

THE WALLET
Episode 3:
SONNY'S DEAL

by

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FADE IN:

1 INT. TECH TAVERN - DAY

1

Dim lighting. Remodeled too many times. A no-kids, no-theme, no-birthday-singing, and for gawd sakes no-karoke place.

It's been a long day for you, just another CUSTOMER looking for a bite and a beer.

Worker bees and suits from tech companies YAMMER and LAUGH in beat up booths and around tiny tables.

No place to sit except at the bar next to a WORKING MAN. Could be 50 or a hard fought 40. Not as gray as his chinos and workshirt. Scruffy like Yoda, but not wise or cute, he bloviates at CHUCK, the bartender.

WORKING MAN

I must not know how good I have it
because I'm sure I'd feel better if
I did. Am I right?

Chuck lays a check in front him and moves on. Working Man turns to yell.

WORKING MAN

Come on, Chuck. It's only a burger.
You know I'm good for it.

He sees you.

CUSTOMER (O.S.)

Mind if I sit here?

Did he nod "yes" or "shrug" no? You take a chance and sit. Guess it's okay. You grab a menu from the rack on the bar.

Working man swallows the last sip of his cheap bourbon.

WORKING MAN

Get the fish and chips. They make
the least on that.

Cheez, you just want to eat in peace. But here comes his pushy handshake and deadpan delivery.

SONNY

I'm Sonny, with an "o".

You cave and put down the menu.

CUSTOMER (O.S.)

(you don't care)

So, Sonny, what do you do?

SONNY
I'm done doing. All out of lemons.

CUSTOMER (O.S.)
Lemons?

SONNY
That life gives you lemons, make
lemonade crap? I'm done. Now, I'm
looking for a deal. All the big shots?
They don't work. They make deals.

CUSTOMER (O.S.)
Hear ya, bro. We started a company
to make three D --

SONNY
-- printers? Like in machine shops?

CUSTOMER (O.S.)
Well, yeah, but we mostly sell to --

SONNY
You know people like that?

CUSTOMER (O.S.)
Not exactly. I just --

SONNY
-- cuz maybe they could use a guy.
(off in his dream)
It's been a while. I was pretty good
in shop class. Kind of miss it, ya
know? One more chance at it and I...

Sonny picks up on your unease. Bummed, he stands.

SONNY
Get the fish.

He pushes through the crowd and out into the waning sun.

2 EXT. TECH TAVERN - DAY

2

CUSTOMERS stroll out. Nice sunset. Sonny doesn't see it. Too busy scanning the sidewalk for lost change.

He also doesn't see KATE. About his age, but not so worn down by life, she struts around in her business outfit and hands customers business cards.

Sonny zeroes in on a metallic glint just ahead.

He kicks a foil candy wrapper.

SONNY
Bogus.

But sees something to the side...

...in the grass. Is that a wallet?

Afraid someone else will see it, he hurries to it. He opens it wide. Paws through it. Finds...absolutely nothing.

SONNY
Figures.

He drops it and moves on, but...

...Kate sees the wallet hit the ground. She abandons the gal she's been bugging and rushes toward Sonny.

KATE
Sir? Sir?

She scoops up the wallet and runs after him.

Catching up to Sonny, she thrusts the wallet at him.

KATE
I think this is yours.

Sonny takes the wallet.

KATE
I saw you drop it back there.

SONNY
Yeah, but it's not...

He sees something peeking out of it and takes the wallet.

SONNY
Ah, yeah, thanks.

He turns away for a quick peek. It's a twenty dollar bill. Sonny snaps the wallet closed and shoves it into his pocket.

KATE
Lucky you. The last one.

SONNY
I don't want to take your last --

She shoves her business card at him.

KATE
No problem. Better to get them out there, right? We're reopening.

On it he reads: Tool Town - Professional Grade Machine Tools.

KATE

We stock all the best brands.
Professional grade.

SONNY

I can see from the...Look, I
appreciate the gesture and if it
were any other time --

KATE

Not in the market right now? That's
cool.

She hurries toward the corner.

KATE

(over her shoulder)

Stop by whenever.

Sonny pulls out the wallet and slides in her card. He pulls
out the twenty and turns to call after her.

SONNY

Maybe you should take this back.

But Kate has already rounded the corner.

3 INT. TOOL STORE - DAY

3

Sonny pretends to check out the tools on the racks around
him. He sneaks glances at...

Kate, wearing a tool vest over her workshirt and making it
look good. She finishes ringing out a customer. Register
shows: \$6.39. She frowns at the paltry sale.

Sonny sidles up to the checkout counter. Kate puts on her
game face.

KATE

Welcome to the new Tool Town. I see
you noticed our --

Sonny leans over the counter, maybe a little too far. He
pulls the twenty out, and lays it on the counter.

SONNY

Nice try, but you can have this back.

His belligerent stance makes the offer of free money feel
like a threat. Kate grabs her cellphone. He goes to grab her
arm. She grabs his middle finger, twists it, and pushes.

SONNY

Ah!

He lets go of her arm, twists his body trying to get free, and talks quickly through the pain.

SONNY

Let it go! I just came in to...Please, let go...You slipped the twenty in... in the...in my wallet and I --

KATE

What wallet?

SONNY

Last night. At the...let go, please?

KATE

Last night? Oh...

She releases his finger. Sonny dances around shaking his hand while trying to slow down his breathing.

KATE

Sorry about that.

SONNY

Are you crazy? You slip a twenty in my wallet to get me to come in here, and then you treat me like this? No wonder you don't have any customers.

KATE

Hey, I have plenty of customers. I don't need to pass out bribes. It's a little slow right now is all.

They eye each other as though the other is a nut job and an annoying one at that.

SONNY

So, you're telling me you didn't put the twenty in my wallet so I'd come here, spend the money, and then maybe a little more?

KATE

I don't have cash to throw around like that, bud. And anyway --

SONNY

So it's just charity.

KATE

I just told you I didn't --

SONNY

I don't need your damn money.

That relights her fuse. She leans into his face.

KATE

Mister, all I got left is this store
and what's in it. It was bad enough
being the only woman on the machines.
Then some asshole wrecks my car, my
back, my...screw it.

Slides the bill back at Sonny.

KATE

I'm just told you that so you know I
really mean it when I tell you to
shove this up --

SONNY

Okay, so where'd it come from?

KATE

Don't know. Don't care, but it sure
as sweet Jesus wasn't from me.

SONNY

That wallet was empty when I picked
it up off the...
(catching himself)
off my dresser last night.

Sonny snaps up the twenty and shakes it at her.

SONNY

Money don't come out of nowhere.

He turns away. Kate watches her only customer leave.

KATE

Don't have to tell me.

4 INT. TECH TAVERN - NIGHT

4

Sonny bellies up to the bar, pulls the twenty out, slaps it
on the bar, and yells to Chuck.

SONNY

Beer. Fries...and a burger.

5 INT. TECH TAVERN - LATER

5

Sonny finishes the last fry and sucks down the last of his
beer. He calls to Chuck.

SONNY

Ah, my change?

CHUCK

Let's call it a little interest for
all the times I floated you. Any
more where that came from?

Sonny opens the wallet wide and shows him it's empty.

CHUCK

Not this time, Sonny. Let me see it.

Sonny, annoyed, hands it to him. Chuck turns toward the light
and studies it from a couple of angles.

SONNY

Jeez, Chuck. You think I'm Houdini
or something?

CHUCK

David Copperfield, or Penn and Teller.
Houdini was an escape artist.

SONNY

Excuse me. I'm telling you, it was a
first-taste-is-free scam. From that
chick that was out front last night.

Chuck hands him back the wallet. Sonny takes it.

CHUCK

With the business cards?

SONNY

Yeah, her.

CHUCK

I could use a free taste.

SONNY

Knock yourself out. She owns that
tool store down the street. But I'm
telling you, it's a con. Later.

Sonny heads for the door.

Sonny strolls past the darkened windows. He stops at the
locked door. Something feels weird in his hip pocket. He
squirms to shake off the tingle in his right butt cheek.

He pulls the wallet out of the tingling pocket. Relieved,
Sonny takes a step and halts. He squeezes the wallet. It
looks...thicker. Sonny opens it to find...

SONNY
 That's gotta be three
 hundred...dollars! What the hell?

Sonny's euphoria evaporates.

SONNY
 Ah. Real funny, Chuck.

Irate, he grabs the money and throws the wallet at the door.
 He turns and scurries back towards the tavern.

7 INT. TECH TAVERN - NIGHT

7

Sonny hurries past the last few exiting customers. Chuck,
 beaten down by the day, swabs the bar.

CHUCK
 Sonny, we're closed.

SONNY
 And now you think I'm gonna waltz
 out of here and pass your bogus
 twenties for you.

CHUCK
 You only had one drink, right?

SONNY
 Don't play me, you son-of-a --

CHUCK
 It's been a long day, Sonny. Get out
 of here. Please?

Sonny throws the money on the bar.

SONNY
 Tell me you didn't sneak that into
 that damn wallet.

Chuck forgets he's tired. He grabs a bill and holds it to
 the light. Gets an idea.

CHUCK
 Just messing with ya Sonny. You didn't
 try to spend any of it, did you?

Chuck gingerly, but not too eagerly, gathers the money.

CHUCK
 Cuz, ya know, that would have been
 embarrassing.

SONNY
 Course not. And don't try that again.

Sonny turns to leave. Pauses.

SONNY

And you can tell your little chippie
if she wants me to spend --

CHUCK

(no way)

Sure, get right on that.

SONNY

Fine. I'll tell her myself.

8 INT. TOOL STORE - DAY

8

Kate, unlocking the register, looks up to see...

...Sonny storming right at her.

She reaches under the counter. Sonny halts, expecting her to pull a weapon.

SONNY

Just want to talk. If there's something, ya know, funny going on with Chuck, I don't want to --

Kate pulls out the wallet Sonny tossed last night.

KATE

Take your damn wallet and --

SONNY

What are you doing with that?

KATE

It was laying outside the door. Don't bitch at me if you can't hang on to...Who's Chuck?

SONNY

I get it. You can't talk. That's cool. But I am not taking whatever is in that wallet.

Kate opens the wallet wide and shows him it's empty.

SONNY

Oh no. Not this time. It was empty last night and then...

KATE

Then?

SONNY

Gimme that.

Confused Kate hands him the wallet.

SONNY

There's gotta be some kind of hidden
pocket or button or something.

Sonny opens, twists, and tears at the wallet.

SONNY

What the hell is this made of? You
got any tools?
(off her eye roll)
That I can use?

Kate steps around the counter and grabs him by the arm.

SONNY

Hey, hold on. It's Kate, right? I'm
Sonny. I think we got off to a bad
start. All I need is --

KATE

You want tools? You pay for them.

She hustles him toward the door.

SONNY

I just need a --

Kate shoves him out the door and slams it.

9 EXT. TOOL STORE - DAY

9

The door hits Sonny's ass on the way out. While massaging
away the indignity, he feels a tingle from the wallet. Too
afraid to look, but too curious not to, he pulls it out.

He opens it. Eyes go wide. Stunned, he reaches for the door.

10 INT. TOOL STORE - DAY

10

Dazed, Sonny walks back in.

Kate, on her way back to the checkout, twirls around. Fists
clenched and arms churning, she charges.

KATE

(right fist)

You want a piece a this?
(left)
Or this?

She notices his dizzy expression.

KATE
You all right?

He opens the wallet and shows her hundreds of dollars. You can see her wheels turning while Sonny comes back to earth.

SONNY
And you know what? I don't care where the hell it came from. I don't care if you, Chuck, or whoever put it in there. I'm going to use it this time. This is my chance and nothing is going to stop --

KATE
You gonna buy or talk?

11 INT. TOOL STORE, CHECKOUT COUNTER - DAY

11

Kate counts money into the till while Sonny gently lifts the last few shiny new tools one by one, inspects them, and places them just so into a new toolbox. He shuts the lid with a satisfying CLICK.

KATE
Got everything?

SONNY
Yep. Think so.

Kate hands him a receipt.

KATE
Good machinist probably get by with a tenth of that tackle.

SONNY
You don't know what I'm gonna build.

KATE
So tell me.

SONNY
Long story. Maybe another time.

Sonny grabs the toolbox and carries it toward the door. Kate calls after him.

KATE
At least show me when you're done.

Sonny waves over his shoulder and pushes out. His butt does not get hit by the closing door.

12 INT. TOOL STORE - DAY

12

SUPER: Three Days Later

Sonny trudges toward the counter, a beaten man, carrying what looks like a toaster carelessly wrapped in black plastic. His clothes and hair are dirty, sweaty, and rumpled.

Kate watches from behind the counter.

KATE

Now what?

Sonny drops the wrapped item on the counter.

SONNY

Can't get it to work. Not even one tiny part of it.

KATE

I'll bite. Show it to me.

Sonny pulls the plastic off to reveal a half-built hand-cranked model of a four cylinder engine.

SONNY

Couldn't get it working in high school. Can't get it working now.

Kate studies it from a few angles pokes at parts.

SONNY

All day, all night I worked. Just for something kids in high school probably do all the time.

She applies a caliper to a cylinder.

SONNY

Why the hell did I ever think I could --

KATE

Quiet.

Kate pulls out a micrometer and measures a few more parts. Thinking she's done, Sonny starts up again.

SONNY

Me, a machinist? What the hell was I --

KATE

Shut up.

Sonny watches her tap out numbers on a calculator.

SONNY
If I quit now...but what else can I do. I got nothing left.

KATE
If you don't shut the hell up...

Biting his tongue, he watches Kate sketch on a pad of paper.

Kate finishes her sketch and shows it to him.

SONNY
(not paying attention)
I spent all this time and money and it's a piece of crap.

KATE
You can wuss out, but not on my time.

Kate taps her pencil on the sketch.

KATE
Here. Here. And here. It's a linkage that's binding. Too much friction in the system. All you gotta do is --

SONNY
-- is buy more tools and more junk and screw around until I --

She slams the pad down. It gets his attention.

KATE
You think this stuff is easy for anybody? You can retool the parts. All you need is --

SONNY
It doesn't matter. I'm tapped out.

KATE
It doesn't cost that much to --

SONNY
Really? Not that much? So you wouldn't miss it if I didn't pay right away.

KATE
This ain't no bar.

SONNY
You sure you don't know Chuck?

KATE
Again with Chuck. Even if I did, I still can't afford to --

SONNY
I get it. I get it.

Sonny doesn't even bother wrapping it, he sweeps the half-built device off the counter. He turns and heads to the door.

He pauses in mid-step. He tugs at the wallet in his back pocket. He opens it, smiles at another cash infusion, and turns back toward Kate.

SONNY
How much do you think it'll take?

13 INT. TOOL STORE - DAY

13

SUPER: One Week Later

Sonny strides in, a new man. Same clothes, same hair, both cleaner and not so rumpled. And he's smiling.

His hands cradle the model neatly covered in black plastic. He scans the empty store for Kate.

She's busy checking out a customer and doesn't see Sonny come up to the other end of the counter.

The customer picks up her boxes and heads out. Kate turns and sees Sonny place the cloaked device on the counter.

KATE
Well?

SONNY
Think I got it working.

Sonny slides the plastic off the model engine. Kate studies it from a few angles pushing on parts and nodding. She pulls out a micrometer and measures a few parts.

KATE
Looks good. Want to run it for me?

Hesitant, Sonny grips the hand crank connected with a linkage to the crankshaft. He gives it a quarter turn. The pistons moves a quarter turn. He cranks a full turn. The pistons slide smoothly up and down.

Kate leans over from behind the counter and cranks it. Up, down, and around...faster and faster. Kate keeps cranking.

Sonny beams with pride. She lets it spin to a stop.

KATE
Smooth action. Nice job on the journal bearings.

The model spins slowly to a halt. Sonny frowns.

KATE
What? What now?

SONNY
Now I just feel stupid. Took me what?
A week and half almost nonstop and
this is what I got?

Kate leans further over and looks Sonny in the eye.

KATE
So, how long do you think it should
have taken?

SONNY
I don't know. Couple, two, three
days? How the heck should I know?
I'm not a --

KATE
Machinist? No, you're not. Not yet.
So shut the hell up about how it's
supposed to be. And, if you don't
mind my asking, why'd it take you so
long to get to it?

SONNY
Get to...?

KATE
Learning, to do this stuff.

Pain from the past contorts Sonny's face into a grimace.

SONNY
High school I guess. There was this
shop teacher...kind of a dick. And
the guidance counselor said my math
wasn't good enough. My Dad thought I
was a lost cause anyway.

KATE
What about --

SONNY
Mom didn't want me to get hurt. My
buddies went right into the factory
or yard work or --

KATE
But didn't you ever --

SONNY
-- the army.
(MORE)

SONNY (CONT'D)
Hell, even people I never met before
would tell me there was no way I
could --

KATE

Sonny.
(gets his attention)
Did you ever ask a real machinist if
you could be one?

Sonny blinks, then enlightenment spreads across his face.

SONNY
I...you know...no.

KATE
Well, I am and I'm telling you that
you can. Trust yourself. Pay
attention. Make mistakes. Learn.

14 EXT. TOOL STORE - DAY

14

Sonny, feeling lighter than he's ever felt, carries the model out the door. As he strolls down the street, he giggles a bit, then laughs. The wallet pops up in his back pocket.

He speeds up a little to get started on his new life.

The wallet falls out and slaps onto the concrete.

A teenage girl carrying a gym bag spies it.

She looks around, walks over to it, and picks it up.

FADE TO BLACK:

MALLORY
What the...?