

# **GRATUITOUS VIOLENCE**

Written by

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**OVER BLACK.**

KITCHEN NOISE, the sounds of POT and PANS CLANGING, scattered conversation and MUSIC playing softly in the background.

**FADE IN:**

**INT. MEL'S DINER - NIGHT**

A 24-hour spot. The place busy.

DONNA (pushing 40 - kind face but tired eyes, heavy make-up) stands over a table with a billfold in hand. Clad in waitress uniform and apron. Name tag pinned to her chest.

She labors a smile.

DONNA  
Can I get you boys anything else  
tonight?

Sitting at the table--

MILO (Early 20s - narrow eyes, pointy features) looks across to GACY (same age - shy demeanor, round-faced).

Milo looks up at Donna, shakes his head.

MILO  
I think we're good.

Donna sets the billfold on the table.

DONNA  
Whenever you're ready.

She takes their empty plates and leaves the table. Across the room at--

**ANOTHER TABLE**

BILL and SYLVIA, obnoxious, uppity Valley types in their mid thirties, wave at Donna as she walks past.

Donna forces a smile. It's obvious this table's been giving her trouble all night.

DONNA (CONT'D)  
Be with you in two seconds...

But Bill tugs at her apron. Donna stops, turns and looks down at this hand, offended.

BILL  
Can we PLEASE get our check?

DONNA  
(delayed, holding back)  
Sure. Was everything okay, guys?

Sylvia rolls her eyes.

SYLVIA  
Guys? Did you just call us guys?

DONNA  
It's just a general--

SYLVIA  
I'm a woman, I have a vagina.

Brief, awkward pause.

DONNA  
I'm sorry--

BILL  
Can you just get us our check,  
like, yesterday?

Donna smiles sadly. Nods.

**MILO AND GACY'S TABLE**

Milo checks his cell phone as it BUZZES.

The CALLER ID reads -- UNAVAILABLE. He scrunches his brow, confused. Answers the phone.

MILO  
Hello?

Listens.

MILO (CONT'D)  
Yeah, I think you got the wrong  
number, buddy.

Listens again. Looks across to Gacy, perplexed.

MILO (CONT'D)  
(to Caller)  
Is that right? Then why am I  
sitting across from him right now?

Gacy's ears perk up as Milo listens to his caller.

MILO (CONT'D)  
 (to Caller)  
 Fuck off, dude.

He hangs up. Picks up the billfold.

GACY  
 Who was that?

MILO  
 Some jerk-off.

As he reads over the check, he keeps a watchful eye on Donna across the room. A crooked grin forms across his face.

MILO (CONT'D)  
 You know what would be funny?

GACY  
 What?

MILO  
 If we just left. Like, right now.

GACY  
 Dine and dash?

MILO  
 (laughs)  
 Yeah.

GACY  
 What are we, in high school?

MILO  
 I don't have any money.

GACY  
 You don't have any money?!

MILO  
 Do you?

GACY  
 Well... no...

MILO  
 Then stop being a condescending  
 prick about it.

GACY  
 You said you'd spot me dinner!

MILO  
ME? Spot YOU dinner? Are you really  
that gullible?

GACY  
Fuck you, you're gullible.

MILO  
Yeah? You know gullible isn't even  
a real word in the dictionary?

GACY  
Really?

Milo chuckles, shakes his head.

MILO  
You are a special, special kinda  
guy, Gacy. And I don't mean like X-  
Men special. I mean retarded.  
You're a fucking retard.

GACY  
Ha-fucking-ha. Insults aside... she  
was really nice to us. We should at  
least leave her something.

MILO  
What part of "I don't have any  
money" don't you understand?

Gacy shakes his head, holds a glare.

MILO (CONT'D)  
Oh, stop looking at me like you're  
gonna do something... fucking  
pussy.

Milo sets a dollar bill on the table.

MILO (CONT'D)  
Happy?

GACY  
That's just wrong.

MILO  
It's something, right?

Milo continues to watch Donna closely.

MILO (CONT'D)  
All right, game time. On the count  
of three.

GACY  
Come on, man, can't you just have  
your mom Venmo you--

MILO  
Three!

Milo leaves in a flash, to the door.

GACY  
(hisses)  
Milo!

Gacy looks to Donna, her back turned.

GACY (CONT'D)  
Shit.

He takes a look at the check. Writes "Sorry" on the back.

Gacy rises, but stops. Nabs the dollar off the table. He  
looks up--

Donna, carrying coffee, sees him.

DONNA  
Hey!

He runs out the door.

Donna spills the coffee while chasing after him. But as she  
hurries past Bill and Sylvia's table--

Bill grabs her by the wrist.

BILL  
Where's our check?

Donna pulls her hand away, eyes focused on Milo and Gacy. She  
fishes into her apron, sets their billfold on the table.

She rushes to the door just as--

A MYSTERIOUS MAN in a dusty top hat, face hidden beneath the  
brim, bumps into her, slowing her down. Briefly capturing her  
attention - something otherworldly about him.

A taxi cab drives off. Milo and Gacy in the back. Gacy stares  
at her through the back window as the cab drifts away.

DONNA  
Damn it.

BILL (O.S.)

Hey!

Donna turns. Bill snaps his fingers at her from across the room. Waves the billfold into the air.

She returns to their table.

DONNA

Sorry, guys - I mean folks. I just had a table walk out--

BILL

Keep the change.

She nods sheepishly. Opens the billfold as she walks away.

Her change is only a single dollar.

Donna stops. Returns to their table.

DONNA

Was there something wrong with the food?

Bill and Sylvia exchange a glance. Bill looks up at Donna.

BILL

The food was awful.

DONNA

Oh. I mean, you ate the whole thing. You should have said something, I would've brought you--

SYLVIA

It's too late now.

Donna nods, on the brink of tears. Looks down at the floor.

She lifts her head, reveals an enraged, intense glare.

DONNA

You know what?

Donna slaps the dollar bill on the table.

DONNA (CONT'D)

Keep your dollar. You obviously need it more than I do.

She storms off.

SYLVIA  
Well, excuse you!

BILL  
I'd like to have a word with your  
manager!

Donna disappears into the kitchen.

**INT. MEL'S DINER - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER**

Donna wipes tears from her eyes as she explains to her  
MANAGER (late 40s - male, balding, pudgy).

The COOK and DISHWASHER look on, holding back laughter.

DONNA  
They were being assholes the whole  
time--

MANAGER  
If you paid more attention to your  
tables--

DONNA  
I WAS paying attention!

MANAGER  
Oh, yeah? Were you paying attention  
when one of your tables walked out  
without paying?

DONNA  
It wasn't my fault!

MANAGER  
It never is, Donna. Is it?

Manager shakes his head and walks into the dining room.

Donna watches him speak to Bill and Sylvia. Manager just nods  
as Bill and Sylvia express their displeasure.

Manager returns to the kitchen.

MANAGER (CONT'D)  
I'm giving them free dessert.

Donna rolls her eyes.

MANAGER (CONT'D)  
Problem?

She shakes her head sadly. Defeated.

MANAGER (CONT'D)

Good.

(to the Cook)

Hot fudge sundae, Jose! Stat! That means now! Ahora!

COOK

My name's Miguel.

MANAGER

Whatever.

He looks Donna in the eye.

MANAGER (CONT'D)

When you bring it to them, I want you to apologize.

DONNA

Can't you just bring it to them--

MANAGER

Just do it!

Manager leaves.

The Cook slides a glass bowl of ice cream with peanuts and hot fudge to the front of the food line.

Donna wipes a tear. She grabs for the bowl but accidentally knocks it to the floor - the glass shatters.

Donna stares down at the shattered bowl of ice cream. Rage boiling to the surface.

But she calms. Pops a MENTOS. Smiles deviously.

**INT. MEL'S DINER - DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

Donna sets a fresh bowl of ice cream at the center of Bill and Sylvia's table. Glowing smile on her face.

DONNA

I would like to apologize...

SYLVIA

WOULD like to?

Donna grins.

DONNA  
Enjoy your ice cream.

She leaves the table. Stands by the kitchen and watches.

Sylvia shovels a huge scoop into her mouth.

BILL  
Good?

SYLVIA  
(chewing)  
A little crunchy. Think they put in  
too many peanuts. Wanna try?

BILL  
(shakes head)  
All yours, babe.

Something crunches hard in her mouth. She chews slowly. Then stops. Confused.

BILL (CONT'D)  
Babe?

Sylvia opens her mouth, her teeth covered in blood, gums sliced up and gushing crimson. The blood drips onto what's left of the ice cream.

BILL (CONT'D)  
Babe?!

She gags, choking, hawking up blood-covered shards of glass onto the table, eyes bulging.

Bill reaches across to her, looks around the restaurant in desperation.

BILL (CONT'D)  
Somebody! Help!

Looks to Sylvia again. She convulses in her seat, her eyes rolling back until--

SMACK! Her head hits the table, face-first into the bowl of ice cream. Unconscious.

Bill looks up in horror as Donna approaches with a wide grin.

DONNA  
How's dessert?

BILL  
You fucking bitch! What did you  
do?!

Donna draws a kitchen knife from her apron and plunges it through Bill's throat - blood squirts onto her face.

Crimson cascades down his Adam's Apple and covers his chest as he gurgles blood.

She pulls the knife out. Spots the one dollar bill lying on the table and nabs it.

DONNA  
You forgot your dollar.

Rolls up the dollar bill and inserts it into his neck wound as he convulses wildly.

She turns--

Manager stares at her with wide eyes.

DONNA (CONT'D)  
I quit.

She slides the blade across her own throat -- blood shoots out and sprays all over the other tables. A collective gasp as she drops instantly.

Manager remains frozen in shock. He looks to all the tables in the dining room - the SHOCKED CUSTOMERS stare back at him with the same expression.

Long silence until...

An ELDERLY WOMAN at a window seat slowly raises her hand.

ELDERLY WOMAN  
Check please?

**CUT TO BLACK:**

**TITLE CARD OVER BLACK.**

**9 MINUTES EARLIER**

**FADE IN:**

**INT. MEL'S DINER - NIGHT**

Milo keeps a close eye on Donna the waitress. Gacy sits across from him at the booth, on edge.

GACY  
Come on, man, can't you just have  
your mom Venmo you--

MILO  
Three.

Milo leaves in a flash, to the door.

GACY  
(hisses)  
Milo!

Gacy looks to Donna, her back turned.

GACY (CONT'D)  
Shit.

He takes a look at the check. Writes "Sorry" on the back.

Gacy rises, but stops. Nabs the dollar off the table. He looks up--

Donna, carrying coffee, sees him.

DONNA  
Hey!

He runs out the door.

**EXT. MEL'S DINER - CONTINUOUS**

Gacy spots a taxi cab driving off, Milo in the back. He chases after the cab and waves his arms.

The cab stops. Milo sticks his head out of the window.

MILO  
Hurry the fuck up!

Gacy catches up to the cab, hops in the back.

**INT. TAXI CAB (MOVING) - CONTINUOUS**

THE METER - it starts at \$1.

Gacy peers out the back window - meets eyes with Donna as she watches them drive away from the diner entrance.

Gacy hangs his head and sighs. He turns, sits straight. Milo laughs hysterically and slaps his knee in celebration.

MILO

Oh, man, you should've seen your face! You were this close to washing dishes, dude! This close!

GACY

Fucking asshole, can't believe you were just gonna leave me like that.

MILO

Stop acting like a bitch, I was gonna wait for you.

GACY

Bullshit.

MILO

Hey, I gave you the heads up, dude. Gotta be quicker around me.

Gacy shakes his head.

GACY

Probably ruined her night.

MILO

Who?

GACY

(incredulous)  
The fucking waitress, you sociopath!

MILO

Relax your titties, I left her a dollar.

GACY

You ran out on the bill! You know that probably comes out of her pay?

MILO

We. WE ran out on the bill.  
(chuckles)  
Lighten up for Christ sake! Not like she's gonna kill herself over the whole fucking thing.

Just then, a cell phone BUZZES. Milo takes a look at his CALLER ID -- it reads UNAVAILABLE.

He answers.

MILO (CONT'D)  
Stop. Fucking. Calling.

Hangs up. Shakes his head.

MILO (CONT'D)  
(mutters)  
Dickhead.

GACY  
Who was that?

MILO  
Wrong number.

Silence. Gacy looks up at the CAB DRIVER through the dashboard mirror up front.

CAB DRIVER (mid 40s) wears a derby hat. Mysterious looking, his eyes hidden beneath shadows. He adjusts the mirror, glances back at Gacy.

Gacy takes a peek at the meter - it reads \$9.50.

GACY  
Wait a minute.  
(turns to Milo)  
How are we paying for this cab?

Milo smiles.

MILO  
You really are gullible.

In a flash, he jumps out of the cab as it continues to move forward, door hanging open--

He tucks and rolls.

Gacy looks out the back window in shock--

Milo gets to his feet, runs off with his middle fingers raised in the air. Disappears into an alley.

The cab screeches to a halt - the door swings shut.

Cab Driver gazes at Gacy through the dash mirror. Eyes still hidden. No expression.

CAB DRIVER  
 (delayed)  
 Why did he do that?

Gacy tries to think on his toes. Stuck.

He glances to the front. His eyes widen - a pickaxe sits propped up by the passenger's seat.

Gacy tries to escape but CLICK - all the doors lock. He looks to Cab Driver. Raises his hands in submission.

GACY  
 Listen... all I have is a dollar...

Tense silence. Cab Driver just stares at him through the mirror. Then looks straight ahead and hits the gas.

Cab Driver pulls a U-turn and drives into the opposite direction.

Gacy looks around, in a panic. Petrified.

GACY (CONT'D)  
 Where... where are we going?

CAB DRIVER  
 (delayed)  
 Back.

Gacy zeroes in on the meter. Narrows his eyes in confusion as the meter moves backwards - \$9.50 to \$9 to \$8.50.

He takes out his cell phone, finds MILO under his contacts. And calls. After a few rings:

GACY  
 (whispers)  
 Dude! What is wrong with you? You left me here with fucking Travis Bickle! Guy's got a God damn pickaxe in the car!

Brief silence.

GACY (CONT'D)  
 Hello?

MILO (V.O.)  
 (filtered)  
 Yeah, I think you got the wrong number, buddy.

GACY  
 What? Milo! It's me! Gacy! Stop  
 being an asshole--

MILO (V.O.)  
 (filtered)  
 Is that right? Then why am I  
 sitting across from him right now?

GACY  
 What?

MILO (V.O.)  
 (filtered)  
 Fuck off, dude.

CLICK. Milo hangs up.

Gacy looks at his phone in disbelief. Glances out the window as the cab pulls a U-turn and parks at the curb right outside the diner again.

Cab Driver turns, looks to Gacy.

CAB DRIVER  
 One dollar.

Gacy stares at Cab Driver befuddled. Sees \$1 on the meter.

He hands Cab Driver a one-dollar bill. Still confused, he turns and faces the diner. Nods.

GACY  
 Okay. Bite the bullet. Wash a few  
 dishes. And then... go home.

He nods to convince himself.

GACY (CONT'D)  
 What's right is right.

He leaves the taxi cab.

**EXT. MEL'S DINER - CONTINUOUS**

As he heads to the diner entrance, he glances back at Cab Driver. Exchanges a stare that lasts seemingly forever.

He turns just as--

Milo dashes past him and jumps into the taxi cab.

GACY  
(baffled)  
What the fuck? Hey!

The taxi cab drives off.

Gacy can't believe it. Confounded. As he turns around--

SOMEONE brushes past him. Waving their arms at the taxi cab, chasing after it.

Gacy inspects closer. His blood turns cold, eyes wide in utter disbelief - that SOMEONE who just brushed past him looks exactly like... himself.

Milo sticks his head out the cab window.

MILO  
Hurry the fuck up!

Gacy watches as his doppelganger hops into the back of the taxi cab, the cab taking off.

Gacy continues to watch the cab disappear out of the parking lot, still trying to put together what he just witnessed.

Spellbound, he backs into the diner through its front doors.

**INT. MEL'S DINER - CONTINUOUS**

He bumps into Donna the waitress, who rushes out the doors just to see the taxi cab driving off.

She returns and storms right past him.

GACY  
What... the... hell?

He spies the empty booth where he and Milo were sitting. Slowly approaches it. Donna in his peripheral.

His eyes widen in shock - he sees the "sorry" note on the back of his check still on the table.

**INT. MEL'S DINER - MEN'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

He paces back and forth. Phone to his ear.

GACY  
Milo? Listen. Something very  
fucking weird is happening--

MILO (V.O.)  
 (filtered)  
 Stop. Fucking. Calling.

CLICK. Milo hangs up. Gacy stares at his phone baffled.

GACY  
 (in wonder)  
 Dickhead.

**INT. MEL'S DINER - DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

Gacy wanders out. Eyes to the floor. In a world of his own. He lifts his head to see--

Donna shoving a knife into Bill's throat. Blood gushing and eyes bulging.

She stuffs a one-dollar bill into his throat wound. Turns to her Manager.

DONNA  
 I quit.

She slits her own throat. Blood sprays the patrons and douses Gacy as she collapses. Crimson covering his face and clothes.

**EXT. MEL'S DINER - MOMENTS LATER**

Gacy exits covered in blood. Mouth agape. Dumbfounded.

A taxi cab pulls up along the curb. The window rolls down. It's the same Cab Driver from before.

They stare at each other - Gacy slowly grins with a madness in his eyes. As if losing his sanity.

**INT. TAXI CAB (MOVING) - MOMENTS LATER**

Shadows dance across Gacy's blood-covered face as they drive past streetlights. He just stares off into space wearing a faraway look.

The cab stops outside an apartment building.

Gacy glances to the seat next to him -- a pickaxe sits there.

He looks up at Cab Driver. Cab Driver simply nods.

**INT. MILO'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS**

A man-cave for potheads. Posters of girls in bikinis on the walls. Empty pizza boxes and dirty dishes everywhere.

Milo sits in the dark with TV light bouncing off his face.

On TV - A "Bugs Bunny" cartoon. Bugs is disguised as a girl.

Milo squirts lotion into his palm.

MILO

Fuck yeah.

His PHONE BUZZES. He checks the CALLER ID - 666.

Milo hits the IGNORE button. Focuses on the cartoon. Just as he slides his hand down his pants--

A LOUD CRASH from somewhere in the apartment startles him. He wipes the lotion from his hand on the bed. Stands up.

**INT. MILO'S APARTMENT - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS**

The bedroom door CREAKS open. Milo tiptoes out. Stops.

Gacy stands in the shadows at the end of the hallway. Pickaxe hanging from his grip.

MILO

Gacy? That you?

Takes a few steps forward. Sees Gacy's face. Gacy remains silent. Still.

MILO (CONT'D)

Hey, man.

GACY

(delayed)

Hey.

Tense silence.

MILO

What's, uh, what's with the pickaxe, buddy? Plan on doing a little yard work this time of night?

Gacy takes a few steps forward. Emerges from the shadows.

Milo observes the blood covering him and steps back.

MILO (CONT'D)  
Whoa, what the fuck, man?!

GACY  
Stop being a bitch... I'm not gonna  
kill you.

**EXT. MILO'S APARTMENT BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER**

VIOLENT CRASHING from inside. GLASS BREAKING.

Milo sprints out from the entrance. Full speed to the taxi cab sitting at the curb out front.

He frantically tugs on the door handle but it won't open. Locked. He smacks the window repeatedly.

MILO  
Come on, dickhead! Open up!

Peers in through the window and sees Cab Driver grinning at him menacingly.

He backs away, stunned. Turns away but stops frozen--

Gacy stands there with pickaxe in hand.

They stare at each other.

MILO (CONT'D)  
Dude.., I'm sorry about the  
waitress and I'm sorry about the  
cab. I'm a dick, I know. I'll...  
I'll work on it, dude, I promise!

Gacy grips the pickaxe firmly with both hands. Moves forward.

MILO (CONT'D)  
Wait! Gacy! Bro! Amigo! B-F-F-F-F!  
Let's talk this over, man!

GACY  
(delayed)  
You know that waitress? She killed  
herself. Because of you.

MILO  
(confused)  
What? What are you talking about?  
Look man, I apologize, okay? Just  
put that fucking garden tool down  
and--

GACY  
 (shakes head)  
 Since we were kids, all you've done  
 is talk-talk-talk. I'm DONE hearing  
 you talk.

Milo shrinks back, hands out in front of him.

MILO  
 But... you said you weren't gonna  
 kill me!

GACY  
 (smiles)  
 Who's gullible now?

Raises the pickaxe high into the air and THWACK! Sticks the  
 pointy end into the top of Milo's head.

Milo's eyes roll back, mouth open. He wobbles and falls  
 forward. But stops suspended in the air. The pickaxe handle  
 keeps him propped up like a kickstand.

The taxi cab trunk pops open.

**MOMENTS LATER**

Gacy hoists Milo's limp corpse into the trunk. Crouches down  
 and nabs the pickaxe from the street, about to toss it in the  
 trunk--

But he freezes. Awestruck.

In the trunk - two bodies. One Milo. The other... HIS  
 DOPPELGANGER.

DOPPELGANGER opens his eyes, immediately alarmed. Jumps up.  
 But--

Gacy, startled, swings the pickaxe--

He chops DOPPELGANGER'S head clean off. Drops the pickaxe  
 into the trunk and slams it shut.

Looks ahead at his reflection in the cab's back window. But  
 he doesn't see himself. Instead, he sees the MYSTERIOUS MAN  
 in the dusty top hat, face hidden beneath the brim.

The taxi cab drives off. Leaves MYSTERIOUS MAN standing alone  
 on the empty street.

**FADE TO BLACK.**

**THE END**