

Change The Channel

By

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FADE IN:

INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

Two men occupy seats that lie either side of a large oak table that's seen better days.

The first man CONRAD BATEMAN(25) is a handsome, well dressed, well groomed, borderline metro sexual figure of a man. He fidgets with something in his pocket while his eyes take in the sights of a dilapidated small office that looks like the home of a trash hoarder.

THE SOLICITOR(62) the second man is rustling through papers in a congested desk drawer. He wears a sorely creased suit without tie and thick glasses that magnify eyes like windows to his soul.

FULL SHOT - TV

A marble white spherical body wraps itself around a twenty inch liquid black screen, centered in the lower part of the frame sits a dormant blue LED light, four legs each pointing in opposite directions sprout from its under side inadvertently complementing the whole structure.

INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

Conrad marvels at the TV.

THE SOLICITOR

I see that's caught your eye.

CONRAD

Its surroundings do make it stand out -- no offense.

THE SOLICITOR

Its a fifty year old unique piece of craftsmanship, that when finished was about fifty years ahead of its time.

CONRAD

Fifty years ahead of its time!

THE SOLICITOR

Yes, in fact I'd even go so far as to say that the televisions of today just don't compare to this technological master piece.

(CONTINUED)

Conrad takes a deeper look at the TV.

CONRAD

Apart from it not looking out of place on the set of *A Clockwork Orange*, whats so special about it?

THE SOLICITOR

Take a good look at it, do you see a lead running out of it with a plug on the end, NO, -- theres no windup key or place to put batteries, it self generates its own power.

CONRAD

(intrigued)

How, nuclear?

THE SOLICITOR

(laughs)

My high opinion of the intellectual genius that was the man who built this would not have me believe that he would ever consider the conception of a nuclear television.

CONRAD

(embarrassed)

Well then what powers it?

THE SOLICITOR

To find that out you'd have to break it open.

The thought of breaking it open appeals to Conrad who always has money on his mind. To him a profitable enigma sits inches away.

THE SOLICITOR

Along with it being a color TV it has over a hundred channels -- a hundred and one to be exact...

CONRAD

(cheekily)

Is it HD ready.

THE SOLICITOR

HD is nothing more then a gimmick, this TV does everything it needs to do and more.

Conrad takes in the expired state of the room his sits in.

(CONTINUED)

CONRAD

I doubt you're the owner of a TV built in the last twenty years, maybe if you were to join the HD revolution you'd soon realize what you're missing out on.

THE SOLICITOR

What am I missing out on, baseball in high definition, could there be anything more pointless.

CONRAD

(thinks)

How about non- alcoholic beer.

THE SOLICITOR

Touche.

CONRAD

Your TV is nice and all but can we get down to the business end of things now, what did uncle Fintan leave me?

The solicitor nods to the TV and smiles.

CONRAD

He left me this.

Conrad leaves his seat. His hands touch and feel the perfect curves of the TV as if it was the holy grail itself.

A feeling of great wealth and greed rushes through his body.

CONRAD

What else?

THE SOLICITOR

What else what?

CONRAD

What else have I been left?

THE SOLICITOR

Nothing else, just the TV.

CONRAD

There was no property, no money or cars?

(CONTINUED)

THE SOLICITOR

Yes, there was all that and more
but none of it that was left to
you.

CONRAD

(perplexed)

Why just the TV?

THE SOLICITOR

(snaps)

Why anything!, where you close to
your uncle?, were you at his
funeral?

The solicitor leans back into his chair awaiting the word
"NO" to limp out of Conrads mouth.

CONRAD

(confused)

So then like you said, why
anything?

The solicitor sits in silence. Avoiding a question his
facial expressions say he knows the answer too.

Conrad gestures towards the TV.

CONRAD

He built this?

THE SOLICITOR

He thought it up, he designed it,
he foraged its parts and yes he
build it.

CONRAD

I don't think I'd be far off in
saying that you were more then just
my uncle's solicitor.

THE SOLICITOR

That depends on what more means to
you Mr Bateman, I've come to
realize that sexual innuendo never
strays far from the minds of your
generation -- lets just say that I
was an admirer of your uncle's
engineering brilliance and was a
good friend of his.

(CONTINUED)

CONRAD

I didn't know the man at all, can't remember the last time we spoke.

THE SOLICITOR

You where twelve, and it was the first, last, and only time you ever meet.

CONRAD

Well then I must of made a lasting impression -- so lasting that he felt the need to tell you about it.

THE SOLICITOR

Your name only came up in the latter stage of his life -- the lone ranger.

CONRAD

Thats what he referred to me as?

THE SOLICITOR

(cont'd)

The success story who turned his back on family and tradition to strike it rich in the big city.

CONRAD

(cocky)

And he respected that?

Again the solicitor sits in silence. A trait he shows when faced with what he perceives as an uncomfortable question.

CONRAD

Well is that it then! are we done now? can I take the retro TV and go?

THE SOLICITOR

We're finished, you can leave now.

CONRAD

I don't have to sign anything?

THE SOLICITOR

Theres nothing for you to sign.

Conrad braces himself to lift the weight of the TV. The TV reveals its first genius attribute to Conrad.

Its as light as a feather. Conrad lifts it with ease.

(CONTINUED)

CONRAD

I presume the rest of the possessions were shared out among the family -- who got his house?

THE SOLICITOR

There was only two names written in your uncle's will, one of which was yours.

CONRAD

And the other?

THE SOLICITOR

That's confidential.

CONRAD

Did they get left everything else!

THE SOLICITOR

(laughs)

I don't believe you're as stupid as you look Mr Bateman, you can figure that one out yourself.

CONRAD

(enraged)

Who!

THE SOLICITOR

A word of warning before you go, don't sit too close to the TV ...

CONRAD

You!

THE SOLICITOR

(cont'd)

... you'll ruin your eyes.

CONRAD

You got everything else?

THE SOLICITOR

Good-bye Mr Bateman.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM

FULL SHOT - TV SCREEN

Through the black reflection of the sleeping TV we see the overview of the hotel room.

Conrad is sitting on one of two single beds. He is talking on the phone while sifting through an open suit case that lies on the floor in front of him.

CONRAD

... I need you to get a hold of David Nicholson, I can't get through to him from here, go around to his place if you have to, tell him I have something of worth to show him ...

Conrad takes a toilet back and a small tub of moisturizer out of his suit case.

CONRAD

... unless of a delay I should get in at three, meet me at baggage claim I'm not risking a taxi with this ...

Pause

CONRAD

... no, you'll see what it is when I get home, good-bye.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - BATHROOM

An array of cosmetic products surround the bathroom sink.

Conrad's face hovers inches from the mirror. He precisely plucks immature hairs that have sprouted between his eyebrows.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM

From the doorway of the bathroom the camera turns slowly back to the hotel room.

We now see the TV sits perched on a table.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

8.

It flickers to life and dies just as quick.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - BATHROOM

Conrad massages his face with a creamy white moisturizer. He is in his element. The hours he spends everyday pampering himself is pour bliss.

INT. HOTEL ROOM

The TV flickers again.

It blinks ever faster, straining to wake from its slumber,
THEN ...

An endless scream of static signifies its arrival like that of a new born child. It is conscious.

The noise drags Conrad from the bathroom.

CONRAD

What the fuck ...

He paces over to it and feels franticly for a volume button, any button.

The TV pulses. On screen the static rain is replaced by black. Its silent.

Conrad steps back and sits at the edge of the bed in anticipation.

FULL SHOT - TV SCREEN

The number ONE appears on the top right hand corner.

A grainy picture of a baby materializes.

CUT TO:

BLACK VOID

Two small white dots sit centered on an invisible horizon.

We hear a faint sound of static as we sense ourselves moving forward.

CUT TO:

FULL SHOT - TV SCREEN

With the change of a channel come a change of a picture and number.

A baby, the same baby, but slightly older fills our screen as the number TWO hangs over it like a street light.

This pattern continues, with each new picture an older child and the next in line on the numeric alphabet.

As the channels hop they begin to build up speed.

CUT TO:

BLACK VOID

The two white dots appear bigger, closer.

We are moving faster, the sound of static is louder, the screen vibrates a little.

CUT TO:

FULL SHOT - TV SCREEN

Rhythmic pictures of an adolescent boy flicker.

The pictures become ever more crowded with people, there faces are blurred, leaving the boy to stand and catch the eye.

The juvenile face looks familiar, we make the connection.

CUT TO:

FULL SHOT - CONRAD

Sweat leaks from his forehead, he is griped by the images the TV produces.

He looks on as his whole life literally flashes before his eyes.

A single tear of blood vents from his left eye and courtly rolls down his cheek.

CUT TO:

FULL SHOT - TV SCREEN

Pictures of an adult Conrad whiz pass, too fast for us to fully take in. The numbers rise like that of a bomb timer in reverse.

... 98, 99, 100

CHANNEL 101

INT. HOTEL ROOM

A mirror image of Conrad sits still on screen. From the video stream Conrad notices the blood on his cheek, in an attempt to wipe it he accidentally smears it.

Conrad's body stiffens, his jaw drops slightly as if bracing himself to vomit.

The TV pulses.

BLACK VOID

The blackness has been overwhelmed by a glorious white brightness surrounded by a crimson halo.

The sound of static is unbearable.

The screen rocks violently as we struggle with the g-force. We brace for penetration.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM

A piercing CHANNEL OFF AIR tone blasts from the TV.

Two horizontal gazers of blood erupt from Conrad's eyes, crashing into the TV and spraying everywhere. As if locked in place the TV and Conrad don't budge under the force.

Conrad's screaming is drowned out by the high pitch tone from the TV, his veins bulge, ever contracting and extracting.

CU of the TV reveals that it's absorbing some of the blood.

As if by the click of a switch the surge of blood and screaming tone abruptly stop.

(CONTINUED)

A weak and blind Conrad groans in pain as droplets of blood that fall from a soaked sealing lightly shower him.

The electric blue TV light fades and then dies, the TV returns to it coma like state.

Concurrently Conrad slumps to the floor, he is DEAD.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

VOICE

... I've never executed a will
before -- is there much to it?

A slow fade in reveals a familiar scruffy office. A fresh new face sits opposite the Solicitor.

THE SOLICITOR

(grins to himself)

Quick and painless, I think would
be the best way of describing it --
well compared to other legal
proceedings.

YOUNG MAN

Great. So what have I been left?

The young man points to a TV. The TV.

YOUNG MAN

This I hope.

FADE TO BLACK