

COFFEE RIOT AT JAVA JOE'S

or

"When does the duck with the cigar and Groucho
glasses drop down with my cup of coffee?"

Scene from THE CAROUSEL

An original screenplay by Ross E Cooper
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INT. LIMOUSINE - CONTINUOUS

ETHAN CROSSE [50], a real estate mega-mogul and his
chauffeur MARCUS [40'S] continue their daily limo
commute to Ethan's Manhattan office.

Marcus fumbles through some CD's and finds one by Mahalia
Jackson and puts it on the car's player. A gut-wrenching
version of "IN THE UPPER ROOM" is heard.

ETHAN

Wait a minute ... You know I love
gospel ... but it's a little too
somber for 8:00AM! It's takin'
the edge off my coffee!

Marcus laughs and turns off the CD player.

MARCUS

Would you like to stop off for a
cup of coffee? There's a Java
Joe's just up the road.

ETHAN

I think you're taking me a little
too literally, Marcus.

MARCUS

I just thought, since you said --

ETHAN

-- OK! OK! Anything to postpone
the inevitable.

EXT. STREETS - EDGEWATER, NJ - CONTINUOUS

They take the next exit and arrive at the parking lot of Java Joe's. It's bustling with the vehicular toys of young Wall-Streeters who vie aggressively for parking spaces.

MARCUS

Have you ever been to Java Joe's?

ETHAN

Nah ... somehow these pretentious
coffeehouses annoy me!
How's the coffee?

INT. JAVA JOE'S - CONTINUOUS

They enter, work their way to the front of a velvet-roped maze, hoping to be noticed by a BARRISTA.

MARCUS

Not bad ... if you can figure out
what to order.

They gape at a daunting menu covering an entire wall. Shaking their heads, they try to interpret the dizzying array of coffee drinks with exotic names and absurd prices. Finally, the clerk peers down at them scornfully.

BARRISTA

Have you made your selection?

ETHAN

Let me think ... um ...
... Yes ... I'll have a
mocha-java ...
poca-hama ...
lava-chino!

Make that a pequeno, por favor!

The server is not amused by Ethan's joke and stands with arms folded, head turned away indifferently. Ethan notices the line building behind him. Tables are populating with young Wall-Streeters sprawling out with laptops, cell phones and palm pilots trying to look important reading "The Financial Times".

ETHAN

Not funny, huh?
 Sorry! How 'bout a regular?

Our coffee clerk does not react.

ETHAN

A medium coffee? A cup-a-joe?
 Not even close, right?
 You do sell coffee here?

The barrista curls his lip derisively and emits a sigh. The line of young be-suited junior executives is growing who can hardly wait to play "name that coffee". A rage burns its way up the line, but they are reluctant to confront the two very large men before them in expensive suits, albeit with grass stains on their backs. The only protest they can muster are a few loud TSSSSSSKS!

ETHAN

Young man ... are we looking for an
 international coffee moniker?

The barrista, still with arms folded, rolls his eyes and looks toward his manager for help. A gaggle of moon-eyed servers with visors and green aprons converge to lend support to their comrade in trouble.

ETHAN

Tell me ... do I want a Kaffee Wien?
 Turska kava?
 Café noir?
 Turetskoe kofe?

I'm getting warm, aren't I?

When does the duck with the
 Groucho glasses drop down ...
 ... with MY cup of coffee?

The arcane reference is lost on the youthful clerk who peers disdainfully at Ethan between the register and a gigantic acrylic tip box. Defiantly, the barrista points to the menu on the wall and waits for the neophyte to order in the proper syntax. The reinforcements nod their heads in approval.

BARRISTA

Please order from the menu sir.

ETHAN

Well, I know when I'm outnumbered!
I guess I'll have a Daily Grind.

BARRISTA

There are six Daily Grinds --

ETHAN

-- Oh God ... please no!
I've entered the first rung of
caffeinated Hades! I've been
sucked into the black hole of Java
Major! I've been --

BARRISTA

-- We have Costa Rican Peabury,
Peruvian Pescado, a very smooth
Anticado Grecco --

ETHAN

-- That's it ... Peabury!!
Marcus ... I've just made my most
difficult decision of the day!

Marcus giggles as Ethan puts an arm around his shoulder
pulls him close in an act of mock friendship.

ETHAN - CONT'D

My friend here needs a Peabury as
well ... don't you my good man?

The patrons look up from their laptops, palm pilots and
newspapers to gawk at the two oddballs causing a commotion.
They are not outraged or entertained, just perplexed as to
why two well-dressed men would want to act so silly.

BARRISTA

Do you want that black or --

ETHAN

-- Here we go again!
(MORE)

(ETHAN - CONT'D)

Let me guess ...
You have whole milk, 2% milk, fat
free. You've got heavy cream,
half-n-half, condensed milk and
kosher coffee creamer?

BARRISTA

Yes, that's very good.
We also have crème fraiche.

ETHAN

Is the crème fraiche ... fresh?

BARRISTA

Absolutely!

ETHAN

Do you have soymilk?

BARRISTA

Certainly!

ETHAN

Do you have whipped cream?

BARRISTA

If you'd like it, of course!

ETHAN

Cocoa and caramel flavored syrups?

BARRISTA

An excellent finishing touch.

ETHAN

Then ... we'll take it black!!
Thank you!

Ethan pays up and throws a twenty into the huge tip box.
The clerk is pleased with his good fortune. All eyes
follow Ethan and Marcus as they take their coffees to a
counter in the window and pull up a couple of stools.
Marcus is still laughing but Ethan is strangely serious.

MARCUS

That was really funny, Mr. Crosse!

ETHAN

It seems their customers are paying for the ritual of ordering the coffee ... not the coffee! I'll never understand, for the life of me, why these Wallstreet wannabees are so obsessed with trying to look important.

They overlook the fact that anybody of substance would never have the time or patience to worry about admittance to this little caffeine subculture. One must learn a new language just to describe an item that should be a two-syllable noun. They practice a new kind of etiquette just to slurp a pretty lousy cup of coffee.

MARCUS

Yeh, it does taste bitter.

ETHAN

It's pathetic how these young fella's navigate the uncertain waters of stocks and bonds, knowing how expendable they are. Any market fluctuation can flush them out to sea like so much plankton, for the whales to gulp, tons at a time.

But, at least they know their status in the coffee house! Did you finish your coffee? Let's get the hell out of here!

EXT. STREETS - PALISADES PARK, NJ - CONTINUOUS

Marcus returns to their regular route on River Road and continue on their way toward the Lincoln Tunnel.

INT. LIMOUSINE - CONTINUOUS

MARCUS

You really don't like this place!

ETHAN

A few of those little twerps are going to grow up one day and face me across the boardroom table. I never worry about the competent adversary, but empty-headed morons like them are dangerous!