

# THANKS FOR NOTHING ANNE RICE

By Jerry Rabushka

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**THANKS FOR NOTHING, ANNE RICE**

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**1M (The speaker is a young man, say late teens or early 20s.)**

So I'm pretending to make out with this girl and I think everything's going great but suddenly she says, "I just love the way you're nibbling on my neck" and I'm like "Whoa, I'm not *nibbling*, I'm trying to bite through it!" *(as the girl, after a pause and a "look")* "Oh, that's so romantic." *(in response)* "Oh, I'm so hungry." *(as the girl)* "Let's go out." "This *is* out." Well it was for me, we were in her mom's living room.

She smiled. *(HE imitates a scary smile)* "You're weird. I like that in a guy."

I smiled back. It was hard; I wasn't in a good mood. And she didn't like the smile.

*(as girl, slowly getting frightened at the smile, which slowly fades away.*

*[This may take a bit of practice])* "Your teeth!"

*(slight pause)* That's never a good sign. When your date says *(in the same tone of voice as before)* "your teeth!" you're sunk.

*(asking the girl)* What about my teeth?

She never said. She just ran out of the room.

I shout. *(shouting after her)* "I can't fix the problem if you're not going to tell me."

She shouts back. "You could 'fix it and forget it' with Fixodent." Then she says, "This really bites!"

*(disappointed, and getting ready to explain his dilemma to the audience.)*

No. That's what's wrong. It doesn't.

I did have a problem. I couldn't eat. I had to get my teeth looked at or I was going to starve to death. Figuratively speaking, anyway. It's not a good feeling when you've already been dead 100 years.

Being a vampire has its downside.

*(as a casual onlooker)* "Funny, you don't look like Tom Cruise!"

*(as if he's very tired of hearing that)* Ahahahaha . . . Whatever.

But I thought . . . *(light bulb goes off!)* this year I'll winter in Fairbanks, Alaska! It's dark a lot. Stalking chicks in the French Quarter was getting old. Besides if I hear "When the Saints Go Marching In" one more time . . . but it isn't much fun going out there when the high is 20 below zero.

*(as a receptionist, very monotone)* “Sure young man, we’d love to take a look-see at your teethie-weethies.” *(small laugh, still monotone, then he reacts silently with disgust)*

I got to the dentist about 9 a.m. on a brisk morning in early January. Well before sunrise.

Does anyone else hate going to the dentist? *(imitating a random dental assistant, mockingly)* “You’re not brushing, you’re not flossing, everything is going to rot out and I’m going to call your mother and tell her you’re a horrible, horrible person. Here’s our bill, see you in six months!”

And you want to say, “Look lady, I’m paying you 100 bucks to brush my teeth, so I thought *you* should do it today instead of me.” It’s like cleaning up before the maid comes over.

But the news was worse than no-brush no-floss.

*(as a dental assistant)* “Your teeth are loose. They’re worn down. And *this* looks like a fang!”

*(deadpan)* It is.

*(laughing slightly)* “No, really.”

*(still deadpan)* It is.

She laughed again. “Can you say root canal?”

*(in response, it would be hard to talk clearly given the circumstances)*

“Not with your hand in my mouth, no.”

*(as the assistant)* “Bite down,” she asks.

*(big sinister smile!)* Oooo! Now we’re talking!

*(reacting as the hygienist)* “Ow!!!!”

That was a relief! Maybe it wasn’t as bad as I thought. “I’m sorry. Are you bleeding?”

She looked at her fingers for even the slightest puncture wound. “No.”

*(desperate)* “Can I try again?”

She laughs. The laugh of a woman with the ultimate power – she’s got metal hooks in your mouth and you’re pretty much tied to a chair. “Very funny!”

“No, I mean it.”

So next she brings out that little mirror that they stick behind your teeth to see what’s wrong on “the dark side.”

*(as the hygienist, the actor gets a quizzical look and finally calls . . .)*

Doctor!

*(as the dentist)* Yes?

*(as the hygienist)* Doctor, the mirror doesn’t work!

*(as himself, interrupting)* Of course the mirror doesn’t work, I’m a-  
*(pause as everyone reacts)* You’re a what?

This was a hard corner to get out of. You never know. I mean with some people you say you're a vampire and they're like *oooo Anne Rice and all that* and or (*country accent*) *hey Martha this kid thinks he's Dracula* and others they reach for a stake that they usually keep next to the toilet plunger *honey have you seen the hammer?* So you never really know.

But he takes a look as well. "This is very strange, but I can't see anything."

So I had to tell the truth. "I'm a vampire."

Oh, please!

No, really. (*addressing them as if they're children*) That's why you can't see my teeth in the mirror!

The good doctor was not to be won over. (*sternly*) "Look, this is a dentist's office. I don't care who or what you think *you* are—vampire, werewolf, elf, goblin . . . I am a dentist!"

And yet – I told them, and yet – you seem unable to fix my teeth.

"Root canal!" he says with the glee of an auto mechanic who knows you can't tell if you need a new transmission or not. He explains further. "Your tooth will be dead, but we can save it from extraction."

I'd have bolted from the chair, but I felt about five years old with a spit-soaked napkin chained around my neck. "Look! All of me is dead. But I'm hungry. Do you have any patients that are coughing up blood? I don't need dental work—I need an auto wreck."

(*as the dentist*) "Root canal and we'll file that fang down. You're not one of those body alteration types, are you?"

No, I'm a vampire.

(*as hygienist*) Doctor, he's delusional.

No, really.

"Doctor, he's *really* delusional."

I couldn't put it any plainer. "I suck blood! I bite people and suck their blood!"

She laughs. "Not with *these* teeth."

"That's why I'm here."

"If you'd add some apples to your diet, their natural teeth-cleaning properties would do away with much of this ugly tartar buildup. But for now, we're going to do a root canal. What is your preferred method of payment?"

Don't you just love that phrase "preferred method of payment?" My mother's credit card, but she won't give it to me.

(*to the hygienist*) "I don't have a preferred method of payment! I'm dead!"

*(as the dentist)* “Then this root is moot! Dead or not, we are not a free clinic.”

His assistant suddenly got an attack of curiosity. “I think he’s rather elegant. I’d like to ask him a few questions. Do you watch TV? Movies? What’s your favorite cuisine? I bet it’s Romanian! What’s your favorite entertainment venue here in Fairbanks? How do you propose to feed the world amidst our dwindling resources?”

I had no answers. My life, such as it was, was boring. I’d given up everything in the quest for blood.

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