

SCREEN TREATMENT

We're with the Jeep

A Screenplay

Written by

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Logline:

An overly trusting and forgiving man with a Jeep is hijacked by a pair of young, spirited female strippers. He learns about love on the ensuing wild, week-long road trip where the three confront troublemakers, each other, and issues from their respective pasts. 142 pages (Drama, Comedy)

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Concept:

This is a travel story with three main characters. They consist of an intelligent yet passive naïve man and two young, rowdy women. One woman is a lively, outgoing Goth with black hair. The other is a reserved yet violent former kick boxer with blonde hair. The two women are extremely close in spite of being as different in their personalities as they are in their appearance. In addition to their own slang, the women often communicate through a silent language consisting of facial expressions and gestures.

Contributing to the main plot of the travel story are multiple sub-plots that center on each of the three main characters. They have distinct character arcs that loosely parallel those of *The Wizard of Oz*. There are subtle hints to these sub-themes throughout the screenplay and at the end.

The tone of the story changes throughout. It starts out comedic in that the women take advantage of Guy's easy going nature. He puts up with their demands and slapstick abuse simply because he is unaware that he doesn't have to. As the story progresses, he slowly becomes aware of the increasingly cruel nature of the women's behavior. After a ride on a carousel, the story takes on a more serious and dramatic tone. The pranks stop being funny. The women grow to respect Guy. A strong friendship forms between the three of them at the end.

Main Characters:

Guy the Jeep Guy is the naïve man who drives a Jeep. A childhood accident has left him disconnected from his emotions. While he is unable to experience happiness, sadness, love and hate, it is his inability to feel anger, resentment, suspicion and jealousy that has left him vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. Furthermore, he is unaware that the neural connections involved have been re-established. He does not understand the sensations he experiences as his emotions slowly regenerate. A ride on a carousel reminds him of his life before the accident and finishes the healing process. He spends the rest of the story adapting and adjusting to a life with his newfound feelings. He is the Tin Man.

Katie is the outgoing Goth. While she is fairly intelligent, she acts like she would prefer she wasn't. Throughout the story, anytime she is asked a question regarding what to do or where to go, she always defers to her soul mate, Liala. In addition, she finds herself interested in Guy. She remains in denial of this until an incident makes her attraction obvious to her. She ultimately has to choose between Guy and Liala and make this decision on her own. She is the Scarecrow.

Liala is the usually cool, calm and dangerous blonde. She is intelligent and athletically gifted. There isn't a situation in which she cannot dominate. Her only vulnerability is a paralyzing fear of being rejected by her younger sister whom she misses. She is the Cowardly Lion.

Guy's Jeep is an old red Wrangler. The top and doors have been removed. A row of 8" speakers align across the car behind the back seat. While a 1988 Wrangler is indicated in the

preceding story *Jeep Commercials*, any model year from 1987 to 1991 can be modified to fulfill the role. The key is that the roll bar needs to be the older, slanted style so that characters can jump in and out of the back easily.

There are minor characters that round out the cast:

- Kelly, a recently murdered friend of the two female leads, represents Glinda the Good Witch. She appears as various animals throughout the story and watches over the three. On one occasion, she appears and provides some guidance to Katie. In another scene, she seems to give Dancing Thumbelina some instruction.
- Debbie, a woman who owns a consignment shop, symbolically represents the Wizard of Oz. She gives or sells the three various objects that symbolize their individual character arcs: a pocket watch for Guy and charms for Katie and Liala. In addition, she sells Guy a shirt and gives Katie a comic book that is a recall of something she mentions in the beginning: a desire to be rescued by someone from a comic book. It also clarifies her interest in Guy and sets the stage for her decision.
- Dancing Thumbelina, a mysterious love interest of the male lead, represents Dorothy. She has only a single, one-word line in the story and is repeatedly described as being “weird”.

Connection to *Jeep Commercials*

While this story is a sequel to *Jeep Commercials*, it is written such that the story is not dependent on its prequel for relevance or understanding. The two stories were written to be independent yet will embellish each other if seen together. They can be viewed in any order. *Jeep Commercials* can just as easily be considered a prequel to *We're with the Jeep*.

The links connecting the two stories are:

- The beginning of *We're with the Jeep* overlaps the ending of *Jeep Commercials* but is shown from the two women's point of view.
- In *We're with the Jeep*, there are a few references to Tiffany, the male lead's girlfriend in *Jeep Commercials*.
- In *Jeep Commercials*, Guy sees a semi-transparent man with a semi-transparent four-year-old boy in a drug-induced hallucination. That man and child are Guy and his father as seen in a flashback in *We're with the Jeep*.
- A green teddy bear which Guy lost in the hospital accident is seen in a flashback in *We're with the Jeep*. In *Jeep Commercials*, he is reunited with that teddy bear in the drug-induced hallucination. The teddy bear represents his ability to feel and express strong emotions. While not explicitly mentioned, it is the hallucinogens that his girlfriend spiked his drink with in *Jeep Commercials* that has caused his emotional capacity to regenerate.
- Near the beginning of *Jeep Commercials*, Guy mentions a hope to meet somebody to bring home. At the end of *We're with the Jeep*, he drives home with the woman the female leads call Dancing Thumbelina.

Synopsis:

The story opens in a boarding room over a strip club called The Bearskin Lounge. Liala Kochanski, a stunning, tall, athletic blonde woman in her mid twenties gazes out a window. Her roommate, Katie Loughlin, an attractive Goth female with shoulder length black hair, enters. Liala announces that she knows how they are going to get there. She nods to something outside.

Katie looks out the window. She recognizes Guy's Jeep, an old red Wrangler, in the parking lot. It has no doors or top. An impressive-looking stereo sits quietly behind the back seat. The two women contemplate if he would drive them to an as of yet unrevealed location. Liala points out that he has never turned them down before. They share a laugh about how they never actually ask him for rides when he drives them.

He arrives at the parking lot that very moment. They hastily pack their bags and exit the room. They rush down to the strip club and inform their employer and landlord that they need to leave immediately. The two women exit the club and run to the driveway. They jump into Guy's Jeep before he leaves the parking lot. After they give him directions, the three ride off into the sunset.

That night, in a lonely gas station convenience store, a counter clerk watches a production of the Wizard of Oz. It is being performed by eight-year-old school children. Each child that plays a part in the classic novel also represents a character in this story.

A mysterious man purchases a six pack of beer and leaves in a white pickup truck. Only his hands, worn cowboy boots and his rusty old truck are shown.

After his departure, the headlights of an approaching vehicle appear in the distance. Music blasts from the car and gets louder as it gets closer. It is Guy's Jeep and it stops at the same gas pump abandoned by the pickup truck.

As Guy pumps gas, the two women enter the convenience store. The counter clerk asks if they were "with that guy outside", referring to Guy. Katie responds with, "No, we're with the Jeep." This becomes an ongoing joke and slogan for Katie and Liala and as such, becomes the title of the story.

The clerk attempts to make small talk. He asks about their destination. Katie tells him that they are going to Pittsburgh. She concocts a story about Guy being recently sexually abused by a gang of gay bikers. As a result, he now needs an operation. This evokes sincere sympathy from the clerk. Liala points out that it would be helpful if he had blankets. It turns out that he does. They tell him to bring the blankets out so Guy could thank him. It should be pointed out that while it isn't their planned destination, they do in fact end up going to Pittsburgh.

The women leave for the restroom while the clerk brings the blankets to Guy. In the restroom, Katie spikes a peanut butter cup with an amphetamine and gives the candy to Guy.

This becomes another running gag in that he will not accept any food offers from them out of concern that it may be tampered with.

The next morning, they arrive at a gas station in another town. While Guy pumps gas, the two women enter the convenience store. When Guy enters, Katie observes that the female counter clerk appears attracted to him. They become concerned that the clerk's interest may jeopardize Guy's motivation to drive them. Katie invents a story to dispel the clerk's interest. Katie's story leaves the counter clerk disgusted and horrified.

Guy expresses interest in eating at a nearby restaurant. While waiting for a table, they visit a Native American new age gift shop. They have their collective fortunes told which reveals an assortment of plot lines:

- They are being watched by a friend in the spirit world.
- One of them needed to be rescued.
- One of them misses the love of their family.
- One of them was injured in an accident which left them cold inside.
- They are on their way to a festival.

He continues on to say:

- There will infighting among them.
- Open wounds will close.
- There will be good and bad reunions.
- The wounds of the past accident have healed but the spirit remains asleep. The soul will be awakened by an embrace and there will be much about life to learn.
- One of them will be faced with a decision.

In addition, the fortune teller takes Guy aside and warns him that he should not be playing with "wolves".

The plot lines are clarified in the breakfast discussion that follows:

- Katie once wanted to have children.
- Katie was repeatedly molested by an older relative where she wished to be rescued by a comic book superhero.
- Liala was thrown out of her home after coming out to her parents. Her behavior suggests that there may be more to her story than what she is revealing.
- Guy was a victim of a hospital accident that left him unable to feel or express any strong emotions.

At the end of the breakfast the women tell Guy that they are on their way to a camp ground in Ohio. They are headed to a party which he cannot attend. They strike a deal with him that if he drives them there, leaves them with the Jeep, and returns to drive them someplace else, they will let him socialize with them. He accepts this provided that he gets to pick the next song on the stereo. Inevitably, Katie hates the song.

They stop at small bar on a lonely stretch of roadway. They are the only customers until a biker arrives and harasses them. Liala thrashes the biker with a serious beating as the mortified bartender watches. Guy matter-of-factly explains that it happens often.

As they continue on their journey, Guy points out that it is going to rain that night. They stop at a sporting goods store and pick up two sleeping bags and a tent. While waiting at the register, he asks how they are going to pay. The women reply that they have a stolen credit card and that he has to sign for it. They also point out that there will be dire consequences for him if he refuses. Upon seeing the credit slip, he discovers that it is his card that they stole.

They awaken the next morning in the tent. The back half of the Jeep shares the tent with them. When the women express a desire for breakfast, Guy is stubbornly slow to wake up. They loosely seal up the back of the Jeep in the tent and start the engine. He emerges from the exhaust-filled tent, choking.

At breakfast, Katie receives a phone call informing her that the party grounds will not be ready until the following night. After the call, a song on the juke box reminds the women of Kelly, a friend who had been recently murdered. A discussion about friendship ensues. Guy mentions that he has friends back home whom he records a podcast with. He also considers the two women to be his friends. The women jovially disagree and reply with, "We're with the Jeep". He asks if he is merely a free ride. They give a reply with a joke involving a sarcastic and a "truthful" answer.

At a consignment shop in Emerald County, the women are reunited with Debbie, the owner. An infant lies awake in a carrier on the counter. As Katie and Liala browse the isles, Guy interacts with the baby. Katie sees this and has a quick daydream of placing a baby into a car carrier in the back of Guy's Jeep. Liala spots a small action figure that resembles Guy. She shows it to Katie who places it on a miniature merry-go-round, foreshadowing an important ride they embark on the next day.

On the way to a park, Katie gives Guy a long look. She then spots a hawk circling far overhead. They rent a rowboat at the park and Guy rows it about a lake. A hawk circles above before landing on the boat. It watches them for a moment, then leaves.

After the boat is returned, Guy stops the Jeep to use a restroom. While the women wait, Liala is approached by a confident athletic man. He tries to start a conversation. She avoids the conversation by asking Katie to turn up the stereo and drown him out. He turns off the car and removes the key; shutting off the music. He resumes the conversation only to be rebuffed and insulted. She asks him to put back the key to which he responds by shoving the key down the front of his pants.

Guy emerges from the restroom and spots the man with Liala. Knowing that the man is in grave danger, he screams for him to get away. The man responds by grabbing Liala by her hair. Guy deflates as he listens to the vicious beating that ensues. For some reason, the violence bothers him now. The hawk watches from a tree branch above.

At dinner, Katie notices an attractive woman admiring Guy. She uses their unique silent language of facial gestures to communicate this to Liala. Liala replies with a plan, also explained in their secret sign language. The plan is to distract Guy. While he is distracted, Liala is to pour hot sauce on Guy's hamburger while Katie switches her gin with his water. The plan works. Guy burns his mouth and mistakenly drinks Katie's gin and chokes. Katie grabs the gin and pours it over his mouth and nose, worsening his situation. When the violent coughing subsides, the admirer's barstool is empty.

After dinner, Guy expresses a desire to play miniature golf at a complex nearby. Katie declines while Liala expresses interest. Her interest is contingent on there being a one hundred dollar wager on the game. Guy agrees to the wager.

While waiting for the first tee to open up, Katie notices a bar at the other side of the complex. She shouts out "Buddy!" to which Liala responds with "Bud me." After Katie leaves, Guy asks for the meaning of "Buddy!" and "Bud me." Liala explains that "Buddy" means "I'm getting drinks" and that "Bud me" means "get one for me, too."

After the game, they leave for the Jeep. Guy asks about the location of their evening lodging. Liala answers that she knows a place. Guy asks if she knows everywhere in America where one can sleep outside. His question enrages Katie and she shoves Guy to the ground and kicks him. Liala pulls Katie off Guy and they board the Jeep. When Guy asks about the previous violence, Liala informs him that she had been homeless for a time and that Katie thought he was making fun of her. When Guy apologizes, the women declare that they don't believe in apologies.

The next morning, the three sleep in the tent arranged like they were the previous morning. Katie awakens and crawls over to Guy. She stares at Guy for a long moment raising concerns within Liala. After Guy reacts too slowly for the women's satisfaction, they seal up the tent like they did the previous morning. Guy realizes what is about to happen in time to avoid being fumigated again. He emerges from the tent ready for breakfast.

At breakfast, Guy notices an elderly couple seated nearby. He points out that they haven't said a word to each other and that they have been holding hands the whole time. Katie explains that they are in love. He asks Katie and Liala how they knew when they were in love. Katie tells a story about a time when Liala rescued her from a bad encounter at work. Liala explains how Katie always knows what she needs whether she knows it herself or not. At the end of the discussion, the women decide to spend the day at an amusement park. Guy protests claiming that amusement park rides make him sick.

In a montage, the three go on rides that invariably make Guy ill. In addition, the girls enter a photo booth and pull Guy in with them. They take a series of four photographs. The last picture is of the girls kissing Guy on his cheeks.

At the end of the montage, Guy spots a popsicle vendor. He shouts "Buddy!" to which Liala replies with "Bud me.", and indicates that the two women will split one. Guy departs to

make the purchase. A discussion ensues between the two women about Guy being taught their language. Katie wonders out loud if there was “anything else he could be taught” and generates more concern within Liala.

They watch a carousel as they finish their popsicles. A four-year-old girl departs from the carousel and gives Guy a hug. When asked why, the girl replies, “He looked like he needed it.” This is the embrace mentioned by the Native American fortune teller.

Kelly appears, semi-transparent, and tells Katie that the carousel looks like fun. Katie makes the suggestion that they should ride the carousel for Kelly. Liala agrees and the three embark on the ride together.

A montage begins with the start of the ride. Guy looks at himself in mirrors and starts to see himself as a four-year-old child. He also imagines the two women as children. He soon closes his eyes and has a flashback.

Through a series of shots, Guy remembers a time before the accident when he went to an amusement park and rode a similar carousel. A series of shots reveal the emotions he experienced prior to the accident. He laughed whenever his father tickled him. He was sad when his balloon floated away. He was delighted interacting at a puppet show.

The flashbacks then show the illness, the trip to the hospital and the accident. The scenes fade to black and white symbolizing Guy’s loss of emotions. Near the end of the flashbacks, Guy maintains a blank expression when tickled. Also, he fails to grab his green teddy bear and calmly waves goodbye to it as he leaves the room. It symbolizes his leaving his emotions in that hospital bed. The montage returns to the present and ends with him looking like he knows what he lost in the accident. He seems to have been reunited with his emotions. He now needs to understand them.

Later, the three stand on line for another roller coaster. Guy looks down at the crowd and spots various couples holding hands. He sees Katie and Liala holding hands and wonders what it’s like. He reaches out and grabs Katie’s hand. When Liala glares at Guy and clears her throat, he holds her hand as well. They ride the roller coaster and Guy does not get sick.

Later that night, the three arrive at the party grounds. It’s an open field bathed in starlight. They lay down their sleeping bags beside each other. Liala casually insists on sleeping between Katie and Guy. The sight of the stars overhead generates curiosity in Guy. He asks several questions. Among the questions, he asks about Kelly. He is told that she was funny and could make anybody laugh, including Liala. She also liked everybody including him and that she could probably make him laugh as well. He muses that he hasn’t laughed since the hospital accident.

He also asks if they believe in life after death. Katie tells how Kelly believed that when one dies, they can take control of different animals to keep an eye on those that they left behind. She also mentions that the dead can make suggestions to the living and provide guidance.

Guy wakes late the next morning alone and without the Jeep. He leaps to his feet to find the Jeep parked at the far end of the field next to a pond. The pond is accompanied by a bench and a dock. He proceeds to the pond.

Katie and Liala see Guy approach and form a plan: Katie will keep his attention while Liala will sneak up behind him and push him into the water. Liala hides under the dock as he walks above. He asks Katie about Liala's location and is told that, "She's around." The two engage in a flirtatious conversation. As Liala sneaks up on Guy, she is enraged by the flirtation. She says something which startles Guy and makes him turn around. He is met by a powerful punch to the face which sends him airborne into the water. She dives in and surfaces behind him. She gives him a threat to keep away from her girlfriend and swims off.

Katie approaches Guy and mentions that Liala doesn't like it when she flirts. Guy leaves the pond and sits on the bench. A deer sneaks up behind Guy and nuzzles his neck. This tickles and makes him smile. The deer runs off.

Later, cars arrive with the start of the party. Guy leaves and ventures a short distance into the woods. He leans against a tree and watches the party. A bus arrives. Partiers disembark from it. One of them is Dancing Thumbelina, a young, awkward-looking woman with long dark hair. She spots Guy and it appears that an invisible person speaks to her. After taking his picture, she ventures into the woods. She sneaks up from behind and sits beside him. After some bizarre behavior, she seduces him.

At the party that night, Liala approaches Katie and asks her to dance. Katie is fixated on Guy and Dancing Thumbelina. Liala assures her that Dancing Thumbelina is not a threat to their transportation and convinces her to forget about them.

The next morning, Guy wakes up alone. After getting dressed, he walks out onto the field and eventually finds Katie. She is alone at a picnic table. He takes a seat and asks about Liala's whereabouts. She points to an area behind the bus and tells him that she is with her old girlfriend. The woman has some news about Liala's sister. He is informed that Liala and her sister were close and that she didn't get a chance to say goodbye. They have been out of contact since. She misses her dearly. He sees the woman hand Liala an envelope.

After the bus leaves, they comment about Guy spending the night with Dancing Thumbelina. They joke about her being weird. He asks about their plans for the day. They tell him that they will spend the day sleeping and will go to a place called Rosie's that night. When he grumbles, he is told that Dancing Thumbelina will be there.

At dusk, they arrive at Rosie's. Upon entering, they see that Dancing Thumbelina is already there. Guy nervously asks for advice. Katie tells him to buy the girl a bottle of beer and let things continue from there. He leaves for the bar.

Laila points out that Dancing Thumbelina hates beer and that she thinks it smells like urine. Katie smiles and tells her to watch. She sends a signal to a friend at the bar who splashes a drink onto Guy's pants. Katie then approaches Dancing Thumbelina with Liala in tow. She

informs her that Guy gets aroused when women drink his urine. When the young woman reacts with a look of revulsion, Katie warns that if he hands her a beer and his pants are wet, not to drink the beer.

He approaches Dancing Thumbelina and offers her a beer. Upon seeing his wet pants, she screams, “EW!”, which is her only audible line in the story. She runs into the kitchen in tears.

As the bar goes completely silent, he sees that he is the focus of every occupant. He also realizes that he is the only male in the club and that he is clearly not welcome. He places the beers on a banister and leaves to wait outside.

Later that evening, Katie and Liala emerge from the bar. Katie is extremely intoxicated and is being held up by Liala. After Guy and Liala place her in the back seat, Liala takes a seat up front. The two women changing seats symbolizes a change in how Guy sees them. Katie no longer appears to be the friendlier of the two. At the end of the scene, Katie asks to sleep indoors to which Liala consents.

At a motel, Katie sleeps restlessly as the other two watch her. Liala departs to go shopping. She leaves Guy to watch over Katie. Thunderstorms are predicted for the evening. He steps out to cover the Jeep with the tent as a tarp. When he finishes, he attempts to reenter the room only to find Katie belligerently blocking the door. He is told that he’s not welcome. He tries to get under the tent and into the Jeep as a downpour ensues. Katie has an alcohol-fueled epiphany and asks Guy to make love to her. He declines which only heightens her insistence. She eventually disrobes and runs out into the middle of the parking lot.

She spins around and screams out to anybody listening that they can see her. Guy runs out to her and tells her to stop. He tells her to get back into the room. A bolt of lightning striking a nearby tree seconds his suggestion.

Upon returning to the room, Katie falls onto the floor. Guy helps her back to her feet. She remarks that he is never mean to her. She gives him a passionate kiss that he does not return. The rebuff fuels Katie’s anger and she slams Guy’s head onto the brass room numbers on the still-open door. She stops when she gets sick over the front of his shirt. Getting her safely back into bed before her jealous, thermonuclear blonde girlfriend returns remains his only concern.

Meanwhile, Liala leaves the store and returns to the motel walkway. She is harassed by a greasy drunk who wants to have a private party with her. When he ignores her non-interest, she knocks him unconscious and throws him into his room. She closes his door and continues on her way.

She arrives at their doorstep to find Katie’s clothing littering the sidewalk and the door cracked open. Liala opens the door and quietly enters. She finds Katie in bed and Guy sitting in a chair beside her. He has an open book on his lap and appears to be reading her a story. He recites lines from *Go, dog. Go!*, which is the same children’s story shown in Guy’s childhood flashback. When Liala sees the front of his shirt, she tells him to take a shower which he does.

Katie asks Liala to sit with her. She mentions that she may have gone too far with her prank on Guy and Dancing Thumbelina. Liala seems unconcerned. The conversation switches to the news about Liala's sister. Guy emerges from the shower in time to overhear it.

Katie tells Liala that she knows that her sister is in the area and that they should try to see her. Liala disagrees. She is absolutely petrified that her sister may reject her the same way that her father did. She does not want to find her deepest fears come true. As she puts it, "Right now I have doubt. I don't want to find out that I have nothing."

Katie falls asleep at the end of the conversation. Guy emerges from the bathroom. He and Liala have a quick conversation about the podcasts that he records with his friends. He thinks the podcasts are serious. She thinks they're hysterical and recommends that he should watch one.

He skims through a podcast on his cell phone. He sees them in a whole new light and realizes the true nature of the questions he answers. It is now obvious to him that the questions are not genuine or serious. The producers and questioners are making fun of him. He realizes that the people whom he thought were his friends were only using him. He wonders if he may have any real friends at all.

The next morning, Katie and Liala shop while Guy is sleeping. They return and tell him that they bought him a new shirt. He puts it on in the bathroom and exclaims that he does not like the shirt and it doesn't fit. He steps out of the bathroom and reveals that it is too small and that he looks ridiculous. The two women break into uncontrollable laughter and collapse to the floor. The contagious laughter causes Guy to laugh. He suddenly realizes that he is laughing and reacts with confusion. When he recovers his composure, he insists on going back to the store to get another shirt.

At Debbie's Dream Shop, Liala and Guy look at shirts near the front while Katie shops in the rear. He picks out an old-style Batman tee shirt. Katie calls out to Liala to come see something.

Liala places her pocketbook on a chair and leaves. Guy rifles through the unwatched bag in search of his credit card. After he retrieves it, he pulls out an unsealed envelope. Inside is a newspaper clipping. On it is a picture of a young woman who resembles Liala. The caption reads that the woman is attending the University of Pittsburgh on a swimming scholarship. He returns the envelope to the bag.

He brings his tee shirt to the counter. There, a used gold pocket watch catches his attention. Debbie pulls it out and shows it to him. It is a little worn on the outside but is otherwise like new. She shows him where he can place a picture inside the lid. He pulls out a picture of his house and shows it to Debbie. She leaves to find the watch's box. After a glance at Katie and Liala, he pulls something different from his wallet and places it into the watch. He shows it to her upon her return and she finds the photo to be sweet and heartwarming. The photo remains a mystery until the final scene.

After they leave Debbie's Dream Shop, they have brunch at a country delicatessen. It is secluded on a wooded stretch of roadway. They sit equidistant around a circular table as a foreshadowing of Katie's upcoming decision. Guy wears his new tee shirt. He asks them what they bought at the gift shop. Among the things they purchased are charms. Katie reads from a brochure and finds that she picked out a charm that is supposed to bring wisdom. Liala's charm is supposed to bring courage. Katie also mentions that Debbie gave her a free comic book.

A group of young women enter. One of them resembles Dancing Thumbelina from behind. Guy proceeds to the counter to find that it isn't her. The group leaves and Guy returns to the table. Katie and Liala mimic and mock Dancing Thumbelina to his displeasure. Katie laughs about the joke she played at Rosie's and makes his disposition worse. When she accidentally knocks her cup of coffee onto Guy, his patience is overwhelmed. He screams at them to remove their belongings from his car and that he is now going home. He leaves for the restroom to clean himself up.

The delicatessen's sole employee turns up the music and proceeds to dance like a harlequin. Katie leaves to retrieve their things from the Jeep. Liala opens the comic book.

Outside, Katie is collecting their various items when an old white pickup truck parks behind her. A pair of worn cowboy boots emerge from the truck. They are the same boots seen in the first convenience store at the beginning of story. They belong to the greasy drunk that hit on Liala the previous night. He approaches Katie from behind. He calls out to her with, "Hey cuz." She turns and recognizes her older cousin.

He makes a couple of unwanted advances which she rebuffs. She knows what is going to happen next. She snaps open her switchblade knife and swipes it at him. He is too fast. He grabs her wrist and squeezes it tightly. He smacks her face until she drops the knife. He picks up the knife and threatens to slice her face to pieces. He coerces her cooperation and drags her behind the building.

Meanwhile, Liala has her back to the window. The loud music drowns out everything. She is oblivious to all that is going on outside behind her. She reads the comic book. The story parallels what is happening to Katie.

Guy is in the bathroom cleaning himself up. Something outside the window catches his attention.

Katie is thrown to the ground. Her cousin cuts and tears apart her clothing. He tells her that he is going to savor the moment. Guy makes his presence known and interrupts the action. Katie's cousin turns and swings the knife at him. Guy receives a minor cut across his stomach and takes a step back. The cousin rises to his feet, charges and thrusts the knife toward Guy. Guy sidesteps the cousin's thrust, grabs the man's arm and stomps on his leg. It collapses. The cousin drops the knife and grabs his injured leg. Guy elbows the man's head and knocks him unconscious.

Guy freezes and stares as he deals with the angry feelings that are new to him. Katie rises to her feet and gives Guy a hug. She proceeds to stomp on her cousin until she sprains her ankle. She holds onto Guy for support as he leads her to the front of the building. Along the way, he picks up her switchblade knife and closes it.

Katie asks for the knife. She wants to neuter her cousin. Guy holds onto it and keeps it out of her reach. She is adamant about getting her knife back. He does not give in. When they arrive at the front of the deli, Katie starts slapping him on the head and screaming for her knife.

Liala steps out the door and sees the bad situation. Katie's clothing is torn and soiled. Her nose bleeds and she walks with a limp. She is smacking Guy in the head as she yells at him. He holds something in his hand that she is reaching for. Liala becomes livid at the sight. She steps up to Guy and knocks all of the air out of him with a single punch. He crawls a short distance before collapsing flat on the ground gasping for air.

Katie has an epiphany. Instead of looking to Liala for answers, she knows what action to take. Guy is right. They've done enough and need to leave. She picks up the knife and tosses it into the Jeep. She fishes Guy's keys from his pocket and hands them to Liala. She tells her that they need to leave. She asks Liala for her assistance to get Guy into the back seat.

On the first attempt, Katie loses her grip. Guy's forehead is rammed into the side of the Jeep and he is dropped to the ground. She kneels beside him, caresses his head and apologizes. Liala is shocked by the apology. Katie requests her assistance again. On the second attempt they manage to get him into the Jeep. His head is on the floor and his feet stick out the back but he's in the Jeep. They leave.

As they motor along a stretch of rural roadway, music plays on the stereo. Liala is driving. She sings along with the music and smiles at Katie. Guy has recovered and is sitting upright in the back seat. He scowls at the passing scenery. This is symbolic in that in Katie's mind, Guy and Liala have traded places. Katie holds a tissue on her bleeding nose. She looks back and forth between Liala and Guy as she is now confronted with her decision. She looks up at a hawk flying overhead. The hawk looks down at the three of them.

They arrive at a highway rest stop later that afternoon. Liala takes a seat alone at a table situated in a picnic area. Guy approaches from a nearby gift shop. He stands across from her and shows off his new shirt. After a quick discussion, he takes a seat. Katie arrives and sits next to Liala. The two women have a quick discussion about the location of an unknown person.

Katie leaves to make a phone call. Liala asks Guy if he still intends to abandon them. He replies that he is still going home and that he will drop them off anywhere along the way. Guy mentions that he is only making one detour and that it's to go to Pittsburgh. He wants to visit the university and mentions Liala's sister. She slaps his face and violently tells him to stay away from her sister. Katie takes a seat and joins the conversation. He assures Liala that going to Pittsburgh is in her best interest even if it's just to see the area.

Later that day, Guy drives around the city blocks of the university and recognizes Liala's sister. He pulls over and gets the young woman's attention. When she sees Liala, she freezes.

Liala is petrified. Guy has Katie write contact information on a card which he hands to Liala. With a word of encouragement, he sends her to reunite with her awaiting sister.

As she crosses the street, she has a flashback. She remembers her father dragging her out of the house and shoving her off the front steps.

Her sister has her own flashback. She remembers Liala walking out to the street and disappearing into the night.

Liala's sister gives her an unfriendly reception. Liala responds with, "I'm still the same person!" This hits a nerve with her sister and her demeanor softens.

Meanwhile, Guy takes a seat on a knee-high wall along the sidewalk. Katie sits next to him. She tries to thank him for what he did earlier but he pretends to not know what she is talking about. With some painful coercion, he relents and acknowledges her appreciation. Dancing Thumbelina becomes the topic of conversation. Katie mentions that he must have been special to her. When her phone rings, she answers it. She leaves stating that it is a private conversation.

Laila returns from her reunion and is called over by Katie. They have a quick non-verbal discussion where Liala signals that things are good with her sister. Katie signals that she got a hold of the person that she was searching for. She was told that their jobs and their room are still available at the Bearskin Lounge. She is sure that it will be no problem getting their old jobs back.

Meanwhile, Guy gets a phone call from his ex girlfriend. He does not answer it and blocks her number.

The two women approach Guy and ask for a ride to the Bearskin Lounge. They point out that for once they are asking nicely. Also, it's not that far out of his way. With a grumble, he agrees to take them.

They are driving late that night when Katie's phone rings. It seems to be the same person as the previous phone call. The person relays the good news about their jobs. Katie tells the person that she and Liala are already on their way. She also looks at Guy and says, "He's with us!" instead of "We're with the Jeep". The phone conversation moves on to Katie trying to convince the mystery caller to do something. The call ends with the person agreeing to the request.

After the phone call, Katie attempts to make small talk with Guy. The unsuccessful topics include: changing the music, Astronomy, and the podcasts that he contributes to.

She finally asks the question burning in her thoughts: If he never saw her again, would he miss her? He replies with the same joke answer she gave him earlier regarding a sarcastic or truthful answer. In giving the sarcastic answer, he lists all of the angst he put up with on their trip. His answer is cut short when her patience runs out. When called upon to give the truthful answer, he tells her that he would indeed miss her. This is in lieu of the joke answer he is supposed to give. She is touched by his response.

He recalls their earlier conversation about friendship and that he still considers her and Liala to be his friends; more so than ever. She accepts the compliment but reiterates the incompatibility of their respective lifestyles.

He recalls a recent period of time where he did not see them and wondered where they went. She explains that they got into trouble and had to leave town. She confesses that due to Liala's temper that it happens often. Because of this, they are running out of places where they aren't in trouble. He advises that it's a sign that she needs to make some changes in her life. She tells him that she had been considering that recently and has decided to stay with Liala.

He points to the sun that is about to crest the horizon. He tells her that every day provides an opportunity for change and improvement. Under her breath she muses, "For some people."

They arrive at the Bearskin Lounge parking lot. The Jeep comes to a stop and he turns off the engine. Katie gathers her things and leaves for the club's back door.

He wakes Liala, helps her gather her things and walks with her to the back door. It is open with Katie standing beside it. To him, it sadly symbolizes the separate directions their lives will lead. They thank him for the ride. Guy thanks them for "everything else". He pulls out his pocket watch and opens it, revealing the mystery photo he placed inside. It's the picture of the two women kissing him taken at the amusement park. They try to cheer him up by pointing out that he can finally go home like Dorothy. He remarks that he feels more like the Tin Man as a reference to a breaking heart.

As he plods toward the Jeep, Katie runs to him and asks for a goodbye hug. Liala follows and the three engage in a hug. A hawk lands on the Bearskin Lounge sign and watches. It is revealed that Kelly's picture is on the sign. Afterward, the hawk flies to the horizon.

Guy asks if he will see them again. Katie doesn't want to give bad news and expects Liala to be strongly against it. She asks Liala in their facial sign language. She is confused by Liala's reaction. Instead of her usual scowl, Liala is smiling. Liala glances at the Jeep. Katie is confused at first. The message soon becomes perfectly clear: We're with the Jeep! Remember?

In unison, the women tell him that they will be in touch.

He slides into the Jeep and starts it. As he fastens his seatbelt and checks his mirrors, Liala asks Katie if everything is all set. As he leaves, Katie confirms that it is and sees the shadow of somebody hiding behind the front corner of the building. They shout for him to stop.

He locks up the breaks and the Jeep slides to a stop. Dancing Thumbelina approaches, waves to Katie and Liala and climbs into the Jeep.

She turns up the music which draws his attention. He is shocked. He asks her where she wants to go. She uses a poke and a shrug to ask him where *he* wants to go. He tells her that he wants to go home. She points left and right to ask him which way is home. He points to the right. With a nod and pointing with her thumb, she silently tells him to make a right turn which he does.

Guy and Dancing Thumbelina ride the Jeep into the sunrise.

The end.