

Squirrel

Time: 2002.

Set: The stage should appear to be a warehouse or rented space converted into a film studio. There should be various mics, monitors, cameras, and a couch for lounging. Dominating the backdrop should be a large projection screen, which is used periodically during the show for flashbacks and communication with Mexico. Consequently, there are a few parts in which the actors appear only on the screen. Action on the screen should only take up 10% of the play's total, at maximum. The screen can also be used to provide visuals when various characters are recording commentary for the movie

Onstage roles:

Brian: A screenwriter and artist. Very dry and sarcastic sense of humor. 20.
Pierce: Brian's friend, a director and film student. Industrious yet sometimes oblivious. 21.
Timothy: A helpless movie-making intern. 18.
Portia: Another intern. Sleeps with Pierce. 20.
Harold: A professional British voice actor.
LeHoc: A pretentious French social critic.
Dr. Sideburns: Squirrel feminist and biologist.
Trees: Total-immersion squirrel scientist. Flamboyantly dressed.
Valdez: Anything but Mexican. Middle aged.
Sanchez: A professional type.
Ms. Flapperjacker: A very old, crochity woman
Gerry: Balding Ex-President.

(Appearing only on video screen:)

Producer: Bearded, husky man. A little too loud.
Hidalgo: Mexican. Older.

Note: The characters involved in the production of this movie are meant to be outrageous. Directors, Actors, and Designers are encouraged to embellish and add to them as they see fit.

A Bit on Source Material: *The basic concept of making a movie about squirrels was first developed by Bryan Madole and Tyson Wu. Some fragments of their original narration for that movie (uncopyrighted) appear in the lines of LeHoc, Trees, and Harold. Their permission was granted for the use of this material (which is less than 5% of the entire text of the play). Otherwise, they were not involved in the creation of this script. The writer would like to thank them for their inspiration and encouragement.*

(Lights up on Brian only)

BRIAN: When I was a kid, my dad used to beat me with bricks. Bags full of them. And that was alright – the scars were only on the outside. But every once in awhile, just to make me feel guilty, he would open the bag – right before he wailed on me with it – and put a squirrel in. Not a dead squirrel – a live, cute, fuzzy one. And afterwards he would say, “you’re not just hurting me, and you’re not just hurting yourself – you’re hurting a poor, innocent, adorable squirrel. And that’s what makes God angry, son: rodent suffering.” *(smokes cigarette, thinks for a while)* So that’s why I’m making a documentary film about squirrels. At least, that’s my excuse for it. I’m sure I have some messed up psychological motivation too.

(lights go up on whole stage)

HAROLD: I simply cannot do this without my schnitzel. How can a man work without his schnitzel?

PIERCE: Let's get this once more from the top, Harold. Then everyone can have all the schnitzel they want.

HAROLD: Fine. But I'll have you know, I am unsatisfied.

PIERCE: A shame. Let's roll.

(Lights change, crew starts filming)

HAROLD: As we come to the conclusion of our journey through the world of squirrels, a few things still remain fuzzy. What makes a squirrel happy? Is it something profound, something that we humans miss all the way up here? Or is it just a good set of nuts? We may never know the answer. I certainly don't. I'm Jools Tuffington, thank you for joining us.

PIERCE: Cut! Cut. Your name is Harold.

HAROLD: What?

PIERCE: You said Jools again. Your name is Harold.

HAROLD: Bloody hell. Who cares what name I said? It was brilliant narration.

PIERCE: Maybe that sort of fruity-tuity voice-over improv would fly on a llama show, but there's just no place for it with squirrels.

HAROLD: *(mumbling)* At least at the llama show they have some real catering.

PIERCE: What's that?

HAROLD: Nothing.

PIERCE: Do you want to go back to hosting "The Absolutely British Buttocks Hour"? Because that can be arranged.

HAROLD: No. Let's proceed.

PIERCE: Roll sound.

(Harold says the next lines very quickly, slowing down and emphasizing only "Harold")

HAROLD: As we come to the conclusion of our journey through the world of squirrels, a few things still remain fuzzy. What makes a squirrel happy? Is it something profound, something that we humans miss all the way up here? Or is it just a good set of nuts? We may never know the answer. I certainly don't. I'm Harold Tuffington, thank you for joining us.

PIERCE: Harold...

HAROLD: Something wrong, Lord Fuzzy bottoms?

BRIAN: Just get him the damn schnitzel.

PIERCE: We're on a tight schedule. There's no time for silly sausage antics.

HAROLD: There's always time for sausage in my life.

PIERCE: Fine. Fine. You go get some schnitzel, we'll shoot another scene. Just keep in mind that I hate all of you. *(points to Timothy, who has just entered)* Especially you.

TIMOTHY: *(in adolescent voice)* What did I do?

PIERCE: *(sinister, low-toned)* You sunk my battleship.

(intern stands with scared expression for a second, then runs)

PIERCE: *(smiling at the scared intern)* I'll never get tired of scaring them.

BRIAN: Or sleeping with them.

PIERCE: Keep your moral quandaries to yourself. So, what else can we shoot?

BRIAN: How about my "squirrel imagery in the abusive family" sequence?

PIERCE: Well... if we must. It really is infringing on my vision.

BRIAN: Oh come on, it's my movie!

PIERCE: But I am... the director. The... essence of the movie lies within my firm...

BRIAN: Loins?

PIERCE: Grasp! Grasp of the... stakes. And what's at stake here is the image of the squirrel in the minds of the world.

BRIAN: That's precisely what my family psychology sequence deals with.

PIERCE: But they told us never to mix drama with fact!

BRIAN: Ugh, I suppose you learned that at film school.

PIERCE: No! ... It was a film camp.

(The interns, Tim and Portia, enter in costume as a father and mom. They are horsing around.)

BRIAN: Control your minions. *(he puts on some costume items to become a "son" character)*

PIERCE: Alright, places! I hope everyone remembers their lines this time... or it's back to working on "The Regis Show" you go.

(the lights focus on the large dinner table that they are now sitting at center stage)

PIERCE: And... action.

DAD. Son, your Mom and I have some bad news.

SON. What? Did Grandma die? Did you not get the inheritance you wanted? She was a greedy old bat, you know.

DAD. No, no, that's not it.

SON. So we got the money? Let's go crazy and buy shit! I want my own bullfighting ring!

DAD. Unfortunately, your grandmother did not die. It's something much worse.

SON. What dad, what?

DAD. Much, much worse.

MOM. Just tell him, Patrick. Just tell him.

DAD. I'm warming up to it, Fran.

MOM. You're impossible. *(turning to son)* We found it! We found it, you little brat, we found it! I can't believe you were hiding it from me! I'm a failure as a mother!

SON. Uh... what did you find?

DAD. Your stash, son. Your stash... of squirrel.

SON. What! You were going through my porn drawer?

DAD. It was well hidden under all those Hustlers and bags of weed, but your mother has a knack for knowing when things are up... and something was certainly up with you, mister.

SON. I can't believe this.

MOM. How could you? Imagine, a rodent smoker in our family. And we thought Uncle Frank's pedophilia was bad.

DAD. Now Fran, we need to be firm but gentle, remember? That's what the brochure said... before I lost it during sex.

SON. Ewwww, Dad.

DAD. Don't worry Son, it wasn't sex with your mom.

SON. Oh. Ok.

DAD. Now, we're going to do some role-playing, son

MOM. It's for your own good.

DAD. I'm the "high school teen," and your mom is my "target." *Alchem. (playing "high school teen")* How ya doin', sweet pussy?

MOM. Not bad, mae daddy.

DAD. Care to join me to smoke some squirrel? Afterwards, we can engage in premarital sex.

MOM. Alright, but only if we don't wear a condom.

DAD. Anything for you, my hot buttered roll.

SON. This is crazy! It's not like that at all. It's just something I do in my own time. *Of my own free will. (sensing their stares)* It's not about you! It's about me. I mean, if you want something about you, *dad*, maybe we should talk about your little obsession with trout.

DAD. *(suddenly uncomfortable)* What are you talking about?

SON. You know what I'm talking about, Dad. Or should I call you Fishy McFish?

DAD. Lies!

MOM. It's true, dear. Everything's about trout with you. Trout for every meal. Trout hung on every wall. When I want to go on vacation, you want to go trout fishing. And... when you're angry, you even beat us with a frozen trout. Now I start to see where our little guy got it from. When does the madness end?

DAD. I'm not all about trout! I'm also... writing a book.

MOM. About what?

DAD. Gypsies!

MOM. Gypsies?

DAD. Well, Gypsies with trout. It's an ancient tradition. Like Judaism, but fishier.

MOM. That's it! I'm leaving!

DAD. Sounds like somebody didn't get their daily trout. *(Takes out giant trout, starts to beat her. However, the scene goes awry and has to be called off.)*

PIERCE. Cut. Cut. Just, cut. Brian, can we cut that completely? Please say yes. Please. Please.

BRIAN: I think the interplay between the Dad's obsession and the son's disorder is key. It explains man's relations with squirrels.

PIERCE: No one has a relationship with squirrels like that.

BRIAN. *(tension is building)* Speak for yourself.

PORTIA: *(having removed her mom outfit)* Am I the only one not wearing underwear here? It's really chilly.

(silence)

PIERCE: Thank you, dear. That was a keen reminder to us all as to why we have interns.

PORTIA: Why do you have interns?

PIERCE: No reason whatsoever. You agree, Brian?

BRIAN: Hey, you're the one sleeping with her.

PIERCE: Touché. See, Portia, you are good for something.

PORTIA: But Brian doesn't get anything out of our working relationship.

PIERCE. So maybe you could break my heart and seduce him, only to have commitment issues and "pull out" at the last second?

PORTIA: I think I *will* do that, someday. Sorry Brian, but you're screwed.

BRIAN: That's ok. *(very cheerily)* I'll just give you syphilis!

TIMOTHY: Hey... do I get to sleep with anyone?

PIERCE: No. Male interns are here to be killed in terrible rigging accidents. Let's take five and then continue this death march of a production.

(all leave but Brian. He smokes.)

BRIAN: So you might ask, "how did we get to make a film about squirrels?" Which is a good question, because it's not everyday that you find any sort of production company backing a rodent-related show... unless, of course, you're in the dirty movie business, which I don't plan to be for at least the next five years. Actually, funding wasn't hard to get, but compromises had to be made. *(smokes cigarette)* Terrible compromises. The type that make poor art school students wake up in the middle of the night screaming, "But there were no machine guns in Little House on the Prairie! How can you ruin my masterwork like this? I wrote my thesis on David Lynch!" See for yourself. I would say, "look at it through the eyes of a squirrel," but I doubt any of you could handle seeing that many nuts.

(The large screen turns on. The action takes place in the interior of an office. A big shot producer sits across from Brian and Pierce.)

PRODUCER: Gentlemen, I've read your script. I've seen your shot list. I've heard your concepts.

PIERCE: Something else you need?

PRODUCER: No, no. There's just one question I have for you.

BRIAN: What?

PRODUCER: Where, my friends, are the boobalics?

BRIAN: The what?

PRODUCER: The breasts. The jigglies. The luscious melons.

BRIAN: Uh, squirrels don't have breasts. They're rodents.

PRODUCER: So, what I have here is a movie about squirrels, themselves quite evil, which features no racks or giant busts of any kind.

PIERCE: Yes.

PRODUCER: And you expect me to sell this?

BRIAN: Why not?

PRODUCER: I'm afraid I'm going to need to see some giant gazongas added to your production before I can approve it. Squirrels are just too negative.

BRIAN: Hey, hold on.

PIERCE: Wait a minute. May I talk to my associate in private a moment.

PRODUCER: Only if I can spend that moment looking at this magazine full of fake breasts.

PIERCE: Uh... we have a deal.

(They huddle and talk, the camera can still see their faces)

BRIAN: I don't like how this is going!

PIERCE: Yes, I feel my vision being tied to the stake as we speak. But... maybe we can go... another route than the "squirrel playboy mansion special."

BRIAN: I don't quite follow you.

PIERCE: Maybe we can't add sex, but we can add... well you know.

BRIAN: I'm still in the dark.

PIERCE: Violence.

BRIAN: Uh...

PIERCE: Let's have the squirrels explode.

BRIAN: But they don't do that. At least, not without alka-seltzer.

PIERCE: That's a minor issue. We'll fix it in post production. Let's try and sell it to him!

BRIAN: I dunno...

PIERCE: It's better than the dancers.

BRIAN: Ok, let's do it.

PIERCE: What if the squirrels blew up?

PRODUCER: *(puts down magazine, considers.)* A movie. With squirrels blowing up.

PIERCE: *(disappointed at how dumb it sounds)* Yeah...

PRODUCER: That's brilliant. It's every producer's dream. It's like Land Before Time meets The Terminator, but with more fur.

BRIAN: That makes it sound dirty.

PRODUCER: I like how you think, young man.

PIERCE: Do we have a deal?

PRODUCER: Well, let me ask my partners. *(he turns to the magazine and consults the pictures of the ladies inside)* Well girls, whatdya think? Yeah? So do I. You, Mindy, you're one smart cookie. You're gonna make it in this biz. *(he gives her a kiss, and turns back to Brian and Pierce)* Boys, you're on.

(Screen goes up. Once again, Brian addresses the audience)

BRIAN: Stay tuned for the exciting conclusion to "the combustion of small mammals." In the meantime, we have for you the death of all things good and natural! *(this is said in preparation for the entrance of Pierce and Portia, followed slowly by the sociologist, LeHoc)*

PIERCE: I specifically asked you only to call me "Mommy" if I called you "Daddy."

PORTIA: But you did say "daddy"! You said, "Daddy, Portia!" Kinda weird, but it counted.

PIERCE: I said, "at ease, Portia!" We were having our army fantasy, not our grown-up fantasy.

PORTIA: Whatever. You're lucky I'm a total prostitute.

BRIAN: Uh, Pierce couldn't afford a real prostitute.

LeHOC: One of your so called Miss Americas would not last five minutes in a French brothel. There, a woman... must be like a man!

PIERCE: That's good to know. Dr. LeHoc, I'd like to thank you for taking time out of your busy lecture schedule to help us make your film. Your contribution is most appreciated.

LeHOC: It is easy to sacrifice the chance to berate Americans in person for the chance to berate them on film.

BRIAN: Are we ready? I have my sound gear hooked up.

PIERCE: Yeah, Dr. LeHoc, please take a seat.

LeHOC: That is not all I will take from you.

PIERCE: Right. Roll sound. (*from offstage: "rolling!"*) And, speak whenever you're ready, Doctor.

(*The doctor clears his throats and begins. Images of squirrels, etc. can be played on the big screen during his narration.*)

LeHOC: Squirrels, like all American creatures, generally waste most of their lives staring blankly into space, surfacing from their idle filth only to procreate and devour foods rich in fat and grease. Fortunately, squirrels are the least intrusive of these United States slobs, having the decency to keep to themselves instead of corrupting other cultures with their television, slang, and furniture.

PIERCE: This is where we put a shot of a squirrel on a futon.

BRIAN: I still think it should be an armchair.

PIERCE: We'll work on it. We might have to settle with a recliner.

BRIAN: Can the squirrel have a pipe?

PIERCE: Only if it's a bubble pipe.

LeHOC: Most of these American squirrels, when not wasting away into nothingness, are stealing things that belong to me. Things like my watermelons, my taxicabs, and assorted buildings. They then replace these plundered goods with McDonalds and Starbucks brand whorehouses.

PIERCE: Now this is culture. True cutting-edge film making.

BRIAN: I didn't know the cutting-edge was so French.

PIERCE: Oh yes. I believe it runs right along the Alps.

LeHOC: Hopefully, in time, these creatures can be trained to do something for the greater good. These jobs will include eating nuclear waste, digging for truffles, and eliminating the less useful members of

society, such as children and the elderly. *(he turns from the microphones)* I am completed. Where is my money?

PIERCE: That's not in the script.

BRIAN: Thank you Pierce for making our obvious lack of money even more obvious.

PIERCE: Dr. LeHoc...

LeHOC: I know what you will say, fancy pants. You will say that in America art is a charity. In France film is a charity as well, paid by the taxpayers, so that the film people can pay the men who do nothing but be quoted in their films. One of those men is me. I demand that your taxpayers pay me now, as well. They should share the burden of the noble frenchman.

PIERCE: But by paying you, we would be breaking our trust with the other unpaid professionals donating their efforts to this film.

LeHOC: These others that you speak of, are they french?

PIERCE: No.

LeHOC: Then they are of no interest to me. Pay or die.

BRIAN: It's not in his contract!

PIERCE: Who wrote that contract, you or me?

BRIAN: Uh... me.

PIERCE: We're screwed.

BRIAN: Hey! I can deal with complex issues. I'm not just an artist.

PIERCE: You have no sense of responsibility.

BRIAN: Yes I do!

PIERCE: A responsible person would not have named our fish "diarrhea."

BRIAN: You asked me to name it while I was drunk!

PIERCE: Well, a responsible person knows not to name fish while they're drunk.

BRIAN: I can't believe you're dragging the fish into this.

PIERCE: First you ruin my pets. Then, my movie.

BRIAN: OUR MOVIE.

PIERCE: Yeah, maybe I should start saying that, so you can take credit for this disaster.

BRIAN: Hey!

PIERCE: Look, LeHoc, we can't pay you. We didn't agree to it.

LeHOC: Yes you did. Actually, by paying me, you also declare war on Mexico. It was in my contract

PIERCE: I'm going to kill you, Brian. Slowly. With tweezers.

BRIAN: *(quietly to pierce)* I have an idea. Play along. *(loudly)* Say Pierce, where did we put all those explosives?

PIERCE: Uhm, you mean, the one for the squirrels?

BRIAN: Yeah! We had enough to blow up a country... a country about the size of France.

LeHOC: What?

PIERCE: Of course we would never do that.

BRIAN: No, of course not. Think of the baguettes. They'd all be refugees: starving, homeless. In need of jelly and butter.

PIERCE: It would be a shame to let so many pastries go to waste.

LeHOC: My precious pastries! I must safeguard them from the likes of you. I will be back. Possibly with a lawyer, possibly with a lot of booze. Only time, that retched slut, shall tell.

(He exits. Timothy enters with a platter full of dummy squirrels.)

TIMOTHY: Here's those explosive squirrels you were asking for. I almost lost an arm stuffing them with all that dynamite.

PIERCE: Almost? Damn. That would have been good press.

BRIAN: *(Observing combustible rodents)* This nostril needs more c4.

PIERCE: I think we've almost got it...

BRIAN: Ok, let me poke it with this match.

PIERCE: What? No, you fool!

BRIAN: She's gonna blow!

(They hurl the squirrel offstage, where it explodes)

BRIAN: *(as if someone sneezed)* God bless you. Let me try this one.

(Brian drops the squirrel, which sparks.)

BRIAN: Do you have any fireproof kleenex handy?

PIERCE: For sweet Jesus, get that out of here!

(they hurl it again, leading to another offstage explosion)

PIERCE: This sounded a lot simpler before.

BRIAN: Perhaps we can just have squirrels that fizzle. We can tie them to bottle rockets.

(He is interrupted by the door opening stage left. An old lady walks on.)

MS. FLAPPERJACKER: You!

PIERCE: Uh, can we help you, ma'am?

MS. FLAPPERJACKER: You've been hurling explosive rodents into my garden all morning!

BRIAN: All morning? We just started.

PIERCE: *(ignoring Brian)* Oh! Well, I can assure you ma'am, it was a complete accident.

BRIAN: We'll be happy to pay you back for your damaged soil.

MS. FLAPPERJACKER: Shut your face, whippersnapper! It's not just my garden you hit.

PIERCE: Wait... what else?

MS. FLAPPERJACKER: You blew up my dog! Your irresponsible rodent combustion has robbed me of my precious poodle.

BRIAN: Oh my.

PIERCE: Was this poodle particularly valuable?

MS. FLAPPERJACKER: It was a rare albino poodle, purebred.

BRIAN: And we blew it up?

MS. FLAPPERJACKER: Yes.

BRIAN: *(genuinely impressed with himself)* That's so cool!

PIERCE: Uh, what he meant to say, ma'am, is that you're taking this very coolly.

MS. FLAPPERJACKER: I'm used to it. I've always hated squirrels. Squirrels and minorities.

BRIAN: Whoa.

MS. FLAPPERJACKER: Those Africans, when they cross the border, they bring all sorts of squirrels with them. Squirrels in their leederhosen, squirrels in their dentures, squirrels in their hula skirts, even squirrels in their naughty bits.

PIERCE: I didn't know squirrels could fit there.

MS. FLAPPERJACKER: *(gesturing down pants)* Would you like me to show you how, sonny?

PIERCE: For the love of all that's holy, no.

BRIAN: Ms. Flapperjacker. Are you retarded?

MS. FLAPPERJACKER: I don't know what that word means, so I'm going to leave. But I warn you: *(her voice suddenly gets very deep)* I'll be back. *(she exits)*

PIERCE: Well, that sure shriveled my sack.

BRIAN: What's left of it after your army training with Portia.

PIERCE: Yeah, well, at least I don't commiserate with an animal that resembles a chihuahua wearing an imitation fur coat, then blow it up in fits of childish rage.

BRIAN: You're still mad about the fish named Diarrhea, aren't you?

PIERCE: No, I'm mad that your hatred for your father is ruining my career ambitions.

BRIAN: You're lucky it's time for one of my emotional soliloquies, or I'd... do... something. Go away.

(All leave but Brian, who addresses the audience)

BRIAN: Pierce is mad. I'm mad. But there's a difference. Pierce is mad in the way that he'll blind you when that vein in his forehead pops. I'm mad in the way that I'll blind you, in the night, with salad forks. *(smokes)* Of course I'm kidding. They would be nicer forks than that. Maybe tongs. Anyway, here's the point: I'm not mad because I want to be, or because I was born that way. I'm mad because society says I am. Allow me to explain. Not that you could do anything else but allow me, because, hey, you're just an audience, and I'm drunk on power. Power and gin. Here's the story:

We're all born weird. When you get rich, it's called eccentricity, it's charming. When you're famous, it's erotic: you have "obsessions" and "fetishes." And when you're a genius, it's like your weirdness becomes the ultimate sign of your brilliance. But us not-so-special people, the pieces of everyday shit, have to feign "normalness." As a self-declared piece of shit, I protest this segregation. So I'm making a movie that indulges all of my weirdness, I don't care if Pierce, or anyone, can handle it. How does the Reading Rainbow song go? *(sings)* I can be anyone... *(stops singing)* Yes, well, that deflated any momentum I had going. But you get the point, maybe. Or you had some good fantasies about the person in front of you while I was talking. All you people, turn around and wave to your new best friend behind you! They were thinking some very weird things, which they'll tell you about after the show, I'm sure.

(Pierce enters, lighting changes.)

PIERCE: I think I patched stuff up with Lefloc's lawyer... no thanks to you, fish defamer.

BRIAN: You're lucky we got that fish! It could have been a chihuahua. Then "diarrhea" would have been on the tags and everything.

PIERCE: I hate chihuahuas even more.

(A crazily dressed man, Juan Valdez, struts on from stage left. He is filled with braggadocio, machismo, and other Italian superlatives.)

JUAN VALDEZ: Enough! Enough of this chihuahua bashing! I shall not have it.

BRIAN: Who are you?

JUAN VALDEZ: I am Juan Valdez, President of Mexico!

BRIAN: No you're not.

JUAN VALDEZ: Yes, I am. I am a fiesta of power! A pinyata bursting with authority. Dow before me. Bow! *(they bow)* Ok enough bowing. I very much thank you.

BRIAN: We bowed out of amazement. You're still not the President.

JUAN VALDEZ: Who else could I be? No one but myself, me. I am the President of Mexico.

BRIAN: Why is the President of Mexico on our set, then?

JUAN VALDEZ: Because you declared war on us 20 minutes ago, you fool.

PIERCE: When we signed LeHoc's contract.

JUAN VALDEZ: Correct, young man who is to be dead soon.

BRIAN: But I've never been to Mexico.

JUAN VALDEZ: Ah! You have not lived until you have seen the rolling green hills of Mexico, heard the roar of the elephants, felt the sting of our delicious bananas.

BRIAN: You've never been to Mexico, either, have you?

JUAN VALDEZ: Silence! What do you know, dog! You know nothing. You hump these fuzzy squirrels all, how do you say it, "the live long day." In Mexico we would eat the squirrels. Eat them and dance!

(A man in a suit enters)

JUAN SANCHEZ: Good evening. I am Juan Sanchez, Assistant to the Vice-Consulate of Mexico. I'm afraid we'll have to sue all of you for defaming the good name of our nation. I would read off the list of your violations, but I only have a few hours.

(Everyone stands silent and befuddled. After a few seconds of everyone staring at Sanchez, Juan Valdez casually lifts his gun, extends his arm and shoots him. Sanchez falls to the floor without a sound, and the conversation continues. During the rest of the scene, Timothy creeps out and slowly drags the body away.)

JUAN VALDEZ: As I was saying, you do not need to see Mexico to hurt her pride. Does Jorge *(pronounced hor-hey)* Bush the Junior visit Iraq before he bombs? No. Now, prepare yourselves for hell.

(He raises his gun to fire. Dr. Sideburns enters. She sees Valdez, who approaches her)

JUAN VALDEZ: You! You are a sexy american feminist. We hear of you in Mexico. It is said that your type likes to ride the donkey on top. *(quietly)* I like a woman on top.

DR. SIDEBURNS: Ugh... get your disgusting, non-furry paws off of me. *(she puts him in a headlock)* Sorry buddy, *(she karate chops him to the floor)*, I only date mammals with fur.

BRIAN: That is not how I expected that problem to be solved.

PIERCE: Dr. Sideburns, I presume?

DR. SIDEBURNS: Yes, and that's what you'll call me... unless you're a cute little squirrel. Then you can call me love muffin.

(Portia enters)

PORTIA: *(looking at Juan Valdez)* Oh my god, that guy is sooo dead. *(looking at Dr. Sideburns)* Oh my god, you are sooo ugly. Did you get run over on the way here?

BRIAN: Hey, Portia, didn't you forget to throw up after your last meal?

PORTIA: Oh yeah! Thanks for reminding me! *(she exits. Much to Brian and Pierce's relief, Dr. Sideburns laughs)*

DR. SIDEBURNS: So, which one of you is screwing her?

PIERCE: Actually, I am.

DR. SIDEBURNS: Well, you disgust me. In fact, sexual relations between humans always disgust me. I will only mate with the squirrel kind.

BRIAN: Have you succeeded?

DR. SIDEBURNS: Yes, I had three beautiful squirrel children. They were then promptly devoured by dingoes.

PIERCE: Whoa. The dingo really did eat your baby.

DR. SIDEBURNS: Yes, I started that joke.

BRIAN: My sound equipment is set up. Ready to start your commentary?

DR. SIDEBURNS: Don't order me around like I was one of your Mary Hot-between-the-legs. I'll start when I'm ready. Which is now.

PIERCE: Roll sound... and, begin.

DR. SIDEBURNS: Squirrels love sex. You think rabbits are horny? I've been to a squirrel porn shop before. You've never seen anything like it. *These squirrels know how to get it on.* And they will keep humping, and their numbers *will* overtake all else. Then, the earth will be ours! Uh, I mean, theirs.

BRIAN: Does it seem a bit sexist to you that the only girl in our movie is talking about sex?

PIERCE: Shhhhh... I think I can see her breasts growing. *(many seconds of silence)* Still growing...

BRIAN: Shouldn't someone be talking? *(more silence)*

PIERCE: Is... something wrong, Doctor?

DR. SIDEBURNS: No, that's all I have to say.

PIERCE: Ok. Uhm, thanks?

DR. SIDEBURNS: That's just like you, isn't it? Just use a woman and dismiss her. I bet you treat everything in life that way. It's all about the masculine power structure, you know.

PIERCE: I don't have any power over you. You respond to squirrels

DR. SIDEBURNS: But I have to use men to get to those squirrels, fool. That's how I have so much power now, by manipulating men. *Those squirrel affairs are my reward.*

PIERCE: Brian, I really wish I could blame you for this.

BRIAN: I only hate my father. Not all men, just him.

PIERCE: Right.

DR. SIDEBURNS: This really is pathetic. You have no control over anything, Mr. Pierce. Your movie is controlling you. And you, Mr. Brian. Your obsessions control you. You're both bitchslapped by

PRESIDENT GERALD FORD: Hi, I'm Gerry.

PIERCE: Oh... my god. President Gerald Ford? Oh my god. I'm going to wet myself. Oh my god.

BRIAN: Do I need to get you a bib?

PIERCE: Yes... and lots of kleenex.

PRESIDENT GERALD FORD: Hello. Did someone order nachos?

MEX: Oh yeah, let me just grab those from you.

PRESIDENT GERALD FORD: Hold on, partner. Are you Mr. M. Army?

MEX: You got it.

PRESIDENT GERALD FORD: Good enough for me! Here you go.

BRIAN: Wait. Your name is actually Mexican Army.

MEX: Sure is. I guess my parents saw me as a military man.

BRIAN: That's pathetic.

MEX: I know. But hey, I have nachos, you don't.

BRIAN: Good point. Carry on.

(Pierce snaps out of his admiration of President Ford long enough to address him.)

PIERCE: President Ford! It's such an honor to meet you. I have all of your books. I've memorized all of your speeches. I've even stolen light bulbs from your presidential library. Can I... shake your hand?

PRESIDENT GERALD FORD: Sure! But I haven't washed it since Nixon died.

(As they are about to shake, a door flies open. Harold enters, holding a tub of radishes. He flings them at Mex.)

MEX: Dude. Radishes? Come on, dude.

HAROLD: This will be a good war yet! I shall return. History Channel, here I come! *(he exits again)*

PRESIDENT GERALD FORD: Oh, I see you're having a war here. How nice. I never got to have one of those. Where did my nachos go? Did you order the nachos?

PIERCE: ... No. Listen, Mr. President, will you be in my movie?

PRESIDENT GERALD FORD: Is it about me?

PIERCE: No.

PRESIDENT GERALD FORD: Ok!

(As they are about to shake, Harold once again interrupts them. He flings open the door, shouting various war cries, carrying a spear. Mex hurls the Nachos at him, but misses and hits the President, who is blinded.)

MEX. Oops, I was aiming at the british guy.

PRESIDENT GERALD FORD: I'm blind! But I love cheese! Thanks.

(The President stands in the middle, stumbling. Suddenly, Harold hurls a spear at Mex. He does not see Gerald Ford until it is too late. The former president is struck, and lies dying on the floor.)

PRESIDENT GERALD FORD: Geez . . . I'm sorry that you didn't enjoy your Nachos, sir.

PIERCE: Gerry! Gerry, you're dying.

PRESIDENT GERALD FORD: We had some good times, though.

PIERCE: Sure, yeah, we did. Can I shake your hand before you die?

PRESIDENT GERALD FORD: No. I'd like to speak to that strange boy over there.

BRIAN: Me?

PRESIDENT GERALD FORD: Yes, you, come here. *(he whispers to Brian)* Your father told me to tell you... before he died... that he's *(coughs)* very proud...

BRIAN: Of me? Really?

PRESIDENT GERALD FORD: That he's very proud... of his record collection. *(He dies.)*

BRIAN: His record collection? Well that's bloody marvelous.

PIERCE: What did he say? What did he say to you? I can't believe Gerald Ford is dead!

BRIAN: He said... to tell you that your true calling is in porn, Pierce.

PIERCE: Oh I knew it, I knew it! Thank you Gerry! *(he kisses the president's head)*

BRIAN: Ewww... you just kissed a dead guy.

PIERCE: Wow. I did. Our squirrel movie has a body count.

BRIAN: Isn't that what we wanted?

PIERCE: I was figuring on squirrel bodies only.

BRIAN: I guess that's the lesson here: animals are constantly trying to kill us.

(Timothy enters and slowly drags off the body of the President)

HAROLD: I always wanted to be on the history channel. Maybe now they'll do a biography of me on A&E. This stupid squirrel movie has lead to one good thing... well, for me at least. The rest of you are bugged silly! I'm Jools Fuckyou-ington. Goodnight. *(he leaves)*

PIERCE: I'm glad one person's happy. This couldn't be worse.

PORTIA: Hi Pierce. I'm going home now.

PIERCE: Ok, I'll be there in an hour or so, I guess.

PORTIA: Sure! Oh that reminds me, I'm dumping you. Bye!

BRIAN: Wait, you forgot the part where you sleep with me after you dump him.

MEX: Dude, the rebound is so pathetic.

BRIAN: Shut up, Mexican Army.

(Portia suddenly stops and turns towards Mex)

PORTIA: Your name is Mexican Army?

MA: Yeah, woman, go ahead and mock me.

PORTIA: My real name is Portuguese Armada.

MA: Are you serious?

PORTIA: Oh my god! Someone with a name worse than mine!

MEX: Maybe we're soulmates. Let's run off together.

PORTIA: Well, when you think about it, having similar crappy names doesn't mean we'll have any sort of romantic compatibility, but... you are a Mexican. There's not many days when you run into someone from Mexico in the U.S.

MEX: Actually, I'm from New Jersey.

PORTIA: Even more exotic! Let's go. *(as they leave)* You know, I've always wanted to date a military man.

(They skip offstage, holding hands)

BRIAN: And thus the Mexican army was defeated by a total slut.

PIERCE: Well, I guess that ends that.

BRIAN: Yeah, except our movie still *sucks*.

PIERCE: That can be fixed in editing. I'm going out for a drink.

BRIAN: You mean, after all this work, after all this angst, after all this... weird shit, you're just going to fix it in editing? What happened to your vision?

PIERCE: It died, along with half the other things involved in our movie. I give up.

BRIAN: You're a fake. A fake, Pierce. A big fake. You know it, and I know it now too. After all we've done on this, your precious vision, you don't give a damn about it. It's just another intern to you. Another tool to live out your fantasies.

PIERCE: Don't get all psychosexual on me. I've had enough squirrel sex exposure to last a lifetime.

BRIAN: Just tell me why. Why are you giving up on this movie ever being good, ever being finished. On it ever being real.

PIERCE: I'll tell you why, Brian: Because I hate squirrels.

BRIAN: No.

PIERCE: Yes. They disgust me.

BRIAN: Take it back.

PIERCE: No! I used to think they were just... blah. Normal. Whatever. But all this shit, from you, from everyone, has made me absolutely despise them. You said you get to choose something to love, all of us get to choose a passion. Well we get to choose what not to care about too, Brian. Some people just don't care about squirrels. And you can't force them too. Not with whining, not with science, not with a movie.

BRIAN: So that's your vision, huh? Cynicism.

PIERCE: That's right. It's useless. Being artsy can get you a lot of things. But it can't give you passion. It can't give you faith. You have to believe before you create, I guess. Yeah. Ok, here it is: I just wanted to use this as a stepping stone to my real career... which now appears to be in porn. Squirrels are just a rung on the ladder.

BRIAN: I don't know what to say.

PIERCE: You don't need to. This is how it ends, Brian. Not all creations are finished. Not all art is meant to be art. I don't know how to make that point clearer.

(The big screen flicks on. The Producer addresses the boys)

PRODUCER: Well, boys, got some bad news. Your movie was cancelled. We've turned into a porn studio. I'm afraid you're out of work... unless you want to help with my new project. "Re-erected: Attack of the Sex Zombies." *(he shows them the cover of the video)* Catch ya on the flip side! *(the screen turns off)*

PIERCE: It's my big opportunity. I'm sorry to leave you like this. Good luck with the squirrels, man. And with yourself. *(he leaves)*

BRIAN: *(lights cigarette up)* And that's the end folks: no end. There will never be a squirrel ending. There is no funny twist. There is no secret save. Like so many of your ambitions, your projects, my movie is dead. It's the half finished painting of a naked man in your basement. It's the millions of lines of verse never put in a proper poem. It's the serf that's more brilliant than Shakespeare, but never taught to read or write. It's you, it's me, when we die, uncompleted. This is how a lot of things in life end. Just be glad it's not everything.

(He thinks for a long time, then smiles, as if relenting) Ok, fine. I'll give you a bit to cheer you up. Another ending to another story. After this is all over, Pierce'll be the one working in porn, and I'll be the millionaire. My memoirs about rodent abuse will be a bestseller, once again proving that this country has a strange fascination with small-animal bestiality. Someone will talk to me about making them into a movie, but it will never happen. As for my issues with my Dad... well, let's just say that I visit his grave every day. And I kick it. Really, really hard.

So, if any of you are still listening, let me say this: for the love of Jesus, don't have children. And if you do, keep them very far away from squirrels. *(he smokes, smiles.)* Those things can kill.

(He grabs a stuffed squirrel, looks at it, and walks towards the door. He flips a switch and turns on the projector, squirrels now showing on the big screen. He leaves through the door stage left. As the door closes, the door on the opposite side opens. Mrs. Flapperjacker enters, walking slowly and concealing something behind her body. She speaks after a few steps.)

MS. FLAPPERJACKER: Poochie was a nice dog. Poochie was a good dog. And now Poochie's gonna be a happy dog again. *(She takes out a shotgun, laughs maniacally, and walks towards where Brian and Pierce went offstage. Suddenly, Trees emerges)*

TREES: We meet again, Patricia. Your dog dug up my nuts just one too many times.

MS. FLAPPERJACKER: You want some nuts? Then come get some, tree hugger!

(he lunges, making a strange squirrel sound. She shoots, he dies but falls on her. After they both wriggle on the ground, she dies as well. Brian returns to get his cigarettes.)

BRIAN: *(looks at both bodies)* That was completely unnecessary! *(another long pause as he stares at the audience)* Good night! *(lights down. Squirrel footage remains playing through curtain call and audience exit.)*