

# **Purge**

by Michael Olsen

**Synopsis:** How much would you pay for a great purge? Dennis is about to find out, but not in the way he expected...

**Characters:** DENNIS  
BURT  
SIMONE

**Genre:** Black Comedy

**Running Time:** approx. 10 minutes

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**Phone: 0418 173 029**

**Email: michael\_olsen@bigpond.com**

*Lights come up on an empty office. There is a chair with a dressing gown slung over it, a desk, a computer and a knife.*

*BURT stands in the middle of the office, wearing a suit and tie. He looks nervous. DENNIS enters, closes the door behind him. He walks around Burt slowly, then quick as a flash he snatches up the knife on the desk and slices off the suit. Then he slices off the shirt, and the tie. Burt stands half naked, shivering. Dennis rolls Burt's cheeks in the palms of his hands, squishing his face together. Next, he pokes Burt in his gut, his finger almost disappearing into Burt's stomach.*

**DENNIS:** Beautiful.

*Dennis takes out a small can of spray, sprays his finger and his hands, then wipes them with a tissue.*

**BURT:** I—

**DENNIS:** No. You don't speak. You have no tongue. (*quietly*) If you speak again I'll reach in and rip it out.

*Burt nods.*

**DENNIS:** You have no idea why you're here, do you?

*Burt shakes his head.*

**DENNIS:** I have no idea either. All I know is you are vile. You re-define the word vile. You are a huge puddle of shit on the footpath that people try to step over all the time, but sometimes they can't. You stick in the grooves of their shoes. The stench of you permeates their clothes, their noses. They try to sneeze but you're there, quietly getting fat and smelly and rolling around like a pig in a sewer. After you've made love to your wife she goes to the bathroom to vomit. Your children are ashamed of you. That's why they get you to park two blocks from school so their classmates don't see you. Your mother who gave birth to you and rues that day, she is so slack she doesn't shit, she dribbles. Everything you touch has that smell of you about it. Someone borrows a pen or a stapler, they pick them up, they can't get rid of the smell from their hands for a week. You're like a disease. Something we're all trying not to catch, but no-one can help it: we pick you up, just sharing the air in a room. I would think even cannibals wouldn't eat you. There's too much fat to begin with, but there's nothing underneath. No meat. Nothing that does all the work. Just more fat rolling onto your bones like tons of whale blubber. You make everyone sick. I'm sick just being here this close to you. The way you just quietly stand there getting fatter. Balder. Smellier. They say beauty is only skin deep, but ugliness goes right to the core, doesn't it? It's something you're born with. I can just see you clawing your way into the world, out of your poor mother's cunt—I mean, she had no idea, did she?—and there you were, ready to puke and make people puke, ready to lie in the gutters of life like a dog turd, happy to be vile, happy to fuck like

an idiot and kiss like a slobbering fool. If only things were superficial. But you take vileness to a new level, don't you? You don't just look ugly, your ugliness extends to the tips of your fingers, the ends of your toes, to everything you touch, every place you go, you bring the sordid, the weak, the horrible, the pain. There's no escape. And you luxuriate in it like a bath of warm vomit. There's nothing—

**BURT:** *(looking at his watch)* OK. That's two minutes.

**DENNIS:** Oh. Really?

**BURT:** What's the matter?

**DENNIS:** I was just getting warmed up.

**BURT:** I only paid you for two minutes. It doesn't seem enough., does it?

**DENNIS:** It's enough. It's certainly long enough for me.

*Burt clicks his fingers. Dennis hands Burt the dressing gown. Burt pulls on the dressing gown, ties it up.*

**BURT:** Don't you like doing what you do?

**DENNIS:** It certainly pays the bills, but no, it—it's hard to do. It's not natural.

**BURT:** But you're so good at it.

**DENNIS:** Thank you.

**BURT:** No, really. It's like I was even believing it myself. And that bit about my mother. Well.

**DENNIS:** Clawing your way—

**BURT:** No no, the slack bit. Totally awful.

**DENNIS:** That's what you're paying for.

**BURT:** So—um—how's business?

**DENNIS:** Good. Very good in fact. So many people want the purge. This is definitely the guilty age.

**BURT:** It's not for me.

**DENNIS:** What do you mean?

**BURT:** I don't feel guilty. About anything.

**DENNIS:** The money. The business. That wife of yours I see in the women's mags.

**BURT:** I know I've done well, but I feel absolutely nothing but pure pleasure. I seem to have this knack of making money, spending it and making it. The business could be sold tomorrow and I wouldn't care. And as for my wife, well, that's a pleasure you will never know. She wasn't called HooverLips for nothing at school.

**DENNIS:** I beg your pardon?

**BURT:** She gives the blowjob of the century. She can suck your brain right through your dick.

**DENNIS:** Sounds painful.

**BURT:** Pleasure and pain, it's all the same. Now, how much did we agree on?

**DENNIS:** You know how much.

**BURT:** Three hundred dollars. And you don't even have to take your clothes off!  
*Burt goes to the desk, pulls out a cheque book.*

**DENNIS:** I prefer cash if you have it.

**BURT:** I don't.

**DENNIS:** Cheque it is then.  
*Burt is about to write out the cheque, then stops, looks at Dennis. Burt checks his watch.*

**DENNIS:** What's the matter?

**BURT:** How would you like to make double, triple tonight?

**DENNIS:** OK. We could pick up where we left off. I have perfect recall.

**BURT:** No no nothing like that. Well, a little like it, but my wife's due home soon. I'd like you to abuse her—verbally—like you did me.

**DENNIS:** No.

**BURT:** What?

**DENNIS:** She'll think it's for real.

**BURT:** If you tell her there won't be the same sting.

**DENNIS:** It's one of my policies. Everyone knows, so no-one really gets hurt.

**BURT:** So you've never done it for real?

**DENNIS:** No. Well, once but that was years ago.

**BURT:** What happened?

**DENNIS:** She went and killed herself.

**BURT:** That must have done something for your professional pride.

**DENNIS:** She was my wife.

**BURT:** And you did that to her?

**DENNIS:** The most complete sense of job satisfaction one could ever achieve.

**BURT:** That's cold. I love it. *(Pause)* What if I offer you five thousand dollars?

**DENNIS:** No.

**BURT:** Ten.

**DENNIS:** Are you insane?

**BURT:** You are worth that much, aren't you?

**DENNIS:** Yes, but—

**BURT:** Fifteen. And I want the best you've ever done.

*Pause*

**DENNIS:** Fifteen.

**BURT:** Cash. It's here in the desk.

**DENNIS:** OK. Fifteen. Now what about her? You have to give me something to go on.

**BURT:** She loves money. She loves shopping. She's shallow, vindictive, manipulative. She's out for all she can get.

**DENNIS:** She's your wife.

**BURT:** So I should know.

**DENNIS:** How far do you want me to go?

**BURT:** All the fucking way. Don't spare her anything.

**DENNIS:** OK. When will she be here?

**BURT:** *(again checking watch)* Soon. Very soon.

**SIMONE:** *(off)* Home!

**BURT:** *(calling out)* In here!

*Simone enters with shopping bags from boutiques.*

**SIMONE:** *(as she kisses Burt on the cheek)* Hello.

*Dennis says nothing. He moves around Simone. Simone raises her eyebrows as if to say "What do we have here?"*

**SIMONE:** Hello. I'm Simone.

*Dennis says nothing.*

**SIMONE:** Where I come from it's rude not to respond when spoken to.

**DENNIS:** I don't respond to whores.

**SIMONE:** I beg your pardon!

**DENNIS:** You heard me. Whore. Slut.

**SIMONE:** Burt!

**DENNIS:** He can't help you. Cunt. Tart.

**SIMONE:** But—but—

**DENNIS:** I'm here to tell you what you're really like. The truth now. The truth you need to hear.

**SIMONE:** Burt! This is out—

**DENNIS:** You have to listen because deep down you really know it's true. You fuck for money in all its forms. That's why you're with Burt!

**SIMONE:** Burt!

**DENNIS:** You know it but you hide it deep down in your guts where all the other nasty truths hide, like the fact that you hate your mother—

**SIMONE:** I don't hate—

**DENNIS:** —and the fact that you would do absolutely anything to hang onto Burt and all his money. You hate giving him a headjob but you force that cock down your throat and thank christ the only small mercy is he doesn't come in your mouth you let him do it on your face because more than the fact that you hate the taste of cum you hate Burt, don't you? You hate that man like you've never hated anyone in your life. He's done everything for you but you despise him for it, don't you? You just wish he'd go away and die like some tired old man whose time has come. You want to be left alone. You don't want anyone to touch you. You think you're better than every person you see. You think you're above them. You think that the only way to get ahead is to marry some dumb bastard who's got more money than sense, keep them happy, and spend their money. Spend spend spend like it's going out of fashion. And you're never out of fashion, are you? You must have the latest, the best, the most expensive. You spend two hours in the bathroom getting ready every morning, plucking, trimming, making sure everything is clean and perfect and then you go forth, into the shops like a painted whore, and spend money that isn't yours. Isn't that what you do? Isn't it?

**SIMONE:** Burt, I—

**DENNIS:** Don't look at him! Look at me! I've just told you the truth, haven't I? And it hurts.

**SIMONE:** No, no, it—

**DENNIS:** Aren't you ashamed? Don't you have any iota of decency left in you? How can you sleep at night knowing that the greatest thing in your life is simply to fuck to stay exactly where you are, grabbing the baubles and crappy Jap plastic lifestyle devoid of charm, or honesty, or decency.

**SIMONE:** Stop it! Stop it! Burt! Make him stop!

**DENNIS:** It's the truth, isn't it Burt?

**BURT:** Yes yes it's—it's the truth.

**SIMONE:** Burt!

**DENNIS:** There's only one honourable thing to do, isn't there?

**BURT:** There is?

**SIMONE:** What—

*Dennis hands Simone the knife.*

**DENNIS:** Honour. We might not live with it, but we should die with it.

**BURT:** But—

**DENNIS:** When you hear the truth there's only one thing to do, isn't there? Redeem the past, cleanse the future, purify your soul.

**BURT:** No! No!

*Simone looks at Burt, shakes her head, then plunges the knife into her stomach. She collapses on the floor.*

**BURT:** What have you done?

**DENNIS:** Me? Nothing—I, I didn't think she'd do it!

**BURT:** She's—she's dead!

**DENNIS:** I'm sorry. I pushed and pushed but I never thought—

**BURT:** Get out of here! Go! Before I call the cops!

**DENNIS:** I'm sorry, I—

**BURT:** Go!

*Dennis hurries out. Burt bends over Simone, weeping.*

**SIMONE:** Is he gone?

**BURT:** He's gone.

**SIMONE:** He was good.

**BURT:** The best yet.

*Fadeout as Simone and Burt kiss passionately.*