

Eddie, The Mechanic

Chapter Two The Mechanic

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Now that Eddie and Kathy have returned from their honeymoon, it's back to real life, at least for a while. Eddie gets back to work, heading to the service station three or four days a week, putting in about four to eight hours a day. In a few weeks, it will be back to school for Kathy. This gives Kathy some time to organize the house and turn it into their home.

Eddie and Kathy make time to work out together, especially since Kathy will be back to track practice at the University shortly. With high school starting soon, Mr. Frazier has decided to hold track and field practice during the Autumn for those athletes who are not on another team. Kathy, along with the other team assistants, will each be working about one day a week with the high school team.

Mark and his father have been working on Eddie and Kathy's house for the last few weeks. They have gotten everything on the list finished, and more. While Eddie and Kathy were away on their honeymoon, their bedroom furniture arrived, along with a few other items. Mark was available to take the delivery, so Eddie and Kathy returned home with a place to sleep. And, Paula was nice enough to make their bed for them while they were away. But, all of Kathy's and Eddie's clothes and other items are still in boxes.

While they are waiting one afternoon for another furniture delivery, Kathy asks Eddie, "so, have you thought any more about running for the University?" Eddie replies, "yeah. My deal still stands. I don't have to go to class. And, I get all A's. If they'll do that, then I'll run. Oh, and I thought of one more thing. They can fill out my application for me. I'll just sign it." Kathy replies, "wow! You drive a hard bargain, buddy." Eddie points out, "well, I have everything they want, and they have nothing that I want. Well, outside of running track." Kathy mentions,

“hey, that’s worth something!” Eddie replies, “only because you’re on the team.” Kathy tells Eddie, “aw, you’re so sweet. I love you.”

The doorbell rings, meaning the living room and dining room furniture has arrived. Eddie and Kathy will now get to sit down at a table to eat, and not have to eat sitting on the floor. As the furniture is being brought in, Kathy tells Eddie, “Paula said that Mark will run if you run.” Eddie asks, “really? What is Mark going to get a degree in?” Answering his own question, Eddie exclaims, “oh, wait! I know! They’ll come out and grade his framing job, plumbing job, electrical work, and everything else he does! Then, they’ll give him a bachelor’s degree in being a jobber.” Kathy laughs, telling Eddie, “that is kind of funny.” Eddie continues, “Framing 101. Bricklaying 201. No, wait a second. Bricklaying should probably be a senior level class. Oh, and I can hear it now! ‘Hello. I’m Mark Svoboda. I have a Ph.D. in Jobber. No one drives nails better than me!’” Kathy tells Eddie, “now, you’re being silly.”

The delivery people leave, and Kathy exclaims, “wonderful! I can finally sit down!” Kathy and Eddie sit down on their new sofa. Kathy sighs, and says, “wow! Look at our view. All woods!” Kathy puts her head on Eddie’s shoulder, and asks, “okay, now where were we?” Eddie replies, “I was hanging a mirror on the wall, and you were unpacking boxes.” Knowing that Eddie misunderstood, Kathy asks, “no. Where were we about you and Mark running track?” Eddie replies, “we were talking about Mark getting a jobber’s degree.” Kathy tells Eddie, “you know, Johnson is on the team.” Eddie replies, “yeah, I know.” Kathy points out, “you, Mark, and Johnson could be on the 4 by 440 relay team.” Eddie comments, “get Braden back on the team, and you got a deal.” Kathy remarks, “that would be awesome, but that ain’t happening. He’s probably off on a ship cruising the world by now.”

Kathy comments, “if you, Mark, and Johnson ran in the 4 by 440 relay, you’d probably have Steve Leggett on the relay team with you.” Eddie replies, “yeah right, lug nut.” Kathy laughs, while she is exclaiming, “lug nut? How is that? He’s their best 440 guy!” Eddie explains, “yeah, Leggett. Lug nut. What’s the difference? Lug nuts are heavy, like his sneakers. He’d probably be a little faster if he bought some better running shoes. Oh, and his socks go up to his knees. That’s a lot of extra weight. So, there you have it. Lug nut.” Kathy comments, “I wonder why the coaches hadn’t noticed that.” Eddie answers, “that’s the first thing I noticed when I ran time trials with your team last year. It was kind of hard to miss.”

Eddie explains, “maybe your coaches have too much education. In an automobile, if you want to improve acceleration, you have to decrease what we call rotating mass. Rotating mass is the mass turned by the engine. It is basically the flywheel, the clutch assembly, the drive shaft,

the axle, the wheels, and tires. If you throw 50 pounds into the trunk, you are not going to really affect acceleration that much. If you add 50 pounds, for example, to the flywheel, the car's acceleration will be seriously affected. That's why your Porsche accelerates so fast. Put heavy steel wheels on it, and higher profile tires, and you'll be seriously disappointed." Kathy asks, "where did you learn that?" Eddie replies, "from Kurt Richter."

Eddie, applying what he learned from Kurt, continues, "so, if you want to run faster, taking excess weight off your legs is really important." Kathy replies, "wow! I can see that. See there? How does the team not need you?" Eddie made a good point. Running with five pounds strapped to each leg is a lot more taxing than running with a ten-pound backpack. Eddie tells Kathy, "okay, so if Mark runs, I'll consider it too. But, no classes, and I want all A's. That's not negotiable." Kathy sighs, wondering how she is going to get this all to work out. Eddie clearly does not want to sit in a classroom for four more years under any circumstances, and neither does Mark.

A few days later, while Eddie is at work, Paula visits with Kathy in Kathy's pool. Inevitably, the subject of Eddie and Mark running track for the University comes up. Kathy mentions to Paula, "Eddie said he'll run track at the University if Mark runs." Paula tells Kathy, "that's funny. Mark said he'll run if Eddie runs. It sounds like a catch-22." Kathy relates to Paula, "I know, right? And, Eddie is always joking about it too. He says stuff like Mark will be taking classes like, 'Framing 101 and Bricklaying 201.' And, what did Eddie say he would be taking? I think like, 'Pumping Gas 101 and Major Tune Ups 201.'" Paula laughs, telling Kathy, "you know, that is kind of funny." Kathy mentions, "I can't even imagine what kind of classes Stone takes."

Darryl Stone, who is on the University track team, does not attend formal classes. Able to break a four-minute mile, Stone apparently has a special deal going on. Stone plays in a band, and earns class credit for playing the drums. No one really knows what year Stone is in. But, it is rumored that when he graduates, he will be receiving a degree in music.

Paula suggests, "hey! Maybe we can go over to the University and get the applications, and fill them out for them." Kathy tells Paula, "Eddie won't even apply. He doesn't want to sit in a classroom. He says he'll run, but he doesn't want to go to class, and he wants all A's." Paula replies, "I can't say that I blame him."

Kathy points out, "Coach Herndon told me she thinks that it's doable. And, Mr. Frazier said that colleges have ways to make that sort of thing work out." Paula tells Kathy, "well, we can always go over to the University now, and get the applications. Maybe we'll get real lucky and find Coach

Herndon or Dr. Braun.” Kathy agrees, telling Paula, “yeah. Let’s go and do that now.” Kathy and Paula get out of the pool, and dry off. They get dressed, and head over to the University, seeing what they can find out.

Arriving at the University, Summer semester is in full swing. Kathy and Paula head straight to the administration building, and pick up two applications for enrollment. They then head over to the physical education complex, hoping to find any one of their coaches. Walking down the hall, they find Coach Herndon in her office, with her feet up on the desk drinking coffee, apparently not working very hard today.

Paula knocks on the door. Coach Herndon turns around, greeting them saying, “wow! I wasn’t expecting to see you girls here today! What’s up?” Kathy replies, “we came by the school to pick up applications for Eddie and Mark. We just thought we’d drop by and say hi.”

Coach Herndon asks Kathy and Paula, “so, have you guys extended our offer to Eddie and Mark?” Kathy replies, “yeah. But, they drive a really hard bargain.” Coach Herndon, who always gets right to the point, tells Kathy, “explain, please.” Kathy replies, “Eddie doesn’t want to go to college. Eddie said he’ll run, but he doesn’t want to go to classes, and he said that he wants all A’s.” Coach Herndon asks Paula, “and Mark?” Paula replies, “Mark is the same way. Mark couldn’t wait to get out of high school. There ain’t no way he’s sitting in a classroom for four more years either.”

Moving on to the question of the day, Coach Herndon asks, “what are their times?” Kathy, who seems to have the entire high school track team’s statistics in her head, energetically replies, “Eddie runs the 100-yard dash in 9.2 seconds, and Mark runs it in 9.3 seconds. They both can run the 440-yard dash in the mid 40-second range, like 46 to 47 seconds. Mark and Eddie can run the 220-yard dash in less than 22 seconds consistently. Mark owns the high school State record, which is 21.5 seconds.” Coach Herndon asks, “what’s the high school National record in the 220-yard dash?” Kathy replies, “on a curved track, it’s 20.5 seconds¹.”

Coach Herndon is having a difficult time believing what she is hearing. If it were not for the time trials last season where Coach Herndon saw Eddie and Mark perform on the track, she might not believe Kathy and Paula. Coach Herndon, knowing that Kathy and Paula are talking about potential freshmen, is quite impressed.

¹ The National high school record in the 220-yard dash on a curved track is 20.5 seconds, held by Dwayne Evans, set in 1976.

Kathy adds, “and, now that I’m thinking about this, I think Eddie and Mark might be able to beat Braden in the 440-yard dash.” Coach Herndon asks, “who is this Braden guy?” Paula replies, “he owns the State record in the 440-yard dash, and he broke his own record last year. But, he ran off to join the Navy.” Coach Herndon curiously asks, “what was Braden’s time in the 440-yard dash?” Kathy replies, “his best is 46.6 seconds. And, he can run times in that range pretty consistently.” Coach Herndon asks, “what’s the National high school record in the 440-yard dash?” Kathy replies, “I think it’s 45.8 seconds².” Kathy, the walking track and field statistics encyclopedia, would be right.

While she has Kathy’s and Paula’s attention, Coach Herndon asks, “how about this Eric Johnson guy we picked up on scholarship? How did he end up last year?” Kathy replies, “Johnson was the best all-around runner on the high school team. He’s a great sprinter, but his strengths are in the 440-yard dash, and any distance race. He can also run the 440-yard dash in the 47-second range. Johnson got the silver medal in the half mile at State. That’s only because Mitchell beat him. Johnson was also on the 4 by 440 relay team that won the gold medal for the last year.” Coach Herndon already has all the statistics on Johnson, but merely wanted an update on his performance. What she hears from Kathy and Paula is all good news.

Going farther down the rabbit hole, Coach Herndon asks, “okay, so who is this Mitchell guy?” Kathy replies, “Gary Mitchell. He ran the mile and the half mile. Mitchell won the gold medal at State in both of those events last Spring.” Paula adds, “and last Winter, and the year before that. And, so on.” As expected, Coach Herndon asks, “where did Mitchell go to college?” Paula replies, “well, he kind of didn’t. He’s traveling the country organizing charity races.” Coach Herndon raises her eyebrows, not quite believing what she is hearing. Apparently, she’s heard a lot more than she was expecting today.

Coach Herndon closes the door, and tells Kathy and Paula, “this is strictly between you and me. If Eddie and Mark can run those times, they won’t have to go to class. If they want A’s, they’ll get them. The school will likely give them both a full scholarship, and a degree in whatever fits them best, just like Darryl Stone. If they want to run, trust me, something will be worked out. And, I could probably manage getting an internship for Eddie and Mark like you both have.” Kathy and Paula are satisfied with what Coach Herndon has relayed to them.

² The National high school record in the 440-yard dash is 45.8 seconds, held by Ronnie Ray, set in 1973.

As soon as they are out of the physical education building, Kathy and Paula, jumping into the air, exchange a very energetic high-five. Kathy exclaims, “they’re on their way!” Paula replies, “let’s go and start on their applications!” Kathy and Paula then head to the student center, wasting no time to begin filling out Eddie’s and Mark’s applications. Once they have done as much as they can, they head back to Kathy’s house.

When they arrive back at Eddie and Kathy’s home, they find Eddie and Mark who just finished hanging three 6-inch by 8-foot beautifully crafted oak boards on the wall, stained to match the color of the oak floor. On the boards are numerous pegs to hang all of Eddie’s and Kathy’s track medals. Above the medal collection is a matching oak board, with a Bible verse carved into the wood. The verse is 1 Corinthians 9:24, which states, “Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you win.” As he is hanging his and Kathy’s medals, Eddie asks Kathy, “so, what do you think?” Kathy exclaims, “I love it!” Eddie tells Kathy, “pictures on the wall are forgettable, but no one will ever forget seeing this.” Mark comments, “you got that right.”

Paula tells Mark, “you should have made four.” Mark asks, “why? I left enough room for Kathy’s future medals.” Paula informs Mark, “well, Eddie might be winning more medals too.” Eddie then chimes in, and tells Kathy, “okay, Katarina. Spill the beans.” Kathy asks Eddie, “what makes you think there are beans?” Eddie replies, “for one, asking me why I think there are beans. And, when Paula said, ‘Eddie might be winning more medals,’ well, that kind of gives it away.”

Spilling the beans, Kathy explains, “okay, so me and Paula went over to the University and got applications for you guys. Then, we stopped by to see Coach Herndon, and she was there. Then, she asked if we talked to you guys about running, and we said we did. So, then she asked about your times and I told her. So, then she said that she can get you a full scholarship, and you don’t have to go to any classes. Oh, and she said you’ll get all A’s. Oh yeah! And, she also said she can probably get you guys an internship too!” Mark asks, “are you serious?” Eddie replies, “yeah, she’s serious. It’s her long run-on sentence that gives it away.”

Kathy then asks Eddie, “so, you might run?” Eddie replies, “yeah. If I don’t have to go to classes, and I get all A’s.” Excited that Eddie is strongly considering running, Paula asks Mark, “okay, so are you going to run too?” Mark replies, “only if I don’t have to go to class. And, I want all A’s too.” Kathy jumps up and down, giving everyone in the room a high-five. It looks like Eddie and Mark might just be running for the University after all.

Eddie informs Kathy and Paula, “oh, and there’s one more thing.” Expecting the worst, Kathy asks Eddie, “and just what would that be, Mr. fastest man in the State?” Eddie replies, “if you guys have a Mr. Crum at the University who’s going to call me to his office every week, I’m out of there.” Paula comments, “now, that’s one thing you definitely don’t have to worry about. They treat us like gold.” Eddie gives Mark a high-five, pretty much sealing the deal. Now, it’s up to the school to come through.

Kathy works with Eddie, and Paula with Mark, completing their college applications. For their majors, Eddie writes in “Automotive Engineering,” which is not exactly a choice at the University. Eddie’s proposed major prompts Mark to write in “Building Construction”. Once they are all done, Eddie and Mark sign their applications. Knowing Kathy and Paula, the applications will be hand delivered to the school first thing tomorrow morning, along with all the supporting documentation.

While Kathy and Paula are trying to get Eddie and Mark enrolled in the University, Mark has been busy building his and Paula’s house, working out as he works. Eddie has been working twenty hours a week at the service station. Working out extensively, Eddie is training hard just in case the University comes through in meeting his ridiculous demands. Neither Eddie nor Mark is expecting the University to come through, but Kathy and Paula are very hopeful.

One day, while Mark and Paula are working on their house, Paula announces out of the blue, “hey! I’m going to the card shop and talk to what’s her name? Nora, I think.” Mark asks, “do you want me to come, or should I just keep working?” Seeing that Mark is almost finished installing the underground low-voltage electrical wiring going to the pool area, Paula replies, “I’ll just go. You look like you’re really busy. And besides, I’m just going to pick up the information. I’ll be back in less than an hour.” Mark replies, “okay. I should be done when you get back.” Paula heads over to the card shop to get the ball rolling on their wedding plans.

Paula arrives at the card shop, and quickly finds Nora. After they introduce themselves to each other, Paula tells Nora, “you helped my friend Kathy with her wedding. I’m getting married sometime soon, and I really need to get started on this.” Nora asks, “Kathy and Eddie?” Paula replies, “yeah! You remembered!” Nora tells Paula, “that was a really fun couple to work with. Jennifer told me that was the best beach wedding ever.” Paula informs Nora, “I want my wedding to be kind of like Kathy’s.” That is good news to Nora, since Kathy and Eddie’s wedding was kind of easy to do.

Nora asks Paula a few questions, finding out that Paula, like Kathy, prefers to leave the bulk of the work in the hands of a wedding planner.

After all, Paula and Mark are building a house, Paula is in college, and track practice takes up a lot of time. Paula picks up Jennifer, the wedding planner's, card. Nora hands Paula a wedding checklist that is two pages long, just so she will know what is involved. Before she leaves, Paula looks over the invitations, having a good idea which one she wants. Paula thanks Nora, leaving the card shop with confidence that everything is going to go well.

Paula heads back to her and Mark's house, where she tells Mark, "it's all done! We're getting married in the morning!" Mark replies, "wow! That was easy." Paula admits, "I wish it was that easy. But, I got a packet of information, and now we can start!" Mark suggests, "maybe we can call the wedding planner in a little while. I'm almost done." Paula helps Mark as he finishes up. They pack up, and head out to call Jennifer, the wedding planner. Mark and Paula now have a plan.

As the end of the Summer draws near, Angelo expresses a little concern about Eddie. Eddie is now married, and has some expenses that he did not have while he lived at home. Curious whether Eddie is financially okay, Angelo asks Eddie, "hey, is twenty hours a week enough for you, or do you need more work to make it?" Eddie, rebuilding a benched carburetor, replies, "no. We're doing really good." Angelo asks, "is Kathy working?" Eddie replies, "yeah. She got an internship as part of her scholarship. She works ten to fifteen hours a week with the high school team during the track season. They pay her really well."

Angelo, thinking about what Eddie said, asks, "now, I'm curious. How are you guys able to make it? After all, if you're putting in twenty hours, and Kathy is only putting in ten hours, you guys must have something else going on." Eddie replies, "the stock market. I've been investing in the stock market since I was sixteen years old." Angelo asks, "is that where you guys got the money for the house?" Eddie replies, "yeah, mostly." Angelo, like many people, is very curious how Eddie and Kathy were able to buy a house in the expensive town behind the school.

Eddie then puts out the offer to Angelo, "I can tell you a few stocks that are guaranteed to go up." Angelo asks, "how can you know which ones go up?" Eddie replies, "I spend a lot of time studying the market." Eddie, in fact, does spend a lot of time studying the stock market, but not in the usual sense. He travels to the future through the portal, and figures out which stocks will go up the most. Then, he comes back to his time, and buys the stocks, already knowing how much they will go up and exactly when to sell them.

Angelo asks Eddie the names of a few stocks that are guaranteed to return a profit. Eddie tells Angelo that he will have to go down to the bank, and open a brokerage account. Angelo decides that he will give the

stock market a try. After all, Eddie seems to be having an easy time. Angelo is still working more than 50 hours a week. If Eddie is right, Angelo figures he might get a break from the long hours he has been putting in for years. And, Angelo could definitely use a break. He hasn't had a real vacation in years.

Right before lunch, Angelo asks Eddie, "hey, can you man the station? I'm going to the bank and open the brokerage account." Eddie replies, "sure. I have to reinstall this carburetor anyway. I wanted to get this job done before I left." Angelo is wasting no time investing in the stock market. Even if Eddie is wrong, Angelo figures that, if he invests for the long term, he can't go wrong. Angelo heads out for a while, hoping to make his future a little brighter.

When Angelo returns, Eddie is just finishing reinstalling the carburetor, and almost ready to crank the engine. Eddie asks, "how did it go?" Angelo replies, "great. I filled out the application, and gave them a big deposit. They said I'll be ready to go once the account is set up in a day or two. I'm on my way!" Angelo energetically asks Eddie, "so, what should I buy?" Eddie replies, "I have all the information at home. I'll bring a list for you tomorrow." Angelo replies, "good deal! Thanks!" Angelo is hopefully now on his way to working fewer hours.

Mark and Paula have been spending the remainder of the Summer working on their house. With the foundation finished, the well drilled, and the septic tank installed, things are moving along quite well. Mark and Paula are having a pool put in, which Paula is anxiously waiting to be completed. Mark is currently framing the house, which is taking much longer than expected. Instead of nailing the framing together, Mark is using screws. And, seeing how Eddie and Kathy's house was framed with 2 by 8's, instead of 2 by 4's, Mark decided to do the same.

Late one Saturday morning, Eddie and Kathy drive to Mark and Paula's construction site, wondering if they want to go and get pizza. Driving up, they see Mark, Paula, Bobby B., and Erika all working on the house. Seeing Eddie and Kathy, Mark yells out to everyone, "hey! The second shift is here! We can go get pizza now!" Eddie tells Mark, "wow! It looks like you got a whole crew now!" Mark asks, "well, what do you think?" Eddie, taking a close look, replies, "it's coming along well. And, it's looking really solid!"

Seeing Erika, Eddie mentions to her, "hey, I need my training sled back now." Erika, who expresses a bit of disappointed, replies, "can't we use it for a little while longer?" Eddie informs Erika, "I got Tessa and yours done, so I need mine back. I made one for John too. Yours is at my house." With a sudden burst of excitement, Erika gives Eddie a high-five, telling him, "thank you so much!" Erika tells Eddie that his training sled has

helped her a lot in her sprints, and that she and Tessa have improved a lot. Eddie asks, “so, has anyone timed you recently?” Erika replies, “no. But, I know I’m a lot faster now. I can tell.”

As everyone is getting ready to head to the pizzeria, Kathy tells Erika, “by the way, Mr. Frazier is going to start track practice this year when school starts.” Erika asks, “really? Why?” Kathy replies, “to maintain a competitive edge over the other schools in the division. Some of the other teams in the area are starting practice early too.” Erika, happy to hear the news, tells Kathy, “that will definitely make Fall semester a lot better. It will give me something fun to do after school.”

Eddie asks Bobby B., “so, are you still throwing the shot-put?” Bobby B. replies, “yeah. I’ve been practicing a lot with Erika. And, I have a slave driver for a boss who keeps me in shape.” Kathy interjects, “Eddie might be going to the University, and running with our team.” Bobby B. replies, “really?” Eddie comments, “yeah. But, only if they meet my high demands.” Bobby B. curiously asks, “what demands?” Eddie explains, “I told Kathy that I would run only if I don’t have to go to classes, and I get all A’s.” Bobby B. tells Kathy, “they’ll never go for that!” Kathy reassures Bobby B., “oh, yeah they will!” Bobby B. asks, “are you serious?” Kathy, very confident of herself, replies, “uh huh. They will. You’ll see.”

Bobby B., now with Kathy’s full attention, indirectly asks, “I wonder if there could be a place on the team for me.” Kathy asks Bobby B., “how far are you throwing?” Bobby B. replies, “I’m throwing over 65 feet now.” Kathy asks, “with the twelve or the sixteen-pound?” Bobby B. replies, “with the sixteen-pound. I gave my twelve-pound shot to Erika. We’ve been practicing together. She’s kind of interested in throwing it next year.” Erika interjects, “if they let me.” Kathy asks Erika, “how far can you throw it?” Erika replies, “with the twelve-pound, about 50 feet now.” Kathy informs Erika, “hon, if you can throw the shot-put 50 feet, you’ve made that event!”

Kathy, again focusing her attention to Bobby B., informs him, “and, trust me. If you can throw over 65 feet, I’m sure they’d be interested in talking with you.” Quite surprised, Bobby B. replies, “really?” Kathy tells him, “yeah. I’ll bring it up to our coaches the next chance I get.” They all head out to lunch together, having a reunion of sorts, with Bobby B. and Erika getting some good news today.

Back at the service station, Angelo is informed by the bank that his brokerage account is now active. Wanting to get started immediately, Angelo gets on the phone and buys the stocks that Eddie recommended. Angelo hangs up the phone with the bank, and tells Eddie, “I’m on my way!” Eddie asks, “to where?” Angelo replies, “hopefully to working a few less hours! I just bought the stocks you told me about.” Eddie replies,

“awesome!” Eddie reminds Angelo that some of them need to be sold at the end of the year, and not to carry them into the next year. Angelo is hopeful that the stocks will go up. Eddie, however, knows the stocks will perform, and perform well.

While Eddie and Angelo are talking, bad news drives into the station. A blue Corvette, with Paul Mahoney behind the wheel, is the last thing that either Eddie or Angelo wanted to see today. Eddie yells out to Angelo, “here comes trouble!” Angelo looks up, and replies, “not that guy again. I wonder what his problem is today.” Eddie replies, “his Johnson Rod must have failed again.” Angelo replies, “I must have put in a Chinese Johnson Rod. My fault.”

Mahoney gets out of his car, and heads toward Angelo. Angelo, looking out from behind the engine he is working on, asks, “what can I do for you today?” Mahoney, with a blank stare, does not even reply. Knowing that Mahoney could represent trouble, Eddie takes a peek and sees Mahoney is hiding a tire iron behind his back. Eddie yells out to Angelo, “hey! Watch out!” Mahoney raises the tire iron, and runs toward Angelo, who is leaning over an engine. Eddie runs over, attempting to intercept Mahoney as he tries to strike Angelo with the tire iron. Mahoney strikes Angelo with a glancing blow that Angelo was able to partially block and deflect. Eddie grabs Mahoney, placing him in an arm lock.

Holding Mahoney in an arm lock, Eddie lowers the Jeep he has been working on to a few inches above the ground. Mahoney tries to fight Eddie, but is very unsuccessful. Eddie takes Mahoney over to the Jeep, and shoves Mahoney’s foot under the tire. He then tells Angelo to lower the lift all the way, which Angelo is very glad to do. Mahoney screams out in pain, as Eddie tells him, “don’t even think about going anywhere.” It’s not that Mahoney can walk away with his foot stuck under the tire. Angelo heads to the office to call the police, as Mahoney displays a colorful vocabulary laced with a generous portion of expletives.

Eddie tells Mahoney, “start talking.” Mahoney screams out, “get this off me!” Eddie calmly replies, “no. I said start talking.” Mahoney, who is both in pain and irate, exclaims, “he turned me in!” Eddie firmly tells Mahoney, “no one ‘turned you in’ as you claim. What are you talking about?” Mahoney exclaims, “get this off my foot!” Eddie again replies, “no.” Mahoney tells Eddie, “I’m going to kick your ass!” Eddie replies, “go ahead, junior. Waiting.”

Mahoney tries to hit Eddie, but Eddie avoids the punches. Eddie, remembering what Mark told Chuckie in physics class last year, messes with Mahoney and tells him, “this is called the rope-a-dope. That makes you the dope.” Eddie moves a little closer, prompting Mahoney to strike again. Eddie swiftly moves back, dodging the punch, and tells Mahoney,

“see that? The rope-a-dope. Go ahead, try again, junior.” Mahoney gets even more irate that Eddie is messing with him, and throws another punch. Eddie swiftly dodges Mahoney’s punch, and yells, “strike three! You’re out of there!”

When Angelo returns to the service area, Eddie asks Angelo, “are you okay?” Angelo replies, “yeah.” Turning his attention to Mahoney, Angelo exclaims, “what was that all about?” Instead of answering Angelo, Mahoney exclaims, “get this off my foot!”

Angelo takes a hand-held pneumatic grinding wheel, and connects it to an air hose. Sticking the grinding wheel in front of Mahoney’s face, Angelo engages the tool for a few seconds, telling Mahoney, “if you ever come back to my shop, I’m going to take you apart, piece by piece, with this! Got it?” Mahoney exclaims, “yeah! Yeah! I got it! Just get this off my foot!” Eddie firmly tells Mahoney, “no.” Eddie is perfectly happy to let the Jeep’s tire sit on Mahoney’s foot until the police arrive.

The police arrive, and Officer Richard Hayes, the senior officer, immediately sees the problem. He has had enough dealings with Mahoney in the past, so he tells his partner to radio for a backup. Richard walks in, and asks Angelo, “what do we got going on here today?” Angelo, pointing to Mahoney, explains, “that guy walked in and hit me with a tire iron. He went psycho.” Eddie adds, “that’s Paul Mahoney. He was in here last Summer. I’m guessing he wasn’t too happy with his repair job.”

Officer Hayes bluntly asks Mahoney, “son, did you hit this man with a tire iron?” Mahoney replies, exclaiming, “get this tire off me!” The officer tells Eddie to lift the Jeep, then asks him, “who thought of this?” Eddie replies, “me. Guilty as charged. He was out of control.” Richard whispers to Eddie, “nice job. I couldn’t have done a better restraining job myself.”

Eddie lifts the Jeep, and Mahoney exclaims, “you broke my foot! You broke it!” Sounding a bit like Mr. Zunde, Eddie replies, “that would be your problem, not mine.” Richard, pointing to Angelo, asks Mahoney again, “now, did you hit this man with a tire iron?” Mahoney replies, “I’m not saying anything to you. I’m exercising my right to remain silent.” That about says it all. Mahoney’s father is an attorney, so he knows what and what not to say.

After a conversation on the radio, Richard’s partner informs Richard that Mahoney has jumped bail, and failed to show for his hearing a few weeks ago. Mahoney, who apparently has been running from the law, is arrested, placed in handcuffs, and taken away by the backup unit.

While Richard is taking information for his report, Eddie informs Richard that Mahoney mentioned that Angelo turned him in. Richard

clearly remembers the incident from this past Summer when Mahoney was arrested for possession of heroin and a few other banned substances. Once Richard is finished acquiring the information for his report, he assures Angelo that Mahoney will not be back on the street anytime soon.

Once the officers have left, Eddie comments, “well, I guess that ruined Mahoney’s day. And, with his foot, I guess he’s not going to be running anymore. I’m not so sure we’ll be seeing him again.” Angelo replies, “if he ever shows up here again, next time I’m not going to be so nice.” Eddie tells Angelo, “well, we still have Mr. Crum out there. He’ll be back.” Angelo, who is now in a mood, comments, “that guy is another type of problem. There should be a law against being that stupid.” Angelo and Eddie get back to work, getting one problem off the road for everyone else.

Not everything that goes on at Angelo’s Service Station is bad news. One day, out of the blue, an unexpected guest decides to pull in and fill up his tank simply because he happened to be in the area. The patron yells out to Eddie, “hey, you work here now!” Eddie replies, “Kurt! How have you been?” Eddie yells over to Angelo, “hey, Angelo! This is Kurt Richter, the engineer who modified Kathy’s Porsche!”

When Eddie met Kurt last Spring, he told him about Angelo’s Service Station. Kurt was in the area, saw the sign, and decided to stop by. Angelo stops what he is doing, and walks over to meet the Georgia Tech engineer that he’s heard so much about over the years. Kurt, likewise, has heard a lot about Angelo, but they have never met.

Angelo tells Kurt, “wow! I’ve heard so much about you. It’s nice to finally meet you! That was an impressive job you did on Kathy’s Porsche.” Kurt replies, “it’s nice to meet you too. And yeah, that particular 914 was an interesting project. I was wondering what ever happened with that car.” Angelo tells Kurt the story about Richie Dennison, and that the car never made it to the track. Kurt is surprised to hear that the Porsche 914 was never put into service to do what it was built to excel at.

Kurt mentions, “well, I was certainly glad to hear from Eddie that the 914 is back on the road again.” Angelo then explains, “Eddie broke down the engine, and we found a valve got crushed. Eddie and Kathy fixed it. Kathy’s now driving it every day.” Kurt replies, “wow! A valve got crushed. They must have downshifted and overran the valve train.” Angelo replies, “we thought that someone revved it past the redline³.” Kurt replies, “that’s not possible. That particular engine doesn’t really

³ For the installed engine, the factory redline was originally 7,200 rpm.

have a redline.” An engine that doesn’t have a redline doesn’t make much sense to Angelo and Eddie. Neither Angelo nor Eddie can just let Kurt’s comment fly by without investigating the reason why.

Wanting to know what Kurt did to modify the engine, Angelo asks, “no redline? How did you manage to do that?” Kurt explains, “all the mechanicals are perfectly balanced. The weight difference of each piston is less than a half gram. The same thing with the valves. And, the valve springs and camshaft aren’t stock. The cam is balanced and has a much steeper profile than the original stock version. The crankshaft is balanced and has oversized bearings. And, the valve springs are a whole lot stronger and stiffer than the stock ones.”

Kurt, explaining when the engine reaches its limit, continues, “the engine gets to a point where it just won’t rev any faster. I suppose it might have a redline when the motor is not loaded but, on the road, you can safely take it to 10,000 rpm. I’ve taken it to 11,000 rpm once. But, on the road, you’ll find that, at the higher speeds, wind resistance becomes the issue.” Eddie replies, “wow,” and is at a loss for any more words. Eddie, however, does think back to when he was in Miss Amherst’s physics class and learned about wind resistance and drag.

Kurt continues, “since the valve train was no longer the limiting factor, I replaced the fuel injectors with a model that can deliver a little more fuel. That resulted in more torque, but no additional rpms. As a result, the acceleration improved. When I finished the engine, the distributor advance was seemingly the limiting factor of why the engine won’t rev higher. I could have solved that problem, but anything mechanical has its limits. So, it would have just led to another problem that would have to be solved. So, I just left it as is.”

Kurt further explains, “cooling the engine, though, was a real issue. If you look underneath, you’ll see two curved steel plate assemblies that direct air up into the engine compartment. The plates are both structural and functional. While you can run the engine at 10,000 rpm, you just can’t do it forever.” Eddie remarks, “that would explain all the gauges.” Kurt replies, “exactly. And, normally cylinders two and five will be running just a little hotter than the others. Those are the ones to watch.” Eddie, Angelo and Kurt talk a while longer about the modifications that were made to Kathy’s 914. Needless to say, Angelo and Eddie have a lot of interesting questions for Kurt.

Eddie inquires of Kurt, “when I tuned up the engine, I noticed it ran a little rougher than I expected. I had to adjust the timing slightly. Is there any reason for that?” Kurt smiles, and replies, “oh, yeah! Advance the timing three to four degrees beyond the factory specs, and set the idle to at least 1,200 rpm. You can then rev the engine to 10,000 rpm. When

you hit about 6,000 rpm, the engine will really come alive. Below 6,000 rpm, there's really not too much difference compared with a regular 911 engine, other than it's a little noisier. That's because of the steeper camshaft profile."

As he is taking a few notes, Eddie comments, "we clocked it from zero to sixty right at 6.5 seconds. But, that was shifting at the redline on the tach. So, it will actually perform a lot better?" Eddie already knows the answer, but he wants to hear Kurt's take. Kurt replies, "of course. If you tune it like I mentioned, it easily does zero to sixty in better than four and a half seconds. On the track, it was once clocked at 4.3 seconds from zero to sixty." Eddie replies, "wow! Kathy will be glad to hear that."

Eddie, Angelo, and Kurt talk a bit more about the Porsche 914 as Angelo shows Kurt around the shop. Kurt is impressed that, in addition to being a well equipped three-bay auto repair facility, Angelo also has an impressive in-house machine shop and welding facility. Most of all, Kurt is impressed that he has finally found two mechanics that understand and appreciate the engineering he does.

Before Kurt leaves, Eddie asks, "I remember you were working on a Dune Buggy. How is that project coming?" Kurt replies, "it's finished. It handles like a charm. I must admit though, with the Porsche 911 engine, it's a bit overpowered. But, that's better than being underpowered." Angelo asks, "you built a Dune Buggy with a 911 engine?" Kurt explains, "yes. The 911 drive train drops right into my frame design, and the 911 front suspension drops right in too. And, I designed it so the Meyers Manx⁴ body fits perfectly." And, it's sort of street legal. Angelo asks, "how is it 'sort of street legal?'" Kurt explains, "I found a wrecked Volkswagen Beetle. I took the VIN plate off of it, and replaced the entire car, piece by piece." Angelo and Eddie laugh, understanding perfectly how Kurt managed to get the vehicle registered.

Eddie asks, "Kathy really wants a Dune Buggy. What's the chance that I can get you to build a frame for me?" Kurt replies, "I can do that. But, you'll need a 911 drive train, and it will also require a 911 front suspension. Is that what you were looking for?" Preferring a 911 engine over the comparatively anemic Volkswagen Beetle engine, Eddie replies, "sure. The drive train should be easy enough to find." Kurt advises Eddie, "if you want to build it on my frame design, start looking for a wrecked 911." Angelo informs Eddie, "there are two sitting over at Vinnie's right now."

⁴ Meyers Manx: The most popular fiberglass Dune Buggy body of all time.

Kurt then mentions, “you also might want to find a wrecked Volkswagen and get the VIN plate off of it.” Surprisingly, Angelo tells Eddie and Kurt, “I have a few VIN plates, along with the titles, from various vehicles that have disappeared over the years in the back. A few of them are Beetles.” Kurt tells Eddie the price for the frame, and Eddie agrees to having Kurt build not one, but three of them. Angelo, Eddie, and Kurt then exchange contact information, and have vowed to keep in touch.

Later that afternoon, when Kathy comes home, Eddie tells her, “hey! I have some good news about your Porsche.” Kathy replies, “oh really? What’s that?” Eddie explains, “Kurt Richter, the guy who modified your car, came by the shop today. He explained how the engine was extensively modified. If it’s tuned to his specs, the engine doesn’t have a redline.” Kathy asks, “okay, so what does this mean, Mr. Mechanic?” Eddie continues, “the engine will rev to over 10,000 rpm, and it will do zero to sixty in less than four and a half seconds.” Eddie then asks, “well? Do you want to go and try it?” Suddenly getting excited, Kathy replies, “sure! Let’s go! We can make dinner later.”

Eddie also tells Kathy, “I have some other good news.” Kathy tells Eddie, “wow! You’re just a bundle of good news today.” Eddie explains, “I got Kurt to build us a Dune Buggy frame. But, it won’t have a Volkswagen engine. It will have a Porsche 911 engine, like your car has.” Kathy exclaims, “woo-hoo! My Dune Buggy is on its way!” Eddie tells Kathy, “Angelo tells me Vinnie has two wrecked 911s at his shop. I’m going to take a look at them tomorrow. And, I’ll have to order the body.” Eddie then asks Kathy, “do you still want yellow?” All excited that her Dune Buggy project is rolling, Kathy replies, “yeah! Yellow! That’s the ticket!” Kathy is very happy that her Dune Buggy is now on its way.

As he sets the timing and idle speed to what Kurt suggested, Eddie explains more about the engine modifications to Kathy. After a few minutes of making adjustments, Eddie tells Kathy, “okay, we’re ready. Let’s go!” Kathy replies, “wow! That was like really quick!”

Since it is her car, Kathy gets behind the wheel, and Eddie gets in the passenger’s seat. They get on the road and drive toward the high school. While in first gear, Kathy takes the engine past the redline, which is something she’s never done before. As Kathy is driving, Eddie listens to the engine carefully for any signs of imminent mechanical failure. Fortunately, he hears no such sounds. In fact, at 8,000 rpm, the engine sounds very smooth. At 10,000 rpm, the engine sounds like a plane that is ready to take off.

Now that the engine is warmed up, Eddie tells Kathy, “when we get to the stop sign, accelerate as fast as you can, but don’t shift at the redline. Let it keep going.” From a standstill, Kathy pops the clutch, and floors the

accelerator. Just like Kurt said, when the engine hits 6,000 rpm, the acceleration suddenly improves. At 6,500 rpm, Eddie and Kathy get the impression that they got rear ended by a freight train. Kathy takes the engine close to 10,000 rpm and, when it sounds like it's not revving any faster, Eddie tells her, "okay, shift." Kathy shifts into second gear, and screams, "oh yeah! Awesome!"

They come to a red light at the school, where Kathy has to slow down. Kathy turns left onto the main four-lane road, again taking the car to 10,000 rpm. Kathy drives down the main road, taking the car to its limit in third gear. Quite impressed by the car's performance, Eddie is not quite believing what he just experienced. Eddie and Kathy now understand why Angelo called her Porsche a street-legal racing car.

Kathy pulls off the main road, and Eddie gets behind the wheel. Eddie drives away, with the pedal to the metal ignoring the redline on the tachometer. Sensing that the torque peak has expired just above 9,500 rpm, Eddie shifts into second gear. Second gear provides more excitement than first gear, taking the car to 60 miles per hour long before the engine is at its rev limit. Taking the car around the three-mile loop behind the high school, Eddie comments, "wow! This is exactly like what Kurt described." Kathy replies, "pretty cool, isn't it?" Eddie comments, "yeah. But, I get a really weird feeling just ignoring the redline."

After discovering the newly found features of her Porsche 914, Kathy asks Eddie, "hey, do you mind if I let my dad try it out?" Eddie replies, "no. Let's go and see if he's home." Eddie heads to Kathy's parent's house. Kathy is hoping that her dad is home from work. As they drive up, Kathy gets excited, seeing her dad's car in the driveway. Eddie parks Kathy's Porsche on the road, in the same place it was parked by Angelo when Kathy first got it.

Since she doesn't have her key, Kathy knocks on her parent's door. Her dad opens the door and, before he can say anything, Kathy tells him, "hey! This is really cool! You have to come and see my car! Follow me!" Kathy runs toward her car, as Eddie and Kathy's dad try to keep up. Kathy's dad asks Eddie, "what's this all about?" Eddie replies, "we found out something new about the Porsche, and she couldn't wait to show you."

Kathy tells her dad, "okay. Get in! I got to show you this!" Knowing that Kathy will be gone for a few minutes, Eddie tells her, "I'll go in the back yard and check the pool water." Kathy drives to the four-lane road, which is less than a half mile away. Kathy's father can clearly tell that Kathy is very excited about something.

Turning onto the main road, Kathy tells her dad, “okay. Watch this.” With an empty road in front of her, Kathy pops the clutch, and takes the car well past the redline. Shifting into second gear, it doesn’t take long for the car to reach 60 miles per hour, which is 4.4 seconds to be exact. Coming to an intersection, Kathy slows down, and turns onto a side street.

Kathy asks her dad, “so, what do you think?” Kathy’s father exclaims, “wow! I don’t even know where to begin!” Kathy asks her father, “do you want to give it a try?” Kathy’s father, who always wanted a Porsche 914, can’t resist the temptation. Kathy’s father gets behind the wheel, remembering when he and Kathy took their first drive in the car when she first got it.

Kathy energetically explains, “okay, so Eddie talked to Kurt, the guy who modified my car. And, so Kurt said the car really doesn’t have a redline, and it will do zero to sixty in like four and a half seconds. And, then Eddie tuned up the car the way Kurt said to. So, now when it gets to like 6,000 rpm, it’s like Braden kicked it in the rear end.” Kathy’s father comments, “yeah, I noticed that.”

Kathy’s father, being a bit apprehensive, takes the car onto the four-lane road. Like Kathy, Kathy’s father takes the 914 to sixty miles per hour in about four and a half seconds. Every bit as impressed as Kathy is with the car’s performance, he asks, “can we take it around the loop behind the school?” Kathy replies, “yeah. That’s the road I drove on when I first got it.”

Taking the Porsche 914 on the curvy back roads, it quickly becomes evident to Kathy and her father what a gymkhana⁵ car really is. Not only does the car handle like a racing car, but accelerates like one too. Kathy’s father asks, “so, this car could perform like this all along?” Kathy replies, “yeah. But, we just didn’t know it until Eddie talked with Kurt.” Kathy’s father comments, “wow. This is definitely impressive.”

Eddie hears Kathy’s Porsche driving toward the house, so he walks with Kathy’s mom from the pool area to the front. Eddie greets Kathy, telling her, “there are no dead frogs!” Kathy replies, “one dead frog in a pool per lifetime is enough.”

Eddie asks Kathy’s father, “so, what did you think?” Kathy’s father replies, “I had no idea my daughter was driving around in a racing car when she was in high school. This car is seriously impressive.” Kathy’s

⁵ Gymkhana Car: A car, usually heavily modified, intended for agility racing.

father then asks her, “how much did you pay for your car again?” Kathy replies, “the final bill came to two hundred sixty seven dollars, and seventy-five cents. Oh, and plus whatever it cost to register it.”

Wanting to know the newly discovered details, Kathy’s father asks Eddie what they learned from Kurt. After Eddie’s explanation, Kathy’s father, needless to say, is more impressed with Kathy’s Porsche now than when she first got it.

While the men are talking, Kathy’s mother asks Kathy, “would you and Eddie like to stay for dinner?” Kathy replies, “I was hoping you’d ask that. I didn’t really feel like cooking anything tonight anyway.” If Kathy’s mother didn’t offer, Kathy and Eddie probably would have headed straight to the pizzeria. But tonight, the dinnertime conversation will revolve around Kathy’s Porsche 914.

Eddie is enjoying his job as a mechanic, as long as Paul Mahoney or Mr. Crum doesn’t drive into the shop. Mr. Crum does, however, bring a little entertainment with him when he drives in. Part of what Eddie likes about his job is that he gets to meet a lot of different people. Another benefit is, working with Angelo, he can essentially set his own hours. He also occasionally runs into a few old acquaintances, classmates, and even a few former competitors from running track.

Today, an old classmate drives in whom Eddie has not seen since graduation. Lynn Berson, who was a photographer for the yearbook and the high school newspaper, drives in behind the wheel of a Ford Mustang, which she is test driving. Walking into the office, Lynn takes a seat along with her father, waiting for someone to help her. Since Angelo has not arrived yet, that person would be Eddie.

Eddie walks in and, seeing Lynn, exclaims, “hey! It’s Lynn! How have you been?” Lynn explains, “really good! I’m going to be taking photography classes!” That’s no surprise to anyone. When in high school, Lynn always had her camera with her wherever she went. Eddie asks, “where?” Lynn replies, “over at the community college. So is Penny. But, I need a car, since classes will be starting really soon. I’ve been looking all Summer, but I’m kind of running out of time.”

Lynn introduces Eddie to her father. Lynn’s father has been to Angelo’s Service Station many times in the past, and is where he buys his gas. Eddie and Lynn catch up on what they’ve done over the Summer. The biggest surprise to Lynn is that Eddie is now married. It is, however, no surprise to Eddie that Lynn and Penny are going to be taking photography classes.

Eddie asks Lynn, “so, what can I do for you today?” Lynn explains, “so, I’m test driving this car, and I want to have it checked out to make sure it’s okay.” Eddie tells Lynn, “I can check it out for you.” Lynn replies, “great! We were hoping someone could look it over for me.” Eddie gets the keys, and drives the five-year-old Mustang into a vacant service bay.

As Eddie looks over the vehicle, he explains to Lynn and her father, “the first thing you want to do is check over the body. If it checks out, then you look at the mechanicals. If it passes, then you begin to look at future big ticket maintenance items, such as brakes, tires, and the clutch.” Lynn’s father may already understand what Eddie is explaining, but he mentions it for the benefit of Lynn.

Eddie looks over the vehicle, noticing the paint job is not too bad for a five-year-old vehicle. That could represent good news, but could easily represent bad news as well. Examining the body under the hood and the door hinges, Eddie notices the bolts have not been cracked⁶ open. Opening the trunk, however, Eddie notices that the bolts securing the hinges have been cracked open at one time, evidenced by small cracks in the paint around the bolts.

Looking a little further, Eddie examines the inside of the trunk, looking for any variation in the sheet metal. In the trunk, under the carpet, Eddie notices a minor crease in the sheet metal, a clear sign that the vehicle has been in an accident.

Eddie tells Lynn and her father, “the car has been hit in the rear. Let me show you what I found.” Already checking over the car himself, Lynn’s father is quite surprised to hear that. Showing them the floor to the trunk, Eddie explains, “there is a slight crease in the sheet metal. Since the crease goes diagonally, I suspect that it was hit on the side, not rear-ended. And, the trunk lid has been removed at one point. I know that because, when they repaired it, they didn’t paint the inside of the trunk.” Eddie shows them the bolts, which they can clearly see have been removed at one time.

Eddie continues, “okay, so this is what happened. The car got hit on the left side. They tried to realign the frame, but they apparently didn’t do too good of a job. The reason the paint looks so good is because they repainted the whole vehicle. And, the reason they repainted the vehicle is because of all the bodywork that had to be done. There’s probably a lot of body filler here and there. So, it’s clear that the car has been in a collision. Do you want me to continue inspecting it?” Lynn’s father,

⁶ Crack a bolt: Automotive term meaning to remove a bolt. Evidenced on the automobile body by chipped paint.

clearly seeing what Eddie has discovered, replies, “no. I think we’ll pass on this one.” Apparently, Mr. Berson does not want to purchase a vehicle that has been in a collision.

Eddie casually mentions, “well, Vinnie definitely did not fix this car.” Lynn asks, “who’s Vinnie?” Eddie replies, “he owns the auto body shop across the street. When Vinnie fixes something, it’s done right. And, his paint jobs are a whole lot better than this.” Eddie asks, “have you seen Paula’s Beach Patrol Jeep?” Both Lynn and her father indicate they have seen the Beach Patrol Jeep driving around, as has most everyone in the town. Eddie tells them, “that’s Vinnie’s work.”

Lynn, a little upset, thought she found the perfect car. Eddie asks her, “what exactly are you looking for?” Lynn replies, “a Mustang. I’ve always wanted one.” Eddie asks Lynn, “what’s your budget?” Mr. Berson mentions, “I’m helping Lynn buy it. Actually, I’ll be buying it for her.” Eddie is glad to hear that, for it is good news. Most eighteen year olds do not have enough money to purchase a quality vehicle.

Eddie asks Lynn and Mr. Berson, “do you know where John Malea’s place is on Sunrise Highway?” Mr. Berson replies, “no. Who is he?” Eddie explains, “John purchases muscle cars, such as Mustangs, Camaros, Corvettes, and Firebirds, and restores them to perfect condition. He also takes a few of the muscle cars and turns them into super muscle cars. John inspects a car very carefully before he buys one. Some of the cars on his lot have been modified to perform better. Some have not, and are close to stock. But, they’re all in top condition. If you’re really looking for a Mustang, I’d definitely check it out.”

Lynn suddenly becomes a little more excited. Lynn asks Eddie, “do you think he has any Mustangs on his lot right now?” Eddie replies, “he probably has a dozen or so. There’s always 75 or so cars on his lot, and they’re all in great condition.” Lynn asks her father, “can we go look?” Mr. Berson replies, “I think we will. The guy from the used car lot assured us that this car has not been in an accident. I really don’t see how we can trust him anymore.” And, Lynn is up against a tight deadline. School will be starting very soon.

Finished with their test drive, Lynn and her father drive back to the used car dealership to drop off the vehicle. After that, they will head to John Malea’s place, where they will find many vehicles to choose from, which are all in great condition. Eddie gets back to work, glad to help out one of his high school friends.

When Eddie returns home, Kathy is already home from her day. Kathy has been out shopping for school, and has had a long day. When Eddie walks in, he finds Kathy composing what looks like a paper for a class.

Eddie asks Kathy, "what are you working on?" Kathy replies, "so, this guy called on the phone, and wanted to know if I wanted to buy life insurance. The guy was from India." Eddie replies, "really? What did you tell him?" Kathy replies, "it was so funny, that I'm writing it out. Maybe I can use it for a class paper someday. I'm almost done. Go wash up and I'll let you read it."

Once Kathy is finished documenting her first encounter with a telemarketer, she lets Eddie read the script as she remembers it. Eddie reads:

Guy: Hello, ma'am. My name is John. The reason why I am calling you today is to let you know that we are offering a special life insurance rate for the new homeowners in your area.

Me: First of all, junior, your name is not John.

Guy: I can assure you, ma'am. My name is John.

Me: No, it's not. You sound like your from India. Your name is like Hashish or something.

Guy: I can assure you, ma'am. My name is John.

Me: No, it's not. Look, John. The people you work with don't like you.

Guy: I will let you know, ma'am, they assigned me this name John. That is because Americans find it difficult to pronounce my real name. But, how can it be that you are sure that they don't like me?

Me: Because, John, in the United States, John is a slang term for where you go to the bathroom. And, also, a John is a slang term for someone who visits a prostitute. That is how I know they don't like you. You really don't want to use the name John. Do you understand what I am saying?

Guy: I think I understand what you are saying. I can assure you, ma'am, that I was not aware of this.

Me: Look, John. You really need to get a better name. In the United States, we have a game called football.

Guy: Yes, I know about American football. I have seen this game once on television.

Me: Good. So, there was a really tough football player a while ago. His name is Rosey Grier. You need to use the name Rosey. That will make you sound much more American.

Guy: I was not aware of this, ma'am. I would like to thank you for giving me this information.

Me: So, from now on, I want you to use the name Rosey. People will listen to you a lot better.

Guy: I would like to again thank you for this information. From now on, I will use the name Rosey. Am I pronounce that correctly?

Me: Perfect. So, you have a nice day, Rosey.

Eddie laughs, and tells Kathy, "that's really kind of funny! But, we'd better not show this to my brother." Kathy replies, "oops. I guess not."

Eddie mentions, "now that we have a house, I wonder if we'll be getting a lot of these calls." Kathy explains, "if we do, I'll just mess with them, and talk them in circles. It was kind of fun messing with that guy. And, I was trying not to laugh when I was on the phone." Eddie replies, "at least you had some fun with it."

After reading Kathy's future paper for who knows which class, Eddie asks, "what's for dinner?" Kathy replies, "summa." Eddie asks, "summa?" Kathy explains, "yeah. Summa. Summa this and summa that. Like, some of this and some of that." Eddie observes, "wow! You're in an interesting mood today!" Kathy replies, "yeah. Because track is starting again, and I can't wait." That evening, Kathy and Eddie make dinner from whatever happens to be in the refrigerator.

The next day, Lynn Berson returns to Angelo's Service Station along with her father, pulling up in another Ford Mustang, this one being red. Lynn and her father again walk in, and take a seat. Walking into the office, Eddie greets Lynn, telling her, "hey there! Do you have another one that you want checked out?" Lynn replies, "yeah. We went to John Malea's lot, like you said. He had a whole lot of nice looking ones." Mr. Berson

adds, "Mr. Malea was very nice. He explained to us exactly what he does. And, he said that, if the car was in an accident, he won't even take it." Eddie tells them it will be a minute, and that he'll check it out.

Eddie finishes the paperwork for the vehicle he just finished repairing, and drives Lynn's Mustang into the service bay. Eddie begins inspecting the body, beginning at the front and working his way to the rear. Taking the time to show Lynn and Mr. Berson the sheet metal under the carpet in the trunk, Eddie tells them, "this is what the floor of the trunk should look like. As you can see, there's no crease anywhere in the sheet metal." Seeing what Eddie is talking about, Mr. Berson replies, "I can see the difference." So can Lynn.

Eddie, not finding any problem with the body, tells them, "it looks like the body checks out." Eddie lifts the car, and begins inspecting underneath.

Angelo walks up and, recognizing Mr. Berson, asks, "hey! How have you been?" Mr. Berson replies, "good. We're looking at what will hopefully be Lynn's first car." Angelo asks, "where's it from?" Mr. Berson replies, "John Malea's lot. We're test driving it." Angelo frankly informs Mr. Berson, "there's nothing wrong with it. I know John. Unless it's perfect, he won't put it on his lot." Hearing that is definitely good news to Mr. Berson. Eddie interjects, "so far, I can't find anything wrong with it."

Eddie lowers the car, finding nothing wrong underneath either. Eddie informs Lynn and Mr. Berson, "the brakes and tires are good. Nothing leaks. There's no damage underneath. And, there's no rust that I can see." Eddie then offers, "if you want, I can do a compression test." Mr. Berson tells Eddie, "go ahead. I'm sure it's fine, but I want to be sure." Eddie goes ahead with the compression test, which finds all eight cylinders are up to factory specs. With more good news, Eddie finds no other issues under the hood.

When he is finished, Eddie tells Lynn and Mr. Berson, "it checks out. If the price is right, I don't see how you can go wrong." A smile comes across Lynn's face, glad to hear this car passes inspection. Lynn clearly wants this particular car, more so than the one she drove in yesterday. Mr. Berson pays Eddie the inspection fee, letting Eddie know that it is well worth it. Lynn and Mr. Berson head back to John Malea's lot to purchase the car.

Later that afternoon, Lynn pulls into Angelo's Service Station, returning with her red Mustang. Lynn yells into the service area, "hey, Eddie! I got it!" Eddie walks out of the service bay, and exclaims, "awesome!" Eddie takes a look at the car, and can immediately tell that Lynn is very happy with it.

Lynn tells Eddie, "I want to get a photograph of you, me, and Angelo in front of my new car. Is that okay?" Eddie replies, "sure," not that there was much choice. Lynn is already getting her camera and tripod out of her trunk.

Eddie yells out to Angelo, "hey, Angelo! Do you have a minute?" Angelo replies, "sure. What's up?" Eddie replies, "Lynn wants to get a picture of us in front of her new car." Angelo walks out of the service area, remembering Lynn from yesterday.

Lynn positions Eddie and Angelo next to her car. Focusing her camera, Lynn tells Eddie and Angelo, "I'm going to set the timer. We got fifteen seconds to get set before the camera takes the photograph." Lynn sets the timer and walks over, positioning herself between Angelo and Eddie. They look at the camera and smile, and the camera takes the shot.

Lynn tells Eddie and Angelo, "okay! One more." Lynn positions Eddie near the front of the car, with his arm extended pointing to where Lynn will be positioned. Lynn positions Angelo near the driver's side door, with his arm extended, also pointing to where Lynn will be positioned. Lynn instructs them, "when I come up, point at me, look at the camera, and smile." Lynn sets the timer, walks up to the car, and poses, sitting on the front fender. With Eddie and Angelo both pointing to Lynn, the photograph is taken.

Lynn tells Eddie and Angelo, "thank you guys so much! When I develop the film, I'll bring you guys copies." Eddie asks Lynn, "do you still develop your film yourself?" Lynn replies, "yeah. I still have my darkroom in my parent's basement. And, I've bought a lot more equipment since you were there. And, I still do all my own work." Quite surprised, Eddie replies, "wow! You bought more equipment. You had quite a lot when I was there." Lynn asks Eddie, "do you guys want an eight by ten, or and eleven by fourteen?" Eddie replies, "I don't know." Lynn tells him, "I'll bring both, and see what you think."

As Lynn begins to leave, Angelo tells her, "thank you in advance for the photo. And, good luck with the Mustang. Since it came from John, it should be in perfect condition." Eddie gives Lynn a high-five, telling her, "and, remember. This car only takes Angelo's gas." Lynn tells Eddie, "don't worry. I'll be back." Lynn happily drives off, continuing to document her life through photographs.

After Lynn leaves, Angelo tells Eddie, "that was funny. This car only takes Angelo's gas." Eddie explains, "I tell that to all my friends. They know I'm only kidding. But, they all come back." Angelo replies, "I'm going to remember that. This car only takes the gas we sell here. Yeah, that sounds good." Eddie mentions, "unless it's Paul Mahoney's car. His

car takes gas with a special heroin additive.” Angelo informs Eddie, “you know, that guy never came in here before he had that problem with his fuel system. He doesn’t even buy gas here.” Eddie replies, “that’s probably a good thing. He should have paid more attention to his Johnson Rod too. It was all worn out.” Eddie and Angelo get back to work, glad to hear that Lynn is happy with her first car.