

"Clerks."

by

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Ostensibly
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INT BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING HOURS

A DOG
sleeps on a neatly made bed.

A POSTER
of Bugs Bunny conducting an orchestra.

A SHELF OF BOOKS
holds such classics as Dante's Inferno, Beyond Good and Evil, The
Catcher in the Rye, and The Dark Knight Returns.

A FRAMED DIPLOMA
dusty and unkempt hangs askew on the wall. A snapshot of a girl is stuck
in the corner, and a bra weighs one end down.

A PHONE
with gum wads stuck on the receiver sits quietly atop a circular trash
can. It suddenly explodes with a resounding ring - once, twice, thrice.

A CLOSET DOOR
partly open. A sneaker sticks out of the bottom. As the phone rings, the
door is kicked open by an unsneakered foot. A half-clad figure musters
itself from the closet floor. The sneakered foot attempts to gain
leverage.

THE PHONE
rings yet again, and a hand falls upon the receiver, yanking it off the
trash can, OC.

THE RUMPLED FIGURE
lays with his back to the camera, phone in hand.

FIGURE
(groggily)
Hello...What?...No, I don't work
today...I'm playing hockey at
four...Arthur's working...

THE DOG
yawns and shakes its head.

FIGURE (OC)
No, I can't...I'm playing hockey at
four...It's nine o'clock...So I got
a game in seven hours...No...That's
not my fault...

A HALF-EATEN TWINKIE
sits atop a half-finished tumbler full of chocolate milk.

FIGURE (OC)
Call Randal...I'm fucking tired...
No...No way...I've got a game at
four!...What?...Jesus...
(deep sigh)
What time are you going to come in?
...Two...Be there by two...Swear...

A PICTURE OF A GIRL
leans against a trophy. The picture is decorated with a Play-Doh beard
and mustache.

FIGURE (OC)
Swear you'll be in by two and I'll
do it...Two...Two or I walk.

THE PHONE RECEIVER
slams into the cradle.

THE RUMPLED FIGURE
slowly sits up and remains motionless. He musses his hair.

FIGURE
Shit.

He stands.

THE DOG
stands and wags its tail. A hand pats his head.

THE RUMPLED FIGURE
lays down on the bed. We now see his face. It is the face of DANTE and
this is Dante's room; this is Dante's life.

POV DANTE - THE DOG
looks down at its master.

DANTE
grabs the dogs head and wrestles it.

DANTE
Next time, you sleep in the closet
and I get the bed.

He releases the dog and sits up.

DANTE
(exhausted)
Shit.

CUT TO:

CREDITS.

CUT TO:

INT. BATHROOM - MINUTES LATER

A STEAMING SHOWER
fills the room. The dog licks water from the toilet.

CUT TO:

CREDITS.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - MINUTES LATER

A TOWEL-DRESSED DANTE

opens the fridge and peers inside. He grabs a half-empty gallon of milk and closes the door.

CUT TO:

CREDITS.

CUT TO:

INT KITCHEN - SECONDS LATER

CHOCOLATE MILK MIX

is heaped into a tumbler. One scoop, two scoops, three scoops, four scoops.

CUT TO:

CREDITS.

CUT TO:

INT BEDROOM - A MINUTE LATER

DANTE

gulps his breakfast while feeling inside the closet for some clothes. Some chocolate milk spills on the floor.

THE DOG

laps at the small puddle of chocolate milk.

CUT TO:

CREDITS.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - MINUTES LATER

DANTE'S FEET

are hastily covered with sneakers in mid-stride, accomplished by a series of hops.

A HAND

grabs keys from atop a fish tank.

CUT TO:

CREDITS.

CUT TO:

EXT DRIVEWAY - MINUTES LATER

A CAR

backs out of the driveway and speeds down the street. The dog looks on.

DANTE
brushes his hair in the rearview mirror while attempting to drive.

CUT TO:

CREDITS.

CUT TO:

EXT CONVENIENCE STORE - MORNING

THE CAR
pulls up, with a screech.

FEET
descend to the ground from the open door. Pan up to reveal DANTE in front of the store.

CUT TO:

INT CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

A SICKLY ARTHUR
is slumped over the counter. DANTE lifts his head by the hair.

DANTE
It's okay Arthur. I'm here now. You
can go.

ARTHUR is genuinely pleased to see his relief, but feels a bit guilty.

ARTHUR
Dante. I'm sorry you had to come in,
but I felt like shit since this
morning.

DANTE
I'm only here till two, then the boss
is coming in. I've got a game at four.

Arthur
He's coming in? But I thought...
That's weird.

DANTE
Why don't you go home and lay down
man. You sound like shit too.

Arthur
Yeah, I should. Oh! I forgot. We
didn't get any Asbury Park Press
this morning, so you've gotta do the
thing again.

DANTE
Why can't we just pay for the papers
like all the other stores?

ARTHUR hands him a quarter.

Arthur
Go ahead. I'll wait here.

DANTE shakes his head and exits.

CUT TO:

EXT CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

POV NEWSPAPER MACHINE

Through murky glass and thin metal grating, we see DANTE approach. He stops and drops a quarter in the slot. He pulls the door down, finally allowing us a clear view, as he reaches toward the camera.

DANTE
pulls a stack of newspapers from the Asbury Park Press vending machine. He struggles to hold them all in one hand as he lets the door slam shut. He turns to walk away, but the sound of the quarter dropping into the change slot stops him. He takes a step back to grab the coin.

CUT TO:

INT CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

THE PAPERS

drop into the once-empty rack with a resounding flop.

ARTHUR

leans on the ice cream case in front of the counter. He is prepared to leave. DANTE hands him the quarter.

Arthur
Tell Randal to be careful today. Six people lodged complaints against him this morning, and one woman wants to press charges for harassment.

DANTE
Sexual?

Arthur
I don't think so. Randal kept calling her an idiot because she wanted to rent 'Navy SEALS'.

DANTE
I remember that. Mrs. Dempsey.

Arthur
I think so. I'm sorry you had to come in, Dante.

DANTE
Arthur, don't even worry about it. You're in bad shape, and besides: I'll be out of here by two. Don't worry about me.

Arthur

I'm going to go home and sit on the toilet. I've had the runs all damn morning. You know how it gets, when there's nothing solid? It's like you're pissing out of your ass; thick muddy piss.

Arthur

Thanks for the visual.

Arthur

I've heard that the tobacco people have been hitting the local stores, so be careful not to sell any kids cigarettes.

DANTE

I never do.
(sniffing the air)
Jesus, it even smells like sickness in this place.

Arthur

That was me. I just threw up behind the counter.

DANTE

I'll bet. Go home, man.

Arthur

(exiting)
Thanks again, Dante. I'll see you on Monday.

ARTHUR leaves as a customer walks in. DANTE hops behind the counter and slides out of view, slipping on vomit.

OC DANTE

Jesus!

CUT TO:

INT CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

DANTE

waits on a customer (ACTIVIST) with a briefcase.

DANTE

(dispensing change)
Thanks. Have a good one.

ACTIVIST

(indicating his coffee)
Do you mind if I drink this here?

DANTE

Sure. Go ahead.

The ACTIVIST leans on the counter and drinks his coffee. Another CUSTOMER approaches.

CUSTOMER
(to DANTE)
Pack of Marlboro.

ACTIVIST
Excuse me, I don't mean to
interrupt, but are you sure?

CUSTOMER
Am I sure?

ACTIVIST
Are you sure?

CUSTOMER
Am I sure about what?

DANTE
(to CUSTOMER)
Two fifty five.

ACTIVIST
Do you really want to buy those
cigarettes?

CUSTOMER
Are you serious?

ACTIVIST
How long have you been smoking?

CUSTOMER
(to DANTE)
What is this, a poll?

DANTE
Beats me.

ACTIVIST
How long have you been a smoker?

CUSTOMER
Since I was thirteen.

The ACTIVIST lifts his briefcase onto the counter. He opens it and extracts a sickly-looking lung model.

ACTIVIST
I'd say you're about twenty nine,
thirty, am I right?

CUSTOMER
What the hell is that?

ACTIVIST

That's your lung. No, wait...

The ACTIVIST pulls some gummy-substance from the briefcase. He slaps it onto the model - it represents cancer.

ACTIVIST

That's your lung. By this time, your lung looks like this.

CUSTOMER

(taken aback)

You're shittin' me.

ACTIVIST

You think I'm shitting you...

The ACTIVIST hands him something from the briefcase.

CUSTOMER

What's this?

ACTIVIST

It's a trach-ring. It's what they install in your throat when throat cancer takes your voice box. This one came out of a sixty year old man.

CUSTOMER

(drops ring)

Unnhhh!

ACTIVIST

(picks ring up)

He smoked until the day he died. Used to put the cigarette in this thing and smoke it that way.

DANTE

Excuse me, but...

ACTIVIST

This is where you're heading. A cruddy lung, smoking through a hole in your throat. Do you really want that?

CUSTOMER

Well, if it's already too late...

ACTIVIST

It's never too late. Give those cigarettes back now, and buy some gum instead.

CUSTOMER

It ain't the same.

ACTIVIST
It's cheaper than cigarettes. And it
beats this.

Hands him a picture.

CUSTOMER
Jesus!

ACTIVIST
It's a picture of a cancer-ridden
lung. Keep it.

CUSTOMER
(to DANTE)
I'll take gum instead.

DANTE
Fifty five.

ACTIVIST
You've made a wise choice. Keep up
the good work.

The CUSTOMER exits.

DANTE
Maybe you should take that coffee
outside.

ACTIVIST
I'll drink it in here, thanks.

DANTE
If you're going to drink it in here,
I'd appreciate it if you'd not
bother the customers.

ACTIVIST
Okay. Sorry about that.

Another CUSTOMER comes in.

CUSTOMER
Pack of Newport.
(looks at model)
What's that?

ACTIVIST
This? How long have you been
smoking?

CUT TO:

EXT CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

A BLANK WALL

which JAY steps into the frame and leans against, followed by SILENT BOB. SILENT BOB yawns; JAY checks his beeper, then does a makeshift slam dance, spinning his arm and fake-hitting SILENT BOB.

JAY

Neh!

SILENT BOB adjusts his hat. JAY ties his shoe.

JAY

Did you bring change? The small bills?

SILENT BOB checks his pocket and nods.

JAY

I feel good today, Silent Bob. We're gonna make some money! Neh! And then you know what we're going to do?

(to the tune of

'Hello, I Love you')

Me, and you, and my friend too, in the bedroom, with girls with lots of boobs!

(ends song)

We're gonna get some ... PUSSY!

(screaming)

I'LL FUCK ANYTHING THAT MOVES!!!

(quieter)

Neh.

SILENT BOB points to something off screen.

JAY

(to OC)

What you looking at?! I'll kick your ass! Neh!

(to SILENT BOB)

Doesn't that motherfucker still owe me ten bucks?

SILENT BOB nods 'yes'.

JAY

Tonight, you and me are going to rip his fucking head out and swallow his soul! Neh. Next time he tries to buy a bag, remind me to cut it with twigs and shit...and leafs. Neh.

People walk past. JAY smiles at them.

JAY
(to people)
Wa sup?
(to SILENT BOB)
Damn, Silent Bob! You one rude
motherfucker! But you're fucking
cute.
(slowly drops to knees)
I wanna take you in my mouth and
suckle you...
(makes blow job neck-jerks)
And then, I wanna line up three more
guys, and make like a circus seal...

JAY
makes blow job faces down an imaginary line of guys, looking quite like
a performing seal. He throws a little humming sound behind each nod. He
then hops up quickly.

JAY
Ewwwww! You fucking faggot! I fucking
hate guys!
(yelling)
I LOVE WOMEN!!
(Calmer)
Neh!

A GUYS comes up to them.

Guy
You selling?

JAY
(all business)
I got hits, hash, weed, blow, and
later on I'll have 'shrooms. We take
cash, or stolen Mastercard and Visa.

INT CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

A SMALL CROWD
gathers around the ACTIVIST as he orates. It has become something of a
rally.

ACTIVIST
You're spending, what? Twenty,
thirty dollars a week on cigarettes.

Listener 1
Forty.

Listener 2.
Fifty three.

ACTIVIST

fifty three dollars. Tell me, would you pay someone that much money every week if after so many weeks they were going to kill you? Because that's what you're doing now, by paying for the so-called privilege to smoke!

Listener 3

We all gotta go sometime...

ACTIVIST

It's that kind of mentality that allows this cancer-producing industry to thrive! Of course we're all going to die someday, but do we have to pay for it? Do we have to actually throw hard-earned dollars on a counter and say "Please, please, Mister Merchant of Death, sir; please sell me something that will fry my lungs and give me lousy breath, and stink up my clothes, and make me a social pariah."

Listener 4

It's not that easy to quit.

ACTIVIST

Of course it's not; not when you have people like this mindless cretin so happy and willing to sell the packaged death to you!

DANTE

Hey, now wait a sec...

ACTIVIST

Oh, listen to him balk. Now he'll launch into his rap about how he's just doing his job; following orders. Well, let me tell you about another bunch of hate-mongers that were just following orders: they were called Nazis, and they practically wiped a nation of people from the Earth...just like cigarettes are doing now! Cigarette smoking is the new Holocaust, and those that partake in the practice of smoking or sell the wares that promote it are the Nazis of the nineties! They don't care how many people die from it! They smile as you pay for your cancer sticks and say 'thank you' of 'have a nice day'!

DANTE

I think you'd better leave now.

ACTIVIST

you want me to leave?! Why?! Because somebody is revealing the truth?! Because somebody is showing you for what you really are?!

DANTE

You're loitering in here, and you're also causing a disturbance.

ACTIVIST

You're the disturbance, friend! And here...

(slaps a dollar on
the counter)

I'm buying some gum. There; I'm no longer loitering, I'm a customer - a customer engaged in a discussion with other customers.

Listener 2

(to DANTE)

Yeah, now shut up so he can speak!

ACTIVIST

Oh, he's scared now! He sees the threat we present! He smells the changes coming, and the loss of sales when the non-smokers finally demand satisfaction! We demand the right to breathe clean air!

Listener 1

Yeah!

ACTIVIST

We want to abolish this heinous practice, and if it means ruffling the feathers of some convenience store jerk, then so be it!

DANTE

That's it. Everybody out.

ACTIVIST

We're not moving! We have a right, a constitutional right to assemble and be heard!

DANTE

Yeah, but not in here.

ACTIVIST

What better place than this? To stamp it out, you gotta start at the source!

DANTE

Like I'm responsible for all the smokers!

ACTIVIST

The ones in Leonardo, yes! You encourage their growth, their habit. You're the source in this area, and we're closing you down for good! For good, cancer-merchant!

The small crowd begins to chant and jeer in DANTE'S face.

Crowd

Cancer-merchant! Cancer-Merchant!
Cancer-Merchant!

VERONICA

enters and surveys the mess.

THE CROWD

throws cigarettes at DANTE, pelting him in the face. Suddenly, a loud blast is heard, and white powder explodes over the thrall. People run screaming in all directions, mostly toward the door.

VERONICA

stands on one of the freezer cases, spraying the OC crowd with a fire extinguisher.

VERONICA

Disperse! Disperse!

The crowd flows through the door, followed by the ACTIVIST.

ACTIVIST

(Pausing at the door)

You can't kill all of us! You...

He is blasted in the face by some extinguisher gunk. He flees.

VERONICA

climbs off the freezer case and places the extinguisher next to DANTE. DANTE is sitting on the floor, head in his folded arms.

VERONICA

God, I hate anti-smoking militants!

DANTE is silent.

VERONICA

"Thank you, Veronica; you saved me from an extremely ugly mob scene."

DANTE remains silent.

VERONICA
(sits beside him)
Okay, champ. What's wrong.

DANTE lifts his head and shoots her a disgusted look.

VERONICA
Alright; stupid question. But don't
you think you're taking this a bit
too hard?

DANTE
Too hard?! I don't have enough
indignities in my life - people
start throwing cigarettes at me!

VERONICA
At least they weren't lit.

DANTE
I hate this fucking place.

VERONICA
Then quit. You should be going to
school anyway...

DANTE
Please don't start, Veronica. Last
thing I need is a lecture at this
point.

VERONICA
All I'm saying is that if you're
unhappy you should leave.

DANTE
I'm not even supposed to be here
today!

VERONICA
I know. I stopped by your house and
your mom said you left at like nine
or something.

DANTE
Arthur got sick and I had to come
in.

VERONICA
Don't you have a hockey game at
four?

DANTE
Yes! And I'm going to play like shit
because I didn't get a good night's
sleep!

VERONICA

Why did you agree to come in then?

DANTE

I'm only here until two, then I'm gone. The boss is coming in.

VERONICA

What time?

DANTE

Two, I said.

VERONICA

No, what time did you go to bed? You left my house at ten thirty.

DANTE

I don't know; like two thirty, three.

VERONICA

What were you doing?

DANTE

(skirting)

Hunhh? Nothing.

VERONICA

(persistent)

What were you doing?

DANTE

Nothing! Jesus! I gotta fight with you now?!

VERONICA

Who's fighting? Why are you so defensive?

DANTE

Who's defensive? Just...Would you just hug me?! Alright? Your boyfriend was accosted by an angry mob, and he needs to be hugged.

She stares at him.

DANTE

What?!

VERONICA

You're trying to change the subject.

DANTE

What?

VERONICA

You're trying to change the skirt
something here, and I want to know
what it is.

DANTE

I'm not skirting anything.

VERONICA

Why did you go to be so late?

DANTE

Jesus! I don't know! I was...

VERONICA

That psychotic called you.

DANTE

... just watching t.v.! What are
you...

VERONICA

I knew it! That fucking bitch called
you.

DANTE

...talking about? Nobody called me.
I was watching t.v.

VERONICA shakes her head angrily.

DANTE

What?! What is that?

VERONICA

She called you, didn't she?

DANTE

Nobody called me! Would you...Would
you please hug me? I just went
through a very traumatic experience,
and I haven't been having the best
day so far. Now come on.

VERONICA stares at him.

DANTE

What?! What's with that look?! I
wasn't talking to anybody,
especially her! Look at you, being
all sorts of... I don't know...
stand-offish.

VERONICA looks away.

DANTE

Fine. You don't trust me, don't hug me. Now I see how it is. Alright, little Miss Pissy-pants, you just go on being suspicious and quiet. I don't even want to hug you at this point.

VERONICA looks back at him.

DANTE

(pleadingly)
Give you a dollar?

CUT TO:

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

A NOTE ON THE COUNTER

next to a small pile of money, reads:

PLEASE LEAVE MONEY ON THE COUNTER. TAKE
CHANGE WHEN APPLICABLE. BE HONEST.

DANTE AND VERONICA

are slumped on the floor, behind the counter. VERONICA holds DANTE in her arms, his head on her chest. Change is heard hitting the counter.

DANTE

(to OC customer)
Thanks.

The door is heard opening and closing - a customer leaving.

VERONICA

How much money did you leave up there?

DANTE

Like three dollars in mixed change and a couple of singles. People only get the paper or coffee this time of morning.

VERONICA

You're trusting.

DANTE

Why do you say that?

VERONICA

How do you know they're taking the right amount of change? Or even paying for what they take?

DANTE

Theoretically, people see money on the counter and nobody around, they think they're being watched.

VERONICA
Honesty through paranoia.

DANTE
Yes, I'm testing my hypothesis
gauging the control groups response.

VERONICA
Kind of Pavlovian. Everyone probably
thinks we're screwing back here.

DANTE
You think so? Next time someone
comes in, moan.

VERONICA
Why?

DANTE
Then people will think I'm a good
lover.

VERONICA
We wouldn't want them to know the
truth.

DANTE
Nas-ty. Are you saying I'm not a
good lover?

VERONICA
You have your moments.

DANTE
(concerned)
I'm not a good lover?

VERONICA
Calm down. You're a good lover.

DANTE
Am I a great lover?

VERONICA
I tell you: you are the greatest
composer known to me.

DANTE
You even sound like F. Murray
Abraham.

VERONICA
So what about you?

DANTE
I don't sound like F. Murray
Abraham.

VERONICA

You know what I mean. I've boosted
your ego, now boost mine.

DANTE

You as a lover? You do the job.

VERONICA

Thank you. A fist can 'do the job'.

DANTE

Well what do you want me to say?
Women, as lovers, are all basically
the same. They just have to be
there.

VERONICA

' Be there'?

DANTE

Making a male climax is not all that
challenging; insert somewhere close
and preferably moist; thrust;
repeat.

VERONICA

How flattering.

DANTE

Now, making a woman cum...therein
lies a challenge.

VERONICA

Let's here this.

DANTE

Every woman requires a different
technique; what works for some
doesn't work for others. The
talented man is patient and
resourceful, applying various
maneuvers in an effort to discern
the exact procedure that brings a
woman to the heights.

VERONICA

Do you actually believe this stuff?

DANTE

Like bible truth.

VERONICA

I'm insulted. Believe me, Don Juan,
it takes a lot more than a wet hole
to get a guy off. Just 'being there'
- as you put it- is not enough. It
requires some precision timing to
not cut the blood-engorged member on
canines and incisors.

DANTE
(remembering)
Oh shit! I have a dentist
appointment on Wednesday.

VERONICA
And who do you think keeps the train
on track in the throes of passion?
If we left it up to you guys, you'd
fall out every other pull-back.

DANTE
This is a matter of pride with you.

VERONICA
It was astonishing to hear you
trivialize my role in our sex life.

DANTE
It wasn't directed at you. I was
making a broad generalization.

VERONICA
You were making a generalization
about 'broads'! You should hear your
Machiavellian self!

DANTE
These are my opinions based on my
experiences with the myriad females
goodly enough to sleep with me.

VERONICA
How many?

DANTE
How many what?

VERONICA
How many girls have you slept with?

DANTE
How many different girls? Didn't we
already have this discussion once?

VERONICA
We might have; I don't remember. How
many?

DANTE
Including you?

VERONICA
It better be up to and including me.

DANTE
(pause to count)
Twelve.

VERONICA
You've slept with twelve different
girls?

DANTE
Including you; yes.

Pause. She slaps him.

DANTE
What the hell was that for?

VERONICA
You're a pig.

DANTE
Why'd you slap me?

VERONICA
Do you know how many different men
I've had sex with?

DANTE
Do I get to slap you after you tell
me?

VERONICA
Three.

DANTE
Three?!

VERONICA
Three including you.

DANTE
You've only had sex with three
different people?

VERONICA
Because I'm not the pig you are.

DANTE
Who?

VERONICA
Who?

DANTE
No; who were the three besides me?

VERONICA
John Franson and Rob Stanslyk.

DANTE
That's great. I can't believe that.

VERONICA

Believe it. Only three. And each of them I dated for a long time before even considering it.

DANTE

Who're you kidding? We did stuff on the first night!

VERONICA

Stuff, but not sex. We didn't have sex until four months into our relationship, you and I.

DANTE

(thinking)

My god, you're right.

VERONICA

See?

DANTE

(with true admiration)

Wow. That's great. That's something to be proud of.

VERONICA

I am. And that's why you should feel like a pig.

DANTE

Believe me, I do feel like a pig now.

VERONICA

You men make me sick. You'll sleep with anything that says yes.

DANTE

Animal, vegetable, or mineral.

VERONICA

Vegetable meaning paraplegic.

DANTE

They put up the least amount of struggle.

VERONICA

After dropping a bombshell like that, you owe me.

DANTE

How about I lock the door and pay you back then?

VERONICA

In small change? I don't think so.

DANTE

Is that a jab at my penis? Is my dick small. Because I'd really like to know if it is.

VERONICA

It's not a jab at your penis. God; must everything be about sex with you? You're so uptight.

DANTE

Well, you said small change, so...

VERONICA

Yea, yeah, yeah. Anyway, I want you to come with me on Monday.

DANTE

Where?

VERONICA

To school. There's a seminar about getting back into a scholastic program after a lapse in enrollment.

DANTE

Can't we ever have a discussion without that coming up?

VERONICA

It's important to me, Dante. You have so much potential that just goes to waste in this pit. I wish you'd go back to school.

DANTE

Jesus, would you stop? you make my head hurt when you talk about this.

VERONICA stands, letting DANTE'S head hit the floor.

DANTE

Shit! You slammed my head on the floor...

VERONICA

I didn't slam your head on the floor.

DANTE

... riddling my cranium with neurological damage. Why are we getting up?

She extends her hand to him and pulls him up.

VERONICA

Unlike you, I have a class in forty five minutes.

A handsome young man (WILLIAM) is standing at the counter. VERONICA reacts to him.

VERONICA
(surprised)
William! How are you?

WILLIAM
Ronnie! How are you? You work here now?

VERONICA
(locks arms with DANTE)
No, I'm just visiting my man.
(to DANTE)
Dante, this is William Black.
(to William)
This is Dante Hicks, my boyfriend.

DANTE
How are you? Just the soda?

WILLIAM
And a pack of Marlboro too.
(to Veronica; paying)
Are you still going to Seton Hall?

VERONICA
No, I transferred into Monmouth this year. I was tired of missing him.
(squeezes DANTE'S arm)

WILLIAM
Do you still talk to Sylvan?

VERONICA
I just talked to her on Monday. We still hang out on weekends.

WILLIAM
(leaving)
That's cool. Tell her I said hi.

VERONICA
I will. Take it easy.

WILLIAM
Bye.
(exits)

VERONICA
Bye.
(under her breath)
Snowball.

DANTE
Why do you say that?

VERONICA

Sylvan and I used to call him snowball all the time. It's a blowjob thing.

DANTE

What do you mean?

VERONICA

After he gets a blowjob, he likes to have the cum spit back into his mouth while kissing. It's called snowballing.

DANTE

He requested this?!

VERONICA

He gets off on it. It's not like he's gay or anything. He just likes the taste of his own cum.

DANTE

That's strange! And Sylvan did that for him?

VERONICA

(confused)

Sylvan? No; I snowballed him.

DANTE

Yeah, right.

VERONICA

I'm serious.

A moment of silence as DANTE'S chuckles fade to comprehension.

DANTE

You sucked his dick?!

VERONICA

Yeah. How do you think I knew he liked...

DANTE

(panicky)

But...but you said you only had sex with three guys! You never mentioned him!

VERONICA

That's because I never had sex with him!

DANTE

You just sucked his dick!?!

VERONICA

We went out a few times. It wasn't like I met him and my head started bobbing!

DANTE

(massive panic attack)

Oh my God! My God! Why did you tell me you only slept with three guys!?!

VERONICA

Because I did only sleep with three guys! That doesn't mean I never went with anyone else, or just fooled around.

DANTE

I feel nauseous.

VERONICA

I'm sorry Dante. I thought you understood.

DANTE

I did understand! I understood that you slept with three different guys, and that's all you said.

VERONICA

Please calm down.

DANTE

How many?

VERONICA

Dante...

DANTE

How many dicks have you sucked?!

VERONICA

Let it go...

DANTE

HOW MANY?!?

VERONICA

Alright! Shut up a second and I'll tell you! Jesus! I didn't freak like this when you told me how many girls you fucked.

DANTE

This is different. This is important. How many?!?

She counts in her head, holding up the occasional finger as a mark. DANTE waits on a customer in the interim. Then another. VERONICA stops counting.

DANTE
Well...?
VERONICA
(half-mumbled)
Something like thirty six.

DANTE
WHAT?! SOMETHING LIKE THIRTY SIX?!!

VERONICA
Lower your voice!

DANTE
What the hell is that anyway,
'something like thirty six'?! Does
that include me?!

VERONICA
Um. Thirty seven.

DANTE
I'M THIRTY SEVEN!?!

VERONICA
(walking away)
I'm going to class.

DANTE
Thirty seven?!
(to CUSTOMER)
My girlfriend sucked thirty seven
dicks?

CUSTOMER
In a row?

Dante chases VERONICA down and grabs her by the door.

DANTE
Wait a minute! Where are you going?!

VERONICA
I'm going to class, Dante! Before
you humiliate me even more.

The CUSTOMER exits.

DANTE
I can't believe this!

VERONICA
Hey listen, jerk! I never said I was
a pristine virgin! Until today you
never even knew how many guys I'd
slept with, because you never
bothered to ask. And then you act
all nonchalant about fucking twelve
different girls. Well I never had
sex with twelve different guys!

DANTE

No, but you sucked enough dick!

VERONICA

Yeah, I sucked dick a few times...

DANTE

A few?!?

VERONICA

...And one of those dicks was yours!
The last one, I might add, which -
if you're too stupid to comprehend -
means that I've been faithful to you
since we met! All the other guys I
went with before I met you, so if
you want to have a complex about it,
go ahead! But don't look at me like
I'm the town whore, because you were
plenty busy yourself, before you met
me!

DANTE

(a bit more rational)

Well...why did you have to suck
their dicks? Why didn't you just
sleep with them, like any decent
person?!

VERONICA

Because going down isn't a big deal!
It's like kissing for me. I used to
like a guy, we'd make out, and
sooner or later, I'd go down on him.
But I only had sex with people I was
in love with.

DANTE

I feel sick.

VERONICA

(holds him)

I love you. Don't feel sick.

DANTE

Every time I kiss you know I'm going
to taste thirty six other guys.

VERONICA violently lets go of him.

VERONICA

I'm going to school. Maybe later
you'll be a bit more rational.

DANTE

(pause)

Thirty seven. I just can't...

VERONICA
Goodbye, Dante.

She exits in a huff. DANTE stands there in a silence for a moment. Then he swings the door open and yells out.

DANTE
Try not to suck anymore dicks on
your way through the parking lot!

Two men were walking in the opposite direction outside, double back and head in the direction VERONICA went.

DANTE
HEY! HEY, GET THE HELL AWAY FROM HER!

DANTE races after them.

CUT TO:

INT CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

A VIDEO CASSETTE
encased in the customary black box, flips repeatedly, held by an
impatient grasp.

THE IMPATIENT CUSTOMER
glares at DANTE. Dante studies a copy of 'Paradise Lost', making a
strong attempt at not noticing the glare.

IMPATIENT CUSTOMER
(pissed off)
I thought that place was supposed to
be opened at eleven o'clock? It's
twenty after!

DANTE
I called his house twice already. He
should be here soon.

IMPATIENT CUSTOMER
It's not like it's a demanding job.
I'd like to get paid to sit around
and watch t.v. The other day I
walked in there and that sonofabitch
was sleeping.

DANTE
I'm sure he wasn't asleep.

IMPATIENT CUSTOMER
You calling me a liar?

DANTE
No; he was probably just resting his
eyes.

IMPATIENT CUSTOMER
What the hell is that? Resting his
eyes?! It's not like he's some god
damned air-traffic controller!

DANTE
Actually, that's his night job.

IMPATIENT CUSTOMER
Such a smartass. But go ahead. Crack
wise. That's why you're jockeying a
register in a fucking convenience
store instead of doing an honest
day's work.

DANTE
Words like daggers.

IMPATIENT CUSTOMER
I got no more time to bullshit
around waiting for that sonofabitch.
(tosses tape on counter)
You make sure this gets back. The
number's eight twelve - Wynarski.
And I wanted to get a damn movie
too.

DANTE
If you'll just tell me the title of
your rental choice, I'll have him
hold it for you when he comes in.

IMPATIENT CUSTOMER
Don't bother. I'm going to Big
Choice Video instead.

He storms out. Dante lifts a ring of keys from the counter.

DANTE
(in a whisper)
You forgot your keys.

THE HALF-FILLED TRASH CAN
swallows the ring of keys.

CUT TO:

EXT CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

ANOTHER VIDEO-ANXIOUS CUSTOMER
leans against the video store door. A hapless RANDAL drifts by and
stops. He glances at the door, peers inside, and gives the door a tug.

V.A. CUSTOMER
The guy ain't here yet.

RANDAL
You're kidding. It's almost eleven
thirty!

V.A. CUSTOMER
I know. I've been here since eleven.

RANDAL
(kicks the door)
Man! I hate it when I can't rent
videos!
(punches glass)

V.A. CUSTOMER
I would've went to Big Choice, but
the tape I want is right there on
the wall.

RANDAL
Which one?

V.A. CUSTOMER
'Dental School'.

RANDAL
You came for that too? That's the
movie I came for.

V.A. CUSTOMER
I have first dibs.

RANDAL
Says who?

V.A. CUSTOMER
I've been waiting here for half an
hour. I'd call that first dibs. It's
only fair.

RANDAL
Life isn't fair. And neither is the
cutthroat world of video renting.

V.A. CUSTOMER
(not amused)
Whatever. But that tape is mine.

RANDAL
(relenting)
Relax. The tape is your's.

V.A. CUSTOMER
You're damn right it is. Nothing
short of God is going to stop me
from getting that tape.

RANDAL
(taken aback)
Well! We'll just see what the guy in
charge says when he finally shows up
to open, won't we?

Randal walks away. The VERY ANXIOUS CUSTOMER stands like a sentry at a post. The IMPATIENT CUSTOMER storms up.

IMPATIENT CUSTOMER
You see a pair of keys lying around
here somewhere?

CUT TO:

INT CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

RANDAL
dances in, attempting a soft-shoe routine. He sees DANTE and stops dead, mid-shuffle.

DANTE
You're late.

RANDAL
What the hell are you doing here? I
thought you were playing hockey at
four.

DANTE
The boss called at nine. Arthur fell
ill.

RANDAL
No shit. I'm glad he didn't call me.

DANTE
He did call you. He said it sounded
like you were in bed with another
man.

RANDAL
If I'd known you were working, I
would've come even later.

A PILE OF VIDEO CASSETTES
is piled onto the counter, with a single key atop.

DANTE
(OC)
Well, you were missed, I assure you.
The locals are screaming for your
blood.

RANDAL
balances the pile of tapes on his head.

RANDAL
What time do you have to stay 'til?

DANTE
He assured me that he'd be here by
two.

RANDAL
The boss?! Shit, man! How am I
supposed to get some sleep?

DANTE
Go open the store. I don't want to
see the town draw and quarter you.

CUT TO:

EXT CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

THE VERY ANXIOUS CUSTOMER
now sits on the ground, next to the video store door. RANDAL balances
his burden and shoves the key into the lock. The Very Anxious Customer
stares as Randal enters the store. The door closes behind him, only to
be held ajar in a gentlemanly fashion a few moments later by Randal. He
smiles and hums pleasantly, as the woman rises and enters.

CUT TO:

INT CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

A COFFEE FILTER
is shoved into the metal pan and ground coffee heaps upon it. We've seen
this same routine before.

DANTE
crosses back to his post, as RANDAL enters, tossing the key into the air
happily and catching it.

RANDAL
Some guy just came in refusing to
pay late fees. He said the store was
closed for two hours yesterday. I
tore up his membership.

DANTE
Shocking abuse of authority.

RANDAL
I lord over the video selections of
this one-horse town.

RANDAL
Don't let it go to your head.

RANDAL
Now I know why there has always been
an aristocracy; a monarchy. I can
appreciate the philosophy of the
ruling class.

DANTE
You work in a video store. And
badly, I might add.

RANDAL
Want something to drink? I'm buying.

Randal adjusts a container full of licorice.

RANDAL
pulls a soda from the cooler.

RANDAL
Who was on your phone this morning
at about two thirty? I was trying to
call for a half an hour. I wanted to
use your car.
He walks by a row of snacks and grabs one without looking at it.

RANDAL
Snack cake?

DANTE
climbs into his seat behind the register. RANDAL grabs a paper and joins
him behind the counter, sitting on a stack of magazines.

DANTE
You don't want to know.

RANDAL
Again? That girl's got balls of
steel.

DANTE
Caitlin calls all the time lately.

RANDAL
Do you ever tell Veronica?

DANTE
One fight a day with Veronica is
about all I can stomach, thanks.

RANDAL
What do you fight about?

DANTE
I guess it's not really fighting.
She just wants me to leave here, go
back to school, get some direction,
shave...

RANDAL
Shave?

DANTE
It chafes.

RANDAL
I've heard that before.
(opening paper)
I'll bet the most frequent topic of
arguments is Caitlin Bree.

DANTE
You win.

RANDAL

I'm going to offer you some advice my friend, and I don't want you to take this the wrong way; remove all thoughts of Caitlin Bree from your consciousness. You've been with Veronica for how long now?

DANTE

Seven months.

RANDAL

All the points she made - with the exception of the shaving request - are comments only made by someone who cares.

DANTE

Or someone who whines.

RANDAL

How long did you date Caitlin?

DANTE

Five years.

RANDAL

Chick only made you miserable. She cheated on you how many times?

DANTE

Eight, almost nine.

RANDAL

(looks up from paper)

Almost nine? What does that mean?

DANTE

We were at a party senior year and I got blitzed and passed out in a bedroom. Caitlin comes in and dives all over me. Tells me to take her from behind.

RANDAL

You're kidding.

DANTE

I tell you, it was the most incredible sex we ever had. It was fantastic.

RANDAL

Where's the cheating come in?

DANTE

In the middle of it, she calls me Brad.

RANDAL
She called you Brad?

DANTE
She called me Brad.

RANDAL
That's not cheating. People say
crazy shit during sex. One time, I
called Samantha 'Mom'.

DANTE
I hit the lights, and she freaks.
Turns out she thought I was Brad
Jobran.

RANDAL
What do you mean?

DANTE
She was going to cheat on me, and
she was supposed to meet Brad Jobran
in a bedroom. She picked the wrong
one.

RANDAL
On my God.

DANTE
Great story, isn't it?

RANDAL
That girl was vile to you.

DANTE
Interesting post-script to that
story: do you know who wound up
going with Brad Jobran in the other
dark bedroom?

RANDAL
Your mother.

DANTE
Allan Harris.

RANDAL
Chess team Allan Harris?!

DANTE
The two moved to Idaho together
after graduation. They raise sheep.

RANDAL
That's frightening.

DANTE
Yeah, well, different strokes...

RANDAL

In light of this lurid tale, I don't see how you could even romanticize your relationship with Caitlin - the demon/bitch that broke your heart and inadvertently drove men to deviant lifestyles.

DANTE

Because there was a lot of good in our relationship.

RANDAL

Oh yeah.

DANTE

I'm serious. Aside from the cheating, we were a great couple. But that's what high school's all about - Algebra, bad lunch, and infidelity.

RANDAL

You think things would be any different now?

DANTE

They are. When she calls me now, she's a different person - she's frightened and vulnerable. She's about to finish college and enter the real world. That's got to be scary for anyone.

RANDAL

We're in the real world; it's not scary.

DANTE

No, but we're used to it now. Caitlin's been cloistered away in a campus life for four years. It's gotta be frightening to leave that behind.

RANDAL

(reading)

A store got robbed in Hazlet.

DANTE

I'm talking to myself here.

RANDAL

No, no I'm listening. She's leaving college....

DANTE

...and she's looking to me for support. And I think that this bond of trust is leading our relationship to a new level. And it's going to be hard to allow that relationship to blossom if I'm involved with Veronica.

RANDAL

So that's why all the arguments?

DANTE

I think so. I think it's some kind of manifestation of a subconscious desire to break away from Veronica so that I can pursue the possibility of a more meaningful relationship with Caitlin.

RANDAL

Caitlin's on the same wave-length?

DANTE

I think it's safe to say yes.

RANDAL

Then I think all four of you had better sit down and talk it over.

DANTE

All four of us?

RANDAL

You, Veronica, Caitlin...
(lays paper flat)
...and Caitlin's fiancé.

THE HEADLINE

of the Engagement Announcement reads 'BREE TO MARRY ASIAN DESIGN MAJOR'.

CUT TO:

INTO VIDEO STORE - DAY

RANDAL

dials the phone. He holds a list in his hand.

RANDAL

Yes, I'd like to place an order,
please...Thank you.

A MOTHER and her SMALL CHILD approach the counter.

MOTHER

Excuse me, but do you sell video
tapes?

RANDAL

We have a limited selection in the store, but I can order any title we don't have. What were you looking for?

SMALL CHILD

Happy Scrappy!

MOTHER

(smiling)

It's called 'Happy Scrappy - The Hero Pup'.

SMALL CHILD

Happy Scrappy!

RANDAL

I'm on the phone with the distribution house now. Let me make sure they have it. What's it called again?

MOTHER

'Happy Scrappy - The Hero Pup'.

SMALL CHILD

Happy Scrappy!

MOTHER

(more smiling)

She loves the tape.

RANDAL

Obviously.

(to phone)

Yes, hello this is R.S.T. Video calling. Customer number four, three, five, zero, two, nine. I'd like to place an order... Okay...

(reading from the list)

I need one of each of the following tapes ; 'Whisper on the Wind' , 'To Each His Own' , 'Put It Where It Doesn't Belong' , 'My Pipes Need Cleaning' , ' All Tit-Fucking, Vol. Eight' , ' I Need Your Cock' , 'Ass-Worshipping Rim Jobbers' , ' My Cunt and Eight shafts' , 'Cum Clean' , 'Cum Gargling Naked Sluts' , ' Cum Buns Three' , 'Cumming in a Sock' , 'Cum on Eileen' , ' Huge Black Cocks with Pearly White Cum' , 'Slam It Up My Too-Loose Ass' , ' Ass Blasters in Outer Space' , 'Blowjobs by Betsy' , 'Sucking Cock and Cunt' , ' Finger My Ass' , 'Play with my Puss' , ' Three on a Dildo' , ' Girls Who Crave Dicks' , ' Girls Who Crave Cunt' , 'Men Alone Two - The K.Y. Connection' , ' Pink Pussy Lips' , and 'All Holes Filled with Hard Cock'.
Oh, and ...

(to Mother)

What was the name of that movie?

MOTHER
(nearly dazed)
'Happy Scrappy - The Hero Pup'.

RANDAL
(to phone)
And a copy of 'Happy Scrappy - The
Hero Pup'Okay, thanks.
(hangs up; to MOTHER)
Sixteen forty nine. It'll be here
Monday.

Silence. Then...

CHILD
Cunt!

CUT TO:

INT CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

DANTE
is on the phone.

DANTE
Yes, I'd like to check on a misprint
or error in today's edition...
Today's edition...It says Bree to
wed Asian Design Major...In the
announcements column... No, no;
everything's spelled fine. I just
wanted to know if the piece was a
misprint or something...I don't
know, like a typographical error or
something...Maybe it's supposed to
be Caitlin Bray, or Caitlin Bree,
with one 'e'...I'm a curious party
...A curious party...I'm an ex-
boyfriend...Well, it's just that we
talk all the time, and she never
mentioned this engagement, which is
why I'm thinking maybe it's a
misprint....Are you sure?... Maybe
there's like a vindictive printer
working for you...Meaning like
someone who maybe - I don't know -
asked her out once and got shot
down, and his revenge is throwing
this bogus article in when the
paper went to press...Hello?...
Hello?

DANTE hangs up. He looks at the paper ruefully, shaking his head. He
walks back to the counter and begins ringing up an order (BUYER), which
includes fabric softener; a REFLECTIVE customer stares at the fabric
softener.

DANTE
(to BUYER)
Eight twelve.

The Buyer digs for the change and then abruptly turns attention to
REFLECTIVE.

BUYER
What the hell are you looking at?

REFLECTIVE
(caught off-guard)
Hunhh? Oh sorry.

BUYER
What, is there something on my
shirt, or...

REFLECTIVE
No, no. I was just staring at your
fabric softener and I kind of...

BUYER
Noticed what a rip off this store
is?

REFLECTIVE
No, I was thinking about this kitten
my family had when I was nine.

INSERT

Quick shot of kitten.

BUYER
(hands DANTE money)
Kitten?

REFLECTIVE
Scruples. Our neighbor's cat had
kittens and we adopted one. We named
him Scruples.

BUYER
(to DANTE)
I think I have the change in my
pocket.

REFLECTIVE
That kitten loved to sleep. It was
the only kitten I've ever seen that
didn't want to run and play and all
that shit. It just liked to sleep.

INSERT:

Quick shot of kitten sleeping.

BUYER
(to DANTE)
Can I have a bag that that?

REFLECTIVE
See, the thing was, Scruples loved
to find weird places to crawl up in
and sleep. He'd crawl into a shoe
and sleep, or in a tupperware bowl.
He liked warm places.

BUYER
(finding change)
Here it is.

REFLECTIVE
One morning, my mother was doing
laundry, you know? And she forgot
some whites in the hamper.

CUT TO:

INT LAUNDRY ROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK: A WOMAN
walks away from an open dryer, passing a kitten.

OC REFLECTIVE
So she goes to get them. And she
left the dryer door open, which was
really no big deal- she'd done it
thousands of times before.

THE KITTEN
stares at the open dryer.

OC REFLECTIVE
But we never had a kitten before.

THE WOMAN
grabs the clothes from the hamper.

OC REFLECTIVE
So while my mother is getting the
other laundry...

THE KITTEN
is halfway in the dryer.

OC REFLECTIVE
...Scruples was finding a new warm
place to sleep.

THE WOMAN
enters the kitchen with the whites. She drops them on the floor and
pulls the washed laundry from the washing machine. She reacts to the
phone and answers it, holding the laundry.

OC REFLECTIVE
And then my Aunt Kathy called, so my
mother wasn't paying too much
attention to anything really.

She tosses the laundry into the dryer.

OC REFLECTIVE
It's no big deal. I mean, who looks
in the dryer before they turn it on
anyway?

THE KITTEN
is quickly glimpsed from beneath wet clothes as the dryer door slams
shut.

OC REFLECTIVE
The vet said it probably wasn't that
painful.

A HAND
turns the dryer dial and presses the starting button.

OC REFLECTIVE
He said Scruples might have even
slept through it.

THE DRYER
slightly vibrates, performing it's duties.

CUT TO:

INT CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

DANTE
and the Buyer stare more-or-less open-mouthed. The REFLECTIVE man gazes
into space.

REFLECTIVE
We never had another pet after that.
My mother was institutionalized
three years later.
(shakes off his fog)
Do you have dried prunes?

DANTE
(hands bag to BUYER)
Um...no. No, we've never had those.

REFLECTIVE
Damn. Okay, well thanks anyway.
(to BUYER)
If you're going to use those things,
make sure...well, just be careful.

The REFLECTIVE man exits. DANTE and the BUYER stand in silence. The door
swings open and RANDAL leans in.

RANDAL
(excitedly)
Turn on Channel nine: Hermaphrodites!

CUT TO:

EXT CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

JAY, SILENT BOB, AND OLAF
lean against the wall.

JAY

I was in there, man. I was sliding and slipping. And all the sudden she comes out with "Don't cum in me." It ruined the mood, man. So then I gotta pull out and spank it to get it on. I fucking hate jerking off when I don't have to, dude. It's the biggest let-down. So I blow a nut on her belly, and I get out of there, just as my uncle walks in. And he's asking what we were doing, and I'm like "Listening to c.d.'s and talking". It was such a close call. I tell you what, dude: I don't care if she is my cousin, I'm gonna knock those boots again tonight.

TWO GIRLS join them

JAY

Oh shit; look who it is. The human vacuum. Nynne!

GIRL 1

Scumbag, What are you doing?

JAY

Nothing. Just hanging out, talking with Silent Bob and his cousin.

GIRL 1

(to SILENT BOB)

He's your cousin?

JAY

Check this out, he's from Russia.

GIRL 1

No way.

JAY

I sweat to God. Silent Bob, am I lying?

SILENT BOB shakes his head 'no'.

JAY

See? And Silent Bob never told a lie in his life.

Girl 2

What part of Russia?

JAY

I don't fucking know. What am I, his biographer?

(to OLAF)

Olaf: What part of Russia are you from?

OLAF looks quizzically at SILENT BOB.

Silent Bob
(in Russian)
Home.

OLAF
(comprehending)
Moscow.

GIRL 1
He only speaks Russian?

JAY
He knows some English, but he can't
not say it good like we do.

Girl 2
Is he staying here?

JAY
He's moving to the big city next
week. Check this out: he wants to be
a metal singer.

GIRL 1
No way!

JAY
(to OLAF)
Olaf: Metal!

OLAF makes a metal face and strikes an air guitar chord.

JAY
(laughing)
That's his fucking metal face. He
fucking kills me.
(to OLAF)
Olaf: girls nice?

OLAF looks the girls up and down.

OLAF
(in Russian)
Skrelnick.

JAY
(laughs)
That's fucked up.

GIRL 1
What'd he say?

JAY
I don't know, but he makes me laugh
man. he's a fucking character.

Girl 2
He really wants to play metal?

JAY

He's got his own metal band back in Moscow. I think it's called 'Fuck Your Yankee Blue Jeans' or something like that.

GIRL 1

That doesn't sound metal.

JAY

You gotta hear him sing.

(to OLAF)

OLAF: Berserker!

OLAF laughs and shakes his head.

JAY

Come on, man. Sing 'Berserker'!

Olaf laughs and shakes his head again.

Girl 2

Does he sing in English or Russian?

JAY

English.

(to OLAF)

Come on, man. Berserker! Girls like. Think Olaf sexy.

OLAF

(relents)

Da. Da.

JAY

He's gonna sing it. This is too funny.

OLAF

(in broken English)

MY LOVE FOR YOU JUST LIKE A TRUCK
BERSERKER! WOULD YOU LIKE SOME
MAKING FUCK? BERSERKER!

JAY

(laughing)

That kills me!

GIRL 1

Did he say 'making fuck'?

JAY

Wait, there's more.

(to OLAF)

Olaf: sing...

(makes pot-smoking face)

OLAF

(nods in understanding)

MY LOVE FOR YOU IS LIKE ROCK
BERSERKER! WOULD YOU LIKE TO SMOKE
SOME POT? BERSERKER!

CUT TO:

INT VIDEO STORE - DAY

RANDAL

leans back in his chair, staring up at the t.v. The theme to 'Star Wars' plays. He stands up, points the remote, clicks the t.v. off, and ponders.

CUT TO:

EXT VIDEO STORE - DAY

RANDAL LOCKS THE DOOR

and walks away, while OLAF sings for the small crowd.

OLAF

MY LOVE FOR YOU IS TICKING CLOCK
BERSERKER! WOULD YOU LIKE TO SUCK MY
COCK? BERSERKER!

CUT TO:

INT CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

DANTE

is tugging at a can of Pringles potato chips. The can is stuck on a MAN'S hand.

DANTE

You hold the counter and I'll pull.

MAN

Usually I just turn the can upside
down.

DANTE

(pulling)

Maybe we should soap up your hand or
something.

MAN

(straining)

They oughta put some kind of warning
on these cans, like they do with
cigarettes.

DANTE

I think it's coming now...

The can pops off and DANTE staggers back a few steps. The man rubs his hand.

MAN

Thanks. I thought I was gonna have
to go to the hospital.

DANTE

I'll throw this out. Precautionary
measure.

MAN

It stings a little.

DANTE
A work of advice; sometimes it's
best to let those hard to reach
chips go.

DANTE steps behind the counter.

MAN
Thanks.

The MAN exits as RANDAL enters. DANTE throws the canister away.

DANTE
You know that article is accurate?
Caitlin's really engaged to an Asian
design major. Can you believe that?!

RANDAL
You know what I just watched?

DANTE
Me pulling a can off some moron's
fist.

RANDAL
'Return of the Jedi'.

DANTE
Didn't you hear me? Caitlin really
is getting married.

RANDAL
Which did you like better: 'Jedi' or
'The Empire Strikes Back'?

DANTE
(exasperated)
Unhh!
(changing subject)
Empire.

RANDAL
Blasphemy.

DANTE
'Empire' had the better ending; Luke
gets his hand cut off, and find out
Vader's his father; Han gets frozen
and taken away by Boba Fett. It ends
on such a down note. And that's life
- a series of down endings. All
'Jedi' had was a lot of muppets.

RANDAL
There was something else going on in
'Jedi'. I never noticed it until
today.

RANDAL follows DANTE as he cleans up around the store.

DANTE
What's that?

RANDAL
Alright, Vader's boss...

DANTE
The Emperor.

RANDAL
Right; the Emperor. Now the Emperor
is kind of a spiritual figure, yes?

DANTE
How do you mean?

RANDAL
Well, he's like the pope for the
dark side of the Force. He's a holy
man; a shaman, kind of, albeit an
evil one.

DANTE
I guess.

RANDAL
Now, he's in charge of the Empire.
The entire imperial government is
under his control. And the entire
galaxy is under Imperial rule.

DANTE
Yeah.

RANDAL
Then wouldn't that logically mean
that it's a theocracy? If the head
of the Empire is a priest of some
sort, then it stands to reason that
the government is therefore one
based on religion.

DANTE
It would stand to reason, yes.

RANDAL
Hence, the Empire was a fascist
theocracy, and the rebels forces
were therefore battling religious
persecution.

DANTE
More of less.

RANDAL
The only problem is that at no point
in this series did I ever hear Leia
or any of the Rebels declare a
particular religious belief.

DANTE

Just because they were fighting the theocratic Empire, that doesn't necessarily mean they themselves ascribed to any particular faith. Maybe they just wanted freedom to choose any religion they wanted.

RANDAL

You know what else I noticed in 'Jedi'?

DANTE

There's more?

A BLUE COLLAR MAN enters and heads to the coffee machine.

RANDAL

Oh yes. So they build another Death Star, right?

DANTE

Yeah.

RANDAL

Now the last one they built was completed and fully operational before the Rebels destroyed it.

DANTE

Luke blew it up. Give credit where it's due.

RANDAL

And this one was still being built when the rebels blew it up.

DANTE

Lando Calrissian did that one.

RANDAL

There was something that never sat right with me the second time they destroyed it. I could never put my finger on it - something didn't sit right about it the second time around.

DANTE

And you figured it out?

RANDAL

Well, the thing is, the first Death Star was manned by the Imperial army; stormtroopers, dignitaries - the only people on board were Imperials.

DANTE

Basically.

RANDAL

So when they blew it up, no prob.
Evil is punished.

DANTE

And the second time around....?

RANDAL

The second time around, it wasn't
even finished yet. They were still
under construction.

DANTE

So?

RANDAL

The Death Star doesn't just build
itself. People have to build it. And
do you think only Imperials were
building it.

DANTE

Of course.

RANDAL

Wrong, my friend. A construction job
of that magnitude would require a
helluva lot more manpower. I'll bet
there were independent contractors
working on that thing: plumbers,
aluminum siders, roofers.

DANTE

Please.

RANDAL

Think about it, Dante. In order to
get it built quickly and quietly
they'd hire anybody who could do the
job. Do you think the average storm
trooper knows how to install a
toilet main? All they know is
killing and white uniforms.

DANTE

All right, so even if independent
contractors are working on the
Death Star, why are you uneasy with
its destruction?

RANDAL

All those innocent contractors
hired to do a job were killed-
casualties of a war they had
nothing to do with.

(notices Dante's confusion)

All right, look-you're a roofer,
and some juicy government contract
comes your way; you got the wife
and kids and the two-story in
suburbia-this is a government
contract, which means all sorts of
benefits. All of a sudden these
left-wing militants blast you with
lasers and wipe out everyone within
a three-mile radius.

You didn't ask for that. You have no personal politics. You're just trying to scrape out a living.

The BLUE-COLLAR MAN joins them.

BLUE-COLLAR MAN
Excuse me. I don't mean to interrupt, but what were you talking about?

RANDAL
The ending of Return of the Jedi.

DANTE
My friend is trying to convince me that any contractors working on the uncompleted Death Star were innocent victims when the space station was destroyed by the rebels.

BLUE-COLLAR MAN
Well, I'm a contractor myself. I'm a roofer...
(digs into pocket and produces business card)
Dunn and Reddy Home Improvements. And speaking as a roofer, I can say that a roofer's personal politics come heavily into play when choosing jobs.

RANDAL
Like when?

BLUE-COLLAR MAN
Three months ago I was offered a job up in the hills. A beautiful house with tons of property. It was a simple reshingling job, but I was told that if it was finished within a day, my price would be doubled. Then I realized whose house it was.

DANTE
Whose house was it?

BLUE-COLLAR MAN
Dominick Bambino's.

RANDAL
"Babyface" Bambino? The gangster?

BLUE-COLLAR MAN
The same. The money was right, but the risk was too big. I knew who he was, and based on that, I passed the job on to a friend of mine.

DANTE
Based on personal politics.

BLUE-COLLAR MAN

Right. And that week, the Foresci family put a hit on Babyface's house. My friend was shot and killed. He wasn't even finished shingling.

RANDAL

No way!

BLUE-COLLAR MAN

(paying for coffee)

I'm alive because I knew there were risks involved taking on that particular client. My friend wasn't so lucky.

(pauses to reflect)

You know, any contractor willing to work on that Death Star knew the risks. If they were killed, it was their own fault. A roofer listens to this...

(taps his heart)

not his wallet.

The Blue-Collar Man exits. Dante and Randal remain respectfully quiet for a moment. An angry WOMAN opens the door and pokes her head in.

WOMAN

Is that video store open or not?

CUT TO:

INT VIDEO STORE - DAY

RANDAL

reads a newspaper, tipping his chair back. An INDECISIVE CUSTOMER studies the two rental choices she holds. She looks from one movie to the other, repeatedly.

INDECISIVE CUSTOMER

(attempting to solicit help)

They say so much, but they never tell you if it's any good.

RANDAL hardly stirs and continues to read his paper. The INDECISIVE CUSTOMER half turns to see if her comment was even heard. She tries again, but this time with a different approach.

I.C.

Are either of these any good?

RANDAL continues to read. The INDECISIVE CUSTOMER tries harder.

I.C.

(louder and more direct)

Sir!

RANDAL continues to read.

RANDAL

(flatly)

What?

THE INDECISIVE CUSTOMER holds up her rental choices.

I.C.
(politely)
Are either of these any good?

RANDAL as always, reads on.

RANDAL
(again, flatly)
I don't watch movies.

The INDECISIVE CUSTOMER is a tad flabbergasted, but not put off.

I.C.
Well, have you heard anything about
either of them?

RANDAL does his level-headed best to not get involved.

RANDAL
(reading)
No.

The INDECISIVE CUSTOMER challenges him.

I.C.
(in disbelief)
You've never heard anybody say
anything about either movie?

RANDAL (OC)
I find it best to stay out of other
people's affairs.

I.C.
(with a new determination)
Well, how about these two movies?
(holds the same two)

RANDAL continues to read his paper, not looking up.

RANDAL
They suck.

The INDECISIVE CUSTOMER smirks smugly at Randal and his paper. She has caught him.

I.C.
I just held up the same two movies.
You're not even paying attention.

RANDAL
No, I'm not.

I.C.
I don't think your manager would
appreciate...

RANDAL
(turning the page)
I don't appreciate your ruse, ma'am.

I.C.
I beg your pardon!

RANDAL
(reading on)
Your ruse. Your cunning attempt to
trick me.

I.C.
(defending herself)
I only pointed out that you weren't
paying any attention to what I was
saying.

RANDAL
(turning page and reading)
I hope it feels good.

I.C.
You hope what feels good?

RANDAL
I hope it feels so good to be right.
There is nothing more exhilarating
than pointing out the shortcomings
of other, is there, ma'am?

The INDECISIVE CUSTOMER wears a face that belies utter disbelief in the audacity of this most lackadaisical video clerk. The unmoving newspaper illustrates the total disinterest of the news-hungry Randal. The INDECISIVE CUSTOMER shakes her head in disgust and throws the movies back onto the wall.

I.C.
(in a huff)
Well this is the last time I ever
rent here...

RANDAL (OC)
You'll be missed.

I.C.
(losing it altogether)
Screw you!

She storms out. The paper that Randal is reading lowers suddenly, and we see that he is offended.

RANDAL
(a whisper of resentment)
Screw me?

He hops over the counter and whips the door open.

RANDAL
(calling after her)
You're not allowed to rent here
anymore, you got that?!

Randal closes the door and stands there momentarily, totally appalled by her exiting remark.

RANDAL
(shaking his head)
Screw me!

He reaches behind the counter and grabs a ring of keys. Exiting, He locks the door behind him from outside, gives it a tug to insure its security, and storms off in the opposite direction of the woman.

CUT TO:

INT CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

DANTE
is staring, open-mouthed, at something OC. RANDAL hurls the door open and immediately launches into his tirade.

RANDAL
You'll never believe what this unruly customer just said...

DANTE
(a hand up to urge
him to hush)
Wait.

RANDAL
(looking around)
She's in here?

DANTE
This guy is going through all of the eggs. Look.

AN ODD MAN
sits on the floor, surrounded by cartons of eggs, all opened. He grabs a carton from the cooler case, pops it open, and examines each egg carefully.

DANTE (OC)
This has been going on for twenty minutes.

RANDAL AND DANTE
study the OC oddity.

RANDAL
What's he looking for?

DANTE
He said he had to find a perfect dozen.

RANDAL
Perfect dozen.

DANTE
Each egg has to be perfect.

RANDAL
The quest isn't going well?

DANTE
Obviously not. Look at all the
cartons that didn't make the grade.

THE ODD MAN
holds an egg up to the light and studies it from several different
angles.

RANDAL (OC)
Why doesn't he just mix and match?

DANTE (OC)
I told him that and he yelled at me.

RANDAL
snickers at his friend.

RANDAL
What did he say?

DANTE
He said that not everyone took the
easy way out. he said it was
important to have standards. He said
nobody has pride anymore.

RANDAL
It's not like you laid the eggs yourself.

DANTE
I'll give him five more minutes and
then I'm calling the cops. I don't
need this, man. I'm not even
supposed to be here today.

A SMOKER steps up to the counter.

Smoker
Pack of Newport, pack of Marlboro.

Dante manages to break his study of the OC oddity and searches for the
smokes. The smoker glances at Randal and then at the OC oddity.

THE ODD MAN
is spinning an egg on the floor.

The SMOKER
looks at RANDAL.

RANDAL
(still staring at
the ODD MAN)
I'm as puzzled as you, dude.

Smoker
(paying DANTE)
I've seen it before.

DANTE
You know that guy?

Smoker
No; I've seen that behavior before.
Looking for the perfect carton of
eggs, right?

RANDAL
(a bit astonished)
Yeah. How'd you know?

Smoker
I'll bet you a million bucks that
the guy's a Guidance Counselor.

DANTE
Why do you say that?

Smoker
I was in Food City last year when
the same thing happened, different
guy though. Stock boy told me that
the guy had been looking through the
eggs for like half an hour, doing
all sorts of crazy endurance tests
and shit with them. I ask the kids
how come nobody called the manager,
and he says it happens twice a week,
sometimes more.

RANDAL
Get out of here.

Smoker
I kid you not. They call it Shell
Shock. Only happens with Guidance
Counselors for some reason. The kid
said they used to make a big deal
about it, but there's no point.

THE ODD MAN
places a handkerchief over an egg on the floor. He quickly whisks the
handkerchief away to reveal the egg still sitting on the floor.

Smoker (OC)
He said they always pay for whatever
they break and then never bother
anybody.

DANTE
Randal, and the smoker stare at the OC man.

DANTE
Why Guidance Counselors?

Smoker
If your job served as little purpose
as theirs wouldn't you lose it too?

RANDAL
Come to think of it, my Guidance
Counselor was kind of worthless.

Smoker
(grabbing matches)
See? It's important to have a job
that makes a difference, boys. That's
why I'm a pollster.

CUT TO:

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

POV RANDAL - THE EMPTY COUNTER
and then a LITTLE GIRL comes into view, smiling and holding money. She
can't be more than five.

Little Girl
(innocently)
Can I have a pack of cigarettes?

RANDAL
without looking up from his magazine, takes her money.

RANDAL
What kind?

Little Girl
Marlboro.

RANDAL completes the transaction, still reading. The LITTLE GIRL puts a
cigarette in her mouth. RANDAL hands her matches.

Little Girl
Thank you.

She skips away as DANTE returns to the counter holding a feather duster.

DANTE
Did you ever notice all the prices
in this place end with a nine. Damn
that's eerie.

RANDAL
You know what the average jizz-
mopper makes per hour?

DANTE
What's a jizz mopper?

RANDAL
He's the guy in those nudie-booth
joints who cleans up after each guy
that jerks off.

DANTE
Nudie-booth?

RANDAL
You've never been in a nudie-booth?

DANTE
I guess not.

A female CUSTOMER pops items onto the counter, DANTE rings her up.

RANDAL

Oh, it's great. You step into this little booth and there's this window between you and this naked woman, and she puts on this little show for like ten bucks.

DANTE

What kind of show?

RANDAL

Think of the weirdest things you'd like to see a chick do. These chicks do it all. They insert things into any opening in their body... ANY opening.

(to CUSTOMER)

He's lead a very sheltered life.

DANTE

(indicating CUSTOMER)

Can we talk about this later?

RANDAL

And the jizz-mopper's job is to clean up the booths afterwards, because practically everybody shoots a load against the window, and I don't know if you know this, but cum leaves streaks if you don't clean it right away.

CUSTOMER

(grabbing her bag,
disgusted)

This is the last time I come to this place. You're both foul-mouthed and I find your conversation offensive.

The CUSTOMER stands silently, awaiting an apology.

RANDAL

Well, if you think that's offensive...

RANDAL flips open the magazine's centerfold - a graphic picture of a woman with her vaginal lips and anus spread wide open.

RANDAL

... then check this out. I think you can see her kidneys.

RANDAL checks out the centerfold wistfully. DANTE frantically apologizes to the rapidly exiting CUSTOMER.

DANTE

Ma'am, ma'am, I'm sorry! Please, wait a second, ma'am...

The door closes and the CUSTOMER is gone. DANTE turns on RANDAL.

DANTE

Why do you do things like that? You know she's going to come back and tell the boss.

RANDAL

I don't care. That lady's an asshole. All of the people that come in here are too uptight. This job would be perfect if it weren't for the fucking customers.

DANTE

I'm gonna hear it tomorrow. "You were talking dirty to the customers?"

RANDAL

You gotta loosen up, my friend. You'd feel a hell of a lot better if you'd rip into the occasional customer.

DANTE

What for? They don't bother me if I don't bother them.

RANDAL

Liar! Tell me there aren't customers that annoy the piss out of you on a daily basis.

DANTE

There aren't.

RANDAL

You pig. How can you lie like that. Vent! Vent your frustration. Come on; let's hear it: who pisses you off?

DANTE

(reluctantly)

It's not really anyone per se, it's more of separate groupings.

RANDAL

Come on. Let it out.

DANTE

(pause)

The milk maids.

RANDAL

The milk maids?

INSERT - MILK HANDLER

A WOMAN pulls out gallon after gallon, looking deep into the cooler for that perfect container of milk.

O.C. DANTE

The women that go through every gallon of milk looking for a later date. As if somewhere - beyond all the other gallons - is a container of milk that won't go bad for like a decade.

END INSERT

RANDAL

See? I knew it. You're unwinding.
That's good. You've gotta let it
out, my friend. I'll help you. You
know who I can do without? I could
do without the people in the video
store.

DANTE

Which ones?

RANDAL

All of them.

MONTAGE INSERT #1 - VIDEO JERKS

A series of people addressing the camera asking the dumb questions.

First

Do you have that one with the guy
who was in that movie that was out
last year?

Second

(in front of stocked
new release shelf)
Do you have any new movies in?

Third

What would you get for a six year
old boy who chronically wets his
bed?

END INSERT

RANDAL

And they never rent quality flicks;
they always pick the most
intellectually devoid movie on the
rack.

MONTAGE INSERT #2 - "Ooooh!..."

An identical series of customers finding their ideal choices.

First

Ooooh! 'Hook'!

Second

Ooh! 'Navy Seals'!

Third

Ooooh! 'Home Alone'!

END INSERT

RANDAL

It's like in order to join, they
have to have an I.Q. less than their
shoe size.

DANTE
You think you get stupid questions?
You should hear the barrage of
stupid questions I get.

MONTAGE INSERT #3 - DUMB QUESTIONS

A series of people standing in various locations throughout the
convenience store, asking truly dumb questions.

First
(holding coffee)
What do you mean there's no ice? You
mean I gotta drink this coffee hot?!

Second
(holding up item from
clearly-marked '99¢'
display)
How much?

Third
(peeking in door)
Do you sell hub-caps?

END INSERT

RANDAL
(laughing)
Who asked you that?

DANTE
True story. I swear.

RANDAL
You know what people get to me in a
weird way? The people that buy
toilet paper.

DANTE
Toilet paper.

RANDAL
Yeah. Nobody comes to a convenience
store and pays two bucks for a roll
of toilet paper unless they're in
dire need, you know?

MONTAGE INSERT #4 - IN DIRE NEED

Various shots of people approaching the counter in crouched, bent over,
and desperate strides, carrying toilet paper rolls.

OC Randal
And every time one of them comes up
to the counter, you just know that
either their shit's on the way, or
it's sitting there already.

END INSERT

DANTE
That bother you?

RANDAL

I don't know, I just find it kind of tacky. It's like, I then know, without a doubt, what they're going to be doing in the next ten minutes.

A female customer places a box of tampons on the counter.

VERONICA

enters the store, carrying books and something covered with aluminum foil.

VERONICA

Little help?

DANTE is suddenly by her side, taking the books from under her arm.

DANTE

What are you doing here? Why aren't you in class?

VERONICA

My afternoon class got canceled. I stopped home and brought you some lunch.

DANTE

What is it?

VERONICA

Peanut Butter and jelly with the crusts cut off. What do you think it is? It's lasagna.

DANTE

Really?

(kisses her forehead)

You're the best.

VERONICA

I'm glad you've calmed down a bit.

(to RANDAL)

Hi Randal.

OC Randal

(exaggeratively

impressed)

Thirty seven!

DANTE

(to OC)

Shut up!

(to Veronica)

Yes, I've calmed down. I'm still not happy about it, but I've been able to deal.

RANDAL makes loud slurping noises from OC.

DANTE

(to OC)

Why don't you go back to the video store?

RANDAL walks past the two, and pats VERONICA on the head. He exits.

VERONICA
You had to tell him.

DANTE
I had to tell someone. He put it
into perspective.

VERONICA
What did he say?

DANTE
At least he wasn't thirty six.

VERONICA
And that made you feel better?

DANTE
And he said most of them are college
guys I've never met or seen.

VERONICA
The ostrich syndrome; if you don't
see it...

DANTE
...it isn't there. Yes.

VERONICA
Thank you for being rational.

DANTE
Thank you for the lasagna.

VERONICA
I'm going to go back to school now.

DANTE
What time do you get finished?

VERONICA
Eight. But I have a sorority meeting
'till nine, so I'll be back before
you close. Can we go out and get some coffee?

DANTE
Good.
(kisses him)
I'll see you when you close, then.
Enjoy the lasagna.

She exits. DANTE leans against the counter with his lasagna. RANDAL pops his head in and makes the loud slurping noise again.

CUT TO:

EXT VIDEO STORE - DAY

A GIRL
tries to take the hat off JAY'S head. SILENT BOB eats a bagel. Another
GIRL looks on.

GIRL 1
Come on! Let me wear it.

JAY
Fuck you.

GIRL 1
Fuck you! Let me wear your hat.

JAY
(to SILENT BOB)
This bitch is crazy.
(to GIRL)
You think I'm letting you touch
this, you got another thing coming.

Girl 2
Let the baby have his hat.

JAY
You're the baby, and I'd sure like
to powder your ass. Nynne!

Girl 2
You wish.

GIRL 1
Come on Jay!

JAY
You want I should come on your back
or on your face? Neh.

GIRL 1
You're fucking disgusting.

A LOST MAN approaches them.

Lost man
Excuse me, I was wondering if you
could help me?

JAY
(to GIRL 1)
Cut it out, this is business.

GIRL 1
(with moron face)
Oh yeah?!

JAY raises his hand as if to strike her. She cowers.

JAY
Neh!
(to LOST MAN)
What do you need?

Lost Man
I'm trying to find First Avenue in
Atlantic Highlands.

JAY
You want directions? Don't you want
any weed?

Lost Man

Um...no.

JAY

Tell you what: you buy a dime bag
offa me, and I'll give you
directions.

Lost Man

Are you kidding?

JAY

(to SILENT BOB)

Silent Bob, do I kid about sales?

SILENT BOB shakes his head 'no'.

JAY

See? And Silent Bob never told a lie
in his life.

Lost Man

I haven't smoked pot in years.

JAY

Isn't it time you went home again?
Celebrate the moments of your life.

Lost Man

(intrigued)

How much?

JAY

Fifteen.

Lost Man

Fifteen for a dime bag?!

JAY

This shit is strong, man. Two hits
and you'll be fucked up. Two hits,
guaranteed, or your money back.

Lost Man

(relenting)

Alright.

(digs for cash)

JAY

(accepts cash, hands over weed)

Here you go.

(breaks into cop stance)

Alright freeze! D.E.A. agents,
undercover.

(to SILENT BOB)

Cuff him, Agent Bob!

(to LOST MAN)

You have the right to remain silent.

Anything you say can and will be
used against you in a court of law!

SILENT BOB moves menacingly toward the LOST MAN, reaching into his back
pocket, ostensibly for cuffs.

Lost Man
(panicked)
Wait! Wait! What is this?!

JAY
(stopping)
Just kidding - NOI-NOI-NOI-NOIN!

CUT TO:

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

RANDAL
is recommending titles to potential customers.

RANDAL
Alright, now if you're really
feeling dangerous tonight, then
'Smokey and the Bandit 3' is the
movie you must rent.

CUSTOMER
(studying box)
This doesn't even have Burt Reynolds
in it.

RANDAL
Hey, neither did 'E.T.'; but that
was a great movie, right?

DANTE
opens the door and leans in.

DANTE
Can you come next door? I gotta make
a phone call.

RANDAL
(to DANTE)
'Smokey 3' : thumbs up, am I right?

DANTE
The best Burt-less movie ever made.

DANTE exits. RANDAL gives his customers the what-did-I-tell-you look.

CUT TO:

INT CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

THE CAT
lays on the counter. Pull back to reveal RANDAL as he rings up an order.
The CUSTOMER pets the cat, smiling.

CUSTOMER
Awww, he's so cute. What's his name?

RANDAL
Lenin's Tomb.

Dolly over to DANTE, on the phone.

DANTE

Hello, is Mister Rhabari there? This is Dante...Did he say if he was on his way here?...Here...The Convenience store...I know, but the other guy called out this morning and Mister Rhabari asked me to cover until he got here. He said he's be here by two, but it's two o'clock now, so I...Excuse me...Vermont?!?!? ...When the hell was someone going to tell me?!?!?...He promised he was coming by two!! ...I've got a hockey game this afternoon!!!...Jesus... When does he get back?!...TUESDAY?!?! ...You've gotta be fucking kidding me?!?!...I'm not even supposed to be here today!!!...

(deep sigh)

So I'm stuck here till closing?... This is just great...I just can't believe...I'm sorry, I didn't mean to yell at you...No...No, I'll be alright...Thanks...

He hangs up. RANDAL joins him.

RANDAL

Vermont?

DANTE

Can you believe that sonofabitch?

RANDAL

He didn't mention it when he called you this morning?

DANTE

Not a fucking word. Slippery shit.

RANDAL

So you're stuck here all day?

DANTE

FUCK!

RANDAL

Why'd you apologize?

DANTE

What?

RANDAL

I heard you apologize. Why? You have every right in the world to be mad.

DANTE

I know.

RANDAL
That seems to be the leitmotiv in
your life; ever backing down.

DANTE
I don't back down.

RANDAL
Yes you do. You always back down.
You assume blame that isn't yours,
you come in when called as opposed
to enjoying your day off...you
buckle like a belt.

DANTE
You know what pisses me off the
most?

RANDAL
The fact that I'm right about your
buckling.

DANTE
I'm going to miss the game.

RANDAL
Because you buckled.

DANTE
Would you shut the hell up with that
shit? It's not helping.

RANDAL
Don't yell at me.

DANTE
Sorry.

RANDAL
See? There you go again.

DANTE
I can't believe I'm going to miss
the game!

RANDAL
Join the club, man. I was going to
be stuck here while that no-talent
Headly played my position. Now at
least we're stuck here together.

DANTE
Small consolation.

RANDAL
Misery loves company.

DANTE
You've got a customer.

RANDAL walks away. DANTE shakes his head in frustration and picks up the phone again.

DANTE

Hello...I can't play today...I'm stuck at work...I'm not scheduled, but - just forget it. I can't play ...Who else? Headly can't play either? Neither can Randal...Because he's working too, otherwise he'd be in net...

RANDAL comes back.

DANTE

(getting an idea)

Wait a second. Do we have to play at the park?...Hold On...

(to RANDAL)

Do you feel limber?

CUT TO:

INT CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

TAPE

is rolled around the top of a stick.

LACES

are pulled tightly.

AN ORANGE BALL

is slapped back and forth by a blade.

THE HOCKEY PLAYERS

fill the convenience store. Some sit on the floor, lean against the coolers, but all are either preparing or practicing.

RANDAL

enters, still wearing his equipment. DANTE skates to his side.

DANTE

(lifting his foot)

Pull my laces tighter.

RANDAL

(drops mitt and pulls laces)

I've gotta tell you, my friend: this is one of the ballsiest moves I've ever been privy to. I never would have thought you capable of such blatant disregard for store policy.

DANTE

I told the guy I had a game today. It's his own fault.

RANDAL

No argument here. Insubordination rules.

DANTE

Well I appreciate that, but I don't deserve accolades. I'm not making any statements with this thing, I just want to play hockey like I was scheduled to.

SANFORD skates up and skids to a halt.

DANTE

Don't skid! I gotta mop this.

Sanford

Dante, let me grab a Gatorade.

DANTE

If you grab a Gatorade, then everyone's going to grab one.

Sanford

So?

DANTE

So? So nobody's going to want to pay for these Gatorades.

Sanford

What do you care?

DANTE

I've got a responsibility here. I can't let everybody grab free drinks.

Sanford

What responsibility? You're closing the fucking store to play hockey in the parking lot.

RANDAL

He's blunt, but he's got a point.

DANTE

At least let me maintain a semblance of managerial control here.

Sanford

All I'm saying is if you're going to be insubordinate, you should go the full nine and not pussy out when it comes to free refreshments.

RANDAL

What's it going to hurt, man? As if we're suddenly gonna have a run on Gatorade.

Sanford

Fuckin A.

DANTE
Alright. Jesus you fuckers are
pushy.

Sanford
We ain't pushy Dante; you just
uptight.
(skating away; to all)
Dante said we can all drink free
Gatorade.

A laid-back hurrah is heard.

DANTE
(to Randal)
What is that? Do you think I'm
uptight?

RANDAL
I'm not a therapist. Are you gonna
lock the store?

DANTE
I haven't decided yet. Did you lock
the video store?

RANDAL
Look who you're asking. How're you
gonna run the store and play the
game.

CUT TO:

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

THE SIGN ON THE DOOR READS

TEMPORARILY CLOSED. BE OPENED AFTER
THE FIRST PERIOD.

THE PLAYERS
skate around the street in front of the store. Four cars block off a
makeshift court and prevent traffic from coming through. Bags of potato
chips line the sides, preventing the balls from leaving the 'arena'.

DANTE
skates and passes with another player.

REDDING
stretches against the building.

LITTLE KIDS
sit by the side and watch.

RANDAL
pulls his mask on and slaps his gloves, urging a shot.

STANDISH
skates in and takes a shot which RANDAL blocks.

JAY AND SILENT BOB
deal to a player.

DANTE
holds a ball in the center of the court.

DANTE
Ready?

PLAYERS
take position.

A LITTLE KID
comes to the center and holds the ball in drop position. DANTE and REDDING face-off, and the ball is in play.

THE GAME BEGINS
as the little kid darts off the court and players engage in a ballet of violence and beauty. Faces are smashed with sticks, slide tackles are made, shots are taken, C.U.'s of various players included.

INACTIVE PLAYERS
call out encouragement and slander from the sidelines.

JAY AND SILENT BOB
watch, amused.

JAY
(screaming)
You fuck! You're a bum! Skate into the crease! My man'll fuck you up! You can't control the ball! You're ugly! I fucked your mother! Neh.

THE LITTLE KIDS
view the game, their heads turning from one end of the court to the other.

MORE GAME PLAYING
including both goalies getting scored on and more face-offs.

A CUSTOMER
braves past the action and tugs on the convenience store door. He reads the sign and turns, awed and annoyed at the brazen sign.

THE GAME CONTINUES
despite the new on-looker.

THE CUSTOMER
shifts from one foot to the other impatiently. Finally he calls out.

CUSTOMER
When's this period over?

SOMEONE O.C.
Eight more minutes!

CUSTOMER
Are you shitting me? I want to get cigarettes!

DANTE skids to the sidelines.

DANTE
(out of breath)
If you can just wait a few more
minutes.

CUSTOMER
Fuck that! This is a business!

SOMEONE O.C.
Dante! Where are you?!

CUSTOMER
He's busy!

DANTE starts to skate away.

DANTE
I'll be right back. It's almost
over.

He jumps back into the game.

CUSTOMER
What the fuck is this?! I want some
service!

O.C. Dante
In a second!

CUSTOMER
Fuck in a second! This is...Look at
you! You can't even pass!

DANTE
I can pass!

CUSTOMER
How 'bout covering point!? You'd
better stick to jockeying a register,
cause you suck at hockey.

DANTE skids back to the sidelines to address the CUSTOMER.

DANTE
Who are you to make assessments?

CUSTOMER
I'll assess all I want!

SOMEONE O.C.
DANTE! ARE YOU IN OR OUT!

CUSTOMER
(to O.C. SOMEONE)
Don't pass to this guy! He sucks!
(to DANTE)
You suck!

DANTE
Like you're better!

CUSTOMER
I can whip your ass.

A WOMAN pulls at the door behind them. She peers into the store, face against the glass.

DANTE
That's easy to say from over here.

CUSTOMER
Give me a stick, pretty boy! I'll
knock your fucking teeth out and
pass all over your ass.

WOMAN
Is the convenience store open?

DANTE and Customer
(simultaneous)
NO!

The WOMAN strides off angrily.

DANTE
(to Customer)
There's a stick over there. You're
shooting against that goal.
(to the court)
REDDING! COME OFF AND LET THIS FUCK
ON!

THE GAME CONTINUES
with the added player running about the court on feet.

THE LITTLE KIDS
eat chips from the bags that act as the 'boards'.

SOMEONE O.C.
Hey! The fucking kids are eating the
boards!

A NEW FACE-OFF
pits DANTE against the CUSTOMER.

THE BALL
drops between the two and DANTE smashes the CUSTOMER in the jaw with his
elbow. He winds up and takes a hard shot.

THE BALL
sails past the court, through the air and into a faraway yard.

DANTE
calls to the sidelines.

DANTE
Give me another ball.

SOMEONE O.C.
There are no more.

DANTE
What the fuck are you talking about?
How many balls did you bring?

SANFORD skates up to him.

Sanford
(counting)
There was the orange ball... The
orange ball.

DANTE
One ball! You only brought one
ball?!

Sanford
I thought Redding had like three
balls!

O.C. Redding
I thought Dante had the balls.

DANTE
Nobody has another ball?!

Sanford
Shit!

DANTE
We get...what...twelve minutes of
game, and it's over? Fuck! This is
so typical!
(pause; rubs head)
I'm not even supposed to be here
today!

DANTE skate off.

Sanford
We still get free Gatorade, right?

CUT TO:

INT CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

DANTE
standing on a ladder, replaces a fluorescent light. And OLD MAN joins
him at the foot of the ladder.

Old Man
Be careful.

DANTE
I'm trying.

Old Man
You know the insides of those filled
with stuff that gives you cancer.

DANTE
So I'm told.

Old Man
I had a friend that used to chew
glass for a living. In the circus.

The light in place, DANTE descends the ladder and closes it.

DANTE
And he got cancer by chewing
fluorescent bulb glass...?

Old Man
No, he got his by a bus.

DANTE
(confused)
Oh... Can I help you?

Old Man
Well that depends, Do you have a
bathroom?

DANTE
Um...yeah, but it's for employees
only.

Old Man
I understand, but can I use it. I'm
not that young anymore, so I'm kind
of...you know...incon...incontinent.

DANTE
Uh...sure. Go ahead. It's back
through the cooler.

Old Man
Thanks son. Say - what kind of
toilet paper you got back there?

DANTE
The white kind.

Old Man
I'm not asking about the color. I
mean is it rough or cottony?

DANTE
Actually, it is kind of rough.

Old Man
Rough, eh? Oh, that stuff rips hell
out of my hem-roids. Say, would you
mind if I took a roll of the soft
stuff back there. I see you sell the
soft stuff.

DANTE
Yeah, but....

Old Man
Aw, c'mon boy. What's the difference?
You said yourself the stuff that's
there now is rough.

DANTE
Yeah, okay. Go ahead.

Old Man
Thanks son. You're a life-saver.

The OLD MAN walks off. DANTE heads back to the counter. The OLD MAN returns.

Old Man
Say, young fella; you know I hate to bother you again, but can I take a paper or something back there...to read? It usually takes me awhile, and I like to read while it's going on...

DANTE
Jesus...go ahead.

Old Man
Thanks young man. You've got a heart of gold.

The OLD MAN sifts through some papers and a few magazines. He comes back to the counter.

DANTE
You know, you probably could've been home already, in the time it's taken you to get in there.

Old Man
Can I trouble you for on of those magazines?

DANTE
I said go ahead.

Old Man
No, I mean the ones there. Behind the counter.

DANTE glances over and reacts.

DANTE
The porno mags?

Old Man
Yeah. I like the cartoons. They make me laugh. They draw the biggest titties.

DANTE
(hands on to him)
Here. Now leave me alone.

Old Man
Uh, can I have the other one. The one below this one. They show more in that one.

DANTE makes the switch.

Old Man
Thanks son. I appreciate this.

The OLD MAN walks off. We hear the back door open and close, then the front door does the same. RANDAL joins DANTE.

RANDAL
Helluva game!

DANTE
One ball! They come all the way here...I close the damn store...for one ball!

RANDAL
Hockey's hockey. At least we got to play.

DANTE
Randal, twelve minutes in not playing! Jesus, it's barely a warm-up!

RANDAL
But they were a strong twelve minutes. You played great.

DANTE
I could've played better if I'd had more time.

RANDAL
Bitch, bitch, bitch. You want something to drink?
(walking away)

DANTE
Gatorade.

Pause. Then...

OC Randal
What happened to all the Gatorade?

DANTE
Exactly. They drank it all.

OC Randal
After an exhausting game like that I can believe it.

DANTE
(as RANDAL)
"It's not like we're gonna sell out."

RANDAL comes back with drinks.

RANDAL
You know what Sanford told me?
(offering drink)

DANTE
He enjoyed the free Gatorade.

RANDAL
Julie Dwyer died.

DANTE
Yeah right.

RANDAL
No, I'm serious.

DANTE is visibly taken aback.

DANTE
Oh my god.

RANDAL
Sanford's brother dates her cousin.
He found out this morning.

DANTE
How? When?

RANDAL
Embolism in her brain. Yesterday.

DANTE
Jesus.

RANDAL
She was swimming at the Y.M.C.A.
pool when it happened. Died mid-
backstroke.

DANTE
I haven't seen her in almost two
years.

RANDAL
Correct me if I'm wrong, but wasn't
she one of the illustrious twelve?

DANTE
Number six.

RANDAL
You've had sex with a dead person.

DANTE
You know what I always remember
about her?

RANDAL
Listen to you; already with the
eulogies.

DANTE
She held my hand. Whenever we went
somewhere; didn't matter where. She
would always take my hand and hold
it. And when she held your hand, you
felt held... you know?

RANDAL
Have any of the other women you
slept with died? Because maybe your
cursed, like the cast of
'Poltergeist".

DANTE
I'm gonna go to the wake.

RANDAL
No you're not.

DANTE
Why not?

RANDAL
It's today.

DANTE
What!?

RANDAL
Paulsens Funeral Parlor. The next
show is at four.

DANTE
Shit. What about tomorrow?

RANDAL
One night only. She's buried in the
morning.

DANTE
You've gotta watch the store. I have to go to this.

RANDAL
Wait, wait, wait, wait. Has it
occurred to you that I might be
bereaved as well?

DANTE
You hardly knew her!

RANDAL
True, but do you know how many
people are going to be there? All of
our old classmates, to say the
least.

DANTE
Stop it. This is beneath even you.

RANDAL
I'm not missing what's probably
going to be the social event of the
season.

DANTE
You hate people.

RANDAL
But I love gatherings. Isn't it
ironic?

DANTE

Don't be an asshole. Somebody has to stay with the store.

RANDAL

And it has to be me?

DANTE

Barring the fact that you have no reason to attend this wake other than you hate being left out, you have no means of transportation to get you there. I was intimate with the girl once, and I have a car.

RANDAL

I'm proud of you.

DANTE

You're being a dick.

RANDAL

If you go, I'm going.

DANTE

Come on Randal. Just work the register for an hour. I'll be back even sooner than that.

RANDAL

I'm going with you.

DANTE

She meant nothing to you!

RANDAL

She meant nothing to you either until I told you she died.

DANTE

I'm not taking you to this funeral.

RANDAL

If you go, I go.

DANTE

I can't close the store.

A CUSTOMER comes to the counter.

CUSTOMER

Do you have anymore Gatorade back there? I need a case.

DANTE

Um...no, we're sold out.

CUSTOMER

You have no Gatorade whatsoever?

DANTE

No. Sorry.

CUSTOMER

Yeah right.
(walking away)
Lazy fuck.

RANDAL

(continuing)
You just closed the store to play
hockey in the parking lot.

DANTE

Exactly, which means I can't close
it for another hour so we can both
go to a wake.

RANDAL

So we're not going?

DANTE

No. Forget it. If you won't stay to
work so I can go to the wake, then
neither of us is going.

CUT TO:

INT CAR - DAY

DANTE DRIVES WITH PASSENGER RANDAL
their backs to the camera.

RANDAL

You were saying?

DANTE

Thanks for putting me in a tough
spot. You're a good friend.

RANDAL

Do you know where this place is?

DANTE

It's by the firehouse. Up the block.
In Atlantic.

Silence. Then...

RANDAL

She was pretty young, hunhh?

DANTE

Twenty five; same as us.

RANDAL

An embolism in a pool.

DANTE

Must be an embarrassing way to die.

RANDAL

That's nothing compared to how my
cousin Jared died.

DANTE
How'd he die?

RANDAL
Broke his neck.

DANTE
That's embarrassing?

RANDAL
He broke his neck trying to suck his
own dick.

Absolute silence. Then...

DANTE
Shut the hell up.

RANDAL
Bible truth.

DANTE
Stop it.

RANDAL
I swear.

DANTE
Oh my god.

RANDAL
Come on. Haven't you ever tried to
suck your own dick?

DANTE
No!

RANDAL
Yeah sure. You're so repressed.

DANTE
Because I never sucked my own dick?

RANDAL
No, because you won't admit to it.
As if a guy's a fucking pervert
because he tries to go down on
himself. You're as curious as the
rest of us, pal. You've tried it.

DANTE
Who found him?

RANDAL
My cousin? My aunt found him. On his
bed, doubled over himself with his
legs on top. Dick in his mouth. My
aunt freaked out. It was a mess.

DANTE
His dick was in his mouth?

RANDAL
To the hilt. Balls resting against
his lips.

DANTE
He made it, hunhh?

RANDAL
Yeah, but at what a price.

Silence. Then...

DANTE
I could never reach.

RANDAL
Reach what?

DANTE
You know.

RANDAL
What, your dick? You tried to suck
your own dick?

DANTE
Yeah. Like you said, you know. I
guess everyone tries it, sooner or
later.

RANDAL
I never tried it.

DANTE glares at RANDAL. Silence. Then...

RANDAL
Fucking pervert.

CUT TO:

EXT FUNERAL PARLOR - DAY

DANTE AND RANDAL
step out of the car.

RANDAL
You're worrying, aren't you?

DANTE
I know it was a bad idea to close
the store.

RANDAL
Listen to you. Would you quit with
the worrying already?

DANTE
I can't help it. At least when we
were playing hockey outside, I could
see if anyone wanted to go in.
Now...

RANDAL
Dante, be real. Nobody's there. It's
four o'clock on a Saturday. How many
people ever come to the store at
four on a Saturday?

CUT TO:

EXT CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

A MASSIVE CROWD

is outside the store.

CUT TO:

INT FUNERAL PARLOR HALLWAY - DAY

DANTE AND RANDAL

close the door and greet a teary-eyed BONNIE. She hugs DANTE and then
RANDAL.

Bonnie
(in a loud whisper)
DANTE!

DANTE
Bonnie. How're you doing?

Bonnie
I haven't seen you in...Jeez, I
don't know how long!

DANTE
We just found out this afternoon. We
were working.

Bonnie
It was a shock. I couldn't believe
it.

RANDAL saunters away.

DANTE
I know. Neither could I.

Bonnie
(indicating RANDAL)
Why'd you bring him?

DANTE
You still got that grudge against
Randal?

Bonnie
Wouldn't you? Not only did he stand
me up for the prom, but he sent
Frank Bimly in his place. My senior
prom, and I'm standing next to Frank
Bimly.

DANTE
Wasn't he wearing a polyester blazer?

Bonnie
And a polo shirt. I don't even want
to think about it.

(changing subject)
This is so weird, isn't it?

DANTE
I know. I haven't seen her in almost
two years, and then I find out she's
dead. I was floored.

Bonnie
She was talking about you last week.

DANTE
Really?

Bonnie
I swear. She said you must feel like
an asshole now that Caitlin's going
to marry some other guy.

DANTE
How'd she know Caitlin was getting
married?

Bonnie
Caitlin told her.

DANTE
Caitlin told her?

Bonnie
Caitlin told everyone, you mean she
didn't tell you?

DANTE
No. And who is this guy she's
engaged to?

Bonnie
Sang? Oh, he's a nice guy. He's a
design major.

DANTE
You met him?

Bonnie
He's really cute.

RANDAL joins them.

RANDAL
(confused)
Don't they usually have food at
these things? Where's the finger
sandwiches?

BONNIE stalks away, angrily.

RANDAL
What? What did I say?

CUT TO:

INT FUNERAL PARLOR VIEWING ROOM - DAY

DANTE AND RANDAL

are on a long greeting line, heading toward the grieving parents and the casket.

DANTE

When we get up there, you greet her parents. I'm going right to the coffin.

RANDAL

You're supposed to express regret to the family first.

DANTE

Yeah, well, I don't think her parents need to see me right now.

RANDAL

What are you talking about?

DANTE

They caught Julie and I together once.

RANDAL

Get out of here.

DANTE

Really.

RANDAL

Fucking?

DANTE

Worse.

RANDAL

Worse than fucking?

DANTE

Something no parent wants to see their child engaged in.

RANDAL

(thinks)

Butt-fucking?

DANTE

Look where your mind is. Its much be frightening to have your libido.

RANDAL

Terrifying. So what happened?

DANTE

We were watching t.v. in her living room, and things started going on...

RANDAL
With her parents right there?!

DANTE
No, they weren't home.

RANDAL
Oh.

DANTE
So we're going at it, and it's a living room couch type of situation, so the pants don't come off, per se...

RANDAL
Jeans and panties off one leg; one shoe on.

DANTE
Always with that one shoe on.

RANDAL
False sense of security.

DANTE
So I start sliding down, work the nipples, kiss the stomach, then to the goods.

RANDAL
You lady-killer.

DANTE
So I'm eating her out, and she's got the legs wrapped around my head, so I can't really hear much, and she's grinding into my face...

RANDAL
You're making me hard.

DANTE
And then out of nowhere...

RANDAL
Oh shit.

DANTE
....In walk her parents, carrying a couple of videos they had just rented across the street.

RANDAL
Jesus!

DANTE
So there's Julie, pants and undies half-off, my face between her legs, and her parents staring at us.

RANDAL
What happened?

DANTE
Julie says "Mom, Dad; this is Mrs.
Hicks' son, Dante."

RANDAL
They knew your mother?!

DANTE
From church.

RANDAL
No way!

DANTE
Swear to God.

RANDAL
That's classy. That's too cool.

DANTE
Her parents dropped out of the
parish, and Julie got grounded for
two months.

RANDAL
And you haven't seen her parents
since?

DANTE
No, and I prefer to keep it that
way, so you greet the parents, and
I'll go straight to the coffin.

RANDAL
Alright.

By this time DANTE and RANDAL have progressed toward the front of the line. RANDAL reaches the grieving MOTHER and FATHER of the deceased. DANTE faces the other direction.

RANDAL
Mr. and Mrs. Dwyer, I'm really
sorry. I went to high school with
Julie. She was special.

MOTHER
(crying)
Thank you. What's your name?

RANDAL
I'm Randal Graves.
(spinning DANTE around)
And this is Mrs. Hicks son, Dante.

The dawn of realization falls over the parents as they are reminded of DANTE'S identity. They stare, angrily.

CUT TO:

INT FUNERAL PARLOR VIEWING ROOM -DAY

AN EXPOSED BELLY
lays perfectly still, with hands crossed over the chest above.

DANTE AND RANDAL

stare, befuddled. They speak in whispers.

RANDAL

Interesting look.

DANTE

I can't believe they would want her laid out like this.

RANDAL

I always thought Julie would have an 'outsy'.

DANTE

A tube top and a dress jacket? What were they thinking?

RANDAL

I believe they're referred to as belly blouses these day.

DANTE

I don't understand. Do you think this is some sort of request she made while she was still alive?

RANDAL

Maybe after a fifth of scotch.

DANTE

If anyone ever asks, I want to be laid out in a suit.

RANDAL

(staring)

I don't like this part. Can't we just mingle?

DANTE

She was really pretty. I wish I'd spent more time with her.

RANDAL

I'm very uncomfortable. What are we supposed to be doing up here?

DANTE

Praying. For repose of the soul.

RANDAL

I think I saw her chest move.

DANTE

It's weird: I was intimate with this girl.

RANDAL

There's lint in her belly button.

DANTE

Leave it alone.

RANDAL
That's a helluva way to go to your
grave: lint sticking in your belly
button. Why do you think no one's
pulled it out yet?

DANTE
Because it's not that noticeable.

RANDAL
Bullshit, it's like a fern.

DANTE
Could you be quiet for just two
minutes so I can get a little prayer
going here?

Silence. Then...

RANDAL
I'm bored.

DANTE
Jesus. Go wait in the hallway. I'll
be there in a minute.

RANDAL
I'll start the car. Give me the
keys.

DANTE
(digging in pocket)
You're king of the pains in the ass.
Here.

DANTE tosses the keys to his right. RANDAL misses them.

THE KEYS
slide down the dead girl's dress.

DANTE AND RANDAL
stare, shocked.

RANDAL
(astonished)
What are the chances...?

DANTE
Holy shit.

RANDAL
I bet you couldn't do that again if
you tried.

DANTE
You couldn't catch the keys?!

RANDAL
You couldn't hand me the keys?
(studying OC crotch)
They're down there, man. I don't
even see them.

DANTE

What the fuck am I supposed to do now?! Those are the car keys and the store keys!

RANDAL

Get the undertaker.

DANTE

And cause a scene?! Screw that. You get them.

RANDAL

Oh certainly. Fuck you, I'm not reaching into that terminal vagina!

DANTE

Jesus. Stand behind me, then. I'll get them.

RANDAL

Why am I standing behind you?

DANTE

To block the view of the crowd.

RANDAL

Should I rub your shoulders, to make it look like your upset.

DANTE

Yeah, that's good.

RANDAL stands behind DANTE and rubs his shoulders. DANTE reaches down the dead girl's dress.

A LINE OF MOURNERS

stare, befuddled, at the OC pair.

JULIE'S MOTHER AND FATHER

stare, horrified.

POV PARENTS - DANTE AND RANDAL'S BACK

as RANDAL massages DANTE, whose hand digs into the casket, rocking back and forth toward the southern region, looking awfully perverted.

Randal
Feel anything?

Dante
Almost there.

JULIE'S FATHER muscles in, flanked by JULIE'S MOTHER.

Father
Alright, what the hell...
(sees and reacts)
Jesus Christ!

JULIE'S MOTHER screams. DANTE tries to free his hand, from the prison-like crotch. Both parents are screaming. The casket falls.

CUT TO:

EXT FUNERAL PARLOR - DAY

DANTE AND RANDAL
run from the front door, closely chased by a small crowd of angry mourners.

CAR LOCKS
are slammed down.

THE CAR
screams away. The pursuing crowd stand in the middle of the street and shake their fists, throwing things.

CUT TO:

EXT CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT

THE CAR PULLS UP
and RANDAL and DANTE get out. Absolutely nobody is outside.

RANDAL
See? What did I tell you? It's dead.

DANTE
(fumbling with keys)
Just get inside. I don't know if we were followed.

RANDAL
Did you see the look on her father's face?! That was too funny!

DANTE
(opening door)
Just....go. Go open the video store.

RANDAL
What did it feel like? Did you touch her clam?

JAY AND SILENT BOB join them.

JAY
You guys are in trouble, man! This place was packed with people after you left.

RANDAL
Get the fuck outta here, junkie.

JAY
I'm serious. Right, Silent Bob? There were so many people outside the store.

DANTE
(to RANDAL)
Go open the video store.
(to JAY)
How many times I gotta tell you not
to deal outside the store?

JAY
I'm not dealing.

A KID tugs at JAY'S shirt.

Kid
You got any weed?

JAY
How much you want?

RANDAL heads to the video store. DANTE enters the convenience store and slides the sign to 'open'. After a few seconds, the IMPATIENT CUSTOMER (guy who lost his keys) appears, flashlight in hand, scanning ground.

IMPATIENT CUSTOMER
(to JAY)
Hey, did you see a set of keys
laying around here anywhere?

CUT TO:

INT CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT

DANTE
rearranges the milk. RANDAL joins him.

RANDAL
Let me borrow your car.

DANTE
What for?

RANDAL
I want to pick up Samantha.

DANTE
Why?

RANDAL
Because she wants to come down.

Dante stands and shakes his head.

DANTE
I don't think that's a good idea.

RANDAL
What's the big deal? Let me borrow
your car.

Dante heads back to the counter. Randal follows.

DANTE
Must we go through this routine
again?

RANDAL
What are you talking about?

DANTE
She comes here, and all you two do
is fight.

RANDAL
We do not.

DANTE
You're right. You don't fight. You
verbally massacre each other. And I
gotta hear it. It's annoying.

RANDAL
Come on; give me your keys. When we
come back, I'll tell her to show you
her tits.

DANTE
I don't want to see your girlfriends
tits.

RANDAL
She's not my girlfriend.

DANTE
(scoffs)
That's another thing that gets me
about you and her. You fuck like
rabbits, but you refuse to call her
your girlfriend. And she won't call
you her boyfriend. Yet neither of
you has sex with anyone else.

RANDAL
Titles screw things up.

DANTE
What're you talking about?

RANDAL
It's true. you slap a title on any
relationship, the there's pressure
to live up to that title. 'This is
my girlfriend', 'That's my
boyfriend' - all the sudden you
gotta behave a certain way. Title
dictates behavior.

DANTE
That's bullshit. People dictate
their own behavior.

RANDAL
I disagree.

DANTE
How can you? You're the perfect
example.

RANDAL
How do you figure?

DANTE

You haven't been with anyone but her
in almost a year.

RANDAL

Right. And I guarantee that if I'd
been calling her my girlfriend all
this time, I'd have screwed about
five other chicks as well.

DANTE

Let me hear this logic.

RANDAL

It's the taboo continuum. Anything
that's forbidden is always more
appetizing.

DANTE

Taboo continuum. You're proof that
not everyone should have access to
dictionaries.

RANDAL

When society dictates a certain type
of decorum, it eliminates choices
that an individual would probably
never consider anyway. But by
eliminating said choices, our
curiosity is piqued; we want to try
anything that's not the American
preoccupations with anal sex, drug
abuse, infidelity...even necrophilia
as you yourself displayed in the
funeral parlor.

DANTE

Shut the hell up.

RANDAL

As it stands, I am quite happy to be
monogamous. I have zero desire to
fuck anyone else. But if we were
labeled with that boyfriend/
girlfriend title that you're so big
on, I can guarantee you that I'd be
out there slamming anything that
moved. And why? Because the title
insists that I remain fidelious.

DANTE

You're twisted.

RANDAL

You disagree?

DANTE

Yeah, I do.

RANDAL

Example: When we were back in high school, you screwed Maria Bodets while you were dating Caitlin. Why?

DANTE

What do you mean, why? Maria was hot; everyone wanted to go with her. Even you.

RANDAL

So you went with her because everyone wanted to go with her?

DANTE

No. I went with her because I was attracted to her.

RANDAL

Fair enough. Now, upon the crumbling of your relationship with Caitlin, I seem to remember Maria Bodest offering solace in the way of much nooky. Am I correct?

DANTE

Yes.

RANDAL

And you never went with her then.

DANTE

I was no longer attracted to her.

RANDAL

And why was that?

DANTE

I don't know.

RANDAL

Yes you do.

DANTE

It just wasn't there anymore.

RANDAL

Because there were no restrictions this time around with Maria Bodets. You could have painted yourself blue and sixty-nined her in the middle of town, and short of getting arrested, you wouldn't be in violation of any societal code.

DANTE

Oral sex in the middle of town, painted or otherwise, violates societal codes, my friend.

RANDAL

Ah yes, but not the boyfriend/
girlfriend codes that you had so
enjoyed breaking while dating
Caitlin. And that was the true draw
of going with Maria Bodets: because
it wasn't allowed at the time.

DANTE

(beat)

You're too analytical.

RANDAL

Now may I borrow your car, so that I
can pick up the woman to whom no
societal restrictions bind me?

Dante stares at Randal for a beat. Then he tosses him the keys.

DANTE

What about marriage?

RANDAL

(exiting)

You're not my type.

CUT TO:

INT CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

DANTE

waits on a customer (TRAINER). He lifts the gallon of milk into a paper
bag, letting out a slight grunt.

Trainer

Somebody needs to hit the gym.

DANTE

Excuse me?

Trainer

I heard you strain when you put the
milk in the bag. That milk only
weighs about seven pounds.

DANTE

I didn't strain. I sighed.

Trainer

I don't think so. That was a grunt;
a deep inhalation of oxygen to aid
in the stretching of muscles. I'm a
trainer. I know what that kind of
sound signifies: you're out of
shape.

DANTE

I don't think so.

Trainer
Oh, I do. You made the same noise
when you reached across the counter
for my cash. Your muscles are thin
and sadly underutilized.

DANTE
They are not.

Trainer
Yes they are. You're out of shape.

DANTE
What are you talking about? There's
no fat on this body.

Trainer
No fat, but no tone either. You
don't get enough exercise.

A female (HEATHER) pays for a newspaper.

DANTE
(to HEATHER)
Thirty five.

Trainer
(to HEATHER)
Let me ask you a question: look at
this guy and tell me if you think
he's out of shape.

Heather
(studies DANTE)
I don't know. I can't really tell
from here.

Trainer
He is.

DANTE
I am not.

Trainer
How much can you bench?

DANTE
I don't know.

Heather
(studying DANTE)
I'd say about sixty, seventy - tops.

DANTE
I know I can bench more than that!

Trainer
I think the lady called it.

Heather
My ex-boyfriend was about his height,
but he was much bulkier. He could
bench two fifty, three hundred easy.

Trainer
I do about three fifty, four.

Heather
No way!

Trainer
(rolling up sleeve)
Feel that.

Heather
(feels his muscle)
That's tight. Solid.

Trainer
Now feel his.
(to DANTE)
Roll up your sleeve, chief.

DANTE
Oh for God's sake!

Trainer
See? You're ashamed. you know you're
out of shape. Take my card. I can
help you tone that body up in no
time. Get you on an aerobics and
free-weights program.

A SUITED MAN carrying a notebook comes to the counter.

DANTE
I'm not out of shape.

Suited Man
Excuse me, but have you been here
all day?

Heather
(still studying DANTE)
He's got those love handles.

DANTE
(to HEATHER)
I don't have love handles.

Suited Man
Were you working here at about four
o'clock?

DANTE
I've been here since ten o'clock
this morning. Why?

Trainer
(to HEATHER)
It's probably from being around all
this food every day.

Heather
Oh I know. If I had to work here all
day, I'd probably be bloated and out
of shape too.

DANTE
I'm not out of shape!

Suited Man
Can I have your name please?

DANTE
DANTE Hicks. Why? What is this about.

The SUITED MAN scribbles in his notebook.

Heather
You're Dante Hicks?! Oh my God! I
didn't even recognize you!

Trainer
Because he's out of shape.

DANTE
Do I know you?

Heather
Do you remember Alyssa Jones? She
hung out with...

DANTE
....Caitlin Bree. Yeah?

Heather
I'm her sister.

DANTE
You're Alyssa's sister?! Heather?

Heather
Yes. I remember you used to come
over and make out with Caitlin in my
parents bedroom.

Trainer
Did you say Caitlin Bree?

DANTE
Yeah.

Trainer
Pretty girl, about this girl's
height - dark hair - gorgeous body?

DANTE
Yeah?

Trainer
And your name is Dante? You went to
Henry Hudson Regional? You play
hockey?

DANTE
How do you know that?

Trainer
Oh man! Hey, you still going out
with her?

DANTE
She's getting married.

Trainer
To you?

Heather
To an Asian design major.

Trainer
Shit, this is bizarre!
(to Dante)
Don't take this the wrong way, but I
used to fuck her.

DANTE
What?!

Trainer
While you two were dating in high
school. We're talking four, five
years ago, back when I drove a
Trans-Am.

Heather
Oh my God! You're Rick Derris?!

Trainer
Yeah!

DANTE
You know him?!

Heather
Caitlin used to talk about him all
the time.

Trainer
Really?

Heather
Oh yeah. You were the built older
guy with the black Trans and the
big...

DANTE
Wait a second!
(to TRAINER)
You used to sleep with Caitlin Bree?
While I was dating her?

Trainer

All the time. You'd be playing hockey or hanging out with your little friends, and I'd go over to her house. That girl was like a rabbit.

DANTE

I...I don't believe this...

Heather

(to TRAINER)

I still remember Caitlin telling us about that time you two went to that hotel - the one with the mirrors and the hot-tub in the room.

DANTE

THE GALLERY!?!

Trainer

Holy shit! She told you about that!

(to DANTE)

Buddy of mine worked there. Said he watched the whole thing. They used to film people at that hotel; nobody knew about it.

DANTE

Jesus!

Trainer

What else did she say about me?

Heather

(to DANTE)

Do you mind?

DANTE

No. No, I'd love to hear this.

Heather

(to TRAINER)

She said you were incredibly good. Forceful, powerful. She said you used to bring her to the beach at night and do it on the rocks.

DANTE

What?! When?! When did all this shit happen?!

Trainer

Hey, man, that was a long time ago. Don't let it get to you.

Heather

I can't believe you never found out about it, Dante. Everybody in school knew, even in my class.

DANTE

Jesus Christ, what next!?!

The SUITED MAN rips a piece of paper out of his notebook and hands it to DANTE.

Suited Man
Here you go.

DANTE
What's this?

Suited Man
A fine, for five hundred dollars.

DANTE
WHAT?!?

Trainer
Five hundred buck?! What for?

Suited Man
For violation of New Jersey Statute
Section two A, number one seventy
slash fifty one: Any person who
sells or makes available tobacco or
tobacco related products to persons
under the age of eighteen is
regarded as disorderly.

DANTE
What are you talking about?!

Suited Man
According to the NJAC - the New
Jersey Administrative Code, section
eighteen , five, slash twelve point
five - a fine of no-less than two
hundred and fifty dollars is to be
leveled against any person reported
selling cigarettes to a minor.

DANTE
I didn't do that!

Suited Man
You said you were here all day?

DANTE
Yeah, but I didn't sell cigarettes
to any kids!

Suited Man
An angry mother called the state
division of taxation and complained
that the man working at Quick Stop
convenience sold her five year old
daughter cigarettes today at around
four o'clock. Division of taxation
calls the State Board of Health, and
they send me down to issue a fine.
You say you were working all day,
hence the fine is your's. It's
doubled due to the incredibly young
age of the child.

DANTE
But I didn't sell cigarettes to any
kids!

Trainer
To a five year old kid?! What a
scumbag!

Heather
That's sick, Dante.

DANTE
I didn't sell cigarettes to any
kids! I swear!

Suited Man
The due date is on the bottom. This
summons cannot be contested in any
court of law. Failure to remit
before the due date will result in a
charge of criminal negligence, and a
warrant will be issued for your
arrest. Have a nice day.

The SUITED MAN exits, with DANTE trying to follow.

DANTE
But I didn't sell cigarettes to any
kids! Hey!

Trainer
(takes back card)
Forget it. I don't want to deal with
a guy that sells cigarettes to a
five year old.
(to HEATHER)
Can I offer you a ride somewhere?

Heather
Sure. How about the beach?

Trainer
I like the way you think.

The two exit. DANTE, alone, studies his summons. He rubs his forehead.

DANTE
What the fuck next?

OC Voice
DANTE?

DANTE spins, angrily.

DANTE
What?!

His expression softens.

DANTE
Caitlin?

CUT TO:

EXT VIDEO STORE - NIGHT

JAY
deals with a customer as SILENT BOB Looks on.

JAY
That's the price, my brother.

John
Yo, I don't have that kind of cash.

JAY
For this kind of has, you need that
kind of cash.

John
How long you gonna be here?

JAY
Till ten. Then I'm going to John K's
party.

John
You're gonna be at John K's party.

JAY
(to SILENT BOB)
My man is deaf.
(yelling)
I'M GOING TO JOHN K'S PARTY!
(quieter)
Neh.

John
Yo, don't sell all that. Cause I'm
gonna get the cash and buy it from
you at John K's. You're gonna bring
it, right?

JAY
The only place I don't bring my
drugs is church. And that ain't till
Sunday morning.

John
Yo. I'll see you at the party.
(puts his hand
up to be slapped)
I'll see you there?

JAY
(reluctantly
slapping hands)
I'll see you there.

JOHN leaves. JAY turns to SILENT BOB.

JAY
It's mother fuckers like that who
make this a dirty business.
(remembering)
Oh shit! I forgot! We gotta cut the
blow with flour.

CUT TO:

INT CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT

DANTE AND CAITLIN

are embracing very tightly. We hold on them for a few, just to let it sink in. Then...

DANTE

When did you get back?

Caitlin

Just now.

DANTE

My God. I haven't seen you since...

Caitlin

Dante. You've got a customer.

DANTE hops behind the counter. A customer pays for something while DANTE continues to talk.

Caitlin

I just saw Alyssa's little sister outside. She was with Rick Derris.

DANTE

Let's not talk about that. How'd you get home?

Caitlin

Train. It took eight hours.

DANTE

I can't believe you're here.

Another customer comes to the counter.

CUSTOMER

Excuse me, do you have...

DANTE

(to CUSTOMER)

To the back, above the oil.

(to CAITLIN)

How long are you staying?

Caitlin

Until Monday. The I have to take the train back.

Yet another customer comes to the counter.

CUSTOMER

Pack of cigarettes

(to CAITLIN)

Congratulations. I saw that announcement in today's paper.

(to DANTE)

She's marrying an Asian design major.

DANTE

So I'm told.

The customer leaves.

Caitlin

You saw it?

DANTE

Very dramatic, I thought. Your mother?

Caitlin

Who else. But it's not what you think.

DANTE

What, it's worse? You're pregnant with an Asian design major's child?

Caitlin

I'm not pregnant.

DANTE

Were you going to tell me or just send me an invitation?

Caitlin

I was going to tell you. But then we were getting along so well, I didn't want to mess it up.

DANTE

You could've broke it to me gently you know; at least started by telling me you had a boyfriend. I told you I had a girlfriend.

Caitlin

I know, I'm sorry. But when we started talking...it's like I forgot I had a boyfriend. And then he proposed last month...

DANTE

And you said yes?

Caitlin

Well...kind of, sort of?

DANTE

Is that what they teach you at that school of your's: kind of, sort of? Everyone knows about this except me! Do you know how humiliating that is?

Caitlin

I would've told you, and you would have stopped calling, like a baby.

DANTE

How do you know that?

Caitlin

Because I know you. You prefer drastic measures to rational ones.

DANTE
So you're really getting married?

Caitlin
No.

DANTE
No, you're not really getting married?

Caitlin
The story goes like this: he proposed, and I told him I had to think about it, and he insisted I wear the ring anyway. Then my mother told the paper we were engaged.

DANTE
How like her.

Caitlin
Then my mother called me this morning and told me the announcement was in the paper. That's when I hopped the train to come back here, because I knew you'd be a wreck.

DANTE
Thanks for the vote of confidence.

Caitlin
Was I right?

DANTE
Wreck is a harsh term. Disturbed is more like it. Mildly disturbed even.

Caitlin
I love a macho façade. It's such a turn-on.

DANTE
And you came here to what? To comfort me?

Caitlin
The last thing I needed was for you to think I was hiding something from you.

DANTE
But you were.

Caitlin
No I wasn't. Not really. I told you I'd been seeing other people.

DANTE
Yeah, but no seriously. Christ, you're ready to walk down the aisle - I'd say that constitutes something more than just seeing somebody.

Caitlin
I'm giving him his ring back.

DANTE
What?

Caitlin
I don't want to marry him. I don't want to get married now. I'm on the verge of graduation. I want to go to grad school after this. And then I want to start a career. I don't want to be a wife first, and then have to worry about when I'm going to fit in all of the other stuff. I've come way too far and studied too hard to let me education go to waste as a housewife. And I know that's what I'd become. Sang's already signed with a major firm, and he's going to be pulling a huge salary, which would give me no reason to work, and he's so traditional anyway...

DANTE
Sang? His name is a past tense?

Caitlin
Stop it. He's a nice guy.

DANTE
If he's so nice, why aren't you going to marry him?

Caitlin
I just told you.

DANTE
There's more, isn't there?

Caitlin
Why Mister Hicks - whatever do you mean?

DANTE
Tell me I don't have anything to do with it.

Caitlin
You don't have anything to do with it.

DANTE
You lie.

Caitlin
Look how full of yourself you are.

DANTE
I just believe in giving credit where credit is due. And I believe that I'm the impetus behind your refusal to wed.

Caitlin

If I'm so nuts about you, then why am I having sex with an Asian design major.

DANTE

Ouch! Jesus, you're caustic.

Caitlin

I had to bring you down from that cloud you were floating on. When I say I don't want to get married, I mean just that. I don't want to marry anybody. Not for years.

DANTE

So who's asking? I don't want to marry you.

Caitlin

Good. Stay in that frame of mind.

DANTE

But can we date?

Caitlin

I'm sure Sang and - Veronica? - would like that.

DANTE

We could introduce them. They might hit it off.

Caitlin

You're serious. You want to date again?

DANTE

I would like to be your boyfriend, yes.

Caitlin

It's the shock of seeing me after three years. Believe me, you'll get over it.

DANTE

Give me a bit more credit. I think it's time we got back together, you know. I'm more mature, you're more mature, you're finishing college, I'm already in the job market...

Caitlin

This is a market, alright.

DANTE

Tell me you wouldn't want to go out again. After all the talking we've been doing.

Caitlin

The key word is talk, Dante. I think the idea, the conception of us dating is more idyllic than what actually happens when we date.

DANTE

So....what? So we should just make pretend over the phone that we're dating?

Caitlin

I don't know. Maybe we should just see what happens.

DANTE

Let me take you out tonight.

Caitlin

You mean, on a date?

DANTE

Yes. A real date. Dinner and a movie.

Caitlin

The Dante Hicks Dinner and a Movie Date. I think I've been on that one before.

DANTE

You have a better suggestion?

Caitlin

How about the Caitlin Bree Walk on the Boardwalk, Then Get Naked Somewhere Kind of Private Date?

DANTE

I hear that's a rather popular date.

Caitlin

(hits him)

Jerk. Here I am, throwing myself at you, succumbing to your wily charms, and you call me a slut, in so many words.

DANTE

What about Sing?

Caitlin

Sang.

DANTE

Sang.

Caitlin

He's not invited.

DANTE

He's your fiancé.

Caitlin

I offer you my body and you offer me semantics? He's my boyfriend, Dante, and in case you haven't gotten the drift of why I came all the way here from Ohio, I'm about to become single again. And yes - allow me to placate your ego - you are the inspiration for this bold and momentous decision, for which I'll probably be ostracized at both school and home. You ask me to who I choose, I choose you.

DANTE

So...what are you saying?

Caitlin

You're such an asshole.

DANTE

I'm just kidding.

Caitlin

I can already tell this isn't going to work.

DANTE

I'll ask Randal to close up for me - when he gets back.

Caitlin

Where'd he go? I'd have thought he'd be at your side, like an obedient lap dog.

DANTE

He went to pick up his girlfriend, but he hasn't gotten back yet. Ah screw it; I'll just lock the store up and leave him a note.

Caitlin

You're too responsible. But no. I have to go home first. They don't even know I left school. And I should break the disengagement news to my mother, which is going to cause quite a row, considering she loves Sang.

DANTE

Who doesn't?

Caitlin

Well, me I guess.

(gathering herself to go)

So, I shall take my leave of you, but I will return in a little while, at which time - yes - I would love to go for dinner and a movie with you.

DANTE
What happened to the walk and the
nakedness?

Caitlin
I'm easy, but I'm not that easy.
(she kisses his cheek)
See you later, handsome.

DANTE watches her leave. He then explodes in jubilation.

DANTE
YES!!!
(he does a little dance)

A rough, burly man, chewing on a stubby cigar come in.

Burly
Hey, when the fuck is that video
store gonna open?!

DANTE grabs the man and dances with him. The man seems to jump right
into the rhythm of the surreal waltz. DANTE finishes by dipping the
BURLY man.

CUSTOMER
(dryly)
Oh, you dance divinely.

CUT TO:

EXT VIDEO STORE - NIGHT

JAY AND SILENT BOB
lean against the wall.

JAY
It's slow.

SILENT BOB walks out of the frame, leaving JAY alone against the wall.
He comes back a few seconds later, carrying a mini-walkman with ten watt
speakers. He sets it down on the ground and turns it on. House music
starts playing. Jay - possessed by the beat - breaks into an impromptu
dance, in which he busts suggestive and often lewd moves. SILENT BOB
leans against the wall.

CUT TO:

INT CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

DANTE
sniffs a package of Fig Newtons. He inhales very deeply. An OLDER LADY
customer nods her head approvingly. She's in her seventies, and she
holds a generic brand of fig newtons.

Older Lady
Am I right? They smell different.

DANTE
All I smell is cardboard.

Older Lady
You've gotta inhale beyond the
cardboard. Go ahead.

DANTE
Basically you're saying that the
generic fig bars are superior to the
brand name fig bars.

Older Lady
Isn't it obvious. The smell alone
says it all.

DANTE
I really can't smell either of them
through the packaging.

RANDAL enters and approaches them.

DANTE
(extending Newtons)
Smell these.

RANDAL
(inhales)
Smells like cardboard.

Older lady
You can't smell anything because you
both watch too much t.v.

The OLDER LADY goes about her shopping.

RANDAL
There she goes. Off to buy her dog
food. That's all old people can
afford, you know. I saw an episode
of 'Good Times' all about it.

DANTE
Where's Samantha?

RANDAL
Oh we had sex at her house. That way
I didn't have to bring her here.

DANTE
I got fined for selling cigarettes
to a minor.

RANDAL
No way!

DANTE
Five hundred dollars.

RANDAL
You're bullshitting.

DANTE hands him the summons. RANDAL reads it.

RANDAL
Holy shit. I didn't think they even
enforced this.

DANTE
(pointing to himself)
Living proof.

RANDAL
I thought you never sold cigarettes
to kids.

DANTE
I don't; you did.

RANDAL
(pause)
Really?

DANTE
Little girl. Maybe six years old?

RANDAL
(taken aback)
Holy shit. That girl?

DANTE
As opposed to the hundreds of other
children you let buy cigarettes
whenever you work here.

RANDAL
Then how come you got the fine?

DANTE
Because I'm here.

RANDAL
(incredulous)
You're lying.

DANTE
I swear. I couldn't make this kind
of hell up.

RANDAL
Then why aren't you like screaming
at me right now?

DANTE
Because I'm happy.

RANDAL
You're happy?

DANTE
I'm happy.

RANDAL
You're happy to get a fine?

DANTE
No, I'm happy because Caitlin came
to see me.

RANDAL
Now I know you're lying.

DANTE
I swear to God. She just left.

RANDAL
What did she say?

DANTE
She's not going to marry that guy.
She went home to tell her mother.

RANDAL
You're kidding.

DANTE
I'm not.

RANDAL
(takes it in for a moment)
Wow. You've had quite an evening.
From the depths of hell, to the
heights of Heaven.

DANTE
She's coming back, and we're going
out.

RANDAL
I feel so ineffectual. Is there
anything I can do for you?

DANTE
Watch the register while I carry
Mrs. Krepp's groceries to her house
for her.

RANDAL
You want me to do it so you can be
here is Caitlin comes?

DANTE
Mrs. Krepp doesn't like you. You
stay here, and if Caitlin gets back
before I do, tell her that I'll be
along shortly.

RANDAL
For a little bathroom action?

The OLDER LADY comes back to the counter and presents a few items for
pricing.

DANTE
I am not a bathroom action sort of
guy, thank you very much.

RANDAL
What's wrong with sex in the
bathroom?
(to OLDER LADY)
Mrs. Krepp, did you ever have sex in
the bathroom with your husband while
he was still alive?

Older Lady

God, no. I tried to screw my husband as little as possible. He was an awful lay.

DANTE

Whoa. I thought you and Mr. Krepp had a great marriage.

Older lady

Oh, we did. But he was a lousy lay. I was lucky if he lasted two, three minutes. I used to top myself off with a rolling pin when he fell asleep.

RANDAL

A rolling pin?!

Older Lady

We're talking about the days before vibratin' devices, boy. Gals these days have it easier. They don't even need men anymore.

DANTE packs her groceries into a large bag.

DANTE

(to Randal)

Well, let's hope that Caitlin doesn't feel that way.

RANDAL

I don't think you have to worry about that - Caitlin's always needed men.

DANTE stops packing and glares at RANDAL.

RANDAL

Oh...did I say that? I'm sorry.

DANTE

(to OLDER LADY)

And I call him my best friend.

RANDAL

(suddenly aware)

Hey, what about Veronica?

DANTE

No! Don't bring it up. I don't want to think about that now, let me enjoy this hour of bliss. I'll think about all of that later. In the meantime, nobody mentions the 'V' word.

RANDAL

(to OLDER LADY)

Can you believe this guy? He's got a girlfriend and he's hounding around after a chick that's engaged to an Asian design major. He's a beast, I tell you!

Older Lady
You leave Dante alone. He's a good boy.

(to DANTE)
When we get to my house, I'm gonna give you a nice piece of dog food meatloaf.

(to RANDAL)
That's all we elderly can afford, you know.

DANTE takes the bag and follows the OLDER LADY toward the door.

DANTE
(to RANDAL)
Tell Caitlin not to go anywhere. I'll be right back.

They exit. RANDAL waits on a customer. The customer pets the cat.

CUSTOMER
Cute cat. What's his name?

RANDAL
Enema-bag.

CUT TO:

EXT STREET - NIGHT

DANTE
carries the grocery bag as the OLDER LADY hobbles along - cane in hand - besides him.

Older Lady
So is it true what he said: you're skirt-chasing while you have a girlfriend?

DANTE
Um...it's hard to say.

Older Lady
I've met your girlfriend, haven't I?

DANTE
Veronica? I think so. She'd be the one telling me I'm stuck in a dead-end job, and I should go back to college.

Older Lady
She's right.

DANTE
I know she's right, but I hate being reminded all the time.

Older Lady

She's staying on top of you. She knows that you're cut out for better things than being a clerk your whole life.

DANTE

It's annoying.

Older Lady

It's love. She loves you, boy. Now who's this other girl?

DANTE

Caitlin? Oh, we go way back.

Older Lady

You're talking to a seventy eight year old woman. Trust me, you don't know from way back.

DANTE

We dated in high school. She's in college now, but she's graduating soon. We've always... I don't know. She makes me feel a certain way that no one else can even come close to making me feel. Talking to her, seeing here...it's powerful, you know?

Older Lady

I felt that way about someone once. Nora Miller. She was a Ziegfield girl, way back in the day. God, that woman could do things...!

(sighs)

I was born into the wrong damned era. Back then, things were about being proper and socially acceptable. Now everything's more liberal, and I'm too old to take full advantage of it all. If things back then were like they are now, I would have never gotten married.

DANTE

Really?

Older Lady

Hell no. I would've stayed single and slept around. But that wasn't what you did then. you were expected to get married. And what did I get from it all? One of my kids dies in a war, the other lives twelve miles away and only visits maybe twice a year. The husband ups and croaks on me, and all I got to look forward to is a Social Security check every month.

DANTE

You paint a bleak portrait, Mrs. Krepp.

They stop in front of the house.

Older Lady

You want the advice of an old woman, Dante? Go after the heartbreaker. Go after the one that makes you feel alive inside, gives you a hard-on. Because if you don't, you'll never be able to sleep well at nights. I can promise you that.

DANTE

But what about Veronica?

Older Lady

Is she a nice person?

DANTE

Well then she loses. Nice people always get screwed over.

CUT TO:

INT CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT

CAITLIN

enters, carrying an overnight bag. RANDAL is reading at the counter.

Caitlin

Well! If it isn't Randal Graves, the scourge of the video renter.

RANDAL

Caitlin Bree. I hear you've seduced my boy Dante. What would your Asian design major fiancé say?

Caitlin

You saw that article? God, isn't it awful? My mother sent it in.

RANDAL

I take it she likes the guy.

Caitlin

You'd think she was marrying him.

RANDAL

What'd she say when you told her the engagement was off?

Caitlin

She said not to come home until graduation. I'm going to have to stay at Dante's tonight.

RANDAL

Wow, you got thrown out? For Dante?!

Caitlin

What can I say? He does weird things to me.

RANDAL
Can I watch?

Caitlin
You can hold me down.

RANDAL
Promises, promises. So what makes you think you can maintain a relationship with Dante this time around?

Caitlin
It's different this time. We've both done a lot of growing in the past four years.

RANDAL
And this is your reason for breaking off an engagement?

Caitlin
That and I want to fuck his brains out.

RANDAL
Ah! Elegantly put.

Caitlin
Can I use the bathroom?

RANDAL
It's a hard one. There's no lights back there. Dante's the only one who can navigate the back room in the dark.

Caitlin
Why aren't there any lights?

RANDAL
Well, there are, but for some reason they stop working at five fourteen every night.

Caitlin
You're kidding.

RANDAL
Nobody can figure it out. And the boss doesn't want to pay the electrician to fix it, because the electrician owes money in the video store.

Caitlin
Such a sordid state of affairs.

RANDAL
And I'm caught up in the middle - torn between my loyalty for the boss, and my desire to piss with the lights on.

Caitlin
Well, I think I can manage. I've
picked up a few of Dante's extra
sensory powers over the years.

She heads toward the back.

RANDAL
Hey Caitlin...
(cautionary)
Don't break his heart again this
time, okay?

Caitlin
You're very protective of him,
Randal. You always have been.

RANDAL
Territoriality. He was mine first.

Caitlin
How primitive.

She heads into the cooler. A customer pokes his head in the door.

CUSTOMER
Is the video store open?

RANDAL
you didn't hear? The Feds closed it
down this morning.

CUSTOMER
The Feds? Why?

RANDAL
They were renting child porn and
snuff videos.

CUT TO:

EXT CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT

DANTE
walks past JAY on his way back to the store.

JAY
Who was that delicate creature you
were talking to before?

DANTE
Why?

JAY
She was hootie mack, boy. Too fine.

DANTE
Hootie mack? Her name is Caitlin
Bree.

JAY
(taken aback)
That's Caitlin Bree?

DANTE

Yeah.

JAY

That's Caitlin Bree?

DANTE

Yeah. Why?

JAY

Oh shit!

DANTE

You know her?

JAY

I don't know her, but I heard a story about her once.

DANTE

What story?

JAY

Are you going out with her?

DANTE

Why?

JAY

'Cause I don't want you pissed at me if I tell you this story.

DANTE

I won't be pissed.

JAY

I don't know, my brother. It has dirty parts.

DANTE

Just tell me the story.

JAY

(looks around)

One of my contemporaries told me this story.

DANTE

You mean another drug dealer?

JAY

you make it sound like a bad thing, dude. Anyway, he said that this one time, he was at a party in Atlantic, and he was making money! Everybody there had cash, and he sold everything he was carrying; all except the hits...

DANTE

Hits?

JAY

Acid, my man. Crazy nonsense, make you see all kinds of shit.

DANTE

I know what acid is.

JAY

Anyway, this girl comes up to him, and she's so lit, and she's like 'Let me get some blow', and he's like 'Nah, I'm all out'. And so she's like 'Let me get some weed'. And he's like 'Ain't got no weed'. So she's like 'What do you have?' and he's like 'Acid'. So she's like 'Alright, let me get some acid'. Only she looks in her purse, and she's broke. So she's like 'Can I pay you for it tomorrow?', and he's like 'Cash upfront'. So she's like jonesing, so she says 'What if I suck your dick for it?' and he's like 'Alright'.

(to passing person)

You want some blow? A dime bag?

DANTE

Finish the story.

JAY

Oh yeah. So she wants like twenty hits for her and her friends if she's gonna suck his dick, so he gives her like half at first. She takes a hit, and they go into the laundry room, and she starts sucking his dick, and he said it was like the best fucking blowjob he ever had.

DANTE

I don't think this was the same girl.

JAY

Wait, I'm not even finished. So she's tripping and sucking his dick, but all the sudden the trip must have went bad, because she rips into his dick with her teeth, but she's still jerking him off and sucking his dick! And there's like blood flying everywhere, and he's fucking screaming, and his dick has this huge slice going up it, and somebody called the cops, and the ambulance came. He said it was a mess.

DANTE

And he said the girl was Caitlin Bree?

JAY

Yeah. I always remember that name when some bitty says she'll suck my Melvin for blow. I just think of my boy's dick all stitched up and shit, and how he couldn't do anything with it for like a year. I don't care if the bitch is a fucking goddess....

(makes his finger go limp)

Melvin's out of there.

DANTE

When did all this happen?

JAY

I think she was still in high school because my friend said he used to do work on her boyfriend's car in auto shop.

DANTE rolls his eyes. He slowly walks away, leaving JAY behind.

JAY

He just walks away. Rude son of a bitch.

(suddenly spotting something OC)

Hey baby! You ever have your asshole licked?

CUT TO:

INT CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT

DANTE

rubs his forehead as RANDAL joins him near the coffee machine.

DANTE

Who used to work on my car in auto shop?

RANDAL

That stoner, Rupert Haines. Remember him? He got busted selling coke in the main office.

(suddenly remembering)

Hey, Caitlin's in the back. You might want to see if she's okay; she's been back there a long time.

DANTE

There's no lights back there.

RANDAL

I told her that. She said she didn't need any. Why don't you join her, man. Make a little bathroom bam-bam.

DANTE

I love your sexy talk. It's so.... kindergarten.

RANDAL

Poo-poo; wee-wee; pee-pee.

The cooler door is heard opening.

CAITLIN

walks lazily down the convenience store aisle. She looks very satisfied.

DANTE AND RANDAL

regard her curiously. She joins them, latching onto DANTE'S arm, lovingly.

Caitlin

How'd you get here so fast?

DANTE

Mrs. Krepp's house is only around the block.

Caitlin

(regards him curiously)

Do you always talk weird after you violate women?

RANDAL

you violated Mrs. Krepp?

DANTE

Not that I know of.

Caitlin

(hugging DANTE)

Ooooh! Promise me it'll always be like that.

DANTE

Like what?

Caitlin

When you just lay perfectly still and let me do everything.

DANTE

Um....okay.

RANDAL

Am I missing something here?

Caitlin

I went back there, and Dante was already waiting for me.

RANDAL

He was?

Caitlin

It was so cool. He didn't say a word. He was just...ready, you know? And we didn't kiss or talk or anything. He just sat there and let me do all the work.

RANDAL

(to DANTE)

You dog! I didn't see you go back there.

DANTE is bewildered.

Caitlin
And the fact that there wasn't any
lights made it so...
(she lets out a
growl and hugs DANTE)
Oh Dante! That was the best sex
we've ever had.

DANTE
(quietly)
It wasn't me.

Caitlin
(laughing it off)
Yeah, right. Who was it: Randal?

DANTE
(to RANDAL)
Was it you?

RANDAL
I was up here the whole time.

Caitlin
(half-laughing)
You two better quit it.

DANTE
I'm serious.

Caitlin
(beat)
We didn't just have sex in the
bathroom?

DANTE
No.

Everyone is silent. Then...

Caitlin
Stop this. This isn't funny.

DANTE
I'm not kidding. I just got back
from outside.

Caitlin
(covering her chest)
This isn't fucking funny, Dante!

DANTE
I'm not fooling around!
(to RANDAL)
Who went back there?

RANDAL
Nobody! I swear!

Caitlin
I feel nauseous.

DANTE
Are you sure somebody was back
there?

Caitlin
(hits DANTE)
I didn't just fuck myself!! Jesus,
I'm going to be sick!

RANDAL
You fucked a total stranger?

DANTE
Shut the fuck up, Randal!

Caitlin
I can't believe this! I feel
faint....

DANTE
(to RANDAL)
Call the police.

RANDAL
Why?

Caitlin
No, don't!

DANTE
There's a strange man in our
bathroom, and he just raped Caitlin!

Caitlin
(weakly)
Oh God....

RANDAL
It wasn't really rape; she said she
did all the work.

DANTE
WOULD YOU SHUT THE FUCK UP!?!
(pause)
WHO THE FUCK IS IN THE BATHROOM!?!

CUT TO:

THE OLD MAN'S FACE
is serene, almost happy, as he lays on a stretcher. (same OLD MAN who
took a porn mag to the bathroom)

OC CORONER
Who is he?

The body bag zipper is pulled closed.

DANTE, THE CORONER, AND RANDAL
stand around the stretcher-bound body bag. The CORONER takes notes.

DANTE

I don't know. He just came in and asked to use the bathroom.

Coroner

What time was this?

DANTE

Um....I don't know.

(to RANDAL)

What time did hockey end?

RANDAL

Around two or something

DANTE

What time did we go to the funeral?

RANDAL

I think three thirty, four.

Coroner

Wait a second? Who was working here today?

DANTE

Just me.

Coroner

I thought you just said you played hockey and went to a funeral.

DANTE

We did.

Coroner

Then who operated the store?

DANTE

Nobody. It was closed.

Coroner

With this guy locked in?

DANTE

I guess. Everything happened at once. I guess I forgot he was back there.

An Ambulance Attendants join them.

Attendant 1

Can we take this now.

Coroner

Go ahead.

The stretcher is wheeled out. Mid-way down the body bag, something protrudes, pushing the bag up. It is an erection. RANDAL stares at it.

DANTE

Was he alive when....Caitlin...you know...

Coroner
No. I place the time of death at
about three twenty.

RANDAL
The how could she...you know...

Coroner
The body can maintain an erection
after expiration. Sometimes for
hours. Did he have the adult
magazine when he came in.

DANTE
No. I gave it to him.

RANDAL and the CORONER stare in disbelief.

DANTE
Well he asked me for it!

RANDAL
How'd he die?

Coroner
I can't say for certain until we get
him back to the lab, but my guess is
the excitement of...touching himself
...provoked a heart attack.

DANTE
Great! In our bathroom.

RANDAL
No way!
(to CORONER)
This has gotta be the weirdest thing
you've ever been called in on.

Coroner
(writing)
Actually, I once had to tag a kid
that broke his neck trying to put
his mouth on his penis.

RANDAL looks down, anonymously.

DANTE
What about Caitlin?

Coroner
Shock trauma. She's going to need
years of therapy after this. My
question is: how did she come to
have sex with the dead man.

DANTE
She thought it was me.

The CORONER stares at DANTE.

Coroner
What kind of convenience store do
you run here?!?

He exits. DANTE and RANDAL stare at the floor.

RANDAL
I feel like we're in a twisted
episode of 'Three's Company'.

CUT TO:

EXT VIDEO STORE - NIGHT

A BLANK WALL
fills the frame. The SILENT BOB steps into it. He leans against the wall
and looks around casually.

OC Jay
(timidly)
Are the cops gone?

SILENT BOB looks around again, and then nods to OC. JAY leaps into the
frame, all piss and vinegar.

JAY
It's a good thing, too. I was
getting ready to waste that fuck.
(singing)
Fuck the police, coming straight
from the underground!
(not singing)
I was getting ready to walk right up
to him and say "Yo, I sell drugs; so
what, motherfucker?!"
(swings at the air)
Pow! In the mouth! Poom! In the gut!

A BYSTANDER joins them.

Bystander
What was with the ambulance and the
cops?

JAY
I fucked up a cop. Sonofabitch tried
to sucker me from behind, but I cam
across like...
(enacting a defensive move)
Boom! Boom! They didn't even arrest
me because they knew I was right.
Fucking cops - they don't know shit.
Hey, you wanna buy any weed or
something? I got the dope shit.

Bystander
I'm a cop.

JAY
(pause)
So?

Bystander
So I don't appreciate those
comments.

JAY
I said cock. I fucked up a cock.
Like a dickhead? Some guy who was
bad-mouthing the police. I had to
give him what for, on behalf of the
boys in blue.

Bystander
What's your name?

JAY
(pause)
Al.

Bystander
Al what?

JAY
Al be seein' you!

JAY takes off out of the frame, followed by the BYSTANDER. SILENT BOB
remains against the wall.

CUT TO:

INT CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT

A JAR OF SALSA SAUCE
is invaded by a large corn chip. Once in the condiment, the corn chip
resembles a surfacing shark fin. Fingers poke at it, bringing it to life
- swimming menacingly to and fro across the jar.

OC Randal
(mumbling 'JAWS' theme)
Da-dum! Da-dum! Da-Dum! DA-DUM!
DA-DUM! DA-DUM!

DANTE AND RANDAL
are on a freezer case. RANDAL pushes the chip around the jar of salsa;
DANTE stares up at the ceiling, oblivious.

RANDAL
Salsa Shark.

DANTE says nothing.

RANDAL
(as Brody)
"We're gonna need a bigger boat."

DANTE still says nothing.

RANDAL
(as Hooper)
"It's a Condiment Carcaius. It's a
great white!"

DANTE says even less than nothing.

RANDAL
(as Quint)
"Man goes into the cage; cage goes
into the salsa; shark's in the
salsa; Our shark."

DANTE...you know.

RANDAL
(angry)
What?! What's with you? For the love
of Christ, you haven't said anything
for like twenty minutes. I've got a
mini-drama going on here.

DANTE
Why do I have this life?

RANDAL
It speaks.

DANTE
Why do I have this life?

RANDAL
As opposed to...?

DANTE
As opposed to a life where every
aspect isn't clouded with pure shit.

RANDAL
Have some chips; you'll feel better.

DANTE
I'm stuck in this pit, earning less-
than slave wages, working on my day
off, dealing with every backwards
fuck this hellish existence offers
up, and ex-girlfriend whose no
doubt insane by now after fucking a
dead guy in the bathroom, a
girlfriend who's sucked thirty six
dicks...

RANDAL
Thirty seven.

DANTE
And then there's you.

RANDAL
Me? What'd I do?

DANTE
Oh, Jesus, not much...just got me
slapped with a five hundred dollar
fine.

RANDAL
Who knew the kid was a nark?

DANTE

Thanks to you, I'm most likely wanted in connection with some light necrophiliac petting charges Julie Dwyer's family is bound to level against me.

RANDAL

Ironic. You never hear about anybody being intimate with a dead body, and then boom! Twice in one day.

DANTE

My life is in the shitter right about now, so if you don't mind, I'd like to stew a bit.

OC Customer

Can I get a pack of Marlboro?

RANDAL hops off the freezer and steps OC.

OC Randal

That's all bullshit. You know what the real problem here is?

DANTE

I was born.

RANDAL comes back.

RANDAL

You don't face up to shit. Like now: what are you really cheesed about?

DANTE

Must I detail it again?

RANDAL

No, you listed a ton of crap, but that's all it was: crap. You refuse to address the one topic that's been eating at you all day.

DANTE

Oh? And what's that?

RANDAL

Caitlin vs. Veronica

DANTE

What are you talking about?

RANDAL

You carry a torch for a girl you dated in high school. In high school, for God's sake! You're twenty two!

DANTE

I don't carry a torch.

RANDAL

When was the last time you saw Caitlin, Dante?

DANTE

I talked to her last night.

RANDAL

When was the last time you saw her?

DANTE

I don't know. Three years ago.

RANDAL

Three years ago. People change, man.

DANTE

What am I, stupid? You don't think I know that?

RANDAL

No, I don't think you know that. I think you've got it in your head that just because you've talked a couple of times - on the phone, no less - you and Caitlin are on the mend of something.

DANTE

Wait a second. What are you saying here? Are you saying I should stay with Veronica? Since when did you become her champion?

RANDAL

I'm not saying anything for either of them. I think they're both manipulative. What I am saying is that you should shit or get off the pot.

DANTE

I should shit or get off the pot.

RANDAL

Yeah, you should shit or get off the pot. If you want Caitlin, then face Veronica, tell her, and be with Caitlin. If you want Veronica, be with Veronica. But don't pine for one and fuck the other. Make your choice and stick with it.

DANTE

Are you done analyzing me?

RANDAL

Yeah, but not like it's going to help. 'Not improving your situation' is your forte.

DANTE

Fuck you.

RANDAL

It's true. You'll sit there and blame life for dealing you a cruddy hand, never once accepting the responsibility for the way your situation is.

DANTE

What responsibility?

RANDAL

Alright, if you hate this job and the people, and the fact that you have to come in on your day off, then quit. Move on; get a different job.

DANTE

As if it's that easy.

RANDAL

It is. You just up and quit.

DANTE

There are a few different aspects to be thought of here: bills, money...

RANDAL

There are other jobs, and they pay better money. You're bound to be qualified for at least one of them. So what's stopping you?

DANTE

Leave me alone.

RANDAL

You're comfortable. This is a life of convenience, and to attempt a change in your routine would shatter the pathetic microcosm you've fashioned for yourself.

DANTE

Oh, like you life is better.

RANDAL

I'm satisfied with my situation for now. You don't hear me bitching. You, on the other had, have been bitching all day.

DANTE

Thank you. Why don't you go back to the video store?

RANDAL

The same applies to your personal life.

DANTE

Oh, now I have a personal life?

RANDAL

If you can call it that. You'll continue to date Veronica because it's easy, it's convenient. Meanwhile, all you ever do is talk about Caitlin. If you weren't such a fucking coward...

DANTE

...If I wasn't suck a fucking coward.

(chuckles)

It must be so great to be able to simplify everything the way you do.

RANDAL

Am I right or what?

DANTE

You're wrong. Caitlin and I can't be together. It's impossible.

RANDAL

Melodrama coming from you seems about as natural as a beaver shitting chicken eggs.

DANTE

What do you want me to say?! Yes, I suppose some of the things you're saying may be true. But what's that point in analyzing it. It's the way things are. That's not going to change.

RANDAL

Make them change.

DANTE

(cathartic)

I can't, alright! Jesus, would you leave me along?! I can't make changes like that in my life. If I could, I would, but I don't have the ability to risk comfortable situations on the big money and fabulous prizes.

RANDAL

Who're you kidding? You can so.

DANTE

I can't. I'm tell you.

RANDAL

So you'll continue being miserable all the time, just because you don't have the guts to face change?

DANTE

(sadly)

My mother told me once that when I was three, my potty lid was closed, and instead of lifting it, I chose to shit my pants.

(resolute)

I'm not the kind of person that disrupts things in order to shit comfortably.

DANTE crosses OC. RANDAL appears contemplative.

CUT TO:

EXT VIDEO STORE - NIGHT

SILENT BOB

leans against the wall. JAY drags himself into the frame, sweating, huffing and puffing. He lays a hand on SILENT BOB'S chest and leans over, spitting on the ground.

JAY

(through labored breathing)

I lost him...Damn!...That mother fucker was ...fast.

TWO KIDS join them, carrying skateboards.

Kid 1

Why were you running from that guy?

JAY

He caught me...fucking his wife.

Kid 2

That's guy's a Middletown cop.

JAY

Now somebody tells me.

Kid 1

You got any weed?

JAY

I got a couple of joints.

Kid 2

How much?

JAY

Five each.

Kid 1

Five bucks each?! That's a rip-off!

JAY

you don't like it...fuck you.

Kid 2

(looking OC)

Hey, there's that guy - the cop.

Kid 1
YO! OVER HERE!

JAY
(in a panic)
Alright, alright! Shut up! You can
have them...
(hands them joints)
Just get the fuck outa here and keep
your mouth shut.

The KIDS skate off, laughing. JAY looks OC for the cop, hiding behind
SILENT BOB.

JAY
Do you see him? Did he see me?

OC Kid 1
YO! JAY'S GIVING AWAY FREE WEED!!!

JAY
(to SILENT BOB)
Meet me at the party in Atlantic!

JAY, again, runs OC, followed shortly after by the BYSTANDER. SILENT BOB
shakes his head and walks off in the opposite direction.

CUT TO:

INT CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT

DANTE
scrubs an empty coffee pot. JAY enters and drops to his knees, peeking
through the window. Slowly he rises, continuing to look outside.
Satisfied, he stands fully erect and claps his hands together,
triumphantly.

JAY
(singing)
The five o'clock whistle's on the
blink
The work is all done and what you
think...
(to DANTE)
A pack of wraps, my good man. It's
time to kick back and smoke some
weed, drink some beers.

DANTE
Done poisoning the youth of Leonardo
for the day?

JAY
Hell's yes, whatever that means. And
I just outran a cop. It's shaping up
to be a good night. Now I'm gonna
head over to Atlantic, hit a party,
get ripped, and -please God- get
laid.
(pulls out money)
E-Z Wider, one and a halves.

DANTE
One seventy nice.

JAY
Don't you close soon?

DANTE
Half hour.

JAY
We get off about the same time every night. We should hang out. You get high, man?

DANTE
I should start.

JAY
Wanna come to this party tonight? There's gonna be booty!

DANTE
With you? I don't think so.

JAY
Listen to you. Oh shit. "Oh, I don't hang with drug dealers."

DANTE
Nothing personal.

JAY
(pulls out weed)
I work, just like you. You're more of a crook than I am, dude.

DANTE
How do you figure. Hey, what are you doing...?

JAY
(rolling a joint)
Relax, brother. What I mean is that you sell the stuff in the store at the highest price around. A dollar seventy nine for wraps - what is that?

DANTE
It's not my store.

JAY
And these aren't my drugs - I just sell them.

DANTE
The difference is you exploit a weakness.

JAY
What's that mean?

DANTE
You sell to people that can't stay away from addiction.

JAY

Alright. How much is Pepsi here?

DANTE

A dollar sixty nine, plus tax.

JAY

At Food City it's ninety nine cents, plus tax.

DANTE

So.

JAY

So why do you sell it for so much more? I'll tell you why - because people come here and they're like 'A dollar eighty for soda? I should get it at Food City. But I don't feel like driving there. I'll just buy it here so I don't have to drive up there.' That's exploiting a weakness too, isn't it?

DANTE

I can't believe you just rolled a joint in here.

JAY

Hey man, what happened with that old guy?

DANTE

He died in the bathroom.

JAY

That's fucked up. Yo, I heard he was jerkin' off.

DANTE

I don't know. I wasn't watching.

JAY

Probably saw that Caitlin chick. I know I felt like beatin' it when I saw her.

(pantomimes sex)

Come here, bitch. Is this what you want?! Hunhh?!

DANTE

Knock it off. That used to be my girlfriend.

JAY

No way. You used to go out with her?

DANTE

We were going to start again, I think.

JAY

Wait a second. Don't you have a girlfriend already?

DANTE

Veronica.

JAY

Is she that girl who's down here all the time? She came here today carrying a plate of food.

DANTE

Lasagne.

JAY

And what - you were gonna dump her to date that Caitlin girl?

DANTE

Maybe.

JAY

I don't know, dude. That Caitlin girl's fine. But I always see that Veronica girl doing shit for you. She brings you food, she rubs your back... Didn't I see her change your tire one day?

DANTE

I jacked the car up. All she did was unscrew the bolts and put the tire on.

JAY

Damn. She sure goes out of her way.

DANTE

She's my girlfriend.

JAY

I've had girlfriends. Most of them just try to get what they can from me - weed and shit. Two times I had girlfriends smack up my car. But none of them ever brought me like, a home cooked meal, or had me over their house unless their parents were in like Fiji or something.

(beat)

Shit, I wish I had a girlfriend like your's. My grandma used to say 'Which is better: a good looking plate or one with good stuff on it.' No, wait. I fucked up. She said 'What's a good looking plate with nothing in it?'

DANTE

Meaning?

JAY

I don't know what she meant. She was senile and shit. Used to piss herself all the time.

(beat)

There's a billion fine-looking women in the world, dude. But they don't all bring you lasagna at work. Most of them just cheat on you.

DANTE

(amazed)

My God. You've got a point. I can't believe this.

JAY

What?

DANTE

It's true. Everything you said is true. Veronica is...incredible. She's....she's just the greatest.

JAY

If you're gonna stay with her, can I go for the other one? Nynne!! Just kidding.

DANTE

You've really helped me out here. Thanks.

JAY

Should we like...hug...or something now? Nynne! Eeeww! You fucking faggot!

DANTE

Have fun at your party.

JAY

(walking out)

Knock her boots tonight, dude. Give her the thick dick.

(a sudden thought)

You know what dude? It's probably better that you didn't pick that Caitlin chick. She's been around. It's not like you want to date a chick that's sucked a lot of dick. See ya later.

JAY leaves. DANTE freezes - then shakes it off.

DANTE

(reassuring himself)

So she sucked thirty seven dicks. Big deal. The important thing is she's sucking my dick now.

(beat)

I love Veronica.

CUT TO:

INT VIDEO STORE - NIGHT

RANDAL
has a heart-to-heart with Veronica.

RANDAL
He doesn't love you anymore. He
loves Caitlin.

VERONICA stares, dumbfounded.

VERONICA
And he told you all this...?

RANDAL
Every last word. The thing you have
to understand about Dante, is that
he could never bring himself to say
these thing to you, because he
cares about you a lot. He just
didn't want to hurt your feelings,
you know?

VERONICA
I...I don't know what to say.

RANDAL
Don't hold it against him. Some
people you fall in love with and
they can do the shittiest things in
the world to you, but you can't get
that person our of your system.
That's the way it is with Dante and
Caitlin.

Silence. Then...

RANDAL
Do you want to cry or something? Do
you want me to leave?

VERONICA
I'm not sad.

RANDAL
You're not?

VERONICA
No, I'm more furious. I'm pissed
off. I feel like he's been killing
time while he tries to grow the
balls to tell me how he really
feels, and then he can't eve do it!
He has his friend do it for him!

RANDAL
He didn't ask me to...

VERONICA
After all I've done for that fuck!
And he wants to be with that slut?!
Fine! He can have his slut!

RANDAL
Um, do you think you can give me a ride home tonight. Because I don't think he's going to be too happy with me.

VERONICA
(oblivious to RANDAL)
I'm going to have a word with that asshole.

VERONICA storms out.

RANDAL
Wait! Veronica...I don't think...

RANDAL stares after her. A customer stands nearby.

RANDAL
(to customer)
What am I worried about? He'll probably be glad I started the ball rolling. All he ever did was complain about her anyway. I'm just looking out for his best interests. I mean, that's what a friend does, am I right? I did him a favor.

CUSTOMER
(sees box on counter)
Oooh! 'Navy SEALS'!

CUT TO:

INT CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT

DANTE IS ON THE GROUND
holding his knee. VERONICA stands above him.

DANTE
What the fuck did you do that for?!

VERONICA
If you didn't want to go out with me anymore, why didn't you just say it?! Instead, you pussy-foot around and see that slut behind my back?!!

DANTE
What're you talking about?!

VERONICA
(kicks him)
You've been talking to her on the phone for weeks!

DANTE
It was only a few times...

VERONICA
And then you pull that shit this morning, freaking out because I've gone down on a couple guys!

DANTE

A couple...?

VERONICA

(throws purse at him)

You judgmental fuck! At least it was before we ever dated! I'm not the one trying to patch things up with my ex, sneaking around behind your back! And if you think thirty seven dicks are a lot, then just wait, mister! I'm going to put the hookers in Times Square to shame with all the cocks I suck now! And each time some guy cums in my mouth, it'll taste that much sweeter, knowing that it hurts you!

DANTE

Would you let me explain...

VERONICA

Explain what? How you were waiting until the time was right, and then you were going to dump me for her?!

DANTE

(getting up)

Veronica...I ...it's not like that anymore... I mean, it was never really like that...

VERONICA kicks him in the other leg. DANTE goes down, yelling in pain.

VERONICA

You're damn right it's not like that! Because I won't let it be like that! You want you slut?! Fine! The slut is yours!

DANTE

I don't want Caitlin....

VERONICA

You don't know what you want, but I'm not going to sit here anymore holding your hand until you figure it out! I've tried with you, Dante. I've encouraged you to get out of this fucking dump and go back to school, to take charge of your life and find direction. I even transferred so maybe you would be more inclined to go back to college if I was with you. Everyone said it was a stupid move, but I didn't care because I loved you and wanted to see you pull yourself out of this senseless funk you've been in since that whore dumped you, oh so many years ago. And now you want to go back to her so she can fuck you over some more?!?!?

DANTE

I don't want to go back with her...

VERONICA

Of course not; not now! You're caught, and now you're trying to snake out of doing what you wanted to do. Well I won't let you. I want you to follow through on this, just so you can find out what a fucking idiot you are. And when she dumps you again- and she will, Dante; I promise you that - when she dumps you again, I want to laugh at you, right in your face, just so you realize that that was what you gave up our relationship for!

(grabs purse)

I'm just glad Randal had the balls to tell me, since you couldn't.

DANTE

(weakly)

Randal...?

VERONICA

And having him tell me... that was just the weakest move ever. You're spineless.

DANTE

Veronica, I love you...

VERONICA

Fuck you.

VERONICA exits. DANTE lays on the floor alone.

CUT TO:

RANDAL

exits and locks the door behind him. He walks to the convenience store and pulls the steel shutters closed, fastening the locks.

CUT TO:

INT CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT

TIGHT ON RANDAL'S FACE

as he steps inside. It is darker than before.

RANDAL

DANTE?

Hands clasp around his throat and yank him out of the frame.

DANTE THROTTLES RANDAL

choking him to the ground. RANDAL throws his fists into DANTE'S midriff, throwing him back into the magazine rack. RANDAL jumps to his feet as DANTE comes at him again.

RANDAL TUMBLES INTO THE CAKES

as Entenmanns products scatter beneath and around him. He grabs a pound cake and hits DANTE in the head with it, using the opportunity to scurry down the middle aisle. DANTE leaps at his feet, and RANDAL grabs the shelves, knocking aspirin over as he falls to the ground. They exchange punches until RANDAL - shrieking - sprays something in DANTE'S face. DANTE paws at his eyes.

RANDAL GRABS ITALIAN BREAD

and smacks it into DANTE'S face as he rushes him blindly. DANTE chases him out of the frame. M&M's scatter wildly across the empty floor, and the ruckus is heard OC.

CUT TO:

DANTE AND RANDAL

later, out of breath, on the floor. RANDAL sits up against the candy rack, rubbing his neck. DANTE lays on the floor, bacon held against a sort of swelling eye. Both are pretty banged-up. They are surrounded by a mess of crushed cookies, ripped-open candies, broken bread, and other damaged goods.

RANDAL

How's your eye?

DANTE

(reluctant)

The swelling's not so bad. But the
FDS stings.

(pause)

How's your neck?

RANDAL

It's hard to swallow.

They are both silent. Then....

RANDAL

You didn't have to choke me.

DANTE

Why the fuck did you tell Veronica
that I was going to dump her for
Caitlin?

RANDAL

I thought I was doing you a favor.

DANTE

Thanks.

RANDAL

You were saying how you couldn't
initiate change yourself, so I
figured if I helped you out, it
might be easier for you to move on
to Caitlin.

DANTE

Jesus.

Silence. Then...

RANDAL

Yeah, well, you still didn't have to choke me.

DANTE

Oh please! I'm surprised I didn't kill you.

RANDAL

Why do you say that?

DANTE

Why do I say that? Randal...Forget it.

RANDAL

No, really. What did I do that was so wrong?

DANTE

What don't you do? Randal, sometimes it seems like the only reason you come to work is to make my life miserable.

RANDAL

How do you figure?

DANTE

What time did you get to work today?

RANDAL

Like ten, or ten after.

DANTE

You were over half an hour late. Then all you do is come over here.

RANDAL

To talk to you.

DANTE

Which means the video store is ostensibly closed.

RANDAL

It's not like I'm miles away; I'm right here talking to you.

DANTE

Unless you're leaving for two hours at a time to go to your girlfriend's house.

RANDAL

She's not my girlfriend. And you said it was a bad idea that she come here.

DANTE

So you have to stay at her house for two hours?

RANDAL

(cornered)

It's not like I do that everyday.

DANTE

You get me slapped with a fine, you fight with the customers and I have to patch everything up. To top it all off, you ruin my relationship. What's your encore? Do you anally rape my mother while shitting on the American flag and pouring sugar in my gas tank?

(get up)

You know what the real tragedy is? I'm not even supposed to be here today.

RANDAL

(suddenly outraged)

Fuck you. Fuck you, pal. Listen to you trying to pass the buck again. I'm the source of all your misery. Who closed the store to play hockey? Who closed the store to attend a wake? Who tried to win back and ex-girlfriend without even discussing how he felt with his present one? You wanna blame somebody, blame yourself.

(pause)

"I shouldn't even be here today." You sound like an asshole. Whose choice was it to be here today? Nobody twisted your arm. You're here today of your own violation, my friend. But you'd like to believe that the weight of the world rests on your shoulders; that this store would crumble if you didn't bail it out of a bind. Well I got news for you, jerk: this store would survive without you. Without me either. All you do is overcompensate for having what's basically a monkey's job: you push buttons. Any moron can do our jobs, but you're obsessed with making it seem so much more fucking important, so much more epic than it really is. You work in a convenience store, Dante. And badly, I might add. And I work in a video store. Badly, as well.

(beat)

You know, that guy Jay's got it right - he has no delusions about what he does. He sells drugs. Us? We like to make ourselves seem so much better than the people that come in here, just looking to pick up a paper or - God forbid - cigarettes. We look down on them, as if we're so advanced. Well I we're so fucking advanced, then what are we doing working here?

They sit in silence. Then...

DANTE
Free food?

Slowly, they begin to chuckle. The chuckle changes to giggles.

RANDAL
Free food!

DANTE
Free food!

They laugh.

CUT TO:

DANTE
places a mop in the corner. It is later, following a massive clean-up.
RANDAL pulls on his coat.

RANDAL
I threw out the stuff we broke. The
floor looks clean.

DANTE
You sure you don't want a ride?

RANDAL
I asked Samantha's mother to pick me
up before I came over here. I had a
feeling you'd be mad. Who knew?

DANTE
Choking mad.

RANDAL
Yeah. Choking mad.

DANTE
(pause)
I'm sorry, man. I shouldn't have
blown up like that.

RANDAL
No man, it's okay, you know. I mean,
hell - you weren't even supposed to
be here today, right?

They smile.

DANTE
Do you work tomorrow?

RANDAL
Same time. What about you?

DANTE
I'm calling out. Going to hit the
hospital - see how Caitlin is. Then
try to see Veronica.

RANDAL

You wanna grab something to eat tomorrow night...after I get out of here?

DANTE

yeah. That'd be cool. We can hit the diner.

RANDAL

Alright. Hey - good luck with Veronica. And if you need like an alibi to back you up or something...

DANTE

I'm sure I will.

RANDAL

I'm there, you know. I mean, that's what friends are for, right? Like the song says.

(kind of singing)

Keep smiling

Keep shining

Knowing you can always count on me

For sure...

DANTE

Get the fuck outta here already.

RANDAL

I'm gone. I'll talk to you on the morrow.

RANDAL exits. DANTE pushes the sign to closed.

DANTE

climbs behind the counter. He pops the register open and starts counting the drawer out. The door is heard opening.

THE DOOR

closes.

POV JOHN : DANTE

counting out the register, not looking up.

DANTE

What'd you forget?

(looks up, surprised)

Oh. I'm sorry; we're closed.

A gunshot blasts out. DANTE flies back, his chest exploding with blood and sinew. He stares ahead and slumps to the floor.

JOHN

walks behind the counter, stepping over DANTE'S body on the floor, and takes the money out of the register. The credits begin to roll. He grabs a paper bag and jams the money in it. He grabs hands-full of change, shoves them in his packet, and then quickly exits the frame. DANTE continues to lay on the floor, unmoving, while the credits roll.

Credits end, and the door is heard opening. A customer comes to the counter and stands there. He waits, looks around for a clerk, looks down the aisles.

CUSTOMER

Hello? Little help?

No reply. He looks around again, and glances at the door to make sure nobody's coming in. Then he reaches behind the counter and grabs a pack of cigarettes. He leaves. Blackout.