

SCREENPLAY EXCERPTS - Laurie Lamson

GUITAR MAN

Dramatic adaptation of the life and book of activist/musician Buzzy Martin. The film has earned 19 awards including two for the screenplay.

INT. SAN QUENTIN THIRD CHECK IN AREA - NIGHT

A new Buzzy - tan, relaxed, radiating joy - arrives at the third San Quentin check in with Officer Henry.

OFFICER HENRY

You better turn it down, Son. You're too damned happy to come in here.

BUZZY

I'm just glad to be back, Officer Henry. How have you been?

Officer Henry smiles cryptically as he pushes the P.A. button. He speaks in to the microphone:

OFFICER HENRY

The Guitar Man is back in town. You heard right. Music class in 10 minutes.

INT. SAN QUENTIN PRISON HALLWAY - NIGHT

Buzzy walks down the hall toward the classroom.

Shouts echo through the hall. Inmates push their foreheads against the wall in the tight hallway.

OFFICER SOLOMON (O.S.)

ESCORT!

Officer Solomon and hardass female Officer La Verne escort a young guy in an orange jumpsuit down the hall.

It's Keaton. Buzzy has a vertigo reaction as their eyes meet.

Keaton recognizes Buzzy and quickly drops his head in shame.

In an instinctive burst of paternal energy, Buzzy grabs Keaton by the arms and tries to pull him away from the officers.

Officer La Verne struggles with Buzzy - but he won't let go.

OFFICER SOLOMON (CONT'D)

Buzzy! Come on now!

Officer La Verne is about to beat Buzzy off with her stick when Officer Solomon forcefully pushes him against the wall.

OFFICER SOLOMON (CONT'D)

You gotta chill out, Guitar Man!

Officer La Verne pulls despairing Keaton down the hall.

OFFICER LA VERNE

Escort!!

Buzzy tries to follow them but Officer Solomon blocks him with a piercing warning look into Buzzy's eyes.

OFFICER SOLOMON

Go teach your class.

Officer La Verne's shouts of 'ESCORT' fade away as they disappear down the hall. The inmates pull away from the wall, and carry on.

Some of the inmates stare curiously - Buzzy looks devastated.

INT. PRISON WARDEN'S OFFICE DOOR - NIGHT

Buzzy bursts in the Warden's office, startling the Warden. He is desperate, enraged, with tears in his eyes:

BUZZY

I just saw one of my kids from school being brought in. What the hell is he doing here?!

WARDEN BRONTË

He must have done something wrong.

BUZZY

He's a good kid who had a bad start, but he's trying to change his future.

Cool as a cucumber, Warden Brontë raises a doubtful eyebrow.

WARDEN BRONTË

What do you expect me to do?

BUZZY

He's only seventeen - move him to Juvenile Hall!

WARDEN BRONTË

If you saw him here, he's already in the system-

BUZZY
Can't you help him get out of here?

WARDEN BRONTË
Break the law, you pay the price.

BUZZY
Please, please...

Buzzy notices the picture on Warden Brontë's desk of a TEENAGED GIRL. Buzzy points at it, pleading with his eyes.

BUZZY (CONT'D)
He's someone's seventeen year-old child. Isn't there something you can do?! You're the warden of this prison!

Warden Brontë shakes his head, 'No'.

BUZZY (CONT'D)
Has anyone ever stopped to ask whether all this punishment even works? Does it make anything better?

WARDEN BRONTË
It's what people want and expect. And besides that, it's pretty profitable. That's the way it works and neither you nor I can change it.

Buzzy stares into Warden Brontë's unflinching, uncaring face.

WARDEN BRONTË (CONT'D)
How do you know he doesn't want to be here? You said so yourself-

Irate and bitterly frustrated, Buzzy exits.

ABCD

Historical comedy drama inspired by true story
1923, before the modern brassiere was invented

INT. NATIONAL CITY BANK - DAY

Seated stiffly in a small bank office, Jeanette is dressed in a high collar and hat. Max squeezes her gloved hand.

JEANETTE

I can't believe we're here.

A BANKER enters and sits behind the desk.

NATIONAL CITY BANKER

We have analyzed your fitness for a business loan using the three "C's."

NATIONAL CITY BANKER (CONT'D)

The first "C" is capacity. We find your business proposal is relatively sound.

Max gives Jeanette a positive "I told you so" grin and nod.

NATIONAL CITY BANKER (CONT'D)

The next "C" is capital. Your family home has an estimated value more than double the loan you requested.

Jeanette and Max smile at the Banker with eager anticipation.

NATIONAL CITY BANKER (CONT'D)

Our concern is the third "C", character.

He shakes his head sadly and speaks as if pains him.

NATIONAL CITY BANKER (CONT'D)

An unmarried woman, forgive me for saying this, especially at her age.

MAX

What do you mean? Spit it out, man.

NATIONAL CITY BANKER

Ahem, from the bank's perspective, the facts don't exactly vouch for her character. They don't indicate...
(whisper)
... morality.

Jeanette blushes with embarrassment and Max jerks in his seat. To contain his anger, Max takes his time looking at her, then the banker. Back at Jeanette. He leans toward the banker.

MAX

But she's engaged. I mean, we are.

NATIONAL CITY BANKER

(to Jeanette)

Is that so?

MAX

Of course. Right, darling?

Jeanette just stares at Max in shock.

NATIONAL CITY BANKER

Allow me to speak with my supervisor.

He rises and walks away.

JEANETTE

What? Why?

MAX

(joking)

Is that a "Yes?"

JEANETTE

(whispering)

You can't be serious.

The banker returns carrying paperwork with a relieved smile.

NATIONAL CITY BANKER

National City Bank has decided to grant you a five-year loan.

JEANETTE

What about my house?

NATIONAL CITY BANKER

It's your collateral. If you default on the payments, the bank takes possession.

He hands Max the loan terms.

MAX

Twenty a month. This is reasonable.

JEANETTE

(whispering)

I haven't even tried yet.

MAX
Dresses sell for at least thirty a
pop, right?

JEANETTE
(nodding)
But who knows if we'll-

MAX
Shh. You need the loan to get started
and find out. You will be a success.

EXT. NATIONAL CITY BANK - DAY

As Max and Jeanette exit the bank, she grabs his arm.

JEANETTE
What was that show you put on?

MAX
It worked, didn't it?

Amused now, she smiles and nods.

OFFSTAGE SECRETS

psychological suspense drama

1960s, when celebrities could keep their secrets hidden

INT. FORTUNE APT. - LIVING ROOM - DAY

In the living room, Joyce carries in two glasses of iced tea. Terry braces himself before speaking.

TERRY

We're not getting married yet.

With pursed lips, Joyce hands him one of the glasses.

TERRY (CONT'D)

I know how much you want this for me, and I love her. She's just not ready. I'm so sorry. I tried-

JOYCE

I told you I'd accept a foreigner. She's beautiful and charming. What's the problem?

TERRY

Mama, please. I said "yet." Give us some more time.

JOYCE

What exactly did you say? It's inconceivable she turned you down.

TERRY

Only for the time being.

JOYCE

She's not getting any younger.

TERRY

What's all the rush, really?

JOYCE

You know.

TERRY

You can't die happy-? You never admit it, but you're still young-

JOYCE

You fool.

(MORE)

JOYCE (CONT'D)

Don't you realize, the longer you wait, and put it off, and put it off, the more rumors-

TERRY

What rumors?

JOYCE

Are you going to make me say it? Dark hints, sordid whispers. Of course I know it's all lies, but once the public starts to believe-

She shudders in horror and her glass of iced tea spills.

JOYCE (CONT'D)

Now look what you made me do!

He runs in to the kitchen and returns with a wet cloth. He drops to his knees and scrubs at the spill on the carpet.

JOYCE (CONT'D)

Don't bother. It's going to leave a stain. Just like the permanent blot on your reputation if you don't-

TERRY

No, look, it's coming out.

JOYCE

Propose, today, and we'll never need to speak of this again.

TERRY

I told you, I did!

JOYCE

Apparently, you weren't very convincing.

Seeing his helpless distressed look, she goes to him and sympathetically caresses his back.

JOYCE (CONT'D)

Trust me, every woman wants to be married. Especially to you! Do it right. Go down on one knee.

TERRY

Okay.

JOYCE

That's my boy.

She tickles his arm and gets a smile out of him.

JOYCE (CONT'D)

I'm going to get something special
for dinner, to celebrate. Lobster!

She grabs her purse and goes out the front door.