

SERENADE

Screenplay by Laurence Maher

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FADE IN

EXT. SUNNY'S NIGHT CLUB NIGHT

A lonely car in the lot of a second-rate night club. Out the club door comes SATLER (male, thin, early 30's) in blues getup with a guitar case.

He approaches, locks his bass in the trunk, and gets in. In the passenger seat is SPUNKY (male, early 30's, attractive) in a pensive angry stare.

SATLER

I talked to Sunny. He says we might be able to come back on Wednesday if it's -looking slow that night.

(No reply)

Come on, Spunks. Don't worry about it. Blues just isn't everybody's bag, that's all. We'll find our niche. God didn't make us musicians for nothing, you know.

Spunky swallows bitterly.

SATLER (CONT'D)

Hey, that was a tough crowd tonight. Come on, we've had worse than this.

Spunky grits his teeth.

SATLER (CONT'D)

Christ, alright, I know it was...different. But not really. Hell, there's always going to be someone that doesn't like you.

Nothing. Satler puts hand on Spunky's shoulder, then direly:

SATLER (CONT'D)

Spunks, you have to believe it's gonna change. If it's going to, you, more than any of us, have to believe that.

Sater starts the car. As he pulls away, he says:

SATLER (CONT'D)

I can speak for you man. But I can't speak for you.

ROLL CREDITS/EXT. CITY MONTAGE DAY

Morning city set to pop music. Streets jump, People shout, Neighbors laugh, babies cry, dogs bark, birds sing.

INT. SPUNKS'S APARTMENT DAY

We travel down a wall of photos (Spunky and Satler through the years) to Spunky's blaring radio alarm. Spunky still lies asleep.

RADIO JOCKEY

So if you're not awake yet, get up,
run around, scream and shout-

Spunky awakes, gawks at the time.

EXT. CITY STREETS DAY

Spunky pedals his bike like mad. A cop yells at him as he runs a stop light. He gets to "Antonio's" restaurant.

INT. ANTONIO'S FRONT END DAY

Spunky rushes in, passing TOOTSE (cute young hostess) & Satler, behind the bar mixing drinks, who gets cut off by Spunky's hand before he can speak. Satler laughs.

TOOTSE

Hurry Spunks. Boss'll be pissed if
he sees you're late again!

INT. ANTONIO'S KITCHEN DAY

Spunky enters, grabs a pad & pencil off a stack of them on a near counter. A waiter passes, grabs them away. Spunky tries a second time, but the same thing happens. 2 waiters near.

FRANK

(Playing around)
He's late again.

CHESTER

Who?

(Turns)

Oh, Spunks, I didn't hear you come in. You know I don't think this is fair, them hiring employees with a natural stealth advantage.

(MORE)

CHESTER (CONT'D)
 (To Frank) I say we strike. All in
 favor say "Aye".

FRANK
 (Boisterously)
 Aye!

CHESTER
 (To Spunky)
 All opposed, nay?
 (Off Spunky's look)
 A strike it is!

Spunky looks at the counter; no more pads and pencils. He
 throws his hands up. Frank taps him on the shoulder.

FRANK
 (Holding up pad & pencil)
 You know, you could have put in a
ballot.

INT. ANTONIO'S FRONT END DAY

Spunky comes up with a dry erase board to serve 2 customers.
 He scribbles a message, extends it. It reads "Warning: Mute
 Waiter". They smile as he writes "Never fear, I'm trained for
 this!" They laugh and acknowledge as he mimics drinking from
 a glass, slurping as he does.

BUSINESSMAN
 Oh, okay, umm. I'll have a tea.

Spunky frowns. They laugh.

BUSINESSWOMAN
 I'll have a dry martini please.

Spunky gives her a thumbs up, hands them menus and scribbles
 "I'll be back" on the erase board. He goes to the bar.

SATLER
 Spunks, Betsy's behind. Run this to
 table nine, will ya?

Spunky motions like he's busy.

SATLER (CONT'D)
 You can't cuss, I can't here ya.
 Nine.

Satler slides a drink down the length of the bar, and Spunky
 lunges, barely catching it. Spunky slaps one end of a spoon
 sitting on the bar. It flies at Satler.

SATLER (CONT'D)
 (Flinching as it passes
 his head)

Punk!

Spunky goes to nine. A pretty blonde sits alone (SARAH MELDER) reading a textbook. Spunky, impressed, walks over & stands silently, unnoticed. A few seconds. He clicks his mouth. Sarah looks up.

SARAH
 Oh is that mine?
 (Spunky nods)
 Thank you. Did we switch waiters?

Spunky shakes his head, thumbs to where her waitress is. He smiles & leaves. Sarah looks intrigued. She shrugs, reads on.

INT. ANTONIO'S KITCHEN DAY

Spunky enters the kitchen wolf-whistling at Frank.

FRANK
 Saw her huh? Good looking girl.

CHESTER
 Good looking who? What table?

Spunks holds up 9 fingers. Chester turns to BETSY, a waitress in her 20's, and grabs her order tablet.

CHESTER (CONT'D)
 We just switched sections, Betsy.

Chester whisks away.

BETSY
 Dammit not again! Thanks Spunks.
 If he scores, we'll never hear the
 end of it.

Betsy hits Spunks. Frank laughs. Spunky hits Frank

EXT. ANTONIO'S FRONT END DAY

Spunky comes to the bar, wraps on a glass with a spoon.

SATLER
 What? I'm busy.

Satler turns away. Spunky throws a \$5 over his shoulder.

SATLER (CONT'D)
Ooh! Where? What table?

Satler sees Chester trying to woo Sarah at table nine.

SATLER (CONT'D)
I'll see your five and raise five.
(Spunky cringes)
Oh come on! You started these
stupid bets!

Spunky sighs, slaps down a five, shakes Satler's hand.

SATLER (CONT'D)
Gonna lose. Oh, you seeing the
doctor tomorrow?
(Off Spunky's annoyed nod)
Just asking! Damn!

Meanwhile, waiters watch Chester scheming on Sarah in BG,
pouring her tea and sitting with her. Betsy nears.

BETSY
Look at them, like vultures.

FRANK
Money's money, baby. Come on,
girly, don't do it. He ain't that
good-looking.
(Spunky passes, stops)
Hey, here's your money, Spunks.

Other waiters next to Frank & Spunky are eagerly pulling for
Chester. A waiting moment. Then Sarah lifts her hand showing
a ring on her wedding finger. Spunks and Frank bang dukes.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Oh Yes! Oh Yes! Who are the men?!
Pay up boys. I got tables to run.

Suddenly Spunks notices Sarah staring at them. He looks
quickly away, whistles nonchalantly and leaves. He passes the
bar, grabbing Satler's ten dollars. Satler looks up from
checking his beeping pager.

SATLER
Hey! Yo! I didn't see him lose!

INT. ANTONIO'S MAIN FLOOR DAY

Later; Spunks cleans tables & eyes Sarah as Chester gives her
a bill & leaves. Then Spunks double takes.

Sarah removes her ring & signs the bill. Spunks runs to the bar, pokes Satler. No response. He pokes again.

SATLER
I can't feel you.

Spunky picks up a fork, hard-pokes Satler's arm. Satler whirls.

SATLER (CONT'D)
Ow! Shit! You do that again, I'm going to kick your ass!

Spunky playfully puts up his dukes.

SATLER (CONT'D)
What, I'm in a hurry.

Spunky makes the curve of girl with his hands.

SATLER (CONT'D)
Don't have time, buzz off. And I've only got eyes for Cynthia, you know that.

Spunky slaps him, points to himself.

SATLER (CONT'D)
Oh, for you. I should have known.
(Spunks points to Sarah)
What her? She's married!

Spunky shakes head, simulates her ring switch.

SATLER (CONT'D)
Ooo, gave Chester the old ring-finger switch a-roo, huh? What's the matter, you shy? I said I'm not doing your pick-up routine anymore.
(Spunky frowns, motions to come on)
You talk to her, you got a voice box.

Sarah closes purse in BG. Spunks slaps the bar, mouths "She's leaving", uses 2 fingers to simulate her walking. Satler hands Spunky his own pad and pencil.

SATLER (CONT'D)
Well then you better hurry up.
(Spunks leaving angrily)
Good luck!

Spunky runs to table nine & Sarah's gone. He goes up front & sees Sarah driving off. Spunky grits his teeth, wraps the door with his fist. His boss (HARRY, heavyset haggard type) yells as Tootse nears.

HARRY

It isn't made of Steel, Spunky!

TOOTSE

You should have told me you liked her. I would've said we're closed & took you in the back storage room.

Spunky kisses her cheek.

INT. SUNNY'S NIGHT CLUB NIGHT

We pull away from a pair of string-picking hands to see GI-GI (Afro-American cool-cat type, dreadlocks) and his electric guitar. He rattles notes. In BG, Chester (on drums) and a skinny keyboard player (JOULSEN) setup to gig.

GI-GI

Yo Sat-head! Wassup! What ya think?!

We pan to see Satler standing at the far end of the club.

SATLER

Awesome! You can even go a little more, I think.

GI-GI

Oh, I always like more!

Gi-Gi hungrily cranks the volume on his amp.

GI-GI (CONT'D)

Yeeeeaaaaahhhhh!

SATLER

Oh Not that far!

(To himself)

Christ, he's gonna blow the whole house down.

Suddenly Satler's pager goes off. His girlfriend next to him (CYNTHIA, cute, dark hair, late 20's), who was rubbing his shoulders gets the pager from his belt.

SATLER (CONT'D)

(Annoyed)

What the hell now? Studios are calling us back at this hour?

CYNTHIA

They're three hours behind us, Mr. Grump. Don't worry, I'll get it.

Satler tries to kiss her before she runs off, misses. He shrugs, turns to Spunky, who's melancholy in a near chair.

SATLER

Well, okay, you ready to hit it?

(No response)

Yo, Spunks, ten till. Better warm up, man.

(Pointedly)

Spunks, you okay?

A realization from Satler. He goes and sits.

Oh hey, you're not still pissed about that chick today, are ya? Come on, she was a tease. You didn't want to pick her up anyway, know what I mean?

(Taps Spunky)

Hey.

(A small reaction)

Come on, I'm sorry, all right. It's just that it's not good for you if I keep helping you like that. I want to see you succeed. I want to see us succeed, huh?

(Taps again)

Come on, I'll buy drinks after.

(Hardy back slaps, leaves, then O.S.)

Sing some blues, buddy, you'll be okay. Just take it out on the horn.

We close on Spunky, still not happy. He shakes his head, blows out a touch of steam, stands and leaves the seat.

INT. SUNNY'S NIGHT CLUB NIGHT

The band rocks to life with a quick series of shots on mean drums, guitar, & keyboards. Satler's hand grabs the front mic, and we pull back to see the band swinging on stage (Spunky with a tambourine).

SATLER

How's it going ladies and gentlemen of the night, or at least I'll call you ladies and gentlemen until you get shit-faced and prove me wrong. We are the "Rebels Without a Voice" & I'm proud to introduce to you the vicious individuals that are going to rock you this p.m. Behind me on the keys is "Joulsen 4-Eyes", we have "Chester the Molester" on drums, the brother pretending to be Hendrix is actually the guy who taught him-his name is Gi-gi "the human pick." I know I don't have to tell you who I am, but since I prefer the women I sleep with to scream the right name I'll remind you it's Satler and I of course, play base. Last but not least, to my left you might notice a really strange guy some people call Spunky. He has a tendency to follow us around with a tambourine and be a god-damned nuisance.

Spunky gives a sarcastic smile, throws the tambourine down.

SATLER (CONT'D)

But time to time if you're lucky you might encounter a show where he's feeling uppity, so if he happens to pull out something that's long, expandable, & requires occasional lubrication, make no mistake, he's not giving you the bone, he's giving you Trom-bone.

Satler steps aside and Spunky swings his horn to the mic, letting lose a fast-paced slew of mean brass notes. He takes the melody, going all over the scale, swinging his horn about like no tomorrow. Sweat pours from the band members, all their energy coming out through their instruments. They undoubtedly love performing.

Then there is a break in the music, and it's solo time. Several measures of each instrument, with Spunks hamming it up on "air guitar" as Satler plays bass. Finally, back to Spunky, blowing trombone through to the song's end. He cuts off the band by giving a huge nod with his horn, and then there is silence. Satler takes the mic again.

SATLER (CONT'D)

Thank you much. Thank you much.
Hang on to your seat while we get
ready for this next one.

We turn and see the audience, 3 people (2 with beers, 1 clapping). Satler speaks to the band away from the mic.

SATLER (CONT'D)

It's gonna be one long-ass night.

Spunky blows saliva from his horn's spit valve. We cut to black.

IN BLACK

Silence for a few seconds, and then a surreal, almost ghostly music. It's volume increases slowly until we see a glimmer of distant light approaching. Closer the light comes, until we see a full screen image.

EXT. PUBLIC PARK DAY

A beautiful brunet (SUSAN) in summer attire giggles as she runs back and forth, playing "tag" with the camera.

SUSAN

(Laughing)

What's wrong, Spunky, can't you
catch me?

From behind the camera, a pair of male hands grabs her waste.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

No, don't tickle me! Don't tickle
me Noooooooooo!

Susan falls to the ground laughing, & we come down with her. She calms, looks at the camera with pretty eyes.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Sing Spunky. Please sing to me.

The words echo. Then eerily, her laughing grows like she's mocking him. The noise is suddenly deafening.

INT. SPUNKY'S APARTMENT NIGHT

Spunky awakes in a cold sweat.

He collects himself. A beat. He looks over to his night table where his digital clock reads "4:36 a.m.". On the clock is a note that says "Appointment 7:00".

Spunky thunks the note away and pulls the electricity on the clock.

INT. ANTONIO'S BAR SECTION DAY

Satler polishes a glass at the bar before opening, no customers. He glances out a near window and sees Spunky sliding his bike to a halt in the parking lot. Satler looks at his watch.

SATLER

Got em!

Satler throws everything down and runs from the bar.

INT. ANTONIO'S FRONT END DAY

Satler bounds to the front entrance just before Spunky gets there and locks the doors so they can't be opened. Spunky pulls at them, confused, annoyed. Satler speaks through the doors.

SATLER

(Sly smile)

Harry's gonna be pretty mad if he catches you late, you know.

Spunks frantically points to his watch, points to the doors. Satler calmly breathes on the door glass, rubs a smudge off.

SATLER (CONT'D)

You go to the doctor this morning?

Spunky stops pulling at the doors, realizing the game. He puts his hands on his hips. He sighs impatiently, then shakes his head "no".

SATLER (CONT'D)

(Wincing)

Oh, Spunks, bad move, man. I told you, you were gonna get there one way or another.

Spunky throws his arms up angrily, makes a pillow with his hands like he's sleeping.

SATLER (CONT'D)

(Shrugs)

It's not my fault you overslept.
Might as well go back to bed now
though, cause you sure ain't havin'
no job once the boss man figures
out you're not here.

Spunky yanks at the doors as Satler walks off. He pounds a couple of times, but Satler doesn't come back. Then Spunky leaves the doors, dashing around the restaurant corner, heading towards the back. Satler sees him pass by the window.

SATLER (CONT'D)

Shit!

Satler bolts for the back.

INT. ANTONIO'S KITCHEN DAY

Satler shoots into the kitchen area, smashing into several other waiters trying to prepare food. They scream obscenities as Satler redirects himself and hurries past.

15. INT. ANTONIO'S BACK ENTRANCE DAY

Satler wheels around the corner, smashing into a cook carrying a horde of pots and pans. Just as Harry is stepping out of his office, Satler and the cook fall hard, sliding into a wall, taking down half the kitchen appliances with them. Harry freaks at the ruckus.

HARRY

(Furious)

What the?! Satler, what the hell
are you doing?!

Not a beat when Spunky appears behind Harry through the back door, instantly assuming a casual leaning position against the wall. The shaken Satler and cook start to move around.

HARRY (CONT'D)

(To Satler)

When you're in such a god damned
hurry, that's how accidents happen!

Harry turns to Spunky, who's now examining his nails. Spunky looks up, holds out his hands and shrugs like he has no explanation for such behavior.

HARRY (CONT'D)
 (To Spunky)
 Well, you're on the clock for
 Christ's sake! Help them up!

Harry storms off around the corner. The cook stands, hands the one tiny cup left in his hand to Satler and limps away. Spunky grins and offers his hand to Satler, who just lies there.

SATLER
 ...Dick-head.

INT. ANTONIO'S MAIN FLOOR DAY

Chester puts two plates down at a table with several giggling girls.

CHESTER
 (Suggestively)
 And what else could I get you
 ladies?

At the next table, Spunky is cleaning up lunch aftermath. He nonchalantly scribbles on his dry erase board, grabs some dirty plates and walks toward the kitchen. On the way, he pauses, holds up the dry erase board behind Chester. It reads 555-2965.

The girls giggle. One pulls out a napkin and a pen. Chester looks over his shoulder to the erase board.

CHESTER (CONT'D)
 Oh, there ya go. Always helps to
 have a little advertisement.

Spunky moves on.

INT. ANTONIO'S BAR DAY

Satler speaks angrily to Spunky as he passes the bar.

SATLER
 What did you do that for, punk?
 You screwed up my bet!

Spunky hits himself upside the head as if he had an idiot's realization. He moves on.

SATLER (CONT'D)
 (Shaking head, to self)
 ...Punk.
 (MORE)

SATLER (CONT'D)
 (Several beats, yells)
 Punk!
 (Normal, to self)
 Stupid...Maybe you'll talk if I
 kick you in the balls, you....

Suddenly, Satler double-takes. Sitting in the same seat as the day before is Sarah.

SATLER (CONT'D)
 (To himself)
 Oh, ho, hoooooo. Well look who's
 here.

Spunky comes back out of the kitchen, heading to his dirty table. Satler catches him.

SATLER (CONT'D)
 Hey Bucco. Looks like you picked
 the wrong day to be a jerk.
 (Pointing)
 I think your friend over there
 might have appreciated our little
 routine, you know.

Spunky sees Sarah. His eyes go wide. Quickly he rushes to Betsy. He taps her on the shoulder.

BETSY
 (Whirling)
 Huh? What, I'm in a hurry.

Spunky pulls his invoice book out, grabs Betsy's and trades her.

BETSY (CONT'D)
 What? What are you...Oh dammit!
 No! I'm not going trade sections
 today, Spunky. Forget it!

She tries to grab her tablet back from him, but is too slow. Before she knows it, she is holding his receipt book, and he has run off with hers.

BETSY (CONT'D)
 (Angry)
 Spunky! You mute bastard!

SATLER
 (Spunky rushing off)
 A visit to the doctor says you
 don't get her!

Spunky runs from view. A beat. Spunky runs back into view, gives Satler a single hand-shake, runs off again.

SATLER (CONT'D)
Oh hell yes! On a bet! Got 'em!
Got 'em!

INT. ANTONIO'S KITCHEN DAY

Spunky runs into the kitchen, looking at Betsy's tablet, whistling frantically at Frank.

FRANK
Huh, What?

Spunky points at the tablet he's holding in his hand.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Hey, that's Betsy's tablet.

Spunky slaps Frank upside the head.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Christ, what?!
(A beat)
Oh, what the hell, you switched with her? God, mistake man. I can't read her handwriting either. But I'm pretty sure that's a number three with iced tea.
(Squinting)
Uh, unsweetened, ya.

Spunky grabs Frank and drags him out of the kitchen. On the way out, a frustrated Frank complains...

FRANK (CONT'D)
What?...What?!

INT. ANTONIO'S MAIN FLOOR DAY

Satler whistles heartily, cleaning a glass with assurance as Spunky appears with Frank.

FRANK
A girl? Spunks, I'm not good at this, man, get Satler to do....

SATLER
Don't worry Frank, we're both off the hook.

Spunky grabs Satler's beer hose and points it at him threateningly. Satler reaches for the sky, then slowly points across the restaurant to Sarah. Spunks looks and sees her sitting with some blonde guy wearing a suit (BRENT). Satler chuckles.

SATLER (CONT'D)
Look at the bright side; you get
see the doctor after work today.

Spunky slouches his forehead onto the bar in drudgery. Satler fakes an evil bellowing laugh. Spunky, head still down, raises the beer hose and squirts away.

SATLER (CONT'D)
(Knocks hose)
Shit! Punk!

EXT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE DAY

...Surreal music.

...Spunky, nervous, moves in slow motion along a sidewalk, nearing an impending white building. The closer he gets, the more nervous he looks. Finally, he reads a sign; "Sam Marcus Clinic for the Vocally Impaired"...

But he doesn't slow, just continues on with a look of guilt. The sign fading to BG, Spunky shuts his eyes in defeat.

INT. SUNNY'S NIGHT CLUB NIGHT

Spunky enters (carrying a case), passing the tuning band & Satler in a chair, who nonchalantly strums his bass.

SATLER
Take that trip to the doctor?

Spunky pauses. He turns, winks at Satler, moves on.

SATLER (CONT'D)
And did you see...the doctor?

Spunky, caught, stops, sighs, & stands his case on end.

SATLER (CONT'D)
(A beat)
Bet violation.
(Cinches, shakes head)
Boy oh boy, now there's a mistake.

Strumming, Satler stands, comes up behind him. We close.

SATLER (CONT'D)

It will take me a while to come up
with your punishment. In the
meanwhile...

Satler leans way in to whisper loudly into Spunky's ear.

SATLER (CONT'D)

...Better keep looking for help
with that pick-up routine...ouch-
ouch-ouch.

Spunky grits his teeth, snapping his case's lock. We hear
jazz music come to life....

INT. SPUNKY'S APARTMENT DAY

...The music continues (but muffled) as we follow a headphone
wire down to a sleeping Spunky, morning sun coming through
the window. We hear a far door open O.S. and Satler yelling
about. Through the bedroom door we see Satler come up some
stairs with some fast food. He walks in and notices Spunky
asleep.

Giggling, Satler goes to the stereo and slowly starts turning
up the volume. Spunky stirs more and more until he finally
wakes, pulling the headphones off and smiling. He chunks his
pillow at Satler and in response Satler tosses him a
doughnut. Spunky catches it in his mouth, starts chomping.
Satler clicks off the tape labeled "Rebels Without a Voice".

SATLER

Didn't you get enough of that crap
last night?...I got eggs and coffee
for ya, too.

(Hands bag over)

You know I never hear you say thank
you.

(Spunky flips Satler off)

Guess "fuck you" is close enough.
Oh, your folks called this morning,
said they'll be on-line after one
o'clock.

(Spunky Nods)

So...You want the good or bad news?

(Spunky gives a thumbs up)

Good news is that the bad news is
so bad it side-tracked me and I
haven't thought of your punishment
for the bet thing yet.

(Spunky Mimics a party)

Bad news is that both Sony and RCA
turned us down.

(MORE)

SATLER (CONT'D)

(Spunky rolls his eyes)

Also...

(Spunky gives a big look)

Sunny says we're going to have to bring in three times as much business if we're still playing for him next month, so....

(Spunky raises 2 fingers)

Ya, I know that's 2 pieces of bad news, but...Hey we just need focus, like old times, you and me, you know focus. Then they'll be coming to us. Plus, I'm making some extra coin this week cause Harry's having me close Thursday, so we can send out posters, dig? And I'll let you off early that night so you can make it to the doctor on Friday morning.

(Spunky signs a rebuttal)

Spunks, we can do the grapefruit another week.

(Spunky signs again)

Hey, come on! You've missed 6 times! I didn't make you miss.

(Spunky signs again)

I have a responsibility to the other guys to do all I can on my end. They're being patient, do them a favor. Come on, just this once.

We hear the other band members enter and climb the stairs.

GI-GI

Yeeeeaaaaaahhhh! Four-eyes be losin' that bet, said I couldn't pick the lock on the front doooorrrr! Heh-heh!

SATLER

(Off Spunky signing)

He says the lock is broken, dumb-ass.

GI-GI

Aaaaaawww-Shhhhhiiiiiiiiittttttt!!!

INT. LARGE GROCERY STORE DAY

Spunky juggles grapefruits, stopping every once in a while to wrap one against a wall & examine it. Frank is next to him.

FRANK

Thanks for switching shifts Spunks.
This girl is so hot I couldn't
afford to turn her down. Why was
Satler so pissed? It's only
Thursday. It's not like I'm
ditching work on a weekend or
anything.

Spunky shrugs. He squeezes a grapefruit. It squirts in his eye. He dances in pain.

Just then...a distant metallic crash, and Spunky halts, drops the fruit, his whole feeling changing. He starts to trot away, building speed to a sprint as Frank calls after him. We follow Spunky, panting, running like a wild man through the lines of customers, causing more than one to drop a bag.

EXT. LARGE GROCERY STORE DAY

Spunky flies out the doors into the open lot, looking desperately about. Across the way, he sees a suburban and a sedan in a fender bender, the sedan's engines mildly smoking. He dashes, breath pounding, until he is upon the cars, each vehicle owner (a man and a woman) already out and arguing with each other.

Spunky slams to a halt at the sedan's windows, peering inside to see a five year old child. He throws the door open, grabbing the child. As it cries, the mother suddenly rounds the car, screaming. Instantly, the child is on the ground, running to its mother as Spunky backs off, hands up wide.

The man who was arguing with the woman suddenly gets in Spunky's face. Spunky just backs away quickly, glancing into the suburban windows as he does. Finally, Spunky is far enough off that the confused man goes back to the shaken mother. Spunky, noticing a few ugly looks from passers-by turns and walks back to the store with Frank approaching. He passes Frank, ignoring him as he goes back to the store.

INT. LARGE GROCERY STORE DAY

Spunky appears at the grapefruit section, visibly shaken, continues juggling to escape. Frank runs up.

FRANK

Spunks! What the fuck was that?!

Just then the store manager comes stomping up.

MANAGER

Excuse me sir...Excuse me sir!
 (Spunky stops juggling)
 Would you mind explaining what you
 were doing outside just now?

FRANK

Say buddy, he doesn't....

MANAGER

I didn't ask you!
 (To Spunky)
 Are you gonna buy those
 grapefruits?

Spunky shakes his head. The manager takes his fruit.

MANAGER (CONT'D)

Then pick the one you want, and
leave.

Spunky eyes the manager, turns to the pyramid of grapefruit, studies it. He pulls one off the bottom and the whole thing crashes down. Frank hauls ass, Spunky barely evading the manager and escaping.

INT. ANTONIO'S RESTAURANT NIGHT

Satler stands at the front doors, sternly talking to the police. Spunky stands nervously behind him.

SATLER

So I will state one last time for
 the record, officer, that this
 diligent worker, who isn't even
 capable of speech-much less
 creating a public ruckus, has been
 here working his fingers to the
 bone all evening so we could open
 early. So he will not, without a
 specialized warrant from the United
 Mute Criminals Society, become the
 scapegoat for a misinformed grocery
 store manager bully this evening.
 Now if you'll excuse me, I am in
 charge here on Friday nights, and I
 really do have to go.

Spunky gives the police a pitiful look as the doors shut....

Satler locks the bolt and turns to the large crowd of Friday night regulars.

SATLER (CONT'D)
Let's get it on!

The crowd roars to life, beer mugs clinking, music pounding. Satler turns to Spunky. He points a hard finger into his chest.

SATLER (CONT'D)
You better be damn glad Harry isn't here tonight, asshole. Now it's almost nine, so get home and go to sleep because for this one you're gonna see that doctor tomorrow.

Spunky tries to sign, but stops to catch the grapefruit that Satler tosses behind him as he walks off.

SATLER (CONT'D)
(Off camera)
And take your damn grapefruit with ya. I said already I'm not doing it.

Spunky looks frustrated, throws the grapefruit off screen towards Satler. There's a sudden crash.

SATLER (CONT'D)
(Off camera)
Missed! Fuckin' punk!

Spunky tosses his apron on an indoor plant. He unlocks the doors and walks out. Brent walks in. Sarah walks in. Spunky walks in, grabbing his apron off the plant.

INT. ANTONIO'S MAIN FLOOR NIGHT

We come down from a clock (reading 10:00) above the bar to see Spunky hiding under a table cloth. We then pull back to see a tired Betsy waiting on Satler for some drinks.

BETSY
God, I hope that blonde tips well.
It's been an hour since we've closed already.

In BG, Spunky's arm reaches up, grabs the bar phone, pulls it out of sight. Several beats, then Spunky's arm puts the phone back. A few seconds later Satler's cell phone goes off. Satler stops fixing Betsy's drinks, checks his phone.

SATLER
(Squinting)
Message marked urgent?
(MORE)

SATLER (CONT'D)

What the hell? Hold on Betsy, Gotta make a call.

BETSY

(Sighs)

Anything to make the night longer.

As Betsy checks her watch, Spunky slips his hand into her apron and sneaks her order tablet.

INT. ANTONIO'S MAIN FLOOR NIGHT

Spunky appears at Sarah's table with the bill. Sarah looks surprised. Spunky lays the bill in front of Brent, who has his nose in a book.

BRENT

(Not looking up)

Umm, who's turn is it?

SARAH

Oh, sorry. I think it's mine.

Spunky looks appalled, slowly slides the check to Sarah. She laughs. Brent looks up from his book.

BRENT

What?

Sarah shakes her head.

SARAH

Uh, Nothing.

BRENT

Oh, I'm gonna hit the restroom.

Brent leaves as Sarah puts down a twenty, laughing.

SARAH

Keep the change.

Spunky bows "Japanese style" for thank you. Several beats. He slowly turns to go.

SARAH (CONT'D)

So do you know sign language?

Spunky yanks back, breathes on his nails, buffs them.

SARAH (CONT'D)

I figured you did. When I come in here, feel free to use it.

(MORE)

SARAH (CONT'D)

I know it too.

(He gawks, points to her)

Ya, it's what I do for a living.

I'm a speech therapist.

Spunky drops his erase board. He fumbles, picks it up, straightens. Sarah apologizes. He shakes his head like it's not her fault and motions for her to continue.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Actually, right now I'm in a firm until I finish my PHD, but I plan to open my own practice next year, so....

Spunky gives an enthusiastic "thumbs up".

SARAH (CONT'D)

Ya, it's a good deal, because it's likely a lot of the patients I have now will choose to stick with me when I go on my own.

(Spunky nods attentively)

How about you? Is this full time?

Spunky sits down across from her. She's a tiny bit startled. He signs and she looks confused.

SARAH (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, you said you want to be a singer?

Spunky shakes his head quickly. He signs again.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Oh, a trombone player. Okay, that makes a little more sense.

BRENT

(Then from nowhere)

Ready to go?

SARAH

Oh, hey, ya.

(To Spunky as she stands)

Sorry to talk and run, but he's got an exam tomorrow.

Spunky stands & nods like it's no problem. He signs.

SARAH (CONT'D)

(Pulling out card)

Oh, a card? Ya, sure. Feel free to give it to any friends too.

BRENT

Hey, new client, huh? Let me give you one of my cards. I'm a pediatrician in case you have kids.

Spunky takes it, smiling falsely. He waves to them as they leave, chunks Brent's card away and tucks hers into his crotch. He walks off macho, bobbing his head. As he passes the bar, Satler is trying to calm Betsy, then notices him.

SATLER

(To Betsy)

Christ, I haven't seen your tablet, all right!

(To Spunky)

Yo! Speechless! I said go home over an hour ago!

BETSY

Spunky?! You little shit! Gimme that!

Spunky gawks, tosses everything and flees. Betsy pursues him as Chester catches her money and tablet. Satler buries his face in a towel to escape as Chester reads the tablet.

CHESTER

Well I'd be pissed too if I got only three dollars from a couple of doctors.

At the word "doctors", Satler looks up from the towel.

INT. SPUNKY'S APARTMENT DAY

Music tells us something is up as we hear the phone continuously ringing in the early morning. Slowly we move across the vacant bed to the answering machine, which plays a message of Spunky whistling for a few seconds, then beeps. Satler's voice is heard after the beep.

SATLER

(O.S. over machine)

Yo punk. Better not be hearing this message, cause if you are, you're late for your appointment, kapeesh? Sam Marcus Clinic, suite 206. Get there.

INT. SAM MARCUS CLINIC DAY

The music continues as we pass through the front doors of the building and move down the hall to Suite 206. We move past the Suite into the office, where DR. MARCUS approaches his receptionist, GLENDA.

DR. MARCUS

Glenda, has Jonathon Stewart come in yet?

GLENDA

No, Doctor, he hasn't.

The doctor nods and leaves as we close in on a ringing phone. Glenda's hand picks it up.

GLENDA (CONT'D)

Doctor Marcus's office....

INT. SARAH'S OFFICE BUILDING DAY

The music continuing, we now move along a different hallway behind Spunky, pausing as he comes to a door reading "MPS Private Therapeutical Practices, Terry Springer M.D. & Associates." The card in Spunky's hand reads the same, the bottom of it listing "Sarah P. Melder". Spunky enters the office, approaches the receptionist, JULIE.

JULIE

Hi are you Mr. Encina?

(He shakes head)

Okay, just fill this form out please.

She hands him a medical form and pen.

JULIE (CONT'D)

Who did you have an appointment with?

Spunky puts Sarah's card down, starts to write his response on a flyer, but before he can, she takes the card and hits a button on the phone.

JULIE (CONT'D)

Sarah, your appointment is here.

Spunky freaks, tries to get her attention...too late. He cringes, starts to fill out the form. Over the phone speaker we hear Sarah.

SARAH

(O.S. Over Phone Speaker)
Appointment? Umm, I must have
forgotten to write it down. Send
them on back.

Spunky shakes his head wildly, but Julie is opening the door for him already. She takes his form with him still writing.

JULIE

I can fill that part out for you.
Right back this way.

Spunky rolls his eyes, reluctantly follows through the door and down an impending hall, viewing offices with prestigious looking men wearing suits. We hear Sarah's voice getting louder through a nearing door.

SARAH

(O.C. Through office door)
Whenever, just call this same
number to make an appointment...
Yes, one-hundred dollars a session.

Spunky stops, eyes wide. Julie about-faces, opens a door reading "Intern Research and Study". Spunky fakes a grin and walks through.

INT. SARAH'S OFFICE DAY

Julie places Spunky's form on Sarah's desk and walks out. Spunky starts a bit as the door closes behind him. He walks to the middle of the room. Sarah stands on the near side of her quaint desk facing away from Spunky, still on the phone.

The walls display various certificates, and some pictures, including one of her and Brent. Spunky starts to snarl when he is caught off guard.

SARAH

(Hanging up)
Oh! Hi! It's you! Please excuse me,
uh...

Sarah unfolds some glasses, puts them on, reading his form.

SARAH (CONT'D)

...Jonathon.
(Looks up)
Everything's been so hectic this
week that I'd swear I don't
remember setting an appointment
with you last night.

A beat, then he sluffs a hand like it's no big deal.

SARAH (CONT'D)

God, I feel awful. I'm supposed to meet someone else in about fifteen minutes. But that's okay, our first session is just an orientation and you don't pay for it anyway, so I think we can cut a few corners. You want a seat?

Spunky shrugs, claps, rubs his hands together and sits. Sarah pulls her chair from behind the desk, grabs some literature, sits.

SARAH (CONT'D)

First things first. I need to point out that I'm not officially part of the team here. I'm technically classified as an intern, but I am certified to diagnose and treat under the supervision of the other doctors.

Sarah folds her glasses up and puts them in her pocket.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Now since you've come here at the beginning of the semester, which is our busiest time, there's a good chance you'll be getting me instead of the more experienced personnel, so before we proceed you should probably keep that in mind.

Spunky nods like a dope.

SARAH (CONT'D)

However, if at any time you feel unsatisfied with how our sessions are going, you can request a transfer to one of the board-tested MD's. Okay? One of the benefits to going with me is that you only pay half the normal rate...

(Spunky smiles)

...Which is only \$100 instead of \$200.

(Spunky swallows)

And for that, you get the full hour session.

(MORE)

SARAH (CONT'D)

We do ask appointments be made at least a week in advance, and any cancellations must occur no later than 24 hours before the appointment, otherwise, you still have to pay. That's all the bad news. Any questions so far?

EXT. SARAH'S OFFICE BUILDING DAY

Spunky strolls towards the street exit, happy as a clam, tipping a non-existent hat to people that walk by. When he reaches sunlight, he spreads his arms, breathes deeply. He does a jig as he goes down the stairs and hangs a left... past Satler, propped like his father against a near brick wall. Satler has his arms folded and holds the receipt Chester was viewing at the end of scene 31.

Spunky stops in his tracks, lowers his head to the ground. He slowly walks backwards until he reaches the wall, thumping his head against it, arms dangling. The two never look at each other.

SATLER

Did you happen to tell-the doctor-how convenient it is for you that you get to satisfy both your medical and primate needs by receiving therapy from someone you also have a crush on?

No response.

SATLER (CONT'D)

Did you happen to tell-the doctor-just why it is that you do...not...talk?

No response. Satler sighs.

SATLER (CONT'D)

Then what you might tell-the doctor-next time you see her, is that due to a punishment for a bet you reneged on with your best friend, you will no longer be able to use her as-your doctor-any longer.

An angry look overtakes Spunky's face.

SATLER (CONT'D)

I'm sorry to do this to you pal. It's for your own good.

Satler walks off. Spunky whistles. Satler backs up, leans again.

SATLER (CONT'D)
...Yeeeeessss?

Spunky takes the paper from Satler's hand, ticking with his mouth as he pulls out a pen and scribbles something on it. He hands it back to Satler, who rolls his eyes when he reads it. His expression changes to Spunky's, and Spunky's to Satler's.

SATLER (CONT'D)
(Sighing)
No. I guess we never...made a time
limit on how long it took for you
to go out with this girl.

Spunky, smiling, starts whistling and walks off in his jig again. Satler looks at the ground, shaking his head.

INT. SUNNY'S NIGHT CLUB NIGHT

The bell of Spunky's horn belts notes and the crowd applauds. The rest of the band smiles at the response, each nodding as they look at each other, obviously impressed with Spunky's adrenaline and sudden zest. They all seem to be having a good night...save for Satler.

INT. SUNNY'S NIGHT CLUB NIGHT

The band packs as SUNNY approaches & hands Satler some cash.

SUNNY
The crowd was small, but it sure
was happy tonight. Things are
looking better. Keep it up.

SATLER
Appreciate it Sunny.
(Hands cash to Joulson)
Pass it out. By the way, we're
giving Spunky a ride home tonight.

Joulson, Gi-Gi and Chester shrug at each other, go back to watching Spunks still getting laughs by stealing people's drinks.

INT. SPUNKY'S APARTMENT NIGHT

An ECU of a miniature green parrot, squawking like there's no tomorrow. We pull back and see it sitting on a perch in Spunky's livingroom. Spunky looks angry, Satler satisfied. The band stands by in question.

SATLER

This...is motivation. A vocal example if you will, for our lead man to go by. You see the other night, our friend Spunky was foolish enough to attempt what we in the band call "bet renege".

The band members wince. Spunky tries to sign.

SATLER (CONT'D)

What the accused is trying to say is that the bet is still on-going. However, the bet renege happened at a point where he thought the bet was closed and there was a clear winner, thus, his protests are invalid.

JOULSEN

Is that true?

Spunky looks about, nods, then tries to explain. All others wince.

SATLER

But, nothing. At the very least our fine green friend here will stand as an excellent placeholder until our bet is complete.

(Satler's pager goes off)

And now, my girlfriend awaits, so Gentlemen, I think it's time Spunky see us to our vehicle.

Spunky sneers as the group heads for the door. Gi-Gi flinches when he passes too close and the bird lashes out, just missing him.

INT. SATLER'S CAR NIGHT

Spunky stands at Satler's car, waving angrily. As the last of the band gets in, all wave goodbye back but Satler. Joulsen reaches for the car door handle. As he does, the band-packed vehicle is strangely quiet.

JOULSEN
 Good gig, Spunks.

Silence. Joulsen shuts the door.

The instant it's shut, Chester, Joulsen and Gi-Gi freak out, none of them coherent for talking over each other. All want to know what's going on. Satler drives.

 SATLER
 Everybody shut up! It's between me and him and I don't talk shit about my friends.

 (Silence)
 Aww fuck that, he wants to get laid by going to some looker chick doctor instead of his normal doctor, and I'm pissed.

 JOULSEN
 What, that's it, he switched doctors, that's why you're pissed?

 SATLER
 She's not even a real doctor. She's in school.

 CHESTER
 Whoa, wait you're not talking about that Sarah chick I hit on?

 SATLER
 Exactly who I'm talk'n about.

 CHESTER
 (Concerned)
 Ohh man.

Satler nods like it's serious.

 CHESTER (CONT'D)
 Man I can't believe he's bagg'n a girl I couldn't!

The car erupts again.

 SATLER
 God damnit guys! Can't you see the problem here?

 JOULSEN
 I don't know. His current doctor ain't doing much good.

SATLER

Maybe that's cause Spunky never goes. The last thing he needs is another distraction.

GI-GI

Maybe de Spunk-man just need to be laid.

SATLER

Then he's sure looking in the wrong place, cause the chick's gotta boyfriend.

GI-GI

Well do she have a ring on her finger?

SATLER

Well no, but...

CHESTER

(Double takes)

What?!

GI-GI

Oh man, he might as well be in her bed. Shiiiiieett, III might as well be in her bed. Fuck dat PC shit, just cause he can't talk....

The car goes nuts. Satler rolls his eyes.

SATLER

God dammit.

As we slowly we DISSOLVE to...

INT. SPUNKY'S APARTMENT NIGHT

We move along Spunky's carpet, slowly at first, steadily building speed, reaching the stairs and ascending them. Eerie music comes now, nearing the top, rounding the corner, through the bedroom door. SUSAN's ghostly voice echos as it screams.

SUSAN

(V.O.)

Spunky...Spunky!

We shoot up to Spunky waking violently, a light like an explosion flashing the room. Then, silence. Spunky pants, shaken. He sits up, puts his legs over the bedside. A beat.

Suddenly, he wraps his fists against the bed, mouth gaping as if trying to scream. He grabs his telephone and throws it, smashing it on the far wall. The bird squawks in BG off screen. Spunky doesn't react, just sits pensively alone in the dark, head in his hands.

INT. SARAH'S OFFICE DAY

Sarah opens the door to her office.

SARAH
Jonathon! Come on in!

Spunky enters, handing her an application and looking around. She shuts the door.

SARAH (CONT'D)
So you went with me huh? Thanks, I need clients.
(Reads application)
I'd give you all the standard spiel, but I see you've had therapy before. I'm sure you're used to general procedure, so the only thing I'll say is I have 2 basic rules. One, during our sessions I'd like as much as possible to avoid sign language to get you used to communicating differently, and two, honesty with me is key, because I can't help you unless you're willing to help yourself, okay?
(He nods)
Okay...So, do ya like it standing, sitting, or you wanna do it on the couch?

His eyes widen. An odd moment as he tries to look serious, but he cracks like a juvenile and silently laughs. Sarah shakes her head, gives a confused chuckle.

SARAH (CONT'D)
Wh-what?

He starts to sign.

SARAH (CONT'D)
I'd rather you'd point than sign.

He blows it off, points to some chairs.

SARAH (CONT'D)
Sitting, okay.

INT. SARAH'S OFFICE DAY

Sarah and Spunky are sitting in the chairs facing each other.

SARAH

You were mute from birth then?

(Odd beat, then he nods)

Wow, that's so unusual. Your X-rays show your vocal chords are perfectly healthy. I think I can remember only two cases in current years similar to yours. Any professional theories as to why?

(He holds up his hands)

Ya, I don't expect elaborate answers without sign.

(He signs, she nods)

Ya, it is possible there's something the X-rays just don't pick up. Stranger things have happened. Did you cry as an infant?

(An odd beat, shrugs)

Surely your parents talked about your situation.

(Signs)

Oh, I'm sorry to hear that. How old were you when they died?

(Holds up 2 fingers)

Wow, then you don't remember them. How about your birth records? Any notes of biological defects?

(An odd beat, he shrugs)

You mean you never looked?

(Shakes head)

Then you've got homework for next time.

INT. ANTONIO'S FRONT END DAY

Satler cleans glasses as Frank laughs at Chester.

FRANK

I can't believe you lost to Spunky!
"The King of Smooth Talk" beaten
out by mute!

SATLER

The joke's gonna be on the whole
band when she walks. Little
bastard's gonna waste months of our
time trying to get into this girl's
pants.

FRANK

Lighten up, man! He needs every advantage he can get.

SATLER

Gimme a break. I was dateless for two years before Cynthia. All he's gotta do is pull out a stupid grapefruit out to get laid.

Suddenly is heard blaring the "charge" theme from across the restaurant. All turn (including customers) to see Spunky playing his trombone. Some people laugh, yell "Charge!" Spunky goes again.

SATLER (CONT'D)

See, not a one damn clue the boss is back. Prick's gonna get me fired.

Spunky continues to play as Harry walks slowly up, arms crossed. When Spunky finally notices him, he lets the music peter out like a dying elephant and then lowers his horn. He looks to Harry.

HARRY

Who said you could play that in here?

Satler curses when Harry bellows his name.

INT. ANTONIO'S FRONT END NIGHT

The place is hopping. Satler mixes drinks with Betsy behind the bar.

SATLER

(To Spunky)

Calling all handicapped! Pick up!

Spunky passes by whistling, grabs some drinks.

BETSY

Boy, Spunky's flipping out tonight. What's going on? I almost expect him to start singing.

SATLER

I doubt it
(turns to next customer)
What'll you ha...?

Sarah is sitting down at the bar with Brent. Satler turns back around, curses.

SATLER (CONT'D)

Betsy, hold the fort, I need to take a leak.

BETSY

You sure that's a good idea right now?

(Satler leaves)

Shit.

(To Brent)

Have you been helped?

INT. ANTONIO'S KITCHEN NIGHT

Satler approaches Chester amidst the chaos.

SATLER

She's here, God dammit.

CHESTER

Huh? Sat, man you gotta loosen that leash somehow.

SATLER

Not Cynthia, punk! The chick, that doctor chick! Her and her God damn boyfriend.

CHESTER

Oh, well that's good. Spunks will see them together and get the drift.

SATLER

Please! Not good enough. We need to get rid of her somehow.

CHESTER

What, you don't think he's got the smarts to play it cool if that dude's around?

Spunky flies into the kitchen with a large tablet, Betsy on his tail, screaming.

BETSY

I said give it back! Give back that drink order list, Spunky!

SATLER

No.

INT. ANTONIO'S MAIN FLOOR NIGHT

Betsy slaps two drinks onto the bar in front of Sarah and Brent.

BETSY

Here you go, guys. Sorry it took so long.

SARAH

Oh, it's no problem.

BETSY

(Turns to Satler)

Psst. Thanks, I couldn't afford Spunky's game tonight.

Satler eyes the disgruntled Spunky taking orders across the restaurant.

SATLER

That makes two of us.

Spunky nears, scowling at Satler. As he does, Sarah and Brent are scratching their heads over something.

BRENT

Ya, I know the band you're talking about, but I can't remember their name. They had a one-hit wonder ten years ago or so.

Just then Betsy calls from the far end of the bar, sliding a full drink down the length of it.

BETSY

Spunky!

SARAH

That's it! "Spunky and the Monotones!"

Satler's hand catches the drink. He looks over his shoulder to Sarah.

BRENT

Ya, right! "Spunky and the Monotones!"

Spunky freaks to a halt, looks at Brent.

SARAH

Oh, there he is! Hey Jonathon!

Satler looks at Spunky.

SARAH (CONT'D)

It's weird you're working tonight.
We were just talking about you.
(Off Spunky nodding)
You remind us of someone famous.

BRENT

(Waving it off)
Well, kind of famous.

SARAH

(Elbows Brent)
Shut up, they were good!
(To Spunky)
You look like a guy who was in this
cool music video once. Anyway,
sorry, I'll stop bothering you.

Spunky acknowledges. He starts to take the drink in Satler's hand as Sarah goes back to talking with Brent. Satler holds it firm, leans into Spunky.

SATLER

Remind her of someone famous,
huh...Jonathon?

Satler lets up the drink. Spunky takes it, eyes him, departs.

INT. ANTONIO'S RESTROOM FOYER NIGHT

Spunky rounds the corner of the more silent restroom foyer and takes a deep breath. He upends the drink he holds, downing it in a single gulp. Then he leans back on the wall, shutting his eyes as drops the glass to the floor, letting it shatter. We close on him, DISSOLVE to other visions.

INT. SPUNKY'S OLD CAR NIGHT

The pop music comes up as a delicate hand reaches into frame to turn up the car radio. The music gets louder as we pull back to see Susan talking to the camera.

SUSAN

Here it is! Here it is! Come on
stud, let me hear it.

A male hand reaches down for the radio knob, but she stops it.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Oh no you don't!

She wrestles with the hand, laughing, trying to keep it from getting to the knob. Everything is giggles. Then...a blinding light through Sarah's window. A deafening wham. Susan rocks violently as the view behind her goes end over end. She laughs the whole time, looks at us.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

(Ghostly)

Sing to me, Spunky.

INT. SPUNKY'S APARTMENT DAY

Another sudden wham in the dream wakes Spunky in a sweat. He has headphones on, which are playing the same music as from the car radio in the previous scene. He rips the headphones off to see Satler banging on the window next to him. In BG, the bird is squawking.

SATLER

You fixed your lock you phone-screening punk! Let me in!

Spunky clicks off the tape he listens to, pulls down the shade on the window.

EXT. SPUNKY'S APARTMENT DAY

Satler stands on a ladder at Spunky's second story window.

SATLER

Come on man. I had to drag a ladder all the way over here.

The shade comes up. Spunky looks annoyed. He pulls the shade down as Satler protests more.

SATLER (CONT'D)

Plus Cynthia's with me. You don't want to be rude to her, do ya?

The shade comes back up; Spunky with a ridiculous grin. The shade goes back down again.

SATLER (CONT'D)

Ha-ha. Very funny. Now come on.

The shade comes up; Spunky is cross-eyed. It goes back down. Satler pounds hard on the glass.

SATLER (CONT'D)
Come on man, quit being an asshole.

The shade comes up. Spunky's bare ass is against the window.

SATLER (CONT'D)
No, I said quit being an asshole.

The shade goes down a long time, Satler continuing to protest. Finally we hear Cynthia yelling from below.

CYNTHIA
(O.S.)
Sweetie, he opened the door!

Satler starts to climb down. Suddenly the shade comes up. Spunky throws the window open, starts shaking the ladder.

SATLER
God! Shit! Stop it!

INT. SPUNKY'S APARTMENT DAY

Cynthia cleans a cut on Satler's head. In BG, the shower runs and the bird squawks.

CYNTHIA
Oh, be a good a sport.

SATLER
The bastard chucked me off a God damn ladder! Could have broken my legs!

CYNTHIA
Well you could have broken his heart, so....

SATLER
Should break is face is what I should do. Fucker doesn't call me for three days...I go spend money the band can use on a ladder....

With a sneer, Satler ejects the tape Spunky was listening to.

SATLER (CONT'D)
Meanwhile he sits in here like a punk listening to this....

Satler's face goes blank when he reads the cassette labeled "Spunky & the Monotones." Cynthia only glances at it, goes back to cleaning.

CYNTHIA

Hey, I thought you said Spunky never listens to the old stuff...Sweetie?

We close on Satler, still looking in awe at the tape.

SATLER

Babe, I'm gonna have to roll posters tonight.

INT. SATLER'S APARTMENT NIGHT

Satler, Joulson, Chester & Gi-Gi sit around a table rolling posters.

JOULSEN

I still don't get it, Sat.

SATLER

Man, he hasn't listened to that tape in over seven years. I'm telling you, something's starting to change.

JOULSEN

Okay, let's say you're right. How do we know it's the chick that's effecting him? Maybe he's just coming around.

CHESTER

(Nodding)

I don't know, man. Nothing effects like a woman effects.

SATLER

That's right. And It's the only factor in his life that's any different. I'm bettn' the closer he gets to her, the bigger the changes will be.

GI-GI

Yaaaaa, De Sat-head be say'n the only way Spunks be come'n along is she's cuuummmm'n along wid em! Ahhhhhh! Yeeaaaahhhhh!

JOULSON

I don't know Satler. I think your playing "Cupid" is a little selfish.

SATLER

(Pointedly)

Hey, you can go to hell, man.

All posters pause rolling.

SATLER (CONT'D)

I'm his friend, his best friend you got that. He and I have known each other forever and what I'm looking out for is his own God damn good. Besides, I'm not gonna talk to her about it.

...Joulsen is the first to start rolling.

JOULSEN

Or him?

Satler is the last to start rolling.

SATLER

Hey? What did he say her last name was?

INT. SARAH'S OFFICE DAY

Julie lays down a stack of mail on Sarah's desk, a poster for Spunky's band included. We pull back to see Sarah talking to a mentor.

JULIE

Here's your mail today.

SARAH

(Not paying attention)

Thanks.

(To mentor)

I don't know, he's mouthing things okay, and our tests show no damage to his vocal chords, but he's not forming any sounds.

MENTOR

Well, it's a slim chance, but it could be psychological.

SARAH

Ya, that's what I think too, but...

MENTOR

If you remember in Robert Smith's case, Townsend had him do exercises that would make him feel more comfortable. You might try some basic personality tests, like asking him easy questions about himself and such. Then slowly increase the difficulty of the answers he'll have to give you. This will force him to incorporate details that can't be easily communicated without speech. It might even unlock some subconscious anxieties of some kind.

Spunky sticks his head around the corner, knocking on the door.

SARAH

Oh, Jonathon, come on in.

She grabs 2 chairs as the Mentor leaves. We close on the poster, reading the date and a bold headline stating "This Thursday."

INT. SARAH'S OFFICE DAY

Sarah and Spunky sit in her office during the session.

SARAH

...You're favorite color?

(Points to the carpet)

Green, I can see that. I know these questions sound silly, but believe it or not they can tell a lot about a person. Are you very religious?

Spunky raises his hands to answer.

SARAH (CONT'D)

No hands.

He puts his hands down, shakes his head.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Hey, that's rare. I'm not either. Most handicapped persons are... Whoops! Sorry, not supposed to say "handicapped". Broke my own rule.

(MORE)

SARAH (CONT'D)
Umm, what are your relationships
like, are you married?

An odd beat. Spunky shakes his head.

SARAH (CONT'D)
Umm, no? Engaged, have a
girlfriend?

He shakes his head again.

SARAH (CONT'D)
No? How about general sexual
activity?

A nervous beat. He kind of nods.

SARAH (CONT'D)
Okay, and you're heterosexual?

He nods violently.

SARAH (CONT'D)
(Laughing)
Sorry, it's something I should ask.
Nothing wrong if you're gay.

She flips pages, he nervously loosens his collar.

SARAH (CONT'D)
Any pets?

Spunky smirks in an annoyed fashion.

INT. SPUNKY'S APARTMENT DAY

Spunky rolls around with the pillow over his head, the bird on top of the pillow pecking at him. The phone rings and the answering machine picks up. The voice speaking is unfamiliar.

VOICE
Jonathon, this is Dr. Edmond Ross,
your family Doctor back in
Rockville. I received a phone call
earlier today from MPS Private
Therapeutical Practices there in
Chicago. A Miss Sarah Melder was
requesting a copy of your birth
records.

Spunky lifts the pillow to reveal wide, bloodshot eyes. The bird flies in a panic, starts squawking.

VOICE (CONT'D)

I don't have your new address, but I saw your mom the other day and asked her for it so I could send the records directly to you.

Spunky sighs with relief.

VOICE (CONT'D)

She didn't have your address on her and said for me to just send the records to your old address since Satler still lives there and it'll get to you.

Spunky's eyes go wide again.

INT. SATLER'S APARTMENT DAY

We pull back from Satler eating a sandwich by candlelight with Cynthia in his kitchen. Spunky stands sternly before him.

SATLER

No, man, I never found anything in the mail.

Cynthia rolls her eyes. Spunky points at him accusingly.

SATLER (CONT'D)

I didn't man!

(Spunky signs)

Now what interest would I possibly have in informing...Doctor-ahem-Melder about your dirty little past.

(Signs)

My friend, I deny all accusations. Now my significant other and I were having a few hours alone for a change, so if you don't mind, please jump on your little tricycle and pedal off. Or would you prefer to keep insulting me?

Spunky grabs a rubber glove from the kitchen sink, turns his nose up at Satler, smacks him snobbishly on both cheeks. He leaves the apartment. After he does, Satler pulls Spunky's birth records out of a near phone book.

CYNTHIA

(Sassy)

"I never found anything in the mail."

SATLER

Hey, IIIII didn't.

CYNTHIA

I'm never bringing in your bills again. God, you're shameless.

SATLER

Don't look at it as me lying to Spunky. Think of it more as me lying for Spunky.

CYNTHIA

If you get caught, I never knew a thing.

Satler lifts the records into the candle.

SATLER

Neither will Sarah Melder, my dear, neither...will...Sarah Melder.

INT. SARAH'S OFFICE DAY

Sarah sits before Spunky reciting nursery rhymes. Spunky mouths along, no sounds coming out. They finish up.

SARAH

Good.
(Looks at her watch)
Okay, Question time.

INT. SARAH'S OFFICE DAY

SARAH

What's some relatively dangerous activity you always wanted to do?

Spunky grabs some paper, makes an airplane, simulates a parachute jump.

SARAH (CONT'D)

(Laughing)

Skydiving. Oh, it's so much fun! I finally went and did it last year on my birthday. You so need to try it. It's scary, but such a thrill.

(MORE)

SARAH (CONT'D)

Okay, umm, if you could name one thing you long to do that you've never done before in your life, what would it be?

Spunky looks hesitant.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Uh oh, I caught you didn't I. It's something kinky.

Spunky smiles, makes a "so-so" with his hands. She laughs as he simulates writing.

SARAH (CONT'D)

(Laughing)

Sure, you're allowed to write it, as long as it's PG rated.

Spunky takes her pad and pen, scribbles a bit, gives them back. Sarah reads, looks taken aback, almost touched. There are several odd beats.

SARAH (CONT'D)

(Reading)

I've never called out a woman's name while I've made love to her.

(Looks up, smiles)

Not X-rated at all.

A pleasant silence that seems to last.

...Until her watch goes off...She gets the alarm.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Well, times up.

Spunky nods.

SARAH (CONT'D)

See you next Thursday.

INT. SUNNY'S NIGHT CLUB NIGHT

A beer slams down onto a bar. We pull back to see the club packed with attractive young women...not nearly as many men. We move through the crowd to Satler and the band gearing up. Cynthia is with them.

CHESTER

(Gawking)

Damn, you guys have got a lot of friends!

SATLER

You guys hell, it's Cynthia that did it.

CHESTER

And all of them single? Man-o-man did she do it. My god, I'm gonna be playing with three drumsticks tonight.

SATLER

Ya and that's all you're playing with. Remember the plan. And Gi-Gi, watch your mouth, I don't want you pissing any girls off and causing them to leave.

GI-GI

Paaaalease Sat-head. Who you think you be talkin'...Holy Sheeeeeiiiiitt! ...You see de rack on dat one?!

SATLER

Cynth, remember, a full one every ten minutes. He's gotta be....

CYNTHIA

Spunky will be plastered! I know, I know. Now Shhh! Here he comes!

Spunky walks backwards into the shot holding his horn, jaw-wide in shock at all the women. He bumps to a halt against the drum symbols, not noticing the one that tumbles.

SATLER

Quite a crowd, eh Spunks?
(No reply)
You uh, ready to rock?

Spunks twirls his horn like a sword.

SATLER (CONT'D)

(To Band)
Let's do it.

INT. SUNNY'S NIGHT CLUB NIGHT

Spunky swings his horn all over the stage, the rest of the band following suit. The crowd goes wild as they go into the bridge. Satler grabs the microphone.

SATLER

Now check out these chops guys &
dolls.

Spunky goes horn nuts as Satler turns from the mic to Joulson & Gi-Gi.

SATLER (CONT'D)

Dammit, he's perfectly drunk!
Where is she?

JOULSEN

You sure you sent the poster to the
right place?

SATLER

Yes, I'm sure.

GI-GI

Well, she don't show up in ten,
(pointing to a gorgeous
Afro-American)
I'm gonna jump on a dat fine woman
right der! Ain't no sister dat
fine go out with a mute cracker
anyhow.

Suddenly Satler sees Sarah & Brent coming to a table in the audience. He turns too close to the microphone as he speaks.

SATLER

(Over speakers)

She's here!

(Starts)

Uh, here-hearing those fine notes
tonight she is.

The song wraps up.

SATLER (CONT'D)

Thank you one and all...Okay,
everyone in tonight's table game
needs to make sure a number's in
the bowl up here.

Satler points to a small raffle globe on stage.

SATLER (CONT'D)

It's coming up in the next ten or
so minutes. Meanwhile, our friend's
gonna slide you this one.

Spunky takes his cue to start the next song with a long slur on his trombone. Just then Satler sees Brent leave his table. Satler hands his bass to Gi-Gi, who frowns.

SATLER (CONT'D)
Yo Gi, take over for me.
(To Cynthia)
Go tell....

CYNTHIA
(Rolling eyes)
Frank, I know.

INT. SUNNY'S NIGHT CLUB KITCHEN NIGHT

Satler flies into the kitchen, yells for Sunny, who pops up.

SATLER
Sunny, you guys have any
grapefruits?

INT. SUNNY'S NIGHT CLUB NIGHT

Satler comes to the microphone just as the song ends.

SATLER
(Over mic)
Okay everyone, time for the
evening's famous main event.

Girls here and there start jumping up and down, yelling "Spunky!" Sarah notices them, looks curious. Then slowly... the crowd starts chanting, "Grapefruit, grapefruit." Spunky looks to Satler, shaking his head, confused.

SATLER (CONT'D)
Yes, I know most of you were
disappointed the last few weekends
because you had to go without, but
as the old saying goes, you can
never keep a mute man down. Since
you women are all eager to see who
the lucky lady is I'm sure, I'll
shake the "globe of love" here
round and round to see who gets
charmed away from their boyfriend
tonight.

Girls yell as Satler shakes the raffle bowl, reaches in, pulls out ticket number 15.

SATLER (CONT'D)
 8 is the lucky number!
 (Some girls whine)
 Will all the ladies at table 8
 stand up. Could I have a light
 please?

A spotlight shines on Sarah at 8. Her eyes go wide. So do Spunky's.

SATLER (CONT'D)
 Uh oh, only one female at the
 table? What are the chances of that
 in this bar, huh?
 (Off a look from Spunky)
 A round of applause for the winner
 as she comes up to get her prize.

Spunky slaps Satler, then pretends to be calm as she approaches. Sarah and Spunky exchange odd greetings as Satler pulls them towards a near piano. He sits Sarah on the bench, keeps Spunky standing. Spunky rolls his eyes, joins in the routine.

SATLER (CONT'D)
 I assume I need the explanation?

The crowd roars.

SATLER (CONT'D)
 Years ago, when Hollywood was
 young, a very talented group of
 comedians known as "The Marx
 Brothers" housed a member
 named...Harpo.

Spunky gives a "thumb's up" to the crowd. They roars.

SATLER (CONT'D)
 Now Harpo, while probably not as
 famous as his brother Groucho...
 (thumbs down, crowd boos)
 Was 10...times...cooler.
 (crowd roars)
 Why you ask?
 (crowd asks "why")
 Three reasons;
 (crowd yells "1")
 Nose-glasses are stupid
 (crowd yells "2")
 Nose-glasses are stupid, and
 (crowd yells "3")
 (MORE)

SATLER (CONT'D)

Only a mute can make an aphrodisiac
 (pulls out a grapefruit)
 ...out of a grapefruit.

Chester does a drum roll.

SATLER (CONT'D)

To prove my point once and for all,
 here to woo yet another bar-going
 female into agreeing with me is the
 one, the only, "Ghost of Harpo
 Marcs".

Satler tosses the grapefruit to Spunky, who rebounds it off his inner elbows, bouncing it from one to the other, balancing it on his right knee, flicking it up and catching it behind his back. The crowd roars, and Spunky gives Satler a sly eye. Then he slides devilishly onto the piano seat next to Sarah, who starts laughing. He moves his eyebrows up and down like a wolf as he twirls the grapefruit on one finger and the girls in the bar go crazy. A tense few beats as he slowly lowers the grapefruit to the keys, and then suddenly, the grapefruit is wacking away at the piano keys, tapping out the famous tune "Chopsticks."

INT. SUNNY'S NIGHTCLUB MEN'S ROOM NIGHT

Brent keeps angrily looking between his watch, the urinal sporting the "out of order" sign, and the one occupied stall. Inside the stall, Frank stands with pants down, snickering.

INT. SUNNY'S NIGHTCLUB NIGHT

Spunky keeps going, the crowd continuing to support. As he goes along, a girl from nowhere pops up and kisses him on the cheek. He blows her a kiss, continuing to play without missing a beat. Sarah seems tickled by the whole scene. Finally, the song ends, and the crowd applauds. When all quiets, there is one person still clapping...Brent.

BRENT

Wow, fantastic. How about "Flight
 of the Bumblebee", you do that one?

An odd silence...Quickly Satler jumps on the mic.

SATLER

Oh, so there was another lady at
 table 9.

(Crowd laughs)

Just kidding.

(MORE)

SATLER (CONT'D)

But it stinks for the lovely here at the bench, because if she's got a boyfriend, that means Spunky's free rein. Who wants first dibs on the man?

The girls in the crowd cheer. Several rush Spunky, kissing him in play. Sarah laughs a bit as he is pulled away, waving to her almost apologetically. She stands and goes back to 9 with Brent, the crowd dispersing. Back at 9, Brent orders a drink as Sarah watches Spunky being swamped with women.

JOULSEN

Freakin' thing might as well be a cucumber.

(Motions to Brent)

I thought he was taken care of.

SATLER

We gotta ditch that guy.

INT. BRENT'S CAR NIGHT

On the way home, the conversation between Brent and Sarah seems heated.

SARAH

He was just doing an act.

BRENT

Good at it too. He's got you fooled and you're a trained psychologist.

SARAH

Don't insult me like that. And don't insult him either.

BRENT

What, you're defending him now?

SARAH

I'm glad to see him glow for a change. You as a doctor should be too. Besides, if you didn't want us to get called up, you shouldn't have put our table number in.

BRENT

I didn't.

She looks at him.

INT. SATLER'S APARTMENT NIGHT

The whole band sits on Satler's livingroom floor, drinking. But Spunky just wanders about the room, hard drunk, wavering.

SATLER
 To a great gig!
 (All drink)
 So Spunks, how come you didn't go
 home with any of those women, man?

Gi-Gi almost flies up off his feet, going for the kitchen.

GI-GI
 Ohhhhh Shhhhiitt, I need some more
 beer.

Chester follows right behind him.

CHESTER
 Ya, me to.

As they go, Spunky gives Satler a look.

SATLER
 (Defensive)
 What's that for?

JOULSEN
 (Sarcastic)
 What a twister ending; he's onto
 him.

SATLER
 Hey shut up, I just figured I'd
 back off a little on the Doctor
 chick, that's all.
 (Pats Spunky's leg)
 I mean this way at least you're
 going, right? How stupid you are
 with your schlong is your business.
 (Joulsen rolls his eyes)
 Hell, invite her out with us some
 night as far as I care.

No response from Spunky but wavering. Across the room, Chester & Gi-Gi have snuck back in. They collate.

CHESTER
 Think he bought it?

Spunky falls face first onto the table, upending it off it's legs, a mess of snacks and glasses crashing to the floor on top of him.

GI-GI
(A beat, nods)
...Table and all.

THE FOLLOWING SCENE IS A MONTAGE OF EVENTS SET TO MUSIC:

Minor music, this time more upbeat, but with a sense of wanting as we witness a collage of events;

A. SARAH'S OFFICE:

Spunky sits with his back to us as Sarah raises a flash card before him. Spunky (big bruised nose) mouths the word.

B. SUNNY'S NIGHT CLUB:

Spunky plays his horn before another large crowd, Satler secretly nodding to the smiling others behind Spunky's back.

C. SARAH'S OFFICE:

Sarah holds flash cards in front of Spunky reading small words. Spunky (no bruise now) mouths them.

D. ANTONIO'S RESTAURANT:

Spunky takes a customer's order, mouthing "yes's" and "no's". He hands Satler a drink order and Satler mouths "No" to him. Spunky slaps him.

E. SARAH'S OFFICE:

Spunky enters when Brent is there. Tension is in the air. Sarah sees Brent to the door, giving him a forced kiss. Spunky sneers, but then suddenly smiles as Brent looks his way, making it "extra big" as Sarah shuts the door.

F. SUNNY'S NIGHT CLUB:

Spunky enters the back door wearing headphones & carrying his horn case, puts them both down next to other band equipment and runs for the restroom. Satler ejects the walkman to see the "Spunky and the Monotones" tape. He smiles, puts it back.

G. SARAH'S OFFICE:

Sarah, straight-faced, holds up a flash card amidst the small words reading "super-calafragalistic-expi-ala-docious". Spunky and her laugh.

H. ANTONIO'S RESTAURANT:

Sarah & Brent sit at the bar. Satler notices, shakes their hands, flags down Spunky. Sarah smiles. Brent doesn't.

I. SUNNY'S NIGHT CLUB:

Sunny greets people, taking cover charge as they enter the Night Club. Hands exchange money. Drinks fill up. Sunny hands Satler more and larger bills of salary.

J. SATLER'S APARTMENT:

All band members but Spunky roll band posters. We close on Satler's poster.

K. SARAH'S OFFICE:

Sarah unrolls the poster Satler just rolled.

L. SUNNY'S NIGHT CLUB:

Sunny greets people as they enter the Night Club. Sarah comes through alone (wearing green). Satler rushes over and gets Sunny to let her in for no charge. She smiles big, thanks them, goes on. Sunny holds his hand out to Satler, who hands him a five like a coward.

M. SARAH'S OFFICE:

Sarah lifts a card. A ECU of Spunky's lips mouth it.

N. SUNNY'S NIGHT CLUB:

On stage, Satler notices Sarah (wearing yellow) at a table watching the band perform. Satler points her out to Spunky, who smiles her way just in time for Brent to show and greet her with a kiss. Cynthia at stage side frowns at Satler. He sees her, wincing like he didn't mean that to happen.

O. SARAH'S OFFICE:

Sarah in slow motion raises a card reading "jealous." We close on Spunky.

P. SPUNKY'S APARTMENT:

Daytime...In slow motion we close on Spunky pensively sitting at his bedside with headphones on, the volume meter on the stereo blinking away. The wind through the window waves the blinds and blows desk papers.

Q. SARAH'S OFFICE:

Sarah in slow motion raises a card reading "heartache." We close on Spunky.

R. SATLER'S APARTMENT:

We slowly move out from Satler who is seemingly arguing with the other band members, Cynthia by his side.

S. SARAH'S OFFICE:

Sarah in slow motion raises a card reading "desperate." We close on Spunky.

T. SPUNKY'S APARTMENT:

Nighttime...In slow motion we close on Spunks...still pensively sitting at his bedside with headphones on, the volume meter on the stereo blinking away. The wind through the window waves the blinds and blows desk papers.

U. SATLER'S APARTMENT:

We slowly move out from Satler who is definitely arguing with the other band members. Cynthia and the band are one side of the room, Satler the other.

V. SARAH'S OFFICE:

Sarah's hand in slow motion raises a card reading "obsessed." We move into an ecu of just Spunky's eyes. They slowly raise up from the card. Sarah gleams back as the music fades away.

INT. SARAH'S OFFICE DAY

Spunky writes a check as Sarah gathers things on her desk. Through the window, the sun is setting. Sarah lifts up one of the band flyers.

SARAH

Oh ya, got your flyer about you playing this coming Thursday.

(Spunky looks confused)

Wanted to say sorry I can't make it. I've got plans.

(He cinches)

Ya I know, I'm missing out. Don't worry, I'll make it next time. Oh, almost forgot to check messages.

Sarah presses the button on her machine. It's Brent.

BRENT

Hey Babe, it's me.

(Spunky secretly scowls)

Looks like I'll have to cancel for tonight because I have to study.

(MORE)

BRENT (CONT'D)
 (Spunky perks up)
 ...So call me tomorrow, okay? Bye.

SARAH
 Aw man, not tonight. Boy I really
 needed to get out.
 (Spunky turning)
 Don't you ever have those days
 where you just really needed to do
 something that night?

Spunky nods wide-eyed, he starts to sign. Suddenly Sarah
 snatches his hands, holding them still.

SARAH (CONT'D)
 Now that's the bad habit, remember?

An odd beat of silence as Spunky looks at her. She pulls the
 check from his fingers and lets go. She chuckles as she
 crosses the room and grabs her coat.

SARAH (CONT'D)
 Next time I should charge you for
 it. See ya next week.

Spunky slowly turns as she puts her coat on. When he reaches
 the door, he watches her go back to her desk for a moment.
 He walks outside the door and stands in the hallway, out of
 sight, nervously procrastinating. After five or so seconds,
 he turns back, and almost bumps into Sarah, who starts.

SARAH (CONT'D)
 Whoa! Oh, god, you scared me. You
 forget something?

A nervous beat, then Spunky reaches into his pocket, pulls
 out a pad & pen, starts scribbling.

SARAH (CONT'D)
 No hands for a change? Hey, you're
 coming along yet.
 (Takes note, reads)
 "I just remembered our band
 practice got canceled for tonight.
 Are you...hungry?"
 (Taken aback)
 Oh uh, ya I guess I am uh...
 (odd beat, writes another
 note)
 "It's not like I'm asking you on a
 date"-Oh god, no, I know, it's just
 that, well Brent gets a little
 jealous that's all.
 (Another note)
 (MORE)

SARAH (CONT'D)

"No problem, I'll just let you pay for it?"

(She laughs)

Boy, that's romantic. How about we go Dutch?

INT. ANTONIO'S RESTAURANT NIGHT

Satler mixes drinks. Chester approaches, grabs one.

CHESTER

Heard from Spunky about practice yet?

SATLER

Hell no. And he's supposed to meet us there in thirty.

(Cell phone beeps)

What the hell now?

Satler checks his phone. It's a text from Spunky reading ..."69". Chester sees it. He and Satler gawk at each other.

CHESTER & SATLER

(Simultaneously)

He's out with her!

INT. PIZZA RESTAURANT NIGHT

We pull from an ECU of Spunky's hands using sign language... to Spunky and Sarah sitting together in a booth. There's a half empty bottle of wine on the table. She laughs.

SARAH

No, you can't do that! I don't care if we're just hanging out.

(Waves her off)

No wonder you don't make progress.

(He puts his hands on his hips)

You heard me. Although don't feel too bad. For someone who never learned to speak, your lips and tongue pick it up like lightning.

(He raises a glass to that, drinks)

...Which they say makes you a good kisser.

Spunky spits his drink clear across the table.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Hey!

(Spunky apologetic)

Oh, don't worry about it!

Sarah sucks from the straw in her drink, raises the straw & shoots. Spunky gawks, flicks a chunk of ice at her. She retaliates. The two continue on with napkins, throwing, covering.

EXT. SARAH'S APARTMENT NIGHT

Sarah wears Spunky's jacket as they approach her door.

SARAH

Well you sure don't do anything for my ego. I think every senior in the place has told me I'm doing something wrong because I haven't got one syllable out of you yet. I'm really not supposed to tell you this, but I've had three of them suggest you try them instead of me.

They stop in front of her door. She turns to him. Spunky looks nervous.

SARAH (CONT'D)

But you know what? Since you started with me, it's my decision to keep you on if I want to, so I told them I think we had something going here. Somehow, I'm certain you're improving.

(Spunky nods)

Of course, at any time you're allowed to switch, you know. I told you that, right?

(Spunky shakes head violently)

Oh, I didn't?

(Spunky nods yes, signs)

Oh, wheww, thought I did, ya. But again, if you change your mind.

A beat, then calmly, Spunky shakes his head.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Oh, well, here's your jacket back.

Spunky reaches to help her take the jacket off, and she smiles, pleasantly surprised. There is definitely an electricity as the jacket slides down her shoulders.

When she turns to face him again, he grins solemnly, takes a small step back. After a beat, she collects herself.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Well, umm, thanks for a good time.

He goes to the street, giving a "thumb's up" from the curb before she shuts the door. When the coast is clear, he knocks his head on her mailbox a few times and leaves.

INT. SARAH'S APARTMENT NIGHT

Sarah hangs up her coat and pensively leans against the closet door, blowing steam. Then she notices the blinking phone machine. She curses, walks over, presses the button.

MACHINE

(Robotic voice)

Hello, you have ten messages.

SARAH

Shit.

INT. SATLER'S APARTMENT NIGHT

The entire band is huddled before Satler's front window, peering out to the street. Suddenly they run for the livingroom table.

GI-GI

Ooohhhh Damn! He be comin'!

They slam into their chairs, yank up some beers and cards. An instant later Spunky enters scowling. Satler looks over his shoulder.

SATLER

Just in time for the next deal, Mr. practice-ditcher. Oh, but I got your 69 page there. What's up? You get laid?

Spunky grabs a beer, walks into the back bedroom and shuts the door. All is quiet a few seconds.

GI-GI

(A beat)

Did he fuck the chick or not?

Joulsen looks at the door Spunky just shut. He sighs.

JOULSEN

Look Satler, I know what you're doing is for a good purpose, so I'm not going to blow the whistle, but that's it for me. You're gonna have to do the rest of this Sarah scam on your own.

Joulsen tosses his cards on the table.

JOULSEN (CONT'D)

You're gonna have to deal me out.

Several heavy beats in the room. Chester clears his throat.

CHESTER

Umm...I uh...I guess me too Sat. I think I'm gonna fold too.

Chester shyly lays his cards on the table. Satler nods at the two of them with sore disappointment. He crosses his arms, finally looks to Gi-Gi, shrugs at him.

SATLER

Well...I'm waiting.

Gi-Gi looks back at Satler. He looks at the other two. Frustrated, he slings his cards across the table.

GI-GI

Man, will somebody please tell me if he fucked the chick or not?!

INT. SUNNY'S NIGHT CLUB NIGHT

The whole band warms up while the crowd builds. Sunny approaches.

SUNNY

You guys want something to eat before you start playing?

All say yes but Spunky, who shakes his head. Sunny leaves.

SATLER

(Approaches Spunky)

What's up man? You're always hungry. Hey, blow it off, Sarah will come next time. Hell, she might even....

Just then, he notices Sarah coming through the door.

SATLER (CONT'D)

Well look who's here.

Spunky notices, peeps up, motions "eating" to Satler & runs off.

SATLER (CONT'D)

Man, you go tell him!...dumb ass.

Spunky walks up smiling to Sarah, who gives him little response.

SARAH

Hey, Jonathon.

(He waves)

Listen umm, tonight I didn't come by to watch you guys play.

(Spunks mimics "sad")

Ya, it stinks. I hope it's okay that I came by real quick for another reason. Do you have just a second?

Spunky nods. He walks over to a corner with Sarah where it's a little more quiet.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Ummm, I've been thinking about it, uh, that you've been with me a while and all...And you still haven't made much progress.

(Spunky looks nervous)

As a result, I think perhaps it would be best if uh, you try one of the other doctors.

An odd beat...Spunky shakes his head.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Well, the thing is, after some more consideration, I'm not sure I'm helping you that's all, or at least you could be making better progress with someone else. So, I've put in a note of transfer and starting next week, you'll be seeing Dr. Headly, one of the certified M.D.'s

(A silence)

Of course, at no extra charge. I hope that's okay.

In the BG, Satler calls Spunky. Spunky doesn't even look.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Look, I know you have to run. I'll still be in the office at your normal time so we can talk more when you come in, okay? Play well tonight.

Sarah exits, leaving Spunky to stare into open space. Satler runs up from the BG.

SATLER

Hey, don't worry, she'll be back in a minute, right. Come on we gotta eat...Spunks?

INT. SATLER'S APARTMENT NIGHT

Satler screams his rage to Cynthia.

SATLER

I'll be God damned if that fucking prick boyfriend of hers didn't put her up to this!

CYNTHIA

No duh, Satler, what did you think was eventually gonna happen? If I was a doctor, you wouldn't want some strange client hitting on me.

SATLER

Well that would be different!

CYNTHIA

How?

SATLER

Because this guy is an asshole!

Cynthia takes a deep breath, stays calm but firm.

CYNTHIA

Babe, I'm really not looking for a fight here, but you're not so sphincter-free yourself right now, you know what I mean?

Satler turns from her, grumbling, thinking.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

The band is going A-wall, Spunky is in shambles, and now this girl is all but out of the picture.

(MORE)

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

What are you planning to do, patch everything up by going out on a date with them?

Sater squints with determination. He snaps his fingers.

INT. SARAH'S OFFICE DAY

Satler stands before Sarah, using his best sales technique.

SATLER

We can't throw a surprise "speech improvement" party without you being there. You're his doctor! You're the whole reason his speech is improving to begin with!

SARAH

But Satler, I'm not his doctor anymore. Next week he's being transferred.

SATLER

Transfer-Schmansfer. Everyone knows you're the kingpin. You're the only doctor that's been able to help him for years. The other schmucks working here will spend one week with him, then throw him right back to you.

Just then Julie sticks her head around the corner in the BG.

JULIE

(Sarcastic)

Sarah, your mentor..."Doctor Schmuck"...has posted the grades on your mid-term.

SARAH

(To Julie)

Shhhh! Okay, thanks.

(To Satler)

Satler, look. I don't know how to say this, but, well, my fiancée is a little jealous of Jonathon.

An odd beat. Satler is taken aback.

SATLER

...Fiancée?

SARAH

Yes.

(holds up ring)

As of last night. You know, Brent?

SATLER

(Recovering)

Ya, right, Brent! Hey congrats!

What, you mean jealous of Jonathon?

How's that? He's just a client

...right?

SARAH

Well, ya, but....

SATLER

Hey no problems, bring Brent along,
man. He can't be jealous then.

He'll be able to see you and Spunky
how you really are.

SARAH

Who?

SATLER

(A beat)

Jonathon, I mean. Hey, what are you
going to do after you're married,
just not have any friends?

Sarah is at a loss for words.

SATLER (CONT'D)

...or clients?....

(Several beats)

Sarah...please?

INT. SPUNKY'S APARTMENT DAY

Joulsen, Chester & Gi-Gi argue with Satler in the front room.
In BG, the bird squawks.

JOULSEN

Satler, you are pushing it, man.

GI-GI

(Beer in hand)

Shoveling it is more like it.

SATLER

(Focusing on Chester)

Okay, Chester, come on.

(MORE)

SATLER (CONT'D)

You of all people can see she was starting to go for it, right? You see how she was interacting with him at the club.

CHESTER

(Pessimistic)

Engaged women have but one question on their mind, pal..."Where...is... the altar?"

SATLER

Guys...even Cynthia is turning me down. I mean the guy is passed out drunk in his bed as we speak. He needs this.

Joulsen shakes his head, opens the door, leaves. Chester goes with him. Satler puts his face in his hands as Gi-Gi fidgets.

GI-GI

Aww man. Well, alright, I'll come.

Satler looks up. After several defeated beats, he gives a sincere....

SATLER

Thanks anyway, Gi-Gi.

Gi-Gi turns his face up.

GI-GI

Awww mannn, fuck you.

Gi-Gi rudely snatches a fresh beer and struts out the door. As Satler rolls his tired eyes, his cell phone goes off. Several rings go by before he answers it.

SATLER

Ya, babe, what ya need?

Over the phone O.C., Sarah's voice responds with....

SARAH

Boy, you answer friendly.

Satler alerts.

SATLER

Sarah! Sorry, hey, I thought it was my girlfriend.

SARAH

Ya I figured. I'm calling to confirm because I talked Brent into it. Spunky's place tomorrow at five, right?

Satler studies the room, contemplating.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Hello?

SATLER

Ya I'm still here, uh that's right. Five o'clock. So glad you guys can make it, Sarah. It'll mean a lot to him.

SARAH

Great, I'll see you tomorrow.

They say goodbye and Satler beeps the phone dead. He pensively clutches it with both hands.

SATLER

Damnit.

INT. SPUNKY'S BEDROOM NIGHT

INT. SPUNKY'S BEDROOM NIGHT

Spunky lies on his bed, half asleep, facing away from the door. A half-empty tequila bottle sits on the night table. In BG, Satler enters, quietly approaches and sits on the bed, looking concerned at the half-sleeping Spunky.

SATLER

Yo, buddy, you awake?
 (Spunky stirs a bit)
 Spunks, If I told you that everything I do as far as you and me go is what I believe is for the best...you'd believe me right?

A beat. Spunky holds a hand up. Satler clasps it in his own, watching Spunky drift off. With his other hand, he grabs the tequila & drinks.

SATLER (CONT'D)

...Right.

INT. SPUNKY'S APARTMENT DAY

Spunky lies snoring on his side. We tilt slowly down to see his arm around Satler, also snoring on his side. Spunky stirs, one groggy eye peeking open, noticing, shutting. Then he jolts awake, the shock quickly waking Satler.

SATLER

Wha-wha-what! I didn't do it....

Both of them calm.

SATLER (CONT'D)

Oh, Jesus Christ, I thought I was having a nightmare. It's just you.

Spunky reaches to the tequila bottle, lifts it...and gawks when he sees there's none left. He hands it to Satler, staggers to his feet & creeps to the restroom.

SATLER (CONT'D)

Ya, that God damn bird probably drank it the way it was going all night. I wonder what finally got it to shut up.

Inside the bathroom, Spunky wets his face, opens a cabinet to get a towel. The bird is inside, squawking. When he shuts the cabinet, the bird can no longer be heard.

SATLER (CONT'D)

(Dozing now, not looking)

Oh, there it goes. Say, what time is it?

Spunky claps his hands 4 times, whistles once. He brushes his teeth.

SATLER (CONT'D)

(Eyes still shut)

4:30? Man, did we ever sleep. It's almost time for the, uh...ummm....

Satler jolts awake.

SATLER (CONT'D)

Shit!

Satler shakes his head like he got hit with a bucket of cold water. He sees Spunky taking his shirt off.

SATLER (CONT'D)

Spunks, what are you doing, man? Shower already?

(MORE)

SATLER (CONT'D)

Hey, I wouldn't do that just yet, bro, I uh...forgot I saw rust...Ya, a lot of rust coming out of your water pipes this morning. That's why I didn't shower.

Spunky looks curiously at the faucet. When he turns it on, the water is crystal clear.

SATLER (CONT'D)

Wow! That cleared up fast. Well then quick, if you're going to shower go ahead and get in there, man, I can't wait to take mine.

Spunky looks weirdly at Satler.

SATLER (CONT'D)

Well come on!

INT. SPUNKY'S SHOWER DAY

Spunky showers away. Suddenly, odd noises on the other side of the curtain catch his attention. He sticks his head out to see Satler cleaning the bathroom up.

SATLER

Damn, this place is a sty, I can't handle it. Keep showering, man. I don't want to wait all day.

INT. SPUNK'S APARTMENT DAY

Spunky walks out of the bathroom in a towel, shakes his head at Satler, who folds clothes. Spunky walks towards the stairs. In BG, Satler notices, stuffs the remaining clothes under the bed & follows him.

SATLER

Where ya going? You don't want to walk around downstairs without any clothes on do ya? Someone might see you through the window.

We move with Spunky down the stairs. Satler runs down behind him with some clothes.

SATLER (CONT'D)

Here, put this on! No wait.

Satler disappears as Spunky moves on through the den. Spunky notices a chair with bird crap all over it. He scowls. Satler reappears with a nicer shirt.

SATLER (CONT'D)

Here, this looks better on you...
for today's weather, I mean.

Spunky looks at him even weirder, and steps into the clothes as he goes. In BG, Satler gawks at the filthy chair and yanks it up, disappears around a corner. We go into the kitchen with Spunky as we hear a far door slam and something thump to the floor. Spunky reacts a bit, shrugs, keeps going. Spunky opens the refrigerator. Satler flies into the kitchen.

SATLER (CONT'D)

What are you doing? Your not eating
before you brush your teeth, are
you?

Suddenly the doorbell rings. Satler screams....

SATLER (CONT'D)

I'll get that! It's just...Cynthia-
I told her to come on over.

Spunky rolls his eyes like he doesn't buy it, goes to answer the door.

SATLER (CONT'D)

Oh shit! What are you doing? I told
you it's only....

Spunky opens the door. Cynthia stands there, looking surprised.

SATLER (CONT'D)

...Cynthia, see.

CYNTHIA

Spunky?! Oh no, I'm sorry, did I
ruin....

Satler kisses Cynthia, shutting her up. Upstairs, we hear a massive crash, and then we hear the bird squawking. Spunky notices, goes up.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

(Confused, to Satler)

Look, I changed my mind, okay. What
the hell is Spunky doing here? I
thought you were getting him out of
the house.

The door rings again. Satler yanks it open. Sarah stands there.

SARAH

Oh good, I've got the right place.

Satler pulls her in.

SATLER

Just in time, he's about to come down the stairs now.

SARAH

Huh?

The bird flies from one room to the next at the top of the stairs. Several large objects fly after it, and then an angry Spunky appears, descends the stairs. Half way down he stops, gawks at Sarah.

SATLER

(Stupid grin)
Surprise!

INT. SPUNKY'S APARTMENT NIGHT

Spunky gives Cynthia the suspicious eye as she walks with him out towards her car. When they are at a distance, Sarah appears next to Satler, who locks the still open front door.

SARAH

Okay, I'm ready.

SATLER

So you're sure Brent is going to call Spun...Jonathon's line to get directions?

SARAH

Ya, it'll be no problem. I just hope it wasn't any trouble to change his answering machine.

SATLER

Oh, no trouble. No trouble at all.

Satler shuts the door. We move pass the window to see the cars driving off. Suddenly, the phone rings, and we come to the answering machine.

MACHINE

(Satler's Voice)
Hey, Brent this is Satler.
(MORE)

MACHINE (CONT'D)

If you're hearing this, you've reached the right place, Jonathon's line. We already left, so here's the directions to where we're at...got a pen?...Okay, from Jonathon's house, go....

A long beep cuts the recording off. After a few seconds, we hear Brent's voice over the speaker.

BRENT

Ummm...hello?

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT NIGHT

We pull out from Sarah laughing hysterically to see her sitting with Spunky, Satler, and Cynthia at a table lit for romance.

SATLER

So then Johnny here walks right into the cop station, lifts up his horn and booms out "76 Trombones" as loud as you've ever heard it. The whole lot of us spent the night in jail and it took everything we earned that week to pay the fee so it wouldn't go on his record.

SARAH

You know it's really funny how I can both see and not see Jonathan doing half the things you guys tell me about. Ever since I've met him he's seemed to have this whole "undercover" feeling to him. Don't ask me why.

CYNTHIA

Ya, as you get to know him that should make more and more sense.

Kicking Cynthia under the table, Satler says....

SATLER

Then again, I guess your first impression of anybody is never what they're like underneath.

Meanwhile, Spunky has made a cheesy paper mask out of a napkin. We pan over to see him. Sarah notices, laughs, and elbows him. Just then Brent walks up, adding to Satler's statement.

BRENT

I'll say.

SARAH

Hey, Brent! You finally....

Gi-Gi walks timidly up behind Brent, looking guilty.

GI-GI

Uhhhh, Wassup guys. I know you didn't expect me, but I got off work early, and uh....

(Wincing)

...Ran into Brent outside Spunky's place. He uh, came inside wid me and we almost didn't make it cause de machine wan't dat clear, but luckily...he noticed de open phonebook wid diss restaurant circled.

(Under breath)

Sheeiiit.

SARAH

Well I'm glad you made....

BRENT

Ya, not for long. I just came down here to piss a few people off.

SARAH

(A beat)

...What?

BRENT

I'll tell you about it on the way. Come on get your stuff, we're going.

SARAH

(A beat)

Did I just here you give me an order? I'm not going anywhere. What the hell's wrong with you?

BRENT

Wrong with me? The only thing wrong with me is that I've been too patient with you, and especially these guys.

Sarah quickly stands.

SARAH

Ok that's it! I'm tired of you insulting my friends and embarrassing me. What gives you the right to just barge in here and ruin everybody's night?

Brent shakes a very conceited head at her.

BRENT

God, the gullibility. You just have no clue do you? You're lucky I haven't walked already the way you strut around with this clown the way you do and pretend your not interested. I have half a mind to let you finish the job and then find out who he really is. After all, you'd make a great couple. He's mute, and you're blind.

Spunky stands. Satler does too, grabs him back, woe-woe-woeing him.

SARAH

Pretty cute joke. I've got a better one.

Sarah takes off her engagement ring, hands it to Brent. Spunky snickers.

BRENT

(Bowing up to Spunky)
Oh, you think that's funny?

Spunky answers by cracking his knuckles. Satler intervenes.

SATLER

We've just had a few, that's all.

BRENT

Ya, what could he do about it anyhow?

Gi-Gi tapes Brent's shoulder.

GI-GI

Ahem-well weeeeee'd do whatever the hell we want.

Brent smiles.

BRENT

Oh, is that right?

Brent grabs the beer from the table and smashes it over Gi-Gi's head. Gi-Gi falls.

Spunky swings at Brent, who ducks and counters with a shot to the gut. As Spunky slumps, Satler swings. Brent blocks, punches Satler in the face. Satler flies back as Brent turns to Spunky again.

Spunky sees him coming, suddenly holds up his hands like a "T" (simulating a time out). Brent pauses, confused....

...And Spunky slams him in the face.

Brent flies back into Satler, who was just getting up. Spunky closes, just in time to see Brent whirl around with a wooden chair in his hands. Brent shatters it over Spunky. Spunky wobbles for a second, then collapses.

Just then Satler flies from nowhere and knocks Brent out of the picture. We tilt down to see Spunky out cold and Gi-Gi just waking up. Off screen fight noises are heard.

GI-GI
Oooohhhhh sssshhhhhhhiiiiitttt.

INT. SPUNKY'S APARTMENT NIGHT

The front door swings slowly open, and our rag-tag crew enters.

Cynthia is nursing a cut on Gi-Gi's head as he walks, and Satler acts as a crutch for Spunky, who's having trouble walking.

SARAH
(Tiredly)
My god you guys, I'm so sorry I
caused all this.

Spunky holds up a hand to her, shakes his head as some others speak.

SATLER
Oh no, it's not your fault.

CYNTHIA
(Eyeing Satler)
That's definitely the truth.

GI-GI
Shit, wouldn't have been no
problem, 'cept he be fightn' dirty.
(MORE)

GI-GI (CONT'D)

Say, I can't remember, did we win
dat fight?

Spunky lifts his head, displaying a good quarter of his face
as a giant bruise. He looks at Gi-Gi like he's an idiot.

SATLER

Hell ya we won it! Punk ran out
with his tail between his legs!

CYNTHIA

He walked out Satler, with your
head beneath his shoes.

SATLER

(Defensive)

Hey, I dared him to come back, he
just kept right on going!

Cynthia rolls her eyes.

SARAH

(Sighs)

And I guess good riddens, too.

Several sorrowful beats go by.

SATLER

Well, the one thing we do regret is
that you guys didn't work out.

CYNTHIA

(Sickened)

Can we please get Spun...

Cynthia cuts herself off, shakes her head in defeat.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

..."Jonathan" to his room?

Satler turns Spunky towards the stairs.

INT. SPUNKY'S ROOM NIGHT

Satler lays a dog-tired Spunky into his bed as Sarah and
Cynthia watch.

SATLER

Well, I guess I better find where
that bird's gotten to before it
tears the house down. We can just
turn out the lights for now.
Johnny here will be fine.

All but Spunky go to the door. Satler clicks the lights off.

SARAH

Hey, umm, I'm just gonna stay with him a second, if that's okay.

SATLER

(Looks at Cynthia)

Uhh, ya, sure, we'll just see ya downstairs.

Sarah turns to Spunky, and behind her, Satler wraps his fist through the air with excitement. Cynthia grabs him and pulls him out the door.

Sarah goes over and sits on the bed, starts to speak softly.

SARAH

Jonathan, are you...?

But she sees Spunky is already asleep. She just smiles, lightly strokes his hair. She looks up from him, glances about at his wall pictures; Spunky & his horn, Spunky & Satler, Spunky in a graduation gown, Spunky & the band.

Then she squints harder at one picture where it looks like he is...singing into a microphone? She looks puzzled for a bit, then snickers, looks down at Spunky again.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Maybe some day neither one of us will have to pretend.

She leans down, kisses him gently on the forehead. He stirs a bit in his sleep. She smiles, stands, goes to the door. And then...she hears it...a voice from behind her.

VOICE

(O.C., half whisper)
...Susan?

Sarah stops cold in her tracks.

The voice comes again. She turns ever so slowly, a look of bewilderment on her face as she watches Spunky stir some more. She takes slow steps towards him, watching, waiting for it to come again. A dead silence that seems to take forever, and then, with the movement of his lips comes the proof.

SPUNKY

(Stirring)

Susan...no, no, Susan...help me.

INT. SPUNKY'S KITCHEN NIGHT

Cynthia holds a wet ice pack to Satler's shiners. The group speaks in loud whispers as Gi-Gi digs through the refrigerator.

CYNTHIA

Sorry, Gi-Gi, if your looking for more ice, I've already used the last of it.

GI-GI

(Sighs, grabs beer)

Well ice be nice, but beer be here, know what I'm sayn'? De Spunk-man do need some food, dough.

SATLER

No guys, I don't think Spunky is gonna be needing anything. I do believe our mission is accomplished.

GI-GI

Shhheeeiiiit, at de expense of my heaaaad.

CYNTHIA

(Standing)

Well since you two are out of commission, I'll make a food and ice run.

SATLER

Oh Sweetie, we're fine.

GI-GI

BuuuullShit! Whatever you gettn', make mine a double de everythaaang. And den get Sat-head here a head for his Sat, cause he done lost his head. And dat ain't all he gonna lose cause de Spunk man gonna kick his ass on dat bet now, heh-heh!

CYNTHIA

(Leaving)

Okay, guys, I'll be back.

GI-GI

I'd come wid ya, but I'm stay'n here and pull de glass out of my skull.

Gi-Gi starts rolling with painful laughs as Cynthia exits.

GI-GI (CONT'D)

Heh-heh, oh ya, he gonna shove dat
bet up your ass now! You gave'em
dat bird, but he gonna shove a
whole god-damn eagle up your ass!

Then, from nowhere, Sarah appears.

SARAH

What bet are we talking about?

Satler and Gi-Gi go blank. A long, silent beat. Suddenly Gi-Gi is up and out the door.

GI-GI

Actually dat drive to de store'll
do me some good. We'll be back in a
few hours.

Gi-Gi slams the door behind him. Satler and Sarah are alone.

SATLER

Hey, how's uh, Jonathan?

SARAH

Oh, Spunky's fine.

SATLER

Spu...Oh, he's got even you calling
him that now?

SARAH

No, but in his sleep he manages to
say it pretty good himself.

SATLER

I'm sorry, what?

SARAH

What was Brent going to tell me
tonight?

SATLER

What do you mean, "Brent"? About
you guys breaking up you mean?

SARAH

At the bar he said he was going to
let me find out who Spunky really
is, and I cut him off because I
thought he was speaking
metaphorically, not literally.

(MORE)

SARAH (CONT'D)
 Now I think he was talking
 literally, and I think you knew it.
 So what did he mean?

SATLER
 Look, I'm confused. You said....

SARAH
 No, Satler, I'm the one who's
 confused.

Sarah reaches into her pocket, pulls out the "Spunky & The Monotones" tape. She tosses it onto the table before Satler.

SARAH (CONT'D)
 And right now you're going to tell
 me what the hell's going on.

Satler sighs, caught, and we continue with him as he speaks into the next scene(s).

THE FOLLOWING SCENES ARE INNER CUT:

INT. SATLER & SARAH IN SPUNKY'S KITCHEN NIGHT

INT. SPUNKY TURNS IN HIS SLEEP IN HIS BEDROOM NIGHT

EXT. HIGHWAY ROAD ACCIDENT DREAM/FLASHBACK DAY

Continuing on seamlessly from the previous scene, Satler bites the bullet, and now tells Sarah the truth about Spunky's situation.

As he does, the audience gets the added benefits of seeing what Spunky is physically experiencing in his sleep upstairs.

...As well as Spunky's simultaneous "dream flashbacks", to better punctuate Satler's ongoing narrative.

What the audience sees visually (i.e., Satler talking, Spunky turning in his sleep, or dream flashback) is determined by the respective CUT TO: (i.e. CUT TO: SATLER TALKING, CUT TO: SPUNKY SLEEPING:, CUT TO: DREAM)

As Satler starts his story, the eerie dream music comes....

CUT TO: SATLER

SATLER

It happened seven years ago. Spunky was driving on a small highway in Maine. Susan his girlfriend was with him.

CUT TO: SPUNKY

A calm Spunky suddenly twitches in his sleep.

CUT TO: DREAM

In a car from yesteryear, Susan giggles, distracting Spunky.

CUT TO: SATLER

SATLER (CONT'D)

She was laughing a lot, playing with him....

CUT TO: DREAM

Susan plays with the car radio.

SATLER (V.O.) (CONT'D)

...Taking his attention off the road because she was excited.

CUT TO: SATLER

SATLER (CONT'D)

Our first and only hit single was playing on the radio.

CUT TO: DREAM

In the oncoming lane, a wide-eyed truck driver blabs on the CB radio. As the two parties approach a bridge from opposite sides, Spunky barely notices the other vehicle swerving his direction.

SATLER (V.O.) (CONT'D)

They were going over a bridge when some trucker high on speed flew into their lane coming the other direction.

Spunky looks up. He gawks. He yanks on the wheel...too late.

SATLER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Spunks tried to swerve into the
opposing lane, but then the truck
readjusted and shoved him off the
bridge.

CUT TO: SPUNKY

A violent flop of the head. Spunky is sweating.

CUT TO: SATLER

SATLER (CONT'D)
His car just caught the first bit
of land on the other end.

CUT TO: DREAM

The flying car rams the cement below the far end of the
bridge, gravity quickly tumbling it.

SATLER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
It rolled down a steep incline and
landed on it's side.

Spunky can't reach Susan inside the upended car. The hood,
having smashed through the windshield, is wedged into a
barrier between them. He barely fits himself out the driver's
window.

He limps to Susan's side, but it's smack against the ground.
Through the windshield, he sees her head is bleeding. He
fumbles his cell from his pocket.

SATLER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Spunks managed to get out, but
Susan was stuck, bleeding pretty
badly. He had a cell phone on him,
called 911.

CUT TO: SPUNKY

Spunky thrashes about in the bed.

CUT TO: SATLER

SATLER (V.O.)
That's when the rear of the car
caught on fire.

CUT TO: DREAM

Spunky, cell phone in hand, sees the car set alight. He looks at his struggling girlfriend. Trying to speak into the cell, his eyes go wide in dismay.

SATLER (V.O.)

All of a sudden, something gripped him. For the first time in his life, he couldn't speak.

Spunky grabs his throat, trying to force something out, his face turning beat red.

SATLER (V.O.)

Of course, he panicked, trying and trying, because he and Susan were only three miles outside of town. But after a couple of minutes, he knew the phone was only keeping him from getting her out.

Spunky drops the phone to the ground. He rushes to the car, trying with all his might to pull at the windshield. But it's wedged too tight.

His girlfriend, struggling, reaching for him, is terrified. In desperation, he crawls back into the car, trying to bend the hood enough to free her.

SATLER (V.O.)

So he pulled, and she pulled. The flames kept rising, creeping closer for fifteen minutes. Then suddenly, his shirt caught on fire, and he couldn't see.

Spunky's shirt poofs alight. Flames in his face, he pulls out of the car, tugging at his shirt, falling to the ground.

The brush catches alight. The near field lights up. He barely gets his shirt off, stumbling amidst the smoke back to the car. He reaches for her. He reaches, reaches, reaches.

SATLER (V.O.)

He surfaced to get it off, but that only made matters worse when he rolled into the dry brush. By the time he got his shirt off and got back to her, it was way past too late. To this day, Spunky swears she was still screaming when he heard the first sirens.

CUT TO: SPUNKY

Spunky violently sits up, awake, red eyed, in a cold sweat.

CUT TO: SATLER

Satler matter of factly finishes with...

SATLER

Coroner said the window kept enough
of the smoke out. She died burning
to death.

INT. SPUNKY'S KITCHEN NIGHT

In the aftermath of Satler's story, Sarah finally responds.

SARAH

So the fire injured him, what?

SARAH (CONT'D)

The fire didn't injure him. And
Spunky isn't mute. He has a
psychological phobia that keeps him
from speaking-brought on by the
trauma. He hasn't said a word since
the accident.

SARAH (CONT'D)

I just heard him say several.

SATLER

That's because he was asleep. When
he's asleep, his subconscious is in
control and overrides the phobia.
But when he's awake, his conscious
mind starts thinking and suddenly
he can't talk again. At least
that's what he's told. He's tried
everything, medicine, shrinks,
hypnosis, acupuncture, all sorts of
crazy herbal shit.

Sarah points to the "SPUNKY AND THE MONOTONES" TAPE.

SARAH

So that was you guys.

SATLER

Ya, it was. Till the record company
took us for a ride.

(MORE)

SATLER (CONT'D)

Had three more albums lined up with them that was gonna give us a better percentage by contract, but the small print screwed us when we couldn't deliver. Studios used our bonus to pay off the press so it wouldn't effect record sales. The trucker from the accident lied so we spent most of our money beating a wrap of negligent homicide. The rest we spent on god damned witch doctors. We were broke within two years.

SARAH

Why me?

Satler looks at Sarah squarely.

SATLER

Because he likes you Sarah. When he started falling for you, I saw...

SARAH

(Bitter)
Falling?

SATLER

Yes, I saw a change. He started acting different, started trying. You represent hope.

SARAH

Oh, I see, so you guys figured you can get your band back if you're just willing to womanize and rake me over the coals.

SATLER

No, Doc, it's not like that, he doesn't even....

Suddenly Satler looks up. Sarah follows his gaze. Spunky stands near the stair bottom with a look of surprise. Several tense beats.

SARAH

(Sarcastic)
Oh, Jonathon, Hi. Spunky, I mean. Too bad you woke up, because you and Satler have a lot to talk about, and it would be a lot easier if you were asleep.

Confused, Spunky signs. Sarah grabs her coat.

SARAH (CONT'D)

I'll tell you what's going on. I am leaving.

SATLER

Wait, doc....

SARAH

Don't call me "Doc", because I'm not his doctor anymore.

Spunky signs. Sarah regroups, holding back tears.

SARAH (CONT'D)

No, I am not all right. I have been emotionally tricked and professionally deceived. Very soon, I will probably lose my job, if not the ability to practice as a doctor- Not to mention I have just lost a very loyal and caring fiancée because I'm in love with a man that doesn't even exist!

(Suddenly yells)

No, I am definitely not all right!

Sarah runs out, slamming the front door. Spunky looks to Satler, angrily holds his hands up in question.

SATLER

Fuck! Fuck!

Satler turns away, Spunky whirls him.

SATLER (CONT'D)

Look, I fucked up, all right? You saw it, you were standing right there!

Spunky's signing becomes wild.

SATLER (CONT'D)

Look, she knows, all right, she knows you've been lying to her!

(Spunky signs again)

Because you were talking in your fucking sleep again, that's how! So she came down here and grilled me, and I tried to tell her what I was doing, but-

Spunky signs abruptly.

SATLER (CONT'D)

What do you mean, "What do I mean?"
I've been doing some stuff to help
you guys out, that's all.

Spunky signs with worry.

SATLER (CONT'D)

Oh Jesus, you know what I'm talking
about.

Spunky signs with anger.

SATLER (CONT'D)

Oh please! Don't hand me that shit,
I've been hanging with you guys for
weeks now, and you're gonna tell me
you didn't know I was playing a
little match-maker?

A beat. Spunky shoves Satler. Satler shoves him back.

SATLER (CONT'D)

Hey fuck you man! I've been trying
to help you, okay, because don't
think I can't see how she effects!
Every time you see her you start
smiling like there's no tomorrow.
Before her, you hadn't smiled legit
in seven god damned years!

Satler grabs the cassette TAPE.

SATLER (CONT'D)

All of a sudden you're carrying
this thing around like it's a
security blanket, and you think I'm
not gonna want you two to happen? I
was wrong about her, but it ain't
because of your little therapeutic
sessions, bucco, it's because of
something going on-

(Slaps Spunky's chest)

...In here! I couldn't see you fail
again, man, I couldn't, I couldn't-

(Shamefully)

...I couldn't see us fail, alright.

Satler speaks, weary, head in his hands.

SATLER (CONT'D)

I mean I'm tired, Spunks, I'm
tired. And I know what I've done is
wrong, I know it's wrong.

(MORE)

SATLER (CONT'D)

But I just can't take it anymore. I can't take seeing you lose anymore. I can't take seeing the band lose anymore. God damnit, I just want us to win.

(Slowly looks up)

Spunks?...Please. You're my best friend.

He moves in to hug Spunky, but Spunky pulls away. Several beats. Spunky takes the cassette tape, puts on his coat.

SATLER (CONT'D)

Oh Christ, Spunks what are you doing?

Spunky goes to the door.

SATLER (CONT'D)

Spunks, she's gone, man, don't do this to yourself.

Spunky opens the door.

SATLER (CONT'D)

At least not tonight. She's so pissed! Spunks!

He grabs Spunky. Spunky turns. Several beats. He sees Spunky has made up his mind.

SATLER (CONT'D)

Just win that bet.

Spunky turns to go.

SATLER (CONT'D)

Hey-

(Spunky turns back)

...Double or nothing you don't get your voice back.

Spunky gives him the once over, then looks him in the eye, points at him piercingly and mouths, "You're on." He leaves.

Satler takes a seat on the first step of the stairs, hands cupped together in regret.

EXT. CITY STREETS NIGHT

A desperate intensity as our hero pedals his bike like mad, passing through red intersections and stop signs, being ridiculed by the many.

All we hear is surreal music, the panting of Spunky's breath, and the hateful voices of the night, driving Spunky to gritted teeth and unusual speed, his expression is angry, angry, angry.

EXT. SARAH'S APARTMENT NIGHT

We track behind Spunky as he arrives, throwing one leg over the bike and landing both feet on the ground. He trots into a fast walk as he lets the bike go and it rolls away, falls.

His pounding on the front door is what seems to halt his momentum. He rings the bell without missing a beat. Maybe three seconds pass before he tries again.

He goes to a near window, wraps loudly. Then back to the door. Finally, in the middle of a knock, the door is unlocked. He stops, waits. The chained door opens. Sarah is very stand-offish.

SARAH

My neighbors are sleeping.
What do you want?

Spunky makes a quack mouth with his hands.

SARAH (CONT'D)

I'm afraid it's a little late for
that. Please leave me alone.

She tries to shut the door. Spunky puts a foot in it, Sarah starts. She holds up a cell phone. Nervously, she says-

SARAH (CONT'D)

I'll call the police.

Spunky pulls his foot from the door, points the cell phone like that would be fine.

SARAH (CONT'D)

What do you want?

He points to the chain. She rolls her eyes, unlocks it. Suddenly, Spunky rushes in. Sarah gasps as he grabs her hands. She's frozen stiff.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Oh God Jonathon, please don't hurt
me.

A beat, then Spunky angrily lets her hands down, displays to her the wide open door. He turns to her livingroom, enters.

INT. SARAH'S LIVINGROOM NIGHT

Spunky finds a stereo system, powers it. Sarah enters nervously behind him.

SARAH
What are doing?

Spunky puts in the SPUNKY AND THE MONOTONES TAPE. He fast forwards it.

SARAH (CONT'D)
Look, I already know that was you guys, okay. Satler told me. And I don't want to hear your hit song. I already know it.

Spunky hits play, and turns to her. A beautifully sad music bed starts, and the camera begins an ever-so slow circle that encompasses the two of them where they stand.

SARAH (CONT'D)
(Frustrated)
Jonathon, this is the wrong song.

Coming around to see Spunky now, who pays no attention, only looks at her deeply, humbly...

And when the lyrics start, he shuts his eyes and mouths along with them. By the time we come around to Sarah again, her expression has changed. Despite herself, she seems oddly intrigued.

The second verse starting, the song at full energy, Spunky drops to his knees before her, outreaching his hands, projecting passionately as he mouths on. The lyrics seem so appropriate, his miming of himself so sincere.

Our view coming around to Sarah at the bridge, her expression has completely changed. She looks taken, very taken, with sympathy as Spunky sways, eyes shut to the powerful notes.

Finally, the last verse starts, Spunky sweating profusely, tears now pouring from his face. He seems to beg, plead, as if all Hell's pain has him in it's grasp.

By the end of the song, he is so shaken by his emotions that it doesn't even seem he can stay kneeling. And the music fades with him exhausted on all fours, eyes still closed, waiting in the silence for his inevitable fate.

Then, as if from nowhere, two quivering hands come into frame to touch his cheeks. Spunky, still crying, flinches.

His eyes slowly open. Sarah is on her knees before him. She too now is crying. She lifts his tired head.

The two share a long, mutually felt silence. Then, slowly but surely, magnetism builds. They drift closer, closer, until the climax we've waited for takes place in a small kiss.

They pull apart, look at each other. They kiss again, first softly, then with something more, until finally they embrace with all passions fire, and drift slowly out of view.

EXT. SARAH'S APARTMENT NIGHT

A very long shot of the entire residence, the livingroom light on. It clicks off, and the bright half-moon just above the roof "time fades" to much higher in the sky.

A magic wind blows the trees, and the same voice that was singing the song we just heard cries into the night.

SPUNKY
Uhh-Ahhh-SSSarah!

INT. RECORDING STUDIO DAY

We cut to the top of the drum set opening on an upbeat pop song riff, and pull back to see Chester. We move onto Joulson on keys, Gi-Gi on lead guitar, Satler on base, all of them smiling, getting into it.

Finally, we move to a waiting a microphone at the beginning of the first verse.

Suddenly a hand grasps it, holds it tight, and a mouth flies into view, belting lyrics. Of course, when we pull back it's Spunky.

The music goes on as the shots of the band get wilder, now with some strange lighting and different locations, and...

...Suddenly many shots of Satler getting flapped at and pecked on by the infamous green bird.

The image and music pause on the most of ridiculous of these shots, and we pull back again.

We're watching a music video on a Hi-Def TV.

Before the screen are large mixing boards. The editor, DEECK, a tech-head wearing a stylish jacket, is at the controls. He turns around and looks at our infamous band members, surrounded by horn cases and luggage.

JOULSEN and CHESTER shake their heads as GI-GI laughs. Satler, standing next to them, has a bunch of red scratches on his face. Derek checks his watch.

DEREK

I know you have to go guys, but you're sure you don't want to look at some footage besides this bird stuff? I mean it's you're comeback video, man.

Joulsen looks over his shoulder.

JOULSEN

Spunky?

We pan over to see Spunky's back to us. He drinks from the water fountain with the bird on his shoulder wolf-whistling. He turns around, approaches.

SPUNKY

Ahem... "Double or nothing?" Ain't that right Sat? The bird stays.

Derek sighs.

DEREK

Okay, we're out of here.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO DAY

The studio is dark, save for the sunlight coming in through the open door. Derek hands the keys to Spunky as the group heads out. Gi-Gi's still laughing, imitating the bird attacking Satler.

DEREK

Can you lock it up while we load?

SPUNKY

Tight as a drum.

SARAH and CYNTHIA appear at the door.

SARAH

I've gotta run by the realty place. They need my signature before I can lease the office.

CYNTHIA

Plus, we're hungry, so Chester's taking us to a drive-through and we'll meet you at the airport.

Chester sighs and shrugs at Satler and Spunky.

CHESTER

I make them hungry. You know how it
is.

Cynthia kisses Satler. Sarah quickly kisses Spunky, hugs him, clasps his hands happily. Then the girls are out of sight, and it's Satler and Spunky alone.

They turn to each other. Silence. Underlying giddiness. Satler lightly nods, and their small sly looks grow into smiles. Chuckling together, they hug with meaning.

They pull apart. Satler sighs with satisfaction, turns, walks out of sight. Spunky cinches, puts a fake hat on his head.

Then Spunky exits, shutting the door into BLACK.

We hear it lock, then hear tiny feet scuffling and little parrot wolf-whistles. The door unlocks, opening again. And in the light, the tiny silhouette of the COLLIGIA THE BIRD walks about on the floor. Spunky speaks to it with care.

SPUNKY

Baby, I'm sorry, did I almost
forget you, huh?

Spunky picks up the bird, pets it as he puts it on his shoulder. It wolf whistles. When they reach the door, it speaks.

COLLIGIA THE BIRD

Errraap! Satler sucks.

SPUNKY

(Like a mother)
Ya, Satler sucks.

Now whole, Spunky shuts the door again as we....

FADE TO BLACK

THE END

ROLL CREDITS