

Cinema Limbo

<https://www.thoughtco.com/cinema-limbo-two-person-scene-2713380>

Setting: The box office of the Grand Cinemas. No set is required. Two office chairs (capable of rolling and spinning) are placed center stage. A young woman spins in the chair. She is dressed in a rather ugly polyester outfit one expect to find on a movie theater employee. Her name is Vicky. And she is bored.

(A young man named Joshua enters. Vicky suddenly stops spinning. Her boredom has vanished.)

VICKY: So, you've finally made it to the fishbowl?

JOSHUA: The what?

VICKY: That's what we call the **box office**. An inside joke between cashiers.

JOSHUA: Oh.

VICKY: So you've made it.

JOSHUA: I guess. Mr. Boston said he wanted you to train me how to work the box office.

VICKY: Then let the training begin. People come up. They say what movie they want. You press this button. Take their money. Give them their ticket. There, you're trained.

JOSHUA: Now what?

VICKY: Now sit down and wait. But don't get anxious. No one's coming tonight. It's **Christmas Eve** and all our movies suck.

JOSHUA: This beats working at concessions. Thank God I didn't get stuck with that Bar One job. That would've sucked.

VICKY: Stuart is certainly loving it though. Have you seen that look in his eye when he's running Concessions?

JOSHUA: What do you mean?

VICKY: He usually smiles, and treats the peons with respect... but his eyes... They're lit up like a power hungry mad man. I think he pictures himself as some pharaoh who whips the backs of his slaves, just to sell a few extra drinks.

JOSHUA: Really? I haven't noticed.

VICKY: He told me you guys went to grade school together.

JOSHUA: Are you guys dating?

VICKY: Why do you ask?

JOSHUA: He told me you were dating but that you wanted it kept secret.

VICKY: If I was dating someone why would I want to keep it secret?

JOSHUA: Uh, maybe because Stuart's kind of a nerd.

VICKY: So you did go to school together?

JOSHUA: We met in the fifth grade. You know how every class has a kid who gets picked on throughout the whole year by everybody? That was him. No one liked him.

VICKY: Why?

JOSHUA: Well, it started out just because he was the new kid. His folks just moved into town to set up a new church. They were husband and wife ministers or something. Very, I don't know, just kind of friendly and creepy at the same time.

VICKY: I met them. I know.

JOSHUA: Anyway, kids in school picked on him because he was new, and a little weird looking. You can't tell it as much, but his face was completely covered with freckles. Big brown freckles... kind of like... um... like someone flicked splotches of paint at him.

VICKY: I always thought they were kind of cute.

JOSHUA: And then no one liked him because every chance he got, he started talking about Jesus. He did a book report on the entire Bible. In art class, he made a crown of thorns ashtray. He tried making Noah's Ark out of clay, but it exploded in the kiln. And then one day we were supposed to give a speech, an oral report on the country of our choice and he picked Israel.

VICKY: Well... that's not so bad.

JOSHUA: During his whole oral report... he spoke in tongues.

VICKY: Really? I had an uncle who got into that. He'd speak in tongues before every Thanksgiving dinner. But he had one of those robot voices because of his throat cancer, so it was really low and scary. Like Darth Vader speaking pig latin.

JOSHUA: Stuart wasn't as entertaining. And to top it off, the kids started hating him more because he wanted to be the teacher's pet.

VICKY: That doesn't surprise me. He kisses up to all the managers...

JOSHUA: Same thing we the school teachers. And the lunch lady. And the principal. Most kids said he was a tattletale. There was this one bully who hocked a loogie right in his hair, right in the middle of class.

VICKY: Oh please, I just ate buttered popcorn.

JOSHUA: But anyway, I felt sorry for Stu. So I let him hang around me at recess once in a while. He was okay. Sort of clingy. He never wanted to leave my side. I got beat up a couple of times by Troy, just for sticking up for him.

VICKY: Are you two still friends?

JOSHUA: I guess. But it isn't like grade school anymore. We don't hang out. I was kind of surprised to see him when I got hired here. He left before we finished junior high. His parents put him in some private school. So, are the rumors true?

VICKY: What rumors?

JOSHUA: I heard echoes from the girls locker room.

VICKY: You perv.

JOSHUA: Well, they were talking so loud, I couldn't help it.

VICKY: Okay, dork, what did you hear?

JOSHUA: That you're not interested in Stuart anymore. That you are, oh what were the words, that you're almost done toying with him.

VICKY: Well that makes me sound like a bitch. I kind of like that.

JOSHUA: So?

VICKY: So?

JOSHUA: It's just me, you, and the fishbowl.

VICKY: Why should I talk about my love life? Or "lust" life? What about you? I bet you've had a lot of girlfriends. Probably broken a lot of hearts.

JOSHUA: Not really. I've never been in love or anything. Just casual dates and stuff. I mean, for all intents and purposes I'm pretty much like all the other geeks you've been describing.

VICKY: But you wear that letterman's jacket. You're kind of a jock. I say that with all due respect.

VICKY: Well, you have to understand. I'm the kind of girl who takes pity on poor pathetic geeks who have never kissed a girl. Let's just say that I like someone who is easily trainable – someone who will truly appreciate me. It's sad, I know. But hey, I'll take an ego boost wherever I can get it. Unfortunately, these adorably nerdy boyfriends get boring after a while. I mean, I can only listen to their computer games and mathematic equations for so long. Of course, Stuart's different in a lot of ways. He's terrible at math, for one. And he's pretty clueless about technology. But he's a comic book sort of geek. And a hopeless romantic. He's pre-occupied with holding my hand. Everywhere we go, he wants to hold hands. Even when we're driving. And he's got this new pastime. He keeps saying "I love you." It was so sweet and wonderful the first time he said it. I almost cried, and I'm not the kind of girl who cries easily. But by the end of the week, he must have said "I love you" about five hundred times.

And then he starts adding pet names. “I love you, honeybunch.” “I love you sweetheart.” “I love you my little smoochy-woochy-coochi-koo.” I don’t even know what that last one means. It’s like he’s speaking in some brand-new, love-infected language. Who would have thought romance could be so boring?

JOSHUA: Is it boring?

VICKY: You mean you don’t know from first-hand experience?

JOSHUA: Yeah, I swim. But that’s not what I lettered in.

VICKY: What was it?

JOSHUA: Well now you’re going to laugh.

VICKY: Perhaps.

JOSHUA: I lettered in choir.

VICKY: (Laughs. Falls off chair.) They let you letter in choir?! Oh, that’s priceless.

JOSHUA: You can also letter in drama.

VICKY: Oh, that’s pathetic.

JOSHUA: So, you’re done with school, right?

VICKY: Since last summer. Sweet. sweet freedom.

JOSHUA: Now what?

VICKY: College I guess. Back to captivity. I’m taking a year off first.

JOSHUA: Did your friends already go?

VICKY: Friends? I hated everybody in high school.

JOSHUA: Hey, me too! I was hoping the Grand Cinemas would improve my social life.

VICKY: (Laughs.) Has it?

JOSHUA: I've met some cool people, I guess. Like you.

VICKY: Like me?

JOSHUA: Yeah, well, and others. Like Rico.

VICKY: OH.

JOSHUA: Is that bad?

VICKY: No. Rico's cool. I just wouldn't trust him with much more than a postage stamp.

JOSHUA: Thanks for the advice.

VICKY: I used to want a social life but I think I'm content here in the box. If you want to see people, just wait till Friday night, they'll swarm around you, begging you for tickets. But the glass on the fishbowl keeps them from violating your space. If you want to talk to someone, you just pick up the phone, and when you get sick of talking, you can just hang up. You can read, you can do your homework, or you can veg-out and watch the Grand go by. You can swipe snacks from concessions and on hot days, we've got air conditioning. If you're bored you can spin around on this thing.

(She spins around on the chair.)

JOSHUA: Wow. You're pretty good.

VICKY: My record is eight rotations. All thanks to twelve years of ballet.

JOSHUA: Really?

VICKY: Hey, what did you get at the Christmas party gift exchange?

JOSHUA: A Chia pet.

VICKY: I got the worse possible present ever. Listen to this. I'm in this dance group, right. Ballet. I've been doing [the Nutcracker](#) for the past two months. I've been having nightmares with

the 'sugar plum fairie suite' playing in the background. Every mall or department store has been playing Tchaikovsky. I can't get away from that God forsaken music! It drives me nuts. And guess which CD Mrs. Sanchez buys me? The Nutcracker. I hope I pick her name next year. I had no idea she could be so cruel. That's why it must be nice to be religious like Stewy. You can doom people to hell.

JOSHUA: Eternal hell over the Nutcracker? Now that's a raw deal.

VICKY: Eternal damnation. You'd think after a few thousand years you'd get bored with never ending torment. Satan would come up to you and say, "Today you'll be covered with man-eating ants and pummeled by a giant mountain gorilla." And you'd just look at him and YAWN and say, "Again?! How dull. Are you running out of ideas already? Can I make a request for Bubba the mountain Gorilla, because he and I have a rapport going; we work well together, I think. (Pausing and completely changing the subject.) Do you think it's possible to travel through time?"

JOSHUA: Someone has ADHD.

VICKY: It's this fishbowl. It really gets to you after a while. So do you? You know, think they'll figure out time travel?

JOSHUA: I doubt it. Maybe someday.

VICKY: What would you do?

JOSHUA: I don't know. I guess I might travel back and find my great-great-great-great grandfather. Say hi. What would you do?

VICKY: Well, if I had a [time machine](#), say they invent it when I'm like really old. Like 35 or something. Then, I'd travel back to right now, and I'd give myself advice.

JOSHUA: What kind of advice?

VICKY: Who to be friends with. Who to avoid. What choices to make. What guys to like.

JOSHUA: Why do you need a time machine? Just make the right choices now.

VICKY: But how do you know if it's the right choice? You don't until after the fact.

JOSHUA: Well, that's the point. You take a chance and you learn from your mistakes. Or, you try something and it's a great experience.

VICKY: And what if you regret it?

JOSHUA: Then you regret it. I think not knowing what happened next is part of the fun.

VICKY: Really?

JOSHUA: Yeah.

VICKY: Come here.

He pauses for a moment. Then, they roll their chairs toward each other. She kisses him. He kisses back. They pull apart.

JOSHUA: So...

VICKY: So... Do you regret that experience?

JOSHUA: Not at all. Do you regret it?

They are both started as they hear the sound of a door opening. They look upstage.

JOSHUA: Oh! Hi. (Suddenly regretful.) How's it going, Stuart?

VICKY: Hey, Stewy. Joshua and I were just talking about regrets. (Listens.) What do I have to regret? Oh nothing. (A sly smile on her face.) Nothing at all.

Lights out.