

AND YOU THOUGHT HIGH SCHOOL WAS HELL
(EXCERPT)

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THE STAGE IS DARK. MUSIC.

The lights come up on the stage. Center is a table with three cubes used as chairs. The table has an array of office desk items; notebook, ledger, calendar, stapler, a cup with a variety of pens, etc. Standing by the table is MS. KLARPEN. She is an efficient looking woman with glasses, blouse and skirt. She paces behind the table, checks her calendar, then presses her finger on the table top.

MS. KLARPEN

Biff, could you please send in my next appointment?

An affected MALE VOICE calls from offstage.

MALE VOICE

Your intercom's broken. You're just pressing the table. She looks at the table.

MS. KLARPEN

(Frustrated.)

Shit...Send him in anyway.

JULES PLURB enters. He is a nebbish young man, shy and somewhat withdrawn. He wears baggy slacks that are too short in the leg, a button-down sweater and carries a stack of books in his right arm. His left hand is conspicuously hidden behind the books. (To be explained later in the script.) He stands nervously on the edge of the stage.

MS. KLARPEN (CONT'D)

Hello, are you Jules?

JULES

Jules, yes...Jules Plurb.

MS. KLARPEN

I'm Hermione Klarpen. Please, have a seat.

JULES

(Sitting.)

Thank you.

She sits opposite him. She checks her notebook.

MS. KLARPEN

So...it says here you've been a student here at Morrie Amsterdam Business College for two years?

JULES

Three and a half semesters, yes.

MS. KLARPEN

Hmmm, as Class Advisor I usually like to have a face-to-face sit-down with any new students, but I don't recall ever meeting you. Did we have a new admissions meet-up scheduled when you enrolled?

JULES

Maybe...was it on a Tuesday?

MS. KLARPEN

Maybe.

JULES

Yeah...no, Tuesday's hemorrhoid day.

MS. KLARPEN

'Nuff said. So, Jules, I see you are filing a complaint against one of our new instructors?

JULES

Yes Maam.

MS. KLARPEN

It says in your complaint "harassment, intimidation and theft of personal items?"

JULES

Indeed.

MS. KLARPEN

Those are pretty weighty charges, Jules.

JULES

And all true.

MS. KLARPEN

Well, we here at MABC take these sort of accusations very seriously. We feel our students are our most valuable asset. In the words of our beloved founder, "Eratus Sigma Epsilon."

JULES

"Never Step On A Duck."

MS. KLARPEN

Exactly. And it is our experience that the best way to resolve these sort of issues is to address it face-to-face.

JULES

(Nervously.)

What?

She presses the table top again.

MS. KLARPEN

Biff, could you please send in--

MALE VOICE

(Offstage.)

Still broken!

MS. KLARPEN

God dammit!

GARY enters. He is a devil, complete with fangs and horns. He wears an extremely baggy, large overcoat with a variety of pockets. He also sports shabby, fingerless gloves. Rags and other pieces of fabric hang from him till he almost resembles a walking parade float. He is sarchastic, extremely crude and full of himself (think Beetlejuice on steroids).

GARY

Is this where we sacrifice the kittens? Ha! Kidding.

MS. KLARPEN

(Introducing herself.)

Hello, Hermione Klarpen, MABC Student Advisor for Attendees K through Z.

GARY

Gorgoth the Gatherer, Defiler of Fresh Virgins, Scorcher of Crops, Invader of Dreams and Evicerator of Warm Bowels.

The is an uncomfortable pause.

GARY (CONT'D)

Or...you know, just Gary.

MS. KLARPEN

Hi Gary, have a seat.

GARY
Don't mind if I do.

He picks up the stapler from her desk.

GARY (CONT'D)
Nice.

He puts the stapler in his pocket. He then puts his hand down his pants and begins absently stroking his penis.

MS. KLARPEN
The reason we called you down here, Gary, is that Mr. Plurb feels he is experiencing some harassment from you in your class...

She checks her notes.

JULES
Introduction to Adobe Illustrator
and Protection From The Dark Arts.

MS. KLARPEN
Wednesdays in Artie Johnson Hall.

GARY
(Shuddering.)
Ugh...vector art.

MS. KLARPEN
He claims your actions make him
uncomfortable...

GARY
Jules, bud. What the frick, dude?

MS. KLARPEN
Threatened...

GARY
I ought to kick your ass!

MS. KLARPEN
And sexually compromised.

GARY
No, I'll ream it out first, then
I'll kick it!

JULES

He hardly seems qualified to teach.
He's always retching and vacating
his nether region in the middle
class and picking his teeth.

MS. KLARPEN

Gary came highly recommended to our
institution, Jules.

GARY

Yeah...suck on that, Dweezel.

MS. KLARPEN

He has a great deal of
experience...Duke and Arizona
State.

JULES

Well, that doesn't change the fact
that he's a moral deviant.

MS. KLARPEN

Would you like to address these
accusations, Gary?

GARY

Yes. Yes, as a matter of fact, I
would.

He stands and paces slowly. She sits in her chair.

GARY (CONT'D)

Now I can understand that to some
of our more...how shall I put
it...Meek...Spinless...Cowardly
students I may seem a tad
intimidating.

As he speaks he takes a small box of matches from his pocket,
takes one, lights it, then waves it behind his ass like a
Grandpa trying to douse a fart.* (NOTE* All of Gary's
actions; stealing the stapler, stroking the penis, lighting
the fart, looking down Ms. Klarpen's blouse, etc, should be
done as off-handedly and non-chalantly as possible. Don't
oversell the joke. Let the audience catch him doing these
things rather than physically framing the jokes for them with
large actions. I think they'll be funnier that way.)

GARY (CONT'D)

But I'm a guy that likes to be out
on the edge. It's my way. I like
things big.

He crosses behind Ms. Klarpfen reaches over her shoulder, opens her blouse a bit and takes a peak, all while speaking.

GARY (CONT'D)

I like big American cars, Glam-Rock music and extreme sports. I love naked mountain climbing, Rooster Kung Fu, Bob Ross paintings and reaching up inside of a sheep. And if that's gonna be misconstrued as off-color or intimidating, well...guilty as charged, I guess. He sits.

MS. KLARPEN

Jules, rebuttel?

JULES

Okay, granted, I can come across as a tad shy and, you know... spineless. But that's my way. I purposely sit in the back of the room making as little noise or movement as possible. My Mother always said, "Pretend you don't exist and no harm will come to you." Or was it my Dad? But that still doesn't stop him from continually harassing me. Wednesday after Wednesday. Did you know last week he asked me to stay after class and help him make a necklace out of human teeth?

GARY

A Mother's Day gift!

JULES

And when we were done he wanted to wrap it around my...you know what.

GARY

Oh, you wish!

MS. KLARPEN

I can see you are very upset, Jules. But these accusations are just hearsay. Unprovable. Your word against his.

GARY

Exactly.

JULES
Well, what about the theft?

GARY
What?!

MS. KLARPEN
And what do you claim he's stolen?

JULES
My pen! My pen! Every time he steals my pen. I always bring in a Paper Mate rolling ball medium weight black ink pen with extra-soft foam shank for comfort and writing ease. It's the only pen I use. Every day I bring one to class and every time class is over, it's gone. And he's always hovering nearby. He steals my pen!

GARY
Poppycock!

MS. KLARPEN
Gary...

GARY
Balderdash!

MS. KLARPEN
Gary...

GARY
Flimmel Flugan Flargan!

MS. KLARPEN
Gary?

Ms. Klarpen and Jules stare at Gary, accusingly.

GARY
(Standing, defiant.)
Oh, this is so...I do not believe--
It's almost funny. I'm almost
laughing.

They continue to stare.

GARY (CONT'D)
(Giving in.)
Fine.

He takes a pen from his pocket and tosses it on to the table.

GARY (CONT'D)

Happy?

They continue to stare.

GARY (CONT'D)

What?

He gives in again and takes four or five pens from his pockets. He tosses those on to the table. They continue to stare at him. He begrudgingly starts to take more and more pens from his pockets. A few become ten...then twenty...then fifty. I would like to see if we can get hundreds of pens into his pockets and the lining of his coat. We let the bit drag out until the table is filled with a huge pile of pens. All the same brand. (The author will gladly supply the pens.) At the end of the pen barrage Gary sighs and smiles.

GARY (CONT'D)

What can I tell you? I'm Gorgoth the Gatherer. "Gatherer." I take things. I have a condition. DSS. Deamon Stealing Syndrome. It's in my DNA. So is burning crops and defiling virgins, but taking things...that's where I have a real problem. In the old days it was cattle, hair, shiny gold things and newborn babies. Now it's pens, office supplies, spare change and...newborn babies. But you have to believe me, I can't help myself. God knows I've tried.

He stands away from them and begins to sob, obviously faking it. Ms. Klarpén stands and goes to him.

MS. KLARPEN

Oh, there, there, Gary. Don't cry.

She holds his head to her chest. He diddles her breasts as she speaks.

MS. KLARPEN (CONT'D)

You see, Jules. Gary has opened himself up to us. He's confessed his condition and his weakness. I think it's our turn to forgive him.

JULES

Well...okay, I suppose so.

She steps away from Gary and steps toward Jules.

MS. KLARPEN

Now, are there any other complaints, Mr. Plurb?

JULES

Well...he did try eating my hand.

Jules holds up his hidden left hand, which is a bloody, bandaged stump. Gary, in the meantime, is nibbling on a hand he's taken from his pocket. Ms. Klarpen turns to Gary.

MS. KLARPEN

Gary!

GARY

That is such a lie!
(He looks down at the
hand.)
Oopsie.

MS. KLARPEN

Gary. Jules. I can see we're at an impasse. Well we here at The Morrie Amsterdam School of Business do not believe in impasses. We believe that if any eager student wishes to achieve their two year Associates Degree in Business Management, Data Entry, Beginning Graphic Design, Paralegal or Mortuary Sciences, then a level of trust must be in place. I think we must work to develop that trust.

Jules stands and goes to Gary and Ms. Klarpen.

MS. KLARPEN (CONT'D)

Let's start with a simple game we like to call "Catch."

JULES

I don't know...

MS. KLARPEN

It's easy. I'll show you. I'm going to fall and I'll "trust" that Gary will catch me.

She falls forward towards Gary. He catches her and props her up, holding her breasts.

MS. KLARPEN (CONT'D)

See, Jules? It's easy.

GARY

And fun!

She straightens up. Gary releases her.

MS. KLARPEN

All right. Now you catch Gary.

Gary falls towards Jules. Jules catches him. His stump pains him. Gary leans in towards Jules' face, flicking his tongue at him, hungrily.

MS. KLARPEN (CONT'D)

Don't you feel a level of trust building?

JULES

I guess so.

Gary straightens up.

MS KLARPEN

Okay, now let Gary catch you.

JULES

I don't think so.

GARY

Come on, Amigo.

MS. KLARPEN

You have to learn to trust.

JULES

He's gonna drop me.

GARY

See, now that hurts me.

MS. KLARPEN

Learn to trust, Jules.

JULES

All right.

Jules leans forward. Gary catches him. Gary then turns and sees something at the front of the stage.

GARY

Hey, is that Hugh Downs?

He steps away and heads downstage. Jules falls to the floor. Ms. Klarpen follows Gary.

MS. KLARPEN

Where?

GARY

(Looking out.)

No, it's just a bird.

Jules struggles to his feet.

JULES

I knew it! I knew he'd drop me!
He's a joke! This whole place is a
joke! All I wanted was to get my
degree in computer art so I can
design video game characters or
skate board decals or whatever. I
didn't expect it to be some kind of
living hell.

Ms. Klarpen and Gary stand on either side of Gary.

MS.KLARPEN

I've got news for you, Jules. If
you go to a community college...you
are in Hell.

She begins to laugh an evil, throaty laugh. Gary joins her.
They laugh large and hard and menacingly. It goes on...then
dies out. They both sigh and are quite a moment.

MS. KLARPEN

No, I'm just fucking with you. Now
get back to class or I'll have you
suspended.

JULES

Yes Ma'am.

Jules and Gary start to exit.

MS. KLARPEN

And Gary? Get your own pens and
stop shitting in class, okay?

GARY

You got it.

MS. KLARPEN

And bring back my stapler!

He runs off. She sits on the edge of the table and sighs
contentedly.

MS. KLARPEN.
Ahhh...I hate my life.

BLACK OUT.

THE END