

Script: Emma Soinstyle Buys a Used Car

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Characters:

Emma Soinstyle – 18-yr old fashion-conscious car buyer
Fast Al – devious and “sharp” middle-aged used car salesman & owner of Fast Al’s
Everybody Rides Used Car Dealership
EconoMan – the financially smart super hero
Jamal Sosensible – Emma’s friend who is more sensible on money matters
The 2 car seats – silent actors except for specified sounds
The cow
The hangar (standing in a “closet” with a blue shirt, sweater draped over him/her)

Props:

Chair and table/desk for Emma’s bedroom
In Magazine – regular magazine with a handmade paper cover saying “In Magazine”
Red shirt or sweater or sweatshirt
Blue shirt or sweater or sweatshirt
Bag of potato chips, bag of pretzels, bag of popcorn
Cell phone (optional)
Superhero costume – red cape, black mask, money decorations, etc.
Signs:

- “Fast Al’s Everybody Rides Used Car Dealership”
- “Reputable Dealership Avenue”
- “Half-off Blue Nissan Maximas”
- “Blue Nissan Maxima Closeout Sale”
- “One Week Later”

White sheet (for car)
Cardboard/paper wheels (for car)
Sunglasses
Cow costume?
Credit card
Door handle

Scenes:

Scene 1 – Thursday night, Emma in her bedroom, reading *In Magazine*. She is dressed in blue jeans, a white T shirt and a red shirt/sweater/sweatshirt. She’s lounging in a chair with a table next to her. The three (unopened) bags of snacks should be under the table but visible to the audience.

Emma: I'm so glad about my subscription to *In Magazine*. It's really my secret for being THE most in person in the whole high school. (*Flipping thru the magazine, and then stroking her pantlegs*). Ah good, I see that Rodolpho Vaccaro Insidio Trevino jeans are still THE most in things in terms of casual wear. (*Gets up, stands before hypothetic mirror, admiring her jeans, twirling about once, then returns to chair.*)

Let's see, what's *In* got to say about snacks this week. (Reading from the magazine). 'Everyone who is anyone this month has put away those greasy potato chips and switched to honey mustard flavored mini-pretzel twists.' (*She picks up the pretzel bag and sets it on the table, and studies it.*) Hmm, I didn't get honey mustard flavor. (*Looks around to ensure she is alone – then opens the bag.*) But I really am hungry. I bet no one will notice this (grabs a pretzel from the bag and takes a bite.)

(*Keeps flipping thru, then sits up with a start*). Oh no! (reading) 'According to our latest check in with the highest fashion authorities and kings and queens of "in," red is decidedly out and blue is definitely in.' (*Looks at her red shirt/sweater in horror and pulls it off.*) I know I have something blue in my closet. (*Walks over to where "hangar" is standing, motions the opening of a closet door, and reaches in to take the blue clothing off the "hangar." Then shuts the door, walks back to the chair and puts on the blue sweater.*)

Sound of phone ringing.

Emma: (*Picking up the phone, or pretending to, if no phone*). Hello? Oh, hi Jamal. How you doing?
(*waits for answer*). I'm doing great – just chilling out in my room and eating some honey mustard mini-pretzel twists (*winks widely at the audience*). (*Listens for a bit*). Yeah – it is true. Can you believe it, Jamal? I'm really gonna buy a car! I'm really excited. (*Listens for a bit*). *Consumer Reports*? No, I haven't looked at that. (*Rolls her eyes at the audience*). (*listens some more*). Well...no, not exactly, Jamal. Financing? (*listens some more*) Umm Hmm, Umm, Hmm (*bored*). Take it to a mechanic??? But Jamal, what a hassle! (*listens more*). Yeah yeah yeah – but listen Jamal, I'm telling you, I am prepared. (*listens more, than gets louder*) I am! Jamal – I'm doing research right now! I'm reading *In Magazine* and they have a whole section on cars and what's in and what's not, so I can be totally prepared on Saturday when I go out shopping. You just wait and see. Jamal, I'll talk to you later. (*hangs up*).

(*Looking at audience*) Mr. Jamal Sosensible. He means well, but man can he be a drag sometimes! Like I'm really interested in financing and interest rates and safety ratings! How excruciatingly boring.

(*Flips through magazine again*) OK – here we go. (*reading*) 'What's In for Used Cars.' 'All shades of blue...um hmm...faux white leather interior...hmm

hmm...two doors, sun roof.' Well, that doesn't sound too hard. I can't wait until Saturday!

Scene 2 Saturday morning. Emma enters Fast Al's car dealership.

Fast Al: Well, hello, there, little lady! Welcome to Fast Al's car dealership, where everybody rides in the HIGHEST style.

Emma: Perfect! I am looking for a very IN car.

Fast Al: Well you've come to the right place. And may I say that is a lovely blue sweater you are wearing. You clearly know what's in style – can I assume you'll be looking to buy a blue car today?

Emma: (*Delightedly*) Oh yes!

Fast Al: Excellent. Here's our first blue beauty, In Style Car magazine's Car of the Year.

Emma: Car of the Year???

Al: Yes! Now, I don't have any *records* of the car's history, and the Vehicle Identification Number is... uh.... lost... but I can tell you that we got it in just yesterday....

Emma: No records? Isn't that... bad?

Al: Well, yes, usually. But you see, I am not supposed to *tell* you who sold the car to us. That's why the records are gone...

Emma: Not supposed to tell me? Why not?

Al: Well.... you see, miss, this car belonged to.... a celebrity.

Emma: (*gasps*) A celebrity! Which one??

Al: Well... um..... a very FAMOUS celebrity. Oh, miss, this celebrity buys only the most fashionable things.

Emma: Ooh! That's better than any crummy records any day! And (*looking inside the car*), it has faux white leather interior!

(*enter EconoMan! Al and Emma freeze.*)

EconoMan: Hi, Kids! I'm..... EconoMan!! I save innocent people from making poor financial decisions that could ruin their lives! And it looks like I got here just in time. Emma has chosen a car that's in style, which is fine, but she seems to care MORE

about the style of the car than anything else! She should have definitely asked for the car's Vehicle Identification Number. That number allows you to run a report on the car to find out about any accidents it's been in. Right now, Emma has no way of knowing what's happened to this car in the past!

Emma: This sounds like a great deal. I do have a few questions, though....

Fast Al: Um... of course you do!

Emma: *(to herself)* I wonder if maybe Jamal was right about some of those things he said last night... what did he say, exactly? Oh... I think he mentioned safety... yeah. *(To Al.)* Ok, um... what about.... um, airbags? Does it have airbags?

Fast Al: Airbags? Well, not EXACTLY, no. I mean, it did, of course, but when the very famous and fabulous celebrity had a little.... mishap... with the car, the stereo and the airbags were damaged... He thought it would be more important to fix the stereo than the airbags. I mean, you use a stereo EVERY DAY. How often do you need airbags?

Emma: That is SO TRUE. Besides, you know, if a CELEBRITY thinks the stereo is more important than the airbags, that's clearly the way to go!

Fast Al: Clearly!

(EconoMan enters! Others freeze.)

EconoMan: Kids, this is awful! Emma is willing to give up basic safety features to have a stereo, to keep in style! A stereo is great, but NOTHING is more important than Safety when you're buying a car! Plus, Al just told her this car has been in an accident. Emma needs to ask more about that accident – other important things could have been damaged. Let's see if she does....

(EconoMan exits. Others unfreeze.)

Fast Al: Well, miss, it looks like you're about ready to wrap this deal up. Will you be making your deposit in cash or with a check?

Emma: Wait, wait, wait....

(EconoMan enters. Others freeze.)

EconoMan: Thank goodness! Emma is really wise to need more time. She needs to see the price of the car in writing to review with a parent or friend. And she needs to have her mechanic look at this car before she buys it. I'm glad Emma's gonna be smart about this...

(EconoMan exits. Others unfreeze.)

Emma: Wait, I need to take it for a ride first! I can't buy it without knowing how it feels on the road, and without seeing how I look in it! I need to feel the wind in my hair! Wait – it does have a sunroof, doesn't it?

Fast Al: *(shocked)* Miss! Of course! Sun roofs are so *in* right now. Would I sell you a car without a SUN ROOF?

Emma: *(smiling)* Oh good. Well, how about that drive? I need to see what other people think of me while I'm driving. Let's go somewhere crowded, with lots of really popular people!

Al: Oh.... Of course! Let's go!

(EconoMan enters. Others freeze.)

EconoMan: Uh oh. Looks like I overestimated our friend. Emma is still just interested in how the car looks and feels. Test-driving a car before buying it is important, though. So maybe she'll still be ok. Let's see how the drive goes.

(EconoMan exits. Others unfreeze.)

(Emma and Fast Al enter the "car," which is two people sitting directly next to each other in chairs facing the audience, draped by a white sheet. Emma and Fast Al sit down on their laps and Emma looks around, admiring the faux white leather interior).

Emma: Oh my goodness! This interior not only looks great, but it's so soft and comfortable too!

Fast Al: Sure is. Ok, let's start this beautiful baby up.

(As Fast Al is talking, they drive by another dealership: Three people stand to the side of Emma and Fast Al's car. The First has a street sign that says "Reputable Dealership Avenue." The other two are holding signs that say "Half-off Blue Nissan Maximas", and "Blue Nissan Maxima Closeout Sale")

Fast Al: *(Seeing the signs, and looking worried)* Hey, there's the shopping mall! *(Points to the other side of the car)* Just imagine how cool you'd look rolling into that parking lot in this ride.

Emma: *(Dreamily staring off in the mall's direction)* Yeah, I sure would...*(The signs walk offstage).*

(Scene Freezes)

Economoman: *(Flying into the scene)* If Emma had visited other car dealerships and compared prices, she would have known that Fast Al offered the worst deal on blue Nissan Maximas in the entire state!

Remember kids – you gotta shop around.

(Scene resumes.)

Emma: Ewww...there's just so many red cars on the road today! What are they thinking? *(pauses)* Hey look! There's Leena, Rina and Christina! *(Takes her hands off the wheel and waves out the side of the car. She puts on a pair of sunglasses, lets her hair down, and gleams in her beautiful car. Meanwhile a cow walks in front of the car and moos.)*

Fast Al: Watch out for that cow!! *(Emma grabs the wheel and swerves as the cow runs out of the way of the car.)* Whew, I think we probably should turn around and head back to the dealership.

(Emma turns the wheel as if turning around. The car begins making a suspicious noise).

Fast Al: *(Looking nervous and fidgety again as the noise continually gets louder)* Hey – you haven't even heard the radio yet!

Emma: What was I thinking. *In* magazine said that a good car stereo is *essential*. Turn it on!!

(Fast Al reaches for the switch, and the person he is sitting on starts singing "I Will Survive," or "Money Money Money." As the car gets louder, Fast Al turns up the volume – this continues until the two car seat characters are very loud. When they are at the top of their voices, the scene freezes and Economoman enters.)

Economoman: Although it's OK to test the stereo at some point when you are trying out cars, you won't be able to drive around playing your tunes unless you can actually drive around. So when you look for a new car, make sure it runs well first, and then check the stereo. *(He flies away, and the loud noises resume).*

Emma: *(Shouting)* This stereo sounds great! *(She moves her shoulders to the music.)*

Fast Al: *(Holding his ears, shouting.)* Well, it looks like we're back. Go ahead and turn off the car.

(Emma turns off the car and the loud noises stop. They get out of the car.)

Emma: So how much will it be?

Fast Al: Right...we're having a sale on all...uh...blue Nissan Maximas this month, so we'll give it to you for \$250 a month.

Emma: And for how many months?

(Scene freezes)

Economian: Take a good look at this everyone! Emma is showing financial responsibility by considering how much she can spend on her new car. Since many months of payments means a higher total price, and more interest costs, it is very important to consider the entire payment plan, and to even see it in writing. Let's see if she makes a wise decision and asks for the price of the car in writing.

(Scene resumes.)

Fast Al: I'm going to make it easy on you – I'll give you seven years to pay for your car! So only \$250 a month for seven years!

Emma: But isn't that –

Fast Al: *(gestures toward car)* The coolest car in Richmond? Yes. And we even offer a loan to help you pay for it.

(scene freezes, Economian enters).

Economian: Uh-oh – Emma's really being taken advantage of. First she hasn't asked for the total price. At least \$250 a month for 7 years – Emma's going to end up paying for this car. Plus she should be wary of taking out a loan with Fast Al – his interest rate is higher than the interest rate Emma could have gotten from a local bank or credit union.

(scene resumes)

Emma: *(Thinking out loud)*. Let's see, I have \$5,000 in my account, *(looks at car)*... that sun-roof looks so good...and I make \$100 a week at my job *(looks at car again)*...I looked so *in* today in front of Rina, Leena and Christina...so that means that after four years...*(looks again)* I love blue...I'll take it!!!

(Scene freezes, Economian enters).

Economian: Noooooo!!!!

(Scene resumes.)

Fast Al: Great, now I just need a down-payment of \$4,500.

Emma: You got it. *(She takes out a credit card).*

Scene 3.

(Someone enters with a sign that says “One Week Later.” Emma gets in the car, and as she shuts the door, she holds up a make-believe door-handle.)

Emma: Whoops. I’ll fix that later. I have to get right to the store and pick up the new issue of *In Magazine*. I need to know the latest fashions before everyone else does. *(She turns on the car. It starts after three tries, and it’s very loud immediately. She starts driving, and after a little while, the “seat” (person sitting in the chair) next to her falls off and onto the ground.)* I don’t know about this car...it doesn’t seem to be holding up very well. It’s so loud I can’t even hear my radio...the sunroof looks great, but it won’t even close...now the passenger side door is falling off. Maybe Jamal was right...*(pauses)*...but at least it’s blue and looks great!

(Emma stops the car and runs into the store. She grabs a magazine and a look of horror comes over her face.)

Emma: Noooo!!! This can’t be! Blue is out! But I just bought a blue car. What am I going to do? I’ll just sell this one to someone who doesn’t know what’s in...but no one is going to want a car that’s falling apart. What am I going to do?!!!

(Economan enters)

Economan: What’s the problem Emma?

Emma: I just bought a blue car and now it’s out of style, and I still have seven years of payments and I don’t think I’m going to be able to sell it.

Economan: Why not?

Emma: Well, because I didn’t really think very much about how well it runs, and it’s falling apart.

Economan: Well I’ll tell you what, Emma, I’ll fix it up and resell it to the dealer for you, and then you can try this car-shopping thing again. But what will you remember?

Emma: Next time I’m going to shop smartly, to look around at different dealerships, and compare prices. I’m going to ask for the vehicle’s history and get the total price in writing. And I’m going to shop around for financing to find the best deal on a car that’s really *In!*

Economan: *(laughing)* That sounds good, Emma.

