

Check-Out

By

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Cast of Characters

Clyde: late 30s- mid-40s.

Anton: late 30s- mid-40s.

Scene

Duane Reade - Feminine product aisle.

Time

5pm.

We hear the faint sounds of items being scanned at a check-out counter. Lights up on a Duane Reade drug store. Clyde is standing nervously in the feminine product aisle, lost in a sea of tiny pink boxes. He tries to study the boxes while simultaneously pretending he's not studying the boxes. Anton stands at the end of the aisle, watching Clyde and smiling. Finally, Clyde grabs a small pink box.

ANTON

Oh I wouldn't get those!!

CLYDE

Why not !?!

Startled, Clyde tosses the box back on the shelf like it's on fire.

ANTON

Well you love your wife don't you?

CLYDE

Yes...?

ANTON

Then why would you "plug up her power with dangerous, bleached cotton?" Why would you "blot-out the beauty of her free-flowing femininity?"

CLYDE

...because she asked me to?

Anton approaches him.

ANTON

(laughing)

Oh no, no, no, I was quoting from the "Diva Cup" commercial that plays on that monitor up there! You didn't think I really talk like that, did you?!

Beat.

CLYDE

I have no idea how you talk. I have no idea who you are.

ANTON

Right. Sorry. Anton.

Quick handshake.

CLYDE

You... work here?

ANTON

Nope! Just hanging out. You're Clyde?

CLYDE

What?

ANTON

(pointing)

Name tag.

CLYDE

Oh. Yeah. Just off work.

ANTON

Security Guard?

CLYDE

...

ANTON

Got the frame for it. Sturdy. No, but in all seriousness - Clyde? Get. Your wife. The Diva Cup!

Anton grabs a little white box and puts it in Clyde's hands.

CLYDE

(disgusted)

Aw, what the hell is this?

ANTON

My wife uses one - my ex wife I mean - god it feels crazy calling her that. I don't like the way that sounds. I'm just gonna stick with calling her Kate. That's her name after all, Kate. Sorry. Off-track. You asked what a diva cup was...

CLYDE

No, I don't actually care - I was just-

Perhaps Anton does some neat gestures in this next speech to describe the process?

ANTON

...To answer your question, it is a flexible, re-usable cup that gets inserted into the woman's body during men-stroo-ation. It shapes itself to fit snugly inside her vaginal walls and it catches and collects the blood as it falls from her uterus.

Beat.

CLYDE

That. Is. Heinous.

ANTON

No, it's not! It's quite beautiful really! My wi- Kate - and I actually used to take the tiny vial of blood from her diva cup, mix it with spring water and feed it to our houseplants! I mean, think about it, that blood was meant to nourish a fetus, so you can imagine what wonders it did for our ficus tree! Believe me when I tell you - it flourished!

CLYDE

Yeah, I'm gonna vomit now.

ANTON

Really? Oh shit. Sorry. Aisle 6 has the Pepto. Take it easy though. Overuse can result in a temporary darkening of the tongue or stool.

Beat.

That probably didn't help, did it.

CLYDE

About how much time do you spend "hanging out" in this here Duane Reade?

ANTON

It's considerable.

CLYDE

May I ask why?

Beat.

ANTON

I like the honesty here.

Beat.

CLYDE

Yeah, I have idea what that could possibly mean.

ANTON

Hmm.

Quick beat.

Have you ever watched a teenage boy buying condoms for the first time?

CLYDE

What? No! Why would I do that?

ANTON

That sounded creepy, didn't it.

CLYDE

Sure did!

ANTON

Oops. Let me try again.

Quick beat.

How bout an old lady buying incontinence pads?

CLYDE

...

ANTON

Alright, alright. Here's the thing. When people are in Duane Reade, they're vulnerable. They can't help it. It's like...they can put on all kinds of airs and shields and guards when they're outside, but when they're in here? Buying things to deal with the primal functions of their bodies? They can't get away with their usual games. You sweat, I sweat. You bleed, I bleed.

Beat.

Truth be told, I spent the majority of my life not being honest about who I was. So, now, I like to see people being... themselves. Their... scared, raw, little insecure selves.

Beat.

Does that make sense?

CLYDE

I don't know.

ANTON

You don't know?

CLYDE

I don't know shit. That's my greatest asset.

ANTON

I wouldn't say that. You seem to have a lot of great assets.

Beat. Anton looks him up and down. Clyde gets uncomfortable.

CLYDE
Stop that.

ANTON
Stop what?

CLYDE
Nothing.

*Clyde throws the diva cup back on the shelf, grabs
a small pink box at random and starts walking
away.*

Thanks for the advice, but I'm just gonna get her what
she asked for, so-

Quick Beat.
Bye.

ANTON
(calling after him)
Anything else I can help you find?

CLYDE
No. I'm just need to get her some of those
panty-hoser-things and I'm outta here.

He is almost out of sight.

ANTON
Alright! Well you'll find the hose-ee-uh-ree just two
aisles over, so-

Clyde bolts back and gets in Anton's face.

CLYDE
It's pronounced HOYZ-uh-ree, you-you-you-

ANTON
Wow, what? Calm down!

CLYDE
(mocking him)
"HOSE-ee-uh-ree." Just-- don't say it all fruity like
that, ok?

ANTON
"Fruity?"

CLYDE
I saw the way you looked at me and my, uh...assets a
minute ago, and I didn't like it!

ANTON

You don't like to be looked at?

CLYDE

Not by people like you!

ANTON

People like me? Alright. I see. Well, I'm sorry for looking at you and I'll try to be less fruity in the future.

CLYDE

Just say the word the way it's spelled!

ANTON

And how's that?

CLYDE

HOYZ-uh-ree!!! !

ANTON

Hmmm. If you'd take a look at the sign over there Clyde, it is quite clearly spelled hose-ee-uh-ree, the "I" is after the "S" so-

CLYDE

I don't give a shit Anton! Say it in whatever goddamn fruitcake way you want! I don't give a shit!!!

ANTON

You certainly seem to give a shit-

CLYDE

Why am I even -- ?

Clyde tries to bolt toward the check-out. Anton blocks him from going.

Get out of my way.

Quick beat.

Move!!!!

Anton places his palm on the center of Clyde's chest.

ANTON

Shhhh...

CLYDE

What are you doing.

ANTON

Feels good doesn't it?

CLYDE

No. Sort of. Why.

ANTON

I do this to my friends whenever they get riled up.

CLYDE

I'm not your friend.

ANTON

Noted.

CLYDE

And I'm not riled up.

ANTON

OK.

Beat.

Should I stop?

Quick Beat.

CLYDE

I don't know.

ANTON

Alright, well when you do, just - let me know.

Beat.

Anton keeps his hand on his chest. Clyde breathes and clutches the pink box. He stares off past Anton's shoulder.

CLYDE

(softly)

So... I'm looking at the sign now and I'm seeing that you're right. The "i" is actually after the "s," so it must be HOSE-ee-uh-ree. My mistake.

ANTON

Not a problem.

CLYDE

(quietly)

I guess I've just always said HOYZ-uh-ree in my head...

ANTON

Sure.

Quick beat.

If it makes you feel any better I spent years saying
noo-kyu-lur instead of noo-klee-ur.

CLYDE

Oh I hate when people do that.

ANTON

Well, I don't do it anymore.

CLYDE

Good. That's very annoying.

ANTON

Yes it is.

Beat.

CLYDE

OK, you can stop now.

ANTON

Sure.

He releases his palm from Clyde's chest.

Beat.

*Anton pulls two large boxes off the shelf and sits
down on one of them. He pats the "seat" next to
him.*

Care to sit with me, Clyde?

*Clyde considers. He sits down, still clutching
the tiny pink box to his stomach. They sit in
silence. Clyde stares straight out.*

CLYDE

(glancing at the box he's sitting on)
What the hell is a Diaper Genie?

ANTON

The only diaper pail with antimicrobial protection to
inhibit odor-causing bacteria.

CLYDE

Ah.

Another silence.

ANTON

Kids?

CLYDE

What?

ANTON

Kids. You have kids?

CLYDE

Oh. No. I don't. You?

ANTON

No. We wanted to. Well- that's not exactly true- she wanted to. But I just... couldn't-

CLYDE

(starting to get emotional)

Yeah. We're talking about it now and I just-

ANTON

Yeah.

CLYDE

(verge of tears)

I love her though, I do, I just don't-

ANTON

You'll figure it out.

Beat.

Clyde finally turns to look at him.

CLYDE

I haven't slept with my wife in six years.

Beat.

And I don't think I want to.

Beat.

ANTON

Hmm...

Beat.

Well, yeah. That's-

Clyde cries. Anton watches him a moment.

Clyde's head gradually lands itself on Anton's shoulder. Anton slowly puts his arm around him.

They sit together until Clyde quiets.

CLYDE

I'm sorry.

ANTON

You're fine...

CLYDE

I'm crying in a fucking Duane Reade. I'm not fine.

ANTON

No, you are. You're gonna be fine.

They sit in silence.

Clyde eventually pulls away.

Anton slowly stands.

What do you think Clyde?

Beat.

Should we check out?

Beat.

Clyde remains sitting, holding tightly to the small pink box.

CLYDE

I don't - I don't... know.

Anton extends his hand.

Black out.

End of play.