

SLACK CITY
"PILOT"

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COLD OPEN

FADE IN:

EXT. STEEL CITY RECORDS - MORNING

JAY (33, a little rough around the edges, but mostly together) approaches a graffitied steel shutter in front of a run down looking store. He pulls a set of keys out his pocket, juggling the large coffee in his hand.

He unlocks the door to Steel City Records and enters.

INT. STEEL CITY RECORDS - CONTINUOUS

Jay strolls in casually and plops his stuff down on the counter. The store is slightly rundown but charming. Stacks of used CDs, vinyl, and video games cram the isles.

Jay locks the door behind him.

CHINESE MAN (O.S.)
(in Cantonese)
Do it, you coward!

Shocked, Jay freezes and looks around the store. Nothing.

ANOTHER CHINESE MAN (O.S.)
(in Cantonese)
Come on!

Jay slowly creeps through the isles towards the voices.

As he rounds a corner, Jay sees two CHINESE BUSINESSMEN (40s) in suits quietly smoking with large wads of money in their hands.

As Jay's about to say something, he notices two CHINESE MEN (30s) sitting on the floor in sweat-stained undershirts. Next to them on the floor is LEE (mid 40s, aging rocker), the sketchy owner of the store. An empty bottle of tequila sits next to him.

LEE
Alright. Alright.

Lee holds up a revolver and puts it to his head.

JAY
Lee! What the hell are you doing?!

Lee stops.

LEE
(startled)
Oh Jay. Uh, I was just showing
these gentlemen our fine
establishment.

JAY
With a revolver and a bottle of
tequila?

LEE
Oh, you know. Just having some fun.

Jay glances to the stone-faced Chinese Businessmen, then back
to Lee.

JAY
Sooo... I have to open the store.

LEE
Isn't it Sunday? Aren't we closed?

JAY
We're not closed on Sundays - and
it's Tuesday.

LEE
Right...
(to the Chinese, in
Cantonese)
Game's over.

CHINESE BUSINESSMAN 1
(in Cantonese)
You owe us!

Jay has no idea what's happening, but the Chinese quickly
gather up and leave.

Jay turns to Lee.

JAY
Were you just playing Russian
roulette with Chinese businessmen?

LEE
Ha! Oh Jay...
(then)
Well, I'll be in my office.

Lee staggers off, leaving Jay bewildered.

ACT ONE

INT. STEEL CITY RECORDS - DAY

Chill, indie-folk music squeaks from the ceiling speakers as a few customers mill about the store.

KEVIN (early 20s, super geeky) carefully arranges retro video games in a precise line.

ALYSSA (early 20s, metalhead) is walking the isles with a price gun. As she halfheartedly tags a record, a SPACED-OUT CUSTOMER (mid 20s) approaches her.

SPACED-OUT CUSTOMER

Uhhh, where's your vinyl section?

Alyssa looks around at the records that surround her then up to the big sign above her that says "VINYL". She stares dead-eyed at the customer.

ALYSSA

We don't have one.

SPACED-OUT CUSTOMER

Oh.

Jay is up at the front counter with BARRETT (mid 20s, über hipster). Barrett is preoccupied with his phone.

JAY

I mean, I understand getting wasted and crashing at the store, but bringing a loaded weapon and Chinese businessmen along is something else entirely.

BARRETT

That's racist.

JAY

But they were Chinese.

BARRETT

It shouldn't matter where they're from.

JAY

It doesn't! I'm just describing them. Look, the point is Lee's stressing me out.

Barrett still hasn't taken his eyes off his phone.

JAY (CONT'D)
What are you on Tinder?

BARRETT
No, that's for desperate people and date rapists. I'm using Hinder. It matches: looks (obviously), likes, and, most importantly, dislikes.

JAY
You want to find someone who hates the same things you do?

BARRETT
That's all I ask for. That, and for them to be, like, really hot.

Lee shuffles onto the sales floor.

LEE
Jay, I'd like to see you in my office.

Jay looks to Barrett, who shrugs. Jay gets up and follows Lee.

INT. LEE'S OFFICE

Lee's office consists of a card table, two fold down chairs, an old filing cabinet, and a several empty beer bottles.

Lee plops down in a chair and gestures for Jay to do the same. Jay sits.

LEE
Listen, Jay. I just wanted to apologize.

JAY
It's okay, Lee. I just don't think playing Russian roulette is cool inside the store... or anywhere really.

LEE
First of all, it was strip Russian roulette. Second, I will never apologize for playing it. It's the sport of kings.

JAY
Strip Russian roulette...? Wait, what are you apologizing for?

Lee gets up and walks over to his filing cabinet. He opens a drawer and pulls a bottle of vodka out. He takes a swig and offers it to Jay, who refuses.

LEE

You know, Jay. The world is a crazy, crazy place. And if you're not careful, it can swallow you up.

JAY

What're you getting at?

LEE

I may have bet the store on a horse race. And lost.

JAY

What?! How could you do that?

LEE

Relax. It'll be fine. It's not a for sure thing yet. I can fix it. Trust me.

JAY

Trust you? This morning I caught you playing strip Russian roulette in the middle of the store!

LEE

Which is a well respected sport in certain circles!

JAY

Insane Chinese businessman circles?

LEE

That's racist.

Jay rolls his eyes.

LEE (CONT'D)

But don't worry. I'll take care of it. And DO NOT tell everyone else. No need to worry them.

JAY

But you felt the need to stress me out?

LEE

I don't want people accusing me of keeping this a secret if things go south.

Jay sighs in frustration.

INT. STEEL CITY RECORDS

Alyssa is with a TEENAGE GIRL customer.

TEENAGE GIRL

Do you have the new Taylor Swift
album?

Jay exits Lee's office nearby.

ALYSSA

Yeah, it's over there.
(gestures toward an isle)
But it sucks.

The Teenage Girl is shocked, and quickly walks away.

JAY

Don't slag the customer's taste in
music.

ALYSSA

But it's so hard not to. What's
going on with Lee?

JAY

Uh. Nothing. He's just, you know,
being Lee.

Jay strolls off towards the counter. Alyssa eyes him
skeptically.

Jay passes by Kevin arguing with a NERDY CUSTOMER in the
gaming section.

NERDY CUSTOMER

I am not paying that kind of money
for a game in such poor condition.
You don't even have the original
packaging.

KEVIN

This is a copy of the unlicensed
Captain Kangaroo's Wacky Rampage.
They only made 5123 copies. 5000 of
which are in Japan. So unless you
plan on traveling there...

JAY

Give it to him for fifty.

KEVIN
Are you crazy?!

JAY
It's been sitting on the shelves
forever. Get rid of it.

Jay leaves Kevin in shock.

Jay arrives at the counter where Barrett is still standing
looking at his phone.

BARRETT
Everything alright?

JAY
Yeah, it's fine.

Barrett eyes Jay skeptically.

JAY (CONT'D)
It is. Besides Lee playing strip
Russian roulette in the store.

BARRETT
Strip Russian roulette? How does
that even work?

Jay shrugs.

BARRETT (CONT'D)
Speaking of stripping. This might
sound weird, but would you mind
having a look at my dick?

JAY
Yes. Yes I would mind.

BARRETT
It's just that it doesn't quite
look right.

JAY
Go to a doctor.

BARRETT
Yeah, but that involves making an
appointment. Then going to that
appointment. It's a lot of work.

JAY

So you're too lazy to check on the health of, at least what you consider to be, the single most important part of your body?

BARRETT

I guess so. So will you look at it?

JAY

No, I'm not looking at your dick.

The Nerdy Customer looks over at Jay in shock. Jay winces in embarrassment.

Suddenly, Lee bursts out of his office carrying a box of his belongings. Without making eye contact with anyone, he bolts out the front door.

Barrett turns to Jay.

BARRETT

So, umm, are you sure everything is okay?

JAY

I'll be right back.

Jay swiftly makes his way to Lee's office, but Alyssa stops him.

ALYSSA

What the hell is going on?

JAY

I'm sure everything is fine.

Jay steps around Alyssa, and quickly enters Lee's office.

Barrett shuffles up to Alyssa.

ALYSSA

We're screwed aren't we?

BARRETT

Probably.

Alyssa sighs.

INT. LEE'S OFFICE

Jay surveys Lee's office. It's even emptier than before.

He opens up all the drawers in Lee's cabinet. All empty. Jay slams them shut in frustration.

Barrett slips into the office.

BARRETT

What did he do this time? Can't be worse than when he tried to convince the government we were a non profit by giving used CDs to the homeless.

(then)

Those hobos really did not like Billy Joel.

JAY

Lee bet the store on a horse race.

BARRETT

That's still a thing? Anyway, while we're in private, could you just take a peek at my dick? Please?

JAY

Seriously? You're about to lose your job and you're concerned about your penis?

BARRETT

Wouldn't you be? Come on, man. I'm actually concerned.

Jay sighs then nods.

Barrett unzips his pants. At first Jay recoils, but then he gets a look at it.

JAY

Actually that doesn't look good. You should probably see a doctor.

BARRETT

(crushed)

Really?

Jay nods solemnly.

BARRETT (CONT'D)

Oh my god.

JAY

We should get back on the floor.

Jay exits Lee's office. Barrett sluggishly follows.

INT. STEEL CITY RECORDS - CONTINUOUS

Jay comes onto the floor where Alyssa and Kevin are waiting. Barrett also walks onto the floor looking thoroughly depressed.

JAY

So, I have bad news.

Alyssa motions to the front door. Standing there are TWO GOONS (30s), and KOWALSKI (40s, greasy, but nicely dressed).

KOWALSKI

Hello, my friend. I am Kowalski: the new owner of this establishment. I am very excited about this new business venture.

JAY

Wish I could say the same.

KOWALSKI

I understand. But I am a fair man. I will give you until the end of the week to get the hell out of my store. See you in a few days!

One of the Goons knocks over a rack of CDs.

KOWALSKI (CONT'D)

(to Goon)

What did you do that for?

The Goon shrugs.

KOWALSKI (CONT'D)

(to the staff)

So rude. Sorry about that.

Kowalski and the Goons split, leaving Jay and the rest of the employees in shock.

BARRETT

My poor penis.

Alyssa looks to Barrett with confusion and disgust.