

Clownfoolio

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Scene I

(The 1950s . A one room office in a technology company. Wald, a statistician for the company and former circus acrobat, is hanging from a pipe running along the ceiling. When things are slow, which is most of the time, he does tricks, like hanging from the pipes. Bernie, the other company statistician and Wald's officemate, watches.)

Bernie: You think you can do that 15 minutes?

Wald: I can do this 2 hours.

Bernie: Well let's see you do it half an hour.

Wald: I'll do it 20 minutes. I got to get some work done today.

Bernie: What work?

Wald: Papers.

Bernie: Paper work?

Wald: Yeah.

Bernie: Paper work for what real work?

Wald: Just paper work.

Bernie: You don't have a project, do you?

Wald: No, no, no project.

Bernie: Because if you have a project, and I don't, I don't like that. Makes me suspicious.

Wald: It's not a project.

Bernie: But you got something?

Wald: Yeah. It's a mini-project, a non-project really. An iddy bitty teeny weeny project.

Bernie: What are you talking about?

Wald: Nothing. (pause) You think I can leave at two today?

Bernie: Two? Leave at two? I don't know, maybe. You have something at two?

Wald: Two-thirty.

Bernie: Another date?

Wald: A datette.

Bernie: What?

Wald: Like Raisonettes - something to keep you occupied at the movies.

Bernie: You're going to the movies.

Wald: If I can get off at two.

Bernie: (matter of factly) You can get off at two.

Wald: How do you know?

Bernie: I got a feeling. I saw, the schedule.

Wald: How'd you see the schedule?

Bernie: I saw it this morning.

Wald: What were you doing this morning?

Bernie: A meeting. Nothing.

Wald: With the chief?

Bernie: No, the chiefette.

Wald: About me?

Bernie: Enough about you, you're the one with the almost-a-project.

Wald: All right. What was it then?

Bernie: Office stationary use.

Wald: She mentioned pens?

Bernie: Not that I recall.

Wald: Why wasn't I invited?

Bernie: The point is the chiefette had it in the cave, and G-O-L-F was written 2 to 5.

Wald: So 2:15.

Bernie: Makes sense to me.

Wald: How long it's been?

Bernie: I don't know, I forgot to start counting.

Wald: Ten minutes?

Bernie: 10-15, who knows.

Wald: I gotta save my strength for later.

Bernie: But you said you could do it for two hours.

Wald: I can. Maybe tomorrow.

Bernie: All right.

Wald: And I got the- (stops himself)

Bernie: The paperwork. What's going on with you?

(Wald climbs down from the pipes.)

Wald: Nothing. Nothing. Statistics.

Bernie: It'd better be.

Wald: Is it time for...

Bernie: Gotta be. Let's go.

(Wald and Bernie get up and get their stuff to go out of the office. Wald taps at his wallet.)

Wald: You buy today, I got the date.

Bernie: Datette.

(They exit.)

Scene 2

(A short while later in the chief's office or "the cave". Bernie and Marlene (the chiefette) sit. Marlene sits at the chief's desk. Behind them is the schedule.)

Bernie: Look chiefette...

Marlene: Marlene?

Bernie: Excuse my etiquette. I'm concerned about something.

Marlene: Mmm.

Bernie: I think Wald may be plotting against me. Against us.

Marlene: Mmm.

Bernie: What do you know about Wald's, thing?

Marlene: Which thing?

Bernie: Which thing, he has more than one thing!?

Marlene: He has several things.

Bernie: That liar.

Marlene: They're small things though.

Bernie: How small?

Marlene: Teeny weeny small.

Bernie: That's what he said.

Marlene: He wasn't lying about that.

Bernie: But you think he's lying?

Marlene: I have suspicions.

Bernie: You do?

Marlene: Sure, why wouldn't I?

Bernie: What do you mean?

Marlene: Well with his background.

Bernie: With the circus.

Marlene: Exactly.

Bernie: I always thought, why'd an acrobat want to work here?

Marlene: Well you know the circus can be slow.

Bernie: It's cyclical.

Marlene: Seasonal, yeah.

Bernie: Hmm.

Marlene: What?

Bernie: Are those extra danish?

Marlene: Help yourself.

(Bernie goes to get one.)

Marlene: To one. The husband.

Bernie: Likes 'em?

Marlene: Loves 'em.

(Pause.)

Bernie: But why us?

Marlene: You and me?

Bernie: No. The company, the town. Why not India, Buenos Aires. Arabian Peninsula.

Marlene: Maybe he likes the climate. (pronouncing it cli-mette)

Bernie: It doesn't add up.

Marlene: Keep me updated.

Bernie: Sure, I will. (pause) He went on a date, a datette, today, now.

Marlene: Datette?

Bernie: Like the raisons.

Marlene: The Raisonettes?

Bernie: Exactly.

Marlene: I see. Does the chief know about this?

Bernie: Of course not.

Marlene: I understand. We'll keep an eye out.

Bernie: One and one and two and two.

Marlene: Eyes?

Bernie: Exactly.

(Bernie gets up and goes. End of scene.)

Scene 3

(Much later that night in Wald and Bernie's office. The lights are off. Bernie is hanging from the pipes. Wald opens the door and enters with his datette, Roz. Roz is played by the same actress as Marlene. Roz has a very blond or red or colorful wig on to distinguish her from

Marlene. Wald turns on the lights.)

Bernie: Ahh!

(Bernie fall to the ground.)

Wald: What are you doing here?

Bernie: Sleeping.

Wald: Why you hanging from the pipes?

Bernie: I'm a bat.

Wald: What are you talking about?

Bernie: I was seeing how long I could hang.

Wald: Like me?

Bernie: Right.

Wald: You scared us. This is Rosaline.

Roz: Call me Roz.

Bernie: I'm Bernie, Wald's office-mate.

Roz: Ai-ai-captain.

Bernie: I'm sorry.

Roz: Only on the ship?

Bernie: (figuring it out) We're Navy men.

Wald: And proud to be.

Bernie: For twenty years.

Roz: I thought Wald used to be an acrobat.

Bernie: Sure, before the navy.

Roz: But aren't you 25?

Wald: First I joined the navy circus.

Bernie: That's were I spotted him for the office.

Roz: I never heard of the Navy circus.

Bernie: It's top secret.

Wald: Wouldn't want the public to get jealous.

Roz: I gotta pee.

Wald: 12 doors down, with the doll on the front.

Bernie: Take the key.

(Bernie gives Roz the key and she exits.)

Bernie: What are you doing here?

Wald: What are you pulling stunts in the middle of the night?

Bernie: It's not that late.

Wald: You snooping?

Bernie: I told you, just seeing if it's really so hard to hang from here. You think it'd easy, but it's hard.

Wald: Very hard. Of course.

Bernie: Why didn't you take her to the ship?

Wald: There's no room there.

Bernie: There's no room here.

Wald: This is more discreet.

Bernie: Roz's a discreetette?

Wald: Might be, I was trying her out.

Bernie: You tried out a lot of dolls here?

Wald: Never on your desk.

(Roz returns.)

Bernie: How was it?

Wald: What kind of a question is that?

Roz: Very nice. Fragrant.

Bernie: Where's the key?

Roz: I must have forgot it. Let me go look.

Bernie: No, no, I'll take a look.

(Bernie exits.)

Roz: He's friendly.

Wald: Just never seen the ladies room.

Roz: Oh.

Wald: Sorry for all the disturbances. Take off your coat.

Roz: Got any plans you can show me?

Wald: What type of plans?

Roz: You know blueprints, architectural.

Wald: We don't deal in that.

Roz: But aren't you an engineer?

Wald: Just got promoted. That's what Bernie just told me. So moved all my stuff. I'm a statistician now.

Roz: That sounds lower than engineer.

Wald: Well it's not. Let's each take off a randomized piece of clothing.

Roz: All right. You first.

(Bernie returns.)

Roz: How was it?

Bernie: Brighter than I expected.

Wald: See you tomorrow captain.

Bernie: Oh right, wouldn't want to miss the boat.

Wald: It's a long swim.

Bernie: (gathering his stuff) Nice to meet you. See you at 0900.

Wald: You know me, 0845,0850.

Bernie: That I do.

(Bernie leaves.)

Roz: Take off your underwear.

Wald: But I got to take off my shoes and pants then.

Roz: That's what the random clothing generator came up with.

Wald: I like you.

(They kiss. End of scene.)

Scene 4

(Just outside Bernie and Wald's office. Bernie has fallen asleep, with his ear to the door. Marlene walks by and wakes Bernie.)

Marlene: Whatcha doing?

Bernie: (startled) Chiefette. (pause) Just listening to the door.

Marlene: Pretty late to be listening to your door.

Bernie: You know me, no common sense.

Marlene: Someone's in there?

Bernie: Of course not, it's late.

Marlene: So why you listening at the door?

Bernie: Just to hear the sound.

Marlene: Like the tree falling.

Bernie: Right. Does the door have a sound when no one's on the other side.

Marlene: Smells like humping to me.

Bernie: Probably everything smells like humping to you.

(Pause.)

Marlene: See you tomorrow.

Bernie: I hope your husband enjoys the donuts.

Marlene: Dainuts.

Bernie: Right.

(End of scene.)

Scene 5

(The next morning at the office, Roz and Wald lie sleeping on Bernie's desk, covered with a blanket. Bernie comes in.)

Bernie: Oh my God!

(Roz and Wald are startled. They look up.)

Wald: Oh good morning.

Bernie: What are you doing on my desk?

Roz: Oh I'm so embarrassed. Captain Wald said you didn't come in till 0930.

Bernie: It's 0945, I overslept.

Wald: So did we.

Roz: He said you didn't mind. I'd never done it on a captain's desk.

Bernie: Did you at least cover the paperwork?

Wald: What paperwork?

Bernie: Nevermind.

Roz: It's very quiet here at night, like the country.

Wald: Or the sea.

Bernie: Well I hope you slept well.

Roz: You got a lovely desk, it's good for the back.

Bernie: I'm glad you liked it. Staying for the day?

Roz: I'm interviewing for the secretary position.

Bernie: Oh, I see.

Wald: You'll need some coffee.

(Wald puts on his shirt and pants and exits. Roz begins to get dressed.)

Bernie: Don't worry about your dress.

Roz: It's permanent press.

Bernie: I meant we won't hold it against you, wearing the same thing two days in a row.

Roz: Oh, I thought the chief was conducting the interview.

Bernie: Could be, we'll ask Wald.

Roz: It's a lovely office.

Bernie: No need to flatter.

Roz: Oh I don't, better to take than to receive.

Bernie: Right you are.

(Wald comes back.)

Wald: Piping hot coffee. Chiefette made it.

Bernie: You mean Marlene.

Wald: That's right. She looks tired.

Bernie: Chief in?

Wald: Didn't ask.

Bernie: Maybe's got a golf-over.

Roz: But he's going to do my interview?

Wald: Oh right. Don't know, better check.

(Wald exits.)

Roz: Good coffee.

Bernie: Navy doesn't cut corners.

Roz: Is this really the Navy?

Bernie: Is that your real hair color?

Roz: I see.

Bernie: Does it matter?

Roz: Maybe not. Never been with an acrobat before.

Bernie: How about a statistician?

Roz: Just Wald, oh, and the chief.

Bernie: Excuse me?

(Wald comes back.)

Wald: Terrible news, Navy's downsizing, your position was eliminated.

Roz: But yours is safe.

Wald: With the promotion it is. Man that replaced me been made to walk the plank.

Roz: Really?

Wald: Figuratively.

Roz: I see.

Wald: We got lots of work to do.

Roz: I should go.

Bernie: No, stay. You liven up the place.

Roz: Got to look for jobs. I'm destitute.

Bernie: Destitutette. I'm sorry to hear that.

Roz: Be seeing you.

Wald: I'll mosey you out.

(They exit. Bernie is alone.)

Bernie: Damn him, I'd sure like a girl like that.

(Bernie goes and smells his desk. He then goes and takes a puppet out of his desk.)

Bernie: (speaking for the puppet) I'm lovely. But everyone thinks I look like an evil demon, so no one will date me. Not even the two-bit dames like Roz that fall for Wald or married girls like Marlene. Just because I want to eat your head off doesn't mean we can't be friends. Because I only get mean and hungry every so often.

(Wald opens the door, Bernie hides the puppet.)

Bernie: Seems like a nice girl.

Wald: I think she likes you more than me.

Bernie: No.

Wald: Wouldn't stop talking about you. I had to ask her to shut up.

Bernie: And did she?

Wald: I don't know, I already turned the ear off.

Bernie: You bic.

Wald: Quebec?

Bernie: Forget it.

Wald: Bickeror?

Bernie: Let it lay.

Wald: Becka becca bing bing.

Bernie: That was the name of the first girl I ever secretly loved. How'd you now that? Have you been looking at my journal?

Wald: You left it out.

Bernie: No I didn't. I always put it securely away.

Wald: Well we knocked over your desk by accident, it fell out.

Bernie: We - you and Roz?

Wald: We couldn't help it.

Bernie: How's that?

Wald: I'm sorry, we only glanced at it.

Bernie: You've been snooping.

Wald: Of course not.

Bernie: I'm lodging a complaint, asking for a transfer.

Wald: Where? We're the only statisticians.

Bernie: Than for your removal.

(Bernie holds the puppet up in an attacking stance.)

Wald: I know it all, Bernado.

Bernie: You're all lines, private.

Wald: I know this.

(Wald takes out a puppet nearly identical to the one Bernie has.)

Wald: (speaking for the puppet) I want to eat your brain, I want to eat your toes, I want to eat your head.

Bernie: Give me that.

Wald: (handing it to him) I got a million of 'em, just like you. Clownfoolio.

Bernie: You know me?

Wald: How'd you think you'd ever hide?

Bernie: You've told others?

Wald: Not yet.

Bernie: What do you want?

Wald: What do you want?

Bernie: What every boy wants, a quiet farm, a plump wife, an easy day. Free to be who I am. Pursue my dreams and passions, with no one to tell me otherwise. You?

Wald: It's time Clownfoolio. The circus will have its vengeance.

Bernie: They sent you?

Wald: I sent myself.

Bernie: I knew you didn't fit in.

Wald: Neither did you.

Bernie: You won't take us alive.

Wald: Leave the puppet out of this.

Bernie: But he's Clownfoolio. He's the one that did it all.

(Wald whistles. Marlene/Roz bursts into the room wearing a police hat and handcuffs Bernie.)

Wald: Let's go.

Bernie: Chiefette.

The End