

Chasing Amy

Written by Kevin Smith

**INT. COMIC BOOK STORE - DAY**

A pile of COMIC BOOKS are on a shelf next to myriad others. The most prominent one is called 'BLUNTMAN AND CHRONIC'. A hand reaches in and pulls one out of frame. HOLDEN opens the comic and flips through it. He shakes his head. BANKY looks over his shoulder.

**BANKY**

Felt Like this fucking day would never come. Issue two - on the shelf.

**HOLDEN**

Yippee.

**BANKY**

Don't start, alright! This is a cool moment, and I'd appreciate you not trying to ruin it. How often does a guy get the opportunity to purchase something with his name on it!

(points to name on cover)

Banky Edwards- right!

(points to the other)

Holden McNeil.

**HOLDEN**

I know my name.

**BANKY**

C'mon, sour puss. We got the rest of our lives to be artists. But it's supply and demand. And right now, the unwashed masses demand this.

**HOLDEN**

(off comic)

This is easy, alright! And right now it pays the bills. Just don't forget that we're better than this.

**BANKY**

I'll tell you who we're better than: these two fags right here.

They approach the counter, where STEVE-DAVE, the store manager, and WALT the Fan-boy, play a card game.

**BANKY**

(lays books on the counter)

Alright Old-Maid's - take a break from the Crazy-8's marathon and ring us up.

**STEVE-DAVE**

(not looking up)

Well, well,well, Walt Did you see who it is! The local celebrities. Quick - get them to autograph one of their books so we can sell it for triple it's value.

**WALT**

I'm not that in need of fifteen cents right now.

They snicker and high-five one another. Holden rolls his eyes.

**BANKY**

You guys operate the smallest, ladies' bridge circle I've ever seen.

**WALT**

For your information, we're playing 'Crimson Mystical Mages' - an overpower card game. Not that either of you would give a shit about something as advanced as this - there are no dick or poopie jokes involved.

**BANKY**

(to Holden)

I don't think they're fans.

**WALT**

No, we're not. You're both a couple of fucking no talents that got lucky.

**STEVE-DAVE**

And obviously your handlers or hangers-on convinced you that your first comic was good which it was not it was thoroughly mediocre with a few spiky bits of dialogue. And when you get your foot in the door of the business, what do you do! You turn out a piece of shit like 'Bluntman and Chronic'.

**WALT**

Tell him, Steve-Dave.

**STEVE-DAVE**

(off comic)

'Bluntman and Chronic'. Pah. What was that thing the little stoner pulled on the villain in the last issue!

**WALT**

The Stinky-palm.

**STEVE-DAVE**

Stinky-palm. You give comics a bad name I tell all my customers not to buy it, to spend their money on a real comic book.

**WALT**

Fucking one hit wonder, dime-store  
Frank Miller's.

**STEVE-DAVE**

This is the reality at Comic-Toast -  
you're not going to get your ass  
kissed here, because both me and Walt  
think you suck.

**WALT**

And me.

**STEVE-DAVE**

I said that.

Steve-Dave offers the boys his two middle fingers, then  
goes back to playing his game with Walt. Holden and  
Banky stare, shocked. Banky nudges Holden and they both  
exit Steve-Dave and the Fan-boy slap hands and go back to  
playing.

**WALT**

I've got a dragon card - forty power-  
ups and twelve life points! Ha! I  
get your elf card!

**STEVE-DAVE**

You're such a bitch! But thankfully,  
I've saved a dark forces Shaman card  
for just such an occasion.

**WALT**

You suck! Eighty six life-power  
points to my twenty two!

**STEVE-DAVE**

I schooled their asses, now I'm  
schooling your's.

Suddenly. A trash can crashes through the front window.  
Steve-Dave and Walt hit the deck like bitches, covering  
one another. They look up slowly. Steve-Dave leaps to  
his feet and looks at the shattered mess. He pulls  
something off the garbage can and reads it.

**WALT**

You know it was those two fucks!  
Let's call the cops and have them  
busted! I know where their studio is!  
Or better yet, let's sue! You can sue  
them, Steve-Dave!

**STEVE-DAVE**

(still reading note)

That won't be necessary.

**WALT**

What?! Why the hell not!

**STEVE-DAVE**

(holds up check)

Because this is a check for three  
times what that window cost.

(reading note)

Dear critics - thanks for the

insight. But like my grandmother  
always said - Fuck 'em if they can't  
take a joke.. and break their window.'  
Kiss it, Banky the Hack.  
P.S. - Your card game blows.

**WALT**

He said Kiss it !

**CREDITS**

**INT. COMIC BOOK: CONVENTION SIGNING BOOTH - DAY**

A physically large FAN - sweaty brow, tote bag bursting  
with comics - leans forward, smiling.

**FAN**

Could you sign it To a really big  
fan !

Holden sits at a table. Across from the barely-managing-to-stand Fan. He offers him a patronizingly kind, half-smile in return,

**HOLDEN**

You bet.

We're at a Comic Book show, specifically at a book-signing. Behind Holden hangs a large banner, heralding HOLDEN McNEIL AND BANKY EDWARDS - CREATORS OF BLUNTMAN AND CHRONIC'. Beside it is a large mock-up of the comic book cover which features two stoner super-heroes who bear a striking resemblance to a pair of very familiar friendly neighborhood drug dealers, Holden hands the book back to the Fan.

**FAN**

I love this book man! This shit's  
awesome. I wish I was like these guys  
- getting stoned, talking all raw  
about chicks and fighting  
supervillains! I love these guys!  
They're like Cheech and Chong' meet  
Bill and Ted'!

**HOLDEN**

I like to think of them as  
Rosencrantz and Guildenstern' meet  
Vladimir and Estragon'.

**FAN**

Yeah!

(beat)

Who!

BANKY signs the book of another COLLECTOR.

**COLLECTOR**

So you draw this!

**BANKY**

(signing the comic)

I ink it and I'm also the colorist.  
The guy next to me draws it. But we  
both came up with the characters,

**COLLECTOR**

What's that mean - you ink it'!

**BANKY**

Well. It means that Holden draws the pictures in pencil, and then he gives it to me to go over in ink

**COLLECTOR**

So you just trace!

Banky freezes up. He composes himself and continues signing.

**BANKY**

It's not tracing. I add depth and shading to give the image mere definition. Only then does the drawing really take shape.

**COLLECTOR**

You go over what he draws with a pen - that's tracing.

**BANKY**

(hands book back to Collector)

Not really.

(calling out)

Next!

A LITTLE KID steps up but the Collector lingers.

**COLLECTOR**

Hey man. If somebody draws something and then you draw the same thing right on top of it, not going out-side the designated original art what do call that!

**LITTLE KID**

(shrugs)

I don't know. Tracing?

**COLLECTOR**

(to Banky)

See?

**BANKY**

It's not tracing.

**COLLECTOR**

Oh, but it is.

**BANKY**

(to Little Kid)

Do you want your book signed or what?

**COLLECTOR**

Hey - don't get all testy with him just because you have a problem with your station in life.

**BANKY**

I'm secure with what I do.

**COLLECTOR**

Then say it - you're a tracer.

**BANKY**

(grabbing Little Kid's book)  
How should I sign this?

**LITTLE KID**

(grabs book back)  
I don't want you to sign it, I want  
the guy that draws Bluntman and  
Chronic to sign it. You're just a  
tracer.

**COLLECTOR**

Tell him, Little Shaver.  
Holden accepts a comic from another Fan.

**HOLDEN**

(off comic)  
Who do I sign it to!  
Before Holden can finish, a loud crash is heard. He  
looks to his left and freaks.  
Banky is throttling the Collector from across the table.  
The Collector attempts to fight him off. SECURITY GUARDS  
pull them apart. Holden grabs Banky.

**COLLECTOR**

Jesus! All I did was call him a  
tracer!

**BANKY**

(to Collector)  
**I'LL TRACE A CHALK LINE AROUND YOUR  
DEAD FUCKING BODY, YOU FUCK?!**

**HOLDEN**

(to Security Guard)  
Could you get him out of here!  
The Security Guards drag the collector away.

**COLLECTOR**

Hey, wait a sec! He jumped me! And  
you're dragging me away!!  
(exiting)  
Fucking tracer!

**BANKY**

(calling OC)  
**YOUR MOTHER'S A TRACER!!**

**HOLDEN**

Can I explain the audience principle  
to you! If you insult and accost  
them, then we have no audience.

**BANKY**

He started it! Fucking cock-knocker!  
He's lucky I didn't put my pen through  
his thorax!

**HOLDEN**

Need I remind you...  
(holds up watch)  
Curtain's in ten minutes.

**INT. COMIC BOOK CONVENTION LECTURE HALL - DAY**

HOOPER fills the frame. He comes off like a typical, pro-black/anti-white homeboy.

**HOOPER**

For years in this industry whenever an African-American character - hero or villain - was introduced usually by white artists and writers - they got slapped with racist names that singled them out as negroes: Black Panther, Black Lightning, Black Goliath, Black Mantra, Black Talon, Black Spider, Black Hand, Black Falcon, Black Cat..

**VOICE FROM CROWD**

She's white.

**HOOPER**

She is?

(beat)

Well bust this - regardless.

We're at a panel discussion. The room is full. Five creators sit at a long table, their names on placards in front of them.

(One of them is a very striking Girl.) The banner behind them reads WORDS UP - MINORITY VOICES IN COMICS'.

**HOOPER**

(holds up comic)

Now my book, White-Hating Coon', doesn't have any of that bullshit. The hero's name is Maleekwa, and he's a descendant of the black tribe that established the first society on the planet, while all you European mother fuckers were still hiding in caves and shit, all terrified of the sun. He's a strong role model that a young black reader can look up to, Cause I'm here to tell you - the chickens are comin' home to roost, ya'll: the black man's no longer gonna play the minstrel in the medium of comics and Sci-Fi/Fantasy! We're keeping it real, and we're gonna get respect - by any means necessary!

During the speech, Holden and Banky enter and sit up front.

**HOLDEN**

(calling out)

Bullshit! Lando Calrissian was a black man, and he got to fly the Millennium Falcon!

Hooper whips his head around, looking for the source of the comment

**HOOPER**

Who said that?!?

**HOLDEN**

(standing)

I did! Lando Calrissian is a positive black role model in the realm of Science Fiction/Fantasy.

**HOOPER**

Fuck Lando Calrissian! Uncle Tom nigger! Always some white boy gotta invoke the holy trilogy! Bust this - those movies are about how the white man keeps the brother man down - even in a galaxy far, far away. Check this shit. You got cracker farm-boy Luke Skywalker, Nazi poster boy - blond hair, blue eyes.

And then you've got Darth Vader: the blackest brother in the galaxy. Nubian God.

**BANKY**

What's a Nubian?

**HOOPER**

Shut the fuck up! Now Vader, he's a spiritual brother, with the force and all that shit. Then this cracker Skywalker gets his hands on a lightsaber, and the boy decides he's gonna run the fucking universe - gets a whole Klan of whites together, and they're gonna bust up Vader's hood the Death Star. Now what the fuck do you call that!

**BANKY**

Intergalactic Civil War!

**HOOPER**

Gentrification. They're gonna drive our the black element, to make the galaxy quote, unquote safe' for white folks.

**HOLDEN**

But Vader turns, out to be Luke's father. And in Jedi, they become friends.

**HOOPER**

Don't make me bust a cap in your ass, yo! Jedi's the most insulting installment, because Vader's beautiful, black visage is sullied when he pulls off his mask to reveal a feeble, crusty white man! They're trying to tell us that deep



inside, we all want to be white!

**BANKY**

Well isn't that true!

Hooper explodes, He pulls a nine millimeter from his belt, draws on Banky and fires. Banky goes down, falling forward into the crowd The crowd screams and starts to scatter, Hooper jumps over the table and raises his fists in the air.

**HOOPER**

**BLACK RAGE! BLACK RAGE!! I'LL KILL  
ANY WHITE FOLKS I LAY MY MOTHER  
FUCKIN' EYES ON!!!**

The crowd-is gone. Holden sits in his chair, laughing. Hooper steps off the stage and picks Banky's head up off the floor.

**HOOPER**

(breaking character)

What's a Nubian!' Bitch, you almost made me laugh!

Hooper sounds different Actually, he sounds gay. Actually - he is. Banky smiles.

**BANKY**

Well what about you! You didn't tell me you were going to scream Black Rage'. I nearly pissed myself.

**HOLDEN**

How do you manage to get away with this all the time? Shouldn't cops be busting your head open right about now?

**BANKY**

Wrong coast.

**HOOPER**

(off gun)

Well this right here - she full of blanks, okay. And Opiate gets all sorts of legal clearances before I go on.

**HOLDEN**

Your publisher condones these theatrics!

**HOOPER**

Condone? Honey, they insist. I need to sell the image to sell the book Would the audience still buy the Black Rage' angle if they found out the book was written by a.. a...

**BANKY**

Faggot.

**HOOPER**

When you say if it sounds so sexy...  
(he kisses Banky full on the

lips)

**BANKY**

(wipes his lips)

Hey, hey! I'll play your victim, but not your catcher.

**VOICE**

How is it that you sound like Minister Farakhan when you're on stage..

They turn to see...

A beautiful, blonde, ruffled-haired angel swinging her purse in a circle. Her name is ALYSSA. She's the striking Girl from the panel who didn't get to say much.

**ALYSSA**

...and the King of Pop when you're nor.

**HOOPER**

Look out, boys - this kitten has a whip.

**ALYSSA**

(shoves and slaps him)

Always before I get to speak! I swear - the next con I attend and they ask me to be on the minority panel, if I see your name anywhere near the List, I'm passing.

**HOOPER**

(defending himself)

Holden. Banky - this pile of P.M.S. is Alyssa Jones. She does that book 'Idiosyncratic Routine'. This is the fourth panel we've been on together, and even though she knows my publisher sets this up and pays for the event. She still gets mad when it ends with my act.

**ALYSSA**

I just wish I was the one who gets to shoot you.

**HOOPER**

That's what my father said when I came - nay - leapt out of the closet

(off guys)

These boys do 'Bluntman and Chronic', which outsells both of our books put together, hence they're never on a panel with the likes of us. They slumming right now.

**BANKY**

I've read your book. It's cute. Chick stuff, but cute.

Holden hits him.

**BANKY**

What?

**HOLDEN**

(shoots him a look; to  
Alyssa)

Sorry about him. He's dealing with  
being an inker.

**ALYSSA**

(to Banky)

Oh. You trace!

Banky seethes.

**HOLDEN**

(shaking her hand)

I really enjoy your book I'm surprised  
we've never met at any other Con's  
before.

**ALYSSA**

Lose the dick or change your skin tone  
and we can get to know each other on  
panel after panel while the Pink Black  
Panther here plays Chuck D. for the  
fanboys.

**HOOPER**

Hey, jealousy.

(to the Boys)

I told Alyssa I'd buy her a post-rave  
drink. Do the Garden-Staters have to  
sprint to the Lincoln Tunnel, or can  
you stay for a round in the big, scary  
city!

**BANKY**

We're gonna take off soon...

**HOLDEN**

We'll go.

Banky offers Holden a puzzled glance. Then he nods to  
Hooper.

**BANKY**

We'll go.

**INT BAR - NIGHT**

Holden, Banky, Alyssa and Hooper sit around a table  
drinking, talking, and smoking.

**BANKY**

Archie, alright! Archie and the  
Riverdale gang were a pure and fun-  
lovin' bunch. You can't find  
dysfunction in those comics, because  
they were just flat out wholesome.

**HOOPER**

Archie and Jughead were lovers.

(sips his drink)

**BANKY**

Shut the fuck up.

**HOOPER**

It's true. Archie was the bitch and Jughead was the butch - that's why Jughead wears that crown-looking hat all the time: he the king, of queen Archie's world.

**BANKY**

Man, I feel a hate-crime coming on

**HOLDEN**

He's got a point. Archie never did settle on Betty or Veronica.

**BANKY**

Because he wanted them both at the same time, you assholes! He never chose one because he was trying to get both of them into a three-way!

**HOOPER**

(pulls out a dollar and hands it to Banky)

Here. I want you to go down to the corner store and buy yourself a clue. Go on.

**BANKY**

Eat it. Urkel.

**HOOPER**

I told you to watch it with that Urkel shit. Face it, girl - Archie's a sister.

**BANKY**

(getting up; to Hooper)

That's it. You.

**HOOPER**

Moi?

**BANKY**

You are marching back across the street with me, and we're going to pick up a shit load of Archie books, I am going to prove to you - beyond the shadow of a doubt that Archie was all about pussy. Come on.

**HOOPER**

(sliding out of booth)

This boy is conflicted, I shall play mother-therapist for him. You two sit tight. We shall return promptly.

Banky and Hooper exit, leaving Alyssa and Holden alone at the table.

**ALYSSA**

Is he always Like that!

**HOLDEN**

For years now. Started back in third grade - a nun was teaching us about the Blessed Trinity. She's going on

about the three persons in one God thing - Father, Son, Holy Spirit - and he just goes ballistic. I guess it was too big for him to grasp. They got into this huge fight.

**ALYSSA**

Please. How bad could it have been!

**HOLDEN**

You ever seen a nun call a small child a fucking cunt-rag'? Wasn't pretty, Shit like that's bound to happen when you make a kid wear a matching tie and slacks everyday.

**ALYSSA**

And your parochial school misadventures!

**HOLDEN**

Limited to wine-tasting prior to mass. Turned me into a grade school alcoholic altar boy. I couldn't tell you how many mornings after serous benders I'd wake up next to strange priests.

**ALYSSA**

Aren't you the sharp wit!

**HOLDEN**

Sharp! No. I'm just a fan of clergy-molestation humor. Probably why the extended family quit inviting me to First Communion parties.

Alyssa laughs. Holden smiles.

**ALYSSA**

(looking OC)

You play darts!

**HOLDEN**

Not professionally. You know - only in bars.

#### **AT THE DART BOARD**

A dart hits the board then, one hits the wall beside the board.

Alyssa winds up with another dart. Holden watches. Her's always hit. His never do.

**ALYSSA**

So your new book seems to be selling like mad.

**HOLDEN**

It goes back to something my grandmother told me when I was a kid. "Holden," she said "The big bucks are in dick and fart jokes." She was a church-goer.

**ALYSSA**

Uh-oh - the cry from the heart of a real artist trapped in commercial hell - pitying his good fortune. I'm sure you can dry your eyes on all those fat checks you rake in.

**HOLDEN**

I'm sorry - did I detect a note of bitter envy in there!

**ALYSSA**

Nope. I'm happy my stuff gets read at all. There's very little market for hearts and flowers in this spandex-clad, big pecs, big tits, big guns field. If I sell two issues, I feel like John Grisham.

**HOLDEN**

(looking out window)

It's all about marketing. Over- or underweight guys who don't get laid - they're our bread and butter. People like those two outside should be yours.

Through the window, we see a COUPLE making out on the hood of a car.

**HOLDEN**

And sadly, there are more of our core audience out there than yours.

(smiles)

Look at that, though - kind of gives you a little charge, to see two people in love. And all over Banky's car, no less. That car's seeing more action right now than it's seen in years.

**ALYSSA**

Bubbly guy like that, it's hard to figure out why.

**HOLDEN**

(still looking at OC Couple)  
You've gotta respect that kind of  
display of affection. It's crazy,  
rude, self-absorbed - but it's love.

**ALYSSA**

That's not love.

**HOLDEN**

Says you.

**ALYSSA**

That out there! That's fleeting.

**HOLDEN**

Fleeting.

**ALYSSA**

Uh-huh. You wanna hear about love!  
Oh, I'll tell you about love.

**HOLDEN**

A story?

**ALYSSA**

The story. The original love story.

**HOLDEN**

'Doctor Zhivago'.

**ALYSSA**

Nope. My mother's uncle. He was a  
millionaire.

**HOLDEN**

Get out.

**ALYSSA**

I kid you not.

**HOLDEN**

Explain.

**ALYSSA**

All through high school, he dated this  
one girl. They were inseparable.  
And when they graduated, she went off  
to Carnegie Mellon...

**HOLDEN**

In Pittsburgh.

**ALYSSA**

I'm impressed. So he stays in the home town, and they begin their long-distance relationship. The plan is, on the third Sunday of every month, he'll train out, spend a week then train back They do this for four years.

**HOLDEN**

That is love.

**ALYSSA**

Not nearly finished. Two months before she's going to graduate, he's got this job digging graves, and he comes across...

**HOLDEN**

A stiff.

**ALYSSA**

A steamer trunk containing silver ingots.

**HOLDEN**

Get out of here.

**ALYSSA**

Many, many silver ingots. Now, my mother's uncle being quite the ingenious chap - he buries the trunk again and heads up to the main office, where he proceeds to purchase a cemetery plot. Guess which one?

**HOLDEN**

Clever.

**ALYSSA**

So now he owns the plot and all of its contents. Two days later, my mother's uncle is worth three million.

**HOLDEN**

At which time he marries the high school sweetheart and lives happily ever after.

**ALYSSA**

Not even close. Inside the steamer trunk, stenciled into the wood, or



something like that, is a curse.

**HOLDEN**

Someone wrote 'Fuck' inside his new steamer trunk.

**ALYSSA**

Not that kind of curse. A cryptic curse "Great fortune means great loss" it said.

**HOLDEN**

What kind of asshole writes that inside a steamer trunk!

**ALYSSA**

The same kind of asshole that buries silver ingots. The day my mother's uncle is heading out to see the girl, he stops at his accountant's to grab some cash, and winds up missing his train. So he has to take the next one - which he does - and he gets there an hour later than his usual time of arrival, whereupon he sees lights.

**HOLDEN**

A hero's welcome for the new millionaire.

**ALYSSA**

It seems that while she was standing on the platform waiting that extra hour for my mother's uncle to show up, the girl was dragged into the bushes by an unknown assailant, raped and gutted.

Holden is silent Alyssa downs her drink.

**ALYSSA**

The assailant was never apprehended.

**HOLDEN**

(beat)

That's a love story!!

**ALYSSA**

Yes, and here's why: my mother's uncle rode that train every day for the rest of his life. One day up, the next day back. Did that 'till the day he died.

He donated the fortune he'd acquired to the train station in Pittsburgh, to have a well-lit terminal built. The train line let him ride for free after that.

**HOLDEN**

I should hope so. Jesus, that's the saddest tale I've ever heard.

**ALYSSA**

That's my love story.

Alyssa tosses her last dart. Holden seems a bit dazed. He looks out the window.

**HOLDEN**

Those two aren't on the hood of Banky's car anymore.

**ALYSSA**

I told you It wasn't love.

(grabs her purse)

I gotta split. It was really nice meeting you. I wish you the best of luck with your book.

(shakes his hand)

Tell Hooper I'll call him later. And tell your friend to calm down.

Alyssa exits to the night. Holden stares after her. Two beats later, Hooper and Banky enter, holding an 'Everything's Archie' comic between them.

**BANKY**

You're insane. Archie is not fucking Mister Weatherbee!

**HOOPER**

Deny, deny, deny.

(to Holden)

Where's Alyssa?

**HOLDEN**

Huh! Oh. She left. She said she'd call you later.

**BANKY**

(off comic)

He's just offering to help Archie with his homework!

**HOOPER**

Read between the lines.

**BANKY**

(shoves book at him)

Fuck this.

(to Holden)

Let's go. Traffic.

(no response from Holden)

Holden!

**HOLDEN**

(shaken)

What!

**BANKY**

Let's go.

**HOOPER**

(looking out window)

D'jou see that dent in the hood of  
your car!

**BANKY**

(looking out window)

What the...! Son of a bitch!

Banky runs out Holden shrugs at Hooper.

**HOOPER**

Let me guess: you like her!

**HOLDEN**

Who?

**HOOPER**

Miss Alyssa Jones.

**HOLDEN**

She's alright.

**HOOPER**

As long as that's all.

(finishes drink)

Maybe you can convince that partner of  
your's to drop me off downtown before  
you scurry out the tunnel!

**HOLDEN**

(beat)

Mister Weatherbee wasn't really trying  
to fuck Archie, was he!

They begin exiting.

**HOOPER**

Hell no. Weatherbee was Reggie's  
bitch.

**INT. STUDIO - DAY**

We're in Holden and Banky's studio/apartment. It's a rented loft-style place with high ceilings, wood floors and sparse furnishings. There are posters on the walls, a sort of kitchenette, a hockey net, a big TV. (with all the trimmings - VCR, Laserdisc player, Sega, SNES), a huge comfy couch, and two drawing boards with adjacent desks (littered with pencils, pens, coloring pencils, paints, erasers, etc.) - at which sit Holden and Banky. They're working. Some music plays.

C.U. OF HOLDEN PENCILING - over his shoulder, we see Holden sketching Chronic in mid-attack of his arch-nemesis - the Giggler. Holden erases a line and re-draws.

C.U. OF BANKY INKING - over his shoulder, we see Banky outlining a pre-penciled page. He traces Bluntman swinging from a street light.

The two work in silence. Then...

**BANKY**

(not looking up)  
This is one of the best street lights  
you've ever drawn.

**HOLDEN**

It's the one across from the post  
office.

**BANKY**

Looks just like it.

**HOLDEN**

Thanks.  
(beat)  
What do you wanna do tonight!

**BANKY**

Get a pizza. Watch 'Degrassi Junior  
High'.

**HOLDEN**

(erases)

You got a weird thing for Canadian  
melodrama.

**BANKY**

I've got a weird thing for girls who  
say 'aboot'.

The phone starts ringing. Holden answers it, while still  
drawing.

**HOLDEN**

Bank-Hold-Up.

CROSSCUT between Holden and Hooper. He's on a phone in a  
**CLUB**.

**HOOPER**

Hooper here. Listen, I know how you  
burb-fiends hate the city, but there's  
a club shindig going down that I think  
you'd get into.

**HOLDEN**

Where is it?

**HOOPER**

Place called Her-sterectomy - I'm  
tempting as bar-keep.

**HOLDEN**

I don't know, Hoop. We're prepping  
the next issue, and we've got our big  
M-TV meeting in the morning.

**HOOPER**

I told her you wouldn't be interested.

**HOLDEN**

Told who?

**HOOPER**

Alyssa.

**HOLDEN**

Alyssa from last night Alyssa?

**HOOPER**

How do you begin and end a question  
with the same word like that? You got

skill. Yes, that one. She asked me to invite you. Now here's the part where you say...

**HOLDEN**

I'll be there.

**HOOPER**

Thought so. Ten o'clock. Later.  
(both hang up)

**BANKY**

Who was that?

**HOLDEN**

Hooper. He invited me to a club.

**BANKY**

When's that faggot going to learn - you like chicks.

**HOLDEN**

(getting up)  
Not that kind of a club.

**BANKY**

So when we leaving?

**HOLDEN**

'We'? You can't go. He's setting me up with Alyssa.

**BANKY**

And?

**HOLDEN**

And I don't want you messing it up.

**BANKY**

Like I care about your shit. Maybe I'll hook up myself.

**HOLDEN**

(pulling on coat)  
I just told you - it's not that kind of club.

**BANKY**

How does one man get to be so funny!

**HOLDEN**

(throws him his coat)

How are you going to get home if I hook up!

**BANKY**

Like that'll happen.

**HOLDEN**

Let me explain something to you, my witless chum the other night in that bar, we two - Alyssa and I shared a moment, alright!

**BANKY**

Oh, you had a moment!

**HOLDEN**

(brings his two pointer fingers together)

We shared a moment. And in that moment, one thing was made abundantly clear: this girl loves me, my friend. Loves-me.

**6. INT. HER-STERECTOMY - NIGHT**  
**6.**

It's a club - people are mingling, a band is playing, it's loud. But something's fishy. Hooper's tending bar. He hands a GUY a drink. The Guy sips it.

**GUY**

This is so watered down. It's terrible. Why is it you can never get a decent drink in these places!

Hooper looks around in a very exaggerated fashion.

**GUY**

What are you doing!

**HOOPER**

Trying to find you a tissue.

The Guy shoots Hooper an angry glare, Banky enters.

**BANKY**

Alright - bring on the free hootch.

**HOOPER**

As long as you don't bitch about how

little alcohol is in the drink.  
(hands Banky a drink; to Guy)  
You owe me five sixty.

**GUY**

(off Banky)  
And I suppose you're going to make  
your friend here pay for his drink  
right!

**BANKY**

Hey, I befriended a guy in a position  
of authority so I could abuse that  
authority and get free shit. You want  
to do the same? There's a lonely  
Hindu works at the '7-11' across the  
street. Get in tight with him.

The Guy angrily pulls out his money and slams it on the  
bar.

**GUY**

I work at that '7-11'!  
(storms away)

**BANKY**

(calling after him)  
Wanna be friends!

**HOOPER**

Where's your better half!

**BANKY**

Taking a piss. Guy's got a bladder  
like an infant.

**HOOPER**

That's funny - he says you're hung  
like an infant.

**BANKY**

Must his mother tell him everything!

Holden enters.

**BANKY**

What'd you do - fall in love?

**HOLDEN**

Where is she?

**HOOPER**



Over there...

ON THE DANCE FLOOR - in the middle of a thrall of people - dances Alyssa. She moves like a cat and she's looking very sexy.

**OC HOOPER**

Been dancin' for an hour. Hasn't stopped yet.

Hooper, Holden, and Banky stare OC.

**BANKY**

She ain't no Denny Terrio, I'll say that.

Holden smacks Banky and moves to exit.

**HOOPER**

Wait. wait, wait - there's something you should know.

**HOLDEN**

She's got a boyfriend.

**HOOPER**

Well.. no.

**HOLDEN**

Then what's to know?

Holden exits; They watch him go. Banky looks around.

**BANKY**

There're a lot of chicks in this place.

**HOOPER**

'Chicks'. You're such a man.

**BANKY**

(beat)

He didn't really say that about my dick, did he!

ON THE DANCE FLOOR - Holden slips into the crowd and dances up to Alyssa. He intentionally bumps into her.

**HOLDEN**

(fake rage, dancing)

Hey, hey, hey - you fucked up my cabbage-patch!

**ALYSSA**

Well, well, well - Bluntman himself.  
Or should I call you Chronic!

**HOLDEN**

Call me flattered. I heard you sent  
me the invite to this little soiree'.

**ALYSSA**

From a former home-town girl, to  
Mister Home-Town himself.

**HOLDEN**

You're saying you're from the 'burbs!

**ALYSSA**

Middletown, N.J.

**HOLDEN**

Get out of here! I'm from Highlands!

**ALYSSA**

I know. Hooper told me.

**HOLDEN**

How is it that we never ran into one  
another?

**ALYSSA**

You graduate from Hudson?

**HOLDEN**

Yeah. Eighty eight.

**ALYSSA**

I went to North. Also eighty eight.

**HOLDEN**

What a small fucking world. So you  
know the tri-town area!

**ALYSSA**

Quiz me.

**HOLDEN**

Miller Hill?

**ALYSSA**

I wrote my name on the wall.

**HOLDEN**

Sandy Hook?

**ALYSSA**

Lost my virginity there.

**HOLDEN**

This is so cool. The mall!

**ALYSSA**

Eden Prairie of Menlo Park!

**HOLDEN**

Wait - here's the big test: Quick Stop!

**ALYSSA**

My best friend fucked a dead guy in the back room.

**HOLDEN**

You know that girl!!

**ALYSSA**

I did. Before she was committed.

**HOLDEN**

You know what this is! This is fate.

**ALYSSA**

(regarding her move)

No, this is the 'Rog'.

**HOLDEN**

I was talking about us meeting - what are the chances!

**ALYSSA**

Pretty slim. I haven't been back to the 'burbs since my friend's funeral.

**HOLDEN**

The Quick Stop girl died!

**ALYSSA**

Another friend - Julie Dwyer. She died in the..

**HOLDEN**

Y.M.C.A pool! Damn! You knew her too!

**ALYSSA**

So well.

**HOLDEN**

One friend in an asylum, the other  
friend in the grave. You're a  
dangerous person to know.

**ALYSSA**

But I can tap.  
(does an impromptu tap dance)  
That was the Buffalo Two-Step.

**HOLDEN**

Very solid.

**ALYSSA**

That's what six years of tap lessons  
yields.

**HOLDEN**

Two towns away from each other for  
years and we had to meet in New York.

The Sand stops playing. People clap.

**ALYSSA**

Coulda been worse - we could have not  
met at all.

Holden looks at her.

**OC SINGER**

Thank you. Thanks.

The SINGER on stage speaks into the microphone.

**SINGER**

A long time ago, we used to have this  
bass player who took off one day to  
draw funny books or something. Maybe  
you've seen her stuff - it's called  
'Idiosyncratic Routine''

The crowd applauds. Alyssa shakes her head, smiling.  
Holden pokes her.

**SINGER**

But what a lot of people don't know is  
that she used to harbor these  
delusions that she could sing. And  
she used to subject us to these  
throaty renditions of Debbie Gibson

tunes and shit, insisting that we let her front on a few numbers. Well, we didn't and she quit.. and then she got famous, the bitch.

(crowd laughs)

But she's here tonight, and I think if we all begged, or maybe offered her some X, she'd get up here and treat us to some of her vocal stylings.

(crowd applauds)

What do you say, Alyssa?

Alyssa shakes her head no. The crowd urges her. Holden pushes her forward.

**SINGER**

She's shy.

(yelling)

**GET UP HERE AND SING, BITCH!!**

The crowd thunders. Alyssa offers the Singer an embarrassed half-smile. She looks at Holden, who claps along with the others and nods toward the stage. Alyssa shakes her head and relents, heading through the crowd

Banky and Hooper stand at the bar.

**BANKY**

This is so queer.

(he exits)

**HOOPER**

(beat)

You don't know the half of it.

Alyssa jumps on stage, hugging the Singer. She takes the mic, shaking her head. The crowd is applauding.

**ALYSSA**

She is such a twat.

The crowd cheers. Alyssa laughs. She turns to the band and says something which they nod. She turns back to the crowd.

**ALYSSA**

Alright. I should dedicate this, right?

(thinks)

This is for that special someone out there.

Holden smiles. Banky joins him. Holden glances at him. Banky offers a mocking mimic of his smile.

The band starts playing. Cross cutting begins.

Alyssa launches into a torchy tune. The song is extremely sexy - as is Alyssa who works the mic, making direct eye contact with...

Holden. Or does she! Holden is smiling, being seduced, Banky rolls his eyes. Beside Holden, stands a pretty GIRL with a short haircut, who's also riveted by Alyssa's performance.

Alyssa makes big-time eye contact with somebody out there.

The song seems to be aimed at whoever she's looking at. It's more than obvious there's a seduction going on, bur of whom! At the end of the song, the crowd goes wild but Alyssa's preoccupied. She points to someone in the crowd, and curls her finger back in a 'c'mere' fashion, urging whoever it is to join her. She jumps off the stage.

Holden shakes his head sheepishly and looks downward, aw-shucks style. At that moment, the Girl beside him leaps forward. Banky's eyes widen. Holden looks up and is suddenly taken aback.

Alyssa and the Girl race into each other's arms and fall into a way-to-passionate-to-mean-anything-else kiss.

Holden's eyes bug. Banky allows a smile to creep across his face. The crowd applauds. Banky looks around, and for the first time, we get the distinct impression that this is a lesbian bar...

There are a lot of chicks in this place. Gay chicks. Banky looks at Holden and slaps him on the back.

**BANKY**

Now that, my friend, is a..  
(brings his fingers together,  
mimicing Holden)  
...shared moment

Holden continues to stare - mouth agape.

Alyssa and the Girl continue to kiss.

**INT. HER-STERECTOMY - LATER**

Banky, Holden, Alyssa and the Girl from the dance floor sit around a table. Alyssa and the Girl continue to make out. Holden and Banky casually watch, wide-eyed. Banky stares a little harder. Holden hits him.

**BANKY**

What?!

**HOLDEN**

(under his breath)

That's rude.

**BANKY**

Man, when are we ever going to get a chance to see this kind of shit live without paying for it?

Alyssa and the Girl break their kiss.

**ALYSSA**

Uh-oh - better knock it off: we're getting a man excited.

**HOLDEN**

Sorry. It's just... new to him.

**BANKY**

Oh, and you're an old hand at this.

**ALYSSA**

No, I should apologize. I don't usually get all mushy in public. But it's been awhile since I've seen Kim here.

**KIM**

(formerly the Girl)

Tell me you didn't set that gross display up with the band just so you could nail me.

**ALYSSA**

Like I'd have to go through that much effort

**KIM**

You know what! I want to dance.

**ALYSSA**

Go ahead. I'll watch from here.

**KIM**

(tugging at her arm)  
No. I want to dance with you.

**ALYSSA**

Don't be such a rag. I have to sit here and work up the desire to fuck you later.

**KIM**

Please.

Kim exits. Banky is smiling ear-to-ear. Alyssa looks at him.

**ALYSSA**

Yes?

**BANKY**

You said 'fuck'. To that girl. You said you'd 'fuck' her.

**ALYSSA**

And?

**BANKY**

How can a girl 'fuck' another girl! Were you talking about strap-ons or something?

**HOLDEN**

(hits him)  
Would you shut up!!

**BANKY**

What!!? It's a valid question. You know the dyke stuff in the Penthouse Letters section is written by guys - this is our chance to get the inside scoop.

**HOLDEN**

(to Alyssa)  
I don't know how many times I can apologize for him.

**ALYSSA**

It's okay. Secretly, all I really want is to be the center of attention.  
(to Banky)  
I've never used a snap-on.



**BANKY**

Then what's with saying 'fuck'?  
Shouldn't you say 'eat her out' or at  
least modify the term 'fuck' with  
something like 'fist'?

**ALYSSA**

Let me ask you a question - can men  
'fuck' each other!

**BANKY**

Ask Hooper.

**ALYSSA**

In your estimation.

**BANKY**

Sure.

**ALYSSA**

So for you, to 'fuck' means to  
penetrate. You're used to the more  
traditional definition - you inside  
some girl you've duped, jack-hammering  
away, not noticing that bored look in  
her eyes.

**BANKY**

Hey - I always notice the bored look  
in their eyes.

**ALYSSA**

(laughs)

'Fucking' is nor limited to  
penetration, Banky. For me it  
describes any sex when it's not  
totally about love. I don't love Kim,  
but I'll fuck her. I'm sure you don't  
love every girl you sleep with.

**BANKY**

Some of them I downright loathe.

**ALYSSA**

But I'll bet it's different with the  
ones you love. I'll bet you go the  
full nine when it's not just a quick  
fix - like you go down on them longer  
or something.

**HOLDEN**

Here we go.

**BANKY**

I don't do that.

**ALYSSA**

What?!?!

**BANKY**

I stopped dropping. It got to be too frustrating.

**HOLDEN**

As stupid as you usually come off during this diatribe of your's, you're going to come off ten times as stupid on this occasion.

**BANKY**

What?! I lost my tolerance for the bullshit baggage that comes with eating girls out. What's the big deal?!

**ALYSSA**

If you say the smell, so help me, I'll slug you.

**BANKY**

Not the smell - the smell is good. I'm talking about not being able to do it property. And my mother brought me up to believe that if I can't do something right I shouldn't do it at all. Of course, my father told me she gave lousy head, but that's beside the point.

**ALYSSA**

At least you blame yourself for your sexual inadequacies.

**BANKY**

No, I blame them. Chicks never help you out. They never tell you what to do. And most of them are self-conscious about that smell factor, and so most of the time they just lay there, frozen like a deer in the headlights, right? Not for nothing, but when a chick goes down on me. I

let her know where to go, and what the status is. You gotta handle it like CNN and the Weather Channel - constant updates.

**HOLDEN**

You're such an idiot.

**ALYSSA**

No, he's got a point. That's how I was in high school - I was nervous, and inhibited about being eaten out. But by the time I got to college, that all changed. I loosened up. Not only did I learn to communicate - I learned to be bossy.

I was like one of those guys at the airport with those big flash lights - waving them this way, directing them that way, telling them when to stop.

**BANKY**

And that's all I'm saying, it'd be different if chicks helped out - pointed a guy in the right direction. Then there'd be no bullshit, no wasted time, and no chance for permanent injuries.

**ALYSSA**

Permanent injuries?

**BANKY**

Sure. You wanna see something permanent!

(pulls out front tooth)

I got this from Nina Rollins, sophomore year. I'm going down on her, and out of nowhere, her cat jumps on her stomach. She does this big ol' pelvic thrust - cracks my tooth in half, sends it down my throat. I had to get a crown for the stub.

**ALYSSA**

(to Holden)

I got that beat.

(to Banky)

I got that beat.

(half-turns and lifts chin)

Sophomore year. I'm going down on Cynthia Slater in her dorm room after

we went club-hopping. I'm totally drunk, and in the middle of it, I fall asleep - right there in her lap. She got so mad, she digs her heel into my back, right there.

(points to scar)

That's permanent.

**BANKY**

You see this!

(moves neck slightly right)

That's the farthest I can move my neck to the right Sophomore year, I'm going out with Maria Bennert, and for six months, I'm going down on her, and not a damn thing's happening.

Then one night, I change a position, or vary my lapping-speed, and suddenly it's a whole new world. She's moving around, convulsing, breathing heavy. And her legs are pressing against my ears so tightly that I don't hear her father come into the room. He grabs my hair...

(grabs his own hair and pulls back)

...and he pulls me way back, hard.

**ALYSSA**

(throws up her leg, and rolls up pants)

Senior year. Spring Formal. I'm eating our Missy Kurt in her brother's car. She's laying across the back seat, and I'm half-hanging out of the car, my knees on the ground. She's flailing around, and she knocks the parking brake off. The car starts rolling down the hill, and my right knee is cut up all to shit like a kiddy's scissor class cut it up for paper dolls.

Banky and Alyssa laugh. Holden looks at a small scar on his arm and thinks better about mentioning it. Then Kim re-enters and plants a big kiss on Alyssa's neck.

**HOLDEN**

(off Banky's watch)

Holy shit, is that the time. We've gotta beat traffic.

**BANKY**

What traffic - it's one thirty in the morning!

**HOLDEN**

(getting up)  
And rush hour starts in six hours.  
Let's go.  
(to Alyssa)  
Thanks for inviting us out. It was...  
educational.

Alyssa waves at him as he exits. Banky slides out of the booth.

**BANKY**

(to Kim)  
Since you like chicks, right..  
do you just look at yourself in the  
mirror all the time?

Holden reaches in and pulls Banky out. Alyssa watches them go, then turns and kisses Kim.

**INT. M-TV EXEC'S OFFICE WAITING ROOM - DAY**

Holden looks preoccupied. Banky flips through magazines, biting off mini pieces of the gum he's chewing. He sticks them between pages, presses the mag closed, picks up another one and then repeats the whole process. A Receptionist types.

**BANKY**

(off Holden's look)  
You're still dwelling on the dyke,  
aren't you?

**HOLDEN**

Lower your voice.

**BANKY**

What'd I tell you - she just needs the  
right guy. All every woman really  
wants - be it mother, senator, nun -  
is some serious deep-dicking.

The Receptionist stops typing and looks at Banky, shocked.

**BANKY**

(off her look)  
Don't give me that look - I heard Adam  
Curry say worse.

The Secretary goes back to typing. Banky shrugs at  
Holden.

**BANKY**

That's why I can't buy lesbians.  
Everyone needs dick. See, I can buy  
fags. Bunch of guys that need dick -  
just plain need it? That I get.  
Dykes? Bullshit posturing. But -  
live and let live, I guess.

**HOLDEN**

I'm sure the gay community appreciates  
your support.

JOHN SLOSS, the boy's lawyer, joins them.

**SLOSS**

Please tell me you haven't blown this  
deal already.

**BANKY**

Sloss like a mother fucker.  
(slaps his hand)

**SLOSS**

Hey, every mother but your's - a  
shyster's gotta have his standards.  
Shall we?

**INT. M-TV EXEC'S OFFICE - DAY**

The EXECs are a casual couple of guys, sitting on couches  
across from our trio.

**EXEC 1**

We just want to start off by saying  
that it's a pleasure to finally meet  
you. While it's been - shall we say -  
an experience dealing with Sloss here,  
one of the main reasons we started  
this whole thing was to meet the guys  
that do 'Bluntman and Chronic'.

**EXEC 2**

(points at them)

'Snootchie Bootchies'.

The Execs and Sloss laugh. Holden and Banky politely join in. Banky shoots Holden a 'these guys are idiots' look.

**EXEC 1**

Which brings us to our proposal: we are extremely interested in doing twelve, half-hour 'Bluntman and Chronic' cartoons. The age of Beavis is coming to a close, and we're looking for something... something...

**BANKY**

Even more retarded and juvenile to sate the voracious, intellectually-challenged miscreants that make up your key demographic.

The Execs laugh hard. Sloss secretly shrugs to Banky and gives the thumbs up.

**EXEC 1**

(composes himself)

So what do you say! Are we in business!

Banky leans back into the couch, wearing a thoughtful face. He looks to Holden, then to Sloss. Sloss nods in understanding.

**SLOSS**

Jim, Sean - could we have a few minutes!

**EXEC 2**

(looks to Exec 1)

Uh... absolutely. We'll just..

**EXEC 1**

Uh...wait outside

The Exec's smile and head our, closing the door behind then. Sloss turns to Banky.

**SLOSS**

So? Did I do good?

**BANKY**

You did better - you sold us out!

They clasp hands and quietly explode in ebullience.

**SLOSS**

Do you know how much you'll make on merchandising alone!

**BANKY**

(as Simon Bar Sinister)  
Money and Power, and Money and Power...

**SLOSS**

(joins in)  
Money and Power, and Money and...

**HOLDEN**

(interrupting)  
I don't think it's a good idea.

Banky and Sloss freeze. They stare at Holden.

**BANKY**

What's not a good idea! Please don't say the cartoon, please don't say the cartoon...

**HOLDEN**

The cartoon.

**SLOSS**

What?!? Are you out of your fucking mind!

**BANKY**

(getting up)  
John, let me handle this.  
( to Holden)  
You are out of your fucking mind, aren't you!

**HOLDEN**

Is this how you want to be remembered!  
As the guy who created Bluntman and Chronic!

Banky sits at the Exec's desk and starts rifling through the guy's stuff.

**BANKY**

No, I'd like to be remembered as the filthy rich guy who created Bluntman and Chronic.



**HOLDEN**

But it'll be all glossy and mainstream. We'll lose any artistic credibility we ever had.

**SLOSS**

(to Banky)

Is it me! I don't see the problem.

**BANKY**

(to Sloss)

He just has to get over this crush of his.

**SLOSS**

Oh God - not on Carrie Fisher again!

(to Holden)

Holden - she's not really a Princess.

**BANKY**

(opening drawer with a letter opener)

Not on her; on Alyssa Jones - the chick that does that comic book 'Idiosyncratic Routine'. You ever seen it?

**SLOSS**

Please. Like I even read your comic, let alone anyone else's,

(to Holden)

I'm not limited to offering you legal counsel only, my friend. I'm also learned in the ways of the heart, and can offer you this advice - nail her, get it out of your system, and move on. Like we say at Sloss Law - good fences make good neighbors.

**BANKY**

She'd never let him in her yard. The chick's gay.

**SLOSS**

(laughing)

She's gay? You fell for a gay, comic-book writing chick? Holden, you poor, poor man!

(beat)

Wait a sec - does she have representation!

**BANKY**

Always working, you.  
(holds up a Polaroid of a  
naked woman)  
Look at this - Mrs. M-TV Exec has a  
string of pearls hanging our of her  
ass,

**SLOSS**

Would you leave his stuff alone!  
(to Holden)  
You can break her resolve, killer.  
All it takes is one good man. But if  
it takes two good men, don't hesitate  
to call me. That being said, in  
regards to the more pressing issue, I  
suggest you leave art to the museums  
and grab on with both hands to the  
big, fat check.

**HOLDEN**

I'll give it some thought

**BANKY**

(holding up Polaroid)  
I'm taking this as a precaution - just  
in case they give us any shit about  
pussy's decision delay.  
(glaring at Holden)  
You'll 'give it some thought'. You're  
so retarded

**HOLDEN**

I'm retarded! This from the guy who  
only forty five minutes ago paid fifty  
bucks for what's supposed to be a boot-  
leg of 'March of the Wooden Soldiers'  
with a deleted scene of Stan Laurel  
wearing a French Tickler.

**SLOSS**

How'd you fall for that!

**BANKY**

The guy who sold it to me had an  
honest face.

**INT. STUDIO - DAY**

There is a door. There's a knock at the door. Holden opens it and Alyssa is standing there.

**ALYSSA**

Somebody told me that they make comic books here, and I've got an idea for this story about a guy who comes to a club and high-tails it when he finds out this girl is pay. Any interest in a story like that!

Holden smiles.

**EXT. RIVERFRONT PARK - DAY**

Alyssa and Holden walk through the park, eating hot dogs.

**ALYSSA**

**M-TV?**

**HOLDEN**

Twelve episodes.

**ALYSSA**

That's great, isn't it?

**HOLDEN**

Banky seems to think so.

**ALYSSA**

But you don't.

They come to a swing set and sit down on the swings.

**HOLDEN**

I don't know if that's the perception I want people to have of our stuff. I know this sounds pretentious as hell, but I like to think of us as artists. And I'd like to get back to doing something more personal - like our first book.

**ALYSSA**

Well when are you going to do that?

**HOLDEN**

(beat)

As soon as we have something personal to say.

**ALYSSA**

Do you know how pretty you are?

**HOLDEN**

What?

**ALYSSA**

You're a pretty man.

**HOLDEN**

Uh... thanks.

**ALYSSA**

Oh. I get it. I'm into girls, so I have to find all men repulsive or something.

**HOLDEN**

I didn't say anything.

**ALYSSA**

Aren't there some men that you find attractive? Granted, not enough to sleep with, but still - just handsome or something!

**HOLDEN**

Sure. Harrison Ford. And our mailman.

**ALYSSA**

Well it's the same thing. I look at you and just find you really handsome. And you know, it has very little to do with your look, per-se. Your look is fine, don't get me wrong. But it's more your outlook. The things you say, the way you see things. It's... I don't know... attractive,

Holden looks away, embarrassed,

**ALYSSA**

I weirded you out the other night

**HOLDEN**

Huh! No, not really.

**ALYSSA**

Come on.

**HOLDEN**

(beat)

It's just that we've.., I mean, I've never seen that kind of thing up close and personal. It just took awhile to process, longer than usual.

**ALYSSA**

Do you want to talk about it!

**HOLDEN**

Um. If you want to.

**ALYSSA**

I like you. I haven't liked a man in a long time. And I'm not a man-hater or something. It's just been some time since I've been exposed to a man that didn't immediately live-into a stereotype of some sort. And I want you to feel comfortable with me, because I want us to be friends. So if there are things you'd like to know, it's okay to ask me.

**HOLDEN**

(beat)

Why girls?

**ALYSSA**

(beat)

Why men?

**HOLDEN**

Because that's the standard

**ALYSSA**

If that's the only reason you're attracted to women - because it's the standard..

**HOLDEN**

It's more than that.

**ALYSSA**

So you've never been curious about men?

**HOLDEN**

Curious about men? Well... I always wondered why my father watched 'Hee-Haw'.

**ALYSSA**

You know what I mean.

**HOLDEN**

No.

**ALYSSA**

Why not!

**HOLDEN**

No interest.

**ALYSSA**

Because...?

**HOLDEN**

Girls feel right.

**ALYSSA**

And that's how I feel. I've never really been attracted to men. I'm more comfortable with the idea of girls.

**HOLDEN**

Wait, wait, wait - you're still a virgin?

**ALYSSA**

No.

**HOLDEN**

But you've only been with girls.

**ALYSSA**

You're saying a person's a virgin until they've had intercourse with a member of the opposite sex?

**HOLDEN**

Isn't that the standard definition?

**ALYSSA**

Again with the standards. I think virginity is lost when you make love for the first time.

**HOLDEN**

With a member of the opposite sex.

**ALYSSA**

Why? Why only then?

**HOLDEN**

Because that's the standard.

**ALYSSA**

So if a virgin is raped, then she's still a virgin?

**HOLDEN**

Of course not.

**ALYSSA**

But rape is not the standard. So she's had sex, but not the standard idea of sex. Hence, according to your definition, she'd still be a virgin.

**HOLDEN**

Okay, I'll revise. Virginity is lost when the hymen is broken.

**ALYSSA**

Then I lost my virginity at ten, because I fell on a fence post when I was ten, and it broke my hymen. Now I have to tell people that I lost it to a wooden post I'd known my whole young life?

**HOLDEN**

Second revision - virginity is lost through penetration.

**ALYSSA**

Physical penetration or emotional?

**HOLDEN**

Emotional?

**ALYSSA**

Well, I fell in love hard with Caitlin Bree when we were in high school.

**HOLDEN**

Physical penetration.

**ALYSSA**

We had sex.

**HOLDEN**

Yeah, but not real sex.

**ALYSSA**

I move to have that remark stricken from the record. On account of it makes you come off as completely naive and infantile.

**HOLDEN**

Well where's the penetration in lesbian sex.

Alyssa holds up her hand.

**HOLDEN**

A finger? Come on. I've had my finger in my ass but I wouldn't say I've had anal sex.

**ALYSSA**

Did I hold up a finger?  
(waves her hand)

**HOLDEN**

(beat; then he gets it)  
You're kidding?!?!  
(she nods)  
How...?!?

**ALYSSA**

Our bodies are built to pass a child, for Christ's sake.

**HOLDEN**

But doesn't it hurt?!

**ALYSSA**

Sure. But in a good way. And it's only a once-in-awhile thing - reserved for really special occasions.

**HOLDEN**

What about not-so-special occasions?

**ALYSSA**

Tongue only.

**HOLDEN**

But how can that be enough? I mean, let's be real - how big can a tongue even get?



Alyssa swallows what she's chewing and releases her tongue, which is just huge. Holden is transfixed. Alyssa wraps it back up and smiles, standing.

**ALYSSA**

Let's go.

She exits. Holden remains in the swing. Alyssa comes back in.

**ALYSSA**

Come on.

**HOLDEN**

Just...uh... just give me a moment.

**INT AIRPORT - DAY**

Holden enters. Banky tries to balance way-too-much luggage.

**HOLDEN**

Look at you. It's a two day trip.

**BANKY**

I got the Sega in one bag, my clothes in the other, and two months worth of unread comics in this one.

**HOLDEN**

We're going to a convention, for the love of God. We'll be busy from ten 'till eight each day. When are you possibly going to have time for any of that shit? In fact, fuck it - you're leaving some of this shit here in a locker. Come on - give me the two that aren't clothes.

**BANKY**

Hold on.

(starts rifling through one bag)

**HOLDEN**

What are you doing?

**BANKY**

I just have to get something.

(pulls out a huge stack of

porno books)

**HOLDEN**

Who are you, Larry fucking Flynt?  
What are you going to do with all of  
those?

**BANKY**

Read the articles. What do you think  
I'm going to do with them? They're  
stroke books.

**HOLDEN**

You've got like thirty books there!  
We're only there for two days!

**BANKY**

(leafing through mags)  
Variety's the spice of life. I like a  
wide selection. Sometimes I'm in the  
mood for nasty close-ups, sometimes I  
like them arty and air-brushed. Some  
times it's a spread brown-eye kind of  
night, sometimes it's girl-on-girl  
time. Sometimes a steamy letter will  
do it, sometimes - not often, but  
sometimes - I like the idea of a chick  
with a horse.

A beeping sound is heard. Holden checks his beeper.

**HOLDEN**

Go check us in. I've gotta call  
Alyssa.

**BANKY**

His master's voice.

**HOLDEN**

Put that stuff away.

Holden exits. Banky starts packing his mags up. A  
little KID enters, staring at him.

**KID**

What are those?

**BANKY**

(looks at kid then books)  
Do you Like horsies?

Holden finishes dialing the phone. Cross cut between him

and Alyssa at home.

**ALYSSA**

I hope for the sake of the women  
you've dated that you're only this  
quick in returning calls.

**HOLDEN**

What's up? I'm about to get on a  
plane.

**ALYSSA**

Ohhh. Why!

**HOLDEN**

Last minute invite to the Dragon Con'.

**ALYSSA**

Shit.

**HOLDEN**

What?

**ALYSSA**

My sister's at my parents'. I was  
gonna go see her.

**HOLDEN**

The one that wrote the book?

**ALYSSA**

Yeah. But I was staying all weekend,  
and I wanted to hang out with you.  
This sucks.

**HOLDEN**

You didn't get invited to the Con'?

**ALYSSA**

I don't do southern con's - all the  
chicks have that annoying drawl. You  
know how hard it is not to laugh when  
someone moans "Fuhhk me"?

**HOLDEN**

Well this sucks.

(thinks)

You know - both of us don't have to  
go.

**ALYSSA**

Really?

**HOLDEN**

Yeah. Banky can go by himself. It's not like we're on a panel. It was just a signing appearance.

**ALYSSA**

If you come pick me up, I'll be your best friend.

**HOLDEN**

(beat)

Where's your apartment?

**ALYSSA**

I'm not there. I'm at a friend's - in the Village. Corner of Houston and Mercer. Number eighty six, apartment **6-D**.

**HOLDEN**

I'll be there in half an hour.

**ALYSSA**

You're so easy.

They hang up. Holden reacts to something OC and exits quickly.

C11. Banky points to pictures in the book. The kid looks on.

**BANKY**

...And then Black Beauty couldn't take it any longer, and he finally did some of his own mounting.

**KID**

(off book)

Wow.

Holden grabs Banky's arm and drags him away.

**HOLDEN**

What are you doing?

**BANKY**

(waving to kid)

I think I want kids of my own one day. They're fun.

**HOLDEN**

Listen to me - I'm not going. You're going to have to do this one by yourself.

**BANKY**

What? Why?

**HOLDEN**

Alyssa's coming down for the weekend, so I want to hang out with her. You don't need me for this.

(taking his excess baggage)

Meantime, I'll take this stuff home. You can keep the filth. I'll pick you up at nine Sunday night, alright? Don't forget to plug the Annual and don't mention the t.v. show, okay? Call me if you get bored.

And he's gone. Banky stands there, open-mouthed. A check-in FLIGHT ATTENDANT comes up to him. His name-tag reads 'Frank'.

**FLIGHT ATTENDANT**

Checking in, sir!

**BANKY**

(still watching Holden go)

Hunhh!

(looks at F.A.)

Yeah. But this is carry-on.

**F.A.**

Federal aviation security law requires me to ask if you've been given any strange gifts or parcels to carry-on since arriving at the airport today.

**BANKY**

(thinks)

Not this trip. But one time, when I was using curb side check-in, this sky-cap gave me a cock ring and a set of anal ben-wa balls. I always thought that was pretty strange. He said his name was Frank.

(looks closely at him)

Hey! You're name's Frank!

Banky storms away. The Flight Attendant watches him go.

**F.A.**

Fucking kids.

**EXT APARTMENT 6-D - DAY**

Holden knocks at the door. It opens. A WOMAN is standing in the doorway in her bra She looks Holden up and down and smirks.

**WOMAN**

Let me guess - 'the right man'?

**HOLDEN**

Excuse me?

**WOMAN**

You've got it in your head that Alyssa's not really into chicks - that she just hasn't met the right man. And you believe you're it. You're going to treat her right, fuck her like a stud, and 'straight-jacket' her back from the land of the lost. And the sad truth is that you'll accomplish none of that and wind up as either an even more bitter misogynist or a reverse fag-hag.

Holden's at a loss. Alyssa slips past the Woman, carrying an overnight bag.

**ALYSSA**

Don't mind her. That's just her way a saying hello.

**WOMAN**

Actually, it's just my way of saying "Give it up."

**ALYSSA**

(to Woman)

You're such an asshole.

**WOMAN**

When you file the date-rape charges, don't say I didn't warn you.

**HOLDEN**

(holding out hand)

I'm Holden, by the way.

**WOMAN**

I'm the voice of reason that Miss Bitch is having such a hard time listening to.

**HOLDEN**

Look, we're just friends.

**WOMAN**

That's what every guy says before he tries purring your hand on his dick.

**HOLDEN**

And how do you know men so well?

**WOMAN**

Because I lapdance for a living, dick-head.

She slams the door. Holden looks to Alyssa.

**ALYSSA**

Ohhh - you look so cute!

She heads down the stairs.

**HOLDEN**

Who was that?

**ALYSSA**

Just an occasional friend.

**HOLDEN**

Why would you want to hang our with someone bitter as that?

**ALYSSA**

(stops)

Remember this!

(sticks out huge tongue)

Her's is even bigger than that.

She smiles and continues on. Holden looks back up at the door. He sticks his own tongue our and sizes it with his fingers.

**EXT TURNPIKE - DAY**

The car sits in traffic.

**INT CAR - DAY**

Holden sighs. Alyssa plays with the radio.

**ALYSSA**

You were raised Catholic, right?

**HOLDEN**

Yeah. You?

**ALYSSA**

Baptist.

**HOLDEN**

Really? Did you have a strict upbringing?

**ALYSSA**

Please There was no time to be bad - we were too busy saying 'Jesus'.

**HOLDEN**

You think your upbringing had something to do with your lifestyle choice?

**ALYSSA**

Somewhere along the line. It's a gradual transition to make - from doing what the majority does to taking a leap of faith and doing what feels more natural. Everything helps - from the way you were handled as a kid, to the way the boys acted in third grade, to the shoes you wore at your freshman prom.

**HOLDEN**

Shoes?

**ALYSSA**

Well they were really tight.

**HANGING OUT MONTAGE BEGINS**

With the requisite music, over which we hear a conversation between Holden and Alyssa.



1) Holden and Alyssa sit in the DINER eating. Holden's talking. The Waitress walks past and drops her pad. She bends over, to pick it up, hiking her mini-skirt up in the process. Alyssa stares at her ass. Holden stops talking and stares at her. Alyssa looks over at him and offers a caught smile.

2) Holden pushes a shopping cart at the FOOD STORE, throwing various things into the basket. Alyssa comes up with a box of Tampons and throws them in. Holden glances at them, a bit flushed. Alyssa catches him, picks up the box, and pulls one out. She proceeds to demonstrate their usage, throwing one leg on the can and miming insertion. Holden puts up his hands in the "I know, I know," fashion.

3) In the Studio, Holden displays some of his artwork to Alyssa, during which she pulls out a cigarette and goes to light it. It's a child-proof lighter, so she's having trouble. Holden grows a little frustrated. Finally, he grabs the lighter and pulls the child proof tab out with his teeth. Alyssa stares at him a bit taken aback. Holden spits the tab out, and lights Alyssa's smoke. He then continues with his display.

4) Holden and Alyssa at the COMIC BOOK STORE. Steve-Dave and the Fan-Boy eye them suspiciously. Alyssa pays for a comic. Steve-Dave glowers at Holden. He gives Alyssa her change and they exit. Steve-Dave goes back to his card game with the Fan-Boy. Suddenly, a garbage can comes crashing through their window. Steve-Dave rips a check off the garbage can and punches the counter. The Fan-Boy rubs his back soothingly,

5) Holden and Alyssa walk through a PARKING LOT, talking. She takes his hand and pulls his arm around her shoulder. Holden smiles to himself.

**HOLDEN V.O.**

Let me ask you something - we get along, right?

**ALYSSA V.O.**

Famously.

**HOLDEN V.O.**

We have a definite chemistry?

**ALYSSA V.O.**

So it would seem.

**HOLDEN V.O.**

But we're both into girls.

**ALYSSA V.O.**

I'm into women.

**HOLDEN V.O.**

But you weren't always gay.

**ALYSSA V.O.**

When I was nine I had a crush on Scott Baio.

**HOLDEN V.O.**

So If we'd met a long time ago, say in high school...

**ALYSSA V.O.**

...I'd still be muff-diving, yes.

**HOLDEN V.O.**

Thought so.

**INT STUDIO - DAY**

Holden and Banky play EA Sports Hockey on Sega. There's a knock at the door.

**HOLDEN**

Come in.

Alyssa enters and stands besides them, smiling at their game.

**ALYSSA**

I read somewhere that guys who play hockey are merely making up for penile deficiencies by carrying big sticks.

**BANKY**

I thought you lived in the city? This is like the umpteenth time I've seen you here. Isn't that grounds enough for the little pink mafia to throw you out of their club?

**HOLDEN**

(hits Banky; to Alyssa)

I'll be ready in a second.

I just have to school this mouthy second-stringer.

**BANKY**

Bitch, you're schooling no one.

They play. Cut back and forth between the game and Banky, Holden, and Alyssa.

**HOLDEN**

(off game)

What? Do something!

**BANKY**

(off game)

You fucking cock-teaser. I'll knock your fucking teeth out and pass all over your ass.

**HOLDEN**

Look at how slow you are. Christ, you move like a geriatric.

**BANKY**

(screaming at screen)

Fuck! You Fucking cock-sucker, man! These faggots won't do what I tell them to!

**HOLDEN**

Oh. It's the controller, right? It's always the controller.

**BANKY**

No, it's these... fucking queers on blades that can't accept a fucking pass to save their lives! What period is this?

**HOLDEN**

Final sixty of the third.

**BANKY**

Fuck! Look at your fucking guys, they... FUCK!!!

(whips controller)

**FUCKING COCK SUCKER, MAN! I SWEAR TO GOD!**

Banky storms away. Alyssa looks at Holden,

**HOLDEN**

Imagine if I'd only beaten him by one instead of thirty.

**INT SKEE-BALL ARCADE - DAY**

Holden feeds a couple dollars into the change machine.  
Alyssa looks on.

**ALYSSA**

Explain this again.

**HOLDEN**

How could you have grown up down the  
shore and never played skee-ball?  
What did you do with your youth?

They head toward the skee-ball runs.

**ALYSSA**

Stayed out late, smoked pot, screwed  
around.

**HOLDEN**

Not your grade school years; your high  
school years.

**ALYSSA**

(off skee-ball run)  
This looks complicated.

**HOLDEN**

(Inserts coin and pulls  
lever)  
The premise is very basic - you roll  
the ball up the ramp at varying  
speeds, in an effort to pop it into  
the score circles. The higher the  
score, the more prize tickets you get.

**ALYSSA**

What do you do with the prize tickets?

**HOLDEN**

Trade them in for prizes that aren't  
worth nearly as much as you paid to  
play the game.

**ALYSSA**

Then what's the point?

**HOLDEN**

It's fun.

**ALYSSA**

And you question my lifestyle.

**HOLDEN**

Observe.

Holden rolls the ball. It pops into a twenty point circle.

**HOLDEN**

See? It's just that simple.

**ALYSSA**

Why not just walk up there and put it in the fifty every time?

**HOLDEN**

Where's the skill in that?

**ALYSSA**

Oh, this is a skill? I'm sorry, I had no idea.

**HOLDEN**

Just toss one.

Alyssa picks up a ball, squints to aim, and whips it overhand. It pops off one of the circles and shoots back at them, missing them as they duck. An OC knock and an "OW!" is heard. Holden reacts as Alyssa laughs.

**HOLDEN**

(to OC guy)

I'm sorry, man. She's new at this.

Holden ducks as the ball comes sailing back at his head. He gets up.

**HOLDEN**

(to OC)

Thank you.

(hands Alyssa another ball)

Underhand. Throw it underhand.

**ALYSSA**

This is where you take straight chicks on dates?

**HOLDEN**

It's like Spanish Fly. This'll probably be the first time I don't

score afterwards.

**ALYSSA**

I don't know. I'm starting to get a  
tingle in my bottom.  
(tosses a ball)

Ten.

**HOLDEN**

(grabs a ball)  
So what'd you do last night?  
(prepares to throw)

**ALYSSA**

Got laid

Holden whips the ball in surprise. It ricochets off the ceiling and through the glass of an old pinball machine. Alyssa laughs. Holden looks around, nervously.

**ALYSSA**

Some more of that skill you were  
telling me about?

**HOLDEN**

Maybe we should just leave before  
somebody gets hurt.

**ALYSSA**

No way. I want a cheap prize.  
(throws a ball)  
So your friend's quite the homophobe.

**HOLDEN**

He just feels left out, I think.

**ALYSSA**

I'm not talking about his infantile  
hang-up with me. I'm talking about  
when you two were playing that game.  
Everytime he swore - when his players  
messed up, he called them cocksuckers,  
he referred to the players as queers,  
he called you a cock-teaser...

**HOLDEN**

I thought he was talking to you.

**ALYSSA**

I know you think it means nothing, and  
it may in fact be unintentional, but  
it's ugly all the same.

**HOLDEN**

He was just pissed he was losing.

**ALYSSA**

So he slams the gay community?

**HOLDEN**

C'mon. Don't get all p.c. on me.

**ALYSSA**

I'm not. But what is that saying?

**HOLDEN**

It says he gets too easily frustrated.

**ALYSSA**

It's passive/aggressive gay-bashing.

**HOLDEN**

How do you figure?

**ALYSSA**

How casually did it roll off his tongue? And that's how he expresses his anger? By calling people faggots?

**HOLDEN**

I think you're reading too much into it.

**ALYSSA**

I think you're just so used to it that it rolls off your back. I've heard the two of you play your little rank out game where one insists the other is gay.

(as the boys)

"You're a faggot. No, you're a faggot." It's cute and all to watch you go at it like grade-schooler, but it's also offensive - labeling and ducking the label of being gay as if it were the scarlet fucking letter.

**HOLDEN**

You're blowing this way out of proportion. We live in a more tolerant age now. You refer to yourself as a dyke. Hooper calls himself a faggot all the time...

**ALYSSA**

Yeah, but that's what's known as empowerment/disempowerment. I call myself a dyke so it's not too devastating when some throwback screams it at me as I'm leaving a bar at night.

Same for Hooper - by calling himself a faggot, he steals the thunder away from the mouthy jerks of this world who'd like to beat him to it. But the difference between us having it and your friend saying it is miles wide. We say it to mask the pain - you say it for lack of a better expression at any given moment. No Holden, we do not live in a more tolerant age. And if you think that's the case, then you've been in the suburbs way too long to be resuscitated.

Holden kind of sulks. Alyssa notices.

**ALYSSA**

But you know what?

(picks up his face)

I have more faith in you than that.

(rips her tickets off)

Come on - I want my cheap prize.

**INT STUDIO - NIGHT**

Holden enters. Banky's still playing Sega. Holden sits next to him.

**HOLDEN**

(off screen)

How bad do you suck!

**BANKY**

How was your pseudo-date?

**HOLDEN**

Leave it alone.

**BANKY**

That chick bugs me.

**HOLDEN**

(rubs his head; in baby-talk)



Aww. Everyone bugs you.

**BANKY**

Get off.

(off game)

Fucking faggot! Did you see that?!  
Your dyke courting ass just got me  
scored on!

**HOLDEN**

(beat)

You know, you should watch that. If  
you're going to get all bent out of  
shape while playing the game, so much  
so that you need to curse the t.v.,  
try not to gay-bash it, alright.  
You're nor that kind of guy.

(gets up)

And don't call her a dyke, alright?  
She's a lesbian.

Holden goes to his drawing table and takes off his coat.  
Banky sits there, shocked. He puts the controller down  
and crosses to the drawing table.

**BANKY**

What the fuck is going on here?

**HOLDEN**

(pulling out pencil)

I'm starting a new page.

**BANKY**

(smacking pencil away)

Not with this shit! With you. What  
the fuck is going on with you and that  
girl?

**HOLDEN**

We're friends.

**BANKY**

She's programming you.

**HOLDEN**

I beg your pardon? Programming?

**BANKY**

Yeah. And apparently, you don't even  
realize it. What does it matter if I  
refer to her as a dyke, or if I call  
the Whalers a bunch of faggots in the

privacy of my own office, far from the sensitive ears of the rest of the world?

**HOLDEN**

It's passive/aggressive gay-bashing; and I know you're not really prejudiced at heart. You should just find some other way to express your anger, is all I'm saying.

Holden starts drawing. Banky stares at him. Then he grabs the pencil out of Holden's hand and shoves him to the side. He starts drawing something.

**HOLDEN**

What the fuck are you doing!

**BANKY**

Bear with me here. I just want to put you through this little exercise.  
(drawing feverishly)  
Okay, now see this? This is a four way road, okay?

Banky draws a four-way stop. He illustrates according to his voice-over.

**BANKY V.O.**

And dead in the center, is a crisp, new, hundred dollar bill. Now at the end of each of the streets, are four people, okay? You following? Up here, we got a male-affectionate, easy-to-get-along-with, no political agenda lesbian. Okay? Now down here, we have a man-hating, angry-as-fuck, agenda-of-rage, bitter dyke. To this side, we got Santa Claus, right? And over to this side - the Easter Bunny.

Banky finishes drawing. Holden's shaking his head

**BANKY**

Which one's going to get to the hundred dollar bill first?

**HOLDEN**

What is this supposed to prove?

**BANKY**

I'm serious. This is a serious

exercise. It's like an S.A.T. question. Which one's going to get to the hundred dollar bill first - the male-friendly lesbian, the man-hating dyke, Santa Claus, or the Easter Bunny?

**HOLDEN**

(beat; then pissed)  
The man-hating dyke.

**BANKY**

Good. Why?

**HOLDEN**

I don't know.

**BANKY**

(wildly crossing out the other three)  
**BECAUSE THESE OTHER THREE ARE FIGMENTS OF YOUR FUCKING IMAGINATION!**

Holden storms away. Banky follows.

**HOLDEN**

I don't need this. I'm going home.

**BANKY**

She's fucking with your mind, man! She knows you've got this schoolboy crush and she's using it to sway your way of thinking!

**HOLDEN**

And why would she need to do that? What is she Mata fucking Hari?! What does she gain?

**BANKY**

Maybe she thinks you'll get her comic picked up by Contender. Or maybe she thinks you'll change the content of our book to something more political and message oriented. Or, gee - I don't know - maybe because that's just what dykes like to do: fuck around with straight guys' heads, just so she can go back to her little rug-muncher club and have a good laugh with all her man-hating harpy cronies about how fucking stupid and easily duped men

are!

**HOLDEN**

You're so out of line right now..,

**BANKY**

You don't even know this girl! Big deal, she's from Middletown and she went to North! All the girls at North were bitches and sluts anyway! And this one's got them beat by a mile because she's a bitch/slut/dyke!

**HOLDEN**

Watch your fucking mouth, is all I'm going to tell you..

**BANKY**

Oh why? Do you get my back when she bashes me? Because I know she does. And do you know why she does? Because I won't play her fucking game!

**HOLDEN**

Sometimes your paranoia and suspicious bullshit is amusing. Sometimes it's just fucking annoying as piss!

**BANKY**

What is it about this girl? You know you have no shot at getting her into bed! Why do you bother wasting time with her? Because you're Holden fucking McNeil - most persistent traveller on the road that's not the path of least resistance! Everything's gotta be a fucking challenge for you, and this little relationship with that bitch is a prime example of your fucking condition. Well I don't need a fucking magic eight ball to look into your future; you want a forecast? Here - will Holden ever fuck Alyssa.  
(shakes and looks at  
imaginary ball)

What a shock - "Not fucking likely"! This relationship of your's is affecting you, our work and our friendship, and the time's going to come when I throw down the gauntlet and say it's me or her! And then

what're you going to say?!

**HOLDEN**

(beat)

I think you should let this one go.

**BANKY**

No, what would you say? Would you trash twenty years of friendship because you've got some idiotic notion that this chick would even let you sniff her panties, let alone fuck her?!

**HOLDEN**

Let it go...

**BANKY**

What the fuck.. WHAT THE FUCK MAKES  
**THIS BITCH ALL THAT IMPORTANT?!?!**

Holden looks at Banky for a long beat.

**HOLDEN**

I'm in love with her, man.

Banky stares at him. Holden stares back. Banky looks into Holden's eyes. Suddenly, he softens a bit. He drops his head.

**BANKY**

Fuck.

Banky walks away. Holden watches him go and exits.

**INT DINER - NIGHT**

Holden and Alyssa sit at a booth. Alyssa picks through her food. Holden looks at the check and pulls money from his wallet.

**HOLDEN**

I wish you were the one being pursued by M-TV.

**ALYSSA**

Oh really?

**HOLDEN**

Sure. Then you could sell our and maybe pick up the check once in

awhile.

**ALYSSA**

(drops her fork and wipes her hands)  
We're leaving!

**HOLDEN**

Well it's not like this is a bed and breakfast,

**ALYSSA**

I've got a little business to conduct.

She grabs her bag and slides out of the booth. Holden watches her, then follows.

A23. Alyssa slides up to the cashier's desk as does Holden, who offers a puzzled shrug. Alyssa offers the 'just wait' finger. The CASHIER turns to her.

**ALYSSA**

Are you an authorized deal-maker in this establishment? Do you have the power to negotiate.

**CASHIER**

You wanna haggle over the price of your French Dip?

**ALYSSA**

I want to haggle over the price of fine art.

**CASHIER**

What do you mean?

**ALYSSA**

(pointing OC)  
There. By the kitchen. That painting.

**CASHIER**

What about it?

**ALYSSA**

The price tag says seventy five.

**CASHIER**

So!

**HOLDEN**

(to Alyssa)  
Tell me you're kidding!

**ALYSSA**  
I'll give you fifty.

**CASHIER**  
(to OC)  
Manuel! Bring, me the Dyksiezski off  
the wall.

(to Alyssa)  
All my years in the diner business,  
I've waited for this day - the day  
when someone wanted to buy one of the  
pictures.

**ALYSSA**  
(holds out hand)  
Alyssa Jones. Pleased to meet you.

**CASHIER**  
You say you want to haggle, but you  
don't know rule one about haggling,  
which you just broke: you never give  
your name. The name is power, and to  
give the opponent that piece of you is  
to give away victory.

**ALYSSA**  
I'm only trying to conduct a  
transaction. We're not opponents.

**CASHIER**  
(accepting painting from  
**BUSBOY**)  
Oh, but we are - if you think I'm  
letting this beautiful piece go for  
fifty.

**ALYSSA**  
Ah-ha!  
(to Holden)  
Now we're haggling.

**24. INT CAR -  
NIGHT**

**24.**

It's drizzling outside. Holden drives. Alyssa hugs her  
painting and pushes her bare feet against the windshield,  
making footprints.

**HOLDEN**

I've always wondered what kind of people buy those things. I can't believe you talked him down to twenty five!

**ALYSSA**

It was looking shakey when he told me the artist was a blind cripple with a hump-back, but I held my ground. There's no room for sympathy in the buyer's market.

**HOLDEN**

Where are you going to hang it?

**ALYSSA**

I'm not. You are.

**HOLDEN**

You want me to hang it for you? You better hope it doesn't get out to the girl-nation that you needed a man to help you hang a picture.

**ALYSSA**

You're going to hang it in your house. I bought it for you.

**HOLDEN**

(laughs)  
Yeah, right.

**ALYSSA**

(looks at him)  
I'm serious.

Holden stares at her.

**HOLDEN**

Why?

**ALYSSA**

Because it's captured the moment. It'll be a constant reminder - not just of tonight, but of our introduction, the building of our friendship, everything. Make no mistake about it my Friend - it's a gift to you, from me, so you'll always remember us.



Holden stares ahead. Then he swerves the wheel to the right.

**EXT ROADSIDE - NIGHT**

The car pulls to the side of the road. The rain is a bit heavier now.

**INT CAR - NIGHT**

Holden throws the car into park

**ALYSSA**

Why are we stopping?

**HOLDEN**

Because I can't take it.

**ALYSSA**

Can't take what?

**HOLDEN**

I love you.

**ALYSSA**

(beat)

You love me.

**HOLDEN**

I love you. And not in a friendly way, although I think we're great friends. And not in a misplaced affection, puppy-dog way, although I'm sure that's what you'll call it. And it's not because you're unattainable. I love you. Very simple, very truly. You're the epitome of every attribute and quality I've ever looked for in another person. I know you think of me as just a friend and crossing that line is the furthest thing from an option you'd ever consider. But I can't do this any longer. I can't stand next to you without wanting to hold you. I can't look into your eyes without feeling that longing you only read about in trashy romance novels.

I can't talk to you without wanting to express my love for everything you are. I know this will probably queer our friendship - no pun intended - but I had to say it, because I've never felt this before, and I like who I am because of it. And if bringing it to light means we can't hang out anymore, then that hurts me. But I couldn't allow another day to go by without getting it out there, regardless of the outcome, which by the look on your face is to be the inevitable shoot-down. And I'll accept that But I know some part of you is hesitating for a moment, and if there is a moment of hesitation, that means you feel something too. All I ask is that you not suppress that - at least for ten minutes - and try to dwell in it before you dismiss it.

There isn't another soul on this fucking planet who's ever made me the person I am when I'm with you, and I would risk this friendship for the chance to take it to the next plateau. Because it's there between you and me. You can't deny that. And even if we never speak again after tonight, please know that I'm forever changed because of you and what you've meant to me, which - while I do appreciate it - I'd never need a painting of birds bought at a diner to remind me of.

Holden stares at Alyssa. She stares back. Then she gets out of the car.

**HOLDEN**

Was it something I said?

**EXT ROADSIDE - NIGHT**

Holden gets out of the car. It's raining pretty hard now. Alyssa's hitching up the road. Holden reaches her.

**HOLDEN**

What are you doing?

**ALYSSA**

Get back in the car and get out of here.

**HOLDEN**

You're going to hitch to New York?

**ALYSSA**

Y'ep.

**HOLDEN**

Aren't you at least going to comment?

**ALYSSA**

Here's my comment fuck you.

**HOLDEN**

Why?

**ALYSSA**

That was so unfair. You know how unfair that was.

**HOLDEN**

It's unfair that I'm in love with you?

**ALYSSA**

No, it's unfortunate that you're in love with me. It's unfair that you felt the fucking need to unburden your soul about it. Do you remember for a fucking second who I am?

**HOLDEN**

So? People change.

**ALYSSA**

Oh, it's that simple? You fall in love with me and want a romantic relationship, nothing changes for you with the exception of feeling hunky-dorey all the time. But what about-me? It's not that simple, is it? I can't just get into a relationship with you without throwing my whole fucking world into upheaval!

**HOLDEN**

But that's every relationship! There's always going to be a period of adjustment.

**ALYSSA**

Period of adjustment?!?  
(hitting him)

**THERE'S NO 'PERIOD OF ADJUSTMENT'  
HOLDEN! I'M FUCKING GAY! THAT'S WHO  
I AM! AND YOU ASSUME I CAN TURN THAT  
AROUND JUST BECAUSE YOU'VE GOT A  
CRUSH?!?**

**HOLDEN**

If this is a crush... then I don't  
know if I could take the real thing if  
it ever happens.

She looks at him, rain drenching the pair. She shakes  
her head ruefully.

**ALYSSA**

Go home, Holden.

She walks away. Holden stands there, at a loss. Then he  
turns and heads back to his car.  
As he reaches the door and turns to look back at her,  
Alyssa pounces on him, grabs his face and locks lips with  
him, big time. He drops his keys and embraces her.

And there they stand, by the side of the road, drenched  
kissing.

**EXT STUDIO - DAY**

Banky carries a bag in one arm and pulls out his keys  
with the other. He jams them into the lock, opening the  
door. He picks up the mail on the floor.

**INT STUDIO - DAY**

He closes the door behind him and shuffles to the  
kitchenette, passing by the blanket-covered, slumbering  
forms of Holden and Alyssa, who are out cold in each  
other's arms. The place looks a mess - Like a couple of  
people were engaged in some tremendous fucking. Banky is  
oblivious. He sets the bag down on the counter and pulls  
out a chocolate milk. He opens it, sticks a straw into  
the top, and begins sipping and sifting through the mail.  
He comes to mail that's Holden's and tosses it onto the  
couch, near Holden's head. He looks down at the sleeping  
couple, then back at the mail for a couple of beats.

Then he freezes. He looks down again, and drops his jaw and his carton of choco. It hits the floor with a pop. Holden and Alyssa shoot straight up, eyes struggling to focus. They look at one another, then at the flabbergasted Banky. Banky blinks. Then he shuffles toward the door again and lets himself out.

**ALYSSA**

(off Holden's reaction)

I take it that's not good.

**HOLDEN**

(getting up)

Stay here.

(he kisses her and exits)

**EXT STREET - DAY**

Banky sits on a curb, staring into the distance, Holden saunters up and sits beside him. He follows Banky's gaze.

**BANKY**

Catholic school girls.

Across the street, the Catholic High School is letting out. Teenage girls clad in uniforms and tight sweaters smoke, frolic, wait for their bus.

**BANKY**

The uniform is what does it for me. I wish I'd have went with more Catholic school girls when I was a kid. As it stands. I have no "...and then she unzipped her jumper..." stories.

**HOLDEN**

You looked weirded out back there.

**BANKY**

That's my couch you were fucking on.

**HOLDEN**

Sorry.

**BANKY**

I wanted to watch some TV. Hard to do when your best friend's wrapped around a naked rug-muncher on your couch.

**HOLDEN**

She had boxers on.

Banky shoots him a glare. He goes back to staring at the OC girls.

**BANKY**

This is all going to end badly.

**HOLDEN**

You don't know that.

**BANKY**

I know you. You're way too conservative for that girl. She's been around and seen things we've only read about in books.

**HOLDEN**

But we have read about them. So we're prepared.

**BANKY**

There's no 'we' here. You're going to have to go through this alone. And it's one thing to read about shit, and something different when you're forced to deal with it on a regular basis. When you guys are walking in the mall and both your heads turn at a really nice looking chick, it's going to eat you up inside. You'll spend most of your time wondering when the other shoe's going to drop. Because for you, this isn't about cool weird sex stuff, it's about love.

**HOLDEN**

Maybe it is for her as well.

**BANKY**

Somehow I doubt it.

**HOLDEN**

Everyone's not out to get someone in life. Bank.

**BANKY**

Everybody has an agenda. Everyone.

**HOLDEN**

Yourself?

**BANKY**

My agenda is to watch your back.

**HOLDEN**

To what end?

**BANKY**

To insure that all this time we've spent together, building something, wasn't wasted.

**HOLDEN**

She's not going to ruin the comic.

**BANKY**

I wasn't talking about the comic.

(gets up)

I'm going to gel a bagel. Clean off my fucking couch so I can watch TV.

Banky walks away. Holden shakes his head.

#### **INT ALYSSA'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

An all-girl gathering. TORY, NICA, DALIA and JANE help Alyssa finish an issue of 'Idiosyncratic Routine'. Tory letters a page. Nica and Dalia lay-out the artwork. Dalia drinks wine. Alyssa paints the cover.

**DALIA**

From what I understand, when you sign with a publisher, someone else does all this work for you, and you just sit back and collect.

**ALYSSA**

And miss these last minute cram sessions with my nearest and dearest? Never.

**TORY**

I don't know what she's bitching about. All she's done since we got here is pound Merlot.

**DALIA**

I'm sorry weren't you the one who misspelled 'receipt' on page eighteen? Yeah, you're a real help.

**NICA**

What I'd like to know is why we're here at all when we haven't seen Princess funny-Book in a month.

**JANE**

Yeah Alyssa - who've you been shacking up with?

**ALYSSA**

'Shacking up!' Please.  
(stops painting; smiles wide)  
I'm so in love!

Everyone aww's. Alyssa buries her face, giggling.

**ALYSSA**

I know. I know -I feel like such a goon. But I can't help it - we have such a great time together.

**DALIA**

Who is it? Don't even tell me it's Ms. Thing from the C.D. place. I'll kill you.

**ALYSSA**

It's not her. It's someone you guys don't know.

**NICA**

That chick you left the restaurant with that night?

**ALYSSA**

They're not. From around here.

**TORY**

Don't even tell me you met her down the shore!

**JANE**

Eww! Not a bridge-and-tunnel Jersey dyke!

**TORY**

With huge hair and acid-washed jeans!

They all cackle. Alyssa tries to laugh with them.

**DALIA**



Come on, Alyss - Hoboken Hussy or what?

**ALYSSA**

For your information, they don't have big hair or wear acid wash.

(goes back to painting)

They're from my home town.

Dalia stares at Alyssa, suspiciously.

**DALIA**

Why are you playing the pronoun game?

**ALYSSA**

What? What are you talking about? I'm not even.

**DALIA**

You are. "I met someone." "We have a great time. "They're from my home town." Doesn't this tube of wonderful have a name!

**ALYSSA**

(beat)

Holden.

All four Girls stare at Alyssa, a bit horrified. She stops painting.

**JANE**

Oh, Alyssa - no. Not you.

**TORY**

You're dating a guy?

**ALYSSA**

He's not like a typical man. He's really sweet to me, and we relate so well. You guys'd love him, really.

They stare at Alyssa. Then Dalia gets up.

**DALIA**

I've gotta go to the store.

**JANE**

I'll go with.

They exit. Alyssa looks to Tory and Nica.

**TORY**

(pouring wine)

Whelp - here's to both of you.

(moves the glass to her lips)

Another one bites the dust.

**INT HOLDEN'S BEDROOM -NIGHT**

Holden and Alyssa lie in each other's arms, moonlight bathing them. She smokes.

**HOLDEN**

Can I ask you something?

**ALYSSA**

Don't even tell me you want to do it again.

**HOLDEN**

Why me - you know? Why now?

**ALYSSA**

Because you were giving me that look, and I got wet...

**HOLDEN**

You know what I'm talking about.

**ALYSSA**

Why not You?

**HOLDEN**

I'm a guy. You're attracted to girls.

**ALYSSA**

I see you've been taking notes. Historically, yes that's true.

**HOLDEN**

Then why this?

**ALYSSA**

I've given that a lot of thought, you know? I mean, now that I'm being ostracized by my friends, I've had a lot of time to think about all of this. And what I've come up with is really simple: I came to this on my terms. I didn't just heed what I was taught, you know? Men and women

should be together, it's the natural way - that kind of thing. I'm not with you because of what family, society, life tried to instill in me from day one. The way the world is - how seldom you meet that one person who gets you... it's so rare. My parents didn't really have it. There was no example set for me in the world of male/female relationships. And to cut oneself off from finding that person - to immediately half your options by eliminating the possibility of finding that one person within your own gender... that just seemed stupid. So I didn't. And by leaving my options open, I was branded 'gay', which to me was no big deal - labels are labels, you know? They define what you do, not who you are, I guess. But then you come along. You - the one least likely; I mean, you were a guy.

**HOLDEN**

Still am.

**ALYSSA**

And while I was falling for you, I put a ceiling on that, because you were a guy.

Until I remembered why I opened the door to women in the first place - to not limit the likelihood of finding that one person who'd compliment me so completely. And so here we are, I was thorough when I looked for you, and I feel justified lying in your arms - because I got here on my terms, and have no question that there was someplace I didn't look. And that makes all the difference.

**HOLDEN**

(beat)

Shit.

**ALYSSA**

What?

**HOLDEN**

Well, you took the luster out of it.

**ALYSSA**

What luster?

**HOLDEN**

(joking - in case you didn't  
get it)

Of how I brought you back from the  
other side. How all you needed was  
the right man to turn you around.

**ALYSSA**

You're not the right man.

(kisses him)

You're just the one.

She snuggles into him and closes her eyes. Holden stares  
at the ceiling.

**HOLDEN**

Can I at least tell people that all  
you needed was some serious deep-  
dicking?

She hits him with her pillow.

**THE BIG OL' FALLING-IN-LOVE MONTAGE BEGINS**

1) In Holden's Apartment - Alyssa waves in various  
directions, shaking her head accordingly. Then she puts  
up her hands to stop. Cut to Holden, hanging the  
picture. Alyssa gave him.  
It hangs at a severely crooked angle. He looks back to  
her and shakes his head 'no'.

2) Holden and Alyssa try to play a video game. Banky  
plays as well. Holden instructs her in the ways of NHL  
'96 (turning her paddle right-side-up, pointing at things  
on the screen). She presses the reset button, over and  
over. Banky gives Holden a 'What the fuck?' look.  
Alyssa sticks her tongue at him.

3) At the Video Store - Holden picks up a Disney cartoon  
off the shelf. He goes to show it to Alyssa, who's  
reading the back of 'Anything But Dick', an allchick  
porno. An old WOMAN stares at her. Holden nods to the  
old Woman and takes the tape out of Alyssa's hands,  
putting it back on the shelf. He ushers her away. The  
old Woman waits until they're gone and then picks up the  
tape herself,

4) Holden carries Alyssa on his shoulders through the park, her crotch against the back of his neck. He's talking. She taps him and he stops and looks up. She begins to maneuver around so her crotch is in his face. He pulls her off and put her down. She's laughing. He's flushed with embarrassment. The same Old Woman from the Video store passes by with her husband. Holden shrugs.

5) In Holden's Apartment again - Alyssa again with the waving, then putting up her hands to stop. Cut to Holden again, this time with the painting hung completely upside down. He looks at it, then offers her a bewildered gaze.

6) In the Office Banky comes to his drawing table. There are penciled pages on it with a note that says "Hanging out with Alyssa today. Holden". Banky crumples it up and throws it across the room.

7) In Holden's Apartment - Alyssa waves this way, then that way, then puts up her hands frantically to stop. She settles back against the wall, a satisfied smile crawling across her face, and closes her eyes. We pull back to reveal Holden on his knees in front of her, eating her out (no, we don't see anything!).

#### **INT OFFICE - DAY**

Holden draws. A book is thrown in front of him. He looks up. Banky stands there.

#### **BANKY**

Check out page forty eight.

Holden looks down at that book. It's the Nineteen Eighty Eight yearbook from Middletown North. He shakes his head at Banky and flips it open.

On the page is Alyssa's Senior year photo. Under her name is another name in quotes that says 'Finger Cuffs'.

#### **HOLDEN**

(looking up)

So?

#### **BANKY**

Did you see the nickname?

#### **HOLDEN**

'Finger Cuffs'.

**BANKY**

And...?

**HOLDEN**

And... she had a weird nick-name.  
What's your point?

**BANKY**

Do you know why it's 'Finger Cuffs'?

**HOLDEN**

I suppose you do.

**BANKY**

I do.

(takes a seat)

You remember Cohee Lundin? Left  
Hudson and went to North our senior  
year?

**HOLDEN**

Yeah.

**BANKY**

Well, I ran into him at Food City the  
other day, and we got to talking, and  
I mentioned that you were dating  
Alyssa, and he said..

CUT TO COHEE LUNDON. In the PARKING LOT of FOOD CITY,  
addressing the camera.

**COHEE**

Alyssa Jones? Shit. I know Alyssa  
Jones. I mean, I know Alyssa Jones,  
you know what I'm saying?  
Me and Rick Derris used to hang our  
with her for awhile, right? Just  
hanging around her house after school,  
'cuz her parents were like never home,  
and shit. And one day, Rick just  
whips it out, and starts rubbing it on  
her leg and shit; chasing her around  
the living room - I was dying. But  
you know what the crazy bitch did?  
She fucking drops to her knees, and  
just starts sucking him off right in  
front of me! Like I wasn't even there  
man! I almost died! But that's not  
the fucked up part - the fucked up  
part was Rick, man - right in the

middle of it, he turns to me and he's pointing at her and he says "Cohee." Just like that - "Cohee." So I'm like I'll give it a shot. And I start pulling her pants down all slow, 'cuz I figure any second she's gonna turn around and belt me in the mouth, right? But yo, check this shit out - she's all into it man! She don't try to stop me or nothing! She's all wet and shit, and I just went to work, know what I'm saying? Me and Rick are going to town on this crazy bitch, and she's just loving it, all moaning and shit! It was fucked up! So Rick's the one that came up with the nickname - 'cuz that day, she had us locked in tight from both sides - like a pair of goddamn Chinese finger cuffs!

BACK IN THE OFFICE - Holden stares at Banky.

**HOLDEN**

He's full of shit.

**BANKY**

Cohee's a lot of things, but an exxagerator he's not. The dude's Catholic.

**HOLDEN**

She's never even been with a guy.

**BANKY**

That's what she says. But I say her on her hands and knees getting filled out like an application constitutes 'being with a guy'.

**HOLDEN**

He's pulling your chain. And the fact that you even bought it for a second makes you look like an idiot.

**BANKY**

I'm getting your back, asshole! People don't forget shit like 'Finger Cuffs'. And if it got out that she's queer as well, how do you think it's going to make you look?

**HOLDEN**

I give a shit what people think.

**BANKY**

Alright, forget about that; what if she's carrying a disease? That was just one story - what if there's more?

**HOLDEN**

(grabs his coat)

You're such a fucking asshole.

**BANKY**

What? Oh, it's not possible that she's all crudded up? Cohee I can vouch for as clean - the dude never got laid in high school. But Derris is an arch fucking bush-man! Name me one chick in our senior class that Rick Derris didn't nail, for Christ's sake!

**HOLDEN**

Would you let this go? I'm telling you - she's never even been with a guy, let alone those two zeroes.

**BANKY**

And I'm telling you, the bitch could be a bigger fucking germ farm than that monkey in 'Outbreak'!

Holden grabs Banky and pins him against the wall.

**HOLDEN**

Give it a rest! Do you hear me?! I'm tired of this shit! She's my goddamn girlfriend, do you understand?! Show her a little fucking respect! And if you ever even so much as mention that Alyssa looks a little peaked from now on, I'll put your fucking teeth down your throat!

He releases Banky. Banky brushes himself off.

**BANKY**

Maybe I'll put your fucking teeth down your throat.

**HOLDEN**

(walking out)



Not bloody Likely.

Banky runs to the open door.

**BANKY**

(calling after him)

I've been working out you know!

(no response)

You better be ready to make that M-TV deal!

The downstairs door slams. Banky makes a muscle, then feels it.

**INT TOWER RECORDS - DAY**

Holden and Hooper peruse laser discs.

**HOOPER**

Where's that bitch partner of your's been?

**HOLDEN**

Sulking. He's having a real problem with this Alyssa thing.

**HOOPER**

I think it's more like Banky's having a problem with all things not hetero right about now. And I'm just another paradigm of said aberration.

**HOLDEN**

Banky does not hate gays, you know that.

**HOOPER**

But I do think he is a bit homophobic. And this latest episode between you and Ms. Thing has tapped into that. In his warped perception, he lost you to the dark side - which is she.

**HOLDEN**

You make it sound like me and him were dating.

**HOOPER**

Don't kid yourself - that boy loves you in a way that he's not ready to

deal with.

**HOLDEN**

(beat)

He's been digging up dirt on Alyssa.

**HOOPER**

And just what has Mister Angela  
Lansbury uncovered about your lady  
fair?

**HOLDEN**

He heard some bullshit story that she  
took on two guys.

**HOOPER**

Really? Well then he's barking up the  
wrong we if he wants to split you up,  
isn't he? He's not going to make you  
see the error of your ways by pointing  
out how truly gay she's not

(holds up a disc)

This one?

**HOLDEN**

Have it.

(beat)

Actually, it's kind of gotten to me.

**HOOPER**

How so?

**HOLDEN**

Banky's not known for believing  
misinformation. He's got a pretty  
good bullshit detector.

**HOOPER**

So, what if it is true? Would that  
bother you?

**HOLDEN**

Sex with multiple partners?

Hooper lets our a faux-shock shriek.

**HOLDEN**

At the same time.

Again, even louder, hands slapped against his cheeks.

**HOLDEN**

Thanks for being so comforting.

**HOOPER**

So what do you care?

**HOLDEN**

Well that's the thing, isn't it? I shouldn't.. but it gets to me.

**HOOPER**

Kind of gal Alyssa is, you don't think she's been in the middle of an all - girl group-grope?

**HOLDEN**

You see - that doesn't bother me. But the thought of her and guys... Uh!

**HOOPER**

Oh Holden, I beg you - please don't drop fifty stories in my opinion of you by falling prey to that latest of trendy beasts.

**HOLDEN**

Which is?

**HOOPER**

Lesbian chic. It's oh-so acceptable to be a gay girl nowadays. People think it's cute, because they've got this fool picture in their heads about lipstick lesbians - like they all resemble Alyssa - while most of them look more like you.

**HOLDEN**

Do I detect a little inter-subculture cattiness?

**HOOPER**

Gay or straight - ugly's still ugly. And most of those boys are scary.

**HOLDEN**

I thought fags were all supposed to be super-supportive of one another.

**HOOPER**

Screw that 'all for one' shit. I gotta deal with being the minority in the minority of the minority, and

nobody's supporting my ass? While the whole of society is fawning over girls-on-girls, here I sit - a reviled gay man, and to top that off, I'm a gay black man - notoriously the most swishy of the bunch.

**HOLDEN**

Three strikes.

**HOOPER**

Hey, hey! There's a line.

A young BLACK KID approaches Hooper, holding a comic book.

**KID**

Are you Hooper X?

**HOOPER**

(in militant mode)

A-salaam Alaikum, little brother.

**KID**

Could you sign my comic?

**HOOPER**

(signing comic; nods to Holden)

See that guy there? He's the devil, you understand? Never take your eye off the Man. Our people took their eyes off him one time, and he had us in chains in two shakes of his snake's tail.

The Kid offers Holden an angry look. Hooper gives him back his comic.

**HOOPER**

Fight the power, little 'G'.

**KID**

Word is bond

The Kid leaves, Hooper slips back into his real voice.

**HOOPER**

Look at what I have to resort to for professional respect. What is it about gay men that terrifies the rest of the world.

(shakes his head)  
As for this hang-up with Alyssa's  
past, maybe what's really bothering  
you is that your fragile fantasy might  
not be true.

**HOLDEN**

What do you mean?

**HOOPER**

Holden - don't even try to come off  
like you don't know what I'm saying.  
Men need to believe that they're Marco  
fucking Polo when it comes to sex -  
like they're the only ones who've ever  
explored new territory. And it's hard  
not to let them believe it. I let my  
boys run with it for awhile - feed  
them some of that "I've never done  
this before..." bullshit, and let 'em  
labor under the delusion that they  
rockin' my world, until I can't stand  
them anymore. Then I hit 'em with the  
truth. It's a sick game. The world  
would be a better place if people  
would just accept that there's nothing  
new under the sun, and everything you  
can do with a person has probably been  
done long before you got there.

**HOLDEN**

I can accept that.

**HOOPER**

Honey, that almost sounded convincing.  
Do yourself a favor - just ask her  
about her past, point blank. Get it  
out of the way, before it gets too big  
for both ya'll to move.

(spotting something OC)

Ooh! 'Myra Breckinridge'!

Hopper trots off, Holden glances at the disc in his  
hands. Pictured on it are two gorgeous chicks, barely  
clad, making out. The title is 'Men Suck.. and so do  
Girls - All XXX Action.'

**INT HOCKEY RINK - NIGHT**

On the ice, two teams clash, chasing the puck up and

back, checking galore.

In the bleachers, amidst a slew of fans, Alyssa watches the game with a large degree of enjoyment. Sitting beside her, Holden doesn't seem to share her enthusiasm.

**ALYSSA**

Since most of these people are rooting for the home team, I'm going to cheer for the visitors. I'm a big visitors fan - especially the kind that make coffee for you in the morning before they go.

(smiles at Holden; no response)

That was a joke. A little wacky wordplay?

**HOLDEN**

What do you mean, 'visitors'?

**ALYSSA**

Was I being too obscure? The kind that - until recently - had no dicks and would spend the night.

**HOLDEN**

So that was until recently!

**ALYSSA**

Oh, yeah.

(shouting; to ice)

Hey - foul! Foul! He was traveling or something!

**HOLDEN**

So nobody but me has stayed the night at your place since we got together?

**ALYSSA**

(beat)

Something on your mind, Holden?

**HOLDEN**

No, I was just wondering,

**ALYSSA**

If I've been 'faithful' or something?

**HOLDEN**

Look, I was just asking.

**ALYSSA**

(toucher his face)

Oh, sweetie. I only have eyes for you.

(to ice)

**CALL THAT FUCKING SHIT, REF!! THE GUY ON THE SKATES TOTALLY SHOVED ONE OF MY GUYS!!**

(to Holden)

I told you I was great at sporting events. Imagine what a bitch I could be if I knew what was going on?

ON THE ICE - Things heat up between two opposing PLAYERS. One snatches the puck away from the other and skates off. The other Player gives chase.

Alyssa's very into the game. Holden shakes his head

**HOLDEN**

That'd make Banky half right.

**ALYSSA**

About what?

**HOLDEN**

He said all the girls from North were bitches and sluts.

**ALYSSA**

Really. I'm sorry - you two left high school behind how many years ago?

(grabs his face and kisses his cheek)

Can I put some of my books in your locker?

(goes back to watching game)

**HOLDEN**

(under his breath)

How about your yearbook.

ON THE ICE - The Player giving chase slashes the Player with the puck.

Alyssa jumps to her feet.

**ALYSSA**

(to ice)

**IF YOU DON'T START USING THAT WHISTLE I'M GONNA JAM IT STRAIGHT UP YOUR ASS!!**

(to guy next to her)  
Right?

**HOLDEN**

What's with 'Finger Cuffs'?

**ALYSSA**

(sitting back down)  
'Finger Cuffs'?

**HOLDEN**

Yeah. In your senior yearbook your  
nickname was 'Finger Cuffs'. What is  
that?

**ALYSSA**

It was? Shit, damned if I can  
remember. I'd look it up, but I threw  
all that shit our years ago?

(beat)

Where'd you see a North yearbook?

**HOLDEN**

Do you know Rick Derris?

ON THE ICE - The Players skid into the corner where  
Player One checks Player Two into the boards, hard.  
Player Two scrambles to his feet and throws down his  
gloves.

The crowd around Alyssa and Holden go wild.

**ALYSSA**

Rick? Sure. We used to hang out in  
high school.

(to ice)

**PUNCH HIM IN THE FUCKING NECK, NUMBER  
TWELVE!!**

**HOLDEN**

Did you go out with him or something?

**ALYSSA**

(eyes on the ice)

Date Rick Derris? No. We just hung  
out a lot.

**HOLDEN**

Just... you and him?

**ALYSSA**

No. Me, Rick, and... um... what was



that guy's name...?

**HOLDEN**

Cohee?

**ALYSSA**

Yeah! Cohee Lundin. God, I haven't thought about that name in years.

ON THE ICE - The Players square off. Player Two pulls Player One's helmet off and punches him in the face.

Holden looks as if he'd Like to do the same to his companion. Alyssa's into the game.

**ALYSSA**

I remember those guys'd come over almost everyday after school. They'd bug my sisters, look for porno tapes in my dad's closet, raid our fridge. They really took advantage of my parents never being home.

ON THE ICE - Player Two yanks at Player One's jersey and gut punches him. Alyssa seems oblivious to Holden's anger, so enthralled with the action is she.

**ALYSSA**

(starts laughing)

This one day... Rick pulled out his dick and chased me around the house with it! Right in front of Cohee! I couldn't believe it! Guys are weird - I thought the whole size hang-up made you all terrified to show your dicks to each other?

ON THE ICE - Player One staggers a bit, then quickly rights his jersey and lunges at Player Two, landing a barrage of his own punches. Blood sprays across the ice.

Holden's face is reeeeeaaaaally sour looking. Alyssa's still in the game.

**HOLDEN**

Rick pulled his dick out? Really? What'd you do?

**ALYSSA**

(looks him dead in the eye)  
I blew him while Cohee fucked me.

ON THE ICE - Player One delivers the kill shot, slamming his fist into Player Two's nose. The blood shoots out like a geyser, and Two goes down hard.

Holden stares at Alyssa, flabbergasted. The crowd around them stares not at the fight on the ice, but the fight in their midst, shocked. Alyssa fumes.

**HOLDEN**

Excuse me!?!

**ALYSSA**

That's what you wanted to hear, isn't it? Isn't that what this little cross-examination of your's is about? Well try not to be so obvious about it next time, there are subtler ways of badgering a witness.

(to Bystander)

Am I right?

**BYSTANDER**

(to Holden)

Jeez, even I knew what you were getting at.

**ALYSSA**

(gathering her stuff)

If you wanted some background information on me, all you had to do was ask - I'd have gladly volunteered it. You didn't have to play Hercules fucking Poirot!

She storms away. Holden chases after her. The Bystander watches them go.

**BYSTANDER**

(to companion)

I told you these were good seats.

**INT RINK LOBBY / EXT PARKING LOT - NIGHT**

Alyssa marches quickly, pulling on her coat. Holden catches up to her. We track with them our into the parking lot.

**HOLDEN**

So it's true?!

**ALYSSA**

Yes Holden! In fact, everything you heard or dug up on me was probably true! Yeah, I took on two guys at once! You want to hear some gems you might not have unearthed - I took a twenty six year old guy to my senior prom, and then left halfway through to have sex with him and Gwen Turner in the back of a limo! And the girl who got caught in the shower with Miss Moffit, the gym teacher? That was me! Or how about in college, when I let Shannon Hamilton videotape us having sex - only to find out the next day that he broadcast it on the campus cable station?! They're all true - those and so many more! Didn't you know? I'm the queen of urban legend!

**HOLDEN**

How the hell could you do those things?!

**ALYSSA**

Easily! Some of it I did out of stupidity, some of it I did out of what I thought was love, but - good or bad - they were my choices, and I'm not making apologies for them now - not to you or anyone! And how dare you try to lay a guilt trip on me about it - in public, no less! Who the fuck do you think you are, you judgemental prick?!

**HOLDEN**

How am I supposed to feel about all of this?

**ALYSSA**

How are you supposed to feel about it? Feel what ever the fuck you want about it! The only thing that really matters is how you feel about me.

**HOLDEN**

I don't know how I feel about you now.

**ALYSSA**

Why? Because I had some sex?

**HOLDEN**

Some sex?

**ALYSSA**

Yes, Holden - that's all it was: some sex! Most of it stupid high school sex, for Christ's sake! Like you never had sex in high school!

**HOLDEN**

There's a world of fucking difference between typical high school sex and two guys at once! They fucking used you?

**ALYSSA**

I used them! You don't think I would've let it happen if I hadn't wanted it to, do you?! I was an experimental girl, for Christ's sake! Maybe you knew early on that your track was from point 'a' to 'b' - but unlike you I wasn't given a fucking map at birth, so I tried it all! That is until we - that's you and I - got together, and suddenly, I was sated. Can't you take some fucking comfort in that? You turned out to be all I was ever looking for - the missing piece in the big fucking puzzle!

(tries to calm down)

Look I'm sorry I let you believe that you were the only guy I'd ever been with. I should've been more honest. But it seemed to make you feel special in a way that me telling you over and over again how incredible you are would never get across.

She touches his face. He pulls back. She stares at him, hurt and pissed.

**ALYSSA**

Do you mean to tell me that - while you have zero problem with me sleeping with half the women in New York City - you have some sort of half-assed, mealy-mouthed objection to pubescent antics, that took place almost ten years ago? What the fuck is your problem?!?

Holden's eyes are downcast. Alyssa waits for a response.

**HOLDEN**

I want us to be something that we  
can't.

**ALYSSA**

And what's that?

**HOLDEN**

(beat)  
A normal couple.

Holden skulks off. Alyssa stares after him, and then starts kicking and punching a car beside her, finally slumping to the ground. She cries.

**INT STUDIO - DUSK**

Holden sits on the couch, alone in the dark. The door opens and Banky enters. He stands there, sizing up Holden's mood.

**BANKY**

The girl?

Holden nods. Banky nods back. He stands there for a beat. Then he sits beside Holden. He opens his arms. Holden shifts into his friend's embrace and begins crying on his shoulder. Banky pats his back. Pull back on a man in pain and the comfort of a friend.

**INT DINER - NIGHT**

Holden sits alone at a booth. He stirs his iced tea.

**OC VOICE**

Yo, look at this morose mother fucker  
here..

Holden looks up. JAY and SILENT BOB stand above him.

**JAY**

Smells like somebody shit in his  
cereal.

Holden offers a half-smile. The pair slide into the booth.

**HOLDEN**

What took you so long?

**JAY**

We were at the mall. You bring the salad?

Holden pulls an envelope out of his jacket and tosses it to Jay. Jay opens it and pulls out a thick wad of bills, along with the latest issue of 'BLUNTMAN and CHRONIC.'

**JAY**

Man, this likeness rights shit is more profitable than selling smoke.

**HOLDEN**

How'd a dirt merchant like you ever learn about likeness rights?

**JAY**

(hands envelope to Silent Bob)

We deal to a lot of lawyers. Speaking of which...

(pulls out a dime bag)

Little signing bonus and shit!

**HOLDEN**

I'll pass. Take a look at the issue.

Silent Bob thumbs through the comic. Jay looks over his shoulder, as he begins rolling a joint.

**JAY**

Yeah. When you gonna get some pussy in that book, man! Throw some super-villain in with big fucking tits that shoot milk or something, and I just drink her dry, bust some moves on her...

(demonstrates)

...and then she has to fuck me.

(Silent Bob hits him)

Fuck us.

**HOLDEN**

I'll see what I can do.

A WAITRESS joins them.

**WAITRESS**

What can I get you.

**HOLDEN**

Nothing, thanks.

**JAY**

Yo Flo - tell Mel to whip me up a  
toasted bagel and cream cheese.

(to Silent Bob)

You want one too?

(Silent Bob nods)

Make that two. And kiss my grits.  
Noonch.

(the Waitress leaves; to  
Holden)

D'jever watch 'Alice'? That show's  
good as hell.

(continues rolling)

So why the long face, Horse? Banky on  
the rag?

**HOLDEN**

When is he not? No - I'm just having  
some girl trouble.

**JAY**

Bitch pressing charges? I get that a  
lot.

**HOLDEN**

No. I'm just at a point where I don't  
know what to do.

**JAY**

Kick her to the curb. Girls get to be  
too much trouble, there's always the  
'band of the hand'.

**HOLDEN**

Can't do it, g. I'm in love.

**JAY**

Ah, there ain't no such thing. You  
gotta boil it all down to the  
essentials. It's like Cube says -  
life ain't nothing but bitches and  
money.

**HOLDEN**

Just what I needed - advice from the  
'hood

**JAY**

Who is this girl?

**HOLDEN**

I don't think you know her.

**JAY**

Come on man - I'm people who know people.

**HOLDEN**

You sound like Barbra Streisand.

**JAY**

That's 'cause I got this tubby bitch playing her greatest hits tape in my ear all the time. You should see him: she starts singing 'You Don't Bring Me Flowers', this faggot starts crying like a little girl with a skinned knee and shit. It's embarrassing. I got the only muscle in the world with a weakness for ballads.

(to Silent Bob)

You big fucking softie.

(to Holden)

So what's this skirt's name!

**HOLDEN**

I'm telling you, you don't know her.

**JAY**

I ain't playing. Tell me her name, Mysterio.

**HOLDEN**

Alyssa Jones.

**JAY**

Finger Cuffs?

Holden rubs his eyes.

**JAY**

You're dating Finger Cuffs? Wait a minute I thought she was all gay and shit!

**HOLDEN**

She is. Or was. I don't know.

The Waitress returns with the order.



**JAY**

And you go out with her? Shit, man - you're a lucky dog. She bring other chicks to bed with you, get a little of that filet o' fish sammich going on?

The Waitress stares wide-eyed and offended at Jay.

**JAY**

(off the Waitress' look)

Yeah - you know what I'm talking about, baby.

(Waitress leaves; to Holden)

So - four tits, or what?

**HOLDEN**

It's not like that.

**JAY**

Well what's it like then?

**HOLDEN**

Right now?

(beat)

I don't know. I love her. But she has a past

**JAY**

I'll say. Stuffin' two guys, eating chicks out. Yo - I heard one time, she had this dog...

**HOLDEN**

Eat your fucking bagel already!

**JAY**

(to Silent Bob)

Look at this touchy mother fucker right here.

(to Holden)

So, if you're all in love with her, what's the problem?

**HOLDEN**

The problem is shit like that. It was one thing when it was just girls - that was weird enough. But now you throw guys into the mix - two guys at once, no less. All that

experience...What am I supposed to think?

**JAY**

You think good; because now she'll be all true blue and shit. The girl's tasted life, yo. Now she's settlin' for your boring, funny-book-makin' ass.

**HOLDEN**

Settling. That's comforting, Jay. Thanks.

**JAY**

That's what I'm here for.

**HOLDEN**

I'm lusc having a problem with all of it I can't get it out of my head these visuals of her doing all this shit. And I don't know why I can't let it go. Because I'm crazy about her, you know? I look at this girl, I see the future. I see kids. I see grand-kids.

**JAY**

You're scaring me.

**HOLDEN**

I'm scaring myself. Because I think so much of her, and then I can't get over shit like 'Finger Cuffs'.

(shakes his head)

I don't know what I'm doing.

Holden looks out the window. Jay continues to roll his joint. There's silence. Then...

**BOB**

You're chasing Amy.

Holden's head snaps forward. He stares, wide-eyed at Silent Bob.

**HOLDEN**

What..what did you say?

**BOB**

You're chasing Amy.

Holden stares, shocked. He looks to Jay, who's still rolling his joint.

**JAY**

What do you look so shocked for? He does this all the time. Fat bastard thinks just because he never says anything, that it'll have some huge impact when he does open his fucking mouth.

**BOB**

Why don't you shut up? Jesus! Always yap, yap, yapping all the time. Give me a fucking headache.

(to Holden)

I went through something like what you're going through. Years ago. Same kind of thing with a girl named Amy.

**JAY**

When?

**BOB**

A couple of years ago.

**JAY**

What'd she 'Live in Canada' or something? Why don't I remember this?

**BOB**

What you don't know about me I can just about squeeze into the Grand fucking Canyon. Did you know I always wanted to be a dancer in Vegas?

Jay and Holden look at him. Silent Bob busts a move with his hands.

**BOB**

Hunhh? Bet you didn't know that?

**JAY**

Just cell your fucking story so we can get out of here and smoke this.

**BOB**

(to Holden)

So there's me an Amy, and we're all inseparable, right? Just big time in love. And then about four months in,

I ask about the ex-boyfriend. Dumb move, I know, but you know how it is - you don't really want to know, but you just have to... stupid guy bullshit. Anyway she starts telling me all about him - how they dated for years, lived together, her mother likes me better, blah, blah, blah - and I'm okay. But then she tells me that a couple times, he brought other people to bed with them - menage a tois, I believe it's called. Now this just blows my mind. I mean, I'm not used to that sort of thing, right? I was raised Catholic.

**JAY**

Saint Shithead.

Silent Bob backhands him. Jay raises his fist as if to strike.

**BOB**

Do something.

(to Holden)

So I get weirded out, and just start blasting her, right? This is the only way I can deal with it - by calling her a slut, and telling her that she was used - I mean, I'm out for blood I want to hurt her - because I don't know how to deal with what I'm feeling. And I'm like "What the fuck is wrong with you?" and she's telling me that it was that time, in that place, and she didn't do anything wrong, so she's not gonna apologize. So I tell her it's over, and I walk.

**JAY**

Fucking a.

**BOB**

No, idiot. It was a mistake. I wasn't disgusted with her, I was afraid. At that moment, I felt small - like I'd lacked experience, like I'd never be on her level or never be enough for her or something. And what I didn't get was that she didn't care. She wasn't looking for that guy anymore. She was looking for me. But by the time I realized this,

it was too late, you know. She'd moved on, and all I had to show for it was some foolish pride, which then gave way to regret. She was the girl, I know that now. But I pushed her away...

Everyone's silent Silent Bob lights a cigarette.

**BOB**

So I've spent every day since then chasing Amy...  
(takes a drag from his smoke)  
So to speak.

They sit there for a beat. Jay pockets the rest of his dime-bag.

**JAY**

Enough of this fucking melodrama. My advice - forget her, dude. There's one woman in the world. One woman, with many faces.

(to Silent Bob)

Get up, bitch

(to Holden)

We gotta book. We're catching a bus to Chi-town.

**HOLDEN**

What's there?

**JAY**

Business, yo. How many more of those phat envelopes do we got coming to us?

**HOLDEN**

I don't know. I don't know if the book's going to be around much longer.

**JAY**

Yeah? Good. I'll be glad as shit when it's gone.

**HOLDEN**

Are you kidding me? There's millions of people out there that'd love to see themselves in a comic book.

**JAY**

I know. I spend every fucking waking hour with one of them. But it ain't

like us at all - all slapsticky and  
shit - running around like dicks,  
saying... What's that shit you got me  
saying?

**HOLDEN**

Snootchie-bootchies.

**JAY**

'Snootchie-bootchies'. Who talks like  
that? That's baby-talk.

(slaps his hand)

It's a big world, g - but we're bound  
to run into you again. Until then -  
keep your unit on you.

**HOLDEN**

I'll try.

**BOB**

Do, or do not - there is no ay.

**JAY**

(slaps him)

Knock it off! Get your fat ass moving  
- we got a bus to catch.

(under his breath)

Jedi-bitch.

Exit Jay and Silent Bob. Holden remains in the booth,  
thinking.

**MONTAGE - AN UNCOMFORTABLE SILENCE**

- 1) Holden sits at his drawing table, tapping his pencil  
up and down.
- 2) Alyssa sits in a club, getting talked at by some women.  
She's not present in the conversation.
- 3) Banky meets with Sloss at a restaurant Sloss shakes  
the contracts at him, and Banky makes the "I know, I  
know," face.
- 4) Holden stares at the picture Alyssa gave him.
- 5) Alyssa with her ear to the phone. She hangs up,  
angrily.
- 6) Holden sits in the park that he and Alyssa walked

through. He's staring at Alyssa's yearbook picture. He closes the book and sighs. Then, an idea hits him. He jumps up and dashes out of the park.

**INT STUDIO - NIGHT**

Banky and Alyssa sit on the couch. Holden paces in front of them.

**HOLDEN**

I know you're wondering why I asked you both here tonight, at the same time, knowing that we have shit to settle between us, separately.

**BANKY**

I just figured you wanted to kill two birds with one stone by telling her to fuck off with me here so you didn't have to go through the story again later on.

**ALYSSA**

Fuck you.

**BANKY**

Not even if you let me videotape it.

**HOLDEN**

Enough!

(they both look at him)

I've been going through things, over and over. And I dissected it all, and looked at it a thousand different ways. Banky - there's friction between us for the first time in our lives. You hate me dating Alyssa and you want me to sign off on this M-TV thing.

**BANKY**

How perceptive.

**HOLDEN**

Alyssa - you and I hit a wall, because I don't know how to deal with... your past, I guess.

**BANKY**

That's a nice way of putting it. I'd

have said the whole double-stuff  
thing...

**HOLDEN**

(right in his face)  
I'm only going to say it once: shut  
up.

(back to pacing)  
Now - I know I'm to blame one way or  
the other on both accounts. With you,  
Alyssa - it's my fault because I feel  
inadequate. Because you've had so  
much experience, had such a big life;  
and my life's been pretty small in  
comparison.

**ALYSSA**

That doesn't matter to me...

**HOLDEN**

Please. I have to get through this.  
(beat)  
And with you Banky - I know why you're  
having such a hard time with Alyssa,  
and it's something that's been obvious  
forever, but I guess I just didn't  
acknowledge it.  
(takes a deep breath)  
You're in love with me.

**BANKY**

(makes a face; beat)  
What?

**HOLDEN**

You're attracted to me. Just as, in a  
way, I'm attracted to you. I mean, it  
makes sense - we've been together so  
long, we have so much in common...

**BANKY**

(getting up)  
Well, I've got to get home and catch  
the last few minutes of 'Babylon 5',  
so I'll be...

Holden grabs him, kisses him full on the lips, and pushes  
him back onto the couch Alyssa reacts. Banky - wide-eyed  
and speechless - looks away.

**HOLDEN**

It's something you're going to have to



deal with. Bank. You may very well be gay, which explains your homophobia and why you're so jealous of Alyssa, and your sense of humor as well.

**BANKY**

Just 'cause a guy's got a predilection toward dick jokes...

**HOLDEN**

Bank. Stop. Deal with it. You'll feel much better.

He grabs a chair from the side of the room.

**HOLDEN**

Now - at this point, you may be asking yourself the question that I've been going over and over in my head for the last few days: what does one have to do with the other?

Alyssa's face drops. She subtly shakes her head.

**ALYSSA**

(under her breath)

Don't.

**HOLDEN**

And when I did some serious soul-searching, it came at me from out of nowhere, and suddenly it all made sense - a calm came over me. I know what we have to do. And then you - Bank, you Alyssa, and I - all of us... can finally be... alright.

**ALYSSA**

(again, under her breath)

Please don't say it.

**HOLDEN**

(sits in the chair; takes a long beat)

We've all got to have sex together.

The room is silent. Holden Lights a cigarette. Banky's eyes nearly bug. Alyssa's head drops.

**HOLDEN**

Don't you see? That would take care of everything. Alyssa - I wouldn't

feel inadequate or too conservative anymore. I'll have done something on par with all the experience you've had. And it'll be with you, which'll make it that much more powerful. And Banky - you can cake that leap that everyone else but you sees that you should take. And it'll be okay, because it'll be with me - your best friend for years. We've been everything to each other but intimates. And now, we'll have been through that together too. And it won't have to be a total leap for you, because a woman will be involved. And when it's over, all that aggression you feel toward Alyssa will be gone. Because you'll have shared in something beautiful with the woman I love. It'll be cathartic. A true communion. We have to do this. For me, for both of you... for all of our sakes. This will keep us together.

(beat)

What do you say?

Banky stares forward, wide-eyed. He leans back into the couch and lets out a huge sigh. Then shrugs.

**BANKY**

Sure.

Holden smiles at his friend. Then he looks at Alyssa.

**HOLDEN**

You know I need this. You know it'll help.

Alyssa looks at him, sadly.

**ALYSSA**

No.

Holden reacts, shocked Banky lets out a sigh of relief.

**HOLDEN**

No? I... I thought you'd be into this.

**ALYSSA**

You did? What does that say about me?

**HOLDEN**

But you've... you've done... stuff...  
like this. This should be no big deal  
for you.

**ALYSSA**

You don't want this.  
(lights her cigarette)  
You really don't want this. Trust me.

**HOLDEN**

I need this. This has to happen. Why  
can't you see that? And how can you  
not? What does that say about me?  
You can take it from two guys whose  
names you can barely remember, but I  
ask you to share an experience like it  
- where it's about intimacy - and you  
say no?

**ALYSSA**

(inhales from her cigarette,  
takes a beat)  
I can't.

Holden moves to her side of the couch.

**HOLDEN**

You can. I'll be there. And when  
it's over, we'll be the strongest  
we've ever been because we got through  
some nasty shit together. And we'll  
finally be on the same level together.  
And then there'll be nothing we can't  
accomplish.

A tear rolls down her cheek She looks at him, sadly, and  
touches his face.

**ALYSSA**

Oh Holden.  
(trying to compose herself)  
That time is over for me. I've been  
there. I've done it. And I didn't  
find what I was looking for in any of  
it. I found that in you - in us.  
Doing this won't help you forget about  
the things you're hung up on. It'll  
create more.

**HOLDEN**

No it won't. I thought about all of

that.

**ALYSSA**

No, it will. Maybe you'll see me differently from then on - maybe you'll despise me for going along with it, once you're in the moment. Maybe I'll moan differently and then you'll resent Banky, and become suspicious of us. Or you'll alienate him because of it, and then grow to blame and hate me for the deterioration of your friendship. Or what if- I sincerely doubt it, but what if - I saw something in Banky that I never saw before, and fell in love with him and left you. I've been down roads like this before; many times. I know you feel doing this will broaden your horizons and give you experience. But I've had those experiences on my own. I can't accompany you on your's. I'm past that now.

(touches his face; stares to cry)

Or maybe I just love you too much. And I feel hurt and let down that you'd want to share me with anyone. Because I never wanted to share you

(holds it in; gets up)

Regardless I can't be a part of this.

(beat)

Or you. Not anymore

(hugs him)

I love you. I always will. Know that.

She releases him, then slaps him.

**ALYSSA**

But I'm not your fucking whore.

Alyssa storms away, stopping briefly to look Banky up and down.

**ALYSSA**

He's your's again.

She walks our of the studio. The door closes behind her.

Banky and Holden stand there, silently. Cut to black.

**INT COMIC BOOK SHOW - DAY**

It's ONE YEAR later. We're at another show, not unlike the one from the opening.

A copy of 'Bluntman and Chronic' enters the frame. The cover reads 'The Death Chronic', complete with a corresponding drawing.

**BANKY V.O.**

Blast from the past.

Banky sits at his own signing table. Behind him hangs a banner that reads 'BANKY EDWARDS - CREATOR Of BABY DAVE'. A small line is formed in front of him. He talks with a **FAN**.

**FAN**

Do you know how much it's going for these days? One ten. You signing it will push that up even higher,

**BANKY**

If you sell it, I want a kickback  
(starts signing)

**FAN**

I don't know if this is true, but I heard once that there was going to be an animated series.

**BANKY**

There was going to be

**FAN**

What happened!

**BANKY**

(off comic)  
You're looking at it. No Chronic - no cartoon

**FAN**

That sucks man. That would've been awesome.

**BANKY**

Tell me about it

**FAN**

Is that what happened to you and Holden McNeil? You got into a fight

over the rights or something?

**BANKY**

It was a little more involved than that.

**FAN**

Whatever happened to him?

**BANKY**

He quit the biz. I guess.

**FAN**

You guys don't talk anymore?

**BANKY**

(looks OC)

No. Not really.

Banky locks eyes with someone OC. His expression softens.

Holden leans against a wall on the far side of the room. He smiles at Banky. Banky smiles back, and sort of nods.

Holden holds up a copy of Banky's new solo comic. He points to it and gives a thumbs up.

**OC FAN**

Probably shouldn't have killed off Chronic.

Banky smiles to OC.

**BANKY**

Guess not. Some doors just shouldn't be opened.

Banky looks in another direction, OC. He looks at Holden and points to it. Holden looks in the same direction, and then looks back at Banky and nods.

**OC FAN**

You don't need that guy, anyway. You do great stuff without him.

Banky looks at Holden for a beat. Then he brings his pointer fingers together, mimicing Holden's 'shared moment' gesture.

Holden shrugs slightly, then crosses his fingers - as if to say 'hopefully'.

**OC FAN**

You were just carrying that guy,  
anyway.

Banky sort of smiles at the OC Holden. Then he offers  
his own thumbs up - as to say 'good luck'.

**BANKY**

(to fan, still looking OC)  
You're so right.

Holden smiles back, nods 'bye', and walks off.

**OC FAN**

Well, keep up the good work, man.  
Love them dick jokes. Love 'em. See  
ya.

The Fan Leaves, but Banky is watching Holden go.

**BXVKY**

Yeah. Bye.  
(shakes it off)  
Okay. Who's next?

Alyssa sits at a separate signing table, with a line in  
front of her. A WOMAN behind her. Alyssa dashes off  
signatures in the copies of her comic.

**ALYSSA**

(to OC departing fan)  
Thanks for reading it.

The Woman stands and rubs her shoulders.

**WOMAN**

I'm going to get a soda. You want  
anything?

**ALYSSA**

I'm fine, thanks,

The Woman heads off. Alyssa starts rummaging through her  
bag.

**ALYSSA**

(not rooking up)  
Okay, who's next!

A comic book drops on the table in front of her. It's a  
comic book called 'Chasing Amy'.

She leafs through it, not looking up.

**ALYSSA**

Um... This isn't one of mine.

**OC HOLDEN**

It's mine.

Alyssa looks up sharply.

Holden stands before her, smiling.

**HOLDEN**

I saved you one.

**ALYSSA**

Hi.

**HOLDEN**

Hi.

**ALYSSA**

(beat)

How've you been?

**HOLDEN**

Good. Really good. Yourself?

**ALYSSA**

Good

(beat; off her own comic)

New issue's selling like crazy, for some reason.

**HOLDEN**

Because it's so good. I really liked it.

**ALYSSA**

Thank you.

(off comic)

I haven't even seen this yet. Did it just come out?

**HOLDEN**

A month ago. I did a really small run. Self-financed. Only about five hundred issues.

**ALYSSA**

Will I enjoy it?



**HOLDEN**

You might. It's familiar subject matter.

Alyssa leafs through it. Her eyes get somewhat misty.

**ALYSSA**

Looks Like a very personal story.

**HOLDEN**

I finally had something personal to say.

They look at each other for a beat

**HOLDEN**

I'm going to go. I don't want to hold up the line.

**ALYSSA**

Yeah. I mean, it can get ugly. I just saw this nun in line call this small child a cunt-rag.

**HOLDEN**

(smiles)

Read that, when you have a minute

**ALYSSA**

I will.

**HOLDEN**

I'd like to hear your thoughts about it. If you get a chance, give me a call.

**ALYSSA**

Okay.

They look at each other for a beat.

**HOLDEN**

Nice seeing you again,

**ALYSSA**

Really nice to see you too.

He walks away. A few steps away, he turns and waves again. She waves back. And then he starts moving through the thrall of fan-boys.

The Woman returns with coffee. She follows Alyssa's

gaze.

**WOMAN**

who was that?

**ALYSSA**

Hmm! Oh. Just some guy I knew.

She watches him go for another beat, then.

**ALYSSA**

(to line)

Next

(to Woman)

So what do you want to do tonight?

And as they fall into conversation, the show goes on.

**END**