

Lost At Sea
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EXT. PARK - DAY

JESSE JAMES (7) is playing with his friends 4 BOYS (7-8) in a park. A white van pulls up. A STRANGER gets out, goes to the back of the van, opens it. The stranger pulls out a puppy with a white bandage on its leg. Jesse notices, stops playing, walks over to the stranger.

JESSE

What's wrong with him?

STRANGER

He hurt his leg. I'm just getting ready to take him to the vet.

The stranger lets Jesse pet the puppy.

JESSE

How'd he hurt his leg?

STRANGER

Doing puppy stuff I guess. You want to help me out with him?

Jesse looks back at his friends. They are still playing.

STRANGER (CONT'D)

You can go to the vet with me. We'll get him all patched up. Then you can take him home.

JESSE

I don't know if my dad will let me have a dog.

STRANGER

I can talk to your dad.

JESSE

Really?

STRANGER

Sure. This pup is going to need a good home and someone to take care of him. You look like you love animals.

JESSE

I really do. And I would take really good care of him.

STRANGER

Well, why don't you hop in. You can hold him.

The stranger hands the puppy to Jesse who takes the puppy in his arms. Jesse climbs into the back of the van. The stranger closes the door, looks around, gets into the driver's side of the van and drives away.

EXT. PARK - DAY

A WOMAN (30s) arrives at a park. Her DAUGHTER (5) gets out, runs for the jungle gym. As the woman approaches the playground she notices Jesse sitting next to the slide. He is covered in blood. The woman dials 911.

WOMAN

There's a little boy here, he's hurt.

(beat)

Can you tell me your name?

Jesse doesn't respond.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Please hurry!

The woman kneels down next to Jesse.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Help is on the way. Can you tell me your name sweetie? Can you tell me where you're hurt?

JESSE

He hurt me.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

JESSE JAMES SR (32) arrives at the hospital. He has on a mechanics uniform. He is distraught. A NURSE is waiting for him, gives him a look of sincere compassion.

NURSE

He's ready for you to take home. The doctor has some medications he's prescribing and here are some notes for care at home.

Jesse Sr takes the paperwork, nods.

NURSE (CONT'D)

I also have a list of counselors here. I recommend you get in touch with one of them as soon as possible.

JESSE SR

We don't need that.

NURSE

Mr. James, your son has been through an extremely traumatic experience. He's going to need help and support to get through this.

JESSE SR

He has all the support he needs at home.

NURSE

Please, please take this list and call one of these counselors, Mr. James.

The nurse is standing firm, holding the list out to Jesse Sr. He takes the list, stuffs it in his pocket.

INT. HOSPITAL, PRIVATE ROOM - DAY

Jesse is lying in a hospital bed, his face towards the wall. Jesse Sr sits down next to the bed. Jesse is hugging a stuffed superhero toy close to his chest. Jesse Sr breaks down and starts to cry. Jesse hugs his toy tighter, starts to cry too.

JESSE

I'm sorry, dad.

JESSE SR

Jesse, you can't tell anyone about this. People will...they'll look at you differently, treat you differently if they know. We need to put this behind us. Understand?

JESSE

I understand.

INT. JAMES HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

12 Years Later

Jesse, now 19, walks into the living room. He has a duffel bag and a box of personal items. The stuffed superhero toy is sticking out of the top. His father is looking down. His sister RAYNA JAMES (15) is standing in a bedroom doorway.

JESSE (CONT'D)

I guess that's it.

Jesse Sr hands Jesse an envelope. Jesse Sr looks defeated.

JESSE SR

There's enough cash in there for you to get a place and to last you a few weeks for gas and food. You'll need to get a job, but this should be enough to get you started if you don't spend it on drugs.

JESSE

Can't I stay here for just a little longer?

JESSE SR

You're always in trouble, Jesse. You barley graduated from high school, you smoke that garbage all day long. It's better this way. You need to be a man, be responsible for yourself. I can't do anything else for you. I've done all I can.

Jesse takes the envelope, then he looks at Jesse Sr who is not looking directly at him.

JESSE

Look at me, dad.

The father glances at him a moment, then quickly looks away.

JESSE (CONT'D)

I want you to look at me.

Jesse Sr doesn't respond.

JESSE (CONT'D)

(yelling)
Look at me!

Jesse starts to cry. Rayna goes to him, hugs him. She is crying too. Jesse Sr is still looking away, but there are tears in his eyes. Jesse hugs his sister, heads out the door.

EXT. JAMES HOUSE, DRIVEWAY - DAY

Jesse throws everything into an old 2000 model, beat up Subaru. Jesse looks at the house one last time, then drives off.

EXT. SLUM APARTMENT, WALKWAY - DAY

The LANDLORD (60s) is walking with Jesse. The Landlord is a huge, filthy man. The building is a slum apartment. A MAN is selling drugs on the corner.

LANDLORD

Rent's due the 1st. Not the 2nd, not the 3rd, the 1st. If the rent's not in my box on the 1st, you'll get served with an eviction notice. No screwing around, no loud noise, no selling or using drugs out of the apartment. You understand?

JESSE

(glancing down at the guy selling drugs)
Yes, sir.

The landlord stops at apartment 306, hands Jesse the keys.

LANDLORD

If something breaks or there's a problem, leave a note in my box.

JESSE

Ok, thanks.

The landlord walks away without saying another word.

INT. JESSE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jesse walks into the furnished studio apartment. It is a dump. Jesse has to do massive cleaning to make the apartment livable.

Later

Jesse is making his bed with clean sheets and a blanket. He throws a blanket over the couch. He looks around at his new home.

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

Jesse counts the money he has left. He buys a gallon of milk and cheap, unhealthy food.

INT. JESSE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jesse makes himself a cup o noodles. As he eats he searches the internet on his phone for jobs.

INT. JESSE'S APARTMENT - LATE NIGHT

Jesse is awakened by the sound of his neighbors fighting. Jesse bangs on the wall.

JESSE
(yelling)
Hey, can you keep it down in there?

Without skipping a beat, the noise continues. Jesse puts his pillow over his head.

INT. LOCAL GROCERY STORE - DAY

Jesse is working at a small, family owned grocery store bagging groceries.

EXT. LOCAL GROCERY STORE, PARKING LOT - DAY

Jesse helps an ELDERLY LADY take groceries to her car. He loads up the car for her.

ELDERLY LADY
Thank you.

JESSE
You're welcome. Have a nice day!

Jesse rushes back into the store.

INT. LOCAL GROCERY STORE - DUSK

At the end of the day the boss, JOSEPH BENTLEY (50s), brings everyone together.

JOSEPH
Drug testing is this Friday everyone. You have the address. Get it done, bring the results in.

Jesse looks extremely nervous.

INT. JESSE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jesse is pacing around his apartment, looks anxious, is wringing his hands. He looks at the dresser next to his bed, turns away from it shaking his head.

JESSE
Not this time.

INT. JESSE'S APARTMENT - LATE NIGHT (NIGHTMARE)

Jesse is tossing and turning. In his dream a white van is parked in a deserted area. From outside, the muffled sounds of a young boy crying and screaming for help can be heard from inside the van.

INT. JESSE'S APARTMENT - LATE NIGHT

Jesse wakes up with a start. He is in a full-blown panic. He retrieves marijuana, rolls a joint, lights it and takes a long drag. He is clearly upset as he smokes the joint.

INT. LOCAL GROCERY STORE, JOSEPH'S OFFICE - DAY

Jesse walks into Joseph Bentley's office, hands his boss his drug test results. Joseph looks them over, frowns, shakes his head. He is clearly disappointed.

JOSEPH

I'm sorry, Jesse. I'm going to have to let you go.

JESSE

Look, I'm really sorry. It was just one time. I really, really need this job. I don't have enough to cover my rent next month.

JOSEPH

I like you, the customers like you. But we don't allow any drug use here. It's a zero-tolerance policy. Wait a few weeks, don't smoke any pot and get another drug test. If it comes out clean, we'll consider hiring you back. But I can't make any exceptions here.

JESSE

Mr. Bentley, please. I really need this job.

JOSEPH

I'm sorry, Jesse. I really am.

JESSE

A few weeks, a clean test and I can get my job back?

JOSEPH

Come back with a clean test and we'll talk.

JESSE
Thank you, sir.

JOSEPH
Take care of yourself.

INT. JESSE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jesse has on a nice pair of pants and shirt. He puts several job applications into a beat-up leather portfolio, he heads out the door.

EXT. JESSE'S APARTMENT, WALKWAY - DAY

Jesse is walking up the stairs when two PRETTY YOUNG GIRLS (18-19) walk by. They smile at him, he returns the smile. Jesse turns around to look at them before he goes into his apartment.

EXT. JESSE'S APARTMENT, WALKWAY - DUSK

Jesse is in his nice clothes walking up the stairs. He runs into another PRETTY GIRL (20s). She is walking past him when he stops her.

JESSE
Hey.

PRETTY GIRL
Hey.

JESSE
I notice a lot of people going in and out of 303. What's going on in there?

Pretty girl looks around nervously.

JESSE (CONT'D)
I'm not going to say anything. I'm just curious.

PRETTY GIRL
The guy's an agent. He takes pictures, sends them to different agencies, gets us work.

JESSE
Really?

PRETTY GIRL
Yeah.

She looks around again. She is anxious to leave.

JESSE
Does he pay you?

PRETTY GIRL
Four hundred dollars a session.

JESSE
Wow! Really?

PRETTY GIRL
Yeah.

JESSE
OK. Well, thanks.

PRETTY GIRL
Sure.

Pretty girl leaves quickly. Jesse looks at apartment 303 for a long moment before going into his own apartment.

INT. JESSE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jesse is sitting at the kitchen table. A past due utility bill and eviction notice are laid out on the table in front of him. He walks to his fridge. It is almost empty. He opens a kitchen cabinet, he has 2 cup o noodles left. He sits back down at the table with a desperate look. He gets up, leaves his apartment.

EXT. JESSE'S APARTMENT, WALKWAY - NIGHT

Jesse walks to apartment 303, knocks on the door. An older man, REGGIE PEARL (50s), answers the door. He looks Jesse over suspiciously.

REGGIE
Can I help you?

JESSE
I live in 306, right down the hall.

Reggie recognizes Jesse, seems to lighten up a little.

JESSE (CONT'D)
Um...I ran into a friend the other day and she said that you're an agent or something? That you pay for pictures?

Reggie looks Jesse over, laughs.

REGGIE
Something like that.

JESSE
Well, I...I um...I could really use
a little extra cash right now. I
didn't know if you represent guys
too, or is it just girls?

REGGIE
Come in.

INT. REGGIE'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Reggie opens the door wider for Jesse. Jesse steps in. The apartment is decorated like a throwback to the 60's. Reggie looks Jesse over again.

REGGIE
We can try it. I can take a few
pics, send them out, see if I get
any hits. What's your name?

JESSE
Jesse.

REGGIE
You ever done any modeling Jesse?

JESSE
(laughs nervously)
No.

REGGIE
How old are you?

JESSE
Nineteen.

REGGIE
You have ID?

Jesse removes his driver's license, hands it to Reggie who looks it over. Reggie hands the license back to Jesse.

REGGIE (CONT'D)
Well, let's see what you got.

JESSE
My friend says it pays four
hundred?

REGGIE
That's only for the ladies. I'll
give you two hundred.

JESSE
Ok, that sounds good.

Reggie motions to a bedroom.

REGGIE
Come in here.

Jesse is reluctant, on guard, but he follows Reggie.

INT. REGGIE'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM - NIGHT

REGGIE (CONT'D)
Name's Reginald by the way. Friends
call me Reggie.

JESSE
Nice to meet you.

Inside the bedroom there is a professional grade camera set up on a tripod surrounded by lights. There is a red velvet couch and two red velvet chairs on each side of the couch. The set up looks professional, legitimate.

REGGIE
Sit there.

JESSE
(pointing to the couch)
Here?

REGGIE
Yep.

Jesse sits. Reggie takes a few pictures.

REGGIE (CONT'D)
Ok, looking good. Now take your
shirt off.

Jesse is still reluctant, but he takes off his shirt. Reggie takes a few more pictures.

REGGIE (CONT'D)
Good, that's great. Now everything
off.

JESSE
What?

REGGIE
Everything off.

JESSE
Like...nude?

REGGIE
Yes. That's what everything off means.

JESSE
I don't know what you're expecting here. I thought I was just taking pictures.

REGGIE
You are. People just want to see you. All my clients take nudes. It gives you more exposure, more potential to get work.

Jesse is conflicted, but he is desperate and needs the money. He stands, starts to remove his belt.

EXT. JESSE'S APARTMENT, WALKWAY - NIGHT

Jesse leaves Reggie's apartment. He has the two hundred dollars. He looks terrible, heartbroken as he counts the money.

EXT. JESSE'S APARTMENT, WALKWAY - DAY

Jesse is walking down the hallway with his nice clothes on and his portfolio when Reggie calls out to him. He turns around. Reggie is hanging halfway out of his apartment.

REGGIE (CONT'D)
Hey, what are you doing tonight?

JESSE
Nothing. Just hanging out.

REGGIE
A friend of mine saw your pictures, wants to meet you. Why don't you come over about eight.

JESSE
Ok.

REGGIE
Don't be late.

JESSE

I won't.

Jesse turns, heads downstairs.

INT. JESSE'S APARTMENT - DUSK

Jesse has on jeans and t-shirt. He has a list of jobs on a notepad and filled out job applications. He crosses off a job, taps his pen on the next job. Taking in a deep breath, he munches noodles. He looks extremely worried.

INT. REGGIE'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Reggie answers the door to Jesse.

REGGIE

Hey, come in.

Jesse enters. There is a woman, MARGO VAN STRATEN (LATE 40s), sitting on the couch. She looks very sophisticated.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

Jesse, this is Margo.

JESSE

Hello.

MARGO

Hello there, Jesse. How are you?

JESSE

I'm good. It's nice to meet you.

Jesse shakes her hand.

REGGIE

I showed Margo your pictures. She thinks you'd be a great fit for a job opening she has.

JESSE

Oh, wow. That would be awesome.

He looks at his clothes.

JESSE (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, I didn't know this was a job interview. I would have changed clothes.

Margo waves this away.

MARGO
It's informal. No worries.

JESSE
Thanks. Sorry again.

Margo leans back on the couch, looking Jesse over.

MARGO
You know how to dance?

JESSE
Dance? Um...no.

MARGO
Come on. You've never danced? Maybe when some funky, hip song came on and you were in your room by yourself?

JESSE
No, never.

MARGO
Well, I own a club. It's a ladies club with a full bar. Ladies come in to have a good time.

JESSE
I've never tended bar before, but I'm sure I could pick it up.

Margo laughs, glances at Reggie.

MARGO
Oh my gosh, he's cute. They're gonna love him. Play something for me Reggie, something soft.

Reggie puts on a trip hop song with a deep, vibrant groove.

MARGO (CONT'D)
(to Jesse)
Come here.

Jesse sits down next to Margo. She opens her purse, takes out a pill case.

MARGO (CONT'D)
(to Reggie)
Water?

Reggie disappears into the kitchen, returns with a bottled water, hands it Margo.

MARGO (CONT'D)
 (to Jesse)
 Take this. It'll help you relax.

JESSE
 What is it?

MARGO
 It won't hurt you. It's my happy
 pill. I take them all the time.

Margo smiles cunningly at Reggie, he returns the smile. Jesse
 takes the pill, drinks the water.

MARGO (CONT'D)
 Take your shirt off.

Jesse glances at Reggie, then back at Margo. He looks
 uncomfortable.

MARGO (CONT'D)
 Come on. I just want to see you.

Jesse pulls his shirt over his head, tosses it on the couch.

MARGO (CONT'D)
 Now, let's see you dance.

JESSE
 I don't know how to dance.

MARGO
 Just feel the music.

Jesse stands up. At first his movement is a nervous back-and-
 forth shuffle. Then he closes his eyes, the drug is taking
 affect. He starts to move a little better, swaying to the
 music. Reggie sits down next to Margo. She is looking at
 Jesse like a tiger eyeing a piece of raw meat.

MARGO (CONT'D)
 (whispering)
 How old is he?

REGGIE
 Nineteen.

MARGO
 You sure?

REGGIE
 I checked his driver's license.

Margo smiles, nodding her head. She likes what she sees.

INT. LES DAMES CLUB, HALLWAY - DAY

DOMINO REYES (60s), the doorman, is waiting for Jesse.

DOMINO

Come on in. I'm Domino, the doorman here. I got the keys to the kingdom.

Jesse follows Domino down the hallway to a closed door, Domino knocks.

DOMINO (CONT'D)

New guy's here.

MARGO (O.S)

Come in.

INT. LES DAMES CLUB, MARGO'S OFFICE - DAY

Domino and Jesse enter. In the office is Margo, ROXY PETERSON (50s), a woman who looks like she has a few miles on her, GAFFEY PELLETIER (24), young, good looking with a great body and LUPITA ALDANA (45) a Cuban-American woman. Lupita is wearing a cleaning uniform and is dusting the shelves. Margo gives Jesse an appreciative look. Gaffey notices, he doesn't like it.

MARGO

Thanks Domino.
(to Jesse)
Wait for me outside. I'll call you in a moment.

Jesse and Domino step outside.

MARGO (CONT'D)

Well, everything is looking good for this weekend. Let me know if anything else comes up.
(to Roxy)
I'll send the new guy over to you in a moment.

ROXY

I'll be in my office.

Roxy and Gaffey leave the office, leaving Margo alone with Lupita. Lupita looks directly at Margo.

LUPITA

Are you kidding me? Is that kid even legal?

MARGO
He's nineteen.

LUPITA
Nineteen? Are you serious?

MARGO
He came to me.

LUPITA
It doesn't matter. You can say no.
You gonna start pulling them out of
preschool pretty soon.

MARGO
For crying out loud. Lighten up,
Luppie. He's here to make money, I
gave him a job. Its business,
nothing more. He can leave whenever
he wants, but he's not going to
want to. He's adorable. The ladies
are going to love him.

LUPITA
(angry)
Coño...mierda sucia.

MARGO
What was that?

LUPITA
Have a nice day.

Lupita walks out of the office.

INT. LES DAMES CLUB, ROXY'S OFFICE - DAY

Roxy is sitting at her desk. She looks up when Margo and
Jesse enter.

MARGO
Roxy's the Office Manager. She'll
get you sorted with employee
paperwork and payroll. Roxy, this
is Jesse James.

ROXY
Jesse James, huh? Real name?

JESSE
Yes, Ma'am.

Margo leaves, Jesse sits across from Roxy.

ROXY

You have a social security number
and driver's license?

Jesse hands them to her. Roxy looks them over.

ROXY (CONT'D)

You're just a baby. You sure you
want to do this?

JESSE

Gotta eat.

ROXY

What do people call you?

JESSE

Jesse.

ROXY

People know you're nineteen?

JESSE

Yeah, I guess.

ROXY

There's no nineteen year-old by the
name of Jesse James working here.
If anybody asks, you're twenty
three. Got it?

JESSE

Yes, Ma'am.

ROXY

I'm going to call you Baby Bear. If
the club is full and I need you,
I'll call out Baby Bear over the
speaker and you'll know that's you.
Margo will pick out a separate
stage name for you.

JESSE

Stage name?

ROXY

Yeah. All the guys have stage
names. Margo will come up with
something snazzy for you.

Roxy passes several forms to Jesse.

ROXY (CONT'D)

Fill your personal information in on these forms, then sign and date.

Jesse does as he's told. Roxy returns his ID's.

ROXY (CONT'D)

You'll get a base salary, which I'm sure Margo discussed with you. You get to keep all your tips. Make the ladies happy, give them what they want. The happier they are, the more money you make. Got it?

JESSE

Got it.

ROXY

Some of the guys like to do a little something before they go onstage. A little weed or ecstasy. Margo don't mind that. Just don't show up so high you can't work. You do that, she'll send you home without pay. It happens more than once, then you're out. Got it.

JESSE

Yes, Ma'am.

ROXY

Ok, Baby Bear. You're all set. We'll see you on Friday.

JESSE

Thank you.

Jesse stands, heads out the door. Roxy looks him up and down as he's leaving.

INT. LES DAMES CLUB - NIGHT

Jesse arrives, he looks extremely nervous. Margo greets him.

MARGO

Ah, there you are. Come meet the rest of the gang.

Jesse follows Margo into the main bar.

INT. LES DAMES CLUB, BAR - NIGHT

Two men, STEVE (30s), ROCCO (30s) are behind the bar stacking up glasses, wiping down the bar. Both men are good looking, muscular and shirtless except for a black bow tie.

MARGO

This is Steve and Rocco, my bartenders.

STEVE

Nice to meet you.

ROCCO

What's up man.

Jesse shakes both men's hands. Another man, RUBIN (40s) approaches. Rubin is very muscular. He shakes Jesse's hand.

MARGO

This is Rubin. He's my security.

RUBIN

Welcome, welcome.

MARGO

(to Jesse)
Let's go in back. I'll introduce you to the other guys.

INT. LES DAMES CLUB, DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

Jesse follows Margo to a large dressing room. It is filled with mirrors, tables with chairs, lockers and wardrobe. Several men RICARDO (27), JASON (23), DENNY (36), CHRIS (40), SAM (22) and Gaffey are already in the room getting dressed in their dance costumes. All the men are good looking, various nationalities, sizes and builds.

MARGO (CONT'D)

(to Jesse, pointing each guy out)

This is Ricardo, Jason, Denny, Chris, Sam and you already met Gaffey.

They all say hello in unison. Gaffey sizes Jesse up. He's still miffed about Margo checking Jesse out earlier.

MARGO (CONT'D)

This is Jesse. He's the new guy. You guys be nice, show him the ropes. And only call him by his stage name in the club.

GAFFEY

Kid looks like he's about to puke.

Chris gives Jesse a concerned look. Margo takes Jesse to a chair in front of a small table and mirror, sits him down. She hands Jesse a pill and the water. He takes the pill. Margo looks through clothing on a wardrobe rack, grabs a golden cowboy outfit and hat off the rack. The outfit has chaps, a vest, men's short shorts held together by Velcro on each side and a men's G-string. She hands it to Jesse, he looks at it in disbelief.

JESSE

You want me to wear this?

MARGO

Yes, Jesse James. We're going to call you the Golden Cowboy.

She pushes the outfit towards Jesse.

MARGO (CONT'D)

Newbies go on first. So, get ready.

Margo smiles, walks out of the room. All the guys follow her except Chris. Gaffey smirks at Jesse as he walks by.

GAFFEY

See you later, Cowboy.

Chris comes up, looks at Jesse with sincerity.

CHRIS

How old are you?

JESSE

Nineteen.

CHRIS

First time's the hardest. After that, it's a piece of cake. The ladies are a lot of fun. And, good looking guy like you, you're going roll outta here with a lot of cash.

Chris pats Jesse on the back, leaves the room. Jesse gets up with the outfit in his hand. He looks ashamed as he goes into the bathroom.

INT. LES DAMES CLUB, DRESSING ROOM - LATE NIGHT

Jesse is back in his regular clothes. He is in the dressing room alone counting his money from tips.

The effects of the drug Margo gave him is wearing off. He looks depressed. Chris approaches him.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Good night?

JESSE

Yeah, I guess.

CHRIS

It'll hold you over until you get your check next week. Margo pays every Friday afternoon. You just need to come and grab it. And you can make more money if you walk the floor in between shows, flirt with the ladies a little.

JESSE

Thanks.

Chris grabs his duffel bag and keys out of a locker, starts to head out.

JESSE (CONT'D)

Hey...

Chris stops, turns back around.

JESSE (CONT'D)

How long have you worked here?

CHRIS

Three years now. I got a wife and two kids at home.

JESSE

Your wife doesn't mind you doing this?

CHRIS

She did at first, but our second kid's got a lot of health issues. She had to quit her job to take care of him full time and working as a janitor wasn't covering my kid's bills. Guys do this for different reasons. Some really like it, like showing off for the ladies, but some are doing it just to make ends meet.

JESSE

You still have the other job?

CHRIS

Yeah. Janitor by day, sex idol by night.

Jesse chuckles at this.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Don't worry kid. I know how you feel. For some of us, this just isn't what we had planned for ourselves. But it gets easier. Just come in, get your money and get out. Keep your head on straight, don't get wrapped up in the partying and the drugs and you'll be fine. See you next week.

JESSE

See you. Thanks.

Jesse sits for a moment looking at the cash in his hands. He grabs his duffel bag, heads for the door.

INT. LES DAMES CLUB, BACK DOOR - LATE NIGHT

Jesse is on his way out when he's stopped by Rubin.

RUBIN

Hey, you can't walk out like that.

JESSE

What do you mean?

RUBIN

Bunch of thugs and crackheads out there. They know you guys are coming out of here with a bunch of cash. They'll be waiting to jump you before you even get to your car.

JESSE

Isn't that what you're here for?

RUBIN

I'm here to protect the ladies. Guys fend for themselves.

Jesse peaks outside, looks around the parking lot.

JESSE

Great.

RUBIN
Come to my room, I have something
for you.

JESSE
I'm not going to your room.

RUBIN
Hey, I'm not a perv or anything
kid. I just want to give you
something. Just hang here.

Rubin disappears, returns with something wrapped in a towel.
He hands it to Jesse. Jesse unwraps it. It's a gun.

RUBIN (CONT'D)
Be careful with that.

JESSE
I don't know how to use one of
these.

RUBIN
See this...

Rubin points at the barrel of the gun.

RUBIN (CONT'D)
Aim, cock, pull the trigger, done.

JESSE
I don't want to hurt anyone.

RUBIN
They want to hurt you. Trust me,
life or death, you're gonna use it.

JESSE
What if I shoot someone?

RUBIN
That piece is street. You have to
use it, just wipe it down and throw
it in the trash afterwards. It's
untraceable.

Jesse sticks the gun in the pocket of his jacket.

JESSE
How much I owe you for it?

RUBIN
Nothing. Consider it a new employee
gift.

JESSE

Thanks.

RUBIN

Don't mention it kid. Just watch yourself.

Rubin leans in, whispers.

RUBIN (CONT'D)

And stay away from Gaffey. His mind's rotted off all that junk he uses and there's some weird stuff going on between him and Margo. They're both bad news.

JESSE

Ok. Thanks again.

Jesse moves away, heads for his car.

EXT. GAS STATION - LATE NIGHT

Jesse pulls up to a gas station pump, fills the car with gas. Jesse jumps back in the car, turns the key in the ignition, nothing happens. He tries again, the car is dead. Jesse gets out, pops open the hood, examines the engine. He slams the hood down hard in disgust, looks around. The gas station has a repair shop attached. A BYSTANDER (30s) approaches Jesse noticing his dilemma.

BYSTANDER

You need help?

JESSE

It's dead. If you could sit in the car and steer while I push, that would be great.

BYSTANDER

Sure.

The man slides into the driver's seat, Jesse pushes the car over to the repair shop.

JESSE

Thanks.

BYSTANDER

(sliding out of the car)
Sure thing. Hope you get that fixed. That's a bummer.

Jesse pulls his duffel bag out of the car, slams the door shut and locks it. He goes to the convenience store service window attached to the gas station. A CASHIER (20s) is behind the counter reading a magazine. He looks up as Jesse approaches.

JESSE

(pointing to his car)

That's my car, in front of the repair shop. I think it needs a new starter or something. You got a business card for them?

CASHIER

Nope.

JESSE

Can you leave a note for the repair shop to call me when it's done? You got a piece of paper?

The cashier hands Jesse a piece of paper. Jesse writes down his name and cell phone number, slides it across the counter to the cashier.

JESSE (CONT'D)

That's my information. Can you please make sure they get this?

CASHIER

(bored tone)

Sure thing.

EXT. STREET - LATE NIGHT

Jesse walks down the street heading towards a bus stop. As he walks, he sees an old, modest four story building with a sign that reads "His Light Church and Community Center, Capitol Hill". Jesse stops, grabs a large rock, throws it through one of the church's windows.

JESSE

Serves you right.

Jesse continues walking to the bus stop.

INT. GROCERY STORE, SERVICE COUNTER - DAY

Jesse walks up to the customer service counter, pulls out the utility bill.

JESSE (CONT'D)

I'd like to pay this off please.

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

Jesse strolls the isles with his grocery cart. The cart is full. On his way to check out he sees the deli section, heads towards the deli service counter. Jesse looks at the menu, sees a fried chicken special. The DELI GUY (50s) approaches Jesse.

DELI GUY
Can I help you?

JESSE
I would like to get the deal
please, the chicken.

DELI GUY
Coming right up.

INT. BUS - DAY

Jesse has his grocery bags in hand. He pays for the bus ride, goes to the very back of the bus. He eyes the bag with the chicken, sticks his face in, sniffs. Looking around to make sure no one is watching, he takes out a chicken leg and starts to munch, cleaning it down to the bone. He wipes his mouth on his shirt, his greasy hands on his pants.

INT. JESSE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jesse is sitting at his kitchen table with an empty plate in front of him and a satisfied look on his face. He is writing out a check for his rent when his phone rings.

JESSE
Hello?
(beat)
That's great news! How much do I
owe you?

The satisfied look on Jesse's face collapses.

JESSE (CONT'D)
Ok, thanks. I'll be by tomorrow to
pick it up.

Jesse hangs up, looks at the eviction notice and the check. Looking around his apartment he sits for a moment, thinks. Then he picks up the phone, dials a number.

JESSE (CONT'D)

Margo, it's Jesse. Hey, I was wondering if I could get an advance on my check? My car broke down last night and I'm about two hundred dollars short. I used my tips to pay my utility bill and buy some groceries. I don't have enough left to pay rent and get the car.

Jesse waits in anticipation, then he looks hopeful. He grabs a pen and paper.

JESSE (CONT'D)

What's the address?

He writes the address down quickly on the piece of paper.

JESSE (CONT'D)

Can I come tomorrow, late morning or afternoon? I'll be riding the bus. I just need to make sure I have time to pick up the car.

He waits, listens to the response.

JESSE (CONT'D)

Ok, great. Hey, you're a lifesaver. Thank you so much.

INT. JESSE'S APARTMENT - LATE NIGHT

Jesse is awakened by the sound of his neighbors having very loud sex. Jesse bangs on the wall, to no avail. He puts a pillow over his head.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Jesse jumps off the bus, starts walking down the street. He looks tired. He turns into an affluent neighborhood with multi-million-dollar homes.

EXT. MARGO'S HOUSE, FRONT ENTRANCE - DAY

Jesse arrives at Margo's front door, rings the bell. Margo answers in a silk bathrobe.

MARGO

If it isn't the Golden Cowboy.

Jesse looks down, he doesn't like the name.

MARGO (CONT'D)
 Or should I call you Baby Bear like
 Roxy? Come in.

INT. MARGO'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jesse follows Margo into the living room.

JESSE
 Sorry it took so long. The bus
 doesn't come up here. I had to walk
 from the bus stop.

MARGO
 No worries. You want a beer, some
 wine?

JESSE
 No thanks. It's a little early for
 me for that.

Jesse is standing in the middle of Margo's living room
 looking at her. She is looking at him.

JESSE (CONT'D)
 Um...you said I could get an
 advance on my paycheck?

Margo smiles. Jesse realizes she's not going to give him the
 money without him doing something in return.

INT. MARGO'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - DAY

Jesse already has his pants back on. His shirt and a box of
 condoms are sitting on the night stand. Jesse grabs his
 shirt, slips it over his head. Margo comes up to him, runs
 her hand over his chest.

MARGO
 Your first time?

JESSE
 No.

Jesse looks at her, waiting.

JESSE (CONT'D)
 I really need to get my car.

Margo smiles.

MARGO
Come in here.

INT. MARGO'S HOUSE, OFFICE - DAY

Jesse follows Margo to her office. She goes to a drawer, pulls out some cash, counts out two hundred and fifty dollars. She hands it to Jesse.

MARGO
I threw in a little extra to tide
you over.

JESSE
Thanks. See you on Friday.

Jesse stuffs the cash in his pocket, walks out of the office.

INT. BUS - DAY

Jesse is on the bus. He looks tired and humiliated. He gets off the bus.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Jesse is walking down the street towards the car repair shop when he sees His Light Church and Community Center. He stops.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Jesse walks into the church, looks around. It is empty. He starts trashing the church. He is in such a frenzy he doesn't notice Pastor LOUIS "LOU" GOSSY (50s) standing in the corner watching him.

LOU
Hello there.

Jesse turns at the sound of the voice, walks past Lou without saying a word, leaves the church.

INT. CAR REPAIR SHOP - DAY

Jesse enters the repair shop. A REPAIR MAN (40s) is at the counter.

JESSE
I'm Jesse James. I'm here to get my
car.

REPAIR MAN
Subaru...it's ready.

The repair man passes Jesse an invoice. Jesse pays the bill.

REPAIR MAN (CONT'D)
Here's your receipt and your keys.

JESSE
(snatching both items up)
Thanks.

EXT. CAR REPAIR SHOP, PARKING LOT - DAY

Jesse arrives at his car, kicks the door. He opens the door, gets inside, slams the door. He hits the steering wheel, sits back, breathing hard. Calming down, he puts the car in drive, pulls out.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Lou is cleaning up when Jesse walks in. Jesse doesn't say anything. He starts to help clean up.

LOU
Bad day?

JESSE
Yeah.

Lou looks around the church.

LOU
Well, it isn't the first time it's happened and probably won't be the last.

Lou chuckles. He goes to Jesse, offers his hand.

LOU (CONT'D)
Name's Louis Gossy. People call me Lou or Pastor Lou.

Jesse shakes Lou's hand, doesn't offer his name. The men continue to clean up in silence.

EXT. CHURCH, ROOF - DAY

Later

Jesse and Lou are sitting on the roof top of the building. The roof top is partially covered, but there is a part that is uncovered as well, open to the outside. There is a large, open pigeon coup in the covered section. Lou has three plastic yard chairs set up on the roof. It is a nice, sunny day. The covered part of the roof provides some shade. Jesse and Lou both have beers. Jesse pulls out a joint.

JESSE

You wanna hit this?

LOU

Thirty years ago I would have said yes. But I haven't touched the stuff in a long time.

JESSE

Suit yourself.

Jesse lights up, takes one hit, then extinguishes the joint. He sticks it in his pocket. He looks at Lou. Jesse is still irritated, has an attitude.

JESSE (CONT'D)

Gotta drive.

(beat)

You gonna condemn me? Rain fire and brimstone down on my head?

LOU

Well, it's a good idea not to drive when you're on that stuff. But what you do with your body is your choice.

JESSE

Good. I'm glad we've established that because I hate to be preached to.

LOU

No preaching here. Just enjoying a day with a new acquaintance and feeding my pigeons.

JESSE

Pigeons? Nothing better to do?

LOU

I like to come up here. It's relaxing. Let's me reflect on life, get closer to God.

JESSE

Oh man. I don't even want to hear about that shit.

Jesse stands to leave.

LOU

This rooftop is accessible outside. It's got one of those old-school, retractable stairways. Come up here anytime. It's a great place to unwind, think about stuff.

JESSE

You're telling me this? What if I come back and burn the whole church down?

LOU

You could, but I think you won't.

JESSE

Later.

Jesse starts to leave, then stops, turns back to Lou.

JESSE (CONT'D)

My name's Jesse James, like the outlaw. Thanks for not calling the cops.

LOU

See you later, Jesse. It was nice to meet you.

Jesse guffaws.

JESSE

Sure it was.

Lou watches Jesse as he leaves.

INT. LOU'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DUSK

Lou walks into the living room. His wife ADELE GOSSY (50s) greets him. The Gossy's live in a modest, middle class suburban neighborhood.

ADELE

There's my man. You get everything cleaned up?

Lou and Adele kiss. He holds her in his arms for a moment, kisses her again.

LOU

I did. It put me behind on some other things, but I got everything done. The kid came back.

ADELE

Really?

LOU

Yep. He came back, helped me clean up and I got him into my special office.

ADELE

(with a chuckle)
You and those pigeons. How'd you get him up there?

LOU

Offered him a beer and a place to take a load off after the cleanup. I got him to talk.

ADELE

Why don't you sit down, tell me all about it. I'll heat up some dinner.

Lou sits at the kitchen table. Adele heats up a plate, sits it in front of Lou with a glass of ice tea. She goes back to the kitchen, heats up her plate, pours herself a glass of ice tea as well.

LOU

You didn't eat?

ADELE

I was waiting for you.

Lou looks at her adoringly, takes her hand in his and kisses it.

ADELE (CONT'D)

So, tell me about your new friend.

LOU

He can't be any older than Kyle. He's got a lot of stuff going on, that's for sure. Breaks my heart. But, at least he came back.

ADELE
That's a first.

LOU
I told him how to get up to the roof.

ADELE
You think that's a good idea, considering?

LOU
It's a gamble. I'm hoping he comes back, just so I can talk to him. I don't know this kid from Adam, but it seems like he really needs a friend.

ADELE
Well, I hope he comes back.

LOU
Me too.

Lou leans over, kisses his wife again, takes a bite of dinner.

LOU (CONT'D)
This is great. Thank you, My Love.

ADELE
Can't have my hard working man going hungry.

They both dig into dinner.

INT. MARGO'S HOUSE, FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

Margo answers the door to Gaffey. She nods for him to come in.

INT. MARGO'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Gaffey approaches Margo, puts a large wad of cash into her hand, pulls her close, kisses her.

MARGO
(looking at the cash)
Nice.

GAFFEY

We're making a ton of money off the parties. Not to mention the entertainment house's other uses. I told you the house would pay off.

MARGO

And so it has.

Gaffey and Margo start to kiss passionately.

INT. MARGO'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Margo and Gaffey are in bed. Gaffey leans down, retrieves his pants from the floor. He pulls a joint out of his pocket. Sitting up in bed, he lights it up. Margo pulls on her silk robe, climbs out of bed and goes to Gaffey's side of the bed. She pulls the joint out of his mouth, takes a hit, then puts it out.

MARGO (CONT'D)

I told you I don't want you smoking in here.

Margo goes into a walk in closet. Gaffey looks at the condoms on the dresser, looks around the bedroom, leans back in the bed. When Margo emerges from the closet she has on expensive designer causal wear. Gaffey fixes his eyes on Margo.

GAFFEY

Jesse been here?

Margo laughs.

MARGO

Why do you ask?

GAFFEY

I hear talk from the guys that you like to break guys in, especially the new ones...the young ones.

MARGO

You should know better than to listen to work gossip. It doesn't matter.

(beat)

And even if he was here, it's just business.

Gaffey is jealous and upset.

GAFFEY

What about this?

Gaffe motions between him and Margo.

GAFFEY (CONT'D)
Is this just business?

Margo goes to Gaffey in bed, climbs on top of him, tries to kiss him. He turns his head.

GAFFEY (CONT'D)
Did you at least change the sheets?

MARGO
Come on Gaffey, you know things are special between us.

GAFFEY
Must not be that special.

Margo kisses him, this time he lets her.

MARGO
You know how it is.

She kisses him, bites his bottom lip, kisses him again.

MARGO (CONT'D)
It's nothing like what you and I have. It's just business.

Gaffey pulls her down onto the bed, gets on top of her, starts to kiss her ferociously.

EXT. BASEBALL PARK - DAY

Jesse is standing in the background at a baseball field. His dad is in a coach uniform. Jesse Sr is having a talk with the team, nine GIRLS (15-16), including Rayna. After the talk the girls run out onto the field and take their places.

JESSE SR
(clapping,yelling)
That's it. We've got this. Just one more out. Let's go!

Jesse watches Rayna on the pitchers mound with anticipation.

JESSE
(whispering)
Come on, Sis. You got this.

Rayna eventually strikes out the last hitter. All the girls run, screaming towards her. They are jumping up and down, screaming and cheering. Jesse Sr approaches.

JESSE SR
Great job ladies! Amazing job!

Jesse closes his eyes, listens to the sound of his father's voice.

INT. BURGER JOINT - DAY

Jesse is sitting in a burger joint waiting for Rayna. Jesse Sr drops Rayna off, Jesse stands up, waves. Rayna rushes over to him. After a big hug, Rayna slides into the booth seat across from him.

JESSE
Where's dad going?

RAYNA
He's going to do some shopping.
He'll be back in about two hours.

JESSE
I can take you home, you know.

RAYNA
I know. But you know how dad is.

JESSE
Yeah, I know.

Jesse grabs a menu from the table, hands it to Rayna.

JESSE (CONT'D)
Order whatever you want. My treat.

Later

Jesse and Rayna have used plates off to the side, they're enjoying strawberry shakes.

JESSE (CONT'D)
How's school?

RAYNA
Good. Kind of boring without you there. But good.

Jesse chuckles.

JESSE
I saw your game today.

RAYNA
I didn't see you in the stands. I looked for you.

JESSE

I was in the back, but I could see you. You pitched a really great game.

RAYNA

I felt really good. I think we're going to make it to the championship this year.

JESSE

That's really awesome.

RAYNA

You going to come?

JESSE

I wouldn't miss it for the world.

RAYNA

You could come with me and dad.

JESSE

Probably not a great idea.

Jesse and Rayna sit in silence for a moment.

RAYNA

How's your new place?

JESSE

It's good.

RAYNA

I want to come and visit.

JESSE

No, you don't. It's a mess. Remember my bedroom?

RAYNA

Oh geez, I can imagine. You still working at the grocery store?

JESSE

I was there for a little bit, but I found this other job bar tending. I make more money. It's just for a little while, until I figure some things out.

RAYNA

Wow. You're really doing it, living on your own.

JESSE
Yes...yes I am.

Rayna's phone beeps. She turns around, looks outside. Jesse Sr is outside sitting in his car.

RAYNA
Dad's here. You should come say hi.

JESSE
Maybe another time.

They both stand. Jesse wraps his arms around Rayna, hugs her.

JESSE (CONT'D)
Love You, Sis.

RAYNA
Love You too, Big Bro.

Jesse stands at the glass door of the restaurant, watches Rayna as she heads out to the car, then disappears inside. The car drives away.

EXT. BURGER JOINT, PARKING LOT - DAY

Jesse leaves the burger joint, walks towards his car. He is melancholy. He is almost at his car when he sees an injured pigeon. He is about to walk by, but stops. He looks at the bird, starts to walk away, then stops again. He turns around, picks up the bird.

JESSE
(to the bird)
I don't have time for this.

EXT. CHURCH ALLEY - DAY

Jesse has the pigeon wrapped in a sweater. He pulls down the stairs to the roof, carefully makes his way up while also trying to cradle the bird.

EXT. CHURCH, ROOF - DAY

Jesse finds Lou sitting on the rooftop. Jesse looks disappointed. He was hoping to drop off the pigeon and leave.

LOU
Hey there, Jesse.

JESSE
I found this pigeon.

LOU
Bring him over.

Jesse approaches Lou, hands him the bird.

JESSE
It's been pretty calm. Not sure if
it's dying or something.

Lou takes the bird gently from Jesse, looks it over.

LOU
It has a damaged wing. See that?

JESSE
What happened to it?

LOU
It happens. Probably got caught in
a wire or something. Could have
been an animal.

JESSE
Can you help it?

LOU
Yep. He just needs a safe place to
heal.

Lou tends to the bird, puts him inside a cage.

JESSE
Well, gotta go.

LOU
You can come check on him anytime
you want.

JESSE
I don't give a crap about that
bird.

LOU
I'm going to call him J.J, since
you found him.

JESSE
Don't name that stupid bird after
me.
(Jesse looks at the pigeon
coop)
What is this anyway?

LOU
It's a pigeon coop.

JESSE
You keep them locked up, like jail?
That's messed up.

LOU
They're free to come and go as they
please. See, no doors. I just put
J.J in here so he doesn't try to
fly away until he's healed. I'll
give him water and feed him. He'll
heal up, you'll see.

Jesse looks at the bird, it has settled into its new home as
if it knows someone is trying to help it.

LOU (CONT'D)
Here's some feed. Why don't you
take a load off and feed J.J. He
probably hasn't eaten in a while.

Later

Jesse takes a deep drag on his joint. He blows it out slowly.
Pigeons are cooing softly in the background.

LOU (CONT'D)
So, what do you do when you're not
saving pigeons?

Jesse laughs.

JESSE
You really want to know?

LOU
Yeah.

JESSE
Really?

LOU
I asked, didn't I?

JESSE
I work in this strip bar for
ladies. And trust me, this place
ain't Chippendale's. It's dark,
it's dirty. I dance and take my
clothes off and women stick money
in my crotch. What do you think
about that, PASTOR?

LOU

Well Jesse, I've said it before.
You're an adult and what you do
with your body is your choice.

JESSE

Damn right it is.

LOU

What made you get into that line of
work?

JESSE

(in an irritated tone)
What do you think? I needed the
money. It wasn't like I woke up one
day and said "Hey, I wanna work in
a crappy strip bar."

LOU

I get it. But you can't do that for
the rest of your life. What do you
plan to do afterward? You saving up
money? You going to school?

JESSE

I did terrible in school, almost
didn't graduate.

LOU

That doesn't mean you still can't
go. Think about it. Think about
something you like to do and just
do it. You don't have to go the
full university route. Just start
off with something small. Maybe one
of the community colleges. Take a
few courses, see where it leads.

JESSE

That's a bunch of BS. I'm not
taking any stupid classes. Can you
imagine me in a classroom with a
bunch of jackasses pretending like
they know everything. I hated
school. I hated that crap. I'm not
going back to school...not ever.

INT. COLLEGE ADMISSIONS OFFICE - DAY

Jesse is in the admissions office of a local community
college. He is looking at pamphlets and brochures. With his
hands full of papers, he walks up to the admissions desk. An
ADMISSIONS ADMINISTRATOR (40s) is behind a desk.

JESSE (CONT'D)

I'd like to sign up for some classes.

ADMISSIONS ADMINISTRATOR

You can do that online at home or there's some computers in the student center you can use. You decide on a career path? You want to make an appointment with a counselor?

JESSE

No. I just want to sign up, maybe just a few classes to try it out.

ADMISSIONS ADMINISTRATOR

What do you like to do?

JESSE

I don't know. When I was a little kid I used to go to the shop with my dad, he's a mechanic... fixes cars. He'd show me what he was doing. Sometimes I'd help him out.

The woman walks to a table that has several displays and brochures, Jesse follows her. She pulls out a brochure.

ADMISSIONS ADMINISTRATOR

Try this.

Jesse looks the brochure over.

JESSE

Mechanical Engineering? What's that?

ADMISSIONS ADMINISTRATOR

It's like what you used to do with your dad. It's a great program. Try it out. If you don't like it, you can switch to something else.

Jesse takes the brochure, heads towards the student center.

ADMISSIONS ADMINISTRATOR (CONT'D)

You sure you don't want to talk to a counselor?

JESSE

No, I'm good. Thanks.

In the student center, Jesse reads the brochure. He starts his registration online.

INT. COLLEGE, STUDENT STORE - DAY

Jesse has a stack of school books. He takes them to the counter. The CASHIER rings up his purchase.

CASHIER

That will be one hundred and fifty-one dollars and twenty-three cents.

Jesse is shocked, the cashier notices. Jesse looks at the books. He selects three books, moves the other three aside.

JESSE

I'll just get these for now.

CASHIER

You want to apply for a line of credit?

JESSE

What's that?

The cashier slides an application towards him.

CASHIER

You working?

JESSE

Yeah.

CASHIER

You just need to fill this out. They'll want proof of income and they'll need to verify your employment. You can get a small line of credit. It will pay for the books and any other school supplies you need. Then you just make small monthly payments until you pay it off.

Jesse slides the application back towards the cashier.

JESSE

I'll just take these for now.

INT. LES DAMES CLUB, HALLWAY - DAY

Jesse is walking towards Margo's office to grab his check when he runs into Gaffey in the hallway. Gaffey bumps into him hard. The two men face each other.

JESSE (CONT'D)
What's your problem?

GAFFEY
You, Cowboy.

Gaffey pushes Jesse. Jesse pushes him back, is ready for a fight. Rubin peaks out of Margo's office as Sam is leaving with his check.

RUBIN
Hey, knock it off.

GAFFEY
Nothing going on here. Just friendly conversation.

Rubin looks at Jesse who nods in agreement. Jesse walks past Gaffey as Rubin pops back into the office. Gaffey looks after Jesse with a plotting look.

INT. LES DAMES CLUB, MARGO'S OFFICE - DAY

Jesse enters, Denny is in the office. Margo is sorting through the checks.

DENNY
Hey Cowboy, what's up?

JESSE
Just getting my check. How about you?

DENNY
Livin' the dream.

Margo hands Denny his check.

DENNY (CONT'D)
(to Margo)
Thanks, Sexy Lady.
(to Jesse)
See you tonight.

JESSE
See ya.

Margo looks Jesse over, starts sorting through the checks.

MARGO
Here you go, Cowboy.

She hands him his check.

JESSE
Thanks.

Jesse heads towards the office door.

MARGO
Hey, Cowboy.

Jesse stops, turns back towards her.

MARGO (CONT'D)
I'm having a dinner party tomorrow
night with a few friends. You
should come by.

JESSE
I'm working tomorrow night.

MARGO
Did you forgot who your boss is?

Behind Margo, Rubin is giving Jesse a warning look. He shakes his head slightly.

JESSE
Maybe some other time.

Jesse walks out.

INT. LES DAMES CLUB, ROXY'S OFFICE - DAY

Gaffey is hiding in Roxy's office. He is in the dark, the door is slightly cracked. He heard the conversation between Margo and Jesse. He is seething.

INT. LES DAMES CLUB, PARKING LOT - DAY

Jesse is on his way to his car. Lupita is packing up her cleaning van when she sees him. She approaches him.

LUPITA
Hey Baby Bear, you heading home?

JESSE
Yeah, got my check.

LUPITA

Come by my house. I made some
tamales yesterday. They're Cuban
tamales. I have some for you.

JESSE

What's the address?

Lupita hands him a piece of paper with her address written
down. Jesse looks it over.

LUPITA

I'll be home about four.

JESSE

Ok, I'll come by.

Jesse starts to head towards his car again. Gaffey walks out
of the club. Lupita watches Gaffey as he approaches Jesse.

GAFFEY

Hey, Cowboy.

Jesse is immediately on guard.

JESSE

Look, Gaffey, I don't want any
trouble. I'm just here to work.

GAFFEY

I'm sorry about earlier. I can be a
real asshole sometimes, especially
when I'm coming down off a good
high, you know what I mean?

JESSE

Yeah, I know what you mean.

Gaffey offers his hand, the two men shake.

GAFFEY

Check it out, I'm having a party
next Wednesday, lots of important
people. Why don't you come by. I
can introduce you to some people I
know. You can make some
connections, make some real money.

JESSE

I'm good, but thanks.

Gaffey laughs like it's no big deal.

GAFFEY

It's up to you, doors always open.

JESSE

(sincerely)

Thanks.

Gaffe looks after Jesse with a sinister look as Jesse gets in his car and drives off. Lupita has finished packing up the van, she heard the entire conversation.

EXT. LUPITA'S HOUSE, FRONT DOOR - DAY

Jesse approaches the door and rings the doorbell. Lupita answers the door.

LUPITA

Come in.

INT. LUPITA'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

Jesse follows Lupita to the kitchen. In the kitchen area there is an extended counter with three chairs. A young girl, ARELLIA ALDANA (12), calls out from somewhere in the house.

ARELLIA (O.S.)

Mom, who is it?

LUPITA

Just a friend from work. Get your homework done.

A young boy, JACOB ALDANA (7), comes into the living room, he is dribbling a basketball.

LUPITA (CONT'D)

None of that in the house. Outside.
Ay! These kids.

Jacob continues to dribble the ball until he gets to the patio door. He opens it up, runs outside. Lupita motions for Jesse to sit, heats up food for him. Jesse takes a few bites, he's delighted.

JESSE

Oh my gosh.

LUPITA

You can take a couple packs home
and I have some beans and rice for
you too.

Lupita opens her freezer, shows Jesse several packages of frozen tamales.

JESSE

I'm not going to turn you down.

LUPITA

I wanted to give you tamales, but I also wanted to talk to you.

Jesse nods, he is stuffing his face.

LUPITA (CONT'D)

Baby Bear, you are too young to be doing that crap, the dancing.

Jesse stops eating, gives her a "don't start with me" look.

JESSE

My real name is Jesse, by the way. And I gotta eat...I've got bills to pay.

LUPITA

You can work somewhere else.

JESSE

I tried, I can't.

LUPITA

You can if you stop smoking that crap. I see you in the car smoking and popping pills before you go to work.

JESSE

Lupita, come on. I really don't need this right now.

LUPITA

You need to hear this. You're only nineteen.

Jesse gives her a startled look. No one is supposed to know how old he is. Lupita notices the look.

LUPITA (CONT'D)

When you do cleaning, it's like you're invisible. You would fall out of your chair if you knew the stuff I have seen and heard. But that's besides the point. You have your whole life ahead of you.

(MORE)

LUPITA (CONT'D)

You need to get out of there. You going to school?

JESSE

I'm taking some courses at the college.

LUPITA

Good. You come work for me. I do cleaning, I have clients. I could use the help.

JESSE

I have rent to pay, and bills, and school expenses and a car that's falling apart.

LUPITA

But you can still afford to buy weed and pills?

JESSE

I need it.

LUPITA

You're addicted to that crap and you're going to let it destroy your life.

JESSE

(exasperated)

Why do you care about what I do? I don't even know you.

LUPITA

I had a sister your age. She did drugs, worked at a strip club, did all the same lousy crap that you're doing. She died of an overdose. She was nineteen. That lifestyle killed her and it's going to kill you too, in more ways than one, if you don't get out of it.

Jesse continues to eat, doesn't respond. He is silenced by her words.

LUPITA (CONT'D)

Margo doesn't care about you. She'll use you until there's nothing left. She's a predator. Gaffey...he was like you once.

(MORE)

LUPITA (CONT'D)

He was only eighteen when he started working for her. Now he's a monster. That life took his soul.

Jesse stops eating. He is looking down, not meeting Lupita's eyes.

LUPITA (CONT'D)

And don't tell any of them that you're going to school, Baby Bear. Don't tell them anything about your personal life. They'll try to drag you down if they find out, try to destroy your chances of getting out. You're just a piece of meat to them. Just a thing.

Lupita's words have an affect on Jesse.

LUPITA (CONT'D)

Now, finish your food. We don't waste around here.

Jesse eats as Lupita packs up his food. When he is done she hands him the bag of food and a business card.

LUPITA (CONT'D)

That's my information on the card. Call me if you want a job.

JESSE

I can't pass a drug test.

LUPITA

We'll deal with that later.

Jesse takes the card, stuffs it in his pocket. He stands up, bag in hand. His plate is clean.

JESSE

(with sincerity)
Thank you, Lupita.

LUPITA

Take care of yourself and call me if you need to. I mean that.

INT. COLLEGE, CLASSROOM - DAY

Jesse is on his way out of the classroom when he is stopped by his PROFESSOR (60s).

PROFESSOR
Jesse, can I talk to you?

JESSE
Sure.

PROFESSOR
You need to bring your grades up if
you're going to pass this class.

Jesse looks down. His body language is very defeated.

JESSE
I've never been good at this type
of stuff.

PROFESSOR
We have tutors.

The Professor passes Jesse a list of tutors.

PROFESSOR (CONT'D)
They're divided by subject. There
are several tutors that will tutor
you in multiple subjects. Just
reach out and they'll schedule a
time to meet with you.

Jesse takes the paper, looks it over.

PROFESSOR (CONT'D)
You also need to get the required
book for the class.

Jesse nods.

PROFESSOR (CONT'D)
I'm here for you. If you have any
questions or need anything. You're
one of my students, I want you to
succeed.

JESSE
Thanks.

Jesse walks out of the classroom looking at the list.

EXT. LES DAMES CLUB, PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Jesse is sitting in his car smoking a joint. He pops a pill,
chases it down with water. He leaves the car.

INT. LES DAMES CLUB, DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

Margo is in the dressing room as Jesse walks in.

MARGO

We have a bachelorette party booked tonight in the private room.

All the guys are upbeat and excited except Jesse. He doesn't know what this means for him.

MARGO (CONT'D)

Chris, Denny, Sam and Jesse...you're on it.

GAFFEY

Hey! I always do the parties.

MARGO

Not this time. The ladies are asking for the Golden Cowboy.

Margo winks at Jesse.

INT. BANK - DAY

Jesse is at the bank. He has a large roll of cash, he makes a deposit.

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

Jesse is strolling down the aisle with a full cart. He stops in the school supply section, pulls out a list.

INT. COLLEGE, STUDENT STORE - DAY

Jesse is at the checkout counter buying the three books he couldn't afford previously.

EXT. JESSE'S APARTMENT, RENTAL OFFICE - DAY

Jesse stops at the office, drops off his rent check.

INT. JESSE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jesse has a school book and a notepad on the kitchen table. He also has a plate with tamales, beans and rice. He looks outside his window, it's a nice day.

EXT. JESSE'S APARTMENT, COURTYARD - DAY

Jesse is eating his food and doing homework as he sits outside at a bench next to a pool with no water.

He is openly smoking a joint, has a math book in front of him. His neighbor BENNY DE LUCA (30s), a drug addict, approaches Jesse.

BENNY
(eyeing the joint)
What's up.

JESSE
Hey.

BENNY
(nodding towards the joint)
You got an extra one of those?

JESSE
No, last one.

Benny sits down next to him.

BENNY
Name's Benny.

JESSE
Jesse.

BENNY
You new here?

JESSE
We're neighbors. I'm the guy that's
always banging on your wall.

BENNY
Oh yeah, I recognize you. We've run
into each other a couple times. Me
and my old lady been here two
years. Place is a dump. You seen
the rats?

JESSE
I saw one yesterday when I was
emptying the trash.

BENNY
They're all over the place. And the
landlord...guy's a pig. And watch
out for that guy in 303. He's some
type of pervert. I see girls going
in and out all day.

Jesse nods, tries to focus on his homework. Benny looks around.

BENNY (CONT'D)

I come sit out here sometimes, just to get some fresh air. Place don't got no patio. What apartment don't got a patio? No place to get fresh air but out here.

Jesse nods again. He really wants to be left alone.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Me and my lady are going out pickin' tomorrow.

JESSE

Picking?

BENNY

We drive around in the truck, pick up stuff we see lying around. Some of it we keep, some of it we sell. You need anything?

JESSE

I could use a computer...a laptop.

BENNY

Won't find nothing like that pickin'. Go to Jake's Pawn Shop on 23rd. They got all that kind of crap, cheap too.

JESSE

Cool, thanks.

BENNY

And...uh...sorry about the noise. Sometimes me and my old lady go at it, you know. Sometimes we luvin' and sometimes we fightin'.

Benny laughs at himself. Jesse realizes Benny isn't going to leave him alone. He stops trying to focus on his homework, packs up his book and notebook, grabs his empty plate.

JESSE

Well, it was nice to meet you, Benny.

Jesse stands, hands the half smoked joint to Benny. The man's eyes light up like it's Christmas.

BENNY

Thank you, Jesse! You're a real upstanding human being.

Jesse nods, heads back to his apartment.

INT. MEDICAL CLINIC - DAY

Jesse is in an examination room buttoning his shirt. A NURSE (50s) walks in with a paper.

NURSE

Here's your test results from your last visit. Everything is good. You're 100 % healthy.

JESSE

(taking the paper)
Thank you.

NURSE

Do you need some condoms or needles? There's no charge.

JESSE

No, Ma'am.

NURSE

Well, you're all set. The doctor said to only come back if needed.

JESSE

Ok, thanks.

Jesse leaves the medical clinic.

EXT. STREET - DAY

As Jesse is walking down the street he sees a place called the Spring of Wellness Health Center. A sign reads that they offer counseling, mental and physical wellness checks and addiction services. Jesse stops in front of the counseling center, looks at it for a long moment. Then he heads towards his car.

INT. JAKE'S PAWN SHOP - DAY

Jesse is in the electronics aisle. He sees an old beat up laptop for fifty bucks. He turns to JAKE (40s) who is at the counter.

JESSE (CONT'D)

This thing work?

JAKE

It works. It looks bad, but the guts are good. That's all that matters.

Jesse picks up the computer, takes it to the counter.

JESSE
I'll take it.

At the counter, there is a glass covered display case. Jesse sees several beautiful pieces of jewelry in the display case. He looks at them for a moment. Jake notices.

JAKE
Anything else?

JESSE
No, just the computer.

Jesse pays for his purchase.

INT. JESSE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jesse has his school books and a notepad spread across the kitchen table. He boots up the laptop, pulls out the paper with the list of tutors. He sees a person that tutors in multiple subjects, Robby Jensen. He sends an email.

INT. COLLEGE LIBRARY - DAY

Jesse is working on his homework. A beautiful, young, petite woman, ROBERTA JENSEN (19), slips into the seat across from him. She sits her backpack next to her.

ROBBY
Hey there, you must be Jesse.

Jesse is clearly stunned. He stares at her.

ROBBY (CONT'D)
I'm Robby.

She holds out her hand. Jesse doesn't respond. He thinks Robby is the most beautiful woman he has ever seen.

ROBBY (CONT'D)
You thought I was going to be a guy. I get that a lot. I can recommend someone if you're not comfortable with me.

JESSE
I am.

ROBBY
What?

JESSE

I'm sorry. You're fine. I mean...it's ok. I'm Jesse.

ROBBY

Nice to meet you, Jesse.

They shake hands. Robby smiles. She is aware of her affect on men, but she is down to earth and modest. She thinks Jesse is cute.

ROBBY (CONT'D)

So, what do you need help with?

JESSE

Everything.

ROBBY

I tutor in multiple subjects so that won't be a problem. Any subject giving you more trouble than others?

JESSE

English.

ROBBY

Really? Most people have problems in math and science. English is easy.

JESSE

I'm getting C's in math and science. I got a D in English.

ROBBY

Is it an issue with the concepts? Writing?

JESSE

...And I have trouble focusing.

ROBBY

We can work on that. Why don't you grab your book, we'll jump right in.

As Robby is grabbing her book, Jesse can't take his eyes off her. But he feels she is way out of his league. Robby looks up. Jesse is staring at her, he hasn't retrieved his book.

ROBBY (CONT'D)

Book?

JESSE

Oh.

Jesse retrieves his English book. They start to study.

INT. LUPITA'S HOUSE, ENTRYWAY - MORNING

Lupita opens the door to Lou.

LOU

Hey, Luppie.

The kids run up and give Lou a big hug. They're gone as quickly as they came. Lou has three bags of groceries in his arms. He follows Lupita inside.

INT. LUPITA'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - MORNING

Lou sits the groceries on the kitchen counter, gives Lupita a brotherly kiss on the cheek.

LUPITA

Oh Lou, thank you. You don't have to do this you know.

LOU

I want to. How are you?

LUPITA

Doing good. Still haven't heard from that deadbeat brother of yours, but otherwise good.

LOU

Well, that makes two of us.

Lupita starts unpacking the bags. There are groceries, but a lot of stuff to make tamales as well.

LOU (CONT'D)

I got everything on your list. You making tamales for the whole neighborhood now or what?

LUPITA

No. Just for this kid I met at one of my jobs.

LOU

He must like tamales.

LUPITA

Everyone likes my tamales.

(beat)

(MORE)

LUPITA (CONT'D)

It was really just a way to get him to talk. Food opens doors.

LOU

It sure does.

LUPITA

Speaking of which, sit down, sit down. Have some breakfast

Lou slides into a bar stool at the kitchen counter. Lupita serves him breakfast.

LOU

Oh, Luppie. Woman, you can cook.

LUPITA

There's more if you want it. And I made some tamales for you and Adele.

LOU

Adele is going to love that. Tell me about your new friend.

LUPITA

I'm at one of the clubs I clean the other day and I see this kid. I mean, they're all kids, but he's young, only nineteen. It makes me sick to my stomach every time I see him there. I tried talking to him, but he's pretty closed off. So I invited him over for a meal and I told him I'd give him some food to take home.

LOU

Sounds like it worked.

LUPITA

It did. It's the only reason I work at these clubs, so I can talk to these kids. He's been here a few times and he's starting to open up a little. He reminds me so much of Elena. He still has that innocence about him, you know. He has a chance at a different life if I can just get him out of there.

LOU

You're a good woman, Luppie. I'll keep him in my prayers. What's his name?

LUPITA

Jesse. Jesse James. And that's not a stage name. It's his real name... Jesse James.

Lou drops his fork, stares at Lupita in disbelief.

INT. LES DAMES CLUB, MARGO'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Gaffey is in Margo's office. Margo is sitting on top of her desk. She looks disheveled. Gaffey is in front of her. He backs away, zips up his pants, fastens his belt buckle. Margo slides off the desk. Gaffey sits down, pulls a joint out of his pocket, puts it in his mouth. Margo pulls it out of his mouth before he can light up.

MARGO

Not in here.

Gaffey watches her as she straightens her dress, checks her appearance in the mirror.

GAFFEY

I heard there's another bachelorette party booked this Saturday. I could really use the money.

MARGO

What are you talking about? You stay at the entertainment house for free and you still make good money performing.

GAFFEY

I notice Jesse's been getting all the parties.

MARGO

You party too much. Drugs, expensive clothes, that's where all your money goes.

GAFFEY

I have bills too. And what does that have to do with anything...what I spend my money on?

(MORE)

GAFFEY (CONT'D)

I should still be able to get some work from here and you're giving all the good stuff to a new guy.

MARGO

For goodness sake Gaffey, don't be such a child. I give the ladies what they ask for and they're asking for Jesse. He's new...a fresh face. That's it.

GAFFEY

What are you trying to say?

MARGO

I'm done, Gaffey.

GAFFEY

I'm not done.

MARGO

Do I need to call Rubin?

GAFFEY

You're going to call Rubin on me? You weren't so anxious to get rid of me a few minutes ago.

MARGO

I'm done Gaffey. Out...now. I'll see you Friday.

Gaffey gets up, snatches his jacket off the back of the chair, heads out of the office.

EXT. BALL PARK - DAY

Jesse is at Rayna's softball game. He is in the background watching as they win the championship. Jesse watches for a moment as the girls celebrate. Then he turns around, leaves the ballpark. At the dugout, in the midst of the celebrating girls, Jesse Sr turns around and looks at the area where Jesse was standing previously.

EXT. CHURCH, ROOF - DAY

Jesse takes a long drag from his joint, puts it out, sticks it in his pocket. He checks on J.J, gives the bird some feed, then he sits down next to Lou.

JESSE

I go to my sister's games. I promised her I'd be there and I haven't missed one. They just won the championship.

LOU

That's great news, Jesse. I'm sure its really special for her that you're there. Sounds like you two are very close.

JESSE

We are.

LOU

You see your Dad?

JESSE

My dad's the coach. He's always yelling out things like, "You got this" and "amazing job" and stuff like that. Sometimes I close my eyes, I listen to his voice, and I imagine that he's talking to me.

LOU

You and your day don't talk?

JESSE

No. He kicked me out of the house.

LOU

Why?

Jesse pulls the joint out of his pocket, holds it up.

JESSE

This...among other things.

Jesse sticks the joint back in his pocket, quickly changes the subject.

JESSE (CONT'D)

You married?

LOU

Got a wife, a beautiful daughter and a son. My daughter is married, has a wonderful husband and a little boy.

JESSE

Sounds like a nice family.

LOU

It definitely is. I am a very lucky man. You should come have dinner sometime.

JESSE

Probably not a good idea. I think their heads would blow up if they knew who you were bringing home.

LOU

I don't think so. I think they would love to meet you, Jesse. Hey, why don't you come tonight?

JESSE

I've got to meet someone tonight.

LOU

Someone special?

JESSE

Just a tutor. I mean, she's great. She's actually really great, but she's just tutoring me.

Lou cues in on Jesse's tone of voice and his body language. He can tell Jesse likes her.

LOU

What's she tutoring you in?

JESSE

I took your advice, signed up for some classes at the college. I'm just trying it out for now, but I needed some help.

LOU

Kudos to you! How do you like it?

JESSE

It sucks. I'm not doing so well, as usual. One of my teachers said I should get a tutor. I thought it was gonna be a dude, then Robby shows up. She's meeting me at the public library tonight. She's gonna show me how to research stuff.

LOU
 (with lifted eyebrows)
 Robby, huh?

Jesse looks down.

JESSE
 Don't say it like that. There's
 nothing going on but tutoring.
 Girls like her don't fall for guys
 like me.

LOU
 Never say never.

JESSE
 Never.

LOU
 You should head out. Get home, get
 cleaned up.

JESSE
 What do you mean? I took a shower
 this morning.

LOU
 You can't meet a young lady looking
 like this and smelling like pot.

Jesse sniffs himself.

JESSE
 You can smell it?

LOU
 Yes. The best thing to do would be
 to just quit. I know that's easier
 said than done, but you can at
 least get cleaned up for the lady.

Jesse stands up.

JESSE
 I better go.

LOU
 Yep.

INT. CLOTHING STORE - DAY

Jesse is in a men's clothing store buying new clothes.

INT. JESSE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jesse is airing out his apartment. He sprays Lysol, plugs in air fresheners. He sprays fabric freshener in his closet.

INT. JESSE'S APARTMENT, SHOWER - DUSK

Jesse is in the shower vigorously scrubbing himself off, washing his hair and brushing his teeth.

INT. PUBLIC LIBRARY - DUSK

Jesse has cleaned up nicely. He takes one more whiff of himself as he waits for Robby. She enters with her book bag. Robby smiles as she approaches, she notices the change in appearance.

ROBBY

Hello there.

JESSE

Hello.

ROBBY

You ready?

JESSE

I'm ready.

Robby takes Jesse around the library, showing him around. He pulls out some assignment notes from class. She looks over the notes, motions for him to follow her. At the end of it, he has a stack of books he checks out.

JESSE (CONT'D)

I think I'm all set. Thank you.

ROBBY

Glad I could help.

JESSE

Oh...by the way.

Jesse pulls a folded, stapled paper out of his backpack. He hands it to Robby. CLOSE in on the paper. He got a B- on his english assignment.

ROBBY

Oh my gosh! This is wonderful. We have to celebrate. Pie...it's on me.

INT. THE PIE SHOP - NIGHT

Jesse and Robby are standing in line at the pie shop. It is a funky bakery with every type of pie imaginable displayed behind a clear glass case.

ROBBY (CONT'D)
This place has the best pie you've ever had.

JESSE
Sounds great. But, I'm treating.

Robby gives him a look. She wants to treat him.

JESSE (CONT'D)
...To say thank you.

ROBBY
(giving in)
Ok.

A few minutes later Jesse and Robby are seated at a table with pie.

JESSE
This is really good.

ROBBY
Like I said, best pie in town.
(beat)
So, you live around here?

JESSE
Over there.

Jesse points at a random group of student apartments. He doesn't want to tell Robby where he really lives.

ROBBY
That's cool. What do you do when you're not in school?

JESSE
I work.

ROBBY
Where?

JESSE
I'm a bartender.

ROBBY
Nice? Where at? Maybe me and some friends can stop by.

JESSE

Um...I'm on call. I work at several different places. I never really know where I'll be at.

ROBBY

Oh...ok.

JESSE

What about you?

ROBBY

I work with kids and I tutor, of course.

JESSE

You go to Denver Community College? I haven't seen you around the campus.

ROBBY

I'm at the University of Denver, Lamont School of Music. I'm an arts major.

JESSE

You shredding on the guitar or what?

This makes Robby laugh. Jesse loves her smile.

ROBBY

I play classical piano. I'm also in the university orchestra. I would love to play in one of the major orchestras someday, like the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

JESSE

You must be really good.

ROBBY

It's something that I enjoy. I'm rehearsing tomorrow at the university concert hall. Come check it out if you want.

JESSE

I'll do that.

INT. UNIVERSITY CONCERT HALL - DAY

Jesse is standing by the back door of the concert hall ready to make a hasty exit. Several other people are sitting in the hall watching the orchestra perform. Robby is at a piano. She waves at Jesse, he waves back. He listens to the rehearsal, is blown away by Robby's performance. He makes sure he leaves before they are done.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Jesse leaves the university and it's surrounding neighborhood and gets back to his part of town. The scenery changes. Everything is run down, there's liquor stores and XXX shops and strip clubs. People are hanging out, some openly drinking and smoking pot. Jesse looks around, depressed at his situation. Jesse notices the Spring of Wellness Health Center again, does a u-turn, pulls over, parks.

INT. SPRING OF WELLNESS HEALTH CENTER - DAY

Jesse approaches the front desk RECEPTIONIST (40s).

JESSE

Hi. I'm wondering if I can make an appointment or something.

RECEPTIONIST

(compassionate, sensing Jesse's nervousness)
We only service women here. But I can recommend some other places that work with men.

JESSE

That's ok. Thanks.

Jesse walks out.

EXT. JESSE'S APARTMENT, STAIRWAY - DAY

Jesse arrives home. Benny and his girlfriend, LANGLEY (20s), are having a loud argument.

BENNY

Come on, Baby. You know I didn't mean nothing.

LANGLEY

You can sleep outside tonight for all I care.

JESSE
(to Benny)
Hey.

Jesse slips past Benny, starts heading upstairs.

BENNY
Jesse, talk to her man. I don't
want to sleep out in no street
tonight.

Jesse walks by Langley.

LANGLEY
(to Jesse)
Hey Sweet thing.

JESSE
Hi, Langley.

LANGLEY
(talking to Jesse, but
loud enough so Benny can
hear)
My old man ain't gonna be home
tonight. You want to come over to
my place tonight and give me a
little sugar?

BENNY
Oh baby, why you gotta do my like
that?

JESSE
(to Langley)
I think he's sorry.

He looks down at Benny.

JESSE (CONT'D)
He looks really, REALLY sorry.

Langley thinks about this, her hands on her hips. She finally motions to Benny for him to come up. Benny runs up. Hugs her, kisses her.

BENNY
Oh baby, you know how much I love
you. I never do anything on purpose
to hurt you.

LANGLEY
I love you too. You just drive me
so crazy sometimes.

Langley smacks Benny. Then they start to kiss and really get into it with each other in front of the apartment. Jesse slips by quickly, goes into his apartment.

INT - JESSE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jesse closes the door behind him, leans against the door. The look on his face shows he is tired of being where he is at. He is ready for change.

INT - JESSE'S APARTMENT - LATE NIGHT

Benny and Langley are having very loud sex. Jesse doesn't bother to bang on the wall. He puts his pillow over his head.

EXT. LES DAMES CLUB, PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Jesse is sitting in his car. He looks at the club, he is not in a good mood. He opens a pill bottle, pops two pills, chases them down with water. He gets out of the car, heads into the club.

INT. LES DAMES CLUB, DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

Gaffey and Sam are in the dressing room. Gaffey is putting on a leather biker outfit and Sam is slipping into a fireman's outfit. Jesse enters.

JESSE

What's up?

GAFFEY

Convention's in town. Packed house tonight.

SAM

Gonna make that money.

Jesse nods, goes to his table. His cowboy outfit has been dry cleaned, is wrapped in plastic hanging on the rack. He puts his personal belongings in a locker, starts to unwrap the cowboy outfit. Margo walks in, approaches Jesse.

MARGO

You've got a private dance request in room number two.

She smiles, tosses condoms on Jesse's table.

JESSE

What's this for?

MARGO

You know what it's for.

Jesse looks back at Margo. He is furious.

JESSE

Fuck You, Margo. I'm not a prostitute.

The room goes silent, Sam and Gaffey stop what they're doing. Sam approaches Margo.

SAM

I can take care of it. Is it Belinda?

MARGO

(not taking her eyes off Jesse)

Yes.

SAM

I know what she likes. Let me take care of it.

Margo nods. Sam takes the condoms off Jesse's table, sticks them in the pocket of his fireman's outfit.

SAM (CONT'D)

You don't know what you're missing, Cowboy.

Sam disappears from the room.

MARGO

(to Gaffey)

Can you give us a moment?

Margo and Jesse are standing face to face. Gaffey raises his eyebrows, smirks, leaves the dressing room. As soon as Gaffey is gone, Margo slaps Jesse hard across the face.

MARGO (CONT'D)

Don't ever talk to me like that in my place of business, in front of my employees. I'll throw your ass out of here and trust me, I know everyone. You won't get work anywhere else. You got that?

Jesse is high and enraged. He grabs Margo by the arms, pushes her against the wall. He moves close to her, his face inches away from hers. Margo is shocked at first, then her eyes glaze over as she is looking into Jesse's eyes.

MARGO (CONT'D)

Cowboy...I didn't know you had it
in you.

She is breathing heavy, bites her lip. She presses against him suggestively. Jesse releases her, grabs his cowboy outfit, goes into the bathroom. She is left standing alone looking after him. She has a look of desire mixed with cunning on her face.

INT. CAR REPAIR SHOP - DAY

Lou is inside of the office of a car repair shop picking up his car. Jesse Sr passes him an invoice. Lou looks at the invoice, then looks at Jesse Sr.

LOU

Jesse James?

JESSE SR

Yes, Sir. That's me.

LOU

You have a son...same name?

Jesse Sr freezes, doesn't speak.

LOU (CONT'D)

I know him, your son.

JESSE SR

You a police officer?

LOU

No, a pastor. Your son and I have
become friends.

Jesse Sr doesn't say anything. He's thinking, wondering. Lou watches him, has an idea.

LOU (CONT'D)

What time you off?

JESSE SR

I'm here 'til five, then I'm taking
my daughter to a sleep over. Rest
of the night is free.

LOU

Why don't we grab a beer? I'll tell
you how Jesse's doing.

Jesse Sr nods in agreement. Lou signs the invoice, pays with his credit card. He writes down an address on a nearby notepad.

LOU (CONT'D)
See you around five-ish!

INT. BREWERY - DUSK

Jesse Sr enters the brewery. Lou is already seated at a booth, Lou waves him over.

LOU (CONT'D)
Get whatever you want. They got great food and great beer. They make it here themselves.

Lou points towards an in house distillery proudly displayed behind clear glass. A WAITRESS approaches.

WAITRESS
What can I get for you boys?

LOU
House brew.

JESSE SR
Same.

Jesse Sr waits until the waitress is out of ear shot to speak.

JESSE SR (CONT'D)
How do you know Jesse?

LOU
I'm a Pastor. I met Jesse at my Church.

Lou passes Jesse Sr a business card. Jesse Sr looks it over.

JESSE SR
Jesse's going to church?

LOU
(chuckling)
You could say that.

JESSE SR
I hope he stays there.

LOU

I'm working on it. He's a good kid.
There's some things going on, I
knew that the first day I met him.
But he's a good kid.

The waitress returns with two mugs of beer, sits them in front on Lou and Jesse Sr. Lou sips his beer.

LOU (CONT'D)

Ahhhh, that's good.

Jesse Sr takes a sip of his beer as well. Lou can tell he needs someone to talk to.

JESSE SR

I did everything, tried everything.
Nothing could reach him. His mother
died when he was young and he had
some...some trauma when he was a
kid. It's not easy raising two kids
without a mother.

LOU

I know how it is. I got two kids
myself. I don't know how I would
have raised them without my Adele.
I'm not here to judge. But, a young
man that age, he still needs a
father.

Jesse Sr doesn't respond, sips his beer.

LOU (CONT'D)

What happened, if you don't mind me
asking? Why did you ask him to
leave?

JESSE SR

He was hanging out with the wrong
crowd, getting into a lot trouble.
I caught him smoking pot one night.
I told him I'd put him out if I
caught him doing it again. I had to
keep my word. I got my daughter
too, and she looks up to him. I had
to make a choice. Man's gotta learn
how to be responsible.

LOU

That he does. But if I may be so
bold, he's still a kid.

(MORE)

LOU (CONT'D)

Jesse is like a wayward boat in a stormy ocean without a rudder, lost at sea. He's just living day to day, with no direction. He needs a father, he needs guidance. I'm trying, but he won't let me get too close. And he likes to try and push my buttons, let me tell you, he's good at that.

Lou chuckles.

JESSE SR

He won't let anyone in, especially not me. He's my son. I love him. I just don't know how to...how I can make up for past mistakes.

LOU

With all due respect sir, I'm not the one you should be saying this to. You need to tell Jesse you love him. I think it would mean the world to him. More than you know.

Jesse Sr nods, drinks up the last of his beer.

LOU (CONT'D)

I'm here almost every Friday grabbing a beer and taking a load off after a busy week. You have my phone number and email. Let's keep in touch. I'll let you know how Jesse is doing.

JESSE SR

I'd like that. Beer's good too.

The two men stand, shake hands. Lou has a hopeful look as the two men part ways and head out the door.

INT. CHURCH, LOU'S OFFICE - DAY

Lou is in his office working. He hears the stairs to the roof being engaged from outside. He waits a moment, then he gets up, heads up to the ceiling through the church.

EXT. CHURCH, ROOF - DAY

When Lou gets to the roof, Jesse is feeding J.J.

LOU

J.J's about healed up.

JESSE

That's good. I'm sure he wants to get out of jail.

Jesse finishes feeding J.J. He sits down, fires up a joint. Lou grabs some feed, starts to feed the other pigeons.

JESSE (CONT'D)

So, how do you talk to a lady? I mean a real lady.

LOU

You talk to a woman the same way you would to anyone.

JESSE

I'm just afraid I'm going to say something stupid.

LOU

Define stupid?

JESSE

Pretty much anything that comes out of my mouth.

Jesse and Lou both have a good laugh at this.

LOU

Have you ever had a girlfriend before? How did you talk to her?

JESSE

I started hanging out with all the stoner kids in junior high because they had the best weed. That's where me and this girl hooked up. We'd get high, then she'd let me hit it, you know. It was great until her family moved. Then, I met this other chick...

LOU

...We need to work on this. First, you can't call her a chick. And you can't talk about hooking up. And what does hitting it mean? No...no... none of that.

JESSE

See, I need your help. What do I say?

LOU

Just talk to her naturally and say nice things. Is she pretty?

JESSE

She's beautiful.

LOU

Next time you see her, tell her she looks beautiful.

JESSE

Ok. What else?

LOU

Ask her how she's doing, how her day was. How she's feeling.

JESSE

Really?

LOU

Yes. Women want to know you care about how they feel.

JESSE

What about sex? When can I make my move?

LOU

After you put a ring on her finger and it's your wedding night, then you can make love to her. None of this...hitting it...stuff.

JESSE

I've been having sex since I was 12 and none of my girlfriends ever wanted to get married.

LOU

You like this young lady?

JESSE

Yes.

LOU

A lot, a little, or are you just interested in sex?

JESSE

I like her...a lot. She's different than any woman I've ever met. She's beautiful, she's smart, she's plays the piano...like really good, like Mozart or something. She's just...different.

LOU

Then you have to treat her like she's different. A huge part of that is respecting her and respecting yourself. If you like her A LOT. Then treat her that way. Treat her like a lady.

JESSE

Treat her like a lady?

LOU

Yes, like a lady. With dignity and respect.

JESSE

Is that how you got your wife?

LOU

Yes. Yes, it is. And I married up.

JESSE

What does that mean? Her family rich or something?

LOU

No, nothing like that. She has made me a better man, a better person. She's enriched my life in ways I could never have imagined. Every man should have that. You should have that, Jesse.

Jesse takes another hit from his joint, tosses out more seed to the pigeons. He really wants what Lou is talking about.

LOU (CONT'D)

She know about that?

Lou nods towards the joint.

JESSE

No.

LOU

What do you think she'll say about it when she finds out?

JESSE

I don't smoke around her. I only see her when she tutors me. Then there was the library...then pie. And I went to one of her rehearsals, but we didn't really talk. She doesn't know anything else about me.

LOU

Ahhh...Robby.

JESSE

Yeah, Robby. I feel like...I feel different when I'm with her. I want more with her.

LOU

So, you're lying to her? She doesn't know you get high? Does she know where you work? Are you going to tell her? Lying is not a good way to start off a relationship, Jesse.

Jesse looks down, then out into the horizon.

JESSE

I can't stop. That's why I work at the club. I can't pass a drug test.

LOU

You ever tried?

JESSE

Yeah. But...

LOU

But what?

Jesse's demeanor changes.

JESSE

When I was a kid...um...something happened. I have these nightmares.
(Jesse holds up the joint)
This helps me.

LOU

I'll tell you something
 Jesse...worry and fear can keep us
 in a dark place. We make decisions
 based on worry and fear for the
 past, for the future and for the
 present. Sometimes these fears can
 rule over us, control our lives.

(beat)

The next time you have one of these
 nightmares, I want you to repeat
 something to yourself.

JESSE

What's that?

LOU

I don't have a spirit of fear, but
 of power, love, and a sound mind.

JESSE

I don't have a spirit of fear,
 but...

LOU

Of power.

JESSE

Of power.

LOU

Of love.

JESSE

Of love.

LOU

And of a sound mind.

JESSE

Of a sound mind.

LOU

Say it again. And I want you to
 really mean it and believe it. You
 don't have a spirit of fear, Jesse.

JESSE

I don't have a spirit of fear, but
 of power, love, and a sound mind.

LOU

I want you to remember that. Can
 you do that for me?

JESSE

Yeah, I can do that. That's deep.
Where'd you get that from?

LOU

From a very old, very dear friend.

JESSE

(whispering)

I don't have a spirit of fear, but
of power, love, and a sound mind.

INT. JESSE'S APARTMENT - DUSK

Jesse is sitting at his kitchen table. His laptop is on, books and papers are spread out everywhere. His phone beeps. It's a text from Robby. Cell Phone Message From Robby: *At the library studying. Want to study together?* Jesse looks around his apartment, looks at the spread on the table. He responds to the text. Cell Phone Text To Robby: *I'll be there in 30 minutes.* Jesse packs up his books, stuffs them in his back pack and heads out the door.

INT. PUBLIC LIBRARY - DUSK

Silent Scene: Jesse and Robby are studying together. They are whispering back and forth as they study.

CUT TO:

INT. BURGER JOINT - NIGHT

Silent Scene: Jesse and Robby are having a lively conversation over burgers. For the first time, Jesse seems comfortable around Robby.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARK - DAY

Jesse and Robby are jogging together. They stop to look at the scenery.

ROBBY

There's a great band playing at
Rick's Bar tonight. You want to go?
A friend of mine plays lead guitar.

JESSE

Sounds great. What time?

INT. ROBBY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Robby opens the door to Jesse. He has cleaned up nice, has on a nice shirt and jeans. He holds up flowers.

JESSE
These are for you.

ROBBY
They're beautiful. Thank you.

Jesse looks around Robby's spacious apartment as Robby goes into the kitchen and grabs a vase. The apartment is clean, in a nice area, unlike his studio apartment. Robby reemerges, puts the flowers on the table. He notices a piano tucked into the corner of the apartment.

JESSE
Is that a piano?

ROBBY
It's my baby grand.

JESSE
How'd you get it up here?

ROBBY
You don't want to know. I don't know how I'm going to get it out either.

Jesse chuckles. He feels at ease with Robby.

JESSE
Can I hear you play?

ROBBY
Sure.

Robby motions towards the couch. Jesse sits as Robby sits at the piano. She lifts the fallboard.

ROBBY (CONT'D)
Any special requests?

JESSE
Whatever you like.

She starts to play, elegantly, passionately. Jesse closes his eyes, lets the sound move over him and through him. When she finishes, he has tears in his eyes. She stops playing, is looking at him, moved by his tears. He quickly wipes them away.

JESSE (CONT'D)
 Wow, that was amazing. Where did
 you learn to play like that?

ROBBY
 My mom and lots of lessons.

Robby looks at her watch, closes up the piano.

ROBBY (CONT'D)
 We'd better head out or we're going
 to miss our show.

EXT. ROBBY'S APARTMENT, HALLWAY - NIGHT

Jesse follows Robby out of the apartment. She lets him take her hand. Something inside him starts to bloom. The first seeds of love.

INT. ROBBY'S APARTMENT, LATE NIGHT

Later

Jesse and Robby step into her apartment.

JESSE
 That was a good show.

ROBBY
 I'm glad you got to finally meet
 some of my friends.

JESSE
 Me too. That was nice.

Jesse leans in and kisses her. She returns the kiss.

JESSE (CONT'D)
 Can I see you Sunday night?

ROBBY
 Sure, you want me to come by your
 place?

JESSE
 No, I can come here, it's better.
 My place...bunch of rowdy
 guys...stuff thrown all over the
 place.

ROBBY
Goodness, sounds like a real
bachelor pad.

JESSE
Bunch of guys, not very fun.

ROBBY
Seven. Movie?

JESSE
You pick the movie, I'll grab
pizza.

ROBBY
It's a date.

They kiss again, savoring the kiss.

EXT. ROBBY'S APARTMENT, HALLWAY - LATE NIGHT

Walking down the hallway Jesse is smiling ear to ear. He is
on top of the world.

INT. LUPITA'S HOUSE, GARAGE - DAY

The garage door is open. Lupita is standing off to the side,
Jesse is underneath Lupita's car working. The kids come into
the garage and start running around.

LUPITA
(to her children)
Hey, back yard!

They run back into the house. Jesse slides out from
underneath the car, stands up.

JESSE
I changed the oil. Plus, I put in
new spark plugs and a new filter.

LUPITA
Thank you so much. You just save me
a small fortune.

JESSE
Don't mention it. It's really not
that big of deal.

LUPITA
Come inside. I want to show you
something.

JESSE

Tamales?

LUPITA

Oh, I have some of those for you.
This is something else.

Jesse follows Lupita into the house.

INT. LUPITA'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - DAY

Lupita takes Jesse to a bedroom. It is modestly furnished.
Lupita looks around the room, deep emotion in her eyes.

LUPITA

My sister Elena used to stay here
sometimes.

Lupita sits down on the bed.

LUPITA (CONT'D)

It was hard, the day I got the
call. I had always held out hope
that she was going to kick the
habit, that things would get
better. But she would always slip
back into that lifestyle, start
using again. Then one day...she was
gone.

JESSE

I am so sorry.

LUPITA

I don't want that to happen to you,
Jesse. You've become like family to
me.

(beat)

You should get out of that crack
house you live in too. You can come
stay here.

JESSE

I may be many things, but I'm not a
freeloader.

LUPITA

You don't have to freeload. You can
pay some rent or do some things
around the house, fix the car and
my work van. How much is your rent?

JESSE

Six hundred.

LUPITA

For that death trap? They should be paying you six hundred dollars to live there. What a bunch of crooks. I'll charge you three hundred. Then you can help me around the house, stuff like that. And the job offer is still open, whenever you want it. You need to get out of these bad places, Baby Bear. Think about it.

Jesse looks around the room, sits on the bed next to Lupita.

JESSE

I did some pretty messed up things when I lived at home and I wasn't a good influence on Rayna. That's why my dad kicked me out.

LUPITA

But things are different now.

JESSE

Things are different now. But, I can't guarantee that I can stay clean. I just don't want to...I don't want to mess this up.

LUPITA

You won't. I trust you and that's no little thing. I don't trust a lot of people around my house, my kids. But I trust you.

JESSE

You don't know how much that means to me.

LUPITA

(Looking around the room)
Well, this is here. Think about it.

JESSE

I will.

Lupita hits the bed with her hand.

LUPITA
Ok, now we eat. And, I have a
surprise for you.

INT. LUPITA'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

Jesse follows Lupita into the kitchen area. Lou is standing there, hands in his pockets.

JESSE
Lou!

LOU
It's a long story.

LUPITA
(looking at Jesse)
It's really not that long of a
story.

EXT. LUPITA'S HOUSE, BACKYARD - DAY

Jesse is dribbling a basketball with Jacob and Lou. Jacob is trying to steal the ball. Jesse lets Jacob steal it. Jacob makes a basket, runs around doing a victory lap. Jesse runs to him, tackles him. Lou, Jesse and Jacob are laughing. Lupita watches them from the patio door. She has a serene smile on her face.

INT. LES DAMES CLUB, DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

Jesse is in the dressing room alone looking at the cowboy outfit. He takes in a deep breath, doesn't move to put the outfit on. Chris enters.

CHRIS
Jesse, I was hoping I'd run into
you.

JESSE
Chris, hey! What's up man? I
haven't seen you around.

CHRIS
I got a new job, head janitor. It
pays great, comes with benefits. I
start on Monday. I just picked up
my last paycheck.

JESSE
(genuinely happy)
That's awesome. I'm so happy for
you.

CHRIS
Yeah, me too.
(beat)
Look, I normally don't say anything
cause most of these guys don't
care, but you need to get out of
here. This place, young guy like
you, it'll eat you alive if you
stay here.

JESSE
Everyone keeps telling me that.

CHRIS
You need to start listening. I
don't know what the problem is,
it's usually drugs. But you gotta
do whatever you gotta do to get out
of here. You hear me?

JESSE
I hear you.

CHRIS
This is my phone number and email.
Keep in touch. You get clean, I can
probably get you a job.

JESSE
Thanks. Really, thank you.

Chris offers his hand. They shake, do a man hug, then Chris is gone. Jesse looks at the cowboy outfit again. His eyes have changed. He desperately wants to escape the lifestyle.

INT. ROBBY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jesse and Robby are cuddling on the couch watching a movie and eating popcorn. The movie ends. They kiss, Jesse reluctantly pulls away.

JESSE
I'd better head out. I've got a
seven am class tomorrow.

ROBBY
Before you go...

Robby gets up, runs to her back pack and returns with a bunch of brochures.

ROBBY (CONT'D)
I got these for you.

JESSE
What is this?

ROBBY
They're for universities.

JESSE
Oh...I don't know.

ROBBY
All of your grades are up, Jesse.

JESSE
Thanks to you.

He leans in, kisses her.

ROBBY
I'm just saying that you should apply. You could start next semester.

Jesse looks through the brochures.

JESSE
I'll look them over.

ROBBY
Promise?

JESSE
Promise.

Robby takes his face in her hands, kisses him.

INT. JESSE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jesse is at his kitchen table, the laptop in front of him. He looks through the university brochures, starts to apply online.

INT. SPRING OF WELLNESS HEALTH CENTER - DAY

Jesse walks into the health center. He looks nervous, but determined. A look of recognition flashes over the receptionist's face.

JESSE

Hi. Um...I was here before.

RECEPTIONIST

(with a gentle smile)

Yes, I was hoping you'd come back.
I had this ready for you.

She hands him a list of counselors and groups for men. Jesse takes the list.

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)

I put some stars next to the ones
that I've gotten good feedback on.

JESSE

Thank you.

INT. JESSE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jesse is trying to study but he's antsy. He walks around the apartment, looks at the drawer he stores the pot and pills in.

JESSE

Not this time.

He grabs a piece of gum, starts to chew. He sits back down, opens his books.

INT. JESSE'S APARTMENT - LATE NIGHT (NIGHTMARE)

The white van pulls up to a park. The stranger pulls 7-year-old Jesse out of the van, leaves him standing in front of the park covered in blood. The van quickly drives away as Jesse stumbles towards the playground.

INT. JESSE'S APARTMENT - LATE NIGHT

Jesse wakes up shaking, a look of fear and panic in his eyes. He reaches for the drawer where he keeps his drugs, opens it, closes it. He gets up, paces around the room.

JESSE

I don't have a spirit of fear...

He is trembling, pacing, crying.

JESSE (CONT'D)

I don't have a spirit of fear...I
don't have a spirit of fear...

Jesse walks to the drawer, grabs the bag of pot and the bottle of pills, walks into the bathroom.

INT. JESSE'S APARTMENT, BATHROOM - LATE NIGHT

Jesse is standing over the toilet. He is breathing hard, looks like he might black out. He finally closes his eyes, calms himself.

JESSE

I don't have a spirit of fear, but
of power, love, and a sound mind.

Jesse dumps the weed into the toilet, the pills follow. He flushes the toilet and watches as the drugs swirl down with the water, then they're gone.

INT. JESSE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jesse is at the kitchen table. He is jittery, but clean. On his laptop he is researching how long it takes for drugs to leave a person's system. He has job applications and bills on the table in front of him. There is a look of concern on his face. His cell phone rings and he answers.

ROXY (O.S.)

Jesse, how are you? We haven't seen
you in a awhile. When are you
coming back to work?

JESSE

I've been...um...sick.

ROXY (O.S.)

We have a huge bachelorette party
coming up. The ladies are asking
for you.

Jesse looks long and hard at the bills on the table.

JESSE

Ok, I'll be there.

ROXY (O.S.)

Good, I'll let Margo know. We could
use you this Friday and Saturday
too.

JESSE

I can't.

Jesse looks at a picture of him and Robby on his phone screensaver.

JESSE (CONT'D)

I have plans.

ROXY (O.S.)

Ok, call me if you want to get on the schedule sooner. With Chris gone, we got more work for you.

Jesse hangs up with Roxy, dials Robby.

ROBBY (O.S.)

Hey there.

JESSE

Hey. You still want to do something this Friday night?

ROBBY (O.S.)

The university has a concert series every Friday. This Friday is dueling violins.

JESSE

Dueling violins?

Jesse screws up his face. It doesn't sound fun.

ROBBY (O.S.)

It should be great.

JESSE

Ok. What time is the...uh...the show?

ROBBY (O.S.)

Starts at six.

JESSE

I'll see you then.

INT. ROBBY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jesse is laughing as they enter Robby's apartment.

JESSE

I didn't think I would enjoy that, but I did.

ROBBY

I'm glad you came with me.

JESSE
I'm trying new things all the time
with you. It's a good thing.

ROBBY
It is.

JESSE
It's late. I should head out.

ROBBY
Ok.

They kiss, Robby stays close.

JESSE
I should get home.

ROBBY
Ok.

Robby is still close, makes no move to let Jesse leave. She looks into his eyes.

JESSE
I should go.

Robby kisses Jesse, he returns the kiss. Jesse takes her in his arms. They kiss passionately.

INT. ROBBY'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM - MORNING

Jesse is in bed sleeping. He wakes up to the sound of the piano. He sits up, slips on his pants, then his shirt. When he goes into the living room, Robby is at the piano playing.

INT. ROBBY'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Jesse slides onto the piano bench behind her, a leg on each side, wraps his arms around her. She finishes the song.

JESSE
That was beautiful.

ROBBY
Thank you.

JESSE
You hungry?

ROBBY
A little.

JESSE

You want me to take you out to breakfast? I'll get you pancakes... anything you want.

ROBBY

Anything?

JESSE

You can have anything you want.

She takes his arms, wraps them tighter around her. Leans into him.

ROBBY

I want you.

Jesse kisses her shoulder, her neck. Then nestles his head in the nape of her neck.

JESSE

I want you too.

INT. JENSEN HOUSE, ENTRYWAY - DUSK

Robby answers the door. She is excited. Jesse steps in, but then he turns around, pretends like he is going to leave. She pulls him back in, kisses him. They both laugh. Jesse has dressed up nice to impress the family but he is beyond nervous.

INT. JENSEN HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DUSK

Robby brings Jesse into the living room, introduces him to the family, ALEX JENSEN (50s), SUSAN JENSEN (50s), JENNY JENSEN (21). Jenny gives Jesse a strange look.

INT. JENSEN HOUSE, DINING ROOM - DUSK

Jesse is at the table with the Jensen family enjoying dinner.

ALEX

So, what do you do for work, Jesse?

JESSE

I tend bar around town, different places.

ALEX

You're twenty one? I thought you were the same age as Robby?

JESSE

I tend bar at some of the college clubs...I...um...I don't have to be twenty one.

ALEX

Hmmm.

JENNY

(sarcastic)

Tips must be good.

JESSE

Yeah, it pays pretty good.

ALEX

You go to the university?

JESSE

No, just community college for now. I'm trying to figure some things out.

ALEX

Robby says the two of you met at school?

JESSE

We did, but not at her school. I needed a tutor and there she was. She's been great...with tutoring that is.

Jesse blushes down to the roots as Alex examines him.

SUSAN

That's wonderful. I'm glad she's helped you out.

ALEX

So, what are your plans after school?

JESSE

I'm not sure yet. Just trying to figure some things out.

ALEX

Your parents in town?

Jesse is uncomfortable. Robby notices, is embarrassed.

ROBBY

Dad!

ALEX

I just want to get to know him better, sweetheart.

JESSE

My dad lives here and I have a younger sister that still lives at home. My mom passed away when I was young.

SUSAN

Oh, I'm so sorry to hear that.

This admission slows down Alex's interrogation. The table talk turns back to light conversation. Jenny is glaring at Jesse from across the table.

EXT. JENSEN HOUSE, BACKYARD - NIGHT

Later

Jesse and Robby are sitting on a two person swinging bench.

ROBBY

I am so sorry about my dad.

JESSE

That's what dads are supposed to do. My dad's like that with my little sister, won't let guys get anywhere near her. He's just being protective.

ROBBY

It's embarrassing.

JESSE

You shouldn't be embarrassed, even though I thought he was going to hook me up to a polygraph any second.

Robby gives him a teasing smack on the chest.

ROBBY

You coming to my concert?

JESSE

Of course. I wouldn't miss it for the world.

(beat)

Oh wait, is your dad going to be there?

ROBBY

Oh my gosh! You're never going to
let me live this down are you?

They lean into each other, laughing secretly. Jenny watches them from an upstairs window.

INT. UNIVERSITY CONCERT HALL - NIGHT

Jesse shows up for Robby's performance. He has on a suit and tie. He looks like a real gentleman. Jenny is waiting outside of the concert hall. She is holding a black shopping bag and her purse. Jesse spots her, waves. He approaches Jenny.

JESSE

I'm not late, am I?

JENNY

No. She's backstage with the rest of the orchestra getting ready to go on.

JESSE

I can't wait to see her. I've been listening to her practice for weeks.

JENNY

You look great.

JESSE

Thanks. Robby said formal. I was hoping this was ok.

JENNY

I think it would probably look better with this.

Jenny pulls a golden cowboy hat out of the bag. Jesse freezes.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Does she know?

Jesse can't speak. His eyes are glued to the hat. Several emotions tear through him.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Maybe I should tell her right before she goes on. That would make for an interesting show.

Jesse looks at the hat, then at Jenny. He backs away slowly, then turns and leaves.

Jenny is left standing in the hallway with a satisfied smirk on her face. Once Jesse is gone, she throws the golden cowboy hat in the trash. She opens the door to the concert hall, goes in.

INT. JESSE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jesse is sitting at the kitchen table with an empty look in his eyes. His phone rings. He lets it go to voicemail then he listens to the message.

ROBBY (O.S.)
 (deep hurt in her voice)
 Where were you? Jenny said she waited for you and you didn't even show up. You said you wouldn't miss it for the world. Are you going to call me?

Jesse's eyes tear up. He calls Robby.

JESSE
 Hey, I'm sick. It's some type of stomach bug. I'm so sorry I missed it. I really wanted to be there.

ROBBY
 Am I going to see you tomorrow? We need to talk, Jesse.

JESSE
 I'll be there.

Jesse hangs up. The bills are on the table in front of him. He has a very conflicted look on his face.

INT. ROBBY'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jesse is sitting on the floor studying. He is mentally and emotionally distant. Robby is at the piano playing. She suddenly stops, looks at Jesse. She approaches Jesse, sits in his lap facing him. Jesse can hardly meet her eyes. She kisses him.

ROBBY
 I want to see your place. I want to meet your family and I want to know where you go when you disappear.

JESSE
 Jenny didn't tell you?

ROBBY

Tell me what? What are you hiding from me?

JESSE

I don't live in the same world that you do, Robby.

ROBBY

Do you think that matters to me?

JESSE

Yes. It would if you knew...

ROBBY

I feel so close to you. But then, sometimes when we're together, I feel like you're not being completely honest with me.

Jesse looks down and away, Robby takes his face in her hands, turns him back to face her.

ROBBY (CONT'D)

Jesse, please. What is it?

Jesse takes her in his arms, holds her tight for a moment, then he gently moves her aside.

JESSE

I should go.

ROBBY

Don't do this.

JESSE

Robby, you're the best thing that's ever happened to me. But this is like a dream, it's not even real.

Jesse gathers up his books, stuffs them in his backpack. He goes to the table, grabs his car keys, heads for the door.

ROBBY

(in tears)

What are you doing? You're just going to leave? Can't we talk about this?

Robby follows him to the door.

ROBBY (CONT'D)

Jesse!?

Jesse kisses her desperately.

JESSE

I love you. I love you so much,
Robby. I'm so sorry you ever met
me.

EXT. CHURCH, ROOF - NIGHT

Jesse is looking through the cage at J.J. He takes some seed, passes it through the cage. The bird pecks at the seed. Jesse sees that Lou has water in the cage as well.

JESSE

(to the bird)

You've got it made here, don't you?

Jesse takes the bird out, sits down with it. The bird coos for a moment, then it spreads out its wings and flies away, healed. Jesse watches the bird sailing through the sky for a moment until he can't see it anymore. Then he stands, closes the cage. He climbs down the outside stairs, stores them, starts to walk back to his car.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Jesse is walking to his car when a rough looking BUM steps out from behind a dumpster.

BUM

You got any change?

JESSE

Nope.

Jesse breezes by the guy, keeps walking. He can hear the man's footsteps behind him, the footsteps start to quicken. Jesse turns, he knows the bum is coming for him. The man rushes up on him, Jesse and the bum fight. Jesse is able to fight the guy off, but he is a mess afterwards.

INT. JESSE'S APARTMENT, BATHROOM - NIGHT

Jesse looks at himself in the mirror. His face is a mess.

JESSE

Damn it.

He turns on the water, grabs a towel, washes his face.

INT. LES DAMES CLUB, HALLWAY - NIGHT

Jesse walks into the club. His face is cut and bruised. Roxy sees him, stops him in the hallway.

ROXY
What happened?

JESSE
Got into a fight.

ROXY
Go see Margo.

INT. LES DAMES CLUB, MARGO'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Jesse steps into Margo's office. She looks up, does a double take.

MARGO
What happened to you?

JESSE
Got into a fight.

MARGO
Well, you can't work like that. Go home, put some ice on it. I'll take a look at you in a couple of weeks.

JESSE
Margo, I really need to work tonight.

MARGO
You're not going in front of my clients looking like that.
(beat, with a cunning smile)
I can always give you another advance if you need it. Why don't you come by the house?

JESSE
I can't. I just need to work tonight.

Margo holds up her hand.

MARGO
Answer's no.

Jesse leaves her office, flustered and desperately concerned.

INT. LES DAMES CLUB, HALLWAY - NIGHT

Gaffey is walking down the hallway, sees Jesse's face.

GAFFEY

Tough break, Cowboy.

Jesse gives him a dirty look, keeps walking.

GAFFEY (CONT'D)

Hey man, I'm sorry. I didn't mean it like that. I've had it happen to me a couple times, it sucks. I'm having a party at the house tomorrow night. Lots of people will be there, important people. Why don't you come by. Maybe we can get you some other type of work until your face heals up.

Jesse is hesitant.

GAFFEY (CONT'D)

I know I've busted your chops a little bit, but us guys got to stick together. You're not going to be able to work for a few weeks, so let me help you out. A friend of mine needs a bouncer. You don't need to look pretty to do that. I can introduce you to him tomorrow.

JESSE

That would be great.

ROXY

(stepping into the hallway)
Gaffey, I need you to cover the bachelorette party. Get ready.

Roxy disappears back into the club. Gaffey pulls out his phone, sends Jesse a text.

GAFFEY

That's the address.

JESSE

Thanks, I'll be there.

GAFFEY

See you then.

When Jesse's back is turned Gaffey looks after him with a sinister smirk.

INT. ENTERTAINMENT HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - LATE NIGHT

The house is luxurious and filled with party guests. Men and women check Jesse out as he walks in. Jesse looks around, sees Gaffey with five other GUYS (25-35). Jesse approaches them.

GAFFEY

Hey, you made it. Get yourself a drink. There's wine, beer, champagne and there's some finger foods over there too, all you can eat and drink.

JESSE

(Looking around)
This is an amazing house.

GAFFEY

It's home. Go grab something. I'll find that friend I was telling you about.

Jesse makes his way to the food table. The group of men and women that were checking Jesse out earlier approach Gaffey. They whisper to each other, looking at Jesse. Gaffey nods, smiles. The five thugs walk away from Gaffey and walk down the hallway. Gaffey walks over to Jesse.

GAFFEY (CONT'D)

Hey, my friend wants to meet you.

JESSE

Great!

Jesse follows Gaffey into the hallway.

INT. ENTERTAINMENT HOUSE, HALLWAY - LATE NIGHT

As soon as they are out of sight of the other guests, the five guys jump Jesse, pull him into a bedroom.

INT. ENTERTAINMENT HOUSE, BEDROOM - LATE NIGHT

Jesse fights for his life. The guys eventually overpower him, drag him down to the floor. Jesse continues to struggle as the guys are holding him down.

JESSE

(yelling, struggling)
Get off me!

GAFFEY
 (to the guys)
 Hold him still. Give me his arm.

JESSE
 (yelling, struggling)
 Get the hell off me!

Gaffey finds a vein, injects Jesse with a drug. Jesse continues to fight and tries to escape as they hold him down. They wait a moment until Jesse stops struggling, then they let go of him. Jesse gets up, swings at the air, nearly falls over. Gaffey and the guys laugh.

GAFFEY
 Yeah...he's feeling it.
 (beat, to Jesse)
 Don't fight it. Just enjoy the ride.

JESSE
 What the hell did you give me?

Gaffey grabs Jesse, leads him to the bed.

JESSE (CONT'D)
 What did you give me? Where am I?

Gaffey pushes him on the bed.

GAFFEY
 You're in wonderland.

Through the drug induced haze, Jesse sees several people enter the room. Jesse blacks out.

INT. ENTERTAINMENT HOUSE, BEDROOM - MORNING

Jesse wakes up, sunlight shining on his face. He starts to get up, realizes he is nude. He looks around, sees his clothes on the floor. There is a large wad of cash sitting on the nightstand next to the bed.

INT. ENTERTAINMENT HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Gaffey is in the living room with the five thugs. Gaffey and the thugs laugh when they see Jesse's condition.

JESSE
 What did you do to me?

Jesse's can barely talk. Gaffey laughs again.

GAFFEY

It's all good. Look how much money
you made.

Gaffey nods towards the wad of cash in Jesse's hand. Jesse drops the money, is on Gaffey in a heartbeat, pushes him against a wall, slugs him hard in the face. Within seconds Gaffey's guys are on Jesse. They pull Jesse off Gaffey and hold him while Gaffey punches Jesse hard in the stomach. Gaffey pulls out a gun, puts it to Jesse's head.

GAFFEY (CONT'D)

(wiping blood from his
mouth)

Just making a little money.

Gaffey nods towards the cash on the floor.

GAFFEY (CONT'D)

You got almost a G there, even
after my ten percent. Take your
money and get out of my house. You
want to make more money, come back
next week.

All the guys laugh as Jesse stumbles out of the house.

EXT. STREET - MORNING

Outside the sun assaults Jesse's eyes. He covers his eyes trying to locate his car. He sees the car, stumbles over to it. Jesse sits in the car for a moment until his eyes adjust and his head clears enough for him to drive. He starts the car, pulls away from the curb.

INT. JESSE'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Jesse enters his apartment, closes the door behind him. On his face is a blank, empty stare.

INT. JESSE'S APARTMENT, SHOWER - MORNING

Jesse is in the shower. His eyes closed, he lets the water pour over him.

INT. MEDICAL CLINIC - DAY

Jesse is at the medical clinic sitting in a chair. A NURSE finishes drawing blood.

NURSE

We should have your test results back in 2 to 3 business days. Is there anything your worried about?

JESSE

I just want to know if I've contracted anything.

NURSE

You do drugs, share any needles?

JESSE

No.

NURSE

Have you had unprotected sex?

Jesse stands.

JESSE

I just need my test results.

NURSE

Do you need any condoms or needles? They're free.

Jesse walks out.

INT. JESSE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jesse is at the kitchen table. He has a defeated, dead look in his eyes. He stands, opens a drawer, pulls out the gun Rubin gave him. He sits back down, places the gun on the table in front of him. He stares at the gun for a moment, then he grabs the gun, cocks it, tilts his head back and puts it in his mouth. His phone rings. At first he ignores it, but it keeps ringing. He takes the gun out of his mouth, places it on the table. He is breathing heavy with tears in his eyes when he answers the phone.

LUPITA (O.S.)

Hey, Baby Bear.

JESSE

Hey.

LUPITA (O.S.)

You doing ok? You sound out of breath.

JESSE
I was jogging.

LUPITA (O.S.)
Jogging?
(beat)
Anyway, Jacob got all A's on his
report card and I told him I'd take
him to the zoo if he did. So, we're
going to the zoo. You want to come
hang out with us? It's a nice day.
All the animals should be out.
Jacob wants to feed the giraffes.

Jesse looks at the gun for a long moment.

LUPITA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
You there?

JESSE
Sure, ok.

EXT. ZOO - DAY

Lupita and Jesse are sitting on a blanket, on the lawn. The
kids are running back and forth playing tag.

LUPITA
(calling to the kids)
Don't go too far. Stay where I can
see you.

Lupita looks searchingly at Jesse.

LUPITA (CONT'D)
You doing ok, Jesse? You've been
quiet all day.

JESSE
Just thinking.

LUPITA
About what?

JESSE
Life.

Jesse watches the kids playing. He has come to a deep
realization.

JESSE (CONT'D)
You still have the job opening and
the room?

Lupita's whole demeanor changes. She is ecstatic.

LUPITA
Yes...Yes I do!

JESSE
How soon can I start the job and
move in?

LUPITA
Whenever you want. You just can't
bring that stuff to my house, you
hear me? I can't have that stuff
around my babies.

JESSE
I won't, I promise. I stopped all
the drugs. It's been hard, but I'm
clean.

Lupita looks long and hard at Jesse. She takes his hand.

LUPITA
You're going to be ok, Baby Bear.
You're going to be ok.

EXT. CHURCH, ROOF - DUSK

Lou is sitting in his usual spot feeding the pigeons. Jesse comes up the stairs, sits down next to Lou. He grabs some feed, starts to feed the pigeons too.

LOU
Looks like J.J escaped.

JESSE
He was healed. He flew away, right
out of my hands.

Tears start falling from Jesse's eyes. He tries to wipe the tears away, but he starts to cry. It's gut wrenching, his entire body is wracked with the crying, he can't stop. Lou puts an arm around him. He sits with Jesse in silence as Jesse sobs.

EXT. JESSE'S APARTMENT, PARKING LOT - DAY

Jesse loads a few boxes with his personal items into his car. The superhero toy can be seen sticking out of the top of one of the boxes. His phone rings. Jesse glances at the phone. He takes a deep breath in, looks around.

LUPITA

Is that the young lady you were
telling me about?

(beat)

You going to answer?

Jesse looks at the phone again, shakes his head. Lupita puts
her hands on her hips.

LUPITA (CONT'D)

She cares about you. You shouldn't
treat someone who cares about you
that way.

JESSE

She's better off without me.

EXT. BASEBALL STADIUM - DAY

Lou is sitting at a baseball game with Alex Jensen. Both men
have their team jersey's on with a hot dog and a beer.

LOU

This is gonna be a good one, I can
feel it.

ALEX

Thanks for the invite. It's good to
catch up with you outside of board
meetings. How's Adele and the kids?

LOU

All doing great. Kyle's off to
college. How about you? How's the
family?

ALEX

Doing good, doing good. Both my
girls are in college now. I'm a
little worried about my youngest.
She's dating this new guy I'm not
so sure about. I don't know what
happened, but she's been really
upset. I'd like to get my hands on
him.

LOU

Well, that's one of the reasons I
wanted to get together. Besides
just hanging out with an old
friend, I wanted to talk to you
about that, about Robby.

(beat)

Robby's boyfriend. I know him.

Alex gives Lou his full attention.

INT. LES DAMES CLUB, MARGO'S OFFICE - DAY

Jesse walks into Margo's office. Margo glances up at him.

MARGO

I don't have a check for you.
(looking at his face)
And you still can't work.

Margo goes back to work. Jesse makes no move to leave, Margo looks up again.

JESSE

I'm done, Margo. I just wanted to
tell you in person.

MARGO

What do you mean you're done? I
need you here.

JESSE

I'm done. I quit.

MARGO

(standing up)
I gave you a job when no one else
would hire you. I trusted you in my
home, gave you an advance when you
needed it. This is how you repay
me?

JESSE

I can't do this anymore.

MARGO

Gaffey got himself arrested last
night and I don't know when he's
going to get out. Sam found another
job, Rubin quit yesterday and now
you?

JESSE

I'm done, Margo.

Jesse turns, walks out of the office. Margo Follows.

INT. LES DAMES CLUB, HALLWAY - DAY

MARGO

Jesse!

Jesse keeps walking.

MARGO (CONT'D)
 What happened between us didn't
 mean anything to you?

Jesse doesn't respond. He is almost at the exit door.

MARGO (CONT'D)
 What an ungrateful bastard you are.

JESSE
 (turning to Margo)
 Bye, Margo.

Jesse turns away from her, walks out the door.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING, BATHROOM - DAY

Jesse has on a blue work shirt and a pair of jeans. He is cleaning an office building bathroom. He looks at himself in the mirror, pulls out a couple of pieces of gum and starts to chew. He starts to clean again. His phone rings, he answers.

LOU
 Can we talk? Meet me on the roof?

JESSE
 Sure. I'm off at six.

EXT. CHURCH, ROOF - DUSK

Jesse comes up the stairs, he still has his work outfit on.

LOU
 Sit down, Jesse.

Lou's tone of voice is serious. Jesse sits.

LOU (CONT'D)
 Robby's not doing so good. She's
 really heartbroken.

Jesse gives Lou an incredulous look.

JESSE
 How do you know what's going on
 with Robby?

LOU

When you're a pastor at a church that has three locations, you get to know a lot of people. Robby's dad and I are both on the church's board, I've known him for years. When you said you were seeing someone named Robby, I put two and two together.

JESSE

You should have told her to run like hell.

LOU

Well, I didn't. Because I can see what kind of man you are. You're not defined by your past. Question is, who are you now? What type of man are you now, Jesse? Sounds like Robby is someone special, like the two of you had something wonderful together. That's not something you just throw away.

JESSE

I lied to her about everything. The man she's in love with doesn't even exist. I can't mess up her life anymore.

LOU

What did you mess up? Sounds like things were going well from what I was told. You can't break a woman's heart like that without telling her why.

Jesse closes his eyes, puts his head in his hands.

JESSE

I am so screwed up.

LOU

Aren't we all? You know what I was doing when I met my Adele? I was in a biker gang. Banging, selling drugs. I did time, hard time. That woman's love saved my life. You need to tell Robby everything. Just come clean.

JESSE

She's going to hate me. She'll never want to see me again.

LOU

Let her make that choice.

INT. ROBBY'S APARTMENT, ENTRYWAY - NIGHT

Jesse knocks on the door. Robby answers. He expects her to be angry, but she just looks brokenhearted. She lets him in.

INT. ROBBY'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Robby walks away from Jesse, sits down on the couch. He follows, sits beside her.

JESSE

Robby, the way I feel about you...you completely consume me. I was so afraid for you to know the truth. But I can't go on like this, keeping things from you.

(beat)

Not if we're going to have any type of future.

ROBBY

(meeting Jesse's eyes)

A future?

JESSE

Yes, that's what I want. Would you maybe want something like that with me?

ROBBY

Yes. I would like that.

Jesse doesn't know where to begin. He takes Robby's hand in his, takes in a deep, nervous breath.

JESSE

I don't have a spirit of fear, but of love, of power and a sound mind.

ROBBY

What?

Jesse looks Robby in the eyes.

JESSE

When I was seven...something
happened to me...

Later

Robby is sitting next to Jesse crying. He's all talked out, has nothing left that he can pour out of himself. Jesse steels himself for what he expects to happen, Robby asking him to leave. Instead, she wraps her arms around him, kisses him, pulls him close.

ROBBY

I love you, Jesse James. I love you
so much.

Jesse exhales. He doesn't want to cry, but he can't stop himself. A huge weight has been lifted off his shoulders. He wraps Robby in his arms.

JESSE

I love you too.

INT. LUPITA'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

Several months later

Jesse walks into the living room. Robby, the Gossy Family, Lupita and the kids are all there. The entire house is decorated with birthday decorations. There is a big sign that says "Happy Birthday Jesse".

EVERYONE

Surprise!

Jesse is genuinely startled as everyone jumps out of their hiding place. Robby goes to Jesse, gives him a big hug and kiss.

ROBBY

Happy Birthday.

LUPITA

Everyone come get some food.

Lupita leads everyone to a table that is laid out with Cuban food and a birthday cake. Jesse looks over the food, then at Robby.

JESSE

Best birthday ever.

Robby laughs and they kiss. Lupita approaches him, hands him an envelope from a university.

LUPITA
Well, open it.

Jesse frowns.

JESSE
What if it's a no?

LUPITA
What if it's a yes?

LOU
(as he's fixing himself a
plate of food)
Open it!

Jesse opens the envelope. He looks down, disappointed.

LUPITA
Well, Baby Bear, you try for the
next one.

Jesse looks up, smiles.

JESSE
It's a yes!

He picks up Robby, swings her around. The doorbell rings.

LUPITA
(to Jesse)
Can you get that please?

He bounds away for the door.

INT. LUPITA'S HOUSE, ENTRYWAY - DAY

Jesse swings the door open. Jesse Sr and Rayna are standing at the door. Rayna has a gift and a huge smile on her face. Jesse is floored, speechless. Jesse steps aside, Jesse Sr and Rayna step in. Lou and Lupita are standing in the background. They look at each other with a heartfelt smile, then they both head back to the kitchen.

JESSE SR
Happy Birthday, Son.

Jesse Sr speaks to his son, looking Jesse in the eyes. Jesse Sr. takes Jesse into his arms. Rayna joins the hug.

JESSE SR (CONT'D)
Happy Birthday. I love you son. I
love you.