

OFF THE CUFF

"Pilot

Written by

Amanda Barker

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Amanda Barker
78 Wychcrest Ave
Toronto ON
M6G 3X7
416 432 5368
amandajb@yahoo.com

TEASER

1 INT. A STAGE

1

The set is bright and colourful, like Nursery Rhymes on steroids. A childish piano tune plays in the background.

AMELIA jumps into frame. It is a close shot. She is wearing little girl's clothes.

AMELIA

(singsong voice)

Well hello boys and girls! I'm
Freda and I'm six. Me and my
bestest friend Courtney are here to
tell you about our school.

HILLARY jumps into frame.

HILLARY

Most days we play hopscotch and
have fun. But there was one day.

AMELIA

One really bad day.

HILLARY

Where the bullies stole all of our
lunch money!

AMELIA

Oh No! Here come the bullies now.

JOHN and JEREMY come in. They are wearing bandanas and ripped jeans. John is effeminate and Jeremy is a wimp but both try really hard.

JOHN

Give us all of your lunch money.

JEREMY

Good one!

John and Jeremy high five.

2 INT. DAYTIME - INTERVIEW - AMELIA'S APARTMENT

2

The apartment serves as a shrine to Amelia's accomplishments. Three cats wander and continually jump on the table while she sprays them off with a plastic bottle of water.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AMELIA

When I was 12, I wanted to be an actress. I was in ballet class and I realized that playing the roles was the part I liked the most. That and my boobs where throwing me off balance. I went to a high school for the performing arts. I wasn't very good. I got mono a lot. I went to university. I met an actor. I got married. We moved to NYC. Without green cards. We both got deported. We moved to Toronto. I booked, you know, some work. He left me for an actress named Hilary Grant. She's in this cast. She doesn't know that I know that. Yet.

END OF TEASER

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ACT ONE

3

INT. A STAGE

3

The camera comes on and tries to focus. Its film quality, wobbly and being adjusted for sound. A group of 4 actors sit on a stage sitting in chairs. JOHN and AMELIA sit in front, JEREMY and HILLARY sit on higher chairs, in back.

LESLIE, the person behind the camera whose face we never see, addresses the cast.

LESLIE V.O.

Could you elaborate on what you were saying before, Amelia?

AMELIA

Well what I was saying was that in our careers as actors, what younger actors and other people don't realize, is that most of the
(makes air quotes)
career moves you make are lateral ones.

JEREMY

Well, that's true if, like, you're like in your thirties and like you're career hasn't taken off, but some of us haven't given up on our dreams and we believe that each choice we make helps us grow as we develop
(making air quotes to mock Amelia)
our craft.

AMELIA

Well, yes, Jeremy, no one has given up their dream here - what I meant was that, not every job leads to fame and fortune. Not everything is, you know, Miss Saigon.

HILLARY

Actually, I made it to the last round of callbacks for Miss Saigon and the only reason I didn't make it would be that it wouldn't be you know....like....politically correct to put me in.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HILLARY (CONT'D)

(whispering)
I'm not Oriental.

Beat.

AMELIA
Somebody else say something.

JOHN
(to Leslie)
What's your name honey? Leslie?
Ok Leslie, my name is John. And
this company is kind of not every
actor's dream, Ok? When you were a
little girl did you wish you would
grow up to do documentaries on
crappy children's theatre
companies?

PETER, the director, leans into frame, playfully wagging his
finger.

PETER
Family theatre. Family theatre!

Peter falls a bit and steadies himself.

Theatre that is appropriate for
kids but intelligent enough for
everyone.

Peter leans out of frame very slow and awkwardly.

JOHN
Ok - Leslie when you went to school
did you want to do hard hitting
documentaries or the crap that pays
the bills?

Beat.

Exactly.

DAWN, the Stage Manager and Peter are now behind them,
placing set pieces and props along the curtain. Dawn pays no
attention to the camera. Peter is very aware of the camera
and continually makes faces that comment on the interviews,
smiling, shaking, eye rolling.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LESLIE

What about you Jeremy? Do you feel like you've paid your dues so to speak?

JEREMY

You know actually, there aren't any major parts for me, being Asian in Canada.

PETER

(from behind)

Just for the record, I never even noticed that Jeremy was Oriental. That had nothing to do with why I hired him.

DAWN

But you said having one visible minority would mean we would get funding?

HILLARY

Apparently my grandmother was part first nations. I put that on my Miss Saigon audition call sheet but they said it didn't make a difference.

AMELIA

I was the understudy for the lead for Miss Saigon.

LESLIE

Wonderful, where was that?

In Scugog. It's near Port Perry. Ontario. Behind Whitby.

4

INT. PETER'S TOURING VAN - MORNING

4

The van is dirty and falling apart. Peter drives, Dawn sits in the front. Amelia and John are in the middle, Hillary and Jeremy are in the back. John looks unwell.

PETER

And here we are! The official touring van. Time is 8:33 and we are on route to-

Shuffles with the paper, looking for the name, and begins to veer off the road.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PETER (CONT'D)

Can't find the name.

Dawn grabs the paper from him.

DAWN

It's a school in the city, anyway.

PETER

And get ready, because "Off the Cuff" is coming to a Canadian city near you. If this gig goes well. Yep, we all could be spending alot of time in this van.

JOHN

Ugh. I'm gonna vomit.

5

INT. DAYTIME - INTERVIEW - AMELIA'S APARTMENT

5

LESLIE

Why don't you tell us about some of the stuff we see here in the background?

AMELIA

So this is a poster of when I played Helena in Shakespeare in the Park. Midsummer's Nights Dream, of course. We did it with a Holocaust theme so rather than being set in a forest, it was set in an internment camp...which I guess would mean it was a forest....but....like a Polish forest and we all had numbers on our arms and we were wearing like see through nighties, which was such a pain in the ass because it was black fly season and of course we had to look the part so I was like bulimic for three months before. I looked great. I booked two Burger Barn commercials just because I looked so good.

JUMP CUT TO:

6

INT. CONTINUOUS - A COMMERCIAL SET.

6

Amelia is filming a "Breezy Clean" Sanitizer commercial. She looks starved and disoriented.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AMELIA (CONT'D)
Breezy Cleen is ...clean...and 100
percent natural.
(to the Director off
screen)
It's one hundred percent natural?
It is?

She starts to take the top off of the bottle, enjoys the
aroma of the cleaner, and then prepares to sip it.

CUT BACK:

AMELIA (CONT'D)
Yeah, that was a really good
summer. Well, career wise.

7

INT. VAN - CONTINUOUS

7

We see Hillary and Jeremy in the back seat sitting close
together. John and Amelia as sitting as far apart as
possible.

HILLARY
So exciting!

JEREMY
Hil - how do you feel about
castmates dating castmates? I
mean, is this something that you
would consider?

Amelia raises her brows.

HILLARY
Oh gosh no, it can really damage
your professional relationship.

JEREMY
Right. Right.

Amelia rolls eyes in disgust.

8

EXT. MORNING - BUS SHELTER - JEREMY'S INTERVIEW

8

JEREMY (CONT'D)
Hillary is hot. Super hot. And
SUPER Christian. Which just makes
her hotter. Cause I have a thing
for nuns.

Beat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Maybe it's an Asian thing. All I can say is there is a Korean baptism in the works if you know what I mean.

9

INT. VAN - CONTINUOUS

9

Dawn is reading paperwork for the school on the clipboard and looks confused.

DAWN

(whispering to Peter as he drives)

Says here it is a high school.

PETER

Oh yeah, I think it might be.

DAWN

A high school? Peter? This is a kids show -

PETER

It's a family show. It's for everyone.

DAWN

It's called Marmel Marmel Magic.

PETER

Maybe it's take your kid to school day.

DAWN

For the teachers?

PETER

No, for the students. Teen pregnancy is a real issue in these parts. That and obesity. Which is kind of gross if you envision both at the same time.

JOHN

(to camera)

Right now I am puking both literally and figuratively in my mouth.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

10 INT. REHEARSAL HALL - PETER'S INTERVIEW 10

PETER

You know I don't know fancy actor terms, I am not like the actors - I haven't been in this business for you know 2 years or you know 15 years, some of them. I am just a man with a dream. And there you have it. That's my secret. One Man. One Dream. One Company.

11 INT. JOHN'S CONDO - JOHN'S INTERVIEW 11

John is smoking and drinking - a bitch stick in one hand and a mojito in the other. Techno music and partying gay men socialize behind him. John is very tipsy.

JOHN

Peter's an idiot. He's a failed businessman who couldn't cut it in the real world so he decided to follow his dream of being a children's theatre director slash music director slash producer slash theatrical legend. We aren't really sure. I guess because he can't act. But I mean, he certainly can't direct. So what do you do when you can't do anything? You produce.

JUMP CUT TO:

12 INT. REHEARSAL HALL - PETER'S INTERVIEW 12

PETER

I produce. That's my dream. It's always been my dream. Honestly.

CUT BACK:

13 INT. JOHN'S CONDO - JOHN'S INTERVIEW 13

JOHN

Peter is about as gifted in the Arts as Stephen Harper' is in the boudoir. Wait, no. I forgot Harper can play the piano. But not as good as Condoleeza Rice, right?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOHN(CONT'D)

So my partner Rob and I are having a little Wednesday night soiree and if this was, you know, a real job, I would care. But it's theatre for embryos who would rather be rocked to sleep in their mother's amniotic sacs.

(to Leslie)

Ok, I have to ask you am I going to come across as like the super bitter queen?

14

EXT. MORNING - BUS SHELTER - JEREMY'S INTERVIEW

14

JEREMY

John is a super bitter queen. There's one in every cast. He dreamt of being in musical theatre but he's not that good of a singer. He's both fat and flat which is pretty much career death. He basically just made sure to hook up with a guy that's in real estate so that he can play at acting. He's given up. It's as simple as that. Beware the queens. They'll bring any cast down. I don't care what this show is - I bring something new to every role that I create. I am so glad Hillary's in this cast because, you know she really gets it. And by gets it, I mean she's gonna get it. From me. In the form of sex. But like, really good sex.

15

INT. VAN - MORNING -BACK OF THE VAN

15

HILLARY

What are they talking about up there? I hope everything is ok.

JEREMY

I'm sure it is. Listen the reason I was asking was because there is someone in the cast that I really want to ask out but I don't want to damage the integrity of the show.

HILLARY

Oh wow. Hon, I don't know how to tell you this, but John's seeing someone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEREMY

Not John. Wait? No! You thought I was gay?

HILLARY

Oh you're not? But I thought since you said you lived on Church St. -

JEREMY

Near Front though!

HILLARY

And you knew the whole sound track to The Pajama Game-

JEREMY

I played Babe Williams in high school!

HILLARY

What?

JEREMY

It was an all boys school. We had to play all parts.

HILLARY

Well, and you love ice cream -

JEREMY

Wait...really?

HILLARY

I just assumed. It's wrong to assume I guess. But don't worry - I'm pretty sure Amelia likes you too.

Amelia turns around.

AMELIA

I heard my name?

HILLARY

Yes, you did.

Hillary pokes and winks at Amelia.

HILLARY (CONT'D)

Some one is just a little shy!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JEREMY

No I'm not!

PETER

(to all) We're here! I hope you
guys are ready for Our Lady of
Immaculate Contraption High School!

JEREMY

That's Conception.

PETER

Whatever.

END OF ACT ONE

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ACT TWO

16 INT. SCHOOL GYM EQUIPMENT CLOSET - HILLARY'S INTERVIEW 16

Hillary sits among volleyballs and orange pylons.

HILLARY

I'm glad we got to do this on sight. You can really get the feel of what it's like here on the front lines. Et, Voila - here you have it! Our dressing room!

LESLIE

Some of the cast members feel that you are the most committed member of the company.

HILLARY

That's. Wow. I mean I FEEL committed, you know, in the truest sense. I've been doing alot of Bouffon clown work lately and I really was thinking about giving up this whole commercial theatre thing and then you remember how completely fulfilling it is to be part of a true ensemble.

A volleyball hits Hillary in the head. She takes the hit but tries to stay committed to her interview.

HILLARY (CONT'D)

Sometimes the rewards come later.

A second volleyball hits Hillary in the head.

Much later.

She sinks to the floor, disoriented.

17 EXT. MORNING - SCHOOL'S BRICK WALL - DAWN'S INTERVIEW 17

LESLIE

So Dawn, fill us in with your experience. What in your experience have you found to be true about actors?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAWN
They are crazy.

Beat.

Yep.

Peter enters frame.

PETER
I thought I had a name here....well
this is it anyway if you want to
find the contact inside.

Dawn exits. Peter turns to camera.

PETER (CONT'D)
So welcome audience, to our very
first show as a company. Historic
moment. Everyone's very excited.
Very excited.

Beat.

I should go and get the actors.

18 INT. SCHOOL GYM EQUIPMENT CLOSET -CONTINUOUS

18

The rest of the actor's enter, breaking up Hilary's
interview. Hillary picks up the volleyball.

HILLARY
Alright, who threw this?

AMELIA
Whoopsies! I guess that was me!

JEREMY
Smells like hormone.

AMELIA
Or just whore.

JEREMY
I can't believe our green room is
an equipment closet.

HILLARY
I've been doing my interview in
here for a half an hour, I haven't
noticed any smell.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

AMELIA

Some animals don't recognize their own scent.

HILLARY

Excuse me?

Dawn enters.

DAWN

Peter can I talk to you for a minute?

PETER

Sure.
(to camera)

Theatre talk.

They step into the gym.

19

INT. GYM - CONTINUOUS

19

DAWN

I just spoke to the teacher in charge here a Mrs. Delfino. Does that name ring a bell?

PETER

Well, I am the director, producer, and booking agent -

DAWN

Well, she says that you said that this show would be appropriate for high school students.

PETER

Right.

DAWN

Did you say that this show was appropriate for high school students?

PETER

Well, I might have said that we could adjust the content.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAWN

She's got nine classes of at risk students ready to see a show that apparently reflects their lives.

PETER

Well, maybe we can just adjust the content.

DAWN

How are we going to make a story about 6 year old Courtney and her life like dolls appropriate for an 18 year old who is on parole?

PETER

I know this is the plight of Stage Managers. You don't always think outside of the box the way we artistic types do. The answer, my dear Watson, is elementary. It's called improv-is-ation.

20

INT. GYM CLOSET.

20

John is stumbling around looking for a receptacle to vomit in. He finally finds a bright orange cone and vomits in the wide end. It starts to trickle out of the smaller end.

JEREMY

Dude! What the hell is wrong with you?

HILLARY

John, are you ok?

JOHN

No need to worry. No need to worry. Just, some food poisoning...Oh...I forgot these things were open on both ends...

JEREMY

Kinda like you.

AMELIA

Actually, it smells like you were poisoned by a Merlot.

JOHN

Yes I was. Clearly someone tampered with the box.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He wretches.

JEREMY

Are you crazy? You partied last night? It's our first day!

JOHN

Please don't tell Peter. I need this gig.

AMELIA

Oh my god, the smell is making me sick. Even more than the 15 year old boy smell.

JOHN

I didn't know the smell of young boy could make me so sick. It's never had the effect on me bef-

He wretches again.

AMELIA

Ok, we can't let Dawn or Peter know. Here.

Amelia takes florescent coloured gym jerseys and places them over the puke.

HILLARY

(to camera)

Um...did you want to continue the interview?

21 EXT. SCHOOL'S BRICK WALL - DAWN'S INTERVIEW

21

DAWN

So....Peter's telling the actors right now that they have to improvise to make "Murmel Murmel Magic" in a way that makes it suitable for gang members. So the first day is going really well. Depending on who you talk to.

22 INT. SCHOOL GYM'S EQUIPMENT ROOM

22

PETER

Ok so there has been a little bit of an organizational hiccup if you will - regarding the age range of the audience.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SFX: A SCHOOL'S LOUD SPEAKER ANNOUNCEMENT.

MRS DELFINO V.O.

Would the grade twelves please come to the gym for today's presentation. That's Mr. McKinley's shop class and Mr. Johnson's twelve three class only.

JEREMY

Ha ha. She said Johnson.

AMELIA

I'm sorry, we are doing this show for 18 year olds?

PETER

Mostly seventeen and eighteen year olds but I am told they can go as far up in age as twenty three seeing as they are -

Tries to mumble this over a cough.

At risk students.

HILLARY

What?

PETER

Well I don't actually think it's fair to put labels on kids, I mean that's kind of the point of the show...

John is tying a purple headband on.

JOHN

Are we going to be performing for Bloods or the Crypts? I'm not sure if mauve is one of their colours.

AMELIA

Oh my god. They'll murder us.

PETER

No they won't! No. They. Won't. Because I am giving you a gift here - the gift of artistic license. To make this show really hit home with these troubled youth.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PETER(CONT'D)

To turn "Murmel Murmel Magic" into true magic...So whaddy'a say? It's time for you to make a difference. To show the world (motioning to camera) what kind of actors you really are.

Peter holds up one finger and tries his best to make a dramatic exit but can't shut the door all the way from the other side. He has a thought and reemerges.

PETER (CONT'D)

Maybe take out the madrigal at the end.

He exits again, less dramatically.

They all stare at the camera. John pukes again into his pylon.

23

INT. SCHOOL STAGE - CONTINUOUS

23

Dawn and Amelia are setting props to create the set behind the closed curtain and then make their way to the gym closet as the kids are pouring into the gym.

AMELIA

This is bullshit. So bullshit.

DAWN

I know dude, what do you want from me? Don't change anything just do the show the way it is then. It's not your fault.

AMELIA

Those kids are gonna think we're idiots. You know what I'm going to improvise? I'm going to improvise that I'm nearly 30 and I need this job because my student loan is in collections and I auditioned to be the "before" girl in a weight loss clinic ad and I booked it!

(to camera)

Do you mind?

They go into the gym closet and Amelia attempts to slam the door.

The kids pour into the gym and Mrs. Delfino makes her way to the stage.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MRS DELFINO

Hello everyone. Hello. Ok so we have some special people here today to do a very special presentation. I am told by their director that they are really new at this and pretty nervous. So can we give them an Immaculate Conception welcome?

A student yells from the crowd.

STUDENT

I'll show you an Immaculate Conception! Bend over!

Mrs. Delfino holds a paper up that she has been given and reads from it.

MRS DELFINO

So boys and girls, ladies and germs,
Two hands together make the perfect noise to welcome the best theatre you've never heard of - Please welcome "Off the Cuff"!

Amelia, Jeremy, John and Hillary burst out of gym closet and run up to the stage.

Peter is at the piano, in his bliss.

AMELIA, JEREMY, JOHN, HILLARY:

Heyyyyyyyyyy!!!!!!!

HILLARY

Hi Boys and Girls! My name is Courtney.

JEREMY

And Courtney had a problem that made her a little bit dorky.

JOHN

So she had a plan!

STUDENT

Is that supposed to rhyme

AMELIA

To make Freda her right hand man.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HILLARY

And together they wouldn't be so dorky!

STUDENT 2

Guy, this is for little kids!

John and Jeremy run backstage in character. Amelia and Hillary stay on.

24

INT. BACKSTAGE

24

Jeremy and John are backstage. John grabs a football helmet and pukes in it. Jeremy just puts his head in his hands. A book is thrown and it bounces off the other side of the backstage tarp.

JEREMY

This is brutal.

JOHN

I'm just at the bile stage now.

25

INT. SCHOOL STAGE - CONTINUOUS

25

AMELIA

Once upon a time.

STUDENT 3

Once upon your face!

AMELIA

Once upon a time, bullying was not talked about in schools. It was just something kids put up with.

STUDENT 3

I'm putting up with your face!

HILLARY

And so, if a kid got bullied they didn't have anywhere that they could go?

AMELIA

I can't believe that Courtney, you mean when you get bullied, there's no where you can go?

HILLARY

Sadly, no.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AMELIA

Let's watch a typical day in
Courtney's school.

John walks onto stage as a bully.

JOHN

Hey Courtney why don't you hand me
over your lunch money?

STUDENT 2

Why don't you hand her your dick?!

HILLARY

But I only have 4 dollars, and I
need to have my lunch too!

JOHN

Well, then, you had better -

John vomits on Hillary. The student body cheers. Hillary is
horrified.

JOHN (CONT'D)

(yelling)

Damn it!

The student body cheers louder.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Well then, you'd better
(wiping mouth and suddenly
getting inspired)
lick it up.

Student body goes crazy, Hillary looks stunned.

JOHN (CONT'D)

That's right, you heard me, lick up
my puke...BITCH!

When the student body hears this, they roar in excitement.
Shouting, fist pumping, cheers.

PETER

This is better than Mamet.

Peter gets excited by the students being so into it, makes
hand gestures to actors to give more of this from the piano.
Hillary looks stunned and then turns back to John.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HILLARY

And.....what are you going to do
if I don't?

JOHN

I will cut you, I will cut you like
the bitch that you are!

John exits.

Dawn runs on with mop and quickly mops behind Amelia then
runs off.

AMELIA

And so, since Roy was up in
Courtney's.....grill....and Roy
was.....threatening to cut Courtney
like.....the bitch that she
is.....they met after school where
both brought their posse...posses.
But what Roy didn't know is that
Courtney was a bitch with
even...bitchier friends.

26

INT. BACKSTAGE

26

JEREMY

What the eff dude?

JOHN

(groggy) They love it. Let's just
keep going.

27

INT. SCHOOL STAGE - CONTINUOUS

27

AMELIA

So, John brought his.....pimp
daddy....Shin Tong. And Courtney
brought....me....her....Ho with the
Mo....friend Freda.

JOHN

Are you bitches ready to throw
down?

SFX: Hillary's next swear gets "bleeped" out.

HILLARY

(forced)
Bleep....yeah

Crowd cheers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEREMY

Well good because we are going to
cut you like a bitch....we are
going to....bleep bleep and
bleep...you

SFX: John goes on a swearing tirade which all gets "bleeped"
out.

There is a pause and the gym goes silent. The actors look
horrified.

Mrs. Delfino looks horrified.

Peter looks up from the piano, stunned.

Dawn is back at the tech booth. She bites her lip and
clenches her mop.

ALL STUDENTS

YEAAAAAAAAAAHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!!!!

HILLARY

Well...that's ok....because we like
getting bleeped and bleeped. And
bleeped.

SFX: Hillary's swears get "bleeped" out.

JEREMY

Oh yeah?

HILLARY

Yeah. Because we
pack...knives....and we can
go....and chop off all of your...
dicks!

ALL FEMALE STUDENTS

YEAHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!!

DAWN

Oh Christ. Here we go.

AMELIA

Yeah! We're....dick choppers.
And uh...we will only have to use
on butter knife on you, Shin Tong.
Cause your Asian! So your dick is
small!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

STUDENT 2

Oh yeah!

ASIAN STUDENT

Boo!

HILLARY

We are going to Ginsu knife that
thing like a California Roll!

ASIAN STUDENT

Cut her!

Both Amelia and Hilary run off stage.

28

INT. BACKSTAGE

28

AMELIA

Ok, you know what Hilary - I've had
just about enough of you!

HILLARY

I beg your pardon?

AMELIA

(mocking tone, pretending
to be Hilary)

I was a triple threat. I talk
about people behind their backs, in
the van. I'm still in my 20's.
It's the same shit that you pulled
with my ex husband.

Beat.

HILLARY

You're Dave's ex wife?

AMELIA

Yes. Well. Soon to be. Neither
of us can afford the divorce yet.

HILLARY

Ok - listen. Dave came on to me!
And Jeremy has a thing for you, not
me!

A moment for Amelia's recognition. The conversation turns
from fight to bonding instantly.

AMELIA

Oh my god. He does?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HILLARY

Yes, that's what we were talking about in the van.

AMELIA

Oh my god. I mean he's not my intellectual equal but he's really cute.

HILLARY

And you are only probably 10 years older than him. That's less than Ashton and Demi.

AMELIA

Right. Thanks.

29

INT. BACK OF SCHOOL GYM - TECH BOOTH

29

Mrs. Delfino approaches Dawn.

MRS DELFINO

Pull the lights. Pull the lights or I will pull them for you. I'll be calling the other schools in the district to let them know that you are a disgrace to edu-tainment.

DAWN

Yes, and we are so sorry. On behalf of "Off the Cuff" I would love to offer you maybe a more appropriate performance -

SFX: Mrs Delfino's next swear gets "bleeped" out.

MRS DELFINO

Oh "bleep" it. You guys are done. I'll make sure of that.

JEREMY

Well it's that time boys and girls! It's time for some audience participation! Get it? Participation? Hal and Joanne? Too young? Ok. Who would like to volunteer to come up on stage?

MRS DELFINO

What?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAWN

Oh my god. No, no Jeremy, no.

JEREMY

I need that one special person in the audience- that one person who can never stop talking.

Sees a quiet boy in the corner.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

How about you, kind sir?

MRS DELFINO

That's Robert and he's autistic. He's a biter.

DAWN

Awesome.

Jeremy leads Robert onto stage.

JEREMY

Yes, you, watch your step there. So since we are improvising today's show, tell me some of the things that interest you.

Robert just stands on stage, staring at one corner.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Are you into sports?

Beat.

Or Cars?

Beat.

Music?

ROBERT

I like music.

JEREMY

Excellent - because we have a song for you - don't we ladies?

Motions to the girls fighting backstage.

AMELIA

Oh yeah...the madrigal.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Girls look like deer caught in headlights and slowly make their way onto the stage.

ROBERT
I sang a song in church.

HILLARY
I know a few church songs....we
like church songs....right Jeremy?

JEREMY
That's right!

Audience begins to boo. Robert starts to sing Amazing Grace. The entire gym falls silent. His voice is incredible. It is a real "Susan Boyle" moment. Shocked expressions fall on Mrs. Delfino, Dawn and all of the actors on stage.

Peter plays along on the piano.

The actors sing along but they allow Robert to have the final "Was blind but now I see".

DAWN
Lights going down.

The lights come down. The curtain comes down. The kids stand up and applaud.

MRS DELFINO
I don't believe it.

30 INT. BACKSTAGE

30

John vomits and passes out.

END OF ACT TWO

CONTINUED:

31 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY.

31

John is lying on the bed, hooked up to the IV. Cast stands around him. John is feigning real sickness rather than just extreme hung-overness.

PETER

Food poisoning happens to the best of us John. What did the doctor say?

JOHN

She said that I should rest up and drink plenty of fluids. It could be something serious you know, like lupus.

JEREMY

Pretty sure you have to be born with lupus.

AMELIA

Jeremy can I talk to you for a moment?

JEREMY

Uh. Sure.

They step outside the room.

AMELIA

Listen, I want to say that we are going to be touring cross country and I don't want any weirdness between us ok?

JEREMY

Sure.

AMELIA

I just want everything out on the table. I think you a really cute, and really sweet but I think it's best if we keep it professional.

JEREMY

Sure.

AMELIA

Ok. Because Hillary told me everything.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEREMY

So nothing's gonna happen for us,
right?

AMELIA

I'm sorry, hon. No.

JEREMY

Good - can you figure out if
Hillary is single? She's actually
the girl I want to bang.

AMELIA

Yeah. Ok. I'll find out if she's
into...banging.

JEREMY

Because I know she's Christian
right? So she might take awhile to
get cozy with so I just want to
know what her triggers are.

AMELIA

She likes it if you are a real jerk
to her.

JEREMY

She does?

AMELIA

Yep, the bigger the jerk, the more
she wants you.

JEREMY

How do you know?

AMELIA

I just know. It's a girl thing.

JEREMY

Well, that's great advice. Thanks!

Jeremy goes back into hospital room. Amelia looks into camera with an awkward sigh. She goes back into the hospital room.

JOHN

Did someone call Robert?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HILLARY

He's coming. How are you feeling?

JOHN

Foggy. Did we actually...? Did that happen?

JEREMY

It got real, John. It got really real.

PETER

It was wonderful. Mrs. Delfino has booked us for 3 more shows.

DAWN

WHAT? That can't be possible.

PETER

It's not only possible, it's happening. I knew I had the right team here. She suggested that we apply for the relevance awards. They are theatre awards for at risk youth.

JOHN

Wow.

PETER

I know in my heart that there is nothing, nothing more relevant than the show I watched today.

Nurse enters.

NURSE

They are ready for you.

PETER

That's why I've booked the cast to give a special performance for the kids in intensive care. John, of course you will be missed but maybe one of the kids can sub in for you?

Beat.

PETER (CONT'D)

Sound cool guys?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

NURSE

There are only two kids.

PETER

Well that's not a-

NURSE

They are both hooked up to machines.

Beat.

JOHN

(smiling an evil grin)

Can I watch?

END OF ACT THREE.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

TAG

32 INT. HOSPITAL - ICU - CONTINUOUS

32

Scene is shot from the perspective of the kids watching. You can see the foot of the bed, several machines, and the actors at the end of the bed. Amelia is pretending to be a sort of duck creature.

AMELIA

Murmel, Murmel quack quack - I don't have any friends.

To kids.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

Sometimes do YOU feel like you don't have any friends?

Beat.

CHILD'S V.O.

I don't have any friends.

SFX: the sound of a heartbeat monitor flatlining.

HILLARY

Oh my god.

Hillary, Amelia, and Jeremy all look to Leslie off camera in horror.

LESLIE

Um...I'm just gonna stop rolling here... ok?

Film goes out of focus.

END