

## CLERKS (Miramax, 1994)

**DANTE's day goes from bad to worse when he gets the news of CAITLIN's engagement. Then CAITLIN unexpectedly shows up at the deli, where DANTE is having trouble coping; she's taken the train down from school to see him. She doesn't know what she wants any more than DANTE does, but she thinks she's got it all sorted out. In the process, she sends a different mixed message with every line.**

INTERIOR. VIDEO STORE – NIGHT

*On counter.*

**CAITLIN:** You're just going to lock the store like that?

**DANTE:** I want to talk to you about something, and I don't want to be disturbed.

**C:** You saw it?

**D:** Very dramatic, I thought.

**C:** It's not what you think.

**D:** What, it's worse? You're pregnant with an Asian design major's child?

**C:** I'm not pregnant.

**D:** Were you going to tell me or just send an invitation?

**C:** I was going to tell you. But then we were getting along so well, I didn't want to mess it up.

**D:** You could've broken it to me gently, you know; at least started by telling me you had a boyfriend. I told you I had a girlfriend.

**C:** I know, I'm sorry. But when we started talking...it's like I forgot I had a boyfriend. And then he proposed last month...

**D:** And you said yes?

**C:** Well...kind of, sort of?

**D:** Is that what they teach you at that school of yours? Kind of, sort of? Everyone knows about this except me! Do you know how humiliating that is?

**C:** I would've told you, and you would have stopped calling, like a baby.

**D:** How do you know that?

**C:** Because I know you. You prefer drastic measures to rational ones.

**D:** So you're really getting married?

**C:** No.

**D:** No, you're not really getting married?

**C:** The story goes like this: He proposed, and I told him I had to think about it, and he insisted I wear the ring anyway. Then my mother told the paper we were engaged.

**D:** How like her.

**C:** Then my mother called me this morning and told me the announcement was in the paper. That's when I hopped the train to come back here, because I knew you'd be a wreck.

**D:** Thanks for the vote of confidence.

**C:** Was I right?

**D:** Wreck is a harsh term. Disturbed is more like it. Mildly disturbed even.

**C:** I love a macho façade. It's such a turn-on. (*sniffing air*) What smells like shoe polish?

**D:** And you came here to what? To comfort me?

**C:** The last thing I need was for you to think I was hiding something from you.

**D:** But you were.

**C:** No, I wasn't. Not really. I told you I'd been seeing other people.

**D:** Yeah, but not seriously. Christ, you're ready to walk down the aisle – I'd say that constitutes something more than just seeing somebody.

**C:** I'm giving him his ring back.

**D:** What?

**C:** I don't want to marry him. I don't want to get married now. I'm on the verge of graduation. I want to go to grad school after this. And then I want to start a career. I don't want to be a wife first, and then have to worry about when I'm going to fit in all the other stuff. I've come way too far and studied too hard to let my education go to waste as

a housewife. And I know that's what I'd become. Sang's already signed with a major firm, and he's going to be pulling a huge salary, which would give me no reason to work, and he's so traditional anyway...

**D:** Sang? His name is a past tense?

**C:** Stop it. He's a nice guy.

**D:** If he's so nice, why aren't you going to marry him?

**C:** I just told you.

**D:** There's more, isn't there?

**C:** Why, Mr. Hicks – whatever do you mean?

**D:** Tell me I don't have something to do with it.

**C:** You don't have anything to do with it.

**D:** You lie.

**C:** Look how full of yourself you are.

**D:** I just believe in giving credit where credit is due. And I believe that I'm the impetus behind your failure to wed.

**C:** If I'm so nuts about you, then why am I having sex with an Asian design major?

**D:** Jesus, you're caustic.

**C:** I had to bring you down from that cloud you were floating on. When I say I don't want to get married, I mean just that. I don't want to marry anybody. Not for years.

**D:** So who's asking? I don't want to marry you.

**C:** Good. Stay in that frame of mind.

**D:** But can we date?

**C:** I'm sure Sang and – Veronica? – would like that.

**D:** We could introduce them. They might hit it off.

**C:** You're serious. You want to date again.

**D:** I would like to be your boyfriend, yes.

**C:** It's just the shock of seeing me after three years. Believe me, you'll get over it.

**D:** Give me a bit more credit. I think it's time we got back together, you know. I'm more mature, you're more mature, you're finishing college, I'm already in the job market...

**C:** You work in a market, all right.

**D:** Cute. Tell me you wouldn't want to go out again. After all the talking we've been doing.

**C:** The key word here is *talk*, Dante. I think the idea, the conception of us dating, is more idyllic than what actually happens when we date.

**D:** So...what? So should we just make pretend over the phone that we're dating?

**C:** I don't know. Maybe we should just see what happens.

**D:** Let me take you out tonight.

**C:** You mean, on a date?

**D:** Yes. A real date. Dinner and a movie.

**C:** The Dante Hicks Dinner and a Movie Date. I think I've been on that one before.

**D:** You have a better suggestion?

**C:** How about the Caitlin Bree Walk on the Boardwalk, Then Get Naked Somewhere Kind of Private Date?

**D:** I hear that's a rather popular date.

**C:** Jerk. Here I am, throwing myself at you, succumbing to your wily charms, and you call me a slut, in so many words.

**D:** What about Sing?

**C:** Sang.

**D:** Sang.

**C:** He's not invited.

**D:** He's your fiancé.

**C:** I offer you my body and you offer me semantics? He's just a boyfriend, Dante, and in case you haven't gotten the drift of why I came all the way here from Ohio, I'm about to become single again. And yes – let me placate your ego – you are the inspiration for this bold and momentous decision, for which I'll probably be ostracized at both school and home. You ask me who I choose, I choose you.

**D:** So what are you saying?

**C:** You're such an asshole.

**D:** I'm only kidding.

**C:** I can already tell this isn't going to work.

**D:** I'll ask Randal to close up for me – when he gets back.

**C:** Where'd he go? I'd have thought he'd be at your side, like an obedient lapdog.

**D:** He went to rent a movie, but he hasn't gotten back yet. Ah screw it; I'll just lock up the store and leave him a note.

**C:** You're too responsible. But no. I have to go home first. They don't even know I left school. And I should break the disengagement news to my mother, which is going to cause quite a row, considering she loves Sang.

**D:** Who doesn't?

**C:** Well, me I guess. So, I shall take my leave of you, but I will return in a little while at which time – yes – I would love to go for dinner and a movie with you.

**D:** What happened to the walk and the nakedness?

**C:** I'm easy, but I'm not that easy. See you later, handsome.

*She leaves.*

**D:** Yes!!

## CLERKS (2)

The day is finally almost over, Dante and RANDAL have survived the slings and arrows of the deli and video business, fights with girlfriends and each other, a fire, a trip to a wake (the wrong one) during which RANDAL knocked over the coffin, and it's not over yet. CAITLIN, Dante's ex-girlfriend, has come down from school to visit Dante and RANDAL is suspicious of her intentions. His loyalty to Dante creates conflict when he sees her. His remark about Chinese food is an insulting reference to CAITLIN's current boyfriend, who is Chinese.

INTERIOR. CONVENIENCE STORE – NIGHT

*CAITLIN enters, carrying an overnight bag. RANDAL is watching his porno. The porno is loud and lewd. CAITLIN stares.*

**CAITLIN:** Randal Graves – scourge of the video renter.

**RANDAL:** Ladies and gentlemen, Mrs. Asian Design Major herself: Caitlin Bree!

**C:** You saw that article? God, isn't it awful? My mother sent that in.

**R:** I take it she like that guy.

**C:** You'd think she was marrying him. What are you watching?

**R:** Children's programming. What did your mom say when you told her you weren't engaged anymore?

**C:** She said not to come home until graduation.

**R:** Wow, you got thrown out? For Dante?

**C:** What can I say? He does weird things to me.

**R:** Can I watch?

**C:** You can hold me down.

**R:** Can I join in?

**C:** You might be let down. I'm not a hermaphrodite.

**R:** Few are. So what makes you think you can maintain a relationship with Dante this time around?

**C:** A woman's intuition. Something in me says it's time to give the old boy a serious try.

**R:** Wow. Hey, I was just about to order some dinner. You eat Chinese, right?

**C:** Dick.

**R:** Exactly.

**C:** So where is he?

**R:** He went home to change for the big date.

**C:** God, isn't he great?

**R:** (*indicating the TV*) No, *this* is great.

**C:** Can I use the bathroom?

**R:** There's no light back there.

**C:** Why aren't there any lights?

**R:** Well, there are, but for some reason they stop working at five-fourteen every night.

**C:** You're kidding.

**R:** Nobody can figure it out. And the boss doesn't want to pay the electrician to fix it, because the electrician owes money to the video store.

**C:** Such a sordid state of affairs.

**R:** And I'm caught in the middle – torn between my loyalty for the boss, and my desire to piss with the lights on.

**C:** I'll try to manage.

*She heads toward the back.*

**R:** Hey Caitlin...Break his heart again, and I'll kill you. Nothing personal.

**C:** You're very protective of him, Randal. You always have been.

**R:** Territoriality. He was mine first.

**C:** Awww. That was so cute.

CLERKS (3)

Thanks. DANTE

VERONICA  
How much money did you leave up there?

DANTE  
Like three dollars in mixed change and a couple of singles. People only get the paper of coffee this time of morning.

VERONICA  
You're trusting.

DANTE  
Why do you say that?

VERONICA  
How do you know they're taking the right amount of change? Or even paying for what they take?

DANTE  
Theoretically, people see money on the counter and nobody around, they think they're being watched.

VERONICA  
Honesty through paranoia. Why do you smell like shoe polish?

DANTE  
I had to use shoe polish to make that sign. The smell won't come off.

VERONICA  
Do you think anyone can see us down here?

DANTE  
Why? You wanna have sex or something?

VERONICA  
Ooh! Can we?!

DANTE  
Really?

VERONICA  
I was kidding.

DANTE  
Yeah, right. You can't get enough of me.

VERONICA  
Typically male point of view.

DANTE  
How do you figure?

VERONICA  
You show some bedroom proficiency, and you think you're gods. What about what we do for you?

DANTE  
Women? Women, as lovers, are all basically the same: they just have to be there.



VERONICA  
"Be there?"

DANTE  
Making a male climax is not all that challenging: insert somewhere close and preferably moist; thrust; repeat.

VERONICA  
How flattering.

DANTE  
Now, making a woman cum...therein lies a challenge.

VERONICA  
Oh, you think so?

DANTE  
A girl makes a guy cum, it's standard. A guy makes a girl cum, it's talent.

VERONICA  
And I actually date you?

DANTE  
Something wrong?

VERONICA  
I'm insulted. Believe me, Don Juan, it takes more than that to get a guy off. Just "being there"-as you put it-is not enough.

DANTE  
I touched a nerve.

VERONICA  
I'm astonished to hear you trivialize my role in our sex life.

DANTE  
It wasn't directed at you. I was making a broad generalization.

VERONICA  
You were making a generalization about "broads!"

DANTE  
These are my opinions based on my experiences with the few women who were good enough to sleep with me.

VERONICA  
How many?

DANTE  
How many what?

VERONICA  
How many girls have you slept with?

DANTE  
How many different girls? Didn't we already have this discussion once?

VERONICA  
We might have; I don't remember.      How many?

DANTE  
Including you?

VERONICA  
It better be up to and including me.

DANTE  
Twelve.

VERONICA  
You've slept with twelve different girls?

DANTE  
Including you; yes.

Pause. She slaps him.

DANTE  
What the hell was that for?

VERONICA  
You're a pig.

DANTE  
Why'd you hit me?

VERONICA  
Do you know how many different men I've had sex with?

DANTE  
Do I get to hit you after you tell me?

VERONICA  
Three.

DANTE  
Three?

VERONICA  
Three including you.

DANTE  
You've only had sex with three different people?

VERONICA  
I'm not the pig you are.

DANTE  
Who?

VERONICA  
You!

DANTE  
No; who were the three, besides me?

VERONICA  
John Franson and Rob Stanslyk.

DANTE  
(with true admiration)  
Wow. That's great. That's something to be proud of.

VERONICA  
I am. And that's why you should feel like a pig. You men make me sick.  
You'll sleep with anything that says yes.

DANTE  
Animal, vegetable, or mineral.

VERONICA  
Vegetable meaning paraplegic.

DANTE  
They put up the least amount of struggle.

VERONICA  
After dropping a bombshell like that, you owe me. Big.

DANTE  
All right. Name it.

VERONICA  
I want you to come with me on Monday.

DANTE  
Where?

VERONICA  
To school. There's a seminar about getting back into a scholastic program after a lapse in enrollment.

DANTE  
Can't we ever have a discussion without that coming up?

VERONICA  
It's important to me, Dante. You have so much potential that just goes to waste in this pit. I wish you'd go back to school.

DANTE  
Jesus, would you stop? You make my head hurt when you talk about this.  
VERONICA stands, letting DANTE'S head hit the floor.

DANTE  
Shit! Why are we getting up?

VERONICA  
Unlike you, I have a class in forty-five minutes.

A handsome young man (WILLAM) is standing at the counter. VERONICA reacts to him.

VERONICA  
Willam!

WILLAM  
Ronnie! How are you? You work here now?

VERONICA  
No, I'm just visiting my man. Dante, this is Willam Black. This is Dante Hicks, my boyfriend.

DANTE  
How are you? Just the soda?

WILLAM  
And a pack of cigarettes. (to VERONICA; paying) Are you still going to Seton Hall?

VERONICA

No, I transferred into Monmouth this year. I was tired of missing him.

WILLAM

Do you still talk to Sylvan?

VERONICA

I just talked to her on Monday. We still hang out on weekends.

WILLAM

That's cool. Well-you two lovebirds take it easy, all right?

VERONICA

I will. Take it easy.

WILLAM

Bye.

(exits)

VERONICA

Bye. That was Snowball.

DANTE

Why do you call him that?

VERONICA

Sylvan made it up. It's a blow job thing.

DANTE

What do you mean?

VERONICA

After he gets a blow job, he likes to have the cum spit back into his mouth while kissing. It's called snowballing.

DANTE

He requested this?

VERONICA

He gets off on it.

DANTE

Sylvan can be talked into anything.

VERONICA

Why do you say that?

DANTE

Like you said-she snowballed him.

VERONICA

Sylvan? No; I snowballed him.

DANTE

Yeah, right.

VERONICA

I'm serious...

DANTE

You sucked that guy's dick?

VERONICA

Yeah. How do you think I know he liked...

DANTE

But...but you said you only had sex with three guys! You never mentioned him!

VERONICA

That's because I never had sex with him!

DANTE

You sucked his dick!

VERONICA

We went out a few times. We didn't have sex, but we fooled around.

DANTE

Oh my God! Why did you tell me you only slept with three guys?

VERONICA

Because I did only sleep with three guys! That doesn't mean I didn't just go with people.

DANTE

Oh my God-I feel so nauseous...

VERONICA

I'm sorry, Dante. I thought you understood.

DANTE

I did understand! I understand that you slept with three different guys, and that's all you said.

VERONICA

Please calm down.

DANTE

How many?

VERONICA

Dante...

DANTE

How many dicks have you sucked?!

VERONICA

Let it go...

DANTE

HOW MANY?

VERONICA

All right! Shut up a second and I'll tell you! Jesus! I didn't freak like this when you told me how many girls you fucked.

DANTE

This is different. This is important. How many?!

DANTE

Well...?

VERONICA

Something like thirty-six.

DANTE

WHAT? SOMETHING LIKE THIRTY-SIX?

VERONICA

Lower your voice!

DANTE

What the hell is that anyway, "something like thirty-six?" Does that include me?

VERONICA

Um. Thirty-seven.

DANTE

I'M THIRTY-SEVEN?

VERONICA

I'm going to class.

DANTE

Thirty-seven?! My girlfriend sucked thirty-seven dicks!

CUSTOMER

In a row?

DANTE

Hey! Where are you going?!

VERONICA

Hey listen, jerk! Until today you never even knew how many guys I'd slept with, because you never even asked. And then you act all nonchalant about fucking twelve different girls. Well, I never had sex with twelve different guys!

DANTE

No, but you sucked enough dick!

VERONICA

Yeah, I went down on a few guys...

DANTE

A few?

VERONICA

...And one of those guys was you! The last one, I might add, which-if you're too stupid to comprehend- means that I've been faithful to you since we met! All the other guys I went with before I met you, so, if you want to have a complex about it, go ahead! But don't look at me like I'm the town whore, because you were plenty busy yourself, before you met me!

DANTE

Well...why did you have to suck their dicks? Why didn't you just sleep with them, like any decent person?!

VERONICA

Because going down it's a big deal! I used to like a guy, we'd make out, and sooner or later I'd go down on him. But I only had sex with the guys I loved.

DANTE

I feel sick.

VERONICA

I love you. Don't feel sick.

DANTE

Every time I kiss you now I'm going to taste thirty-six other guys.

VERONICA

I'm going to school. Maybe later you'll be a bit more rational.

DANTE

Thirty-seven. I just can't...

VERONICA

Goodbye, Dante.

DANTE

Try not to suck any more dicks on your way through the parking lot!