

SOUL SUCKER

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MOSTLY DARKNESS

Head Credits Roll to the tune of eerie THEREMIN MUSIC a la "Day the Earth Stood Still."

Green light dances across the face of an OLD WOMAN creeping through the dark.

As we pull back, we see that the light comes from a lava lamp on a studios looking desk. And the Old Woman is a... GRANNY.

Granny creeps over to a window and opens the curtains. Golden light pours in, revealing...

INT. DELANY RESIDENCE - ELLIOT'S BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

MUSIC CUE: YOU'RE NOBODY TILL SOMEBODY LOVES YOU

ELLIOT, her grandson, is just a bump under the covers, though from the look of the room, he's a big nerd.

While most teenage boys would have posters of playboy models, Elliot has a Periodic Table of Elements, a map of the brain, and a Harvard poster.

There's also a picture of his parents who we will neither see nor meet. Elliot lives with his granny.

Granny pulls clothes out of his closet and lays them on the Elliot bump. Some slacks, a button down shirt, tie, dress shoes, and socks. They all say Harvard.

Satisfied, she shuffles into the...

INT. DELANY RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - EARLY MORNING

A sunny place with light catchers dancing in the window. A Harvard acceptance letter on the fridge.

Granny prepares breakfast. Eggs, bacon, pancakes, and orange juice. A real Denny's Grand Slam with a bacon smile.

She sets the table, pours herself some coffee, and just as she lays out a SCOOBY-DOO VITAMIN, Elliot enters in his "Harvard clothes." He's a real Granny's boy.

He sits and smiles as Granny ties on a... Harvard bib.

INT./EXT. SCHOOL BUS - DAY

Elliot plops down in the front seat with a briefcase and "Harvard lunch pail." The biggest nerd, but no one bothers him. He's going places and everyone knows it.

He opens the window and waves to Granny.

OUTSIDE

Granny stands in the front yard waving back. She keeps on waving as the bus goes over the hill and far away.

INT./EXT. SCHOOL BUS - DAY

The school bus winds through the sweet green Pennsylvania countryside. Past farms and free roaming cows.

It stops at a TRAILER PARK where a train of TRAILER TRASH get on board.

Among them is DAN. Though in thrift store duds, he's the coolest kid you'll ever meet. Even his farts are cool. Too bad nobody knows it but him.

A ROAR OF APPLAUSE goes up as he gets on board. Some FOOTBALL PLAYERS in the back pound their seats.

They JEER at him.

FOOTBALL PLAYERS
Dan, Dan, the Food Stamp Man!

Dan waves nonchalantly and sits down by Elliot.

ELLIOT
I wish they'd stop doing that.

DAN
Naw. I should thank them. It's my new moniker.

He hands Elliot a Demo CD labelled "The Food Stamp Man" in sharpie. Elliot shakes his head.

Then the bus stops at a RAMBLING FARM, corn fields go on for miles, horses out to pasture, and a rustic farm house.

HOPE boards, smoking a clove. She's a free spirit, wears enormous Jenko jeans, doesn't conform and doesn't care. Her hair has been dyed like the colors of a sunset (It looks good on her).

Dan waves. She smiles back.

EXT. LAUREL JUNIOR/SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

The bus pulls up to a very small public school, probably under 600 kids in all. A couple of TRACTORS are parked in the lot in lieu of cars.

Everyone gets off the bus.

Elliot and Dan follow the crowd inside.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

Elliot and Dan march down the hall. Girls smile and nod at Elliot. Teachers say "hi." Geek or not, he's cool, confident and streamlined for success.

STUDENTS/TEACHERS

(ad-lib)

Congratulations, Elliot. / Looking good today, Elliot. / We love you, Elliot.

Everyone ignores Dan, a couple people ram into him. He tries to keep pace with Elliot, who basks in his own personal glory.

The first bell RINGS.

ELLIOT

Oh shoot!

DAN

Dude, chill. What are they going to do, suspend you from graduating?

ELLIOT

True. They have nothing on me.

DAN

They've got nothing.

ELLIOT

I'm going to Harvard. Getting out of this small town. Living the dream.

DAN

OK, Martin Luther King.

ELLIOT
What? It's true.

DAN
I know... Guess I'm jealous.

ELLIOT
Shucks. You'll be a rock star with cool clothes and hot chicks in no time.

DAN
Speaking of hot chicks.

They pass Hope at her locker.

ELLIOT
You should go talk to her.

DAN
Yeah.

ELLIOT
Now.

Dan nods, takes a breath, and goes after

HOPE

Who's now heading down the hall.

DAN
Uhm. Hope?

HOPE
Hey, Dan.

DAN
I made something for you.

He hands her his DEMO CD.

DAN (CONT'D)
Listen to Track 10. It's called,
"You're a Ten."

Before she can respond, he hurries away. Hope looks down at the CD, smiles, and puts it in an enormous pocket.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - ELLIOT'S LOCKER - DAY

Elliot approaches his locker as the second bell RINGS.

A PRETTY YOUNG TEACHER pokes her head out of her room and looks at him.

ELLIOT
Be there in a minute.

TEACHER
I know you will.

She smiles and keeps looking at him.

ELLIOT
What?

TEACHER
Oh, nothing. We're just all so proud of you. Getting accepted to Harvard is a big deal.

ELLIOT
I know. In some ways, I can't believe it's really happening.

TEACHER
You earned it.

She winks and is gone.

The hall is quiet. Almost too quiet. The fluorescent lights gutter green above his head.

Alone, Elliot turns back to his locker. He deftly puts in the combination. Then steps back.

BAM! A blond cheerleader bounces out and into Elliot's waiting arms. This is CHELSEA, his girlfriend.

He spins her around and kisses her.

ELLIOT
I love it when you do that!

CHELSEA
I love doing it!

ELLIOT
I love you!

He goes to kiss her but...

CHELSEA
Congratulations!

ELLIOT
Of course.

He tries again but...

CHELSEA
Did you get a scholarship yet?

ELLIOT
Well, no--

CHELSEA
Oh, honey. Don't worry.

ELLIOT
I'm not. And neither should you.

She smiles.

This time he kisses her passionately but...

GRANNY (O.S.)
Ahem.

They turn. Granny's standing in the hall watching.

GRANNY (CONT'D)
You forgot to take your Scooby-Doo.

She holds out his Scooby-Doo vitamin and smiles.

INT. TRAILER - DAN'S BEDROOM - AFTER SCHOOL

Elliot and Dan rock out to a FUNKY BASS BEAT. The walls are paper thin. The whole place vibrates.

Elliot sits at his old laptop creating cool psychedelic visuals on the fly to Dan's music.

Dan jumps around, rapping.

DAN
(rapping)
*They call me Dan, the Food Stamp
Man. Rapping here from Food Stamp
Land. Cash card, credit card,
debit card, piss poor, thrift
store, wanting more but broke. My
mom lost her leg and can't afford a
peg. Sometimes it makes me think
my whole life is just a joke. Now
she's a big gimp with a limp that
has to beg.*

(MORE)

DAN (CONT'D)

*So she sits at home alone, yapping
on the phone. Welfare health care,
canned soup, I don't care. And why
don't I care? Cause I'm--*

ELLIOT AND DAN

Dan Dan! The Food Stamp Man! Dan
Dan! The Food Stamp Man!

DAN

Yeah!

They collapse, exhausted. Elliot claps. Dan bows.

DAN (CONT'D)

Thank you! Thank you!

Elliot closes his laptop, nods to himself.

ELLIOT

The music works well--

DAN

Like hell!

ELLIOT

But I still think we need to tweak
the lyrics.

DAN

Tweak the lyrics? You shittin' me?
Those lyrics are solid gold. From
the heart.

ELLIOT

Yeah, but--

DAN

Trust me, dude. I know.

Elliot shrugs.

ELLIOT

You're the musician.

As Elliot packs away his laptop, Dan gazes off dreamily.

DAN

I gave her Track 10.

ELLIOT

Yeah?

DAN

As soon as she hears it, she won't be able to resist. I'll be like "Mr. Magneto" and she'll be some lonely piece of metal.

ELLIOT

If that's what you want... She's kind of flaky.

DAN

Naw, she's like... my Harvard. Well, that and rap.

Elliot nods.

DAN (CONT'D)

Hey! Want to see that new dance move? Stand back.

Dan switches back on the MUSIC and dives into a HEAD SPIN. He only does it for a beat before he crashes into the wall, putting a hole through it.

DAN'S MOM (O.S.)

What the fuck?

DAN'S MOM, with a peg leg, pushes her way in. A Bud Lite in one hand and cigarette in the other, she BURPS big time.

She sees Dan sprawled on the floor.

DAN'S MOM (CONT'D)

What did I say?

DAN

No head spins in the house?

DAN'S MOM

I should say no music too! How would you like that? If you want to be an electrician, you can't spend all your time spinning on your head... And putting holes in the wall.

DAN

Sorry, Ma.
(to Elliot)
Let's go outside.

BEEP.

Elliot gets a TEXT MESSAGE from Granny: "Home soon?"

Dan makes a face.

DAN (CONT'D)

Granny?

Elliot nods.

ELLIOT

Granny. You know how she is about eating dinner together.

DAN

Yeah. Pain in the ass. What's she gonna do when you go to Harvard?

ELLIOT

I think she's used to the idea by now... See you in school.

(to Dan's Mom)

Bye, Mrs. Hobble.

Elliot steps out.

Dan is still on the floor. He looks up at his mom.

DAN

So what did you make us for dinner?

She bends down and BURPS in his face.

DAN'S MOM

Enjoy.

INT. DELANY RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

BEEP BEEP BEEP. Smoke alarm. The kitchen is filled with smoke. Granny rushes around, coughing, waving her hands.

Elliot opens the window.

INT. DELANY RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - A LITTLE LATER

Elliot and Granny sit at the table. In between them is a cinder black apple pie.

Elliot picks at the pie with his fork. Hard as a rock.

Granny looks like she's about to cry.

GRANNY

They say burning food is the first step to going senile...

ELLIOT

It is?

GRANNY

What if I'm losing my mind?

ELLIOT

Granny...

GRANNY

But, Elliot, I can't go to a home.
Please don't put me in a home. You
won't put me in a home? Will you?

She looks at him pathetically.

ELLIOT

Granny, the last thing I would do
is put you in a home. Where did
you even get the idea?

GRANNY

I just worry, you know. Used to be
as sharp as a tack.

ELLIOT

You still are. You take care of
me.

She smiles.

GRANNY

You take care of me too, Elliot...

(beat)

Now that that's settled, I have
something to show you. You know
how you weren't sure about the
dorms? Problem solved!

She pulls out some brochures. They're for houses and
apartments next to Harvard.

GRANNY (CONT'D)

We can live together!

ELLIOT

Wait. What?

GRANNY

You and me! Just like it is now
only at Harvard! What do you say?