

EXT. BURGER HUT - EVENING

The sun sets in the background. The breeze floats by.

A couple cars sit in the drive-through lane, unbothered.

A 1997 Toyota Paseo idles in the empty lot. JASON sits in the driver's seat, head back, eyes closed. His window is rolled all the way down.

He might even be asleep.

TED, a twenty-something employee comes out of the building. His arms hang low. Head too.

His work shirt is draped over his shoulder.

Ted walks over to the Toyota Paseo.

He goes for the passenger handle.

Locked.

Inside, Jason startles awake.

Jason fixes the issue at hand.

Ted swings the door open and gets inside.

INT. JASON'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Ted tosses his work shirt in the back. Jason rolls the passenger window down while he puts his seatbelt on.

Ted wipes a hand across his face and gives the vents a pointless adjustment.

The two sit there in silence for a bit.

Ted fixes the non-issue.

TED

It's really hot out today.

Jason nods as he starts looking up at the sky through the windshield.

JASON

Yeah, well...I think it's supposed to cool down soon. In an hour. Something.

Ted nods, now looking at the sky as well.

He then takes a deep breath.

Jason looks over at him.

JASON (CONT'D)
How'd work go?

A crease appears on Ted's lips.

TED
...Alright.

Jason nods.

JASON
That's good.

Jason leaves room for more.

Nothing comes.

JASON (CONT'D)
Nothing cool happen?

Ted searches for something-anything.

Found it.

TED
There was one guy...I think-*well*, he
was high. Wanted to get a chicken
sandwich.

JASON
Okay.

TED
And then he uh...well, right before he
paid he-uh, he left.

Silence.

JASON
What do you mean he left?

TED
He walked out. He left the building.

JASON
And he didn't come back?

TED
...Nope.

Beat.

JASON
...hm...

Beat.

JASON (CONT'D)
...weird.

Ted slowly nods, mind elsewhere.

Jason puts the car in reverse and gets out of the parking lot.

The two drive around town.

Not a place in mind.

Ted looks out his window as they go.

Jason drives one-handed, loose at the wheel.

The radio plays low, masked by the wind from the open windows.

Ted glances over at Jason.

TED
Did you ever figure out that thing
with your foot? What it was?

Jason' brings his other hand to the wheel.

JASON
I went in...on a...Tuesday-last
Tuesday, and they said it was a uh...
a sprain, that's what it was, a
sprain.

Ted nods.

TED
What'd they say to do?

JASON
Uh...ice...raise it...stay off of it.

Beat.

TED
Didn't you go to that track meet on
Wednesday though?

Silence.

JASON
I did...yeah...

TED
Isn't there a lot of standing...at
those things?

JASON
...yeah, no you'd be right about that,
yeah.

TED
...hm...

Jason hangs a right.

Ted looks back out his window.

Jason adjusts his grip on the steering wheel.

Still, no destination in mind.

Ted reaches back for his work shirt.

He grabs it and starts fishing around the chest pocket.

But he glances back to the backseat.

On it, sits a blue VHS tape. Alone, seemingly untouched.

Forgotten.

Ted glances between the tape and Jason, who's unaware of the
glances being made.

TED (CONT'D)
Did we never turn that tape in?

Jason perks up a bit.

He looks over at Ted.

Jason follow's Ted's gaze to the backseat.

The tape.

Silence.

JASON

Oh shit...I thought we turned that in.

TED

I thought so too...

Ted reaches back and grabs the tape. He looks it over.

TED (CONT'D)

When did we get this?

Jason exhales, no clues to give.

JASON

Uh...well couldn't of been last week...

TED

No...did we get it the week before?

JASON

...maybe...wait, no...that week I was sick. It had to've been the week before that...

Ted thinks.

TED

So three weeks ago...?

Jason thinks, then starts to nod.

JASON

Yeah...three weeks ago.

Silence.

TED

Then...this has to be due soon, no?

Jason nods again.

JASON
Yeah...has to be.

Silence fills the car again.

TED
Man I think this might be due today...

That gets Jason.

JASON
...today?

TED
Yeah. I think this might be due today.

JASON
Hm...

Beat.

JASON (CONT'D)
Should probably go do that then, huh?

TED
Yeah...I guess so.

JASON
Alright.

They continue to drive.

A destination in mind-

JASON (CONT'D)
I got to stop at the mall first...

TED
...Why?

JASON
I got coupons...for Tim's...I think
they expire soon.

Ted nods.

TED
Alright. Do that first I'd say.

JASON
Yeah...yeah...

Jason turns.

Ted puts the tape back in the backseat.

He puts his work shirt back there too.

Jason pulls into the mall lot. Mostly empty, except for the closest rows.

He parks a few rows farther than he needs to.

He turns the radio.

TED

There's a couple spots closer.

JASON

I know.

Jason parks the car in an empty row.

He turns it off and opens the center console and starts fishing around.

Ted opens his door, but waits for Jason to get what he needs.

Jason pulls out a couple coupons and closes the lid.

He starts looking them over.

Ted glances into the backseat, the VHS sits half-buried under Ted's work shirt.

Jason pockets the coupons.

Notices Ted on the tape.

JASON (CONT'D)

We'll be in and out. Don't worry.

Ted scoffs and starts getting out.

TED

Huh? I'm not worried.

JASON

You're looking a little worried.

Beat.

TED

Never.

Jason gets out and closes his door. Ted closes his.

EXT. MALL PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Jason and Ted walk towards the entrance.

Jason studies the coupons like they matter.

Ted watches the sunset.

TED

Looks cool out...

Jason looks up.

JASON

Yeah...it does...

They get to the main entrance. The doors slide open for them.

Into the mall they go.

INT. MALL - CONTINUOUS

Ted and Jason stand at the entrance.

Like the lot, the mall seems to be mainly empty.

Couple people walk by.

JASON

Nice in here.

TED

I was gonna say, yeah.

Ted and Jason start walking.

Jason notices a security guard near the entrance, watching them walk.

He waves.

JASON

Hi.

The guard waves back.

SECURITY GUARD

Hey.

The guard keeps watching.

They come to the first intersection in the mall.

Jason immediately takes a left, eyes locked to in front of him.

Ted follows a bit behind, his gaze floating around the quiet mall and stores he passes.

Jason locks on to TIM'S CLOTHING up ahead.

He glances at the coupons in his hand once more as he gets close.

Ted watches him do so and quickens his pace to catch up.

Jason walks in.

Ted too.

INT. TIM'S CLOTHING STORE - CONTINUOUS

The clothing store is all but empty, just a single clerk inside.

Jason goes straight to them.

Ted stops in the middle. He watches Jason go on. He then looks around.

A section of sweatshirts catches him. He wanders over.

One crew neck gets his attention.

JASON (O.S.)

I have these coupons and was wondering about them.

He examines the sleeves.

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

Well they say they expire today.

Ted feels the bottom seam.

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

Right, but it doesn't say what time.

Ted looks at the price tag.

Ted moves on.

JASON (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Yeah...okay...

Ted sees a couple more sweatshirts. He flips through the rack. He stops at a burgundy one.

JASON (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I'm not disputing the expiration. I'm
disputing the interpretation of thus
said expiration.

Ted takes the burgundy one off the rack and holds it up against himself.

JASON (O.S.) (CONT'D)
It doesn't say that.

Too big.

So is the one behind it.

JASON (O.S.) (CONT'D)
That's not what it says.

Ted glances over at Jason.

JASON
That's what you're saying it says.

Ted looks back at the sweatshirts.

He walks further down, now by shirts. He flips through them.

JASON (O.S.)
I'm not asking you to bend anything.
I'm just pointing out-that's not what
I'm doing.

The shirts do nothing for him.

A pair of joggers he spots do, though.

JASON (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Okay...

The joggers line up nicely as Ted holds them against his legs.

Ted looks at the price tag.

JASON (O.S.) (CONT'D)
...right...

Ted likes the price tag.

JASON (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I get that, I do. But that-

Ted drapes the pants over his arm and walks down towards some hoodies.

He takes a look at the counter.

JASON
I'm really not doing that, I'm not.

Ted browses the hoodies.

The first couple he examines a bit.

The rest he just looks at the price tag.

JASON (O.S.)
Okay, yeah, I'll wait...

Ted spots a windbreaker.

All attention goes to the windbreaker. He sets the joggers on a nearby rack.

He holds the windbreaker up to his chest.

It seems to fit.

He looks at the price tag.

Somehow, it agrees.

Ted looks around for a mirror.

One in the corner, he goes to it.

He puts the windbreaker on. He turns around to see how the back looks.

JASON (O.S.) (CONT'D)
So what does that mean?

Jason's argument from across the store dulls the moment.

He gets a side angle on it.

JASON (O.S.) (CONT'D)
That's what he said?

This side isn't as bad. Ted gets the other side angle.

It could work.

Ted does a pose.

JASON (O.S.) (CONT'D)
That's dumb-I'm sorry but that's
stupid.

It works.

Ted indulges another pose.

JASON (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I know you don't make the rules.

Ted takes the windbreaker off.

He walks back towards the joggers he set down.

JASON (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Alright...

He examines the price tag of them. Then he looks back at the price tag of the windbreaker.

Ted weighs the two price tags against each other.

A sigh from Jason can be heard from the other side of the store.

JASON (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Alright-well...

Silence.

JASON (O.S.) (CONT'D)
No...thank you though.

The windbreaker gets more expensive the longer he holds it.

Ted reluctantly puts it back. The joggers the only thing he's holding now.

Jason rounds the corner and spots the joggers.

JASON
Oh you were looking for those right?

TED
I was yeah.

Jason nods.

Ted looks at Jason, who's head is clearly elsewhere.

Jason realizes Ted's looking at him and then glances out the store.

JASON
Let's stop at the food court. Hm?

TED
Yeah, just lemme buy these first.

JASON
Alright.

Jason walks out the store, and hangs by the entrance.

Ted goes to the desk and hands the joggers to the clerk. He pulls out his wallet.

INT. MALL - CONTINUOUS

Ted comes out of the clothing store. Jason and him start walking towards the food court.

JASON
How much did they cost?

TED
Uh...twenty-five.

Jason nods approvingly.

As they walk, they pass the security guard from before leaning against a wall, watching them.

Jason clocks him. Ted doesn't.

Jason and Ted keep walking.

A moment later, the guard pushes off the wall and drifts after them.

Ted and Jason don't notice at first, just keep walking.

Then-

Jason takes a glance back.

He sees the guard.

The guard sees him.

Jason stops, staring now.

The guard mirrors him.

Ted realizes Jason stopped and does the same.

He looks back.

The standoff has already started.

Silence.

JASON

Everything alright?

SECURITY GUARD

I'm not following you.

Silence...again.

Jason looks at Ted, then back at the guard.

Again.

Jason takes a step to Ted, still looking at the guard.

The guard doesn't move.

Ted and Jason keep moving. Jason can't stop checking behind them.

The guard watches them go.

In silence.

INT. FOOD COURT - CONTINUOUS

Ted and Jason walk up to the food court. They scan the overhead menus.

Behind them, the court sits mostly empty. A couple people are eating.

A janitor fills the silence with echoing cleaning.

JASON
What're you thinking?

TED
Uh...I don't know...something...small.

Jason nods a bit.

JASON
Part of me wants the burrito.

TED
...alright.

JASON
But part of me doesn't.

TED
Why not?

Beat.

JASON
...I don't know...

They continue to scan the menus.

The cashier watches them, patiently.

Ted nearly orders.

Doesn't.

Then he does.

TED
I'll have a pretzel.

The cashier rings up a pretzel. Ted pulls out money.

JASON
Mmm...the tacos are usually pretty
good too...

Ted counts the money, glancing back at Jason who's still looking at the menu.

TED
Yeah...they are.

Ted hands over the necessary amount.

JASON

Maybe the quesadilla...mmm...that's
small though...

Ted gets change handed back.

The cashier goes to grab his pretzel.

JASON (CONT'D)

You eat it...then it's gone...

Ted...nods?

TED

...yeah...

The cashier comes back with Ted's pretzel. He grabs it and
slides over for Jason, who steps up to the cashier.

JASON

I'll have one chicken burrito
and...two chicken quesadillas. And a
drink.

The cashier rings it up.

Ted grabs some napkins and gets some cheese for his pretzel.

Jason pulls out the money and pays for the food.

He puts the little change given into the nearby tip jar.

Ted looks for a place to sit, Jason watching him, putting his
receipt in his pocket.

Moments later, they're sitting down at a table.

Ted dips his pretzel in the cheese and takes a bite.

Jason starts eating one of the quesadillas.

They eat quietly.

The other people in the food court leave just as quietly.

Ted eats and takes in the empty space.

Jason's too busy eating to look around.

TED
How is it?

Jason swallows and starts nodding.

JASON
Alright...

He takes a sip of his drink.

JASON (CONT'D)
Yours?

Before Ted can speak, he coughs a little.

Jason nudges his drink a bit towards Ted, who takes a sip.

TED
It's good.

Beat.

TED (CONT'D)
I've had better but...

Jason nods.

JASON
I feel like whenever I get
those...it's like I'm chasing a high
I'll never get back.

Ted nods.

TED
Yeah...I get that...

Ted finishes his pretzel. Jason finishes his first quesadilla and moves to the second, not slowing down between them.

Ted wipes his hands with a napkin. Then around his mouth.

Ted glances around the court again.

This time it's not so empty.

The security guard is on the other side of the food court now, sitting down.

The guard may or may not be watching.

Ted looks at Jason who's busy eating.

TED (CONT'D)
Are you still on that prednisone?

Jason nods with a little too much relief.

JASON
Yeah, almost done though. Tomorrows
the last day of two, then it's five
days of one.

Ted nods.

Jason finishes the second quesadilla.

JASON (CONT'D)
I'm gonna be honest, I'm still going
to be hungry after this.

TED
Yeah...me too.

Beat.

TED (CONT'D)
How bout we swing by Angelo's. Get a
pizza?

Jason nods, now eating the burrito.

Ted takes a look at the security guard, who's still there,
possibly watching them.

Ted sighs.

He leans back in his chair, relaxing.

TED (CONT'D)
Let's take the long way out of here,
hm?

JASON
Sure.

Jason finishes the burrito. Ted let's his eyes wander.

INT. MALL - CONTINUOUS

Ted and Jason are walking through the long hallways of the
mall now. Even fewer people can be seen walking around.

They drift past shuttered storefronts and dim displays,
One storefront catches Jason.
He gestures at it, Ted looking over.

JASON
Remembering going in that one all the
time? Back when it was the arcade?

TED
Oh yeah...that one had all the fun
games.

JASON
Playing tag around the machines while
we waited. None of the employees
cared.

TED
None of them cared until we eventually
ran someone over.

JASON
They shouldn't have gotten in the way
of a game of tag.

TED
I feel like we more got in *their* way.

JASON
No, nonono. Vice versa, my friend,
vice versa.

The two pass more stores.

One of which is a home goods store -

With a single display chair facing out towards the rest of
the mall.

Ted notices it.

His eyes narrow slightly.

His gaze shifts forward.

TED
What if...you had a store...and it
sold...*one* kind of chair?

Jason's eyes rest on the ground as the two walk.

JASON

...what do you mean one kind of chair?

Ted's eyes narrow a bit, still looking in front.

TED

Like...we only sell one kind of chair.
One model of chair...

Beat.

JASON

Is that...is that sustainable? Is that
profitable?

TED

If you use the right kind of chair...I
think so.

JASON

...but...I don't know-

TED

You'd use whatever the best kind of
chair is. That's the one you'd sell.

Beat.

JASON

What if people don't like it? It's not
their best kind?

TED

Well...then they're wrong.

Beat.

TED (CONT'D)

Because it's the best chair.

The chair idea hangs there as they walk.

JASON

...I guess...

The two slowly come to a bit of a stop. They look around the hallway, now nobody can be seen on either side of them.

TED

I think this place is closing soon.

JASON

Yeah...let's get out of here.

The two start walking through the hallway again.

Ted looks ahead. Jason watches the floor pass under them.

INT. MALL CENTER - CONTINUOUS

Ted and Jason stroll up to the middle of the mall. A fountain sits in the middle.

A small merchandise stand is nearby selling keychains.

Ted looks at the fountain, Jason at the stand.

JASON

I'll be right back.

Jason walks towards the stand, Ted watches him.

Ted returns to the fountain.

JASON (O.S.)

It's five dollars, yeah.

Beat.

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

But that's the listed price.

Beat.

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

I'm talking about the actual price.
Your price.

Ted looks at the bottom of the fountain.

Coins litter the bottom.

Ted fishes in his pocket and pulls out a quarter.

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

I think there's a middle ground you
haven't thought of.

Ted turns the quarter over once.

The fountain waits.

Patiently.

JASON (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Come on...something is better than
nothing.

A crease forms around Ted's mouth.

JASON (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Hell yeah, thank you.

Jason returns with a keychain.

He notices the quarter and lets the moment happen.

FLIP.

The coin drops into the water.

Ted watches it settle on the bottom. Jason watches with him.

Beat.

JASON
Ready?

Ted nods.

The two walk back towards the entrance of the mall.

As they walk out, the security guard appears behind them,
trailing once again.

Ted notices.

This time, Ted stops first.

Jason follows.

So does the guard.

TED
What's going on dude?

SECURITY GUARD
I'm not following you.

Silence.

TED
I didn't say you were.

SECURITY GUARD
Good...cause I'm not.

Nobody else is around them. They seem to be the last people in the mall.

Ted doesn't look away from the guard. Jason's eyes move between them, keychain in hand.

TED
We're going now.
We're leaving.

The guard taps his sides rhythmically.

SECURITY GUARD
...Alright.
Have a nice night.

Beat.

Jason looks at Ted. Then back at the guard.

JASON
...You too.

Ted backs toward the doors without giving the guard his back.

Jason leads, checking over his shoulder.

The guard stands there, watching.

Patiently.

The doors open for Ted and Jason.

They walk out.

The doors close.