

"Untitled Johnny Knoxville Project"

A Pilot

Story by

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Teleplay by

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Writer's Draft
January 24, 2015

Series Regulars

12-year-old Johnny Knoxville.

Impulsive. Wants to do well, and is smart, but acts before he thinks. Probably a tad ADHD.

Ray Knoxville. Johnny's Dad. (35)

Big personality, loves pranking people. Owns the local tire store. Also has been known to buy and sell merchandise of questionable origin. Tough, but has a soft spot for his only son, Johnny.

Genevieve Knoxville. Johnny's Mom. (35)

Genevieve worries about her son, but also babies him. Sweet, but can be overly dramatic. Pretty and narcissistic.

Audrey Knoxville. Johnny's sister (16)

Bright and studious, Audrey is going places. Impatient with her mom. Challenges her dad. Understands Johnny is always going to get/need more attention from her parents, but sometimes it bugs her.

Big Stevie (early 30s)

Six feet, heavyset, African-American. Good to Johnny, but someone you don't want to mess with. A bit of an outlaw.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt "Jukebox" Johnson Jr. (early 30s) Small, and like everyone who works for Ray, has frequently been in trouble with the law. Wiry, runs hot, the opposite of Big Stevie in looks and temperament.

COLD OPEN

FADE IN:

EXT. KNOXVILLE CITY PARK - DAY - 1977

A Tennessee oak stands in a grassy field on a bright, beautiful day. Suddenly, A FIVE-YEAR-OLD BOY wearing a bike helmet (young Johnny Knoxville), runs full-speed into frame, lowers his head and BAM! slams helmet-first into the tree.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)

When I was a kid, I was a little excitable.

He falls over, motionless. Is he dead? Not yet. He opens his eyes and looks up at the big, blue sky. He lifts his hand, reaching for it.

EXT. KNOXVILLE CITY PARK - DAY - 1981

Chyron: FOUR YEARS LATER

The same tree in the same park, now in the background as families gather for a Fourth of July picnic. The Knoxvilles; Dad, RAY; Mom, GENEVIEVE; fourteen-year-old sister, AUDREY, sit on a blanket as Genevieve sets out food.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)

Having an excitable kid was not easy on my parents.

GENEVIEVE

...deviled eggs, potato salad, my special broccoli casserole for my special-- Where's Momma's little baby? And our picnic umbrella?

ON THE TREE. High up, Johnny, now ten, stands on a branch with the picnic umbrella, which he begins to open.

BACK ON THE KNOXVILLES.

AUDREY

I'm here. I'm kidding. I'm always here.

Genevieve looks for Johnny, doesn't see him, is worried.

GENEVIEVE

Oh, my God. Ray?

RAY

Let's all stay calm, Genevieve.

Behind them (and unseen by the family), Johnny, holding the now open umbrella, drops from the tree. The umbrella immediately snags on a branch and stays put as Johnny sails through the air, spread-eagle and lands with a THUD.

ON JOHNNY. Lying in the dirt, face-down, the wind knocked out of him but otherwise fine. Ray steps into frame, looks down at his son, not upset, he's seen it before.

RAY(CONT'D)

Damn boy, your momma made her special broccoli casserole, and now you're causin' a disruption.

JOHNNY

I... like... that... casserole.

RAY

Sure, everybody does. The crust is made of Cheezits.

Genevieve runs up, panicked.

GENEVIEVE

Oh, my God. Oh, my God.

RAY

Now no one's gettin' special broccoli casserole.

(then)

Boy just got the wind knocked out of him, Genevieve, that's all.

Genevieve dramatically throws herself on the ground, turns Johnny over and cradles his head in her lap.

GENEVIEVE

My baby. You're gonna be fine, sugar. Momma's here. You're okay, you're okay.

(then screaming out)

My baby's dyin'! Call an ambulance!

INT. AMBULANCE - MOMENTS LATER

Lights and siren. In the back, ten-year-old Johnny, feeling fine, lies on a stretcher. Ray sits next to him. WELDON, a heavysset EMT, is nearby.

WELDON

When I was ten I once ate a roofing nail.

(MORE)

WELDON (CONT'D)

Just saw it on the ground, picked it up and ate it. Almost died.

RAY

Good story.

(to Johnny)

Don't do that. You feeling all right?

JOHNNY

Yes, sir.

RAY

Listen, Weldon, a hospital's a little out of our budget, and since we're driving through our neighborhood--

WELDON

Can't let you out, Ray. We used to let folks out, then they started taking advantage, using us like a free taxi that can go through red lights.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)

My dad could get a little excitable, too.

Ray winks to Johnny, who acknowledges with a small nod. In that instant there's a connection we haven't seen before; two pranksters, the master and the student, about to strike. Ray grabs defibrillator paddles and moves toward Weldon.

RAY

I wonder what these shocky things would feel like on a man's hindquarters.

JOHNNY

Jeez, Dad, I think you're only supposed to use those on dead people. But let's find out.

RAY

Let's find out!

WELDON

Ray, put those down.

RAY

Come on, Weldon, it might not hurt.

JOHNNY
It might not hurt.

WELDON
Ray... Ray!

Ray lunges at Weldon, who screams.

WELDON (CONT'D)
Ahhhhh!

Ray pulls back, laughing, as does Johnny.

RAY
I'm not gonna zap you, Weldon.
(to Johnny)
Boy, you see his face?
(imitating Weldon)
Ahhh, ahhhh--

ZAP! Ray, still holding the defibrillator paddles, has accidentally discharged them into his lap. He flies off his stool into a wall of medical supplies, then slides to the floor, dragging everything with him.

EXT. CITY STREET - SAME - DAY

The ambulance turns off its lights and siren, pulls over. The rear doors open.

WELDON (O.S.)
Just go.

Johnny helps a sore Ray out of the ambulance. The doors slam shut and the ambulance pulls away. Ray and Johnny walk down the street, Ray a little stiffly.

JOHNNY
That was great.

RAY
Don't tell your momma.

END OF COLD OPEN

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. SCHOOL YARD - DAY - 1983

Chyron: TWO YEARS LATER

Two twelve-year-old boys are faced off, about to fight. A small semi-circle of kids is gathered around them.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)
By the time I was twelve, I was
full of ideas...

Twelve-year-old Johnny steps through the crowd and speaks to the squared-off boys.

JOHNNY
Whoa, whoa. Don't fight. There's
a more mature way to settle your
differences.

INT. SCHOOL BOY'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The kid semi-circle is now huddled in the bathroom, waiting.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)
...Like finding creative ways to
resolve conflict.

Johnny calls through the doors of the closed stalls.

JOHNNY
You guys ready?

The two boys we saw squared-off emerge, one from each stall.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)
You both took off your underpants,
right? Don't make me check.

They nod.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)
All right, rules are simple. Zip
and unzip your pants as fast as you
can. Whoever does it the most in
thirty seconds, wins. Go!

The boys start furiously zipping and unzipping their jeans. One of them immediately goes down in pain. As he does, Johnny's teacher, Mr. Flint, (forty, strict, thinks he's cool) walks in.

MR. FLINT

What is God's name is going on here?

ZIPPERED KID

Johnny had this idea and now I'm damaged!

Mr. Flint glares at Johnny.

MR. FLINT

Knoxville. Again. Why am I not surprised?

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)

Truth is, I may have been a little ADHD. But Attention Disruption Something-With-An-"H" Disorder wasn't a thing yet so, like Joey's private parts, I was out of luck.

INT. KNOXVILLE FAMILY HOME - KITCHEN - MORNING

Not a lot of money here, but it's tidy with wood paneled walls, homemade doilies, comfortable, broken-in furniture.

Genevieve makes school lunches at the counter as Johnny sits at the table finishing a bowl of cereal.

Audrey (now sixteen) enters, annoyed, carrying a rose.

AUDREY

Ugh! Tim Blanchard left another rose on our welcome mat. What part of "stop leaving me roses, Tim Blanchard" doesn't he understand?

She throws it in the trash.

GENEVIEVE

He's just being persistent. Maybe you should give him a chance.

AUDREY

We went on a date. I didn't like him. Why should I do it again?

GENEVIEVE

You know, boys always chased me, too.

AUDREY

Oh, so we're done talking about me, that's fine.

GENEVIEVE

We're still talking about you. You happen to be the daughter of someone boys found irresistible.

AUDREY

Feels like it's about you.

GENEVIEVE

I was once even asked out by my gynecologist.

AUDREY

How is this not about you? And also, now, yuck.

GENEVIEVE

He took one look down there and--

AUDREY

Mom!

Johnny, holding his bowl, stretches back in his chair to reach for a cereal box on the counter. Leaning too far, he tumbles over; his milk-filled bowl exploding on the wall of the counter. He pops up, rights his chair.

JOHNNY

Gravity hates me. Go on.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)

I liked when someone had a problem because any time there was drama and it wasn't about me, that was a good day.

Ray enters.

RAY

(to Johnny)

Your teacher wants to hit you now.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)

Or minute.

GENEVIEVE

Oh, no. What's happening?

RAY

We're stayin' calm. But I just got a call from Mr. Flint. He said Johnny's still misbehaving so now he wants permission to hit him.

(MORE)

RAY (CONT'D)

Asked if we got the note he sent home.

GENEVIEVE

Note?

They both look at Johnny, who's been trying to stay below their radar by cleaning the mess on the floor. He stops.

JOHNNY

Okay, here's the thing. I disappoint a lot of people. And I think this is just another example of that.

AUDREY

Excuse me, if it's wrong for kids to hit, then it's wrong for adults. And especially wrong for adults to hit kids. You guys never hit us. Why would you let someone else do it?

Ray and Genevieve look at their smart daughter a beat.

RAY

You have opinions about everything.

AUDREY

And your counter-arguments are often lacking.

GENEVIEVE

All right, all right. I, for one, do not want anybody hitting Johnny.

JOHNNY

Good. Settled. So, who else has a problem?

GENEVIEVE

On the other hand, Mr. Flint is a professional and if he thinks it'll help.

JOHNNY

Wait--

GENEVIEVE

(to Ray)

It wouldn't be in the face, right?

JOHNNY

It's with a paddle.

RAY
 (to Genevieve)
 I'll ask, but I can't tell the man
 how to teach.

JOHNNY
 It's with a paddle. Wait, what's
 happening?

AUDREY
 They're messing with you.

Ray and Genevieve smile.

AUDREY (CONT'D)
 Because they have an illness.

RAY
 We're scaring the boy. That's just
 good parenting. Like when we told
 you Santa hates know-it-alls.

GENEVIEVE
 (to Johnny)
 We're not going to let anyone hit
 my baby.

She moves to Johnny.

GENEVIEVE (CONT'D)
 But darlin', you have to settle
 down, concentrate on your school
 work.

JOHNNY
 Maybe I should take a few days off
 from school, give Mr. Flint a
 break. Yeah. I could hang out at
 Dad's tire store. Sure, that's a
 plan.

GENEVIEVE
 I don't want you at the tire store.
 Honey, you're smart, you need to do
 well so you can make something of
 yourself, and I don't end up like
 Susie Maple who's so worried about
 her son she's growing welts all
 over her hands that hurt and bleed
 and her doctors are powerless to
 treat so they might have to cut off
 her arms. I don't want to lose my
 beautiful arms.

(MORE)

GENEVIEVE (CONT'D)

You kinda do make things about you,
Mom. Just something to look at.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)

I wanted my mom's arms to live a
long, attached life...

INT./EXT. RAY'S TIRE STORE - GARAGE - DAY

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)

But I loved my dad's tire store.
When I was a kid, it was the only
place I wanted to be.

DOLLY across a well-worn open-air garage housing three work bays. Each bay has a car on a lift having a tire changed by a mechanic in work coveralls. We glide by PHIL and HECTOR in the first bay, BIG STEVIE in the second, and land on the last bay where Johnny, standing on a crate, is trying to loosen a lug nut with an air ratchet.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)

There were power tools. You could
spit right on the ground...

Johnny spits. Badly.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)

Or on your shirt. No one cared!
And the folks who worked there were
the coolest people I ever met.

"JUKEBOX" (early thirties, small, wiry, runs hot) comes up behind Johnny, corrects what he's doing.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)

Like, Franklin Delano Roosevelt
Jukebox Johnson Jr...

EXT. BAR - BACK DOOR - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

A drunk Jukebox Johnson wedges a crowbar into the rear door of a bar and pushes. It pops open.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)

...Who got his name from his momma
liking our 32nd president, and him
liking to take things that didn't
belong to him...

INT. BAR - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER - FLASHBACK

Jukebox is in the dimly lit back room of the bar, working a screwdriver into the coin box of an actual jukebox. The box pops opens, spilling change all over the floor.

JUKEBOX

Which he was not very good at it.

The bar owner, carrying a couple cases of beer, walks in from the main room.

BAR OWNER

Damn, Junior, you know we're open.

JUKEBOX

I did not know that, Roy!

INT./EXT. RAY'S TIRE STORE - GARAGE - BACK TO SCENE

BIG STEVIE in the second bay (early thirties, heavy-set, tough, African-American), lifts a tire onto lug bolts.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)

Big Stevie was big. And I guess his name was Stevie. He was someone you wanted on your side in a fight.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Three threatening guys have Jukebox backed up against a wall.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)

And there were a lot of fights in our town. There just wasn't much else to do 'cept take offense at things.

Big Stevie screeches up in his Oldsmobile Cutlass. The Cutlass has SPEAKERS MOUNTED ON THE OUTSIDE front right and left quarter panels, which blast Little Richard's "Good Golly Miss Molly."

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)

Big Stevie also had a car he outfitted with speakers on the outside, so he could share his musical opinions with everyone.

Stevie gets out, walks over.

BIG STEVIE

(to Jukebox)

I got this, buddy. Run to the corner and grab me a sweetened ice tea. Wompin' on these guys is gonna make me thirsty.

The guys look at each other, worried. One of them raises his hand, volunteering.

THUG

I'll go.

He quickly heads off. His buddies follow him out.

INT./EXT. RAY'S TIRE STORE - GARAGE - BACK TO SCENE

ON PHIL in the last bay (late thirties, handsome, cool), working with HECTOR (twenties, Latin).

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)

Then there was Phil. Ex-boxer and crop duster, who currently dabbled in the import/export business.

EXT. SMALL AIRPORT TARMAC - DAY - FLASHBACK

Phil is loading televisions into his beat-up Cessna. He throws in a box of VHS tapes marked with homemade stickers that say "Flashdance."

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)

Every couple months Phil'd fly down to Mexico, taking whatever the free market demanded...

INT. RAY'S TIRE STORE - SHOWROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

A smiling Phil bursts through the front door with Hector who enters tentatively.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)

...And returning with a new friend who wanted to visit our great country.

INT. RAY'S TIRE STORE - SHOWROOM - DAY - PRESENT (1983)

Built in the 50s, aged with years of grime, but kept neat and organized; a couple of tire displays, some chairs in a waiting area, a long counter with a storage room and small office behind it.

Johnny now talks to Big Stevie, Jukebox and Hector, over:

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)
 My dad was tough, and he hired
 tough guys who were in and out of
 trouble. But I liked 'em, because
 so was I.

BIG STEVIE
 Your teacher lay a hand on you I'll
 hit him so hard his teeth will be
 eatin' his ribs for dinner.

JOHNNY
 Listen to me. Don't do that. And
 he's only going to hit me if my
 parents give him permission.

JUKEBOX
 Your folks gotta do what they gotta
 do, Little Man. Then so do we.

HECTOR
 I can do something with a scorpion
 he will find very distasteful.
 (off Johnny's concern)
 It's like tickling. Only with a
 scorpion.

Phil walks by, having overheard.

PHIL
 What's goin' on?

JUKEBOX
 Some teacher wants to hit Johnny.

PHIL
 Hm. Don't like that.
 (to Johnny)
 You have this guy's address?

JOHNNY
 No! I mean, no thank you, I'll
 handle it.
 (to Hector)
 And no scorpion.

HECTOR
 El Hefe will be disappointed. He
 likes to work.

Ray enters, pissed to see no one is working.

RAY

Why y'all standing around? Grab a tire, slap it on a car, it's not that complicated.

The group starts to break up.

RAY (CONT'D)

Jukebox, a letter came for you.

Ray moves to the counter to get it. As he does, he winks at Johnny, cueing him that something's up.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)

Another cool thing about being at the store? My dad loved messing with people. And he was a master at it.

Ray hands an official-looking envelope to Jukebox. Johnny picks up on Ray's prank.

JOHNNY

(off the envelope)

It's from the government. That's never good, right?

JUKEBOX

Oh, man, what the heck do they want?

Jukebox tears it open. It's a letter on U.S. Government stationary. He looks at it, stunned.

JUKEBOX (CONT'D)

Oh, my God. I've been drafted.

RAY

Drafted? What?

JUKEBOX

(off the letter)

They want to send me to Grenada.

BIG STEVIE

Grenada? That sucks. Very humid.

JUKEBOX

I ain't goin'. I have a criminal record, that should be good for something.

PHIL

If you don't come back, we'll name
a tire alignment after you.

RAY

Or maybe a jukebox.

PHIL

Better. Then we can just keep
calling it a jukebox.

JUKEBOX

(off the letter)

This is crazy! It says I'm
supposed to shave my head and all
the hair off my-- wait.

Ray bursts out laughing, as does everyone else, now realizing
Jukebox has been pranked.

RAY

Did you see that look?!

(to Johnny)

Boy, you see that look on ol'
Jukebox? He filled his shorts on
that one. See, it's all about the
prep. I worked for days on this
letterhead, gettin' it right.

Ray shows Johnny the letter. Johnny looks at it in awe.

JOHNNY

It's perfect.

RAY

Right?

JUKEBOX

Hey, boss, speakin' of perfect, Big
Stevie and I came into a couple
dozen brand new desktop calculators
we're looking to unload.

Jukebox picks up a calculator from the counter, hands it to
Ray who gets serious again as he inspects it.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)

And my dad didn't just run a tire
store. He also bought and sold
merchandise of questionable origin.
Everything about this place was
more exciting than school! I
almost felt sorry for school.

RAY
I'll give you four dollars apiece.

JUKEBOX
We need at least eight.

RAY
How's four?

Jukebox looks at Big Stevie who nods.

JUKEBOX
We'll go to six.

RAY
I'll go to four.

JUKEBOX
See, we keep comin' down but you
keep saying four.

RAY
Okay, how about three.

BIG STEVIE
How's five?

Johnny can't take it any more.

JOHNNY
Four! It's gonna be four!
(off their looks)
Am I right?

RAY
What are you doing here, anyway?
Stevie, run the boy home before his
momma starts to worry.

JOHNNY
I did my homework, can't I stay?

RAY
Really? You want to negotiate?
(re: Jukebox and Stevie)
You think I can hold my own with
these desperados but not with you?

EXT. RAY'S TIRE STORE - MOMENTS LATER

Big Stevie and Johnny head to Stevie's car.

BIG STEVIE
You like being here, huh?

JOHNNY

It's the only place in the world I
don't get in trouble.

BIG STEVIE

When I was your age I worked at my
daddy's store.

This lands with Johnny, giving him an idea.

JOHNNY

Really? Your parents let you?

BIG STEVIE

He needed all the help he could
get. The man owned a used shoe
store. It was a business model
that did not make sense.

Stevie starts his car. The exterior speakers blast James
Brown's, "I Feel Good."

Through the back window we see Stevie and Johnny shoot their
arms in the air, then in sync to the music move them to the
left, then to the right, a routine they've probably done
before.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - SAME TIME

Audrey does the combination on her locker.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)

While school and I were happy to be
apart, Audrey and school loved each
other.

She opens her locker and looks in. Inside, there's a rose.

AUDREY

Damn it.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)

Most of the time.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Tim, a smarmy, entitled jock, is getting water at a drinking
fountain. Audrey comes over with the rose.

AUDREY

How'd you get into my locker?

TIM

I can't tell you all my secrets.

AUDREY

(handing it to him.)

I don't need more flowers. I'm not a bee, or an aphid, or a thrip-- that's a tiny, fringed-wing insect from the Thysanoptera family that eats flowers.

TIM

From whose family?

AUDREY

You see how this wouldn't work?

TIM

Maybe your problem is you've never been with someone who could have any girl he wants, and that scares you.

AUDREY

Hmmm, no. It's more like I've never been with someone so smug and condescending, and that annoys me.

TIM

You're vulnerable, I get that.

AUDREY

You're also not a great listener.

TIM

I really like your hair.

AUDREY

Okay, we're done. Stay out of my locker.

Audrey turns and storms off. Tim smiles, not deterred.

INT. KNOXVILLE HOME - LIVING ROOM - THAT NIGHT

Ray sits in his recliner, watching television. Genevieve enters, takes the remote and turns it off. Ray protests.

RAY

Honey, it's Knight Rider. The human car's about to fight an evil tractor and I want to see who wins.

GENEVIEVE

It's not a human car, Ray, it just talks. And it always wins.

RAY
You don't know.

GENEVIEVE
We have a problem. I found
magazines under Johnny's bed I do
not want him looking at.

RAY
(delicately)
Genevieve, darlin', when a boy
reaches a certain age--

GENEVIEVE
--It's tires, Ray. He's reading
about tires.

Genevieve holds up tire magazines.

RAY
Maybe he's just looking at the
pretty girls in the ads and so I
should continue watching my show.

GENEVIEVE
He dog-eared a page on tread
durability in cold-weather radials.
He's not looking at pictures, he's
reading the articles!

Johnny wanders in.

JOHNNY
Why aren't you watching Knight
Rider? T.V. Guide says he fights a
tractor.

RAY
Yeah, I'm missing that. Your
mother found these magazines under
your bed. You know what that does
to her?

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)
There was no gettin' around it now.
I had to come clean.

JOHNNY
Mom, Dad, I like tires.

GENEVIEVE
Oh, my God.

JOHNNY

I want to quit school as soon as I can and work at the store.

Genevieve can't believe what she's hearing.

GENEVIEVE

Quit school? I'm gonna grow welts on my hands. They're gonna take my arms. Is that what you want?!
Ray. Ray, say something!

Ray's looks at Johnny, unsure what to say.

RAY

Boobies! Why couldn't you've been looking at boobies?!

JOHNNY

I'm sorry. I want to run the store one day.

GENEVIEVE

No. No way.

RAY

Boy, tires is hard, dirty work. You don't want to end up there.

JOHNNY

But--

GENEVIEVE

Come with me.

JOHNNY

Where?

GENEVIEVE

I said come with me.

Genevieve walks out. Johnny looks at his dad for help.

RAY

I tell you not to upset your momma. Now you're in trouble and I missed a two human-vehicle fight to the death.

Genevieve yells from the next room.

GENEVIEVE (O.S.)

I feel blisters sproutin' on my fingers!

RAY
Good luck, son.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. SMALL TOWN COMMERCIAL DISTRICT - LATER THAT EVENING

It's cold. Genevieve pulls Johnny along as they walk down a small street lined with stores.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)

I was defying my parents by wanting to be in my dad's business and my mom was upset. I needed to focus, come up with a plan.

(passing man eating a sandwich)

Mmmmm, what is that, pulled pork?

JOHNNY

Don't we have to pick up Audrey from science club? We don't want to be late. She'll learn too much.

Genevieve stops walking, turns to Johnny. She calmer now, just has something to tell him.

GENEVIEVE

When I was fifteen, I wanted to be a fashion model. Even did some newspaper ads. Had a devastating body. Could've hung laundry off my derriere. That means "rear end". Gotta stay in school if you want to know stuff like that.

JOHNNY

Actually, I didn't need to know that.

GENEVIEVE

The point is, I never pursued it. I was too scared of failing, or being laughed at, or rejected.

(then)

Look around. What do you see?

Johnny looks. People are leaving work, folks are shopping, nothing unusual.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)

Obviously, she wanted me to say something insightful; something profound. But what?

JOHNNY

It's cold?

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)

In my defense, it was unseasonably chilly.

She gestures to a man locking up a store.

GENEVIEVE

Look. There's Billy Thompson. He was some kinda math genius, now he works a cash register at the drug store.

(gesturing to a woman)

And Cindy Bell. She had a singing voice that could make an angel cry, now she answers phones at the doctor's office. This town is full of people who didn't do the great things they had it in them to do. They were too afraid, or couldn't imagine it, or didn't have the opportunity. Your daddy works hard so you can have that opportunity. All we want in return is for you to dream big.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)

Ugh. That was such a better answer than "it's cold."

JOHNNY

But I like the store.

GENEVIEVE

You're not working there. Honey, your teacher may see you as out of control. But I see someone with imagination and boundless energy. You only have one life. Do something special. Or I will take it from you.

INT. KNOXVILLE CAR - LATER - NIGHT

Johnny sits in the back, as Genevieve drives and talks with Audrey in the passenger seat.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)

I appreciated my Mom threatening to kill me, but it didn't change what I wanted. And now something else was bugging me--

JOHNNY

Why do I always have to sit in the back?

AUDREY

(turning to him)

We're talking.

(continuing to Genevieve)

And when I got home today, there was a rose on my bed!

GENEVIEVE

We tell you not to leave your window open, sweetheart.

AUDREY

Missing the point. He snuck into my bedroom.

GENEVIEVE

In my day, that would've been called romantic.

AUDREY

In my day, it's called creepy!

GENEVIEVE

Well, who can say.

AUDREY

I can, because we're in my day.

GENEVIEVE

Honey, sometimes boys just do the wrong thing. And when they do, that can cause conflict.

They drive by a cross street, passing a group of guys fighting in the road. Genevieve stops, backs up, and heads down the street toward the brawl as she calmly continues:

GENEVIEVE (CONT'D)

Like those boys. One of them probably did something wrong and now they're in a conflict. Girls just need to tell boys when they're being dumb. That way, they can change and be better.

Genevieve drives straight into the brawling guys, who jump out of her way. Genevieve opens the car door, steps out to face them.

GENEVIEVE (CONT'D)
 You boys are actin' ugly! Stop
 this nonsense and go home.

FIGHTING GUY
 You almost ran us--

GENEVIEVE
 I said go home!

The guys sheepishly head off. Genevieve gets back in the car, continues as though nothing happened.

GENEVIEVE (CONT'D)
 But look, sugar, if you're sure
 that boy's not for you, then you
 tell him. Gently. Always gently.
 I remember when my gynecologist
 asked me out--

AUDREY
 --You were gentle. I get it.

GENEVIEVE
 I was. As was he. With those
 warm, small hands--

AUDREY
 Oh, good, we're going to keep
 talking about this.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)
 That night I realized two things.
 My mom had no filter. And she
 could bend a dozen men to her will,
 so it was going to be next to
 impossible for me to get my way.

INT. SCHOOL CLASSROOM - THE NEXT DAY

Students are taking their seats, waiting for class to begin.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)
 My plan was to not have any
 problems at school, then when
 things calmed down, try again. But
 to do that...

PUSH IN ON MR. FLINT standing at the front of the class.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)
 ...I'd have to get rid of my
biggest problem.

Mr. Flint notices an envelope addressed to him on his desk. He picks it up.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)
So I came up with a genius idea.

INT. RAY'S TIRE STORE - RAY'S OFFICE - DAY - FLASHBACK

Johnny opens his dad's desk drawer and takes out a sheet of the U.S. Government letterhead Ray used on Jukebox.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)
Which was to borrow my dad's genius idea.

The sheet of paper is now in a typewriter as Johnny hunt-and-pecks at the keyboard. We see the words: "Dear Mr. Flint".

The letter now slides into the envelope we saw Mr. Flint just open.

INT. SCHOOL CLASSROOM - BACK TO SCENE

As Mr. Flint reads the letter:

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)
"Dear Mr. Flint, your government is assigning you to a different school. Specifically, Jefferson, across down. It's far and you start tomorrow, so pack your stuff and get out."

Mr. Flint puts down the letter. He looks sad.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)
Mr. Flint wanted to hit me, so I hit him. Metaphorically. Which in spite of not focusing in school, is a word I believe I'm using correctly.

INT. SCHOOL CLASSROOM - THE NEXT DAY

Johnny is all smiles as he watches his new, pretty substitute teacher, MS. ROSEWOOD, write her name on the blackboard.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)
And my plan worked! For about five minutes...

The door opens and Mr. Flint and the SCHOOL PRINCIPAL enter. The principal angrily holds Johnny's letter.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)
 ...until Mr. Flint came in with the
 school principal.

PRINCIPAL
 All right, which one of you little
 bastards sent this?

Mr. Flint and the principal look around the class. Their
 eyes settle on Johnny who slinks down in his chair. Mr.
 Flint glares at him. Johnny slinks further.

INT. KNOXVILLE HOME - LIVING ROOM - LATER THAT DAY

Johnny sits across from his parents. Genevieve, at the end
 of her rope, holds the letter.

GENEVIEVE
 First, your teacher wants to hit
 you, now you're suspended?!

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)
 I hated disappointing my parents.
 Yet it was not an uncommon
 experience.

GENEVIEVE
 What are we gonna do with you?
 Ray?

RAY
 (softly)
 You're killin' me, boy. Killin'
 me.

GENEVIEVE
 And you faked a government letter?
 Where'd you get that brilliant
 idea?

Johnny and Ray both look down at the floor. Genevieve
 notices her husband.

GENEVIEVE (CONT'D)
 Aw, come on, really, Ray?

RAY
 Really, Johnny?!

JOHNNY
 Sorry. It made sense in my head.

GENEVIEVE

(to Johnny)

Well, you and your head are gonna sit in your room this entire week and figure out how you can be a better person.

(to Ray)

You might want to think about that, too.

EXT. KNOXVILLE HOME - THE NEXT MORNING

Genevieve and Audrey are leaving the house heading to school.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)

My head and I sat in my room an entire day, which felt like a week.

Johnny runs from the house to his dad's pickup. He opens the tail gate, slips in, and slowly and quietly closes it. Lining up six tires on their treads, he shimmies down the center, hiding in them as he lies horizontally.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)

I figured I'd hitch a ride to the store, wait 'til my dad was doing errands, then hang out with the guys, and catch a ride home the same way.

Ray comes out of the house, heads for the truck.

EXT. CITY STREET - MOMENTS LATER

The truck drives down the street.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)

I never said I was some mastermind cat burglar. I was an excitable kid with impulse issues... who right now was suffocating inside a tire.

Jammed inside the tires, Johnny looks a little green as they rock back-and-forth with the rhythm of the truck. The tires roll into the tailgate. It moves a bit.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)

And was about to have another run-in with my enemy, gravity.

Now stopped at a light, the truck starts off. When the tires hit the tail gate, it pops open.

The whole chain of them, held together by Johnny, bounces into the street and collects speed as it rolls downhill. Inside, Johnny spins around-and-around.

Cars honk and swerve out of the way. A tire separates from the pack, exposing Johnny's feet which spin as fast as the tires. Finally, they veer off, hit a curb, fly into the air, and land in bushes.

After a beat, we hear Johnny throw-up.

JOHNNY (O.S.)

Yuck.

INT. KNOXVILLE HOME - LIVING ROOM - THAT DAY

Johnny again sits across from his parents, who stare at him in disbelief.

GENEVIEVE

You could've died.
(to Ray)
My baby could've died!

RAY

You've upset your mother. And now I'm missing The Jeffersons. It is a bad week.

JOHNNY

I'm sorry. It's like I have this thing inside me I can't control that makes me do stuff without thinking about the consequences.

GENEVIEVE

See, that right there's a smart thing to say. You're smart. You just don't act smart. It doesn't make sense.

JOHNNY

No, Ma'am.

Ray's had enough, takes charge.

RAY

All right. Here's what's gonna happen. I don't want the boy dying trying to get to the store,
(to Genevieve)
and then you gettin' all upset about it. So.

(MORE)

RAY (CONT'D)
 (losing his nerve)
 Maybe... you know--

GENEVIEVE
 What are you sayin', we let him
 drop out of school and work at the
 store?

RAY
 I'm no parenting expert! I wanted
 dogs!
 (then)
 Okay, what if we let him work there
 after school.
 (off Genevieve's look)
 Occasionally. Or never.

Genevieve considers this. She's not crazy about it, but sees
 it's her best option.

GENEVIEVE
 (to Johnny)
 Well, I don't want you dying
 either. So okay. On trial basis.
 As long as you stay in school and
 keep your grades up.

Johnny smiles.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)
 And so my crazy plan did kinda
 work.

INT. RAY'S TIRE STORE - SHOWROOM - LATER

Johnny is straightening up a display.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)
 I was at the store now. And that
 meant I was part of something.
 Plus...

ON RAY, who subtly nods at Johnny to follow him as he heads
 to his office.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)
 I was with my dad. Looking back on
 it now, I realize that's why I
 wanted to be there. He was
 different at the store. More fun.

INT. RAY'S TIRE STORE - MOMENTS LATER

Ray, deadly serious, hands Johnny two cans of soda, which Johnny accepts reverently.

RAY
You understand?

JOHNNY
Yes, sir.

RAY
This one's all you. You're gonna be on your own.

JOHNNY
Yes, sir.

RAY
Heh-heh.
(then serious)
Don't screw it up.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)
And in spite of what my parents wanted, I did go into my dad's business.

INT. RAY'S TIRE STORE - SHOWROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Johnny exits the office and crosses to Jukebox who stands with Phil, Big Stevie and Hector.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)
But his business wasn't tires. It was giving his friends hell, making them laugh, have fun. These were tough guys, living in tough times. They enjoyed having fun.

Johnny now stands with Jukebox.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)
And now my dad was passing me the torch, teaching me things I didn't know. Like high-low theory, which simply states the eye will always go high...

JOHNNY
Hey.

Jukebox turns to look at him. Johnny tosses a can of soda into the air. Jukebox eyes follow it up.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)
 ...so you can go low.

With the other can of soda, Johnny whacks Jukebox in the crotch.

JOHNNY
 Cod shot! Sir.

Jukebox goes down. The guys laugh.

PHIL/BIG STEVIE/HECTOR
 Nice. / Expertly done. / Kid's
 gonna be dangerous.

Jukebox, curled on the floor, agrees.

JUKEBOX
 (smiling through the pain)
 Classic... high-low.

ON RAY, beaming, the proud papa.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)
 Parents always try to tell their
 kids what to do or how to act, but
 kids don't do what you tell them
 to. They do what they see you
 doing.

EXT. KNOXVILLE CAR/CITY STREET/TIM'S HOUSE - DAY

Audrey drives the family car, determined.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)
 Whether you want them to or not.

She pulls over, sees her suitor, Tim, next to his driveway clipping a rose. Suddenly, Audrey guns the engine, flies up the driveway and keeps going, driving over the rose bushes. Tim stares, can't believe what he's seeing.

Audrey steps from the car, in command, like she saw her mom.

AUDREY
 It's not happening with us, Tim.
 So you need to move on.

TIM
 But--

AUDREY
 I said move on!

Tim, frozen, drops the rose to the ground. Audrey turns to go, smiling at her victory.

INT. RAY'S TIRE STORE - SHOWROOM - EVENING

Just Johnny and Ray now. Johnny sweeps up while Ray does bookkeeping at the counter.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)
And later that day, my dad taught
me something else.

The school principal comes to the front door. Johnny sees him, subtly puts down the broom and moves off. The principal raps on the door. Ray looks over.

INT. RAY'S TIRE STORE - STORAGE ROOM - NIGHT

Ray hands the principal the box of calculators he bought previously from Jukebox and Big Stevie.

PRINCIPAL
You sure?

RAY
I can't sell them. People I do
business with don't do a lot of
math.

PRINCIPAL
Thank you, Ray.

The principal takes the calculators and leaves. Ray stands a moment, then speaks.

RAY
You thought he was here for you,
didn't ya?

Johnny steps out from hiding behind a stack of tires.

JOHNNY
Maybe a little. But why'd you buy
those calculators if you couldn't
sell them?

RAY
Just to throw a little money at
Jukebox and Stevie. Those boys
work hard for me.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)
Seeing my dad do good like that
made me think, maybe sometimes I
could do good.

INT. SCHOOL CLASSROOM - THE NEXT DAY

Kids are finding their seats. Mr. Flint, at the head of the class, notices something on his desk. He reaches for it.

It's one of the calculators with a ribbon around it. There's a card attached. Flint looks at it. "Sorry. From Johnny Knoxville." Flint smiles.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)
Although, in hindsight...

Mr. Flint picks up something else. A beautiful red rose.

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE (V.O.)
...giving him the rose I dug out of
Audrey's trash might have sent a
confusing message.

Puzzled, Mr. Flint looks at Johnny, who shrugs.

THE END.