

Record Store Day

A Short Screenplay By:
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OVER BLACK.

MOM (V.O.)
(tinny/through phone)
Hey, Max. It's Mom. Thought I might
catch you.

INT. APARTMENT/BEDROOM - PRE-DAWN

Passing headlights spill through crinkled venetian slats, painting a young bachelor's den: a mismatched collection of hand-me-down and garage sale furnishings accented with a music lover's treasure trove of posters, CD's, and vinyl.

MOM (V.O.)
You know I really love getting your
texts, but it would be nice to hear
your voice once in awhile...

A SMART PHONE blasts an annoying RINGTONE, RATTLING across a nightstand. A hand grabs the phone, revealing an incoming call from MOM. Fingers blindly trace contours for the silence switch. CLICK.

MOM (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Anyway...I know today's a big day
for you so...just wanted to say I'm
thinking of you.

MAX FARR (24) rolls over, blinking off sleep. His spotty attempt at facial hair has the unintended effect of emphasizing his youthful appearance. He suddenly snaps to attention. Eyes widen.

MOM (V.O.) (CONT'D)
...Love you, Max. Happy hunting.

ON TURN TABLE: A needle hits a record. POP. HISS. CLAPPING HANDS echo as 'HURRY UP LET'S GO' by SHOUT OUT LOUDS blasts to life...

INSERT TITLE: RECORD STORE DAY

The SONG BRIDGES to...

INT. APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

A close relation of vintage lamps SNAP awake. Bare feet shuffle past stacks of college books (existentialism, photography, science) and 12-inch vinyl.

Max digs through small mounds of dirty clothing. Sniffs a *Flaming Lips* tee. It passes inspection.

Max steps into the bathroom, tapping a framed black and white photograph of a TWENTY-SOMETHING ROCK BAND. Stylized chiaroscuro lighting elicits a late seventies vibe. The LEAD SINGER looks a lot like Max (his FATHER).

INT. APARTMENT/BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A faded *Pavement* teeshirt lands on the bathroom tile followed by *University of Michigan* jogging pants.

Steam rises from behind a shower curtain. Max raises his face into the steady flow of the shower head, washing his hair.

INT. APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Vans shoes tied. An army surplus jacket sleeved. 'Tiny record' key chain grabbed.

The door SLAMS, revealing a *Serge Gainsbourg* poster.

EXT. CITY STREET - PRE-DAWN

A YELLOW HATCHBACK SPUTTERS against a canvas of bluing pre-dawn skies.

INT. YELLOW HATCHBACK/MOVING - CONTINUOUS

ON CAR STEREO: Max adjusts the volume.

The DASHBOARD betrays the car's fleeting life. Scuffs. Dirt-darkened smudges. Sun faded color. Band stickers cling to the dash with varying degrees of adhesion.

Max HITS the clutch. POPS the car into third gear with choreographed precision. He wears a winter cap, hunched against the cold. Icy breaths puff as he sings along to the SONG'S CHORUS.

EXT. CITY STREET/BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

The YELLOW HATCHBACK SPUTTERS across the bridge. The ENGINE WHINES in distress. The car LURCHES. GEARS GRIND. Lurches again.

INT. YELLOW HATCHBACK/MOVING - CONTINUOUS

Desperation hits Max like a punch to the gut.

MAX

Come on.

Max fights the clutch and gear shift...

MAX (CONT'D)

Jesus! Come on!

...but it's a losing battle.

EXT. CITY STREET - CONTINUOUS

The engine dies. The car coasts to the shoulder.

INT. YELLOW HATCHBACK - CONTINUOUS

Max pumps the gas. Tries the ignition. The lights dim on the dash. CLICK. CLICK-ITY CLICK.

MAX

Piece of shit.

Max slumps back into his seat. Hits the hazards. He checks his SMART PHONE for the time: 5:45. He leaps out of the car.

EXT. CITY STREET - CONTINUOUS

ON STREET SIGN: Canton Street

Max sprints down the shoulder. The car's dim flashing hazards cast yellow light upon each foot fall.

EXT. CITY STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Max runs down the street passing sleepy storefronts. HEAVING BREATHS betray his lack of fitness. Ruddy faced he struggles uphill passing a GRAFFITI MURAL OF A SURPRISED WOMAN who seems to be looking at Max.

Max stops for a moment, leaning on his knees to catch his breath. A DEEP BREATH. Then...off he goes, struggling on.

EXT. PETAL KETTLE REPLAY RECORD STORE - PRE-DAWN

Max rounds a street corner dragging ass. His eyes brighten as he eagerly surveys...

RECORD STORE ENTRANCE: A long line winds down the storefront sidewalk.

Max's shoulders sag in disappointment.

MAX

Shit.

Out of breath, he shuffles up, reluctantly taking his place in line.

'Hurry Up Let's Go' BEEPS to an end...

INSERT TITLE: SIDE A

EXT. PETAL KETTLE REPLAY RECORD STORE - PRE-DAWN

MELODY JONES (22) steps up behind Max. Petite, she's decked out in a jean jacket with band patches and buttons. She wears fingerless black gloves to match worn black nail polish. She sucks on a cigarette, craning on tip toes to survey the line ahead.

Max notices her. He flashes a tentative smile. Melody smiles back...

MELODY

Hey.

MAX

Hi.

Melody gestures with the cigarette.

MELODY

This doesn't bother you, does it?

MAX

Naw. I'm good.

MELODY

People crush on hating cigarettes these days. You know? But I think they're one of the great under appreciated ice breakers of all time. 'Gotta smoke' was kind of like the universal conversation starter back in the day.

MAX

Ha. Yeah. You're right. Kind of a non-creepy way to strike up a conversation with a complete stranger.

MELODY

Think about it. What conversation starters are there these days? You know? People are all up in their iPhones. They don't even see each other. I saw this video of this guy the other day, he was like, at some zoo in Taiwan or Singapore or whatever and almost walked into a Tiger that had escaped. I mean...Shit! Right?

Max smiles. Melody offers her hand. A plastic pink 'happy face' ring smiles up from her ring finger.

MELODY (CONT'D)

I'm Melody.

Max shakes her hand.

MAX

Max.

MELODY

Max. Ha. That's cool. That's a cool name. Like you're 'the max'. Right?

Max shrugs.

MAX

I don't know. I'd say I'm just average. Just average Max.

MELODY

What do you do, Just Average Max?

Melody offers a cigarette. Max plucks one from the pack, popping it into his mouth. Melody flicks her cheap pink Bic. Max inhales.

MAX

I fritter my days away in perpetual servitude of the man.

Melody laughs. Max smiles.

MAX (CONT'D)

I'm in school at UGA. When I'm not studying I'm celebrated as gifted amongst the rank and file mixologists dispensing caffeinated dreams at *Oh Joe's Coffee* on fourth street.

Melody smiles.

MELODY

What's your major?

MAX

Currently best described as caffeine slash music-induced somnambulism. Let's just say I'm still evaluating my options.

MELODY

I pegged you as an upperclassman.

MAX

Sophomore. Took a couple of years off.

MELODY

Yeah. I get it. It's like we're expected to make this major life decision before we've had a chance to live. You know? I mean - and me - I don't like to get locked into things. Predictability is boring.

MAX

(tentative)

Yeah.

Max exhales a plume of smoke. The GEEK CHIC GUY behind Melody feigns a cough, waving the air in front of him. Max notices...

MAX (CONT'D)

Oh. Sorry, man.

...and quickly discards the smoke, crushing it under his Vans toe. Max taps Melody and nods at GEEK CHIC. Geek Chic shoots Melody daggers. Melody turns back to Max.

MELODY

(sotto/sing-songy)

...Buzz kill.

She takes one last long drag and tosses the cigarette away, waving at the smoke as she exhales.

MELODY (CONT'D)

Oh well. Guess it served its purpose.

(to Geek Chic)

Sorry, man.

Melody bobs up and down, rubbing her arms to keep warm.

MELODY (CONT'D)

Jesus.

MAX

I know. Right?

Melody hugs Max's arm, an awkwardly intimate attempt to get warm. He shrinks back a bit.

MELODY

You don't mind. Right?

Max flashes a tentative smile.

MAX

No. No. I'm good.

EXT. PETAL KETTLE REPLAY RECORD STORE - PRE-DAWN

The line of hopeful patrons now wraps around the building.
The sky reddens with the sun's approach.

Melody continues to hug Max's arm. Max strikes an awkward balance between helping Melody get warm and not overstepping the bounds of relative strangers. Melody sucks on a lollipop.

MELODY

It's something that makes people -
you know humans - stand out from the
rest of the animal kingdom.
Appreciation of music is tied to
language and higher intelligence.
Somebody said that. A scientist or
something.

MAX

So you're saying that animals can't
tell the difference between say
Radiohead and a car alarm?

MELODY

I mean - I can barely tell the
difference between Radiohead and a
car alarm - but yeah. Animals can't
sense a melody or a beat. Except
maybe chimpanzees and dolphins. I
mean they're both pretty smart.

MAX

What about birds? All that singing.

MELODY

Yeah. Birds. I guess that makes sense
too. Right? Birds.

MAX

I don't know what I'd do without
music. I'd rather be blind than deaf.

MELODY

Seriously?

MAX

Yeah. Music can set a mood. Lift you
up.

MELODY

Yeah. But Beethoven was deaf and he
could still write these like masterful
movements. I once read that he sensed
notes through vibration or something.
He could feel the music in his body.

MAX

I'd rather hear it in my ears.

Melody laughs.

MELODY

So what's your thing? What are you here for?

MAX

Music wise?

Melody nods.

MAX (CONT'D)

I'm pretty much into the indie alt-rock scene.

(counting on fingers)

Pavement. Built to Spill. Shout Out Louds. Say Hi.

MELODY

I never heard of half that stuff.

MAX

My dad introduced me to a lot of it. He was in a band. They were pretty good - you know - but not good enough to do anything.

Melody's focus snaps across the parking lot. She stiffens, releasing Max's arm.

MELODY

Oh shit.

MAX

What?

MELODY

He's here. I knew it. I knew he would show up for that fucking stupid album.

MAX

Who?

MELODY

My boyfriend.

Max flinches - equal parts hurt and surprise. He recovers.

MAX

You're boyfriend?

MELODY
Well, ex-boyfriend. Reggae loving
douchebag that he is.

MAX
Oh...
(beat)
You don't like reggae?

Melody grabs Max's hand.

MELODY
Just play along. Okay?

Melody squeezes Max's hand. Max is shocked at her forwardness. She applies an air of 'cool', toning down her bubbly self.

MELODY (CONT'D)
Josh!

JOSH (29) doesn't hear. Thin. Bearded. He wears an expensive winter getup contrasted by a straw fedora. He thumbs a text on his smart phone as he crosses the lot. Melody smirks, put off by having to shout louder.

MELODY (CONT'D)
(sotto)
Jesus Christ.
(forceful)
Josh! JOSH!

Josh stops, scanning the line. He picks out Melody and throws a 'too cool for school' salute. He swaggers up, hiking up his skinny jeans as he fires off a text and pockets his phone.

JOSH
Guess I'm not surprised you'd be
here.

MELODY
This is Max.

JOSH
What's up...

MELODY
You're late.

JOSH
Yeah. Couldn't get out of bed.

Josh throws a grin full of innuendo.

MELODY

Well...hopefully they'll still have what you're looking for by the time you get your turn.

Josh's phone VIBRATES. He checks the response.

JOSH

It's all good. Things have a way of working out.

MELODY

What are you looking for? It's that Ziggy Marley ten-inch. Isn't it?

Josh smirks at his phone. He speed dials, scanning the parking lot. AVERY (26) scans the line, speaking on her phone. African American, she's decked out in an expensive jacket, yoga pants, and knee high boots. She wears a sparkly Girl Power teeshirt.

JOSH

(in phone)

Yo. Ran into somebody.

Josh waves. Avery picks him out of the crowd.

JOSH (CONT'D)

Grab a spot. Be right there.

Josh turns back to Melody.

MELODY

Who's that?

JOSH

My reason for staying in bed in the morning.

(to Max)

Good to meet you, Zach.

MAX

Max.

JOSH

Right. So...see ya.

MELODY

Yeah. See ya.

(sotto)

Fucker.

INSERT TITLE: SIDE B

EXT. PETAL KETTLE REPLAY RECORD STORE - DAY

QUICK SHOTS: The store door unlocked. The door opened. The winding line of patrons lets out a COLLECTIVE CHEER.

Melody spies Josh and Avery laughing with one another, looking like a hip Benneton commercial. Melody unwraps another lollipop, shoving it into her mouth. She stands apart from Max. Max eagerly watches as patrons are ushered into the store two at a time.

MELODY

It's funny how music can bring back a memory. Like I can be listening to a song and I'm back there in the moment. Like that fucker's bedroom. This patchouli bullshit he used to burn to cover up his herbal habit. I can't listen to a fucking Reggae album without getting pissed off and depressed.

MAX

But it's such happy music.
(singing)
'Let's get together and feel all right...'

MELODY

Fucking hate that song.

MAX

There's this Pavement song, *Starlings in the Slipstream* that my high school girlfriend and I listened to summer of my Junior year. We went out to this new subdivision, all of the houses were still being framed. We climbed to the second story of a house, laid down a blanket and star gazed through the rafters. Whenever I hear that song it takes me back. I get these warm butterflies in my stomach. I can smell the outside. The wood rafters. The construction. I can feel the anticipation of her kiss. That was a really good moment.
(beat)
How long were you guys together?

MELODY

About a year. I was all the flav' for awhile. You know? We talked about moving in together.

(MORE)

MELODY (CONT'D)

It was really good at first. I don't think there was a single day in three months that we weren't together doing something. But that was the A-side of the relationship. You know?

MAX

And the B-side?

MELODY

All the leftover crap. The arguments. Him flirting with other girls. Being disinterested. Josh has a way of making a person feel either super special or super insignificant.

MAX

The B-side gets a bad rap. Think about all the great B-sides.

MELODY

If B-sides are so great then why are there double A-sides?

MAX

Like what?

MELODY

Beatles: Day Tripper/We Can Work it Out, Penny Lane/Strawberry Fields Forever? Queen too. We Are the Champions and...what was it?

MAX

I think that's bullshit. A-sides are the commercial songs that the labels want everyone to know. And B-sides are the real artist. When they just let go and be themselves and aren't trying too hard.

Melody takes a bite out of her lollipop.

MELODY

I don't think Josh liked the real me. I think he liked the idea of me. It probably sounds stupid but ... you know the worst thing he ever said to me?

MAX

What?

MELODY
That I'm predictable.

Max turns to look at Josh and Avery. Josh catches Max looking.

MAX
There's nothing predictable about
you.

Melody flashes a strained smile.

MELODY
So you haven't told me what you're
getting.

MAX
Ever heard of Serge Gainsbourg?

Melody shakes her head.

MAX (CONT'D)
He's this French artist from the
sixties. My parents used to put him
on while they made breakfast Sunday
mornings. It was their thing. There's
a remastered 180 gram *Best Of* with
some live stuff that's coming out
today.

MELODY
You buying it for them?

MAX
No. Getting it for myself. Kind of a
way of reliving some good memories.
(beat)
My dad died last year. This is the
first year he's not here for Record
Store Day.

MELODY
Oh. Jesus. I'm sorry.

MAX
No. It's cool. I mean...it's not.
But it is.

MELODY
What happened to him?

MAX
Pancreatic cancer. I dropped out of
school for a couple of years to help
my mom.

(MORE)

MAX (CONT'D)

Dad wasn't very well organized. So there was a lot to sort out.

(beat)

They're only getting one copy. It's obscure enough that I'm hoping no one picks it up. But you never know. So...yeah...that's my number one pick for the day.

Melody takes Max's hand.

MELODY

I'm really sorry, Max.

MAX

It's all good.

MELODY

No. Seriously. I didn't mean to be a downer.

MAX

You're anything but a downer.

Max and Melody lock eyes. The line moves forward. They don't notice.

GEEK CHIC

Uh - guys.

Melody releases Max's hand. The PETAL KETTLE EMPLOYEE counts off Max and Melody, letting them enter the store.

INT. PETAL KETTLE REPLAY RECORD STORE - CONTINUOUS

QUICK SHOTS: Patrons thumb through albums in fevered anticipation.

Max peers around the line of patrons, spotting:

THE SERGE GAINSBURG RECORD: Gainsbourg grins from the twelve-inch cover, tipping a cowboy hat with a six shooter. A BESPECTACLED MIDDLE-AGED MAN picks up the album and examines it.

Max's face drops.

Bespectacled tucks the album under his arm with a selection of others and continues searching the inventory.

MAX

Hey. Hey, man.

Max steps out of line, tapping Bespectacled's shoulder.

MAX (CONT'D)

Hey. I'll pay you double what it's worth.

BESPECTACLED

Which one?

MAX

The Gainsbourg.

Bespectacled mulls it over.

BESPECTACLED

Two hundred.

MAX

It's a forty-five dollar album.

BESPECTACLED

Two hundred.

MAX

I've got ninety. That's all I've got.

BESPECTACLED

Sorry, kid.

Max slips back into line beside Melody, despondent.

MAX

So close.

MELODY

Someone snagged it?

Max nods.

MAX

He wants two-hundred for it. That's half a paycheck.

Melody flips through albums. She seems distraught. Distracted.

ON RECORD: Ziggy Marley posing with a stoned look.

Melody examines the Ziggy Marley album. Thumbs through three copies. She looks up through the store window.

THROUGH STORE WINDOW: Josh and Avery hold one another. Josh spots Melody watching and whispers to Avery. Avery looks at Melody and starts laughing.

Melody's face sets in anger. She grabs all three Ziggy Marley albums.

MAX (CONT'D)

I thought you hated Reggae.

MELODY

I do.

Max and Melody step up to the cashier counter. The HIPSTER STORE OWNER takes Melody's albums. Max watches as bespectacled pays a HIPSTER CASHIER for the Gainsbourg album.

HIPSTER STORE OWNER

One copy per customer.

MELODY

Seriously?

HIPSTER STORE OWNER

We can't have people buying more than one copy on RSD. Store policy.

Melody spots Josh and Avery entering the store. Desperation grips her face. She spins toward Max, GEEK CHIC standing behind him.

MELODY

Would you guys buy these for me?
Please? I've got the cash.

GEEK CHIC shoots a sour look. The line of patrons pause their frenzied hunt for vinyl gold, enthralled by the spectacle.

JOSH

Melody, what are you doing?

Melody turns to Max, panicked. Max weighs Josh's glare, piecing together the puzzle. He grabs one of the albums.

MAX

Yeah. Sure. I'll take this one.

Melody turns toward GEEK CHIC.

MELODY

Please?

MAX

Come on, man.

GEEK CHIC holds up his hands.

HIPSTER STORE OWNER

Come on, sister. One goes back.

HIPSTER reaches across the counter, grabbing the remaining two albums. Melody tugs.

The HIPSTER loses balance and belly flops on the counter.

HIPSTER STORE OWNER (CONT'D)

HEY!

Melody scans her unintended audience, panicked.

JOSH

Melody. This is a pretty stupid way
of getting back at me.

Melody locks eyes with Josh. An internal conflict twitches
across her face, eyes welling. Her face suddenly sets...

BANG! Melody smashes the albums on the edge of the cashier
counter - BANG BANG BANG - until the albums split in half.
The entire store stares in disbelief. A prolonged silence
then...

JOSH (CONT'D)

JESUS, MELODY! WHAT THE FUCK!

EXT. PETAL KETTLE REPLAY RECORD STORE - CONTINUOUS

A small crowd has gathered. A POLICE CRUISER is parked
outside, blues flashing. A POLICE OFFICER speaks with Melody,
her face red with tears. Another OFFICER interviews the STORE
OWNER, flanked by Josh and Avery. Max watches from the
sidewalk. The OFFICER hands Melody a ticket. She nods and
starts across the parking lot. Max rushes to catch up.

MAX

Hey...

Melody keeps walking.

MAX (CONT'D)

Hey. You okay?

MELODY

No. No I'm not okay.

MAX

Hey...

Max takes Melody by the arm, stopping her. She looks at him
through tearful eyes. Max takes the Ziggy Marley album from
a plastic bag and hands it to her. Melody laughs ironically.

MELODY

I'm really not crazy, Max. I'm really
not.

Max keeps his distance, not so sure.

MELODY (CONT'D)

It's like when you get this new album and you play it over and over and over again. And eventually you get bored with it. And so you move on to something else. You know? It's just - I really loved him. And to him I was that album.

Melody holds back tears. She goes to take his hand, Max steps back.

MAX

It's okay. You're going to be okay.

Max turns and walks away. Melody looks down at the Ziggy Marley album. She sees Bespectacled getting into a Volvo with two bags full of finds. She wipes her face, rushing over to him.

MELODY

Hey man. Can you wait here for a second?

Bespectacled looks confused. He watches as...

BESPECTACLED'S POV: Melody runs across the parking lot to Josh. She holds out the Ziggy Marley album. Josh takes it. He makes a face, pulling money out of his wallet.

Melody takes the money and rushes back toward bespectacled. She extends the cash with hopeful anticipation.

EXT. CITY STREET - MOMENTS LATER

ON STREET SIGN: CANTON STREET

Max sits on the hood of his car, hazards flashing dimly.

Melody's shoes run into frame.

Melody steps up to Max, holding something behind her back.

MELODY

Hey.

MAX

Hey.

MELODY

I just wanted to say thank you.

Melody hands Max the Gainsbourg album. Max grins, sliding down the car hood. He takes the album and turns it over.

MAX

Wow. Thank you.

MELODY

You're a really sweet guy, Max. And I'm sorry if I freaked you out. Especially considering what today meant to you.

MAX

He would've thought that was kind of cool. Kind of rock and roll.

Melody smiles.

MELODY

Rock and roll.
(beat)
So what's going on here?

MAX

Battery is shot. Trying to decide what to do about it.

MELODY

You know how to pop the clutch?

MAX

Yeah.

MELODY

Okay then. Come on.

EXT. CITY STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Melody pushes the yellow hatchback while Max drives with the door open. He pops the clutch, the engine chugging to life. Melody keeps running along behind as Max revs the engine, throwing open the passenger door.

MAX

Come on! Get in!

Melody runs up beside the moving car and hops in.

The car chugs up a hill.

MELODY (O.S.)

You ever heard of Synchronicity?

MAX (O.S.)

You mean the Police album?

MELODY (O.S.)

No. The theory.

MAX (O.S.)

No.

MELODY (O.S.)

It's kind of this happy idea that everything happens for a reason even if that reason is not obvious when it's happening.

MAX (O.S.)

Huh...I like that.

MELODY (O.S.)

Yeah. Me too.

IRIS OUT.