

FADE IN:

INT/EXT ZACH'S 1967 DODGE DART - NIGHT

A beater 67 Dart prowls down a residential street. The driver's window scrolls down, reveals ZACH MCKENZIE. He sneers at the nearby, empty storefront.

A 19-year-old punk, barely out of high school in a ripped Cramps shirt, close-cropped hair and dirty jeans, he HAWKS A LOOGIE at the building. A cheap mobile phone rests in his hand.

ZACH  
Whatever. No such place.

DUDE ON PHONE (V.O.)  
I'm looking at it right now: one...  
two... nine... one.

ZACH  
You're not lookin' at shit,  
asshole.

DUDE ON PHONE (V.O.)  
Hey.

At the corner building, an empty commercial storefront labeled 1275, a flash of light catches his eye. He rolls the dart forward. There is no 1291 on the block.

Ahead, three older pickups encircle a cluster of people: A gaggle of "COWBOYS," a country-styled clique, stand in the glare of their truck lights.

ZACH  
1291 East, right?

DUDE ON PHONE (V.O.)  
Wait, there's an east?

ZACH  
Are you fucking kidding me?

The Cowboys shove HAROLD "LAZY" JONES, another 19-year-old punk in a green mohawk around as Zach nears. Junky-thin and too sketched-out to fight back, Lazy falls. Closing in, they're ready to rain pain down on the kid.

The Dart creeps right into them, just slow enough to push some of them out of the way. No one's hurt, just annoyed as he pulls up by Lazy. A FAT COWBOY in a welding cap BANGS on the hood.

ZACH  
Lazy, get in, you dumbshit!

The door's not even shut when Zach takes off. The Cowboys, pound on the Dart as he leaves, then clamor into their trucks.

EXT. STREETS OF WILLS - NIGHT

Zach GUNS the Dart through the straight, badly maintained streets of Wills, the trucks right behind.

A tiny mountain town of maybe 800 people and getting lower every year, it's on its last legs. The only people left are those too poor or too set in their ways.

As the trucks edge closer, Zach snaps the Dart hard right and hits a deep dip. The undercarriage SPARKS against the asphalt and Zach laughs. Growing paler, Lazy chuckles nervously beside him.

ZACH  
What'd you do to them this time,  
Lazy?

LAZY  
They're just assholes, man.

ZACH  
Right. Whatever.

Zach flips around, passes the Cowboys and hits the dip again. The Dart stalls.

Cackling, he CRANKS THE ENGINE over and over as Lazy looks out the back window at the approaching trucks.

LAZY  
Shit, them assholes is right behind  
us.

The ENGINE SCREAMS TO LIFE and Zach punches the gas. He keeps laughing as Lazy holds on for life.

The laugh is cut short by the SQUEAL OF BRAKES.

Fully stopped, they look up at a great, black milk truck. A giant crown logo adorns the side, the words "YELLOW CROWN" over it in old-English letters.

The MILKMAN smiles down at them, a 50's-style manly man in his mid-thirties in a white uniform and white mariner's cap.

He's straight out of a Norman Rockwell painting, handsome, burly and hale.

A polite salute and a wink and the Milkman drives off. Zach reaches into a bag at Lazy's feet and lobs a kombucha bottle from the customer's food at the truck as it pulls away--cracking the back window.

ZACH

Intense.

LAZY

You said it, bro.

The Cowboys ROAR UP behind them and Zach stomps on the gas.

As the trucks close in as they tear down the road, he suddenly jerks the wheel left. Slow to react, the lead Cowboy truck course-corrects and move in a little farther behind.

Another sudden turn and the gap widens. One more and they're in an alley with the Cowboys no longer behind them.

LAZY

We lost 'em, bro.

ZACH

Who's "we," asshole? And not yet we didn't.

Black, as Zach kills the lights and they fly down the alley blind. The Dart bucks and Lazy white-knuckles the door handle.

LAZY

You trying to kill us?

ZACH

Totally.

At the end of the alley, GEARS GRIND as he backs into an empty carport, out of sight. Lights from the trucks approach along the nearby road, dim and vanish.

Lazy pops open the passenger door and PUKES ONTO THE PAVEMENT. Zach laughs.

ZACH

Light-weight. Man, I got to get out of this shitty town.

EXT. STREETS OF WILLS - NIGHT

AURORA DARCIE, a 13 year-old in her dad's beat up Red-River College hoodie, simple pony tail, riding goggles, rides her hand-me-down boys mountain bike from house to house. A newspaper arcs over a lawn, lands in a bush. A sigh. Another porch, another miss, but a 50's style milk crate rests on the porch. A third porch, also with a milk crate labeled "Yellow Crown."

This time the paper THUNKS into the screen door and lands beside the crate.

A fist pump and,

AURORA

Boo-ya!

A glance at her digital watch, she rides off to the next block. Nothing at the intersection and she rides forward, SKIDS to a stop

As the milktruck barely misses her. The Milkman stops and smiles down from his idling truck.

AURORA

Dangit!

MILKMAN

Little lady, what would your father say about language like that?

AURORA

Seriously?

MILKMAN

You'll never get a husband with language like that.

Before she can protest he tips his cap and drives off.

AURORA

"Yellow Crown?"

At the next house he carries a milkcrate to the porch. Back at the truck, a slight turn of his head and a smile: he's watching her watch him. The truck glides down the street.

Goggles down, she gives chase, her bag of papers still half full.

INT. ZACH'S 1967 DODGE DART - NIGHT

The Dart pulls up beside a bench on the edge of a park. Lazy reaches for the door but turns to Zach.

ZACH  
Get gone, I got a jerkoff customer waiting on me.

LAZY  
Hey, throw some cash my way, bro?

ZACH  
I don't even get minimum.  
Everything I get's from tips almost.

LAZY  
I need some food or something.  
C'mon bro.

Snatching Lazy's arm, he exposes track marks. Lazy pulls away and gets out. Zach hands him a bag of fries from the customer's order.

ZACH  
Here, man. Jerkoff won't miss it.  
Hey, I'll float you some cash from my tip.

LAZY  
(half-hearted)  
Thanks.

ZACH  
Yeah, whatever. I'll swing by in about an hour. You're gone you don't get shit. Okay?

Zach PEELS OUT before he gets an answer and inertia SLAMS THE DOOR SHUT.

EXT. STREETS OF WILLS - NIGHT

Perched behind a shrub, Aurora watches the Milkman walk to another house. A HARRIED YOUNG MOTHER opens the door before he reaches the porch. Too far to make out, he SPEAKS AND SHE GIGGLES and covers her mouth. A TOE-HEADED TODDLER appears at her feet and the Milkman leans over, ruffles the kid's hair.

Cell phone at the ready, Aurora creeps closer to the milk truck.

Glancing too and from the house, she takes a dozen quick pictures of the truck. Not that she'd know but there's no sign of the cracked window.

A tip of his hat to the Mother, he walks back to the truck. Aurora dashes to a nearby bush where her bike awaits and takes a couple more pictures as he walks by.

At the truck, he stops, turns and looks right at her, flashing the manliest of manly grins--Ward Cleaver meets John Wayne.

Startled, she jumps on her bike and rides from behind the bush and down the street.

EXT. VIOLA AND SHELLY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Old-style milk carrier in hand, saunters up a walkway from his truck. WHISTLING, he walks up to a modest, small house with a small but lush garden encircling the porch. He KNOCKS.

VIOLA BACKER (64 no makeup, in jeans and simple print shirt and short, gray hair) opens the door.

VIOLA  
Can I help you?

MILKMAN  
I'm absolutely, positively certain that you can, ma'am. I was just passing by when I noticed you aren't on my delivery list.

VIOLA  
There's a good reason for that: we don't drink milk.

MILKMAN  
Oh, my. I don't think I've ever heard of such a thing.

VIOLA  
Okay. I'm lactose intolerant and my partner is a vegan.

MILKMAN  
Partner?

VIOLA  
I think you know what I mean.

SHELLY (O.S.)  
Vi? Who is it?

VIOLA  
It's some kind of Ozzy and Harriet  
milkman.

SHELLY (O.S.)  
Hun, ask if he does oat milk.

VIOLA  
So, do you sell oat milk?

MILKMAN  
Gosh, I'm not sure. I'll have to  
check with the regional office and  
get back to you.

She nods and waits as he turns to go. He pauses, turns back  
and leans toward her.

MILKMAN  
Wouldn't it be wonderful to fit in,  
to be like everyone else?

VIOLA  
Excuse me?

MILKMAN  
If you could drink milk. Like  
everyone else. Don't you think that  
would be just wonderful?

VIOLA  
People have tried to cure me  
before. Didn't take.

MILKMAN  
They didn't have what I have, or  
know what I know.

VIOLA  
Goodnight Mr. Milkman.

MILKMAN  
You have a good night as well. And  
I'll stop by tomorrow. To let you  
know about that "oat milk."

VIOLA  
I can't wait.

A great, big smile and he tips his cap. She watches him walk  
back to his truck before closing the door.

EXT. BURNOUT'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Looking bored and angry, Zach stands on the porch of a run-down house perched on the edge of town. GREG THE BURNOUT (30s, skinny with a ratty beard and worn t-shirt and pants) pokes through three brown paper bags of food.

GREG THE BURNOUT  
Hey, like uh, I thought we ordered more drinks. There's only like two here.

ZACH  
I don't bag it, I just deliver.

GREG THE BURNOUT  
And the food's organic?

ZACH  
I look like a farmer? How the fuck do I know?

GREG THE BURNOUT  
Website says organic.

ZACH  
Well, then it must be. Case solved, Sherlock. So...

He holds out a hand. Greg peers through another bag.

GREG THE BURNOUT  
I think there's 'sposed to be another tea.

ZACH  
Can I just get my tip so I can deliver more shitty food to some other asshole.

GREG THE BURNOUT  
I ain't giving you nothin'. You were late, dude.

ZACH  
Fuck this shit.

Middle finger pointing over his shoulder to Greg, he stomps back to the Dart. He climbs into the car and tears off.

GREG THE BURNOUT  
Not cool.



EXT. PARK - NIGHT

Curled up on the bench, Lazy opens a tentative eye as the Milkman pulls up and gets out.

LAZY  
Hey, bro. Spare some cash?

MILKMAN  
Good evening, Harold. I have so much better than money for you.

LAZY  
I don't do that shit.

MILKMAN  
I can give you purpose, Harold. I can show you purity and meaning.

Lazy scrambles off of the bench but the Milkman is quick and grabs his arm.

LAZY  
I don't DO THAT ANYMORE!

MILKMAN  
I'll take your pain away. Forever.

Yellow light sparks from the Milkman's eyes. Tears bubble out of Lazy's eyes as he stares back.

EXT. PARK - LATER

The Dart pulls up where the milk truck was just parked. No sign of Lazy...

ZACH  
What, you don't like free money anymore?

He checks his phone then HONKS THE HORN.

Lights suddenly erupt behind him. He turns and squints into the supernova.

Two of the three trucks from earlier come into focus. Zach throws up a middle finger, pops the car into gear and ROARS DOWN THE ROAD away from the Cowboys spilling out of the trucks.

Just off the road, Aurora walks her bike through the park, spots lights from the cars ahead.

The third truck slides into his path at the intersection and he cuts the wheel. The Dart spins a quarter turn, pinning the car between the curb and the truck.

Surrounded, he pokes his head out.

ZACH

If you wanted a fight you shoulda  
just said.

The Cowboys pile out of their trucks, led by a fat, grease-stained DIGGER (22 in a sleeveless cowboy shirt and tiny-brimmed welder's cap).

DIGGER

Thought you were outa this town,  
Zach.

ZACH

No worries, Digger, you can have  
all the meth to yourself. I'm high  
on life!

Laughing at his own lame joke, he REVS HIS ENGINE. He spots his Ex, MADDY (a 20 year old half-drunk girl with too much eye-liner in tight jeans) just behind Digger and between about five other Cowboys converging on the Dart.

DIGGER

You're talking way too much shit  
for having no kind of back up.

ZACH

Hey, Maddy, you're playing doctor  
with the local yokels, now? I  
thought I was your one and only.  
Guess you loved the meth more, huh?  
What'd you call them? "Pathetic  
losers," right?

She looks away as they near Zach's car. Digger and a CREW-CUT COWBOY drag Zach out of his car through the window. Stumbling, Zach just keeps laughing as they shove him around.

DIGGER

You could kill someone driving  
through us like that. Why you care  
about the shit-stain junky?

ZACH

(to Maddy)

What the actual fuck, Maddy? I  
never thought we were in love, but  
these shit-kickers?

(MORE)

ZACH (CONT'D)  
I mean, you don't even like country  
music. Or maybe that was a lie.

Escaping the shoving, he leans in for a kiss and she slaps him. He laughs as they rush him. One of his punches lands, sends a LONG-HAIRED COWBOY to his knees. A sucker punch from Digger stuns Zach a moment as Aurora's brother CODY (18 flannel shirt and trucker hat and a wispy mustache) flies at Zach with an axe handle.

Closer to the brawl now, Aurora spots Cody sneaking up behind Zach. Snatching up a hefty rock, she heaves it through a truck window, startling the Cowboys. Turning to the sound Zach spots Cody, knocks him down and runs to his car.

The Dart still pinned, Zach drives up onto the curb and through the park, passing Aurora. The Cowboys spot her and chase after her through the park. On her bike now, she loses them fast in the trees.

EXT. ROD'S DELI - NIGHT

The Dart skids to a halt outside and Zach jumps out. The signage declares it "Rod's Mexican Deli, open til 3 a.m."

INT. KITCHEN, ROD'S DELI - NIGHT

As Zach bounds in through the kitchen entrance, he claps BERNIE (the 67 year-old all-round kitchen slave hunched over the prep board) on the back. Scooping up a fist-full of lettuce from the board, he shoves it in his mouth and makes his way to the office.

ZACH  
Rod in the office?

Unmoved, Bernie remains focused on slicing tomatoes.

INT. OFFICE, ROD'S DELI - NIGHT

An old, faded sign for RODRIGUEZ' FAMOUS TAQUERIA leans sideways in a corner of the tiny office. ERNESTO "ROD" RODRIQUEZ, 57, sweaty, out of shape in ill-fitting business casual sits in a cheap office chair in a tiny back office, crowded with papers, packed cabinets, large safe and a 20-year-old PC and CRT monitor. He shoots Zach a harried, sad look.

ROD  
Why, kid, why are you doing me like  
this?

ZACH  
I got another delivery?

ROD  
Don't be a shit, I'm trying to tell  
you something. Listen, kid. I keep.  
Getting. Complaints.

ZACH  
Talk to Bernie.  
(jabs thumb at kitchen)  
I Just deliver it.

ROD  
Three drinks went out...

ZACH  
Whatever, dude didn't know what he  
ordered. Druggies. Town's full of  
them, Rod.

ROD  
You know all about that, don't you,  
kid?

ZACH  
Nah, I'm all natural, chemical  
free. Never had it, never will. So,  
no delivery?

Rod shakes his head out of frustration and Zach turns away,  
turns back.

ZACH  
Hey, Rod. The ads say the food's  
organic. That true?

ROD  
(shrugs)  
There's no delivery. Go clean  
something.

ZACH  
So, you're fucking lying?

ROD  
Watch your mouth. Organic don't  
mean nothing and you know it. You  
wouldn't care if people ate glass.

ZACH  
Only if they paid to eat glass.  
That's just wrong, Rod. They pay  
for organic, you give them organic.

ROD

Tell me you're joking, kid. You take whatever you want and bitch to me about "organic?" That's nerve.

ZACH

Fuck you and fuck this place, Rod.

ROD

I'm paying you, you little monster. It don't matter if it's organic, you deliver it or you're out the door.

ZACH

You pay me pennies. Nothing. Nada. I get fucked on tips even when I kiss the asses and hand the jobs. I hate them all but I'm not lying to them.

ROD

You want me to fire you or what?

ZACH

Fuck off, I quit.

A short staring contest: who will give in first? A shrug and Zach walks off. Rod turns to his computer, then, quietly...

ROD

Fuck you, you're fired.

EXT. STREETS OF WILLS - NIGHT

Pulling up outside a medium ranch style house, the Milkman gets out and heads up the walkway to the house. He spots TWO KIDS on the next-door porch. One concentrates on his phone screen while his sister plays a game on a tablet.

THE BOY, about ten, looks up. A wave from the Milkman, but the kid looks back down at his screen. Unperturbed, the Milkman knocks on the door.

It opens, reveals BRO-DUDE BOB, a once-muscular, now paunchy "working man" with Oakley-shaped tan lines and short-cropped hair. He cradles a cell-phone in front of his face and gives the Milkman a shrug that says, "what the fuck do you want?"

BRO-DUDE BOB

(into phone)

So, it's not enough.

(MORE)

BRO-DUDE BOB (CONT'D)  
It's half what I need for my boys  
to get the job done.

GUY ON PHONE (O.S.)  
(from phone)  
You ordered thirty-two bags. You  
got it.

MILKMAN  
How are you this evening, Robert?  
I'm here to collect for the monthly  
milk delivery.

BRO-DUDE BOB  
(into phone)  
Thirty-two eighty pound bags. I got  
forty-pound bags. Look, hold on.  
(to Milkman)  
I don't remember ordering milk.

MILKMAN  
If I could just step in, I'll show  
you my ledger.

Opening the screen door, the Milkman steps inside.

BRO-DUDE BOB  
Hey, I didn't say you could come  
in.

MILKMAN  
Nonetheless, it's time to pay,  
Robert.

A big, manly hand closes around Bob's wrist. No give at all  
as a surprised Bob tries to pull away. The door shuts behind  
them.

BOB'S SCREAM RINGS OUT FROM BEHIND THE DOOR and the kids look  
up from their screens. A moment and they look back down.

INT. ZACH'S 1967 DODGE DART - NIGHT

Easing the Dart along the park, Zach looks around for Lazy,  
then glances up and down the street for the Cowboys. Nothing.

Snatching up his phone, he calls Lazy, stares at the screen  
of his half-charged phone as it RINGS ON AND ON.

ZACH  
Did you lose your fuckin' phone  
again, asshole?

A CLICK and the Lazy who answers is suddenly lucid and coherent.

LAZY

Hello. Zach, what can I do for you tonight?

ZACH

Motherfucker, where are you?

LAZY

I'm so sorry. I completely forgot that we were supposed meet at the park.

ZACH

You sound weird. You tweaking or what? Are you mixing shit, cause that'll kill you.

LAZY

I appreciate your concern, but it's not necessary. If you like we can meet up. I'm at the square. If you're lucky you can meet my new friend.

ZACH

What new friend?

But Lazy hangs up and Zach tosses the phone into the passenger seat. He looks up and spots a guy right out of the 1950s in a suit and fedora.

Pulling up nearer, Zach gives him a once-over. The SUIT AND TIE GUY wears a new suit but his face is worn, grizzled and grey. A mouthful of broken teeth grin back at him.

SUIT AND TIE GUY

Have you seen the sign, yet, son?

ZACH

Yeah, here's your sign.

Zach laughs and flips the Guy off and pulls away.

INT. JANICE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Like an ad from a 1950's magazine, The Milkman stands, statuesque beside a tall shelf full of mismatched glass and ceramic figurines.

He smiles down at a hunched JANICE (88, dowdy, wearing the same floral shirt and dark slacks she's worn for 50 years, eyes clouded by encroaching glaucoma, a permed old-lady mullet). She pokes around a secretary desk covered in papers.

JANICE

I know it's here. I just seen it  
when I was looking for my secret  
chocolates I keep here. I used it  
to pay my 'lectric bill yesterday,  
so it's gotta be here. I remember  
it was so high

He admires her parakeet as she searches for her checkbook, pokes his fingers through the bars of it's cage.

MILKMAN

Don't you fret, Janice. I'll be  
back tomorrow.

JANICE

You want to get paid. Milk ain't  
free. I got it round here  
someplace.

MILKMAN

Janice, Yellow Crown milk will  
never put money over good old  
fashioned human kindness. I don't  
care if I ever see a shiny dime  
from you as long as you have the  
milk you need.

JANICE

Oh, bless you.

MILKMAN

Bless you, Janice and have a  
peaceful evening. When I come back  
I want to see some empty milk  
bottles.

A green feather flutters off his collar as he steps outside. Janice closes the door, heads to her living room, past the now-empty bird cage.

EXT. DOWNTOWN WILLS - NIGHT

SLAMMING his CREAKING car door, Zach walks past a row of storefronts. A couple are closed for the night but the others are boarded up or just empty.