

SCENE 1:

(All is darkness. A recording of Raymond's voice is heard.)

RAYMOND (v.o.)

A comet is a lonely thing...

(...then silhouetting Ray and Dave are projections of the primordial cosmos: swirling nebulae and spiral galaxies with the last image being Comet Hale-Bopp, then blackness again before the end of Ray's speech.)

RAYMOND (v.o.)

In the chaos of the beginning, when what was hot and everywhere, became cold enough to be round and planetary, there were still left over balls of icy dust. The gravity of the planets expelled their frozen brethren into deep space. A cloud of primordial snowballs are still out there, surrounding us in their loneliness.

(In the darkness, a phone is ringing. The answering machine beeps. Raymond's answering voice:)

RAYMOND (v.o.)

Hi, I can't come to the phone right now, so please leave a message.

DAVE *(on the phone)*

Ray pick up. I know you're there. She's taking off her shirt. I've been waiting in the dark for an hour. Oh, my God, she just took off her –

(The answering machine beeps. The phone rings again. Lights up. While Dave and Ray are each in their respective homes, the set is a single abstract unit set.)

DAVE *(on the phone)*

I'm going to keep calling till you answer.

(Ray picks up the phone. Though Dave sounds like the hyper one, Ray is the one who paces while he talks – Dave, though on a cell phone, reclines at any opportunity.)

RAYMOND *(on the phone)*

I don't care, Dave.

DAVE *(on the phone)*

C'mon man. I'm trying to share with you.

RAYMOND *(on the phone)*

Why do you waste your time like this?

DAVE *(on the phone)*

Damn it!

RAYMOND *(on the phone)*

What?

DAVE *(on the phone)*

She got dressed.... Hey, want to go to Dinos?

RAYMOND *(on the phone)*

Ahnt-ah.

DAVE *(on the phone)*

Hmmm. Chicken and fries.

RAYMOND *(on the phone)*

No!

DAVE *(on the phone)*

C'mon! Flame grilled chicken. I got a craving.

RAYMOND *(on the phone)*

My stomach hasn't been right since I got food poisoning....

DAVE *(on the phone)*

Okay.... I'm calling you back in 10 minutes.

(Black out. The phone rings. Ray goes to pick it up but drops the receiver on the floor. Lights up.)

RAYMOND *(on the phone)*

Hello.

You just drop the phone?
DAVE *(on the phone)*

No.
RAYMOND *(on the phone)*

I'll keep calling you till you say yes.
DAVE *(on the phone)*

You can't eat alone.
RAYMOND *(on the phone)*

How can you say that?
DAVE *(on the phone)*

Because it's true.
RAYMOND *(on the phone)*

I'm hurt.
DAVE *(on the phone)*

No, you're not.
RAYMOND *(on the phone)*

Okay, I'm not.
DAVE *(on the phone)*

Look, I'm depressed. I DON'T - WANT - TO GO OUT. Okay?
RAYMOND *(on the phone)*

(Black out.)

SCENE 2:

(They are sitting in a booth at generic fast food chicken place. This change of location can be achieved by unrolling a poster, or small drops unfurling, or projections, etc. If need be, the actors should act as their own stage hands, speaking while they retrieve and put away food, etc.)

RAYMOND

(Between bites.) I want to see Hale-Bopp for my birthday. That Comet won't be back for hundreds of years. This is it. The one and only chance in my lifetime. And I want to see it right. We gotta drive to some place where there are no lights.

DAVE

Does it move?

RAYMOND

Of course, it's moving. It's a comet.

DAVE

Fast?

RAYMOND

Sure...but you can't tell...because it's so far away.

DAVE

That's stupid.

RAYMOND

It's not stupid. It's a once in a lifetime experience. Nobody's seen this thing for like, 4,000 years.

DAVE

So what. It's stupid.

RAYMOND

It's beautiful.

DAVE

It's Nature.

RAYMOND

Yes.

DAVE

Nature is just trees, bushes and things that want to eat you.

RAYMOND

I want to see it.

(A beat.)

DAVE

(All of a sudden.) Okay.

RAYMOND

Okay?

DAVE

I said “okay.”

RAYMOND

You mean it?

DAVE

Yes.

RAYMOND

It’s important to me. You know I can’t take my car on the highway.

DAVE

Don’t worry.

RAYMOND

You’ll remember? I wasn’t kidding when I said I was depressed.

DAVE

It’s been a long time since Nikola left you. Don’t you think...?

RAYMOND

Yeah. But, if I don’t think about her, it’s the same problem.

DAVE

You gotta go to the Bar with me. I’ll set you up.

RAYMOND

I don't need to get fucked. I need to get fucked by the same person... A lot.

DAVE

I still say you...

RAYMOND

No.

DAVE

Okay. *(An immediate beat.)* So what was your sex life like?

RAYMOND

Where do you come up with this? Just asking me like that.

DAVE

Why not? You've got to let it out. So tell me.

RAYMOND

I'm not going to tell you.

DAVE

Why not?

RAYMOND

Because you'll tell everyone.

DAVE

I will not.

RAYMOND

Yes, you will.

DAVE

I'll tell you about my sex life.

RAYMOND

I don't want to know.

DAVE

Sure you do.

RAYMOND

No, I don't.

DAVE

You've got dirty pictures of her, don't you? I can tell. Show me.

RAYMOND

No!

DAVE

I knew you had them.

RAYMOND

Oh, Jesus.

DAVE

You just need to jerk off more when you get depressed. I can't go to sleep without doing it.

RAYMOND

Well, I only jerk-off when I feel good. Well, no – I can be mildly depressed.

DAVE

Do you think suicidal people jerk-off?

RAYMOND

I doubt it.

DAVE

I always do.

RAYMOND

Always?

DAVE

Sometimes three times a day.

RAYMOND

How ‘bout when you’re having an anxiety attack?

DAVE

No, I’m busy throwing up.

RAYMOND

Well, I don’t get anxious, I get depressed. That’s my thing.

DAVE

(A realization.) Oh! So, that’s what we’re talking about?

RAYMOND

Yes! It’s been two years now! My life has fallen apart.

DAVE

Want to get some more chicken?

(Blackout.)

SCENE 3:

(The boys are sitting on the stoop of Dave’s apartment building.)

DAVE

From now on, call me Dome.

RAYMOND

Why??

DAVE

Mysterious. It’ll interest the women.

RAYMOND

Dome? Instead of Dave, you’re going to be Dome Shipman.

DAVE

No. Just Dome. One word.

RAYMOND

God, that is pretentious.

DAVE

Don't swear.

RAYMOND

I didn't swear.

DAVE

You used God's name.

RAYMOND

I - what!? That's not swearing. "God-damn it" is swearing. Just saying "God" is an expression.

DAVE

An expression of anger.

RAYMOND

You are so strange about this. You fuck around. You steal library books....

DAVE

I do not steal library books.

RAYMOND

Last year.

DAVE

I forgot about that....

RAYMOND

Uh, huh.

DAVE

Well, anyway it wasn't for me. It was a gift.

RAYMOND

It's still wrong.

DAVE

But that’s a sin against man. We’re talking about God here.

RAYMOND

I don’t need god to be moral.

DAVE

You’ve got to have a tradition.

RAYMOND

Tradition is fine. That doesn’t mean that there’s a god.

DAVE

You’ll see. You’re going to get to heaven. And God is going to say, sit down, Raymond Chardas. Sit down, because you do not believe.

RAYMOND

And what’s he going to say to you?

DAVE

That’s not the point. We’re talking about you calling me Dome.

RAYMOND

I won’t do it.

DAVE

Fine, I’ll remember this.

RAYMOND

No, you won’t. Tomorrow, you’ll want me to call you...Doom.

DAVE

Doom. Doom. Hey, I like that better. Thanks Chardas.

RAYMOND

Auuck!

(He smacks his head as a dramatic gesture, but does so much harder than intended.)

Owww!

DAVE

Karma. We build up our deeds and get what we deserve.

RAYMOND

I don't hurt anybody. And where are my rewards? Huh? Do I hurt people?

DAVE

No.

RAYMOND

So?

DAVE

It'll happen. Just wait.

RAYMOND

I'm tired of waiting.

DAVE

You're getting fat.

RAYMOND

What?

DAVE

I'm just looking at the way your gut is hanging out. Maybe that's your problem.

RAYMOND

Chocolate ice cream has kept me alive.

DAVE

Eat all you want. But you gotta burn it off.

RAYMOND

You're just saying this because you want someone to work out with.

DAVE

Sure I am! It's more fun. I'm very co-dependent.

RAYMOND

Why can't you do things alone?

DAVE

I don't know.

(Flexes his biceps.)

Look at these muscles.

RAYMOND

That's not much.

DAVE

What? This is a great muscle.

RAYMOND

(Pulls up his pant's leg.)

Look at this calf muscle. See. Now, that's a muscle.

DAVE

Women don't look at legs.

(End of sample)