

"INFLUENCE"

by

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&
Matter

Man Falls Off Bike

FADE IN:

EXT. SYNAGOGUE PARKING LOT - DAY

BENNY, a young adult in a black suit, is riding a bike and listening to music. He enters the Parking Lot of a synagogue and looks up at the beautiful temple. Then he turns the other way to find two homeless people having sex.

He double takes then looks forward and sees a mom with a baby stroller. He raises his arm to try and warn the pair and accidentally falls off his bike.

INT. TEMPLE; FUNERAL SERVICE - DAY

CLOSE UP: Old Jewish Woman waist deep in a pool.

ZOOM OUT: She is on a poster adorned with a wreath beside her casket on a dais at the Temple. ZAYDEE, Benny's grandfather is catatonic in a wheelchair next to the casket.

Three young adults are sitting next to each other in the pews of a funeral. BENNY is sitting in a torn up suit at his Grandmother's funeral. DEREK is shifting around uncomfortably in his seat. ALICE is fascinated by the service.

Around them are mostly older people in suits, many look bored, nobody is sad. UNCLE UZI gives a Eulogy in the background.

UNCLE UZI

Now I know what a lot of you are thinking. Why is Uncle Uzi giving a eulogy for his mother-in-law? He only knew her for thirteen years. She didn't even like him that much. These are all valid points that I *will* be addressing. Noya kept a very large collection of silverware. Antique forks, Victorian era tea spoons, and a knife with a handle of human bone. She knew I was scared of that human handle, and she would make me hold it.

Derek pulls a bag of apple slices out of his jacket. Then he proceeds to open it as quietly as he can, which is still quite loud. They get some stares from the other attendees.

DEREK

Is it still called a funeral if it's Jewish?

ALICE

Are you eating?

DEREK

I don't know the rules. This is my first funeral.

Derek is eating apple slices. Alice is looking around and Benny has not been listening at all.

BENNY

I got my first handjob at a funeral. It was definitely a pity handjob. Then she dumped me after Ricky Avalados' sister got Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma.

DEREK

Oh, so she's just a Tear Jerker.

ALICE

Speaking of, you don't seem that devastated. In fact, nobody here looks remotely sad.

CUT TO: Two men are playing handheld game consoles together and giggling, the devices are connected to each other via a dongle.

BENNY

A lot of people have been waiting for this day. When I was ten she ran over my bird with her Nova.

DEREK

So, this a what a whom's-who's of old Hollywood looks like? The sharks have gathered, there's blood in the water.

Derek looks around and sees CACIALLE FERTADO, famously Italian designer, at 77 he still has a 21 year old twink with him today.

ALICE

Who's-who.

DEREK

Whom's Who. Try to keep up, Alice?

Alice rolls her eyes and turns to Benny.

ALICE

Well, I appreciate the invitation, Benny. A little weirded out you think we are close enough friends for this- Shit, I am just realizing we're best friends.

Benny leans over and whispers to Derek.

BENNY

Did you tell her about the decoder rings?

DEREK

Never, buddy.

CUT TO: Benny and Derek bumps knuckles with decoder rings.

ALICE

We are best friends, right?

Derek stares at Alice suspiciously. UNCLE UZI drones, giving a eulogy in the background.

UNCLE UZI

In Hebrew, Uzi means 'strength' but today I am weak. Now it's true, the first question Noya ever asked me was, can you rap? Her disappointment with my answer has puzzled me to this day.

DEREK

She taught me that Jewish people could be racist.

ALICE
Everybody's racist.

DEREK
Benny, what's the over-under that your Grandma's going to hell? You think she'll be reincarnated as a bird? Historically, have the Jews become ghosts?

ALICE
There's no Jewish hell, Derek.

BENNY
Too bad. Do you know how many times Grandpa "fell down the stairs."

Benny puts air quotes around "fell down the stairs."

DEREK
Tough old guy, eh?

ALICE
Why would you even ask that? Do you believe in Heaven?

Alice and Derek are whisper-arguing.

DEREK
I don't believe in democracy, but I still vote. I am prepared for every possible outcome.

ALICE
You don't even know how to swim.

DEREK
You were only invited to balance out the peen to vagene ratio. And from the looks of it, we've still got a ways to go.

ALICE
The album you've been working on all year, it's quantifiably

ALICE (cont.)
garbage. All your friends think
so, even Benny.

Derek stares at Benny in shock, waiting for his response.

BENNY
I... Don't-

UNCLE UZI
Her mentor Roy Donk, called her
Snake Eyes. Her grandkids called
her Bubbee, and in 1983 Lens
Magazine called her 'pretty good,
for a woman.' I called her all the
time, but she always sent me to
voicemail. I just want to let
everybody know that parking is
going to be very complicated at
the house. Most of you are going
to have to park like three streets
away. And be sure to read the
signs because you will get towed.
The tow place is on the corner, so
it happens fast.

JOSH, a precocious twelve year old in a Karate Gi, suddenly
slides into the seat right next to Benny.

JOSH
Just give me half a worm.

Benny is surprised. Josh starts trying to reach into
Benny's pockets. Benny hits Josh's hand with a Torah.

BENNY
I don't have any candy.

JOSH
I saw you eating it. My senses are
finely tuned from years of
rigorous training. You can't hide
candy from me.

BENNY
Josh, why are you wearing a karate
costume?

JOSH

It's not a costume. These are my dress whites. My Karate Gi is the most formal outfit I own, this is a sign of respect for Bubbee.

Benny slams the Torah down on Josh's knee. He winces and yelps in pain. Then he collects himself and whispers to Derek.

JOSH

Hey, you got any candy-

DEREK

Fuck out of here, Josh.

ALICE

Why is that girl waving at us?

CUT TO: CASSIE waving from across the funeral.

BENNY

Oh, shit, it's Cassie. Fuck, no! Fuck, yes? That means her Mom might be here. This might actually be a good thing.

ALICE

Why don't I know her?

DEREK

She was our roommate before you, but now she's kind of famous. Her Mom produced the *Trapped Inside of You reboot*, Cassie got the lead.

While the friends are distracted, Josh sneaks a bag of Sour Gummy Worms out of Benny's pocket.

ALICE

I knew I recognized her. She's the girl they're trapped inside of!

BENNY

I heard Justin's looking for a new project right now, if I can get

BENNY (cont.)
her to read my script... This is my
shot, this is my pity handjob.

DEREK
Pity Handjob Two. Electric
Bubbee-died.

JOSH
This candy tastes like shit.

Josh is eating handfuls out of a bag of Sour Gummy Worms. Benny, Alice, and Derek look at him shocked. Uncle Uzi arrives at their pew and grabs the bag out of his son's hand.

UNCLE UZI
Give me that.
Uncle Uzi tears the bag away from Josh, eats one of the worms, and slaps Josh in the back of the head. Benny, Alice, and Derek turn to look at Unce Uzi, even more shocked.

UNCLE UZI
It doesn't taste like shit. Well,
let's go bury your dead
grandmother. They brought in the
expensive dirt from Santa Bra-Bra.
It's *real* quality dirt.

They all exit the Temple together.

CUT TO:

BEGIN TITLES - The friends and family drive to the Cemetery. Overhead shot of black cars led by a hearse, from the Synagogue to the Cemetery they drive through Burbank. Movie posters on walls of buildings lining the roads, the front entrance gates to studios, and billboard advertisements for music and concerts.

They arrive at the Cemetery and lower the casket into the grave. One by one they take turns shoveling dirt. Starting with Benny, Alice, Derek, Uncle Uzi and Josh, Zaydee (catatonic in a wheelchair), Cassie, CACIELLE FERTADO, MYRNA, and MR NEDS. - END TITLES

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

MR NEDS, Benny's father, stabs the shovel into the ground and turns around to see Benny, Alice and Derek waiting in the parking lot, he marches towards them and pulls Benny away.

MR NEDS

God, fucking, shit. Benny, what are you still doing here? I told you to leave early and make sure the house was ready.

BENNY

I left ten minutes ago, Mr. Neds. Don't even worry. Everything is set up for the... Afterparty! I know because-

Mr. Neds interrupts Benny and gets right in his face.

MR NEDS

You don't know. Because you're not there. Because you didn't leave ten minutes ago. Because you're still here. I know that, because you've been here for the past eleven minutes.

Mr Neds gestures toward Derek and Alice.

MR NEDS

Why did you invite those two?

CUT TO: Derek is staring directly at the camera and Alice is spitting on the ground.

BENNY

I invited them to the service for emotional support. And they are going to help out during the backyard... Ceremonies?

MR NEDS

Celebration of Life!

BENNY

That's it!

MR NEDS

How much money did you spend on these *Ceremonies*?

BENNY

Oh, they're not getting paid.

CUT TO: Derek is trying to listen in on the conversation. Alice is on her phone.

DEREK

We're not getting paid?

MR NEDS

Why would they be getting paid?

BENNY

They're not! That's my point! It's going to be an elegant Celebration, Mr Neds. Have I ever gone over-budget?

MR NEDS

No, you never do. You pocket half the budget, and it ends up looking like shit... Why are your eyes so red?

BENNY

It was a very moving burial.

MR NEDS

Get the fuck out of here.

BENNY

I left ten minutes ago! I got the best team in the business, Mr Neds! The best team!

Mr Neds walks off, and Benny turns around jogging back towards Derek and Alice. At the last minute, Mr Neds turns around and yells at Benny.

MR NEDS

For the last time, Benny. I'm your father. Stop calling me, Mr Neds!

Mr Neds' phone starts ringing, and he answers the call.

MR NEDS

Oh, thank you! Yes, she was such a wonderful woman. You couldn't make it, no worries. She probably wouldn't have wanted you here anyways.

CUT TO:

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