

Pulling the Wool

By

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EXT. MALL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Empty save for one car.

INT. TIM'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

TIM (20) sits in the driver's seat. He has a shiner and holds two cell phones, his eyes fixed on the one that is RINGING.

INT. SMOOTHIE BAR - EARLIER THAT DAY

The bar is located in the mall. Shoppers pass by.

Tim, sans shiner, cleans up around the bar. A plump woman approaches. She looks over the menu.

WOMAN

Wow. Umm...what do you recommend?

TIM

First timer?

WOMAN

Yes, my girlfriend told me about this place. She says it helped her lose weight so I thought I'd give it a try.

TIM

I'll bet she did it with the strawberry-banana Fat Stripper.

WOMAN

Ooh, sold.

She giggles and Tim grabs a blender cup from a stack.

TIM

Small or large?

WOMAN

Large.

Tim blends the contents. ZACH (20, tall and built) walks up and sits on a stool at the bar. Tim gives him a quick glance.

TIM

(to the woman)

Any extra ginseng, protein powder, wheatgrass?

WOMAN
How much are the supplements?

TIM
Dollar a shot.

She shakes her head no. He pours the smoothie and hands it over.

TIM
Six-forty-seven.

They exchange cash and change. She takes a sip and gives Tim a thumbs up.

WOMAN
Mmmmmm...

Tim half-smiles. As soon as she leaves the smile fades. He goes over to Zach at the bar.

TIM
And what can I get for you, sir?

ZACH
All the money in the register,
punk.

TIM
Right, the usual?

Tim makes a smoothie for Zach.

ZACH
(whiny voice)
How much are the supplements?

Tim laughs.

TIM
You really think they're gonna
help, tons-o-fun?

ZACH
Throw in some protein and ginseng-
two proteins.

TIM
Gotta stay pumped.

Tim pours the smoothie.

TIM (CONT'D)
And we just happen to be giving
these away for the next ten
seconds.

Tim looks out at the mall and its inhabitants.

TIM (CONT'D)
Any other takers?

Zach shrugs innocently and takes the smoothie.

ZACH
Later, fool.

TIM
Later.

Zach takes a sip before walking away and gives Tim a hearty thumbs up. Tim laughs.

INT. DVD STORE - LATER

Movie posters cover the walls. DVDs line the aisles. Zach stands behind the counter. Enter Tim.

TIM
Yeah, do you guys have Shaving
Ryan's Privates?

ZACH
Why, you need instructions?

They both laugh. Tim searches, finds two DVDs and takes them up to the counter. Zach holds one up.

ZACH
Oh, this one's not for sale.

TIM
My lucky day.

Zach scans the barcode of one DVD but puts both DVDs in a bag. They exchange cash and change.

ZACH
There you go, twofer. Hey, check
this out.

He opens a door behind the counter that leads to a small back room. A box sits a table with Japanese characters on it.

TIM
Oooooohhh...is that it?

ZACH
That's it.

Tim's eyes get wide with excitement.

TIM
Are we gonna do it?

ZACH
Let's go over it tonight. Wings?

TIM
Wings.

Zach watches Tim leave.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Zach sits at a table sipping a drink and watching TV. His cell phone rings. It is a cheap, older model phone.

ZACH
What up?

OUTSIDE

Tim has his cell phone to his ear.

TIM
Hey, I'm here. Where are you?

INSIDE

ZACH
Uh, back left corner.

Tim enters, finds Zach and sits down.

TIM
Hey.

ZACH
Hey, I already ordered.

TIM
Thanks. So let's go over it.

ZACH
It's not that complicated. How much
do you think you'll have tomorrow?

TIM
Well, since I accidentally forgot
to take the deposit in tonight I
think we could make out with about
eight hundred tomorrow.

ZACH
Is that how much those DVDs are
worth?

TIM
More or less. More to me.

ZACH
You kids and your anime.

A waitress brings two plates of wings.

ZACH (CONT'D)
What are you gonna do with 'em?

TIM
Keep a set, sell the rest.

ZACH
Ebay?

TIM
Craig's List. What are you gonna do
with your cash?

ZACH
I'm out. I get paid tomorrow and
with the extra I'll have enough to
settle up and get out of here.

Tim looks up from his wings.

ZACH (CONT'D)
I got a better offer.

TIM
(sarcastic)
Better than the mall?

ZACH
Yeah, better than the mall.

A beat.

TIM
Well, what is it?

ZACH
Can't say. But along these lines.

TIM
What lines?

Zach points a finger back and forth between the two a few times. Tim leans in.

TIM
Thievery?

Zach smiles and winks. Tim half-smiles.

TIM
Huh. This isn't your first time?

Zach shakes his head no.

TIM (CONT'D)
Wow. Cool. It's my first time.

ZACH
Yeah, but you'll pick it up. You know how to lie. That's your best tool at this stage.

TIM
"This stage", like I'm going to do this again?

ZACH
You might be surprised at how much fun it is. You get hooked.

Tim looks warily at Zach.

ZACH (CONT'D)
It's a rush. Everywhere you go you're looking for things to take and ways to take them.

Tim nods, starting to feel excited.

TIM
And it starts with a lie.

ZACH
No, that's part two.

Tim looks at Zach, brows furrowed.

INT. SMOOTHIE BAR - DAY

Tim sits on the counter chewing his fingernail, looking excited and nervous.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Thanks for holding down the counter
but we had it glued down so you
don't have to do that anymore.

In the back doorway stands ED (45), Tim's boss. Tim grabs a rag and wipes things down.

Ed points behind him to the back room with a thumb.

ED

Just stopping by and I saw we were
low on smoothie mix and brains.

Tim questions him with a look.

ED (CONT'D)

Yesterday's deposit is still in the
safe.

TIM

Oh, yeah, I had to get out of here
last night. Sorry. I'll take it
with tonight's.

ED

I'll take it on my way out.

TIM

No! Uh...It's no big deal, I can
take it tonight.

ED

Or I could take it right now, like
I said.

Tim walks up to Ed with a serious look on his face.

TIM

Look, Ed. I know you like to run a
tight ship. I admire that. But
you're a very busy guy and I like
the responsibility. Carrying that
deposit is like proof that I'm
doing something right. And two days
worth will feel like double
something right. We're making
money, here. We're making money off

TIM
of gym rats and fat women but hey,
money's money, right?

Ed smiles and points at Tim.

ED
Alright, Mr. Moneybags. That's the
attitude I like to see. Maybe
tomorrow we can talk about
salesmanship, huh? I've got a few
pointers.

Tim points back at Ed.

TIM
Oh, I'd like to pick your brain.

Ed returns to the back room as Tim lets out an inaudible
Whew!

Ed walks by the front of the bar on his way out.

ED
Gym rats and fat women.

He shakes his head and smiles. Tim shrugs, then looks
forlorn as he watches Ed go.

INT. SMOOTHIE BAR - NIGHT

Tim exchanges cash and change with a customer. He cleans up
quickly, takes the money tray out of the register and walks
into the back room.

BACK ROOM

Tim locks the door to the bar and checks to see that the one
to the mall is locked.

He gathers the cash from the tray and sets it down on a
table.

He opens the safe and gets out the cash bag with the
previous day's deposit.

He takes the cash out of the bag and sets it on today's
cash, making a neat stack. He picks it up, flips through it
and lets out a breath, a debate going on in his head.

TIM
Just this once.

He puts all of the money in the bag and locks the safe.

He puts on his jacket.

He checks the time on his cell phone.

He sits down at the table and drums his fingers.

BACK ROOM, MOMENTS LATER

Tim leans on the table, chin-in-hand. He checks the time again and stands up.

INT. MALL - CONTINUOUS

Tim emerges from the bar's back door. He looks around, someone is coming. Tim looks startled.

He turns around and fiddles with the door lock until the person has passed.

He looks around again. Safe. He heads for the employee hallway.

INT. MALL EMPLOYEE HALLWAY

Tim enters, shuts the door quietly. He looks down the long, drab corridor.

As he walks down the hallway Zach appears from the other end. They walk toward each other with purpose.

They come face to face. Tim hands Zach the cash bag.

TIM
Eight hundred and twenty-eight.

Zach nods approvingly.

TIM (CONT'D)
Did you get the DVD's?

ZACH
Yep, they're behind the dumpster.
Same box I showed you yesterday.
You ready?

Tim takes in a big breath, lets it out.

TIM
Okay, do it.

Zach draws back to punch Tim who does not flinch. At the peak of his wind-up, a smirk emerges on Zach's face.

Tim's brow furrows trying to comprehend the smirk and WHAM!
Blackness.

INT. MALL SECURITY OFFICE - LATER

Tim lays on a row of three chairs holding ice to his temple.

A uniformed guard enters holding a clip board. His shirt says "Security".

Tim sits up slowly.

GUARD
Tim, was it?

TIM
Yeah.

GUARD
Tim, I'm Roman. Not from Rome,
that's just my name.

He smiles, Tim does not.

ROMAN
How's the eye?

Tim removes the ice and shows his eye, which has begun to bruise.

ROMAN
Ouch. You'll be okay, Jimmy says
you might have a mild concussion,
he's studying to be an EMT. You
want to go to the ER?

TIM
No, I'm fine.

He replaces the ice on his temple.

ROMAN
Alright. You wanna go over what
happened?

TIM

Again? I told you everything. I was in the employee hallway taking the deposit to the bank. Some guy jumped me and did this to me. Next thing I know you guys are helping me up and the cash is gone.

ROMAN

And you don't remember what the guy looked like?

TIM

I can barely remember my name.

ROMAN

Yeah, the guy picked a good spot.

TIM

My eye?

ROMAN

Well, that too. The guard at the bank was too far away to hear anything and because of the way the mall was built we have to keep those doors unlocked in case of an emergency. It's the only exit on the south side. Any Joe off the street can get in there. You understand that we can't be everywhere at once?

TIM

No, I understand. I wouldn't blame you guys.

ROMAN

Okay. You need me to call someone?

TIM

No, I'm alright. My car's outside.

ROMAN

Alright, I'll send an escort with you.

Tim stands up.

TIM

No, really, it's fine. I'm sure you guys want to get out of here too. My car's right outside.

Roman puts up his hands.

ROMAN
Whatever you want.

Tim hands the bag of ice back to Roman as he leaves.

EXT. MALL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Tim exits the mall and heads to the dumpster.

He looks behind it for the box of DVD's. Nothing.

He lifts the lid and looks inside. Nothing.

He looks all around. Nothing. He heads to his car, the only one in the parking lot.

INT. TIM'S CAR

Tim gets in and pulls out his cell phone.

He scrolls through numbers until he gets to Zach. He touches his eye and winces. He dials Zach's phone.

A cell phone rings in the car. Tim looks confused. He pats himself down and finds Zach's cheap phone in his jacket pocket.

He pulls it out and looks at the caller ID. Same shot as the beginning of the film.

MONTAGE -

- Tim enters the employee hallway
- He hands the cash bag to Zach
- Zach winds up and smirks

Tim looks at the caller ID on Zach's phone. It says "Sucker" instead of "Tim".

He puts his head down on the steering wheel, realizing Zach has taken the DVDs and the money. He laughs.