

Comparative Advantage
(Thick and Thin)

By

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FADE IN ON:

INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Tortured GROANS echo from unseen lips. Due to exhaustion... or something else?

On the other side of a DOOR - hasty FOOTSTEPS. The door knob rattles. Followed by: a surprised pause.

TEENA (O.S.)
Oh my God. This one's unlocked!

JENNY (O.S.)
Don't stop to narrate. Bust it open,
girl. Get us inside!

More FOOTSTEPS - like a stampede.

The door flies open, as TEENA and JENNY (late teens) lunge forward.

Momentarily jammed together in the doorway, both squirm.

Teena: designer clothes, head to toe. Fashion model skinny, she's a bundle of awkward, lanky limbs.

Jenny: Short and Ruben-esque Latina. Sweatshirt and cargo pants. Where Teena's all angles - Jenny's round.

Grunting, Jenny breaks free first. She staggers into the room. Head down, out of breath.

JENNY
(gasps)
Mission accomplished. Lock that fucking
door!

Whoever lives here is OCD for security. Teena fumbles with an array of latches and chains.

TEENA
I'm trying. Does this turn left or right?

JENNY
How should I know? Whatever works!

CLICK. Teena manages to accomplish... well, something.

Something heavy hits the other side. THUD! Teena backpedals. Almost trips over Jenny in blind haste.

Catching her balance, Teena spots an open WINDOW across the room:

Lace curtains with red spots flutter in a breeze. Teena careens towards them.

TEENA

We've got to close that, too!

Jenny glances up, shoots her pal a sarcastic look.

JENNY

It's not like they can fly. The ones we just left don't even walk so good!

TEENA

You don't know. So don't assume!

Teena slams the window - so hard, cracks form.

JENNY

Now who's gonna board that up?

TEENA

...oops?

Teena places a well manicured hand on the fractured pane and peers out.

EXT. SIDEWALK

Down two dizzying floors, towards the hideous scene playing out in the streets...

A CROWD OF ZOMBIES shuffle by. Wheezing moans fill the air. They're what's outside the apartment door right now.

INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM

Teena's eyes slide to the reddened curtains. Blood.

TEENA

(whispers)

Some of them could be here, now. Locked in with us. Shit, we're screwed.

Jenny grinds her teeth.

JENNY

Not if we find them first. Help me look!

TEENA

We don't even have weapons! I flunked Tae Kwon Do in Middle School. If one's in here, I can't fight...

Jenny spots a long UMBRELLA, tosses it to her pal.

JENNY

Use this to keep your distance.

TEENA

How?

JENNY

Jam the pointy end through its frikkin' eye.

TEENA

(whimpers)

There's only one umbrella. You have to protect yourself, too.

Improvising, Jenny rummages through her pockets. Finds:

Mace. Not what Jenny was hoping for.

JENNY

Great against assholes. But these things don't feel pain. Pepper spray can't ward 'em off.

More rummaging. A nervous Teena fidgets and watches. Jumps with every zombie groan at the door.

Jenny's next pocket retrieval: CAR KEYS.

Holding them in her fist like "cat claws", she swipes air as a test.

JENNY

Nah. That's even more useless.

TEENA

Not if we can get to your car and drive off!

JENNY

Drive away from this? Girl, get real. My car is surrounded by those dead-enders. I might have just bought custom plates, but no Honda's worth dying for.

To "drive home" the point, Jenny points out the window.

EXT. SIDEWALK

One ZOMBIE cocks his head. Bends down.

He picks up a SEVERED LIMB, and munches on it blissfully.
Around him, undead swarm.

INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM

Jenny shudders. Stops, seized by a thought.

Swinging around, she runs towards the apartment's
kitchen. Zips inside. Disappears.

TEENA

Jenny, no! Don't leave me here!

Teena clutches the umbrella like a life vest.

Thinking it over, she switches to a "sword grip" - tries
a few test jabs at helpless air.

In the kitchen, something CRASHES! Teena jumps.

TEENA

Shit! Jenny?

Silence.

TEENA

Did you find a zombie? Are you OK?

Still nothing.

TEENA

Don't play with me!

Another CLANG. Switching Teena into action mode.

TEENA

Hang on. I'm coming!

She switches the umbrella grip to a baseball bat. Takes a
gulps, charges in...

INT. KITCHEN

Teena darts in, umbrella cocked for maximum damage.

TEENA

Get your claws off my friend, you rotting
puke!

But stops dead when she spots Jenny half collapsed in a PANTRY NOOK. An avalanche of CANS and COOKING IMPLEMENTS pin her pal down.

Jenny moans. Evoking a smile from Teena.

TEENA
You're alive?
(sudden panic)
Where'd it go?!?

Teena spins around, swinging the bat like a tweaked out Babe Ruth. Jenny waves her hand, weakly smiles.

JENNY
All's good. I did this to myself, no
zombie "help" involved.

TEENA
But, how did you...

JENNY
I *should* have stood on a chair. But no, I
had to try and reach.

Teena screws up her face, annoyed.

TEENA
Lemme get this straight: you risked your
life for Goya Beans?

Jenny tries to stand. Slips on a can, falls back down.

JENNY
No! But if we have to be on the run,
we're gonna need food supplies - soon!

TEENA
(beat)
Seriously? The world's ending, and the
first thing you think of is a snack?

JENNY
No, Ms. Einstein Body-Shamer. The first
thing I thought of...is YOU.

Brushing cans off her lap, Jenny pats her ample stomach.

JENNY
Admit it. I can survive for day. Weeks,
maybe. But with no food, you'd fall into
a low blood sugar coma in four hours,
tops. Look at yourself, Ms. Size Two
Gucci. You don't have an ounce to lose!

The girls stare at each other. At first, it's tense. Then the two crack up: the kind of humor old friends share.

TEENA

Fine. You made your point. But forage later. We've got to arm ourselves... now.

Teena grins, and holds up:

A HUGE BUTCHER KNIFE.

JENNY

Sure, a gun would be better. But good news: this bad boy fell on me too!

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The friends tiptoe from the kitchen.

Though armed, they still jump at every shadow. Every zombie utterance in the hallway, too.

JENNY

I *think* this building has one bedroom units, max. Which is score for us. That's less square footage...

TEENA

So less places for creepers to hide!

Jenny points towards a door on the far side of the room.

JENNY

Let's see what's behind Door #2.

TEENA

Now?

JENNY

Either that, or sleep here and hope they don't pounce on us while we dream. But I'm a little tuckered out. You play scout on this round. I'll stand guard.

Teena nods, reaches towards the bedroom knob.

TEENA

What if one of them's waiting on the other side?

Chickening out last second, Teena knocks instead.

TEENA

Hello in there? My name is Teena. Teena Jennings, of Dekalb Avenue, just three blocks down. My friend here's Jenny. I swear, we're both really good people. And we're not here to hurt you. So whatever happens, don't shoot at us. And if you're - you know, infected - don't try other stuff...

JENNY

(snaps)

Don't warn the zombies, for crying out loud!

Defiance blazes in Teena's eyes.

TEENA

It's not like you're a zombie apocalypse expert, either. Neither of us are! There could be scared survivors in there, who need assurance.

She yanks the door open, revealing...

INT. BEDROOM

A blood soaked BED. Empty now - but whoever used to sleep here clearly lost the fight. Red streaks like a Pollock painting everywhere. This room makes abattoirs look good.

TEENA

(croaks)

Or not.

MOMENTS LATER

Jenny stands before a closed closet. Hesitates.

Taking a deep breath, she throws it open. A TEDDY BEAR tumbles down from some high shelf.

A startled Jenny flails with her butcher knife. She stabs the toy multiple times. And "massacres" several shirts.

But still finds no zombie here. Good.

Standing by the bed, Teena watches her friend gulp air.

TEENA

Don't have a heart attack! I thought you were gonna just stand guard.

It's not like zombies are sneaky. Where could they possibly hide?

Teena rests a hand on the bed. SQUISH. Her eyes drift to the bloody sheets. Then even further downward. "What if?"

Shuddering, she pokes the umbrella under the bed.

Past frilly, blood soaked coverlets... she hits something SOFT. Teena recoils, calls to Jenny.

TEENA

Red alert. Zombie found!

Jenny darts over.

JENNY

What? Where?

TEENA

(points a trembling finger)

Where monsters always hide, of course.

With difficulty, Jenny squats. She reaches for the coverlets, butcher knife poised to strike.

TEENA

Be careful!

One look, and Jenny deflates.

JENNY

I just found who owns.. I mean, "owned" this place.

MOMENTS LATER

Each grabbing a flaccid arm, Jenny and Teena haul a gruesome CORPSE from under the bed.

Cause of death: zombie bites. Teena stares down at it, grossed out.

TEENA

I can't even tell if that's a guy or girl.

JENNY

Doesn't matter where they fit on the spectrum. They're mincemeat now.

Without warning, Jenny grabs Teena's umbrella and impales the corpse through its eye.

SQUISH. Blood spatters both girl's faces. Teena gags, almost vomits into her own mouth.

TEENA

Ew! What was that for?

JENNY

Better safe than sorry. Who knows how quickly these things turn?

Jenny wipes off her face with a hand. Rubs her cargo pants, leaves gory streaks. Then looks around, serene.

JENNY

Focus on good news. This room's clean.

TEENA

Clean?!? This place looks like everyone in my sorority had their period. With no pads, at once!

JENNY

I mean, "clear". Of zombies. Not the elite kind.

TEENA

Either way, I won't stay here!

From the living room, more GROANS and SCRATCHING at the door. Louder now. Wood SPLINTERS.

JENNY

I don't think we have a choice.

The two peek their heads out, towards...

INT. LIVING ROOM

The top half of the exit door fractures - at the lock Teena failed to bolt!

Zombie FINGERS penetrate. Skin scrapes off, exposes bone.

The two friends exchange "oh shit" looks.

JENNY

You turned the lock left? You sure?

TEENA

Yes. I mean, no. Right.

More of the door splinters...

Jenny grabs Teena, yanks her back into the bedroom.

JENNY

Retreat!

INT. BEDROOM

Teena fumbles with the bedroom door knob. Jenny scoffs, shoves her aside.

JENNY

You screwed up last time. MY turn!

Tragically, there's no lock. Teena points to a DRESSER.

TEENA

Let's go old school, barricade the door!

The two run over to the dresser. Speaking of "old school", this sucker's heavy: solid wood.

Teena pulls with all her might: not much with those pipestem arms. Jenny uses her shoulder, tries to push.

But she's almost out of breath. It won't budge.

A DILDO rolls off it. Teena stifles a laugh, lets go.

Improvising, Jenny grabs a CHAIR with wheels, rolls it towards Teena.

JENNY

No judgements. Here: I think you know what to do.

Teena does: she jams the chair under the door's knob.

TEENA

That should work. For now?

She places a cautious ear against the door.

On the other side: heavy BREATHING. Shuffling feet. Teena pales. This can't be good.

TEENA

(whispers to Jenny)

Oh God, they're in the apartment. They've broken through! We're gonna have to hide *somewhere!*

She casts around the bloody bedroom with panicked eyes.

JENNY
(sarcastic)
Where? Under the bedsheets? I think
they'd figure that one out.

Teena stares at the corpse. Her face lights up.

TEENA
I know: hide under the bed! Like him. I
don't know... or her.

JENNY
Be real. There's no way I'd fit under
there.

TEENA
Then, uh, try the closet?

JENNY
And be a sitting duck? For zombie chow?

Jenny runs to the window. Teena follows, out of ideas.
Both friends look down.

It's still a two floor drop, onto hard sidewalk.

But there's no zombies on this building side... so far.

JENNY
If I jump, I could run for help.

TEENA
Jump? That's a cement sidewalk, not an
air mattress. The fall would break your
neck. Or at least your leg!

JENNY
(grins)
Maybe not. I've got padding.

Teena shoots her a look: "Really?"

JENNY
Look, in times like these, we've got to
play to comparative strengths to have any
hope to survive. Let me take the fall for
both of us - literally. If anyone can fit
under the bed, it's you. Hide, so they
won't see you.

TEENA
But they'll smell me!

JENNY

They way this place stinks of blood? I think we'll be covered on that count.

The bedroom door vibrates, in sync with zombie snarls. The chair slips. Jenny yelps.

JENNY

It's not gonna hold! Girl, decide now!

Teena groans, and opens the window for Jenny.

Then runs and slides feet first towards the bed. It's another Babe Ruth impression that quasi-works.

Halfway in, Teena turns and flashes a thumbs up to Jenny.

TEENA

Teamwork. We're gonna survive. Promise!

JENNY

Yup. Stay safe, girlfriend.

TEENA

You too!

The door splinters. ZOMBIES flood in.

Jenny dives out the window.

Teena zips under the bed. Pulls bloody sheets over the opening as camouflage.

EXT. SIDEWALK

The sun lies low on the horizon. A few hours passed by.

As do more ZOMBIE HORDES. They swarm the streets.

One half chewed ZOMBIE bumps into a cherry red HONDA. The license plates read "Jenny-Gen-Z."

In the middle of the crowd, two female zombies shuffle.

On closer examination, they're definitely Teena and Jenny. Neither one made it out.

But they're still together.

Teena-zombie starts to drift. Jenny-zombie yanks her friend back in.

Subtitles translate zombie grunts.

JENNY-ZOMBIE
 (subtitled grunt)
 Don't go that way.

TEENA-ZOMBIE
 (subtitled grunt)
 Don't boss me. Why not?

JENNY-ZOMBIE
 (subtitled grunt)
 There's no food. You know what you're
 like when your blood sugar dips. No fun.
 (points)
 I smell humans that way.

Teena-zombie cracks a smile - ghoulish on her dead face.

TEENA-ZOMBIE
 (subtitled grunt)
 Thanks! You always look after me.

JENNY-ZOMBIE
 (subtitled grunt)
 Of course. That's what friends are for!

FINAL FADE OUT: