

EXT. DISPENSARY - DAY

Alice sets the finished white board sign in the window. A local, ALAN, sees her and enters the shop.

INT. DISPENSARY - DAY

Alan comes in and smiles at Alice.

ALICE

Can I help you find something?

ALAN

(grins)

Uh, that depends. On whether you're the real Alice.

ALICE

Oh, I don't know how real I am, but Alice is my real name.

(off his skeptical look)

You want to see my driver's license?

ALAN

I believe you. Only...can I speak to the smoking caterpillar?

ALICE

(laughs)

Sure, but I don't think he really smokes.

At the counter, Providence sees two attractive young Women browsing the store. She notices Mo Joe staring at them.

PROVIDENCE

You pervert.

MO JOE

Hey, I can't help it.

PROVIDENCE

Like hell you can't. Are they, like, naked?

MO JOE

Bikinis.

PROVIDENCE

Bikinis... Hmm...

Alice approaches the counter with Alan, who smiles at Providence and holds out his hand to Mo Joe.

ALAN

So you're the owner.
(as they shake hands)
I'm Alan. I live a few blocks from here.

MO JOE

Mo Joe. That's my name. How can I help you?

ALAN

Oh, I don't need anything today. I was just appreciating the sign...and the one putting up the sign. Great gimmick. But I am a little concerned that you don't have more customers. I suppose you do a lot of deliveries.

PROVIDENCE

Oh, you know. We're still building our customer base.

ALAN

You probably get a break in rent, don't you?

MO JOE

Not bad. Do you know the owner or something?

ALAN

No, but he must have told you about this location...about its weird karma.

MO JOE

How's that?

ALAN

He didn't tell you. Pretty unscrupulous.

MO JOE

What? Just tell me.

ALAN

Okay. I've been in Pacific Beach awhile, and I've seen business after business go belly-up in this spot,

First a clothing store, then a bar, a
 cafe, even a hookah lounge. I was
 thinking good, a dispensary at least
 ought to be able to make it here...
 (off Providence's desperate look)
 ...or not.

ALICE
 It just takes time.

ALAN
 That's just it. It shouldn't. It ought
 to be built-in, especially here in
 party city. You have all the
 ingredients, including the cute
 budtenders--

PROVIDENCE
 Budtenders?

ALICE
 Wait. You don't know what a budtender
 is? That's us. Like a bartender but
 with buds.

PROVIDENCE
 (gives Alice a dirty look; then
)(thoughtfully--)
 Budtender...

ALAN
 And you have the cool theme...
 (indicates Alice)
 Maybe all you need is some kind of
 promotional campaign.

ALICE
 To, like, break the, like, curse.

PROVIDENCE
 (eyes flash)
 No problem. We have just the thing.

MO JOE
 (hand on laptop)
 This? Oh, but it's not done yet.

PROVIDENCE
 Not that! I mean that, but first the
 other thing.
 (off Mo Joe's blank look)

You know! It's called the...the
 Bodacious Budtenders Pageant.
 (off curious looks)
 It'll be like a competition with the
 other dispensaries, with costume...
 (indicates Alice)
 ...and swimsuit...

She gestures toward Women, whose clothes morph into bikinis.
 This gets blank looks from others and a patient nod from Mo
 Joe.

PROVIDENCE
 And talent, and, uh...
 (desperately thinking while others
 wait)
 And marijuana trivia, you know, like
 the Gong Show?

ALICE
 The Gong Show. You mean the Bong Show!

This gets a general laugh; Providence gives Alice a grateful
 smile. Mo Joe looks like a deer trapped in headlights.

PROVIDENCE
 I mean, like, a liberated beauty
 contest with both men and women
 competing so it's not sexist...well,
 not too sexist.
 (after a beat, to Alan, following
 a furtive glance at Mo Joe)
 So. What do you think?

ALAN
 (grinning)
 If that doesn't break the curse on
 this place, nothing will. I look
 forward to it. Anyway, you have my
 business.

Smiling at each of them, he turns and leaves. Providence
 looks at Mo Joe expectantly. Mo Joe is still blown away.

MO JOE
 Tell me you didn't think of all that
 right on the spot.

PROVIDENCE
 Actually...actually, it's kind of been
 percolating, I think, you know, in my

subconscious, in like bits and pieces.
So you think it's a good idea?

ALICE

Yeah, it's pretty smart. I can't
believe I didn't think of it myself.

Providence looks at her ironically, then laughs in shared
amusement.

PROVIDENCE

The Bong Show. Now that's a cool idea.