds like yer having a day, aren't you...

THEY FREEZE. All the sound of the STREET cuts out. WE get a series of FIVE SHORT (ALMOST) STILL SHOTS(Comme l'introduction):

MUSTACHEOED PLAIN CLOTHES POLICE OFFICER is looking down at the broken jar in his hand and sees something we don't see.

JULES' EYES GO WIDE.

JEANNETTE smokes a cigarette.

JULES' iPhone rings again.

THE MUSTACHEOED PLAIN CLOTHES POLICE OFFICER looks at JULES.

CHARLES MINGUS (from the beginning of the film) BLASTS again. JULES mounts his BIKE and rockets off. THE MUSTACHEOED PLAIN CLOTHES POLICE OFFICER runs after him, turns around and runs into his car. JULES swerves through Chicago's maze of alleys and side streets. THE MUSTACHEOED PLAIN CLOTHES POLICE OFFICER tries to follow him, but he's blocked by traffic, pedestrians and other bicyclists. JULES can get around better than a car. MORE SQUAD CARS show up in pursuit. Some cut HIM off, forcing JULES to turn around and double back. When HE does, MUSTACHEOED OFFICERS jump out of their cars and run after HIM. JULES easily outpaces them, and takes a super-swift zigzag through the beautiful landscape of residential Chicago. MINGUS winds down. After a while, HE notices he's not being followed anymore. JULES dismounts, takes off his bag and empties it's contents into a DUMPSTER. HE ditches the bike. HIS iPhone is still ringing as he walks down the street.

JULES takes stock of how badly his face is bleeding. HE has a long, wide SCRAPE across the right side of his face. Waxing inconspicuous, HE answers his iPhone.

JULES

Hey...

JEANNETTE

Oh my god, are you okay?

JULES

Yeah, let's not talk about that right now.

JEANNETTE

Is everything alright?

JULES

I don't know, is it?

JEANNETTE

What do you mean?

JULES

Are you totally giving up on us?

JEANNETTE sighs. JULES takes stock of his surroundings.

JEANNETTE

Jules, come back to the apartment, let's talk about this.

JULES

No, let's talk about it now.

JEANNETTE

I'm moving in with my dad.

JULES

You're fucking moving to Oregon?

JEANNETTE

I can't do this anymore, J. I think you're great, and it really has less to do with-

A SQUAD CAR passes JULES.

JULES

YOU'RE FUCKING LEAVING?

JEANNETTE

Jules...

THE SQUAD CAR BACKS UP.

JULES

NO, FUCK YOU. WE'VE worked so hard on this shit together and now you're taking off? Just like that? WHAT ABOUT THE BUSINESS?

SQUAD CAR OFFICER

HEY!

JEANNETTE

You can do it without me.

SQUAD CAR OFFICER

HEY, BUDDY!

JULES (to the officer)

GO FUCK YOURSELF.

JEANETTE

Fuck you back, asshole.

JULES

No, wait, I wasn't-hello? Hello?

SQUAD CAR OFFICER

GET DOWN ON THE FUCKING GROUND.

JEANNETTE, pissed as all hell, packs up all her belongings. SHE isn't crying, but she might as well be. SHE grabs a SMALL OPAQUE JAR, stuffs it in her bag and walks out of HER APARTMENT without shutting the door.

In a series of quick shots, JULES gets handcuffed on the ground, searched and stuffed into the SQUAD CAR. On the way to the station, WE get this exchange:

JULES

I want a public defender.

THE SQUAD CAR OFFICER laughs.

NOW BANDAGED JULES is sitting in the station, a dingy office. HE rubs the ink on his fingers while he waits by a desk. A DETECTIVE with the most MENACING MUSTACHE YOU HAVE EVER SEEN sits down in front of him with a THICK FOLDER and a SMALL OPAQUE JAR in a ziploc. HE gives JULES a warm smile.

DETECTIVE RYAN

Hi there, Julian?

JULES is SILENT.

DETECTIVE RYAN

I'm Detective Jim Ryan. Nice to meet you, Julian.

JULES looks away.

DETECTIVE RYAN

I respect that you're keeping your mouth shut. Might be the smartest thing you've done in a while. Well, actually, no, that's not true. You actually strike me as a pretty smart guy. Are you in school? Do you go to college?

JULES give DETECTIVE RYAN a DEATH STARE.

DETECTIVE RYAN

I think you must have. Or at least you should have. It seems like you're involved in a rather successful small business. We've found a few of these jars around town the last couple of months, but we never really caught a break. Best we could get out of folks was a bike delivery service number, but with the district cutting corners we could never really follow up. I'm a businessman too, you see, but my business isn't doing as well as yours...

JULES looks down.

DETECTIVE RYAN

Anyway, we found your bike. And your dumpster. And the rest of your jars.

JULES looks up again. HE's silently crying.

DETECTIVE RYAN

Now you seem pretty young to me. Maybe a little old for your age, a bit more mature, but still, 23?

JULES

25.

DETECTIVE RYAN

25, wow. Did you go to college?

JULES

Yeah.

DETECTIVE RYAN

What'd you study?

JULES

Comparative Literature and Philosophy.

DETECTIVE RYAN

Comparative Literature and Philosophy. Wow. Now what I can't understand is, young guy like you, obviously very smart, very well read, capable, not too bad looking...what I can't figure out is, why the heck couldn't you have applied yourself to something positive? Something for your community. Start a real small business, you know, get a loan and make your way in the world...Something legal, you know? Why does a guy as smart as you get involved in something as stupid as selling dope across town? And who involved you? A nice kid as smart as you, this couldn't have been your idea. Whose idea was it?

JULES

I want to make a phone call.

DETECTIVE RYAN

Sure, sure. You want to call a public defender?

JULES

I want to talk to my Mom.

PAUL and ETHEL are sitting across from one another in a DINER by the HIGH-WAY. THEY are looking each other dead in the eye, as if we have caught them in the middle of a brief pause in the conversation:

PAUL

Do I romanticize my life? Or has my life romanticized me?

ETHEL gives PAUL a good SMACK across the face.

PAUL

Ow!

ETHEL

How can a person be smart enough to say something so dumb?

PAUL

Sorry, Jesus...

ETHEL

Where's Janet?

PAUL

Jeannette? She took off. She won't return my calls.

ETHEL

Jesus fucking...this is a fantastic clusterfuck you three have summoned. You know that? I'd be impressed if I wasn't so horrified.

PAUL

I'm sorry!

ETHEL

Don't apologize to me...

PAUL

Then what do you want me to do?

ETHEL

Get a job.

PAUL

I'm, Jesus, I'm fucking trying. Seven months now I've been trying. My resume is shit. What Jules and I were doing was the closest thing to a steady job I've had since graduating. Can't put that on the resume. I've got no skills outside of writing essays and getting my friends thrown in fucking prison. I'm fucked. I'm totally fucked now. Worthless.

ETHEL

...With that attitude...

PAUL

I don't know what to do anymore. I don't have any idea what I'm supposed to be doing with my life.

ETHEL

Paulie, you used to have such big dreams...

PAUL

I have no idea what you're talking about.

ETHEL

You were never this bleak, Paulie. You want to stay with me a while? Rent free?

PAUL

In Holland?!

ETHEL

I don't know, Paulie. You're depressed. We gotta get you going again.

PAUL

No...thanks.

ETHEL

Think about it.

PAUL and ETHEL hug in the DINER PARKING LOT. It's quite a bit later. PAUL gets into JULES' CAR and pops a MIXTAPE into the car stereo. WE hear the cover of "HOLLAND" we heard earlier in the film, until PAUL hits eject and throws a different cassette. Quiet, dissonant jazz fills the car as PAUL pulls out of the PARKING LOT. In a series of cuts, we see PAUL drive JULES' CAR down the HIGHWAY and into DOWNTOWN CHICAGO. Each cut makes the light darker, more blue.

The MUSIC continues as PAUL arrives at the empty apartment. HE lies on the floor. HE falls asleep. The NEXT MORNING he takes a shower. HE walks alone through various locations we've seen in the course of the film. HE sleeps. He wakes up and showers. HE explores.

PAUL is in an office in a BEST BUY. He shakes hands with a smiling manager, a woman the same age as him, sans mustache. SHE hands him a BLUE POLO.

PAUL wanders through his past, smoking cigarettes and wearing his BLUE BEST BUY SHIRT. HE sleeps. HE rings up customers in the BEST BUY. HE drinks coffee alone in a greasy diner. HE wanders. Routine.

WHEN THE MUSIC REACHES ITS CONCLUSION, PAUL is ringing up a CUSTOMER who resembles, but isn't, JEANETTE. HE pays little attention to her or her items until he scans a DVD of AMERICAN SPIRIT BLUES. HE examines the case and the CUSTOMER DISAPPEARS behind the camera.

PAUL

This movie...

CUSTOMER

Yeah, a friend recommended it. I haven't seen it. Is it any good?

PAUL makes EYE CONTACT WITH US. **THE END.**