Tall Tales
EXT. DINER - DAY

Mid-day traffic pushes across a rusty overpass in the industrial outskirts of a big city.

Below the noon-ish summer sun shimmies across the stainless steel of a small, graffiti-graced art-deco diner.

A broken neon sign read’s “ROY’S” off the barrel-vaulted roof.

In front a weathered brown sedan, charmingly dented across the bumper, is parked facing the street.

INT. BROWN SEDAN

HARRISON LUNDEGAARD (28), sloppily suited in full office attire, slouches over the wheel, his head buried in his arms.

Riding shotgun by his side, a box cluttered with paperwork and personal belongings. A photograph of a woman (late 20s) and a young girl protrudes from under the lid.

HARRISON
(to himself)
Okay, relax. It wasn’t your fault. It was downsizing.

Harrison pulls his head up in a quick move. His eyes are glassy, desperate.

He has a quick shufti at the portrait in the box.

He then wipes his hands across his face, breathes in composure.

HARRISON (CONT'D)
Okay, how about this...I get home, she asks me “how was your day?”

He speaks as if to a non-present listener.

Harrison squares his shoulders, gets into character.

HARRISON (CONT'D)
And I say “fine.
(pauses)
Except this ‘thing’ sorta happened at work today.”

His eyes dart aimlessly around the dashboard.

(CONTINUED)
See, what happened was...

A beat.

Uh, the copier...caught fire...

Harrison jerks around, as if struck by genius.

No, no wait, the copier EXPLODED!

(A series of fragmented cuts of Francis sales-pitch)

The copier exploded and so...Melinda caught on fire-

...and someone had to put her out...

He nods to himself-- that makes sense.

...smoke was everywhere-

-and people were screaming...

Harrison’s body language re-enacts every word, all caught up in the story.

...so I ran to save the baby-

...well ’cause I knew the Heimlich manoeuvre...

His gestures an easy wave of the hand, “of course”.

...and the whole thing just EXPLODED! Again!

(CONTINUED)
He supplies the sound-effects with a CRUNCH of the mouth. KABOOM!

CUT TO:

His eyes are all wide and full of zeal.

HARRISON (CONT'D)
...and the one terrorist was like a North Korean black-belt...all communist and shit-

Harrison mimics a “mean terrorist” look.

HARRISON (CONT'D)
...and he was like, “I HATE America!”

CUT TO:

HARRISON (CONT'D)
So I was like, “Yeah? Lemme introduce you to the FOUNDING FATHERS!”

Harrison punches a homemade one-two into the air.

HARRISON (CONT'D)
BAM!

CUT TO:

HARRISON (CONT'D)
...and the FBI agent told me, if I hadn’t defused the bomb-

CUT TO:

HARRISON (CONT'D)
-then the whole building would’ve EXPLODED...

CUT TO:

HARRISON (CONT'D)
And they were all like, "Harrison, you’re a hero! You saved the Vice-President!"

CUT TO:

A nonchalant flick of the wrist.

HARRISON (CONT'D)
...but I told them, you know, “I’m just doin’ my job”.

CUT TO:

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (3)

HARRISON (CONT'D)
But then they were like "Oh, by the way you can't work here anymore..."

CUT TO:

Harrison’s hands fly in all directions, struggling to find causation in his tale.

HARRISON (CONT'D)
-'cause, 'cause, uh, the head terrorist's brother, who’s also a terrorist, might want revenge, and you'd put us all at risk"

CUT TO:

Another passionate wave of the hand, "scratch that".

HARRISON (CONT'D)
No, actually I said that. It was my idea, I said "Pam, I can't put you in harm's way anymore." And she was like "We'll never be able to replace you"...

His voice grows whispery and his gaze wanders.

HARRISON (CONT'D)
...tears were in her eyes and, and time slowed down...

CUT TO:

Harrison sits up, impassioned.

HARRISON (CONT'D)
...and the FBI were all like "We can protect you."

CUT TO:

He lashes his pointing finger out against the invisible listener.

HARRISON (CONT'D)
...But I said "screw you, man! I'm ain’t a rat!"

CUT TO:

So the attractive female FBI agent was like “Hey, I totally respect that.”

CUT TO:

(CONTINUED)
Harrison calms himself, almost out of breath.

HARRISON (CONT'D)
So in closing, I think this way might work out for the best. For all of us.
(pauses)
We just need to lay low for a while, until this thing blows over.

He puffs out, “phew”, and turns around.

HARRISON (CONT'D)
How was that? Better?

CHRISSY LUNDEGAARD, a tiny 8-year-old girl pops her head out from the back seat.

CHRISSY
Great, dad.

HARRISON
Yeah? You think mommy’s gonna buy that? It wasn’t too ‘out there’?

He makes air-quotes with his hands.

Chrissy smiles, proudly.

CHRISSY
No, it was perfect. Totally believable. Much better than the one with the reverse-vampires.

Harrison chuckles, a little abashed.

HARRISON
Yeah, that didn’t make sense.

He turns around and jabs the key into the ignition.

Harrison nods to himself and puts on a self-satisfied smile. Everything’s gonna be alright.

HARRISON (CONT'D)
I bet someone’s in the mood for ice-cream!

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END.