

## GRANDPA GANJA'S EMPORIUM

(Scientology)

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FADE IN:

EXT. NIGHT. View of Grandpa Ganja's Emporium. It's nearly dark and tokers lounge about in front of the club just before closing.

INT. CLUB.

Usual scene. CHESS PLAYERS in place, EARL and BETH sit at the table with coffee, GG sells pot to client. Several others have coffee, smoke, etc. GUTARIST plays softly.

GG

(holds baggie open  
for client who sniffs pot)  
...a hint of chocolate. It's a special  
blend from Jamaica. They say a  
hit of this stuff can make a blind  
man walk or a crippled man see.

CLIENT

(pointing to blind EARL)  
Does he smoke this pot?

GG

Earl doesn't have to; he can already walk.

CLIENT

I've got a bad prostate. Damn thing's  
the size of an orange. Is this pot  
good for prostate trouble?

GG

Guaranteed. You smoke enough of  
this stuff and you won't even know  
you have a prostate.

CLIENT

That good, eh? Okay, I'll take an  
ounce - and throw in some of  
that hash there.

(points)

GG

A wise choice, sir. You'll be right  
as rain within a fortnight.

GG puts the baggie on the table and takes small plastic bag  
from a large glass jar.

GG (cont'd)

There you go. That'll be \$300  
for the pot and a \$100 more for  
the hash.

CLIENT

(counts cash)

How do you decide what to charge  
for pot?

GG

Same way every business does:  
we charge whatever the traffic will  
bear—then we cut it by 50% because  
we're secular humanists.

CLIENT

Secular humanists?

GG

It means we're not assholes.

(beat, takes money)

Remember, you have to be stoned  
24/7 with this pot. If you come  
down the pot loses its power and  
it won't work.

CLIENT

24/7, eh?

(looks at baggie,  
grins happily)

I'm 76 years old but I think  
I can handle it.

GG

That's the spirit!

(CLIENT starts out,  
GG calls)

Come back when you need a refill.

GG goes into the backroom as the NUNS appear at the front door.

BETH

It's the sisters, Earl.

EARL

They back already? They got enough pot last week for all the sisters and the choir, too.

NUNS at table.

BETH

Good evening, ladies. How are things at the parish?

1<sup>st</sup> NUN

Very busy. We've had a huge influx of sinners this week.

2<sup>nd</sup> NUN

They were mostly politicians. The Republicans held a big rally at the Civic Center and they all came in for confession.

1<sup>st</sup> NUN

We burned up a pound of pot trying to raise their levels of consciousness before confessing but it was hopeless.

2<sup>nd</sup> NUN

Two senators and a judge reached the level of a lab rat for a minute but they couldn't maintain it.

1<sup>st</sup> NUN

And you never saw such a bunch! Liars and thieves, bribe takers, grafters, knaves and blackguards...!

2<sup>nd</sup> NUN

...the bishop thinks one of them stole his watch...

EARL

Why didn't you give 'em a good whipping?

2<sup>nd</sup> NUN

We did. I wore out my whip and had to borrow one from a dominatrix in another parish.

1<sup>st</sup> NUN

And it doesn't help, anyway. We're supposed to save souls but the only soul a politician has is on his shoes.

BETH

I'm not surprised. The average politician is so crooked he could hide behind a corkscrew.

EARL

I say you're wasting good pot. Let 'em lie in confession and they'll go to hell where they belong.

1<sup>st</sup> NUN

(sighs)

I'm afraid hell is just a metaphor nowadays; nobody believes in it anymore.

2<sup>nd</sup> NUN

If people stop believing in something, it doesn't exist, you know.

1<sup>st</sup> NUN

(nods)

The same with Purgatory. People won't pay for prayers and masses to get out of it since they found out we made it all up.

2<sup>nd</sup> NUN

And Limbo. What do they do with all the unbaptized babies now?

1<sup>st</sup> NUN

We have to run bingo games and sell dispensations just to pay the rent.

2<sup>nd</sup> NUN

Shades of Martin Luther!

BETH

(pointing to the  
poor box)

Well, you've still got the money  
from the poor box.

1<sup>st</sup> NUN

Sure, but it's never enough. Poor  
people don't have a lot of money,  
you know. There's hardly enough  
here to keep us in, uh, medicine.

2<sup>nd</sup> NUN

That's right. The bad economy has  
been hard on the Church. The pope  
even might sell some of his jewels.  
That would raise \$100 billion right  
there.

1<sup>st</sup> NUN

(aghast)

Surely, he wouldn't sell all of them!

2<sup>nd</sup> NUN

No, no, he'll still have lots of  
jewels left. Just the ones in the  
small warehouse.

EARL

The pope has a warehouse full of jewels?

1<sup>st</sup> NUN

(smugly)

The pope has three warehouses full of  
jewels.

All are stunned and look it.

2<sup>nd</sup> NUN

(box on table)

Anyway, we need to restock our supplies.  
We've got a used-car salesmen's  
convention coming up next week.

BETH

Your timing is perfect; it must  
have been divinely inspired.

2<sup>nd</sup> NUN

Gee, you think so? I mean,  
it just came out of the blue.  
Sr. Mary Martyr finished  
off a bong of Wowie Maui and she got  
this kind of funny look on her  
face and she said, "I think we need  
more pot."

(to 1<sup>st</sup> NUN)

Didn't she say that, Sr. Dolorosa?

1<sup>st</sup> NUN

(nods)

Those very words.

EARL

(piously)

That sounds like God's work to me,  
all right.

BETH

We're having a sale on some  
chocolate-flavored Jamaican pot  
for just \$300 an ounce. They say  
this was Bob Marley's favorite.

1<sup>st</sup> NUN

Oh, I love his music!

2<sup>nd</sup> NUN

We'll take eight ounces.

1<sup>st</sup> NUN

And six ounces of the Mexican.

BETH

(getting pot)

That comes to \$2880.

1<sup>st</sup> NUN

(dumps poor box,  
counts)

Eight, nine, ten...

GG emerges from the backroom.

GG

Good afternoon, ladies. How are the bishop's heebie-jeebies doing?

2<sup>nd</sup> NUN

Very well, thank you.  
In fact, he's already 50% cured.

1<sup>st</sup> NUN

Yes, the pot cured the heebies and now he just has the jeebies.

EARL

(thinking)

Are jeebies always plural? Or can you have just one jeebie?

GG

Good question. If you cure 'em, won't you finally have a single jeebie left just before the cure kicks in?

BETH

Or can you have the heebies without the jeebies?

1<sup>st</sup> NUN

I never heard of anyone having just the heebies.

2<sup>nd</sup> NUN

Or just the jeebies.

EARL

(shudders)

You know, I think I'm getting the heebie-jeebies just by talking about 'em.

GG

(Shudders)

Me, too. I'm sorry I brought it up.

1<sup>st</sup> NUN

(picking up pot)

Well, we have to be getting back. The bishop gets all jittery if he starts to come down.

EARL  
Doesn't everybody?

CAMERA on the NUNS as they start out. Both shudder.

RICO, JASON, JACK and EDDIE come in as the NUNS leave.

GG  
Ah, here's my panel now.

BETH  
(calling)  
Last call, folks, We close in five minutes.

Customers look up, stand, begin to move door ward.

EARL  
(looks around)  
Yeah, it's getting dark, all right.

BETH  
You can see the light?

EARL  
Beth, I saw the light a long time ago. You don't need eyes to see the light.

BETH  
No, but you do need a brain. Too many people have eyes and no brains.

BETH is at the door and she locks it as the last man leaves. The new arrivals stand about. EARL approaches them.

RICO  
(to EARL)  
Hey, man, how's it going?

EARL  
I'm good. Whose ass we kick tonight?

RICO  
I heard its Rush Limbaugh.

JACK  
Isn't that asshole in jail yet?

EDDIE

Jail's too good for him. He said drug addicts should be shot and now he is one. So we should shoot his ass.

JASON

It's not Rush; he's old news. Nobody takes that asshole seriously.

RICO

Maybe it's Bush's military record?

EDDIE

It can't be, they can't even find most of it.

EARL

And what they have found looks like Jesse James' scratchpad.

JACK

Maybe the subject is philosophy. Kant's Critique of Pure Reason or...

JASON

Philosophy's boring. Ambrose Bierce said philosophy is "a route of many roads leading from nowhere to nothing."

RICO

Brilliant man, Bierce.

GG puts a mike and tape recorder on the table and draws up a chair. BETH puts down a glass with several joints standing upright in it as GG lays a yellow legal pad down with questions e-mailed in from previous panel shows.

BETH

(dramatically).

The world awaits with bated breath.

GG

I detect a note of scorn. Our audience may be small but it's only because we're highly selective. We don't allow morons to tune in, you know.

EDDIE

In fact, we blacked out the entire state of Utah to make sure they wouldn't listen.

GG

That's morons, Eddie, not Mormons. We don't care if Mormons listen.

JACK

As long as they don't move in and lower property values.

When all are settled, GG turns the recorder on.

GG

(formally)

Welcome to the further adventures of the Boys in the Backroom, episode #8, Grandpa Ganja presiding. This is a public service educational program aimed at exposing lies and hypocrisies promulgated by liars and hypocrites.

RICO

That's us!

EDDIE

Let's do it, man!

GG

But first we have our customary ritual smoke to make sure everybody is properly stoned.

(points to joints)

Gentlemen, help your selves.

EARL

(to anyone)

Help myself to what?

RICO

A joint. Here, I'll get you one.

RICO takes a joint, hands it to EARL, and lights it.

JASON

Man, this has got to be the coolest goddam club there ever was!

EDDIE

That's because we use pot instead of Robert's Rules of Order.

GG

You know, every time I've seen somebody invoke Robert's Rules the leaders used it to silence the opposition. Everyone was out of order except the guys in charge.

JASON

So we get stoned and nobody's in charge.

RICO

Yeah, fuck Bob and his Rules.

All raise joints in salute.

GG

Gentlemen, I give you the magical curative powers of the noble marijuana bush. To your good health!

RICO

The medicine that works even when it doesn't!

EARL

Hear, hear!

All smoke and exhale clouds of life-giving pot smoke.

GG

Good. Now, it's time for our panel of experts, regular guys from the neighborhood and experienced pot smokers with opinions on everything.

(camera on motley panel.

All wear eye patches, tattoos, scars, hair, etc.)

Jack and Rico are community college grads...

GG (cont'd)

(they nod)

...they're our resident intellectuals.

(beat)

Eddie has his electricians license...

(EDDIE nods)

and Jason got his GED last year.

(JASON nods)

Okay, so it's not a Meet the Press-type panel. But remember, pot makes you smarter. One hit will raise your IQ by 20 points and these guys have been smoking all afternoon. So expect a lot of intellectual hi-jinks.

(all nod and touch fists,  
etc. GG checks legal pad)

All right, let's start with a question from our last show. This is from JC in Omaha. "Which religion is the most idiotic and what should we do about it?"

JACK

Jesus Christ, that's a tough call.

EARL

Maybe we should start with one of the dumbest ones.

JASON

That would mean Scientology, then.

GG

Good choice. That's fertile ground if you're studying idiots.

EDDIE

You're right there. Did you know the average Scientologist has an IQ of 83?

RICO

Are you sure? Sounds high to me.

EDDIE

I'm sure. I saw it on the Internet.

RICO

Oh, well, if you saw it on the Internet...

All nod, agree.

JASON

I could have told 'em that without any fancy study. Being a Scientologist is one of the criteria for diagnosing imbecility.

RICO

Tom Cruise is a Scientologist.

JACK

So is John Travolta.

GG

Well, that settles it, then.

EARL

It's not even a real religion; it's just a cult with money.

EDDIE

You could say that about the Catholic Church.

JASON

Sure, but it wasn't invented 50 years ago by a sci-fi writer.

RICO

Yeah, L. Ron Hubbard made it all up, for Christ's sake.

GG

And that's the definition of a cult. A guy dreams up a new way to bamboozle the ignorant, buys a tent and some sawdust, and bango! you've got a brand-new religion.

JASON

Scientology never had any miracles, did it?

GG

It's a miracle they haven't been run out of town, if you ask me.

RICO

I say, no miracles, no religion.

JACK

Yeah, if a religion doesn't have any miracles, how do we know it's legit?

GG

He's right. If Travolta could raise up a dead man or two, why, I'd sign up with 'em on the spot.

EARL

They don't have any miracles because they can't work any.

RICO

Why don't they just fake miracles like the Catholics?

JACK

Yeah, they could claim Tom Cruise walks on water. Nobody has to see him do it; they just say he does.

JASON

Would people believe that?

RICO

Sure. Nobody ever saw Jesus walk on any water, did they?

EDDIE

They could use Photoshop to make fake pictures of Cruise walking across Lake Michigan.

GG

Maybe the Scientologists could find a rust spot that looks like Travolta and claim it's a miracle. The Catholics have used that one for centuries.

JASON

Or maybe Hubbard could rise from the dead like Lazarus in the Bible..

GG

That wasn't a miracle. Scholars found out there was a field of burning marijuana bushes next to Lazarus' tomb and it was the smoke from the pot that woke him up.

EDDIE

Well, that's a lot more plausible than this miracle bullshit.

RICO

Maybe somebody could find a Scientologist with an IQ over 74—that would be a miracle.

JACK

That's all it would take. Tom Cruise walking on water would legitimize Scientology so it could be taught in place of evolution in our schools.

JASON

Scientologists are good at raising money and bullshit, though.

GG

That's right. They recruit rich guys and brainwash 'em to get their money.

EDDIE

That's what they did to Travolta and Cruise.

EARL

They didn't brainwash Travolta and Cruise; all they needed was a light rinsing. Neither of 'em had any sense to start with.

EARL

It pays off, though. I heard they took Travolta for ten million bucks and two of his airplanes.

RICO

Are there any poor Scientologists?

GG

No. Poor people can't sign up; it's in their Constitution. You have to be a Republican and believe in Creationism.

RICO

But let's be fair. Scientologists do a lot of good things, too.

JACK

Yeah, like polygamy. Those guys can have 10 or 15 wives each.

GG

Those are Mormons and you have to live in Utah.

EDDIE

What?

GG

The Mormons are the ones who can have extra wives.

JASON

And the Muslims, too. Osama Bin Laden has 20 or 30 wives.

EARL

Maybe that's why he's so fucked up. Most guys are fucked up and they only have one wife.

GG

Christians can have a lot of wives but only one at a time. We call that serial monogamy.

EDDIE

Okay, so we know Scientologists are idiots. The question is, what do we do about 'em?

JASON

I say we send out 10,000 roving  
bands of nuns armed with sticks to  
beat 'em back into shape.

GG

(shaking head)

We can't do that. Roving bands of  
armed nuns are against the Geneva  
Convention. We'd be tried for war crimes.

EARL

If nuns are illegal, why not send  
thousands of guys out wearing white  
shirts and riding bikes to convert  
'em to secular humanism? They could  
trick their way into a house and  
refuse to leave until the assholes sign up.

GG

No good. People would think they're  
Mormons; they'd never let 'em in the house.

RICO

We could infiltrate their covens  
and undermine 'em from within.  
Sow seeds of unbelief. Hint that  
L. Ron Hubbard failed science in  
school and may have been a pedophile.

EDDIE

We could round 'em up like we did the  
Japanese-Americans in WWII. Just ship  
their asses out to Manzanar.

JASON

Can we still do that?

RICO

Sure, you can do anything under  
the Patriot Act. Just call 'em  
terrorists and give 'em all life  
without parole. No trial, no  
lawyers, no evidence, no witnesses.

GG

And not much justice, either.

JACK

Why don't we blackmail 'em? Threaten to tell everybody how the Scientologists dressed up as Indians and killed a wagon train load of settlers in the Mountain Meadows Massacre?

GG

That was the Mormons who did that.

JASON

Are you sure?

GG

Yep. 1857. Mormons killed 120 settlers and blamed the Indians. Brigham Young ran the whole operation but he framed another guy and had him shot.

JACK

Okay, then, let's blackmail the Mormons.

GG

We can't do that. Blackmail is against the law.

EARL

So is murdering settlers.

EDDIE

Well, Christians killed a lot of Indians, too.

RICO

But that's different. The Indians were on land that we needed. Congress said it's okay to kill Indians if they're in your way.

JACK

Is that in the Constitution?

JASON

Gen. Custer thought so.

EARL

But Sitting Bull didn't agree.

GG

Nobody's killing Indians these days, not even Republicans. I mean, who would run the casinos? We'd have to drive all the way to Vegas to play a slot machine.

EDDIE

Okay, but if we don't stop the Scientologists they'll overrun the country and our national IQ will fall below sea level.

JASON

That can't happen. If people get any dumber even the Scientologists won't want 'em.

GG

We haven't answered our question yet. What do we do about Scientologists?

JACK

Put their pictures up in the post office and offer a reward dead or alive.

EDDIE

Arm the citizenry with torches and pitchforks and chase the bastards out of town.

GG

Germany just convicted 'em for fraud and hit 'em with a heavy fine.

EARL

That's it. Pass a law against being a Scientologist. Drive 'em underground and make 'em live in caves like the early Christians.

JASON

Or we could just build a wall around Utah and turn the whole goddam state into a big prison and never let anybody in or out.

RICO

You can't lock up over a million people  
in one place and get away with it  
nowadays.

JASON

Sure, you can. Look at Gaza.

BETH

(interrupting)

Anybody want more coffee? Or a cookie?

GG

Good idea. Give everybody a cookie.

BETH goes to fetch the cookie box.

GG

(checks time)

We're out of time, boys, and no  
solution in sight, but at least  
we've warned people about what  
the Scientologists are up to.

(to camera)

If one of 'em moves into your  
neighborhood, alert the authorities.

EARL

(to camera)

And don't watch movies with Travolta  
or Cruise in 'em. They might be  
contagious.

GG

(to camera)

And if you know any Scientologists, try  
to turn 'em on to some pot, as pot is  
an antidote for ignorance.

(beat)

So that's all for this segment of the  
Boys in the Backroom. We'll tackle  
another controversial topic next time  
so be sure to tune in.

(camera on Boys as

they raise fists, etc)

And remember, you can get a recording of

GG (cont'd)  
 this show by sending two fat joints  
 to Grandpa Ganja. I'm in the book.  
 Allow six months for delivery as I'm  
 often stoned and tend to put things off.

GG turns the mike off and all relax, light up roaches, etc.  
 BETH comes from backroom.

BETH  
 (shakes head)  
 You're going to have 500 pissed-off  
 Scientologists show up here at  
 any moment.

GG  
 Oh, yeah? Well, they can't intimidate  
 Grandpa Ganja, by God. Isn't that right,  
 boys?

EDDIE  
 Damn right!

JASON  
 You bet your ass!

JACK  
 One for all and all for one!

RICO  
 You can count on us, Gramps!

EDDIE  
 (waffling, checks watch)  
 Hey, I just remembered! I'm late for an  
 appointment. I've got to get going.

RICO  
 Uh, yeah, me, too. Uh, I've got some  
 stops to make and, uh...

JASON  
 Wow! Is it that time already?

JACK  
 Is this Thursday?! Oh, no! I'm  
 supposed to take my brother to the  
 airport tonight!

GG

You don't have a brother, Jack.

JACK

I do too! His name is Jim and he lives in, uh, Texas. His plane leaves at, uh, 10:15

JASON

I'd like to stay and help you with those 500 pissed-off Scientologists, Gramps, but...

GG

Hey, what happened to that one for all crap? You can't leave me here to face 500 pissed-off Scientologists with just Beth and Earl!

EARL

Who said anything about Earl? I've got to pick my car up at the shop.

GG

(sarcastic)

So it's just me and Beth, is it?

BETH

No, it's just you and 500 pissed-off Scientologists. Tell Travolta I said hi.

The boys are at the front door.

EDDIE

If those Scientologists give you any trouble, Gramps, you let us know and we'll, uh...

JASON

Damn right!

RICO

You said it, buddy!

EDDIE opens the door a crack and peers cautiously out to see if the coast is clear. They crowd through the door in a bunch and scurry off.

GG

Go on, run for your lives. See if I care. Grandpa Ganja doesn't need any help. Any Scientologists show up around here and I'll knock 'em out. They'll rue the day they came after me, by God!

EARL

They gone?

GG

Yeah.

BETH

(at door)

If they do show up, make a run for it. Maybe you can get out the back way before they break the door down.

GG

Impossible! Grandpa Ganja never runs from danger! I'll meet 'em one at a time or all in a bunch.

EARL

I don't know about you guys, but as a black American I have a special aversion to mob scenes. Guys wearing sheets or pissed-off Scientologists all mean the same thing: It's time for a black man to be moving on.

BETH

Let's go, Earl. See you tomorrow, Gramps. I hope.

EARL

I'll drive.

They leave.

GG

Humph! No balls. Got to stand tall and look 'em in the eye and let 'em know who's in charge.

(moves to the door and  
peeks out. Headlights flash,  
brakes squeal. GG slams  
the door closed, locks it)

On the other hand, discretion *is* the better part of valor! I'll just duck out the back way and go for help.

GG hurries from the room without a backward glance, as the GUTARIST plays retreat music.

THE END