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the Yellow Belly Anthology:
Micro-Films about Humans at their Least Impressive

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Introduction

My cat Frankie is self-conscious. She watches the other cats play with toys, then when no one is looking, noncommittally swats at a tinfoil ball and walks away, looking around to see if anyone noticed. And there I am, feeling amused and sad for her. I want to laugh at her, and reassure her that she knows how to be a cat. There are but few ways to ease a cat's self-consciousness, and telling her she is perfectly adequate how she is, with her nervousness and bad breath, "Humans get self-conscious too," I say. I know it is rude to anthropomorphize a cat's feelings, but I see her behavior reflected in every person in their candid moments. I see them swat at the tinfoil ball and retreat, painfully aware of self. I resolved to create a series of visual examples of this type of nervousness in people. It would be an anthology, with all different people and situations, to show that everyone experiences timidity. I resolved to make the episodes very short for Frankie's tiny attention span.

In the fall semester of 2019, I worked with my adviser Dr. Jon Volkmer on writing 60 60-second shorts on the theme of human insecurity, based off of real-life experiences and stories. I wrote a series of micro-scripts (60 seconds) satirizing the human self-consciousness and anxiety—moments that are rushed over or lost in longer-form mass media and film. The scripts show humans at their most indecisive, insecure, and vulnerable. Each of these scripts give glimpses into one or two people's interior lives as they find themselves in a particular nerve-provoking situation. By anthological, I mean that each short features a different set of characters in a different place with a different set of challenges, although each short features recurring themes, characters, and settings. In all of the shorts, a person must overcome, submit to, or rethink their own self-conscious ideation in a social situation. In drafting the series, themes recurred, characters returned and came head-to-head with characters from other shorts. Every week, we met and workshopped four scripts. Jon would prepare with ideas, comedic and structural, and helped got to the core of each short. Fifteen weeks

later, I had 60 scripts. In spring 2020 I selected and ordered nine of the scripts to film and showcase, operating on the criteria of feasibility, quality, and congruency. I have picked nine scripts that speak to one another, and ones I could realistically complete before the end of the semester and my time at Ursinus College.

My series makes use of Horatian satire, which pokes fun at and critiques people for the things we all find ourselves doing from time to time, and avoids Juvenalian satire, which mocks, jeers, and pointedly critiques. One invites judgment, the other compassion. I'm privileging Horatian over Juvenalian satire to emphasize that the feelings expressed in the films are human. It is the humanity of the feeling that we find charming, albeit odd or discomfoting. The Horatian approach suggests, however, that we have something to learn about ourselves by watching what we do in these moments of light satire.

By setting a guideline of sixty seconds per short film, I have forced myself not to capture a particular situation or set of characters, but singular moments. Life introduces us to what feels like an infinity of moments. Some moments we remember for years. It happens, too often perhaps, that we lose these moments without our knowing. A moment I vowed never to forget when I was ten may be nearly irretrievable by the time I was sixteen. Other moments stay with us for reasons we may not realize at the time, or later, or ever. But these moments often open themselves up under interrogation

By carrying out this project, I hope to have captured sixty of these moments and revealed in them the essence that has made them memorable. All of my scripts come from real scenarios I've been privy to, seen, or once enacted. This doesn't mean they adhere to journalistic standards of truth or reportage. I have changed the details and sometimes more critical aspects of situation to get to the core of that particular moment and what makes it so worthwhile. Overall, my goal has been for the complete series of these micro-scripts to transcend the sum of its parts. Each script is a story

about a person or two, but the greater product is a story about humanity and the timidity we struggle against in candid moments.

Various works have inspired and influenced me as I've embarked on this project. Attached are a series of texts and films during the project which have helped me understand three critical facets of the project: the art of anthology, micro (flash) storytelling, and screenwriting for very human, unimpressive characters. Including:

- *Brief Interviews with Hideous Men* by David Foster Wallace.

This book is a series of satirical short stories (some 40 pages long, some a brief paragraph) about different characters with different vices and shortcomings in their relationships with women. Wallace often adopts the voice of his hideous characters, making use of unreliable narrators to create comedy and imply the surreptitious, unmentionable, often sexual acts and viewpoints of his terrible characters in their respective plot structures. Here, I can make use of Wallace's flash fiction, his anthological story telling, and his satirization of his intriguing but unimpressive characters.

- *David Sedaris*

David Sedaris started in publication by reading his diary entries at open mics and cafés. They were hilarious and well-received, so he began developing some stories into nonfiction essays. Thus, the Santaland Diaries (about his time working as an elf in the NY Macy's Christmas festivities) was born, and he soon after read it aloud on National Public Radio. This led to a two-book deal where he wrote non-fiction comedy essays like the Santaland Diaries and sequenced the anthology of nonfiction retellings into two books which were adored by NPR's foundation of listeners and then more, becoming a NYTime best-seller. By adopting his comedic style of describing real events and people in a resigned amusement at the senselessness of people (and himself) I hope to inform the stories in my scripts with the satirical nonfiction techniques he uses in his writing.

- *Mitch Hedberg & Steven Wright*

Hedberg and Wright are stand-up comics, and masters of the micro-joke. It takes less than a breath of time to make the audience erupt. Hedberg's, "I think Bigfoot is blurry, that's the problem. It's not the photographer's fault," "This shirt is dry-clean only, which means it's dirty," and "I used to do drugs. I still do, but I used to, too," are wonderful examples of how one can create a short story, and even within that, a misdirection, in less than 15 words. Compare these to Wright's:

"Why is it a penny for your thoughts but you have to put your two cents in? Somebody's making a penny,"

and "I broke a mirror in my house and I'm supposed to get seven years bad luck, but my lawyer thinks he can get me five."

These jokes show that with a smallest extra context in the setup of a joke can make for a more satisfying punchline. One doesn't have to paint every wall of context. All it takes is a sentence.

I hope to make the viewers laugh in situations where, if developed and pushed further, they might cry. These stories about human vulnerability are tragicomedies. I want to recreate the discomfort of the awkward moment and invite my viewer to experience it. There is something sad and something funny in these moments, and the woe and comedy are in themselves inextricably linked. These are stories about people. The sad work of humanity is coping with mortality; one of the most significant methods of which is laughter and comedy. By hybridizing tragic and comic moments, I hope to move viewers to laughter, and hopefully lingering under the surface is a thoughtful melancholy.

Writing is my passion, particularly comedy and screenwriting. I have found as a screenwriter that a script, although a text in itself, is only that: a text. Many people have massive scripts

untouched in desk drawers and digital Celtx folders, but a script is not meant to be just a text. It is meant for a director, cast, and crew to transform it into a visual product, and then to be seen and heard! The dutiful screenwriter, I believe, does not only write. They see their scripts through to post-production. Unless one does that, one does not know the true quality of a script—the effectiveness of punchlines, the rhythm of beats, the authenticity of characters and honesty of a narrative—and cannot improve at writing them! A dutiful screenwriter, unless they find a good director and producer who will bring their A-game to a project (and the free ones will bring their C-game), must learn the language of filmmaking, the logistics of film production, and the skills of a persuasive leader to produce and direct the scripts themselves. Many writers who aren't filmmakers but are privileged enough to see someone put their stories on the screen end up hating the films! It may not even be the case of shoddy filmwork, just creative differences. Roald Dahl disowned *Willie Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*, after writing the book and even receiving a co-writing credit on the screenplay. Viktor Nabokov hated Stanley Kubrick's adaptation of his novel, *Lolita*, and Stephen King denounced Kubrick's adaptation of *The Shining*. As a writer and filmmaker, I have the rare opportunity of seeing my ideas from text to the screen, and in the tones and rhythms I envision them.

In previous projects, I have enjoyed two of my other favorite activities when filming written scripts: acting and directing. For this project, however, I wanted to challenge myself to stay in the mindset of the director and forego acting. I recruited actors and non-actors, and from there it was my task to direct them. This project, although the episodes are short and various, has a clear thesis. My goal was to adapt as a filmmaker to serve the thesis: how do people cope with personal timidity in social situations? One of the compromises I made was lifting the 60-second requirement. The writing project in the first semester was to write 60 one-minute stories. This semester, we have blueprints for structurally simple stories, and I'm glad for that. The 60-second requirement was an

effective guideline for keeping the narrative simple when writing the scripts, but as I direct and edit the stories, I realize that tightening each story to 60 seconds does not serve the reality of the stories. Many of these are stories about humans who feel awkward or self-aware, and these moments as lived experiences feel long and strained! If one is to portray the reality of what it's like to have an awkward encounter with an oversharing bartender, that moment better feel damn long. I trust that the blueprints for the stories keeps the narratives simple. In the editing room the films do not stretch past 120 seconds. In directing the episodes, it was then my goal to get to the crux and comedy of the situation; in editing the episodes, it was my goal to portray the reality of the characters' experience.

Another directorial decision was to improvise with the actors. The type of stories we're telling are about people who don't know quite how to present themselves. In just 60-seconds, I need to forget I'm watching actors on a screen playing "nervous," I need to see characters with their gears really moving! I've used improvisation in previous film projects as an actor to force myself into the reality of the scenario—now I had to encourage actors and non-actors to play along.

One of our actors was a tipsy patron who stepped into to play the monologuing bartender in a scene after an actor disappeared on us. The script is about a server at a fancy restaurant being told how to serve a bottle of wine. This actor I had literally served a bottle of wine to. When he got to the part of the monologue that makes fun of rich patrons for buying wine at marked up restaurant prices, something did not compute. In fact, most of the monologue did not compute. I tried reading the lines to him and asking him to repeat them, but even those come out confused and wildly altered. He was a little tipsy, and his acting style was oddly earnest. I switched gears. I told him to say people are definitely going to want to sniff the cork. If they say no, say what are you, crazy? You gotta sniff it. This is dialogue I would probably never write, because an actor would read it as goofy. By feeding the tipsy patron the lines right before he'd say them produced uncanny earnest quality.

The punchlines of the monologue changed, and the comedy was salvaged—possibly improved. After he said “You gotta sniff it,” I lost it. It is one of my favorite beats in the series.

Due to the anthological nature of the project, I’ve recruited many people to act over the course of production. Several of these people are non-actors, on whose generosity I relied to plan shoots at strange hours. Often, the hardest part working with non-actors is when they struggle to learn lines. When an actor has a tenuous grasp on their lines, it makes bold directorial choices all the more difficult to incorporate. If I tell someone who mixes up sentences to carefully remove a record from its cover and slide it into a pillow case, the lines will most likely not come at all. This applies even to small directorial bits of advice which are important to make the actor aware of what they are doing so they may keep what is working and ditch what isn’t. Too much directing and the lines fly away. I learned over the course of this project that the best solution for working with non-actors is keep direction simple, invite the actor to paraphrase once they understand the intent of the line, and edit a good performance out of them. If I have enough footage of a person’s reaction to one thing, I can kill the audio of that clip and utilize that shot elsewhere, and no one will know the difference.

I can even change the lines in a scene to better suit the themes and authenticity of the moment. A non-actor reading lines off a page runs the risk of sounding detached and disingenuous. That’s why I encourage actors to improvise as we discover together the crux of a scene. An actor who feels comfortable enough to improvise will deliver tiny treasures you could hardly find with a trained actor. A non-actor who is saying lines is thinking about how to express themselves, and as a result, comes off as inauthentic, and maybe you can get away with that in the theatre, but not on film! A non-actor who is improvising is thinking a character’s thoughts, and this way focus on *being* before expressing. In a series about candid moments, I needed to find this authenticity in each set of actors at each shoot before we could call it a wrap. In a series about people at their most human, one

must help actors find an acting style that conveys the crux of a scene while feeling comfortable enough to seem candid.

Improvisation is writing at the speed of discovery, and often to achieve the misdirection necessary for comedy that works, you need to incorporate improvisation into the way you write. The nature of this 60-script project propelled me into a hybridized state of discovery and re-writing. Just as if you are primed to say “slacker” when you see a yellow car, you will begin noticing more yellow cars on the road, this project primed me to see stories in real time. As situations unfolded, I could discover the nugget of truth about human interaction inherent in them, and at the same time write them as stories in my head, before coming up with a setting and characters, and putting it on the page.

This is an amazing ability, and it is innate to everybody. As I would tell people about this project, they would come up to me weeks later with a situation they witnessed where they thought at the time, “Hey, this would make a good 60-second script.” My roommate, my mom, my adviser, my coworker, my cast mates, and friends—all of them, even un-instructed, noticed situations of this nature in real life and were so compelled by the idiosyncrasy of them to tell me what they had witnessed. And several of these stories made the cut! Some of them are among my favorites (Check out “Plain Pancakes” and “Mahogany”).

If we are primed to recognize the hidden timidity of social interactions, the hidden becomes unhidden, and by the mechanism of improvisation we are able to unearth in these moments secret truths about the human condition. Even if we cannot tell at first what those truths are, like a metal detector we can perceive that they are there, and by process of writing we may uncover those truths, dissever and comprehend them. Then by process of filmmaking, we merely put them on display.

the Yellow Belly Anthology

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#1 "YOU CAN GET SUNBURNT ON A CLOUDY DAY"

EXT. VALLEY FORGE NATIONAL PARK - DAY

A TEEN (19 YO) on an old picnic table. Another TEEN is walking away to the bathroom. The parking lot is busy with cars, PARENTS and CHILDREN walking to the Visitor's Center.

A SWEATY MAN (40s) holds his chest as trudges by. Trudging by-- getting closer closer closer and slumps onto the table-seat.

SWEATY MAN

(panting)

Hey. Hey. How's it going?

TEEN

Hello.

SWEATY MAN

Good. Good. I'm having a little episode and it's good for me to keep talking. Just talk through it.

The teen looks around.

TEEN

Should I call 911?

SWEATY MAN

No! No. No institutions. No cops.

The teen nods, then shakes his head (no cops).

SWEATY MAN

Keep--

(gesticulating)

Keep talking to me. That will help--

TEEN

(re: bathroom)

I gotta--

SWEATY MAN

(cont.)

That's the best thing you can do right now.

TEEN

I got a job at a restaurant--

SWEATY MAN

What? Look at me. I know I have parents. I know I have a car. I know I have a two-year-old niece. I shouldn't go anywhere near those things right now.

TEEN

Yes.

SWEATY MAN

What was-- (mumbles). What was-- I'm having trouble...

TEEN

I'm sorry?

SWEATY MAN

(rehearsed)

"I'm just having difficulty processing the visuals." That's all.

The sweaty man takes out a pack of cigarettes. He puts one in his mouth.

SWEATY MAN

Can we smoke here?

TEEN

I don't think so.

SWEATY MAN

What?

The sweaty man rings sweats from the bottom of his t-shirt. He lights his cigarette. He sits down.

SWEATY MAN

I'm fine. This is what I needed.

TEEN

I've got to go to the bathroom.

SWEATY MAN

Don't leave me! You can't leave me here. I don't wanna be alone.

The teen watches a FATHER walk his CHILD into the bathroom.

TEEN

...Okay.

#2 "GRANDMA'S REMOTE"

INT. RETIREMENT HOME COMMON ROOM - DAY

In a large, decadent, and otherwise empty room, a GRANDMA (80 YO) and her DAUGHTER (50 YO) listen to DISTORTED ORCHESTRAL HOLD MUSIC from Grandma's huge cellphone.

The daughter looks through the open doorway into a long hallway where a lone OLD MAN pushes a walker away from them.

GRANDMA

We can do this another time.

DAUGHTER

No, it's no problem.

GRANDMA

I'm really sorry about this.

GRANDMA

This is why I haven't called-- Mom. Really, it's no prob--

DAUGHTER

The music cuts out. From the phone:

CUST. SUPPORT (O.S.)

Hello, Marge? What seems to be the problem.

GRANDMA

We've been on the phone for 50 minutes.

DAUGHTER

Her remote's not working. We need you to send her a new remote.

CUST. SUPPORT (O.S.)

...Oookay. You said there's something wrong with your remote?

GRANDMA

My phone is fine.

DAUGHTER

Your remote.

GRANDMA

My channel switcher won't work. I have to go to guide and then use the arrows.

CUST. SUPPORT (O.S.)

One moment.

The terrible HOLD MUSIC returns, even more distorted this time. The daughter watches the old man trudge down effortfully down the hall. The music cuts out again.

CUST. SUPPORT (O.S.)

Well we have a center in King of Prussia, why don't you bring it out there.

GRANDMA

Nothing from Prussia, please. I would like an American controller.

DAUGHTER

She doesn't drive out to King of Prussia. We'd like you to send her a new remote.

CUST. SUPPORT (O.S.)

Okay, and Marge: when did your controller stop working?

GRANDMA

Johnson.

CUST. SUPPORT (O.S.)

I'm sorry?

GRANDMA

Marge *Johnson*.

DAUGHTER

When your controller stopped working.

GRANDMA

3 years ago.

CUST. SUPPORT (O.S.)

Oookay. Let me get you on the phone with my manager,

DAUGHTER

No, that's okay we just--

The HOLD MUSIC returns full blast, a distorted cacophony.

GRANDMA

Pete's Sake.

The daughter looks into the hall once more, but the old man is gone.

#3 "WHO BOOKS THE TALENT HERE?"

INT. CLASSY BAR - NIGHT

Live folk music rushes in from outside when a WAITER opens the patio door on his way to the bar. He takes two martinis from the end of the bar, where the erratic bartender is cutting an orange with a citrus knife.

The bartender garnishes two Blue Moons and hands them to two FRIENDS at the bar (50 YO, F).

FRIEND 1

I can't believe you made me get a Blue Moon. I would've never got a Blue Moon.

FRIEND 2

Thanks, Kevin.

BARTENDER

Of course.

Friend 1 looks outside.

FRIEND 1

Who books the talent here?

BARTENDER

I'm sorry?

FRIEND 1

Do you know who books the talent here?

BARTENDER

Oh. Scott. He's one of the owners.

FRIEND 1

Would he book someone that was 16?

BARTENDER

16? Probably not.

FRIEND 1

What if he was like really good, like he booked a 22-city tour on his own.

Friend 1 goes to town on her Blue Moon.

BARTENDER
Shiddy? What's a shiddy?

FRIEND 2
City tour. 22 cities.

BARTENDER
Oh city. I went into the city last
week and saw--
(stifled laughter)
It was a dog ventriloquist.

FRIEND 1
Yeah, this kid actually wrote a song
with that girl who got second on
America's Got Talent this year.

BARTENDER
(to Friend 2)
This guy made it sound like the dog
was talking. Swear to god.

FRIEND 1
He asked his headmaster--he goes to
the Hill School--he asked if he could
graduate 5 weeks early to do the tour
if he got all his work done, and he
said yes.

The bartender keeps laughing, thinking secret thoughts about
the dog ventriloquist.

BARTENDER
He'd say, "Right, Butch?" and the dog
would say--

The bartender breaks down laughing.

BARTENDER
He'd say-- he'd say, "Right Rocco."

Friend 2 bursts out laughing. Friend 1 takes a big swig.

BARTENDER
Wow. How you doing there, you want
another one?

FRIEND 1
Yes. Thank you.

#4 "PINBALL WITCH"

INT. FANCY BAR - NIGHT

An AUNT (50 YO) and her NIECE (21) sit at a hightop table. One of those plastic crowns that say "21" is sitting next to a finished plate of calamari. All that's left is the green sauce.

The aunt is staring at the niece's face as a WAITER puts down two lemon drops.

NIECE
Thanks Aunt Jane.

AUNT
Twenty-one.

The niece laughs affably.

AUNT
When I was 20 years old, you know what I'd do on the weekends?

The niece, trying her lemon drop, shakes her head.

AUNT
My friends and I we'd take quaaludes and go out and play pinball.

The niece almost spits out her drink.

AUNT
And I was the best at pinball. I was even better when I was high. You know quaaludes, like those little green... Ours were green.

NIECE
And you played pinball?

AUNT
I just got so good at it. People would bet on me. We'd make money and we're basically getting quaaludes for free at this point. I just had... the touch.

The aunt takes a long sip of her lemon drop.

AUNT
I was... I could bend the machine

without tilting it. People couldn't believe it. The things I could do to that machine...

The waiter takes the plate of finished calamari.

WAITER

Anything I can help you with right now?

The aunt stares at the paper crown on the table. 21.

NIECE

No, thanks!

#5 "KEYS TO OUR CLEAN RESTROOMS"

EXT. HIGHWAY GAS STATION - DAY

A highway roars in the background as a car flies into a gas station parking lot. It pulls into a spot. NJ plates.

INT. GAS STATION CONVENIENCE STORE - MOMENTS LATER

A WOMAN rushes into the store past a HUNCHED MAN (50 YO) scratching lottery tickets at a small table, around the store, searching, lost, and finally to the CASHIER (40 YO, F).

WOMAN

Do you have a bathroom I could use?

The cashier looks at an empty key rack, the words "Keys to Our Clean Restrooms" on it.

CASHIER

Someone's got the key.

WOMAN

I can wait.

The woman turns around. The hunched man with lottery tickets is RIGHT THERE. He sounds lonely and dumb as he says:

HUNCHED MAN

Are you from Pennsylvania?

WOMAN

Sorry?

HUNCHEd MAN
You have an accent.

WOMAN
I'm from... around Philadelphia.

HUNCHEd MAN
I thought. I thought so.

CASHIER
They sound different when they got all
their teeth, Ralph.

WOMAN
I actually got someone in the car so
I'm--

HUNCHEd MAN
You're leaving?

WOMAN
Yeah.

HUNCHEd MAN
Wish ya weren't.

WOMAN
Sorry.

HUNCHEd MAN
You want these?

The hunched man holds out a key on keychain. The woman looks at it. At the cashier. At the sign "Keys to Our Clean Restrooms".

The woman leaves without taking the key.

The hunched man puts the key back in his pocket and returns to his seat. He examines his tickets.

CASHIER
Any winners?

HUNCHEd MAN
Nah.

CASHIER
One of these days.

#6 "THREE FIVES AND A TEN"

EXT. GAS STATION PARKING LOT - DAY

A STONER (20) is sitting in his car, the engine off, staring off dully. He looks down at the two twenties in his hand.

A car pulls into the spot next to him. From the driver's seat, the stoner's DEALER (16 YO) motions him to come over.

INT. DEALER'S CAR

The stoner closes passenger door behind him. The dealer's holding a bag of weed, an eighth.

STONER
(handing his money)
40?

DEALER
Nah. 45.

STONER
I thought you said 40.

DEALER
Nah.

The stoner reaches into his pocket. Another 20.

STONER
Do you have change?

DEALER
Nah.

INT. GAS STATION CONVENIENCE STORE - MOMENTS LATER

The stoner enters the store self-consciously. His twenty in hand, he walks up to the CASHIER (15, dumb). A tip jar reads "For Exceptional Service."

STONER
(re: 20)
Hey. Could I get change for this?

The cashier nods stupidly. In a stilted exchange, the stoner hands him the 20 and the cashier opens the register.

CASHIER
Three fives and a ten?

The stoner regards the cashier. They look dumbly at one another for several seconds. The stoner nods.

The cashier hands over the money, and the stoner puts the extra five in the tip jar. "For Exceptional Service."

CASHIER
Thanks man.

The stoner leaves, bemused. The cashier takes a lottery ticket from behind its glass casing and scratches it.

#7 "THE NEGATIVE PHYSIOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL EFFECTS OF TOBACCO USE"

EXT. BUCOLIC NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

A MAN (50 YO) walks out the front door of his home onto the porch, where he takes out a pack of cigarettes. He raps the top of the pack against his palm repeatedly. In the foreground, a SCHOOL BUS passes by.

We hear it stop, and see a young GIRL (7 YO) with a backpack walk towards her front porch, before noticing the man. He is lighting a cigarette. She approaches the man. He sees her approach and lowers his cigarette by his side.

GIRL
Tobacco is the leading cause of preventable deaths in the United States of--
(hiccup)
--America. Smoking harms almost every organ in the body. A lot of adults want to quit smoking but can't. But they should because cigarettes are a leading cause of mouth and--
(hiccup)
--lung cancer.

The man looks around. He is hurt.

MAN
(quietly)
Are you serious.

The girl's face turns. She looks like she might start crying. The man puts out the cigarette.

The girl continues looking at him. He throws the pack in a small wastebasket.

She smiles.

GIRL

Thank you, Mr. Jones.

She walks across his lawn and goes into her own house. When the door closes behind her, the man reaches into the wastebasket, pulls out the pack, and continues rapping it against his palm.

#8 "AT THE DOOR A TACO"

INT. COLLEGE DORM - NIGHT

Four FRESHMEN (18, 19 YO) play Mario Party in a dorm. They are all quietly focussed on a particular mini-game when a THUD hits the door.

They all turn. One of them (the host) calls out:

FRESHMAN

Hello?

The freshman walks to the door, nervous, and opens it.

INT. HALLWAY

At his feet, a discarded taco and and its up-sided paper container. He looks left and right. Down the hall, a BASEBALL PLAYER struts brazenly away.

The freshman watches him...

INT. COLLEGE DORM

...looks back into the room at his friends...

FRESHMAN 2

What is it?

INT. HALLWAY

...and down at the taco.

The freshman takes off, charging down the hall toward the baseball player, who does not turn around.

At the other end of the hall, the freshman stops. The

baseball player starts to round the corner when the freshman finally says:

FRESHMAN

Hey.

The baseball player turns around.

FRESHMAN

Is that your taco?

BASEBALL PLAYER

Yeah.

The freshman, his heart pounding, breathing heavy, says nothing. He looks at the baseball player, searching for something to say.

BASEBALL PLAYER

Do you want me to clean it up?

The freshman, relieved, nods like a child.

The baseball player starts walking toward the taco. As he passes, the freshman says:

FRESHMAN

Thank you.

The baseball player keeps walking, and after a few moments, the freshman controls his breathing, and follows.

#9 "YOU HAVE TO STRETCH THE STRINGS"

INT. COLLEGE DORM - DAY

In a dorm room, a young MAN (20 YO) strings the end of a brand new high e-string into the bridge of an acoustic guitar. He pulls it over towards the nut and threads it through the tuning post.

Another young MAN (20) watches neurotically.

MAN 2

Thank you. Again.

MAN 1

Of course, dude. Sorry your string snapped.

He pulls on the center of the string, creating 6 inches of

slack.

MAN 2
What are you doing there?

He begins winding and says:

MAN 1
Slack. For tuning stability.

Man 2 nods, still tense. Man 2 clamps a small tuning device to the headstock. Man 1 plays the string. It is slow and rattly. The tuning device reads "F#"

MAN 1
Now we gotta stretch the string. It comes wound. The high e-string's hard cause it can snap while you're trying to put it on.

MAN 2
This is my only string.

MAN 1
No we get it to E.

Man 1 nods and winds the string tighter as he strikes it. Again. The string's tension rises. The tuning device reads: "G", then "A", "A#".

Man 2 is leaning forward, not breathing.

Man 1 pulls hard on different parts of the tense string to stretch it. He's being rough with it. Man 2 winces.

Man 1 strikes the string again as he winds up. "B", "C", "C#".

He pulls the string but it doesn't give easy.

MAN 1
Really tight.

He pulls on it harder. Man 2 is tearing up a little.

He winds up some more. "D". "D#".

MAN 2
That's fine.

MAN 1
We're almost there.

MAN 2
No that's good.

Man 2 takes the guitar and strums a few chords. It doesn't sound great.

MAN 2
Thank you!

#10 "ADVICE FOR A SORE THROAT"

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - NIGHT

A BARTENDER (40 YO) carries a plate of vanilla ice cream to a table where a timid MAN (60) is sitting across from a WOMAN (60). The restaurant is mostly empty; it is a slow November night.

The woman stands up and excuses herself, and nearly bumps into the bartender but he is deft and cordial, and moves aside to let her walk to the bathroom.

The bartender sets the ice cream down for the man.

MAN
Thanks. This'll be great. I've got a sore throat.

BARTENDER
Did you wake up with it?

MAN
I've had it all week actually. I keep expecting to wake up better but it's been getting worse.

BARTENDER
You know, what I do is get the real Listerine, the sort of yellow Listerine, and you know not to drink from the bottle, yeah? You've got to use the cap or dixie cup if that gets the film of crust and you gotta gurgle it like far back.

The bartender tilts his head far back in demonstration. The man continues eating his ice cream.

BARTENDER

So it gets into your throat and you will feel it if you do it right and your eyes will water. You may gag a little, just like once or-- but you can grab onto something and squeeze it like I don't know your arm and just you know grit and gurgle. It's like when a dentist is going tzzzzrt! tzzzzrt! to your teeth and they say you can raise your left hand if it hurts but in this case you can use your left hand to grab your right forearm if it hurts cause it will sting when it gets in there for a while and you're tearing up and gagging and even if you pee yourself a little, just sort of grit and bear it.

The bartender leaves the check on the table.

BARTENDER

Whenever your ready. Have a great night.

MAN

(mouthful of ice cream)

Thank you!

The bartender returns to the bar. The man stares into space. The woman sits back down at the table.

#11 "FROM A BOTTLE OF WINE"

EST. VINEYARD - DAY

A vineyard stretches back into Pennsylvania woods.

EST. FANCY RESTAURANT

Adjacent to the vineyard is a small restaurant with a sign on the door: "Tastings at Bar + a free glass, \$12".

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT

Two WOMEN sit at the bar (30 YO) examining wine lists. They are circling the names of wines with small golf pencils.

The BARTENDER (40, M) returns to the bar, polishing a glass.

BARTENDER
Got your picks?

WOMAN 1
Yes, we'll have the same ones. Shiraz,
Bughouse, and the Whiskey Barrel Cab.

WOMAN 2
That cab's gonna be so good.

The bartender immediately deposits two glasses on the pour
and pours the Shiraz for them.

BARTENDER
This is our off dry. And it's full
bodied, which is really nice.

The bartender steps back and returns to polishing wine
glasses. Woman 2's glass is slightly less full than Woman
1's. She regards it, then writes it off.

BARTENDER
Enjoy!

Woman 1 starts drinking slowly.

WOMAN 2
C'mon let's get to that whiskey barrel
cab.

Woman 2 downs her wine. Woman 1 tries to keep up.

WOMAN 2
Can we have the next one?

The bartender pours Woman 2 some merlot. Then Woman 1. Woman
2 now has noticeably less wine.

BARTENDER
Our Bughouse Merlot.

WOMAN 2
You keep getting more wine than me.

WOMAN 1
Really?

Woman 1 drinks.

WOMAN 2
Did you see?

WOMAN 1
Don't you want the cab?

Woman 2 downs her wine. The bartender returns with the cab. He pours Woman 1 a generous glass, then gives very little to Woman 2.

WOMAN 2
(to sommelier)
Could I take the whiskey cab for my free glass?

BARTENDER
Excuse me?

WOMAN 2
It said the tasting comes with a free glass.

BARTENDER
Oh, yes!

The bartender puts an empty glass on the bar.

BARTENDER
That's yours.

The second woman takes a breath, controls herself.

WOMAN 2
Thanks.

The bartender reaches under the bar, pulls out a much larger wineglass, and sets it down in front of Woman 1.

#12 "YOU'RE DRIPPING"

INT. WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

Muffled rain begins to sound clear as a door opens and a soaking wet WOMAN (30 YO) walks through the front door of a waiting room. She is wearing a tweed blazer, corduroy pants, and a button up shirt with a pen and tiny notepad in the breast pocket. They are all soaked.

She makes squishy sounds as she walks through the room to the RECEPTIONIST (40 YO, F).

RECEPTIONIST
Here for Dr. Richards?

WOMAN

Yes.

RECEPTIONIST

(on regarding woman)

Is it raining?

WOMAN

("are you stupid?")

...Yes.

RECEPTIONIST

You're dripping.

The woman looks at her clothes. No drip. Then sees: her *hair* is dripping. She smiles and ducks into the restroom.

INT. RESTROOM

The restroom is single-use: one toilet, one sink, one air dryer.

She thinks for a little bit, then takes off her blazer and holds it under the air dryer. It blows and seems to be drying the jacket; her blazer wriggles under it. She sways it from side to side.

Her hair is still dripping. Oh shit. She hangs her blazer on the sink and bends to get her hair under the dryer. Not low enough--she squats. Still not low enough, she sits under the dryer and moves her hand back and forth under the blower to keep it on.

She sits there for a little, recognizing her situation. She takes the tiny notepad out of her pocket. Oh shit. It's soaked through.

She opens to the most recent page. A to-do list. There are boxed checked off: "Dry Cleaners" "Drop off Car".

She checks off the last box: "Walk to Therapy"

#13 "STARING AT WALLS, DUDE?"

EXT. RESTAURANT PATIO - DAY

A first-time WAITER (20 YO) picks up a check off a table. There is a booster seat, a mess of blueberries on the ground and many dirty plates and cups.

Some coins fall out of the checkbook. The waiter examines the

inside where it reads "Total: \$82.00." "Tip" is crossed out in angry pen that has teared the paper. Above, an item, "Lemonade, \$1.80" is circled on the bill and in big angry lettering: "Never Received Lemonade!!!"

MAN

Excuse me!

The waiter turns around. A COUPLE (60 YO, M&F) are sitting at a table. The woman has a martini.

MAN

Could you put this in one of those--
(gesturing)
You know.

The waiter stares blankly at him.

WAITER

In what?

MAN

One of those glasses.

WOMAN

A snifter glass.

MAN

A snifter.

WOMAN

And I'll have a tito's martini up with salt, lime, a splash of cranberry and only a little vermouth. I want some vermouth but not too much.

The man hands the waiter his drink. He nods and walks away when another MAN (40 YO) calls:

MAN 2

You there.

The waiter, a checkbook in one hand, full martini glass in hand, approaches the man and his wife (30 YO).

WAITER

Yes.

MAN 2

This is the smallest piece of chicken I have ever seen.

The man points at his plate of chicken florentine. He has eaten around a regular-size piece of chicken.

WOMAN 2

Does someone smoke here?

WAITER

I'm sorry?

MAN 2

Why don't you go take this off my bill
and we'll see dessert menus.

WOMAN 2

It smells like smoke. Can you ask them
to stop?

The waiter looks around. Who?

WAITER

Of course.

The man holds out the plate of chicken. The waiter sticks the checkbook in his apron (some coins fall out and onto the ground) and takes the chicken. The couple looks at the coins but don't move.

EXT. RESTAURANT BACKDOOR

He walks to the back area with plate and glass in hand and tries lamely to open the Employees Only door. He gives up and looks at the back area; punctured trash bags spill onto the damp cement, dead bugs, Raid canisters, and cigarette butts. He looks blankly at the cigarette butts.

The BARTENDER (40 YO) walks through the backdoor as he puts a cigarette in his mouth.

BARTENDER

Staring at walls, dude?

WAITER

Yup.

The waiter tries to walk through the closing door, and spills the martini on himself.

#14 "HOW TO WAIT"

INT. APARTMENT KITCHEN - DUSK

An electric whirring. A young MAN (22 YO), face illumined yellow, stares seriously at a microwave timer. His head is cocked to the side.

The timer moves down: :15, :14, :13, :12--

He yanks the microwave door open. A stack of quesadilla rolls bubble on a damp paper towel. He uses the tip of his fingers to deposit the rolls one by one into the open cardboard container they came in (T.G.I. Fridays brand) and places the damp paper towel in the trash.

EXT. APARTMENT PORCH - DUSK

The young man takes his T.G.I. Fridays box and sits on the stoop to eat his rolls.

He carefully opens one with his front teeth, and blows into the hole.

A DOG approaches from the lawn. The dog looks at the young man and begs.

The young man looks at the dog and shakes his head stiffly. His eyes are serious.

He blows into the hole of his quesadilla roll for a long time as the dog begs, and takes a little bite.

The dog sits down and cocks his head to the side. He waits at length as the young man finishes the first roll in the tiniest bites you have ever seen.

#15 "NICE COSTUME, ASSHOLE"

EXT. COLLEGE MAIN STREET - DAY

On the sidewalk of a main road splitting a college campus a young STUDENT (20 YO) in his corduroy jacket or vest (depending on the weather) and cowboy hat, is walking.

From a passing SEDAN a local PUNK pelts a red baseball-sized object at the young student in the back, yelling loud as he speeds by:

PUNK
NICE COSTUME ASSHOLE!

The student turns his neck to examine his back, then looks at

the sedan speeding away.

He turns around, looks at the ground where the object has landed. It is a radicchio.

The young man takes the vestment off and holds it arm length to examine it. He wipes the back.

He takes his cowboy hat off. He looks around to see if anyone saw. Nobody. He is perplexed. Just passing cars. He looks alone and self-conscious.

He thinks for a while, checks the time and continues his route. He walks along the sidewalk. Cars pass. He puts his cowboy hat back on and does a little cowboy jig as he rounds a corner.

#16 "CONTIGO"

EXT. APARTMENT PARKING LOT - DAY

A young RESIDENT (22 YO) walks out the backdoor of his apartment building to the small porch, where he leans on the rail and blows on his mug of coffee.

The mug reads: "WE LOVE YOU A WHOLE LATTE, AUNT MARY! LOVE MICHAEL AND SUE." It is not his.

As he sips his coffee, he notices something shiny across the gravel parking lot, next to the dumpster. It is short and skinny.

Taking his coffee with him, the resident descends the steps and approaches. He squints. The object is a CONTIGO insulated steel travel mug.

He looks around. No one. He shuffles toward the mug, trying not to spill his coffee. He spills it anyway.

At the travel mug, next to the dumpster, he crouches and picks it up. It is heavy. He balances his coffee cup on his arm and removes the lid from the travel mug. He pours it out onto the ground. RED WINE gushes out and forms a big puddle in the gravel next to the dumpster. He looks into the puddle. There are bits of yellow grass floating in it.

Another RESIDENT (30, F) exits the apartment backdoor and the young man holds the two mugs casually in front of his chest to conceal them against the dumpster.

The resident walks away and the young man puts the lid back

on the travel mug, and walks back to the porch with his two mugs, spilling coffee along the way.

#17 "MINDFULNESS, NOW"

EXT. CAMPUS LAWN - DUSK

A GOTHIC YOUNG MAN (20 YO) meditates broodingly on a long patch of grass on the campus lawn. He stares forward, focused.

A DITZY HIPPIE (20 YO) in bell-bottoms and a big flowing button-up shirt walks on a trail approaching the young gothic man. The hippie notices the goth boy, then recognizes him.

HIPPIE

Rain?

The hippie raises his arm a little to wave. The goth boy continues to stare forward.

HIPPIE

(louder)

Hey, Rain.

The gothic boy, RAIN, continues staring forward. Waving, the hippie passes Rain's line of vision.

HIPPIE

Hey.

No response. The hippie, after passing, is hurt and self-conscious. He shuffles awkwardly back to Rain's line of vision and puts his hands in his back pockets.

HIPPIE

So nice out.

Rain continues looking at the hippie's knees.

HIPPIE

Getting kind of chilly I guess.

Nothing. The hippie walks away. Rain clenches his fists, focussed.

The hippie disappears behind two red dumpsters in the parking lot.

#18 "IS THAT YOU IN THE PURPLE SHIRT?"

EXT. CAMPUS PARKING LOT - DAY

A STUDENT (20 YO) in a lilac short sleeve button-up shirt sits on a bench facing a parking lot. He checks his phone. A facilities WORKER (50) is spraying weed killer where the grass meets the curb.

The student furtively removes his wallet from his pocket and peers at his cash. He dispatches two twenties and a ten, folds them up and puts them in his breast pocket. He's pocketing his wallet when he gets a Snapchat call from DonCorleone69. He answers:

STUDENT

Hello?

DONCORLEONE69 (O.S)

Yo. Is that you in the purple shirt?

STUDENT

Yeah. What sort of car do you drive?

DONCORLEONE69 (O.S)

...I'll pull up.

DonCorleone69 ends the call. The student stands self-consciously in front of the bench. The worker keeps spraying.

A green Subaru pulls up. A redheaded teen (18 YO) puts the car in park. His window is open.

DONCORLEONE69

Yo.

STUDENT

Hey.

The following at breakneck speed--

The student gets in the passenger seat. DonCorleone resumes driving.

DONCORLEONE69

I'm just gonna drive down here cause that guy's chilling--

The student takes the folded bills out of his breast pocket and puts them in the cupholder.

STUDENT

--Yeah that makes sense--

DONCORLEONE69

I don't think he cares but anyway
there it is.

DonCorleone takes a baggy out of his pocket and hands it to
the student.

STUDENT

Thanks.

The student puts the baggy in his back pants pocket.

DONCORLEONE69

So how's school going is school good.

STUDENT

Yeah we got homecoming this weekend,
so there will be a lot of cars...
parked on the lawn.

DONCORLEONE69

Alright nice is it cool if I drop you
off here?

DonCorleone hits the brakes.

STUDENT

Yeah, this is good. Thanks.

DONCORLEONE69

Alright, peace homie.

DonCorleone extends his hand and they share an awkward
incongruous pseudo-secret handshake. The student leaves the
car.

STUDENT

Goodbye.

The dealer drives away. The student watches, bemused, looks
around, and walks down the path where DonCorleone has
deposited him.

#19 "WE CAN CHANGE THE NAME"

INT. PET SUPPLY STORE - DAY

A MAN and WOMAN walk briskly through the automatic doors of a

pet supply store. They have wedding rings. The woman is carrying an empty cat carrier, with a small note taped to the front: "Welcome Home, Cassidy!"

WOMAN

You made an appointment?

MAN

You don't need to make an appointment.
They're here til 4.

WOMAN

It's 3:30.

MAN

No one's gonna take a one-eyed kitten.

INT. CAT ADOPTION AISLE

The couple turns down an aisle where CATS sleep in cages. CUSTOMERS greet the cats and watch them sleep.

The woman approaches a clueless EMPLOYEE standing near the cages.

WOMAN

Hi. We're here to adopt Cassidy. We got our recomm--

EMPLOYEE

(confused)
Cassidy?

WOMAN

Yeah.

EMPLOYEE

One second.

The employee disappears behind a door. The woman is confused. She checks all the cages for her one-eyed cat.

MAN

Do you want to change her name?

WOMAN

(distracted)
Her name is Cassidy.

MAN

She's six weeks old. She can learn a

new one.

WOMAN

What's wrong with "Cassidy"?

MAN

It's a human name.

The woman sees an empty cage with an ADOPTED sign in front of a laminated cat bio. She approaches, and slides the sign out of its laminated container. "Cat's Name: Cassidy. 7 Weeks Old."

WOMAN

Cassidy's gone.

The woman turns and sees the man playing with another cat through its cage.

MAN

Wanna meet this one?

The woman grieves, looking at her cat carrier, then at the other kitten, nuzzling her husband's finger, and nods.

#20 "ENCHANTMENT SAVANT"

INT. STUDENT COMMON AREA - DAY

Two STUDENTS sit together on a couch facing a desk. STUDENT 1, the Dungeon Master of a local D&D game, has a laptop. Student 2 has pieces of paper labeled "Character Sheets." STUDENT 1 gestures toward the character sheets, and STUDENT 2 looks at them blankly.

STUDENT 1

Conjuration, which is summoning.
Enchantment which is imbuing objects
with power.

Student 2 scooches toward Student 1, who is smiling.

STUDENT 2

Oo!

STUDENT 1

Evokation, which is basically damage--

STUDENT 2

Can I do enchantment?

STUDENT 1
Yeah, sure! So your first thing is
enchantment savant which--

A third STUDENT emerges.

STUDENT 3
Can I play?

Student 1 looks at him. The new student is awkward but
solicitous. He is holding his arm with his opposite hand.

STUDENT 1
I'm out of character sheets.

STUDENT 3
If I print some, can I give them to
you.

STUDENT 1
Sure, I guess.

STUDENT 3
I'd like to be a barbarian sailor.

STUDENT 1
Okay.

The student disappears.

STUDENT 1
So it costs, with savant thing, half
gold, half time for learning
enchantment spells.

STUDENT 2
Cool!

STUDENT 1
Yeah, it--

A fourth STUDENT appears! He is wet and carrying a smoothie.

STUDENT 4
I got my smoothie and then it started
raining.

STUDENT 1
Oh, man.

STUDENT 4
Can I join?

STUDENT 1
One second.

STUDENT 3
Can you take these.

The third student has reappeared with new character sheets. He shoves them on Student 1's laptop.

STUDENT 3
Are you done.

Student 1 is exasperated, but Student 2 laughs and puts their head on Student 1's shoulders. Student 1 smiles.

STUDENT 3
I'd like to be a barbarian sailor.

#21 "THESE FEATHER EARRINGS"

EXT. MAIN STREET STARBUCKS - DAY

Cars whiz by a Starbucks on Media PA's Main Street. A WOMAN (50 YO) in what looks like a navy train conductor's hat and big black sunglasses removes the lid of her paper coffee cup and lets the steam out. The table is busy with handwritten notes and typed documents.

To a MAN (40) and a YOUNG MAN (21), she presents two big red feather earrings, saying rapidly:

WOMAN
He sent me these feather earrings. He hates my guts. He's a priest. He played Lucifer in the high school play with me. He had this big red leotard suit. We had these big cast parties after the shows, but this one time, I was writing on the stoop outside. I did these horoscopes for the school newspaper and he comes out in his leotard suit and says, *what are those, horoscopes? Pfft!* I do his voice. He hates my guts. I said, I'll do your full birth chart. Free of charge. I looked. I said there's Saturn and Pisces in the tenth house, the hallmark of a priest. He gave me this

look like, uh!

The woman takes her huge sun glasses off to demonstrate. She puts them back on.

WOMAN

So! He was a priest. He hated poor people. *They better not send me to St. Michaels in **Kensington!*** He hates my guts. But he's a caring guy, really. That's why he couldn't be around poor people, because he cares so much. He gave sermons at St. Agnes, which is really a very nice church in West Rockyvale, til he got fired for reporting Pastor Peter. People loved Pastor Peter, but he was a pedophile. Right! So my friend he starts this non-profit for people who had been abused in that way. He'd been abused too. Do you know what I mean, abused? Poor guy. Hates my guts. Gave me these feather earrings. So, I mean you tell me.

She sips her coffee. The men relax.

WOMAN

A movie? "Holy Rollers"? Is there marketability, you think?

#22 THE NEGATIVE PHYSIOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL EFFECTS OF TOBACCO
- PART 2

INT. APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - DAY

In a messy apartment--pile of records, a record player spinning the inside of a finished record, Bob Dylan posters on the wall--a YOUNG MAN is at his computer, while the SECOND YOUNG MAN is lounging, staring at the ceiling.

Young Man 1 is watching a Bob Dylan interview from the 90s. Those teeth.

The young man focuses and we zoom in on Dylan's goat whiskers and his big yellow crooked teeth.

He springs up and dashes past YOUNG MAN 2. He crosses to his:

INT. BEDROOM

...bedroom where he grabs his toothpaste and tooth brush, and is out the door.

INT. BATHROOM

He swings open the bathroom door and gets to brushing his teeth fast and intensely, then gently but poking and prodding his teeth. He examines the color. Spits something into the sink, we see a blur of white and hear a clink of something hit the sink porcelain.

He looks in the sink. He picks up something. It's a mint. He looks at his teeth. Presses them. Are they moving?

INT. BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

He dashes back into his bedroom, opens his top dresser drawer. With his underwear is stowed RED BAG of tobacco.

INT. APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - DAY

Young Man 2's concentration on the ceiling is broken when Young Man 1 rounds the corner and nearly tumbles into the room. He grabs his denim jacket from a chair and pulls out MARLBORO RED BOX.

He shows the bag and the box to his rapt roommate, then chucks them in the trash can.

Young Man 2 cheers. He is ecstatic.

Young Man 1 throws his jacket on the floor and slinks down in the chair.

YOUNG MAN 2

Good acid.

YOUNG MAN 1

What? Yeah, really good.

#23 "OR ELSE EXPECTING RAIN"

INT. DORMITORY BATHROOM - DAY

A YOUNG MAN in a towel locks the door behind him and side steps small puddles in an un even tile floor to the dingy shower.

He turns on the water, then touches it with his hand. Too

cold. He turns it hotter, feels it. Too cold. Hotter. Too cold. He cranks it to the hottest setting, feels it (too cold) and notices long hairs and curly-Qs on the shower wall.

He cups his hands to catch the cold water and throws it on the hairs. It takes several tosses of water to wash them down. He then removes his towel, places it on a hook, and sits on the toilet and pees.

Bored, he notices a tube of red lipstick on the plastic toilet paper dispenser. Bored, he picks it up and draws long hairs and curly-Qs on his chest and stomach.

He stands up, flushes the toilet, and walks purposefully to the shower (now steaming). He gets in the shower, screams (too hot), and falls down, screaming.

#24 "GOING TO THE BAR?"

EXT. TOWNLET STREET - NIGHT

A sedan with an Uber sticker on the back window pulls to a stop on the side of a small town street. The DRIVER (40 YO, M) has a big beard and mustache. He goes to call someone when--

The back car door opens and a frazzled PASSENGER (20 YO) gets in. They don't put on their seat belt.

PASSENGER

Hello.

DRIVER

Going to the bar?

The passenger lets out a long low sigh, and slinks back.

PASSENGER

I don't know.

DRIVER

Going... somewhere else?

PASSENGER

There's this guy at the bar and he used to be my friend but he's pretentious and he never stops talking but he takes these long fucking pauses where he just stares into space like a stupid fucking frog and you think he's done and basically we had three votes--

our friends--and the first one didn't go his way so he had a second vote and it went my way again and he just couldn't take it and we had a third vote and people just said whatever you win, guy, and I stormed out of the room so fast I twisted my ankle. It still hurts, I was gonna walk to the bar. He's there with this girl I got a crush on and they're always like together they used to date but she must've got tired of getting fucking frog warts from touching him and I was gonna go and maybe call him something and he might punch me in the face and knock a tooth loose and I'd make him pay for the dental surgery and while I was at it I'd have them fix this snaggle tooth, see?

The passenger shows the driver a crooked tooth.

PASSENGER

And I'd make him pay for it, but then maybe I'd have to pay for it and get reimbursed by him and what if his parents didn't pay--he spends all his money on craft beer crowlers, and I don't want to go to court or anything.

The passenger opens the door.

PASSENGER

I think I'll stay home tonight.
Thanks.

The passenger leaves and shuts the door. The driver stares into space.

The door reopens and the passenger reaches forward with two dollars.

The driver takes the two dollars and the passenger exits again. The driver puts the money in a jar labeled: "Tips".

#25 "THE MOST WRETCHED THING YOU'VE EVER HEARD"

INT. PROFESSOR'S OFFICE - DAY

ECU on a big rectangular cellphone pulls back slowly.

AUTOMATED MESSAGE

(from phone)

I'm transferring you now.

An outgoing RING repeats, becoming softer and softer as we pull back and see a PROFESSOR (60 YO) at his desk staring at his big phone, willing it to move or change colors or disappear with his intense stare.

A STUDENT sitting across the professor, is eyeing the time. An ALARM goes off on their phone. They snooze it.

PROFESSOR

I swear. It's like--imagine being in an elevator with an entire distorted orchestra. And it goes over and over and over and never--

STUDENT

The hold music?

PROFESSOR

The hold music. It's-- I can't tell you how many times I've been, y'know, "Hello?" and it goes *Baaa Daaa Baaa...* how does it go? Why isn't it playing?

STUDENT

That's okay.

The ringing stops.

PROFESSOR

Here it comes.

The robot voice returns:

AUTOMATED MESSAGE

(from phone)

Many Americans take medication--

--electronic interference--

PROFESSOR

Oh okay, here--

--and then, from the phone, a REAL voice.

NURSE (O.S)

(from phone, blandly)

Thank you for calling 24-hour nurse

line. This is Abigail, a registered nurse.

PROFESSOR
(same time)
I'm sorry, I--

NURSE (O.S)
How can I help you today--

PROFESSOR
I didn't... try to get a registered nurse. I wanted to ask about my... health claims. I'm sorry.

The professor smiles conspiratorially at the student, who is leaning forward, zipping up their bag.

NURSE (O.S)
That's fine. I can get you over to the correct area. Do you have your member ID number?

PROFESSOR
Yes.

Another alarm goes off on the student's phone. He snoozes it again. When he looks up, the professor is rooting through his drawers.

PROFESSOR
Um. Where'd that card go. Um. I can't find it, could you just transfer me there?

NURSE (O.S)
Yes. Please hold.

The professor smiles at the student. This time!

PROFESSOR
Here we go.

We hear two buttons DIAL on the other end of the line. The outgoing RING continues. The professor holds up his finger to the student. One secccond.

The ringing stops.

AUTOMATED MESSAGE
Please wait.

#26 "CUTTING HAIRS"

INT. BARBER SHOP - DAY

In the doorway of a small town barbershop, a friendly, well-trimmed, CONFIDENT MAN (40 YO) calls back as he exits:

MAN

Thanks Dina!

A FRIENDLY BARBER (30) turns from the seated NERVOUS TEEN who is fumbling with his apron.

DINA

Let me know what Shirley thinks.

MAN

(laughing)

I will.

The door CLOSES behind him. Shirley attempts to help the teen with his apron and the two awkwardly work together until the teen gives up and lets her do it.

TEEN

Sorry.

DINA

There we are. What are you thinking?

TEEN

Could you cut an inch?

Dina nods and gets to work, spraying.

DINA

So school is treating you well?

TEEN

No.

DINA

I'm sorry.

Silence.

Dina itches herself.

DINA

Ah. I got poison ivy.

A spark in the teen's eye. He turns.

TEEN

Humans are the only kinds of animals that poison ivy can cause an allergic reaction in.

DINA

Wow. I did not know that.

TEEN

It's perennial, meaning it can--

DINA

Oh don't tell me. That's... like the flowers!

TEEN

Yes, it's like perennial flowers.

DINA

We used to have flowers like that. When would it bloom?

TEEN

Poison ivy flowers in April through June when the leaves are just about half open. Then it culminates in the fall!

DINA

(enthusiastically)

I'd rather have bug bites than poison ivy.

TEEN

(confidently)

I think *I* might have genital warts.

DINA

Oh.

TEEN

Well. No.

DINA

Yeah.

TEEN

I didn't have sex.

DINA
What?

TEEN
Like I probably didn't get them.

DINA
Oh.

TEEN
But I'm not sure.

DINA
Oh.

A short silence.

TEEN
(about the haircut)
You know what. This length looks good.

The teen stands up and leaves, dropping money on the counter.
After he exits, he opens the door again.

TEEN
But, you know. It could just be poison
ivy.

DINA
Okay.

TEEN
Thank you, Dina!

#27 "MY NAME"

INT. BLACKBOX THEATRE - NIGHT

It has been a long rehearsal for a two college theatre ACTORS
(20, 22 YO). The younger of the two is playing a cop, the
other playing a politician. They are tired.

ACTOR 1
(in character)
Not much of a party, is it?

ACTOR 2
Afraid not.

A DIRECTOR (55 YO) is watching. His mouth is moving silently
and he's shifting around. The actors regard him self-

consciously. Is he going to say something?

ACTOR 1
(still in character)
Can I get your name, sir?

ACTOR 2
My name?

ACTOR 1
Yes, your name.

ACTOR 2
You want my name?

ACTOR 1
Please--

DIRECTOR
Can you play-- just play with the
stress. My name. My name. You say it
twice. Let's just-- does that make
sense?

ACTOR 2
...Yes.

DIRECTOR
Perfect. Go.

ACTOR 1
Can I get your name, sir?

ACTOR 2
My name?

ACTOR 1
Yes, your name.

ACTOR 2
You want my name?

DIRECTOR
You want my name?

ACTOR 2
You want my name?

DIRECTOR
You want my name?

ACTOR 2
You want *my name*?

DIRECTOR
You want *my name*?

ACTOR 2
You want *my name*?

DIRECTOR
Perfect. From the top!

A brief silence.

ACTOR 1
Me?

The director nods. The younger actor clears his throat.

ACTOR 1
Not much of a party, is it?

#28 "SMELL SOMETHING"

INT. MESSY DORM ROOM - DAY

In a two-person dormitory room, a YOUNG MAN looks over the top of his book (assigned reading, *The Last of the Mohicans* or something) at his ROOMMATE, who is eating Oreos at his desk, playing a neon, 80s-esque indie video game on his television.

The room is messy. The young man looks at the roommate's Oreos, then sniffs, looking around.

YOUNG MAN
Smell something?

The roommate in turn sniffs.

ROOMMATE
Oh. Does it smell bad?

He pauses his video game, sniffs again and looks around.

ROOMMATE
I just did my laundry, is it-- oh shoot. Is it my... I haven't taken out the trash in a while.

YOUNG MAN

Hmm.

The roommate grabs a half-full trash bag and fills it with another empty Oreo container, a collection of Baby Bell cheese waxes, and some loose napkins.

The young man watches as the roommate opens the lid of another trash can and removes a full bag from it.

The roommate trudges to the door with two full trash-bags and a cardboard box he's collected from the floor. The young man puts his book down, stands up, and hurries to the door to open it for the roommate.

ROOMMATE

Thank you!

YOUNG MAN

Of course, bud.

The roommate waddles through the door frame and young man shuts the door behind him, walks to the Oreos, stuffs one in his mouth, sits down, and continues reading.

#29 "HOW TO SERVE A BOTTLE OF WINE"

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - DAY

Beside the bar in a fancy restaurant, the fast-talking BARTENDER (40 YO) shows a nervous WAITER (20 YO) the front of a bottle of wine, MacMurray Pinot Noir.

BARTENDER

So first you show the man of the table the wine and you present it against your forearm and then you pour in his glass--

The bartender takes two wine glasses from the bar.

BARTENDER

It's two people, right? You're gonna wanna bring these glasses and pour just a little for him just like
(indicating with thumb)
up to there and then if he accepts it you pour a glass for everyone.

WAITER

What if there's two men?

BARTENDER

Whoever looks wealthier then. Think: who's paying the tip? People could get this stuff at the liquor store for 20 bucks but they're paying you 35 plus tip so you're gonna wanna earn it.

The waiter gulps, nods seriously.

BARTENDER

This is a red so you're gonna leave the cork there because sometimes they like to sniff it and you don't pour full glasses because we want them to think it's more wine in a bottle and not just a few glasses, right? Does that make sense? I'll carry the glasses. Here's a wine key. Lead the way.

The server nods and leads the bartender to the table, where a WOMAN (50 YO) and ANOTHER WOMAN (50) sit argue at a table.

WOMAN 1

That's what I'm saying!

WOMAN 2

Would you shut--

They stop talking as they become aware of the server and bartender, who puts the glasses on the table and returns to the bar, leaving the server alone.

He holds the bottle against his arm and presents it awkwardly to both women. Woman 1 furrows her brow; Woman 2 crosses her arms and waits for the waiter to leave.

He nods to himself, then begins opening it, struggling with the bottle, eventually popping the cork loose and spilling a little wine on the table cloth. He rubs the stain with his thumb.

WAITER

Sorry.

He pours a little wine in the first woman's glass. She looks at him. "Are you stupid?" He pours some in the second woman's.

WOMAN 1

Would you just leave the bottle,

please?

The waiter puts the bottle down, then looks at the wine key in his hand.

WAITER

Would you like to sniff the cork?

The first woman looks at the waiter as if he's taken a swig from the bottle.

WOMAN 2

(re: the bottle)

We're just going to let it breathe.

The waiter nods, and walks away with the wine key in hand, hunched forward in tragic awe of himself. Once around the corner, he sniffs the cork.

#30 "DON'T LOOK UP"

EXT. FANCY RESTAURANT PATIO - DAY

A new WAITER (20 YO) and an experienced WAITRESS (50 YO) follow a HOSTESS (25 YO), who is holding two water glasses, two plates, two cloth silverware rolls, and a tiny metal Reserved sign, out an Employees Only door onto a sunny restaurant patio. There are many tables with closed umbrellas.

HOSTESS

(setting a table)

I totally forgot these guys were coming, could you get all these umbrellas up? Thanks I'll be right back.

With that, the hostess disappears. The older server starts cranking open an umbrella.

WAITRESS

You ever work brunch?

The waiter walks up to the reserved table and searches clumsily for the crank under the folds of the umbrella.

WAITER

No.

WAITRESS

Just turn that guy clockwise, watch

your head, and don't look up.

The waiter begins cranking. The umbrella wings his head but he keeps turning and turning. When it seems to be fully suspended open, he looks up.

BUGS! So many stink bugs lie dormant on the underside of the open umbrella. The waiter looks at these, then at the plates on the table and the glasses on the table.

The restaurant door opens and a MAN and WOMAN (50 YO) follow the hostess, who is now holding two big menus and an ice water pitcher, onto the patio. The waitress is still putting up umbrellas in the background.

HOSTESS

Here you two are.

MAN

Thanks.

The hostess sets down the menus and begins pouring the waters.

HOSTESS

Alright! And your server will be right with you.

The hostess walks away, whispering to the waiter:

HOSTESS

That's you.

The waiter looks at the hostess, then the umbrella, then the couple. He looks back, but the hostess has disappeared again.

He walks over to the couple.

WAITER

Hello. Do you two want to sit inside?

The man laughs.

WOMAN

No?

WAITER

I'm just afraid it might rain.

MAN
(joking)
Isn't that what these umbrellas are
for?

The man tugs on the umbrella pole to demonstrate. The waiter cringes. Nothing happens. In the background, the waitress has finished putting up umbrellas.

The waiter takes out his notepad. The waitress walks past him, inside.

WAITER
How can I help you?

#31 "FOX IN THE YARD"

INT. CLEAN LIVING ROOM - DAY

A young MAN (20 YO) is petting a CAT (8 YO) on his lap. A TV is on in the background. A drama series is on. From the TV, we hear a MAN (30 YO) speaking to a WOMAN (30 YO) under the sound of RAIN and DRAMATIC MUSIC.

TV MAN (O.S.)
I loved you. I loved you every minute
of every day we spent on this island
and you knew it.

The young man looks into the cats eyes and says:

YOUNG MAN
How's it going, Ms. Frank? How you
doing there?

TV WOMAN (O.S.)
But I love you. I've always--

TV MAN (O.S.)
DON'T waste your breath on me. I see
what you are. You're a damn traitor.

A DOOR opens.

FEMALE VOICE
Hellooo.

The young man's MOTHER appears, holding her camera bag, which she sets down beside the chair opposite the young man, and sits.

MOTHER
Whatcha watching?

The cat leaps off the young man's lap and sits on her mother's lap. The young man stares at the cat in disbelief.

MOTHER
Oh, you're such a nudge, Frank. Go see your brother. Your brother wants to say--
(looking out the window)
THERE'S A FOX IN THE YARD! There's a red fox.

The mother leaps up with her camera, pushing the cat off her lap, and runs out the backdoor.

The cat looks disgruntled, then approaches the young man again, who regards her contemptuously. She rubs up against his leg.

YOUNG MAN
There's a fox in the yard.

The young man stands up and follows his mother outside, closing the door behind him. The cat sits alone in the living room.

TV WOMAN (O.S.)
Damn this island!

#32 "FIRED"

INT. MANAGERIAL OFFICE - DAY

A MANAGER (50 YO) sits at his desk, brooding. He checks the time (1:06), looks down at some handwritten notes. His nose twitches. His face pulls back as if he's going to sneeze, but he doesn't.

Two KNOCKS at the door. A wide-eyed EMPLOYEE (30 YO) appears as the door edges open.

EMPLOYEE
Hey. I'm sorry, I got mixed up with--
should I sit?

The manager nods, crooks his head toward an empty seat. The employee sits down. He regards his employer in anticipation.

MANAGER
Several times this year, you've
betrayed my trust.

The manager lets this sink in. The employee looks like a deer
in headlights.

EMPLOYEE
I--

MANAGER
You said you had a positive,
productive meeting with another
employee when you berated her and made
her cry. I asked you to step down as
digital director and you agreed. Then
you went and told people you were
still in that position. And earlier
today, I--

The managers nose twitches. His mouth pulls back a little.
The employee leans in, confused.

MANAGER
I keep thinking I'm gonna sneeze.

The employee nods understandingly.

MANAGER
Earlier today a few people said you
told them I fire people if they
defecate in the office bathroom.

A long pause. The employee thinks.

EMPLOYEE
I didn't say that--

MANAGER
Not only is that false. It is- You
know Alex?

EMPLOYEE
Alex? I know-

MANAGER
Yeah Alex has a kidney infection. So I
guess I'm wondering-- what the fuck?
Do you know what I mean?

EMPLOYEE

Yes.

MANAGER

I don't think you do.

The employee looks at his feet.

MANAGER

You're fi--ACHOO!

EMPLOYEE

Bless you.

MANAGER

You're fired.

#33 "LOCK PICK KIT"

EXT. APARTMENT PARKING LOT - NIGHT

A YOUNG WOMAN (20) encumbered with a huge backpack exits the backdoor of a small apartment building, followed by a YOUNG MAN (no backpack), jingling car keys in hand. It's cold.

Descending the back porch stairs, the young woman stops. She's looking at the Bilco cellar doors, and the PADLOCK closing them.

WOMAN

I got my lock-picking kit.

The young man springs to life. He paces to the lock, then back to her, saying:

MAN

You got it with you?

WOMAN

(reaching in her bag)
Yeah.

MAN

I've lived here for two years. We've got to see what's under there.

WOMAN

I don't know, man.

MAN

You could do it?

WOMAN
I'm out of practice.

MAN
C'mon.

WOMAN
What if people see? Won't that be like sketchy?

MAN
Don't you wanna see what's inside?

She thinks, then opens her lock picking set. The man grabs the bag and runs over to the Bilco doors, where she follows, examines her instruments, and goes to work on the lock.

The man watches her work with the lock. He stands up straight. Rubs his hand. Stands guard.

WOMAN
The cylinder and the keyhole are disconnected.

MAN
What's that mean?

The woman stands up.

WOMAN
It's broke. I don't have the right tool.

MAN
Maybe another time?

WOMAN
Yeah.

MAN
Want me to drive you home?

WOMAN
Yeah.

The woman puts her set back in her bag and the man unlocks his car.

#34 "THE NEGATIVE PHYSIOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL EFFECTS OF TOBACCO
PART 3"

EXT. VINEYARD DUMP AREA - DAY

A stressed CATERER (30 YO, F) walks out the backdoor of a loud banquet hall. Music is blaring from the hall. People are screaming and cackling. They are drunk. Grape vines stretch out in the distance.

By the dumpster, the caterer reaches in her apron for her pack of cigarettes. She lights one. She relaxes a little.

A drunk GROOMSMAN stumbles out of the banquet hall. He is mumbling to himself.

GROOMSMAN

So loud.

He smells the smoke, looks up and sees the caterer, who tries to conceal the cigarette.

GROOMSMAN

Can I bum one of those man?

The caterer relaxes, sighs, puts the cigarette back in her mouth, and takes out another for the groomsman. She hands him her lighter.

GROOMSMAN

Thank you man.

The groomsman lights the cigarette and puts the lighter in his pocket. The caterer notices and opens her mouth to say something when--

GROOMSMAN

You were pouring the water! You're good at that. You should be a gardener. I caught the garter. You know like at the wedding. The guy who catches the garter is supposed to--he puts it on the leg of the woman who catches the... bouquet! But the flower girl caught the bouquet and she's like 12. So I got it--

The groomsman pulls the lighter out of his pocket.

GROOMSMAN

Whoops.

The groomsman puts the lighter back in and pulls out a garter.

GROOMSMAN
So I got it still.

The caterer tries to enjoy her fucking cigarette.

GROOMSMAN
You ever wear a garter?

The caterer thinks for a moment. The groomsman is holding out the garter as if he might put it on her. The caterer flicks her cigarette. She takes out another.

CATERER
You got a light?

The groomsman takes out the caterer's lighter and extends it to light her cigarette. She grabs the lighter and walks away as she lights it herself.

The groomsman watches her leave, then looks at the garter in his hand. He is all alone. After a moment, he takes his shoe off.

#35 "YOUR FAULT"

INT. FAMILY KITCHEN - DAY

In the kitchen of a one-child family (pictures of one child at many different ages on the wall), a SON (17 YO) is sitting across his FATHER (45 YO), who is frowning at his knuckles.

A MOTHER (45 YO) is standing near the sink.

MOTHER
Want some water? Anybody?

The father shakes his head solemnly. The son shakes his head.

SON
Is everything alright.

The mother sits down at the table. She looks at the father.

FATHER
Your mother and I are getting a divorce.

MOTHER

But it's not because of the marijuana.

The son looks at both their faces. Confused, then smiling (is this a joke?), then terrified.

FATHER

We're going to start a new living situation. I will be staying at grandpa's--

SON

You mean the pipe?

FATHER

What?

SON

You mean the weed? It's about the weed?

FATHER

No.

MOTHER

We're saying it's not about the weed.

FATHER

It's just like one thing happened, then another thing happened.

SON

Then why'd you say it?

MOTHER

Dad's gonna need some help moving some furniture.

SON

Okay.

MOTHER

Jamie-Lee is going with him until he gets situated.

A CAT is watching from the corner.

MOTHER

Then we're putting her down.

SON

What?

MOTHER

I said I know how this sounds.

FATHER

You'll visit on weekends. I'll pick you up after work on Friday.

The son nods, finally processing.

FATHER

But your grandpa runs a tight ship, so no marijuana.

SON

Of course not. What-- why--?

MOTHER

We just don't want you to feel like you did anything wrong.

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SON

Of course not. What-- why--?

MOTHER

We just don't want you to feel like you did anything wrong.

#37 "MY BOOK"

EXT. DUNKIN DONUTS DRIVE-THRU - DAY

Under the arch of a drive-thru, a MAN's (40 YO) hand extends from the window of a big blue sedan and gives seven dollars (all singles) to the DRIVE-THRU BARISTA.

MAN

That's all yours, you can keep that.

The barista reaches out with two coffees (one iced, one hot) and the man takes them.

INT. CAR

The man hands the hot coffee to a YOUNG MAN (20 YO) sitting passenger.

MAN

There you go, don't worry about it. You can pay me back some other time. I'm kidding about that. You can pay for parking. I'm just kidding you. Do you see the face your making? Look in the mirror. Look at this face I'm looking at. I'll have to put that in my book. This book I'm writing. I don't want to talk about it.

YOUNG MAN

You're writing a book?

MAN

Yeaah, I've got nothing to say about it.

The young man nods and unlids his coffee.

MAN

It's just, I know it's gonna be three acts, ten chapters each, eight to ten pages per chapter. Yeah. It's Halloween. That's it. Something weird always happens to me around Halloween.

The man drives with his knees as he lights a cigarette

MAN

I write a novel every ten years. You know when I started writing my last one?

YOUNG MAN

Was it around--

MAN

Halloween night, ten years ago, I started writing *Bongo Blues*.

The man enjoys his cigarette. He sips his coffee.

YOUNG MAN

...What'd you write before that?

MAN

That was my first novel.

YOUNG MAN

And this will be your second?

MAN

I don't wanna talk about it.

The man takes a sip of his coffee.

#38 "ON THE WAY OUT"

INT. COLLEGE DINING HALL - DAY

A young MAN (20 YO) sits across a young WOMAN (20 YO) at a booth. They each have hot chocolate and salads. The young man's foot is fidgeting. The young woman is leaning in.

WOMAN
He's a puppy. Like this big. You have
to--

The woman takes her phone out of her pocket and flips through
images.

MAN
What's his name?

WOMAN
Spencer.

MAN
Oh.

WOMAN
I know it's so human.

MAN
I wasn't gonna say that!

WOMAN
What were you gonna say.

MAN
Show me some pictures!

The two laugh. The woman holds her phone out.

MAN
Awww.

A sleepless bitter young WOMAN (20 YO) arrives at the table
with coffee and pork chops. Setting it down, she says:

WOMAN 2
Do you guys have any relatives that
are on the way out?

She grimaces as she walks away.

WOMAN 2
I'm gonna get some water.

The man pretends to still be focussing on the dog photos.

WOMAN
I can't believe I won't see him til
Thanksgiving.

MAN

That sucks.

WOMAN

Yeah.

MAN

I read something that losing a pet can be harder than losing a human relative.

WOMAN

Oh, wow.

MAN

Not that-- you know he'll probably live for like at least 10 years.

WOMAN

Yeah he's a puppy.

#39 "DID YOU GET A HAIRCUT?"

INT. DORMITORY VESTIBULE - DAY

A YOUNG MAN (20 YO) with short hair walks in the front door of a dorm building. A NEIGHBOR (20 YO) walking to the restroom sees the young man walking in and does a double take.

NEIGHBOR

Did you get a haircut?

YOUNG MAN

(laughing)

Yeah!

NEIGHBOR

(smiling)

Oh wow.

The young man's laugh peters out to a smile, which falls to a frown after the neighbor has turned the corner. The young man enters his room.

INT. DORM ROOM

In his room, the young man's ROOMMATE (20 YO) is throwing on a jacket and shoving books in a bookbag. He looks up and yelps.

ROOMMATE
I didn't recognize you.

YOUNG MAN
Big cut.

ROOMMATE
Do you like it?

YOUNG MAN
(angry)
Yeah.

ROOMMATE
(distracted)
Good. I gotta run.

YOUNG MAN
Cool.

The roommate dashes out the room, shutting the door loudly behind him. On the back of the door is a mirror, into which the young man swings into frame. He looks at the mirror. Fixes his hair. Shakes it out. Pushes it all back. Folds it all to one side. Then the other. Combs it with his fingers.

He looks away from the mirror, takes a water bottle, drinks from it. He puts some of the water on his hand and pushes his hair back with it.

He looks in the mirror. No good.

He looks away again, hunches over, really goes to work on his hair, applying more water, more water, combing vigorously with his fingers, shaking out, shaking, until finally he turns to the mirror:

And he looks like an animal.

The door opens and roommate rushes back in. The young man stands straight, tries to act natural.

ROOMMATE
Thirsty.

The roommate grabs a water bottle and leaves, the door mirror bringing the young man back into frame.

#40 "I HATE CAESAR SALAD"

INT. CRAMPED RESTAURANT KITCHEN - NIGHT

A young WAITER (20 YO) is stuffing frozen rolls in a toaster oven. A WAITRESS (50 YO) is dumping a packet of coffee grounds into an industrial coffee pot.

WAITRESS

(re: oven)

Don't turn that on yet. If we do it at the same time, the power goes out.

The waiter stares at the frozen rolls in the toaster oven.

WAITER

I'm so hungry.

A CHEF calls from behind racks of plates:

CHEF

You're up. Caesar salad...

The waiter starts loading the plates onto his arms as the chef speaks.

CHEF

...calamari, roasted brussel sprouts
no glaze...

The waiter loses balance and almost tips the salad, and tries various new configurations.

CHEF

...house salad with balsamic
vinaigrette no croutons.

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - MOMENTS LATER

Two swinging doors jut slowly open and we see the rear of the waiter as he trudges backwards through the doors, his hands and arms full of appetizers.

Once through, the HOSTESS (25 YO, on the phone) notices him.

HOSTESS

Need help?

WAITER

Yeah, thank you.

She sticks a long pepper mill through his underarm and goes back to taking reservations.

The waiter trudges with his plates to a table at the end of the restaurant, where he sets down the caesar in front of a MUSTACHIOED MAN.

MAN

Thank you.

He sets down the rest of the plates to their respective diners TWO WOMEN and another MAN, and says:

WAITER

Enjoy.

MAN

Is that pepper you have there?

The waiter notices the pepper in his underarm.

WAITER

Oh. Yes! Yes. Would you like some fresh ground pepper?

MAN

Please.

WAITER

Just say when.

The waiter starts grinding the pepper.

MAN

Is this a beet salad?

WAITER

(still grinding)
...No. It's a caesar salad.

MAN

I hate caesar salad.

The waiter stops grinding.

MAN

Does someone have my beet salad?

WAITER

(grabbing salad)
Oh. I'm sorry, let me fix that.

INT. CRAMPED RESTAURANT KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

The waiter bursts through the swinging doors with the caesar salad in hand. He yells to the chef:

WAITER

Could you fire a beet salad?

CHEF

Heard.

The waiter grabs a fork and takes a bite of the caesar salad. So good.

He leans against the counter, eating the salad, watching the rolls in the oven. He turns the timer and the lights go out.

#41 "ARE YOU DRUNK YET?"

INT. DORM SUITE - NIGHT

Loud dance music plays as a YOUNG WOMAN (20 YO) sends a text message sitting on a couch. Sitting next to her is a YOUNG WOMAN (20 YO) who flicks her Bic lighter on and off as she flicks her eyes back and forth. First at the radio speaker.

Then around the corner where a looming DRUNK YOUNG MAN (22 YO) snickers at his phone screen.

Another DRUNK YOUNG MAN is talking to someone on his phone, saying:

YOUNG MAN 2

Listen, I'm ready to go dancing.

A third DRUNK YOUNG MAN appears in front of the second young woman, eclipsing the man talking on his phone.

YOUNG MAN 3

Are you drunk yet?

YOUNG WOMAN 2

We're not drunk.

YOUNG MAN 3

We got rumplemintz!

YOUNG WOMAN 2 flicks her lighter. The third young man flinches.

YOUNG MAN 3

Yo, there's a smoke detector right there man.

YOUNG WOMAN 2

Oh. It's kinda far away.

YOUNG MAN 3

They got sprinklers in every room.

YOUNG WOMAN 2

Okay, I'm sorry.

YOUNG MAN 3

I'll pour us some shots.

Young Woman 1 looks up from her phone. Young Man 2 appears beside them tapping the End Call button.

YOUNG MAN 2

Listen, me and my buds are going dancing if you want to come.

Young Woman 2 looks at Young Woman 1, who furrows her brow.

YOUNG MAN 3

(to Young Woman 1)

Rumplemints or Schnapps?

YOUNG MAN 2

Thanks but I can't. I'm going dancing if you want to come.

Young Woman 2 flicks her lighter.

YOUNG MAN 3

Yo. Do you know many computers would be ruined if the sprinklers went off? Shit man. I live in the basement.

Young Woman 2 looks at Young Woman 1. Who is really furrowing her brow at this point. YW2 does a smoking gesture and YW1 nods.

YOUNG WOMAN 2

Sorry. We'll be right back.

The young women stand up and walk toward the backdoor when Young Man 1, the drunkest of the three men, appears before Young Woman 2. He grins and waves. Young Woman 2 waits for him to say something. His grin gets bigger, but he says

nothing.

YOUNG MAN 2
We're gonna go dancing if you wanna
go.

YOUNG WOMAN 2
(Young Woman 1)
Do you wanna go to the home?

Young Woman 1 nods.

YOUNG WOMAN 2
(to Young Man 2)
We're gonna go to the diner.

The young women walk away, Young Woman 2 flicking her lighter
as Young Man 2 says behind them:

YOUNG MAN 2
We're gonna go dancing if you wanna
come.

They walk past Young Man 3, who is carrying 3 shots, and
spills them when Young Woman 2 flicks her lighter back on.

#42 "WOULD YOU LIKE TO BUY A TICKET?"

INT. COLLEGE THEATRE LOBBY - DAY

A box office's sliding front is shut.

A CHAPEL BELL rings outside. 12 STROKES, as--

A STUDENT WORKER (20 YO, F) with a ponytail and a short-
sleeved button up shirt swipes her card to open the box
office back room.

INT. BOX OFFICE

The door closes behind the worker unlocks a drawer with a key--

--pulls out the sliding drawer

--removes a red roll of tickets

--sets the tickets on the counter

--unrolls the tickets

--opens a laptop

--pushes a button on the wall

INT. COLLEGE THEATRE LOBBY

The box office's sliding front whirs upward, revealing the worker, as she sees:

a wired WOMAN (50 YO) marching toward her trailed by a downtrodden MAN in a dingy t-shirt (60 YO).

WOMAN

Hello. Are we in the right place?

STUDENT WORKER

I'm not sure.

MAN

What'd she say?

WOMAN

We're here to see the play.

The student worker snaps to life.

STUDENT WORKER

Oh. I have got--

The student worker sets the tickets down on the front counter.

STUDENT WORKER

Tickets! Did you pay online?

WOMAN

No.

STUDENT WORKER

Oh. They're--

STUDENT WORKER

--eight dollars.

MAN

What's she say?

WOMAN

(to Man)

Do you want to see this?

MAN

It's fine.

MAN
So that's 8 dollars.

WOMAN
He's a senior citizen. I'm not.

MAN
Are you kidding me?

WOMAN
What?

MAN
(getting closer)
Just give her 8 dollars.

WOMAN
(re: his shirt)
Oh god, you were wearing this outside
Monday.

MAN
I just got this out of storage.

WOMAN
(to Student Worker)
Could we have another ticket for the
chair between us?

MAN
What?

WOMAN
You stink.

MAN
No I don't.

WOMAN
When's the show start?

The student worker snaps to reality. She's talking to me?

STUDENT WORKER
Two.

WOMAN
What time is it?

STUDENT WORKER
It's 12.

MAN

Oh shit.

#43 "POLLING PLACE"

EXT. SUBURBAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - DAY

A YOUNG MAN (20 YO) walks alongside a series of campaign SIGNS. "Melanie Reynolds for Sheriff," "Paul Studt for School Board," "Bill Schur for County Coroner."

He approaches the front vestibule of a closed elementary school, where a WOMAN (50 YO) has a small stand with pamphlets.

WOMAN

(to Young Man)

Hi. Would you like the democratic ballet?

YOUNG MAN

Yes. Thank you!

WOMAN

Thank you for coming out today.

The young man takes the ballet and continues to the corner, where another WOMAN says from the shadows:

WOMAN 2

Would you like a republican ballet?

YOUNG MAN

No thank you.

WOMAN 2

You should take one.

The young man laughs nervously.

WOMAN 2

Do I know you?

YOUNG MAN

...I went to school here.

WOMAN 2

Are you Jenna's brother? Jenna Craven?

YOUNG MAN

Oh yes.

WOMAN 2
Do you still live in Cassel Mill?

YOUNG MAN
Yes.

WOMAN 2
Do you lock your windows?

YOUNG MAN
What?

WOMAN 2
I said do you walk in Primrose?
Primrose Park? Eric Ryan is our
current county supervisor and he's
been fighting to maintain our public
parks.

YOUNG MAN
(walking away)
Oh, well thank you.

WOMAN 2
Will your family mourn her?

The young man turns and approaches her.

YOUNG MAN
What?

WOMAN 2
I said Bill Schur for county coroner.
He's very good at what he does.

The young man looks at Woman 2. She smiles heinously.

YOUNG MAN
I'll take one.

Woman 2 hands him the Republican ballot.

WOMAN 2
Thank you for coming out today.

The young man walks into the polling place, dropping the
Republican ballot in the recycling right outside.

#44 "FOR THE RECORD"

INT. CLEAN DORM ROOM - DAY

In an organized dorm room, music posters deck the walls. Woodstock, Hendrix, Dylan.

A YOUNG WOMAN (20 YO) is carefully pouring hot water into two mugs with tea bags. Her hands are a little shaky; she is concentrating.

Behind her, a YOUNG MAN (20 YO) with his shoes on squats in front of a carefully organized record collection.

YOUNG MAN
Holy crap. Is this... these are all records?

YOUNG WOMAN
(suddenly alert)
Yes.

YOUNG MAN
(sifting violently)
Woah. You got so many.

The young woman hands the young man his mug.

YOUNG MAN
Thanks!

He sets it on top of the record player. She stares at it.

YOUNG MAN
Blood on the Tracks!

The young woman's mug of tea is shaking and spilling a little in her hands.

YOUNG MAN
How much was it?

YOUNG WOMAN
What?

YOUNG MAN
For the record.

YOUNG WOMAN
Fifteen fifty.

She picks up young man's mug and puts it on a table.

YOUNG MAN
 (not noticing)
 Is that cheap?

The young man takes the record out of the case and handles it with his long careless fingers and palms. The young woman's tea is spilling on her hands and sleeves.

YOUNG MAN
 Can we play it?

YOUNG WOMAN
 I've got to clean it first.

YOUNG MAN
 I got it.

The young man puts his sleeve around his hand and rubs the record hard with his wrist. The young woman's tea (steaming) spills all over, spills forward onto the young man's neck. He screams the record shoots out of his hands and splits against the wall.

The young woman takes a deep breath and sets her mug down. The young man is lying on the floor holding his neck.

YOUNG MAN
 Jesus.

YOUNG WOMAN
 Fifteen fifty's pretty standard.

#45 "MAHOGANY"

EXT. WOODSY BACKYARD - NIGHT

Loud muffled music booms from a crowded house dressed in Halloween decor. It is cold and a hard breeze makes the trees whine.

A big bonfire is crackling. A YOUNG MAN (21 YO), alone, watches the house, smoking a long homemade pipe by the bonfire.

A MAN's (60 YO) voice:

MAN
 (re: the fire)
 That's really nice. That's really
 burning nice.

The man appears from the dark carrying a bundle of sticks.
The young man, scared, conceals his pipe.

MAN

Skunk out here? No, don't you worry
about me. I'm cool. I'm a cool guy.

The man drops the sticks in the fire.

MAN

Is that a pipe?

YOUNG MAN

Yeah. I made a pipe with my friend.

The young man takes out the pipe.

YOUNG MAN

It's a Gandalf pipe.

MAN

What kind of wood you using?

YOUNG MAN

Oh we... we got some from Home Depot.

The man scoffs.

MAN

Yeah that's probably pine. That'll
burn right up and you'll smell it.

YOUNG MAN

My friend says as long as don't char--

MAN

You're gonna wanna use mahogany. Yeah.
Doesn't burn. Put it in a fire. It'd
get really hot, but wouldn't burn.
Swear to God.

The man walks around the fire as he talks, poking the fire
with a stick, shifting the wood around.

YOUNG MAN

Ah. Dang. Well, I already made it.

MAN

You're gonna wanna use mahogany.

YOUNG MAN

...Yeah.

MAN

Let me show you what you did wrong.

The young man hands the man the pipe. The man scoffs.

MAN

Okay. Yeah. I can get a piece of mahogany from the place I work. And you're gonna wanna make fix the dimensions, it's too long.

YOUNG MAN

It's a Gandalf pipe.

The man examines the pipe as he walks to the other side of the fire.

MAN

I watched Harry Potter but this won't really work for you you'll want a much better pipe than this. Here take a look.

The man hands the young man over the fire and slips from his fingers into the flames. The young man tries to catch it and burns his hand.

YOUNG MAN

Ahhh! FUCK!

The man sees the pipe in the fire. He pokes it with his stick. The young man nurses his hand. A loaded silence.

MAN

You should've used mahogany.

#47 "CARPAL TUNNEL"

INT. COLLEGE DINING HALL - DAY

In a near empty-dining hall, a YOUNG WOMAN is sitting off to the side, bundled up. She takes off her scarf and blows on a paper cup of coffee.

She looks out the window, where dead leaves clutter the lawn. She smiles thoughtfully to herself.

An EMPLOYEE (40 YO) turns the corner; she's been wiping down

tables. She notices the young woman.

EMPLOYEE
(warmly)
You doing alright?

The young woman looks around, me? She smiles.

YOUNG WOMAN
Yeah. Thanks--

EMPLOYEE
I'm not.

YOUNG WOMAN
What?

The employee sets down her cleaning spray and towel.

EMPLOYEE
I'm not doing alright. I gotta take my
mom to get surgery next week, and you
know what I found out yesterday? I
gotta get surgery this month.

YOUNG WOMAN
Oh, no.

EMPLOYEE
I got carpal tunnel. Both wrists. Then
this one's got a whole heap of
problems. Nerve stuff, inflamm--
what'd they say? Whole heap of stuff.
But I got carpal tunnel in both.

The employee shows the young woman one of her wrists.

EMPLOYEE
Look at that. Look how swollen it is.

She shows her the other wrist.

EMPLOYEE
Then this one's **real** bad. And Sam
looks at me and says oh that's not a
real thing.

YOUNG WOMAN
Are you serious.

EMPLOYEE

Yeah! I say Sam you gotta take me to the hospital. He says he can't. I say you don't even know when it is. Now I gotta take my mom to get surgery next week and I told the doctor, you think you could do us both at once? And he says no. *Two* different days, I gotta drive to the *same* hospital in *Maryland*.

The employee continues looking at the young woman.

YOUNG WOMAN

(re: the wrist)

...Holy... cow.

EMPLOYEE

But of course I'm working. Scrubbing, polishing silverware. Taking out the trash in the cold.

The young woman looks out the window.

YOUNG WOMAN

Yeah, it's chilly.

The employee stands and turns the corner, saying:

EMPLOYEE

Anyway.

And is just as soon gone. The young woman looks out the window, sad. Sips her coffee.

A young man turns the corner with a plate of food, sees her.

YOUNG MAN

You doing alright?

YOUNG WOMAN

...No thanks.

#48 "NICE COAT"

INT. STREETLIT CURB - NIGHT

In the freezing cold, TWO YOUNG MEN (20 YO) stand under a street lamp on the sidewalk, waiting, checking the time.

The first one is bundled, bedecked with a scarf, hat, leather

gloves, wooly peacoat, jacket, suede vest, flannel, thick corduroy pants and boots. He seems rather comfortable, just annoyed. What's taking so long?

The second is in a t-shirt and jeans. He's hugging himself, sighs. The sigh becomes visible fog in front of him. His teeth are chattering. He looks at his warm friend.

MAN 2

Nice coat.

MAN 1

Thanks! My grandma gave it to me.

MAN 2

Cool. Cool cool cool. And your scarf's nice too.

MAN 1

I got it at Goodwill, to match the coat!

MAN 2

It looks warm.

MAN 1

Oh yeah. Totally warm. Feel it.

Man 2, incredulous, feels the scarf. His finger touches Man 1's neck.

MAN 1

Ah! Your hand's cold.

MAN 2

Yeah. All of me's cold.

Man 1 smiles. Man 2 takes a breath, tries again.

MAN 2

I just love your whole outfit.

MAN 1

Thanks! I actually got the hat from a flea market in Prague, it was my first day of Czech class and we took the tram in. Got it for 200 crowns, which is like 10 bucks. And the jacket was my grandfather's. He was a scientist. He died in the arctic of hypothermia. The flannel's my brother's, the pants

were my mom's actually. I don't know how they ever fit her. The fit me perfect.

A CAR pulls up. Man 2 gets right in and slams the door shut as Man 1 continues talking.

From muffled in the car we hear:

MAN 2
(muffled)
Just go. Go. Please.

MAN 1
(reaching for the handle)
The vest I got in Virginia at a farmer's--

The car drives away.

MAN 1
...market-- oh. Okay.

Man 1 stands warm and alone in the cold, looking around.

#49 "TWO HUNDRED DOLLAR BILLS"

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - NIGHT

After hours, the MANAGER (35 YO) in black pants and a grey polo talks on the phone:

MANAGER
Yeah come right in. No, I'm sorry for making you come back. Like I said, you know, Debbie just had some questions about money and--

A WAITRESS (50 YO) in an all black gives the manager a look. She snuffles. She's been crying.

MANAGER
I don't wanna get involved-- So I just wanna let you two work it out. No one's accusing you of-- What? No we're not accusing you of anything. You sure you're not too far?

A WAITER (20 YO) in a big brown fur coat over his black serving-wear walks through the door. He's talking on the phone.

WAITER

(into phone)

You know what? I'm pretty far. Wanna talk tomorrow instead?

MANAGER

(laughing, into phone)

Yeah.

(off waitress's look)

So, I'm just gonna hand it off to Debbie.

The waitress, tears in her eyes, takes a breath. She gathers her will and says (as the manager's hand and phone slowly creeps into frame and he snickers).

DEBBIE

It's just earlier you said that guy had a hundred dollar bill and he--

Debbie hears the manager snickering and notices the phone. She scowls at him and he puts it away.

DEBBIE

And he gave you two hundred dollar bills and when we pooled tips we didn't clear 80 bucks.

The waiter is flabbergasted.

WAITER

His bill was a hundred and six. I gave him change. He tipped me twenty.

MANAGER

That's a nice coat.

WAITER

(defensively)

Thanks. I got it from Goodwill.

DEBBIE

And I always love your shoes.

Debbie looks down at the waiter's black suede shoes.

DEBBIE

My feet always kill me in these.

Debbie's shoes are cheap black waiter shoes, falling apart.

WAITER

So was that what you wanted to talk about then?

MANAGER

Yeah. Unless you need something.

WAITER

Yeah. Could you break a hundred?
(off Debbie's look)
Just kidding. See you tomorrow.

#50 "I'LL BE HELPING YOU TONIGHT"

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - NIGHT

A WAITER (20 YO) brings two lamb shanks with yellow rice, and a giant "Impossible Burger" to a small family's table.

At the table: a grinning FATHER (50 YO), a serious MOTHER (50 YO) and their serious TEENAGER (18 YO). The waiter hands the teenager the burger.

WAITER

A medium-rare Impossible Burger. I know you can do it.

The waiter grins stupidly. The father laughs.

TEENAGER

Medium-rare?

WAITER

Medium-well! Medium-well impossible burger. Yes. I said the-- oops.

The waiter stammers and stutter-steps away to the mother and father.

WAITER

Who got the lamb shank?

The mother and father look. The waiter is holding a lamb shank in each hand. Stupid grin.

The mother and father laugh for a while. A long while. "Give us our lamb shank."

The waiter laughs and hands them each their lamb shank, noticing a smaller, emptied appetizer plate in front of the Father.

WAITER
How were the roasted brusselsprouts?

MOTHER
He hated them.

The waiter looks at the father's face. He's mean and stern.

WAITER
Oh, I'm sorry, that--

The waiter looks at the tiny appetizer plate, completely polished off. He looks back up at the Father, who is grinning stupidly.

WAITER
Oh!

The father, mother, and waiter begin to laugh. They keep laughing. Don't know when to stop. The waiter wants to stop laughing. It's starting to hurt. He's starting to cry a little. The teen is dissecting the burger to see if it is really medium-well.

WAITER
Is that too pink?

TEENAGER
It's a little--

WAITER
I'll take care of that.

The waiter takes the teenager's burger and leaves the table while the mother stops laughing and the father tries but can't stop. He giggles in pain.

#51 "I WOULD LIKE TO ROB THE STORE"

INT. DORMITORY COMMON ROOM - DAY

A YOUNG MAN (20 YO, serious) in a cowboy hat is playing with a big green 20-sided die at a big circular table full of pieces of paper, maps, different sets of colored dice, and a cardboard box labeled "DND".

Seated next to him is a YOUNG WOMAN (21 YO, frantic), another YOUNG WOMAN (19 YO, morose), and another YOUNG MAN (21 YO, extremely attentive).

On the other side of the board, the DUNGEON MASTER (22 YO,

nervous) stands behind a big plastic divider, reading some secret documents behind it.

DUNGEON MASTER

Who'd like to go into the store?

YOUNG WOMAN 1

Me. I will go.

YOUNG WOMAN 2

Me too.

YOUNG MAN 1

I'll come.

Young Man 2 nods attentively.

DUNGEON MASTER

Okay, everyone-- okay, you go inside the store and you don't see anyone.

Then you look down and you see

(elf voice)

Tabitha, the elven shopkeeper. Hello dearies. How can I help you--?

YOUNG WOMAN 1

I'd like to buy a speed flying potion.

DUNGEON MASTER

Oh yes I believe we have one of those for 300 gold.

YOUNG WOMAN 1

Charisma check. I talk you down.

DUNGEON MASTER

Roll D20.

Young Woman 1 rolls a 20-sided die and scores an 18.

YOUNG WOMAN 1

18 plus 5 modifier: 23.

DUNGEON MASTER

Oh yes dear, I like you very much. 30 gold should do.

Young Woman 1 scribbles on her character sheet.

YOUNG MAN 1

I would like to shrink you.

DUNGEON MASTER

What?

YOUNG MAN 1

Can I shrink you?

The young man puts down a spell card. It says:
Reduce/Enlarge.

DUNGEON MASTER

Why?

YOUNG MAN 1

I would like to rob the store.

YOUNG WOMAN 1

Don't rob the store.

YOUNG MAN 1

We're on the same team.

DUNGEON MASTER

Okay, roll D20.

YOUNG WOMAN 1

I would like to convince him not to
rob the store.

YOUNG MAN 1

Are you serious?

DUNGEON MASTER

Alright charisma check, you roll
first.

YOUNG MAN 1

(to Young Woman 2)
I'll give you 10 percent.

YOUNG WOMAN 1

50 percent.

YOUNG MAN 1

Why don't you roll then.

Young Woman 1 rolls the 20-sided die. Everyone leans in. 3.

DUNGEON MASTER

You fail. Now,
(to Young Man 1)
Roll to shrink.

The young man takes the die and rolls.

20.

DUNGEON MASTER
(elvish voice)
What! Oh no! What have you done!
You've *shrunk* me! Oh.

YOUNG MAN 1
I knock on the register.

Young Man 1 puts down another card that says "Knock".

DUNGEON MASTER
(elvish)
It's open!

The dungeon master writes something on a flashcard behind his secret border.

DUNGEON MASTER
That's yours.

Young Man 1 reads and smiles.

DUNGEON MASTER
Alright, would you like to leave the store?

YOUNG WOMAN 1
I'd like to convince him to give me the money.

#52 "IF HE DOESN'T FIND ANYTHING"

EXT. MAIN STREET CURB - DAY

On a roadside next to a parked Honda, a mortified YOUNG WOMAN (20 YO) looks at a form on a clipboard. "Consent to Search". A POLICE OFFICER is holding the clipboard. Another OFFICER is standing behind the young woman.

YOUNG WOMAN
If you don't find anything, what happens?

OFFICER 1
We're gonna search it either way.

YOUNG WOMAN

But what happens if you search it and don't find anything?

OFFICER 1

It'll be easier on you if you sign this form.

The young woman looks at her car. Then the officer. She signs the form.

OFFICER 1

So you're going to wait here with Chris while I search the vehicle. But one last time, I'm gonna ask you: if I search that vehicle, will I find anything else?

The young woman looks around, pats her jacket, nervous.

YOUNG WOMAN

No, sir.

Officer 1 nods and walks over to the car. Begins searching. Officer 2 stands behind the young woman awkwardly. She turns around.

YOUNG WOMAN

Can I sit down?

OFFICER 2

Yeah. Oh yeah yeah yeah. Go ahead. You can sit on the curb if you'd like.

The young woman sits on the curb, hugs her knees, watches Officer 1 rummaging through a bag in her car.

OFFICER 2

You study?

YOUNG WOMAN

I'm a psychology major. I wanna be a therapist.

OFFICER 2

I always thought I'd be a good therapist.

A long awkward pause. Officer 1 goes to the other side of the car.

OFFICER 2
Do you live--

YOUNG WOMAN
If he doesn't--

OFFICER 2
What's that?

YOUNG WOMAN
I'm sorry?

OFFICER 2
I'm sorry, what were you saying?

YOUNG WOMAN
If he doesn't find anything, what happens?

OFFICER 2
Well, you've been very cooperative.

YOUNG WOMAN
Yeah?

OFFICER 2
You've already given us your marijuana and paraphernalia.

YOUNG WOMAN
Yeah?

OFFICER 2
Usually that's two misdemeanors.

YOUNG WOMAN
Okay?

OFFICER 2
But you've been very cooperative.

YOUNG WOMAN
Thanks.

The young woman looks at Officer 1, lifting up the car rug.

#53 "HAPPY BIRTHDAY TWICE"

INT. UNIVERSITY RESTROOM - DAY

A MAN (60 YO, professor) is at the urinal. We hear a FLUSH and see a stall door open behind him.

Muffled CHAPEL BELLS ring three times, marking the time--3

o'clock.

MAN
(mutters)
Shit.

He hurriedly flushes the urinal and turns around where there are two sinks--one full of maroon gunk and old wet paper towels, and the other occupied by a YOUNG MAN who is humming to himself quietly.

The man judges his options, looks at his watch, and plants himself a respectful six feet behind the young man, who hunches over the sink washing his hands and--humming? No.

The man takes a few steps closer and hears: the young man is actually singing.

YOUNG MAN
(quietly)
Happy birthday dear fingernails, happy
birthday to you.

The man, baffled, keeps his composure as the young man turns off the sink, removes a paper towel from the dispenser, dries his hand, discards the towel, and turns the sink on again. More soap. More washing.

YOUNG MAN
(quietly)
Happy birthday to you.

The man can't believe this. He looks at the other sink, disgusting. At the time, 3:00.

YOUNG MAN
Happy birthday to you. Happy birthday
dear--

The man clears his throat. The young man stops. Then continues from the beginning.

YOUNG MAN
Happy birthday to you. Happy birthday
to you. Happy birthday dear cuticles.
Happy birthday to you.

The young man turns off the sink, dries his hands. The man edges in toward the sink, gets a handful of soap, as the young man takes out a toothbrush and toothpaste.

#55 "ARLENE"

EST. SUBURBAN LIBRARY - DAY

It is early in the day. At the local library, the parking lot is mostly empty.

INT. SUBURBAN LIBRARY

A YOUNG MAN (20 YO) sets down a stack of freshly printed programs on a desk full of flyers and event sign-up sheets. He peels one of the flyers off his stack and shows it to the WOMAN (50 YO) working the front desk.

WOMAN

This is for...

The woman examines the flyer. It says, "Songs. Puppets. Fun! Sing Along with Katie B and her fluffy friends. June 12th, 7pm. Kids Only."

YOUNG MAN

The sing-along thing for the kids. With the singer-songwriter. And the puppets.

WOMAN

Yes! Yes yes yes Kate's thing. This looks good. Well done.

The library door opens and in walks a PATRON (70, F) holding an iPad, already talking while the young man and woman chat.

YOUNG MAN

Thanks I wasn't sure if I could just copy from the other flyers or--

WOMAN 2

I just got an iPad and I just wanna know if I can delete the apps or not.

WOMAN

(to Woman 2)
One moment, Arlene.

ARLENE

(to young man)
Who are you? I haven't seen you before?

YOUNG MAN

I'm an intern.

Arlene sets her iPad on the desk and moves to the program

table. She picks up flyers and asks about them rapid-speed.

ARLENE

What is this publishing class, who teaches it?

WOMAN

I think it's an author from--

ARLENE

I'm an author. You should've asked me to teach it. What is this chess club? How good do you have to be?

WOMAN

I don't know.

ARLENE

I'll look it up online.

Arlene picks up one of the sing-along flyers.

ARLENE

What's this? A sing-along? With puppets?

WOMAN

Yes.

ARLENE

"Kids Only!?" What do you mean Kids Only? This isn't enforced, is it? I'm a children's author. I need to go for research. Can you change this?

The young man looks at the woman. Should I?

WOMAN

Why don't you go ask Anne about it?

ARLENE

I will.

Arlene takes her iPad, a flyer, and walks down a hall of offices. The woman goes back to her business.

WOMAN

(to young man)
So good work on that.

ARLENE (O.S.)

Anne!

#56 "THE NOISE I MADE"

INT. DORM COMMON AREA - NIGHT

Music blares from a stereo system. There are empty cans and used paper towels on the floor to bandage old spills.

A PARTYGOER (20 YO) shifts self-consciously in the corner, watching the HOST (21 YO) talking with PARTYGOER 2 (25 YO). A third, PARTYGOER 3 (20 YO) is snoozing on the couch near Partygoer 1.

The Host turns the speakers off.

HOST

(re: Partygoer 2)
Chris is leaving!

Partygoer 3 wakes up.

PARTYGOER 3

What?

CHRIS

I'm heading out.

PARTYGOER 3

For good.

Chris nods.

PARTYGOER 3

Oh my goodness.

Partygoer 3 gets up and runs over to Chris, embracing him and audibly expressing his sorrow:

PARTYGOER 3

Ohhh.

Partygoer 1 observes. Is this what we're doing? Partygoer 3 lets go.

PARTYGOER 3

Be good.

Chris turns to the Host, who hugs him, saying even louder:

HOST
Oh my go-o-o-od.

Partygoer 1 looks around. He's next. The Host lets go of Chris.

HOST
I'll miss you.

Chris turns to Partygoer 1, who is right there with a hug. He squeezes Chris and emits a long, loud, strange noise.

Chris laughs nervously. Partygoer 1 lets go.

CHRIS
That was loud.

HOST
Yeah, what was that?

PARTYGOER 1
I'm sorry.

PARTYGOER 3
Well, peace Chris.

HOST
Yeah, be safe.

PARTYGOER 1
I don't know where that came from.

CHRIS
Alright, see you guys!

PARTYGOER 1
It's been a long week.

#57 "PLAIN PANCAKES"

INT. DINER - DAY

SIX COLLEGE KIDS (19-21 YO) whisper conspiratorially across a large table as we see:

--waters, sodas, and coffees on the table, but they are all mostly empty.

--six menus are stacked on the edge of the table.

--only four rolls of silverware.

COLLEGE KIDS

Are we ever gonna get more coffee... I don't have any silverware... I'm so thirsty... Was he looking at me weird... I wanna ask for water but what if he spits in it...

We hear heavy footsteps and strained breathing as a shadow is cast over the table. The college kids stop speaking.

REVERSE: a STRESSED WAITER (18 YO) on the verge of tears sets down a folding tray stand with six plates of plain pancakes on it.

With shaky hands, the waiter removes each plate from the tray and places one deliberately if a little violently in front of each guest. The college kids look at one another, at their pancakes. They furrow their brows. Open their mouths to speak but say nothing. There is only the sound of plates hitting the table and the waiters strained breathing.

Finally, the waiter takes a step back and reviews the table. He doesn't seem to notice the empty glasses or the menus hanging precariously off the side.

The college kids look at one another.

COLLEGE KID 1

I'm sorry. None of us ordered plain pancakes.

The waiter is about to cry.

STRESSED WAITER

(inaudible)

Just take it.

COLLEGE KID 1

...I'm sorry?

STRESSED WAITER

(volume rising to crescendo)

Just take it. Just-- take'em all. I can't bring them back, just-- I'll get you your food. Just take the pancakes I cannot bring them back!

The waiter catches his breath. The guests look at one another.

COLLEGE KID 2
Can I have a fork--?

--A FORK crashes onto the table toward College Kid 2.

#58 "CHOCOLATE MARTINI"

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - NIGHT

An austere WOMAN (50 YO) hands her jacket to a nervous WAITER (20 YO), who hangs it on a coat rack.

WOMAN
I'm hungry!

WAITER
Oh, that's--

A MAN appears (her husband) and hands the waiter his jacket.

MAN
I'm thirsty.

The waiter hangs up the second jacket.

The BARTENDER is almost yelling:

BARTENDER (O.S.)
Who would kill himself with a toaster?

WAITER
That's good. Would you--

MAN
Yeah, two chocolate martinis.

BARTENDER (O.S.)
Yeah I'm sorry you didn't kill yourself. You were murdered!

WAITER
Would you like to order now?

The couple stares at the waiter.

MAN
Yeah, we'll have our drinks first,
thanks.

The waiter nods.

WAITER

I'll put that right in.

The waiter logs onto the computer. Hits Chocolate Martini. Confirms. He looks over to the bar, where a little receipt prints out. He looks at the bartender, who approaches it, then turns around.

BARTENDER

I knew a guy who drank a bottle of anti-freeze. Who'd kill himself that way!

Two women sit at the bar with empty wine glasses, staring at the bartender, disgusted. The waiter looks between them, the bartender, and the receipt.

WAITER

Kevin.

BARTENDER

(to Couple 2)

A whole bottle of that stuff, man! I swear to God. I know because my girlfriend went to the funeral.

The waiter looks at his table. The man is staring at him.

WOMAN 2

Can I have another?

The bartender grabs a bottle of merlot and starts to pour but stops himself.

BARTENDER

(to Couple 2)

Anti-freeze? Do you know what that stuff would do to you, man? That stuff would corrode your insides.

WAITER

Kevin.

BARTENDER

(cont.)

You wouldn't have insides left. You'd have-- I gotta ask my girlfriend about this, man.

WAITER

Kevin!

BARTENDER

What?

WAITER

Can you make two chocolate martinis?

BARTENDER

Yeah man. Just say so.

#59 "FIVE-O"

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE PARKING LOT - DAY

At a seedy off-brand convenience store, a big dark SUV with tinted windows is sitting in a parking spot. A dinky sedan pulls into next to it.

INT. SEDAN

A bearded MAN (40 YO) driving the sedan, puts it in park and kills the engine.

MAN

Papers?

The YOUNG MAN (20 YO) is looking out the window at the SUV next to them.

YOUNG MAN

What?

MAN

Rolling papers.

YOUNG MAN

Oh!

The young man takes a pack of Tops cigarette papers out of his breast pocket and hands it to the man, who fiddles with a grinder in his lap. The young man looks back out the window.

YOUNG MAN

Do you think maybe that's a cop car?

MAN

What?

YOUNG MAN

(pointing)

Like an undercover cop car?

The man looks.

MAN

Pfft.

He rips a small strip from a business card and rolls it up, sticks it between his teeth.

YOUNG MAN

Its windows are so--

MAN

Is it a Crown Vic?

The man pours the contents of the grinder into a rolling paper.

YOUNG MAN

No.

MAN

Look at the side mirrors. Does it have a spotlight?

YOUNG MAN

No?

MAN

Are there antennas on the trunk?

YOUNG MAN

No.

MAN

You see bars between the seats?

YOUNG MAN

No.

MAN

Are there hubcaps on the tires.

The man takes the rolled up bit of business card from his teeth puts it in the end of his cigarette. He licks it.

YOUNG MAN

Yes.

MAN

It's not a cop car.

The man looks in his rearview mirror. He hastily searches for his Febreze canister and sprays the car down as he turns on the ignition.

YOUNG MAN

What is it?

MAN

I know him.

He puts the car in reverse.

YOUNG MAN

What-- who? What happened--?

The car shoots away.

#60 "LOLLIPOP"

INT. COLLEGE CLASSROOM - DAY

A PROFESSOR (50 YO) walks around a classroom handing out exams. She places one on a YOUNG WOMAN's (20 YO) desk and continues on.

The young woman regards the exam: "Childhood Development Final". A skeptical look on her face. She picks up her pencil and begins writing when heavy THUMPING begins shaking her desk.

The YOUNG MAN (20 YO) in front of her is rocking back and forth; his foot is fidgeting. His desk is bumping into hers.

The young woman takes a breath and begins writing again when the young man lets out a long whimpering sigh. She looks up at his head.

Suddenly, the professor is at the young woman's side, holding out a basket of candy. The young woman takes a lollipop.

YOUNG WOMAN

(quietly)

Thank you.

The young woman puts the lollipop in her mouth. The young man takes a lollipop from the professor and puts it in his mouth. His foot stops tapping. He is completely quiet.

She begins taking her test again. She is finally making real progress, writing hastily, confidently. She hears a loud CRUNCH. Her desk begins shaking again. The foot is tapping

with a vengeance. The young man is whining.

The young woman takes the lollipop out of her mouth and wraps it back up as best she can. She hands it to the young man, who is surprised.

YOUNG MAN

...Thank you.

The young woman smiles and nods. She resumes her test. The young man's foot stops tapping.

CRUNCH.