

(Lights cross fade to the bar.  
The sign on the door reads "open,"  
indicating that it shows closed on  
the street. CURT comes out of the  
back room. RANDI follows close  
behind.)

CURT

I don't do meaningful relationships. That's the thing I like about this job. Lonely, miserable, people come in here and bitch about their lives, I pour them a few drinks, and a couple of hours later they're gone, along with their drama and bullshit. No personal attachments.

RANDI

I'm not asking for emotional investment.

CURT

Just keep your damn hands off my ass.

RANDI

Is it because you work for me? Because I could fire you.

CURT

Fire me? That's a crock! Who would you get to tend bar?

RANDI

You don't tend bar remember? You just clean up around here, at least that's what you're parole officer thinks.

CURT

Yeah well, what he thinks and what I do don't exactly match up now do they?

RANDI

I could replace you tomorrow.

CURT

You'd have a better chance replacing your virginity.

RANDI

You're pretty cocky. People aren't exactly lining up to hire convicted felons.

CURT

Yeah, but nobody else will put up with you.

RANDI

Jason didn't leave me. I threw him out.

CURT

I wasn't referring to your ex. I was talking about the six different guys you've hired in the past three months for the weekend shift. You've run all of em off.

RANDI

That was because none of em could tell Vodka from Gin without tasting it.

CURT

It's because you come on to any pair of pants with a dick behind the zipper. For crise sakes Randi, you played grab ass with the paper boy.

RANDI

That wasn't my fault. He looked 20 if he looked a day.

CURT

He looked 15!

RANDI

Hey, I didn't hear him complaining.

CURT

You are some piece of work. - My point is you're lucky to have me, and you know it.

RANDI

I don't know any such thing.

(Beat)

I don't get you. You have no friends, no family, no fun... You're miserable as hell and you like it that way.

CURT

I've got what I deserve.

RANDI

God, not more self loathing. Why don't you just kill yourself already? - But give me two weeks notice.

CURT

(Pulls two beer cans from the trash.)

Is it so hard to sort the glass and aluminum?

RANDI

I don't actually see glass and aluminum. I only see garbage.

CURT

(Throws the cans into a second  
trash can)

So put the aluminum garbage in the trash can on the left, and  
the glass garbage in the one on the right.

RANDI

It's trash. If it wasn't trash they'd pay you for it.

CURT

That would mean a woman who's selling what you're giving away  
would be worth more than you.

RANDI

In my case it's a matter of value versus price.

(There's a knock at the door.)

CURT

(Looks out the window.)

It's a cop.

RANDI

Probably had another robbery, this neighborhood has gone to shit  
in the past couple of years.

CURT

(Opens the door)

Come in, officer. What can we do for you?

POLICEMAN

We're looking for someone, wondering if maybe you'd seen him. A  
white male, five nine, about 130 pounds, sixteen years old,  
wearing a black hoodie, jeans and tennis shoes.

CURT

I haven't seen anyone like that. Randi, have you seen any  
underage boys lately?

RANDI

No, I haven't. Is this boy dangerous?

POLICEMAN

Only to himself, he's a runaway they caught trying to kill himself. They had him under observation at Research Hospital, but he got away from em.

CURT

Research is across town. Why would you think he's around here?

POLICEMAN

He stole an ambulance. We found it about an hour ago down at the end of the block.

RANDI

If he's got any sense he's long gone by now.

POLICEMAN

I just chased a kid matching his description down the alley in back, but I lost him.

CURT

We haven't seen him, but we'll keep an eye out.

POLICEMAN

It looks like you've got some homeless camping out back. If you want to file a complaint I could run em off.

RANDI

And the day after you do that, all the windows in my bar are busted out. No thanks.

POLICEMAN

Okay then, have a good evening.

RANDI

Say officer, would you mind walking me to my car? I'd feel safer what with that kid on the loose. I'm parked in the garage across the street.

POLICEMAN

Sure, not a problem.

RANDI

(Grabs her coat)

You can finish closing up can't you, Curt?

CURT

I do it every night.

(POLICEMAN opens the door)

CURT (continued)

Be careful.

POLICEMAN

I'll make sure she gets to her car.

CURT

I wasn't talking to her.

(RANDI gives Curt the finger as  
THEY exit.)

(Lights cross fade to the alley.  
CHASE enters left.)

CHASE

(In a loud whisper)

Hello, is anybody here...?

(HE cautiously investigates the  
camp.)

Anybody home?

(HE approaches the appliance box  
and looks inside. HE reaches in,  
pulls out a box of Gold Fish  
crackers, and begins to eat  
ravenously.)

PICASSO

(Enters left)

Hey, those are mine! You get the hell away from there!

(CHASE drops the box and backs  
away.)

PICASSO (continued)

(Picks up the box and looks  
inside)

You ate half the box. These aren't your run of the mill  
saltines. These are Goldfish crackers. You know how hard it is  
to find these things at the food pantry?

CHASE

There was nobody around. I was hungry.

PICASSO

You're hungry, I'm hungry, the whole world is hungry, so what!  
Nobody gives a shit. You get outta here. Go on, get.

(HE checks his camp to see if  
anything is missing. Noticing  
Chase is still there.)

I told you to get out of here.

CHASE

I can stay here if I want. You don't own this alley.

PICASSO

Yes I do. I claimed it. It's mine.

CHASE

You can't claim an alley.

PICASSO

I was here first. There's privilege granted to someone when  
they're first. Ever hear of the land rush? First one to stake  
a claim got to keep the land. The entire state of Oklahoma was  
built on that.

CHASE

We're not in Oklahoma.

PICASSO

Get the hell out of here. Go find your own place.

CHASE

I don't wanna find another place.

PICASSO

(Picks up a board)

You're not listening. Maybe I should let this do my talking.  
What do you think of that?

(CHASE picks up a second board and  
swings it in the air.)

CHASE

You talk with that, and I'll beat the shit out of you with this.

PICASSO

(Lowers his board)

Why are you getting violent?

CHASE

You threatened me first.

PICASSO

Did I swing at you...? No, I didn't. But there you are, swinging at me.

CHASE

What was I supposed to do?

(Lowers his board)

Stand here and *hope* you didn't smash my head in?

PICASSO

(Drops his board)

No! You were supposed to run away. Can't you tell when you're not wanted?

CHASE

I know the signs.

PICASSO

Then why aren't you running?

CHASE

(Drops his board)

I got no place else to go.

PICASSO

You didn't have any place to go when you found this place. You'll find another one.

CHASE

One night, what's the big deal?

PICASSO

One night turns into two, and two turns into three, and before I know it your mail is being delivered here.

CHASE

I've got somethin' I gotta do tomorrow, and if it all works out I'll be gone by afternoon.

PICASSO

It doesn't look like things have been working out for you so far. Why don't you go home? Take your beating and be done with it.

CHASE

I told you, I'll be out of here tomorrow. I don't plan to live on the street.

PICASSO

No one ever does.

CHASE

What are you gonna do, call the cops?

(Several beats)

PICASSO

(Frustrated)

Alright, one night, but you park your ass over there.

(Points to the end of the dock)

And keep your sticky fingers away from my stuff, and tomorrow you clear out.

CHASE

No problem.

(PICASSO looks at Chase and shakes his head, indicating Chase has no business on the street.)

(CHASE sits down and hugs himself for warmth. PICASSO sorts through his cart, occasionally glancing over at CHASE who squirms to find comfort and warmth.)

PICASSO

Look at you. You don't have so much as a coat. It's October, for god sakes. A kid runs away in October he should have sense enough to take a coat.

CHASE

I left in a hurry.

PICASSO

How much time does it take to grab a coat? I don't know what I was worried about. One night out here in the cold and you'll be running back home to mommy.

CHASE

And what direction would that be?



PICASSO

I don't care, as long as it's away from here.

(PICASSO watches as CHASE  
continues to try and find warmth.)

PICASSO (continued)

What are you doing over there?

CHASE

What's your problem?

PICASSO

I can hear your teeth chattering clear over here. How am I  
gonna sleep with that noise?

CHASE

Stick a couple of gold fish in your ears.

PICASSO

Come here... Come on...

CHASE

What for?

PICASSO

Get your ass over here.

(CHASE crosses cautiously to  
Picasso. PICASSO pulls out a  
stack of news paper and hands it  
to CHASE.)

PICASSO (continued)

Take these and lay em on the ground. They'll keep the cold  
concrete off your ass.

(CHASE takes the papers and lays  
them out as PICASSO pulls a  
blanket from his shelter.)

PICASSO (continued)

Here...

(Tosses the blanket to CHASE)

I want that back.

CHASE

Yeah, sure.

PICASSO

You're not a bed wetter are you?

CHASE

No!

PICASSO

The guy who gave me that was.

(Grins to himself)

CHASE

(Smells the blanket)

Just a minute ago you were trying to run me off. Now you're helping me? What's that about?

PICASSO

If you freeze to death the cops will show up. Then they'll run me outta here, and I'll have to move back to camp Run-a-muck. I don't want to move back to camp Run-a-muck.

CHASE

What's camp Run-a-muck?

PICASSO

It's the homeless camp down by the river, under the Broadway Bridge.

CHASE

So why did you leave?

PICASSO

A lot of people live down there. It's hard to watch your back.

(Beat)

What's your name, kid?

CHASE

What's yours?

PICASSO

Seriously?! You invade my place and you're giving me attitude? I guess I'll just call you Shit Head.

(Beat)

CHASE

Chase... My name's Chase. Does that make you happy?

PICASSO

A million dollars and a hot shower would make me happy.

CHASE

What about you? Or should I just call you Shit Head?

PICASSO

They call me Picasso.

CHASE

Are you like a painter?

PICASSO

If you mean like Sherwin Williams, no. If you mean like an artist, yeah.

CHASE

Have you been living back here very long?

PICASSO

Long enough.

CHASE

Do you know the people who run the bar there?

PICASSO

(Oozing sarcasm)

Oh sure, we're great friends. We play cards, exchange recipes, all the shit friendly neighbors do.

(Back to reality)

Listen kid, when you're homeless the rest of the world likes to pretend you're invisible. If you're smart, you'll play along.

CHASE

I'm not homeless.

PICASSO

Wanna bet?

End of Scene