

ACT 1

SCENE 1

INT-DAY COPYWRITER'S OFFICE

CHARLEY, LATE TWENTIES, IS TYPING AT HER COMPUTER WHILE MALCOLM, MID THIRTIES, WHO'S OBLIVIOUS TO HER, IS DOING THE SAME.

HOWARD, mid 50's enters the office in a panic.

HOWARD

Well??

MALCOLM

I know, I know!

HOWARD

You're killing me Malcolm. Come on!

MALCOLM

It'll be ready.

(Howard exits)

Long beat

CHARLEY

You didn't even notice.

MALCOLM

How could I not notice? No one will leave me alone about it!

CHARLEY

I'm talking about my eyes.

MALCOLM

What?

CHARLEY

You don't notice anything different?

MALCOLM

Geez dude. I'm trying to get some work done here.

CHARLEY

Work?

(leans over to look at his screen)

CHARLEY (CONT'D)

Act 1 scene two. Jake's office. Are you for real?

MALCOLM  
If I ever want to get my play produced, I gotta finish it.

CHARLEY  
What about my eyes?

MALCOLM  
What about 'em?

CHARLEY  
You honestly can't see what colour they are?

MALCOLM  
I dont-

CHARLEY  
They're fuschia.

MALCOLM  
What?

CHARLEY  
Fuschia. I just got coloured contacts. Would you notice if I got a nose job?

MALCOLM  
(who has since resumed typing and isn't paying attention)  
You have a job.

CHARLEY  
How about a boob job?

MALCOLM  
(not paying attention)  
Does it pay well?

CHARLEY  
I know. What if I got some Botox?

MALCOLM  
(still typing)  
I think we're out. Get Debbie to pick some up later.

CHARLEY  
Your hair's on fire.

MALCOLM  
(still typing)  
I'll eat later.

CHARLEY

My broccoli had an affair with the celery.

Malcolm continues to type.

CHARLEY (CONT'D)

Why am I even bothering? I should seriously have a lobotomy. That way they can remove the piece of brain that still makes me think there's a chance.

MALCOLM

(still typing)

Huh?

CHARLEY

Sighs.

I was just wondering how your play was coming along.

MALCOLM

Actually, I was just getting to the point-

BROCK, mid 40's, enters.

BROCK

Malcolm, I need the damn ads already!

CHARLEY

Brock. Do you have an appointment?

BROCK

Back off Charley. This is between me and Malcolm.

(to Malcolm)

I need the ads and I need them now. My client has been up and down my butt for the past week.

CHARLEY

Brock, Brock, Brock. Have long have we worked together now? Two, three...

BROCK

I dunno.

CHARLEY

Well, haven't we established the type of relationship where we can just be frank with each other?

BROCK

Huh?

CHARLEY

Has our relationship deteriorated to the point where we can't be civil to one another? Can't we just talk to each other without all the b.s.?

BROCK

I guess.

CHARLEY

That's the very least I deserve.

(as she's pushing him out of the office)

And I think we got off on the wrong foot. Why don't we start this again?

(Brock leaves the office and knocks on the door)

Who is it?

BROCK

Me.

CHARLEY

Entre!

MALCOLM

(to Charley)

Entre?! What the-

CHARLEY

Brock buddy. What can we do you for?

BROCK

I got a big problem.

CHARLEY

Problem? What sort of problem? We're good with problems aren't we Malcy?

MALCOLM

The best.

CHARLEY

So describe this... problem... as you call it.

BROCK

It's like this-

CHARLEY

Good. Get it off your chest. Release it or it will build up inside of you.

BROCK  
Fine. I got this client see?

CHARLEY  
Okay. You have a client. We're making headway. I hope you're taking notes Malcy.

MALCOLM  
(Starts writing)  
Client. Got it!

CHARLEY  
So describe this client for us won't you?

BROCK  
They own a chain of copy centres that you can also mail stuff from.

MALCOLM  
(Continues writing)  
Chain. Mail. Got it.

CHARLEY  
Please continue. We're getting somewhere.

BROCK  
And they're a big client. Got a lot of customers.

CHARLEY  
(to Malcolm)  
You're getting this?

MALCOLM  
(Continues taking notes)  
Yup. Big. Customers. Got it!

CHARLEY  
And?

BROCK  
And they got about a quarter of a million bucks on a print campaign with us-

CHARLEY  
Which is good.

MALCOLM  
Continues writing.  
Good. Got it!

CHARLEY

But? I'm sensing some turmoil here. Tell me if I'm wrong.

BROCK

I've been promising them their stuff now for over a month now and-

CHARLEY

And it's not ready right?

BROCK

Yeah!

MALCOLM

(Continues writing)

Yeah.

CHARLEY

So you intend on dealing with this by...

BROCK

Smashing Malcolm's face in if it's not ready by noon.

MALCOLM

Continues writing.

Smashing my face in if... HEY!

CHARLEY

(walking him out of the office)

There you go. Don't you feel so much better now that you've gotten in off your chest?

BROCK

Hmm. Yeah!

MALCOLM

Well I don't feel so good. Where does this leave me?

BROCK

Look, either I get the damn copy or I don't.

MALCOLM

Ummm... and if you don't?

BROCK

It means I'll lose the client, a huge chunk of coin and my family vacation to Disney World.

CHARLEY

But you said either.

MALCOLM

That's right dude. With an either there has to be an "or".

BROCK

OR, if it's not ready by noon, then I tell the president of the agency what a screw up you are and I pummel you beyond recognition.

MALCOLM

You're kidding me right?

BROCK

I'm not screwing around. If we lose this client it's gonna cost me serious bucks and my kid's gonna freak.

CHARLEY

I don't know about you but I'm sure glad we had this talk.

(pushes Brock out the door)

BROCK

(as he is backing out of the office)

And when I said "beyond recognition, I'm talking forget dental records. Got it?

(slams office door)

BROCK

(OFF) Remember. 12 o'clock or else.

MALCOLM

(shouting)

We'd love to join you for lunch Brock but we have some deadlines that you're not helping with! Sheesh. Some people you know!

CHARLEY

You didn't even start it did you?

MALCOLM

Not even a syllable. How can I be motivated to write that garbage when I have my play that I've been working on the past few months?

CHARLEY

You can't be serious.

MALCOLM

What would you rather write? Boring, inane brochures for a company that specializes in one-stop printing services

(yawns exaggeratingly)

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

or a script where your characters come alive before your eyes. They live and breathe and their very existence depends upon each keystroke. Through your words, they can suffer through the injustices of life, or experience the highs of multi-orgasmic experiences.

CHARLEY

A girl can only dream.

MALCOLM

So what's stopping you?

CHARLEY

God you're such a dolt! Well, that all sounds great bud, but I have this really annoying habit that prevents me from doing my own stuff on company time... I like to stay employed! And if you share the same habit, then I suggest you support it by not getting your butt fired and having the living hell beaten out of you by working on those Super Copy Centres brochures.

MALCOLM

Whose side are you on?

CHARLEY

What?

MALCOLM

You can't handle the fact that I have a life outside of work.

CHARLEY

Life? What life? At least I go to the gym or to an occasional movie. Sure I may not date much but that's my own fault. So while I never claimed it was much of one at least it's my own!

MALCOLM

And you can have it! Don't force your boring life on me.

CHARLEY

There's treatment out there for you. I've read about this in Psychology Today. You've created this fantasy life for yourself so you don't have to deal with your own.

MALCOLM

A little overly dramatic aren't we?

CHARLEY

You live in this fantasy world so you can avoid living the real one. And you know what the really sick thing is??? In your play, you don't even get the girl! How messed up is that? But noooooo... you lose her to the Creative Director of all people! I mean is that pathetic or what?

MALCOLM

What's pathetic is having parents who to this day want to know when I'm going to get a REAL job. What's pathetic is that every day I come in here I feel like a prostitute!

CHARLEY

How can you say that?

MALCOLM

Because I get paid to do something for someone I have no interest in doing it for in the first place! How is that any different than lying on my back all day?

CHARLEY

I think you have the roles reversed Malcolm.

MALCOLM

What?

CHARLEY

Well, aren't you the one screwing the agency by working on your play instead of working.

MALCOLM

I would have thought that you of all people would have been more encouraging for me to go after my dreams. You haven't even READ my play!

CHARLEY

Read it?! Who needs to read it when all you do is act it out all day as you're writing it? I've had homeless people come up to me offering me spare change if I can get you to shut up about it already.

MALCOLM

I could get the girl if I wanted to.

CHARLEY

So what's the problem?

MALCOLM

Because maybe she's not the one I want!

(Pause)

CHARLEY

I need to get some air.

(exits)

ACT I SCENE 2

MALCOLM

Time to revisit my babies. Let's see... act two, scene one.

MALCOLM'S PLAY, DOWNSTAGE- INT. JAKE'S OFFICE- DAY

IN THE OFFICE IS JAKE, MID THIRTIES, AND RAQUEL, LATE TWENTIES.

JAKE

Give me one good reason you won't go out with me.

RAQUEL

Because you're annoying, have no taste in clothes, sweat too much, usually have stuff in your teeth...

JAKE

I asked for one reason not an essay.

RAQUEL

You just don't get it do you?

JAKE

What's to get?

RAQUEL

Look... the real reason I won't go out with you is because I can't.

JAKE

Excuse me?

RAQUEL

What verb didn't you understand?

JAKE

I'm a Copywriter. I've written more verbs than you'll ever perform.

RAQUEL

Do I actually have to spell it out for you?

(Pause)

You're not good enough for me.

JAKE

What?! You're a receptionist. How can I not be good enough for you? A good day for you is if you remember who you've put on hold for five minutes before you transfer them to someone who didn't want to speak with them in the first place.

RAQUEL

And?

JAKE

And? So I'm not good enough for you but Dexter is? What's he got that I don't have?

RAQUEL

He's the Creative Director.

JAKE

The Creative Director?

(almost choking)

Do you know what a Creative Director is? Someone who can't write well enough to be a writer and who can't draw well enough to be an artist. A Creative Director gives orders to the real talent.

RAQUEL

Real talent is getting those who *can* work for you so you can take the credit and the glory.

JAKE

Oh come on. He drives a big fancy car, takes clients out for lunches and then tells them exactly what they want to hear.

RAQUEL

Excuse me, but he drives a \$100,000 sports car that can go from 0-60 in 4.3 seconds, takes clients out for \$200 lunches and he tells clients what they *think* they want to hear.

JAKE

Then let's cut to the chase. A Creative Director is simply a title that says "I'm getting paid more than you because I can shovel more crap than someone who works on a slop farm!" That's what Dexter is!

RAQUEL

And what are you? A measly little Copywriter! Talk about dispensing crap. At least Dexter has an expense account. At least Dexter drives a real car, not that rusted out shell of carbon emissions you drive. I can run faster than that thing.

JAKE

You have no idea how much I would pay to see that!

RAQUEL

Pay? What are you talking about pay? I know what you make. Dexter spends more on client lunches in a month than you make in a year.

JAKE

There's more to life than just food and cars missy!

RAQUEL

You're so far out of your league little boy. Why don't you run along and let Dexter give you some lessons on how to be a real man?

(exits)

JAKE

(shouting)

Fine! And I'll give Dexter... er... I'll give Dexter some... some...

(standing behind Malcolm are Brock and Howard)

HOWARD

Who's Dexter?

(to Brock)

Do you know who Dexter is? Is he a new client? What's going on? Why doesn't anyone ever tell me anything anymore? Malcolm... do you know what day of the week it is?

MALCOLM

Um... let me guess... wait don't tell me... does it end with the letter "Y"?

HOWARD

Does the name Super Copy mean anything to you?

MALCOLM

Did you say Super Copy Howard?

HOWARD

As a matter of fact I did. Would you happen to know anything about them?

MALCOLM

Are you kidding me. Super Copy is your one stop shop for all of your printing needs. From brochures and newsletters to boxing and shipping, Super Copy makes all of your printing dreams an-

HOWARD

Well, since you seem to know sooo much about them,

(shouting)

would you like to tell me where Brock's copy is then?

MALCOLM

Relax gentlemen. I have it.

HOWARD

Then where is it?

MALCOLM

Points to his head.

Up here man.

HOWARD

Well you have exactly one hour to put it down here

(Points to a blank piece of paper that  
he has just picked up)  
or I'll put you out there!

(points towards the audience)

(Brock and Howard leave just as Charley  
walks in)

CHARLEY

Whoa. What did I miss? I've never heard Howard that mad  
before. Let me guess... Inspector Clouseau and his sidekick  
Kato found out about the Super Copy brochure... or should I say  
lack of one?

MALCOLM

That's very good Sherlock. Evesdropping again for a change I  
see. But he wouldn't fire me. I mean, where would I go? What  
would I do? Doesn't loyalty mean anything these days?

(Charley starts to choke)

MALCOLM

You should take better care of yourself Charles. Now where  
was I? Ah yes... my babies. Don't worry, daddy's coming. Did  
you miss dadada?

(Starts typing away at the keyboard)

MALCOLM'S PLAY- INT., DAY- JAKE'S OFFICE

(PETER, mid 40's, and STEPHEN, mid  
30's, are in the office)

PETER

(handing a draft of an ad to Jake)  
So... what do you think? Is that not the best use of white  
space you've ever seen? Don't you just love how the colours  
blend in with the fonts? Don't the visuals just make you  
want to buy this car right this minute? But wait. Don't let  
me influence you... why don't you tell me how great you think  
it is.

JAKE

You know Pete, you're really onto something.

STEPHEN

Or just on something.

PETER  
See, see. Didn't I tell you?

JAKE  
It's a hit!

STEPHEN  
With a capital "S"!

PETER  
What?

STEPHEN  
Ya... you're the best!

PETER  
Hey what can I say... I mean, you know me! Anyway, I'd love to stay and chat with you gents, and I do mean that in the loosest of terms

(laughs to himself)  
... but I'm off to create.

Exits.  
(knocking from the outside of  
the door is FRANK, early 40's)

STEPHEN  
Beat it... we don't need any!

JAKE  
(opens the door)  
Don't mind him Frank. He hasn't had his morning latte yet.

FRANK  
Begins to gently pull on his hair.  
Well... I'm sorry to bother you fellas, but... well... I don't know how to ask you this but... well...

STEPHEN  
Spit it out bud... we don't get paid by the hour you know.

FRANK  
Well... I was just wondering... you know...

JAKE  
What's on your mind Frank? Are you looking for something?

STEPHEN  
Come on Frank, we haven't got all day. First syllable... sounds like?

FRANK

(shouting)

Where's the Burger, Burger radio spots I was supposed to have yesterday?!

STEPHEN

Geez ya freak... you don't have to shout!

FRANK

I'm... I'm sorry... very sorry. I'm bad... very bad.

JAKE

Take it easy Frankie... here's a tissue... don't go to pieces on us. Stephen didn't mean anything now did you Stephen? Look Frankie, I'm sure this is one big misunderstanding... we'll have it for you before the day's over okay?

FRANK

Thanks. I really appreciate it. You're the best!

(Leaves office excitedly)

STEPHEN & MALCOLM

What a joke.

INT.- MALCOLM'S OFFICE

CHARLEY

How can you think of jokes at a time like this?

(Entering the office is DEBBIE, early 20's)

DEBBIE

Like, you'll never guess what I just heard. When I was bringing Howie his coffee, you know, like double sugar one milk, I like overheard him talking on the phone saying how like he was going to be making changes around here. And then I thought, like cool, 'cause the carpeting in here is like soooo gaudy, but then I overheard him say he has to put an ad in the newspaper but like who would write it. So anyway, I like heard him say that he has to move quickly and I thought like I have this cousin who's an interior designer and she's like sooo mod 'cause she like designed this funky new café uptown that's going to open in like three months. (SQUEALS) Isn't that like the most exciting thing you've heard all day. I'm like soooo totally psyched. Anyway, I just wanted to share the good news with you. Oopsy... I better give Howie his coffee before it gets like totally frozen.

(runs out of the office excitedly)

MALCOLM

Did you just feel a draft?

CHARLEY

Dude. I've never heard anyone use the word "like" as a pronoun, an adjective and an adverb all in the same sentence.

MALCOLM

Yeah, but I wonder what changes "Howie" was talking about?

CHARLEY

(imitating Debbie)

Like, what do you think? The writing's on the wall Malc.

CHARLEY (CONT'D)

I hate to be the bearer of bad news, but it looks like he's gonna give you the axe.

MALCOLM

Because of those stupid ads?

CHARLEY

Because of the lack of them, duh! Wake up and smell the latte dude. What have you done for the last six months except work on your play? The Copy Centre brochures are beyond late and you haven't even started them yet. You've missed deadline after deadline, you've shown up late for meetings and your work lately hasn't even been up to your usual sub-par standards.

MALCOLM

What? You could only aspire to write as sub-parly as I do.

CHARLEY

That's not even a word!

MALCOLM

I'm a copywriter, not a Scrabble player. You're just jealous because the most creative thing you've ever written was a Mother's Day card. And it was for MY mother!

CHARLEY

I don't have to take this abuse from a fourth-rate Neil Simon.

(Starts to sob as she exits)

MALCOLM

FINE! Now where was I? Oh... is that my babies I hear?

Puts his ear to the keyboard.

Don't worry. The bad woman went bye bye. Do you want to speak to dad-da now?

(Starts typing)

Okay. Daddy's listening. Talk to me.

MALCOLM'S PLAY- INT.- DEXTER'S OFFICE

(DEXTER, late 40's)

DEXTER

Can I confide in you Jake?

JAKE

Of course. What's up?

DEXTER

It's Raquel. I really have a thing for her.

JAKE

That's too bad.

DEXTER

What?

JAKE

I mean...uh... that's too bad for all of the other women in the office.

DEXTER

Hmmm... so, what you're really saying is that I could do better?

JAKE

Dexter. You're the Creative Director. Do you have any idea what that means? You're the top of your field. You probably spend more on client lunches in a month than Raquel makes in two years. Sure Raquel may be gorgeous. Sure she may have the biggest...brownest eyes known to mankind. Sure she may have legs that can stop traffic-

DEXTER

You're right Jake. What was I thinking? Thanks for the talk. I owe you one.

JAKE & MALCOLM

You can count on me.

INT.- MALCOLM'S OFFICE

HOWARD

No I can't Malcolm. That's the problem. I was completely serious about what I said earlier. I like you Malcy.

I think you have a lot of talent but I'd hate to see you throw it all away. Don't let me down son. One hour. That's it!

(exits)

MALCOLM

One hour? That's what it's come down to? Why doesn't anything ever go my way? Why can't I ever catch a break? I bet if he read my play he'd have a change of heart. Hmmm...

(Charley enters)

CHARLEY

And maybe he'll like it so much he'll make you a partner while he's at it.

MALCOLM

I thought I told you not to evesdrop on me anymore.

CHARLEY

Look, I didn't come looking for a fight. I just wanted to apologize to you for saying all of those nasty things to you and calling you a fourth rate Neil Simon.

MALCOLM

That's big of you.

CHARLEY

What I meant to say was that you're a third rate Neil Simon. From what I can hear, your play's not half bad.

MALCOLM

Thanks Charles.

CHARLEY

Of course it's not half good either.

(Pause)

Look Malcy, you know you're not only my office roomie but you're also my best friend and I'd really hate to see anything happen to you.

MALCOLM

Like an incident with a homicidal Account Executive?

CHARLEY

That I could handle. I was talking about you having to find a new place to work.

MALCOLM

You really think he's serious?

CHARLEY

I think he's deadly serious... no pun intended. As a matter of fact, I have a great idea for your next creative writing project.

MALCOLM

What?

CHARLEY

Your resume!

MALCOLM

They can't fire me. They wouldn't. At least not when you're as talented as me.

CHARLEY

You mean as talented as "I".

MALCOLM

What? So you think you're a better writer than me now?

CHARLEY

No. I was just saying-

MALCOLM

I know exactly what you're saying Brutus. That's from Shakespeare you know. He stabbed Caesar in the back.

CHARLEY

I know who he is and I wasn't-

MALCOLM

Yes you were. You can't accept the fact just because I didn't go to university like you did and grammatacize everything perfectly like you can, that I can't write.

CHARLEY

Geez dude. You do to the English language what Yoko Ono does to singing. I never said that.

MALCOLM

You didn't have to Mata Hari. She was-

CHARLEY

I know who she was!

MALCOLM

Of course you do. Because you also know that if it weren't... or wasn't... or whatever... for me... then you probably wouldn't be working here any more.

CHARLEY

What the Funk and Wagnalls is that supposed to mean?!

MALCOLM

Oh, I think you know very well what it means, Rosa... uh... Rosa Mas... Mast... Mastopeecho.

CHARLEY

Now you're just making up names.

MALCOLM

Am I? You mean they didn't teach you that in school? Hmph! Well guess what? I don't need you. You hear me. I DON'T NEED YOU!

CHARLEY

Fine!

(storms out)

MALCOLM

Fine!

(Pause)

Raquel, on the other hand, I do need.

MALCOLM'S PLAY- INT.- DEXTER'S OFFICE

RAQUEL

Dex, what's on your mind? You seem rather tense these days. It's almost as if you're trying to tell me something without actually saying it.

DEXTER

You must be psychic. In fact...

FRANK

Enters the office in a rush.

Dddexter, Dddexter... I'm really mad. I'm really very angry.

RAQUEL

Can't it wait Frank? Dexter was just going to discuss some important business with me weren't you?

FRANK

(begins pulling on his hair)

Bbbut this is really important, it's just that-

RAQUEL

So was this and I'm sure you don't want to interrupt your boss when he's in a meeting.

FRANK

Bb... bbbut...

DEXTER

Well speak up boy what's going on?

RAQUEL

I'm sure it can wait can't it Frank? Unless of course you would prefer me to audit your expense account in much more detail? So what was it that was so important now Frankie?

FRANK

(Pause)

I'm sorry... very sorry. I'm bad... very bbbbad. You're right. Bebebebe back later. Bye bye.

DEXTER

Now what the heck do you think he wanted?

RAQUEL

I'm sure it was nothing important... now what was it that you wanted to tell me?

DEXTER

Tell you?

RAQUEL

Yes! You were about to tell me something important!

DEXTER

Can you give me a hint?

RAQUEL

A hint? Why yes... I believe it had to do with asking me out.

DEXTER

Was that it?

RAQUEL

Dex honey... Why would I make up something like that?

DEXTER

You're right... I guess you wouldn't. Well... now that you mention it

Peter enters holding up his latest creation.

PETER

What do you think Dex? Tell me how much you love it. What does it say to you? Tell me honestly.

DEXTER

(examines it closely)

Hmm...I think it says buy this car... if you're part of the hip hop generation.

PETER

That's exactly what I was saying. You read my mind again!

DEXTER

(shouting)

It's an \$80,000 friggin car for Christsakes. And Tiffany Tears, who's only 16 years old, doesn't sell \$80,000 cars!! And you know why Pete?

PETER

Uh... no... well, not exactly.

DEXTER

Because kids, teenagers... CHILDREN... don't have \$80,000 friggin dollars in their piggy banks!!!! But Tiffany Tears, who's only 16 years old, does sell soft drinks, music and perfume. Does she sell investments?

PETER

No.

DEXTER

Does she sell jewellery?

PETER

No.

DEXTER

But could she sell skateboards?

PETER

She could.

DEXTER

Could she sell video games?

PETER

She could.

DEXTER

Could she sell adjustable beds?

PETER

She could.

DEXTER

No she couldn't! That's my point. Now go and think of another celebrity to hock, I mean advertise this luxurious \$80,000 friggin car!!!!

INTERIOR- STEPHEN AND JAKE'S OFFICE

(Peter rushes in frantically. Jake and Stephen see him and start laughing hysterically)

PETER

So... you guys think you're soooooooo funny huh? Tiffany Tears, who's 16 years old could sell anything you say. Tiffany Tears speaks to the affluent you say! She could sell ice to Eskimos you say. That's the last time I ask either of you guys to help me on anything!

JAKE

Geez Petey. You're hurting our feelings here. Do you honestly think we'd go out of our way to purposely sabotage your brilliance?

PETER

You can't. In fact, my mind sometimes gets tired thinking down to your level.

JAKE

Exactly. So who are we, other than mere sounding boards, for your greatness? I mean, we are mere Copywriters. We can only aspire to be as...as...

STEPHEN

Sub par...

JAKE

As sub par... I mean as superfluous as...

PETER

Superfluous eh? Hmmm... so what you're really saying is that my work is super?

JAKE

In all honesty Pete, I can say with all my heart that I have rarely seen anyone as superfluous as you!

PETER

Hmm. Then I take back what I said. I'm at a loss for words!

STEPHEN

(under his breath)

Maybe if you read a few more books...

PETER

What?

JAKE

He said let's have another look.. at your campaign ideas that is.

PETER

Great idea. I'm sorry I overreacted. I don't know what I was thinking.

STEPHEN

Not to worry Petey. We never know either!

PETER

If you'll excuse me, I must take leave of you to create.

Exits.

INT.- DEXTER'S OFFICE

DEXTER

Raquel... you know I think you're great.

(looking her over up and down)

I mean really, really great. But...

RAQUEL

But what? Are you telling me that I'm not gorgeous?

DEXTER

No.

RAQUEL

What?!

DEXTER

I mean no... you ARE gorgeous!

RAQUEL

Are you telling me that I'm not captivating enough for you?

DEXTER

No.

RAQUEL

What?!

DEXTER

I meant you are very captive!

RAQUEL

What?!

DEXTER

I... I... I mean you're very captivating.

RAQUEL

So what is the problem here Dexter? What are you trying to tell me?

DEXTER

I don't know anymore. One second. I need to make a quick call.

(picks up the phone and starts to dial,  
waits a few seconds and then begins to  
whisper)

Jake. You gotta help me. Raquel is putting the heat on.

(Pause)

What do you mean what is she wearing? Look, she really means business. What do you think I should do? Play hard to get?

DEXTER (CONT'D)

(Pause)

Coy? Tell her there are better fish in the sea? Great idea. Umm... why do I want to do that again?

(Pause)

To make her really jealous? To get her all hot and bothered?

(Pause)

(Speaking very deliberately)

To make her think I'm the last man on earth? Wow. Brilliant. I can't believe you're just a Copywriter. Thanks a lot. I owe you.

(Pause)

DEXTER (CONT'D)

What do you mean by that? Anyway... thanks again. I'll let you know what happens.

(hangs up the phone)

So... as you were saying Raquel?

RAQUEL

Is it my imagination or do I get the feeling you're being evasive?

DEXTER

Me? Evasive? Now why on earth would you think that way? Because if you think you're wasting your time here...

RAQUEL

Excuse me?

DEXTER

I mean... I know I'm a very attractive man... strong jaw line... buns o'steel...

Starts to flex.

I think I'm probably the envy of every man in this office don't you think?

RAQUEL

I beg your pardon?

DEXTER

Please Raquel. You don't have to beg.

(laughs sarcastically)

RAQUEL

Well I never...

DEXTER

Maybe you should. You might like it.

RAQUEL

Listen buster. I can have any man I want in this office. I can just snap my fingers and men will come running. I don't have to beg for anything.

DEXTER

When I think of all the women I had to sleep with to get where I am today... it just boggles the mind. And yet you expect me to come running like a little puppy just because you flash those sexy blue eyes... long supple legs-

RAQUEL

I don't know who you think you are or who you're talking to, but this conversation is over.

DEXTER

Perfect! There's nothing like great mental foreplay.

RAQUEL

I couldn't agree more. And you know what Dexter?

RAQUEL & MALCOLM

I am so going to screw you!

INT.- MALCOM'S OFFICE

Charley enters

CHARLEY

Uh... can you at least buy me dinner first?

MALCOLM

What?

CHARLEY

Never mind. And the news just gets better. Remember that joke ad you did?

MALCOLM

You mean where I wrote, "Buy a Porsche and get some head" instead of "get ahead"?

CHARLEY

(laughing)

MALCOLM

Don't tell me Brock submitted that to the client. Please don't tell me that!

(starts laughing hysterically with Charley. Brock, who's overheard the conversation, enters)

BROCK

You think that's funny huh? I'm doing my presentation with this potential client, when I pulled it out-

CHARLEY

Careful Brock, you could go blind!

(Charley and Malcolm are convulsed with laughter)

BROCK

My proposal morons, my proposal. And instead of showing them something that rocks... something that says "buy this studly car", I show them something from buddy's stag party!

MALCOLM

For God sakes man. Can't you take a joke?! If you would take one minute to extract that rather large projectile from your butt, you would find the humour in this.

BROCK

Humour?

(Pause)

Humour?

MALCOLM & CHARLEY

YES!

(barely able to speak from laughing so hard)

CHARLEY

Admit it Brock. You're only sore because you got caught with your pants down.

(crying from laughter with Malcolm)

MALCOLM

Wait a second Brock. I think you have it all wrong. Honestly. I don't think you get it.

BROCK

You know what you're gonna get Mr. Comedian? Your last rights read to you.

MALCOLM

Brock, Brock, Brock. Have I ever told you how much I respect you as an Account Executive before?

BROCK

No.

MALCOLM

I admit it. I'm jealous.

CHARLEY & BROCK

What?!

MALCOLM

It takes guts.

(being overly dramatic)

Only you can know how much courage it must take to go to meeting after meeting after meeting... only to face rejection after rejection after rejection? Only you can know how tough it must be to wake up day after day after day... only to realize you have to come into work only to face more ridicule by your peers? Only you can know just how much cajones you must obviously have to wait endlessly for the phone to ring... waiting for the call to come that says "you've got a deal"... but never does? I don't know how many people know this better than you!

BROCK

So what you're saying is-

CHARLEY

Nobody does it better!

BROCK

Hmmm...

MALCOLM

And do you know why I wrote that ad Brock? Do you have any idea what possessed me to come up with such... such...

CHARLEY

Debauchery.

MALCOLM

Debock- er, what she said.

(Brock shakes his head)

Because I had confidence in you. I knew that no other sales rep...

CHARLEY

Nay... Account Executive!

MALCOLM

I mean Account Executive of the most executive kind..

(clearing his throat)

could get away with something like that without completely offending the client. This was a test for you Brock.

BROCK

Huh?

MALCOLM

Well... I didn't want to say anything but...

(whispering)

I was told to provide a little extra "zing" to this campaign. I don't want to mention names, but I think it was to see how you would handle yourself in such an important meeting. Shhhh... you can't breathe a word of this to anyone.

Puts a finger to Brock's lips.

BROCK

We're cool. You guys are okay. I mean, to have your own boss-

MALCOLM & CHARLEY

Shhh.

BROCK

Right....

(whispering)

...when someone, who shall remain nameless, has enough confidence in you to screw up a major presentation just to test how good you are. Cool. Very cool.

Howard enters the office in a rush.

HOWARD

(to Brock)

There you are. I was going to ask you how your meeting with the Porsche people went but I just got off the phone with them.

BROCK

Shakes Howard's hand excitedly.

You rock boss dude!

HOWARD

What in the world are you talking about son?

MALCOLM

(clears his throat to get Brock's attention)

BROCK

Oh right. I forgot.

(whispering)

Forget I said anything. What did Porsche say?

HOWARD

Why are you whispering? They said they were impressed by the humour and the execution of the campaign and thought you were comical. However, they said they wanted to see the real campaign next week same time without the "extras" as they put it. Can anyone tell me what's going on?

CHARLEY

Long story Howard. But trust me on this one. Malcy is definitely on the ball.

HOWARD

Um. Okay then. But the clock is still ticking. I mean it!

Brock exits

ENTERING FROM STAGE LEFT IS KING, A MIDDLE-AGED ORIENTAL SHORT-ORDER COOK, LATE 50'S. DRESSED IN A WHITE T-SHIRT, APRON AND BRANDISHING A CLEAVER, KING RUSHES IN ANGRILY. BLOOD IS ON HIS MIND.

KING

There you are Malcolm. And now I kill you!

HOWARD

King! What the devil is going on?

KING  
What devil going on? I tell you what going on. Today, I chop Malcolm into pieces!

(waves his cleaver erratically in the air)

HOWARD  
Why?!

KING  
Why?! Every day he come in. Order burger, fry and shake. Burger fry and shake. When it come time to pay he say next week. And then week after. And week after that. No more week. No more life!

HOWARD  
(reaches into his pocket and pulls out some money)  
How much does he owe you?

KING  
Two hundred and thirty-two dollars and forty-three cents. And not include tip!

(Howard quickly puts back his money and exits)

MALCOLM  
Is that all it is? You should have told me sooner. Wait a sec Kingy, I'll write you a cheque.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

Reaches into his wallet and pulls out a cheque which he proceeds to sign and gives to King.

KING  
Took long enough. All forgiven.

(bows)

MALCOLM  
You're a pal. So how about making me my usual for lunch today?

KING  
(smiling)  
Burger, fry and shake right?

MALCOLM  
You're a pal.

KING  
(smiling)  
Okay. See you soon.

(bows and exits)  
CHARLEY  
Since when do you just happen to carry spare cheques in your wallet?

MALCOLM  
Are you kidding? I never leave home without them.

CHARLEY  
That's a lot of money. How can you afford it?

MALCOLM  
You mean how can Brock afford it!

CHARLEY  
You're kidding!

MALCOLM  
Nope. Let's just say that lunch was on Brock.

CHARLEY  
You're going to have to pay King eventually.

MALCOLM  
That's the key word there. Eventually. Made up of three other important words. Event. Meaning a rare or significant occurrence. U. As in you, Charley, will run interference for me when he comes back. And of course Ally. That's you again Charles. In other words. You're going to help me the next time he comes looking for me with very sharp utensils.

CHARLEY  
Uh, dude, have you ever thought of maybe making your own lunch once in a while?

MALCOLM  
(who had already resumed typing at his computer)  
Huh? I wasn't-

CHARLEY

I know, I know. Your "babies" were talking to you again weren't they. Well, you'd better "feed" them or whatever it is you do with them before they have an accident". I'm telling you Malcy, if you don't finish that thing soon I might have to put your play up for adoption.

MALCOLM

You wouldn't dare!

CHARLEY

I don't even know what I'm talking about and you're getting worried. Do you honestly think I would be capable of such a thing. I mean come on.

MALCOLM

I don't know what you're capable of. Why don't you write your own play and leave me alone?

CHARLEY

What are you saying?

MALCOLM

Nothing. Never mind. Sometimes I just don't get you. It's just that-

CHARLEY

Look. I'm sorry. I can't write like you.

MALCOLM

Don't say that.

CHARLEY

It's true. When it comes to press releases and announcements... all the godawful boring stuff, I can do it. I hate it. But I do it. But when it comes to the really creative stuff like the slogans, or the commercials... man, I don't know where you come up with half the stuff you do.

MALCOLM

(laughing)

Neither do I.

CHARLEY

And what kills me is that you don't even smoke weed so I have no idea where you get the ideas. Remember that commercial you did for the telephone company? And you tied it in perfectly to that new super hero movie that came out at the same time?

(standing with her legs apart, hands on her hips a la superman and doing her best superhero voice)  
 "Going beyond the call". Damn. That was classic.

MALCOLM

(laughing)  
 Thanks. But where did they get that guy in the suit? He looked like he came from the Justice League of Cheeseburgers

(expands his stomach and puffing out his cheeks)

CHARLEY

No kidding.

(Howard enters)

HOWARD

Charley, where are the slogans for the IPG Group?

CHARLEY

What do you mean?

HOWARD

I mean I asked you for three slogans to present to the IPG Group and I have a conference call with them after lunch and I wanted to go over them first.

(Malcolm starts to type furiously at his computer)

CHARLEY

Howard. There must be some confusion. You told me that they needed a flyer not a slogan and that it wasn't due until mid next week.

HOWARD

Charley. I know EXACTLY what I told you. I have a call with them this afternoon otherwise I wouldn't have scheduled it with them till next week.

CHARLEY

But when we met-

(Malcolm grabs a piece of paper from the printer and gives it to Howard)

MALCOLM

Uh. I believe this is what you were looking for?

HOWARD

Yes! How did you get it??