REALITY/FICTION

by Daniel J. Toemta INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

J.P., a man in his forties, is sitting down at a table in a booth. He's drinking a cup of coffee. Without a word, A WAITRESS comes over and gives him his bill. She leaves. J.P. then turns his head and looks directly at us.

J.P. The best movies in the world are the films made by indie filmmakers and the more intelligent people in Hollywood. The independent filmmakers do with what they have which is a small budget and they are somehow able to make a good film out of it. While the more intelligent filmmakers in Hollywood, who do have a lot of money for their films, make them very well, and they make big budget films which are actually good. Then there's the few others who are the medium. They make the movies which are only ok and nothing else. I mean, a person can like it, but it's nothing special. Then there's the rest. The people who makes the shit Hollywood pukes out every day, every week, every month, every year. That's the problem with Hollwood. They make too many bad movies. Now don't get me wrong. I'm not some I-wanna-belike-Steven-Spielberg kinda guy who can barely walk the distance from my coffee table to the refrigerator without stumbling in the carpet due to my drug habit. No, look at me as an observer. I see everything the world does and what's wrong with it. I see it, but I also know that I'm in no position to do anything about it. Take the movie The Getaway with Steve McQueen for instance. Arguably McQueen's greatest performance, excepting The Great Escape, and Bullitt, of course. They didn't call him the king of cool for nothing. Great directing by Peckinpah. Cinematography, script and acting are all perfectly done. (more)

J.P. (CONT'D) But this is the thing; the guy's a criminal and a robber. He takes innocent peoples money and threatens them with a gun. Now the man is practically busted out of jail by a guy with great political influence who Steve contacted through his wife. In return, he has to do a bank robbery for this guy, and he tries to set McQueen up, but he gets away and heads for Mexico with the money and his wife. And in the end, they get away with the money. A happy ending? It feels like a happy ending but is it really? I mean, the guy's a criminal and threatens unarmed people with a gun. And he even hit his wife. So he's actually not a really nice guy. But still when he gets away, we're happy for him. Now this is a variant of what I wanna do, but there's still a problem with it. You know what that is? It's realism. Realism. It's nice that they got away and that they gave Slim Pickens 30,000 dollars. But no real criminal would do that. They would just steal his car and leave him there. See what I'm saying? All this romanticizing of things, which there's a lot of in today's Hollyood movies, is not how it happens in the real world. I have this idea for a movie. There's this guy. And he's a real motherfucker. He sadistically kills women and men and even children in a small suburban town in middle America. This goes on for years, many years. And while the movie plays out, we, the audience, start to hate this man more and more until you just want him to die. He has a love interest, and she loves him too but only in his sick mind. In reality, she has a husband and two kids who she loves more than anything in the world. He kills her entire family, and when she rejects him, he kills her too. At this point, the audience just wants (more)

J.P. (CONT'D) to reach into the screen and kill this man themselves. In the end, the police are so close to getting him that he has to fake his own death. Thus the movie ends. The sadistic killer gets away. Realism.

Two obscure male figures, STANLEY and ROBERT, are seen sitting opposite to J.P. in the booth. They both wear suits, Stanleys is fairly expensive and well cut, Roberts is polyester, enough said.

> ROBERT This movie of yours... I don't think it's gonna work.

J.P. Really? Why not?

ROBERT

It has to end happily. It's a necessity in cinema today. The audience demands it. Imagine you're depressed one Saturday night, and the only thing which could cheer you up was going to the movies. Then how would you have liked to have seen a film which only made you even more depressed? Audiences demand happy endings.

J.P. He escapes, kills a female drifter, marries the corpse and lives happily ever after. (pause) No?

STANLEY (shakes his head) No.

J.P. Why not?

STANLEY The villain can't win. It's a question of morality. One way or another, in the end, he's gotta go down.

J.P. Well... I suppose it's ok. Not everyone can succeed in changing the world. I guess, in some ways life is stranger than fiction. J.P. gets up from the booth and takes two steps towards the exit, then turns around towards Robert and Stanley. He smiles at them.

JP Rene Descartes is sitting in some bar in Paris. Bartender says, 'Hey, you want another drink?' Descartes says, 'I think not.' And disappears.

He smiles at his own joke. Stanley smiles slightly. Robert remains silent. Suddenly, with super human speed, J.P. pulls out an old fashioned world war 2 Colt M1911 pistol and shoots Robert three times in the chest. He collapses on the table, dead.

Stanley is shocked and gets up quickly. J.P. glares at him, and points his gun at Stanley. Stanley runs like a maniac to the front door. J.P. follows him with his eyes and when Stanley is only a few feet away from the door he fires off two shots at Stanley's back which hit their target.

Stanley falls to the floor. J.P. calmly walks towards him. He's still alive and is trying to crawl to the door.

J.P. leans down and turns Stanley on his back. He looks into his eyes. Stanley is almost choking in his own blood which is coming up his throat.

STANLEY What-- what do you want? J.P.

...Realism!

J.P. places the muzzle of the gun against Stanley's forehead. He gently touches the trigger a few times, not firing his weapon. Probably only to make him suffer.

STANLEY (in spasm) NO!!! J.P. (screaming) Bang!

Stanley cringes. J.P. stands up from Stanley and walks back to his table. Stanley opens his eyes wondering what the fuck just happened. He pats himself down just to see if he's alive or not.

Terrified customers in the coffee shop has already either escaped out the back door or are hiding under their tables. The clerk is standing behind the counter, petrified. He has his hands raised.

J.P. puts on his leather jacket and pays for his coffee. He's still holding his gun in his right hand.

J.P. (to the clerk) Sorry about the mess. He then walks over Stanley and shoots him in the head without taking his eyes off the front door. The clerk and remaining customers jump in surprise. J.P. never looks back and simply walks out the door without saying a word.

FADE OUT:

THE END