

THE WALLET
Episode 2:
SKATER

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. PARK, PUBLIC POOL AREA - DAY

Soothing BIRD CALLS mingle with distant TRAFFIC NOISE.

Early morning joggers pound the sidewalk past the pool.

JAY CROCKFORD, 15, clad in T-shirt and shorts, hangs his lanky frame on the storm fence and talks through it.

JAY

I think I'm growing up too fast.

On the other side of the fence, DARIA, The Lifeguard, stacks life jackets. Cute? Sure, but if you're drowning, no matter who you are, she can and will pull you out.

DARIA

Jay, you're what? Fifteen?

JAY

I know. Right? Already fifteen and I'm never going to get another chance like this until I retire.

She tosses the last jacket on the pile.

DARIA

So you're just going to blow summer sitting around doing nothing.

JAY

Really? From someone who sits in a chair all day and --

Jay sees her nostrils flare and hands clench.

DARIA

Go ahead. Say "does nothing."

JAY

I'm just saying, thinking is not nothing. Come on, you're sitting there. You think about stuff, right?

DARIA

Well, okay. So once in a while I drift off and think about, like, what I'm going to major in. But I'm still doing my job.

JAY

So, do you have one? A major?

DARIA

When I had my first aid training, I thought about medicine, but that's way more than first aid and I hate hospitals anyway. After that, I just went through the usual law, business, accounting, engineering stuff guidance counselors throw at you. And then --

JAY

So, you still don't have a major.

DARIA

No. But what's that got to do with --

JAY

The more you can think about it, the faster you'll think of one. And, you could think about it more if you weren't working. Which is why I'm not working, so I can, ya know, think.

INT. JAY'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

Jay sits at the dinner table with MOM and DAD, both in their late thirties.

MOM

Thinking. You spent the day thinking.

DAD

I hope you were thinking about how to get your college money.

JAY

I'll pencil it in for tomorrow's agenda.

MOM

Better yet, pencil in Stan.

JAY

That guy from your birthday party? Stan, Stan, the --.

DAD

-- bakin' man. Yeah, he's a little wack, but he'll pay you cash for sweeping up and stuff.

JAY

What kind of stuff?

PRELAP: GIRR-GIRR-GIRR skateboard rolling on pavement.

EXT. SIDEWALK, NEAR BAKERY - DAY

Jay skateboards toward a bakery a couple blocks away.
 KRICK-WHOOSH...he nosedives...CRACK! Onto the concrete.
 Jay sits up and shakes it off. He sees what tripped him.
 A man's battered yet stylish leather wallet.

JAY

What the...

He grabs it. Looks kind of retro cool.
 Jay opens it. Empty. Not even an ID.
 He stands, pockets it, and rolls on.

INT. BAKERY, SHIPPING DOCK - DAY

Heavenly particles of fresh baked bread and donuts swirl in
 the air wafted by trucks backing up and pulling out.

Jay watches drivers load trays of baked goods while bakers
 haul away empty trays. Everyone rushes, and sweats, a lot.

STAN, forties, clad in white baker's attire, rushes up.

STAN

Stan, Stan, the bakin' man.

Holds out his hand.

STAN

That's me. Glad to meet cha'. Your
 Crockford's kid, right?

Jay's grip does not match Stan's enthusiasm.

JAY

Jay. Yeah. He said --

An EXASPERATED VOICE yells from inside the bakery.

EXASPERATED VOICE (O.S.)

Stan! Number four! It's overheating!

STAN

Shut it down.

EXASPERATED VOICE (O.S.)

What about the --

STAN
 Just shut it down!
 (to Jay)
 What are you gonna do, eh? Rather
 sit on my ass dreaming up the next
 Moon Pie, but I gotta bake, right?

JAY
 So, yeah, the job. My dad said there
 was sweeping and other stuff...?

STAN
 Move the goods to the dock. Stack
 trays. Always something. But you
 gotta pay attention or --

EXASPERATED VOICE (O.S.)
 Stan! It's not shutting down!

STAN
 (yells back)
 Did you press both red buttons?
 (to Jay)
 Where was I? Pay attention or this
 is what happens.

Stan shows a long scar on his left wrist. Jay winces.

EXASPERATED VOICE (O.S.)
 Still not shutting down!

STAN
 Okay! Okay! I'm coming.
 (to Jay)
 Gotta go kid.

Stan hustles into the bakery. Jay yells after him.

JAY
 So, do I have the job, or what?

INT. JAY'S HOUSE, FOYER - NIGHT

Jay gingerly shuts the door behind him and leans his
 skateboard against a wall. MOM and DAD yell from the kitchen.

MOM (O.S.)
 Jay, honey. You missed dinner.

DAD (O.S.)
 You weren't late to the bakery too?

Jay hears his PARENT'S FOOTSTEPS.

JAY
 No. I, ah...

Flustered, he searches the ceiling, walls, and floor for what he can possibly say.

JAY
...I got there okay.

PLING! Jay feels the wallet in his pocket tingle and swell. He pulls it out just as his parents enter.

DAD
So, how'd it go?

Jay opens the wallet and unfurls its wad of cash.

DAD
That's mah boy. Already earning.

MOM
I knew you could. My little boy. All grown up and working.

Jay, stunned into silence, can only grin weakly.

DAD
Guess we can cut a workin' man a little slack, eh?

Triumphant, they usher him back to the kitchen.

EXT. SIDEWALK, NEAR BAKERY - DAY

Jay skateboards toward the bakery a couple blocks up.

Daria, in cut-offs over her certified red swimsuit, comes up a cross street that leads to the pool.

Jay stops and checks the wallet. Empty.

Daria peeks over his shoulder.

DARIA
Lose that rubber?

JAY
WHAAA!

Daria pretends to hide her smirk.

JAY
Fun-ny.

DARIA
Pay attention.

JAY

You don't happen to know Stan the
bake...? Never mind.

Daria heads toward the pool. Jay's gaze follows her.

He shakes his head and peers down the street at the bakery.
Looks towards the pool. Back and forth.

Jay swivels his skateboard onto Daria's path and rolls.

EXT. OUTDOOR PUBLIC POOL, GATE - DAY

Jay watches Daria fiddle with the lock and key.

JAY

Settle on a major yet?

DARIA

What? Oh, yeah. Thought about chemical
engineering, which led to math and
then computer science. That got me
onto Asian languages. Then I thought,
why not English or Comp Lit. Then I
deadended. So, no. But I'll have
time today. Shouldn't be too hot. No
heat. No swimmers.

Jay taps his phone to get the weather prediction and shows
her that the high will be 92 degrees.

DARIA

Low ninties? Nah. See that line of
clouds? Wind out of the southwest
five to ten. Maybe mid seventies.

Daria opens the gate. Jay follows her. She blocks him.

DARIA

You can come in, as long as you keep
your clothes on.

JAY

Bet you say that to all --

DARIA

-- Please don't start that.

He follows her toward...

INT. OUTDOOR PUBLIC POOL, SHOWER BUILDING - DAY

Light blue painted concrete. Steel door swings open. Daria
leads Jay in. Their voices ECHO as they pass the tile and
glass showers.

DARIA

If anybody asks, tell them you're here to inspect, I don't know, something.

JAY

Ah, so you think I look old enough to pull that off.

DARIA

No. You're right. Better find you something to do...Ah. Here we go.

Daria hands Jay a pair of cleaning mitts. She points to the shower doors.

DARIA

Get the scum off these.

Jay dons the mitts and does wax-on, wax-off moves.

DARIA

You're pretty good at that.

JAY

Finally, my karate lessons pay off.

Daria exits.

Jay pulls off the mitts and checks the wallet. Empty. He pulls the mitts back on.

EXT. OUTDOOR PUBLIC POOL, LIFEGUARD CHAIR - DAY

SPLASHES and BURBLES blend with the GIGGLES and SQUEALS of kids playing like kids while tweens play at being teenagers and teenagers play at being flirting adults.

Daria, with sunglasses perched on her zinc oxidized nose, scans them all from her high umbrella shaded chair.

Jay approaches, mitts in hand.

DARIA

(whistles at kid)

TWEET! Hey, no running!

(to Jay)

Done?

JAY

No scum can stand me...up to me.

DARIA

Awe-some. I got more for you.

JAY

Quick question. If you interviewed for a job, but you weren't sure you got it, but your parents thought you got it because they saw you holding...

DARIA

Holding what?

JAY

Never mind. The point is --

DARIA

-- Tell them.

(whistles at same kid)

TWEET! TWEET!. Next time? You are out. Yeah you, in the yellow baggies.

(to Jay)

Just tell them you didn't get the job and move on.

JAY

They'll be

(air quotes)

disappointed in me.

DARIA

How disappointed could they be?

There's other jobs, you know.

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

Jay rolls along, dodges traffic, and debates with himself.

JAY

How disappointed could they be? Did she ever have parents?

He waits for WHOOSHING TRAFFIC to subside.

JAY

Even if I work at the bakery...

A LITTLE KID rolls up on her bike. She stares, a little scared of the blathering stranger.

Jay makes a show of pulling out his phone and putting his earbuds in to pretend he's talking to someone else.

JAY

Even if I work there, who knows when I'll get paid or how much?

Jay turns away to show the kid the talk is private.

JAY

What if it's not the same amount as last night? Then what do I tell them?

A lull in the traffic flow. Jay lets the kid take off.

JAY

I gotta tell them.

Jay rolls across the street toward his house.

JAY

I'm going to tell them.

EXT. JAY'S HOUSE, WALKWAY - DAY

Jay pops up his board, walks to the front door, and pauses.

JAY

I'm going to tell them.

PLING! He feels the tingle of the wallet in his pocket.

Jay pulls out the wallet and opens it. Bingo! Cash.

JAY

Or, maybe...

EXT. OUTDOOR PUBLIC POOL, POOLSIDE - DAY

VRR-VRR-VRR...a distant lawn mower.

Disapproving Daria stares down Jay, a few feet away, his guilty gaze fixed on the push broom he's holding.

DARIA

So you didn't tell them.

VRRR-RRR-RRR...louder, the mower crests a low rise. Its earmuffed driver steers right for the pool.

JAY

Not exactly. No.

VRRR-RRR-RRR...The mower trundles toward the pool.

JAY

(yells over the noise)
But, there were extenuating circumstances.

Daria and Jay run to fence and yell at the driver.

DARIA

Hey, dumbass! You're gonna --

JAY
Stop! You idiot! Stop!

The mower sweeps along the fence, spews grass clippings through it and onto the pool deck, and trundles on.

DARIA
You son-of-a...Gaaaah!

Jay leans into his push broom and sweeps.

DARIA
Sorry, man. I tell them and I tell them, but it's like...and they wonder why robots take their jobs. By the way...extenuating circumstances?

JAY
Let's talk more about your major.
(off her disapproval)
Okay, fine.

As Jay talks, he sweeps clumps of clippings under the fence and returns to sweep more.

JAY
Let's say I found a wallet.

DARIA
Did you return it?

JAY
No, no. It's a metaphorical wallet.

DARIA
Okay. Metaphor for...?

JAY
A sort of a wallet. Just stay with me on this. The wallet gives me money, but only...

DARIA
Wait gives you money, or has money?

JAY
Money appears in this wallet, this metaphorical wallet, at the end of the day. Enough money to make it look like I got paid for working at the bakery.

DARIA
Every day?

JAY
So far.

DARIA

You sure? Did you try using this metaphorical wallet for other things?

JAY

Hmph. Never thought of that.

DARIA

I gotta get back to the chair.

She gazes at the horizon.

DARIA

Better sweep faster. See that cloud formation? It's headed right for us. Wet grass is a bitch to sweep.

EXT. SKATEBOARD SHOP - DAY

Jay trudges in out of the rain. He pulls down the hood of his rain jacket. A young SALESPERSON rolls up. He perks up. Maybe she goes to his school.

SALESPERSON

Need new trucks? We just got the latest from Krux.

Jay holds up his board.

JAY

I'm thinking of stepping it up. Show me your hottest stuff...boards.

She leads him to the back of the store where, on a rack all by itself, sits the biggest, baddest street cruiser ever.

JAY

Oh bay-bah, bay-bah, bay-bah.

SALESPERSON

Yeah. Sweet.

They both gaze in awe.

SALESPERSON

Three-fifty and it's yours.

Jay nods and smiles like he's got that kind of money. As the saleperson takes down the board, he turns away and pulls out the wallet. So empty.

But, he follows her to the checkout, grimacing and hoping.

She scans the price and rings it up.

Jay opens the wallet and...no dice. He gives her a wan grin.

SALESPERSON

Don't tell me you're saving it for a prom or something. 'Cause that would be so lame.

JAY

Yeah. I mean no. I mean yeah that would be lame. You got something more, uh, mid-range?

Jay scans the price tags of a few other boards. He grabs the next cheapest board.

MONTAGE

- Salesperson rings it up. Jay checks wallet. Nada. Shoots her an apologetic look and...

- ...grabs a decidedly less cool board. While salesperson rings it up, he sees there's still no money in the wallet.

- Jay grabs a cheaper board. Price flashes on the register. He peers in the wallet. Nope. Nothing.

- Even cheaper board. Price on register. Empty wallet.

- Bargain basement board. Price on register. Jay opens the wallet wide and turns it upside down. Nothing comes out.

- With a what-the-hell look, Jay grabs a board even cheaper than his. Price on register. Empty wallet.

- Jay sheepishly grabs one truck and lays it on the counter.

END MONTAGE

SALESPERSON

Sure you don't want a pair.

Jay digs into his pocket and pulls out a few crumpled bills.

JAY

One's fine.

INT. JAY'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jay sits across the table from Mom and Dad. Mom catches him staring at his brand new useless truck.

MOM

Good day at work?

JAY

Work? Oh, yeah. Good. Yeah.

DAD

Look, I know it's not the most glamorous job, but ya gotta start somewhere, right?

Mom slips out of the room.

JAY

Sure. I guess.

Silence. Mom comes back in carrying Mason jar with a few bills in it.

MOM

See? Your hard work is paying off.

DAD

It's more motivating than a number on a screen. We'll put it in the bank eventually.

Jay stares at the jar not sure what to make of it.

DAD

Well?

Jay gets it. Nervous, he pulls the wallet from his pocket. He opens it. Pay day!

Smiles all around as Jay shoves the cash into the jar.

INT. JAY'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jay tosses and turns in a FITFUL DREAM.

INSERT

Jay holds the empty wallet while skateboard salesperson LAUGHS at him. She is joined by others LAUGHING, HOWLING, JEERING. The derisive crowd gets bigger and LOUDER.

The wallet gets grows to the size of an iPad. Then pizza box size. Larger and larger. He can no longer hold it.

He drops it and it keeps getting larger. The JEERING echoes.

The wallet, now the size of an SUV, swallows him up.

Sucked into its dark brown folds until all is black.

EXT. OUTDOOR PUBLIC POOL - DAY

Jay, haggard from lack of sleep, sits leaning against the lifeguard chair frame. Daria sits on the other side.

DARIA

Boy that metaphor got out of control.

Daria gazes at the sky.

JAY

I know. Weird, right?

DARIA

For sure. You hardly ever see altocumulus in uniform puffs.

JAY

Daria.

DARIA

What? If you're not going to tell me what this wallet thing is really about --

JAY

I don't really know what it's about. Why you gotta be so harsh?

DARIA

Truth? I'm a little jealous.

JAY

You think I'm seeing another lifeguard?

DARIA

Ha. No, I mean here you are, a young punk taking a stand against rushing into the whole college career thing. I kind of envy that. Even if you're tragically wrong.

Daria stands and climbs up into her chair.

DARIA

Did you try buying food with it?

JAY

So you were listening.

MONTAGE - IN FAST MOTION

- In a clothing store, Jay lays shirts, pairs of trousers, and jackets on the checkout counter. Register shows \$623.00. Jay checks the wallet. Empty.

- At the pool, Jay gathers up lifejackets.

- At home, Jay pulls money from wallet, puts it in the jar.

- In a hardware store, Jay piles tools on the checkout counter. Register shows \$377.00. Jay checks the wallet. Empty.
- At the pool, Jay scoops leaves out of the pool with a net.
- At home, Jay pulls money from wallet, puts it in the jar.
- In a food store, Jay piles groceries on the checkout counter. Register shows \$109.00. Jay checks the wallet. Empty.
- At the pool, Jay sweeps the deck.
- At home, Jay pulls money from wallet, puts it in the jar.

EXT. JAY'S HOUSE, WALKWAY - DAY

Dad heads toward their car in the driveway. Mom pops her head out and yells to him.

MOM

Don't forget. We need bread.

EXT. OUTDOOR PUBLIC POOL, SHOWER BUILDING - DAY

Jay, with his mitts on, whines to Daria.

JAY

I tried to buying everything. It just doesn't work.

DARIA

Food? Games? Movies?

JAY

Yup.

DARIA

Cars? Motorcycles? Bikes?

JAY

Of course.

DARIA

Clothes? Camping gear? TVs?

JAY

Everything, except porn.

EXT. OUTDOOR PUBLIC POOL, GATE - DAY

Jay holds the gates while Daria inserts the padlock.

JAY

You still got a lot of summer left.

DARIA

Actually, no. They sent me a letter.
I've got until the end of the month.

JAY

Be a philosophy major. You can pivot
from that into anything.
(off her bored look)
Okay. English. That's pretty flexible.

DARIA

I was thinking maybe some other kind
of engineering like electrical --

JAY

-- mechanical, civil --

DARIA

-- Civil. Yeah, that could be outdoors
sometimes. Or maybe urban planning
or architecture. No, wait.
Environmental science. Landscape
architecture. Yeah. I like that.

Jay's parents hurry towards him. They are not happy.

DAD

So this is where you are? What have
you been doing all summer?

MOM

And where did you get the money?

DAD

Stan said you never showed up. Not
once.

JAY

Well I did interview, but he --

DAD

Quiet. Are you dealing? Or stealing?
Or...I don't want to even think --

JAY

You gotta go negative so fast? I
could be running websites or day
trading or --

MOM

Honey, you don't do any of that.

JAY

But I could have.

Uncomfortable stares and silence all around.

DARIA

(to Jay)

Now might be a good time to tell them. Besides, I'm dying to see this metaphorical wallet.

MOM

Metaphorical what?

Jay pulls the wallet from his pocket.

JAY

Here's the truth about the money.

DAD

You stole a wallet? You said --

JAY

Found it. I found it.

Dad snatches it away from him.

DAD

Well you're going to take this back to the owner...

Dad opens the wallet. Sees it is empty. No ID.

DAD

...and pay back everything. Okay, we'll list it online, somewhere.

Jay grabs it back.

JAY

I don't think that's going to work. It's magic, or something.

DAD/MOM/DARIA

Magic?

DAD

Okay, that's it. No more fantasy adventure games.

Dad pulls hard on the wallet.

DAD

Let go, mister.

They struggle with it. Jay let's go suddenly. Dad loses his grip on the wallet. It flies into...

...a large patch of tall weeds.

All four stare at the weeds. Daria, inspired, laughs.

DARIA
Okay. Joke's over.

She puts her arm around Jay's shoulders.

DARIA
This guy's been helping me here.

Jay breaks away. Incredulous, he stares at her until he sees her flash a go-with-it look.

JAY
Yeah. Hah. I was afraid to tell you because, you know, with you and Stan being friends and all...

His Mom, relieved, looks at Jay and Daria.

MOM
So, you've been getting paid here.

JAY
Ah...yeah...

Daria gives him a subtle nod.

EXT. OUTDOOR PUBLIC POOL, LIFEGUARD CHAIR - DAY

Jay, sweating through his T-shirt, scrubs the metalwork on the chair. Daria, a queen on her throne, yells down to him.

DARIA
Yes. You are my bitch.

Jay pauses to grin up at her.

JAY
I get minimum wage, right?

DARIA
Have to...Do you miss it?

JAY
Not really. I'm guessing it wouldn't work now anyway.

Jay looks at the cloud dotted sky.

JAY
Whaddaya think? Rain later?

Daria gazes skyward. Her furrowed brow suddenly smooths out.

DARIA
Meterology!

EXT. OUTDOOR PUBLIC POOL, GATE - DAY

The wallet languishes, hidden in the tall grass.

A DOUR LOSER who looks like life has whipped his ass for forty odd years, snatches the wallet out the grass.

FADE TO BLACK:

DOUR LOSER (O.S.)
What the...?