

# "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.