

**"MAN ON THE MOON"**

Written by

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**FIRST DRAFT**

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FADE IN:

INT. VOID - DAY

Sitting in a nonexistent set is ANDY KAUFMAN, looking a bit nervous. Wide-eyed, tentative, he stares at us with a needy, unsettling cuteness. His hair is slicked-down, and he wears his father's loud blazer.

Finally, Andy speaks -- in a peculiar FOREIGN ACCENT.

ANDY (AS FOREIGN MAN)

Hallo. I am Andy. Welcoom to my movie.

(beat; he gets upset)

It was very good of you to come... but now you should leave. Because this movie ees terrible! It is all LIES! Tings are out of order... people are mixed-up... I rue the day I signed dat release!

(he composes himself)

So... just go. Tell de manager you want your mooney back. If you leave right now, he has to give you a refund.

(he thinks)

Or just sneak into another theater. Maybe they have one of those "event" movies. Well, bye-bye.

Long pause. Andy sits patiently and HUMS... watching his imaginary audience leave and march up the aisles.

Beat -- then a sly smile. Andy leans in and WHISPERS.

ANDY (AS FOREIGN MAN)

Okay, good. Just my friends are left. I wanted to get rid of dose other people... they would have laughed in de wrong places.

(beat)

I was only kidding about de movie... it is actually VERY GOOD! It shows everything... from me as a little boy until my death --

(his eyes pop; he covers his mouth)

Oops!! I wasn't supposed to talk about that! Oh. Eh, uh, we better just begin. It starts back in Great Neck, Long Island...

Andy picks up a little toy Super 8 movie viewer. He peeks in, holds it to the light and hits a button. WHIR! Andy smiles.

ANDY (AS FOREIGN MAN)

Oh, yes. I remember it well...

CUT TO:

EXT. KAUFMAN HOME - 1957 - DAY

Great Neck, 1957. An upper-class Jewish neighborhood with large homes. In the street, a group of crewcut BOYS plays t-ball, laughing and shouting.

A fat convertible drives up, pulling in front of the smallest house. STANLEY KAUFMAN, 40, gets out, still in his suit. He's a well-meaning slave to his job -- tired, responsible.

Stanley goes over to admire the t-ball game. At bat is his son MICHAEL, 6, a natural charmer. Michael swings -- CRACK! -- and hits a solid single. Stanley smiles.

STANLEY

That's my boy! Good swingin', kiddo.  
(warm beat; then, a look)  
Hey -- Michael... where's your  
brother?

MICHAEL

He's inside.

Instantly -- Stanley's mood turns black. He frowns angrily, then snatches his briefcase and marches in.

INT. KAUFMAN HOUSE - SAME TIME

Baby CAROL is crying. Mom JANICE, 35, quickly peels carrots, trying to get dinner made. Stanley marches past.

STANLEY

Is he in his room?

JANICE

Of course he's in his room.  
(aggravated)  
All his "friends" are in there.

Stanley glowers. He huffs upstairs.

OUTSIDE ANDY'S ROOM

Stanley hurries up to Andy's shut door. We hear little Andy doing VOICES.

ANDY (o.s.)

(as WORRIED GIRL)

But Professor, why are the monsters  
growing so big?

(now as BRITISH PROFESSOR)

It's something in the jungle water.  
I need to crack the secret code.

Stanley rolls his eyes. He opens the door... revealing ANDY, 8, performing for the wall. Andy is happy and enthusiastic... as long as he's acting.

ANDY  
 (as BRITISH PROFESSOR)  
 Maybe I should talk to the natives.  
 (as dancing NATIVES)  
 Shoom boom boo ba! Shoom boom boo  
 ba --

STANLEY  
 Andy!

ANDY  
 (startled)  
 Oh!  
 (as ANNOUNCER)  
 Um... we're experiencing technical  
 difficulties. We'll return to the  
 Million Dollar Movie after these  
 messages.

Frustrated, Stanley stares at his son. Turned off, the boy now  
 seems introverted... and awkward.

STANLEY  
 Andy, this has to stop. Our house  
 isn't a television station. There  
 is not a camera in that wall.

Andy glances over at the wall. Hmm.

STANLEY  
 (trying to cope)  
 Son... listen to me. It isn't  
 healthy. You should be outside,  
 playing sports.

ANDY  
 But I've got a sports show.  
 Championship wrestling, at five.

STANLEY  
 (he blows his top)  
 You know that's not what I meant!  
 Look, I'm gonna put my foot down! No  
more playing alone. You wanna  
 perform, you GOTTA have an audience!

ANDY  
 (he points at the wall)  
 B-but I have them.

STANLEY  
 No! That is NOT an audience! That  
 is PLASTER! An audience is people  
 made of flesh! They live and breathe!  
 And I won't have a son of mine playing  
 under... er... any other conditions!

Frazzled, Stanley turns and storms out. The door SLAMS.

ANGLE - ANDY

Well! He looks sadly at his wall, then considers his options. What to do...?

CUT TO:

INT. FAMILY ROOM - DAY

Baby Carol sits in her crib, sucking a pacifier. Andy's hands suddenly YANK her out.

INT. ANDY'S ROOM - DAY

Andy hurries in and plops Carol down on the floor. She dutifully sits there, deadpan, unable to crawl.

Andy returns to the center of the room. He resumes his show.

ANDY  
(as ANNOUNCER)  
Live! From Midtown Arena, it's  
Wrestling!! Today, the return of evil  
Buddy "Nature Boy" Rogers!  
(he turns into sneering BUDDY  
ROGERS and struts around)  
I WILL DESTROY YOU! I'VE GOT THE  
BRAINS!

Baby Carol giggles.

CUT TO:

EXT. GREAT NECK - 1961 - DAY

Birthday BALLOONS twirl in front of a fancy colonial home.

Suddenly, Stanley and Andy drive up. Now 12-YEAR-OLD ANDY hops out, wearing a cape and top hat. He hurries to the front door and knocks. Beat -- then a MOM and DAD answer it. They smile and formally shake his hand. Andy bows.

Back at the car, Stanley lifts out a giant CASE. He starts lugging it up the stairs...

INT. FANCY HOME - LATER

The case is unpacked. Andy has set-up a stage in the living room. He is performing for FOUR-YEAR-OLDS... and they are entranced.

Andy is doing the "milk pitcher trick." A tiny BOY holds up a cone of newspaper, and Andy pours a stream of milk into it.

Andy has newfound confidence... and an easy rapport.

ANDY (12 YEARS OLD)  
So Tom, do you drink lots of milk?

TOM  
(giggling nervously)  
Yeah...

ANDY  
You know, milk is good for us. It  
makes our bones strong. You should  
drink eight cups of milk every day.  
(a devilish grin)  
But Tom's gonna drink eight cups right  
now!!

Andy suddenly UNFURLS the newspaper and snaps it over the kids' heads. They all SCREAM happily and duck.

But the milk is gone.

The crowd WHOOOs.

IN THE BACK

A group of PARENTS drink cocktails. They are impressed.

MOM  
It's a hell of a show for five  
dollars.

Behind the group stands Stanley, quiet. He is very proud.

AT THE SHOW

Andy comes down and sits with the kids.

ANDY  
And now, it's time for Andy's Fun  
House. I've written a song, specially  
for this party! Are you ready?? I'll  
say the animal, and you make his  
sound! Okay? Okay!  
(he starts to SING)  
"Oh, the cow goes....."

KIDS  
MOO!!

ANDY  
(he's pleased)  
"And the dog goes....."

KIDS  
WOOF!!

ANDY  
"And the cat says....."

DISSOLVE TO:

CLOSEUP - ANDY

now GROWN UP. 26-years-old, still performing the song.

DRUNK AUDIENCE

MEOW!!

WIDE

It's 1975. A small, hip New York nightclub.

ANDY

"And the bird says..."

DRUNK AUDIENCE

TWEET!!

ANDY

"And the lion goes..."

DRUNK AUDIENCE

ROAR!!

ANDY

"And that's the way it goes!"  
(he grins)

Thank you. Goodbye, boys and girls!

Andy takes a bow. There's faint scattered applause.

Andy sighs. A burly TUXEDOED MANAGER steps onstage. He shoots Andy a disgruntled look, then takes the mike.

MANAGER

The comedy stylings of Andy Kaufman,  
ladies and gentlemen!

In the b.g., Andy starts packing up. Hand puppets, conga drums, a phonograph, all his junk goes into the big bulky case from his childhood.

CUT TO:

NIGHTCLUB - LATER

The club is empty. At the bar, the Manager cleans up. Andy eagerly comes over. Offstage, his presence is soft, placid -- his voice barely above a whisper.

ANDY

So, Mr. Besserman, same slot  
tomorrow...?

MANAGER

(awkward)

Eh, I dunno... Andy. I'm... thinkin'  
of letting you go...

ANDY

You're firing me??

(beat)

You don't even pay me!

MANAGER

Look -- I don't wanna seem insulting.  
But... your act is like amateur hour:  
Singalongs... puppets... playing  
records...

A stunned beat. Andy is hurt.

ANDY

What do you want? "Take my wife,  
please"??

MANAGER

Sure! Comedy! Make jokes about the  
traffic. Do impressions. Maybe a  
little blue material...

ANDY

I don't swear. I -- I don't do what  
everyone else does!

MANAGER

Well, everyone else gets this place  
cookin'! Pal, it's hard for me to  
move booze when you're singin' "Pop  
Goes The Weasel."

Andy stares, disheartened.

MANAGER

I'm sorry. You're finished here.

An uncomfortable beat -- and then Andy starts crying.

The Manager is dumbfounded. He doesn't know what to do.

Tears are rolling down Andy's cheeks. He's pitiful.

The Manager is confused -- totally disoriented.

Shamed, Andy covers his face, then runs out. Silence. The  
Manager stares after him... having no idea what just happened.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHTCLUB - SAME TIME

Sobbing Andy bursts out the door. He steps onto the sidewalk  
-- and IMMEDIATELY STOPS CRYING. Just like that.

Andy lifts his big case and starts walking. Andy shakes his  
head angrily.

He turns down a dark street -- and TWO MEN start following him.  
Andy glances back and moves faster. He's alone in Hell's  
Kitchen, a frightening neighborhood late at night. The men walk  
faster. Andy wants to speed up, but is slowed by the case.

Their shadows close in. Andy is trapped. Resigned, he puts  
down the case and slowly turns. The two thugs glare menacingly.



THUG #1  
Give us your wallet.

The guy flashes a KNIFE.

Andy stares fearfully. An anxious moment. He thinks... considering his options.

Then, he suddenly stammers in a thick FOREIGN ACCENT.

ANDY (AS FOREIGN MAN)  
I -- doo not understand!!

THUG #1  
Give us your money!

ANDY (AS FOREIGN MAN)  
What?? What mooney? Abu daboo! I do not have mooney!

The thugs glance at each other.

ANDY (AS FOREIGN MAN)  
Please! I just move to America yezterday! I do not know!!

THUG #1  
What's in the case?

ANDY (AS FOREIGN MAN)  
NO! Eet, eet is just perzonal trifles from my homeland --

THUG #2  
Shut up! Gimme that thing!

The guy snatches the case. He impulsively BREAKS the lock.

The suitcase opens -- and clothes, congas and records fall out.

The thugs are dismayed.

THUG #1  
Goddamn immigrants!

THUG #2  
This guy's pathetic. Let's go.

Harsh glances. They angrily pocket the knife and leave.

Andy takes a nervous breath, then starts picking his things off the street. He shouts after the guys:

ANDY (AS FOREIGN MAN)  
Tank you veddy much...!

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW YORK IMPROV - NIGHT

The Improv, the biggest comedy club around. People are lined up, buying tickets.

A man walks up -- GEORGE SHAPIRO, 40s, a Hollywood talent manager. George is old school: Bronx accent, shmooze and a hug... but with a surprising sweetness that is quite disarming.

George gets in line. Inside, owner BUDD FRIEDMAN sees him and comes out.

BUDD

George! For Christ's sake, you don't have to wait in line.

Budd smiles and pulls George in.

INT. IMPROV - SAME TIME

The bar is packed with COMICS and SHOW BIZ TYPES. A few turn and wave -- "George!" "George!" George greets an OLDER MAN.

GEORGE

Hey, congrats. I heard your show got renewed.

OLDER MAN

Yeah, thank God. How 'bout Van Dyke as a guest star?

GEORGE

Sure. Pay his quote.

George smiles and drifts away. He turns and goes into the SHOWROOM

Where the show's in progress. A WAITRESS sees George, runs over, and hugs him. She gives him a front row table.

George sits -- then gives the stage his undivided attention. Up there is a WISEASS COMIC.

WISEASS COMIC

So I'm getting my mother-in-law a special Christmas present: A pre-paid funeral! The mortician asked me if I wanted her buried, embalmed or cremated. I said, "Make it all three! I'm not takin' any chances!"

(the crowd LAUGHS)

Thank you. Good night!

The comic waves and exits. APPLAUSE. George politely claps. A PIANO PLAYER jumps in with an unbeat show tune.

We think there's a break... when Andy suddenly, awkwardly steps on stage. He is in character as Foreign Man. Pink jacket, tie, hair slicked back, frightened like a deer in headlights. He puts down his big case, pulls out various junk, and arranges it on chairs.

The room hushes, uncertain as to who the hell this guy is. Andy tentatively grabs the mike. The stagefright is agony.

ANDY (AS FOREIGN MAN)

Now? Now...?

(looking around)

Tank you veddy much. I am very happy to be here. I tink -- this is a very beautiful place. But one ting I do not like is too much traffic. Tonight I had to come from, eh, and the freeway, it was so much traffic. It took me an hour and a half to get here!

Andy chuckles, as if this were a punchline.

Silence. The crowd is baffled.

ANDY (AS FOREIGN MAN)

But -- talking about the terrible things: My wife. Take my wife, please take her.

Yikes. A few NERVOUS LAUGHS.

Andy gestures, as if they got the joke.

ANDY (AS FOREIGN MAN)

No really, I am only foolink. I love my wife very much. But she don't know how to cook. You know, one time, she make steak and mashed potato. Ehh, and the night before, she make spaghetti and meatballs. Her cooking is so bad... is terrible.

People are embarrassed. Some avert their eyes. A couple hipsters laugh mockingly.

George leans forward. Andy wipes sweat from his brow.

ANDY (AS FOREIGN MAN)

Right now, I would like to do for you some imitations. So first, I would like to imitate Archie Bunker.

(no change in his voice)

"You stupid, everybody ees stupid! Ehh, get, get out of my chair Meathead... go in the, eh, Dingbat get into the kitchen, making the food! Ehh, everybody ees stupid! I don't like nobody, ees so stupid!"

Pleased, he proudly bows. Some people BOO and walk out. A few giggle, getting in the groove.

George is intrigued.

ANDY (AS FOREIGN MAN)  
And now... I would like to imitate  
the Elvis Presley.

A woman LAUGHS caustically. Andy grins stupidly, then turns his back to us. He presses "Play" on a CASSETTE RECORDER... and the THEME FROM 2001 starts playing.

House lights dim dramatically. With a flourish, Andy pulls tape off his pants -- revealing rhinestones. He removes his pink coat -- putting on a white jeweled jacket.

He combs his hair.

Then he brushes his hair.

Then he combs his hair some more.

Finally he picks up a guitar, strikes a pose -- and spins around.

He is ELVIS. CONFIDENT. SEXY. LIP CURL. DEAD-ON PERFECT.

The crowd is blown away.

Vegas Elvis INTRO MUSIC suddenly blasts. Andy/Elvis swaggers stage left and takes a bow. Then he goes stage right and takes a bow. Then he returns stage left for another bow.

Music STOPS.

ANDY (AS ELVIS)  
Thank you very much.

Wow. Flabbergasted, people APPLAUD. This man is Elvis.

Suddenly -- "JAILHOUSE ROCK" guitar kicks in.

ANDY (AS ELVIS)  
(SINGING)  
"Warden threw a party  
In the county jail!  
Prison band was there  
And they BEGAN TO WAIL!"

ANGLE - GEORGE

He is astonished. George cannot quite figure out what's going on... but he wants in.

He waves the Waitress over. She leans down, and he WHISPERS.

GEORGE  
Pst, honey. What's the story with  
this guy?

WAITRESS

I think he's Lithuanian. None of us  
can understand him.

George nods admiringly.

GEORGE

He does a hell of an Elvis.

CUT TO:

BACKSTAGE - LATER

Andy is packing up his things. He very methodically folds each  
item of clothing, then checks the creases.

George strolls up.

GEORGE

Hey, I really enjoyed your set.

ANDY (AS FOREIGN MAN)

Tank you veddy much.

GEORGE

So I understand you're from Lithuania?

ANDY (AS FOREIGN MAN)

No. Caspiar.

George is puzzled.

GEORGE

Caspian? I haven't heard of that.

ANDY (AS FOREIGN MAN)

It's a veddy small island in de  
Caspian Sea.

(beat)

It sunk.

GEORGE

Oh. Hm. I'm uh, sorry.

(beat)

Well look, I just wanted to say I  
think you're very interesting. If  
you ever need representation, give  
me a call.

George hands him a BUSINESS CARD.

Andy reads it -- then his eyes pop. He DROPS the accent.

ANDY

Mr. Shapiro, it's an honor!!

George realizes it's all been an act. He laughs heartily.

GEORGE  
Caspiar, huh?!

CUT TO:

INT. SOHO HEALTH FOOD RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Andy and George sit in a bohemian health food restaurant. Hippie waitresses in sandals mill around.

Andy and George are trying to get a sense of each other.

ANDY  
You see, I want to be the biggest star  
in the world.

George is surprised at this hubris.

GEORGE  
People love... comedians.

ANDY  
I'm not a comedian. I have no talent.  
(he shrugs)  
I'm just a song-and-dance man.

George looks up at Andy -- and inexplicably there is a giant MOIST BOOGER hanging from Andy's nostril.

George cringes. He doesn't know what to say.

A waitress brings over two plates of awful 70's HEALTH FOOD -- beans, sprouts, seaweed. Andy beams. George is skeptical.

GEORGE  
I thought you said this place was  
good.

ANDY  
You should give up meat, George.  
It'll change your life. Mmm!

Andy pulls out a little Handi-wipe and cleanses his hands. Then he starts arranging the food in compulsive little piles: Beans in pinwheel shapes. Sprouts in piles.

George peers at the bizarre food behavior.

GEORGE  
You show a lot of promise... but...  
my concern is I don't know where to  
book you. You're not a stand-up.  
Your act doesn't exactly translate  
to films. It's not a series...

ANDY  
(bright)  
I've always wanted to play Carnegie  
Hall.

GEORGE  
Yeah, ha-ha. That's funny.

Andy dips his silverware in the water glass. Two dunks, then he dries it with his napkin.

George stares, perplexed. He looks back up -- and Andy's booger has suddenly switched nostrils.

Huh?

ANDY  
See, I don't want easy laughs or polite applause! Any bozo can get those!

Andy's about to eat -- but first bows his head in silent prayer.

George raises an eyebrow.

Andy snaps his head back up.

ANDY  
I want gut reactions! I want that audience to go through an experience. They love me! They hate me! They walk out -- it's all GREAT!

Andy triumphantly sticks a bean in his mouth. George smiles.

GEORGE  
You're insane.  
(beat)  
But -- you also might be brilliant.  
(sincere)  
Alright, Andy... let's do it.

George warmly extends his hand.

Andy slowly smiles, then takes George's hand. The men shake. A moment of supreme importance.

CUT TO:

EST. BEVERLY HILLS - DAY

The glitz strip of Los Angeles. Money. Beauty.

INT. SHAPIRO/WEST - DAY

Real working showbiz offices. No glamour at all. It looks more like an insurance company.

George sits in his office with a YOUNG COMIC. The guy is upset.

YOUNG COMIC  
George, I don't wanna open for David Brenner!

GEORGE  
Sammy, it's a good gig. You'll be  
on the road... get some exposure...

O.s., a SECRETARY shouts out.

SECRETARY (o.s.)  
Tony Clifton on the phone!

GEORGE  
Who?

SECRETARY (o.s.)  
He says he's an associate of Andy  
Kaufman's.

GEORGE  
Oh.  
(to his guest)  
Excuse me one sec'.  
(he picks up the phone)  
Hello? George Shapiro here.

On the phone, a STACCATO, ABRASIVE NASAL VOICE blares.

TONY CLIFTON (v.o.)  
Uh, yeah. Is this GEORGE SHAPIRO?

GEORGE  
(beat)  
Er, yes. Speaking.

TONY CLIFTON (v.o.)  
"Speaking"! Reeking, seeking,  
creaking. ...Freaking!

George is baffled.

GEORGE  
Can I help you with something?

TONY CLIFTON (v.o.)  
Yeah! You stay away from that Andy  
Kaufman, if you know what's good for  
you!

GEORGE  
(stunned)  
Who is this?

TONY CLIFTON (v.o.)  
You -- you know damn straight who it  
is. Tony Clifton! A name to respect.  
A name to fear.  
(beat)  
Beer. Gear. Deer. Ear.



GEORGE

(unsure what to say)

Look... I don't know what your problem is. But Andy shows a lot of promise, and I want to work with him.

TONY CLIFTON (v.o.)

Kaufman's a lying bastard! If you sign him, I'll RUIN YOU!

CLICK. Clifton hangs up.

George is bewildered.

CUT TO:

EXT. MEDITATION INSTITUTE UNIVERSITY - DAY

MIU -- the national headquarters for Transcendental Meditation. A quiet, simple retreat in rural Iowa.

INT. MIU CLASSROOM - DAY

Fifteen barefoot STUDENTS sit on mats in a circle. Eyes shut, bodies in different yoga positions, they are all meditating. Andy is one of the students. The teacher is LITTLE WENDY, a teeny lady with an absurdly high-pitched voice.

LITTLE WENDY

Alright. Now while continuing your deep breathing, slowly open your eyes. You should feel rested, relaxed, and alert.

The students all open their eyes. Wendy smiles.

LITTLE WENDY

Do any thoughts come...?

STUDENT #1

My mind is clear. I feel great.

STUDENT #2

All the tension is gone from my body.

ANDY

Yeah. I've been so stressed since this show I did last Tuesday. I was playing a country-western bar, and the audience just didn't get my vibe. But now my manager's lined-up a TV gig for me -- it's some late night loser show, but I'm still excited.

Oh. Everyone politely shrugs.

A MAN IN A TURBAN silently enters. He discreetly WHISPERS in Andy's ear -- and Andy is startled.

ANDY

Really?!

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Andy nervously walks down a long dim hall. Finally, he gets to a door -- "HIS HOLINESS, MAHARISHI MAHESH YOGI."

Andy gulps.

INT. MAHARISHI'S OFFICE - DAY

His Holiness the MAHARISHI sits in his spartan, humble office.

Maharishi smiles beatifically at Andy. He speaks in a melodic Indian accent.

MAHARISHI

I'm told that in your visits here, you've shown great progress and discipline. Is that true..?

ANDY

(confessional)

Yes. When I... started seven years ago, I was aimless. I was fighting with my family.

MAHARISHI

Families are important.

ANDY

Uh-huh. But TM got me focused. I stopped drinking. I gave up drugs.

MAHARISHI

(he smiles)

Transcendental Meditation opened your awareness to the reservoir of energy and creativity.

ANDY

Now I meditate three hours a day. It's the center of my life...

MAHARISHI

We're all impressed. And because of this dedication, we wish to make you a Governor of the program.

Andy is awed.

ANDY

Wow. Thanks, Your Holiness!

MAHARISHI

Do you have any questions?

ANDY

No. Thank you.

(he starts to rise; then)

Oh -- wait. Yes!

(beat; he works up his nerve)

Is there... is there a secret to being funny?

TIGHT - MAHARISHI

Huh? He thinks hard... squinching up his face... then finally nods and speaks.

MAHARISHI

Yes. Silence.

CUT TO:

INT. SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE - NIGHT

It's the first "Saturday Night Live." Backstage, CAST MEMBERS in Killer Bees outfits goof off and push each other.

On stage is Andy, alone. The THEME FROM "MIGHTY MOUSE" plays -- but Andy just blankly stands there. He's purposefully doing nothing.

MIGHTY MOUSE THEME (v.o.)

"Although we are in danger,  
we never despair,  
Because we know where there is danger  
he is there!"

IN THE BOOTH

The SNL PRODUCER is panicked.

SNL PRODUCER

Oh my God, he's doing nothing.  
It's dead air...!

BACK ON ANDY

MIGHTY MOUSE THEME (v.o.)

"We're not worrying at all.  
We're just listening for his call..."

Then SUDDENLY -- Andy comes to life and triumphantly LIP SYNCs.

MIGHTY MOUSE (v.o.)

"Here I come to save the day!"

Shocked, the crowd HOWLS with LAUGHTER.

Then instantly -- Andy resumes his blank expression.

MIGHTY MOUSE SINGERS

"That means that Mighty Mouse is on the way!"

The audience SCREAMS with glee. The tune ENDS, and the audience APPLAUDS CRAZILY.

Delighted, Andy grins and bows.

CUT TO:

EXT. CONEY ISLAND - DAY

A crisp, sunny day. Cars plummet down the Cyclone's big hill. Andy and his family whip through the rollercoaster -- arms up, SCREAMING.

ANDY AND THE KAUFMANS

Aaaaaahhhhh!!!

Andy is filled with terror and euphoria. Everyone seems too old for this. The siblings are in their 20s. The parents, their late 50s.

The cars race to the end and suddenly BRAKE. The passengers slowly climb out. Exhilarated, Andy beams at his family.

ANDY

Let's do it again!

STANLEY

No, enough is enough. We've been on it three times.

CAROL

If I go again, I'll puke.

ANDY

But it's Mom's birthday. We gotta have fun!

MICHAEL

(to his mother)

I thought we should take you to a Broadway show.

Andy is a bit insulted.

ANDY

Hey! She can still see a show..!

CUT TO:

A garish SIGN. It says "FREAK SHOW."

INT. FREAK SHOW TENT - DAY

Strangeness everywhere. Andy exuberantly pulls his queasy family through the exhibits.

ANDY  
 Isn't this great...?  
 (he sees a BANNER)  
 Whoa! They've added a lizard lady!  
 I wonder if she has a tail and eats  
 bugs?!

Grinning, Andy excitedly runs around the corner...

And finds the LIZARD LADY. Sitting tiredly on a stool. She's just an old woman with bad skin and scabs on her face.

Yow. Andy is caught off-guard. There is nothing fun about this. She slowly looks up... and peers sadly at Andy.

The two of them stare uncomfortably at each other. Until --

LIZARD LADY  
 . Hey, weren't you on TV the other night?

#### ON THE FAMILY

They're waiting. Suddenly, Andy staggers up. He tightens his face, holds his stomach... and VOMITS. He spits a hunk of yuck onto the ground.

BYSTANDERS are appalled. People grimace and hurry away.

But the family's unimpressed. They stare at the vomit, bored.

JANICE  
 That's cute. Now put it back in your pocket, so we can go home.

Andy frowns -- eyeballs her -- then picks up the vomit. It's rubber.

CUT TO:

#### INT. GEORGE'S OFFICE - DAY

George jumps up from his desk. Andy is walking in.

GEORGE  
 Andy, c'mon IN! Thanks for flyin' out here!!  
 (giddy)  
 So how do you like L.A.? Ain't it beautiful??!

ANDY  
 It's very nice. Sunny.

GEORGE  
 Would you be willin' to move here?  
 Would you live here, if I told you  
 that you were getting a  
 once-in-a-lifetime, unbelievably  
 lucrative, unheard of opportunity to  
 be on a PRIMETIME NETWORK SITCOM????!!

Andy freezes up.

ANDY  
Sitcom...?

GEORGE  
 And this is a CLASS ACT! It's the  
 guys who did the Mary Tyler Moore and  
 Bob Newhart shows! It takes place  
 in a taxi stand! And you're gonna  
 be the Fonzie!

ANDY  
 (confused)  
 I'm -- Fonzie?

GEORGE  
 NO! The Fonzie! The crazy breakout  
 character! The guy that all the kids  
 impersonate and put on their  
 lunchboxes!

ANDY  
 (soft)  
 George, I hate sitcoms.

GEORGE  
 HANG ON, you ain't heard the best  
 part! ABC has seen your foreign man  
 character, and they want to turn him  
 into --  
 (he checks his notes)  
 "Latka," a lovable, goofy mechanic!!!

Long pause. Then -- Andy responds.

ANDY  
 No.

GEORGE  
 "No"? "No" to which part??

ANDY  
 No to the whole thing. None of it  
 sounds good.

George is flummoxed.

GEORGE  
 Andy... this is every comedian's  
 dream.

ANDY

I told you, I'm not a comedian. And sitcoms are the lowest form of entertainment: Stupid jokes and canned laughter.

GEORGE

(shocked)

B-but, this is classy... they did Bob Newha--

ANDY

I'm not interested. I want to create my own material.

Beat. George glares.

GEORGE

You have to do it.

ANDY

I refuse.

GEORGE

(he explodes)

LISTEN, you arrogant putz! I've been in this business for twenty years! I know! If you walk away from this opportunity, you will never, NEVER see another one like it again!!!!

Long pause. Andy stares at George, amazed at this passion.

Then Andy gets up and looks around the office. He stares at the awards... the gold records... emblems of success and experience.

Andy thinks -- then nods.

ANDY

Okay. Fine, I'll do it.

(beat)

But I have a few terms.

GEORGE

(relieved)

Of course! That's what negotiations are for.

ANDY

Okay. I'll write them out for you...

Andy sits and WRITES DOWN a few requests.

George watches patiently.

Andy clicks his pen, done. George smiles and takes the list. He scans it... then his face gets totally befuddled.

GEORGE

What the --? This is RIDICULOUS!

ANDY  
(blase)  
Those are my terms.

GEORGE  
They're IMPOSSIBLE!! Jesus!  
(he points at one item)  
I mean -- "two guaranteed guest shots  
for Tony Clifton"??! I don't even  
know who this is!!

ANDY  
He's a Vegas entertainer. I used to  
do impressions of him. We sorta...  
got in a fight over that.

George gets a look.

GEORGE  
Wait a second -- this Clifton called  
me up. He's a loon!

ANDY  
Nah, he just talks tough. But I owe  
him one.

Andy smiles ingenuously, then turns stern.

ANDY  
If I'm the new Fonz... ABC's just  
gonna have to give me what I want.  
(a sarcastic FONZIE IMPRESSION)  
Heyyyyyy!

George winces. He stares at the list.

CUT TO:

INT. ABC OFFICES - DAY

George sits across a conference table from three NETWORK SUITS.

George stoically reads the men his demands.

GEORGE  
Mr. Kaufman will only appear in half  
the episodes.  
(beat)  
Mr. Kaufman requires an undisturbed  
90 minutes of meditation prior to  
filming.  
(beat)  
Mr. Kaufman won't rehearse.  
(beat)  
Mr. Kaufman gets his own network  
special.

The execs are stupefied. Finally -- George delivers the  
clincher.



GEORGE  
And Taxi must guarantee two guest  
appearances to... Tony Clifton.

NETWORK GUYS  
WHO???

GEORGE  
Tony Clifton.

NETWORK GUY #1  
Who is he?!

GEORGE  
(solemn)  
I don't know.

Long pause. The execs stare at George like he's lost his mind.

GEORGE  
But these are the terms.

The execs' leader, MAYNARD SMITH, shudders hopelessly.

MAYNARD  
Couldn't Kaufman ask for more money,  
like everyone else?

Beat. George sadly shakes his head: No.

CUT TO:

INT. ABC PARKING STRUCTURE - DAY

George shuffles back to his car. He's dazed. He starts to unlock his Jaguar, when he notices a bright pink FLYER on the windshield.

George reaches for it. He looks around, and notices the PINK FLYERS on every car. Hm. Curious, George turns it over. It says "TONY CLIFTON! At MAMA RIVOLI'S, ONE NIGHT ONLY!"

George is rattled.

CUT TO:

INT. MAMA RIVOLI'S - NIGHT

Mama Rivoli's, a dark Italian restaurant with red booths, wise guys, and cigarette smoke.

George enters, unsurely. He approaches the MAITRE'D.

GEORGE  
Excuse me, is Tony Clifton appearing  
here?

MAITRE'D  
Who?

GEORGE  
He's an entertainer.

MAITRE'D  
Oh -- the asshole.  
(he checks his watch)  
Yeah, he's about to go on.

The Maitre'd guides George to a booth. The "stage" is a six-foot space in the back of the room.

The lights dim. A BLARING ANNOUNCER speaks.

ANNOUNCER (v.o.)  
And now, Mama Rivoli's is proud to  
present International Singing  
Sensation... a man who has sold more  
records than Elvis and the Beatles  
combined...

George exhales, reassured.

GEORGE  
Okay. He can sing.

ANNOUNCER (v.o.)  
Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr.  
Entertainment... TONY CLIFTON!

The PATRONS applaud half-heartedly.

ANNOUNCER (v.o.)  
Out of respect for Mr. Clifton's vocal  
demands, could everyone please  
extinguish your cigarettes and cigars.

The crowd GRUMBLES angrily -- then irritably complies. One ANGRY GUY thrusts his cigar into a water glass.

ANGRY GUY  
Goddamn, I paid five dollars for this.

ANNOUNCER (v.o.)  
And now! A man who needs no  
introduction... TONY CLIFTON!

A small BAND starts playing lounge standard "VOLARE"... and then obnoxious TONY CLIFTON swaggers out. Tony has a black wig and moustache, sunglasses, a padded belly, and a peach tuxedo with blue shirt and velvet piping.

He is also clearly Andy Kaufman.

ANGLE - GEORGE

His eyes pop. WHAT?! A moment of brain melt -- and then he EXPLODES with laughter.

WIDE

Tony glances momentarily at George -- then smirks at the audience and sucks on a cigarette. He blows smoke rings at them.

TONY CLIFTON  
Heh-heh. How ya all doin'?

The crowd is furious.

OLDER DINER  
Fuck you!

People light back up.

George looks around gleefully, then CACKLES louder.

Tony ignores the ruckus. He starts SINGING pinched and off-key.

TONY CLIFTON  
(singing)  
"Volare!  
Whoa, whoa.  
Cantare,  
Whoa whoa whoa whoa."

George grins -- in on the joke.

TONY CLIFTON  
(singing)  
"I got the wings of your love,  
I got the wings of a dove.  
I got the... uh...  
(forgetting the words)  
...the chicken wings from  
eh, Kentucky Fried..."

The band is lost.

TONY CLIFTON  
Oh. Whoop do doo,  
whoop de di,  
stick a needle in your eye...

The band gives up and stops.

TONY CLIFTON  
Eh, the hell with that song.

One person CLAPS. Most BOO.

TONY CLIFTON  
So how ya doin'!  
(leering)  
How ya doin' over here? How ya doin'  
over there?  
(he approaches a WOMAN)  
How's that pasta carbonara?

WOMAN

Leave me alone.

TONY CLIFTON

Okay!

(he spins around)

So, you havin' a good time, sir?!

Tony approaches a LONELY SAD SACK sitting at the bar. Tony thrusts his mike at the guy.

SAD SACK

Sure...

TONY CLIFTON

So what's your name?

SAD SACK

Bob.

TONY CLIFTON

(he reacts as if this is enormously funny)

"Bob"? BOB! Bob bob bob.

(beat)

Bob what?

SAD SACK

Bob Gorsky.

TONY CLIFTON

"Gorsky"? What is that, Polish?

SAD SACK

(meek)

Yes.

Tony gets indignant.

TONY CLIFTON

Are you tryin' to do some of that Polack humor? Well if that's so, you can just get the hell out of this restaurant!

SAD SACK

(timid)

It's my name.

TONY CLIFTON

SHUT UP! I hate them Polish jokes!

People are embarrassed.

TONY CLIFTON

I do a clean show! Like, I wouldn't do that one... oh, you know it... "What do you call a pretty girl in Poland"?

SAD SACK  
 (he giggles stupidly)  
 A -- a tourist.

TONY CLIFTON  
 See, that's EXACTLY what I'm talkin'  
 about!

(enraged)  
 Here! I'LL give you a little humor!

Tony snatches Bob's water glass and POURS IT over his head!

George is appalled.

The crowd is aghast.

Bob is wet.

People BOO AND HURL THINGS.

Bob starts weeping, then bolts up and runs from the building.

TONY CLIFTON  
 And stay out, Fatso!

The room erupts, outraged.

CLOSEUP - GEORGE

looks like he's ill. He slowly covers his face.

CUT TO:

LATER

The restaurant is empty. Employees sweep up.

George sits with Andy, still in the Tony get-up. But Andy is now himself.

GEORGE  
 I just don't understand this act.  
 Why is that entertainment?

ANDY  
 (in jolly spirits)  
 I dunno. Everyone loves a villain.

GEORGE  
 Yeah? Well tell that to the poor  
schlub who you humiliated!

Beat -- then Bob strolls over. His real name is BOB ZMUDA.

ZMUDA  
 Hey Andy, good show.  
 (pleased)  
 Really hot house.

ANDY  
 (he grins)  
 Did ya see how upset that lady in  
 front was?

ZMUDA  
 Oh yeah! I thought her boyfriend was  
 gonna shoot you!

George gapes at these two madmen.

He is absolutely speechless -- and then, SHOUTS BACK.

GEORGE  
Is it too late to get a drink?

ANDY  
 (innocently)  
 Oh gee, my manners. I'm sorry.  
 George Shapiro, I'd like you to meet  
 Bob Zmuda. Bob and I have been  
 buddies for years.

On closer inspection, Bob is cocky, aloof, and conniving.  
 George reluctantly shakes hands.

GEORGE  
 Your name's not Gorsky?

ZMUDA  
 Don't believe everything you hear.

ANDY  
 Bob's a genius. He once faked a lion  
 escaping from the Chicago Zoo. They  
 had to close it for two days.

George eyeballs Zmuda -- then turns to Andy. Andy now has a  
booger hanging from his nose.

George moans weakly.

GEORGE  
 Please. No more of that.

Andy sighs -- then nods and removes the booger. It is rubber.  
 Andy takes out a plastic case labeled "SNOT," packs up the  
 booger, and pockets it.

Zmuda mutters darkly.

ZMUDA  
 You told me he was fun.

Andy looks downcast.

ANDY  
 I dunno, George. Maybe this isn't  
 such a good fit. All relationships  
 do run their course...

GEORGE

Oh no you don't! "Run their course"???

(outraged)

I've known you for a month! I marched into ABC and broke their heads making demands I don't even understand!!

ANDY

You gave it your best shot.

GEORGE

You idiot -- ABC said yes! They thought the terms were a brilliant example of your "irreverent wit" -- and precisely why they want you.

(beat)

You're getting EVERYTHING!!.

ON ANDY

Wow. An unexpected curve. He is astonished, enjoying a moment of total rapture. Then --

ZMUDA

Hey, can I write the special?

Andy thinks, then flips a QUARTER. It lands heads-up.

Beat.

ANDY

Sure.

CUT TO:

INT. PARAMOUNT STUDIOS - STAGE 25 - DAY

The first week of "TAXI." The CAST rehearses on the taxi set. PRODUCERS watch from the bleachers.

Latka works under a car hood -- but we can't see his face. A transistor radio plays.

JUDD HIRSCH (AS ALEX)

"What's Latka listening to?"

JEFF CONAWAY (AS BOBBY)

"It's a New York radio station that broadcasts Latka's language every afternoon."

MARILU HENNER (AS ELAINE)

"Oh, that's nice to keep in touch with home. Hey Latka! What's the news?"

Latka turns around -- and he is a bored BLACK STAND-IN. He reads half-heartedly from a script.

## BLACK STAND-IN

(listless)

"Well, they devalued the bracnick.  
And Ichi Dam just set our country's  
pole-vaulting record. He jumped 12  
feet."

The cast glances around. Jeff Conaway loses his temper.

## JEFF CONAWAY

Man, this is bullshit!

(he marches to the PRODUCERS)

Where's Kaufman? Why isn't he here??

One producer stands. This is tightly-wound ED WEINBERGER.

## ED

You'll see him on Friday when we  
shoot. Now run the lines with Rodney.

An angry beat. The actors resume...

CUT TO:

TWO DAYS LATER

The AUDIENCE is filtering in. They fill the studio bleachers.

BACKSTAGE

Actors mingle outside the dressing rooms.

## JUDD HIRSCH

I'm taking bets we do the show with  
the stand-in.

## MARILU HENNER

No, I hear Andy arrived. He's locked  
inside his dressing room.

## JUDD HIRSCH

(surprised)

Really?

INT. ANDY'S DRESSING ROOM

Andy is meditating. He's tranquil, at total inner peace.

Silence -- until a little clock radio CHIRPS.

Andy snaps his eyes open. He exhales a few calm breaths, then  
sits upright. Andy reaches for a sealed envelope, rips it open,  
and removes a SCRIPT.

Andy sighs, opens the script and starts flipping through. He  
quickly scans each page.



ANDY  
 Good, I'm not in this scene. Good,  
 I'm not in this scene.  
 (suddenly, he reacts)  
 Oh, darn --

Andy glowers, then leans back and starts reading the page...

CUT TO:

LATER

The filming. Cameras roll. Everyone's in costume. Andy is  
 Latka: Wide-eyed, endearing, in mechanic's overalls.

The crowd HOWLS with laughter. Andy waves the radio.

ANDY (AS FOREIGN MAN)  
 "And on de lighter side, it seems that  
 a farmer made a miztake in the dark  
 and tried to milk a billy goat!"

The crowd SCREAMS with delight and APPLAUDS.

A FLOOR DIRECTOR with headphones steps up.

FLOOR DIRECTOR  
 And that'll be a cut.

The cameras turn off. Actors relax.

Andy walks up to Judd Hirsch and extends a warm smile.

ANDY  
 Oh, hi. I'm Andy Kaufman.

JUDD HIRSCH  
 (he rolls his eyes)  
 Hi, I'm Judd Hirsch. Pleased to meet  
 you.

They shake.

CUT TO:

EXT. ALPHA BETA SUPERMARKET - NIGHT

Late night at the Alpha Beta. Just a few cars in the lot.

INT. ALPHA BETA - SAME TIME

2:30 a.m. Andy and Zmuda are playing Space Invaders. Andy is  
 focused intensely on the video game -- his fingers pounding the  
 buttons. On SCREEN, little spaceships blast his base.

ANDY  
 What a mistake. Each show is worse  
 than the next!

ZMUDA

I dunno, that little mean guy in the cage is funny.

ANDY

(upset)

I can't even breathe up there. I'm tellin' George I'm quitting.

Andy tears open an envelope of Pop Rocks and pours them in his mouth. His tongue explodes with fizzing.

Across the store, a PUNK-ROCK COUPLE are staring at Andy. They're dumbstruck by his presence. Nervous, but inextricably drawn, they finally mosey over.

PUNK GUY

Hey, Latka.

PUNK CHICK

Yo, Latka! Aren't you Latka?

Andy slowly turns, shocked at being recognized. He is confused emotionally -- still angry, but pleased to have fans.

ANDY

Yeah... I am... sort of.

The punks grin, wowed. Pop Rocks burst between Andy's lips.

PUNK GUY

I knew his accent was bogus!

PUNK CHICK

(to Andy)

Hey, we watched you on "Taxi Driver"!

PUNK GUY

You were great!

ANDY

(pause)

But... didn't it bother you that Foreign Man is usually a naive standup comedian, and now instead he's a garage mechanic?

The punks scratch their heads.

PUNK CHICK

Eh, I don't know. I just thought it was some funny shit.

PUNK GUY

Yeah, keep it up! ABC Comedy Tuesday RULES!

They high-five Andy and take off.

A moment of silence. Andy and Zmuda are awed.

ZMUDA  
Fuck. You've got fans.

ANDY  
That was cool...

ZMUDA  
A week ago, they would've thought you were some freak playing video games at three in the morning. Now, you're their god.

Andy is taken aback. He chews on his last Pop Rocks.

ANDY  
I don't believe in the worship of idols.

ZMUDA  
(mind racing)  
No, think about it. A hit show gets seen by forty million people every week! That gives you credibility.

ANDY  
What good is that?

ZMUDA  
The more people that know and love you... the more people's minds you can fuck with later.

ANGLE - ANDY

Hmm. He is intrigued...

CUT TO:

INT. ABC NETWORK OFFICES - DAY

We're in the power office of Maynard Smith, the powerful ABC exec. He shouts into a phone.

MAYNARD  
I don't care! Travolta signed a contract -- he's a Sweathog for life!  
(beat)  
Yeah? Just try to sue us.

He HANGS up. His ASSISTANT peeks her head in.

ASSISTANT  
Sir, they're having a problem down on the Kaufman special.

MAYNARD  
What kind of problem?

ASSISTANT

Well... it's sort of weird. They say he's not following the network technical requirements.

Maynard is baffled.

MAYNARD

"Technical"???

INT. TV STUDIO - DAY

Maynard marches irritably down a hall. He reaches the "Stage Door" -- and blocking the way is pixie TM teacher Little Wendy, meditating within a ring of candles.

MAYNARD

Excuse me honey, I gotta get through.

LITTLE WENDY

(she opens her eyes)

I'm sorry, no looky-loos.

An astonished beat.

MAYNARD

And who the hell are you?!

LITTLE WENDY

I'm Andy's personal secretary.

MAYNARD

YEAH? Well I own the goddamn building! Now get this crap out of my way -- I'm going through!!

He kicks over some candles and barges in.

INT. TV STAGE - SAME TIME

Andy is in a booth, arguing with a HEAVYSET TECHNICIAN. Zmuda watches and eats a banana.

ANDY

Make it roll!

TECHNICIAN

I won't.

ANDY

DO IT! It's my show, and I WANT IT.

Maynard strolls up, buttoning his suit jacket.

MAYNARD

Andy, I hear fabulous things about the special...

(delicate pause)

Eh, I understand we've hit a teeny speedbump?

TECHNICIAN

(harried)

Yeah, Kid Genius told me to mess with the horizontal hold! He wants the picture to roll!

ANDY

(happy)

It'll be great. The viewer will think their TV is broken. They'll get out of their chair, they'll twist the knobs, they'll hit the TV, but they won't be able to fix it!

Maynard stares at a MONITOR. The picture rolls, totally indecipherable. A glum pause.

MAYNARD

Andy... we don't want the viewer to get out of their chair. They might change the channel.

ANDY

But it's funny! It's a practical joke. They'll get frustrated!

Andy beams giddily. Maynard gazes dully, struggling to reason.

MAYNARD

Andy... uhh... this network has a longstanding policy: The viewer must be able to see the program.

ANDY

But it's only for thirty seconds!

Beat.

MAYNARD

Five.

ANDY

Twenty!

MAYNARD

Ten.

ANDY

Deal.

Both men quickly extend their hands. They shake.

Beat -- then Andy pulls out a Handi-wipe and cleans his palm.

CUT TO:

INT. ANDY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Andy's crappy apartment, looking like a freshman dorm: Cheap furniture, stained carpet. The only notable items are a Howdy Doody doll next to a framed photo of the Maharishi.

Andy is eating Haagen Dazs chocolate ice cream. He scoops it, then vigorously stirs it. He stirs and stirs, totally focused, until the ice cream is liquified.

Suddenly, KNOCK-KNOCK! Andy goes to the front door. It's the MAILMAN.

MAILMAN

Got your mail, Mr. Kaufman.

He gestures down -- and there's THREE ENTIRE CRATES.

Andy's eyes bulge. He's practically salivating.

CUT TO:

LATER

HUNDREDS OF LETTERS are all over the floor. Andy happily chats on the PHONE.

ANDY

...so you liked the show? Your letter said I was silly. Did you think I was too silly? ...Oh good. I'm glad.

CUT TO:

Another phone call. Andy holds a different letter.

ANDY

Yes, it's Andy Kaufman! Really! I got your fan letter!

CUT TO:

Another phone call. Andy holds another letter, which has a GIRL'S SNAPSHOT stapled to it. He is very nervous.

ANDY

So Mimi, I got your picture...  
(tentative)  
It was real nice of you to send it.  
Cause you knew what I looked like...  
and now, I know what you look like!

Andy flips the letter over. He glances at the return address.

ANDY

So, um... San Bernardino...  
(beat)  
That's just a couple hours away, isn't it..?

EXT. SAN BERNARDINO DOWNTOWN - DUSK

The sun is setting. In an ugly shopping district, Andy walks along with sexy, wholesome MIMI.

MIMI

...so after I finish junior college, I'll go work for my dad's accounting firm. Unless, I decide to live with my friend Valerie, but she wants to move to Anaheim, and I don't want to do that.

A disinterested beat.

ANDY

Oh.

Another beat.

ANDY

So do you wanna wrestle?

MIMI

Excuse me--?

ANDY

Do you wanna wrestle? It's a good way of breaking the ice.

(pause)

That instant physical intimacy really brings two people together.

Mimi is bewildered, and offended.

MIMI

What are you talking about?! We just met an hour ago.

ANDY

(calm)

No no no, it's not sex! I mean -- it can lead to sex... but really, it's just wrestling.

MIMI

I don't wanna talk about it!

An awkward silence. They continue walking. She points up.

MIMI

The sunset is really beautiful.

ANDY

What do you mean?

MIMI

(a bit offput)

I mean -- uh -- the colors in the sky are so vibrant. I love this time of day.

ANDY

(he shrugs dully)

I've never understand that. It's just... getting dark.

Another awkward pause. Mimi is not enjoying this date.

Andy looks about for cheap thrills. He sees a BUSINESSMAN strolling towards them. Andy smiles and winks conspiratorially.

ANDY

(whispering)

Hey, this should be good...!

Andy pulls out his shirt, messes up his hair... and puts the fake booger in his nose. He takes the girl's hand and pathetically shuffles over to the Businessman.

The Businessman looks up -- and takes a nervous step back. Andy is NOW A TERRIFYING STREET PERSON.

ANDY

(mumbling)

Excuse me... sir... I don't mean to bother you... but I'm a little down on my luck... I lost my job... my wife is pregnant...

(he pats Mimi's stomach)

...and I was wondering if you could help me out with a little spare change... maybe a dollar, if you could...

BUSINESSMAN

(frightened)

Don't hurt me.

The Businessman fumbles with his wallet, hands Andy a dollar, and quickly hurries off.

Beat.

Mimi is appalled. Andy grins victoriously.

ANDY

Hey, we got some money! Let's go have some fun!

MIMI

I... w-why... eh....



ANDY  
 (he thinks)  
 Or how 'bout this?? I like you! Why  
 don't we fill the car with gas, drive  
 to Tijuana, and GET MARRIED???

ANGLE - MIMI

Fear. She shivers, then hoarsely speaks.

MIMI  
 ' I wanna go home.

CUT TO:

INT. ABC NETWORK - DAY

A conference room. George screens Andy's TV special for Maynard and his team.

The network execs look constipated.

ON THE TV - Andy speaks tenderly, lovingly to famed puppet Howdy Doody.

ANDY (on TV)  
 Howdy, I've been watching you ever  
 since I was a little boy...  
 (choked up, nervous)  
 You're the first friend from  
 television I ever had. I always  
 wanted to meet you... and now... I  
 finally am.

Andy touches him and starts weeping.

THE EXECS

are horrified.

EXEC #2  
 This is NOT funny.

EXEC #3  
 (ominous)  
 "Artsy fartsy shit"...

GEORGE  
 (worried at this response)  
 No -- eh, it's sweet.

Maynard stands.

MAYNARD  
 If I want sweet, I'll watch the  
 Waltons.  
 (he turns to the TV)  
 Goodnight, Kaufman. We're not airing  
 your show.

He hits EJECT. On the TV, Andy hugging Howdy disappears.  
George is flabbergasted.

GEORGE

B-but, our contract says you have to  
air it!

MAYNARD

No... the contract says we have to pay  
for it.

(beat)

We're done.

CUT TO:

INT. JERRY'S DELI - NIGHT

A delicatessen. Andy wears an apron and angrily cleans tables.  
He stacks dirty dishes and wipes up the food.

A nearby BALD DINER gestures.

BALD DINER

Excuse me, could I please have more  
coffee?

ANDY

Yeah yeah, in a sec'.  
(he lugs the dishes to the kitchen,  
then shouts back)  
That was decaf, right?

BALD DINER

Yes.

Andy hurries over with the coffeepot. He starts pouring.

BALD DINER

You know, you look just like Andy  
Kaufman.

ANDY

Yeah, I get that all the time.

Andy hurries off.

The bald guy's WIFE leans in, whispering.

BALDIE'S WIFE

I'm telling you, it's him.

BALD DINER

Nah, you're crazy. If that was him,  
he wouldn't be workin' here, pouring  
my coffee!

NEAR THE KITCHEN

Andy dumps out wet coffee grounds. He is sweating.

Suddenly, George enters the restaurant. He looks around, spots Andy, and strides over.

GEORGE  
Andy, this is ridiculous. Take off that apron.

ANDY  
(infuriated)  
NO! I'd rather work here, than at ABC.

Andy grabs a water pitcher and hurries off. George chases after him.

ANDY  
A restaurant is an honest job. There's no lying. They don't promise you a job as a cashier, then suddenly make you a frycook!

GEORGE  
(trying to calm him)  
Look... we work in a creative business. You can't predict what people are gonna like --

ANDY  
The ONLY reason I did Taxi was so I could have my own special!

Beat.

GEORGE  
Tell you what. We'll show it around... see if somebody wants to buy it --

ANDY  
(bitter)  
Yeah, we can have a garage sale. "Hey look, I got a floorlamp and a network TV special for only fifty cents!"

A glum moment.

GEORGE  
I'll book you on some concerts. Those are always fun.

Andy ignores this. He fills water glasses.

ANDY  
How long is left on my Taxi contract?

GEORGE  
 You signed for five years --  
 (awkward)  
 so four years, seven months.

CUT TO:

INT. "TAXI" BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

"Taxi" is filming. We HEAR actors performing on-set.

Backstage, Andy fumes. His eyes rage pure bile. He silently listens for his cue -- then suddenly, steps through a set door.

ON SET

Andy instantly transforms into cheery, cute Latka. He grins and hands CAROL KANE a wallet.

ANDY (AS LATKA)  
 "Simka, I tink I found de wallet!"

The studio audience LAUGHS.

Beat, then the Floor Director steps out.

FLOOR DIRECTOR  
 And that's a cut.

The audience APPLAUDS.

The smile drops from Andy's face.

The Floor Director listens to something over his HEADPHONES.

FLOOR DIRECTOR  
 Uh, hang on. We're gonna do a pickup  
 -- the writers want to add a button  
 to the scene.  
 (to the actors)  
 Carol, after Andy does the wallet  
 line, say "Keep it." Then Andy, you  
 smile and say "Tank you veddy much."

ANDY  
 (he gets pissed-off)  
 But I've already said "Tank you veddy  
 much" twice this show!

The Floor Director shrugs indifferently.

FLOOR DIRECTOR  
 I dunno... three's the charm.

TIGHT - ANDY

He stares daggers.

CUT TO:

EXT. COLLEGE - NIGHT

A marquee says "TEXAS A & M PRESENTS - ANDY KAUFMAN, 8 P.M."

INT. COLLEGE AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

An impatient AUDIENCE claps and CHANTS:

AUDIENCE  
Start the show! Start the show!!

BACKSTAGE

Behind the curtain, Andy is obsessively measuring out stage props. He positions the conga, then methodically walks heel-to-toe to a mike.

Six and a half paces.

Befuddled STAGEHANDS stare. Andy peers down cryptically, then paces back and slides the conga three inches. He squints, then adjusts it a quarter turn.

Suddenly, Zmuda storms over.

ZMUDA  
Jesus Christ, ENOUGH! Andy, you have  
to go on!!

ANDY  
(ticked-off)  
Fine! Raise the curtain!

Zmuda shoots him a look, then nods to the crew...

WIDE

The house lights dim. Huge APPLAUSE. Curtain rises.

Andy slowly walks out. The excited clapping swells louder. He is truly a gigantic presence to these people.

Andy is in a foul mood, but forces a smile and bows.

Suddenly --

FRAT BOY VOICE  
LATKA! DO LATKA!!

Andy reacts, perturbed. He tries to continue.

ANDY  
Thank you. It's great to be here.

SORORITY GIRL  
HEY, DO LATKA!!

Andy scowls. He struggles to stay composed.

ANDY  
We're all -- going to have a very nice  
time tonight...

DRUNKS IN UNISON  
LATKA!!! LATKA!!!

ANDY  
I --

CROWD  
LATTTTKAAAA!!!

Suddenly, Andy SNAPS. He barks through gritted teeth.

ANDY  
Excuse me one moment --

Andy hurries offstage.

IN THE WINGS

Andy runs up to Zmuda.

ANDY  
Give me the book.

ZMUDA  
(startled)  
No! Andy, don't do it --

ANDY  
They're asking for it.

Andy fiercely GRABS a small book from Zmuda. Zmuda winces.

ON THE STAGE

Andy strides back out. He gazes at the crowd.

ANDY  
Since you're such a special  
audience... I'm going to reveal, for  
the first time ever, the real me.  
(he goes into a CLIPPED BRITISH  
ACCENT)

I'm actually British. I was raised  
in London and educated at Oxford.  
And though I dabble in clowning, I  
do find it so boorish. So...  
American.

(beat)  
I prefer the fine arts. Henceforth,  
tonight I'd like to grace you with  
a reading of the greatest novel ever  
written!

(he holds up the book)  
"The Great Gatsby," by F. Scott  
Fitzgerald!!

BEAT.

Heh? The crowd isn't quite clear if this is good or bad. A confused murmur.

ANDY (BRITISH)

(he cracks open the book)

Chapter One.

(he starts READING)

"In my younger and more vulnerable years, my father gave me some advice that I've been turning over in my mind ever since. 'Whenever you feel like criticizing any one,' he told me, 'just remember that all the people in this world haven't had the advantages that you've had.'"

There's a little NERVOUS LAUGHTER. Is he really gonna read this?

ANDY (BRITISH)

"He didn't say any more, but we've always been unusually communicative in a reserved way, and I understood that he meant a great deal more than that..."

DISSOLVE TO:

LATER

ANDY (BRITISH)

"When I came back from the East last autumn I felt that I wanted the world to be in uniform and at a sort of moral attention forever; I wanted no more riotous excursions with privileged glimpses into the human heart..."

People start BOOING. Andy looks up.

ANDY (BRITISH)

Please, let's keep it down. We have a long way to go.

(he resumes READING)

"Only Gatsby, the man who gives his name to this book, was exempt from my reaction - Gatsby, who represented everything for which I have an unaffected scorn..."

The crowd is incredulous.

DISSOLVE TO:

LATER

ANDY (BRITISH)  
Chapter Two.

The crowd is horribly bored.

Andy glances up, and sees some people leave. He knows he's gone too far -- but he's committed. Andy must continue.

ANDY (BRITISH)  
"About half way between West Egg and New York the motor road hastily joins the railroad and runs beside it for a quarter of a mile, so as to shrink away..."

DISSOLVE TO:

BACKSTAGE

A clock says 11:30. The PROMOTER glares at Zmuda.

PROMOTER  
Is he ever gonna stop?

ZMUDA  
(dour)  
Sure. When he reaches "The End."

DISSOLVE TO:

LATER

People are streaming out. Maybe fifty are left. Andy is fatigued, but plows on:

ANDY (BRITISH)  
"Tom was evidently perturbed at Daisy's running around alone, for on the following Saturday night he came with her to Gatsby's party. Perhaps his presence gave the evening its peculiar quality of oppressiveness..."

A weak VOICE feebly shouts.

WEAK VOICE  
Do Latka.

Andy looks up, shocked. Insulted, he "blows his temper."

ANDY (BRITISH)  
Look! I don't have to tolerate this impoliteness! Forget it -- I'm gonna stop the show. GoodBYE!

He slams shut the book. People cheer.

Andy starts to storm off -- then turns.



ANDY (BRITISH)  
No no, I'm only fooling.

Loud GROANS.

Andy sits and resumes reading.

ANDY (BRITISH)  
"His presence gave the evening its  
peculiar quality of oppressiveness  
- it stands out in my memory from  
Gatsby's other parties that summer..."

DISSOLVE TO:

LATER

There are six people left in the audience.

ANDY (BRITISH)  
"Tomorrow we will run faster, stretch  
out our arms farther.... And one fine  
morning - So we beat on, boats against  
the current, borne back ceaselessly  
into the past."

Andy somberly shuts the book.

ANDY (BRITISH)  
The End.

A moment of quiet personal euphoria. Andy looks enraptured, the  
man who has just climbed Everest.

A pause -- but no applause. It's dead silence. Andy looks  
out... and sees the few audience members are asleep.

He shrugs, stands up, and shuffles off-stage.

IN THE WINGS

Exhausted Zmuda sighs.

ZMUDA  
Are you happy?

Andy nods.

Beat.

ZMUDA  
The audience left.

ANDY  
(defensive)  
Six or seven people stayed.

ZMUDA  
Six or seven people went to bed.

Zmuda hits a big metal switch.

WIDE

The house lights go on. The snoring people don't move.

Zmuda rubs his eyes.

ZMUDA

Nobody likes anarchy more than me...  
but this is science fiction.

Pause. Andy smiles.

ANDY

You always say, you can never go too  
far for a joke.

ZMUDA

When it shows up -- tell me.  
(he lightens)  
C'mon, let's grab a bite.

Zmuda opens the metal stage door... and BLINDING SUNLIGHT blasts  
in. It's morning.

Both guys squint.

ANDY

We'll make it breakfast.

CUT TO:

INT. GEORGE'S OFFICE - DAY

George is yelling at Andy and Zmuda. They are seated on his  
couch, heads bowed in shame.

GEORGE

What kind of a show was this??!  
(angrily reading off a LIST)  
There were three-hundred walkouts!  
The promoter wants a refund!

Andy mumbles in a pipsqueak whimper.

ANDY

I'm sorry, George...

GEORGE

You're DAMN RIGHT you're sorry!

ZMUDA

(a guilty sigh)  
We might have lost our focus...

GEORGE

(turning on Zmuda)  
And you -- you're the road manager!  
You should be watchin' out for him!

George paces furiously.

GEORGE

When you play the Midwest and South,  
you DON'T MINDFUCK THESE PEOPLE! It's  
not postmodern -- it's rude.

(beat)

If you wanna perform in Texas, you  
give 'em Mighty Mouse! You give 'em  
Elvis!!

ANDY

But George, I like to push the  
boundaries...

GEORGE

And that's great. But do it in L.A.  
and New York! The Improv is your  
playground. There you experiment!  
Show up with a sleeping bag and take  
a nap on the stage! I don't care!

Hmm. Andy thinks.

ANDY

How long would they let me sleep?

GEORGE

I don't know!

(he composes himself and lowers  
his voice to a hush)

Andy... you have to ask yourself: Who  
are you trying to entertain? The  
audience... or yourself?

ANGLE - ANDY

He doesn't know the answer.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE SHAPIRO/WEST - DAY

Zmuda waits in the hall, next to a bathroom. He's bored. Zmuda  
checks his watch, then opens the bathroom door a crack.

INSIDE the bathroom, Andy is manically washing his hands.  
Liquid soap from the dispenser, then rubbing under the water.  
Then more liquid soap. More rubbing. Then more liquid soap...

Zmuda sighs and shuts the door. Beat -- and George comes  
walking up. He speaks softly.

GEORGE

Bob... I'm gonna cancel the next month  
of shows. Andy needs to rest before  
he goes back to Taxi.

ZMUDA

He's meditating every day.

GEORGE

It's not enough. His stress level  
is affecting his work.

ZMUDA

(he thinks)

The Tony Clifton guest shot is coming  
up. Maybe that'll chill him out.

Beat.

GEORGE

I highly doubt it. Bob... Andy needs  
to RELAX. See if you can get him away  
from all this. Find him something  
special. Something nice...

Zmuda mulls this over.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEVADA DESERT - DAY

A tattered sign says "Welcome to the Mustang Ranch."

The world-famous whorehouse sits behind a barb-wire fence.  
Dusty connected trailers sit in the sand.

A cab idles out front. Andy and Zmuda sit inside. Andy is  
scared.

ANDY

I dunno about this...  
(worried)  
What will my mother think?

ZMUDA

She'll say, "Now my son is a man."

ANDY

It's so dirty.

ZMUDA

Nah. The girls sponge off between  
johns.

Andy nods.

ANDY

Okay.

INT. MUSTANG RANCH - DAY

The reception room -- wood paneling and black-lite posters.  
Twenty deadpan HOOKERS are lined-up, while Andy picks out who  
he wants. But he IS NOW GERMAN, with a monocle and a stiff  
walk.

ANDY (GERMAN)  
I vill haf dat fraulein...  
(looking around)  
unt... oh my, the vun vith the big  
strudels.

The two chosen girls take Andy's hands and lead him off. He reaches the door -- and turns. Andy gives Zmuda a nervous look. Zmuda smiles reassuringly. Andy gulps, and goes in...

Beat. Zmuda turns to the older, jaded MADAM.

ZMUDA  
This is a big day. It's my friend's  
first time with a prostitute.

MADAM  
(mocking)  
What're you talkin' about? Andy comes  
here almost every weekend.

Zmuda's jaw drops, stupefied.

ZMUDA  
You're talking about... Andy?

MADAM  
Oh, he doesn't always call himself  
that. Sometimes he's Tony, and wears  
a tux.

Disbelief -- then Zmuda LAUGHS sharply. He's been conned.

INT. MUSTANG RANCH BEDROOM - DAY

Andy and the two hookers are WRESTLING. They grapple and roll around, all three of them in their underwear.

Suddenly Andy flips the girls over and pins them with his arms.

Breathing hard, he stares down.

ANDY  
You let me win.

HOOKER  
(she giggles sexily)  
What if we did...?!

Andy grins and leans down...

CUT TO:

INT. BURBANK BAR - NIGHT

George sits in a dark bar with Ed, the "Taxi" producer. Empty glasses are piled up. George looks haggard.

GEORGE

...And you cannot tell anyone else!  
Christ, if Andy knew I was telling  
you, he'd never forgive me.

ED

So Clifton is Kaufman... but Kaufman's  
not Clifton...

GEORGE

Exactly! In the spirit of fair play,  
I thought you should be warned.

Ed stares at his drink. He empties the glass.

ED

You know, George... maybe you're too  
close to this stuff. It's just a  
guest shot. We can have fun with this  
kooky character --

GEORGE

(ominous)

You've never met Clifton --

ED

Look, Andy made Latka one of the most  
popular characters on television.

(blase)

Who's saying lightning can't strike  
twice???

CUT TO:

INT. ANDY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Mission Control. Zmuda, Little Wendy, and a Mustang Ranch  
Hooker sit on the couch, watching intently.

Andy is seated in a makeup chair. A long-haired MAKEUP MAN is  
gluing elaborate prosthetics to his face.

ANDY

"Taxi" is a well-oiled machine -- a  
triumph of Hollywood art, commerce,  
and technological know-how.

(beat)

Our goal... is to destroy it.

The group is shocked. The Makeup Man nods.

MAKEUP MAN

Okay, Andy, you're ready.

Andy spins around... and is now RUBBER-FACED TONY CLIFTON. The  
transformation is startling. He's unrecognizable -- his face,  
gestures, even body language all different. He snaps.

TONY CLIFTON  
Who the hell is Andy??

CUT TO:

INT. TAXI REHEARSAL ROOM - DAY

The Taxi cast sits irritably around a big table, holding scripts.

TONY DANZA  
This guy is an hour late.

Beat -- then the door SLAMS open. Tony bounds in, filthy drunk, clutching a bottle in a brown bag.

TONY CLIFTON  
Taxi! Laxy! Just the factsy, Maxie!  
Them's all the words that rhyme with  
taxi!

The cast stares in horror.

TONY CLIFTON  
Eh, why the blue faces? You musta  
read the script!  
(he chuckles)  
Well, don't worry! Your pal Tony  
stayed up all night, writin' some  
fixes on it.  
(he pulls out SCRIBBLED PAGES)  
I added me a musical number, cut out  
Judd Hirsch, and changed the location  
to Mardi Gras!

Ed's expression goes ashen.

CUT TO:

LATER

Tony is tap-dancing on top of the conference table. The cast watches. Tony does a "fancy" move, and his booze bottle suddenly flies away and CRASHES against the wall.

CUT TO:

ON THE TAXI SET - LATER

A failed rehearsal. A frazzled DIRECTOR pulls Tony to a mark.

DIRECTOR  
Tony, PLEASE! I told you, you have  
to stand here!

TONY CLIFTON  
But then I can't reach my chickies.

Tony goes over to Wendy and the Hooker, dressed as tarts. He impulsively feels them up. They SQUEAL.

CUT TO:

REHEARSAL - LATER

Tony is SINGING. The cast is pissed-off.

TONY CLIFTON  
 And now, the new theme song!  
 (he starts SINGING)  
 "Oh yes, we drive a taxi,  
 And we're havin' fun.  
 Yeah, we work together,  
 And we get the freakin' job done."

UP IN THE TECH BOOTH

Beleaguered Ed sits with George.

ED  
 George, we HAVE to let him go! We've  
 lost two days. If I miss the Friday  
 filming, the studio will eat a quarter  
 of a million dollars.

GEORGE  
 (worried)  
 I don't know how Andy's gonna take  
 this...

ED  
 So we'll go downstairs and tell him!

He points at Tony, swaggering around on the set. George shakes his head.

GEORGE  
 But that's Tony down there. That's  
 not Andy. Trust me, it's like "Sybil"  
 -- Andy's nowhere on the premises!

Ed glares.

ED  
 Well whoever the fuck that is, I'm  
 firing him!

GEORGE  
 (he sighs)  
 Okay. But we'll have to warn Andy  
 first. I think he's up in San  
 Francisco, doing a concert.

Heh? Ed raises his eyebrows.

CUT TO:



SECONDS LATER

George and Ed are both on the phone.

GEORGE (into phone)  
Hi, Amy, this is George. I'm trying  
to reach Andy at that live show in  
San Francisco.

A stilted pause.

SHAPIRO/WEST SECRETARY (v.o.)  
Oh yes. Andy is up in San Francisco  
for that live show. I'll see if I  
can reach him and patch him in.

Ed glances down at the stage... and suddenly Tony is no longer  
there. He's magically vanished.

Beat.

Then CLICK! Andy's happy voice pops on the line.

ANDY (v.o.)  
Hi, George! Good to hear from you!

GEORGE  
Hi, Andy. How's the weather up there?

ANDY (v.o.)  
Oh, you know the Bay Area! Always  
chilly!

Ed looks totally off-balance. George winks at him.

GEORGE  
I'm here with Ed over at Taxi.  
There's been some trouble with Tony.

ANDY (v.o.)  
Oh no! Did he get hurt?

ED  
No no, Andy, nothing like that.  
(nervous beat)  
But... Tony's not fitting in. His  
style of performance is too...  
burlesque.

ANDY (v.o.)  
"Burlesque"?

ED  
Andy, I'm calling you up like this  
because I have the utmost respect for  
your artistry. But -- I need your  
permission to fire him.

ANDY (v.o.)

Oh dear!

(upset)

George, this is gonna kill Tony. He's waited his whole life for this break.

GEORGE

There'll be other shots.

ED

Andy, I have to do it. He's a terrible actor.

Andy thinks about this.

ANDY (v.o.)

I guess I understand. But Ed -- please... let him down gentle.

Ed nods, relieved.

CUT TO:

INT. TAXI SOUNDSTAGE - NEXT DAY

Tony SCREAMS insanely.

TONY CLIFTON

FUCK YOU! I AIN'T GOIN'!!

WIDE

Ed is stupefied. The cast stands nervously behind him.

ED

I said you're fired! Get off my stage!

TONY CLIFTON

I GOT A CONTRACT!! I'm gonna take you to the DEPARTMENT OF LABOR!

Suddenly a FLASH! goes off. Ed squints and looks over. A REPORTER has a camera.

ED

Who're YOU?!

REPORTER

I'm from the L.A. Times. We're doing a little puff piece on Mr. Clifton.

(beat)

Mr. Kaufman arranged it.

Ed's temple pounds furiously. A bright vein pops.

TOP OF THE BLEACHERS

George enters. He looks down at the growing debacle -- and winces. Uh-oh.

ONSTAGE

Ed is livid. He gazes harshly at Tony -- Tony's burning eyes piercing through the rubber features.

ED

We had a deal.

TONY CLIFTON

I don't know what yer talkin' about.  
You musta talked to someone else.

Enraged, Ed blows up.

ED

Security! Escort this man off the  
lot!!

IN THE BLEACHERS

George stares at this car crash... and starts to giggle.

ONSTAGE

Studio SECURITY GUARDS run over. They GRAB Tony.

TONY CLIFTON

Stop! GETCHER HANDS OFF ME!

Tony scuffles. The camera FLASHES.

TONY CLIFTON

LEMME GO! I'M A BIG STAR!

IN THE BLEACHERS

George breaks into laughter. Hysterical laughter.

ONSTAGE

Two Guards drag Tony to the door.

TONY CLIFTON

You'll be SORRY! One day I'm gonna  
OWN this town!!

Tony SCREAMS and gets removed.

Dead silence. Then --

ED

I don't want those pictures getting  
out.

SECURITY GUARD

(to the Reporter)

This is a closed set. You'll have  
to give me the film in that camera.

The Guard reaches for the Reporter's camera...

An uncertain moment -- until Zmuda authoritatively cuts in, from out of nowhere.

ZMUDA

I'll take care of this.

Zmuda takes the camera. He casually starts to make his way for the exit... when Ed suddenly HOLLARS.

ED

Wait -- he's one of THEM!

Zmuda gasps. Two guards go running for him.

Zmuda barrels away. The guards chase him. Zmuda tries to exit -- but gets trapped. He suddenly backs against the Taxi cage, looking around helplessly, clutching the camera...

ON GEORGE

He stares sweatily at the situation... unclear about his loyalties...

And then George leaps from his chair.

GEORGE

HEY! I'M OPEN!!

WIDE

Zmuda grins, reaches back, and quarterbackbacks the camera across the soundstage.

It soars through the air... and lands in George's hands.

George hugs the camera to his chest and scampers feverishly across the bleachers. He disappears out the door.

EXT. PARAMOUNT SIDE GATES - SAME TIME

Tony Clifton gets dragged out, kicking and screaming.

TONY CLIFTON

Stop! HELP! You wouldn't do this to Wayne Newton --

The Guards toss Tony out the gate, then slam it shut. He lands in a heap.

IN THE BACKGROUND

George sprints madly across the lot, more Guards chasing.

SECURITY GUARD #2

Give us that camera!!

George serpentine between a few bystanders, ducks behind a bush -- then suddenly bolts for the exit.

The Guards race a step behind him, and he gets out.

## OUTSIDE THE GATES

George collapses on the sidewalk, breathing heavily. He glances over... and Tony is lying next to him.

The men look at each other. There's a moment of understanding.

TONY CLIFTON

Hey. Good hustlin'.

George slowly smiles.

INT. TAXI OFFICES - SAME TIME

Ed storms in, insanely angry.

ED

That asshole! That FUCKING BASTARD!!  
 (he SLAMS the door behind him)  
 We had a fuckin' deal, and THAT  
 COCKSUCKER SHAFTED ME!!

Ed is seething. His SECRETARY timidly speaks.

SECRETARY

Um, Ed... you have a phone call --

ED

I'M NOT IN!

SECRETARY

Well, um... it's Andy Kaufman...

Heh??! Shaking with fury, Ed stares at the telephone... then slowly picks it up.

ED

Yeah???

A long pause... then Andy's voice calmly speaks.

ANDY (v.o.)

You were brilliant.

A flabbergasted beat.

ED

Huh?

ANDY (v.o.)

You were in the moment. You became  
 a producer losing his mind.  
 (sincerely joyful)  
 It was the best improv I've ever seen.

TIGHT - ED

He thinks intently about this. And then... amazingly, a magnificent smile comes over his face.

ED  
Well -- thank you.

Pause.

ANDY (v.o.)  
Okay. See you next week.

Andy hangs up. Ed just sits there, astounded.

CUT TO:

INT. HEALTH FOOD RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Andy, Zmuda, George and Wendy are squeezed in a booth, laughing and celebrating. They eagerly read the L.A. Times.

INSERT - The headline says "WHO IS TONY CLIFTON?" Below is a PHOTO of Tony being thrown off the Taxi set.

They all HOWL.

ANDY  
This is great! It makes Tony REAL  
-- three-dimensional! It's very good  
for his career.

Zmuda reads one paragraph.

ZMUDA  
"Was this in actuality Andy Kaufman?  
And if it was Andy Kaufman, is Andy  
Kaufman crazy?"

ANDY  
(he chortles)  
Boy, they totally fell for it! I'm  
only acting crazy!

Hmm. A few awkward glances.

Then -- Andy grins at his meal.

ANDY  
Boy, this is tasty.  
(he shouts to a WAITER)  
Hey, can I please have some more  
seaweed?!!

CUT TO:

EXT. TENNIS COURT - DAY

Whack! George and Maynard are playing tennis. They bat the ball back and forth, George making the points. Whack! He smiles, then serves a hard SLAM. Ace! Maynard misses.

GEORGE  
That's game, and set.

Exhausted, they both walk off. George towels himself.

MAYNARD

Good game.

GEORGE

Thanks.

(beat)

So why am I really here? And why'd you let me win?

They both sit. Maynard sighs.

MAYNARD

George, we have an ailing show, a cheap knockoff of Saturday Night Live...

GEORGE

"Fridays"? It stinks.

MAYNARD

No argument from me. Anyhow, we were thinking it could use a kick in the ass... some Andy Kaufman "nuttiness."  
(trying to be charming)  
Maybe get a little press...

George winces at this.

GEORGE

There's no way he'd host "Fridays."  
It's a step down.

MAYNARD

But we'd give him carte blanche! He can do ANYTHING he wants.

GEORGE

That's what you said about his special. Then you didn't air it.

Beat. Maynard whispers mischievously.

MAYNARD

George... I promise that this time we can't screw him. The show goes out live...!

Hmm?! George is intrigued.

CUT TO:

INT. FRIDAYS BACKSTAGE - DAY

The FRIDAYS CAST prepares. In a corner, Andy is arguing with director JACK BURNS.

ANDY  
The monologue is okay, the newscast  
is sorta funny... but I'm not  
comfortable with the last sketch.  
I told you, I don't do drug humor!

JACK  
Andy, it'll be fine! It's what we're  
known for!  
(playing "stoned")  
"Maui? Wowie!"

ANDY  
(losing his temper)  
You're not listening to me --

JACK  
Don't worry. The kids love it --

ANDY  
(he BLOWS up)  
But I don't do drugs! And I don't  
enjoy making light of them!  
(YELLING)  
I was promised creative control!

Andy storms off. Eavesdropping cast shake their heads.

ACTOR  
What a prick!

INT. FRIDAYS AUDIENCE - LATER

The show is going, live. A SNIGGERING NARRATOR steps out front.

NARRATOR  
In this next sketch, two married  
couples are out to dinner. Now --  
everybody has secretly brought along  
a joint --  
(crowd WHOOPS; he grins)  
So, when each person leaves the table,  
they sneak into the restroom to get  
a little high...

The crowd CHEERS rowdily.

In the front row, we reveal Michael sitting with a GIRL. He  
whispers.

MICHAEL  
Afterwards, I'll take you backstage.  
You can meet my brother.

She smiles excitedly.

CUT TO:



LATER - THE SKETCH IN PROGRESS

An overlit French restaurant set. Andy sits at a table with actor RICHARDS and actress MELANIE. Another actress, MARY, tiptoes back over, GIGGLING stupidly, playing stoned.

MARY

"Gee, restaurants are amazing, aren't they? All these strangers sitting around... stuffing food in their faces! It's just incredible!"

She GIGGLES more. The other three play baffled.

MELANIE

"If you say so."

ANDY

(he stands)

"Excuse me, I'll be right back."

Andy walks out.

INTERCUT:

INT. KAUFMAN FAMILY HOME - SAME TIME

Stanley, Janice, and GRANDMA watch the show.

GRANDMA

Hmph! They sure didn't give Andy much to do.

JANICE

Mom! He said he's coming back!

INT. FRIDAYS - RESTAURANT SET

Actors read the menus. Suddenly Andy returns, a strange grin on his face. He's swaying on his feet.

The audience WHOOPS: "Yeah! All right!"

Andy awkwardly sits. He has a strange hesitancy.

ANDY

"Gee, that bathroom is so colorf--"

Suddenly, he STOPS. The actors glance up.

Andy purses his lips, fretting.

An endless pause.

Uh-oh. Andy won't finish the line. The cast looks around worriedly. Live TV is beaming out...

Finally, Melanie tries to cover.

MELANIE  
You okay, honey? Something wrong,  
Carl?

ANDY  
I can't, um...

Andy shakes his head.

The crowd laughs nervously.

ANDY  
I can't play stoned.

UP IN THE BOOTH

The TECH DIRECTOR and his crew are bewildered. They flip through script pages.

TECH DIRECTOR  
Shit...! What's he doing??

ON THE SET

Silence. Andy is torn up inside.

RICHARDS  
Just say it!

ANDY  
(he shakes his head)  
I can't play stoned. I feel really  
stupid.

More silence. The actors are trapped.

MELANIE  
You feel really stupid?  
(upset)  
What about us?!

The tension is awful.

Unsure beat -- then fed-up Richards jumps up and storms off the set.

A CAMERAMAN unsurely starts to pan, not knowing whether to follow.

Mary continues giggling, playing stoned. She has no idea what else to do.

Richards returns... with the CUE CARDS. Irked, he dumps them over Andy's head.

The crowd CHEERS stupidly.

ANDY  
You didn't have to do that!

Andy gets enraged, grabs his prop water glass and THROWS it in Richards' face.

RICHARDS  
Hey! CUT IT OUT!

MELANIE  
You JERK!

Melanie slaps her prop butter in Andy's hair.

WIDE

Jack runs up from the floor. He gestures at the booth.

JACK  
Go to commercial, man!  
(he turns to Andy)  
Get off the stage!

ANDY  
I said I didn't want to do the sketch.

JACK  
(he JABS him)  
GET OFF!

ANDY  
DON'T TOUCH ME!

Andy HITS Jack. Jack recoils and SLUGS him. They start FIGHTING.

Burly crewmen run in.

The crowd WHOOOOS.

Chaos. Andy swings wildly. The brawl goes wild. Actors duck. Crewmen struggle to separate Andy and Jack. Everyone gets dragged in.

IN THE AUDIENCE

Michael tries to run up and help. A SECURITY GUY blocks him.

IN THE BOOTH

The tech crew is freaking out.

TECH DIRECTOR  
Go to three! Eh, go to four!

INT. KAUFMAN HOUSE - SAME TIME

Stanley, Janice, and Grandma are flabbergasted. Jaws to the floor.

On their TV - fists are flying. Suddenly the BAND kicks in, and the show abruptly cuts to COMMERCIAL.

They stare at the TV. Until, someone speaks.

STANLEY  
I shoulda made him play outdoors.

CUT TO:

INT. FRIDAYS SOUNDSTAGE - LATER

The show is over. The disoriented audience shuffles out, a shaky USHER waving them goodbye.

BACKSTAGE

Flabbergasted Michael leads his date backstage. Angry actors hurry past.

MELANIE  
He's a fuckin' psycho. I hope he never works again...

Michael gasps. He whispers to his date.

MICHAEL  
This is terrible... all Andy lives for is his career! What's he gonna do??!

GIRL  
(stepping away)  
Maybe it's a bad time for me to meet him.

MICHAEL  
No, he needs my support.

Michael guides her to a door marked "GUEST HOST." A nervous gulp, then he opens it...

INT. DRESSING ROOM

And INSIDE is Andy, Jack, and Maynard, joyously LAUGHING and HIGH-FIVING EACH OTHER! Champagne bottles POP.

JACK  
Didja see Melanie's face when that grip punched you?!!

MAYNARD  
You guys were perfect! I never thought it would play so real!

Beat. Michael is stunned.

MICHAEL  
A-Andy...???

ANDY  
 (surprised to see him)  
Michael...?!  
 (beat; then)  
 Get in here and close the door! The  
 cast doesn't know!

They shut the door. The girl is totally confused.

GIRL  
 I don't understand... what's  
 happening?

MICHAEL  
 (eyes widening in realization)  
 They faked the whole thing...!

ANDY  
 I was engaging a passive audience.

Beat -- then Michael runs at Andy and brotherly RABBIT-PUNCHES  
 him.

MICHAEL  
 You bastard! You gave me a heart  
 attack!!

ANDY  
 (he laughs)  
 S-sorry...!

MICHAEL  
 (laughing)  
 I thought you'd ruined your career!

Everyone cracks up, laughing.

CUT TO:

INT. ANDY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Andy is home, scanning through his ANSWERING MACHINE tape.

CONCERNED WOMAN (v.o.)  
 Andy, are you okay? We saw the  
 show... and uh, if you need someone  
 to talk to --

(he FAST FORWARDS)

SOOTHING MAN (v.o.)  
 ...everyone at TM supports you in your  
 time of need. You seem out of balance  
 --

(he FAST FORWARDS)

STANLEY (v.o.)  
 I'm cashing out your long term  
 investments! Cause you're  
unemployable! You'll need the money  
 to LIVE on!

BEEP! Hmm. Andy thinks about this -- and slowly smiles.

INT. GEORGE'S OFFICE - DAY

Andy sits with George. A New York Times sits between them. George is both amused and uncertain.

GEORGE

We're in a very curious position. The good news, AND the bad news, is that you're on the front page of the New York Times. This is an unprecedented feat for a TV comedian.

ANDY

(correcting)  
Song-and-dance man.

GEORGE

Right, song-and-dance man.  
(he smiles and pulls the article)  
The gist of the article -- is that you're completely insane. One man even theorized that it was morally wrong of ABC to take advantage of such a clearly unstable individual.

Andy nods.

ANDY

How can we capitalize on this?

GEORGE

(sarcastic)  
Hmm. Capitalizing on going berserk in front of 20 million people.  
(beat)  
Well -- your schedule's wide open... Three concert promoters called today to cancel -- they're worried you're too unreliable.

ANDY

Leak that to the press.  
(pleased; wheels spinning)  
I think this could be big. People will pay money to see me melt down.

Pause.

George leans back, contemplating the world he lives in. A gaze crosses his face.

GEORGE

Andy... maybe I'm coming around.  
(thoughtful)  
You just might have been right about everything.

Andy smiles.

The intercom BUZZES.

SECRETARY (v.o.)  
Maynard Smith on line two.

GEORGE  
(grinning at Andy)  
He must be ecstatic! You singlehandedly  
got the world talkin' about a show  
they couldn't give away.  
(he PICKS up the phone)  
Maynard! Hey lucky man! Did we  
deliver??!

INTERCUT:

MAYNARD SMITH ON THE PHONE

Maynard is sweaty and beleaguered.

MAYNARD  
George... it's a disaster. My bosses  
have been chewing my ass out all  
morning.

GEORGE  
(startled)  
Why?!

MAYNARD  
They said the show was too radical.  
It looked like anarchists taking over!  
You know, when there's a coup in a  
tiny country, the first thing they  
do is grab the TV stations --

GEORGE  
Maynard, this wasn't a coup. You  
okayed it.

Maynard grimaces -- pained by what he has to say.

MAYNARD  
Regardless, they're demanding an  
on-air apology.

GEORGE  
That's ridiculous!

MAYNARD  
They're insisting. Andy has to inform  
the world that it was pre-scripted.  
We need to prove that the American  
Broadcasting Company is not out of  
control.

A heavy beat. George glances nervously at oblivious Andy.

GEORGE  
Oh boy...

CUT TO:

EXT. FRIDAYS SOUNDSTAGE - NIGHT

A looming soundstage. A sign over the door says "FRIDAYS."

Beat -- then Andy tentatively walks up. Zmuda is backing him. Andy glances anxiously at his friend, then enters.

INT. FRIDAYS BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

Andy crosses the stage... and actors angrily turn away. He's a pariah. Nobody will look him in the eye.

INT. FRIDAYS DRESSING ROOM

Andy and Zmuda enter the empty room -- and there is an envelope sitting there. It says "ANDY KAUFMAN APOLOGY - 2 Minutes."

Andy rips it open, removing one TYPED SHEET OF PAPER. He and Zmuda crowd together, reading it... and their faces drop.

ZMUDA  
Are they kidding?? They want you to  
give away the trick!

ANDY  
(upset)  
I never, NEVER wink at the audience!

ZMUDA  
Man, it's like one of those Viet Cong  
confessions -- with someone offscreen  
pointing a gun at the POW's head!

Beat. Andy BECOMES a brainwashed POW.

ANDY (AS POW)  
"I confess I was a spy. I denounce  
the imperialist United States of  
America"...

They both laugh.

Then -- Andy gets a dangerous gleam. Bob gets worried.

ZMUDA  
Andy...! You promised to behave --

ANDY  
But Bob, they're daring me to go  
further! ...It's LIVE.

INT. SOUNDSTAGE - MINUTES LATER

Commercial break. The audience waits for the show to resume.

A lone chair sits in a spotlight. Suddenly, Andy staggers into view... TRANSFORMED INTO A SHELL-SHOCKED P.O.W. His face is smudged, his eyes are glazed, and mucus runs from his nose.

Busy Jack Burns strides into view.



JACK  
 Alright, Andy, you're gonna be  
 sitting --  
 (his eyes pop)  
 Oh SHIT!

Jack takes a horrified look at Andy. He is speechless.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR  
 Coming out of commercial in fifteen  
 seconds.

JACK  
 Oh, Jesus... Andy, no...

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR  
 Five seconds!

Andy glances derangedly at Jack, then sits in the chair. The camera LIGHT goes on.

Andy looks into the camera... hesitant, dazed, and emotionally unstable. He refers stiffly to the SCRIPT PAGE in his hand.

ANDY  
 "I've agreed to appear on this program  
 tonight, to make a statement. Because  
 ABC would like you to know the truth.  
 The truth is -- last week was staged.  
 We wanted to do something  
 different..."  
 (choking up)  
 and... um...  
 (unable to speak)  
 I can't do this.

Andy breathes heavily. He throws the script down.

ANDY  
 I won't do it. I can't say it. I'm  
 sorry.  
 (struggling to continue)  
 I'm sorry. This has been a very hard  
 week for me.

The crowd LAUGHS nervously. Andy is shaken.

ANDY  
 Why are you laughing? I'm not trying  
 to be funny right now. Because of  
 this incident, my job at Taxi is in  
 jeopardy. My agent is finding it hard  
 to convince anyone in the show  
 business community to hire me.

A LAUGH. Andy gives the audience a strange look.

ANDY

You laughing at this... I think your laughing at this is very tasteless.

(a long sigh)

My friends won't talk to me.

(trying not to cry)

And my wife... thanks to last week my wife has left me. And she took the kids, little Howard and Maria...

A few GIGGLES. Andy shakes his head in shock.

ANDY

I don't know where you people are coming from.

(distracted)

Maybe I went too far... I don't know.

He starts weeping. He can't continue.

Andy sits there, shuddering. It's very uncomfortable.

UP IN THE BOOTH

The Tech Director stares at this sight. An endless pause... until he realizes Andy has nothing else to say.

TECH DIRECTOR

(frazzled)

Cut to black. Cue commercial.

CUT TO:

INT. MAYNARD SMITH'S HOME - EARLY MORNING

Maynard is passed-out on his couch. Empty liquor bottles are everywhere. A gun sits on the coffee table. Last night was a horror.

The doorbell RINGS. Maynard moans, rubs his head, and staggers to the door. He opens it, and a fresh-scrubbed RUNNER holds a packet.

MAYNARD

What's that, my resignation...?

RUNNER

No, Mr. Smith. It's the overnight ratings.

Maynard groans. Pained, he opens the packet, shielding his eyes in fear. Finally... he looks -- and GASPS in SHOCK.

MAYNARD

Oh my God!

INT. ALPHA BETA - DAY

Andy is in the supermarket, playing Space Invaders.

In the b.g., George appears in the window. He feverishly peers around, then suddenly spots Andy. George grins and runs in.

Beat -- then he races up to Andy and grabs him.

GEORGE

Andy! ANDY, I've been to every arcade in town, looking for you!!

ANDY

(staring at the screen)  
Oh, hello George. What's up?

GEORGE

Oh, just THE BIGGEST RATINGS IN THE HISTORY OF FRIDAYS!!!

Andy jerks, startled. On the VIDEOGAME, his space station BLOWS UP. Andy is off-balance. Discombobulated.

ANDY

So I'm -- not in trouble...?

GEORGE

They want you to guest host the first show of next season! They're gonna air your special, and pay you for it AGAIN! Time Magazine wants to profile you! Rolling Stone wants to profile Tony Clifton! And concert dates are pouring in like there's no tomorrow!!

TIGHT - ANDY

Whoa. He is momentarily speechless.

ANDY

I should've cracked-up sooner.

CUT TO:

EXT. BOSTON THEATER - NIGHT

A marquee says "ANDY KAUFMAN - SOLD OUT." A line of waiting FANS goes around the block.

FAN #1

I hear he's gonna sing "99 Bottles of Beer" all the way through.

FAN #2

I hear he's gonna blow his brains out.

INT. THEATER - BACKSTAGE

Exuberant Andy huddles with sister Carol, her straightlaced fiancée RICK, and striking blonde bombshell PRINCESS.

ANDY

Here's the deal. I've reached the moment I've always dreamed of. I can get away with anything -- and people expect it. So I wanna go out there tonight and do stuff that's so disturbing, it's probably ILLEGAL!

Rick grimaces fearfully.

RICK

I-I-I dunno about this, Andy. I'm really not much of a performer --

ANDY

HEY. You wanna marry my sister, you have to join the family!

CAROL

You make it sound like the Godfather.

An anxious pause. Andy smiles reassuringly.

ANDY

Don't worry, it'll be fun. I'm gonna be a hypnotist, and I'll pick three people from the audience... which'll just happen to be you, you and you. Then I'll make you do incredibly humiliating things, while you pretend you're someone else.

(to Carol)

So you're not my sister...

(to Rick)

You're not my maybe future brother-in-law...

(to Princess)

And you're not a stripper from that club on Fourth Street.

(Andy chuckles)

Just pretend you're regular folk.

CUT TO:

INT. THEATER - LATER

The show's in progress. The crowd is SCREAMING in shock.

Onstage, Carol, Rick, and Princess are shaking like epileptic attacks.

Carol is violently picking her nose.

Rick's pants are soaked yellow from urine.

Princess Cheyenne is nude.

Andy wears a turban and waves his arms at the three.

ANDY  
 You're all under my spell! You'll  
 do anything I say!

CLOSEUP - RICK'S HAND

We see him squeeze a plastic bulb in his hand.

WIDE

The yellow stain grows across his pants.

The crowd HOWLS LOUDER.

ANDY  
 And NOW, we take advantage of these  
 hypnotized subjects!!

Andy opens a SUITCASE -- revealing assorted SEX TOYS.

Jesus Christ.

The crowd ROARS in horror.

WIDE - AUDITORIUM

Suddenly, BAM!! The HOUSE LIGHTS go on.

Everyone spins in shock. WHISTLES blow -- and a DOZEN POLICEMEN  
 barge in the back of the theater!!

POLICEMAN #1  
 STOP THE SHOW!

POLICEMAN #2  
 You four are under arrest, for  
 violating the morals laws of the city  
 of Boston!!!

The cops race down the aisle.

Onstage, the four stop the "act." Princess frantically covers  
 herself. Everyone is terrified.

RICK  
 Oh my God, we shouldn't have done  
 this!

CAROL  
 (panic-stricken)  
 Andy, you said this would be okay!

Cops with nightsticks WHACK the theater seats.

POLICEMAN #1  
 Clear the building! Fun's over!!

People bolt from their seats.

It's total mayhem.

Onstage, the four are frozen in fear.

POLICEMAN'S VOICE  
Move! OUTTA MY WAY! All four of you  
are goin' in the paddywagon!!

This last cop pushes through -- and he is Zmuda.

Disorientation -- then Carol's jaw drops.

Instant realization. She looks at Andy -- and he knowingly  
winks back.

Carol dazedly grins.

Zmuda jumps onstage. He spins Andy around, and phony handcuffs  
get SLAPPED onto Andy's wrists.

CUT TO:

INT. PHOTO STUDIO - DAY

FLASH! Rubber-faced Tony Clifton is being photographed by a  
FASHION PHOTOGRAPHER. Tony smirks and preens -- arms up, arms  
out.

TONY CLIFTON  
I feel sexy! This looks good!  
(pelvis out)  
I know the ladies love this!

PHOTOGRAPHER  
If you say so.  
(beat)  
Hang on, I gotta reload.

The photographer walks off.

We reveal George in back, watching the session. George comes  
over and sits with Tony.

GEORGE  
So, I heard you had quite a show in  
Boston the other night.

TONY CLIFTON  
I don't know what yer talkin' about.  
I never been to Boston!

George smiles wryly. He leans in and corrects himself.

GEORGE  
Sorry, I mean -- Andy had a good show.

TONY CLIFTON

Yeah, he did. I talked to Kaufman.  
He told me it was one of the most  
satisfying performances of his career.  
(sincere)  
Kaufman especially enjoyed trickin'  
his sister.

GEORGE

She wasn't in on it?

Tony smiles. There's a feeling of genuine intimacy with George.

TONY CLIFTON

Oh, she thought she was -- but there  
were circles within circles. That's  
the thing with Kaufman's family...  
they're complacent. They think they  
know him, cause they grew up with  
him... but they don't.

GEORGE

(agreeing)

They're not in the thick of it, like  
we are...

Beat -- then Tony ominously shakes his head.

TONY CLIFTON

I disagree, George. Nobody knows  
Kaufman.

A strange pause. Then, an ASSISTANT shouts.

ASSISTANT

Andy Kaufman's here!

PHOTOGRAPHER

Okay, send him into makeup.

Huh?

Confusion. George slowly turns --

As ANDY strolls in the door. Andy waves cheerily.

ANDY

Oh, hi, George.

CLOSEUP - GEORGE

A moment of staggering incomprehension.

Total brain melt. He looks at rubber-face Tony -- then he looks  
at Andy -- then he looks back at Tony.

Finally he GRABS Tony and peers in his eyes.

GEORGE  
Who ARE you???

CUT TO:

LATER - SIDE ROOM

George is hyperventilating.

GEORGE  
What is the point of all this??

ANDY  
It's fun.

GEORGE  
It's NOT fun!

We pan over... revealing Tony with his makeup half-off. It's Zmuda underneath.

ZMUDA  
I think it's fun. I like being Tony.  
Now I can dump a glass of water on  
someone else's head.

ANDY  
See, with all these articles coming  
out, people think they're insiders.  
They see Tony Clifton, and they say,  
"Ah, that's really Andy Kaufman."  
But that spoils it.

GEORGE  
No it doesn't. Tony always denies  
being Andy.

ANDY  
Ha-ha! But that's the beauty of it!  
Because NOW Tony will be telling the  
truth! The audience will be laughing  
because they think he's lying -- but  
actually, they're WRONG! He's not  
me!

(giddy)  
Then I can go on talk shows and deny  
being Tony! And the audience will  
be laughin' at me -- but actually,  
on the inside I'll be laughin' at  
them, because they're wrong and I'm  
right!!

George is dazed, and unimpressed.

GEORGE  
So you've got this big elaborate joke,  
which is really only funny to two  
people in the universe.  
(dry)  
You, and you.



ZMUDA

Yeah! But WE think it's hilarious!

Long beat. George turns serious.

GEORGE

Andy... why is any of this necessary?

Pause. Andy sighs.

ANDY

George... I'm at the point where the audience expects me to constantly shock them. But short of faking my death, or setting the theater on fire, I don't know what else to do.

(thoughtful)

Cause I've always got to be one step ahead of them.

GEORGE

But I feel like you're extending this philosophy to real life. It's obsessive. Nothing's ever on the level anymore.

A perplexed beat.

ANDY

George, it never was.

(pause)

Didn't you know that?

CUT TO:

INT. THEATER BOOKER'S OFFICE - DAY

A slick BOOKER, sitting in a crowded office full of head shots. He's on the phone.

BOOKER

Mr. Shapiro, this is Gene Knight up at Harrah's Tahoe. We'd like to book Andy Kaufman for our showroom.

INTERCUT:

George on the phone.

GEORGE

Ehh -- Andy doesn't really like playing casinos. The audiences don't work well for him.

BOOKER

Oh.

Disappointed beat. The Booker thinks.

BOOKER  
What about Tony Clifton?

GEORGE  
 (startled)  
 Really?! You want Tony Clifton to  
 headline Harrah's Tahoe??

BOOKER  
 (being tricky)  
 Eh, sure. We're trying to expand our  
 audience base -- and I know the  
 college kids really love Andy Kaufman.

George winces.

GEORGE  
 Look -- I gotta be clear with you.  
 Tony Clifton is NOT Andy Kaufman.

BOOKER  
 (he LAUGHS merrily)  
 Yeah yeah yeah! I know! I get it!

GEORGE  
 (frustrated)  
 No, I'm serious. If you book Tony,  
 you are NOT GETTING ANDY.

BOOKER  
 (LAUGHING harder)  
 Wink wink! Nudge nudge! Of course!

George rolls his eyes in disbelief. Finally he shrugs.

GEORGE  
 Fine, be my guest. Book him.

CUT TO:

INT. SPORTS ARENA - DAY

A crowded arena. Andy comes walking down the aisle with his  
 elderly Grandma.

GRANDMA  
 You're such a good boy, Andy. I  
 hardly ever get out anymore.

ANDY  
 But I love you, Grandma. I like to  
 do these special things for you.

A BRAWNY GUY jumps up from his seat.

BRAWNY GUY  
 Kick him in the NUTS!

We GO WIDE - and reveal we're at a WRESTLING MATCH. Muscular WRESTLERS throw each other around the ring. Their faces drip blood.

Andy helps Grandma into her seat. He hands her a popcorn.

GRANDMA

I can't tell you how many times I brought you here as a boy.

ANDY

That's why grandmas are the best. They're just good to you. They never yell at you like parents. Grandmas are unconditional love.

He kisses her on the forehead.

In the ring, a melee breaks out. A MANAGER crawls in to help -- and gets hurled. The crowd SCREAMS wildly.

GRANDMA

Oh my Goodness! They just threw that poor man from the ring!

ANDY

(gently laughing)  
Grandma, it's not REAL! They're just pretending.

GRANDMA

No, no, Andy. If it was fake, they couldn't call it sports.

The Good Guy Wrestler (in white) JABS the hooded Bad Guy. A few CHEERS.

Andy smiles.

The Bad Guy retaliates by SMACKING the Good Guy. He topples unconscious. The crowd BOOOOOOOOS FURIOUSLY.

Andy looks around, amazed at this impassioned reaction.

The Bad Guy jumps on the Good Guy's head. The REF tries to stop this -- and the crazed Bad Guy knocks out the Ref! The crowd goes NUTS.

The Bad Guy grabs a chair and SMASHES it over his slayed opponent. Then he does a smarmy victory dance. The crowd is ENRAGED. They SHOUT, SCREAM, and HURL PROGRAMS at him.

CLOSEUP - ANDY

His eyes widen with glee.

ANDY

Hey -- this is where the fun is...!

CUT TO:

EXT. NEWSSTAND - DAY

Andy and Zmuda are thumbing through wrestling magazines. . It's page after page of SCOWLING BLOODY WRESTLERS.

ANDY

Look at this! An evil Russian! Ooo, here's an evil Nazi -- he likes to fight dirty! Hey, here's an evil Japanese guy!

ZMUDA

What is this, World War Two..?

ANDY

These magazines are great! 68 pages of villains -- and no good guys!

ZMUDA

Good guys suck.

ANDY

("fake insulted")

Hey, Latka's a good guy...!

ZMUDA

Latka sucks.

Andy laughs. He looks at Zmuda hopefully.

ANDY

So, what do you think...?

ZMUDA

No offense, man, but I just don't think you're built for it. These guys'll kick your ass. They're huge.

Andy's face drops. He realizes Zmuda's right.

Beat -- then Andy glances around. His gaze locks on an issue of... "MS. MAGAZINE."

Hmm???! Andy's eyes light up. He reaches for the "MS."...

CUT TO:

INT. MERV GRIFFIN SHOW - DAY

Andy and MERV GRIFFIN stand on an erected wrestling ring. Andy wears a goofy wrestling outfit that resembles thermal underwear. He is shouting like a wrestler.

ANDY

...and I vow to continue wrestling until I am BEATEN, in a three-minute match, with my shoulders pinned to the mat!!

MERV  
(nonplussed)  
By a woman.

ANDY  
Yes! BY A WOMAN!  
(emphatic)  
I'm doing this because I feel that  
a woman cannot beat a man in  
wrestling. Even if they train with  
weights... it requires a certain  
mental ability --  
(a clumsy pause)  
And, uh -- I just don't feel they have  
that...

The audience MURMURS uncomfortably. Andy laughs and backpedals.

ANDY  
No no! Women are superior in many  
ways. When it comes to cooking and  
cleaning, washing the potatoes,  
scrubbing the carrots, raising the  
babies, mopping the floors, they have  
it all over men. I believe that!

An appalled silence.

Merv winces. Some people start BOOING.

We can tell Andy is pleased.

ANDY  
But when it comes to wrestling, forget  
it! If there's a woman that can prove  
me wrong, come up here. I'll shut  
my mouth and pay her 500 dollars.

Merv baitingly turns to the crowd.

MERV  
Any... volunteers...?

WIDE

All the WOMEN'S hands angrily shoot up!

We move through the crowd, finally picking out... a feisty  
woman, LYNN. She mutters, half hateful, half laughing --

LYNN  
I wanna kill that jerk.

CUT TO:

MINUTES LATER

Andy and Lynn stand in the ring. Zmuda is in a referee's  
uniform.

ZMUDA (AS REFEREE)  
 Will you please shake hands, go to  
 your corners, and come out wrestling.

Lynn extends her hand. Andy fakes a shake -- then snidely refuses and struts away. The crowd BOOS.

DING! It's the bell. The match begins. Lynn comes running at Andy -- she's craving a victory, but terribly unprepared for this experience. Andy immediately grabs her by the legs and flips her over.

WHUMP! She's down. Andy has trained for this.

Zmuda gets on his knees, watching, trying to look official. Lynn struggles and slithers away.

She grabs Andy's arm and forces him down. People CHEER. His torso hits the mat. LOUDER CHEERS. But suddenly he rolls over and pulls her hair! Her head snaps back. The crowd is INCENSED. Zmuda hurries over and pantomimes a stern warning.

Andy nods, and they separate. They do a little dance around the ring, Lynn looking for a hole. Suddenly, Andy spins her into a Half-Nelson. Her arms are pinned. They struggle, then he throws her down on her stomach. One! Two! Three!

And DING! It's all over.

Andy jumps up and sneers at the audience.

ANDY  
 I'm the winner! I've got the BRAINS!  
 (he points at his head)  
 Now baby, get back in the kitchen  
 where you belong!!

Lynn glares.

Out of the blue, an old RECORDING OF BOUNCY PIANO MUSIC starts playing. A chicken starts CLUCKING to the music, and Andy lip-syncs along, doing an obnoxious cock o' the walk around the ring.

CUT TO:

INT. MERV GRIFFIN SHOW BACKSTAGE - LATER

Lynn is escorted by a GUEST COORDINATOR. Lynn is dazed. The Coordinator hands her a bunch of crap.

GUEST COORDINATOR  
 Here's your complimentary photo with  
 Merv. Here's your Turtle Wax --

LYNN  
 I don't need Turtle Wax.

GUEST COORDINATOR  
Every guest of Merv gets it. And here's your dinner-for-two voucher at Red Lobster.

Lynn takes her junk and hobbles off. She passes Andy, who sees her and grins.

ANDY  
Gosh, you scored! Look at all those goodies!

LYNN  
Buzz off. Go patronize somebody else.

Lynn coldly hurries away. Andy chases after her.

ANDY  
Hey, I hope you didn't take that stuff I said seriously. It was just part of the show!  
(eager to impress)  
It's like the old days, when a carnival barker would try to rile up the crowd.

LYNN  
Oh. So you were just pretending to be an asshole.

Andy nods, pleased.

ANDY  
It's what I'm good at!

Lynn stares -- then begrudgingly cracks a smile.

CUT TO:

INT. GOLD'S GYM - DAY

Jumbo-sized BEEFY MEN work out, sweating and groaning.

In a corner is Andy, lifting gigantic barbells. Sitting on a bench, unhappily watching, is George.

GEORGE  
Merv Griffin has received 2000 pieces of hate mail. Andy, Merv Griffin doesn't GET hate mail.

ANDY  
That means it was a success. I woke up the audience.

GEORGE  
And now they detest you! And it's not that they detest a character that they sense you were portraying... they detest YOU, Andy Kaufman!

ANDY  
George, it's punk rock.  
(he hands him a BARBELL)  
Here, take this.

GEORGE  
No, I'm not going to take it. If I  
take it I'll break my back. Put it  
down yourself.

George crosses his arms. Andy frowns and lowers the weight.

GEORGE  
Next time you make a live appearance,  
women are going to picket.

ANDY  
They're having a laugh...

GEORGE  
WRONG! You haven't given them any  
clues that it's a parody!

ANDY  
That's because they've only seen it  
once. But I'll do it again, and  
again, and AGAIN...  
(a maniacal grin)  
They'll catch on!

George shudders. Suddenly a white-haired HARDASS marches over  
-- bellicose BUDDY ROGERS, 70.

BUDDY ROGERS  
Alright, QUIT THE YAPPIN'! Hit the  
ground and give me 50 pushups,  
Kaufman!

Andy dutifully follows orders and drops to the floor.

ANDY  
George, I want you to meet my new  
manager, Buddy "Nature Boy" Rogers!

GEORGE  
(baffled)  
"Manager"? I thought I was your  
manager...

BUDDY ROGERS  
(to George)  
You handle the song-and-dance crapola.  
I handle the wrestling.  
(to Andy)  
UP DOWN! UP DOWN! UP DOWN...!

George stares in disbelief.

CUT TO:



## MONTAGE OF WRESTLING MATCHES:

MATCH 1 - Andy throws a FAT WOMAN to the ground.

MATCH 2 - Andy squeezes a SMALL WOMAN in a headlock.

MATCH 3 - Andy throws an ITALIAN LADY from the ring. He then proudly waves a phony plastic belt over his head.

ANDY

I am the Intergender Wrestling  
Champion of the World!!!

CUT TO:

## INT. MOVIE THEATER LOBBY - DAY

At the boxoffice, Andy buys a ticket. He enters the theater, hurries across the lobby, and goes up to the candy counter.

ANDY

Two large popcorns, extra butter.

Andy pays. He takes the popcorns... then WALKS OUT.

## EXT. MOVIE THEATER - SAME TIME

Andy proudly leaves with the popcorns. He goes up to his parked Cordova, which contains in the passenger seat... Lynn.

ANDY

I love movie theater popcorn, but I'm  
NOT gonna sit through "On Golden  
Pond."

## IN THE CAR

Andy hands Lynn her popcorn, then gets in. He starts driving.

LYNN

When my phone rang the other night,  
the last person I was expecting it  
to be was you.

ANDY

Gosh. Gee... I was just so --  
impressed with your wrestling moves.

LYNN

You were impressed with something.  
It's pretty odd when a man sports a  
hard-on that large on national  
television.

Andy is shocked.

ANDY

Oh! Uh, I hope I didn't offend you.

Beat.

LYNN  
I'm here, ain't I?

A charged moment. Andy's eyes widen.

He is disconcerted -- and excited -- by her aggressiveness.

Lynn checks him out.

LYNN  
Have you ever played Murder in the  
Car?

ANDY  
(unsure)  
No...

LYNN  
Pull over next to that Buick.

Lynn points. At a red light, Andy pulls them over.

Suddenly, Lynn starts SCREAMING FURIOUSLY.

LYNN  
YOU STUPID SON OF A BITCH! DID YOU  
THINK I WASN'T GOING TO FIND OUT ABOUT  
YOU AND MY SISTER??!

Beat -- then Andy realizes the game.

ANDY  
B-but, baby, it didn't mean  
anything...!

LYNN  
I'LL KILL YOU!

ANDY  
I love you --

She lunges over and fakes CHOKING him. He flails helplessly  
and SLAMS his head against the glass.

Lynn "throttles" harder. Popcorn flies. The HORN goes off.

IN THE BUICK

An ELDERLY COUPLE gapes in horror. Andy gestures desperately,  
gasping through the glass.

ANDY  
Help...me....!!!

The old people are paralyzed. The man turns to his wife.

OLD MAN  
We're not getting involved.

Terrified, he HITS THE GAS and screeches away.

IN ANDY'S CAR

Andy and Lynn see their audience drive off. She stops choking. Andy is sweaty... and exhilarated.

ANDY  
You were fantastic...!

He stares into Lynn's eyes.

ANDY  
Do you wanna come to Memphis?

LYNN  
What's in Memphis?

Andy grins loopily.

ANDY  
More wrestling!!

CUT TO:

INT. MID-SOUTH COLISEUM - MEMPHIS - NIGHT

A giant arena, filled with furious BOOING SOUTHERN WRESTLING FANS. Ladies in hair nets. Men clutching beer cans. This is a rougher crowd than we've seen before.

Andy stands in the ring, unshaven in a torn green robe. He's screaming at them.

ANDY  
SHUT UP!  
(more BOOS)  
SHUT UP! Show some respect! I want  
SILENCE when I speak!!

Louder BOOS. People throw debris.

Andy is pleased. In the corner, Buddy Rogers nods approvingly. Amused Lynn sits in the front row, ducking the onslaught.

ANDY  
If any woman can defeat me, I will  
pay her 1000 dollars! Then I'll shave  
my head BALD! And then as a bonus  
-- that lucky lady will get to marry  
me!!

Screeching CATCALLS and JEERS.

Suddenly his opponent climbs in: A muscular black woman, FOXY. Plus her manager, oversized Southern wrestler JERRY LAWLOR, a doughy good guy. Jerry snatches the mike away.

JERRY LAWLOR

Look here, Mr. Andy Kaufman. I am Jerry Lawlor, the KING of Memphis wrestling!!

(huge CHEERS)

I have trained this woman, Foxy Jackson! She is READY! And I say before three minutes are up, you will be one bald, married man!!!!

CUT TO:

LATER

DING! The bell rings. Foxy comes out, ready to brawl. But Andy remains in his corner, running down the clock. He nonchalantly peels off his robe. Foxy dances around impatiently. Andy casually removes a towel from his neck. People BOO. Still stalling, Andy then takes off his watch.

People SCREAM so furiously they're red-faced. Andy is tormenting them. A TATTOOED GUY jumps up.

TATTOOED GUY

Are you scared???

Andy sneers. He cracks his knuckles, finally walks over... and commences a WINDMILL. Absurdly, he spins his arms around and around, daring Foxy to get near him.

She rolls her eyes and waits. The REF jumps from the way. A minute has counted down. Finally Andy stops -- and the real wrestling begins. Foxy lunges at him and immediately goes for a chokehold. The crowd CHEERS, relieved. Jerry motions signals. Foxy yanks -- but Andy jerks away.

Andy is intrigued. She's coming to play! Andy gestures to the Ref and points UP. The Ref looks away -- and Andy SLAPS Foxy.

The crowd furiously JEERS. The Ref spins around, and Andy shrugs innocence. He then runs at Foxy and theatrically pushes her into the ropes. She bounces off, stumbles back -- and Andy drops to his knees. She trips over him and hits the mat.

Andy aggressively jumps onto Foxy's shoulders and pins her. The Ref counts, One! Two! Three! DING!!

It's over. But Andy stays on her, shaking his ass, leering rudely. Jerry Lawlor yells from the corner.

JERRY LAWLOR

Alright, you won. GET OFF HER!

Andy remains, flapping his arms like a chicken.

The BOOING grows. Louder. More emotional.

ANGRY VOICES

Jerry, help her! Get in there! Do something!!

Jerry hesitates -- then suddenly climbs in the ring and lifts Andy off! Jerry angrily PUSHES Andy down.

Andy is flabbergasted.

ANDY

W-what are you DOING?! I don't fight men!!

Lawlor snickers and walks away. Completely overreacting, Andy grabs the mike.

ANDY

I'm gonna SUE YOU!

CUT TO:

INT. COLISEUM INTERVIEW ROOM - LATER

A supercilious TUXEDOED ANNOUNCER holds a microphone up to Andy. Disheveled Andy rants berserkly at the camera:

ANDY

Let me tell you something, Mr. Lawlor! I am not a hick -- I'm a national TV star! And I DON'T like a dumb cracker pushing me around in the ring! I never agreed to wrestle you! So you know what I'm gonna do???

(seething)

I've hired a lawyer to sue you for every cent you've got! This was assault and battery! In a court of law, I'm going to kick your Southern-fried rump!!!

LATER

Lawlor stands on the same platform, bellowing at the camera.

JERRY LAWLOR

YEAH?! Well I got news for you, Andy Kaufman! Wrestling is a serious sport to me! I don't like anyone makin' fun of it, and I hate anyone insultin' the South! So we can settle this two ways: We can go to court... or you can get in the ring with a man, and wrestle for REAL!

Off to the side, Andy watches, fuming. He is INFURIATED.

ANDY

He -- he can't get away with this. He's calling me chicken!

LYNN

Andy, no --

Andy pushes some TECHNICIANS aside and barges onto the camera area. He sticks his face in shocked Lawlor's.

ANDY  
 (sarcastic SOUTHERN ACCENT)  
 You wanna "wraaastle" me?! You wanna  
 "WRRAASTLE" ME?? Okay Lawlor -- let's  
rumble! Yeah, I've only wrestled  
 women, but they were bigger than you!  
 In fact, they're probably smarter than  
 you, cause you're from "Maaamphis,  
 Taaanassee!"  
 (back to his regular voice, he  
 points at his head)  
 I'm from Hollywood. I have the  
 brains. That's how I win. And Mr.  
 Lawlor, I'm gonna make you cry "Mama"!

Andy bares his teeth. Enraged, Lawlor tries to take a swing at him. HANDLERS run in and separate the angry men.

EXT. MID-SOUTH COLISEUM - LATER THAT NIGHT

A nearly deserted parking lot. Andy and Lynn exit the back VIP door, Andy swaggering arrogantly. Lynn is concerned.

LYNN  
 Is this an act -- or are you addicted  
 to causing trouble??

ANDY  
 (he jokingly impersonates a drunk)  
 I can shtop whenever I want...

She's unamused.

Suddenly -- enraged MEN IN OVERALLS leap from the shadows.

ANGRY MAN 1  
 Fuck you, Kaufman!

ANGRY MAN 2  
 Go home, Jew Yankee!!

The men pelt them with eggs and garbage. Genuinely freaked, Andy and Lynn run for their car.

CUT TO:

INT. GEORGE'S OFFICE - DAY

George stares glumly at Andy. Andy is quite cheerful -- eating a big piece of chocolate cake.

GEORGE  
 Andy, do you realize you don't do  
 comedy anymore?? Please, enough with  
the wrestling! You've lost touch with  
 reality!

ANDY  
(ingenuous)  
What, you don't think I can beat him?

GEORGE  
He is the Southern Heavyweight  
Champion. He'll kill you.  
(very disapproving)  
First you piss-off women. Then you  
piss-off the South. Then you get  
killed!  
(dry)  
And I managed your career.

Andy shrugs, lacking a response. He eats more cake.  
Aggravated, George hands him a packet.

GEORGE  
Which brings me to your tickets for  
Tahoe, for the Tony Clifton  
engagement. Gosh, remember those  
quaint old days, when Tony was your  
most obnoxious character??

ANDY  
Yeah.  
(trying to be reassuring)  
Well, at least he's no longer really  
me!

CUT TO:

EXT. HARRAH'S TAHOE - DAY

Harrah's marquee brags "TONY CLIFTON"

Underneath, a CAB pulls up. Inside sit Andy and Zmuda. Zmuda  
looks uneasy -- his usual bluster gone.

ZMUDA  
Man, I hope I can pull this off...

ANDY  
Doctor, you'll be fine. Nobody will  
ever know it wasn't me.

INT. HARRAH'S CASINO - LATER

Andy spies into the crowded casino. Beat -- then he swings a  
door open and parades through, broadly crossing the casino in  
an exaggerated loop. A murmured hush follows.

WHISPERED VOICES  
Hey, it's Andy Kaufman...! Look!  
See, I knew Kaufman would be here!

Andy smiles mysteriously.

CUT TO:

## INT. HARRAH'S STATELINE CABARET - NIGHT

The big showroom is packed. Standing solo on the huge stage is Zmuda in the Clifton makeup and peach tux. He's BELTING "I Gotta Be Me."

TONY CLIFTON (ZMUDA)

"Whether I'm right,  
Or whether I'm wrong  
Whether I find a place in this world,  
Or never belong!  
I gotta be me! I gotta be me!  
What else can I be, but what I am?"

Zmuda is pulling it off. His voice is strong, his movements jerky. He's just as bad as Andy.

## IN THE AUDIENCE

Table after table of dressy people stare. Some grin, some are sickened.

PRIM LADY

He's awful.

PRIM MAN

Yeah, but it's Andy Kaufman.

## ONSTAGE

The song FINISHES.

TONY CLIFTON (ZMUDA)

Let's bring it on home --  
(he hits his off-key CLIMAX)  
"I GOTTA BE MEEEEEEEE!"

The BAND ends with a brassy punch. The crowd begrudgingly applauds.

Then -- a HECKLING VOICE sotto voce, in back.

HECKLER (o.s.)

You know who that is? That's that  
guy from Taxi!

ANNOYED WOMAN

Shh --

HECKLER (o.s.)

Don't you "shh" me!

We reveal the HECKLER. He has a big hat, long blonde hair, a droopy moustache, and glasses. Actually -- he's Andy.

HECKLER (ANDY)

I'm tellin' you, he's a fake!



ONSTAGE

Tony bows.

TONY CLIFTON (ZMUDA)  
Thank you, thank you. That's one of my favorites. I wrote that tune for my friend Frank Sinatra. He had a nice little success with it... but forgot to thank me on the album.

HECKLER (ANDY)  
YOU'RE A LIAR! You didn't write nothing! You're not even yourself!

An awkward silence. Tony glares into the darkness.

TONY CLIFTON (ZMUDA)  
Q-quiet. I demand silence when I perform.

HECKLER (ANDY)  
You're Andy Kaufman!

The crowd MURMURS.

Tony looks around nervously.

TONY CLIFTON (ZMUDA)  
I -- I don't know nothin' about no Kaufman. He's been ridin' my coattails, smearing my reputation. Been usin' my good name, to get places.

IN THE CROWD

PRIM LADY  
(to her husband)  
Why won't he just admit it?!

The Heckler stands.

HECKLER (ANDY)  
This show is a RIPOFF! People are payin' to see someone, and they're actually getting somebody else!

Suddenly two BOUNCERS IN SUITS glide over.

BOUNCER  
Sir, we're going to have to ask you to leave.

HECKLER (ANDY)  
It's FRAUD! That's why that man cannot admit he's Andy Kaufman!

TONY CLIFTON (ZMUDA)  
 (shouting from onstage)  
 You're nuts. I'm as much Andy Kaufman  
 as YOU are!

The Bouncers grab Heckler Andy.

HECKLER (ANDY)  
 (frantic)  
 You're Andy Kaufman!

TONY CLIFTON (ZMUDA)  
 No, YOU'RE Andy Kaufman!!

The Bouncers drag the Heckler out. He goes into a Clifton voice.

HECKLER (ANDY)  
 (doing CLIFTON)  
 GETCHER HANDS OFF ME! GETCHER HANDS  
 OFF ME! AAAHHHH!

They haul him out. The crowd is beyond dumbfounded.

EXT. HARRAH'S TAHOE - SECONDS LATER

The lobby doors crash open. The bouncers carry out Heckler Andy and dump him on the sidewalk. He sits there a second -- then nonchalantly removes his hat, wig, and moustache. He throws them in the trash and hails a taxi.

ANDY  
 Take me to the airport. My work here  
 is done.

CUT TO:

SHOWROOM - LATER

Tony FINISHES "MY WAY."

TONY CLIFTON (ZMUDA)  
 "I DID IT MYYYYYYYY WAY!"

The band kicks in with brassy curtain call music. The crowd APPLAUDS, and Tony takes his well-deserved bows.

TIGHT - TONY is dripping sweat. Underneath the rubber face, we can see Zmuda's eyes -- overwhelmed, exhausted, and flying high.

INT. BACKSTAGE - MINUTES LATER

Tony walks backstage, toweling himself off. STAGEHANDS nod.

STAGEHAND  
 Great show, Tony.

TONY CLIFTON (ZMUDA)  
 Hey, thanks. Thanks a lot.

Smiling, Tony strides up to his DRESSING ROOM. It says "TONY CLIFTON" in glitter on the door.

Tony opens the door... and inside is a NAKED BLONDE SHOWGIRL with stunning breasts. Tony stumbles back, shocked.

TONY CLIFTON (ZMUDA)  
W-who're you???

NAKED GIRL  
I've always wanted to suck off Andy Kaufman.

Whoa.

Tony/Zmuda slowly glances in the mirror at himself.

A beat -- then he turns back to the girl.

TONY CLIFTON (ZMUDA)  
(as ANDY)  
Who am I to keep you from your dreams?

He walks toward her, as the door swings SHUT...

CUT TO:

INT. MID-SOUTH COLISEUM - NIGHT

Memphis wrestling. The Announcer stands center ring, booming into the mike.

ANNOUNCER  
And now, the MAIN EVENT of the evening! The match you've been waiting for! The King Jerry Lawlor, versus Hollywood Andy Kaufman!

The THEME FROM "ROCKY" plays -- and Lawlor enters from the tunnel, wearing a shimmery hero's cape! The crowd ROARS with approval.

INT. COLISEUM DRESSING ROOM - SAME TIME

Andy is meditating, eyes shut, at rest in his private oasis.

Buddy Rogers shouts desperately.

BUDDY ROGERS  
C'MON, KAUFMAN! Christ, you're ON!

Buddy violently SHAKES him. Andy awakens and smiles.

INT. COLISEUM

The THEME FROM "MIGHTY MOUSE" begins playing. Then, Andy strides in, a sneer on his grungy face. The crowd SCREAMS and BOOS pure pile. Andy is euphoric, loving the hatred.

Both men enter the ring. Andy takes the microphone.

ANDY

Before we begin this event, I just wanna say a few things to you foul people.

(beat)

This city is filthy! You Southerners live like pigs! So I'm going to teach you some lessons in hygiene... bring you out of your squalor.

Holy cow. The crowd is flabbergasted.

Women in K-mart dresses gape. Ruddy men in trucker caps glare.

Down front are Lynn and George. He is ashen-faced.

GEORGE

They're gonna lynch him.

In the ring, Andy reaches in his pocket and removes a bar of SOAP.

ANDY

People, this is a bar of soap. Does it look familiar to you? If you wet it, it'll clean your hands.

George's eyes bulge.

The crowd is enraged -- rumblings of imminent violence.

Andy smiles helpfully.

ANDY

And now, for your next lesson: This -- is toilet paper.

Andy holds up a ROLL OF TISSUE.

That's it. The crowd goes NUTS. Jerry Lawlor races over and snatches the mike, trying to maintain his dignity.

LAWLOR

Kaufman, we've had enough!! Let's you and me do what we came here for -- WRESTLING!

CUT TO:

SECONDS LATER

And DING! That's the bell! Andy strikes a threatening pose.

Lawlor takes a step forward -- and Andy instantly, cowardly runs for the ropes and jumps out of the ring.

BOOOOO!!! Andy grins at the crowd and points at his brain: I'm smarter.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

And Kaufman's left the ring! Lawlor's waiting for him to return.

LYNN

(to George)

It looks like Andy figured out a strategy.

Lawlor disparagingly frowns. The REF checks his watch. Andy crosses to the opposite end of the ring, gauging his rival... then slowly climbs in --

Until the second Lawlor moves. Then Andy quickly jumps back out!

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

And Kaufman's left the ring again! He doesn't seem interested in actually making contact with his opponent.

Andy struts around the floor, pointing at his brain. He smirks at various spectators... until suddenly finding himself face-to-face -- with George.

An unexpected moment. Andy's finger frozen on his brain. George shakes his head disapprovingly. A beat -- then Andy gets HIT in the head with a cup.

People HOOT. Disoriented, Andy returns to the ringside. Lawlor is losing his patience.

LAWLOR

Hey! Did you come down here to wrestle, or to act like an ass?

Andy paces around, unsure of his next move.

LAWLOR

Look... if you get in here, I'll give ya a free headlock.

Lawlor leans down and offers his neck.

Andy peers skeptically. People jeer. Andy looks at waiting Lawlor... then tentatively climbs in.

As promised, Lawlor doesn't move. So Andy crosses over and GRABS Lawlor's head! Andy grins triumphantly. He squeezes his arms tight, muscles flexing, riding high on this moment.

Until -- Lawlor stands and flips him over. Andy SLAMS DOWN on his back. CRUNCH!

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

It's a side suplex!!

Andy lies on the mat, unmoving. Lawlor doesn't care. He picks up Andy's prone body and grips it upside-down, against his chest.

REFEREE  
(frantically gesturing)

No! NO!

Lawlor disregards the ref and slams Andy's head in a pile-driver!!

A horrible THUD.

DING! The BELL immediately RINGS.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)  
Lawlor has committed a PILEDRIIVER,  
which is an AUTOMATIC  
DISQUALIFICATION!

LYNN  
Jesus Christ, he's not moving!

REFEREE  
Match goes to Kaufman by  
disqualification, after two minutes,  
twelve seconds!

Andy is splayed unconscious.

Raging Lawlor promenades around the ring, arms over his head. The crowd shouts, "AGAIN! AGAIN!" Goaded, Lawlor picks up Andy, raises him... and PILEDRIVES HIM AGAIN.

BAM!! Jesus -- Andy's floppy head SLAMS into the ground yet again.

George runs to the ropes, SCREAMING for help.

GEORGE  
Andy! Andy!

Andy stares up, eyes glassy.

GEORGE  
Somebody GET A DOCTOR!!

CUT TO:

EXT. MID-SOUTH COLISEUM - NIGHT

An AMBULANCE screeches up, SIREN wailing.

POLICE clear a path.

Andy is wheeled from the building on a gurney. He isn't moving. Frantic Lynn and George run after him. PARAMEDICS quickly load Andy into the ambulance.

INT. KAUFMAN FAMILY HOME - NIGHT

Stanley and Janice are asleep in bed.

Suddenly the phone RINGS. Janice groggily reaches for it.

JANICE

Hello...

(suddenly horrible news)  
OH MY GOD.

ANGLE - TV

Stanley and Janice run to their TV and click it on. A LOCAL NEWSCAST is beginning.

LOCAL ANCHOR (ON TV)  
...and in our top story tonight,  
comedian Andy Kaufman has been injured  
in a freak accident in a Memphis  
wrestling ring.

Stanley fearfully clutches Janice. We stay on their wan faces...

LOCAL ANCHOR (o.s.)  
Kaufman has been rushed to a nearby  
hospital, where doctors are checking  
him for possible paralysis. Fans will  
best remember him as lovable Latka  
on television's "Taxi"...

Overcome, Janice starts crying.

INT. MEMPHIS HOSPITAL - DARKENED ROOM - NIGHT

Andy is alone with a DOCTOR. They examine an X-RAY of Andy's neck.

DOCTOR  
I just don't see anything, Mr.  
Kaufman. Your neck has sustained no  
trauma whatsoever.

ANDY  
(annoyed)  
You're SURE I didn't break it?

DOCTOR  
Look at you -- you're sitting here  
fine! Perhaps it's sprained... but  
there's nothing on the X-ray.

Andy is irked.

In the b.g., a NURSE discreetly carries in the biggest flower arrangement you've ever seen. Intrigued, Andy hurries over and opens the CARD.

It says, "Andy, we're all praying for you. Your friends at Taxi."

Andy chuckles. He turns to the Doctor.

ANDY  
Maybe I need a neck brace.

DOCTOR

In my opinion, you don't. If it makes you feel better, you could try a little ice --

ANDY

I don't WANT any ice! I want a NECK BRACE!

(he rubs his neck)

C'mon, Doc. If you think it's sprained, a brace couldn't hurt...

The Doctor gives Andy a weird look.

CUT TO:

INT. MEMPHIS HOSPITAL - ANDY'S ROOM - LATER

Andy sits propped up in bed, happily wearing a NECK BRACE.

Lynn feeds him jello.

The phone RINGS. Andy answers it.

ANDY

Hello?

INTERCUT:

FRANTIC STANLEY AND JANICE

STANLEY

God, ANDY! We found you!! Are you okay, son???

ANDY

Yeah, I'm fine.

JANICE

(crying)

No matter what happens -- even if you can't ever walk again, we'll still love you --!!

ANDY

Mom, Dad, calm down. Really, I'm fine. It's phony baloney -- I faked the whole thing.

A confused beat.

STANLEY

B-but... we saw, on the TV -- you smashed your head...

ANDY

No, it was just a yoga move. I tucked my head in -- it didn't hurt at all.

Silence.



Stanley considers all this... and then a FURY comes over him.

STANLEY  
 Andrew -- HOW DARE YOU!!  
 (livid)  
 For all we knew, you could have been  
 DYING! Your mother and I were worried  
sick!

TIGHT - ANDY

He is genuinely shocked.

ANDY  
 Geez... I'm sorry. I figured you  
 realized it all by now.  
 (he slowly continues)  
Here's the rule of thumb: Anything  
that happens to me... IS NOT REAL.

CUT TO: .

EXT. ZMUDA'S HOUSE - NEXT MORNING

Early morning. A door opens, and Zmuda shuffles out, wearing a bathrobe. He picks up the morning newspaper -- and freezes.

The HEADLINE says "TAXI STAR ANDY KAUFMAN CRITICALLY INJURED."

A beat... then Zmuda LAUGHS heartily.

ZMUDA  
 That's great...!

He giggles giddily and walks back in.

INT. MEMPHIS HOSPITAL - MORNING

George pushes Andy to the exit in a wheelchair. Andy proudly wears his neckbrace. Lynn follows.

GEORGE  
 Foreign Man was funny. Elvis was  
 incredible... the best I ever saw.  
 But this -- I don't understand...

ANDY  
 (whispering)  
 George, people feel sorry for me.  
 I'm America's hero.

GEORGE  
 You're delusional. You're America's  
 carnival freak.

The exit DOORS open...

EXT. HOSPITAL - SAME TIME

And outside is a wall of PHOTOGRAPHERS AND TV CREWS.

FLASH! FLASH! FLASH! A zillion cameras go off. Andy squints into the light, trembling, jaw clenched over his brace.

ANDY  
(very weak)  
I... feel... fine...

CUT TO:

EXT. ANDY'S APARTMENT BUILDING - L.A. - DAY

A cab pulls up. Andy gets out, still wearing the neckbrace. He reaches for his luggage -- and the CABBIE quickly steps in.

CABBIE  
No, please -- let me carry it.

Andy raises an eyebrow.

EXT. PARAMOUNT STUDIOS - DAY

Andy drives up to the gate. He's wearing the neckbrace. The studio GUARD sees him and hands Andy a BLUE HANDICAPPED plaque.

GUARD  
Here, Mr. Kaufman. The studio wants you to park right next to the stage door.

Andy smiles.

INT. TAXI SOUNDSTAGE - DAY

A dress rehearsal. On the set, Judd Hirsch motions to Andy.

JUDD HIRSCH (AS ALEX)  
"Hey Latka, can you figure out why my car's leaking oil?"

Andy nods. He starts to kneel and lie on a mechanic's rollboard... but is constrained by his neckbrace. Like a piece of absurd slapstick, he cannot seem to figure out how to lie back and get under the car.

UP IN THE BOOTH

The show WRITERS stare at this mess.

WRITER 1  
This is ridiculous! Latka doesn't wear a neckbrace.

WRITER 2  
Do we have to explain it?

WRITER 3  
Maybe we can put him in a turtleneck.

At the CONSOLE sits Ed, glaring suspiciously at a small TV screen. On it is Andy's wrestling injury moment. Like a man possessed, Ed twirls an editing knob, going forward-back, forward-back, analyzing the moment of impact like the Zapruder film.

Ed growls. Frame by frame, Andy's head bends under as it hits the mat. Suddenly -- Ed jumps up and rushes out.

ON SET - LATER

Andy is resting in a chair. Ed approaches.

ED  
Andy, can we talk?

ANDY  
Sure, Ed. Just gimme a moment.

Like an old man, Andy stiffly gets up, clenching his neck in the brace. Ed waits irritably. Andy hobbles over...

ED  
Alright, you can cut the bullshit.  
I know you're not injured.

ANDY  
(surprised)  
B-but... my neck --

ED  
No buts. I'm not playing your party games anymore. The ratings for Taxi aren't as good as they once were -- and I can't afford to have Latka pulling some unexplained weirdness.

Oh. Andy considers this... truly comprehending the problem.

ANDY  
When is this episode gonna air?

ED  
The third week of October.

Beat.

ANDY  
Okay. My neck'll be better by then.

With a velcro RIP, Andy yanks off the brace.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROCKEFELLER CENTER - DAY

George sits with the "Saturday Night Live" Producer. They're in an outdoor cafe.

GEORGE  
Thank you for seeing me.

SNL PRODUCER  
Thank you for flying 3000 miles to  
have lunch.

George takes a careful beat.

GEORGE  
I... I wanted to talk to you about  
booking Andy on "Saturday Night Live."

SNL PRODUCER  
(uncomfortable)  
Gee... I don't know if Andy works for  
our show anymore. That wrestling  
stuff...  
(choosing his words)  
is such a turnoff.

GEORGE  
We agree completely.  
(tactfully begging)  
Andy has to reconnect with his core  
audience. So I got him on "Letterman"  
tonight. He's gonna apologize to  
Jerry Lawlor, then repent for all his  
bad guy shenanigans.

The Producer mulls this over.

SNL PRODUCER  
That's smart.

GEORGE  
He's very sincere.  
(quietly emphatic)  
He needs this.

Beat. The guy nods.

SNL PRODUCER  
Okay. It'd be good to have the old  
Andy back.

CUT TO:

INT. DAVID LETTERMAN SHOW - NIGHT

Andy and Jerry Lawlor are on DAVID LETTERMAN'S show. Andy is  
pallid, hair shaggy, in a neckbrace and tweed jacket. Husky  
Lawlor wears loud red pants and gold chains.

Andy speaks timidly, in the style of his early-days sweetness.

ANDY

I apologize for all the wrestling I've ever done. For all the abuse I've ever given...

(soft, regretful)

I was just playing bad guy wrestler. That's not me... it's just a role. But Jerry took it personally.

Lawlor and Letterman are unimpressed.

LETTERMAN

You said some pretty inflammatory things.

JERRY LAWLOR

He thinks everything's a joke -- but it's not.

(to Andy)

Did you laugh when you were layin' in the hospital??

The crowd WHOOOOS.

Angst flickers on Andy's sweaty face. He stammers.

ANDY

T-there wasn't a reason to purposely hurt me --

JERRY LAWLOR

You're a wimp.

ANDY

(upset)

My father said I should've gotten a lawyer --!

JERRY LAWLOR

Then your father's a wimp.

ANDY

(losing it)

And, you're just poor white trash!

Lawlor's had enough. Enraged, he wildly stands and SLAPS Andy.

BAM!

Andy crashes over and falls from his chair.

THUD. He's on the floor.

Dead silence. Everyone is astonished.

They're all slack-jawed. Even PAUL SHAFFER. Trying to cover, Paul hurriedly kicks in with a ROCKABILLY TUNE.

Andy jumps up, crazed.

ANDY  
I'M SICK AND TIRED OF THIS SHIT!

Lawlor freezes in his seat. Letterman hides behind his desk.

Andy storms over, out-of-control. From a safe distance, he starts SCREAMING at Lawlor.

ANDY  
YOU ARE FULL OF SHIT, LAWLOR! I WILL  
SUE YOUR ASS! YOU'RE A FUCKING  
ASSHOLE!

(he POUNDS the desk)  
FUCK YOU! FUCK YOU! I WILL GET YOU  
FOR THIS!!!

Freaked, Andy leaps up and storms out.

The crowd CHEERS rowdily.

An unsure moment. Dave glances at Lawlor.

Until, Andy stumbles back in. He tries to calm himself.

ANDY  
I am sorry. I am sorry to use those  
words on television. I apologize!  
I'm sorry!

(demented)  
But YOU -- you're a MOTHERFUCKING  
ASSHOLE!!!!

Andy SLAMS Dave's desk. Dave jerks nervously.

Crazed, Andy looks down at Dave's coffee cup. Uh-oh. Suddenly,  
Andy grabs the coffee and DUMPS it on Lawlor!

Lawlor jumps, burned.

A SECURITY GUARD runs in.

Andy screams and hurtles away. He slams open the stage door and  
barrels out of sight.

INTERCUT:

THE SNL PRODUCER WATCHING THIS AT HOME

He gapes in disbelief.

SNL PRODUCER  
Jesus Christ.

CUT TO:

INT. SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE - ONE WEEK LATER

A SMUG COMIC stands on stage, speaking into camera. The show's  
going out live.

## SMUG COMIC

Hi. Um, we were supposed to have Andy Kaufman on our show this week -- but now our producers aren't sure if it's such a good idea.

(beat)

Some of us at "Saturday Night Live" think that Kaufman isn't funny anymore. The wrestling, the tirades, the mean-spiritedness... it's getting old.

(beat)

Others disagree. They say Kaufman's a comic genius, challenging our concepts of what is real.

(beat)

So we're putting the decision up to you. Please call up and vote. To keep Andy, call 1-900-244-7618. To DUMP him, call...

## INT. GEORGE'S OFFICE - DAY

Tight on Andy, staring at the L.A. Times. A small headline says "JOKESTER ANDY KAUFMAN VOTED OFF 'SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE'"

He is bothered.

ANDY

This is bad. I'm like McGovern in '72...

George sighs.

GEORGE

And this wasn't "Merv." This was the hippest audience on television.

(grim)

They've turned on you.

ANDY

(thinking)

Maybe I can turn it into a bit. I can go back on the show, and say it was rigged. Demand a recount...

GEORGE

Andy! You don't get it!

(somber)

They don't want you back.

At that... we reveal that SOMEONE ELSE is sitting next to Andy. But only the back of his head is visible.

George glares at him.

GEORGE

It's like you two guys wanted to destroy Andy's career! Upsetting all those people... putting out that toxic venom...

(helpless)

What did you THINK would happen??!

ANDY

(guilty)

We were just trying to push the envelope.

GEORGE

You're BLIND! There is no envelope anymore!!

(angry)

It hurts me to say this... but there's only one solution --

(pained)

I don't want you two to ever work together again.

WE WIDEN...

And the other person is JERRY LAWLOR. He feels bad.

JERRY LAWLOR

I'm sorry. We thought it was funny...

ANDY

Jer', it's not your fault. You were terrific.

(sad)

But maybe George is right...

JERRY LAWLOR

That's fine. But I wouldn't have traded it for anything...

(poignant)

Because for one brief, shining moment... the world thought that wrestling was real.

Andy gulps emotionally.

ANDY

We'll stay in touch. Next time I'm in Memphis, I'll stop by the house, and Noreen can make me her double chocolate cake.

JERRY LAWLOR

Alright, buddy...

(choked up)

Stay good.

Andy and Jerry hug.

CUT TO:



EXT. MAGIC MOUNTAIN - DAY

Andy and Zmuda ride on a rollercoaster. They SCREAM happily as the car drops down the hill.

ZMUDA  
It's good to have you back.

ANDY  
Were you jealous?

ZMUDA  
Oh, fuck you.

ANGLE - A CANDY CART

Andy goes up to a CANDY VENDOR.

ANDY  
Two cotton candies, please.

CANDY VENDOR  
Or what? You'll hit me?

Andy is taken aback.

He and Zmuda quickly pay, then hurry off.

ZMUDA  
God, you're on everyone's shit list.  
You gotta fix that.

ANDY  
(beat)  
If I died, they'd miss me. Then  
they'd be sorry.

ZMUDA  
It's working for Elvis.

ANDY  
Sure! He's layin' low, but when he  
comes back, he'll be bigger than ever!

ZMUDA  
(agreeing)  
How about this: Before your career  
went into freefall, "Fridays" said  
you could host. I could sneak a gun  
into the studio and shoot you!

ANDY  
(getting excited)  
Yeah! And I'll put fake brains inside  
a wig, so when I die my head explodes!

A giddy moment... until reality hits. The guys sigh.

ZMUDA  
This is not what George wants to hear.

ANDY  
He wants happy... nice. He wishes  
I were -- the Hudson Brothers.

Andy scratches his head.

ANDY  
What do really bad people do, when  
they need to clear their names?

ZMUDA  
The Watergate guys found God.

ANDY  
(his face lights up)  
Hey, that's good...

They grin naughtily at each other.

CUT TO:

EST. BOOKSTORE - DAY

A sign says "CHRISTIAN BOOKS AND MUSIC"

INT. CHRISTIAN BOOKSTORE

Andy and Zmuda hunt through gospel records.

ZMUDA  
What about her?

Zmuda holds up an album. The cover shows a backlit HEAVYSET  
BLACK WOMAN. It says "Touched By The Lord."

Andy stifles a giggle.

ANDY  
That's funny -- but I wouldn't believe  
it. This could be my last shot...  
we've got to sell it.  
(he goes through more records --  
then grins)  
HEY, how about her??!

He excitedly lifts an album: "Cathy Sullivan - Walking With  
Jesus." Gospel singer CATHY SULLIVAN has Osmond-size teeth and  
a Farrah Fawcett haircut. She reeks sincerity.

ZMUDA  
She's amazing. Look at those teeth!

ANDY  
(suddenly doubting)  
Oh, why would she go along with it?  
I've got nothing to offer her...

Zmuda hits him.

ZMUDA  
 You idiot, it's TV!  
 (cocky)  
 She'll get national exposure!!!

CUT TO:

INT. FRIDAYS STAGE - NIGHT

Live television. Andy stands on stage, his appearance completely changed: Gone is the unshaven sweaty face and the messy hair. Andy is now CHRISTIAN ANDY: Freshly-washed face with a rosy glow, neatly-trimmed haircut, and glistening, happy eyes. He's dressed in a tidy, off-the-rack three-piece suit.

Andy smiles earnestly and empty-headedly. He has the grin of a lobotomy victim.

ANDY  
 I would like to thank "Fridays," for giving me the opportunity to come back, after what I did here.

(beat)

That was a low point in my life. Since then, I've gone through a lot of changes. And I would like to bring out a person who has helped me a great deal through this period, and been very influential to me. Her name is Cathy Sullivan.

CATHY SULLIVAN strides out, a remarkably sincere Christian woman in a long blue dress with a prim white collar.

Cathy crosses over to Andy. They look into each other's eyes, then kiss sweetly.

ANDY  
 I would like to announce that Cathy and I are engaged.

The audience is surprised, then APPLAUDS. Andy warmly hugs Cathy. She holds his hand, smiling with anticipation.

CATHY  
 During this past year... I've had a chance to share my faith with Andy. And there's been a big change.  
 (beat)  
 Andy has recently become a Christian. And I just thank God that I was given the opportunity to not only turn around his life, but to be a part of it.

Andy hugs her tighter. Scattered applause. Andy fondly kisses her forehead.

CATHY

And we'll probably end up with a bunch of little kids running around the house, saying "Tank you veddy much!"

(she smiles)

We'd like to sing a song for you, that really says just how Andy and I feel. It's called "Home Again."

They take handheld mikes. Cheesy CHRISTIAN MUSIC starts playing. Andy drops his head reverently. Cathy stoically begins SINGING.

CATHY

"Lord it's me... I'm home again."

ANDY

(he ardently JOINS IN SINGING)

"Guess you've wondered where I've been."

Cathy beams proudly.

ANDY AND CATHY

"But I've been gone for quite awhile,  
And I've missed the mark a mile,  
And I'm finding I don't know where to begin."

IN THE WINGS

Lynn watches with Jack Burns.

JACK

Who woulda thought Andy would fall  
in love?

LYNN

(nodding)

I thought he only dated bimbos.

CUT TO:

EXT. FAIRFIELD, IOWA - DAY

Andy and Little Wendy drive in a rental car, through Iowa. She is confused.

LITTLE WENDY

So you're not marrying her?

ANDY

No! I barely know her.

LITTLE WENDY

It looked real to me.

ANDY

Wendy, it was just a goof! I'm not really born again.

Wendy frowns.

LITTLE WENDY

I dunno... Some things you shouldn't  
joke about.

They drive through some rustic gates. They're in Meditation  
Institute University.

EXT. MIU FACILITY - PARKING LOT

Various TM FOLLOWERS get out of their cars, carrying suitcases  
inside. Tranquil, benign, they greet each other.

TM LADY

Hi! I didn't know you were coming!

TM GUY

It's great to see you!

They happily hug.

Andy and Little Wendy walk up, carrying duffel bags. They  
approach the building -- when a GENTLE MAN IN A ROBE steps up.

GENTLE MAN

Hi, Andy...

ANDY

Hi, Kevin!

GENTLE MAN

(awkward)

Could I... speak with you for a  
moment?

Anxious, he pulls Andy aside.

GENTLE MAN

This is very difficult for me to  
say... but -- perhaps it would be best  
if you didn't attend the retreat.

ANDY

(surprised)

What are you talking about? I attend  
every year.

GENTLE MAN

Yes -- we do not doubt your devotion  
to TM. But we feel that perhaps...  
you and the program have grown apart  
philosophically.

Andy is stunned.

ANDY

"Philosophically"?

GENTLE MAN

(he sighs)

The wrestling... the sexist remarks...  
that sarcastic Christian conversion...  
these things are not becoming of an  
enlightened individual.

(beat)

It seems you have no respect for  
anything.

Andy is stupefied. He doesn't know how to respond.

ANDY

Of course I do...

The guy shakes his head.

Andy can't believe it. He looks around, and notices FACES in an  
upstairs window. Ten MEN IN TURBANS stare down, watching.

Andy cracks.

ANDY

Please! You've GOT to let me take  
the classes! It's how I keep myself  
BALANCED!!

GENTLE MAN

It's obviously not working.

ANDY

So HELP ME! All I wanna do is  
MEDITATE!!

GENTLE MAN

(pained)

Andy, don't raise your voice. We  
don't wish your presence here.

The man turns away and walks off.

Andy is broken.

He fights to bottle his rage -- then notices Little Wendy  
inside, peering through the glass doors. Beaten, Andy waves  
goodbye to her.

Wendy gulps and waves goodbye too.

CUT TO:

INT. ANDY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Middle of the afternoon, Andy lies in bed. Covers pulled up to  
his face, expression glum, he's like a tragic still-life.

Suddenly DING-DONG! The doorbell rings.

No reaction. Andy ignores it.

Another DING-DONG! Then KNOCKING.

ANDY

Go away.

Then, odd SCRATCHING. He looks over, and a coat hanger creeps in under the door and struggles for the knob. Andy groans, resigned.

ANDY

Oh, it's open.

The door opens. Lynn enters, holding a carton of ice cream.

LYNN

I brought you Haagen Dazs. Chocolate.

ANDY

(mournful)

I'm a horrible person. I don't deserve Haagen Dazs.

LYNN

Andy, you're not horrible. You're just... complicated.

ANDY

I'm not enlightened.

LYNN

Forget what they said!

(genuine)

I like you.

He shakes his head.

ANDY

You don't know the real me.

LYNN

Andy... there is no real you.

TIGHT - ANDY

An astonished silence.

And then... he slowly smiles.

ANDY

Yeah, you're probably right.

They both giggle.

Andy studies her... looking at Lynn's face, body, eyes. Pause.

ANDY

Do you wanna move in together?

Lynn smiles slyly. She leans down and kisses him.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAUREL CANYON HOUSE - DAY

A moving van outside a funky 60's house. MOVERS carry boxes in.

INT. LAUREL CANYON HOUSE - SAME TIME

Andy sits disoriented in the living room. Movers bustle around him. Mirrors get leaned against opposing walls -- and he finds himself looking into multiple reflections of himself.

In the b.g., Lynn arranges some vases, then hurries out. Andy opens a box and pulls out his old Howdy Doody doll. He smiles, then places Howdy on the shelf next to the vases.

Pause -- and he realizes how dumb Howdy looks in the grown-up house. Andy frowns and quickly throws Howdy back in the box.

Suddenly a phone on the floor RINGS. He grins.

ANDY

Hey! Our first phone call!  
 (he scrambles for the phone)  
 Hello?

GEORGE (v.o., on phone)

Andy... it's me. I've got some crummy news.

(long beat)

Taxi's been canceled.

Silence.

Andy has no response.

GEORGE (v.o.)

Do you want me to come over? Talk about it?

ANDY

Um... no. Uh, I'm sorta busy right now. Thanks. We'll get together next week.

Andy hangs up. He just sits there... confused... unsure how to react.

Andy scratches his head -- then feels something odd. He goes over to the mirror. On the back of his neck... is an inflamed red pimple. Andy grimaces.

ANDY

Yuck!

CUT TO:



INT. L.A. IMPROV - LATE NIGHT

Very late -- a clock says 1:15. A YOUNG COMIC is onstage, performing to the DOZEN audience members left.

In back walks... Andy. Unshaven, morose, he quietly approaches paternal owner Budd Friedman. Budd sees him, grins, and gives him a hearty hug. Andy points at the stage and asks for something -- Budd eagerly nods.

LATER

Budd is onstage.

BUDD

And now we have a treat for you  
late-night diehards. The star of Taxi  
-- here in person, Andy Kaufman!

The sparse crowd applauds. Budd leaves, and Andy shuffles up.

ANDY

Actually, Budd, you're wrong. I found  
out today that Taxi's been canceled.

The crowd AWWWWS sadly. Andy blinks.

ANDY

Yeah, that's how I felt too... though  
I don't know why. Cause for years,  
all I wanted to do was get off that  
show.

(quiet, very confessional)

But now that nobody will hire me, and  
nobody thinks I'm funny... I guess  
it was probably a pretty good job.

One guy LAUGHS sharply.

Andy gives him a look -- thinks -- then continues.

ANDY

Not to mention that my wife and kids  
have left me.

(he sighs)

I don't know what I'm gonna do with  
myself. My options are sorta  
limited...

(beat)

This morning, I noticed I've got a  
cyst, or some kind of boil, on the  
back of my neck. I'm gonna go see  
a doctor -- it's really disgusting.  
Look.

Andy turns. The red lump is bigger, grosser. The crowd GROANS,  
revolted.

ANDY

So I was thinking, since I'm sort of a quasi-celebrity, that I could charge people to touch it.

(candid)

Does anybody want to pay a buck to touch my cyst?

A couple stoners GIGGLE and CLAP. Andy COUGHS, then frowns.

ANDY

I'm serious.

Pause. Then... a few people stand and walk up to the stage.

The first taker is a GOOFY BLONDE WOMAN. She starts to reach for the cyst -- when Andy stops her.

ANDY

No no, you gotta pay first.

She nods, discomfoted, and reaches for her purse...

CUT TO:

LATER - AT THE BAR

A BUSBOY sweeps up. Budd counts money in the cash register.

Andy shuffles out of the showroom. He waves some bills.

ANDY

I made six bucks. That's good money.

Budd stares sadly.

BUDD

This is a comedy club -- not a medical sideshow.

(trying to be kind)

If you wanna perform here, take a shower, get some sleep, and pull yourself together. Come back and do the material that people love: Do the Mighty Mouse, the foreign guy! Andy, you gotta snap out of this funk! If you can -- I'll give you the headline spot tomorrow.

TIGHT - ANDY

He stares at Budd, wheels spinning.

CUT TO:

EXT. L.A. IMPROV - NEXT NIGHT

George is driving down Melrose, listening to the radio. He glances at the passing marquee -- then does a doubletake.

It says "ANDY KAUFMAN - 9 P.M."

INT. IMPROV - MINUTES LATER

Puzzled George hurries inside. COMICS greet him: "Hey George!" "George, you got a second?!" George distractedly waves and moves toward the showroom...

At the door, he finds Budd.

GEORGE

Hey, what's going on here?

BUDD

George, you won't believe it... I got Andy to do the old material!

(grinning)

And he's killin' them!

Inside, there's HUGE LAUGHTER. George's eyes widen.

Piqued, he goes in...

SHOWROOM

And it's packed! Andy is onstage, playing struggling, lovable Foreign Man.

ANDY (AS FOREIGN MAN)

...but one ting I do not like is too much traffic. Tonight I had to come on de freeway, and it was so much traffic...

(giggling)

It took me an hour and a half to get here!

Foreign Man chuckles pathetically.

The crowd HOWLS. Andy's rockin'.

ANDY (AS FOREIGN MAN)

But talking about the terrible things: My wife. Take my --

INTERRUPTING JERK

"Take my wife, please take her."

ANDY (AS FOREIGN MAN)

T-take my wife, please take her...

The rhythm is thrown. A couple laughs.

A flustered pause. Andy glances down, then continues.

ANDY (AS FOREIGN MAN)

No really, I am only foolink. I love my wife very much. But she don't know how to cook --

INTERRUPTING JERK  
 "Her cooking is so bad, is terrible."

ANDY (AS FOREIGN MAN)  
 H-her cooking...  
 (Andy stumbles uncomfortably)  
 Uh, cooking is so bad, is terrible.

The laughs are weaker. The act is getting wrecked.

IN BACK

George grimaces. Who the hell's doing this??

Angry, George hurries down front, looking for the loud jerk. He scans the tables... and it's Zmuda.

ANDY (AS FOREIGN MAN)  
 But right now --

ZMUDA (AS JERK)  
 "But right now I would like to do for you some imitations. First, the Archie Bunker."

Andy freezes up.

The audience is embarrassed.

A frazzled confusion, then Andy drops the accent. He glares at Zmuda.

ANDY  
 Sir, do you have a problem?

ZMUDA (AS JERK)  
 Yeah, my problem is you're tired.

Andy winces.

ANDY  
 I, I was asked to do this material --

ZMUDA (AS JERK)  
 Sure, because your new stuff's a bunch-  
 of crap. Kaufman, people are sick  
 of you. The wrestling... the  
 hoaxes...

ANDY  
 (defensive)  
 Hey -- that stuff gets written-up in  
 the papers --

ZMUDA (AS JERK)  
 Who gives a shit?! It's not funny!

ON GEORGE

He's dumbfounded.

GEORGE  
Why...? Andy, why...?

ON ANDY AND ZMUDA

ZMUDA  
I used to think you were original.

ANDY  
I was very original!

ZMUDA  
Yeah, exactly -- "was"! But now,  
you're creatively bankrupt.  
(he gleams cruelly)  
In fact, Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Kaufman's so desperate, he PAID me  
to do this tonight!! I'm a plant.  
It's just a fresh coat of paint on  
an old broken-down routine.  
(back to Andy)  
Isn't that true???

Andy shudders.

The audience averts their eyes.

A painful silence.

"Andy Kaufman" has been destroyed.

CUT TO:

EXT. L.A. IMPROV - LATE THAT NIGHT

Andy and George walk sadly down the street.

There is a horrible gloom over them.

ANDY  
I was just trying to keep in step with  
the times...  
(sad)  
The world thinks Andy Kaufman sucks.  
So I was just giving 'em what they  
want...

George stops.

GEORGE  
Andy, they don't think you suck.  
They've just... lost a reason to love  
you.  
(he gently takes Andy)  
You've gotta make the public embrace  
you again. You have to win back their  
sympathy...

No response. Andy knows he's right.

CUT TO:

INT. LAUREL CANYON HOUSE - MORNING

Lynn wakes up in the new bedroom. She looks over -- and Andy's not there.

Lynn's baffled.

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE - AFTERNOON

End of the day. Lynn's on the phone.

LYNN

Hey, Zmuda. Is Andy with you?  
(concerned)

It's weird... he's been gone all day...

INT. GEORGE SHAPIRO'S HOUSE - LATE NIGHT

George is asleep in bed. Suddenly the PHONE RINGS.

He jerks up, startled. The clock says 4 a.m. Groggy, he fumbles for the phone.

GEORGE

Hellllo...

ANDY (v.o.)

George.

GEORGE

Andy! Where have you been?! People have been worried sick!

ANDY (v.o.)

There was some stuff I had to do.

(unsure pause).

I've got something important to tell you. Can we get together for breakfast?

GEORGE

Sure... what time tomorrow?

ANDY

(confused)

Tomorrow? No -- NOW.

George tiredly looks at the clock. 4:01.

CUT TO:

INT. DENNY'S - NIGHT

Late-night. Hollywood weirdos are scattered about.

In a booth, Andy sits with bleary Lynn, Zmuda, and George. Zmuda admires the menu.

ZMUDA

Look at that Grand Slam! Two eggs,  
two bacon, two sausage, two pancakes  
-- \$2.99! How do they do it?

LYNN

They get you on the coffee.

GEORGE

(irritable)

Excuse me -- but could Andy tell us  
why we're here???

All heads turn.

A long pause.

Andy stiffly speaks.

ANDY

I have cancer.

Beat. Zmuda nods.

ZMUDA

Hey, that's good! We can make that  
play.

(spitballing)

And we'll really drag it out... You  
get better, you get worse --

GEORGE

FORGET IT. It's in terrible taste!  
I want nothing to do with this.

Pause. Lynn is crestfallen.

LYNN

I think he's serious.

ZMUDA

(grinning)

Serious like a heart attack! Maybe  
we can bring back Cathy Sullivan to  
tend to him!

Andy softly shakes his head.

ANDY

No, it's true. I have lung cancer.

GEORGE

That's ridiculous. You don't even smoke.

ANDY

(emphatic)

I -- I got some freaky rare kind. It's called large-celled carcinoma.

Lynn's eyes tear up. She hugs onto Andy.

LYNN

Jesus, Andy! Can they cure it?

ANDY

They don't know... they've gotta run more tests.

LYNN

(starting to cry)

Have you told your family?

ANDY

No, NO! I don't want them to know yet. It'll just weird 'em out!

George and Zmuda glance skeptically at each other. Hmm.

Confused, George leans in to Andy.

GEORGE

Andy... you look me in the eye, and tell me this is real.

Andy gulps.

ANDY

George -- it's real.

CUT TO:

INT. DENNY'S BATHROOM - LATER

George confronts Zmuda.

GEORGE

If I find out you're behind this, I'll-kill you.

ZMUDA

What are ya TALKIN' ABOUT?! I was the one saying I didn't believe it!

GEORGE

Exactly. That's the sort of thing you guys would work out to fuck me up.



INT. LAUREL CANYON HOUSE - DAY

Andy is doing laundry. He empties the clean clothes, puts them in a basket, and carries them to the rug. Then he sits down and starts laying out pairs of socks in highly symmetrical patterns. Focused, impassive, Andy pointlessly orders the socks like the world depended on it.

Lynn enters, emotionally wrecked. She stares in frustration at Andy's behavior.

LYNN

How can you be so casual??!

ANDY

(he shrugs)

Even if I'm dying -- I still need clean socks.

LYNN

You're NOT DYING!

ANDY

Okay. You're probably right.

He keeps working. Lynn loses it.

LYNN

God, you're so detached!!

Lynn storms out.

Andy finishes his socks. Satisfied, he piles them up... then turns on the TV.

ANGLE - TV

It's "Lassie." Little TIMMY is laid-up in bed, with a broken leg in a cast. Suddenly LASSIE runs in, holding a book.

Lassie places the book on his lap. The boy smiles gratefully.

TIMMY

Thank you, girl. You're my best friend.

Timmy warmly embraces the dog.

ON ANDY

He's terribly touched. Tears start rolling down his cheeks.

Genuine sobbing. Terrible grief, until he wipes his face. Andy collects himself, then reaches for a phone. He dials a long number.

ANDY  
(on phone)  
Dad...?

CUT TO:

INT. CEDARS-SINAI - DAY

Andy lies in a hospital bed. Wearied Stanley, Janice, Michael, Carol and husband Rick surround the bed.

They all listen to a BLAND DOCTOR in a white coat.

DOCTOR  
The cancer started in Andy's left arm  
and spread to his lungs. We're going  
to initiate an aggressive radiation  
program... see if we can eradicate  
the affected cells.

(beat)  
Does anyone have any questions?

A somber silence.

DOCTOR  
Alright, then I'll leave you alone.

The family nods. The Doctor turns and walks away.

Carol glances down... and notices the Doctor is wearing old tennis shoes. She raises an eyebrow. He leaves.

A stilted awkwardness. The family doesn't know what to say.

JANICE  
So... how long do you have to stay  
here?

ANDY  
Oh, they said I could probably go home  
Thursday.

JANICE  
That's good.

Pause. Andy mutely lies there.

STANLEY  
So how's the food?

ANDY  
Oh, okay... the vegetables are kinda  
overcooked.

Another pause. Andy coughs.

MICHAEL  
We should probably let you rest.

Everyone mumbles agreement.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - SAME TIME

The family exits Andy's room. The door SHUTS -- and they all turn on each other.

JANICE

He looks good...

MICHAEL

Of course he looks good. He's NOT SICK.

STANLEY

(angered)

How dare you make light of this!

CAROL

Dad, I cried when he broke his neck. He's not gettin' me again --

STANLEY

(impassioned)

Jesus! He's got lung cancer!

A standoff moment. The siblings glare at the parents.

CAROL

See, that's exactly it! He picked lung cancer, because he doesn't smoke. That makes it weird! If he'd picked leukemia, it'd be totally believable, and we'd all be going, "Poor Andy, he's really sick." So he chose lung cancer, because he WANTS us to be scratching our heads, saying, "Is this real?"

JANICE

(trying to convince herself)

Of course it's real. We're in a hospital...

MICHAEL

Mom, it's Cedars-Sinai! It's a showbiz hospital! Andy's studio friends probably run this place!

CAROL

I've seen how he does it. He plans these things out, takes over the facility, hires actors to play cops, doctors...

(beat)

Personally, I didn't think that "doctor" was very convincing.

RICK

Did you notice his costume had the wrong shoes?

CAROL  
 (excited)  
 Yeah! He didn't have doctor shoes!

Stanley shakes his head.

STANLEY  
 This conversation is disgusting.

MICHAEL  
 Dad... you know Andy's talked about  
 faking his own death.

STANLEY  
 Sure -- but what if he isn't?  
 (sad; poignant)  
 My son could be dying... and we're  
 actin' like we're on Candid Camera.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAUREL CANYON HOUSE - DAY

George pulls up in his car.

He gets out and walks to the door. He starts to knock -- when suddenly it creeps open. It's Lynn. She puts her finger to her lips: Shh!

INT. LAUREL CANYON HOUSE - SAME TIME

The house is dark. Lynn leads George... and they get to the shrouded living room.

Andy sits in a lotus position, concentrating. In front of him is a WILD-HAIRED GURU in a robe.

WILD-HAIRED GURU  
 I want you to visualize. Visualize  
 big, healthy white cells in your body.  
 Now visualize little cancer cells.  
 Now those big white cells are  
 attacking the cancer cells...

ANDY  
 I see them... I see the white cells...

IN THE CORNER

George stares at this. He's fighting his skepticism.

CUT TO:

LATER

The drapes are open. Sunlight streams in. Andy hugs the guru goodbye, and the man leaves.

George has been waiting in back.

GEORGE  
What was that all about?

ANDY  
It's visualization therapy. He's helping me turn inward and fight the disease.

Long beat.

GEORGE  
He's an actor. I remember him in "The In-Laws."

Ah.

Andy's eyes widen. His wheels are spinning fast.

ANDY  
Uh yes... that's true. But he's also ordained in holistic medicine.

ANGLE - GEORGE

He glares, stewing. He's fed up.

ANGLE - ANDY

An unspoken tension. Suddenly he breaks down.

ANDY  
George, what am I supposed to do?! I'm sick, and I'm tryin' to get better... but everyone's lookin' at me funny! People visit me in the hospital, and I catch them sneaking peeks at the chart. You come to my home, and you act like I'm puttin' on a skit!

GEORGE  
You must take a little pleasure in it.

ANDY  
Of course!  
(beat)  
But that doesn't mean I don't need everyone's support! I can't be surrounded by negative energy.

George shakes his head.

GEORGE  
Andy, you're surrounded by what you create. You are the KING of negative energy.

ANDY  
 (thrown)  
 Y-yeah? Well, then it has to stop!  
 Because if these bad vibes get out...  
 then everyone will be talkin' about  
 how sick I am, and it becomes a  
 self-fulfilling prophecy, and then  
 -- I'm dead.

Andy struggles to remain composed. George sighs.

GEORGE  
 So how can I help you...?

ANDY  
 I wanna go back to work and put on  
 a happy show.  
 (bright-eyed)  
 The best show anybody's ever seen!

GEORGE  
 Do you wanna tour the clubs?

ANDY  
 No clubs. I wanna reach the TOP!  
 (beat)  
Carnegie Hall...!

George gently smiles.

CUT TO:

INT. NATIONAL ENQUIRER OFFICES - DAY

A STAFF meeting at the National Enquirer.

REPORTER 1  
 I've heard Lucille Ball is drinking  
 again.

REPORTER 2  
 Bert Convy is cheating on his wife.  
 The maid'll talk for ten grand.

EDITOR  
 Good, good... but not exactly cover  
 material.

REPORTER 3  
 (puffing himself up)  
 Okay, how's this: I've got a guy in  
 the lab at Cedars. He says Andy  
 Kaufman is dying of lung cancer.

Beat. The room GROANS.

EDITOR  
 What bullshit! No. No more Kaufman  
stories! We got burned on that  
Christian wedding.

REPORTER 1

Yeah, he's definitely not dying. He's playing Carnegie Hall next month!

The Editor frowns.

EDITOR

Jesus. Only Kaufman would use cancer as a publicity stunt.

INT. LAUREL CANYON HOUSE - NIGHT

A 16mm PROJECTOR runs a scratchy 1930's movie short on the wall. Smiling fake COWBOYS and COWGIRLS dance, the Cowgirls straddling hobby horses. They all SING.

COWBOYS AND COWGIRLS

"I've got spurs,  
That jingle-jangle jingle..."

WE WIDEN

Andy and Zmuda watch. Andy's face is enthralled like a kid.

ANDY

This is great. The crowd's gonna love this!

(giddy; thinking)

Hey... do you think any of those cowgirls are still alive?

ZMUDA

I dunno. If they were, they'd be pushin' 80.

ANDY

Well, call SAG. It'd be cool to get one on the show.

(excited)

I want the evening to build and build. It's gonna have the most incredible ending: Singers, dancers, the "Hallelujah Chorus" -- then the sky opens, and Santa Claus comes flying down!

ZMUDA

And you say, "Santa, what am I gettin' for Christmas?" and he says, "Cancer!"

ANDY

No! NO NO NO! None of that! I want this show to be positive!

CUT TO:

INT. CEDARS-SINAI DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Andy sits glumly with his Doctor. X-RAYS of Andy's insides litter the walls.

DOCTOR  
The radiation didn't get the cancer.  
It has metastasized and spread.

Andy looks down. He coughs.

ANDY  
What can you do?

DOCTOR  
(grim)  
We'll progress to chemotherapy. But  
I've got to warn you -- it's going  
to really knock you out. You'll lose  
your hair... and you won't have as  
much energy.

Andy nods tiredly. Okay.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Andy silently sits. The Doctor and two NURSES administer a chemo drip into Andy's body.

He stares at the needle in his arm.

The chemo begins.

CUT TO:

EXT. CARNEGIE HALL - NIGHT

A dressy NEW YORK CROWD pushes into Carnegie Hall. The marquee says "ANDY KAUFMAN"

INT. CARNEGIE HALL - BACKSTAGE

Andy gets ready, moving a bit slowly. CHOIR MEMBERS get in their robes. George and Zmuda run in.

GEORGE  
The place is sold-out!  
(beat)  
That means you're only gonna lose  
eighty grand.

ANDY  
I don't care about the money. I just  
want the show to deliver.

ZMUDA  
Good. Because thirty-five school  
buses with loading-zone permits don't  
come cheap.

Suddenly -- Andy starts COUGHING harshly.

The guys are taken aback. Andy heaves and holds his chest.



GEORGE AND ZMUDA  
 Hey! Are you okay???

Still coughing, Andy gestures: I'm okay.

ZMUDA  
 (worried)  
 If you're not feeling good, I could  
 go on in your place, as Tony Clifton.

ANDY  
 (he shoots him a dirty look)  
No, Zmuda. I'll be fine.

CUT TO:

INT. CARNEGIE HALL - LATER

The show's on. The audience is rapt. Andy effusively PLAYS his conga drum and SINGS nonsense words to "Allouette, Gentille Allouette."

ANDY  
 Abbu daba, abi abbu daba! Abbu daba,  
 abu dabu do!  
 (to the crowd)  
 Abbu dabbu da ba do...!

Everyone repeats. In the audience, George sings along too.

AUDIENCE  
 ABBU DABBU DA BA DO!!

ANDY  
 A ba du ba ti la ma na go!

AUDIENCE  
 A BA DU BA TI... LA... MA NA GO...

ANDY  
 (grinning)  
 Abbu da ba du ba ti lama na la gobo  
 abi tabu la!

AUDIENCE  
 ABBU DA BA DU...

The crowd hopelessly breaks out LAUGHING.

Andy laughs along. They're all having a good time.

CUT TO:

LATER

The corny "Jingle Jangle Cowboy" MOVIE is playing on a big screen. It finishes. Beaming Andy grabs the mike.

ANDY

Ladies and Gentlemen! I'm pleased to announce that we have with us the one surviving cowgirl from that 1931 film, Eleanor "Cody" Gould!!

Crazed APPLAUSE. Frail ELEANOR GOULD, 75, comes onstage.

ANDY

It's such an honor to have you here.

ELEANOR

(squinting into the lights)  
Andy... this is so overwhelming...

ANDY

Well, it's gettin' even better! Cause we found one of the original hobby horses! Do you -- do you think you could treat us to a few steps from "Jingle Jangle Jingle"?

Eleanor starts to protest -- but Andy hands her the HOBBY HORSE. She blushes. Andy turns away, goes to the band, and starts conducting.

They begin PLAYING "JINGLE JANGLE JINGLE." Eleanor awkwardly starts dancing in circles.

Andy gets excited and starts conducting FASTER. Eleanor is sweating. She dances faster.

Andy impatiently SPEEDS UP the MUSIC MORE. Eleanor desperately skips in circles, trying to keep up... when suddenly she grabs her heart.

Eleanor stops -- and collapses. She's down.

A horrified GASP from the crowd. The band stops playing. CREW MEMBERS run on from backstage. One checks her heart. She's not moving. Zmuda runs out, horrified.

ZMUDA

Is there a doctor in the house??!

The crowd is stunned silent. Pause -- then one man stands.

It's Michael.

Straight-faced, he hurries out of his seat, sprints down the aisle, and goes on stage. Michael checks her pulse and loosens her blouse. He presses on Eleanor's chest, trying to restart her heart. But then -- he shakes his head sadly. She's dead.

The crowd MOANS in horror. Michael takes off his jacket and covers Eleanor.

## BACKSTAGE

Andy watches, pleased. He COUGHS. Andy drinks some water, puts on a goofy Indian headdress, and runs back out.

## ONSTAGE

Eleanor lies dead centerstage. Andy skips over and starts doing an Indian war dance around her prone body. The crowd is baffled. Andy WHOOPS, he CHANTS... and then Eleanor starts to rise!

He WHOOPS triumphantly. She lives, like Frankenstein reborn!

The crowd CHEERS, surprised and giggling.

ANDY

Ladies and Gentlemen, she's alive!

Huge APPLAUSE.

CHOIR (o.s.)

HALLELUJAH! HALLELUJAH!

ANDY

Ladies and Gentlemen, the Mormon  
Tabernacle Choir!!!

Rear curtains part, and the MORMON TABERNACLE CHOIR belts out the "Hallulujah Chorus"!

It's spectacular. The crowd goes nuts.

ANDY

Oh my gosh, it's the Rockettes!!

Yes indeed, TWO DOZEN ROCKETTES rush in from the sides, legs kicking high.

The crowd WHOOS.

ANDY

Girls and boys, it's Santa Claus!!

Snow starts falling, and SANTA ON HIS SLEIGH drops from above.

The crowd screams with excitement. It's unbelievable. They leap to a standing ovation.

In front are Stanley and Janice. They start crying.

Andy beams and takes the mike.

ANDY

And it's not over yet!! 'Cause I'm  
taking you all out to Milk and  
Cookies!!

The crowd laughs.

ANDY  
I'm serious!!!!!!!

CUT TO:

EXT. CARNEGIE HALL - MINUTES LATER

A thousand people file out -- and THIRTY-FIVE SCHOOLBUSES are parked up and down Fifth Avenue!!!!

The crowd is awed.

Andy euphorically marches out, pushing his endurance. He's the Pied Piper.

ANDY  
Single file! Don't rush!! There's enough cookies for everyone!!

EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - LATER THAT NIGHT

The schoolbuses pull up to a school. The disoriented passengers step out, not sure what to expect...

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CAFETERIA - NIGHT

The audience crowds inside... and LADY CAFETERIA WORKERS in hairnets are dispensing milk and cookies. It's remarkable.

At a little kids table sits Andy and Lynn. Andy's face is pure joy. He watches all the adults munching on their cookies, everyone giddy at the silliness of it all.

Andy smiles beatifically. He whispers to Lynn.

ANDY  
I don't want this to ever end...

Lynn squeezes his hand. Andy stands.

ANDY  
Hey EVERYBODY! The show's not done!  
Let's meet tomorrow morning at eight,  
at the Staten Island Ferry! We'll  
have MORE FUN!!

Everyone giggles -- what a nut.

Andy gingerly sits back down.

CUT TO:

INT. WALDORF-ASTORIA - NEXT MORNING

Zmuda is asleep, wearing an eyemask.

Suddenly -- the phone RINGS LOUDLY. Zmuda jerks up, startled. Bleary, he fumbles for the phone.

ZMUDA  
H-h-hellllllllllo?

ANDY (v.o.)  
(chipper, on phone)  
Dr. Zmudie, wake up! It's 7:30! We  
gotta catch the ferry!

ZMUDA  
(groggy)  
Andy... weren't you jokin'? C'mon,  
no one's gonna be there.

ANDY (v.o.)  
Hmm. Well, even if there's just one  
guy -- we better show.

Zmuda moans.

CUT TO:

EXT. STATEN ISLAND FERRY TERMINAL - EARLY MORNING

The waterfront is desolate. One lone CAB comes screeching up.  
Andy and Zmuda come tumbling out of the cab. They look up --  
and their jaws drop.

THEIR POV

At the dock are THREE-HUNDRED PEOPLE! Seeing Andy, they cheer  
and wave.

TIGHT - ANDY AND ZMUDA

Zmuda's astonished.

Andy is radiant.

ZMUDA  
Wow.

ANDY  
(wondrous)  
And a year from now we'll have a  
reunion. It'll all start over...!

Zmuda looks at his friend. In the morning light, Andy looks  
fatigued... wispy...

Zmuda's face falls.

EXT. STATEN ISLAND FERRY - DAY

The boat whizzes across the water. Andy's gang fills it up. A  
cool breeze blows, everyone energized by this experience.

Andy is smiling. But then -- his expression turns odd. He  
holds his stomach, hurries to the railing, and vomits.

Zmuda rushes over to him. They whisper.

ZMUDA  
Are you okay?

ANDY  
I'm feelin' really weak.

Beat. Zmuda shouts to the crowd and points at Andy.

ZMUDA  
Seasick!

CUT TO:

INT. LAUREL CANYON HOUSE - DAY

Andy lies in bed, a shadow of himself. His face is paler. His hair has thinned.

George sits on the bed, reading newspaper reviews to him.

GEORGE  
The Times says, "Funnyman Kaufman is back. A triumph of Pirandelloesque nonsense." Variety says, "Subversive, yet captivatingly innocent."  
(beat)  
Pretty good...!

Andy has a blank look.

ANDY  
I can't move my arm.

GEORGE  
(he pauses awkwardly; this is hard)  
You got good days and bad days...

Andy winces. He softly sighs.

ANDY  
My hair's comin' out.

GEORGE  
(whispered)  
Yeah...

They look at each other. George silently pats him.

INT. KITCHEN - LATER

Lynn and Little Wendy are cooking Andy lunch. Lynn mashes up strange unidentifiable plant products.

LITTLE WENDY  
What is this stuff?

LYNN  
 It's all macrobiotic. Millet, burdock  
 root, kelp... Andy says it'll purify  
 him.

Suddenly -- a SHARP VOICE.

TONY CLIFTON (o.s.)  
 What is that crap?! Looks like  
 somethin' my dog would puke up!!

The women turn. It's Andy -- dressed as Tony Clifton.

A spooked moment.

Tony's wig, peach tux, and sunglasses are there... but Andy is  
 barely strong enough to bark out the attitude.

TONY CLIFTON  
 How 'bout me and you dolls go get some  
 REAL food: French fries and a  
 Porterhouse steak!

LYNN  
 (not sure what to say)  
 ...Andy...?

Wendy's eyes pop: Oh no, she broke the rule!

Tony gets indignant.

TONY CLIFTON  
 I ain't Andy! I'm TONY! Andy's sick  
 -- pick, chick, kick, lick! The  
 doctor says he's a goner.  
 (rousing himself)  
 But Tony's built like a mule! Here,  
 watch this!

Tony picks up a CHAIR and starts lifting it: Up, down, up, down.

Worried, the women rush to stop him. They take the chair.

LYNN  
 Stop it! C'mon, put that down.

TONY CLIFTON  
 Yeah, you're right. We better get  
 movin'. We don't wanna miss Happy  
 Hour at Kelbos -- all the MaiTai's  
 you can drink for \$4.99.

Tony jauntily turns to exit. He gestures to the ladies.

TONY CLIFTON  
 Let's go!  
 (he starts SINGING "New York, New  
 York")

"These vagabond blues,  
Are washin' away,  
I'll make a brand new start of it..."

Tony reaches the doorway -- and collapses.

He clutches himself in pain.

LYNN AND WENDY

Andy!!

Shocked, they run over.

Tony lies huddled on the ground. He mutters sadly, defeatedly.

TONY CLIFTON

Dammit...

CUT TO:

INT. LAX AIRPORT - DAY

A crowded terminal. Zmuda pushes Andy in a wheelchair. Andy looks gaunt and very depressed. He wears a hat.

A few PASSERSBY notice Andy. They whisper.

DUDE #1

Hey, look. It's Andy Kaufman!

DUDE #2

Whoa, what's he doin'?! He's  
pretending to be sick!  
(he snickers)  
That guy's a crack-up.

Excited, they approach Andy. The dudes grin and wave.

DUDE #1

Andy Kaufman! Yo! What's happening?

ANDY

(frail)  
I'm going off to meet a crystal  
healer.

The guys LAUGH uproariously.

DUDE #2

That's funny SHIT! It's even better  
than the time you broke your neck!

ANDY

I'm serious.

DUDE #2

Yeah RIGHT!



DUDE #1  
 (he leans in to Andy)  
 Hey, you know what would be funnier?!  
 Get an I.V. bag to hang on the chair!

A long beat. Then -- Andy smiles wryly.

ANDY  
 That's good. I'll use it on  
 Letterman.

The dudes grin and stride away. Andy absorbs this absurdity...  
 and chuckles. Zmuda pushes him on.

Suddenly -- a PAPARAZZO PHOTOGRAPHER jumps out.

PAPARAZZO  
 ANDY!

Andy looks over. FLASH! The man snaps a picture. Andy is  
 dazed. The paparazzo turns and runs.

Instantly he's gone.

ANDY  
 Now everybody's gonna know.

ZMUDA  
 (beat)  
 It's not like they're gonna believe  
 it.

Andy peers up.

ANDY  
 Do you believe it?

ZMUDA  
 (he smiles)  
 Fuck no. You're just lying, as  
 always.

Andy laughs faintly.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW MEXICO DESERT - DAY

A stucco SPA RESORT sits in the middle of the rocky desert.

INT. SPA - SAME TIME

A room with soft lighting and billowing curtains. A New Agey  
 HEALER is laying crystals upon Andy's body.

Andy COUGHS. His hat is off, revealing he's bald.

HEALER

Now we'll place a blue crystal. Very high vibrations. It's wonderful for its healing powers.

ANDY

(spellbound)

Okay. Let's try two of those... and one of the pink ones.

OUTSIDE

Zmuda stands with a smarmy ADMINISTRATOR.

ADMINISTRATOR

Your friend is doing four crystal sessions a day, but it's just not helping.

ZMUDA

I know...

(beat)

The cancer's terminal.

ADMINISTRATOR

Yes. That wasn't made particularly clear to us when he checked in...

ZMUDA

(irked)

Look, personally, I think rubbing rocks on people is a load of horseshit. But if it makes Andy happy, that's all that matters.

The man purses his lips.

ADMINISTRATOR

I'm sorry to sound crass -- but we don't want to be "that health resort in New Mexico where Andy Kaufman died."

(beat)

I'm going to have to ask you to leave.

Zmuda is speechless.

INT. SPA - ANDY'S ROOM - LATER

Zmuda angrily packs Andy's bags. Zmuda is seething.

But Andy is strangely calm and unaffected.

ANDY

It's okay, Bob. It wasn't really working.

(a gentle smile)

We'll find something better.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAUREL CANYON HOUSE - DUSK

The sun is setting, purple and orange over the hills. Andy and George lie on chaise lounges, serenely staring out. Andy has lost more weight.

ANDY

Boy, look at the colors in the sky...

GEORGE

Yeah. It's really beautiful.

Andy's energy is sapped, but he forces himself to be upbeat.

ANDY

I've got an idea for a new TV show for me to star in. It's called "Uncle Andy's Fun House" -- it'll be a Saturday morning thing where I can goof off with the kids.

George is choked up. He goes along with it.

GEORGE

That sounds nice. Children have always loved your act.

ANDY

Yeah... it's kind of a throwback to shows I used to do in Great Neck. We'll have an audience of little kids, and I can do puppets, magic tricks, stuff like that...

GEORGE

(he nods awkwardly; long pause)  
I think we can sell that.

Silence.

George struggles not to shatter Andy's enthusiasm.

Andy smiles gratefully.

ANDY

Hey... thanks for always backin' me.

George clenches Andy's hand.

GEORGE

Did your -- doctor say it's okay for you to go back to work?

ANDY

Ehhh, you know those guys. If he had his way, I'd be stuck in the hospital, running tests all day.

(more)

ANDY (Cont'd)

(beat)

And anyway, I've found a new guy who's gonna be able to instantly remove the cancer.

GEORGE

(startled)

Really? Is he at a different hospital?

Andy laughs.

ANDY

No! He's in the Philippines! His name is Jun Labo. He's a psychic surgeon! I've read about him, and he's amazing! He rubs you and sucks the disease right out!

Andy beams. George stares sadly.

GEORGE

The Philippines? I dunno... Andy... he sounds like one of your characters.

TIGHT - ANDY

His voice gets hushed.

ANDY

No... this guy's special.  
(very sincere)  
He performs miracles.

George doesn't know how to respond.

Andy looks up pleadingly.

ANDY

He's my last chance.

CUT TO:

EXT. BAGUIO CITY - PHILIPPINES - DAY

Baguio, a tiny scratched-in-the-dirt Philippine city.

Suddenly, a rattletrap COMMUTER PLANE lurches out of the sky. It hits a dirt runway.

Dust flies. Chickens squawk and scatter.

INT. BEAT-UP TAXI - DAY

Andy, Lynn, and Zmuda ride through the impoverished city.

Andy stares in amazement.

They reach a brick building. A sign says "CLINIC," with an eye over a triangle.

EXT. CLINIC

Zmuda helps Andy into his wheelchair. Andy grimaces in pain. Suddenly -- a MOTORCADE OF ARMY JEEPS screeches up.

SOLDIERS carry M-16s and red banners, "JUN LABO FOR MAYOR." Jun Labo's stern face peers from the banners.

JUN LABO himself jumps out of a jeep. WELLWISHERS on the sidewalk cheer.

Jun shakes their hands and gives out ballpoint pens.

Lynna and Zmuda glance at each other.

INT. CLINIC

A NURSE hurriedly helps weakened Andy sign a bunch of forms. Money is handed over.

Andy's clothes are stripped off. They're thrown in a locker.

INT. OPERATION ROOM

A large white tiled room. Lynn and Zmuda roll in pallid Andy, his limp body unmoving.

Andy looks up... and there's a LONG LINE OF SICKLY PEOPLE. Primarily Japanese, emaciated, all stripped to their underwear and barely able to stand.

They have a look of desperation and reverence.

At the head of the line is Jun at his workstation: A bench, a sink, and ATTENDANTS with clean towels.

A SICKLY WOMAN crawls onto the bench. Jun impassively presses his hand into the fatty flesh of her stomach, kneading, searching. Pause, then he removes some BLOODY GUTS.

He flings them into a bucket.

The woman cries out.

Andy gasps.

The woman is helped away.

Jun turns and washes his hands. An attendant gives him a towel to dry with. Then a SICKLY MAN crawls up...

Andy rolls closer. He stares at all this with fear. Nervousness. Hope.

Jun impassively presses his hand against the man's head. He concentrates, searching... then pulls out some BLOODY GUTS.

He flings them into a bucket.

The man shakes. He is helped away.

Andy is wide-eyed. He gets closer... closer...

More patients. More bloody guts. More sobbing.

Andy's excitement builds.

Then -- he reaches the front.

A moment.

Lynn and Zmuda stare into Andy's eyes, drawn in by his total belief. They are overcome. It feels like they're saying goodbye. Lynn gives Andy a tender kiss. Zmuda starts to shake his hand -- then instead hugs him tightly.

Andy smiles, then the attendants lift him from the wheelchair. They help him up to the bench.

Andy lies down. Fluorescent lights buzz overhead.

He looks over, and Jun Labo is washing his hands from the previous patient.

Andy shivers, anticipating the miracle.

Jun turns. An attendant gives him a towel to dry off.

Andy relaxes, readying for it all...

He glances at Jun's hands. Jun hands back the towel -- and under it the attendant quickly slips Jun a sack of animal intestines.

Jun discreetly palms it. He's a fake.

CLOSEUP - ANDY

A moment of stunned disbelief.

He is shocked. Outraged. Disappointed. Flabbergasted.

The faith is meaningless. The joke is cosmic. The con man has been conned.

Andy's overpowering emotions coalesce... and he starts to LAUGH.

It's sidesplittingly funny. Andy LAUGHS, and LAUGHS, and LAUGHS, like a crazy man with no salvation, the joy releasing him, the tears rolling down his cheeks.

His face flushes with color. Life sparkles in his eyes. Andy laughs and guffaws until he's hoarse. This is the best gag of them all.

SLOW DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FUNERAL HOME - DAY

Andy lies at peace in a casket. He has died.

His expression is pleasantly bland. Almost Latka-like.

WIDE

Andy's funeral. The chapel is filled with flowers. Grieving MOURNERS in black slowly enter. It's very quiet.

Andy's family stands huddled together. They're all in a state of shock.

Lynn sits alone in a pew, crying.

Across the room, George gives Zmuda a hug. Little Wendy comes over... and they all comfort each other.

Everyone who ever knew Andy is there: Taxi cast, Fridays cast, TM followers, hookers, Buddy Rogers, Jerry Lawlor, Ed Weinberger, Cathy Sullivan, Maynard Smith, Budd Friedman, it goes on and on...

But -- the people have odd discombobulated expressions.

There's lots of whispering.

MAYNARD SMITH

So when's Andy gonna jump out?

ED WEINBERGER

I say the body's made of wax.

Buddy Rogers ambles up to a curtain. He suspiciously peers behind it.

Grandma is weeping.

GRANDMA

He was so young...

Two hookers discreetly whisper.

HOOKER #1

You know, he used to play dead in bed.

HOOKER #2

(surprised)

You too?

Tear-streaked Cathy Sullivan approaches Jack Burns.

CATHY

Now he's with God...

JACK BURNS

I refuse to cry. I don't wanna get scammed.

Janice slowly turns to Stanley.

JANICE  
It's his funeral. He's gone...  
(very drained)  
So how come I don't believe it?

She starts sobbing. Stanley holds her.

ON ZMUDA AND GEORGE

They stare out.

ZMUDA  
It's a perfect Kaufman audience. They  
don't know whether to be sad or angry.

GEORGE  
(beat)  
Too bad he's not here to see it.

ZMUDA  
(longer beat)  
Who says he isn't?

TIGHT - ANDY IN THE CASKET

Andy lies in state. He's ostensibly dead... but seems unreal. His face is caked with so much funeral-home makeup, it almost looks like a mask.

We tilt up... and standing there are Judd Hirsch, Carol Kane, and Marilu Henner. They stare morosely at the body, their faces depressed and somber.

Beat. Nervous glances around -- then all three of them quickly poke the body. POKE! POKE! POKE!

Freaked out, they compose themselves. They WHISPER.

JUDD HIRSCH  
What do you think?

CAROL KANE  
(beat)  
I dunno. He could be doin' some Yogi  
deep-breathing technique.

A frustrated sigh.

MARILU HENNER  
We'll never know.

EXTREME CLOSEUP - ANDY

He enigmatically lies there.

FADE OUT.



FADE IN:

EXT. NEWSSTAND - DAY

A SUPER slowly appears: "EXACTLY ONE YEAR LATER"

The two Dudes from the airport are reading magazines. Dude #1 reads a comic book, Dude #2 flips through the L.A. Weekly.

Suddenly -- Dude #2's eyes pop.

DUDE #2

No WAY!

(stupefied)

This is the freakiest thing I've ever seen! Look.

He shows his friend a FULL PAGE AD.

It says: "ONE NIGHT ONLY. TONY CLIFTON - LIVE!" Underneath is a photo of cocky Tony.

Their jaws drop in amazement.

DUDE #1

Man, we were right! He's not dead!

DUDE #2

He's just been layin' low for a year!  
(hysterical)  
WE GOTTA GO!

CUT TO:

EXT. COMEDY STORE - NIGHT

The marquee says "TONY CLIFTON."

The two dudes come riding up on skateboards. They look up -- and it's INSANITY. Traffic on Sunset is jammed. Police have barricades. HONKING limousines jockey to pull in.

The guys desperately push their way through the pulsing mob. People are screaming. Everybody wants in. The two reach the front -- and a COP suddenly stops them.

COP

Uh-uh! If you don't have a ticket, you can't go through.

DUDE #1

(begging)

But you gotta let us in! We're huge fans!! We wanna see Andy!!

COP

(puzzled)

Andy? ...Who's Andy?

(he points)

The sign says "Tony Clifton."

INT. COMEDY STORE - SAME TIME

It's packed. Every square inch is filled with glittery Hollywood VIPs. People make chit-chat... but there is a squeamish excitement in the air. A brooding unease. Nobody knows what to expect.

Suddenly -- the lights go black. A BOOMING ANNOUNCER.

ANNOUNCER (v.o.)  
Ladies and Gentlemen! Please put your  
hands together for... Tony Clifton!!

The THEME FROM 2001 starts playing. "DAAAAA, DAAAAA, DAAAAAA!  
DA-DAAAA"!

A small SPOT appears -- on a peach tuxedo. The light grows bigger, bigger... the tension magnifying... people gasping... our view widening... until Tony Clifton is revealed onstage!

It's an extraordinary theatrical moment -- without response.

The crowd has no idea what to do.

Tony smirks.

TONY CLIFTON  
How ya doin'?!

Dead silence.

Tony struts downstage. He waves to the crowd.

TONY CLIFTON  
How you doin' back there!  
(to the front rows)  
How you doin' up here?!

Still no response. Until -- a lone reckless VOICE.

VOICE  
Andy!

Whoa. The crowd rustles nervously.

Tony grimaces.

TONY CLIFTON  
Don't know nothin' about no Andy.  
Just some dead guy tryin' to ride my  
coattails.  
(to the BAND)  
Let's HIT IT, boys! One, two, anda  
one two three four!

The BAND kicks in with disco anthem "I WILL SURVIVE."

Tony starts SINGING the schmaltzy opening:

TONY CLIFTON

"First I was afraid,  
I was petrified.  
Kept thinkin' I could never live  
Without you at my side."

(he wipes away a pretend tear)

"Were you the one that tried to  
hurt me with goodbye?  
Did you think I'd crumble?  
Did you think I'd lay down and die..?"

We PAN the room of enthralled spectators. At a front table  
are George and Lynn.

Tony attacks the chorus.

TONY CLIFTON

"Oh no not I!  
I WILL SURVIVE!  
As long as I know how to love,  
I know I'll simply stay alive!"

In the crowd, we pass face after face -- smiling... frowning...  
intrigued... confused... until we settle on a man in the very  
last row.

Bob Zmuda.

Enjoying the show more than anyone.

TONY CLIFTON

"I've got all my life to live,  
I've got all my life to give.  
I will survive..."

(he hits his big finish)

"I -- WILL -- SURVIVE!!!"

The music CRESCENDOS, and the song ENDS.

Zmuda grins and APPLAUDS proudly.

FADE OUT.

THE END