

Let's Make A Deal

by

Reginald Beltran

reggiebeltran@hotmail.com

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FADE IN:

INT. PAWN SHOP - DAY

A PAWN BROKER sits behind a counter. He holds up an open newspaper. It covers him completely, except for the two hands, holding the paper. A ring adorns each finger.

A 1930s style cash register sits on the counter, which could use some cleaning.

Behind the broker, a large sign reads "We Buy Gold / Compramos Oro." Above him, a slow whirling ceiling fan cools the area.

The whole store has many curiosities for sale: dusty books, masks, toys, 1970 style Casio watches, and one fine business suit next to the pawn broker.

KURT (29) enters the store. He carries a case strapped around his shoulders.

Doors close behind him. Bells jingle above him, which startles Kurt. The pawn broker doesn't budge.

Kurt peruses the odds and ends, offered at the musky shop.

Without looking up:

PAWN BROKER

I only buy gold. I don't sell.

KURT

I'm not looking to buy. I'm looking to sell.

PAWN BROKER

Oh?

The pawn broker lowers his paper to peek at his curious customer. Someone must have rubbed Aladdin's lamp and out came this pawn broker. Full set of facial hair with a rubber band, tying the tip of his beard.

PAWN BROKER

Someone looking to trade?

Kurt approaches the pawn broker.

KURT

I'm selling.

The pawn broker puts the paper on the counter. Points at the case, strapped to Kurt.

PAWN BROKER

May I have a look at the goods?

Kurt puts the case on the counter. Opens it and reveals a pristine SAXOPHONE.

The pawn broker's eyes twitch. His fingers caress the saxophone's metallic skin.

PAWN BROKER

I give you ten dollars for Jenny.

KURT

How did you--

The pawn broker lifts the saxophone from the case. Twirls it around. Points at an inscription labeled "JENNY."

KURT

Listen, I know it's not gold, but it's certainly worth more than ten dollars.

PAWN BROKER

Naming something makes it a treasure indeed, but selling it means damaged goods.

KURT

It's clean. It works. Trust me.

PAWN BROKER

Oh, trust me... I know it works. What matters to me is why you're selling it.

KURT

Look, I just need the money and ten dollars is not gonna get me there.

PAWN BROKER

Perhaps ten dollars and something that I have will help you on your way. Hmmm?

KURT

A trade?

PAWN BROKER

An offering. Please have a look around.

Kurt's eyes scan the store, while the pawn broker inspects the saxophone with twitchy fingers.

KURT

(points at business suit)

How much you want for that suit?

The pawn broker puts the instrument on the counter. Reaches for the suit and hands it to Kurt.

PAWN BROKER

Ten dollars and a saxophone should suffice? Deal? Hmmm?

Kurt inspects the suit. Italian made. Wool. No scratches or damages. Fine stitching.

Kurt's eyes glance at his saxophone one last time, as if to say goodbye to "Jenny."

KURT
(nods)
Deal.

Unknowingly, Kurt hands him his driver's license. The saxophone distracts him.

The pawn broker takes a moment to scan his license.

PAWN BROKER
Happy Birthday. Twenty nine is a
good number but I'm afraid I can't
accept this as payment.

The pawn broker smiles and hands the license back to him.

PAWN BROKER
Cash only.

KURT
(shakes head)
I'm sorry. Here.

Kurt hands him the ten dollars, and the pawn broker puts it in the register.

KURT
What's your return policy?

PAWN BROKER
There is none. All sales final.

Kurt nods. Eyes the saxophone one last time and walks away.

The pawn broker polishes up his new treasure and places it behind him. Hangs the case, where the suit used to be. Puts a "For Sale" sign on it.

Bells jingle. Kurt exits and a JENNY (29) in a business suit enters. She carries a bag, the size of a laptop.

She walks to the counter and puts the bag on the counter. Opens it and reveals a computer.

PAWN BROKER
(smiling)
I don't fix things.

JENNY
I'm looking to sell.

PAWN BROKER
Oh?

JENNY

I hate my job.

INT. KURT'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The business suit hangs by a closet door. Next to it is a clean white shirt.

The pristine shirt contrasts the messy room. Demo CDs on one corner. Torn posters fill a garbage can. Opened letters scattered on a desk.

One opened letter has a red stamp which reads: "Overdue." It is on top of other letters.

Kurt tears one last poster. It's a poster of a famous jazz musician. Tears it up. Rolls it up into a ball. Throws it at an overfilled garbage can--

Misses it completely. It rolls to a corner of the room, where CD's scatter everywhere.

Kurt sits on the bed, where he has several stacks of newspapers. Opens one to the Classified Ads.

INT. JENNY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

She lies on the bed, stares at a nearby poster of Van Gogh's "Starry Night." A cell phone pressed to her ear.

JENNY

(to phone)

I've had it. Momma always said to chase your dreams.

(waits)

I'll be fine. Better than waking in the morning to see the fuck face twins at the water cooler.

(waits)

I'll. Be. Fine... Follow your dreams.

(waits)

What? Nevermind. Momma's always right. Listen, I gotta go.

She hangs up. Sits up at the corner of the bed. Pulls out a case from underdeath. Opens it--

Light glistens off the saxophone's metallic skin.

Jenny grabs it. Her fingers caress the "Jenny" inscription on the instrument.

She's about to play the instrument for the first time--

INT. KURT'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

With a red marker, Kurt circles a job posting.

INT. STRIP CLUB - NIGHT

Scantily clad women work the room filled with drunk men.

Kurt sits alone by the bar. His face could use a shave.

He wears the business suit and an untucked white shirt. Tie loosened around his neck. He stares at an empty glass.

BARTENDER approaches him.

BARTENDER

Another?

Unknowingly, Kurt hands him his driver's license:

KURT

Yeah. Put it on my tab.

BARTENDER

Happy Birthday. Don't listen to what they say about being thirty.

KURT

What?

The bartender returns the driver's license.

BARTENDER

We accept Visa, Mastercard or American Express only.

Kurt slides over a credit card:

KURT

I'm sorry. I didn't mean to--

BARTENDER

That's alright, son.

(smiles)

They say we age like Kentucky bourbon. Sweet--

KURT

Give me a shot of Wild Turkey.

He slides over a twenty dollar bill to the bartender.

KURT

And send me your best girl. I'm heading to the private rooms.

BARTENDER

Wild Turkey coming right up.

INT. PRIVATE ROOM - NIGHT

With drink in hand, Kurt sits in a private booth. It's like a bathroom stall, but for a different purpose.

Enough room for a private dance.

A half naked GIRL with a scarf wrapped around her head walks into his booth. She carries a saxophone with her.

She dances for him. Her lips suggestively licks the saxophone's metallic skin.

His eyes bulge with curiosity. The sax looks familiar.

When the dancer's within reach, he grabs the saxophone.

The dancer removes her scarf: it's Jenny.

JENNY

Hey! There's a no touch policy.

Kurt searches for the inscription on the sax. Finally, he finds it:

KURT

Jenny...

JENNY

The name's Savannah. Hey, how did you--

KURT

How did you get this?

JENNY

It's mine.

KURT

I sold this at a pawn shop.

JENNY

And I bought it. Now, hand it back.

Kurt reaches in his pockets and hands her a hundred dollar bill.

KURT

That's all I've got.

JENNY

It's not for sale.

He doesn't hear her or pretends not to.

JENNY

I'll sell it to you for five hundred.

KURT

Do you play?

JENNY

You've seen me dance.

KURT
I mean for real.

JENNY
Listen, mister. I'm just trying to
make a living--

KURT
May I?

She takes a moment to consider his offer. Another twenty
bucks from Kurt seals the deal.

JENNY
You're the weirdest customer ever.

She takes a seat next to him.

JENNY
Why'd you sell it in the first
place?

KURT
I had no choice. I've had it
forever, until I couldn't afford it
anymore. It was time to move on.

His words bring a tear to her eye. Then more tears.

KURT
What's wrong?

JENNY
You can have it. I don't want it
anymore.

With tears streaming down her eyes, she runs away and leaves
him in the booth.

KURT
Wait!

He doesn't chase her. His fingers touch the inscription.

KURT
(whispers)
Jenny...

He plays the saxophone.

INT. PAWN SHOP - DAY

Whistling a happy tune, the pawn broker shines a HAND GUN.

Content with his work, he puts the hand gun in a drawer
behind the counter. Closes it.

Bells jingle. A WOMAN enters. Eyes swell with tears.

She walks up to the counter and removes a GOLD RING with a diamond as a centerpiece. It's on her left ring finger.

With twitchy fingers, the pawn broker inspects it.

PAWN BROKER

Ten dollars.

WOMAN

Listen, asshole. I'm in no mood.

PAWN BROKER

Perhaps a trade?

WOMAN

What would you have that I would want?

The pawn broker flashes a wide smile.

FADE OUT

THE END