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# ***Walking in a Man's Shoes***

Original Story & Screenplay

by

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**INT. MODERN CONDO - BOY'S BEDROOM - DAY**

A DOOR BURSTS OPEN revealing a 9-year old boy - **NEWMAN LOVEJOY**. His pensive eyes, peering out from beneath a mop of curly hair, seem to contradict the impish grin that flashes the instant the boy SEES the brand new COMPUTER, wrapped in ribbons, waiting on his desk.

**NEWMAN**

Man-Oh-MAN!

The boy charges at the machine, his mom, **JUNE**, inches behind him. She's 25, pretty, but the spiky neon-tinted hair and eccentric attire leave her more the wayward teenager than a mom.

**NEWMAN**

This is AWESOME!

**JUNE**

AND! It wasn't easy buying this sucker either. Everyone was like ... *He's 9? He won't need all this just for school work.* And I'm like ... *Who said anything about work?*

**NEWMAN**

Exactly.

She loads a flying game and hands him a fancy JOYSTICK ...

**JUNE**

Fly me to the moon, baby!

**NEWMAN**

Yes, m'am!

And they're off... both leaning into the imaginary trajectory displayed on the screen.

**NEWMAN (VO)**

Today is my 9th birthday and the day I start being a kid again. That's what June says anyway.

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**EIGHT YEARS AGO: INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - CORRIDOR - DAY**

**NEWMAN** (age 1) drags the adult football shoes he's wearing down a length of green carpet.

**NEWMAN (VO)**

You know that saying: **walk a mile in a man's shoes**? Well, June says I started wearin' men's shoes **REAL** early, and now it's time to put'em away.

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**2 YEARS BEFORE THAT: EXT. HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY**

Teenage **FOOTBALL PLAYERS** wearing the same shoes thunder across lush, green grass. It's seconds before the end of the game and the **VISITING TEAM** is winning.

**NEWMAN (VO)**

Actually, the shoes were my dad's but he forgot'em.

The visitor's star player, **PARIS** - a flamboyant, exotic 17-year old - weaves past the opposition. The **CROWD** **BOOS** and **HISSES**. The home **CHEERLEADERS** chant "NO-NO-NO!". All except one - **JUNE** (then 16) - who only has eyes for Paris.

**NEWMAN (VO)**

See, my dad was a football hero ...

As Paris thunders past, he notices June jump up from her seat, waving **POM-POMS** in the air ...

**JUNE**

Go-Go-GO ...!

He likes what he sees and spins around to wave, which leaves him running backwards ...

**NEWMAN (VO)**

And June says that even if he forgot his shoes, he would **NEVER** forget the moment they met.

Eye contact. Magic! Till the mass of opposition that Paris forgot buries him - face up and just inches from a touchdown. **OUCH!**

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - BEDROOM WINDOW - NIGHT**

Paris, still in his team uniform but now with a **BAND-AID** on his cheek, scales the last branch up to a bedroom window.

**NEWMAN (VO)**

Anyway, I don't know the details, but I do know he was invited over after the game.

The window opens and a hand pulls him in.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT**

June and Paris sit on the BED. The room is pretty typical for a teenager, except for the exceptional number of DRAWINGS on the walls, attesting to June's budding talent.

**PARIS**

Nice. You did all these yourself?

**JUNE**

Yeah. I have more - wanna see?

**PARIS**

Sure ...

June gets up but he grimaces, reaching to touch the scrape on his face. Instantly concerned, she sits back down - closer this time.

**JUNE**

Does it hurt?

**PARIS**

I'll be okay.

**NEWMAN (VO)**

She says they were REAL good friends right away. Sort'a like magic. I mean they hardly had to talk and they would understand each other!

Knees make contact. Furtive glances acknowledge. And they're sliding to the floor, kissing.

**JUNE**

Oww!

**PARIS**

Oh yeah ... sorry ...

The thorny shoes come off and fly across the room in single file. Giggles. Then sighs ...

**JUNE**

Think it's safe?

**PARIS**

Yeah. NEVER happens the first time.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Two lumps asleep in bed: **NANCY** (41) - June's mother - a green facial covering her face, and **NORBERT** (60) - her step-father - with ear plugs and an award-winning SNORE. Suddenly, a loud BANG. Nancy's eyes fly open.

**NEWMAN (VO)**

But since my dad was from some place far away, he couldn't stay very long.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - JUNE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

More skittish than an alley cat, Paris sits up. June sets the LAMP that fell back on her DESK ...

**NEWMAN (VO)**

Fact is, they never even said goodbye cause he had to go so fast or he'd miss the next game!

Bad news: a LIGHT in the hall, then FOOTSTEPS approaching and fast. The lovers manage a quick kiss before June pushes Paris out onto the tree branch ...

**PARIS**

*(whispering)*

My shoes! I need my shoes ...

Too late: The door flies open. Paris dives out of sight. June turns to face trouble - Nancy.

**JUNE**

Oh Hi! You too hot to sleep too, huh.

But Nancy's busy scanning the room. In a flash, she spots it. She lets the tell-tale shoe dangle by its laces in front of June, swinging like a pendulum counting down the seconds before doom.

**NANCY**

Say you didn't do something stupid and I won't tell your dad.

**JUNE**

He's NOT my 'dad'!

Nancy's gaze just digs deeper. June turns away, unable to take the heat.

**JUNE**

And anyways, I'm SIXTEEN already. So?

Nancy's fury melts into a frightened grimace. She sinks down on the bed. June glances over. Seeing Nancy's panic rising, she rolls her eyes skyward ...

**JUNE**

Awww ... Nancy!

**NANCY**

The name is MOM!

**JUNE**

FINE! And nothing happened, 'kay?

June sits down on the bed beside Nancy but still won't look her in the eye.

**NANCY**

Nothing?

**JUNE**

Well, NO ... not exactly ...

Nancy breaks into tears - the green mask washing onto her neck in thin squiggly lines.

**NANCY**

How could you? After EVERYTHING ... and ... and ...

The rain of tears thickens. June can't take it - she starts crying too.

**JUNE**

Aww, mom? It won't happen again, 'kay?

**NANCY**

Promise?

**JUNE**

Pinkie swear.

They wipe away tears and link pinkies.

**NANCY**

Besides, we couldn't possibly be THAT unlucky!

June puts her arm around Nancy's shoulder and pats it reassuringly ...

**JUNE**

Exactly.

Nancy sighs, calming down. But the June's face tells another story  
...

**CUT TO:**

**A FEW WEEKS LATER: INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - BATHROOM - DAY**

June stares at a drop on the piece of blotting paper in her hand  
...

**JUNE**

Don't change ... don't change ... oh  
please, oh **pleeeazze!**

**NEWMAN (VO)**

Still. Even if my dad wasn't around, June  
says the day she found out about me was  
the best day of her life.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY**

Nancy, HARLEQUIN ROMANCE in hand, stirs sauce on the stove ...

**JUNE (OS)**

Noooooooooooooooooo!

**CUT TO:**

**INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - BATHROOM - DAY**

Nancy throws open the door. June's on the floor, the results of a  
PREGNANCY KIT in her hand.

**NANCY**

Betcha it's expired - did you check the  
date?

June points to the heap of other kits in the garbage. Mom sinks to  
the floor too.

**JUNE**

At least I'm not breaking with tradition,  
right?

Nancy throws her a stern look. June's quasi-smile evaporates ...

**JUNE**

... sorry ...

**NANCY**

What about the father?

**CUT TO:**

**INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - JUNE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

June whispers into the phone ...

**JUNE**

You're surprised! *(nearly breaks out laughing)*  
--- so, so what should we do? --- Oh, the  
football season --- Well! I hope you have  
a great season without your shoes!

She slams the phone down, grabs the shoes from her shelf and hurls  
them to the back of the closet.

**CUT TO:**

**8 MONTHS LATER: INT. HOSPITAL BIRTHING ROOM - NIGHT**

It's the big moment. But before the **DOCTOR** can say a word, Nancy  
beats him to the punch.

**NANCY**

It's a BOY! It's a boy, honey!

June reaches out to cradle the **INFANT** the doctor places on her  
belly.

**JUNE**

Frankly, I don't care **WHAT** he is as long  
as he's got all his fingers and toes.

She checks - just in case.

**NANCY**

Just wait till he's sixteen. Then you'll  
see why you're lucky!

**JUNE**

Oh gimme a break, Nancy.

**NEWMAN (VO)**

Anyway, gran was extra happy I was a boy  
for some reason. And like a boy, June says  
I took charge right away.

**CUT TO:**

**A YEAR LATER: INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT**

Nancy, June and Newman (1) in his high chair, sit on one side of a  
TABLE, with Norbert presiding on the other - cut-off reading  
glasses perched on his nose, looking like the opinionated academic  
that he is.



**NORBERT**

We all have dreams my dear, but let's be realistic.

June piles mashed potatoes on a spoon to feed Newman, mouthing the words of the lecture - knowing it by heart. Newman notices that June's upset and grows agitated.

**NORBERT**

Making it as an artist is a long shot. But for an unwed, teenaged mother with no high school diploma, I'd say you're shooting for the moon!

As the airplane spoon comes in for a landing, Newman throws his arms up, making the buttery mess fly. It lands next to Norbert's plate. He glares at the blob but chooses not to comment.

**NORBERT**

We have to face facts. But at least you have me, which is more than your mother had in the same situation. Right dear?

Nancy nods. June grins, re-loading the spoon. Newman giggles. Once in range, he lets it fly, the mess landing on Norbert's shoulder this time. Nancy smiles. But Norbert is NOT amused.

**NORBERT**

You spoilt, ungrateful child! You'll never amount to anything!

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. BUS DEPOT - DAY**

June, with Newman and a load of bags in tow, heads for a BUS. Nancy runs after them ...

**NANCY**

Honey ... be reasonable.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. BUS - DAY**

June hands the bags to the **DRIVER** to load on the bus and puts Newman down.

**JUNE**

If I stay here, I'll just prove him right. You know that.

Newman teeter-totters off and tries to climb the steep steps onto the bus.

**JUNE**

See? Even Newman agrees!

**CUT TO:**

**INT. BUS - DAY**

June and Newman are in their seats. Nancy clips a GOLD LOCKET around June's neck.

**JUNE**

No, mom ...

**NANCY**

Yes ... baby ...

*(turning to Newman)*

Now you take good care of mommy, okay sweet-heart?

**CUT TO:**

**INT. BUS - ALONG COUNTRY ROAD - DAY**

June watches Nancy getting smaller and smaller in the distance. Finally, she turns away. Newman, who is standing on his seat, stares out the window. June puts her arms around him and looks too.

**JUNE**

See that little house, Newman? Soon we'll have one just like that and you'll be the man of the house, 'kay?

**NEWMAN (VO)**

So that's how it started. But I only got the real deal about being a man later. Let's just say I started learning the RULES!

**FADE TO BLACK:**

**SEVEN YEARS LATER: INT. MODEST APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY**

FADE IN - a small living-room, meager if not for the huge DRAWINGS of fantastic places displayed on every wall. Suddenly, an ALARM. A hand reaches out and homes in on SNOOZE.

**JUNE (now 24)**

Nine more minutes?

**NEWMAN (now 8) (OS)**

Yes, please.

June, snug in her HIDE-A-BED, rubs the sleep from her eyes then glances at the clock. PANIC!

**JUNE**

NEWMAN! I set it wrong!

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - NEWMAN'S ROOM - DAY**

Newman sits up in bed. His room - the only bedroom - is cheerful: a fairy tale FOREST on the walls, and HOUSES made of LEGGO arranged all over to complete the magical atmosphere.

**NEWMAN**

Again? How does she DO that?

*(yelling)*

Troops or beds?

**JUNE (OS)**

Beds!

June pulls the cover off of Newman and starts making the bed as he's climbing out.

**NEWMAN**

How come I always get the troops?

**JUNE**

You recruited'em? You feed'em.

Newman gets to work feeding the troops - pets that is, cheap, little ones: a turtle in an aquarium, a hamster running in a play wheel, and a budgie eager to jump on his finger.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY**

June and Newman dash for the door - grabbing things on the way, tripping one over the other.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - CORRIDOR - DAY**

Newman and June pile out the door with their many bags - both out of breath.

**JUNE**

School bag?

**NEWMAN**

Check . Wallet?

**JUNE**

Check . Lunch box?

**NEWMAN**

Check . House keys?

**JUNE**

Check. Bus fare?

**NEWMAN**

You're supposed to have it!

**JUNE**

I gave it to you ...

**NEWMAN**

Did not!

**JUNE**

I had it right here in my pocket, then ...

June fishes in her pocket and pulls out change.

**JUNE**

Oh ...

They march for the elevator.

**NEWMAN**

Did you lock the door?

Seeing her reaction ...

**NEWMAN**

Throw me the keys, I'll do it!

**JUNE**

Have you got your emergency quarter?

**NEWMAN**

In my shoe ...

Newman shakes his foot and looks down - only to realize ...

**NEWMAN**

Umm, I think we forgot something?

**JUNE**

What?

He points: Both are wearing socks, but no shoes! An explosion of LAUGHTER.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - CORRIDOR - DAY**

Classes have started. June gives Newman a big kiss near the door to his classroom.

**JUNE**

Hey, whatever Cramer says can't be as bad as what 'Mr. Punctuality' is gonna do to me, so chin up, partner!

She prepares to walk away ...

**NEWMAN**

Uh, June? School bag?

**JUNE**

Oh, right.

She hands it over, having forgotten that she was the one carrying it.

**JUNE**

And the name is MOM!

**NEWMAN**

Uh-huh!

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - PLAYGROUND - DAY**

Recess. Newman hangs out with his best friend, **ROSA MERCEDES** (9) - a street-smart girl of Mexican origin with a mischievous twinkle in her eye and a major accent!

**NEWMAN**

We ALWAYS forget something, but shoes?

**ROSA**

Well ... me, once in Grade 1, I forgot my underwears!

**NEWMAN**

Rosa!

**ROSA**

An' it was windy - an' I was wearin' a dress!

Newman sees **TIGER CASH** - a freckle-faced 8-year old who always picks on him - approach.

**NEWMAN**

That's bad. But there is something worse  
...

**ROSA**

What?

**NEWMAN**

The daily SUPER DAD report

**ROSA**

Just don' listen. Think of'im like a fly  
goin' BZZZZzzzzzz ...

Rosa keeps on buzzing as Tiger squares off in front of Newman.

**TIGER**

Hey, Newman! Guess who MY dad met  
yesterday!

Saved by the BELL!

**NEWMAN**

Gee, Tiger. Guess you're gonna have'ta  
fill me in later!

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - GRADE 3 CLASSROOM - DAY**

All Grade 3 **STUDENTS** pile into class. Tiger and Newman slide into  
their seats - side-by-side.

Tiger hums a generic Country & Western SONG and sticks a glossy  
autographed PROMO PIC of his dad inside his desk, adding to the  
COLLECTION already there. Inside Newman's desk are only pictures  
of June and the pets - no dad.

A CLOCK on the wall ticks towards noon. The kids work on math  
sheets at their desks.

Newman day-dreams, doodling - football players wearing their  
trademark shoes. Rosa's anxious. She checks the time then looks  
out the window and smiles. **ESMERALDA**, her fashionable 18-year old  
sister, is waiting in the yard.

**MRS. CRAMER**, the Grade 3 teacher, a stern 45-year old who's been  
40 since she was 12, works at her desk. She hears MOANING - looks  
up.

**MRS. CRAMER**

Alright. Who's doing that?

Rosa raises one hand, rubbing her tummy with the other.

**ROSA**

Is me ... I feel really seeck ...

**MRS. CRAMER**

Alright then. To the office ... off you go!

**CUT TO:**

**INT. AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM - EVENING**

Newman and Tiger are the only ones left but they ignore each other. The **COUNSELOR** checks the time - past 6. Finally, **DEBBIE CASH** (30), Tiger's mom - a stern looking nurse - hurries in.

**NEWMAN**

Guess 'Super Dad's' too busy to get ya, huh.

**TIGER**

He's in the recording studio, dimwit.

Debbie looks at Tiger strangely ...

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT**

June clears the dishes while Newman feeds salad to the menagerie of pets on the table.

**JUNE**

Give me a minute and I'll go get us some ice-cream.

**NEWMAN**

I can go!

**JUNE**

Not alone, you can't.

**NEWMAN**

But Rosa ...

**JUNE**

You are NOT Rosa.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

June and Newman eat ICE-CREAM SUNDAES topped with the works. REPRODUCTIONS of June's drawings are on the COFFEE TABLE in front of them. She points to one ...

**NEWMAN**

Winner.

**JUNE**

Promise you're not sayin' that just cause I'm your mom?

He doesn't answer - just extends a pinkie to link with her's.

**JUNE**

After I take this course, it's no more cashier! I'm gonna design logos, and book jackets, and ...

**NEWMAN**

Games for Playstation?

**JUNE**

Games for any station you want! And! Since mommy's been really, really good - no lunches, no taxis, no make-up, no hair cuts - I now have the bucks for college! AND ...

She reaches under the stuff on the table and pulls out a LEGGO CATALOGUE. Newman's eyes go to high-beam at the sight.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - PLAYGROUND - DAY**

Rosa studies the Leggo booklet with interest. Newman notices the BAND-AID on her hand

**NEWMAN**

Rosa ...

But here's Tiger!

**TIGER**

Aww. Leggo for your birthday AGAIN. Ya know, my dad's takin' me to L.A. for my birthday!

**NEWMAN**

Well. I'm probably MOVING to L.A. cause my mom got a job designing games for Playstation!

**TIGER**

Yeah? So how come she still works at the supermarket?



**NEWMAN**

They haven't found a replacement yet!

**TIGER**

Well my dad just signed a BIG deal with  
*Wild Man Records!*

**NEWMAN**

Even if nobody's ever heard of him?

**TIGER**

Have too! He just did a BIG interview on,  
on ...

**ROSA**

Channel 17?

**TIGER**

17, yeah!

**ROSA**

That's the shopping network, dimwit!

Newman laughs. Tiger shoves him. Newman shoves back just as Cramer rounds the corner.

**MRS. CRAMER**

Boys? I see this again, and it's off to  
the principal's office!

**CUT TO:**

**INT. AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM - EVENING**

Tiger and Newman are alone and sitting apart, as usual. Seeing June arrive, Tiger charges ...

**TIGER**

Is it true about the Playstation thing?

June shoots a look at Newman. He mouths "PLEASE?" June accepts. She leans toward Tiger ...

**JUNE**

*(whispering)*

Okay, but don't spread it around. See, we  
hate to brag. It makes other people feel  
bad, and that's not nice, ya'know?

**TIGER**

Yeah. I NEVER brag m'self.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - NIGHT**

June and Newman charge out of the school laughing. They link arms and skip - like two kids.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. TOY STORE - LEGGO SECTION - NIGHT**

An endless aisle of LEGGO, floor to ceiling. Newman charges for the big boxes. June lags behind, checking prices. Newman pulls an enormous TRAIN SET down from an upper shelf, kneels before it, opening the top to look inside.

**NEWMAN**

It's electric! There's sound, too!

June secretly checks the price: Her mouth drops open, but she catches herself ...

**JUNE**

Wow! One day I'll get you one and that's a promise.

Newman's smile evaporates. He pushes the train away.

**NEWMAN**

Naah. Looks too complicated.

He hands a much smaller box to June.

**NEWMAN**

This is more my style.

But secretly, he's still studying the train. She knows.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - NEWMAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Newman watches his turtle, Croc, peer out the window of a house in his Leggo colony.

**JUNE (OS)**

It's that time ...

Newman takes the turtle out of the house as she walks in ...

**NEWMAN**

If I had a train, Croc could ride from house to house!

**JUNE**

He'd get electrocuted cause he's wet!

He puts the turtle back in its glass aquarium ...

**NEWMAN**

He's not always wet ...

**JUNE**

How about the Circus set with the pool?  
Croc would love that!

He climbs into bed ... mumbling under his breath ...

**NEWMAN**

At least somebody would be happy ...

**JUNE**

That's not fair, Newman. That train costs  
over \$300 and with the college  
registration an'everything, I just can't.

She strokes his hair.

**JUNE**

You know, my mom couldn't afford any toys  
at all when I was growing up. In fact, the  
only thing she ever gave me is this ...

She holds up the gold chain and locket ...

**JUNE**

But after I finish college and get a good  
job, I'll get you FIVE train sets!

**NEWMAN**

It's okay. I probably won't be into toys  
by then.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

June climbs in her hide-a-bed and switches off the light. Moments  
later, in jumps Newman, throwing his arms around her neck. They  
hug ...

**NEWMAN**

I'm sorry.

**JUNE**

No. I'm sorry things can't be different  
...

**NEWMAN**

Do you think they would ... if my dad was around?

**JUNE**

I really don't know, sweetie. But what I do know, is that we're really lucky cause we have each other. Now you should go back to bed or you'll be really tired tomorrow.

**NEWMAN**

No ... please?

**JUNE**

Alright ... but go to sleep.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - NEWMAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

June sneaks into Newman's bed - quiet as a mouse. Seconds later, Newman leaps in!

**NEWMAN**

Good night.

She waits till he seems to be asleep, then tries to sneak off again ...

**NEWMAN**

Stay ...

**JUNE**

And if I don't, that means musical beds all night, huh.

**NEWMAN**

My point exactly.

Newman sleeps. June plays with her little locket and stares at the ceiling, thinking.

**FADE OUT:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - NEWMAN'S BEDROOM - DAY**

BLACK ...

**JUNE (OS)**

NOW!

Eyes open: BALLOONS, a Happy Birthday SIGN, a huge PRESENT. Newman leaps from his bed. He rips open his present - the train set! He throws his arms around June, lips raining kisses.

**NEWMAN**

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

**JUNE**

Okay. okay. okay.

**NEWMAN**

But how? ...

He notices her locket is gone.

**NEWMAN**

June? Where's gran'ma's locket?

**JUNE**

Well? She said it was for a special occasion. And today's your birthday AND the day I register for college. That's special!

**NEWMAN**

For real?

**JUNE**

Right after school. And after that? We Par-tee!

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - DAY**

Mrs. Cramer is about to close the door when Newman charges in.

**NEWMAN**

Sorry!

He hurries down the aisle toward his seat. Rosa grabs his arm on the way ...

**ROSA**

So?

Newman opens his jacket a crack to reveal the LEGGO TRAIN ASSEMBLY BOOKLET ...

**ROSA**

Aye Karamba!

Newman lovingly puts the Leggo booklet away in his desk. Tiger watches.

**MRS. CRAMER (OS)**

Alright class, homework please!

Newman joins the line in front of Cramer's desk. She checks his homework and hands it back ...

**MRS. CRAMER**

Next?

Back at his desk, Newman finds Tiger completely absorbed, reading his Leggo booklet.

**NEWMAN**

*(whispering)*

That's MINE!

Tiger looks up - startled ...

**TIGER**

This? This is for BABIES!

**NEWMAN**

So I'm a baby. Now gimme!

Newman reaches for it but Tiger gets up and moves back.

**TIGER**

How bad do ya want it?

**NEWMAN**

Give-it!

Tiger holds the booklet out of reach - taunting Newman. Newman lunges at him. In the skirmish, they knock over a chair. Mrs. Cramer looks up ...

**MRS. CRAMER**

What's going on back there!

Newman lunges at Tiger anew. But Tiger dodges, leaving Newman on a collision course with a HIGH-TECH PROJECTION SYSTEM. We have impact: The machine crashes. BANG!

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY**

The school principal, **MR. HURST** (30) - a stern 'everything-by-the-book' kinda guy - faces Debbie, June, Tiger and Newman. Mrs. Cramer looks on from the sidelines.

**MR. HURST**

School policy IS school policy. So Mrs. Cash, you owe 30% of damages, and **Miss Lovejoy**, well, what can I say ...

Newman jumps up from his chair ...

**NEWMAN**

But Tiger started it ...

**MRS. CRAMER**

Newman ...!?

Newman sits back down. June pulls out her check-book, the tears flowing.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT**

June and Newman eat dinner. Newman watches his mother - her eyes glued to her plate.

**NEWMAN**

Why didn't we go register for college?

She looks up at him and just stares. He looks down, large tears falling onto his plate.

**NEWMAN**

I'm really sorry, mommy.

**JUNE**

But that won't change anything, will it.

She gets up and walks out. Newman notices an envelope on the table, addressed to him. He opens it - a card from Nancy and a \$5 bill.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

June sits on the couch just staring into space. A \$5 bill is thrust in front of her face. She looks up.

**NEWMAN**

I want you to have it.

**JUNE**

Don't be silly. Now go to bed, it's late.

The PHONE. June answers. Newman leaves the money on the table when she's not looking.

**JUNE**

Hello? --- Oh, hi. Just a minute ...  
Newman?

Newman takes the receiver ...

**NEWMAN**

Hello?--- Oh, hi gran'ma --- yeah, it was great --- No, I'm just tired --- yeah, I'm sure --- I got this HUGE Leggo train ---I know! Mommy even had to sell the locket you gave her ...

*(bursting into tears)*

... an'then I ruined everything and now she can't go to college and it's all my fault!

He drops the receiver and runs out of the room crying. June picks up the conversation.

**JUNE**

Nancy? --- No, no. --- What for? ---  
Nancy, NO!

**CUT TO:**

**INT. NANCY AND NORBERT'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Nancy, wearing her trademark green facial, hands the receiver to Norbert.

**NORBERT**

Hello, June --- Yes, I see --- As you know my dear, I put myself thru college. --- Well. If you'd listened to reason ...

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - NEWMAN'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Newman, in bed, listens to the telephone conversation ...

**JUNE (OS)**

You're right! I'm a stupid loser like you said. I might as well DIE, cause my life's over anyway!

June slams the phone down. Newman hears the sound of PAPER RIPPING.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

June rips the college application forms in half, then hides her face in the couch, weeping.



**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - NEWMAN'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Newman listens to his mother crying in the next room. A strange, determined look appears on his face. He sits up and climbs out of bed.

He gets an old SHOE BOX out from the back of his closet and opens it. Inside are his father's football shoes. He takes them out and starts to dust them off, deep in thought.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - NEWMAN'S ROOM - DAY**

Newman packs the unopened PACKETS OF LEGGO in his KNAP-SACK, and fills the outer box of the train set with old pieces. He feeds the troops ...

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY**

The ALARM. June's gropes for the snooze button.

**JUNE**

Another nine minutes?

**NEWMAN**

Not for me.

She looks up - there's Newman, all dressed and ready to go.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - PLAYGROUND - DAY**

Newman and Rosa sit away from everyone. Newman is crying ...

**NEWMAN**

... it was horrible. I just havta get her that money, Rosa.

**ROSA**

Si, but how?

He digs into his knapsack and reveals the packets of Leggo from the train set ...

**NEWMAN**

Think anyone would buy it?

**ROSA**

I dunno if they wan'to, but they better!

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - ENTRANCE - DAY**

Rosa stands near the door and yells...

**ROSA**

Tiger! Your dad's on the phone in the office.

**TIGER**

Really?

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - CORRIDOR - DAY**

Tiger barely makes it past the doors before Newman corners him.

**NEWMAN**

False alarm.

**TIGER**

What's the big deal?

Rosa appears on the scene as back-up.

**NEWMAN**

Cause of what you started, my mom can't afford to go to college, her life is ruined and now she's talkin' crazy!

**TIGER**

Wha'do you want me to do about it?

**NEWMAN**

Buy this ...

Newman opens the top of his knap-sack and Tiger looks in. His eyes light up ...

**TIGER**

Wish I could help you out, but I'm a little short right now. How'bout a rain check?

**NEWMAN**

How'bout you call your dad and have HIM bring the money!

**TIGER**

Good idea, but ...

**ROSA**

Call!

**TIGER**

Have it your way, but he was recording all night and you expect him to answer THIS early? Gimme a break.

Tiger pulls a CELL-PHONE out of his pocket, punches the numbers then waits ... finally he shrugs and pushes the antenna back down.

**TIGER**

That's what I was trying to tell you ...

Rosa grabs the phone and smashes it on the ground.

**NEWMAN**

Rosa!

**ROSA**

It's a toy! All my brothers got one to look important!

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - PAY PHONE - DAY**

Newman pulls his emergency quarter out of his shoe and hands it to Tiger. Tiger makes the call. He's nervous, starts sweating. Finally, he slams the receiver into the wall and starts crying ...

**TIGER**

My dad left, okay? He's got some girl, mom threw'im out and we haven't heard from'im in months. There, you happy now?

Newman and Rosa look at one another - then turn to face Tiger as he sinks down onto the floor. Rosa and Newman slide down beside him - one on each side.

**ROSA**

What about the singing part? That true?

**TIGER**

So what.

**NEWMAN**

So why d'ya have to be so mean? It's not like it's my fault.

**TIGER**

Yeah! But you're all happy and everything. You don't even CARE if you got a dad!

**NEWMAN**

... I do too!

**TIGER**

Really?

**ROSA**

Look. You guys wanna dad so bad? Take mine! Then he can boss you around 'stead of me! An' anyway, we got somethin' more importan'to do righ'now, comprendo?

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL - YARD - DAY**

Three little heads rise above the top of a bench: Newman, Tiger and Rosa. Newman is uncertain.

**ROSA**

GO!

**NEWMAN**

Why me?

**TIGER**

It's your Leggo!

Newman ventures into the thick of **TRENDY TEENS** doing their after-lunch socializing, parks his bag in the middle of the yard, and starts setting up. Nobody notices - except a pair of trouble-makers - **JIMMY** and **DEAN**. They amble on over.

**JIMMY**

What'up, munchkin? Lost your mommy?

**DEAN**

If you're lookin' to play, there's this playground, like 6 blocks that'a way.

**NEWMAN**

I'm not here to play. I'm lookin' to do a little business.

**JIMMY**

Gee, but we don't do Leggo anymore ... ya'no?

Dean gives Newman the once over and grins ... then turns to his buddy ...

**DEAN**

Yeah, but the kid's got some balls, I'll tell you that!

*(turning to Newman)*

Hey. I'll give you 20 bucks, 'kay kid?

**NEWMAN**

Twenty! It costs THREE hundred!

**CANDICE** - a mass of streaked blonde with nail file busy at work - looks over Dean's shoulder.

**DEAN**

So? Look at it! Where's the box and stuff  
...

**NEWMAN**

Yeah, but: **It's what's INSIDE that counts!**

**CANDICE**

Well wha'do ya know. A man of the future.

She leans down to Newman ...

**CANDICE**

Hey. I'll buy this ... **THING** ... for my  
baby bro.

Candice searches in her purse. Now Jimmy's interested. He starts flashing bills.

**JIMMY**

Hey, baby. I got it.  
*(to Newman)*  
How do fifty big ones sound?

**CANDICE**

You sleaze!

**DEAN**

You're cheap, Jimmy, really. I'll give ya  
a hundred, kid.

**JIMMY**

Oh look. It's 'Mr. Splurge'! I'm scared  
now ...  
*(to Newman)*  
Hundred'n twenty, take it or leave it.

**DEAN**

Hundred'n FIFTY!

Candice nudges Newman...

**ANGLE ON BENCH**

Newman sits down beside Tiger and Rosa.

**NEWMAN**

Not bad for my first business deal ...

**ROSA**

Lemme see the money ...

Newman gives her the wad of bills, then turns to Tiger.

**NEWMAN**

I learned a valuable lesson today, Tiger.

**TIGER**

Oh yeah? What's that?

**NEWMAN**

**Girls are good for business.**

Tiger raises his hand and the boys do a celebratory High-Five.

**TIGER**

Got that right!

**ROSA**

Eh. Maybe you should've learned somethin' else.

She hands the money back to Newman ...

**NEWMAN**

Like what?

**ROSA**

**Don't forge'to count the money.**

**ANGLE ON MIDDLE OF YARD**

Candice checks out the Leggo with a **FRIEND**, while Dean moons over her. She notices.

**CANDICE**

What?

Her look alone is enough to deflate his ego. He backs off - unfortunately, right into Newman.

**NEWMAN**

Hi! Hey! You know, I counted the money and there's a mistake or something cause I come up short!

**DEAN**

Oh. You're short. How'bout I make'ya even shorter, squirt!

Dean reaches to grab Newman ...

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. STREET NEAR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - DAY**

Newman, Tiger and Rosa charge towards their school, out of breath. Rosa sees Esmeralda's car.

**ROSA**

Tell Cramer I'm sick, you guys.

She makes a mad dash for the car.

**NEWMAN**

Weird.

As the boys round the side of the building, it's bad news: The playground is deserted.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - AFTERNOON**

CLOSE on a hand writing: "*I will not be late for class*" on a page already filled with repetitions. Newman and Tiger do detention, while Cramer's busy with her favorite pupil, **OLIVIA** - a bespectacled 7-year old black girl, the class genius - standing up front, a written speech in hand.

**OLIVIA**

Without rules, where would we be?

Tiger sneers ...

**TIGER**

Not here! Feels likes my hand's gonna fall off.

**MRS. CRAMER (OS)**

Wonderful. Now what about counter-arguments?

Newman glances over at Tiger who, alone, is filling in two sheets.

**NEWMAN**

The handwriting's starting to look the same.

**TIGER**

You're right. I'll use my left on yours.

Newman finishes taping June's college application forms back together, then tries to read.

**NEWMAN**

*(squinting)*

It's so SMALL ... I can't read it, you?

Tiger leans over ...

**MRS. CRAMER (OS)**

Boys?

Newman and Tiger look up - terrified. Mrs. Cramer stands in the doorway ...

**MRS. CRAMER**

I'm leaving Olivia in charge for a minute,  
so NO monkey business, got that?

Olivia is diligently at work when Newman comes up and taps her on the shoulder.

**NEWMAN**

Umm, I need your help, Olivia.

**OLIVIA**

You're supposed to be copying.

**NEWMAN**

This is for a social science project.

He places the application forms before her. She looks distressed suddenly.

**OLIVIA**

What project?

**NEWMAN**

It's uh, just for me. You know, to bring  
my marks up?

**OLIVIA**

Well. They won't go anywhere if your  
work's all torn up.

**NEWMAN**

Nibbler, my hamster? He did that! Just  
tell me 'bout the applying part, cause my  
eyes are really botherin' me, ya'now?

Olivia grabs the sheet and scans it in a flash ...

**OLIVIA**

Tuition is \$850. The deadline's today.

**NEWMAN**

What does that mean?



**OLIVIA**

Means you have to pay \$850 today or you can't go. And I'm NOT giving any more answers!

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - NEWMAN'S ROOM - EVENING**

Newman hides the \$120 he got for his Leggo under the insole of his father's football shoes.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - EVENING**

June and Newman eat dinner in silence - avoiding eye contact.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - NEWMAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Armed with a FLASHLIGHT, MAGNIFYING GLASS and RULER, Newman is under his bed, scrutinizing the tiny print on June's application forms. Wait! He notices something. Smiles.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - AUDITORIUM - DAY**

**STUDENTS** and **TEACHERS** are assembled in the auditorium. Most kids are horseying around, but Rosa and Newman are deep in conversation.

**NEWMAN**

She can apply again in three months!

**ROSA**

Newman. Maybe I can help you!

**MR. HURST (OS)**

All right, Everyone settle down!

**ROSA**

I tell you later!

**MARCUS RIELLY**, a shy 14-year old, walks up on stage to join Mr. Hurst.

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· This part could be based on a real child activist who can even represent him/herself. In Canada, **Craig Kielburger**, now 17, began an organization called FREE THE CHILDREN at age 13. A local chapter was started in Montreal by **Arnold Engel**, 14. Actual child-activists from many countries may fit the profile.

**MR. HURST**

Boys and Girls, I want you all to meet Marcus Rielly.

**MARCUS**

Hi. Before I start, I'd like to show you something real special!

He un-buttons his shirt revealing a T-SHIRT with a printed design underneath - something that was once popular with kids, but is now passé (Ninja Turtles, Power Rangers etc.). Kids laugh.

**MARCUS**

Okay. So it's dorky now. But when I got it, everyone wanted one. Fact is, this shirt changed my life. Wanna know how?

**AUDIENCE**

Yeah!

A SLIDE of a sweat-shop in South-east Asia, with **LITTLE KIDS** operating huge machines to produce shirts like the one he's wearing fills the screen behind him, followed by a series of others.

**MARCUS**

See, I found out that my super-cool shirt was made by kids who would never get to wear one. They never went to school, worked 12 hours a day, and slept right in the factory. And, the only difference between them and me, was where we were born. According to the International Labor Organization, there are an estimated 250 million kids working in the developing world, but if you include undeclared domestic work, it could be closer to 500 million! Many work against their will or under dangerous or harsh conditions. Many work to help their families. And many start as early as five ... here, listen to some of their stories ...

The LIGHTS DIM as a VIDEO begins to play ...

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· Use real video testimonials: possibly produced and distributed by Childrens' Right Organizations worldwide. The statements used here are inspired by those of real children found on the **One World Org.** web site.

**INT. CIGARETTE FACTORY IN INDIA - DAY**

A crowded factory in India, manned entirely by **CHILDREN**. Little hands fold leaves, fill them with tobacco then roll them to make *beedis* - the staple cheap smoke of India. **LAKSHMI** (10), one of the workers, tells her story in her own language ...

**LAKSHMI**

*(with translation VO)*

I started making *beedis* when I was six. It hurts my back a lot and the tobacco smell is very bad. Some say you can get TB from this work but I don't care. I'm not welcome at home if I don't make money. Without this job, I would be on the street.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. REMOTE JUNGLE IN PERU - DAY**

A line of **CHILD WORKERS** emerges from the mouth of a gold mine. The kids struggle to carry loads of ore up a steep incline. **VIDAL** (12), one of the workers, tells his story ...

**VIDAL**

*(with translation VO)*

Many times, I carry sacks of ore that are too heavy for me. If I refuse, I will be fired. I want to go to school but I must earn money. Maybe one day it will be different.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. GARMENT FACTORY IN THAILAND - NIGHT**

A small garment factory in Bangkok - sweat-shop to the max! A young girl, **SAWAI** (15), leads us through the crowded, poorly lit room ...

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. GARMENT FACTORY SHACK - NIGHT**

Sawai emerges through a narrow doorway and stops a few paces away ...

**SAWAI**

*(with translation VO)*

When I was 12, my father suddenly became paralyzed from overwork and my mother couldn't manage. So I quit school and looked for work but the only job I could find was here, far from home. I worked every day from 8 in the morning until midnight, then slept in a small room in the owner's house along with many others. We got one meal of rice a day and had to pay the owner for our food and housing. I also had to pay for my training. At the end of the month, they was hardly anything left to send home. But I am one of the lucky ones because after one year, a Children's Organization representative found me and helped me change my life. Now I try to help others.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - AUDITORIUM - DAY**

The lights come on as the video ends. Some of the younger kids in the audience are CRYING. Marcus is at the microphone again ...

**MARCUS**

Awful, isn't it. Some kids have to work to survive or help their families, that's true, but people should not take advantage of that. And there is hope. Countries all over the world are signing an agreement designed to protect kids and stop child labor. They agree that certain forms of child labor are intolerable: Things like children working under forced labor conditions and in bondage, children in hazardous working conditions and occupations, and very young working children. Basically, it is against the law for anyone to hire a kid younger than 12. But you know what? You guys can help too! Have your parents find out what toys, clothes or other things are made by exploited kids and don't buy them. Remember. Those kids could have been you! Any questions?

Little hands fly up and wave in the air.

**MARCUS**

You ... in the green shirt.

**LITTLE GIRL**

*(sobbing)*

Gra'ma say mommy an'daddy are b'loke. Duz  
th'mean I got'a go an'wo'k ... too?

**MARCUS**

Well, children in North America do ...

**MR. HURST**

*(interrupting)*

... have nothing to worry about. How about  
another question?

Newman's hand shoots up but Rosa grabs it and pulls it down before  
anyone notices.

**NEWMAN**

*(whispering)*

I just wanted to ask if kids here work.

Rosa gives him a sly look and starts to sneak towards the exit,  
motioning for him to follow.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - LOCKER-ROOM - DAY**

Rosa pulls a BAG out of her locker and opens it. Inside, are tiny  
SEMI-PRECIOUS STONES, SILVER WIRE, odd shaped METAL PIECES and  
HOOKS.

**NEWMAN**

I don't get it.

**ROSA**

Listen. You know my sister, Esmeralda,  
right? Well, she met this real nice lady  
who gave me a job!

**NEWMAN**

What do you mean, a JOB? What about what  
that guy just said about child labor: As  
in against the law? Illegal? Ring a bell?

**ROSA**

Look, I'm just like you! I need to help my  
family. And if nobody finds out, what's  
the big deal?

**NEWMAN**

Is that why you've been leaving early?

**ROSA**

Si.

**NEWMAN**

What about the Band-Aids?

**ROSA**

Is nothing. But what if the lady can give  
YOU a job too?

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

June adds up a pile of BILLS. Newman looks over her shoulder - she doesn't even notice.

**NEWMAN**

How was your day?

**JUNE**

Sure, go play ...

**NEWMAN**

Is it okay if I go to Rosa's for a while?

**JUNE**

Uh huh.

Newman, already wearing his jacket, waits near the front door ...

**NEWMAN**

Aren't you going to walk me?

**JUNE**

I'm really busy, Newman! Just go!

This is new. He waits - just to make sure she won't change her mind - then leaves.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT BUILDING - CORRIDOR - NIGHT**

Newman follows **MRS. KRUPNIK** (75) - the spinster from across the hall - into the elevator.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT BUILDING - ELEVATOR - NIGHT**

Mrs. Krupnik presses the DOOR OPEN button and waits. But no one comes.

**NEWMAN**

My mom's not coming. But it's okay - I'm allowed.

She lets go of the button but continues to watch him as they ride down - frowning.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. JUNE'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT**

Newman emerges outside. His eyes dart back and forth. His pace quickens. Finally, he bolts.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ROSA'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Rosa opens the front door. Newman stands outside, completely out of breath.

**ROSA**

What happened to you?

He tries to catch his breath as he glances inside ...

**NEWMAN**

I ... was ... jogging.

A bunch of men and boys are parked on the couch watching a Latino show: Rosa's father, **LUIS**, 40, uncle **JOSÉ**, 44, cousin **PEDRO**, 24, and brothers **JUAN**, 17, and **ENRICO**, 15.

**NEWMAN**

You have company.

Rosa pulls him in and shuts the door.

**ROSA**

Company? Is family.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ROSA'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN**

Rosa's mother, **ESPERANZA**, 37, is cooking enough to feed an army. Esmeralda does her nails instead of helping. Seeing Newman and Rosa pop in the doorway, she gets up.

**ESMERALDA**

*(in Spanish)*

Bathroom ...

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ROSA'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT**

Esmeralda sits on the toilet while Rosa and Newman sit cross-legged in the tub.

**ESMERALDA**

Maybe I can help, but I can't no promise anything. See, Mrs. Peterson is bery choosy. She wen'to lots of technicians before she chose me to do her hair. So me, I gotta be careful, see?

**NEWMAN**

That makes sense. But what's the job anyway?

**ESMERALDA**

Makin' earrings - \$5 a pair.

**NEWMAN**

Five dollars! And how many can you make a day?

**ROSA**

I make a pair a day!

**ESMERALDA**

Yeah, but she's slow. The other girl iz a lot faster.

**NEWMAN**

Okay. So how many pairs do I have to make for \$850? Wait - I mean take away \$120 ... how much is that?

**ESMERALDA**

Eh, me I do hair. Wan' someone to do countin'? Ask the men.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ROSA'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Rosa, Esmeralda and Newman wait as Luis, José, Pedro and Juan scribble numbers on bits of paper ... the TV guide, a magazine, a cigarette box. Enrico's the only one still watching TV.

**JUAN**

I got it! A hundred and forty six pairs!

**NEWMAN**

Yeah? So how many per day?



**LUIS**

How many days you got?

**NEWMAN**

Three months. But take away the weekends  
...

**LUIS**

*(yelling towards the kitchen - in Spanish)*

Esperanza, get me tha' calendar you got on  
the wall in there!

**UNCLE JOSÉ**

*(in Spanish)*

A calendar! How'bout a calculator, too.  
Betcha me and Pedro can figure it out  
without a calendar AND faster.

**LUIS**

*(in Spanish)*

Is that a fact! Juan, get us some more  
paper!

The two father/son teams move to opposite ends of the room,  
leaving Enrico with the couch all to himself. Esmeralda and Rosa  
retreat to the kitchen. Enrico waves for Newman to come closer ...

**ENRICO**

If I was you, I'd forget trying to get  
anything from these guys, know what I  
mean?

**NEWMAN**

What are they doing?

**ENRICO**

Betting on who's gonna get the right  
answer first.

**NEWMAN**

But how will they know it's right?

**ENRICO**

How, eh?

Enrico focuses back on the TV - he changes to a MUSIC VIDEO  
channel and sits back to relax.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ROSA'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT**

Newman watches over Esmeralda's shoulder as she writes. By now, more **FEMALE RELATIVES** help out in the kitchen. Rosa and Newman keep moving to stay out of the way.

**ESMERALDA**

What type'o doctor?

**NEWMAN**

Uh, dentist! Dentist is good. And sign it  
..."June Lovejoy".

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ROSA'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Newman doesn't seem all that eager to leave on his own. Enrico notices

**ENRICO**

Eh, kid! Want I walk you home?

**NEWMAN**

You don't have to, but if you want to,  
sure.

Enrico sneaks a cigarette from the pack his uncle left on the table when no one is looking.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. ROSA'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT**

Newman and Enrico emerge outside. Enrico stops to light up - takes a long luxurious puff.

**ENRICO**

First one today. Uncle watches his smokes  
like a hawk!

**NEWMAN**

Smoking can kill you.

**ENRICO**

That's why I'm makin'sure it don't kill  
Uncle first. Let me see - one less today,  
means that should add a'least thirty  
seconds to his life. And anyways. **A man's  
gotta smoke to be tough.** You wanna be  
tough, right kid? Here - try...

He extends the cigarette towards Newman. Newman backs off.

**NEWMAN**

Wish I could but I gotta go - promised to help my mom with something. You know.

**ENRICO**

Yeah. Too bad you got no sister to do that kinda stuff.

Enrico starts to practise blowing smoke rings. Newman walks away - trying to emulate Enrico's cool walk but step by step, he goes faster, finally breaking into a run.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT BUILDING - CORRIDOR - NIGHT**

Newman bursts onto his floor, completely out of breath. He takes a moment to calm down before knocking on the door - after all, no need for June to see how scared he was.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT**

Newman is in the bath. His hamster floats on the water in a plastic boat in front of him.

**NEWMAN**

*(in a whisper)*

So, you can also make money just by betting.

Nibbler twitches his whiskers. Newman pretends he's listening ... nods.

**NEWMAN**

I think a job is a better idea too.

Suddenly, a KNOCK at the door.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

June opens the front door ...

**JUNE**

Oh, hello. Is something wrong?

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT**

Newman, wrapped in a towel, listens at the door, Nibbler in his arms.

**JUNE (OS)**

I know, but I don't have the rest of it right now! --- I know what the lease says, but I don't have anyone I can ask ...

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - NEWMAN'S ROOM - NIGHT**

June tucks Newman in.

**NEWMAN**

Since this is all my fault, I think I should help. Like what if I got a job or something?

**JUNE**

Don't be ridiculous. I would never let you do that.

**NEWMAN**

But ...

**JUNE**

No! And why haven't you been playing with that train? Matter of fact, you know what we should do right now? We should pretend none of this ever happened, and play.

**NEWMAN**

But it's late.

**JUNE**

That never stopped us before.

She stands. Newman sits up - terrified.

**NEWMAN**

Not tonight, please? I don't feel so good.

**JUNE**

Alright. But I wanna see Croc riding that train pretty soon.

He lies back, turning away so she won't see his tears. She kisses him on the head - grateful he doesn't see her pained expression either.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - NEAR FENCE - DAY**

Newman and Rosa make a beeline for the pre-arranged spot where Esmeralda waits in the family STATION-WAGON - a beat-up number with plastic sheets where some windows should be.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. RICH NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY**

They arrive in the city's most affluent, established neighborhood - mansions galore. Esmeralda parks the car and they walk. Newman circles around - blown-away by the sights.

**NEWMAN**

Wow! Is this it?

**ROSA**

No. Around the corner.

**NEWMAN**

So why did we park here?

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. MRS. PETERSON'S HOUSE - BACK DOOR - DAY**

Esmeralda, Newman and Rosa round the back of a massive stone house and knock at the kitchen door. A maid in uniform, **MARIA**, opens the door.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. MRS. PETERSON'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY**

Maria leads them through the kitchen ...

**MARIA**

*(whispering)*

Mrs. Peterson is busy but she gonna come in a minute.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. MRS. PETERSON'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY**

Newman sits, hands folded neatly on his lap. Rosa and Esmeralda snoop - picking up this, that.

**MRS. PETERSON (OS)**

Fine, but you did said \$39.99--- Well, that's YOUR problem, deary. If I paid every 2.99 that got thrown in my face at the last minute, I'd be filing for bankruptcy! --- I am upset! --- As long as it doesn't happen again.

Rosa and Esmeralda sit as **MRS. PETERSON** makes her entrance. In her mid-fifties, she is perfected the way those with money to burn can be; every inch of the woman the product of hair stylists, manicurists, tailors, masseurs and so on. Funny to think she was arguing about pennies!

**MRS. PETERSON**

Hello, Esmie, Rosa ... you didn't park in front, did you?

They nod NO. She exchanges air kisses with Esmie, tousles Rosa's hair, then turns to Newman.

**MRS. PETERSON**

And you must be Newman ...

Newman leaps to a standing position, nearly tripping on his feet.

**NEWMAN**

I want to thank you SO MUCH for giving me this chance cause I really need to help my mom and ...

**MRS. PETERSON**

No need to explain! It's a tough world out there. The sooner you take charge, the better. Want to know a little secret?

**NEWMAN**

Sure ...

**MRS. PETERSON**

*(leaning in closer)*

I started making my own money when I was eight, same age as you. And look at me now!

She extends her hand for a handshake. Newman takes hold, and before you know, she's examining his hands.

**MRS. PETERSON**

Sensitive hands! That's a good sign. Very good!

**CUT TO:**

**INT. MRS. PETERSON'S HOUSE - STUDIO - DAY**

Newman, Esmeralda and Rosa follow Mrs. Peterson down to the basement studio. It's dark except for lamps directed at work areas, large magnifying glasses attached for better visibility.

A girl is already working, **SARAH** (10) - Maria, the maid's daughter. Rosa slips into a work seat beside her. Mrs. Peterson points out a chair for Newman and places some materials before him.

**MRS. PETERSON**

Alright then. I want you to attach this here ... like so ...

She demonstrates how to solder, then hands the soldering gun to Newman.

**MRS. PETERSON**

You try ...

Newman tries: Nothing happens. Mrs. Peterson takes the gun and shakes it.

**MRS. PETERSON**

Oh not again! ... Ah, here we go.

She hands it back and watches over his shoulder as he applies the alloy to the surface. In seconds, the metallic drop expands to a puddle. Mrs. Peterson grabs the soldering gun away ...

**MRS. PETERSON**

No, no, no ... we must be gentle. These are not just earrings, they're art! Never forget that! Like this.

She demonstrates, then lets him try again. This time, it's a good weld.

**MRS. PETERSON**

Perfect! And your mother does know about this, of course.

**ESMERALDA**

*(jumping in before Newman can)*

Oh, yes ...

**MRS. PETERSON**

Fine. I'll pay you four dollars a pair ...

**NEWMAN**

Four! But Rosa...

**MRS. PETERSON**

Rosa's a seasoned veteran! You don't expect me to pay for poor workmanship, do you?

**NEWMAN**

*(clearly disappointed)*

No ...

**MRS. PETERSON**

In fact, I'll let you in on another little secret. **In a good business, everybody profits.** So you earn some dough, and I get the best workmanship. Make sense?

**NEWMAN**

I guess.

**MRS. PETERSON**

Tell you what. If there's a noticeable improvement between your 5th and 1st pair, I'll raise it to five.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ESMERALDA'S CAR - DRIVING TO SCHOOL - DAY**

Esmeralda drives Newman back to school.

**ESMERALDA**

So, you're a lucky kid, eh?

**NEWMAN**

Yeah! And thanks Esmeralda, I mean it!

**ESMERALDA**

You don't need to thank me. But you do havta gimme ten percent, you know, like a commission kinda thing.

**NEWMAN**

What do you mean?

**ESMERALDA**

You get four bucks a pair, I get forty cents, see?

**NEWMAN**

That's not fair!

**ESMERALDA**

Hey! **Business is business!** And how are you gonna get to work and home after? You didn't think about that, eh?



**CUT TO:**

**EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - INSIDE CAR - DAY**

Newman is ready to cry. Esmeralda glances over at him ...

**ESMERALDA**

Okay, okay. How about you gimme a hundred bucks up front, and we forget the commission thing.

**NEWMAN**

A hundred!

**ESMERALDA**

Fifty then cause you're Rosa's friend, 'kay?

**NEWMAN**

I guess. But how will I keep my mom from finding out?

**ESMERALDA**

Bring the money tonight, an'I tell you. And bring extra cash, jus'in case.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM - DAY**

Newman and Tiger sit in a corner together, much to the surprise of the counselor.

**TIGER**

Hey, ya'know what they say - **Gotta spend money to make money.**

**NEWMAN**

Who says that?

**TIGER**

My dad, when he spends mom's money. But we're still waiting to see if the second part comes true.

**NEWMAN**

It's hopeless. I mean I don't even know if I have enough time! What if it works out to 5 pairs a day?

Tiger notices Olivia working at a computer. He nudges Newman - points.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ROSA'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN**

Newman gives Esmeralda \$50. She smirks and counts it, as Rosa, Juan and Enrico watch.

**ESMERALDA**

An'give Enrico and Juan ten each so they disappear.

**NEWMAN**

Ten each?

**ESMERALDA**

Well? Do you wan'this to work or no?

Newman sighs and forks over the bills. Juan grabs Enrico's ten.

**NEWMAN**

Hey! That's his ten!

Juan gives Enrico a couple of dollars back.

**JUAN**

Eh! **A man's gotta do what a man's gotta do**, an' he's the baby so me, I gotta make sure he does what you ask.

**NEWMAN**

Don't you guys do anything for free?

**JUAN**

Eh - **money talks**. Know what I'm sayin'?

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ROSA'S APARTMENT BUILDING - CORRIDOR - DAY**

The elevator opens and Newman and June step out.

**JUNE**

I will not risk your welfare to pay bills.

**NEWMAN**

Then you can start saving for college again.

They reach Rosa's door and Newman knocks.

**JUNE**

Hey - I'm not going to college. We might as well face facts.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ROSA'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - DAY**

June stands in the doorway to the kitchen and looks in.

**JUNE**

Looks nice. What do you think, Newman?

She turns to Newman, standing behind her. He leans in and looks ... instant shock!

**NEWMAN**

Oh Yeah! ... See? I told you.

Esmeralda stands proud in the middle of the kitchen - now the perfect homework environment with reading lamp, dictionary, pencils, and Rosa hard at work.

**ESMERALDA**

Since mama took Rosa out of the after-school, her marks are so much better, right baby?

Rosa nods.

**JUNE**

But can I impose on you like this. What if I pay something?

**ESMERALDA**

No, no, no. Reelly, iz my pleasure.

Rosa looks up and notices the time. She kicks Newman and points to the clock.

**JUNE**

But I don't feel right about it.

**ESMERALDA**

That's so sweet, but I couldn't - you a single mom an'all.

Newman takes June by the hand and starts to pull her toward the door.

**NEWMAN**

Maybe Esmeralda needs to think about it.

She dis-engages her hand from his.

**JUNE**

How about \$50 a month. That's nothing!

Newman points out the time to Esmeralda ...

**ESMERALDA**

Well, if it makes you feel better, okay.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. ROSA'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY**

June and Newman walk home.

**JUNE**

This may work after all.

**NEWMAN**

I told you.

**JUNE**

And it's so quiet!

**NEWMAN**

Yeah, eh? Rosa's family is real small and they're away a LOT.

WHOOOPS! Rosa's extended family steps off a BUS up ahead. Newman grabs June's hand and pulls her across the street. Juan sees them. June pulls her hand back a few paces later and stops ...

**JUNE**

Hey! What's with all this leading me around today?

Juan mumbles something to the gang. They all nod.

**JUNE**

So. You found a way to save money and now you're getting too big for your breeches, huh.

Juan sneaks his family past Newman and June - they all wink at the boy.

**NEWMAN**

Well, actually ...

He shows her how short his trousers are. She gives him an amused smirk and they walk on.

**JUNE**

Guess you'd better make yourself some out of Leggo then, cause that's where all the money went.

**NEWMAN**

Thanks for reminding me.

She gives him a mischevious look ...

**JUNE**

While you're at it, make us a dad too, so  
HE can pay the bills!

Newman looks up and smiles ...

**NEWMAN**

And if we get sick of'im, we can make  
another?

**JUNE**

Exactly.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. MRS. PETERSON'S HOUSE - STUDIO - DAY**

Sarah and Rosa are hard at work. Mrs. Peterson hovers over  
Newman's shoulder as he puts the finishing touches on an earring.

**MRS. PETERSON**

Good, now the filigree. Careful. Watch it!  
.... NO!

She lets out a loud 'poor-me' sigh and pats - more like hits! -  
Newman on top of his head.

**MRS. PETERSON**

I'm sure if you try harder, the second  
will be much better.

Newman nods. Once she's out of the room, he leans forward on the  
table, exhausted.

**ROSA**

Don't worry 'bout her, Newman. Just think  
o' her like a ...

**NEWMAN**

Rosa! Tiger, maybe. But Peterson's no fly!

**ROSA**

A nasty wasp then. But you got a net so  
who cares.

Newman smiles ... starting to relax. He lets out a buzzing sound.  
The girls join in.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - DAY**

Students line up to show Cramer their homework. Newman's turn ...

**MRS. CRAMER**

I see Newman will be joining Rosa at recess.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. MRS. PETERSON'S STUDIO - DAY**

Newman struggles with an earring.

**NEWMAN**

If we get too far behind, they'll suspect something.

**ROSA**

Me, I'm gonna pay Enrico to do my stuff.

Newman ruins what he's working.

**NEWMAN**

AH, not again ...

**SARAH**

Come on, I show you.

Newman watches as Sarah demonstrates how to cut a metal sheet into pieces ...

**NEWMAN**

Wow! Aren't you scared to go so close to the blade?

**SARAH**

No problem - just gotta pay close attention, that's all.

**NEWMAN**

How did you get so good, even with school and everything?

**SARAH**

School? I don't go to school.

Newman looks at Rosa in disbelief. Rosa just shrugs and continues working.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT**

Newman and June eat. The boy is so tired, he barely notices his turtle climbing onto his plate.

**JUNE**

Don't let'im do that, honey.

Newman moves the turtle away ...

**JUNE**

So how's the homework deal at Rosa's working out?

**NEWMAN**

Great!

**JUNE**

I'm glad. Cause school's really important.

**NEWMAN**

Why? I mean it's not like I'm going to college.

**JUNE**

What do you mean, not going to college.

**NEWMAN**

Well, you said we should face facts.

**JUNE**

I should face facts. I have a child to support and that's that.

**NEWMAN**

So because of me, your life is over?

He gets up and goes to get a carton of juice from the fridge.

**JUNE**

What a ridiculous thing to say!

June follows - taking another carton.

**NEWMAN**

And anyway, some kids don't even go to school.

Newman drinks right from the carton ...

**JUNE**

That's against the law. And don't drink from that!

Newman just looks at her and waits. Without thinking, she does the same thing.

**NEWMAN**

Why not?

Caught. She pulls it away from her lips.

**JUNE**

Oh. Well, we shouldn't. What if we have company?

**NEWMAN**

June? We NEVER have company.

**JUNE**

We better swear not to do it at someone else's house then.

They're about to link pinkies when there's a KNOCK at the door. June goes to answer while Newman puts the juice cartons back in the fridge.

**JUNE (OS)**

But we agreed I'd pay next week ---  
Bounced!?

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

June does math on the coffee table. Newman, in his pyjamas, comes up behind her ...

**NEWMAN**

Anything wrong?

June looks at him - eyes full of fear.

**JUNE**

No. The landlord's just a little mad cause I made a mistake counting. NOW you see why school is so important?

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - NEWMAN'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Newman is in bed, doing his homework with a flashlight. He falls asleep in the middle of it.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. MRS. PETERSON'S HOUSE - STUDIO - DAY**

Mrs. Peterson inspects Newman's work through a magnifying glass, then looks up, smiling.

**MRS. PETERSON**

You'll be happy to know that starting tomorrow, it's \$5 a pair!



**CUT TO:**

**INT. ESMERALDA'S CAR - DRIVING HOME - NIGHT**

Esmeralda drives Rosa and Newman home. Newman stares out the window. Rosa watches him.

**ROSA**

Okay. You're gettin' full pay, so que passa?

**NEWMAN**

The landlord's kinda mad at my mom.

**ROSA**

Mad. Why?

**NEWMAN**

I dunno. She did her math wrong and something bounced.

**ESMERALDA**

Eh. You gotta be careful 'bout that cause landlords can throw you out on the street if you don't pay the rent.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT**

June washes the dishes after supper, Newman dries them ...

**NEWMAN**

Esmeralda says the landlord can throw us out of our house!

**JUNE**

Not to worry - I took care of it. Actually, that's what I need to talk to you about.

She sits and invites him to sit beside her.

**JUNE**

Listen, honey. I talked to the manager at the supermarket today, and he agreed to give me three night shifts on top of my day schedule, which means I'll be able to pay the landlord. And, I can start tonight! Isn't that great?

**NEWMAN**

Wow! So how long do you have to work?

**JUNE**

Not that long. Just from 8 to 1.

**NEWMAN**

Okay. And who's gonna be here while you're gone?

**JUNE**

That's the problem ...

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

June stands, arms crossed, in the middle of the living room. Newman, in pajamas, faces her.

**JUNE**

Intruder - fire-escape!

Newman rushes to the kitchen.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT**

Newman shakes a MOBILE made of kitchen utensils hanging in front of the fire-escape.

**NEWMAN**

Early warning system, then...

He grabs a can of oven cleaner and a large skillet waiting on the floor.

**NEWMAN**

Blindman's surprise.

He demonstrates his spray and swing technique.

**JUNE**

Perfect. Intruder at front door!

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Newman sprays oven cleaner through the mail slot.

**NEWMAN**

First ... peek-a-boo, joke's on you. But if Mr. Intruder gets to second base, it's blind-man's ballet ...

Newman digs in his pocket and takes out a handful of marbles. He drops them, then mimes how someone blinded by oven cleaner would slip and slide when stepping on them.

**JUNE**

And what's the very, very first thing?

**NEWMAN**

9-1-1! But are the marbles too much?

**JUNE**

Are you kidding? Just don't slip on them,  
'kay?

June crouches and hugs Newman extra tight, then kisses him all over, making him giggle.

**NEWMAN**

Okay, okay, STOP!

She looks him straight in the eye.

**JUNE**

You're sure about this?

**NEWMAN**

Come on, June! I'm not a baby.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - NEWMAN'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Newman whistles, all nonchalant, but his eyes dart back and forth - registering any and every sound. He arranges stuffed animals around his pillow, brings his pets as close as possible, then lies down and closes his eyes.

A LOUD CREAK! Newman's eyes flash open. Shadows transform into sinister monsters. He leaps out of bed and turns more LIGHTS on, then lies back down, closes his eyes and sighs.

Suddenly, a loud BANG! Newman flies out of bed!

**CUT TO:**

**INT. SUPERMARKET - JUNE'S CASH - NIGHT**

June packs the last purchase of an unsavory **SHOPPER** - I mean who buys groceries at midnight? She hands over the bag when suddenly, arms grab her around the waist from behind. She spins around: It's Newman - in slippers, pajamas and jacket, elephant tears in his eyes ...

**JUNE**

What are you doing here?

She crouches down to his level.

**NEWMAN**

Please don't be mad!

She wipes the tears from his eyes.

**JUNE**

I'm not mad! Bet you had a nightmare, huh.

He nods, sniffing. But June notices **DIRK** (26) - a legend-in-his-own-mind who thinks he's a Forbes corporate discovery rather than the supermarket manager he truly is. But cute, nonetheless.

**JUNE**

Oh-oh!

June spins around, hiding Newman behind her back. She tracks Dirk with her eyes and smiles, assuming stilted postures to keep Newman out of sight. Dirk notices her eyes on him and stops ...

**DIRK**

Yes?

**JUNE**

Oh ... was I staring? Gee! I am SO embarrassed!

She bats her eyes. He puffs up his chest and adjusts his tie. Is this the start of a role conflict?

**DIRK**

No need for that. But, umm, I do need to get back to work ...

**JUNE**

I understand completely.

He walks off - a few inches taller, giving her a parting glance before disappearing in his office.

June uses grocery BAGS, rolls of PAPER TOWEL and her COAT to make a spot for Newman to lie down under her cash. He settles down and starts to doze off.

**JUNE**

Did you know you took your very first steps in a supermarket just like this, honey?

**NEWMAN**

I KNOW. Now be quiet.

**JUNE**

Okay, okay, sorry ... (beat) ... I love you, sweetie

**NEWMAN**

I love you too, now GOOD-NIGHT!

June rings up the groceries a **SECOND SHOPPER** is piling in front of her cash. She notices Newman is uncovered. Pretending to need more plastic bags, she leans down to cover him.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - DAY**

Newman faces Mrs. Cramer at her desk. The sound of KIDS PLAYING outside is hard to ignore.

**MRS. CRAMER**

I don't know what to say, Newman. Rosa was falling behind, but she pulled through. But I see no improvement here at all.

**NEWMAN**

Just give me another chance. I'll do better, I promise.

**MRS. CRAMER**

Well. This is DEFINITELY your last chance!

**CUT TO:**

**INT. MRS. PETERSON'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY**

Newman and Rosa sit on the couch facing Mrs. Peterson who is beaming like a Cheshire cat.

**MRS. PETERSON**

The award for the most productive part-timer goes to ... Newman! \$220 in pay AND a \$2 bonus!

Newman takes his envelope, sits back down and starts counting. Mrs. Peterson hands Rosa her pay, then notices Newman counting. She's ready for him when he looks up.

**MRS. PETERSON**

And you are short ...?

**NEWMAN**

Twenty ...

She hands him another envelope.

**MRS. PETERSON**

Precisely. A smart business person never takes anything for granted! And keep up the good work!

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ESMERALDA'S CAR - DRIVING - NIGHT**

They drive through downtown, passing a TOY-STORE.

**NEWMAN**

Esmeralda! Can you stop here? It'll only take a minute.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

June lies back on the couch, eyes closed even though the TV is on. She opens her eyes for a second, realizing Newman's not there.

**JUNE**

Newman? Watch'a doing?

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - NEWMAN'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Newman hurries to assemble a Leggo train car using a small set he got - an attachment for the train set he sold. He stashes the box inside the original train box.

**NEWMAN**

Coming!

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Newman places a Leggo train car on the coffee table before her.

**NEWMAN**

Look!

June opens her eyes.

**JUNE**

You started on your train! Thank you.

**NEWMAN**

No. Thank YOU.

**JUNE**

No, seeing you happy, makes me happy, so  
thank YOU!

He smiles. June rubs her feet, grimacing.

**JUNE**

Gee - I'll never understand why they don't  
allow cashiers to sit, I mean what's the  
big deal?

**NEWMAN**

Foot problems, eh. Well, Dr. Newman can  
take care of that!

Newman hauls a pail of hot water from the bathroom to the foot of  
the couch.

**NEWMAN**

Ma'am? Park your feet right there.

**JUNE**

Ah, sweetie, thank you!

She puts her feet in and sighs. Newman sits beside her - smug as a  
bug.

**JUNE**

You know baby, THIS is how to unwind on a  
girl's night off!

**NEWMAN**

Exactly.

**JUNE**

Come on - put yours in too ...

She puts her arm around him and before you know, the two are  
asleep - their feet still in the water

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL YARD - DAY**

Olivia wanders around filming KIDS at recess. She approaches  
Newman and Tiger ...

**OLIVIA**

Hey - did you guys see my new camera?

Newman quickly hides something in his jacket.

**NEWMAN**

It's great, now can you leave us alone,  
please?

**OLIVIA**

Gee, someone's in a bad mood.

She walks away. Newman pulls the object out again and gives it to Tiger - a cell-phone.

**TIGER**

It looks so REAL!

**NEWMAN**

Rosa's brothers only use the best. So will you do it?

**TIGER**

I don't know ...

**NEWMAN**

Please, Tiger. My life depends on it.

**TIGER**

Okay, okay, don't get all dramatic already ...

**CUT TO:**

**INT. MRS. PETERSON'S HOUSE - STUDIO - DAY**

Newman is so concentrated on his work, he hardly notices Mrs. Peterson peering over his head.

**MRS. PETERSON**

WHAT are you doing?

Startled, he burns his finger with the soldering gun. Mrs. Peterson grabs what he's working on.

**NEWMAN**

It looks almost the same and is easier to make so I thought ...

**MRS. PETERSON**

Did I say I was paying you to think?

She examines the earring. She likes it.

**MRS. PETERSON**

Cuts down on materials too. Clever like thing, aren't you.

She gives him a sly look and fluffs up his hair affectionately.

**NEWMAN**

So you're not mad?



**MRS. PETERSON**

About saving on time AND expenses? Here's a little tip for you, Newman: **When facing the unexpected, see what there is to gain.** Only smart people do that!

**NEWMAN**

You know, Mrs. Peterson, I was thinking.

She arches her eyebrow as she glances at him ...

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - NEWMAN'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Newman hides a soldering gun and assorted materials under his bed.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT**

June is setting the temperature on the stove when Newman comes in.

**NEWMAN**

What's for dinner?

**JUNE**

That's the thing. One of the girls got sick and I have to replace her, so I just came home to get something going for you. You are to take this out in exactly 30 minutes.

**NEWMAN**

Yeah, No problem.

She hands him a MINI-FIRE-EXTINGUISHER. He rolls his eyes.

**NEWMAN**

I won't forget, geez.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Newman sets up shop on the living room floor with his turtle, hamster and budgie for company.

**NEWMAN**

Okay, my little friends! Watch and observe.

Croc edges towards the soldering gun. Newman grabs the turtle away ...

**NEWMAN**

No one touches this. Or you're gonna be in big, BIG trouble! Matter of fact, everybody off the factory floor. Yes, you!

He reaches to gather up his pets when suddenly, the SMOKE DETECTOR goes off!

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT**

Newman puts his flaming dinner out with the fire-extinguisher. Then he steps up on the table and takes the smoke detector off the ceiling. He hits it - still blaring!

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Newman buries the smoke detector under a pillow. It stops. But now someone is BANGING on the door. He grabs a chair and looks through the eye-hole in the door ...

Mrs. Krupnik! He yells to her through the door ...

**NEWMAN**

It's okay! My mom took care of it!

**ANGLE OUTSIDE THE DOOR**

Mrs. Krupnick glares at the eye-hole and knocks again - harder. Moments later, the door opens, revealing Newman, smiling like an angel.

**NEWMAN**

Everything's fine Mrs. Krupnick, really.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Mrs. Krupnick pushes her way in.

**MRS. KRUPNIK**

Let me speak to mummy just to make sure.

**NEWMAN**

But she's in the shower.

Indeed, STEAM billows out of the bathroom. Her eyes scan the apartment. She doesn't like what she sees - a hamster and turtle eating salad from a plate on the coffee table, a budgie leaving droppings everywhere, junk all over the place.

**MRS. KRUPNIK**

You tell mummy I am keeping my eye on her.

Newman shuts the door and leans against it, relieved.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - DAY**

Mrs. Cramer hands back TESTS. She stops at Newman's desk - his has a big 'F' on top.

**MRS. CRAMER**

What about your promise?

**NEWMAN**

I don't get it, I mean I AM doing my homework!

**MRS. CRAMER**

Surprising, isn't it.

Newman and Tiger exchange a look as Cramer walks away.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - DAY**

Mrs. Cramer looks through the window into the yard. The first snow of the year starts to coat the bare trees. She sees Newman make a mad dash towards a car - not even wearing his jacket.

She opens Newman's desk - it's a complete mess in there.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM - DAY**

Tiger signs Newman's name to a copy of the homework he just made.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - DAY**

Tiger charges into the classroom only to crash into Mrs. Cramer.

**TIGER**

I'm sorry!

She bends to pick up the papers he dropped. He rushes to intercept  
...

**TIGER**

It's okay, I got it.

Too late - Cramer sees Newman's name on the pages of homework.

**MRS. CRAMER**

Let's have a little chat, Tiger, shall we?

**CUT TO:**

**INT. MRS. PETERSON'S HOUSE - STUDIO - DAY**

Sarah rubs her eyes, Rosa her neck. Newman shakes his hand - it's cramping. Mrs. Peterson, who works alongside the crew, takes note and frowns. Newman cuts metal into pieces. He's clumsy on account of being tired and cuts himself ...

**NEWMAN**

Oww ...

Sarah throws him a box of Band-aids.

**MRS. PETERSON**

Okay. Let's all leave that *poor-me* routine outside, cause with Christmas around the corner, we've got to boogie!

Everyone groans.

**MRS. PETERSON**

I have to organize the Season's Launch too. Is anyone going to help me? No. Am I complaining?

Newman sighs and leans back into his work.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - CAFETERIA - DAY**

Newman barely eats his lunch - he's wants to know what Cramer is doing and Tiger is his spy ...

**TIGER**

Now she's sitting down... now she's opening her yogurt ...

**NEWMAN**

(*angry*)

Just tell me if she's coming HERE, Tiger!

Tiger glares back at Newman ...

**TIGER**

Look - I already said I was sorry. And it's not my fault so don't yell! And anyways, you're not the only one with problems. My dad showed up and mom won't let'im move back in, and when I say I want'im to, she says I'm taking his side which means I must not love her so ...

**NEWMAN**

Okay, I'm sorry! So spare me the details already. What's Cramer doing now?

Tiger looks ...

**TIGER**

She's gone!

**NEWMAN**

What do you mean?

Newman looks: Cramer's not there! That's because she's right here - standing next to him.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY**

Newman sits looking around the office. Mr. Hurst and Mrs. Cramer watch him intently.

**MRS. CRAMER**

Mr. Hurst isn't angry, Newman. He's just a little worried.

**MR. HURST**

Mrs. Cramer's right, son. We thought maybe there was something you wanted to tell us.

**NEWMAN**

Fine! I MADE Tiger do it! I hate homework. So if you wanna punish anyone, punish me!

**MRS. CRAMER**

Does your mommy get angry a lot, Newman?

Newman looks confused.

**NEWMAN**

No ...

They glance at his hands - the Band-Aids and burns. He notices and sits on them.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - DAY**

Newman is packing his school bag when Mrs. Cramer comes over and gives him an envelope.

**MRS. CRAMER**

I want you to give this to your mother -  
it's very important.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - PLAYGROUND - DAY**

Newman dashes towards Esmeralda's car, but not without noticing Tiger and his dad, **ACE** (40) - a country & western type with a big grin and a heap of attitude. Ace gives Tiger a bear hug.

Newman looks away. He sees a garbage can and throws the envelope Mrs. Cramer gave him in.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. MRS. PETERSON'S HOUSE - STUDIO - DAY**

Newman, Rosa and Sarah are hard at work.

**ROSA**

Take her out for dinner - girls love that!

**NEWMAN**

But how will I explain the money?

**SARAH**

Say you won a contest or something.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT**

June rushes around, cleaning up after supper. Newman trails behind her, helping.

**NEWMAN**

Do you realize what Thursday is?

**JUNE**

The day before Friday?

**NEWMAN**

NO. Your birthday!

**JUNE**

Oh yeah ...

**NEWMAN**

Well? There's this radio contest where you can win a dinner-for-two!

**JUNE**

That's nice, but we're not very lucky, are we?

She throws on her coat and gives him a peck on the cheek.

**NEWMAN**

Well, maybe once in a while, the unlucky get lucky!

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Newman works on a pair of earrings. Daisy (the budgie) flies by, grabs one and lifts it.

**NEWMAN**

You like it Daisy? It's my design. But you can't have it, sorry.

He pulls at the earring. Unable to maintain a beak hold, she releases it and flies off with a screech.

**NEWMAN**

Gee! Maybe if you acted a little nicer, I'd make you one.

He yawns and checks the time - past midnight.

**NEWMAN**

If I ever finish these ...

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - DAY**

Mrs. Cramer, arms crossed, watches as Newman takes everything out of his knap-sack.

**NEWMAN**

My mom's note is in here, really. Unless Nibbler got in my bag! He's my hamster ...

Cramer shakes her head and walks away.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. MRS. PETERSON'S HOUSE - STUDIO - DAY**

Newman, Sarah and Rosa are hard at work ...

**SARAH**

They can TOO. They took a friend of my mom's kids away!

**NEWMAN**

They'd never do that to me, I mean why?

**SARAH**

Well, you are working here and she doesn't even know, right?

Suddenly, Mrs. Peterson bursts in.

**MRS. PETERSON**

Santa's here, little elves! What's new?

Newman shoves the earrings he was working on onto his lap, but one falls to the floor just as Mrs. Peterson's rounds bring her to his workstation.

**MRS. PETERSON**

Someone is not being careful around here!

She's about to place the earring back in Newman's eager little hand, when she pulls it back.

**MRS. PETERSON**

Wait a minute ...

She examines it.

**MRS. PETERSON**

Alright. Where's the other one?

Newman just looks at her - lost.

**MRS. PETERSON**

Don't tell me. You just made a prototype. Well, I'll tell you what my dear, if the Museum likes it, I'll add it to my collection.

She takes off with the earring, leaving Newman near tears.

**ROSA**

This is good, Newman!

**SARAH**

Yes! Now maybe you can make MORE money!

**NEWMAN**

Yeah, but June's birthday is tomorrow!



**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - NEWMAN'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Yawning, Newman wraps June's earrings, hides them under his pillow, and climbs in bed just as June gets home.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY**

Newman whispers in June's ear ...

**NEWMAN**

Happy Birthday to you ... Happy birthday to you ...

**JUNE**

*(groggy)*

Newman?

He holds his tiny present in front of her, beaming with pride.

**JUNE**

Ah, honey! You made something for me!

But when she sees what's inside the box, she's shocked.

**JUNE**

Newman! They're beautiful! But how? I mean you didn't make these, so where did you get them? With what?

**NEWMAN**

At the school bazaar, with change I found around the house. Moms are always donating stuff. Guess I got lucky!

She hugs him.

**JUNE**

Guess you did, cause this is the most beautiful thing I ever got in my life!

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CORRIDOR - PAY PHONE - DAY**

Newman, Tiger and Rosa crowd around a pay phone. Tiger practices lowering his voice before the other party answers ...

**NEWMAN**

Come on, you can go lower than that. Or I'll do it myself!

**TIGER**

Okay already ... Hello ... Oh, Hello,  
Luigi's Pasta Palace? --- I'd like to make  
a reservation for two --- Lovejoy ---  
Seven's good. Oh, and are you the manager?  
--- Guido --- Swell. Thanks, doll!

Rosa stares at Tiger as he hangs up ...

**ROSA**

Doll?

**TIGER**

My dad always says that. Oh, and I got the  
name of the manager too. My dad says you  
should always know the name of the manager  
cause that puts you in charge or  
something.

**NEWMAN**

If he's so in charge, how come he's not  
allowed back home?

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

June walks in to find Newman, dressed in his finest, waiting with  
flowers in hand.

**NEWMAN**

I told you we'd get lucky!

**JUNE**

Lucky, how?

**NEWMAN**

The radio contest! Dinner-for-two,  
remember?

**JUNE**

Really? Oh my God!

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - NEWMAN'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Newman takes some money from the football shoes while June is  
dressing.

**JUNE (OS)**  
*(sing-song)*

I'm ready!

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

June wears simple clothes but with Newman's earrings on, she looks stunning! Newman grins.

**NEWMAN**

Mama mia!

She grabs Newman and pretends to tango with him.

**JUNE**

*(putting on an accent)*

Ma'be ve dance, too.

They giggle as they tango out the door, both holding the stem of a flower between their teeth.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. ITALIAN RESTAURANT - NIGHT**

Newman and June stand in front of the restaurant, their mouths gaping.

**NEWMAN & JUNE**

Mama mia!

June notices a sign that announces, *We make our own pasta!*

**JUNE**

Look!

**NEWMAN**

Is that good?

**JUNE**

Oh yeah! Means this is a REALLY expensive restaurant!

**NEWMAN**

It does?

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ITALIAN RESTAURANT - DINING AREA - NIGHT**

June and Newman, seated at their table, explore the silverware.

**JUNE**

Look at all these forks and spoons and knives!

**NEWMAN**

I know! I wonder what they're for.

Their waitress, **MARIA** (25) - Italian DNA, but modern attitude all the way - ambles over to their table.

**MARIA**

Buona sera (*good evening*)

**NEWMAN**

Hi, 'doll'.

She looks at him - not quite believing it - then glances at June. But mom is busy checking out the tablecloth now.

**NEWMAN**

Could you please tell Guido we're here?

**MARIA**

You want me, to tell Guido, the manager, you're here?

**NEWMAN**

Exactly.

**ANGLE ON DOOR TO KITCHEN**

Maria comes out of the kitchen, laughing her head off, followed by **GUIDO** (30) - the manager, but more like the quintessential Latin lover - and points to Newman's table.

**ANGLE ON DINING AREA**

Guido arrives at their table and addresses the adult, June - I mean who wouldn't?

**GUIDO**

Good'a evening. I understand you wanted to see'a me?

**NEWMAN**

Yes. But I need to talk to you alone.

**GUIDO**

YOU want to'a talk to me?

He looks at June.

**JUNE**

We won the contest!

With a wan smile, Guido looks back at Newman - hardly expecting to see a \$20 under the table.

**GUIDO**

And you're a'right. A gentle a'man never make it the lady deal with the liddle details. Come. We talk man-to-man.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ITALIAN RESTAURANT - KITCHEN - NIGHT**

**AUGUSTO** (50), the cook, watches from behind his pots as Guido bears down on Newman.

**GUIDO**

What radio contest?

**NEWMAN**

The one I made up, okay? Here, you already got one twenty, now here's forty for the food.

Guido takes the cash and counts.

**NEWMAN**

Oh, and I want a cake with *"Happy Birthday to the best artist in the world!"* on it!

**AUGUSTO**

We can't a fit that'a many letters on one'a cake!

**GUIDO**

Be inventive!

Guido hurries out, leaving Newman to follow. But before he leaves, he notices Augusto putting packaged spaghetti in a pot of water.

**NEWMAN**

And I want the expensive pasta - the one you make yourself.

**AUGUSTO**

We don't make it the pasta! Is'a too much a trouble. *Capisce?*

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ITALIAN RESTAURANT - DINING AREA - NIGHT**

Newman butters some bread and gives it June. Other **DINERS** watch the two of them - touched. June sees Maria bring a bottle of wine to another table ...

**JUNE**

That's so romantic. Wonder if I'll ever meet a man who'll take me to a restaurant like this and order a WHOLE bottle of wine!

**ANGLE NEAR MARIA'S WORK STATION**

Newman taps Maria on the arm.

**WAITRESS**

What. Wanna see the owner this time?

**NEWMAN**

No. But that bottle of wine the other table got? I want one just like that for my mom - it's her birthday, you know.

**WAITRESS**

Oh, you do, do ya? Lemme check into it. But hey, kid. You should really drop that doll thing - truly stale, trust me.

**NEWMAN**

Thanks for the tip.

**WAITRESS**

Pleasure ...

**ANGLE ON NEWMAN AND JUNE'S TABLE**

Guido ambles over.

**GUIDO**

I am'a sorry, but the radio contest does'a no includ'a the vino.

**NEWMAN**

But how can my mom enjoy the wonderful homemade pasta I saw you making in the kitchen without wine? I bet a lot of expensive restaurants say they make their own but don't.

*(to June)*

Wanna go see how they make it, mom?

**JUNE**

OH, yes!

Newman throws Guido a certain 'look'. He sizes up the kid and decides to play along.

**GUIDO**

No, no. Cook already finish makin'it the pasta for tonight. But you're'a right ... fresh pasta without red vino, eh?

With the snap of a finger and a feigned dose of fear and embarrassment, the wine is on the way. Newman beams from ear to ear, triumphant ...

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ITALIAN RESTAURANT - KITCHEN - NIGHT**

Guido, Augusto and Maria share a laugh in the kitchen when Newman bursts in.

**NEWMAN**

Where's the cake?

They swallow their chuckles ...

**GUIDO**

The cake is'a coming!

**AUGUSTO**

And is'a perfect!

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ITALIAN RESTAURANT - DINING AREA - NIGHT**

The bottle of wine's empty and June's in stitches. Newman sees the cake headed their way.

**NEWMAN**

June. Look...!

Instead of writing the message, Augusto, Guido and Maria sing-struggling to cram the words in.

**GUIDO, AUGUSTO & MARIA**

Happy Birthday, to *the-best-artist-in-the-world*, Happy birthday, to *the-best-artist-in-the-world* ...

**JUNE**

Awwww ... do ya reely tink so?

Newman looks a little lost at this point. They all help out: Augusto cuts the cake, Maria keeps June from falling face down in it, and Guido tries to keep the other customers from staring.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ITALIAN RESTAURANT - ENTRANCE AREA - NIGHT**

Newman helps June get her coat on. She's busy singing "Best artist in the world" over and over, and clutching the empty bottle of wine. Guido tries to relieve her of it.

**GUIDO**

Here, Madame, let me.

**JUNE**

Oh, no, no, no, no, no! Theez izz my moo-men-toe!

Guido leans down to Newman ...

**GUIDO**

Eh - how are you goin' home, kid?

**NEWMAN**

By bus, why?

**GUIDO**

You crazy? No way you get you mama home thata way!

**NEWMAN**

I gave YOU all the money I had!

Guido gives him a twenty ...

**GUIDO**

You take it the taxi. And take'a good care of that mama. She's a pretty special to have a kid like'a you ... *capisce?*

He gives Newman's cheek an Italian pinch ... OWWW!

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - CORRIDOR - NIGHT**

Newman, still rubbing his cheek, helps June down the hall. She's still clutching the empty wine bottle - laughing and tripping along the way. Mrs. Krupnick opens her door and leans out.

**JUNE**

Hewoo ...

Mrs. Krupnick scowls and shakes her finger at June - like parents would do to children in days gone by - and slams the door.



**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT**

Newman holds a glass of water ready while June brushes her teeth - talking at the same time ...

**JUNE**

*(hardly understandable)*

I'm sooo sowwy I'mm wourkin' soo much ...  
but I gotta be both the moum and the dawd,  
ya know ...

**NEWMAN**

You don't have to apologize ... here ...

She rinses, missing the sink as she spits out, and forgets to switch off the faucet - Newman does.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Newman tucks June in her hide-a-bed.

**JUNE**

You aww suchha good kid! I luuve yuu soooo  
mushh ... Lezz sleep ere juzz the two of  
us like ol'times, 'kay?

**NEWMAN**

Okay. I'll just get my pajamas.

Newman tiptoes away, freezes, then leans back to look: Sure enough, she's fast asleep, snoring.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - NEWMAN'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Newman packs the earrings he made at home in a plastic bag, then calculates how much he will get for them on a sheet of paper crammed full of notes and calculations.

**NEWMAN**

YES!

He puts the paper away and jumps in bed, almost forgetting how tired he is.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY**

June gets up before Newman for the first time in ages. She frowns and grabs her head ...

**JUNE**

*(noticing the wine bottle)*

Oh, right.

Then she smiles, remembering the evening.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - NEWMAN'S ROOM - NIGHT**

June straightens up in Newman's room. The noise wakes him up. She's about to pick some things up from the floor, when Newman leaps out of bed to stop her ...

**NEWMAN**

I don't think so. This is **my** room; I'll clean it.

**JUNE**

Yes, sir!

Newman kicks the soldering gun wire further under the bed when June's not looking.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - ELEVATOR - DAY**

Newman, his knap-sack on his back, holds a plastic bag full of earrings in his hand. He is so tired he leans back against the wall, eyes closed. June reaches for the bag ... Newman's eyes fly open.

**NEWMAN**

No; I got it.

**JUNE**

Put it in your back-pack at least ...

**NEWMAN**

I will. Later ...

**CUT TO:**

**INT. CITY BUS - DAY**

June and Newman ride a CROWDED BUS - at least they're lucky to have a seat.

**NEWMAN**

If you think last night was special, wait till Christmas!

She puts her arm around him.

**JUNE**

Newman. You're the best present in the world and I should've never given up on us like that.

Newman reaches over and hugs her. He closes his eyes and sighs deeply. Before you know, he's asleep and the plastic bag handle slips out of his grasp.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - LOCKER ROOM - DAY**

Newman hangs his things on his hook - only then realizing he lost the bag full of earrings. He grabs Rosa and pulls her to the back of the locker room.

**NEWMAN**

I forget everything I made at home on the bus!

**ROSA**

Madre mia! You gotta find it!

**CUT TO:**

**INT. BUS - CITY STREETS - DAY**

Newman sits near the **DRIVER** ...

**NEWMAN**

Sir? I lost something on a bus ...

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. GATE TO BUS DEPOT - DAY**

A deserted area of town. Newman walks to the gate of the bus depot. He stops ...

**NEWMAN**

Please God, let them still be there!

He breaks down crying, then peps himself up aloud ...

**NEWMAN**

Don't wimp out on me, Newman! Be a MAN!

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. BUS DEPOT - YARD - DAY**

Newman looks for buses with the number of his route marked on them. But all the numbers have been cleared. A **CLEANER** spots him...

**CLEANER**

Hey! Aren't you supposed to be at school, kid?

**CUT TO:**

**INT. BUS DEPOT - LOST & FOUND - DAY**

The cleaner shows Newman the things he found on the buses from his route.

**NEWMAN**

That's it?

**CLEANER**

Yeah, aside from the garbage, but that's gone by now.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. DESERTED PART OF TOWN - DAY**

Newman waits at a bus stop, alone and disheartened. The wind picks up. Snow starts falling. He pulls his collar up around his bare ears to keep out the cold.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. SUPERMARKET - MANAGER'S CUBICLE - DAY**

Dirk stares intently at June, sitting across from him.

**DIRK**

First you wanna work more, now you wanna work less. How am I supposed to manage that?

She bats her eyes at him.

**JUNE**

Please, Dirk! This is so important to me ...

**DIRK**

Well ... let me see what I can do.

She jumps towards him and grabs his hand, holding it tight ...

**JUNE**

Oh thank you, thank you!

**DIRK**

Okay. Hey, you know, maybe we could ...

But she's already run out of the office ...

**DIRK**

June?

**CUT TO:**

**INT. BUS - DOWNTOWN - DAY**

Newman wipes away a tear, trying to keep other **PASSENGERS** from seeing he's crying. An **ARAB FAMILY** boards - the father and mother herd their children to safety, holding them close.

Newman looks out the window. A group of **CHRISTMAS CAROLERS** sings a lively "Jingle Bells" A **MOTHER** and **SON** delight at a display of toys in a **STORE WINDOW**.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. MRS. PETERSON'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY**

Mrs. Peterson pats a **STOOL** for Newman to sit and places a **CUP** of hot chocolate before him.

**MRS. PETERSON**

Whatever happened can't be as bad as you think. Would I count on you if I had any worries? Hmm? So spill the beans.

**NEWMAN**

I ... I ... I forget the stuff I did at home ...

**MRS. PETERSON**

Is that all? Oh, aren't you precious. Now what would I do without such a responsible little man on my side, hmm?

She pats him on the head. He gives her the best smile he can muster.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. MRS. PETERSON'S HOUSE - STUDIO - DAY**

Rosa and Sarah work while Newman scavenges and puts any materials he can find in his bag.

**ROSA**

*(to Sarah in a whisper)*

I can't believe he didn't tell her!

**SARAH**

*(whispering back)*

Oh. And you would?

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

June prepares to walk out the door.

**JUNE**

After Dirk gets a replacement, no more moonlighting and back to fun at the Lovejoy mansion.

**NEWMAN**

Uh huh.

**JUNE**

Don't you worry. I'll get a smile on that face in no time.

She gives him a tickle. He laughs - weakly.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - NEWMAN'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Newman takes inventory of the materials he scavenged from Mrs. Peterson's.

**NEWMAN**

It's hopeless ...

Suddenly, a KNOCK at the door.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Newman looks through the eye-hole: Mrs. Cramer! He backs out of sight and freezes till he hears her walk away ...

Newman spies as Cramer and Krupnik talk, both glancing back at the door to June's apartment.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. WINTERY PARK - DAY**

It's the school's traditional SNOW FUN day, when **FAMILY MEMBERS** join their **KIDS** and **TEACHERS** for a day of skating and tobogganing. Everyone has an adult with them except Newman - June had to work. And Newman is the only one who seems disinterested in having fun.

Newman notices Mrs. Cramer walking in his direction. He spins around and heads for the tobogganing hill, only to come face to face with Tiger and Ace.

**TIGER**

Hey, Newman. I want you to meet my dad.

**NEWMAN**

Hey ...

**ACE**

You coming up, too?

**NEWMAN**

No. I don't have a sled.

**TIGER**

You can use ours!

**ACE**

Hey, how about I go down with ya one time.

**TIGER**

But dad ...

**NEWMAN**

It's okay, really.

Newman catches sight of Cramer approaching ...

**NEWMAN**

But if you insist ...

Tiger scowls - he wasn't insisting, that's for sure.

**TOP OF HILL**

Ace and Newman wait their turn.

**ACE**

Tiger's told me a heap abou'cha, Newman.

**NEWMAN**

I'm glad.

It's their turn - Ace sets the sled down and Newman climbs on in front.

**ACE**

I know you've been havin' some problems.  
And I sure know it ain't easy for a guy to  
get back on'is feet after he messes up.

**NEWMAN**

I messed up?

Ace prepares to sit down behind Newman ...

**ACE**

Come on ... losing your cool like that?  
Makin' your mom havta pay all that money?

**NEWMAN**

Well - maybe if YOU hadn't messed up and  
got kicked out, Tiger wouldn't have been  
all messed up, and I wouldn't have messed  
up, and my mom wouldn't get messed up!

Ace is still trying to fit his feet on the sled ...

**ACE**

Look. I was just tryin' to be nice. I know  
it's gotta be hard not havin' a man around  
to talk about stuff ...

Newman shoves off before Ace has fully settled on the sled ...

**NEWMAN**

Actually, me and Tiger, we got each other.

The sled speeds up but Ace stays behind ...

**BOTTOM OF HILL**

Newman reaches the bottom of the hill - alone. Tiger comes running  
up ...

**TIGER**

Where's my dad?

Newman just points behind himself, without looking even looking.

**ANGLE ON SLOPE**

Ace slides down the whole hill on his rear end - much to the  
amusement of everyone he passes.



**CUT TO:**

**INT. MRS. PETERSON'S HOUSE - STUDIO - DAY**

Newman, Rosa and Sarah are hard at work. Sarah stops for a moment - she is crying.

**SARAH**

I am so tired you guys. I been at it since  
six this mornin'!

Mrs. Peterson walks in. Sarah wipes her tears away quickly. Peterson inspects Sarah's progress. She sweeps the metal pieces the girl just cut on the floor.

**MRS. PETERSON**

Redo them, they're awful. Now we're even  
MORE behind schedule!

Newman's soldering gun sparks suddenly. He drops it, covering his eyes for protection. Finally, the thing hisses to a complete breakdown. Newman clicks the on-off switch in vain.

**MRS. PETERSON**

Great. First labor, now hardware. Give me  
that ...

Peterson fishes in the back of a closet, then hands another soldering gun to Newman - even older than the first. There's electrical TAPE holding it together, but Newman is not about to complain

**MRS. PETERSON**

At least I can count on you, young man.  
Show the girls what you did at home, go  
on!

**NEWMAN**

Umm ... I forget to bring it ...

**MRS. PETERSON**

Again? Listen up people! This is NOT some  
Sunday picnic!

Sarah watches Mrs. Peterson rant and rave - hardly noticing how close her hand nears the cutting blade. Suddenly, a SCREAM. BLOOD streams from Sarah's hand. Mrs. Peterson goes to look ...

**MRS. PETERSON**

Oh, for goodness sake. Let me see ...

Sarah just stares at her bloodied hand - in shock. Rosa cries. Newman's too afraid to even look.

**MRS. PETERSON**

Well. There goes the schedule. Come on,  
let's go deary!

Mrs. Peterson leads Sarah upstairs, leaving a trail of blood  
behind them.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. SUPERMARKET - JUNE'S CASH - DAY**

Dirk inches up to June who is closing up her cash ...

**DIRK**

Lazy evenings on special at Cash No. 5!

**JUNE**

Really? Starting when?

**DIRK**

Just in time for a drink with me ...

**JUNE**

Thanks - but I'll take a rain check.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. MRS. PETERSON'S HOUSE - STUDIO - DAY**

Mrs. Peterson comes flying down from upstairs. Newman and Rosa  
look up ...

**ROSA**

Iz Sarah okay, Mrs. Peterson?

**MRS. PETERSON**

Yes, yes. Maria took her to emergency. But  
Newman. I spoke to the Museum and they  
need the collection NOW. I'll drive you  
home so we can get your stuff.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. DOWNTOWN - DAY**

June ambles down a downtown street decked out with Christmas  
cheer. She looks happy for once.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. MRS. PETERSON'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY**

Mrs. Peterson paces while Newman remains frozen on the couch.

**MRS. PETERSON**

I don't have to pay YOU? Oh, that takes the cake. What about my materials? What about my deadline? You will pay ME! Every cent! Now GO! I need to think!

**NEWMAN**

But I need Esmeralda to drive me!

**MRS. PETERSON**

I don't care! Call someone. Call your mother! Bet she doesn't even know you work here! Yes! I'd LOVE to speak to her. And your teachers!

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - NEWMAN'S ROOM - DAY**

June straightens up in Newman's room. She dusts the shelves - noticing the football shoes ...

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD - BUS STOP - DAY**

Newman charges down the street and arrives at the bus stop, completely out of breath and in tears.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - NEWMAN'S ROOM - DAY**

But what's this inside? June finds the cash, the progress chart, the college application forms taped back together, the bill from the restaurant, something scribbled about Leggo ...

She digs in the closet, then pulls out the BOX for the Leggo train set and looks inside ...

She notices something under the bed - a soldering gun and some metal pieces ...

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY**

June hugs the souvenir bottle of wine while she holds the phone receiver in her hand ...

**JUNE**

Pick up, Esmeralda ... come ON ...

No answer. Suddenly, a KNOCK at the door. She jumps up to open it - bottle still in hand ...

**JUNE**

Newman?

Instead, there's Mrs. Cramer.

**MRS. CRAMER**

Good afternoon, Miss Lovejoy. My name is Mrs. Cramer and I'm Newman's Grade 3 teacher.

Mrs. Cramer takes note that June is red-eyed, with an empty bottle in her hand ...

**CUT TO:**

**INT. BUS - DOWNTOWN - DAY**

Newman rides a crowded bus. He has to stand. He looks lost and overpowered as the crowd of tired **COMMUTERS** presses in on him from all sides.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY**

June paces while Mrs. Cramer lifts the lid on her worst fears ...

**MRS. CRAMER**

The fact he never showed up at school today AND is failing is only the tip of the iceberg.

**JUNE**

What are you trying to say?

**MRS. CRAMER**

When we see kids failing, and parents not responding to our efforts to help ...

**JUNE**

What efforts?

**MRS. CRAMER**

What efforts. Really.

**JUNE**

Mrs. Cramer, I just can't deal with this at the moment. I'll come and see you in the morning, alright? Now please, I have something I need to do ...

June leads Mrs. Cramer out.

**MRS. CRAMER**

Do you even KNOW where Newman is right now?

**JUNE**

Of course I do!

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ROSA'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY**

Enrico and Juan watch TV, half listening to June who paces in front of them, forcing them to lean past her to see the show.

**ENRICO**

They wen'out - what do you wan'us to do 'bout it?

June switches their TV off.

**JUAN**

Eh! Why you do that?

She reaches for the phone.

**JUNE**

Have it your way! I'm calling the cops ...

Juan jumps up and grabs the phone away from her ...

**JUAN**

Eh, Seniorita. You bett'a calm down or you'z in BIG trouble!

**JUNE**

I'll ask you one more time. Where is my son?

**JUAN**

He's a'work, that's all. He be back soon.

**JUNE**

**Where!**

**JUAN**

Look. Me and my family did you family a BIG favor ...

**JUNE**

You hired my son out and you call that a favor?

**ENRICO**

Hey, missus, Newman is workin' to help YOU out!

**JUAN**

And it would look real bad with social services, you know, on account of you not even knowin' he's workin'?

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. STREET NEAR JUNE'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY**

June walks home, defeated, when suddenly, she catches sight of Newman getting off a bus.

**JUNE**

NEWMAN!

She runs towards him. He sees her and runs to meet her, arms wide.

**NEWMAN**

MOMMY!

They embrace, both in tears.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT**

June washes Newman with a big sponge - as if she can wash all the past weeks away.

**NEWMAN**

It was my fault so I had to. And I was gonna have \$850, but then I ruined everything again. I can't do anything right!

**JUNE**

Do anything right? Newman ...

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

June and Newman snuggle up in the hide-a-bed - like two kids afraid of an impending storm.

**NEWMAN**

She says I owe her for everything she's gonna lose in sales.

**JUNE**

Oh yeah? And what about Sarah? And the cuts and burns you have? What kind of a sweatshop is this witch running? I'm gonna tell the school!

Newman starts crying ...

**NEWMAN**

No mommy, please. What if she tells that I was working and you didn't know. I don't want them to take me away!

**JUNE**

Oh honey, never.

She hugs him ... thinking ...

**JUNE**

We gotta be smart then. Tomorrow, we go to work like always, but in the meantime, I'm gonna figure something out.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. OUTSIDE PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY**

Newman listens in through the door as June meets with Mr. Hurst and Mrs. Cramer.

**JUNE (OS)**

Things have been very hard financially, so I was a little distracted, that's true.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY**

Mr. Hurst cracks his fingers, glances at Mrs. Cramer for approval, then launches his response.

**MR. HURST**

**Miss** Lovejoy. There is still the question of all those cuts and burn marks on the boy's hands ...

**MRS. CRAMER**

The cuts are no surprise, with all those wine bottles around.

**JUNE**

Wine bottles? The only one I have is the one Newman bought for my birthday!

**MR. HURST**

You send your son to buy booze for you?

**JUNE**

No! You don't understand!

**MR. HURST**

Miss Lovejoy. We don't mean any harm. We just want Newman to have the kind of care he deserves and maybe being with you is not what he needs right now ...

**JUNE**

This can't be happening! Just give me a trial period, please ...

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - CORRIDOR - DAY**

June runs out of the principal's office crying. She hardly expects to see Newman waiting outside.

**JUNE**

Sweetie. What are you doing here?

**NEWMAN**

I was just getting a drink of water. Is everything okay?

**JUNE**

Perfect.

Newman gives her a hug and plays along - not letting on he knows what just happened in there.

**JUNE**

Now remember. Don't be afraid of that Peterson person. And if everything goes well, I'll bring the money later today.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. SUPERMARKET - MANAGER'S CUBICLE - DAY**

June sits facing Dirk ...

**JUNE**

I beg you! I know I was late, but this is an emergency ...

**DIRK**

Why are you doing this to me? I'm already bending the rules for you. But an advance? I just can't. I'm sorry.



**CUT TO:**

**INT. SUPERMARKET - JUNE'S CASH - DAY**

As she wipes away her tears, June checks the groceries of a **WEALTHY SHOPPER**.

**WEALTHY SHOPPER**

Gorgeous earrings, my dear. I guess working the cash is more lucrative than when I was your age.

**JUNE**

My son got these at a school fair.

**WEALTHY SHOPPER**

OH, please. Since when do people give \$350 earrings away?

**JUNE**

Three hundred and fifty dollars?

**WEALTHY SHOPPER**

I just got a pair at the Museum. But you know, I do believe yours are nicer. They didn't have any like that.

June drops the JAR of pickles she is holding. Pickles fall everywhere ...

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - GATE - DAY**

June grabs Newman just before he dashes for Esmeralda's car ...

**JUNE**

You don't owe that witch a cent, Newman!

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. BUS STOP - DAY**

Newman and June wait for a bus.

**NEWMAN**

Three hundred and fifty dollars?

**JUNE**

Three hundred and fifty dollars!

**NEWMAN**

Hey ... aren't you supposed to work till six?

**JUNE**

Work! Oh NO ...

**CUT TO:**

**INT. SUPERMARKET - DAY**

June shifts from foot to foot while Dirk - working her cash - pretends she's not even there.

**JUNE**

I'm sorry, Dirk. It was an emergency. What more can I say?

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. SUPERMARKET - DAY**

Newman watches June and Dirk through the glass wall. He frowns.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. SUPERMARKET - MANAGER'S CUBICLE - DAY**

Dirk paces while June hangs her head and tries to be invisible.

**DIRK**

Did you tell anyone? No. Did you close your cash? No. And who got in hot water?

**JUNE**

You.

Suddenly, Newman appears in the doorway ...

**NEWMAN**

Mommy, it hurts ...

June doesn't understand but then SEES the bandage, the blood. Dirk freaks when he sees it.

**DIRK**

Oh my GOD, why didn't you tell me, June?

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. SUPERMARKET - PARKING LOT - DAY**

June and Newman wait near a Land Rover ...

**NEWMAN**

Did you like the blood?

**JUNE**

Heinz?

**NEWMAN**

What else?

**CUT TO:**

**INT. LAND ROVER - DAY**

Dirk drives them home, completely distressed - he pulls twenty dollar bills out of his pocket:

**DIRK**

I had no idea, June. I am SUCH a jerk!  
Here - will 200 do ya?

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY**

June locks the door to the apartment as Newman goes to have a bath....

**JUNE**

I dunno. I still feel bad about Dirk ....

**NEWMAN (OS)**

June. At least one of us needs a job,  
right? **So a man's gotta do, what a man's  
gotta do ...**

She grins as she hears him say that - a mischevious twinkle in her eye.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - DAY**

Newman is in the bath when June comes storming in - wearing a bathing suit.

**JUNE**

So! You're the man now, huh! Well! I have  
a surprise for you, cause I'm still the  
boss!

She dives in the bath, creating a big wave.

**NEWMAN**

N000000ooo!

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - NEWMAN'S ROOM -NIGHT**

June tucks Newman in.

**JUNE**

Peterson can keep all her money cause I have you and you're priceless. And you know what? They say that in the end, **everybody gets what they deserve**, it's one of life's Golden rules.

Newman smiles to himself ...

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - PLAYGROUND - DAY**

It's cold outside. Most kids huddle near the school building - except Newman and Rosa, shivering at the far end of the yard. Newman stares at Rosa in disbelief.

**ROSA**

When you needed her, she was the best. And now she's bad. That's not very nice, you know.

**NEWMAN**

I can't believe you, Rosa. What about Sarah?

**ROSA**

It wasn't like she needed any stitches, and iz her fault - she should'a been more careful.

**NEWMAN**

Maybe someone her age shouldn't use that equipment?

Rosa turns away and crosses her arms.

**NEWMAN**

Okay. What about the fact that we get 5 bucks, and Peterson gets 350. Sound fair to you?

No comment from Rosa, but her eyes reveal confusion brewing ...

**NEWMAN**

How about the fact that Sarah never goes to school?

**ROSA**

Iz okay with her mother, so.

Tiger walks over and listens ...

**NEWMAN**

If you wanna work for nothing, that's up to you. But I don't.

**ROSA**

I will not do anythin' to hurt Mrs. Peterson!

**NEWMAN**

Did I say we were gonna hurt her, or get even?

**TIGER**

Maybe my dad can help - he's really into stuff like this.

**NEWMAN**

We don't need your dad.

**ROSA**

We do if he's got a car, cause Esmeralda's not gonna help.

**NEWMAN**

Lucky me.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - DAY**

Olivia gives her VIDEO CAMERA to Newman.

**NEWMAN**

Maybe you can even do a project about this later.

**OLIVIA**

You mean for marks?

**NEWMAN**

Lots and lots of marks!

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - MAINTENANCE CLOSET - DAY**

Rosa stares at the camera ...

**ROSA**

... everybody's always getting cuts and burns and the soldering thing keep sparkin' which kinda hurts ...

**NEWMAN (OS)**

Don't you wear safety goggles?

**ROSA**

Safety goggles? *Que?*

**CUT TO:**

**INT. MRS. PETERSON'S STUDIO - DAY**

CLOSE-UP of a bandaged hand holding a taped-up soldering gun, then PAN UP to Sarah's face.

**SARAH**

The cut hurt a lot but it's better now. I was thinkin' maybe I dunno how to use that cuttin' machine right.

**ROSA (OS)**

Afta workin' 12 hours, nobody would! What abou'school?

**SARAH**

Yeah ... I miss goin' to school ...

Suddenly, Mrs. Peterson bursts in. Rosa dives into her seat, hiding the camera in her lap.

**MRS. PETERSON**

Alright. Where is he?

P.O.V. OF CAMERA - LOW ANGLE - Mrs. Peterson looms down over Rosa ...

**ROSA (OS)**

You mean Newman?

**MRS. PETERSON**

Don't get smart with me, missy! Who do you people think you're dealing with? Wait till I get my hands on that boy! You tell him he can't hide from me!

She slams her fist on Rosa's table and marches off. Rosa and Sarah look at each other in shock.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - PLAYGROUND - DAY**

June pulls Newman's hat lower over his ears. He pulls it back up while he scans the yard.

**JUNE**

Newman! It's cold.

**NEWMAN**

Oh yeah, sorry.

Newman spots Tiger and Ace approaching and smiles ...

**TIGER**

Did you ask her?

**NEWMAN**

I can't! I told you I promised to catch-up on school.

**JUNE**

Can't what?

**ACE**

Nothin' really. I'm just doin' a little afternoon gig and I invited the boys to come along.

**TIGER**

Please? Newman never believes me about my dad singing. I mean what if HIS dad showed up and I wasn't allowed to see him play ball. He does play, right?

**NEWMAN**

Mom, a promise is a promise.

**JUNE**

Yes, but one afternoon can't hurt.

**ACE**

I'll pick'em up after school, an' have'im home 'bout eight.

**JUNE**

Fine. But give me your phone number, just in case ...

**NEWMAN**

But why?

**JUNE**

But because!

Ace has no choice but to give it to her, but all three guys seem upset about it.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - DAY**

The class is out for recess. Rosa shows Newman and Tiger what she shot at Mrs. Peterson's.

**NEWMAN**

Well, well. It's the new Steven Spielberg!

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - GATE - DAY**

Ace pulls up in a huge, gas-guzzling, ancient CHEVY. Newman and Tiger climb in.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. CAR - CITY STREETS - DAY**

Tiger and Ace up front, happy as larks. Ace smokes. Newman leans back, away from the smoke.

**ACE**

Say, Newman. Seems like even guys that mess up can come in handy once in a while, huh.

**NEWMAN**

We'll see. Turn left here ...

**ACE**

Got it ... Hey! That was pretty cool how you used tha'old reverse psychology on your mama this mornin'.

**NEWMAN**

That wasn't reverse psychology - that was the truth.

**ACE**

Right. Who you tryin' to kid?

**CUT TO:**

**INT. FURNITURE STORE - DAY**

June wanders down the aisle in a furniture store. She spots a **SALES CLERK.**

**JUNE**

I'm looking for a desk for my son. What can I get for \$200?

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. MRS. PETERSON'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

A succession of FANCY CATERING and DELIVERY VANS drive up to Mrs. Peterson's house.



#### **ANGLE ON CORNER**

Ace's Chevy pulls up out of sight of Mrs. Peterson's house. Ace and the boys pile out.

**ACE**

Yep. Just like I thought. You kids ain't gonna sneak in that house just like that.

**NEWMAN**

Thank you for your opinion, Mr. Cash, but all I need from you is a ride.

**ACE**

What you need is a distraction, and I took care of it for'ya.

Newman looks with horror as another BEAT-UP CAR pulls up, MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS sticking out the back.

**ACE**

You did tell your mama I was takin' you boys to a gig, so we might'as well make the truth work for us one more time.

#### **ANGLE ON SIDEWALK**

Ace high-fives the two middle-aged musicians who step out of their cars, **CHUCK** and **DON**.

**DON**

Eh man, hope we ain't late.

**ACE**

Not a chance. And this squares us even, right?

The two just shoot an index finger towards Ace - meaning 'right-on'.

**NEWMAN**

Mr. Cash? I really need to talk to you alone ... NOW?

**ACE**

Relax, Newman. Here's the plan. With me and the boys workin' the inside, you guys waltz in the back, nice and easy.

**NEWMAN**

Yeah ... maybe

**ACE**

Trust me. Now give 'em each a twenty...

**NEWMAN**

Why don't you, it's your plan.

**ACE**

But it's your gig. And you know what they say: **gotta spend money to make money.**

**NEWMAN**

Maybe that's why you don't make any, cause you're always spending someone else's!

**ACE**

Oh, you're good. He's really good, Tiger. You never told me how good he was.

**TIGER**

Yeah ... he's just great.

Tiger glares at Newman - jealousy getting the best of him. Suddenly, the screech of tires and the growl of a SHOT MUFFLER ...

**NEWMAN**

Finally! The guns are here ...

**DON**

Guns? Nobody said nothin' 'bout guns.

**ACE**

Don't worry 'bout it. The kid's got it all under control.

Juan, Enrico and Rosa drive up in the family clunker. POLICE SIRENS blare in the distance. Rosa, holding a large BAG in her hand, jumps out and the brothers screech away at top speed.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. MRS. PETERSON'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

Newman watches from a hiding place as the first **GUESTS** start arriving by LIMOUSINE. He gets a determined look on his face and sneaks back to the others.

**ANGLE ON CORNER**

Newman stands before his team.

**NEWMAN**

Alright people, time to lend a hand to life's golden rule.

**ACE**

**Don't get mad, get even?**

**NEWMAN**

No. **Everybody gets what they deserve.** Oh,  
and don't do the doll thing with Mrs. P.,  
okay?

**ACE**

Why not?

**NEWMAN**

Trust me. Now **MOVE OUT!**

Ace, Don and Chuck, carrying their instruments, head for the house.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. MRS. PETERSON'S HOUSE - ENTRANCE - NIGHT**

Newman, Tiger and Rosa watch from a hiding place as Ace - a seductive grin on his face - ushers Don and Chuck past a stunned Mrs. Peterson.

**ACE**

Sorry we're late, doll, but we're here so  
ain't no big thing.

**MRS. PETERSON**

... doll?

Ace doesn't break eye contact ... his eyes sparkle. She almost takes his seductive bait but then catches herself and hurries after them.

**MRS. PETERSON**

... excuse me ... hello?

**ANGLE ON BUSHES**

Newman frowns ...

**NEWMAN**

I told him not to do the doll thing ...

**TIGER**

Yeah, but it worked!

**NEWMAN**

*(confused)*

I know ...

**CUT TO:**

**INT. MRS. PETERSON'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY**

**MR. DAUPHIN**, the City Museum Director - an elegant gray-haired gentleman in his sixties - catches hold of Mrs. Peterson's hand as she flies in behind the band.

**MR. DAUPHIN**

Amanda ... you are a devil. Country & Western?

*(laughing with delight)*

It's so ... **unexpected** ... simply ingenious.

Mrs. Peterson smiles and goes with the flow - like the survivor she is.

**MRS. PETERSON**

I knew you would find it amusing, Henri ...

*(to the band)*

Hold on now ... set up in THAT corner ... yes.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. MRS. PETERSON'S HOUSE - BATHROOM WINDOW - NIGHT**

Rosa, Newman and Tiger sneak up to the side of the house. The window to a ground floor bathroom opens and Sarah leans out. The kids climb in.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. MRS. PETERSON'S HOUSE - DOOR TO STUDIO - NIGHT**

The kids hide behind a curtain till a **WAITER** with a tray goes by. Then they sneak towards the basement. They attach a sign to the door - "STUDIO" - then go in and shut the door behind them.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. MRS. PETERSON'S HOUSE - STUDIO - NIGHT**

Newman holds open the bag Rosa brought, while Tiger, Sarah and Rosa pull brand new soldering guns and a variety of **SAFETY EQUIPMENT** out.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. MRS. PETERSON'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

The band plays an old Country & Western standard. Ace croons, his eyes locked on Mrs. Peterson - leaving her blushing.

**ACE**

*(singing)*

*Your cheatin' heart ... will make you blue  
...*

**THREE MODELS** wearing Mrs. Peterson's earrings work the room. They carry flat velvet covered DISPLAYS with SAMPLES for closer viewing by the **DOZEN GUESTS**.

**MRS. PETERSON**

*(yelling to be heard)*

What the girls are bringing around are items from the new collection ... please feel free to TOUCH!

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - NEWMAN'S ROOM - NIGHT**

June admires the desk she just finished assembling for Newman, and how she's redone his room. She notices the time - it's late.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. MRS. PETERSON'S HOUSE - STUDIO - NIGHT**

Newman looks at the clock on the wall ...

**NEWMAN**

We've still got some time ...

The studio is being transformed by the minute. Sarah - now wearing gloves that cover her bandaged hand - plugs in the new equipment. Rosa dusts. Newman places SAFETY GOGGLES & GLOVES at each work station. Tiger prepares to hang an **International Labor Organization** poster on the wall, not seeing the electrical CABLE in his path. Newman notices...

**NEWMAN**

Watch it!

**TIGER**

What?

Tiger turns. His foot snags the cable and a lamp falls to the ground with a loud THUD.

---

· Hank Williams song

**CUT TO:**

**INT. MRS. PETERSON'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Mrs. Peterson leaps up and heads across the living room towards the hall to the basement ...

Ace sees ... He glances at his band ... they nod.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. MRS. PETERSON'S HOUSE - STUDIO - NIGHT**

Sarah and Rosa hold hands, scared stiff.

**ROSA**

She's gonna kill us for sure, Newman!

Tiger just hangs his head in shame. Newman sizes them up ...

**NEWMAN**

It's okay. Just finish up and I'll, I'll  
... I don't know.

Newman leaps up the stairs ...

**ANGLE AT TOP OF STAIRS**

Newman opens the door a crack and peeks out: Mrs. Peterson is approaching and fast. Suddenly, Ace stops singing and the band follows.

**ACE (OS)**

Folks, I never claimed I was a patient  
kinda guy, and I just can't stand it any  
long'a.

**ANGLE AT TOP OF STAIRS ...**

Newman leans up against the door ... he sees the doorknob move ...

**ANGLE AT DOOR TO STUDIO**

Mrs. Peterson has her hand on the knob. The door seems stuck ...

**ACE (OS)**

Amanda? Amanda Peterson! Where are you,  
doll?

Mrs. Peterson looks up ... startled ...

**ANGLE AT TOP OF STAIRS**

Newman closes his eyes and smiles ...

**NEWMAN**

Thank you!

**CUT TO:**

**INT. JUNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

June holds the phone receiver in her hand and listens ...

**JUNE**

What? They went WHERE?

**CUT TO:**

**INT. MRS. PETERSON'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Ace has his arm around Mrs. Peterson. She's blushing ...

**ACE**

So there I was in Nashville, when my good friend calls me on the telephone and says ... *Ace, you have got'ta get down here, cause this gall's been workin' like a dog and she deserves a special surprise*" So I say, *Golly - you're right. Everybody should get what they deserve.* And here I am. I do hope the entertainment was to your likin' ...

Everyone claps their approval. Mrs. Peterson shakes Ace's hand ... what else can she do?

**MRS. PETERSON**

Wonderful, thank you. But I am DYING to know who would go to all this trouble just on account of me ...

Newman takes his cue and walks in.

**MRS. PETERSON**

Newman!?

**NEWMAN**

Ladies and gentlemen, I am so happy you liked the music. And now I have more to show you. Please, come this way ...

Mrs. Peterson jumps forward ...

**MRS. PETERSON**

No ... wait!

**CUT TO:**

**INT. MRS. PETERSON'S HOUSE - DOOR TO STUDIO - NIGHT**

Mrs. Peterson stands guard at the door, smiling an iron smile at Newman ...

**MRS. PETERSON**

I think the samples were enough to give everyone an idea, sweetheart.

But **MADAME ADRIENNE** (60), the director of another large museum - an eccentric woman wearing bizarre prescription specs - is not about to back off. An undercurrent of catty competition in evidence here!

**MADAME ADRIENNE**

But this is so exciting, Amanda. Is this where you work?

**MRS. PETERSON**

Heaven's no ...this is the bb...

Newman jumps forward, interrupting her, and points to the sign.

**NEWMAN**

Beautiful **Studio** - just like the sign says. Cause Mrs. Peterson doesn't think making these earrings is work, it's more like **art**. Right Mrs. P.?

**MRS. PETERSON**

Art. Precisely.

**NEWMAN**

But it's much MORE than art. See for yourselves ...

Newman pushes the door open before Mrs. Peterson can stop him; everyone descends.

**MRS. PETERSON**

*(shouting after them)*

You really mustn't get the wrong idea ...

**CUT TO:**

**INT. MRS. PETERSON'S HOUSE - STUDIO - NIGHT**

Sarah, Rosa and even Tiger sit at work stations and smile - wearing brand new goggles and gloves, using brand new soldering equipment, with cartons of MILK and COOKIES nearby. Mrs. Peterson stands at the top of the stairs - flabbergasted. Newman walks down around her ...



**NEWMAN**

You all know Mrs. Peterson is a great artist and designer. But what you didn't know is that she's also someone who cares about children and their future. See these kids? They, like me, work with Mrs. P. to make these beautiful pieces of art because all of us need to help our families - families crippled by poverty. But Mrs. Peterson offered us a way out.

**MADAME ADRIENNE**

Yes, but is this legal? What about school?

**NEWMAN**

School? Why Mrs. Peterson would never deprive any child of an education. Right Mrs. P.? Tell them about Sarah ...

Newman looks at his boss, smiling proud. Everyone looks at her.

**MRS. PETERSON**

Sarah. Well ... Sarah is my maid's daughter ... and ... and they spent many years apart so I ... I ...

**NEWMAN**

What Mrs. Peterson is trying to say is that in order to help make up for all that time apart, she got Sarah a private tutor, right here in the house. Now Sarah can see her mom whenever she wants to.

**MR. DAUPHIN**

That's wonderful ...

**MRS. PETERSON**

Isn't it ...

**MADAME ADRIENNE**

But what about the time factor? What hours do you work?

**ROSA**

Well. Me and Tiger only two a day, right Tiger?

**TIGER**

Two hours! That's right! Only two!

**ROSA**

You know, because of Mrs. Peterson, me, I can help my whole family.

**GUEST**

Yes, but couldn't somebody older be doing that?

**ROSA**

No. My brothers and sisters, they are all younger than me.

This is her chance: Mrs. P. grabs Newman and pulls him out of there while no one is looking.

**MADAME ADRIENE**

How many are there?

**ROSA**

Six ... and then there's my uncle, but he's only got one leg.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. MRS. PETERSON'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Mrs. Peterson drags Newman into the living room ...

**MRS. PETERSON**

You are going to explain this, and it better be good, buster ...

Ace slips by, secretly passing a high-tech TV REMOTE to Newman.

**ACE**

*(singing under his breath)*

*Your cheatin' heart ...*

Mrs. Peterson crosses her arms and glares down at Newman. He smiles, playing with the remote.

**MRS. PETERSON**

Well, what? What do you think you are doing?

**NEWMAN**

Going into partnership, with you.

**MRS. PETERSON**

WHAT?

She nearly chokes. Newman is cool though - he simply aims the remote at the mega TV.

**NEWMAN**

Unless, of course, you want your buyers to see THIS version of the truth instead ...

CLICK ... then LOUD on the huge TV screen: the testimonials - scars, no safety measures, missed school, low wages, and Mrs. P. yelling. She lunges for the remote ...

**MRS. PETERSON**

This is blackmail!

**NEWMAN**

Looks like fair play to me! Remember? **In a good business, everybody profits.** And: **Always see what there is to gain.** The way I see it, we get \$5, you get \$350. Even after the cost of materials, come on! So if you want to fix this, you know the rule: **Money talks!**

**MRS. PETERSON**

Why you ....

Mr. Dauphin appears on the scene. Mrs. Peterson notices just in time ...

**MRS. PETERSON**

... wonderful boy!

**MR. DAUPHIN**

Did I miss something?

**NEWMAN**

I wanted to show a video about kids in other countries who don't have someone like Mrs. Peterson ...

**MRS. PETERSON**

But the tape broke. Right in half, can you believe? Now you must excuse me for a moment, Henri.

**MR. DAUPHIN**

Ahh, if I must ... I suppose I must.

He grabs her hand and kisses it. She gives him a demure smile, then heads off upstairs.

**ANGLE ON BAND AREA ...**

Newman ambles over to where Ace is sharing a smoke with the band.

**NEWMAN**

Can I talk to you for a minute?

**ACE**

Sure ...

He signals to the band ... they leave.

**NEWMAN**

You know, I couldn't have done this without you. So I just wanted to say, you know, thanks.

**ACE**

Listen man, you had this under yo'belt. All I did was tighten it up a few notches.

**NEWMAN**

Really?

**ACE**

Yes sir. And here's another thing. Somewhere out there's a guy, and I don't care how rich or handsome or happy he thinks he is, cause he's a poor bastard for missin' out on **you**. Cause if I was your dad, I would, I would just ... I dunno ...

**NEWMAN**

Yeah, I know.

Ace pulls Newman into his arms and gives him a big hug.

**ACE**

And if you evah'need to talk **man-to-man**? I'm here for ya.

**NEWMAN**

Thanks. But I don't think Tiger would like that. You know, kids can be kinda weird about their parents that way.

**ACE**

You're probably right. But MAN, wait till ya get inta women! Women can be weird about a LOTTA things that way.

**NEWMAN**

Exactly. Like that 'doll' thing. Never works for me.

**ACE**

It's not the word son, it's the eyes. And I guess you gotta be a little olda' too.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. MRS. PETERSON'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

June stands in front of the house, completely in awe. She checks the address - yes, it's the one.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. MRS. PETERSON'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Tiger walks in on Newman and Ace talking. Newman notices his friend's pained expression.

**NEWMAN**

Tiger! Your dad was just tellin' me about how much he missed you when he was away.

**TIGER**

So why didn't he tell me ...

**NEWMAN**

Cause guys can be kinda stupid that way, 'kay?

They hear the front DOOR OPENING in the entrance nearby ...

**JUNE (OS)**

Hello? HELLO! ...

They all look at each other in a panic ...

**NEWMAN, TIGER & ACE**

June!

**CUT TO:**

**INT. MRS. PETERSON'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

There is a buzz in the room. The guests talk among themselves. Rosa, Sarah and Maria stand at the back of the room, tense. Tiger, Ace and the band finish off the trays of goodies. Newman sits on the couch beside June; smiling, while struggling to keep her pinned down.

**JUNE**

Why won't you let me go confront that WITCH!

**NEWMAN**

Five more minutes, that's all I ask ...

**JUNE**

Three!

**NEWMAN**

Four ...?

Mrs. Peterson reappears on the scene, a pile of envelopes in hand.

**MRS. PETERSON**

I am SO sorry for the delay. And where is my band?

Ace and gang jump to action but keep it low ...

**ACE**

*(singing)*

*Hey, good lookin'. What, you got cookin'.  
How'bout cookin' somethin' up with me ...*

**MRS. PETERSON**

Well, yes. I did say to myself. Amanda - are you mad? They're children! You can't hire children!

**MADAME ADRIENNE**

Precisely!

**MRS. PETERSON**

But you CAN go into business! What is to stop me from creating a company which will be of benefit to me AND these wonderful little children! Think of it - each of my earrings means beauty AND goodwill ... and right here, right now, I will distribute the profits we have earned as a team!

They CLAP as Mrs. Peterson distributes the envelopes - even Tiger, Ace and the band get one!

She gives Newman his along with an air kiss on the cheek. Newman just hands it over to June. She opens it - her eyes get big! A check for \$5,000. Mrs. Peterson whispers to Newman ...

**MRS. PETERSON**

I should KILL you, you little twirp, but let's talk on Monday, say ten?

**NEWMAN**

I have school!

**MRS. PETERSON**

Yes, of course, then is four good for you?

---

· Hank Williams song

**NEWMAN**

Four's great.

**ANGLE ON BACK OF ROOM**

Sarah whispers in Maria's ear:

**SARAH**

Ma, Mrs. P. is getting me a tutor! I can learn like the others!

Maria kisses her on the forehead, tears in her eyes.

**ANGLE ON MRS. PETERSON**

Mrs. Peterson stands on the sidelines, arms crossed, and scans the room - trying to assess how her announcement went over. Madame Adrienne slinks up to stand shoulder-to-shoulder beside her.

**MADAME ADRIENNE**

You know, something smells very fishy around here, Amanda. And believe you me, I'll get to the bottom of it.

**MRS. PETERSON**

Well. I suggest you get to the bottom of your jealousy first, deary. Henri dumped you. Get over it.

**MADAME ADRIENNE**

I left HIM! And don't think I don't see you changing the subject. Those kids aren't even twelve, are they ...

Newman catches sight of the exchange between the two women and rushes over ...

**NEWMAN**

Is everything alright Mrs. P.?

**MRS. PETERSON**

Just peachy, darling!

She puts her arm around Newman's shoulder and leads him to the center of the room ...

**MRS. PETERSON**

Everyone! I almost forgot to mention that Newman contributed one of the designs in the new collection!

Mrs. Peterson pats Newman on the shoulder.

**MRS. PETERSON**

And. Children? If you want those Christmas Bonuses, better gather'round!

Mrs. Peterson writes checks while the kids look on. Rosa pokes Newman to get his attention.

**ROSA**

Don't you think she's bein' a leedle too nice?

**NEWMAN**

You think?

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. RICH NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT**

Newman and June walk through the wealthy neighborhood, looking at the 'perfect lives' displayed behind the windows. Newman glances at her and smiles ...

**NEWMAN**

Okay. Which one do YOU like?

She points to what should be a castle ... they stare at the house, imagining ... but after a moment of reflection, they look at each other ....

**NEWMAN & JUNE**

Nawww!

**NEWMAN**

Think of the house work!

**JUNE**

And we'd never find Nibbler.

**NEWMAN**

Exactly!

Newman smirks and grabs some snow. June notices: Snowball fight! Finally tired, they lie back on the snow and she pulls him close.

**JUNE**

Gee, honey, I don't deserve you.

**NEWMAN**

Gee, mom. You deserve like a LOT more.

**JUNE**

As do you, sweetie, as do you.



**CUT TO:**

**EXT. MRS. PETERSON'S HOUSE - DAY**

A swarm of POLICE CARS pulls up on the lawn and surrounds the mansion. **COPS** ring the doorbell, while the **CHIEF** consults Madame Adrienne, sitting in a BLACK LIMO across the street.

**NEWMAN (VO)**

Well, my four o'clock meeting never happened. They say all these policemen came to Mrs. P.'s house in the morning.

**CUT TO:**

**LATER: P.O.V. OF SOMEONE PEERING IN THROUGH A WINDOW**

A deserted home - dust balls rolling across the bare floors the only inhabitants.

**ANGLE ON NEWMAN**

He pulls away from the window and looks at June. They both shrug.

**NEWMAN (VO)**

By the time me and June got there at four ... she was gone. The neighbors say she's in jail. Rosa says she's in Costa Rica. Me, I don't care. All I know is this: the Christmas Bonus checks were rubber.

**CUT TO:**

**OPENING SCENE: INT. CONDOMINIUM - NEWMAN'S ROOM - DAY**

Newman, Tiger and Rosa crowd around the new computer while June dries tears of happiness.

**NEWMAN (VO)**

And that's my story. I guess now you understand why I do NOT plan on growing up for a while! And June? Well, I don't think there's much hope of her EVER growing up but that's cool. And now, if you don't mind, I got some playing to do.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. CONDO - LIVING ROOM - DAY**

This place is definitely bigger and better - there's a view, and a computer workstation where June can perfect her computer design abilities. Nancy (now 51) sits on the couch - happy at last. Norbert (now 70) sits at June's workstation and reads computer manuals.

**NORBERT**

This machine has more memory than the one  
I have at the university!

**JUNE**

Well what do you know ...

The DOORBELL rings. Rosa walks in just in time to witness June greet Dirk at the door - he has flowers in one hand, a present in the other.

**JUNE**

Dirk! What a surprise.

**DIRK**

I was in the neighborhood so I thought I'd  
drop by to wish Newman happy birthday and  
you know ... say hi ... to you.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. CONDO - NEWMAN'S ROOM - DAY**

Rosa runs in - beaming from ear to ear.

**ROSA**

Hey, I think that supermarket guy's got a  
thing for June.

Tiger and Newman look up ...

**NEWMAN**

A thing? What kind of thing?

Rosa does her trademark family 'wink, wink' and puckers up her  
lips ...

**NEWMAN**

No way!

**TIGER**

Is he married?

**NEWMAN**

Who cares? June can do better than some  
supermarket guy!

**CUT TO:**

**INT. CONDO - LIVING ROOM - DAY**

Tiger and Rosa follow Newman into the living room. Nancy holds her  
arms out to her grandson.

**NANCY**

Come'ere, you handsome devil.

**NEWMAN**

In a minute gran'ma ...

Newman inches up to Dirk, whose eyes are glued to June, and gives  
him the once over. Well, looks like he's off on another real life  
adventure. I guess he'll play later. You know how kids are!

**Roll credits ...**