

No, Like This...

written by

Michael T. Burgess

May 25, 2023

michael@deelenwithtrouble.com
416.827.7721

ACT I

1

EXT. STONE CREEK - DAY

1

Coming in to the idyllic small town. Cars are parked on an angle into the stores on Main Street. Smiling townsfolk greet each other like it's the middle of the day in a messed up PLEASANTVILLE meets LEAVE IT TO BEAVER Twilight Zone.

The leaves are starting to change and through the lightest dusting of foliage on the ground we come across JANE, stylishly coordinated, just as happy as the next fucker in this small town and blissfully unaware of anything that isn't "wondrous and beautiful".

We see the wooden handle that looks worn and used. A hand that reaches for it is soft delicate.

Snapping back we see that it's Jane holding a handheld stop sign.

Her WHISTLE BLOWS as a small gaggle of children holding a knotted rope cross the street.

JANE

Good morning / How are you? / Good morning / Watch your step.

The adult on the end of the line of kids hands Jane a coffee.

KINDERGARTEN TEACHER

We thought you could use this.

JANE

Lifesaver. Thank you.

The gaggle gets onto the sidewalk with Jane following behind.

The end of the line adult hands her a cellophane wrapped brownie and winks.

JANE (CONT'D)

You are awesome!

From her blind spot..

MAYOR (O.S.)

Good morning!

Jane hits play on her headphones.

PODCAST VOICE

Detectives Allemang and Mazurka petitioned the Crown to take the new evidence into discovery. Yet something was making this quiet difficult. Now a word from our sponsor, Shitty Coffee Company...

Jane gets tapped on the shoulder.

Jane spins.

JANE

Mornin' Clark.

MAYOR

Jane.

JANE

Fine, morning Mr. Mayor.

His shit eating grin tells you everything you need to know about this jack-hat.

MAYOR

Will we see you at the firehall fundraiser?

JANE

You bet'cha.

MAYOR

I know it's been pretty quiet but those boys at the hall always need our help.

JANE

They'll always be there when we need'em.

MAYOR

Ain't that the truth.

JANE

Have a great day.

A kid trailing the group finally makes it to the street.

Jane throws up the stop sign.

JANE (CONT'D)

(to kid)

You can be anything but choose not to be a politician.

The kid nods.

2 EXT. STREET - DAY

2

Jane, finally off-duty, rides by a cop car that's pulled over a truck from out of state.

PODCAST VOICE

When the farm hands discovered the bones for a third day in a row. Bennett said he had a hard time. Sure he had compassion and sympathy for whoever died but he also knew the economics with no crops that year might not only ruin him financially but his reputation the community as well.

Hard to see the name on the plate but it's a different color than the rest of the plates lined up.

An OLDER MAN sits outside the barber shop reading a newspaper.

OLD MAN

Seems like every out'a state jackass can't read a posted speed limit.

JANE

Sure does.

OLD MAN

You watch yourself with the likes of them on the road.

JANE

Eyes on the back of my boobs.

Old man starts to nod and then just gets confused by the statement.

Jane hits her headphones.

PODCAST VOICE

Now this could be seen in a number of ways. Was this a brazen serial killer who just liked dropping remains in Bennett's field? Or was it a political rival, such as Thompson, who wanted to ruin him or his wife?

Jane smiles at herself as she rides off.

3 EXT. FLOWER SHOP - DAY 3

Jane stylishly dismounts her bicycle and parks it against a tree. Pets a dog who's tied up to the cafe chair beside the flower shop.

JANE

Good morning Sherlock McMurdoch.

She pets his head as the slobbering dog pants her way.

4 INT. FLOWER SHOP - DAY 4

Jane walks through the store and into the back work area.

5 INT. FLOWER SHOP - WORKSHOP 5

As she walks through the hallway into the refrigerated backroom, the mist in the air falls like a waterfall.

Behind the mist, NATASHA, think 40 year old Helen Bonham Carter, a botanical guru, is putting the final touches on her umpteenth bouquet.

NATASHA

Half hour early?

JANE

That would be true. If I was working today.

Natasha holds up a stack of papers.

NATASHA

31 orders.

JANE

Congratulations.

NATASHA

This isn't how I planned to fill my Sunday.

JANE

Wedding or funeral?

NATASHA

Only one has fun in the title.

JANE

Wow, grim.
(looking for a name on
the tag)
Anyone I know?

NATASHA

Doubt it. Young woman who died in
that car crash in Kempville.

JANE

Yeah, I recognized her face in the
news but didn't know her.

Natasha realizes the pattern in front of her.

NATASHA

Today's your day off. Be gone --

JANE

-- okay, I get it. The threat of
houses falling on my head is
enough, I'm out.

Jane grabs a wrapped present from her cubby and runs out.

6 EXT. STREET - DAY

6

Passing the dog, Jane slides single footed on her bike out
onto the street and is nearly hit by a van!

The van swerves to the left!

Jane swerves to the right and hard stops!

A few of the articles in her basket fly out from the momentum
including the present.

JANE

Fuck!

She lands on her feet, steadies herself, and turns around to
see who's in the driver's seat.

The van speeds away away before she can make out who the
cowardly dumbass is.

JANE (CONT'D)

Dick.

At the back of the van she sees the license plate is bent and
almost ripped off but can make out the bumper sticker, "How's
my Driving...888-432-0099"

JANE (CONT'D)

I'm going to remember that number.

7 EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

7

A small group of mourners stand and sit in the two rows around a small grave plot.

In this mix of mourners, a small number of black individuals, a handful of white & blue dress uniform police, and other community members.

A SUV with a floral design on the side rolls up quickly.

The uniformed officers in the group clock the vehicle with the quick stop.

Natasha flies out of the vehicle, pats herself down to look presentable, and pulls two large wreaths from her trunk.

The closest officer walks up to her.

OFFICER GARRY

Hey Tasha. Need a hand?

NATASHA

Yeah, Garry. There's two bouquets in the back. Can you place them on either side of the plot.

OFFICER GARRY

You got it.

(points at the left wreath)

Is that the one from the Force.

NATASHA

Yeah, where's Carl?

CHIEF CARL waves her over.

OFFICER GARRY

See him. Thanks for the hand.

8 EXT. FIREHALL - DAY

8

Deep bass music can be heard as Jane pulls around the corner.

The hotties are out in full force helping the oldies set up the balloons and banners for the Fire-Pole Fundraiser.

Jane, now with all the contents back in basket, her expression goes from pained to a put on overdone toothy smile.

They all wave at Jane.

JANE

Hey All!

She catches the eye of one of the new young firefighters, are we gonna find out his name as his smile brightens his face and he slowly flexes.

Jane smiles and turns the other way with a huge eye-roll.

9

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

9

Natasha has adjusted the flowers and walks the wreath over to Chief Carl.

CHIEF CARL

What a shindig.

NATASHA

It was a rush but I think they look great.

CHIEF CARL

They certainly do.

Just then the hearse and a town-car roll up.

The grieving family, a Nigerian woman in her late 60's, a Nigerian woman in her 30's, and a Nigerian teen, step out of the car and make their way to their seats.

There is a empty chair on the other side of plot. Definitely some family politics here.

Over the hill, a man walks up to the group. A few of the officers pat him on the back and give him signs of encouragement.

He pulls his sunglasses off and it appears he's been crying for some time. His eyes are puffy, he looks to the ground, everything about him shows unspeakable grief.

His left hand, specifically his ring and pinky finger, are in a foam & metal cast.

He moves to the single empty seat.

The funeral home staff walk the small wooden box from the hearse.

They walk up to the family, the 30 year old woman pours some sand on the box.

As the sand falls from her hand, she stares across at the widower with a sense of anger radiating from her eyes.

The older black woman breaks down as she reaches out to touch the box and whispers a heart-braking moment of love to the deceased inside.

The staff then takes the box over to the widower.

He takes the box into his hands.

As it's transferred into his possession the Nigerian teen notices the widow hold the box weird.

Him and the widower lock eyes for a moment.

The PASTOR steps forward.

PASTOR

As we gather to say goodbye to our sister, Ayo. Her family has asked in leu of flowers, please make a donation to Mother's Against Drunk Driving.

The grieving mother, sister, and teen stare daggers into the widower holding the box.

CHIEF CARL

(to Natasha)

Now they tell us.

PASTOR

After the box is lowered into the earth from which we all came, if you would like to add a prayer, message, or flower from the bouquets into the site, please do.

The widower places the box on two straps that will lower into the ground.

As the scene of the first mourners start to stand with a flower in hand, in the distance, a grey van sits near a utility shed.

10 EXT. STREET - DAY

10

Jane rolls around the main square and notices her boyfriend's car, a classic green Corvette, leaving the grocery store.

PODCAST VOICE

Whoever it was that was trying to push Bennett was doing a great job at it. The municipal election was not far away and the pressures of the investigations was taking its toll on his mental health.

Her smile beams as she tries to catch up to him.

JANE

Kev! Kevin!

The Corvette is just too fast and she's left in the dust.

Annoyance reads all over her face.

11 EXT. HE-DONE-IT BOOKSTORE - DAY

11

Jane rolls up with a basket full of flowers, groceries, and the small present with a bow on it. You'd swear you're watching a interstitial from Gilmore Girls.

She pulls the present from the basket and goes into what looks like a bookstore.

Following her in the hand-carved sign comes into focus, HE DONE IT! Bookstore & Curiosities.

12 INT. HE-DONE-IT BOOKSTORE - DAY

12

The door swings closed *hard*.

SMASH!

Everything around the door shakes from the vibration.

She looks over at the sign,

"IF THE RED LIGHT'S A FLASHIN' YOU BEST BE PASSIN'" under it reads - Tiny Crimes Podcast Team.

Of course, the red light is blinking.

The stickers for USA Today, The TODAY show, Pod Save America, and Spotify line the bottom deck of the window.

She walks through the inside big heavy red drape.

In the the middle of room is the podcast table. A couple of hanging microphones, a neon sign, and sitting at the helm of the control center is the owner of the place, DENZEL, 30, a gregarious black little person.

This is also the Podcast Voice we've been hearing in Jane's headphones.

This place has easter eggs like the bunny held an orgy last weekend and the kids haven't come in to collect the mess. Books, audiobooks, magazines, DVD's.

DENZEL

Thanks for letting me into your ears and please make sure to check out the He-Done-It store for the newest books, merch, and collectables. Til next week, keep your eyes open.

He clicks on his laptop and flicks a small button on the desk to turn off the red light.

JANE

Soooo serious.

DENZEL

I was just going to say, "Seriously."

Jane looks around the place. Every title in here she has read, skimmed, or listened to.

JANE

Of course you were. Why don't you just lock the door then you won't get chicks with flowers walking in on your soul voice.

DENZEL

Soul voice?

JANE

You know you drop an octave or more. Trying to suss the ladies or gents with your smooth vocals.

Denzel holds up a paper.