

AngelBeast by Howard Meyer

CANDICE enters a room. CHARLIE lags behind. FRANK LEVENTHOL is lying in a hospital bed.

CANDICE

Hey Frank.

FRANK

Candice. Candy. My girl. You come for our date?

CANDICE

I'm here every day for our date Frank.

FRANK

I knew you'd finally come around. Come give me a hug.

CANDICE

Someone here to see you Frank.

FRANK

Tell them to come back some other time. After our date.

CANDICE

Frank. It's Charlie.

CHARLIE enters

FRANK

Aahhh Charliiiiiiiii!! What a surprise.

CHARLIE

Hey pop.

FRANK

Sorry, Candice but I'm going to have to postpone til later. We're still boyfriend and girlfriend, right?

CANDICE

You're the only guy for me Frank.

FRANK

You met my son, Candice?

CANDICE

Yes, I---

FRANK

He's my oldest... All State safety. Plays for---

CANDICE

Penn State, I know. *(To Charlie)* He can't stop talking about you. Football scholarship to Penn State. That's somethin'.

CHARLIE

How much time do I have?

CANDICE

Don't worry about it.

FRANK

You'll come and get me later, Candice?

CANDICE

Yes. Of course. Lunch and painting.

FRANK

And then...

CANDICE

Goodbye you two. Have a nice visit.

(CANDICE leaves)

FRANK

She's sexy. Isn't she sexy?

CHARLIE

A little young for you Dad.

FRANK

No. No. Not at all. Hey, don't you even think about it. She's mine. She's a real woman Charlie. Knows her mind. Not a push over, let me tell you. I'll get her.

CHARLIE

I bet you will.

FRANK

Oh, you know I will. They always fall for the smile and the blue eyes.

CHARLIE

The mayor of St. Agnes. Authority has its privileges.

FRANK

Don't you joke. They look up to me here. They do.

CHARLIE

So, how you feeling?

FRANK

Pretty good. Not bad.

CHARLIE

You have to get up and move. Do the exercises, like they told you to.

FRANK

I exercised my whole life. I'm done exercising.

CHARLIE

Stretching. It's different. Or else you're gonna' seize up.

FRANK

It's all gonna' seize up anyway. Bed is not such a bad place to be.

Pause

CHARLIE

Sorry it's been so long dad.

FRANK

What?

CHARLIE

Since the last time I came.

FRANK

What are you talking about? You were here last week. And I just saw you on television. You're a big man... Hey did I tell you? The president came to visit me.

CHARLIE

The president of...

FRANK

Here. St. Agnes. He offered me a car. And if I don't make it out of the wheel chair he's going to get me a driver. He wants me to be patient advocate or something. Frank Leventhol. He sees what I do around here. He understands... He's a

schvatze, the president. You know I always got along with them, the schvatzes. We understand each other. Drive around in a Lincoln Town car. With a driver. That's a real nice schvatze car, hey?

CHARLIE

Nice Dad. Nice.

FRANK

What did I tell you? Your pop's an important guy around here.

CHARLIE moves to paintings on the wall.

CHARLIE

Candice tells me you're painting.

FRANK

She lifts me and wheels me. It's the highlight of my day.

CHARLIE

To Arts and Crafts?

FRANK

I can't concentrate around all those lunatics. Paint fights. Finger painting. She found me a studio. Quiet. Just me and the paints.

CHARLIE

A studio?

FRANK

An office. A nice one. Overlooking everything. We'll go over.

CHARLIE

Hey, is this the one of...?

FRANK

Number 33. State Wide. You like it?

CHARLIE

It's great dad.

FRANK

I copied it. From the newspaper. I carry it around in my wallet. I wanted to see it right in front of me. My boy. Eight tackles, three interceptions that day. Ferocious....Hey, you remember when we used to watch those Penn State games on Saturdays. You and me in front of the tube? WE ARE...

CHARLIE
PENN STATE.

FRANK
WE ARE...

CHARLIE
PENN STATE. Remember on my 12th birthday we drove down to Beaver Stadium to see a game in person.

FRANK
And you shook John Cappalletti's hand after the game. John Cappalletti. Heisman Trophy winner! That was something, wasn't it? You said to me, "Dad, that's going to be me some day. I'm going to play for Coach Paterno." Success with honor, son. Success with honor. Those were good days. Weren't they son?

CHARLIE
The best.

FRANK
And now you're one of them. A Nittany lion. Living the dream. Our dream... Ah, that Cappalletti. Tough, determined. No one'll ever forget that Heisman trophy acceptance speech. Giving the trophy to his brother who was dying from... dying from...

Uncomfortable Pause.

FRANK (Again)
The first thing I do when I get my car is come down and see you play. 50 yard line. Big Ten Football. Big Man.

CHARLIE
You know I never made it down to---

FRANK
---Whatya got there.

CHARLIE
--- Penn. I never went. I'm getting ready to go and---

FRANK
--- Whatya got there? In the bag. Whatya got?

CHARLIE
Some music. For you... Bennett, Mathis.

FRANK

That's fucking fantastic.

CHARLIE

And some Frank.

FRANK

No more Frank. You can take that home.

CHARLIE

No Sinatra? You gotta be kiddin' me.

CHARLIE goes to put the Sinatra record on the turntable.

FRANK

I said no... Frank and I are finished.

CHARLIE

What are you talkin' about. He's your favorite. He's always been your---

FRANK

He visited me.

CHARLIE

Frank Sinatra?

FRANK

You don't think these guys have problems. The worst... He was staying right down the hall.

CHARLIE

Frank Sinatra was admitted to ---

FRANK

He was depressed... It happens. It happens to a lot of folks. He needed some time. Some time to---... He needed some advice. "Could you have done it Frank. Sold out to the mob?," he asked me. "It would have been a tough one," I had to admit, "but I would have said, No." "Get your fuckin' life back," I told him. "You're Frank Sinatra for Christ's sake." Told him he needed some chutzpah. That I would lend him some, that chutzpah was a Jewish thing. He thanked me. Frank Sinatra thanked me, Frank Leventhol. Frank and Frank. Right here... But did he listen? He left with those mother fuckers last week. Fuckin' gumbas. I saw them putting him in the back seat of a stretch limo. One day I'll teach him. I'll pull up to him in my Lincoln Town Car with my schvatze driver and roll down that automatic window and I'll say, "Hey, Frank, you see, you see what integrity and honor gets

you.” What a voice. What a voice on that man. He sang for me, you know. Right here. Anything I wanted he said... *My Way*, of course... He asked me to join him. And I did. And you know what? He told me I had a damn good voice. That I coulda’ had a career as a singer. A career as a singer. Wouldn’t that have been somethin’.

(Pause... FRANK gets blue... drifts...)

FRANK (Again)

I coulda ya’ know... I shoulda’... Your mother. Your damn mother... If only she---

CHARLIE

Dad.

FRANK

Bitch. Leaves me to rot in this godforsaken---...Shacking up with that, that fucking, that motherfucking---

CHARLIE

Dad. We agreed. No talking about---

FRANK

What, now you’re going to defend her? Making eyes at him. Long before.... Long before we---

CHARLIE

Frank. Stop this.

FRANK

I saw them. I saw them. Didn’t I tell you, didn’t I ever tell you?

CHARLIE gets up to leave.

FRANK

He might have been your coach. But it was me. Me who taught you everything. Everything you know. Who do you think he went to when he needed---?... What? You got nothing smart to say. You always have something to say... Big man. Big important man. Never has time for his old man any more. Just that fucking second rate replacement, that stand-in... Who was it practiced with you every day? Starting when you was old enough to hold a football... Me... Who took you to every game? Snow. Pouring fucking rain... He stole what I started... Go... Go... practice with him... Be his pal now. You don’t need me.