

RELATIONSHIP OF CONVENIENCE

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FADE IN

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT

Empty parking lot, empty street.

A POLICE CAR pulls up to the empty convenience store. OFFICER GILBERT (25, not ugly, not handsome) exits the car and enters the store.

CHING-A-LING!

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - CONTINUOUS

The door jingles behind Gilbert. He nods at the cashier, JULIE (25, attractive). Julie rolls her eyes at Gilbert and looks back down, counting cigarettes for inventory.

Gilbert starts shopping. He grabs the worst items. Sandwich cookies, spicy chips, sour gummy worms, etc. He gets to the alcohol freezer door and tries opening it. Locked.

GILBERT
(yelling across the store)
Hey, you guys still selling
alcohol?

JULIE (O.S.)
We can't sell after two!

Gilbert sighs. He grabs a workout drink and continues.

CHING-A-LING!

Gilbert gets to the ice cream freezer door and weighs his options, taking his time. After a few seconds he adds a pint of chocolate chip to his pile.

JULIE (O.S.)
(across the store)
Excuse me! We're closing now!

MOMENTS LATER

Gilbert drops his haul on the counter. *Confused.*

GILBERT
I thought you guys were open 24
hours?

JULIE

(stiff)

We're closing early today. *Weird* right?

GILBERT

Yeah.

(points to hot case)

And can I also get 2 hotdogs? No buns, keto, y'know.

Julie robotically opens the hot case and carefully places the hotdogs into a paper bag. She narrates exactly what she does as she does it.

JULIE

Grabbing hotdogs... putting them in the bag.

What's your name, by the way?

GILBERT

Gil.

(looks at name-tag)

Nice to meet you Julie.

JULIE

(stiffly)

My real name is Damsel, actually.

GILBERT

Ah, cool.

Julie stares at Gilbert expectantly. Gilbert whistles as he looks around the store. Julie stiffly scans every item. *Slowly.*

JULIE

Would you like it if I threw it all in a bag?

Y'know, the old- "throw it all in the bag!" -type of thing?

GILBERT

Sure whatever.

JULIE

Oh wow, chocolate chip ice-cream. Only \$3.69, that's practically **highway robbery.**

GILBERT

Um yeah. Seems normal to me, to be honest.

JULIE

No, no, no, you're not hearing me.
\$3.69... That's *high*-

GILBERT

Oh I get it. Sixty-nine, you're
hitting on me.

Beads of sweat on Julie. She is as stiff as a board. A beat.

JULIE

(robotic)

Yes.

GILBERT

Look, Julie, you seem like a really
nice gal and all. I'm just not
really interested.

JULIE

Umm-

GILBERT

I'm getting through a break-up.
Pretty big one. I thought she was
the one.

JULIE

I didn't actually ask-

GILBERT

Yeah, it's crazy, this sort of
thing happens to me all the time.
Cashiers are always flirting with
me.

JULIE

Right...

GILBERT

The way you looked at me when I
walked in, I could tell. I'd be
lying if I said I didn't feel a
little steamy myself.

JULIE

Jesus...

Julie has an idea.

JULIE

(still robotic)

Oh yeah, I felt it too, super hot.

GILBERT

I just have that animalistic charm
I guess.

JULIE

(zero emotion)
Oh yeah, I'd love to see that
animal side of you. Take me.

GILBERT

Damn. You move quick, you little
minx.

JULIE

(through gritted teeth)
I'd love to show you, what's hiding
under the counter.

Julie signals with her eyes below the counter. Gilbert smirks. His smirk quickly fades though. He hides his face in his hands and starts crying.

GILBERT

(sobbing)
I just. I can't do that to her,
y'know? We just broke up yesterday,
it would feel like I cheated on
her. I can't do that to you either!
We'd be starting a relationship on
a lie... Apparently how I start all
of my relationships!

Julie grabs a pen and some receipt paper.

JULIE

Gil. I really want to continue this
conversation. Why don't you CALL ME
at THIS NUMBER.

Julie writes 911 and emphasizes each number about ten times. Gilbert picks up the paper, without even looking, and stuffs it into his pocket.

GILBERT

I'll hang on to it, Julie. I'll
keep it in a special place. I think
we really have a connection, but
maybe you and I weren't meant for
each other because of our
backstories. Timing is a son of a
bitch.

JULIE

You really don't get it.

GILBERT

Oh I get it. Look at you, you're an absolute smoke-show. You probably have a body that just won't quit, but that's not me.

(scoffs)

Look, you're amazing at seduction, I'm sure you play other men like fiddles. But not me, not Gilbert Cockburn. I see right through that bombshell facade.

Gilbert pulls out his wallet and looks at the total.

GILBERT

(overly cocky)

35 dollars? I'll leave you 40. Just for you doll-face.

Julie stands there in abject fascination. Gilbert drops the money and picks up his bag of junk food.

JULIE

What the...

GILBERT

(walking away)

I'll call you sometime.

CHING-A-LING!

The door shuts behind Gilbert. His car starts and drives away.

A ROBBER in a SKI-MASK stands up from under the counter, holding a GUN.

ROBBER

Wow, guy could really not take a hint.

FADE OUT.