

DUNCAN - 3 SCENES

6.

ACT I

FADE IN:

INT. SCIENCES BUILDING - DUNCAN'S OFFICE

START

Psychology Professor DUNCAN [30s, low calibre hippy] is working at his desk in a small office lined with plants, books and weird art. Jeff appears in his doorway.

JEFF

You're a hard man to reach,
Professor.

Duncan takes a moment to place the face.

DUNCAN

Jeff Crocker? Attorney at law?

He stands and shakes Jeff's hand.

JEFF

You remember.

DUNCAN

How could I forget? I still can't
figure out how you got a jury to
connect September 11th with my DUI.
Let alone why it helped.

JEFF

2002 was a simpler time.

DUNCAN

What's my lawyer doing on campus?

JEFF

I'm a student.

DUNCAN

That can't be an inspiring journey.

Duncan goes to a dorm-sized fridge and grabs two beers.

JEFF

Eh, those ivy league twits on the
state bar have had me under a
microscope since I started.
They've suddenly decided that even
though I have a law degree, my
college degree isn't "legitimate."

Duncan hands Jeff one of the beers.

DUNCAN

I thought you had a bachelor's from Columbia.

JEFF

And now I have to get one from America. They must have noticed the eagle in the seal was holding coffee branches. I'm dead in the water until I replace that degree.

DUNCAN

If you're in my class, I hope you're not going to ask for special treatment.

JEFF

Professor, please, I do have rules. I would never take psychology, it's boring. But I was hoping that, as a teacher, you could get me all the quizzes, tests and exams for the classes I *am* taking this semester.

Jeff places a sheet of paper on Duncan's desk.

DUNCAN

Jeff, you just described - no, *defined* cheating. Not only is it illegal, it's unethical.

He takes a drink of his own beer.

JEFF

Well, laws are tools. We reshape them to suit the job. And you seemed less concerned with ethics the day I convinced twelve of your peers that when you did a U turn on a freeway and tried to order chalupas from an emergency call box, your only real crime was being an American.

DUNCAN

You're saying I owe you.

JEFF

I'm not saying that. I'm giving you pieces of a puzzle, which, when put together, form a picture of you owing me.

Duncan gets somber. He surrenders.

DUNCAN
I'll look into it.

Jeff heads for the door.

JEFF
I'll be in the library at six, but
by 6:20, my fake study group will
not have shown up and I'll have to
take a very hot girl to dinner.

DUNCAN
Oh, Jeff. Don't lie to women.

JEFF
(doesn't care)
Whoops!

END.

CUT TO:

~~INT. LIBRARY - STUDY ROOM~~

~~Jeff is seated at a big table, reading a Spanish text book.~~

~~JEFF
(repeating)
Bienvenido. Bienvenido.~~

~~Britta walks in. He smiles.~~

~~JEFF (CONT'D)
Bienvenido! Have a seat.~~

~~Jeff puts a notepad in front of her while she gets settled at
the room's large table.~~

~~JEFF (CONT'D)
You can put your contact info on
here. I guess the group is running
late, but we can get acquainted.~~

~~She writes some stuff on the pad.~~

~~BRITTA
You may have noticed this morning,
I'm not great at small talk.~~

~~JEFF
I want to talk big. I want to
know, what's your deal?~~

~~BRITTA
That's not small talk?~~

JEFF

I'll be right back. When it's
about psychology, it's *urgent*.

Jeff heads for the door.

BRITTA

What if the group shows up?

JEFF

They'll know what to do.

CUT TO:

EXT. ATHLETIC FIELD - DUSK

A motley crew of would-be athletes are trying out for the
apparently all-ages track team. Currently, a ninety year old
man is prepping himself on the starting line.

START

Jeff and Duncan are standing out in the middle of the field.

DUNCAN

I could get fired for having this
conversation, so act like you're
watching the athletic proceedings.

JEFF

You couldn't stop me from watching.
There is a man trying out for your
track team that is older than the
game of poker.

(noticing)

And he's kinda truckin'.

DUNCAN

Suppose I did feel indebted to you,
Jeff. And suppose I said it was
possible to get you these answers.

JEFF

I'd say go for it. And, for future
reference, you can ask me stuff
like that way closer to wherever
we're originally standing.

DUNCAN

I'm asking if you understand the
difference between right and wrong.

JEFF

I understand "right" and "wrong" are slippery slopes that end with presidents who don't believe dinosaurs existed. And I've understood since I was a kid that if I talked long enough, I could make anything true. So either I'm God or truth is relative, and in either case: booyah.

DUNCAN

Interesting. The average person has a harder time saying "booyah" to moral relativism.

JEFF

Ian, you don't have to play shrink to protect your pride, I accept that you're a chicken.

DUNCAN

Are you trying to use reverse psychology on a psychologist?

JEFF

I'm just using normal psychology on a pussy.

DUNCAN

You can't talk to me that way!

JEFF

A six year old girl could talk to you that way!

DUNCAN

Because it would be adorable!

JEFF

No, because you're a five year old girl, and there's a pecking order!

DUNCAN

FINE, I'LL DO IT!

COACH BARTEL (O.S.)

- Gentlemen.

COACH BARTEL [stocky, 40s] is approaching their exchange.

COACH BARTEL (CONT'D)
 This is an athletic field, not a rehearsal of Glengarry Glen Ross, and I should know, because I run both the Sports and Theatre departments. Take it elsewhere.

Jeff and Duncan start walking off the field together. Coach Bartel calls after them:

END.

COACH BARTEL (CONT'D)
 Either of you guys play football?
 It's looking that bad this year.

CUT TO:

INT. LIBRARY - STUDY ROOM

Jeff enters, feigning disappointment.

JEFF
 Well, I just found out that the rest of the group -

Britta is not at the table, but Abed is, along with four new students: Pierce, Shirley, Troy and Annie. They look at him.

JEFF (CONT'D)
 - is here?

ABED
 Britta's in the bathroom, I think, and I invited more people from Spanish class, is that cool?

Jeff raises a fist that immediately becomes a thumbs-up.

JEFF
 It's the coolest. I should go to the bathroom, too. And I should bring my jacket, keys and wallet in case there's a fire.

CUT TO:

INT. LIBRARY - LOBBY

Jeff is on his way to the exit doors. He nearly collides with Britta, who is entering the lobby.

BRITTA
 Ah. *Busted.*
 (confiding)
 (MORE)

Jeff's phone rings. He answers.

JEFF

Hello?

A very low voice from the other end:

DUNCAN (V.O.)

(on phone)

It's Professor Duncan. Come to the parking lot. Now.

JEFF

What's wrong with your voice?

DUNCAN (V.O.)

(on phone)

I'm disguising it.

JEFF

I'll be right there.

Jeff hangs up.

BRITTA

Now where are you going?

JEFF

It's an emergency. You guys need to hash this stuff out anyway, because we can't study with all this stuff seething under the surface. I just hope at least one of you is here when I get back.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Jeff enters the parking lot, looking around.

DUNCAN (O.S.)

Hello, Jeff.

Duncan emerges from between two cars, holding a large, thick envelope.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)

Every answer to every test in your curriculum this semester.

JEFF

You are the best.

FYI ONLY

FYI ONLY

START

Jeff reaches for the package. Duncan withholds it.

DUNCAN
But what do I get?

JEFF
I thought we had a deal.

DUNCAN
Deals are bound by ethics, Jeff.
Deals are for five year old girls.

JEFF
What do you want.

DUNCAN
Your Lexus.

JEFF
HA! My luxury sedan for a
semester's worth of answers?

DUNCAN
Come on, you're never going to stop
taking the easy way out. I'll be
helping you for four years. You
want to get a degree while taking
naps? I want leather seats with
built-in ball warmers. Offer
expires in ten seconds.

JEFF
I'm supposed to do what, walk home?

DUNCAN
Take my Prius.

Duncan holds up some keys.

JEFF
PRIUS?

DUNCAN
It's good for the Earth.

JEFF
So is wiping your butt with a leaf
but it's not how a man gets around!

DUNCAN
Time's up.

Duncan starts to walk away. Jeff panics.

JEFF
Alright!

END.

CUT TO:

INT. LIBRARY

Jeff heads across the library toward the study room, carrying Duncan's packet.

Britta opens the door and comes running to him. We can hear chaos coming from the room behind her.

BRITTA
It's really bad in there.

JEFF
Yeah, sounds like a train wreck.
What do you say? Time to go?

BRITTA
Go? Jeff, I would rather flunk Spanish and starve to death than abandon a group of people in pain.

Jeff stares at her for a beat, then:

JEFF
You thought I meant time to go to dinner? I meant time to go give these people the healing they need. Time to spread the love, time to set everything back to exactly the way it was before they got here.

She gives his arm one of those platonic but lingering touches that women have been using to secretly control civilization for 50,000 years. As she heads back to the room, Jeff adds carefully:

JEFF (CONT'D)
Then dinner.

FADE OUT.