

AMERICAN CARS

Written by

F.J. Hubert

THIRD DRAFT: 03/28/2019
WGA #: 1306602

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DISCLAIMER: Even though the American car models and builders and some historical characters and events presented in this movie script are real, its story, corporate discussions and transactions, along with its characters, are purely fictitious.

EXT. CITY OF FLINT, MICHIGAN - MORNING

MUSIC: Jimi Hendrix's Star-Spangled Banner guitar solo.

The sun is shining through the morning clouds. Below, a ghost town widens with its old buildings and clunkers. Abandoned "USE" plants. Broken windows. Empty parking lots. A long, wide boulevard with black metal arches. Up front, an arch displaying the sign "FLINT VEHICLE CITY." In residential areas, empty streets with dilapidated houses. Plywood sheets over windows. On the side of a street, a rusted kid's bike in a pile of junk. A ruined couch. Water pipes. A stained sink. A bird flies from a wire to a tree. A quiet street named "Serenade" reveals itself...

EXT. FLINT, SERENADE STREET - MORNING

TITLE: 1974

On a corner, an old house still stands. The fence delimits a small backyard with yellow grass and dotted ill-looking trees. A trash can knocked over. Spilled contents on the street. Dogs bark from a distance. A rusted 1967 Oldsmobile Starfire, with one window half open, rests in the driveway. Its dark blue frame is the only vivid color cheering up this sad, grey neighborhood. The house's living room blinds are shut.

INT. OLD HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - MORNING

A box of fried chicken lies open on the coffee table. Empty cans of beer litter the floor. The sun filters through the window's blinds and dirty curtains, beaming light in a wide array.

An old black-and-white TV set, crowned with an overflowing round amber glass ashtray, shows a cheerful weatherman with the volume muted. A portable silver screen receives the unstable images of Jimi Hendrix on stage performing "The Star-Spangled Banner." A white man in his late thirties sits at a kitchen table, his back facing us. He deeply inhales his cigarette then rests it on the contour of a round amber glass ashtray. He takes a pen and resumes writing a letter. A black and white cat is curled up at his feet, sleeping. The man soon stops and leans back. He looks at the silver screen a moment. He then reaches toward a corner of the table where a newspaper covers an object. The headline of the paper reads: "USEngines to lay off 86,000 workers."

TIGHT ON THE CAT

Sound of a gun cocking. The cat raises an ear.

EXT. SERENADE STREET - MORNING

A gunshot echoes out of the house, followed by silence throughout the neighborhood. A tall black man comes rushing to the door. He peers through the window, then frantically turns the knob. It's locked. Inside, a man in a white underwear shirt lying on the floor. On the back of his underwear shirt, a fresh stain of blood.

BLACK MAN

Albert! Albert! No! Not you!

The black man weeps, smashes open the door, gets in. He comes out almost immediately, falling onto his knees, crying. Other neighbors come running to the scene, gasping, grieved. One neighbor slowly steps inside the house, his eyes filled with fear. On the kitchen floor, the dead man lying on his side, his back facing us. On the back of his underwear shirt, a red roundish stain of blood spreading in thick lines down to his waist. The neighbor swallows. Near the dead man, a dark .38 handgun. On the kitchen table, a handwritten letter. The neighbor closes his eyes, devastated.

FADE TO BLACK:

FADE IN:

EXT. HENRY CITY, CLOSE-UP ON OUTDOOR SCREEN - DAY

TITLE: 2011

MUSIC: "Foxy," Jimmy Hendrix.

A desert. A young couple approaches a brand-new 1965-style Chevrolet Impala SS convertible. A beautiful turquoise muscle car, top-down, smaller than the original. Its grille features three blue letters: "USE." On the rear left, a charger inlet. The camera goes around it on Hendrix's song: "Ah, Foxy!"

The young man gets in the car, grabs the wheel, and marvels at the interior. The young woman gets in too, exchanges a smile with her boyfriend. She caresses her leather front seat. The dashboard highlights a plugged-in iPod and iPad. The woman smiles at the "self-drive" and "anti-collision" buttons. The young man stares ahead and flattens the pedal.

MUSIC: "I've made up my mind, I'm tired of wasting all my precious time, you've got to be all mine, all mine... Ooh, Foxy Lady!" The trunk logo reads "American Cars" in handwritten curvy style. The sparkling turquoise 1965-style Chevrolet Impala SS speeds up toward the horizon.

SEDUCTIVE FEMALE

(v.o.)

Retro. Self-driving. Drive a dream.
Drive an American Car.

EXT. HENRY CITY, MAIN BOULEVARD - DAY

We zoom out from a giant digital screen installed on top of a building. Hotels, streets, palm trees. An incredibly neat, flawless town. Sparkling new 1960s-style cars cruising the roads silently: a white 1963-style Buick Riviera, a red tail-finned 1962-style Cadillac Eldorado, a blue 1964-style Corvette Stingray... They look identical as the originals, but midsize with a charger inlet. Young families with kids. White-haired senior couples. Digital screens spread around town playing the same "American Cars" TV ad. Music echoes. "You look so good... Foxy!" All screens in sync now read "Welcome to Henry City, Florida," then, "Saturday, February 3, 2011," "11:12 am," "Clear skies, a high of 90 degrees."

CUT TO:

EXT. HENRY CITY HALL - DAY

MUSIC: "Walk Like an Angel," Elvis Presley.

MONTAGE

The heart of a 1960s-style town swarming with young families and silent passing cars. A city hall building and park with the American flag. A drive-in restaurant. Female car hops in roller skates.

On the side of the main boulevard, a direction sign board reading "Drive-In Theater," "NASCAR Track," "USE Dealership," "HC Beach," "HC Boardwalk." Vintage diners, barbershops, service garages, and clothing stores. Young families looking at themselves in storefront windows, teasing each other about their new 1960s-style haircuts and clothes.

A convenience store. Next to its entrance, a 3D hologram of a 1960s Coca-Cola sign. The handwritten white "Coca-Cola" name on a red-fishtail shape. The 3D letters seem to be alive, breathing and floating above its red background. A little girl touches the "Cola" part, which letters spread for a moment as being tickled.

A clothing store. On the side of its building, a giant square-shaped advertising image. Over it floats a 3D holo teen walking to school in Levi's jeans. "RIGHT FOR SCHOOL! LEVI'S." Two boys approach the "Put Your Face Here" mirror at the bottom of the image. One boy puts his face over it, looking at himself smiling with missing teeth. The 3D holo teen turns to show us his new face, with missing teeth, a perfect digital integration of the boy's face from the mirror. Crazy laughters from the boys.

EXT. HENRY CITY, USE DEALERSHIP - DAY

A one-story 1960-style building. Its art-deco sign reading "USEngines." On each side of its main doors, a series of three brand names: "CHEVROLET," "PONTIAC," "BUICK," then "CADILLAC," "LINCOLN," AND "USE TRUCKS." Around the building, rows of electric 1960s-style cars. Slick midsize cars with a charger inlet on the rear left side.

A young couple with two kids having ice cream. The boy and the girl both finger the tail lights of a 1962-style Chevrolet Bel Air. The father peers in the driver's window. The mother rounds its left wing, a finger caressing the hood. A row of electric 1964-style Cadillacs. A row of electric 1966-style Corvettes. Everywhere we hear Elvis Presley's "Walk Like an Angel" song.

A row of electric 1960s-style Thunderbirds. In the middle of it, a 46-year-old man, PETER SMITH, stands next to the windshield of a black 1963-style Thunderbird. On his suit, a "USE" nametag reading "Peter - CDO." He has brown hair, green eyes, and a kid's playful smile.

He takes off the \$18,998 price tag from the windshield then gets in. He sits behind the wheel, smiles at the older man already seated as a passenger, RICHARD DERRECK. The passenger is a good-looking man in his sixties, tall, athletic. He smiles back. His name tag reads "Richard - CEO."

Richard marvels at the red dashboard and door interior featuring chrome. He fingers the handwritten-style "Thunderbird" logo on the glove compartment.

RICHARD

So neat.

PETER

(activating the top down)
Thanks.

Richard turns the radio on.

MUSIC: "Walk Like an Angel," Elvis Presley.

PETER (CONT'D)

Oh. You can tune out. Just say your favorite song.

Richard smiles playfully.

RICHARD

(distinctly)
"Theme from 'A Summer Place,'" Percy Faith.

MUSIC: "Theme from 'A Summer Place,'" Percy Faith

PETER

You like that song?
(Richard nods)
It reminds me so much of my father and of our Sunday rides in his Oldsmobile.

RICHARD

It's a beautiful song.

Peter nods at him. The Thunderbird exits the dealership parking lot, turns onto the main road. Richard turns up the volume. The two men enjoy their quiet ride, top down, listening to the music. Peter stares ahead, thoughtful, holding the steering.

PETER'S FLASHBACK - SUNDAY RIDES WITH HIS FATHER, 1968 - DAY

Peter is a four-year-old boy sitting as a passenger in his father's 1967 Oldsmobile Starfire. The top-down, dark blue car is cruising a scenic road by Lake Michigan. The car speakers are blaring the famous 1960s instrumental song. Albert Smith turns up the volume, exchanges a smile with Peter. The sounds of violins seem to be merging with the air rushing by in richer musical harmonies.

Peter smiles at his dad then at the clear sky, the side of the road, and the lakeshore. All these elements of the landscape seem to be moving past the Oldsmobile at different speeds. Peter lays down both forearms on the window frame. He rests his chin on his piled hands, gazes at some seagulls flapping wings over the lake. He sticks a hand out and starts surfing the air up and down. He opens the triangular window of its car door window frame. More air rushing by the car is deviated in Peter's face. He closes his eyes, enjoys the powerful air kissing his cheeks, smiling.

BACK TO HENRY CITY, 2011

The 1963-style black Thunderbird with a charger inlet speeds up on Main Street. It soon comes side by side with a silent sparkling, top-down 1964-style Cadillac. Peter releases the gas pedal, makes eye contact with its driver. They exchange a wave and a smile. Richard watches, frowning.

PETER
(to the Cadillac driver)
Is everything all right, sir?

CADILLAC DRIVER
Yes, I love it!

PETER
Great. If there's anything, our dealership's open till 9:00 tonight.

CADILLAC DRIVER
Thanks. You guys are awesome!

Peter waves; the driver waves back. Richard exchanges a glance and a smile with Peter, shaking his head.

RICHARD
What you've done with this pilot in so little time is amazing.

PETER
I could have never done it without an incredible team. You hungry, Richard?

RICHARD
You bet.

PETER
Let me show you our drive-in restaurant.

Richard nods, smiles. The Thunderbird makes a turn.

CUT TO:

EXT. MEL'S DRIVE-IN RESTAURANT - DAY

A huge, round-shaped restaurant building buzzing with female carhops in roller skates. It sits in the middle of a wide, circular parking lot filled with 1960s-style cars showing a charger inlet. A curvy, thick, retro neon sign. "Mel's Drive-In" glowing in red, handwritten-style letters.

RICHARD

Wow.

Peter smiles. He parks his Thunderbird between a 1963-style Corvette and a 1967-style Chevelle SS. Three 2011 "American Cars" with their original 1960s designs, but midsize with a charger inlet. In the Corvette, a young couple. In the Chevelle, a young family. A carhop in roller skates clips a tray of food on the Chevelle's driver's window.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

(looking around)

This city's like a dream.

PETER

The American Dream I envisioned as a kid.

Richard smiles. A curvy carhop in black Lycra tights roller skates to Peter's side.

CARHOP

Hi. Welcome back, Mr. Smith.

PETER

Thanks, Cindy. Gorgeous day, isn't?

CARHOP

Yep. And very hot. A cheeseburger with fries and a large Coke?

PETER

(nodding, glancing at Richard)

Yes, make it two.

CARHOP

(smiling)

It shouldn't take long.

PETER
 (smiling back)
 Thanks.

The carhop smiles and roller skates away. Peter looks around, smiles at the young couple in the Corvette. They smile back. Richard lays an arm on the edge of the bench, sets his gaze on Peter.

RICHARD
 Your father would have been so proud of you, Peter.

PETER
 (a little moved)
 Thanks. Thanks, Richard.
 (exhaling)
 All I hope is that the net profits of this pilot allow us to reopen some of the old plants shut down in Flint.

Richard smiles, a sparkle of empathy in the eye. Cindy returns and clips a tray on Peter's window frame. It carries two filled original Coca-Cola glass tumblers. She smiles and roller skates away. Peter hands a glass to Richard, takes one, rises it.

PETER (CONT'D)
 To Henry Ford's vision...

RICHARD
 ...and to your American Dream.

They clink glasses and both take a sip. Peter looks around the drive-in.

PETER
 And it all started out with that CEO contest, six months ago, in your office...

RICHARD
 (nodding)
 Yes. A job interview that turned into a contest briefing.

Peter nods, lost in thought. He takes another sip, looking at the steering without seeing it. Richard smiles, glancing around.

FADE TO:

EXT. USE TWIN TOWERS, DETROIT - MORNING

TITLE: Six months earlier

MUSIC: "Another Day" - Interdrive

<https://interdrive.bandcamp.com/track/another-day>

"The sound of the machines is making me deaf/Torturing my head while my hands are bleeding..."

A sunny, cloudless morning. Two impressive, 170-story Art Deco-style towers with a metallic crown. At middle height, a bridge connecting the two. Near the top of the left tower, the 3D hologram of the blue letter "U" floating; on the bridge, the "S," then, near the foot of the right tower, the "E." They diagonally read "USE." In the streets, cars and crowds headed to work.

INT. USE BUILDING, LOBBY - MORNING

A gigantic lobby. Digital screens on the walls. Henry Ford's signature and history facts with visuals.

"June 16, 1903: Ford Motor Company."

"October 1, 1908: Model T."

"1913: First assembly line..."

Moving holos of cars invented by Ford. Peter smiles. He tries to touch the passing holo of a 1926 Ford T Roadster. He rushes into an elevator with a small group of men in dark suits. He pushes and lights up the "170" button. Elevator shuts. Peter stays silent, thinking. The elevator speeds up. It stops at the 24th. Three of the suited men exit. Only Peter and another man are standing in the elevator. An attractive woman in her mid-thirties gets in, glances at Peter and the other man.

ATTRACTIVE WOMAN

Morning.

PETER

Morning.

OTHER MAN

Hey.

She presses the "44" button.

She's 5'9" with blonde hair, a pretty face, and a strong athletic frame. Peter likes her sad, loving grey eyes. She glances for a moment at Peter, flashes him a slight smile, then sighs. Peter smiles back, curious. The elevator closes and speeds up to the 44th floor in a few seconds. Peter glances at her and takes in her delicate, seductive perfume and beautiful, sensual lips.

Elevator doors open. The woman exits. Peter pinches his throat, watching her walk away. The elevator shuts and swings up at high speed again. Another stop. The other man exits. They salute each other. Peter's now alone. The elevator speeds up to the 170th floor.

INT. 170TH FLOOR HALL - MORNING

Elevator doors open. Peter Smith exits.

POV - PETER

The man walks alone in black-polished shoes toward a reception desk. He slows down to look at a giant painting of Henry Ford, who seems to be gazing back at him with a slight smile. Mr. Ford's right hand is raised in his direction, as if he's about to give him some sound advice. His lips are sealed but his blue eyes, locked with Peter's, seem wide open to warn him of something...

SECURITY AGENT

Can I help you?

Lost in thought, Peter jerks his head toward him.

PETER

Oh. I'm here to meet Mr. Derreck.

SECURITY AGENT

This way, please.

Peter follows the security agent, passing the reception desk. The blonde receptionist gives him a furtive glance, then presses a button.

RECEPTIONIST

Good morning, Mr. Derreck's office.

(A beat.)

He's away for the day. Would you like his voicemail?

(Another beat.)

You're welcome. Have a great day.

SECURITY AGENT
(pointing to a room)
Please have a seat.

The security agent leaves silently, turning his back on him. Peter looks out the window, impressed by the view. Building rooftops and antennas. The wide, uninterrupted horizon. Mountains, lakes, and rivers. A port. Cargo ships moving slowly. He picks up the TIME magazine on the coffee table. On the cover, Richard in suit, smiling, the USE twin connected towers in the background. "USE's Richard Derreck: Can he save the American dream?" Peter quickly thumbs through the pages to find the article.

RICHARD
(o.s.)
There you are.

PETER
(dropping the magazine)
Mr. Derreck.

RICHARD
(shaking his hand)
Holy smokes! You're the spitting
image of your father!

Peter smiles broadly, excited like a kid.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
We'll be more comfortable in my
lounge.

PETER
(pleased)
Okay.

Richard yields the way near the doorstep of the lounge. Peter enters. A disco ball hanging over an empty dance floor. A wheel of lights. Myriad of unlit lights on the walls and ceiling. Two sexy-looking girls, hands at their backs, greet the two men in front of a bar. They smile at Peter, who smiles back. Richard points to one of them.

RICHARD
Drink?

Peter looks surprised.

PETER
Oh. Yes. Southern Comfort. On the
rocks.

Richard looks at one of the two girls.

RICHARD
The usual for me.

Each of the two men sit down in a nice, comfortable armchair. Sounds of glasses and ice cubes in the background. Peter and Richard exchange a smile.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
(to the girl serving them)
Thanks, Bianca.
(Peter smiling, nodding to Bianca)

Bianca smiles back and leaves. Richard sets his gaze on Peter.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
I loved your father, Peter. I'm so sorry for your loss.

PETER
It's okay. That was a long time ago.

RICHARD
We had our differences, but I loved working with him. He was always in a good mood and telling funny stories. He could laugh like that dog from the TV animated series...

PETER
Precious Pupp?

RICHARD
Yes! That asthmatic-sounding laugh.

They both chuckle.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
His favorite candy was Reese's Peanut Butter Cups...

PETER
(smiling)
Yes. It was mine, too. With a large glass of milk.
(chuckling, a hand showing the height of the glass)

Peter takes a sip of his drink, smiling, happy. Richard does the same, puts his glass down. (A moment.)

RICHARD

Your father was the first union rep
I was working with as the plant
manager.

PETER

I bet labor negotiations in USE's
heyday were easier.

RICHARD

Definitely.

Richard looks down for a moment, lost in thought. Peter looks down, too, taking another sip of his drink. He sets his gaze on Richard.

PETER

I never guessed I'd be back here
for a job interview 36 years after
you closed the plant my father
worked at... then led an inquiry
about his suicide.

RICHARD

(sighing)

It was necessary given the context,
Peter.

PETER

Sure. But why does USEngines still
have my dad's gun and letter? I
don't understand.

Richard reseats himself more comfortably, looks at Peter in the eye.

RICHARD

Before the Flint plant was shut
down, your father led a riot that
left me injured for weeks. The gun
and the letter became part of a
routine inquiry to discard the
murder thesis; I could not have
killed your father in retaliation
for my injuries; it was, without a
doubt, a suicide.

Peter looks at Richard with a sparkle of skepticism in the eye. Richard stares back at him, silent.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

(glancing at his
smartphone)
(MORE)

RICHARD (CONT'D)

I have a very busy day ahead, so I'll cut to the chase: I've already announced to our staff that I had appointed you as USE's new Chief Design Officer.

PETER

(rising, offering a handshake)
Wow. This is great!

RICHARD

(rising, shaking his hand)
Don't get excited yet. There's a "but."

PETER

Oh.

RICHARD

Yes.

Richard, standing next to his armchair, thumbs his smartphone, then puts it to his ear.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Could you send Bonnie in? Thanks.

Richard and Peter watch the door open. The sad attractive woman from the elevator steps into the room, notices Peter, frowns. She shuts the door. Again, Peter is seduced by her sensual lips and sad demeanor. He also glances at her grey eyes and green suit pants, looking so tight over her athletic thighs. She walks up to Peter, a little amused.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Peter, meet Bonnie Derreck, my daughter and Chief Financial Officer.

(Peter and Bonnie shake hands)

PETER

Hi. Nice to meet you.

BONNIE

Same here.

RICHARD

Peter is our newly appointed CDO. His father was the union rep of the Flint plant we shut down in '74.

BONNIE
Oh. So, you're like family?

PETER
Sort of.

BONNIE
Congrats on the new job.

PETER
Thanks.

Bonnie seems seduced by Peter's good looks and playful smile, glances at his jacket. She seems to like his shoulders.

BONNIE
(to Richard)
We saw each other in the elevator
this morning.

RICHARD
Oh.

BONNIE
I always say hi in the elevator.

RICHARD
(casually lecturing Peter)
As a new hire, introducing yourself
in elevators is good practice.

Peter nods, amused, his lips tight. Richard smiles. Bonnie sits in an armchair next to Richard's.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
Drink? Latte?

BONNIE
No, I'm fine, thanks.

Richard finally sits, looks at Bonnie and Peter. A silence sets in. Bonnie and Peter watch Richard's every move. The CEO puts three fingers on the table, exhales.

RICHARD
I intend to leave the company in
less than a year.
(both raise their eyebrows,
surprised)
Our headhunters have identified the
both of you as the auto industry's
top talents.
(MORE)

RICHARD (CONT'D)

I could simply appoint either of you as the next CEO when the time comes, but I'm torn. I just can't make up my mind.

Richard scratches his chin. Peter smiles; Bonnie seems disappointed. Peter frowns, tilts his head to one side. Bonnie slowly raises her chin, a sparkle of pride in the eye.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

So, I've decided to create a contest, in two parts.

(Bonnie nose flaring)

In the first, each of you will aim to achieve the most profitable pilot driven by your respective vision. In the second, you will be tested on your biggest fear as an individual.

(Peter and Bonnie frown)

You'll never know when, how, or by whom it'll happen. Six months from now, our two main shareholders and myself will elect one of you as the new CEO.

Peter nods. Bonnie stares at Richard.

BONNIE

As a pilot, could I privatize our pickup truck division and move its operations to Hong Kong?

RICHARD

Sure. As long it generates more profits for our shareholders.

BONNIE

It will. Through cost reduction.

Richard nods, bites his lower lip, then grabs a remote on his desk. He presses a button. A 3D holo of Bonnie Derreck appears into the air. The hologram shows her full-length in a grey skirt suit, smiling and crossing her arms. Peter is swept away by her beauty and romantic looks. He discreetly sighs. Bonnie doesn't see that. Richard clicks the remote and Bonnie's holo breaks up into two pieces. The first is Bonnie in suit with a collage of magazine covers, newspaper headlines, and silent video interviews; the second is a world globe centered on the US. A Sports Illustrated cover catches Peter's attention. It shows Bonnie in a Gwinnett Braves' uniform throwing a ball.

PETER
 (to Bonnie)
 You played professional?

BONNIE
 Yep, with the Atlanta Braves'
 triple A affiliate. One season.

PETER
 Wow. So, you must have been one of
 the first female players to ever be
 signed by a professional minor
 league baseball team.
 (Bonnie nods and smiles,
 proud)

RICHARD
 That's correct. And her fastball
 set a new world record for a woman
 at 74 mph.

Peter looks blown away. Richard smiles proudly, glancing at Bonnie. He presses a few buttons on the remote and a "NYSE" logo appears over the US part of the globe.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
 (to Bonnie)
 You, Bonnie Derreck, your vision is
 all about expanding in the emerging
 markets, making the company
 private, and moving our head office
 to Honk Kong.

Peter widens his eyes, fearful, caught by surprise. Bonnie nods, serious. The "NYSE" logo gets double-crossed in red. The globe shows a blinking dot titled "Detroit." The dot stops blinking as the globe rotates over to China. There, a dot titled "Hong Kong" is now blinking. Peter covers his mouth with a fist, shaking his head in disbelief.

BONNIE
 Correct. The goal is to merge with
 some of our Asian competitors to
 become number one in the world. I'm
 already working on a merger with
 our Korean competitor.

RICHARD
 Maybe some of our shareholders will
 not like your long-term vision.

BONNIE

Maybe our majority shareholders will realize that getting richer by selling their shares to me is the best future for everyone.

RICHARD

(smiling, nodding)
Fair enough.
(sighing)

PETER

Did I hear right? We're about to merge with our Korean competitor?

BONNIE

Yes, and this is only step one of our plan.

PETER

Richard? Did the shareholders approve this?

RICHARD

Basically, yes.

PETER

God.

RICHARD

But USEngines would keep the majority of voting shares until it turns private. So, I don't see it as an immediate threat to any of your projects, Peter.

Peter still looks worried for a moment, looking ahead without seeing. He takes a sip of his drink, thoughtful. Richard presses a few buttons; Peter's holo appears with a collage of magazine covers, newspaper headlines, and silent video interviews. The CDO smiles, proud.

Peter's holo, collage, and 3D world globe now appear next to Bonnie's. The attractive female executive seems to like his playful smile. Peter's globe shows a dot over the US titled "Detroit," which is blinking next to a "NYSE" logo.

The collage also features a digital montage of 1930s-style Ford Hot rods coupes, 1950s-style Chevys, 1960s-style Dodge Chargers, 1970s-style Dodge Challengers, and 1970s-style Corvette Stingrays. They are a little smaller than the original with a charger inlet on the side. Peter smiles, proud and playful.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

You, Peter Smith, you want to build upon Henry Ford's vision, launching "American Cars," a new line of midsize self-driving cars leveraging our successful designs from the 50s, 60s, and 70s.

PETER

Correct. Build cars for the great multitude, affordable, to enjoy rides in "God's great open spaces..."

RICHARD

...Henry Ford's American Dream.

PETER

Yes. And my marketing plan is to build three historic towns called "Henry City" to showcase this new line of cars: one of the fifties in California, one of the sixties in Florida, and one of the seventies in Georgia.

(Peter's globe blinks a dot in each of the three states, then zooms in on the California "Henry City" 3D blue holo)

Each town would host a super dealership, a drive-in restaurant, a drive-in theater, a beach boardwalk with festivals and shows, and a branded NASCAR racetrack for vintage cars.

(3D blue features of "Henry City" with some 1960s-style "American Cars" cruising its streets)

Richard raises his eyebrows, impressed. Bonnie seems indifferent and slightly impatient.

RICHARD

So, what's your actual pilot, Peter?

PETER

Oh, I wasn't prepared to decide on a pilot this morning...

(chuckling)

But... Um... Okay.

(MORE)

PETER (CONT'D)

How about designing and producing a limited edition of 1960s-style "American Cars," self-driving... then building Henry City, Florida, to market them?

RICHARD

You got it.

PETER

Wow. That was easy.

RICHARD

(glancing at the CFO)

You should thank Bonnie. She's made me an expert in identifying R&D tax breaks opportunities.

Peter nods and smiles gratefully at Bonnie, who nods back politely. He inhales, a little emotional.

PETER

My project also aims to make a difference. I want "American Cars" to be successful to the point of reopening all those plants that were shut down in Flint.

RICHARD

That is quite a tall order, Peter. Why is it so important for you to bring back prosperity in Flint?

PETER

(after a sigh)

Maybe I've got the ideas, vision, and heart to make...

BONNIE

(interrupting)

Even if we could reopen all those plants, it wouldn't change a thing economically. They're almost completely automated now.

PETER

You can't automate creativity. The workers who were laid off from those plants could star in the first online game to challenge young gamers like never before.

Bonnie smiles and sighs mockingly. Richard stares at her with a look of exasperation. Bonnie pinches the bridge of her nose, squinting, then her expression shifts to curiosity.

BONNIE

Okay. How?

Peter enlarges a dot in his holo that becomes an Xbox game case. The cover shows up an abandoned auto plant with this title: "American Cars: Radon Quest." In the dark sky over the plant, an alien ship in the shape of a star. Richard keeps watching, serious. Bonnie glances at her smartphone under the table.

RICHARD

Business plan?

PETER

We create a gaming division, USE Play. We recruit, train, and compensate laid-off workers as ghost holos neutralizing the young gamers trying to blow up their abandoned plants. Why? Because, the young gamers, as the members of an ancient extra-galactic race of warriors,

(Bonnie closing her eyes,
putting fingers on her
forehead, shaking her
head in disbelief)

need to extract Radon, a radioactive gas found in the soil the plant was built on. Extracting that gas will save them from extinction.

Bonnie opens her eyes and lets out a long sigh of impatience. Richard ignores that and tilts his head to one side, interested. The Xbox game case opens as a 3D holo video taking us inside the abandoned plant. An old, deserted assembly line. Partially lit areas of a large, deep room. A fluorescent lamp hanging by a fixture. Large 3D white-glowing, human-shaped creatures with no faces. They are entering the abandoned plant, one by one. Each of them is pointing ahead a white-glowing gun. Inside the plant, 3D ghosts in blue coveralls are hiding in dark corners. They are waiting with miniguns. White and blue sidebars of online chats. Exchanges of fire between the two groups. Creatures exploding and dying. The ghosts are superior in number and weapons. Richard smiles.

RICHARD

Target?

PETER

Cash in on one million downloads a year of the online game.

(A moment.)

And making "American Cars" the brand of choice for millennials.

BONNIE

What? Twenty-somethings would suddenly cherish our brand? Why?

PETER

Because we would also make a difference.

RICHARD

Philanthropy is definitely a growth driver in that millennials' market.

PETER

Yes. And making a connection is just as an important.

Richard nods, his lips tight, respectful and admiring of Peter's intent. Bonnie yawns discreetly, a hand over her mouth. She then straightens her back.

BONNIE

As the CFO, I need to point out that Peter's pilot could seriously impact our projected growth rate in the emerging markets. It could also make our stock price fall.

RICHARD

How?

BONNIE

Even if Henry City sells out its limited edition of "American Cars," the monthly costs of running a vintage town are quite substantial. And let's not forget its initial building costs. So, Henry City's pilot is bound to decrease our cash flow while eroding stock value.

RICHARD

(rising)

Good point. Let's all strive for sound management and profits. And please send me your pilots' budgets as early as possible.

(MORE)

RICHARD (CONT'D)

I need to get them approved by our two major shareholders.

Both Peter and Bonnie nod and rise.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Oh.

(both Peter and Bonnie pay attention)

Make sure you fill out and return the confidential form about your biggest fear I'm going to send you.

BONNIE

I can tell you everything right now. I'm afraid of spiders.

Peter looks amused.

RICHARD

(smiling)

No, no.

(serious)

It's rather about your deepest, entrenched, secret lifetime fear.

Bonnie nods.

PETER

This is going to be fun.

BONNIE

(to Richard)

That contest... What's in it for you?

RICHARD

(sighing)

Peace of mind. When everything is said and done, I know only the best of you two will be elected CEO.

Bonnie nods. Richard smiles.

PETER

(shaking hands with Richard)

I came here for a job, and now I'm competing to become CEO.

(shaking his head, blown away)

Richard smiles and pats Peter's shoulder. They salute each other. The CEO turns toward his desk.

Peter glances at Bonnie, who was busy admiring his face and shoulders. She seems caught by surprise and immediately looks away. Peter smiles, happy. She heads for the door, looking a bit sad. The newly appointed CDO catches up on her in the hall.

PETER (CONT'D)

Bonnie.

She turns to him, a look of disappointment on her face.

PETER (CONT'D)

I don't want us to hold anything against each other, so, I just wanted to say that...

BONNIE

I was rude?

PETER

(chuckling at being cut off again)

Yes.

BONNIE

(raising a hand to Peter's shoulder without touching it)

I'm sorry. The last thing I expected today was to enter a contest.

PETER

I hear you. I wanted to tell you... I think you being already the CFO of this company's absolutely amazing.

BONNIE

Thanks. I've read all your interviews and articles in Popular Mechanics. I always felt there was something special about your ideas.

PETER

In what sense?

BONNIE

You're all into cars from the 50s, 60s, and 70s... And they all link back to your father and brothers.

PETER

Right.

BONNIE

I like some old cars myself. My favorite is the 1963 Corvette.

PETER

I love Vettes from the 60s, too. What do you like about the '63?

BONNIE

Everything. The fiberglass body panels, the split rear window, the stiffer suspension...

PETER

You're a true Corvette lover.

BONNIE

Yes.

They lock eyes for a split second, chuckle, a little shy. She glances down then back at him.

BONNIE (CONT'D)

Talk to you later.

She walks away. Peter smiles and waves at her. Bonnie turns a corner, glances one last time at Peter, who does the same. They both smile. Bonnie disappears behind a wall.

PETER

(getting tingles)
Ooh. That was something.
(exhaling)

Richard's office door opens. The CEO glances at Peter then greets two men in suits walking up to him. He looks at Peter.

RICHARD

(interrupting himself)
Oh, Peter?

Peter stops, steps toward Richard and his two guests.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Meet Nelson Hicks,
(both exchanging smiles
and a handshake)
And Todd Evans.
(both exchanging smiles
and a handshake)
Our two main USEngines
shareholders.

PETER
Nice to meet you.

TODD
Same here.

RICHARD
Peter is our new CDO.

NELSON
Nice to meet you. Welcome to the family.

PETER
Thanks.

The three men walk away, waving at Peter, who turns a corner and disappears.

CUT TO:

BACK TO MEL'S DRIVE-IN RESTAURANT, HENRY CITY - 2011

A curvy, thick, retro neon sign. "Mel's Drive-In" glowing in red, handwritten-style letters. The drive-in lot is filled with sparkling new 1960s-style cars.

INSIDE PETER'S THUNDERBIRD

Cindy returns and delivers two dishes of cheeseburgers and fries on the window tray.

CARHOP
(smiling)
Enjoy!

PETER
Thanks.

The carhop roller skates away. Peter hands Richard his dish, who puts it on his lap and unfolded napkin. Peter does the same. They stay silent for a moment, both sinking their teeth in a cheeseburger.

RICHARD
(noticing the Heinz bottle
on the tray, swallowing)
I'm flying to Hong Kong tonight.
Could you pass the ketchup?

Peter takes the Heinz bottle on the tray and hands it to Richard.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Thanks.

He dumps some ketchup on his fries, hands the bottle back to Peter. He takes one fry and eats it.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Everything's so good.

Peter nods, eats some fries, too.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

I'm flying there to look at Bonnie's pilot then I'm calling you to join us for my official feedback on part one of the CEO contest.

PETER

This sounds like fun.

Richard smiles. They both take a sip of their Cokes. A black-and-white music video starts playing on pillar-mounted screens across the lot. Peter smiles, eating his burger. Richard pays attention. It's Dee Dee Sharp's, "Mashed Potato Time."

RICHARD

Oh, my wife used to love that song and dance.

Peter smiles, proud. A black woman with a sky-scraping hairdo singing on stage; an audience of young people dancing; ladies on go-go stages showing the moves. 1960s clothes and looks.

MUSIC: "Mashed Potato Time," Dee Dee Sharp.

Peter smiles. Richard turns the radio volume up. Dee Dee Sharp with her sky-scraping hairdo suddenly appears as a 3D color holo on the pavement. She starts singing, dancing, and slowly moving around the drive-in circular building. People rising in their cars, clapping and dancing; Richard and Peter, too. Young dancers from the music video appear next to Richard's car door as 3D color holos. Richard smiles and waves at them; they smile and wave back. Ladies on go-go stages appear as 3D color holos behind Dee Dee Sharp's. Women on their feet in cars all over the drive-in dancing in sync with the go-go ladies. A woman dancing alone in her 1960-style white Plymouth Fury convertible, with tailfins and a charger inlet, waves at Dee Dee Sharp. The black singer smiles and waves back at her.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

(clapping to the rhythm)

This is so awesome, Peter.

PETER

Thanks.

FADE TO:

EXT. HONG KONG SKYLINE - DAY

A light blue sky. A dense city skyline. A wide massive mountain in the background. In the bay, a traditional Chinese boat with dark orange sails and a "CHINA SHIPPING LINE" cargo ship with stacked containers.

EXT. DOWNTOWN STREET - DAY

A large street swarming with double-decker trams and buses, cars, and pedestrians. Countless Chinese commercial signs on facades and mass transit vehicles. Sporadic American signs like "7-Eleven" and "McDonald's" in a Chinese-predominant landscape. On the outskirts of the city, a busy boulevard leading to a blue glowing "USE" sign at the top of a building. At the bottom, a "USE Trucks" storefront. Glass doors. A crowded sidewalk. Men in suits. Women carrying shopping bags. Young tourists with backpacks.

INT. "USE TRUCKS" SHOWROOM - DAY

A large sky-high showroom with a dozen of sparkling new American pickups. A floor buzzing with Asian men in suits wearing a "USE" lapel pin, TV reporters and camera operators with blinding lights, political dignitaries... Pretty Chinese women with trays of drinks and hors-d'oeuvres. At the end of the showroom, an elevator dings. Elevator doors open. Bonnie and Richard exit. The female CFO is talking to him in a confident, composed manner.

BONNIE

Moving our pickup division here has already cut down our manufacturing costs by 40%.

RICHARD

Amazing.
(looking around)
What is this?

BONNIE

(matter-of-factly,
smiling)
Our "Enter the Dragon Opening Sale."

Richard smiles. Two male political dignitaries wave at Bonnie and Richard, who wave back. Two male Chinese dancers enter the showroom, each holding a red sphere on a stick. The crowd falls silent. Two groups of dancers follow. Both are holding a long flexible figure of a dragon on poles. The mythical creature is predominantly green with red eyes and white sharp teeth. Three musicians carrying drums, cymbals, and gongs take place on a round stage. Both the dancers and musicians are wearing red pants, a green belt, and a yellow T-shirt. Richard looks impressed with the event, the guests, the colors.

BONNIE (CONT'D)

(whispering at Richard)

You want to be #1 for quality and prices? You need a country of abundance and good luck.

Richard looks at her in the eye.

RICHARD

(whispering back)

You mean an abundance of cheaper labor and tax breaks.

Bonnie smiles, conceding, then sets her sights on the dancers.

MUSIC: beating of drums, cymbals, and gongs

The two groups of dancers start moving their dragons made of sections in a sinuous and undulating manner. They make the dragons pause, change directions, move faster or slower as per the rhythm of the music. Each dragon never endlessly chases the red sphere on a pole held and carried away by a dancer. The dragons separate in the middle of the showroom, head for the pickup on each side. The dragons go around their vehicle, regroup in the middle of the showroom, change sides, then go around the other. It regroups again in the middle of the showroom. Some dancers leap up onto truck cargo beds, dance for a moment, then make a back flip to return down. A Bruce Lee lookalike dancer makes a surprise entrance. The shirtless, athletic Chinese crosses the showroom, looking upset. Richard squints, looks at Bonnie. The CFO raises a finger to her dad, watching the show. The lookalike fighting legend stops and eyes a sign on a wall that no one had noticed until then. It reads "No rebates and deals allowed." All the Asian attendees break a laugh, smiling and nodding at Bonnie.

BONNIE

(in a lower voice)

In "Fist of Fury," Bruce Lee kicks then breaks in two a public sign at a zoo that says "No dogs and Chinese allowed."

RICHARD

Nice. I think they like it.

Bonnie smiles, glowing with pride. The Kung-Fu dancer shouts an astounding kiai, sprints to the wall, and jumps up close to the sign. He kicks it and breaks it into two pieces. The Kung-Fu dancer lands on his feet. All the other dancers walk up to him, cheering, celebrating. The show ends with the raining of water drop-shaped foamy pieces on the crowd. Each grey spherical piece has a crack from which comes out the edge of a strip of paper. It looks like a fortune cookie message. Bonnie picks up a foamy piece on the floor, pulls the full strip of paper out of it, and reads it: "You will get a 20% discount on your first purchase." She shows it to Richard.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Brilliant.

Everyone looks delighted with the event. Applause from the crowd and a wave from the dignitaries to Bonnie and Richard, who wave back.

FADE TO:

INT. A FINE-DINING RESTAURANT, HONG KONG - NIGHT

A large bay window. A breathtaking view of Hong Kong by night. Richard and Bonnie in suits sit opposite at a table for four. They are both gazing at some partly lit downtown highrises under a dark sky.

BONNIE

I want to see Henry City.

RICHARD

Sure. Just treat yourself on your way back. Peter will be there for another two days.

BONNIE

Great.

RICHARD

I'm flying back tonight.

Bonnie nods. A Chinese waiter comes. He puts on the table a pot of tea with two cups. He hands Bonnie and Richard a menu, then leaves. Bonnie fills a cup, gives it to Richard.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Thank you.

Bonnie fills her own cup, rises it.

BONNIE

To our success in the emerging markets.

RICHARD

To Henry Ford's dream in the East.

Bonnie seems displeased, but blinks and finally nods. They clink cups, both take a sip, then put their cups down.

BONNIE

I need to tell you something.

(Richard raises his eyebrows)

Over the last six months, Peter and I spent a lot of time getting to know each other through texting, video calling, and even holoing.

(Richard looks amused, eager to learn more)

It started off with some flirting and now we can exchange up to one hundred messages a day.

RICHARD

Nothing wrong with that. It might just spice up the contest results for everyone.

BONNIE

Hahaha, yeah, right.

(after sighing)

But it got me a little nervous.

RICHARD

Why?

BONNIE

I'm going to see him tomorrow for the second time since the contest briefing in your office. I don't know. It's scary.

RICHARD

I was going to talk to you about something every scarier.

BONNIE

What?

The waiter returns. Richard picks up the menu, looks at it; Bonnie does the same. The daughter suggests some General Tso Chicken with white rice for the both of them. Richard agrees. They both give the menus back to the waiter, who leaves.

RICHARD

I received the analysis of your fear survey. Falling in love came out as your biggest lifetime fear.

BONNIE

Hahaha! No shit!

She takes a sip of tea. Richard smiles, empathic and paternal.

RICHARD

Starting now, I want you to free fall into that fear.

BONNIE

What? Fall in love with the very man I'm competing against for a job?

RICHARD

I didn't mean, "fall in love." I meant, "free fall" into your fear of falling in love."

BONNIE

Isn't it the same thing?

RICHARD

No.
(taking a sip of tea)

BONNIE

And what does that personal fear have to do with the CEO job, anyway?

RICHARD

In your case? Everything. And figuring out why is your ticket to the CEO office.

Bonnie smiles, chuckles, then shakes her head in disbelief.

BONNIE

What about my dream to become the first female and youngest CEO of USE's history?

RICHARD

Letting someone get close to your heart will give you the best lessons in leadership.

BONNIE

How could I do that without letting him rock my world and break my dream?

RICHARD

That's for you to figure out.

Bonnie nods, her lips tight, overthinking. The waiter returns with the food plates. He serves them, then leaves. Bonnie and Richard start eating. The CFO takes a sip of tea, then puts her cup down. She looks out the window for a moment, lost in thought. She meets Richard's eyes. He winks at her. She smiles.

FADE TO:

INT. HOTEL SUITE, HONG KONG - LATE AT NIGHT

Floor-to-ceiling windows. A spectacular view of Hong Kong at night. A double-height living room. A mix of contemporary and classical furniture. Near a grand piano, Richard and Bonnie sit at a round table with an empty chair. The CEO thumbs his smartphone then puts it on the table. Peter's holo gradually appears sitting in the empty chair, wearing a 1960s suit.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Good morning, Peter.

PETER

Hi guys.

BONNIE

Hi.

Peter in a holo takes a sip of coffee.

RICHARD

Is the coffee good in Henry City?

PETER

Oh yes. Henry's Coffee Shop on Main Street has the best coffee in the world.

RICHARD

Good for you.

Peter takes another sip, then exchanges a smile with Bonnie.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Well, here we are, part one of the CEO contest's already over. I'm blown away by how much and how great the both of you have achieved in so little time.

(Peter nods, Bonnie smiles politely, looking tired)

Bonnie, moving our pickup division to Hong Kong went so smoothly with unthinkable cost reductions, you've almost sold me on the idea of moving our entire company there.

BONNIE

Is that true?

RICHARD

Yes, but not now, maybe in a few years, and only as a public company. I think USE's too much a part of America's history to have its future decided only by a few individuals.

Bonnie seems to disagree, scratching her chin. Richard exchanges a glance with her, then sets his gaze on Peter.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Peter, building Henry City, Florida to market a limited edition of your "American Cars" proved a historical success. And these creations inspired the world with their embodiment of the American Dream.

PETER

(glowing with pride)
Thanks, Richard.

RICHARD

You're welcome. And you can already start working on Henry City number two.

PETER

Wow. I don't know what to say.

RICHARD

Have you already decided where?

PETER

Yes, somewhere outside Atlanta, Georgia.

RICHARD

Well, just let me know if I can help.

PETER

Thanks, Richard.

(A beat.) Bonnie stares at Peter, thoughtful.

PETER (CONT'D)

Henry City, Georgia will be a city from the seventies marketing retro self-driving cars.

RICHARD

I can't wait to see this.

BONNIE

Me too.

RICHARD

Bonnie, go have a drink at the hotel bar while I brief Peter on part two of the contest.

BONNIE

Sure. See you later.

RICHARD

I'll be there in twenty.

BONNIE

All right.

Bonnie waves at Peter, who waves back with a smile. She doesn't smile back, looking preoccupied, or tired, then exits the suite. Richard smiles at Peter. They are now alone in the living room.

RICHARD

Are you ready to face your biggest fear, Peter?

PETER

I think so.

RICHARD

I received the analysis of your fear survey. Pulling the trigger like your father came out as your biggest lifetime fear.

Peter nods, a little emotional and worried, glancing down.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Starting now, you'll never know how, by whom, or when you'll be challenged to master that biggest fear of yours.

Peter nods.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

And when we reconvene to determine the CEO contest winner, you need to have figured out why mastering that fear would make you the best CEO.

Peter nods again at Richard, then glances around, a little worried. Richard smiles. Peter politely smiles back.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Good luck.

PETER

Thanks.

Peter waves at Richard, who waves back. Richard touches his smartphone and Peter's holo disappears. He stands still for a moment, thoughtful. He then rises and exits the room.

FADE TO:

EXT. HENRY CITY AIRPORT, FLORIDA - DAY

A nice regional airport. A blue sky. Palm trees in the background. A fence. Small planes and private jets on taxiways. A "USE" Learjet completes its descent to the airport. The plane tires squeal as they touch the runway.

CUT TO:

EXT. AIRPORT PICKUP/DROP-OFF AREA - DAY

A street buzzing with taxis, buses, and limos. Travelers waiting with their suitcases. Bonnie is one of them. A shiny new, top-down white 1963-style Corvette is approaching. Bonnie waves at Peter driving it, sunglasses on. The silent Vette comes to a halt near her. Peter looks at Bonnie wearing a T-shirt and black shiny leggings, sunglasses on. She seems a bit tired, edgy, and reluctant to smile. But, her sensual lips with pink lipstick are fresh and irresistible. Before Peter can get out and help, she swings her suitcase onto the backseat, gets in from the passenger door. He smiles to that. Bonnie slides her long, athletic legs on the saddle-tan leather seat next to Peter's.

BONNIE

Hi.

PETER

Hi. Welcome to Henry City, Florida.

BONNIE

Thanks. Wow.

(running fingers on the
dash, the window frame)

Is this one of your retro self-driving cars?

(Peter nods, proud)

So nice.

(marveling at the car,
fingering the "Corvette
Stingray" logo)

The steering, the seats, the logo, everything looks the exact same as the original.

PETER

Thanks. You wanna drive it?

BONNIE

Oh, I'd love to.

Peter and Bonnie swap places. They exchange a smile and a light touch of the hand in front of the car. She is now sitting behind the wheel, and Peter, in the passenger seat.

BONNIE (CONT'D)

And this is actually a brand-new
2011 self-driving car?

Peter nods. Bonnie seems impressed. She buckles her seat belt, glances around.

BONNIE (CONT'D)

This is so cool. It's like we're on vacation.

Peter acknowledges, smiles. Bonnie drives the Corvette away from the airport, soon turning onto a highway. On the side of the road, a sign reads "Henry City - 2 MILES - EXIT 9." Bonnie and Peter exchange a smile. The white Corvette takes the fast lane and speeds up toward Henry City. Bonnie and Peter look happy, excited. The highway is quiet.

IN THE CORVETTE

Bonnie sees the "self-drive" button and presses it. The steering now steers by itself, driving the Vette in the fast lane. The wind is blowing through Bonnie's blonde hair. She raises her hands in the air.

BONNIE (CONT'D)

Hahaha. This is like a dream.

PETER

Yeah. Welcome to my American Dream.

BONNIE

A brand-new 1963-style Corvette but self-driving? I can't wait to see the city.

Peter turns the radio on.

MUSIC: "Follow That Dream," Elvis Presley.

Bonnie likes it, nodding to the music. She deactivates the self-driving mode, grabs the steering, and resumes her driving. Peter enjoys the ride, trying not to stare at Bonnie, looking sexier driving the car. Exit 9 is near. Bonnie's car flashes right, changes lanes, then takes the exit. They exchange a smile.

CUT TO:

EXT. HENRY CITY'S MAIN STREET - DAY

A hot, sunny day. Palm trees on both sides of "Main Street," a flawless boulevard with wide sidewalks. Tourists and 1960s-style passing cars. Hotels. Shops. Restaurants. Digital screens on rooftops spread around town. A black-and-white YouTube video. The Beatles at the Ed Sullivan show. A 3D color holo of Ed Sullivan in suit appears on the sidewalk.

Passersby, motorists, and pedestrians slow down to a stop, mesmerized. Ed Sullivan's color holo stands on the sidewalk, smiling and glancing at everyone, as if alive. The young female crowd from the video screams and appears as color holos amid the cars and onlookers. A young father with his kids tries to touch Ed Sullivan's holo. The virtual TV host smiles and steps back politely. The father looks blown away, waves at the TV host, who waves back.

FATHER
 (to his kids)
 Did you see that?

The kids nod yes, mesmerized; the crowd is, too.

ED SULLIVAN
 (as a color holo)
 Ladies and gentlemen... The Beatles!

Louder screaming from the holo fans, blowing away the crowd of Henry City tourists. Ed Sullivan's color holo disappears. The Beatles' color holos appear on the sidewalk. A group of young girls in the Henry City audience start screaming and jumping, acting silly, stumbling, going to pieces.

MUSIC: "Twist and Shout," The Beatles.

Ringo Starr drumming; John Lennon, Paul McCartney, and George Harrison playing guitar. John singing.

JOHN LENNON
 Well, shake it up baby now.

MCCARTNEY AND HARRISON
 Shake it up baby.

JOHN LENNON
 Twist and shout.

MCCARTNEY AND HARRISON
 Twist and shout...

Full-length color holos of female teens screaming, going crazy amid the Henry City cars and onlookers. A man with his dog on a leash tries to touch a female teen's holo. The female 3D floating image glances at the man, makes a quick wave at him, then continues screaming and going crazy. The dog owner seems impressed, drawn in. Parents, kids, couples, and seniors on sidewalks and in the street start twisting and shouting. Drivers get out of their cars to join the frenzy. An entire town under siege with casual dancers and color holos from the famous 1964 black-and-white TV show.

On circular platforms on both sides of Main Street, go-go dancers in 1960s clothes performing the Twist and Shout dance. Bonnie's white Corvette stops amid this human dancing traffic. Both she and Peter glance at each other, get out, and join the frenzy. Bonnie and Peter start twist-dancing facing each other, exchanging smiles and sharing laughs. The music video and holos soon fade out. Everyone on Main Street applauds. The boulevard gets cleared in a few seconds. The driving and walking resume. People are sharing their experiences, excited. Bonnie and Peter get back into the white Corvette.

BONNIE

(starting the engine)

That was absolutely amazing, Peter.
I loved it. People loved it.

PETER

Thanks.

Bonnie drives the Corvette down Main Street. Peter discreetly looks at her for a second, hypnotized. The wind bringing fine locks of hair over her pink lips. Her nice hands steering and shifting gears, her beautiful head sometimes looking back, her thighs and calves in black leggings contracting when she hits the pedals. Their eyes meet. Tender smiles. Bonnie grabs Peter's hand, squeezes it. Peter brings her hand to his mouth, kisses it, puts it back on the shifter. She strokes his hair, exchanges a smile with him.

MONTAGE - PETER GIVING BONNIE A TOUR

Bonnie driving the white 1963-style Corvette around town. Peter pointing and talking. The Drive-In restaurant. They eat in the Corvette. The "Mashed Potato Time" holos. Bonnie loves them, joining the applause in the end. The silent vintage NASCAR track. The boardwalk. Amusement parks. The USE super dealership.

EXT. HENRY CITY DEALERSHIP - EVENING

Peter points to a parking space. Bonnie parks the Corvette. They get out. The late evening sun projects a soothing orange light all over the white dealership building. Peter gives Bonnie a quick tour of the rows of parked retro self-driving cars: Lincolns, Cadillacs, Mustangs, Challengers, Chargers, Thunderbirds...

BONNIE

How many cars have you sold?

PETER

All of them.
(Bonnie's jaw drops)
(MORE)

PETER (CONT'D)

Everything you see here is sold.
So, we're basically back-order.

Bonnie shakes her head in disbelief, amazed.

PETER (CONT'D)

Would you like to see a movie at
the drive-in with me tonight?

BONNIE

Oh yes. What's playing?

PETER

"Breakfast at Tiffany's," "West
Side Story," "Goldfinger..."

BONNIE

All movies from the sixties. So
cool. I've always wanted to see
"Breakfast at Tiffany's."

PETER

Me too.

Peter takes Bonnie's hand and kisses it, caresses it. He
smiles at her; she smiles back, touched. He leads her to the
white 1963-style Corvette Stingray.

BONNIE

I love that car.

PETER

I'm glad you do. I built it for
you. It's yours.
(opening the driver's door
for her)

BONNIE

(touched, turning to
Peter)
A gift?

Peter nods, smiles, a sparkle of desire in the eye. They lock
eyes. Bonnie brings her mouth to his ear.

BONNIE (CONT'D)

(whispering)
Thank you. It's a beautiful gift.

PETER

It had to be, for a beautiful
woman.

She smiles at Peter, motions to kiss him, but stops. A USE salesman in the lot smiles at her, at them. Peter smiles back; Bonnie, too. They both chuckle, a little shy. The beautiful woman gets behind the wheel. Peter closes her door. He goes around the hood and gets in, too. Bonnie drives the car out of the dealership lot. The Corvette turns onto the main road and speeds up. Peter turns the radio on.

MUSIC: "There's a Moon Out Tonight," The Capris.

"There's a (moon out tonight) whoa-oh-oh ooh
Let's go strollin'
There's a (girl in my heart) whoa-oh-oh ooh..."

BONNIE
(smiling at Peter)
So 1960s. I love it.

PETER
I love it, too.

They exchange a glance and a smile. The Corvette passes a giant digital screen on the side of the road. Bonnie looks at the 45-rpm vinyl record reading "Old Town Records - There's a Moon Out Tonight - THE CAPRIS." She nods and smiles at Peter, who smiles back. She grabs his hand and puts it on her thigh, caresses it. They exchange a smile. Peter exhales, feeling his excitement growing. On the sidewalk, a young couple in swimsuits pushing a stroller. The canopy is pulled down. The baby's asleep. Bonnie and Peter both smile at that vision.

EXT. HENRY CITY DRIVE-IN THEATER - LATE EVENING

Four lanes of brand-new 1960s-style "American Cars" from the Henry City dealership. All cars moving slowly, bumper-to-bumper, toward four gates. A blue 1960-style Cadillac Seville with tailfins, a white 1967-style Lincoln Continental rolling on whitewall tires, a red, top-down 1965-style Ford Mustang GT Fastback, a light yellow 1966-style Thunderbird with full-width taillights... All cars are midsize, with a charger inlet on the side. Digital dashboards, iPods, iPads, "self-drive" and "anti-collision" features. The riders are young families, couples, or seniors, sometimes with a dog on the back seat. A square-shaped, Art Deco-style digital neon sign rising from the ground. On it, "Clara Jane's" glowing in red handwritten-style letters, and, underneath, "DRIVE-IN THEATRE," glowing in blue, print letters.

BONNIE
Clara Jane?

PETER
Henry Ford's wife.

Bonnie nods. Both she and Peter look at the sign's movie listing. Peter caresses her thigh. She grabs his hand, squeezes it. They exchange a glance.

1 West Side Story - Breakfast at Tiffany's

2 Night of the Living Dead - Rosemary's Baby

3 Bullitt - Goldfinger

4 Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? - The Graduate

Peter discreetly admires Bonnie's cheek and neck. Her skin is young, tight, with some micro blonde hair on her forearms glowing platinum under the sun. The entrance of the drive-in is delimited on both sides by a white wooden fence. The late evening sun repaints it light orange.

PETER (CONT'D)

God, you're beautiful, Bonnie.

BONNIE

(glancing at him,
squeezing his hand)

Thank you. You're very handsome.
And you've built this American
Dream on wheels and city roads.

Peter smiles, moved, glances around. In the other lane, a man alone in his green 1969-style Pontiac Firebird inches forward. The Pontiac is now side by side with Bonnie's Vette. In the grille, "USE"; on the left wing, "Pontiac Firebird." Peter smiles to that.

PONTIAC DRIVER

Hey. Mr. Henry City.

PETER

Hey.

PONTIAC DRIVER

It's Peter, right?

PETER

Yes. Peter Smith.

PONTIAC DRIVER

(rising up in his car,
pointing at Peter)

Hey guys, Mr. Henry City is out at
the movies with us tonight. Let's
hear it for an incredible man!

All car drivers and passengers start applauding, honking, and whistling at Peter, who waves back. Bonnie joins the applause, glowing with pride. She releases the brake pedal and inches the Corvette closer to their gate. She exchanges a tender smile with Peter.

CUT TO:

EXT. DRIVE-IN THEATER, PARKING AREA - EVENING

Bonnie drives the 1963-style top-down Corvette to the parking area of screen one. She parks it about five rows away from the screen, then turns off the engine. Both unfasten their seat belts, and sit more comfortably. Peter looks at Bonnie, she glances back, smiles, then looks around the Corvette. Bonnie seems a little shy, avoiding eye contact with him.

MUSIC: "Mr. Bass Man," Johnny Cymbal's.

All theater and Henry city screens show the black KAPP's 45-rpm single "MR. BASS MAN - JOHNNY CYMBAL."

The parking area is filling up quickly.

"Mr. Bass Man/You've got that certain something/Mr. Bass Man/You set that music thumping/To you, it's easy/When you go one, two, three/Bop bop bop Yeah..."

They look at each other, exchange a shy grin.

PETER

(worried)
Do you still like me?

BONNIE

Yes. Of course.

PETER

Are you sure?

BONNIE

Yes. Why are you asking?

PETER

I don't know. You're a bit distant now.

BONNIE

Isn't this an unusual situation?

PETER

Definitely. The CEO contest. You
and me. This city.
(Bonnie nodding)

Peter nods, looking at her. Bonnie glances at him. They don't talk for a moment.

"Mr. Bass Man/You're on all the songs/With a boom boom boom boom/And a dit dit ba boom boom boom..."

BONNIE

(chuckling)
This song's funny.

PETER

(smiling, amused)
Yes. I like it, too.
(shifting, serious)
Can I kiss you, Bonnie?

Bonnie nods, staring at Peter. Peter looks around. All the couples, families, and seniors in their cars smile playfully at Peter, some of them making a shy wave. He smiles back at them mischievously, activating the top down. All car riders react: "Aw," "Oh," "Come on!" The vinyl top has a split rear window.

PETER (CONT'D)

They're funny.

BONNIE

(looking back)
Yeah.
(pointing at the rear)
You even created a top with the
1963 split rear window. So nice.

PETER

You're welcome.

They smile at each other, a sparkle of desire in the eye. The car's white top is up, but anyone can still see the couple through the windows. Peter comes close to Bonnie's mouth, looks at it, then glances at her grey eyes. He starts kissing her very slowly. She kisses him back. All car riders in the lot cheer and whistle. Bonnie and Peter laugh. He smiles like a kid. He comes close to Bonnie, takes her and lays her down on the seat. Car riders start honking and shouting their disappointment. Both Peter and Bonnie chuckle then stare at each other, serious. He rubs his cheek against hers, breathing in her skin, hair, perfume. She fingers his hair, hugs him, rubs her cheek back against his, and drops a kiss on it.

Peter brings his face over hers, gazes at her grey eyes; she stares back at his, breathing heavily. He fingers her cheek, slowly thumbs her forehead.

PETER (CONT'D)

I've dreamed so much about this moment.

BONNIE

Me too.

They start French kissing each other very slowly, changing sides, feeling each other's tongue. The night falls. Cars honking and flashing headlights on the big screen for the movie to start. The screen lights up with some black-and-white 1960s TV commercials: "Bounty," "Coca-Cola," "Colgate," "Bold"... Bonnie sits between Peter's legs. She lays down on his chest, Peter wrapping her in his arms. Bonnie touches and caresses Peter's arms. They exchange a happy smile.

FADE TO:

EXT. HENRY CITY REGIONAL AIRPORT - MORNING

A clouded sky. A buzzing regional airport. Small planes and private jets on taxiways. A plane is taking off from the runway. A light jet engine sound. A "USE" Learjet gets in line behind another private jet in the taxiway.

INT. USE LEARJET - MORNING

Bonnie and Peter are the only passengers. They are seated face-to-face by a window. The two USE executives look tired, staring out the window, silent. Bonnie yawns.

BONNIE

Isn't it your birthday next week?

PETER

Yes. How did you know?

BONNIE

The USE calendar.

PETER

Oh. Yes.

PETER (CONT'D)

If you win the contest, will you kill "American Cars"?

BONNIE

Yes.

PETER

(disappointed)

Why?

BONNIE

I've looked at your actual numbers for Henry City. Your operation costs are enormous. And your cars' retail prices are too low. Even after selling out your limited edition, you'll need to operate on very tight profit margins.

PETER

Ahhh shit.

BONNIE

Any private company would pull the plug on "American Cars" and Henry City after a few weeks.

PETER

This is where I come in. USEngines must remain a public company.

BONNIE

Even as a public company, the shareholders would eventually kill everything over disappointing profits, Peter.

PETER

Making a new line of cars mainstream takes time.

BONNIE

I know. And, don't get me wrong, I love your product and your marketing concept. But this is 2011, the aftermath of the most devastating recession in decades. Shareholders are risk-averse.

PETER

(sighing)

So, our next quarterly report could be disastrous?

Bonnie nods with a sparkle of empathy. Peter sighs then looks out the window, concerned. Bonnie fastens her seat belt, looks out the window, too. The jet engine sound gets louder.

The Learjet starts taxiing toward the runway for take off. Peter, looking out the window without seeing, starts bouncing a leg. Bonnie closes her eyes, rubs her cheek against the head rest.

FADE TO:

INT. USE CAR LAB - DAY

TITLE: One week later

A double-height large room. Unpainted car frames on pedestals. Robot arms assembling cars from the ceiling. A 1974-style unpainted Plymouth Barracuda. The car is smaller than the original with a charger inlet on the side. Near the car frame stands Peter wearing a white coat and a security helmet. He watches the robots build the Plymouth as he laser-pens a 3D holo of the original 1974 car.

CUT TO:

INT. USE VIDEO STUDIO - DAY

In a wide and deep room, two 3D video holos facing one another on pause: on the left, Tony Manero (John Travolta) in the Bee Gees's music video "You Should Be Dancing" from the "Saturday Night Fever" movie, a hand on his hip and an arm stretched out, pointing at the crowd; on the right, Redfoo and Sky Blu, from LMFAO, in a street, the first making a step into the air, one arm across his chest, the other floating above ground while pointing at the sky. Peter fingers the console. Both still 3D holo images turn to motion. On the left, Tony Manero dancing across the disco dance floor on these lyrics: "My woman keeps me warm/What you doin' on your back, aah/What you doin' on your back, aah?/You should be dancing, yeah..."; on the right, Redfoo and Sky Blu dancing in the street on these lyrics: "And we gon' make you lose your mind/Everybody just have a good time (let's go)/Party rock is in the house tonight..." Peter fingers the console and pauses both video holos. He looks at them for a moment, thoughtful, scratching his chin with a knuckle. He glances around him, sees Bonnie waving at him behind the bay window. He waves back. She smiles. Peter exits the studio.

BONNIE

Hi.

PETER

(combing his hair with
fingers)

Hey.

(MORE)

PETER (CONT'D)

(exhaling)

I need to take a break.

BONNIE

You're gonna use some 2010 music video holos, now?

PETER

(sighing)

Yeah. In Henry City, Atlanta, I'd like our visitors to experience our brand through a dance competition: the best of the past and the present.

BONNIE

That sounds like fun. There's something I'd like to show you.

PETER

What?

BONNIE

(touching Peter's hand)

You'll see.

CUT TO:

INT. USE SHOWROOM - DAY

A wide, empty hall to four elevators. A double-height ceiling equipped with Fresnel lanterns. An elevator dings. Doors open on Peter and Bonnie, standing side by side. The CDO steps out first, then freezes in his tracks: the high-tech room displays a set of three rotating platforms featuring original gas-powered cars: a 1958 white Chevrolet Impala, a 1971 white Dodge Challenger, and a 1973 red gold Corvette Stingray.

PETER

Oh wow.

Bonnie smiles mischievously. Peter, mesmerized, heads straight to the rotating Chevy Impala. He steps on its platform and looks at the car for a moment. He touches a fin and slowly runs two fingers on the frame, from rear to front. Bonnie smiles proudly, steps closer to the platform. Background sounds of screeching tires and police sirens turn Peter's attention to a series of video screens. They are large HD screens hanging over the three rotating platforms. On each screen, an American car movie is playing: "American Graffiti," "Vanishing Point," "Dirty Mary, Crazy Larry," "The California Kid," "Corvette Summer," and "The Cannonball Run." Peter loves it, smiling like a kid.

PETER (CONT'D)

Was it already like this or did you
do this for me?

Bonnie smiles, biting her lower lip. Peter looks at the "Vanishing Point" screen, smiles at Kowalski in the Challenger shifting gears and overtaking a Jaguar. "You bastard," grumbles the Jaguar driver. The Challenger beats the Jaguar to a one-lane bridge, causing it to crash into the river. Peter laughs candidly. Bonnie smiles. They exchange a glance.

PETER (CONT'D)

This is crazy. You must have read
that article about my favorite
American car movies?

Bonnie smiles and nods. Peter steps on the platform rotating the original 1971 Dodge Challenger at floor level. He runs two fingers on the frame, then bows at the window to touch the wheel. He examines the copper brown dash cover, breathes in the scent of the beige leather seats... The platform suddenly starts drilling into the floor. Peter realizes it and leaps out on the marble floor. Bonnie is there, watching him.

PETER (CONT'D)

Whoa.

Peter loses balance. Bonnie grabs his elbow. He puts a hand on hers holding him.

PETER (CONT'D)

Thanks.

They exchange a smile. Peter glances around.

PETER (CONT'D)

I could spend hours in this place.

Bonnie acknowledges, smiles. Bonnie looks at the "Corvette Summer" screen.

BONNIE

I liked the movie "Corvette
Summer."

PETER

Me, too.

Bonnie smiles.

PETER (CONT'D)

But why did you do this?

Bonnie looks down, a little shy. The Dodge Challenger has disappeared into the floor. On the same platform now rotates out in plain sight a 1934 Ford Hot Rod Coupe.

PETER (CONT'D)

Man... This is my lucky day.

Peter gazes at the yellow coupe, speechless. The Chevy Impala has now disappeared into the floor, too.

BONNIE

Watch carefully for the next car to come out.

PETER

(curious)

Oh. Okay.

The platform returns with some dark blue convertible from the sixties. Peter steps forward and stops. He marvels at a 1967 dark blue Oldsmobile Starfire, with the top down. The car is now rotating in plain sight.

PETER (CONT'D)

Oh, my God...

Bonnie cheers, excited. Peter exchanges a glance with her and runs to the Oldsmobile platform. He turns his head to Bonnie.

PETER (CONT'D)

Can we stop this thing?

Bonnie walks up to a red button on the floor, taps it with her foot. All the cars stop moving.

PETER (CONT'D)

(smiling)

Thanks!

Bonnie smiles, watching his every move. Peter gets excited like a kid, marvels at the Oldsmobile, opens the car door, and sits behind the wheel. He grabs the hard steering, adjusts the interior rearview mirror, presses the black radio buttons... Bonnie gets in from the passenger seat door. He glances at her.

PETER (CONT'D)

Everything's the same as my father's Oldsmobile.

Bonnie smiles like a little girl getting kudos from her classmates. Peter opens and closes the triangular window on his side, smiling like a kid;

Bonnie touches her triangular window, too. She turns the radio on and presses a black button.

MUSIC: "Theme From 'A Summer Place,'" Percy Faith

PETER (CONT'D)

This song reminds me so much of my father. Richard put it on when I gave him a tour of Henry City.

BONNIE

That song always reminds me of my father, too. He loves it.

Peter nods. Bonnie turns up the volume, her other hand on the leather seat almost touching Peter's thigh. Peter runs his fingers across the dash, taking in the scent of the interior, of the front bench leather. Peter falls into a trance.

PETER'S FLASHBACK, SUNDAY RIDES WITH HIS FATHER, 1968 - DAY

Peter is a four-year-old boy sitting as a passenger in his father's 1967 blue Oldsmobile Starfire. The sparkling new car is cruising the road by a lake with the top down. Peter sticks a hand out the window, his palm surfing the air rushing by, up and down. The landscape mixes with a few moments from the 1959 movie "A Summer Place": the opening scene showing the movie title over the sea, then some kissing scenes between a man and a woman by the sea.

BACK TO THE SHOWROOM IN 2011

Peter, both hands on the steering, glances at Bonnie with a sparkle of desire, smiling. Bonnie smiles back, curious.

BONNIE

Why is "American Cars" so crucial for you?

PETER

(after a sigh)
My life ended in 1974 when my dad took his own life.

BONNIE

I'm so sorry for your loss.

PETER

Thanks. I grew up in Flint, Michigan, in USE's heyday. It broke my heart to see USE's downfall and how fast it killed my dad and my brothers' family spirit.

Bonnie caresses Peter's arm softly. Peter puts a hand on hers, touched.

PETER (CONT'D)

Somehow, if I could bring back in the landscape all those cars from 50s, 60s, and 70s I love so much, maybe I could resume my life.

BONNIE

What do you mean?

PETER

I know in my heart that if I create all those "American Cars" and market them in three "Henry City" locations, I would feel my father's presence again. I miss him so much. I love him so much. And maybe the amazing world-wide success of these cars could help reopen all those plants that were shut down in Flint.

BONNIE

And maybe you could save some broken families still living there...

PETER

That's right. Now you know everything.

(chuckling)

Go ahead and kill my boy's American Dream, Bonnie Derreck!

BONNIE

(business-minded)

No. You just need to make your pilot in Florida lean and profitable. And win the contest.

(winking at him)

Peter nods, concerned. They start kissing each other and make love, soon reaching ecstasy. They lay on the bench face-to-face, smiling at each other. Two kids in love with adult bodies.

PETER

From the first time I saw you, you found a way straight to my heart.

BONNIE

In the elevator?

PETER

Yeah.

BONNIE

How?

PETER

The mix of your beauty and goodness completely seduced me, leaving me totally unguarded. That morning, I saw your sadness. It melted my heart, because I knew you weren't afraid to wear that sadness. And I knew then you had a huge, kind, loving heart.

BONNIE

Is that so?

PETER

Yes. So, when you glanced at me with a sad smile, it went straight to my heart.

BONNIE

Wow.

Bonnie half-smiles, then sits on her seat; Peter, too. They put their clothes back on. A silence sinks in. She glances around, then at him.

BONNIE (CONT'D)

You know what? I brought that Oldsmobile here just for you; I might as well give it to you.

PETER

(stunned)

Bonnie, this car's a vintage prototype...

Bonnie gets out of the car; Peter, too. She walks up to the red button on the floor and taps it with her foot. The Starfire and the other cars start moving again. The two executives get back together. He kisses her, emotional and grateful. She looks at him.

BONNIE

(all smiles, excited)

My pre-birthday gift to you.

PETER
 (caressing her cheek)
 This is the nicest gift I've ever
 received.

BONNIE
 You'll find it before six tonight
 in the outdoor VIP parking area.
 The keys will be at reception.

Peter watches her, on a cloud.

PETER
 (moved, his eyes watery)
 Bonnie. Thank you.

Peter kisses her; she kisses him back. Bonnie's smartphone
 makes a noise. She looks at it.

BONNIE
 (softly)
 Oh. I'm sorry. I really need to
 run. Bye.

She heads for the emergency exit, waving and smiling at
 Peter.

PETER
 (on cloud nine, all-
 loving, softly)
 Bye.

Bonnie gets in the stairway, then stops. Lost in thought, she
 scratches her lower lip with her thumbnail.

BONNIE'S FLASHBACK - FEAR TEST BRIEFING IN HONG KONG

Bonnie and Richard in the Hong Kong restaurant.

BONNIE
 What about my dream to become the
 first female and youngest CEO of
 USE's history?

RICHARD
 Letting someone get close to your
 heart will give you the best
 lessons in leadership.

BONNIE
 How could I do that without letting
 him rock my world and break my
 dream?

RICHARD

That's for you to figure out.

Bonnie steps forward and grabs the handrail, but stops. She glances around, then stares ahead, thinking. After a moment, she climbs up the stairs, resolute.

FADE TO:

EXT. DETROIT BURB - NIGHT

A half-moon in the dark sky. Peter's Oldsmobile Starfire rounds a corner. Bonnie's sitting in the passenger side. A quiet neighborhood. Oscillating sprinklers watering lawns. Sounds of crickets. The car slowly passes a row of luxurious townhouses surrounded by beautiful trees. One of them features an antique-style Roman fountain on its front yard.

BONNIE

There. The one with the fountain.

PETER

I guessed it.

BONNIE

How?

PETER

It's the only unit without flowers.

BONNIE

And?

PETER

(parking the car)
You don't have time for flowers.
You're a workaholic.

BONNIE

(chuckling, smiling)
This is a weird feeling.

PETER

What?

BONNIE

It's like we've known each other
for a long time.

PETER

I have the same feeling.

They both lean in and French kiss each other slowly. Peter steps back, glances at Bonnie's face, breathing more heavily. She looks back at him puzzled. He admires her grey eyes for a moment, caresses her cheek, stops. He's a little shaky, losing his breath.

BONNIE

What is it?

PETER

Bonnie, you're so beautiful.

She squeezes Peter's hand, touched. He kisses Bonnie's hand. He swallows, looks at her in the eye.

PETER (CONT'D)

This moment with you, in this car, my dad's shiny '67 convertible, is like a dream. My young kid's heart is beating again, but too fast.

BONNIE

Me too.

PETER

I've never been so excited, happy, and hopeful since I was a kid, when my father used to take me for a ride.

BONNIE

What are you afraid of, Peter?

PETER

I'm afraid to mess up and lose everything that makes me so happy right now: my dream job, my dream project, and you, my dream girl. It's like, too good to last.

BONNIE

And if you did lose everything, what's the worst that could happen?

Peter glances away, closes his eyes, then reopens them and exhales.

PETER

You're making me so vulnerable, Bonnie Derreck, it's terrifying.

BONNIE

I'm terrified too, Peter.

They hug, kiss, and caress each other for a moment.

BONNIE (CONT'D)

Please don't break my heart, Peter.
I've never taken that leap of faith
before. I'm not sure I'm strong
enough to survive a...

PETER

(interrupting)

I'll never break your heart,
Bonnie.

Peter holds Bonnie tight for a long moment, his eyes closed.

PETER (CONT'D)

(in her ear)

Do you feel what my arms are
saying?

She hugs him back, nodding.

BONNIE

Yes.

They look and smile at each other. Peter breathes more easily, looks at her a little more serene. She smiles and gets out of the car. She stands on the sidewalk for a moment, watching him in the car. He starts the engine, waves at her. She waves back, turns, starts walking toward her place. He drives away, glancing at her. She walks away, her back turned to him. He glances ahead then back at her. She keeps walking without glancing back. Peter looks ahead, disappointed. He sighs.

FADE TO:

INT. USE CONFERENCE ROOM - MORNING

A medium size room. A long dark wood conference table. Leather executive chairs. Paintings of 1920s Ford cars and assembly lines. Peter sits alone near the edge, on one side. He thumbs his smartphone, smiling. Nelson Hicks enters. He's short, a little fat, and bald, with some hair on the sides.

NELSON

Hey.

Peter glances at him, rises, steps toward him.

PETER

Nelson. G'morning.

Peter shakes Nelson's hand. Todd Evans enters. He's tall, chubby, with good looks. He looks tired but cheerful. He exchanges a quick smile with everyone.

NELSON
Hey Todd.

TODD
Hey.

Nelson glances around, yawns, a hand over his mouth. Todd goes directly to the coffee table, pours himself a cup of coffee. Peter waves at him. Todd waves back. Richard enters the room, followed by Bonnie. He looks in a hurry. The CFO wears a black skirt suit. Peter looks at her, the back of two fingers scratching his jaw line. She's delightfully beautiful. She salutes everyone, then sits down opposite Peter. She exchanges a smile with Peter. Nelson notices, smiling. Richard glances at everyone, a little agitated.

RICHARD
Ah, good morning.

NELSON
Morning, Richard.

TODD
Hey Richard.

RICHARD
Everyone, enjoy a cup of coffee, I need to go get my tablet. I'll be right back.

Richard exits. Peter looks at Bonnie across the table. Her grey eyes sparkle some goodness at him for a split-second. Peter reciprocates. Todd sits next to Peter with his cup of coffee. The CDO nods to him then looks at Bonnie.

PETER
(kind, half-smiling)
Morning, Bonnie.

BONNIE
(composed)
Morning.

She seats herself more comfortably then smiles back politely. Peter gets a little upset, looks away. Bonnie and Todd look at each other.

TODD
Hi.

BONNIE

Hey.

Todd glances at Peter, who looks upset, then at Bonnie across the table. She smiles politely. Richard rushes in then shuts the door. Richard sits and taps his tablet a couple of times. He looks up. The meeting's agenda now appears in the air as a 3D holo. Peter glances at Bonnie, who's looking at the agenda.

#1: M&A Emerging Markets

#2: Vision 2021

#3: Pilot Projects

Bonnie makes a light smile at Peter, who doesn't reciprocate. She stares at him for a moment, puzzled, then looks at Richard. Nelson feels the tension between Peter and Bonnie, then looks at Richard. Todd takes a sip of his coffee.

RICHARD

Item number one. Our M&A activity in the emerging markets. Peter, I'm sorry we didn't pull you in the loop earlier.

BONNIE

(to Richard)
My bad.

RICHARD

I think Peter had enough on his plate with the "American Cars" and "Henry City" pilot in Florida.
(Peter nods.)
I'd like to thank Bonnie's team for working so hard on that merger with our Korean competitor.

Bonnie, Nelson, and Todd smile and nod proudly at Richard. Peter glances at everyone, looking unhappy.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

I believe things are coming along nicely.

TODD

This merger is our vehicle to USE's success in the emerging markets.

RICHARD

It has all the ingredients. Peter, I heard you had concerns.

PETER

Well, I'm not sure this is in line with what made us pioneers in the auto industry, Richard.

BONNIE

Peter, a few of our divisions have already merged with foreign car builders.

NELSON

You said it. And you can't win if you don't go global in your vision and in your assembly line.

TODD

We're competing for elephant markets like China and India now.

PETER

We're doing these mergers only to win the great battle in the emerging markets, is that it?

NELSON

(laid back)

Go East, you men, go East!

Todd smiles. Bonnie nods at Nelson.

BONNIE

The future is definitely in the countries where the labor is abundant, cheap, and educated.

Bonnie looks laid back, her legs crossed. Under the table, she dangles her shoe. Peter looks at Bonnie, tilting his head to one side, struggling not to glance at her dangling shoe.

BONNIE (CONT'D)

We've already started to reimburse our bailout money. Our sales are up. Before you know it, we'll be number one again in the U.S. and abroad.

PETER

For how long, Bonnie? Two years? We need to think long term.

RICHARD

(looking at his
smartphone)

(MORE)

RICHARD (CONT'D)

I'm afraid we'll need to save this discussion for our next meeting. My shareholders' meeting starts in ten. We need to wrap up.

With his finger, Richard remotely strikes out items one and two. He then taps his finger on item number three, which pops up a still image of a video titled "Henry City, Florida - Peter Smith."

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Todd, Nelson, I already told you about that contest I've created (Nelson and Todd nod) to have only the best between Bonnie and Peter elected as my successor. In part one of the contest that just ended, Bonnie and Peter had to deliver a pilot project upon their respective vision. Both pilots exceeded my expectations.

Nelson and Todd nod slowly, glad to hear that. Both Peter and Bonnie smile, glowing with pride. They exchange a glance.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

The videos speak for themselves.

Richard clicks the remote and the video of Peter's pilot starts. Everyone watches. "Henry City, Florida - Peter Smith." The City Hall park. Vintage stores and barbershops. A drive-in restaurant with car hops. Nelson and Todd smile. Giant screens. "American Cars" holos coming out of video commercials. Nelson nods, loving it.

NELSON

Nice.

Everyone seems blown away. Peter's radiant. The USE dealership surrounded with parking lots of shiny new "American Cars." Young families and seniors looking at 1960s-style cars in the lot. Henry City's Main Street. Palm trees. The Beatles at the Ed Sullivan Show. Interactive holos. The drive-in theater. The silent Nascar track. The Henry City beach and boardwalk. Todd and Nelson trigger a general applause for Peter's work, shaking hands with him. The CDO waves at everyone. Richard clicks the remote and the video holo shows a title over the Hong Kong skyline reading "Enter the Dragon - Bonnie Derreck." Todd and Nelson smile and nod their appreciation to her, amused. A busy commercial street. A "USE" building. A "USE Trucks" glass storefront. A Chinese-English banner reading "USE's 'Enter the Dragon' Grand Opening Sale." Todd's and Nelson's faces light up.

Inside the store, Asian salespersons in suits, clients, political dignitaries, reporters, Bonnie and Richard. The Chinese dragon dance. The Bruce-Lee finale with the "fortune" foamy drops. Applause from the USE Trucks showroom crowd and a wave at that crowd from Bonnie and Richard. The video ends with this title over the Hong Kong skyline: "Enter the cost reduction" Todd, Nelson, Richard, and Peter smile and nod, loving it. "It's now 40% cheaper to build trucks." Todd and Nelson trigger a vigorous applause for Bonnie's work. Bonnie is all smiles, glowing. Peter smiles, sharing her pride.

PETER

Wow. Nice work.

BONNIE

(to Peter)

Thank you.

The two main shareholders seem delighted with Bonnie's pilot, giving her praises. Richard, too.

FADE TO:

Elevator doors close on Peter alone. He looks at his smartphone.

TIGHT ON PETER'S SMARTPHONE

Peter: You're a woman to be reckoned with.

Bonnie: It's business and nothing else.

Peter: Yeah. Sure.

Bonnie: I'm at the lobby. Come over.

Peter: Why?

Bonnie: It's your birthday today.

Peter: And?

Bonnie: You'll see.

BACK IN THE ELEVATOR

Peter looks at his smartphone, then glances around, sighs. He presses the button for the lobby.

FADE IN:

USE LOBBY - DAY - MUTE

A majestic, sky-high lobby. Digital screens on the wall showing portraits of Henry Ford and his handwritten signature. Holograms of Henry Ford cars. Bonnie and Peter meet at the center of the lobby. She talks to him in a kind and courteous way. He stares at her, listening. She now wears some pink lipstick, looking fresher and more beautiful than ever. She grabs his hand and pulls him away with her. Peter looks reluctant, resisting, and bringing her to pull harder. They soon exit the lobby.

EXT. USE OUTDOOR PARKING LOT - DAY

A vast blue sky with some big white clouds. Every inch of white cotton-like texture seems real enough to be grabbed and eaten up like cotton candy. A wide outdoor parking lot. Grilles of shiny Lincolns and Cadillacs. Peter still follows Bonnie reluctantly. He glances around, exhaling. They pass many rows of parked cars to reach a "VIP" area, with only three powered-gas cars parked backwards. Peter stops and stares at the three cars, his lips parted: a bronze 1969 Pontiac Parisienne, a 1973 gold glow Mustang Mach 1, and a blue 1976 Plymouth Duster.

PETER
(glancing at Bonnie)
Holy shit.

He stares at the cars, then smiles at Bonnie, excited.

BONNIE
Happy birthday!

Peter chuckles out of amazement, widening his eyes.

PETER
Oh, wow!

He walks up to the Mustang. A shiny gold glow frame. A black stripe on the side and on the hood. Bonnie watches him, all smiles. He runs his hand on the long hood, peers inside the driver's window, then smiles at the low leather seats and the dashboard.

PETER (CONT'D)
I was ten years old when my oldest
brother bought his Mach 1, used.
(MORE)

PETER (CONT'D)

Same color with black stripes and a rear spoiler.

(looking at Bonnie)

But this one's shiny new!

Bonnie bites her lower lip, lightly twisting her torso. Peter runs his fingers from the hood of the car to its aerodynamic rear window. The gold glow paint sparkles under the sun.

PETER (CONT'D)

My brother never let me go in it, not even get close to it. He was guarding it like the most precious thing he had.

Bonnie's excited, listening and nodding. Peter walks around the Mach 1 slowly, his eyes on the frame. He touches the right wing, the hood.

PETER (CONT'D)

After parking it, my brother would slowly walk around it, checking its frame, inch by inch.

INSERTS - HIS BROTHER'S MUSTANG - 1975

Peter's old house in Flint. In the driveway, a 1973 gold glow Mustang Mach 1. In front of the house, on the street, a blue 1976 Plymouth Duster and a bronze 1969 Pontiac Parisienne. The Mustang has a black stripe on the side and on the hood. A rear spoiler, too. Ahead of the front bumper, on the pavement, a kid's bike. Its rubber handles are white. A young adult with a mustache in 70s clothes. He slowly walks around the Mustang. His brown ankle boots with a side zipper suddenly stop. The young man widens the eyes, gasps. A white spot under the car door handle? He fingers it swiftly. A powerful sunbeam now lights up the back of his hand. He closes his eyes, exhales, then resumes his walking.

BACK TO USE'S VIP PARKING LOT - 2011

PETER (CONT'D)

So, if later on I had accidentally hit it with my bike, he would know it. But I never did. I treasured it as much as he did.

INSERTS - PETER'S BIKE - 1975

Same driveway. Same Mustang. Ten-year-old boy Peter stands next to the Mustang's passenger window. He holds his bike by its white rubber handles, looking in. The low leather seats. The dash. The automatic shifter. Peter smiles.

BACK TO USE'S VIP PARKING LOT - 2011

BONNIE

(smiling)

But now you can get in and drive
it. It's all yours.

PETER

This is a gift? The three of them?

Bonnie nods repetitively, smiling, proud. Peter gets excited like a kid. He gets into the Mustang, behind the wheel, and cranks down the window. He grabs the steering, feeling it, running fingers on it. He's smiling and marveling at the interior like a kid.

PETER (CONT'D)

(looking at the dash then
at Bonnie)

It's sparkling new, with zero
mileage!

Bonnie stands outside the driver's window, sharing his excitement. She puts a hand on Peter's resting on the open window frame. Peter kisses Bonnie's hand, rubs his cheek against it. She strokes his hair, then caresses his cheek. He closes his eyes, exhaling. She bends down to kiss him. Peter then glances at the passenger seat.

PETER (CONT'D)

C'mon, let's go for a ride!

Bonnie rushes to the passenger door and gets in. Peter smiles gratefully at her. He starts the engine, flats the pedal, and the car screeches away. A giant Hot Wheels exiting the USE parking lot.

PETER (CONT'D)

Woo-hoo!

Bonnie squeezes Peter's hand, her face glowing with happiness. Peter watches the road, shifting into high gears the 4-speed manual car. He glances at her, excited. She smiles at him and at the road.

CUT TO:

EXT. DETROIT HIGHWAY - DAY

The same vast blue sky with some big white clouds. The horizon spreading on both sides. A powerful midday sun shines on a three-lane highway. Speeding up in the middle lane is the sparkling 1973 gold glow Mustang Mach 1.

EXT. CLOSE-UP ON THE CAR - DAY - MUTE

Peter is driving, all smiles, talking, his elbow resting on the open window frame. Bonnie is listening, looking at Peter, smiling, excited. He sticks a hand out, rises his palm against the powerful air rushing by, smiling like a kid. He then turns it flat to surf the air up and down. Bonnie leans on Peter's side, a hand on his thigh. Peter takes it and kisses it, glancing at her. She smiles.

INT. MUSTANG MACH 1 - DAY

Peter holds the steering, smiling. His eyes are set on the road coming to them. He glances at the radio.

PETER

All I need is some 70s music.

BONNIE

(excited)

Oh yes, I forgot!

Bonnie presses one of the black buttons under the radio tuner. A quiet song starts. She turns the volume up.

MUSIC: "More Than a Feeling," Boston.

"I looked out this morning and the sun was gone, turned on some music to start my day..."

PETER

I love this song!

BONNIE

Me too!

The music blares out of the car speakers. Hands on the steering, Peter nods to the rhythm; Bonnie, too.

PETER

(singing)

It's more than a feeling (more than a feeling)...

PETER AND BONNIE

(both singing, glancing at each other)

...When I hear that old song they used to play [more than a feeling].

(both smiling at each other)

(MORE)

PETER AND BONNIE (CONT'D)

...And I begin dreaming [more than
a feeling], till I see Marianne
walk away, I see my Marianne
walkin' away...

EXT. CLOSE UP ON THE CAR - DAY

MUSIC: "More Than a Feeling," Boston.

Peter sings, driving both hands on the steering. Bonnie watches the road, happy. In the fast lane, a passing red 2011 self-driving Mustang honks. Its driver points to Peter's Mach 1, then gives a thumbs-up. Peter responds with a thumbs-up, nodding at him, very proud. The red 2011 Mustang speeds away. Peter smiles at Bonnie, who smiles back and nods.

IN THE CAR

PETER

(turning the music down)
Hey. Can I show you something?

BONNIE

What?

PETER

I'm driving us to Flint. I'll show
you the house I grew up in.

BONNIE

But it's a 45-minute drive. And the
city's unsafe.

PETER

It's not that bad. And we won't
stay for long. C'mon, it's my
birthday!

BONNIE

All right. But can we buy a gun on
our way there?

PETER

(chuckling)
It's actually not that bad.

BONNIE

Can we visit the city in the car,
without getting out?

PETER

All right. We'll get out only for a
few minutes, okay?

BONNIE

Thank you.

Peter smiles. She squeezes his hand.

CUT TO:

EXT. SERENADE STREET - FLINT - DAY

The 1973 gold glow Mustang Mach 1 drives Serenade street at different speeds. It alternately slows down, halts, and speeds up. The car's shiny gold glow frame brings in some sun in that grey, dying neighborhood.

IN THE MUSTANG

As the car slows down, Peter behind the wheel points to a house toward Bonnie's car window. The light blue house was abandoned. Plywood sheets covering its windows. Only some graffiti about pain and sacrifices on the coating give it a human touch.

PETER

This was my best friend's house. In USE's heyday, this street was so beautiful with nicely painted houses, gardens, flowers, kids riding their bikes... I was one of those kids.

(glancing at Bonnie)

Bonnie looks at Peter, tightens her lips, then grabs his hand. He smiles gratefully at her. She smiles back, brings his hand to her mouth, kisses it.

PETER (CONT'D)

(glancing at her, moved)

Thank you, Bonnie.

Bonnie squeezes his hand again. He speeds up on Serenade Street for an instant, glancing on both sides. He sees a house through the windshield, stops smiling. He slows down the Mustang to a stop. Both are staring at the house.

PETER (CONT'D)

This is the one.

Peter exhales slowly, then turns off the engine. They both get out of the car. A "For Sale" real estate yard sign on the front lawn. Bonnie joins Peter on the sidewalk, grabs his hand, watching the house with him. Peter's house has been repainted but plywood sheets still cover the windows. Peter looks like a kid desperate to find his stolen bike.

PETER (CONT'D)

My life ended here, in this house,
in 1974. My dad, my hero, took his
own life. I've felt abandoned ever
since.

BONNIE

(squeezing his hand)

I'm so sorry. I like you so much,
Peter Smith.

PETER

I like you a lot, too, Bonnie
Derreck.

They kiss and hug. He takes a deep breath and climbs the wooden stairs. He stops at the door. He holds Bonnie's hand, glances behind at her. He pushes open the front door. The house is empty and clean. A sun beam across the living room. Peter looks around, silent. The kitchen is old but neat. He takes another deep breath, steps toward a living room wall, and crouches down. At the foot of it, cracks in the old wood floor seem to hide some tiny pieces of paper. He fingers the inside and takes out a torn piece of paper. He looks at it for a moment. The handwritten number "(810) 233-6" appears, incomplete, in blue pen ink. Peter shows it to Bonnie, who takes it and looks at it.

PETER (CONT'D)

The restaurant's number to order
our Friday night pizza.

Bonnie caresses Peter's hair. Peter brings his face close to the wide crack, looking in. He sees a round, flat, beige object. He pulls it out. It's a dusty car key ring. Bonnie's paying attention, silent. Peter blows and brushes off the dust of it, revealing a brand name: "USE." He squeezes the object in his hand, holding back some tears. He rises. Bonnie cuddles him. He hugs her back, steps away.

He pockets the car key ring. He slowly looks around, thoughtful, then walks out the door. Bonnie heads for the door but halts at a hall shelf. She delicately puts a nice USE pen on it. Peter waits for Bonnie on the porch, fighting tears, looking ahead without seeing. She gets out and steps closer to him. She kisses him lovingly; he kisses her back. They hug each other tight for a moment.

PETER (CONT'D)

(whispering)

Thank you, Bonnie.

BONNIE

I'm with you now, Peter.

They squeeze each other, exchanging smiles. They get back in the car and drive away. The residential street is quiet. In the industrial area, only a few cars passing under the "VEHICLE CITY" arch. Buildings with deserted parking lots. Empty streets and sidewalks.

FADE TO:

EXT. USE OUTDOOR PARKING LOT - DAY

The Mustang Mach 1 enters the VIP area of the outdoor USE parking lot. It parks next to the other two cars received as gifts, the Plymouth and the Pontiac. Peter and Bonnie both get out and meet at the front of the three cars, parked side by side. Peter approaches the first one, the Mustang.

PETER

After my father's funeral, my big brothers became my world. And these cars were like, the best expression of who they were to me. John's Mach 1 was his dream of becoming a commercial airline pilot.

(touching the Mustang's hood)

Piers' Parisienne was his dream of seeing the world as a flight attendant.

(touching the Pontiac's hood)

Andrew's Duster was his calling to be a professional car racer.

(touching the Plymouth's hood)

Peter glances at Bonnie then at the three cars.

PETER (CONT'D)

A few years after my dad killed himself, all my brothers gave up on their dreams. They moved to other states and never came back.

BONNIE

What happened with your mom?

PETER

After I got my UCLA scholarship and moved to L.A., she met a man and moved to Wisconsin.

Bonnie takes Peter and hugs him. Peter hugs her back. He steps back, glances down, then looks at Bonnie.

PETER (CONT'D)

So, now I'm the only one left with a dream.

BONNIE

And you will make it big.

PETER

Yeah, right. You're our CFO and all you want is to merge with some Asian car builders and move Motor City to Hong Kong.

BONNIE

(sighing)

Why can't you agree on making "American Cars" a limited deluxe edition, for collectors?

PETER

Because, unlike you, I believe this country was founded on a beautiful dream of equal rights and opportunities for everyone. Not just for a small group of people.

Peter turns to go. Bonnie caresses his arm softly, looking at him. The CDO looks at her hand, closing his eyes, exhaling. Her hand is feminine, with nice fingers and soft skin; her grey eyes are sad, beautiful, and caring.

BONNIE

What about my gifts to you?

PETER

(sighing)

Please stop.

BONNIE

Why?

PETER

This tender touch,
 (caressing Bonnie's hand)
 your amazing beauty,
 (admiring her features)
 all that goodness...
 (glancing at the three
 cars)
 it's making me too vulnerable.

Bonnie looks at him in shock, speechless. Peter walks away, but immediately stops and turns. Bonnie's eyes are down, lost in thought; they turn to him.

PETER (CONT'D)
 (pointing at her)
 And I know you're doing all of this
 to make me fail the fear test, so
 you can become CEO.

BONNIE
 What?

PETER
 C'mon, Bonnie. All I know is that I
 can already guess where this is
 going: my biggest fear.

Bonnie hears her smartphone make a noise, draws it out. Peter
 walks away, blinking, and exhaling slowly. Glass doors ahead.

PETER (CONT'D)
 (whispering, for himself)
 God, she's beautiful. Life sucks.
 Life fuckin' sucks.

Bonnie looks at her smartphone, then at Peter heading for the
 building entrance.

BONNIE
 (sighing, loving)
 Peter.

Peter likes her tone, stops, half-turns. He looks at her.

BONNIE (CONT'D)
 You said I had a huge heart. You
 were right. That's just who I am.

Peter turns to her completely, captive. He looks down, then
 at her. Bonnie looks back at him, then glances at her
 smartphone.

BONNIE (CONT'D)
 Richard wants to see us in his
 office in ten.

PETER
 Is there anything wrong?

BONNIE
 It's about our stock not going so
 well, and an upcoming team-building
 activity.

PETER
 Okay. I'll be there.

Peter turns, resumes his walk. Bonnie watches him enter the building. She sighs and heads back to the building. In the lobby, she crosses paths with a woman in suit holding the hand of her five-year-old daughter. The little girl has long blonde hair with grey eyes. She waves and smiles at Bonnie, who smiles and waves back. Bonnie glances at her smartphone, then one more time at the little girl, who's still smiling at her. Bonnie smiles back politely, then looks away. An elevator dings. She sighs.

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE - DAY

Richard stands behind his desk, looking tense. Bonnie and Peter stand opposite. They all sit down. Richard grins nervously, rubs his cheek with the back of two fingers. He looks at them.

RICHARD

For the second week in a row, our stock price plunged.

Bonnie and Peter nod emphatically, waiting for more.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

My meeting with the shareholders was a disaster. Many of them dumped their stock over Peter's "American Cars" disappointing net profits.

Peter exchange a glance with Bonnie. Richard looks a little shaken and grieved. He inhales, then shifts to courage.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

As a result, our stock is in free fall. We need to take action. Now.

Bonnie exhales, feeling pressured. Peter nods slowly, tightening his lips. The female CFO looks down for a moment, thoughtful, then looks at Richard.

BONNIE

I suggest we cut down our operation costs by thirty percent.

PETER

Thirty-percent? But that's ten thousand of our people, Bonnie.

BONNIE

Somebody has to fix the mess.

PETER

Richard, couldn't we wait just another week?

RICHARD

Oh no. We definitely don't have the luxury of time, here.

BONNIE

So, if you agree with the idea, I could email you my restructuring plan in less than an hour.

Richard nods, looking ahead without seeing. Peter rubs his lower lip with a knuckle. Bonnie waits for Richard's response.

RICHARD

(sighing)

It's a very tough decision.

Peter holds his nose between his thumb and index finger, blinks, in grief. Bonnie glances at Peter, then looks at Richard.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

But this is my decision. So, I need the both of you to fly to Atlanta on Friday. Peter, you'll be our spokesperson.

Peter glances at Richard, nods, exhaling inside his fist resting against his lips. He shakes his head in disbelief, crushed with guilt.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

On a happier note, I wanted to talk to you about an upcoming team-building activity. Lemme get those jerseys.

BONNIE

Okay.

PETER

Sure.

Richard rises, walks up to his closet, grabs two jerseys on a hanger. Peter looks at Bonnie for a moment, wearing a sadness of his own. She grabs one of his hands and squeezes it warmly. Peter sighs, his eyes blinking "thank you." She blinks back, smiling. Richard returns with two baseball jerseys. He hands one to Bonnie, the other to Peter, then sits down.

Bonnie's white jersey reads "USE" on the front and "B. DERRECK" on the back; Peter's green jersey reads "USE" on the front and "P. SMITH" on the back.

BONNIE

Nice. Very nice.

Peter looks at it on both sides, nods his appreciation to Richard. The CEO smiles, pleased.

RICHARD

This year, we have a record-high number of new hires at the head office. You're one of them, Peter.

(smiling at Peter, who smiles back)

We'll be playing a friendly ball game. The goal is to increase the engagement level of our new hires using our role models on the field.

PETER

Role models?

RICHARD

That's right. One of our most notable is Bonnie herself, the first woman at USE to become CFO. She'll be the starting pitcher for the white team.

Peter nods, impressed.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Yes. And... beware of her fastball.

PETER

Yes, I know.

Bonnie smiles, proud. A silence sinks in. She folds her jersey on her lap. Peter sighs, exchanges a glance with Bonnie, then looks at Richard.

RICHARD

We'll have that friendly game when you two return from Atlanta. I'll email you the details.

Both Bonnie and Peter acknowledge and leave. In the hall, they walk side by side for a moment. Peter's staring down.

PETER

I wanted to make a difference...
I'm directly responsible for laying
off ten thousand of our people.

Peter shakes his head, broken, devastated. The hall is quiet.

BONNIE

We all make mistakes, but men never
learn to listen to women.

Peter and Bonnie look at each other, serious, then smile and burst into laughter. He kisses her slowly. They hold each other for a moment. He squeezes her, closing his eyes.

PETER

Thank you.

BONNIE

You're welcome.

PETER

I'll get these jobs back.

BONNIE

I'm sure you will.

FADE TO:

EXT. USE TOWER, DOWNTOWN ATLANTA - DAY

A warm, sunny day. Men and women in suits entering and exiting the building. A group of interns next to a fountain. They are chatting and having coffee. A man sitting alone at the fountain thumbing his smartphone.

INT. USE MEETING ROOM, ATLANTA - DAY - MUTE

A group of men and women in suits seated around a long executive table. Bonnie and Peter taking place side by side at the edge. All have stern faces. Bonnie talking, Peter watching everyone around the table. All men and women listening look in shock, many covering their mouths or shaking theirs head in disbelief.

A woman asking questions. Bonnie answering. More men and women around the table shaking their heads in disbelief, their faces deformed with anxiety. A few of them rising and leaving in tears. Peter nodding at some of Bonnie's answers, repressing a growing feeling of guilt and sorrow.

FADE TO:

INT. USE ATLANTA OFFICE - EARLY EVENING

Peter walks down a hallway, loosening his tie. He watches Bonnie in a glass office thumbing her smartphone while talking in her headset mic. Peter looks down at his smartphone, starts thumbing it.

CLOSE UP ON PETER'S SMARTPHONE

Peter: Are you done?

Bonnie: Almost.

Peter: I miss you.

Bonnie: I miss you too.

They both exchange a quick smile through the glass wall. Peter sits on a bench next to her office door. He leans his head against the wall, closes his eyes. He stays like this for a moment, falling asleep.

PETER'S NIGHTMARE - START

A loud gunshot. Peter wakes up in terror, gasping. He's sitting on the same bench outside Bonnie's office. The office floor is desert and quiet. He looks inside Bonnie's office through the glass wall: no one's there. He slowly pushes open Bonnie's office door, sees a gun on the floor, then the hand of a man lying on the floor. He breathes faster, sweating. He opens the door wider on a bloodied man lying dead, face down. Peter slowly goes to the man, crouches down. He flips him over. It's Peter's father! He gasps and steps back in terror.

He breathes with great difficulty, glancing behind. He sees Bonnie behind the door, aiming a gun at him.

BONNIE

Peter. Wake up.

PETER

(rising slowly, terrified)
Wake up? I don't understand. You just killed my dad, and now you want to kill me?

PETER'S NIGHTMARE - END

BACK TO PETER ASLEEP ON THE BENCH

BONNIE
 (touching his arm)
 Peter.

Peter wakes in fright, glances at Bonnie, then around him. He blinks, exhaling. He looks at the empty office through the glass wall.

BONNIE (CONT'D)
 Are you okay?

PETER
 Yeah, yeah, I'm fine. When I stay up all night, I wake up like this when I nap during the day.

He rises and walks away with her.

BONNIE
 You were up all night?

PETER
 Yeah. I was crunching some numbers for "American Cars."

BONNIE
 (playfully)
 Sadly, I'm gonna kill "American Cars" when I become CEO.

PETER
 (chuckling, smiling)
 You will NOT become CEO.

BONNIE
 Don't be so confident in your survival skills.

Bonnie smiles mischievously at him. He smiles back.

FADE TO:

EXT. BALLPARK, DETROIT BURB - EVENING

Bright lights above the fence beam down the diamond and shine through the empty stands. Wearing a "USE" green jersey, Peter finds his way on the pavement surrounding the fenced field.

He stops to watch for a moment two players on the diamond exchanging the ball. It's Bonnie and Richard, both wearing a white "USE" jersey. Peter resumes his walk.

EXT. BALLPARK - EVENING - TIME CUT

Bonnie is on the mound and strikes out the first two batters. The green guys look pitiful at the dugout. Peter steps to the plate. Bonnie and Peter exchange a look and a light smile. Bonnie throws a curve. Peter hits a single. A new batter steps to the plate. He practices his swing, staring at Bonnie. Peter ventures away from first base. Bonnie adjusts her cap and suddenly turns to throw the ball at Richard on first base. The CEO makes the catch but Peter had already retreated on time, his foot on the base. Bonnie glances at Todd Evans on second base. Todd nods at her. The batter practices his swing in the striking zone, stops, then waits for the pitch. Bonnie stands still, glances back, then starts lifting her knee. Peter's already sprinting between first and second bases.

TODD

Bonnie!

Bonnie turns around and throws the ball at Todd on second base. Todd makes the catch, Peter stops, glances behind him. Richard gets the ball, exchanges it with Todd a few times, closing in on Peter. The runner stops, turns and sprints the other way, dodging a tag each time. The runner tries to pass Todd, feints to go left, but goes right. Todd tries to tag Peter, misses his shoulder. Peter falls onto one knee, gets up. Todd plunges and tags him out on the ankle. "Out!" shouts the referee. Peter retreats to the dugout, mad at himself, throwing his helmet down. The white team supporters cheer as Bonnie smiles. A new inning. Peter is the pitcher. Bonnie is at the plate, holding her bat high. She cracks a smile and winks at Peter, who doesn't respond and remains composed. Peter throws a fast ball. She hits a triple. Richard hits a single, Bonnie scores. It's 1-0 for the white team. The next two batters get retired. Last inning. Bonnie walks back to the mound, massaging her right shoulder. Richard runs to her.

RICHARD

Bonnie... You look tired. Let me step in, okay?

Bonnie stops massaging her shoulder, staring at him.

BONNIE

Maybe you're right.

She nods.

BONNIE (CONT'D)

Okay.

They fist bump. Richard watches her walk toward the dugout. Peter steps to the plate, smiling and nodding to the guys at the dugout, all clapping. Richard seems rusty and throws two balls in a row. He regains composure and holds the ball in his glove a moment. He glances back then lifts his knee high and throws a fastball. The ball hits Peter on the helmet. Richard watches Peter grin and step away. The CEO looks impassive, catching the ball returned to him. Peter takes off his helmet, rubs a side of his head, then puts it back on. He struts back to the plate and gets in the batter zone. Peter waves at Richard, who nods. The batter waits for the pitch, holding his bat high. A perfect silence. Bonnie playing first base watches Richard, standing ready for a play. Richard takes his stance, glances back, then lifts his knee high. He throws another fast ball. The ball hits Peter on the helmet again. Peter drops his bat and starts running toward the mound. Richard looks calm. Both dugouts of players pour out on the field. The two teams are about to collide around the mound. Peter swings at Richard.

PETER

(for himself)

You son of a...

Richard dodges the fist and grabs Peter by the sweater. The brawl is growing around them. Bonnie can't believe what she sees.

RICHARD

(straight in the eye)

You're fired, idiot!

The brawl suddenly calms down and everyone on the diamond falls silent, astounded. Todd comes forward to watch the two men, speechless. Richard glances at Peter then around him. Peter looks shaken and disoriented for a moment, then walks away. Bonnie walks up to Richard.

BONNIE

Is this for real?

Richard scratches his chin with his gloved hand, readjusts his cap. All the other players slowly walk away, in shock.

RICHARD

As real as it can get.

Richard steps away, but stops, returns to her.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
 Make sure to block him and ignore
 him everywhere.

BONNIE
 Why?

RICHARD
 I can't tell you as this point.
 Just do it and don't worry, okay?

Bonnie looks at Richard a moment, then nods, sad.

BONNIE
 Okay.

RICHARD
 Thanks.

Richard walks away. Bonnie thumbs her smartphone, her head
 down, slowly walking away, too. She's alone on the diamond.

TIGHT ON BONNIE'S SMARTPHONE

Peter: Richard blocked me. Why? What's going on?

BACK TO THE BALLPARK

Bonnie sighs, hesitates to thumb a reply. Her phone rings.
 "Caller: Peter Smith." Her thumb hovers over the green
 telephone icon. Bonnie blinks, exhales, and finally thumbs
 Peter's name, which pops up a menu:

Block
 Delete
 Archive

She thumbs "Block." Her telephone stops ringing. Bonnie
 raises her chin, sighs, then walks away. She looks shaken.

CUT TO:

EXT. DETROIT BURB - NIGHT

The street where Bonnie lives. Her townhouse. The antique-
 style Roman fountain. Peter's Oldsmobile Starfire parked on
 the street. Behind the wheel, the fired employee in his USE
 baseball uniform thumbing his smartphone. He looks panicked.

TIGHT ON PETER'S SMARTPHONE

A list of names. He thumbs Bonnie's. The next screen shows Bonnie's last text to him. He types "Reply" but a system message pops up: "You can't reply to this message."

PETER

Her, too? Are you fuckin' kidding me?

A USE limo car rounds a corner. Peter sees it, gets out, then waits on the sidewalk. The limo parks ahead of the Oldsmobile. Peter stands next to Bonnie's limo door, looking in. Bonnie looks away, sad, worried. The chauffeur gets out, sees Peter, then opens the door for Bonnie, who gets out.

PETER (CONT'D)

Bonnie. What's going on? Why did Richard fire me? Why did you both block me?

She doesn't answer and hurries to get to her place. The chauffeur grabs Peter by the arms, keeping him away from Bonnie. Peter tries to escape his grip in vain. He watches Bonnie hurrying up the stairs.

CHAUFFEUR

This is private property. Miss Derreck doesn't want you here.

PETER

Why? What the fuck's going on?

Bonnie gets into her place and shuts the door. The neighborhood is quiet. Sound of the water falling in the fountain.

CHAUFFEUR

(pulling out his
smartphone)

I'm calling the police.

Peter shakes his head in disbelief. He walks back to his car, gets in, and the Oldsmobile screeches away. The chauffeur watches it round a corner and disappear. He stands there for a moment, surveying the area. Standing at her living room window, Bonnie shuts the curtains.

CUT TO:

EXT. 7-ELEVEN GAS STATION - NIGHT

Peter in a phone booth, the handset to his ear.

PETER

Bonnie? What's going on?

BONNIE

(v.o.)

I can't talk to you. Contact HR if you have any questions.

PETER

What? I need you. Talk to me.

She clicks off. Peter looks at the handset, hangs up. He calls her again. Sound of a busy line. Peter hangs up, this time more slowly, then exhales. He rubs his lower lip with the back of a thumb, looking without seeing.

CUT TO:

INT. PETER'S TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

Peter gets in, then shuts and locks the door. He goes straight to the living room, drops his keys and smartphone on the coffee table. He throws himself on the couch, turning on his back. He stares at the living room ceiling, exhales, then closes his eyes. He reopens them, glances around for a moment. He finally covers his eyes with his forearm, his other hand resting on his stomach.

FADE TO:

INT. PETER'S TOWNHOUSE - MORNING

A living room filled with feeble daylight. The powerful sun filters through the blinders and appear on the living room walls as white thin parallel lines. Sounds of trucks arriving in the neighborhood. The white lines over the couch now mix with blinking blue and yellow lines. Peter rolls over onto one side, grabbing a cushion. The doorbell rings. Peter moves his feet, then his head. He sits on the couch, eyes closed. He opens his eyes, blinks. He rises and goes to the door. He opens. A man in blue mechanic's coveralls is standing outside.

MAN IN COVERALLS
Good morning, sir.

PETER
Hey.

Peter looks at the four towing trucks flashing their lights on the street, confused.

MAN IN COVERALLS
Mr. Richard Derreck sent us here to tow away four cars.

PETER
What?

Peter's USE baseball uniform is all wrinkled. The man in coveralls looks at him, empathic.

MAN IN COVERALLS
We would need those cars to be parked on the street now, so we can tow them away. Is this something you can help us with?

Peter nods, looking away, speechless.

CUT TO:

EXT. PETER'S TOWNHOUSE STREET - MORNING - TIME CUT

Peter stands on the sidewalk. The four tow trucks alternately release the air brakes, and start carrying away the Oldsmobile Starfire, the Mustang Mach 1, the Pontiac Parisienne, and the Plymouth Duster. Peter looks down and turns to go.

FADE TO:

EXT. SERENADE STREET, FLINT - EVENING

A lifeless street with the same old clunkers and abandoned houses. A knocked down steel trash can. Three stray dogs fighting over some leftovers. Distant gun shots and screams. A house in flames, crumbling down. No bystanders watching.

INT. PETER'S OLD HOUSE - EVENING

Peter sits on the floor, his back against the wall. He holds his father's beige car key ring, examining it. Sound of a limo arriving and parking near the house.

Peter looks at the door. Bonnie enters. She meets Peter's eyes, looks away, sad, then goes straight to the kitchen counter. He doesn't move, looking broken in every way.

BONNIE

(avoiding eye contact)
I just came here to give you two things that belonged to your family.

PETER

Bonnie, what the hell's going on?
Please talk to me.

He slowly gets up and walks up to her. He's wearing jeans and a blue hoodie. Bonnie doesn't answer, keeping her back turned on him. She puts a .38 handgun and a letter on the counter.

BONNIE

(looking at them)
Richard kept these for 37 years.

PETER

Is this my father's .38?

BONNIE

(avoiding eye contact)
Yes. And his suicide letter.

Peter freezes with fear and grief. His eyes hooked at the two artefacts of his father's suicide, he lightly turns away his head and torso, exhaling slowly. He looks like a kid entering a haunted house, his hands a little shaky. He seems torn by a burning desire to touch and a growing fear of actually touching. Bonnie glances at Peter and seems about to burst into tears, but doesn't. She glances at the .38 and the letter on the table, then at Peter.

BONNIE (CONT'D)

Good luck.

Peter stands there, in shock, watching her hurry out of the house. He seems paralyzed, with no hope or will left in his body. His eyes turn to the gun and the letter. After a moment, he slowly steps closer to them. Staring in terror at the .38, its grip and trigger, he slowly picks up the letter. He exhales, unfolds it, then reads it.

CLOSE-UP ON THE LETTER

"John, Piers, Andrew, Peter, I love each of you so much.
Peter, I'm taking with me our glorious Sunday rides.

But I just can't live with the man I am anymore. I hope you all forgive me.

Dad"

BACK TO PETER HOLDING THE LETTER

A tear goes down his cheek. Peter turns his eyes to the .38 on the kitchen counter. He hesitates for a moment, then grabs it. He goes to the middle of the living room, holding the gun, and sits cross-legged on the floor. He brings the .38 closer to his face, studies it, slowly, turning it on both sides. He slowly caresses the grip then looks at it for a moment. He then runs one finger on the barrel, slowly. He examines the trigger, his finger softly going over it, feeling it.

INSERTS - PETER'S THOUGHTS/MEMORIES

The first time he sees Bonnie, in the elevator. Their first kiss, at the Henry City's Drive-In. The first time they make love, in the showroom. Bonnie's gifts. Peter and Bonnie lying face-to-face, smiling.

BACK TO THE SCENE IN THE HOUSE

Peter thumbs back the hammer, hearing the click. He starts raising it to his head, but stops, and rather brings it toward his chest. He slowly points the gun at the left side of his chest. He breathes more heavily, stares at his finger slipping on the trigger, feeling the hard lever. He starts pressing it.

INSERTS - PETER'S THOUGHTS/MEMORIES

MUSIC: "Theme From 'A Summer Place,'" Percy Faith.

Split-second moments. The sunny sky. His father driving the Starfire, smiling at him. The seagulls flapping wings over Lake Michigan. Peter driving in Henry City, exchanging a smile with Richard. Bonnie's pink lips and smile at the airport.

BACK TO THE SCENE IN THE HOUSE

The rain outside hits the roof with more force and insistence. Peter raises his chin and listens. The rain drops are hitting the roof like nails. His finger on the trigger, he slowly presses the muzzle against his chest. He looks at the .38, his finger on the trigger, tight, ready to pull it hard. He exhales, inhales, then stares at the muzzle pressing against his beating heart, suddenly racing, his chest going up and down fast in his blue hoodie. His pulse gets louder in his ears. He gasps, exhales.

EXT. SERENADE STREET - NIGHT

A limo is parked down the street. Bonnie stands next to it in heavy rain, watching Peter's house, terrified. The chauffeur is holding an umbrella over her and the opened car door. Bonnie gets in the limo, sits on the rear seat. She suddenly looks lost and panicked. The chauffeur closes the door but the woman pushes it back open, and gets out. She makes a few quick steps toward the house, alone. She breathes louder, staring at the house. The rain is dripping from her nose. The chauffeur steps closer with the umbrella but she raises a hand to him. He stops. Her eyes are wide opened, filled with terror. She watches a bird fly from a wire to a tree. Some dogs bark from a distance.

That rainy night seems perfectly quiet and serene. We hear a powerful, loud gunshot coming out from the house. Bonnie widens her eyes in horror, gasps, then steps left, right, pressing her temples. She stares at the house, hesitating to run to it, gasping, struggling to breathe. The chauffeur steps closer but she gestures to leave her alone. She starts crying her heart out, screaming. She falls to her knees. The street looks like a one-inch river with multiple currents converging to and curbing around a storm drain. Bonnie's knees are directly on the pavement, soaking in that superficial river. She curls in a fetal position, sobbing, her head down, grabbing her knees. The chauffeur takes her in his arms. She doesn't react. The chauffeur lifts her and carries her to the limo. He lays her down on the rear seat, shuts the door, then gets in and shuts his. The limo screeches around a corner and disappears. The rain keeps falling.

INT. PETER'S OLD HOUSE - NIGHT

Peter's hand is still holding the gun, but flat against his chest.

FADE TO:

EXT. SERENADE STREET - MORNING

The morning light shining through the clouds. Electric cables between houses dripping water. A small bird drinking water from a puddle on a corrugated steel roof. The neighborhood is quiet.

FADE OUT/IN:

INT. PETER'S TOWNHOUSE BEDROOM - NIGHT

Peter lies in a large bed in his underwear. His doorbell rings. He wakes up, tumbles out of bed, and slides on a bathrobe. He goes to the door and opens. Richard Derreck stands outside in a nice suit, looking Peter in the eye.

RICHARD
Can I come in?

PETER
(confused)
Sure.

Richard steps in, closes the door behind him. Peter looks at the CEO.

PETER (CONT'D)
Why are you here?

RICHARD
Do you mind if we sit down?

Peter shakes his head no and sits on the couch. Richard sits in an armchair, smiling at Peter.

PETER
I don't understand.

Richard doesn't respond and calmly pulls out his smartphone from his jacket. He thumbs it, then puts it on the coffee table. Holograms of Bonnie, Todd, and Nelson in suits appear in Peter's living room.

PETER (CONT'D)
What the hell is this?

RICHARD
It's a special meeting.

Peter looks at Todd's holo appearing over his cabinet of American cars DVDs.

TODD
Hey Peter.

Peter doesn't answer, confused. He looks at Nelson's and Bonnie's holo appearing over his cabinet of American car model kits.

NELSON

Hi.

BONNIE

(worn-out, dead tired)

Hi Peter.

Peter doesn't respond, looking more confused than ever.

RICHARD

(to the holos)

Hi everyone. Thanks for being with us.

Todd, Nelson, and Bonnie nod. Richard nods back at the three of them. Peter looks away, lost in thought.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Peter. Thank you for accepting this virtual meeting without notice, in your own home.

PETER

It's okay. I can't wait to hear what this is all about.

RICHARD

Well, you were never actually fired, Peter.

PETER

What?

RICHARD

Welcome to the CEO contest's moment of truth.

The others stay silent, their eyes on Peter. Richard takes the black, thick "USE" pen lying on the coffee table. He offers it to Peter, who takes it, looks at it, and notices the initials "B.D." marked in gold on the cap.

PETER

Wait a minute. I found this pen in my old house in Flint.

Richard nods, waiting for more.

PETER (CONT'D)

Did Bonnie put it there?

Richard nods; the others in holos, too. Peter shows the pen to everyone, more confident.

PETER (CONT'D)

How could Bonnie have known when I was in that old house? What is this, a camera? Richard, was this all one big test? Were you trying to see if I'd pull the trigger, like my dad?

Richard face lights up, content. Everyone nods. Peter smiles.

RICHARD

Yes. Everything from the firing at the ball game to the handing of your father's gun and letter at the house were meant to make you pull the trigger, Peter.

PETER

(for himself)
The fear form...

RICHARD

That's right. In your fear form, you wrote that you felt abandoned when your father killed himself. So, blocking you on our phones, ignoring you, and Bonnie overly loving you then abruptly walking out on you were meant to make you feel abandoned... and grab the gun.

(A moment. Looking down then at Peter.)

You did pull it, but you fired away. Do you think you still passed the test?

PETER

Yes. Even when I thought I had lost everything, I felt something true and strong for myself and this world. And I could never pull the trigger on that. A CEO will always take the best decisions if he remains rooted in what makes him whole and connected to the world.

Richard smiles broadly. Peter smiles back, proud, glowing, glancing at the others' holos. Richard turns to Bonnie's holo, who looks deadly sad. She inhales and chins up.

RICHARD

Bonnie. Do you think you've succeeded in facing your biggest fear?

BONNIE

Yes.

RICHARD

Why?

BONNIE

Peter, I was terrified for you. I was awake all night. I'm so happy you made it.

PETER

(delighted and moved)

I'm very happy I made it, too, Bonnie.

They smile affectionately to each other.

BONNIE

Richard. To let Peter get closer to me, I've used my courage to show him what makes me vulnerable. I've also worked relentlessly to earn his trust and respect.

(Richard tightens his lips and nods, swept away)

The CEO showing how vulnerable he or she is and how committed he or she is to never-ending improvement is the only way to make a brand number one in the world.

RICHARD

(jerking his head as if he couldn't believe it)

Wow.

Peter exhales, widening his eyes, impressed, too.

BONNIE

Peter. I couldn't have done the Hong Kong pilot without you. You're right, love is the invisible force driving everything. And you were the inspiration.

Peter smiles, glowing with affection.

RICHARD

Todd, Nelson, it's time to vote.

Peter smiles at Bonnie's holo, who smiles back at him.

NELSON
I vote for Bonnie Derreck.

TODD
Me too.

RICHARD
And my vote goes to Bonnie, too.

PETER
And mine.

The group breaks into laughter.

RICHARD
Congratulations, Bonnie. Let's hear
it for the new CEO of USEngines,
Bonnie Derreck.

Richard, Todd, Nelson, and Peter give a vigorous, sustained
applause.

BONNIE
Thank you. Thank you.

Richard waves at Bonnie, Todd, and Nelson, then turns off
their holos. Peter gives him an emotional hug. Richard taps
his shoulder then exits, closing the door behind him. Peter
exhales, still fighting tears.

FADE TO:

INT. BONNIE'S TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT - TIME CUT

Clothes on the floor. A bed. A duvet blanket partially
covering two naked bodies. Bonnie's head over Peter's
shoulder. She watches her hand slowly run across his torso.
Peter watches Bonnie's hand, touched, lost in the moment.

BONNIE
So, are you ready to make "American
Cars" a deluxe edition for high-end
collectors?

PETER
(taken aback)
You want to talk about this now?

BONNIE
Why not?

PETER

"Why not?" I don't want to talk
about work now.

BONNIE

Remember, I'm a workaholic.

Peter smiles and nods in a sarcastic way, then sits in the bed, upset. He stares at her. Her grey eyes, beautiful, stare back at him.

PETER

Do you love me, Bonnie?

She glances down, then looks at him.

BONNIE

(trying to touch his
shoulder)

I like you.

(Peter rises, dodging her
touch)

PETER

You like me.

He picks up his pants on the floor, slides them back on, and does the same with his shirt. Bonnie rolls out of bed wrapping her naked body in the duvet blanket.

BONNIE

I was asked to free fall into my
fear of letting a man get close to
me. I don't know, maybe I got
carried away?

PETER

You knew all along you could never
love me.

(Bonnie stays silent,
staring at Peter)

When Richard asked you to dive head-
first into your fear of falling in
love, you saw the opportunity.

(Bonnie looks Peter right
in the eye, more
respectful)

The opportunity to look vulnerable,
courageous, and inspiring at the
final meeting of the contest... and
rake in all the votes.

Bonnie nods. Peter looks away, drowning in disappointment. He sits on the floor, struggling with grief, and puts his shoes back on. He ties up his laces but misses the knot on the last one. He exhales, does it again, then jumps to his feet.

PETER (CONT'D)
 (tucking his shirt in)
 The only good thing for me here is
 this: you never truly existed.
 (Bonnie seems admiring of
 Peter)
 So, there's actually no one to cry
 over.

Peter heads for the door in silence.

PETER (CONT'D)
 (opening the door, making eye
 contact with her)
 See you in the boardroom.

Bonnie nods. Peter exits. She stands still for a moment, wrapped in her duvet blanket, watching him hurry down her stairs. She shuts the door, returns to her room, picks up her smartphone on the nightstand, and looks at it. An Outlook Inbox window. Dozens of lines of unread emails, bolded. She looks at the one on top, from TIME magazine: "Bonnie Derreck elected first woman CEO of USEngines."

Bonnie exhales, as if relieved of a huge pressure. Wrapped in her duvet blanket, she enters a wide, double-height ceiling living room. She looks at the empty couches and armchairs, the unlit fireplace, and the open velvet curtains framing a distant city skyline. Bonnie drops her duvet blanket on the floor. She steps closer to the window, naked, smiling mischievously.

FADE OUT.

THE END

MUSIC: Interdrive, "Run over you."

<https://interdrive.bandcamp.com/track/run-over-you>

"Come on!/When I see you in my dreams, I turn around, turn around/When I see you on the street, I turn around, turn around/Run over you with my car, run over you with my car..."