

Boston Legal
... There's Fire!
Season 2, Episode 17
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Denny Crane is in front of a mirror trying to tie his bow tie. Unsuccessfully.

Denny Crane: Ah! ***Frustrated.*** Alan! Help me with my tie.

Alan Shore: Certainly. ***Facing Denny he attempts to tie the tie.*** I can't do it this way, turn around. ***He reaches from behind, and as he's looking in the mirror, he ties Denny's tie.***

Denny Crane: Ahhh. I wish you and I were getting married. That's you and I. Both of us. To others. I'm not gay.

Alan Shore: I heard you the first Freudian slip.

Denny Crane: Well, Alan, I, I don't wanna leave you.

Alan Shore: No doubt there'll be some adjusting. But you're not losing an Alan, you're gaining a Bev. The girl of your recent dreams.

Denny Crane: Alan, you're my best friend. If you want you can dream about her too.

Alan Shore: Denny, you're generous to a fault. There you are.

Denny Crane: Well! Denny Crane. Getting hitched.

Alan Shore: Indeed.

We see, but don't hear Denny and Beverly Bridge say, "I do." Denny places a ring on Bev's finger. They kiss.

Announcer: Ladies and gentlemen! Would you please rise and welcome, for the first time as husband and wife, Mr and Mrs Denny Crane!

Everbody applauds as Denny and Bev come out to the dance floor and start dancing.

Shirley Schmidt: White roses, gold-leafed cake, Bev's boobs swimming out of her wedding dress.

Brad Chase: Who said money can't buy tastelessness?

Alan Shore: I think Bev and Denny did a lovely job.

Paul Lewiston: Eleven marriages between the two of them, they've had plenty of practice.

Denise Bauer: Will you listen to you people? Can we not, for just one moment, appreciate the simplicity and timelessness of two souls in love?

The entire crowd is horrified to see Denny and Bev grabbing each other's asses, grinding into one another as though the rest of the world didn't exist.

Wedding reception – later that evening. The band plays as people mingle and dance. Hors d'ouvers are passed around. Alan steps up beside Paul Lewiston.

Alan Shore: Congratulations. I saw you were the lucky one who caught Bev's garter.

Paul Lewiston: Yes. I'm going for a full battery of tests first thing in the morning.

Denny and Bev are cooing at one another.

Denny Crane: I love you.

Beverly Bridge: I love you more.

Denny Crane: I love you more more.

Yes, it's sickening. Troy, thirty, well-groomed and officious, approaches Denny and Bev.

Troy: Mainlander!

Beverly Bridge: Oh, my angel. Denny, this my dear friend, Troy.

Denny Crane: ***Friendly, shakes.*** Troy.

Troy: Denny, Mahalo, and congrats.

Denny Crane: Thank you.

Beverly Bridge: Troy lives on the Big Island.

Denny Crane: Oh yeah? We'll have to come and look you up! On our honeymoon. If there's time.

Troy: Oh, excellent, excellent. I've got some new listings you two are going to fall for.

Denny has a curious look.

Beverly Bridge: Ah, Troy's a Realtor. He's been keeping an eye out on houses for us.

Denny Crane: ***Surprised.*** I didn't know we were in the market for a second home.

Beverly Bridge: Oh, ho, ho. Actually, Darling, when you see the Kona Coast, you may even be thinking of first homes.

Denny Crane: *Good natured.* What am I supposed to do, beam myself to Boston every morning?

Denny gives a friendly chuckle at his own joke, but something's amiss here.

Beverly Bridge: Would you excuse us, Troy? Thank you. *She escorts Denny to a more private area.* Now, Honey, I just want you to humor me and my wild notions. I wanna to put this thought in your head. And it's only a thought, that's all, but, now that we're starting this new chapter in our lives, what do you say we really... do it?

Denny Crane: Retire?

Beverly Bridge: No, that's an old person's word. I'm talking about new beginnings.

Denny Crane: But Bev, you know I'm the rainmaker at the firm. My clients wanna to know that Denny Crane is taking care of their business.

Beverly Bridge: And Bev wants to know that Denny Crane is taking care of... well, Denny Crane. And we have lots of time for these thoughts. Tonight's all fun and games. Right?

Bev kisses Denny and moves off, leaving Denny with an odd, uneasy feeling. This night has taken a turn he's not comfortable with. A female server approaches Denny. She's carrying a tray of filled champagne glasses.

Female server: Hi. *Smiles, flirty.* Nice night.

Denny Crane: *A beat, then.* Suddenly it is.

Bev walks up to Alan, Denise, Brad Chase, Shirley and Paul's table in a restaurant.

Beverly Bridge: Has anyone seen Denny? It's time for our toast.

Brad Chase: Oh, last time I saw him he was up near the Coat Check room.

Bev chokes on her drink. Everybody is startled. They get up and walk over to the balcony which overlooks the Coat Check room. There is movement under one of the coats.

Beverly Bridge: Denny?

Denny Crane: *He looks out from under the coat.* Is it time to cut the cake. *No sign of remorse in his voice.*

Brad, Shirley, Paul and Denny are in Denny's office at Crane, Poole and Schmidt.

Paul Lewiston: Of course, there is no prenup.

Brad Chase: Actually, Denny signed one.

Shirley Schmidt: He just neglected to get Bev to signed it..

Denny Crane: I thought it was a lovely reception. I never got to the cake. It looked fantastic. Any of you try it? It was supposed to be marble with a little fudge...

Paul Lewiston: Shut up! Just, shut up! While you sit here prattling about cake fillings, Bev has hired an army of lawyers to gut this firm.

Shirley Schmidt: She won't get far, Paul. It's a straightforward annulment.

Brad Chase: They were only married for three hours. Legally they never had the opportunity to consummate the marriage after the ceremony.

Denny Crane: Oh yes, we did.

Paul Lewiston: You had sex with another woman and your wife in the three hours you were married?

Denny Crane: It was my special day. I had taken my little blue pill.

Shirley Schmidt: No cure for cancer, but we got three pills for that!

Brad Chase: Look there are other criteria for an annulment. Legally we can always say that Denny was not of sound mind.

Paul Lewiston: That cannot become public knowledge. Despite the repeated shootings, the television appearances, people still believe Denny runs this firm.

Denny Crane: I am one of those people.

Shirley Schmidt: Bev's attorney, Eli Granger, will be here in less than an hour, my suggestion for now is that we simply hear him out.

Joan is out on the street smoking. She sees Alan coming out of the building.

Joan Zeder: Alan, it's awful.

Alan Shore: Joan? What's awful?

Joan Zeder: My boss, Mr Lumis just fired me!

Alan Shore: I'm sorry.

Joan Zeder: You work so hard, you know. Eight years at friggin Escrow company.

Alan Shore: Why'd he fire you?

Joan Zeder: Well, one day, six week ago, he brings us all in for a staff meeting. And he says, "Due to the spiraling costs of health care insurance, all smokers have exactly six weeks to quit. At which point I'll test their system for nicotine and if you fail the urine test. Then, you'll be terminated." Fired! Friggin health Nazi. You know, I got rent to pay. And of course, I tried to quit. You know, I wanted to! I did the patch and I did that little nicotine sucky thing, you know, but the more I imagined losing my job the more I panicked. And the more I panicked, the more I smoked. Now I'm up to three packs a day. And today was the day, he made me pee in a cup and then he fired me!

Alan Shore: Well, unless that's some kind of sex game with your lover, I find it appalling and we won't let him do it.

Joan Zeder: We won't?

Alan Shore: I'm off to court right now, but what floor is your office on? I'll pay him a visit.

Joan Zeder: The tenth. Just follow the evil stench of vitamins and celery.

Alan Shore: Ha, ha, ha.

Shirley, Paul, Brad, Denny and a paralegal come into the conference room where Eli Granger and his team are sitting around the table.

Attorney Eli Granger: Ah! Good morning, everyone. I can see I didn't bring enough silent flunkies to fill my side of the table. *In a stage whisper to the paralegal.* Double-shot espresso, skim milk, two sugars. Scoot.

Shirley Schmidt: **She stops the paralegal from leaving.** Let's start over. Eli, welcome to Crane, Poole and Schmidt, that's my seat. Get out. **To the paralegal.** Please get Mr Granger a cup of coffee, skim milk, two sugars. Thank you. Now Eli. Besides telling you your fake tan is coming off on your collar, what can we do for you?

Attorney Eli Granger: A parting of ways, marital dissolution. My client's trauma is incalculable, and yet, look at me, I've calculated it.

Paul Lewiston: To the point.

Attorney Eli Granger: Mrs Crane gave up her career, a lucrative office furniture business to be a stay-at-home wife. She made irrevocable scarifies, and still as a generous offer, considering her pain, she is willing to take only fifty percent of Mr Crane's assets.

Paul Lewiston: What?

Attorney Eli Granger: Including his equity in the firm here, of course.

Brad Chase: They were married only three hours!

Attorney Eli Granger: It would have lasted longer had Denny here not banged a cocktail waitress at his own wedding reception. We're not here to judge. Hm. Though the state of Massachusetts is. And in cases like this we are a 'fault' state, and clearly Denny is at fault. And by the time Mrs Crane gets what's her's, who knows? Maybe I'll have my name on the door here.

Brad Chase: Do you smoke it or take it in the arm?

Denny Crane: Brad. **Mr Granger chuckles.** There'll be not divorce.

Attorney Eli Granger: I beg your pardon?

Denny Crane: Bev and I had an agreement. When we first got together she told me that I could sleep with whomever I wanted. Delmonico's Restaurant. January 14th. Happiest night of my life. So I had sex with another woman. Or a Navy Burberry. Not sure which. But the point is, she granted me the right to tomcat and I exercised that right. No divorce.

Attorney Eli Granger: No reconciliation. We're going to court. **He and his team leave.**

Denny Crane: Every good marriage takes work.

Kurt Lumis is in his office. Alan comes in.

Kurt Lumis: Kurt Lumis.

They shake hands.

Alan Shore: Alan Shore. I've noticed you at the juice bar on the first floor. You always leave a penny, never take one. I admire that.

Kurt Lumis: Ha. Thank you, Al. So! I guess you're here to speak about Joan?

Alan Shore: Yes, Kur, I am.

Kurt Lumis: Well. Sorry to see her go, but rules are the rules, you break em, you gotta pay the price.

Alan Shore: I've never heard our entire system of justice encapsulated so succinctly.

Kurt Lumis: Ha, ha. Well, that's me. Ha, ha.

Alan Shore: However, instances arise where the rules themselves are unfair. This is one of those cases.

Kurt Lumis: Nope. The no smoking rule is as right as the Bible. Good for the company, good for the employees. This is good. Period.

Alan Shore: Well! And this may be in the Bible somewhere, you do have the right the forbid you employees from smoking at work, but why do you think you're justified in telling anyone what they may or may not do on their own time?

Kurt Lumis: Because it's good for them. And my lawyer told me I could. Guy just like you. You see, everyone here is what you call an 'at will' employee. And like most workers in this country, they can be fired for anything. Anytime. Anyplace. Anyway. You see, Al. I used to coach football.

Alan Shore: I never would have guessed.

Kurt Lumis: It's like I used to tell my players. There are two ways to do things. My way and the wrong way. Joan did things the wrong way so I cut her from the squad.

Alan Shore: I have a similar bit of wisdom I like to share. We can do this my way or another way that will have you writing a very large check and crying like a baby.

Kurt Lumis: Are you threatening me, Al?

Alan Shore: Why not just rehire Joan and forget we ever met? I know I'd like nothing more.

Kurt Lumis: Nope. I think we're done.

Alan Shore: Actually, this is just the beginning of our little game. I assumed that as a coach you'd have figured that out.

Joan and Bev are in the waiting room at Crane, Poole and Schmidt. Joan is nervously playing with some pencils.

Beverly Bridge: Trying to quit?

Joan Zeder: Not really. I suppose there should be a law requiring me to try to quit. What are you in for?

Beverly Bridge: Divorce.

Joan Zeder: Ahhh! Been there. Not with a husband actually. But, boyfriend after friggin boyfriend. I suck at relationships. I say, I suck at almost everything. He, he. When I'm not inhaling, I'm sucking. Ha, ha, ha. Story of my life. The only thing I've actually ever been good at is my job, which I never sucked at, but got fired just the same, for inhaling. I was good at it. I was good. Was good. I was...

Beverly Bridge: Good.

Joan Zeder: I can't make my rent. I don't know what I'm gonna do. No! I do! Actually. I'm suing. That's it. And I'm gonna win. Alan Shore is my lawyer and he's good. He's good. Who have you got?

Beverly Bridge: Ah, I had Denny Crane. Now I've got Eli.

Joan Zeder: Alan Shore is in my boss's office right now trying to settle. He's gonna come walking off that elevator any second and tell me I got my job back. Or they're giving me money. Or I'm gonna get everything I want. Otherwise... I have to win this. I have to win.

Denny, Brad and Paul are in Denny's office. Shirley comes in.

Shirley Schmidt: We're being audited.

Brad Chase: The entire firm?

Shirley Schmidt: To determine Denny's net worth.

Paul Lewiston: Let them. We have nothing to hide.

Denny Crane: Hold on a second there, Aunt Sally. This could be, well, a problem.

Paul Lewiston: Why?

Shirley Schmidt: Denny? What have you done?

Denny Crane: Little things.

Paul Lewiston: How little?

Denny Crane: I may have on occasion, laid off an occasional personal expense on the firm, occasionally.

Paul Lewiston: Good Lord.

Shirley Schmidt: Call Joel Landson in accounting and get him up here right away.

When Joel Landson gets there he goes over some spread sheets with them.

Joel Landson: Ahh. Mind you it's not exactly illegal but it's not legal either. It's in the fuzzy grey area.

Shirley Schmidt: Denny's home address.

Paul Lewiston: Bottom line?

Joel Landson: Should this information become public...

Paul Lewiston: And we can be sure that Bev's lawyers will see that it does.

Joel Landson: The IRS could get involved. Our reputation will be sullied. Clients will begin to wonder if they've been bilked. There could be more investigations and all of the partners will be libel. We're talking Arthur Anderson headlines.

Brad Chase: We're screwed.

Shirley Schmidt: We don't own enough shredders.

Paul Lewiston: Our only chance right now is to settle, and settle quickly.

Denny Crane: Uhm. We can't do that.

Paul Lewiston: Why not?

Denny Crane: Because, I wanna stay married to Bev.

Brad Chase: I thought you were bluffing!

Shirley Schmidt: This doesn't seem to be an option right, Denny!

Denny Crane: I'm gonna make it an option, and as we know, my name on the door.

Paul Lewiston: **He can't take this anymore. He exhales deeply, slaps his hands on his thighs and stands up.** That's it! **He storms out.**

Denise is in her office. Paul comes in.

Denise Bauer: Paul?

Paul Lewiston: Denise, I want you look the partnership agreement and tell me, hypothetically, what would be required for me to sell my portion out and take early retirement. And hypothetically I would need that very fast.

Shirley Schmidt: **She and Brad come in.** Paul! Don't do anything you'll regret.

Paul Lewiston: Doing nothing is what I'll regret most. I have devoted my life to keeping this firm an outstanding institution. Now, in the twilight of my career, this, this mess could destroy my reputation. All because Denny cannot control his aged groin.

Brad Chase: Listen guy. I can fix this. Now just let me talk to Denny. I know what to say. I can make him settle.

Shirley Schmidt: Paul. Just wait this out. Please.

In Judge Peter Harding's courtroom. Joan is being questioned by Alan.

Joan Zeder: The purchase of a home is one of life's great stressors. And while I'm no braggart, in my eight years at Lumis-Escrow I had the most Escrow closes. I had the highest customer satisfaction record. All of my year-end reviews were fours. **To the judge.** That's out of a possible four. I was employee of the year three years running. I mean if I was such a bad worker then why was I awarded the hundred dollar gift certificate to the Hungry Whistler?

Alan Shore: Your Honor, at this time if I may enter into evidence Ms Zeder's three 'Employee of the year' plaques. The inscribe nickname, Just Ask Joan.

Judge Peter Harding: Thank you. I can see that.

Alan Shore: Now. Joan. Do you smoke cigarettes?

Joan Zeder: Yeah.

Alan Shore: Have you ever smoked at work?

Joan Zeder: Yes, but only on my breaks, on my time, away from the door. And I'm a courtesy waver.

She mimics smoking and then waving the smoke away. Not in anyone's face.

Alan Shore: Does your smoking impact your job in any way?

Joan Zeder: No. And I've never been late because of smoking; in fact actually it helps calm me down so I can focus on my work.

Alan Shore: Thank you, Ms Zeder.

Attorney Jonathan Weiner: Ms Zeder. Did your boss tell you to quit smoking or you'd be fired?

Joan Zeder: Yes.

Attorney Jonathan Weiner: Nothing further.

Denny is at his desk in his office at Crane, Poole and Schmidt. Brad marches in.

Brad Chase: Denny? I was a Marine, served my country proudly in the first Gulf war. I am an honest, honorable person. I want you to know I that do not lie. Clear on that?

Denny Crane: Yes.

Brad Chase: Are there any guns in here? I wanna be clear on that as well.

Denny Crane: There are many guns.

Brad Chase: Within reach?

Denny Crane: No.

Brad Chase: Alright. *He takes a deep breath.* Several weeks ago I took your fiancé out to lunch. **Denny gives him a look.** It's not that. I offered he five hundred thousand dollars to end her relationship with you.

Denny Crane: What?

Brad Chase: I know it was a foolish thing to do but I felt that I was acting in the best interest of the firm and you.

Denny Crane: She turned you down?

Brad Chase: Yes. But before she did, she hesitated. She considered it. And it's my believe if I'd have offered her more, she'd have taken it.

Denny Crane: Thank you, Brad, for telling me that. It couldn't have been easy. **Brad breaths a sigh of relief.** You're fired.

Brad Chase: What?

Denny Crane: Name on the door. *He salutes.* See ya.

Brad walks out and runs into Shirley.

Brad Chase: He fired me. I'm a partner. He fired me.

Shirley Schmidt: Brad. The review committee will take care of this. He can't just fire you without consulting the partners!

Brad Chase: Of course he can. He's Denny Crane. His name's on the door. If he wants me gone. I'm gone.

Brad leaves. Shirley looks through the window and sees Denny watching. She marches in. Denny gets ready.

Shirley Schmidt: Dammit, Denny! You just can't.

Denny Crane: Can't...?

Shirley Schmidt: All of it! This is a law firm! This is a living breathing entity. Yes, you may have founded it, but hundreds and hundreds of people now have their lives attached to it. And at this moment, through the choice you make, you have the potential to unravel this entire place and the individuals who have given everything to it.

Denny Crane: That may be but, still...

Shirley Schmidt: So help me, if you say, "It's still your name on the door." I will shoot you with one of your own guns.

Denny Crane: That won't change the door.

Shirley Schmidt: Denny. You cheated on your wife at your own wedding reception in what has become some sort of cloakroom fetish that is a new low even for you.

Denny Crane: Yeah. It is, isn't it?

Shirley Schmidt: And now you're saying you don't want the marriage to end? What is going on here?

Denny Crane: You've known me thirty years. You tell me. One moment I'm enjoying my own wedding reception, and the next my gut's telling me something's wrong. And somehow having sex with that waitress, or the coat, made everything feel right, and once things felt right again, I wanted Bev back.

Shirley Schmidt: Denny, your once charming and eccentric behavior has turned into a series of self-destructive impulses. I love you, but it's time to take a step and look at what you're turning into.

Denny Crane: Shirley? I love you too.

Alan goes into his office. He is followed by Shirley.

Alan Shore: Shirley? You want something. I'll guess its sex. Let me take my coat off.

Shirley Schmidt: As much as I'd love to, Alan, if we did I wouldn't have time to deal with your needs.

Alan Shore: Yes. Well, another time. What's on your mind?

Shirley Schmidt: I'm sure you know what's going on with Denny.

Alan Shore: Shirley? In this case I've decided to stay above the fray and catch show from the mezzanine.

Shirley Schmidt: In case you missed the first act, Denny's decision not to settle on his divorce leaves the firm quite vulnerable. We may be open to public audit, ah, potential lawsuits, Paul has threatened to leave and we may loss Brad if we're not careful.

Alan Shore: Sounds exciting. So? You want me to convince Denny to settle? So that we all may be settled.

Shirley Schmidt: Something like that.

Alan Shore: I won't do it.

Shirley Schmidt: Alan? You're willing to see this firm go down?

Alan Shore: You're asking me to manipulate my friend, and I won't do it.

Shirley Schmidt: It would have been easier just to have sex with you.

In Judge Peter Harding's courtroom Kurt Lumis is being questioned by Attorney Jonathan Weiner.

Kurt Lumis: Health Insurance premiums keep going up. I run a small business. I'm competing against Escrow services that are nation-wide chains. And others that are on the internet. I have to either cut costs or close my doors. It's that simple.

Attorney Jonathan Weiner: If Ms Zeder would have been able to quit smoking? Would you have kept her on the payroll?

Kurt Lumis: Of course. We didn't give her the hundred dollar gift certificate to the Hungry Whistler for nothing.

Alan Shore: Mr Lumis. Your desire to cut costs makes absolute sense. But earlier we heard your office manager testify that when you weigh Ms Zeder's productivity against any increased Health Insurance premiums, you still come out ahead. So, your argument is, dare I say it, a fumble, correct?

Kurt Lumis: I have to think of the future. If she gets cancer or heart disease or any of the other things that smokers get. My rates go sky high.

Alan Shore: Mr Lumis, how do you feel about fat people? Because according to the Surgeon General three hundred thousand Americans die every year from obesity-related illnesses.

Kurt Lumis: Other businesses are firing people for that. I haven't done it yet.

Alan Shore: So you're think about it?

Kurt Lumis: I'm always thinking.

Alan Shore: Anyone can see that. How about alcohol consumption? People who have more than fifteen drinks a week are at risk of becoming alcoholics and alcoholism can cause cirrhosis of the liver, pancreatitis, increased incidents of cancer. Wouldn't it be a good idea to monitor your employee's alcohol intake?

Kurt Lumis: Maybe I should.

Alan Shore: What about coffee? Caffeine temporarily your blood pressure. Trans-fatty acids! And stress! Both of these things could cause heart attacks. That would certainly raise your premiums sky high. It's been proven arguing thirty minutes a day lowers your immune system. As does loneliness, there go your married employees and your single ones! You're going to have to watch these people all the time, Mr Lumis. I hope you're a multitasked.

Kurt Lumis: Mr Shore, I think you're exaggerating.

Alan Shore: No. I'm just welcoming us all to 1984, the bus arrived a little late, and our tour guide George Orwell is good and dead. But nonetheless we made it. And big brother Lumis is watching us.

Attorney Jonathan Weiner: Objection.

Alan Shore: Nothing further. That is if it's okay with Mr Lumis.

Paul is in his office at Crane, Poole and Schmidt. Denise comes in.

Denise Bauer I, uhm... Ahem. ***She closes the door.*** I drafted a memo for you regarding the partnership agreement?

Paul Lewiston: Thank you. As a second topic. I'm not saying this firm is about to dissolve... if it did...

Denise Bauer: Hypothetically?

Paul Lewiston: If, it did. Would you be interested in breaking off and setting up your own firm with someone? Someone and Bauer would probably be the name on the door.

Denise Bauer: Uhm. I would certainly have to think about that, hypothetically.

Paul Lewiston: Well. That's all I could ask. If, I were asking.

Denny is sitting in a lounge chair, deep in thought. Alan knocks on the open door.

Denny Crane: There you are.

Alan Shore: Here I am.

Denny Crane: How's your case.

Alan Shore: Not over.

Denny Crane: How are your various enterprises?

Denny Crane: You mean Bev? Everyone here thinks my situation upstairs is clouding my judgment. That only an idiot would wanna stay with her.

Alan Shore: Everyone in love is something of an idiot. This might get ugly, Denny. It may have already.

Denny Crane: And I don't care. At a certain age, Alan, you find it extraordinary the compromises one's willing to make for even the possibility of love.

In Judge Peter Harding's courtroom Attorney Jonathan Weiner is giving his closing.

Attorney Jonathan Weiner: Increased globalization. Mega corporations. How can a small businessman compete? Two ways. He must offer a unique, terrific product or service, and he must keep costs down. Now Kurt Lumis runs a first rate Escrow company. And he wants to do right by his employees by offering them Health Insurance. But, if he doesn't keep his biggest expense in check? Health Care? He loses everything. So! He instituted a very strict no-smoking policy. Now, Mr Lumis is not only reducing his business costs, he's also helping his employees who smoke by giving them motivation to quit. Now, Joan Zeder knew the company policy. She was given ample time to quit smoking and she knew she'd be fired if she didn't. But, she chose cigarettes over her job. And because Ms Zeder is an 'at will' employee, Mr Lumis had a legal right to fire her. And as to what smoking is doing to her health? She can read the warning label on the pack.

Alan Shore: The great Irish playwright George Bernard Shaw had a rather jaundiced view of our country. Shaw said that , "While our constitution was set up to prevent political dictatorship, in doing so we established a society where every ward boss is a dictator, every financier a dictator, every private employer a dictator. All with the livelihood of the workers at their mercy. Well, if Mr Lumis wants to immolate Muslinee in how he treats his employees at the office that's one thing. But Joan Zeder's actions at work have always been commendable. Mr Lumis also declared himself Emperor over Ms Zeder in her home. There he found her smoking. Something which is not against the law. Which is in fact none of his business, but he fired her anyway. Shouldn't we be able to have private lives that aren't governed by the people we work for? My God! I cannot believe I just asked that question in an American courtroom. My head may explode. Your Honor, the right to privacy, as you well know, is guaranteed under our constitution. But now, thanks to our current Supreme Court, that right is flickering like a candle in the wind. And the breeze is picking up. But Justice Scalia and his ilk aren't judging this case. You are. And at what point will we say, will you say, that provided we do not violate the law other people cannot dictate what we do in the privacy of our own homes. Your Honor, when you consider this case in the privacy of your chambers where no police or lawyers or Lumis may enter. Please think about the dying gasps of our precious right to privacy and what our lives might be like if it actually passes away.

Denny walks down the corridor at Crane, Poole and Schmidt. He walks up to Shirley, Paul and Brad.

Denny Crane: In the conference room. I'm putting this thing to bed.

They walk into the conference room where Bev and her attorney are waiting.

Eli Granger: ***He flips a sheet of paper across the table.*** It's high. It could have been much higher.

Shirley Schmidt: Denny? Do you wanna take a look at this?

Denny Crane: No need. Here's our counter offer. Two word. Uh, maybe three. Barbar's Built-ins.

Beverly Bridge: ***She's startled and covers with a cough.*** Could Denny and I please have the room?

Eli Granger: Bev...

Beverly Bridge: It's alright. I got it. ***When they are alone.*** So, what do you know?

Denny Crane: Barbara's Built-ins. Only the best. You market it to old people in retirement homes. In and around ??? town you sold Built-ins for television sets, Built-ins for dishwashers, Built-ins for microwaves, but you never built them in.

Beverly Bridge: That's not true. I did some lovely work. I always meant to finish the jobs that people had contracted me for but I, I had a cash flow problem. And it made more sense financially to...

Denny Crane: To rob the geezers and skip town.

Beverly Bridge: How long have you known?

Denny Crane: Since our third date. Whenever I make love to a woman more than twice I have her investigated.

Beverly Bridge: But Denny? Since you knew my history why didn't you have me sign a prenup?

Denny Crane: Because I loved you. And when you can send someone to jail with a phone call, there's your prenup.

Beverly Bridge: Well, you know, I still could have you audited.

Denny Crane: Uh huh. Stalemate.

Beverly Bridge: Exactly.

Denny Crane: And you know why it's a stalemate? Because we're so much alike. The fact that we have something on each other means we belong together. Our love is a fairytale written by real people. What I'm saying is, even after all this, I'd like to make it work.

Beverly Bridge: Denny? I love you. But, I love Hawaii more.

Denny Crane: Well, you'll be the one that got away from Denny Crane. That makes you a large fish in a very small pond.

In Judge Peter Harding's courtroom the judge is giving his verdict.

Judge Peter Harding: Mr Shore. I believe in the right to privacy that you so passionately defended. And I believe that when Mr Lumis fired Ms Zeder for actions that in no way affected her performance at work, he acted unreasonably. But unfortunately the law doesn't require Mr Lumis to be reasonable. Therefore, there's nothing I can do. I am granting the motion to dismiss. Court is adjourned.

Joan Zeder: What?

Alan Shore: I'm sorry, Joan.

Out on the courthouse steps.

Alan Shore: We can always appeal this, Joan. And in the meantime find you a new job.

Joan Zeder: A new job? Alan, I'm a smoker. An evil villainous smoker. If I go in to job interview and I'm honest, I tell them I have a two-pack-a-day habit. That's it. Liability. Leper. Yeah. No, this is a new world order, Alan. I'm just a cog and I gotta find a way to fit in. I gotta find a way to quit. Even if it kills me. You know what I'm gonna miss most about smoking? It's like you work your ass off all day, people screaming at you, "Where's my this?" "Where's my that?" "Why haven't you answered my email that I sent you seven seconds ago?" And in all that chaos, all that frenzy, smoking was more than a habit. It was, it was a place to go. Where I could just shut out the rest of the world and find a little square bit of time, and peace for me. Just a little bit.

Alan Shore: It sounds perfect. If I may suggest an alternate habit. Intercourse.

Joan Zeder: What?

Alan Shore: I find it just as relaxing. That break in the day, or several times, when you shut the rest of the world out. Breathing in the moment. Feeling it run through your body. That nice high in the end. Much like a cigarette.

Joan Zeder: Was that a proposition?

Alan Shore: Not really. But, if as a friend you ever need any assistance, whenever you feel like having a smoke, just call me instead.

Joan Zeder: Thanks, Alan.

Back in the conference room at Crane, Poole and Schmidt. Both parties are still present.

Denny Crane: An agreement has been reached in the matter of Crane versus Crane. I will buy a house for Bev in Hawaii. She will accept. Marriage is dissolved.

A beat.

Eli Granger: Mrs Crane, I think we should consider our options...

Beverly Bridge: We're done. Eli, we're done. **To Denny.** Look me up if you're ever on the Big Island.

Denny Crane: I am the big island. **Everybody gets up to leave. Denny stops Brad.** Brad. I really couldn't have fired you by myself.

Brad Chase: Yes, you could have.

Denny Crane: Yes, I could have. But sometimes people say things they don't really mean. Like, "I love you." Or "You're fired." So. I really want you to stay with the firm. While everyone was whining about Bev, you were actually trying to take her out. I admire that. You have very large testicles, my friend.

Brad Chase: Well. Thank you, Denny, I'm flattered you have that opinion of me.

Denny Crane: It's not my opinion. I saw you in the shower at the gym. Good God!

Alan and Denny are out on the balcony, drinking and smoking cigars.

Denny Crane: You know, the best part of my marriages has always been the first day.

Alan Shore: 'Just Married.' Grand thing. But for me there was nothing more devastatingly lonely than being married for a while.

Denny Crane: You never talk about your wife. What was she like?

Alan Shore: She had all the most delectable qualities one could hope for. Creativity, desire, zealotry, a gorgeous clavicle, healthy lack of inhibition.

Denny Crane: Sounds spectacular. What happened?

Alan Shore: She began... to know me too well and I began to hate her for it. Even when I was unpredictable, she'd predict it. For those of us who aspire to be original, it's the worst sort of banality. She died. I've missed that banality ever since.

Denny Crane: I wonder if sometimes I get remarried just to have someone listen to my stories again.

Alan Shore: Ha, ha. Not a terrible reason.

Denny Crane: Someone with that admiring look in their eye.

Alan Shore: Yes. **A beat.** Denny, they're doing some sort of renovations at my hotel. They start at dawn, and make a tremendous racket, wakes me up, I can't get back to sleep.

Denny Crane: It's always something with you. Night terrors, clowns, renovations.

Alan Shore: I was wondering if I could spend the night at your place.

Denny Crane: How long are these renovations gonna take?

Alan Shore: They won't say.

Denny Crane: Well. Stay as long as you need.

Alan Shore: Thanks.

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