

THE SECRET MENU

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INT. FAST FOOD RESTAURANT - DAY

Two 20-something guys, STEVE and WILL, enter the Over-N-Under Burger. An employee, JESS, and her manager, DAVE, work behind the counter in colorful uniforms and nametags. There is a large menu sign above the counter that gives prices for only "SINGLE WHAMMY," "DOUBLE WHAMMY," "FRENCH FRIES," and "MILKSHAKE."

STEVE

(enthusiastically)

Like I told you, man: come visit me in California, and we're going to the Over-N-Under Burger!

WILL

Yeah, you talk about this place constantly. It's like 80 percent of your Instagram.

STEVE

So what're you gonna order?

WILL

(looking up at menu)

The, uh, "Double Whammy," I guess.

Steve looks horrified. He drags Will by the arm away from the counter and speaks in a frantic stage whisper.

STEVE

Dude, you can't just order off the *menu* like some kind of chump! You gotta order off the *secret menu*.

WILL

The "secret menu"?

STEVE

They have code phrases for special orders! Like, if you tell them to "Spider-Man it," they toast the bun, and if you say "Give it to me chainsaw-style," they add grilled mushrooms!

(CONTINUED)

WILL

That's the dumbest thing I've ever heard. Why not just say "with grilled mushrooms"?

STEVE

Because it's more fun this way!

WILL

It so isn't.

STEVE

Here, just watch.

Steve marches up to the counter with confidence.

JESS

Welcome to Over-N-Under Burger. May I take your order?

STEVE

(loudly and quickly)

Yeah, let me get a Walnut Whammy--double walnut, smoking and non-smoking--an order of Octopus Fries, and a Cincinnati Boom-Boom shake, Hangman Style.

Jess turns to Dave and they do an elaborate fist-bump handshake as they loudly whisper their little catchphrase:

JESS

Sssssssecret menu.

DAVE

Sssssssecret menu.

Steve glances over at Will with a very self-satisfied "Not bad, huh?" eyebrow wiggle.

WILL

You sound absolutely ridiculous. Just FYI.

STEVE

Ridiculous-ly cool, you mean.

Jess brings out a huge tray of delicious-looking fast food.

JESS

Your total comes to \$9.15, sir.

Steve pays and takes the tray of food. Will marvels at it.

(CONTINUED)

WILL
 (grudgingly)
 Okay, that *does* look pretty good.

STEVE
 Yeah, dude! This place is awesome!
 You just gotta know how to order.
 Now you try!

WILL
 But I *don't* know how to order.

STEVE
 Yeah, you do, bro.
 (pats his chest)
 In here, you do.

WILL
 (to Jess, sarcastically)
 Uh, okay. Give me a...Stainless
 Steel Burger, uh, Tornado-style,
 and make it spooky.

JESS
 Certainly, sir.

Jess and Dave do their handshake again.

JESS
Sssssssecret menu.

DAVE
Sssssssecret menu.

WILL
 (shocked)
 Wait, seriously? That's a thing?
 What did I just order?

Jess brings out a tiny, gray, wrinkly burger patty on a small, damp bun.

WILL (CONT.)
What?? I don't want to eat some
 crappy gas-station burger! I want
 something cool and secret!

JESS
 I'm sorry to hear that, sir, but
 that's what you ordered.

WILL
 Well, then I'll order something
 else! Give me an Ultra-Orthodox
 Triple Cyclops with a Werewolf Dick
 and extra airplanes.

(CONTINUED)

JESS
Certainly, sir.

WILL
(annoyed)
Unless that's an even smaller, even
crappier burger.

JESS
I'm just doing my job, sir.

Jess turns and does the handshake again with Dave.

JESS
Sssssssecret menu.

DAVE
Sssssssecret menu.

WILL
(to Steve)
That felt like a good one, right?
I'm just trying to--

Will stops mid-sentence because Jess and Dave have started full-on making out. He gapes at them as they kiss passionately for about 10 seconds, really getting into it, before stopping abruptly and acting like nothing happened.

WILL (CONT.)
...Sorry, w-what just happened?

DAVE
That was what you ordered.

WILL
And what was that, exactly?

JESS
We made out for 10 seconds. Oh, and I dunno if you could see this because of the counter, but he also stuck *one* finger in.

She holds up one finger by way of demonstration.

WILL
...And that was part of it?

JESS
(indignantly)
Uh, *yeah*. I have a *boyfriend*.

WILL
But no food?

DAVE
You didn't order any, dude.

STEVE
Hey, relax, buddy. It happens. My first time, I ordered a straight-up *tortoise*. Not even cooked. A raw tortoise.

WILL
I just want a normal fast-food meal! I'm fucking *hungry*!

DAVE
Dude, you can just order off the menu. It's fine.

WILL
(furious)
No, apparently that's some kind of *massive hipster faux pas*! God, I *hate* California. I just want to eat my meal without any trouble! Is that too much to ask?

STEVE
It's okay, man. Just try one more time. You got this.

WILL
Yeah?

DAVE
Yeah, dude. Go for it.

WILL
(deep breath)
Okay. Okay. Let me get...whatever this is...a "Baseball Burger."
Right? Nice and simple. Just a "Baseball Burger."

The entire restaurant falls silent. Jess and Dave exchange a nervous look.

WILL (CONT.)
Is that not a real thing? Can you not do it?

(CONTINUED)

JESS
 (swallowing nervously)
 No, no, we trained for this. We'll
 do it.

DAVE
 (slowly)
 I just think, in the back of our
 minds...we were both hoping we'd
 never have to.

They look at each other and, with shaking voices and hands,
 do the secret handshake and catchphrase again.

JESS
Sssssssecret menu.

DAVE
Sssssssecret menu.

Jess looks up at him, but Dave slowly shakes his head and
 points to his own chest.

DAVE (CONT.)
 You're still young. I'll do it.

Jess throws her arms around Dave and starts crying into his
 chest.

WILL
 Wait, what's wrong? Why is she
 crying?? I take back that order!

JESS
 (shaking her head sadly)
 Once an order on the secret menu is
 made, it cannot be *un-made*.

DAVE
 It is written in the Ancient
 Scrolls. And also in our employment
 contract. Right after the sexual
 harassment stuff.

He turns to Jess solemnly.

DAVE (CONT.)
 Do it swiftly.

Dave closes his eyes and holds out his hand, palm-up. From
 nowhere, Jess produces a huge, ornate ceremonial dagger. As
 she raises it high above her head with both hands, the
 lights dim. She begins chanting ominously in a dead
 language.

(CONTINUED)

WILL

Wait! No!

Steve grabs his arm and holds him back.

STEVE

Just let it happen, man. This is bigger than any of us.

Jess plunges the dagger downwards, and Dave lets out a piercing scream. Will turns away, unable to watch, and Steve hugs him tightly.

STEVE (CONT.)

In a way, it's almost...beautiful.

The lights slowly come back up, and Dave is gone. A pool of blood spreads from behind the counter into the seating area. Jess is standing behind the register again like nothing unusual has happened. Will crumples to the ground weeping, a broken man.

JESS

(same bored voice as before)

Sir? Your total comes to \$12.15, sir.

BLACKOUT.