

ASHLEY

I had to have some guy with a broken window and missing stereo drive me to school. But other than that, can't complain.

27 INT. SOCIAL SERVICES OFFICES - DAY

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Parker enters his cubical, throws his coat on the back of his chair before slumping into it. He sips a large cup of coffee from a styrofoam and surveys the stack on his desk. *

He sifts through the files, each one representing a family in a desperate situation. Images flash of squalid living rooms, homeless street children, deadbeat parents. *

He sits down to type up a report on the O.D. the day before.

Click-click-click on a computer keyboard. Monotony. Xerox machine light flares up and down as copies spit out.

He pulls the Montrose file and flips it open. Paper-clipped on the inside front cover is a wallet-sized photograph of Ashley. He pulls his cell phone, dials.

DAHLIA (V.O.)

Hi, it's Dahlia, leave a message.

Before he can leave a message a co-worker, STU FELDMAN, mid 40s, leans over the top of the cubicle. He's tall, broad-shouldered. Probably quarterbacked in high-school. Probably was a dick. Definitely still is...

STU

Porker!

Parker hangs up, swivels around in his chair, gives him an icy stare.

PARKER

Stu. Enough. The joke was bad the first time. Find some new material.

STU

Never gets old. Mind if I borrow your white-out big guy, mine ran dry.

PARKER

I do.

His deadpan return and spin away rubs Stu the wrong way.

STU

Take a joke. What stick got shoved
up your ass?

Parker swivels back around. He's hot now.

PARKER

Getting another neglected kid off
to school this morning.

STU

Yeah, well that's the job. I can't
get through the stack of cases,
I've got. I can't afford the time
to care. We're just low paid city
workers. This is definitely not
Gotham City, you ain't no Bruce
Wayne.

PARKER

Superhero's couldn't save 'em all
fast enough.

STU

We do our job, if it goes good no
noise, nothing. But you get a girl
gone loco being pimped out by some
alley cat...
Some fucking lowlife wetback
decides he's gonna play shoot 'em
up and it all becomes my fault.
They don't give a shit. Fucked up
world... Now can I snake some of
your white-out?

Stu's cheerful tone makes it worse. Parker manages to hold
his temper and lifts the White-out up for Stu, who takes it
and walks off.

STU (CONT'D)

(over his shoulder)

Thanks, Porker.

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EXT. CASINO - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

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Parker steps from his car and walks towards the bright
lights.