

REASONABLE LEVELS

Written by

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EXT. SMALL TOWN STREET - EVENING - 1970

YOUNG JERRY (less than 10) walks alone on a desolate two lane road. He's surrounded by farmland. Tears and snot run down his face as he tries to catch his breath. As he turns to look for oncoming cars, we see that he has one deformed ear. It looks like it's been melted. He notices a truck approaching. He quickly picks up his pace as he wipes his snotty nose.

An old pickup truck screeches to a halt. Young Jerry stops in his tracks, too scared to look into the truck. He can see the reflection of his MOTHER (30s) in the passenger side mirror. He notices a fresh bruise around her eye.

We don't see FATHER, but we hear his drunken words.

FATHER
(stammering)
Where the fuck you been, kid?! I
said, to stay at the FUCKIN'
church!

Young Jerry, frozen in fear, just stares forward.

FATHER (CONT'D)
HEY! RETARD! You hear me...?

Young Jerry looks at the reflection of his beaten mother. Without looking at the boy, she shakes her head.

FATHER (CONT'D)
GOD DAMMIT, Jeremiah!

Just as the truck door opens, Young Jerry takes off in a sprint and quickly disappears into the farmland.

FATHER (CONT'D)
MOTHERFUCKER!

Father slams his fist into the hood as he watches the boy.

Mother smile's as she watches him run. Father notices Mother, so he focuses his rage on her.

CUT TO:

INT. JERRY'S APPARTMENT - DAY - PRESENT DAY

A skipping record echoes throughout a small apartment. The apartment is dirty, but not filthy. A forever bachelor pad. The sound of a busy city outside can be heard between skipping lyrics.

The walls of the apartment are adorned with framed 'Forced 40' tour posters. One poster reads, 'Forced 40 - On The Way Up'. The aged posters show four young punks.

Old guitars lean against a wall of vinyl.

Two bodies start to squirm atop a small bed, as the bright sun spills through the room. JERRY (59) rolls over, exposing his ear, then pulls the sheets over his hungover face. A PUNK GIRL (30s) pokes her head out from the sheets. She looks confused and hungover. She scans the room for her things.

Hungover, yet stealthy, she crawls out of bed, grabs her pants from the floor and tries to put them on. Losing her balance, she falls back onto the bed. Jerry, lets out a moan.

JERRY

Urgh...fuu...urgh...

PUNK GIRL

(grimacing)

Sorry.

Jerry looks up at her. Hard lines in his face are evidence of a forever resting dick face.

Jerry looks around the room. He finds a waded up sock and throws it at the skipping record. It's scratches to a halt. Jerry takes some loose pills off the bedside table and washes them down with a stale beer.

PUNK GIRL (CONT'D)

That was...um...one helluva birthday party. Do you usually fight with your band that much?

Jerry grunts annoyingly.

JERRY

Only when they play like shit. I'll prolly play again in a few months. Come...

Punk Girl perks up as she starts to exit.

PUNK GIRL

Awesome. I'll text you...

Punk Girl trips over records on the ground.

JERRY

HEY! Watch the vinyl...and don't text...

The door slams, she's gone.

JERRY (CONT'D)
 (to himself)
 ...I don't do that.

Jerry tries to stand, but gets light headed and sits.

He eventually rolls out of bed grabs the records off the ground. Then he walks by an old Forced 40 poster.

Time has not been good to Jerry.

EXT. APARTMENT - LATER THAT DAY

With coffee cup in hand, Jerry throws on his old ratty leather jacket and slides on his sunglasses as he starts walking. A car passes and honks. Jerry reluctantly waves.

Jerry grabs a cigarette from his pocket and searches for lighter. Nothing. We watch as he sets his coffee down and walks into a LIQUOR STORE. As he exits, he waves to the CASHIER and lights his cigarette.

CASHIER (O.S.)
 Great show last night, Growl.

Another reluctant wave as continues down the sidewalk.

Finally, he stops in front of a dive bar, 'The Tasty Tavern'. The marquee reads, 'Jerry Growl Birthday Bash - Full Forced 40 Set - Tonight Only'. GUY (any) is taking the sign down.

Jerry studies the sign as he exhales a cloud of smoke.

GUY
 Cool show last night, Growl.

He smirks, takes a drag and then tosses it into the street.

INT. THE TASTY TAVERN - CONTINUOUS

Jerry keeps his sunglasses on as he enters the closed bar. The local 'TOWNIE' (OLD) sweeps up trash.

TOWNIE
 Helluva party, Growl.

JERRY
 Fifty-nine and feelin' fine...

Just then an ANGRY WAITRESS (20s) storms from the back and tosses her apron at Jerry.

ANGRY WAITRESS
Fifty-nine and you're an asshole!

Jerry's seen this a number of times. Before he can say anything, she's gone.

Jerry nods to Townie then takes a seat at the empty bar. He looks around. Nobody but him and Townie. He reaches over the bar and tops his coffee off with some whiskey. Townie's mouth waters watching Jerry pour the booze.

Just as he puts the bottle back, ANNE (55), enters carrying a case of beer. Townie quickly gets back to work.

Anne is a tough as balls, but has miles behind her eyes.

ANNE
(annoyed)
Hey birthday boy, we lost another one. And stop taking booze, old man. We have to pay for that.

JERRY
It helps with the whips and jingles. And, enough with the birthday shit. I'm just as surprised as you all.
(re: Angry Waitress)
AND, I didn't even know that, kid.
How am I the asshole?

Anne walks behind the bar.

ANNE
Calling her a lazy bartender during your show? Ring any bells? I need bartenders and you're not helping.

Jerry shakes his head and shrugs.

ANNE (CONT'D)
Maybe a little less booze and a little more--

Jerry brushes her off by topping his coffee with more whiskey. He smirks as he does it.

JERRY
It's the band. These young players rush everything. I wrote it fast, don't rush it!

ANNE

Sure, it's definitely not the bottle of brown and carton of smokes. I mean, who smokes cigarettes anymore?

She pours herself some coffee and tops it with Bailey's.

ANNE (CONT'D)

Or, maybe you're too old for this shit now. Old punker's can go soft too ya know. Drink less, play more...

JERRY

I've been too old for too long to go 'soft' now. And you know what, I don't pay you for these little life lessons.

ANNE

You're right. YOU pay me to keep YOUR bar on the up and up, so YOU can play 'rock-star' three times a year.

Jerry nods in silent agreement. They both sip.

ANNE (CONT'D)

So, how was the 'after party'?

JERRY

That girl?

ANNE

She probably has a name.

JERRY

Probably.

Anne rolls her eyes.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Just another girl who wants to get close to, all this...

Jerry attempts a 'sexy dance', but ends up in a coughing fit.

ANNE

How could one resist. Before you know it, you're gonna sleep with all the thirty somethings who visit this place.

JERRY

I've made peace with that. You should too.

Jerry holds his cup up for a cheers.

JERRY (CONT'D)

May the bridges we burn, light our way.

Anne rolls her eyes as Jerry quickly finishes his drink.

EXT. THE TASTY TAVERN - LATER

Jerry exits with cigarette in mouth, and looks towards the marquee. Guy is putting the last letter up in, 'Jerry Gowls - The Tasty Tavern'.

Jerry notices the missing 'R'. He exhales in disgust.

JERRY

(to Guy)

You're missin' something, Guy.

Guy looks at Jerry, then the sign and finally notices.

GUY

Shit...

He starts moving letters to fix his mistake.

JERRYS DAY TO DAY LIFE - MONTAGE

We spend a day in life of Jerry Growl.

- Jerry thumbs through records at his local record store.
- Jerry drinks as he cleans up his dirty apartment.
- Jerry drinks and plays with his old flip phone and tries to find the right cord to charge it.
- Jerry is trying to fix an old clock. He turns the screwdriver and it slips. Jerry's mad and throws the screwdriver against a wall.
- Jerry sits outside of his apartment complex, smokes cigarettes and people watches as he drinks a beer.

INT. JERRYS APARTMENT - LATER THAT DAY

Jerry throws his jacket on the couch, takes a seat, and begins strumming his guitar. His foot taps as he hums along. Suddenly there's a knock at the door.

Jerry answers it. It's Punk Girl. She lets herself in.

JERRY

Um...hi...

PUNK GIRL

I left my vest here, somewhere.

She stumbles around the apartment looking for her vest. Jerry immediately looks annoyed.

JERRY

Yeah, I haven't seen it.

PUNK GIRL

Did you miss me?

JERRY

I just saw you this morning.

PUNK GIRL

You coulda just texted ya know...

JERRY

Yeah, I still don't do that.

Punk Girl stops looking, and starts being sexy.

PUNK GIRL

Okay mister cranky, since I'm here--

She starts kissing Jerry's neck. He's getting less cranky. They start kissing as she starts unbuckling his belt. He takes off her shirt as his pants fall to the floor. It's about to get sexy when there's another knock at the door.

JERRY

Nobodies home. Go away!

Another knock.

JERRY (CONT'D)

GO-AWAY!!

Jerry and Punk Girl are slowly making their way to the bedroom when there's another LOUD knock.

Jerry pissed. He holds his pants up and stomps to the door.

JERRY (CONT'D)
 For fucks sake! Somebody's getting
 thumped in the...

He swings the door open.

JERRY (CONT'D)
 ...fucking head!

On the other side stands DENA (40s) and STAN (40s). Both
 dressed professionally and both holding briefcases.

STAN
 Are you...

He looks at the clipboard.

STAN (CONT'D)
 ...Jeremiah Gilawhacky?

Jerry grimaces when he hears the name.

JERRY
 Whatever you losers are selling,
 I'm not buying!

Jerry tries to close the door. Stan puts his foot in the way.
 Jerry looks at the foot, then up to Stan with a fighters
 grimace.

STAN
 (serious)
 I said, are you, Jeremiah Gil...

JERRY
 (angry)
 I go by Growl, and if you don't
 move that foot...

Stan looks at his notes confusedly. Dena leans into Stan.

DENA
 (whispered - to Stan)
 I told you it was him...

Just then, Punk Girl pokes herself into the conversation.

PUNK GIRL
 Oh, who's this?

She looks at Dena and Stan. They look at the half-naked house
 guest.

PUNK GIRL (CONT'D)
 You guys have drugs?

Jerry looks at them with an optimistic look. Dena and Stan look offended.

STAN
 Mister Gilawhacky, we're with Child Protective Services.

Jerry's even more confused. Punk Girl and Jerry listen in.

DENA
 When was the last time you spoke with your daughter...
 (check notes)
 ...Monica?

JERRY
 If she's in jail again, I don't have the money for bail...

Just then, Dena and Stan part to reveal SUE (6). Jerry stops in his tracks and stares at the child.

DENA
 CPS, Child Protective Services. Have you spoken with your daughter...

JERRY
 (to Dena)
 No. It's been like four or five years...
 (to Sue - thinking)
 Maybe six...

PUNK GIRL
 Oh, she's cute. Too young to be selling in my opinion.

Jerry snaps back into reality. He slams the door shut. He picks up Punk Girl's shirt from the floor, hands it to her, opens the door, and pushes her out.

JERRY
 (to Punk Girl)
 You, out.

PUNK GIRL
 Hey...

She squeezes by Stan, Dena, and Sue.

PUNK GIRL (CONT'D)
Text me if you find that vest.

Stan and Dena look suspiciously at Jerry and the situation.

JERRY
(to Dena and Stan)
Come in I guess...

INT. JERRYS APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Jerry, Dena, Stan, and Sue sit. Jerry's annoyed and surprised. He stares at Sue as Dena talks.

DENA
She hasn't been seen in about a week. A neighbor tipped us off that Sue was in the apartment all by herself.

Sue looks dirty and tired.

DENA (CONT'D)
It's customary to reach out to family first. And if that doesn't work, then she'll go into the system until Monica pops up or when we can figure out a new living situation.

JERRY
Like foster care?

Dena nods.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Good. Great. There's a system in place. Do I need to sign something?

STAN
No, Mister Gil...

Jerry shoots him a look.

STAN (CONT'D)
Sue needs a place to stay--tonight. Right now.

JERRY
(annoyed)
So my estranged daughter is missing, left her kid, and I'm supposed to take her?

DENA

In the simplest of terms, yes.

He stands and paces the room.

JERRY

No. That doesn't work for me. This is a really bad time. Maybe she can spend a few nights at the center. I'm sure she'll show up.

Stan is over it and stands to exit. Sue watches the adults.

STAN

(annoyed)

Thank you for your time *Mister Gilwhacky*.

Dena stands and approaches Jerry.

DENA

(whispered)

I'm gonna level with you. I saw her apartment--it wasn't good. This could've been a very different conversation.

JERRY

I get it. It's horrible. That kid deserves better. I'm just not--

DENA

We're happy to take her to the shelter. She'll be processed and hopefully there's a bed left. Budgets are tight, so food is scarce, but we're happy to take her down...

Jerry looks at Sue. She's too cute for words. He notices how dirty she is and how tired and scared she looks.

He sighs and rolls his eyes.

JERRY

(to Dena)

How long does this usually take?

STAN

Hard to say. All cases are different.

Jerry looks at Sue and her at him. He shakes his head.

JERRY
(annoyed)
A couple of nights. That's it!

Everyone but Sue breathes a sigh of relief. She just stares at the dirty apartment and the cranky old man.

DENA
(to Sue)
Okay, you're gonna stay with Jerry.
He's your grandpa.

Sue shrugs.

DENA (CONT'D)
(to Sue)
It'll be fine.

Dena looks at Jerry, unimpressed but optimistic.

DENA (CONT'D)
(to Sue)
Call me. Anytime. For anything.

STAN
(to Jerry)
Here's my card.

JERRY
So just like that?

DENA
For right now, yes.

They both start to exit when Dena pulls Jerry aside.

DENA (CONT'D)
(whispered)
I'm a fan. How they treated you was
horrible in my opinion.

JERRY
Mine too.

DENA
(whispered - serious)
But clean this place up...

She gestures to the pill and booze bottles. They exit.

Jerry watches them exit down the HALL. He closes the door and turns. Sue is still standing there, staring. She walks up to Jerry and hugs him. He's wildly uncomfortable and pats her on the head and finally forces her off of him.

She looks confused.

JERRY
Okay, hi. I'm Jerry. Your--grandpa?
No. Call me Growl.

SUE
Growl?

JERRY
Yeah, like a dog.

Sue looks confused.

SUE
Dogs bark. Can I call you, bark?

JERRY
No. It's Growl. Grandpa sounds...I
don't know what it sounds like, but
it doesn't sound good. Also, we
don't need to hug. Got it?

Sue shrugs as looks around the apartment.

SUE
Do you know where my mom is?

Jerry gives a nonchalant shrug.

Sue sees an acoustic guitar in the corner as Jerry looks for his phone.

JERRY
I'm gonna make a call.

Sue nods as Jerry exits the room. She lightly touches the strings on the guitar. She smiles as they buzz.

Jerry can be heard in the next room.

JERRY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
(quietly - into phone)
Yeah, she's here right now. Yes,
I'm being serious. S-O-S. I need
your help.

Jerry ends the call and enters to see Sue touching his guitar.

JERRY (CONT'D)
HEY!

Jerry scares the shit out of her, making her accidentally knock the guitar over.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Dammit!

Jerry rushes to the aid of his guitar and notices a scratch.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Don't touch stuff. This isn't yours! These aren't toys, kid! See that, that decreases the value.

Sue quickly retreats out of site. Jerry sets the guitar back on the stand and rubs the scratch again. He turns to look for Sue. He hears sniffles coming from behind the couch. She's sitting crying.

JERRY (CONT'D)

(annoyed)

Are you crying...already?

She doesn't answer.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Get up, we're uh...going on a walk.

Sue wipes her tears and slowly stands, watching Jerry the whole time. Jerry opens the front door and Sue slowly exits with him.

INT. THE TASTY TAVERN - EVENING

Sue lets out a big yawn as she snacks on french fries with Townie. Jerry and Anne sit at the bar.

ANNE

You're a grandpa?! This is so wild.

JERRY

Stop saying it like that. This is real.

ANNE

Okay, okay. What's the plan then peepaw?

JERRY

How the hell should I know? I haven't watched a kid since...

ANNE

Ever.

Jerry looks at her and knows she's right.

Just then Sue walks up and looks at Anne and Jerry.

SUE
(to Jerry)
If you're my grandpa...

JERRY
Growl...

SUE
(to Anne)
Then does that make you my grandma?

ANNE
Oh god no.

Sue's confused again.

ANNE (CONT'D)
I'm just Growl's very best friend.

JERRY
Yeah, this...
(re: Anne and Jerry)
...isn't a thing. Your
grandma...she...umm--

SUE
Is she dead?

Jerry nods and Sue accepts it. Sue walks back to her booth.

ANNE
She's smart. I don't know what
would've been worse, Kristy taking
care of that kid or you.

JERRY
Yeah, nothing more wholesome than
an old granny who's dope sick.
That's the dream Normal Rockwell
painted.

ANNE
Now what?

JERRY
I don't wanna talk about Kristy...

ANNE
No. Now what with Sue? You need a
plan.

Jerry shrugs nonchalantly.

ANNE (CONT'D)
 Seriously! She's a kid. A kid
 you're related to!

Jerry gives Anne a look she's seen far too many times.

ANNE (CONT'D)
 No.

The look intensifies.

ANNE (CONT'D)
 NO!

More intense.

ANNE (CONT'D)
 FINE! I'll help you when I can.
 BUT, I get to hire another waitress
 and you can't be mean.

Jerry thinks about it for a beat. Sips a beer then nods.

Anne disappointedly sips as they both look over and watch Townie and Sue play.

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Sue is tucked in on the couch. Random blankets lay across the small girl.

JERRY
 Okay, well--go to sleep.

Jerry turns to exit.

SUE
 But can you tell me a story?

Jerry stops and sighs.

JERRY
 I'm not really the storytelling
 type.

Sue looks over at one of Jerry's guitars. He notices.

JERRY (CONT'D)
 You like songs? Songs I can do.

Sue nods.

Jerry picks up his guitar and starts playing a Forced 40 song. It's loud, fast and aggressive.

Jerry is belting it out when he feels a small hand on his leg.

SUE

I'll just try and sleep. No more of that...

Jerry, half annoyed, sets his guitar down, turns a light off, and exits.

CUT TO
FLASHBACK:

INT. DIRTY PUNK CLUB - NIGHT - 1989

We slide past a group of YOUNG PUNKS slam dancing as the music echoes throughout the dingy building. We stop at the 'Mens Room' door. Jerry (20s) and KRISTY (20s) exit. Jerry buckles his belt and wipes the extra drugs from his nose. His long hair hides most of his face and is pushed to one side of his head. His collared shirt is spray painted with, 'Hate Me' on the front, and his tight jeans and boots look like they haven't been washed in years.

Kristy stands behind him as she adjusts her shirt and bra. She wipes the smeared lipstick from her mouth. She goes to grab Jerry's arms but he pulls it away. Kristy plays tough, but her eyes show a tinge of heartache.

Jerry's bandmates and manager approach- TORCH (20s), MAT (20s) & STONEY (20s). Anne stands to the side holding a clipboard.

Torch garners a black leather jacket with a giant 'FORCED 40' patch safety pinned to the back.

ANNE

(to Jerry)

Hey, asshole. You go on soon.

(to the band)

OH, and I just scored you a West Coast tour opening for Social Distortion.

TORCH

No shit?!

JERRY

(to his band)

Told you she'd be a good manager.

ANNE

Yeah, now go make money so I can
get paid.

Kristy watches Anne like a hawk.

Jerry takes a moment and looks out to the crowd.

JERRY

Well boys, tonight, these idiots
are here for us.

KRISTY

(fawning)

Baby, you're gonna fuck this place
up, tonight.

Jerry looks unimpressed at Kristy.

Torch opens his leather jacket to reveal a bag of weed.

STONEY

A little pre-show green, anyone?

Suddenly the lights drop. It's time.

STONEY (CONT'D)

I guess not, bummer.

Anne escorts them to the stage, leaving Kristy behind.

KRISTY

I'll see you after, baby...

Jerry doesn't notice as he and his bandmates take the stage
to a sold out-crowd. Jerry picks up his guitar.

JERRY

(to audience)

HELLO!

The crowd erupts.

JERRY (CONT'D)

(to audience)

I don't know if you've heard. But
we just put out a new album.

More cheers!

JERRY (CONT'D)

Go buy it! Help us get '*famous*'!

Audience laughs.

JERRY (CONT'D)
 But remember kiddies, if it's too
 loud...

The crowd screams along with Jerry.

JERRY/AUDIENCE
 ...then *FUCK YOU!*

The drummer counts it off and Forced 40 erupts into a song.

The crowd goes nuts, a circle pit erupts, people jump on the stage and dive into the crowd. It's amazing chaos.

Jerry begins singing with all his heart. Kristy looks up at him as he looks down and smiles. He winks. She loves that he notices her.

Then from behind her a GROUPIE GIRL (20) screams.

GROUPIE GIRL
 FUCK ME, JERRY GROWL!

Jerry smiles even more and gives Groupie Girl a pucker.

Kristy looks at the Groupie Girl, then back at Jerry, to realize he wasn't winking at her. She's crushed.

Forced 40 continues ripping through their set. The crowd loves it and the band can feel that this is the 'beginning'.

The song they're playing slowly fades out as...

CUT TO PRESENT:

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - MORNING

Jerry jolts awake as he slowly realizes he's hearing Forced 40 from his record player. He shakes off his dream, climbs out of bed, and enters the LIVING ROOM.

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

He is shocked to discover Sue sitting around his record collection. Records are pulled out of sleeves, sitting loosely on the floor. It's a record collector's nightmare.

JERRY
 WOH! What the fuck are you doing?!

Jerry immediately starts picking up the records.

JERRY (CONT'D)

These are priceless! You can't just play with this, ya know! I don't need your sticky fucking fingers ruining these! Do you hear me!?

Sue cowers. She's scared.

Jerry continues sighing and mumbling under his breath until he notices the scared child.

Sue lets out a little whimper as small tears begin to roll down her cheeks.

JERRY (CONT'D)

(annoyed)

Goddammit, don't start that again. Please...

The whimper turns to a quivering lip, which turns into full-blown tears and crying.

Jerry sighs and puts down his records.

Sue's sobbing becomes louder and louder. He just pats her head like a dog.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Kid...Sue...it's okay. Just stop crying. You're really loud. Like, obnoxiously loud.

Jerry looks around his apartment. He sees a bag of gummy bears and grabs them.

JERRY (CONT'D)

How about some high fructose corn syrup?

Jerry holds open the bag. Sue slows down and takes a bear. Jerry rolls the bag up and puts it in her pocket.

JERRY (CONT'D)

If you wanna cry more, eat those.

Sue starts to catch her breath. Eventually calming down.

JERRY (CONT'D)

See. All good.

Jerry angrily mumbles to himself as he cleans the records.

Sue wipes her nose on her sleeve. She looks up at a Forced 40 poster.

SUE
That's you?

Jerry looks.

JERRY
Yup.

Sue moves to sit closer to Jerry and grabs the record sleeve.

SUE
Mom used to play this...

JERRY
Really?!

SUE
Yeah, when they'd fight. She'd turn
it up real loud thinking I couldn't
hear. But I could.

JERRY
Fighting with who?

Sue shrugs.

JERRY (CONT'D)
With your dad?

SUE
Mom said he's a bad guy and we
don't talk about him.

JERRY
Sounds good to me. You hungry?

Sue's eyes light up as she nods.

EXT. RESTAURANT - LATER THAT DAY

Jerry drinks a beer as they have breakfast burritos.

JERRY
You've never had a breakfast
burrito?

Sue takes a bite and shakes her head.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Well, you're welcome.

They continue eating for a beat.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Do you go to school or anything?

Sue shakes her head.

SUE

Mom said I can start soon, though.

JERRY

Then what do you do all day?

SUE

I dunno. Stuff with mom.

JERRY

(half-annoyed)

Stuff like...

Sue shrugs again.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Good god kid, give me something.
Pretend I'm a stranger...

SUE

You are a stranger.

JERRY

True...okay. What would you two be
doing today?

Sue thinks.

SUE

Hmm...well I'd make breakfast then
make sure Mom gets coffee. Then
we'd go trading, then...

JERRY

Trading?

SUE

Trading. Ya know, trading.

Jerry looks confused.

SUE (CONT'D)

It's like when you go to Walmart
and trade something on the shelf
for money.

JERRY

So you take something new from the shelf, your mom says she needs to return it but doesn't have a receipt, and then they give her money?

Sue smiles and nods. Jerry looks unimpressed as another sip.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Yeah, I used to play that *game* with your mom...

(beat)

Has your mom ever gone away like this before?

Sue nods and talks with a mouthful. Jerry watches, unamused.

SUE

Never this long. She usually calls.

JERRY

And you just stay home?

Sue nods again.

Jerry's phone rings. He answers.

JERRY (CONT'D)

(into phone)

Yeah...

ANNE (V.O.)

We gotta problem. When can you get here?

JERRY

(into phone)

Well, it's burrito o'clock, so...

ANNE (V.O.)

Just get over here.

INT. THE TASTY TAVERN - LATER THAT DAY

Jerry and Sue enter. The bar is quiet, still closed. Jerry notices the empty stage.

Anne is behind the bar.

JERRY

Where the fuck is the band?

Anne looks down at Sue.

ANNE
(re: Sue)
Easy...language.

Jerry looks down at Sue.

JERRY
Can I say 'fuck' in front of you?

Sue nods. Jerry looks at Anne.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Now that that's handled, where's
the fucking band?

ANNE
Canceled. The bassist went down a K-
hole last night. He's still in
another dimension.

JERRY
Modern-day drugs are weird. Okay,
tell them to find a replacement.
We're talking about a BASS player!

ANNE
Too late. I got someone else...

Anne looks at Jerry with 'idea' eyes.

JERRY
What? Who?
(beat)
No...
(beat)
Seriously. I don't even have a band
and I don't have my guitar. It'll
take--

Anne points to Townie, holding an acoustic guitar.

JERRY (CONT'D)
No! Fuck that. I'm a band guy. NOT
a solo guy. Name one guy who went
acoustic that DIDN'T sound lame?

ANNE
Steve Soto, Brett Gurewitz, Tim
Armstrong, Chuck Regan...

JERRY
Okay, okay, okay.

ANNE

I've already re-billed the night.
Most people are keeping their
tickets for a chance to see YOU,
solo. So, this-is-happening.

Jerry sighs and nods his head. Anne smiles.

INT. THE TASTY TAVERN - LATER THAT NIGHT

A small, yet eager, crowd stands in front of the stage. The lights dim and they cheer.

Jerry takes the stage, just him and his guitar.

JERRY

Thanks...

He tunes his guitar.

JERRY (CONT'D)

I know most of you were expecting
something else...

CONCERT GOWER

Fuck it!

JERRY

(laughing)

Well, now you're stuck with me.

The crowd cheers as Jerry begins playing a Forced 40 song. It's fast and aggressive. Jerry gives his signature scream into the mic. It sounds like *noise* without the rest of the band. Most of the audience seem to enjoy it as they sing along.

Sue watches from the back of the bar. She holds her hands over her ears as Anne slides on giant headphones. But Sue's face is still unimpressed with the music.

INT. THE TASTY TAVERN - LATER THAT NIGHT

Jerry's just about done with his set. He sounds and looks tired. He looks out to the crowd. They look bored. He sees one person yawn. He needs to do something. He's losing them.

He can hear his heart beating, louder and louder. Then he looks at Sue. She looks tired, her arms crossed.

Jerry starts to strum the intro to the next song. It's slower, with an Americana vibe. Sue lowers her arms.

JERRY

Okay, this is the last one. It's an oldie, but--uh--done a little different...

They cheer.

JERRY (CONT'D)

This is, 'Oblivion'.

As he begins singing the toned-down version of the song, the crowd begins to sway to the music. This is different.

Jerry looks up and even Sue smiles. EVERYONE is into this new style.

Someone in the back holds up a phone and records it.

EXT. THE TASTY TAVERN - LATER THAT NIGHT

Anne stands with Sue as people file out of the bar. Jerry exits as a few people stop him to grab a picture.

CONCERT GOER 1

Dude, that was awesome.

JERRY

Cool. Thanks.

CONCERT GOER 2

Are you working on a new album?

Jerry starts to light up. He's liking the attention.

JERRY

New album?

CONCERT GOER 2

Yeah, that last song was amazing.

JERRY

Really?

CONCERT GOER 2

Totally. I want more. Can I download it somewhere?

JERRY

I don't know what that means, but yeah, I'm, uh, working on stuff.

Concert Goer 2 exits with a big smile. Jerry has a big shit eating grin on his face. He's liking the attention as he walks up to Anne and Sue.

Anne gives a clap.

ANNE

Wow...

JERRY

Shut up.

SUE

'Shut up' is a bad word.

Anne nods and agrees with Sue.

JERRY

(to Sue)

THAT'S the bad word?

ANNE

That last song.

JERRY

Don't say...

ANNE

I told you it'd be good. That song was different. It was...slow.

Just then more CONCERT GOERS arrive.

CONCERT GOER 3

We love that new song. We're actually going to a party, you should come.

JERRY

It's an old song, just done differently. And, I like parties. A lot!

The Concert Goers laugh.

CONCERT GOER 3

Perfect. We're leaving now. You can ride with us.

JERRY

Great...

As Jerry starts to leave with them, Sue tugs at his shirt.

JERRY (CONT'D)
 (to Sue-annoyed)
 What?!

SUE
 I think I'm tired.

JERRY
 Cool, go tell Anne or something.
 I'm going with them.

Jerry tries to exit with the partiers when Anne pulls him to the side.

ANNE
 Hey! Dipshit. The kid is tired.

Jerry looks, Sue yawns.

ANNE (CONT'D)
 Take her home.

JERRY
 Yeah, but they have beers and
 drugs...

Anne shoots him a very stern look and motions to Sue again.

JERRY (CONT'D)
 (very annoyed)
 Fine. Get your shit and lets go.
 (to Concert Goers)
 Sorry. Next time...

The Concert Goers are disappointed as they exit.

Jerry motions for Sue to follow him.

Anne watches the two of them walk away. Sue is saying something to Jerry, but we can't hear. She tries to hold Jerry's hand, but he flinches and moves.

Anne gives a concerned look, then hears a glass break inside the bar.

ANNE
 TOWNIE!

EXT. RESTARAUNT - DAY

Jerry and Sue eat another breakfast burrito.

Jerry sips his beer as they sit in silence and eat. Jerry notices that Sue keeps looking at him. Then looking away.

JERRY
(annoyed)
What?!

Sue shakes her head.

JERRY (CONT'D)
If there's shit on my face you have
to tell me.

Then Sue takes a quick glance at his ear.

Jerry sets his burrito down.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Ask.

SUE
Why does your ear look all melted?

Jerry takes a beat to search for the right words.

JERRY
(half annoyed)
Ya know how there's good guys and
bad guys?

Sue nods.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Well, my... 'father' was a very,
very bad guy.

SUE
And he hurt you?

Jerry nods.

Sue contemplates for a moment.

SUE (CONT'D)
Yeah, my dad was a bad guy too.

JERRY
And, he hurt you?

Sue lowers and shakes her head.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Your mom?

She slowly nods.

Jerry's body stiffens. He sips his beer.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Hey...

She looks up.

JERRY (CONT'D)

High-five to shithead dads.

Sue gives him a shy-reluctant high five.

SUE

Are you a bad guy?

Jerry goes back to his burrito and takes a bite.

JERRY

(mouth full)

I've been called worse...

Sue gives a small frown, lowers her head and takes a bite. Jerry can tell she didn't like that answer.

They continue eating in silence.

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jerry's busy changing his guitar strings. He looks cranky.

Sue enters the room and just watches for a minute. She notices a new Rolling Stone magazine with Forced 40 on the cover. She can feel the tension in the room.

SUE

Why do you have a mad face?

JERRY

It's not a mad face, it's just my face.

SUE

But you...

JERRY

Are you gonna just stand there, or you wanna help?

She shrugs.

Jerry slides a new string onto the guitar and gets ready to tighten it.

He looks at Sue again.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Come on. Help or stop staring.

Jerry gestures to the guitar as Sue approaches. Jerry hands her a string winder.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Here, take this. Put it here...

He shows her how to use it.

JERRY (CONT'D)
And start winding.

Sue goes fast.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Woah, woah. It's not a race.

He takes her hand and shows her how to do it.

JERRY (CONT'D)
There. Like that. Keep going until
I say stop.

Sue keeps winding. She's concentrating hard. The string gets tighter and Jerry begins plucking it.

JERRY (CONT'D)
(quietly)
Okay, stop...

Sue keeps going. Stuck in concentration.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Okay...good!

Sue keeps winding until the string snaps and cuts Jerry's finger.

He jumps back.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Motherfucker! I said stop.

He grabs the winder from her hand and tosses it.

FLASH - JERRY'S DAD HITS THE HOOD OF HIS OLD TRUCK.

Sue is scared.

JERRY
 Didn't you hear me?!

Sue shakes her head.

JERRY (CONT'D)
 DAMMIT KID! Pay attention!

FLASH - CLOSE UP OF JERRY'S DAD'S MOUTH AS HE YELLS FOR YOUNG JERRY.

Sue cowers more.

JERRY
 Just fucking, go watch TV or something.

Sue exits and Jerry hears a door slam.

Jerry's hot with rage and heavy with embarrassment. He looks at the guitar, and then the magazine cover.

JERRY (CONT'D)
 (to himself - embarrassed)
 Fuck...

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT - LATER

The door to the bathroom is shut. Jerry gives a small knock.

No answer. He knocks again.

JERRY
 You in there?

SUE
 Go away. You're a bad guy.

Jerry sighs and takes a seat outside the bathroom.

Jerry tries to find the right words.

JERRY
 Here's how it is, okay? I've never been one to have a lot of patience. So I'm at a different starting line than most guys. I don't know how to do this.

(MORE)

JERRY (CONT'D)

I know those CPS people are trying to find your mom. I'm sure you'll be back with her real soon, okay?

He waits.

Then Jerry quietly hears Sue on the other side of the door humming a tune, then singing.

SUE (O.S.)

"Have you ever done something, that you weren't supposed to do? And afterward, you felt bad. Okay, here's what you should do."

Slowly Sue cracks the door and looks at Jerry. He's as confused as ever.

Sue continues with the song.

SUE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

"Say sorry for your actions..."

Jerry has his resting dickhead face on. Eyebrows furrowed and hands on hips.

SUE (CONT'D)

"That's right, YOU apologize..."

JERRY

Okay, okay. Leave the singing to me. Sorry. There, happy?

Sue studies him for a beat.

SUE

Now lets practice breathing.

Jerry rolls his eyes.

JERRY

I can't with this kid...

Jerry turns and walks away. Sue smiles.

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - DAY

Jerry paces in the kitchen as he holds the CPS business card. He checks on Sue in the LIVING ROOM. She's happily watching Bluey. He takes out his cell phone and dials.

The phone rings and rings. Finally.

DENA (V.O.)
Hello...

JERRY
(whispered)
Hey, it's Growl. Jerry Growl.

DENA (V.O.)
Is everything okay with Sue?

JERRY
(whispered)
Yeah. She's fine. It's been over a week. I thought by now...

DENA (V.O.)
We still haven't been able to contact Monica.

Jerry mouths 'fuck'.

JERRY
It's just work is starting to get busy for me, and, if you could find her faster...

DENA (V.O.)
Listen, I understand this isn't the best time or best idea. But you are literally all that kid has. I have a dozen other cases that are far scarier than what Sue is going through. But we're doing our best, okay?

JERRY
(rushed)
Yeah okay. Thanks. I guess just let me know if you hear anything.

Jerry quickly ends the call and enters the LIVING ROOM.

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jerry sits on the couch with Sue to watch Bluey. He furrows his brow as he watches. He just doesn't get it.

JERRY
Why do they talk like that?

SUE
Like what?

JERRY

Is that an accent? Dogs don't have accents!

SUE

YEAH THEY DO!

JERRY

You show me a dog with an accent and I'll show you Johnny Ramone.

SUE

What's a Donny Lemmone?

Jerry turns the TV off.

SUE (CONT'D)

Hey!

JERRY

You've never heard The Ramones?!

Sue shakes her head.

JERRY (CONT'D)

I raised your mom better than that.

SUE

(matter of fact)

Mom says she was raised backstage.

Jerry rolls his eyes and lets out another sigh.

After a beat, Jerry stands and goes to his record collection. Sue watches as he pulls out The Ramones, Rocket To Russia, and turns it on. 'Do You Want to Dance' starts playing.

Jerry looks at Sue with a big shit-eating grin. She watches as he slowly starts to dance/pogo to the music.

Sue watches in confusion, not sure if she likes the music.

Jerry tries to encourage her to join him.

JERRY

Come on. Who needs TV? This is a classic!

Sue isn't falling for it. She gets up. Jerry starts to smile. But she turns the TV back on. Jerry is annoyed.

Then there's a knock at the front door.

He answers. It's Anne.

ANNE

Hey!

She peaks in and sees Sue on the couch.

ANNE (CONT'D)

(re: Sue)

How's it going?

Anne enters and can tell he's clearly annoyed.

ANNE (CONT'D)

Hey-ya Sue-Bear. What's cracking?

She gives a half-assed smile to Anne and goes back to TV.

ANNE (CONT'D)

Well alright then.

Jerry gracefully pulls Anne to the KITCHEN.

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

JERRY

(annoyed)

CPS still hasn't heard anything.
I'm so tired, just so tired. Like
all the time. She doesn't stop
moving. I've only had like, twelve
beers this week.

ANNE

God forbid.

(beat)

There is this other thing...

Jerry sighs as he waits impatiently for her to finish.

ANNE (CONT'D)

We've been getting a lot of calls
at Tasty...

JERRY

Listen, you can tell NOFX that I'm
not paying those fuckers a dime...

ANNE

No, no, no...

She takes out her phone and plays a video of Jerry's last
show.

He's playing the final song and everyone is singing along.

Jerry looks confused.

JERRY

So, it's all over The Facebook?

ANNE

NO PEEPAW! Look! People like it.

She points to the number of views- 10,000!

ANNE (CONT'D)

I've gotten calls almost everyday since you played. And since you have about *ZERO* social media skills, people have resulted in calling me. A LOT.

JERRY

Really, they liked it? Well tell those idiots it was a 'one and done'. Special one night only affair. I only play with the band.

ANNE

Yes, you've made that clear. But, the bar made money that night. Good money for a weeknight. You should do it weekly.

JERRY

The acoustic thing? That's for wash-ups and has beens. Or someone trying to reclaim glory. Plus, I feel like a poser. Like some hippy with a guitar singing at Woodstock or some shit. It's not me. I'm a... band guy!

ANNE

...Band guy. I know. But get your head out of your ass. People liked it. And I know you liked it too.

JERRY

That's not the point. I--

Suddenly there's a crash from the living room.

SUE (O.S.)

Um--Growl. I spilled--a lot.

Jerry rolls his eyes.

ANNE

Think of it like this. The more you play, the less you have to babysit.

Jerry thinks on it.

JERRY

I'm not going soft! Or country!

ANNE

Nobody's asking you to.

JERRY

Fine, one more. That's it!

ANNE

Great, I already printed flyers.

JERRY

What?

Anne excitedly hugs an awkward Jerry as he follows her to...

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

She gives Sue a thumbs up and exits.

Jerry takes a breath and then sits with Sue.

JERRY

Just so you know, I talked to the CPS people...

Sue looks hopeful, but can tell by Jerry it's not good news.

JERRY (CONT'D)

You can stay here for a little while and just, ah, hang out I guess. I mean, I'm not going anywhere.

They sit in silence for a beat.

JERRY (CONT'D)

You wanna listen to The Ramones or watch the Australian dogs?

Sue points to the TV and Jerry sighs, then obliges.

INT. THE TASTY TAVERN - NIGHT

Jerry sits with Sue at the bar. She sips sparkling water as he finishes another bourbon and writes lyrics on a napkin.

In the background, a band gets ready for soundcheck.

From the stage, someone spots Jerry.

DICKY BARRETT
YO! Is that THEE JERRY GROWL?

Jerry spins around to see lead singer, Dicky Barrett, walking toward him.

JERRY
(to himself)
Oh shit...

Sue notices Jerry's reaction.

SUE
Who is that?

JERRY
A giant pain in my--

Dicky approaches. Jerry quickly stuffs the napkin in his pockets.

JERRY (CONT'D)
What's up Dicky.

DICKY BARRETT
Seems like every time we play here,
you're never around.

JERRY
Yea, almost like it's on purpose...

DICKY BARRETT
Ahhh, come here...

Dicky pulls Jerry in for a hug.

JERRY
Alright...

Jerry pushes him off.

DICKY BARRETT
'member that time we opened for
Forced 40. You got wicked hammered
and punched the security guy...

JERRY

(annoyed)

Yeah, yeah...that was awhile back.

That was the same tour...

(whispers)

I fucked your--

Dicky cuts him off.

DICKY BARRETT

YEAH! Okay. Didn't they fire you on

that tour...

They stare daggers for a beat before Dicky notices Sue.

DICKY BARRETT (CONT'D)

And, who's this?

JERRY

This is, Sue. My grand...my
daughter's kid. She's staying with
me for a little.

DICKY BARRETT

(to Jerry - perplexed)

YOU have a grandkid?

(to Sue)

Your ol' grandad...

Jerry rolls his eyes.

DICKY BARRETT (CONT'D)

...we used to get into a lot
trouble. He's one tough son of a
bitch. I'm sure he's told you all
kinds of stories.

SUE

He doesn't say much...

DICKY BARRETT

(to Jerry)

This age is the best...

(sincere-scared)

Then they get older...and smarter.

JERRY

Alright, don't you have a sound
check to do, or something...

DICKY BARRETT

(to Jerry - re: himself)

Lead singer...I'm already done.

(to Sue)

(MORE)

DICKY BARRETT (CONT'D)
Make sure this old guy tells you
about the time we stole--

JERRY
I will...I will. Enough story time.

DICKY BARRETT
(to Jerry)
You stayin' for the show?

JERRY
We'll see.

DICKY BARRETT
(to Sue)
Nice to meet you, little lady.

Sue waves as Dicky exits.

SUE
Who was that?

JERRY
Old friend.

SUE
You know it's polite to say
goodbye.

Jerry leans over the bar and pours himself a large glass of
bourbon.

JERRY
Strike one for 'ol Grawl, then.

SUE
What does getting fired mean?

Jerry takes a big swig.

JERRY
It means ah...to be let go. Like
when a job doesn't want you
anymore.

Sue studies him as he finishes the drink.

SUE
Are you lying?

Jerry stops in his tracks.

JERRY

Ya know kid, I'm a lot of things,
but a liar ain't one of them. I
won't lie to you. Got it?

Sue nods as Jerry pours himself another drink. He sips it as he watches Dickey and the band play.

Sue notices a look of sadness run through Jerry's eyes. He continues drinking.

CUT TO
FLASHBACK:

INT. JERRY & KRISTY'S APARTMENT - DAY - 1994

Four-year old Monica plays with CATE (20s), Kristy's sister. Cate looks professional and clean-cut. She tries to play with Monica, to distract her from the yelling in the next room.

The apartment is messy, with used baby bottles on the table, music equipment everywhere, old furniture, and used beer bottles.

KRISTY (30) and Jerry (30) come bursting into the living room. Both clearly drunk. Kristy smokes heavily which adds to the hanging smoke in the room.

JERRY

Fine, call the cops. Your sister is
my witness, I haven't done shit.

CATE

You guys, please...

Cate picks up Monica.

KRISTY

I already called em!

JERRY

(dismissive)
Oh good for you...

KRISTY

Just say it, then! SAY IT, PUSSY!

CATE

(to Kristy)
KRISTY...

Cate gestures to the baby. Kristy dismisses her and digs her heels into the fight.

KRISTY

You wish we never had this baby.
You think WE fucked up your band.
Say it, just say it...

JERRY

Leave it alone...
(under his breath - but
loud enough)
...You drunk, bitch.

Now she's fuming. She has a crazy fire in her eyes. She looks around the room. Then she spots it.

Kristy holds up a magazine with Forced 40 on the cover that reads- "NEW SINGER, NEW SOUND, NEW RECORD". The band members hold gold records and look excited.

KRISTY

Well, I think they're doing pretty great without you...

JERRY

Put that away...

Jerry pours another drink.

KRISTY

(condescending)
You just miss being on the road?!
Playing music to the masses?!
Getting loaded all the
time...FUCKING WHOEVER YOU WANT!

Monica starts crying.

CATE

Okay, if you two aren't going to calm down, I'll take her for a walk.

Jerry takes a swig, barely acknowledging the baby and Cate.

Cate looks to her sister for some kind of acknowledgement. She brushes them both off as she's too drunk and too mad.

Cate rushes out the door to escape the growing fight.

JERRY

Being on the road never stopped you from having whatever 'fun' you wanted to have. And the more I think of it, Monica looks nothing like me!

KRISTY

You're a real piece of shit. My
'fun' never showed up at our
apartment asking if you were
here...

JERRY

I don't know who the fuck that was!

KRISTY

(mocking)

Because Jerry Growl never tells a
lie. Cause he's some kind of punk
rock guru...

(serious - to herself)

Fucking joke.

(to Jerry)

And now you wanna take the little
money we have left and open a bar--
with Anne. Lemme guess, you're
fucking her too...

Jerry is turning red with rage.

JERRY

I never even wanted to have a kid!

KRISTY

Yes, you've made that very clear!

JERRY

I made it clear on day one, I
didn't want kids. But some groupie
bitch poked holes in our condoms
when I was drunk.

KRISTY

You know what? I've got an idea.
You should call the band and
apologize. Get down on your hands
and knees and see if they'll have
you back.

Jerry is about to pop.

KRISTY (CONT'D)

I bet you'd be a great
roadie...NO...groupie. You can suck
a mean di--

Jerry throws a bottle, it explodes on the wall.

Kristy jumps.

JERRY
WHAT THE FUCK IS WRONG WITH YOU...

MONICA
ME...!? YOU'RE A LOSER WHO'S NEVER
GONNA DO ANYTHING...LOSER!

INT. APARTMENT COMPLEX HALLWAY - SAME

We slowly back out of the hallway. Muffled screams and cries can be heard coming from their apartment.

Two POLICE OFFICERS walk the hallway towards their apartment.

CUT TO PRESENT:

INT. JERRYS APARTMENT - THE NEXT MORNING

Jerry slowly opens his eyes. He's on the couch and hungover. He looks around. The apartment is different. It's cleaner. Not spotless, but tidy.

He sits up and notices it's late morning.

Jerry scans the room and then sees Anne sitting in the KITCHEN, staring at him.

ANNE
(serious)
Morning, dickhead.

Jerry looks confused.

ANNE (CONT'D)
Sue's fine. Townie's taking her to get breakfast.

JERRY
Townie?

ANNE
Oh, you think maybe I should've had someone else watch her?

Jerry playfully shrugs and nods.

ANNE (CONT'D)
(snaps)
Do you think it was my first choice to see Sue, *AT THE BAR LAST NIGHT. ALONE!*

Jerry looks surprised.

ANNE (CONT'D)

That little girl wandered into my office, tired, hungry, and scared. She said you left *HOURS* ago. She was just sitting in our busy bar, by herself. GOD KNOWS WHAT COULD'VE HAPPENED JERRY!

JERRY

(hungover)

Yeah, but she was fine--

ANNE

She said you were mad at the music and didn't wanna see anyone. So you got up, and left. You left her because you were black-out drunk, again. And she was worried about YOU. She kept asking if you were going to be okay.

Jerry looks like he's trying to piece together the night.

ANNE (CONT'D)

She crashed at my place. I came here to make sure you weren't gonna die, or already dead. And, here we are.

JERRY

And here we are?

Jerry grabs a stale beer and sips it.

ANNE

Remember how you were a shitty father and husband? REMEMBER!?! Well, I do. The whole fucking thing. I'm not going to watch you act--like this--

(beat)

It's not fair. So time to decide.

JERRY

It's not like...

ANNE

JERRY! Look at me.

He looks at her with his puffy, hungover face.

ANNE (CONT'D)
 You spent your whole life running
 away from your father.
 (disgust)
 It looks like he finally caught up.

She stands and walks to the front door.

ANNE (CONT'D)
 We're going to get ice cream later.
 Come and say the right things, or
 don't come at all.

Anne slams the door as she exits.

EXT. ICE CREAM SHOP - LATER

Anne, Sue, and Townie eat ice cream.

TOWNIE
 I slept in an ice cream truck once.

Sue and Anne both look confused.

Townie looks around.

TOWNIE (CONT'D)
 I don't think he's coming.

ANNE
 (to Townie)
 Good god, man.
 (to Sue)
 Don't worry.

Sue takes a bite of ice cream and sees him in the distance.

SUE
 (to Townie)
 Told you!

Jerry arrives, still hungover. He nods to Anne and Townie.

JERRY
 (awkward)
 Ice cream...looks good.

Sue nods and takes another bite.

JERRY (CONT'D)
 (to Sue)
 Wanna take a walk, kid?

Sue looks to Anne. Anne nods.

Sue stands to go with Jerry.

SUE
(to Anne)
Thank for the ice cream.

ANNE
You got it.

Jerry and Sue walk down the street together.

EXT. CITY STREET - MOMENTS LATER

JERRY
What'd you get?

SUE
It's mint and chip. My favorite.

JERRY
Mine too...
(beat)
Listen kid, about last night...I
like to drink. Sometimes I drink
too much and I act like an idiot.

Jerry looks at her and can tell that isn't working. He stops
and comes down to her level.

JERRY (CONT'D)
I'm...stressed, I guess. I'm just
kinda used to doin' my own thing.
So this-- me and you-- it's new...

She gives a little smile.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Anne's got me playing more music at
the bar.

Sue looks confused.

JERRY (CONT'D)
(hesitant)
Maybe you could help me?

Sue starts to smile. She sticks out her hand.

SUE
Deal. Shake on it.

Jerry's impressed and shakes.

Jerry stands and looks across the street. He sees a record store.

JERRY

Have you ever been record shopping?

Sue shakes her head. Jerry smiles and presses the 'Cross Walk Button'.

Sue tries to hold his hand. Jerry jerks away.

JERRY (CONT'D)

What the hell you doin' with those little raccoon hands?

SUE

We have to hold hands to cross...

JERRY

No, not today. You'll be fine. Just stay close.

The light turns and Jerry walks. Sue stays close.

INT. RECORD STORE - MOMENTS LATER

Jerry picks up a random record and takes it out.

JERRY

(to Sue)

See all these tiny, tiny grooves...

Sue nods.

JERRY (CONT'D)

There's music in those tiny grooves. And this is the, and always will be, the best way to listen to music.

SUE

Why?

JERRY

The first time the needle hits a brand-new record, it's like time stops. The warmth, the tone...even the cracks and pops...it's magic.

SUE

Can we get it?

Jerry looks at the record - 'Best of Boston'.

JERRY

Absolutely not. This is shit. Let's find something that speaks to you.

They continue walking around the store.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Let's see...hey. You like the Blues show...

SUE

Bluey!

JERRY

And you're always singing that song.

Sue starts singing the intro to Bluey, humming the tune.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Yeah, that's the one.

Jerry's onto something now and looking for a record. He quickly rifles through records, until...

JERRY (CONT'D)

GOT IT...

He holds up a Go-Go's record.

JERRY (CONT'D)

This...you'll love this.

They both take the record to the counter to pay.

RECORD STORE OWNER

Hey, Growl. Just the one?

Jerry nods and gets his wallet out.

While Jerry buys the record, Sue sees a big framed poster of Jerry, with Forced 40. Jerry is behind bars and the rest of the band are laughing on the other side. The caption reads - 'The Baddest Guy In Town'.

Sue studies it for a beat.

JERRY

(to Sue)

Let's kick rocks...

He notices her staring at the poster.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Yeah, we can't all be saints.

They exit.

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT - LATER THAT DAY

Jerry excitedly takes Sue over to his coveted record player with the Go-Go's record.

SUE
Can...can I do it?

Jerry reluctantly agrees.

JERRY
First, take the record out. You wanna hold it by the edges if possible.

Sue complies.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Good, good. Then see that tiny hole in the middle. You're gonna wanna put that little piece of metal through it...

Sue does it.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Hell, you're a natural. Then carefully lift that needle and softly put it on the record...

Sue drops the needle, making a loud 'record scratch' noise. She looks at him, nervously.

JERRY (CONT'D)
That's okay. Not good for the needle, but you're still learning. Now try again...

Sue once again tries and this time with success. The song, 'We Got The Beat', starts playing.

Slowly, Sue's face starts to light up.

JERRY (CONT'D)
What do you think?

Sue starts to bounce her head to the music.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Yeah, there you go!

Jerry notices her foot tapping.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Now we're talkin' tuna!

Sue loves it and is dancing hard now. She continues dancing until the song ends.

Suddenly, she hugs Jerry.

SUE
That was so cool.

Jerry, feeling uncomfortable, just pats her head. When he looks down at her, he can see how dirty she is.

JERRY
When was the last time you took a shower?

SUE
I've never taken a shower, we only had a bath.

JERRY
I think the time is now...

Jerry starts walking to the bathroom.

SUE
But Mom always...

Jerry shifts uncomfortably as he realizes he's still just an old guy, not a 'safe' parent.

JERRY
Right...Mom...

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - LATER

Anne gives Sue a bath as she excitedly recalls the events of the day. Jerry plays guitar in the LIVING ROOM.

SUE
(mid story - excited)
...And then, and then we picked a record and got to play it. Growl let me put the record on, and I danced for so long!

Anne smiles and continues bathing Sue.

INT. JERRYS APARTMENT - LATER THAT NIGHT

Jerry continues playing his guitar. Two beers sit on the table in front of him. Anne enters, sits next to him and, grabs one of the beers.

ANNE

That child was filthy. I put her in your bed. She needs a real bed, ya know...

He gives a small nod and continues playing.

JERRY

Uh-huh...

Anne listens to the song.

ANNE

Sounds good. New?

JERRY

Uh-huh...

ANNE

Tickets are selling.

Jerry plays and starts to hum a melody. Anne sips her beer.

INT. THE TASTY TAVERN - NIGHT

Jerry's on stage. He's just finished a song.

JERRY

I'm sure you ol' timers remember that one.

The crowd cheers.

JERRY (CONT'D)

I wrote that with Forced 40...

The crowd cheers again.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Wonder whatever happened to those guys...

The crowd laughs.

JERRY (CONT'D)

This is the last song. Something new.

Sue is at the back of the bar with giant headphones on, cheering as well.

Jerry starts playing the new song. Once again, it's a little slower, but with some edge to it, and people are singing along again. They like it!

As we move around the room, people are singing, smiling and, looking at each other with happily surprised faces. This time some more phones are recording the show.

Jerry strums the last chord of the song and the crowd cheers.

JERRY (CONT'D)

(to audience)

Thanks. Cool to see some more faces this time. Night...

He sets his guitar down, grabs his beer, and exits the stage.

Sue claps as Anne slings drinks. Jerry approaches.

ANNE

Great set tonight.

SUE

So cool!

Jerry gives a half assed bow.

Anne sets a drink down and approaches.

ANNE

Almost sold out, too.

SUE

I told you they'd like the last song...

Jerry lights up a cigarette as a YOUNG FEMALE FAN (20s) approaches with her two friends, trying to get Jerry's attention.

YOUNG FEMALE FAN

Hey...hi...sorry. Can we get a picture?

Jerry immediately turns on the 'rock star charm'.

JERRY
Why, but of course.

The Young Female Fan takes a few quick selfies.

Jerry sips his beer as the Young Female Fan's friends exit.
But she sticks around.

YOUNG FEMALE FAN
Great set tonight.

Jerry tips his glass in gratitude.

YOUNG FEMALE FAN (CONT'D)
That last song was *great*, too.
(embarrassed)
Urgh...stop saying 'great'.

JERRY
It's fine.

YOUNG FEMALE FAN
Can I download it?

JERRY
(unsure)
Download--

Anne interrupts.

ANNE
Not yet. We're getting ready to
record it now.

Jerry looks surprised but tries to keep up.

JERRY
Yeah...recording soon and stuff.
But I have vinyl for sale too.
Signed and limited.

Jerry realizes she's making 'fuck me' eyes. He reciprocates.

She takes a step closer.

YOUNG FEMALE FAN
I'd love your signature...

Just then Sue approaches.

SUE
Hey Growl...

Jerry ignores her.

JERRY

(to Young Female Fan)

Damn, I don't have a pen here. Why don't you come over and I'll...

SUE

Growl...I'm tired a need to pee.

Young Female Fan's attention goes to Sue.

YOUNG FEMALE FAN

Oh, hello. And what's your name?

Sue gets shy.

JERRY

This is Sue. My...daughters kid.

Young Female Fan's energy changes immediately.

YOUNG FEMALE FAN

Oh, your *granddaughter*? That's...so nice. I should probably get back to my friends. It was nice to meet you two...

And before he knows it, she's disappeared into the crowd.

He turns to Sue.

JERRY

Ya know, there used to be a code about doing that...

SUE

Anne says I'm tired and you have to take me back.

Jerry looks up to Anne, and she gives him a cheeky look.

EXT. THE TASTY TAVERN - MOMENTS LATER

Jerry and Sue are exiting and see Young Female Fan.

YOUNG FEMALE FAN

(to Jerry)

Hey, don't feel bad. You're a hot grandpa.

She slips her number into his hand.

YOUNG FEMALE FAN (CONT'D)

(to Sue)

Your grandpa is pretty cool, kid.

She exits as Jerry and Sue begin their walk home.

SUE

Who was that even?

JERRY

Someone with horrible taste.

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

Sue is in a small, makeshift bed now. Jerry sits on the coffee table next to her, finishing a 'bedtime story'.

JERRY

Well, at first we were just four friends who wanted to play loud and fast. Then all of a sudden people start to like our music. We make a self released vinyl that really sells. People, suits, really start to take notice. And that's where things go off the rails. They want one thing, I want something else, and...

Jerry gets lost in thought for a beat. Trying to remember how it 'really' went down.

JERRY (CONT'D)

But at the end of it, we just didn't like each other. So they fired me, they got rich, I didn't. The end.

Sue lets out a big yawn. Jerry stands and turns the lights off.

SUE

What does 'fired' mean again?

JERRY

Well, it's kinda like when something doesn't want you anymore...

SUE

Did my mom fire me?

JERRY

Oh shit...
 (beat - thinking)
 No...

He looks at Sue. Her face is riddled with worry.

JERRY (CONT'D)

I know she loves you. You're a really *nice* kid. Sometimes adults do things that don't make sense when you're little. I know it feels like being little is hard, but I guarantee, being an adult is the hardest. Now try and sleep.

Turns to exit once again.

SUE

But I'm not tired.

Jerry can see how tired her eyes are. He notices his guitar.

JERRY

Do you want me to play?

Sue nods. Jerry picks up his guitar and starts strumming a fast song.

SUE

No, no, no. Not that one.

Jerry looks annoyed at first. He quickly thinks and starts playing a mellow, Americana melody. Jerry hums at first and then starts making up lyrics about Sue.

JERRY

(singing - *temp* lyrics)
 I WAS OUT LATE DRIFTING, JUST OFF
 AND BEING NAUGHTY.
 I LIVED LIFE AND ALL I WANTED TO DO
 WAS PARTY. I COULDN'T REMEMBER
 WHERE I WAS, OR HOW I GOT THERE.
 I JUST KNEW IT WAS GOING NOWHERE.
 THEN ALONG CAME THIS GIRL- SHE
 STOOD ABOUT TWO-FEET TALL.
 SHE WALKED IN THAT DOOR AND CHANGED
 IT ALL.
 LITTLE SUE GIRL, I SEE YOU NOW.
 LITTLE SUE GIRL SHE SAYS IT'S TOO
 LOUD.
 LITTLE GIRL SUE, CLOSE YOUR EYES
 BEFORE TOMORROW'S HERE.

(MORE)

JERRY (CONT'D)
*LITTLE GIRL SUE, THINGS WILL BE
 BETTER NEXT YEAR...*

A soft smile shines on her face before her heavy eyes start to close.

Jerry's proud of himself. He puts the guitar down and starts walking to his room when his phone vibrates with a text. He stops and turns to the FRONT DOOR and opens it.

It's Young Female Fan. She holds a bottle of bourbon.

Jerry gestures to Sue as they quietly tiptoe to Jerry's ROOM.

The bedroom door closes and music starts. It's loud, but then the volume drops and Jerry pokes his head out to quickly check on Sue. She's fast asleep.

EXT. PARK - BENCH - DAY

Jerry sits by himself on a park bench watching Sue play by herself at the PLAYGROUND. She looks up and smiles at him. He returns with a small wave.

Moments later YOUNG DAD (30) arrives and sits next to Jerry, as his SON (8) runs off to the PLAYGROUND.

Young Dad slowly starts to recognize Jerry.

YOUNG DAD
 Aren't you that musician? You have
 that bar, right?

JERRY
 (annoyed)
 Yeah, The Tasty Tavern. Other side
 of town.

YOUNG DAD
 Man, I knew it. Didn't you used to
 be in a band too, or something.

JERRY
 Yup...

YOUNG DAD
 That's so cool...

YOUNG DAD (CONT'D)
 My buddies are gonna be so
 jealous...

Young Dad takes out his phone.

EXT. PARK - PLAYGROUOND - SAME TIME

Young Dad's Son runs up to Sue. She's happily playing by herself.

SUE

Hi.

SON

Whatcha doing?

Sue looks over to Jerry on the BENCH, Young Dad is taking a selfie with Jerry.

SUE

Playing restaraunt. I'm the waiter,
wanna be the shopper?

SON

What's your name?

SUE

Sue.

SON

Sue? Sue rhymes with poo! Sue the
poo! HAHAHAHA.

EXT. PARK - BENCH - SAME TIME

Young Dad puts his phone back into his pocket.

YOUNG DAD

Man, I bet the tour-life is
awesome. Beers, girls...tell me
about the girls...

Jerry isn't really paying attention. He's watching Sue and Son at the PLAYGROUND. Sue looks like she's getting mad. She starts walking away from Son and he keeps following her.

YOUNG DAD (CONT'D)

Hey...

Jerry snaps out of it.

JERRY

Yeah it was a different time, man.
We had a lot of fun, without a
phone in site.

YOUNG DAD

Yeah bro. I get it. That's cool.
But tell me about the groupies.

JERRY

We weren't Motley Crue, man.

Young Dad studies Jerry for a beat. Jerry continues watching Sue.

EXT. PARK - PLAYGROUOND - SAME TIME

Son is now taunting Sue. Sue is doing her best to ignore it.

SON

Sue the poo. Sue the poo! I can't
wait to tell all my friends I met
SUE THE POO! HAHA.

Sue tries to get on a swing, but Son jumps in front of her and gets on it.

SON (CONT'D)

Sorry, this ones mine.

Sue rolls her eyes and walks to the next one. But Son jumps off his swing and gets on the next one.

SON (CONT'D)

Actually, they're all mine. No Sue
poo's allowed.

SUE

I don't have to listen to you.

Sue walks back to the original swing and gets on and starts swinging.

Son gets off his swing.

SON

Are you a dummy? I said no Sue
poo's allowed!

Out of nowhere he pushes her off the swing.

EXT. PARK - BENCH - SAME TIME

Young Dad is still at it.

YOUNG DAD
I play in a 'dad' band. Maybe we
could play at your bar.

Jerry see's her get pushed.

He stands angrily as Young Dad speaks.

YOUNG DAD (CONT'D)
So, can we play?

JERRY
Absolutely not!

Jerry runs to the PLAYGROUND. Young Dad now sees what's
happening and is quick in toe.

EXT. PARK - PLAYGROUOND - MOMENTS LATER

Sue dusts herself off just as Jerry and Young Dad arrive.

Sue looks down at her scraped knee.

SON
(to Young Dad)
Dad, she tripped...

Jerry's fuming and starts to approach Son.

JERRY
You little shithead...

Then Sue walks up to Son and kicks him right in the dick. Son
goes straight to the ground, crying.

Jerry stops in his tracks and looks at Sue shocked.

Young Dad quickly runs to aid his son.

YOUNG DAD
(to Son)
Are you okay?
(to Jerry)
Hey! Aren't you going to do
something.

Jerry looks at Sue. She's looks guilty.

JERRY
(to Young Dad)
Yeah, I am...

Sue lowers her head in shame.

JERRY (CONT'D)
I'm gonna take this little girl and
buy her an ice-cream. With extra
nuts.

Sue looks up and smiles.

Young Dad is furious, but can't do anything because Son is
still crying.

JERRY (CONT'D)
(to Sue)
Nice shot.

Jerry motions for them to leave.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Who taught you that?

SUE
Mom always said to aim for the
jewels.

Jerry has the biggest grin we've seen yet. They exit happily.

INT. THE TASTY TAVERN - CONTINUOUS

Anne notices Jerry and Sue enter. Jerry holds his guitar.

SUE
(to Anne)
Is Pluto a planet?

Anne thinks for a beat.

ANNE
I think it's a dwarf planet.

Sue gives Jerry an *'I Told You So Face'*.

JERRY
Alright, smart ass. You were KINDA
right.

He sets his guitar on the stage and starts prepping.

ANNE
(to Jerry)
You feeling good about tonight?

JERRY
 Yeah, this little dwarf planet...
 (re: Sue)
 ...is helping me a new song.

ANNE
 She is!?

Sue looks proud.

ANNE (CONT'D)
 Then she can help me with the merch
 table then.

Sue happily walks with Anne. Jerry watches stoically happy.

INT. THE TASTY TAVERN - LATER THAT NIGHT

Jerry is in the middle of his set. There are more people and more phones recording now.

JERRY
 This next song is a doozy. You old
 timers might remember it. Funny
 thing about it is, I wrote it
 hiiiiigh...

The crowd laughs.

JERRY (CONT'D)
 ...On cocaine. That's why it's so
 fast.

The crowd cheers.

JERRY (CONT'D)
 But times are a changing. I haven't
 done that...

He pretends to think, then quickly glances at Sue at the merch table.

JERRY (CONT'D)
 ...In a almost two months. So it
 might be a bit slower than what you
 remember.

The crowd laughs again. And just as Jerry is about to go into the song, Jerry spots TORCH (50s) enter the bar.

Torch looks around and then notices Jerry. He nods.

Jerry locks eyes with him and immediately gets serious.

JERRY (CONT'D)
 But then again, some things never
 change.

Jerry starts playing an old Forced 40 song.

Torch nods along with the song.

INT. THE TASTY TAVERN - LATER

The crowd has mostly dispersed. Anne and Sue clean the merch
 table as Jerry is putting his guitar away.

Torch casually walks up to Jerry. Anne notices from a
 distance.

TORCH
 Hey man, great set tonight...

Jerry pretends to ignore him.

TORCH (CONT'D)
 ...Even though you butchered that
 last song.

Jerry turns around with fire in his eyes. Ready for battle.

TORCH (CONT'D)
 Kidding, man. Kidding.

JERRY
 What the hell are you doing here?

TORCH
 Buy you a drink?

JERRY
 It's my bar dipshit, I drink for
 free.

TORCH
 Okay, buy me a drink.

Jerry notices Anne watching curiously.

INT. THE TASTY TAVERN - MOMENTS LATER

Jerry and Torch sit at the bar. Torch looks around the bar.

TORCH
 I can't believe this is my first
 time here.

(MORE)

TORCH (CONT'D)

(to Jerry)

Not one invite after all these years.

JERRY

I didn't want you to scuff your pretty shoes.

They both look down. Torch's shoes are pretty nice.

TORCH

If this gonna turn into the whole 'I'm a sellout' speech again, you save it. There's nothing wrong with making money doing something you're good at.

JERRY

It's not about the money, dickhead, it's about what you let it do to you.

TORCH

(starting to get loud)

Money didn't change anything! Does it help me get backstage passes or dinner reservations?! Sure. But I still have to practice everyday! And, we didn't change our sound *FOR* the money. We wanted to experiment with our sound!

JERRY

(yelling)

EXPERIMENT! IT WASN'T YOURS TO EXPERIMENT WITH...

Torch takes a breath and calms himself.

TORCH

Good god, Growl. I didn't come here to...

(thinking)

People change, okay. This doesn't have to be weird.

JERRY

I'm making it weird?! You assholes kicked me out of the band I started. That YOU and I started...

Torch takes a sip to calm himself.

TORCH

Hell, if I could go back and change that shit...

(thinking)

...I don't know what I'd do. You, us, the band, we were a mess. You didn't wanna play half the shows we promised. You were drunk all the time, you hated the label...

JERRY

They were stealing...

TORCH

You were on speed and thought everyone was stealing. We were young, dumb, and trying to do something. A lot of time has passed.

JERRY

For some of us...

TORCH

Okay, I get it. I'll cut to it then. Forced is coming up on a thirty-year anniversary.

Jerry looks inquisitive- *THIRTY YEARS?!*

TORCH (CONT'D)

We're doing a few hometown shows and I thought it'd be cool...

Jerry perks up.

JERRY

Oh...Okay, okay. I'll come out and sing a few songs for the old-school fans. BUT, I'm not doing it for free!

TORCH

Actually, I was hoping you'd open the show. Those new songs you wrote are killer. One of those YouTube videos had something like five hundred thousand views.

JERRY

Wait, wait, wait...you want *ME* to open for *YOU*?

Torch nods.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Yeah, that's what I thought I heard.

Jerry finishes his drink and stands to exit.

JERRY (CONT'D)

You haven't changed at all Torchy. Good luck with the anniversary of the band I started. Don't forget to tip...

(to himself)

Dickhead.

TORCH

Think about it, Growl. Could be huge.

(to himself)

Asshole.

Jerry exits.

EXT. JERRY'S APARTMENT - THE NEXT MORNING

The morning sun shines on Jerry as he sits on the steps of his building. He's smoking and finger-picking a melody on his guitar. It's the same song he sang to Sue to put her to bed. It has more lyrics now and it's slowly becoming a real song.

Sue exits the building, holding a cup of milk and sits by Jerry. He puts his smoke out. He stops singing and hums the melody now.

SUE

There were a lot of people there last night.

JERRY

People love a cheap cocktail and cheaper music.

He continues playing.

SUE

You should play this.

Jerry gives her an inquisitive look.

SUE (CONT'D)

Like when you're on stage...

Jerry laughs it off.

SUE (CONT'D)

Why not?

JERRY

Cause this is slow bedtime music. Perfect for little humans who need to sleep. But horrible for people who come to see me play old Forced 40 shit...stuff.

SUE

Well, I like it.

JERRY

Well, you're six and still waking up. And tired six-year-olds are like drunk fifty-nine-year olds...cranky.

Jerry starts playing a really fast song. Sue covers her ears as he antagonizes with the loud song.

NEIGHBOR (O.S.)

SHUT THE HELL UP!

Jerry stops and looks at Sue. They both look guilty and start laughing together.

INT. THE TASTY TAVERN - NIGHT

Jerry drinks as he's lost in thought.

After a beat, LARS FREDRIKSEN approaches and sits next to him. Lars leans over to Jerry.

LARS

(quietly)

Hey, man...

Jerry looks up, slightly annoyed.

LARS (CONT'D)

Sorry to bother you and all, but that first Forced 40 album is killer. Totally changed my life.

Jerry's surprised. A real fan.

JERRY

Thanks. You're uh--

LARS

Lars.

JERRY

Rancid! You guys are great.

Lars nods.

LARS

I'm doing a small solo tour.
Thought I'd come in and see the
legendary Tasty Tavern.

JERRY

Thoughts?

LARS

Well, it stinks, the service sucks
and the stage looks small...it's
perfect.

JERRY

My own design...

LARS

You'll never remember this, but we
opened for Forced just before you
left. Early nineties, Chicago...

Jerry wracks his brain.

LARS (CONT'D)

You kept coming to our dressing
room asking me for speed. I kept
telling you I was sober...

JERRY

Yeah, that tracks. God, I can't
believe you guys opened for US!

LARS

Are you kidding!? It was an honor!
We still listen that first album
all the time. And if I'm being
honest, I'm not much of a fan of
that new guy.

JERRY

That 'new guy' has been in the band
longer than I ever was. For most
people, he IS Forced 40.

Jerry takes a drink.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Weirdly enough, I was asked to play
with them on their anniversary
show.

LARS
THATS RAD!

JERRY
Well...not play *WITH* them. But open
for them.

LARS
(optimistic)
Oh...

JERRY
Exactly.

LARS
No, that's awesome. I saw some
video of you playing recently. Are
those new songs?

Jerry nods.

LARS (CONT'D)
So all those old school fans will
get to hear your new stuff too?

JERRY
Yeah, I guess. But it's a total
punch in the dick. They booted me
out of the band, then thirty years
later, I open for them?! It's a
total punch to the ego.

LARS
Fuck ego! There's always going to
be a reason to NOT do something. Do
you like these new songs?

Jerry nods again.

LARS (CONT'D)
Do you still like playing live?

Jerry smiles and nods.

LARS (CONT'D)
And I can only assume it's gonna be
a nice payday.

Jerry reluctantly agrees again.

LARS (CONT'D)
Then what's the fucking problem?
I'd buy that ticket.

Jerry thinks about it for a beat. Then finishes his drink.

JERRY
Alright, Lars. This would be easier
if you just agreed with me.

The two continue sharing stories as Jerry continues drinking.

INT. DRESSING ROOM - EVENING

Jerry looks nervous as Sue fumbles with his old flip phone.

SUE
There's no games on your phone.
What do you do with it?

JERRY
Call people. Or better yet, ignore
people.

Sue continues fumbling with it. Jerry's leg nervously shakes.

SUE
My mom's not coming back is she?

Jerry's leg stops.

JERRY
(plainly - honestly)
I really don't know, kid. I haven't
heard from CPS for weeks now.

Suddenly there's a knock at the door.

Jerry opens the door to see Torch, Stoney, and Mat. Torch lets himself in and the other two follow.

TORCH
Looks like you found the place.

STONEY
A little different from the rooms
we had back in the day, huh?

MAT
This room is bigger than mine, man.

Jerry nods, sizing up his old bandmates.

TORCH

I'm glad you decided to do this.

STONEY

The crowd is gonna be stoked.

MAT

(to Sue)

You must be Mon's daughter.

(to Jerry)

Is this her?

Jerry nods. Mat studies Sue.

MAT (CONT'D)

You look just like her. I can't believe you're old enough to be a grandpa.

Sue goes over to Jerry and stands.

JERRY

Easy with that grampy shit.

SUE

Are these the guys who fired you?

Jerry nods.

JERRY

Joe didn't wanna stop in?

The three band mates shrug awkwardly.

STONEY

Yeah, he's uh...doing vocal warm-ups.

JERRY

Cute.

MAT

Hey man, I'm really happy you're here. Those new songs are great.

SUE

(to Jerry)

Told you...

JERRY

Yeah yeah, kid. You're very smart.

Just as an awkward silence starts to loom, Anne enters.

ANNE

Well hello, gentlemen.

The three men all nod toward Anne, who's still holding the door open.

ANNE (CONT'D)

We need to get ready...

They all take the hint.

TORCH

Good luck tonight.

They exit.

ANNE

You're all set. The sound guy has your set list and I told him to go easy on the lights in your face since someone refuses to wear glasses.

JERRY

My guitar? Next time I'll walk out with it.

ANNE

It's tuned and waiting by the stage.

Jerry takes a deep breath and exhales a loud sigh.

SUE

Good job.

Suddenly another knock at the door.

STAGE MANAGER (O.C.)

Mister Growl, two minutes.

ANNE

Alright old man. Here we go.

INT. THEATER - MOMENTS LATER

Jerry, Anne, and Sue stand side-stage.

The lights dim and the crowd claps.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
 LADIES AND GENTLEMEN. PLEASE
 WELCOME, THE ONE, THE ONLY...JERRY
 GROWL.

The crowd goes nuts as they watch Jerry take the stage.

He waves to the crowd and gets himself comfortable.

JERRY
 Remember me?

The crowd cheers more.

JERRY (CONT'D)
 Alright, take it easy. I'm gonna be
 playing some new stuff tonight. I
 don't wanna hear any bitching about
 not playing the old stuff. I'll let
 Forced play the hits.

The audience laughs as Jerry goes into the first song. As he starts playing, he fumbles a chord, clearly making a mistake.

Everything slows down as a surge of panic floods Jerry. He looks down at his guitar, then up into the blinding stage lights. He can hear people in the crowd snickering. He can see people holding their phones out, ready to record something, anything.

He looks to the side of the stage. Anne mouths, "Play". He looks at Sue. She looks calm and cool. She smiles at him. She takes a BIG deep breath, he follows suit.

Then bam! He's back.

JERRY (CONT'D)
 Just a little Alzheimer's kicking
 in. Let's try that again.

Jerry goes into the song again without fail and everyone loves it.

INT. THEATER - LATER THAT NIGHT

Jerry finishes a song as a HECKLER yells from the back.

HECKLER
 STICK TO THE HITS...

JERRY
 I'm gonna stick it to your mom
 later...

The audience laughs and cheers.

JERRY (CONT'D)
 Alright, heathens. This is my last
 song. Here we go...

Jerry is a youthful surge. The crowd, the music, the attention. It's all working. People are clapping, and dancing to the music. Jerry can tell his music is doing something.

INT. THEATER - SIDE STAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Jerry exits the stage, and runs into JOE (50s), Forced 40's singer.

JOE
 Not bad, Growl.

Jerry gives him a polite nod as he walks by.

JOE (CONT'D)
 Might wanna work on those guitar
 lessons, though.

Jerry turns to say something but is interrupted by Anne and Sue.

ANNE
 Hey! That was...wow!

She makes the 'chefs kiss' movement.

SUE
 Those people cheered really loud!

ANNE
 And before you could say no, I
 already booked you a radio spot and
 a podcast.

JERRY
 Cool, but what's a podcast?

The three members of Forced 40 walk by.

TORCH
 (to Jerry)
 Solid set, Growl.

MAT
 (to Jerry)
 You were always a helluva
 songwriter.

Stoney gives him a thumbs up as he puffs on a joint.

They all make their way to the stage as the lights dim.

Intro music starts as Forced 40 waits.

ANNE

You coming? I've got beers in the
green room.

Jerry watches the stage.

JERRY

I'm gonna watch for a minute.

Anne nods as she takes Sue back to the green room.

Forced 40 takes the stage and opens with a big song.

Jerry watches as he lights a cigarette. His brow furrows in quiet jealousy as he focuses on Joe. Joe leads the band and the crowd like a punk rock maestro.

INT. THEATER - BACKSTAGE - LATER THAT NIGHT

The night is over as everyone is packing up. Jerry, Anne, and Sue are exiting. They pass by Forced 40 and their entourages.

Jerry keeps his eyes down as he passes Joe.

JOE

(growling like a dog)
Grrrrrr...grrrrrrr...grrrrrowl!

Joe and his entourage giggle. Jerry pretends he didn't hear.

JOE (CONT'D)

(to his entourage -
playing with his ear)
Maybe he didn't hear me.

More giggles. Jerry finally turns towards Joe.

JOE (CONT'D)

The acoustic thing is cool.
(to entourage)
Everyone loves a washed-up lush.

Joe laughs along with some of the crew and groupies.

Jerry starts to storm toward him but is stopped by Anne. She shakes her head and motions to Sue. Sue looks up at him and takes a deep breath. He reluctantly follows suit.

Jerry shakes it off and tries to exit.

JOE (CONT'D)
Anne...we're always looking for
more merch girls...

ANNE
You couldn't afford me.

JOE
Okay, fine you can bring Jerry's
bastard granddaughter too...

Without hesitating Jerry b-lines straight to Joe and manages to get in a solid punch.

A short burst of chaos erupts. Groupies start recording.

Anne guards Sue as she watches the fists fly.

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - THE NEXT DAY

Jerry lies face down on his bed with fresh wound on his lip.

A half-empty bourbon bottle sits by his bed.

Sue approaches and tries to wake the sleeping beast.

SUE
(quietly)
Growl...hey Growl wake up.

Nothing.

SUE (CONT'D)
(louder)
Jerry...

Still nothing.

She leans in closer and goes to give him a nudge, but just as she's about to, he opens his eyes and jolts.

JERRY
OH SHIT...what...where...

Jerry sits up. He looks hungover.

He squints his eyes from the bright morning sun.

JERRY (CONT'D)
What...

SUE
They're here...

Jerry looks at Sue curiously.

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A very hungover and bruised Jerry enters to see Dena and Stan sitting quietly as Sue watches Bluey.

JERRY
Monica, did she...

Dena holds up her phone. It's a photo of Jerry fighting Joe.

DENA
You realize if we feel a child is in danger, or maybe surrounded by danger, we have to step in right?

Sue perks up. Jerry still looks confused.

SUE
That guy was an asshole.

They all quickly look at Sue.

JERRY
There was no danger.

Stan looks like he's on his last nerve.

STAN
If it were up to me, we never would've brought her here.

JERRY
Hey! You showed up at my place--

DENA
What Stan is saying is, we're sticking our necks out. And stuff like this makes us all look bad.

STAN
Do you want her to go into the system?

SUE
I DON'T WANNA LEAVE.

STAN
Mister Gilwhacky?

Jerry stares daggers.

JERRY
EVERYONE, QUIET!

Everyone stops.

JERRY (CONT'D)
(to Sue)
What'd you have for dinner?

SUE
Left over Chinese food.

JERRY
(to Sue)
Where do you sleep?

Sue points to her new makeshift bed.

JERRY (CONT'D)
And what do we do at bedtime?

SUE
You tell me that music today will
never be what is used to be--

JERRY
Not that part...

SUE
Oh. You sing me a song about our
day and sometimes I get to help.

Stan looks annoyed while Dena looks pleasantly surprised.

JERRY
WE are doing just fine here.

Jerry leans in, focusing on Stan.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Don't forget. You came to me. And
I'm helping. So maybe next time,
give us a call before showing up.
(to Sue)
Burrito time?

SUE
YEAH!

Jerry walks them to the door.

STAN
We'll be in contact.

They exit. Jerry stares daggers at the door. Then looks at Sue. Jerry smiles.

EXT. RESTARAUNT - LATER

Jerry and Sue sit silently eating their burritos.

After a moment, Sue starts staring at people behind Jerry. This catches Jerry's eye.

JERRY
(annoyed)
What...what the hell is over there?

Jerry looks behind him to see TWO GEN-Z'ers (early 20s), looking at their phones, then back up at Jerry and giggling.

The Gen Z'ers notice Jerry and try to act cool.

JERRY (CONT'D)
(to Sue)
Are those nerds looking at you weird or something?

The Two Gen Z'ers approach.

GEN Z 1
Hey, sorry, but uh are you...

Gen Z 2 shoves a phone in Jerry's face.

GEN Z 2
Is this you?!

Jerry aggressively grabs the phone to get a better look.

He watches a video of Jerry punching Joe.

JERRY
Where the hell...?

GEN Z 1
It's online...

GEN Z 2
All over YouTube, my guy.

Jerry aggressively hands the phone back and tries to leave.

Gen Z 1 is already trying to take a picture.

GEN Z 1
But can we get a picture?

JERRY
Absolutely not. You should be watching videos of my songs, not some stupid fight...

Now Gen Z 2 tries to get a picture.

GEN Z 2
It's cool. Here little girl, take our pic...

Gen Z 2 grabs Sue and tries to put the phone in her hands.

JERRY
Get away from her...

Jerry grabs Gen Z 2, scaring him.

GEN Z 1
Hey, it's just a picture.

Jerry realizes what he's doing and loosens his grip. But he grabs the phone and steps on it.

GEN Z 2
HEY! My dad's gonna be pissed...

SUE
(to Jerry)
That wasn't very nice.

Jerry grabs Sue and they exit.

EXT. CITY STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Jerry is flustered and walks briskly ahead of Sue.

SUE
Why did you step on that phone?

JERRY
Because people are...are...lame and focus on the wrong shit. AND, they don't understand personal space.

SUE
But you're walking too fast.

She tries reaching for his hand again and he pulls away.

JERRY
Then walk faster...

Jerry takes out a cigarette and lights it up.

SUE
You're acting like a real...like a
real...

JERRY
I'm not mad, Sue. I don't need to
breathe.

SUE
You're acting like a real ASSHOLE!

Jerry stops and turns to her. People on the street look.

JERRY
Okay, we get it. You learned a
word. But I wasn't being the
asshole.

SUE
YES YOU ARE! They just wanted a
picture and that's not bad.

Jerry rolls his eyes and continues walking. Sue stays right
behind him. They arrive at The Tasty Tavern.

EXT. THE TASTY TAVERN - SAME

Jerry's walking ahead of Sue. He's mad. His phone rings and
he looks at it. It's CPS. He ignores it.

JERRY
(to the phone - himself)
Urgh, I don't need this right now.
(to Sue)
Listen! You're a little girl and
don't understand. Those two dorks
don't get to get everything they
want! AND, that fight wasn't my
fault. They should be watching my
new songs! BUT NO! They'd rather
watch some dumb fight! Ya know
what, I don't need commentary on
every shitty thing I do. And I
definitely don't need the video
proof. I know who I am!

Jerry once again stops and looks at Sue before they enter.

JERRY (CONT'D)
 (almost yelling)
 What else do you want from me!?

Sue is starting to fume now. Staring directly at Jerry.

SUE
 (yelling)
 I AM JUST A LITTLE GIRL. ALL WE
 WANT ARE TREATS AND TO FEEL SAFE! I
 DON'T HAVE TREATS AND YOU'RE
 YELLING! I WANT MY MOM!!

Sue storms into the tavern. Jerry is quick in toe.

INT. THE TASTY TAVERN - CONTINUOUS

Jerry charges into the bar.

JERRY
 WELL LA-DEE-FUCKIN'...

Jerry stops in his tracks. To his surprise, Sue is hugging
 MONICA (30).

SUE
 MOMMY!

Anne gives Jerry a concerned look.

Monica clothes hang off her pale, skinny body.

MONICA
 (to Sue)
 Baby girl, I missed you so much!

Monica kisses Sue as mother and daughter are reunited.

INT. THE TASTY TAVERN - LATER

Jerry and Monica sit as Sue and Townie play together.

Monica seems upset and hurried.

JERRY
 How are you?

MONICA
 I'm fine. Glad you were around...
 (under her breath)
 ...for once.

JERRY
Where the hell were you?

MONICA
(annoyed)
I already told CPS. It's all good.
Horrible misunderstanding. The
neighbor lady was gonna watch her.
She forgot, Sue forgot...but I'm
back. I'm back with Sue.

Jerry watches Monica and her behavior.

JERRY
(skeptical)
That's a two-month
misunderstanding. No calls, no...

MONICA
(disappointed/mad - to
Jerry)
You really took her to your shows?

Jerry nods as he looks at his unhealthy daughter.

JERRY
You really need to keep it under
control.

Monica glares at him with a *'HOW DARE YOU'* look.

MONICA
Me? You're going to tell ME to keep
it under control--

JERRY
I didn't mean--

MONICA
Jerry! Where were you when I wanted
to go to shows? HMM?! Oh that's
right, hammered, belligerent.
Again.

JERRY
Mon--

MONICA
Or here's one for you! Where were
you when Mom died?

Jerry looks away.

MONICA (CONT'D)

That's right. Where were you when Mom died?

(sounding like a buzzer)

EHHHHHHH! Times up. You were coked outta your mind, banging some rando in some weird motel. I couldn't find you for days, Jerry! DAYS!

(beat)

And you have the audacity to tell me to 'keep it under control'. Sure thing *Jerry Growl*.

Anne enters with Sue's belongings and noticing the tension.

ANNE

Um, I think this is the last of it.

Monica stands, happy to be done with Jerry.

MONICA

Thank you.

Monica looks through everything as she walks over to Sue. Anne takes a seat with Jerry.

ANNE

(worried)

She seems--

JERRY

I know.

ANNE

Want me to ask if they can stay.

JERRY

She won't.

Jerry worriedly watches Sue and Monica. But Sue looks happy to see her mother as Monica packs up their things.

Anne notices them packing to leave.

ANNE

Oh, please don't go...

(to Sue)

...we'll just miss this kid so much.

Anne gives Sue a big hug.

JERRY
 (to Monica - awkwardly)
 I'm always here if you two--

MONICA
 (dismissive)
 Believe me, I always know you're at
 the bar.

Sue walks up to Jerry and stares for a beat. She sticks out
 her hand for a shake.

SUE
 Well, Growl...

They shake.

JERRY
 Thanks for hanging out with us...

Sue stares, waiting for more. Monica checks the time.

MONICA
 (hurried)
 Say goodbye, Sue. We gotta catch
 that bus.

EXT. BUS STOP - MOMENTS LATER

Jerry and Anne wave to Sue and Monica as the bus drives away.
 Jerry stays silent as he lights a cigarette.

ANNE
 What were you two so mad about?

Jerry exhales smoke and watches the bus leave. Jerry's phone
 vibrates. He answers it.

JERRY
 (into phone)
 Yeah...

DENA (V.O.)
 Jerry, we just got word your
 daughter is back in town.

JERRY
 (into phone)
 Yup, and you just missed her.

He ends the call.

INT. RADION STATION - DAY

Jerry sits across from PRICE (40) and ASTOR (40), two morning radio hosts. They are the quintessential 'radio personalities', annoying and outdated.

Jerry takes out a cigarette and puts it in his mouth.

PRICE

Thanks for comin' in, Growl. This is gonna be fun.

Jerry smiles and lights his cigarette.

ASTOR

But you really can't smoke--

Price stops Astor and gives a nod that says, 'Let it go'.

PRICE

Alright, and we're live in five, four, three, two...

The red 'live' light turns on and they're off.

PRICE (CONT'D)

(radio voice)

Alright morning drivers, we have a special guest in our studio today, the one and only...

ASTOR

Back from the dead...

PRICE

Punk rock god...Mister...

ASTOR

Jerry Growl...

PRICE (CONT'D)

Jerry Growl...

JERRY

That's a helluva intro.

Jerry pours bourbon from his flask into his coffee.

ASTOR

It's been about a month since you opened for Forced 40...

PRICE

The band you started and got kicked out of...

JERRY

Yeah, like thirty years ago.

ASTOR

But you not only opened for them,
you also got to into a little
scuffle with their singer.

PRICE

That video is gangbusters.

JERRY

Yup...

Jerry takes a sip and a drag.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Words were said and things
happened. BUT, I'm working on my
new album--

PRICE

Sure, sure. But how good did it
feel to finally let him have it?

JERRY

Have you ever been hit? Or hit
someone?

ASTOR

Only by his abusive ex-wife.

PRICE

It was only one time.

JERRY

Well, for your listener...

ASTOR

Zinger!

Price hits a button and an annoying 'radio' noise plays.

JERRY

...Hitting someone sucks. It hurts.
I wouldn't recommend it. But, I'm
also playing some shows--

ASTOR

Hold that thought. We're gonna
check in with our man on the street
and see what the traffic is up to,
right after this.

Price checks the monitors.

PRICE

We're clear.

(to Jerry)

This is really good stuff. You're a natural.

ASTOR

Don't be afraid to plug your new stuff. I'm sure the people wanna hear all about it.

PRICE

(into the mic)

ANNNND, we're back. Thanks to Lenny, the traffic guru, for keeping us up to date.

ASTOR

And if you're just joining us, we have Jerry Growl joining us bright and early, giving us all the juicy details about his recent brawl with Forced 40's Joe--

JERRY

I'd hardly call it a brawl.

ASTOR

What would you call it, then?

PRICE

A reunion with your fist to his face?

ASTOR

Oh I like that.

PRICE

So tell us what it was like punching the singer who replaced you---

JERRY

Lemme stop you right there, *CHEESE DICK and COFFEE BREATH...*

Jerry grabs the mic aggressively.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Listen up, everyone. I have a new album I'm working on. First one in decades.

(MORE)

JERRY (CONT'D)

New songs, no covers, and
absolutely nothing to do with
Forced 40. I'm playing a lot of
shows. Someone runs my social
medias, so I guess check that.
Radio is dead.

Jerry takes his headphones off, puts his cigarette out on the
desk and exits.

Price and Astor scramble to take the show back.

ASTOR

(awkward)

Alright, we've got the weather
coming up, just after this...

EXT. RADION STATION - MOMENTS LATER

Jerry exits with Anne.

JERRY

Assholes. Radio used to mean
something, man.

ANNE

At least you got to promote the
shows. We might see a big turnout
for tonight.

JERRY

Woulda been nicer to talk with
people who actually want to listen,
instead of just poke--

ANNE

It's a new world, Growl. Let it go.

INT. STUDIO APARTMENT - DAY

Sue sits on a futon, holding her backpack. The small studio
isn't furnished. Just a futon, a smaller table with food
wrappers and empty pill bottles on it, and a TV.

The bathroom door is closed.

SUE

Mom...

Monica doesn't respond.

SUE (CONT'D)

MOM...?

Monica can be heard in the bathroom. She's holding her sobs.

MONICA

(sobbing)

What is it?

SUE

You said I could go to school
today...

More silence.

SUE (CONT'D)

Mom, did you hear...

MONICA

(sobbing)

Can't you hear that mommy's having
a hard time?

Sue disappointingly lowers her head.

MONICA (CONT'D)

(sobbing - spiraling)

Why would you say that anyway...you
want to leave me? I'm trying,
dammit! The doctor won't refill
my...and now you wanna leave...

Monica continues to sob harder and harder.

SUE

(quietly)

Sorry...

She takes the backpack off and sets it on the ground.

INT. THE TASTY TAVERN - NIGHT

It's a packed house with people looking in from the front
door. There's a banner on stage: 'Jerry Growl, The Resting
Dick Face Tour'.

The lights dim and the crowd cheers as Jerry takes the stage.

As he approaches with a cigarette in his mouth, he exhales
the smoke and puts the cigarette on the nut of his guitar.

JERRY

Hey...

The crowd cheers again.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Settle down. You might hate these
songs, so don't get too excited.

He tunes his guitar and looks around.

JERRY (CONT'D)
(to the bar staff)
HEY! Can someone bring me some
whiskey? About this much...

Jerry holds up to fingers about two inches apart.

CROWD MEMBER
GET THIS MAN A DRINK!

The crowd laughs, and Jerry smiles.

JERRY
Perks of being talent.

The drink arrives and he takes a sip.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Okay, this has been a weird year.
Did you hear I got in a fight? It
was a flashback to the 80s. God, we
fought a lot back then.

The crowd laughs.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Don't let my face fool you, I'm
glad to be here. Let's play some
fucking music!

The crowd goes nuts as Jerry starts strumming. The music has
a hard-edged 'Americana' vibe. Although the song is new,
people are already singing along.

As the song continues we cut away to a montage of stages that
Jerry is playing on...

INT. CONCERT HALLS - MONTAGE

- Jerry sings as a GUY (any) jumps up on stage and sings
along with him. Jerry loves it.

- At another place, TWO GIRLS (30s) get on stage and kiss him
on his cheeks and then are pushed off by a BOUNCER.

- Jerry continues singing in another venue, but stops to watch a fight breakout. He sips a drink and takes a drag.
- Jerry starts to look a little road-worn, as he smokes a cigarette on stage and takes another drink. A PRETTY GIRL (20s) catches his eye from the front row and winks and mouths, 'FUCK ME'. He smiles.
- Jerry strums his guitar at another venue when a string breaks. Anne rushes on stage and hands him another guitar. He holds her hand up and the crowd cheers.
- Jerry holds a cigarette in his mouth and a drink in his hand as he takes selfies with fans.
- Jerry signs old Forced 40 merch.
- Finally, Jerry sits down on a couch in a green room. He's tired and tries to catch his breath. People rush in with booze and the party starts all over again.

INT. THEATER - BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

A cheering crowd is heard as Anne stands waiting for him. Jerry looks tired and even more road-worn at this point.

ANNE

Good show. You feeling okay?

He nods and lights another cigarette.

ANNE (CONT'D)

You wanna meet me at the merch booth? There's already a line.

Jerry is lost in thought, tired, and hungover.

ANNE (CONT'D)

Hey...

Jerry snaps out of it and looks at Anne.

ANNE (CONT'D)

You coming?

JERRY

(winded)

Yeah, just need a breather...

He holds up his cigarette.

JERRY (CONT'D)

I'll meet you there.

Anne has a quick look of concern before she exits.

Jerry smokes in silence. He then looks down at his guitar and focuses on the scratch that Sue left. He touches it softly.

Anne pokes her head backstage.

ANNE

Growl! Let's go, people are waiting.

Jerry flicks his cigarette butt and exits to the merch booth.

INT. THEATER - MERCH BOOTH - MOMENTS LATER

Jerry is greeted by fans as he takes a seat at the table.

FAN GIRL (40s) approaches.

FAN GIRL

This is so lame, but I'm so excited about your new album.

Jerry doesn't even look up, he's just going through the motions.

JERRY

Thanks, should be out soon.

FAN GIRL

I have a small gift for you...

Jerry looks up as she slides a bag of coke across the table.

FAN GIRL (CONT'D)

(whispers)

Maybe we can share that later while you tell me about the album.

Jerry smiles and nods.

FAN GIRL (CONT'D)

See you soon...

Jerry watches her exit as another FAN approaches.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

Jerry pours a drink as Fan Girl does a line of coke.

JERRY

You're not worried about what's in there?

Fan Girl finishes cleaning her nose.

FAN GIRL

Kid tested, mother approved.

JERRY

I don't know what that means.

FAN GIRL

It means it's pure. Now come here.

Jerry takes a tiny straw and snorts a line. He cleans his nose but doesn't look as happy as one should. She notices.

FAN GIRL (CONT'D)

Hey baby, why the face? Usually, drugs turn those frowns upside down. Maybe this will help.

She starts kissing his neck, his face, and then his lips.

EXT. MOTEL ROOM - SAME

Silhouettes of Fan Girl and Jerry can be seen getting busy.

INT. CITY BUS - MOVING - MORNING

Sue longingly looks out the window as the bus slows to stop. Monica sits behind Sue, looking down the isle in anticipation. Monica perks up when she see's JESSE (40). She taps Sue to get her attentions.

Jesse looks like trouble.

MONICA

(to Sue)

Hey, he's here. Be nice.

Monica waves him down.

MONICA (CONT'D)

(to Jesse)

Baby. Babe, right here.

Jesse smiles and takes a seat next to Monica. Sue barely acknowledges him.

MONICA (CONT'D)

(to Sue)

Say hi.

Sue quickly glances at Jesse.

SUE

Hi.

MONICA

This is mommies friend, Jesse. We met while you were with Jerry.

SUE

Neat.

JESSE

Sorry kid. You can blame me for your moms absence. We got a little carried away--

Monica playfully shushes him.

Sue takes a break from window gazing and looks at Jesse.

SUE

I don't like you. You're weird.

MONICA

SUE!

Monica smacks the back of Sue's head.

JESSE

Smart kid.

MONICA

(staring at Sue)

Don't listen to her.

(to Jesse)

You know I like weird.

The bus pulls up to its next stop, Sue catches a glimpse of a poster. 'JERRY GROWL - Resting Dick Face Tour - Live at the Grange Hall'.

Sue's eyes widen with excitement. She turns to Monica.

SUE

Mom...

MONICA

(to Jesse)

...We can party tonight once she's
in bed---

SUE

MOM...

MONICA

(snappy)

What is it?

SUE

Growl! He's playing! Can we go?

JESSE

Growl?

MONICA

(annoyed)

My dad. He was the singer for...

SUE

(excited)

He was in Forced 40. But got fired.
Now he's making more music. It's
good. Really good.

(to Monica)

Please...can we go?

JESSE

Your dad is Jerry Growl?

MONICA

You heard of him?

JESSE

I grew up on Forced 40. Sounds fun.

Monica sits up in her seat. She has something Jesse wants.

MONICA

Yeah, it could be.

SUE

So can we go?!

Monica never looks at Sue. She keeps her gaze on Jesse.

MONICA

Yeah, we can go.

(whispered)

But what's in it for me?

Jesse gives a devious smile and taps the side of his nose.

JESSE

Oh, I'm sure I can think of something.

Sue rolls her eyes and continues looking out the window.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - AFTERNOON

Jerry slowly peels his eyes open. The room is trashed and Fan Girl is passed out, snoring. He checks the clock, 12:54.

Jerry looks around the room trying to remember where he is.

CLOSE ON Jerry's phone in the trash can. It quietly vibrates with an incoming call from SUE.

INT. STUDIO APARTMENT - SAME AFTERNOON

Sue is holding the phone to her ear while Monica and Jesse look suspicious in the background.

SUE

(to Monica)

I got his voicemail...

MONICA

That's okay--

JESSE

Just do it how we practiced.

SUE

(into the phone)

Hi Growl, it's um, Sue. You're coming to town soon. I was hoping to get some tickets.

JESSE

(to Sue - whispers)

Ask for three. We need three...

SUE

(to Jesse - annoyed)

Okay...okay, I'll ask...

(into phone)

Three tickets, backstage maybe...

Monica and Jesse whisper deviously together.

SUE (CONT'D)
 (into phone)
 ...okay that's it. Miss you. Bye.

Sue ends the call. Jesse and Monica rejoice. Sue looks annoyed.

JESSE
 (to Monica)
 We're gonna party...

INT. MOTEL ROOM - LATER

Jerry is up as Fan Girl lies in bed.

JERRY
 Have you see my phone?

FAN GIRL
 Nope...

Jerry sighs. Then Fan Girl sits up.

FAN GIRL (CONT'D)
 Wait, I think I saw it in the
 bathroom.

Jerry walks in and sees it in a trash can.

FAN GIRL (CONT'D)
 Told you I was psychic.

Jerry holds the phone to his ear. Fan Girl watches him.

SUE (V.O.)
 ...I miss you...

As soon as he hears, 'I miss you', Jerry's face sours. He looks ashamed.

FAN GIRL
 So, morning cocktails?

JERRY
 Can't today, doll. Sleep in, rooms
 paid for. But I gotta roll.

Jerry grabs his stuff, puts his sunglasses on, and exits.

Fan Girl shrugs it off and falls back into bed.

EXT. MOTEL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Jerry exits at the same time Anne exits.

ANNE
Woof, you look like--

JERRY
Yeah, yeah, yeah. I'm old I get it.

Jerry begins packing the van. Anne can tell something isn't right.

ANNE
Hey, what's going on?

JERRY
Nothin'. I'm ready when you are.

ANNE
No, stop.

Anne gives him a stern look that says, 'TALK'.

JERRY
(annoyed)
Sue called. Left a message. They
wanna come to the show tomorrow.

Jerry immediately goes back to loading his stuff.

ANNE
Wait, hold on. Would you stop for
one minute?

She physically has to stop him and make him look at her.

ANNE (CONT'D)
Sue called?

Jerry nods.

ANNE (CONT'D)
And who is 'THEY'?

Jerry shrugs.

ANNE (CONT'D)
How'd she sound?

JERRY
Okay, I guess...

ANNE

So I'll put their names on the list. Right?

JERRY

I don't think so. It's probably better if they don't come. It's just more trouble than it's worth.

Jerry turns and goes back to packing the van.

ANNE

Grow the fuck up.

Jerry is taken by surprise.

ANNE (CONT'D)

You heard me. I know you miss her. So do something about it. For gods sake, you haven't mentioned her once since she left.

JERRY

What do you want me to say?!

ANNE

I just can't anymore with you. I can't just sit back and watch you do *nothing* this time.

JERRY

This time? What's that supposed--

ANNE

You know exactly what that means.
(very serious)
Do you know how many times you've asked about 'ME'? I'll tell you, never, zero, donut hole! I run your bar, I'm managing the tour, and I've seen every bad side of you. And there's a lot. But I'm not gonna be some silent background character in all this.
I don't know if Sue loves you, but I know she likes you. And if you give it a chance, I bet she ends up loving you. And what the fuck is so special about you, that you can't accept love from that tiny human. Jerry? Let her love you! And for fuck sake, love her back.
(under her breath)
You old idiot.

Silence.

ANNE (CONT'D)
Do-you-hear-me?

Jerry, still shocked, nods.

ANNE (CONT'D)
Now stop messing around and load
up. We get to see Sue tomorrow.

Anne gets in the van, leaving Jerry to think.

INT. THEATRE - THE NEXT NIGHT

Jerry's backstage as an opening band can be heard performing.

Jerry's leg shakes. He's sucking down the last of a
cigarette. He puts it out in an overflowing ashtray, and
lights another.

After a few moments he stands and begins pacing. He's getting
more frustrated and decides to exit. He swings the door open
and surprises Anne who was just about to enter. She looks him
over.

ANNE
You good?

JERRY
They show up, yet?

Anne shakes her head. Jerry takes another puff.

He looks at Anne.

JERRY (CONT'D)
(re: to himself)
What the hell is this? My heart is
racing...

ANNE
Those are called emotions, Growl.
Relax, I'm sure they'll be here.

He nods as he takes a long drag and exhales.

Just then a STAGEHAND enters.

STAGEHAND
You've got guests...

Jerry quickly cleans himself and puts his cigarette out.

Sue, Monica, and Jesse enter.

As soon as Sue sees Jerry she runs in and hugs him. He's surprised and caught off guard. He still doesn't hug her but places a hand on her head.

The hug is interrupted by Jesse. He forces a handshake.

JESSE

I'm such a big fan, dude. Like I had all your records...

JERRY

All my records...?

JESSE

(embarrassed - stuttering)
Of fuck, I'm...I'm so stupid. I mean, like, um, like, I listen to that first Forced album like a hundred times.

Jerry notices how 'tweaky' Jesse looks.

JESSE (CONT'D)

Anyway, big fan. Can't believe we get to party--

Jerry cuts him off by walking toward Monica. Jesse seems upset that he was ignored.

JERRY

Hi.

Anne hugs Sue and they talk in the background.

MONICA

Hey...so like this is backstage, huh? I remember more girls and booze.

Anne chimes up.

ANNE

We thought it'd be nice to tone it down since family is here.

MONICA

Never stopped him before...

JERRY

Can't fly too close to the sun every night.

Monica and Jesse look disappointed. But Jerry gives his attention to Sue.

Jerry takes Sue and grabs his guitar. Sue smiles when she sees the guitar and that the 'knick' she left is still there.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Check this out.

Sue smiles as Jerry starts playing a new song. She smiles.

While Jerry plays for Sue, Monica and Jesse are in the BACKGROUND.

JESSE

I can't believe he just brushed me off.

MONICA

Baby, it's fine. It's Growl, I'm sure he's got *stuff* around here somewhere.

(to Jerry)

Hey Jerry, you mind if we...

JERRY

(while singing to Sue)

Hold on Mon.

Jesse is starting to get heated. Monica is getting antsy.

Jesse snaps and charges toward Jerry and grabs the guitar.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Hey!

JESSE

Enough bedtime stories, man. We came here to party. You're Jerry *FUCKING* Growl.

Jerry looks both annoyed and surprised.

JESSE (CONT'D)

Where's the booze? Where's the drugs? There should be trays of dope! This looks like fucking AA meeting.

Jesse starts to unravel. Monica looks scared.

JESSE (CONT'D)

I was being nice, so I introduce myself--

Jerry stands.

JERRY

So you thought taking my guitar
would help?

ANNE

Come on, man. Now I have to call
security.

(to herself)

Do we have security?

JESSE

(re: the guitar)

I'm taking this and...

He looks around the room. There's nothing worth taking except
the guitar.

JESSE (CONT'D)

And whatever's in your pockets.

SUE

(worried)

Mom...

MONICA

(whispered - to Jesse)

What are you doing?!

JESSE

(to Monica)

Shut up, just shut up! YOU were the
one who said we'd be able to score
here!

(to Jerry & Anne)

Pockets. Everyone empty your
pockets.

Jerry rolls his eyes.

JERRY

Okay, just gimme the guitar...

Jerry takes a step toward Jesse. Jesse awkwardly swings the
guitar at Jerry. Jerry steps back from the fumbled attempt.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Seriously? You're bending the neck.
It's gonna be all out of tune.

Jesse's even more mad now. He pulls out a shitty knife and
waves it in front of Jerry.

JESSE

What?! Yeah, you're scared now.
Good! Now empty the pockets.

Jerry puts a secure hand on Sue as he empties his pockets.

JERRY

(disappointed - to Monica)
Really? With Sue?

Monica looks fumbled and unsure what's happening as Jerry and Anne throw their wallets to the ground.

Jesse motions for Monica to pick it up. She complies.

ANNE

Monica, you don't need to do this.

JESSE

Shut up! Don't talk to
her...umm...me! Talk to me!

Jesse looks at the wallets and lack of money.

JESSE (CONT'D)

What the hell?! I thought you were
a rockstar. Where's the money?

JERRY

Yeah, I got kicked outta that money-
making band, remember?! This is
what being a musician looks like.
(whispered)
Stupid...

JESSE

Fine, fine. I'm taking the guitar.
(to Monica)
This'll get us something.

MONICA

Whatever, just hurry!

JERRY

That thing isn't worth anything to
anyone but me.

JESSE

Yeah, well, I'm sure I can pawn it,
or...why am I telling you this?

SUE

NO! You do not get to take that!

MONICA
(panicked)
Sue! Quiet, just...it's gonna be
okay.

Jesse slowly starts making his way to the door.

JESSE
(to Monica)
Come on...

Jesse and Monica turn to leave, when suddenly Sue charges
Jesse and tries to grab the guitar.

SUE
I SAID LEAVE IT HERE...ASSHOLE!

Jesse turns frantically as Sue grabs the guitar.

JERRY
Sue, no!

There's a quick scuffle of hands and people.

SUE
OUCH!

Everybody stops. The door is open and Jesse yanks the guitar
away from Sue to realize he's accidentally stabbed her in the
stomach.

He looks down at the bloodied knife, then to Sue and
eventually to Monica.

MONICA
BABY!

Everything goes slow as the sound fades.

Sue looks confused as she slowly falls to the ground, her
shirt becoming soaked with blood.

Jerry holds Sue and looks up to a panicked Monica.

Monica starts slapping Jesse who is looking for a way out.

He quickly runs out the door. Monica looks at Jerry and Sue,
then looks to Jesse, who's making a break for it.

Jerry shakes his head, begging Monica to stay.

Just as Jerry tends to Sue, Monica runs after Jesse.

Sue looks up at Jerry with confusion and fear. Jerry strokes her head as we start to hear the panic in the room start to fade in.

ANNE
HELP! WE NEED HELP IN HERE!

Anne runs out of the room looking for help.

INT. JAIL - DAY - MONTHS LATER

It's visiting day and Jerry sits alone at a table. Monica is brought in by a GUARD and sits across from Jerry.

Jerry looks at her. She has a new face tattoo on her jawline. There's a beat of silence as neither wants to talk first.

JERRY
She's okay.

MONICA
I know, they told me.

JERRY
Anne and I finally worked
everything out with CPS.

Monica stares off, trying to hide her anger. Her lip quivers.

JERRY (CONT'D)
It was actually pretty easy...
(re: Monica)
...Considering their options.

MONICA
I could've been so much more.

Jerry immediately looks confused.

MONICA (CONT'D)
I could've had the white picket
fence. People who cared about me,
more than they cared about
themselves. I could've been loved,
for once.

She turns and looks at him.

MONICA (CONT'D)
But you had to be...you.

JERRY
(confused)
What are you--

MONICA
Aunt Cate?

Jerry silently racks his memory.

MONICA (CONT'D)
Of course. After Mom died, Aunt Cate wanted to take me. She knew you couldn't raise a daughter. But your pride, your ugliness, you stopped her. You didn't want me cause you loved me, you wanted me to prove something. Something to the world.

(beat)
In one second I could've been taken care of. Instead, I was 'watched' by random girls, weird band guys, and...

She stops.

MONICA (CONT'D)
I can't forgive you. I can't. But don't do that to Sue. Watch her. Protect her.

Jerry is fighting back tears, his sorrowful face says it all. He reaches over and tries to touch her arm. She jumps up.

She quickly wipes any evidence of tears or emotion from her face and looks around.

MONICA (CONT'D)
Guard! I'm done.

Jerry watches as a GUARD takes Monica back to her cell. She turns at the last second and looks at him with sadness and hate in her eyes.

INT. STAGE - NIGHT

The sounds of a large audience chanting can be heard--
"GROWL, GROWL, GROWL..."

Jerry steps onto the stage as the chanting reaches its peak and the crowd erupts in applause. Jerry smiles and waves.

Jerry hushes the crowd to reveal we're inside The Tasty Tavern.

JERRY
Who wants to hear some music?!

The crowd cheers.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Well lucky for you, it's record
release night!

The crowd cheers louder.

JERRY (CONT'D)
And weirdly enough, the suits put
it on the radio. Thanks, suits.

More cheers.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Real quick, I'd like to thank my
manager. Anne, she runs my life, my
music, and my bar.

He finds her in the audience and makes eye contact.

JERRY (CONT'D)
(earnestly)
Thank you.

Anne smiles and nods as everyone claps.

JERRY (CONT'D)
And I told my granddaughter she
could come to the show if she
finished her homework.
(to Sue)
Did you get that shit done?

Jerry covers his eyes so he can see into the crowd. Sue is in the back at the merch table wearing big earphones.

SUE
(shouting)
Turned it in the morning, Grandpa.

Jerry gives her a playful look.

JERRY
Funny kid. Okay, this album is a
long time coming.

The crowd settles as Jerry opens up.

JERRY (CONT'D)

We let so much noise in all the time. TV, radio, phones, our friends, family, work, stress, life, bills... 'noise'. I wanted to make something honest for a change. It's been a long time since I've played something honest, or new. So this is my attempt at cutting through the noise.

As Jerry talks we move around the room looking at fans.

JERRY (CONT'D)

I made a career telling everyone that if it's too loud...

FANS

FUCK YOU!

JERRY

...and you listened. Now listen to this. Tonight, no phones, no cameras, no filters, no distractions...

As we move through the room, we land on the merch table. Jerry's new album, 'Reasonable Levels', sits there. A FAN goes up to the table and buys a copy from Sue.

JERRY (CONT'D)

...just music. Let tonight be about, *TONIGHT*. We've only got this one...

Jerry starts playing the song he wrote for Sue. It's finally finished and it's perfect. People start singing along, but Jerry sings to Sue as if she's the only one in the crowd.

The song continues as...

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

People hustle and bustle. Jerry and Sue walk side by side. She grabs his hand and he holds it.

FADE TO BLACK.

END