

Here are two pages taken from a novella that I edited. It's a before-and-after look at the material. This project is unique because the entire manuscript is in the first-person present tense, a rare choice. The client also wanted the writing to be stark with staccato sentences.

Before the Edits

Ashton and Violet in car, dropping Violet off at work her occupation a California DMV Title and registration supervisor. Although \$22.50 an hour was an awesome promotion Violet being the bread winner and Ashton having the next "get rich quick" "I have a plan" work ethic.. on top of living in the city, She didn't feel to much promoted.

Encouraging him to get a real job she slams the door with an routine "I love you" (sigh) Ashton inspired enough, looking confused, turn the music up loud, and drives off. on the way to his best friend Edward's he notices used car lots overlooking them, driving Violet's car everyday knowing he's a long way from a used vehicle of his own he turns right on to an Auto Mall dr. all brand new vehicles shining to one sun like solar panels. When he arrived he hears Edward screaming at someone as if its getting physical.. Ashton barges in, to find him arguing with a kid from "China" Edward was a big online gamer who made decent money doing so.

His games of choice were racing he felt no one could beat him on any track, any game willing to race at any time. Ashton ask you know about selling cars? Edward, eating on his chip replies " any man can sell a car, but the right car will sell itself, Ashton with a confused look on his face replies, yea whatever that means, violet wants me to look for a job, I'm thinking about getting a sales license and selling used cars.. Edward laughing replies "there's more to life than work" you must find something you love doing! You want to sale cars and make money or make the customer feel good by selling them a car, there's a difference. We make money gaming, because we enjoy gaming yea we shit talk it's a competition. At the end of the day there happy

losing and I'm King (they both laugh) see now that's the key "happiness" it's magic! Ashton immediately felt different about this project.

After the Edits

Violet had recently been promoted to *Title and Registration Supervisor* at the DMV. But her promotion felt a bit underwhelming to me. Although twenty-five fifty an hour is a good wage for us, I had another get-rich-quick scheme in mind.

I stop the car in front of Violet's house, and she gets out. She turns and leans on the car, resting her arms on the open window of the passenger side. "Don't worry, something will turn up," she says, letting out a big smile. "I love you."

"I know," I confidently reply, giving her a wink.

Violet walks up to her front door. She turns and watches me drive off. I blast the music as I cruise down the road. I pull into a car lot filled with brand-new cars. As I pull up, I hear Edward screaming at someone in his small office at the corner of the lot. I park and walk into his office.

I notice Edward yelling at a Chinese kid who is no more than twenty-one. With Edward, an altercation is never out of the question—no exceptions. Edward is an ex-street-racer who made some decent coin over the years. He was willing to race anyone at any time and usually won. A bad car wreck tragically ended his racing days, but he came away with scars and a limp he boasts about. The Chinese kids leave, and Edward sits behind his small desk. He annoyingly begins to crunch down on some potato chips to calm down. He looks at me and asks, "What are you doing here?"

"I need work."

Edwards lets out a scoff.

"You know I'm the best at what I do," I insist.

"I agree. It's your ethical dilemma that concerns me." He throws the rest of his chips away. "We'll discuss it over lunch."

Edwards gets up and heads to the door, and I follow him out.

We drive down the street in my car. Edward's cell rings. "Turn the music down; it's my brother calling." He answers the phone as I turn down the radio.

"Hello... yeah, okay, okay... what's the address? Okay, got it, we're on our way... I have him with me... It won't be a problem." Edward hangs up.

"Is Evan in trouble?" I ask.

"Naw, there's a big shipment coming in we need to check out. He said to meet him at his place. Get on the 101. It'll be the fastest way."

I nod as I make a U-turn. I hate going with Edward to get his merchandise; we may be walking into a sting, or someone has tipped off the cops. I doubt Edward worries about it like I do. He's done this so often; it's just another day at the office for him.