

BRAIN DRAIN

by  
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FADE IN

EXT.SMALLTOWN MONTAGE - DAWN

A quaint roadsign informs us:

"YOU ARE NOW IN BEDFORD  
FALLS."

Yet the camera PANS off to reveal not quaintness but utter DEVASTATION. Burned-out cars, rubble, broken glass and smoldering fires are everywhere. The only SOUND is that of a mournful distant wind.

A fast food RESTAURANT sports but one intact golden arch.

A downtown STREET is empty and silent save for dozens of motionless auto carcasses, all stripped of anything remotely valuable. SMOKE rises from several of the blackened hulks.

A gutted and shattered appliance STORE still sports a sign that says "Liquidation Sale".

A SUPERMARKET has no intact glass remaining on its facade. The sidewalk and parking lot are strewn with the empty packaging of products from the store. Rats scurry occasionally through the debris.

SUPERED over these silent vistas of destruction are the MAIN TITLES.

EXT.NATIONAL GUARD POST MAIN GATE - DAY

As the flag is raised above the guard shack to greet the new day, a station wagon turns in and pulls up. COLONEL DODD the post commander steps out of the car as his WIFE slides over behind the wheel. She sticks her head out the window and he gives her a peck.

DODD  
Bye, honey.

MRS. DODD  
See you Monday.

Doddthrows his garment bag over his shoulder and watches as she drives off.

He then marches past the guard shack where the occupants snap to attention, saluting.

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DODD  
(saluting as he passes)  
Morning guys.

GUARD #1  
Good morning Sir.

INT. COMMAND POST OFFICES

Colonel Dodd strolls past the RECEPTION DESK where a CORPORAL busies himself with a crossword puzzle. Dodd never breaks stride as he heads toward his office.

DODD  
Mornin' Jack. Any coffee?

JACK  
Yes sir. Made it fresh yesterday.

Dodd continues in to the CENTRAL COMMAND AREA, a largish room with tables, a big map on one wall and surrounded by mini-office cubicles. Several of these are occupied by lieutenants or captains busying themselves with such activities as talking on the telephone to a girlfriend, playing "Missile Command" on the computer, and reading the National Inquirer. A radio BLARES in the background.

One officer, CAPTAIN SMOLLET is playing solitaire at a table near the door to Dodd's office. Dodd is about to enter his office when he halts behind SMOLLET.

DODD  
Captain Smollet!

Startled, Smollet rises.

SMOLLET  
Yes, Colonel?

DODD  
(pointing to the cards)

I'd play the ace.

SMOLLET  
(insulted)  
Thanks Colonel .

DODD  
Don't mention it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Dodd turns to head into his office when LIEUTENANT TAFT, who has been reading the Inquirer breaks up laughing.

TAFT  
(still laughing)

Colonel! Colonel ... you gotta see this.

He steps over and shows the paper to Dodd.

TAFT  
Right here: "'Ghost of Elvis haunts my tank', says Minnesota National Guardsman."

Dodd grabs the tabloid from Tafts hands. A phone begins ringing in the background.

DODD  
Lemme see that. Boy this really burns my butt...

SMOLLETT  
(smiling)  
What's the matter, Colonel?

The phone continues to ring.

DODD  
Look at this ... Minnesota gets *tanks* to jerk around with and all we get here is two clunky helicopters and a bunch of damned jeeps. (turning) Will somebody please get the phone?

CAPTAIN WILLENS  
Sir, it's coming from your office.  
(beat) I ... think it's the red phone, Sir.

Suddenly the sound of the phone is the only sound in the room. All eyes are on the Colonel, who hands the paper back to Taft and solemnly enters his office. He stands before the red phone a moment, then picks it up.

DODD  
Colonel Dodd. Yes Sir

Taft turns to Willens and whispers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TAFT

The Governor? Has this ever happened before?

WILLENS

Not as long as I've been here.

SMOLLET

(butting in, whispering)  
What do you think it is?

DODD

(on the phone)  
Nothing at all? How long has it been?

TAFT

(to Willens and Smollet)  
Maybe Mr. Governor isn't getting any from Mrs. Governor.

Smollet snickers. Willens shushes the other two. They all turn their attention back to Dodd.

DODD

(seriously)  
Yes sir... Yes sir... You'll have info as soon as I can get it. Yes sir, we're right on it.

He hangs up, and ponders a moment. He then steps back into the larger room. The look on his face means business.

DODD

(addressing the group)  
Anybody know anything about Bedford Falls?

A lanky LIEUTENANT pipes up.

LT. GREGG

Yes sir. I got an aunt who lives there. What do you want to know?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DODD

It seems the Governor's been getting a lot of calls. Nobody has been able to communicate with Bedford Falls in almost 36 hours. No phones, no mail, radio, TV signals, ... nothing. It's like the entire town has disappeared.

LT. GREGG

Disappeared?

SMOLLET

If they can't call in why doesn't somebody just drive there?

DODD

The main highway's blocked. Some sorta landslide I guess. Don't we have a map of the area?

Gregg pulls down a good-sized map on the wall and the group gathers around it. Gregg points to the location.

LT. GREGG

It's about a hundred miles north of here in the mountains. It's a good size town ... thirty thousand maybe. But there's no airport and only the one highway to get in or out. Pretty isolated.

TAFT

I can see how it wouldn't take much to cut them off.

GREGG

It is a nice little valley. But the surrounding mountains are pretty tough. That's why only the one road.

DODD

Captain Willens.

WILLENS

Yes sir.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

DODD

Assemble a squad of six men and take a chopper into the area to check things out. Full combat gear. Gas masks, radiation gear, the works. Ready to move out in forty-five minutes.

WILLENS

Yes sir.

Willens turns to head out the door. Dodd calls after him.

DODD

Willens! ...

WILLENS

(turns back)

Yes Colonel.

DODD

Be ready for anything.

EXT. BEDFORD FALLS - DAY

The eerie quiet of the disaster-stricken town is broken by the approach of thundering helicopter rotors. The NOISE grows as the chopper descends and lands in the middle of a deserted (but litterstrewn) street.

Tentatively the SOLDIERS file out of the machine, hardly believing the devastation that greets them.

SOLDIER #1

Would you look at this place!

SOLDIER #2

(grimacing)

Would you smell this place.

WILLENS

(pointing)

You three come with me. The rest of youguys check things out to the south Ok spread out. Let's see if we can find out what went down here.

The two groups separate and head in opposite directions.

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

B squad pokes their way through the rubble

SOLDIER #3

It's like this place got nuked, man.

SOLDIER #4

Not really. There'd be a lot more random damage. See all those smashed windows--they're all at ground level, where they could be reached easily.

SOLDIER #5 waves a Geiger counter.

SOLDIER #5

I get nothing but normal readings for background radiation.

SOLDIER #3

I don't like this, man.

EXT. SHOPPING CENTER PARKING LOT - DAY

Squad A examines the pock marked side of a building.

SOLDIER #1

Sir, this looks like a shotgun hit.

SOLDIER #2

And small arms fire over here. And looks like a .45 over here.

WILLENS

Seems like somebody got a little trigger happy.

SOLDIER #6 snaps photos of the damage.

SOLDIER #1

Judging by the smell, they musta hit something besides non-moving targets.

As the group rounds a corner they suddenly hear and see MOVEMENT and reflexively cock their weapons.

SOLDIER #3

Hey ...

(CONTINUED)

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But the movement turns out to be only that of a DOG, pawing at the entrails of a BODY. Willens attempts to shoo the animal off.

WILLENS

Go on! Get outa here.

The dog reluctantly takes off when it sees four soldiers coming its way.

As the group approaches they are forced to cover their noses to deal with the stench of rotting flesh. Willens forces himself to from the waist up. An empty handgun lies not far from its hand.

WILLENS

Wait a minute ...

He uses his foot to roll the body over on its back.

SOLDIER #2

Holy Tarzan ...

SOLDIER #6

(rushing over)

What is it?...Man! We're talkin' ugly!

Soldier #6 immediately snaps photos of the corpse, which is rather bulky and extremely hairy, its forehead sloped and its jaw protruding like some sort of missing link ...

SOLDIER #3

Relative of yours Willens?

WILLENS

Looks like some kind of Neandarthal.

SOLDIER #3

Some kind of what?

WILLENS

A cave man ... A relative of yours bonehead.

SOLDIER #6

Wait'll they see this in the Inquirer.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SOLDIER #2

Where do you suppose he came from?

A yell comes from Soldier #1 who has wandered several yards away.

SOLDIER #1

Sir ... Over here. There's another one.

The group joins him. Sure enough, its another Neandarthal.

WILLENS

More gunshot wounds ...

SOLDIER #2

Look over there, there's another one.

SOLDIER #1

And another ... Sir they're all over the place.

A call comes over Captain Willens' walkie talkie.

SOLDIER #4 V.O.

(through walkie talkie)

Squad A this is Squad B.

Willens puts the receiver to his ear.

WILLENS

Yeah this is Willens. Whadaya got?

SOLDIER #4

(V.O.)

Some sort of hairy primitive type.

EXT. ROADSIDE CHURCH GROUNDS.

Soldier #4 is on the walkie talkie standing over another Neandarthal.

WILLENS

(V.O. through walkie talkie)

Yeah, us too ... Any of 'em alive?

(CONTINUED)

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SOLDIER #4

No sir.

WILLENS

(V.O.)

Stay sharp. Let us know if you find any survivors. Over.

SOLDIER #4

Yes sir. Over.

He puts the walkie talkie away and his group continues exploring the church grounds. The church itself is not in nearly as bad a shape as some other structures.

Suddenly there is a bump and a crash that comes from inside the church and all three soldiers tense up behind their weapons.

What emerges from the building, however, is no Neandarthal monster, but a disheveled and dirty figure of a man in his late twenties.

He is STAN DRAPER. Obviously having been through hell, he wears the remnants of a sport coat and tie.

As he steps out of the church he stands dazed for a moment, staring at the soldiers but not seeing. Then, as the reality of the situation sets in he gets a huge, idiotic smile on his face.

STAN

Soldiers! ... men! Real human beings!  
Soldiers! I can't believe it!

He goes up to the nearest soldier and hugs him as the others look on in amused puzzlement.

STAN

(getting quite animated)  
Men! Real men! I'm so glad to see you guys. You can't imagine. Wait! ...  
Did you come to save me or to shoot me?

He backs off his embrace of the soldier. He doesn't give anyone a chance to answer his question, however. His joy has turned instantly to terror.

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CONTINUED: (2)

STAN

You're not gonna shoot me are you?  
After all this? Don't I get a trial or  
something? You're not gonna shoot me  
are you? You're not ...

SOLDIER #3

Nobody's gonna do anything to hurt you,  
sir. Now just ...

STAN

Oh thank God, thank God! Wait a minute  
TV!!! You guys don't watch TV do you?  
Promise me! Swear to me!

SOLDIER #5

(taking his, arm)

Sir, we need you to come along with us.

STAN

Yes. Yes!! I'll come ... Promise me  
... please promise me you don't watch  
TV. Please. Promise me.

The soldiers look at each other, shaking their heads at this pitiful  
figure.

Soldier #4 gets on his walkie talkie.

SOLDIER #4

Squad B this is Squad A. Come in.

WILLENS

(V.O.)

Come in Squad A.

SOLDIER #4

Sir, we have a survivor here. A white  
male approximately 25 years of age.  
Request permission to bring him back to  
the chopper. Over.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

WILLENS

(V.O.)

Roger Squad A. We'll meet you there at  
eleven hundred hours. Over.

Soldier #5 has been poking around inside the church. He calls out the  
front door as Soldier #4 puts away his walkie talkie.

SOLDIER #3

Hey you guys, there's a girl in here!

STAN

(to whoever will listen'  
Christine! That's Christine!

SOLDIER #4

(trying to ignore Stan)  
Is she alive?

SOLDIER #3

She's unconscious but she's breathin'.

STAN

(slowing down)  
Christine ...

SOLDIER #4

(to #3)  
Get a stretcher.

STAN

(leaning on Soldier #4)  
You've got to save her. You've got to  
...

Stan COLLAPSES in a faint. Soldier #4 looks down at him.

SOLDIER #4

Two stretchers ...

DISSOLVE

EXT. NATIONAL GUARD BASE LANDING STRIP - DAY

The returning chopper descends and lands near a waiting military  
ambulance.

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The soldiers emerge and assist medics in loading the unconscious Stan and Christine into the back of the ambulance. The doors are closed and the ambulance rushes off to the nearby base hospital.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - EVENING

Colonel Dodd enters the infirmary and meets DOCTOR BILLINGS in the hallway just outside Stan's room.

DODD  
How is he, doc?

BILLINGS  
Well, he's still out of it. But all tests so far point to a simple case of malnutrition.

DODD  
No diseases or chemicals that might explain ...

BILLINGS  
Not so far, Colonel. From what I can tell there's nothing wrong with him that a good night's sleep and a steak dinner wouldn't cure.

DODD  
What about the girl?

BILLINGS  
She's still out too. Same general symptoms but a lot of alcohol in her blood. Appears to be a real partydoll.

A matronly black NURSE pokes her head out of Stan's room and calls the doctor's attention.

NURSE He's coming around, doctor.

DODD  
(to Billings)  
Maybe we can get to the bottom of all this.

Dodd and Billings immediately rush to Stan's bedside.

INT. HOSPITAL - STAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Stan's eyelids flutter as he tosses in twilight sleep, mumbling. Suddenly he sits up in a cold sweat with a bolt and a gasp.

BILLINGS

It's all right son. You're safe.  
Everything's gonna be OK.

STAN

Who are you?

BILLINGS

(reassuringly)

I'm Dr. Billings. This is Colonel  
Dodd. You're in the state National  
Guard hospital.

Stan rubs his eyes and looks around. He calms slightly when he sees relative normalcy in his surroundings.

STAN

Was it just a nightmare? Tell me it  
was a nightmare.

DODD

You mean about Bedford Falls? I'm  
afraid not. We're hoping you can help  
us there.

STAN

Christine. Where's Christine?

BILLINGS

She's resting comfortably just down the  
hall.

Stan sighs relief at that. There is a brief silence as he tries to shake the cobwebs from his brain.

DODD

Can I get you some coffee or something  
mister... ?

STAN

Draper. Stan Draper. Yeah, coffee  
would be great.

DODD

Nurse, would you ... ?

(CONTINUED)

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NURSE  
Certainly Colonel.

She exits. But as she does so Stan glances up and notices the wall-mounted TV of a typical hospital room. The set is turned off but any sense of calm immediately vanishes from Stan's face. He begins to sweat.

DODD  
Now Mister Draper. I'm sure you'll understand that we need to ask you some questions.

STAN  
(trembling )  
The TV ...

BILLINGS  
Yes, what about it? You want to watch it?

STAN  
(shouting)  
NO! Get rid of it!

DODD  
Rid of it? It's not going to

STAN  
(getting more crazed)  
I said get rid of it!

Billings takes Stan by the shoulders trying to subdue him.

BILLINGS  
It's all right Mister Draper. Just calm down...

STAN  
I said get rid of it! Get rid of all your TV's!

He frees himself of Billings grasp, and dives at the TV set sending it CRASHING to the floor. A pair of M.P.'s, responding to the noise, enter the room and wrestle a crazed and struggling Stan back into his bed, pinning him. Colonel Dodd, annoyed, pokes his nose into Stan's face and snarls at him.

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CONTINUED: (2)

DODD

Now listen to me, Bud. I don't know who you are or where you came from but right now you're under my care until I get a few answers. And if you wanna stay on my good side I'd advise you not to be goin' around destroying government property, kapiche?

Stan calms, tries to collect his thoughts.

STAN

I'm telling you, Colonel. It's life and death. You want to know what happened to Bedford Falls? I'll give you all the answers you want. But first you've got to promise me ... You've got to order your men ... nobody's to turn on a TV till you've heard me out. Maybe I'm crazy. Maybe I'm not. But I'm not spilling anything till you tell your men!

The Colonel backs off, eyeing Stan warily. There is a tense moment of silence as the Colonel ponders his position.

DODD

(softly)

Let him loose, sergeant.

The M.P.'s hesitantly back off of Stan. Dodd continues to eye Stan as he speaks to the M.P.

DODD

Issue a general order, sergeant. All television sets on this base are to be confiscated until further notice. Effective immediately, television viewing is off limits to all personnel. Is that clear?

M.P.#1

Yes Sir.

As the sergeant exits, the nurse returns carrying a cup of coffee. She steps over the smashed TV, puzzled.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

NURSE

Somebody get tired of re-runs?

Nobody pays much attention to her. She hands the steaming cup to Stan as he sits up in the bed and clasps it to his lips.

STAN

Thanks.

DODD

Very well Mr. Draper you've got your order ...

Stan takes another sip and places the cup on the nightstand. He then reaches into his clothing and pulls out a gold chain that he wears around his neck. From it dangles a golden key.

STAN

See this key, Colonel? In a weird, twisted way this is what started it all. This little key caused all that destruction.

DODD

Mr. Draper we don't have time for games ...

STAN

Call me Stan.

BILLINGS

What is it the key to, Stan?

STAN

If I told you that right now, doctor, you'd really think I was a few bricks shy of a load.

DODD

What about all those dead creatures we found? Was it some sort of genetic engineering accident? A chemical spill ... ?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

STAN

No, no, nothing like that. Pull up a couple of chairs guys. I'm gonna have to go all the way back to the beginning. But listen close because, we're running out of time.

The Colonel and Doctor glance at each other then take seats as Stan sips the coffee and begins his story.

STAN

It was one morning about six weeks ago  
...

DISSOLVE

INT. STAN'S APARTMENT - DAY

The rude SOUND of an alarm clock bursts from somewhere on a cluttered nightstand that is covered mostly with empty Wrappers from PACO'S TACOS and an empty bottle of Tequila.

A searching hand emerges from the nearby heap of bed clothes in an attempt to silence the offending noise-maker. After several probes into the clutter the hand emerges with the clock.

A dishevelled and grimloDkingStan Draper shuts off the alarm and gazes at the clock, groaning.

There is a note taped to the front of it which reads: "Staff meeting 8:30".

STAN

(mumbling)

... not the way I'm feeling there  
isn't.

He lifts the note to reveal that the clock itself reads nearly 8:00. He leans over to replace the clock on its perch and comes face to face with a cold, half-eaten burrito. Visibly worse off, he settles back to groan in agony.

STAN

Paco, Paco What did you do to me, Paco?  
How'm I gonna go to work like this?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He lays there a moment. Strange NOISES emerge from his stomach.

STAN  
It's no use.

Slowly he rolls over and reaches for the phone as best he can. Just as his fingers touch it, though, it RINGS abruptly.

STAN  
(startled)  
Yaaah!

Annoyed, he composes himself and picks it up in the middle of the second ring.

STAN  
Hello.

STEVEN  
(telephone V.O'.) Stanley  
it's Steven.

Stan pulls the receiver away briefly in disgust and mumbles.

STAN  
(to himself)  
Oh great ...

He puts the receiver back to his ear and gets as chipper and polite as he can.

STAN  
Steve ol' boy! To what do I owe the  
honor?

INT. OFFICE - DAY

The other end of the phone line is held by STEVEN DURWOOD, Stan's lanky, tall, impeccably-dressed co-worker. He is thumbing through a Ferrari magazine as he speaks.

STEVEN  
I just wanted to call and make sure,  
Stanley, that I can count on your  
support in today's staff meeting.

INT. STAN'S APARTMENT (INTERCUT)

STAN

Staff meeting. Well, that's just what I was about to support? What kind of support. What are you cooking up?

STEVEN

Oh Stanley don't be so suspicious! It's just that since today's meeting promises to be such an important one I ...

STAN

(even more suspicious)  
Oh, and what makes this one so important, Steve?

STEVEN

(correcting)  
Steven.

Stan belches in discomfort.

STAN

(rolling his eyes)  
Steven.

STEVEN

Well you know, since there's every reason to believe they're going to be appointing myself as the new account executive. I just wanted to make sure our new working relationship gets off on the right ...

STAN

(laughing nervously)  
Huh? Wait a minute. You? Account Exec? What happened to Bill?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEVEN

You really don't know, do you? Well it seems, Stanley, that our dear supervisor William is no longer with us. I can't believe you didn't hear this yet. Anyway naturally we must assume that they'll be promoting from within and of course their first choice would have to be me ... Stanley?

INT. STAN'S APARTMENT

The phone dangles from the nightstand as we see through the window, Stan's red Porsche convertible roaring into the street, tires squealing.

EXT.-FREEWAY - DAY

Stan attempts to simultaneously dress himself and steer while rushing into the city as fast as his wheels can haul him.

STAN

(V.O.)

Paco's or no Paco's there's no way that twit was gonna make himself my boss without a fight.

Buttoning his shirt is difficult enough, but the tie really poses a challenge.

EXT. - GREY & GREYER BUILDING - DAY

Stan's car pulls into the lot of the twelve story building whose top is emblazoned with a huge plastic sign reading "Grey & Greyer Advertising".

Stan has conquered the coat and tie. But as he pulls his car into his space, he steps out to reveal his figure still lack pants. He grabs them from the back seat and pulls them on in a stumbling trot.

INT. - GREY & GREYER OFFICES

The elevator doors open and out pours a ruffled Stan Draper into the posh reception area, obviously in a hurry.

Fending off several "good mornings" and "about-that-storyboard,-Stan's" he disappears straight into the boardroom.

INT. BOARDROOM

As Stan enters the room and the door closes behind him there is an imposing silence. About a dozen junior and senior EXECUTIVES sit around the large conference table where there is one seat open. Stan, with his corduroy sportcoat over a Hawaiian shirt, is the only one in the room not wearing a gray suit.

As the door closes behind Stan, all eyes turn from the clock on the wall, (which reads 8:36) to Stan.

The man standing at the other end of the table, LEO GREY, addresses Stan sarcastically.

GREY

So nice of you to join us, Mr. Draper.

STAN

(forces a smile)

and it's so nice to be here too, Leo.

Grey lets it pass. Stan slinks toward his seat next to Steven.

STEVEN

(for all to hear)

Stanley? Did you sleep in those clothes or what?

STAN

(straight faced)

Why yes I did, Steve. Did you pass away in those?

GREY

All right, all right, let's get started. There are a couple of major items we need to cover this morning. As many of you already know, Bill Stone is no longer with us, which leaves quite a hole for us not only in the executive level, but as you know, Bill was also one of the most creative minds this firm has ever had. He will most certainly be missed. Now I'm sure we all ...

Grey continues as Stan turns to Steven.

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CONTINUED:

STAN  
 (whispers)  
 What'd he die of? Heart attack?

STEVEN  
 (whispering)  
 Die? Who said he died?

STAN  
 Well what then? Where'd he go?

STEVEN  
 Saturday he packed it all in and ran  
 off to Oregon to be with his guru.

STAN  
 (shocked)  
 You mean the divine Llama ...

STEVEN  
 Llama Rama. Yes. Are you surprised,  
 Stanley?

STAN  
 Well no, it just seems so sudden ...

Stan settles back from the shock as they both turn their attention back to the meeting.

GREY  
 ... Now as you all know the policy of  
 this company is to promote from within.  
 However, you also realize that it's  
 going to take quite a lot to fill Bill  
 Stone's shoes ...

Stan gets a sudden cramp and holds his stomach.

STAN  
 (V-O.)  
 If he didn't make this brief, something  
 was gonna get filled all right...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

STEVEN

Excuse me, Leo, ... But doesn't it make good sense to promote someone directly from Bill's department, someone who worked closely with him and knows the in's and out's of his accounts.

Several of the execs. around the table roll their eyes in disgust.

GREY

(condescending)

I'm sure we're all aware of the er ... working relationship you had with Bill Stone, Steve.

STEVEN

(correcting...under his  
breath)

Steven ...

GREY

But this is not a decision to be made rashly. And there is also Mr. Draper, who has similar qualifications.

Stan struggles a smile as he continues to squirm in discomfort.

GREY

Nevertheless your department is currently without a head, and this condition obviously cannot persist for long, especially with some of the new accounts coming on board. And that brings us to the second major item on the agenda, an account we've just been awarded...

STEVEN

(getting assertive)

Excuse me, Leo, but are you or aren't you going to make that executive appointment at this time?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

GREY

Oh for God's sake stow it, Steve! I'm getting to that. Sandra could you get the lights please?

Steven sits back, pouting. SANDRA, one of the executives, snaps off the room lights as Grey touches a button. A bookcase behind him opens to reveal a projection screen, and a slide projector snaps on to reveal a rather awful ad for ANIMUSK, COLOGNE FOR MEN. Several other slides follow, all containing more lowbrow layouts for Animusk. As the slides progress, there are titters from around the table.

GREY

Perhaps you can get an idea from these slides why the manufacturer dismissed their previous agency, McMann and Tate.

EXECUTIVE #1

I saw a market study for Animusk, that showed that 93% of the product was purchased by people from downscale demographic groups.

EXECUTIVE #2

(inventing a slogan)  
... "the scent of the low-life."

Stan is also amused.

STAN

I always thought the stuff was only used redneck cowboys and aging disco ducks.

EXECUTIVE #3

(laughing)  
... those with single digit I.Q.'s

STEVEN

I think you all must be mistaken ... I use Animusk ...

The entire room breaks up in laughter.

Except for Grey. He shouts above the giggles, fuming.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

GREY  
 (loudly)  
 May I remind you people that we're in this business to sell product! Did it ever occur to any of you that perhaps the reason we've been awarded the Animusk account is to change its image; to persuade the upscale consumer to buy the stuff?

The laughter vanishes.

GREY  
 I don't care if it's "Eau de Barnyard." We've been given a free reign to come up with a new campaign and sell this junk and by god that's what's going to happen if I have to send every single one of you door to door.

There is a silence all of a sudden. Various subdued voices are heard from around the table.

EXECUTIVE #3  
 Quite right, Leo.

EXECUTIVE #4  
 We're behind you, Leo.

Grey looks around at all the somber, gutless faces. He takes a breath.

GREY  
 I'm going to assign this account to what was Bill Stone's department. Since there is no account executive at this time I'm going to use this opportunity to select Bill Stone's replacement.

Stan and Steven eye each other.

GREY  
 Steve.

STEVEN  
 (struggles to suppress saying "Steven".)  
 ' er ... yes Leo?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

GREY  
Mister Draper...

STAN  
(still in discomfort)  
Yes Leo.

GREY  
Each of you has approximately the same background with this company. Both of you had the opportunity to learn from Bill Stonels tutelage. Here's your chance to prove it. Each of you will create and produce a new 30 second television spot for Animusk Cologne.

There are eyebrows raised around the table.

STEVEN  
(somewhat disappointed)  
Leo, isn't that a bit extravagant. I mean, two complete commercials?

GREY  
Yes, it's a bit irregular. But The investment is well worth it in finding a good account executive. In other words, whichever spot proves the most effective will carry its creator up the corporate ladder to fill the vacancy left by Bill Stone's departure. Any questions?

There is general muttering around the table as the concept of the unusual contest sinks in. Steven, of course, is visibly upset that he didn't get the promotion directly. Stan's gastric problem is coming to a head. (Luckily the sound of CHURNING and GURGLING is masked by the sounds of people at the table.)

STEVEN  
(standing)  
Well ... uh ... no questions, Leo. On behalf of Stanley and myself I'd just like to express...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

GREY  
 (terse)  
 Yes I know, Steve. Meeting's adjourned  
 ...

Those words come none to soon for Stan as he rushes out of the board room and is gone almost before the others have risen from their seats.

INT. HALL OUTSIDE BOARDROOM

Stan heads two doors down the hall toward a sign that reads "MEN". A MAN in a grey suit has just entered as Stan dashes to the door, which snaps closed as Stan arrives at it. A sign is emblazoned on the door: "EXECUTIVE WASHROOM".

Stan tries the handle and finds that it is, of course, locked. A small emblem above the lock reads "authorized personnel only". He smashes his fist against the door in utter frustration and rushes off toward another door labelled "STAIRS".

INT. STAIRWELL

Stan rapidly descends what seems like an endless series of steps and flies out of the door leading to the next floor.

INT. LOWER FLOOR HALLWAY

Stan quickly glances around, finds the men's room, and dives for it. He bursts into the restroom and is gone from our sight.

INT. GREY'S OFFICE

Grey wanders in and speaks to his SECRETARY, MARCIA.

GREY  
 Marcia, have those hot tub brochures  
 come in yet?

She motions toward his inner office with her eyes signalling that he's got a visitor.

GREY  
 Huh? Oh.

He steps into his inner office to find VICTOR GRISWOLD a greying polyester-clad gentleman waiting from him. Grey puts on his best salesman smile.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GREY  
Mister Griswold. What a surprise!

GRISWOLD  
Call me Victor, Leo. Here I brought  
you a present.

He hands Grey a bottle of Animusk.

GRISWOLD  
(winking)  
One splash of this and the chicks'll be  
all over you.

GREY  
Well, thanks Victor But you already sent  
me a case.

GRISWOLD  
Oh, well, use it for paint thinner then.  
That's what I do.

GREY  
So uh, to what do I owe the pleasure.

GRISWOLD  
Just came by to look the place over,  
Leo. Gotta see the hole I'm pouring my  
money into.

Griswold starts wandering around Grey's office, checking it out.

GREY  
I uh, come to think of it I'm glad you  
did Victor. There's some people I'd like  
you to meet. Can I get you a drink or  
something?

INT. LOWER FLOOR HALLWAY

Stan emerges from the men's room, a somewhat calmer look on his face and  
with a less frantic demeanor.

He takes a package of Pepto-Bismol tablets from his coat pocket, pops one  
into his mouth, and takes the stairs back up to his floor.

INT. STAIRWELL

Stan makes the long climb.

INT. OFFICE LEVEL HALLWAY

Ambling down the hallway toward his office, Stan can now greet some of his co-workers who pass him en route.

ED, a kid from the mail room passes him.

ED

Stan! Heard you might be movin' up.  
Go for it, man.

STAN

We'll give it a shot...

ED

(remembering)  
Hey, I got you this for your  
collection.

He hands Stan a pair of wind-up dentures that chatter away merrily.

STAN

(sincere)  
They're beautiful! Thanks, Ed.

ED

You bet. See ya' around.

Stan smiles and keeps moving.

LARRY, a bearded art department type pokes his head out of an office.

LARRY

Stan. I'll have those storyboards in  
about an hour. I could sure use your  
input on the copy when you get the  
chance.

STAN

When you're ready just "Come on down."

Stan notices a display in Larry's office window. it consists of a doll nailed to a piece of wood with a yellow sign attached that reads "Child on Board".

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STAN  
(with a wink)  
Nice touch.

LARRY  
Good luck on the Animusk thing. If  
there's anything I can do ...

STAN  
I'll keep you in mind. Thanks.

Larry is gone and is quickly replaced by GLORIA, a bubbly redhead.

GLORIA  
Stan you know we're getting the four-  
by-fives on the Baker job back today.  
Client wants to ...

STAN  
I'll take care of it.

GLORIA  
(smiles)  
You're a doll. (whispers) Can't wait  
to see what you come up with on  
Animusk.

She blows him a kiss as she heads off down the hall.

STAN  
(to himself)  
Yeah ... me too.

INT. STAN'S OFFICE

What greets Stan as he enters, however, causes his jaw to drop.

STEVEN  
Welcome home Stanley! I guess we're  
roomies.

Steven Durwood is unpacking things from a box on his newly-installed  
desk. He is currently placing his awards on the wall.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STAN  
 (annoyed)  
 Steve! What's going on? This is my  
 office. I already have to step outside  
 to change my mind...

He sets the wind-up teeth down on his desk. They begin to chatter.

STEVEN  
 I know, Stanley, I know. I'm making a  
 sacrifice too, goodness knows.

He glances at Stan's less-than-stylish half of the tiny cubicle,  
 including the chattering teeth.

STAN  
 Don't give me that crap. What happened  
 to your office?

STEVEN  
 Steven! My name is Steven.

STAN  
 (reading )  
 Good Steve.

STEVEN  
 (fuming)  
 If it wasn't for ... Leo!

Unnoticed by Stan, who's trying to ignore Steven's raving, Grey and Victor  
 Griswold are standing in the doorway of the tiny office. There is brief  
 silence. Stan puts the comic book down.

STAN  
 (to Steven) Leo?! Forget Leo. If it  
 wasn't for Bill, Leo would've canned  
 your butt ages ago. Now he's so pre-  
 occupied landing these loser accounts  
 he ... What are you grinning about?

Stan turns to discover Grey who shoots him a quick annoyed glare.

STAN (sheepish )  
 Oh ... hi Leo.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Grey resumes his role of tour guide.

GREY

Boys I want you to meet Victor  
Griswold, president and CEO of the  
Animusk corporation.

Stan and Steven both stand to greet the visitor. Stan offers a nervous smile. Steven siezes the opportunity and steps over to shake Griswold's hand.

STEVEN

Mister Griswold! It's such a  
pleasure.I'm really looking forward to  
this project,sir.

GREY

Victor, this is Steve ...

STEVEN

Steven ...

GREY

Durwood, one of our top creatives that  
I'm assigning to the Animusk project.

GRISWOLD

How do you do.

STEVEN

(enthused)

If I may say so sir, as a personaluser  
of Animusk I see the essence of our  
goal as being to find a way to  
communicate that specialaura one gets  
from. using Animusk. I'm sure you're  
conscious of it, sir. I just feel that  
it's... it's not so much a mere  
cologne. Animusk is more gestalt,a  
state of being, a way of life if you  
will.

Griswold is completely snowed: He's all ears.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

GRISWOLD

A way of life! Yes! That's exactly the way I've always felt about it. It's something I never could get across to those people at McMann and Tate.

Stan pops another Pepto-Bismol tablet into his mouth as Griswold turns toward Grey.

GRISWOLD

Looks like you've got yourself a good man, Leo. I'm looking forward to seeing what Steven here comes up with.

Steven beams as Stan makes faces of disgust behind Griswold's back.

STEVEN

Thank you sir.

GREY

And uh, this is Stan Draper, Victor.

As Griswold turns, Stan's silent gagging turns instantly into a cheery smile and a hearty handshake.

STAN

Pleased to meet you, sir.

GREY

Stan'll also be working on Animusk.

Griswold eyes the pile that is Stan's desk. While not terribly messy, it is a veritable monument to kitsche culture. Comic books, hula girls, and pink flamingos are among his treasures.

A sign on his bulletin board reads "He who dies with the most toys wins."

Stan himself echoes the theme. Though he does sport a coat and tie, the tie has a hand-painted cowboy on it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

GRISWOLD

Are you sure, Leo?

GREY

Well, Stan brings a certain,...alternative perspective to a project. You'll see.

GRISWOLD

(turning to exit)

Whatever you say, Leo. But just between us, I think I know who's going to be the class part of this act.

GREY

(uneasy)

Uh, right. Let me show you the art department, Victor.

Grey puts a hand on Griswold's shoulder to shepherd him out. Stan tries to get their attention.

STAN

Mr. Griswold I...

From the look Grey give him, Stan realizes it's a lost battle.

STAN

It's been nice meeting you.

GRISWOLD

(coldly)

Yeah(then to Steven.) I'm counting on you boys, now. Knock my socks off!

STEVEN

Absolutely sir.

Griswold exits, followed closely by Grey.

STEVEN

(calling after) ... we're terrific sock knockers.

He chortles idiotically at his own joke. Stan rolls his eyes and flops back into his chair. He grabs a comic book, turns on his radio, (which begins blaring "Rama Lama Ding Dong,") and puts his feet up, sulking.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

STEVEN

Stanley, do we really need that Neandarthal gibberish? ... And would you please take your feet off the desk.? Stan can't take it any more.

STAN

Listen, Your Snootiness This is my office and this is my desk and I'll do whatever I jolly well like with it. And if you don't like it...

Hearing himself he hesitates, deciding it's not worth it.

STAN

Aaah!

Stan turns back to his desk and reaches for the phone.

STEVEN

(smiles)

"Aaah" what? Come on Stanley. Don't you even have enough imagination to make a proper threat?

STAN

(VOICE OVER)

I'd remembered my father's advice to never engage in a battle of wits with someone who is only half armed. Besides, I needed to hear a friendly voice.

He dials a four digit extension.

STEVEN

Well Stanley?

STAN

(his back to Steven)

Blow it out your Gestalt, Steve.

Steven finally lets it drop and returns to tidying up his desk area.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

RECEPTIONIST  
(on telephone)  
Research department.

STAN  
Hi Madeline. Could I speak to  
Christine please?

RECEPTIONIST  
One moment.

As Stan waits for Christine to pick up the line, he glances back over at Steven, who has just finished installing a large painting on the wall directly behind his desk. It is a portrait of himself, pompously sitting behind a large desk.

Stan shakes his head in disbelief.

CHRISTINE  
(over telephone)  
Hello.

STAN  
Hey Beautiful. Recovered from Friday  
night yet?

There is a loud CLICK as the phone on the other end is hung up. Stan is somewhat puzzled but accepts his fate stoically.

STAN  
(V.O.)  
I knew then it was gonna be a Mondayto  
end all Mondays.

While Steven is admiring and adjusting his painting, Stan steals the small vase of FLOWERS from Steven's desk and head out of his office and into the:

CORRIDOR

We follow Stan as he hurries past several offices and lunges for a closing elevator.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (7)

STAN  
(V.O.)  
So Christine was on my case too. That was all I needed. But we hadn't had any arguments recently; I hadn't forgotten her birthday; I had even been nice to her stupid cat the last time I'd seen her.

INT. ELEVATOR

Stan pushes the button for the third floor.

STAN  
(V.O.)  
So heaven only knew why I was in the doghouse this time.

INT. RESEARCH DEPARTMENT RECEPTION AREA.

Stan exits the elevator, flowers in hand, and speaks to MADELINE, the receptionist, a spinsterish woman in her late forties.

STAN  
Madeline, I need to see Christine.

MADELINE  
I don't know if she wants to see you.

STAN  
Be a sweetheart and get me in would you?

He makes sure she sees the flowers.

MADELINE  
I'll see what I can do.

She presses the intercom button.

MADELINE  
Christine, you have a delivery.

CHRISTINE  
(over intercom)  
Thanks Madeline. Send it in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Stan smiles, makes his way around the desk, gives Madeline a peck on the cheek, and hands her a single flower from the vase.

STAN  
You're an angel, Madeline.

He heads through the big door labeled LABORATORY "A".

INT. CHRISTINE'S LAB

CHRISTINE HIMMEL, a cute, extremely bright young woman, wearing glasses and a lab coat sits at her desktop computer terminal which is against one wall of the large laboratory. Electronic gear, charts, chemistry apparatus and small animal cages fill the room.

Christine looks up from her keyboard to find Stan, clutching the bouquet, looking as repentant as he can.

Christine tries to stay angry at him but the flowers make it impossible.

CHRISTINE  
Am I still speaking to you?

STAN  
(shrugs)  
I dunno . Will you ever forgive me?  
I'll never do it again-Promise.

Christine is forced to laugh at this pathetic figure. She takes the flowers, smells them and smiles.

CHRISTINE  
Same old Stan. You're bluffing. You really have no idea why I'm mad at you, do you?

STAN  
Well I'm sure it's...uh...no.

Christine is both amused and exasperated.

CHRISTINE  
The Picasso exhibit, Stan!

STAN  
What about it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHRISTINE

Last night was the last night! It's been here in town for three months and you've been promising to take me ever since it opened. You know what it meant to me!

STAN

(knows now he blew it)  
Oh geez ... Christine I'm sorry. You know I've been so busy with ...

CHRISTINE

(sulking)  
Now it's gone on tour around the country.

There is a pause.

STAN

(thinking)  
Where's it going next?

CHRISTINE

San Francisco I think. What's the difference?

She tears the Picasso exhibit poster from her bulletin board.

STAN

(brightening)  
How about if I still take you?

CHRISTINE

(resolved)  
Oh Stan thats too far.

STAN

I mean it. Yours truly will personally escort the mountain to Mohammed. I'm up for a promotion in a few weeks and when I get it, you and I will celebrate in the city of the Golden Gate. What do you say?

CHRISTINE

Promotion? Stan that's wonderful!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

STAN

Well, don't open the champagne yet.  
It's... I need to talk about it. You  
wanna get some lunch or something?

CHRISTINE

(shakes her head and  
smiles)

I don't know how you do it, Stan. I'm  
supposed to be hurt and furious with  
you and here you are taking me to  
lunch.

She removes her lab coat and hangs it on a hook.

CHRISTINE

Where do you want to go?

STAN

Any place but Paco's.

They head out.

EXT. SIDEWALK CAFE - DAY

CHRISTINE

So it's just between you and Steve  
Durwood?

STAN

Yeah. The putz. The guy drives me  
nuts! Like sand in your shoes ... And  
on top of it I get to share an office  
with him too. So it's more like sand  
in my trunks-- rubs you raw in all the  
wrong places.

CHRISTINE

And all you've got to do is make a  
better commercial than him?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STAN

Well, unfortunately the man--and I use the term loosely--he's got a certain sense of style some people find appealing. But if I don't win this thing I'll be working for a guy who's a cross between Mr. Wipple and ring around the collar.

CHRISTINE

You can do better than him, Stan. I've seen you.

STAN

It's not just that I want to beat out Durwood. Sure, that's important. But it's more than that.

CHRISTINE

Being an executive\*has big responsibilities

STAN

Huh? No it's not that.

CHRISTINE

What then?

STAN

The sacred key!

CHRISTINE

The what?

STAN

The key to the executive washroom! Symbol of power, salvation, and the endless humiliation of having to tramp down threeflights of stairs just to use the can.

CHRISTINE

(smiling in disbelief)  
Stan, come on ...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

STAN

(leaning forward)

I'm telling you, Christine. That key  
... that token ... The day I possess it  
will be the turning point in our lives.

Christine turns away, gathering her thoughts.

CHRISTINE

Stan! I wish you could hear yourself. I  
can't believe you get such a big kick  
out of such petty aspirations. You  
want a promotion just for its own sake?  
That's hardly any different from your  
buddy Durwood.

STAN

I don't see any reason to get vicious  
...

CHRISTINE

Stan, for such a talented guy I'd think  
you'd have some sort of goals beyond  
banal creature comforts.

STAN

(defensive)

Like what if I may ask?

CHRISTINE

(her voice raising)

Art ... Literature, religion-making the  
world better. Something besides a stupid  
bathroom key!

Her last phrase brings turned heads and odd stares from nearby tables.  
They are both a bit embarrassed.

INT. CHRISTINE'S LAB

Stan escorts Christine back into the lab.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STAN

Well, what about you? A person with all the degrees you've got, working for an ad agency?! How come you're not out there curing cancer or...

CHRISTINE

Stan, that's not fair. You know this was a job I had to take when all my grants fell through. Besides, I'm doing what I can ...

STAN

Like finding out if people prefer Whizzo II over brand X?

CHRISTINE

(defensive)

All right, so I do the demographic studies and market surveys. That's what they hired me for. But I at least try to squeeze in some real research whenever I get the chance.

Stan raises his hands in surrender.

STAN

Okay Dr. Schweitzer. I apologize. So what's your latest then?

CHRISTINE

Don't patronize me, Stan.

Stan feigns exasperation.

STAN

(coy)

Did it ever occur to you Christine dear, that I might be genuinely interested in your life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness?

He tries to get close. She smiles, and calms a bit.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CHRISTINE  
(embarrassed)

I'm sorry ... Here, take a look at  
this experiment over here. I was just  
analyzing the data this morning.

She seems unaware of Stan's attempted advances as she turns to show Stan  
a peculiar setup of a rat cage with a video screen comprising one of the  
cage walls and small loudspeakers on two of the others.

STAN  
(smiling)

What're you doing? Turning rats into  
couch potatoes? Wanna know what Pixie  
and Dixie think of "Love Connection?"

CHRISTINE  
You're not too far off. I've been  
testing the effects of specific  
combinations of audio and video  
frequencies on rats.

STAN  
Frequencies?

CHRISTINE  
Uh huh. We put up an image on the  
screen that flickers at a certain rate.  
And simultaneously we pipe varying  
audio tones through the speakers.

STAN  
Not exactly Masterpiece Theater. Why  
don't you just show 'em reruns of Rat  
Patrol?

CHRISTINE  
Very funny ... Anyway, after exposing  
them to this controlled sensory  
stimulation, we put them in this maze  
over here and time how long it takes  
them to get to the food at the other  
end.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

STAN

Watching TV always makes me hungry.  
What did you expect them to do?

CHRISTINE

I didn't really know. I just knew that  
all of us are bombarded with audio  
visual stimuli throughout our lives and  
I thought it was time some of the  
effects were quantified.

STAN

So did they dash out of the room for a  
sandwich when the commercials came on?

CHRISTINE

Hardly. Take a look at this chart.

She slips a small floppy disk into her computer and a graph appears on  
the screen.

CHRISTINE

This plots the average performance of  
the rats in the maze in seconds against  
the frequencies of stimuli here on the  
left. Now if you notice there is a  
tremendous dip right here at this  
combination of audio and video input.

STAN

(intrigued but puzzled) So?

CHRISTINE

So that means that one specific  
combination of frequencies caused the  
rats' performance in the maze to be  
markedly slower. I thought it might  
have been a statistical fluke so I ran  
more tests with that combination.

STAN

And?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

CHRISTINE

Not only did it slow them down but the more they were exposed to the stimuli, the slower they progressed until finally they didn't move at all. Physically they were perfectly healthy, maybe even healthier than before. But it's as if that special combination of sensory input actually lowered their I.Q.'s.

STAN

Maybe they just don't like T.V.

CHRISTINE

I don't-think so, because just the audio or just the video has no effect. The combination produces stupid rats.

STAN

Sounds handy. Ever think of trying it on humans?

CHRISTINE

(impatient)  
Stan, don't be silly.

STAN

(backing off and kidding)  
Didn't you ever want to be head of your class?

CHRISTINE

(annoyed)  
I was the head of my class.

Stan wipes the smirk off his face when he sees she means business. He gets close to her.

STAN

(snuggling)  
All right, professor. Just tell me what it takes to be teacher's pet.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

CHRISTINE

You already are, Stan. You know that. I just want you to put your potential to good use. Stop looking for short cuts and try to have a little real ambition...

Stan puts his hands on her waist.

STAN

Isn't it a bit early in the day for heavy philosophical discussions?

CHRISTINE

Stan, I'm trying to be serious.

Stan kisses her neck.

STAN

So am I.

Their heads are very close. She gently touches the end of his nose with her finger.

CHRISTINE

(softly)

All I'm saying is look beyond the end of your nose, Stan. Being a corporate executive is more than a few little priveleges. It's a position of ... well, power. And like all power it can either be used to better yourself and your world or it can be used for...

He kisses her lips gently. Her cool intellectualism melts away and she is soon returning his kiss with passion.

The intercom buzzes rudely. Christine pulls away from Stan and speaks into the speaker:

CHRISTINE

Yes?

MADELINE

(over intercom)

Christine I have some questions on these purchase orders.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

Christine straightens her rumpled clothing.

CHRISTINE

Okay, I'll be right there. Excuse me a minute Stan.

STAN

I'll keep my bunson burning.

She steps out to speak with Madeline, leaving Stan alone with his thoughts, staring at the computer screen.

STAN

(V.O.)

We'd been seeing each other for nearly five months now. It seemed like we had something pretty good going. But this wasn't the first time I'd heard that little "real ambition" speech. I always hated that. But I was beginning to wonder if maybe she wasn't right. Who knows? Maybe I was aiming a little low; maybe I should be thinking bigger...

CAMERA MOVES IN close on Stan's eyes.

STAN

(V.O.)

That was when it hit me. An idea so radical, so ambitious it was certain to convince Grey that I was his man and get Christine off my back.

INT. RESEARCH DEPT. RECEPTION AREA - DAY

Christine is huddled over Madeline's desk looking at papers when Stan emerges from the lab.

CHRISTINE

Stan, I'm sorry, I...

Stan grabs her, kisses her, and, whirling around, heads towards the elevator smiling. He calls back over his shoulder:

STAN

You're gonna be proud of me ...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He can then be heard whistling "San Francisco Open Your Golden Gate" as he enters the elevator and its doors close.

Christine and Madeline watch him go.

CHRISTINE

You think he'll ever grow up?

MADELINE

What would you ever do if he did?

Christine looks at Madeline. She never really considered it that way.

MONTAGE - MAKING THE COMMERCIALS

In a classically-dissolving montage sequence we see images layered one upon another as industrial MUSIC pounds.

1. Storyboards are drawn--lots of markers and color.
2. Steven erects a partition between his desk and Stan's, ensuring "privacy".
3. Casting-(Steven's) Painfully-chic women and men stand under the lights before a video camera. Steven gesticulates.
4. Casting-(Stan's) Dwarfs, Cowboys, poodles and hula girls are among the oddities parading before a cheerful Stan.
5. Wardrobe-A wardrobe mistress brings several hanger's full of samples behind the partition to show Steven, carefully making sure nearby Stan doesn't get a peak. Stan, however, is too intent on his phone conversation to care much.

STAN

Yeah, fourteen of 'em, right. And I need three ballerinas with chainsaws and a couple of dozen Mr. Potatoheads. Yes, a couple dozen ... Of course I'm serious ... By Wednesday.

Stan and the wardrobe mistress peek out at Stan from behind the partition in disbelief.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

6. Huge stage lights are snapped on. 7. Stan discusses a scene with a DIRECTOR on the set. 8. Cameras roll, dollies dolly, smoke machines churn. 9. Diamond necklaces are placed around pale gaunt feminine shoulders. 10. Film is cut, spliced, projected 11. Steven discusses things in a screening room with a crew of two MEN and a WOMAN, all dressed at least as pretentiously as Steven. 12. Musicians play, violinists and oboes for Steven. 13. Saxophones and kazoos for Stan. 14. Technicians toil over a large audio-mix board. 15. Hundreds of buttons and monitors flicker in an elaborate video editing suite. 16. Video tape machines roll 17. Steven nods in approval as he views an image. 18. Stan points out something to a video technician. 19. A video cassette is handed to Steven--He smiles and shakes the hand of the person delivering it. 20. Similarly, a pair of cassettes are handed over to Stan as the MUSIC comes to a brassy fanfare ending we abruptly CUT TO:

INT. LEO GREY'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY

Stan and Steven, each clutching a videocassette sit opposite each other on the posh couches in Leo's waiting area. Each tries to out-chill the other in his lack of nervousness.

STEVEN

(after a pause)

Well, Stanley, our futures hinge on this screening.

STAN

Thanks for the information, Steve.

STEVEN

I ... hope you won't feel any the worse towards me after this meeting.

STAN

Why Steve I don't think that would ever be possible.

STEVEN

(relieved)

I'm glad you feel that way, Stanley.

The SECRETARY'S phone buzzes. She picks it up.

SECRETARY

Yes Leo ... All right.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She turns to Stan and Steven.

SECRETARY

Leo will see you now. Good luck.

Both, of them rise. Steven offers his hand to Stan.

STEVEN

May the best man win.

STAN

No question about it.

He shakes Steven's hand, but wipes it on his trousers as he follows him into Leo's office.

INT. GREY'S OFFICE

Grey rises from his desk as the two enter.

GREY

Boys! Come on in. Are you ready for this? (winks) Can I get either of you anything to drink?

STEVEN

No thank you, Leo.

STAN

No thanks Leo. I think I can speak for both of us in saying we've been looking forward to this for some time.

GREY

Well, let's get on with it then. Who's first?

STAN AND STEVEN

(unison)

He is.

Grey laughs, reaches into his pocket for a coin.

GREY

All right, I get the idea. We'll do it sportsman-like. Call it in the air, Steve.

He flips the coin.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEVEN

Tails.

GREY

It's heads. You're up first, Durwood.

Grey punches a button on his desk and the windows darken, a set of shutters slides open to reveal a large-screen monitor, as a VCR emerges from a cabinet.

Grey then takes the single chair centered in front of the screen while Steven inserts his cassette in the machine. Stan gloats a smile at Steven and sits in a chair to the side.

INSERT-TV SCREEN-STEVEN'S SPOT

What appears on the screen is a lush but conventionally slick-andsexy production. Diamond-laden bimbos with sultry looks, highheels, leopardskin tights, and albino wolfhounds slink across the screen for thirty seconds.

When the screen goes dark Grey turns to a sweating Steven.

GREY

You produced this, Steve?

STEVEN

Steven, sir. Yes I did.

GREY

Bravo Steve, Bravo!

Steven lightens up.

STEVEN

Thank you, Leo. You know I really appreciate the ...

GREY

All right Draper. You've got a tough act to follow.

Steven ejects his cassette from the machine and gives Stan a snide smile as he goes to take his seat. Stan cringes and inserts his cassette.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

INSERT- TV SCREEN - STAN'S SPOT

Stan's production consists of a series of rapidly-cut, seemingly unrelated and very bizarre images. It is an arresting pastiche of surreal kitsche that only mentions the product in the last three of its thirty seconds.

BACK TO SCENE

Grey sits transfixed, almost in disbelief. Steven, noting Grey's reaction, struggles to-keep a straight face.

When the screen goes dark, Grey sits motionless for a moment. He then swivels his chair to face Stan. There is an extremely tense silence. Stan doesn't flinch, however.

STAN

I know just what you're thinking, Leo.  
You're thinking it's the most god-awful  
mess you've ever seen on the screen.

GREY

Stan, I...I can't show this to  
Griswold.

Steven is grinning.

STAN

It's ok, it's ok. I just want to say  
one word to you, Leo  
"Guaranteed."That's what this spot has  
to offer. It may not be entertaining.  
It may not even be art. But I  
guarantee you Leo, it will sell Animusk  
cologne.

GREY

Stanley...

STAN

And that's why I'm asking you Leo, not  
to make the biggest mistake of your  
life. I'm asking you not to pass  
judgement on this spot from just a gut  
reaction because frankly, Leo, I don't  
like it either.

Grey is beginning to be intrigued.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

STAN

That's right. I can't stand to watch it. But it's not what I like or what you like even that matters, is it Leo? It's whether or not the spot moves product off the shelves. That's the bottom line. That's what you taught all of us, Leo. That's why I'm asking you to test the spot, Leo. Test both spots. If Steve's spot comes back with higher test scores I'll gladly throw in the proverbial towel. But I'm telling you Leo. You'll never forgive yourself if you pass up an opportunity like this. What do you say, Leo?

Steven doesn't look as smug any more.

GREY

(scratching his head) Lord knows I've got enough invested in these spots already ...

STEVEN

So why waste any more on testing? Right Leo?

Grey glances at Steven. He sighs.

GREY

All right, Stan. Go ahead and test them.

STEVEN

What?!

GREY

It's the only fair way, Steve. Who knows, maybe Stan's got something revolutionary here. We ought to at least be willing to see what an auditorium full of guinea pigs has to say.

STAN

You won't regret it Leo.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

STEVEN

But Leo ...

GREY

Don't whine at me, Steve.

Steven looks as if he may cry. Stan beams with accomplishment.

INT. STAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Stan and Steven return from their meeting with Grey. Steven goes behind his partition and sulks. Stan calls over the wall.

STAN

Hey, no hard feelings, huh Steve?

STEVEN

As you would say, Stanley, the fat lady hasn't sung yet.

STAN (coy)

Why Steve, I didn't know you were that interested in women fat or otherwise.

STEVEN

Drop dead.

Stan notices someone passing by the doorway.

STAN

Gloria!

She re-appears at the door.

GLORIA

What's up Stan honey?

STAN

Gloria, dear, we've got a couple of spots we need to get in for testing right away. Think you can take care of it.

GLORIA

Sure thing. You got 'em here?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STAN  
(hollering over the wall)  
Steve, buddy. You got your, uh ...  
epic?

Steve emerges, cassette in hand. He refuses to allow Stan to even touch it, however, and hands it directly to Gloria.

GLORIA  
And is that the other one?

She points to the cassette in his hand.

STAN  
Uh, no, just a second.

He takes a key from his pocket and unlocks his desk drawer. He opens it, pulls out a cassette and hands it to Gloria. It has a small red sticker on it.

GLORIA  
"Encoded?" What's that mean?

STAN  
(fumbling)  
It's uh ... technical stuff... a new  
technique we're trying out.

Steven eyes this transaction with puzzlement and a bit of suspicion. Stan decides to beat it before questions are asked.

STAN  
Anyway, you'll take care of it, won't  
you, Gloria? Thanks.

He blows her a playful kiss and vanishes out the door.

INT. CHRISTINE'S LAB

Christine is at work with one of the cages. She doesn't notice Stan as he enters the lab and playfully puts his arms around her.

STAN  
Hi sweetcakes, how's the rat race?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHRISTINE

Well hi Stranger! How's your commercial coming?

STAN

Just screened it for Grey. It's going right into testing.

CHRISTINE

What'd Grey think?

STAN

(pleasantly )  
He hated it.

CHRISTINE

Hated it?! And you're smiling? You know, Stan it's amazing to me how you seem to feel completely unbound by the normal rules of behavior.

STAN

(grinning)  
Yeah...That's why you're crazy about me.

He kisses her on the nose. She struggles to suppress laughing at his contagious silliness.

CHRISTINE

(smiling)  
So why's it being tested if Grey hated it so much. And why are you smiling?

STAN

It's a surprise. Let's just say we can start booking our little date with Pablo in the city by the bay.

Christine doesn't quite know how to react. Half smile, half puzzlement fills her eyes.

CHRISTINE

Stan, you're so confident ...

A thought crosses her mind.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CHRISTINE

You haven't rigged the testing, have you?

STAN

(insulted)

No, of course not.

CHRISTINE

(relieved)

I wouldn't put it past you sometimes y'know

STAN

Just a bit of the old Draper maverick genius is all. ...And you're my inspiration.

CHRISTINE

Me huh? What's in this production of yours?

STAN

I told you, it's a surprise.

There is a slight pause, Christine breaks the silence.

CHRISTINE

Stanny ...

STAN

Uh oh. I don't like that tone.

CHRISTINE

Well, I was just thinking.

STAN

I knew it. I'm outa here.

CHRISTINE

Come on now Stan; Be serious for one second.

STAN

All right. Something tells me I should have made a break for it when I heard the word "Stanny" but ... ok hit me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

CHRISTINE

Well, when you do get that promotion I was thinking Wouldn't it be nice to to make that trip to San Francisco extra special?

STAN

(suspicious)  
Like how?

CHRISTINE

Well, like making it a honeymoon.

Stan looks away, catches his breath.

STAN

You mean like get married? In this day and age? Don't people usually kind of sneak up on it by way of a long cohabitation first and then ...

CHRISTINE

Well yeah. But my apartment's toosmall for two people. And so's yours If we pooled our resources, we could do a whole lot better. And if we're pooling our resources anyway, we might as well ...

STAN

(impatient)  
Don't you think we're jumping the gun a little here?

CHRISTINE

Stan, you were the one that came in bragging about ...

STAN

I know, I know. That's not what I mean. I just don't think we're ready for that big a step yet, you know?

CHRISTINE

Ready? Stan what are you afraid of? It's just me, Christine, You know: Your best friend, admirer and..."inspiration"?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

STAN

Yeah, I know...

CHRISTINE

You told me yourself you haven't even considered dating anyone else in months ... And I'm the same way. If that's not love, what is?

STAN

(shudders)

Ooh ... the "L" word ...

CHRISTINE

(getting disgusted)

Well?

STAN

(getting serious)

Christine I want to be able to ... to give you things. You deserve the best there is; better than ...

CHRISTINE

(interrupting)

Than what? Stan, you should know me better than that. I don't give a tinker's damn about what demographic bracket you're in.

STAN

Couldn't we think about it for awhile?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

CHRISTINE

(angry)

What do you think we've ... Wait a minute. It's suddenly clear to me what you're all about, Stan Draper. All along it's been waiting for the next big one, looking for that big score. And now when the big score is finally here and your bluff is called, all you've got is a single ace. A one. And that's you, looking' out for ol' number one, Stan. You've been using that career of yours too long to hide behind. To hide the fact that you're not interested in anything or anybody that doesn't benefit old number one.

STAN

Wait a minute, Christine. Don't you think you're being a little ...

CHRISTINE

Well, I've got a career too. And I'd appreciate it if you'd let me get on with it. Excuse me.

She turns to her work with the cages.

Christine has tears in her eyes. She presses a button on her intercom.

CHRISTINE

Sidney, could you show Mr. Draper the way out, please.

STAN

(hollering and backing  
away)

Don't bother, Sidney!

(to himself)

I can take a hint. See you later,  
Toots.

Stan exits the lab in defeat as Christine throws a notebook across the room and sulks.

INT. HOSPITAL - STAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

DODD

Mr. Draper, if you don't mind we're not particularly interested in your romantic travails ...

STAN

Don't worry, I'm getting to the important part.

INT. STAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Stan has his feet up on the desk and is reading a Batman comic book.

STAN

(V.O.)

It was about a week later. It was pretty late in the day and I was doing some literary research ...

The intercom buzzes. Stan answers it without putting down the comic.

STAN

Yeah.

GLORIA

(over intercom)

You're wanted in the conference room, Stan.

STAN

Gloria, have you ever wondered why Batman spends all his time running around with a young boy in pink tights?

GLORIA

Maybe you can ask Mr. Grey; Stan. He's waiting for you in the conference room!

STAN

All right, all right. I'm goin'. But this better be important.

Stan lays the book down and saunters out into the

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CORRIDOR

It is noticeably quiet, not the bustling thoroughfare we saw earlier. Stan doesn't seem to notice, however, and ambles toward the double doors at the end of the hallway.

INT. BOARDROOM

As Stan opens the doors he is surprised to find a table full of executives, all glaring at him.

Grey is at the far end of the table and, at his right hand, sits Steven. The look on Steven's face is even more dour than the rest of the group.

STAN

Hi guys, what's up?

GREY

(standing at the far end)

Mister Draper. This company has been through some trying times in the past. Before you, however, sits a group of deeply troubled souls, all of us terribly concerned and disturbed over your behavior.

STAN

My behavior?

GREY

Disturbed to the point of questioning the validity of this company's very existence. Everything we hold dear in the field of advertising is in jeopardy and it appears that you are at the heart of it. We feel, therefore, that some explanations are in order.

STAN

(trying to keep 'it light)

Leo, I'm afraid I don't quite understand.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GREY

I'm referring, of course, to the Animusk project, Mr. Draper. We've just received the test results. Steven's spot, it seems, tested quite well.

Stan scowls involuntarily.

GREY

But your Spot ...

Stan gulps.

GREY

Your spot tested higher than anything this or any other company has ever experienced. The scores were literally off the scale.

STAN

(raising a fist in jubilation)

Yahaa!

Stan boldly approaches the table, scarcely containing his triumph

STAN

All right! I told you it'd work, Leo! Stick with me, man! ...

None of the sour faces has budged.

STAN

So uh what's the problem and when do I get my key to the executive washroom?

Grey nods to the executive on his left, who reaches under the table and pulls out a velvet case, opens it to display the sacred key, and places it on the table. Stan's eyes sparkle at the sight.

But before Stan can approach to claim his prize, Grey shuts the case and takes it in his own hands. Stan is puzzled.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GREY

What you don't understand, Mr. Draper, is that we don't understand. Steven's production is, as you know, dripping with implicit and explicit sexuality. Your spot on the other hand contains ... well ... Mr. Potatoheads. By all rights Steven's spot should have tested far better than yours. And yet it didn't. What we want to know is why.

Stan smiles.

EXECUTIVE #1

If sex doesn't sell, what does? That's cutting at the very heart of advertising.

EXECUTIVE #2

Stan, if you've got something better ...

Stan looks around with a sudden feeling of power and superiority. He glances at the velvet box.

STAN

All right, I'll tell youBut first  
(grins)  
I'll take my key.

The executives all look at each other, surprised at Stan's sudden bravado. After a pause, Grey concedes.

GREY

(softly)  
All right ...

Executive #1 slides the box down the length of the long table into Stan's hands. There is silence as Stan opens the case, removes the key which is on a gold chain, and places it around his neck. After a pause, Stan breaks the silence.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

STAN

Gentlemen. I congratulate you on your perception. We are, as you suspected, at the dawn of a new age of advertising. In fact it may be a whole new dimension in marketing

Murmurs are heard around the room.

GREY

Mr. Draper we're advertising men. You can spare us the hyperbole and get on with your explanation.

STAN

I think when I'm done you'll agree with all the claims I'm making, Leo. You see I began by asking myself just how a product gets produced in today's system. It may start with an idea. Then that idea gets tested. Surveys are taken of consumer tastes. Prototypes are developed and tested some more. Then the product is manufactured and we, the advertising and marketing people jump into action developing new and better ways to try to convince the consumer to plunk down his hard-earned cash for something he doesn't really want in the first place. Look at Detroit. No matter what kind of plastic junk they turn out claiming it's an automobile, we stand on our heads trying to convince John Q. Public that it's God's greatest gift to man since Eve. Well, it strikes me, gentlemen, that this entire system is wasteful. Yes, I know you're thinking each of us draws his salary off of that wastefulness. We have a vested interest in it. And you're absolutely right. But wait. We can do far better ...

Stan gets a sly gleam in his eye.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

STAN

We must ask ourselves: Why should we waste our time and resources tailoring products to the fickle consumer ... if we could instead tailor the consumer to the product? And that gentlemen, is the revolutionary concept at the heart of my campaign for Animusk.

More murmuring is set off around the table.

EXECUTIVE #1

Stan, what ever are you talking about?

STEVEN

(to Grey)

He bribed the test audience! I told you Leo. What else could explain

?

STAN AND LEO

(unison)

Shut up, Steve!

All eyes fall on Stan as if he has intruded on Leo's priveleges. Stan feels the bad vibes coming from Leo and pauses for a moment, before continuing.

STAN

(smiles)

So my spot tested higher than Steve's. Why? ... Well, it's time for me to confess, Leo.

STEVEN

Aha!

STAN

The spot that went to testing, Leo, was not the same spot I screened for you.

STEVEN

I knew it. I told you. I knew it...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

Leo merely waves for Steven to shut up, his eyes keenly fixed on Stan.

GREY

Why, Stan? If you had something brilliant, why didn't you show it to me?

STAN

Oh every scene is exactly the same, Leo. Every word of dialog; every note of music. But with one subtle difference. A special combination of audio and video frequencies superimposed over the primary signals.

Every.one in the room is all ears now.

STAN

In order to understand this encoded signal's purpose, though, we must recall the product we're selling-- Animusk. It's a product that--apparently appeals primarily to people with, among other things, subnormal intelligence. Our clients the Animusk people, are interested simply in increasing sales., There are only a few ways they can do this. They could change their product ... at some expense, and then it wouldn't be Animusk any longer. Or they could try to expand their consumer base by appealing to smart people, for instance. This, as we have seen, is an uphill battle. Or they could lower the price; which is unthinkable. Now, however, we've given them another alternative. The encoded frequencies in our spot, developed by myself and a close uh.. associate, have been shown to actually lower t6 I.Q. slightly of anyone exposed to them.

(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

STAN (Cont'd)

So now we don't have to beg intelligent people to buy a product they don't want. We can make more stupid people who'll want to buy the product! Instant market share! Plus these frequencies stimulate the brain's pleasure center. The more they watch it, the more they want to watch it.

EXECUTIVE #1

(awestruck)

My god! Stan! That's brilliant.

EXECUTIVE #2

(excited)

We won't need demographics any more, Leo!

EXECUTIVE #3

We can call it "Consumer Contouring." Profits are gonna skyrocket, Leo.

EXECUTIVE #1

I'll bet we can develop the frequencies to create and supply our clients with virtually any type of consumer they can ask for! What do you say, Stan?

STAN

Now guys remember this is just an experimental technique ... It's only now in the early stages of...

EXECUTIVE #1

Imagine, Leo: Stupid consumers this week, intelligent ones next week, then hungry ones ...

EXECUTIVE #2

... sleepy ones, sneezy...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (7)

STEVEN

and Bashful and Dopey and the rest of the seven dwarfs. Leo, I'm tired of these fairy stories. I say we should put Stanley under investigation for his...

GREY

(softly)  
Steve, you're fired.

STEVEN

What?!

GREY

I said...Wait. Maybe I won't fire you. Perhaps I should leave that decision to your new department account executive.

He turns to Stan whose nervous pallor turns to a smug grin. When all eyes are on him, Stan gleefully and ceremoniously gives a gasping Steven thumbs down as the room explodes in applause and laughter. Grey addresses Stan for all to hear.

GREY

(smilin)  
Stan, my boyy am in awe. Never before have I seen such initiative, such breathtaking insight into the advancement of our industry. Gentlemen, I believe we owe Stan a vote of gratitude. This new process of his will usher in a new era of advertising techniques and a new record in profits for Grey and Greyer advertising. For this and for his new promotion to the rank of account executive I think we should all say to Stan Draper "Bravo".

With this he begins to applaud. The rest of the group dutifully follows suit each applauding Stan and rising to bestow him with a standing ovation. Stan exhibits a reasonable display of humility

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (8)

Meanwhile, however, something has snapped inside Steven, the lone dissenter from the ovation. He sits almost catatonic, trembling slightly, staring eerily at the source of his defeat and humiliation: Stan.

As the applause subsides, Grey continues speaking.

GREY

I'm sure you'll be pleased to learn, Stan, that your Animusk spot is already airing in a test market. We've sent a market researcher on-site as well to gather precise data on this phenomenon you've created. When the results are in, we're taking it national.

Insecurity sets in as the potential i'mpact of his work is suddenly made clear to Stan.

STAN

National? ... Now w... wait a minute. Let's take it easy, Leo. We don't wanna overdo it.

GREY

(scowling)

Stan, what's come over you? What happened to the bold innovator that was here just a minute ago?

STAN

(nervous)

Well, we uh don't really know all the long term effects yet. I...I just think we ought to take it slow, that's all.

GREY

And maybe you think we should take it slow on your promotion too perhaps? Maybe even give it to Steve here? Is that what you're thinking?

Steven, almost too manic to absorb much any more, perks up as Grey's taunt turns the atmosphere tense.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (9)

STAN  
 (sweating)  
 I ... uh ...

He caves in.

STAN  
 (grinning sheepishly)  
 Oh ... what's a few I.Q. points in a  
 little old test market anyway?

The entire room breathes a sigh of relief. Grey smiles and handshakes and chuckles become the order of the day.

STAN  
 So where is this test site?

GREY  
 I suppose I can tell you, Stan. The  
 test area is a little town about a  
 hundred miles north called Bedford  
 Falls.

INT. CORRIDOR

The meeting breaks up and the grey suits file out of the boardroom, many of them patting Stan on the back as they pass.

Stan basks in the glory of his -victory for the moment, slowly wandering down the corridor until he stops near one specific doorway. He glances up to note the sign on the door:

EXECUTIVE WASHROOM.

Stan's moment has come.

Slowly, deliberately, he takes his new key and inserts it in the lock. As he turns the latch and the door gives way, we hear, echoed off somewhere, a CHOIR OF ANGELS.

INT. EXEC. WASHROOM

Stan steps into the empty sanctum and the choir builds, emphasizing each new discovery as Stan notes: linen towels, brass fixtures, saunas, bidets, showers.

Nirvana is brief, however, as a thought strikes Stan and the choir music ENDS abruptly. He quickly exits the facility.

INT. CORRIDOR

Stan strides rapidly down the empty hall until he notices that, up ahead stands a motionless Steve, glowering at him.

STAN

Oh, uh, Steve ol' buddy. You think you can have your stuff cleared out-of my office by this afternoon?

Steve is eerily motionless and silent.

STAN

Gee thanks. I appreciate it.

Stan turns the corner and heads for the elevators.

EXT. JEWELRY SHOP - DAY

A spectacular diamond ring is plucked from the store window by the JEWELER. Moments later, Stan emerges from the storefront, sporting a small black case, (which he pockets), and a satisfied look on his face.

INT. RESEARCH DEPT. RECEPTION AREA - DAY

Madeline is busy typing. Unseen by her, Steven emerges from the stairwell, checks to make sure Madeline is totally pre-occupied, and sneaks into Christine's lab.

INT. CHRISTINE'S LAB

There is no one in the lab. Steven enters and slowly starts to look around at all the equipment and papers.

A large black notebook labelled "Intelligence Shifts in Laboratory Animals" attracts his attention.

INT. RESEARCH DEPT. RECEPTION AREA- DAY

Stan bounces out of the elevator and makes an ornate bow before Madeline.

STAN

Ah good morrow Lady Madeline.

MADELINE

What can I do for you, Stan?

INT. CHRISTINE'S LAB

Steven hearing voices just outside, steps over toward the door to eavesdrop on the conversation.

INT. RESEARCH DEPT. RECEPTION AREA

STAN

Could you perchance inform her majesty that Sir Stanley the Knave seeks an audience with the queen?

MADELINE

I'd love to Stan, but her majesty isn't in.

STAN

Praytell, when might she return? I have urgent business.

MADELINE

She's out of town supervising some test marketing. Left two days ago.

Stan drops the cutesy banter and turns a little pale.

STAN

Not the one in Bedford Falls?

MADELINE

Now Stan, you know I can't give out that kind of information. It might bias the test results.

STAN

Come on, Madeline. It's important. Real important. Maybe more important than I thought.

MADELINE

I'm sorry Stan ...

STAN

(defeated)

Yeah, well ...

MADELINE

If you'd like, what I can do is get her a message when she checks in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STAN

What I wanted to do was give her this.

He tosses the ring case on Madeline's desk. She opens it and her eyes widen.

STAN

How long will she be gone?

MADELINE

Six weeks.

STAN

Six weeks! Madeline you gotta do something for me!

MADELINE

Sorry Stan.

STAN

(sighs)

Well have Mer give me a call if she can.

He presses the button to call the elevator.

MADELINE

I'll do that Stan.

The elevator arrives.

MADELINE

Don't forget this.

Stan steps back over to get the ring case.

STAN

Oh, yeah. Thanks.

He turns to leave.

MADELINE

You know, Stan, I thought you had more imagination.

STAN

(turning back)

Huh?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MADELINE

It's true that I can't tell you about the location of the field research Christine is conducting. But you haven't asked me a thing about the other field research projects we've got going.

STAN

What? Madeline, if you won't tell me about one, why would you tell me about any others? And why should I even care about any others?

MADELINE

Stan ...

STAN

Ok, I'll bite. "Tell me about the other field research projects we've got going, Madeline."

MADELINE

(innocently)

Why Stanley we don't have any other field research projects in progress at this time!

Stan grins.

STAN

Oh, I see! ... Well, gosh, Madeline. I think maybe I'll take a drive up to scenic Bedford Falls. Can you recommend any good motels up that way?

MADELINE

My personal favorite is the Bailey Inn ...

STAN

(hurrying away)

Thanks bunches, Madeline. I'll send you a postcard.

He hops into the elevator and blows her a kiss as the doors close.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MADLINE

Good luck!

INT. CHRISTINE'S LAB

Steven listens to Stan leave then leans back against the wall, staring off into space, thinking. The look in his eyes is a bit scary.

INT. STAN'S APARTMENT - DAY

Stan bursts into his apartment, puts the ring case on the nightstand, grabs a suitcase from under his bed and proceeds to hurriedly transfer an armload of the contents of the closet to the suitcase.

STAN

(V.O.)

Not only was Christine special to me,  
but she's also about the most  
intelligent human being I've ever met  
on this planet. The responsibility of  
that lovely I.Q. being lowered was  
more than I cared to deal with.

Turning to his dresser, he grabs a few things from the top drawers and tosses them into the suitcase. He then slams it shut and dashes back out the door ... leaving the ring sitting on the nightstand.

EXT. MOUNTAIN HIGHWAY - DAY

Stan's red Porsche speeds past a sign that reads "Bedford Falls 17".

EXT. BEDFORD FALLS MAIN STREET - DUSK

As Stan reaches the edge of town he begins noticing some slightly odd things-like an unusual number of Bingo parlors, most apparently newly-opened, with crude, hand-painted signs declaring their content. Every other establishment, it seems, is either a Polka dance club or a gun shop.

A couple of old MEN, each with a Shriner fez, are standing in the middle of the street yelling and shaking fists at each other. Stan has to dodge them.

The local theater marquee announces a Cheech and Chong film festival.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A parked car is completely covered with yellow "Baby on Board" diamonds.

Stan's Porsche stands out on this street since every other vehicle he passes seems to be a pickup truck with an NRA bumper sticker and a gun rack. Many of them look brand new.

Stan spots his destination and pulls into the nearly-empty parking lot of the Bailey Inn.

INT. BAILEY INN OFFICE - EVENING

Stan enters the office to find an elderly GENT wearing a cowboy hat and pearl-handled pistols, sitting in front of a TV that's playing an old movie: "Island of Lost Souls". Hearing Stan come in, the man gets up and steps over to the counter. He's a big fellow and sports a name tag that reads: "Norm".

NORM

Howdy. What can I do you for?

STAN

Howdy ... uh ... hi. I'd like a room.

NORM

You want a single or a kitchenette?

STAN

Just a single, thanks.

NORM

Sign here. That'll be thirty dollars plus a five dollar key deposit.

Stan quickly counts out several bills onto the counter.

STAN

Say, uh, Norm. Is there a lady named Christine Himmel staying here?

NORM

Yep. Shore is. She was it till you showed up.

STAN

Business not so hot huh?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NORM

Well, I tell ya. We was doin' okay till a few days ago. Full up as a matter of fact. Then all of a sudden they all left. And you know what? Every one of 'em told me they was headin' for Las Vegas. Now if that don't beat all you tell me.

STAN

Why Las Vegas?

NORM

Beats the bejeebies outa me! Far as I'm concerned, only a moron'd wanna head out of a pretty little town like this to throw all his money away in the middle of the desert. Uh ... you're in number two.

He hands Stan the key.

STAN

And Ms. Himmel?

NORM

She's in number one, right next door.

Stan steps toward the door.

STAN

Thanks.

NORM

There's an ice machine just down the way, and a coupla good eateries just up the street if you're lookin' to tie on the feed bag.

STAN

I'll keep that in mind. Thanks a lot.

EXT. BAILEY INN - NIGHT

Stan travels ten feet down the walkway to the door labeled number one. The door is ajar and Christine is just returning from the market, unloading some things from a brown bag.

Stan knocks and pushes the door open further.

INT. CHRISTINE'S ROOM - NIGHT

STAN

Knock, knock.

CHRISTINE

Stan! What are you doing here?

STAN

Never mind that. What's the cube root of twenty seven?

CHRISTINE

Huh? Three last I checked. What ever are you ... ?

STAN

When was the Magna Carta signed?

CHRISTINE

Stan, what is this? Trivial Pursuit?

STAN

Just answer the question.

CHRISTINE

The year 1215 I think, in April. What is all this about, Stan?

STAN

Have you had any recent urges to travel to Las Vegas?

CHRISTINE

(sarcastic)

No more than usual. What kind of question is that?

STAN

Just checking. I think you're all right.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHRISTINE

(annoyed)

Oh well thank you very much. I'm glad I meet with your approval. Now if you'll excuse me I've had a busy day and I plan on turning in early. Talk to me in the morning when whatever you're on wears off.

She holds the door open for him.

STAN

Wait a minute. Couldn't we go somewhere where we can talk? I've got something important I want to say to you.

CHRISTINE

No we couldn't. I've been out all day. If you've got something to say, say it.

STAN

Okay, okay I just wanted to tell you I got it Christine. I got the promotion! Look!

He displays the key hanging around his neck.

CHRISTINE

(less than enthused)

Good. You drove over a hundred miles to show me your bathroom key. I'm so thrilled Stan.

STAN

No wait. That's not all. Here this is for you.

Quickly he hands her the small box from his coat pocket.

She looks down in puzzled amazement.

CHRISTINE

A box of matches? What do you suggest I do, light a candle for you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

STAN

Huh? Wait. No. That's not it.

He searches his pockets.

STAN

(panicky)

It's not here. I must've lost it. I  
can't believe this. I had it when I  
...

CHRISTINE

Had what, if I may ask?

STAN

A ring ... Your ring, Christine. I was  
gonna ask you to marry me.

CHRISTINE

You mean you're not now?

STAN

No ... I mean yes. I mean ...

This was hard enough to begin with. He glances into Christine's skeptical eyes.

STAN

Whadaya say? Let's run away together,  
you and me--tonight.

CHRISTINE

Tonight? Stan what's come over you?

STAN

I mean it, Christine. I've been  
thinking aobut what you said. Let's  
get out of this one horse town. We'll  
go to San Francisco just like I  
promised.

She begins to soften but remains a bit leery.

CHRISTINE

Stan, you know I've got a job to do  
here ...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

STAN

Job! That's the excuse you got mad at me for using.

CHRISTINE

(sighs)

I'm really tired, Stan. I need some time to think this over. Let's talk about it in the morning, huh?

She gives him a peck.

STAN

"Some time..." Another one of my lines. Christine, Today is the last day of the first part of your life!

CHRISTINE

Stan ...

Stan sees he's not going to get much farther. He moves toward the door.

STAN

Allright But this is a limited time offer. So you don't forget, call before midnight tonight.

CHRISTINE

(correcting)

Tomorrow, Stan. Midnight tomorrow. Just keep those operators standing by.

She is about to close the door behind him when Stan turns and pushes it back open.

STAN

One last thing, Christine uh Promise me you won't watch TV tonight.

CHRISTINE

(alarmed)

What? What don't you want me to see?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

STAN

I'll explain later. Just promise me.

CHRISTINE

(anything to get rid of  
him)

Don't worry Stan I just research the  
stuff.. I don't actually watch it. I'd  
rather read a book anyway.

STAN

That's a good girl. I'm right next  
door if you need anything like maybe  
somebody to keep you warm through the  
night

CHRISTINE

Good night Stan.

She finally closes the door in relief. Turning around, she notes the  
blank glass eye of the television set and wonders...

MONTAGE - STAN'S SPOT AIRS

In a series of dissolving locale's, we see Stan's enigmatic Animusk spot  
as it flickers out over the night-time airwaves. As it plays, audiences  
sit transfixed in:

1. A BAR - noticeably minimal activity other than attention to the tube
2. A LIVING ROOM - A TEENAGE BOY and GIRL interrupt their necking to  
stare wondrously.
3. AN ELECTRONICS SHOWROOM - Several passingshoppers find their  
attention arrested by the imagery
4. THE BAILEY INN - Norm watches from a rocking chair in the rear of the  
motel office.

INT. CHRISTINE'S ROOM - NIGHT

All the lights are out. The glow of neon through a window illuminates a  
travel alarm clock that reads 2:00 AM. Christine is fast asleep.

EXT. CHRISTINE'S DOOR

A key turns silently in the lock of Christine's door as she sleeps.

INT. CHRISTINE'S ROOM

The door opens but the safety chain stops it. Christine is jarred awake by a crude, gruff voice.

VOICE

It's party time!

CHRISTINE

(sitting up)

Stan?

VOICE

Come on honey, let's get naked!

Now she knows it isn't Stan. Suddenly terrified, she remains quiet hoping this crazy person will go away. Instead, however, he starts banging on the door, trying to force it open.

INT. STAN'S ROOM

The violent pounding next door awakens Stan.

INT. CHRISTINE'S ROOM

After a few blows, the door chain gives way suddenly and a large FIGURE stumbles into the darkened room.

VOICE

Come on honey. I know yer in here!

The figure approaches the bedroom. He bursts through the door, knocking over a brass lamp. He spots Christine.

VOICE

There y'are dollface!

Christine can take no more. She SCREAMS ... to little avail. The figure grabs her.

Stan, upon hearing the scream, immediately rushes into Christine's room.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He sizes up the situation quickly and attempts to pull the figure away from Christine. The figure turns his attention immediately to Stan and begins choking him with his huge hands. Just as a gasping Stan is about to pass out, his fingers find the overturned brass lamp. He brings it down hard on his attackers head.

The figure stumbles backward and falls over motionless.

Relieved, Stan gulps air to catch his breath and moves over to Christine who clings to him tightly, sobbing.

STAN

It's okay now ... shh. I'm here. He won't hurt you now.

CHRISTINE

(in tears)

Stan, who was he? How'd he get in here?

STAN

I don't know. I ...

CHRISTINE

Oh Stan, I'm so glad you were here. I don't know what I woul-d've ...

STAN

It's okay. It's over.

CHRISTINE

We've got to do something. Stan, we should call the manager.

Stan reaches over and snaps on a lamp. In the light, Christine loosens her hold on Stan. He steps over to the body and uses his foot to turn him over.

STAN

No need to call. He's here already. Good ol' Norm.

Christine approaches.

CHRISTINE

It is him! But look at him. He's different. The frontal lobes are swollen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

STAN

And I don't remember his eyebrows being  
on such close terms before either.  
Wait a minute ...

Suddenly Stan starts to sweat. He grows pale in the realization of the  
cause behind this attack. He sits down on the bed in shock.

CHRISTINE

Stan? Are you okay?

STAN

(nearly catatonic)  
My God! I never thought it'd be like  
this ...

CHRISTINE

(scared again)  
Never thought what? Stan? Stan?!  
What's going on?

He can't look at her.

STAN

Christine, I think I caused this. He  
must've...Oh my God, I never dreamed...

CHRISTINE

You? How? What're you talking...

STAN

Your experiments. The frequencies you  
used on the rats. I put them in the  
Animusk spot.

CHRISTINE

(panicky)  
You what?!

STAN

Believe me I had no idea ...

(CONTINUED)

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