

MORE TROUBLE THAN SHE'S WORTH

Written by

Stephen Schuyler

EXT. BILLBOARD IN A TALL GRASS FIELD - MORNING

It's summer in rural North Dakota, and a bespectacled indy-rocker named MAG RAMIREZ (19, Latina) is sitting on the ledge of a billboard for diamond engagement rings.

She lights TWO CIGARETTES as SUZ (19), straight out of an American Eagle ad, climbs the ladder and sits beside her.

SUZ

What's the scoop Magoo?

MAG

Got my own personal paparazzi.

Suz squints toward the field below, where ERNIE GUTIERREZ (18, Latino) is staring into the viewfinder of a HASSELBLAD 500C. Wild-haired with thrift store clothes, anyone else would look like a hipster, but he just looks nerdy.

SUZ

Is that Ernie Gutierrez?

MAG

One and the same.

SUZ

My brother used to beat his ass in high school.

MAG

Everybody's brother used to beat his ass in high school.

(then)

Shouldn't you be halfway to Michigan?

SUZ

After my dad gets off. Then, it's five fun-filled days of academic orientation. Ugh, kill me--

MAG

I'm late.

SUZ

How late's late?

MAG

Late enough to lose sleep.

SUZ

I thought you were all abstinence-
only since you and Donnie went
splitsville.

Mag takes a drag and shrugs.

MAG

Yeah, well...

INT. DONNIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Mag's straddles DONNIE (21), ripped with a military crewcut
and dog tags, kissing him.

MAG

This doesn't mean we're getting
back together.

DONNIE

I don't care.

She pushes him back and pulls off her shirt.

EXT. BILLBOARD IN A TALL GRASS FIELD - MORNING

They're still smoking on the ledge.

MAG

I am the seething wound of regret.

SUZ

Let's call it a momentary lapse of
judgement.

MAG

Or a pity fuck.

SUZ

For who?

MAG

Jury's still out on that.

POV-CAMERA VIEWFINDER: a beautifully framed shot of Mag and
Suz sitting on the billboard comes in and out of focus. Suz
flips us off. The shutter snaps to BLACK...

And we're right back with them on the ledge.

SUZ

What do you think he does with all those pictures? Probably jerks off to them or something.

MAG

Can we keep focused on me for a minute? I'm kind of going through something major.

Suz huffs.

SUZ

Look, I know you're used to running like a German train schedule, but here in the real world, the rest of us expect a little fluctuation with our month-to-month. Besides, if you're really worried take a test.

(shouting to Ernie)

Hey, you! Yeah you, fuck-face.

MAG

Could you not..?

Mag hangs her head as Ernie stands and gives a meek wave.

SUZ

You better delete those photos or my brother's gonna beat your ass.

ERNIE

(quiet)

It's film.

SUZ

What'd you say?

ERNIE

(louder)

I said, it's film. They don't delete.

SUZ

That's it...

Suz dramatically pulls out her cell phone.

SUZ (CONT'D)

You better be gone when he gets here.

Ernie runs to his moped, hops on, and takes off, trailing a cloud of WHITE EXHAUST SMOKE in his wake.

MAG
You're such a bitch.

SUZ
Little stalker gives me the creeps.

MAG
He's harmless.

SUZ
That's how it starts. Today, it's pictures. Tomorrow, you're chained up in a basement somewhere.

MAG
You're ridiculous.

SUZ
It puts the lotion on it's skin...

Mag playfully shoves Suz.

SUZ (CONT'D)
(laughing)
...or else it gets the hose again.

Mag stands up.

MAG
I've got work.

SUZ
Whatever.

Suz waves and blows her a kiss. Mag climbs down.

BEGIN TITLE SEQUENCE

EXT. FARM LINED RURAL ROAD - DAY

Mag rides her OLD MOUNTAIN BIKE in the middle of the lane.

A car crosses the double yellows, HONKING as it passes. Another. And a third. All blaring their horns.

THIRD DRIVER (O.S.)
Get off the road!

But she continues, undeterred.

END TITLE SEQUENCE

INT. SIP 'N' GO - DAY

At the register, JASON (27) is doing rudiments on a DRUM PAD.

BING: Mag enters, burning heel for the back room.

JASON
You're late.

MAG
I know.

JASON
That's two points.

MAG
I said, I know.

LATER

Jason's twirling a drum stick in one hand and counting a CUSTOMER'S change with the other. Mag walks up beside him.

JASON
Hold it there, Mags-a-million,
you're on restocks.

MAG
I did them yesterday.

JASON
And now you're doing them again.

MAG
That's not fair.

JASON
Start a union.

She huffs and grabs the restock bin.

LATER

Restocking air fresheners, Mag stares out the window at...

EXT. SIP 'N' GO - DAY

An OVERWORKED MOTHER takes a moment alone in the car as her TWO UNRULY BOYS wrestle nearby.

INT. SIP 'N' GO - DAY

Jason pounds on the drum pad, Iron Maiden's RUN TO THE HILLS.

JASON
(singing)
*Riding through dust clouds and
barren wastes... Galloping hard on
the plains... Chasing the redskins
back to their holes... Fighting
them at their own game...*

The entire counter becomes his drum kit, toppling displays.

JASON (CONT'D)
*Murder for freedom the stab in the
back... Women and children are
cowards attack...*

Mag schlepps the restock bin back to the counter.

JASON (CONT'D)
*Run to the hillllllls. Run for your
liiiiives....*

She slams the bin down. Jason pulls out an earbud.

JASON (CONT'D)
When you bringing out your axe?

MAG
Don't call it an axe--

But Jason shoves a finger to her lips, staring outside.

JASON
Shhh.

Mag smacks his hand away. He hops the counter and stares out the window at...

EXT. SIP 'N' GO - DAY

A SKATER KID (16), in an oversized hoodie, heading their way.

INT. SIP 'N' GO - DAY

JASON
(whisper)
Nemesis.

Jason pulls off his work shirt, a MOTORHEAD shirt underneath, and tosses it to Mag, who dodges it like the plague.

JASON (CONT'D)
Be cool, honey bunny. Just be cool.

CUT TO:

BING: the skater kid enters, heading for the back.

Jason pretends to read a magazine while watching the skater kid in a SECURITY MIRROR.

MAG
He knows who you are, retard.

JASON
Shh, you're gonna blow my cover.

Mag slumps forward on the counter.

The skater kid, sweatshirt bulging with stolen goods, heads for the door. But Jason steps out, blocking him.

The skater kid stops. Steps left. Jason matches. He steps right. Blocked again. They freeze, eyes locked, a stand off.

The skater kid throws a SPINNER RACK at Jason and hauls ass out the door.

JASON (CONT'D)
Watch the store!

And Jason takes off, in hot pursuit. Mag watches as...

EXT. SIP 'N' GO - DAY

Jason chases the skater kid down the road, screaming at him.

INT. SIP 'N' GO - DAY

An idea hits her like a thunderclap. Now or never.

QUICK SHOTS:

-Mag locks the doors and tapes up a sign: BACK IN 5.

-She grabs a SMALL BOX from the shelf.

-A door slams shut: EMPLOYEES ONLY.

INT. EMPLOYEE BATHROOM - SIP 'N' GO - DAY

The box has a smiling blonde woman under big bold text: RIGHT TIME PREGNANCY TEST. Mag rips off the shrink wrap.

Pants around her ankles, she hovers over the toilet, bracing herself on the wall as she struggles to use the stick.

CUT TO:

The stick rests on the edge of the sink, her CELL PHONE counting down beside it as Mag paces, chewing her thumb.

KNOCK-KNOCK-KNOCK

JASON (O.S.)

Mag?

MAG

Yeah... Be right--

BEEP-BEEP-BEEP, the ALARM on her phone goes off.

MAG (CONT'D)

Fuck.

Mag fumbles with the phone almost drops it in the toilet.

JASON (O.S.)

Are you alright?

MAG

A little privacy, please!

She hops up and down shaking her arms, psyching herself up.

MAG (CONT'D)

You can do this. Just pick it up.
Just pick up the fucking stick.

She grabs the stick and there it is a BIG PINK PLUS.

MAG (CONT'D)

Son of a bitch.