

**Make It Your Business
when you witness sexual assault**

SETTING: A street-level business with a view of the sidewalk and nearby parking meters

[Our vantage point is from the sidewalk, where we see a WORKER (JOE) at the open door of a street-level business, allowing the NARRATOR to leave the shop with a handshake. JOE is looking down the street in anticipation, as though waiting for something or someone. As JOE retreats back into the store, a WOMAN (SHARON) pulls her car into a parking spot in JOE's line of vision. A MAN (FRED) approaches SHARON as she reaches the parking meter.]

FRED: **Sharon! Fancy meeting you here. Looking for change?** [SHARON looks uncomfortable.]

[We again see JOE inside the shop, looking out the display window as though looking for someone. A CUSTOMER (NEIL), obviously a regular customer who is friendly and familiar with JOE, enters the shop. JOE and NEIL smile and greet each other.]

NEIL: **Hey, Joe.**

JOE: **G'day, Neil. How's she going?**

NEIL: **I'm doing very well.**

JOE: **I'm looking for the delivery truck – big brown one. You haven't seen it, have you?**

NEIL: **No, not really, eh?**

[JOE and NEIL look out the display window. They see SHARON and FRED talking. They can't hear what they are saying, but he seems aggressive. He is verbally distracting her from paying for her parking and also occupying the space next to the parking meter. SHARON is trying to hold her ground but is leaning back away from his words and his body, looking uncomfortable.]

JOE: **Wait a sec, there's something going on out there.**

[Meanwhile, on the sidewalk, we still can't hear what's happening, but SHARON is shrinking and shrinking, looking distressed. She still hasn't put

the money into the meter. She looks like she'd rather be anywhere in the world than where she is. FRED still has his back to the display window. He leans into the SHARON's space, finally getting so close that he cups her elbow possessively with his hand, restricting her movement. She looks pained.]

NEIL: **Uh, I don't know... They seem to know each other, Joe, but she looks so upset. What should we do?**

JOE: **Let's just hang back here for a minute, and get an eye on this.**

[As this is playing out, BYSTANDERS (JAY and AVA) enter the scene, walking on the sidewalk. They give the scene at the parking meter a once-over as they pass by, AVA pausing to look back over her shoulder to assess the situation.]

FRED: **These things don't just go away by themselves. C'mon.**

[... and while the viewpoint is somewhat obscured from where the camera and JOE and NEIL are watching from, FRED seems to reach out and cup SHARON's buttocks for a moment or two. SHARON freezes entirely. The camera returns to JOE and NEIL in the shop.]

JOE: [incredulous] **Did you see that? Did he just grab her by the butt?**

NEIL: [wonderingly] **I couldn't see, but something bad happened. We have to do something, Joe.**

NARRATOR: **Joe and Neil are right: something bad happened. If the man touched the woman's buttocks, Joe and Neil have witnessed a sexual assault under the Criminal Code, and it's a matter for police.**

Even if he didn't touch her buttocks, Joe and Neil have witnessed intimidation and harassment. The man in this scene was making the woman feel *very* uncomfortable. His attention was clearly *not* wanted. He was touching her in ways she did *not* invite.

There's no way to tell for sure if the woman and man in this situation are in a family-type relationship. To you as a witness, their past or current relationship shouldn't matter. No matter what, the woman needs someone to step up and help.

If you were Joe, what could you do to address the violence and keep yourself and the people around you safe? Here's one option.

[Back to scene where it was interrupted]

JOE: [to NEIL and reaching for a phone.] **I'm going to call the police and report a crime in progress.**

NEIL: **Of course. What a terrible thing to happen.** [shaking his head]

NARRATOR: **This is a situation that needs police involvement, but another option could be to interrupt the aggressor *as well as* calling police. Distraction can be a great tactic. Here's another example.**

JOE: **Hold on a sec. I'm gonna go out and see what I can do.**

NEIL: **Okay – be careful, though. That man does not look happy. If anything dangerous happens, I'll call 911 for you. .**

[The camera follows JOE to the sidewalk where he positions himself in SHARON's line of sight and JOE catches her eye. When he speaks, JOE addresses FRED.]

JOE: **Excuse me, excuse me, excuse me. Did you happen to see a big brown delivery truck just come by here?** [He points down the street away from SHARON] **I'm waiting for him. A big brown truck.** [JOE blocks FRED as SHARON walks away.]

FRED: [Distracted from harassing SHARON and turning away from her. He says confusedly] **What are you talking about, man? I never seen any big brown truck.** [Walking away backwards.] **Why don't you take care of your own deliveries. What do I look like, some kind of delivery boy to you or something?**

NARRATOR: **If Neil hasn't called 911 when Joe gets back to the shop, they'll call the police together. Remember to trust your instincts—if you think someone is in danger, or if you are in danger, call 911.**

NARRATOR: **Joe was not the only person to witness harassment on the street. If you were a passerby who witnessed a woman being intimidated and possibly assaulted, what could you do to address the violence and keep yourself and the people around you safe? Let's ask a person who walked past on the sidewalk about what they could have done.**
[Turning to the BYSTANDERS (JAY and AVA)]

Excuse me, I know you saw what happened at the parking meter. What did you do?

JAY: Yeah, so we were just walking by and the way that that man was, like, crowding her really creeped me out, we just doubled back and waved and pretended to know her.

AVA: Yeah, we just kinda looked at each other and knew we had to do something, and Jay thought really fast. He said, "Hey, are you Don's mom? I haven't seen you in a while."

JAY: Yeah, she just shook her head and looked kinda confused. She didn't know what I was talking about. About Don, I mean. But it totally threw off the guy who was bugging her.

AVA: So I just kinda caught her eye as if to say, are you okay. She kinda shook the guy off and pulled herself together and ended up walking down the street with us.

NARRATOR: A small action might be all it takes to help in a situation of family violence. Recognize signs of violence and abuse. Consider what you can safely do. Reach out for help from community services like Family Violence Prevention Services. *Make it your business* to prevent family violence.