

On Tick

By Gabrielle Mentjox

Please note: this involves New Zealand-specific slang which may be confusing for international readers.
"Tinnie" = \$20 worth of marijuana, wrapped in aluminum foil

EXT. BACKDOOR - DAY

A swift knock on a dilapidated door. The door creaks open and an intimidating young woman's face peers out, eyebrows raised. This is CRYSTAL (20s, skinny, eyebrows plucked super thin, wearing a crisp white hoodie and tight denim shorts). She nods and hands over two small tinfoil packages in exchange for two 20s.

Rinse and repeat, we see minor variations on the same exchange several times before a firm hand pushes the door wide open. Crystal stumbles back.

CRYSTAL

The fuck?

ANGRY STONER

(arms folded, staunch)

That's exactly what I thought when
I opened my tinnie.

Crystal stands up, staunch, trying to block this guy from heading down the hallway.

ANGRY STONER

(moving right up into
Crystal's face)

My mate said this was the place to
buy some decent shit but I reckon
you been ripping me off.

CRYSTAL

I reckon you needa turn your ugly
arse around and get outta here.

ANGRY STONER

Nah, I ain't leaving until--

INT. LOUNGE - DAY

From the lounge SHONTELLE (20s, overweight, wearing an oversized basketball singlet and dickies shorts) overhears the argument. She jumps up, scrambles into a sparsely furnished bedroom and turns on the stereo.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Shontelle strides down the hallway towards Crystal and Angry Stoner.

SHONTELLE

(arms folded, standing tall)

What seems to be the problem here?

(CONTINUED)

CYRSTAL

Old mate reckons we been stinging
his packages.

ANGRY STONER

Fucken oath you have, and I want a
refund.

SHONTELLE

That so?

ANGRY STONER

Yeah I'm sick of this shit. You
think you can--

SHONTELLE

(nudges Crystal)

You hear that?

CRYSTAL

What?

We hear an angry dog growling and scratching at a door.
Angry Stoner is curious, confused.

SHONTELLE

I think Bruce is ready for his
walk... or was it his feed?

The growling gets louder and the scratching more urgent.
Shontelle eyeball fucks Angry Stoner as she steps right into
his personal space. Crystal hangs back, head cocked, smug as
fuck.

SHONTELLE

Aw shit, I forgot Bruce don't like
strangers. Crystal, go get the dog.

Angry Stoner looks at both of them, backs away slowly, then
sprints out the door. Shontelle and Crystal turn to each
other and nod their heads in smug satisfaction.

INT. LOUNGE - DAY

A small flame lights a generously packed cone. A
plastic coke bottle fills up with smoke as we pull back to
REVEAL a homemade bong with two bits of garden hose sticking
out either side; Shontelle is sucking on one, Crystal on the
other. In the same moment, they both lean back, trying to
hold in the smoke.

The lounge is sparsely decorated; a few comfy old chairs
point towards a big screen tv and PS3 in the corner.

(CONTINUED)

We're close on Shontelle's face, contemplative.

CRYSTAL (O.S.)
Such a dick, aye?

SHONTELLE
Huh?

Shontelle, distracted, picks up a PS3 controller. We cut to Crash Bandicoot Team Racer on the tv screen, then to Crystal who is really into it - she's leaning into the corners with every turn.

INT/EXT. CAR/RESIDENTIAL STREET - DAY

A hypnotic doof doof base blasts from the stereo. We're in a beat-up Nissan, cruising up a typical street in small-town New Zealand. We pass paint-chipped state houses sitting atop bare quarter-acre sections.

INT. LOUNGE - DAY

Shontelle puts her controller down and heads to the...

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

There's budget bread on the bench and Shontelle pops four slices in the toaster. She peers in the fridge. There's buggier-all in there but ooh! Chinese takeaways. Eyes glazed over, she takes a big mouthful. Aw yuck, it's off. She spits it into the sink and drinks straight from the tap.

We hear a car screech to a stop outside.

INT. LOUNGE - DAY

Crystal is completely engrossed in taking selfies and posting them to instagram.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - DAY

A steel cap boot hits the pavement. Very SLOWLY, a beige orthopaedic shoe steps into frame next to it.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Shontelle scrapes margarine out of the tub and spreads it on toast.