

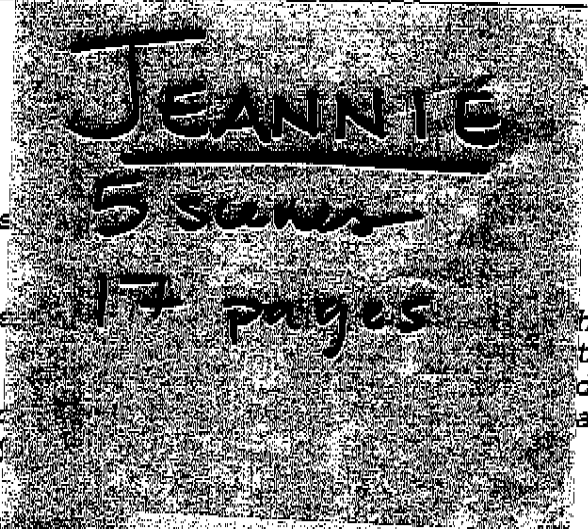
MACK (CONT'D)

The live, or at least live for some of us, career suicide of Wes Mendell and the hiring now of Matthew Albie and Daniel Moore to take over a show they were fired from or quit, depending on who you talk to, we're takin' your calls.

Albie
night

That's

That's
where
movie
vote
Grammy



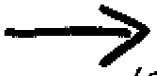
I thi
probably self-explanatory for most
people, Dave, but thanks just the same.
Lena in Toluca Lake, what's on your mind,
did you see it live?

During all this we've also been hearing a kind of rhythmic
'clanking'. It's not annoying, it's just there.

And now we've arrived at the source of the clanking. It's a
mini-gym that Matt has on one side of his covered deck. MATT's
in baggy gym shorts and a loose fitting Cornell tank top. He's
worked up a pretty good sweat doing leg-lifts at a nautilus
bench and the lifts are coming harder and slower now.

JEANNIE gets up from the table with the papers and comes right
out --

Scene 1
START



JEANNIE

(calling)

Matt! Right here. I found it right here.
First of all you're supposed to wait
until Day 10, this is Day 5, and you're
supposed to start with ten reps using 10
pound weights. You've got 20 pounds on
there and you've done like 41 lifts, I've
been listening to the clanking.

MATT

I laugh directly in the face of medical
science.

Studio 60

1/17

And JEANNIE simply puts her foot on the weight bar--

MATT (CONT'D)

Ow.

JEANNIE

(get this through your head)
You've had back surgery. You will rip
whatever they did apart. It will hurt.
And I'm one of the people who'll have to
politely listen to you complain about it. *

MATT

I'd prefer if when I complained you
listened out of more than politeness.

JEANNIE

Never gonna happen.

MATT

It doesn't matter, I feel strong. I feel
great, I'm having the best morning. Come
inside with me, I'm gonna make special
juice.

JEANNIE

Special juice?

JEANNIE's following MATT back into the kitchen, where of
course the radio show is still playing.

MATT

I've had a recipe for months. I was given
it by a for-real physical health guy, I
mean just this side of being licensed in
the field. You put 12 ounces of fresh
orange juice in a blender... *

(pouring)

...I don't really know what 12 ounces
looks like.

JEANNIE

(patiently)

It's on the side of the blender.

MATT

Hey yeah, look at that.

JEANNIE

What's the powder?

2/17

MATT

I don't really know, I've never used it,
but we need two heaping tablespoons.

JEANNIE

Would you like me to take you out to
breakfast?

MATT

Olympians drink this, Jeannie. Do I have
a ripe banana?

JEANNIE

(not having to look)

No.

MATT

Do I have 16 ounces of frozen
strawberries?

JEANNIE

No.

MATT

Do I have strawberries that are just very
cold?

JEANNIE

No.

MATT

Well lemme ask you this. If I had
flaxseed oil or brewer's yeast, where do
you think I'd keep it?

JEANNIE

You don't have those things.

MATT

You're sure?

JEANNIE

I've been in your refrigerator, Matt,
you've got champagne and ketchup.

MATT

All right, well then the orange juice and
mystery powder.

JEANNIE

I'm getting my pants. Put the top on the
blender there, Rocky.

3/17

JEANNIE steps into the bedroom, where we catch glimpses of her getting dressed.

MATT

What are you listening to?

JEANNIE

Mack and Dave in the morning. I looked for someplace where they weren't talking about it but there is no place where they're not talking about it. They'll play music in a minute.

~~DAVE~~

~~--once again--~~

~~MACK~~

~~Dave's gone crazy~~

~~DAVE~~

~~Sophisticated humor. You two don't appreciate it because it's sophisticated.~~

~~MATT~~

~~Yeah, I get this guy confused with P.G. Wodehouse all the time.~~

~~MACK~~

~~Dorothy in Rehearsal, you're on the air with Mack and Dave~~

MATT's blended the drink and pours it into a glass--

MATT

I don't know what it is, I feel like I slept for 20 hours.

JEANNIE comes out of the bedroom--

JEANNIE

You did.

MATT

What do you mean?

JEANNIE

Actually you slept for 28 hours.

MATT

What are you talking about?

JEANNIE

You slept for 28 hours, Matt.

4/17

MATT

What are you talking about?

JEANNIE

You were pretty dosed up with some very powerful painkillers. Danny told me to take you home and baby-sit you.

MATT stands there a moment, then goes to the kitchen table and picks up a newspaper.

MATT

It's Sunday.

JEANNIE

Yeah.

MATT

I slept through Saturday?

JEANNIE

You woke up a couple of times. Once to ask me if the Yankees won and once to have sex.

MATT

(pause)

Did the Yankees win?

JEANNIE

Yes, that's why you wanted to have sex. Which, by the way, it turns out you're not allowed to do until Day 10 either.

The penny's slowly, very slowly, starting to drop for MATT...

MATT

Hang on, 'cause this is starting to get strange. What did you mean when you said you looked for someplace where they weren't talking about it.

JEANNIE

Well just that everybody's talking about it. We can turn on the Sunday morning news shows if you want. Shelly gave the head's up that Russert's doing it and Stephanopoulos, probably Blitzer and--

MATT

Hang on--

↓ 5/17

DOROTHY (CALLER)

--and at a time when this whole country--
 well everybody but the Hollywood liberal
 limousine elite--but at a time when real
 Americans were and should have been
 standing shoulder to shoulder with the
 President, these two characters were
 mocking the President and defending Bill
 Maher. I think Studio 60 stinks, I think
 it's always stunk, and I think that NBS
 hiring back these Barbra Streisand-
 loving, Michael Moore-worshiping
 jackasses to be in charge of the show is
 a big ef-you to the real Americans who
 make up the lion's share of their
 audience and to the troops and for that
 this network should pay a high price.

MACK

Alright, strong words from Dorothy in
 Reseda. It's worth noting by the way that
 Wes Mendell had been the Executive
 Producer from the very first show.

HEATHER

20 years ago.

MACK

That's right, so with Matt Albie and
 Danny Moore, this'll be the first time
 since its inception that new people are
 in charge of what you'd really have to
 say is an American institution, or
 certainly an LA institution.

And with that it all comes back to him, and the glass drops
 from his hand with a CRASH...

JEANNIE

(genuinely)

Ohh...baby. You thought you'd dreamed it,
 didn't you.

MATT

(pause)

Yeah.

STOP

MACK

We'll be taking more calls here at Mack
 and Dave in the Morning.

(MORE)

6/17

HARRIET
Tell me about it.

PA (VO)
Cast to the stage please. Cast to the
stage.

HARRIET, SIMON and TOM head out to--

INT. BACKTAGE - CONTINUOUS

SIMON
Can he even sit in a chair for 14 hours a
day?

TOM
Who?

SIMON
Matt. He just had back surgery. Can he
sit in a chair?

TOM
It wasn't a big deal, they just moved
something around.

SIMON
I had that surgery and it's not a big
deal, but you're not supposed to move
around for about a week and a half.
You're not supposed to ride in a car and
you can't sit at a desk for 14 hours.

HARRIET
14 hours is a short day for him and when
you had the surgery you didn't miss a
show.

SIMON
I'm exceptional in many ways. He on the
other hand, I don't think he can sit in
the chair.

They walk out onto--

INT. STAGE - CONTINUOUS

--where tables have been set up for a read-through. The rest
of the cast and a few P.A.'s are already milling around.
There's a pecking order here too, with the more junior people
standing in the back and knowing to stay quiet.

↓
7/17

F.Y.I

Scene 2
START →

JEANNIE

It's not gonna be a problem.

SIMON

What?

JEANNIE

Matt's back surgery. He's doing 40 leg-lifts with 30 pound weights.

SIMON

Get the hell outa here.

JEANNIE

He is.

SIMON

I couldn't tie my shoes.

HARRIET

Well you're exceptional in many ways.

rides onto the stage--

DANNY

Good morning. I got a chance to speak on the phone with each of you yesterday. I think I know what you're all thinking: "They're gonna make some changes, bring in some new blood, am I staying, am I going...".

(pause--then to TOM)

That's what you were thinking, right?

TOM

Not till just now, no.

DANNY

(laughing a little)

Man, well you shoulda been. Don't give me your very best or choose this week to complain about something and you'll make those decisions very easy. Mark Wahlberg's our host but Matt's not gonna make his first show about Mark Wahlberg and we all know it. He's also gonna write for the guys he knows, so you people in back, be patient. I'd also become one of the guys he knows. The White Stripes is the musical guest.

8/17

continue →

~~SIMON~~~~Dorm intramural flag football, my friend.
You know how hard it is to make it to the
finals?~~*
*~~TOM~~~~I'd imagine not very.~~

*

SIMON

(to DANNY)

Anyway, he's telling people he can do 40
leg lifts with 30 pound weights. I say
he's a liar and I challenge him to a
contest of physical supremacy.

TOM

Why don't you guys settle it like the
real Athenians over 18 holes at Riviera?

JEANNIE

He's not saying he did 40 reps, he did 40
reps, I saw him. Yesterday morning.

HARRIET

He went to the gym?

JEANNIE

At his house, he bought a machine.

*

There's a terrible tension felt by some--not all--of the
people at the meeting. DANNY, SIMON, TOM and most especially
HARRIET. JEANNIE doesn't know what she said to make the joking
around stop...

HARRIET

(pause)

And you saw him.

*

*

JEANNIE didn't mean to step in it, but she did. She likes
HARRIET and she doesn't know what to say...

*

*

HARRIET (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, Danny, may I be excused from
this meeting?

*

*

*

DANNY

Yeah.

They watch as HARRIET heads off. Then--

JEANNIE

God, Danny, can I go talk to her?

*

*

DANNY

No. Sorry. Anybody have any questions?
(pause)

*

*

Alright--

9/17

STOP

INT. GREEN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

--where the cast has started to assemble in various stages of dress--some of them wearing Studio 60 bathrobes. They're in their own spaces going over script pages or stretching a little...

JEANNIE steps over to HARRIET...

Scene 3
START →

JEANNIE
(quietly)
It was thoughtless of--

HARRIET
(startled)
Oh.

JEANNIE
Sorry.

HARRIET
I didn't see you.

JEANNIE
(pause)
It was thoughtless to blurt it out at the meeting and I'm very sorry.
(beat)
We're friends, Harry. I love him to death, but we're friends. And when we're both without somebody, sometimes we wind up with each other. You'll keep your head in the game, right?

HARRIET looks at her, then casually takes a whiskey bottle that's handy nearby and smashes it over JEANNIE's head. The bottle breaks soundlessly and painlessly. It was a candy glass prop and JEANNIE knew it so she didn't flinch.

HARRIET
You're a hard girl to hate, Jeannie.
Believe me, I've spent all week trying.
Have a good show and we'll drink together at the party.

JEANNIE
Eat 'em up.

HARRIET
Eat 'em up.

MATT and DANNY walk in--

/ STOP

10/17

CONTINUED: (3)

Silence...

SIMON

(pause)

Damn, Harry, let's never speak of that moment again.

HARRIET

I can be funny while I'm doing it.

SIMON

No you can't and we're not going to Matt with "The bear said roar."

TOM

Roseanne Barr is releasing an album for children.

JEANNIE

I flat-lined.

This stops them...

HARRIET

What?

JEANNIE

I flat-lined in the focus group.

TOM

(pause)

How do you know?

She holds up the data--

JEANNIE

Ricky and Ron gave me the dial groups. It's all good and they're crazy about everybody. But Commedia dell'Arte flat-lined and that was my only sketch last week.

SIMON

You can't look at it.

JEANNIE

Well...too late.

HARRIET

It's a great character.

Scene 4
START →

(CONTINUED)

11/17

CONTINUED: (4)

JEANNIE

Not according to the people watching it, but the point is I guess that I'm the one who convinced Matt to do it. I pitched it, I wrote the first draft--

TOM

Jeannie--

JEANNIE

--I told him it wasn't gonna be "ha-ha" funny, but it was gonna be funny and he believed me.

TOM

Did it actually flat-line or are you--

JEANNIE hands him the data and TOM starts flipping through...

JEANNIE

My little brother played football at Iowa State. A guy comes back to the huddle and says, "Man, you gotta throw it to me, I'm open." And then they throw it to him and he drops the pass. It's a pretty long time before they let that guy open his damn mouth in the huddle again.

TOM

(reading)

"Didn't get it."

JEANNIE

Yeah.

TOM

"Boring."

JEANNIE

There's a word networks like to hear.

TOM

"Too smart."

JEANNIE

That's another word for boring.

SIMON

Smart as a pejorative.

JEANNIE

Look at the dials.

(CONTINUED)

12/17

CONTINUED: (5)

TOM
She flat-lined.

JEANNIE
In the first 25 seconds.

TOM
Except for one guy in St. Louis and one
guy in Atlanta.

JEANNIE
Well I'll have plenty of time to
personally perform it for both of them in
their living rooms.

SIMON
You can't look at it.

JEANNIE
It's not the fault of the focus data,
Simon, you gotta catch the ball when you
ask for it.

SIMON
You make more than your share of catches
around here.

JEANNIE
Dammit!

And JEANNIE whips around and smacks her hand against the wall,
but what she hits is a metal electrical box and

THUNK--

--the power goes out...

JEANNIE (CONT'D)
(quietly)
Sorry.

STOP

HARRIET
I don't know what to tell you guys.
Either God's a little sweet on me today,
He doesn't like Simon at all or He
disapproves of Jeannie sleeping with my
ex-boyfriend.

TOM
(to JEANNIE)
She's kidding.

13/17

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MATT

Well no I don't think I have to do that.

DANNY

Yeah it's time.

MATT

You know what, a hundred years ago Garry Marshall re-wrote an episode of *Happy Days* or something, kept their names on it and they won an Emmy--they've been eating lunch off it ever since.

DANNY

I think Ricky and Ron were about 10 when *Happy Days* was on, but I get the idea. Use 'em anyway.

MATT

Why?

DANNY

'Cause you're gonna burn out.

MATT

I'm not.

DANNY

Then do it 'cause I'm smarter than you and I'm asking you nicely.

MATT

The drop-off, you think inside 10 percent, 90 percent retention or better--

DANNY

Don't worry about it.

JEANNIE knocks at the door, she's in a *Studio 60* bathrobe--

Scene 5
START



JEANNIE

Excuse me.

DANNY

You should be downstairs.

JEANNIE

No. Matt. You gotta take it down off the board.

MATT

Noooo.

(CONTINUED)

14/17

CONTINUED: (2)

JEANNIE

Matt--

DANNY

What are you talking about?

MATT

She saw the focus data on Commedia dell'Arte.

DANNY

Oh man, this is exactly why--

JEANNIE

You can't keep it in the show, Matt, there were three sketches that got bigger laughs at dress, which isn't saying much because Commedia got *no* laughs at dress.

MATT

That just means it's not that kind of funny.

JEANNIE

Or it could mean it's not funny at all and I'm dragging the show down.

DANNY

Can we have this conversation moving?

They head out into--

INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

JEANNIE

I flat-lined. "Boring" was a word that was used to describe it.

DANNY

Some people just don't get Moliere parodies.

MATT

He's right, even though Moliere was a French playwright from a different century who had nothing to do with Italian Commedia dell'Arte.

JEANNIE

Matt--

(CONTINUED)

15/17

MATT

It's an acquired taste, Jeannie. But once you acquire it it's like barrel-smoked whiskey.

DANNY

What's that?

MATT

I don't know, I may have just made it up.

JEANNIE

Look--

MATT

How could you think Moliere was even remotely connected to--

JEANNIE

(stopping them)
Idiot boys!

They stop...

DANNY

She's talking to us.

MATT

Yeah.

JEANNIE

I flat-lined. Nobody liked it.

MATT

That's not true. One guy in St. Louis and one guy in Atlanta.

JEANNIE

Could you please be serious.

MATT

Look at me. ~~The network's doing another dial group tonight because, well, because they just can't help themselves. They're doing it during the live show so we'll have the results at roughly the same time we have the ratings. The focus group is made up entirely of people who saw last week's show.~~ The two people who liked it last week, is going to go up to three. If it doesn't, I'm going to give you \$10,000 cash. Is that serious enough?

JEANNIE

(pause)
What?

MATT

If the two doesn't go to three I give you \$10,000. If it does, you have to wear a t-shirt at the wrap party that says "Matt is My Hero and Danny Thinks Moliere was Italian." I'm having wardrobe make the shirt right now.

MATT heads off and JEANNIE takes a step to go after him--

JEANNIE

Matt--

--but DANNY grabs her arms without moving. He gets to be a director now, which he loves.

DANNY

(simply and directly)
Commit to it. No comedian you admire has ever been afraid of silence. You're gonna feel a strong instinct to make it bigger. Resist that with everything you've got.

*
*

JEANNIE nods that she understands...

DANNY (CONT'D)

And don't forget to breathe before you go out there.

/ STOP

CUE

INT HARRIET'S DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT.

SIMON and HARRIET are looking over cue cards with TOM as MATT steps in--

*

MATT

Hey, you know what worked at dress? The Lincoln, Missouri joke.

SIMON

Yeah.

MATT

The school play, that whole run. And it was all yours, I didn't even touch it.

(CONTINUED)

17/17