

INT. X FLAT - DAY

Joe lies on his cot, watching Ratso struggle to penetrate the fibrous husk of a coconut, experimenting with a variety of rusty tools in an old cigar box.

RATSO

The two basic items necessary to sustain life are sunshine and coconut milk. That's a known fact. If I can find the goddam hole the milk squirts out.

JOE

This is an okay setup you got here, but I'd say you ain't just exactly, uh, flush, is that right or not?

RATSO

I been sick. Hold this, will ya?

Joe takes his time rising to hold the coconut while Ratso tries to poke a hole with a bent ice-pick.

RATSO (CONT'D)

In Florida, they come smooth, ready to eat. Down there, your only problem is, diet-wise, you gotta lift an arm to wipe warm milk off your chin. Tough, hey?

JOE

I think finding you's the smartest thing I ever did, for both of us. You just the crooked kinda sneaky little sidewinder I need to get me hustling in this town. Hey!

Joe jerks his hand away just in time to avoid the ice-pick. The coconut bounces on the floor. Ratso picks it up, holds it, while Joe tries to crack it, swinging his boot like a hammer.

RATSO

Miami Beach is the only place for a real hustler. Florida has more rich

chicks per square yard than any resort spot in the world. They lie out in their pagodas and pergolas waiting to grab the first jockstrap that passes.

JOE

What's all this sweet talk about Florida? Your friend O'Daniel got a stable down there now?

Joe swings violently. Ratso yelps, hopping on his one good leg, sucking his thumb.

RATSO

Cowboy killers! Break my finger, Christ! I got news for you, baby, no chick with any class buys that big dumb cowboy crap...

Ratso holds his thumb under the tub-sink faucet.

RATSO (CONT'D)

... the cowboy bit's out, except among fags of a certain type, which take a certain, type hustler to exploit. Like I could handle it -- being a stealing operation basically -- but take your average fag, very few of them want a cripple.

Joe holds the coconut like Yorick's skull, thinking hard.*

JOE

Well, I am dumb, that's for sure. I don't talk right. I can't think too good. Just only one thing I ever been good for's loving. Women go crazy for me. Fact. Crazy Annie. Had to send her away. So I don't cash in on that, what am I? I'm shee-it. May's well flush me down that hole with the dishwater.

Joe sets the coconut on the floor, holding it with both hands

while he tries to smash it with the heel of his boot.

JOE (CONT'D)

That's why you gonna stop crapping
about Florida and get your skinny
butt moving to earn twenty bucks
worth of management you owe me...

INT. ROOM 1014 - DAY

The suitcase lies open, displaying Joe's wardrobe.

JOE'S VOICE

Make that twenty-three bucks.

INT. X FLAT - DAY

Joe slams his heel down. The coconut shoots out from under
him and he lands on his ass.

RATSO

Look at yourself, Joe, no offense,
but frankly, you're beginning to
smell. For a stud in this town
that's a handicap.

JOE

You talk like a man with a tin twat.

Ratso sets the coconut on the window sill, balancing it as he
raises the X window.

RATSO

You ain't got a chance in hell. You
need threads and glitter, baby. A
front, hey?

JOE

Well, uh, my manager's gonna manage
all that crap, or else he gonna get
a coconut up his flue.

Joe slams, the window down. The coconut flies down to crash
O.S. on the sidewalk below.