

The scenes in this document are a couple of sample cinematic scripts from *Dead Head Fred*, which was released in 2007 for the PSP. The game won the first Writer's Guild of America award for video game writing in 2008. It starred John C. McGinley as Fred, and Jon Polito as Ulysses Pitt.

Fred is a pseudo-film noir detective whose head was removed by a gangster named Ulysses Pitt. A mad scientist has replaced his head with a water cooler jug in which Fred's eyes and brain float. Fred can steal heads from his enemies and swap them with his jar head to gain the enemies' abilities.

Uptown: Where is "Dry Bones?"

EXT. UPTOWN, OUTSIDE THE BOUTIQUE

Fred is walking down the street near the boutique (wearing his jar head). The camera swings around to pan across the area. There are more **Denizens** on the street here than there were in other areas. None of them has noticed Fred...yet.

FRED (VO)

Now we're getting somewhere. This should be a good place to dredge up some memories—it's crawlin' with people. Somebody around here is bound to know who the hell I am...

Fred spots **Female Denizen 1**, who is walking along ahead of him carrying a bag of groceries. She doesn't notice his approach. He taps her on the shoulder.

FRED

Pardon me, ma'am. I was wondering if you could help me to...

She turns all the way around, takes one look at Fred's Jar Head, and screams.

FEMALE DENIZEN 1

AAAAAAAAAAAAHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

She drops her bag of groceries and runs off camera in the direction of the street, her scream continuing. There is the sound of a car screeching to a halt and a loud thump, which cuts off the woman's scream.

FRED (VO)

...or maybe not.

Fred continues walking, unfazed.

FRED (VO)

I guess I've got to do something about this damned mug of mine before I can do much of anything.

Fred walks up to the No-Frills Boutique. In the window, there is a suit exactly like that worn by the bone thug captain known as The Face—but there are no bone thugs in sight.

FRED

Well...I guess I know now where the well-dressed thugs in town get their threads. Maybe it's worth checkin' out.

Fred walks into the boutique.

Uptown: Elle Cosmo Intro Cinematic

INT. NO FRILLS BOUTIQUE

The door to the shop opens and Fred walks in. **Elle Cosmo** steps out from behind the counter, taking in his appearance with a surprised look on her face.

ELLE

Good LORD!!!! What in the WORLD possessed you to leave the house looking like that?

FRED

Do I know you, lady?

ELLE

OBVIOUSLY not! If you knew me, you would NEVER have DARED to go out on the street looking like a refugee from an Alfred Hitchcock Halloween party!

FRED

Nice. Well, if I had wanted fashion advice, I would have...hey! Wait a minute. Just about everybody else I see in this burg runs screaming when they see me! How come you're not running scared?

ELLE

Darling, I'm Elle Cosmo! I've been in the fashion business for thir...um...SEVERAL years, and I've seen it all.

Elle looks Fred up and down appraisingly as she walks around him.

ELLE

Now...let's have a look at you. Well, the clothes are awful, of course. It looks like your some sort of detective from a 40s film noir picture.

FRED

I *am* a detective...

ELLE

Well, a P.I. license isn't a license to dress badly, darling. Still...we can fix the clothes. I have plenty of lovely things in stock.

FRED

Hey ...from the look of things, you've been here for a while...

Elle is suddenly cold.

ELLE

And just what is *that* supposed to imply?

FRED

Nothing...nothing. Thing is, I've got this...memory problem...and I'm trying to get a handle on what's going down in this town. As an established business owner, I figured you'd have the straight dope.

Elle brightens up again.

ELLE

Oh, of course! I know pretty much everything that's worth knowing hereabouts. Some call me the town gossip. I prefer to think of myself as a well-informed conversationalist.

FRED

So...what's the deal with Pitt?

ELLE

Well...the short story is, everything was fine, Pitt came to town, then it all went to hell in a designer handbag. Pitt and his thugs have ruined the retail business.

FRED

I need to know more about Pitt...where he comes from, why he's messin' with this town...

ELLE

Well, that's one thing I really don't know. It's not healthy to stick your nose...or lack thereof...too far into Pitt's business. One person who might be able to help you is Jeanne Rossini. Her father, Vinni, used to be in charge here in Hope Falls before Pitt came along and Vinni disappeared. Nice man, Vinni...snappy dresser.

FRED

Jeanne Rossini... Where can I find her?

ELLE

She usually goes to the Dark Tones concerts in the park. There's supposed to be one today, in fact...

FRED

Thanks a lot, ma'am. Much obliged...

Fred turns and starts to go. Elle puts out a hand and grabs his arm, stopping him.

ELLE

Are you mad?!? You can't go out and try to talk to her looking like that!

FRED

Like what?

ELLE

Like a water cooler from hell, that's what! That jar on your shoulders! NORMALLY, when I have a customer who is less than stunning, I recommend a face job. You...you need a HEAD job!

Fred takes a step back.

FRED

Look, Elle...that's really a nice offer and all, but we've just met.

ELLE

Good LORD! Is that all you men ever think about? I meant, you need to change that head of yours if you want to make a better impression on people.

Fred brightens up.

FRED

Oh! Hey, I CAN change heads!

ELLE

Really? Do tell...

Fred does a head swap, changing out his Jar Head for the Corpse head. Elle recoils comically.

ELLE

Good LORD! I can't believe I'm saying this, darling, but I think the floating brain and eyes is a better look for you. That head changing trick, though...very chic. That would have saved me about 15 rather PAINFUL surgeries.

Fred swaps back to the Jar Head.

ELLE

What you need is something more...normal looking. Why, my MANNEQUINS look more like normal people than YOU do.

FRED

I don't suppose you could spare the head off of one of your dummies, could you?

ELLE

My mannequins are imported from PARIS, darling. They're VERY expensive...

FRED

Damn. And I ain't got a lot of scratch on me at the moment...

ELLE

Well...you being a detective and all...we might be able to work something out. You see, there are these creatures that congregate in the alley behind my shop. Their leader is called The Skull or somesuch...

FRED

"The Face." Yeah. We've met.

ELLE

Yes. Well. They work for Pitt, and they are extorting money from me constantly. Plus, they scare off the customers. If you could dispose of them for me, I might be able to find you a spare mannequin head. What do you think?

FRED

You've got a deal, lady. I'm on it. Me and The Face have a score to settle anyway...

FADE TO BLACK

Uptown: Suk Fishing Intro Cinematic (Suk Intro To Park)

EXT. ROSSINI PARK

Fred (wearing the Dummy Head) is meandering through the park. Someone off screen takes an interest in his presence.

SUK (OS)

Oh, great...just what this park needs. Another freak.

Cut to a wider shot. **Suk** is standing at his sushi cart in the park looking curiously at Fred.

FRED

You talking to me?

SUK

You see any other freaks around here at the moment?

FRED

Well, watch who you're calling a freak. I don't need to take that kind of shit from a friggin' pufferfish peddler.

Suk is affronted, and he temporarily forgets his plight.

SUK

Pufferfish peddler? You know who the hell you're talking to, weirdo? I am a sushi artist! To many, I am known as the Renoir of rockfish. The Monet of mackerel. The...the...

FRED

The Jackson Pollock of jacks and pollack?

SUK

Hey! That's a good one! Gonna have to add that! My card.

Fred takes the card and reads it aloud.

FRED

"Raw Deal Sushi. Magnificent culinary creations. Fish and fishing accessories. Suck One, master manipulator of fish and fish by-products. The Renior of rockfish. The Monet of mackerel."

Fred looks up.

FRED

Your name is “Suck One?”

SUK

Not Suck! Suk! Like “book!” Suk Kwan!

Fred hands back the card.

FRED

If you say so. Now, if you’re finished insulting me, I’ve got business in the park...

Fred turns and starts to walk away into the park. Suk starts looking nervous and stops him.

SUK

Oh...I wouldn’t go in there if I were you. Very dangerous!

FRED

Dangerous? It’s a park. Afraid I’ll get attacked by a rabid chipmunk?

SUK

Yeah. But chipmunks in this park are seven feet tall and carry big axes! This place is crawling with executioners.

FRED

Executioners? Not sure I like the sound of that...

SUK

You can say that again! Very bad for business! I can’t even get to the lake to catch fish! Park is a very dangerous place!

FRED

Well...I don’t have a choice. I’ve got to get in there. I’m meeting somebody.

SUK

The only thing you meet in there is your maker! But you seem determined. Tell you what...you go in, take care of all executioners and clear path to lake. If you survive, Suk will reward you. Teach you how to fish!

FRED

Fish. Gee. Thanks. Looking forward to it. Now, out of my way, pal. I've got some executioners to execute.

Fred walks away.

FADE TO BLACK