

BACK IN A MINUTE

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. HARDWARE STORE - DAY

With the look of someone in desperate need of a bathroom break, a MALE EMPLOYEE, 20s, appears in the window of a hardware store and looks up and down the street.

Relieved to see it's deserted, he hurriedly locks the door, flips the "OPEN" sign over to read "BACK IN A MINUTE" and disappears from view as a genial-looking MAN approaches the store and tries to enter.

Finding the door locked, the man notices the "BACK IN A MINUTE" sign, checks his watch, then steps back to the curb to wait under a sign that reads:

NO PARKING  
NO STOPPING  
NO STANDING  
NO KIDDING

He smiles at WOMAN #1 who approaches a dress store next to the hardware store with a dog on a leash.

Ignoring the man, she starts to enter the store when she notices a sign in the window that reads: "NO PETS ALLOWED."

She turns back to the man with an appraising look, then approaches and, after a moment, hands him the dog's leash.

Woman #1 enters the dress store as WOMAN #2 approaches from the opposite direction with a TODDLER eating an ice cream cone in her arms.

She starts to enter a china store on the other side of the hardware store, then stops when she sees a sign that reads: "YOU BREAK IT, YOU BUY IT."

Her gaze drifts from the sign to her child, then to the man by the curb as he patiently waits with the dog.

Woman #2 approaches the man and, after a moment, hands the child to him, then enters the china store.

The man smiles at the child who, in turn, pokes him in the eye with her ice cream cone and laughs.

As he wipes away the ice cream, a strange look crosses his face, prompting him to look down at the dog to see it peeing on his leg.

He takes a step back from the dog, stumbles off the curb, and catches his foot in the grate of a storm drain.

Still holding the child and dog, he struggles to free his foot when bird shit plops unceremoniously onto his shoulder.

He looks up at the bird as another TODDLER walking along the street with his MOTHER jumps in a puddle, splashing him, the dog, and the child.

The child begins to cry just as Woman #2 reappears, takes back her child, slaps the man's cheek, and leaves.

Woman #1 then reappears, notices her dog is all wet, slaps the man's other cheek, then leaves, too.

Freeing his foot from the grate finally, disheveled and in pain, the man looks at the "BACK IN A MINUTE" sign still in the window of the hardware store, looks at his watch again, then exits.

As soon as he disappears, the hardware store employee returns and looks up and down the street again.

Happy to see it's deserted still, he turns the sign over to read "OPEN" again as we

FADE OUT:

THE END