

**"Larry's Big Break"**

**Written by**

**Kevin Miles**

**For**

**The Larry Sanders Show**

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FADE IN:

INT. LARRY'S OFFICE - AFTER THE SHOW

LARRY and ARTHUR sit across from each other. Larry is staring at the phone on his desk while Arthur puffs a cigar.

LARRY  
I can do this, can't I Artie?

ARTHUR  
Is Michael Jackson khaki? Of course you can. You're a major talent. There's nothing Mr. Larry Sanders can't do.

LARRY  
Thanks, Artie.

ARTHUR  
It's not you I'm doubting here.

Larry reaches for the phone on his desk and picks it up.

LARRY  
C'mon, Artie. If this movie works out it could be my ticket out of TV.

ARTHUR  
And if the Indians had greeted the pilgrims with flaming arrows instead of corn, we'd be holding this little powwow in a teepee.

Larry dials a number.

LARRY  
And then there would be no Thanksgiving, no turkey and no 24 hour Butterball help line. Then where would we be?

ARTHUR  
All I'm saying is this jerk has been known to stretch the truth-among other things. It's nothing personal. I'm just playing devil's advocate here.

LARRY  
No, I believe the anti-Christ is who you're playing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARTHUR  
I promise to be a good boy. Just  
pretend I'm not here.

Larry places the phone back in it's cradle. Now WE HEAR the SPEAKERPHONE dialing and answered on the other end.

WOMAN  
(on speakerphone)  
Joel Gold's office.

LARRY  
Hi. Is Joel around?

WOMAN  
(on speakerphone)  
May I tell him who's calling?

LARRY  
Sure. Go right ahead.

A beat.

WOMAN  
(on speakerphone)  
I beg your pardon?

LARRY  
I'm kidding. Tell him it's Larry.

WOMAN  
(on speakerphone)  
Larry David?

LARRY

NO.

WOMAN  
(on speakerphone)  
Larry King?

LARRY

NO.

WOMAN  
(on speakerphone)  
Larry Flynt?

LARRY  
Cute. Tell him it's Larry Sanders.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WOMAN  
(on speakerphone)  
Oh yes. Hank Kingsley's sidekick.

LARRY  
Well, actually it's my show. Hank's my side...

WOMAN  
(on speakerphone)  
Hey now!

WE HEAR the call transferred and picked up on the other end.

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
Larry, my man. You get the script?

LARRY  
Just got it. Oh, by the way, I'm here with my producer...you two know each other. Say hi to Joel, Artie.

ARTHUR  
(reluctantly)  
How's it swinging Joel?

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
Hello Arthur...You're going to love the script Larry.

LARRY  
My agent says it's very funny. But then, he thought "Million Dollar Baby" was funny.

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
Funny? It's hilarious. But more importantly Larry, this project was written specifically with you in mind.

LARRY  
Wow. Really?

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
Swear on my Jasper Johns. The green light was pie in the sky without your name attached to it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARTHUR  
(quietly)  
If you listen closely, you can actually  
hear his nose shooting out like a cane  
pole.

Larry motions to Arthur to keep quiet.

LARRY  
I don't know what to say.

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
Say you'll do it, so we can crank this  
puppy out. You know, Bob Peterson, the  
screenwriter of "Finding Nemo" insisted  
we talk with you before we even signed  
a director.

LARRY  
Hey, my goldfish did some stunt work on  
that film.

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
We're thrilled you're considering this  
project, Larry.

LARRY  
You should be. I'm very popular among  
the young male movie going demographic.

ARTHUR  
That's right, Gold. My boy here's got  
offers coming out his ass. In  
triplicate.

A beat.

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
You're shittin' me. Who with? Not that  
hack Bruckheimer. Wait. You guys are  
pulling my pud aren't you?

LARRY  
We can't get anything pass you.

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
You're a funny man, Larry Sanders.

LARRY  
Thanks, Joel.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARTHUR  
Mr. Gold, we really need to wrap this up. My man here needs his beauty rest.

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
Who said that?

LARRY  
Listen, Joel. I gotta go. I'll read the script and get back to you.

A beat.

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
You're going to read it? What? You don't trust me, Lar?

LARRY  
You don't want me to read the script?

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
Whatever. Okay, gotta run. Give Jenny my love.

LARRY  
It's Jeanie and we've been divorced for three years.

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
So that wasn't a rumor?

LARRY  
Have a pleasant evening, Joel.

Larry hangs the phone up.

ARTHUR  
Fucking sycophant.

Larry eyes the script and puts his head down on his desk.

INT. ELEVATOR HALLWAY - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Larry and Arthur are walking down the hallway.

ARTHUR  
These A-holes are jerking you off. I can feel it in my bones.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LARRY  
I'm a big boy, Artie. I think I know  
when I'm being jerked off.

ARTHUR  
The motion picture industry is an  
enigma my boy. This isn't network TV  
we're talking about here.

LARRY  
I enjoy being jerked off. Sometimes I  
even do it myself.

ARTHUR  
I just don't want these Hollywood  
pricks blowing smoke up your ass for  
some B-movie piece of horseshit.

LARRY  
Smoke up my ass? You know, a good  
therapist can clear that anal fixation  
right up.

They stop at the elevator. Arthur pushes the down button.

ARTHUR  
Take it from me grasshopper. If there's  
one thing I've learned in this  
Kamikaze, crapshoot of a business, it's  
this; always stick with what you know.  
If Mr. Chevy Chase had lived by that  
creed, perhaps he wouldn't have to sell  
his soul for a decent table at  
Morton's. Morton's for God's sake, the  
poor bastard.

LARRY  
Artie, this is going to be a big budget  
project, with "A list" talent.

ARTHUR  
Polish a turd all you want. All you end  
up with is a shiny turd. Ever see  
"Gigli"?

LARRY  
C'mon Artie. I have a good feeling  
about this. I'm flattered they're even  
talking to me. Is it asking too much to  
have your blessing on this?

ARTHUR  
As long as it doesn't interfere with  
your duties on "The Larry Sanders  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARTHUR (cont'd)  
Show", I'm behind you one hundred per  
cent. Just watch yer ass.

The elevator doors open and they get on.

LARRY  
Geez Artie. There you go again with the  
anal reference. Get some help man.

INT. WRITER'S ROOM - MID-MORNING

Phil is sitting at the table going over Larry's monologue  
for that evening's show. Jerry enters and sits down at the  
table.

PHIL  
What's up?

JERRY  
Mary Lou just told me Hank's the new  
spokesperson for that neo-Nazi human  
hair replacement cult.

Phil laughs.

PHIL  
Run that by me in English.

JERRY  
He's doing spots for the "Hair Club For  
Men".

PHIL  
Greedy son of a bitch. He's gotta be  
pulling down at least two mil' a year  
in endorsements alone.

JERRY  
Try five.

PHIL  
Unbelievable. All the guy does is sit  
on his fat ass riding Larry's success,  
and people practically line up and hand  
him piles of cash.

JERRY  
And here we are scratching by on a  
petty seven hundred g's a year. Like  
some low-life, third-rate, sit-com  
hacks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PHIL

Jesus. The guy doesn't even create anything. He just sits there, taking up space. Sidekick my ass.

JERRY

We make Larry Sanders. Each and every night, we make Larry Sanders.

PHIL

There's no order in the universe.

(beat)

Jerry, did you just say you're making seven-hundred grand?

JERRY

Uh...

PHIL

You're getting seven hundred grand? We came over as a team and you're getting that? Seven-hundred-fucking grand?

JERRY

Is that what I said? Because I was...

Phil gets jumps up from his chair and jerks the door open.

JERRY (CON'T)

(cont'd)

What are you doing? We need to finish the opening.

Phil grabs his crotch.

PHIL

(pissed)

I got your opening right here.

JERRY

Phil...

Phil storms off down the hall. Jerry snickers.

INT. STUDIO OUTSIDE LARRY'S OFFICE - MORNING

Beverly is on the phone as Larry walks up and stops at her desk eyeing the mountain of mail piled high in front of her.

BEVERLY

Hank, I'm sure if you come around Larry will see you. Hold on Hank, he just walked up. Good morning Larry.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LARRY  
Yes it is.

BEVERLY  
Larry, Hank says good morning.

Larry thumbs through the mail.

LARRY  
Good morning, Hank.

BEVERLY  
No, Hank. Larry won't mind if you stop by. Yes I'm sure. Ask him? Okay. Hank wants to know if it would be alright with you if he stops by later.

LARRY  
(shaking his head no)  
Tell him that would be fine.

BEVERLY  
Larry's okay with it Hank. Hank says thank you, Larry...Larry said you're welcome. Well that's because he said it low, so only I could hear it. Really. Uh huh. I have to go now, Hank. Good-bye.

(to Larry)  
Hanks says bye.

Larry says nothing.

BEVERLY (cont'd)  
Yes, Larry said bye, Hank.

Beverly finally hangs the phone up.

LARRY  
How often does he do that?

BEVERLY  
Two or three times a day.

LARRY  
Is that all? Well, then. That's okay.  
Do you have a minute?

BEVERLY  
I always have time for you. You're my boss.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LARRY  
(pointing)  
And don't you forget it.

Larry bumps the desk causing a stack of mail to fall. He motions to pick it up, hoping Beverly will stop him.

BEVERLY  
That's okay. I'll get that.

LARRY  
You sure? I don't mind.

BEVERLY  
Leave it. What's up?

Larry sits on the edge of the desk causing even more mail to hit the floor. He pretends not to notice.

LARRY  
Well, as you know, I'm doing this movie.

BEVERLY  
Your motion picture debut. Congrats!

LARRY  
Thanks. Thanks. Well, I was thinking about changing my name.

BEVERLY  
Now why on earth would you want to do that?

LARRY  
Larry Sanders doesn't say leading man to me. You know, like Russell Crowe or Vin Diesel. Admit it. Larry Sanders says middle-aged periodontist.

BEVERLY  
Oh, I disagree. People love you. Jacked up name and all.

LARRY  
Thank you, Beverly. But do you think Larry Sanders will pop on a marquee or a movie poster?

BEVERLY  
It looks just fine on TV.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LARRY

Well, Beverly, as I'm sure you know,  
what works in this medium doesn't  
necessarily transfer to the silver  
screen.

BEVERLY

I think you're over thinking this.

LARRY

(trying to sound "black")  
For reals tho?

BEVERLY

Oh no you didn't. Don't even go there  
Larry. You barely have the white guy  
thing down.

LARRY

Sorry.

BEVERLY

In my opinion, Larry Sanders is  
perfect.

Larry digs into his jacket pockets and takes out a small piece of paper.

LARRY

I have a short list and right now I'm  
leaning towards Larry Cooper.

BEVERLY

Larry, you're so crazy.

LARRY

What do you think, "Seventeen Again"  
starring Renee Zellweger and Larry  
Cooper?

Beverly Laughs.

LARRY (cont'd)

What? I'm serious. I think I'm on to  
something here. Larry Cooper. It rhymes  
with Gary Cooper. It's perfect. What do  
you think? I even look like the guy  
from a distance.

Larry saunters over to his office imitating Gary Cooper.

LARRY (cont'd)

See? How does my ass look?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEVERLY  
Stick with Larry Sanders, Larry  
Sanders.

LARRY  
Really?

BEVERLY  
Definitely.

LARRY  
Maybe we should set up a focus group.

INT. LARRY'S OFFICE - LATE MORNING

Once again Larry is on the speakerphone with Joel.

LARRY  
Joel, are you there?

JOEL  
(on the speakerphone)  
I'm here.

LARRY  
I love the script.

JOEL  
Really? Glad to hear it.

LARRY  
It's terrific. As you know, the  
contracts are signed. When do we start  
shooting?

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
Soon. Soon. I told you it was perfect  
for you babe. Did you get the rewrite  
yet?

LARRY  
Rewrite?

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
I had it sent over. You should get it  
any minute.

LARRY  
We're not talking major changes here,  
are we?

WE HEAR a knock at the door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
Course not. It's nearly perfect.

LARRY  
Good. Because I've heard how these things can begin to take on a life of their own. I saw "The Player" twice.

Beverly enters, hands Larry a new script and exits.

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
Relax, Larry. That was just a movie. The motion picture machine is nothing like that.

LARRY  
Got it, Joel. Hey, this has Dan O'Bannon's name on it. Didn't he write, "Alien"?

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
What? You didn't like "Alien"?

LARRY  
I loved it. Especially the part where Herve Villachez, bursts through John Hurt's stomach. But I thought this is a romantic comedy about a guy who overcomes his mid-life crisis.

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
That has not changed. We're talking minor tweaks, Lar. Nuance. Polish, babe.

LARR  
My character still triumphs over his mid-life crisis?

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
With his wit and sense of humor.

LARRY  
Great.

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
And a shit load of special effects.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LARRY  
I see.

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
Now it takes place in the future and you're a recently retired talk show host, slash double-agent for the National Security Agency, caught up in a tangled web of inter-galactic intrigue...with marital problems.

LARRY  
Interesting...And you still think I'm the man for the job?

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
Who else could pull this off?

LARRY  
I take it Arnold's not interested?

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
Hello? He's a little busy running the state right now.

LARRY  
Oh. That's right. He's our governor. I thought that was all just a bad dream. I'm pretty sure that's the first sign of the Apocalypse.

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
Funny. So, you ready to do this thing, Paco?

LARRY  
I'm in like Flynn.

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
You da man, Larry.

LARRY  
Yes I am.

JOEL

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE THE BULLPEN -- LATE MORNING

Phil is on the phone with his agent. And he's not happy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PHIL  
(yelling)  
Look, either you renegotiate my deal by  
the end of the day, or I'm walking! I'm  
serious! I don't need this under the  
table, back-door bullshit! What??  
That's your job you human leech! You  
talk to Arthur!

Beverly walks past trying her best to appear oblivious.

PHIL (cont'd)  
A joke? Does it sound like I'm laughing  
here? Does it?

Phil uses the phone to beat a hole into the wall.

PHIL (cont'd)  
(even louder)  
Seven hundred grand! Seven hundred  
grand! Seven hundred grand!

INT. LARRY'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Larry is reading a Hollywood trade paper with his feet propped up on his desk. WE HEAR A KNOCK at the door.

HANK (O.S.)  
(muffled through the door)  
Room service.

LARRY  
Yes?

Larry's places the paper out of sight.

HANK (O.S.)  
Larry, may I have a word with you? I  
believe Beverly mentioned my coming by.

Larry looks at the door, saying nothing.

HANK (O.S.)  
(cont'd)  
Larry? If I could trouble you for just  
a moment of your time, I'll be off and  
on my way.  
(beat)  
I know you're in there, Larry.

LARRY  
What is it Hank?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HANK (O.S.)  
 May I enter? You have my word as your  
 personal friend and peer, this won't  
 take a second.  
 (beat)  
 Larry?

LARRY  
 (reluctant)  
 Come in, Hank.

Larry takes the phone off the hook, as the door opens, as if he's about to place a call. Hank enters and closes the door.

HANK  
 Thank you so much, Larry. I promise  
 I'll be out of your hair in the  
 twinkling of an eye. That's a lovely  
 tie you're wearing today. Is that  
 virgin silk?

LARRY  
 Hank, I'm expecting a really important  
 call. What can I do for you?

HANK  
 (beat)  
 You're not leaving the show are you  
 Larry? Kill me now if you're even  
 thinking about making a move without  
 me.

LARRY  
 Hank, you'll be the first to know when  
 that ship sails. What can I do for you?

Larry reluctantly places the phone back on the hook.

HANK  
 You're not leaving then?

LARRY  
 No. I'm just doing a small part in a  
 movie.

HANK  
 Praise Allah!  
 (beat)  
 Any room for me?

LARRY  
 What do you want, Hank?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HANK

I'd like your thoughts on an exciting opportunity that has landed on my platter.

LARRY

Geez Hank, another endorsement deal? What are you hocking now?

HANK

The folks at the "Hair Club For Men" have approached me about representing their hair replacement system. And I have humbly accepted.

LARRY

Is that right? That's nice, Hank.

HANK

You really think so Larry?

LARRY

Are you serious? Those guys are still in business with all those hair transplant operations out there?

HANK

They're like Coke Classic, Lar.  
They're the original.

LARRY

Well, then. I'm sure you will be an inspiration to the follically challenged everywhere. Now, if you don't mind...

Larry takes the phone off the hook and holds it up to his ear.

HANK

Because if you think for one minute I'm compromising the integrity of "The Larry Sanders Show" I'll walk away. The ink is still wet.

LARRY

It's fine, Hank. As long as it doesn't interfere with your duties on "The Larry Sanders Show".

HANK

My priorities are well in line. First and foremost, I'm a disciple of Mr.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HANK (cont'd)  
Larry Sanders. A sheep in your  
bountiful fold.

LARRY  
Hank?

HANK  
Yes, Larry?

LARRY  
Could you shut the door on your way  
out?

Hank finally rises to leave.

HANK  
Will do. Thanks so much for penciling  
me in and for your undying support and  
friendship.

Hank shakes Larry's hand violently and turns for the door  
then turns for one last comment. After all, this is Hank.

HANK (cont'd)  
Larry, should you or your loved ones  
ever require the cutting edge  
technology of the "Hair Club For Men",  
you and yours will receive an  
unprecedented discount package. That  
was part of the deal.

Larry is speechless. Hank sheepishly backs out of Larry's  
office and closes the door as Larry props his feet back up  
and takes the trade paper out again.

INT. BULLPEN- AFTERNOON

Phil, seated at the table, is still fuming when he spots  
Arthur rushing by outside the door.

PHIL  
Arthur, you got a minute?

Arthur stops and looks at his watch.

ARTHUR  
What's on your mind, Phil? I have a  
meeting with the network scum in five  
minutes.

PHIL  
I don't usually like to discuss these  
kinds of issues, but my agent insists  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PHIL (cont'd)  
you hear it from me. It's about my  
deal...

ARTHUR  
That reminds me, I meant to ask you  
about your agent. Where's he located?

PHIL  
Broder, Kurland, Webb...

ARTHUR  
And Uffner. Yes, I know them. Old  
friend of mine, Jim Burrows is with  
them. Fine outfit. Do you know if  
they're taking new clients on?

PHIL  
I'm not sure. Why?

ARTHUR  
Well, my Godson, he's a brilliant  
television writer, just brilliant, and  
he's looking to make a move out west.

PHIL  
That's great Artie.

ARTHUR  
He's with Letterman right now. He's  
doing very well, the talented little  
shit, but he's really sick of New York.  
It's making him crazy. He's seeking a  
change of pace. That sort of thing.

PHIL  
New York is a good place to visit,  
but...

ARTHUR  
You know, I love that young man as if  
he were my own son. Say Phil, would you  
happen to know what's going on in town?

PHIL  
Me?

ARTHUR  
I mean, would you be privy to any jobs  
out there? Through the grapevine, so to  
speak. You "writer types" hear things  
don't you?

PHIL  
Sure. But LA's pretty locked down...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARTHUR  
Can I get your agent's number?

PHIL  
Uh, yeah. Sure.

ARTHUR  
you're a pal, Phil. You'll let me know  
if you hear of any developments?

PHIL  
Sure, Artie.

Arthur looks at his watch again.

ARTHUR  
I'm sorry, I've gotten off track,  
haven't I? What was it you wanted to  
talk about?

PHIL  
(beat)  
Nothing.

ARTHUR  
You sure? I still have ninety seconds.

PHIL  
It's nothing. No biggie.

Arthur takes off down the hall.

ARTHUR  
I'm always here for you Phil. Take  
care.

Phil punches the wall and winces in pain.

PHIL  
(under his breath)  
Shit.

INT. HANKS OFFICE - LATE AFTERNOON

Seated with Hank are FRANK GULICK, BOB SMITH and NED MARTEL, heads of marketing at the "Hair Club For Men". It's obvious these guys don't just work for the club, they're members, as the tiny corn rows of freshly planted hair plugs on their scalps attest.

FRANK  
Mr. Kingsley...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HANK  
Please, gentlemen, call me Hank. We're all friends here.

FRANK  
Hank, here's the way we see the campaign. Do you recall Kathleen Sullivan's work for "Weight Watcher's"?

HANK  
Of course. In the mid 90's, right? You know, Ms. Sullivan lives not far from one of my homes. I run into her at the Vons' on Ventura from time to time.  
(beat)  
I'm sorry, go on.

FRANK  
Well, Hank, F.Y.I., That campaign increased market share in an otherwise flat category. The industry hasn't seen growth like that since the "Spuds Mackenzie" campaign for Bud Light in the eighties.

HANK  
I love that little guy.

BOB  
Hank, sadly, "Spuds" is no longer with us.

HANK  
Stop. Really?

NED  
Dead to the world.

HANK  
What a tragedy.

FRANK  
He, she, that is, passed away in her sleep last year.

HANK  
I'm sure she's wagging her tail this very moment in that big dog pound in the sky.

NED  
Don't be ridiculous. Dogs don't have souls.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HANK  
There's know way of knowing that for sure, now is there?

FRANK  
You always have to put a negative spin on things, don't you?

NED  
Sorry.

HANK  
What does this have to do with the "Weight Watcher's" spots?

FRANK  
We admired how they illustrated the step by step progress of Miss Sullivan's weight loss. We'd like to do the same with our new campaign.

BOB  
Tracking your hair implantations from beginning to end, until we reach our target goal: A full head of hair.

HANK  
That's brilliant.

NED  
We think so.

HANK  
So when do we start?

FRANK  
Next spring.

HANK  
Splendid.

NED  
Now is as good a time as any to discuss the implantation process.

Bob rises from his chair and walks over to a huge easel.

FRANK  
Hank, if you'll focus your attention on the diagram behind us.

Bob picks up a short pointer and flips the cover of the huge pad of paper on the easel in front of them, revealing a fine line drawing of Hank's pate.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BOB  
(pointing as he talks)  
There are two ways we can go here,  
Hank. Start at the anterior of the  
cranium working our way back, or at the  
posterior and work our way to the  
front.

FRANK  
We recommend the latter.

HANK  
What's the difference?

FRANK  
It's much more aesthetically appealing.

NED  
That's crucial.

BOB  
And we don't quite know why, but the  
implants seem to take much better.

NED  
There's also less risk of infection.

Frank and Bob shoot Ned a look. Hank notices this exchange.

HANK  
Infection?

BOB  
That almost never happens.

HANK  
Almost?

FRANK  
Only on rush jobs.

BOB  
The whole process will take six months  
at the most, which increases the  
overall success rate by a full ninety  
percent.

Bob walks back over to his chair and sits back down.

FRANK  
And if this thing washes out to our  
expectations, we have plans to go  
global with the campaign.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HANK

Really?

FRANK

Concentrating on the far-east.

BOB

We've made arrangements to have you take Japanese lessons with the top tutor in Southern California.

HANK

Is that really necessary?

FRANK

Goes to credibility. The Japanese are very suspicious of western products.

BOB

When in Tokyo...

HANK

Say no more.

HANK (cont'd)

It all sounds very exciting. So why me?

NED

I know. You're thinking Rob Reiner, right? He's all wrong, Hank. Sure, he's got a lot of surface area to play with. But his head is all pointy on the top.

FRANK

Honestly, your popularity as Larry Sander's side-kick put you over the top.

HANK

Frank, I prefer the term, "Co-host".

FRANK

I'll make a mental note.

NED

Ted Danson was bounced around, but he still hasn't come out of the closet. Like everyone doesn't know that's a rug.

BOB

And Ted Koppel was asking for Jerry Seinfeld money. Like he needs the dough.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRANK  
Our first choice was Matt Lauer, but  
you see how that abortion turned out.

NED  
Somebody please give that man a hat.

HANK  
Oh. Oh...that explains it.

NED  
We have six months of qualitative  
research that tells us, based on your  
track record as a pitch-man, our long-  
term fiscal goals are reachable.

BOB  
We love "The Garden Weasel" spots.

FRANK  
Not to mention the fine job you're  
doing on the medical alert necklace and  
the adjustable beds.

NED  
And isn't that you in the new Green  
Giant campaign?

HANK  
You boys have really done your  
homework.

FRANK  
We don't take chances, Hank.

NED  
You also happen to have the most  
pronounced example of male-pattern  
baldness in network television.

BOB  
Bar none.

Hank's face turns red.

HANK  
I'm flattered.

BOB  
You're going to be terrific Hank!

INT. ARTHUR'S OFFICE - MID AFTERNOON

Arthur is leaning up against his desk playing a Gameboy.  
Jerry enters, slamming the door behind him.

ARTHUR  
Holy Mary, sweet mother of Jesus!

JERRY  
Sorry about that.

Arthur never looks away from the Gameboy.

ARTHUR  
What the hell do you want?

JERRY  
I just wanted to let you know Phil went  
for it big time.

ARTHUR  
I saw the hole in the wall. The repair  
of which will come out of your salary.

JERRY  
It was worth it to see him squirm.

Jerry walks over and stands next to Arthur.

ARTHUR  
You remind me of myself in my pimple-  
faced youth.

JERRY  
Thanks.

ARTHUR  
You pick up my Laker's tickets?

JERRY  
Hell, yes.

ARTHUR  
Next to Nicholson?

JERRY  
Center court.

ARTHUR  
You're a prince. Just put them in my  
coat pocket dissolve yourself. You're  
breaking my concentration.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jerry places the tickets in Arthur's pocket and continues to watch him play the Gameboy.

ARTHUR (cont'd)  
How would you like a fist sandwich, you little weasel? Shove off.

JERRY  
Where'd you get the Gameboy?

ARTHUR  
I borrowed it from one of those snot-nosed little crumb snatchers on the lot next door. Spoiled little fuckers.

JERRY  
You know you're going straight to hell.

ARTHUR  
Would you like to beat me to the gate?

JERRY  
I'm out.

INT. HANK'S OFFICE - EARLY EVENING

Hank is admiring his reflection in a hand held mirror. Mary Lou, Hank's personal assistant, enters without knocking, startling Hank, causing him to drop said mirror shattering it on the floor. Mary Lou places Hank's fan club newsletter, mail and a small, gift-wrapped package, with a red bow attached to it on his desk.

MARY LOU  
I'm really sorry, Hank. I didn't mean to.

HANK  
(screaming)  
Sorry? Sorry isn't good enough, Missy!  
Look at this mess. You had better march out of here, get a broom and get it cleaned up...and I mean now!

MARY LOU  
Yes, sir!

HANK  
Did you wash and dry my car?

MARY LOU  
Yes, sir!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HANK

Well, what do you know everyone? As it turns out, Mary Lou can do something right. Now put that stuff down on my desk in a neat pile and get out. And don't you ever come in here again without knocking. "Capese"?

MARY LOU

Yes, sir!

Mary Lou exits.

MARY LOU (cont'd)  
(under her breath)  
Asshole!

Hank studies the mountain of fan mail and picks the gift-wrapped box up and shakes it for a hint of what it contains.

INT. WOMAN'S BATHROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

Mary Lou, her face streaming with tears, tosses a pair of scissors, a bottle of glue, a photograph with a hole cut out of it and a small empty cardboard box in the trash.

BACK TO:

INT. HANK'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

Hank unwraps the package. He carefully removes the contents of the box. WE SEE it's a Chia Pet with a full, luscious coat of beautiful, green grass. Over it's face, a mug-shot of Hank Kingsley, all teeth, is glued to it. Hank's jaw drops in horror. He slowly rises from his chair, walks around to the front of his desk and with all his might, hurls the Chia Pet onto the floor causing it to explode into a million pieces.

HANK

(screaming)

Phil! Jerry! You are history! History,  
do you hear?!!!

INT. WOMAN'S BATHROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

WE HEAR HANK SCREAMING, through the thin walls of the bathroom. Mary Lou is looking into the mirror. Through her tears and a ball of tissue, a smile forms on her face.

INT. LARRY'S OFFICE - MORNING

Once more Larry finds himself on the speakerphone with Joel Gold. He's anxiously flipping through the notorious screenplay, now in it's third reincarnation.

LARRY  
Joel, are you there? It's Larry.

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
Larry? Larry who?

LARRY  
Larry Sanders.

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
Christ, why didn't you say so? Did you get the latest revision of the script?

LARRY  
That's what I called.

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
F.Y.I., we've got Jonathan Demme interested in this.

LARRY  
So my agent tells me.

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
Danny Devito is licking his chops, too. The guy needs a hit after "Death To Smoochy" and "Duplex".

LARRY  
That's nice. I see we have a new writer.

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
Really?

LARRY  
You weren't aware?

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
Who am I, God?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LARRY  
I don't know what to think, Joel. I had no intention of doing a western.

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
Don't wimp out on me, Larry. That's an easy fix. F.Y.I., Darryl Hannah is out.

LARRY  
I didn't know she was in.

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
She's doing "Splash Three". Now your love interest is Sean Young.

LARRY  
(beat)  
Sean Young?

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
Is there a problem?

LARRY  
We have a history.

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
She's gone with the wind.

LARRY  
Just like that?

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
As leading man, you have cart blanche.

LARRY  
Except when it concerns trivial things like the script.

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
I hear Holly Hunter is chomping at the bit to do a western. Holly Hunter on a horse. How hot is that? Are you thinking what I'm thinking, Larry?

LARRY  
Catherine The Great?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOEL  
Hell yes. We're talking Holly Hunter on  
a big black horse.

LARRY  
Why not just remake Caligula? I look  
great in a toga. And I'm sure as you've  
heard by now, I'm Milton Berle's love  
child so I'm hung like a rhinocerus.

A beat.

JOEL  
Let me sleep on it and get back to you.

Beverly pokes her head in and motions for Larry to get off  
the phone. Larry is relieved.

LARRY  
I gotta go Joel.

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
Hey, did I mention Tarantino's on  
board?

LARRY  
Great.

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
Let's do dinner tomorrow. Your place,  
okay Larry? Tell Jenny to set for five.

Before Larry can react, Joel hangs up. Beverly enters.

BEVERLY  
Larry. Steve and Stephanie from the  
network are here to see you.

LARRY  
What? What the hell do they want? Tell  
them I'm busy.

BEVERLY  
I can't. They're right outside.

LARRY  
Where's Arty? I don't want to talk to  
those people. C'mon, Beverly. Help a  
brother out.

BEVERLY  
Mmm hmm. Brother my ass.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEPHANIE and STEVE, two network executives young enough to be Larry's kids walk right past Beverly and into Larry's office.

LARRY

Shit.

STEPHANIE

Thank you, Beverly.

LARRY

Yes, thank you so much, Beverly.

Beverly, unfazed, pulls the door shut and exits. Stephanie and Steve sit down in the chairs in front of Larry's desk.

LARRY (cont'd)

Please. Have a seat.

STEPHANIE

Larry, we won't take up to much of your time. I think you know why we're here.

LARRY

You and monkey boy are going to perform a sex act on my desk?

STEVE

Hey, now just wait a minute here...

LARRY

Didn't I see you at Venice Beach last weekend with that organ grinder? Remember me? I gave you a peanut?

STEPHANIE

Larry, there's a rumor going around that you signed on to do a movie without network approval. Is it true?

LARRY

Why? Do you want to be my fluffer?

STEPHANIE

A fluffer? What's a fluffer?

STEVE

That kind of talk is really uncalled for. We're just trying to do our jobs here, man. Just like you.

LARRY

What is it that you do exactly?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEPHANIE

Larry, I'm sure you're aware that you can't do anything outside The Larry Sander's Show without prior network consent. Commercials, interviews with the print and broadcast media, motion pictures, or any material that might reflect badly on the network, our sponsors or our parent company.

LARRY

We have parents? I thought we were bastards.

STEVE

You don't know when to quit, do you?

STEPHANIE

Look, Larry...

LARRY

You look. It's a done deal. I'm doing the picture.

STEPHANIE

Fine, Larry. We're just going to need a copy of the script.

LARRY

No problem.

INT. WRITER'S ROOM - LATER

Hank leans in the doorway and glares at Phil and Jerry. They stare at him blankly, so he turns to walk away.

JERRY

(singing)

Chuh-chuh-chuh-Chia!

Hank sticks his head back in the room. Phil and Jerry laugh.

HANK

You smug little assholes.

PHIL

Hey, don't look at me. Hey...What's that?

(indicating Hank's scalp)

Right there. I was pre-med and that looks like cancerius pretensis to me. You better have that looked at.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HANK  
(feeling his head)  
Cancerius pratensis? Isn't that Latin?

PHIL  
Yeah. Loosely translated I believe it means crabgrass.

HANK  
Why, you little shit! Come here!

Hank lunges for Phil but Jerry step in between them.

HANK (cont'd)  
If I find out you little fucks had anything to do with this, I'm going to eat your children!

Hank leaves in a huff and Phil and Jerry sit down at the table. Phil begins typing away at his PowerBook. Jerry watches him nervously. His PowerBook sits on the table closed shut.

JERRY  
So we're cool here?

INT. MEN'S ROOM -- MID MORNING

Larry is at a urinal. Jerry comes in and walks up to him.

JERRY  
Hey, Larry. How's it going.

LARRY  
Everything's coming up alright. Thanks for asking.

JERRY  
I heard about your movie deal.

LARRY  
I heard about that thing with Phil. I thought you guys were tight.

JERRY  
Hey! Shhhh!

Jerry checks to make sure he and Larry are alone.

JERRY (cont'd)  
It was a joke, okay?

LARRY  
Hey, I'm not casting stones.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JERRY  
Thanks so much for telling me you were interested in doing a movie, Larry.

LARRY  
C'mon. Give me a break.

JERRY  
I've been working on a script for you for two years and you go and run off with some Hollywood jerks who don't give a shit about you. Thanks a lot.

LARRY  
Do we have to talk about this in the toilet? I'm trying to take a piss here.

JERRY  
I bet the first thing they did was bring in new writers. Am I right? Tell me I'm wrong.

A beat.

LARRY  
Do you have a copy of it on you?

JERRY  
Really?

LARRY  
Sure.

JERRY  
Would you just take a look at it?

LARRY  
I'd be happy to. It's not a western is it?

JERRY  
You rock, Larry. I'll go print a copy out for you.

WE HEAR A TOILET FLUSH. Larry and Jerry look at each other.

INT. OUTSIDE LARRY'S OFFICE - LATE MORNING

Larry is about to enter his office when Stephanie approaches him from behind in a rage.

STEPHANIE  
Hey Larry...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Stephanie spins Larry around and when he see's it's her, it's obvious from the look of instant terror on his face he knows it's payback time for the fluffer remark. Stephanie's knees Larry in his groin causing him to drop to the floor like a sack of hammers.

STEPHANIE  
(cont'd)  
We're okay with the script.

Stephanie slowly walks away just as Beverly approaches from the other direction noticing Larry grabbing his crotch and writhing in pain.

BEVERLY  
Larry, what happened? Are you okay?

LARRY  
No.

BEVERLY  
Do you want me to call an ambulance?

LARRY  
No.

BEVERLY  
Are you sure?

LARRY  
No.

INT. LARRY'S THERAPIST'S OFFICE -- LATE AFTERNOON

Larry is seated in an oversized leather chair. DR. SETH FRIED sits opposite Larry in a matching chair.

LARRY  
I don't know. I'm not sure if I can carry a film. Do I look fat?

DR. FRIED  
Larry, whenever we venture out to try something new, it's only natural that we feel some apprehension. It's human nature. It's very normal to feel the way you're feeling Larry.

LARRY  
It is?

DR. FRIED  
Sure. Absolutely. It's a big emotional risk putting yourself out there.  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DR. FRIED  
Exposing yourself. Wondering if people will embrace you.

LARRY  
So you don't think I'm fat?

DR. FRIED  
Larry, I feel your anxiety stems from the lack of a well-defined arc in the growth of your character. I mean really, the second act just falls apart.

Seemingly from out of thin air, Dr. Fried hands Larry the latest version of the script.

DR. FRIED  
(cont'd)  
I think you're going to really like what I've done here, Larry. I already ran it past Joel. Take your time. It's on me.

INT. HALLWAY - LATER- A FEW MINUTES BEFORE THE SHOW

Larry and Arthur are on their way to the set to tape the show.

LARRY  
Arthur, you gotta get me out of this thing.

ARTHUR  
Not panning out as expected, eh?

LARRY  
This guy is starting to really make me nervous.

ARTHUR  
One trick, Hollywood side-show act.  
Like I said, always stick with what you know.

LARRY  
This guy is going to have me doing "Psycho Part Three" before it's all over.

Arthur Laughs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LARRY (cont'd)  
 I'll end up on Sunset and Labrea  
 selling out-dated maps to the homes of  
 the stars.

ARTHUR  
 Nonsense Larry. We'll resolve this  
 matter after the show.

LARRY  
 Thanks, Arthur.

ARTHUR  
 No problemo. I'll have that piece of  
 horse hockey on his knees, licking your  
 Kenneth Cole's.

INT. TALK SHOW SET - EVENING

On "The Larry Sanders Show" logo and montage opening. Over this we hear Hank's introduction.

HANK (V.O.)  
 Live, on tape from Hollywood, it's "The Larry Sanders Show"! Tonight, join Larry and his guests Fabio, Uma Thurman, Martin Lawrence and me, "Hey Now!" Hank Kingsley. And now, the man who proved beyond the shadow of a doubt, Soylent Green is indeed made out of people...Larry Sanders!

Larry enters through the curtain and crosses down to his mark for the monologue. The audience erupts in wild applause.

(MONOLOGUE)

LARRY (CONT'D)  
 We've got a simply super show for you this evening..."The elegant, ass kicking, star of "Kill Bill 2", Uma Thurman", "The Fabulous Fabio" (yes he's still alive) and my main man, "Mac Daddy" Martin Lawrence are on this very show. So don't inhale, we'll be right back before you can say, "Drop It Like It's Hot".

As the audience applauds dissolve to:

INT. TALK SHOW SET - LATER

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Larry is interviewing God's second-born son, Fabio. Martin Lawrence and Hank are sitting off-camera on the couch.

LARRY (cont'd)  
So Fabio, or should I call you Mr.  
Fabio?

FABIO  
I am Fabio, of course.

LARRY  
So Fabio, where do I start? Your career  
is really taking off. Again. I'm sure  
you must hear this all the time, but  
you are just stunning in person.  
Really. In fact, may I kiss you?

The audience laughs. Fabio does not.

LARRY (cont'd)  
Things are really going well for you.  
You have a new CD, a new novel, a new  
perfume...you're a renaissance man for  
the new millennium. What, other than  
your enticing anatomy, do you think is  
the secret to your success?

FABIO  
I am Fabio, of course.

Larry looks at the camera. The audience chuckles.

LARRY  
Of course. I see.  
(beat)  
It's obvious there's more to you than  
your perfectly chiseled body and Euro-  
mullet. I listened to your CD, and I  
must tell you, I was aroused. How long  
have you been singing professionally?

FABIO  
I am Fabio. Fabio does not sing.

LARRY  
Are you sure. I'm sure I heard voices.

FABIO  
Fabio does not sing. They were, how you  
say, studio musicians.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LARRY

That must be why I found your music  
original and yet, strangely reminiscent  
of early Milli Vanilli.

MARTIN

Damn, Larry. Milli Vanilli? How long  
ago was that? You trying to bring it  
back?

LARRY

Not long enough.

MARTIN

True that.

The audience laughs again.

LARRY

(beat)

Well, Fabio, I understand your book is  
just flying off the shelves. Was this  
your first crack at the written word?

FABIO

Fabio does not write. I am too busy to  
write. I hire people. They write. I pay  
them. Everybody is very very happy.

LARRY

So you didn't sing on your CD and you  
didn't pen a single word of your book.  
Tell us about this new fragrance.  
Jeannie, the former Mrs. Sanders, just  
loves it.

FABIO

Fabio is allergic to cosmetics, of  
course.

LARRY

I did not know that. Hank, did you know  
that?

HANK (O.S.)

Negative Larry.

LARRY

So Fabio, if one were to sum up the  
essence of Fabio, one might say, "you  
think, therefore you am Fabio", of  
course. Is that correct?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FABIO  
Of course. I am Fabio.

LARRY  
That you am.

FABIO  
Why do you ask Fabio so many questions?

LARRY  
Well Fabio, this is a talk show. In this format, as a rule, hosts tend to ask questions of their guests. Perhaps you would you like to ask me a question.

Fabio looks at Larry as if he has insulted his manhood.

FABIO  
No. I am Fabio, of course.

Larry looks at the audience and then at Arthur standing behind one of the cameras.

MARTIN  
I got a question.

A wide-shot of Larry, Fabio, Martin and Hank.

MARTIN (cont'd)  
Yeah, I got a question, Larry.

LARRY  
(relieved)  
Is that right?  
(motioning to Martin)  
Well, come on down.  
(to Fabio)  
You don't mind do you?

Martin walks over, waiting for Fabio to move.

FABIO  
I am Fabio, of course.

LARRY  
Is that a yeh or a neh?

MARTIN LAWRENCE  
Man, get your ass up. You ain't all that.

The audience laughs, as Fabio rises and slides down the couch toward Hank. Hank taps him on his leg for being such

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

a good sport. Fabio looks at Hank threateningly. Hank freezes in fear.

Larry talking to Martin.

LARRY  
Martin. How long has it been? six,  
seven minutes?

MARTIN LAWRENCE  
Oh, you the funny man now.  
(referring to Fabio)  
He ain't too, bright now is he? He got  
that chest and stringy hair and things,  
but he ain't exactly a threat in Final  
Jeopardy.

LARRY  
Now, Martin, if you don't have anything  
nice to say.

INT. LARRY'S OFFICE

Larry and Arthur are on the speakerphone having a showdown with Joel Gold.

ARTHUR  
The long and short of it is my boy  
wants out of this fiasco. Everybody  
walks, nobody gets hurt.

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
You're shittin' me, right?

ARTHUR  
I'm deadly serious sir.

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
We have his John Hancock Arthur.

ARTHUR  
That's "Hancock" you mindless lemming.

LARRY  
Come on Joel, this script doesn't even  
remotely resemble the script I agreed  
to. Nine rewrites in a week? What the  
fuck is that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
Things change. Nature of the beast,  
Larry. Grow up.

ARTHUR  
(yelling)  
Look here, you over-weight, walking  
pile of yak shit!

LARRY  
(quietly)  
Artie, be nice.

ARTHUR  
Fuck 'em.

LARRY  
Please, after you.

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
Go ahead. Just try and back out on me,  
Larry. I would love it.

ARTHUR  
You're skating on thin ice with sharp  
skates, you rat bastard.

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
Sticks and stones, Arthur. Sticks and  
stones. You two recall what happened to  
Kim Basinger when she tried to back out  
of a little film called "Boxing  
Helena"? She's still in the poor house,  
Larry.

ARTHUR  
(threatening)  
This is your last chance.

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
What are you going to do, insult me to  
death?

ARTHUR  
Okay, you want to get nasty, we'll play  
it your way. I hear on occasion you and  
your underage, illegal alien Venezuelan  
pool boy, Rico, like to play swallow  
the sword.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOEL  
 (on speakerphone)  
 You son of a bitch.

ARTHUR  
 (imitating Joel in the throws  
 of passion)  
 All for you! It's all for you, Rico!  
 Rico Suave'! Aye Papi Chulo! I'm cuckoo  
 for Cocoa Puffs! Cuckoo for Coco Puffs!  
 Should I go on? Or would you prefer I  
 have some pictures of you and boy  
 wonder Fed-exed to the Mrs?

Dead silence.

ARTHUR (cont'd)  
 Cat got your tongue Mr. Gold?

More dead silence.

JOEL  
 (long beat)  
 (on speakerphone)  
 Larry, sorry things didn't work out.

ARTHUR  
 Parting is such sweet sorrow.

JOEL  
 (on speakerphone)  
 You know, we have Jeffrey Boam on the  
 current re-write. He wrote "Funny  
 Farm", you know.

LARRY  
 The Chevy Chase vehicle.

JOEL  
 (on speakerphone)  
 You saw it?

LARRY  
 After "Vacation", it's perhaps my  
 favorite Chevy Chase film.

JOEL  
 (on speakerphone)  
 Are we still on for dinner, Lar?

LARRY  
 Eight o'clock good for you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOEL  
(on speakerphone)  
See you then.

LARRY  
So long.

FADE TO:

BLACK

**END OF SHOW**

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