

CORNERS

by

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## INT.MATTRESS STORE - DAY

Morning sun streams through the store, lighting up the immaculate white sheets on the front row of mattresses. An insulated coffee jug and some disposable cups rest on a table at the front of the store.

The front door sensor chimes. CECIL enters. In his 50s, he is trim, neat, and meticulously dressed. He pours himself a coffee and sips it as he walks to the back of the store.

CECIL

Arthur?

ARTHUR, 50s, emerges from the back room. Cecil glares at Arthur's creased suit and floppy hair as he ambles over.

ARTHUR

Morning, Cecil! I've got amazing news!

CECIL

Good morning, Arthur. Thank you for putting on the coffee this morning. Er, did you even go home yesterday?

ARTHUR

Cecil, I've been thinking and thinking, and I've figured it out. I know how we can improve sales!

CECIL

No, Arthur. Not first thing in the morning. I can't deal with whatever new idiocy you --

ARTHUR

I know you don't like me, but listen ... I've been up every night, researching ... Now, what do we sell?

CECIL

Nothing, according to the sales figures this week.

ARTHUR

Mattresses! An intimate product that requires the greatest trust and confidence! We sleep on them! We make love on them!

CECIL

Steady on ...

ARTHUR

People need to trust our product!  
We need to build intimacy, we need  
to have customers feel good when  
they come here, we need them to  
feel ... this!

(takes out a metal flask  
from his back pocket)

CECIL

Oh dear god. What is that? Is it  
some kind of tranquiliser? Are you  
planning to roofie our customers?

ARTHUR

No, no! I found it online! It makes  
you feel comfortable, open to  
intimacy ... It makes you want to  
get cosy ... And what's cosier than  
a new mattress?

CECIL

It's a sex potion. You're going to  
illegally roofie our customers with  
a sex potion.

ARTHUR

It is not a sex potion! It is a  
scientifically formulated,  
pheromone-laced, sugar-free liquid  
supplement that promotes the  
loosening of inhibitions!

CECIL

Unless you find something that  
promotes the loosening of wallets,  
Arthur, do not speak to me again  
today.

The front door sensor chimes. MILDRED, 50s, tidy,  
attractive, wanders in. She pauses at the coffee table.

CECIL

Oh, thank god. A customer!

Cecil swallows the rest of his coffee and hands his cup to  
Arthur. He puts on a smile and heads towards Mildred.

ARTHUR

And Cecil, can we please, please

order in some fitted sheets? No one wants flat sheets anymore.

CECIL  
(over his shoulder)  
Fitted sheets are for the lazy, Arthur.

ARTHUR  
But they're easier to --

CECIL  
(spins around)  
Easier? Easier? Life's not meant to be easy!  
(spins back around and continues walking)

INT. MATTRESS STORE - AN HOUR LATER

Cecil wakes up, dishevelled, on one of the beds in the front row. Next to him, Mildred, much less tidier than when she arrived, caresses the sheets dreamily.

CECIL  
(sitting up and smoothing his hair)  
May I help you, ma'am? I'm not sure what happened, but I apologise for whatever it was ... that happened.

MILDRED  
(feeling the corners of the bed)  
Oh my! Flat sheets! With hospital corners! Call me old-fashioned but I do enjoy a properly-made bed!

CECIL  
I was in the army, ma'am. Old habits die hard.

MILDRED  
My late husband was in the army.

CECIL  
Your ... late husband?

MILDRED  
Yes, very late ...

They smile at each other. Arthur bustles over.

ARTHUR

You see! It works! I put it in the coffee!

(focusing on Mildred)

Do you feel like buying a mattress?

MILDRED

Oh! I beg your pardon ... I don't know what came over me. I'm sorry, I have to go.

Mildred gets up and hurries out of the store. Cecil springs to his feet.

CECIL

No, please come back!

INT.MATTRESS STORE - DAY

Arthur and Cecil sit at their desks, silent. Cecil has his arms folded and glares into the distance. Arthur rocks back and forth miserably, glancing now and then at Cecil.

The front door chimes. Eager, Cecil stands up.

The MAILMAN walks in and drops a pile of letters on Cecil's desk. Cecil drops back into his chair.

INT.MATTRESS STORE - NIGHT

Cecil smooths out the sheets on the beds in the front, lingering on one in particular. He frowns, and kneels to check the corners of the sheets.

Feet clad in sensible shoes come up to him.

MILDRED

Don't cut yourself on those hospital corners.

CECIL

They're not as easy as fitted sheets.

MILDRED

Life's not meant to be easy.

He beams up at her.

MILDRED

Do you think I could buy this

mattress? I feel like ... I can  
trust you.

Cecil rises and their hands meet and clasp.

ARTHUR  
(appearing next to them)  
It worked!

CECIL  
Go away, Arthur.

Arthur slumps away, dejected.

MILDRED  
He seems a bit simple, but I like  
him.

CECIL  
Me too.

FADE OUT.