

“A PIECE OF APPLE PIE”

A Screenplay by Nicholas T. Proferes

From *Film Directing Fundamentals* by Nicholas T. Proferes

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FADE IN:

EXT. DINER - NIGHT

An Edward Hopper atmosphere.

MAIN TITLE AND CREDITS

INT. DINER - NIGHT

Close on last piece of apple pie being taken from a pie tin and placed on a serving dish.

Wider as COUNTERMAN sets the pie on the counter along with a napkin and fork. He looks toward the door as CUSTOMER enters.

CUSTOMER

Good evening.

COUNTERMAN

Hi.

Counterman looks at the wall clock: 11:55.

Customer walks the length of the counter, past the dish of apple pie, and sits at a table in the empty restaurant, facing Counterman.

COUNTERMAN

Need a menu?

CUSTOMER

(inspecting tabletop)

No.

Customer stands and moves to the next table, sits, inspects it, finds it unsatisfactory, gets up and moves to a third table.

He runs his hand over the surface. It seems to pass muster.
He inspects the fork. It'll do.

He looks up at Counterman.

CUSTOMER

I'll have a piece of apple pie.

COUNTERMAN

I'm out of apple pie.

CUSTOMER

What's that on the counter?

COUNTERMAN

I'm saving that piece.

CUSTOMER

You're saving it?

COUNTERMAN

There's a customer comes in around
this time every night for apple pie -
but I've got cherry, blueberry, lemon
meringue, key lime -

CUSTOMER

I want the apple pie.

COUNTERMAN

I'm sorry. This customer would be
very disappointed.

CUSTOMER

But you don't mind disappointing me.

COUNTERMAN

I'll tell you what. I'll give you a
piece of any other pie you want, on
the house.

CUSTOMER

No.

COUNTERMAN

I'll make it a la mode.

CUSTOMER

Listen - if you don't give me that
piece of pie right now, I'll call
the police.

COUNTERMAN

The customer is a cop.

CUSTOMER

I don't care if he's the King of
Siam.

Customer gets up and approaches the counter. Standing in
front of the piece of apple pie, he takes out a gun.

COUNTERMAN

Hey, no guns allowed in here.

CUSTOMER

I want this pie!

COUNTERMAN

I can't.

CUSTOMER

Don't make me shoot!

COUNTERMAN

(looks toward door)
For a piece of pie?
(grabs pie)

CUSTOMER

I'll count to five. One...
two...

COUNTERMAN

It's stupid.

CUSTOMER

Three... Getting shot when you don't have
to is stupid. Four!

COUNTERMAN

Okay! Okay! It's yours.

Counterman sets the pie back on the counter. Customer puts the gun away and sits on the stool. He pushes the napkin and fork away.

CUSTOMER

Could I have another fork and a fresh napkin, please?

Counterman places a new fork and napkin on the counter.

CUSTOMER

Thank you.

COUNTERMAN

Something to drink?

CUSTOMER

I'm fine.

Counterman walks away from Customer. He leans on the end of the counter, his head in his hands; a picture of utter defeat.

After a beat, he steals a glance at Customer who is wiping the new fork vigorously - some might say compulsively.

A ray of hope comes to Counterman just as the fork is about to cut into the pie.

COUNTERMAN

I never eat apple pie, myself.

Customer looks up at Counterman, quizzically.

COUNTERMAN

I like it, but I just don't eat it.

CUSTOMER

Why not?

COUNTERMAN

Why? Well . . . because of that stuff they spray on them.

CUSTOMER

What stuff?

COUNTERMAN

Something that causes cancer.

CUSTOMER

I know what you're trying to do.
It's not going to work.

COUNTERMAN

Maybe I'm being too cautious.
Nobody's gonna get out of this
world alive, anyway. Apple pie is
as good a way to go as any.
Probably better than most.

CUSTOMER

Would you just shut up!

Counterman raises his hands in surrender. He begins busying himself with a wiping rag.

The Customer stares at him.

CUSTOMER

It doesn't make any sense.

Counterman says nothing.

CUSTOMER

You got this cop coming in here
eating apple pie, what - two, three
times a week?

COUNTERMAN

Sometimes five.

CUSTOMER

So why didn't you tell the cop about
this spray?

COUNTERMAN

I did. But you know cops. They'll eat
anything. Sure you don't want a cup
of coffee to wash that down?

CUSTOMER

I don't drink coffee.

COUNTERMAN

Oh, no, why not?

CUSTOMER

I heard it wasn't good for you.

COUNTERMAN

If I had to stop serving everything that wasn't good for you, I'd be out of business.

CUSTOMER

You have a responsibility to your customers.

COUNTERMAN

Hey, I'm not twisting anybody's arm.

Customer looks down at the piece of pie, hesitates, then places the fork on the counter.

CUSTOMER

What do I owe you?

COUNTERMAN

Forget it, it's on me.

Customer lays two dollars on the counter and stands.

COUNTERMAN

You sure you don't want to try the key lime?

Customer goes to the door, stops, and turns back to Counterman.

CUSTOMER

Sorry about the gun.

COUNTERMAN

Maybe you ought to get rid of it.

CUSTOMER

I just bought it today. It's not even loaded.

COUNTERMAN

No one knows that but you.

CUSTOMER

I'm tired of being pushed around.

COUNTERMAN

That's no excuse.

Customer hesitates a beat, then takes out the gun and tosses it to Counterman.

CUSTOMER

Give it to the cop.

Before Counterman can answer, Customer turns and exits.

Counterman looks at the clock: 12:00.

He places the gun out of sight, goes to the piece of apple pie, replaces the napkin and fork, turns to the coffeepot and pours a cup of coffee.

As Counterman turns to set the cup next to the apple pie, a FEMALE COP sits down in front of it. It is obvious that she can take care of herself.

The Counterman smiles lovingly at the Female Cop.

The Female Cop picks up the fork and smiles lovingly at the piece of apple pie.

EXT. DINER - NIGHT

It's quiet.

FADE OUT