

CHAMBERS

Hi, Patti. Hi, Jennifer. Come on in. You've got ten minutes. That was just the warning bell.

They both smile at Mr. Chambers as they enter, Patti smiling with enthusiasm and Jennifer acknowledging a servant.

PATTI

Hi, Mr. Chambers!

Jennifer looks peeved. She was speaking and "someone" had the audacity to interrupt her.

CHAMBERS

Don't be late to First Period.

PATTI

Okay, sir.

JENNIFER

Whatever.

PATTI

Okay, what dress?

JENNIFER

Well, everybody else is going to be in something obvious, like from the Sean Collection or To the Max, but I found this perfect dress, it's a Laundry by Shelli Segal, and it's way too expensive, so I'll be the only one wearing it...

The one-sided conversation fades into the school's interior.

EXT. NEAR THE SAME ENTRANCE -- DAY

Mrs. Rossbach, veteran teacher, is still approaching the entrance, but her load has slipped again, and she's struggling to hold on to everything.

JAMES KNOX, 17, veteran troublemaker, is moving unhurriedly across the lawn, then through some flowerbeds.

ROSSBACH

James. Could you help me with this?

JAMES

Stuff it.

He strolls nonchalantly past, CRUNCHING some of the flowers underfoot, leaving Mrs. Rossbach still grappling with her materials, mouth agape.

INT. THIRD FLOOR HALLWAY -- A MINUTE LATER

Mr. Jennings and Ms. Campbell arrive at the top of the stairwell, and head for their respective classrooms. Students are already outside each room, waiting for the doors to be unlocked. This is accomplished quickly, and the two teachers duck inside, followed by gaggles of students.

Jennifer and Patti come up the last few stairs and onto the third floor hallway, walking quickly toward their lockers.

JENNIFER

I don't know what do about him, Patti.  
He just won't give up.

PATTI

Who? Norman or Robert?

JENNIFER

Norman, of course. Robert isn't on the team anymore, so I couldn't possibly be seen anywhere with him.

Patti gives her a "that's a cruel thing to say" look, which Jennifer ignores.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

I guess Norman is okay, but what would people say? He's so -- normal.

Normal Norman.

I tried telling him "no" a thousand times, but he just won't take "drop dead" for an answer.

PATTI

(giggling)  
My god, Jennifer, you didn't tell him that, did you?

JENNIFER

No. But after the tenth time I felt like it.

And they arrive at their lockers, which are side by side, and just outside Ms. Campbell's classroom.

The locker to the left of Jennifer's doesn't have a lock on it, but it does have a bright yellow smiley-face sticker.

Ms. Campbell and Mrs. Watkins are standing at their doors, encouraging students to get inside on time. Mr. Jennings opens his door across the way, and steps into the hall.

He and Ms. Campbell play hide and seek with their eyes. He's doing the seeking. She's doing the hiding.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Norman's been asking me out for almost a month. I can't make him give up.

Patti grins.

PATTI

Well, at least he's persistent. But why are you like this with most guys? Is it just because he isn't popular?

JENNIFER

No. What do you think I am?

PATTI

Well, I just don't get it. What's the matter with Norman? I think he's cute. If you don't want him, I'd like a shot at him.

Jennifer fidgets, reluctant to talk about it. Patti decides it's time to tease her a little.

PATTI (CONT'D)

Okay, what's the deal? Did dating Robert totally kill your interest in other guys? Are you going gay on me, or what?

She could always make Jennifer laugh when she wanted to, and she succeeds here.

JENNIFER

Oh, shut up, you dip. I guess Norman's okay. I just don't know him. And he's a nerd! He doesn't play sports or anything, and I...

Patti breaks into a big smile when she sees Norman walking up behind Jennifer.

PATTI

Well, well. Guess who's here.

Norman is on a mission. At first glance, he does appear to be the quintessential nerd. He's clean-cut, slight of build, and wears glasses -- but no pocket protector. Patti's right, though, he is cute, and he is determined.

NORMAN

Hi, Jennifer.

He's obviously interested enough in Jennifer to keep pursuing her, but at this point he's not quite sure how to continue.

NORMAN (CONT'D)

Uh, can I talk to you for a minute?

Jennifer is trapped between Norman and Patti.

JENNIFER

Well, I can't talk right now, Norman.  
The bell's going to ring soon.

That's not enough to make him give up.

NORMAN

Please, I just want to know why you  
won't go out with me.

Patti soaks all this in, loving every second of it.

Jennifer turns to her locker to avoid talking, and tries to close it. The corner of a brightly-colored notebook gets caught in the door and is hanging out. Jennifer tugs at it, but it won't budge. She just succeeds in making it stick out a little farther. It's stuck just like she is.

She gives in, and the three of them start walking down the hall, with Jennifer stalling for all she's worth.

JENNIFER

Well, I... I don't know why. I...  
Do I have to tell him, Patti?

PATTI

It's a fair question.

Norman decides to try something else. He steps in front of the girls and kneels. A few kids pass by, and clearly want to stop to see what's going on, but they're almost late to class, so they keep moving.

Now that he's kneeling, Norman has to do something, but what? Everything else has failed so far, why not Shakespeare?

NORMAN

"Use me but as your spaniel -- spurn me, strike me, neglect me; but give me leave to" ...uh, to date you.

All of this is completely lost on Jennifer, but Patti's eyes light up. This guy has guts!

PATTI

That's from A Midsummer Night's Dream, isn't it?

She has a sudden flash of recognition.

PATTI (CONT'D)

Oh, that's where I know you from. I saw you do that last year. You were very good.

Norman looks up at Patti, and "sees" her for the first time.

NORMAN

Uh, thanks!

Norman gets up and Patti takes him aside. There's a brief moment here when they realize they like each other, but Patti is still Jennifer's friend, so she lets the moment die.

The Windup.

PATTI

Okay, this is the whole deal.

The Pitch.

PATTI (CONT'D)

Jennifer likes you, she thinks, but she's not really sure, because she doesn't really know you. She wouldn't mind going out with you, but she's just a little bit scared.

She'd probably keep you asking her forever so she won't have to say "yes", so I'll say it for her.

The Home Run.

PATTI (CONT'D)

Yes. Jennifer would like to go out with you on Friday night.

Jennifer's jaw flies open in a huge grin of disbelief.

JENNIFER

Patti!

Norman walks over to Jennifer.

NORMAN

Well, how about it?

I promise, I'm not an ax murderer or terrorist or anything. Seven o'clock on Friday? We'll go see a movie or something.

Patti nudges Jennifer in the ribs.

PATTI

Go on. Go for it.

Jennifer gives in.

JENNIFER

Oh, all right. I'll give you my address later, but we have to get to class right now.

NORMAN

Oh, right. Me too. Thank you, Jennifer.

As they start to walk away, Norman grabs Patti's arm.

NORMAN (CONT'D)

And thank you, Patti.

Letting her "true friend" guard drop for a second, Patti's face reveals some attraction for Norman.

PATTI

Aw, that's sweet.

Thanks.

Anytime.

Is Patti hitting on Norman? Jennifer hauls her down the hallway toward the stairwell at the front of the building.

PATTI (CONT'D)

What?

Patti glances back at Norman and giggles, but Jennifer keeps tugging her along.

PATTI (CONT'D)

What?

ANGLE ON NORMAN -- IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING

The two girls head for the stairwell, and their first class. Norman turns and walks the other way. When he is nearly at the other end of the hall, he does a little celebration jump in mid-air, and nearly bumps into The Creep.

The Creep has made it to the third floor. Norman sees the look in his eyes and deftly skirts around him.

The Creep has stopped at the edge of the corridor, clutching a few textbooks and his backpack. He almost looks young enough to be a student, but the beads of sweat and stubble on his face, along with the fevered look in his eyes, give away the fact that he clearly doesn't belong here.

He leans forward, trying to look around the corner, when...

A HAND lands on the Creep's shoulder. The Creep drops his books, startled.

CHAMBERS

Son, hadn't you better get to class?  
The bell's about to ring.

The Creep keeps his face down and gathers up his books. He doesn't want Mr. Chambers to see who he is. Anger flashes across the Creep's face for a split second, but he forces himself to relax and act subserviently.

CREEP

Uh ...yes, sir. Going right now,  
sir.

And he moves slowly into the hallway, head still down. He glances back and sees Mr. Chambers going down the stairwell.

He begins walking slowly down the row of lockers. The hallway is almost empty now.

A few students are still in the halls, but they're on the move. First Period is about to start.

THE CREEP'S POV: SEVERAL LOCKERS -- A SECOND LATER

These lockers are well cared for, but some of them show the tell-tale signs of student use. One has a little graffiti, another is bulging at the seams. Most of the lockers have locks on them, but a few have small metal triangles inserted in the hasps to keep them shut when not in use.

The Creep fingers several of the small triangles before seeing a smiley-face sticker on one of the lockers. Jennifer's trapped notebook is visible right next to it.

ANGLE ON THE CREEP -- A SECOND LATER

CREEP

Perfect.

He touches the smiley-face, then wiggles the triangle back and forth a little bit. As he twists the triangle, he mumbles under his breath.

CREEP (CONT'D)

Metal triangle, so it's empty. And it's...

He looks up at the number on Ms. Campbell's door.

CREEP (CONT'D)

...just where I want it.

The hallway is completely empty now.

The Creep sets down his books and slips his backpack off, carefully setting it on the floor. Reaching into his jacket pocket, he pulls out some small pliers. Working quickly, he twists the triangle until one corner separates, slips the triangle off, and quietly opens the locker.

There's a sudden NOISE down the hall, and he freezes.

INT. OTHER END OF THE THIRD FLOOR HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

Some water is leaking from underneath the boys bathroom door. The sound of METAL BANGING comes from inside the bathroom. The door opens, letting out a little more water, and James Knox's head peers around it and sees the hall appears empty. The open bathroom door hides the Creep from his sight.

James props the bathroom door open with a large metal trashcan, disappears momentarily, then slides into the hallway on the film of water, his sneakers slipping wildly on the clean, waxed floor. He skids to a stop, doing his best Tom Cruise/Risky Business impersonation.

James is far enough out in the hall now that he can see the Creep, who is still standing rigidly at the locker, with his head buried inside so his face can't be seen. James "owns" the hall as he strides toward the Creep.

JAMES

Morning's the best time to do that.  
You hydroplane better on clean floors.

When the Creep doesn't move or acknowledge him, James saunters past him and goes into Mrs. Rossbach's classroom.

As soon as James is inside, the Creep gingerly pulls a large, fairly heavy paper bag out of his backpack, and carefully places it inside the locker. Then he replaces the triangle, and bends it back into shape with his pliers.

He's almost done. He pulls a large plastic baggie out of the backpack, slips the empty backpack back on, and starts scattering some dark powder onto the floor as he walks toward the stairwell, holding his textbooks under one arm.

He passes one of the school's tall industrial style trashcans, and drops his textbooks inside. Then he scatters a little more powder on the stairs as he goes down them.

ANGLE ON THE LOCKER -- A SECOND LATER

What's inside the locker? Something draws us toward it. We reach the surface of the locker, and...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. INSIDE THE LOCKER -- CLOSE UP -- DAY

...we're inside. The paper bag is barely visible in the light seeping through the slits on the locker door.

There also seems to be A VERY FAINT NOISE coming from the bag, maybe electronic whirring or buzzing. It's hard to make out. Suddenly, there is a HUGE JANGLING NOISE.

INT. THIRD FLOOR HALLWAY -- A SECOND LATER

The final BELL to start First Period is ringing. VIOLA WATKINS closes the door to her classroom.

INT. MRS. WATKINS' CLASS -- A MOMENT LATER

A CLOCK on Mrs. Watkins' wall reads 8:00. A few students are leaning across the aisles, whispering to each other. One boy, DAVID, is out of his seat, talking to a girl as he leans over her desk, but this is not a Ferris Bueller-style classroom. Most of the students seem to be waiting patiently, glancing through their textbooks, etc.

Mrs. Watkins moves to her desk and looks at her seating chart.

ANGLE ON A STUDENT'S DRAWING

A STUDENT is finishing a faceless drawing of someone whose hair and clothes are exactly like Mrs. Watkins'.

BACK TO SCENE

Mrs. Watkins looks back and forth between her chart and the class. She is not pleased about something. The student, perplexed, looks back and forth between his drawing and Mrs. Watkins.

ANGLE ON THE DRAWING

He finishes the drawing by giving "Ms. Watkins" a frowny-face.

BACK TO SCENE

WATKINS

Well, since David is the only person absent, we can get started.

David looks up, puzzled at hearing his name. Then he realizes what's going on and heads for his seat.

DAVID

Sorry, Mrs. Watkins.

Mrs. Watkins' voice has a pseudo-pleasant tone, but her eyes are drilling holes into David's apparently thick skull.

WATKINS

A seating chart only works if you're in your seat.

(MORE)