

INT. THE RINKY DINK TAVERN - STAGE - NIGHT

Gil stands in front of a small open-mic comedy crowd. He leans on the mic stand and tries to look pensive.

He delivers a bad bit of stand up. It relies heavily on perverted punchlines and lots of swearing.

I'm not going to write it because it's stand-up and that shit is crazy difficult to write, especially poorly.

Despite the lack of funny, he has a confident presence in front of a crowd. He finishes with a hearty -

GIL

Fuck you very much, goodnight.

- to no applause. He heads for a booth in the corner where he joins Jo-Jo and Delia Jane.

DELIA

Wow. So that wasn't funny. It wasn't even a little funny. The absence of funny is kind of impressive.

He slides in next to Jo-Jo.

GIL

Says the girl who thinks "Love Actually" is the funniest movie ever made.

JO-JO

Yo. Don't act like you don't watch the shit out of that movie at Christmas time.

GIL

(British accent)
Yep. Solid gold shit, maestro.

DELIA

Did you take a class to learn how to be so un-funny?

GIL

Take it easy. I have a feeling left to hurt. I think.

JO-JO

Why didn't you do that shit about your Pop sleeping at the Bike shop?

(MORE)

JO-JO

Yo, he had me in stitches with that shit last night.

DELIA

I'm not saying he's not funny. I'm saying what happened here. Just now. On stage. That wasn't funny.

JO-JO

Or that time you went to J.O in the church bathroom and the priest came in and started dropping a huge deuce in the next stall over.

GIL

Fuck, don't remind me. He thought he was alone so he got chatty with his asshole. "Come on, buddy. I know you can do it. Have a little faith."

Delia laughs. Jo-Jo nudges her.

JO-JO

See. He got some stuff. That Pop shit was a riot. Do that shit.

The energy drains out of Gil.

GIL

Nah. Fuck that guy.

An alarm BLEEPs on Delia's phone. She waves it at Jo-Jo.

DELIA

Ten minute warning. My folks will plotz if I miss my curfew.

She puts her weight on Jo-Jo.

JO-JO

You said ten minutes.

DELIA

I gotta wee.

He gets up and she slides out. He watches her cross the room until she disappears in to the bathroom.

Gil watches the goofy, dazed look on his face.

GIL

You raw dawg. You guys are totally fucking. I can smell that pussy on your dick, bro. High five.

Gil holds his hand up. Jo-Jo shakes his head at it.

GIL

What, I gotta change up how we roll because you got "feelings"? Fuck that. Good for you. I've been waiting for ever for you to cash in the V-card. How is it? Is it weird because she's so little?

JO-JO

Nah. It's cool.

He sips his drink.

GIL

God dammit. You can't go tight lipped on me now, brother. I need all the details. Who cums more, you or her? You eat that box like a maniac? Oh shit. You get down to brown town or what? Pack a little fudge? Kick in the brown door and paint it white?

He stares at Jo-Jo with a big "ain't I a stinker?" look on his face. Jo-Jo shakes his head.

JO-JO

Keep it up, man. See what happens.

Delia comes out of the bathroom. Jo-Jo is on his feet before she gets to the table.

GIL

Aw, c'mon. It's just shits and giggles. You got eight more minutes.

Jo-Jo holds Delia's coat open for her. She slips her arms in the sleeves and turns into it. The move lands on a kiss.

DELIA

We're going?

JO-JO

Yeah.

He gestures his head at Gil. Delia waves.

DELIA

Bye, Gil. You should. I dunno. Try to be funny next time?

GIL

Oh shit. Sick advice. Can you email me that when you get home so I don't forget it?

DELIA

Ha. Ha. Save it for the stage.

Jo-Jo puts a hand in the small of her back and gently leads her away. Gil salutes them with his beer.

GIL

And maybe a picture of yourself dressed up like a mermaid? Topless or shells, I don't care.

They walk out without responding. Gil turns his attention to the Comic on stage - she gets a few laughs.

EXT. THE RINKY DINK TAVERN - NIGHT

A TATTOOED BARTENDER pulls the grate down and locks up. Gil waves as he walks off. She only barely acknowledges him.

He thrusts his hands deep in his pockets and crosses in the middle of the street.

INT. GIL'S MINISCULE BASEMENT STUDIO - NIGHT

Gil lies on a mattress on the floor. The fitted sheet is only attached to one corner.

He watches parts of OLD STANDUP videos on his phone. Literally only ten or twenty seconds of each.

Bill Hicks. Richard Pryor. Todd Barry. Patton Oswalt. Sarah Silverman. Margaret Cho. Maria Bamford.

BLOOP. An alert pops up on his phone -

"This is a friendly reminder from your service provider that you're about to exceed your data limit"

He swipes it away immediately and goes back to his comedy.

INT. THE RINKY DINK TAVERN - BACK SMOKING AREA - NIGHT

Gil sits folded over a beer in a far corner of the indoor-outdoor space. He picks at the label on the bottle.

CASSAVETES and JULIETTE dance to Brit Pop tunes. The dance floor is mostly empty.

Juliette motions Gil over. He waves her off. Cass gestures at him. He shrugs and gets up.

He walks through the thin crowd, past Cass & Juliette, and into the bar. Juliette nudges Cass.

He gives up his Brit Pop dreams and follows Gil.

INT. THE RINKY DINK TAVERN - BAR - NIGHT

Gil slouches on the bar. Cass hops on to a stool.

CASSAVETES
Wuddup, lil homie?

GIL
I dunno. Nothin'.

CASSAVETES
You cranky as fuck.

GIL
I just don't like it when they have a DJ on open mic night. Everyone -

CASSAVETES
- has way more fun than when they don't have a DJ on open mic night?

GIL
I gotta get time at a real fucking club. This place is podunk.

CASSAVETES
So do that shit.

GIL
Nah. I'm not there yet. I can handle being on stage fine. The writing just won't come together.

CASSAVETES
You need to hang out with actual comics. Trial by fire, baby.

GIL
Who wants to hang out with stand-up
comics? Buncha assholes.

Cass gestures at Gil.

CASSAVETES
Case in point.

The Tattooed Bartender pops over.

TATTOOED BARTENDER
You're up next.

Gil swivels his stool around. It makes a CREAK that seems to go on forever. A SKINNY COMIC finishes a set.

A SINGLE DRUNK GIRL sits at a table watching.

CASSAVETES
Lemme go grab Jules.

INT. THE RINKY DINK TAVERN - STAGE - NIGHT

Gil does another round of lousy, perverted jokes. His presence is stiff and awkward this time around.

Cass & Juliette sit at a table, front & center. The SKINNY COMIC and Drunk Girl canoodle at a back booth.

He tries a rapid-fire approach and blasts through some filthy sex jokes. He blows every one of them.

He walks off stage muttering.

EXT. MANNIE'S HOUSE - SIDEWALK - DAY

Gil stands down the street from a house at the crest of a steep hill. He calls Jo-Jo on the phone.

GIL
Yo, my dad at the shop? Cool. I'm going up again on Thursday. You gonna be there? Blow your maybe out your ass, Muchacho. OK, fine. Later.

He glances over his shoulder and approaches the house.

INT. MANNIE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS - DAY

Gil lets himself in to the kitchen through the back door. The place is tidy and well kept.

There's nothing personal about it, though. No pictures on the fridge. No knick-knacks. Just plates and shit.

He opens the fridge and grabs the remains of an 18 pack of cheap beer. CRACK. He opens one and walks in to the -

LIVING ROOM

- which is as well kept as the kitchen save for on area by a recliner. It's surrounded by empty cans.

GIL
Fuckin' slob.

He plops into the recliner and grabs the remote from where he knows it will be - the crack between cushions.

He opens the battery compartment, turns the batteries backwards, and puts it back where he found it.

The chair swivels in a complete circle. Gil chugs the entire rest of his beer during the revolution.

CRACK. He opens another one.

INT. MANNIE'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Gil stands in the doorway. He looks at the tightly made bed. Perfect hospital corners. Perfect pillow puff.

He moves to the bedside stand and roots around. Nothing interests him. He opens the closet.

He looks through Mannie's clothes for cash. Nothing. He slides a whole row of blazers to one side.

A few pieces of women's clothing hangs in the far corner, on the other side of a cross-bar. Isolated.

They're in dry cleaners plastic. Gil checks the tag on the plastic. They were cleaned recently.

GIL
You sad old fucker.

EXT. MANNIE'S HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - DAY

Gil comes out the front door. He holds the beer and a bag full of various other shit. Detergent. Snacks.

He locks up and slips a key under the mat. A car idles in the driveway across the street.

BENDIX leans into a car window. He plants a quick goodbye kiss on ALICE and watches her drive off.

When the car passes his eyes are on Gil. Gil waves his beer.

GIL
Sick nooner, bro.

Bendix pulls his robe closed.

BENDIX
Hey, Gil. Haven't seen you in a while.

GIL
Been too busy banging your mom.

BENDIX
Mom joke. Adorable.

Gil steps off the porch.

GIL
You want a beer?

EXT. BENDIX'S - BACK PORCH - DAY

The two sit at a table, sipping on a beer.

GIL
I don't know, man. I saw some set you did in Houston in 99 on Youtube. Unreal. You were on fire.

BENDIX
That's online? Fuck. Did someone have a VHS recorder in the crowd?

GIL
You tear a heckler a new asshole. For real. It's like watching you bend him over a piano and fuck his brains out.

BENDIX

Hey. Watch it. The only time I do any bending over a piano is when I'm getting my brains fucked out. Wait.

They grin and sip their beers in silence. Gil furrows his brow. He leans his elbows on to the table.

GIL

When did you know you were good?

BENDIX

I never knew I was good. Why do you think I stopped?

GIL

No, but. Like. When did you know you could do a full hour or get a special? When did you know you weren't wasting everyone's time?

BENDIX

I don't know, man. The crowd. If it gets bigger you're worth the two drink minimum, I guess. Or if someone steals your jokes. Getting ripped off is a pretty good indication you're doing something right. Aside from that all you need to figure out is whether you're wasting your own time or not. If you think you are, bail.

He shakes his can. It's empty. He doesn't grab another one. Gil can tell he's about to ask him to split.

GIL

Hey. Wait. I'm going up at this place down on Fig on Thursday. Any chance you might come check it out?

Bendix bursts out laughing.

EXT. GIL'S MINISCULE BASEMENT STUDIO - NIGHT

Jo-Jo sits on an apple box. Gil squats next to him. He holds his phone in front of Jo-Jo's face.

It plays a video of Bendix doing stand-up. Gil watches Jo-Jo's face to make sure he laughs when he's supposed to.

He doesn't. He grins. And chuckles. But no out-louder's.

GIL
Dude, you totally don't get it.

JO-JO
I said he was funny.

Gil puts his phone away and takes a pull off a bottle of vodka. He passes it to Jo-Jo.

GIL
He's fucking genius, bro. I know he fucking likes me. I know it. If I could get him to come see me it...

JO-JO
It what?

GIL
It would be a big deal.

JO-JO
Doesn't he host a radio show these days or some shit?

GIL
A podcast. It's fucking huge. Radio show. What are you, nineteen ninety two? Handle your shit.

Jo-Jo's phone VIBRATES. His whole face smiles as he reads a text from Delia. And keeps smiling as he responds.

Gil flops on his mattress. Jo-Jo is a slow texter.

GIL
You text slower than a pig.

JO-JO
Wuddup now?

GIL
You're so pussy whipped it's not even funny. Your leash is so tight.

JO-JO
Yeah. I like my girlfriend. Crazy.

GIL
You're coming tomorrow, right?

JO-JO
Nah.

GIL
Fuck you mean, no?

JO-JO
Delia wants me to meet her folks.

GIL
I don't give a fuck what that hot
snatch wants. You come every time I
go up. You're my bad luck charm.

Jo-Jo stands and grabs his coat.

GIL
Chill, man.

JO-JO
Nope. I'm out.

He moves for the door. Gil hops up.

GIL
What is it with this broad? She have
the wettest pussy in town? She turn
water in to wine? I don't get it. You
fuckin' bail all the time. You get
all precious about a couple dirty
jokes. What? You gonna get married?

Jo-Jo's hand clenches in to a fist.

GIL
You hearing wedding bells, is that
it? You gonna get a white picket
fence and knock her up so you can
populate the earth with some new,
immortal race of kids?

INT. THE RINKY DINK TAVERN - STAGE - NIGHT

Gil stands at the mic stand. A HUGE BLACK EYE covers a good
portion of the left side of his face.

His head is down. The mic is at his side. The small crowd
stirs and shuffles awkwardly.

He stands there without moving. Five seconds turn in to ten
which turn in to twenty.

He's beating out the clock. Someone yells something dead
clever like "Tell a fuckin' joke" or something.

Gil's fingers loosen on the mic. He keeps his eyes on his shoes. The crowd bustles and whispers.

The sound of the street pours in when the door opens. A couple of people turn around.

Bendix walks in and sets himself up at the bar and scopes out the scene. Gil looks up at him.

His fingers tighten on the mic.

CUT TO BLACK: