



Scene II

*(By Campbell Carolan By Richard Prince, A Photograph of  
Brooke Shields by Gary Grosz)*

Spiritual America Booth at NAFTA: Contemporary. KIM and THE ART HANDLER seated. The following conversation takes place after the first day of the VIP previews at NAFTA: Contemporary. KIM is the intern. THE ART HANDLER is down \$213,000 in student loans. The booth costs just shy of USD 10,000 and a full page bleed in art forum costs USD 5,000.

The ARTWORK is *Richard Prince, Brooke Shields (Spiritual America)*, 1983, color photograph, 24 x 20". The ARTWORK is well-known amongst die-hards of international contemporary art: [The infamous picture was a photograph of a photograph of a heavily lubricated, extravagantly made-up, prepubescent Brooke Shields, posed to look like she has just arisen from a steamy bath. An "extremely complicated photo," Prince has said, "of a naked girl who looks like a boy made up to look like a woman."](#) The ARTWORK was last realised at USD 3,973,000 out of a 4,500,000 estimate.

The following scene corresponds to Act 1, Scene 2 in *Glengarry Glen Ross* (1984)

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KIM

Mids and PMC's...

ART HANDLER

...Professional managerial clout...

KIM

Mids, all.

ART HANDLER

...they hold on to their good names...

KIM

Their inflated reputation...

ART HANDLER

I'm going to get cancelled.

KIM

Hey, hey now- you're still here! You'll turn around. You're young. It doesn't have to be like- I mean, look at what we're looking at. we're all getting fucked. Just because you can't pass Richard Prince off as an 'emerging artist' even if you could make these collectors feel touched for the very first time... She's 10. I can't sell this to a twelve year old even if she is on the cover of Forbes.

*Pause*

Your mistake was taking this gig in the first place.

ART HANDLER

I'm here...for the experience. Just wrapped up an MFA.

KIM

For the experience of what? I'll give you an MFA- what I learned on OnlyFans! You don't sell content, honey. You sell them the Autofill. You sell them the experience that they're not (fumbling with phone)

not...that...kind of...person...

ART HANDLER

I've never been on OnlyFans...

KIM

Just you wait. You sell drugs?

ART HANDLER

Not anymore

KIM

You get those...crypto

ART HANDLER

I don't know...

KIM

You ever buy art?

ART HANDLER

I don't know.

KIM

You make an art deal and you know it. The people...the people like US who can tell the difference between an underexposed negative and an underdeveloped negative are a dying breed. Crypto? I don't know. They like to support art. (pause) They're *lonely*, something. (pause) They like to feel *contemporary*, I don't know. Never bought a fucking thing. Cept coin. You sit down, you say "This is a historically significant work of Appropriation," or "Porn isn't about sex, it's about genitalia." or "See this glare riding up her thigh like glaze on a baked ham? You like that? That's a surface reflection. It's a photo of a photo you sick fuck" (pause) It's like explaining art history to dead animals. Prurient interest.

ART HANDLER

Prurient?

KIM

It's all one big org chart, these kids...like " I'll go live in a Republican tax haven, work in multiple time zones, slip into the occasional K-hole, back a stablecoin pegged to the American dollar and if that's not political enough...I think I'll enlist in an avant garde!"

(pause)

Ha! ever thought of dropping out of one, Trekkie?

(pause)

We work too hard. Listen- remember when we had a social practice? Remember when we used art to feed people? Instead of just make them drunk and rich?

ART HANDLER

They came in and they..

KIM

Well, they fucked that one up.

ART HANDLER

They did.

KIM

They killed the rabbit

ART HANDLER

They did.

KIM

And now...

ART HANDLER

We're stuck with stablecoins backed by the US Dollar (pics)

KIM

Why not just invest in Raytheon? It'll pay off sooner.

ART HANDLER

...in a *cashless* society... (taking pictures)

KIM

You experience one sharp downturn, all of a...

ART HANDLER

You're on this...

KIM

Market index...

ART HANDLER

Performance trackers...

KIM

Trend forecasters...

ART HANDLER

I... (taking pictures)

KIM

This social media campaign...

ART HANDLER

It's not right...

KIM

It's not pornography either. You know why Richard Prince isn't in jail right now?

ART HANDLER

Why?

KIM

Because he's a pop artist, not a pornographer. He calls into question the standards of exploitation while also profiting from them on the basis of ethical financial decisions.

(stands up, gazes at artwork)

God I can't believe this was 1981. It looks like an internet thing.

(gazing)

This is not a version update.

(pause)

Listen.



Web 1 was for sharing files, Web 2 was for sharing cute cats. Web 3 will be that over an encrypted network. So, if you give people the power to encrypt something cute...what do you think is going to get shared?

ART HANDLER

Not ID

KIM

That's the God's truth. These people don't look at art. They just look at dick pics. Makes me angry. They hook us to the ruling class with an umbilical cord of gold. Then, then...they

ART HANDLER:

...then they put our credentials on trial..

KIM

That's how they kill the rabbit. I, I, me, I'm a lifer. I will live and die in my Blahniks.

ART HANDLER

I'm an artist

KIM

...makes a woman cower in her heels...

ART HANDLER

(simultaneously with "heels") Afraid to talk...

KIM

For another stigmata on the resume!

ART HANDLER

For some "cultural programming"

KIM

Kiddie porn

ART HANDLER

Yes.

KIM

And you know who's responsible?

ART HANDLER

Who?

KIM

Richard Prince didn't exploit a ten year old, Mommy did. And Mommy's nice photographer friend.

ART HANDLER

It wasn't our idea to photograph Brooke Shields, naked, in a bathtub, face plastered with makeup, at the age of ten and it wasn't Richard's. It wasn't even the photographer, Gary Grosz- and he was pretty pervy.

KIM

Yeah, we have source congruency here. It's called art history. You know where I was earlier this month when crypto took a dive?

ART HANDLER

Where?

KIM

I was at Christies! Cause we don't have bank runs either! We have death and divorce. May 9 was the first time this Warhol had seen the light of day since 1984. A *Marilyn*. Blue. Talk about market confidence...talk about stimulation. Talk about stability. Talk about the use and abuse of art history for life! You could see the dicks rise as the numbers climbed. Whispers off the chandelier. It was almost civilized. 100...150... \$195 million dollar hammer price. Auctioneer struck the mallet with his elbow. Bang. Most expensive work of american art to ever be sold.

ART HANDLER

Oh yeah. The Warhol.

KIM

That's seeing.

ART HANDLER

Yes

KIM

Postwar art, I tell you, it's the last reserve.

ART HANDLER

I heard that they were running out.

KIM

Of money? God no. Just Warhols. Let me tell you what happened: 1964. Factory is popping— Lady walks in during the day with some press people, she asks Warhol if she can shoot the Marilyns. He says sure. Lady pulls out a gun instead of a camera. BANG! editions four of them. (Pause) This little Milady was on the drying rack.

ART HANDLER

She was actually the only unique Warhol. (pause) She's even shaped like an NFT. (holds up magazine)

KIM

She's still wet. (Pause) Painting is liquid. (pause) Hey...You ever think Scarcity on the internet is weird?

ART HANDLER

What?

KIM

Scarcity on the internet is weird.

ART HANDLER

Yes

KIM

Look at what we're buying into! This is NAFTA! We're *paying* the market for exposure. Downtown, we weren't under exposed! We were *that* exclusive. There was a door code, It was: TESTIMONY.

ART HANDLER

It's empty and meaningless (holds up Art Forum) Who can afford to comply with this level of regulation?

KIM

It's pop! It's empty and meaningless and it's empty and meaningless that it's empty and meaningless! Nothing exudes "market potential" like white tents and balloon dogs.

ART HANDLER

Or kiddie porn

KIM

It's easily excitable! It's volatile! It's a market. You want a stablecoin? Get a paternity test! Larry,

he's serving the good kool-aide, the kind that makes you take your dick out and wave it. But the Marilyn's are in short supply so we're stuck here with Brooke choking up a product no one wants or understands. The Marks aren't hard to find. It's the market that doesn't seem to be anywhere. Meanwhile, bitcoin is dropping, what?

ART HANDLER

God, getting fucked by money is one thing but getting fucked by other peoples money?

SKEEN

Give me a world of Men. Give me something people want to look at waiting for the Viagra to kick in. A Botero, something. They want us to keep viewers safe from exposure but they want us to stimulate them constantly. They want cats and porn. They flip out at the tiniest amount of uncertainty. What do you think the American dollar is pegged to?

ART HANDLER

Exorbitant privilege?

SKEEN

Six degrees from Andy Warhol to Art.sy.com

ART HANDLER

With the online sales?

SKEEN

Online sales, quality assurance control, you name it. They like their painters young and Black. And they like their women finished. Yale. Makes for better company.

ART HANDLER

Decadence...

KIM.

That's what I'm sayin-ggg. They've got the multiples.

ART HANDLER

It makes the money look Potent

KIM

It's economic POETRY. The dogs just deflate a bit when the Viagra stops working, but when you learn that they're backed by big pharma the art gets better

ART HANDLER

Yes

KIM

Why do you think the New Museum looks like a bank? A work of art doesn't "inflate" unless it's made of trash. Most of the time a work of art just fails to

meet its reserve. It still looks the same! And if it's contemporary, it never ages. It just... appreciates.

ART HANDLER

What about the artists?

KIM

Well, everyone's an artist. Most are just at the wrong gallery.

ART HANDLER

Most people...

KIM

Most of them, yeah. Art workers are the fastest growing demographic next to the prison population. You're the audience! It's...kind of the beautiful part about all of this.

ART HANDLER

What?

KIM

It's a life sentence! And this is our reward for time well served.

ART HANDLER

Wait... can this...get us on a predators...list?

KIM



It can get us on a lot of lists! A lot of lists. Let me tell you what you do: you find yourself chained to the ledger of art history. You...you're... you know. It's slavery for the sake of slavery in the name of something free. It's criminal. This is my life. I want art to be about change. Not pocket change. Real change!

ART HANDLER

I want art to be about authentic human experience..

KIM

Well, Broadway is for when you want an experience, honey. And I'm a bad actor. Art is for..

ART HANDLER

Art is for..

KIM

Art is for..

ART HANDLER

They...

KIM

You can't just come in here...the fine art world, with, you know-the art world with the sex appeal, then you can't fucking turn around, enslave people, treat them

like interns who need the experience, fuck them up the ass, then slice out the middleman based on an astrology reading (pause) No. (pause) We don't answer to the Feds here, but we respect the law.

ART HANDLER

What law?

KIM

Death and divorce, what else? We don't file taxes.

ART HANDLER

Didn't your last boss hide \$4M from the government?

KIM

It turns out it's really easy to hide \$4M on a tax return. They're not transparent.

ART HANDLER

So you hide money under the... 1099?

KIM

No, you give people a place to put it! Art pays its debt to history, not to society! But what is society without history?

ART HANDLER

I don't know. Another society?

KIM

Hey...You ever wonder why you can't lose your virginity twice?

ART HANDLER

Brooke Shields is still a virgin

KIM

Now that's an idea.

ART HANDLER

What?

KIM

I mean, One false god is as good as another false god, right? IF we were, if we were artists, contemporary, or even hell, con, if we had that kind of discourse, to just mint it, make it look like the next Milady, start a new record of provenance...we could take the fucking thing to Web 3

ART HANDLER

How much could we get...

KIM

I don't know. Probably what we could get for an NFT of the hammer sound at Christies on Black Friday. The bar

is low. (pause) But not as low as bitcoin. I say we spit the IPO half and half and sell off encrypted shares to the strongest blockchain. \$220,000 at a post-money valuation of 1,934,000M.

ART HANDLER

How many people are talking about this?

KIM

I mean... at this point.. Everyone. They just haven't thrown it on the wall to see if it sticks.

ART HANDLER

And you're saying we could appropriate this as a work of art in order to tokenize it as a currency..

KIM

We would have significant precedent.

ART HANDLER

How do you know people would buy them?

KIM

Because they've been buying con art for forty years.

ART HANDLER

You haven't tried this...

KIM

The Whitney already bought Spiritual America. 20 years ago. So did the Tate. They can't even show it. And... Apparently Richard Prince **can** get banned from instagram. For porn.

ART HANDLER

I thought it wasn't porn.

KIM

What do you think a museum is, some kind of private digital republic?

ART HANDLER

We're still talking about the...art, right?

KIM

We're talking about art, contemporary art. 65,000 private namespaces implemented on an ethereum chain with nothing between a work of art and the viewer.

ART HANDLER

Contemporary... .. art.

KIM

And adjacent fields, like fintech, marketing

ART HANDLER

We're not actually counterfeiting a Richard Prince

KIM

That would be way, way too much paperwork. We have decentralized ledgers for that.

ART HANDLER

We're talking about Appropriating it.

KIM

You're making this really complicated, are you sure you don't have the wrong idea?

ART HANDLER

As a ready-made.

KIM

As a "ready-made"?! No. What is this, the 1930's?

ART HANDLER

Well. Well...

KIM

Hey. Pause.

ART HANDLER

So all this, um, you didn't, actually, you didn't talk about this...on Urbit, did you...

KIM

Not actually, no

ART HANDLER

You didnt'?

KIM

No. Not actually.

ART HANDLER

Did you?

KIM

What did I say?

ART HANDLER

What did you say?

KIM

Yes. (pause) I said, "Not actually." The fuck you care, dude? We don't rake enough in to be white collar criminals, we're more like carhardt...criminals

ART HANDLER

We are?

KIM

We're just visualizing, baby. There's nothing to see here! Look at what we're looking at. Unless you can prove prurient interest in a Childs genitalia, it isn't porn! It's pop, it's democratic, it's daddy. It's *family* value. We're not exploiting Brooke, we're appropriating the Prince, and we're not expropriating Richard Prince, because Richard didn't exploit a child. Richard Prince exploited Gary Grozs, and Gary Grozs deserved it.

ART HANDLER

I don't see how it's any less misogynistic.

KIM

The same way that Bored Ape Yacht Club is... less racist

ART HANDLER

You're actually talking about this?

KIM

Art history is the longest blockchain.

ART HANDLER

You're going to put kiddie porn on the blockchain?



KIM

Have I said that? *Pause.*

ART HANDLER

Are you? *Pause.*

KIM

Did I say that?

ART HANDLER

Did you talk to Tlon?

KIM

Is that what I said?

ART HANDLER

What did the hackers say?

KIM

What did the hackers say? They're already in a bidding war. *Pause.*

ART HANDLER

You're going to Appropriate the kiddie porn and flip it on Urbit?

KIM

Yes.

ART HANDLER

What will they pay?

KIM

Depends on how free they want to be. Let's pretend a dollar a doge biscuit. That's a blue chip deal. Then, there's the royalties agreement. That's the whole point of pop art baby. Royalties. It's why we're ripping off Prince and not the Art Workers Coalition.

ART HANDLER

For a quarter million?

KIM

Stop asking questions. Now I need you to go get started on the tokenizing so I can get started on the customers.

ART HANDLER

You're saying "me."

KIM

Yes. (pause) I hope you didn't lose your seed phrase. A little tech work, and you're linked in with Larry. Working the blue chip sector. *Pause.*

ART HANDLER

I could show with Gagosian?

KIM

He could take you on.

ART HANDLER

He'd let me work-

KIM

27 year old girlfriend? Yes. Her paintings go in the special crates.

ART HANDLER

Is that the truth?

KIM

Yes. It is, kiddo. (pause) Yes. It's a big decision. (pause) And it's a big- (pause) It's a big reward. For something a kid could do. (pause) But it's got to be tonight.

ART HANDLER

What?

KIM

What? What? The auction. The gala auction.

ART HANDLER

You have to appropriate a Richard Prince and flip it at the Alyssa Davis Gala as a virtual currency...tonight?

KIM

That's right, because I cannot afford the dress I'm wearing. And I'm not going to take it back to the store. Performance art is the one that doesn't cost money. Art fairs do.

ART HANDLER

You're, you're saying so you have to get on the exchange tonight...

KIM

You...

ART HANDLER

I'm sorry?

KIM

You. *Pause.*

ART HANDLER

Me?

KIM

You have to do it (pause).

ART HANDLER

I do?

KIM

Yes.

ART HANDLER

I...

KIM

It's not something for nothing. You know the rules. You can't appropriate originals. You can only appropriate copies.

ART HANDLER

What's to stop someone else from appropriating it?

KIM

You're not going to cancel me are you?

ART HANDLER

Kim.

KIM

Because if you do... you're going down with me. You took the photo of a photo of a photo.

ART HANDLER

You want me to tokenize a 10 year old child?

KIM

No, I want you to let me tokenize you tokenizing a late career pop artist who tokenized a photographer who deserved it

ART HANDLER

No.

KIM

Just think of it as an opportunity. Just like it was for Brooke.

ART HANDLER

You just said this image wasn't about Brooke.

KIM

It's not about Brooke. It's about integrity. I can't be an artist and a dealer at the same time, that's a conflict of interest!

ART HANDLER

What, we can't collaborate?

KIM

I'm a dealer who deals. I don't collaborate with artists, I represent them. And I also collect...

ART HANDLER

Why are you making me do this?

KIM

You just need to understand that I'm making you. You like it when i make you laugh, right?

ART HANDLER

No.

KIM

Are you sure?

ART HANDLER

You're funny.

KIM

(laughs) I have to get Brooke on chain tonight. That's something I have to do. If I'm not at the gala...if I'm not pounding topshelf tequila and soda with Alyssa and Rachel and Genevieve...well... I'm going to have to come in...

ART HANDLER

...you don't have to come in...

KIM

...and make everyone's job harder...

ART HANDLER

...I thought that we were only talking...

KIM

Alyssa Davis works very, very hard.

ART HANDLER

So do i

KIM

Well, as far as she's concerned, you're the weakest link. I'm on Web 3. You're on Web 2. That's where they still cancel people.

ART HANDLER

I'm on Web 3.

KIM

(Disgusted) Which *one*?

ART HANDLER

What?



KIM

I saw the way you were looking at Brooke.

ART HANDLER

Why are you doing this to me, Kim.

KIM

You wanna be avant-garde, right? The avant-garde dies. Otherwise how would you know?

ART HANDLER

We were just looking at the art!

KIM

Yes, and then your mind went...over the frontlines.

ART HANDLER

What does that mean?

KIM

Art has a viewer. Porn has a voyeur. Art when it's on the wall. Porn when it's on your...handheld...device and money when it's in your wallet

ART HANDLER

How is this not porn?

KIM

It was. Until Richard turned it into art and... you turned it into porn, and I turned it into performance art- which is free speech- and then you're going to turn it into money which I'm going to generously put back into the community as the next milady

ART HANDLER

This is fucked up.

KIM

It's the intersection of art and technology

ART HANDLER

You need clout? Is that the...

KIM

Hey, hey, let's just keep it simple, what I need is not the...I said free as in puppies not free as in emotional labor!

ART HANDLER

What about the IPO? (pause) What is the, you said that we were going to split five...

KIM

I lied. (pause) But you tell me, in or out, you're out you take the consequences.

ART HANDLER

I do?

KIM

Yes.

ART HANDLER

And why is that?

KIM

Because you're here for the experience