

Faking Reality

screenplay by
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FADE IN:

EXT. LITTLE LEAGUE FIELD -- DAY

A boy, 7-year old YOUNG ALBERT, is charging a ground ball. He misjudges it, steps on the ball and does a huge pratfall.

The winning run scores. His team is pissed. As Albert sits up.

GRAPHIC: Screen cap of Albert's fall posted on Facebook. Comment comes up: "What a dork!!!!"

INT. GRAMMAR SCHOOL AUDITORIUM -- DAY

It's the 5th grade spelling bee finals. Young Albert is up at the mike before a packed house. THE JUDGE gives him his word.

JUDGE

Your word is "there."

Young Albert panics.

YOUNG ALBERT

Could you use that in a sentence please?

JUDGE

Certainly. "They're putting their toys in there."

That doesn't help.

Kids in the audience snicker.

GRAPHIC: screen cap of panicked Albert posted on Instagram. Comments pop up: "Nerd much?"

EXT. PLAYGROUND -- DAY

Boys are on the swings, swinging high and leaping off for distance.

Young Albert is on the last swing. He goes high and lets go. There's a ripping sound and the swing comes back with Young Albert's pants still attached.

The kids watching *l-a-u-g-h*.

GRAPHIC: screen cap of Albert running off in his underwear posted on Twitter. Retweets numbers increase, comments pop up "It's Capt. Underwear!"

EXT. SCHOOL YARD -- DAY

Lonesome Albert is eating his brown bag lunch, looking at a comic book.

He sees an ad for "The Astounding Leopold's Mail-Order Magic Store" with the slogan, "Learn magic and impress your friends."

He rips out the coupon.

EXT. PLAYGROUND -- DAY

Young Albert has a cheap ball and cup set which he's performing in front of a group of kids. They merely roll their eyes and walk away, laughing. But there's a FIVE YEAR OLD BOY who's amazed and astounded. Albert is pleased.

FIVE YEAR OLD BOY

How did you do that?

YOUNG ALBERT

Magic!

He pulls out a coin and starts to manipulate it...

DISSOLVE:

INT. PIZZA WORLD PARTY ROOM -- AFTERNOON

It's 10 years later---

We're in one of the private party rooms of the famous chain of pizza stores that cater to the youth of our nation.

ALBERT VOLUZ pulls the coin out of a SIX-YEAR OLD's ear to much acclaim.

Albert is performing magic before a joyous and rowdy room of SIX-YEAR-OLDS. He's now an ordinary, good-natured, scruffy high school senior dressed in a goofy wizard gown with a long colorful scarf around his neck.

Albert pulls out a handkerchief with a flourish.

ALBERT

And now I present the magical dancing handkerchief trick. You'll notice this is an ordinary handkerchief.

He waves it toward one Child and quickly pulls it away before the Child can touch it. He does it again to a Second Child.

ALBERT (CONT'D)

See? See? Yes! Now, I hold this ordinary handkerchief like so.

(MORE)

ALBERT (CONT'D)

And I'll ask our birthday girl, Lisa,
to say the secret word.

He holds it out to the sweet little LISA. They wait a moment,
then Lisa asks:

LISA

What is it?

ALBERT

Oh, right, you don't know it, you're
not a professional magic person.
Okay, here it is; Abra---

LISA

Abra.

ALBERT

Macaroni.

LISA

Macaroni.

ALBERT

Whacha-ma-walkin-lily-alley-ous.

LISA

What now ma wacky flower odor.

ALBERT

Dance!

LISA

Dance!

Nothing happens. Kids boo.

ALBERT

Now what went wrong? Oh, I forgot!
You know how to make a handkerchief
dance?

KIDS

How?

ALBERT

You have to put a little bogey in
it!

Albert grabs the handkerchief, blows his nose in it and then
it goes into the dancing handkerchief bit, jumping between
his hands.

He steers the booger-filled hanky towards the kids who shriek,
laugh and applaud. Lisa is amazed!

LISA
How did you--?

ALBERT
Magic!

INT. PIZZA WORLD RESTAURANT -- AFTERNOON

Albert, still in costume, has his equipment in a duffel bag as he exits the party room eating a slice of pizza. He meets up with LISA'S MOM.

LISA'S MOM
You were great.

ALBERT
Thank you. Good bunch of kids.

Lisa's Mom hands Albert some money.

LISA'S MOM
There you are. Thanks again.

ALBERT
Thank you.

Lisa's Mom enters the kiddy chaos that is now the party room while Albert heads for the front door.

As he reaches the entrance, the high school jock crowd comes in. The group is led by footballer and starting running back, PAUL DAIZACKER. With him are his pals, HORT, a smaller, slick-looking senior and a slow-witted linebacker, JOCKTU.

PAUL
Oh, nice outfit, Voluz. Who are you supposed to be, David Crapperfield?

That cracks up the gang.

HORT
Or Sigmund and Avoid!

Less so.

PAUL
What?

HORT
Sorry.

Albert starts to say something, then he looks at Paul oddly. He reaches up to Paul's ear and pulls out a quarter.

ALBERT
Ah, that explains the rattling noise.

Albert offers him the coin but Paul slaps it away. He's in mid-glower when suddenly:

TRACY (O.S.)

Paul!

They all turn to see the girls coming over. It's TRACY GILLIGAN, the embodiment of perkitude and high school royalty, waving them over. She's with others, including CINDY, the cheerleader.

Paul turns from Albert in disgust and the boys join the girls. One of the group snaps a picture of Albert and you just no he's posting something.

Then the kids escape the party room and surround Albert with cries of "More! More!"

Albert's smiling, but steals a glance over to see Paul and Tracy, the couple, surrounded by their preening friends.

GRAPHIC: SnapChat post of Albert "You never know what kind of losers you'll meet at the pizza place. Sad."

EXT. SHOPPING PLAZA -- DAY

A few moments later, Albert exits Pizza World. He wanders down a few store fronts, counting his money. He reaches "Moe's Magic Shoppe." In the display window is an elaborate magic disappearing cabinet. The price tag reads \$1,200.00.

ALBERT

Gettin' there.

He pockets the cash, then reaches into his duffel bag and pulls out another slice of pizza and moves on.

INT. VOLUZ'S BACKYARD -- AFTERNOON

Albert comes into the yard as MOM, perky PTA parent, sets the redwood table for a barbecue. DAD, tired 40-something with a twinkle in his eye, is setting up the meat on the grill.

ALBERT

What's for dinner?

MOM

Burgers and hot dogs.

DAD

Last barbecue for the end of summer!

ALBERT

Summer's not over.

DAD

It is for you.

Mom hands him an envelope.

MOM

Came from school. For you.

ALBERT

School hasn't even started yet!
What do they want from me?

DAD

(singing)

School days, school days---

He opens it.

ALBERT

Oh, this.

MOM

What?

ALBERT

The yearbook committee. They want
the seniors to start filling out our
bios. Great. It'll be fun lingering
over the last three years.

MOM

Oh, so you're going to mope about it
now?

ALBERT

What if I am?

MOM

Go fly a kite.

She pulls out a package marked "Windswept Kite Co."

MOM (CONT'D)

Here, I think it's the new model you
ordered.

Albert takes the package and heads inside.

INSERT:

A script. It shows the dialogue for a character called "The
Magic Dude."

EXT. FIELD -- AFTERNOON

JANELLE JONES, a pretty, homespun girl, is standing in the
distance behind Albert.

She's reading the script in a binder as Albert (now in his street clothes) has his new kite up. She closes the binder and comes up to him.

JANELLE

Hi, Albert.

ALBERT

Hey, Janelle.

JANELLE

Flying a kite?

ALBERT

What gave it away?

JANELLE

So, excited about the first day of school?

ALBERT

I haven't been excited about that since kindergarten.

JANELLE

Oh, right, since they took your paste away.

ALBERT

LOL. Not.

JANELLE

I haven't seen much of you this summer.

ALBERT

I've been working at Pizza World a lot. I've almost got enough.

JANELLE

The magic cabinet? What is up with that?

ALBERT

Sure, I could work my way through college by flipping burgers or at a Zombie-mart or I can up my magic game and make money doing something I love.

JANELLE

You think?

ALBERT

With a few class tricks I can charge more for my act.

(MORE)

ALBERT (CONT'D)

I can go from birthday parties to school events or tour retirement homes.

JANELLE

So that's where the bucks are?

ALBERT

They're great tippers. Hey, I haven't seen much of you either. What have you been up to?

JANELLE

I wrote the High School Sing this year! It's all done.
(displays binder)

ALBERT

Well, "ta-da" for you.

JANELLE

It came out really well. I think we have a real chance of beating the Junior/Fresh team this time.

A gust drives the kite into the ground.

ALBERT

Damn.

They walk over to it. Albert licks his finger and attempts to judge the breeze. Janelle copies him.

JANELLE

Why do you do that?

ALBERT

To see if I can get you to do it too.

Paul and his pals and the girls wander by.

They come upon Albert and Janelle trying to get the kite back into the air. The kite is not rising.

PAUL

Can't get it up, kite-boy?

Albert goes to say something, but he doesn't. The jocks move on, laughing.

A photo is taken and posted:

GRAPHIC: Facebook: Kiteboy can't get it up.

Tracy looks back, but not in scorn, but puzzled.

Janelle pats him on the back.

ALBERT
Sometimes I wonder what it would be
like to be part of a clique.

JANELLE
We're not a clique?

ALBERT
We're the anti-clique.

JANELLE
I don't mind.

Finally a breeze comes up and lifts the kite. They just
stand in silence watching the kite fly.

JANELLE (CONT'D)
You should try out.

ALBERT
For what?

JANELLE
The Sing! We start auditions the
first week back.

ALBERT
Who? Me? No, no, no.

JANELLE
Yeah. It'll be fun.

ALBERT
I'm not really a joiner. And if I'm
going to join something, I should
probably join something cooler.

JANELLE
It's cool!

ALBERT
So's being locked in a freezer but
I'm not going to do that either.

JANELLE
I'd better get going. So, I'll see
you tomorrow?

ALBERT
School: it's the law. I'll be there.
Later.

Janelle takes out a pencil and writes in the binder.

JANELLE

See ya.

INT. ALBERT'S LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Albert sits down to watch TV, suddenly his 10-year old sassy sister REBECCA appears, grabs the remote and turns on "Beach High" the reality show about a bunch of California high school kids.

Albert rolls his eyes and heads upstairs.

INT. CINDY'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Cindy's watching the TV Show "Beach High."

INT. PAUL'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Paul's watching the show on his laptop, tweeting along.

INT. HORT'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Hort is watching the show on his cell phone.

INT. SID'S ROOM -- NIGHT

SID, a nebbish is watching it on some nicely-placed product, totally enthralled by it.

DISSOLVE:

INT. ALBERT'S ROOM -- MORNING

A 17-year old boy's room; messy and cluttered, featuring a computer, various magic props, and a couple of fancy kites hanging on the walls and ceiling.

A chicken alarm clock on the nightstand next to the ruffled bed goes off, singing about having to get up and get going.

Albert comes out of the covers in pajama pants and tee-shirt and glares at the clock.

ALBERT

Why do I still own you?

He goes to turn it off. It won't go off. He shakes it and bangs it. Finally he reaches in and pulls out the batteries. It goes dead.

Albert closes his door and pulls out a duffel bag from under his bed. He opens it and reveals a whole lotta tee-shirts.

He tries on shirt after shirt of different designs and sayings, checking himself in the mirror, trying to see if any of these are going to up his "cool" quotient. Shirts like:

"I'm with Stupid" with the arrow pointing up,

"My other shirt is a Izod,"

"This is what more cowbell looks like," and

Various graphic designs; Goth, Heavy Metal, Psychedelic.
Even football jerseys and...

"I'm Still with Stupid."

Rebecca pokes her head in.

REBECCA

Mom! Albert's trying to change his
image again!

ALBERT

Get out before I call the orphanage
and tell them you escaped.

He throws some shirts at her as she ducks out.

EXT. MAPLE RIDGE HIGH SCHOOL -- MORNING

Albert, dressed in his usual jeans and polo shirt, reaches
the corner across from school, meeting Janelle and his lanky
pal, ROB. Greetings are exchanged.

They watch the various groups, gangs and cliques return; the
Hot Girls, the Jocks, the Goths, Stoners and Geeks.

ALBERT

Clique-y as ever. They're having a
great time.

JANELLE

This is the best time of their lives.

ALBERT

Exactly.

JANELLE

No, I mean it. This is it for them.
They're peaking. It's all downhill
from here.

ROB

Yeah, right.

JANELLE

Hey, who do you think Bill Gates'
high school reunion committee is
talking about? Him or the
quarterback?

ROB

So, we ready for senior year, dudes?

ALBERT

Yeah, let's get this over with.

As they start to cross the street, a car pulls up. It's the jocks. They surround Albert, grab him, pull off his sneakers, tie the laces together and throw them up into the phone lines.

The sneakers join several old pairs of different sizes up in the telephone wires.

The jocks all shove Albert and they get back into the car and drive off.

JANELLE

Well, that never gets old.

ROB

Dude, you okay?

Albert takes a pair of flip-flops out of his backpack, puts them on and heads for school.

They head across.

GRAPHIC: Screen Cap of sneakers on the wire, text reads "Fresh Meat."

INT. SCHOOL HALL -- AFTERNOON

It's after class now as Rob and Albert come down the hall. Albert carries his yearbook form. A couple of STUDENTS hurry by.

STUDENT 1

Hurry up, we're going to miss "Fashion Team."

STUDENT 2

I know. I hear Healy and Tiffany fight over Devon!

ROB

You're kidding, right? Who wants to join a club?

ALBERT

(waving form)

Don't you have an urge to connect with your fellow students?

ROB

Dude, we've known these kids since grade school.

(MORE)

ROB (CONT'D)

If we were going to connect, we would have connected by now.

They walk into a classroom.

INT. CLASSROOM -- CONTINUOUS

It's the robotics club; a dozen NERDY STUDENTS, lead by Head Nerd, MITCHELL, are gathered around a bizarre looking robot. There are diagrams drawn on the board and electronic odds and ends scattered about. They're all engaged in dense technobabble.

They all turn to look at Rob and Al's entrance.

MITCHELL

Yes?

ALBERT

Well, um, yeah. Hi.

MITCHELL

Don't hurt us.

ALBERT

What? No. Um...wrong room.

Albert backs out.

ROB

Awesome 'bot, dudes.

Rob bops on out. The Nerds look confused and pleased.

INT. SCHOOL HALL -- CONTINUOUS

Al and Rob continue walking down the hall.

ROB

What was that?

ALBERT

Okay, I panicked. Did you see them? What they were working on? My alarm clock still outwits me.

ROB

What? Mr. Cluck-a-doo?

ALBERT

Shut up.

ROB

I didn't even know we had a robot club. I thought you wanted to join the student body?

ALBERT

I say I want to be part of a group, then I look at the group and can't take it seriously. What's up with that?

ROB

It's an ego thing. You don't want to join them. You want them to join you.

ALBERT

That was very deep.

ROB

Like they say, stillborns run deep.

ALBERT

No, you mean...never mind.

ROB

Too bad you don't have anything worth joining.

ALBERT

Shut up. Let's go.

INT. ROBERT'S BASEMENT -- NIGHT

They're watching TV. Robert is using the game controls as a TV remote control. Albert is practicing some card moves.

ROB

It's not like everyone hates you.

ALBERT

No one has any reaction to me. I'm invisible.

ROB

(beat)

Being invisible would be awesome.

Albert notices Robert's yearbook form on the end table. It's filled out completely. Upstairs, a doorbell rings.

ALBERT

What is this? You filled it out?

ROB

Yeah.

ALBERT

How'd you put down all these activities?

ROB
 With a little something I call
 "fabrication."

Janelle comes down.

JANELLE
 Hey, guys. Where were you after
 school? We're starting try-outs for
 the Sing. I wish you'd re-consider---

ROB
 Janelle, we're slackers. We slack.
 Anything else would take us away
 from our slacking.

She plops down beside them.

JANELLE
 What are we watching?

ALBERT
 "Beach High."

The show "Beach High" comes ON TV:

EXT. [ON TV] BEACH -- DAY

A beautiful California day. A group of incredible looking
 TEENS are playing volley ball.

BRAD (V.O.)
 Lucky for us we had to go to beach
 volley ball class, or I'm sure Brianna
 and Gouda would have had a major cat
 fight during tanning class.

CUT TO:

EXT. [ON TV] BEACH BLANKET -- DAY

Two teen beauties, LEMON and TYDY are talking. Graphics up
 with their names.

LEMON
 I can't believe Brad got so hot over
 the summer.

TYDY
 Brad was always hot.

LEMON
 No, not Brad L. Brad D.

TYDY
 Oh, yeah, Brad D. got hot.

LEMON

But you're right, Brad L. was always hot.

TYDY

He was.

LEMON

I'm conflicted.

END OF TV SEGMENT.

INT. ROBERT'S BASEMENT -- NIGHT

The trio are watching.

JANELLE

We're in high school. Why are we watching a show about high school?

ALBERT

Because it's like no high school we know?

ROB

Fine.

He flips channels with his converted remote.

JANELLE

What is that?

ROB

Oh, check it out, I converted my game control into a remote. Makes television more interactive.

JANELLE

Cool.

The show, "Audition Island," comes ON TV:

EXT. [ON TV] DESERT ISLAND -- DAY

Shot of tropical island. The show title comes up.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Last week on "Audition Island," Sara began practicing her big number...

EXT. [ON TV] JUNGLE STAGE -- NIGHT

SARA, dirty and in worn-out clothes is rehearsing.

SARA
 (singing)
 Tomorrow! Tomorrow! I love ya,
 Tomorrow---!

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
 When suddenly she was attacked by a
 lion.

A lion leaps on her, the camera gets knocked over.

END TV SEGMENT.

INT. ROBERT'S BASEMENT -- NIGHT

The trio are still watching, amazed.

JANELLE
 What else is on?

Robert starts flipping through the channels.

ANNOUNCER 2 (V.O.)
 We'll follow these fledging actors---

ANNOUNCER 3 (V.O.)
 What happens when people stop being
 nice and get in your face---

ANNOUNCER 4 (V.O.)
 Watch as Tony attempts to open a rad
 new bistro---

ROB
 Too bad you can't get on one of these
 reality shows. That would really
 raise your profile.

JANELLE
 Sure. Nothing validates your
 existence like being on TV.

ALBERT
 You're right.

JANELLE
 I was being facetious.

ALBERT
 I know you were being facetious. I
 was responding to Robert's statement.

ROB
 (sincerely)
 I was sincere, dude.

Albert's thinking on this concept, nodding.

EXT. ALBERT'S BACKYARD -- DAY

Robert is setting up a video camera on a tripod. He has a CD player at the ready. Albert is warming up his voice. Rebecca wanders over.

REBECCA
What are you doing?

ALBERT
None of your business.

REBECCA
Can I watch?

ALBERT
Don't you have to go locate your
birth mother?

MOM (O.S.)
Albert, stop telling Rebecca she's
adopted!

ALBERT
Mom! Get Rebecca out of here!

MOM (O.S.)
Becky! Let the boys do their little
sketch show!

Rebecca sulks off.

ROB
Okay, you got the mike?

Albert pulls out a microphone.

ALBERT
Check.

ROB
You sure this is the direction you
want to take?

ALBERT
Gotta start somewhere. We put
together a great video and submit
it.

ROB
And a one and a two and a three---

Robert turns on the CD. Albert sings in an okay voice.

ALBERT
I believe that children are our future
Feed them well and let them go away---

He sings to the camera for a few more lines, then Rebecca comes up and hits him in the crotch with a foam bat. Albert drops to the ground.

ROB

If you don't get on "Singing Idol"
maybe you can get on "TV's Funniest
Videos."

INT. BASEMENT -- DAY

Albert is seated at a table with the video camera rolling.

Robert puts a kitchen timer on the table.

ROB

One minute to eat what you can.

Albert nods and tucks in a napkin, holding his knife and fork.

Robert puts a covered tray in front of Albert. He starts the timer and lifts the lid. There's a bowl of maggots, a roasted whole rat and a glass of something horribly gray.

ROB (CONT'D)

Go!

Albert hesitates. He pokes at the maggots, then at the drink. Then the rat. Then he turns green and runs off and begins puking.

ROB (CONT'D)

Cut!

A toilet flushes.

EXT. ALBERT'S BACKYARD -- DAY

Albert, dressed in camping gear, addresses the camera.

ALBERT

I'm a rugged individualist. The
idea of being left alone on an island
doesn't bother me. Bring it on,
says I! Bring it on. I'll take on
your baddest asses. Your dirtiest
players. I am a survivor and I can
win this game!

Suddenly, the lawn sprinklers come on and Albert is freaking out over it. Rob pans over to see Rebecca at the water spigot. He pans back over to Albert.

ALBERT (CONT'D)

Stop it! I'm getting wet! Turn it
off! Turn it off!

ROB

Dude, suck it up, man. You're going to get voted out of your own yard.

INT. AUDITORIUM -- DAY

Students are seated around the auditorium. Janelle is at the piano. MRS. WENDELL, the esoteric 50-year old art teacher is on stage addressing the kids.

MRS. WENDELL

Welcome to our High School Sing auditions. It's great to see you all here to try out. We're here to have fun and promote school spirit. For you new people, it's a competition; seniors and sophomores against the freshmen and juniors. You each do a 45 minute extravaganza at the beginning of November and you'll be judged on dance, presentation, script and, of course, spirit. You'll be auditioning before myself, our director, Miss Borowitz and our author, Miss Jones. Janelle?

JANELLE

We are auditioning for the musical leads and appreciate anything you've prepared. Now, first up.

Mrs. Wendell takes a seat beside the beatnik-type girl, RAYNE BOROWITZ, who has a clipboard.

RAYNE

So, dancers who can sing on stage.
Singers who can dance in the wings.

MONTAGE:

Girl 1 taps dances.

BOY 1 does hip hop.

Girl 2 does ballet.

BOY 2 does similiar hip hop.

GIRL 3 does gymnastics.

BOY 3 does hip hop.

INT. AUDITORIUM -- LATER

Mrs. Wendell, Janelle and Rayne look worn down.

RAYNE

Is it too late to transfer to another school?

EXT. ALBERT'S ROOM -- EVENING

Robert and Albert are at the computer, viewing some more of the audition tapes. A desk lamp is on, but the ceiling light is off.

ROB

Well, there's this take. It's almost vomit-free.

ALBERT

Certainly the least amount we've seen. Where did you even get a roasted rat anyway?

Big brother Matt walks in, carrying a bag of laundry.

MATT

Where's Mom and Dad?

ALBERT

The doctor's or the PTA. I forget which.

MATT

What are you two Spielbergers up to? You're not going to be film majors are you? My dorm-mate's a film maker and I can't take it any more...

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

INT. MATT'S DORM ROOM -- NIGHT

Matt's asleep in his bunk. Suddenly a bright light snaps on, waking him up.

MATT

What the---?

He's staring at the camera in his face.

PHIL (O.S.)

No, no, don't look at the camera. Ignore the camera.

MATT

I will as soon as I cram it down your throat.

PHIL (O.S.)

Wait, stop, this is for my thesis---

INT. COLLEGE LOUNGE -- NIGHT

Matt and OTHER COLLEGE STUDENTS are hanging out, talking when bright lights suddenly kick on. They all look at the camera.

PHIL (O.S.)
Just act natural, everyone.

They all approach the camera.

PHIL (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Okay, not that natural.

Camera goes over and out. Beating and screaming continue, however.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. ALBERT'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Matt shakes off the memory.

ROB
We're putting together an audition tape for a reality show.

MATT
Get out. Which one?

ALBERT
Any one. Kind of a school project.

MATT
Well, it's too late. Those shows were filmed months ago. Even if you got in today, it wouldn't get on TV 'til next year.

ALBERT
I kinda needed to be on it now.

MATT
You know how many thousands of people try out for that stuff?

ROB
How many?

MATT
Thousands! It's, like, impossible to get on one of those shows.

Albert clicks off the program in disgust.

MATT (CONT'D)

Hell, you'd have a better chance
making your own reality show.

Albert gets an idea and the light bulb over Albert's head goes on. They turn to look. Rebecca is at the door, hand on light switch.

REBECCA

What are you doing? Looking at porn?
I'm telling mom!

INT. SCHOOL HALL -- DAY

Albert goes into the boys room.

A beat, then some muffled yelling and a huge flush.

The Jocks exit the boys room laughing.

A few moments later Albert comes out, his head all wet and bits of toilet paper sticking out of his ears. He takes out his cell phone.

INTERCUT:

INT. MATT'S DORM ROOM -- DAY

It's a dorm room that looks like 6 sloppy students are sharing, but it's just the two. Matt's asleep. The other bed is empty. His cell phone rings.

MATT

Hello?

ALBERT

Matt, it's Albert.

MATT

What's the matter? Everyone okay?
You sound wet.

ALBERT

Yeah, yeah, everyone's fine.

MATT

Then why are you waking me up?

ALBERT

It's 2 o'clock.

MATT

I know that. We have clocks in
college.

ALBERT

You said your roommate was a film major?

MATT

Phil? Yeah. Why?

ALBERT

I need to rent him.

EXT. COLLEGE THEATER -- DAY

The student media center's theater of a nice campus. A banner is out saying "Student Film Festival."

INT. COLLEGE THEATER -- DAY

A screening of some student films is going on with an eclectic group of COLLEGE STUDENTS watching very important, very meaningful, very black & white films.

PHIL CICHON, aggressively nerdy college senior, is seated toward the back of the room.

Matt comes in with Albert in tow.

MATT

Phil?

Audience shushes him.

PHIL

Here.

Matt and Albert sit behind Phil and lean over on each side.

MATT

Yo, Phil.

PHIL

Yo. So, someone wants to hire me?

ALBERT

Me.

PHIL

You? For what? Your sweet sixteen?

ALBERT

I'm seventeen!

PHIL

Oh. Your sweet seventeen?

ALBERT

Look, I need a camera man to follow me around high school for awhile. Pretend to be a reality show crew.

PHIL

A reality show about what?

ALBERT

Me.

PHIL

You? You're kidding, right? What are you, like the class clown? The BMOC?

ALBERT

BMOC?

PHIL

Big Man On Campus.

ALBERT

Hardly.

Audience shushes them again.

MATT

He's trying to make an impression on his class for his senior year.

PHIL

Oh, no, you aren't an outsider, are you?

ALBERT

No, no. I'm just not inside. So, I was hoping if I had a film crew follow me around---

PHIL

You might be able to score.

ALBERT

What? No, that's not why..I would never...You think?

MATT

You need a victim to film; he's willing.

ALBERT

Yeah. Wait, what?

MATT

Is this even do-able?

PHIL
Oh, sure. The college loans out
equipment to us film majors. I just
tell them it's for a school project.
I'll need a crew.

ALBERT
What kind of crew?

PHIL
A sound man and gaffer.

ALBERT
You need both?

PAUL
You want this to look professional,
don't you?

MATT
How much?

PHIL
Say...a thousand.

MATT
A thousand dollars?

Audience shushes them.

PHIL
About. You have a thousand, outsider?

ALBERT
Yeah.

MATT
You do?

ALBERT
Yeah.

MATT
Really?

ALBERT
Yes.

MATT
A thousand dollars?

ALBERT
Yes.

MATT
How did you--?

ALBERT

Magic.

MATT

I should probably be nicer to you.

PHIL

Okay, you got yourself a film crew.

INT. COLLEGE EDITING BAY -- NIGHT

The room where the college students edit their film and video projects. Two guys work on a console: JERRY, a 4.0 student, and WILLIE, a blue collar B student. Phil comes in with a pizza.

PHIL

Guys, I got us a gig.

JERRY

A gig! Great!

WILLIE

Finally! I get to use the word "gig."
Feels good; "gig."

JERRY

What are we filming?

PHIL

We follow this high school kid around his senior year and pretend to document his life.

JERRY

Is he BMOC?

PHIL

Nope.

JERRY

A celebrity? A spelling bee champ?

WILLIE

A hot girl? Some Disney channel
'tween star?

PHIL

No.

JERRY

Then why are we filming him?

WILLIE

Wait, I have more guesses!

PHIL
He's paying us.

WILLIE
Better.

PHIL
He's thinking that being the subject
of a "reality show" will make him
more popular.

WILLIE
Say what?

JERRY
Interesting. What you have here is
the Hawthorne Effect in reverse.

PHIL
The how's-that effect?

JERRY
Hawthorne Effect.

WILLIE
The Hawthorne Effect. That's cool
to say, too. The Hawthorne Effect.
The Hawthorne Gig. Either.

JERRY
We covered it in sociology.

PHIL
I'm an *auteur*, what do I care about
sociology?

WILLIE
Yeah, because you're not social at
all.

JERRY
All it states is that the mere act
of observing something can alter it.
The minute the camera shows up, people
behave differently.

PHIL
Is that what you call it? My last
project crashed and burned because
of it. And I still have the bruises
to prove it.

JERRY
So what you have here is someone who
is actually counting on the Hawthorne
Effect to occur.

PHIL

And we'd be there to capture
it...because we're there causing
it...

WILLIE

So, we'll be filming people because
they'll be behaving differently in
front of us but since that's what we
want, we'll be filming them without
effecting it because we are the
effect.

Jerry and Phil mull this a moment.

PHIL

Yes, exactly.

WILLIE

Doesn't sound very effective.

JERRY

I've never seen that before.

PHIL

(pondering)

No one has. Ohmigod, this is it,
this is my senior thesis.

(beat)

I think our gig just got big.

INT. HALLWAY -- MORNING

Rebecca is at the bathroom door, banging.

REBECCA

Albert! Get out! Other people have
to use the bathroom!

ALBERT (O.S.)

In a minute!

She bangs some more. Albert steps out. He's all cleaned &
polished and looking un-scruffy; combed hair, collared shirt,
cleanly shaven with a bit of toilet paper on his chin and
some shaving cream by his ear.

REBECCA

What the---?

ALBERT

Bathroom's yours.

He heads downstairs. Rebecca just stares after him.

REBECCA

Are you wearing make-up?

ALBERT

Shut up.

EXT. MAPLE RIDGE HIGH SCHOOL -- MORNING

The student body is milling about outside the school.

Tracy is walking to the school talking on her cell phone.

TRACY

(exasperated)

No, Mom. What? I can't. You know I can't. First, they won't sell to me. Second, I don't have the money. I'm so sure, Mom. Well, you'll just have to wait, Mom. Yes, I'll be home right after school.

Paul catches up and she quickly hangs up.

PAUL

Tracy, where were you last night? We were doing some serious hanging out.

TRACY

Some family stuff came up.

PAUL

So, next time maybe I should hang at your place?

TRACY

No, you can't. You just can't.

PAUL

People are starting to think we're not hooked up.

TRACY

Why would they think that?

PAUL

You're the hottest girl, I'm the hottest guy and they know we're not doing it.

TRACY

Why would they know that?

PAUL

It came up in the locker room. I can't lie about something like that.

TRACY

Oh, and what did the locker room have to say?

PAUL

They think you're turning lesbo on me.

TRACY

You're a jerk.

PAUL

Yeah, well, that's what all the lesbos say.

There's a sudden commotion in the crowd. Paul and Tracy turn to look.

Across the street is Albert, looking nervous. And behind him, Phil on camera, Jerry holding the boom mike and recorder and Willie loaded down with everything else.

PHIL

Rolling.

Janelle and Robert come up.

JANELLE

I don't believe it. You're actually going through with it?

ALBERT

I don't know. Suddenly, it seems like a really stupid idea.

JANELLE

Suddenly?

ROB

Dude, this rocks!

ALBERT

This is Phil, Jerry and Willie. These are my friends Rob and Janelle.

PHIL

Very authentic looking.

JANELLE

I get that a lot.

PHIL

Be nice to me, missy, if you want to stay in focus.

Janelle rolls her eyes as Albert looks across the street.

ALBERT

Everyone is looking at me.

JANELLE

You could have accomplished the same thing by getting a face tattoo.

PHIL

Tattoo? Hmmm. Nah, save it for season two.

ROB

They're looking at you, man, and they want to be you right now. When has that ever happened?

ALBERT

I know. Wait, what? Shut up.

ROB

Let's do this thing.

He pushes Albert forward. Albert starts to make his way across the street, slightly tripping.

Phil nods and the crew follows.

A group of students observe; there's Cindy, the head cheerleader, BILL, a flamboyant senior, Paul's friend Hort and the pair of friends, DENNY and BUDDY.

DENNY

What is that?

BILL

A news crew?

DENNY

What did the janitor do now?

BUDDY

Is that the video yearbook guy?

CINDY

It better not be. I'm not ready yet.

PAUL

It's Voluz. What's that retard doing?

Albert gets to the school sidewalk. He takes out some index cards and begins to read for the camera.

ALBERT

Hello! I'm Albert Voluz and this is my high school, Maple Ridge High School named after Maple Ridge, the city. Well, town...

PAUL
He's talking to himself.

DENNY
I believe that's narration.

Paul shoves Denny away.

Kids gather behind Albert, showing off for the camera, making faces and crowding in.

TRACY
Albert Voluz? He's on TV?

PAUL
How the hell did that happen?

ALBERT
It's just a typical high school in a typical suburb. But it's been our world for the past three years. And now you'll get to join us for senior year. The end of the world as we know it.

As they walk to the school, the tightly-wound principal, MR. RAFENELLO, rushes up.

RAFENELLO
Excuse me, what is this?

ALBERT
What is what?

PHIL
We're doing a cable documentary on senior year...

A cheer goes up.

PHIL (CONT'D)
As seen through Albert Voluz's eyes.

Disappointment is heard.

LONE VOICE (O.S.)
Who?

RAFENELLO
Not here you're not.

PHIL
Why not?

RAFENELLO
This is my school not Television City, Hollywood.

PHIL

This is a public school. I'm part of the public. So I can go into the school any time I want.

RAFENELLO

You can't film people unless they sign release forms. I know that much.

Willie produces some release forms.

PHIL

And we'll be handing them out as needed. The network makes sure that these legal matters are dealt with before beginning a major project like this.

Tracy's ear prick up at "network."

RAFENELLO

Network?

Tracy has a thought. She starts chanting.

TRACY

Let them film! Let them film!

The crowd takes it up.

PHIL

And don't worry, if you don't want to be included, we can simply blur you out.

RAFENELLO

I don't want to be blurred out.

PHIL

No one ever does.

Willie hands Rafenello a form. Paul pushes his way through. The chant dies down as he speaks.

PAUL

Wait a second. Out of all the people who go to this school, somebody wants to make a reality show out of you?

ALBERT

Yeah.

PAUL

Who?

ALBERT

Who?

PAUL

Yes, who? MTV? VH1? Animal Planet?

PHIL

We can't say. We're still in a critical point in contract negotiations. Apparently, the Writers Guild is trying to pull some jurisdiction stunt with the film editors union. Anyway, we can't say until all the papers are signed.

ALBERT

Darn non-disclosure agreements.

PHIL

But, the school year starts no matter what the lawyers say, right? So we're here now.

PAUL

You can't say?

TRACY

Paul, don't spoil this. This could be the best thing to ever happen to this place.

ALBERT

Yeah.

PAUL

Who's talking to you?

ALBERT

You just were---

Rob takes up the chant now. Janelle just shakes her head.

ROB

Let them film!

The crowd joins in again. Willie tosses the forms into the air and the crowd rejoices and rushes to get a form.

Albert is quite satisfied by the response even as he's crushed by the crowd.

Paul gives Albert the international "I'm watching you" sign.

INT. HALLWAY -- DAY

Albert walks down the hall, crew in tow. Everyone is saying hello to Albert, shaking his hand, patting his back, treating him like one of the guys. A few selfies are taken.

Albert continues down the hallway, then goes into the boys room. The crew follows him in. A beat passes. Many students come rushing out quickly, zipping up flies and tucking in shirts. Another beat. Albert comes out, embarrassed.

INT. GYM -- DAY

The boys are in line to climb the rope as the blunt-looking gym teacher, MR. BERGONZI, keeps his clipboard updated. Paul is standing behind Albert. Paul starts signaling to his buddies that he's about to give Albert a wedgie.

As he reaches to grab Albert's waistband, Phil and the crew come in.

They go up to Albert and Paul freezes.

ALBERT

(to camera)

Hi. Waiting to climb the rope.

(turning)

Paul. Hey. Did you need something?

Paul feints innocent.

PAUL

Just keep the line moving, Voluz.

INT. CAFETERIA -- DAY

Albert walks in, with the crew in tow. He waves to various parts of the room. He sees OLLIO, an exchange student, seated at a table, alone. Feeling cocky, he heads on over and sits.

ALBERT

(acting cool)

Hi. You new here? I'm Albert, star of the latest reality show. Yeah, senior year, dude. Dude-ster. Dude-boi. We're looking to live it up. Hollar. It's going to be some year, right? Am I right? Yeah, I'm always looking to add a new member to my TV family.

Mr. Rafenello comes over.

RAFENELLO

Ah, Mr. Voluz, I see you've met Ollio Frankavich, our exchange student.

OLLIO
Clump zegment.

ALBERT
Ollio? Exchange?

OLLIO
Nep yurbing.

RAFENELLO
I hate to interrupt but I need to
take Mr. Frankavich to the office
for some paperwork and a Homeland
Security screening. Come, Mr.
Frankavich. Come. With. Me.

Rafenello mimes his point and Ollio leaves with him.

OLLIO
(bows)
Crow bitta tak.

ALBERT
Bitta tak.

He turns to the camera.

ALBERT (CONT'D)
Can we do that again?

Janelle walks over.

JANELLE
Are you all right?

ALBERT
Nothing we can't fix in post.

JANELLE
There's no post production in life,
Albert.

Robert walks in counting some singles.

ALBERT
Where'd you get money?

ROB
Selling your autograph to the
freshmen.

ALBERT
I didn't sign any autographs.

ROB
Details.

To camera.

ROB (CONT'D)

Is that thing on? Oh, right, nobody's going to see this.

ALBERT

Shut up about that.

JANELLE

Isn't that fraud?

ROB

One of the privileges of senior-dom.

JANELLE

It's not right.

ROB

Look, seniors sold me bogus pool passes when I was a freshie.

ALBERT

Oh, please, you were still buying them in junior year.

ROB

Yeah, well, now I get to do it to some one else. It's nature's way. Hey, how are auditions going?

JANELLE

Remember that time you tried to skate down your front stairs blindfolded?

ROB

Yeah.

JANELLE

Not that good. You guys going to try out?

ROB

Can't. I got pool passes to print out.

Albert notices that people walking behind them are stopping to mug and wave to the camera and move on.

ALBERT

I feel like I'm on the Today Show and everyone else is on the other side of the window, waving.

INT. SCHOOL HALL -- DAY

Albert is walking down the hall, addressing the camera.

ALBERT

So, here we are in the hallway.
This is the place that connects all
the classrooms. To each other.
It's how we get to one class from
another class. Everyone is in class
right now, so the hall is kind of
empty---

He comes up to the HALL MONITOR's desk.

HALL MONITOR

Halt!

ALBERT

(to camera)

Oh, man, I forgot about the Hallway
Hitler. I'll get detention now.

HALL MONITOR

What are you doing out of class?
You have a pass?

ALBERT

No, Collins, I don't. But we were
just trying to film something between
classes.

HALL MONITOR

(aware of camera)

Oh. Right. The filming. So, you're
gonna be a big star now, huh? Hey,
you guys ever hang with the guys who
make "Cops?" Okay, look, Voluz,
I'll let you off with a warning this
time but make sure you have a hall
pass next time.

(to camera)

School safety just doesn't happen,
you know. It takes diligence. It
takes a keen eye. A sixth sense!

Albert walks on with the camera, leaving the Hall Monitor
behind.

ALBERT

Holy mackerel. That camera is like
a super-hall pass.

Tracy comes up to him at an intersection.

TRACY

Hi, Al.

ALBERT

Tracy. Hi. Um, what are you doing
here?

TRACY

Actually, I was looking for you.

Yelling from down the hall:

HALL MONITOR

You got a pass?

Tracy holds up a pass.

HALL MONITOR (CONT'D)

Diligence!

ALBERT

I'm sorry, did you say you were looking for me?

TRACY

Yes.

ALBERT

Oh, good, I was afraid the waxy ear build-up was distorting my hearing.

TRACY

I wanted to ask you...

ALBERT

What?

She indicates the camera with the hand holding the hall pass.

TRACY

What is this about?

ALBERT

What? The hall pass?

TRACY

No, the cameras.

ALBERT

Oh, right.

(going for nonchalant)

After awhile, you forget they're there.

TRACY

I don't want to get all involved in this show thing and then find out it's only going to be on Youtube.

ALBERT

Oh, no, that's not going to happen. At all.

TRACY

Good to know.

She pulls out the release form.

TRACY (CONT'D)

You have a pen?

Albert pulls out a pen, as do Phil, Jerry and Willie, all their arms coming into frame. Tracy takes Albert's pen, signs the form and hands it to Albert.

TRACY (CONT'D)

I guess I'll see you around.

PHIL (O.S.)

You know it.

Tracy winks and heads off. Albert, now smitten, continues on, walking into a column.

ALBERT

Take two.

He gathers his wits and approaches a corner:

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY -- DAY

Around that corner, Paul is stuffing a FRESHMAN into a locker.

Done, he turns to see Albert approach. Paul heads for Albert, flexing his fists when the film crew comes around the corner.

ALBERT

What was I saying? Hallways! The blood vessels of high school...

Paul does a 180 and walks away, frustrated. Albert and the crew walk on. Paul comes upon a "No bullying" poster. He rips it off the wall and tears it up.

The school bell rings and the hallway fills with students changing classes. People wave to Albert and crew as they pass.

INT. AUDITORIUM -- AFTERNOON

Janelle, Rayne and Mrs. Wendell watching a chorus line attempting to do a kick line. The directors look concerned.

RAYNE

We're so going to lose.

JANELLE

Don't say that.

RAYNE

Then we're going to need a gimmick.
We have to get some jocks involved.
People love it when the jocks get
involved.

Janelle doesn't like that.

INT. PIZZA WORLD -- DAY

Albert, in his magic outfit, is packing up.

He's in the play area of the Pizza World, where little kids
are in jungle gyms, moon rooms and a ball pit.

ANOTHER MOTHER approaches.

ANOTHER MOTHER

Are you available?

Albert does a little prestidigitation to produce a business
card.

ALBERT

Weekends and many afternoons.

ANOTHER MOTHER

Wonderful.

Another Mother heads back into the play area.

Albert resumes packing. Just then Tracy pops in. Albert is
startled.

TRACY

Hi.

ALBERT

Tracy? Oh, hi Tracy. What in the
world are you doing here?

TRACY

In the mood for pizza.

ALBERT

Then what in the Pizza World are you
doing here? You alone?

TRACY

Yes.

ALBERT

Really? I never thought of you as
the solo type.

TRACY

Nobody knows my type, Al.

ALBERT
I didn't mean anything--

TRACY
So, where's your camera crew?

ALBERT
Camera crew--? Oh, right, yeah,
they couldn't get permission to bring
cameras in here.

Tracy looks disappointed.

TRACY
Well, I guess---

ALBERT
But they did get, make an agreement
to use the security camera feeds.

Tracy walks around, looking up and around.

TRACY
Security cameras?

ALBERT
Yeah, well, since it's mostly about
school, they didn't push to get in.
Nothing ever happens here. But if
it does, it'll be on tape!

TRACY
You've been doing this magic forever.

ALBERT
"Learn magic and impress your
friends."

TRACY
Were they impressed?

ALBERT
Nah, they used to bust my balls.

Albert pulls out his balls and juggles them.

ALBERT (CONT'D)
So, Tracy, how goes the college
search?

TRACY
I'm probably going to end up at State.

ALBERT
Well, they have some pretty good
programs.

TRACY

I guess. So, what about you, Mr. TV star?

ALBERT

What? Oh, not like that. I'm still leaning toward engineering and design. We're supposed to visit Drexel next weekend and check it out.

TRACY

The TV thing could happen. Look at all the people who ended up on TV or in movies or politics after being on a reality show.

ALBERT

That's not why I did it. Just so you know.

TRACY

Oh, I'm sure it isn't. But once you're on TV, anything can happen. It's something you should be aware of.

ALBERT

I'm not exactly what you would call a "break out" star.

TRACY

True.

She's coming on to Albert now.

ALBERT

Wait, what?

TRACY

I meant, it's really not something you can control. All you can do is try to do something unforgettable and hope for the best.

ALBERT

Again, not really my best thing.

TRACY

So, they'll be checking the security tapes?

ALBERT

Only if something happens.

TRACY

Well, then, let's see what happens.

Tracy is on Albert with a long, wet kiss. Albert's balls fly out of his hand and he kisses back.

They fall into the ball pit....

INT. TRACY'S HOUSE -- MORNING

It's a plain-looking middle class home in the 'burbs, kinda run down, kinda neglected. Needs a mom's touch.

INT. TRACY'S KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS

Tracy comes into the messy and run-down kitchen. She takes some empty liquor bottles off the table and tosses them in the recycling. She grabs a snack bar then sets out a cereal box, bowl, spoon, etc. She gets her books and leaves.

INT. VOLUZ'S KITCHEN -- MORNING

Mom is making some Toaster Tarts™ and Dad's wolfing down a muffin.

DAD

Okay, granted, this muffin does taste less like particle board than the last one. It's not a bran muffin?

MOM

It's called a "Sans Muffin." Sans calories, sans transfats, sans sugars---

DAD

Sans taste.

MOM

Try one of these new soy Toaster Tarts™.

DAD

Gotta run.

And Dad is off.

Mom takes the Toaster Tart™ out of the toaster as the Rebecca enters.

MOM

Oh, good, you're just in time.

She hands the soy tart to Rebecca just as the doorbell rings and Mom goes to answer it.

MOM (CONT'D)

Who could that be?

REBECCA

Saved by the doorbell.

Rebecca dumps the soy tart into the trash and follows.

INT. ALBERT'S LIVING ROOM -- MORNING

Mom gets the door. It's Tracy, looking wonderful. Rebecca comes over.

MOM
Can I help you?

TRACY
Is Al here?

REBECCA
Al who?

TRACY
Albert Voluz.

MOM
He's here.

REBECCA
Why?

MOM
(calling)
Albert!

REBECCA
Does he owe you money?

Albert comes running downstairs with his back pack.

ALBERT
What? Huh?

He sees Tracy and freezes.

ALBERT (CONT'D)
Tracy?

TRACY
I was wondering if you wanted to
walk to school together.

ALBERT
Sure, as long as it's on the way.

More awkward silence.

ALBERT (CONT'D)
Okay, bye, mom.

He hurries out the door and they're gone.

MOM

That was a girl.

REBECCA

That wasn't just a girl. That was Tracy Gilligan.

MOM

So?

REBECCA

They come from different worlds. She's not from planet Jerkhead.

MOM

Oh, stop it. You should be glad for Albert that he decided to widen his circle of friends.

REBECCA

(suspicious)

That didn't happen by pulling anything out of his hat.

INT. CAFETERIA -- DAY

Albert, Janelle and Rob are seated as the camera observes. Janelle is sitting next to Albert, but she gets shoved over as Tracy squeezes in. Suddenly, others start to gather around and squeeze in between Janelle and Albert.

Paul walks in with his tray. He's thoroughly disgusted, twisting his tray into a helix.

INT. PAUL'S ROOM -- DAY

Paul's sports-themed room. He's working the Internet, pulling up a listing of various cable networks as he talks on the phone.

PAUL

Yes, hi, I'm trying to get some information on one of your shows. A documentary on high school. You have a film crew following around this dork...I mean, student, on his senior year. No? Are you sure?

He makes a note and scrolls to the next name on screen.

LATER:

Still on the phone.

PAUL (CONT'D)

---A high school senior. What?
(MORE)

PAUL (CONT'D)

Good looking? Well, I suppose, in a Tom Hanks sort of way...Wait, do you have it or not?

He crosses the name off the list.

LATER STILL:

PAUL (CONT'D)

--A reality show about a high school senior. No, a boy. His senior year. Maple Ridge High.

INTERCUT:

INT. ROSE'S EXECUTIVE OFFICE -- DAY

The semi-nice office of ROSE BELLOWS, a 40-ish woman trying hard to look business-like, at A.O.K.-TV. She's on the phone while leafing through the rating memos.

ROSE

I'm sorry, could you repeat that?

PAUL

A reality show. High school nerd. Senior year. Can you tell me when it's going to air?

ROSE

I'm sorry, we have nothing like that in development here. Where did you hear about this show?

PAUL

Everyone's...talking about it at school. It's all I've been hearing for weeks now. I'm trying to find out what channel it's going to be on.

ROSE

Sorry, not us. But I hope you'll enjoy the many other fine shows and syndicated repeats here on A.O.K.-TV. Hello? Hello?

As Rose hangs up the phone, her BOSS walks in carrying a reams of memos.

BOSS

Rose! What about these ratings? Shouldn't they be going up?

Rose sighs.

ROSE
Some of our shows have under
performed.

BOSS
"Audition Island" totally tanked.

ROSE
I don't understand that at all. We
stole the best two ideas on TV!

BOSS
"America's Next Top Clown?" "Bar
Brawls Live!" "Who Wants to be a
Hitler?" Seriously, Rose, what is
programming thinking? And then I
find out we're number one---

ROSE
Great!

BOSS
In Retirement Villages. We have to
skewer younger, Rose, or we're going
to skewer unemployed.

ROSE
Younger?

BOSS
Get on it!

The Boss leaves.

ROSE
(into intercom)
Grace, can you tell me where that
last call came from and find out
about a Maple Ridge High?

INT. HALLWAY -- AFTERNOON

Albert and Rob walk down the hall, with crew in tow. A COUPLE
OF FRESHMEN come up to them wearing bathing suits, diving
caps and carrying towels and a couple of pool passes.

FRESHIES 1
Excuse me, can you tell me where the
pool is?

ROB
Upstairs, dude. On the roof.

The Freshmen head up the stairwell while Rob and Albert crack
up silently.

Rob and Albert go into the classroom.

INT. CLASSROOM -- AFTERNOON

The Robotics Club greets them with applause.

EXT. FIELD -- DAY

Albert, Janelle and Robert are walking up a slope carrying several new, fancy kites.

JANELLE

So, Ken Burns, is your big plan working?

Albert nods as they reach the top of the slope:

There's the film crew filming the CHEERLEADER SQUAD (led by Cindy) which launches into a cheer:

CHEERLEADERS

Albert, Albert, he's our man; if he can't fly it, no one can! Fly that kite!

Rob and Albert grin and high five while Janelle rolls her eyes.

INT. PIZZA WORLD -- DAY

Paul and Hort are sitting at a table, alone.

PAUL

--no one knows a thing about this--
(air quotes)
"TV show."

HORT

Why do you care?

PAUL

I care because this is supposed to be--
(air quotes)
"My year."

HORT

Your
(air quoting)
"Year"?

PAUL

We haven't heard from this dweeb in three years and now in senior year it's supposed to be about him? I didn't work to make varsity just to step aside for this freak show. I earned my

(MORE)

PAUL (CONT'D)
 (air quotes)
 "Senior year."

HORT
 Dude, do you even know how to use
 air quotes?

PAUL
 Sure I do.

HORT
 (air quotes)
 You "do?"

PAUL
 What is that?

HORT
 I'm air-quoting you.

PAUL
 (looking around)
 Where is everybody?

EXT. FIELD -- DAY

Albert has this super big, multi-tethered, colorful cloth kite. Dozens of kids are helping him get it airborne. The camera crew records all of it.

It's a real party atmosphere with blankets set up with snack foods and beverages.

The gothic kids have a black kite up with the help of some Cheerleaders who supplied a tail made out of pompom parts.

Nerds are measuring the span of a kite made out of plain brown paper.

MITCHELL
 It's aerodynamically perfect!

A Stoner wanders over.

STONER
 But it needs some color, bruh!

He pulls out a spray paint can and goes to work.

Some pretty GIRLS come over and start talking to Rob, who's with Janelle.

GIRL 1
 So, Bobby you're really his best
 friend, right?

ROB

Totally.

JANELLE

One of them.

GIRL 2

So, if you asked him to hang with us, he would, right?

ROB

He's my peep, boo.

JANELLE

Boo? Peep?

GIRL 1

It's just not fair that Tracy is on camera, I mean, really, with Al all the time.

They look and sure enough, there's Tracy and Albert pulling on the strings to the kite.

A gust comes up, the giant kite rises and the crowd cheers.

The cheerleaders go into the "Gimme a K" cheer, spelling "kite".

Phil, Jerry and Willie are thrilled.

JERRY

Are you getting all this?

PHIL

Oh, yeah.

WILLIE

Think we'll get an "A?"

PHIL

We'll get an "o" for Oscar!

Tracy gives Albert a big kiss.

Janelle is hurt. She hurries off, passing a group, Benny, Rayne, Bill and Buddy, eating, drinking and talking:

DENNY

It's weird. I've known Bert since fourth grade. He didn't used to be this much fun to be around.

RAYNE

Bert? Well, we never really hung out with him.

BILL
No, he was kind of a wall flower.

BUDDY
Must be a late bloomer.

Rayne looks at Buddy.

RAYNE
Who are you?

EXT. VOLUZ'S HOUSE -- MORNING

Dad leaves. Albert leaves.

A car pulls up and beeps. Mom comes out the front door and gets in the car.

From an upstairs window, Rebecca watches. She has an ice pack on her head. As soon as mom drives off, she takes off the ice pack and heads out.

She comes out the side door, dressed in fatigues. She pulls out her cell phone, tests the video camera and heads out.

A few moments later, Matt comes up to the door with his laundry. He tries to go in. It's locked. He knocks and waits.

EXT. MAPLE RIDGE HIGH SCHOOL -- MORNING

Albert and Rob are at the corner. But the film crew is late.

Rebecca is hiding in some bushes, camera at the ready. A bus goes by, hitting a puddle and it all splashes on Rebecca. The camera starts to short out and she drops it.

Janelle walks by. Albert catches up to her.

JANELLE
Where's your pal, Tracy?

ALBERT
She texted me. She's running late, not to wait. With a little smilie face.

Janelle simply glares at him.

ALBERT (CONT'D)
What's eating you?

JANELLE
She's using you, you know.

ALBERT
Au contraire, I'm using her, remember?

JANELLE

And that makes it okay then? Does it, "Al?"

She storms off.

ALBERT

What's up with her?

ROB

Must be that time of year.

ALBERT

Rob...that's a monthly thing.

ROB

Monthly? Whoa. If I had to deal with that every month, I'd just shot myself.

PHIL (O.S.)

Morning crew. Let's get to it!

When Rebecca looks back up with camera at the ready, Albert and his crew are out of sight, in a crowd of students entering the building.

INT. GYM -- DAY

The boys are in gym class playing games of 1/2 court basketball.

Slowly, a large, wheeled hamper creeps itself into the gym. Rebecca peeks out from under a towel.

Mr. Bergonzi, the gym teacher, walks over. Rebecca ducks down.

MR. BERGONZI

Sid! Where's that laundry?

The nebbishy Sid, student equipment manager, walks in carrying armloads of dirty jock straps and cups.

SID

Right here, sir.

MR. BERGONZI

We need those dirty jockstraps and stained cups for the game, so get them in the laundry now!

SID

Yes, Mr. Bergonzi.

Sid drops all the dirty items into the hamper Rebecca is hiding in.

She acts grossed out, twitches a bit, reaches down in the back of her shirt and pulls out a jock strap. Ewwww. Then she pulls out the camera.

INT. ALBERT'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Albert is at his PC. He finishes a Facebook Fan page about himself and hits a list of "Invites." A moment later replies come up: "Hey Albert," "Hi, Dude," "S'up, bro?"

Then an Private Message comes up saying "Busted bro" and a screen cap of Phil and Albert. Albert looks concerned.

He turns around and there's Rebecca at his door holding up her phone.

INT. VOLUZ'S KITCHEN -- NIGHT

They're all at the table finishing up their dinner.

DAD

Is it my turn to ask?

REBECCA

Ask what?

DAD

How was your day?

REBECCA

Dad!

DAD

Are you smarter than you were yesterday? Because if you're not, I'm going to stop buying lottery tickets.

MOM

We done? Becky, I believe it's your turn to clear the table.

Rebecca looks at Albert.

ALBERT

I'll do it.

REBECCA

Thanks, Albert.

He starts clearing away the dishes.

DAD

All right, we just slipped into another dimension, didn't we? It looks the same but there are these subtle differences.

Matt walks in.

MATT
I smell meatloaf.

DAD
From your campus? I thought the
point of going away to college was
being away.

Matt takes a plate, grabbing things as Albert tries to put them away. He finally is able to get a plate together. He sits and eats.

MATT
Why are you clearing the table?

ALBERT
Community service. They want us
seniors doing more of it.

REBECCA
A *lot* more.

Well, that sounds ominous, stopping Matt in mid-meatloaf.

INT. REBECCA'S ROOM -- DAY

He's making the bed.

He's washing the window.

He's brushing the ponies.

INT. VOLUZ'S KITCHEN -- DAY

Rebecca pours a glass of milk. She starts to drink it but smells it. Not sure, she gives it to Albert to taste. He does. It's sour. He spits it out into the sink.

INT. VOLUZ'S LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Albert is watching TV. Rebecca sits next to him and puts her hand out. He surrenders the remote control to her.

EXT. MAPLE RIDGE HIGH SCHOOL -- AFTERNOON

Phil, Jerry and Willie exit the school. They climb into Willie's run-down V.W. and pull away.

Another car engine starts. It's Paul. He follows.

EXT. COLLEGE CAMPUS -- AFTERNOON

Phil and Co. drive onto the campus, find a parking spot and head out.

Paul pulls into another spot and follows.

EXT. FILM SCHOOL BUILDING -- AFTERNOON

As the trio enter the Film school with their equipment, Paul snaps some photos with his cell phone.

INT. FILM SCHOOL EQUIPMENT LOCKER -- AFTERNOON

They're at the check-in window, returning their equipment. College posters are up. It all looks very collegiate.

Paul snaps off a few more photos.

PAUL

Voluz, you're going down.

INT. COLLEGE EDITING BAY -- EVENING

Willie's at the editing machine. Phil is over his shoulder.

WILLIE

Man, I'm telling you, we don't open with the walk to school. We open with him flying the kite alone.

PHIL

I want the immediacy of the situation. Boom; we're there!

WILLIE

We want the opener to show the contrast; How different his situation is and will become.

PHIL

Excuse me, we have like 5 minutes tops to hook the audience.

WILLIE

They've already paid and are in the theater. What? Are we afraid they might go into the next theater? We can build up to it. Watch this.

Willie plays some footage in the editor:

ON SCREEN:

EXT. [ON SCREEN] FIELD -- DAY

An edited scene of Albert flying his kite alone. It crashes.

END OF SCREEN SEGMENT.

INT. COLLEGE EDITING BAY -- NIGHT

PHIL

Where'd you get that shot?

WILLIE

I culled it from a couple of different reels.

PHIL

Oh, we're culling now, are we?

WILLIE

Problem?

PHIL

It's not real.

WILLIE

It better tells the story.

PHIL

You're telling me how to tell the story?

WILLIE

Hey, I'm a storyteller, too. I piece together some random clips and a whole tale emerges, beginning, middle and end.

PHIL

Excuse me, those clips aren't random.

Jerry comes walking in with bags of fast food.

JERRY

I got from the new place, Chex-Mex. It's Czech Republic-Mexican cuisine.

PHIL

Can we just assemble a decent 20 minutes to present, please?

WILLIE

We're better than halfway there.

JERRY

How long is this going to be?

PHIL

Don't know yet.

JERRY

How's it going to end?

They all stop to consider that.

ROSE (O.S.)
End? We're just getting started.

They turn to see Rose standing at the entrance with a gleam in her eye.

INT. PAUL'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Paul is at work on his computer posting the photos he took on-line.

INT. BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Denny is looking at the photos on-line.

INT. DEN -- NIGHT

Cindy is looking at the photos on-line.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Hort is looking at the photos on-line.

INT. BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Janelle's looking at the photos.

JANELLE
Oh, Albert.

EXT. MAPLE RIDGE HIGH SCHOOL -- MORNING

Albert reaches the curb alone.

The kids milling about stop as they realize that Albert is there.

Tracy walks out of the crowd, right up to him. Then she slaps him and hurries off, sobbing.

ALBERT
What was that about?

Paul saunters up.

PAUL
You don't mess with the natural order.

ALBERT
I don't know what you're talking about.

PAUL
Admit it, Voluz, that was not a TV show. It was a couple of college kids with a camera.

DENNY

Several...a couple would imply two.
There were three.

PAUL

Shut up, Rand-McNally.

DENNY

I believe you mean Strunk and White.

ALBERT

Look, it's not like that at all.

ROB

What are you, like, the fake-film-
crew police?

ALBERT

Now, look---

(take to Rob)

Huh? Look, Paul, I don't know what
you think you know, but you don't.
Know.

PAUL

Oh, yeah? Where's your "around-the-
clock" film crew then?

Paul glances over to Hort who gives him the "okay sign" on
his use of air quotes.

ALBERT

Gee, they were just here a minute
ago.

(whistles for them)

Crew, here, crew---

Suddenly, they're all hit by spotlights. They squint to
look. Several really-for-real PROFESSIONAL FILM CREWS
surround the students. A helicopter with a camera hovers
over head.

PAUL

What is going on here?

ALBERT

Heel, crew, heel!

Phil, Willie and Jerry step up.

PHIL

Back to school, everyone. Act natural
for the cameras. They're HD and
pick up everything!

The students start to file into the school, glad-handing and
back-slapping Albert once again.

PAUL

I don't know how you managed this
but it's not over yet.

ROB

It's not over 'til the fat lady yells
"cut."

Paul stomps inside. Albert turns to Phil and them.

ALBERT

What is going on here?

PHIL

We are now part of the A.O.K.-TV
family. They took over production.

ALBERT

What? What are you saying? This is
a real show now?

JERRY

You bet.

WILLIE

There's a craft service truck on its
way now.

ALBERT

What about you? You're not a film
crew anymore?

PHIL

Grunt work. We got executive producer
credits now!

Tracy comes out.

TRACY

I'm so sorry I doubted you.

ALBERT

You should be.

TRACY

Paul's a jerk.

ALBERT

Yes. Yes, he is.

She kisses him

DIRECTOR

Excuse me. You were out of frame.
Could you kiss him again? Take it
from your line "I'm so sorry I doubted
you."

Albert's cell phone rings.

MOM (O.S.)

Albert?

*

INT. VOLUZ'S LIVING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Mom and Rebecca are face-to-face with ANOTHER FILM CREW.

MOM

Would you care to explain why I have
a film crew in the living room?

She listens a moment then Dad, in his jogging outfit, walks in but before he can even get his hand off the doorknob:

MOM (CONT'D)

Tony, your son is the subject of a
reality show for TV!

Dad steps back, looks up at the address on the door, then backs out and closes the door.

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE -- DAY

Rose is at Rafenello's desk. Albert comes in.

ALBERT

You're not Rafenello. Not by a long
shot.

ROSE

Rose Bellows. A.O.K.-TV.

ALBERT

Uh-huh.

ROSE

So, you're the inventive Albert Voluz.

ALBERT

So far.

ROSE

I think we have a winner here.

ALBERT

I have no idea what you're talking
about.

ROSE

It would be a shame if it came out
how everyone wasted the last 4 weeks
kissing up to you.

ALBERT

Pretty much the reason I haven't brought it up.

ROSE

Look, Albert--may I call you Albert?-- Albert, you started something. Something quite remarkable. And you understand the power of the TV lens to alter and shape your environment and position. Quite shrewd.

ALBERT

All I was doing was looking to make a couple of friends, maybe. And cut down on the number of wedgies received.

ROSE

You want to be popular, so does my channel. Not only will this school love you, the country will!

ALBERT

I really don't have the time to keep this stunt up. I've got school work piling up, college applications that have to get out---

ROSE

Something like a cable TV series would look mighty impressive on your application.

ALBERT

How can that...no, I don't...you think?

ROSE

Most colleges would kill to be able to raise their profile in the public eye. You could have your pick of campuses.

ALBERT

That could be good. Frankly, my SATs were weak.

ROSE

Forget SATs. I'm talking Q-ratings.

ALBERT

Yeah, Q-ratings. Yeah, let's keep this project running.

ROSE

I'm glad to hear you say that.

They shake hands.

Then Rose picks up the phone.

ROSE (CONT'D)
Tell Mr. Rafenello he can come back
in now.

EXT. QUAD -- DAY

Rob and Janelle are waiting. Albert exits the building with one the pro film crews following.

ROB
So, what happened? It's true? Are
you going to be a real TV show?

JANELLE
I'm guessing the camera crew means
yes.

ALBERT
They're very excited about this
project.

ROB
Totally fresh! Minty fresh!

JANELLE
Albert, I don't think you should do
this.

ALBERT
Are you kidding? It worked like a
dream when it was bogus. It can
only get better if it's real.

ROB
You'll have to let us know when it's
on so we can DVR it.

LONE VOICE (O.S.)
Hey! There's Albert!

Suddenly he's surrounded by his new BBFs.

INT. CAFETERIA -- DAY

Kids on line to get food. The other kids get the usual slop on a shingle but as Albert comes up with the TV crew in tow, he gets the blue plate special.

As he thanks the CAFETERIA LADY, he realizes she's all dolled-up with heavy rouge and Tammy Faye eyelashes.

Janelle and Rob are seated at a table. They wave to Albert. Beyond them are Tracy and the cool girls.

Albert heads over to Tracy and her friends, kissing each of them and making a "Duck, Duck, Goose" game of it.

ALBERT
Kiss, kiss, kiss---

They he gets to Tracy and gets a big kiss.

ALBERT (CONT'D)
Smooch.

Paul, sitting over on the other side with his team mates is watching and snaps a spork in two.

Janelle at her table crushes her juice box and it squirts all over Rob.

INT. COLLEGE EDITING BAY -- NIGHT

The group and Rose are watching some footage on the editing machine.

Footage shown:

ON SCREEN

INT. [ON SCREEN] CAFETERIA -- DAY

Albert walking along the cafeteria line, tripping and dropping from sight.

PHIL (O.S.)
This is the earlier footage. People are still becoming acclimated to the camera. Their immediate behavior is still evident but they then come around. Soon, the old pre-camera behavior is replaced by their on-camera selves.

The entire cafeteria bursts out laughing. Then they become aware of the camera, nudging each other and quickly pointing at the camera. A few go over and help him up.

INT. [ON SCREEN] SCHOOL HALL -- DAY

Janelle and Albert come walking down the hall. They stop at her locker. While she's busy with books, Tracy comes over and talks up Albert. They walk off.

The camera follows, but with a final pan to Janelle, now a small figure down the hall at her locker.

PHIL (O.S.)
And the subject's own confidence builds.

(MORE)

PHIL (O.S.) (CONT'D)

There was a time he couldn't say two words to the hottie. Now they're best buds.

END SCREEN SEGMENT

INT. EDITING BAY -- DAY

They stand at the monitor.

ROSE

What is this? A National Geographic special? This is worthless.

PHIL

It's an amazing examination of the---

JERRY

Hawthorne Effect.

PHIL

Exactly.

ROSE

Unless Hawthorne has a big family that will watch, I don't care about that. This is duller than vanilla.

WILLIE

Hey, I like vanilla.

ROSE

Maybe he can get involved in something.

School footage is running and Rose sees the Sing poster.

ROSE (CONT'D)

Freeze the frame. That's it. Perfect! He can be part of the competition.

PHIL

Excellent. Except that Albert isn't in the Sing.

ROSE

He is now.

She pulls out a cell phone.

ROSE (CONT'D)

Grace, get me Rayne Borowitz.

INT. RAYNE'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Very dark and alienated. Rayne is reading a book of poetry. Her cell phone rings.

RAYNE

Hello? Who? Yes, I'm directing the Sing. How did you get my number?

INTERCUT:

INT. ROSE'S EXECUTIVE OFFICE -- NIGHT

Rose is crunching some numbers in her computer.

ROSE

We have to talk.

RAYNE

What is it?

ROSE

My spies saw the Junior/Freshies show. It's good, I'm told.

RAYNE

So? We're solid. Wait, you have spies?

ROSE

Of course you're solid, honey. But there's no buzz. You need flash. You need some razzle-dazzle. You need heat.

RAYNE

We already put Paul Daizacker in the lead role even though he can't sing or dance. The class loves him.

ROSE

You want the popular kids in there. You want the audience rooting for us. You can go bigger.

RAYNE

Bigger?

ROSE

Who's the most popular kid right now?

RAYNE

No, no, no. I'm not going to have him come in here with his crew and screw up everything.

(MORE)

RAYNE (CONT'D)

Besides we asked him weeks ago to be in it and he said no.

ROSE

Yeah but that was back when he was a nobody.

INT. HALLWAY -- DAY

Albert is strutting down the hall, on camera. Rayne and Janelle come up to him. Janelle looks very uncomfortable.

RAYNE

Yo, Voluz, can we talk?

ALBERT

Ah, the queen of poetry and Janelle, my good personal friend. What can I do you for?

JANELLE

(mumbling)

Could you be in the sing?

ALBERT

Huh?

RAYNE

Look, we need a gimmick to hype the Senior/Soph sing. I think you're that gimmick. It would be a tremendous boost to us. We really want to win this year.

ALBERT

Really?

Rayne nudges Janelle.

JANELLE

It would be a tremendous boost.

ALBERT

What part?

RAYNE

The lead.

Janelle is shocked by this, Rayne signals her to silence.

ALBERT

Wow, the lead. That fits.
(to camera)
What do you think?

A thumb comes in with a big "thumb's up."

ALBERT (CONT'D)

Having a musical number in this show would be awesome. And it would really widen our demographics. Who's the female lead?

RAYNE

Why?

ALBERT

Tracy would be perfect.

RAYNE

Tracy it is.

JANELLE

What?

RAYNE

Great. See you at three.

ALBERT

We're a lock to win!

While Albert continues down the hall, Rayne and Janelle remain behind, arguing softly. Paul joins them. They begin to explain the situation to Paul. He's not happy.

INT. LIBRARY -- DAY

Janelle is alone, hitting the books. Rose steps in and joins her.

ROSE

Hello.

JANELLE

Oh, the cable lady.

ROSE

I have something for you.

She pulls out a script and gives it to Janelle.

JANELLE

What is this?

ROSE

We had some of our staff writers go over the script and see if they could punch it up a bit.

JANELLE

You re-wrote my script?

ROSE

Honey, you have to understand the business we're in.

JANELLE

I'm not in business. I'm in the 12th grade.

ROSE

It's nothing major. We just tweaked it a bit and strengthened your plot beats.

Janelle scans the script.

JANELLE

Where's the Magic Dude?

ROSE

Oh, we had to write him out.

JANELLE

That was Albert's part.

ROSE

It didn't suit him.

JANELLE

I wrote it for him. He's a magician.

ROSE

Well, you know, our focus group felt that magicians are kind of geeky.

JANELLE

What? I've been focus-grouped?

ROSE

No one liked him. They couldn't relate. So we have a new character. Awesome Albert.

JANELLE

This is ridiculous.

ROSE

Your classmates are depending on you. Not to mention Nielsen families everywhere. We really want to showcase Albert in the best possible light, right?

Janelle stews silently.

INT. AUDITORIUM -- AFTERNOON

Janelle and the cast and crew of the school show are in rehearsal.

Janelle is at the piano. Rayne watches with the script.

The camera crew is roaming around.

Albert leads the cast of Tracy, Ollio, the exchange student, Hort, Bill and others in a scene. Denny is dressed as a truant officer. Paul is an extra and not happy.

ALBERT

But why? Why do I stay around here?

OLLIO

Yes. School of high is a pain.

RAYNE

High school.

OLLIO

Yes, is a pain, no?

DENNY

High school is the law!

BILL

True that, truant officer.

TRACY

We do it as our fore-students before us did it; we go so we can get---

ALL

Yes? Yes?

TRACY

Our diploma!

RAYNE

Cut, cut! Marvelous, troupe. Janelle, we just need to smooth out the dialogue going into the transition. It's a little jagged around the edges.

JANELLE

I'll see what I'm allowed to do.

RAYNE

Let's do the diploma song now, please? Only a few days left!

INT. SHOP CLASS -- AFTERNOON

The class is filled with students. Each has a lump of clay. There are a couple of electric potter wheels. Albert comes into frame, dressed with a shop apron and talks to the camera.

ALBERT

So, anyway, I'm into ceramics. I've been making objects out of clay since I went to this birthday party when I was five at a pottery class. Turns out that this school used to have a ceramics shop class but got closed by budget cuts. Now, catch this, everything was in storage downstairs in the spooky, spooky basement. And the kilns, the clay ovens, have been sitting here in this room, used for storage. And the occasional pizza. So what I have done in my magnanimous way was organize a ceramics club and because some of my personal friends signed up, we were able to form this club, get a budget and pull the equipment out of mothballs. Rad-tic-cal.

He walks over to a wheel, where Tracy is ready to go, passing Janelle and Rob in the process.

ALBERT (CONT'D)

So, with my assistant, we're going to throw some clay!

Tracy and Albert are at a wheel with a lump of clay.

ALBERT (CONT'D)

The secret is moisture. You have to keep the clay wet while working it.

They dip their hands in the bucket of water. Albert turns the wheel on. He takes Tracy's hands and they begin working the clay.

ALBERT (CONT'D)

Now, working the clay is easy. Let the wheel do the work. Just slowly and evenly apply pressure on both sides.

Hands inter-clasped, Albert and Tracy work the clay up and down, up and down, until they have a long phallus shape, wet and glistening.

ALBERT (CONT'D)
 Just work the clay, gliding your
 hands and fingers over the clay.
 Steady and slow, steady and slow---

The students look on, slack-jawed.

Albert gets flushed and embarrassed. He wipes his forehead
 and leaves a big clay stain there.

INT. SHOP CLASS -- LATER

The students are filing out, messy, but happy. They look
 like they had fun, showing off their misshaped creations.

Albert is there, watching them go. He's beside a set of the
 swinging hall doors.

BUDDY
 What's that?

DENNY
 An ash tray.

BUDDY
 You don't smoke.

DENNY
 I was trying for a salad bowl but I
 didn't have enough clay.

CINDY
 You call that paperclip holder?
 This is a paperclip holder!

And they're gone.

Janelle comes out carrying her vase.

JANELLE
 What was all that about?

ALBERT
 What was what?

JANELLE
 Your Freudian ride on the potter's
 wheel.

ALBERT
 Oh. Well, sometimes a phallic symbol
 is just a phallic symbol.

JANELLE
 This is all just wrong. Don't you
 feel bad about this?

ALBERT

Why should I feel bad? Nobody felt bad when they filled my locker with pudding last year.

JANELLE

You don't know that.

ALBERT

It's all good, now. It's all working. Don't you see how "in" I am? If I were any inner, I'd implode.

JANELLE

Don't get too used to it. It's all a ploy, remember? It's not going to last. As soon as the camera is gone all this goes away.

ALBERT

Oh, well, thanks. I'm glad you have that much faith in me. You don't think I can hold on to these friends on my own?

JANELLE

They're not your friends, Albert. I'm not sure what they are but they're not your friends. A friendship goes beyond being extras on TV.

ALBERT

I've tried it the other way, Janelle. We both have. These cameras are the great equalizer. I'm clicking with the cliques now! I've got the bullies kowtowing to me! I'm sitting at the head of the cool table!

She takes his hand.

JANELLE

Is that what you always wanted? How is that better than you're already have?

ALBERT

What are you talking about?

Just then Tracy comes up and spins him around.

TRACY

Is there a problem here?

ALBERT

No problem. Janelle's just asking for some life advice.

TRACY
Everyone's headed to Pizza World,
I'll see you there.

ALBERT
Meet you at the ball pit.

She's off.

JANELLE
She, most of all, is not your friend.

ALBERT
It could happen. Once they get to
know the real me.

JANELLE
But this isn't the real you. You're
a game show host!

ALBERT
What is your problem? I finally
leave the loser ranks and you get
all in my face? What's that about?
Envy isn't a good color on you!

Albert turns and leaves through the swinging doors.

JANELLE
Wait, Albert--

The door swings back, knocking the vase out of her hand.
Janelle's vase hits the floor and breaks.

Janelle watches him go through the swinging door. Then she
bends down to pick up the pieces of her vase.

INT. ROSE'S EXECUTIVE OFFICE -- DAY

Rose is at her desk, watching this scene on her office TV.

Intercom buzzes.

GRACE (O.S.)
The editors are here to see you, Ms.
Bellows.

She pauses the TV player.

ROSE
Send them in.

Phil, Willie and Jerry enter, each carrying a bottle of water.

ROSE (CONT'D)
Hello, boys.

PHIL

Good to see you again, Ms. Bellows.

ROSE

I've seen the footage you put together for the first episode.

WILLIE

Yes.

ROSE

I'm sorry. It's not working. I mean, why do we care about the mousy friend. She's a real buzz-kill. And frankly, you're showing everyone being way too aware of the camera. Way too meta. We're going to have to bring in some other people to cut the footage.

JERRY

What?

PHIL

Are you firing us?

ROSE

To an extent. More like outsourcing. To our editors in India.

PHIL

This is my project. You just can't take over it like that.

ROSE

You did sign over all rights to us with your contract. Look, it's nothing personal. I barely know you guys.

INT. ELEVATOR -- MOMENTS LATER

The trio are riding down.

JERRY

That was sudden and unexpected.

WILLIE

So we're out.

PHIL

No yet. Let's go to the source.

Phil pulls out his cell phone. Willie pulls a second bottle of water out of his pocket.

WILLIE

Now I don't feel so bad about taking
this extra water.

INT. COLLEGE THEATER -- EVENING

Phil, Willie and Jerry are in the back. Another film festival
is in progress.

Albert steps in wearing a hoodie and dark glasses. He takes
a few steps and falls. Getting up, he takes off his sun
glasses and joins Phil and them.

PHIL

You alone?

ALBERT

Yeah. What's up?

WILLIE

She canned us.

JERRY

We're off the show.

ALBERT

Why?

PHIL

She didn't like the edit we put
together.

ALBERT

She didn't? Why not?

WILLIE

'Cause she's a suit, man. She doesn't
understand the creative process at
all.

PHIL

She was culling, man. And culling
hard.

Audience shushes them.

ALBERT

I'm going to assume that's a bad
thing.

JERRY

Look, Albert, you've got plenty of
juice with these people. You could
get us back on.

ALBERT

Hey, guys, I'm sure Rose had her reasons for letting you off the project, but I'm only the talent here. I really have to defer to her on these kind of matters.

PHIL

What?

ALBERT

I'm reluctant to interfere with her vision.

Phil rises up in anger but Willie and Jerry hold him down. The audience shushes them.

JERRY

So, that's it?

ALBERT

Maybe I can get you back on as one of the second units.

PHIL

Oh, gosh, would you?

ALBERT

For you guys? Of course!

Albert puts his sunglasses back on.

ALBERT (CONT'D)

Ciao!

He leaves, stumbles and falls. Audience shushes him. Albert gets up and shushes them back.

ALBERT (CONT'D)

How do you like that? I guess now the shush is on the other foot!

He leaves.

PHIL

Why that miserable little twerp!

WILLIE

I can't believe he did that.

JERRY

What now?

PHIL

What now? What now? He wants to be a star, we'll make him a star.

(MORE)

PHIL (CONT'D)

Jerry, you still have access to the digital footage?

JERRY

Sure. Megabytes of it. I backed it all up on the cloud.

PHIL

Willie, you're going to edit like you've never edited before.

INT. ALBERT'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Albert is on his bed reading when the cell phone rings.

ALBERT

Yell-ow!

INTERCUT:

INT. MATT'S DORM ROOM -- NIGHT

Matt is on his computer with the website, i-Tube, up.

MATT

Albert, get on i-Tube right now.

ALBERT

What's up?

MATT

I'm sending you the link.

Albert gets his PC and the email pops up. He clicks onto i-Tube. A video starts playing: "A sneak preview of the new Maple Ridge High reality show."

INT. [ON VIDEO] PIZZA WORLD -- DAY

It's Albert stepping out of a birthday party.

ALBERT

--That oughta hold the little bastards for a while.

EXT. [ON VIDEO] SCHOOL YARD -- DAY

Rob and Albert talking.

ALBERT

I can't believe Janelle. She said I couldn't hold on to any of these friends without the cameras! Why do I even hang around with her? She's hosing my mellow, man. Hanging with her is a real mistake.

INSERT:

The website's "times view" counter starts increasing.

INT. PAUL'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Paul's on i-Tube watching the video.

EXT. [ON VIDEO] SCHOOL YARD -- DAY

Albert talking.

ALBERT

One of the things we'll be doing is heading down to the Homecoming game and watch everyone fawn over the knuckle-draggers. Until they realize I'm there. Then those witless sport fans will be all over me. Suck that, Paul.

INT. CINDY'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Cindy's watching it on her laptop.

INT. HORT'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Hort is watching it on his cell phone.

ALBERT

I can't believe how pliable these kids are. Just like I predicted. I hold this school in the palm of my hand. How did they stand their boring little lives before this happened?

INT. SID'S ROOM -- NIGHT

The nebbish Sid is watching it on some nicely-placed product.

INT. ROSE'S EXECUTIVE OFFICE -- NIGHT

Rose is watching it on her PC. The phone rings. It's the Boss.

BOSS (O.S.)

Rose!!!

ROSE

Yes, sir?

BOSS (O.S.)

Shut it down.

ROSE

But sir---

BOSS (O.S.)

Great show; Letting this moron insult all this classmates. Great if we were at Don Rickles High. Shut it down before the PTA revolts against us.

INT. ALBERT'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Albert's cell phone starts to blow up. The group texts are popping up on Albert's screen saying things like, "You jerk!", "How could you say that?", "I hate you", "You're dead to me!", "Delete your account" and "Delete your life!"

Albert is stunned.

INT. JANELLE'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Janelle is at her computer, weeping as the video plays. On her desk is her vase which she had been gluing back together.

INT. ALBERT'S ROOM -- MORNING

The chicken alarm clock goes off.

Albert's arm comes out from under the blanket of the messy bed and fumbles around looking for the clock. Finally, he knocks it off the nightstand. But it keeps playing.

The hand pulls back in and comes out with a heavy textbook. It drops the book and the alarm stops.

MOM (O.S.)

C'mon, Albert! Up!

Albert comes out of the covers.

ALBERT

Man, I need a new alarm clock. Maybe the witness protection plan will supply a new one.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALL -- MORNING

Albert emerges from his room. Rebecca, dashes into the bathroom, beating him out.

ALBERT

Hey! I was going in there!

MOM (O.S.)

Breakfast!

ALBERT

Becky, get out of there!

REBECCA (O.S.)
Go eat your cereal, slowpoke.

ALBERT
Just remember, Mom and Dad kept all
the receipts from the baby broker
for you!

He stomps off back into his bedroom.

INT. ALBERT'S ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Albert is back under his covers. Dad knocks and enters.

DAD
Rough night?

ALBERT
I've been trying to figure out a way
to deal with this whole mess at
school.

DAD
And?

ALBERT
I think I have a way.

DAD
What is it?

ALBERT
You can home school me.

DAD
Hiding at home isn't going to solve
the problem.

ALBERT
It is if the problem was looking for
a good place to hide.

DAD
So this clip winds up on the Internet.
Seriously, how many people are even
going to see it?

ALBERT
I'm getting hate mail from Japan and
Kyrgyzstan.

DAD
Okay. World Wide Web; I get it.
But you're not hiding out in my house.
Now get dressed and get going.

ALBERT

But Dad---

DAD

Hiding from life is not a viable option.

ALBERT

I can do everything online!

DAD

Don't they have cyber-bullying too?

ALBERT

Touché.

DAD

So, here's an adult secret: it's never going to get easier. I hope you realize there aren't any real shortcuts to being yourself. Now get going.

EXT. STREET -- MORNING

Albert's walking. Some STUDENTS are approaching. They see him and cross the street to avoid him.

ALBERT

Great, I went from invisible to repulsive.

EXT. MAPLE RIDGE HIGH SCHOOL -- MORNING

Albert comes walking up to the school. A lot of students are waiting there, standing in their old cliques.

Tracy steps up and slaps Albert.

The student body breaks up laughing.

Some Cheerleaders pass by.

CINDY

Gimme an "L".

They each hold up their thumb and forefinger as a "L" to their forehead (the international sign for "Loser") and glare at Albert as they leave. The school bell rings and everyone files in, including Janelle and Rob.

Rayne catches up to Paul.

RAYNE

Paul, you want the lead part back?

Albert is left standing on the sidewalk, alone. Suddenly, a pair of Albert's old sneakers drop on his head from the wires.

INT. CAFETERIA -- DAY

Paul is at his table with the old gang back in tow.

PAUL

Well, I'm glad that's over with.
How that feeb thought he could take
over just boggles my head.

SID

Boggles.

PAUL

What are you doing here? The old
world order is restored! Get back
to your own table!

Sid hurries off with his tray.

Tracy comes walking in. She's very sullen. Paul sees her and waves her over. She just turns and leaves.

Paul gets up and hurries after her.

INT. HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

Paul catches up to Tracy.

PAUL

Hey, Tracy, hey. Where you going?
Don't you get it? The natural social
order has been restored. No more
nerd-at-large. Things can get back
to normal now.

TRACY

Oh, can they? What is so great about
normal?

She pulls away and leaves.

PAUL

Man, she has gone lesbo.

INT. ENGLISH CLASS -- DAY

Mrs. Wendell is welcoming the class.

MRS. WENDELL

Welcome to the first normal day of
English class, video-free!

BILL
Did you check Voluz? Maybe his binder
is a camera!

The class bursts out laughing. Albert does a fake "ha-ha."
Robert looks over and shrugs. Janelle just looks away.
Tracy looks sullen.

EXT. FIELD -- DAY

Albert alone, trying to get a kite up. It finally takes
off. He just stands far below the kite, alone in an empty
lot.

INT. GYM -- DAY

Class is set up for Dodgeball. Both sides rush to the middle
and the kids grab the balls. Everyone turns toward Albert
and everyone pelts Albert with his ball.

FREEZE FRAME. GRAPHIC: "Had it coming!"

INT. ALBERT'S ROOM -- NIGHT

At the PC, Albert's Facebook page comes up. Shows everyone
online. He sends out a general "hi" and watches as everyone
signs off.

INT. SHOP CLASS -- DAY

Albert is sitting at a potters wheel alone. All alone. A
lump of clay slowly spins untouched.

INT. BOY'S ROOM -- DAY

Albert is washing his hands. Paul enters with his crew.
They ignore him. Albert thinks a moment, then goes to a
toilet stall. Standing there, he flushes, basically inviting
a flushing.

Paul gives him the once over, shakes his head and leaves,
can't be bothered.

Albert is disappointed.

INT. GYM

The class is set up for half-court basketball. Then everyone
holding a basketball turns and pelts Albert with the
basketballs.

FREEZE FRAME. GRAPHIC: "Nothing but Nerd!"

INT. AUDITORIUM -- AFTERNOON

The sing cast is deep in rehearsal. Albert's face is pressed
against the door, peering in.

INT. CAFETERIA -- AFTERNOON

Albert comes in bearing his bagged lunch and water bottle.

He heads over to a table of STUDENTS where there's a seat open.

ALBERT
Free seat?

BUDDY
(glaring)
What seat?

ALBERT
Oh. Okay.

He heads over to another table. He reaches it just as Bill leaps into it. The table applauds.

ALBERT (CONT'D)
By all means, you take it.

He looks and sees Rob and Janelle eating together. They are avoiding eye contact.

He walks over and sees Ollio, the exchange student, still seated alone. Finding his resolve, he heads on over and sits.

ALBERT (CONT'D)
Crow bitta tak.

Ollio glares.

OLLIO
Feek barra rump!

He gets up and leaves.

INT. AUDITORIUM -- LATER

It's empty now, except for Albert sitting in a seat, eating his lunch.

The stage is open and decorated for the Sing. Tracy walks in and sits behind Albert.

TRACY
Albert?

ALBERT
Oh, man, you're not going to slap me again, are you?

TRACY

No, no. I just wanted to see if you're all right.

ALBERT

Me? Why?

TRACY

I know why you did it.

ALBERT

Why?

TRACY

The same reason I do it. You don't want to be alone.

ALBERT

You do it? Tracy, you kidding me? You're the queen of Maple Ridge high.

TRACY

Which is great until we graduate, right? I have no home life. So I made Maple Ridge my life. My life is the pits, okay? So, maybe it's shallow but if I can turn my looks into an escape, I will.

ALBERT

Escape?

TRACY

I thought maybe, just maybe, this stupid show of yours could rescue me. Maybe I could've been discovered.

ALBERT

Oh.

TRACY

Yeah, maybe some big shot somewhere would have seen me and say we need to hire that girl. I could act in something. I could host something.

ALBERT

I didn't mean to screw that up for you.

TRACY

You're lucky. You have a plan. You have something to look forward to.

ALBERT

Before I got sidetracked with this lunacy.

TRACY

You got sidetracked, is all.

They get up and start to walk on stage.

TRACY (CONT'D)

You put on quite a show.

ALBERT

I can't lie. It was really great while it lasted. Everything. For a while I was part of this community. Everyone was.

TRACY

It certainly shook things up. I need to thank you.

ALBERT

You're welcome. For what?

TRACY

You wanted something and you did something to get it. Granted, it was something stupid, but you did it. If I want something, I'm going to have to do something, too.

ALBERT

Like what?

TRACY

I've sent in applications to NYU, to Columbia, to Northwestern. If I'm going to get out of here, I have to do it on my own, not ride someone else's coattails. I have a future to map out.

ALBERT

So we're cool?

TRACY

We're cool.

He passes a trash bin. His costume is in it. That hurts. Then he sees a copy of the script. He gets it and opens it up to the page that introduces the Magic Dude.

ALBERT

Oh, man.

TRACY

What is it?

Albert hands the script to Tracy.

ALBERT
Janelle's script. The original.

TRACY
(reading)
"Enter The Magic Dude. A quirky boy who doesn't seem like much, the better to surprise everyone with his gift."

ALBERT
Is there anything I haven't screwed up?

TRACY
It's nothing that can't be fixed.

ALBERT
By someone competent.

TRACY
You can win her back.

ALBERT
How?

TRACY
A grand gesture always works. Show her what she means to you. She does mean something to you, doesn't she?

ALBERT
Well, yeah, I mean, my plan worked, and I got all this stuff going on; people sharing interests and hobbies. But in the end I couldn't even share it with her. And she's my best...my best girl. My friend. My girl. My...girlfriend. My god, she was my girlfriend all this time and I didn't even realize it? Am I a dope or what?

TRACY
You're a dope.

ALBERT
Thanks for the confirmation but it was kind of rhetorical. But I can use your help.

TRACY
For?

ALBERT
A grand gesture.

INT. CLASSROOM -- AFTERNOON

Albert steps in, interrupting the Robotics Club as they assemble the new version of their robot, with an inflatable doll as part of it. Rob looks up from his wiring.

ROB
What do you want?

ALBERT
I want you to stop it. I want you to stop avoiding me.

ROB
Why should I?

ALBERT
Well, for starters, it was kinda your idea.

ROB
That was my idea?

ALBERT
I emphasis "kinda."

ROB
Yeah, so?

ALBERT
Oh, and two more words: spill-over. You made out okay riding my fame train.

ROB
I suppose.

ALBERT
After all we've been through; the pants-ing, the locker-stuffing, the Indian burns, you're going to bail on me now?

ROB
I think they're called Native-American burns now.

ALBERT
Probably. Anyway, I need help. I need to make amends. It's still our senior year, dude.

Rob thinks and nods.

ROB
Dude.

They bump fists.

They are then joined by the fembot.

ROB (CONT'D)

Oh, check it out, it's our fembot.

ALBERT

Well, look at you, Dr. Frankenstein,
all creating aberrations.

ROB

Turns out re-wiring a robot is easier
than rewiring a TV remote. And catch
this; these guys not only play video
games, they create them!

INT. CLASSROOM -- AFTERNOON

It's the very beatnik-centric poetry reading club. Rayne
recites her poem.

RAYNE

Round about, Round about.
You simply spin yarns.
The truth is an obstacle.
For you to negate.

Albert pokes his head in. A book is hurled at him and he
ducks out. A moment later, his hand comes in, waving a white
handkerchief.

ALBERT

Rayne, please, I have to talk to
you.

EXT. MOE'S MAGIC SHOPPE -- DAY

Albert, Rob, Rayne and Tracy walk into the shop.

INT. AUDITORIUM -- NIGHT

It's the night of the big show. The audience is packed with
friends and family.

There's a table to the side with alumni JUDGES taking notes.
On the table sits the winner's trophy.

On stage, a group of girls are doing a tap dance. The mascot,
a Rooster, hops around the sidelines as the cast performs.

PAUL

We do it as our fore-students before
us did it; we go so we can get---

ALL

Yes? Yes?

PAUL
Our diploma!

ALL
Hurrah!

Janelle starts playing the tune "Oklahoma!" The actors each pull out a diploma and sing:

ALL (CONT'D)
(To Oklahoma!))
Oh, diploma; what the class gets
graduation day
And the campus grounds fill with
caps and gowns
As the seniors rule all they survey
Oh, diploma
Ev'ry kid gets sheepie skin good-
byes
Every end of June they play that
tune
Makin' students into alumni
We got the old parchment in hand
Now we can blow this pop stand!
And when we say, you freshman clear
the way!
We're only sayin'
You're doin' fine, With diplomas
With diplomas, okay!

Janelle is at the piano, playing away, looking very pleased.

The number comes to a close, the curtains close and the stage goes dark.

Janelle looks confused, flipping through the script. Rob's voice comes over the sound system. Flashing strobes start.

ROB (O.S.)
And now, the grand finale, a rare
appearance by the Magic Dude.

The curtain opens to reveal Albert in his wizard outfit and Groucho Marx glasses.

Rebecca is rolling her eyes. Dad and Mom look confused. Mom flips through the program.

ALBERT
I've got spirit, yes I do! I got
spirit! How about you?

He waves his arms and two flash pots go off. The audience is hooked.

ALBERT (CONT'D)
 I like the classics; like pulling a
 rabbit out of a hat. Assistant!
 Bring me my hat!

Rob comes out, carrying a top hat, held out at his waist.
 Albert waves his hand over the hat.

ALBERT (CONT'D)
 Yes, siree, you can't go wrong with
 the classics.

Albert reaches into the hat.

ALBERT (CONT'D)
 Now I'll say the magic word; Alcatraz!

ROB
 Alcatraz? I thought it was alakazam.

ALBERT
 It's Alcatraz because I'm helping
 the bunny to escape.

He reaches further and further into the hat, up to his
 shoulder.

ALBERT (CONT'D)
 Wait, wait, I got something!

He pulls up a pair of underwear. He holds it up. It says
 "property of Maple Ridge High School" on the back.

Rob grabs it away and hurries off stage.

The audience and judges are enjoying the act.

Albert grimaces and decides he needs to wipe his hands. He
 pulls a handkerchief out of his pocket and a long string of
 hankies come out. The last one is a flag that says, "Go
 Maple Ridge Roosters!"

Meanwhile, a hand comes out the side of the curtain, beckoning
 Janelle to come backstage. She heads back.

ALBERT (CONT'D)
 Moving on. I'll just get my magic
 wand...

He pulls out a magic wand and it goes limp. He tries to
 straighten it out, but it keeps drooping.

Just then, Tracy, in a sexy outfit, crosses the stage. The
 wand goes straight.

Mom cringes in audience.

MOM

I wish he wouldn't work blue.

ALBERT

You know what, let's forget all this
and go straight to the big finale.
Bring out the magic box!

Rob and Tracy wheel out the magic cabinet last seen in Moe's
Magic Shoppe.

MOM

How did he---?

DAD

Let's just say he'll be doing the
dishes for a long time.

Rob and Tracy exit.

ALBERT

I thought senior year was going to
suck. Granted, I was basing that on
the previous three years. I thought
I had a way to spice things up.

He pulls out magic dust and sprinkles it around.

ALBERT (CONT'D)

I thought I could make myself
something I'm not and try and impress
people.

He steps into the cabinet, tapping on the walls, closing the
door, then opening it back up.

ALBERT (CONT'D)

But I couldn't. And doing that,
well, I made my life emptier than
this cabinet.

He closes the door again and turns it around three times.

ALBERT (CONT'D)

I tried to fill it with a lot of
stupid, vapid things when there was
only one thing that could fill this
void.

He waves his wand. Then he opens the cabinet. A confused
Janelle is inside.

ALBERT (CONT'D)

Janelle.

JANELLE

Albert! How did you---?

ALBERT

Magic.

JANELLE

I don't know what you're up to---

ALBERT

Wait, Janelle.

JANELLE

What do you want now? You need a second take?

ALBERT

I want to apologize.

JANELLE

Do you? And this is off the record?

ALBERT

That's over, Janelle. You know it. I let it get out of hand.

JANELLE

Or maybe you got exactly what you wanted?

She looks over to Tracy.

ALBERT

No, no. I was wrong.

JANELLE

How wrong?

ALBERT

Amazingly wrong. Stupendously wrong. You got a thesaurus?

JANELLE

I can't believe how you changed.

ALBERT

I'll never go on TV again. Heck, I won't even own a TV if you say so. I'm sorry, I'm a jerk.

JANELLE

I'm sorry you're a jerk, too.

ALBERT

Funny.

JANELLE

You're right, though, I was jealous, Albert.

(MORE)

JANELLE (CONT'D)

I had you to myself all these years
and I couldn't take you being with
everyone else. Don't you ever put
me in that situation again.

ALBERT

No prob. Like I was saying, my world
may not have been very big, but with
you, it was very full.

He pulls out a bouquet of flowers from his sleeve and presents
them to Janelle.

ALBERT (CONT'D)

I don't need popularity. I don't
need a documentary. I just need
you.

Tracy is in the wings.

TRACY

(chanting)

Forgive him, forgive him.

The audience takes up the chant.

They kiss.

The curtains close to huge applause.

INT. BACKSTAGE -- CONTINUOUS

They continue to kiss as the cast gathers around. Paul throws
his hands up in disgust.

Mrs. Wendell comes out.

MRS. WENDELL

Curtain up, take your bows!

The curtain goes up.

Suddenly, Rose comes in, with Phil, Willie and Jerry filming
again.

ROSE

There you are!

PAUL

Lookit! Lookit! He's at it again!

ALBERT

Oh, no, no, no. What are you doing
here?

ROSE
That video clip, instead of alienating
the viewing public, it attracted
more than ever! It was a great
promotional tool. The show's back
on.

Cast cheers.

ROSE (CONT'D)
There's just one thing...

ALBERT
What?

ROSE
Well, it seems when we bought the
rights to the project from these
guys...
(indicting Phil and
them)
...We got the signed releases from
everyone except Janelle and Rob---

ROB
Well, duh. We didn't sign because
it wasn't for real.

PAUL
I knew it!

HORT
Shut up, Paul.

ROSE
Right. But now it is, so we need
release forms from you, Janelle and
Albert.

Everyone turns to Albert as Rose pulls out a form and pen
and hands it to him. He looks at the group. He looks at
Janelle. He looks at the form.

He tears it up.

ALBERT
No way am I going through that again.
I've had all the fame I can deal
with.

JANELLE
Me, too.

They kiss again.

Paul approaches Rose and the crew.

PAUL

Hey, look, if you're looking for
someone who's cable ready...

The camera pulls back from the scene to reveal:

INT. LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

We're in a fancy, futuristic living room and the Albert and Janelle kiss video is playing on a wide-screen hi-tech television. Graphics "The End" come up on the TV picture.

Janelle's Sing trophy sits on the wall unit next to the set and the repaired vase.

A hand comes into view holding a video game control pad. A button is pushed and the TV gets turned off and the lights dim.

THE END

FREEZE FRAME. GRAPHIC: Hearts and flowers.

FADE TO BLACK.