

The Enlightened Signologist

FilmLab 2012

0923

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

RONNIE DILFER, 20s, tall and lanky, sits on a sofa. He breathes in deeply and exhales, hands resting on his legs. Around him are an array of signs on sticks.

RONNIE  
 (Interview setting)  
 I've always been a signer, started  
 when I was about 6 or 7.

SUPER (lower third) - Ronnie Dilfer, Signologist

RONNIE  
 My parents owned a Pet Store on  
 Alberta Street. They'd have me  
 stand outside in different  
 costumes, holding signs, you know,  
 promotional stuff.

INSERT: PHOTOGRAPH OF A TEN YEAR OLD RONNIE IN A RIDICULOUS  
 DOG COSTUME HOLDING A SIGN

BACK TO SCENE

RONNIE  
 They were put in jail for that.

RONNIE looks down.

RONNIE  
 For all their faults, Mom and Dad  
 knew I had a talent. Being a  
 signer, it's my destiny.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Ronnie and 3 others (people of different ages and genders) wave signs in unison. YOGI TODD, an amateur guru who speaks like a remedial Yoda, leads them in an exercise. He wears a robe and a long, white fake beard.

SUPER (lower third) - Yogi Todd's Signing From the Soul  
 Master Series, Alberta Park, Portland, OR

YOGI TODD  
 (Interview setting)  
 Holding a sign, it's much more  
 than.

SUPER (lower third) - Sri Yogi Sign Guru Todd Baxter

Yogi Todd strokes his fake beard.

YOGI TODD

A signer wills others into parking lot of said retail establishment, mind power through. Essentially meaningless, the sign is.

RONNIE

Through the power of mind control, the signer transcends traffic and whispers into the ear of the driver...

(whispers)

You're hungry. Come to Little Caesars and get a pizza for just \$5 dollars.

YOGI TODD

Good boy, Ronnie is. Potential, he has much, a lot, of it. At his doorstep, opportunity lies.

Yogi Todd smiles a crooked, pained smile.

INSERT: IMAGE OF A FLYER SHOWCASING "PDX SIGN-OFF 2012" - A SIGNING COMPETITION BETWEEN RONNIE AND BLAKE FLAIR.

RONNIE

This is my big break, a chance to showcase my signing skills, maybe even have an awakening.

YOGI TODD

Competition with master signer, Ronnie will have. Ready, is he? Know, don't. Hope, so.

VOICE

(From a random person in the park)  
Idiot, you.

YOGI TODD

(Jumping up) Hey, who said that?

EXT. STREET CORNER - DAY

A local news team interviews BLAKE FLAIR, a muscular, energetic frat boy hyped up on caffeine. The FEMALE REPORTER holds a microphone as Blake spins a sign.

BLAKE

No one can touch me. No really, don't touch me. I have a thing about people touching me.

Blake throws the sign up in the air and catches it, then does a karate style leg kick followed by a fist pump, his signature move.

BLAKE

I've signed for Mattress World,  
Mattress Giant, Mattress Universe,  
Mattress Solar System, Mattress  
Heaven, Mattress Pergatory,  
Mattress Hell...now signing for  
Great Clips.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Yogi Todd and Ronnie watch the feature on Ronnie's TV. Their mouths hang open as they see Blake spin two signs at once.

REPORTER (V.O)

And in one week, Blake Flair will  
take on a challenger in "PDX Sign-  
Off 2012" - a competition to  
determine who's the best sign waver  
in Northeast Portland!

Blake hops up and down like a boxer before the fight.

BLAKE

Two signs. Two entrances. One  
establishment. The one to get the  
most cars in the parking lot in one  
hour wins.

REPORTER (V.O)

Blake Flair is taking on Ronnie  
Dilfer, a relative newcomer to the  
signing game. Flair is putting up  
his Great Clips account in the  
contest.

BLAKE

I have all the confidence in the  
world that I'll mop the streets  
with this wannabe signer.

Ronnie looks over to Yogi Todd with bug eyes.

RONNIE

Oh shit.

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

MONTAGE:

A) During a workout, Ronnie waves a sign left to right. Yogi

Todd yells instructions.

B) Ronnie does bicep curls with a sign.

C) Ronnie stretches the sign high over head, then swings it around like a Samarai sword.

D) Ronnie practices going into a trance-like state.

EXT. STREET CORNER - DAY

Blake warms up with his team of trainers. They all wear matching black polo shirts, khaki shorts, and white sneakers. Blake waves around a huge, glossy sign with GREAT CLIPS in huge letters across both sides.

SUPER - PDX SIGN-OFF 2012

An old Pinto slowly sneaks up to the curb. Yogi Todd gets out of the driver's side and slams the door.

BLAKE

Well, if it isn't Yogi Guru Todd  
Baxter, along with his fake beard.

Yogi Todd leaps forward.

YOGI TODD

Dare you, how!

Blake laughs a hearty evil laugh.

YOGI TODD

Someone you should meet...you  
should.

Blake looks perplexed, like he's just smelled rotten eggs.

Ronnie exits the car, and calmly stands next to Yogi Todd. He wears a white puffy shirt, and holds a smaller home-made, hand-written sign for Great Clips.

BLAKE

Hey loser, ready to get your butt  
kicked?

RONNIE

No, I'm not.

Uncomfortable silence.

BLAKE

Ha, this is gonna be easy. Let's  
get it on.

Blake sprints over to his street corner.

Ronnie calmly strolls to his corner and meditates, puffy shirt flapping in the wind.

A horn sounds.

Blake bops his head with his sign and jumps around waving his sign. Several cars immediately pull into his lot. He does a Karate-style leg kick followed by a fist pump.

SUPER (Lower third) - On the bottom left, a counter reads: Vehicle Count - 6. On the bottom right, a timer counts down from 0:57.17.

Ronnie looks at cars going by. None pull in. His face is contorted and sweaty. He looks around in a panic, scratching his head, unsure what to do.

SUPER - Counter reads - Vehicle Count - 2. Timer shows 0:53.25 and counting down.

Blake leans back and howls. He pantomimes giving himself of haircut with one hand, then points to his Great Clips sign.

Ronnie shakes his head like he's in horrible pain. He looks around for something that isn't there.

Yogi Todd strokes his beard furiously.

YOGI TODD

(Yelling)  
Waiting for, what are you?

Blake fake yawns as 3 more cars pull into his lot.

SUPER - Vehicle Count - 19. Timer shows 0:41:34 and counting down.

Ronnie shakes his arms, then his legs, loosening up his whole body. He then takes a deep breath, and exhales loudly. He lifts his sign over his head as if it was Lloyd Dobbler's boombox. A car pulls in.

SUPER - Vehicle Count - 6. Timer shows 0:36:13 and counting down.

Blake's team runs over to Blake and pours water in his mouth, wipes his face off with a towel. One guy makes's sure no one is looking and stabs his hip with a syringe.

On the other corner, Ronnie becomes rigid, starts shaking and mumbling.

RONNIE  
(Mumbling) aaaagggahhh rabba mabba  
chumba wambaaaaaa kaja  
goooggoooooooooooo...

Yogi Todd nods furiously.

YOGI TODD  
Happening, it's! Happening, it's!!!

Ronnie shakes uncontrollably. He's in a trance.

Blake spins a sign at lightning speed. It slips out of his hand and lands in the street. A car runs over it.

Watching from nearby, Blake's team all gasp.

Yogi Todd leans back in a belly laugh.

Blake waits for cars to go by, then runs in the street to retrieve the sign. When he gets back on the curb, he busts into a running man dance. A tire track is on the sign.

Ronnie shifts his gaze towards oncoming traffic, and starts waving cars into the lot. They come in one after another.

SUPER - Vehicle Count - 12. Timer shows 0:23:47 and counting down.

Blake starts doing awkward ballet pirouettes.

SUPER - Vehicle Count - 32. Timer shows 0:18:05 and counting down.

Ronnie, now calm and no longer shaking, methodically places his sign on the ground. He then waves cars in one after another, using only mind control.

Yogi Todd wipes away a tear and slowly removes his beard, folds it, and places it in his briefcase.

Blake bounces around like a wild dog needing to urinate.

Ronnie stands tall as wind blows through his puffy shirt. With every wave of his hand, a car pulls into the lot.

SUPER - Vehicle Count - 29. Timer shows 0:9:47 and counting down.

Cars pile up in the parking lot. A line of people gather outside the doors of Great Clips. A middle-age bald man parks his car, slams the door, and runs towards the establishment.

BALD MAN  
 (Busting through the doors of Great  
 Clips)  
 I need a haircut.

Blake does the robot dance.

SUPER - Vehicle Count - 38. Timer shows 0:1:34 and counting down.

With time counting down, Ronnie breathes in deeply and points at a car going by. The car screeches its brakes and makes a sharp turn into the lot.

SUPER - Vehicle Count - 39. Timer counts down to 0:0:00

Blake throws his sign down and flops on the ground.

Ronnie looks around in confusion and starts swerving, ready to faint. Yogi Todd runs over and catches him just as he collapses.

EXT. IN A PARK - DAY

A beardless Yogi Todd, Blake, and 5 others stand in a row waiting instructions. No signs are visible.

Ronnie stands front and center, pulls out the fake beard from the briefcase and carefully unfolds it.

RONNIE  
 Master, the student becomes.

Yogi Todd squints his face in pain.

RONNIE  
 (To Yogi Todd)  
 What?

YOGI TODD  
 My thing, that is

RONNIE  
 (Nodding)  
 Yes, you're right Yogi Todd. I already have enough. But after transcending the street corner and achieving signlightenment, what else is there?

Ronnie looks up in the sky and imagines a plane flying by dragging a long banner that reads: To be continued.

FADE OUT