

**WHAT HAPPENS HERE**

by

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## WHAT HAPPENS HERE

### Characters

MR. BANKS, 40s-50s, a teacher who has seen it all.

CORY, 17, a high school student who thinks he's seen it all.

ADAM, a sullen teenager.

SYBYL, a pissed-off teenager.

### Time

Present.

### Setting

A high school detention hall, teacher's desk, student desks, and an analog clock on the wall.

**WHAT HAPPENS HERE**

*A high school detention hall, deathly silent. MR. BANKS sits at the desk in front of the room, ramrod straight and hard at work grading papers. The three teenagers are arranged at separate student desks, as far from each other as possible, with CORY closest to the front. The wall clock reads 4:30. MR. BANKS looks up, surveying the students.*

MR. BANKS

Adam, Sybyl, wake up.

*ADAM and SYBYL stir, stretch, slump upright.*

MR. BANKS (CONT'D)

Adam, do you have that math worksheet done for Mr. Ross?

*ADAM pulls a ragged sheet of paper from under his arm and waves in the air like surrender.*

MR. BANKS (CONT'D)

Bring it here, please, on your way out.

*ADAM un-entwines himself from his desk and wends his way to the front, where he drops off the paper and exits.*

MR. BANKS (CONT'D)

Sybyl, how about you?

*SYBYL lifts her head imperiously.*

SYBYL

*(Dripping scorn.)*

Don't have no fucking worksheet. This a non-working detention.

MR. BANKS

*(Matter-of-factly.)*

That language is unacceptable in school, Sybyl. Don't you realize that I can add more time for infractions like that?

SYBYL

Aw--

MR. BANKS

--Say no more, Sybyl, and you're excused.

*SYBYL shuts her mouth, gets up with languid haste and heads for the door. Just past MR. BANKS' desk, she stops and unfolds a severely abused sheet of paper. She turns...*

SYBYL

Mr. Banks, you sign my petition?

MR. BANKS

What?

SYBYL

My petition. To load the cafeteria vending machines with Red Bull and Five-Hour Energy.

MR. BANKS

Sybyl, as much as I would like to energize you, you know I can't do that.

SYBYL

*(Dejected.)*

Yes, sir.

MR. BANKS

Good afternoon, Sybyl.

*SYBYL exits. MR. BANKS carefully stacks the student papers and slides them into his briefcase. He digs out the latest copy of Maxim, leans back in his chair, and puts his feet up on the desk.*

CORY

What about me?

MR. BANKS

*(Without looking up.)*

What about you, Cory.

CORY

When can I get out of here?

MR. BANKS

You got another half hour, you know that.

CORY

Shit.

MR. BANKS

*(Placidly.)*

Watch your fucking language, Cory.

*CORY double-takes.*

CORY

Hey, what you said.

*(Beat, while MR. BANKS ignores him.  
Then, pressing what he thinks is his  
advantage...)*

You can't say stuff like that here.

MR. BANKS

*(Paging appreciatively.)*

Fuck I can't.

CORY

*(Hoots.)*

Wait'll Principal Ebson hears. He going to fire your ass.

MR. BANKS

Principal Ebson hears, I'm going to punch you in the uvula.

CORY

*(Indignantly.)*

You...you're threatening me!

MR. BANKS

Goddamn right I am. And I'd do it too. Make it look like you rear-ended a truckload of telephone poles.

CORY

I don't even have no uvula. That a girl part.

MR. BANKS

Your uvula's in your throat, dipshit. The fleshy knob that hangs down behind the soft palate.

*CORY swallows and moves his tongue  
around, trying to sense if this is  
true.*

MR. BANKS (CONT'D)

You'd know stuff like that if you opened your health textbook.

CORY

Oh, yeah, I think I seen them uvulas in cartoons, when they got their mouth wide open, screaming or shit.

MR. BANKS

You are far better educated than I gave you credit for, Cory. Although you're still a little pissant.

CORY

You know, I don't like how you talking to me.

MR. BANKS

Get used to it. You got another 27 minutes.

CORY

You supposed to be setting a good example.

MR. BANKS

I'm off duty in that regard.

CORY

Well, I don't like it.

MR. BANKS

It's just the two of us, numbnuts. I'd never admit anything, and no one'll believe you.

CORY

Aw, man, that's oppression.

MR. BANKS

*(Laughs.)*

I suppose it is.

CORY

You better hope I don't rise up in rebellion.

MR. BANKS

That I'd like to see. A rebellion of one.

CORY

Me and my friends. We'd all be rebelling together.

MR. BANKS

I count Fergus Panko and that Matthews kid, what's his name?

CORY

Main Street.

MR. BANKS

*(Laughs.)*

Oh, yeah, Terrence Matthews.

CORY

Call him Main Street.

MR. BANKS

Whatever. You're still only a rebellion of three.

*CORY falls back in his seat, knowing this is accurate. He studies MR. BANKS for a moment, then...*

CORY

What you reading, Mr. Banks?

*MR. BANKS ignores him.*

CORY (CONT'D)

Looks like a fancy tittie mag.

*(Beat, waiting for a reaction.)*

Ms. Reynolds know you read them tittie magazines?

MR. BANKS

You're on thin ice, Cory.

CORY

Just wondering what she think, she see you now.

MR. BANKS

Mighty thin ice...

CORY

Just wondering--

MR. BANKS

--Like I said: My fist, right down your throat.

CORY

Aw!

*CORY retreats again.*

CORY (CONT'D)

Why you busting my balls, Mr. Banks. What you got against me?

MR. BANKS

Got nothing against you, Cory. Outside this room, you don't even exist.

CORY

That ain't right. You supposed to care about us. You supposed to be helping.

MR. BANKS

Eight hours a day is enough. Four o'clock comes around, I am just going through the motions.

CORY

How you do that? Just punch out like that. Don't you care about your job? Why'd you even take a job you hate?

MR. BANKS

I don't hate my job. I just know when to turn it off and enjoy my real life.

CORY

Wish I could do that.

MR. BANKS

Could? Come on, you got nothing but a life of your own.

CORY

You call sentenced to high school 'til I'm eighteen a life?  
What kind of life is that.

MR. BANKS

As far as I can tell, your days pass entirely on your terms.  
You're turned off the whole time you're inside these walls.  
You've got it made.

CORY

You don't know nothing about me. You said I don't exist.

MR. BANKS

Yeah, well, by that I meant you're boring.

CORY

Wouldn't be boring if I wasn't bored.

MR. BANKS

You're bored, you're boring--it's another chicken and egg  
question. Only thing with you is you choose to be boring,  
which is the most boring of all.

CORY

Says the man who reads that Maxim, but dresses like a plonk.

MR. BANKS

You have no idea, my man. I am the Clark Kent of Hampton  
High.

CORY

Shit.

*(Beat.)*

And why you so sure about me?

MR. BANKS

I've seen enough.

CORY

Oh, no you ain't.

MR. BANKS

I doubt it.

CORY

You be surprised. I got a life too, you know.

*MR. BANKS lowers his magazine.*

MR. BANKS

Oh, yeah? Really.

CORY

Really. I could show you a thing or two.



MR. BANKS

This ought to be good. Enlighten me. What would surprise me about Cory Huber?

*CORY ponders, unsure how to respond.*

CORY

I got an uncle in Asheville drives stock cars.

MR. BANKS

Do you drive stock cars?

CORY

No.

MR. BANKS

So big deal about your uncle. You're still boring.

CORY

I board.

MR. BANKS

I know that. You already told me you're board.

CORY

No, I mean, I skate. I got a skateboard. Had one since I was a kid. I was airwalking when I was nine.

MR. BANKS

I have no idea what that is.

CORY

It's when you take air off a ramp or a handrail. And when you're up there you grab the nose and kick back and forth like you're walking.

MR. BANKS

Is that impressive?

CORY

Damn straight! And for being only nine and double-kicking? Shit.

MR. BANKS

Huh. Can't really picture it.

CORY

Shit. I do it all the time.

MR. BANKS

Yeah? Where?

CORY

Addison Skate Park mostly. You come by most days after school or on weekends, I be there.

MR. BANKS

The park by the old bakery?

CORY

Yeah, Addison. You should come by.

MR. BANKS

Perhaps. Skateboarding's not really my thing.

CORY

Well, maybe it would be if you tried it. Or watched an expert.

MR. BANKS

Eh.

*MR. BANKS checks the clock. It's only 4:38.*

MR. BANKS (CONT'D)

You know, what, Cory, you're so boring you've bored me too. Why don't you get your ass out of here so I can go home.

CORY

What? You mean it? Leave early?

MR. BANKS

Go on, get the fuck gone.

CORY

Shit, thanks.

*CORY is up quickly and moving for the door.*

MR. BANKS

You owe me two more days, Cory.

CORY

Right, see you tomorrow, Mr. B.

*MR. BANKS watches CORY exit. Then he drops his feet to the floor. He puts the magazine back in his briefcase. He pulls out the student papers and resumes grading them. Fade to black.*

THE END