

JUDE: 19-24; regular looking dude. The pragmatic artist, but a bit uptight...1 SCENE

NICK, JUDE (21) a short-yoga-built-stocky-flat-haired-indie-fashionable-attractive-hippie-type introvert friend of Nick and NOAH (20) thin-small-assed-artist-attractive-type-with a cigarette in his mouth-namebrand-fashionable-Native American hue to his face extrovert. Both sit with Nick in a booth near a small stage. Nick and Mehar smoke while Mehar is in the middle of telling a story.

NOAH

So we're back in the corner of this bar drinking whatever and this older guy walks up to our table, ponytail and receding hairline. He's wearing this leather vest without a shirt and he's got this buck knife hanging from his belt so he stops and tries to focus his eyes on us, but the guy is plastered and he asks us straight up.

INTERCUT TO

Noah's story in a bar where a man fitting 'PONYTAILS'(40) and 'ponytails' GIRLFRIEND (40) description approaches Noah's table.

MAN

Are you independent filmists'?

Noah speaks over the scene as 'Noah and his friend' sit wide-eyed in their seats staring at the man.

NOAH (V.O.)

We look at each other like no, but my buddy was working on a short film at the time and so was I and so my buddy didn't want to start anything because this guy wasn't small and he looked pissed and my stand up is horrible. The guy stands there for a minute with his hand tapping on his knife, swaying, and then he says.

MAN

(poetic)

Filmmaker heh? I refuse to call em films. Movies. Northern Lights was a movie. Woolly lights have seen Fargo sights and I've gathered a few myself up here in God's country. But the best they ever did see, maybe, was the last summer of my youth tripping through Mountrail County.

NOAH (V.O.)

All right. Then he pulls out this bowie knife and his girlfriend comes over and makes him put the knife back and drags him back to their table.

Back to Fargo bar scene.

NICK

That really happened?

NOAH

I swear to God?

NICK

Did anything else happen?

NOAH

No, me and my buddy went back to his place to slur our SSS's - HUH!

NICK

WHAH!

A pause as each reaches for their chosen drink or cigarette.

NICK (cont'd)

You know, I haven't written anything worth writing in a long time. I think I need a woman to inspire me.

JUDE

A woman?

NOAH

But Noah's got the fat chick right
because he's ethnic.

They all laugh.

NICK

Maybe I should stop reading books
just to see how far I can get on
instinct alone.

NOAH

This is what you need to do. Think
of a bunch of ideas, story ideas.
Write them out almost like a
movie, but good enough to be a
novel. I'll make the movies and
when they are put in a theatre, we
also put out the novel. It's like
that Coen Brother's movie based on
the novel. I went to the movie,
then wanted to read the book. For
the first time I wanted to read
the book after the movie so I read
the book and it was written like a
movie, except there were just
enough details in the book; left
out in the movie so both were
completely satisfying. I would
even take it a step further and
have alternative endings in each.
The movie shows us one ending and
the book shows us another and you
sell both at the same time. The
difference being the book and
movie are essentially done by a
team of the same people.

NICK

So would it be an adapted
screenplay or an original
screenplay.

NOAH

Would it be an adapted novel or an
original novel? What do you value
more?

NICK

It doesn't really matter because I don't have any ideas.

JUDE

Oh, c'mon! Get over yourself man. You have the ideal life.

NICK

How so?

JUDE

How so? You don't have a car or a cell-phone. You live alone in a dirt-cheap downtown apartment. Your landlords are gay. You work at a coffee shop. You drink too much. You freeload at a house with four girls and you come to this open mike every month and trade stories with the locals and your moving to California. It's not like your sitting at a coffee shop in New York City living off your parents dime with enough time to become an artist. You are an artist. You already have the depth and even though you're trying to be artsy, you still need to work to pay your rent and buy your own cheap vodka so you've got that right too. The only thing you haven't got is a woman and despite what you think about love, maybe love is the death of creativity.

NOAH

What are you saying?

JUDE

Rely on instinct.

NICK

Remember that party at Messmore's in high school and your dad saw me pull an 18-Pack out of the trunk

of my car. He never looked at me
the same again.

JUDE

I don't remember that and don't
change the subject.

NOAH

(laughing hysterically)
Yeah because your mom was making
you buy your own groceries.

JUDE

She doesn't like peanut butter.

NOAH

I bet she loved it when you
switched majors.

JUDE

Art is not that much different
from Architecture.

NICK

Yeah, except about 5 bedrooms and
two stories from your drop-cloth
basement efficiency.

JUDE

You shouldn't glamorize it. See,
The problem with you Nick is your
looking too hard for inspiration.
Maybe you'll find it in
California. And when you come
back here we'll all be different
or the same or gone and who knows,
this bar might change owners and
you'll wonder what's changed.
Well, your gonna change and this
place is gonna change, but you'll
always be you and this place will
always be some bar in North Dakota
and maybe you'll come back and
realize that. Maybe you won't.

NICK

Realize what?

JUDE

That this place inspires you.
Fargo, Minot, that little town you
grew up in, whatever town you grow
up in. You just won't know it
until you come back. Or maybe even
staying away is inspiration.
Either way you've been inspired so
stop whining.

All three relax in comfortable silence for a moment. Nick
and Noah smoke while Jude thinks.