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# Blue in the Face

By Paul Auster

Hey, hey, hey  
Who caused this child  
to walk on her own  
Hey, hey, hey, hey  
Who leads her down  
this treacherous road  
Hey, hey, hey, hey  
She's dancing to  
a song we can't hear  
Hey, hey, hey, hey  
I think one of the reasons  
I live in New York is 'cause..  
I know my way  
around New York.  
I don't know  
my way around Paris.  
I, uh...  
don't know  
my way around Denver.  
I don't know  
my way around Maui.  
I don't know my way  
around Toronto, etcetera.  
So, it's almost by default.  
I don't know very many people  
who live in New York...  
who don't also say,  
"But I'm leaving."  
And I've been thinking  
of leaving...  
for, uh, 35 years now.  
I'm almost ready.  
Last summer there  
was a stretch of a couple of weeks...  
where everywhere I turned  
everyone seemed to be going nuts.  
I mean, it's crazy enough  
living in Brooklyn in the first place.  
But, so many weird little things  
kept popping up at once.  
They all kinda got scrambled  
together in my head.  
I doubt that any of it  
makes sense anymore...

but... this is how I remember it.

- You got it?

- I got it.

Remember, okay?

Saturday the sixteenth.

- Saturday the sixteenth?

- Yes.

- Saturday the sixteenth?

- Saturday the sixteenth.

It has to be that night.

It's got to be because it's the only night...

that Ramon and his band

are playing in Brooklyn. Okay?

Auggie, he's my brother.

Trust me, okay?

- Don't worry, sweetheart. It's a date.

- Trust me.

Thank you. Listen. Listen.

You're going to be so special.

Just remember the steps

I teach you. Okay?

And you're going to be

like Fred "Fucking" Astaire.

- Okay, Ginger. Whatever you say.

- Hey! Thief!

He took my bag! Hey!

He got your purse.

- Thank you very much, sir.

- You okay?

- I really appreciate that. Yeah. Thank you.

- All right. Good.

- That was great.

- All right.

Let's go call the cops,

have this little kid arrested.

- Come on.

- Wait a second.

We'll call from inside the store.

You're gonna

have him arrested?

Yeah.

- No. No. No! Don't!

- How old are you?

I see it in your eyes.

Me? I'm only... 12.

- Come on, he's...

- Is that what you're gonna give me now, lady?

No. He's scared

to death. Come on.

I'm scared to death of him.

- You caught him in about five seconds flat.

- I'm only 12 years old...

and I only shoot people

who can't catch me, who are too old...

- Come on. Come on.

- Lady. Lady!

Mister, come on. I thank you for getting  
it back, but let him go. He's too little.

- You're not gonna press charges against him?

- No.

- You're not gonna press charges against him?

- No. Look at him.

- Look at him? What about him?

- He's a baby. He looks like my little brother.

Sweetheart, babies are shooting people  
in New York today.

- Do you see a gun on him? Come on.

- Do you read the papers?

- You got a gun on you?

- You're kidding me. Let him go, all right?

- Bye, bye. That's it.

- This is a joke already. Let him go.

- Stop it. Leave him alone, please!

- That's enough.

- Let's call the cops.

- Just let him go. All right?

I don't care. I don't want to  
press charges. Thank you.

I do appreciate getting my purse back,  
but please let him go.

- He's gonna be good. Look at him.

- Uh-huh.

You're not gonna do  
anything anymore.

- Here, it's yours. It's yours.

- You're looking for trouble.

- You're looking for trouble.

- Go! Go!

- What are you doing?  
- Why'd you do that?  
You shit! Look at the poor girl.  
Why you do that, you fuck?  
Why you stand there?  
Do something! You think it's funny.  
- It's not funny. I'm not laughing.  
- How dare you do that!  
How dare you take my thing  
and give it away like that.  
- Do you know what is in there?  
- Lady...  
- Shut up!  
- Lady?  
- What are you doing? Are you some kind of vigilante?  
- If that bag is important to you...  
then hang onto it.  
- I put my life at risk to catch that kid.  
- Thank you, but I have a right...  
- to forgive somebody and not be punished for it.  
- No. You've got a respon...  
- Excuse me, sweetheart. Give me a minute.  
- Don't talk to me like that, Auggie.  
- You've got a responsibility to teach that kid...  
- Don't stick that in my face!  
- You have no right.  
- Oh, lady.  
- Lady! Lady! What is this?  
- You've got a responsibility to teach this kid right from wrong.  
You just taught him right from wrong?  
That was right from wrong?  
- You just rewarded him!  
- You know what you taught him?  
- I rewarded him? Mama!  
- You gave it back to him.  
- Oh, God! Please!  
- Come on, stop it!  
- I rewarded him?  
- You just gave it back. What a lesson was that?  
- It was encouragement. Mine was a lesson of clemency.  
- Clemency? Lady!  
- I showed him a little bit of kindness.  
- This is New York!  
I'm scared in my own apartment.

I'm, I'm... You know.  
I'm scared 24 hours a day,  
but not necessarily in New York.  
I actually feel  
pretty comfortable in New York.  
I get scared  
like in Sweden.  
You know, it's kind of empty.  
They're all drunk.  
Everything works.  
If you, you know... If you stop at a stop  
light and don't turn your engine off...  
people come over  
and talk to you about it.  
You open the medicine cabinet  
and there'll be a poster saying...  
"In case of suicide, call..."  
You turn on the TV,  
there's an ear operation.  
These things scare me.  
New York, no.  
There are 2.3 million people  
living in Brooklyn.  
There are 90 different  
ethnic groups...  
32,000 businesses...  
and 1,500 churches, synagogues  
and mosques in Brooklyn.  
There were 30,973 robberies...  
14,596 felonious assaults...  
and 720 murders  
committed in Brooklyn last year.  
No problem, Vin.  
Everything's under control.  
- I could run this store in my sleep.  
- I know.  
How long you been  
workin' for me, Auggie?  
I don't know. Thirteen, fourteen years.  
Something like that.  
Kinda crazy, don't you think?  
I mean, uh...  
a smart guy like you, what do you want  
to hold onto a dead-end job like this for?

I don't know.  
Maybe because  
I love you so much, boss.  
I love you too.  
The Brooklynites  
The Brooklynites, yo  
Shakes you for the truth  
The three, the four, the five  
The A, 'the "C, 'the"E'  
The "B-D-F'  
The "N, 'the"R'  
The Queens bound "G'  
Won't you please stand clear  
of the closin'doors  
Won't you please  
stand clear of...  
The Brooklyn attitude,  
as far as I'm concerned, is first...  
knowing what you're doing,  
being right...  
and following through and never stop  
following through on what you believe in.  
And, uh, if  
you have to defend it...  
physically, verbally, spiritually,  
whatever way you have to defend it, is...  
Brooklyn people are always ready to pay  
the price for what they believe in.  
And, um, it's being  
up front and following through...  
and not taking  
any crap from anybody.  
Uh, a pack of Kools, please.  
- What's she doing?  
- I heard you, Dennis.  
- Huh?  
- I heard you, Dennis. This is a public place.  
Yeah, it's a public place.  
Whatever.  
- How you doin'?'  
- How you doin', Dennis?  
Oh, I'm good.  
I'm always good.  
I'm glad to see

your fingers aren't broken.

Wha... What the...

What's that supposed to mean?

If your fingers were broken, you'd have an excuse for not callin' Mary last night.

She sat by the phone all night.

She thought somethin' happened.

"Oh, maybe Dennis...

Maybe something happened." Fool!

If you tell her you're gonna meet her, you come or at least call.

- Wha...

- Don't act like you don't know what I'm talking about.

Wait, wait, wait, wait.

What are you comin' in here tellin' me...

- I was hopin' I'd bump into you, to be honest.

- No, let me fin...

What are you comin' in here, tellin' me what to do with my girlfriend?

- Your girlfriend?

- I think that...

If you cared an ounce about Mary, you would not let her sit there all night waiting for you.

Mary and I have an understanding.

See, I work for a living.

- She didn't act like she understood anything last night.

- I don't know what you do.

I know what you do. You spend ten hours a day standing around a diner, making 25...

- I work for a living. I have a schedule, I have people...

- A schedule?

The Knicks game's at 8:00. That means at

**7:**

- That's a schedule?

- It's a schedule. It's a job.

- It's where I have to be. It's something she understands.

- And what is this?

What are you doin' even like deciding wh-what she needs to think, what l...

Wh-What are you gettin'

in my shit for?

I don't give a shit

what you do with your life.



- Do what you like. But leave my sister...  
- Then shut up about it.  
- In one piece.  
- Then shut up about it! Why you come in here...  
- These... This place... Don't touch me.  
- I don't like to see my sister...  
How 'bout you don't touch me at all, okay?  
Keep your greasy diner fuckin' fingers off me.  
- What?  
- You know, I had...  
- Where do you come off?  
- I spent a year listening to Phil, my good friend...  
You know Phil. I spent a fuckin' year  
listening to him bitch about you.  
A year! And now you're gonna tell me  
how to run my relationship?  
- You're gonna tell me what I should do to my girlfriend, or shouldn't do?  
- I'm asking...  
I believe you come... Y-Y-You... Phil left you.  
I think that was the case, right?  
- A-Am I mistaken about that?  
- I don't think that was the sequence of events.  
I think he left... Well, no.  
What was, then? What, you left him?  
No, I don't think so.  
I don't think so! No. He left you.  
- You know why he left her? Frigid. Frigid.  
- I'm glad you're an ex...  
That's why. Frigid.  
Nothin'. Nothin'! Nothin'! Nothin'!  
- Fuck you!  
- Ice bitch. Ice bitch.  
Fuck you, you bastard!  
I taught him handball, and he's my best  
opponent because the score's always tied.  
We don't fight at home  
because we fight on the court.  
I'm talkin' about drop-dead fights.  
I won't give.  
I'll die. I'll fall down on that court  
before I give him a point.  
And then he tries  
to harass me on, you know.  
He said, "Oh! Now," he said,

"I'm gonna get serious."

And every time he does that,

I kick his butt.

What the fuck you come in here

doin' this shit for?

These are my friends. You're telling

him how to run his business!

These are my friends. What the hell

you comin' in here tellin' my friends...

- Dennis, come on.

- No! Fuck you. Fuck you!

- All right, I'll just go out.

- Just forget about it.

- What we... What were you yelling about?

- Is that what this is about?

- You guys sit around here and talk all day this trash?

- Nah. No.

I'm sorry. I started it.

Believe me, I know I started it.

- Nobody talks about you.

- Hmm.

Wh-What were you

yelling about?

- Things we shouldn't've been yelling about.

- You want a hug?

- Yeah.

- Yeah?

Get right in there, Jimmy.

- Do you feel better?

- Yeah, a lot better.

- You're not rigid anymore?

- No, no. Not rigid.

I get rigid sometimes.

Yeah.

Like the Indian over there.

- Yeah?

- Yeah. I, I stand over there, get rigid.

Auggie says that, uh...

He says that first of all, you...

He says first of all,

you like somebody.

And, um, and then

you kiss 'em.

Then after you kiss 'em,

uh, you do the dirty.

Yeah. Yeah, doin' the dirty.

Yeah. He says,

and after that, uh...

then you find out if, uh,

you can fall in love with 'em.

And if you fall in love with 'em,

you marry somebody else.

Hey. Hey!

- Hey, Dot.

- Hi.

- How are you, kid?

- Well, I'm just great. I'm just great.

Can I have gum?

Everything's real fuckin' great.

What brings you

to sunny Brooklyn?

I just drove in. I wanted to talk to ya,

if I can talk to ya.

Can I talk to ya?

Do you have a minute?

- You caught me at a bad time. I'm taking inventory.

- Ooh, a minute.

A minute.

I'm so fucking pissed off!

Goddamn it, I'm so fucking

pissed off at Vinny. I just...

I just wanted to talk to you about it.

I don't know why I want to talk to you about it.

But you know him.

I don't know.

- I don't know him.

- What happened?

He just drives me out of my

fuckin' mind. You know what I mean?

He promised me that he was gonna take me to

Las Vegas. You heard about that and everything.

Then at the last minute

of course, another time, he pulls out.

And he says, "We're gonna postpone it."

Or cancel it. Whatever the fuck he said.

- But I'm not goin'. He's not goin' with me, anyway.

- Yeah?

And I'm mad because

I was looking forward to it.  
I really wanted to go.  
I've been wanting to go my whole life.  
But instead of being able to go there,  
what did I do? I sat there washing dishes...  
making tuna fish casserole for 15 years,  
and I don't get to go to Las Vegas.  
And I'm pissed,  
and I can't get on this chair!  
Dot, baby, he must've had  
a good reason for canceling.  
He doesn't have a good reason.  
There is no good reason.  
There's a million reasons,  
but none of them are good.  
I need to have some excitement.  
I wanted to go...  
you know, where there's things  
happening at night...

**after 6:**

- How about your bed?  
- Ha.  
- Like I said, that's why  
I want to go to Las Vegas.  
- Come on!  
- Come on? You don't know.  
- So the guy, one time he broke a promise.  
- It isn't one time!  
It's every time.  
It's 15 years' worth of times.  
It's not one time. If it was one time,  
do you think I'd be this upset?  
If it was one time, I'd be like,  
"Oh, that's okay. That's okay, Vinny."  
But it's always.  
We never do anything fun!  
I'm a fun girl.  
- Can I really talk to you? I mean, really talk to you?  
- Of course, Dot.  
- Well, he's a... I don't know.  
- Whoa. Whoa.  
- Hey, Violet. How are you?  
- Hi, Dot.

- Hi.  
- You know Dot. Dot, Violet.  
- Yeah. Hi, Violet.  
- Hi, Dot.  
- What's doin', baby?  
- Well, I come... You make it clearer, okay?  
I come to tell you  
that Saturday night...  
you and me, chicky-chicky,  
dancey-dancey, remember, okay?  
You're goin' dancin', huh?  
Well, don't cancel.  
- I'll see you later.  
- Okay, listen. Listen, just...  
- Don't cancel, though. Don't let him cancel.  
- We don't cancel.  
- He don't cancel with me.  
- Vinny doesn't cancel either. Vinny's not...  
Don't gimme your shit. I'll see you later.  
- All right. Be good.  
- Yeah.  
- What are you doin', gorgeous?  
- How are you?  
Nice to see you, baby.  
So, you and I go  
dancey-dancey, okay?  
- Saturday night.  
- Saturday night?  
Yeah.  
Not this Saturday night.  
You mean the Saturday night after.  
Bullshit, Auggie. Bullshit!  
- Oh! What are you doin'?  
- What are you doing to me?  
Don't do that.  
He's gotta sweep the floor.  
Auggie, you say Saturday night. Don't bullshit  
me. What kind of number you tryin' to pull?  
You say the sixteenth.  
We say the sixteenth, okay?  
I planned the whole night.  
Jesus! Is there something in the air?  
What's the matter with you?  
Dotty's upset.

You're upset. About what?

- What's in your ear?

- That's my music.

Listen, sweetheart.

Saturday night, um...

Saturday night

I promised Tommy...

I'd clean out

his brother's apartment with him.

His brother, um,

his brother Chuck.

We were... in the Navy

together, and he died.

- You understand?

- I don't know what you're talking about, okay?

Chuck. Chuck.

Who the fuck is Chuck?

No, who the fuck was Chuck?

Chuck is dead.

Chuck's the guy

I was in the Navy with and he died.

You... are two-timing me,

ain't you, baby? Come here.

- Two-timing you?

- Come here. Yes.

- You're too beautiful to two-time.

- Who is it? Dot? Sally?

Oh, I know. I know.

It's the little waitress

with the fat culo, isn't it?

You give me more credit

than I deserve, doll.

No, no. I would never two-time you.

What's the matter with you?

I love you. Come on, stop. Stop.

You lied to me, Augusto.

And people who lie...

don't deserve no love.

You mess with Violeta.

And Violeta fight back.

I rip your guts out, Auggie...

like a tiger.

Like a fucking tiger...

with teeth...

as sharp as the razor blades.  
Don't fuck with me.  
L- Is a Brooklyn girl  
a good fighter?  
Of course. 'Cause we don't  
scratch and pull hair.  
We fight like guys, fist to fist.  
You know what I'm sayin'?  
And if we can't beat  
the other girl, we'll use...  
a garbage can or a bottle  
or anything.  
Do I have a boyfriend?  
Yeah.  
He's a roughneck, though.  
But he's not like me. He don't like  
lookin' at stuff and chillin' out.  
He wanna go smoke weed  
and drink forties all day and...  
That's all he does. I mean, I think  
he smokes a pound of weed a day.  
He's my boyfriend, but I'm gonna change him  
because he got too much Brooklyn in him.  
Pack of Luckys?  
You know what? No.  
I'll tell you what.  
I've got one cigarette left...  
and I decided I was  
gonna come here, I'm gonna quit.  
But I wanted  
to smoke this with you.  
So I thought, you know,  
"Last cigarette, smoke it with Auggie."  
- In fact... Hey, Jimmy.  
- You're kidding me? I'm touched.  
Would you take a picture of me  
and Auggie with my last cigarette?  
- You just push this.  
- Yeah.  
- This is it, man.  
- All right.  
- Where do you want me to stand?  
- I don't know.  
- Think you could come over here?

- All right.  
- Yeah. You just push this.  
- This one?  
No, this one.  
- All right?  
- Yeah.  
- Bob, you know...  
- The last cigarette... with Auggie.  
I'm touched you would want  
to smoke your last cigarette with me.  
Twelve years I come in here. Luckys.  
Wait, Jimmy. Your finger's in front.  
All right.  
- All right. Thanks, man.  
- Good. You got it, Jimmy.  
Good. Okay. You got it.  
Thanks. So this is it.  
One more cigarette.  
I remember  
my first cigarette, man.  
These friends of mine, they stole cigarettes  
from this store, Beeler's Pharmacy.  
I still remember. It was like a suburb  
of Akron, Ohio where I grew up.  
So we walked home along  
the railroad tracks. Opened the pack.  
I still remember.  
It was like a pack of Newports.  
We smelled 'em first. You know,  
that menthol. It smelled like candy.  
Then we lit 'em up.  
We started inhaling, coughing.  
- A couple minutes later,  
we're sick, nauseous, dizzy.  
- But we felt so cool. You know?  
- Yeah.  
Real bad-ass  
ten-year-old kids smokin'.  
But sex and cigarettes, man,  
you gotta admit.  
- That's one thing I'm really gonna miss, having a cigarette.  
- Sex?  
- Well...  
- You giving up sex also because you can't smoke afterwards?



Maybe, you know, if...

1- I've never had a girlfriend who didn't smoke.

Maybe that means if I quit,

I'll never have sex again. I don't know.

But having a cigarette

after sex, that's like...

A cigarette never tasted like that, you know?

Share a cigarette with your lover.

- That's bliss.

- That I'm gonna miss.

Also with coffee.

Coffee and cigarettes, you know?

That's like

breakfast of champions.

- Hey, my man. Hey.

- What's happenin'?

Want some coffee?

Don't get lint

on your outfit.

Lint? No, I hate lint.

Lint ain't no good for me.

- Let me ask you somethin'.

- What do you want to ask me?

I got a job interview

at 209-1/2...

See, man. Is there any nurses

livin' in the neighborhood?

Nurses? There's a hospital

five blocks up on the left-hand side.

I just came out

of the hospital.

You need to go back

to the hospital, get that redressed.

- No. It just got dressed.

- It don't look like it just got dressed.

- What day is this?

- Today? It's Wednesday.

- Wednesday.

- What are you lookin' for?

- I'm lookin' for 209-1/2...

- This is 211. 209's across the street.

- Half is in between. Right in that crack.

- You're wrong.

This is 209. 209 ain't across the street.

208 is across the street.  
209's here, 211 's here. So 209-1/2  
is in between these two buildings.  
I don't need no information from you.  
You don't know nothin'.  
This is Brooklyn. You don't go by  
numbers. What are you lookin' for?  
I'm lookin' for \$4.95  
to get a Belgian waffle.  
Ah! You're lookin'  
for \$4.95.  
- Is that a work of art or what?  
- That's beautiful.  
They don't make those anymore.  
Obsolete.  
You can't get that.  
You better go home to mama and get that.  
It looks pretty good actually.  
Brooklyn has everything.  
It has little, little, uh, rivers runnin'  
through it. People don't know it.  
It has waterfalls in it,  
and they don't know where it's at.  
And, uh, it's just fantastic.  
It's a big, beautiful borough.  
It has everything.  
Flatlands, highlands,  
lowlands, wooded land.  
And even swamps.  
When you look at the other boroughs  
and compare them all...  
Brooklyn is larger and is the hippest  
of all of the boroughs.  
I'll meet you there, then.  
Check it out. I got the clocks,  
the watches. I don't deal in Swatches.  
Seiko, Casio, Timex, Rolex.  
What do you need when you have sex?  
The latex. Don't forget. How you doin', man?  
- I got it all.  
- I'll take the whole batch.  
- You like my sales pitch?  
- Not bad, man.  
- What you sellin', my man?

- I got a good deal for you today.  
- For you, Mr. Brooklyn Cigar Company...  
- What've you got?  
- I got \$20 and \$25 prices.  
- Twenty and \$25?  
I've got the African price, I've got  
the European price. Which one you want?  
- African price or European price. Show me something nice.  
- What does that mean?  
Take a look. I'll get to  
what that means in a minute.  
I'm dealing  
with the African first.  
Black people first, always.  
- Rolex.  
- Rolex, baby. It's the real deal lizard skin.  
- Where'd you get this?  
- Don't you worry yourself about that, baby.  
I got the goods.  
You ain't got to worry about that.  
You're gonna sell this Rolex  
for 20, 25, 30, 40, 50? What is it?  
- African price... \$25.  
- What does that mean, African price?  
I'm not from Africa.  
There are 872,702  
African Americans.  
412,906 Jewish people.  
462,411 Hispanic people  
livin' in Brooklyn.  
There ain't one black person  
even hangin' around this neighborhood.  
- What're you doing here, man?  
- My name is Tommy Fennili. That's my name.  
Tommy Fennili.  
Oh, yo! Tommy Fennili.  
Are you from Brooklyn or somethin'?  
This guy! Please, guys!  
Why you hangin' out in this neighborhood?  
Crown Heights, Howard Beach.  
- We're in Brooklyn, man. Brooklyn!  
- This is my neighborhood.  
- West Side, do or die. That's where I'm from.  
- This is my neighborhood.

- Your neighborhood. How'd you get the name Fennili?  
- I'm from Italy.  
- From Italy?  
- My father's Italian, my mother's black.  
You ain't even... What's that?  
Mulatto? You ain't no mulatto.  
- You're as black as me, man.  
- Hey, hey. Come on.  
Wait. How do you know  
what I am?  
- I'll tell you this, black man.  
- You're assuming.  
- I'll tell you this, black man. I'll tell you this, my brother.  
- No. Wait a minute.  
My brother Fennili,  
I'll tell you this.  
- Calm down. Get real with me. Talk to me.  
- Excuse me.  
- I'm gonna take a seat over here.  
Hold up. Hold up. Hold up.  
- He's not gonna buy one.  
- Chill, chill, chill. Excuse me, sir.  
Timex, Rolex,  
Casio, Seiko.  
Whatever you want,  
I got it for yo.  
- Yo. Come on, man. I'm tryin' to sell these.  
- Hey, Vinny.  
I'm trying to sell these  
watches. The problem is...  
I'm trying to sell these  
watches 'cause I'm really a rapper.  
That's my thing. I rap. Y'all like rap  
music? You probably don't like it.  
- You're a rapper?  
- You probably ain't into rap music either.  
I'm trying to get some equipment.  
You wanna buy a watch?  
- My heart is heavy with song.  
- What?  
- I got a feeling called a blue-ue lonesome  
- Oh, God.  
- Since my baby said good-bye  
- Oh, no.

And Lord, I don't know

what I'd do-o-o

- All I do is sit and sigh-igh - Hold on.

What's up with... What're you, Puerto Ricans?

You black. Playin' Billy Ray Cyrus.

What's up with this neighborhood?

- Billy Ray who?

- Y'all wanna be white. That's the problem.

- Playin' that... Whatever that is.

- What do you want to hear?

- This guy is good.

- Where're you from?

- Bed-Stuy.

- He doesn't know where he's from.

I was from Africa. But in case you didn't remember, they stole us from Africa.

- Black man Fennili.

- I got a Bed-Stuy too.

I stole you from Africa?

Can I give you back?

I couldn't have been  
unhappier...

in the eight years I spent  
growing up in Brooklyn.

But I say that, uh...

not having realized what it would  
then be like being on Long Island...

which was infinitely worse.

And if there was probably  
a childhood trauma that I had...

other than

the Dodgers leaving Brooklyn...

which if you think about it is a reason  
why some of us are imbued with a cynicism...

that we never recovered from,

obviously you're not a Mets fan...

and you can't possibly be  
a Yankee fan.

So baseball's eliminated  
from your life...

because of being born  
in Brooklyn.

- You cared about the Dodgers as a kid?

- Very much.

I don't know why.  
I don't like baseball.  
Of course, maybe I don't like baseball  
because the Dodgers aren't here anymore.  
These days if you said the Dodgers,  
no one knows what you're talking about.  
They think you're talking about Los Angeles.  
And I don't mean the Los Angeles Dodgers.  
But, uh, Long Island was terrible.  
Absolutely terrible.

I mean, at least Brooklyn  
you could walk around.

- I'm from Brooklyn, man.
- Just relax.
- You got some Brooklyn tune?
- Yeah.

Arriba.! Arriba.!

I told you, right? Hey!

- Here you go.
- Yeah, man.

Smoke Sen-Sen

Smoke, smoke

- Let me hold it a second.
- Oh, you play?
- Yeah, man.
- Sells watches. Plays.

That's right. Gotta hustle.

Told you.

Yee-hah!

Check it, check it Check it out

Come buy my watches

I got the clock

I got the time I got the rhyme

Black man, black man

You're outta your mind

Sittin' over here

on your black behind

Sittin' in the chair

White man over there

Stares at me

without a care

I know you don't care but

it's like... Oh, yo. Whatever, man.

My favorite thing

about Brooklyn is...  
that every nationality  
in the world is in Brooklyn.  
The least favorite thing is that  
all of these nationalities...  
we have not  
been able to get along.  
There are 3,268,121...  
potholes in Brooklyn.  
You know, I think a lot of people start  
smokin' because it's glamorized...  
like Hollywood  
and the movies, you know?  
You see Marlon Brando,  
you see James Dean smokin' a cigarette.  
- Marlene Dietrich.  
- That's how I started smoking. I started smokin' 'cause...  
when I was a boy, a teenager, I saw this  
great movie called A Walk in the Sun.  
- You ever see it?  
- No.  
Richard Conte, um...  
Oh. Who was the other guy?  
I forget his name. Anyway...  
they're on the campaign in Europe,  
it's World War II and they're in the army.  
Richard Conte's a machine gunner and he has  
his assistant who carries bullets and all that.  
Or he carries the machine gun. As they're  
walkin' down the road on to the next battle...  
Richard Conte would be philosophizing  
about life and he'd go, "Butt."  
He never had any cigarettes, and his partner  
would always go... And give him a cigarette.  
And somehow, the way Richard Conte  
would be walkin' in the sun...  
carryin' a machine gun  
and go, "Butt,"  
it made me want to smoke.  
- I used to do it to my friends in the pool room.  
- Yeah?  
I go..."Butt." They go,  
"Get the fuck outta here. Butt."  
Speakin' of movies,

I was thinkin' too, this is unrelated...  
but I was watchin' TV  
the other night...  
and in Japan and  
there was some movie on.  
Why is it in every movie  
there's a shootout...  
and when they run out  
of bullets, they like "click, click."  
They fling the gun away like it's  
a disposable cigarette lighter.  
What's up with that? Guns cost a lot  
of money. Can't you reload it?  
You know what I'm saying? They always  
like... click. They throw the gun out.  
- That's a good point.  
- Another thing in movies I think is really weird.  
Like war movies.  
Nazis in movies?  
- Why do they always smoke  
in some weird way like this?  
We have ways  
of making you talk, Auggie.  
Stop! It's like the threat of...  
you know, burn torture.  
Or it's like this.  
Yeah. We know who you are.  
We have seen what you've done.  
The fucked up thing  
is like you go to Hollywood now...  
they got us hooked on cigarettes,  
you know, this image of glamour.  
You go out there now,  
you can't smoke anywhere.  
You light up after a meal  
in a restaurant.  
They come over. "I'm sorry, sir.  
Smoking's prohibited by law in restaurants."  
What's up with that?  
They get you started, you know?  
- A butt.  
- What happened to the one I just gave you?  
I sent it home. They're cutting down  
on the butts at home.



A butt!  
A match.  
Thanks.  
Pays to have friends.  
Yes, I'm smoking cigarettes  
and many of my friends have died of it.  
On the other hand,  
while I am smoking cigarettes...  
I am not downing a bottle  
of Scotch... in 15 minutes.  
So looked at from that point of view,  
it's a health tool.  
I can't remember the first time  
I had a cigarette.  
I can remember the first time  
I had a thing...  
you would know 'cause you're from  
Brooklyn, called a punk.  
Do you remember a punk?  
Punk was this long, green piece of wood.  
It was a slim piece of wood,  
this big, dyed green...  
with God knows what  
caked on it...  
about three inches down  
all the way to the end.  
You lit it  
and pretended to smoke it.  
Of course you couldn't inhale it  
because it's solid wood.  
And you'd walk around with it.  
It was called a punk.  
Am I right?  
That I can remember.  
When that turned into  
an actual Marlboro...  
uh, I honestly don't recall.  
It's... It, along with most of my childhood  
memories, are not available to me.  
My childhood was so unpleasant that I  
absolutely don't remember anything, I think...  
before, uh, age 31.  
- Tommy.  
- Yeah.

Pete.

- Pete? Peter?

- Pete.

- Pe-Peter Maloney?

- Peter Maloney!

- Oh, my God! Oh, shit!

- Tommy! Tommy...

- Come on.

- Facimimimi.

- No. Uh, uh. Fennili. Fennili.

- Fuckin' who?

Fennili.

Tommy Fennili.

- You're Peter Maloney, Midwood High.

- Right.

- Double A-plus in Algebra.

- Yeah.

You're the guy that wiped out the curve.

How you been?

- How you been?

- Good. Good. I'm good, yeah.

I went to Harvard.

Got my B. A. At Harvard. Went to Yale.

Got a Ph. D. In the disciplinary studies,  
philosophy and biology.

- Whoa.

- Yeah. So, what're you... This is your place?

- Uh, yeah, it's my place. Yeah. Kinda.

- Still in the neighborhood?

Yeah. I love the neighborhood,  
you know? Hey, wow!

- You mind if I sit down? Thanks. That's great.

- No, no, no. Sit down.

My glasses...

represent probably  
the future of glasses...  
for a certain segment  
of the population.

I've approached, uh...

I went to the patent office first about  
my glasses, and that was because...

Let me explain

what the glasses are.

The glasses

only have lenses on top.  
We basically go out and we,  
and we survey people at random.  
And then we take their answers and funnel  
them into, into a philosophy basically...  
that'll help  
improve their life.  
I have... Do you want to do a survey?  
Can I ask you some questions?  
- Who, me?  
- 'Cause I have a quota...  
and you'd really  
be helping me out.  
- Right here?  
- We can just... We can do it here.  
S- Sure. Sure. I got nothin' to lose.  
Why not? Let's do it.  
Do you believe in God,  
Tommy?  
- Yeah, I believe in God.  
- Okay. Yeah.  
- Really?  
- Well, don't you?  
I think there's a god.  
And I'm not it. Okay.  
Is there anyone you hate enough to want dead,  
and if somebody said they'd kill that person...  
and the crime wouldn't be discovered,  
would you let them go ahead and do it?  
L... That's a hard one.  
I don't want anybody dead.  
- This is Pete, Tom. You can tell me.  
- All right.  
- Maybe, uh... Maybe one guy, okay?  
- One guy.  
There's always that one fuckin' guy,  
you know?  
- That one fucking asshole.  
- One fuckin' guy.  
One fuckin' guy.  
That's right. Okay.  
Do you look at your bowel movements  
before you flush the toilet?  
- Oh, come on, Peter.

- Just humor me.  
Look, come on.  
Is it... whoa, a foot-long floater.  
You don't even want  
to say good-bye to it.  
You give it a name,  
you know.  
All right. Yeah, I look.  
Who doesn't look? You look, right?  
Abso-fuckin'-lutely,  
I look.  
I went to  
a space shuttle launch.  
As the shuttle was taking off...  
I could put binoculars right in...  
Straight through my frames  
because there's no lenses there.  
The space scientists  
were all huddled around me.  
"How can I get a pair of glasses like that?  
How can I get a pair of glasses like that?"  
Because they're all standing there with  
those tacky little strings around their neck...  
with glasses hanging or they've got them  
on their bald heads.  
Or I'll be in a restaurant, and when I go  
to read the menu I flip the lenses up.  
And people come over and say,  
"How can I get a pair of glasses that do that?"  
So I saw what my future was.  
Th-That perhaps  
my future lay...  
uh, in eyeglass  
frame manufacturing.  
Or being sponsored  
by a frame manufacturer.  
And I was gonna call it  
"Lou's Views."  
- Are you satisfied with the size and shape of your penis?  
- Oh, cripe!  
Peter, come on. That's a personal  
question. That's a personal question.  
These are not... No one's gonna know  
this is you. There's no name.

- Who's gonna see this stuff?  
- It just gets processed into a computer.  
- No. But who is?  
- No. You're not satisfied?  
What is it? Girth, no distance?  
Distance, no girth? No girth, no distance?  
Between you and me?  
No, I'm... The length is good...  
the width is questionable, and I got a  
little... It curves a little to the left.  
- You got a curved one?  
- You know, it leans a little bit.  
A leaner. Okay.  
That counts in horseshoes.  
How much money would it take  
for you to eat a bowl of shit, Tom?  
Hey! I'm gonna tell  
you somethin'. That I won't do.  
Every man's got his price, right,  
but not me. No, no. Not Tommy Fennili.  
- No. Me? Uh-uh. I don't eat shit.  
- No shit for Tommy.  
It's against my religion.  
What religion is that, Tom?  
The religion of sanity, Peter.  
You should try it sometime.  
I belonged. They excommunicated  
me. Let me tell you something.  
In an insane society,  
the sane man must appear insane.  
San... Okay.  
"Insanity is the logic  
of an accurate mind..."  
- "Overtaxed."  
- "Overtaxed!"  
- Oliver Wendell Holmes.  
- Yeah, I heard that.  
Goddamn it, Tommy!  
Goddamn it, thank you.  
One thing that you do  
get here in Brooklyn...  
which I now know from having driven around  
the country and looked elsewhere for it...  
you get plastic bags

stuck in trees.  
And it really drives me nuts.  
It's like a flag of chaos.  
A bag in a tree.  
It's a symbol. It just...  
And I used to see them and just...  
They would bug me.  
And then one day I realized, you know,  
you could get it out of the tree.  
So a friend and I made  
a long bag snagger.  
For which we are currently  
applying for a patent, in fact...  
because no one ever made  
something to take bags out of trees.  
And it works very well.  
It's a long aluminum pole.  
And we can actually reach now  
almost, I would say, 50 plus feet.  
It's fun. It's exercise. It's...  
Holding a big pole up and stretching.  
We walk a fair amount.  
And it definitely makes things nice,  
you know. Improves the tree.  
This is your basic bag  
in a tree.  
This can be recorded on film.  
We know that it existed.  
And when you come back, it will be...  
only an image on film...  
because I will  
have taken it out.  
- Is this your mission in Brooklyn?  
- I don't consider it a mission.  
It's more like a hobby. Something to do  
with my friends. It's fun to do.  
And it's very satisfying. It's also...  
It used to be I would see a bag like that...  
and just shrug and think,  
"Well, there's that bag."  
And now I see a bag and I think,  
"You're comin' out, pal."  
Once there was a major league  
baseball team in Brooklyn.

But that was a long time ago.  
Jackie Robinson,  
Brooklyn's famed number 42...  
baseball's first Negro  
in the major leagues...  
continues to captivate fans  
nationwide with his daring play.  
Boy, when they moved  
the Dodgers out of Brooklyn...  
I don't believe  
there ever was a worse day.  
Maybe when the war  
was declared.  
But other than that, I don't think that  
Brooklyn ever experienced a worse day...  
than when they moved  
the Dodgers to California...  
and the wrecking ball  
hit Ebbets Field.  
There was nothing like it.  
The stadium, the ball park...  
was like a little old  
country club.  
The fans all knew each other,  
and the Dodgers' Symphony...  
was a group of workin' guys  
that went out...  
played the trombone, the trumpet, the drums  
and generally made fools out of themselves.  
Everybody loved them  
and they didn't care.  
The ballplayers  
all lived in Brooklyn!  
They weren't all from Brooklyn,  
but they lived on Bedford Avenue...  
and they used to rent apartments right around  
the stadium, right around Ebbets Field.  
Everybody knew 'em in the neighborhood.  
"Hey, Duke Snider!  
Jackie! How're you?" You know, whatever.  
It was like a family thing.  
Now, no more baseball  
in Brooklyn.  
Hey, Auggie, it's a lot of money.

I'd be crazy to turn it down.  
After 19 years,  
you're just gonna walk away?  
I can't believe it.  
It's dollars and cents.  
The store's been losing money  
for years. You know it as well as I do.  
But you've got  
plenty of money, Vin.  
All those real estate deals  
out on the island.  
I mean, you just  
write this place off on your taxes.  
Too late.  
We're already in contract.  
Hmph. So  
the Brooklyn Cigar Company...  
is gonna become  
a health food store?  
Times change, Auggie.  
Tobacco's out.  
Wheat germ's in.  
You know, it may not be  
such a bad thing for you, either.  
I mean, uh, maybe it's time  
you moved on too.  
I don't wanna see you turn into an  
old man sitting behind that counter.  
Everybody has to grow old.  
What difference does it make  
where it happens?  
No more free cigars,  
huh, Auggie?  
You really should  
think this thing through before you...  
let it happen, Vincent.  
I mean, sure. It's a dinky,  
little nothing neighborhood store.  
But everybody comes in here.  
I mean, not just the smokers. The kids  
come in, the school kids for their candy.  
Old Mrs. McKinna comes in  
for her soap opera magazines.  
Crazy Louie



for his cough drops.  
Frank Diaz  
for his El Deario.  
Fat Mr. Chin  
for his crossword puzzles.  
I mean, the whole neighborhood  
comes in here.  
It's a hangout.  
And it helps to keep  
the neighborhood together.  
Twenty blocks from here...  
12-year-old kids are shootin'  
each other for their sneakers.  
I mean, you close this store  
and it's one more nail in the coffin.  
You'll be helpin'  
to kill off this neighborhood.  
You're trying to make me feel guilty.  
Is that what you're doin'?  
No. I'm just  
givin'you the facts.  
You can do  
what you want with them.  
That Auggie,  
he's gonna drive me crazy.  
Just when I get the deal together,  
he comes in playin' those fuckin' violins.  
Brooklyn! Hmph.  
Brooklyn. I'm supposed  
to care about Brooklyn.  
I don't even live in this  
shit hole of a town anymore.  
Hiya, Vinny.  
Jackie!  
In the flesh, sport.  
Jackie, the greatest  
ballplayer of them all.  
I used to pray for you  
every night when I was a kid.  
I was the man  
that changed America, Vinny.  
And I did it all right here,  
in Brooklyn.  
Oh, they spat at me.

Cursed me.  
Made my life  
a never-ending hell.  
And I wasn't allowed  
to fight back.  
It takes its toll,  
being a martyr.  
I died when I was  
53 years old, Vinny.  
Even younger  
than you are now.  
But I was a hell  
of a ballplayer, wasn't I?  
The best, Jackie.  
You were the best there was.  
Things changed after me.  
Not just for black people.  
For white people too.  
After me, well, white people  
and black people...  
never looked at each other  
in the same old way anymore.  
And it all happened  
right here, in Brooklyn.  
Yeah, then they...  
moved the team away.  
Almost broke my heart. What'd they do  
a dumb thing like that for?  
Dollars and cents,  
Vinny.  
Ebbets Field  
may be gone now...  
but what happened there  
lives on in the mind.  
That's where it counts, Vinny.  
Mind over matter.  
There are more important  
things in life than baseball.  
But, Brooklyn looks good.  
More or less the same it was  
the last time I saw it.  
And Prospect Park over there.  
Still as beautiful as ever.  
Say, Vinny, they don't still

make those Belgian waffles, do they?  
Ah, man! What I wouldn't give to sink  
my teeth into a Belgian waffle!  
Two scoops of pistachio ice cream,  
some bananas on top.  
Hmph. Boy,  
do I miss those things.  
Belgian waffles, sure.  
They still make 'em.  
Just go down two blocks  
to the Cosmic Diner.  
Jackie, they'll make you  
all the Belgian waffles you want.  
Thanks, sport.  
Don't mind if I do.  
A day in Brooklyn just wouldn't be complete  
without stopping in for a Belgian waffle.  
Would it?  
Every day 7,999...  
Belgian waffles are eaten  
in the restaurants of Brooklyn.  
The, the waffle culture  
in Belgium is, um, is complex.  
Waffles generally are made in huge  
batches, and then they're eaten cold.  
They're not a breakfast food. Uh, they're  
like cookies or something, or raisin bread.  
They're that kind of food. You eat  
them with coffee in the afternoon.  
The Belgian waffle as it's known here, with  
great piles of strawberries and whipped cream...  
is something that Belgians  
are never failed to be amazed by.  
I think Belgians  
kind of like Belgian waffles.  
But to them, Belgian waffles  
seem distinctly American.  
They've got that big Hollywood  
overproduction to them, which Belgians...  
It's kind of foreign to Belgians  
to overdo things quite in that way.  
Cigarettes are sort of like  
a reminder of your mortality in a way.  
Like each puff is like

a passing moment, a passing thought.  
You know, you smoke.  
Smoke disappears.  
It reminds you that  
to live is also to die somehow.  
I don't know, I'm gonna miss 'em.  
But anyway, last one is with you, Auggie.  
Boom!  
Shit.  
It's out, man. Got a light?  
Adios.  
Adios, amigo.  
Adios, "cigarrettos. '  
L. S. Equals M. F. T.  
Loose stomach  
means full toilet.  
Or something like that.  
When we were kids, that's what  
we used to say about Lucky Strikes.  
Yeah, there it is.  
What'd I tell you?  
I love this too.  
"It's toasted."  
Oh, boy.  
They sure do  
take us for a ride, huh?  
- How's it taste?  
- Tastes great.  
There he goes.  
Thirty seconds over Tokyo.  
Bombs away.  
- Want a smoke?  
- No, thanks. I quit.  
Ebbets Field,  
"Shrine of Flatbush, '  
will make way  
for apartment houses.  
The old ball park, standing for nearly  
half a century, comes to the end of the trail.  
The stands where thousands  
once roared...  
await another kind  
of wrecking crew.  
Home plate is dug up

to find a niche...  
in the Baseball Hall of Fame  
at Cooperstown.  
At the sad ceremony, Roy Campanella  
is surrounded by old Dodger players...  
Tommy Holmes, Ralph Branca  
and Carl Erskine.  
They watch stoically for the demolition  
of their old playground.  
Now it's play ball again...  
but not the sort  
Dodger fans cheer.  
This time, Ebbets Field itself  
is struck out.  
Today is my birthday,  
and I'm 18 now.  
Da-da-da-da da-da  
That's so sweet.  
Nobody sung it to me yet.  
Brooklyn will take care  
of me tonight, though.  
If I go around my way and tell everybody  
today's my birthday, they'll celebrate.  
You'll see fireworks,  
but they'll be gunshots.  
And, um... people'll probably hit me  
with cakes and eggs and powder socks.  
That's how they celebrate  
my birthday.  
I don't get no cake  
and can eat it.  
I have to get it smashed in my face, and  
beat with a powder sock for a surprise party.  
Walk in my building 'cause somebody beat me  
with a sock, and hit me with a egg probably.  
Y'all have a nice day.  
- You too. Happy birthday.  
- All right. Thank you.  
Ay, Augusto.!  
You make me  
so horny!  
You make  
my tripas tremble.  
Ay, Augusto.!

You would be  
so wonderful...  
if only you were different.  
That Auggie.  
That Auggie,  
he gonna drive me cuckoo!  
First he say "yes"...  
then he say "no."  
Is "on"...is "off."  
Maybe some other time.  
But Ramon, you see,  
he don't know some other time.  
He's going to play  
at Freddie's on the sixteenth.  
And now, Augusto say  
he's too busy on the sixteenth.  
Ay.  
What gives around here, huh?  
Is somebody deaf  
or something?  
I talk myself  
blue in the face!  
And still,  
it don't do no good.  
Lock this door.  
- I want you to lock this. All right.  
- What's with you, Dot?  
I don't want to talk to you.  
I don't wanna say anything to you.  
- Um, if he comes to the door, don't let him in.  
- Vinny?  
- Yeah. Where's the money? I know he keeps money around here.  
- I count it...  
- I know he's got a secret stash besides what's in here, right?  
- No, no.  
- I'm taking this too.  
- What's the matter with you?  
It's only today's receipts.  
What are you doing?  
I'm taking the money.  
I told you before.  
I'm going to Las Vegas  
by myself.  
I asked him to go and he doesn't wanna

go, so I'm going to go to Las Vegas.  
Not only am I going there for a visit,  
but I'm going to go there...  
and I might just fucking live there,  
you know what I mean?  
- What happened?  
- What happened? I told you what happened.  
He's a fuckin' bore.  
I'm going to do something exciting.  
I'm going to go to Las Vegas,  
and I'm going to wait to see Wayne Newton.  
You know what I mean?  
Then when I see Wayne Newton...  
I'm going to chase him down the street  
and I'm gonna mount him like Trigger.  
I want out, and I wanna go have fun.  
And I'm gonna. I'm gonna.  
And don't try to talk me out of it.  
Because the last time I tried to talk to you...  
you didn't have nothin' to say to me,  
I have nothin' to say to you.  
I have nothing to say to him.  
And you're gonna tell him that for me.  
Nothing about your life  
is boring, right?  
You're just terribly excited  
about everything that you do?  
You're terribly excited about everything.  
Everything's like A-okay, okeydoke, right?  
- I'm in a good place. Yeah.  
- I don't think you're in a good place.  
I've known ya for a long time.  
I don't think you're in a good place.  
I say that as your friend. I don't think...  
I think you could be in a better place.  
- Like where?  
- I don't know! I think you could be in a better place.  
Like... I think you could be  
in a better place...  
like... Las Vegas  
is a better place.  
Would you want  
to go with me?  
- What?

- I mean, I have money and everything.  
I think you deserve to be loved very fucking  
well. I really do think that about you.  
I know you don't have that  
and I could do that.  
I, I could, um...  
I could do that.  
Give me some of this.  
I could love you very well.  
Would you go to Las Vegas  
with me?  
Jesus, Dot.  
Would you go to Las Vegas  
with me?  
Will you come to Las Vegas  
with me, honey?  
Dot, Jesus. What am  
I doing to my friend, Dot?  
Everybody's got friends.  
You got enough friends.  
This ain't right, Dot.  
No, no.  
No, no. Dot, this ain't right.  
This ain't right.  
Listen, I really care about you.  
I really care about you.  
But this ain't right.  
It ain't right. This ain't right.  
- Listen, listen. Nothing's right.  
- No, no, no.  
Nothing in the whole fucking world  
is ever right. Do you know?  
- Things that are wrong are good!  
- Yeah.  
- They could be good.  
- They could be good. That's right.  
- I've always wanted to kiss you.  
- But this is wrong.  
I've always wanted to kiss you.  
Just let me kiss you.  
- I can't say I haven't wanted to kiss you either.  
- Just let me kiss you.  
I can't say...  
No, no, no. Dot.



- Dot, I want you to stop it. I want you to stop it.

- Okay, fuck you. I'm going.

Good-bye.

Oh, fuck me. Fuck.

What's going on? What's up?

- What's going on?

- You see Dot go out? She was just here.

- Yeah.

- Yeah?

What's going on?

She didn't talk to me.

She seemed very upset.

- Oh, man. Oh, man.

- Where'd you go?

Because I did not want you  
to come in. Do you understand that?

Do you speak English?

I don't wanna talk

to you anyway.

You're not going anywhere.

- Why?

- What do you mean, why? What the hell you talkin' about?

- I'm going to Las Vegas.

- For what?

For what? To be in show business.

To have excitement.

To do things besides watch you sit  
on the couch and watch fucking TV.

- Be in show business?

- Well, around show business!

I'm not talking to him.

Tell him I'm not gonna talk to him.

- You want me to tell him?

- L... What?

- Five times you want me to tell you?

- What did I do?

Tell him I'm not talking to him because  
he does not know how to communicate.

- Communicating. Do you know what that means?

- Yeah. What's the matter?

What does it mean?

Tell me what it means. Define it!

- Talking to each other.

- Talking. But what comes after talking?

Do you have any fucking idea

what comes after talking?

It starts with an "L." I'll give you

a clue. It starts with an "L."

- It's three syllables. You know what it is?

- Yeah.

- What is it?

- Listening.

- Yes! Thank you. You win the big fucking jackpot.

- I'm listening.

- No, you don't know how to listen.

- I'm listening!

I told you what the problem is.

Then why are you asking me again?

- I'm listening.

- You're not listening!

- What's the problem?

- The problem is that you never, ever listen!

- I'm listening now! Tell me!

- You don't listen to me.

What am I doing?

- You're listenin'.

- I'm listenin'.

You want a Belgian waffle,

go to Belgium.

Don't go to the Dutch part,

go to the French part.

And if I want a Boston egg cream,

should I go to Boston?

I want to go to Las Vegas

right now!

And I'm goin' with you,

or I'm goin' without you.

Because I already have money.

So are you goin' with me or not?

And I'm not even gonna ask you. Forget that

I said that, because you already said no.

So I'm not gonna let you

fucking tell me no one more time.

We're going to Vegas...

right now!

- We're going to...

- Right the fuck now.

- We're going to Vegas, Auggie.

- Have a good time.
- All right? Yeah, we're going to Vegas.
- We're really goin'? Okay.
- Okay?
- Okay. Right now?
- All right.
- We're not gonna have...
- We're goin' to Vegas.
- Come on.
- Auggie.
- See ya.

Adios.

Are we really gonna go?

Vegas.

You stand right there, okay?

Okay. Here we go.

In the words  
of the famous poet...

Billy Shake-a-speare...

**I quote you:**

What are you doin'?

"To be or not to be?

That is the question."

Jimmy, lock the door.

Put the closed sign on.

Well, Auggie... I am!

Okay? So that is that.

Come here, because

I'm going to make love to you.

And I'm going to ride you  
like a big bull.

Ay.! What's this?

Is this for me?

Oh, yeah, baby,  
this is mine.

This is mine, all mine, and only mine.

I cannot bear the thought of you being  
with another woman. It makes me crazy!

Never know how much

I love you

Never know how much I care

When you put your arms  
around me

I get a fever  
that's so hard to bear  
You give me fever Yeah  
When you kiss me  
Fever when you hold me tight  
Fever Ooh, in the morning  
Fever all through the night  
Fever  
Ay, yeah, Augusto.  
Fever Ooh, in the morning  
Fever all through the night  
Daddy, don't you treat me right  
Pow, pow, pow  
Ooh  
What a lovely way to burn  
Ah, ah, ah  
Fever  
You like a Spanish women?  
I'm glad you like a Spanish women,  
because I am Spanish woman.  
Ay, ay, ay yeah  
S- s-s-s-s  
You give me fever  
I can't get enough of you,  
Auggie!  
Is this the  
Brooklyn Cigar Company?  
In the flesh.  
What can I do you for?  
I'm looking for  
a Mr. Augustus Ren.  
- Well, you found him, beautiful.  
- Great.  
I've never been to Brooklyn before.  
I wasn't sure I'd find you.  
Well, Brooklyn's on the map. We've even  
got streets out here. Electricity too.  
You don't say? Well?  
- Well what?  
- I have a telegram for you.  
- Nobody's dead, I hope.  
- A singing telegram.  
This gets better and better.  
- You ready?

- Ready when you are.  
Chee-chee chee-chee-chee  
chee-chee  
The deal is off Stop  
Ba-da-da-da-da-da-da Boom  
Not sellin' the store Stop  
Ba-da-da-da-da-da-da Boom  
I'll see you next week Stop  
Ba-da-da-da-da-da-da Boom  
Chee-chee chee-chee-chee  
chee-chee  
I'm sending you love  
Love, love  
From Las Vegas  
- Ba-da-da-da-da-da-da Boom  
- Ooh!  
Dynamite, sweetheart.  
Dynamite.  
I say that's worth at least a \$5 tip.  
Five dollars?  
Thanks a lot, mister.  
I'll finally be able to buy that  
hearing aid my mother always wanted.  
Anytime you got some more good news,  
you know where to find me.  
"The deal is off."  
Ba-ba boom.  
"Not selling the store.  
Stop. See you next week.  
Love from Las Vegas."  
Ba-ba boom, Jimmy!  
Ba-boom! Ba-boom!  
- We don't have to leave?  
- No. We don't have to leave, Jimmy.  
Keep sweepin'.  
Sweep all of Brooklyn, Jimmy.  
Brooklyn is yours.  
That's most of it, I think.  
Who knows why  
all those crazy things happened.  
I mean, maybe  
Vinny really did see a ghost.  
And maybe Violet really  
was gonna rip my guts out.

Who could be sure  
of anything?  
I love you!  
What I do know is that the day after  
Vinny and Dot left for Las Vegas...  
the temperature in Brooklyn dropped  
below 90 for the first time in two weeks.

- Wow.

- Well, what are you two lovebirds up to?  
A hell of a lot!

- Do you mind if I join in?  
- Of course. Be my guest.

So I decided  
to throw a little party.  
Things had pretty much returned to normal, and  
I was feeling good enough to wanna celebrate.  
All right, Brooklyn,  
I'm gonna teach you a new dance.  
It's called "The Brooklyn Cha-Cha."  
It's real simple, okay?  
It goes like this, okay? Step, step,  
cross, open, back, back, cha-cha-cha.  
It wasn't my fault  
that things got out of hand.  
When 572 citizens of Brooklyn  
show up in the same spot...  
spirits are bound to run high.  
To tell the truth,  
I wasn't around to see it all.  
Violet and I had other business  
to attend to that night...  
and I sort of lost track  
of the time.  
Nine months later, I was passing out  
cigars myself... free of charge.  
It was a boy.  
We named him Jackie.  
His first solid food  
was a Belgian waffle.  
Baseball is a beautiful game.  
You can't blame it on 'em.  
I'm not talking about the game.  
The point is...  
I'm just saying personally,

the way I feel about it.

I understand. But you don't see

the beauty of the game?

Just forget it.

Dennis, forget it.

- Are you the chief?

- Yeah.

El jefecito, eh?

I got something for that thing, huh?

- Huh?

- I got something for you.

- What?

- Cuban cigars.

- Yeah?

- I got some connection. I could do like that.

And you could... you could be okay, man.

- What kind of cigars you got?

- He almost had me. He almost had me.

- What're you talkin' about, okay?

- Come on, Auggie. Don't you see it?

- This is serious business here, man.

- See? You hear that voice?

- He was in here last year with the watches.

- What're you talkin' about, man?

- You don't know me, man. I got connections.

- He was in here.

- You got to be fucking kidding me.

- I can do that for you, man.

- I got connections.

- I don't believe this.

- Man, gimme a kiss.

- What'd I tell you?

- You want a kiss, baby?

- Gimme a kiss.

Oh, man, another scam, huh?

Always on the scam.

- Were you serious about the cigars?

- No.

- Oh!

- Oh, man. You got a hustle for everything.

- What? Do you like it here? Were you lonely?

- Wh-What do you think?

- You like it? You like me like this?

- You look good!

- You like it?
- Nice.
- Te gusta?
- Who are you this week?
- Valentino.
- Valentino, huh?
- Valentino. The lover. The Latin lover! The lover!
- Like me.

Do you sit at home  
and think this stuff up?  
No, actually I'm on my way.

**I got a 3:**

- I got a record contract that... might happen.
- Ooh!
- Do you wanna buy a bridge?
- Very funny.

No, seriously, man, seriously.

No, I'm very musical.

- He's got the voice for it.
- He could, he could do it.
- I got a record deal happenin'.
- I think he could do it.
- Sure, man, you got a voice.
- You know, God bless Brooklyn to make me who I am today.

I'm glad you guys like the suit. I figured I'd  
try to pull one more scam on you before I go.

Pull a scam on the man!

'Cause, see. You understand. Like...

- Where're you from?
- Me?
- Yeah.
- Well, my family's from...

"My family!" Why do they always do that?

Man, he's from Italy.

- Where're you from? France? You French now?
- I'm proud to be...
- I'm Puerto Rican all the way through.
- You're Puerto Rican.
- I'm Puerto Rican, but...
- What's wrong with you guys, man? Jesus Christ!

Now, you're gonna tell me he's black!

He's Italian. You're French and he's black.

What's up, brother?



How you doin', black man?

You got a great rap,

but you gotta follow this stuff up.

What's you talkin', follow it up?

Look at the suit, baby!

No, no, the suit.

All right, the clothes make the man.

But, you know, you gotta decide  
what you wanna do with your life.

You're gonna go out here, get another...

Next week, he's gonna come back...

he's gonna be selling  
used cars outside.

- Next week I'm gonna have a record deal.

- You could have a record deal...

- but you gotta go for it, you know what I mean?

- Like this cigar?

- I like the cigar.

- I took up smoking.

There's numerous possibilities for you.

Right? You never know what life's about.

That's your problem. I don't think  
you're really realistic, black man.

- I'm realistic.

- See, last time I was in here, you really pissed me off.

Hanging around

these white people.

- Now you got Julio here acting like he's Francois! Please!

- Francois?

A buddy of mine...

We were ten years old. All right?

We all dared this guy to go in  
and rip off this chicken joint.

It was owned by this German guy. And we  
thought this German guy, he's a real square.

He's a white guy.

He lived in Harlem, right?

So we dared the kid to go in.

The kid, he had balls, right?

He goes in, but the guy  
already locked up the night's receipts.

But he had a little cash  
in his pocket.

So the guy, he goes in, he hits the guy

over the head with a bottle.  
He gets his little cash out of the guy's pocket, leaves him on the floor for dead.  
The guy lives, of course. Kid's ten years old. Goes home, all right?  
His mother says, "Where'd you get this money?"  
She goes in his room next morning to wake him up, the money's on the bureau.  
"Where'd you get this money?" He's not gonna tell her where he got the money, okay?  
She finds out the guy on the corner was robbed. She puts it together.  
She takes the kid, drags him by his collar back into the store.  
The guy is there. His head's bandaged. He's doing his day's business.  
She says,  
"Did my son rob you?"  
The guy looks at the kid.  
"Yeah, I think it was him.  
But it's okay, he's ten years old, he's young. I don't care."  
She says, "Well, he's yours.  
What do you want to do with him?  
"You want to send him to jail?  
What do you want to do with him?  
You want him to work for you?  
What, what do you want?"  
So he gives the kid a job. The kid sweeps up the store like Jimmy, every day.  
Then eventually he's washing dishes.  
Then eventually he's like cleaning tables.  
I run into this guy,  
all right, ten years later.  
I looked at him, I said,  
"What are you doin' with yourself?"  
He says, "You know the chicken joint?"  
I said, "The chicken joint?  
That was when you were ten years old!"  
He says, "I own the place."  
The German guy died,  
left him the place...  
and the guy is making money

hand over fist. So you never know, right?

That's your problem. I'm a black man,  
and I got to sell fried chicken.

That's your problem, man.

I got to be selling chicken.

- That ain't got nothing to do with my...

- That's not the point.

- I'm trying to make it...

- The point is...

out of something really horrible,  
something really great happened.

- You got some watermelon too?

- Come on. That's not the point.

- Okay, that was okay. That was...

- That could happen.

Relax, I'm jokin'!

I got you. That's good. Thank you.

- Hey.

- Black people got to stick together, black man.

- I got a watch.

- Hey, I got one. Check it out.

Hey, what do you think about the suit?

Hey, hey, hey. Te gusta?

- Yeah, it's good.

- All right, baby.

Where's that \$10 I gave you last time

I saw you? Remember the \$10?

- You got a short memory. Remember the \$10 I gave you?

- Yeah.

- Whenever you can, you give it back to me, all right?

- Okay. Thanks a lot though.

- He's got a heart.

- I bought some fried chicken with it.

I got some good news,

I got some bad news.

The good news is that you're all here.

The bad news is I'm gonna sing.

Well I was gonna join the army

when you turned me down

But I was rejected

so I headed for the river to drown

Well, I've reconsidered

decided life shouldn't end

'Cause girls like you

are a dime a dozen  
And I got a nickel to spend  
- Everybody.  
- Girls like you are a dime a dozen  
And I got a nickel to spend  
Hey, don't you feel no pity  
I'm a-living in paradise  
They say life's a piece of cake,  
hell I'm gonna get me a slice  
Well, I see fine chicks all around me  
Yeah, I'm getting the urge  
'Cause girls like you  
are a dime a dozen  
- And I got a nickel to splurge  
- Ya-hoo!  
Yeah, girls like you  
are a dime a dozen  
And I got a nickel to splurge  
Yeah, girls like you  
are a dime a dozen  
- And I got a nickel to splurge  
- Brooklyn style now.  
Yeah, girls like you  
are a dime a dozen  
And I got a nickel to splurge  
- Why are you... Why are you still smoking?  
- I'm not inhaling.  
- What does it do?  
- Stand back, asshole.  
You know, in case you get stuck up  
or something, you just pull the fish out.  
That's not food.  
That's sugar and... and shit.  
You know what that causes?  
Diabetes.  
- Not to me, man.  
- Oh, yeah?  
No, 'cause I got  
sugar blockers.  
Why can't we be friends  
I'm sittin' out here  
readin' the paper...  
To most people it looks like  
I'm not doin' a goddamn thing.

Havin' some coffee, right?  
Smokin' a cigar. Hangin' out with Auggie.  
But... they look at me.  
They tip their hat.  
"Good morning. How you doin'?"  
They look at you. What do they see?  
They think you're a mugger.  
Well, early in the mornin'  
Or even when it's late  
I call my baby on the phone  
up in the 718  
And I think about the way  
that she does love me  
And I wish that  
she weren't so hot  
I talk on the phone a lot  
so people can't see that I'm black.  
But I really believe that...  
I'm Sicilian.  
- No, no, it's good.  
- It's good. You like it? Do you believe me?  
- I totally got it.  
- I can't get my shoulders out of my frickin' ass here.  
Put them all together  
we got the same attitude  
Very necessary being rude  
That's the Brooklyn mood  
It's the place where  
it's hard to shed a tear  
People are filled with little care,  
any sympathy you won't find it here  
That's the same problem we had. 'Cause I'm  
a black man you don't think I can be Italian!  
Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah  
Wish I knew how to say  
I had a friend.  
Man, he loved cigarettes so much...  
he used to like set his alarm clock  
for the middle of the night.  
Like he'd go to sleep. He'd set it for four  
hours later, wake up, have a cigarette.  
Butt me.  
Last pack. Get your  
filthy hands off'em!

When I was a young man  
No bigger than this  
A chocolate egg cream  
was not to be missed  
Some U Bet's chocolate syrup  
seltzer water mix it with milk  
You stir it up into a heady froth  
Tasty just like silk  
You scream, I steam  
We all want egg cream  
You scream, I steam  
We all want egg cream  
So the next time  
you're in Brooklyn  
Please say hello for me  
At Totonno's for pizza and ice cream  
and at Al and Shirley's  
But mostly you go  
to Becky's  
Sit in the booth and you say hello,  
and have two chocolate egg creams  
One to stay and one to go  
You scream, I steam  
We all want egg cream  
Ah, you scream, I steam  
We all want egg cream  
Yes, directly  
from the planet of Brooklyn  
We have Bush Babees  
in the house  
In your area  
Yes  
Oh, one time for your mom  
Yes  
Brooklyn's in the place  
Yes  
Go take it to your face