

Product Placement

Pilot

by
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ACT ONE

ESTABLISHING MONTAGE-- EXT. AND INT. OFFICE BUILDING --DAWN.

Sequence of NARRATOR'S POV taking the elevator to the office of the empty ad agency. Past the logo festooned lobby, personalized workstations, a conference room, on his way to a hidden office with an old Selectric typewriter.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

This is the Atlanta office of David, Charles and Barry advertising, where a family of eccentrics and hucksters struggle to get by -- and to get you to buy stuff. I'm employee Y598. I was fired five years ago, but due to a paperwork glitch I still get paid. Over the decades everyone who's worked here has said at least once, "this place is a sitcom." So on the off chance they're right, every work day I come sit at my secret and secure Selectric to tell their stories -- of a world that revolves around advertising, and where life feels like Product Placement.

CUT TO:

INT. SMALL MARKET -- MORNING

DAVID puts a pack of gum and a Snapple on the counter. KAI CHING mans the register.

KAI

Good morning. You come here often.

DAVID

That's right.

KAI

We exchange pleasantry. What your name?

DAVID

David, why?

KAI

Relationship management. Full name and phone number.

DAVID

Oh, uh, no -- I just got out of a relationship. Just the gum and Snapple.

KAI

That cool.

Kai adds items on register.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

This is David Lawrence, copywriter. He'd graduated college as an idealist in search of truth.

FLASHBACK: EXT. COLLEGE CAMPUS --DAY

A tweedy PROFESSOR walks with David, counseling him.

PROFESSOR

True, your liberal arts degree won't get you a job, but it will give you the background to understand *why*. Never forget that.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

So David pursued truth in the most likely profession he could think of. Journalism -- at a small town paper.

FLASHBACK: INT. SMALL TOWN NEWSROOM -- DAY

David photographs an old FARMER posing with an oddly shaped and newsworthy vegetable.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Then, after a quick turn at selective truth, in the form of political PR...

FLASHBACK: EXT. STAGE AT VICTORY RALLY -- DAY

David stands on stage behind a POLITICIAN at a victory rally. COPS arrest and cuff politician, then cuff a stunned David.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

David gave up on truth and took a job writing advertising.

Back to present:

DAVID

So, what's your name. I mean, you know mine, so...

KAI
 I thought you not ready for
 relationship. Now you want to opt in?
 Name Kai Ching.

SFX: Ka-ching (as Kai hits total on the register.)

DAVID
 (LAUGHS)

KAI
 You laugh at Kai? That not
 relationship!

DAVID
 No, no. I was laughing at the
 register. It went "ka-ching," like
 your name. That would be a great ad
 for your store, but I'm not laughing
 at you.

KAI
 It true. You always hurt the one you
 love.

DAVID
 No, no, no hurt. Just Snapple and gum.

KAI
 Kai move too fast. You not ready for
 relationship. Is that okay with Kai?
 Maybe. Does Kai want more? Certainly.
 Will you pay me \$2.79 now. Oh, yes.

Kai and David finish the transaction.

DAVID
 Thanks.

David opens the door to leave.

KAI
 I wait for you!

CUT TO:

INT AD AGENCY, VILLAGE GREEN COMMON AREA --MORNING

JENNIFER reads and eats breakfast at her desk as David
 arrives for work. An award statuette sits on her desk.

DAVID
 Hey, Jennifer. What's in Cosmo?

JENNIFER
(with mouth full) Fuhrtin.

SUPER: Jennifer Kennedy, employee Y623

DAVID
What's that? Something deviant?

JENNIFER
Flirting.

DAVID
Never heard of it.

JENNIFER
I know. It's about flirting with
double entendres, but I might have to
nap in the ladies room before I finish
it. I was out real late.

DAVID
Well, you'll feel better once you
finish that sausage biscuit.

JENNIFER
Yeah, I always perk up once I get some
pork in me. (BEAT)

DAVID
Keeping my Addy award all shiny, I
see.

JENNIFER
Lloyd hates it when you get your
fingerprints all over it.

DAVID
What makes him think it should go in
his office? He was on vacation when we
did this job.

JENNIFER
No. He was on holiday. Poor people go
on vacation. It's his department, so
he thinks it's his award. He needs the
validation.

DAVID
I'm just going to steal it back. Where
is he?

JENNIFER

He's getting coffee. I'm not a waitress.

CUT TO:

INT. AGENCY BREAK ROOM -- MORNING

LLOYD tries to fill a coffee cup while the machine is still brewing.

SUPER: Lloyd Farbi, employee A21

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Lloyd had been with the conglomerate Interpublicom Global, owner of the agency, since they were Intrapublicom 30 years ago. And though he'd never won the awards that would earn him a spot in New York, Lloyd knew things, some of which he still remembered. So he'd been paid well as corporate shuffled him to the most harmless shops in the system.

Lloyd returns to the village green area on the way to his office, stirring his coffee.

LLOYD

Jennifer. Remember that lunch I took you to a while back? What was that for? I need to expense it.

JENNIFER

Administrative assistant's day. It was yesterday.

LLOYD

Yes, right. The pate was fabulous.

Lloyd looks at the Addy statuette, then at David, and retreats to his office. DUNBAR STEVENS, on his way to his office, stops to talk with DAVID.

DUNBAR

Oh, David. Come see me. We need to show Lloyd something on the kids' ad this week. I have some ideas, but you need to flush them out. Or is it flesh them out?

SUPER: Dunbar Stevens, employee Y666

DAVID

If they're your ideas I'd go with
flush.

DUNBAR

Whatever. You're the writer. See me.

Dunbar crosses off.

LLOYD (O.S.)

Jennifer, do you have the receipt from
our secretary's day lunch?

JENNIFER

It's taped to your chair.

LLOYD (O.S.)

Oh, here it is. (BEAT) Jennifer?
What's your last name?

JENNIFER

Kennedy.

LLOYD (O.S.)

That's right. Thanks, Jackie.

David sticks his head in Harry's office.

DAVID

What do you got?

Harry lifts his drawing pad and displays a sketch of a
pergola.

HARRY

A pergola. It's the transition from my
side yard to the backyard. And what is
life but a transition to be
celebrated?

DAVID

That's nice, but I was thinking of the
Happy Kingdom board.

HARRY

Oh, that.

Harry holds up a storyboard and points to frames in rapid
succession.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Music, music, music, music, music,
logo, snappy closer. Your words were
in the way. Like jaywalkers.

DAVID

That should cut down on the rewrites.
I gotta see Dunbar.

HARRY

Have fun with that. I'll be here for
grief counseling.

David starts to walk off but stops as Harry adds...

HARRY (CONT'D)

Watch your six. We have visitors.
(OMINOUSLY) They're here to help.

DONNA sits in her office and furtively tucks something away
in her desk drawer as David arrives at her door.

DAVID

Good morning, Donna.

Donna turns to greet David, unaware of her enormous Maalox
moustache. She wears a short arm cast.

SUPER: Donna Lutz, employee V434

DONNA

Hey! It *is* a good morning, isn't it?
So many challenges and opportunities.
We got the kids' ad, Happy Kingdom...

DAVID

And visitors from the New York office.

DONNA

Great. My ulcer needs company. But for
the record, those aren't people.
People don't steal your future right
out from under your nose.

DAVID

Yeah, about that "under your nose"
thing. You got some antacid or
something...

DONNA

(wiping away the residue) (bleep) it,
(bleep) it! (bleep) it. Thank you.
(bleep) it!

(MORE)

DONNA (CONT'D)

They're here to steal a big assignment from our beverage friends, Alternative media. The client told me about it at Camp Cola.

FLASHBACK: EXT. SHEER CLIFF FACE -- DAY

Donna from a rappelling rig, in conversation with the female CLIENT.

CLIENT

...so with digital recorders, people are skipping right through the commercials. We need new ways to target consumers. Outside the box stuff. Old media is dead.

Client continues her controlled descent out of frame. Donna holds her head in dismay, releasing the rope and plunging from frame.

Back to present:

Quick cut of Dunbar eavesdropping through the wall.

DONNA

We need new ways to target consumers. Outside the box stuff. Old media is dead.

DAVID

We can rebuild it. We have the technology...

DONNA

We'd better.

Donna tosses David a small, flat device. He examines it curiously.

DONNA (CONT'D)

It's a proximity triggered audio chip. You get too near it and it talks to you.

DAVID

Oh, like a Dunbar.

DONNA

(off device) No, that thing will shut up after ten seconds. But it's the kind of thinking we need. If New York wins this, we won't make our numbers.

David looks at Donna quizzically.

CRIBBY

(CROSSING ON) That means no (bleep) bonuses. Now, goddamit, if we can't make our numbers when we charge a commission on our own (bleep) commission, we don't deserve to be called (bleep) advertising people.

Cribby storms off to his office.

DAVID

We get bonuses?

CRIBBY (O.S.)

Management gets bonuses. You get a (bleep) company picnic and discount parking.

DONNA

Just clear the decks and think outside the box. We present Friday.

David nods and walks away down the hall.

DONNA (O.S.) (CONT'D)

And watch your six.

David enters Dunbar's office and sits beside his desk, on which are stacks of art reference books with post-it markers in the pages.

DUNBAR

Don't you ever knock?

DAVID

When you can draw a door, I'll knock on it.

DUNBAR

I'm an art director. I don't have to draw.

DAVID

Well, I'm a writer, and I have to write.

DUNBAR

Yeah, you blew it on career fair day.

Dunbar slides an open book towards David.

DUNBAR (CONT'D)

I thought we'd do something like this.

DAVID

This is an illustration of the levels of hell. We're doing an ad for a kids' rag.

DUNBAR

Don't be so literate. Just write something for that *style*. Smooth words, like the airbrush.

DAVID

Well what's the illustration going to be of?

DUNBAR

You tell me, Ideaguy. The client will probably make us show the product, but I can make it legal line tiny, almost invisible. So give me edgy. This could roll out into bobbleheads. I'm serious.

DAVID

Oh, I know.

DUNBAR

Think breakthrough.

MUSIC: (IN DAVID'S HEAD.) intro drums from Led Zeppelin's "Rock n' Roll" as used by Cadillac.

DUNBAR (CONT'D)

And let me present. You blow.

David walks to Harry's office and settles in.

DAVID

Donna has a make-or-break job for us. We need new ways to advertise. I swear, there are days when I think advertising will consume the world.

David takes a big drink from his Snapple.

HARRY

Consume or *accent*, like wisteria on a pergola?

Harry displays his sketch of a wisteria adorned pergola. Reveal Harry wearing a Snapple T-shirt.

HARRY (CONT'D)
What are you playing with?

DAVID
Donna gave me this audio chip thing.
(READING) To record press and hold
mode until flashing...(SIGHS) I miss
analog.

SFX: Phone ring and pickup.

JENNIFER (O.S.)
Just a moment. Lloyd, line one.

Harry grabs an empty Starbuck's cup and removes the lid.

DAVID
Brownie frapuccino?

HARRY
Venti. It was like a party in my
mouth.

DAVID
Why does it have to be "venti?" Why
can't you say "extra large?"

HARRY
Why would I do that? It's the one part
of the day when I feel Italian.

Harry rolls his chair back to the wall, places the cup
against it and listens. He's done this before.

HARRY (CONT'D)
It's corporate.

DAVID
I thought they were in jail.

HARRY
Those were just indictments.

Harry stops eavesdropping.

HARRY (CONT'D)
That's it. A big assignment, our New
York friends, and now this. I'm
raising the alert level from fuscina to
eggplant.

Lloyd exits his office, stops by Jennifer's desk and strides
to the door of Harry's office.

LLOYD

Jackie, you should hear this, too. New York corporate wants me to fly up there Friday to accept a lifetime achievement award.

JENNIFER

You're not going to wear that turtleneck, are you?

LLOYD

This isn't a turtleneck. It's a dickey.

JENNIFER

So *that's* a dickey?

Lloyd shows Jennifer the flap of the dickey.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

It's a tiny little thing.

DAVID

You're getting an award of your own. That's great.

HARRY

But we have a big dog and pony Friday.

LLOYD

Oh, get Dunbar to present. He's killer.

DARCIA (O.S.)

And speaking of presentations...

All peer into the village green area, where DARCIA MADDOX stands. Lloyd approaches her.

DARCIA (CONT'D)

Darcia Maddox. Riverridge films. We had a ten o'clock?

LLOYD

Yes, yes. Well, you can show your reel right here. I'll collect the staff. People, let's take a time out for a screening in the village green.

No one shows. Harry takes the audio chip from David, examining it to pass the time.

LLOYD (CONT'D)

(TO DARCIA) This area's modeled after the village greens in Europe, where I spent much of my career.

DARCIA

Aren't they usually outdoors?

LLOYD

Well, in old Europe, yes. People, she brought gifts.

The creative staff quickly assembles.

DARCIA

Well, I guess I'd better start with a gift, then. Now, Riverridge has over fourteen directors so there's always some of our work on the air somewhere. And lately we've had a lot of fun with a certain well known travel company.

Darcia pulls Travelocity's ROAMING GNOME from a bag. The staff applauds and laughs.

DARCIA (CONT'D)

And he says he wants to belong to...

Various staffers raise their hands and call for it, but Darcia hands it to David.

DARCIA (CONT'D)

Take care of him now, and he'll take care of you. (WHISPERING) I'll be in town for a few weeks.

David sees Darcia's card with a hand-written phone number taped to the Roaming Gnome. He puts the card in his coat pocket.

DARCIA (CONT'D)

(TO ALL) But don't worry, I have more gifts after the reel, including really big cookies and really big T-shirts. And remember, we're very involved with new media, so whatever the job, it's worth it to bid Riverridge.

Darcia inserts 3/4 videotape into machine.

ROAMING GNOME (O.S.)

You are due for a holiday. Just look at you.

David looks to the Roaming Gnome, then to Darcia, who smiles.

DARCIA
Could you get the lights?

DAVID stands motionless. HARRY turns off the lights.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
And as the lights went down, Harry and Donna realized that Lloyd's award was corporate's way of sabotaging the big meeting...

Donna pulls the flask from her blazer and takes a swig, leaving a Maalox residue.

NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
...while Dunbar schemed to get into bed with the New York team -- and Darcia. And David worried that he was hearing voices -- from a spokesgnome.

Cut to full screen title: Riverridge Commercial reel.

FADE OUT.

Insert actual commercial pod.

FADEIN FROM
BLACK.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT IIINT OFFICE --DAY

SUPER: Thursday

David sits at his desk. Outside his window he sees a billboard of Kai Ching giving a thumbs up. Headline: Kai Ching means value!

GNOME

You really *do* need a holiday, you know.

DAVID

I'm a little stressed.

GNOME

Well, yes. You're chatting with a gnome, after all.

DAVID

I have to present a kids' ad to my boss and tomorrow there's a do-or-die pitch. I'm awful at presenting. It's making me lose my hair.

GNOME

Oh, I disagree.

DAVID

You think I'm a good presenter?

GNOME

Oh, dear no. But you're not losing your hair. As you age you'll grow more elsewhere - ears, eyebrows - and likely on your whoopsydaisy.

DAVID

I'm not comforted.

GNOME

It's quite inevitable. But we *can* do something about your presentation skills. Do you ask and answer your own questions?

DAVID

The grocery guy did that to...

GNOME

No. Should you learn?

DAVID

Well, I guess...

GNOME

Absolutely. Is it a crafty way to filibuster while simulating conversation?

DAVID

(pointing) Yes.

GNOME

Yes! But don't point. It's far too threatening, like a dagger. Instead place your thumb over your closed fist and shake.

David practices the gesture.

DAVID

I can do *that*.

GNOME

That's it! Like a truncheon, beating your point into their cursed, dim, skulls. Mix that with a little touch, turn, and talk and Bob's your uncle. And one more thing. Stop having ideas.

DAVID

Sorry?

GNOME

Ideas get shot down, but style and fluff, well, you can't shoot down smoke, can you?

DAVID

That sounds like Dunbar.

GNOME

Friend of yours?

DAVID

My nemesis.

GNOME

Then you'll be fighting fire with fire. Beat him at his own game. And when you're done, for heaven's sake man, take a vacation.

CUT TO:

INT.OFFICE, A SECRET FLOOR -- DAY

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Meanwhile, Harry and Donna set out to spy on the New York team.

The MAIL CLERK (the Office Depot "rubberband man") lets Harry and Donna into a restricted area and exits. They search through the paperwork of the New York team, layouts, etc.

NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

When they discovered the awful truth.

DONNA

These guys are trying to steal our business, and they get *window offices*?

HARRY

(HAVING FOUND AN INTERESTING DOCUMENT)
Actually they're trying to close our business. If we don't make numbers this time, they can shut us down.

DONNA

We've missed our numbers before.

HARRY

Yeah, but now we have some fat salaries getting a little too close to retirement. Haven't you noticed how cranky Cribby's been?

DONNA

I thought he was just low on scotch.

They jump at the sound of the elevator bell and desperately search for a hiding place, settling on a stall in the men's room. A NEW YORKER enters and stands at the urinal. DONNA takes a swig from her antacid and drops the cap. The New Yorker walks to the stall door to investigate. DONNA grabs HARRY and kisses him passionately as the NEW YORKER hurls open the door. He hastily excuses himself and exits.

HARRY

Wow. I liked that more than I should have. I'm going to have to rethink some things.

DONNA

(Flattered) Really?

Harry and Donna separate, revealing that they both have Maalox mustaches.

HARRY
Yeah, I usually hate wild cherry.

CUT TO:

INT. SMALL MARKET --DAY

Darcia brings a Snapple and gum to the register. Dunbar watches from behind his newspaper, the New York Times.

KAI
You like spicy gum.

DARCIA
Yes, I like a little tingle.

KAI
That fit your demo. You also catalog shop. Name and phone number please.

DARCIA
Wait a minute. I know you! You're on those billboards! Very cute.

KAI
Is Kai happy with them? Yes. Would Kai like still greater recognition? Certainly. Will Kai someday franchise and go national? Definitely.

DARCIA
You should do TV. The camera would love you. I'll be in town for a while. Give me a call and let's work up a bid.

Darcia exits.

Kai
(TO DUNBAR) This not library.

Dunbar brings the paper to the counter and pays.

KAI (CONT'D)
You from New York?

DUNBAR
Not yet.

KAI
 (OFF DUNBAR'S INTEREST IN DARCIA) She
 like a little tingle.

CUT TO:

INT. LLOYD'S OFFICE -- DAY

NARRATOR (V.O.)
 Though David normally resented
 unnatural presentation tricks, given
 his past performance, he decided to
 try them at an internal meeting.

Dunbar and David settle on the sofa as Lloyd rolls up his
 sleeves and sits in a chair western style.

LLOYD
 We're talking about the kids' ad,
 right? Twelve to fourteen-year-olds?
 What do we got?

DUNBAR
 We've approached it stylistically
 since young minds are more susceptible
 to graphic treatments.

DAVID
 Which explains comic books, video
 games, capri pants...

LLOYD
 Uh-huh, uh-huh.

DUNBAR
 So for a visual we're thinking of
 something like this.

David opens a reference book and displays a page.

DUNBAR (CONT'D)
 It's bold and intense, so it really
 pops. I want to give it a postmodern
 feel.

DAVID
 What *is* postmodern, I mean, for a
 twelve-year-old?

LLOYD
 We can research that.

DUNBAR
(TO DAVID) And you have some copy?

DAVID
Yeah, I have some thoughts.

David reaches beside him for a book and displays it. Before he speaks, he remembers to touch and turn.

DAVID (CONT'D)
I want to do something with this kind of feel.

Lloyd squints at the book.

LLOYD
Dickens? Is he public domain?

DUNBAR
I thought Michael Jackson bought his catalog.

DAVID
Doesn't matter. We'll do our *own* Dickensian copy.

David shakes his thumb-capped fist with each of the following points.

DAVID (CONT'D)
We'll go first-person narrative, elaboration, social consciousness - all driven by - thirst. It's a bold concept. Is it safe? No. Will it make the client nervous? Probably. Will it win us an award? Definitely.

DUNBAR
This could roll out into bobbleheads.

Lloyd nods like a bobblehead, inhales deeply and closes his eyes, touching his hand to his head. He seems to be telepathically contacting his advertising muse.

LLOYD
That's...it's...

Lloyd, recovering from his reverie, opens his eyes to proclaim..

LLOYD (CONT'D)
Breakthrough!

MUSIC: Drum intro to Led Zeppelin song "Rock and Roll" as used by Cadillac. DAVID experiences quick flashes of a zooming Cadillac as he watches LLOYD talk. LLOYD seems to be mouthing the lyrics as Robert Plant sings "been a long time since I Rock n' Rolled..." then out abruptly to real time.

LLOYD (CONT'D)

Let's go with it...

David and Dunbar collect their books to leave. LLOYD ushers them out.

LLOYD (CONT'D)

But see me before the meeting. We'll have to put on our suits of armor and do some serious lap dancing. *Tap dancing.*

David and Dunbar are now outside Lloyd's office as the door closes. Jennifer sits at her desk.

DUNBAR

Was that a good meeting?

DAVID

It was the best of meetings, it was the worst of meetings.

DUNBAR

Well, make up my mind.

Dunbar crosses off.

JENNIFER

You okay? You look kind of scattered.

DAVID

I don't know. I'm hearing voices. You ever hear voices?

JENNIFER

I've heard sweet nothings. (BEAT) Oh, you're still not flirting. I hear an old Selectric once in a while. I think this place is haunted.

DAVID

If it's not, it should be. Thanks Jackie.

David crosses off.

DAVID (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I'm kidding.

CITYSCAPE WITH AGENCY BUILDING. EXT.-- TIME LAPSE DAY TO EVENING.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
So on the eve of a meeting that would
make or break the agency...

INT. AGENCY CONFERENCE ROOM -- LATE NIGHT

Pizza boxes and wadded paper litter the floor, layouts and headlines are pinned to the walls, tight shots of concentration, frustration etc.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
...they papered the walls and floors
with ideas, while Dunbar took
unusually detailed notes...

Flashback: (continuation from earlier scene)

Harry and Donna exit men's room on the secret floor. They wipe antacid from their mouths and take the elevator. Just as the doors close, another elevator door opens. Dunbar exits and looks around furtively as he swipes a security card into the secure location of the New York team's secret offices.

NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
which he promised to share with the
New York team in return for a place in
their presentation, hoping his
willingness to two-time his coworkers
would prove he was New York material.

Back to present:

DAVID
Okay, what do we got?

DUNBAR
Let's see. Tattoos. Stunt blimps. Ads
in textbooks. And TV programming with
built in commercials.

Donna takes a big, refreshing pull from a Snapple, nearly a hero shot.

DONNA
Scratch that one. Never gonna happen.

DUNBAR
(CONTINUING) Proximity triggered audio chips, commercials broadcast on baby monitor frequencies, and telepathy. That's it.

DAVID
We're gonna need more than that.

DUNBAR
(GETTING UP TO LEAVE) Well, I'm worn out.

DAVID
But you haven't had one idea.

DUNBAR
I'm selling the ideas tomorrow. I gotta be fresh.

HARRY
Well, you better sell the hell out of them.

DUNBAR
Oh, I will.

Dunbar exits.

DAVID
I'd feel a lot better with Lloyd presenting.

HARRY
What do you suggest? Tell him corporate made up an award just to get him out of the office?

David considers it.

JENNIFER
It would kill him.

David still considers it.

DONNA
Put yourself in his shoes.

DAVID
The desert boots or the Wallabees?

Cribby and Lloyd enter, both somewhat in the sauce and with drinks in hand.

LLOYD

Ah, a war room. I almost miss being in the trenches.

Lloyd settles at the table. Cribby freshens his drink.

CRIBBY

Dang straight. Remember that five-day porcine mating event to name those diapers?

LLOYD

(REMEMBERING FONDLY) "Snookums. For baby's precious cargo." That was some of our best, Cribby.

CRIBBY

That's when advertising was teaching the world to hum instead of gumflappin' about danged feminine itch at the dinner hour!

HARRY

We're inventing new media.

LLOYD

Product placement?

HARRY

Kind of. But they want to go waaaay out there.

CRIBBY

Then what are we talkin' about. Crabgrass that grows in the shape of a logo? (LAUGHS HEARTILY)

David, Harry and Donna write on their pads.

LLOYD

Holy crap.

CRIBBY

How the hell are we gonna charge a media commission on (bleep) crabgrass! All right, then. Sand traps. The sand settles into the shape of your slogan or logo or whatever the hell it is.

David writes "sand traps" on a layout page and pins it to the wall.

CRIBBY (CONT'D)

Sell that one, dammit. I'm due for a trip to Pebble Beach. And whoever pulls this off gets a dang company car. And that ain't just the scotch talkin'.

LLOYD

Knock it out of the park tomorrow, and some of you might get a lifetime achievement award some day. Because this company cares about its people. Well, I better go home and pack.

Lloyd and Cribby head for the door.

JENNIFER

Lloyd, leave the dickey at home.

HARRY

Please.

LLOYD

If you say so, Jackie.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE CONFERENCE ROOM AT CLIENT.

Harry, Donna and David sit outside a conference room. An automated mailcart stops at a secretary's station and knocks over a plant. The secretary replaces the plant in its original location.

DONNA

Where the hell is Dunbar?

HARRY

It's not like him to miss a chance to seem important.

DAVID

If he doesn't show, who's going to...

Harry and Donna eyeball David, who sighs and hangs his head.

DONNA

Who's got the talking audio chip? That might save our ass.

DAVID

Asses. Save our asses.

Harry Fruitlessly searches his coat pockets.

HARRY
I know I had it.

DONNA
This is turning into a sitcom.

The conference room doors open.

MINION #1
We're ready for you now.

The group enters the conference room and settles in at the table with TOP EXEC and his MINIONS.

FLASHBACK: INT. AGENCY OFFICE SECRET FLOOR -- MORNING.

The NEW YORKERS gather at the elevator bank. Dunbar excuses himself and disappears around the corner. Once he's out of sight, the New Yorkers board an elevator and abandon him.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
In fact, just a few hours earlier, as the New York team had gathered for their presentation, Dunbar suffered a nervous bladder and visited the men's room.

Dunbar stands at the urinal.

JENNIFER (O.S.)
(RECORDED ON CHIP) So that's a Dickey!
It's a tiny little thing.

Dunbar jumps, making a mess of himself.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Where he discovered the missing audio chip.

Back to present:

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM -- DAY

Donna stands and sets up the meeting as Harry and David sit at the table and confer.

DONNA
You asked us to reinvent advertising,
and we pulled out all the
stops...(CONTINUING UNDER)

HARRY

(SOTTO VOCE) Don't panic. We still got plenty of ammo.

DAVID

(SOTTO VOCE) We got stunt blimps and sand traps.

HARRY

(SOTTO VOCE) Plenty of ammo.

DONNA

(Up FROM UNDER) And now I'm going to let David Lawrence take you through the work.

David moves to the head of the room.

MUSIC UNDER: Tom Waits's "Step Right Up"

DAVID

The problem? People are ignoring advertising. The solution? Make it a part of everyday life.

LYRICS

That's right, you too can be the proud owner of the quality goes in before the name goes on...

Montage: David presenting, pantomiming, his confidence growing. The Top Exec and his Minions react thoughtfully and favorably. DONNA and HARRY exchange smiles. David winds up his performance.

MUSIC FADEOUT:

DAVID

...so in the perfect world we propose, if you're not being exposed to advertising, you're technically dead.

TOP EXEC

I love it. (TO MINIONS) Don't you boys love it?

Minions nod.

TOP EXEC (CONT'D)

Just one question. Why bring the same ideas your New York office showed me two hours ago?

DONNA

Well, the creative process is a mysterious thing. Sometimes...

TOP EXEC

Look, if that's all you got, I'll give the business to New York. Great restaurants up there.

DAVID

Wait, I have one wild thought. I haven't even told my partner about this one yet. Maybe if you gave us a day to...

TOP EXEC

Let's hear it.

Harry masks his terror with a smile.

DAVID

Okay then. Crime scene tape.

Reaction shots.

Harry begins sketching visual aids.

DAVID (CONT'D)

You watch the news. What do you see every night? Crime. Well, with your message on crime scene tape, that's free impressions.

MINION #1

I'm not sure we want to be associated with crime.

DAVID

This brand is built on what's authentic. Doesn't that include the gritty, the edgy?

MINION #2

But homicide?

DAVID

Oh, not just homicide - any felony with a crime scene would be a chance to remind consumers that it's time for refreshment -- to drink in life while you can.

MINION #2

It *could* generate cotangential synergy.

Executives nod.

DAVID

Is it out there? Yes. Is it dangerous? No doubt. Will it make marketing history? Absolutely. (NOW EMPHASIZING WITH THUMB-CAPPED FIST) It's a concept that's bold, revolutionary, and so real it hurts.

Harry finishes his layout depicting crime scene tape emblazoned with refreshment logos. He displays it to the execs.

TOP EXECUTIVE

(SMILING) You know what this idea is?... Breakthrough!

MUSIC IN: Led Zeppelin's "Rock n' Roll" as used by Cadillac.

CUT TO:

INT. AGENCY VILLAGE GREEN --EVENING

Montage of celebration at the agency. Cribby, drink in hand, gives David a set of car keys. DAVID puts the keys in his coat pocket and feels something. It's Darcia's card.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

So they returned to the agency for a victory party, where David took the keys to his new car. And unable to decide if he'd arrived or sold out, he went for a drive.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY STREETS -- EVENING CONTINUOUS TO HOTEL INT.

David drives his Cadillac to Darcia's hotel, where he tosses the keys to an appreciative valet.

MUSIC FADEOUT:

VALET

Smooth. Clean. Lean. *This* is why I'm a professional valet.

David passes through the hotel and knocks on Darcia's door. Darcia opens it.

DARCIA

Well, isn't this a surprise. Finally taking that vacation?

David sees a figure in Darcia's room. She has company.

DAVID

Looks like my timing's off.

DARCIA

It's just a potential client.

KAI

(REHEARSING) Ka-Ching. No, *Ka-Ching*. No. Ka-Chiiiiing. No, not it...Kaaaa Ching...

DAVID

I just had a quick question for you.

DARCIA

Sure, that's why I'm here.

DAVID

(BEAT) Do we become what we hate?

Darcia notices DAVID gesturing with his thumb atop his closed fist. He puts his hand in his pocket. They lock eyes.

DARCIA

(TO KAI) Mr. Ching, I like what you're doing. You keep practicing, and I'll be right back.

DARCIA and DAVID walk down the hall together.

CUT TO:

HOTEL ROOFTOP, NIGHT.

SUPER: much, much later.

David and Darcia look out over the city, sipping drinks.

DARCIA

I'm glad you finally took a little "me" time.

DAVID

I'm glad I took a little you time,
too. It was a long day. I sold a lot
of advertising.

DARCIA

That's good, isn't it?

DAVID

Advertising that invades your personal
life.

DARCIA

What?

DAVID

And on crime scene tape.

DARCIA

That's so sick!

DAVID

I know. I know.

DARCIA

We might want to bid on that.

DAVID

Okay. (BEAT) You never answered, you
know. Do we become what we hate?

DARCIA

I don't know. Do you hate people who
talk too much?

DAVID

Yeah.

Darcia puts her head on David's shoulder. David wraps an arm
around her. They view the twinkling cityscape.

MUSIC: Colin Hay's "Waiting for my Real Life"

Slow crane over and through the city, on its way to the
agency.

LYRICS

Any minute now
my ship is coming in/ I'll keep
checking the horizon /
And I'll check my machine/ There's
sure to be that call/
(MORE)

LYRICS (CONT'D)

It's gonna happen soon, soon, oh so
 very soon/It's just that times are
 lean/

ZOOM INTO village green as Lloyd enters from his trip with his new award. He sees the remnants of the celebration and smiles. He sits at Jennifer's desk and admires his Lifetime Achievement Award. He notices David's Addy award on Jennifer's desk and takes it to David's office. Lloyd polishes the Addy and leaves it on David's desk next to the Roaming Gnome.

LYRICS (CONT'D)

And you say, "Be still, my love Open up
 your heart/ Let the light shine in"/
 Don't you understand?/I already have a
 plan/ I'm waiting for my real life to
 begin

Tight on Roaming Gnome and David's Addy award.

GNOME

Beautiful, isn't it, my darling?

LYRICS

On a clear day/I can see, see a very
 long way

COURIER TYPE EFFECT: The end

SFX: a Selectric types "The end," then powers off.

END OF SHOW