

# Screenplay: *The Street Cleaner*

## **Director's Statement:**

Like countless others, I've dreamed of making movies for as long as I can remember. I even moved to L.A. back in '99 to break into the biz. I was quickly disenchanted with life as a production assistant, but my experiences on film sets taught me a lot, and while living there I finished writing my first screenplay, called "Vain."

After Hollywood, I returned to my original career as a TV news photographer at the Fox station in Boston, Massachusetts. There, I followed a gruesome case involving a serial killer. Drug-addicted prostitutes were disappearing from the streets of nearby Worcester, MA. Some of their bodies eventually turned up as far away as Maine. I started playing "what if," and the concept for THE STREET CLEANER was born.

After interviewing counselors, prostitutes, and heroin addicts at the CAB Health and Recovery Services Clinic in Lynn, MA, I began writing. I spent many late nights on the phone with my brother Eric in Savannah, Georgia, honing the screenplay. Just as I completed the first draft, some personal issues (OK, I got dumped) led me back to California, where the script gathered dust.

A year later, Eric convinced me to move to Georgia to finally do what we'd always talked about: make a movie together. I accepted a position as Chief Photographer for the ABC/FOX affiliate in Savannah, and headed east. Soon after my arrival, my brother and I decided that a full-length feature would be a bit too much for our first project, so we pared THE STREET CLEANER down to a short.

I joined a local writing group that Eric belonged to, and brought in the revised script. The story sparked the interest of fellow writer Jody Schiesser. Within days, Jody had a cattle-prod to us, insisting that we get off our butts and make this movie! The three of us began the hard labor of preproduction under the name PERPOMBELLAR PRODUCTIONS. One year later (May, 2007), THE STREET CLEANER premiered at "Shorts At The Beach," a film festival in Hilton Head, South Carolina.

I've since quit the news business and begun my own private videography company, HD Savannah. In between commercial projects, creating industrial videos, and covering live events, I still make films. In fact, my wife and I (there, don't you feel better about me getting dumped?) are currently working on a feature length script, a romantic comedy, to go into production next year.

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# PERPOMBELLAR PRODUCTIONS



## THE STREET CLEANER

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*As prostitutes disappear from Savannah's Historic District, one savvy streetwalker believes it could never happen to her.*



## INDIGENOUS

*"Deserving of the 2007 Dixie Film Festival's Mason Dixon Award for the best short film produced in Georgia."  
— Creative Loafing Atlanta*

*"THE STREET CLEANER is mostly set in Savannah, which in the film is by turns gritty and gorgeous, seedy and stunning, fun and dangerous. That's the Savannah I know."  
— Bill Davers, Savannah Morning News*

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## The Street Cleaner

Screenplay by Nathaniel Nauert  
Perpombellar Productions 2007

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Screenplay by Nathaniel Nauert

FADE IN: EXTERIOR (EXT.) SALUDA PUBLIC PARK – MORNING

ON-SCREEN TEXT: “Saluda, North Carolina – Today”

WIDE AERIAL (CRANE) SHOT

It’s a quiet early morning in the clean little mountain town of Saluda. A young boy chases butterflies with a net, as his mother sits on a nearby park bench, reading a book. The camera follows the boy from above as he darts around some high shrubs. On the other side he stops dead in his tracks, spotting a young woman lying in the grass right at his feet. From the way the woman is sprawled there, motionless and disheveled, she appears to be dead. The boy shouts for his mother, as he stares at the body.

BOY: Mamma! There’s a lady!

INTERIOR (INT.) CHEAP MOTEL ROOM – LATE NIGHT / NEAR DAWN.

ON-SCREEN TEXT: “Savannah, Georgia – Two months ago”

CUT TO:

*Tight close-up:* A young woman’s eyes open suddenly. The eyes belong to JAMIE, an attractive, but somewhat unhealthy looking young woman. Clothing is scattered across the dingy carpet. Jamie jumps out of bed, and frantically begins to get dressed. Jamie is in her early twenties.

JAMIE: Shit! What time is it?

A man’s chubby hand grabs her arm. This is WALTER. He is a large middle-aged man, but he is soft-spoken. He is her “client.”

WALTER: Aw, don’t go yet, baby.

Jamie jerks her arm free of Walter’s grip as she continues to get dressed.

JAMIE: I can’t believe I fell asleep. I *never* fall asleep!

WALTER: You could stay here, y’know.

JAMIE: You know that’s not an option.

She is finished getting ready now, dressed in a provocative outfit. She looks down at Walter, and her eyes ask a question.

WALTER: Fine. It’s in my wallet. In my jeans.

She picks his jeans up off the floor, and locates the wallet. She digs out two bills, and stuffs them into her shirt. She puts the wallet back in his pants, and folds them nicely. She walks over to Walter and kisses him on the forehead.

JAMIE: I’ll see you Thursday, Sweetie.

She heads quickly out the door.

OPENING CREDITS: EXT. DOWNTOWN SAVANNAH – DAWN

Jamie walks quickly through the dimly-lit streets of Savannah. She pauses for a moment at a newspaper stand. A headline has caught her eye: “SAVANNAH SERIAL KILLER?” And under the headline: “Six escorts missing in six months. Zero suspects and zero arrests. Chatham County Police baffled.” As she reads further, she is suddenly startled by a loud noise. A street sweeper roars past her. The windows of the vehicle are far too dark to see who’s inside. This distracts her from the article, and she resumes her brisk walk.

CUT TO: INT. THE BISHOP’S HOUSE – EARLY MORNING

THE BISHOP is Jamie’s pimp. He sits watching TV, with a scantily-clad teenage girl sleeping in his lap. Jamie walks in the door. She walks over to him and gives him a kiss on the cheek.

THE BISHOP: You’re late.

She digs into her shirt, pulls out a wad of bills, and hands it to The Bishop. He quickly counts the money and nods his approval.

THE BISHOP: Good girl.

He stuffs the cash into his coat pocket, and retrieves a balloon filled with heroin from his other pocket. He reaches it toward her, but as she grabs for it, he pulls it back. He teases her with it again, pointing to his neck. She kisses his neck. He points to his lips. She gives him a deep kiss on the mouth. Finally he hands her the heroin, and she leaps up the stairs to her room. He swats her on the butt and chuckles as she races past him.

CUT TO: INT. JAMIE’S ROOM – MORNING

Jamie sits on the floor of her tiny room. Another young girl sleeps on a bed beside her. Jamie eagerly opens the balloon The Bishop gave her, and packs the heroin into a homemade tinfoil “pipe.” She smokes it, staring out the window at the morning sky. Her eyes glaze over with euphoria, as she watches a street sweeper slowly drive by.

CUT TO: EXT. PUBLIC WORKS HEADQUARTERS – MORNING

The same street sweeper reaches the parking lot of the Savannah Public Works Department. The sweeper parks, and a middle-aged man, JEREMY COOPER, gets out of the vehicle. He walks into the building, reaches a time clock, and punches his card. He grunts a goodbye to a couple other employees, and strolls back out into the bright morning sunlight.

FADE TO WHITE. FADE IN: EXT. RIVER STREET – LATE NIGHT

Jamie walks the sidewalk with her roommate, VANESSA. They are both dressed in revealing outfits, and are trying to keep their balance in high-heeled shoes on cobblestone. They giggle to each other as they pass drunken frat boys exiting the bars. Vanessa catches the eyes of two of them, and makes her move.

VANESSA: Hey boys; where're your girlfriends tonight?

Jamie is still a short distance behind her friend and the drunk guys. A car slowly pulls up beside her, and the passenger window rolls down. The driver, "STRANGER," leans across the seat, and says something to her (This should be shot from a distance, so their conversation is inaudible). She bends down to speak with him, and within a few moments, she gets in the car. It drives away, and Vanessa smiles at Jamie as she rides past.

INT. STRANGER'S CAR – MINUTES LATER

The car is now parked in a vacant alleyway near River Street. The stranger's face is hidden in shadows, but his silhouette reveals a bushy moustache. He turns off the headlights. A song plays on the radio. The man digs into his pocket, removes a small wad of cash, and hands it over to Jamie. She quickly counts the money, and smiles up at the man as she stuffs it into her bra. She leans toward his lap, and fiddles with his belt. He reaches up to his visor, retrieves a handkerchief and a small bottle of liquid. He quickly drenches the cloth in the liquid, grabs Jamie's head, and slaps the handkerchief to her face. She struggles at first, but within seconds she slumps down in her seat, unconscious. He turns the headlights back on, and drives slowly back onto the main road.

FADE TO BLACK. FADE IN: INT. STRANGER'S HOME – NIGHT

Jamie is now lying unconscious on the floor of the stranger's home. The man wipes Jamie's face with a wet washcloth, removing her heavy makeup. Then he tosses the cloth into a wastebasket, and picks up a pair of scissors. He carefully cuts Jamie's shirt from her unconscious body. He breathes heavily as he does this. The room is so dimly lit that it's impossible to make out any details. The man's face is still hidden from view. He throws her shirt into the trash.

FADE IN AND OUT OF BLACK

The stranger continues to undress Jamie. He removes her stiletto-heeled shoes. He cuts away her skirt. He is still breathing heavily.

FADE IN AND OUT OF BLACK: EXT. RIVER STREET – CONTINUOUS

Vanessa is still out walking the beat, though the area is much quieter now. She looks concerned as she glances down at her watch and then scans the area, looking for her friend.

FADE IN AND OUT OF BLACK: INT. STRANGER'S HOME – CONTINUOUS

Jamie is now down to her bra and underwear. The Stranger raises the scissors to her bra. With a snip, the bills he gave her earlier fall to the floor.

FADE IN AND OUT OF BLACK: EXT. SAVANNAH – MORNING

The sun rises over the Talmadge bridge.

DISSOLVE TO: INT. STRANGER'S BASEMENT – MORNING

*Tight close-up:* Jamie's eyes burst open. She is lying in an Army-issue cot, in a small dark room. The walls of the room are covered in black foam sound-proofing material. A sink and a toilet sit in one corner of the room, and an empty plastic cup rests on the sink. The only light comes from a ceiling fixture just above the cot. There are no windows, and the walls are blank, except for one photo of a quaint little park in Saluda, North Carolina, taped just above Jamie's head. Jamie is now dressed in a long T-shirt. She is lying on her back. She doesn't even move her head as she surveys the unfamiliar surroundings with her eyes. Suddenly she leans over the side of the bed and vomits onto the floor. Once she regains her composure, she struggles to get up from the bed. She makes her way to the door, and yanks at the handle. It's locked from the outside. She doesn't give up.

JAMIE: Hey! Hey!

She frantically jiggles the handle.

JAMIE: Where the fuck..?! Help!

She pounds on the door with her fists. She backs away from the door and tries to kick it, but she is too weak to have much impact.

JAMIE: I don't...what the...shit..?

She bangs on the walls and claws at the foam material. She is crying now, and begins to lose her energy. She notices a slot near the bottom of the door. She is able to pry it open slightly, and continues yelling through the slot.

JAMIE: Hey Asshole! Let me out! This isn't fucking funny!

She begins to dry-heave. She spots the toilet in the corner, and darts over to it. She just makes it down to her knees in time for the vomit to hit the inside of the bowl.

CUT TO: INT. THE STRANGER'S STUDY – CONTINUOUS

The study is a tiny room with a long table and one chair. Two small black and white video monitors sit on the table. The stranger enters the room and sits in the chair, facing the monitors. His face is out of frame. The image on each of the monitors is similar, an aerial view of a girl in a small sound-proofed room. The girl on the right screen is sleeping on a cot. The girl in the left is shaking as she flushes a toilet and begins pacing the room. She is yelling, but there is no audio. The girl is Jamie. The man lifts his hand, and turns the monitor off.

CUT TO: INT. THE BISHOP'S HOUSE – MORNING

The Bishop is in the midst of a temper tantrum. He storms through the house, searching for Jamie. He barges into the bathroom, yanks open the shower curtain, and looks inside. He opens a hall closet and clicks on the light. He slams it shut again. He races past the couch, where Vanessa sits beaten and sobbing. She flinches as he passes. He enters Jamie's room, and scans the area. He goes over to her bed, grabs the mattress, and throws it across the room, shattering a lamp in the process.

DISSOLVE TO: EXT. DOWNTOWN SAVANNAH – DUSK

The sun quickly sets behind the Savannah skyline. Street sweepers trudge through the city, sucking up the day's debris, and cutting through the empty silence. They conclude their nightly dance as the sun begins to rise again.

A SERIES OF QUICK CUTS WITH NATURAL SOUND:

Jeremy parks his street sweeper.

He clocks out.

Jeremy arrives home, with his arms full of groceries.

He slices vegetables.

He sautés chicken on the stove.

He prepares a nice looking plate of healthy food.

He carries the plate on a tray as he descends a staircase. Jeremy is "The Stranger."

INT. JEREMY COOPER'S BASEMENT – MORNING

The tray slides through the slot in Jamie's door with a clunk. It lands near two other trays of food, neither of which has been touched. Jamie is sitting in the opposite corner of the room, clutching her knees to her chest. She is shaking and sweating. She sips water from the plastic cup. As she notices the tray, she looks up and yells out.

JAMIE: Hey! Hey, wait!

She makes her way over to the door, kicks the new tray across the room, and crashes to her knees. She again yells through the slot in the door.

JAMIE: What do you want from me?!

She waits a moment for a response.

JAMIE: Whatever you want, I'll fucking do it! Whatever kinky shit you're into...

I just need one hit.

(then softly to herself) I'll do anything.

(pause, then loudly) Who are you?!

CUT TO: INT. JEREMY COOPER'S STUDY – CONTINUOUS

Jeremy watches Jamie on the monitor as she yells through the slot in the door. She finally runs out of steam, and curls into a ball on the floor. Jeremy rubs his fingers against the screen, as if he's caressing her hair.

MONTAGE:

Street sweepers clean the city.

Trays of food pile up on the floor of Jamie's room.

Jeremy changes the sheets on a cot.

Jamie throws up.

The Bishop stares out the window of Jamie's old room.

Jamie sweats and shivers as she stares up at the photo on the wall.

Jeremy watches Jamie on the monitor. The room shown in the monitor next to hers is now empty.

Jamie finally begins to pick at the food, nibbling a bit.

END OF MONTAGE.

INT. THE BISHOP'S HOUSE – DAY

ON-SCREEN TEXT: "Savannah, Georgia – Yesterday"

Vanessa is watching a report on the local news. The reporter is doing his stand-up.

REPORTER: When you think of River Street, most people picture trolley buses and candy shops. Thousands of curious visitors walk these cobblestones every day. But River Street is also the spot where *five* of this year's *seven* missing call girls...were last seen alive. (now V.O. under video of "Eve")

Meet Eve. She's lived as a professional escort for the last...

Vanessa sees The Bishop approaching, and quickly changes the channel. She smiles at him.

VANESSA: Hey baby.

CUT TO: INT. JEREMY COOPER'S BASEMENT – MORNING

Jamie lies on her cot, with her head hanging over the edge. She is staring upside down at the picture of Saluda. She looks much healthier now. She gets up, eats a bit of leftover food from a tray resting on the sink, and walks closer to the photo.

INT. JEREMY COOPER'S KITCHEN – CONTINUOUS

Jeremy whistles as he prepares another gourmet feast. He carefully decorates the plate, like a professional chef. This time he adds one final touch: he opens a bottle of pills, breaks two of them open, and sprinkles the powder into the food.

INT. JEREMY COOPER'S BASEMENT – MORNING

Jamie is now touching the picture. She smiles slightly as she runs her finger along the lines of the scene. Suddenly the slot in the door flips open and a tray slides into the room. This jars her from her daydream, and she walks over to collect the food.

CUT TO: EXT. SALUDA PUBLIC PARK -- MORNING

ON-SCREEN TEXT: "Saluda, North Carolina – Today"

The boy and his mother (from earlier) stand over the girl's body in the park. She lies frozen in the grass. The girl is Jamie.

*Tight close-up:* Suddenly Jamie's eyes burst open. She looks up at the little boy and his mother. They stare at her in silence as she attempts to get her bearings and slowly rise to her feet. She finally manages to stand, and begins to stagger away from the family. The mother calls out to her.

MOTHER: Miss...are you all right?

Jamie brushes the grass off of her clothes. She finds that she is dressed rather conservatively in jeans, a simple blouse, and a light jacket.

JAMIE: Yeah. I think so.

CUT TO: EXT. SAVANNAH CEMETERY – CONTINUOUS  
ON-SCREEN TEXT: “Savannah, Georgia – Today”

Jeremy Cooper drives slowly through the cemetery. He stops his car near a cluster of graves, and opens the door.

CUT TO: EXT. SALUDA PUBLIC PARK -- CONTINUOUS

Jamie stumbles out of the park and onto a quiet little street. She is in the center of town. It is the same town that she saw in the photograph in Jeremy Cooper’s basement. She wanders aimlessly for a bit, and then she spots a bus station. She enters the building.

INT. BUS STATION – CONTINUOUS

Jamie heads to a sign that shows destinations and fares. The information reveals that she is in Saluda. She reads, “One Way – Savannah, GA - \$34” She walks over to the ticket booth, reaching into her pockets instinctively. She pauses, confused by what she feels inside the pocket of her jeans. Finally she brings her hand out, slowly opens her fist, and finds that she’s holding a huge roll of \$100 bills! There are at least a few thousand dollars worth. She tries to contain her excitement and confusion. She digs into her other pockets. She finds some more cash in her jeans. In her jacket, she finds a keychain with the words, “60 Days” printed on it. In another pocket she discovers a brochure for the local chapter of Narcotics Anonymous, and a few other pamphlets listing apartments and jobs available in the Saluda area. The CLERK at the ticket booth is ready to serve her.

CLERK: Ma’am? You doin’ some travelin’?

Jamie quickly hides the money and material back in her pockets.

JAMIE: Yes, uh, one way to Savannah.

CLERK: That’ll be thirty-four dollars, ma’am.

She fishes one of the c-notes out of her pocket and hesitantly hands it over to the clerk. He makes change and prints out her ticket as he explains the schedule.

CLERK: Now that bus won’t be headin’ out for about another hour here. If you’re hungry, there’s an excellent diner right across the road. Tell Rosie you’re waitin’ on a bus, an’ she’ll usually throw a slice of her key lime in fer free. Here ya go. You have a nice day now, y’hear?

JAMIE: Uh, okay. Thanks.

Jamie heads back outside, and crosses the street to the diner.

CUT TO: EXT. CEMETERY – CONTINUOUS

Jeremy is kneeling on the grass in front of a tombstone. It reads, "Stephanie Cooper, Beloved Daughter." His body trembles.

DISSOLVE TO: FLAHSBACK SEQUENCE: INT. JEREMY COOPER'S HOME – NIGHT

Jeremy holds his wife, AMANDA COOPER back from their front door. Their daughter, STEPHANIE COOPER, bangs loudly on the outside of the door. Everyone yells at once.

STEPHANIE (Off-Screen): Daddy, let me in! I'm clean, Daddy!

AMANDA COOPER: She says she's clean.

JEREMY: You know she's high; you can hear it in her voice. We have to be strong.

AMANDA COOPER: Shit, Jeremy. She's gonna die out there.

STEPHANIE (O.S.): Mom? Why do you hate me, Mamma? Why do you hate me?!

JEREMY: The therapist said...

STEPHANIE: I jus' wanna come home!

AMANDA COOPER: To hell with the therapist! She's our *daughter*.

Amanda lunges for the door, but Jeremy stops her. They both fall to their knees. Amanda begins to cry hysterically. Stephanie continues to pound and yell from behind the door.

JEREMY: If we keep throwing her a life preserver, she'll never learn to swim on her own. You know this is right. He never said it would be easy, but it's the only way.

AMANDA: You don't love her like I love her! You just don't love her...

Amanda breaks down in a fit of tears. Jeremy stares up at the door, and fights back tears of his own.

END OF FLASHBACK SEQUENCE.

DISSOLVE TO: EXT. CEMETERY – DAY

Jeremy Cooper hugs his daughter's tombstone, closing his eyes tightly.

CUT TO: INT. DINER – CONTINUOUS

Jamie enjoys her last bite of key lime pie, and a final swig of coffee. She leaves a twenty-dollar bill on the table, and stands up. She heads to the front door and notices a "Help Wanted" sign facing the outside. The waitress, ROSIE, calls out to her.

ROSIE: You need change, honey?

JAMIE: Oh, no thanks.

Rosie notices Jamie looking at the sign.

ROSIE: Pretty girl like you could make a lot of money here.

Jamie chuckles to herself. She smiles at Rosie, and walks out the door.

EXT. MAIN STREET – CONTINUOUS

Jamie walks to the center of the road and stops. She looks around at this quiet friendly little town. She sees locals greeting each other with smiles and waves. She reaches into her pocket and fishes out the Narcotics Anonymous information. She looks at the bus station and a sign for “Trips to Savannah.” She glances back to the diner. She sees the “Help Wanted” sign, and notices a sign in a window upstairs that reads, “Room For Rent.” She looks down at her clothing, the brochures in her hand, and the “60 Days” keychain. She looks up to the bus station, and to the diner, and to the park, and back down to her own feet.

*Tight Close-Up:* Jamie’s foot takes one step forward.

END

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