

STIFF JUSTICE

CHARACTERS

4 male:-

Gary, Older Cop	48 years old
Dean, Younger Cop	28 years old
Dead Guy on Gurney	20 years old (non talking part)
Dead Guy "John's Toe"	48 years old

SETTING

One half of the stage is in darkness, the other half illuminated to reveal a clinical looking room. There is a sink at the back with a cupboard above. Disinfectant and disposable gloves hangs from the wall, and a low table is positioned beside it with more disinfectant and paperwork.

GARY and DEAN enter the room. DEAN is struggling to push the gurney carrying a DEAD GUY.

INT. FRIDAY 11.30 pm

DEAN

Christ, now we know who ate all the pies.

The two Constables wheel the gurney to the middle of the room and GARY removes the sheet from the body.

DEAN

Hell's bells, he's a stinker too.

GARY

Think you'd fare any better after 2 days in the sun? (Pause) Here, put this under your nose.

He hands DEAN some ointment from his pocket.

DEAN

(Putting his hand up) Nah mate that's fine. I can handle it.

GARY

I take it this is your first '1S'?

DEAN

Eh?

GARY

Sudden death?

DEAN

On the job yeah, but I've seen worse. Found this guy in a ditch once. He was thrown from a car and all ripped up and that. Blood and guts everywhere. Yeah, seen worse.

GARY raises his eyebrows as the two of them struggle to remove the DEAD GUY'S jeans. GARY walks over to the wall and removes 2 pairs of gloves, handing one pair to DEAN. They put them on. GARY then picks up two pairs of scissors and he hands one pair to DEAN.

GARY

Here. We're gonna need to cut them off.

They begin to cut; DEAN is roughly cutting the fabric towards the DEAD GUY's groin.

GARY

Careful! You'll cut him.

DEAN

Who the fuck cares! He's not gonna need that where he's goin'. And look (pointing to the crotch area), it's just a weiner anyway.

GARY

(Grabbing scissors off young cop). His family still have to I.D. him for God's sake. Go get a tag!

He points to a low table covered in pens, disinfectant and paperwork and finishes cutting the jeans off the DEAD GUY. He covers him with a sheet as DEAN approaches with some papers and a tag. GARY fills in the tag and ties it to the toe of the DEAD GUY. He starts walking towards the door.

DEAN

Where are you going?

GARY

I'll fill this paperwork out in the car before we go see the family. You put him in the fridge. You okay with that?

DEAN

Is the Pope catholic?

GARY

Didn't take you for the religious type?

DEAN

Yeah, well you'd be right. Crock of shit if you ask me.

GARY

Okay, see you in a minute then. Oh ... let me get this for you.

GARY walks towards the morgue fridge and opens the door for DEAN, who enters. The door shuts and GARY walks away smirking. (A dim light illuminates the large fridge and we notice 2 other gurneys covered in sheets). DEAN struggles to push the gurney into the large space of the fridge and then quickly moves towards the door to leave. He tries the handle. It won't budge. He tries again and puts his weight against it. It still won't budge. He turns around slowly and looks at the gurneys; the sheets covering the bodies gently blow with the air conditioning. He turns and begins kicking the door and furiously banging it with his fist.

DEAN

Hey, Gary mate. This isn't funny. Open the door.

His banging gets more frantic and he soon starts hyperventilating.

DEAN

I mean it man. Open the fucking door ... NOW!

He stops banging and yelling and falls silent. He shuffles to the corner of the room. Quietly, he whispers ...

DEAN

Breathe Dean. Just breathe. (Starting to panic again). Fuck! Oh my God, oh my God.

Suddenly a voice breaks the silence.

JOHN'S TOE

And I thought you weren't religious?

DEAN spins around in horror and as he does so the light in the fridge goes out. Fumbling and sounds of panic can be heard and then the light flickers back on, revealing the 3 gurneys ... only one of the dead bodies has awakened.

DEAN

Jesus fucking Christ!

JOHN'S TOE

There you go again. You wanna get into heaven my man, you're gonna have to start showing the Lord some respect!

DEAN starts kicking the door with the heel of his foot; too scared to take his eyes from the dead man before him.

DEAN

Gary! Gary, get me the fuck outta here!

JOHN'S TOE

Hey, you need to learn to chill brother. Like us! (He laughs demonically).

DEAN

You're not real, you're not real, you're not real, you're not real ...

JOHN'S TOE

Geez, if I had a dollar for every time I heard that ...

DEAN

... you're not real, you're not real.

JOHN'S TOE

You know what ... you're all the bloody same. Big dick out there, small cock in here. Oh, or should I say 'weiner'. Man, you remind me of the guy that wheeled me in here a few weeks back. I don't have no family right, so guess what name he gives me (points to his toe tag)? 'John's toe'. Another smart arse!

Dean, still in shock, squirms against the wall.

DEAN

Wh.., what do you want from me?

JOHN'S TOE

Oh he *DOES* speak. Well, I would have been content with a bit of company. Being kept in a fridge for days while they try and figure out who the fuck you are isn't so hot, you know? But, I'll settle for ... a secret.

DEAN

A ... secret?

JOHN'S TOE

Yeah. A secret. You know, one of those things you're meant to take to the grave, only I don't got a secret that's of any particular interest, or that anyone would care to hear, so, I figure I'll take one of yours.

DEAN

Or ...

JOHN'S TOE

(Nasty tone) Or I'll take you with me!

He gets out of the bed and we see his shirt is covered in blood and dried blood stains cling to his leg.

DEAN looks around the room, trying to see an escape route.

JOHN'S TOE

I haven't got all day man. You know, I could go at any second.

DEAN looks at the other gurney for any sign of movement.

JOHN'S TOE

Oh, don't worry 'bout him, he's been called. Dead as a do-do, just waiting for burial. I'm dead too, but I'm a John Doe. No white tunnel of light for me yet. Anyway, my patience is wearin' thin ... SECRET?

DEAN

(Nervously) Secret, okay. I um, cheated on my police exam.

JOHN'S TOE

(Acting insane, hands flailing about) Woo hoo! B.O.R.I.N.G. Gimme more! Something juicy this time!

DEAN

I, I pissed my pants.

JOHN'S TOE

I could've told you that. Can smell you from here.

DEAN

Well what then?

JOHN'S TOE loses it now. He turns towards the gurney he was on and pushes it violently. It makes a loud noise as it crashes into the wall.

JOHN'S TOE

A RRREEAALLLLLLL fucking secret moron!

He starts walking towards DEAN.

DEAN

Alright, I, I, I killed my friend.

JOHN'S TOE stops in his tracks.

JOHN'S TOE

You what?

DEAN

(Voice shaking with emotion) I, I had no choice. It was years ago, we were driving. I mean, he was driving. Fast. I asked him to slow down, he didn't. We were drunk. He hit a pole and we went downhill. Crashed into a ditch. It was raining.

He stops talking as if he is remembering.

DEAN

(Sobbing) I couldn't move. We were in pain. The ditch was filling up fast. We were gonna drown. The only way I could get out was by using his head to get some leverage and lift me free. I thought if I did it fast. (Pause) But I got stuck. He drowned. I was found 2 days later.

Another long silence fills the morgue.

DEAN

I fucking killed him. My best mate!

He slides down the wall into a crouching position and starts to cry.

DEAN

It stunk in there man.(Pause). I'm so sorry Pete. I'm so sorry.

Suddenly there are noises outside and JOHN'S TOE makes his way back to the gurney, jumps on and covers himself with the sheet. The door opens and the light comes on in the fridge. DEAN quickly stands up and wipes the tears from his eyes.

GARY

Come on, we've got a job. I know, I know! You probably wanna kill me right now, but it'll have to wait.

They leave the fridge and close the door behind them. They walk outside (off-stage). A moment later GARY can be heard running back in.

GARY

(Yelling over his shoulder) ... forgot my notebook, give me a sec.

He walks over to the cupboard and takes out a neatly folded Police uniform. He then walks over to the fridge, opens the door and walks inside. The light comes back on. JOHN'S TOE gets off the gurney and GARY throws him the police uniform.

GARY

So ... whadd'ya know? Quick, spill, before he comes back in!

JOHN'S TOE thinks for a moment.

JOHN'S TOE

(Putting on the uniform) Nah mate, not this one. He's a good kid.

GARY

Come on Sarge! You know the drill. You must have *something* on him! Gotta find him a nickname to fit.

JOHN'S TOE

Wish I could help ya Gazza, but there's no secrets in his closet.

GARY

Hmmmm. So he's just your typical macho kid eh?

JOHN'S TOE

Oh I don't know. Got shook up a bit, that's for sure! Reckon he might not be so gung ho. But I'm thinking it's time we called it a day. I'm getting too old for this shit and it just ain't as scary as it used to be.

GARY

Yeah, you're probably right Sarge. You're probably right.

With that GARY walks towards the exit and closes the fridge door. He leaves the room as JOHN'S TOE starts banging on the door. The light goes out ...

JOHN'S TOE

"Hey!".

The End