

Thesis Screenplay Summary for Joni Goes Postal

Joanne Wannan - MFA Film

The screenplay opens with Joni, a 34-year-old postal worker, excitedly anticipating the arrival of Richard, her long-term boyfriend who has been away in England attending the funeral of his aunt. The reunion, however, doesn't go as planned. Richard seems aloof, complaining of jet lag, but Joni senses something is wrong.

While helping another "postie" sort his walk, Joni finds a postcard addressed to Richard at his place of work. It is from Dawna, his ex-girlfriend in England, and the message indicates that they spent time together on his recent trip. Joni is afraid of what this might mean, and decides not to confront Richard. Instead, she tears the postcard and hides it in a dresser drawer.

Joni plans a special dinner for Richard. But when Richard finds the post card, the couple fight. Joni discovers the truth: Richard slept with Dawna, and has conflicting feelings about both women. Faced with her greatest fear, Joni kicks Richard out of their apartment.

Joni becomes angry and throws dishes around her apartment. She becomes obsessed while watching TV, gives herself a disastrous make over, and lies to her family about her situation. Her anger is turned inward. Rather than lashing out at Richard, she lashes out at herself. But when Joni comes home after having dinner with her mother and sister, and finds Richard in the process of moving out his stuff, she determines that she is going to get over him. She begins to scrub and clean her apartment, metaphorically clearing away her anger and pain.

Joni tries to prove that she is over Richard. She joins the other "posties" for a night out at a local pub, reads self-help books, and signs up for overtime so that she can cover the rent on her own. However, Joni is thrown for a loop when she runs into Richard and he invites her for coffee. They begin to hang out, on the pretext that they can still be "friends." But Joni realizes she still has feelings for Richard, and begins to hope that they will get back together again.

Joni's dreams are dashed when she discovers that Dawna has come to visit. Infuriated, she makes a decision to get revenge by using the post office in a series of inappropriate ways, ultimately destroying Richard's business. When Joni's boss finds out, she is fired. Alone and distraught, she sits in her living room, the shades drawn, watching TV. Joni finally gets up, goes for a walk, and contemplates the situation. She sees an 80-year-old couple walking, arm in arm. She has a revelation about the nature of true love when the woman trips, the man helps her and they share a smile.

Armed with new determination and insight, Joni finally summons up the courage to confront Richard and tell him how much she hurt him. She also apologizes for her actions. Joni and Richard come an understanding each other, and Joni finally begins to experience peace and acceptance.

For information about this screenplay, please contact
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