

A Fool's Parade Episode 1-1 "Something Else"

By

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BLACK SCREEN

SUPER:

In three words I can sum up everything I've learned about
life: it goes on.

-Robert Frost

FADE IN

INT. MARIE'S HOUSE - DAY

The sound of objects being tossed in a box can be heard.

We see Paul. Late twenties. He is putting a few random
belongings in a box. He closes and tapes it.

Marie enters.

MARIE
Need any help?

PAUL
No, this is the last of it. Luckily
most of our stuff belonged to you.

MARIE
You know, this isn't what I wanted
for us.

PAUL
I know.

MARIE
It didn't have to be this way.

PAUL
But it is this way.

MARIE
You're moving back home?

PAUL
I'm moving in with my cousin, Jake.
You remember Jake? You met him at
Stacy's wedding.

MARIE
Yeah, I remember.
(beat)
I just want you to be happy. I want
us to be happy.

(CONTINUED)

PAUL
I know.

CUT TO:

EXT. MARIE'S HOUSE - DAY

The front door opens. Paul walks out holding a box. He pauses, the door shuts behind him. He walks slowly to his car and gets in.

CUT TO:

INT. PAUL'S CAR - DAY

Paul starts his car and backs out of the driveway. The theme music plays.

CUT TO:

OPENING CREDITS

CUT TO:

EXT. JAKE'S HOUSE - DAY

Paul pulls in the driveway of Jake's house. Jake comes out the front door as Paul exits the car.

JAKE
27 and jobless. What a loser.

PAUL
Hey Jake.

Jake gives Paul a hug.

JAKE
How you holding up?

PAUL
I'm doing all right I gu...

JAKE
Dude, I really don't care. I was just asking to be nice.

(CONTINUED)

PAUL

Right. Thanks for letting me stay with you. Are you sure your roommate doesn't mind?

JAKE

Oh no, he's cool. Got a lot of boxes? Need some help?

PAUL

Yeah, that would be great.

JAKE

Okay, well I don't really want to help so let's go inside and I'll see if Cooper will.

PAUL

All right.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Cooper, late twenties, sits on the couch red-eyed and stoned. He's not a typical stoner. He looks like a regular guy. He is eating peanut butter out of the jar with a fork. Thick smoke fills the air. He coughs a few times. The glow of the t.v. illuminates his face.

We hear the sound of a door open and close.

Jake and Paul enter.

JAKE

Cooper this is Paul. Paul, Cooper.

Paul reaches out to shake Cooper's hand.

COOPER

No, I just washed up for breakfast.

(beat)

Sit down man, you're making me nervous.

Paul sits down.

PAUL

Peanut butter for breakfast?

(CONTINUED)

COOPER

Yeah.

PAUL

Why are you using a fork?

COOPER

All the spoons were dirty.

PAUL

Didn't want to wash them?

COOPER

Why would I want to do that when there are still clean forks?

PAUL

Just a thought.

COOPER

You are so wrapped up in what society tells you to do. You've been told your entire life what to use a fork for and what to use a spoon for. What does it matter?

PAUL

I guess it doesn't.

COOPER

I don't care what society says. I'm using a fork.

PAUL

Yeah. I guess it doesn't matter.

COOPER

Hey, wouldn't it be great if dogs layed eggs?

PAUL

What?

COOPER

Think of all the people that have dogs. We would always have fresh eggs.

JAKE

What if humans could lay eggs?

(CONTINUED)

COOPER (EXCITED)
Yeah! Would you eat your own egg?
Would you?

JAKE
No way, man. Would you?

COOPER
No way.
(To Paul)
What about you? Would you eat your
own egg?

PAUL
I don't...

COOPER
You would! You would eat your own
egg. You sick son of a bitch.

PAUL
All right.
(beat)
So. What do you do Coop?

COOPER
I make and sell t-shirts.

PAUL
Oh, that sounds really interesting.

COOPER
Yeah, I also sell weed if you ever
need any.

PAUL
Thanks, I'll keep you in mind

COOPER
What do you do?

PAUL
I was an accountant. I'm kind of in
a career transition right now.

COOPER
Jake told me your fiance left you
for an astronaut. Is that true?

PAUL
Yes. She did.

(CONTINUED)

COOPER

So you don't have a job and your fiancée left you for a guy that's been to space? That sucks. You must really feel like shit right now.

PAUL

Yeah, sounds like you guys are doing a lot better.

COOPER

Well Jake's dating a gymnast.

JAKE

I'm not seeing her anymore.

COOPER

Seriously? She's a gymnast. That's like my all time favorite fantasy.

JAKE

Yeah, it was mine too, then I actually slept with her.

PAUL

No good?

JAKE

Well the sex itself was fine it was just her proportions.

COOPER

Her proportions?

JAKE (ANNOYED)

Yeah! Have you ever really looked at a gymnast? They're really short and they literally have no boobs. It was like having sex with a really sturdy child. With good balance.

PAUL

Gross.

COOPER

You just ruined the gymnast fantasy for me.

JAKE

Trust me, I did you a favor. You ever meet a gymnast, get out of that gym.

(CONTINUED)

PAUL
So...Cooper. Is that your first or
last name?

COOPER
Last.

PAUL
What's your first?

COOPER
Radio.

PAUL
Radio? Why did your parents name
you Radio?

COOPER
My parents were on the way to the
hospital when my mom was in labor
with me. They couldn't make it
before I was born so my dad
delivered me in the car. The Paul
Simon song "You Can Call Me Al"
came on the radio right as I was
born.

PAUL
So why didn't they name you Paul,
or Simon, or Al?

COOPER
Because it came on the radio.

PAUL
Oh, right. Well I'm just going to
go check out my room.

JAKE
Last door on the left. We still
have some of our stuff in there.

CUT TO:

INT. PAUL'S ROOM - DAY

Paul opens the door. The room is filled wall to wall with
boxes and junk.

PAUL
Fantastic.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jake and Cooper sit on the couch. Jake is drawing something in a notebook. Cooper looks at him confused.

JAKE

And that's where babies come from.
And some other things happen and
it's kind of messy, but that's
pretty much how it works.

COOPER

I just asked if you wanted to get
something to eat. I don't know how
we got here.

Paul walks through the living room and sits down.

JAKE

Hey Paul, Cooper and I are going
out tonight. Want to go?

PAUL

I don't know, not sure if I'm
feeling up to it?

COOPER

Oh come on. You can't just sit
around here throwing yourself a
pity party.

JAKE

Yeah, just come out with us and
have fun. Get your mind off things.
We're going acting.

PAUL

Acting?

JAKE

Yeah, you'll love it.

PAUL

How does it work?

JAKE

We each get three pieces of paper
and write down an occupation on
each piece. We put the pieces into
a bowl and draw one. Whatever it
says is what we tell people we do
for a living.

(CONTINUED)

PAUL
And why do you do this?

JAKE
Would you prefer to tell girls
you've been unemployed for six
months?

PAUL
Give me a pen.

The three of them jot something down on the strips, fold them and place them into the cup.

JAKE
Cooper why did you get a cup
instead of a bowl?

COOPER
We didn't have any clean bowls.

JAKE
Why don't you wash them?

COOPER
Why would I do that when we still
have clean cups? See, again with
societal standards. Why sh...

JAKE
Okay, sorry I asked!

PAUL
Will somebody please draw?

JAKE
Okay you guys know the rules. You
get one draw and whatever it is
that's your occupation for the
evening. I'll go first.

Jake pulls a piece of paper from the cup and unfolds it.

JAKE
Let's see, all right I'm a Doctor.
My favorite occupation to lie
about. Your turn, Paul.

Paul sighs as he removes a piece of paper from the cup.

PAUL
Writer. I'm a writer.

(CONTINUED)

JAKE
Writer's perfect. Girls love
writers.

PAUL
I really don't feel comfortable
lying about what I do.

JAKE
You're not lying. I just saw you
write something. You're a writer.
Okay, Cooper.

Cooper pulls a piece of paper from the cup.

COOPER
You gotta be kidding me.

JAKE
What?

COOPER
I work at an abortion clinic.

JAKE (LAUGHING)
I put that in there.

COOPER
This sucks.

JAKE
Consider yourself lucky. I also put
janitor and magician.

COOPER
I would love to say I was a
magician!

JAKE
What you do is magical in a way.

COOPER
This always happens. Last time I
was the guy that euthanizes dogs at
the pound.

PAUL
Okay, well I'm going to get my
stuff and get unpacked.

JAKE
Oh yeah, hey Coop want to help Paul
with his boxes?

(CONTINUED)

COOPER

No.

Jake shrugs. Paul exits.

JAKE

I get to dress like a doctor
tonight.

COOPER

What does a guy who works at an
abortion clinic wear?

JAKE

Something ominous.

CUT TO:

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Jake is driving, Paul is in the front passenger seat and
Cooper is in the backseat. Thick smoke fills the car. The
three talk as music plays.

COOPER

We have to get something to eat.
I'm starving.

PAUL

Yeah. I'm hungry too.

CUT TO:

EXT. FAST FOOD RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The music stops as the car pulls up to a drive-thru speaker.

JAKE

Hello?

A very unenthusiastic employee answers.

EMPLOYEE

What'll you have?

JAKE

Hi. We would like a bag of
cheeseburgers, please.

(CONTINUED)

EMPLOYEE
A bag of cheeseburgers?

JAKE
Yeah, a bag of cheeseburgers.

EMPLOYEE
We don't sell cheeseburgers by the bag.

JAKE
Well, you're going to put the cheeseburgers in the bag aren't you?

EMPLOYEE
Well yes, but...

JAKE
Well, just put as many cheeseburgers in one bag as you can.

EMPLOYEE
Well I have to be able to charge you before we start making your order.

JAKE
Okay, fine. How many cheeseburgers do you think you can fit into a bag?

EMPLOYEE
I don't know, maybe twelve?

JAKE
Oh you can fit more than twelve. At least fifteen.

EMPLOYEE
Okay, so fifteen?

JAKE
If that's how many fit into a bag.

EMPLOYEE
Okay, fifteen.

JAKE
No, not fifteen. A bag.

(CONTINUED)

EMPLOYEE (SIGHS)
A bag of cheeseburgers.

COOPER
You know what? I think I want
chicken nuggets.

PAUL
Yeah, I want chicken nuggets too.

JAKE
Chicken nuggets do sound good.
Okay, forget the cheeseburgers. We
would like a bag of chicken
nuggets.

COOPER
Oh, can I get some ranch too?

JAKE
And ranch, please.

The music starts playing again.

CUT TO:

INT. CAR - NIGHT

The three are enjoying the bag of chicken nuggets.

CUT TO:

INT. BAR - NIGHT

The three enter the bar.

JAKE
Okay guys, you know the rules. The
first one to get a girl to buy him
a drink wins.

PAUL
What do we win?

JAKE
The respect and admiration of the
other two.

PAUL
What if I don't want that?

(CONTINUED)

JAKE

What else do you have, man?

Cooper walks into the crowd.

PAUL

Aren't we a little old to be doing this?

JAKE

You're a little old to not have a job.

Paul shrugs.

Jake scans the room. He sees a girl standing by herself and approaches her.

JAKE

So do you like getting hit on at bars?

GIRL (ANNOYED)

No, not really.

JAKE

Well it's a good thing I'm not hitting on you then.

GIRL

Yeah, it's a good thing.

JAKE

I'm Jake.

GIRL

Marissa.

JAKE

And what do you do Marissa?

MARISSA

I'm an elementary school teacher.

JAKE

What a rewarding job that must be.

MARISSA

It has it's moments.

JAKE

I'm a doctor.

(CONTINUED)

MARISSA
A doctor? Really? What kind?

JAKE
I'm a...uh... surgeon. Just a
general surgeon.

MARISSA
Where do you work?

JAKE
At the... hospital. Yeah the
hospital.

MARISSA
Which one?

JAKE
The...uh...main one. The big one.
But I actually just got back to the
states last week. I'm in Doctors
Without Borders. Have you heard of
it?

MARISSA
No, what's that?

JAKE
Well, it's a non-profit group where
doctors can volunteer their time to
spend in impoverished countries to
get medical attention to those that
can't afford it.

MARISSA
That is so amazing.

JAKE
Marissa, you're amazing.

Cooper approaches a girl at the bar.

COOPER
Hi.

GIRL (UNENTHUSIASTIC)
Hi.

COOPER
Buy you a drink?

She holds her full drink up to signal she doesn't need one.

(CONTINUED)

COOPER
Oh yeah, of course. So what do you do?

GIRL
I'm a physical therapist.

COOPER
Physical therapist, that is so cool.

Cooper takes a deep breath and takes the plunge.

COOPER
I work at an abortion clinic.

GIRL
That's horrible!

The girl gets up and walks away.

COOPER
Damn it!

Paul has found his girl. He talks with her at the bar.

PAUL
I'm Paul.

GIRL
Tessa.

He shakes her hand.

PAUL
What do you do?

TESSA
I'm a waitress.

PAUL
Oh, that is so cool. I'm a writer.

TESSA
A writer? What do you write? Books?

PAUL
Um... no... I write for television.

TESSA
Wow, really?

(CONTINUED)

PAUL
Yeah, just finished a script for a
show and sold it to a network.

TESSA
You're serious?

PAUL
Yes, I'm serious.

TESSA
That's amazing!

PAUL
I know, I'm really excited about
it. I've been a starving artist for
too long.

TESSA
What's it about?

PAUL
What? The script?

TESSA
Yeah, what's it about?

PAUL
Oh, well uh it's about this guy
whose in his mid-thirties, he finds
out his sister died and his 15 year
old niece has to come live with
him. It's a comedy.

TESSA
Wow. So what happens next?

PAUL
Well, I'm flying out to L.A. next
week to finalize the contract. Then
we start casting next month.

TESSA
I am so excited for you.

PAUL
Oh, thank you. Have you ever done
any acting?

TESSA
No, can't say that I have.

(CONTINUED)

PAUL
Well you should. I think you'd be
really good at it.

Cooper approaches another girl.

COOPER
Hi, I'm Cooper.

VANESSA
Hi, I'm Vanessa.

COOPER
What do you do Vanessa?

VANESSA
I'm actually still in school. I'm
going on a gymnastics scholarship.

COOPER (EXCITED)
You're a gymnast?

VANESSA
Yeah.

Cooper's excitement fades as he remembers what Jake told him
about gymnasts.

COOPER
Damn it, Jake.

Cooper walks away. The girl looks confused.

Cooper quickly approaches another girl. He cuts right to the
chase, knowing he is going to get rejected.

COOPER
Hi, I'm Cooper.

GIRL
Hi I'm Stephanie.

COOPER
I work at an abortion clinic.

STEPHANIE
Baby killer!

She throws her drink in his face and walks off.

COOPER
Damn it!

Jake has his girl wrapped around his finger.

(CONTINUED)

JAKE

There is just something about holding a child in your arms and knowing he is going to have a better life because of you.

MARISSA

You are incredible. Can I buy you a drink?

JAKE

I would love that, Marissa. Thank you so much.

Jake walks toward the bar with Marissa, he looks toward Paul to signal game over but Paul is already holding a drink in the air triumphantly. Jake throws his head back in disbelief.

Paul continues talking to TESSA.

TESSA

So what will happen after you film the pilot?

Paul takes a moment.

PAUL

Uh...I'm sorry Tessa. I'm not a writer. This was just a stupid game my friends talked me into playing. I don't have a job and my fiance left me for an astronaut.

TESSA stares at him uncomfortably.

PAUL

I'm really sorry. Thank you for the drink, but I don't deserve it. Have a good night.

Paul walks off.

At the other end of the bar.

MARISSA

What would you like?

JAKE

Whatever, I don't care. Might as well get something cheap and save your money.

(CONTINUED)

Jake looks to the other side of the bar to see Cooper wiping his face off with napkins. Jake smiles. He turns to Marissa to excuse himself and walks to Cooper.

COOPER
I hate you.

JAKE
Did you get a drink thrown on you?

COOPER
Yeah.

Jake laughs.

COOPER
It's not funny. What a waste of a drink.

JAKE
Paul won.

COOPER
Good, I don't have to tell girls I work at an abortion clinic anymore.

A girl walks past Jake and Cooper. Jake notices her.

JAKE
Hey do the gay thing.

COOPER
What? No, I'm not doing the gay thing.

JAKE
Oh come on!

COOPER
Fine, but you have to tell Paul that a girl throwing a drink in my face that she purchased constitutes a girl buying me a drink.

JAKE
Constitutes? Good word usage.

COOPER
Yeah, I've been reading.

JAKE
Fine. I'll tell him.

(CONTINUED)

COOPER

And you have to tell this girl you
work in an abortion clinic.

JAKE (SIGHS)

Okay, Fine.

Jake and Cooper walk behind the girl.

COOPER

What do you want me to do?

JAKE

Just act like you want to have sex
with me.

COOPER (LOUD)

So, do you want to have sex with
me?

Jake gives Cooper an annoyed look. The girl hears and looks
at Jake.

JAKE (TO COOPER)

Will you excuse me?

Jake turns to the girl.

JAKE

Hi, listen this guy keeps trying to
hit on me, but I'm straight. Would
you help me out?

JENNA

What would you like me to do?

JAKE

Just act like we're together.

JENNA

Okay, but you owe me.

JAKE

Thanks!

Jake turns to Cooper.

JAKE

I'm sorry, but I'm actually here
with her.

(CONTINUED)

COOPER

Your loss.

Jake gives Cooper a disgusted look then turns back to the girl. Cooper stays close.

JENNA

So what do you do?

JAKE

I work in an abortion clinic.

JENNA

Really? It is so refreshing to meet
a man that respects a woman's
rights.

Cooper gives a what the fuck look.

Cooper sees Paul walk out of the club. He taps Jake and
motions toward Paul.

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE OF BAR - NIGHT

Paul sits on a curb staring into the distance. Jake and
Cooper walk out and sit next Paul. As the door closes the
music fades to silence.

JAKE

Not feeling it tonight?

PAUL

No, I'm actually having the best
time I've had in a really long
time. Lying to girls in a bar is
the best time I've had in a long
time.

JAKE

That's good?

PAUL

Shouldn't I be a little more upset?
My fiance just left me for someone
else.

COOPER

For an astronaut.

Jake shoots Cooper a look.

(CONTINUED)

JAKE

You know we were just messing with you earlier, right?

PAUL

I'm glad she left me.

JAKE

What?

PAUL

I'm glad she left me and I'm glad I quit my job.

COOPER

Really?

PAUL

Yeah, really. I was just following the plan. The plan everyone is supposed to follow. You go to college, get a job that you hate but you do it anyway because it pays well then you get married.

COOPER

That's a terrible plan

JAKE

Yeah, who wants to do that?

PAUL

Yeah, you guys obviously have another plan. To never grow up. There has to be more though, right? I mean, shouldn't I want more?

Turns to Jake

PAUL

Shouldn't you want more?

Turns to Cooper

PAUL

Shouldn't you... well maybe this is all you want. But shouldn't we want more, Jake?

JAKE

I think you're being too hard on yourself.

(CONTINUED)

PAUL
Yeah, maybe. I'm going to walk home.

COOPER
It's almost a mile!

PAUL
I'll see you guys later.

Paul walks down the street.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The sound of the front door opening can be heard.

Paul enters.

PAUL
Jake? Cooper?

Jake walks in.

JAKE
There you are. What took you so long?

PAUL
I just decided to walk around for a while.

JAKE
Well Cooper and I got something for you. It's out back.

Paul gives Jake a confused look.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACK YARD - NIGHT

Cooper is standing in the yard, drink in one hand, a baseball bat in the other.

JAKE
So we know you're having a hard time with everything and probably need to blow off some steam.

(CONTINUED)

Jake motions with his head toward a tree. Hanging from the tree is a pinata shaped like a rocket ship.

PAUL

No way, where did you get that?

JAKE

Cooper knows a pinata guy. We wanted to get you one shaped like an astronaut, but those are hard to find.

PAUL

There's such a thing as a pinata guy?

JAKE

Yeah, Juan.

COOPER

Juan.

PAUL

Okay. Juan.

JAKE

You'd think they'd stop making those after the Challenger accident.

PAUL

That's a good point.

Cooper hands Paul the bat.

JAKE

And with each swing of the bat you will be saying goodbye to your old life and hello to your new one.

Paul takes the bat and nods. He walks to the pinata and with a deep breath he takes a swing.

Cut to Black. Credits Roll.