

DANNY BUCKAROO

by

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76 INT MILT'S OFFICE DAY

MILT is seated leaning back in his big chair with his back to the camera.

MILT

(declaiming)

Once more, Achilles' wrath braves
Hector's shield and drags him 'round
the walls of fabled Troy!

Suddenly STANLEY's head pops up and he spits to one side.

STANLEY

Okay, now let's talk movies. I want
to make a new comedy... fast.

MILT

(zipping up)

But you don't even have a script!

STANLEY

That's my problem, okay? Hell, that
stuff writes itself! I'll get one.
I'll get everything. I'll get a new
leading lady. Who needs that bitch
Wellsley anyway? I'll get a new
director and a new script and I'll
be on top again! Just you wait!

MILT

Okay, Stan, but you know I can't give you the same deal as before. This time it's no money up front and 2% of the back end. Take it or leave it.

STANLEY

You're screwing me here, Milt!
Screwing me!

MILT

Well, if you insist...

MILT unzips again. STANLEY decides he better not push his luck.

STANLEY

Never mind, I'll take it, I'll take it!
We'll start shooting in two weeks. I'll send you a postcard!

MILT

Farewell, my catamite on a hot tin roof!

STANLEY goes outside and leans weakly against the door.

STANLEY

Now all I've got to find is one more killer script.

77 INT STANLEY'S HOTEL SUITE DAY

STANLEY's frantically going through DANNY's old trunk. DANNY appears behind him.

DANNY

Nothing there, Stanley. Sorry.

STANLEY

Shit! Stop scaring me like that!
Can't you knock first or something!

DANNY

You're out of luck. There aren't any scripts left.

STANLEY

What? You've got to be kidding! You did it before. So whip one up now.

DANNY

Sorry, Stan. No can do. I never wrote any of my own stuff.

STANLEY

You... you didn't?

DANNY

Course not. Remember what I told you? Back in 1912 I was trying to make a living as The Gingerbread Hooper... boy, was that lame. I was an even bigger no-talent than you were, until that one memorable day...

DISSOLVE TO

78 INT 1912 BOARDING HOUSE DAY

Hell's Kitchen, New York City, circa 1912... DANNY, in tattered clothes, is being shown to his room in a flophouse by a bored LANDLADY.

LANDLADY

The last tenant left all o' his shite in here and if you can use any of it, yer welcome to it. If not, chuck it down the airshaft.

She leaves. DANNY has only the shirt of his back, so he picks up an old suitcase from the floor, puts it on the bed, and unpacks it. He discovers the familiar trove of scripts, costumes, etc.

DANNY

(reading a handbill)

Smitty McTavish, the original Buck O'Roonie? Why, this it! An act! I'm saved, I tell you, I'm saved!!!

DISSOLVE BACK to the present.

DANNY

...and that was it! Overnight I was playing the Palace and boffing Ziegfeld girls. But like I told you, nothing lasts forever.

STANLEY thinks for a moment. He shuts the trunk and rises. He's himself again, STANLEY BELLSON and not DANNY BUCKAROO. The difference is subtle but noticeable.

STANLEY

You're right, Danny. Nothing lasts forever, and maybe it shouldn't. I've been letting you pull my strings long enough, and maybe it's time I quit. Maybe it's time I went back to being my own man.

DANNY

You??!! Schmuck-o, don't make me laugh that hard, I'll get a hernia! You couldn't make it with the widows and orphans, you think you can do ME? Jeez, are you nuts!

STANLEY

No, and I'm not going to be either. I'm going to be myself! You'll see, I can do it!

STANLEY empties out the trunk onto the floor and crawls through it all just in case there's a scrap they've missed.

STANLEY

I know all the bits. And you know what? I think I did 'em better than you! Anybody can crank that stuff out and I've been studying with the master. I'll just put 'em in a different order, move that stuff around, steal some tag lines from TV, and I'll be big! I'll be bigger than you ever were! Yeah! That's right, I'll show you!

He turns triumphantly.

STANLEY
You'll see, Danny! Danny?

But DANNY is gone.

80 INT SOUND STAGE DAY

The set of STANLEY's new movie. STANLEY's in costume finishing a scene. The DIRECTOR yells cut. Nobody moves or laughs at all. You can practically hear crickets. The movie is dreadful. EARL approaches.

STANLEY
What's with everybody? This is supposed to be a comedy!

EARL
C'mon, Stanley. Let's hit the trailer.

They start to walk.

STANLEY
I don't get it! Nobody seems to be having any fun?

EARL
Honest Injun?

STANLEY
Sure, sure... what?

EARL
It's not that funny. Although you have been a lot nicer lately, and I appreciate it. Oh, and more bad news. That video of you and Wilma finally surfaced today and "Extra" has it. It airs tonight.

STANLEY
Jeez. Great...

He continues back to his trailer... alone.

81 INT STANLEY'S HOTEL SUITE DUSK OUTSIDE

It's opening night again and STANLEY's in his hotel suite getting ready. He's nervous, has trouble tying his tie, finding his shoes, finding his cufflinks. He's no longer DANNY and therefore he's a klutz. His discarded clothes are tossed all around the room. The phone rings.

STANLEY

Hello? Wellsley! Where on earth have you been? I've been calling for weeks!!

82 INT WELLESLEY'S BEDROOM NIGHT

WELLSLEY is tied up on a big bed with silk sheets. A big stud is holding the phone for her. She looks wild, out of it, a wreck.

WELLSLEY

I know you have. And I want you to stop! You fucking loser! That goddamned video ruined my career! I'm gonna have to wait three years, then do the talk show circuit confessing and repenting, and maybe if I'm lucky, settle for some Mexican soap opera! Thanks a lot, asshole!

STANLEY

It wasn't my fault! I'm not the one who wanted to get kinky! And I sure didn't video it. Who did?

PULL BACK from WELLESLEY and stud on the bed, as seen through a video-camera. DANNY is taping their activities through a hole in the ceiling.

WELLSLEY

Well, it doesn't matter any more. Listen, I hope your fucking movie bites big time.

STANLEY

Aw, you don't have to call me Bigtime.

WELLSLEY

That was an adverb, you moron! Get lost, jerk-hyphen-off!

She hangs up.

83 INT STAN'S HOTEL SUITE NIGHT

STANLEY is miserable. He sits there a minute.

STANLEY

Mary! She'll know what to do.

He turns and dials her number. It rings. We hear her pick up.

84 INT MARY'S BEDROOM NIGHT

MARY on her bed getting fucked doggy-style by the ice cream vendor from the boardwalk. He's still wearing the top half of his uniform, with his white pants down around his ankles.

MARY

Heeelllloo?

STANLEY

Mary? Mary, is that you?

MARY sits up, embarrassed. The ice cream man falls backwards off the end of the bed.

MARY

Oh, Stan! I... err... what do you want?

STANLEY

Oh, Mary. I've been such a fool.
Please forgive me!

MARY

(sweetly)

Well, I'd love to, Stanley, but I'm afraid it's a little too late. I'm busy screwing the ice-cream man right now, and I've gotta tell you, he's hung like a Great Dane!

STANLEY

Danish? I didn't know he was Danish?
Mary, please! Why? Why are you being
like this?

MARY

You made me this way, Stanley. You
ruined a lot of lives. And, now I'm
afraid you'll just have to live with
that. Good-bye... forever!

She hangs up.