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The Flick

Annie Baker

A SAMUEL FRENCH ACTING EDITION

**SAMUEL
FRENCH**
FOUNDED 1830

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THE FLICK was first produced by Playwrights Horizons at the Mainstage Theatre in New York City on February 15, 2013. The performance was directed by Sam Gold, with sets and costumes by David Zinn, lighting by Jane Cox, and sound by Bray Poor. The Production Stage Manager was Katrina Herrmann. The cast was as follows:

SKYLAR/THE DREAMING MAN Alex Hanna
ROSE Louisa Krause
SAM Matthew Maher
AVERY Aaron Clifton Moten

CHARACTERS

SAM, 35 – shaved head. Caucasian. He often wears a beat-up Red Sox cap. He used to be very into Heavy Metal.

AVERY, 20 – African-American. bespectacled. He wears red, slightly European-looking sneakers. In love with the movies.

ROSE, 24 – Caucasian. sexually magnetic, despite the fact that (or partly because?) her clothes are baggy, she never wears makeup and her hair is dyed forest-green.

SKYLAR, 26/**THE DREAMING MAN**

SETTING

A falling-apart movie theater in Worcester County, MA. The set is the raked movie theater audience, ten to fifteen rows of red seats with a dingy carpeted aisle running up the center. The upstage wall is the back wall of the movie theater, with a window into the projection booth. There is a metal door leading out into the hallway to the movie theater lobby. We, the theater audience, are the movie screen. The beam of light from the projector radiates out over our heads.

TIME

Summer, 2012

A NOTE ON COSTUMES

Sam and Avery wear the same degrading movie theater uniform in every scene. It is a polo shirt (probably dark blue or purple or maroon) with a little name tag/pin, and black pants. Maybe the polo has “The Flick” embroidered in yellow or white on its chest pocket? Because Rose is the projectionist she doesn’t have to wear a uniform. But maybe she wears the black pants anyway. Or the same pair of jeans every day.

“/” indicates where the next line of dialogue begins.

PRE-SHOW

After the theater audience has filed in, the house lights slowly dim (onstage in the movie audience and also in the theater audience). Bernard Herrmann's Prelude to "The Naked and the Dead" starts playing, and the light from the projector beams out over our heads. Images that we cannot decipher are being projected. Dust motes are illuminated by the light.*

This lasts 2 minutes (from beginning to end of the song) and all we can see are abstracted dancing images shooting out of the film projector.

Then the song ends, and the unknown movie ends, and there is a bright flash of green, and then white, and then the sound of the film reaching the end of its spool in the projector. The movie theater lights automatically flicker on, and after about 5 seconds...

*Please see Music Use Note on page 3

ACT ONE

Scene One

(The door at the back of the movie theater is thrown open.)

(SAM peeks his head in, looks around, and then closes the door.)

(A second later, the door opens again and SAM drags in a large trash can that he uses to keep the door propped open. Then he exits again and re-enters carrying a push broom and dustpan. AVERY follows him in, carrying a push broom and dustpan of his own.)

SAM. We call this the walkthrough.

(Pause.)

SAM. Pretty simple.

You just ah...

(AVERY watches as SAM walks down the last row of seats with his broom, sweeping up popcorn kernels and trash and pushing them into the dustpan. When SAM finishes the last row and moves to the second-to-last row, AVERY awkwardly begins sweeping the last row on his side of the aisle. They continue this way, SAM always one row ahead of AVERY, each of them on his own side of the aisle. AVERY is trying to figure out the best way to sweep; it's harder than it looks. In the third-to-last row, AVERY encounters something we cannot see on the floor. He frowns with distaste, then bends over and gingerly picks up a Subway sandwich wrapper. Tiny pieces of shredded lettuce flutter to the ground. SAM looks over, stops what

he's doing, and watches AVERY, without offering any suggestions.)

(AVERY walks up the aisle, throws the Subway wrapper in the large trash can, along with the contents of his dust pan, then walks back and goes back to sweeping. For some reason it's not working—the tiny pieces of lettuce that we can't see are sticking to the ground. SAM is still watching him. After a while:)

SAM. Yeah. With the little pieces of lettuce you kind of have to—

(AVERY interrupts him by bending down to hand-pick the pieces of lettuce off the floor. He mostly disappears from view.)

(SAM watches, then goes back to sweeping. He's about three rows ahead of AVERY when AVERY finishes picking up the tiny pieces of lettuce. Cradling them in his palm, AVERY walks up the aisle again to the trash can and shakes his palm off into it. Then he goes back to sweeping. After moving on to the next aisle:)

AVERY. What do you do about spilled soda?

SAM. We do one big mop at the end of the night.

(AVERY nods. They go back to sweeping. After about twenty seconds:)

AVERY. What if people are still here?

(A pause.)

SAM. Like—

AVERY. Have you ever had anyone like just sit here and refuse /to—

SAM. Sometimes people stay until the end of the credits. But then they go.

(AVERY nods.)

SAM. And they'll get the message when you start sweeping.

(AVERY goes back to sweeping. After a pause:)

SAM. Roberto told me that he once...that one time this couple was like having sex, like fully fucking on the seats when he came in.

AVERY. Whoa.

SAM. But he just like ignored them and like went about his business.

(They continue sweeping. After a pause:)

AVERY. Who's Roberto?

SAM. Oh. He doesn't work here anymore.

(Pause.)

SAM. He joined the Marines.

(Pause.)

AVERY. And who was the guy with the /big—

SAM. That was Brian.

Sundays and Mondays is Brian and Rebecca.

But you'll never meet them because you'll never work Sundays and Mondays.

(AVERY nods, a little uncomfortable. They go back to sweeping. They're almost done. SAM is in the second row and AVERY is in the fourth row.)

(When SAM finishes he just watches AVERY.)

SAM. Did Steve tell you about the soda machines?

AVERY. Uh...like...

SAM. How to clean them? About the seltzer?

AVERY. ...No...

SAM. You gotta soak the spouts in seltzer overnight.

AVERY. Oh. Okay. Cool.

SAM. I'll show you.

In a minute.

(About ten more seconds, then AVERY finishes sweeping. They head up the aisle together, and dump their dustpans in the trash can. Then SAM takes the trash can

and starts rolling it out the door. They are almost out the door when SAM says:)

SAM. So you're into movies?

AVERY. What? I mean yeah! I love movies.

(And they're gone. The door swings shut behind them. Blackout.)

Scene Two

(SAM, alone in the middle of the theater, sweeping. After a few seconds, AVERY runs in, fastening his little pin and holding his broom.)

AVERY. Hey!

SAM. Hi Avery.

(Pause.)

AVERY. Sorry / I'm—

SAM. You're late.

AVERY. Yeah. I was just about to...yeah. I'm really sorry.

SAM. Yeah. Uh-huh. I /just—

AVERY. My dad was supposed to give me a ride but then he couldn't and I had to take like three different buses to get here and I'm still trying to figure /out the whole—

SAM. Uh-huh, yeah, I don't really need an explana/tion, it's just—

AVERY. No, no, of course, I just feel bad and I can totally reassure you that it won't happen again.

(Pause.)

SAM. It just puts me in an awkward position because /I'm—

AVERY. The thing is, I'm actually like...I'm actually like this obsessively punctual person and I'm like never ever late and this was just like a crazy um anomaly with the buses and now I know and I can promise you it will never happen again.

(Pause.)

SAM. Fine. Fine.

(Pause. SAM goes back to sweeping, then:)

SAM. I mean, it's no big deal.

But I'm sort of defacto in charge on Saturdays/and—

AVERY. No, I know.

SAM. It just puts me in an awkward position. That's all. Steve's never here so it was it was just me and I /had to—

AVERY. I can promise you that it won't happen again.

(Pause.)

SAM. I had to do soda and make a whole batch of popcorn by /myself.

AVERY. I'm so sorry.

SAM. No. It's cool.

(Pause. They both start sweeping. Then, unable to help himself:)

SAM. I'm just like—I don't know why Steve doesn't fucking promote me. I'm so sick of this shit.

(AVERY nods, a little confused.)

SAM. I should be a fucking projectionist by now!

AVERY. Oh. Yeah. I'd love to do that.

SAM. Well, he'll probably promote you before he promotes me. He like clearly thinks I'm *diseased* or something.

(Pause.)

SAM. He promoted Rose and I've worked here five months longer than her.

(They go back to sweeping.)

SAM. *(looking down at the floor in his row)* Aw fuck.

What is this?

(AVERY stops and peers over from his side of the aisle.)

SAM. Someone spilled like chocolate pudding or something. Are you fucking kidding me?

AVERY. Are you sure it's not, like...shit?

(A pause. SAM bends down and inspects it.)

AVERY. Oh god.

SAM. ...Definitely not shit.

AVERY. Are you sure?

SAM. Uh-huh.

AVERY. Because I'm kind of um...I'm kind of shit-phobic.

SAM. There are like weird little *balls* in it.

It's like *chocolate tapioca pudding*.

Who brings pudding into a movie theater??!!

(SAM gazes at it for a while, then straightens up, steps around it, and goes back to sweeping. SAM notices AVERY watching him and gets a little self-conscious.)

SAM. ...I'll take care of it later.

(They sweep for a while. Then:)

SAM. What does that mean, shit-phobic?

AVERY. Like other people's shit makes me like...it like makes me want to puke.

SAM. Well sure.

AVERY. Yeah. But with me it's like really...like if I go into the stall and someone has, um, like if someone's left something there I actually sometimes like...I actually need to puke.

Like sometimes I actually puke.

SAM. Huh.

(Pause.)

SAM. Have you heard of that website where people send in pictures of their shit and then other people rate it?

AVERY. Yes I have heard of that website. That website is like my worst nightmare.

(SAM giggles.)

SAM. So if I wanted to be really like cruel I could like leave my laptop open with that website up and you /would—

AVERY. I would literally puke all over your laptop.

(SAM giggles.)

SAM. Oh man.

(A happy pause in which they realize they've broken the tension, and then awkward pause following that happy pause. They go back to sweeping. A minute later, someone appears in the window of the projection booth. It is a girl. She is moving around, changing film, appearing in and out of view.)

(SAM notices her.)

SAM. Oh. Hey. That's Rose.

(AVERY looks up.)

SAM. HEY ROSE!

(She doesn't hear him. After a little while:)

SAM. Huh.

I guess she like hates me or something.

ROSE!

(pause)

ROSE!!

Wow.

She really hates me.

AVERY. Maybe she can't hear you.

SAM. She can hear me.

Rose!

I want to introduce you to her. She's cool.

ROSE!!!!!!!!!!

(ROSE continues moving around in the projection booth, oblivious.)

SAM. *(a cry of pure agony/unrequited love)* ROOOOSSSSSE!!!!!!!!!!

(ROSE remains oblivious.)

SAM. Well.

She officially hates me.

(SAM and AVERY gaze up the projection booth while ROSE moves around, then disappears from view. AVERY goes back to sweeping. SAM keeps watching the window as if he hopes she might appear again. This goes on for about ten seconds, then:)

(Blackout.)

Scene Three

(A few days later. SAM and AVERY are in the middle of sweeping, on their separate sides of the aisle.)

SAM. Jack Nicholson.

Jack Nicholson and uh...

And uh...

Renée—no.

Dakota Fanning.

Jack Nicholson and Dakota Fanning.

(A short pause.)

AVERY. That's too easy.

SAM. Well just do it then.

AVERY. ...Jack Nicholson to Tom Cruise in *A Few Good Men*.

Tom Cruise to Dakota Fanning in *War of the Worlds*.

SAM. Huh.

AVERY. Come up with a better one.

SAM. Fine. Fine.

Uh...

Pauly Shore.

Pauly Shore and uh...

Ian Holm.

AVERY. Okay.

(AVERY thinks. He squints and raises his index finger, as if drawing complicated algebraic equations in the air. After about six seconds...)

AVERY. Pauly Shore to Stephen Baldwin in *Biodome*.

SAM. You have it already?

AVERY. Stephen Baldwin to Kevin Pollack in *The Usual Suspects*.

Uh...uh...Kevin Pollack to Bruce Willis in...uh...let's say...*The Whole Nine Yards*.

SAM. What do you mean “let’s say”?

AVERY. They were also in *The Whole Ten Yards* together and—I think—*Hostage*.

And then Bruce Willis to Ian Holm in *The Fifth Element*.

SAM. Jesus.

AVERY. Make it harder.

SAM. Uh...uh...uh...

Uh...

Michael J Fox! Michael J Fox and uh...

Ooh. Okay.

Michael J Fox and Britney Spears.

(AVERY nods.)

AVERY. Okay.

(He closes his eyes. About ten seconds pass.)

SAM. Ooh-hooh. This one is hard.

(AVERY’s mouth moves slightly and his eyes do strange things as he does his calculations.)

SAM. This is a doozie.

(AVERY’s eyebrows raise—it seems like he is getting somewhere—but then he clearly reaches a roadblock.)

SAM. Ooooo boy.

Uh-oh.

(About twenty more seconds of silent calculation. Eventually AVERY unties some kind of complicated mental knot, opens his eyes, and grins.)

SAM. No.

NO!

AVERY. This one takes a full six degrees but I’m happy with it.

(pause)

Britney to Kim Cattrall in *Crossroads*.

SAM. Okay.

AVERY. Kim Cattrall to Estelle Geddy in *Mannequin*.

SAM. *Mannequin!*

My first sexual fantasy EVER was about Kim Cattrall in *Mannequin!*

AVERY. I've actually never seen it.

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

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

AVERY. Estelle Geddy to Sylvester Stallone in *Stop Or My Mom Will Shoot*.

Sylvester Stallone to John Lithgow in *Cliffhanger*.

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

SAM. WHOA!!

WHAT THE FUCK!!!

YES!!

I LOVE THAT MOVIE!

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

SAM. *Back to the Future.* **AVERY.** *Back to the Future.*

Parts One through
Three.

(*A pause. SAM stares at AVERY, in awe. They don't notice ROSE enter the projection booth.*)

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

AVERY. It's actually like the opposite of a disability.

(*ROSE knocks on the window of the projection booth and waves at them.*)

SAM. Oh! Jesus!

(to AVERY)

That's Rose.

AVERY. I know.

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

AVERY. What is that.

SAM. ...I think it's a penis.

(ROSE draws a heart around the penis.)

AVERY. Whoa.

SAM. Yeah.

She's a lesbian.

AVERY. Really?

SAM. Yep.

(ROSE is unthreading the projector now, mostly obscured from view.)

AVERY. Does she have a girlfriend?

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

(They go back to sweeping. They don't see ROSE leave the projection booth. They keep sweeping. ROSE appears in the doorway. She regards SAM and AVERY, then.)

ROSE. Hi. I'm Rose.

AVERY. I'm Avery.

AVERY. Yeah.

ROSE. Avery, right?

(Pause.)

ROSE. How old are you?

AVERY. 20.

ROSE. Huh.

(Pause.)

ROSE. I like your shoes.

(AVERY looks down at his shoes.)

ROSE. Red.

(Pause.)

AVERY. ...Thanks.

(Another pause.)

ROSE. Hi Sam.

SAM. Hello Rose.

(Pause.)

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

(AVERY goes back to cleaning. ROSE leans sleepily against the wall. SAM seems eager to talk to her.)

SAM. Who were you out with?

ROSE. *(fake-spaced-out)* What?

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

ROSE. Just a couple of friends.

SAM. Katie?

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

Reiko. And this other guy.

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

SAM. Uh-huh.

AVERY. No.

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

(She fake yawns. AVERY accidentally drops his broom, then quickly picks it up.)

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

SAM. 6:20.

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

ROSE. Oh my god no. I'm totally fine.

(She starts to leave, then stops)

ROSE. It was nice meeting you Avery.

AVERY. Yeah. You too.

ROSE. Those shoes rock.

(ROSE exits. SAM stands there. AVERY continues sweeping. After a safe amount of time has gone by:)

SAM. ...So?

AVERY. What?

SAM. What'd you think?

AVERY. She was—

(ROSE reenters.)

ROSE. *(to SAM)* Did you tell him about dinner money?

(SAM gets weird.)

SAM. Uh—what? No. Wait—

ROSE. What did you do last night?

Did you take it all?

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

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

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

ROSE. He *has* to be cool with it.

(AVERY is trying to look like he's not listening.)

SAM. Hey. Avery.

(AVERY turns around.)

AVERY. Yeah.

SAM. At the end of every shift you're gonna get Dinner Money. It's just a little extra cash. We always split it three ways or two ways if there's just two of us. It can be anywhere from you know ten bucks on a weeknight to like thirty bucks on the weekend.

AVERY. Oh. Cool.

(Short pause.)

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

ROSE. A what?

SAM. No. Uh. Well. Kind of. It's kind of like a *per diem*. It's just...

Steve doesn't know about it.

(A weird pause.)

AVERY. Steve doesn't give it to us?

(**ROSE** looks at **SAM**. **SAM** struggles to find the right way to say it.)

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

AVERY. Yeah. Sure.

SAM. Well, sometimes we take like, uh, like 10 percent of those stubs, and we, uh, we, uh, we, uh, resell them.

(A pause.)

SAM. And then we take 10 percent of the, uh, the, uh... cash for the night.

ROSE. As dinner money.

SAM. We call it dinner money.

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

(A pause.)

ROSE. So actually it like, it *is* dinner money.

Because 8.25 an hour is *not* enough to live on.

AVERY. You've never been caught?

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

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

(*AVERY looks at SAM. SAM is embarrassed.*)

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

ROSE. I guess we're not asking you anything. **AVERY.** Because I don't really want to do it.

ROSE. But you can't... it's not up to you to decide! **SAM.** You don't have to do anything! I'll deal with the tickets! You just get half the money!

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

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

(*A long pause.*)

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

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

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

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

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

(*A very long, uncomfortable pause.*)

ROSE. I don't feel that way.

(*Pause.*)

AVERY. Wait, what?

(*Another weird pause.*)

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

(Silence. AVERY walks down the aisle, sits in the front row of the theater, and puts his head in his hands. They watch him.)

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

(SAM and ROSE watch him do this, and then start mouthing panicky silent things to each other. Maybe ROSE is mouthing stuff like WHAT DO WE DO???! HE'S GONNA TELL ON US!! and SAM is mouthing stuff like IT'S COOL IT'S COOL I'LL TALK TO HIM IT'S GONNA BE COOL but we shouldn't really be able to read their lips and maybe they can't either, it's more just like mutual gestures of panic.)

(Then they go back to watching AVERY, who is unmoving in his seat.)

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

(He trails off. Another silence.)

ROSE. Listen.

Avery.

I don't want to be like a total cunt about this and I don't want to put you in a crappy position.

But if me and Sam are doing it and you're not it's like...it's like not fair to anybody. Like it's like really bad for everyone involved.

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

AVERY. Yeah.

Okay.

Fine.

(Pause.)

ROSE. Wait, what does /that—

AVERY. It's fine.

I'll take—I'll do whatever.

It's cool.

Sorry.

I didn't mean to like...

I didn't mean to freak you guys out.

Or be judgmental.

(pause)

Sorry. Yeah.

I'm okay with it.

(They stare at him.)

(He laughs nervously.)

AVERY. Seriously!!

I'm fine.

Sorry.

(ROSE and SAM exchange a long look. Then:)

ROSE. ...All right, boys.

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

Wake me up at five till.

(She leaves. SAM looks at AVERY. AVERY finally stands up. They resume sweeping. After a little while:)

SAM. Richard Pryor and Angelina Jolie.

(Blackout.)

Scene Four

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

SAM. You know what I hate the most?

(AVERY stops whistling.)

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

But to SNEAK FOOD IN...

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

(he lifts up the bag)

...Sun Chips on your seat.

That I do not understand.

AVERY. I feel the opposite.

SAM. What do you mean?

AVERY. It feels so weird when I sold it to them. It's like, I gave you that popcorn. I like scooped it out myself and put it in the bag and handed it to you and you paid me and said thank you.

And now it's all over the floor.

SAM. Huh.

AVERY. With the Sun Chips it's like...it's just regular litter.

SAM. Interesting.

Interesting perspective.

(They continue sweeping. AVERY resumes his whistling.)

(After a while:)

SAM. *(incredulous)* Someone left a shoe.

(He lifts a shoe up in the air disdainfully.)

SAM. Someone left a nasty nasty old New Balance shoe.

AVERY. Do you think it was intentional?

SAM. Like is it a sign of gang *warfare* or something?

AVERY. No. Like do you think someone forgot it and left here with one shoe on...

Or do you think they like meant to throw it away?

(a short pause)

Like do we put it in the lost and found?

SAM. Fuck no.

Fuck no.

It smells disgusting.

(SAM walks up the aisle to the trash can, holding the shoe by its lace.)

SAM. Uch. Uch. Uch. Uch.

UchUchUchUchUchUchUch.

(He throws the shoe in the trash.)

(Then SAM reaches under his polo and scratches his collarbone.)

SAM. My neck itches.

(They continue sweeping. After about twenty seconds:)

AVERY. Hey.

What do you wanna, like...

What do you wanna like be when you grow up?

(Pause.)

SAM. ...I am grown up.

AVERY. Oh.

Yeah. I guess I just mean /like—

SAM. That's like the most depressing thing anyone's ever said to me.

AVERY. Sorry.

(They finish sweeping. They dump their dustpans into the trash.)

(On their way out the door:)

SAM. A chef.

(Blackout.)

Scene Five

(Darkness. The final credits of a movie. Swelling music. Light from the projector.)

(A DREAMING MAN has stayed till the end of the credits.)

(The music ends. A flash of green. A flash of white. The lights in the theater automatically flicker on. A few seconds later, AVERY and SAM come in through the door, in the middle of a conversation. This time they have mops and a large yellow mop bucket on wheels. It is the end of the night.)

SAM. *(not noticing there is still someone in the theater)* I disagree. I strongly disagree.

AVERY. Name one. Name one great American movie made in the—

(AVERY notices the Dreaming Man and stops talking.)

(The man is in the fifth or sixth row, lightly sleeping, facing forward. Maybe his head is subtly listing to one side as he sleeps.)

(SAM and AVERY start to clean, waiting for him to go. The man is on AVERY's side of the aisle. AVERY eventually walks over, looks at the man, and sees that he's asleep.)

(AVERY isn't sure what to do. He gesticulates for SAM to come over. SAM comes over.)

AVERY. *(to the man)* Excuse me.

(The man doesn't move or wake up.)

(SAM pokes his shoulder, a little too aggressively.)

(The man jolts awake and stares at them.)

SAM. The movie is over.

THE DREAMING MAN. Oh. Sorry.

(SAM walks back to his side of the theater and resumes cleaning. AVERY remains standing in the aisle, holding his mop, unsure of what to do. The man wipes the sleep from his eyes, maybe searches for something on the floor, gathers his things, and then departs, not making eye contact. He walks up the aisle, head bowed, and out the door. It slams behind him.)

(A pause, then:)

SAM. *Avatar*! *Avatar* was a great movie made in the last ten years.

AVERY. I...what?!

(More incredulous pausing.)

AVERY. Okay. Uh. If you think that, if you actually think that, I can't even like...I can't even like continue to have this conversation.

If you actually think that I need to like quit this job.

SAM. *Avatar* was a great movie.

(Pause.)

Avatar was a work of genius!

AVERY. I can't even...I can't even...

Words are failing me.

SAM. Oh so like oh so you think you're like *better* than *Avatar*. Like you're above *Avatar*.

AVERY. No. I/just—

SAM. Because I bet you really fucking enjoyed *Avatar*. I bet you had a blast at *Avatar*. And now you're like looking down your nose at *Avatar* because it didn't have like German subtitles or whatever.

AVERY. I repeat: I don't think it's possible for me to engage in like a rational debate with you about it.

SAM. Oh come on.

AVERY. It's like if I said: I love killing babies. Let me like try to convince you why killing babies is fun and you should enjoy killing babies.

(They go back to mopping. Unnoticed by them, ROSE appears in the projection booth, cleaning up, unwinding the film.)

(Silence for a while, then finally, unable to help himself:)

AVERY. It was a video game.

SAM. Excuse me?

AVERY. *Avatar* was basically like a video game.

SAM. It was not a video game.

A video game is interactive.

A video game is defined by the fact that you're...that you're...

(moving on)

It was 3-D. That was fucking awesome. Did you see it in 3-D?

AVERY. Uh-huh.

SAM. It's just like different and that like scares you. People always freak out when like you know when like art forms move forward.

AVERY. That's not the art form moving forward. That's the art form moving backwards. 3-D was around in like the 50s.

(ROSE leaves the projection booth.)

SAM. I thought it was totally awesome-looking.

AVERY. I don't like digital. Period.

SAM. It's where film is going.

AVERY. Well then it won't be film anymore. It'll be computer-generated crap.

(ROSE enters, holding a book.)

ROSE. Hey. Look what I found on the street.

(SAM walks over to her and reads the title out loud:)

SAM. "Astrology and Your Love Life: How to Find True Compatibility and Long Lasting Relationships."

ROSE. What's your sign?

SAM. Uh...Leo.

ROSE. Oh my god me too.

(ROSE flips through the book.)

ROSE. What about you, Avery?

(After a short pause:)

AVERY. I don't know.

ROSE. Excuse me?

AVERY. I don't remember.

I don't really care about that kind of thing.

ROSE. Oh my god. Oh my god.

You are so full of shit!

AVERY. I don't believe in astrology.

ROSE. Okay, that's fine, but you know what your sign is. I don't buy for a second that you don't know what your sign is.

(Pause.)

ROSE. Oh my god, Avery!

Don't even try to *pretend* with me that you don't know what /your—

AVERY. Capricorn.

ROSE. ...Thank you.

(She flips through the book again.)

SAM. Hey Rose.

ROSE. (still looking through the book) Ye-es...

SAM. Avery thinks there hasn't been a single great movie made in the past ten years.

AVERY. Single great *American* movie.

ROSE. (still flipping) Uh-huh.

SAM. And I think he's wrong.

AVERY. (to SAM) *Pulp Fiction* was the last *truly* great American movie and that was '94.

SAM. You have to do some of it for Rose.

AVERY. No.

ROSE. Do what?

SAM. He has like all of *Pulp Fiction* memorized and he can/
like—

AVERY. Nope.

SAM. Do Ezekiel 25:17!

AVERY. No way.

SAM. (to ROSE) He does the most like incredible Samuel L.
Jackson imitation.

“THE PATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS BROTHER IS
BESET ON ALL SIDES BY THE TYRANNY OF THE
WEAK”!

(ROSE eyes AVERY dubiously.)

AVERY. That’s not how it goes.

(A pause.)

ROSE. What about *Million Dollar Baby*?

AVERY. What about it?

ROSE. That’s a great movie.

AVERY. That is not a great movie.

SAM. Avery is like a film snob.

ROSE. *Tree of Life*?

(A grim silence. SAM shakes his head, embarrassed.)

ROSE. Oh boy. You both hate *Tree of Life*.

Okay.

Sam and Avery, I’m gonna read you your compatibility.

It’s me and Avery’s compatibility too because I’m also
a Leo.

SAM. *Magnolia*!

There Will Be Blood.

AVERY. Those are good movies. Very good movies.

But ultimately disappointing.

SAM. *Lord of the Rings! Return of the King!*

AVERY. Are you kidding me?

SAM. Uh uh uh uh...

The third Bourne movie!

The Bourne Ultimatum!

AVERY. This is a pointless debate.

SAM. Oh come on!

Those Bourne movies are like like like fine wines!

(AVERY shakes his head.)

Uh...*The Aviator!* Wait. Never mind.

ROSE. *(reading loudly)* "Leo and Capricorn."

"It's hard to make this combination of personalities work in a long-term love relationship."

Ooh. Sorry guys.

SAM. *(rolling his eyes)* Ha ha.

ROSE. "Orderly and organized Capricorn is likely to disapprove of Leo's exuberance and spontaneity. Leo has a bad temper but is quick to forgive and forget; Capricorn is more even-tempered but can hold a grudge for years. Capricorn is also the more devoted partner and Leos tend to have a wandering eye. Most of all, Capricorn and Leo are not sexually compatible. They are both dominators and yet almost complete opposites. Prudent practical Capricorn is often a bit of a snob and fairly /conservative—

SAM. OH MY GOD! I JUST SAID HE WAS A SNOB!

AVERY I JUST CALLED YOU A SNOB!

AVERY. Uh-huh.

ROSE. "...often a bit of a snob and fairly conservative, and will probably try to tamp down Leo's adventurous and impetuous personality."

Uh...what else...blah blah blah...

"Capricorn is an Earth sign and Leo is a fire sign...it can take Capricorn a while to open up his/her heart but once Capricorn opens it he/she is extremely

loyal...but it will be very hard to make this marriage work..."

Ooh!

Wait. There's a "Business and Career section"!

AVERY. That's probably more relevant.

ROSE. "Business and Career."

Hey!

"The career connection between Leo and Capricorn is fantastic"!

"They are both excited to learn from one another. Usually one partner has more experience and will *show the other the ropes.*"

(She looks up and grins.)

SAM. ...Whoa.

That's weird.

That's...Actually Weird.

ROSE. "As long as there is not a power struggle there can be an incredible and fruitful collaboration."

Uh...

"Connections with the arts are favored"!

SAM. No!!

(He looks over her shoulder.)

SAM. *(to AVERY)* It actually says that!!

ROSE. *(shutting the book)* That is awesome, you guys.

(SAM stands there, stunned.)

SAM. So weird.

So weird.

(pause)

I mean I don't believe in that stuff but that is SO WEIRD.

(AVERY goes back to mopping.)

SAM. You don't think that's weird??!!

ROSE. He's just being a typical Capricorn.

SAM. Ha ha! Yes! Prudent and practical!

(AVERY cracks a smile.)

SAM. *(to ROSE, summoning up the courage)* What about us?

ROSE. What about us?

SAM. Leo on Leo.

I mean, Leo with Leo.

ROSE. Oh.

(She flips through the book nonchalantly.)

Hmmm...I think the same sign together is usually a bad thing...let's see...

"Leo and Leo."

"When this relationship is good it is very good, but when it is bad it is terrible. Leos have a very strong sex drive, so this couple will be highly compatible in bed. This is a kinky, passionate connection, but can sometimes be hard to sustain in a long-term way. These two Leos are king and queen of the jungle. It will either be a great love or a great rivalry. The big question is: who's the boss? There will be heartfelt embraces but also egos butting heads. Compromise is key in the fiery relationship between two Leos."

(Pause. SAM is blushing.)

SAM. *(trying to sound unimpressed)* Huh.

(ROSE closes the book.)

ROSE. I wonder what sign Reiko is.

SAM. What's our career connection?

ROSE. Yeah. I'm bored.

(She gets up.)

ROSE. *(to AVERY)* See ya later, Capricorn.

AVERY. Uh-huh.

(She leaves.)

SAM. Wes Anderson.

Rushmore.

AVERY. That was '98.

And that is a good movie, but not a *Pulp Fiction* level good movie.

(They mop for a while.)

SAM. I think he has a new one coming out this winter.

(short pause)

Tarantino.

AVERY. *Django Unchained.*

SAM. What?

AVERY. It's called *Django Unchained.*

(More mopping.)

SAM. The Coen Brothers!

All the Coen Brothers movies.

No Country for Old Men.

A Single...what's it called.

AVERY. *A Serious Man.*

SAM. *Fargo!! Fargo.*

AVERY. First of all, *Fargo* was '96.

Second of all, those are all pretty good movies. Those are *interesting* movies.

But those are not like like like like...profound commentaries on /like—

SAM. Do you find Rose attractive?

(Pause.)

AVERY. Wait—do I find—

Rose?

SAM. Yes. Rose.

I feel like you guys have kind of a flirty antagonistic banter thing going on.

AVERY. I mean uh—I don't know. No. Not really.

SAM. Not *really*?

AVERY. No. I mean no.

She's...she kind of makes me uncomfortable.

SAM. ...Huh.

AVERY. She's a lesbian anyway, so/it—

SAM. Yeah.

Yeah.

AVERY. Do *you* find Rose/attr—

SAM. Shhhhhhhh.

(They clean for a while.)

SAM. Hey. Will you come over here and look at my neck?

(AVERY puts down his mop and walks over to SAM.)

SAM. Does it look weird?

AVERY. Well there are all these red blotches but I can't tell if that's because you've been scratching it.

SAM. What about my back?

My back itches too.

(SAM turns around and lifts up the bottom of his shirt.)

AVERY. Oh. Yeah.

SAM. Yeah what?

AVERY. Yeah. There are a bunch of red like...

They're like little red lesions or something.

SAM. Lesions??

AVERY. Like they're kind of red oval shaped...

Aughh!

(AVERY pulls SAM's shirt down.)

SAM. What? What?

AVERY. They started freaking me out.

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