

CHESTER

Written By
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A grieving woman's trip to a pizza parlor for her nephew's birthday turns into an elaborate pursuit when she's kidnapped by America's favorite pizza rat.

EXT. JOSHUA TREE-DAY

We open on a small, humble-but-not-shitty house, kind of in the middle of nowhere. Silence. A beat.

After a moment, the front door opens and JEANIE PIERCE (34) comes out. She puts her sunglasses on, reaches into her bag for her keys, locks the door. She's not in a hurry, by any stretch. She's got the slow, deliberate air of someone who maybe has some things weighing on their mind and heart. Tucked under her arm is a BIRTHDAY GIFT.

I/E. JEANIE'S CAR-DAY

Jeanie gets into her car and sets the gift on the passenger seat. We see now that it is terribly wrapped: newsprint hastily taped up, a few stickers, a haphazard bow. There's effort here, but the effort is a little off. Jeanie lights a cigarette and starts the car.

Then, she's driving. That's it: just smoking and driving. No fiddling with her phone, no flipping through radio stations. The desert scrolls past.

Jeanie finishes her cigarette, rolls down the window, and tosses the butt into the desert air.

EXT. DESERT ROADSIDE-DAY

The cigarette butt lands, smoldering, by the side of the road. A DESERT RAT approaches, gives it a sniff, scurries away.

EST. CHESTER MOZZARELLA'S PARKING LOT-DAY

Jeanie pulls into the crowded parking lot of CHESTER R. MOZZARELLA'S PIZZA & FUN EMPORIUM, a nostalgic national chain. She parks, grabs the gift, exits the car.

EXT. CHESTER MOZZARELLA PARKING LOT-CONTINUOUS

A RANDOM FAMILY has also just parked. Without intending too, they match Jeanie's stride. They're loaded down with BALLOONS and GIFTS. The MOM smiles at Jeanie.

RANDOM MOM

Are you here for Mikey's birthday
too?

Jeanie hardly gives her a glance.

JEANIE

Nope.

The mom looks shocked at this curt response. How could you not be chatty and cheerful at Chester R. Mozzarella's Pizza & Fun Emporium?

INT. CHESTER MOZARELLA'S-DAY

The inside of Chester Mozzarella's is an absolute melee. The loud jangle of kiddie slot machines, ringing bells, flashing lights, children running around and screaming. Pandemonium.

Jeanie lifts her sunglasses and squints, scanning the room. She finally sees her family at a table in the crowd.

CHAD (45), Jeanie's brother-in-law (a sort of classic charming asshole type) waves her over.

CHAD

There she is!

He gives her a kind of side-hug. Jeanie's sister, BETSY (38), approaches. Betsy is visibly pregnant and wears a cheerful birthday face, though we get the sense that she's a little stressed and is not always in a happy mood. Also at the table are JO and MO, (late 60's), Jeanie's aunts. They're older and a little boring and kinda hard to tell apart.

BETSY

Hi Jeanie. Glad you could make it.

JEANIE

Thanks. (pause) Is Mom here?

BETSY

She's on her way. (indicates the aunts) Jo and Mo have been here for a while though.

Jeanie gives a half-hearted wave. Betsy eyes Jeanie's gift, skeptical.

BETSY CONT'D

That's for Bray, I assume?

JEANIE

Yeah. Is he around?

BETSY

Is he around at his own birthday party? (smirks) Yeah, he's around here somewhere.

CHAD

I think he's over at the racing machine. (to the aunts) Boys, am I right?

Jeanie hands her gift to Betsy then wanders off to find Bray. Betsy holds the gift as though it were combustible or diseased. She catches one of the aunts, Jo or Mo, watching.

BETSY

Classic Jeanie, right?

JO (OR MO)

How is she doing these days? Is she doing any better?

BETSY

I mean, who knows. Jeanie's always been a mess. You know that.

The aunts look at each other and nod.

INT. CHESTER MOZARELLA'S-DAY-CONTINUOUS

Jeanie weaves her way through the chaos, pausing at the JAMBOREE STAGE. Onstage is the Chester Mozzarella House Band, a quartet of animatronic puppets: on keyboards, FRANNY FLAMINGO, dressed in bright pink 80s gear; on bass, GREEN GREENIE, a shaggy-looking monster that is, frankly speaking, rather out-of-place; on lead guitar, HANG DOG HANK, a droopy-joweled basset hound; and on drums, GUISEPPE PREGO, an Italian chef who is a blatant Italian stereotype. Though silent now, they are ready to rock at the flip of a switch.

Jeanie looks out again and spots BRAYDON (6), her nephew, in shorts and beads and a birthday hat. She makes her way towards him through the crowd.

JEANIE

Hey buddy!

Bray stops what he's doing and throws his arms around her. It's very sweet and tender. There's nothing forced or awkward, as when Jeanie interacts with adults.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Happy birthday! You having fun?

BRAY

My birthday's not till Monday but Monday we have school.

JEANIE
Oh yeah, I know. Happy birthday party.

BRAY
Did you bring me a present?

JEANIE
I sure did. We'll open it after cake.

BRAY
Okay! You wanna do race car?

JEANIE
I definitely absolutely want to do race car.

Bray takes her hand and leads her to the race car machine. There's only one open seat.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
You go first and show me how it's done.

Bray climbs into the race car and Jeanie stands behind him. He plunks in some quarters and shouts instructions as he drives.

BRAY
You have to be careful of the red cars! The red cars always crash!

JEANIE
Okay cool! Good to know!

Jeanie watches him play. A somehow quiet moment, despite the surrounding din. At one point she reaches out and smooths his hair.

Bray's game finally ends.

BRAY
You wanna play now or go look at prizes?

JEANIE
Let's go look at prizes. That sounds fun.

INT. CHESTER MOZARELLA'S-DAY-CONTINUOUS

Jeanie and Bray approach the prize display, where DYLAN (16), a terrifically bored teenager, is behind the counter staring at his phone.

JEANIE
Hey, how's it going?

Dylan barely looks up, shrugs.

CLOSE ON the prizes: buckets of toy animals, slap bracelets, slinky-dinks, candy, mood rings. All of it is plastic and cheap. Bray points at a bin of VERY REAL-LOOKING GUNS.

BRAY
Oooh, cool!

JEANIE
Wow, those look like real guns. (to
Dylan) Don't those look like real
guns?

Dylan shrugs again. LIAM (18) rounds the corner. Liam's a real big shot around here. Or anyway, he's the manager.

LIAM
Dylan! Off the phone!

Liam notices Jeanie standing at the counter and tries to recover from this unprofessional moment.

LIAM (CONT'D)
Hello, ma'am. How may we help you?

JEANIE
I think we're just looking for now.
(to Bray) Right?

Bray nods, still marveling.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Yeah I think we're just looking for
now. But um...

She leans closer, lowers her voice.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Those guns look super real.

Liam glances to where Jeanie is pointing and looks embarrassed and extremely horrified.

LIAM

Dylan! What did I tell you about the guns?! Get the other bin! Now!

Dylan kind of huffs and disappears into a storage closet.

LIAM (CONT'D)

(to Jeanie) Ma'am, I am so sorry. These were a mistake order and I asked Dylan to replace them *weeks ago*.

Dylan reemerges, this time with a NEW BIN. He swaps the bin of very-real-looking guns out for a bin of CHEAP PLASTIC WATER GUNS. Liam takes one and holds it out to Bray.

LIAM (CONT'D)

Here you go, young man. This one's on the house. (to Jeanie) Again, I am so sorry. Dylan's still, uh, training.

It's obvious that Dylan is not, in fact, still training.

LIAM (CONT'D)

Please accept a free child's size soda as a symbol of our apology.

He hands Jeanie a CHESTER BUCK, good for one 8 oz soda. Jeanie smiles—it's so lame. Bray hands her his new water gun.

BRAY

Cyu hold this for me?

JEANIE

Sure thing, buddy. (to Liam) Thanks again.

Jeanie tucks the water gun into her purse and she and Bray head back towards the group table. Behind them, we can see Liam chastising Dylan, who obviously does not give a shit.

INT. CHESTER MOZARELLA'S-DAY-CONTINUOUS

Jeanie and Bray go back to the table. More gifts are piled up, more kids have arrived. Jeanie kind of stands around and one of the aunts waves her over. She approaches reluctantly and sits.

JO (OR MO)

Jeanie, how are you sugar?

JEANIE

I'm fine.

JO (OR MO)

You hanging in there?

JEANIE

Yep. Hangin' in just fine.

An awkward pause.

JO (OR MO)

Your mom says you're still out in Joshua Tree. Is that right?

JEANIE

Still in Joshua Tree.

JO (OR MO)

And that's good for you? That feels like the right thing?

JEANIE

What about you two? I heard little Jimbo had to go into rehab. Last time I saw him he was drowning moths in Me-Maw's pool.

The aunts are shocked. Jeanie smiles and stands. Just then KATHLEEN (65) shows up. Jeanie and Betsy's mom, she's loving and protective. Her family is her world. She makes her way around, greeting everyone. When she gets to Jeanie, she wraps her in a big hug.

KATHLEEN

There's my sweetie pie. How's my baby?

Surprisingly, Jeanie does not seem turned off by this sugar speak. She lets herself be hugged. Betsy smiles tightly.

BETSY

She's not a baby anymore, mom. She even brought a gift.

She indicates Jeanie's terribly wrapped present.

CHAD

Hey mom, you want a beer?

KATHLEEN

Sure, Chaddy. That'd be great.

Chad pours a beer for Kathleen, pours another for himself. Betsy scowls and addresses him quietly.

BETSY
She's not your mom.

CHAD
Babe.

BETSY
You always do that. It's so weird.

CHAD
Chill out. We're at a party. Have some fun.

Party indeed. A SUDDEN, LOUD CHEER erupts and spreads across the room. It! Is! Time!

At the sound of music, CHESTER R. MOZARELLA emerges from a door beside the stage.

SLOW AND CLOSE on Chester. He's everything we'd expect from a pizza chain mascot rat: over-sized rat head, checkered pants, suspenders, white gloves, red shoes. He takes his place near the front of the stage and starts making balloon animals. The animatronic band lights up behind him and the kids GO WILD.

Jeanie watches, a little dismissive but also a little transfixed.

KATHLEEN
There he is! The man of the hour.

JEANIE
You mean the rat of the hour.

KATHLEEN
Ha! The rat of the hour. Did you hear that Jo? Mo? The rat of the hour!

BETSY
What do you think the R stands for?

JEANIE
No idea.

JO (OR MO)
It probably stands for rat.

JEANIE
I highly doubt that it stands for rat.

BETSY
Why wouldn't it stand for rat?

JEANIE
Because that would be terrible
marketing.

The adults watch Chester perform. We can tell they're trying to be enthusiastic, for the kids' sake, but it's a pizza rat. It's fucking weird.

KATHLEEN
How much do you think he makes?
Like an hour?

JEANIE
I don't know, but it's definitely
not enough.

Jeanie grabs her purse and stands.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
I'll be back.

KATHLEEN
Where are you going?

JEANIE
Outside.

BETSY
You're going to smoke right now?

JEANIE
Yes, Betsy. I'm going to smoke
right now.

CHAD
Chill out, Bets.

JO (OR MO)
It's very bad for you. Very, very
bad.

JEANIE
What is? Going outside?

JO (OR MO)
Smoking Jeanie. Smoking is very
bad.

THE OTHER JO (OR MO)
Very bad. It will make you sick.

JEANIE

Oh, really? Gosh I had no idea.

Jeanie steps away from the table and makes her way through the crowd towards a back exit.

EXT. CHESTER MOZZARELLA PARKING LOT-DAY

Jeanie exits the noise of the parlor. The sound of games and children follows her, but dies down once the door is closed. She leans against the side of the building and lights up a smoke.

A LONG SILENCE. Occasionally a car passes or a muffled cheer erupts from inside the parlor, but otherwise it's just this moment of quiet: Jeanie smoking, alone.

Suddenly, we hear a finale kind of cheer. The door bursts open and Chester comes out, as if in escape. The door closes, the sounds disappear.

Chester R. Mozzarella, *the pizza rat*, leans against the wall. If he were to make a sound—which he doesn't—it would be a loud, exhausted sigh.

JEANIE

Long day?

Chester ignores her. He might give a slight nod, but it's hard to tell.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Sorry, man. That sucks. You want a smoke?

This time Chester does nod, so Jeanie steps over and hands him a cigarette. She offers her lighter but he waves it off. She steps back to give him space. He doesn't light it, though—just leans against the wall, unlit cigarette in hand.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

You can take it off. I won't tell anyone.

She means the head. Slowly, Chester turns to look at her. CLOSE ON his face as he "stares."

The door bursts open again and now Liam is outside.

LIAM

Dude, what are you doing? Your break's not until five. (sees Jeanie) Oh, hello, ma'am!

(MORE)

LIAM (CONT'D)

I hope you're enjoying your visit.
 (to Chester) If you would, uh,
 please rejoin us back inside,
 Chester. The children are in a fun,
 fun mood!

Liam opens the door to escort Chester back in, notices the cigarette in his gloved hand.

LIAM (CONT'D)

Give me that.

He snatches the cigarette, throws it away, practically shoves Chester inside. The door closes; they're gone.

JEANIE

What a prick.

She finishes her cigarette and goes back in.

INT. CHESTER MOZARELLA'S-DAY

Jeanie returns to the party, once again making her way through the crowd. She sees Chester and nods, but he's working, busy. She goes back to the family table.

KATHLEEN

Oh Jeanie, you missed the most wonderful show!

CHAD

The rat does backflips, Jean!
 Backflips!

JO (OR MO)

Very unexpected.

THE OTHER JO (OR MO)

Very unexpected.

JEANIE

It's kind of sad, when you think about it.

BETSY

What's sad about it?

JEANIE

Nothing. Never mind.

They all watch as Chester performs at a nearby table, doing a series of tricks: "pulls his thumb off," produces a Chester Buck from behind a kid's ear, and so on.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
What's he doing now?

BETSY
He goes to all the birthday tables
and does his tricks.

JEANIE
Ugh. Depressing.

Betsy looks at her, disgusted.

BETSY
You stink like cigarettes, Jean.

JEANIE
Well, that'll happen.

KATHLEEN
Girls.

CHAD
I think it's cool. *Super* cool.

JEANIE
What's cool?

CHAD
This. All of it. I had no idea
Chester Mozzarella's was so cool.

Chad's a little drunk.

BETSY
All right.

CHAD
No, really babe. He's gonna come
over here and *do a backflip*. For
our kid. On his fucking birthday.

Jeanie starts laughing. Betsy glances around, horrified.

CHAD (CONT'D)
Sorry. His friggin' birthday.

JO (OR MO)
I don't think he'll do a backflip.

THE OTHER JO (OR MO)
He probably won't do a backflip.

CHAD
Why wouldn't he do a backflip?

KATHLEEN
I think the backflips are just part
of the big show, sweetie.

Betsy rolls her eyes at "sweetie." They fall silent again,
watching Chester. Chad is thinking.

CHAD
Well, he's gonna do a backflip for
us.

BETSY
Chad.

CHAD
I'm gonna pay him, babe. I'm not
not gonna pay the guy. The rat.
(off her look) Don't worry. I'll
pay him handsomely.

Betsy rolls her eyes again, turns to Jeanie.

BETSY
Would you please go fetch your
nephew? I think his turn is soon.

JEANIE
Sure.

Jeanie stands and goes looking for Bray. She finds him at the
basketball game with his friends.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Hey guys. You wanna come back to
the table? Chester's gonna do his,
uh, thing soon. Or whatever. He's
coming to our table.

BRAY AND FRIENDS
Yay!

The kids run back to the table and Jeanie follows. She leans
over Betsy and grabs her purse.

BETSY
Again?

JEANIE
Yes, again. Jesus.

KATHLEEN
Honey, you'll miss the show.

JEANIE
I'll literally be right back.

She moves to leave the table, just as Chester arrives.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Hey, man. Good luck.

Chester ignores her. He either doesn't remember her or he's in serious work mode. Hard to say.

EXT. CHESTER MOZZARELLA PARKING LOT-DAY

Jeanie's outside, smoking. Through the window we can see Chester performing his tricks for Bray and his friends. Jeanie stares into space, in her own world.

We hear muffled cheers and then see Chad through the window, pulling Chester aside. He talks in hushed tones, takes out his wallet. Chester shakes his head. Chad waves some MONEY at him. Chester refuses. Chad's body language changes. We can see he's being louder now, more belligerent. Betsy tries to intervene. Bray starts crying, pulls at Chad's shirt. And so on.

Jeanie is oblivious to all of it. She stubs out her cigarette, fishes around for a mint, steps back inside.

INT. CHESTER MOZARELLA'S-DAY

Jeanie walks into the parlor and stops short as she notices Chad's little scene. The place is noticeably more quiet as people stare.

CHAD
C'mon man! It's a hundred bucks!
You can do a backflip for a hundred
bucks!

BETSY
Chad, enough!

CHAD
No, Bets. This is bullshit.

KATHLEEN
Chad, sweetie...

Chester stands still, unmoved. Jeanie watches from across the room.

JEANIE

Jesus, Chad.

CHAD

Listen here, Mr. Rat. Mr. *Chester* Rat. I'm gonna give you a hundred dollars and you're gonna do your fucking job, you hear me? You're gonna do a flip or *I'm* gonna flip.

RANDOM DAD

Hey bud, how 'bout we cool down a little bit?

CHAD

I'm not coolin' nothin'. This rat's not the boss of me.

He gives Chester a shove. People GASP. Chester glances down at the spot on his chest where Chad shoved him. Silence. Chad shoves again.

BETSY

Chad! Stop!

Too late. Chester shoves back now, and boom: it's a brawl.

Chad and Chester punch and slap and tumble and roll, knocking over drinks and toppling over chairs. Pizza slices fly, children wail, other dads try to intervene. Chester and Chad slam into the pile of gifts and Jeanie's package goes tumbling to the floor.

JEANIE

(laughing, shocked) Oh my god!

The Chester/Chad tornado rolls itself around, weaving through the games and the crowd. They land at the prize counter, fists swinging, punches landing. They roll behind the display case and now there are weapons, props: slap bracelets, a rubber chicken, bouncy balls. Dylan backs himself against the wall. Liam rounds the corner and gasps.

All of a sudden, Chester ducks and grabs for something, and when he rises again he's got A GUN.

RANDOM LADY

He's got a gun!

JEANIE

Holy shit!

A SCREAM rises up around the room as people register what is happening. They grab their children, dive under tables and chairs.

CHAD
(hands up) All right, man, calm
down.

But Chester's not having it. He waves the gun like *Shut the fuck up*. Chad backs away.

Silence. Chester holds the gun. The only sound are those stupid games.

LIAM
Chester, look. You can have a break
if you want. Just put the gun down.

No. Chester turns the gun on Liam now, then back to Chad. He swivels his head, thinking. He gestures with the gun: Liam, cash register, a Chester R. Mozzarella prize DUFFLE BAG hanging on the wall.

LIAM (CONT'D)
What, you're robbing us now?

Chester points the gun, confirms.

LIAM (CONT'D)
Oh great. That's just great.
(starts filling the bag)
Corporate's gonna lose their minds,
Chester. You know that right?
Corporate's gonna flip.

There's a surprising amount of cash in the register. Liam puts it all in the bag. Chester grabs the bag, points the gun, backs away. He's making his escape.

LIAM (CONT'D)
(to the room) It's okay, ladies and
gentleman. Everything's fine. We're
gonna give everyone five free
Chester Bucks, how's that sound?
Dylan, get these nice people some
Chester Bucks.

Chester bangs his fist on the counter. No Chester Bucks, not yet. He starts to move towards the door...the door where Jeanie happens to be standing.

JEANIE
Dude, are you okay? What—?

Chester grabs her, holds the gun to her neck. Is he taking her hostage? Holy shit, he's taking her hostage!

EXT. CHESTER MOZZARELLA PARKING LOT-DAY

With the bag of cash in one hand and the gun in the other, Chester leads Jeanie out to the parking lot. He gestures: keys, car.

JEANIE
What is happening?

Chester gestures again: keys, car! He puts the gun to her back as she catches on. She leads him to her car. She's starting to panic now. Chester unlocks the passenger door, kind of pushes her inside, gets behind the wheel.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Oh my god, this is happening! Don't hurt me, don't hurt me!

People emerge from the parlor.

KATHLEEN
Jeanie!

CHAD
Fuck you, you fucking rat!

BETSY
Chad!

LIAM
This is not good. This is not good at all.

I/E. JEANIE'S CAR-DAY

Chester peels out of the parking lot. He races through the streets, dodges pedestrians, runs lights. He's actually a pretty good driver—which is surprising, given the giant head.

JEANIE
Slow down! Slow down!

But he doesn't slow down. It's the beginning of the chase.

I/E. INDUSTRIAL OFFICE COMPLEX PARKING LOT-DAY

Chester pulls into an industrial office complex's parking lot, wheels screeching as he parks.

Jeanie clutches at her seatbelt, panting. He's got the gun in his hand. She shows her palms, tries to talk him down.

JEANIE

Okay, all right, listen. I get that your job sucks, I get that. This is not how you wanted things to turn out. I get that man, I really do. But listen, you don't want to do this. Trust me, you don't.

She starts to tear up as the severity of the situation lands.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

This isn't you, this isn't who you are. You don't want to hurt me and I don't want...

Chester is still, listening maybe.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

I have a family, my mom, my nephew. You can't do this to them. They're just people, they're just regular people. My mom can't-

She stops mid-sentence, looks closely at the gun.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Wait. What the fuck?

She grabs the gun from him. He doesn't resist.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Is this that gun? This is that toy gun?

Chester kind of shrugs like "Yes?"

JEANIE (CONT'D)

You stupid idiot! You stupid fucking idiot!

She starts hitting Chester with the toy gun, enraged. He puts his hands up to protect his giant head.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

You kidnapped me with a fucking toy gun?!

This goes on for a minute—Jeanie beating him over the head with the toy, Chester cowering from the blows—until finally she drops the gun, grabs her purse, opens the door.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL OFFICE COMPLEX PARKING LOT-DAY

Jeanie slams the car door, still shouting. Chester is close behind.

JEANIE

I can't believe this. I can't
fucking believe this. Where the
fuck are we? Get me outta here.

She pulls out her PHONE to call a cab, but all of a sudden Chester is in front of her, waving his hands: *Wait, stop, hear me out.*

JEANIE (CONT'D)

No way, dude. You're done. We're
done.

Please, Chester's hands say. Please.

Jeanie stops, confused. Is this rat actually begging her to stay?

JEANIE (CONT'D)

What the fuck, dude?

He's literally on his knees, practically grasping at her.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

All right. Stop. Calm down.

Chester eases up, stands. Jeanie softens, looks at him, shakes her head. A beat. Then, the SOUND OF SIRENS—lots of them—lights flashing on a road across an empty field.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

See that? That's you. They're
looking for you.

He looks over his shoulder, looks back at her, starts to beg again.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

All right. Chill out. Just give me
a fucking minute.

He nods, eases up. She reaches into her bag for a cigarette. Silence.

A long moment: Jeanie smoking, silently debating, mulling it over, and Chester just kind of...waiting.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Oh fuck it. Whatever.

She tosses the cigarette aside and faces him, squarely.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

All right, listen to me you fucking dumb idiot. Listen to me good. If we're gonna do this, we're gonna do this right. And I don't mean robbing a bunch of banks or whatever bullshit. We're going on the lam, and if we're going on the lam we're going on the *fucking* lam. You understand me?

Chester tilts his head. This is a little confusing.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

I mean this isn't some shoot 'em up whatever. We're not gonna hurt anyone, period. You got it? And if we *do* get caught, which we will, because you, sir, are a dumb fuck, understand that I am not sticking with you. I'm not. I'm crying Stockholm and I'm going my own way. You got that? We are not a team.

Chester nods. Got it.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Now take that stupid head off so I can get a look at your dumbass face.

Chester backs away, shaking his head.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

What, the head doesn't come off?

He shakes his head: the head doesn't come off.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Oh, okay, great, that makes perfect sense. I've been kidnapped by a costumed rat who won't take his fucking head off. Cool.

She rolls her eyes, sticks out her hand.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Give me the keys, dummy. We need an actual getaway car.

Chester hands her the keys and she decisively gets behind the wheel. He fumbles into the passenger seat and they're off.

INT. CHESTER MOZARELLA'S-DAY

The police have arrived at the parlor and are getting witness statements. SERGEANT MORGAN and OFFICER BAKER have their notebooks open, pens uncapped. Morgan (male, 50s) is all-business, proud to be in charge. Baker (female, 40s) is his sort-of-sidekick, offering up perspective or pointing out things he might have missed. Outside, through the window, we can see other cops interviewing other patrons.

Betsy, Kathleen, and Chad all sit at their booth, Liam nearby.

MORGAN

You all are the victim's family, is that correct?

KATHLEEN

Please don't call her the victim. Her name is Jean.

MORGAN

My apologies, ma'am. We're gonna do everything in our power to get your daughter back safely. (pause) Who would like tell me what happened?

BETSY

We were here celebrating my son's birthday, and um, my husband got into an altercation with the, uh, rat...

MORGAN

(to Chad) You're the husband?

Chad nods. Betsy goes on.

BETSY

And anyway, one thing led to another...

MORGAN

One thing led to another?

BETSY

Yes, one thing led to another.

Kathleen is shaking her head, horrified. Chad cuts in.

CHAD

The fucking rat wouldn't do his job.

(MORE)

CHAD (CONT'D)

I was like "Hey, rat, do your job,"
and he refused, so I got angry.

MORGAN

Sir, have you been drinking?

CHAD

What?

MORGAN

Have you been drinking?

CHAD

Have I been drinking? At my son's
birthday party? At Chester R.
Mozarella's Pizza and Fun Emporium?
Uh, yeah, I've been drinking.

MORGAN

And where is your son now?

BETSY

He's outside with his aunts. His
great aunts.

Morgan nods, jots something down. Behind him, Officer Baker
pokes at PIZZA TRASH as if it might be evidence.

MORGAN

(to Kathleen) To your knowledge,
ma'am, did your daughter have any
kind of previous relationship with
the suspect?

KATHLEEN

I'm sorry?

MORGAN

Did your daughter know the suspect?
To your knowledge.

KATHLEEN

Did my daughter know the suspect?
You mean the rat? Did my daughter
know the rat?

MORGAN

Yes, ma'am. To your knowledge.

KATHLEEN

No, sir. My daughter did not have
any prior relationship with or
knowledge of the rat that kidnapped
her.

Morgan makes a note and turns to Liam.

MORGAN

And you're the owner of the place?

LIAM

Huh! I wish! Maybe someday I can franchise but for now—

Morgan cuts him off.

MORGAN

So you're what? The manager?

LIAM

Yes. I'm the manager.

Morgan and Baker confer in whispers. Morgan turns back to Liam.

MORGAN

Does this employee have a history of violence?

LIAM

Employee?

MORGAN

The rat? The guy who did the robbing and the kidnapping? The guy we're here about?

KATHLEEN

Oh my god.

LIAM

Uh, yes, sorry. Um no, he does not have a history of violence.

MORGAN

No aggression? No veiled threats?

LIAM

No sir. A general bad attitude and lack of motivation, but not violence, no.

CHAD

Are you gonna catch this guy or what?

Morgan looks at him, annoyed. Continues.

MORGAN

(to Liam)
And how would you describe him?

LIAM

Oh, you know, quiet. Good at
balloon animals. Great at
backflips.

Chad huffs. Morgan shoots him a look.

MORGAN

Physically. How would you describe
him physically?

LIAM

Oh, sorry. I would say somewhere
between five and a half to six feet
tall. It's hard to say with the
head, you know. Kind of skinny, I
guess. Red shoes, checkered pants,
suspenders.

MORGAN

And his face?

LIAM

His face?

MORGAN

Yeah, his face.

LIAM

I never saw his face.

Everyone looks at him.

MORGAN

You never saw his face?

LIAM

No sir.

MORGAN

You mean to tell me that your
employee, who worked here for...
how long?

LIAM

Two years.

MORGAN

You mean to tell me that in all those two years, you never once saw his face?

LIAM

No sir.

KATHLEEN

How is that possible?

Liam shrugs.

LIAM

He never took the head off.

MORGAN

He came to work in the head?

LIAM

Yeah. He came to work in the head.

Chad starts laughing. Betsy slaps at him, shushing.

MORGAN

And you never thought that was strange?

LIAM

I mean, no. I just thought he was in character, is all.

MORGAN

Well what did he look like when you hired him?

LIAM

I didn't hire him. He was already here when I started.

A hush as everyone takes this information in. Morgan turns to Baker, more whispering. After a beat, Morgan turns back to Liam.

MORGAN

All right, well where did this guy live?

LIAM

I don't know.

MORGAN

You don't know? Don't you have his information on file?

Liam ducks his chin, sheepish now.

LIAM
We were updating our system, our
filing, our uh system...

He trails off. Morgan all but rolls his eyes. What kind of a racket is this?

Behind them, onstage, the HOUSE BAND springs to life. Morgan tries to continue but the puppets are pretty fucking loud.

MORGAN
How did he get to work?

LIAM
What?

MORGAN
(louder now) The rat! How did he
get to work?

LIAM
I'm sorry I can't really hear you!

KATHLEEN
Can you turn the machines off?

LIAM
What?

BAKER
IS THERE A WAY TURN THEM OFF?

LIAM
THERE'S A MASTER SWITCH ON THE SIDE
OF THE STAGE!

Baker goes to the stage, looks for the switch. Shouting continues.

LIAM (CONT'D)
(to Morgan) I'M SORRY WHAT DID YOU
ASK ME?

MORGAN
I SAID HOW DID HE GET TO WORK?

LIAM
WHAT?

ALL
HOW DID HE GET TO WORK?!

LIAM
OH! HE TOOK THE BUS!

MORGAN
HE TOOK THE BUS?

Baker locates the switch just as Liam shouts his answer. The shout echoes in the now-silent room.

LIAM
HE TOOK THE BUS! CHESTER TOOK THE
BUS!

I/E. JEANIE'S CAR-NIGHT

Jeanie and Chester drive slowly down a neighborhood block, the headlights cut. This is a nice neighborhood—really nice. Though it's late, we can see expansive lawns, fountains, statues lit from below.

Jeanie leans over the steering wheel, peering out.

JEANIE
Okay, check it out. Most of these are second homes, which means no one's here right now. See the front window lights? They leave one light on to throw people off, but there's no one there. Like in *Home Alone*.

QUICK CLOSE on a series of front windows, a single lamp lit in each. Chester looks at her. *How do you know all this?*

JEANIE (CONT'D)
(shrugs) I used to know someone who lived around here.

She parks the car along a curb and points.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Most of these cars haven't been driven in months. I think if we move quick I can get one started. You'll have to be the lookout. If the surveillance gets tripped we only have a few minutes before the cops are called. Though honestly they're probably busy looking for you. (pause) Which is ironic, when you think about it.

She turns to Chester.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

You ready?

Chester nods, once, then quickly gathers up his things. The two look at each other, their hands on the doorknobs. One, two...go!

EXT. FANCY NEIGHBORHOOD-NIGHT

Jeanie pops the trunk and grabs a WIRE COAT HANGER out of a dry cleaning bag, then she and Chester run up the slope of a lawn. Chester kind of lumbers actually—it's not easy to run in that head.

JEANIE

(whispering) Hurry up!

Chester moves faster, trips. Jeanie groans, helps him up, takes the duffel off his hands. They reach the top of the driveway and duck behind a car. Panting. Looking. Waiting.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Okay, if you see anything just, uh, clap once.

He claps to test it out. The gloves render his clap muted and useless.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Aw, fuck. Okay, just stomp your foot. But loud.

He does. It's actually pretty fucking loud.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Jesus! Not now.

She ducks around the other side of the car. Chester crouches, on the lookout. Jeanie undoes the door with the coat hanger, then crawls into the car to get to work. A beat, then the engine rumbles to life.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Get in! Get in! Let's go!

Chester dives in the car and they're off, screeching down the street.

I/E. GETAWAY CAR-MORNING

The sun rises as Chester drives the getaway car. Jeanie is slumped against the passenger door, her jacket over her, asleep. She slowly stirs awake.

JEANIE
What time is it?

Chester points at the clock: 5:25. Jeanie nods, rubs at her face.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Thanks for taking over last night.
I could barely keep my eyes open.

Chester nods: *Sure thing.* A beat.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Where are we?

Chester points again. A sign reading "Phoenix 75 miles" slides past.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Oh wow. I haven't been to Arizona
in...a long time.

She looks out the window. She's still waking up.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Dude. I'm fucking starving. Are you
hungry?

Chester nods, clutches his belly.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Oh yeah? You hungry? Should we get
you some cheese?

He shakes his head at her stupid joke.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
(in an exaggerated Italian accent)
Mozzarella! Oh, I'm sorry. Is that
offensive to your people? I mean
your species?

He's still shaking his head. Her jokes are dumb.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
What's the R stand for, anyway?
Roger? Chester "Roger" Mozzarella?

He playfully wags a finger. Nope.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Richard? Robert? Ross?...Rhett?
Ooh, I know! Remington! Chester
Remington Mozzarella.

He looks over at her.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
That's it, I guessed it. Chester
Remington.

She's laughing now. It's so dumb.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Aw, dude, there's a McDonald's!

He changes lanes.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Raheem! It's Raheem. I shouldn't be
so Anglocentric. It's definitely
Raheem.

I/E. GETAWAY CAR-MORNING-CONTINUOUS

Chester pulls into the McDonald's parking lot. The sun is now over the hills. Jeanie dances in her seat, excited for food.

JEANIE
(singing) Gonna get some fries!
Gonna get some fries! Gonna get
some chicken nuggets and a thing of
fries! Hey, what are you doing,
that's the drive-thru.

Chester points at his head, like *Hello*.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Oh, right. Yeah that makes sense.

He parks at the far end of the lot.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Okay, what do you want?

Chester makes some eating gestures.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
What's that, like a Big Mac?

He shakes his head, "cracks an egg."

JEANIE (CONT'D)
An Egg McMuffin?

He nods, gestures hot coffee.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Egg McMuffin, coffee. Anything
else?

He shakes his head. She starts to exit but he grabs her arm.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Yes? Did you change your mind?

He reaches into the duffel bag and hands her a bundle of
cash.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Oh no, it's cool. I've got my card.

Chester shakes his head, wags the cash.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Okay, fine.

She pockets the cash.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
All right. Lay low, be cool.
Raheem.

She laughs at her joke, opens the door. Chester leans his
seat all the way back in an effort to hide.

INT. MCDONALD'S-MORNING

Jeanie steps into the McDonald's. She's one of the first
customers, it's so early. Behind the counter, the workers are
engaged in cheerful early-morning banter.

A CASHIER greets Jeanie.

CASHIER
Good morning, welcome to
McDonald's! How can we make you
smile today?

JEANIE
Oh, that's nice! I'm already
smiling. I'll have two egg
McMuffins and a coffee. And I'll
also take a large order of fries
and some hashbrowns please.

CASHIER

You got it! Any pie or cookies today?

JEANIE

Um, sure. I'll take a pie.

The cashier totals her order and Jeanie hands her some cash.

CASHIER

All righty, ma'am. Shouldn't be too long.

JEANIE

Awesome. Thanks.

Jeanie steps to the side to wait. She glances around the room, watches the workers, smiles. It's nice to be on the lam in a McDonald's in Arizona at dawn.

The cashier returns to the counter with Jeanie's FOOD.

CASHIER

Here you go, ma'am. You have a lovely day.

JEANIE

Thank you. You too.

EXT. MCDONALD'S PARKING LOT-MORNING

Jeanie walks out into the parking lot, a bounce in her step. She finds Chester leaned all the way back in his seat.

I/E. GETAWAY CAR-MORNING

Jeanie slides into the passenger seat and sets the coffee in the cup holder.

JEANIE

Wake up, Raheem! Time to eat!

Chester sits up, does a scan for people, leans the seat up. Jeanie hands him his food then quickly starts unwrapping her own.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

(mouth full) Oh my god. Fuck yes.

Jeanie's shoving food into her face, but Chester...isn't. A beat while Jeanie eats and Chester hesitates. She finally notices.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Why aren't you eating?

A pause while she looks at him, confused. He gestures meekly at his head.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Oh Jesus Christ. How're you gonna eat then?

She gathers up her food, opens the door, moves to the back.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Go ahead. I won't look.

A beat.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
I promise, dude. I won't.

She positions her body halfway out the car, facing away from him, and eats. We can see Chester tilt the head up for mouth access, but we can't see his face.

He starts eating, and it's...a lot. Slurping, gobbling, munching. It's loud and gross.

Jeanie eats quietly, giving him his privacy. Finally, they both finish eating. Chester repositions his head, Jeanie burps and crumples her trash.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Dang. I was so hungry.

Chester nods. A beat.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Okay, we should make a plan. Like, what are we doing? What's the plan?

Chester turns a little, all ears.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Where are we going?

Silence. Jeanie crawls into the front seat.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
I guess we could go anywhere, huh?

They're quiet, thinking. Jeanie reaches into her purse for her phone.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
The first thing I have to do is
call my mom—

Chester knocks the phone out of her hand.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Dude, what the fuck?

He gestures: up, out, airwaves.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
What are you talking about?

He points at the 5G on her phone.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Oh shit. They can track us. Fuck.
(pause) Well what am I gonna do? I
have to tell my mom I'm okay. She
probably thinks I've been murdered
by a pizza rat.

Chester points across the street to a Walgreens.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
I don't know what that means,
Chester.

He makes a little square with his hands, "writes" on it,
sends it off.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Oh you mean a postcard? (thinking)
That's actually a really good idea.
(looks at him) Oh, that's why you
gave me cash! They can track my
card. Dang, you're pretty smart for
a rat. Here, you get rid of this
and I'll be right back.

She hands him her phone and moves to exit the car. He grabs
her elbow real quick, gestures.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
What is that? Are you praying?

More gestures: unfolding, refolding.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
A map! Yes! See? Smart rat.
Thinkin' ahead.

Chester does a two-finger salute: *No problem*. Jeanie exits the car and starts to cross the lot. CLOSE ON her phone as Chester shatters it on his knee.

INT. WALGREENS-MORNING

Jeanie enters the Walgreens and puts her sunglasses on. She's more aware of other people now. She grabs a MAP off a display, goes to the POSTCARDS. CLOSE ON the rack as she spins: *Welcome to the Copper State, Wish You Were Here, We Make a Prickly Pear*.

I/E. GETAWAY CAR-MORNING

Jeanie slides back into the car, a Walgreens bag in hand. She rifles through the bag.

JEANIE

Okay, let me just fill this out
real quick.

She finds a pen in her purse, flips a postcard over, starts writing.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

(reads as she writes) Dear Mom, I
wanted to write and let you know
that I'm okay. I'm (thinks) shocked
but safe. Chester is feeding me
well. Please kiss Bray for me. I
love you, Jean.

She reads it over again.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Okay, this postcard is weird and
kinda makes no sense. Whatever. I
guess I should send one to my work
too.

She pulls out another postcard, begins to write.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Hey everyone, for a number of
reasons I won't be into work for
awhile. It's not a huge deal but I
need to use up all my vacation
days. I hope this note finds you
well.

She shrugs and fishes a sheet a stamps from the bag, puts some on, glances down and sees the phone rent in half.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
That's a bit much, don't you think?

Chester shrugs: *Sorry*. Jeanie unfolds the map.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
All right, let's figure out what
we're doing.

CLOSE ON the map as Jeanie points to where they are, traces
where they might go.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
I think we should go to the Grand
Canyon. You ever been to the Grand
Canyon before?

Chester shakes his head.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Okay, then we're definitely going
there. Where else? New Mexico? New
Mexico is pretty rad.

Chester reaches out, points to the map.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Salt Lake City? What the fuck is in
Salt Lake City?

Chester points again, a little more adamantly.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Okay, fine, we'll go to Salt Lake
City. And then what, Zion?

Chester lifts his hands: *Yeah, sure, Zion, whatever*.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Okay, the Grand Canyon, Salt Lake
City—of all places—then Zion. Fun!

Chester nods, starts the car.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
(points) Drive me past that mailbox
real quick. (picks up the broken
phone) See ya later, sucker!

Jeanie tosses the phone halves out the window. CLOSE ON the
shattered phone, skittering across the pavement.

CUT TO:

INT. BETSY AND CHAD'S HOUSE-MORNING

Kathleen is seated at Betsy and Chad's kitchen table. Betsy sets a cup of coffee in front of her, sits across from her with her own mug. They're both very under-slept.

BETSY
How'd you sleep?

KATHLEEN
Terrible. I'm worried sick.

BETSY
It's horrible. The whole thing is horrible.

A beat. Kathleen cups her hands around her mug, blinking, stressed.

BETSY (CONT'D)
That rat could be doing any number of things to her. Horrible, terrible things. We don't know. We don't have any idea.

KATHLEEN
Bets.

BETSY
Sorry. (pause) I mean, it's true. But...yeah, sorry.

KATHLEEN
Did the sergeant call yet?

Betsy looks at her phone.

BETSY
Nothing. You?

Kathleen shakes her head.

BETSY (CONT'D)
He said he would call. We have to trust them right now.

Kathleen kind of rolls her eyes.

BETSY (CONT'D)
And you stay here as long as you want. We're all in this together.

Bray comes running into the kitchen: chipper, excitable. He is, after all, only six.

BRAY
Did they find Auntie Jeanie yet?

BETSY
No, honey. Not yet. Is your papa
awake?

BRAY
Papa's still snooooooring!

He runs a loop around the table, does a butt scratch, has an
idea.

BRAY (CONT'D)
Mama! Could I open my gifts?

BETSY
Let's just open one right now.
We'll do the rest when papa's
awake.

BRAY
Yay!

He runs into the other room. Betsy looks at Kathleen, shrugs.
Bray comes back with Jeanie's crappily-wrapped gift.

BETSY
This is the one you want to open?
Out of that whole big pile of nice
gifts?

Kathleen shoots her a look.

BETSY (CONT'D)
Fine, open it.

Bray tears at the paper, hoists the gift into the air.

BRAY
A ant farm!!

BETSY
What?

BRAY
C'we set it up?

Betsy sighs, runs a hand over her brow.

BETSY
Let's do that later when papa wakes
up. Go play on mama's phone.

She hands Bray her phone and he runs off. Betsy shakes her head. Kathleen looks at her: *What's the problem?*

BETSY (CONT'D)

An ant farm, Mom? She got him an ant farm. (off Kathleen's look) I'm pregnant with a six-year-old. I don't need to look after a fucking ant farm.

She stands and slams her empty mug into the sink.

BETSY (CONT'D)

It's like she does fucking it on purpose.

KATHLEEN

Honey...

BETSY

Whatever. I'm going to wake up Chad.

She storms out. Kathleen lets out a massive sigh, looks at her phone. Nothing.

INT. POLICE STATION-MORNING

Sergeant Morgan stands at the front of a small conference room as his OFFICERS trickle in, a cup of coffee in his hand. Baker stands at his side.

MORGAN

All right, fuckos. Come on in and take a seat. We got a big one today.

Baker leans close and speaks to Morgan *sotto voce*.

BAKER

I'm not sure 'fuckos' is appropriate.

MORGAN

What do you mean?

BAKER

I just...it may not be appropriate.

MORGAN

It's a term of endearment. My sergeant called us fuckos all the time.

BAKER

Yeah, but it's a new era. I just think...

MORGAN

All right, all right, I got it. That's fine. (to the room) Come on in, um, everyone.

Morgan looks at Baker: *Better?* Baker smiles and nods. The other officers settle and Morgan begins his speech.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

So, as some of you may have heard, we had an incident yesterday at a local pizza shop. My thanks to those of you who were there helping with crowd control. Here's what we know and what we're gonna do.

Baker flicks the lights off and a POWERPOINT starts up. The first slide: A photograph of Chester in what is obviously a promotional photo or a headshot.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

Yesterday at about two pm, there was a robbery and kidnapping at Chester R. Mozzarella's Pizza and Fun Emporium.

A sort of excited chatter rises up.

OFFICER #1

Oh my kids love that place!

OFFICER #2

Isn't it awesome? We do all our birthdays there. It's just great wholesome family fun-

Morgan clears his throat. The room goes quiet again.

MORGAN

Unfortunately, our suspect is Chester himself.

A few GASPS of shock. Not Chester!

OFFICER #1

Sir, are we sure about that?

MORGAN

Yeah, Jones. We're sure. It's pretty hard to confuse this guy with anyone else.

He clicks to A SECOND SLIDE, this one surveillance footage: A still of Chester and Chad tumbling around the arcade.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

At about two pm, an altercation broke out between Chester and one of the patrons. As you can see, it escalated to violence pretty quickly. Chester then robbed the establishment and took one of the patrons hostage.

A THIRD SLIDE shows Chester with the gun, ushering Jeanie out the door.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

The manager claims he's a decent worker with no history of violence, but that seems implausible. I smell a rat.

A chuckle ripples around the room and it takes Morgan a moment to catch on. He laughs too.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

Huh, oh yeah, a rat. That's good.

He clicks to A FOURTH SLIDE. It's a photo of Jeanie wearing sunglasses, not exactly smiling. It's not a great photo at all.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

Our victim's name is Jeanie Pierce-though I should note that the mom does not want us to refer to her as the victim, so let's remember that when we speak with the family. The mom says she's a tough cookie and can handle her own, but obviously we need to get her home.

A beat while the officers let all this sink in, some of them taking notes and so on. Someone raises their hand.

OFFICER #3

Sir, what can you tell us about the suspect? Name, age, race, height...what do we know?

MORGAN

That's where it gets tricky. We don't know much. Apparently he doesn't take the head off, so we don't have a whole lot to go on.

Quiet. This is strange news.

OFFICER #2

Sir...did you say that he doesn't take the head off?

MORGAN

He does not take the head off. No one's ever seen his real face.

Utter silence. A beat. Then the room erupts into chatter at this surprising revelation.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

Listen up, everyone! This is actually good news. If it's true that he doesn't take it off then he'll be easy to find. Not a whole lot of mascot rats runnin' around.

More talk as the officers take all this in. Finally someone else raises their hand.

OFFICER #4

Sir, are you sure we shouldn't call the feds for this one?

Morgan turns suddenly irritated.

MORGAN

Fuck the feds. We're not calling the fucking feds. I didn't bust my ass for twenty-five years to call the feds. This *our* guy, *our* jurisdiction. We call the feds only if they cross state lines. Got it?

Everyone nods. It's clear Morgan doesn't get mad often, but boy when he does! Baker whispers something to him, and then a beat while Morgan calms himself. When he speaks again, he's more collected.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

Johnson, Garcia: I want you two to put out a call to Riverside and Kern counties, tell 'em to keep an eye out for this guy.

(MORE)

MORGAN (CONT'D)

Angstrom and Wallace, see if that bus has surveillance footage and get me the tape.

The other cops nod and jot down their roles, etc.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

All right, fuckos. Let's get to work.

INT. CHESTER MOZARELLA'S, LIAM'S OFFICE-MORNING

Liam sits in a small, cramped office at the back of the pizza parlor. It's no bigger than a storage closet, with a crappy desk, piles of overstock, empty pizza boxes, etc. There's nothing about the room that is even remotely respectful or boss-like.

He's got the phone pressed to his ear, listening intently, clearly stressed.

LIAM

...yes, ma'am...no, ma'am...It was Dylan, ma'am. Have you met Dylan?... No, I suppose you wouldn't have...Yes, no, I understand...of course...Yes. (a long pause while he listens, cringing) Ma'am, I just want to assure you that I fully intend...oh okay, bye.

Whoever was on the other end has hung up. Liam stares at the phone with genuine angst. A beat. Suddenly, he stands and throws open the door.

LIAM (CONT'D)

Dylan! Dylan where are you?!

INT. CHESTER MOZARELLA'S-DAY-CONTINUOUS

Liam charges down the hallway and into the dining room, which is a total mess. He finds Dylan behind the counter, staring at his phone.

LIAM

Dylan! That was corporate! They're pissed, I knew she would be pissed. They're fucking pissed, dude. Dylan! God dammit, pay attention. Our jobs are on the line here.

Dylan looks up and blinks once, long and slow, before sliding his phone into his pocket.

LIAM (CONT'D)
Get some trash bags, start cleaning this place up. We need to be up and running for service, pronto.

Dylan sighs and goes down the hall for cleaning supplies.

LIAM (CONT'D)
(shouting after him) Look alive, man! Look alive!

Dylan pokes his head back around the corner.

DYLAN
Can I put on some music?

LIAM
What? Dude, no, focus. Actually yeah, that'd be pretty cool, thanks.

Dylan disappears again and Liam looks out over the parlor. Utter and absolute disarray. He sighs and grabs a SLAP BRACELET from a bin, absently slaps it on his wrist as he wanders towards the stage.

Suddenly, LED ZEPHELLIN begins to play on the speaker system, LOUD. Liam stands before the silent animatronic puppets, as if in a trance, slapping the bracelet on his wrist over and over again. Behind him, Dylan shoves trash into a bag.

I/E. GETAWAY CAR, OUTSKIRTS OF THE GRAND CANYON-AFTERNOON

Jeanie pulls to the side of the road. Chester is asleep in the passenger seat. She shakes him awake.

JEANIE
Raheem...we're here...wake up
Raheem.

Chester slowly rouses and rubs his fists over his mascot eyes. It's absurd.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
We made it the Grand Canyon. Did you have a nice little nap?

Chester sits up. The Grand Canyon!

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Okay, listen up, we're not in the park just yet. We have to pay and go through the gate, so you need to hide in the backseat. (off his "look") I know, dude, it's not ideal. But we need to start being more careful. We can't take any risks.

Chester nods and crawls into the backseat. Jeanie covers him with whatever she can find—the duffel bag, some trash, her coat.

I/E. GETAWAY CAR, GRAND CANYON—AFTERNOON

Jeanie pulls into a short line of cars waiting to enter Grand Canyon National Park.

JEANIE

It's not that busy. That's good.

She slowly advances the car up to the window. A super friendly female PARK RANGER (50's) welcomes Jeanie with a huge smile.

RANGER

Good afternoon, miss! Welcome to Grand Canyon National Park!

JEANIE

Oh, um, thank you.

RANGER

And how are you today? You ready to behold one of nature's most majestic wonders?

Jeanie's smile is strained. She wants to get through the gate, not make friends.

JEANIE

Yes, ma'am.

RANGER

Wonderful! And have you been to Grand Canyon National Park before?

Jeanie suppresses a grimace.

JEANIE

Just once, a long time ago. How much are tickets?

A look passes over the Ranger's face, echoing the mom in the Chester Mozzarella parking lot from earlier. Who wouldn't want to sit in their car at the gates of the Grand Canyon engaging in idle chitchat?

RANGER

Well, are you camping or just here for the day?

JEANIE

Just here for the day, thank you.

The Ranger glances into the backseat.

RANGER

You sure? It looks like you might be camping.

JEANIE

No, ma'am. Just here for the day.

The Ranger pauses.

RANGER

Because you know, a lot of people say they're just here for the day, but then they try to camp out. And that's illegal. That's a federal offense.

Things are now, awkward.

JEANIE

No, ma'am. I promise I'm just here for the day. I'm driving up to Salt Lake City tonight.

The Ranger claps her hands together.

RANGER

Salt Lake City! What a majestic, beautiful town! Sounds like a great road trip you're on!

She hands Jeanie a day pass and takes her cash. Jeanie pulls away the instant the transaction is done.

RANGER (CONT'D)

(calling after her) Have a wonderful day at our wonder of the world!

Chester pops his head up: *Dude, what the fuck?*

JEANIE

I know, I'm sorry! I didn't mean to mention Salt Lake. I got nervous. I'll be more careful, I swear.

I/E. GETAWAY CAR, GRAND CANYON PARKING LOT-AFTERNOON

Jeanie parks the car at the far end of a mostly empty parking lot. She surveys the scene.

JEANIE

Okay, check it out. Everybody's going that way towards the sky walk or whatever. So let's go down that other trail.

Chester slumps a little, disappointed.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Yeah, dude, I know. I want to go on the sky walk too. But it's not gonna happen this trip. Maybe think about that next time you kidnap someone and insist on wearing a giant fucking costume head.

EXT. GRAND CANYON TRAIL-AFTERNOON

Jeanie and Chester make their way along a forested trail, sort of ducking in a way to obscure themselves. It's ridiculous. Thank god there's no one else around.

Finally, they round a small bend and there it is: THE GRAND MOTHERFUCKING CANYON. They stop in their tracks.

JEANIE

God damn. It's so incredible.

They move slowly towards a lookout, silent, transfixed. A beat while they take it in. A slower, more spiritual moment for them both.

Suddenly, a SHOUT. A DAD (30s) and his KID (5) have rounded the corner. The dad has a BIG CAMERA slung around his neck.

KID

Daddy, look! It's Chester Mozzarella!

The kid points and the dad looks shocked. Jeanie and Chester freeze.

DAD

Well I'll be darned, Timmy! It sure is!

What luck! The dad and kid, both of them beaming, approach Jeanie and Chester. Jeanie glances around, acts quick.

JEANIE

Good afternoon, young man. Are you a fan of Chester Mozzarella's?

KID

He's my favorite pizza rat!

JEANIE

He's everyone's favorite pizza rat!
(starts to usher Chester along)
Well, you two have a cheesy day!

But the Dad stops them, too excited to end this conversation.

DAD

Why are you here? Is someone having their party here? Is Chester available for parties?!

JEANIE

Uh, no sir, we were just here taking some promotional photos. For Chester's uh...upcoming national parks campaign. A pizza in every park!

Chester does ta-da hands.

DAD

Ha! A pizza in every park! You hear that, Timmy? A pizza in every park.

The dad smiles, excited for this chance encounter...but then his brow wrinkles.

DAD (CONT'D)

Where's your equipment?

JEANIE

Equipment?

DAD

Your camera. For the promotional photos.

Panic crosses Jeanie's face. A beat, and then her resourcefulness kicks in.

JEANIE

You know, it's the darndest! Fell into the canyon, right over the side.

The dad lifts his camera, smiles.

DAD

Perhaps I can be of help.

JEANIE

Oh no, that's okay. We were just-

DAD

Go on, Timmy! Go stand by the world's best pizza rat and your old man will take some pictures.

KID

Yay!

The dad proceeds to snap some photos of the trio. Jeanie smiles awkwardly but, you know, Chester's a pro. He's all poses and enthusiastic high fives. Finally, Jeanie cuts off the antics. She reaches into her purse for the FREE SODA CHESTER BUCK from the party and hands it to the kid.

KID (CONT'D)

Oh wow! A free Chester Buck!

DAD

Wow, son! That's so cool!

JEANIE

All right, well you two have a cheese-tastic day!

She starts to lead Chester away. The dad calls after them.

DAD

Where should I send these photos?

JEANIE

(yelling, hurrying along) Just send them to Chester Mozzarella at Gmail dot com.

DAD

Gmail? Did you say Gmail?

JEANIE

Yes, Gmail, god dammit.

But the dad doesn't hear the dammit part. Jeanie and Chester hurry back to the trail, the dad and kid now just out of sight.

DAD O.S.
Wow, Timmy! What a lucky day!

KID O.S.
I love Chester Mozzarella!

EXT. GRAND CANYON PARKING LOT-DAY

Jeanie hurries Chester to the getaway car. The majesty of the Grand Canyon has evaporated, fast.

JEANIE
Get in, let's go, let's go!

I/E. GETAWAY CAR, GRAND CANYON PARKING LOT-DAY

Chester dives in the backseat and covers himself with the coat and trash. Jeanie peels out of the parking lot, the ranger calling after them as they pass through the gate.

RANGER
Thank you for visiting America's most majestic canyon! Be sure to come again!

Jeanie slams her hand against the roof of the car, exuberant.

JEANIE
Dude! I'm such a good actor!

Chester looks up from the backseat.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
We're on the motherfuckin' lam!

CUT TO:

I/E. GETAWAY CAR-A FEW HOURS LATER

Chester's in the passenger seat now and Jeanie's driving. It's not that late but she struggles to keep her eyes open.

JEANIE
I'm fucking exhausted. Are you exhausted?

Chester nods.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
 Being on the lam is exhausting. I
 gotta sleep.

Chester indicates an exit, MOTEL SIGNS glowing on the
 horizon.

ESTABLISHING-MOTEL PARKING LOT-EARLY EVENING

Jeanie pulls into a motel parking lot. It's definitely not a
 luxury hotel, that's for sure.

INT. MOTEL MAIN OFFICE-EARLY EVENING

Jeanie steps into the motel office, pushing her sunglasses up
 onto her head. She can barely keep her eyes open. She blinks
 and rings the service BELL. The MOTEL MANAGER (65, been there
 done that) emerges from the back. He's clearly in the middle
 of dinner: chews, wipes his mouth with a paper napkin. We can
 hear a TV BLASTING SPORTS in the other room.

MOTEL MANAGER
 How many nights?

JEANIE
 Sorry?

MOTEL MANAGER
 How many nights? Are you staying?
 You're at a motel? Presumably you
 want to stay?

JEANIE
 Oh, yeah, I'm sorry. One night.

MOTEL MANAGER
 How many are you?

JEANIE
 How many *am* I?

MOTEL MANAGER
 (impatient now) How many are you?
 How many adults, how many children,
 you got grandparents with you,
 buncha friends, how many are you?

JEANIE
 No, just me.

MOTEL MANAGER

No boyfriends? People always try to sneak in their boyfriends. It's twenty extra each boyfriend.

JEANIE

No boyfriends.

He takes her word for it. She hands him some cash and he starts to write out a receipt, glancing back towards the game. He slides a key across the counter, starts to exit.

MOTEL MANAGER

(over his shoulder as he goes) Room 209, enjoy your stay.

I/E. GETAWAY CAR-EARLY EVENING

Jeanie climbs back in the car, starts gathering her things.

JEANIE

Well that guy's a real charmer. I don't think he's gonna bother us though. (with a sudden idea) Dude, you wanna order a pizza? Just like eat pizza and watch stupid motel tv? Doesn't that sound fun?

Chester nods—it actually does sound fun. Jeanie's exuberant now. Pizza! A shitty motel! Stupid tv!

INT. MOTEL ROOM-ABOUT AN HOUR LATER

Jeanie emerges from the bathroom, wrapped in a robe and towel, drying her hair.

JEANIE

This shitty motel has robes. Who knew?

She glances over and sees TWO PIZZA BOXES sitting on the table. Her whole face lights up.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

The pizzas are here! I love it when you order a pizza and then you step into a shitty motel shower and when you come out they've arrived. That's heaven. (to Chester) They just left them outside the door like I asked?

Chester nods. *Just like you asked.*

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Genius. We've got this system down,
Raheem.

She high-fives Chester, grabs a slice of 'za, dives onto one of the beds. Chester stands and grabs his own slice, then glances around. The room is pretty small.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Go eat in the bathroom if you're
gonna be weird about the head.
(picks up the remote, mouth full of
food) I'll find us a show.

Chester nods: *That makes sense.* He goes into the bathroom and shuts the door. Through the door, we can hear the sounds of Chester's LOUD, GROSS EATING.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
(laughing) Bro, you have got to
learn some manners. It's so gross.

But she's not actually grossed out. She's elated. She's in a robe eating pizza clicking through channels on a motel tv. This is the life.

INT. BETSY AND CHAD'S HOUSE-MORNING

It's morning and Kathleen is still at Betsy's, in the same clothes, exhausted. Her daughter's been missing for almost two days.

Betsy comes in the kitchen, chipper, as if everything is fine.

BETSY
Morning, mom! How'd you sleep?

Kathleen looks at her. Betsy makes an oops face.

BETSY (CONT'D)
I thought maybe you'd feel better
if you got some sleep. I guess you
didn't get any sleep.

KATHLEEN
No, Betsy. I did not get any sleep.

Chad comes in the room: boxers, open robe. He scratches at his exposed belly, yawns.

CHAD

Morning, everyone. How'd everybody sleep?

BETSY

We didn't sleep, Chad. We're very worried about Jean.

She looks at Kathleen: *Right?* Chad goes over and places his hands on Kathleen's shoulders.

CHAD

You know what, mom? They're gonna find her. I promise. That's their job.

KATHLEEN

What if they don't find her, Chad? Women go missing all the time.

CHAD

No, mom. They're gonna find her. I got a good feeling about this.

He steps into the kitchen, starts pulling ingredients from the fridge.

CHAD (CONT'D)

Who wants a Bloody Mary? Mom, you want a Bloody Mary? Bets?

BETSY

It's eight o'clock in the morning, Chad.

CHAD

Perfect! Bloody Mary o'clock!

Kathleen sighs. She is visibly irritated with them both. She glances at her phone: still no calls.

KATHLEEN

I think I'll head home. Take a shower and grab some things.

Chad pours Vodka, munches celery.

CHAD

You can shower here. We got a nice shower.

Betsy makes a face: *Let her go, I need a break.*

CHAD (CONT'D)
 (to Kathleen) You promise you'll
 come back?

KATHLEEN
 Of course I'll come back.

Bray runs into the room.

BRAY
 Mommy! I spilled my poop!

BETSY
 What does that mean, you spilled
 your poop?!

BRAY
 I spilled my poop!

BETSY
 God dammit.

She looks over at Chad: *A little help here.* Chad shrugs and
 sips his drink.

ESTABLISHING-RITE AID PARKING LOT-MORNING

Jeanie steps out of a Rite Aid, her arms loaded down with
 bags, a huge smile on her face and a real pep in her step.
 She crosses the lot towards the car.

I/E. GETAWAY CAR-MORNING

Jeanie slides into the driver's seat, starts rifling through
 the bags. She pulls out a corny souvenir t-shirt, some
 deodorant, new sunglasses. She changes her shirt, puts on
 deodorant, goes through the bags—she's excited.

JEANIE
 Okay, Raheem, I've got supplies!
 Snacks on snacks on snacks!

Chester pops his head up from the backseat. *Ooh, snacks!*

JEANIE (CONT'D)
 Get on up here, you crazy bastard.

Chester crawls into the front seat as Jeanie starts to drive.
 She turns on the radio and scans.

NPR STATION

...the Dow Jones up 3000% onto a bull market NASDAQ S and P five hundred...

JEANIE

Okay, fantastic. They're not reporting on us yet so I think we're good. Let's find some tunes.

She scans the radio more, chomps on a Red Vine. Chester peers at the map. Finally Jeanie lands on the exact right station with the exact right song: SILLY LOVE SONGS by Wings.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Oh my god, I love this song! (bops her head) It's so corny!

Jeanie starts to sing along and now Chester is bopping his head too. They're in full road trip mode. The song grows louder as we slip into a **MUSIC MONTAGE**:

INT. POLICE STATION-MORNING

Morgan sits at his desk and an officer comes in and hands him a video tape. CLOSE ON the tape's label: BUS SECURITY CAM.

INT. CHESTER MOZARELLA'S-MORNING

Liam pulls the chain on a neon "Open" sign, does quick prayer hands. *Please let this go well.*

INT. BETSY AND CHAD'S HOUSE-MORNING

Betsy nags Chad about laundry while he lays scratching himself on the couch. Bray blows bubbles and dances around.

I/E. GETAWAY CAR-MORNING

Jeanie and Chester rocking out.

VIDEO-GRAINY BLACK AND WHITE

Security video from the bus: Chester rides the bus to work, his giant head poking out in a sea of passengers.

EXT. KATHLEEN'S HOUSE-MORNING

Kathleen steps out of her car and goes to the mailbox. She finds Jeanie's postcard inside, reads it quickly, emotionally clutches it to her chest.

EXT. CHESTER MOZARELLA'S BACK ALLEY-MORNING

Dylan steps out into the alley with a bag of trash, hoists it into the dumpster. A half-eaten slice of pizza falls to the ground.

I/E. GETAWAY CAR-MORNING

Jeanie sings, fully feeling the song...but then there's a shift, however slight. Something very small changes in her face. She seems to be thinking or remembering, it's hard to say.

EXT. CHESTER MOZARELLA'S BACK ALLEY-MORNING

A rat emerges from beneath the dumpster and starts gnawing the fallen pizza slice.

PRELAP—The sound of a DOOR BEING KICKED OPEN interrupts the music and ends the montage as...

INT. POLICE STATION-MORNING

The door to Morgan's office is kicked open, the room suddenly swarmed. It's the Feds! Officer Harris (40s, commanding, a real Bridget Everett type) heads up the squad.

HARRIS

Wake up, fuckos! The real cops are here!

FEDERAL OFFICERS take over the room. They sweep files into boxes, open and close drawers, take down posters, uncap and sniff pens. All very rapid and no-nonsense. They wear blue jackets emblazoned with "FBI." Morgan sits behind his desk, appalled, and Baker stands nearby.

MORGAN

God dammit. What are you doing here?

HARRIS
Your little rat friend has crossed
state lines. This is our
investigation now.

MORGAN
When did they cross state lines?

HARRIS
Got a call this morning, fucko.

Harris holds out her hand and is given a VIDEOTAPE by one of
the officers.

HARRIS (CONT'D)
May I?

She doesn't wait for a response, just ejects the bus video
and pops in the new tape.

THE NEW TAPE shows Jeanie and Chester peeling out of the
Grand Canyon parking lot.

HARRIS (CONT'D)
Park ranger says they're headed to
Salt Lake City.

BAKER
What are they planning to do in
Salt Lake City?

HARRIS
That's what we're here to find out,
my friend. (extends a hand for a
shake) Officer Harris, FBI.

BAKER
Baker. Nice to meet you.

They shake hands then Harris gestures to Morgan: *Give me your
seat.* Morgan stands. What choice does he have? Harris sips
from his coffee, makes a face.

HARRIS
Yuck. Good god, man. What is that,
decaf?

She reaches in her pocket, hands him a wad of cash.

HARRIS (CONT'D)
Why don't you make yourself useful
and get some real coffee for my
boys here.

MORGAN
Listen, this is—

HARRIS
Morgan, we don't have time for
this! You want to catch this guy or
not?

MORGAN
Of course I want to catch—

HARRIS
All right. Then let's get these
fellas some fuel. Amiright fellas?

OTHER OFFICERS
Yeah!

Morgan is clearly frustrated, but what's he gonna do? It's
the FBI.

MORGAN
What do you want? Like a mocha?

HARRIS
(dialing on his desk phone)
Just my regular: half caramel, half
vanilla latte, espresso heated to
100° with soy milk and a caramel
drizzle on top. Two sugars on the
side.

MORGAN
Yeah, okay.

Morgan starts to exit as Harris shouts to the room, the phone
to her ear.

HARRIS
Look alive, fellas! We've got a rat
to catch!

We hear a LOUD STAPLE GUN as one of the officers hangs up a
poster. CLOSE ON the poster: AMERICA'S MOST WANTED...and
below that, Chester's face.

I/E. GETAWAY CAR—AFTERNOON

It's a few hours later and the fun of a road trip has started
to wear off. Chester's driving and they're playing a game,
though it's obvious they've been at it awhile.

Chester holds up one hand and rolls his wrist.

JEANIE

Movie.

Chester holds up two fingers.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Two words.

Chester holds up two fingers again, taps them on his other arm.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Second word.

Chester spreads his hand, indicating the landscape.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Desert? Arizona? Oh, is it *Raising Arizona*?

Chester nods.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Good one.

They're both clearly bored.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Mind if we take a break?

Chester shakes his head: *Not at all*. Jeanie starts scanning the radio again. She goes through a few stations, then stops at NPR. What she hears is shocking.

NPR ANNOUNCER O.S.

...the popular pizza chain, on Saturday afternoon. Ms. Pierce, an advertising rep from Joshua Tree, California, is believed to be safe, though authorities have confirmed that they've crossed state lines.

JEANIE

Holy shit, dude! That's us!

Chester turns up the radio, leans forward.

NPR ANNOUNCER O.S.

...eye witnesses at the scene.

The program goes to an interview with the park ranger.

PARK RANGER O.S.

Well, who comes to visit America's most glorious canyon alone? And who only visits *for the day*? When she said she was going to Salt Lake City and didn't even *mention* Dead Horse Point State Park, well, that's obviously suspicious.

The program goes now to an interview with the dad.

DAD O.S.

I was skeptical the moment I saw them. They said their camera went over the edge of the canyon, which I found hard to believe. And then the woman tried to buy us off with Chester Bucks, which of course is a thing only a fugitive would do—

Chester shuts the radio off and screeches to the side of the highway. He and Jeanie sit in silence, stunned.

JEANIE

Oh my god, dude. Oh my god.

Chester turns the car off and puts his head in his hands.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

This is, like, official. We're officially on the lam.

Chester shakes his head, but Jeanie grows excited. She starts nudging him.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Dude! We're officially on the lam! Have you ever been *officially* on the lam before?!

Chester looks up. She cannot possibly be serious. But she is. She reaches into the glovebox for the map, starts to unfold it.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Okay, well obviously we need to come up with another plan. They know about Salt Lake City so we can't go there anymore—

Chester sits up. He taps his finger firmly on the map: Salt Lake City.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
 Dude, they know about Salt Lake
 City. We can't go to Salt Lake
 City.

Chester, again: Salt. Lake. City.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
 Do you understand how much of a
 risk that is? They literally just
 said on national news—

Salt. Fucking. Lake. Fucking. City.

Jeanie pauses, and when she speaks again her tone is serious,
 grave.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
 Chester.

He doesn't respond.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
 Dude. We can't go there. We just
 can't.

Chester slices his hand through the air: *Unacceptable.*

JEANIE (CONT'D)
 Bro, do you understand how
 supremely idiotic that is?

Chester sits stone-still, arms crossed, unmoved.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
 Chester, we can't—

But he cuts her off, smacking his hand on the dash.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
 God dammit. Fine. But listen to me.
Listen to me.

She waits until she's sure he's listening.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
 To remind you, I'm not sticking
 with you if we get caught. And
 we'll probably get caught because
 they just announced our itinerary
 on the fucking news.

Chester looks at her, points again at the map.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
 Yes, Salt Lake City, I get it. But
 do you hear me? We are not a team.

He waves a hand like *Yeah, got it*, then opens the door and starts making his way around the car.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
 What, I'm driving now?

She crawls over to the driver's seat, mumbling to herself.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
 Fucking god damn Salt Lake City.
 What the fuck is in Salt Lake
 City...?

Chester gets in the passenger seat and closes the door. Jeanie starts the car, bewildered, upset. Chester grabs a Red Vine and shoves it up under his mask. They continue their drive.

INT. BETSY AND CHAD'S HOUSE-DAY

Betsy's in the living room with Bray, setting up the ANT FARM. She doesn't look too happy about it, but Bray is thrilled. Out the window, we see Chad in his robe, a Walkman clipped to its belt, as he drinks a beer and waters the lawn with a hose.

Kathleen enters without knocking, Jeanie's postcard in one hand and an overnight bag in the other. It's clear she's been crying.

KATHLEEN
 Bets, honey. Look what came in the
 mail.

Betsy takes the postcard, flips it over, reads it.

BETSY
 That's great, mom.

KATHLEEN
 "That's great?"

BETSY
 I mean it is. It's great.

Her tone suggests it's just, like, whatever.

KATHLEEN

Betsy, your sister is *alive*. This is incredible news.

BETSY

I know, mom. That's why I said it's great.

Kathleen stares at her. Betsy ignores her, fiddles with the ant farm.

BETSY (CONT'D)

I swear to god, if ants...

KATHLEEN

Braydon, honey, would you please go help your daddy water the lawn?

BRAY

How comes? Is you two gonna fight?

KATHLEEN

Oh, no, honey. We never, ever fight.

She kisses Bray on the head and he runs outside. We see Chad spray him with the hose, Bray squealing with delight.

Kathleen turns to Betsy.

KATHLEEN (CONT'D)

What is it? What's going on?

BETSY

Nothing's going on. I'm worried about my sister, that's all.

Kathleen gives her a look. What a load of horseshit.

BETSY (CONT'D)

Can't I be worried about my sister? Who, by the way, left the price tag on this little ant farm and forgot to give me a gift receipt just in case, oh I don't know, maybe I decide I don't want fucking ants in my house.

Betsy slams part of the ant farm down. She starts folding laundry—there's never not a load of laundry.

BETSY (CONT'D)

She's always been like this, mom. And you know it, too.

(MORE)

BETSY (CONT'D)

She has to make everything about herself. It's fucking insane. It's pathological, is what it is.

Kathleen stares at her daughter. This is nothing new, but she is angry and hurt and disappointed. A beat.

Finally, Kathleen stands and gathers her bag.

KATHLEEN

I'm gonna lie down for a bit.
Please let me know if you want me to make dinner. I'm happy to help.

She starts to go upstairs, but pauses halfway.

KATHLEEN (CONT'D)

You know, Bets, you may not believe it, but you'll come to find that there's room enough in your heart for two.

BETSY

(still irritated)
Two what?

Kathleen indicates Betsy's pregnant stomach then points towards Bray outside.

KATHLEEN

Two people that you love more than anything in the world.

Betsy is stunned into silence. Kathleen disappears up the stairs.

CUT TO:

INT. CHESTER MOZARELLA'S-DAY

Chester R. Mozzarella's Pizza and Fun Emporium is starting to fill up for the day. Despite Liam's best efforts, it's not going that well. Lots of stressed-out parents and weepy kids.

Liam is desperately trying to fix a TICKET MACHINE when AN ANGRY PARENT taps him on the shoulder.

ANGRY PARENT

You the manager?

Liam has a SCREWDRIVER in his mouth, is clearly stressed.

LIAM
Yes, sir, how can I help you?

ANGRY PARENT
The ticket machine is broken.

LIAM
Yes, sir, I'm working on it.

ANGRY PARENT
No. The other one.

The parent points to where a DIFFERENT TICKET MACHINE has caught fire. Liam rushes over, grabs someone's soda, pours it on the flames.

RANDOM GUEST
Hey, my drink!

Liam hands the guest a CHESTER BUCK, starts to make his way back to the first machine.

RANDOM GUEST (CONT'D)
This Chester Buck is expired!

Liam frantically looks around for Dylan, sees him behind the counter, gestures for help to no avail. He hands out more Chester Bucks to appease the hoards, then goes to Dylan.

LIAM
Dylan! I think you need to do Green Greenie, just for today.

DYLAN
Fuck that, no way.

LIAM
Dylan! This is an emergency!

DYLAN
No way, man.

LIAM
What do you want? Money? Is it money you want?

Liam goes to the register and takes out some bills, shoves them at Dylan.

DYLAN
Forty bucks? Dude.

Liam grabs more cash. This time Dylan nods in approval.

DYLAN (CONT'D)
Fine. But I want Saturdays off.

LIAM
Saturday is our busiest day!

DYLAN
Yeah. I know.

Dylan disappears around the corner. Liam swipes at his brow.
SOME OLDER KIDS approach the prize counter.

OLDER KID 1
These prizes suck.

OLDER KID 2
Yeah, these prizes suck dick.

LIAM
Young man, please watch your
language. This a family
establishment.

OLDER KID 1
This family establishment sucks
dick.

LIAM
All right, why don't you boys—

A MOTHER and her VERY UPSET CHILD approach the counter.

MOTHER
Excuse me, are you the manager?

LIAM
Yes, ma'am. How may I help—

MOTHER
My son here is very upset. He's
been waiting to see Chester all
day.

LIAM
Well, ma'am, you know, Chester's
not feeling that well but guess
what?!

Liam puts on his best surprise face and gestures towards the
hall. Nothing happens.

MOTHER
What does that mean?

Her kid starts to cry. Liam pokes his head around the corner.

LIAM
(whispers loud) Dylan!

Suddenly Dylan emerges from around the corner, dressed in a raggedy Green Greenie costume. He doesn't do much, just kind of moves his hands.

LIAM (CONT'D)
Green Greenie is here!

MOTHER
Who the fuck is Green Greenie?

LIAM
(deflated) It's Chester's best friend.

The kid starts to wail now. OTHER PEOPLE pipe in.

RANDOM DAD
We came for Chester! Not Green Man!

LIAM
His-his name is Green Greenie.

RANDOM DAD 2
We want Chester!

LIAM
I'm sorry sir, Chester's not here today.

RANDOM DAD 2
(starts up a chant) We want
Chester! We want Chester!

The CHANT takes over, filling up the room. Liam has no idea how to appease this angry crowd. One of the older kids runs up and kicks Green Greenie in the shin.

ESTABLISHING-WALMART PARKING LOT-NIGHT

Jeanie emerges from a Walmart, loaded down with bags. She crosses the parking lot towards the car. The lot is bustling with activity. Are people partying at Walmart? A guy runs by Jeanie with no pants on, laughing and drunk.

I/E. GETAWAY CAR-NIGHT

Jeanie slides into the car, throws the bags on the passenger seat. She goes through the bags while she talks.

JEANIE

This Walmart is crazy. There's like a party or something.

We hear someone CHEER and the sound of BREAKING GLASS. Chester stays hidden in the backseat. After a beat he pops up like *Boo!*

Jeanie doesn't respond. It's clear that by now this is an old joke.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Listen, I'm sorry about earlier. I mean, I'm not *sorry*, but you know—I shouldn't have cursed so much.

Chester lays a hand on her shoulder: *It's all good.*

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Anyway, check this out.

She pulls a POLICE SCANNER out of the bag, then starts to load it with BATTERIES.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

I think this'll be good for Salt Lake City. For the record, I still think going there is a fucking idiotic idea, but maybe this will help.

Chester crawls into the front seat but quickly looks around.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

I wouldn't worry about it. No one's paying attention to us.

Chester takes her word for it. Jeanie turns on the scanner, scrolls through some STATIC until she gets a clear channel.

SCANNER

320, do you copy?...Copy...We got a potential 502 out on McClintock. You nearby?...320 copy that. On our way.

The scanner goes quiet as the call ends.

JEANIE

We'll just keep this thing on. Stay a step ahead. Now we just need a clean getaway car and we should be good for awhile.

Someone in the lot shouts a drunken "Woo hoo!"

JEANIE (CONT'D)

That's right. Woo hoo.

Chester nods, pats her shoulder: *Nice work.*

SCANNER

859, we've got a 507 at the Walmart. Repeat, 507 at the Walmart...859, did you say 507?...507, clerk called it in. They're gettin' rowdy over there...Thanks, Dena. We're on our way.

JEANIE

Fuck. We gotta go.

She starts shoving things back in the bags. Suddenly, cop cars peel into the lot, blocking the entrance to the store.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Shit! Get down! Get down!

Chester scrunches himself up and Jeanie crouches in her seat. The place is swarming!

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Fuck. Fuck.

POLICE LOUDSPEAKER

Sir, it is illegal to be out here with no pants. Sir.

Jeanie sits up.

JEANIE

Wait a minute.

She looks around. No one is paying them any attention at all. People are shouting and hollering, the cops are chasing the pantsless guy around.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Holy shit. This is actually perfect. Chester!

Chester looks up from where he's awkwardly crouched on the floor.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
They're literally so distracted
right now. This is the perfect time
to steal a car. It's fucking
serendipity, dude.

She starts the car and pulls out of the spot, making her way towards the other end of the lot.

I.E. GETAWAY CAR-CONTINUOUS

Jeanie slowly pulls the car up alongside another car, way out in the far end of the parking lot. Towards the store entrance, police lights flash, there's lots of commotion. People are shouting and partying and defying orders.

EXT. WALMART PARKING LOT-CONTINUOUS

Jeanie steps out of the car and quietly closes the door. She goes to Chester's side, taps on the glass. He rolls down the window.

JEANIE
Bro, you gotta come be lookout.

Chester shakes his head. No way.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
It's in all the heist movies,
Raheem. Hiding in plain sight. It's
totally a thing. Remember *Catch Me
If You Can*? Leo? Tom Hanks?

Chester nods reluctantly. He remembers Leo and Tom Hanks.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
You gotta trust me on this one,
okay?

Chester looks at her. A beat. Finally: *Okay*. He steps out of the car.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
You know what to do if you see
someone.

He claps his hands twice. A muted, pointless sound.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
No, your foot, remember.

Chester nods. Stomps once, loud.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Shh! Only if someone comes.

She looks around, quick.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Okay. Let's do this.

Jeanie grabs the coat hanger out of the trunk and goes to the driver's side of the second car. She gets to work while Chester stays on lookout. We can't really see her while she works.

Suddenly, A GUY appears out of nowhere.

GUY
Hey!

Chester freezes in place. Jeanie hears the "Hey," pokes her head up over the side of the car.

A long, tense silence. The man stares at Chester, his eye twitching.

GUY (CONT'D)
Ain't you that cheese man? That mozzarella fella?

Absolute stillness. CLOSE ON Jeanie as we see her mouth "Fuck." The man moves towards Chester, one slow step at a time. He's now inches from Chester's face.

Then:

GUY (CONT'D)
Well I'll be god-damned! It *is* you!
You're my fuckin' favorite pizza rat of all time! You mind if we take a photo?

We realize now that the guy is very, very drunk. He takes out his PHONE and Chester poses next to him. Jeanie gets back to work and the car roars to life.

JEANIE
All right, let's go, let's go!

She opens the trunk of the first car, starts throwing their things into the new one. The drunk guy looks around, confused.

GUY

Wait, what?

Chester shoves past the guy, accidentally knocking him to the ground. He stoops to help him up.

JEANIE

Come on!

Chester dives in the car, tossing some CHESTER BUCKS out the window as they peel off.

GUY

Thanks man! Sweet!

The guy drunkenly scoops up the Bucks. There's no way he's going to remember any of this in the morning.

Jeanie playfully slaps at Chester as they race away.

JEANIE

You're supposed to stomp your foot,
Raheem!

CUT TO:

"CRAZY TRAIN" by Ozzy Osbourne plays as we slide into another MUSIC MONTAGE.

INT. CHESTER MOZARELLA'S-DAY

A series of CLOSE UPS of the Chester Mozzarella House Band:

CLOSE ON Green Greenie's mouth as Ozzy shouts "All aboard!"

CLOSE ON Giuseppe Prego for the drum beats.

CLOSE ON Green Greenie again for "Ay! Ay!"

CLOSE ON Flamingo Franny for that random party spinner sound.

CLOSE ON Hang Dog Hank as the guitar starts.

We scale out to see the band in whole, moving robotically from left to right, their mouths opening and closing in herky-jerky animatronic fashion. Kids dance in front of the stage.

I/E. GETAWAY CAR-DAY

Jeanie driving and singing "Crazy, but that's how it goes..." Chester bopping along, the police scanner between them on the seat.

INT. POLICE STATION-DAY

Morgan's office, buzzing with FBI activity. He opens two SUGARS and pours them into Harris' latte. She gives him a high-five.

INT. BETSY AND CHAD'S HOUSE-DAY

Chad picks up Bray and spins him in the air while Betsy shouts and throws laundry at his head.

INT. BETSY AND CHAD'S HOUSE-DAY

Kathleen, in the guest room, carefully places Jeanie's postcard into the frame of a mirror.

I/E. GETAWAY CAR-DAY

Jeanie drives, rocking out, singing. Chester plays air guitar. CLOSE ON Jeanie's foot as she puts the pedal to the metal.

INT. CHESTER MOZZARELLA'S-DAY

Liam cleaning up some kid's puke while the kid's family looks on. Dylan, dressed as Green Greenie, stands nearby, not really doing anything. The kid pukes some more.

VIDEO-GRAINY BLACK AND WHITE

More security video of Chester on the bus. Some teenagers get on and start fucking with him, smacking at his head. He remains stoic, calm.

I/E. GETAWAY CAR-DAY

Back on Jeanie and Chester for the guitar solo. Chester drums on the dashboard with two Red Vines, Jeanie head-bangs. We go CLOSE ON Jeanie's open purse to catch a glimpse of the TOY GUNS. Then, we go big and wide to take in the majesty of the open road as the **music montage ends.**

I/E. SECOND GETAWAY CAR-NIGHT

Chester and Jeanie have arrived in Salt Lake City. Chester drives.

JEANIE

Chester, I don't know dude. I don't feel so good about this.

She looks a little pale, clutching the scanner in her lap. Chester ignores her, preoccupied. He drives slowly, swiveling his head back and forth as he looks for an address.

Finally, he over and cuts the lights.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Whose house is this?

He ignores her still. He grabs the duffel bag of cash and pulls out two big stacks, shoves them in the glovebox. He starts to exit the car.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Are you sure about this?

Chester does two fingers at his eyes and then points them, the international sign for *You're the lookout*. Then he's gone.

Jeanie looks like she might throw up. She lights a cigarette and turns up the scanner. A man and a woman go back and forth, clearly flirting.

POLICE SCANNER

...What are you gonna have for dinner tonight? Have you decided yet?...I don't know. Any ideas?...Oh, I've got some ideas.

JEANIE

(to the scanner) God. Get a room.

She peers through the windshield. She can see Chester on a porch across the street, talking to someone through a screen door, but she can't see much else. The screen door opens and Chester passes the duffel bag through, but then it closes again.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Who is that? His girlfriend?

She leans forward and squints. Chester is nodding and gesturing, and we gather that the conversation has grown tense. The vibe on the scanner has also changed.

POLICE SCANNER

All units alert! Repeat, all units alert! Chester Mozzarella has been spotted in Salt Lake City. Repeat: Chester Mozzarella has been spotted in Salt Lake City!

JEANIE

Oh shit! Shit!

She stubs out her cigarette and rolls the window all the way down.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

(whispering loud) Chester!

He doesn't hear. Jeanie looks around, panicking. She claps her hands, twice. She clears her throat. She whistles...nothing. God dammit. Finally, wincing, she honks the horn. Chester looks over but turns back, ignoring her.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

(yelling now) Chester! We have to go!

Chester puts a hand up like *Yeah, I'm coming*. He opens the screen door and tries to step into the house, but the person he's talking to pushes him away. He falls back onto his ass, stands—he's upset now. He bangs his fist on the closed door.

A DOG BARKS and a neighbor's porch light comes on. This is not good. Jeanie exits the car and runs up the house's steps.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Chester, we have to go. Now!

She grabs his elbow and starts pulling him towards the car. He struggles, visibly upset.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Chester, please!

She's in a panic, pushing, scrambling. She gets him to the car and shoves him into the passenger seat, runs to her side, dives in, turns the key, starts to pull away...but then sees a SMALL HEAD peering out the front window. It's the head of a child, but SHAPED DISTINCTLY LIKE A RAT. Jeanie slams on the brakes.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Who is that? (turns to Chester)
Chester, who is that?

POLICE SCANNER

We just got a call, looks like they're on Cloverfield. All units to Cloverfield!

JEANIE

Fuck. Fuck!

With no other choice, Jeanie peels away.

I/E. GETAWAY CAR, BUSINESS PARKING LOT-NIGHT

Minutes later, Jeanie screeches into an empty business parking lot, much like the one earlier. She throws the car into park, angry, panting.

JEANIE

What the fuck was that?

She brandishes the scanner.

POLICE SCANNER

...ten four. A neighbor pointed us to a house but the owner won't say much. Waiting for word from the Feds...

JEANIE

They were right on us, Chester!

She's a little crazed, but Chester is unmoved. He sits slumped and staring out the window.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Hey! I'm talking to you! Can't you see I'm talking to you?

Nothing. Chester doesn't move.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

That's it. God dammit. Out of the car. Out of the car!

She throws open her door and goes to his side.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

I said out of the fucking car!

She opens his door and practically yanks him out. He lets himself be yanked.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Do you know how close they were?
You almost got us killed!

She shoves him to shake him out of it.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Whose house was that? (pushing)
Whose fucking house was that?

But Chester is unresponsive. Jeanie pushes him again, slaps at his head. This goes on for a bit: Jeanie slapping, Chester being slapped around.

Unable to help herself, she lifts a foot and stomps on his toe. It's not hard, but still. Chester snaps out of his daze. He grabs his foot and hops cartoonishly around.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Oh come on. That wasn't even that hard.

He looks up at her—he's had enough. He reaches out and gives her a push.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
You're gonna push me? You're gonna fucking push *me*?

She shoves him, hard, and he shoves back.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
You think you can take me? You're a rat, for god's sake.

She punches at his head, his gut. Chester steps away and she lunges at him, but he escapes her by doing a BACKFLIP.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Fuck you. You're just showing off.

He does another backflip, then another. Jeanie runs towards him and hits him in the head.

This goes on for a bit, the two of them slapping and punching each other like siblings might, but Jeanie grows increasingly agitated. Her slaps get harder, her punches more focused. Her anger transforms into rage.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Fuck you. Fuck you! You're keeping secrets from me? No secrets! No secrets, god dammit!

Chester steps back. He realizes she's not play-fighting anymore.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
 You're gonna kidnap me? And put my
 life at risk? And then fucking *keep*
secrets? We almost died, you dumb
 fuck! We almost died!

Now she's really going at it. She's hitting Chester with real force. He puts his hands up, shields himself, backs away.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
 Who the fuck was that? Your son?

Chester is backing away, terrified. He stumbles and falls, his hands up over his face as Jeanie punches and slaps.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
 Was that your son?

Chester, hands up, shakes his head: *No, not my son, no.*

JEANIE (CONT'D)
 Who the fuck was it, then? Your
 little brother?

Chester: *No, no.* Jeanie looms over him, slapping, unhinged.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
 Who, then? Who? Your nephew?

Chester gives a nod. *Yes, my nephew, yes.*

Jeanie's goes rigid, her face white. *Good god. He has a nephew too?*

She slowly backs away. This revelation is entirely too much.

A long beat. The only sound is the police scanner, crackling in the car.

I/E. SECOND GETAWAY CAR-NIGHT

A few hours later. Jeanie pulls into a motel parking lot and parks. The police scanner is on the seat between her and Chester.

POLICE SCANNER
 ...looks like they got away for
 now. We put out a call to other
 jurisdictions, see what comes
 back...

Jeanie turns the scanner off. The mood in the car is quiet, somber. They've been humbled by their fight.

JEANIE

I think we need come up with another plan. Probably have to skip Zion.

Chester nods. They sit quietly for a bit.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Let's get some rest, yeah?

He nods again. Jeanie reaches into the glovebox for some cash and steps out of the car. As an afterthought, and for the first time, she checks her purse to make sure she has the TOY GUNS.

INT. MOTEL OFFICE-NIGHT

A BELL DINGS on the motel office door as Jeanie steps in. RONNIE (early 60s), the clerk-unhurried, kind- sits at the desk reading a magazine. Behind her, a television plays the weather report on mute. She looks up as Jeanie comes in.

RONNIE

Evening, miss. How's your night going?

Jeanie shrugs: *Not great*. Ronnie nods.

RONNIE (CONT'D)

Tough out there, huh?

This is a different vibe from the earlier motel clerk.

RONNIE (CONT'D)

You want a coffee while we get you set up?

Jeanie glances around-she probably shouldn't stall. But she's tired, it's late, this lady seems nice.

JEANIE

Sure. That'd be great.

Ronnie goes to a little COFFEE CART. She gestures: *Cream? Sugar?* Jeanie nods, looks at the TV.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

(casual, subtle)
Anything big on the news?

Ronnie looks at her over the ridge of her glasses, hands Jeanie the coffee.

RONNIE
Just some light drizzle, nothing to write home about.

Jeanie nods. Is there tension? Ronnie pulls out a LEDGER.

RONNIE (CONT'D)
Okay, so how many nights would you like to stay, sweetie?

JEANIE
Just one, thanks.

RONNIE
(writes) One night, you got it. How about a king bed? That'll be a nice rest.

JEANIE
Two queens is fine, if you have it.

RONNIE
Two queens. (writes) And how many are you then?

JEANIE
Just me.

Ronnie arches her eyebrows. *Two queens for one person?* Jeanie tries to recover.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
I like to spread my stuff out.

Ronnie slowly turns her head and looks out towards the parking lot. There, completely visible inside the car, Chester fiddles with the scanner. She turns back to Jeanie.

Quickly, Jeanie reaches into her purse and pulls out one of the guns. It's the water gun. Ronnie puts a hand up.

RONNIE
(calmly) No need for violence, sweetie. I'm not gonna turn you in.

Jeanie holds the gun, unsteady, unsure what to do.

RONNIE (CONT'D)
You ever heard of Rot Gut Dan?

Jeanie shakes her head. Ronnie gestures towards a drawer: *May I?*

JEANIE

Okay, but, uh, no funny stuff.

Ronnie reaches into the drawer for a PHOTO. She lays it on the counter.

CLOSE ON the photo: Ronnie and Rot Gut Dan, a sort of stomach-shaped mascot, at a Grand Canyon overlook. They look happy, in love. The photo is probably thirty years old.

RONNIE

He was my own outlaw mascot. Rot Gut was the face of Septo Bismol before Pepto came on the scene. They blew up overnight, completely took over. Ran all the smaller antacids out of town. Rot Gut lost his job, his house...everything. Had no choice but grand theft. Feds shot him outside of Fort Worth. (pause) I loved him so much. It's not easy to love that kind of man.

She looks up at Jeanie, who's still holding the water gun. It's a little absurd.

RONNIE (CONT'D)

Is it?

JEANIE

I'm not in love with Chester.

RONNIE

Well you love him, dontcha?

Jeanie looks outside. Chester now has the car door open and is shaking rocks out of his shoe.

JEANIE

Yeah. I guess I do.

RONNIE

Put the gun away, sweetie. I'm on your side.

Jeanie does as she's told. Ronnie hands her a KEY. Jeanie tries to pay but Ronnie refuses.

RONNIE (CONT'D)

This one's on the house. Room 209, second floor.

JEANIE

Really?

Ronnie winks, nods.

RONNIE

If the cops show up I'll call and say your pizza's here.

JEANIE

Okay. (pause) Thank you.

She steps towards the door to leave, but pauses on the way out.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Why are you—?

Ronnie puts a hand up, stopping her.

RONNIE

You don't have to question niceness, sweetie. You can just let it be.

Jeanie nods, humbled by this woman's kindness. She steps into the night.

INT. MOTEL ROOM—A FEW MINUTES LATER

Jeanie and Chester enter their room, exhausted. They put their things down and Chester lays on one of the beds. Jeanie takes her cigarettes out of her purse.

JEANIE

I told you she would call? Did I tell you that part?

Chester nods.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

About a pizza, like if the cops show up or whatever.

Chester nods again and gives a kind of half-hearted thumbs up. Jeanie looks at him with tenderness and concern.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Okay. I'm gonna go smoke. You want anything?

Chester lifts a hand: *I'm good*. Jeanie moves towards the door, then stops. She's thinking something through.

She turns to him, slowly.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
 Chester...I feel like I should tell
 you something. No secrets, I guess.
 (off his "look") I, um...I was
 actually married for awhile. For
 like five years.

Chester sits up a little, listening.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
 Her name was Anne. (pause) She was
 amazing.

Jeanie begins to share, and as she does she slowly makes her way to the other bed. While she talks, she'll grab a **PILLOW** and fall into remembering. **Gauzy memories** will appear, intercut with the motel room and Jeanie's words.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
 I actually met her at an 80s party.
 (laughs) I hate that stuff but this
 friend of mine really wanted to go,
 so I went.

INTERCUT Jeanie arriving for a party in the neighborhood where she and Chester stole the car. She's dressed like Miami Vice and has **NOTICEABLY SHORTER HAIR**.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
 It was like something from a movie,
 where you just like walk in and
 there she is across the room, you
 know?

INTERCUT Anne (20s), in full Cyndi Lauper apparel, sipping a drink and bopping her head.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
 I've never been more grateful for a
 stupid party in my life. (laughs)
 It was like there was my life
 before Anne, and my life after. We
 got married at the beach...San Elijo,
 do you know it?...And then she
 started her business and we bought
 a house and it was...perfect. It was
 everything.

INTERCUT their wedding, their home in Joshua Tree, Anne surrounded by boxes and invoices and Jeanie helping her out.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
But then she got sick.

INTERCUT Anne, ill, coughing in bed.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
And then she got more sick.

INTERCUT Anne in the hospital, Jeanie by her side.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
And then that was it. She was gone.

INTERCUT Anne's wake, visible tension between Betsy and Jean.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
And of course Betsy like weirdly
made it about herself, which at the
time was like *Fuck you*. But now
it's like...I get it. Everyone was
freaking out. Thirty-two is a
really young age to die. It's like
Anne's death brought everyone's
mortality right out into the open.

INTERCUT Jeanie alone, crying in the Joshua Tree bed.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Anyway, now Betsy and Chad and
everyone else is like "Jeanie, it's
time to get over it. Jeanie, it's
been three years. It's time to move
on." And I just want to fucking
scream. I want to be like fuck you,
and fuck you, and fuck you. You
have no fucking idea.

Jeanie on the motel bed, the pillow clutched to her chest,
shaking her head. She takes a deep breath.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
I know they're just trying to help.
I know that. But sometimes...you just
don't want help, you know? You just
want to sleep.

She turns to Chester now, who's been listening this whole
time.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Anyway, I guess I don't mind being
kidnapped. And I don't mind that
we're being chased, and I don't
mind that we're on the lam.

(MORE)

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Because the alternative, the other option or whatever, is just me sitting in my house being sad. And I don't want to be sad. I'm tired of being sad.

She lays down, and the exhaustion and the sorrow set in. A beat as she breathes, and then she is asleep.

Chester looks at her then carefully stands. He raises the blanket to cover her then goes towards the bathroom. A door leads to the shower, but there's a counter out here. He steps into the small room and we can hear the SHOWER being turned on. The door is slightly ajar.

A beat, and then the door opens a little. We can't see anything of Chester but his hands as he reaches through the door and, onto the counter, sets down the MASCOT HEAD. Another beat. The door opens again and out come the GLOVES, tossed, landing on top of the head.

Jeanie remains asleep. She doesn't see a thing.

EXT. MOTEL POOL AREA-EARLY MORNING

Jeanie is up early, sitting in a chair by the motel pool. On the table: a cup of coffee, her cigarettes, a postcard, a pen. She picks up the postcard and begins to write.

As she writes, we catch glimpses of the quiet morning: a bird on a branch, trucks passing on the highway, a piece of trash moving in the breeze.

JEANIE V.O.

Dear Betsy, I know this is stupid. I know it's probably really dumb. I shouldn't put big things on a postcard.

She pauses, thinking.

JEANIE V.O. (CONT'D)

I guess I just wanted you to know that I love you. And for what it's worth I think you're a great sister, and an incredible mom. I know we haven't always gotten along, but I cherish you, Bets. I really do. And if I make it out of this thing in one piece I want to hang out more—a lot more. If you'll have me :) With love, Jean

CLOSE ON the postcard: It's not that spacious and Jeanie's words are crammed in. She affixes a stamp, then stands and gathers her things. She starts walking towards a MAILBOX down the street.

ESTABLISHING-MOTEL PARKING LOT-EARLY MORNING

Just as Jeanie rounds the corner, a COP CAR pulls into the parking lot. The cops don't see her and she doesn't see them.

INT. MOTEL OFFICE-MORNING

Ronnie sits at the counter, watching through the window as the cops pull in. She doesn't even flinch, as if she's been waiting for this.

TWO OFFICERS emerge from the car then come in. They're gruff, all business.

OFFICER #1
Are you Ronnie Davis?

RONNIE
I guess it depends on who's asking.

OFFICER #2
Ma'am, we have it on good authority that some outlaws might be staying here at your motel.

RONNIE
Some outlaws? Well, that sounds terrifying.

She stands before they can respond, goes to the coffee cart.

RONNIE (CONT'D)
How about some fuel as we talk about these outlaws, eh fellas?

OFFICER #1
That won't be necessary.

RONNIE
Maybe not necessary for you, but I always need coffee if I'm going to chat about folks breaking the law. (to the other officer) You?

The second officer nods: *I'll take some coffee.* Ronnie pours two cups, changes her mind, pours a third...in no hurry. The first officer talks while she pours.

OFFICER #1

Guy named Chester Mozzarella and his companion, Jeanie Pierce. He's the mascot for Chester Mozzarella's Pizza Emporium. Giant rat. Any of this ring a bell?

RONNIE

You forgot the fun.

OFFICER #1

Excuse me?

RONNIE

It's Chester Mozzarella's Pizza and Fun Emporium. Used to take my kids there all the time.

Officer 1 looks at Officer 2. Is this lady dumb or is she putting them on?

OFFICER #2

Ma'am, have you seen any of this on the news? It's being reported on every channel.

Ronnie points to the TV, where a weatherman stands in front of a digital weather pattern that looks distinctly like a dick.

RONNIE

Weather's the only news I watch.

She sets her coffee down, all business.

RONNIE (CONT'D)

Listen, fellas, no offense, but a police car parked in my lot isn't exactly great for business.

OFFICER #1

We got a call this morning that someone in your motel saw Mr. Mozzarella here at your establishment. Did you check in a rat last night?

RONNIE

I don't believe that I did.

OFFICER #2

Are you sure about that? Because lying to the police is also a crime.

RONNIE

I'm fairly certain I'd remember if
I checked a rat into my motel, sir.

Officer 1 pulls out a photo of Jeanie and places it on the counter. It's the same photo that Officer Morgan showed before.

OFFICER #1

How about her? Does she look
familiar?

Ronnie picks up the photo and pretends to examine it close. A beat.

RONNIE

Now her? She looks familiar, yes.

OFFICER #1

Okay. Now we're getting somewhere.
Did you check her in?

RONNIE

Matter of fact, I believe I did.
I'd have to think but I believe
she's in room 402.

OFFICER #2

You don't have it written down?

RONNIE

I had a little spill.

She holds up the ledger, which is covered in a conspicuous coffee stain. She makes a face: *Oops*.

OFFICER #1

Which way to that room?

RONNIE

Left down the hall, take the
stairs, fourth floor.

OFFICER #2

There's no elevator?

Ronnie shrugs: *Oops*.

RONNIE

Elevator's broke.

Both cops put their hands on their holsters, in action mode.

OFFICER #1

We need to you stay here, ma'am,
and lock the door.

RONNIE

You betcha.

The officers exit, fast, but Ronnie doesn't lock the door. Instead, she reaches into the drawer and pulls out a SMALL KNIFE, then picks up the phone.

CUT TO:

INT. MOTEL ROOM-SIMULTANEOUSLY

The phone rings in the room and Chester picks it up.

RONNIE O.S.

Your pizza's here. I sent 'em to
the fourth floor.

Ronnie hangs up.

CUT TO:

EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT-MORNING

Ronnie steps out of the office and goes towards the police car. Swiftly and decisively, she opens the door and cuts the cord to the radio, then steps out and plunges the knife into a tire.

CUT TO:

INT. MOTEL ROOM-SIMULTANEOUSLY

Chester stares at the phone in his hand, shocked. He drops the phone and starts to panic: shoves clothes in bags, gathers up things. He flaps his hands—*Where is Jeanie?*

He cracks the door and carefully peers out. He sees Jeanie crossing the parking lot and the officers going up the stairs. He ducks back in, takes a breath, opens the door. He steps to the edge of the walkway and looks down. He claps his hands at Jeanie, but it's soundless.

Then he remembers.

Chester stomps his foot: one, two, three! Jeanie looks up. He points to the cop car.

Jeanie looks, gestures: *Meet me at downstairs!* Chester grabs the bags, does a quick scan, runs out.

EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT-MORNING

Jeanie leaps into action and starts running.

JEANIE

Shit! Fuck!

She sees Ronnie gesture through the window: *So long, good luck.* Jeanie gestures back as she races to the car. She rounds the corner and sees Chester, loaded down with their stuff, posing for a photo with A MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

(shouting) What are you doing?
Let's go!

Chester hands the phone back to his fan and runs towards the car.

WOMAN

(shouting) Thank you so much,
Chester! You're my favorite pizza
rat of all time!

CUT TO:

EXT. MOTEL HALLWAY, FOURTH FLOOR-DAY

The cops arrive at the fourth floor, breathless, and hear the woman shout. They look at one another, confused, then peer over the railing's edge.

OFFICER #2

(pointing) Stop that rat!

The woman looks up, clutches her purse. *What is going on?*

OFFICER #1

God dammit! Let's go, let's go!

They race down the stairs, almost knocking over a GUY WITH AN ICE BUCKET. The ice scatters down the stairs.

ICE GUY

Hey! My ice! Fuckin' cops.

EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT-DAY

Chester dives into the car and Jeanie takes off. On the other side of the building, the cops jump into their car and start to pull out but the tires are flat.

OFFICER #1
What the fuck?

Officer 2 steps out, sees the damage.

OFFICER #2
Call dispatch! Call dispatch!

But the radio's been cut—it's dead.

OFFICER #1
God dammit!

Behind them, Jeanie peels out of the lot, tires screeching. Officer 1 fires his gun, but it's too late: they're gone.

INT. POLICE STATION-AFTERNOON

Harris stands at Morgan's desk, phone to her ear.

HARRIS
...uh huh...and you said Cedar City...uh huh...And who slashed the tires?...Oh yeah, I remember Rot Gut Dan. Learned about him at the academy...All right, thanks.

She hangs up and shouts for Morgan, who's standing, like, right there.

HARRIS (CONT'D)
Morgan! That was our guys up in Salt Lake. Looks like your little rat friend is making his way south.

MORGAN
For the hundredth time, he's not my friend—

HARRIS
Let's get the family on the phone, see if we can get some clues as to where they're headed.

Harris waves a hand and someone gives her a SLIP OF PAPER with a phone number on it. She picks up the phone and dials.

While the other end rings, she waves her hand again and someone gives her a fresh cup of coffee.

**During the call, we intercut between Harris and Kathleen:
Harris at the station and Kathleen in Betsy's kitchen.**

HARRIS (CONT'D)

Mrs. Pierce, this is Officer Harris of the FBI. How are you this morning?

KATHLEEN

How *am* I? My daughter's been kidnapped and I haven't heard from her in days. I'm not good, Officer Harris.

HARRIS

Yes, of course. Well, we've got an update. Your daughter and the rat had an altercation this morning with some officers in southern Utah. The officers tried to apprehend but the suspect and your daughter managed to escape.

KATHLEEN

Is she alive?

HARRIS

Yes, ma'am. As of this morning, yes.

KATHLEEN

Oh, thank god. (pause) Where are they going? Are you going to get them?

HARRIS

Well, yes, ma'am, that's why I'm calling. We have reason to believe they're headed south. Is it possible they're headed your way?

KATHLEEN

I don't think Jeanie would put her family in danger like that.

Kathleen glances towards the living room, where Bray is dancing in front of the tv.

KATHLEEN (CONT'D)

Especially not her nephew.

HARRIS

Is there anywhere else you can think they might be headed? Somewhere south?

KATHLEEN

I mean, it's possible she's going home.

HARRIS

Home, ma'am?

KATHLEEN

Yeah, home. Joshua Tree. It's where she lives. (like *How do you not know this?*)

HARRIS

Of course, ma'am. Joshua Tree.

Harris signals and someone hands her a MAP. She uncaps a SHARPIE with her teeth and circles Joshua Tree.

HARRIS (CONT'D)

All right. We'll be in touch.

KATHLEEN

Officer Harris?

HARRIS

Yes, ma'am?

KATHLEEN

I expect you to get my daughter home in one piece.

HARRIS

Yes, ma'am. That's our goal.

They both hang up.

Music begins as we slide into a final MUSIC MONTAGE—"True" by Spandau Ballet. Things are more somber now.

I/E. GETAWAY CAR-DAWN

Jeanie drives as the sun comes over the horizon, Chester in the back "sleeping". There's no rocking out this time.

EXT. BETSY AND CHAD'S HOUSE-DAWN

Kathleen sits on the back porch of Betsy's, worried and fatigued. She keeps glancing at her phone.

INT. CHESTER MOZZARELLA'S-DAWN

The empty pizza parlor, the neon sign reading "Closed." Everything is clean and ready for patrons. The Chester Mozzarella House Band is frozen, off.

VIDEO-GRAINY BLACK AND WHITE

More security video from the bus: Chester on the bus to work. Aside from him, the bus is empty. He rides alone.

INT. POLICE STATION-MORNING

Harris stands at the front of the crowded conference room, going over the plan.

I/E. GETAWAY CAR-AFTERNOON

Jeanie and Chester sit in the parked car eating McDonald's: Jeanie in the front, Chester turned away from her in the back. His head is tilted up and we cannot see his face.

EXT. BETSY AND CHAD'S HOUSE-AFTERNOON

Betsy goes to the mailbox and finds Jeanie's postcard inside. She reads it slowly, clearly very moved.

INSERT ANT FARM

We go CLOSE on the ANT FARM, now filled with a bustling colony, as the **music montage ends**.

EXT. JEANIE'S HOUSE-NIGHT

Jeanie pulls the getaway car into her driveway and cuts the engine. She and Chester step out of the car.

JEANIE

Here it is. Home sweet home.

She gathers some things and starts up the walkway. Chester follows, looking around.

He pauses halfway up the path and, for some reason, looks down. CLOSE ON Chester's foot as he lifts it and gently taps it on the ground. A meaningful but mysterious gesture.

INT. JEANIE'S HOUSE-NIGHT

Jeanie unlocks the door and steps inside, Chester close behind. The house is cozy and neat.

JEANIE
Make yourself at home. I'll put on
some coffee.

She sets her things down and heads to the kitchen.

JEANIE O.S.
Ew, the fucking milk is all rotted.
(laughing) Gross.

Jeanie bangs around in the kitchen while Chester moves through the living room, idly looking at her things. He pauses at a shelf that is clearly a kind of SHRINE.

CLOSE ON: framed photos of Jeanie with Anne, the two of them smiling or laughing or hamming it up; candles; a dried sunflower in a vase. A sacred space that shows Jeanie hasn't quite moved on.

INT. JEANIE'S HOUSE-CONTINUOUS

Chester goes to the kitchen and stands in the doorway, watching Jeanie pour coffee. She gestures for him to sit at the table and places a cup before him. They're both road-worn and filthy: their clothes stained and torn, Chester's head a little banged up. Jeanie lifts the scanner and gives it a shake.

JEANIE
Batteries are dead.

Suddenly, the LANDLINE RINGS. Jeanie smiles, surprised.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
The phone! Should I answer it?

Chester shrugs. *May as well.* Jeanie makes a face of childlike mischief as she picks it up.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Hello, Pierce residence, how may I
help you?

KATHLEEN O.S.

Jeanie?

JEANIE

Mom!

KATHLEEN O.S.

Oh my god, thank god! I've been calling and calling. You're alive!

JEANIE

Yes, I'm good. I'm alive. You've been calling since when?

KATHLEEN O.S.

I don't know, I just thought you might be going there. Are you hurt, is everything okay?

JEANIE

No, I'm not hurt. I'm fine, really. What's going on? How's Bray? I miss you guys.

She turns away from Chester, shy now. As she talks, Chester spills coffee, tries to clean it up, knocks over the salt, spills more coffee, etc.

KATHLEEN O.S.

Everybody's good honey, everybody's fine. Betsy's here, she wants to say hi.

BETSY O.S.

Jeanie? Are you okay?

JEANIE

Yeah, Bets, I'm fine.

BETSY O.S.

The rat didn't, uh—

JEANIE

No, no. It's not like that.

BETSY O.S.

Okay. (pause) Jeanie, I...

JEANIE

I know, Bets. Me too.

Silence on the other end. They're saying "I love you" in their own way.

BETSY O.S.

Mom has more she wants to say. Be safe, okay?

JEANIE

Okay.

KATHLEEN O.S.

Honey, listen to me. The police know you're there. They're coming to rescue you, okay? Just do what they say.

JEANIE

They're coming *here*?

KATHLEEN O.S.

Yes, they should be there soon.

JEANIE

Okay. Thanks.

She looks at Chester and then we hear SIRENS, lots of them.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Oh shit, that's them! I gotta go!

KATHLEEN O.S.

Jeanie, just do what they say, okay? Just listen and do what they—

JEANIE

Mom I gotta go! I love you.

Kathleen starts to respond but Jeanie hangs up. It's go time. She turns to Chester.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Bro, that's them!

Chester stands and they rush to the front window, just as a SWARM OF COP CARS pulls up, lights flashing. The cops leap out of their vehicles, guns over open doors. Harris, Morgan, and Baker are front and center.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Fuck, dude! They sent the whole god damn squad.

She's beaming, back in outlaw mode. She shuts the curtain, fast. Chester gestures: *What now?*

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Don't worry, we got this. Get the guns.

Chester starts digging through their bags just as Harris' voice comes over a LOUDSPEAKER.

HARRIS O.S.

This is the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation and the San Bernardino County sheriff and police. Chester Mozzarella, you are under arrest. I repeat: you are under arrest.

Chester has the toy guns now.

JEANIE

Okay, check it out. Remember when you were a kid and you'd make shadows that they could see across the street? Or like with a flashlight in a tent or whatever?

Chester gestures: *What?*

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Never mind. Just go turn on that lamp.

Chester turns on the lamp while Jeanie turns out the other lights. They meet back at the window.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

All right, stand behind me and put a gun to my head and I'll open the curtain again.

Chester hesitates but does as he's told. Jeanie places a hand on the curtain.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

One, two, three!

CUT TO:

EXT. JEANIE'S HOUSE-NIGHT

Jeanie throws the curtain open and we get a view of what the cops see: Chester's shadow holding Jeanie's shadow hostage.

HARRIS

He's got a gun. People, he's got a gun!

INT. JEANIE'S HOUSE-NIGHT

Jeanie shuts the curtain again.

JEANIE

Oh my god, I can't believe that worked!

She puts her hand up for a high five, laughing. This is so fun!

INT. KITCHEN-NIGHT

Jeanie and Chester come back to the kitchen and take a seat.

JEANIE

I guess now we just wait. They'll probably call in a minute.

She rolls her eyes: *So predictable.*

JEANIE (CONT'D)

You want more coffee?

Chester shrugs: *Okay.* Jeanie stands to make more coffee as Harris gets on the loudspeaker again.

HARRIS O.S.

Mr. Mozzarella, our primary concern is that no one gets hurt. If you surrender now everything will be fine.

JEANIE

(snorts) As if we're gonna surrender. Please.

She sits across from Chester, settles in.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Okay, what do you want to do? You wanna play UNO? I might have Scrabble around here somewhere.

Chester gestures like dealing cards.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
I think there's an UNO pack in that
drawer.

Chester reaches into a drawer, digs around, finds an UNO
DECK. He tries to shuffle but it's hard with the gloves, so
he hands the deck over to Jeanie. She shuffles, deals, they
arrange their cards. Police lights flash across the walls.

A beat as they play. Then the PHONE RINGS.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
See? I told you!

She stands and moves towards the phone.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
What do you think? What are our
demands? (smiles, answers) Hello,
Pierce residence. How may I help
you?

MORGAN O.S.
Ms. Pierce, my name is Officer
Morgan. I want you to say the word
'sandwich' if you are safe.

JEANIE
Hamwich.

MORGAN O.S.
What?

JEANIE
Did you say hamwich?

MORGAN O.S.
Hamwich? No, *sandwich*. If you are
safe say the word sandwich.

JEANIE
Oh, okay. Got it. *Ham sandwich*.

She winks at Chester. He puts his hands over his mouth,
giggling. We can hear Harris and Morgan arguing on the other
end.

HARRIS O.S.
What the fuck does ham sandwich
mean?

MORGAN O.S.
I don't know, that's what she said.

Jeanie covers the phone and talks to Chester while Morgan and Harris bicker on the other end.

JEANIE

What do you want? Like a jet? A helicopter? Let's ask for a helicopter, that's funny. A helicopter is fucking hilarious.

Now Harris is on the line.

HARRIS O.S.

Ms. Pierce, this is Officer Harris of the FBI. We want to get you out of there safe and—

Jeanie cuts her off.

JEANIE

He says he wants a helicopter.

She looks at Chester, winks again.

HARRIS O.S.

A helicop—?

JEANIE

A helicopter and twenty-five thousand dollars in unmarked cash.

HARRIS O.S.

Ms. Pierce, I don't know that we can—

JEANIE

A helicopter and twenty-five grand, or he'll kill me. That's what he says.

HARRIS O.S.

Does he know how to fly a helicopter? That seems—

JEANIE

He'll figure it out.

Jeanie hangs up. She claps her hands together and looks at Chester, beaming.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Bro! Did you see what I just did?

She goes to him for a high-five then sits again.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Fucking master negotiator right
here. Dang, that was awesome.

Chester nods, impressed. They pick up their cards and resume playing. A beat as they continue their game.

HARRIS O.S.
Mr. Mozzarella, we are prepared to
meet your demands. We just want Ms.
Pierce to be safe.

Jeanie rolls her eyes again: *Fucking amateurs.*

JEANIE
They're so predictable. It's crazy
how predictable they are. Uno.

Jeanie idly talks while they play.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Hey dude, by the way, I'm sorry I
said we weren't a team. That was
rude. We're totally a team. I
shouldn't have said that.

Chester nods in thanks. The game continues.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
Where should we go next, do you
think? I guess we actually could go
to Zion. We could probably figure
it out. But then where? I don't
know how to fly a helicopter, so
we'll have to figure that out too.
But honestly I think we could just
keep going. Like if we wanted to,
we could just be on the lam. Like
permanently on the lam. I mean
obviously I'd have to figure out
how I'm going to see Bray. Like I
want to see my sister and my mom.
And Chad too. But I bet we could
hire someone to help us with
disguises. I mean, I don't want to
press the issue or whatever, but
you might at some point reconsider
taking off the head...

As Jeanie rambles, we SLOWLY PAN around Chester's head,
taking her in from just outside his point of view. It's as if
he's realizing something for the very first time.

He reaches into the drawer and pulls out a PAD OF PAPER and a PEN. He starts to write something down.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
 (still rambling) I should've asked
 for more money. That was dumb.
 Twenty-five grand isn't that much.
 Next time I'll ask for more.

Chester folds his slip of paper and slides it to her across the table, then stands. Jeanie takes the paper in her hand.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
 Wow. I honestly had no idea you
 knew how to write. I don't know why
 I assumed you didn't. Of course you
 know how to write. Why wouldn't
 you?

She starts to read, unaware that Chester is leaving the room.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
 "The R stands for Really Really Fun
 Good Time." The R stands for
 "really really fun good time"? Oh,
 you mean the R! So it's not Raheem.
 Ha! Jesus, that's terrible
 branding. I can't believe somebody
 got paid to come up with that.

Jeanie looks up, realizing that Chester is gone.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
 Chester? Chest?

She stands and shoves back her chair, panicked now. The chair crashes to the floor as **EVERYTHING SLOWS**.

CUT TO:

EXT. JEANIE'S HOUSE-NIGHT

Chester Mozzarella, America's favorite pizza rat, opens the front door of Jeanie's house and goes outside. His hands are up in surrender as he descends the steps, but it's a pointless gesture. Harris signals: *Open fire*.

One, two, three, four bullets to the chest, and Chester Mozzarella crumples to the ground. Just then, Jeanie makes it to the door.

HARRIS
 Hold your fire!

Jeanie runs down the steps. Frantically, she grabs at Chester and pulls him into her lap.

JEANIE

You assholes! You fucking assholes!

She's weeping now.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

You killed him, you stupid fucks.
You fucking killed him!

Jeanie cradles Chester's lifeless body in her lap. There's blood everywhere. Harris, Morgan, Baker...everyone watches, silent, still. A beat.

Slowly, gently, Jeanie rests Chester's head on the ground. She sits back, wiping away tears, looking at him. Then, as if in a trance, she reaches out both hands and places them on either side of his head. She starts to pull. One...two...the head pops off.

Under the Chester head: another Chester head, smaller but exactly the same. Jeanie's face registers confusion, but she reaches out and does it again—pries the head off.

Under the second Chester head, a third Chester head: smaller but exactly the same.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

(frustrated now) God
dammit, Chester.

Jeanie pries the third head off but underneath, this time, it's her: eyes closed, hair the same short style she wore when Anne died.

A sharp intake of breath, and then Jeanie pulls this past self into her own arms, crying out, rocking back and forth.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

No, no, no, no, no, no.

We zoom up and out and watch her from above.

EXT. JEANIE'S HOUSE-DAY-ONE YEAR LATER

Jeanie exits her house, a little dressed up but not much, sunglasses on and a GIFT tucked under her arm. She locks the door and goes down the steps.

At the base of the steps, she pauses and lifts the toe of one shoe, then gently taps it on the ground.

This is the same spot where Chester had tapped his foot, the same spot where he died.

She goes to her car and gets in.

I/E. JEANIE'S CAR-DAY

Jeanie sets the gift on the passenger seat. CLOSE ON the gift: it is carefully wrapped with colorful paper and a big bow. Jeanie does not light a cigarette this time. Instead, she fishes a some JELLY BEANS from a bag.

Then, she's driving. She turns on the radio and lets some oldies play. The desert scrolls past. Jeanie rolls down the window to feel the fresh desert air.

EXT. DESERT ROADSIDE-DAY

A DESERT RAT pauses along the side of the road, sniffs at a flower, scurries away.

EXT. CHESTER MOZZARELLA'S PARKING LOT-DAY

Jeanie pulls her car into the crowded parking lot of Chester R. Mozzarella's Pizza and Fun Emporium and exits her car. A RANDOM FAMILY has also just parked and without intending too, they match Jeanie's stride. They're loaded down with balloons and gifts. The MOM smiles cheerfully at Jeanie.

RANDOM MOM

Are you here for Jeremy's birthday
as well?

Jeanie gives her a smile.

JEANIE

No ma'am. But I hope you all have
fun!

The mom smiles and goes with her family inside.

INT. CHESTER R. MOZZARELLA'S-DAY

The inside of Chester Mozzarella's is still an absolute melee. The same familiar chaos of games and bells and lights. Liam stands just inside the door. Behind him, Green Greenie waves and hands out balloons. Liam doesn't recognize Jeanie as she comes in.

LIAM

Hello, miss. Welcome to Chester Mozzarella's! We hope you have a cheestastic time.

He hands her a FRESHLY MINTED CHESTER BUCK. CLOSE ON the Buck: "Good for one 8 oz kiddie soda." And then, in smaller print: "Chester R. Mozzarella's is not held responsible if Chester Bucks are used in illegal activity."

Jeanie smiles to herself.

JEANIE

Thank you.

She lifts her sunglasses and scans the room, sees her family at a table in the crowd. She smiles and waves.

INT. CHESTER MOZARELLA'S-DAY-CONTINUOUS

Jeanie's family are excited to see her. They welcome her with big smiles and open arms—except for Jo and Mo, who still sit rather awkwardly off to the side.

BRAY

Aunt Jeanie!

JEANIE

Hi buddy! Happy birthday!

BRAY

My birthday's not until Tuesday.
Today is just the party.

JEANIE

I know! And what a party it is.

Betsy steps closer, smiling. She is visibly more relaxed than last year and has a cute baby resting on her hip. She goes to Jeanie and they swap the baby for the gift, Jeanie cooing.

BETSY

What a beautiful gift! Did you wrap this yourself?

JEANIE

I did!

CHAD

Is it an ant farm?

JEANIE

It's two ant farms, actually.

BETSY

Ha! Fun for the whole family.
(turns to Jo/Mo) Did you see
Jeanie's beautiful gift?

Jo and Mo smile tightly and Jeanie goes to them, side-hugs them with the baby on her hip.

JEANIE

Jo, you smell amazing. That must be
a new perfume.

Jo beams. Jeanie turns to Betsy.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Is mom here yet?

BETSY

She's on her way.

JEANIE

Awesome. Hey Chad! You think we'll
get a backflip this year?

CHAD

Ha! Yeah, maybe. (pauses) No, I've
been laying off the beer lately.
Just lemonade for me.

He lifts his cup in a kind of cheers. Kathleen arrives. She weaves her way through the crowd and makes her way around the table, greeting everyone. She hugs both Jeanie and Betsy hard, and they both hug back.

JEANIE

I'm gonna go find Bray.

BETSY

Thanks Jeanie.

Jeanie passes the baby to Kathleen and goes in search of her nephew. Jo and Mo start to gossip.

JO (OR MO)

(to Betsy) What did I hear about
the mask?

BETSY

I'm sorry...the mask?

JO (OR MO)

Jimbo said that someone said that Jeanie said that it was *her* inside the mask. After he was killed by the police.

THE OTHER JO (OR MO)

After the *rat* was killed by the police.

BETSY

Yes. What about it?

JO (OR MO)

Well...that doesn't make any sense.

THE OTHER JO (OR MO)

It doesn't make any sense at all.

BETSY

It's her story, Jo. It doesn't have to make any sense.

Jo and Mo are shocked by this response, but Chad puts his arm around Betsy. She takes a sip of his lemonade. Kathleen bounces the baby and coos.

INT. CHESTER MOZARELLA'S-DAY-CONTINUOUS

Jeanie makes her way through the crowd, unfazed by the chaos. She spots Bray at the basketball game, stands watching him shoot.

Then, the SOUND OF EXCITING MUSIC. The house band comes to life and the crowd lets up a cheer as Chester R. Mozzarella emerges from a door beside the stage. Jeanie turns and looks. Bray takes her hand and they head over.

INT. CHESTER MOZARELLA'S-DAY-CONTINUOUS

It's Chester, all right...but is it? He's all cleaned up now, with BRAND-NEW GLOVES and a BRAND-NEW HEAD. He takes his position at the front of the stage, handing out Chester Bucks and candy. Kids gather around him and dance.

Bray runs over to join the crowd. Chester raises the roof and waters the lawn. It's a really really fun good time.

Jeanie watches this new Chester—or maybe it's the old one—with a happy, peaceful expression. A beat. Finally, she lifts a hand and gives a small wave.

And though it's improbable, and totally absurd, Chester R. Mozzarella—America's favorite pizza rat—lifts a hand, and gives a small wave back.

FADE TO BLACK.

End.