

GOIN' SOFT

by

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Characters

Major roles:

Mike Williams, a good-natured but pathetic lonely-heart.

Dr. Bell, a UO psychiatrist.

Ashley, Mike's ex-girlfriend.

Medium Roles:

Professor Johnson, Mike's teacher

Dentist, Mike's dentist

Roger, Mike's friend

Small Roles:

Bud, Mike's friend (2 lines)

Many extras are needed as well

FADE IN:

INT.--UO DENTIST OFFICE--EXAMINING CHAIR--DAY

MIKE WILLIAMS is reclining in the dentist's chair, his mouth open, having his teeth cleaned by the DENTIST. The dentist is speaking while he works.

DENTIST

You've been drinking coffee,
haven't you?

MIKE

Ah-ra.

DENTIST

Did you know that coffee stains
your teeth?

MIKE

Ah war ga wa id ra.

DENTIST

Your fourth grade science teacher
told you? So why do you keep
drinking it?

MIKE

Ah ga eck waa ba ga la fuh buh da.

DENTIST

You like Starbucks's Mocha
Frappucinos with half-cap and twist
but no foam? Me too.

(Keeps working.)

Hmmm...What's this? (Pulls out
long thread from Mike's mouth.)

MIKE

Ah ga waa.

DENTIST

Floss? I don't think so. Looks
more like some kind of thread from
a cloth. Strange.

INT.--FRONT SEAT OF MIKE'S CAR--DAY

We see only Mike as he sits in the driver's seat, talking and glancing to his right.

MIKE

Sorry it took so long. The dentist
found some kind of thread in my
teeth. He said I should brush more
often. What does he know. You're

the only one who understands me,
Ashley. I love you, sweetheart.

The camera pans back and we see Mike and a pillow in the passenger seat next to him. Mike leans over and passionately kisses the pillow a couple of times. Then he leans back and tries to pull something out of his teeth, as if something got caught in his teeth. Then he pulls the car out of its parking space.

INT.--UO CLASSROOM--DAY

Mike sits at the back of the classroom, staring blankly at PROFESSOR JOHNSON at the front of the room. The professor is speaking, but Mike is not really paying attention to her. The establishing shot is on Professor Johnson.

PROF.

While Shakespeare certainly took
some license with his characters
and stories, ...

CUT to Mike with a faraway look on his face while Johnson's speech continues uninterrupted. While the below speech continues, we zoom out to see Mike's pillow in the seat next to him. Mike stares lovingly at the pillow, and slowly puts his arm around it.

PROF.

... he was above all inspired by
real events. For the most part, he
wrote about real people and real
conflicts, basing his plays on
historical evidence and eyewitness
accounts.

A quick cut to the professor lecturing THE CLASS. Then Mike, with his arm around the pillow, brings the pillow to him, and begins stroking its "head." Again, the professor's speech is never interrupted.

PROF.

But when it came time to give his
characters thoughts, feelings, and
emotions, Shakespeare displayed a
depth of perception that few others
could ever hope to rival. Whether
it was their hopes, their dreams,
their fears, or their demons,
Shakespeare described them with
uncanny believability, as if he
himself had been witness to every
conversation, every gesture, even
every thought.

CUT to Professor Johnson.

PROF.

Uh, Mr. Williams, you look like
someone who knows about passion.
How, in *your* opinion, was

Shakespeare able to reach so deep
into his characters?

CUT to Mike, who is still focused on, and caressing,
his pillow.

PROF.
Mr. Williams, the class is
waiting.... Mr. Williams?

MIKE
(oblivious, talking to
pillow)
I love you.

The class laughs. Professor Johnson shows disapproval and surprise.
Mike frowns and slumps in his seat.

INT.--TRENDY BAR--TABLE--NIGHT

Seated around a table are Mike, his pillow, and ROGER and BUD, Mike's
friends. Each has a beer, including the pillow.

MIKE
(while drinking his beer)
That Professor Johnson sure is a
hard ass. It's like she's got
something personal against me and
Ashley.

ROGER
Mike, when are you gonna stop with
this Ashley stuff?

MIKE
What do you mean?

ROGER
You know what I mean. You're
carrying around that damn pillow
like it's Ashley!

Mike is astonished. He's goes behind the pillow and covers up its
"ears."

MIKE
Don't listen to him, Ashley!

ROGER
(continuing)
She's gone, Mike! She dumped you
three weeks ago! When are you
gonna stop this?

MIKE
How dare you!

BUD

Dude, if Ashley's not gonna drink her beer, can I have it?

MIKE

Shut up! Both of you! I can't believe you two are my friends! C'mon Ashley.

(picks up pillow
and exits)

BUD

That guy is seriously wacked.

ROGER

I know. We need to get the poor guy some help.

INT.--TRENDY BAR--DANCE FLOOR--NIGHT

Mike is slow dancing with his pillow. Other dancers stare incredulously. Mike is oblivious to them while talking to his pillow, Ashley. At first, we see only the upper torsos of Mike and ASHLEY--the real Ashley, the human one--as they dance. Ashley is responsive and smiling.

MIKE

How could they be so insensitive, Ashley? They're probably just jealous of me. Well, who could blame them...

(Pause. We cut to a wide shot and see the horror on the faces of the other couples. This time, we see that Mike is in fact dancing with his pillow. Cut to torso shot again, this time we see the pillow, not Ashley.)

Oh Ashley, you're so soft and warm.... Do you think we stand a chance?

INT.--PSYCHIATRIST'S OFFICE--DAY

Roger is escorting Mike into DR. BELL's office. Dr. Bell is already in the room.

ROGER

C'mon, Mike. Dr. Bell isn't going to bite you. He just wants to talk to you for a little while. I'll be waiting outside.

Roger escorts Mike to the couch. Mike is still holding onto the pillow, which he puts down next to him on the couch as he sits down. Then Mike puts his arm around the pillow. Roger exits.

DR. BELL

(looking Mike square
in the eyes. Serious
but friendly.)

Hello, Mike.

MIKE

(a little scared)

H-H-H-Hello, Dr. Bell.

DR. BELL

You know you have a problem, don't
you.

(Mike looks down.)

Mike, listen to me. Ashley is
gone. She ended her relationship
with you three weeks ago, and in
your despair, your mind created a
delusion. Somehow, that ruffled,
stained, smelly pillow became
Ashley to you. But look at me,
Mike.

(Mike looks up.)

That

(pointing at pillow)

is not Ashley. That's just a
pillow.

(Mike is wide-eyed)

You've been holding on to a
delusion, Mike, and now you need to
let go.

Mike gets that faraway look again--faraway, but also very silly. Need to ham up every possible moment for this film! We dissolve from Mike's ridiculous face to a flashback.

EXT.--BRIDGE OVER A RIVER--SIDEWALK--DAY

We see Mike peering over the bridge railing, throwing pieces of bread into the water. Ashley approaches him.

ASHLEY

(a little playful,
a little melancholy. She
holds something behind
her back.)

Hi, Mike.

MIKE

Hey, sweetie!

(Gives her a hug, then
resumes his bread tossing.)

ASHLEY
(nodding toward
the water)
Feedin' the ducks?

MIKE
Nah, just tossing bread in the
water.
(We cut to a shot of
Mike's hand throwing bread into the
river. There are no ducks in the
water.)

ASHLEY
Hmmm. Um, you left your pillow at
my apartment.
(She hands him the pillow.
He takes it with his free hand.)

MIKE
Oh, yeah, thanks. Hey, what do you
wanna do tonight?

ASHLEY
Uh, yeah, I wanted to talk to you
about that.

MIKE
About what?

ASHLEY
I don't think it's working out,
Mike.

MIKE
WHAT?

ASHLEY
I don't think we should see each
other anymore.

MIKE
What are you talking about? We're
perfect for each other!

ASHLEY
No, we're not.

MIKE
Of course we are!

ASHLEY
NO, WE'RE NOT.

MIKE
What do you mean, we're not?

ASHLEY

We're just not compatible.

MIKE

What the heck does that mean? I
wanna know exactly why you're
dumping me!

ASHLEY

C'mon, Mike...

MIKE

I WANNA KNOW!

ASHLEY

All right, you talk too much. I can
never get a word in. And you snore.
LOUDLY. You pick your teeth public.
You never hang up your clothes.
You're boring, arrogant, tedious,
and you leave the toilet seat up.
Satisfied?

MIKE

I'm speechless.... I don't know
what to say...

ASHLEY

There's nothing to say. It's over.

MIKE

Wait, Ashley, it doesn't have to be
over. You can learn to speak up
more. And you can wear earplugs at
night. And no one has to pick up my
clothes...

ASHLEY

I gotta go, Mike. Take care.

MIKE

No, wait! Ashley! Ashley!
AAAAASHHHELEEEY!!!!

(Big melodramatic scream
at the end. As he says these last
lines, he clutches the pillow
tighter and still tighter, then
sobs into it and hugs it and puts
his head against it.)

We dissolve back to the the present.

INT.--PSYCHIATRIST'S OFFICE--DAY

Mike wakes up from his flashback, astonished and a
little teary-eyed.

MIKE

It is just a pillow, isn't it?

DR. BELL

That's all it is.

MIKE

(sniffing, kind of
crying)

Oh doctor, I am so sorry. I don't
know what happened to me.

DR. BELL

That's all right. This kind of
thing happens all the time. Why,
just today I saw a woman who
carried a garden hose for seven
years after her snake Petey died.

Dr. Bell smiles and stands, and Mike stands in return.

MIKE

I don't know how to repay you,
doctor.

DR. BELL

No repayment is necessary, Mike.
My salary comes out of your
overpriced health fee.

Mike suddenly hugs the doctor, and the doctor is taken a bit by
surprise.

MIKE

Oh doctor,
(suddenly noticing)
you're so soft and warm. Do you
think we stand a chance?

DR. BELL

(firmly)
No. Now get out.
(Mike turns to get
the pillow)
And leave the pillow.
(Mike exits.)

Dr. Bell closes the door after Mike leaves. He then moves to the
pillow, and addresses it:

DR. BELL

(passionately)
Oh Ashley, all the time that I was
talking to Mike, I just couldn't
take my eyes off you! You are so
beautiful, my dear. What's that?
Well, I do try to stay in shape.
(he picks up the
pillow and holds

it gently)
Would you like a martini?
(he puts his ear
against the pillow)
Oh, such dirty language, young
lady!
(narrowing gaze)
I want you, Ashley! I must have
you!

The doctor, still holding the pillow, falls behind the couch. There is lots of grunting. His pants get thrown over the right side of the couch, then the pillow's pillowcase gets thrown over the left side of the couch.

FADE OUT:

THE END