

Last Call

A Play in One Act

Cast of Characters:

Harold/Charlie:

A man in his late 50's or early 60's. His clothing appears cheap and wrinkly, but is now disheveled and torn. He is overweight and balding, like a used-car salesman trying to be president. Sober, he is quiet, scared and somber. Drunk, he acts slightly incredulous, with fantasies overtaking his imagination.

The Man/Nick:

A man in his late 20's or early 30's. He is confident and sure of himself. He wears fashionable clothing and looks sophisticated and slightly flashy. Despite his friendly demeanor, he is cold and uncaring. He is the life of the party on one hand, and an absolute bastard on the other. He has the face and charm that people hate to love.

Scene

A somewhat messy hotel room that contains a recliner, a table, a chair, a bed, a liquor cabinet, and a mirror. Under the bed is a satchel. An open suitcase with tourist-y Hawaiian shirts and bathing shorts rests on the bed. The hotel room itself has an appearance of class at first glance, but when really examined, flecked paint on the walls, chipped wood on the table even the 'nice' recliner is torn. It doesn't hold up.

Time

The present.

ACT I

Scene 1

Setting:

We are in a somewhat messy and cluttered hotel room. What once may have been a very chic place to sleep carries a feeling of time worn disparity to it. The door and doorway are slightly busted from being broken into. The bed is in disarray, as is the rest of the room. A large mirror hangs on the wall above the small table and mini-bar, reflecting out. An opulent recliner sits on one side of the table while a basic wooden chair sits on the other.

AT RISE:

The audience hears the sound of laughing women and lapping waves. Sea breezes and overhead seagulls make a final pronouncement of the

audible calm before the hard sound of a breaking door chain and shattered hinge replace the paradise soundtrack.

As STAGE LIGHTS illuminate the scene, we see HAROLD, trying to sit up on the floor with blood on his face. Over him, THE MAN/NICK, wearing an understated yet unsoiled overcoat, is standing in front of the broken, ajar door, with a shiny black pistol pointed at HAROLD's head. THE MAN/NICK examines the room monetarily, looks out the door behind him, and shuts it quietly, before beaming a wickedly charming smile.

THE MAN

Hey Charlie, up here.

(Crouching to HAROLD's level, looking him in eye. Guns is still pointed at him.)

Stop crying, you're better than that.

HAROLD

(Hesitantly looking up at THE MAN, rubbing his face. Opens his mouth momentarily, then shuts it.)

THE MAN

It's alright, you can talk. What's on your mind?

HAROLD

(Eyes focus on the gun in NICKS hand. Eyes water, and begins to blubber.)

Please...please don't kill me. Look, I have some money; I'll give it to-

THE MAN

Oh, Charlie, you mean the suitcase under the bed? Yeah, I know about that. Don't worry, I am gonna take it, but - trust me-it's not yours to give me.

HAROLD

Wh-what are you going to do to me? Please, I have a family...

THE MAN

(With free hand, makes a 'stop' gesture.)

Stop. Stop it right now. I don't have time for that noise. C'mon Charlie, you know why I'm here.

(Stands up and motions upwards with gun holding hand.)

Go ahead and sit on your bed; that looks really uncomfortable. This doesn't have to be unpleasant.

HAROLD

(Struggles standing up; almost falls backwards onto hotel bed. Touches face again.)

THE MAN

Oh yeah, sorry 'bout that. That couldn't be helped man - I didn't mean to ding ya' that much - but, ya' know, I hafta make a strong first impression with all my clients. How ya' feeling though? Okay?

HAROLD

(Looks down at floor and watches blood drip from mouth to carpet.)

Please...I jus-

THE MAN

What'd I say?

(Walks to the recliner, and sits down, making himself comfortable.)

HAROLD

(Still looking down, snorts up a glob of snot, and chokes on it; begins to cough rough.)

THE MAN

Whoa, Charlie man, don't go doing that - your sinuses are full of blood - and you'll only throw up. You don't, or really, *I don't*, wanna have to worry about any messes.

(Gets up and steps closer to HAROLD.)

Feeling better?

HAROLD

(Nods silently and sits up straighter. He wipes his mouth and nods yes. He keeps his head lowered.)

Wh-what are you going to do to me? Are you going to kill me?

THE MAN

(Steps backwards towards the recliner and sits back down. One hand still pointing the gun at HAROLD and the other resting on the arm of the chair. He rubs the chair arm and smirks as if impressed.)

Always the business man, huh? All right, so be it, yes, I'm here to kill you. You've been a bad boy.

HAROLD

(Snorts and blubbers at NICKS candor.)

I don't know what you're talking about. This has to be a mistake!

THE MAN

(Shakes his head empathetically and laughs.)

Man, why does everybody - seriously everybody - always think I have the wrong guy? Like I just go and grab any guy with a beard or something. C'mon Charlie, do you really

think I just picked you out of the blue? Believe me when I say this: I'm a bit more professional than that.

(Rubs chair arm again, as if more impressed than before.)

Anyway, you have a suitcase - or what is that, actually?

(Points to satchel under the bed.)

HAROLD

What?

THE MAN

C'mon man, the bag...what's the word for it; I know it's not a brief case...you know, *that!*

(Pointing more pronounced at satchel.)

HAROLD

(Confused, HAROLD clears his throat.)

Ummm...A satchel?

THE MAN

(Excited he lifts his hands in an 'aha' realization for a moment.)

A satchel! That's the word! Anyway...

(Lowers hands, one pointing gun, other resting on chair arm.)

You have a *satchel* filled with the better part of a hundred thou under you. I'm pretty sure you are the *right* guy.

HAROLD

(Quiet for a moment. Wipes his mouth and lets his hand fall into his lap.)

Please...I can make this right...Please don't do this, I can-

THE MAN

Man, this the last time I'm gonna tell you to stop. It's too late for that. It's done. Besides, I'm not the guy who makes that decision.

(Sighs and strokes his chin.)

Look Charlie-boy, I don't want your dignity. Might as well keep that.

HAROLD

(Looks down and shakes head.
quietly sobs to himself before
silently looking around the room.
He stares at the door.)

(SUPER-IMPOSED FOOTAGE SHOT ON STAGE, COVERING SET AND ACTORS: Beautiful beaches and summer scene. Quintessential 'Corona' Commercial like imagery. Cuts hard to stock gunman and spy footage; all images look like 'badguys' with the upper hand. Quick shot cuts to 60's/70's era 'good guys' ala James Bond running away. Footage cuts off suddenly)

THE MAN

(Notices HAROLD staring at door.)
So Charlie, whad'ya thinkin' bout?

HAROLD

(Looks up, as if praying; his words
are quiet.)
Just do it...

THE MAN

What was that?

HAROLD

(Eyes wide open and still
staring upwards. He screams.)
Just fucking do it!! Stop fucking with me!

THE MAN

(Visibly surprised, but
still restrained and measured. His
phone vibrates and holding it
with his free hand, looks at it
and smirks.)
Damn Charlie, straight-the-fuck-up huh? Calm down guy, take
a breath.

(Laughs, puts phone on table next
recliner and strokes chair arm again.)

Goddamn, this is a comfy chair...did you get to sit in this?
It is, no lie, like sitting on a piece of heaven.

HAROLD

(Gasps at the word 'heaven' and
mumbles to himself. He closes his
eyes.)

THE MAN

Look, I have a proposition for you.
(Shifts to focus on HAROLD.)
Charlie, you there?

HAROLD

(Whispering to himself.)
I'm so sorry...please...please...forgive me. I was wrong...for
everything. For everything...I love you Jesus...
(Shrugs to self)
Please don't let me go to... I promise I'll be good...I prom-

THE MAN

(Slams free hand on table)
Charlie! C'mon man, over here. You ain't gonna get any help
up there. Hey, I got something to ask you.

HAROLD

(Resigned and defeated, he looks
at NICK.)
What? What do you want from me?

THE MAN

How would you like a little more time? I mean, you can make
your peace later.

HAROLD

What? I don't understand what you-

THE MAN

Time man!
(Stands up and walks towards HAROLD.)
Look, it's an easy question: I can either take you out
right now, if that's what you want, or I can give you a
couple more hours. You know, have yourself a drink or

something. Calm the nerves...Get your thoughts together. The choice is yours, but make it quick.

(Lifts gun to HAROLD's head, pressing
The barrel into HAROLD's temple.)

HAROLD

(Involuntarily shakes at the touch
of the gun. His arm trembles
uncontrollably. He hears the clicking
sound of the hammer.)

Fuck, fuck, stop! Stop, I want to live. Don't do it! Please
stop!

THE MAN

(Excitedly with a laugh.)

Atta boy, that's what I wanted to hear!

(Raises the gun from Harold's
head and saunters back to
the recliner, sitting down.)

Goddamn Charlie, I'm real glad you said that, you have no
idea!

HAROLD

(Trying to catch breath from
hyperventilating earlier. Clutches
heart and rubs arm. As he calms down
he begins to actually look at NICK.)

THE MAN

(Keeps gun pointed at HAROLD as
he reaches over to his vibrating phone
and picks it up with his free hand. He
chuckles to himself, types something
and puts it back on the table.)

HAROLD

(Clears throat.)

That's a nice jacket.

THE MAN

(Looking down at his attire
for a moment and smiles.)

Hey, thanks Charlie-man, I was going for that understated
style, ya know? I really dig it, but it was like \$3,000 or

something ridiculous. I guess good looks don't come cheap, right?

HAROLD

3,000? You were robbed.

THE MAN

(Taken aback by the candor for a moment, before laughing uproariously.)

HAROLD

(Chuckles for moment at NICK's reaction.)

THE MAN

That's what I'm talking about! I knew you had to have a sense of humor!

(Strokes his mouth and chin.)

Hey, why don't ya sit over here man?

(Kicks out the small wooden chair out from the small table.)

HAROLD

(Face turns serious again. Shakes his head.)

No, it's ok. I'm fine..

THE MAN

C'mon Charlie-man, don't be like that, not when we finally start 'clicking'. Besides, I know you don't want to be sitting in your own piss. The smell don't bother me. Come over here.

(THE MAN is smiling, but he is still.)

HAROLD

(Looks sheepishly around the room, and slowly picks himself up off the bed. Each step is slow and measured.)

THE MAN

(His smile is still on his face,

but his eyes are tracking HAROLD coldly.)

HAROLD

(Meekly pulls out chair and sits down. He isn't sure whether to place hands on table or not, deciding finally to rest them in his lap. He turns his eyes to the corner of the table.)

THE MAN

(THE MAN's gun hand relaxes and he Subtly begins to move again.)

Wanna drink?

(Forces eye contact with HAROLD.)

HAROLD

Yes.

NICK

Go ahead and pour yourself one; the mini bar is all yours.
(Motion's head to small refrigerator resting on the table.)

HAROLD

(Slowly looks at refrigerator and pulls the gold plated handle; opening the door. He chuckles to himself.)

THE MAN

What's so funny?

HAROLD

Nothing really...just...

(Looks up at THE MAN.)

Just, when I checked in, I thought having a mini bar like this was...I don't know...kind of elite or something..

(Shakes his head and pulls two small Jack Daniels shooters.)

It doesn't seem like that anymore.

THE MAN

(Nods slightly empathetically.)

I get it, but you don't have to be all pessimistic. Ain't like you getting charged or anything.

(Noticing the choice of drink HAROLD makes.)

That's what I'm talking about Charlie-man. J.D. is the way to go!

HAROLD

(Opens both bottles and places caps on table carefully. He drinks both bottles in succession and makes a face.)

THE MAN

(Smiles and laughs at HAROLD's reaction to the drink.)

That's what I-AM-TALKIN-ABOUT!

(Phone vibrates and NICK picks up to look at it. Smiles at phone and texts a quick response before putting it back down.)

HAROLD

(Fidgets in chair.)

I don't want to be here anymore... I just-I just-

THE MAN

Hey man, you think *I* wanna be here? I promise you, it's only gonna be a drag if you keep bringing it up like this. Shit, we might as well have a good time before I gotta leave.

HAROLD

(Flashing with incredulity.)

A good time!? You're fuc—you've got to be joking.

(Eyes flash like he caught himself acting out of turn and calms down.)

Can you at least put that thing away?

THE MAN

(Looking at gun and back to HAROLD.)

Awww, I'm sorry brotha, I can't do that. Professional, remember?

HAROLD

(Looks back at corner of table.)

(SUPER-IMPOSED FOOTAGE SHOT ON STAGE, COVERING SET AND ACTORS: Stock footage of kids in the '40's playing around and teenagers in the 50's driving cars and laughing (no sound). The sound of seagulls and waves can be heard. Footage of swinging hammocks and sunset filled beaches can be seen. Then they immediately flash away.)

THE MAN

What kind of flicks do you watch?

HAROLD

What?

THE MAN

Flicks man, movies. What's your flavor?

HAROLD

Uhh...I don't know.

THE MAN

You *don't know*? C'mon Charlie-man, when you go to the flicks, or throw on a DVD, or DVR cause you gonna miss it; what do you watch?

HAROLD

(Shifts in seat, face in consternation. Looks like he's trying to remember.)

Ummm...I took my wife to see 'Once' a little while back.

(SUPER-IMPOSED FOOTAGE SHOT ON STAGE, COVERING SET AND ACTORS: A video flash of a woman in a red and yellow dress pops in and out for just a second. She's young and vibrant, then she's older and jaded, quick shot smiling and quick shot crying or yelling.)

THE MAN

Oh shit! That is a great movie! Real talk, that was one of the most realistic love stories I have ever seen, seriously.

HAROLD

Yeah, it was a good one. Remember that line 'the girl' says to 'the guy' in Finnish when he asks her if she still loves her husband?

THE MAN

Yeah, yeah! Man, I've tried googling it before, but I never can find it. *Nobody* knows the secret apparently.

HAROLD

I do.

THE MAN

Really!?! Can you tell what she said; that's always bothered me not knowing.

HAROLD

No.

THE MAN

(Taken aback once more, but quickly relaxes himself and laughs loudly.)

Man, Charlie...I like you. Fine, be that way. Hey, have you ever seen 'Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind'?

HAROLD

(Opens the refrigerator door and stops, looking at NICK.)

THE MAN

Ah, yeah man. You're good, I don't mind. Drink up; you don't have to ask me.

HAROLD

(Grabs two more bottles of Jack Daniels and closes the door, moving the empty bottles to the side and placing the new

bottles in front of him.)

THE MAN

But, have you seen it though?

HAROLD

That's the one with Jim Carrey, right?

(Cracks open one of the bottles
and drinks it down heartily. He
doesn't make a face this time.)

Yeah, I saw it; it was okay. Personally, I thought—hold on...

(Opens the second bottle, raises it
NICK in salutations and drinks
and drinks it down with a smile. Makes
an exaggerated "Ahhh".)

Personally, I thought it was too trendy for my tastes. I
didn't feel the heart in it. It was like—

THE MAN

What!? Are you serious Charlie? Not enough heart? Oh my god
man, I couldn't disagree with you more!

(NICK wilts his gun hand downward
and is much more animated; leaning
into HAROLD.)

Man, that flick was *real* realistic, the most I've seen,
with how people - or really 'couples' - act with one
another. I mean, knowing that things will turn to shit, but
try and 'beat' it anyway. I don't know about you, but
that's like every stupid relationship I've seen. Don't get
me wrong or anything, I still believe in the whole 'love at
first sight' thing, but that movie was solid cause it
wasn't all sappy, know what I mean?

HAROLD

I take it you've never been married then...Tell you what,
after twenty-three years and two kids, you can tell me I'm
wrong. You want to see a love story, watch 'Casablanca'.
Now that is something worth remembering.

THE MAN

(Slaps his open hand onto his knee
and laughs heartily.)

Jesus Charlie, you sound like my pops! He says the same exact kinda shit and I just don't get it. I mean, do all you old guys swear by that one movie or what?

(Gun holding hand lowers once more, with forearm resting on the table.)

HAROLD

(Laughing along with THE MAN, sitting back a little more relaxed.)

What can I say, those are the greats. Listen, you have Bogart and Bergman together for one thing, and then an actual *good* story to go with it. Your father knows what he's talking about.

(Moves forward and opens the refrigerator once more and peruses the bottles left. His hand hovers over the remaining Jack Daniel bottles.)

Shit...

(Hastily scoops up three Vodka bottles instead. As he closes the door, it slams accidentally. Moves the empty bottles to the side and places the full Vodkas in front of him. He happily opens one and drinks it down.)

THE MAN

I know, I know...next you're going to tell me the importance of the war setting behind the complex love they had for each other. I've heard it before.

HAROLD

(Laughs as he finishes the bottle and wipes his chin.)

Hmmm...that is some deep analysis; your dad a movie buff?

THE MAN

Oh, well that's what he studied in college I guess. You know, theater, film, art, that kind of thing. He got a PhD in critical analysis I think...or something like that. That's what he does now.

HAROLD

Your dad is a movie critic?

THE MAN

Yeah, and I swear that's his little paradise in life...sometimes a little too much I think.

HAROLD

Where did he go? To school I mean?

THE MAN

You know, I wouldn't even know it, but it has a funny name. It was something like Bowling Green or something I think?

HAROLD

Bowling Green State University? In Ohio? Was that what it was called?

THE MAN

(Shrugs and nods.)

Yeah, that sounds about right...Actually, that's exactly what it is I think.

HAROLD

(Chuckles to himself and opens the second bottle of vodka. Finishing it, he tosses the empty on the table and makes a harsh face.)

Goddamn, that is nasty.

(Looks up at THE MAN.)

You're kidding me right? That's my school. Bowling Green, class of '71.

THE MAN

(Phone vibrates and he checks it. Smiling, he types a response without looking up HAROLD.)

Really? That's funny. Small world, huh?

(Finishes his response before placing the phone back on the table.)

HAROLD

(Notices the inattention, and starts to sway slightly.)

Yeah, small world...

(Blinks and exhales loudly.
Stifles a burp.)

Oh damn, hey...I think I need to go to the bathroom...I feel like I'm going throw up.

THE MAN

It's okay man, just do it on the floor. Over there.
(Points toward corner of the room.)

You can't go the bathroom though.

HAROLD

(Nods and turns away, bending over. His balance is off and he dry heaves, but nothing comes out.)

THE MAN

You all right, Charlie?

HAROLD

(Sits back up and leans backwards, seeming relaxed. Nods affirmatively at THE MAN's query, keeping his eyes half-lidded.)

(SUPER-IMPOSED FOOTAGE SHOT ON STAGE, COVERING SET AND ACTORS: Scenes of his wife in an elegant black dress at a dinner. She is opening a box with a diamond necklace. Shots of various expensive pieces of jewelry keep showing, before the entire shot fades away. Shots of Elizabeth Taylor, Audrey Hepburn, Marilyn Monroe, all looking beautiful, doing nothing. Shot quickly disappears.)

HAROLD

Fucking women...

THE MAN

What, Charlie?

HAROLD

(Shakes his head exaggeratedly.)

Ahhh, nothing...just thinking. So your father, how does he—he like *what you do*?

THE MAN

What I do? Oh, hell no, yeah right, he doesn't know about my work. He'd flip; shit he'd probably lock me up himself. Nah, he thinks I'm a music producer.

(Laughs.)

Now that I think about it though, I think he sees it just as reprehensible.

HAROLD

(Laughing along with THE MAN.)

Wait—what? Of all the things...why in the world would you want to be a music producer? They're like the...ummm...sweaty assholes of the music world.

THE MAN

(Laughs and shrugs at HAROLD's words.)

I don't know man, it sounded good at the time I guess. It also helps that my pops absolutely hates it. Definitely keeps things interesting during the holidays. Hey, tell me something, it just came back to me, how do even know Finnish?

HAROLD

(Laughs and looks downward for a moment.)

(SUPER-IMPOSED FOOTAGE SHOT ON STAGE, COVERING SET AND ACTORS: A close-up of an old woman wearing traditionally Finnish garb. Clips of a young boy running around in circa 50's setting, before fading away.)

My great grandmother from my mom's side lived with us. She never spoke English—I don't think ever knew it...tried knowing it...

THE MAN

(Nods.)

HAROLD

(Shakes his head.)

But...in any event, you like...doing *this*? Maybe I'm getting a little drunk, but you don't seem like a...a, well you know.

THE MAN

Well thanks for that Charlie, you seem alright yourself.

(Shrugs to himself.)

It's good money I guess. And, I mean, I get to travel a lot, so that's always cool. I guess mostly I like it when work is over, not so much the work itself. What about you though, how do you like being - what was it again, and investor or something? Dealing with stocks and bonds or something?

HAROLD

How-how'dju know what I-oh, wait. Professional right? Yeah, lead investor for 'The Grubman Group' for sixteen fucking terri-

(Stifles a burp and exhales hard.)

Sorry...sixteen fucking years. I couldn't wait to leave.

THE MAN

Well that sucks. You at least made some good money though, right? I mean, I mean, why else do it?

HAROLD

(Reaches out to the last bottle of vodka, but accidentally knocks it over. Bends over to pick it up and tries to sit nonchalantly. Opens the bottle and drinks the contents, before tossing the bottle to the ground.)

I guess-I guess good enough. But when you got a wife spending it before you can make it, shit...I stops mattering.

THE MAN

'Fuckin' women'; I gotcha...well now that makes more sense to me; this whole thing I mean.

HAROLD

What? Whaddya mean?

THE MAN

(Leans closer to HAROLD, gun in hand now veering to the left.)

Well, I knew you were trying to get to Belize or some noise like that, but I was wondering what the hell you were gonna

do when you got there? "Call up the old lady and send her down?" It didn't make any sense to me.

HAROLD

(SUPER-IMPOSED FOOTAGE SHOT ON STAGE, COVERING SET AND ACTORS: A static shot of a beach at sunset is seen. It is faded, but the sound of seagulls, waves, and laughter can be heard faintly. Beautiful scantily clad women in bikinis walking are in abundance.)

Hell no, I wasn't going to call her! What do you take me for? I'm no idiot! This is my bran' new life! Hot sands, pink sunsets! The works.

(HAROLD stretches his hands above his head and they flop down to his sides. His head sways and his attention is towards the floor.)

(The shot of the beach fades away as HAROLD's arms fall.)

THE MAN

That's a nice dream Charlie...a real nice dream.

(Moves head to make eye contact with HAROLD.)

Hey Charlie, you alright? You're not too faded, are you?

HAROLD

(Refocuses his eyes and looks at THE MAN, resting his hands on table.)

Why do you keep calling me Charlie?

THE MAN

(Leans back in recliner.)

Ummm, wow, I don't know really. Defense mechanism I guess. Yeah, that's the best way to put it.

HAROLD

So, you know my name's not 'Charlie', right?

THE MAN

Oh, most definitely! It's just easier that way. I mean, I only really want to know what I need to do my job right.

Man, if you only knew all the crying I've had to listen to, or the begging or whatever, dang, it'd break your heart.

HAROLD

(As if not even listening, HAROLD leans on table to open the refrigerator door. His hand playfully dances in front of the last four Jack Daniels bottles, before grabbing them one by one and lining them up in front of him. After closing the refrigerator door, he opens the first bottle in the row, opens it, raises it to himself and drinks it down. As he finishes, his eyes still closed, he exhales, drops the bottle and wipes his mouth.)

We've been talkin' for a while, and you know my name. I don't like being called 'Charlie'. Call me Harold.

(Wipes his hand on his pants and stretches it out to meet THE MAN's hand for a handshake. It's wobbly.)

THE MAN

(Strokes his chin for a moment and clicks his tongue. Very deliberately he extends his free hand out and meets HAROLD's hand, formally shaking it twice.)

I'll think about it...but you can call me Nick.

(He let's go of HAROLD's hand at sound of the phone vibrating. Picks it up, reads it quickly and replies with a short text. After putting the phone down his attention turns back to HAROLD.)

It's strange; that's never happened before.

HAROLD

(Opens the next bottle in line, but sets it back in place, laughing.)

Really? Well, I s'ppose everybody else has other things on their mind?

NICK

Well, in all honesty, you're the only guy whose had enough time to say anything else. I kinda like to get work done as quickly as possible. Why procrastinate, right?

HAROLD

(Shrugging absently and lifting the second bottle to his lips. Much of it spills over his cheeks as he finishes it down. Again, he tosses the empty bottle to the floor.)

So why me then? Why'm I so special. Getting the special treatment from a professional of your caliber? How come I get all this time?

NICK

(Chuckles and smiles.)

Well, to tell you the truth, there's this girl and she-

HAROLD

(Shocked and loud, he reacts angrily.)

A girl? What does that shit got to do with me?

NICK

(Immediately tensing up, the hand holding the gun straightening directly at HAROLD.)

Hey man, I'm going to ask you to relax okay. Drink you drink, ask your questions, whatever, but don't you get all crazy; it'll only end this little pow-wow of ours prematurely. Solid?

HAROLD

(Shirking back into a meek position. Looking towards the floor he nods slowly.)

NICK

What? I'm sorry, I didn't hear you.

HAROLD

(Quietly.)

Yes.

NICK

Thank you; I'm glad we're on the same page again. Anyway, there's this girl I've been talking to and—hey, you can drink them other shots—man, I know it's going to sound corny, but I think she is, damn I can't believe I'm saying this, but I really think she could be *the one*.

HAROLD

(The morose look on his face fades as HAROLD closes his eyes and sways and nods to the words NICK says to him. He laughs when he hears 'the one'.)

The one? You're fuckin' kidding me? That's too funny.
(Sloppily reaches over the table and grabs the next shooter in line. He drinks it with gusto, laughing intermittently as he finishes the bottle. He is about to toss it, but instead very meticulously places it back in place on the table. When it stays in place he congratulates himself with flourish.)

NICK

Damn man, you can knock them back like a champ.
(Laughs and rests his gun holding arm on the table, again.)
You alright? You look kinda fucked up.

HAROLD

(Makes a grimace and shakes his head slowly.)

I-I'm fine. I'm good. What were you saying? Oh yeah, 'the one'!

(Leans in closer to NICK and points at him.)

Hey, I'm goin' to give you some advice - fuck I'm drunk - let me tell you something that'll save your life: There is no such as thing as 'the one'. That shits a lie movies tell

us. All those love movies...all those thrillers...even all those spy movies with those James Bond looking assholes...they throwing us lies that want us to feel-

(Dry heave/Burp)

Damn sorry- that want us to feel like we aren't alone. That there is someone out there feeling the same way. Thinking the same way. Wanting the same things. And I thought the same thing too one time...Shit, if there's something you can know right now: there isn't 'a one', if you're lucky, there *might* be a 'one right now'...

You just don't have any idea! I remember trying to tell my own boy, Greg, the same thing only a couple weeks ago...

(Stops and momentarily finds himself in revelry. He looks around the room as if in surprise.)

and he...I, he just didn't want to listen...

(His voice fades to silence and his hands rest in his lap. He just looks at the table, at the last shooter.)

(SUPER-IMPOSED FOOTAGE SHOT ON STAGE, COVERING SET AND ACTORS: Shot of boy and girl circa 1990's goofing around on film. Images of Christmases, birthday parties, and graduations. It's hard to distinctly make out anyone specific, but they look like fleeting good times. They fade away without sound.)

NICK

(Nods in contemplation and clears his throat.)

Yeah, man, you're probably right. I get what you dropping, but I have to tell ya', she *is* different.

HAROLD

(Breaks out of his thought. Picks up the last shooter and rolls it in his hands.)

They-they're *all* different NICK, you'll see, you're young. But...

(Waves his hand in a dismissive manner.)

It doesn't matter, tell me about her...what's she like?

NICK

(Beams a smile and straightens
in the recliner.)

Well, ok, I gotta get this outta the way off that bat but I met her on 'Match.com' right? You know, that one website? We've talked for a while, nothing special - "Hi's" and "How you doin's", but the crazy thing is, we click, straight up. I don't know how to say it besides that.

HAROLD

(Places the bottle back on the
table.)

Match.com? Jesus, that's funny to me..

NICK

(Rolls his eyes and sits relaxed.)

Yeah, yeah, yeah, I've heard it before, but seriously though, besides *that* thing, it's just been butter! We just hit it off. I mean, all the stupid little things, like, when she texts me we have little word battles. Like-hold on let me find it-

(Lifts phone off table and
excitedly clicks buttons, looking
at screen.)

Okay, like, this one time, we were talking about whatever, I don't even remember, it don't even matter, but then she goes and pops out a 'Back to the Future' reference! Seriously, what chick does that!? Or, other times when we're talking, she does this crazy 'mad scientist' kind of laugh. She's *just* awesome, that's it. And-

(He nods his head as if in self-
reflection.)

she's ridiculous hot!

HAROLD

(Shakes head and laughs.)

Well, what can I say. She soun's perfect...just do me a favor, and don't go and get yourself married.

NICK

Well, that's a little passed where my mind is right now, so I wouldn't worry about that right yet. I'm actually 'meeting-meeting' her for the first time after work today.

(Attempts to hide a guilty

face.)

When I saw a job in San Diego, I used the excuse to come down. Had that whole 'it's a sign kinda vibe' to it. But, I'm not seeing her 'til later, and I mean, 'work' wasn't going to take *that long*, so-

HAROLD

(Shakes his head and waves his hand for confirmation.)

Wait, wait, wait...Are you jus? What are saying?

(Although slightly slumped over, HAROLD stares NICK in the eye.)

NICK

(Fidgets slightly and smacks smacks his lips.)

Man, it sounds dickish I know...and I know what you're thinking and it ain't *like that*, I swear. I really liked us talking, it's been cool...I just -I don't know - I hate driving around the city nowhere to go. I just thought, maybe, we could help each other out; you get some time, I get some conversation.

HAROLD

(Exhales like being hit in stomach.)

Conversati-

(Rubs his face with his hands.)

I want to go home Nick... Can you let me go home, please?

NICK

(Leans against table and seems to be thinking for a moment.)

I-I wish I could, but, you know I can't.

(Looks at phone and places it back on table.)

Look, we have a while still, why don't you keep telling me about Belize and those beaches you were-

(NICK's phone starts playing a music ring tone like Lady Gaga or Nikki Minaje. HAROLD and NICK look at the phone.)

NICK

(Picks up phone and smiles.)

Speak of the devil...Hey man do mind if I take this, it'll only take a second? It's her.

HAROLD

I don't mind-

NICK

(Answers phone without waiting for an answer.)

Hey there troublemaker, whatchu up to right now, breaking hearts?

HAROLD

(Voice wilts as HAROLD looks at the last bottle on the table.)

I'm not going anywhere...

(Picks up the bottle and rolls it in his hands. He looks up at mirror next to the table. He examines his reflection closely and turns back to and looks around the room.)

NICK

...I know, real talk, 'SD' better watch out tonight, we gonna be the 'dangerous duo'!

(Listening for a moment.)

Nah, nothin' much. I'm just at work...

HAROLD

(Looks back at mirror, seemingly disappointed. Looks down his own self before looking back at the mirror.)

NICK

...yeah, yeah, that sounds good to me. We can do that most definitely. We can eat first and then...

HAROLD

(Brushes his hand over his head, sliding his hair back into position. Looks at NICK.)

NICK

(Gun hand relaxed and paying complete attention to phone.)

...Who you telling!? I feel like I'm in middle school again, all nervous having to impress you...

(Listens and laughs...)

I might have to go and get something custom, I mean you're one of the beautiful people...

HAROLD

(Looks at bottle and slowly looks at NICK. His face is determined. His free hand clenches. He looks in the mirror one last time and nods to himself.)

NICK

...Shoot, you tell me; anytime is good by me. You let me know when to swing by...

HAROLD

(Breathes deep and opens the bottle, giving himself a small salutations as he drinks the contents.)

(SUPER-IMPOSED FOOTAGE SHOT ON STAGE, COVERING SET AND ACTORS: Various shots of Dirty Harry, James Bond, Shaft, and other badass heroes that get the final shot on the villain. A variety of clips of the 'good guy' getting the drop on the 'bad guy' and making a final escape. The last clip has the James Bond getting away with a beautiful Bond girl at his side.)

NICK

...oh wait, you're already ready? Nah, nah, nah, that's cool, your boss don't care? Shit, I'm just finishing up myself...

(Nick's gun arm straightens and the barrel flashes, making a 'chirp' sound. NICK still isn't looking at HAROLD, instead laughing on the phone.)

(The clips of James Bond et al. is suddenly stopped.)

HAROLD

(Involuntarily spits out a small mouthful of liquor and is pushed back in his chair. He looks stunned, drops the bottle, and pats his chest.)

NICK

(Pulls trigger once more without looking at HAROLD.)

(Another 'chirp' sound occurs, followed by a sound like ears ringing.)

HAROLD

(Falls forward onto table while still sitting in the chair. His head rests on its side. Opens mouth to speak, but blood pours out instead.)

NICK

...No worries at all, I'll be there in like fifteen, solid?

(Smiling on phone while listening)

Alright troublemaker, I'll see you in just a second.

(Pushes button on phone and puts in pocket.)

HAROLD

(Mouth opening and closing, without making any words. Short, raspy breaths gurgle out.)

NICK

(Looks at HAROLD momentarily, sighs slightly and stands up. Walks to the bed, removes the satchel from under bed, keeping gun in hand. Takes one last look around room, places gun in waist and adjusts jacket over it. Walks to door and opens it, but stops and closes it.)

HAROLD

(Gasping and gurgling, slower now.)

NICK

(Walks over to HAROLD,
resting his hand on HAROLD's
shoulder.)

Goodbye Harold.

(Pats HAROLD's shoulder and exits
the room.)

(SUPER-IMPOSED FOOTAGE SHOT ON STAGE, COVERING SET AND ACTORS: Footage of beaches and women in bikinis. The sound of waves grows as the picture becomes more vivid. Bells ring out over the sound of waves and a colorful sunset fills the frame. The sound of seagulls and laughter can be heard.)

(BLACK OUT)