

## GRANDPA GANJA'S EMPORIUM

(Seminar)

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FADE IN:

EXT. DAY. 9:45 am. GG arrives for an early seminar for new patients. He carries a cardboard box under his arm and enters the Club.

INT.

BETH is putting fresh coffee out with a box of regular cookies.

BETH

You're late. I thought you forgot today's seminar.

GG

Grandpa Ganja never forgets. I just had to go back for my demos.

BETH

Because you forgot them.

GG

Nonsense. My memory is excellent. I remember a lot of stuff that never even happened.

BETH

(pours coffee)

Here, have some mocha java and see if you can remember where you put the storeroom key.

GG

It's behind the cookie dough. I hid it from Earl so he won't pass out any more free samples to his pals.

BETH

You hid the key from a blind man?

GG

No, I hid the key from Earl "Light-Fingers" Bailey, notorious freeloader and potnapper.

BETH

There's no such word as potnapper.

GG

There is now. I just made it up.

(beat)

And here the miscreant comes.

Door opens and EARL enters.

EARL

(they're on his  
right; he looks left)

Aha! Talking about me, were you?

BETH

We're over here, Earl.

EARL

(looks right)

I know where you are. I can sense your presence from heat waves on my skin.

GG

I don't know about heat waves but you're sure as hell paranoid. Next you'll think people are hiding stuff on you.

EARL

(shakes head)

It's impossible for a black person to be paranoid; our fears always turn out to be real.

(leans in)

Now, what'n hell are you hiding on me?

GG

Hey, do I look like a guy who'd hide stuff on a blind man?

EARL

How do I know what you look like?

BETH  
Touché!

GG  
Oh, yeah? Well...

Door opens and BIKER BILL enters. He looks like he came from central casting.

BIKER BILL  
Hey, man.

GG  
Bill. How's it going, buddy?

BIKER BILL  
Well, okay, except for Red.

EARL  
What happened to Red?

BIKER BILL  
Got busted. He was havin' a debate with a neocon and the asshole attacked him.

BETH  
(incredulous)  
The neocon attacked *Red*?

GG  
Jesus Christ, was this guy King Kong?

BIKER BILL  
Red said that's what happened and there weren't any witnesses, so...

GG  
Nobody saw any of this?

BIKER BILL  
Oh, a lot of people saw what happened but nobody wanted to talk about it.

GG  
It's against the law to intimidate witnesses, Bill.

BIKER BILL  
(feigned naïveté)

It is?

Everybody laughed and BETH broke out a baggie of fat joints. She held the baggie while they took one.

BETH  
That one's worth a smoke on the house.

EARL  
We get free joints for witty remarks?  
I may never have to pay for pot again!

GG  
You never pay for pot anyway, Earl.

EARL  
I know but now I won't feel guilty  
about it.

BIKER BILL  
But you'll still *be* guilty.

EARL  
(to BIKER BILL)  
You guys shouldn't talk about guilt.  
I tried to join your club and you  
blackballed me. That's racist, you know.

GG  
Wrong again, Earl. They've got black  
guys in their club right now.

EARL  
Oh, yeah? Why would they reject me  
if it wasn't because I'm black?

BETH  
Uh, because you can't ride a bike?

EARL  
What!

BIKER BILL

That's it, Earl. We ride Harleys.  
Whoever saw a biker without a Harley?  
It's an image thing. Big bike, all that  
leather, the wild look, an ominous air.  
You have to ride so you can escape  
from things real fast and..

BETH

What are you escaping from?

BIKER BILL

Each other.

GG

That's why they call it a bikers club,  
Earl. Everybody has to ride a Harley.

BIKER BILL

Hell, yes, you'd be elected in a minute if  
you could ride. Everybody in the club  
likes you—except for the schizophrenics,  
of course.

GG

There you go, Earl. Almost half of  
the Hells Angels like you.

EARL

(somewhat mollified)

Oh, well. If that's the case, why..

(beat)

Still, I find it disturbing that the  
schizophrenics are racists.

GG

Even worse, they all have multiple  
personalities so there's a lot more  
of them than meets the eye.

BIKER BILL

That's true. I read where they put a  
dozen schizophrenics in a ward  
on Friday and when they went back  
on Monday 36 people were living there.

BETH

All that must confuse the census takers.

GG

Now I'm starting to confuse myself.  
Let's light up here and take this  
conversation and ourselves to newer  
heights.

BETH

To new promontories!

BIKER BILL

Hear! Hear!

EARL

To new horizons!

All look at Earl, shrug, and inhale. On exhaling, Earl  
turns to Biker Bill.

EARL (cont'd)

Uh, say, Bill, maybe I could come over  
and hang out at the club. You know,  
I could be like a guest and add a  
little class to the place.

BIKER BILL

Oh, I don't know, Earl. We can't have  
just anybody hanging around. Why, you  
might steal some of our secrets or...

GG

You've got secrets?

EARL

And how the hell am I going to steal  
'em, anyway?

BIKER BILL

(defensively)

Some of our secrets are audible.

EARL

Man, what? You think I'll wear a wire?

BIKER BILL

(giving in)

Okay, it's a bit irregular but let me  
run it by the steering committee and

BIKER BILL (cont'd)  
see if the schizophrenics will go along  
with it.

GG  
Good. Earl gets a bunch of new friends  
and the bikers get Earl.

BETH  
But a majority of these friends are  
schizophrenics.

GG  
So what? That's still a better crowd  
than the losers he hangs out with now.

BIKER BILL  
(hesitantly)  
Uh, wouldn't that be you guys?

GG  
What?

BIKER BILL  
Anyway, I'm trying to raise bail for  
Red. It's only until he gets out. He's  
got some cash stashed in the desert.

BETH  
Why don't you go dig up the stashed  
cash and pay the bond?

BIKER BILL  
Because Red doesn't trust me. He  
thinks if I dig up the stash I'll split  
with the cash.

EARL  
Would you?

BIKER BILL  
(shrugs)  
Yeah, probably.

All nod in agreement and mutter about life's unfairness.  
Smoke swirls, guitar strums softly.

GG  
(comes to)  
How much is that bail?

BIKER BILL  
Five grand.

GG  
How about if I contribute \$500?  
(writing check)

BIKER BILL  
Cool, Gramps. You know Red's good for it.  
(starts out)

GG  
(calling)  
No problem. If Red doesn't pay off  
I'll have Earl kick his ass for him.

EARL  
(shadow boxing)  
I'll dazzle his ass with footwork,  
blind him with speed! I'll hit him  
in the chest so hard he'll walk  
backwards for a week!

Bill shakes his head and leaves.

BETH  
Earl, you've never seen Red, have you?

EARL  
No. Why?

BETH  
Nothing. No reason.

GG  
I'll tell Red you're looking for him,  
Earl.

EARL  
Uh, no, that's okay. I'll, uh, tell  
him myself when I see him.

BETH  
And when do you think that will be?

EARL

As soon as I get back from Lourdes.

Door opens, TOM enters with walker and sings out.

TOM

Is this the place?

GG

If you're here for the seminar, yes.

TOM

Do you give free pot with the seminar?

BETH

Yes, sir.

TOM

Good. Then I'm here for the seminar.  
Got the goddam lumbago. Can't walk  
worth a damn. Read that marijuana  
can fix lumbago.

GG

Wouldn't surprise me. Pot's a real  
miracle drug. Marijuana can cure almost  
anything except actual death. How  
about some coffee?

TOM

Is it hot? I don't like cold coffee.

BETH

It's hot. Here, let me get you a cup.

BETH tends to the coffee as the door opens and several others enter including three old ladies & two geezers. JAN is in a wheelchair.

GG

Welcome to Grandpa's Ganja Emporium  
where the medicine works even  
when it doesn't.

The visitors look about suspiciously and stand bunched in the center of the room while they reconnoiter the terrain, as it were. All are in their 80s while Tour Guide ED is 94

and wears inch-thick glasses. They use canes, a wheelchair, walkers and wear the passage of time like a communal cloak.

BETH

We have coffee and cookies if you'd care for any.

Several nod and take seats as BETH readies coffee.

GG

(aside, hands box)

Here, set this stuff up, Earl

EARL

These the designer cookies?

GG

Yeah.

EARL looks around surreptitiously and slips two fat cookies into his pocket. GG is 3 feet away and sees him.

GG

I can see you stealing cookies, Earl.

EARL

(outraged)

What?! You're spying on a blind man!  
Have you no shame? I'm calling Homeland Security on your ass for illegal surveillance of a U.S. citizen!

GG

You don't have to steal cookies.  
If you want a cookie just ask.

EARL

(slyly)

Okay, can I have a cookie?

GG

No.

EARL

(points)

Hey! What's that?

(slips cookie into pocket)

GG  
I didn't look, Earl.

EARL  
(starts off)  
Good, then you didn't see anything.  
(bites cookie)

GG shakes his head and turns back to his seminar group as BETH draws near.

GG  
(cheerily)  
And how is everybody from the, uh...

BETH  
(sotto voce)  
Sunnydale Home.

GG  
...Sunnydale Home?

BABS  
Keep it short, mister. We don't have much time.

GG  
(eyeing them)  
Yes, I can see that...  
(beat)

EARL  
(aside)  
Shit, even *I* can see that.

RON  
When does the show start?

BABS  
Do we get free samples?

JAN  
How about a senior citizen discount?

GG  
Whoa! You're getting the cart before the horse. First things first. I need your doctor's letter. We can't give

GG (cont'd)  
anybody marijuana unless it's for a  
medical reason.

(collects letters)

Good. Let's see what we have.

(sorts thru them)

Hmm. One bad spleen, one insomniac,  
one case of leprosy...

(all move apart

and eye others warily)

...one heebie-jeebies, two amnesiacs...

All pretty routine.

(stops and looks

more closely)

I notice all your letters are signed  
by Dr. Slivitz.

RON

He lives at the Home.

BABS

He's 99 years old.

TOM

He was a college professor.

GG

What did he teach?

BABS

English.

TOM

But he's a real doctor. Says so on  
his business card.

GG

Oh, he has a card, has he? That's  
okay, then. Just checking. We can't  
be too careful, you know.

AMY raises her hand.

AMY

We all have different problems.  
Can marijuana fix all those  
things?

GG

Pot can fix most of 'em. If you've got a problem it can't fix, pot will make you forget you have it.

ED

(papers up)

We need a field trip!

GG

Isn't this a field trip?

ED

(shakes head)

It has to be official. If we go on an official field trip the Home gets bonus points and the feds renew their grant.

GG

And who are you?

ED

I'm Ed. I'm the Tour Guide.

BABS

Humph. Some guide. We got lost four times on the way here and the Home's only a mile away.

ED

Oh, yeah?

RON

Ed's also known for his quick wit.

ED

Damn right. I've matched wits with some of the quickest minds in the world and I won half of those contests.

AMY

So, would that make you some kind of half-wit?

GG

Now, look, folks, I think it's time we all get stoned and moved on before

GG (cont'd)  
something irregular happens and I get  
arrested for elder abuse.

TOM  
So, what about the field trip?

GG  
(exasperated)  
Look, I can't... What if somebody gets  
hurt? Or killed? I could be sued into  
penury.

ED  
(waves papers)  
The Home grants immunity to Tour  
Guide leaders. It's in the fine print.  
And if we all get back alive you get  
a bonus, too.

GG  
(suspiciously)  
What kind of bonus?

TOM  
They give you a 10% discount when  
you check in.

GG  
Check in? Are you kidding? I don't  
have any plans to hang out in some old-  
folks' home.

JAN  
(wryly)  
Nobody ever does.

RON  
Yeah, you think Sunnydale was a  
career goal for us?

GG  
(hand up)  
Okay, here's the plan. We'll go on  
with the seminar while Beth checks  
with my lawyer. If he OKs it we'll  
have an official field trip. How's that?

BABS

Great. Now where's the smoke?

JAN

Yeah, it's later than you think.

GG

(to BETH)

Call Andy. I've got a question for him.

(to EARL)

Earl, let's start everybody off with a cookie. Pass the box around.

EARL

(looks in the box)

They're all gone!

(looks around)

We've been robbed! Don't anybody move!

I'll call 911!

(starts out)

GG

(grabs his arm)

You ate them, didn't you?

EARL

I did not! I hid 'em. I thought they might fall into the wrong hands.

GG

Where'd you hide 'em?

EARL

(pulls cookies from pockets, dusts off lint)

Where they'd be safe.

GG

(to group)

These are marijuana cookies. Each one has enough THC in it to raise your IQs by 20 points and explain the inexplicable. I suggest you take little bites until you get a sense of...

He stops as his audience wolfs down their cookies and lean forward expectantly for the stoning to commence.

RON

When does it start?

GG

When you took the first bite.

AMY

I don't feel anything.

RON

I think it's a fake.

GG

That's because pot's slow acting when you eat it but it lasts longer. If you're in a hurry try one of these!

He holds aloft a handful of fat joints rolled in vari-colored papers and all draw back at the sight.

ED

Cigarettes!

BABS

And gift-wrapped!

TOM

We smoke these?

AMY

(anxiously)

Isn't smoking against the law?

GG

That's tobacco, Amy. Pot is medicine. You can smoke pot anywhere because inhaling the smoke is therapeutic. A sick person on Willie Nelson's bus could get well on the spot.

(passes joints)

When you light up inhale a little smoke and hold it for a few seconds. Repeat that three or four times and think pure thoughts.

All nod and go about the business of lighting and smoking their joints. The usual smoky atmosphere is further

beclouded by six blazing joints spewing out enough THC to stun a linebacker. The ritual is the same. They take a hit, exhale, cock their heads and wait for the expected high.

TOM

Nothing's happening.

JAN

Same here.

ED

Maybe we didn't smoke enough.

AMY

Or maybe we're immune to marijuana...

RON

We can't all be immune. What are the odds?

Then somebody giggles and somebody says "What?" and everyone laughs as six minds slip as one into a different gear. They grin and laugh at inanities and high-five each other and even forget there's a leper among them. JAN forgets herself and takes a few steps around her wheelchair and all agree it's a miracle.

As this goes on lawyer ANDY FINNIGAN enters with briefcase in hand and heads for the table. He wears a ponytail and round glasses and a lawyerly air befitting one of the sharper legal minds in town.

ANDY

What's up? The feds finally nail your ass?

GG

It's not about me. It's them.

(nods at stoners)

They want a field trip and I'd like to help 'em out but I'm not sure that's a good idea.

ANDY surveys the stoned old-timers as they plow through a tray of junk food BETH knew they'd appreciate.

ANDY

Are you kidding? I'd give odds they

ANDY (cont'd)  
don't all make it home. Look at em.  
(points at ED)  
That old duffer there is wheezing like  
The Little Train That Could.

GG  
That's Ed. He's the Tour Guide.

ANDY  
With those glasses? He doesn't look like he  
could find the tour bus.

GG  
So, if somebody gets hurt I'm stuck?

ANDY  
In spades. These guys are walking  
lawsuits. Any one of 'em could fall down  
and break two or three bones and  
they'd hold you responsible.

GG  
Ed says the Home gives the Tour Guide  
immunity. He's got it right there.  
(points at papers)

ANDY  
He does, eh? Let me see that.  
(takes papers, reads)  
Hmm. Eureka!

GG  
You've learned how to test gold for  
its purity?

ANDY  
The loophole. There's always a loophole.  
See here? It says the Tour Guide has  
immunity so you just make Ed the Tour  
Guide and you're off the hook.

GG  
I can do that?

ANDY  
Sure, just have Ed fill the form out  
and sign it instead of you. You fill

ANDY (cont'd)  
in the info about your business  
and that's it.

GG  
Brilliant! How can I ever repay you?

ANDY  
Easy. Any Panama Red left?

GG  
Sold out but I've got some Kung Pao  
that's very popular.

ANDY  
I'll take it. And save some of the Red  
when it comes in.

Quarter-ounce in hand, ANDY stops at the door and looks  
back at the partying seniors. He shrugs and leaves.

And it was so ordered. GG rounded up the seminar and had  
BIKER BILL drive them home, as they were thoroughly stoned  
and unable to drive themselves. GG followed to retrieve  
BIKER BILL. It was agreed that he would take the seminar on  
a pot buying outing the next night to add a little dash to  
their lives and score some stock for his store at the same  
time.

EXT. NIGHT. CITY STREET.

GG pulls into the parking lot of the old-folks' Home where  
the six inmates are waiting for him next to a large van. ED  
is holding a city map three inches from his eyes as he  
scans the local geography.

GG  
Am I late?

RON  
Naw, we're just early.

AMY  
It's all the same to us. Early,  
late. We're not going anywhere.

ED  
At least, not right away.

JAN

We hope.

BABS

We won't be out past ten o'clock,  
will we? I go to bed at ten, you  
know.

Others nod in agreement, point to watches, etc.

TOM

What's with the cane?

GG

(reveals hidden blade)

For luck. I always take it along  
when I'm buying ganja.

(beat)

Okay, here's the plan. We hit the  
East Side where the dealers are  
and look for a guy named Paco.

JAN

What if Paco's not there?

GG

Paco's always there. It's a generic  
name; all dealers are named Paco.

RON

What if the dealer is a Swede?

GG

There aren't any Swedish dealers,  
but if there were his name would  
still be Paco.

(beat)

Now, the first thing is...

ED

What's Paco look like?

GG

(looks at him)

Why?

ED

I'm the lookout. I have to know what  
I'm looking out for.

GG

I'll point him out for you.

ED

Right!

(assumes an Indian  
scout pose and scans  
the side of the truck)

GG

Now, the first rule is to stick  
together so the gangbangers won't  
pick us off one at a time.

(they close ranks  
and look about  
nervously)

The second rule is, if there's any  
trouble it's every man for himself.

RON

Is that it?

JAN

Good. That's already more'n most  
of us can remember.

GG

One more thing.

(Mace cans from pocket,  
hands 'em around)

This is Mace. If there's any  
violence let 'em have a good shot  
of this stuff and run like hell.

(beat)

Okay, follow me.

(starts into van)

AMY

(to JAN)

What's with this run like hell crap?  
Most of us can barely totter.

JAN

It means we're probably screwed.

They follow the others into the van.

NIGHT. CITY STREET.

The van pulls to the curb on a sinister looking city street and GG et al climb out with some trepidation on the part of the seminarians. They ignore GG's everyman-for-himself remarks and bunch together with canes, crutches, and Mace at the ready.

GG surveys the scene with a practiced eye and ED helps him. There is no sign of life, the street dark, the silence deep.

ED

(studying a wall)

It's quiet.

GG

It always is just before the fun starts.

(he addresses his charges)

This is where the dealers hang out. Keep your eyes open and your Mace handy and follow my lead. Remember, stick together and run like hell if there's any trouble.

BABS

Right.

AMY

Let's go!

They move off in a cluster and peer about nervously as they go. They reach an alleyway and bunch up there as they all try to peek around the corner. GG turns and scowls as he pushes the others back, straightens his lapels, and steps around the corner and starts down the alley with his bunched troops bringing up the rear.

As they approach a patch of light from a nearby building several forms emerge from the shadows and confront them.

All are tall and blond and wear neat trousers and shirts with ties and speak with Swedish accents.

1<sup>st</sup> SWEDE

Halt!

The group stops and stares and GG recognizes them.

GG

Jesus Christ, they're Swedes!

2<sup>nd</sup> SWEDE

Ja, we are Swedish and this is our alley. What are you doing here?

RON

We're looking for Paco.

1<sup>st</sup> SWEDE

I am Paco.

(turns to others)

And this is Paco and so is he...

JAN

We want to buy some pot.

3<sup>rd</sup> SWEDE

How much money do you have?

GG

How much pot do you have?

2<sup>nd</sup> SWEDE

You give us the money and we'll go get your pot.

GG

No money until we see pot.

1<sup>st</sup> Swede

(produces stick)

There is no pot here. Give us all your money or...

JAN

Oh, no, you don't!

TOM

Let 'em have it, boys!

They whip out their Mace and fire a salvo that scores a direct hit on the Swedes and fills the air with noxious gases. The Swedes stagger back and claw at their eyes as GG rallies his troops.

GG

It's Plan B, boys! Let's go!  
Rendezvous at the van!

ED

Everybody follow me!

He turns and bumps into the wall of the building; TOM turns him around and aims him in the right direction. As they start off one of the Swedes drops a backpack and GG scoops it up as he leaves.

The group rounds the corner of the alley and heads for the van with GG urging more speed and everybody tottering along on their canes, etc. As the group gets down the street, the Swedes stumble around the corner wiping their eyes and in pursuit of the old-timers.

They reach the van and begin pushing and getting in each other's way in trying to get aboard as the Swedes close in on them. All give it up and face the Swedes in a huddled bunch as they arrive. GG stands in front cane in hand.

1<sup>st</sup> Swede

You refuse to cooperate, do you?

GG

Fuck you.

3<sup>rd</sup> SWEDE

You leave us no choice.

The Swedes advance menacingly as GG steps forward and whips out his sword.

GG

You'll have to go through Grandpa  
Ganja first, boys!  
(slashes the air  
with sword)

2<sup>nd</sup> SWEDE

He is only one man! We will  
rush him!

Quick as a flash, GG grabs AMY with an arm around her neck  
and holds his sword at her throat.

GG

One false move and I'll slit this  
old bat's throat!

3<sup>rd</sup> SWEDE

Stand back! He means it!

2<sup>nd</sup> SWEDE

You win! We do not wish to hurt  
the old bat!

AMY

(struggling)

Who are you assholes calling an old  
bat?

GG

Back off or...!

The Swedes throw their sticks down and beat a hasty retreat  
as the old-timers brandish their canes, etc., at them and  
shout threats and insults. GG releases AMY and she turns  
and takes a mighty swing at him with her cane.

AMY

What the hell's the matter with  
you? Are you nuts? What if those  
guys called your bluff, for  
Christ's sake?

GG

(shrugs)

Who said I was bluffing?

AMY stares wide-eyed and slack-jawed at this news. The  
others stop and look at each other, then shrug and start  
into the van. GG absently pulls the dull blade through his  
hand and smiles.

Moments later in the moving van.

ED

We didn't even get any weed.

GG

The hell we didn't. What does this  
look like?

(reaches into backpack,  
brings out a two-pound  
brick)

It looks like a kilo of pot to me!

All cheer and pass the brick around, etc. CAMERA on the  
receding van as they head back to the Home.

The End