

Mouths of Decadence
(2006)
by Mark Noonan

Neal
Sam
Thad
Jenny
Ryan
Oser
Dean

(January 1999, a year before the great bubble burst. Early evening. Living room of a college apartment. It is a large room. It is also the basement of a former schoolhouse so there are small windows high up along the back wall and the left wall is all brick. A permanent wooden bar stretches from wall left to a few feet past the couch center. It descends as it falls from left to right (starts at bar height, ends at maybe two feet). Center sits a baby blue couch with coffee table. Left, against the wall, is another couch. Right, angled towards the coffee table, is an easy chair with ottoman. Down center is a television and stereo. Down-left and off this main room is a small kitchen and a door that leads into the main hallway of the schoolhouse. Far right is a wooden kitchen table with four chairs (pushed against wall right). A door right leads to a bedroom. Back right is a small corridor leading to the offstage front door (actually two doors). Down right, past the table, is a dark corridor that leads to the other bedrooms and bathroom.)

Act I

(In the darkness we hear 3 voices – a radio show.)

Neal: Welcome back to *Zeitgeist*, just to refresh your memory if you've been listening at home—

Sam: (laughs) Yeah, right—

Neal: We were discussing—

Thad: (Dylan impersonation) I don't care who threw the glass—

Neal & Thad: I just wanna know—

All 3: Who threw the glass.

Neal: So, Thad, what do you think—

Thad: What's that?

Neal: About Jesus—

Sam: (laughs) Oh, Jesus—

Thad: That's right, man. Nobody..messes with the Jesus.

Neal: Nice recovery.

Thad: Thank you.

Neal: So, do you think Jesus ever masturbated?

Sam: (laughing) Here we go—

Thad: (laughing) Jesus—

Neal: And if so: do you think he watched gay or straight porn?
Sam: It's a good question—
Neal: I think so—
Thad: And an important question—
Neal: Without question—
Sam: What was the question?
Neal: To question or not to question—
Sam: Aye, there's the question—
Thad: No question.
Neal: So, Jesus: gay or straight porn? Let's open up the phone lines. (Thad & Sam laugh)
What?
Sam: This is ridiculous.
Neal: You winning, guy?
Thad: You bet.
Neal: Dude?
Sam: Absolutely.
Neal: Okay. Back to the important matters at hand...
(Their voices fade out.)

Scene 1

(Lights up. The sound of a porno movie – the bad music, moans, dirty talk, etc – comes from the TV. A young man, 21, Thad, stands behind the bar with a serious, pained look on his face. Then, it becomes obvious by his facial expressions and right shoulder bobbing that he is jerking off. He is close to climax. Very close. Any minute now...As he cums the front door slams.)

Thad: Fuck.

(Thad fumbles with the remote controls, turns off the TV. Another door slams. Enter Sam, 21, and Jenny, 19. At the last second Thad realizes he can't pull off acting cool and ducks down behind the bar.)

Sam: So, this is it, Casa de Jihad, as Neal says.

Jenny: Where'd that come from?

Sam: What, Jihad?

Jenny: Yeah.

Sam: Really drunk one night. Late. Neal boldly declared a Jihad on Oser—

Jenny: (laughing) Yeah, why?

Sam: Oh, he was pissed—you want something to drink?

Jenny: Sure. What have you got?

Sam: (checking fridge and kitchen) Let's see...Uh, we have MGD...(opens freezer) some vodka, but...nothing really to combine it with—water. And there's a bottle of Jamesons.

(Thad crawls on all fours from behind the bar and out to the front door, unseen.)

Jenny: I'll have a beer.

Sam: Cool. (he opens two bottles of MGD) What were we talking about?

Jenny: Uh, Jihad.

Sam: Right. Of course. Jihad. How could I forget? It's nothing really all that interesting—late night—drunk—Neal declared a Jihad on Oser—he was pissed about the green room incident.

Jenny: What was that? (takes beer) Thanks.

Sam: He...it was really stupid, he put a picture of a woman having sex with a horse on the green room computer. As the screen saver.

Jenny: Jesus.

Sam: You said it, man—Yeah, it was...it was actually pretty funny. But so stupid. (laughing) That guy...

(Sam goes to the TV area to put on a CD.)

Jenny: I've been here before.

Sam: You have? When?

Jenny: You guys had a party like the first few weeks of school—Neal was dressed in a gold unitard and gold wig—

Sam: Oh, our Golden Boys party—

Jenny: --And I, none of us, knew who he was—we thought he was just crazy.

Sam: Well he is a little crazy—

Jenny: You know what I mean—

Sam: Sure—you were here for that—It was ri-diculous. So you saw my gold shimmering Hugh Hefner pajamas—

Jenny: (laughs) Yes!

Sam: All right, that's enough, thank you.

Jenny: I just remember, it must've been like two o'clock in the morning—

Sam: Oh, that's early—

Jenny: Right. I didn't know that at the time—and Neal standing out front on top—

Sam: --On top of the picnic table—

Jenny: --Right. And he had this gold glitter he was throwing at everybody, screaming out—

Sam: --Screaming out, This is your baptism—

Jenny: Yeah—

Sam: I baptize you in the name of the father, and the son, and holy golden ghost, drink up, merry revelers—God, he was out of his mind—

Jenny: And then he started screaming that Carte Blanche had been declared?

Sam: Mm. Yeah. That sounds about right. Carte Blanche always gets declared at some point.

Jenny: What's that mean?

Sam: Well Carte Blanche is French for—

Jenny: Yeah, I know that, asshole—

Sam: Whoa—

Jenny: I took eight years of French, I know what Carte Blanche means.

Sam: Okay then.

Jenny: Why does it get declared?

Sam: Ah, I see. You mean you don't know?

Jenny: (joking) Would you just tell me?

Sam: (smiling) *Carte Blanche* is for that point in the evening when nothing matters—you can do whatever you want—it's like a clean slate—and once it gets declared—that's it, there's no consequences for anything—

Jenny: There's always consequences.

Sam: Not when *Carte Blanche* has been declared, that's the beauty of it—you can do whatever you want—

Jenny: It sounds like an excuse to behave like monkeys.

Sam: Monkeys? I'm offended—(Sam finally chooses an album: Dylan's *Blood On The Tracks*. Song: Simple Twist of Fate.)

Jenny: I love this song.

Sam: You do?

Jenny: Yeah.

Sam: You like Dylan?

Jenny: I love Dylan. I grew up—my brothers were always playing him. What?

Sam: I'm just...flabbergasted.

Jenny: Why?

Sam: Most girls don't like Dylan.

Jenny: Well I'm not like most girls.

Sam: Apparently. (still dumbstruck, paces)

Jenny: What?

Sam: I'm just...What's your favorite album?

Jenny: My favorite album or what do I think is his best album?

Sam: Good point. Both.

Jenny: Well, I'm supposed to say that his best album is Blood on the Tracks. Right? But, I think Blonde on Blonde is a better album. And I'd even go so far as to say Time Out of Mind is better, in its own way, than either of those. What do you think?

Sam: Yeah, I think it's Blood on the Tracks. No question. But what's your favorite?

Jenny: I like, I have to say, maybe it's just 'cause it's the latest one, but I like Time Out of Mind a lot.

Sam: Yeah, it's great. Not Dark Yet is pretty much—

Jenny: It's a perfect song.

Sam: Yeah.

Jenny: What's your favorite?

Sam: Uh...Probably...Freewheelin'. That was the one that got me into Dylan.

Jenny: I love It's Allright, Ma.

Sam: Yeah, it's great.

Jenny: What's your favorite song?

Sam: Ooo, that's tough. Uh...what's yours?

Jenny: Either Not Dark Yet or Visions of Johanna.

Sam: Yeah...Uh...I'd have to say, Hard Rain...

Jenny: That's a good one.

Sam: Yeah. Or...I like Visions of Johanna too. I've got a soft spot for Love Minus Zero.

Jenny: Yeah. Really?

Sam: Yeah. Why, you don't like it?

Jenny: No, it's okay. It's just no—if you're gonna talk love songs it's no If You See Her.

Sam: That's true, I guess.

Jenny: But it's a good song.

Sam: Yeah. I mean, they're all good songs.

Jenny: That's true...Except for Rolling Stone. It's a piece of garbage—

Sam: You don't like Rolling Stone?

Jenny: I hate that song.

Sam: Why?

Jenny: I just do. I don't know.

Sam: That's like Dylan's most famous song.

Jenny: Yeah, it just rubs me the wrong way.

Sam: Why? (The Phone rings. Sam moves to get it.)

Jenny: I don't know. It just does.

Sam: Fair enough. (He answers the call) Hello? Hey, Kirsten...No, I haven't seen...No, I don't know. (to Jenny) Have you heard the new Royal Albert Hall disc?

Jenny: You mean Judas?

Sam: Judas! (to Kirsten) Why would I lie to you? (to Jenny) I don't believe you—

Jenny: (picking up) You're a liar—

Sam: (to Kirsten) Un hun... Yeah... (to Jenny) Play—

Jenny & Sam: Play fuckin' loud!

Sam: (to Kirsten) Yeah... Sure thing... Yeah... Whatever. (hangs up)

(Jenny looks at the black and white photographs taped up to the bar and brick wall.)

Sam: Those are Neal's. He's into photography—obviously. They are, uh—

Jenny: Interesting.

Sam: That's a kind way of putting it.

Jenny: Is this you?

Sam: Yeah. That was a photo shoot gone horribly awry.

Jenny: Are you naked?

Sam: Yeah, I let Neal talk me into that—it's kind of a burning at the stake motif. That was shot in one of those empty factory buildings—an old mill, over by Crompton—you've probably never been over there—

Jenny: No.

Sam: Yeah. We were all pretty drunk. That's my excuse. I can't be held accountable for that.

Jenny: Is that Thad in the bathtub?

Sam: Yeah, that's supposed to be the Death of Marat. He died in a bathtub, it's another famous painting by some famous artist. I don't remember.

Jenny: Hm. Okay...

Sam: Yeah...

Jenny: I like that...(looking up at a small painting on the brick wall center)

Sam: Oh, yeah, that's—(The front door slams. The next door slams. Enter Thad with a bag of McDonald's.)

Sam: It's---That's actually the most expensive thing in this whole apartment—it's Neal's—Jefe!

Thad: Paco!

Sam: You winning, guy?

Thad: Always, guy. Wasn't she a great big fat person?

Sam: It puts the lotion—

Thad: It puts the lotion in the basket or else it gets the hose.

Sam: Austin.

Thad: There are 10 Melanie Fergusons. You got 10 Melanie Fergusons in Bakersfield!

Sam: Sorry. That's just—this is Jenny. I don't know, have you guys—

Thad: Yeah, I've seen you—

Jenny: I auditioned today.

Thad: Right. Right. Totally. How'd it go?

Jenny: Good. At least I think good.

Thad: Cool.

Sam: What'd you do?

Thad: Oh, you know, I did a little number from a little show called Much Ado About Nossing by (British accent) William Shakespeare. (He goes right into it very dramatically. Drops his McD's bag or uses it. His eyes get huge, he performs it ridiculously over-the-top for Jenny's enjoyment. She laughs. As does Sam. But by the speech's end he treats it seriously and is very good.)

This can be no trick: the
conference was sadly borne. They have the truth of
this from Hero. They seem to pity the lady: it
seems her affections have their full bent. Love me!
why, it must be requited. I hear how I am censured:
they say I will bear myself proudly, if I perceive
the love come from her; they say too that she will
rather die than give any sign of affection. I did
never think to marry: I must not seem proud: happy
are they that hear their detractions and can put
them to mending. They say the lady is fair; 'tis a
truth, I can bear them witness; and virtuous; 'tis
so, I cannot reprove it; and wise, but for loving
me; by my troth, it is no addition to her wit, nor
no great argument of her folly, for I will be
horribly in love with her. I may chance have some
odd quirks and remnants of wit broken on me,
because I have railed so long against marriage: but
doth not the appetite alter? a man loves the meat
in his youth that he cannot endure in his age.
Shall quips and sentences and these paper bullets of
the brain awe a man from the career of his humour?
No, the world must be peopled. When I said I would
die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I
were married. Here comes Beatrice. By this day!
she's a fair lady: I do spy some marks of love in
her.

Sam: Nice.

Thad: Well, (Oser voice) You know, I had to raise the stakes. This is hardcore theater, my dear. There's no half-assing—it's balls to the wall, I don't do your run-of-the-mill garden variety theater—I do hardcore theater. It's hardcore. Hardcore. (laughing at his own ridiculousness)

Sam: Professor Oser is kind of a little over-the-top with his intensity.

Thad: (still doing Oser) What? It's hardcore. Listen, Mulhearn, if you don't want to do hardcore theater then you're just a pussy, a big pussy—(aside to Jenny) Sorry.

Jenny: It's okay.

Thad: (still) 'Cause it's hardcore. Hardcore. (snaps out of it) Whew, I need to eat. (sits, opens his McDonald's bag)

Sam: You want a beer?

Thad: Mmm...Sure. (Oser-voice) As long as it's a hardcore beer. (out of it) All right, that's it, I'm done. No more.

Jenny: (picks up a book from off the endtable) He Loved The Children He Knew?

Sam: Well he did.

Thad: Absolutely. The children he knew...

Sam: ...He loved them. The children he didn't know...

Thad: (mouth full) ...Not so much. I mean so he killed the children he didn't know, the ones he did know—

Sam: He loved.

Thad: That's what I'm saying.

Jenny: This is a crazy book. Where'd you guys get this?

Sam: It's Neal's.

Thad: Yeah, not exactly the most homemaking piece, really gives people the great impression that uh—

Jenny: You're Nazis?

Thad: Yeah. (laughing) Pretty much. (Sam laughs) But don't judge us—

Sam: Don't judge us—

Thad: We can't be held accountable for any racist pieces left about our apartment, I mean—

Sam: We just live here.

Thad: That's right, we just live here—if there happen to be books about Nazis lying around—

Sam: Or naked pictures—

Thad: Or naked pictures lying around, that's not us—

Sam: No—

Thad: No, we just live here. (he comes out of his and Sam's back-and-forth) You're so terrified right now—

Jenny: No, I'm not—

Thad: Look, it's okay, it's just a joke. We're not Nazis or anything—

Sam: Well, Thad, I mean, say what you want about the tenets of national socialism but at least it's an ethos.

Thad: Eight year olds, dude.

Jenny: (flipping through book) This is crazy.

Sam: Yeah, it is.

Thad: Totally absurd—you want some fries?

Jenny: No, I'm good.

Thad: Dude?

Sam: No thanks.

Thad: Have you seen the Baron?

Sam: No, have you?

Thad: Ugh, by the way, Zeitgeist—

Sam: (laughing) I know.

Thad: (laughing) That was by far probably our lowest point—

Sam: Hey, guy, an artist creates his own moral universe—

Thad: Yeah, right—

Jenny: What? Where'd you get that?

Sam: It's from Bullets Over Broadway.

Jenny: Oh.

Thad: I mean, some of that shit I don't entirely know—

Jenny: I heard your show—

Sam: You heard our show?

Thad: Zeitgeist?

Jenny: Yeah, Friday afternoon.

Sam: No one listens to us.

Jenny: I heard it.

Thad: I'm amazed you're still hanging out with us. Good for you. That takes balls.

Sam: What did you think?

Jenny: Uh...It was...interesting?

Thad: It was fucking nutbag crazy is what it was.

Sam: Hey, man, Zeitgeist is ahead of its time. The spirit of the people will not be put down—

Thad: I was so fucking out of my mind! I mean, Jesus! What the fuck were we talking about?

Sam: I don't know—You would probably know better than we would, we were messed up.

Jenny: You guys were talking about—to be honest, I was more just amazed you were even on the air—I mean some of the stuff you guys said—

Thad: What, Jesus would be directing porno movies if he was alive today?

Jenny: That's one, sure.

Sam: The thing you have to understand is that no one listens to us. No body.

Jenny: I don't know, you seemed to get a lot of calls—

Thad: A body of water—

Sam: Yeah, but it's all locals driving home from work on a Friday night who just happened to flip the dial and catch our show and hear something ridiculous Neal's spouting off—like saying the Holocaust was nothing but a frat party that got out of control—

Thad: (laughing) Fucking ridiculous, that asshole.

Sam: I mean, it's—

Thad: He has no (laughing) fucking shame. It's just—

Sam: He does it to get a rile out of people—there's nothing malicious, nothing evil—It's just...ridiculous.

Thad: Yeah, but come on, guy, some of that shit is crazy.

Sam: Sure. But it's just for entertainment—to see what people will do—

Jenny: Well...I don't know.

Sam: What?

Jenny: It just seemed uh...and then again, I don't know, it's the first time I ever heard your show but kind of...

Sam: Ridiculous?

Thad: Outrageous?

Jenny: Sad?

Sam: Sad? There's nothing sad about it—

Thad: I think it's a lot of things—I think the boy is off his fucking rocker sometimes but believe me I don't think it's sad—

Sam: Sad?

Thad: How would it be sad?

Jenny: I don't know. Look, if you guys are having fun—

Sam: It's just a way to blow off some steam—shake things up a bit—there's nothing—there's no meaning behind it.

Jenny: I don't know.

Thad: I'm gonna hit the Crack House. I'll be right back.

Sam: What are you getting?

Thad: Probably just an eighth. I might get some Shackleton if Tall Paul has any.

Sam: Cool.

Thad: All right. I'll be right back. Talk amongst yourselves. You're just bastard, bastard people—and I'm gonna go and I'm gonna bite my pillow. (he exits through the kitchen door dramatically)

Jenny: O-kay?

Sam: Waiting for Guffman.

Jenny: Oh.

Sam: Haven't seen it?

Jenny: No. Um...you guys do Crack?

Sam: No! Jesus. We don't do Crack. What do you think—No. That's just the name of the house—you know, the house right next door? (Jenny thinks) If you went out, banged a right, first house...

Jenny: Okay.

Sam: It looks like it could fall down at any moment, and actually, in a lot of ways, looks like a Crack house, a real Crack house—

Jenny: Yeah, it does—

Sam: You've never been in there for a party?

Jenny: No!

Sam: Sorry. I just remember when I was a freshman being in there—we used to wander around like idiots on Friday and Saturday night looking for some terrible party—which we didn’t think was terrible, we thought it was gonna be awesome—then pay five bucks for a red plastic cup—you’ve never been in some of these terrible places? The Crack house? Anna Purna? Crompton?

Jenny: No.

Sam: Maybe it’s more of a male thing to wander around like idiots looking for beer.

Jenny: I think so. It’s different for girls.

Sam: I could see that.

Jenny: But now You throw those terrible parties.

Sam: That’s true. But I like to think ours are a little bit different. Tamer.

Jenny: Carte Blanche.

Sam: More dramatic, sure. But not uh—It’s never a bunch of thick necked meat heads sitting around a keg in some kitchen looking to gang rape some girls—sorry.

Jenny: No, I know what you mean.

Sam: Yeah...(Lost in thought. Trying to figure out how to get past the gang rape comment.)

Jenny: So Thad’s not getting Crack?

Sam: No, no. Sorry. Um, there’s a big a crack in the house. The Crack house. Right up the wall in the living room.

Jenny: Hence the name.

Sam: Hence the name. Exactly.

Jenny: But they do sell drugs there?

Sam: Yeah...that’s true. But not Crack.

Jenny: What’s Shackleton?

Sam: Ah. Blow. Coke.

Jenny: Oh. Why’s it called Shackleton?

Sam: That's actually a phrase Neal coined. (British accent) Named after the famed arctic explorer, Sir Ernest Shackleton—whose 1915 expedition was lost on its way to the South Pole—their ship, The Endurance, sank and Sir Ernest single handedly—(normal) with some other guys—(back to British) navigated a rowboat all the way back to Elephant Island, the nearest town, and then months later went back with a new ship and saved all his men.

Jenny: Hence Shackleton.

Sam: You got it.

Jenny: All the snow.

Sam: Exactly... (small awkward pause) Um, can I show you something?

Jenny: Sure. What's that?

Sam: It is... (messing with remotes, takes them off the top of the bar, turns on the TV, goes, ejects the disc, sees what it is, laughs, shakes his head)

Jenny: What?

Sam: Nothing. Fucking Thad.

Jenny: What?

Sam: No, nothing.

Jenny: What is it?

Sam: It's just—I was thinking about something he did (he puts the porno DVD away, pops in another one)

Jenny: What was it?

Sam: Well... I don't want you to get the wrong impression. (laughs)

Jenny: (laughing) Now why would I get the wrong impression? Naked photos? Hitler book?

Sam: Yeah, I don't know why I'd think you get the wrong impression.

Jenny: I am in the Jihad house after all.

Sam: That you are. You better watch yourself. This isn't the rugby house. Or the lacrosse house. You're not careful you'll leave here with a fatwa against you.

Jenny: I could handle it.

Sam: You think so?

Jenny: Yeah. (Oser voice) Pretty sure.

Sam: I'm sure you can...

Jenny: (normal voice) What was the Thad thing?

Sam: Oh, uh...All right. I'm not proud of this story, I'm just gonna tell it—I can't be held accountable—well, actually, I'm not even involved so it doesn't matter. This was way back at the beginning of the school year. First week. (laughs) This is such a stupid story. But it's funny. Poor Thad. He's gonna hate me for this. We had a couch in here—in place of old baby blue here—beautiful couch, leather, expensive, but it wasn't ours. What happened was the girls on the third floor weren't here yet—this was before school started—so they had asked Neal—they knew Neal—

Jenny: It seems everybody knows Neal.

Sam: Uh, well, you might be right. He is a social butterfly after all—I wonder where the hell he is?

Jenny: He'll show up at some point.

Sam: That's true. He will...So, Thad sitting on this couch—well, no first—not our couch—girls upstairs—ask Neal if they can have the deliveryman leave it here 'cause they're not here yet and then when they do arrive they'll have their big football boyfriends come move it upstairs.

Jenny: Seems like a plan.

Sam: Exactly. So now Thad's here too and for a few days all is fine, they're hanging out on this beautiful couch. So one morning the boyfriends are scheduled to show up. Now Neal knows this 'cause he talked to them. But, he gets up and leaves early and neglects to inform Thad that some large football players will be by to pick up the couch. So Thad gets up and prepares his morning routine which consists of walking around in his boxers—he plops down on the couch and rolls himself a big ass Bob Marley joint 'cause Neal had just purchased half an ounce from Tall Paul—kind of his welcome back gift to the apartment. So, there's Thad in nothing but his boxers sitting on the couch smoking this enormous joint and watching porn, so he's...you know...

Jenny: I get the picture.

Sam: Okay, good. You know about the towel rack?

Jenny: The what?

Sam: Nevermind. So there's Thad: boxers, leather couch, joint, porno, he's... And now he has the volume up fairly loud and he's so stoned he doesn't quite realize this so he doesn't hear the football players knock—and now in his defense I'm fairly certain Neal left both those doors slightly ajar in the morning. He won't admit to that but I think he knew—well, he knew Thad. So the football players waltz on in and what do they see? Thad, in boxers, big ass joint, porno blaring, cloud of smoke, cock sticking out—totally surprised. Completely caught off guard to suddenly see four big football players in his living room staring down at him in just disbelief and horror. "Dude, we're here for the couch." Thad immediately jumps up, "Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah—the couch." Thad's totally frazzled—finally he turns off the porn and walks over to these guys to shake hands—but he doesn't realize that his penis is hanging out the front of his boxers—so he walks up to them, hand outstretched, "How you doing? I'm Thad" And these guys go: "Whoa whoa whoa—dude, look, whatever, we just want the couch." And Thad's like—totally oblivious his penis is hanging right out—"Sure, sure, go ahead." So these guys get around hoist up this big ass couch and as they do this massive pile of porno magazines tumbles out from underneath—and now these guys don't see it at first but Thad does and his initial reaction is to jump on top of the porno mags—while these guys still have the couch up high—Thad jumps on top of them and tries—and it's impossible because it's such a massive amount of porn—to conceal them. So now these guys—these 4 guys move the couch around Thad—in his boxers, holding a joint, penis flapping in the breeze, plopped on top of a mountain of pornography he's trying desperately to hide. Cause he's stoned. And that seems like a good idea. Now these guys see this picture, And, rightfully so they're dumbfounded. I mean there's not much one can say when presented with such a weird picture. And so Thad, at this point—is basically, like the elephant man—and he's so stoned—he starts going "What? What? Don't look at me! I'm hideous! Don't judge me! I am not an animal. I am a man!" But these guys don't get the reference or find it funny. They're just like, "Dude, whatever." And so they leave and you're left with Thad curled up in the fetal position on top of a mound of pornography yelling at the top of his lungs: "I am a man! I'm not an animal! I am a man!"

Jenny: (laughing) That's crazy.

Sam: Now why Thad decided in the first place that it would be a good idea to jump on top of the mountain of porn and try somehow to hide it—no one knows. But he was stoned and I'm sure it seemed like a good idea at the time.

Jenny: Where did all of this porn come from?

Sam: Ah! It's been passed down over the years. This apartment. Neal's old roommate, Big Jim, lived here over the summer and then when he left he left the huge pile of porn

right in the middle of the room alongwith a stuffed bunny rabbit—you know, a stuffed animal, with a huge knife stuck right through it's throat right at the top of the pile.

Jenny: Jesus.

Sam: You said it, man. Nobody—Yeah, it was kind of his final—it was a joke—for Neal's amusement—he knew he'd see it and love it. So, Neal just pushed all the porno mags under the couch and forgot about them until...that fateful day.

Jenny: That's a really funny story.

Sam: Yeah. (Phone rings.) It's kind of pathetic...but funny. Thad's a good sport about it—Sorry. (answers the phone.) Hello...Hey, Ed. What's up?...He's not here...No idea...What's going on?...What'd he say?...Really?...Uh...No, I know...Okay...We never swore, not once—not...Un hun...Well, you know, hey...Really?...All right, no...Fuck...That's what I figured...Yeah, okay...Un hun...I'll tell him...Both of them...Yeah...All right. (hangs up) Fuck.

Jenny: What?

(Thad blows into the room via the kitchen door.)

Thad: Fucking Tall Paul.

Sam: What happened?

Thad: He's got nothing. (opens beer) Says he's tapped out.

Sam: That's a bummer, man.

Thad: We believe in nossing. You hear me, Lebowski? Nossing.

Sam: It's okay with me.

Thad: It's okay with me. (plops down on the couch) Did you guys miss me?

Jenny: Totally.

Thad: Chillin' like Bob Dylan and killin' like penicillin?

Jenny: Pretty much.

Sam: Yeah—Ed just called—

Thad: Oser?

Sam: Yeah.

Thad: Looking for pot?

Sam: No, actually. He wants to see us tomorrow. Apparently the Dean heard our radio show—I guess there were some calls—angry calls to his office—

Thad: The Dean listened to our show?

Sam: No. Someone taped it and gave it to him.

Thad: Shit.

Sam: Yeah, this can't be good. There's probably enough here for a piner.

Thad: Yeah, let me look at that.

Sam: It was pretty bad, wasn't it?

Jenny: Uh...yeah. It was definitely, uh, I could see people being upset.

Sam: Shit.

Thad: I can't believe the Dean heard our show—

Sam: I can't believe someone recorded our show.

Thad: How did Ed sound?

Sam: Uh, pissed.

Thad: The Dean called him?

Sam: Apparently. He, of course, didn't fail to mention tenure—

Thad: (Oser voice) Listen, all right, assholes, I'm on the tenure track. All right. Next year, I'm up for tenure. Okay? So don't fuck with me 'cause I'll fuck you. This is my tenure. I'll fuck you, and won't think twice about it. Okay? Don't fuck with me. This is my tenure.

Sam: I mean we didn't swear—what was the worst thing we said?

(They all think a while.)

Jenny: Uh...

Sam: Hm...

Thad: (purses his lips in deep thought)

Sam: (they all laugh) There's too many—

Thad: Too many to count—

Jenny: There was a lot—

Thad: Well, shit. I picked the wrong week to quit drinking—Whew, I am using all my years of expertise—covert training—right here before you.

Sam: And the verdict?

Thad: We will crush the federales in the plains of Oaxaca.

Sam: Excellent.

Jenny: You guys see a lot of movies.

Sam: Yeah, probably. We've all just seen the same movies, that's the thing—and read the same books—and—

Thad: Smelled the same roses—and smoked the same ganja—it'll do it to you—plus we were in 'Nam together—

Sam: Really brought us close—

Thad: Well those 3 years we spent in that bamboo cage, we had to get close—

Sam: That's true, it was a period of great—

Thad: Mao! Mao! (Sam laughs. Thad slaps him across the cheek) Mao!

Sam: Ow. (laughing) Asshole.

Thad: Mao!

Sam: (laughing) Enough. I yield.

Jenny: The Deer Hunter?

Sam: Yeah, exactly.

Thad: Hey, man, I'll cut your face—

Sam: You're not a tease, are you?

Thad: --'Cause I'll cut your face. Look at that big fat whore over there! (Sam laughs) What're you lookin' at? (Thad cracks up)

Jenny: What's that?

Sam: Pennies From Heaven.

(Thad lights up his thin joint.)

Thad: (on exhale) He thinks the carpet pissers did this?

Sam: Dude, her life is in your hands—

Thad: Don't say that, man—

Sam: Her life is in your hands—

Thad: Man, no—

Sam: Her life is in your hands.

Thad: You guys want to hit this?

Sam: Is there enough?

Thad: Yeah, absolutely.

Jenny: Oh, no, I'm good.

Sam: You sure?

Jenny: Yeah.

Thad: All right. It's okay with me. (hands joint to Sam)

Sam: Danke.

Thad: Je vous en prie.

Sam: (looks down at book on coffeetable) He Loved The Children He Knew.
Sonofabitch.

Jenny: How long have you guys lived here?

Thad: What's that?

Sam: Just this year.

Jenny: Oh, yeah?

Sam: Yeah, Neal lived here before. Neal's been here since...his sophomore year—right?

Thad: Yeah.

Sam: So three years—two and a half.

Jenny: Did you guys live on campus until this year?

Sam: Yeah.

Thad: Yep.

Jenny: When did Neal move off?

Thad: (laughs) Uh, that would be right at the beginning of his sophomore year.

Sam: (British) Yes, the Baron was politely asked to acquit campus and find other environs.

Thad: He was booted.

Sam: (British) That's, of course, another way to put it.

Jenny: What did he do?

Sam: (out of it) What've you heard?

Jenny: What do you mean?

Sam: You must have heard something otherwise—

Jenny: I heard it involved nudity.

Thad: Ah.

Sam: Well that's—It's always that story—

Thad: It is.

Sam: Why is that?

Thad: Don't know.

Sam: Do you care?

Thad: Not really.

Sam: Good. Good talking to you.

Thad: You too.

Sam: Did you hear he went to get his mail in the nude?

Jenny: Something like that. Is it true?

Thad: Yeah.

Sam: But it's not why he got kicked off—

Thad: The Dude walked all the way from Mulledy—it was a beautiful day—Saturday—and the dude walked in nothing but his sneakers and tube socks pulled up high—all the way to Hogan—and all the way, he's smoking a pipe!

Sam: Ridiculous—

Thad: Yeah, and I didn't know him—I didn't know who the hell he was—but here comes this naked guy strolling down the sidewalk—passing by—and he's extremely friendly—not like that—I mean, he's being very cordial—which adds to the ridiculousness. Naked guy, tube socks, puffing on a pipe—and he says to people, as he passes them, he's dead calm, it's like he's off on a Sunday stroll through the British countryside: "Good day." "How are you?" "Lovely day, isn't it?" "Good afternoon." "Hi. How are you?" "Good to see you."—I mean it's ridiculous—and people don't know what to say—me included—and he just stays in character: calm, cool, smoking that damn pipe, on his way to get his mail.

Jenny: What happened?

Thad: Well, I didn't see this—but Neal said that he made it all the way through Hogan—he could see the mailboxes right in front of him—but before he got there, Public Safety descended upon him. He explained the situation—that he was simply going to get his mail. What balls! They were having none of it. They threw a blanket around him—Neal started screaming about the Gestapo—

Sam: Gestapo tactics—

Thad: I meet Gestapo tactics—I meet Gestapo tactics—it's not right

Sam: No man—

Thad: No, no man—I meet Gestapo tactics—

Sam: Go to lunch—

Thad: Will you—

Sam: Go to lunch—

Thad: Will you—

Sam: Go to lunch—

Thad: Go to lunch—

Sam: Will you—

Thad: Go to lunch. (they laugh)

Sam: The funny thing is, Neal realized afterwards that even if he'd made it to his mailbox he didn't have his mailbox key—he didn't have any pockets.

Jenny: Thad, where'd you grow up?

Thad: Paris. Singapore. Brussels. Connecticut.

Sam: (doing a pompous Connecticut guy) Oh, lovely this time of year.

Thad: (same) Oh, just the tops.

Sam: How's Celia?

Thad: Oh, fine. Margaret?

Sam: Doing well. Just the tops. Bryce and—what is it?

Thad: Devin.

Sam: Devin, right.

Thad: The boys are just the tops. How are Emma and Phoebe?

Sam: Oh, fantastic. The tops.

Thad: Looking good, Louis.

Sam: Feeling good, Billy Ray.

(The front door slams)

Thad: Ah, it's about time—(other door slams)

Sam: Finally, the Baron returns—

(But it's not Neal. Enter Sweeney. He has a can of Busch Light in his hand as he casually strolls in. He's also most likely cruising on some Shackleton.)

Ryan: Sixty in January? Can you believe this weather?

Sam: Ryno—

Thad: Hey, amigo—

Ryan: There's so much T and A out, man, just pussy everywhere, pussy fallin' out of my pockets—Oh, hey. I didn't know—sorry about that.

Jenny: It's okay.

Sam: Ryan, this is Jen. Jen, Ryan Sweeney.

Ryan: I've seen you around.

Jenny: Yeah, I've seen you at some parties—

Ryan: That sounds about right—We didn't meet, did we?

Jenny: No.

Ryan: Good. I can't be held accountable for—

Sam: You want a beer?

(Ryan downs the last of his Busch and chuck the can behind the bar—it's not macho or angry, he's just joking around.)

Ryan: Yeah. —my actions. Sorry to bust in.

Thad: It's all right.

Ryan: Where's the Baron?

Sam: Don't know. Have you seen him?

Ryan: Uh, no. Not since...sometime last week, I can't remember.

Thad: Dude's MIA.

Ryan: When did you last see him?

Sam: Zeitgeist—

Ryan: Ah! By the way, I totally forgot, you fucking guys—excuse me—

Jenny: It's okay.

Ryan: I heard that ridiculous thing you call a radio show—

Sam: Oh, great—

Thad: Are you winning, guy?

Ryan: Of course I'm winning. Zeitgeist—he, He was in rare form—did you hear this?

Jenny: Yeah, I did.

Ryan: Unbelievable, right? The balls. The sheer balls on that kid.

Thad: You want to know what it takes to sell real estate? It takes—

Thad & Sam: Brass balls!

Ryan: (jumping right in) You see this watch, this watch costs more than your car—

Thad: Nice guy? I don't give a shit. Good father? Fuck you!

Thad & Ryan: Go home and play with your kids!

Sam: The leads are weak.

Thad: The leads are weak. The fucking leads are weak? You're weak.

Sam: What's your name?

Thad & Ryan: Fuck you! That's my name. (laughter)

Jenny: Are you an actor?

Ryan: Me? No. Hell no. I dabble. I'm not the (with lisp) mathter thethpian over here—give us a kiss—(come down from laughter) I've got to give the kid credit, man, he's got balls. I don't know how he gets away with it.

Sam: It wasn't that bad.

Ryan: Phhhh. (exhales) The holocaust was a frat party hazing that got out of control? Come on, guy.

Sam: Well...

Ryan: What else? Masterson. There's so many: Jesus. Jesus was a bisexual surfer?

Thad: (laughs) That is pretty ridiculous.

Sam: How do we know Jesus didn't like to surf? (look from Jenny) What?

Thad: Cahones Grandes—

Ryan: How he gets away with this shit, man—

Thad: He's golden.

Ryan: He is golden. He's the original golden boy—

Sam: Plus, no one listens to our show.

Jenny: You guys get an awful lot of calls for no one listening—

Sam: Yeah, but it's all townies—all people driving home from work—

Thad: I think we got like one call from on campus—

Sam: Yeah, exactly.

Ryan: Did he go camping—you could, it's warm enough out—you could.

Sam: I don't know—maybe—

Ryan: He does this, though, it's nothing new—

Thad: What have you been up to?

Ryan: Over at the Lacrosse House. Playing Beirut. Those guys are crazy. I left—exeunt stage left—when it started to get physical.

Jenny: They started fighting?

Ryan: Not fighting so much as wrestling. Of course they missed the homoerotic undertones.

Thad: Pretty gay, hun?

Ryan: Pretty gay. But not good gay. Just stupid gay.

Sam: Why do you hang out with those guys?

Ryan: I'm a social butterfly. I don't discriminate—those guys were talking about your show.

Sam: They were?

Ryan: Yeah. They love it. They're big fans.

Sam: How did that happen?

Thad: He knows all those guys—

Sam: Well Neal knows everybody.

Thad: No. He used to live on the same floor—in Clarke—with all those jackasses.

Ryan: That's right.

Sam: You lived there too.

Ryan: You got it.

Thad: You got any ganja?

Ryan: No, Tall Paul's out—

Thad: I know, that fucker—

Ryan: I've got a little bit of Shackleton—

Thad: Really? Mind if I have a taste?

Ryan: By all means. There's enough there for—I don't know—just cut it all up.

Thad: Will do.

Sam: That's where the phoenix was.

Ryan: The phoenix. Yeah. Right.

Jenny: The what?

Sam: The fire. Neal accidentally started a fire.

Thad: Classic fucking hooliganism at it's best.

Ryan: I don't know about it's best—its fucking craziest. We were shitfaced, right? We were shitfaced—I can't be held accountable—Neal, that fucking asshole, accidentally set a bulletin board on fire—

Jenny: Accidentally?

Thad & Sam: Well, you know...

Ryan: Accidentally/on purpose. You know, it happens.

Jenny: What happened?

Ryan: I doused the whole fucking first floor of Clarke with a fire extinguisher.

Thad: Nice job.

Ryan: Thank you.

Sam: So stupid—

Ryan: It was fucking stupid—really fuckin' stupid. But, hey, what're you gonna do? College is nuts sometimes.

Sam: It's okay with me.

Thad: True dat.

Ryan: I'm all—I'm all—I'm all turned around, see.

Thad: That's somebody I love. You, I don't even like. Find—

Thad & Ryan: Find my money cheapee.

Ryan: Eliot Gould's so good—

Thad: He's the best.

Sam: Remember the Trash Can?

Thad: Shit. Now that was funny—

Ryan: Fucking ridiculous. That was really funny.

Sam: One of the best things I've seen. Funniest.

Ryan: Last year, end of last year, okay? Right during finals—it's a, what was it? Monday morning?

Thad: I don't know.

Sam: Sunday I think.

Ryan: Yeah, that'd make sense. Sunday, sure, that's the morning when everybody goes to Kimball, half hungover—

Sam: To see and be seen—

Ryan: That's right—

Jenny: You're right, I hadn't thought about it—

Ryan: Oh, yeah, everybody goes to Kimball Sunday, it's the place to be—Well, Masterson, he—basically, okay, he's outside, in front on the grass, studying, or at least it looks like he's studying—you guys were there—

Sam: Yeah—

Thad: You bet—

Ryan: So, and I don't think—he didn't tell you about this beforehand—

Sam: No.

Thad: No, it was all Neal.

Ryan: So he waits until, you know, there's always that massive throng that leaves Kimball at the same time—the big amoeba exits—

Jenny: Oh, yeah—

Ryan: Usually around twelve-thirty or one. So we're out there and Neal waits for the moment—he stands up and takes his book and chuckles it and he's really mad—and none of us have no idea why—but he just starts screaming his head off—

Thad: "I can't take it anymore! It's too much pressure! To much information to cram! Ahhhh!"

Ryan: Yeah, he's yelling this and we all know it's a ruse—

Sam: Good word.

Ryan: Thank you. And so the dude is stomping around beating himself up, screaming, and he makes his way—or he ends up in front of one of the big garbage bins—the big metal ones with the top and the trash goes in the side—

Jenny: Yeah—

Ryan: And he starts just pounding on this thing—with his fists—and kicking it—and he's screaming out, "I just can't take it anymore! The pressure! The prrrreessssure!" And we're all watching this enrapt—this piece of performance art—and all the people coming out—the looks on their faces, they're terrified—

Thad: Shocked—

Sam: And confused—

Ryan: Oh, yeah. Totally dumbfounded. So Neal—and it was so smart—'cause he timed it so perfectly for when that massive mass of people was just leaving. He starts slamming his head down against the top of the can—just bam, bam, bam—and people are like, Jesus, 'cause it looks like this guy just snapped. So, bam, bam, bam—it looks perfect. But what they can't see because Neal's behind the can, and he's doing it very discreetly—but each time he slams his head down—which he's really not doing—he's kicking the bottom of the can—making this huge boom! boom! but it looks just perfect. So he keeps this up bang, bang, bang. Bang, bang, bang. Bang, bang, bang, bang—and people are just mesmerized. And so bam, bam, bam—he keeps just bang, hitting it until finally he can't take it anymore—and he starts stumbling around in a total daze—about to keel over any second—he stumbles all over the place and then finally falls face first flat out in the middle of the grass. Silence. Everyone's waiting. We're all trying—I'm about to pee my pants—to keep from laughing 'cause we don't want to ruin the joke—and Neal just lays there—totally out. He stays there. Finally a couple concerned girls, probably freshmen, walk up to him and they're like, "Are you okay?" They bend over and go to touch him and just as they do he springs up and screams out: Free—

Thad & Ryan: (overlapping) Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!

Ryan: And we're all clapping. And he's going (bows) "Thank you, thank you. (blows kisses) Mah, mah. You're too kind. You're a beautiful audience. Brand new Cadillac. Brand new Cadillac."

Thad: Yeah, then he casually walks back over to us, sits back down, and says, "So, what's up?" Unbelievable!

Sam: It was great.

Ryan: It was so fucking funny—you had to be there to fully appreciate it—but, man—

Thad: It was fucking funny.

Sam: Totally.

Jenny: That is funny.

Ryan: Oh, yeah. This crazy guy just pounding his head against this can—just again and again and again—

Sam: He really knew how to sell it—

Ryan: Oh, yeah.

Thad: (Oser) There was a level of commitment there. Commitment to the act. It was hardcore.

Sam: (Oser) It was definitely hardcore.

Ryan: Fucking ridiculous. That guy...

Sam: You want a beer?

Ryan: Yeah, sure.

Sam: Beer?

Jenny: No, I'm good.

Sam: Paco?

Thad: I'm staying, I'm finishing my coffee.

Ryan: I didn't watch my buddies die face down in the mud so this strumpet, this tart—

(Enter Neal. He carries a case of MGD bottles, bags slung over his shoulders. Also, a grocery bag with half/half, kahlua, vodka.)

Everyone: Hey! There he is! That guy!

Neal: The dude arrives.

Sam: Where the hell have you been?

Thad: You're entering a world of pain—

Neal: A world of pain, guy—

Ryan: This isn't 'Nam, Smokey. There are rules.

Neal: Ryno, can you get the door for me?

Ryan: Sure. Is that it? Is there anything else?

Neal: This is it, dude.

Sam: The dude abides.

Neal: That's right, the dude abides. Hello, I don't think we've met—

Sam: This is Jen.

Neal: Ah, Jen.

Sam: Jen, Neal. Neal, Jen.

Neal: Enchante. (kisses her hand)

Jenny: (not buying it) What are you kidding me?

Neal: Basically, yeah. So, what's the deal? Is everybody winning?

Thad: You know it.

Sam: Of course.

Neal: Can you put those in the fridge for me, dude, they're cold. What about you, Jen, are you winning?

Jenny: Am I winning? (sarcastic) Sure, I'm winning. How 'bout you?

Neal: I'm always winning.

Jenny: Really?

Neal: Sure.

Jenny: What about when you're losing?

Neal: Still winning.

Jenny: What if nothing's going on?

Neal: Winning.

Jenny: I believe you.

Neal: There's no reason you can't always be winning.

Jenny: I'll take your word for it.

Neal: Our little Sammy here—thanks, guy (beer) has said some great things about you—just raved. And here I believe this is the first time you've been over—(Phone rings. Sam goes to answer it.) Sam, why have you waited so long to bring this beautiful young woman over to Casa de Jihad?

Sam: I wonder. Where have you been? (He answers it.) Hello. Well, hello, Kirsten. (Neal nods No.) No, he's still not here—(Sam keeps talking on the phone with her.)

Neal: (to Jenny) Do you see the way he talks to me—

Ryan: By the way, asshole, that radio show of yours was fucking—

Neal: Zeitgeist—

Ryan: Yeah—was fucking—

Neal: Please refer to it by name. Zeitgeist.

Ryan: Yeah, Zeitgeist—

Neal: It is the spirit of the time after all—

Ryan: Sure. Whatever. That was fucking ridiculous.

Neal: Yeah, it's probably ahead of its time. (smiles to Jenny)

Ryan: Yeah, right. (Sam finally hangs up.)

Neal: Thanks, dude. Have you guys heard this?

Ryan: What's that?

Sam: Wait, hold on. Where'd you go?

Neal: (casually) Montreal.

Ryan: Oh, how was it?

Neal: It was good, man.

Thad: He thinks the carpet pissers did this—

Neal: That's a bummer, man—No, you've got to hear this—

Ryan: What is it?

Neal: It's the Dylan bootleg series, 1 to 3. This version of If You See Her is unbelievable—it's so much better than the original, the—

Jenny: The Blood On The Tracks version. Right. I know.

Neal: Whoa, dude. You know Dylan.

Jenny: Three older brothers, dude.

Neal: Okay. What's his best album?

Jenny: Well, now, I'm supposed to say Blood On The Tracks, right? But I think Blonde on Blonde and even Time Out Of Mind are better albums.

Neal: Hm. Dude, you should marry this girl right now.

Jenny: (laughs) What's your favorite—or what do you think's his best?

Neal: His best: Blood On The Tracks, no question. I can see what you're saying—and now I like Time Out Of Mind a lot too, my dear—and Blonde on Blonde is the perfect album if you're driving across the country—My favorite—I like Desire a lot, believe it or not.

Jenny: I could see that.

Neal: Yeah. And Nashville Skyline is a—that's one I listen to a lot—I could hear it over and over—but, so, long story short, you're wrong—don't get upset about it, we all still like you, you're still cute as a button—but wrong—Now, listen to this. (starts the CD) Oh, wait, hold on. (he stops it, pulls out some dollar bills from his pocket) Dude, here, do me a favor, run over to the Crack House and get a quarter and get some Shackleton.

Thad: Tall Paul's out.

Neal: Come on.

Ryan: He's all tapped out. I tried earlier.

Neal: Okay. Tell him it's for me. Okay? If he doesn't believe you have him call here—

Thad: I'll do it, man, but it's not gonna make a difference.

Neal: It's about NOT giving up! Now off you go. Fly back to school, little Starling. Fly, fly, fly. Fly, fly, fly—(Thad exits via the kitchen door.)

Sam: Like a bird whose feathers are too beautiful to be caged.

Neal: Nice.

Sam: Thank you.

Jenny: What's that?

Sam & Ryan: Shawshank.

Neal: Okay. I wish we had a joint for this but—The Blood on the Tracks version is *nothing* like this. It's just unbelievable. There's so much *pain* in it. I mean he sounds like he might just burst into tears at any moment. Such the bittersweet love song. You know what it's about, don't you?

Jenny: No. A girl?

Neal: It's about Joan Baez 'cause they were together for quite a while but it ended, badly it seems, and you can tell it was his own fault but he's so full of pride that he won't admit it. Ever. Tell her she can look me up if she's got the time... Except in this song. It's the saddest of love songs...(He lights a cigarette) Enjoi...

(He plays the CD: If You See Her, Say Hello begins, the bootleg version.)

(Slow Fade to Black)

Scene 2

(Music: Dylan's Desire album plays in the background. Neal, Thad, and Ryan scattered about the couches and chairs. Thad cuts Shackleton, Neal is rolling a joint, Ryan does a line. Enter Sam from the front door.)

Thad: Dude, have you fucked her yet?

Sam: What? No. She's young.

Neal: That she is. But she knows her Dylan. She's a cool girl.

Thad: Afraid you're gonna hear that pelvis pop? (laughs)

Neal: Jesus. Is there—

Ryan: Nothing like a nice ripping of the Hymen—

Neal: --a priest in the house?

Ryan: --Roth.

Sam: Good lord.

Ryan: Hey, man. Don't knock it 'cause that's where you're gonna be—

Thad: Godfather!

Neal: What?

Ryan: Yeah. You got it. Hyman Roth.

Sam & Neal: Ah...

Neal: I like her.

Thad: Like a dog in heat—

Ryan: What's it like down there?

Sam: It is nice.

Thad: Like a wisp of cotton candy framing a paper cut—

Neal: He was the best—that's poetry.

Thad: Guapo, when you want cattle, you take the cattle. When you want food, you take the food. And when you want a woman, you just take the woman. Why don't you just take her?

Neal: Jefe, you cannot force open the petals of a flower. When the flower is ready, it opens itself up to you.

Thad: So when did you go to Montreal?

Neal: Ah, Friday, after Zeitgeist.

Sam: Listen, guy, Oser just called us about the radio show—

Thad: Yeah, it's true—

Neal: What show is this?

Sam: Zeitgeist—

Neal: Thank you very much. A-Proceed.

Sam: Okay. So, Zeitgeist—

Neal: Did he like the show?

Thad: He didn't hear it—

Neal: Well we're never going to build a fan base that way.

Sam: Listen, dude—

Neal: The dude abides—

Sam: Yes, the dude abides—

Ryan: Anybody need one?

Sam: Sure.

Thad: Yeah.

Neal: Abseulement.

Sam: So—

Neal: T-shirts, right? He wants to know when we're getting t-shirts made—tell him, tell him!

Sam: Oh, Jesus. (laughing)

Neal: Zeitgeist is not about merchandising.

Ryan: Merchandising, merchandising—

Neal: --It's not about making a buck off—

Sam: Spaceballs the coloring book, Spaceballs—

Ryan: Spaceballs, the t-shirt—

Sam: Spaceballs, the lunchbox. Spaceballs—

Thad: --The flame thrower—

Sam & Thad: --The kids love it—

Neal: No, Zeitgeist is about getting at what the true spirit of our time actually is. Giving the people a voice. And I, and we, are merely the conduit through which that spirit moves—we give people a place to express themselves honestly and truthfully and—

Ryan: Which one of these is Jesus was a bisexual porn director?

Neal: Was he? I didn't know that.

Sam: Apparently.

Neal: I always thought he was a lesbian black woman with bad teeth.

Ryan: No.

Neal: No?

Ryan: No.

Neal: Well, okay.

Sam: No, seriously, Oser—

Thad: Ed said that he got a call from Dean Peterson about our show.

Neal: What show?

Thad: Zeitgeist, goddamn it, fuck face.

Neal: Ah.

Sam: So that can't be good.

Neal: Is he a fan?

Thad: Ed?

Sam: Dean Peterson?

Thad: Yeah, I don't think so. Yeah, I'm gonna go with no—

Ryan: Yeah, a Peter, hi, what's happening?

Thad: It's just my stapler—It was a swingline—and—I'll—I'll—I'll set the building on fire—

Ryan: Gonna give her my O face. O, O, O, O. You know what I mean, O, O—

Sam: But this can't be good. The Dean thing—

Thad: So, dude, Montreal—what brought that on?

Neal: Totally impromptu. Got a call from Jean-Paul on Friday—

Thad: Oh, Jesus—

Ryan: Jean-Paul, holy shit—how is that crazy fucking mad Frenchman?

Neal: He's good. He sends his love.

Ryan: Is he still fucking nuts?

Neal: Absolutely.

Ryan: First time I met that guy he told me he wanted to shoot heroin into his eyeball—

Neal: Yeah, he's still talking about that—the latest is he plans to spend New Year's, next year, the Millennium thing—which it really isn't—uh, in the desert outside Cairo, Giza, by the pyramids and he's gonna shoot into his eyeball there—

Sam: Jesus.

Neal: You said it, man. Nobody fucks with the Jesus.

Thad: I see you rolled your way into the semis. Deos mio, man. Liam and me, we're gonna fuck you up.

Sam starts, but Ryan picks up: Well that's like, you know, your opinion, man.

Thad: You try any of your crazy shit with us—flash a piece on the lanes, I'll take it away from you—

Neal: --stick it up your ass and pull the fucking trigger 'til it goes click.

Sam: Jesus.

Neal: You said it, man. Nobody fucks with the Jesus.

Thad: Eight year olds, dude.

Ryan: Fuckin' Montreal with Jean-Paul, Jesus, you must be out of your mind—

Neal: It was ridiculous.

Ryan: Yeah?

Neal: Yeah. Ridiculous. He called me and was like, you know how he is, he's like, "What the fuck are you doing?" And I'm like, uh, nothing much, why? He's like, "Good. We're going to Montreal. Come get me. I can't stand these fucking mountains anymore."

Sam: Where is he?

Neal: Dartmouth.

Sam: Ah.

Neal: I'm like, all right, when do you want to go? He's like, "Right now. Come get me. And don't be a fucking bitch." So, I go over to George's to grab a bite—talk to George

while I'm there, he gives me some advice—always sound advice from George—that man has seen it all and then some working in that diner every fuckin' night—

Thad: No doubt—

Ryan: I like George—

Neal: So now it's about eight o'clock—maybe nine—and all these fuckin' sophomore lacrosse guys fly into George's and these guys are already shitfaced. They're just falling all over the place—total jackasses—and now, of course, George has to deal with them. And so I see one of them and I've seen these guys around and he gives me a big fat sloppy grin (does it). "Hey, Masterson!" He comes on over to me. Great. "We were just listening to your radio show, man. Who the fuck do you think you are?" And it's one of those moments where the guy's drunk and you can't tell if he's belligerent—about to get angry or just drunk. And I'm like, "Uh, well..." "Pthththth, I'm just fuckin' with you!" And I'm like, what a jackass. He's laughing all over himself and so I decide—right then and there, fuck it! I'm going to Montreal. Right now. Fuck all these degenerate Neanderthal fucks. I'm outta here! So I come back here, grab my shit, and leave.

(The phone rings. Sam answers it. He mouths, "Kirsten" to Neal. Neal nods No.)

Neal: Well I get on the road. Well, no first, I rolled a few little pinner joints back here, which I'm gonna do right now, for the drive up...

(While talking he rolls a skinny, tight joint from the pot and some tobacco from a cigarette. He makes a roach from the thicker paper on the table.)

Neal: So...Can you pass me that tray?...Okay...so I'm driving up to meet Jean-Paul and smoking one of these little pinners...I've got a quarter in my bag, a bit of Shackleton we had left over from Zeitgeist.

Thad: Sure.

Sam: Oh, yeah.

Neal: My passport in my pocket, and I'm ready to see what's gonna happen. I'm feeling truly excited, truly inspired for this upcoming weekend with Jean-Paul...(drag, swig, laughs) Alright, now I'm at Jean-Paul's place and he, of course, being the crazy fucking maniac he is, this fucker comes out dressed all in black—smoking a cigarette, wearing sunglasses, hair slicked—the whole getup. He tosses his bag in, we start driving, joking around. I pull out the second pinner, Jean-Paul's eyes of course light up. So we're driving along smoking the joint and talking about this new Hitler book that came out, have you seen this? (to Ryan)

Ryan: No...

Neal: Ohhhh, you'll have to read it. Fascinating stuff. "He Loved the Children He Knew..."

Sam: It's ridiculous.

Thad: Crazy.

Ryan: Oh...Hm...

Neal: Oh, yeah, it's just preposterous. Fucking crazy! Hitler hanging out, bouncing little kids on his knee. I mean, you know, the children he knew, he loved 'em. So the one's he didn't know...he had them gassed? I mean, does that make him evil? He didn't know them, those children. The one's he knew, he loved...Good Ol' Uncle Adolph. So...(does a line) So, we get to the border, get across, no problem. We go find a relatively cheap hotel, get a room and then get ready to go out gambling 'cause Jean-Paul wants to do that straight off. I say, "Whoah, hey, guy, relax. Why don't we first just go get a drink, have a meal..." But he's fucking emphatic, psychotic about getting gambling. So we go to the casino and I'm just messing around, you know, fifty bucks here, fifty bucks there. Well, Jean-Paul goes to a blackjack table and immediately goes up eight grand! I waltz over to the table, unknowing, and he slips out that he's up eight thousand. But he's acting like that's nothing. He's supremely cool, calm...I am amazed and I wanna stay and watch but can tell he really doesn't want me around, so I leave and go to the bar (swig of beer).

Order a martini, smoke a butt. Just try to take it easy, knowing that right now Jean-Paul is on a wild ride. I'm on my second drink when Jean-Paul storms up beside me, pissed as all hell, swearing his fucking head off. "Cocksucker dealer!" "Cocksucker game!"

"Cocksucker chips!" "Cocksucker casino!" "Cocksucker fuck!" "Cocksucker cocksucker!"...So, needless to say, he's pissed, and so I wait a minute before I ask him what happened. He orders a gin and tonic, smokes half a butt and then, with all the bitterness and spite he can muster, says, with teeth clenched, under his breath, very dramatic, "Fucking cocksucker...I only got four grand, that's eet." The way he said it you'd think he'd just won a fucking fuzzy pink teddybear at a carnival. I'm like, "Holy Shit! You just won four grand, guy! This is fucking great!" And he turns to me and slowly, like his eyes have drawstrings on 'em connected to his mouth, the corner of his lips slide up and he says to me with this great wildness in his eyes, "We have to spend eet by Sunday. All of eet. I don't want a fucking cent left when we leave thees country" (drag. Pause) ...And I'm not gonna argue with that...So now things start to get completely ridiculous 'cause it's like monopoly money. We have to spend it. Jean-Paul said so. From the casino we go to a pub and have a few drinks. Then it's on to the next pub. Then a club. Then another club. We're constantly drinking champagne and meeting these basically just...sluts. So we just get rip roaring, fall down drunk. We end up somehow getting a cab, making it back to the hotel, and then passing out. The next morning we check out and move to a new hotel, the *Chateau Royal*, where we proceed, through Jean-Paul's finagling no less, to get an *executive suite* with *two* bedrooms, a living room, *two* baths, a small kitchen and a view of downtown Montreal. It's *utterly* crazy. The day moves by...We lounge around...Talk a bit...Get some food—Just basically take it easy. So now it's nighttime and Jean-Paul *really* wants to go out and

have some fun. So we get fully dressed up—Jean-Paul all in black; I'm wearing, you know, a button down and a jacket. We have dinner in the hotel, a wonderful meal: fresh lobster, champagne again. Jean-Paul makes a call, tries to get some coke, but he can't get a hold of these Turks he knows... So, then we go out to a pub, *La Vieux Dublin*, this Irish-style pub which is pretty nice, before going to—get this—*Ca C'est Clube Supair Sexx*—

Sam: Club Su-pair Sex?

Thad: Oh, yeah, I've been there.

Ryan: I headlined in the late eighties.

Neal: Oui, *Clube Supair Sexx*—this *ridiculous* strip club with some of the most *ridiculously* beautiful women I've ever seen. I mean, these girls are just incredible. I mean, the real thing. And now we are *truly* in our glory. After an hour or two, Jean-Paul asks one of the girls, this cute little redhead, if we could possibly get a lap dance in the back room. So they take us to a back antechamber and Jean-Paul and I get seated back to back. We've got our glasses of champagne, our cigarettes, and by now are a little tipsy. Then, in walks the redhead with her pouty lips and beautiful *pale smooth* body, wearing this *tight* red dress. And with her is, and I'm not exaggerating, the most unbelievable blond I've ever seen—and not a fake, *real* blond—you could tell, and just *tall*, young, probably our age, and dressed in just a white blouse with *no* bra, a dark shirt and stockings. So now I'm *fully* blown away, my mind explodes! I can hear Jean-Paul laughing his high pitched “hee hee” as he puffs through a butt. The redhead moves around to Jean-Paul and the blond gets in front of me and they tell us we can't touch them but they can touch us, which is normal. They start moving around and slowly disrobing and this *blond, guy*, she has the most *unbelievable* body, clear and unstretched, and she's a real blond and she's slowly talking off her stockings in front of me and bending over all the way and it's just *ridiculous*. Now, remember, I can't see Jean-Paul, I just hear him talking dirty to this girl and then the minute I turn my head to see what's going on, she touches me, under the chin, and *turns* my head back to look at her. And there she is *cupping* my head, completely naked and dancing around, slowly *rolling* her hips and never taking eye contact off my eyes. *Extremely* intense. And then she gets up *real* close to me, rubbing against my legs, takes my hands and puts them on her breasts, and they're wonderful, very *full*, voluptuous, not fake at all. So this goes on for about ten minutes, then Jean-Paul and I go back to the bar. Jean-Paul tries to get the girls to come with us back to the apartment but they decline. So we go have a drink and by now it's about one. We hop a cab, get back to the suite and Jean-Paul gets on the phone. I go and for some reason, maybe 'cause I was a little drunk or just liked the big bathtub with jets in my room, I quickly draw a bath and get in. Twenty minutes later Jean-Paul walks in while I'm rolling a joint and says, “Zee girls will be here in about a half-hour.” I'm kind of puzzled, so I ask, “What girls?” And he tells me that he ordered two call girls—real nice, real expensive ones for us. Fucking nuts! (laughter) So, a half-hour rolls by, I get dressed *again*. And just as Jean-Paul said, these two girls, no, no, not girls, these women show up—probably late twenties, early thirties. A blond and a brunette. They come in and are real *knockouts*—they're not wearing too much makeup and they're very nice, cordial, not even slutty. They just come in, Jean-Paul gives them the money and we take their coats. Then the tall blond asks, “So, who's with who?” I look at Jean-Paul and he looks at me

and says, "Hold on for un moment." So Jean-Paul and I *adjourn* to my room and he tells me, "I really want zee broonette, d'accord?" I tell him: "Yeah, that's fine. Sure." We head back in, they get up. Jean-Paul and the brunette go into his room and I invite the blond into my room and close the door. Immediately, she walks up to me and kisses me *long and deep and firm*. I wrap my arms around her back. We pull out of it and kind of fall onto the bed together. I start to take her top off and she goes for my belt and pants. But the whole time, and I don't know why this was, she kept her eyes, these really beautiful, big brown eyes, firmly locked on mine... Then somewhere in the mess of our animalistic disrobing I asked her her name and she told me it was Beatrice which caught me off guard for a moment and spun my concentration off into *The Inferno* which was just fucking crazy... So then we get completely naked—she wanted to know my name and get this: for some reason I told her it was Dante—Dante! Yeah! Isn't that ridiculous? So we make love (swig)—I ask her if we need a condom and she tells me no, so we don't—and it's incredible—

Thad: You didn't use a condom?

Ryan: Yeah, guy, what the fuck?

Neal: Hey. She said she was clean, and without—

Ryan: And you believed her—

Neal: These weren't fucking streetwalkers, guy. These weren't hookers with dead canaries in their pussies. These were classy call girls. Expensive.

Ryan: All right, all right.

Neal: And plus, without trust, what are we? Fucking animals. We resort back—devolve. Plus, everybody wins.

Thad: That's true.

Ryan: Good point.

Neal: So, where was I? Yeah, she's just *amazing*. Amazing. She has this *amazing* body and we're trying all sorts of crazy positions—and that lasts for about forty-five minutes. Then, *post-coitus*, we lie on the bed, bodies entangled, *so* very relaxed... and then for some reason I wanted to know about her and she told me she was married with a *child*! Which just *blew* my fucking mind! I wanted to know why she did this—I mean it seemed kinda strange—but she said that they needed the money and that the money was very good, which I couldn't argue with... And then we chatted some more and *completely* unsolicited she told me I had a really great stroke—which I thanked her for. Then she got dressed, we said goodbye, and she left. I went in, took a shower, put on this *bijon* robe from the hotel, took the joint I had into the living room where I met Jean-Paul who was also wearing his *bijon* robe (laughter). We smoked a little... talked about this crazy world we live in... and then went to bed. That was it... Late the next morning we had a

wonderful brunch, lounged around for a bit, did a little more gambling—didn't win anything, and then left. I dropped Jean-Paul off and now *here we are. Unscathed*. And what is the moral of this story? Once again, everybody wins.

Sam: Wow...

Ryan: Now that is what I'm talking about. Fucking Jean-Paul.

Thad: That guy is crazy.

Neal: Oh, he's a maniac. *And, oh*, and I almost forgot: We got to the border and Jean-Paul realized we still had a couple hundred bucks left, *so*, we went into the duty-free and uh, purchased a few items, dude...

(Neal searches through one of his bags.)

Neal: First off, the practicals: a few cartons of DuMaurier's.

Thad: Ah, fantastique.

Neal: Yeah, the harshest cigarette you're ever gonna smoke.

Sam: Really?

Neal: Yeah. And now, okay, are you ready for this? In *hommage* to Jean-Paul's homeland and my pseudo-home for my adolescence, I give you, *La Tour Eiffel*—(it is a three foot tall pink plastic replica)(laughter) that will become...undoubtedly...one of *les points du centre*...of our *maison d'humble*. (He places it in the center of the table) This is great! (Laughter) Next is an item which I'm not really sure why I bought it, it was probably my being stoned out of my head that...contributed to it. Dude.

Thad: It's okay with me.

Neal: Exactly, man, it's okay with me. But we are now, I'm quite content, quite excited, quite profoundly happy that we are now the proud owners of our very own... *Bird-Sound Clock*. And now what this is, and I know you're skeptical. You're thinking: *Neal*, what good will a Bird-Sound Clock do for me? How will it *help* me? *Aid* me?—and these are valid questions—Will it make you a better man? Probably not. Will it get you laid? *Perhaps*. Will it scare the hell out of visitors? Absolutely. *Guy*, just look at how crazy this is—now okay, you've got the Robin...and then the Blue Jay...and the Cardinal—the Oriole. *But*, you also get the lesser-known birds—the Tufted Titmouse for five o'clock. The Black-Capped Chickadee. The Mourning Dove. And this is the best, hear this, The Call of the White-Breasted Nuthatch. (He plays it. They laugh) This is great! (he makes noise happen) the Call of the White-Breasted Nuthatch! Just ridiculous.

Ryan: Yeah, sure is.

Neal: Thanks, dude. (Does a line. Pause. He gathers tray) *Oh*, and I almost forgot the best, the crowning jewel, the *raison d'être*. I have found, quite possibly the single most American item you can imagine. Are you ready for this? But first, let's just address, for a moment, this idea of America—Now...what exemplifies America? I mean here in this Post-Cold War, Dot-Com world where America is the *greatest* and *biggest* superpower in the world, capable of *single* handedly destroying a small, third-world country's economy. Capable of sending foreign diplomatic aid to troubled areas like the Balkans or the Middle East or, or Northern Africa where people are just being *raped* and *slaughtered*, their guts and their hearts and these people's very *souls* torn from them inexplicably and without any *real* justification behind this mayhem. This madness...And America as a country, and I focus on America because yes, the duty-free might still have technically sat on Canadian ground. *But*, who really gives a fuck about Canada, right? I mean, did Canada fight to keep Great Britain off this North American soil and develop the idea that all men should be created equal? No, Canada did not. Was Canada instrumental in defeating totalitarian regimes in Russia and Germany and even Japan in this last great twentieth century? No, of course not. Did Canada even have anything to do with this time of *vast* and *wondrous* economic prosperity that we are now in? No, Canada did not. So...what we are talking about here is America, the United States of America to be exact. And what best exemplifies, what best shows, what best *demonstrates* what this great democratic land is about?—This. (takes out fish) This simple fish. This trout. Travis. The Trout. Now don't laugh, you're missing the seriousness of this point. Just listen, shhhhh... (He presses the button and the fish flaps and we hear "Bad to the Bone")

(Pause.)

Neal: So, the question *really* becomes—

Thad: Oh, *come on*...No...come on...give me a break...

Sam: Come on.

Ryan: What, you are fucking...

(They laugh and laugh. At the end of it, Neal sits and lights a cigarette.)

Sam: Come on—

Ryan: Give me a fucking break—

Thad: You are so full of shit—

Neal: (smiling) What?

Thad: So unbelievably full of shit—it's remarkable—

Sam: What do you think—

Ryan: It's a fucking fish—

Thad: So full of shit—

Neal: What? (Neal is busy changing CD's. He puts on Dylan's Live 1966 album.)

Ryan: A fish. A fucking fish—
Sam: So stupid—

(They are all enjoying it.)

Ryan: A stupid fucking fish—
Sam: Come on, guy—
Neal: What? Hey, look—
Thad: So full of shit—
Sam: Okay, here we go—
Neal: I'm sorry if you guys—
Ryan: Oh, Jesus—
Neal: --don't want to tackle the tough issues—
Thad: Yeah, that's it—
Neal: --that plague our time—
Ryan: Sure, absolutely—
Neal: And I was merely using this little fish, Travis, the trout—
Sam: Good old Travis—
Thad: Fuck Travis!
Neal: --as a metaphor for the global hegemony of American capitalism—
Ryan: Good word—
Neal: Thank you. But if you guys don't want to talk about the real important issues—(he can't hold it in, he cracks up) (They all crack up)

Thad: There we go, see.

Ryan: Beer?

Neal: (nods)

Sam: Sure.

Thad: Yeah.

Neal: (does a line) We believe in nossing, Lebowski. Nossing!
Thad: Nossing! And next time—
Ryan: Nossing!
Thad: --we'll come—
Sam: Nossing!
Neal: Nossing!
Thad: --And we'll cut off your Johnson.
Sam: Cut it up into—
Thad: --little pieces and squish it.

Neal: Nossing! Here, guy (lines). What have you dudes been doing in my absentia?
Circle jerk?

Thad: Yeah.

Sam: That's all we do when you're not here—

Ryan: Sometimes we fuck each other in the ass but that's rare—

Sam: It's true—

Thad: (gay) Jeesus, you're such a brute.

Neal: (gay) Jeethus Chritht—

Thad: Jeethus Chritht—

Neal: We're going to Broadway!

Thad: Broadway?

Neal: Broadway.

Sam: Actually, we need to have a powwow about this radio show—

Neal: (out of it) Come on?

Sam: Zeitgeist.

Neal: Thank you. All right, fine. Lay this bullshit on me. Give me the facts. What have you been doing?

Ryan: Uh... You're looking at it.

Neal: And how's that working out for you?

Ryan: Seems to be going okay.

Sam: So, Oser said—

Neal: Fuck him.

Ryan: Yeah, fuck him!

Neal: Fuck him right in the ear!

Ryan: Fuckin' douchebag.

Neal: You know if he doesn't watch it, I'm gonna gas him—

Ryan: (laughing) That's horrible.

Thad: Dude. (shaking his head, but laughing)

Sam: So Oser said—

Neal: (German accent) Vat vould happen if ve connected sirty sousand volts of electricity to a persons testicles?...Hm...Bring in zee Jew. (It's so bad they can't help but all laugh)

Thad: (laughing) Bring in zee Jew.

Ryan: (laughing) That is so awful.

Sam: Vat?

Thad: (German) Vat vould happen if ve stuck a steaming hot poker up someone's anus until it came out their mouth?...

Ryan: Oh. (laughing but disgusted)

Neal: Ooo. (same)

Sam: Ah. (same)

Thad: Hm...Bring in zee Jew.

Neal: Bring in zee Jew.

Ryan: That's awful.

Sam: But funny.

Thad: It's a sick twisted—we are some sick twisted fucks—

Neal: Mm. Vat do you suppose vould happen if ve plugged up all of zee orifices on someone's body?...

Sam: Oh. (same)

Ryan: Jesus. (same)

Thad: Ooo. (same)

Neal: Hm...Bring in zee Jew.

Ryan: That is terrible. Just awful.

Sam: So bad—but good.

Thad: We are all going to hell—

Neal: Hey, man, say what you want about the tenets of national socialism but at least it's an ethos.

Thad: A fucked up ethos.

Neal: True.

Sam: Thank God we're nihilists.

Ryan: The dude abides.

Neal: Oh, mmm, hey, what are you guys doing on Wednesday, about 4?

Sam: Nothing.

Thad: No.

Ryan: I'll have to check with my secretary—

Sam: What's up?

Neal: I need to borrow you guys—the philosophy department's doing a reading of Plato's Symposium.

Thad: Cool.

Neal: I need you guys to help me do the reading.

Ryan: Sounds good.

Neal: Yeah, it'll be fun.

Sam: We need to—Zeitgeist. So Oser said that the Dean called him—

Neal: Un hun.

Sam: And basically it was something like—

Ryan: That show was fucking ridiculous—

Neal: What? What do you mean? How so?

Ryan: You fuckin' lay into these people—these poor people that call in.

Neal: I don't see it that way—I simply speak the truth—

Ryan: Oh, yeah?

Neal: And sometimes zee truth is not pretty—

Ryan: Telling people as they're driving home from work that their lives are meaningless, they're meaningless, and they'd be better off if they as soon as they could steered their car into oncoming traffic and a head on collision—

Neal: What? That's wrong? What? I crossed a line?

Ryan: It's fucking cruel—

Neal: Hey, we do dick jokes too, right?

Thad: Fuckin' right we do dick jokes.

Neal: We do a whole section—Thad's got his own whole segment called dick jokes for his big dick—I mean we're just stating facts here: Thad has a big dick. You know it, I know—

Thad: I know it—

Neal: He knows it. We're just—it's like reporting the news. That. Thad's big dick, that's news.

Ryan: I'm sure a big dick is newsworthy.

Neal: Sure it is. It's like a public service announcement—but we're getting away from the point which is—

Ryan: There's a point—

Neal: Oh, sure there's a point. And the point is: Thad's got a big dick.

Thad: Thank you.

Neal: You're welcome—No, that's not the point—

Sam: Then what's the point?

Neal: The point is we never swear. Not once on air have we ever sweared—sworn. Not once on the air.

Ryan: Is that true?

Sam: Yeah, it is.

Thad: It's a clean fuckin' show.

Neal: That doesn't mean we don't talk about important issues—we're like, I like to describe Zeitgeist as a metaphorical Howard Stern looking to entertain you, teach you, and challenge you—

Ryan: With dick jokes?

Neal: Hey, it's a big dick.

Ryan: Don't I know it.

Thad: Can't we all just get along?

Sam: Still, I think the Dean got some complaints 'cause Oser—

Neal: Fuck him.

Thad: Yeah, fuck him.

Ryan: Fuckin' Oser.

Neal: Wouldn't know originality if it fucked him in the ass—(laughter) What'd you do this weekend?

Thad: Fucked Bethany.

Neal: Really?

Ryan: Up the ass?

Thad: No. What? No. But yes.

Neal: How was she?

Thad: She was really nice.

Ryan: Yeah?

Thad: Yeah. Passionate.

Neal: Hm. Who knew? Well, good for you.

Thad: The dude abides.

Neal: The dude certainly abides—how 'bout you, dude?

Sam: I listened to him fuck Bethany.

Neal: Oh, yeah?

Thad: Yeah?

Ryan: Really?

Sam: Oh, yeah—

Neal: How was that?

Sam: Really nice—

Neal: Oh, yeah?

Sam: Yeah, passionate.

Thad: Were you really listening?

Sam: Well it was hard not to, dude. That girl is loud—

Thad: Yeah, that's true—

Sam: I mean, it's not like I was at your door with a glass to the door, I was sitting all the way out here—

Ryan: That is loud.

Sam: No shit.

Neal: Well the scream alone with she first saw that schlong, I mean—

Thad: There was no scream. You guys exaggerate—

Neal: No?

Thad: No. She loved it.

Neal: Well good for her. (starts applauding) Right? (Sam and Ryan join in) I mean, great.

Ryan: (clapping) It's fantastic.

Sam: (clapping) It really is.

Thad: Thank you. (bows) Thanks a lot.

Neal: You get laid last night?

Ryan: Actually, no.

Neal: No? Why not?

Ryan: I got so drunk last night—it was one of those nights—big party at 12 Caro—well,

Neal: Ah, the rugby house—

Ryan: Yeah—Well, I woke up on the football field.

(laughter)

Neal: What yard line?

Ryan: I don't remember.

Thad: You were alone?

Ryan: No. Blevins and Sully were there. There were some girls too I didn't know.

Sam: How'd you get in there?

Neal: Yeah, how did you get in there—they lock that place up—

Ryan: I have no idea.

Thad: How'd you get out?

Ryan: Public Safety.

Neal: They found you?

Sam: You're lucky it's so warm out.

Ryan: No shit. Yeah. But they were cool about it. They just let us leave.

Neal: That's not the Public Safety I know.

Ryan: No. Oh, yeah, that's right.

Neal: I can't get comfortable—I hate this fucking—Fuck! I hate this fucking couch! Sorry, I know you're attached to it.

Sam: Not particularly.

Neal: No? Good. Let's break the shit out of this thing.

Ryan: What?

Neal: Come on. There's an ancient Indian saying, "He who breaks couch soar like Ostrich."

Sam: I don't remember that one.

Neal: Oh, yeah. There's even a verse in the Bible. Under Ottomans 36:12. "And thus the Lord said unto Moses: "Moses, go forth and break every couch in Egypt." And that's exactly what he did. And look where we are. Thank God he did or we wouldn't be where we are today.

Ryan: Which is?

Neal: A land where a couch can live freely. What? Don't you see? Moses had to get rid of all the bad couches so we could start anew with new couches.

Thad: Then why break this one if it's good?

Neal: Aye, there's the rub.

Sam: The rub—

Thad: The rub—

Neal: But this couch unfortunately—this innocent looking baby blue—has crossed over to the dark side—making it fucking impossible to sit comfortably on this middle cushion—and if we don't rid ourselves of this demon it could infect the whole apartment—that couch—that chair—our beds—our beds—I shudder to think—No, we must quickly perform an exorcism before the virus spreads—

Ryan: (rhetorical question) And how do we do that?

Neal: By breaking the shit out of this couch.

Thad: That sounds reasonable.

Sam: Logical when you think about it.

Neal: Absolutely. Why men our very lives depend upon this task at hand—we must take it upon ourselves to save this very apartment—Nay, to save this schoolhouse—Nay, to save the very college itself. Yes, upon this day, men, this is St. Baby Blue Day. He that outlives this day and comes safe home, will yearly on the day say to his neighbors: Tomorrow is St. Baby Blue Day. And he will strip his sleeve and show his scars and say "these wounds I had on Baby Blue Day." Old men forget: yet all shall be forgot. Be he'll remember what feats he did that day: then shall our names, familiar in his mouth as household words Sammy The Duke, Baron Von Thaddeus, Ryno Earl of Sween—be in their cups freshly remembered—We few, we happy few, we band of brothers. For he that sheds blue with me shall be my brother. And gentlemen in England now a-bed shall think

themselves accursed they are not here, And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks
that fought with us upon St. Baby Blue Day!

Thad & Ryan: (rising, excited) Ahhhh!

Sam: Has Carte Blanche been declared?

Neal: Declare it, dude!

Sam: I declare Carte Blanche has been declared!

Neal: Excellent job. Now, let's break this fucking couch!

(Thad and Ryan lift it up. As they do the huge pile of pornography spills out. They move to take Baby Blue out the front door.)

Neal: Dude, your magazines.

Thad: Fuck you, Jack. (as they head out the front doors.)

Neal: Everybody wins!

Ryan: Everybody wins!

Thad: (from out the door) Everybody wins!

Sam: Listen, dude, we've gotta talk about this radio show—Zeitgeist, 'cause, I mean, it can't be good.

Neal: Sammy, tomorrow we'll deal with all that. You're being very irrational. (Neal picks up a lighter, fires up a smoke) Now let's go outside and set this couch on fire. (He skips the CD ahead and turns the volume way up. It is Dylan's Live 1966 album. Like A Rolling Stone. The pre-song dialogue plays:)

Sam: On fire?

Neal: Judas!

Sam: I don't believe you. You're a liar.

Neal & Sam: Play fucking loud!

(Neal puts his arm around Sam and just as they exit out the front door the song blasts off. Slow fade to black. End of Act I.)

Act II

Scene 3

(Music: New Radicals “You Get What You Give.” Monday. Early afternoon. The kitchen table is pulled center. On it is an egg timer, a bowl of red stuff, and a white towel full of red blotches. The couch that was against the wall left is now center over the pornography where Baby Blue once stood. The kitchen table chairs are lined up left against the brick wall. Pieces of white construction paper with what look like red butterflies are taped to the brick wall and bar. The bird sound clock is hung on the brick wall center. Lights up. Neal, in front of the long end of the kitchen table, his back to the audience, picks up one of his paintings and dances around to the music as he takes it over to tape to the bar (or TV). He wears boxers and scrubs but no shirt or shoes. Neal sings along to the ridiculous song. Enter Sam from the front door.)

Sam: (loud) What is this?

Neal: (loud) This is my new favorite song! “You got the music in you...”

Sam: (loud) Who is this?

Neal: (loud) I have no idea! “Don’t give up...”

Sam: (loud) What are you doing?

Neal: (loud) Inspiratu returns!

Sam: (loud) Inspiratu?

Neal: (loud) The bastard child of inspiration. Do you hear it, Sammy? The bells of inspiratu toll for thee.

Sam: (loud) What is this?

Neal: (loud) Art, amigo! “You got a reason to live...”

Sam: (admiring the taped up artwork) Butterflies?

Neal: (singing along) What, dude?

Sam: Butterflies?

Neal: (holds up a finger, goes to the stereo and turns down the music) What was that?

Sam: Butterflies?

Neal: Hm. Yeah. They do look like butterflies, don't they? You winning, guy?

Sam: (moves closer) Uh, sure. What is that?

Neal: Marinara.

Sam: Marinara?

Neal: Spaghetti sauce.

Sam: Oh. Hm. How'd you get it to do that?

Neal: Balls.

Sam: Balls? What kind of balls?

(Neal gives him a look.)

Sam: (laughing) Come on. You're shitting me.

Neal: Don't knock it 'til you've tried it.

Sam: That's okay, really—

Neal: It's very liberating, dude. There really is nothing like a shorn scrotum. It's quite breathtaking—(his back to the audience, he drops his scrubs and boxers down in front, dips his balls in the marinara bowl then places them down on a piece of paper—)

Sam: No—Uh—(We see Sam's reaction to this—laughing at the absurdity but also a bit disturbed—he scrunches his face while he laughs, etc.)

Neal: A bit messy, I'll admit. (He grabs the towel to wipe off.)

Sam: (really laughing) Come on!

Neal: (snaps his boxers back in place, tightens his scrubs ties) What? (also laughing) We have to let that dry a minute. (He turns the egg timer to 1 minute.) It's Ball Art. What's your problem?

Sam: Ball Art?

Neal: Yeah.

Sam: Ball Art?!

Neal: Exactly.

Sam: Ball Art?!?

(They are both really laughing. Neal can't keep a straight face.)

Neal: Look, just 'cause you don't get it—

Sam: Oh, I get it—

Neal: I mean it is hard to get—

Sam: It's pretty straightforward. Pretty...

Neal: It's new. (lights a cigarette)

Sam: Sure it is.

Neal: Seurat used points, Pollack the drip technique, Me: balls.

Sam: Come on!

Neal: What?...Something truly revolutionary is always mocked at first.

Sam: Whoa, hold on—let's not get ahead of ourselves.

Neal: You see, you'll be sorry.

Sam: I'm sure—

Neal: You'll say, I can't believe I mocked him, when these pieces are hanging in the Louvre's Grande Galerie.

Sam: Okay. Right. (laughing) Or our dumpster out back?

Neal: That's a possibility too, man, There's lots of ins and outs, ups and downs, strikes and gutters.

Sam: I hear you, man.

Neal: But do you?

Sam: I think so.

Neal: It's okay with me. (he exits right to the toilet.)

Sam: (shouts) And put on some clothes! Jesus. It's fucking January. (He looks around. Egg timer: Ding! Enter Thad from the front door.) Hey, amigo.

Thad: Hey, what's up?

Sam: Well...

Thad: What the hell's all this?

Sam: Ball Art.

Thad: Oh. Okay. (switches on a dime to more serious matters) Did he see Ed today?

Sam: I don't know. (looking around) I would assume not. You want a beer?

Thad: Sure. (goes to couch) He said he called here a few times.

Sam: I doubt the dude answered.

Thad: Where the fuck is the phone? (looks around, searches couch, finally pulls it out from stuffed down in couch)

Sam: Here, dude. So apparently we have to go meet with the Dean and apologize.

Thad: Yeah, that's what Ed told me too—(Enter Neal.)

Neal: Hey, dude. My timer go off?

Sam: Yeah.

Thad: What's happening? You winning?

Neal: Always, dude. Not much. Revolutionizing the art world, nothing new. This one's good.

Sam: Is there a difference?

Neal: Subtle. It's all texture.

Sam: Ah.

Thad: Oser's looking for you.

Neal: Oh, yeah?

Sam: Yeah. We were supposed to see him today—

Neal: Oh, yeah. Right. How'd that go?

Sam: We need to apologize.

Neal: Apologize? For what?

Sam: For the radio show.

Neal: Dude...

Sam: Zeitgeist.

Neal: A-thank you.

Thad: They taped our show—Zeitgeist.

Neal: Fuck them.

Thad: Yeah, fuck them.

Neal: Taping our show—taping our show—I didn't watch my buddies die face down in the mud—

Thad: I don't see where there's a connection—

Neal: Well maybe not literal—

Thad: Look, there's no connection.

Sam: All we have to do is go before the Dean, apologize, and all will be forgiven.

Neal: When is this?

Sam: Tomorrow. Eleven.

Neal: Hm, By the way, I still need you dudes Wednesday. Four. Stein. The Symposium.

Thad: Oh, yeah, right.

Neal: Cool?

Thad: Yeah, it's cool.

Neal: Dude?

Sam: I'll be there, man.

Neal: Fantabuloso. This is gonna be a lot of fun. Reading it out loud. That's what it's all about. That's how it's supposed to be done.

Sam: I've never read it.

Neal: You've never read it? Oh, man, you are in for a treat: it's basically Socrates and Aristophanes and Alcibiades sitting around, getting drunk, and talking about women, life, death. I can't wait to hear it out loud.

Thad: What's the dude been up to?

Sam: I think you're looking at it.

Neal: Not true, mon frere. (Oser voice) I mean, sure, have I spent the afternoon inventing a new artform? Sure. Yes, I have. But—

Sam: How goes the thesis?

Neal: (Oser voice) It goes, dude.

Sam: Oh, yeah, I can tell.

Neal: It's all up here, man. (points to his brain) And soon it will open up like a great vagina and pour forth (the front door slams) upon all of us and wash away all our sins—

Sam: Oh, yeah?

Neal: And make us (second door slams) all into fresh new babies that—(Enter Oser.)

Oser: Nice. Nice couch. It's a nice touch.

Neal: Herr Oser—

Sam: Ed—

Thad: Hey, there he is—

Neal: It's that guy—

Thad: That guy—

Oser: That really—

Neal: It ties the room together.

Oser: It's a great thing to have out front. Your neighbors must love it.

Thad: Well—

Neal: You know, strangely, it hasn't gotten as many compliments as I would have thought.

Oser: That's surprising. You asshole.

Neal: You winning, guy?

Oser: Am I winning? Sure I'm winning. Right? What an asshole.

Neal: (smiling) What?

Oser: What an asshole.

Neal: Hey, man, the dude abides.

Oser: The dude. Right. First he doesn't audition for me. And now he doesn't show up to my office when I ask him to—

Neal: Hey, guy, I've been working.

Oser: I can see that. (to Thad) You got my stuff?

Thad: Yeah. (goes to tin under the coffee table to retrieve Oser's bag) It's good shit.

Oser: Guy, comes to my office, forgets the one thing—(Thad tosses him the bag of pot) You, what an asshole.

Neal: What?

Oser: (to Sam) Did you tell him?

Sam: Yeah.

Oser: So I get a call from Dean Peterson. "Ed, it's about this radio show, *Zeitgeist*." And right there I know we're in trouble—and I've never heard of a radio show called *Zeitgeist* before—

Neal: It's very big in Germany.

Oser: Oh, I'm sure. But it seems three students I know, who I'm close with—

Thad: (Oser voice) This is hardcore theater—

Oser: --And took under my wing—

Neal: (Oser voice) Look, it's hardcore. We don't do pussy theater. We do full out hardcore—

Thad: It's hardcore—

Neal: Hardcore theater.

Oser: All right, assholes. So, I get a tape given to me by Dean Peterson of this *Zeitgeist* show—

Neal: Oh, huge fan—

Thad: Huge—

Sam: Enormous—

Oser: Which consists of three of my favorite students saying things—

Neal: (gay) Oh, that's so sweet.

Thad: (gay) It really is.

Neal: (gay) He's a pussycat.

Thad: (gay) I just want to eat him up.

Oser: Saying things like—

Neal: Hey, say what you want about the tenets of national socialism but at least it's an ethos.

Oser: Yeah. Shit like that. What the fuck were you thinking?

Neal: About what?

Oser: What the fuck were you thinking?

Thad: You wanna hit this?

Oser: Yeah. (takes the joint, drag) What the fuck were you thinking?

Neal: (stands) I don't understand. Uh, listen, these Gestapo tactics—

Oser: Oh, there's a card—

Thad: I mean Gestapo tactics—

Neal: Gestapo tactics—

Sam: Gestapo—

Neal: These Gestapo tactics—

Thad: Gestapo tactics—

Oser: Nice recovery, asshole. This is better than that last shit.

Thad: Yeah, it is.

Oser: Okay, look. Here's how it is:

(All 3 sit up like eager puppies.)

Oser: You assholes.

Neal: Look, Ed, I know you miss me but you can always just—I'm just a phone call away—

Oser: I called you ten times today, asshole! Yeah, the smile.

Neal: Admit it, guy. You miss me.

Oser: (to Sam) What is he talking about?

Neal: (gay) And it's sweet—

Thad: (gay) So sweet—

Neal: (gay) Of you to come all the way down here—

Thad: (gay) It's a beautiful gesture—

Oser: (joking, to Sam) Such assholes.

Neal: (gay, getting emotional) And we appreciate it.

Thad: (same) We really do.

Neal: (wiping his eyes, etc.) Oh.

Oser: You guys finished?

Thad: (straight) Yeah.

Neal: (straight) Pretty much.

Oser: (reading from a piece of paper he pulls out of his pocket) Jesus was a bisexual surfing porn director.

Neal: I didn't know he surfed.

Thad: What Jesus? Big surfer. Huge surfer.

Neal: Hm.

Oser: (reading) I've declared a Jihad on all of you. Praise Allah. Let the suicide bombings begin. Please start with Wal-Mart.

Thad: Always low prices.

Neal: Always.

Sam: It's true.

Oser: (reading) And my personal favorite—and I could go on for hours—Three Jews walk into Auschwitz. None walk out.

Neal: More of a history lesson than a joke.

Thad: Yeah, pretty much.

Oser: What the fuck are you thinking?

Neal: Uh, right now?

Oser: What, what am I supposed to do with this?

Neal: Uh, cherish it?

Oser: Guys, listen—

Neal: I believe it was the great Jewish poet Robert Zimmerman who said, “Half the people can be part right all of the time, some of the people can be all right part of the time. But all the people can’t be all right all the time.”

Oser: (during Neal’s quote, to Sam and Thad) He’s gonna quote Dylan to me?

Sam: I believe—

Thad: Abraham Lincoln said that.

Oser: The guy who got him into Dylan—

Neal: I’ll let you be in my dream if I can be in your dream—

Sam: I said that.

Oser: Unfuckingbelievable. Unbelievable.

Neal: Ed, you look tense—

Oser: Guys, can I have the room for a minute?

(The 3 look at each other, then fast:)

Thad: Yeah, sure—

Neal: Absolutely—

Sam: Of course—

(They all move to exit, keystone cops-style.)

Oser: Not you, asshole!

Neal: Ah. I see. Gestapo tactics.

Thad: (right into it) Gestapo tactics!

Sam: Gestapo tactics!

Neal: I mean, these Gestapo tactics—

Thad: Gestapo tactics—

Sam: I meet—

Neal: Gestapo tactics!

Oser: (to no one in particular, perhaps himself) You know, you try to teach them things and it just gets thrown right back in your face.

Thad: We're gonna go play in traffic.

Oser: Good idea.

Neal: (to Thad and Sam) Tell the world my story.

Thad: Oh, Billy. (shows his nipple)

(Thad and Sam are almost at the door.)

Neal: Hey, if you don't hear from me in five minutes—

Sam: Just wait longer?

Neal: Exactly.

(Exit Thad and Sam smoking.)

Oser: Such an asshole.

Neal: (smiling) What?

Oser: Such an asshole.

Neal: (smiling) Hey, guy, an artist creates his own moral universe.

Oser: What the fuck is this shit?

Neal: Those are some new paintings I'm working on.

Oser: All right. Look, asshole, I'm up for tenure next year—now I know you don't give a shit 'cause you're out of here in four months, but I—

Neal: Ed, that hurts—

Oser: Fuck off. But I, I have a career here. And I'm not going to let you fuck up my tenure.

Neal: Now how would I fuck up your tenure?

Oser: Don't give me your bullshit. I still remember when you were a scared little freshman who'd never been laid. So don't fuck with me. I don't need this bullshit. All

right? Now I've stuck my neck out for you on multiple occasions but this is it. You got that?

Neal: Guy...

Oser: Don't "guy" me. There will be no more me telling Peterson, "Oh, you know, he's just joking around, he just likes to push the envelope a little"—'cause I know, I've been there. But this (paper) this is not funny.

Neal: Well—I can't be held accountable—

Oser: No, this is not funny.

Neal: It's all subjective, dude.

Oser: Don't give me the dude or the guy, (Neal smirks) I know all your tricks, asshole. And don't think those two guys won't follow you—they'll do whatever you say, and you know that—but don't fuck with them. Sure, they said some bad things on that show of yours but everytime—and I've heard the tape—there's a leader and there's the followers, and you know what I mean.

Neal: Look, Herr Oser—

Oser: Don't Herr Oser me, or Guy me. We're beyond that. Just go, and apologize. Get your diploma, get the hell out of here, and then you can go biking through Europe.

Neal: I was thinking Thailand—

Oser: Whatever. All right?

Neal: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Oser: Apologize.

Neal: Absolutely.

Oser: You're not just bullshitting me?

Neal: No, no, no. I'll apologize.

Oser: Good. All right. Come here.

(They hug, something they've probably done 100 times. The Bird sound Clock erupts!)

Oser: What the fuck is that?

Neal: The call of the White Breasted Nuthatch.

(Blackout. Music: Dylan's 'Freewheelin'. The end of "Talking World War III Blues.")

Scene 4

(Tuesday morning. Dean's Office. The Kitchen table has been cleared and three chairs are set up behind it. Light should be on just the area around this table to further delineate between their apartment and the Dean's space. Lights up. Seated Thad and Sam. Both wear sportcoats and ties. They wait uncomfortably for a few moments. The Dean enters.)

Dean: Hey, guys, thanks for coming in. (shakes hands, sits across from them.)

Sam: Thanks for seeing us.

Thad: Yeah, we appreciate it.

Dean: It's no problem. Look forward to clearing all this up.

Sam: Exactly. That's our hope. To clear all this up. (checks his watch)

Thad: Absolutely.

Dean: So, where's Neal?

Sam: Um...Well...I don't know...(looks to Thad)

Thad: We can probably start. Neal is, uh—

(Enter Neal through the door right. He is dressed impeccably: expensive suit and tie straight from Savile Row, hair slicked back, carries a leather briefcase.)

Neal: Dean Peterson, hello. Neal Masterson. Nice to meet you. (shakes hands across the table, then sits.)

Dean: Hi, Neal. Thanks for joining us.

Neal: Absolutely. Thank you for taking the time to see us, We all know how busy you are and that you have more important things to do than sit around discussing some little radio show.

Dean: Zeitgeist, right?

Neal: Yes, Zeitgeist.

Dean: I'm curious. Why'd you guys choose that name?

Neal: Well, we wanted to do a show about the times we live in, our current place in the world—especially with the Millennium coming up in less than a year.

Dean: You know it's not the real Millennium.

Neal: No, you're right, it's not the real Millennium but it seems the media and the general public have—well it's easy—easier to celebrate a big round number.

Dean: Yes, it is.

Neal: Right.

Dean: So, guys, I've listened to your radio show and I've got to tell you--

Neal: Sure—

Dean: I found it offensive--

Neal: Right—

Dean: And, quite frankly, disturbing.

Neal: Well, let me just say, first of all, and I think I speak for these guys too, We want to completely apologize to you and to the college community—

Sam: Yes—

Thad: Absolutely—

Neal: For that matter. We, uh, it was wrong, it was stupid. We just got...carried away with ourselves. And for that we are very sorry.

Sam: Yes we are, we're really sorry.

Thad: Really very sorry.

Dean: I appreciate that. I appreciate the apology. I mean some of the things you guys were saying was just--

Neal: Right. No, we know. Um, all I can say is that there's no place for that—and we know that—on the college's radio station—it's the college's radio—the voice of the college—this isn't a private station somewhere with a more liberal—with more liberal abilities—And now this is a liberal arts college, I'm not saying we aren't liberal but just, uh, there's a time and a place for that sort of language and this is not the place, nor the time.

Dean: Well, Neal, I'm not sure that's the issue. I mean I honestly don't think what you guys were saying should be broadcast anywhere.

Neal: Well...Now that's a slippery slope. I mean, it's all subjective really, isn't it? I mean if I say something that someone finds offensive but another person doesn't find offensive

should I be held accountable for what I said—Well, not for what I said, but for how they feel? Now that's an entirely different discussion to have—We're here to apologize and tell you we are sorry—

Sam: Yes, we are.

Thad: Absolutely.

Neal: And that it will never happen again.

Dean: Well that's true because you guys won't be on the air anymore.

Neal: That's true.

Dean: Look, guys—and Neal, I hear what you're saying—but some of those things you guys said were extremely hurtful—I mean bordering on a hate crime—

Neal: Well, just a second, if I may? First, I'd just like to say, you're right we said some awful things—

Dean: Yes, you did.

Neal: But, I'd like to just say in our defense, in all the time we've done this show—

Sam: Zeitgeist—

Neal: Zeitgeist, right, thank you. In all the time we've been doing it not once have we swore—an expletive has never been uttered on the air—

Dean: Is that true?

Sam: Yes, it is.

Thad: Absolutely.

Dean: Well--

Neal: So, I'm just saying, it could be a lot worse—we're not off just cursing our heads off on air—Sure, some of the opinions we put forth are maybe not very popular—

Dean: Well, I can't have some of the "opinions" you put forth broadcast over the college's airwaves.

Neal: Of course you can't. And it was stupid. And wrong of us. And we're very very sorry.

Sam: Yes, we are.

Thad: Absolutely.

Dean: All right, guys. The show is no more. Obviously. I appreciate your apologies. And your candor. And I'm willing at this point to just leave it at that.

Neal: Well we really appreciate that.

Sam: Yes we do.

Thad: Absolutely.

Dean: Just, please, guys, in the future, just use your heads. All right?

Neal: No, we will.

Sam: Yes.

Thad: Absolutely.

Dean: I mean, you're all three, obviously smart, articulate young men—just, you know, keep it on the up and up—the right path—you know what I mean?

Neal: Absolutely.

Thad: Absolutely. (Neal and Thad look at each other.)

Sam: Yes.

Neal: We will. And thank you again for seeing us.

Dean: Well thank you for your honesty.

Neal: Oh, no. Of course, of course. I'm just—we feel terrible this got so out of hand—

Dean: Well let's just put it behind us--

Neal: Absolutely.

Sam: Yes, we will.

Thad: Absolutely.

Neal: If I may, uh, Dean Peterson, before we go—and I know you're busy—I wanted to give you a gift, to thank you for taking the time to talk this through with us, and hearing our side—(He pulls out of the briefcase a framed Ball Art painting)—I kind of paint in my spare time—

Dean: Oh.

Neal: And this is a, a recent work—(Thad's and Sam's eyes show it all: terror.) of mine. It's no Picasso, but you know—

Dean: No, it looks nice. A butterfly?

Neal: Right, a butterfly. That's what Sam thought too, didn't you?

Sam: Absolutely.

Neal: So, I wanted to give you this—it's signed of course—not that it will ever be worth anything but I wanted to give you something, something more personal, as a token of gratitude for talking with us.

Dean: Well thank you very much. I'll enjoy it.

Neal: You're welcome.

Dean: Thanks, guys. Thank you.

Sam: No, thank you. (shakes hands)

Thad: Yeah, thanks a lot. (likewise)

Neal: Thank you very much. (shakes hands but he does the hand sandwich, like Bill Clinton used to)

(They all push in chairs and move to leave. Almost at the door...)

Dean: Oh, what do you call it—what's the name?

Neal: (small pause) Oh. I call it "College is Nuts."

Dean: Hm. Why is that?

Neal: I don't know. I've just found in my experience, it just is.

Dean: Sometimes I'd have to agree with you.

Neal: It's a working title. Thanks again. Take care.

Sam: Yes, take care.

Thad: Absolutely.

(They exit. Dean admires the painting. Blackout. Music: Dylan's Blood On The Tracks. Lily, Rosemary and the Jack of Hearts)

Scene 5

(Wednesday. Early Evening. Apartment. All the black and white photographs and Ball Art pictures are gone. Seated couch center is Ryan. He holds up a piece of white construction paper and looks at it and laughs. He smokes a cigarette. An open MGD

bottle on the coffee table. Enter Thad and Sam. They wear togas: basically their bedsheets over shorts.)

Sam: I'm just saying, it really tied the room together—

Thad: Dude—

Sam: And this aggression, man—

Thad: Dude—

Sam: It will not stand—

Thad: Dude—

Sam: It will not stand—

Thad: Well now it ties the—Hey, it's that guy!

Ryan: What the fuck is this?

Sam: What are you doing here?

Ryan: Are we having a toga party?

Thad: To-ga! To-ga! To-ga! To-ga!

Sam: No, it was for—where the fuck were you?

Ryan: What?

Thad: To-ga! To-ga! To-ga!

Sam: We had the Symposium thing today—I think that's enough.

Thad: Okay.

Ryan: Ah, fuck. That was today?

Thad: That's a bummer, man. (goes to the fridge, gets 2 beers)

Sam: Yeah.

Ryan: How'd it go?

Sam: Uh...(looks at Thad)

Thad: It went.

Sam: Yeah, it went.

Ryan: You guys look fucking ridiculous.

Sam: Pretty much.

Thad: Yeah.

Ryan: So what the fuck's up with this?

Sam: Ah, that's Neal's.

Ryan: What's it supposed to mean?

Sam: I don't know. It means nossing—

Thad: Nossing—

Ryan: These things are all over the place.

Thad: What do you mean?

Ryan: You guys haven't been up on campus today, have you?

Thad: No.

Sam: No really. We were down in Stein for this thing.

Ryan: They're everywhere—

Sam: You mean all over campus?

Ryan: Yeah.

Sam: Like where?

Ryan: Hogan, Fenwick, O'Kane, Mulledy, Clarke—

Sam: Shit.

Thad: What's it say?

Ryan: (reading) Zeitgeist. College is Nuts. Touch for Good Luck.

Thad: Fuck. (Sam sits and rubs his face.)

Ryan: This takes some serious balls. Didn't you guys meet with the Dean yesterday?

Sam: Yeah.

Thad: Oh, fuck.

Ryan: What? It's just a little painting.

Sam: Yeah.

Thad: Oh, fuck.

Ryan: It can't be that big a deal—

Sam: It's balls.

Ryan: What do you mean balls?

Sam: Neal's balls. Dipped in marinara sauce.

Ryan: (in awe) No shit?

Sam: Yeah.

Thad: Oh, fuck.

Ryan: You know, now that I look at it, it does look like balls.

Sam: Yeah.

Ryan: That took serious balls.

Sam: Yeah.

Thad: Fuck! That fucking—Oh!

Sam: They're up all over the place?

Ryan: Pretty much. Yeah. I thought it was a butterfly. But now I can see the balls. The outline.

Sam: Of course you can.

Ryan: Does anyone know they're balls?

Sam: I'm sure they'll find out.

Thad: Let's go take them down right now.

Sam: They've been up all day. Right?

Ryan: Yeah. I think so.

Thad: I'm gonna fucking kill him.

Ryan: Why?

Thad: Why? Because we're fucked, that's why.

Ryan: Why?

Sam: Neal gave—In our meeting yesterday, with Dean Peterson—Neal gave him one of these.

Ryan: No shit?

Thad: That fucking asshole!

Ryan: Well that took balls.

Sam: Yeah.

Ryan: He obviously doesn't know that it's balls.

Sam: No.

Ryan: But now—

Sam: Yeah. He thought it was a butterfly.

Ryan: See, it's not just me.

Sam: No, you have plenty of company.

Thad: I can't believe—what a fucking—Oh! Fuck!

Ryan: Here, smoke this. It's the law. (gives Thad the joint. Thad takes a big hit.) So just so I have this straight, he dipped his balls in marinara—

Sam: Spaghetti sauce, yes—

Ryan: And then placed them on the paper—

Sam: Exactly.

Ryan: Over and over again.

Sam: Yeah.

Ryan: Wow. That takes—

Sam & Ryan: Balls!

Sam: Right, we know.

Ryan: Sorry, it's just too easy.

Sam: Ugh, this is bad, this is really bad—

Ryan: It's pretty funny, though. You gotta admit—

Sam: Maybe for you—

Thad: Yeah, maybe for you—

Sam: You're not risking expulsion.

Ryan: They're not gonna kick you out for balls.

Sam: You just gonna keep saying it?

Ryan: Pretty much.

Sam: They will most definitely kick us out for balls.

Ryan: They can't!

Thad: Why?

Ryan: They're not your balls!

Sam: That's a good point—

Thad: He has a point.

Ryan: What kind of sauce?

Sam: I don't know. Ragu?

Thad: You wanna give it a taste, go right ahead.

Ryan: Touch for good luck is a nice touch.

Thad: Oh, it's fucking brilliant.

Sam: Ugh, and Dean Peterson was so cool yesterday—

Thad: That's true—

Sam: Why, why, why. Ugh.

Ryan: Maybe—(there's a knock at the front door)

Sam: Yeah!

Thad: Entre, s'il vous plait!

(Enter Jenny. Sam's in the Easy Chair, his back to her, head in his hands.)

Thad: Hey there.

Ryan: Well hello.

Jenny: Hey, guys. What's up?

Sam: You don't wanna know.

Jenny: Nice...toga?

Sam: Don't ask.

Jenny: Okay.

Thad: Unfuckingbelievable.

Jenny: Oh, hey! So...(goes through her bag) Yeah...(sees Ryan's Ball Art Zeitgeist painting on the couch) What's up with this? (She pulls out one of the Ball Art Zeitgeist paintings too.)

Sam: Oh, dear lord.

Ryan: You're gonna have to sterilize that bag.

Jenny: Hm?

Thad: It's balls.

Jenny: What are you talking about?

Sam: It's—

Thad: Balls! Balls! Neal's Balls!

Sam: He dipped them in spaghetti sauce—

Ryan: Ragu.

Jenny: Oh! (disgusted, drops the poster, her bag, doesn't know what to do)

Ryan: Did you touch it for good luck too?

Jenny: Oh!!!! (doesn't know where to go, what to do, finally, to the bathroom. As she goes) What the fuck is wrong with you guys?!

Thad: It wasn't us—

Sam: Use—there's better soap under the sink.

Ryan: And somewhere up in heaven an angel gets his wings.

Thad: What the fuck does that mean?

Ryan: I have no idea.

Sam: Didn't you touch it for good luck?

Ryan: Yeah.

Sam: Doesn't bother you?

Ryan: I shat my pants last semester. No, it doesn't bother me.

Thad: (laughing, remembering) That's right.

Sam: (laughing) When was that?

Ryan: I don't want to talk about it.

Thad: The dude is gonna get a serious—why the fuck am I wearing a toga?

Sam: That's a good point. (takes off his too. Thad crosses) Grab me a shirt.

Thad: Yeah.

Sam: We are so fucked.

Ryan: Hey, man. What's with the negative vibe, bro? (Sam gives him a look) Could be worse.

Sam: How could it be worse?

Ryan: You could be on fire.

Sam: Okay?

Ryan: All this could be happening to you And you could be on fire—that would be worse.

Sam: All right. I guess so.

(Enter Neal via the front door. He also wears a toga. He carries a case of MGD.)

Neal: Greetings, everyone.

Ryan: There he is.

Neal: The dude brings beer. Cold, refreshing MGD.

Ryan: The nectar of the gods.

Neal: I don't know about that. (goes to fridge and deposits the case inside)

Ryan: Me neither.

Neal: You winning, guy?

Ryan: Of course. You?

Neal: Definitely. I am most definitely winning.

(Enter Thad. He crosses to sit and tosses a shirt to Sam.)

Thad: Asshole.

Neal: Was that directed at me, dude?

Thad: Definitely.

Neal: And why is that? (Neal enters the living room from the kitchen. Thad slams the Ball Art Zeitgeist painting down on the coffee table.) You like that?

Sam: Excuse me?

Neal: You don't like it?

Thad: It's your balls!

Neal: Yeah.

Thad: Your balls, Schwartz! All over campus!

Neal: Absolutely.

Thad: You don't see a problem here?

Ryan: It took balls.

Neal: Thank you, dude.

Sam: You gave the Dean—

Thad: That's right—

Sam: A picture made from your balls.

Neal: By my balls, dude.

Sam: Whatever. Balls were involved.

Neal: That is true. (Enter Jenny) Good evening.

Jenny: Hey there.

Neal: How you doing, Jenny? Are you winning?

Jenny: Am I winning? Am...I...winning?

Sam: She had her hand on your balls.

Neal: Ah.

Jenny: So I don't think so. Probably not. Thanks for asking.

Neal: That's too bad.

Jenny: Yes it is. Too bad.

Thad: We are so fucked!

Ryan: I gotta know—what brought this on? Where the fuck did this idea come from?

Neal: (joking) You know, I wanted to make a political statement—and I was thinking a lot about how crazy college is—how really nuts it is—and then, I thought, yeah, College is Nuts—it's nuts—nuts, nuts—so, bang, naturally—College is Nuts—it somehow had to involve—

Ryan: Nuts.

Thad: What business you in, Saul?

Neal & Sam: Nuts.

Neal: Yeah. My balls. After all, it is the seed, there's nothing more uniquely male than, balls.

Sam: (smiling, laughing but also upset) Dude...Come on.

Neal: What?

Thad: (same) This is serious, man. I mean—

Neal: Balls are serious?

Ryan: It appears that way.

Neal: Jen, you want a beer?

Jenny: Uh, yeah, sure, fine.

Neal: Anybody else?

Ryan: Abseulment.

Thad: Fine.

Sam: I'm good.

(Neal gets the beers.)

Neal: So, thank you dudes for doing that for me.

Thad: Yeah—

Sam: You're welcome—

Neal: I know it was a little all-over-the-place but the philosophy department really appreciated it 'cause you guys brought some life—'cause, let's face it, most philosophy majors are about as exciting as a—

Ryan: As a bucket of Eskimo shit.

(Everyone stops and looks at him quizzically.)

Neal: Uh...yeah.

Thad: What the fuck was that?

(Enter Neal, distributes beers.)

Ryan: What? It's true.

(Pause.)

Neal: What? You guys are really upset about this?

Sam: No, guy, it's just—I mean, what, why?

Thad: Why not!?

Neal: Exactly. Why not?

Sam: This is, it's gonna get us in some serious trouble.

Neal: Did you think it was funny?

Sam: Um...

Neal: No, come on—

Ryan: I did.

Thad: Obviously.

Neal: When you first heard about it you didn't think it was funny? You're initial gut reaction?

(Thad and Sam think.)

Sam: Ye—Yeah. Fine. Yes.

Thad: What it is is funny. But what it does is not funny.

Neal: Why not?

Jenny: 'Cause it's a trick, it's not fair.

Neal: That's a valid point, dudette. I will admit I myself don't like the trick factor either, but I think the comedy outweighs it.

Ryan: Why are we getting all worked up about this—

Sam: Because—

Thad: You weren't sitting in the Dean's office yesterday—

Sam: (to Jenny) We gave one of these to the Dean—

Jenny: You did?

Thad: He did.

Neal: Hey, I can't be held accountable for my presents. Or presence. My presence is presents enough. College is nuts.

Sam: Who knows about this?

Ryan: Guy, when you gave Peterson one of these, what did he say?

Neal: Thank you. And, first of all, it was framed. Real nice.

Thad: It didn't say all that other stuff—

Neal: No. It was just the art, in its purest form.

Sam: Balls in its purest form.

Ryan: That's crazy, I love it.

Sam: Did you tell anyone?

Neal: No, but lots of people saw me hanging them up. (to Ryan) You know, that couch really tied the room together.

Ryan: It did.

Sam: That doesn't matter, as long as they don't know they're your balls, we can still figure this out—I can't believe the conversation we're having right now.

Neal: Hey, dude, you never know what you like until you try it—

Ryan: Look at the big fat whore over there.

Sam: Dude?

Thad: What?

Sam: Did you tell anybody?

Thad: (a look)

Sam: What? What did you do? Who'd you tell?

Neal: Oser.

Thad: Yeah.

Neal: I am the walrus.

Ryan: V.I. Lenin. Vladimir Ilyich Ulanov.

Sam: Oser? Why'd you tell Oser? Why would you tell—

Thad: Well I didn't think we'd be putting these things all over campus, dude!

Sam: Dude!

Thad: Dude!

Neal: Dude.

Ryan: Dude.

Jenny:...Dude?

Neal: Dudette.

Ryan: Dude.

Thad: Dude.

Sam: Dude.

Neal: Dude.

Thad: We're gonna need a bigger boat.

(Sam finds the phone.)

Ryan: You want a toe, I can get you a toe—

Neal: One woman is fair, yet I am well; another is wise, yet I am well; another virtuous, yet I am well—

Sam: It doesn't matter anyway, even if you did tell Oser—people are going to find out sooner or later, you can't keep a secret on this campus—

Jenny: Especially this—

Sam: Yeah.

Neal: The world must be peopled!

Thad: We're fucked.

Ryan: I don't think so necessarily.

Thad: Yeah, why's that?

Ryan: It's just balls.

Sam: You weren't—you didn't meet with the Dean yesterday—

Neal: That's true. This isn't 'Nam, Smokey, there are rules.

Jenny: There are?

Neal: Oh, yes. Absolutely.

Jenny: And what would those rules be because I don't see any rules?

Neal: Rule number one, dudette: an artist creates his own moral universe.

Sam: Tell that to the Dean.

Neal: Rule two: has Carte Blanche been declared?

Ryan: I don't believe so.

Thad: No.

Neal: Would you be so kind as to do the honors, dude?

Ryan: (British accent) I hereby declare that it shall be known from this day henceforth that Carte Blanche has been declared.

Neal: Here here.

Thad: (to Sam) Who are you calling?

Sam: Nobody. (he hangs up)

Jenny: What's the third?

Neal: And three: Everybody Wins.

Ryan: Everybody does win. It's okay with me.

Neal: It's okay with me.

Thad: (he's been thinking to himself for a while) It's not okay with me.

Neal: What's up, dude?

Thad: Look, I don't give a shit, all right? Let me make that clear first off. Crystal fucking clear. I don't give a shit.

Ryan: Are we clear?

Neal: Crystal.

Ryan: Are we clear?

Neal: Crystal.

Thad: But I am not getting fucking kicked out of school because you decided to stick your balls all over campus. And I could care less what you do—do whatever you want—But fuck you, man—

Ryan: Whoa.

Thad: --for putting me in this position. Me and Sam. Fuck you. Go fuck yourself. Is that clear?

Neal: Crystal. (smiles)

Thad: I don't need this fucking bullshit. Fuck you. And fuck the lot of you! Fuck you! Fuck you all! (he storms out the front door, punches the wall as he goes) Fuck!

(Silence. Neal and Sam look at each other dumbfounded. Then Ryan looks at Neal. Ryan and Sam. They let it go and casually move on.)

Neal: Glengarry?

Sam: I think so.

Ryan: This is fantastic pot.

Neal: Hm. It's okay with me.

Sam: So what are we going to do about this?

Neal: I don't know about you but I'm gonna start drinking.

Ryan: Sounds like a plan.

Sam: Seriously?

Neal: (laughs) Seriously?

Sam: Yeah, what's the plan?

Neal: The plan for what?

Sam: To handle this situation.

Neal: There's a lotta ins. Lotta outs. Lotta strands to keep in the old duder's head.

Jenny: I think I'm gonna go.

Sam: Yeah, maybe—

Neal: Don't go—

Ryan: Yeah, don't go, we just started—

Neal: It's true.

Jenny: No, I think I should.

Sam: Yeah, that's probably a good idea.

Jenny: See you guys.

Ryan: All right, my dear. It was good to see you.

Jenny: You too.

Neal: Yeah, you take care, Jenny, our little dudette. Hey, Jenny, can I ask you a question?

Jenny: Sure.

Neal: You ever hear of Hymen Roth? (Ryan loses it, almost does a spit-take)

Jenny: No, I don't think so—

Sam: All right, that's good, thank you—

Jenny: Is that another reference? (Ryan's coughing)

Neal: He's a really great man!

Ryan: Best to open up to him.

Sam: Yeah, Godfather.

Jenny: Oh.

Neal: Yeah, he really, Hymen opens things up in people—

Ryan: He's a real penetrating personality—

Neal: That's true.

Ryan: Really knows how to raise the stakes—

Neal: (Oser voice) Hey, Hymen raises the stakes—

(Sam walks Jenny out.)

Ryan: That was brutal.

Neal: Hey, the key to comedy is...uh, what is it?

Ryan: Timing.

Neal: Right. Timing. The dude abides.

Ryan: Seriously, what are you gonna do?

Neal: Seriously. Everybody wants to talk seriously. You know, no one ever says, "Comically, what are you gonna do?"

Ryan: Okay. Comically, what are you going to do?

Neal: Comically, I plan to walk right up to Dean Peterson and tell him I want a fucking car—a fucking Datsun, a fucking Toyota, a fucking Buick, four fucking wheels and a seat. I want a fucking car right fucking now.

Ryan: Bitch.

Neal: Yeah. Bitch.

(Enter Sam.)

Sam: Assholes.

Neal: What, guy?

Ryan: Come on.

Sam: I'm surrounded by assholes.

Neal: Well—

Ryan: Keep firing, assholes!

Neal: Thank you.

Ryan: You're welcome.

Sam: Whatever. (goes to get beer)

Neal: Sammy, why aren't you winning? And a better question is, why aren't you sleeping with that lovely girl—

Sam: Oh, I don't know, maybe because my asshole roommate decided to drag me into his fucked up joke.

Neal: (melodramatic) That hurts. Right here. He's such a brute sometimes.

Ryan: I know. It's horrible, horrible.

Neal: The way he talks to me. And never listens to me anymore. (wailing) It's like I don't even exist.

Ryan: There, there. It's gonna be okay.

Sam: What the fuck, man?

Neal: He really needs to get laid. Look how tense he is.

Ryan: It would definitely take the edge off.

Sam: We need a plan.

Neal: A plan?

Sam: Yes, a plan. A course of action.

Neal: A plan? This isn't fucking 'Nam, dude. We're not preparing to storm the beaches of Normandy.

Ryan: You know how to make God laugh?

Neal: Make a plan.

Ryan: Exactly. Make a plan.

Sam: So we're just gonna do nothing?

Neal: We believe in nossing.

Ryan: Nossing—

Sam: This is serious, dude.

Neal: This is serious? No, this is comedy.

Ryan: We believe in nossing, Lebowski. Nossing.

Sam: So the plan is to do nothing?

Neal: No, there's no plan to begin with. It's just—

Ryan: Nossing.

Neal: Exactly. Nossing.

Sam: I guess we're all just going down with you. Taking us all with you.

Neal: (singing) We said we'd all go down together—

Ryan & Neal: (singing) Yes, we would all go down together...

Sam: Whatever. (goes to exit)

Neal: Now where the hell are you going? Everyone's pussin' out.

Sam: I'm going to find Thad—

Neal: What do you want from me?

Sam: I'm not getting kicked out because of this. I agree with Thad. Some of us don't have your golden parachute—we don't live in the trustafarian world.

Neal: You think this is about money?

Sam: No. Partly, yes. You just don't give a fuck.

Neal: You're right, I don't give a fuck.

Sam: About anything, anyone—

Neal: I think you know that's not true. Who's the one—No, I don't want to get into it—

Ryan: Chill out, guy, it's all right.

Sam: Don't tell me to chill out! What the fuck are you even doing here? This doesn't concern you.

Neal: Whoa, whoa, whoa. There's no need for hostility towards Ryno. He's just hanging, he's our guest.

Sam: Whatever.

Neal: What the fuck is this?

Ryan: Sammy's taking a stand.

Sam: That's right. I'm taking a stand.

Neal: There's a line in the sand you do not cross, this line—

Ryan: Across this line you do not cross—

Sam: Would you stop the quoting for one fucking second?

Neal: What the fuck is your problem?

Ryan: You just quoted Ferris Bueller, asshole.

Neal: He's got you there, Sammy.

Sam: No, you quoted him. I just threw it back at you.

Ryan: Ah, I see. Let's not get bogged down in semantics.

Neal: Which came first, the chicken or the dick joke?

Sam: Something like that.

Neal: I see. It's something to ponder.

Sam: Do you really?

Neal: No, not really.

Sam: (chuckles) We can't even have a serious conversation. Can we?

Neal: Sure we can. Shoot.

(Pause.)

Ryan: (British accent) Would anyone care for an alcoholic spirit?

Sam: Sure.

Neal: Absolutely...So, you called this powwow. Talk to me.

Sam: Goose.

Neal: That was you. Not me.

Sam: Touche.

Neal: Means to touch.

Sam: I won't let you take me down with you.

Neal: I have no intention of, as you say, taking you down.

Sam: Could've fooled me.

Neal: Apparently I have. Hey, dude—

Ryan: Here you go. Sammy, your beverage, sir.

Sam: Thanks.

Neal: Dude, could I have the room? Just for a little bit.

Ryan: Oh, sure. I see how it is.

Neal: It's nothing personal.

Ryan: No, of course not. (Fake cry) I know when I'm not wanted. And then she threw me out of her life. She thought I was a creep. She thought I was a geek—(as he exits)

Sam: Ghostbusters?

Ryan: Well played. I'm gonna go play in traffic.

Neal: Thanks, dude. We'll let out a resounding fart when it's safe to come back.

Ryan: (out the door) It's okay with me.

Sam: What's that like our—Batman has his sign in the sky, we get the resounding fart?

Neal: Exactly. Fitting, je pense.

Sam: D'accord.

Neal: So...How are the kids?

Sam: (laughs) Asshole.

Neal: What? I'm genuinely concerned. Little Timmy had a bad case of chicken pox last time we spoke.

Sam: How's Celia?

Neal: Oh, the tops.

Sam: Margaret?

Neal: Double tops.

Sam: Bryce?

Neal: Triple tops.

Sam: Looking good, Louis.

Neal: Feeling good, Billy Ray...So, you wanted to talk, let's talk.

Sam: Seriously?

Neal: Seriously.

Sam: No quotes?

Neal: Eets like a quote. (Sam shoots him a look. Neal pantomimes locking his mouth and throwing away the key. Then he quickly remembers he wants a sip of beer, he unlocks his mouth, drinks, relocks, waits attentively for Sam. Sam laughs, then:)

Sam: Okay, look: you're my best friend here and I like to think I'm yours—

Neal: Sure. (sarcastic) But I can safely say I never liked you—

Sam: Well, sure, I never liked you either. But! That said, I guess, um, I mean, to put it simply, Motherfucker, what the fuck?

Neal: Metaphysically?

Sam: I was thinking more literally.

Neal: Ah. Well... You never liked our radio show, did you?

Sam: You mean *Zeitgeist*? (smiles)

Neal: Nicely done.

Sam: Thank you.

Neal: But you didn't.

Sam: No, I liked it.

Neal: No, you didn't.

Sam: No, I did.

Neal: No, you went along 'cause that's what we were doing but you never really liked it.

Sam: It wasn't exactly my thing.

Neal: But you did it.

Sam: Yeah.

Neal: Because we were doing it.

Sam: I guess so, yeah.

Neal: That's cool. I appreciate that.

Sam: Okay. But this, dude, is no joke.

Neal: Everything's a joke, dude.

Sam: Not everything.

Neal: That's actually true. Not everything. The raping and killing of children in Africa, no joke. Cancer, no joke. The Holocaust, no joke. Dead babies, no joke. People being crucified—Jesus, no joke. You don't fuck with the Jesus. You also can't combine things that are no joke. A dead baby on a cross with cancer... Whew, that is definitely no joke.

Sam: How about Ball Art?

Neal: Ball Art, no that's a joke.

Sam: Worth getting kicked out over?

Neal: Aye, there's the rub.

Sam: The rub.

Neal: The rub-a-dub.

Sam: I don't want you to get kicked out.

Neal: Well, the dude abides.

Sam: Do you really want to get kicked out?

Neal: It doesn't matter.

Sam: Why, man?

Neal: Why not!

Sam: Fair enough.

Neal: No, look, Sam. It really doesn't matter.

Sam: That's easy for you to say.

Neal: Yeah it is.

Sam: The trust fund helps.

Neal: You really think I give a shit about money?

Sam: I think it helps.

Neal: You think I care about money? When have I ever made anything about money? Do I ever ask you guys for money for all the pot and coke and mushrooms and food and beer I buy around here? Have I ever once asked for anything?

Sam: No.

Neal: That's right, man. Nobody fucks with the Jesus.

Sam: Jenny said something the other day about our radio show—Zeitgeist—(Neal smiles)

Neal: What's that?

Sam: --That got me thinking. She thought—Thad and I were saying—asking her—if she thought it was ridiculous or outrageous or crazy. She said she thought it was sad.

Neal: Hm...(thinks a while) Well, maybe she's right. It's all subjective.

Sam: I don't think so.

Neal: Me neither.

Sam: Stupid maybe. But not sad.

Neal: Definitely not.

Sam: Screaming with idiocy. But not sad.

Neal: No, there's no way.

Sam: No way.

Neal: No way. She's apparently not winning.

Sam: No, she's not.

Neal: Fuck her. I can't be held accountable—and I can't be around people who are not winning.

Sam: (German accent) They're so boring.

Neal: (German accent) They are. They're so unsexi.

Sam: It's true.

Neal: In Dusselheim we do not even allow people who are not winning within the city limits. It's a city ordinance.

Sam: (laughing) Is that right?

Neal: Oh, yah. There are no losers allowed within the city limits of Dusselheim because they make everyone so very unhappy.

Sam: It's true.

Neal: Yah. We also don't allow Jews but that's for different reasons.

Sam: (laughing, out of accent) Couldn't resist, could you?

Neal: (out of it too) Not really.

(Enter Oser from the front door.)

Neal & Sam: Hey!

Neal: Speaking of the devil!

Sam: Herr Oser.

Oser: You're a funny guy.

Neal: What, are you saying I'm a clown, I'm here for your amusement?

(Oser smirks, laughs)

Sam: (jumping in) No, you're a funny guy.

Neal: Funny how?

Sam: I don't know. Just funny.

Neal: How am I funny? What the fuck is so funny about me?

Oser: I gotta give it to you, man, that took balls.

Sam: That joke's already been used.

Neal: So easy, Ed. You can do better.

Oser: Ball art, eh?

Neal: As an artform it's still in its infancy.

Oser: As an asshole you're still in your infancy.

Neal: Whoa.

Sam: Nothing subtle about that.

Neal: No, pretty much straight to the point.

Oser: And you, I can't believe you're a part of this.

Sam: Hey, man, don't knock it 'til you try it.

Oser: Thanks anyway. I'll pass.

Neal: So, Ed, what brings you to our humble maison? You need some pot?

Oser: No, I'm good. Thanks anyway.

Neal: Any time.

Sam: Any place.

Neal: (laughing, remembering) That's right.

Sam: Clck Clck. (points finger like a gun, shoots, makes the clicking noise with his mouth)

Oser: I can't believe you gave the Dean one of those.

Neal: What? It was framed, dude.

Sam: You told him?

Oser: He calls me up, "He gave me a picture of his balls?"

Neal: By his balls.

Oser: Whatever. And then you have the balls to put these things all over campus.

Neal: Subtlety has never been my strong point.

Oser: No fucking shit?

Sam: How did he find out?

Oser: What?

Sam: How did the Dean find out it was balls?

Oser: Someone must've told him.

Sam: Who?

Oser: Whom.

Sam: You told him.

Oser: Me? Why would I tell him?

Sam: Nobody else knew. The only people who knew were you, me, Thad, and you.

Oser: You don't think Thad told other people? What about Ryan—Ryan's got a big mouth.

Sam: No, he didn't know—

Neal: No, professor Oser wouldn't be stupid enough to rat on a student—a student who's been systematically selling him marijuana for the better part of three years. I mean, why would he do that? Especially considering he's up for tenure next year.

Oser: Watch it, asshole.

Neal: I'm just joking with you, Ed. Just kidding around. No worries.

(Long Pause. Neal smirks. Oser smiles to himself, shakes his head.)

Oser: Don't even think about it.

Neal: Think about what? Come on, Ed, we're friends. Mind if I do a Jay?

Oser: If you even insinuate anything, I swear to God—

Neal: Whoa, guy. Relax. No one's saying anything. There's no jihad—

Oser: And for the record, I didn't tell the Dean on you. Why, I have no idea. You are such an asshole. All you guys. But no, I didn't rat you out, and you know I wouldn't, so to even insinuate that, frankly, it's insulting.

Neal: (claps his hands, Sam joins in) Oscar caliber. Truly. That was hardcore.

Sam: Very hardcore.

Oser: Fuck you. And fuck you. (laughter)

Sam: So what did the Dean say?

Oser: Picasso over here. You're gone, done, finished.

Sam: Fuck.

Neal: (extremely cool and casual about it) Not surprising really. What about these dudes?

Oser: You two. Ten o'clock tomorrow. You're to see the Dean.

Sam: For what?

Oser: To see if you can avoid getting booted. So go, apologize, make peace. You, I swear to you—

Neal: Ed, relax. You're fine.

Oser: All right. You guys are such assholes. All you do is give me fucking ulcers.

Neal: Yeah, but you love it.

Oser: (sarcastic) Yeah, I love it. Asshole. (shaking his head before he leaves) Couldn't just let it go, could you? Had to shake it up?

Neal: Hey, man, if this was the sixties, we wouldn't even be talking about this.

Oser: You're probably right.

Neal: We're just victims of these times.

Sam: Zeitgeist—

Oser: What exactly is it you're rebelling against again?

Neal: What've you got?

Oser: That's what I thought.

Neal: Ed, that hurts.

Oser: Fucking smirk.

Neal: You winning, guy?

Oser: Sure. How 'bout you?

Neal: Always.

Oser: Asshole. (goes to leave)

Neal: Oh, Ed. (walks up to him) Here. (gives him a bag of pot) That shit we usually give you is crap. This is the good stuff.

Oser: Asshole. (He exits. Then he returns and takes the bag from Neal.)

Neal: That shit's hardcore, man. It's hardcore! (Oser is gone.)

Sam: Sold any pot to Dean Peterson?

Neal: Unfortunately no. He only does crack.

Sam: Makes sense.

Neal: Really?

Sam: No.

Neal: That's what I thought.

(Blackout. Music: Dylan's Blood On The Tracks. You're Gonna Make Me Lonesome When You Go)

Scene 6

(The Dean's Office setup again. Lights up. Thad and Sam in sportcoats and ties seated, waiting. Music fades out.)

Sam: So what do you think?

Thad: What?

Sam: What do you think?

Thad: About what?

Sam: Are you stoned?

Thad: (does a pinch sign with his fingers)

Sam: Jesus.

Thad: You said it, man, nobody fucks with the Jesus—

Sam: We don't have time for that—

Thad: Dios mio, man—Liam and me, we're gonna fuck you up!

Sam: Shh.

Thad: Look at me, Carlito, you got everything, man. I'm in fucking diapers—

Sam: (laughing, can't help himself) Hey—

Thad: I can't walk, I can't hump. (starts laughing to himself)

Sam: (laughing) Pull your shit together. What are we gonna do?

Thad: Apologize.

Sam: For what?

Thad: Everything. World hunger, cancer, aids, genocide, junk mail—

Sam: What?

Thad: This shit is really good.

Sam: If we act like we were involved in the pictures they might not expel Neal—safety in numbers. Or they might expel all of us—Or, we tell him we had nothing to do with it—

Thad: Bingo.

Sam: Yeah?

Thad: Well, what? We didn't.

Sam: That's true. Still...

Thad: Fuck that.

(Enter Dean Peterson.)

Dean: Hello, guys. Again.

Sam: Yes, hi.

Thad: Hi there.

Dean: So...Look, I'm just gonna cut right to the chase. These Zeitgeist posters, there's a rumor going around that apparently they were made with Neal's...you know. Is that true?

Sam: Well...

Thad: Balls! (Sam turns and looks at him after his outburst.)

Sam: Yes, they were his balls. That's true.

Dean: All right. Look, I need to know if you guys had anything to do with this? (he holds up his Ball Art painting.)

Sam: Uh...

Thad: No—

(Enter Neal.)

Neal: Dean Peterson, how are you? Sorry to burst in.

Dean: Can I help you?

Neal: Uh, actually, you can. Yes. I just wanted to say, I know there have been some rumors going around about these Zeitgeist paintings, and I just wanted to assure you that these guys had nothing to do with it—it was all my doing. So, they don't deserve any sort of punishment for this because, well, they didn't know anything about it.

Dean: Well, I appreciate that. That's what I wanted to know. Uh, here, you can have this back.

Neal: Okay. Didn't like it, hun?

Dean: Kind of hard to take seriously.

Neal: Didn't find it funny, hun?

Dean: No. I found it...childish.

Neal: Well...it's all subjective, I guess.

Dean: Yes...

Neal: I mean, what if you found out it wasn't balls? Would that change your opinion?

Dean: Honestly, I'm sure it would.

Neal: So, your problem is with how it was made, not the final product?

Dean: Neal, I think we've run around this enough, don't you?

Neal: I'm just wondering.

Dean: (after pause) My problem is with the artist. He seems to think he can do whatever he wants, that there are no rules—

Neal: Carte Blanche—

Dean: Whatever. There are rules, there are, even if you don't like them—

Neal: Come on. I'm out anyway. I know that. Give me an honest answer. When you found out it was balls, did you laugh, at all? Even initially, just your initial gut reaction, was it (does a short snort of laughter)?

Dean: (a small smile, looks at Neal) You've got some serious balls.

Neal: (regards painting he holds) They're not bad. I don't know how serious they are, though.

Dean: I think we're done here, guys.

Neal: Just one quick thing, did you talk to my dad?

Dean: No. I left your parents a message. I'm sure they'll get back to me.

Neal: Okay. Well, you might want to talk to him because I know he was thinking—just recently—of making a sizable donation to the college's capital improvement fund. I think it was to coincide with my graduation. That might be helpful information for you.

Thad: (in awe) Balls...

Dean: (smiling) Well, I'll keep that in mind. Thanks, guys. Neal, one last thing, before you go.

Neal: Yeah?

Dean: Don't ever fucking try to bribe me. Are we clear?

Neal: Crystal.

Dean: Good.

(Exit the Boys.)

Dean: (shaking his head, laughing to himself) Fucking kid...

(Blackout. Music: Dylan's Live 1966 Royal Albert Hall. Tell Me, Momma)

Scene 7

(Apartment. Afternoon. Neal, Thad, and Sam scattered about the room.)

Neal: It's about NOT giving up.

Sam: (smiling) Oh, yeah?

Neal: Yeah, man.

Thad: That's fucked up. Took some serious cahones.

Sam: How long do you think until—

Neal: Any time, any place—

Sam: You remembered.

Neal: Of course, dude. That's our catchphrase.

Thad: For what?

Neal: For our action/adventure/buddy movie where we save the world.

Sam: (ultra-serious) Any time, any place...

Thad: Any time, any place? That's it?

Neal: But it has to be said with feeling: Any time, any place...

Thad: What's that mean?

Sam: It means—

Neal: It means—No, you go ahead, dude.

Sam: It means any time one of them's in trouble—any time the other one needs them they'll be there: Any time, any place.

Thad: It's pretty gay.

Neal: You're pretty gay.

Thad: Well, you're pretty gay.

Neal: It's true.

Thad: Don't I know it. (Neal goes to get beers. Phone rings, Sam gets it.)

Sam: (into phone) Yeahllo?...Oh, hi, Mr. Masterson. It's Sam...I'm good, how are you?...Right. Well, I hear you...He's actually right here... (Sam tosses the phone to Neal.)

Neal: (into phone) Padre, how are you?...The dude can't complain...Un hun...Yeah, I know it was stupid...I agree...Obviously not...Understood...Okay, I will...Where are

you?...Oh, okay, yeah...No more funny stuff. Yeah...Okay...You got it...Talk to you soon...Chow. (hangs up) Everybody wins.

Thad: Yeah?

Sam: How's that? What happened?

Neal: Duder's pops talked to the old Deaner and the dude still abides.

Sam: No expulsion?

Neal: Ixnay on the expulsionay.

Thad: Thank God—

Sam: What did he say?

Thad: Now we can relax. (goes for beer)

Neal: He just, ya know, made him an offer he couldn't refuse.

Sam: Fuck.

Thad: Of course.

Neal: Let's have a toast. Raise 'em high, amigos.

Thad: Paco!

Sam: Jose!

Neal: Jefe! Together we crushed the federales in the plains of Oaxaca!

Thad & Sam: Yeah!

Neal: To Hymen Roth.

Thad: To Hymen Roth.

Sam: To Hymen Roth.

Neal: A truer friend was never found.

Thad: Here, here—

Sam: True, true—

Neal: All right. Now. Let's do something.

Sam: What?

Neal: Let's go pick up Kirsten and Jenny and do something.

Sam: What?

Neal: Whatever.

Sam: All right.

Neal: Okay. (frantic) Oh, but first...(picks up Ball Art painting, hangs it on the brick wall center) Perfect.

Thad: It really ties the room together.

Sam: That's true it does—

Neal: It does tie the room together.

Sam: You know, someday, I'll bet this thing'll be worth a lot of money.

(Pause. Thad and Neal erupt in laughter.)

Sam: What?

Neal: Hey, guy, don't be ridiculous. Come on, let's go.

Sam: All right.

Thad: I'll catch up with you.

Sam: Yeah?

Neal: No, come on, guy. We'll—we can go find Bethany. Bethany, dude...

Thad: No, it's cool. I just need to chill for a minute. I'll find you.

Neal: All right. Cool. We'll probably be at Max's, or George's.

Thad: All right. Cool.

Neal: Dude, shall we?

Sam: Absolutely.

Neal: Hey, guy, are you winning?

Thad: Absolutely. How 'bout you?

Neal: (as he goes) Always, dude. Always. (exits) Let's ride!

(Exit Neal and Sam, shouting as they go.)

Sam: Ha ha!

Neal: Banzai?

Sam: Banzai!

Neal: Banzai?

Sam: Banzai!

Neal: Banzai?

Sam: Banzai!

(Thad goes up to the TV. He puts on a DVD. He grabs the remotes and sits on the couch center. The sound of a porno movie. Thad sits for a minute and watches, his face blasé. Then he looks around, thinks, reaches a resolution, quickly turns, and as he leaps over the bar—Blackout)

(Music: Dylan's Live 1966 version of Like A Rolling Stone blasts off again.)

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