

Lick Me Deadly

by
James Harris

James Harris
shamelessfilms@supanet.com
www.shamelessfilms.com

EXT. A CAR PARK - DAY

An ice cream van sits in a car park. It is emblazoned with the words "Mr Fluffy Whiffletop" and a large, cartoonish logo featuring a giant ice cream cone with arms, legs and a smiling face.

There is a small queue of people at the serving hatch, all dressed in black. The person serving from the hatch cannot be seen.

The MAN at the front of the queue gets his ice cream and walks away from the van towards a building identified by the sign: The Dove of Eternal Rest Crematorium.

The man enters the building, licking his ice cream.

INT. CREMATORIUM - CONTINUOUS

Organ music plays tastefully in the background. There are around twenty MOURNERS in here, huddled in groups. TWO YOUNG CHILDREN run round and round the seating, laughing and screaming.

There is a table at the front of the room holding various bouquets and a floral tribute spelling out "Paul". Behind the table is a curtain, currently closed.

One of the children runs to the curtain, opens it a little and peers through.

INT. REAR CHAMBER OF THE CREMATORIUM - CONTINUOUS

The child sees a table at the back of the room, upon which stands a coffin, its lid open. Three black-clad heavies, SYD, DAVE and ROGER, gather round the coffin, backs to the child, looking down at its unseen occupant.

A fist suddenly shoots up from within the coffin, and knocks Dave to the floor.

Syd and Roger attempt to restrain a man who is struggling to get out of the coffin. This is PAUL. He is in his early twenties, and looks healthier than you'd expect a man in a coffin to look.

SYD

He clobbered Dave.

ROGER

If you weren't dead I'd kill you
for what you just did to Dave.

PAUL

I'm not dead! I'm not dead! Why
are you doing this? Why?

Close on one of the heavies turning and addressing the camera directly.

SYD

Why? Why indeed? The solution to this conundrum lies shrouded in a fog of mystery, for who can know why death must come when it does? And who expects, when staring into the pale impassive face of the reaper, that his heartfelt plea for truth will be answered?

Change angle to reveal that the last shot was from the P.O.V. of Roger. There is a pause.

ROGER

Are you back on the glue?

SYD

Yeah, sorry. Hold him down while I nail the lid on.

Syd walks to the other side of the room. Paul spots the child by the curtains.

PAUL

Get help, please, get help!

The curtain closes as the child quickly retreats into the main room.

PAUL (cont'd)

Oh Jesus, why are you doing this?

Roger is holding Paul down by his shoulders, but it is a losing battle.

ROGER

Don't make me come in there and shut you up.

Paul manages to struggle to his knees. He grabs Roger by the throat and drags him down into the coffin. The lid snaps shut.

Syd rushes to the coffin, hammer in hand. He can hear the sounds of a major fist fight coming from within the casket, which shudders and bumps a little on its stand. He tentatively reaches towards the clasp on the lid of the coffin...

...which opens with a bang, and up pops Paul. Syd raises the hammer and smacks Paul in the middle of the forehead with it. Paul instantly holds his hands to his face and screams. That *hurt*.

Syd peers past him into the unseen recesses of the coffin.

SYD
 Roger, stop fucking about and get
 out here so we can finish the
 job.

PAUL
 Job? What job? What is going on
 here?

CHILD (O.S.)
 I got you an ice cream.

Syd whirls round and Paul looks surprised: the child has poked its head through the curtain and is holding out an ice cream cone. The ice cream has chocolate sauce on it.

SYD
 Ice cream? He wants to give you
 an ice cream. That's irony.

CHILD
 No, it's chocolatey.

Paul seizes his moment, grabs Syd from behind, drags him into the coffin. The lid slams shut.

After the sound of another big fist fight, during which the coffin jumps about a bit, the lid opens once more and Paul stumbles out and on to the floor.

He picks himself up, and runs towards the curtain.

As he reaches the curtain, the child looks up at him and raises the hand holding the cornet towards him. Paul recoils slightly.

PAUL
 No thank you.

INT. CREMATORIUM - CONTINUOUS

Paul stumbles through the curtains into the main room, and is faced by the assembled mourners.

Included in the throng are three near-identical elderly women: MAUREEN, BERYL and AGNES. They are evenly spaced in the room, so each time one speaks Paul must turn his head to see them.

PAUL
 Help... Please help, I'm... They
 tried to put me in a coffin.

The crowd just stares.

PAUL (cont'd)
And I'm not dead.

MAUREEN
You're quite sure about that?

PAUL
What does that mean? (slowly, as if to a child) I need help, there are three men in there trying to put me in a coffin.

MAUREEN
It's not without precedent, young man. This is a funeral, after all.

PAUL
But I'm not dead.

BERYL
So you keep saying, but I'd suggest you take a look at the evidence, Paul.

She gestures towards the floral tribute.

AGNES
Is this going to take very long? I have another two funerals to get to today.

PAUL
I'm sorry if my mysterious life or death struggle is ruining your social life, but...

MAUREEN
Paul, Paul, Paul. Nobody begrudges you your little moment in the spotlight, it *is* your big day after all, but we all came here for a funeral. Do you really want to disappoint all these nice people, hmm?

Paul is stunned, then composes himself and clears his throat as if he's going to make a speech.

PAUL
I would like to thank you all for coming, really, it means a lot to me, I mean, I don't recognise a single one of you but still... Oh, except you, hi Uncle Jefferson.

There is a quiet but enthusiastic "hello" from somewhere in the crowd.

PAUL (cont'd)

My only complaint, if I absolutely had to pick nits, would be that it all seems a touch premature, what with me being alive and not actually fucking dead at all.

The three old ladies gasp.

BERYL

Well I never. There is absolutely no need for language. Now I suggest you get back into the coffin. We'll just pop you in the oven and say no more about your charming little outburst.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Paul? What are you doing?

Paul turns to see a middle-aged woman walking in through the entrance. She is dressed all in black, and a black veil covers her face. Paul is relieved to see her.

PAUL

Mum? Mum I'm in a bit of trouble.

PAUL'S MUM

Oh Paulie, why won't you get in the coffin?

PAUL

What? You know about this?

PAUL'S MUM

Paul, they explained it to me, it's all perfectly above board. Apparently it happens all the time.

Paul starts to back away from his slowly advancing mother.

PAUL

You're mad.

PAUL'S MUM

Don't judge me. It is so hard to lose a son. I was inconsolable when you died. Please, this funeral is very important to me. I need closure. Don't deny me closure, Paul!

MAUREEN

Hasn't she suffered enough, Paul?

Paul moves towards the front door, walking over chairs in order to avoid his mum walking down the centre aisle.

PAUL

You're all insane. Hello! I'm not dead.

MAUREEN

He's not dead he says. You took the ice cream Paul.

PAUL

What? I took the... What is that supposed to mean? I didn't take the ice cream.

PAUL'S MUM

They explained it all Paul. You can't deny you took the ice cream. It's all there in black and white. On paper. They showed me the paper, Paul. I think you'd better get back in the coffin. Sorry.

BERYL

You took the ice cream.

PAUL

No, no, no. I was just offered an ice cream but I didn't take it.

AGNES

Well of course you didn't take it today. You must be full of ice cream.

Everybody nods in agreement, and laughs as if this is the funniest joke ever.

BERYL

He'll turn into an ice cream if he's not careful!

The curtains at the front of the room fly back to reveal Syd and Roger.

SYD

Freeze!

Paul turns tail and runs out of the exit.

EXT. CREMATORIUM - CONTINUOUS

Paul runs out of the building and into the carpark outside. He huffs and puffs for a moment, catching his breath.

A single drop of milky white liquid dribbles down his forehead, like sweat. Puzzled, Paul wipes it away.

He frantically looks this way and that for a hiding place.

The car park is empty apart from the ice cream van. Paul runs to it, looks around again, then tries the door on the van. It opens, and he jumps in.

INT. ICE CREAM VAN - CONTINUOUS

The interior of the van is sparsely furnished. There is a table with a metallic Mr Whippy-style ice cream machine on it. Also on the table is a large, ornately-decorated book.

And there is a high-backed black leather swivel chair, facing away from Paul.

VOICE

Would you like an ice cream?

PAUL

What? No, no I don't really.

VOICE

Very wise. 'Cos if you eat too many...

Then the swivel chair swivels...

Revealing MR FLUFFY WHIFFLETOP, a giant ice cream cone, the ice cream machine's logo made flesh.

MR FLUFFY WHIFFLETOP

...you'll turn *into* an ice cream.

PAUL

You... I know you.

MR FLUFFY WHIFFLETOP

Do you?

PAUL

You're... You are a giant ice cream cone.

MR FLUFFY WHIFFLETOP

And you're a dead man.

PAUL

No, I'm not.

MR FLUFFY WHIFFLETOP

Then I'm not a giant ice cream cone.

PAUL

What? But you are.

Mr Fluffy spins round on his chair.

MR FLUFFY WHIFFLETOP

And so it goes, round and round and round. Now, will you get back in the coffin?

PAUL

Do you have anything to do with what's been happening to me today?

MR FLUFFY WHIFFLETOP

Oh dear. What's been happening to you today?

PAUL

I was kidnapped from outside my home this morning, knocked out and when I woke up I was being stuffed into a coffin by three big, ugly, er, heavies...

MR FLUFFY WHIFFLETOP

Henchmen. The term is henchmen. You knocked one of them out, I believe. He will be... Dealt with.

PAUL

And it turns out I'm at a funeral. My funeral.

MR FLUFFY WHIFFLETOP

Right. Yes then.

PAUL

Yes?

MR FLUFFY WHIFFLETOP

Yes, I do have something to do with all that.

Mr Fluffy throws a rolled up newspaper to Paul, who catches it, unrolls it and studies the front page.

The headline reads: LOCAL MAN WINS LIFETIME SUPPLY OF ICE CREAM.

There is a photo of a grinning Paul shaking hands with Mr Fluffy.

PAUL

I knew I'd seen you before
somewhere. Oh my God, I remember,
this was, what, two years ago?
Wow, I've eaten a one heck of a
lot of ice cream since then,
thank you very much.

MR FLUFFY WHIFFLETOP

Seems like a lifetime ago, eh?

PAUL

I can't believe I'd forgotten...
It might have been the hammer
blow to my head earlier...

MR FLUFFY WHIFFLETOP

I have one of those faces. And it
was a very long time ago. A whole
lifetime away.

PAUL

Yeah. Funny how time flies. I'll
be honest, I got a bit sick of
it. Like, everything tastes
slightly of ice cream these days.
I think I've eaten too much.
Everyone says if I eat much more
I'll turn into an...

MR FLUFFY WHIFFLETOP

Yes, it seems like a lifetime
ago. You winning the contest. For
a lifetime's supply of ice cream.

PAUL

You keep saying that.

MR FLUFFY WHIFFLETOP

Terms and conditions Paul, terms
and conditions.

Mr Fluffy reaches for the book that lies on the table. It is large, dusty and has a small paper bookmark stuck in the midst of its pages.

Mr Fluffy opens the book at the bookmark, removes it and throws the book away.

He produces a pair of pinze-nez reading glasses from a concealed pocket and puts them on. He peers at some tiny writing on the bookmark and coughs theatrically.

MR FLUFFY WHIFFLETOP (cont'd)

Terms and conditions... No purchase necessary, blah blah blah, prizes non-transferable, blah blah blah. Ah yes, here we are. The duration of the lifetime referred to in the term "Lifetime's Supply of Ice Cream" is left at the discretion of the company, Mr Fluffy Whiffletop Ltd - that's me - and can be terminated with extreme prejudice with no prior notice given.

He removes the pinze-nez.

MR FLUFFY WHIFFLETOP (cont'd)

I take it you did not read the small print?

PAUL

You're telling me...

During the next speech, Mr Fluffy works himself up into a rage.

MR FLUFFY WHIFFLETOP

I'm telling you that when you accepted the Lifetime's Supply of Ice Cream, you accepted that the duration of your life would be decided by me. It's a standard clause in these competitions. You have to think of the bottom line, Paul. You're young, healthy, you could live for years. You didn't expect to be gobbling my creamy, tasty, frosty goodness for decades to come, did you Paul? It's simply not realistic, Paul. My shareholders wouldn't allow it, Paul. You took the ice cream, Paul. It's time to pay for it.

Mr Fluffy lunges at Paul with an animalistic roar.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE ICE CREAM VAN - CONTINUOUS

Syd and Roger lock the van door from the outside, and lean against it.

SYD

He'll pay for what he did to Dave. I wouldn't want to be in that boy's shoes. The boss can be a bit hot-headed at times.

The van starts to rock.

INT. ICE CREAM VAN - CONTINUOUS

A titanic struggle between man and giant ice cream cone ensues. Punches, kicks and no-holds-barred wrestling.

There is a lull in the fight. The combatants eye each other warily while gasping for breath.

PAUL

You can't get away with this. I am not dead!

Mr Fluffy cracks his knuckles, which are grazed and a little bloody from the fight.

MR FLUFFY WHIFFLETOP

You took the ice cream. Morally, legally, ethically, every which way but actually, you are dead. You can't fight it Paul. You can't fight me. I am big business Paul, how do you fight the corporate world?

Paul has been studying his knuckles. They are coated with bits of white - ice cream from punching Mr Fluffy's face. He absently licks the back of one of his hands.

PAUL

You're not the corporate world, Mr Fluffy. You're a fucking big ice cream cone. I've had it with you, with the lot of you. You giant ice cream cones, you carnivorous clowns, you aristocratic peanuts, you men made of tires. You think you can stomp all over me because you're cute and because you have a mighty corporation behind you? Well it stops here! You think I can't fight you? What do you think I've been doing these last two years, with my lifetime's supply of ice cream? Practice!

Paul launches himself at Mr Fluffy and sinks his teeth into the lightly whipped ice cream that makes up the corporate monster's head.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE ICE CREAM VAN - CONTINUOUS

Close on Syd, who addresses the camera directly.

SYD

"Battle not with monsters lest ye become a monster". That's Nietzsche.

He brings a clear plastic bag up to his mouth and starts huffing it like an oxygen mask.

Angle: Syd and Roger are leaning against the side of the van, which is rocking ferociously on its axle. Syd sniffs glue, Roger reads a newspaper.

ROGER

"Today is a good day to surprise a close friend with news or a small gift." That's Capricorn.

Then... the rocking stops.

The two men de-lean and make their way to the rear of the van, waiting for the door to open.

Which it does, to reveal a giant ice cream cone. It looks like Mr Fluffy Whiffletop, although perhaps the features have changed slightly. It steps unsteadily down from the van, then straightens.

SYD

Everything all right, Boss?

MR FLUFFY WHIFFLETOP

Yes, we won't be having any more problems with that one, Sydney. Where's Dave?

SYD

Paul knocked him out. He, er, well, the long and the short of it is, he failed you boss. You want we should go kick his face off or something?

MR FLUFFY WHIFFLETOP

No, let him learn from his mistakes. I think this could be the beginning of a new, more compassionate era for the Mr Fluffy Whiffletop corporation.

SYD

So you're saying, just a light
kicking, you know, work the
kidneys...

MR FLUFFY WHIFFLETOP

No Sydney, those days are over.

The two men and one ice cream cone walk towards the
crematorium. Outside the door stands the child from
earlier.

CHILD

Can I have an ice cream please
sir?

MR FLUFFY WHIFFLETOP

You'll turn into an ice cream one
of these days.

Syd, Roger and Mr Fluffy all laugh heartily. The child does
not laugh, just gazes longingly at the ice cream van.

INT. ICE CREAM VAN - CONTINUOUS

Propped in the corner of the van lies a huge cornet, arms
and legs intact, with a big bite mark taken out of the top
of it.

Other than a single milky-white trickle running down the
wafer, it is entirely empty of ice cream

END.