

PARKING LOT TRAFFIC

a comedy in process

by
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CHARACTERS

STACI	-	Twenty/thirty something,
CRAIG	-	Twenty/thirty something. In a relationship with STACI.
FRANK	-	pale, thin, aloof, in his twenties
RONNI	-	wide eyed, in her twenties

SETTING

A one bedroom apartment and other settings (as noted)

The bedroom: Three doors: to the rest of the apartment (linking the living room), a bathroom and a closet. A window. Dresser, bed, clothes hamper and anything else that one might expect to find in a childless couple's one bedroom apartment boudoir.

The living area: a kitchenette with an extended counter separating the kitchen area from the living room area which includes a sofa, side table, chair and other standard fare, including both the door linking to the bedroom as well as a front door leading out to the rest of the world.

TIME

ACT I		Three o'clock . . . ish	a.m.
ACT II	Scene 1	Twenty minutes later	
ACT II	Scene 2	Two hours later still	

A NOTE ON THE DIALOGUE:

1. A slash “ / ” indicates the character with the next line of dialogue begins his or her speech (overlapping dialogue).
2. Dialogue in brackets “ [] ” is unspoken, although the character is thinking it.
(please note these passages will also be highlighted in grey in this script)
3. Dialogue in parenthesis “ () ” is spoken aloud but is an aside.
(also note that these passages are NOT highlighted and SHOULD BE read aloud)
4. Grammatical errors; sentences beginning in lower case; or UPPER CASE; used in place of common punctuation (even a few misspellings), were, indeed, intended.

ACT I

(At Rise:

A bedroom. Shades are drawn over the windows as STACI, twenty/thirty something, clad in sleeping attire, enters quietly from one of three doors (closet, bathroom or rest of the apartment). She is holding something (or things) behind her back, being sure not to awaken the man (CRAIG) sleeping on the bed. Reaching her destination she swiftly jumps on CRAIG, who is lying on his back, and straddles him: holding him down as she moves into place: a rubber kitchen mallet and a wooden stake positioned over CRAIG's heart in classic horror film style. CRAIG opens his eyes at first aware only of being provocatively straddled but then keenly aware of the weapons now in play. Yet before he can say anything STACI announces:)

STACI

Quick: You're a vampire: how do you get out of this alive?

CRAIG

(A beat.)

Can we not do this right now, I don't think I'm / awake yet?

STACI

Then you die. I own the element of surprise.

CRAIG

I'm surprised but I'm really not in the mood / for this.

STACI

(Feeling him beneath her:)

Oh, I think you are.

CRAIG

[Please?] Can you just give me a chance to breathe?

STACI

Don't change the subject; You who are about to die—save yourself. Or is *this* maybe your way of ...

CRAIG

Why can't I just have a normal relationship with a normal girlfriend?

STACI

Because that would be boring; for both of us.

(Touching the stake to his skin innocently:)

{Any} thoughts?

CRAIG

(Acquiescing if only to end the torture:)

What if I do nothing?

STACI

(Touching the stake to his skin:)

Then you die.

CRAIG

Hey! That's sharp.

STACI

There has to be an element of danger involved.

CRAIG

Why?

STACI

Save yourself, Demon.

CRAIG

OK. I'm a vampire.

STACI

We know that.

CRAIG

Where am I?

STACI

In your lair.

CRAIG

Could you [move off me or at least shift to the left]?

STACI

Tick-tock. Whaddo you do?

CRAIG

(Thinking quickly:)

How bad do I want to live?

STACI

Trick question: you're already dead.

CRAIG

If I'm a vampi—

(Responding to the pressure of presumably the stake:)

Pull up. Pull up for godsakes.

STACI

(Eases up just slightly.)

Sissy.

CRAIG

What time is it?

STACI

[Why?] Who's asking?

(Staying on subject:)

Three o'clock.

CRAIG

a.m. or p.m.?

STACI

a.m.

CRAIG

Old style vampire or new [style]?

STACI

Old school: definitely old school. Sunlight is not your friend.

CRAIG

Silver bullets?

STACI

Werewolf.

CRAIG

Mirrors?

STACI

Don't own any. For a reason.

CRAIG

Garlic?

Burns. STACI

Crosses? Holy water? CRAIG

Anything religious. STACI

Wiccan? CRAIG

Except wiccan; Times up. STACI
(She raises the hammer.)

I could kiss you. CRAIG
(Quickly:)

Distract me? Ha! Too cliché. STACI

I could . . . CRAIG
(Slightly rotates his hips beneath her.)

Later. STACI

I could cry. CRAIG

I like that. Unexpected. STACI
(She is stopped. Thinks on it)

I could beg you to kill me; beg you to release me from my / torment. CRAIG
(As she continues to loosen her position over him:)

Too much talking. I hate it when the villain has to spill his guts to the hero instead of just pulling the trigger and being done with it: it's sloppy. [I like it:] a tear. Just a tear. It's ... symbolic. STACI
(Still atop him--thinking aloud as much to herself as him:)

(Having the upper hand finally, CRAIG disarms STACI and flips her onto her back on the bed as if to overpower her sexually but instead continues to roll up and over her, sending his feet to the floor and continue his travel to the bathroom.)

STACI

(Remaining where she is--thinking all things over.)

Thanks, Babe.

CRAIG

Sometimes I think you're crazy.

STACI

Sometimes me too.

(We hear the unmistakable sound of water on water.)

STACI

Close the door for godsakes.

(Flush. Followed by the sound of the sink after which CRAIG reemerges from the bathroom.--closing the door behind himself.)

CRAIG

Sorry. What time is it?

STACI

Three a.m.

CRAIG

Real life?

STACI

Yeah. Maybe three twenty.

CRAIG

What the hell'd you wake me up at three a.m. for?

STACI

I was stuck.

CRAIG

On wha—At 3 a.m.?

STACI
So?

CRAIG
I don't have to be to work till— ...

STACI
Then go back to bed.

CRAIG
I think I'm awake now. Thank you.

STACI
Sorry.

CRAIG
Yeah.

(There is a long pause as CRAIG watches STACI lying on the bed lost in thought. The silence says everything.)

STACI
Later.

CRAIG
What?

STACI
(Sitting back up:)
Next time don't let me watch you pee.

CRAIG
You couldn't see anything; nothing you haven't seen before.

STACI
OK; if you're a vampire: what kind of work do you do?

CRAIG
Really? You're still on this?

STACI
Not to get close to your prey—or ahead of your hunter—none of that kind of crap—but because you really need a job.

CRAIG
Then I'm going back to bed.

STACI

(As he climbs back into bed :)

No, think about it: what if—what if he works at a Seven Eleven or a Dunkin Donuts—something open all night—'cuz he's broke.

CRAIG

You're on your own.

STACI

(Moving to sit on the dresser—she knows too well exactly what his climbing into the bed means.)

Enough with the bourgeoisie, independently wealthy, sucking the life out the working class: that's had its day. It was a great political statement for its time but now the disease has to be reborn—coming up from the gutter.

CRAIG

I liked you better with a stake in your hand.

STACI

Come on; help me with this.

CRAIG

Why?

STACI

'Cuz it's three a.m. and you're wide awake.

CRAIG

I thought there was something to be awake for.

STACI

(Looks at him a moment—tilting her head:)

You're cute.

CRAIG

Really?

STACI

So ... now that you're awake: where does he work? Do you like the convenience store or—

(As CRAIG buries his head back into his pillow:)

—Ple-e-e-e-ease.

CRAIG

Why are we doing this? Are you writing a book or something?

STACI

No. Should I? Would would would you read it?

CRAIG

If it'll get you back in bed I'll memorize it.

STACI

What?

CRAIG

It's the best I could come up with in short notice.

STACI

I want a donut now. You want a donut?

CRAIG

(To himself more than her:)

Oh my god.

STACI

It's not gonna happen till I get that picture out of my mind.

CRAIG

You didn't see anything.

STACI

You will learn.

CRAIG

OK, [I'll play along:] if only to distract you for the purpose of conquering you.

STACI

Was that supposed to be romantic or ... ?

CRAIG

It's three a.m.

STACI

[It's] closer to three thirty now.

CRAIG

(Getting out of bed; throwing on a zippered sweatshirt:)

Coffee or Something stronger?

STACI

You going out for donuts?

CRAIG

No.

(CRAIG steps into the doorway—the lights shift: preferably the stage turns to reveal a modest living room and kitchenette just beyond the bedroom while the bedroom itself [bed, dresser and all] veer into the background or offstage. CRAIG continues his stride to the kitchenette to retrieve a bottle of "something stronger" and two glasses to pour into as STACI follows him out to trade in her hammer and stake for a pen and paper from the kitchen counter. A sofa, side table, chair and other living room amenities make up the room.)

CRAIG

Don't follow me. I'm trying to get you back in there.

STACI

(Already sitting at the counter—across from him—making notes:)

What should I name him?

CRAIG

(Takes the moment in: pours himself a shot and her a full drink. He then takes his shot and pours himself another full drink.)

How did we get stuck on this?

STACI

I was watching a movie.

(Reading from her list:)

Should it be a movie?—A graphic novel or a short story?—Or a series of books; We could get rich, right?

CRAIG

You saw a movie?

STACI

Yeah, it was stupid, they did everything dumb—like one of those franchise things but worse.

CRAIG

Halloween?

STACI

Worse. Much worse. Halloween—the first one—was good.

CRAIG

(Changing the subject:)

You want me to put on a movie?

STACI

Nope. I wanna do this.

CRAIG

You know what I wanna do?

STACI

Really? This is / you're good stuff?

CRAIG

(Continuing anyway:)

You.

STACI

That line ever work for you?

CRAIG

Not tonight obviously.

STACI

I'm worth waiting for.

CRAIG

So why a vampire? You feel like biting?
You ever met a vampire before?

STACI

(Still writing:)

Yes.

CRAIG

Really?

STACI

When I was nine I had an aunt. And she had this one long hair sticking out of her chin and nobody would talk about it.

CRAIG

And that would make her a witch.

STACI

That's what I thought at first too, right? But then I figured why didn't she just pull it—trim it: shave—something—electrolysis maybe. Then I realized maybe she doesn't even know it's there—but of course it's *there*—everybody can see it's *there*. But what if *she* couldn't see it was there and that got me to thinking what if she couldn't see it because she couldn't see her own reflection in the mirror? And that's when I realized—she was a vampire. It made perfect sense: and I mean who could care about a stupid hair on your chin when you've got so many other problems to deal with, right? It never struck me funny after that that she wouldn't go to church with us. Give me some good names.

(As STACI continues CRAIG lets his eyes fall from her cleavage over to the mail piling up at the end of the counter [where the Formica meets the wall].)

CRAIG

(Pulling out a piece of mail that has caught his interest:)

This better be a jury summons.

STACI

C'mon, you're good with names.

CRAIG

(Having opened the previously opened mail:)

You got another ticket?

STACI

It doesn't matter—it won't hold up.

CRAIG

Whaddo you mean it doesn't matter—they're gonna drop your insurance policy.

STACI

It was in a parking lot.

CRAIG

So?

STACI

Parking lot traffic doesn't count.

CRAIG

Who told you that?

STACI

The way I see it: it's private property. [The] signs are there to be used as suggestions [and] guidelines they're not etched in stone.

CRAIG

How did you get a license?

STACI

It's private property.

CRAIG

It's public access.

STACI

On private property. It doesn't count.

CRAIG

(Closing up the envelope again and setting it aside:)

Good luck with that.

STACI

And why are you opening my mail?

CRAIG

Really? What's mine is yours, babe.

STACI

(Following her mood swing—mocking him:)

"Babe"—whaddo you think of that as a name?

CRAIG

Perfect.

STACI

(Repeating it for him . . . just in case:)

"Babe".

CRAIG

(Taking his drink and crossing to the sofa to sit it out:)

And call it: time of death: Three twenty-four.

STACI

I don't open your mail.

CRAIG

I didn't mean anything by it.

STACI

Sure you didn't.

CRAIG

(Picking up the remote:)

I'm putting on a movie.

STACI

No, no, no, no: help me with this. I think I'm really on to something here.
You want me to read it to you?

CRAIG

No.

(A beat.)

Of course.

(As she moves to the sofa:)

So you're going to be a writer now.

STACI

Who can't be a writer?

CRAIG

Apparently the people who wrote the movie you just saw.

(No reply.)

Didn't you try this once before?

STACI

[That] wasn't my fault.

CRAIG

What's wrong with the career you already have?

STACI

I am three jobs removed from "do you want fries with that?"

CRAIG

So what does that make me?

STACI

Four jobs removed.

CRAIG

Such is the world of high / finance.

STACI

Haven't you ever wanted to have a more exciting life?

CRAIG

My life is exciting enough—*You* are exciting enough.

STACI

I mean real exciting. Dream big or go home.

CRAIG

Sitting alone in a room writing about other people having an exciting life—that's what you're saying here.

STACI

For someone who wants to get in my pants you're doing a pretty lousy job.

CRAIG

(After the slightest beat:)

Go ahead, please.

STACI

(Positions herself on the couch--sitting cross legged--facing him; enraptured with her project:)

I still don't have a name but I'm toying with Frank—In honor of Frank Langela—but / he's—

CRAIG

So why's he have to be a boy? Why can't he be a girl?

STACI

(Stopped with the new thought--regroups--storing the thought for later:)

Ok: good thought—maybe later: Frank works at an all night record store.

CRAIG

Where are you going to find a record store anymore?

STACI

Right? Right?

He's a relic—but a new fashioned relic—like in a big city somewhere. Somewhere that sells vinyl. Like LA or New York or Chicago or Detroit: yeah, Detroit. They still have Hell's night in Detroit, right? Whaddo you think of that as a title: "Hell's night"?

(As STACI continues: four record bins roll into place on stage: two on either side of the sofa. FRANK, a pale, thin, man in his twenties, shuffles thru the bins, restocking records.)

(CRAIG chooses not to reply . . . his comment would only make things worse.)

STACI

So, I'm thinking Frank: he works the night shift, obviously, and he *needs* the job 'cuz he's always broke and he's next to homeless. Another victim of the next recession—

CRAIG

[What recession?]

STACI

(There's always one around the corner)—he had money but he lost it all—like / everybody else did.

CRAIG

Like my Dad.

STACI

Not like your Dad; like everybody else did. I don't wanna make this maudlin. I want it alive [and] vibrant. He's in a record shop so of course there'll be this amazing soundtrack.

CRAIG

So, it's a movie?

STACI

Of course it's a movie. What do you think?

CRAIG

About what?

STACI

What I read to you.

CRAIG

That's everything?

STACI

So far.

CRAIG

... It's a start.

STACI

You hate it.