

Tyler  
Dennis

JOHNNY

Phase one, done!

JOSEFINA

Phase two might be a little harder. I still don't know how you're going to come up with what, three thousand dollars?

Josefina exits. A long pause. Peg walks over to the laptop and opens it back up. She looks at the screen. She looks at Johnny, who smiles. Johnny looks at Dennis, who also smiles. Peg, Johnny and Dennis look at Annie, who slowly realizes, but doesn't smile.

ANNIE

Oh, no.

Brownout. All but Dennis exit, Peg with her laptop. Tyler enters with feather duster and various cleaning products.

SCENE 3

VOICE ON PA (V.O.)

*Good morning, Piners! It is Friday, July 25th, 2003. The new pathway to the garden is repaired. That area is now walker and wheelchair-friendly but please leave your skateboards and rollerblades at home. That was a joke.*

Lights up.

TYLER

Did you know that eighty percent of dust is actually flakes of dead skin?

DENNIS

Dust is the more musical choice.

TYLER

More musical?

DENNIS  
Can you imagine funerals? "Ashes to Ashes, dead skin flakes to  
dead skin flakes."

Tyler takes a book off the shelf.

TYLER  
"The Algonquin. Tales from the Round Table." They wrote a book  
about this dump?

DENNIS  
Respect the house, son.

TYLER  
Sorry.

DENNIS  
There is this hotel in New York City called The Algonquin. Been  
there over a hundred years. Through most of the 1920's this group  
of writers, actors and artists used to meet there for lunch. Well,  
mostly to drink and talk. Called themselves The Algonquin Round  
table.

TYLER  
Like who?

DENNIS  
Most brilliant minds of the day. Robert Benchley, George S.  
Kaufman, Dorothy Parker?

Harpo Marx? Nothing registers with Tyler, until -

TYLER  
Duck Soup! (as Groucho) "I could dance with you till the cows  
come home. On second thought, I'd rather dance with the cows till  
you come home."

DENNIS  
That's Groucho.

TYLER  
I know. How am I gonna quote Harpo?

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DENNIS

Good point. How are you a fan? Way before your time.

TYLER

My grandfather. Had VHS tapes of all those guys. Nearly every Saturday I was growing up we had movie night. Kool Aid and Jiffy Pop and everything.

DENNIS

So he introduced you to the Marx Brothers?

TYLER

Not just them. Keaton, Chaplin, Harold Lloyd - I mean, Lloyd hanging off the clock, Keaton with the train? Those guys were like, acrobats.

DENNIS

That they were. Take the book. It's mine, you're welcome to it.

TYLER

(He thumbs through the book)

Cool. I still watch that stuff. It's old, but it's still funny. Like you.

DENNIS

Thank you.

TYLER

(reading)

*"Guns aren't lawful, nooses give, gas smells awful, you might as well live."*

Whoa. That's some dark shit, dude.

DENNIS

Dorothy Parker was a dark lady. That's called *Resume*. 1926, I think.

TYLER

Nothing wrong with your memory.

DENNIS

(shaking his head)

One of the great jokes God plays on you is letting you remember everything that will do you absolutely no good.

Old age is like showing up at the bowling alley every week wearing ice skates. Not that I'm doing much skating these days.

TYLER

Do you miss – I'm sorry.

DENNIS

No, it's alright. Walking? Not as much as you'd think. I'm tired. I've walked enough. Other things I miss. Looking a person straight in the eye. Having coffee at the counter in a diner. Hugging people. (off Tyler's look) When you're in a wheelchair, you have to reach up, people have to stoop down. It's awkward, a half-assed hug at best.

TYLER

I never thought about that.

DENNIS

Why would you? But for now, my memory is working far better than my legs. For the most part. I can quote Dorothy Parker for days, but I couldn't tell you what we had for dinner last night.

Johnny enters.

JOHNNY

Fish tacos! Muy Bueno!

TYLER

Gotta go. You know Carmen? Lives on two?

DENNIS

Yes. Poor thing.

TYLER

She's got that long hair, but because of her stroke she washes it in the sink now. It keeps getting stopped up. Wish me luck. I'm not big on plumbing.

DENNIS

Why doesn't Chuck do it?

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TYLER

He can't do room maintenance, yet. Just common areas until he gets his six-month review. Plus, Carmen would freak if she knew.

JOHNNY

Knew what?

TYLER

About him bein' an ex-con.

(off their looks)

Oh, dude. You didn't know. Don't tell I her I told you.

DENNIS

We won't.

TYLER

Josefina hired him out of that "HOPE" program. Shit. Carmen's right, I talk too much. She always doing this at me.

He demonstrates the chatterbox hand gesture.

She hates me.

DENNIS

She lost her speech, Tyler. Right now, she hates anybody who can talk. You know she used to be a surgeon?

TYLER

Carmen?

DENNIS

Well known, too. Wrote articles and everything. Next time you see her, say "Hello, Dr. Shinday." Bit of respect goes a long way.

TYLER

You think?

DENNIS

Couldn't hurt.

Tyler exits.

JOHNNY

Where are they?