

JUNK

By

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FADE IN:

INT. HIGH SCHOOL CLASSROOM - NIGHT - TV FOOTAGE

It's a teen sitcom, pure 90s, similar in style and tone to *SAVED BY THE BELL*. It's set in a high school classroom - globes, over-sized maps, inspirational posters, all there.

The middle of the room has been converted into a romantic dinner setting, complete with candles and white table cloth.

EVELYN, age 18, a *TIGER BEAT* cover-girl, enters. She's blindfolded, led from behind by her heartthrob boyfriend, TOMMY. They're both dressed for a fancy event - Evelyn in a sparkling purple dress, Tommy in a tuxedo.

TOMMY

Ready?

EVELYN

If anything bites, scratches, or mauls me, we're totally breaking up.

A LAUGH TRACK brings the joke home.

Tommy removes the blindfold. Evelyn swoons.

He pulls out her chair. She sits, and he takes his own.

EVELYN

(re: the wine glasses)

You know we're not old enough to drink.

TOMMY

Who said anything about drinking?

He snaps his fingers.

An older gentleman, a cheesy *ROBOT BUTLER*, approaches the table. His movements jerk and spasm. He's not in the best control of his body.

He pulls the tab on a can of *BUB SODA* and pours some into both wine glasses.

EVELYN

Glad to see you're still making use of the ol' hunk of junk.

TOMMY

He'll be all I have soon.

A *SYMPATHETIC MOAN* from the prerecorded audience.

EVELYN
... don't.

TOMMY
(trying to smile)
This is where we first met, you know?

EVELYN
I somewhat remember being hit in
the back of the head with a pencil.

LAUGH TRACK.

TOMMY
It got your attention, didn't it?

Evelyn puts her hand on his.

EVELYN
And you've still got it.

TOMMY
Not for long.
(pulling hand away)
Tomorrow we both leave. This right
here - this is it.

EVELYN
But we have this moment. And all you
really need is *one* perfect moment.

TOMMY
Just one?

EVELYN
One perfect moment with one perfect
person. That's what it's all about.
Find it and it makes life worth living.

TOMMY
What can I do to make that moment
this moment?

EVELYN
It already is.

Evelyn smiles. She's absolutely stunning. They lock eyes -
PURE LOVE.

The Robot Butler feels the romantic tension and turns his
back.

The young couple lean over the table and share a SWEET KISS.

There's applause, oohs and aahs, whistles, jubilation from the "LIVE STUDIO AUDIENCE."

INT. DINGY HOME - NIGHT

The SOUNDS of the television show continue. It's dark inside the house, illuminated only by the green glow of the TV. GENE, age 18, is every mother's warning about sitting too close to the TV. He's wiry, lean, sickly pale, watching the show with wide-eyes.

A GOLDEN RETRIEVER PUPPY nuzzles up to him. Gene scoops it up, holds it close as tears fall from enthralled eyes. Those watery eyes reflect the END CREDITS of his favorite show.

OPENING CREDITS - MONTAGE - TV FOOTAGE

Under the opening credits are cuts of Evelyn's show, interspersed with flashes of TV STATIC and FUZZ. The footage plays out like a "BEST OF" from the show, now identified as ROBO HIGH. The footage appears to have been recorded from TV to tape, cheap VHS.

- Snippets of the ROBO HIGH title sequence - bright and colorful graphics and an on-the-nose theme song.
- Tommy tinkers with a new robot. It sparks and catches fire.
- Evelyn is getting makeup put on by one of Tommy's contraptions. It's a disaster.
- A GEEKY FRIEND is bullied but saved by Tommy, always dashing.
- Evelyn dances in a talent show. She's doing a cute, wholesome routine, backed up by a few SPASTIC ROBOTS.
- Tommy presents a GOLDEN RETRIEVER PUPPY to Evelyn. She hugs it tight.
- Tommy's Robot Butler spills a tray of food.
- Tommy and Evelyn flirt, madly in love.
- Evelyn cries on a FRIEND's shoulder.

The final clip shows the ENTIRE CAST, Evelyn and Tommy in front, taking a FINAL BOW.

EVELYN (V.O.)
After six seasons, ROBO HIGH came
to a close.

(MORE)

EVELYN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 For the cast and fans alike, we
 laughed. We cried. We loved. We
 found our perfect moment. We found
 each other...

Static cuts off EVELYN's VOICE OVER and ends the OPENING CREDITS.

OVER BLACK

TOMMY (V.O.)
 Tomorrow we both leave. This right
 here - this is it.

A familiar prerecorded AWWWWWWW.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL CLASSROOM - NIGHT - TV FOOTAGE

The EXACT SAME SCENE from the opening plays. The footage is dirtier, fuzzier, a recording of a recording of a recording.

EVELYN
 But we have this moment. And all you
 really need is *one* perfect moment.

TOMMY
 Just one?

EVELYN
 One perfect moment with one perfect
 person. That's what it's all about.
 Find it and it makes life worth living.

TOMMY
 What can I do to make that moment
this moment?

EVELYN
 It already is.

Evelyn smiles. The Robot Butler turns his back. The young couple share their kiss.

The APPLAUSE begins but immediately stops, the image of the couple kissing frozen in time.

The scene begins to quickly REWIND.

INT. REPAIR SHOP - FRONT ROOM - DAY

Gene, now in his early 30s, is still watching the show, sicklier than ever. A remote in his hand, he sits alone at a counter in a cluttered repair shop. The shop is covered floor to ceiling in busted electronics, a hoarder's paradise and hell all at once.

SUPERIMPOSE: 10 YEARS LATER

Gene pushes play. ROBO HIGH resumes on the small, portable TV next to him.

EVELYN (ON TV)

That's what it's all about. Find it
and it makes life worth living.

TOMMY (ON TV)

What can I do to make that
moment *this* moment?

GENE

What can I do to m-make that
moment *this* moment?

Gene plays along with the scene but it sounds forced, soulless. He gets frustrated and REWINDS the footage again.

His concentration is broken by a LOUD BUZZING.

Gene quickly pauses the tape, looking guilty, like he was caught watching porn. It freezes on an image of Evelyn.

Another BUZZ.

Gene turns to see HARRY, older, cut with deep wrinkles, bundled up in a ratty coat, standing at the glass front door. Harry pushes a button and the BUZZER goes off again.

Gene hits a switch beneath the counter. A deadbolt unlatches from the front door, letting Harry in.

HARRY

Got something else for ya'.

Harry holds up an old video camera, huge and blocky. Gene takes it.

HARRY

I'm guessing it ain't outta your
area o' expertise.

GENE

What's wrong with it?

HARRY

Oh, well, see, you push the *on* button but instead of coming *on*, it stays off.

Gene turns it over in his hands.

HARRY

Ain't trying to resell this one either. This one's personal. Got a granddaughter with a birthday coming up. Wife wants us to start recording these "special moments." Kid's nine, Gene. She ain't gonna have a movie-worthy "special moment" for 20 years - if ever.

GENE

I'll get it fixed for you. I get it. 10's a big year.

HARRY

Is it?

GENE

(shrugs)
Double digits.

Harry looks past him, at the frozen image of Evelyn on the TV.

Gene notices. He immediately tries to turn it off, fumbling with the remote, but only manages to start the tape and put the volume on FULL BLAST. Finally, he yanks the cord from the wall and the TV goes black.

He turns back to Harry with an embarrassed smile.

HARRY

Gene. You're pale as ghost tits. You look like shit.

GENE

Thanks, Harry.

HARRY

You need someone in your life besides me to tell you that.

Gene shrugs.

HARRY

Ever tried looking around the real world?

(MORE)

HARRY (CONT'D)

I mean most of it's shit, but at least the further from this place, the better it gets. Or, you know, sit in here all day. Whatever works for ya'. I guess that'll get my camera fixed faster anyways.

Harry turns to leave. Once he's at the door, he looks down. It's the GOLDEN RETRIEVER PUPPY. It hasn't aged a day since the opening.

HARRY

Little guy ever get out of that bed?

GENE

That's his spot.

The puppy's tail wags enthusiastically, other than that, it doesn't move a muscle.

HARRY

We all got em' I guess.

INT. REPAIR SHOP - BACK ROOM - NIGHT

Gene tinkers with Harry's camera at a workbench. It's been completely taken apart, spread out in pieces in front of him.

He's half paying attention to the work and half paying attention to the show on TV - an episode of ROBO HIGH, of course.

A better look at Gene's back room reveals a familiar layout taking up a good portion of the space. An area that isn't overcrowded with cheap electronics resembles ROBO HIGH's classroom set... somewhat. There's a table in the middle with a "romantic" place setting. There's even a large chalkboard and some old inspirational posters, poorly hung.

Gene takes a drink from a can of BUB SODA. The can is empty. He tosses it in a nearby trash can to join several other empty cans of BUB, a veritable wall of aluminum.

He opens a small fridge. Nothing there.

There's a case of BUB next to the fridge. He shakes it. Empty as well.

PENNY PETE (PRELAP V.O.)

Penny Pete's. Drinks and eats.

INT. REPAIR SHOP - FRONT ROOM

Gene's on a landline at the front counter.

GENE

Pete, it's Gene. I need another case of BUB. Can you send Lou?

PENNY PETE (V.O.)

Nope.

GENE

What? Why not?

PENNY PETE (V.O.)

He's dead.

GENE

Dead? When was this?

PENNY PETE (V.O.)

Tonight. Couple hours ago.

GENE

Jeez... wow, yeah, he was, he was a good one. Nice guy...

PENNY PETE (V.O.)

Yeah, real nice.

GENE

Ok, well... can you send someone else?

PENNY PETE (V.O.)

There is nobody else.

GENE

What about you?

PENNY PETE (V.O.)

Can't just leave the store, Gene. Someone's gotta watch the store. Come pick it up yourself.

GENE

Oh, come on. I pay, you know? I'm always good for it. I got the money.

PENNY PETE (V.O.)

So then get down here, you lazy shit.

GENE

I can pay a little extra. I'll do that. I tip. I always tipped Lou really well.

PENNY PETE (V.O.)

Lou's dead.

Pete HANGS UP. There's nothing left to argue.

Gene replaces the receiver, lost. He takes a shallow breath.

He looks to the front of the store - to his puppy, still lying in bed, still in the exact same spot.

GENE

Ok... well, I guess, I guess I'm heading out then, huh? No big deal. Just up the street.

The puppy wags its tail.

EXT. REPAIR SHOP/CITY STREETS

Gene tucks his hands into his pockets and heads off down the road.

The outside world is as cluttered and disgusting as the inside of Gene's shop. Trash lines the streets. Around every corner is a person more dirt than clean skin.

Gene is unfazed, head down, determined.

FUZZ & FUSE

Gene passes an electronics store - the FUZZ & FUSE. Multiple old tube televisions form a glowing wall in the display window. The screens announce BREAKING ENTERTAINMENT NEWS. There are brief mentions of Evelyn and ROBO HIGH.

Gene doesn't notice. He just keeps walking.

PENNY PETE'S CONVENIENCE STORE

Gene's made it to Pete's store. At one time it was a gas station, but the pumps have long been out of service.

There's no entrance in the front. Instead customers have to walk to a thick, bullet-proof window at the side of the building.

At the window is PENNY PETE, bell-shaped, balding, smiling as wide as his face will allow.

PENNY PETE
That you, Gene?

GENE
Hey.

PENNY PETE
Fuck me. From what you order, I
always expected you to be a big,
fat shit. How you stay so skinny?

GENE
Just need a case of BUB. Maybe a
bag of Thing Rings. Barbecue if you
got it.

PENNY PETE
That it?

GENE
That's it.

Pete puts the order together and sticks it in the large metal tray below the window. It slides out with a loud THUNK, hitting Gene in the stomach and pushing him back a step.

GENE
They know who killed Lou?

PENNY PETE
(laughing)
Oh, yeah. Yeah. They got their best
men on it. Everybody gives a fuck
about ol' Lou.

Pete just keeps right on chuckling.

FUZZ & FUSE

Gene carries his groceries back past the electronics store.

A young SHITHEAD, a living anti-drug PSA, rushes out from the shadows. He grabs the case of BUB and tears it from Gene's hands.

The Shithead's sloppy, though, and the case hits the ground. Cans EXPLODE on impact, spraying soda in every direction.

Gene stares at him, nervous about what happens next. The Shithead takes a step forward. Gene flinches and puts up his hands.

The Shithead just laughs, never taking his eyes off Gene, even as he grabs a can of leaking BUB and cracks it open. He pours it into his open mouth. Soda drips from his chin and onto his shirt.

He tosses the empty can at Gene's feet and disappears back down the street.

Once he's gone, Gene starts scooping up the cans when he hears it. A VOICE, nasally, high-pitched, very excited.

HIGH-PITCHED ANNOUNCER (ON TV, O.S.)
Evelyn's back!

Gene stops. *He couldn't have heard that right.* He turns to the wall of TVs. They all show the same BREAKING ENTERTAINMENT NEWS.

HIGH-PITCHED ANNOUNCER (ON TV)
Best known for her breakout role in the hit series ROBO HIGH, she's now taking a new stage that has the entertainment world buzzing.

Gene stands. He can't believe it.

HIGH-PITCHED ANNOUNCER (ON TV)
In a live performance that can't be missed, right here on our stage tomorrow night! Where will you be when Evelyn returns?

Regular programming resumes - casual reports of death and graphic violence.

Gene looks around, wondering if he's dreaming. All he sees is SLOPPY JOE, an old man in a tattered coat as dirty as his thoughts. He stands close by, watching the wall of TVs.

SLOPPY JOE
I know where I'll be. Right here.
Dick in hand. I bet she's looking good, real good.

Sloppy Joe squeezes his crotch and turns to Gene. Gene's already heading back down the street, carrying what cans of BUB he could cradle.

INT. REPAIR SHOP - BACK ROOM

Gene cracks open a fresh can of BUB SODA. He sits at his mock romantic dinner setting.

His show, his scene, is on TV.

TOMMY (ON TV)	GENE
This is where we first met, you know?	This is where we first met, you know?

EVELYN (ON TV)
I somewhat remember being hit in
the back of the head with a pencil.

LAUGH TRACK.

TOMMY (ON TV)	GENE
It got your attention didn't it?	It got, It got your attention didn't it?

EVELYN (ON TV)
And you've still got it.

Gene smiles. It's the first time we've seen it. It's not the best smile, but it's the best he's got.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. REPAIR SHOP - BACK ROOM - DAY

It's a new day, a new morning. Gene is excited, light on his feet.

He packs a small cooler - BUB SODA is all he needs.

EXT. FUZZ & FUSE

Gene rolls his cooler to the front of the store. Under his arm is a lawn chair.

He props the chair in front of the TV display and takes a seat. He cracks open his first can of BUB.

For the time being, the TVs only show news. There's a brief report on a TRENDY CLUB DRUG, modified cannisters with attached oxygen masks. *Breathe in, Zone out.* Nothing Gene finds too exciting.

EXT. FUZZ & FUSE - NIGHT

The sun's gone down. Gene hasn't moved and has started quite a collection of empty soda cans.

A few others have huddled around the glow of the TVs as well, mostly VAGRANTS and general WEIRDOS, Sloppy Joe included. They chatter amongst themselves.

Gene's not interested. His attention is devoted to the TVs.

His diligence finally pays off.

COLOR GRAPHICS explode onto the TVs screens. A vibrance Gene's not used to in his drab world. TRIUMPHANT MUSIC plays. This is an event - a big event.

The crowd keeps yakking. Gene SHUSHES them loudly. Everyone goes quiet, giving him squinted stares.

On the TVs, a stage is dimly lit. The silhouetted heads of a LARGE CROWD sit in silence. A spotlight hits the stage. Evelyn steps out from behind a curtain. She wears a long, flowing dress. She's as gorgeous as ever, more even.

Gene gets out of his chair. He walks closer to the TVs.

Light orchestral music plays, building and building. Evelyn stands before the crowd. Pure elegance. She begins a song, operatic and beautiful. Her voice SOARS.

Gene's eyes widen. His lip quivers.

Evelyn continues her song, singing straight to camera, straight to Gene.

Gene steps even closer to the TVs. He reaches out, brushing the window of the shop with his fingertips. Evelyn's performance reflects in his eyes.

Evelyn's voice crescendos, reverberating through the theater. Then... a huge EXPLOSION OF PYROTECHNICS.

It actually startles Gene.

The large curtain behind Evelyn drops, revealing a full band. They start playing - AGGRESSIVE POP, drug-fueled DANCE MUSIC. Now come the BACKGROUND DANCERS, shirtless men, the bulges in their pants bigger than their biceps. Evelyn sings, auto-tuned, robotic.

Gene scrunches his face.

The Dancers grab Evelyn's dress and pull it in all directions.

It falls to the floor in tatters, revealing very little underneath. She grinds on her dancers, sex-crazed choreography. The AUDIENCE ABSOLUTELY LOVES IT.

Gene turns toward the small group behind him. *They can't be enjoying this.* But they are. Especially that damn old man, Sloppy Joe.

SLOPPY JOE

I knew she'd grow up in all the
right places.

There are HOLLERS and CATCALLS of horny men all around Gene. A few of the vagrants mimic the dance moves, grinding on one another and having a laugh.

Gene turns back to see...

A few dancers in STARFISH COSTUMES now on stage. There's something very phallic about their arms. Evelyn rubs against them. WHITE FOAM explodes into the air.

Gene's had enough. He turns his back to the TVs. He puts his arms out, trying to block the crowd's view.

GENE

Alright. I-I think, I think we've
all seen enough.

HORNY VAGRANT

Get the fuck out the way!

GENE

Nah, we get the idea. Let's all just --

One of the younger members of the crowd grabs Gene by the shirt and pushes him away from the display.

Gene trips over his cooler of BUB, spilling cans across the sidewalk.

Gene's lost the fight. He walks away, defeated.

The crowd scoop up some of the escaping BUB cans and go right back to watching.

INT. REPAIR SHOP - BACK ROOM

Emotionally distraught, physically ill, Gene paces in the back room of the repair shop. A room that serves as a makeshift shrine to ROBO HIGH and its once wholesome star.

Gene's heart sinks. Now he finally calms down, slumping over his counter, tears forming in his eyes.

INT. REPAIR SHOP - BACK ROOM - DAY

It's daytime. Sunlight struggles through gaps in thick blankets blocking Gene's windows.

The LOUD BUZZ of the front door rings out.

The busted tv still rests on the floor.

Another BUZZ.

Gene rolls out of his twin-sized bed. He lumbers, zombie-like, out of the room and toward the sound.

INT. REPAIR SHOP - FRONT ROOM

Gene appears from the back room. He may not have slept a single minute, his eyes red from a night of tears.

Harry's at the door, really giving it to the buzzer. Gene hits the button that lets his regular customer in.

HARRY

Gene, how often do I tell you you look terrible?

GENE

Every time you see me.

HARRY

I take it all back. I was wrong. Every single time I said it before. I was wrong. Because today, today you truly look like reheated shit.

GENE

Thanks.

HARRY

Well, I'm actually hoping I get to thank you today. You get that camera fixed?

GENE

I, uh, you know it's, it's just been a bit tougher than I thought.

HARRY

Awww, shit. I was really counting on having it this weekend.

GENE

I can still make that... I think.

Harry looks him over; a small smile forms.

HARRY

I think I know what got you distracted. It was your girl, huh? Big comeback, right? Probably been playing that back for days, haven't ya? Or did you miss it locking yourself up in here?

GENE

I caught it.

HARRY

Yeah, not my bag really. Grandbaby loved it, though.

GENE

Your grandbaby?

HARRY

Yeah, grandbaby. The 9-year-old. Shit, Gene, no wonder the camera ain't fixed. You don't listen to a word I say.

GENE

A 9-year-old watched that?

HARRY

Likes anything loud and dumb and colorful, I guess. Hell, she's dragging me to meet her today at... what's the name of that damn place. Primal Vinyl, some shit like that.

GENE

What?

HARRY

It's a record store, Gene. She's signing albums or something. You seriously never leave this place do --

GENE

You let a 9-year-old watch that? I mean even the... those were...

(MORE)

GENE (CONT'D)

I'm pretty sure those were...
(under his breath)
Penises, Harry.

HARRY

(laughing)
Who the Hell do you think that
shit's made for? Me and you? Jesus,
Gene, really?

Gene doesn't have an answer. He just listens as Harry has a hearty laugh at his expense.

INT. BUS

Gene, looking as disheveled as ever, rides in a overly crowded bus, standing room only. He's sandwiched between a LARGE COUPLE.

In front of him is a television screen. To his dismay it begins playing a commercial for a LIFE-SIZED EVELYN DOLL. It's hips jerk back and forth, spastic. It's motorized jaw opens and closes, singing a robotic rendition of one of her songs. EXCITED LITTLE GIRLS, sing and dance along with it.

It's not something Gene wants to see, so he attempts to turn his back, but it's nearly impossible with how tightly he's wedged.

His awkward struggle finally pays off and his back is soon to the screen. What he sees on the other side of the bus is a banner for Evelyn's new album: FILTH HARMONIC.

In the banner, Evelyn stares straight forward, mouth slightly open, lips pouted. Someone has taken the opportunity to draw a LARGE DICK near her face.

Gene decides it's best to just look down for now.

EXT. PRIMAL VINYL

The beat-up city bus, ready to break down at any moment pulls up along the sidewalk. Gene steps out.

He stops, barely comprehending what's in front of him.

There's a LINE OF PEOPLE stretched around the block, all there to see Evelyn. Posters with Evelyn's glitter-smearred face are plastered everywhere. The crowd is mostly composed of young girls, TWEENS, glitter-covered themselves, accompanied by BEGRUDGED PARENTS.

Gene makes a bee-line for the entrance.

He passes Harry and his smiling GRANDDAUGHTER, a little girl with an Evelyn t-shirt and bright green eye shadow.

HARRY

Shoulda known you wouldn't miss this.

Gene doesn't respond, just keeps walking past person after person.

He gets to the cluttered doorway and doesn't think twice about trying to push his way in. The crowd isn't having it. There are BOOS and JEERS, a few THREATS OF VIOLENCE.

Gene is on a mission, though. An angry crowd isn't going to stop him.

The security guard, KRAU, plans to, however, and he has the mass and demeanor to do it.

KRAU

Back of the line.

GENE

Oh, I'm just here to talk to Evelyn.

Now the crowd LAUGHS.

KRAU

Wow, really, no shit?
(close to Gene's face)
Back of the line. Now.

Gene takes a step forward. That's all he gets before Krau gives him a hard push in the other direction. The crowd appreciates the force and offers some applause.

Gene clenches his teeth. He's about to take another step toward Krau. But he looks at the big man, and the big man stares straight through him.

KRAU

Please, *please* do something. I've been dying for one of you shitbags to step out of line all day.

Gene thinks better of it.

He slinks his way back down the line, mocked by the crowd the whole way.

As he passes Harry, the old friend grabs his arm.

HARRY

Don't worry, Gene. You'll get in there. Just a bit of patience, huh?

Gene nods and continues down the line, finally arriving at the very back and not thrilled about it.

In front of him is KATHERINE, short, near Gene's age, so full of energy it comes off her in waves.

KATHERINE

Bold move, buddy. Bold move. Trying to cut in line. You'll get eaten alive by this crowd. One pre-teen bite at a time.

Gene isn't up for a chat.

KATHERINE

What's the matter? Can't wait like the rest of them? You something special? Long lost relative? She's heard that one before. Believe me.

GENE

Just need to see her.

KATHERINE

You didn't bring anything to sign. Oh... oh, no... you're not a creep are you? Gonna try to whack it in front of her or something?

Gene looks her over.

GENE

You don't have anything to sign either. Are you a creep?

KATHERINE

Psshh. Evelyn's my friend.
(chuckling)
You don't have friends sign things, dummy. You ever even had a friend before?

GENE

You're friends with Evelyn?

KATHERINE

Good friends.

Gene doesn't buy it.

KATHERINE

What's that? You don't believe me?

Katherine leans out of line. There's Krau, the security guard, back to watching the door.

Katherine waves like crazy to him. He's not paying attention.

KATHERINE

Hey! Hey! Hey, Krau! Heeeey!

Finally, he looks her direction. She's still waving like mad.

Reluctantly, just to get her to stop, Krau nods.

KATHERINE

See? Everyone knows me around here.

GENE

So you know the guards. You're friends with Evelyn --

KATHERINE

Good friends.

GENE

-- good friends. But you have to wait in line with the rest of us. Doesn't make much sense.

Katherine doesn't have a good answer. She looks a bit embarrassed.

KATHERINE

I'm, I'm not really all about, like, special treatment, you know? Getting to meet her means the world to these kids. I see her all the time.

Gene's heard enough.

GENE

... sure.

INT. PRIMAL VINYL - LATER

From the back to the front, Gene's place in line has finally moved inside.

He's close to Evelyn's table. The NERVES have arrived.

Katherine is being politely escorted from in front of Evelyn. Katherine's smile couldn't be wider. She's not quite ready to leave, but she doesn't have much of a choice.

Next to Evelyn is DONNER, her manager, a presence always by her side. He's clean-cut, composed, hands neatly folded in front of him.

He gestures for Gene to come forward, already a little skeptical of the fidgety man approaching his star.

Gene stops about six feet from the table, standing there in awkward silence, hands shaking.

Evelyn looks around, confused.

DONNER

Sir? Come on. We have a long line.

Gene takes a few more steps. He's now face to face with Evelyn, although he can't manage to look her in the eyes.

EVELYN

Hi! How are you?

Gene can't form words. Evelyn keeps her smile up.

EVELYN

You have something you want me to sign?

Gene shakes his head. Evelyn looks to Donner, not sure how to handle the guy in front of her.

DONNER

If you want to buy an album to sign, we can do that.

Donner grabs a FILTH HARMONIC album from a stack. He holds it out to Gene, but Gene doesn't take it.

GENE

I, uh, I just wanted to say, you don't, uh, you don't have to do this. The old, the old, the old show... it, uh...

Evelyn has no idea what he's trying to say. No one does, not even Gene.

Gene swallows hard, knows he's getting nowhere.

GENE

This is, uh, this is where we first met, you know?

Evelyn now looks worried.

GENE

This is where we, where we first met, you know?

Donner's seen enough. He gestures to Krau.

GENE

It got your attention didn't it?

EVELYN

What?

GENE

It's, it's from the show.

EVELYN

... ok.

Krau puts a hand on Gene's shoulder and walks him away from the table.

GENE

Wait, ok, I didn't... I still need --

KRAU

You need to leave. And that's all.

GENE

But, I --

KRAU

Now.

GENE

Yeah, ok. Yeah, sure.

Gene starts to head toward the exit. It's a fake-out. A very bad, very obvious one. He rushes back toward Evelyn's table.

Krau instantly grabs him in a head lock. Gene desperately tries to look Evelyn's direction.

GENE

I just, I just... ROBO HIGH! ROBO HIGH, Evelyn! One perfect moment! That's all we--

Krau squeezes. Gene coughs and no more words come out.

EXT. PRIMAL VINYL

Gene is once again pushed outside. This time with much more force.

He gains his composure. All eyes are on him - a wary crowd and a very pissed security guard. He takes the cue and walks away.

PRIMAL VINYL - SIDE OF BUILDING

Gene turns the corner and runs directly into Katherine.

KATHERINE

... dude. That in there, that was...
damn, that was hard to watch.

Gene walks past her. Katherine doesn't take the brush off lightly and hurries to catch up.

KATHERINE

What were you saying to her?
Seriously.

(still following Gene)

You can't approach her like that,
you know? Evelyn's cool. She likes
her fans to be cool, too. Were you
talking about the old show? Robo
High? Jesus. You know she doesn't
like to talk about the old show,
right? You really don't know
anything about her do you?

Gene finally stops, his patience gone.

GENE

And what do you know?! You don't
know anything!

KATHERINE

Whoa. Hey, alright, calm down, buddy.
Cool, remember? I like the old stuff
better, too. I really do, but artist
evolve, you know? Evelyn doesn't --

GENE

You don't know her, ok? You don't.
Stop. It's embarrassing.

KATHERINE

Yes, I *do*. We hang out. A lot.

GENE

You hang out? And where do you hang out?

KATHERINE

Everywhere. The clubs. Good ones.
Exclusive ones. Her house... how
about that, smartass?

GENE

You go to her house?

KATHERINE

All the time.

GENE

Bullshit.

KATHERINE

No shit, pal. Real shit.

GENE

Great. Then, you can take me there.

A short cough escapes Katherine.

KATHERINE

Take you where?

GENE

Evelyn's house.

KATHERINE

(scoffing)

I can't just take some weirdo to my
best friend's house.

GENE

Because you don't know where it is.

KATHERINE

Because she's a *private* person.

GENE

You know what? I don't care. I
don't even know why I'm standing
here listening to you lie.

Gene starts walking again. Katherine catches back up.

KATHERINE

I'm not lying. Don't call me a
liar. I hate being called a liar.

GENE

Fine. Then, prove it. Just show me her place. Show me.

KATHERINE

I mean, yeah, I totally could. But --

GENE

But, you guys are such good friends. I'm sure she wouldn't mind. Her being so cool and all.

KATHERINE

Yeah, totally cool.

INT. REPAIR SHOP - BACK ROOM - NIGHT

Gene is tidying up his repair shop. It's still a mess from his earlier tantrum.

He sweeps up glass and puts busted electronics back on their shelves.

He also takes the time to reset the table in the middle of the room - his makeshift ROBO HIGH set. He puts the table cloth back and replaces the wine glasses.

He sits at the table, looking longingly at the empty seat across from him.

Then... LOUD HONKING.

EXT. REPAIR SHOP

Gene pokes his head outside.

Katherine is out front in a tiny beat-to-shit Volkswagen Bug. She's JAMMING on the horn, super-excited.

KATHERINE

Hurry up!

Gene cautiously approaches.

KATHERINE

What? You didn't think I'd show? I told you I would. I'm *not* a liar. Now get in.

GENE

We're going to Evelyn's?

KATHERINE

No, we're getting pizza with the Pope. Of course, Evelyn's. Now get in, just being parked in this neighborhood makes me feel like I'm gonna get shot.

Gene heads to the passenger side. He opens the door.

EVELYN'S RAUNCHY POP MUSIC blares from the car speakers.

Gene stops.

KATHERINE

Come on!

GENE

Turn it off.

KATHERINE

What?

Gene motions to the radio. Katherine scrunches her face.

KATHERINE

Jesus. Fine.

Katherine switches off the radio. Gene relaxes and gets in.

INT. KATHERINE'S CAR - GENE'S NEIGHBORHOOD/SPARKLING HILLS

Katherine drives along the dirty streets of Gene's world. She takes a turn toward greener hills.

EXT. SPARKLING HILLS - VARIOUS

Katherine's little Bug weaves through extremely narrow side streets, working their way up and down those steep hills.

These streets are clean, spotless, lined with lush trees, vibrant, colorful trees.

The houses they pass are modern, all glass and metal - expensive, large, gorgeous.

INT. KATHERINE'S CAR

Gene has never seen how the other half live before.

He stares out the window, nearly pressing his face against the glass, staring up at the impressive homes.

Katherine rolls down the window.

KATHERINE

You can stick your whole head out
if you want.

Gene settles back in his seat, a bit embarrassed.

KATHERINE

I'm guessing you don't get to see
this part of the city very often...
maybe at all.

GENE

Smell's different.

KATHERINE

No, see, it doesn't smell at all.
That's good, not different. Not
really suppose to smell like dog
shit all the...

(catching herself)

You want the window up?

Gene goes back to gazing out of the window.

GENE

No.

Katherine can't help but smile.

EXT. EVELYN'S HILLSIDE HOME - FRONT GATE

Katherine finally pulls the car to the side of the road.

In front of them is one of those modern, multi-story homes,
nearly every inch glass, a fluorescent oasis against a black
night.

Between them and the house is an iron fence, rising high
above.

INT. KATHERINE'S CAR

Katherine puts the car in park.

KATHERINE

Well, there it is, Geeeene.
Evelyn's house. Almost as beautiful
as the woman herself. Believe me
now, Geeeene?

GENE

How do we get in?

KATHERINE

What? In? No. I mean, we can't.
It's late. We can't. She goes to
bed early.

GENE

She goes to bed early?

KATHERINE

Beauty sleep, you know? It takes a
lot of... sleep.

GENE

We're not going to stay long. Just
give her a call and see if we can
say hi.

KATHERINE

She doesn't really like to be bothered.

GENE

Even by her best friend in the
whole world?

KATHERINE

Like I said, she's probably asleep.

GENE

You don't have her number do you?

KATHERINE

Whaaat?! Pssshh. Yeah. Of course, I
do. What kind of friend... of
course, I do.

Gene just stares at her. Gives her the go on.

Katherine makes a face back - *fine*.

She takes out her phone. Turns away from Gene. Pushes a few
buttons. Puts it to her face.

KATHERINE

(shrugging)
Not answering.

GENE

You didn't even dial.

KATHERINE

Yeah, I did.

Gene grabs the phone.

KATHERINE

Hey!

He puts it to his own ear. As suspected, he hears nothing.

He tosses the phone back.

He opens the car door and steps out.