

ANNIE BAKER

SAM

It's the best. It's the best. Catrall is this mannequin who comes to life and Andrew McCarthy is the department store worker window guy who falls in love with her. And Estelle Getty is the store manager.

I don't remember *why* exactly Kim Catrall comes to life. There's some sort of magic Egyptian-y reason behind it. And then she / like—

AVERY

Estelle Getty to Sylvester Stallone in Stop or My Mom Will Shoot.

Sylvester Stallone to John Lithgow in Cliffhanger.

Lithgow to Christopher Lloyd in . . . uh . . . okay . . . I'm pretty sure this is the title: Adventures of Buckaroo Banzai Across the Eighth Dim/ension.

SAM

WHOAI!!

WHAT THE FUCK!!!

YES!!

I LOVE THAT MOVIE!

AVERY

Christopher Lloyd to Michael J. Fox in, of course . . .

SAM

AVERY

Back to the Future.

Back to the Future.

Parts One through Three.

A pause. Sam stares at Avery, in awe. They don't notice Rose enter the projection booth.

SAM

You have like a . . . that's like almost like a *disability*.

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THE FLICK

AVERY

It's actually like the opposite of a disability.

Rose knocks on the window of the projection booth and waves at them.

SAM

Oh! Jesus!

(to Avery)

That's Rose.

AVERY

I know.

They wave back. Rose breathes on the window, making a little foggy area, and then draws a cartoon penis in the fog with her finger. It may or may not be decipherable.

AVERY

What is that.

SAM

. . . I think it's a penis.

Rose draws a heart around the penis.

AVERY

Whoa.

SAM

Yeah.

She's a lesbian.

AVERY

Really?

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ANNIE BAKER

Yep.

SAM

Rose is un-threading the projector now, mostly obscured from view.

Does she have a girlfriend?

AVERY

Shhh. Uh. No. I don't think so.

SAM

They go back to sweeping. They don't see Rose leave the projection booth. They keep sweeping. Rose appears in the doorway. She regards Sam and Avery, then:

Hi. I'm Rose.

ROSE

AVERY
I'm Avery.

ROSE
Avery, right?

Yeah.

AVERY

Pause.

How old are you?

ROSE

Twenty.

AVERY

Huh.

ROSE

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THE FLICK

Pause.

I like your shoes.

ROSE

Avery looks down at his shoes.

Red.

ROSE

Pause.

... Thanks.

AVERY

Another pause.

Hi Sam.

ROSE

Hello Rose.

SAM

Pause.

I'm really hungover so you guys will have to excuse me if I'm like a little low-energy tonight.

ROSE

Avery goes back to cleaning. Rose leans sleepily against the wall. Sam seems eager to talk to her.

Who were you out with?

SAM

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ANNIE BAKER

ROSE

(fake-spaced-out)

What?

SAM

Oh. Uh. Who were you partying with last night?

ROSE

Just a couple of friends.

SAM

Katie?

ROSE

Oh my god. Katie is like . . . no.

Reiko. And this other guy.

We all drank moonshine . . . have you guys ever had moonshine?

SAM

AVERY

Uh-huh.

No.

ROSE

Anyway. I'm just like . . . I totally have a drinking problem.

She fake yawns. Avery accidentally drops his broom, then quickly picks it up.

ROSE

I'm gonna go take a nap. When does the next show start?

SAM

6:20.

Do you need anything? I could like run out and get you something.

THE FLICK

ROSE

Oh my god no. I'm totally fine.

She starts to leave, then stops.

ROSE

It was nice meeting you Avery.

AVERY

Yeah. You too.

ROSE

Those shoes rock.

Rose exits. Sam stands there. Avery continues sweeping. After a safe amount of time has gone by:

SAM

. . . So?

AVERY

What?

SAM

What'd you think?

AVERY

She was—

Rose reenters.

ROSE

(to Sam)

Did you tell him about Dinner Money?

Sam gets weird.

SAM
Uh—what? No. Wait—

ROSE
What did you do last night?
Did you take it all?

SAM
I thought that—he just started working here, / so—

ROSE
Well. Exactly, dumbass. You have to explain it to him.

SAM
It's just—we have no idea if he's going to be cool with / it and—

ROSE
He has to be cool with it.

Avery is trying to look like he's not listening.

SAM
Hey, Avery.

Avery turns around.

AVERY
Yeah.

SAM
At the end of every shift you're gonna get Dinner Money. It's just a little extra cash. We always split it three ways or two

ways if there's just two of us. It can be anywhere from you know ten bucks on a weeknight to like thirty bucks on the weekend.

AVERY
Oh. Cool.

Short pause.

ROSE
(to Sam)
See? It's fine.
So it's like a per diem?

ROSE
A what?

SAM
No. Uh. Well. Kind of. It's kind of like a per diem. It's just . . .
Steve doesn't know about it.

A weird pause.

AVERY
Steve doesn't give it to us?

Rose looks at Sam. Sam struggles to find the right way to say it.

SAM
When we . . . when we take the tickets, we just kind of . . . you know when you tear them in half and put the other half in the / bin, well—

AVERY
Yeah. Sure.

SAM
Well, sometimes we take like, uh, like ten percent of those stubs, and we, uh, we, uh, we, uh, resell them.

A pause.

SAM
And then we take ten percent of the, uh, the, uh . . .
Cash for the night.

ROSE
As Dinner Money.

SAM
We call it Dinner Money.

ROSE
Well, it *is* kind of dinner money, because we're so vastly underpaid and because Steve is a total douchebag and doesn't have a credit card machine and is like totally fishy anyway with his finances and basically has like no idea how to run a movie theater.

A pause.

ROSE
So actually it like, it *is* dinner money.
Because \$8.25 an hour is *not* enough to live on.

AVERY
You've never been caught?

ROSE
No, it's like a like a like an employee tradition? Roberto—the guy who trained me—he told me about it and the people who

worked here before him told *him* about it and like nobody has ever been caught or like even been close to being caught. Because Steve is just like . . . he's an idiot. He can like suck my cock.

Avery looks at Sam. Sam is embarrassed.

AVERY
Uh . . . so what are you guys asking me?

ROSE
I guess we're not asking
you anything.

AVERY
Because I don't really want to
do it.

ROSE
But you can't . . . it's not
up to you to decide!

SAM
You don't have to do anything!
I'll deal with the tickets! You
just get half the money!

AVERY
I don't want to take Steve's money.

ROSE
Okay, see, I don't think of it as Steve's money. Steve is like a compulsive gambler who doesn't pay child support. He has like five kids somewhere in like Maine and his ex-wife is always taking him to court.

A long pause.

AVERY
I don't want the money. I'm not gonna like rat you guys out but, no, I'm sorry, I could tell he didn't really want to hire a black guy anyway and / I'm not gonna—

WHOA! Really?! Steve is a racist?!!

SAM

I don't know, okay? That's / what I'm—

AVERY

That's so lame. That's so lame. He's such a fucking racist.

ROSE

AVERY

I'm not saying . . . I'm just . . . he's like an older angry white dude with a truck and like . . . it's just one of those things . . . where like if something goes wrong . . .

A very long, uncomfortable pause.

ROSE

I don't feel that way.

Pause.

AVERY

Wait, what?

Another weird pause.

SAM

Can I just say . . . I guess I just want to say that, uh, Roberto . . . Roberto was Hispa—Latino? And uh nothing ever happened. Nothing bad ever happened to him.

Silence. Avery walks down the aisle, sits in the front row, and puts his head in his hands. They watch him.

After a second, he takes off his glasses, wipes them off on his polo shirt, puts them back on, and then puts his head in his hands again.

Sam and Rose watch him do this, and then start mouthing panicky silent things to each other. Maybe Rose is mouthing stuff like WHAT DO WE DO??!! HE'S GONNA TELL ON US!! and Sam is mouthing stuff like IT'S COOL IT'S COOL FLL TALK TO HIM IT'S GONNA BE COOL but we shouldn't really be able to read their lips and maybe they can't either, it's more just like mutual gestures of panic. Then they go back to watching Avery, who is unmoving in his seat.

SAM

If you have like—
If it's like an ethical you know—
You could always uh . . .

He trails off. Another silence.

ROSE

Listen.
Avery.
I don't want to be like a total cunt about this and I don't want to put you in a crappy position.
But if me and Sam are doing it and you're not it's like . . . it's like not fair to anybody. Like it's like really bad for everyone involved.

A few seconds later, Avery stands up, shakes his head as if to clear it, and puts his hands on his hips.

AVERY

Yeah.
Okay.
Fine.

Pause.

ROSE

Wait, what does / that—

ANNIE BAKER

AVERY

It's fine.

I'll take—I'll do whatever.

It's cool.

Sorry.

I didn't mean to like . . .

I didn't mean to freak you guys out.

Or be judgmental.

(pause)

Sorry. Yeah.

I'm okay with it.

They stare at him.

He laughs nervously.

AVERY

Seriously?!

I'm fine.

Sorry.

Rose and Sam exchange a long look. Then:

ROSE

. . . All right, boys.

I'm gonna go take a nap in the booth.

Wake me up at five till.

She leaves. Sam looks at Avery. Avery finally stands up. They resume sweeping. After a little while:

SAM

Richard Pryor and Angelina Jolie.

Blackout.

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SCENE FOUR

Sam and Avery are in the middle of sweeping. Avery is whistling to himself ("Le Tourbillon" from Jules and Jim). After about a minute:

SAM

You know what I hate the most?

Avery stops whistling.

SAM

It's one thing if I sold you the food. It's one thing if you you know legitimately purchased the food from me and then leave it like scattered across the floor.

But to SNEAK FOOD IN . . .

To sneak outside food in and THEN to like scatter it across the floor and leave empty bags of . . .

(he lifts up the bag)

. . . Sun Chips on your seat.
That I do not understand.

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Through the window, we watch Rose teach Avery how to thread the projector. He probably does it himself while she watches and provides instructions. He is smiling. They finish threading the projector. They turn it on. A movie begins; we see the green light, then blackness, then the opening credit sequence, music. It is the six-minute-long opening-credit-sequence music from *The Wild Bunch*.

Avery watches the beginning of the movie, his face almost pressed up against the projection booth window, and then he and Rose exit and come through the theater door again.

Avery doesn't take his eyes off the screen while he walks down the aisle. He finds the third row, stage left, and sits in the center.

Rose follows him and sits next to him.

They watch the movie for about forty-five seconds.

Then Rose very slowly turns her face and looks at Avery. He notices this but continues watching the screen, attempting to appear nonchalant. Rose keeps looking at Avery. Avery keeps looking at the screen.

After a while, Rose leans over and kisses Avery's neck.

Avery is frozen, still watching the movie. He does not move away.

Rose keeps kissing Avery's neck, contemplates nibbling his ear, decides against it, and goes back to looking at him.

Avery keeps watching the movie.

Rose takes her index finger and traces little stripes and circles on Avery's neck. Then she takes her finger and runs it in a straight line down Avery's shirt (or maybe she stops to make tiny circles around his nipples). Then her hand disappears from our view.

Avery is still watching the screen.

Rose unzips his pants and begins to touch him. Avery lets her touch him and does not take his eyes off the screen.

This goes on for a minute or so but something is clearly off and eventually Rose slowly takes her hand away and, mortified, goes back to watching the movie.

Avery keeps watching the movie. He might start crying. He doesn't. Eventually Rose gets up, walks up the aisle (Avery does not turn around), and ten seconds later we see her in the projection booth. She

shuts off the movie and the lights in the theater automatically go on. As if released from a spell, Avery bends over, elbows on knees, and covers his face in shame.

He stays this way while Rose comes back downstairs, walks down the aisle, and sits in the row across from him, in the aisle seat.

A long silence.

ROSE

Sorry.

AVERY

No.

I'm sorry.

Short pause.

AVERY

Oh my god.

I wanna kill myself.

ROSE

Wow.

Thanks.

Avery removes his face from his hands and looks at Rose. Another long silence.

ROSE

I um . . .

Yeah.

Wow.

We can just forget that this ever happened, okay?

Pause.

ROSE
I feel like I like *molested* you or something.

AVERY
You didn't molest me.

ROSE
Yeah.

I'm an idiot.
(*a short pause*)

Honestly, I don't know why I even like *did* that.
I wasn't planning on doing that.
I swear to god.

(*a short pause*)
There's something wrong with me.

AVERY
No, there's something wrong with *me*.

A long silence.

ROSE
Well are we just gonna like sit here and like freak out together
in silence?
Because then I'd / rather—

AVERY
It's just.
This has happened to me.
Before.

Pause.

AVERY
So don't feel—please don't feel / like—

ROSE
Yeah, but you weren't giving me the vibe and I went for it
anyway.

A long pause.

ROSE
... So you / like—

AVERY
I just have a hard time.
Sometimes.

When like—my mind goes blank and I like . . .
I always just think: I'd rather be watching a movie.

His elbows go onto his knees and his face goes into his hands again.

ROSE
It's okay, Avery.

She moves across the aisle and sits next to him again.

ROSE
What do you think about when you, like, fantasize?

No response. After a pause:

ROSE
Do you ever think about / guys?

AVERY
I really don't want to answer these questions.

ROSE
Okay.
That's okay.

ANNIE BAKER

His face is still in his hands. Rose leans back in her seat, almost relaxed now, and props her feet up on the seat in front of her.

ROSE
Well, I'm fucked up too.

AVERY
(muffled)
Yeah?

Short pause.

ROSE
I can't stay attracted to anyone for longer than four months.

AVERY
... Huh.

ROSE
At first I'm like this like crazy nymphomaniac. All I want to do is like have sex all the time. Like eight, nine times a day.

AVERY
Whoa.

ROSE
And then it like totally goes away and I turn into like this like dead fish.
And then I like fake it until we break up.

AVERY
Huh.

A long pause.

THE FLICK

ROSE
And you know what's even weirder?

AVERY
What.

ROSE
When I like fantasize I just like think about *myself*.

A short pause.

AVERY
Really?

ROSE
Yeah. Like everyone else is blurry except for me.
I'm like totally in focus.
And I like look amazing.
And everyone is like: holy shit.
That girl looks so amazing.

Pause.

ROSE
It's really embarrassing.

AVERY
I don't think it's embarrassing at all.

Silence. They both are leaning back in their seats now, facing the blank screen, peaceful, arms touching.

AVERY
Can we just sit here for a little while?

ANNIE BAKER

ROSE

Yeah.

Yeah.

Of course.

A long, much more comfortable silence.

AVERY

Today is the one-year anniversary of the day I tried to kill myself.

After a pause:

ROSE

Really?

AVERY

Uh-huh.

Pause.

ROSE

How did you do it?

AVERY

I swallowed a bunch of pins.

ROSE

Oh my god.

Pause.

ROSE

That works?

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THE FLICK

AVERY

Well.

(short pause)

I didn't plan on doing it.

(short pause)

It was a weird day.

A long pause.

ROSE

Huh. I've been like super super sad before but I've never wanted to commit suicide.

I just like don't get it.

I don't get suicide.

It's like: aren't you curious what's gonna like *happen* to you? In like the future? I'm just like so curious about my future.

AVERY

Yeah.

You've probably never...

He decides not to say it.

AVERY

... You know what I don't get?

ROSE

What?

AVERY

Bulimia.

ROSE

Oh my god!!! I know, right?!

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ANNIE BAKER

AVERY

Barfing is so horrible.

ROSE

I know!! It's like / the—

AVERY

It's like the worst feeling in the world. It's like being in hell.

ROSE

I know! Like why would you like *voluntarily* . . . like if you're gonna like have an eating disorder just be anorexic.

Pause.

ROSE

This is an awesome conversation.

Pause.

AVERY

I almost quit my second day working here.

ROSE

Why?

AVERY

I just like . . . I couldn't get out of bed. The first day was just like really awkward and I couldn't remember anything and I like . . . I had no idea how to hold the broom—

She laughs.

THE FLICK

AVERY

—I'm serious. And then I woke up the next day and just like freaked out. I was like: I can't have a job. I'm way too depressed. And I didn't get out of bed and I like lay there under the covers staring up at the ceiling and four p.m. rolled around, I like watched the numbers on my alarm clock, and I was like, I should be at The Flick by now, but I couldn't even bring myself to call in sick. And then it was like 4:05, and then it was 4:10, and I was like that's it, I just lost my first job, I give up. And then—it's weird—I didn't even make the decision—but it was like—the second I thought, like—I give up—my body started moving and I like pushed the blanket off and like stood up and put on my uniform and like walked outside and walked to the bus and took the bus and walked in here and made up some like lie to Sam about why I was late and that was it.

A long pause.

ROSE

So why are you depressed?

AVERY

Are you serious?

ROSE

Yeah.

AVERY

Um. Because everything is horrible? And sad?
(a short pause)
And the answer to every terrible situation always seems to be like, Be Yourself, but I have no idea what that fucking means. Who's Myself? Apparently there's some like amazing awe-

some person deep down inside of me or something? I have no idea who that guy is. I'm always faking it. And it looks to me like everyone else is faking it too. Like everyone is acting out some like stereotype of like . . . of like . . . exactly . . . who you'd think they'd be. And I had one friend, one friend, at Clark, this guy from Bangladesh who was really into sculpture, and then he transferred to RISD at the end of freshman year.

After a short pause:

AVERY

And my mom like . . .
Actually never mind.

A long pause.

ROSE

Do you think *I'm* a stereotype?

AVERY

Of like—

ROSE

Of like—whatever.
Of like what I am.

AVERY

. . . Yeah.

ROSE

You do?!

AVERY

Yeah.

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Pause.

ROSE

I guess you're right.

Pause.

ROSE

Uch.

Pause.

ROSE

Wait.

Were you being fake? Just now?

AVERY

When?

ROSE

When you were like . . . when you were going off about how everyone is so fake. Were you faking it then?

AVERY

I mean yes and no.

It's hard to tell, I guess.

ROSE

Yeah.

They look up at the blank screen and prop their knees up on the seats in front of them. Maybe Rose puts her head on Avery's shoulder.

Blackout.

Jeanne Moreau singing "Le Tourbillon" plays.

101

ANNIE BAKER

SAM

I don't know. It's like something someone would write in a movie. I mean, like the hero of the movie. He'd like bring it to Washington and go like running down the corridor of the courthouse and like stop to kiss the love of his life and she'd say, like, you know, GO FOR IT, and then he'd run into the courtroom and read this letter in front of the judge.

AVERY

And what would the judge say?

SAM

You know.

"On this day of all other days . . ."

"We have learned . . ."

"I am humbled to admit that even in my old age I can . . ."

You know:

"This young man has taught us the true meaning of Christmas."

AVERY

Okay. Cool.

Pause.

AVERY

Did I convince you?

Pause.

SAM

Oh. Hm. Good question.

Pause.

SAM

You know, I guess I don't really care either way.

Blackout.

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SCENE FIVE

The lights in the theater are completely different. It's as if all the bulbs have changed their wattage, or gone fluorescent, or switched location. Sam and Rose are sitting on different sides of the aisle. They are both wearing new uniforms. A yellow polo shirt instead of a maroon one, or vice versa. Now the words "The Venue" are stitched on their pockets.

Rose and Sam are waiting for something. After a silence:

SAM

He said I couldn't wear my Red Sox cap anymore.

ROSE

Seriously?

SAM

Uh-huh. And I was like, Paul, we live in Massachusetts. It isn't like a . . . like a controversial hat.

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ANNIE BAKER

And?

ROSE

He didn't go for it.

SAM

After a silence:

So how are you?

SAM

I'm okay.

ROSE

Pause.

ROSE

My roommate left this like long passive-aggressive note on my bedroom door this morning. It was like seven Post-Its long. And she has this really annoying handwriting. Anyway, whatever.

After a pause:

ROSE

How are *you*? I have no idea how you're / like—

SAM

I'm okay.

Pause.

ROSE

What's—what's new?

144

THE FLICK

Pause.

Not much.

SAM

Pause.

I went on a date last night.

SAM

Oh yeah?

ROSE

With like—

Was it a first date?

SAM

It was a first date.

ROSE

Was it an internet date?

SAM

It was an internet date.

ROSE

And?

SAM

I liked her.
She was actually pretty cool.

Pause.

SAM

Tiler.

With an i.

145

ANNIE BAKER

Huh.

ROSE

Pause.

What does she do?

ROSE

SAM

Well.

At the moment she is a barista—

ROSE

Okay.

SAM

—but she's also sort of a um part-time low-flying trapeze artist.

ROSE

Oh wow.

Pause.

ROSE

So she must have like a really great body.

Pause.

ROSE

If she's like a trapeze artist.

Sam sighs. After a short pause:

SAM

Why do you have to be so crude?

146

THE FLICK

What do / you—

ROSE

SAM

Like, you're always like, you know, talking about you know, oh, yeah, he had a huge cock, or like, or like, she's like she's like—wow she must have a nice pussy or something.

ROSE

I have never said anything about anyone having a nice pussy in front of you.

SAM

You know. You know what I mean.

ROSE

You must be thinking about Tiler and her nice pussy because I never said / anything about—

SAM

I have been on one date with Tiler!
I have never even kissed Tiler!

Pause.

ROSE

Whatever.

SAM

Look, you . . . you've made it clear that you're not interested. So I don't understand why you can't have a little like you know pity on me and / like—

ROSE

You wouldn't look at me!

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ANNIE BAKER

SAM

What does—what does—why does—wait—what does that have to do with—why are you—that is like / completely—

ROSE

You didn't even give me a / chance to—

SAM

You said that I didn't know you! And that . . . that you were nothing like the person I thought you were! So—

ROSE

So that's true!

Pause.

SAM

So—

ROSE

So that's a fact!

Pause.

ROSE

But like . . . that doesn't mean you have to run out and start like internet-dating and like forget all about me.

Like oh yeah, you must be really in love with someone if you like do that.

SAM

So—so—so—so what are you—
Do you like want to go out on a date or something?

Pause.

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THE FLICK

ROSE

No!

SAM

SO WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?!

Pause.

ROSE

I'm just saying that I was right. That it was like a . . . that it was like a big performance. That's all.

Pause.

SAM

I can't believe this.
I can't believe this.

This doesn't make any sense.

Pause.

SAM

You want me to / like—

ROSE

Just like GET TO KNOW ME!

SAM

I can't get to know you if you keep acting like a . . . like a . . . like a . . . like a . . . like a—

ROSE

What? Say it.
Say it.

149

ANNIE BAKER

Never mind.

SAM

You think I'm like a total bitch.

ROSE

Pause.

ROSE

Right?!

He doesn't respond.

ROSE

You like totally hate me now.

So just say it!

Avery walks in, also in a new uniform. He looks deeply shaken. They fall silent.

AVERY

Hey.

ROSE

How'd it go?

AVERY

Uh—
Well—

SAM

He told *me* I couldn't wear my Red Sox cap anymore.

AVERY

Oh. That sucks.

150

THE FLICK

He's got a weird face, right?

ROSE

Pause.

SAM

Did he say anything about your letter?

AVERY

He figured out Dinner Money.

ROSE

Wait, what?

AVERY

He figured it out.

He looked at the books and looked at the receipts and like— apparently there was like *too* much money in the register from like last month and that's like a sign that people are stealing and then he found the shoebox with the stubs underneath / the—

SAM

Fuck.

Fuck!

ROSE

Wait, why was he looking at the books from last month? What does he care? He has like a whole new system and a credit card machine! We're not gonna steal from *him*!

AVERY

I guess he like . . . he wanted to make sure we were good employees, or / like—

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ANNIE BAKER

So—so what was . . .

SAM

He was mad.

AVERY

Pause.

Well, yeah. But what / was—

ROSE

And he thinks it's me.

AVERY

Pause.

I mean, he thinks it's all me.

AVERY

Pause.

Because of your letter?

ROSE

AVERY

There was a note for Sam in the box. In my handwriting.

(to Sam)

From the weekend you were gone.

I guess he recognized my handwriting?

I also think he . . .

Pause.

ROSE

So what did you . . .

152

THE FLICK

I mean, I didn't rat you guys out.

AVERY

Rose and Sam both try not to show that they are relieved.

SAM

Well.

Okay.

So we just need to uh. To uh.

To uh—

AVERY

Well, I was thinking that you guys could go to him and like fess up to your side of it too and like tell him that you were the ones who told me to do it in the first place and / then like—

ROSE

Wait.

What?

AVERY

—and then maybe he won't / like—

ROSE

Waitwaitwaitwaitwait.

Hold on hold on hold on.

Let's all like stop and take a deep breath.

(pause)

Why should we tell him we were the ones who told you to do it in the first place?

Pause.

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ANNIE BAKER

ROSE

Which by the way is kind of a um whatscalled revised way of looking at it. If I recall correctly you were pretty happy to take fifteen bucks from us every night.

AVERY

Because if we say that all of us were doing it and it was like an employee tradition like you said and that everyone did it maybe he'll understand and like . . . not fire me.

ROSE

He'll fire all of us.

AVERY

I mean, or he'll like let it go.

Pause.

ROSE

Whoa.

Okay.

That's really intense.

That's a really intense thing to ask of . . . to ask us to do.

AVERY

. . . I didn't tell on you.

ROSE

Yeah, well, that would have been like *evil*.

Sam is silent.

ROSE

Sam?

154

THE FLICK

SAM

Uh-huh.

ROSE

Do you have anything to say about this?

He shakes his head no, averting his eyes.

ROSE

No?

He shakes his head no again. Both Avery and Rose look at him, betrayed.

ROSE

Okay. Great.

A horrible, horrible silence.

ROSE

(politely, to Avery)

I'm just um . . .

How much money does your dad make?

AVERY

Excuse me?

ROSE

I'm just curious. Your dad teaches semantics at Clark, right?

AVERY

Yeah. Semi—

Yeah. I told you that.

ROSE

How much does he make?

155

ANNIE BAKER

AVERY

That's none of your business.

ROSE

And you have a free ride, right?

Pause.

AVERY

I don't see how—

ROSE

Because I still have like twenty thousand dollars in student loans to pay off and my mom is a secretary.

And I don't have a rich dad.

AVERY

My dad isn't rich.

ROSE

And Sam is thirty-five and he lives in a shitty attic above his crazy parents.

Sam winces but does not say anything. Pause.

ROSE

And this is our like—this isn't like a job we have *while* we go to college.

This is what we like—feed ourselves with.

(pause)

So I just think that . . .

AVERY

Wow. Okay.

156

THE FLICK

ROSE

I just think that you should think about that.

A long pause.

ROSE

It's just a like really really intense thing to do to ask someone who's super in debt and someone who didn't even go to college—

SAM

(quietly)
Okay, Rose—

ROSE

—to like give up their jobs to like defend you.

Pause.

ROSE

It just makes me feel like you don't really get it.

Pause. Avery just stands there.

ROSE

And I mean, I'm really sorry that Paul is blaming you. That's really fucked up.

Another pause. Avery takes off his glasses, polishes them on his shirt, and puts them back on again.

He puts his hands on his hips. He seems to be waiting for something. Finally:

SAM

What did he say about the projector?

157

Pause.

AVERY

He's getting rid of it.
He's going digital.

Pause.

SAM

(small, hopeful)

So maybe you wouldn't have wanted to stay?

Pause.

SAM

(even more tiny and feeble)

I mean, maybe you would have wanted to quit anyway.
I remember you saying that.

Avery looks at Sam for a long time, then nods. Then he slowly walks up the aisle toward the door. Then he stops.

AVERY

Hey Sam.

Pause. Sam looks at him.

AVERY

You want me to do Ezekiel 25:17?

SAM

Huh?

AVERY

You want me to do Ezekiel 25:17 for Rose?

Pause.

SAM

Uh . . . maybe . . .

I'm not sure if now is the right / time to—

AVERY

EZEKIEL 25:17.

THE PATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS MAN IS BESET ON
ALL SIDES BY THE INEQUITIES OF THE SELFISH
AND THE TYRANNY OF EVIL MEN.

BLESSED IS HE WHO, IN THE NAME OF CHAR-
ITY AND GOOD WILL, SHEPHERDS THE WEAK
THROUGH THE VALLEY OF THE DARKNESS. FOR
HE IS TRULY HIS BROTHER'S KEEPER AND THE
FINDER OF LOST CHILDREN.

AND I WILL STRIKE DOWN WITH GREAT VEN-
GEANCE AND FURIOUS ANGER THOSE WHO
ATTEMPT TO POISON AND DESTROY MY BROTHERS.
AND YOU WILL KNOW I AM THE LORD WHEN
I LAY MY VENGEANCE UPON YOU.

Pause. Avery speaks thoughtfully, sadly.

AVERY

. . . I been sayin' that shit for years.

And if you ever heard it, it meant your ass.

I never really questioned what it meant. I thought it was just
some cold-blooded shit to say to a motherfucker before you
popped a cap in his ass.

But I saw some shit this morning that made me think twice.

(after a pause)

Now I'm thinking: it could mean you're the evil man. And I'm
the righteous man. And Mr. Nine-Millimeter here . . . he's the

shepherd protecting my righteous ass in the valley of darkness. Or it could be, you're the righteous man and I'm the shepherd and it's the world that's evil and selfish. I'd like that. But that shit ain't the truth. The truth is, you're the weak. And I'm the tyranny of evil men. But I'm tryin', Ringo. I'm tryin' real hard to be the shepherd.

He is looking at Sam. Sam looks like he might cry. After a silence:

ROSE

... That was awesome.

Avery leaves.

Blackout.

SCENE SIX

The theater is dark and empty. The film projector is on. We hear it whirring. It flashes green, then white, then it goes off. We see Rose and Sam enter the projection booth and turn on the lights. They are wearing their new uniforms. They are talking and moving around in the little hi-up window. They seem to be getting along. Maybe at one point Rose laughs and hits Sam on the arm. The theater is still dark.

Then we watch Sam and Rose slowly and methodically disassemble the film projector. They remove the reels and then, piece by piece, they remove the film projector from the window and put it on the floor of the projection booth. This might take a little while.

Then we watch them install the new digital projector. It doesn't take very long. They turn it on for a second to try it out. It emits a glowing square of white light and then begins to project images. It is on for a while, projecting images we can't see. Sam and Rose leave the booth. Then the projector goes to green, then white, then darkness. The lights in the movie theater flicker on, and after about five seconds: