

ED TV

by

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Sixth Rewrite  
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This is the first eRelease for the script of the movie "Ed TV"  
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1 INT. HIGH SCHOOL GYMNASIUM - NIGHT  
The following is shot DOCUMENTARY-STYLE.  
A GIRLS VOLLEYBALL GAME has just ended. It was a big game. Some kind of  
championship.

ONE TEAM is CELEBRATING -- jumping up and down, squealing and  
hugging each other. We are focused on the bench of the TEAM TRAT  
LOST. They're very sad -- several are crying.  
One girl, in particular, (AMY) is really sobbing. She's sweat-  
stained, tired and just blubbering. Stuff's coming out of her eyes,  
her nose, her mouth and the camera is seeing it all.

The COACH, a fortyish man looks at all the weeping girls -- Amy in  
particular.

COACH  
You quit! You gave up!

He KICKS a CHAIR.

Now Amy is really a mess. She's crying, coughing, shaking.

COACH (CONT'D)  
(right in Amy's face)  
You quit!!

The Coach storms off.

COACH (CONT'D)  
Quitters! ... Quitters!

Amy is wailing and choking on her own tears.

This IMAGE FREEZES.

TERRY (V.O.)  
And that would be it. I don't  
think you need any narration at

all. Just end it right there.

REVEAL

2 INT. OFFICE - DAY  
BEGIN CREDITS

We're in New York City. We're in the conference room of a modestly successful cable TV station called "Real TV." The people are young, energetic, clever. It's crowded, noisy -the furniture is beaten up, bulletin boards cover the walls, with large index cards all over them.

This room is not for show -- work gets done here.

SEVEN OR EIGHT PEOPLE are present. One of them is CYNTHIA REED. She's the boss.

TERRY  
(to Cynthia)  
What do you think?

CYNTHIA  
It's horrible, it's depressing, I  
love it. What else?

ALICE  
I want to re-pitch that pregnancy  
idea. Find six women early in their  
pregnancies and follow them all right  
through to the births.

KEITH  
(negative)  
Yeah, when all that stuff comes  
out.

Mixed reactions, mostly negative.

CYNTHIA  
I have an idea.

IMMEDIATE ATTENTION

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)  
This is something I've been thinking  
about for a long time. We're "Real  
TV" right? I mean that's the name  
of the station.

AGREEMENT

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)  
So let's go real. We find someone.  
Just a regular person, someone. And  
we put their life on television -  
live... all day long.

Silence. No movement at all.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

Calm down.

KEITH

What do you mean, like PBS did in the seventies? What was that family?

GREG

The Louds.

KEITH

Yeah.

CYNTHIA

No. We go way beyond that. We don't film it and edit it and put it on later. We go on the air live every morning and the show goes off each night, when our subject goes to bed. In between, we're on live all day, every day - the same person, -- for  
(shrugs)  
let's say a month.

No one is wild for this. Some hate it -- some are unconvinced.

FELICIA

That's not a show that's a surveillance camera.

GREG

You can't do that.

CYNTHIA

The hell we can't. Look, the beauty of being a cable channel is we can take chances. I've thought about this and I'm telling you, I think this can make a noise. A loud one. There are twelve thousand channels. You've got to do something that says "Look at me!" Hell, people look at fish tanks all day. This is people!  
(more firmly)  
Someone's real life -- an TV, all day long - live... And, you know what? I'm doing it.

Pause. The others know the argument is over.

GREG

In that case, we love it.

END CREDITS

like to star in your own TV show? Call Real TV (and a phone number) Coming (and a date)."

4 INT. POOL HALL - NIGHT - PARAMUS NEW JERSEY  
This is a nice upscale pool hall. A party is in progress in a special private area -- a room upstairs let's say -- a loft. Thirty or forty PEOPLE in their twenties and thirties are informally celebrating the engagement of two of their friends.  
  
It's NOISY, it's fun, it's informal. It's not a high-end group. By that we mean, not, for the most part young lawyers or stockbrokers. They're mostly blue-collar. Community college graduates.

WE OPEN ON ED PEKURNY. He's an attractive man, about thirty. There's still something a little juvenile about him -- not stupid, just boyish.

SOMEONE is VIDEOTAPING HIM for one of those congratulation montage things that are done at parties these days. Ed is good at this. He's not professional but he's a loosey-goosey guy who's kind of good on camera.

ED  
I want to congratulate  
Kevin and Tracy on their engagement.  
I knew you guys were meant for each  
other from the moment Tracy told us  
she was pregnant.

TRACY  
You asshole!

Everyone else is cracking up.

ED  
(innocently)  
What? What did I say?

TRACY  
My mother's going to see this!

5 INT. PARTY - LATER  
Other people are being "interviewed" on tape. Ed is SHOOTING POOL with his buddy, JOHN. John's had a couple of drinks. He's a little melancholy.

He is looking across the room, thoughtfully.

ED  
What?

JOHN  
Look at this -- people are  
getting married, they're  
getting married...

ED  
You said that.

JOHN  
We're falling behind.

Ed waves dismissively.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
You know who we are?

ED  
Tell me.

JOHN  
We're the guys who clean up after  
the parade.

ED  
I'm gonna stick this right in your  
eye.

JOHN  
I was at this comedy club last week  
and this comedian says "If you're over  
thirty and your job requires you to  
wear a name tag, you screwed up your  
life." And I'm laughing and then I  
realize I wear a nametag.

ED  
So do I. So what? I'm doing all right.

JOHN  
Your brother's here.

ANGLE ON THE DOOR

Ed's brother RAY and Ray's girlfriend SHARI arrive at the party.  
Shari is pretty in an unglamorous kind of way. They both wave and  
then Shari goes off to talk to some of the LADIES and Ray joins Ed  
and John.

RAY  
What's up?

ED  
Where were you?

RAY  
(reluctantly)  
I was... having dinner with Shari  
and her parents.

JOHN/ED  
(taunting)  
Oooh!

RAY  
I'm telling you, it's  
closing in on me. All of a sudden  
it's like a thing, it's a whole  
thing.

ED

What do you mean all  
of a sudden? You've been going with  
her six months.

RAY

I know. I mean I'm sitting there  
and her father's asking me about  
my "career prospects" and I'm  
playing "Risk," with her kid  
brother, Leon and at dinner the  
dog's sniffing at my balls -- at  
least I hope it was the dog.  
'Cause her mother disappeared for  
a while.

They LAUGH.

6 INT. PARTY - LATER  
It's getting wild. Some of the girls are dancing raucously.

ANGLE ON A TABLE (NOT A POOL TABLE, AN EATING-TABLE)

Ed, Ray, John, Shari and maybe another WOMAN.

Ray is holding a big tray of SHRIMP BALLS. During the  
conversation, Ray throws them in the air and catches them in  
his mouth like popcorn. Once, he even bounces one off the  
wall into his mouth.

ED

You know, those are for everybody.

Ray waves dismissively, then gets an idea.

RAY

Oh!

(to Shari)

Show them that thing you can do.

(to the others)

This is great. I just found out  
she can do this, her brother told me.

(to Shari)

Come on.

SHARI

(thinks it's stupid)

I don't -

RAY

Come on...

She hesitates, but she really doesn't mind. Slightly, amused she  
takes her FIST and fits it completely INTO her MOUTH.

ED

Whoa!! Oh!

Ray is cracking up.

RAY  
Is that unbelievable?

She removes her hand.

SHARI  
And that concludes today's show.  
(to Ray)  
This is where you go around and  
collect the money.

Ed LAUGHS. Ray gives her a KISS.

Shari's roommate RITA sits down.

RITA  
Hi.

SHARI  
You guys know my roommate, Rita.

They do, vaguely.

ED  
What's going on over there?

RITA  
Everybody's making  
audition tapes for that Real TV  
thing.

JOHN  
Oh, that thing. Yeah. Did you hear  
about this?

ED  
(not sure)  
Yeah, what - they put some schmuck  
on TV all day long or something?

RAY  
You know, that would be like a great  
thing.

ED  
What?

RAY  
That! Being that guy.  
Being the guy they watch.

ED  
What are you drunk?

RAY  
Yeah, but let's stay  
on one subject. Whoever that person  
is is going to be famous. They'll be  
able to get whatever they want.  
They'll ... trust me, this is my

business.

ED

What is?!

RAY

Show business.

ED

You're in show business?

RAY

Yeah. I service video equipment.

ED

That's like... those people  
stitching Nikes in Panama saying  
they're in the NBA.

RAY

(insulted)

I'm not stitching Nikes in  
Panama! ... Bedwetter!

ED

Thumbsucker!

RAY

I'm making a tape.

ED

We're excited.

7

INT. BAR - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Ed and Shari, waiting for drink orders.

ED

So Ray met the family.

SHARI

Yeah...

ED

I hear the dog really liked him.

SHARI

Oh, the whole family loved him.  
Of course, they loved the last  
guy I went out with, and he strung  
me along for three years and dumped  
me.

ED

Really? You see, to me, you shouldn't  
have any trouble with men. There  
should be, like, a line behind you.

She takes Ed's beer.

SHARI



You shouldn't drink.

They LAUGH.

8 INT. TABLE - A LITTLE LATER  
Ed and Shari ARM-WRESTLING. After a struggle, Ed wins. Ed is impressed.

ED

Jesus!

Shari wrings out her arm and picks up her beer.

SHARI

(continuing a previous  
conversation)

And, you know, every guy I ever  
broke up with, the minute it was  
over, I could tell you what went  
wrong, how it went wrong, why it  
had to go wrong... but when I'm  
in it... lost. I'm like a love  
coroner. Bring me the corpse,  
I'll tell you what killed it.  
But how to prevent it? Lost.

Ed LAUGHS.

ED

Ray's on.

They walk over.

ANGLE ON RAY

RAY

(to camera)

Hi. I'm Ray Pekurney. I'm from  
Paramus, New Jersey...

9 INT. CYNTHIA'S OFFICE - DAY  
She's watching Ray's tape. Ray thinks he's funnier and  
cuter than he is.

RAY (ON TAPE)

All my friends tell me "Ray, you've  
got too much personality for one guy."  
It's like at a party -- I'm at the  
center of the attention. Everybody  
loves me.

He gets hit in the face by a hors d'oeuvre.

RAY (CONT'D)

Ha, ha, ha. I'll kick your ass.  
No really, let me show you my  
girlfriend. She's really cute.

He reaches out and grabs Shari's wrist. Shari is struggling

to stay out of frame. We just see her arm and Ray pulling on it. Ray lets go.

RAY (CONT'D)  
She's strong, 'cause she's a Fedex girl. She lifts those packages. But she's not dikey at all, she's really pretty.

CYNTHIA FAST-FORWARDS

WE SEE the camera shooting an empty space.

Then Ed's head appears sideways right in front of the CAMERA.

ED  
Hello I'm Ed.

He starts to sniff.

ED (CONT'D)  
What smells?

He steps back from the camera and straightens his head as he SNIFFS. He's more relaxed than Ray.

ED (CONT'D)  
What is that smell? Oop, I think it's this idea. One person on TV all day long?  
(screams)  
Are you nuts?

WE HEAR LAUGHS

The Real TV Staff are enjoying Ed's tape while they eat lunch out of styrofoam containers.

ED (CONT'D)  
Seriously, get your resumes in order. When my brother Ray - whose personality you were just dazzled by -- told me he was going to try out for this -- I said, "why in the world would anyone want to be on TV all day long, no privacy, everybody knowing your business, exposing every single detail of your life I mean... why would anyone want to do that? But then I thought of a reason...  
(loudly)  
Why the hell not?

He KISSES the LENS, smudging it.

Cynthia, watching, cracks up. The others seem to like him to.

This is a video store in Paramus, New Jersey. It's busy.  
PEOPLE are in line to check out tapes.

WE OPEN ON a WOMAN -- a mother -- who is rummaging through her purse for her Blockbuster card. She looks up and sees that her TWO CHILDREN have opened several boxes of candy from the candy display and are eating from the boxes.

MOTHER

Oh for -- Put those -- Oh God...

She grabs the boxes from them. The boxes are ripped more than she thought and candy goes flying all over. She bends to pick it up.

Ed appears. He works here.

ED

(to the Mom)

We'll take care of it.

Someone arrives with a broom.

ED (CONT'D)

(to the broom guy)

Here. This time throw it out, don't eat it.

LOU, the Manager passes.

ED

Lou, can I talk to you a second?

Lou seems like he'd prefer to avoid this.

LOU

Um, yeah, I was gonna ...

ED

What's the deal?

Did anybody make a decision -

LOU

Ed, look, uh... you're not getting the job. They're gonna transfer someone from another store to manage this store when I leave to manage the new store. I'm sorry.

ED

Oh, Christ. Did you go to bat for me?

LOU

I batted!

ED

You batted or you bunted?

LOU

Hey. I went as far as I felt comfortable. I mean, you know,

let's face it -- you come and go  
here as you please. You work  
when you feel like it -- you  
know, Bruce Springsteen's  
birthday is not a legal holiday.

ED

Well, then I'm quitting.

LOU

Ed, come on. What's that gonna do?  
You're gonna bring Blockbuster to  
their knees. Let me recommend a movie  
to you. It's called "Get your shit  
together before it's too late."

ED

(wise-ass)

Who's in it?

CLERK

Ed, telephone.

Ed goes to the phone.

ED

(into the phone)

Yeah... Are you serious? ... Come  
on, no kidding, who is this? ...  
Holy shit!

11 INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - ANOTHER DAY  
Ed is being interviewed by the "Real TV" staff whom we met earlier.  
He's slightly less comfortable than on his tape, but he's good.

ED

I had one year of college. And  
then one year of junior college.

CYNTHIA (O.C.)

What did you study?

ED

Oh, see, studying  
would've been a huge help. Where  
were you, then?

They LAUGH.

CUT TO:

11A INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

ED

Well, there's Ray, my  
brother. He's... ambitious. Like a  
few years ago, he started this  
mobile dog-grooming business. But,  
like, out of his Camry. He had this  
bathtub in his trunk -

(Ed starts cracking up)  
he's throwing the dogs in there, they're  
fighting and splashing, then he'd  
slam the trunk down, let 'em run  
around inside screaming getting all  
wet... then he'd use the car  
exhaust to dry'em.  
(wiping his eyes)  
Ah, Ray... he just can't get a  
break.

CUT TO:

11B INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

ED  
My sister -- Marcia, I  
mean she can't get a break. About  
seven years ago she falls in love  
with this Vietnamese guy who wants  
to marry her so he can stay in the  
country. So they get married, they  
have a kid, he gets his citizenship,  
immediately divorces my sister and  
marries this Vietnamese woman who,  
he was probably already married to  
all along. She can pick 'em.  
(pause)  
She's got a nice  
little boy, though. My nephew, Andy.

CUT TO:

11C INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

ED  
My Mom's okay. Kinda.  
I knew a guy who hated his mother -  
Stuey Shwam. He hated his mother so  
much, he had his belly button  
removed.

CUT TO:

11D INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

ED  
No, I've never been married.

The interviewer seems to be waiting for him to elaborate.  
He doesn't. He shrugs -- that's it.

CUT TO:

11E INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

ED  
Oh, my father -what an asshole. When I was  
twelve, my mother needed a  
hysterectomy -- my father ran  
off with her nurse! And that's

the last I heard of him.

CUT TO:

11F INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

ED

Al, my stepfather he's  
opinionated. And you have to  
listen because he's like in a  
wheelchair.

CUT TO:

11G INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

ED

I like my job -- I  
mean I'm doing all right. I'm  
not sure how long I want to stay  
there, you know... I mean, I'm  
thirty-one... I'm not sure I  
want to be a video store clerk  
when I'm forty... Of course, I  
didn't expect to be doing it  
'til I was thirty-one, either.  
But... you know I'm... keeping  
my options open. Anything comes  
along, I'm ready to pounce.  
(growls like a cougar)

CUT TO:

11H INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

ED

A dream? Of course I have a  
dream I just don't know what  
the hell it is.  
(shrugs and smiles)

Ed's image freezes, while he has a funny-cute expression on  
his face.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL a TV in a conference room with Ed's  
frozen image on it. Cynthia is there with her bosses, the  
people who run the network that owns Real TV. The top man is  
MR. SCHARLACH. His deputies are MS. SEAVER and MR. McILVAINE.  
This is not the same place where we met Cynthia and her  
staff. This is richer, more corporate and formal.

CYNTHIA

He's who we want to go with.

SCHARLACH

(doubtfully)

This guy.

CYNTHIA

I polled my

staff. The men say they'd hang  
around with him and the women say  
he's fuckable. And one of the men  
said he's fuckable.

SCHARLACH

I'm not  
sure about the entire concept.

Cynthia is frustrated.

CYNTHIA

Look it's not like we're  
burning up the airwaves  
now. We're running neck-and-neck  
with The Gardening Channel. If  
people just tune in to this twice a  
day for five minutes, we're a hit.  
Plus we can sell advertising every  
second, running at the bottom of the  
screen... and the beauty is this guy  
doesn't even have to be good. I mean  
if he's good, great. But if he winds  
up making an ass of himself, better.

McILVAINE

How is that better?

CYNTHIA

Come on. People cannot turn away  
from an accident. You drive by,  
you say "Ooh, I hope there's not  
a head lying in the road" but you  
look ! See, nobody in America  
wants to be nobody. This guy  
wants to be famous. So,  
basically, the deal is he agrees  
to drive down the highway a  
hundred miles an hour blindfolded  
and we get to see if his head  
winds up rolling down the  
highway. Fun for the whole  
family. So let's do it.

She stops, waiting for approval.

12 INT. VIDEO STORE

SCHARLACH

(coldly)  
Good luck.

Ed's RE-STOCKING the SHELVES

He gets goosed from behind

RAY (O.C.)  
(very loud and happy)

Hey...

ED  
(goosed)

Oh!

Ed DROPS the BOXES. Ray is there with Shari.

RAY  
I got your message. Way to go!

ED  
Hi, Shari.  
(to Ray)  
Let's go in the stockroom.

13 INT. STOCKROOM  
Ed and Ray enter.

RAY  
So when do you start?

ED  
I ... I'm not gonna do it.

RAY  
What?

ED  
Look -- there's a  
million ways to humiliate yourself -  
I gotta think of a new way? I mean,  
it's all day! Every minute. Id be  
like a monkey at the zoo. I just...

RAY  
(disgusted)  
Oh man! They  
couldn't pick me! They had to pick  
you!

He slaps a tape off a shelf.

ED  
You would do this? You would  
actually --

RAY  
In a second! In a hot second.  
Let me ask you something --

ED  
Why do you do that?

RAY  
What?

ED  
Whenever you ask me  
something why do you always say "Let  
me ask you something?" Why don't you



just ask me?

RAY

(impatiently)

All right. Let  
me ask you something... are you  
happy like this?

ED

I'm doing all right.

RAY

Oh Yeah? What's your master plan here?

Shari enters, curious about the yelling. She stands there  
quietly, unnoticed by the guys.

RAY (CONT'D)

You're  
gonna be a video store clerk for  
the rest of your life? This is your  
big ambition, rearranging the  
"Ernest" movies?

ED

Screw off.

RAY

How many  
opportunities are you going to  
get in your life?

ED

I don't know.

RAY

That's right. You  
don't know. Doors don't fly open  
for guys like us.

ED

Hey. You know-- we're not the  
same. I got a good life, this  
job suits me. I come and go when  
I please --

RAY

Oh, don't bullshit a  
bullshitter. If you're happy like  
this you're an idiot, and you're not  
an idiot.

(sees Shari)

Hi.

Ed turns and sees Shari. She's self-conscious. She feels like she's  
been caught eavesdropping.

SHARI

Oh. I -- I heard Ray yelling.  
I didn't mean to --

RAY

(to Ed)

Give me a chance. I'm begging  
you. I need a break. Look, I'll  
cover your ass. I'll ride  
shotgun. Just bring those  
cameras over to me and I'll make  
something happen for both of us.  
I swear. Come on, Eddie

Pause.

ED

All right.

RAY

Yeah?!

ED

Yeah.

Ray lifts Ed up.

Ray kisses Ed.

RAY

(to Shari)

Is this guy a brother?!

14 INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT  
Moderate-priced, restaurant.

WE OPEN ON a CLOSE-UP of AL. He's about seventy.

REVEAL THE FAMILY

AL

What happens when  
you go to the bathroom? Do they  
go in with you?

Ed, Ray, Al, JEANETTE and MARCIA. Al is in a WHEELCHAIR and has an  
oxygen mask connected to a tank. He periodically takes a hit of  
oxygen. He's a little short of breath, but loves to talk. Jeanette  
is Ed's mother -- about sixty. Marcia is a little older than Ed.

ED

No. The bathroom is off  
limits -and when I go to sleep they  
go to other programming. Unless I get  
up. Then they go back on the air.  
Unless I get up to go to the  
bathroom, I guess, then -

AL

What if--you're vomiting?

ED

(amazed by the  
question)

What if I'm vomiting?

AL

Do they show it?

ED

I guess -- I don't -- it's all in  
the contract. There's this  
million-page contract --

RAY

Look, can we all  
just sign the releases so we can  
get on with this?

MARCIA

(accusing, to Ed)

What happened? You described this  
"crazy-kooky" family who'd be a  
million laughs on TV?

ED

No! I barely even  
mentioned -it's just that, my  
friends, the people at work,  
whoever I'm regularly in contact  
with they want releases from.

MARCIA

(angrily)

They're gonna mock our foibles.

ED

Our what?

MARCIA

Our foibles, our foibles!

RAY

We don't have foibles.

MARCIA

Everyone has  
foibles. Then the whole country sees  
them on TV and mocks them. Then we  
have... mocked foibles.

JEANTTE

Eddie, please  
don't let them mock our foibles.

ED

(losing it)

Stop saying foibles!

MARCIA

Look, my life  
is not so great, that I want it  
shown on television. And neither  
is yours.

RAY

That's the point -- this could  
change things.

MARCIA

How?

RAY

For instance... me and my friend  
Bucky are buying out my boss. His  
equipment, trucks, client list, the  
whole shmear.

MARCIA

(points to Ed)

What does that have to do with... ?

RAY

If they keep Ed on for one full  
month, he gets a balloon payment.

Ed nods.

Pause.

RAY (CONT'D)

I borrow  
against that now, at the bank. Buy  
the business. And Ed becomes a  
silent partner. Now here's the  
beauty part. While we're on TV I  
plug the shit out of the business.  
Free advertising.

AL

How about sex?

A STUNNED pause. They all look at Al.

ED

I'll have to pass, Al. And it's  
not an age thing --

AL

No! Do they show you having sex?

ED

No. Kissing and  
hugging, okay, but if it's actual  
sex they have to cut away.

AL

At what point?

ED

At the point -- I  
don't -- Look you'd be on TV maybe  
one or two times each. I'll try to  
avoid I'll go out of my way to  
avoid, getting together with you.  
Believe me.

WE HEAR: A loud drilling sound.

CUT TO:

15 INT. ED'S APARTMENT - DAY  
A WORKMAN is drilling a hole in the wall.

Ed is there with a TV CREW. They're running cable and drilling holes and examining the apartment.

Cynthia is going around supervising. Ray and Shari are there. Ray is fascinated. Ed is tense. Shari is observant. Ray separates from Ed and Shari and asks one of the Installers a technical question.

SHARI AND ED

Ed thinks.

Ed joins Cynthia.

SHARI  
Are you sure about this?

ED  
Hey, believe me -I know I've got a great chance of making a fool of myself, here.

SHARI  
Why do it?

ED  
I saw this show once.  
It was about logging. I was home sick, there was nothing else on. Do you know how they break up really bad log jams? You know, when they're really tangled... ?

SHARI  
Cream rinse?

ED  
(laughs)  
Dynamite.

SHARI  
So?

ED  
So maybe this is my dynamite.

SHARI  
Dynamite is dangerous.

CYNTHIA  
Ed, can I see you a second.

ED  
(to Shari)

Excuse me.

CYNTHIA

Okay, so you understand? We're installing a permanent camera in your bedroom, one in the kitchen, one in the living room, plus, of course, there'll always be a couple of steady-cams following you.

ED

(overwhelmed)

Cool.

CYNTHIA

I want you to take this.

She gives him a card.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

That has my work number, my home number, my pager number. I sleep three hours a night. Call me whenever you want to talk. Off the air, on the air, whenever. Okay?

ED

(barely listening)

Um, yeah -- thanks.

Ed looks kind of overwhelmed. She doesn't like this.

CYNTHIA

Now look. Don't freeze up on me. I picked you because you had kind of a relaxed, go-with-the-flow quality. You're not going to lose that, are you?

ED

No, uh...

CYNTHIA

I bet my career on you. You'd better be good.

ED

(annoyed)

Don't say that. That's like... telling a guy before you have sex you'd better be good. You don't do that.

CYNTHIA

I do.

Ed reacts.

ED

Oh.

16 INT. ED'S BEDROOM - NIGHT  
He's in bed, watching TV. The news is on. He glances up at one of the cameras. On the news, they go to a story about him.

ENTERTAINMENT REPORTER  
Tomorrow morning, the cable  
channel known  
as Real TV, begins broadcasting  
one of the most heavily promoted  
concepts in the history of cable  
television. In an experiment that  
they say will last at least a month.  
They're going to follow -- live -  
every waking minute of a thirty-one  
year old video store clerk from  
Paramus New Jersey. The Real TV  
press release on this promises that  
none of it will be scripted, none of  
it will be edited and in my opinion,  
none of it will be interesting. we're  
all just supposed to sit in front of  
our TV's and watch this guy... live.  
(rhymes with "give")

ANCHOR  
(to the Entertainment Reporter)  
What would be the interest here?  
What would... get people to tune in?

ENTERTAINMENT REPORTER  
Betas me.

SIDEKICK  
I don't know. I might check it out.

ANCHOR  
Well, Len's  
here to check out sports. Len,  
would you watch this video clerk?

LEN  
I'd sooner watch soccer.

They all CRUCKLE.

17 INT. CYNTHIA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT  
She's watching the same show. She's edgy.  
She's CRACKING her KNUCKLES.

TV SCREEN

LEN  
Speaking of disasters, at the  
Meadowlands tonight...

The set goes off. Ed, once again, stares up at the camera.

FADE TO BLACK

FADE IN:

18 INT. CONTROL TRUCK  
Written on the screen -- "Day one."

A DIRECTOR and TECHNICAL CREW with all the modern equipment.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR  
Here we go. Ten-nine-eight-seven-

19 INT. REAL TV - OFFICES  
Cynthia and her staff are gathered to watch the show begin  
They're TENSE and EXCITED. A commercial is on.

20 INT. TRUCK

21 INT. OFFICE

A.D.  
two... one.

On the TV, the commercial ends and the Real TV logo appears.

A CRAWL BEGINS

It says "The following is unedited, unscripted, and unrehearsed. It is the real life of one American citizen named Ed Pekurny."

The logo fades away and we see Ed, in bed, sleeping. His ALARM RINGS and he wakes up.

He's groggy from sleep. Instinctively, he begins SCRATCHING his balls. As he does, it hits him that this is not a normal morning. He looks up and sees two steady-cam guys at the foot of his bed, aiming their cameras at him. Ed, then, looks at his hand on his balls. Gently, he moves his hand away.

22 INT. OFFICE

KEITH  
(mock cheerful)  
Well, we're off to a great start.

NOTE: The camera operators will change in shifts. We'll see about four regulars over the course of the film. The one we will see most often is shooting Ed right now. His name is CARLOS.

23 INT. BEDROOM  
Ed, wearing shorts and a T-shirt, gets out of bed. His hair is sticking up. He passes a mirror and notices his hair.

ED  
Oh, great.



He turns to the camera and seems about to offer an excuse for his appearance, but, then, just moves on.

ED (CONT'D)

Excuse me.

He grabs some clothes and enters the bathroom.

24 INT. OFFICE

They're not enjoying this. Everyone's staring at Cynthia. She doesn't flinch.

NOTE: Silent advertising runs along the bottom of the screen.

25 INT. KITCHEN - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Ed enters, dressed and showered. The Steady-cam is in his face.

Ed is tight. He's much less comfortable than he expected to be. He smiles stiffly at the camera. He's misplaced his natural charm.

He gets a box of Pop-tarts out of the freezer. As he does, other stuff falls out of the freezer on to the floor. He's embarrassed. He bends down to pick things up, showing his ass to the camera.

26 INT. OFFICE

GREG

(to Cynthia)

Start clearing a place for your Emmy.

27 INT. KITCHEN - A LITTLE LATER

Ed is sitting up on the kitchen counter eating his Pop-tarts and a bowl of cereal.

ED

(nervously)

Same people like  
to put the milk in first and then  
the cereal. I like to put in the  
milk first - I mean the cereal first  
and then the milk. Yeah, that's it.  
Now, watch this.

He takes a KNIFE and a BANANA. He peels the banana. He holds the knife, blade up, over the cereal and chops down on it with the banana, several times, rapidly, slicing it into the cereal. He's proud of this.

28 INT. RAY'S APARTMENT

Ray is watching the show. His head is in his hands. He's horrified by how bad Ed is.

29 INT. PARENTS' HOUSE

Jeanette and Al watching Ed.

JEANETTE  
(being positive)  
So far...

30 INT. OFFICE

KEITH  
Somebody shoot me.

31 INT. NETWORK OFFICE  
Scharlach, Seaver and McIlvaine watching, grim-faced.

32 INT. OFFICE  
Cynthia is ON the PHONE.

CYNTHIA  
Get him out of the house! I want  
him moving!

33 INT. CONTROL TRUCK

DIRECTOR  
(on the phone)  
Hey, I want him dead, but what can  
I do.

34 INT. KITCHEN  
Ed is EATING. He peers confused at the camera.

ANGLE ON

CAMERA OPERATORS. They're signaling Ed to get out.

ANGLE ON ED

Bewildered, imitating their gestures.

ED  
What... You want me to swim?

35 INT. CONTROL TRUCK  
The Director is still on the phone. She's watching Ed on a  
monitor.

DIRECTOR  
Oh God...

Ed gets it.

ED  
Oh, out? You want me to go out.

36 EXT. BUILDING  
Ed exits the building with the Operators walking backwards in front of him, bumping into PEOPLE- People watch, curiously.

Ed reaches his car. He takes out his keys and drops them in a muddy puddle. Disgusted, he fishes them out.

CUT TO:

36A INT. NETWORK BUILDING  
Scharlach, watching impassively.

CUT TO:

36B INT. ED'S CAR  
Ed, in the car. He can barely fit the key into the ignition. Carlos, in the passenger seat taps him on the arm. Ed looks up. Carlos holds up a hastily-made sign. "It's okay. Relax, man." Carlos WINKS. This does help Ed. He appreciates it. He drives.

WE SEE the control truck in motion. We also see another car with another Steady-cam OPERATOR, shooting Ed's car as they travel.

37 EXT. STREET - MONTAGE  
Ed is doing his morning errands. A little shopping -- a little banking -- always ON CAMERA. At one point, he WALKS INTO a GLASS DOOR with the word "Pull" on it. He pushed, banging his forehead. A CHILD points to the word "Pull." Ed turns to the camera, embarrassed. Later he buys a slice of pizza at a little place that's doing no business.

ED  
(to the camera)  
Best pizza in New Jersey.

As he walks down the street, PEOPLE call out "Hey Ed!" People in windows show him that they're watching him at that exact moment.

The camera shoots some of the people in the windows. They see themselves on TV and they go wild. Ed also is confronted by GUYS grabbing their crotches mockingly, calling out things like "Hey, Ed, holding your own?" or "Hey, Ed, howls the grand ballroom." Ed is slightly chagrined by all this, but handles it with good grace. He seems to be loosening up.

38 INT. VIDEO STORE - DAY  
Ed arrives at work. The store is already open. (Ed usually gets there in the afternoon and stays until closing.) CUSTOMERS are a little stunned by the arrival of a camera. Some know what it's about some don't.

The CLERKS are aware of what's going on. They all signed releases. Ed's BOSS greets him stiffly. Clearly he's trying to get face-time on camera.

ED  
Hey, Lou.

LOU  
(stiffly)  
Welcome to work, Ed.

He shakes Ed's hand and smiles at the camera. He WAVES a little.

The BROOM GUY crosses, staring transfixed at the camera. He blocks Ed and Lou. He FREEZES, then panics. He tries to get out of the way and trips over his broom. He tumbles face-first into the camera lens, hurting himself.

ANGLE ON ED, observing.

ED  
(mutters)  
Oh, Jesus, I'm dying.

39 INT. CONTROL TRUCK

DIRECTOR  
Carlos, give him some air, give him some room. Use a longer lens. We'll mostly go with the stationary cameras in here. Less intrusive.  
(to the crew in the truck, sarcastically)  
Have any of you thought about your next career?

40 INT. A KITCHEN - SAME TIME  
A WOMAN is serving dinner. She's watching Ed on TV -- really just glancing at it. Her HUSBAND is helping her bring the food to the table.

HUSBAND  
Why are we watching this?

WIFE  
(a little guilty)  
No reason. just... I just want to see what happens.

HUSBAND  
Nothing's gonna happen. He's just... working.

WIFE  
Oh, come on, they wouldn't put it on if nothing was gonna happen.

He changes the channel. She changes it back. He doesn't get it at all.

RAPID CUTS of VARIOUS PEOPLE around America, watching -- A couple, a young guy, a woman alone -- ending with a few college-age girls in what appears to be a dorm room.

ONE GIRL is watching intently. Her roommates are mostly just hanging around not really watching.

COLLEGE GIRL

I think he's cute.

one of her roommates glances over to see what she's so excited about.

41 EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Ed is walking. He passes the little pizza place he touted earlier. There's a LINE out into the street. The STOREOWNER is working hard -  
- deliriously happy. Ed passes, oblivious to what he's created.

42 INT. ED'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The Camera Operator is shooting Ed in the bathroom CLIPPING his TOENAILS

ED

Some guys work from  
the big toe down to the little toe.  
Not me. I save the big one for  
last. That's the one I really  
enjoy. It's thick, it's big, it's  
a challenge. Did you ever see old  
people's nails?

(makes a disgusted  
noise)

43 INT. RAY'S APARTMENT

Ray and Shari watching Ed. Ray is BANGING HIS HEAD on the table.

RAY

This is not working.  
(to Ed on TV)  
Come to me!

44 INT. CYNTHIA'S OFFICE - NIGHT

It's late. She's alone. She's ON the PHONE. She's coming apart.

CYNTHIA

(into phone)  
No, I haven't seen the spot  
ratings...  
(she winces)

As she talks, she tries to LIGHT a CIGARETTE. She's shaking too much to use her lighter.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

(into phone)  
I think that's a number  
from which we can hopefully, uh...  
build...

ANGRY at her lighter, she throws it breaking a window.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)  
I disagree... No, I am not ready  
to pull the plug... Yes, Mr.  
Scharlach, I know they shoot  
horses...  
(getting angry)  
Look, it's been one day. Can I have  
a week with this and then have  
you fly up my nose?!  
(hangs up)

She immediately regrets her outburst.

45 INT. BAR - NIGHT  
Written on the screen -- "Day Two."

OPEN ON TURTLES racing (as only turtles can) across the floor.  
The turtles have little plastic men, seated on their backs.  
The CROWD CHEERS and SCREAMS for their favorite turtles. Ed is  
being followed by the steady-cams but seems to be ignoring it.

Ed is in a group which includes John, and Ray. The race ends  
John looks very uncomfortable.

BARTENDER  
The winner... Dashing Danny.

Ed wins. MONEY changes hands.

ED  
Next round's on me.

One of the cameras is very close to John. He's very  
SELFCONSCIOUS. He doesn't look where he's walking. He  
trips. PEOPLE LAUGH.

ED  
(off-hand joke)  
Polish acrobat.

RAY  
(loudly)  
Hey. Check this out.  
(to the cameramen)  
Look at this.

Ray TAKES OUT a big stack of QUARTERS and sets them on the bar next  
to a SHOT GLASS

46 INT. CONTROL TRUCK

DIRECTOR  
Go with the desperate brother.

47 INT. BAR  
The cameras go with Ray. Ray does a "spit the quarters off the bar  
into the shot glass" trick, while PEOPLE CHEER.

Ed is standing next to Shari. They're OFF-CAMERA.

ED  
Whoa, God bless Ray.  
First time I'm off-camera in two  
days. This is hard, you know? I'm,  
like, exhausted.

ANGLE ON RAY

He's BALANCING a BAR STOOL on his forehead.

ANGLE ON ED AND SHARI

SHARI  
(calmly)  
He did that at my parents' house.

ANGLE ON RAY

As Ray drones on...

RAY  
(selling hard to the  
camera)  
Okay, I just wanted to get your  
attention. My name is Ray and my  
friend Bucky and I design video  
systems. You've got an office or  
a big home, we'll come out there  
design you an entire system.

ANGLE ON ED AND SHARI

ED  
See, they should've  
picked him. Look how comfortable  
he is out there.

ANGLE ON RAY

SHARI  
He is so wound up. He bought all  
new clothes for this.

He flips the BAR STOOL and catches it. He accepts the plaudits of  
the crowd. He returns to Ed and Shari. So do the cameras. Ray is  
fired-up.

RAY  
Whew! I am kicking hairy ass!

Ray is still full of energy.

RAY (CONT'D)  
Hey, Ed. Did you hear about  
Marcia?

ED  
(worried)  
No. What happened?

RAY  
(to the camera)  
That's our sister.  
(to Ed)  
She's got a new boyfriend.

AL AND JEANETTE

Watching TV.

JEANETTE  
Who?

BACK TO BAR

RAY  
He's living with her!

ED  
(camera-conscious)  
Ray, maybe this isn't ...

RAY  
No, this is great.  
(to the camera)  
You'll love this.  
(to Ed)  
He's a singer.

ED  
Marcia's living with a singer?

CUT TO:

RAY  
Yeah. You know,  
piano bars. plays the piano  
and sings. That's how they met.

SHARI  
He sang to her and they fell in  
love?

RAY  
(enjoying this)  
No! Some drunk  
hit him over the head with his  
snifter -- you know, that thing they  
keep on the piano for tips -- and  
Marcia yanked a big hunk of glass  
out of his head.  
(cracks up, pounds the  
table)

48 INT. MARCIA'S APARTMENT  
Marcia is staring at the TV in UNHAPPY SHOCK. Next to her is a good-  
looking, but slightly sleazy-looking GUY with a bandage on his  
head.



RAY

I mean my question  
is what was she doing in a bar in  
the first place?

ED

Ray --

RAY

She's an alcoholic,  
for Christ's sake.

ED

Oh, Jesus.

Marcia, watching, HORRIFIED.

BACK TO BAR

RAY

Remember the  
last guy she got involved with?  
What was his name?

ED

What's the dif --

RAY

Richie!  
(to Shari)  
She spent six months dating a criminal

ED

(to Shari)  
She didn't know he was a  
criminal. They had a  
relationship. They --

RAY

"Quick pull off the highway" is  
not a relationship. Oh man, I  
gotta pee.

He KISSES Shari. She COVERS her FACE with her hand.

RAY (CONT'D)

What are you, hiding from the  
Police?

(pulls her hands down)

Show your face, you look great.

(to Ed)

Doesn't she look great.

ED

Great.

RAY

(to Ed)

While I'm gone, tell them about  
our cousin Lenny who's gay. We  
knew from when he was five.

He minces off' effeminately, to the bathroom, LAUGHING. It's  
like a hurricane has just passed through. Everyone is sitting,  
STUNNED.

ED  
You do though, you look great.

SHARI  
Right.

ED  
No, no, I -- as soon as you came  
in tonight I said to John, "Boy  
Shari looks beautiful." I said  
it on TV so you can ask anybody  
who saw it.

She LAUGHS. They smile at each other. They make intermittent  
eye-contact a little self-consciously.

Ed finally looks somewhere else and Shari, for just a moment,  
stares right at him.

PULL BACK to TWO GUYS, watching this on TV in a bar -- more of  
a neighborhood bar.

50 INT. BAR - NIGHT

TAD  
Did you see that?

BARRY  
What?

TAD  
Her. That look. She likes the  
Ed guy better than she likes the  
brother.

BARRY  
You're nuts.

TAD  
Okay, I'm nuts.

CUTS OF OTHER VIEWERS,

WATCHING REAL TV

A BEDROOM

The COUPLE we met earlier are in bed, the wife is holding the  
remote.

HUSBAND

Give me the remote.

WIFE

Just a few more minutes. Read  
your book.

A LIVING ROOM

A GAY COUPLE

FIRST GUY

What do you like about it? I  
don't understand.

SECOND GUY

I don't know -- it just  
it's I don't know. Just let  
me watch.

51 INT. ED'S BEDROOM - MORNING  
"DAY THREE"

The ALARM goes off. Ed starts to scratch his balls, but stops  
halfway down. He WINKS at the camera and starts his day.

52 EXT. EWS BUILDING  
Ed comes outside and he's accosted by a GROUP of angry Polish  
Americans, many of whom are carrying signs decrying Polish  
jokes and anti-Polish attitudes. They SCREAM ANGRILY when they  
see Ed. Ed is completely shocked. He runs back inside. He  
locks the door, leaving Carlos outside. The demonstrators  
attack Carlos.

53 INT. ED'S APARTMENT  
Ed is at his kitchen table with several burly DEMONSTRATORS  
arrayed behind him. Ed is NERVOUSLY, READING from a sheet of  
paper while Carlos shoots.

ED

... my "Polish acrobat" remark  
was ill-considered. Although, I  
meant no harm, I should have  
recognized that such  
(trouble with the next  
word)  
stigmatizing remarks bring pain  
and anguish to...

He's having trouble reading the next word.

ED (CONT'D)

I can't read my own writing.  
It's like Chinese --  
(quickly backtracking)  
It's not like Chinese! Chinese  
is, I'm sure, a beautiful  
language and they write ...  
beautifully. It's not Chinese.

He wipes sweat away.

ED (CONT'D)

Jesus, I'm sweating like a  
Mexican fruit-picker.

(realizes)

Oh, Christ!

QUICK CUTS of Ed, getting his laundry, doing some shopping,  
getting his oil changed, all being shot by a CAMERA PERSON.

54 INT. DENTAL OFFICE

A YOUNG DENTAL HYGIENIST is cleaning Ed's teeth. The camera is  
practically right in his mouth. It's making the Hygienist  
NERVOUS. She's distracted. She hurts Ed. He SCREAMS. She  
SCREAMS. She drops her tools.

HYGIENIST

(near hysterics)

Can I have some room please?!

ED

(talking with the  
suction in his mouth)

Gi hu roo.

55 INT. TV STUDIO

It's an educational-type panel discussion involving various  
eggheads and pundits. It's called "Viewpoint."

MODERATOR

Let's change topics for a moment.  
Does anybody have a viewpoint on  
something going on now called "Ed  
TV".

PANEL MEMBER #1

This, I believe, is a new low  
point in American culture.

PANEL MEMBER #2

I agree. What it reveals is the  
absolute creative bankruptcy in  
the television business. What  
they're saying, basically, is  
"We're giving up. We have no  
ideas."

PANEL MEMBER #3

It's worse than that! They don't  
select someone with any talent,  
or with something to say -- they  
seem to celebrate the fact that  
this guy is a boob. It's a  
joyous celebration of boobery.

PANEL MEMBER #4

I think we've already spent far

too much time discussing this.

They all agree.

56 INT. CHINESE RESTAURANT - NIGHT  
OPEN ON Ray with chopsticks up his nose, imitating a walrus.  
Also, he has lo mein noodles protruding from between his lips.  
Ed is forcing a smile. Ray is wearing a tee-shirt that says  
"Ray and Bucky- Video Kings" with a phone number.

57 INT. REAL TV OFFICE  
Cynthia is alone working late. She's drinking. She's watching  
Ray. She's not enjoying him.

ED (V.O.)  
Ray, don't throw the shrimp,  
you're gonna choke again.

CYNTHIA  
Choke to death, you boring  
bastard.

58 INT. EWS BEDROOM - NIGHT  
Ed is sitting up in bed, wearing shorts and a tee-shirt, eating  
directly out of a cereal box.

TERRY  
The audience likes you when  
you're moving.

ALICE  
Yes. Try not to stay in one  
place too long. Get outside as  
much as you can.

KEITH  
Also, we have some notions. Have  
you thought about becoming a Big  
Brother?

GREG  
Or coaching a Little League team?

FELICIA  
How about a date?

ED  
Are you asking me?

FELICIA  
No, I mean...

KEITH  
It's just, the ratings are still  
soft.

LONG PAUSE

ED  
(nervously)  
Are you going to cancel me?

CYNTHIA  
Let's not worry about that vet.

ALICE  
You're testing well.

FELICIA  
There's another problem.

GREG  
It's ... Ray.

ED  
What about Ray?

GREG  
Well, the walrus impression -  
delightful as it was -- is just  
not wowing the audience. This is  
some audience research.

He hands Ed a PRINTOUT. Ed doesn't know how to interpret the  
figures.

ED  
What does this mean?

FELICIA  
It means they hate his freaking  
guts. It means if he were on  
fire they wouldn't put him out.

ED  
He's just ... trying a little too  
hard --

CYNTHIA  
Ed, the audience can smell the  
desperation coming through the  
screen.

TERRY  
Could you... see him a little  
less often?

ED  
How much less?

FELICIA  
Never would be plenty.

ED  
I can't do that to him. He's  
pushing a little too hard -  
but... I just can't do that to  
him.

SILENCE

ED (CONT'D)

He'll be fine.

59 INT. CAR - DAY  
"DAY FIVE"

Ed is driving slowly on a busy street. Suddenly an EIGHTEEN YEAR-OLD BOY lands heavily on Ed's windshield. Ed is badly startled. He can't see. He swerves and stops. The boy is not hurt. He's banging on the windshield, waving at the camera. Ed, furious, gets out.

60 EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

ED

What the --?!

BOY

I'm on TV! I'm on TV!

Ed just stares in disbelief.

61 EXT. STREET - LATER  
Ed is walking. PEOPLE YELL at him.

GUY

Ed! Your show stinks!

The Guy LAUGHS like he really got in a good one. Ed ignores him.

TWO TEENAGERS run in, one has a camera and quickly snaps a picture of Ed and the other Guy. Merrily, they shake his hand and run off, whooping.

There are PEOPLE who trail along. Many of them will show up again and again, throughout the movie, following Ed. Some of them will look mentally or emotionally impaired.

62 INT. VIDEO STORE - NIGHT  
QUICK SHOTS of Ed with CUSTOMERS - One or two show a bit of camera-consciousness. A little group has gathered to observe Ed's "show".

63 INT. APARTMENT BUILDING HALLWAY- NIGHT  
Ed rings the bell.

ED

(to the camera)

This is Ray's apartment. Ray's got a big-screen TV and the Knicks are playing in L.A. tonight, so sometimes I come over after I work late and we watch the game here. He makes funny

comments. He's really a good  
guy. He just...

RAY (O.C.)

Who is it?

ED

It's me, Ed.

The door opens a crack, revealing Ray in a bathrobe. Ray's  
look is unwelcoming.

RAY

Hi.

ED

You watching the ballgame?

RAY

Uh, no, uh I'm a little tired.  
I fell asleep.

ED

Oh. All right. I'll watch at  
home, then.

RAY

Yeah...

WOMAN (O.C.)

Ray, where do you keep the  
glasses?

ED

Oh, is Shari here? Why didn't  
you just say so? Why are you  
giving me a song-and-dance about  
being tired?

ED (CONT'D)

(calls out)

Hi, Shari.

WOMAN (O.C.)

Who's Shari?

ED

Who's --

Ray looks pained. Ed realizes what's happening and freezes  
Ray's phone RINGS.

RAY

Oh shit...

He turns to answer his phone, allowing the door to swing open  
a little. Ed can see into the kitchen. He sees a WOMAN,  
wearing just panties, facing away from him, searching for  
glasses.

RAY



(into phone)  
Hello... Shari, hi... Oh no! ...  
Oh God!

ED  
(to the camera)  
We'd better go...

RAPID CUTS of VIEWERS loving this, some screaming "Don't go!, don't leave, stay" etc.

BACK TO SCENE

RAY  
(into phone)  
No, honey, it's not what it looks like--

She hangs up on him. He holds his head.

RAY  
Oh God ... Ed!

64 INT. HALLWAY  
Ed is TIP-TOEING away. He stops when Ray calls him. Ray 'runs out into the hallway after him. They speak with lowered voices.

RAY  
That was Shari. She saw the whole thing on TV--

ED  
What is this? What's going on, who is that?

RAY  
(embarrassed)  
It's the receptionist at one of the places I service video equipment -- she's very pretty and, you know, she never even talks to me and then today I come in and she's all "I saw you on TV the other night... You were so great ... " Next thing I know we're ...

ED  
Next thing you know! Why didn't you stop?

RAY  
Stop? I'm a guy. I don't stop. The woman's supposed to stop. We're the gas, they're the brakes.

WOMAN (O.C.)  
(calls out)

Ray, I finished the Snapple.

RAY

Fine!

WOMAN (O.C.)

Is there more?

RAY

In the cabinet, but it's warm.

There's ice in the tray. I

(to Ed)

Talk to her.

ED

I don't even know her. All I

know is she likes Snapple.

RAY

No, not her. Shari. Go over

there and talk to her

65 INT. CYNTHIA'S BEDROOM

CYNTHIA

Yes! Go!

She THROWS SOMETHING at the screen.

She PICKS UP the PHONE.

66 INT. HALLWAY

ED

Why me?

RAY

You brought the cameras here!

ED

You brought the girl!

RAY

Please!

ED

If I go over to Shari, the

camera's going there, too.

The Camera Operators are vigorously nodding and mouthing "Yes, Go."  
Ray is oblivious to this, but Ed picks it up.

RAY

That's good. She'll -- you know  
control herself. Look. If I go  
over there, she's just gonna slam  
the door on me. Just go over and  
beg her to talk to me, that's  
all. Please. You owe me for

this!

Ed accepts the irony of Ray's attitude without comment

67 INT. ANOTHER HALLWAY- NIGHT  
The door opens, revealing RITA, Shari's roommate.

RITA  
(nervously)  
Um... Shari knew you were coming  
over because she saw ...

ED  
Right, yeah --

RITA  
(apologetic)  
She really doesn't want you and  
the camera in here right now.

ED  
No, I understand. That's -  
where is she, is she all right?

Rita isn't sure how much she should reveal.

RITA  
I ... gave her a drink. I thought  
it ... but she's not much of a  
drinker, so it's made her a  
little... belligerent.

Shari appears in the doorway over Rita's shoulder. she's  
holding a liquor bottle and she's a little drunk.

SHARI  
What do you want?!

ED  
(awkward)  
Shari, I'm just really sorry.  
Look, I know this is...  
unbelievably awkward, but if I  
could come in for like a second  
and -- you know -- just say...  
two words, then...

Shari indicates with her head, that Ed can come in.

Ed and Carlos enter. Rita shuts the door. Shari crosses to a  
couch. Ed indicates for Carlos to give them some distance.

68 INT. CONTROL TRUCK

DIRECTOR  
Don't lose them, Carlos. This is  
gold. Stay out of their way, but  
get everything.

## INT. SHARI'S APARTMENT

Carlos settles across the room. He rests the camera down as if he's not even shooting, but he's still guiding it where he wants it throughout the scene.

RITA

I'm gonna go to bed.

(to Shari)

You okay?

Shari shrugs.

RITA (CONT'D)

Good night.

She gives the camera a quick glance.

RITA (CONT'D)

(quickly, with a small wave)

Hi, Mom.

(she exits)

ED

Shari, Ray feels --

SHARI

(starting to cry)

Don't defend that horse's ass to me.

ED

I'm not. I'm not. I'm just  
Look -- you know, in a way, it's  
good. He got this out of his  
system now and he knows it's  
not worth it and, you know,  
someday if you guys got married  
or something --

SHARI

Ha!

ED

Okay ...

SHARI

(poking Ed as she  
talks)

I've got news for you-- I never  
intended to marry him.

ED

Oh... how come?

## INT. RAY'S APARTMENT

Ray, watching on TV.

71 INT. SHARI'S APARTMENT

SHARI

Well, for one thing, he's a bad  
lay.

72 INT. RAY'S APARTMENT

His eyes bulge out and he begins to gasp.

RAPID SHOTS of viewers reacting-- "Whoa!" laughs, etc. The  
college girls applauding. one of them SCREAMS "Tell it!"

73 INT. SHARI'S APARTMENT

Ed realizes that Ray's been called a "bad lay" on television.

ED

Oh my God.

SHARI

(directly into the  
camera)

I mean bad.

ED

Look, not having been there... I  
just think you're hurt and you're  
saying this to, you know, get  
back at him.

She starts to cry.

ED (CONT'D)

Look... whether you get back  
together or not, you're too  
terrific a person to... lower  
yourself like this.

74 INT. RAY'S APARTMENT

Ray, still in shock.

75 INT. SHARI'S APARTMENT

ED (CONT'D)

I mean, I told Ray -- a couple of  
times -- that I thought you were  
one of the best and ... smartest  
and... most attractive women  
I've ever seen so...

In comforting her, he's gotten his face very close to hers.

76 INT. DORMITORY

Same dorm girls as before.

DORM GIRL

Kiss him! Kiss him!

BACK TO SCENE

SHARI

Really?

ED

Yeah.

She tilts her head forward a little, hesitates, then kisses him, at first warmly, then passionately.

77 INT. DORM ROOM  
The girls are going wild-- SCREECHING.

78 INT. TAD'S HOUSE

TAD

I'm nuts, hah?! I knew it! I said!

He dials the phone.

79 INT. JOHN'S HOUSE  
John is stunned.

JOHN

Oh, Jesus!

80 INT. RAY'S APARTMENT  
He stares, amazed.

The WOMAN he was found with appears behind him.

WOMAN

I found the Snapple.

81 INT. CYNTHIA'S BEDROOM  
She sees the kiss.

CYNTHIA

Yes! Yes! I win! Scharlach,  
you schmuck! I am the golden  
goddess of television!

She begins beating her chest, one fist at a time while she SCREAMS in triumph.

82 INT. SHARI'S APARTMENT  
Shari and Ed have stopped kissing. They both look stunned.  
Shari is suddenly sober.

SHARI

Oh my God.

She looks at Carlos who has now moved closer to them

SHARI (CONT'D)

Oh my God.

ED

It's... okay

SHARI

I kissed my boyfriend's brother  
on television!

ED

Well, when you put it that way.

SHARI

Leave. Go.

ED

Can't we just --

SHARI

Go!

ED

(exiting)

All right. Okay. I'll ... see  
you.

He and Carlos exit. Going through the door, he gives Carlos a  
little push then quickly steps back inside, slams the door and  
locks it.

83 INT. CONTROL TRUCK

CARLOS (V.O.)

I'm locked out.

DIRECTOR

Stay calm. Shoot the door.  
We're running sound. And we've  
got a camera in the street.

84 EXT. BUILDING

A CAMERA is shooting at a second-story window. We SEE  
SILHOUETTES.

85 INT. SHARI'S APARTMENT

Ed is at the door. Shari is across the room. They stare at  
each other silently. Then they run to each other. They kiss  
again.

86 EXT. BUILDING

We can SEE them KISSING...

87 INT. APARTMENT

Ed and Shari are all over each other. They're breathless.

SHARI

What are we doing?

ED

I've got to tell you something.  
I have had a big thing for you  
for months.

INTERCUT WITH SHOTS OF VIEWERS

They're seeing the door or the silhouette shot, but they're  
hearing every word. They're mesmerized.

SHARI

Really?

ED

Yeah. I mean for months I've  
been seeing you with Ray you  
being his girlfriend and I  
kept wishing you were my  
girlfriend... But, you know, what  
could I do?

SHARI

Me too. I mean I'm going out  
with Ray and I'm... thinking  
about you.

ED

Really?

SHARI

Oh God, this is so weird.

ED

Weird? If this happened last  
month it would've been weird.  
Now with... the TV and... now  
it's just too weird.

They look at each other. They don't know what to do.

ED (CONT'D)

I'd better go.

She nods. He walks to the door.

ED (CONT'D)

Once more?

She nods. They run back to each other and kiss.

88 EXT. BUILDING  
The silhouettes are kissing.

89 INT. RAY'S APARTMENT



Ray staring at the TV.

90 EXT. PRIVATE HOME - LATER  
"DAY SIX"

This is a fairly old, modest private home. Ed pulls up. He and Carlos get out of the car. Ed hurries up to the front door and enters.

91 INT. HOME - CONTINUOUS  
Ed enters. He's a little AGITATED

ANGLE ON AL

ED

Hi, Al.

Al is in his wheelchair and taking periodic hits off an oxygen mask connected to a tank. Al's watching himself on TV.

AL

(excited)

Look. It's me.

He WAVES.

ED

Yeah. I brought you some movies.

AL

Anything good?

They LAUGH.

ED

No, I intentionally picked out a lot of crap 'cause I don't like you.

ED (CONT'D)

Is Mom here? I gotta talk to her.

AL

She's in the kitchen. I'd yell for her, but I'd die.

(sucks more oxygen)

You had a busy night last night.

ED

(calls)

Yeah. Ma...

JEANETTE (O.C.)

Eddie? ...

ED

Yeah?

JEANETTE (O.C.)

Are the TV people with you?

ED

Yeah. The camera guy is here.

JEANETTE (O.C.)

Send him away.

ED

Send him? Ma, I can't.  
it's -- just come out here.  
Please, I --

JEANETTE (O.C.)

No.

ED

Do you want us to come in the  
kitchen?

JEANETTE (O.C.)

No. It's a mess.

ED

Look, Ma, come on out. Really.  
I need to talk to you.

After a pause, Jeanette enters, very camera-conscious.

ED (CONT'D)

(to the camera)

This is my mother.

STIFFLY, he gives her a kiss.

ED (CONT'D)

Ma, do you know where Ray is?  
I've been calling him and I'm  
getting his machine and --

JEANETTE

Eddie, how could you do it? Your  
brother's girlfriend.

ED

Hey, he cheated on her.

JEANETTE

He made a mistake.

ED

I don't want to -- do you know  
where he is?

JEANETTE

No. Maybe he's watching.  
(indicates the camera)  
Tell him you're sorry. Tell him  
you'll stay away from that girl.

ED

No! And that girl has a name.

AL

What do you love her or  
something?

ED

(embarrassed)

Come on...

AL

(teasing)

Look at your face. I had a car  
that color.

VARIOUS REACTIONS OF VIEWERS really liking this.

BACK TO SCENE

JEANETTE

I know you. This Shari is a  
passing fancy.

ED

No! I -- All right,  
look, if you hear from Ray.... tell  
him to call me, okay?

He KISSES her again.

ED (CONT'D)

How's Marcia? She all right?

JEANETTE

I don't know.  
She's living with that  
"entertainer"...

ED

(trying to make his  
mother feel better)

Well, who knows? Maybe she  
finally picked a winner this  
time.

JEANETTE

(unconvinced)

Mm.

ED

You and Al lived together a few  
months before you got married --  
after Dad left.

JEANETTE

(looks at the TV)

Oh my God!

ED

I mean, that worked out.

JEANETTE

Oh my God!!

She gets in the closet and closes the door.

92 INT. OFFICE

ED

(to the camera)

I think we're through here.

The Real TV group is there.

They're smiling. Cynthia is ON the PHONE

CYNTHIA

(into phone)

I will. I'll tell them.

(hangs up)

That was Scharlach. All of you,  
scrub your asses. He's coming  
over to kiss them.

They all WHOOP and LAUGH.

93 INT. SHARI'S APARTMENT - DAY

Shari and Rita are watching Ed leave his parents house on TV.

Rita is very excited. Shari is ON the PHONE.

SHARI

(into phone)

Um, I'd like to get a new phone  
number, please... Because I'm  
getting calls from every nut case  
in America... Right, unlisted...  
Sure.

(she holds)

RITA

Aren't you excited? He said he  
loved you on television!

SHARI

He didn't say it. His stepfather  
said it.

RITA

(joking)

Well, the stepfather's cute...  
Seriously, how do you feel about  
Ed?

Pause.

SHARI

I think he's great. He just  
makes me feel... oh, I'm really  
gonna get hurt, this time - Hello ...

CUTS OF VARIOUS VIEWERS WATCHING REAL TV

End on TAD and BARRY in a health club. This is the refreshment area. They've played racquetball and they're sweaty. They're watching Real TV.

TAD

I'll tell you something else.  
The old guy in the wheelchair?  
The stepfather? They're gonna  
have him die.

BARRY

What do you mean "they're gonna  
have him die?"

TAD

You know, for a tearjerker. The  
audience falls in love with this  
loveable old geezer in a  
wheelchair and then he dies,  
it's ... They know what they're  
doing.

BARRY

This is real, Bananahead!

TAD

So?

BARRY

So if it's a show and they have  
a guy die that's writing, but if  
it's real and they have a guy die  
that's murder.

94 EXT. VIDEO STORE - DAY  
Ed arrives for work.

People CALL OUT to him-- PEDESTRIANS, PEOPLE FROM CARS, TRUCK  
DRIVERS. "Hey Ed, my man." Ed waves. People shake his hand.  
A teenage boy looks into the camera, making a funny face.  
Someone else looks into the camera and says, "Hi, Ma."

Suddenly, Ray is there with a WOMAN. Ray is not happy. He's  
wearing DARK GLASSES and a HAT.

RAY

Hi.

Ed stops.

ED

... Ray?

RAY

Yeah.

ED

Oh, man, I've been trying to call  
you.

RAY

I know.

ED

Look, we gotta talk.

RAY

Save it.

A GUY in a car appears and points at Ray.

GUY

Hey, you're that French guy on TV.

RAY

French guy?

GUY

Monsieur Bad-a-lay.

The guy drives away. Ray is steaming.

RAY

Let me just do what I came here  
to do.

Ed thinks he means to fight. Ed tries to calm him.

ED

What are we gonna fight? Ray,  
please, listen to me --

RAY

(beckoning)

Cassie...

CASSIE, a woman about Ray's age, steps forward. She's slightly  
self-conscious.

RAY (CONT'D)

Go ahead.

Ray points Cassie to the camera.

CASSIE

This is really hard.

RAY

You promised me.

CASSIE

(to the camera)

I went out with Ray a few years  
ago for... a couple of months.  
And we... were intimate. And.  
he's really not as bad as that  
girl said he was.

Ray nods.

CASSIE (CONT'D)  
I mean, I've definitely had  
worse.

RAY  
That's enough.

Ed is amazed that Ray would do this.

RAY (CONT'D)  
(to Ed)  
Good-bye, brother!

ED  
Ray, come an--

Ray leaves, still angry.

Cassie lingers.

CASSIE  
(flirting slightly)  
So you're Ed.

Ray returns and yanks Cassie away with him. Ed still hasn't  
recovered from the bizarreness he just witnessed. Two girls  
YELL in unison from across the street.

GIRLS  
Ed... we love you!

95 INT. REAL TV OFFICE - NIGHT  
Cynthia and her staff, around a conference call box.

CYNTHIA  
We're not going to be able to  
come over there for anymore  
midnight meetings. People are  
starting to watch your building.  
The interest level in you is  
soaring.

INTERCUT WITH:

95A INT. ED'S BEDROOM.  
Ed's OFF-CAMERA

ED  
Soaring is good, right? I mean,  
that means you're not gonna  
cancel me, right?

KEITH  
(sotto)  
Man, he wants that balloon  
payment.

ED (V.O.)  
Huh?

TERRY

Ed, why didn't you go over to see Shari today? That's what all our viewers were hoping you'd do.

ED

Isn't she great? I mean, maybe just to me, but... I don't know, she's just --

TERRY

(impatiently)

She's great, she's great. Why didn't you go see her?

ED

I wanted to! I was dying to! But...

GREG

Is it Ray?

(pulls out research)

The audience hates Ray. Females, 18 to 35 --

ED

No, I don't need to hear that. Cynthia?

CYNTHIA

Yes, Ed.

ED

Could we just talk alone for a second? I --

CYNTHIA

Good idea.

(to her staff)

Could you all leave us alone for a few minutes?

She PANTOMIMES for them to stay in the room, but be quiet. The staff scrape chair legs and feign movement and ad lib "Bye Ed", "See you, buddy" etc. They all stay.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

How you doing, Ed?

ED

I feel like when I was a kid and my mother sent me to school in orange corduroy pants.

CYNTHIA

(no clue)

Uh-huh?

ED

And all the kids stared calling me "Pumpkin Ass." "Hey Pumpkin Ass," -- for like a year. So,



now, I feel like everyone's  
watching me and, you know, I'm  
"Pumpkin Ass" again.

The staff are stifling giggles.

CYNTHIA  
Can I tell you something? I  
think you are fantastic. I think  
you have taken an idea and turned  
it into something explosive.

The staff stifle laughter. One of the guys is doing a jerk-off  
gesture. Cynthia gives them the finger.

ED  
Yeah?

CYNTHIA  
Can I give you one bit of advice?  
About Shari?

ED  
Sure.

CYNTHIA  
A woman wants to be pursued.

96 EXT. SUBURBAN HOME - DAY  
Shari, in her Fed-ex uniform is making a delivery. A WOMAN's  
signing for it.

WOMAN  
This is so exciting! A real  
celebrity delivering my figs.

SHARI  
(uncomfortable)  
Sign here, please.

WOMAN  
That Ray was a pig. Ed is  
doll. You latch on to him  
honey.

SHARI  
By the X.

WOMAN  
Some more make-up wouldn't do you  
any harm. On TV you look a  
little washed out.

SHARI  
What would I actually have to do  
to get you to sign this?

WOMAN  
(insulted)  
Oh, an TV a minute and already an

attitude.

SHARI

(annoyed)

By the X. That's were two lines  
cross -- forming an X.

ANGRILY, the Woman signs and slams the door.

She heads back to her truck. She looks up and Ed is there with  
flowers. The TV cameras are there also. Shari is startled.  
But she's also glad to see him.

SHARI

What are you doing?

ED

I missed you.

She's camera-shy.

ED (CONT'D)

You know, I never saw you in your  
uniform before.

SHARI

Yeah, well...

They both LAUGH.

ED

It's really a tremendous turnoff.

SHARI

You should see the one we wear  
when it rains.

ED

Sunday night at the Devils game,  
I'm driving the Zamboni.

SHARI

The what?

ED

You know, the big machine that  
cleans the ice.

SHARI

Oh yeah.

ED

It's quite an honor. Will you  
come with me?

She looks at the camera.

ED (CONT'D)

(gently)

Look, I know this is weird.  
But... I don't want to wait. I

really think we might have  
something together. Don't you?

EMBARRASSED, she nods.

ED (CONT'D)  
Come on. Be my zamboni date.

She doesn't say "no."

They KISS -- a little hesitantly, not passionately, but affectionately. She's still self-conscious, but she's going with the flow.

97 INT. CYNTHIA'S OFFICE  
They're watching. They CHEER and high-five each other.

98 INT. SHORT MONTAGE  
Ed and Shari dating. She's shy, but she really likes Ed. He likes her and is very sweet to her.

1) Ed and Shari some place like "Tavern on the Green." She looks pretty. He's very happy.

2) They come out of a club. TOURISTS photograph them. Shari is a little disconcerted. Ed takes out a little camera of his own and photographs the tourists. This makes Shari laugh and relaxes her.

3) HOCKEY ARENA

CLOSE-UP of Ed, driving the Zamboni. He's loving it. He WAVES to Shari.

SHARI IN THE STANDS, watching. She waves and smiles.

The ice, a WIDER SHOT.

The Zamboni is, basically out of control. Carlos is sliding along the ice, shooting Ed as the Zamboni zig-zags dangerously, eventually crashing into the boards, shattering the Plexiglas.

99 INT. LOCAL ROCK CLUB - NIGHT  
It's very CROWDED. Claustrophobic. Loud. Ed and Shari enter just to see the show. They're spotted.

The Crowd, which is already fired up by the music, sees them. It starts out okay, people crowding around, patting Ed on the back.

A CHANT begins "Ed, Ed, Ed..." Pretty soon it drowns out the music.

More people press towards Ed. It's too crowded -- dangerous. Shari is swept away from Ed. She's buffeted about, violently. She goes down. Ed can't move. The Crowd is friendly and happy, but the effect is scary.

100 EXT. ROCK CLUB - A FEW MINUTES LATER  
BOUNCERS squeeze Ed and Shari out the door, protecting them.  
Ed is unnerved. Shari is somewhat bedraggled. Her clothing is torn.

101 INT. ED'S KITCHEN - DAY  
Ed is ON the PHONE.

INTERCUT WITH:

CYNTHIA'S OFFICE

Yeah?!

ED

They tore her dress! ...

CYNTHIA

We're going to get you a  
bodyguard, don't worry. Ed, I  
have some news for you. We're  
picking up Ed TV for another  
month!

ED

(excited)

Yeah?!

CYNTHIA

That means a balloon payment and  
a big raise for the second month.

ED

Stand back -- I'm about to do my  
Happy Dance.

He does.

102 INT. RESTAURANT  
Ed and Shari are EATING. So is a HUGE MAN sitting between  
them. His name is MOE.

103 INT. ROLLER RINK  
Ed and Shari are SKATING. Up ahead of them, Moe, (on skates)  
is plowing into people, knocking them over.

104 INT. PIZZA JOINT - NIGHT  
Ed and Shari get up to leave. They look at each other, very  
affectionately. They want to kiss. The cameras are close.

Ed is wearing a jacket. He spreads it out wide to block  
Shari's face from the cameras. He leans in and they KISS on  
the lips, several times, while Ed's jacket screens off the  
cameras. They're in love.

105 INT. TV NEWS SHOW- THREE WEEKS LATER

Written on the screen -- "Day 26."

It's the same news team we met earlier.

ANCHOR

Well, we've had pet rocks, hula hoops, Davy Crockett, Beatle wigs, and leisure suits. But America's latest craze is a guy named Ed. Here with that story is entertainment reporter, Rick Douglas.

ENTERTAINMENT REPORTER

Pat, four weeks ago, no one in America had even heard of Ed Pekurny. Today, this thirty-one year-old video store clerk has become something of a national obsession. The words viewers use to describe him are "charming," "natural," and "appealing." And ratings indicate that "Ed TV" is being watched by more people, each day, than any show in the history of cable television.

CUT TO:

A SHOT of Scharlach being interviewed. A CAPTION identifies him.

SCHARLACH

This idea just came to me. I told my staff -- if people just tune in twice a day for five minutes we're a hit. Sometimes you gotta go with your gut feeling.

CUT TO:

106 INT. CYNTHIA'S OFFICE  
She's watching. She's ANGRY.

CYNTHIA

Sure it came to you! Because I brought it to you!  
(raises her fist)  
You want a gut feeling?! How about a groin feeling?!  
(raises her foot)

BACK TO NEWS REPORT

ENTERTAINMENT REPORTER

Ed TV has become so popular that when Ed goes to sleep Real TV is running highlights of Ed's day all night. Some viewers have become obsessed with Ed. They wake up when Ed wakes up, they go

to sleep when Ed goes to sleep,  
and in between they try to watch  
as much of him as possible.

A SERIES OF MAN-IN-THE-STREET INTERVIEWS.

WOMAN #1

(casually)

Yeah, I watch it... More than I'd  
like to admit sometimes.

MAN

(about fifty)

Never... no...

YOUNGER MAN

Honestly? ... I try not to go to  
the bathroom until Ed goes to the  
bathroom so I won't miss  
anything.

A GUY in an ice cream store.

ICE CREAM GUY

Watch this! Like Ed.

He slices a banana the way Ed does.

WOMAN #2

I just kind of leave it an, you  
know, so it's... there.

THREE TEEN-AGE GIRLS

TEEN-AGER #1

I don't like Shari. She's ...  
needy.

TEEN-AGER #2

I like her. She's sweet.

TEEN-AGER #1

She just rubs me the wrong way.

TEEN-AGER #3

I'm so glad they got rid of Ray.  
He was creepy.

CUT TO:

YOUNG GUYS

GUY #1

To me, this Shari is like  
nothing.

GUY #2

She's not even hot. I mean Ed's  
a celebrity. If that was me, I'd  
be dating the goods.

GUY #1  
There's something wrong with her.  
She's definitely not hot.

GUY #2  
Not hot. Not.

107 INT. SHARI'S APARTMENT  
She's watching this, wearing a bathrobe.  
Her self-esteem is being crushed.

108 INT. TV STUDIO  
This is an "E TV" kind of gossip show. The host -- a YOUNG  
WOMAN -- is showing film of Ed and Shari getting out of Ed's  
car. The film freeze-frames. Shari has an  
unflattering look on her face.

GOSSIP QUEEN  
What's wrong with her! Everytime  
you look at this chick, it's like  
she badly needs a Tampax. Ed, you  
can do better.

Shari watching, in horror.

109 INT. DELICATESSAN - NIGHT  
Ed and Shari are on a date. A WAITRESS is taking their order.  
Shari still seems a little self-conscious, but Ed is having a  
ball.

ED  
I'll have...  
(to Shari)  
Get this --  
(to the waitress)  
I'll have the "Ed."

SHARI  
I'm stunned.

A WOMAN with her young SON approach.

WOMAN  
Mr. Pekurny. I'm sorry to bother  
you. My son would just love to  
have your autograph.

ED  
No problema.  
(to the boy)  
You want a picture?

The boy nods.

ED (CONT'D)  
Moe.

MOE, the Bodyguard, in the next booth hands Ed a glossy of Ed

and a pen. Ed signs it.

ED (CONT'D)

Take this around the corner to  
Frame World, they'll give you a  
discount.

The Woman and Child leave.

ED (CONT'D)

(to Shari)

Oh -- Sunday is good for me to  
meet your folks. We get a big  
family audience on Sundays so it  
works out.

SHARI

(ironic)

That's lucky.

ED

Saturday, I think we should

A PHONE RINGS

Ed takes a phone out of his pocket.

ED (CONT'D)

(plugging)

Compliments of Motorola.

Hello... Marcia??

(to Shari)

My sister. -- What? ... What,  
right now? ... I'm eating, I'm on  
a date! ... Well, where's your  
boyfriend -- what's his name?  
Cliff .... Then, call a cab...

(wearily)

All right. Look, just don't  
start any trouble okay. Just sit  
there quietly 'til I get there...  
you're welcome.

He HANGS UP. He's disgusted.

110 INT. CAR - A FEW MINUTES LATER

ED

This used to be a regular thing.  
And the worst part, is while  
she'd be waiting for me to come  
down to some bar and get her,  
she'd start up with some guy and  
say "Wait 'til my brother gets  
here, he'll kick your ass." So  
then I walk in and there's some  
rhinoceros in a windbreaker who  
tries to shove me into a shot  
glass. And Marcia's drunk and  
screaming "Kick his ass, Ed.





For a second, Ed doesn't get it. Then.

ED

Oh! Oh -- okay, now I get it.  
It's "Star Search." You wanted  
me here because the camera comes  
with me.

MARCIA

Ed, he needs a break. You don't  
know what kind of bad luck he's  
had --

ED

I can imagine. You said you  
wanted nothing to do with this.  
You swore to me. "Don't come  
near me. Don't bring this into  
my life..."

MARCIA

For God sakes, you said two words  
about some lousy pizza joint, the  
guy's a millionaire now. This  
could be my whole future we're  
talking about.

(to Shari)

Hi, I'm Ed's sister.

SHARI

(politely)

I've heard so much about you.

112 INT. BAR - LATER

Cliff is in the middle of his show.

He's wearing a PORTABLE ORGAN. He's not great. He's a smalltime  
professional with a lot of pep. Marcia is beaming. Ed's  
cameras are shooting him.

CUTS OF Cliff, singing every type of song, imaginable. This  
guy is desperately trying to cover all the bases -- i.e.  
Sinatra-type standards, something from "Lion King", "Do Ya'  
Think I'm Sexy," "Smokin' in the Boy's Room," "Hey, Hey, We're  
the Monkees," the theme from "Hawaii Five-0," a rap number, and  
"Ave Maria."

ANGLE ON ED AND SHARI

ED

(sotto)

I wish my stepfather was here.

SHARI

Why?

ED

He could give me some oxygen.

113 INT. SHARI'S APARTMENT - LATER  
Ed and Shari are KISSING.

CUTAWAYS TO VIEWERS

TAD AND BARRY

BARRY  
Oh boy! Here we go!

Ed is passionate.

JEANETTE AND AL

JEANETTE  
(cringing)  
Euuw...

RAY

Fuming.

BACK TO ED AND SHARI

SHARI  
Um...

ED  
What?

She indicates the camera. Ed tries to allay her fears.

ED (CONT'D)  
I told you. If we... you know  
do it, they go away until ...  
we're done.

SHARI  
I know, but even if they go away,  
everybody in America knows what  
we're doing because... they went  
away.

ED  
So? What do they think -- we're  
not kids --

SHARI  
(overlapping)  
I know, I ...

ED  
(overlapping)  
Shari, I really like you...

SHARI  
(overlapping)  
I really like you too...

ED

...if this ...  
    (the camera)  
... weren't here... ?

SHARI  
... yeah, then, but...

CUTAWAYS

ED  
So...?

SHARI  
Ed... I think we should stop  
seeing each other.

The guys who said she wasn't hot.

They applaud.

THE DORM GIRLS

They're booing Shari.

A BAR

A very attractive woman (JILL) and her friend.

JILL  
That girl's an idiot.

BACK TO ED AND SHARI

ED  
What?... Why?

SHARI  
    (starting to weep)  
I can't take it anymore...

GUYS WHO DON'T THINK SHE'S HOT

They mock her, crying "Boo hoo hoo" and pretending to rub their eyes.

BACK TO ED AND SHARI

SHARI  
    (crying)  
I have no privacy. Even now!  
I'm crying and I can't stop and  
they won't go away. And now it's  
going to be another month!

ED  
Shari...

SHARI  
Everybody hates me!

ED

No. Who?

SHARI

Look at this.

She picks up a N.Y. POST.

SHARI (CONT'D)

Page three of the Post.

ED

(knows what it is)

Ohh...

SHARI

A poll. "Is Shari Good Enough  
for Ed?" Seventy-one per cent  
said "no."

(crying)

They hate me!

ED

Who cares? I don't ca -- No. I  
do care.

(to the camera)

Shame on everybody. Shame on  
you! Well, just the seventy-one  
percent. The other...

(he can't do the math)

SHARI

Twenty-nine.

ED

Exactly. Boy, you're smart.

(to the camera)

Why are you so mean to her? What  
did she do to you?

(picks up newspaper)

"Is she good enough for Ed?" Who  
the hell am I?

(sarcastically)

Who the hell do you think I  
should be dating?

SHARI

There's a list.

ED

Really?

(he looks)

SHARI

Ed?

He doesn't hear her. He's scanning the list.

ED

Wow...

114 INT. DAVID LETTERMAN SHOW (OR SOMETHING)  
Ed is a guest.

DAVE  
I'm out here an hour a night and  
I feel like a dork. You're on  
every minute! Doesn't it just  
drive you nuts?

ED  
(cheerfully)  
Yeah.

LAUGHS.

DAVE  
All this fame and the money  
you're making. Is this going to  
change you, do you think?

ED  
God, I hope so.

BIGGER LAUGHS.

115 INT. GREEN ROOM - LATER  
It's after the show. Ed is getting ready to leave. John is  
with him, keeping him company. A. P.A. is giving Ed a bag of  
gifts. (Of course, Ed is still on Ed TV.)

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT  
You've got a ham in there and  
Dave's book and --

ED  
Hey, if it's free, it's me.  
(to John)  
You ready?

JOHN  
Yeah. You did good. What's  
wrong?

ED  
Aah, I wanted Shari to come.

JOHN  
Oh -- so I'm just, what -- a poor  
substitute?

He KISSES John.

ED  
(easily)  
Yeah.  
(to the camera)  
Honey, if you're watching this is  
for you.

JOHN

No! Don't --  
                    (new subject)  
Oh, wow.

ED

What?

ANGLE ON JILL IN THE HALLWAY (We met her earlier in a cutaway.)

She's saying good-bye to a CASTING ASSISTANT.

JOHN

No more calls, we have a  
winner.

Jill looks up, sees Ed and walks right up to him

JILL

Hi.

ED

Hi.

SECURITY steps forward.

ED (CONT'D)

It's all right.

They step back.

JILL

I'm Jill. I really like your  
show. I think you're great.

ED

Thanks... That's ...

Shari, watching this on television.

JILL

You must be John.

JOHN

I'm trying to remember.

JILL

(to Ed)

Well, I don't want to bother you,  
I'm just -- I was here  
auditioning for a skit. You  
know, one of those things where  
Dave goes around town with models  
and whatever...

ED

Oh, yeah, I love those. Yeah...  
those are funny...

JILL

Well, it was really nice meeting  
you and, uh...

(checks her watch)  
I'd better get a cab.

But she doesn't leave.

ED  
Um... They gave me a limo, uh...

JILL  
Oh, great! Thanks. I'm just  
going uptown.

She takes his arm and leads him out.

116 INT. HEALTH CLUB - NEXT DAY  
Written on the screen -- "Day 28"

Two WOMEN on Stairmasters.

WOMAN  
Vll bet he goes out with her.  
It's like those actors -- as soon  
as they get famous -- Pfft -  
there goes the wife.

117 EXT. COLLEGE  
The dorm girls.

118 INT. POKER GAME

COLLEGE GIRL  
He'll never cheat on Shari!

The game includes Tad and Barry.

119 INT. TV STUDIO

BARRY  
You think she really likes him?

TAD  
She doesn't give a shit about  
him.

BARRY  
You know what would be great?

TAD  
What?

BARRY  
If Ray would steal this girl from  
Ed. That would be great.

POKER PLAYER #2  
You know what would be even  
better?



BARRY

What?

POKER PLAYER #2

If you shut your hole and played  
cards. Goddam pineapple  
brothers.

The same eggheads who, earlier, had no interest in Ed. Now  
they're all worked up.

PANEL MEMBER #1

But he's not a normal person  
anymore. He's a celebrity.  
We're no longer observing  
anyone's "real life."

PANEL MEMBER #2

(disagreeing)

But that's what's interesting!  
The effect of celebrity on an  
otherwise average person.

PANEL MEMBER #3

But do you really feel that Ed is  
an average person? I mean this  
guy seems to have a... magnetism,  
a charisma that, I think,  
transcends the entire concept.

PANEL MEMBER #4

I agree. He's special.

They all nod.

120 INT. EWS APARTMENT - DAY  
" DAY 34 "

Ed is opening letters and packages. There are piles of them

ED

This is from a girl named  
Tawny... this goes in the nude  
picture pile. Thank you, Tawny.

He places it in a large pile. He opens another envelope.

ED (CONT'D)

Let's see.

Ed stares and his smile disappears.

ANGLE ON THE MAIL

A picture of Ed's face with his body drawn underneath it. The  
body is spurting blood and is mutilated. Ed stares at it.

ED

Well. This is creative. This  
goes in the psychopath pile.

The DOORBELL RINGS.

ED  
Oh, I hope that's not this guy.  
(indicates psycho  
letter)

He PICKS UP a baseball bat and crosses to the door.

He opens the door. A handsome man in his early sixties is  
there. His name is HANK.

HANK  
Hello.

ED  
Hi.

Ed waits.

HANK  
You don't recognize me.

ED  
No. Am I supposed to?

Hank shrugs. Ed stares at him, then begins to look a little  
shaken.

121 INT. EWS MOTHER'S HOUSE  
Jeanette is putting a jar in the refrigerator. She glances at  
the television. She drops the jar. It SHATTERS...

122 INT. MARCIA'S APARTMENT  
Marcia is with her half-Asian son ANDY. She's serving his  
dinner. OFF-CAMERA we HEAR Cliff SINGING and the DOG HOWLING  
in distress. Glancing at the television, Marcia gasps.

123 INT. RAY'S APARTMENT  
Ray is TYPING on a word processor.  
He stares curiously at the television.

124 INT. ED'S APARTMENT  
Ed is staring at Hank doubtfully.

HANK  
It's me, Hank -- your father.

RAPID CUTS of VIEWERS, excited. Many of them reach for the  
phone.

125 INT. REAL TV OFFICE  
The Real TV staff react. Cynthia looks over-- stunned.

ALICE  
(to Cynthia)  
Did you do this? Did you find  
him and get him to--

CYNTHIA  
No way... Oh, this just keeps  
getting better.

126 INT. AL AND JEANETTE'S HOUSE - DAY  
Written on the screen -- "Day 35"

Ed and his mother are arguing. Al is sucking oxygen and has a  
pile of "People" magazines with Ed on the cover. A REPAIRMAN  
is fixing the refrigerator. All their food is out and melting.

Jeanette is trying to preserve food in an ice chest while she  
argues with Ed.

JEANETTE  
I can't believe you're taking his  
side.

ED  
I'm not! I'm just trying to get  
some facts.

AL  
(to Ed)  
Sign this one to Nancy. She's  
the nurse who handles my urine.

Ed signs.

JEANETTE  
I told you the facts! He  
abandoned us -- those are the  
facts.

ED  
So everything he told me  
yesterday was a lie. Everything.

Al takes a loud breath.

JEANETTE  
Yes! ... practically

ED  
What do you mean practically?  
Did he really run away or did you  
throw him out like he says.

REPAIRMAN  
I need to replace the coil.

JEANETTE  
(to Ed)  
He ran away after I threw him

out.

(to repairman)

How much is a new coil?

REPAIRMAN

A hundred and fifty bucks.

ED

So he was telling the truth  
you threw him out.

REPAIRMAN

Should I go ahead?

JEANETTE

Yes.

ED

Yes to me or yes to the coil?

JEANETTE

Both.

ED

Holy sh--

AL

This one to Dr. Bamajian. Maybe  
he won't make me wait an hour.

Ed signs.

JEANETTE

He had girlfriends!

ED

He says --

JEANETTE

I don't care what he says. Look,  
I don't need to relive this. On  
television!

AL

Whatever happened to Norman  
Rockwell?

ED

Who?

AL

Norman Rockwell. He painted  
magazine covers. Folksy. A  
mailman, a boy scout, a kid  
visiting a doctor...

ED

Yeah, so... ?

AL

They celebrated the common

person.

ED

Well, I don't think you can get more common than me, Al.

AL

No. Only celebrities now. Now, if you put a mailman on the cover of a magazine he'd better have killed someone or no one will buy it. This one to Dr. Rumpley.

Jeanette storms back in.

JEANETTE

All right -- do you want to know the truth? I took you and Marcia and Ray to my sister's on the train for the weekend and you all got chicken pox. So I took you home a day early and there was your father with a woman in our bed. Okay?

ED

Chicken pox? I was six. He didn't leave 'til I was twelve.

JEANETTE

He... apologized, he begged me. He can be very... charming when it suits his purpose.

ED

But what was that whole story about him and a nurse?

JEANETTE

She could've been a nurse.

ED

Could've been a nurse?

JEANETTE

She had white shoes.

ED

So does Grandma. So does Shaquille O'Neal. You told me you had a hysterectomy and he ran off with your nurse.

JEANETTE

What's the difference?

ED

The difference is for twenty years I thought one thing and now it's another thing.

Ed nods.

JEANETTE

He was no good. Do you remember  
how he used to scream at me? You  
used to cover your ears with  
dinner rolls.

JEANETTE (CONT'D)

Also, no job was ever good enough  
for him. "Small potatoes, small  
potatoes." Al, you remember --

Al breathes loudly.

ED

Wait a minute. I thought you  
didn't know Al, 'til after Dad  
left.

Pause. Even the repairman pokes his head out of the  
refrigerator.

ED (CONT' D)

Oh my God. You and Al were -  
and that's why you threw him out.

JEANETTE

He had a woman in my own bed!  
And how dare you call him "Dad"  
in front of Al.

(shakes Al by the  
shoulder)

This is your father. This is who  
was there for you when you needed  
someone.

AL

Jeanette, you're hurting me.

ED

(on the defensive)

I'm not -- I didn't -- Al, you  
know how I feel about you...

Al breathes loudly.

ED (CONT'D)

(uncomfortably)

If I don't call you "Dad" it'  
just because...

I was already a big boy when you  
came into our lives --

(pointedly to his  
mother)

or when I thought you came into  
our lives --

JEANETTE

And what did he come back now  
for?

ED

Who?

JEANETTE

Hank! All of a sudden. Because now you're famous and he can get something from you. I don't want you to become a victim like Marcia.

(to the TV)

Not that you're a victim, honey. You're not. Life's just been a little hard on you, sweetie.

ED

(to Al)

What do you think. I mean about... him. Should I just... have nothing to do with him? I mean...

AL

(to Ed)

Have I ever said a bad word to you about your father?

ED

No.

AL

Well, now I will. He was a crazy mean, son-of-a-bitch.

Al starts to wheel himself out. Ed looks weary.

AL (CONT'D)

But he was your father.

127 INT. ED'S BEDROOM - NIGHT  
He's asleep.

128 INT. CONTROL TRUCK  
They're monitoring him. They see Ed WAKE UP. They stir. Sleepy, and scratching his ass, he goes into the bathroom.

129 INT. BATHROOM  
Ed shuts the door. He takes his PORTABLE PHONE OUT of a bathroom drawer. (He stashed it there.) He makes a call and waits.

ED

(whispering)

Hi... it's me, Ed. It's been two days, I want to see you... No, I won't let them follow me, I'll sneak out... No it's not allowed, but I'm going for it... I'm on my

way.

He takes CLOTHING OUT of the bathroom hamper.  
until he finds something acceptable.

130 INT. CONTROL TRUCK  
They're monitoring the empty bed.

131 INT. BATHROOM  
Ed is dressed. He CLIMBS OUT his bathroom window.

132 INT. SHARI'S APARTMENT - LATER  
Shari opens her front door.

ED

Hi.

She looks down the hallway.

ED (CONT'D)

They're not here.

He goes in, grabs her and kisses her passionately.

SHARI

I tried to tell you over the  
phone -- my parents went to  
Atlantic City.

ED

So?

SHARI

So my little brother's staying  
here. I'm sleeping with Rita.

ED

Oh Je -- couldn't he sleep with  
Rita? We'll all have a good  
time.

SHARI

I'm sorry.

ED

Come on, let's go.

SHARI

Where?

ED

Somewhere.

133 INT. ED'S CAR - A FEW MINUTES LATER  
They get in. They look at each other.

ED



Do you want to go to a motel?

SHARI

I feel like a criminal or, like  
we're cheating on someone.

ED

(nicely)

Just... just relax. Okay? We  
won't do anything. We'll just  
sit here for a while.

SHARI

Okay.

ED

Come on...

Gently he puts his arm around her. At first, she hesitates,  
but then curls up against him and relaxes.

ED (CONT'D)

I need to talk.

SHARI

Are you all right?

ED

She lied to me. I mean all my  
life, she's telling me one story  
and then... it turns out to be a  
completely different story. Come  
to me at some point -- tell me  
the truth. No. Not in my house.  
The truth is a stranger. And  
this is why Ray and Marcia are  
the way they are. Marcia gets  
involved with all these losers  
and sees no problem with herself -  
"How do they find me" she says.  
Ray cheats on you and then blames  
me for it. I'm the only one in  
the family who takes any  
responsibility for himself... Oh,  
man... Are you all right?

SHARI

(hesitantly)

Yeah... I saw that girl come on  
to you at the TV show.

ED

Oh that was... no, I ... she just  
kind of trapped me into giving  
her a ride. It's you. I want  
you.

SHARI

...yeah?

He TOUCHES her. They KISS. Then again. Their hands are

roaming. They're hot. They're breathing hard. He's unbuttoning her blouse. Their hands are all over each other. Her blouse comes off. LIGHTS GO ON. They see cameras, shooting at them. Shari SCREAMS and covers her breasts.

134 INT. TV - DAY

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Good morning. Welcome to another day of Ed TV. Last night, while most of us were asleep ... this happened.

135 INT. FRAT HOUSE - MORNING

FOUR GUYS in a disgustingly messy room, watching the replay of Ed and Shari.

FRAT GUYS

Yes!!

They GYRATE LEWDLY.

136 EXT. STREET - DAY

Shari is working. Ed is following her around. Shari is ANGRY. The cameras are there.

SHARI

Get them away from me.

She takes PACKAGES OUT OF the TRUCK and THROWS them at the cameramen.

ED

It's not their fault.

SHARI

No. It's your fault.

She throws a package at him.

ED

What do you want me to do? You want me to quit the show?!

SHARI

No... Could you?

ED

No. If I quit I don't get the balloon payment.

SHARI

The what?

ED

Ray borrowed this whole tub of money against this balloon payment that I don't get if I qu --

it's too complicated. I -- Besides...

SHARI

What?

Pause.

ED

You see how people look at me.  
Like when they ask for my  
autograph or say "Hi" to me...  
It's like I'm a basketball player  
or a... you know, like I'm  
someone.

SHARI

Everybody's someone.

ED

Well, yeah, everybody's someone.  
But I mean someone they want to  
be. I mean let's face it, I'm  
working in the video store, no  
one's coming in saying "oh, I  
wish I was that guy. I wish  
was rewinding that huge pile of  
tapes." At least for a month  
I'm not just a guy with a name  
tag. I'm famous.

A GUY YELLS from across the street.

GUY

Shari! Nice nipples.

ED

And so are you.

GUYs keep YELLING "Shari!"

She tries to go after them. Ed holds her back.

SHARI

I don't want to be famous for  
getting caught with my shirt off.  
If I'm going to be famous --

The camera is right in her face. She grabs it.

SHARI (CONT'D)

(to the camera person)

This is going right up your ass.

ED

Come on.

He returns the camera.

Shari starts for her truck.

SHARI

Look... maybe we just better put  
us on hold until this is over.

She gets in her truck.

ED  
Come on! Loosen up.  
(trying to joke)  
See -- this is why seventy-one  
per cent of the people don't like  
you.

She SLAMS the TRUCK DOOR.

ED (CONT'D)  
It was a joke! A... vicious,  
thoughtless stupid joke.

He bangs himself in the head.

She drives away.

He BOWS.

ED (CONT'D)  
(to the camera)  
And that, for you kids out there,  
is how you screw up a relationship.

137 INT. ED'S APARTMENT  
Ed enters. He's worn out. He plops down, and puts on the TV.

ED  
(to the camera)  
I'm gonna watch anything but me.

Ed is flipping stations. Something makes him stop.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)  
Coming in two weeks to the  
Lifestyle Channel -- Joma. His  
Dad's a cop, his brother's a  
bouncer in a topless bar, his  
sister is a black-belt social  
worker -- and Joma's living with  
two gals.

ANGLE ON THE TV

We see JOMA. He has a lot of charisma. He seems a little  
dangerous, but in an exciting way.

JOMA  
Hey, Ed! I'm coming to get you,  
man! I'm gonna eat you right up!  
(makes gobbling-up  
noises)

ANGLE ON ED

Watching. He's stunned.

138 INT. NETWORK CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY  
They're watching a tape of Ed TV. Ed has just entered his own apartment. A WOMAN is there, sitting on his sofa. She's caressing Ed's undershorts against her cheek. Ed is highly agitated.

ED  
How did you get into my  
apartment?!

The BODYGUARD is pulling her out.

REVEAL that Scharlach, McIlvaine, Seaver, Cynthia and Greg are all watching.

McILVAINE  
What is she holding?

GREG  
(calmly)  
A pair of Ed's underwear.

McILVAINE  
Oh my God!

ON the TAPE, the woman while being forcibly evicted, offers the underwear to Ed. Ed recoils.

ED  
No -- keep it.

WOMAN  
I love you! I want to marry you!

She's hauled out. They stop the tape.

SCHARLACH  
See -- that's television! This  
other thing, this Jama, that has  
"stink" written all over it.

GREG  
The break-up with Shari was very  
big. Big ratings.

SEAVER  
Only, Cynthia, seriously. Tell  
Ed not to sneak out anymore.

SCHARLACH  
Cynthia ...

He wants it accomplished.

139 EXT. STREET - DAY

SEAVER (CONT'D)

It's in violation of his contract  
and if we wanted to be hard-nosed  
about it, he could forfeit all  
pay, including money he's already  
received.

CYNTHIA  
(dutifully, but a tad  
resentfully)  
I will see that he's properly  
threatened.

SCHARLACH  
Now what? What's on the young  
man's agenda? We don't want to  
see him sitting around like a  
lovesick puppy.

GREG  
Young males do not want to see Ed  
get back with Shari.

SCHARLACH  
(impatiently)  
Enough with her. That sailed.

McILVAINE  
Could Ed live with two girls?

GREG  
You know who the audience is  
requesting a lot? That girl,  
Jill, that Ed met at the  
Letterman show. She really  
scored.

SCHARLACH  
Cynthia...

He wants it accomplished.

139 EXT. STREET - DAY  
Ed is walking from his car to a building. CROWDS are behind  
barricades. They YELL at Ed as he passes. Ed is used to this.

140 INT. SHARI'S BUILDING - DAY  
Rita OPENS the door and sees Ed.

RITA  
(nervously)  
Oh. Ed.

ED  
Hi. Is Shari here?

RITA  
No.

ED

What is she, at work?

RITA

She left.

ED

Well, when will she be back?

RITA

She won't.

ED

What are you talking about?

RITA

She left. She moved. She got Fed-Ex to give her a transfer and she left. She couldn't stand it anymore. We had people, news people, regular people, just sleeping in our hallway, going through our mail, our garbage. I mean it was she couldn't take it anymore. Now I've got to move. I can't afford this place by myself.

ED

I'm sorry. Where'd they send her?

RITA

She wouldn't tell me.

141 INT. ED'S BEDROOM - NIGHT  
He's off the air. He's a little down. He's ON the PHONE-

INTERCUT WITH:

142 INT. CYNTHIA'S BEDROOM  
She's working out an a contraption.

ED

Remember when you were  
interviewing me?  
(details to follow)

143 EXT. PARK - DAY

CYNTHIA

Yeah.

ED

You asked me if I had a dream.  
I said "Sure, I have a dream. I  
just don't know what it is yet."

CYNTHIA

Great line.

ED

What if Shari's the dream?

CYNTHIA

Ed, do you want my advice?

ED

Yeah, that's why I called. I mean, maybe Fed-Ex would tell me where she moved --

CYNTHIA

Leave her be.

ED

You said a woman likes to be pursued.

CYNTHIA

Pursued, not harassed. Give it some space. Can I tell you something -- as a friend? My sister was going with a guy they hit a little rough spot they started seeing other people they got back together and last month they had their third child For what it's worth.

OPEN ON ANDY, Ed's half-Asian nephew. He's eight. He's wearing a baseball glove.

ANDY

Throw me a high one, Uncle Eddie.

ED (O.C.)

Okay.

REVEAL ED, also wearing a baseball glove. He throws a high pop up to Andy. Andy staggers around and almost catches it.

ED

Oh!!

JILL (O.C.)

We have to stop meeting like this.

ED

Hm?

REVEAL JILL, walking a DOG. it takes just a second to recognize her.

ED (CONT'D)

Oh, hi.

Ed is hit with the ball.



ANDY

Sorry.

REVEAL the Real TV Staff watching this on television in their office. As Ed and Jill chat in the background.

ALICE

(to Cynthia)

Did you arrange this?

CYNTHIA

(points to the TV)

Whose dog is that?

ALICE

(surprised)

That's your dog.

Cynthia doesn't even smile.

MONTAGE

INTERSPERSED IN THE MONTAGE ARE SHOTS OF PEOPLE  
WATCHING THEM ON TV

1. Ed and Jill going into a chic club -- ushered in immediately. Here, as in the other times we see her, Jill is comfortable with the situation. She's the opposite of Shari. She poses willingly. She chats easily with paparazzi. She clings to Ed. There's nothing overt or obnoxious about her. She's just comfortable and good at it and always looks great.

2. INTERVIEW with the guys who didn't like Shari.

GUY #1

Way to go, Ed!

GUY # 2

Now, we're talking!

3. A N.Y. Post story:

"Readers Pick Jill over Shari."

Pictures of both women. Jill looks great. Shari is in her uniform and looks like a mouse.

4. SHARI

In a new apartment. Watching Ed and Jill on TV. She's very unhappy. She turns it off.

5. Ed and Jill at the nice restaurant he was at with Shari earlier. It looks like he's starting to like her.

6. Ed is refereeing a pro-wrestling match. He counts out the villain who, then, jumps up and chases him out of the ring.

Ed and Jill are in a HEAVY LIPLOCK. Carlos is right there with the camera. Unlike Shari, Jill seems unself-conscious. She's getting Ed pretty turned-on.

SHOTS of VIEWERS, also turned on, especially the men.

JILL

You want to?

It's clear what she means. Ed is conflicted. He's clearly aroused.

ED

Um... It's kind of ...

He looks for his watch on the wrong wrist, then seems to check all around his body until he discovers it.

JILL

Are you busy tomorrow night?

ED

No.

JILL

Why don't you come over. And I'll make dinner. And you bring a movie. And ... We'll make a night of it ... okay?

ED

(nervously)

Sure.

145 EXT. STREET - DAY

Written on the screen -- "Day 48"

Ed is walking, the camera following. He looks tense. People SHOUT "Hey, Ed" "Ed-die" etc.

ANGLE ON A NEWSPAPER VENDING MACHINE

The New York Post front page -- "Is tonight the Night?" with a picture of Ed and Jill kissing.

ANGLE ON ED

ED

Oh man...

CON ED GUY

Hey, Eddie.

Ed looks up.

CON ED GUY (CONT'D)

(giving the "thumbs  
up")

Go for it!

Ed continues down the street. People YELL to him "Good luck tonight," "We're rooting for you" etc.

A STREET CHARACTER walks alongside for a minute.

STREET CHARACTER  
Hey, man. This is Haitian Love Juice.  
(he produces a vial)  
You give her this, she be yours.

Security grabs him and the vial falls and breaks. The liquid hits the pavement and smokes up.

ED  
(looking at the smoke)  
Jesus!

More shouts "Be gentle", "We'll be watching", "Use a condom" etc.

A SCHOOL BUS passes. The KIDS YELL out the window to Ed.

KIDS  
(in unison)  
Good luck!

- 146 EXT. MOVIE THEATRE - NIGHT  
There is no line. At TICKET TAKER sits, bored. No one is going in or coming out.
- 147 EXT. STREET  
It's deserted.
- 148 EXT. RESTAURANT  
It's empty. The HEADWAITER stands in the doorway with nothing to do.
- 149 INT. LIVING ROOM  
A PARTY is in progress. The TV is on. On TV Ed is in a liquor store, buying a bottle of wine. Ed is dressed for his date. The people at the party are watching TV and commenting. It's like a Super bowl party.
- VOICE (O.C.)  
What's he doing?
- PARTYGOER  
He's buying wine!
- 150 INT. BEDROOM  
Several high-school age BOYS. They have made themselves look like Ed. They're very excited.
- TEEN-AGE BOY #1  
You think he's gonna do it?

TEEN-AGE BOY #2  
Hell yeah. The guy hasn't had  
any sex in six weeks.

TEEN-AGE BOY #3  
Neither have we.

151 EXT. STREET  
Ed's car turns the corner and he sees a CROWD gathered around Jill's building.

152 EXT. BUILDING

ED  
(understating)  
I'm starting to feel a little  
pressure.

Ed carrying his wine enters to APPLAUSE and CHEERS.

153 EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET  
A LONG SHOT encompasses all the houses on the block. Their living room TV's are visible. All but one are tuned to Ed.

154 INT. JILL'S KITCHEN  
Something is cooking. Jill picks up a plate of something - dip and cut vegetables for instance. She starts to exit the kitchen as Ed and Carlos enter. Ed and Jill have a soft collision.

JILL  
Oh.

ED  
Can I help with anything?

JILL  
No. It's going to be about a  
half-hour.

ED  
What is? Oh, dinner!

SELF-CONSCIOUSLY. He takes a vegetable, dips it and eats it.

ED (CONT'D)  
Mm.

JILL  
Good?

ED  
Mm.

They look at each other. Jill leans forward and kisses him. She puts the tray of vegetables on the counter. They continue to kiss.

155 INT. BEDROOM  
The high school boys are CHANTING.

156 INT. DORM ROOM

BOYS  
Ed -- Ed -- Ed -- Ed...

COLLEGE GIRLS (same ones as before).

COLLEGE GIRL #1  
Oh, I hope she makes love to him!

COLLEGE GIRL #2  
I thought you didn't like her.

COLLEGE GIRL #1  
I don't, but I want him to be  
happy-

RAPID SHOTS of other VIEWERS, watching, transfixed --

157 INT. JILL'S APARTMENT  
Ed and Jill are making out. They begin taking each other's clothes off. They're passing the point of no return. It's going to happen right there in the kitchen.

Ed and Jill, in heavy heat, back up to the kitchen table and climb on to it. They continue to pull at their own and each, other's clothing. They're making passionate noises.

158 INT. SHARI'S APARTMENT  
Shari is not watching television. She's eating a little meal she's made for herself. She HEARS PEOPLE in her building cheering and whooping. She looks miserable.

159 INT. CONTROL TRUCK

DIRECTOR  
(slightly panicky)  
Someone say the word, how far can  
we go here?

160 INT. REAL TV OFFICE  
Cynthia and her staff are watching. Cynthia is ON THE PHONE-

CYNTHIA (into phone)  
Stay with them ... don't leave  
yet... not yet ...

Jill is on top of Ed. Carried away with passion, Ed attempts to roll her over and get on top. He does, but rolls too far. He crashes off the table, to the floor, face up.

ED  
(in pain)  
Ohhh...

JILL  
Ed?

ED  
Ohh... do you own a cat?

JILL  
Yeah. Why?

He looks at her apologetically.

161 EXT. JILL'S BUILDING  
Ed is being loaded into an AMBULANCE. He looks humiliated.  
PEOPLE in the street are applauding politely as if Ed were an  
injured ballplayer being carried off the field. Jill is by the  
ambulance. She's PETTING a CAT who looks all right.  
PHOTOGRAPHERS are taking her picture. She's posing willingly.  
The ambulance drives off as Jill continues to pose.

162 INT. TV STUDIO  
Written on the screen -- "Day 49"

The taping of "The Tonight Show" or "the Late Show" -- once  
again, whichever we have a prayer of getting. The MONOLOGUE is  
in progress.

JAY (OR DAVE)  
(mock annoyed)  
So I guess you were all watching  
Ed last night.

The AUDIENCE goes wild.

JAY (CONT'D)  
This got the highest rating of  
the year, since the Super Bowl.  
I guess that makes sense. After  
all, Ed is now the Buffalo Bills  
of sex.

BIG LAUGHS

163 INT. RESTAURANT - DAY  
Scharlach EATING. He's stunned.

SCHARLACH  
What?!

REVEAL CYNTHIA

CYNTHIA  
Take him off the air.

SCHARLACH

What are you talking about? He's fine. He's out of the hospital already. The ratings are higher than ever.

CYNTHIA

I'm telling you, it's peaked. Ed TV is an over-inflated balloon. Get it off before it explodes all over us.

He thinks.

SCHARLACH

With all due respect, Cynthia you're nuts. I'm giving him another month!

CYNTHIA

(coldly)

Good luck.

164 EXT. STREET - DAY  
"DAY 54"

Ed is walking. He's wearing a white, Velcro support around his waist. He's agitated. He's carrying a copy of the New York Post.

ED

Look at this!

WE SEE a headline -- "Ed: She Broke My heart."

ED

She did not!

(venting)

You know what she did?

ED (CONT'D)

She went out to California and got one of those scandal agents. One of those agents who handle, like... Gennifer Flowers and... Kato Kaelin and Joey Buttafuoco. That's what she --

A GUY YELLS AT ED

GUY

Hey Ed! ... She was a little too much for you, huh? Must run in the family.

ED

(angry)

Oh -- like this guy's ever been with a woman.

(yells)

How about I kick your ass 'til

the crack goes the other way?  
(to the camera)  
All of a sudden, I'm like fair  
game for everyone. I'm like --

He stops and looks like he's in shock. He stares in through  
the display window of a bookstore.

ANGLE ON,

a big DISPLAY of cheap, rushed-out, exploitation books. On the  
cover we read "My Brother Pissed On Me By Raymond L. Pekurny.11  
And there's an old photo of two little boys. (Ed and Ray)

ED  
Oh my -- He wrote a book?! Ray  
wrote a book?! He never read a  
book!

165 INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT  
"DAY 58"

It's the hallway of a cheap hotel. Ed and the camera come off  
the elevator. Ed looks at room numbers. He can HEAR the noise  
from all the rooms. A radio -- a domestic disturbance -- a  
baby crying -- it's a horror. He KNOCKS ON a door.

HANK (O.C.)  
Who is it?

ED  
It's Ed.

The door opens REVEALING Ed's father.

HANK  
Ed! Come in -

They enter.

166 INT. HOTEL ROOM  
It's depressing. There's a liquor bottle on the dresser. Ed  
sees it.

HANK (CONT'D)  
How've you been?

Ed SHRUGS.

HANK (CONT'D)  
They don't get cable here, so I  
can't watch you.

Ed just GRUNTS.

Hank takes LAUNDRY off a chair.

HANK (CONT'D)  
Sit down.



He does. He looks around.

HANK (CONT'D)

Quite a shithole, isn't it?

ED

It could be, if you fixed it up.  
How did you... ? I mean how does  
anyone ... wind up like this?

HANK

I was in jail.

ED

The whole time? Eighteen years?

HANK

No. Two times.

ED

What...

HANK

Check forging.

ED

Oh, man! So...

HANK

The last two years, I've been a  
limousine driver, but I don't see  
well anymore, so...

ED

So you saw me on TV and you said  
"Hey, let me jump on this."

HANK

I need help. How many times if  
just one little thing that I  
needed would've happened, it  
would've changed everything. If  
I had a few dollars when an  
opportunity came along or... the  
tumblers just never clicked for  
me.

Ed doesn't know what to say. He's bitter towards Hank, but  
there's also some empathy.

ED

(to the camera)

All right... This is my father,  
I don't know what the hell he can  
do, but if anyone out there can  
help him -- get him a job -  
I'll ... help you. I'll ...  
mention your business or ... I  
don't know, we'll figure it out.

(quickly, to Hank)

I gotta go.

HANK

Ed... I'm sorry.

ED

(still bitter)

Yeah? That's good. Sorry is good. You know I finished that model.

HANK

What...

ED

The pirate ship.

Hank looks blankly at him.

ED (CONT'D)

-- That we were doing "together."  
I finished it. It came out great!  
Because no one was standing over  
my shoulder bothering me -  
"That's too much glue. You're  
using too much glue."

HANK

Do you still have it?

ED

No. Ray sat on it. I'll see you.

He exits. Out in the hallway, he leans back against the door,  
drained. The camera is right on him, soaking it up.

167 INT. TV STUDIO

The same PBS-type panel of smart-looking people we met earlier.  
WE OPEN ON about half the panel.

MODERATOR

Let's hear from our guest  
panelist. You've expressed some  
interesting thoughts on this,  
subject. What do you see as the  
meaning, if there is any, of Ed  
TV, John.

REVEAL JOHN, sitting comfortably on the panel, looking very  
wise.

JOHN

I feel that Ed is the apotheosis  
of a prevailing American  
syndrome. It used to be that  
someone became famous because  
they were special. Now people  
are considered special just for  
being famous. Fame, itself, is  
now a moral good in this country.

It's its own virtue.

The others NOD appreciatively as John puts a PIPE in his mouth.

TV INTERVIEWS

OLD GUY

I was Ed's Little League coach.  
He had no coordination. The big  
game, he struck out with the  
bases loaded. Then he cried like  
a woman. It was sickening.

CUT TO:

OLD WOMAN

I was his third grade teacher.  
I said "Take him for tests.  
There's something wrong with  
him." They didn't listen.

CUT TO:

ANOTHER GUY

He used to steal things from my  
store. At least I think it was  
him. Yeah, it was probably him.

168 EXT. ED'S APARTMENT - DAY

A MAN, on the sidewalk, has a STUFFED CAT stuck to his back to  
tease Ed.

CAT MAN

Hey, look, I just fell off a  
table!

Suddenly, a TUBFUL OF WATER crashes down on him.

169 INT. ED'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Ed at the window, with a now empty plastic tub.

ED

(yelling down)

Okay, is that funny?

Then he throws the tub out the window.

ED (CONT'D)

(to the camera)

How was that? Was that funny?!

170 INT. NETWORK OFFICE

"DAY 78"

Again, everyone there, including Cynthia. A Honcho is reading  
a report.

HONCHO #1

Of more concern than the sag in Ed's ratings is what viewers are feeling about him now. The positives are down and the negatives are up. There's a feeling that Ed isn't cool anymore. We're starting to see a big L.F.

GREG

Hm?

HONCHO #1

L.F. Loser Factor.

HONCHO #2

That's deadly.

McILVAINE

Not necessarily. I mean instead of running from the L.F., run with it. Create more moments like the table thing. We can package a video "Ed's Goofiest Moments." Let him be America's Goofball.

CYNTHIA

Isn't this getting kind of pathetic. I mean we drank the juice, now we're just licking peel. Let it go!

SCHARLACH

Cynthia, I think you're laboring under a misconception. You seem to believe that because you happened to predict this, we should be impressed. We're not. Anybody in any business can predict failure. I need people who prevent failure. I want to see this thing turned back in the right direction. Remember this was your baby.

171 INT. BAR - NIGHT  
"DAY 94"

Tad and Barry -- as we met them, originally -- are watching TV. They're really enjoying it -- laughing, pounding the table.

TAD

I don't know, I still love this guy.

BARRY

Yeah only I wish they had the sister on more.

TAD

Ooh, the sister! She is hot.

BARRY

You know it.

REVEAL that they are watching Joma. On the TV -- Joma is eating dinner in his apartment with TWO attractive WOMEN, who, apparently, both live there. Joma is upset (but he's funny when he's upset). What's upsetting him is that across the alley, in a window of another building, he can plainly see an OVERWEIGHT MAN, with his shirt off, exercising. The overweight man is apparently watching an exercise video and is bouncing up and down in place causing everything to jiggle unpleasantly.

JOMA'S FRIEND

Ignore him.

JOMA

I can't! It's like a mudslide.  
(screams out the  
window)  
Put on a shirt!

ANGLE ON TAD AND BARRY, HYSTERICAL

ANGLE ON TV

JOMA (CONT'D)

(yelling)  
I support the fact that your  
exercising but, for the love of  
God, put on a shirt.

JOMA'S FRIEND

(to Joma)  
Shut the curtains.

JOMA

No! Let him shut the curtains.

TAD AND BARRY

Laughing and wiping their eyes.

172 INT. ED'S BEDROOM  
Off the air. Ed ON the PHONE.

INTERCUT WITH CYNTHIA

ED

This Joma is so phoney! I mean,  
those things aren't really  
happening. I think they have  
writers making that stuff up for  
him. Hey, couldn't we do that?  
Hire some writers and have them  
write up some crazy situations I  
could get into?

She's listening, amazed.

CYNTHIA  
Ed, everything goes off.  
"Cheers" went off. "Mash" went off --

ED  
(getting angry)  
Yeah, but when they went off  
people weren't making fun of  
them. They weren't bozos! I'm  
Pumpkin Ass again!

CYNTHIA  
(getting annoyed)  
Ed --

ED  
You know, everything you asked me  
to do I did. I call you for  
advice about Shari you say -  
(mocking imitation)  
"Leave her be, see other people  
for a while." You just wanted me  
to get involved with Jill because  
it made for a better show.

CYNTHIA  
Ed --

ED  
No. You screwed up my life just  
so you could get higher ratings.  
You never gave a shit about me.

CYNTHIA  
Yeah? Well I'm not starting now.

She HANGS UP and has an acid reflux.

173 INT. POOL HALL - NIGHT  
Ed and John are playing.

JOHN  
Look, you put anybody on TV  
sixteen hours a day, at some  
point they're going to wind up  
rolling off a table on to a cat.  
I mean with no privacy, there's  
no... dignity.

Ed thinks.

Pause.

ED  
You know about that fireman who  
rescued that little girl?

JOHN  
When? Today?

ED  
No! Like, ten years ago. In  
Texas. Baby...  
(tries to remember)  
Jessica!

JOHN  
Oh right, right! She fell down,  
like a...

ED  
Yeah, a thing. He became a big  
hero. He was on TV and there was  
a parade and a movie about him

JOHN  
Right, right...

ED  
And then, uh... you know it blew  
over and he went back to being a  
fireman again.

JOHN  
(cheerfully)  
Right.

ED  
So he killed himself.

JOHN  
(a little shaken)  
Oh.

SILENCE. The cell phone RINGS.

Ed PICKS UP the phone.

ED  
Hello.

INTERCUT WITH JEANETTE IN A HOSPITAL

She's crying.

JEANETTE  
Eddie...

ED  
Mom?

JEANETTE  
I'm at the hospital.

ED  
What's the matter?!

JEANETTE  
He's dead! Eddie, he's dead! It  
was his heart.

ED  
Oh God. What hospital?

JEANETTE  
St. Joseph's.

ED  
I'm coming right over. I'll be right there.

He hangs up.

174 INT. TAD'S HOUSE  
Tad is watching TV and talking an the phone.

TAD  
I told you! I told you he was  
gonna die!

175 INT. HOSPITAL - AN HOUR LATER  
Ed rushes in. He goes up to the desk. Carlos is with him.

ED  
Hi. I'm looking for my mother.  
Her name is --

A DOCTOR spots him.

DR. GELLER  
Mr. Pekurny.

ED  
Yes?

DR. GELLER  
I'm Dr. Geller. Your mother is  
just lying down for a few  
minutes. we gave her something  
to calm her down.

ED  
Thank you. Can I see her?

DR. GELLER  
Just wait here. She's coming  
right back out.

ED  
Mm...  
(wearily)  
Oh, man...

DR. GELLER  
(sympathetically)

ED  
What about him -- did he suffer  
any or was it quick? I'd hate to  
think he...



DR. GELLER  
Very quick. Between you and me,  
it's not a bad way to go. Making  
love to your wife... it's very  
sweet.

ED  
Really? They were..

DR. GELLER  
(nods)  
According to your mother. When  
the paramedics got to the hotel,  
she told them that --

ED  
Hotel? What were they doing in  
a hotel?

DR. GELLER  
I ... don't know. I ...

VOICE (O.C.)  
Eddie. Thank God you're here.

Eddie looks across the room and sees Al in his wheelchair, just  
entering from outside. He wheels towards Ed.

AL  
How's your mother?

ED  
(shocked)  
Al!

AL  
Our neighbors gave me a ride.

ED  
Al!!

AL  
Where is she? Is she all right?

Ed turns to the doctor.

ED  
I thought -- I thought he was dead.

DR. GELLER  
Who?

ED  
Al!

DR. GELLER  
No.  
(reads his chart)  
The deceased is ... Henry Pekurny.

TAD  
(stunned)  
Good twist!

AL  
You thought it was me?

ED  
Yes!

AL  
It's your father. Hank. Your  
mother went to see him and he had  
a heart attack.

ED  
Went --

Again, Ed turns to the doctor.

NURSE  
Dr. Geller, Dr. Stack wants to see you.

DR. GELLER  
(to Ed)  
Excuse me.

NURSE  
(to Ed)  
Could I get your autograph for my niece?

ED  
(distracted)  
Um... yeah...

Jeanette enters.

JEANETTE  
Al! How did you --

AL  
The Burkharts drove me. Are you  
all right?

JEANETTE  
(nervously)  
I'm fine. I ...

AL  
Good. I gotta pee.

He wheels off. Jeanette and Ed are left alone.

ED  
(loud whisper)  
What happened?

JEANETTE

It was horrible. He called me up.

ED

Who?

JEANETTE

Hank! He said he wanted to talk  
to me to apologize for everything  
he begged -- he cried.  
So I went to this horrible hotel  
he was staying in... I felt so  
sorry for him --

ED

So you had sex with him?

Jeanette GASPS.

JEANETTE

What?

ED

The doctor said you were having sex.

JEANETTE

(horrificed)

To you? In front of him?

(indicates Carlos)

With the...

ED

Yes. He assumed Hank was your  
husband. He didn't know.

JEANETTE

Oh my god! On TV!

ED

Why? How...

JEANETTE

One thing led to another. He was  
my husband once.

ED

But Al is your husband now!

JEANETTE

Do you think it's been easy for  
me? It's been years. Al can't  
have sex.

ED

Apparently, neither can Hank.  
What the hell did you do to him?

Al comes rolling back, SINGING.

AL

"Lovely Rita, the Meter Maid..."

178 INT. TV STUDIO

JEANETTE

(whispers)

Don't tell Al. He doesn't know.

ED

(points to the camera)

Well, he's the only one in  
America who doesn't!

OPRAH or RICKI or GERALDO or someone.

OPRAH

Women who remarry but have sex  
with their first husbands. on  
today's Oprah.

179 INT. TV STUDIO

Our same panel of pundits.

PANELIST #3

Ed's family is the tip of the  
iceberg. You watch the daytime  
tabloid shows it's the same  
thing. I'm telling you, America  
is fast becoming a trailer park.

PANELIST #2

Let's not overstate the case.  
There are millions of hard-  
working, sensible, moral,  
educated people in this country.  
Not every family is like Ed's.

REVEAL ED watching this discussion on TV.

180 INT. TV STUDIO

DAVE OR JAY

A CHART is set up with little pictures.

DAVE/JAY

So let's recap. The mother's too  
good at it, both brothers stink  
at it.

(there's a drawing of  
a figure falling off  
a table)

The stepfather can't do it at  
all and the father did it but it  
killed him.

(there's a drawing  
of a tombstone)

How did this family ever reproduce  
in the first place?

181 EXT. CEMETERY GATES - DAY  
Ed is driving Jeanette and Al to the funeral. A CROWD is held back by POLICE. Someone yells "Adulterer". Someone else tries to offer Ed a lunchbox. Someone else is carrying a sign "What a Way to Go".

182 EXT. CEMETERY - DAY  
Hank's COFFIN is being carried to his gravesite. Ed, Ray and Marcia are pall bearers. One of the others pall bearers is Ed's BODYGUARD. The OTHERS TWO are two guys who work for the mortuary. Carlos is shooting.

ED  
(to Ray)  
You're not going to talk to me?  
You're not even gonna say hello?

RAY  
I have nothing to say to you.

Ed gives up. He turns to Marcia.

ED  
How are you doing? Is Cliff here?

She doesn't answer. Ed reacts.

RAY  
Cliff left her, thanks to you.

ED  
Me?!

RAY  
That's right. You put Cliff on television. So then he decided he was too good for her and he left.

ED  
I put his -- who --  
(to Marcia)  
Look, Marsh, he's not that good a singer, he'll be back.

MARCIA  
(too loudly)  
That's not funny!!

Ed CRINGES.

183 EXT. GRAVESITE - A LITTLE LATER  
The service ends. The small group begins to walk away. Ray and Marcia go off together, ignoring Ed. Jeanette is attempting to wheel Al away from the grave, but she's hitting ruts. Ed approaches.

ED  
I'll take it.

JEANTTE  
(to Al, uncomfortably)  
Sweetheart, I'm gonna go ahead  
and sign all the papers.

AL  
Right.

She touches him but he pulls away. Ed wheels Al.

ED  
Are things gonna be okay with you  
and Mom? Is there anything I can --

AL  
I'm moving out.

ED  
What?!

AL  
I'm going to be living with my  
brother. He's not in such good  
shape as I am, but... I'm looking  
forward to the pillow fights.

ED  
(really upset)  
Oh, Al ... This is just...

AL  
Hank was always good with the  
ladies. Always good-looking.  
Hell, he's been dead for two  
days, he still looks better than  
me.

He stops wheeling and crouches down next to Al.

ED  
I want to tell you something...  
I love you. You're my father.

Pause.

AL  
I love you, too.

Al KISSES him.

AL (CONT'D)  
I'll build a pirate ship with  
you.

Ed wheels him away.

184 INT. CYNTHIA'S OFFICE  
She's watching. She's genuinely moved. She wipes her eyes.

185 INT. BAR - NIGHT

This place is sleazy. Ed enters, worn out. He crosses to the bar where we find, Jeanette nursing a drink. She's not drunk, but she is wallowing.

ED

Hi, Ma.

JEANETTE

(startled)

Ed! How did you know I was here?

ED

You're famous. Somebody called me. What are you doing in a place like this?

JEANETTE

Why shouldn't I be in a place like this? I'm a whore!

ED

(cringes)

Ma...

JEANETTE

I'm a tramp

(pulls on the sleeve of  
the man next to her)

Meet your new father. The whole nation is laughing at us!

ED

And how is this helping? come on say, good-night to all your new friends and let's go home.

JEANETTE

(exiting)

I'm a whore!

(yells at an employee)

Your bathrooms are filthy!

They're out.

186 EXT. BAR - CONTINUOUS

Ed is helping Jeanette. Ray arrives. He's ANGRY.

RAY

I'll take her. You humiliated our mother on national television. You've single-handedly destroyed this family.

ED

I -- Oh, but that book you wrote was a real love-letter. That... toilet paper with covers.

BYSTANDER #1

That book sucked. I want my  
money back.

ED

Oh great. Where's Moe?

He looks around. Moe is gone.

RAY

Come on, Ma.

ED

(to Ray)

Let's remember how I got into  
this. "Please, Eddie, do this  
for me. I can't get a break."  
(pretends to cry)

RAY

You know what your problem is?

ED

Yeah. My problem is I've got a  
brother who writes a sentence  
like "We grew up in a small,  
little bedroom." As opposed to  
a big, little bedroom?

RAY

I got paid by the word! No!  
Your problem is you don't ever  
want anything to be your fault.

ED

Me?! That's you!

RAY

I commit. I take a chance. You  
wanted to be the guy on TV, but  
you didn't want to say you wanted  
to. So you have me talk you into  
it so you get what you want, but  
if it goes bad it's not your  
fault.

BYSTANDER #2

Right. Like you say you love  
Shari, but, you wouldn't mind  
noodling that model.

ED

Moe!

BYSTANDER #3

The truth hurts.

ED

Yeah? So does a kick in the  
nuts.



RAY

For once in your life, be honest  
with yourself. I know you, Ed.  
I know you look at me and Marcia  
and Mom and you think you're  
different.  
You're like "How did I end up in  
this family?" You're not  
different. you're worse.  
Because you have no guts.  
You drift around, you don't commit,  
you make fun of me -- okay. Just  
don't kid yourself.  
(to Jeanette)  
Let's go.

JEANETTE

You're both good boys.

Ray and Jeanette leave.

187 INT. NETWORK CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Ed is there along with Cynthia and the Network Execs. There  
are more execs than before. Cynthia's people are not there.  
This entire meeting is on ED TV. Cynthia is quiet -  
observing. Ed looks whipped.

ED

Three more months?

MR. SCHARLACH

Absolutely! Ed TV is more  
popular than ever.  
Congratulations.

McILVAINE

Only, Ed, we want you, in the  
next few weeks to spend a lot  
more time with your family.

ED

You do?

SEAVER

Definitely. Cynthia, explain it to him.

Cynthia just stares at her, COLDLY.

SEAVER (CONT'D)

I'll do it.

(to Ed)

People want to see what happens  
to them now. Do your mother and  
step-father get back together?  
How does your sister handle being  
alone? Your feud with your  
brother.

SCHARLACH

In fact, we have a new concept.

Since your family signed releases, we can follow them on camera even when you're not with them. We can cut around from family member to family member. Whoever's the most exciting at that moment.

McILVAINE

And, of course, it's another big bonus payment for you.

Pause.

ED

A couple of years ago my Uncle Roy got bit on the ass by a dog.

Silence. What the hell is he talking about?

ED (CONT'D)

So he gave me his tickets to the U.S. Open -- the tennis matches.

They still have no idea what he's talking about.

ED (CONT'D)

So me and Ray, we tell our friends "Watch when Andre Agassi is gonna serve for the first time. When he's bouncing the ball and it's real quiet, we'll yell "Whoop". And you'll all hear us."

Pause.

SCHARLACH

I see.

(he doesn't)

ED

You know what that is? It's sad. I mean it was just so we could be heard. So we could stand out from the crowd for a second. So we did it. But we had nothing to say. Just "Whoop". That's it. And the stupid part I mean the really stupid part is we thought it like... elevated us above the crowd. Where the fact is it made us stupider than the crowd.

SCHARLACH

I see.

ED

Stop saying "I see." You don't see. Cynthia, I owe you an

apology.

CYNTHIA

I don't think so.

ED

Yeah. Because, you didn't talk me into anything. Everything you wanted me to do, I wanted to do.

188 INT. SHARI'S PLACE  
Shari watching Ed TV.

189 INT. CONFERENCE ROOM

ED

(to the camera)

Ray, you were right. It's like in school. I was always saying "the room was too hot, the teacher didn't like me" -- but it was me! Everything that's wrong with my life I did. Okay? So now this is it. My family has problems. Which are our fault. And TV is not the place to solve them. So I quit. I'm taking what very little dignity I've got left and I quit. Can someone validate my parking?

Pause. SHOCK.

MR. SCHARLACH

Well, Ed, that's ... not really possible.

ED

All right, I'll pay for the parking. Big network!

Scharlach speaks carefully - gently. He's aware of the camera. He doesn't want to come off as a villain.

SCHARLACH

No, I mean you can't quit.

Ed thinks.

ED

I can't?

MR. SCHARLACH

(very gently)

Well, no. You agreed to stay on the air as long as we asked you to. The station entered into this on that understanding. If you had refused we'd have begun

this with somebody else. You can't just change the rules in the middle of the game, son. It's not fair to us. More importantly, it's not fair to the viewers. They're interested in you. They've devoted hours and days and weeks of their lives to you.

ED

Look, if you don't let me out of this... I'll just... I'll just sit in my apartment all day. I won't go anywhere, I won't do anything. What kind of show will that be?

MR. SCHARLACH

Not too good. That's why it states in your contract that if you do not continue to live a normal life, you're in violation and are liable for the station's financial losses. Ed, I urge you to reconsider. I urge you on behalf of all those people out there whose lives have become so entwined with yours. Play fair with them, Ed.

ED

All right. Let them decide.

He turns right to the camera.

ED (CONT'D)

I'd like you all to do me a favor. Turn me off. Just grab the remote and change the channel. I mean, basically, all you're watching now is a guy deteriorate. The only thing missing is the smell. You're better than that. Turn me off. Thank you.

190 INT. CYNTHIA'S OFFICE

Greg bursts in, carrying a sheet of paper.

GREG

Ratings are up across the board. Look at this!

(drones on)

Men 18 to 35, women 18 to 35 ...

Cynthia stares, amazed.

191 EXT. STREET

Ed WALKING ZOMBIE-LIKE- CROWDS SWARM.

192 INT. LAWYER'S OFFICE - DAY  
Ed is with STEVE, a lawyer. Steve has a huge contract on his desk.

STEVE

This contract you signed? ... It's a masterpiece. Don't go to war with these guys. You fart in the wrong direction they can take everything you own and leave you naked by the side of the road. You ever going to get back with that Jill? Ooh -- she was nice. Shari, I didn't like that much  
("imitates" a gabby girl)  
"yet-tet-tet-tet-tet-tet-tet."

ED

Shut up.

193 INT. DINER - NIGHT  
Ed is sitting alone, eating lunch. He's surrounded by cameras and shielded by BODYGUARDS.

OUTSIDE the diner a CROWD of rubberneckers is out on the sidewalk, looking in at him, some of them acting up, some just staring in. Ed is tired. He glances out the window and makes a MONKEY FACE. Suddenly, he FREEZES.

He sees Shari's face in the crowd. She puts her fist in her mouth.

194 EXT. STREET - NIGHT  
Ed and Shari are walking -- on camera.

SHARI

I bailed. I bailed on you.

ED

Kinda'.

SHARI

It's what I do. I yell "Geronimo" and jump out of a relationship.

He laughs.

Pause.

SHARI (CONT'D)

You weren't able to make me feel safe or secure -- no easy job for any man, I admit -- and my problem is, if I think I'm losing, I pull myself out of the

game. I bail. See? I told you,  
I'm the love coroner.

ED

What did you do to your hair?

SHARI

My truck overheated, so I opened  
the hood and my hair got caught  
in the fan belt. So I had to get  
a haircut.

ED

It's nice.

He touches her hair. They leap on each other. They're  
KISSING.

195 INT. NETWORK CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY  
Big meeting. Many Honchos, including Scharlach and Cynthia.  
All but Cynthia are focused. Cynthia looks bored.

HONCHO #1

I think this could be great.  
What if Ed and Shari decide to  
get married? A wedding? The  
cute, little half-Asian nephew in  
a tuxedo, carrying the ring on  
one of those big fluffy pillows -  
we'll kill. A sixty share.

A secretary (MILDRED) enters. She's a little flustered.

MILDRED

Um... Mr. Scharlach, um -- you're  
not watching TV?

SCHARLACH

No, Mildred, we're working.

MILDRED

Um... Ed -- and Shari are --

SEAVER

Engaged?

MILDRED

No. Here. They're in the  
building. They're on their way  
up.

Scharlach indicates that he wants someone to turn on the TV.  
Someone does and they see Ed and Shari coming down the hall.  
They enter the conference room. The cameras, of course, are  
with them. Ed is carrying a CARTON.

ED

Hi, kids. Busy?

MUCH CONFUSION

ED (CONT'D)

I just came up to pass out these  
Ed TV hats.

He takes a lot of HATS out of the carton and begins placing on  
the heads of the Honchos.

ED (CONT'D)

A guy made these up for me. He  
spelled Ed with two D's. Okay,  
listen. The real reason I came  
up here -- and then I'll get out  
of your way -- is I've been  
thinking about what you said.  
About let's start having more fun  
with this show, you know? Let's  
give it a big kick in the ass.

HONCHO #1

Well, we were thinking --

ED

(cheerfully)

Shut up.

He takes back that Honcho's hat.

ED (CONT'D)

Let's have a contest. Now this  
would mostly be open to  
professional investigators and  
detectives. But anyone can join  
in.

SHARI

(rehearsed)

What do we have to do?

ED

My lovely assistant, Shari. I'm  
glad you asked. The contest is  
who can dig up -- legally, of  
course -- I'm not suggesting  
that anyone break any laws --  
the most embarrassing and  
humiliating facts about any of  
the executives here at the North  
American Broadcasting System which  
owns Real TV.

The Honchos staring blankly.

ED (CONT'D)

But facts! They have to be  
verified. Anything from their  
past, their present, business,  
personal -- arrests, affairs ...  
And whoever comes up with the  
sleaziest, most degrading  
material -- I'll give you ten

thousand dollars. And you get to  
be on Ed TV.

(to the Honchos,  
excitedly)

Hah?

SHARI

So act now. Here's Ed's home  
phone number.

She holds up a CARD.

196 INT. CONFERENCE ROOM

It's packed with LAWYERS and EXECS. Everyone is agitated,  
except Cynthia, who seems relaxed-Ed and Shari are gone.

SCHARLACH

Legal?! How can this be legal?  
It's defamation! It's slander!  
It's...

LAWYER

Not, technically. He is not  
showing a reckless disregard for  
the truth.

SCHARLACH

You're fired!

The meeting continues ANGRILY.

197 INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

The Honchos are watching Ed TV. They look STRAINED, ANXIOUS.

In Ed's home a BANK OF PHONES have been set up like for a  
telethon. Manning the phones are Ed, Shari, Ray, Marcia, Al  
and Jeanette. The PHONES KEEP RINGING.

RAY

(into phone)

Uh-huh... uh-huh... Really?! She  
was how old?

In the conference room one of the Execs looks DIZZY.

The CAMERA PANS to Al on the phone.

AL

(shocked)

He pays a prostitute to do what  
to him? I don't even want that  
on my shoes.

IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM

FEAR and SHOCK, except for Cynthia, who is LAUGHING and can't  
stop.

SCHARLACH



Stop laughing or you're fired.

She stops.

Then she gets up.

SCHARLACH (CONT'D)

Where are you going?

CYNTHIA

I've got this great idea. We put together a video. "The Network Executives Goofiest Moments." And listen, i've really loved working here.

On the word "loved" she shot Scharlach THE FINGER. She exits, LAUGHING.

198 INT. ED'S APARTMENT - NIGHT  
Ed is off the phone,

ED

Okay. We have a winner. Now please don't feel badly if yours wasn't selected. In our eyes, you're all winners.

RAY

And each contestant gets one of these.

(holds up a tee-shirt  
with writing on it)

An "I tried to screw a network executive" tee-shirt.

ED

A hundred per cent cotton. Okay, here we go, Andy.

Ed grabs a sealed ENVELOPE. Andy plays a DRUM ROLL -- not terribly well.

ED (CONT'D)

Andy's available for executions.  
And the winner is ...

As he opens the envelope.

199 INT. CONFERENCE ROOM  
The Executives staring, HORRIFIED.

200 INT. ED'S APARTMENT  
He takes out the card and registers mock-surprise.

ED

Hey, the winner is from right here in New York city.  
Carl Bowers a former orderly at

the Martin Center -- a clinic  
that specializes in, what they  
call, male enhancement  
procedures.

201 INT. CONFERENCE ROOM  
Scharlach's EYES WIDEN in HORROR.

202 INT. ED'S APARTMENT

ED  
(to the camera)  
How many of you know what a  
penile implant is? As it was  
explained to me, what happens is--

203 INT. CONFERENCE ROOM  
As Ed explains, Scharlach reaches for the phone, fumbling it  
for a moment.

204 INT. ED'S APARTMENT

ED  
And the man of the hour -- the  
executive with the winning secret  
the man who, thanks to the  
miracle of space-age science and  
a pump he keeps in his pocket,  
can now --

A SHOT OF a television set tuned to Ed. Suddenly Ed is  
replaced by a Real TV logo.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)  
And that concludes Real TV's  
coverage of Ed TV. Stay tuned  
for new programming information.

MUSAK

205 INT. CONFERENCE ROOM

206 INT. TV STUDIO  
An ENTERTAINMENT REPORTER.

207 INT. TV STUDIO  
The PANEL.

208 EXT. CHURCH

ENTERTAINMENT REPORTER  
A spokesperson for Real TV  
announced that Ed received a

check covering his four months on the air, his balloon payment and an additional bonus to show the Network's appreciation for all his -- quote -- hard work and loyalty -- unquote. When asked --

CUT TO:

The Panel.

PANELIST #1

In five years no one will even remember this person.

PANELIST #4

Five years! Six months. He's the "macarena." He's --

CUT TO:

A NEWS REPORTER is reporting on a wedding.

REPORTER

Marcia Pekurny, the woman known to most Americans as "Ed's sister" was married here today to Carlos Coto, who some of you may remember as the primary camera operator on "Ed TV" --

CUT TO:

209 INT. TV STUDIO  
A news show.

NEWS ANCHOR

The current rage of "Reality Television" got a real dose of reality today. Lifestyle Televisions Joma was shot this evening, outside his apartment. Because Joma was on television twenty-four hours a day, Lifestyle's cameras were there to record the shooting.

WE SEE Joma walking into his building. Somebody steps forward with a GUN. The ASSAILANT is jostled as he shoots and the bullet hits Joma in the ass. He falls to the sidewalk.

JOKA

Ohhhh!!! ... my ass! He shot me in the ass!

The CAMERA PANS to the Assailant, who we might recognize as someone who we've seen following Ed from time to time.

ASSAILANT

Now I'm famous.

REVEAL Ed and Shari watching this on television.

ED

I know him. I gave him an autograph.

Shari turns it off.

THE END