

Fast Asleep

By

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FADE IN:

INT. MIKE CANDLE'S OFFICE - DAY

ECU of angry bespectacled eyes, eyebrows furrow.

MIKE CANDLE (O.S.)  
This is the third day I've received  
mail for marketing.

ECU - a hand impatiently taps envelopes on an office desk.

MIKE CANDLE 50s sits behind a large desk. He uses the office  
phone. 'Candle' logo adorns the wall behind him.

MIKE CANDLE  
I don't care what special needs he  
has. Get rid of him.

Mike slams down the handset. He's pissed.

MATT BERNARD young, eager barges in with two reports in hand.

MATT BERNARD  
Here's the report but I had to  
fudge the figures.

MIKE CANDLE  
Why so?

MATT BERNARD  
Original specs we were supposed to  
interview family members as well.

MIKE CANDLE  
Due to budget constraints we had to  
cut those interviews.

MATT BERNARD  
Those interviews were integral to  
the study.

MIKE CANDLE  
Just use the data you have.

MATT BERNARD  
Mike I hired extra staff and we  
interviewed a family member for  
everyone in the trial.

MIKE CANDLE  
Been busy. What did you find?

MATT BERNARD

Seventy five percent are more grouchy.

MIKE CANDLE

So we'll have less 'Have a nice day' and more 'Fuck You'. It'll be less like America and more like France.

MATT BERNARD

Mother and I holidayed in Paris and the French are actually very nice.

MIKE CANDLE

Bottom line, we cannot let anyone know about this. Okay? Otherwise all our shares are worthless.

MATT BERNARD

Well I did two reports, one with and one without these new details. Here's the one without.

Mike takes one of Matt's reports with a smile.

MIKE CANDLE

Well good work on the report. Much appreciated.

Mike watches Matt exit. He turns to his pc with no keyboard.

MIKE CANDLE

Computer. Candle Pharmaceutical share price.

ON THE SCREEN

Candle Pharmaceuticals Share price replaces Google home page.

ECU of happy bespectacled eyes, eyebrows raised.

INT. MATT BERNARD'S OFFICE - DAY

Matt views a spreadsheet on his laptop. A lacklustre office.

Near the door an old style TV on a small table plays a news report of a fluffy dog running about. The sound is down but the caption reads 'Snoopy the Talking Dog!'.

Mail boy RICKY, a gentle giant, enters with a small pile of envelopes in hand unnoticed. He stops before Matt's desk. Matt continues to work on his spreadsheet unaware of Ricky.

RICKY (O.S.)  
Hi Matt. Here's your mail.

MATT BERNARD  
Oh Hi Ricky. You startled me.

Matt accepts the mail from Ricky. He looks at the letters. The top is addressed to him but the next is for 'Marketing'.

MATT BERNARD  
Hey Ricky, this is for..

Ricky is gone. Matt notices the TV has a News Flash. He uses a remote to turn up the volume.

INSET - ANCHORWOMAN JACQUELINE SEATED IN TV NEWS STUDIO

JACQUELINE  
Breaking news.  
The strangled bodies of several girls have been found today, dumped in the woods, just outside of town.

INT. MATT BERNARD'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Matt looks on concerned.

INSET - JACQUELINE WITH LIST OF SERIAL KILLERS ON SCREEN.

JACQUELINE  
This brings the total number of Serial Killers at large to fifteen. A lot of speculation on what could be causing this deadly epidemic but no solid leads as yet.

INT. MATT BERNARD'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Matt abruptly stands to his feet. He has an Eureka moment.

INT MIKE CANDLE'S OFFICE - DAY

ECU of happy bespectacled eyes, eyebrows raised.

MIKE CANDLE (O.S)  
Oooh Nana. Looking hot.

Matt rushes into Mike's office. Mike's almost caught watching granny porn. He quickly turns the monitor away.

MATT BERNARD  
I know what's causing the serial killer epidemic. It's Fast Asleep.

MIKE CANDLE

What are you talking about Matt?

MATT BERNARD

Well it all adds up. Fast Asleep not only causes cranky behaviour, it also causes a significant number to become psychotic serial killers.

MIKE CANDLE

Now wait on. That's a wild accus--

MATT BERNARD

It's so obvious. We trial one hundred on a new drug and suddenly there's a serial killer epidemic just one week later.

MIKE CANDLE

There is no proof!

MATT BERNARD

Well maybe if I give the police DNA results on everyone in the trial. Maybe they can cross check if anyone in the trial were involved.

Mike Candle's world is falling apart.

MIKE CANDLE

This will kill our shares.

MATT BERNARD

Are shares more important than lives? Sorry Mike but I have to.

Mike looks worried. He looks around, notices a wall clock.

MIKE CANDLE

Ahh well look at the time, it's five O five. All the lab guys go home at five. Say how about Nine A M first thing, you and me visit the Chief of Police.

MATT BERNARD

Aww that would be great. Why I couldn't live with myself if we didn't do something. Thanks Mike.

MIKE CANDLE

Don't mention it.

Matt leaves smiling. Mike sees him off with a wave. He takes a deep breath, stares at his monitor.

ECU of angry bespectacled eyes, eyebrows furrow.

MIKE CANDLE (O.S.)  
Computer. Matt Bernard home address.

OVER BLACK: ONE MONTH LATER

INT. SPRINGHILL 24 HOUR NEWS STUDIO - DAY

TV anchors PAUL and KRISTEN host 'SPRINGHILL 24 HOUR NEWS'.

PAUL  
Four days since Fast Asleep went on sale and an estimated seventy million now enjoy its benefits.

KRISTEN  
I've been enjoying this new wonder drug. In the last four days I've hardly slept and I feel wonderful.

PAUL  
I'm feeling great as well and with all this extra time I'm learning the Ukulele.

KRISTEN  
And I'm learning swahili.  
*Habari.*

PAUL  
That's great.  
We've had reports a small percent are a little --

KRISTEN  
Grumpy?

PAUL  
Yes grumpy. But overall Fast Asleep has been well received.

KRISTEN  
And we have with us the man of the hour. Mike Candle. Hi Mike.

Wide shot shows Paul, Kristen and guest Mike Candle.

MIKE CANDLE  
Hi Kristen, Paul.

PAUL

So Mike, you must be over the moon  
with Fast Asleep's success.

MIKE CANDLE

I am but it's bitter sweet. Matt  
Bernard, brilliant chemist and  
close friend recently died.  
The cause is still unknown  
BUT rest assured -  
he was not taking Fast Asleep.

KRISTEN

Our deepest sympathy to Mr  
Bernard's family. So Mike, you now  
have a drug a quarter of the  
country is using. What's next?

MIKE CANDLE

I'm taking a family vacation and on  
my return, we gear up for a world  
wide release.

PAUL

Well Mike, thanks for making Fast  
Asleep available. It's amazing!

KRISTEN

Yes thank you Mike.

MIKE CANDLE

Bye Kristen, Paul.

KRISTEN / PAUL

Bye

PAUL

Nice guy. And now for our top  
story. A talking squirrel.

OVER BLACK: TWO WEEKS LATER

INT. RICKY'S KITCHEN - DAY

Newspaper on bench. Headline - Anarchy Rules in 'Fast  
Asleep' Apocalypse. Beyond paper someone peers out a window.

Ricky peers through laced curtains to the noisy world  
concerned. Sound of anarchy - sirens, screams, gunfire,  
explosions are constant. Dirty dishes stacked up high.

Ricky forages the pantry. He finds a packet of biscuits.

Ricky sits at the end of the island bench eating biscuits. He giggles hard as he reads a Comic Book.

Near the packet of open biscuits is the Newspaper. Another Headline - CEO Mike Candle Still at Large. A photo of Candle.

Ricky continues to enjoy his biscuits and comic. The fluorescent light goes. Kitchen dimly lit from the window.

RICKY  
Hey! What's going on here!

Ricky tries the light switch over and over. Light stays out.

RICKY  
Stupid Electricity! Errrrr!

A fat candle on the bench gets alit via a cigarette lighter.

INT. RICKY'S HALL - DAY

Ricky walks down a dark hallway holding the fat candle. He opens the door to a backroom. The room is well lit - a large window floods the room with sunlight. Ricky enters.

INT. RICKY'S BACK ROOM - DAY

Ricky looks down at someone. A frantic muffled whimper.

RICKY  
Here's your dinner Mr Wax.

Ricky smiles as he tilts the candle. The hot wax falls down. The muffled whimper gets more frantic and louder.

RICKY  
Tomorrow is my birthday so you can  
be my birthday Candle. Okay?

The frantic muffled whimper gets louder and more frantic.

RICKY  
Nite nite Mr Wax. Ha Ha Ha.

Ricky exits, shuts the door behind. Whimpers continue. Pan down. On his back tied up, head to the door, is Mike Candle.

Mike's face is covered in layers and layers of candle wax. Straws extend from the nostrils. Muffled whimpers continue.

FADE OUT.