Comedy duet & multi-cast scripts

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Ejection Issue

Sketch, customer service · Adult (25-40) · Neutral American · 1 minute

Cast: DREW PAT

A customer support call. PAT, whose toaster has just launched breakfast across the kitchen. DREW, a support agent who reads from the script with total serenity

DREW Thank you for calling Brightloaf Appliances, this is Drew. How can I help today?

PAT My toaster is attacking me.

DREW I'm sorry to hear that. Can I take the model number?

PAT It's on the bottom. I'm not turning it over. It's watching me.

DREW Toasters don't have eyes.

PAT This one has intent.

DREW Can you describe the problem?

PAT I put in a bagel. It went up. It did not come down. Half of it's in the light fitting.

DREW And the other half?

PAT Through the cat flap. The cat hasn't come back.

DREW I'm going to log that as an "ejection issue."

PAT There's a box for "ejection issue"?

DREW There is. It's quite a popular box.

PAT What?

DREW Have you tried turning it off and on again?

PAT Off, yes. On? No. I'm not an idiot.

DREW I'll need you to try it. For the form.

PAT If I die, I want that on the form.

DREW I'll add a note. Go ahead.

SFX: a click, then a loud metallic twang

PAT ...It's gone.

DREW The toaster?

PAT The light fitting.

DREW Good news. You're still under warranty.

Sixty-Eight Degrees

Sitcom, old couple · Mature (55+) · Neutral American · 1 minute

Cast: BARB GENE

A living room, 6 a.m. BARB, 74, and GENE, 77, married fifty-one years. The thermostat is on the wall between them

BARB Touch it and die.

GENE I didn't touch it.

BARB Your hand is on it, Eugene.

GENE My hand is resting near it. I'm allowed to rest.

BARB It says sixty-four. I left it at seventy.

GENE It must have drifted.

BARB Six degrees? What is it, a canoe?

GENE Barbara, it's a sauna in here. The plants are sweating.

BARB Plants don't sweat.

GENE The fern is sweating. I saw a drop.

BARB That's because you watered it with your coffee.

GENE That was one time.

BARB That was yesterday.

GENE ...The fern needed a boost.

BARB Fifty-one years, and every morning I wake up in a meat locker.

GENE You know what's cheaper than heat? A sweater.

BARB You know what's cheaper than a divorce lawyer? Leaving the thermostat alone.

GENE Is that a threat?

BARB It's a budget.

GENE Sixty-six.

BARB Sixty-nine.

GENE Sixty-eight, and I make the pancakes.

BARB Blueberry?

GENE Blueberry.

BARB ...Sixty-eight. But if that fern dies, I'm telling the kids it was you.

Fire Drill

Sitcom, workplace · Adult (25-40) · Neutral American · 1 minute

Cast: TANYA KEVIN

An office car park during a fire drill. TANYA, 34, fire warden, in a hi-vis vest with a clipboard. KEVIN, 28, who has come out holding his lunch, his laptop and a small potted cactus

TANYA Name?

KEVIN Kevin. You know my name. We sit next to each other.

TANYA I have to ask. It's procedure. What's that?

KEVIN That's Gerald.

TANYA You rescued a cactus.

KEVIN You said evacuate. I evacuated. Gerald is part of the team.

TANYA The instructions say leave all belongings.

KEVIN He's not a belonging. He's a colleague.

TANYA And the lasagne?

KEVIN That's a belonging. But it was already warm.

TANYA Kevin, in a real fire you'd have died carrying a cactus and a lasagne.

KEVIN I'd have died with dignity. And lunch.

TANYA How long did it take you to get out?

KEVIN About eleven minutes.

TANYA Eleven minutes?

KEVIN I had to find a bag for the lasagne. You can't carry an open lasagne down nine flights of stairs, Tanya. It's not safe.

TANYA But the fire's safe.

KEVIN There was no fire. You told us on Monday. You sent a calendar invite.

TANYA ...That's to encourage compliance.

KEVIN You accepted your own invite.

TANYA Gerald is being written up.

Thumb

Sitcom, siblings · Young adult (18-25) · Neutral American · 1 minute

Cast: ZOE MILO

A kitchen at midnight. ZOE, 19, home from college, and her brother MILO, 18. A message meant for each other has just gone to the family group chat, which includes their mom

ZOE Did you send it?

MILO I thought you were the group chat. Your name's right above it.

ZOE You sent "Mom's new boyfriend looks like a thumb" to Mom.

MILO And Grandma. And Uncle Rick.

ZOE Uncle Rick's already seen it.

MILO Uncle Rick sees everything and says nothing. Uncle Rick is a thumb.

ZOE Can you unsend it?

MILO It's been four minutes. The window's two.

ZOE Why do you know that?

MILO I have made mistakes, Zoe.

ZOE Okay. Damage control. We say it was autocorrect.

MILO Autocorrect for what? What word turns into "thumb"?

ZOE "Thug"?

MILO That's worse! Now he's a thug!

ZOE Fine. We say you got hacked.

MILO Why would a hacker care what Dennis looks like?

SFX: a phone buzzes

ZOE She's typing.

MILO She's typing a lot.

ZOE She stopped.

MILO She started again.

ZOE ...She sent a photo.

MILO Of what?

ZOE Dennis. Doing a thumbs-up. Right next to his face. With a question mark.

MILO Oh no.

ZOE He's got a sense of humour.

MILO That's so much worse. Now we have to like him.

Unexpected Item

Sketch · Adult (30-45) · Neutral British · 1 minute

Cast: SUPERVISOR SHOPPER

A supermarket self-checkout. A SHOPPER holding a single banana. A SUPERVISOR, summoned for the fourth time in two minutes

SUPERVISOR What's it saying now?

SHOPPER "Unexpected item in bagging area."

SUPERVISOR What's in the bagging area?

SHOPPER Nothing. That's the point. It's expecting something, there's nothing there, and it's upset about it.

SUPERVISOR Did you scan the banana?

SHOPPER I scanned the banana. It asked if I had my own bag. I said yes. It didn't believe me.

SUPERVISOR Have you got your own bag?

SHOPPER ...Not as such.

SUPERVISOR So you lied to the machine.

SHOPPER I didn't think it would check!

SUPERVISOR It always checks. It's got a scale. It knows the weight of everything. It knows the weight of your soul.

SHOPPER It's one banana. It's forty pence.

SUPERVISOR It's thirty-eight. It rounds up if you're rude to it.

SHOPPER I haven't been rude to it!

SUPERVISOR You called it "mate." In a tone. I heard you from the bakery.

SHOPPER Can't you just override it?

SUPERVISOR I can. I need you to do something first.

SHOPPER What?

SUPERVISOR Apologise.

SHOPPER To the machine?

SUPERVISOR It's been a long week for all of us.

SHOPPER ...Sorry.

SFX: a cheerful beep

SUPERVISOR There. It was never about the banana.

Did You Eat Anything

Sitcom · Any · Irish · 1 minute

Cast: LIAM BRIDIE

A phone call, 7 a.m. BRIDIE, 79, in Cork, trying to ring her grandson. LIAM, 24, a stranger in Dublin, who picks up half asleep

LIAM Hello?

BRIDIE Conor, it's your nan. Did you eat anything?

LIAM Sorry, I think you've the wrong number.

BRIDIE Don't be smart, Conor.

LIAM I'm not Conor. I'm Liam.

BRIDIE Since when?

LIAM Since I was born?

BRIDIE Well, you sound like a Conor.

LIAM I'll take that as a compliment.

BRIDIE I wouldn't. Conor's a terrible eejit. He's after moving in with a girl who has a snake.

LIAM A snake?

BRIDIE In the flat. A python. Called Gareth.

LIAM That's a good name for a snake.

BRIDIE It is not. It's a name for a dentist. Did you eat anything?

LIAM Me?

BRIDIE Yes, you. Conor's not on the phone, is he?

LIAM ...I had a biscuit.

BRIDIE A biscuit. At your age. Put on a pot of porridge.

LIAM I don't have any oats.

BRIDIE What kind of house has no oats?

LIAM A rented one?

BRIDIE God help us. Right. If Conor rings you, tell him to eat something and keep the snake out of the bed.

LIAM Why would Conor ring me?

BRIDIE Well, he's not ringing me. Liam, is it? Ring me Sunday. I'll see did you get oats.

Mostly Fine

Sitcom · Young adult (18-25) · Neutral American · 1 minute

Cast: JEN HAILEY

A front hall, 11 p.m. JEN, 41, back from her first date night in two years. HAILEY, 18, the babysitter, who is being extremely calm about something

JEN How were they?

HAILEY Great. Amazing. Angels.

JEN Really?

HAILEY Mostly.

JEN What does mostly mean?

HAILEY So, first: everyone is fine. That's the headline. Everyone is alive and in bed.

JEN Why would they not be alive?

HAILEY They would. They are. I'm starting with the good news.

JEN What's the bad news?

HAILEY There's no bad news. There's just news. Owen has a new haircut.

JEN He's four.

HAILEY He did it himself. With the craft scissors. It's mostly on the left. It's quite modern.

JEN Oh my God.

HAILEY And Lily gave the goldfish a bath.

JEN The goldfish lives in water.

HAILEY That's what I told her. Warm water, though. With bubbles. He's fine. He's much cleaner. He seems confused.

JEN Is that everything?

HAILEY One more thing.

JEN Hailey.

HAILEY They taught the parrot a word.

JEN We don't have a parrot.

HAILEY The neighbours do. It lives by the fence.

JEN What word?

HAILEY You know what, the Hendersons will tell you. They seemed really keen to talk to you. So! How was your date?

The Fourth Alarm

Sitcom, roommates · Adult (25-40) · Neutral American · 1 minute

Cast: DEREK SANJAY

A shared apartment, 3 a.m. DEREK, 27, standing on a chair holding a broom. SANJAY, 29, in a bathrobe, very calm

SFX: a smoke alarm chirps

DEREK There! Did you hear that?

SANJAY Everyone in the building heard that. The building across the street heard that.

DEREK It's doing it every forty seconds. I've timed it. I've been timing it for an hour.

SANJAY Why didn't you change the battery?

DEREK I can't find it! There are three smoke alarms. It's not any of them.

SANJAY There's a fourth.

DEREK ...There's a fourth?

SANJAY In the closet. Above the vacuum. The landlord put it there for reasons known only to him.

DEREK Why didn't you tell me?

SANJAY You didn't ask. You just ran around shouting "where are you" at the ceiling.

SFX: chirp

DEREK I'm going to kill it.

SANJAY With a broom?

DEREK With whatever it takes.

SANJAY Or a nine-volt battery. Top drawer. Next to the takeout menus.

DEREK We have batteries?

SANJAY I bought batteries two weeks ago. When it started.

DEREK It started two weeks ago?

SANJAY It's very quiet in the daytime. It likes an audience.

DEREK You've been listening to this for two weeks?

SANJAY I sleep in earplugs.

DEREK Then how are you awake?

SANJAY You're standing on my bed with a broom, Derek.

No Spoilers

Sitcom, workplace · Adult (25-40) · Australian · 1 minute

Cast: KIRSTY MEL

A work kitchen. KIRSTY, 32, who hasn't watched the season finale yet. MEL, 30, who watched it last night and is not coping

KIRSTY Don't.

MEL I didn't say anything.

KIRSTY Your face said something.

MEL My face is neutral. This is my neutral face.

KIRSTY Your neutral face doesn't normally have tears in it.

MEL Hay fever. It's spring.

KIRSTY It's June, Mel.

MEL The seasons are all over the place now.

KIRSTY I'm watching it tonight. I've bought snacks. I've told my family not to ring me. Just survive until five o'clock.

MEL I can do that. I'm a professional. I'm a grown woman.

KIRSTY Good.

MEL Can I say one thing?

KIRSTY No.

MEL It's not a spoiler. It's a feeling.

KIRSTY Feelings are spoilers.

MEL Bring tissues.

KIRSTY Mel!

MEL That could mean anything! People cry at weddings!

KIRSTY Is there a wedding?

MEL ...I can't answer that.

KIRSTY Why can't you answer that?

MEL Because I promised not to spoil it.

KIRSTY So someone dies.

MEL I didn't say that.

KIRSTY You made a noise. You made a little dog noise.

MEL That was the kettle.

KIRSTY The kettle's not on.

MEL ...I'm going to go and sit in my car until five.

The Negotiator

Sketch · Adult (40-55) · Neutral American · 1 minute

Cast: CAROL GRAHAM

A dinner party. GRAHAM, 45, has locked himself in the host's bathroom. CAROL, 50, the host's sister, who "did a course", is negotiating through the door

CAROL Graham, this is Carol. I'm going to be talking to you today.

GRAHAM Go away, Carol.

CAROL I can't do that, Graham. I'm trained.

GRAHAM You did a weekend course at a community center.

CAROL A weekend is two full days. Let's start with something easy. Are you hurt?

GRAHAM Only emotionally.

CAROL That's good. That's something we can work with. Is there anyone in there with you?

GRAHAM It's a bathroom, Carol.

CAROL I have to ask. What happened?

GRAHAM I don't want to talk about it.

CAROL Graham, it's forty minutes to dessert, and I'd like you out for dessert.

GRAHAM I'm not coming out.

CAROL Is it the toilet?

GRAHAM ...It's not not the toilet.

CAROL Okay. What are your demands?

GRAHAM A plunger. A new identity. A car to the airport.

CAROL I can do one of those.

GRAHAM Which one?

CAROL The plunger's under the sink, Graham. It's always under the sink. It's under every sink in America.

GRAHAM ...Oh.

CAROL Take your time.

GRAHAM Carol. Nobody can know about this.

CAROL Graham, it's a small apartment. They've been listening for twenty minutes.

SFX: muffled applause from the dining room

Tell Me About Yourself

Sitcom, job interview · Any · Neutral American · 90 seconds

Cast: OKAFOR TREVOR

An interview room. MS. OKAFOR, 48, head of HR, very calm. TREVOR, 26, the candidate, who has just realised she is the driver he cut off on the way here

OKAFOR So, Trevor. Tell me about yourself.

TREVOR Well, I'm a people person. A team player. I believe in patience and consideration.

OKAFOR Consideration.

TREVOR For others. Yes. Very important.

OKAFOR Did you drive here, Trevor?

TREVOR ...I took the bus.

OKAFOR Interesting. There's a silver hatchback in the visitor space.

TREVOR Lots of people have silver hatchbacks. It's a popular color.

OKAFOR With a hula dancer bobblehead on the dashboard.

TREVOR That's a... cultural bobblehead.

OKAFOR The same hula dancer that danced at me when that hatchback cut me off on Maple Avenue at nine fifteen this morning.

TREVOR Was that you?

OKAFOR You made a gesture, Trevor.

TREVOR It was a wave!

OKAFOR It was not a wave.

TREVOR It was a wave with some fingers down. I have arthritis. In those two specific fingers.

OKAFOR Let's move on. Where do you see yourself in five years?

TREVOR Honestly? Right now I see myself leaving through that door.

OKAFOR That's refreshingly honest.

TREVOR Is it? Is honesty good? Is that a strength?

OKAFOR It's a start. What's your greatest weakness?

TREVOR Driving, apparently.

OKAFOR ...That's funny.

TREVOR Was it? You're not smiling.

OKAFOR I'm smiling on the inside. It's where I keep it. Last question. Why should we hire you?

TREVOR Because I'm late, I'm rude on the road, and I lied about the bus. But I have never, ever lied on a spreadsheet. My numbers are beautiful.

OKAFOR They are beautiful. I read your portfolio.

TREVOR So I'm hired?

OKAFOR You're on the shortlist. And Trevor. The lane merges on Maple. Everyone takes turns.

TREVOR Everyone takes turns. Yes. I'm writing that down.

The Second Exit

Sketch · Any · Neutral British · 90 seconds

Cast: PEARCE CHLOE

A small car on a driving test. MR. PEARCE, 58, examiner, who has not smiled since 1996. CHLOE, 18, on her fourth attempt, very nervous, very chatty

PEARCE When you're ready, move off.

CHLOE Okay. Mirror. Signal. Mirror again, because you can't be too careful. Hello, mirror. Blind spot. Nothing in the blind spot. Is there? No. Moving off.

PEARCE You're still in neutral.

CHLOE I know. I was building suspense.

PEARCE Take the next left.

CHLOE Left. The left one. The one on the left.

PEARCE That is where left generally is.

CHLOE Sorry, I talk when I'm nervous. My instructor says I narrate. He says it's like driving with a nature documentary.

PEARCE The limit here is thirty.

CHLOE I'm doing twenty-two.

PEARCE I'm aware. A pigeon overtook us.

CHLOE It was a very fit pigeon. Can I ask you something?

PEARCE You may not.

CHLOE Do you like your job?

PEARCE At the roundabout, take the second exit.

CHLOE That's a no. Oh God. A roundabout. I hate roundabouts. It's a circle of decisions.

PEARCE Second exit.

CHLOE First exit. Coming up to second exit. Taking second exit. Hello, second exit. We did it.

PEARCE You went round twice.

CHLOE I was being thorough.

PEARCE Pull over on the left when it's safe.

CHLOE Is this the end? Did I kill anyone? I don't think I killed anyone.

PEARCE Nobody died.

CHLOE I'll take that. Did I pass?

PEARCE You had nine minor faults.

CHLOE Is that bad? What's the maximum?

PEARCE Fifteen.

CHLOE So I passed?

PEARCE ...You passed.

CHLOE I passed! Mr. Pearce! Can I hug you?

PEARCE You may not.

CHLOE Can I hug the car?

PEARCE The car belongs to your mother. Do what you like.

Some Assembly Required

Sitcom, old couple · Mature (55+) · Southern US · 90 seconds

Cast: LORETTA HANK

A spare bedroom in Tennessee. HANK, 70, and LORETTA, 68, married forty-one years, assembling a flat-pack bookcase before their granddaughter's visit. It has been three hours

LORETTA There's a picture of a little man. He's happy. Why is he happy, Hank?

HANK He's happy because he's a drawing. Nobody asked him to find a dowel.

LORETTA Step six. "Insert dowel B into hole C."

HANK I don't have a B. I've got four A's and a thing shaped like a tooth.

LORETTA The tooth is B.

HANK Then why'd they draw it round?

LORETTA Because it's round in Sweden, Hank.

HANK It's not from Sweden. It's from a warehouse in Knoxville.

LORETTA Well, it wants to be from Sweden.

HANK Hand me the hammer.

LORETTA It says no hammer. There's a picture of a hammer with a line through it.

HANK That's a suggestion.

LORETTA It's a hammer in jail, Hank. That is not a suggestion.

HANK Forty-one years, and I've never once seen you read the instructions for anything.

LORETTA I read them now because I've seen what happens when you don't.

HANK What's that supposed to mean?

LORETTA The deck.

HANK The deck was structurally sound.

LORETTA The deck is in the neighbors' yard.

HANK Part of the deck.

LORETTA The part with the grill on it.

HANK ...It was a very strong wind.

LORETTA Honey, there are three screws left over.

HANK Those are spares.

LORETTA The bag says "exactly twenty-four." We used twenty-one.

HANK Then they gave us too many. That's generous. That's hospitality.

LORETTA From Sweden.

HANK Stand it up.

LORETTA You stand it up.

HANK Together, then. On three. One, two—

SFX: a slow creak, then a clatter

LORETTA ...Well.

HANK It's a very modern design.

LORETTA It's a pile, Hank.

HANK Kaylee's nineteen. She'll love a pile. Piles are very in right now.

Reply All

Sitcom, workplace · Adult (25-40) · Neutral American · 90 seconds

Cast: MARCUS PRIYA

An open-plan office. PRIYA, 29, frozen at her desk. MARCUS, 31, her deskmate, who has just received her email along with four hundred other people

MARCUS Priya.

PRIYA Don't.

MARCUS Priya, did you just reply all—

PRIYA I'm aware of what I did, Marcus.

MARCUS —to the CEO's retirement announcement—

PRIYA It was supposed to go to you. Just you.

MARCUS —with "Finally. Now we can get a real coffee machine."

PRIYA The coffee machine is terrible. Everyone agrees.

MARCUS Everyone agrees privately. You agreed with four hundred people. Including the CEO. Who bought that coffee machine.

PRIYA How do you know that?

MARCUS It has a plaque on it. "Donated by Gordon, with love."

PRIYA Oh no. I thought the plaque was a joke.

MARCUS The plaque was not a joke. Nothing about that plaque is a joke.

PRIYA Can I recall it? There's a recall button.

MARCUS The recall button just sends everyone a second email saying "Priya would like to recall the message."

PRIYA So everyone who hadn't read it—

MARCUS Will now read it. With interest.

PRIYA I'm going to have to move to another country.

MARCUS Hang on. Someone's replied. Linda from Accounts. A thumbs-up.

PRIYA What?

MARCUS Dave from Legal. "Agreed." And someone from the warehouse: "Finally someone said it." Oh, it's happening.

PRIYA What's happening?

MARCUS A movement. Twenty replies. Someone's started a petition. It's named after you.

PRIYA Oh God.

MARCUS Wait. Gordon's replied.

PRIYA I'm going to be sick.

MARCUS He says, "Fair point. The machine was my wife's idea. Don't tell her." And a coffee cup emoji.

PRIYA ...He's funny?

MARCUS Apparently. Nobody knew. It's been twenty years.

PRIYA So I'm not fired.

MARCUS You're a hero. It's worse. Now they'll expect things from you.

She's Speaking French

Sitcom, family · Adult (25-40) · Irish · 90 seconds

Cast: CIARAN MAM

A video call. CIARAN, 34, in London. His MAM, 66, in Galway, who has rung for help with her new tablet. He can see only her forehead

CIARAN Mam. Mam. I can only see your forehead.

MAM That's the angle I like. It's very slimming.

CIARAN Tilt it down. Down. No, the other down.

MAM There's only one down, Ciarán.

CIARAN Now I'm looking at the ceiling. Is that a new light?

MAM Your father put it up. It flickers when the kettle's on. We've accepted it.

CIARAN Okay. What's the problem?

MAM The problem is it's talking to me. There's a woman in it. I asked your father what time Mass was, and she answered.

CIARAN That's the voice assistant. It's meant to do that.

MAM Well, she's very forward. She told me the weather without being asked.

CIARAN You probably asked by accident.

MAM I said, "Holy God, it's raining again." And she said, "It's currently twelve degrees and raining in Galway."

CIARAN That's helpful.

MAM That's nosy. How does she know I'm in Galway?

CIARAN It uses your location.

MAM Well, I didn't tell her. Did you tell her?

CIARAN I didn't tell her anything, Mam.

MAM Somebody did. Was it Bernadette next door? She tells everyone everything.

CIARAN It wasn't Bernadette.

MAM Can I turn her off?

CIARAN Yes. Go into settings. It's a little grey wheel.

MAM I've a little wheel. A cog, like. Pressing it. ...Oh.

CIARAN What?

MAM Now she's speaking French.

CIARAN How did you... okay. Don't touch anything.

MAM She's very polite in French. I think I prefer her.

CIARAN I'm home at Christmas. I'll fix it then.

MAM Grand. We'll keep her till then. Your father's learning French off her.

CIARAN He's what?

MAM He's got as far as "the cat is under the table." We haven't got a cat. But he's thrilled.

The Pharaoh's Curse

Sketch · Adult (30-45) · Neutral American · 90 seconds

Cast: DUSTIN PHIL

An escape room called "The Pharaoh's Curse", twenty minutes left on the clock. PHIL, 44, an accountant, deadpan. DUSTIN, 31, extremely into it. They are strangers booked into the same slot

DUSTIN The hieroglyphs! Phil! The hieroglyphs are a code!

PHIL They're stickers.

DUSTIN Coded stickers! Look. Bird, bird, eye, snake. That's four digits!

PHIL Or it's a bird, a bird, an eye and a snake.

DUSTIN You have to open your mind, Phil. The Pharaoh doesn't give up his secrets to closed minds.

PHIL The Pharaoh is a mannequin in a wig from a party store. The price tag's still on.

DUSTIN That's what he wants you to think.

PHIL He wants me to think he cost nineteen ninety-nine?

DUSTIN Fifteen minutes! The sand is falling!

PHIL That's an egg timer.

DUSTIN The egg timer of destiny!

PHIL I came here for my niece's birthday. She left. She said she'd be right back. That was forty minutes ago.

DUSTIN She was taken by the curse.

PHIL She was taken by a text from a boy named Tyler.

DUSTIN Okay. The sarcophagus. There's a lock. Three digits. Think. What would a pharaoh choose?

PHIL His birthday.

DUSTIN Nobody knows a pharaoh's birthday, Phil!

PHIL Then try one, two, three.

DUSTIN That's insulting to the pharaoh.

PHIL Try it.

DUSTIN ...One. Two. Three.

SFX: a click, and a creaking lid

DUSTIN How did you know?

PHIL I'm an accountant. I've audited three of these places. Half the locks are one, two, three.

DUSTIN What's inside?

PHIL A key. And a laminated card: "Congratulations. You have escaped the curse. Please leave a review."

DUSTIN ...That's it?

PHIL That's it.

DUSTIN Do you want to do "The Haunted Submarine"? It's next door. It has a real periscope.

PHIL Does it.

DUSTIN Please, Phil. I came on my own. I always come on my own.

PHIL ...One room. And I'm doing the locks.

Upgrade

Sketch, customer service · Adult (40-55) · Neutral American · 90 seconds

Cast: CRAIG DENISE

An airport gate desk. DENISE, 52, gate agent for twenty-six years. CRAIG, 35, a passenger trying to get upgraded to first class

CRAIG Hi! Hello. Good morning. Love the scarf.

DENISE It's the uniform.

CRAIG It really works on you. Quick one. Any chance of an upgrade?

DENISE Are you a frequent flyer?

CRAIG I fly frequently. In my heart.

DENISE How many times have you flown with us?

CRAIG Counting this one? One.

DENISE Then no.

CRAIG What if I told you it's my birthday?

DENISE May I see your ID?

CRAIG ...It's my birthday in spirit.

DENISE Any other reason?

CRAIG I'm on my honeymoon.

DENISE Where's your wife?

CRAIG She's meeting me there. It's a very modern marriage.

DENISE What's her name?

CRAIG ...Denise.

DENISE That's my name.

CRAIG What a coincidence! That's a sign.

DENISE It's on my badge, sir.

CRAIG Okay. Full honesty. I'm six foot four. Economy legroom was designed for a garden gnome. Last flight I had my knees in my ears for five hours. The man in front reclined into my lap. We're still in touch.

DENISE ...That's the first true thing you've said.

CRAIG It is. And I'm sorry about the scarf. It's a lovely scarf. But it's the uniform, and I knew that.

DENISE I can't put you in first.

CRAIG I understand.

DENISE I can put you in an exit row. Extra legroom. You'd have to help people in an emergency.

CRAIG I'd be amazing in an emergency. I'm very calm under pressure.

DENISE You've told me four lies in two minutes.

CRAIG The lies were a warm-up.

DENISE Seat fourteen C. And sir?

CRAIG Yes?

DENISE Happy birthday.

CRAIG ...It's not my birthday.

DENISE I know. Sarcasm is the only perk of the job.

The Butter Story

Sitcom, siblings · Adult (25-40) · Neutral American · 90 seconds

Cast: MEGAN LUKE

A hotel room the night before their brother Tom's wedding. MEGAN, 33, the eldest, holding a printout. LUKE, 27, the best man, who wrote it

MEGAN You can't say this.

LUKE Which part?

MEGAN Page one. Page two. Most of page three.

LUKE Page four's good, though.

MEGAN Page four is "Thank you, and please enjoy the chicken."

LUKE People like the chicken.

MEGAN "When Tom was twelve he got his head stuck in the banister and the fire department had to use butter."

LUKE That's a classic. That's a crowd-pleaser.

MEGAN Rachel's grandmother is ninety-one, Luke. She thinks Tom is a doctor.

LUKE He is a doctor.

MEGAN She thinks he's a dignified doctor. You're going to tell her about the butter.

LUKE It was a lot of butter. Mom had to go to the store twice.

MEGAN And what's this? "Tom and I share a special bond, because I'm the only one who knows what really happened in Cancún."

LUKE That's a joke.

MEGAN What happened in Cancún?

LUKE Nothing. That's the joke. Nothing happened. But everyone will wonder.

MEGAN Rachel will wonder. Rachel will wonder on her honeymoon.

LUKE Fine. What do you want me to say?

MEGAN Something nice. Something true.

LUKE That's harder.

MEGAN Why?

LUKE Because if I say the true thing I'll cry, Meg. At a microphone.

MEGAN What's the true thing?

LUKE ...That when Dad left, Tom was sixteen, and he got a job at the car wash so I could still play Little League. And he never mentioned it. I only found out last year.

MEGAN Luke.

LUKE See? That's not a joke. That's a disaster.

MEGAN Put that on page one.

LUKE I'll cry.

MEGAN Then you'll cry. And then you do the butter.

LUKE I can still do the butter?

MEGAN After the crying, you can do the butter. People need relief.

Hedge Watch

Sketch · Mature (55+) · Scottish · 90 seconds

Cast: MORAG SHEILA

A parked car on a quiet Edinburgh street, 2 a.m. MORAG, 71, with binoculars. SHEILA, 68, with a flask and a tin of shortbread. Somebody has been cutting shapes into Morag's hedge

MORAG Anything?

SHEILA A fox. And a man walking a cat.

MORAG Nobody walks a cat.

SHEILA This man does. It had a wee harness. It looked mortified.

MORAG Keep your eyes on the hedge.

SHEILA I've had my eyes on the hedge since eleven. It's a hedge, Morag. It's no doing anything.

MORAG That's what they want you to think.

SHEILA Who's they?

MORAG Whoever cut a swan into it on Tuesday.

SHEILA It was a lovely swan.

MORAG It was not asked for.

SHEILA And the dolphin on Thursday. You have to admit the dolphin was very good.

MORAG The minister's wife asked me if I'd taken up topiary. At my age. With my wrists.

SHEILA Shortbread?

MORAG Is it the good shortbread?

SHEILA It's the shop shortbread.

MORAG ...Go on, then.

SHEILA Wait. Somebody's there. By the gate. With shears.

MORAG I've got them. Pass me the torch.

SHEILA Morag, it's Duncan.

MORAG Duncan? From number twelve?

SHEILA How many Duncans do you think there are on this street?

MORAG He's eighty. He's had a new hip.

SHEILA Well, it's working. Look at him go. What is that?

MORAG ...It's a heart.

SHEILA He's cutting a heart into your hedge.

MORAG Oh.

SHEILA The swan, Morag. The dolphin. You told the bowling club you liked dolphins.

MORAG That was in April.

SHEILA He's been working up to it. Are you going out?

MORAG At two in the morning? In my rollers?

SHEILA He's out in his hat with the bobble. It's the same commitment. Go on.

MORAG Give me the shortbread.

SHEILA What for?

MORAG You can't go out to a man empty-handed.

Big Barbara

Sketch · Adult (25-40) · Neutral American · 90 seconds

Cast: RAY JO

A kitchen table covered in hand-drawn maps. RAY, the mastermind, very serious. JO, the crew, who has questions. The target: a prize-winning pumpkin at the county fair

RAY Midnight. We go in over the fence behind the goat pen.

JO Why the goat pen?

RAY Blind spot. No cameras.

JO There's a goat.

RAY The goat's not a security measure, Jo.

JO Have you met a goat? My cousin got headbutted into a creek.

RAY Fine. We bring a carrot.

JO For the goat, or for us?

RAY For the goat! Stage two. We enter the Giant Vegetable Tent.

JO The what tent?

RAY The Giant Vegetable Tent. It's in capitals on the map.

JO I wrote "big veg."

RAY Write it properly! This is a professional operation. We locate the target.

JO Big Barbara.

RAY We don't call the target Big Barbara.

JO It's on her sign. "Big Barbara. Eight hundred and twelve pounds. Grown by Earl Denton."

RAY We don't use her name. It makes it personal.

JO How do we move her?

RAY What?

JO She's eight hundred pounds. How do we get her over the fence?

RAY ...We roll her.

JO Over a fence?

RAY Through the gate.

JO The gate's locked.

RAY I thought we were going over the fence!

JO We are! You are. I'm not rolling a pumpkin the size of a hatchback over a fence, Ray.

RAY Fine. We don't take her. We just swap the ribbon.

JO Onto what?

RAY My pumpkin.

JO Your pumpkin is the size of a grapefruit.

RAY She's got heart!

JO Ray. Is this about Earl?

RAY Nine years in a row, Jo. Nine years. I talk to my pumpkin every morning. I play her jazz.

JO Maybe try classical.

RAY ...You think?

JO Barbara's clearly a Mozart girl.

The Milkmaid's Pail

Sketch · Adult (40-55) · Neutral British · 90 seconds

Cast: NIGEL BEV

A dark alley in York, the last stop on a ghost walk. NIGEL, 50, the guide, in a cape, trying very hard. BEV, 55, the only customer tonight, a sceptic

NIGEL And here, in this very alley, in the year sixteen forty-four, a young milkmaid was lost to the plague.

BEV What was she doing in an alley?

NIGEL ...Milking.

BEV In the town centre?

NIGEL There were cows everywhere back then. It was a very cow-based economy. And they say that on moonless nights you can still hear her calling.

BEV Calling what?

NIGEL "Where is my pail?"

BEV Her pail.

NIGEL She lost her pail. It's a very sad story.

BEV It's a very specific story.

NIGEL Listen. Do you hear that?

BEV That's a bus.

NIGEL It's her. Wailing across the centuries.

BEV It's the number four.

NIGEL Madam, I've been doing this tour for thirty years—

BEV And how many ghosts have you seen?

NIGEL ...Personally?

BEV Personally.

NIGEL Well, not as such. But my colleague Keith saw a shadow in 2009.

BEV Where's Keith now?

NIGEL Accounting. He said the shadow turned out to be his own.

BEV That's a better ghost story than the milkmaid.

NIGEL It's a Tuesday in November. You're the only one who booked. My feet are soaked. Why are you here?

BEV My husband took me on this tour on our first date. Thirty years ago. The guide was a young man in a cape with very wet feet, who told us about a milkmaid who'd lost her pail.

NIGEL ...That was my first year.

BEV You were terrible then, too. He laughed all the way home.

NIGEL Where's your husband now?

BEV He died in March. He'd have wanted to know if you were still going.

NIGEL Oh.

BEV Tell me about the pail again. Properly. With the voice.

NIGEL Right. Yes. In the year sixteen forty-four...

The Swan Lamp

Sitcom, siblings · Adult (40-55) · Neutral American · 90 seconds

Cast: PAUL MIKE

Their late parents' attic in Ohio. MIKE, 52, and PAUL, 49, dividing up the contents. They have reached the lamp: a ceramic swan with a shade on its back

PAUL You take it.

MIKE No, you take it.

PAUL Mom wanted you to have it.

MIKE Mom never said that.

PAUL She said it with her eyes. Every Thanksgiving.

MIKE Paul, that lamp is the ugliest object in the state of Ohio. It has teeth.

PAUL Swans don't have teeth.

MIKE This one does. Look at it. It's smiling. Swans shouldn't smile.

PAUL Okay. We flip for it.

MIKE Fine. Heads you take it, tails I don't.

PAUL That's the same thing.

MIKE Is it? Are you sure?

PAUL Yes, Mike. You did that when I was eight and I lost my bike.

MIKE You were a very trusting child.

PAUL We could donate it.

MIKE To who? Who'd take it?

PAUL A museum. Of fear.

MIKE Mom loved that lamp.

PAUL I know. She bought it on their honeymoon. Dad said it was their first fight.

MIKE Who won?

PAUL Well. It's here, isn't it?

MIKE ...She used to turn it on when we were out late. So we'd know she was waiting up. I'd come up the drive and see the swan in the window.

PAUL Me too. I hated that swan. I was so glad to see it.

MIKE Okay. Joint custody.

PAUL Six months each?

MIKE You get it first.

PAUL Why me first?

MIKE I'm older. I'm tired. And it's looking at you.

PAUL It is not.

MIKE It is. It's smiling at you, Paul.

PAUL ...Fine. But it goes in the window.

MIKE Obviously it goes in the window.

Enzo

Sketch, deadpan vs manic · Adult (30-45) · Neutral American · 2 minutes

Cast: REYES BOONE

An unmarked car outside a florist's shop. DETECTIVE REYES, 44, twenty years on the job, deadpan. DETECTIVE BOONE, 32, on his first stakeout, who has taken the cover story very seriously

REYES What are you wearing?

BOONE It's my cover.

REYES Your cover is "man in a car."

BOONE My cover is Enzo. Enzo is a retired Italian yacht designer who's come to this town to rediscover love.

REYES And the mustache?

BOONE Enzo has always had the mustache.

REYES It's coming off on the left.

BOONE Enzo's been through a lot.

REYES Boone, nobody's going to look in the car. That's the point of a stakeout. We sit, we watch, we eat gas station sandwiches, we go home.

BOONE And if they do look? If the suspect walks right up to this window? Then what are you, "woman in a car"?

REYES Yes.

BOONE That's not a character.

REYES It's my whole life, Boone.

BOONE I've given Enzo a backstory. He lost his wife, Isabella, in a sailing accident off Capri.

REYES Please stop.

BOONE He blames himself. He built the boat.

REYES That's dark.

BOONE He's a complex man.

REYES Movement. Shop door. Guy in a gray jacket.

BOONE Is that him?

REYES That's him. Get down.

BOONE Enzo doesn't hide. Enzo faces the storm.

REYES Enzo needs to get down before he blows three months of work.

BOONE Okay. Enzo is getting down.

REYES He's coming this way.

BOONE Should I talk to him? I've got the accent ready.

REYES Don't do the accent.

BOONE It's a very good accent.

REYES Do not do the accent.

SFX: a knock on the car window

REYES ...He's knocking.

BOONE What do we do?

REYES Roll it down. Say nothing.

SFX: a window rolling down

BOONE Buongiorno.

REYES I told you—

BOONE He's asking if we're lost. He's... oh, he's lovely. He's asking if I'm all right. Because of the mustache.

REYES Tell him you're fine.

BOONE He's giving me a flower. A carnation. He says it's "for Isabella."

REYES How does he know about Isabella?

BOONE I might have mouthed it.

REYES You mouthed "Isabella" at a suspect?

BOONE He's welling up. He lost someone too, he says. Reyes, I think Enzo's made a friend.

REYES Boone.

BOONE He's invited me to dinner. Thursday. Should I go?

REYES ...Yes. Wear a wire.

BOONE Enzo would wear a cravat.

REYES Wear both.

Notes from the Studio

Sketch · Adult (40-55) · Neutral American · 2 minutes

Cast: DOUG KAREN

A television studio office. DOUG, 40, a writer pitching his dream show. KAREN, 45, the executive, who has heard four hundred pitches this year and would like to get to lunch

DOUG Okay. Picture this. A world where—

KAREN No "picture this." Just tell me.

DOUG Right. A world where dogs can talk.

KAREN Done. There are nine of those.

DOUG But only one dog. And only on Tuesdays.

KAREN Why Tuesdays?

DOUG Nobody knows. It's a mystery. That's season two.

KAREN What does the dog say?

DOUG Mostly complaints. He's very disappointed in his owner. He's like a dad.

KAREN Who's the owner?

DOUG A divorced man, forty, lives in a van, wants to be a jazz drummer.

KAREN That's you.

DOUG It's not me.

KAREN You mentioned your van in the lobby. Twice.

DOUG It's inspired by me. Loosely. So the dog, Biscuit—

KAREN We can't call him Biscuit.

DOUG Why not?

KAREN Research did a survey. Food names are testing badly for dogs this year.

DOUG That's insane.

KAREN I don't make the rules. Can he be Colonel?

DOUG Colonel?

KAREN Colonel tests very well. It has authority.

DOUG He's a small terrier.

KAREN Then it's ironic. Irony tests well with the young ones.

DOUG Fine. So Colonel, on Tuesdays—

KAREN Can it be every day?

DOUG The whole point is Tuesdays.

KAREN Nobody knows what day it is anymore, Doug. I don't know. What day is it?

DOUG Thursday.

KAREN See, I'd have said Monday. Every day. And can the dog be a cat?

DOUG What?

KAREN Cats are cheaper to animate. They move less.

DOUG So it's a talking cat that talks every day.

KAREN That's a hit.

DOUG That's nothing! That's a cat! What about the jazz drummer?

KAREN Can he be a surgeon?

DOUG Why would he be a surgeon?

KAREN People love hospital shows. Handsome surgeon, talking cat, no van.

DOUG You've taken out everything.

KAREN I've taken out everything that doesn't work.

DOUG That's everything I love.

KAREN That's usually the same list. Welcome to television.

DOUG ...Can I keep Tuesdays?

KAREN One episode. Called "Tuesday." The cat is silent all day, and nobody knows why.

DOUG That's... actually beautiful.

KAREN I know. I've been doing this for twenty years. I'm not a monster. Now get out. I have lunch.

DOUG Can I call the cat Biscuit?

KAREN Don't push it.

Nobody Read the Book

Sitcom · Mature (55+) · Neutral American · 2 minutes

Cast: JOYCE ELAINE

A kitchen, five minutes before book club. JOYCE, 66, and ELAINE, 70, best friends for thirty years. Neither of them has read the book

JOYCE Did you read it?

ELAINE Of course I read it.

JOYCE What happens?

ELAINE ...Things.

JOYCE Elaine.

ELAINE I read the first page three times. Every night. Then I woke up with it on my face.

JOYCE I didn't get that far. I used it as a coaster.

ELAINE Okay. We've got five minutes. What do we know?

JOYCE It's called "The Salt Orchard."

ELAINE Good. That's a start.

JOYCE There's a woman on the cover. Looking at the sea.

ELAINE So there's a woman. And the sea.

JOYCE And she's sad. You can tell from the back of her head.

ELAINE They're always sad on the cover. Nobody puts a happy woman looking at the sea. She'd turn around.

JOYCE What if Margaret asks us something?

ELAINE Margaret always asks. Margaret reads everything twice with a pencil.

JOYCE What do we say?

ELAINE Things that are true about any book. Watch. "I thought the ending was earned."

JOYCE Ooh.

ELAINE "The sea was almost a character."

JOYCE That's good. Is the sea a character?

ELAINE The sea is always a character, Joyce. That's the rule. Anything on the cover is a character.

JOYCE "I found the mother very complicated."

ELAINE Is there a mother?

JOYCE There's always a mother.

ELAINE That's true. There's always a complicated mother.

JOYCE What if she asks for our favorite part?

ELAINE Then you say, "I don't want to spoil it for anyone who hasn't finished."

JOYCE Everyone's finished.

ELAINE Not everyone. Us.

JOYCE That's clever.

ELAINE I've been doing this for eleven years.

JOYCE Eleven years? You've never read one?

ELAINE I read the one about the dog. I cried for a week. Never again.

SFX: a doorbell

JOYCE That's them. Oh God. I'm sweating.

ELAINE Breathe. The sea was a character.

JOYCE The sea was a character. The mother was complicated.

ELAINE And the ending was earned.

JOYCE Elaine. What if there's no mother?

ELAINE Then we say her absence was a presence.

JOYCE ...You're a genius.

ELAINE I know. Open the door. And hide the coaster.

Chapel B

Sitcom · Adult (25-40) · Neutral American · 2 minutes

Cast: SIMON NATE

The back row of a chapel. NATE, 29, and SIMON, 31, strangers, both slightly late. The service has just begun

SIMON Did you know him well?

NATE Pretty well. Family friend. Uncle Walt.

SIMON Walt?

NATE Yeah. Walter.

SIMON This is Gerald.

NATE What?

SIMON The photo. By the flowers. That's Gerald. Gerald Hoffman. He was my landlord.

NATE That's not Walt.

SIMON That's what I'm saying.

NATE Walt had a beard.

SIMON Gerald did not have a beard. Gerald had a very particular toupee. There it is. That's the toupee.

NATE Oh no. Where's Walt?

SIMON Is there another chapel?

NATE There's a Chapel B. I thought this was B.

SIMON This is A. It says A on the door. In gold.

NATE I didn't look at the door. I followed a sad man in a hat.

SIMON That's everyone at a funeral.

NATE I'm going to have to leave.

SIMON You can't leave now. They're doing the reading. Everyone will turn around.

NATE I'm going to miss Walt.

SIMON You're going to miss Walt anyway. That's how funerals work.

NATE That's dark.

SIMON Sorry. I make jokes when I'm uncomfortable.

NATE You're not the one at the wrong funeral.

SIMON I'm at the funeral of a man who kept my deposit over a blind I didn't break. I'm plenty uncomfortable.

NATE Then why did you come?

SIMON Honestly? To make sure.

NATE ...That's darker.

SIMON I know. I'm working on it.

SFX: the organ swells

NATE They want us to stand.

SIMON Stand. Just do what everyone does.

NATE They're singing. I don't know this hymn.

SIMON Nobody knows the hymn. Move your mouth and look moved.

NATE This is the worst day of my life.

SIMON It's definitely not the worst day of Gerald's.

NATE Stop.

SIMON Sorry. Listen. After this there are sandwiches in the hall. We slip out, you find Chapel B, you catch the end for Walt.

NATE And you?

SIMON I'm staying for the sandwiches. He owes me four hundred dollars. I'm taking it out in egg salad.

Day 142

Sitcom, sci-fi · Adult (30-45) · Neutral American · 2 minutes

Cast: VOSS PARK

A research station in orbit, day 142 of a year-long mission. COMMANDER VOSS, by the book. ENGINEER PARK, who has not done the dishes

VOSS Park. We need to talk about the chore wheel.

PARK Commander, we're in space. We are four hundred kilometers above the Earth. Surely there are bigger issues.

VOSS There are no bigger issues. There's a fork floating in the observation module.

PARK That's not my fork.

VOSS It has your initials on it.

PARK Anyone could write my initials on a fork.

VOSS In your handwriting? With the little star over the K?

PARK ...It's a common star.

VOSS It is day one hundred and forty-two. You have done the dishes twice.

PARK Dishes are complicated up here. Water doesn't behave. It goes into a ball. It chases you.

VOSS It does not chase you.

PARK It chased me into the airlock, Commander.

VOSS Because you tried to rinse a pot with a sneeze.

PARK I was improvising. It's what they trained us for.

VOSS They trained us for hull breaches.

PARK And that pot was a hull breach waiting to happen. There's chili on it from March.

VOSS Whose chili?

PARK ...Also mine. But it was a very good chili.

VOSS Park. We have six more months up here. Just us and a robot arm. I'd like to spend them in a clean station.

PARK What if we made the chore wheel more fun?

VOSS It's a chore wheel. It's not supposed to be fun.

PARK What if there were prizes?

VOSS Like what?

PARK The winner gets the window for the sunrise.

VOSS We get sixteen sunrises a day.

PARK So loads of prizes! Everybody wins!

VOSS Everybody winning isn't a prize.

PARK Okay. Then the loser takes the Friday call with Mission Control.

VOSS ...I hate the Friday call.

PARK Everyone hates the Friday call. Gary does the thing where he reads out the budget.

VOSS For forty minutes.

PARK With slides. In space.

VOSS Fine. The loser takes the Friday call.

PARK Deal.

VOSS And you start today. The fork.

PARK I can't reach it. It's in the corner.

VOSS Park. We're weightless. Everything is reachable.

PARK Not emotionally.

VOSS Get the fork.

Happy Sixtieth, Dan

Sitcom, siblings · Young adult (18-25) · Neutral American · 2 minutes

Cast: AVA LEO

A dark living room. Twins AVA and LEO, 19, crouched behind the sofa for their dad's sixtieth surprise party. Thirty guests are hiding elsewhere. The car has just pulled up

AVA He's here. Everybody, shh!

LEO I am shh-ing. I'm the most shh person in this room.

AVA You're breathing like a horse.

LEO I'm nervous! I'm a nervous breather!

AVA Where's the banner?

LEO It's up. On the wall.

AVA Which wall?

LEO The one he'll see first. By the door.

AVA Leo. Did you check the spelling?

LEO Of course I checked the spelling. It's "Happy Sixtieth." I've been spelling "happy" since I was four.

AVA Read it to me.

LEO I can't read it, it's dark.

AVA Use your phone.

LEO If I use my phone he'll see the light!

AVA Cover it with your hand.

LEO ...Okay. "Happy Sixtieth, Dad." Good. Good. Oh.

AVA What?

LEO It says "Happy Sixtieth, Dan."

AVA Who's Dan?

LEO Nobody's Dan! There is no Dan! I told the guy on the phone "Dad" and he wrote "Dan"!

AVA You didn't check it when you picked it up?

LEO It was rolled up! It was very tightly rolled!

AVA Okay. Fine. Nobody will notice. Everyone will be shouting.

LEO Mrs. Kowalski will notice. She notices everything. She'll say "Who's Dan?" at the cake.

SFX: keys in the front door

AVA He's at the door.

LEO I'm going to fix it. I can make the N a D. With tape. I've got tape!

AVA Why do you have tape on you?

LEO I always carry tape! It's my thing!

AVA That is not your thing. Since when is that your thing?

LEO Since today! Hold the phone! No light! Some light!

SFX: the door opens; a light switch clicks

AVA Surprise!

LEO Surprise!

AVA ...Dad?

LEO Why's he laughing?

AVA He's pointing at the banner.

LEO Oh no.

AVA He's saying... Leo, he's saying his friends at work call him Dan.

LEO What?

AVA It's a work thing. Since the eighties. Now they're all yelling "Dan!"

LEO So I got it right?

AVA You got it right by accident.

LEO I'd like that on the record. I'd like that announced at the cake.

AVA Put the tape away.

LEO Never. It's my thing now.

I Brake for Tubas

Sketch · Adult (40-55) · Neutral British · 3 minutes

Cast: GILES FENWICK

The lost property office at a London railway terminus. MRS. FENWICK, 58, clerk for thirty years, unhurried. GILES, 42, who left something on the 8:14 from Reading and needs it back before a very important evening

GILES Hello! Hi. I've lost something. On the eight fourteen from Reading.

FENWICK Everyone's lost something. That's why the door says Lost Property.

GILES Yes. Right. It's quite urgent.

FENWICK It always is. Name?

GILES Giles Ashworth.

FENWICK Item?

GILES A violin case. Black. Old. With a sticker that says "I brake for tubas."

FENWICK ...Let's have a look.

SFX: a heavy ledger opening

FENWICK The eight fourteen from Reading. Umbrella. Umbrella. Umbrella. Single shoe.

GILES Just the one shoe?

FENWICK We get a lot of single shoes. I've never understood it. How do you get off a train and not notice?

GILES No idea.

FENWICK I have theories. Prosthetic leg, with a sandal on it.

GILES A leg?

FENWICK Nobody's claimed it. I think whoever it belongs to is managing without.

GILES I really do need the violin.

FENWICK You a musician?

GILES No. Well, yes. Tonight. I'm proposing. At a restaurant. My girlfriend plays in an orchestra. I've been learning her favourite piece for eight months. In my car.

FENWICK In your car.

GILES The walls at home are very thin. The neighbours thought someone was strangling a cat.

FENWICK And the ring?

GILES In the case. In the little compartment where the rosin goes.

FENWICK You put the ring in the violin case, and then you lost the violin case.

GILES I'm aware of the sequence, yes.

FENWICK Carrying on. Umbrella. A goose.

GILES A goose?

FENWICK Live. Very angry. He's in the back office with Derek. Derek's not happy either.

GILES How does a goose get on a train?

FENWICK Same as you. Somebody lets him. Umbrella. A wedding cake. Three tiers.

GILES Someone left a wedding cake?

FENWICK With the little couple on top. We ate the bottom tier. Perishables after four hours, it's the rule.

GILES That's terrible!

FENWICK It was lemon. Very good. And here we are. One violin case. Black. "I brake for tubas."

GILES Oh, thank God.

FENWICK I just need you to prove it's yours.

GILES I told you what it looks like.

FENWICK I've just read it out. Anyone could say "I brake for tubas."

GILES Why would anyone say that who didn't have to?

FENWICK I've had people claim the goose, sir. What's in the little compartment?

GILES A ring. Gold. A small sapphire.

FENWICK Could be anyone's.

GILES It's engraved! It says "C, will you." Just that. They ran out of room.

FENWICK Will you what?

GILES The rest was going to cost another forty pounds!

FENWICK ...That's yours.

GILES Yes!

FENWICK One more thing.

GILES What?

FENWICK Play it.

GILES Here?

FENWICK You've practised eight months. Play me a bit. Then I'll know it's yours, and I'll know she's in for a nice evening and not a strangled cat.

GILES I'm not very good.

FENWICK Thirty years in this office. Nobody's ever played me anything. Go on.

SFX: a violin, hesitant and scratchy, begins a tune

FENWICK ...Keep going.

GILES Is it all right?

FENWICK It's dreadful. Keep going.

SFX: the violin wobbles on

FENWICK Stop. Stop. That'll do. Awful, and lovely. She'll say yes.

GILES You think?

FENWICK Nobody learns something that badly for eight months for someone they don't love. She'll hear that. Now go. And take the goose.

GILES The goose isn't mine!

FENWICK It is now. Derek can't take any more.

Fifty Years and a Hat

Sitcom, old couple · Mature (55+) · Neutral American · 3 minutes

Cast: DOT RON

A nice restaurant. RON, 72, and DOT, 70, married fifty years today. Ron booked the table. Dot suspects he has no idea why

DOT So. Why are we here, Ronald?

RON For dinner.

DOT We have dinner every night. At home. In front of the quiz show.

RON Tonight we're having it in front of other people. It's good for us.

DOT You hate other people.

RON I hate most other people. I've made an exception for the waiter. He called me "young man."

DOT He calls everybody that. He called the woman at table six "young man."

RON Well, she seemed pleased.

DOT Ronald. What day is it?

RON Thursday.

DOT The date.

RON ...The fourteenth.

DOT Of?

RON June, Dot. The birds are going crazy.

DOT And what happened on the fourteenth of June?

RON Is this a quiz? Are we doing the quiz show here?

DOT You're doing it. I'm the host.

RON Okay. The fourteenth of June. Is it the day we got the dog?

DOT We got the dog in October.

RON The day the dog died?

DOT The dog is asleep under our kitchen table. The dog is fine.

RON The day your mother came to live with us?

DOT That was a Tuesday in February, and you know it was, because you went and slept in the car.

RON For three nights. It was very peaceful. Okay. Last guess.

DOT Last guess.

RON Is it the day I asked the prettiest girl at the Legion dance to hold my hat, because I needed both hands to ask her to dance, and she held on to it for fifty years and never gave it back?

DOT ...That was March.

RON That was March. I know. The fourteenth of June is the day she stood up at Saint Anne's in her sister's borrowed dress, said "I do," and then sneezed. On the priest.

DOT I did not sneeze on the priest.

RON Father Mulroney. He wiped his glasses. It's in the photo.

DOT It is not in the photo.

RON It's in the photo. It's in my wallet. Look.

DOT ...Oh, my Lord. Look at his face.

RON Look at your face.

DOT I look like a child.

RON You were twenty. You look like the best thing that ever happened to a man who couldn't dance.

DOT You still can't dance.

RON I know. I've booked the band anyway. They're playing our song at nine.

DOT What's our song?

RON Dorothy.

DOT What?

RON What's our song? Go on. Quiz show. What's our song?

DOT It's... it's the one with the...

RON Fifty years.

DOT Don't you dare.

RON I'm going to savor this.

DOT It's the one they played at the Legion. With the trumpet.

RON They all had a trumpet. It was 1975.

DOT Ron.

RON I'll give you a clue. It's about the moon.

DOT They're all about the moon!

RON That's true. It was a very moon-based time.

DOT Fine. I don't know. You win.

RON I win.

DOT What do you want?

RON Same as always. You keep the hat. And one dance at nine.

DOT You'll step on me.

RON I'll step on you. It's tradition. Happy anniversary, Dot.

DOT Happy anniversary. ...Is it the one about the moon over the river?

RON Not even close. Eat your soup.

The Plant Sitter

Sitcom, friends · Adult (25-40) · Neutral American · 1 minute

Cast: FRAN ODETTE

An apartment. FRAN, 31, just back from two weeks away, holding her suitcase. ODETTE, 30, who was watering the plants, standing in front of the window

FRAN Hi! Thank you so much for doing this. How are my babies?

ODETTE Great. Thriving. Very green.

FRAN Can I see them?

ODETTE They're resting.

FRAN Plants don't rest.

ODETTE These ones do. They had a big week.

FRAN Odette, move.

ODETTE Okay, before I move, I want you to remember that plants are a journey.

She steps aside

FRAN ...That fern is brown.

ODETTE It's autumnal.

FRAN And the orchid? Why is the orchid lying down?

ODETTE It's meditating. I put on some whale sounds for it. Every night. It seemed to help.

FRAN It's flat, Odette. And it's June. Where's the cactus?

ODETTE The cactus left.

FRAN Cacti don't leave.

ODETTE I knocked it off the sill. I replaced it. With the nearest thing I could find.

FRAN That's a cucumber in a pot.

ODETTE It's spiky.

FRAN It's a cucumber, Odette.

ODETTE He has a name.

Bee in the Car

Sketch, road trip · Adult (40-55) · Neutral American · 1 minute

Cast: MAUREEN STAN

A car on the interstate, doing seventy. STAN, 52, driving. MAUREEN, 50, passenger, very still

MAUREEN Stan. Don't panic.

STAN Why would I panic?

MAUREEN There's a bee on your collar.

STAN ...What kind of bee?

MAUREEN Does it matter?

STAN It matters a lot. Some are friendly.

MAUREEN This one has a face like it's had a bad week.

STAN Can you get it?

MAUREEN With what?

STAN Anything! The map!

MAUREEN We don't have a map. We haven't had a map since 2009.

STAN The sandwich, then!

MAUREEN I'm not hitting you with a sandwich. That's my lunch.

STAN It's walking toward my ear.

MAUREEN Stay calm. It can smell fear.

STAN Then it can smell a lot, Maureen.

MAUREEN I'm opening my window.

STAN Don't open the window, we're doing seventy!

MAUREEN It's a bee, not a parachute. It'll be fine.

SFX: a window rolling down, rushing wind

STAN Is it gone?

MAUREEN It's gone. And so is my sandwich.

The Neighbour's Parcel

Sitcom, neighbours · Adult (30-45) · Neutral British · 1 minute

Cast: JUDITH IMRAN

A front doorstep. JUDITH, 44, holds a parcel. IMRAN, 38, her neighbour, in his dressing gown

JUDITH Imran! Parcel. It came yesterday. I took it in.

IMRAN That's very kind, thank you.

JUDITH It's heavy.

IMRAN Is it?

JUDITH For its size. Surprisingly heavy. And it rattles.

IMRAN Does it?

JUDITH Only when you shake it. Quite hard. Up and down.

IMRAN Did you shake it?

JUDITH It fell over. On the stairs. Several times.

IMRAN Right.

JUDITH The label says "Fragile, keep upright."

IMRAN Well. Thank you.

JUDITH And there's a little sticker that says "Bagpipe Starter Kit."

beat

IMRAN ...Is there.

JUDITH Such a lovely hobby. Very loud, I'd imagine.

IMRAN I'll practise in the shed. With the door shut. I've watched the videos, you're meant to start slow.

JUDITH The shed backs onto my bedroom.

IMRAN I'll practise very quietly in the shed.

JUDITH You can't play bagpipes quietly, Imran. I looked it up.

Baby Monitor

Sitcom, new parents · Adult (25-40) · Neutral American · 1 minute

Cast: ELLIE MARCO BOTH

A dark hallway outside a nursery, 2 a.m. ELLIE, 33, and MARCO, 34, crouched by the door, whispering

ELLIE Did she go down?

MARCO She went down. Don't breathe.

ELLIE I'm not breathing. I haven't breathed since Tuesday.

MARCO Okay. Now we back away. Slowly. Mind the floorboard.

ELLIE Which floorboard?

MARCO The one that squeaks. Third from the door.

ELLIE They all squeak. This house is made of squeaks.

MARCO Step where I step.

ELLIE You're stepping on the toy giraffe.

MARCO I'm aware of the giraffe.

ELLIE If that giraffe sings, I'm moving out.

MARCO It won't sing. I took the batteries out.

ELLIE When?

MARCO Last night. I put them in the remote.

ELLIE That's why the remote plays a lullaby?

MARCO Shh. We're nearly at the stairs.

ELLIE We made it. We actually made it.

MARCO We're amazing. We're the best parents in the world.

ELLIE High five?

MARCO Silent high five. Very gentle. Just the fingertips.

SFX: a loud, clear clap

BOTH No!

Karaoke Sign-Up

Sketch, friends · Young adult (18-25) · Neutral American · 1 minute

Cast: JAYDEN COLE

A karaoke bar on a Friday night. JAYDEN, 23, staring at the screen. COLE, 24, his best friend, sipping a lemonade

JAYDEN Cole. Why is my name on the screen?

COLE Oh, that? I signed you up.

JAYDEN For what?

COLE For singing. It's karaoke. That's the whole concept.

JAYDEN I don't sing.

COLE You sing in the car.

JAYDEN The car is a private space!

COLE The windows are down. Every time.

JAYDEN What did you pick?

COLE The song you sing in the car.

JAYDEN Not the power ballad.

COLE The power ballad.

JAYDEN It has a key change! There's a whole second key, Cole!

COLE You hit it every time. On the bridge into town.

JAYDEN Can I swap it for something easier?

COLE You're on next.

JAYDEN I'm going to the bathroom.

COLE I told the host you'd say that. He's waiting outside it.

JAYDEN ...Do I at least get a lemonade first?

COLE I already ordered you two.

JAYDEN Fine. Fine. But if I hit the key change, you're doing the backing vocals.

COLE I've been practicing all week.

The Village Dog Show

Sketch, old friends · Mature (55+) · Neutral British · 1 minute

Cast: WIN PRU

The edge of a show ring at a village fete. PRU, 71, and WIN, 73, on folding chairs. Pru's dog, Duchess, is in the ring with a young handler

WIN He's very relaxed, isn't he.

PRU He's confident.

WIN He's lying down, Pru.

PRU He's showing the judge his good side.

WIN All four legs in the air.

PRU That is his good side.

WIN The judge has asked him to walk.

PRU He'll walk when he's ready. He's an artist.

WIN Oh, he's up. He's walking. He's walking very nicely.

PRU Told you.

WIN Toward the cake tent.

PRU He's investigating.

WIN He's in the cake tent.

PRU He's thorough.

WIN The vicar's coming out of the cake tent with a Victoria sponge and a very long face.

PRU Well, he's a sponge man. He knows what he likes.

WIN That poor girl's chasing him round the tombola.

PRU She's doing very well. He's choosing to let her.

WIN He's come third.

PRU Third? Out of what?

WIN Out of three.

PRU Well. They clearly rewarded character.

Tooth Fairy Rates

Sitcom, parents · Adult (30-45) · Neutral American · 1 minute

Cast: BECCA ANDRE

A hallway outside a kid's bedroom at midnight. BECCA, 38, holds her wallet. ANDRE, 39, holds a tiny envelope

BECCA How much?

ANDRE I was thinking twenty.

BECCA Twenty dollars?

ANDRE It's her first tooth.

BECCA She has nineteen more, Andre. That's four hundred dollars of teeth.

ANDRE Inflation.

BECCA When I was a kid, the tooth fairy gave me a quarter.

ANDRE The tooth fairy has had a lot of new expenses since then.

BECCA Like what?

ANDRE Wings aren't cheap.

BECCA Five.

ANDRE Fifteen.

BECCA Five and a sticker.

ANDRE Ten and a note in glitter pen.

BECCA We don't own a glitter pen.

ANDRE I bought one this afternoon. Just in case.

BECCA You planned this.

ANDRE I've been planning this since she wobbled it on Saturday.

BECCA Fine. Ten. And you clean the glitter off the pillow.

SFX: an envelope rustling

ANDRE Wait. There's already something under here.

BECCA What does it say?

ANDRE "Dear Tooth Fairy. My friend Jayla got twenty."

Group Photo

Sketch, family reunion · Any · Irish · 1 minute

Cast: PHOTOGRAPHER AUNTIE

A hotel garden in County Clare. A PHOTOGRAPHER behind a tripod. AUNTIE BRÍD, the family organiser, in front of forty relatives

PHOTOGRAPHER Okay, everyone, if you could all look at me.

AUNTIE Everyone, look at the nice photographer!

PHOTOGRAPHER Lovely. If the tall gentleman could move to the back.

AUNTIE Fergal! Back! You're blocking your mother!

PHOTOGRAPHER And the little boy at the front, could he stop—

AUNTIE Cathal, put the swan down.

PHOTOGRAPHER There's a swan?

AUNTIE He found it at the pond. It's fine. It seems to like him.

PHOTOGRAPHER Okay. Is everybody here?

AUNTIE Nearly. We're waiting for Uncle Seamus.

PHOTOGRAPHER Where's Uncle Seamus?

AUNTIE Car park. He's been parking for forty minutes.

PHOTOGRAPHER Can we go without him?

AUNTIE Not at all. He paid for the sandwiches.

PHOTOGRAPHER Okay. We'll wait.

AUNTIE Here he is! Seamus, you're in the middle!

PHOTOGRAPHER Right. Big smiles. On three. One, two...

AUNTIE Wait, wait. Where's the swan gone?

PHOTOGRAPHER It's behind me.

AUNTIE Well, it's in the picture now. Say cheese!

beat

PHOTOGRAPHER ...That's the one.

Just a Trim

Sketch, salon · Adult (25-40) · Australian · 1 minute

Cast: SHAZ TODD

A hair salon in Brisbane. SHAZ, 32, holds a hand mirror. TODD, 29, has not looked yet

SHAZ Okay, Todd. Big reveal. Are you ready?

TODD It's just a trim.

SHAZ Is it, though? Is anything really "just" anything?

TODD ...Shaz.

SHAZ So I heard you say "a little off the top."

TODD Yeah.

SHAZ And what I heard was "a lot off the top."

TODD How much off the top?

SHAZ All of the top. The top's gone, mate.

TODD Give me the mirror.

SHAZ Before you look, I want you to think about summer. Heat. Freedom. No more hat hair.

TODD Because I've got no hair.

SHAZ Exactly. You're getting it.

beat

TODD I've got a wedding on Saturday.

SHAZ And you'll be the only bloke there who looks aerodynamic.

TODD I'm the groom, Shaz.

SHAZ Well, she's marrying you for your personality, isn't she?

TODD ...Can you fix it?

SHAZ Course I can. Come back in six weeks.

The Gym Induction

Sketch, deadpan vs manic · Adult (40-55) · Neutral American · 1 minute

Cast: VINCE GLORIA

A brand new gym. VINCE, 44, personal trainer, bouncing. GLORIA, 51, new member, holding a free water bottle

VINCE Welcome to the family! So, what brings you here today?

GLORIA My doctor.

VINCE Love that! And what are your fitness goals?

GLORIA To tell my doctor I joined a gym.

VINCE Amazing. Let's start with the rowing machine. It works every muscle in your body.

GLORIA All of them?

VINCE Every single one!

GLORIA That sounds like a lot to ask of a Tuesday.

VINCE Over here we've got the squat rack.

GLORIA What do people squat for?

VINCE Strength! Power! Confidence!

GLORIA I squat to pick up the cat. That's enough for me.

VINCE How about the climbing wall?

GLORIA How high is it?

VINCE Forty feet.

GLORIA I'll wave from down here.

VINCE Okay. Is there anything in this gym you'd actually like to try?

GLORIA What's that by the door?

VINCE That's the vending machine.

GLORIA Show me how that works.

VINCE ...You press the button.

GLORIA Every muscle?

Lost in the Corn Maze

Sitcom, couple · Young adult (18-25) · Neutral American · 90 seconds

Cast: BRODY KAYLA

A corn maze at a fall farm festival, dusk. KAYLA, 21, and BRODY, 22, on their third date. Corn in every direction

BRODY Okay. I know exactly where we are.

KAYLA Where are we?

BRODY In the corn.

KAYLA That's not a location, Brody.

BRODY It's a very specific kind of corn.

KAYLA It's all the same corn. We've passed that scarecrow four times.

BRODY That's a different scarecrow.

KAYLA It's wearing the same hat.

BRODY Scarecrows have a uniform. It's a farm thing.

KAYLA The sign at the entrance said this maze takes twenty minutes.

BRODY And it's been?

KAYLA An hour and ten.

BRODY We're thorough.

KAYLA Why didn't we take the map?

BRODY Because I said maps are for people who don't trust their instincts.

KAYLA And what are your instincts telling you now?

BRODY That I should have taken the map.

SFX: a distant bell

KAYLA What was that?

BRODY The closing bell.

KAYLA They close the maze?

BRODY With us in it, apparently.

KAYLA Okay. New plan. Phone flashlight. We follow the music from the hayride.

BRODY Good plan. Very good. You lead.

KAYLA Oh, now I lead.

BRODY You've earned it. Through suffering.

beat

KAYLA Brody. The scarecrow's moved.

BRODY Scarecrows don't move.

The scarecrow clears its throat

KAYLA ...Did it just cough?

BRODY Sir? Are you a person?

pause

BRODY He's nodding. He's pointing at his watch. That's a whole person.

KAYLA He's been watching us go past for an hour?

BRODY He's been very patient.

KAYLA [laughing] This is the best date I've ever been on.

BRODY Really?

KAYLA You're terrible at mazes. It's my favorite thing about you so far.

Parent-Teacher Night

Sitcom, school · Adult (40-55) · Neutral American · 90 seconds

Cast: QUINN ROB

A classroom. Tiny chairs. MS. QUINN, 47, fourth-grade teacher, holds an essay. ROB, 45, a dad, his knees around his ears

QUINN Thanks for coming in, Mr. Hale. Ethan's doing well. I wanted to talk about one assignment.

ROB Sure. Is it math? He's struggling with fractions.

QUINN It's the essay. "My Hero." He wrote about you.

ROB Oh! That's great. That's so sweet.

QUINN It's very detailed.

ROB He's an observant kid.

QUINN "My dad is my hero because he can eat a whole pizza in the car before we get home."

ROB That's... the drive is long. It's twenty-five minutes.

QUINN "He says it is for quality control."

ROB It is. You don't want to bring home a bad pizza.

QUINN "My dad has a secret drawer that is only for candy and if Mom asks, the drawer is for batteries."

ROB Okay. There are batteries in it. Some batteries.

QUINN "There are no batteries."

ROB He checked?

QUINN He has a section called "Evidence." "My dad cried at a movie about a lost dog. Then he said it was allergies. But we do not have a dog."

ROB It was a very sad dog.

QUINN "My dad cannot fix things. But he always tries. Last week he fixed the sink and now the dishwasher plays the radio."

ROB That's electrical. I've got a guy.

QUINN And then the last paragraph.

ROB Do I want this?

QUINN "My dad is my hero because when I was scared of the dark, he slept on my floor for a whole week, even though the floor is very hard and he is very old."

ROB ...Oh.

QUINN Yeah.

ROB I'm not that old.

QUINN He's nine. You're ancient to him.

ROB What grade did he get?

QUINN An A. I took off a point for the pizza.

Table Six

Sketch, speed dating · Adult (30-45) · Neutral American · 90 seconds

Cast: ANSEL HELEN

A speed-dating event in a hotel bar. Table six. HELEN, 37, and ANSEL, 39. A timer on the table. A bell has just rung

ANSEL Hi. I'm Ansel.

HELEN Helen. Let's not do the usual questions.

ANSEL Agreed. Hit me with a real one.

HELEN Why are you here?

ANSEL My sister bought me a ticket. She said if I didn't come, she'd tell Mom I'm still using the same towel from college.

HELEN Are you?

ANSEL It's a very good towel.

HELEN I'm here because I lost a bet. I said I could go a whole year without being set up. I made it to March.

ANSEL What's your worst habit?

HELEN I read the last page of a book first.

ANSEL That's dark.

HELEN I need to know if it's worth the trip. You?

ANSEL I talk to my car. Out loud. I apologize to it over speed bumps.

HELEN That's not a bad habit. That's manners.

ANSEL What's the most embarrassing thing that's happened to you this week?

HELEN I waved back at someone who was waving at the person behind me. And then I panicked and kept waving. For a full block.

ANSEL How long is a block?

HELEN Too long.

ANSEL I fell asleep in a dentist's waiting room. I woke up and the dentist had gone home.

HELEN They left you there?

ANSEL There was a note. It said "Thursday?" I went back. Lovely woman.

SFX: the bell rings

HELEN That's time.

ANSEL That went fast.

HELEN Can I tell you something?

ANSEL Please.

HELEN I've already read the last page on this one.

ANSEL And?

HELEN Worth the trip.

The Seating Plan

Sitcom, sisters · Adult (25-40) · Neutral American · 90 seconds

Cast: CARLA BETH

A kitchen table covered in sticky notes. CARLA, 30, the bride. BETH, 33, her older sister, holding a pen like a weapon

CARLA Okay. Table four. Who's at table four?

BETH Aunt Vera, Uncle Lou, and the cousins from Phoenix.

CARLA Vera and Lou can't sit together. They're divorced.

BETH Since when?

CARLA Since Christmas. Did nobody tell you?

BETH I thought they were just being quiet.

CARLA Move Lou to table seven.

BETH Table seven is Grandma.

CARLA Grandma likes Lou.

BETH Grandma likes everyone until the cake comes out and someone gets a bigger piece.

CARLA Fine. Lou to table nine.

BETH Table nine is your boss.

CARLA My boss is fine with Lou.

BETH Your boss is vegan. Lou brings his own beef jerky to weddings. In his jacket.

CARLA Okay. Lou to the kids' table.

BETH Lou is sixty-four.

CARLA Lou will love it. They'll have crayons.

BETH Now we have a problem with table two.

CARLA What problem?

BETH Mom wants to sit next to Dad. Dad's new girlfriend wants to sit next to Dad. And Dad wants to sit next to the bar.

CARLA Put Dad at the bar.

BETH You can't seat a person at the bar.

CARLA We can if we call it table zero.

BETH That's... actually brilliant.

CARLA I've been awake for thirty hours. I'm a genius now.

BETH What about me? Where am I?

CARLA Next to me. Obviously.

BETH At the head table?

CARLA Where else would you sit? You're the only one who knows where everyone is.

BETH Carla. That's sweet.

CARLA Also, you're the only one Lou is scared of.

The Breakfast Rules

Sitcom, B&B · Mature (55+) · Irish · 90 seconds

Cast: HEGARTY ANDY

The breakfast room of a guesthouse in Kerry, 7:58 a.m. MRS. HEGARTY, 68, landlady, with a teapot. ANDY, 60, a guest, in a dressing gown

HEGARTY Good morning! You're nearly late.

ANDY Breakfast is from eight, isn't it?

HEGARTY From eight. Not at eight. Eight is a starting gun. Sit, sit.

ANDY Thanks. Could I have a coffee?

HEGARTY You could, of course. But you'll have tea first.

ANDY I don't really drink tea.

HEGARTY You'll have a small one, and then we'll see how you feel.

ANDY ...Okay. A small tea.

HEGARTY Now. Full breakfast?

ANDY Just some toast, please.

HEGARTY Toast is a side. You can't have a side on its own. It'd be lonely.

ANDY What comes with the toast?

HEGARTY Everything. Rashers, sausages, pudding, beans, mushrooms, tomato.

ANDY Could I have it without the pudding?

HEGARTY You could. But my husband makes it himself, so he'll be watching from the kitchen door.

ANDY ...With the pudding, then.

HEGARTY Good man. And how would you like your egg?

ANDY Poached?

HEGARTY Ah, I don't poach.

ANDY Scrambled?

HEGARTY I don't scramble on a Wednesday.

ANDY What do you do on a Wednesday?

HEGARTY Fried. Sunny side up. Lovely.

ANDY Then why did you ask how I'd like it?

HEGARTY Manners, love. Manners. Here's your tea.

ANDY This is a very big tea.

HEGARTY That's the small one.

ANDY What's the large one?

HEGARTY You'd need to book it.

The Pantomime Horse

Sketch, mascots · Adult (25-40) · Neutral American · 90 seconds

Cast: PETE DESHAWN

A baseball stadium, seventh inning. Inside a two-person horse costume: DESHAWN, 28, the front. PETE, 30, the back

PETE Why did we stop?

DESHAWN There's a kid. He wants a hug.

PETE I can't hug. I'm the back.

DESHAWN I'll handle the hug. Just don't move.

PETE I'm always not moving. That's my whole job.

DESHAWN Okay, hug done. We're walking to the dugout.

PETE Which way is the dugout?

DESHAWN Left.

PETE Your left or the horse's left?

DESHAWN We are the horse, Pete!

PETE I can only see your belt.

DESHAWN Then follow the belt.

SFX: crowd cheering

PETE What's happening? Why is everyone cheering?

DESHAWN We're on the big screen.

PETE Is that good?

DESHAWN The horse's tail is coming off.

PETE That's not good.

DESHAWN The tail is on the jumbotron. Forty thousand people are watching the tail.

PETE Can you grab it?

DESHAWN I'm the front! I don't have arms back there!

PETE I have arms. Where is it?

DESHAWN Under your left foot.

PETE Your left or my left?

DESHAWN Pete!

PETE Got it. I got the tail.

DESHAWN Okay. Don't put it back on. Just wave it.

PETE Wave it?

DESHAWN They love it. The whole stadium. They're doing the wave.

PETE For the tail?

DESHAWN For us, Pete. We're the most popular horse in baseball.

PETE Can I come out now?

DESHAWN Not yet. They want an encore.

PETE I've been bent over for three innings. My back is the horse now.

The Parrot

Sitcom, meeting the parents · Adult (25-40) · Neutral American · 90 seconds

Cast: JAKE SOPHIE

A living room. SOPHIE, 31, and her boyfriend JAKE, 32, waiting for her parents to come down. A large gray parrot, the Admiral, watches from a perch

JAKE He's beautiful. What's his name?

SOPHIE The Admiral. He's forty. He's been in the family longer than me.

JAKE Does he talk?

SOPHIE A little. Mostly nonsense. Don't encourage him.

JAKE Hello, Admiral.

SOPHIE [as the parrot] Is that the new one?

JAKE ...What?

SOPHIE He picks things up. Random things.

JAKE He said "the new one."

SOPHIE It's just sounds. Parrots don't know what they're saying.

SOPHIE [as the parrot] Better than the dentist.

JAKE Who's the dentist?

SOPHIE Nobody. A dentist. Everyone has a dentist.

JAKE Sophie, did you date a dentist?

SOPHIE Briefly. Very briefly. He didn't like birds.

SOPHIE [as the parrot] Tell him about the boat.

JAKE What boat?

SOPHIE There's no boat. There was never a boat.

JAKE The parrot seems very sure about the boat.

SOPHIE My dad bought a boat once and sank it in the lake on the first day. That's the boat.

JAKE Oh, that's great. That's a great story.

SOPHIE Don't bring it up at dinner.

JAKE Why not?

SOPHIE He's still sad about the boat.

SFX: footsteps on the stairs

SOPHIE They're coming. Be normal.

SOPHIE [as the parrot] Be normal!

JAKE Should we put a cloth over him?

SOPHIE He hates the cloth. He gets louder.

SOPHIE [as the parrot] I like this one. He's tall.

JAKE ...Thank you, Admiral.

SOPHIE Okay, that one he did learn from me.

The Tasting Menu

Sketch, restaurant · Adult (40-55) · Neutral British · 90 seconds

Cast: FIONA RUPERT

A very expensive restaurant. Low lighting. RUPERT, 48, and FIONA, 46, on their twentieth anniversary. A waiter has just set down course seven

FIONA What is it?

RUPERT The waiter said it was "the memory of a carrot."

FIONA Where's the carrot?

RUPERT I think that's the point. It's a memory.

FIONA There's a single drop of orange on a stone.

RUPERT It's foam. It's very fashionable.

FIONA Rupert, I've had larger meals off a toothbrush.

RUPERT It's course seven of fourteen. It's a journey.

FIONA Course four was a leaf.

RUPERT It was a very special leaf. From Norway.

FIONA It was a leaf on a plate. I could see the waiter's face through it.

RUPERT Just try the carrot.

pause

FIONA ...It tastes of carrot.

RUPERT There you are. Concentrated.

FIONA It tastes of one carrot that once walked past this stone.

RUPERT Please lower your voice, the chef can hear us.

FIONA How do you know?

RUPERT He's staring at me from the kitchen. He's been staring since course three.

FIONA What happened at course three?

RUPERT I asked for bread.

FIONA You asked for bread?

RUPERT I was hungry, Fiona.

FIONA What did he say?

RUPERT He said bread was "a crutch." And then he walked away.

beat

FIONA Rupert.

RUPERT Yes, darling.

FIONA There's a chip shop across the road.

RUPERT We've paid for fourteen courses.

FIONA We've had seven. We'll come back for the other seven next year.

RUPERT ...Happy anniversary.

FIONA Get your coat. Bring the stone.

The Babysitter's List

Sitcom, babysitting · Any · Neutral American · 90 seconds

Cast: ALISON KENZIE

A front hall, 6:45 p.m. ALISON, 42, in her coat, holding four pages of notes. KENZIE, 17, the babysitter, holding a phone

ALISON Okay. So, bedtime is eight. Not eight-oh-one. Eight.

KENZIE Got it.

ALISON He'll ask for a glass of water. Say yes. He'll ask for a second glass. Say no.

KENZIE One water. Sure.

ALISON He'll say he can't sleep without Captain Paws.

KENZIE The stuffed cat?

ALISON The stuffed dog. He's called Captain Paws but he's a dog. It's complicated.

KENZIE Okay.

ALISON Captain Paws is usually under the bed. If he isn't under the bed, check the freezer.

KENZIE The freezer?

ALISON He put him in there once in July. To keep him cool. He's done it ever since.

KENZIE Freezer. Got it.

ALISON If he asks you to read a story, he'll pick the long one. Say it's too late for the long one. He'll argue. He'll say he's allowed. He is not allowed.

KENZIE Got it.

ALISON And if he says the word "pineapple," that means he's going to be sick.

KENZIE Why pineapple?

ALISON We don't know. He just does it.

KENZIE Okay.

ALISON And emergency numbers are on the fridge, Grandma's number is on the fridge, and the fridge has a sticky door, so pull hard.

KENZIE Mrs. Baker?

ALISON Yes?

KENZIE I've babysat him six times.

ALISON I know, but—

KENZIE Last time he asked for three waters, and I gave him one and a half. He called me a legend.

ALISON He called you a legend?

KENZIE Then he showed me where you keep the good cookies.

ALISON What good cookies?

KENZIE The ones in the box marked "Tax Documents."

ALISON ...He found those?

KENZIE Go to dinner, Mrs. Baker.

The Tent

Sitcom, in-laws · Adult (40-55) · Scottish · 90 seconds

Cast: STUART ANGUS

A campsite in the Highlands, pouring rain. ANGUS, 50, holds a bag of tent poles. STUART, 47, his brother-in-law, holds the instructions

STUART Right. This is very simple.

ANGUS You've said that three times, Stuart.

STUART And it's been true every time.

ANGUS Then why is the tent on the ground?

STUART That's step one. Lay the tent on the ground.

ANGUS It's been on the ground for an hour.

STUART It's a very thorough step one.

ANGUS What's step two?

STUART "Insert pole A into sleeve B."

ANGUS Which one's pole A?

STUART They're not labelled.

ANGUS Then how do we know?

STUART It'll be the one that fits sleeve B.

ANGUS Which is sleeve B?

STUART It'll be the one that pole A fits into.

ANGUS That's not instructions. That's a riddle.

STUART You said you'd camped before.

ANGUS I said I'd been in a tent before. At a wedding. There was a ceilidh in it.

STUART Same principle.

ANGUS It had a dance floor, Stuart. And a bar.

STUART Try the long pole.

ANGUS There's no long pole. They're all the same length.

STUART Then it doesn't matter, does it. Shove it in.

SFX: a loud snap

ANGUS ...It's in two bits now.

STUART Grand. Now we've got two short poles. More options.

ANGUS Your sister's going to be here in twenty minutes with the kids.

STUART She'll be impressed.

ANGUS By what? A wet sheet with a broken stick in it?

STUART By the effort.

SFX: a car horn

ANGUS That's them.

STUART Act natural.

ANGUS I'm standing in a field holding half a pole in the rain.

STUART That's the most natural thing a man can do in Scotland.

The Bake Sale Table

Sitcom, rivals · Mature (55+) · Southern US · 90 seconds

Cast: BETTY JEAN DARLENE

A folding table at a county fair bake sale in Georgia. BETTY JEAN, 67, with a pecan pie. DARLENE, 69, with a pecan pie

BETTY JEAN Well, Darlene. Isn't this nice. Sharing a table.

DARLENE Isn't it. And what did you bring this year, Betty Jean?

BETTY JEAN Oh, just a little pecan pie. Nothing special.

DARLENE Pecan. How brave.

BETTY JEAN Brave?

DARLENE To bring pecan. When you know I bring pecan.

BETTY JEAN Do you, honey? I must have forgotten. All forty years.

DARLENE Yours looks lovely. Very rustic.

BETTY JEAN Thank you. And yours looks so even. Like it came from a factory.

DARLENE It came from my oven.

BETTY JEAN I'm sure it did. You must have a real steady hand. Mine shakes a little. From all the love I put in.

DARLENE Mine shakes when I see a crust that's been rolled twice.

BETTY JEAN I roll it once, Darlene.

DARLENE Mm-hm.

A customer approaches

BETTY JEAN Morning, sugar! Pecan pie?

DARLENE Two to choose from.

BETTY JEAN Mine has a secret ingredient.

DARLENE So does mine.

BETTY JEAN Mine has a little orange zest.

DARLENE ...Mine has a little orange zest.

BETTY JEAN You don't put orange zest in your pecan pie.

DARLENE I've put orange zest in my pecan pie since 1994.

BETTY JEAN That's when I started.

DARLENE I know. I tasted yours at the Fourth of July picnic and went straight home and tried it.

beat

BETTY JEAN Darlene.

DARLENE Don't make a fuss.

BETTY JEAN That's the nicest thing you've ever said to me.

DARLENE Don't let it go to your head.

BETTY JEAN Shall we put the pies together? Two for twelve dollars?

DARLENE Two for fifteen. We're not giving them away.

First Day of Retirement

Sitcom, old couple · Mature (55+) · Neutral American · 90 seconds

Cast: FRANK PEGGY

A kitchen, 9 a.m. FRANK, 66, on his first day of retirement, has reorganized the cupboards. PEGGY, 64, has just come back from a walk

FRANK Morning, Peg! Big news. I've optimized the kitchen.

PEGGY You've what?

FRANK Forty years, and nobody ever looked at the system. So I looked at the system.

PEGGY There was a system.

FRANK Was there?

PEGGY It was me, Frank. I was the system.

FRANK Well, now it's labeled. Look. Mugs. Plates. Bowls. Everything in alphabetical order.

PEGGY Why are the bowls next to the batteries?

FRANK B. Bowls, batteries. Alphabetical.

PEGGY And the sugar?

FRANK Under S. Next to the spare lightbulbs.

PEGGY I'm going to put sugar in the coffee and get a lightbulb.

FRANK No, the lightbulbs are in a different box. That's the system.

PEGGY Where's my good knife?

FRANK Under K. For knife.

PEGGY It's under C.

FRANK C?

PEGGY You labeled it "cutlery."

FRANK ...Well, that's a flaw in the system.

PEGGY Frank. Sit down. Coffee?

FRANK I've moved the coffee.

PEGGY Where?

FRANK J. For java.

PEGGY Nobody has ever called it java.

FRANK I'm retired, Peg. I can call it what I want.

beat

PEGGY Frank, honey. Do you know what the garage needs?

FRANK What?

PEGGY A system.

FRANK ...It really does, doesn't it.

PEGGY Start with A. Take your time. Take all day.

FRANK I'll make a chart.

PEGGY You do that. I'll be in here. Under P. For peace.

The Great Lorenzo

Sketch, magic act · Adult (30-45) · Neutral American · 2 minutes

Cast: LORENZO TRISH

A backyard birthday party. Twenty seven-year-olds on the grass. THE GREAT LORENZO, 41, in a cape. His assistant TRISH, 38, beside a folding table

LORENZO Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls. Prepare to be amazed!

TRISH [quietly] They're seven, Lorenzo. Go easy.

LORENZO For my first trick, I will pull a rabbit from this ordinary top hat.

TRISH [quietly] Did you put the rabbit in?

LORENZO [quietly] Of course I put the rabbit in.

TRISH [quietly] Then why is the hat moving on its own over there?

LORENZO Abracadabra!

pause

LORENZO ...And instead of a rabbit, a very nice scarf!

TRISH [quietly] The rabbit's under the trampoline.

LORENZO [quietly] Keep going. Next trick.

TRISH For his next trick, the Great Lorenzo will make this coin disappear!

LORENZO Watch closely! The coin is in my hand. And now...

TRISH [quietly] It fell out your sleeve.

LORENZO ...it is on the grass. It has teleported to the grass!

TRISH [quietly] A kid's picked it up.

LORENZO And this young man now has the magic coin! Hold onto that, sir, it's very lucky.

TRISH [quietly] He swallowed it.

LORENZO [quietly] He what?

TRISH [quietly] Kidding. It's in his pocket. Breathe.

LORENZO For my final trick, the Great Lorenzo will saw my lovely assistant in half!

TRISH No, he won't.

LORENZO Yes, I will!

TRISH [quietly] We left the box in the van. You're holding a bread knife.

LORENZO Change of plan! Instead, I will read this young lady's mind. Birthday girl. Think of a number between one and ten.

TRISH [quietly] Seven. It's always seven.

LORENZO Your number is... seven!

SFX: a crowd of children gasping

TRISH [quietly] There you go.

LORENZO [quietly] I'm a genius.

TRISH [quietly] You're a man in a cape. Now the rabbit.

LORENZO And now, for the first time ever, I shall summon my rabbit from anywhere in this yard!

TRISH [quietly] It's on the cake.

LORENZO Rabbit, appear!

TRISH [quietly] It's eating the cake.

LORENZO Behold. The rabbit has appeared on the birthday cake. He wishes you all a very happy birthday!

TRISH [quietly] He's eaten the seven.

LORENZO And he has eaten the number seven, which is the birthday girl's age, and her favorite number. That's how you know it's real magic!

TRISH [quietly] That was actually good.

LORENZO Thank you, thank you! The Great Lorenzo is available for weddings.

TRISH He is not.

The Spelling Bee

Sketch, competitive parents · Adult (25-40) · Neutral American · 2 minutes

Cast: ALEX JORDAN

A school gym. Folding chairs. ALEX, 34, a first-time spelling bee parent, sits next to JORDAN, 36, a veteran, who has a clipboard

ALEX Is it always this tense?

JORDAN This is nothing. Wait for round four.

ALEX Round four?

JORDAN That's when they bring out the words with silent letters. People cry.

ALEX The kids?

JORDAN The parents.

ALEX Why do you have a clipboard?

JORDAN I track the field. Number twelve, red sweater. She's strong on Latin roots. Number six is dangerous on anything French.

ALEX Which one's yours?

JORDAN Number nine. Zara. Glasses, ponytail, totally focused.

ALEX Mine's number four. Benny.

JORDAN The one picking his nose?

ALEX ...He's thinking.

JORDAN Okay. Here we go. Number twelve. Word is "rhythm."

ALEX Is that hard?

JORDAN No vowels, Alex. It's a trap.

ALEX She got it.

JORDAN Of course she got it. Latin roots.

ALEX "Rhythm" isn't Latin.

JORDAN Don't argue with me during the bee.

beat

JORDAN Number six. "Rendezvous." Oh, he's in trouble. Oh, no. Watch him.

ALEX He's out.

JORDAN He was French-confident and Spanish-weak. Classic.

ALEX How do you know that?

JORDAN I've seen him three years running. Here we go. Zara. "Mnemonic."

ALEX Silent M?

JORDAN Silent M. Come on, Zara. Come on, baby.

ALEX She got it!

JORDAN Don't cheer. They hate it when you cheer.

ALEX Benny's up. Benny's up.

JORDAN What's his word?

ALEX "Phlegm."

JORDAN Oof.

ALEX Is that a bad one?

JORDAN That is a very bad one. Silent G, and it's gross.

ALEX He's... he's spelling it. P. H. L. E. G. M.

JORDAN He got it.

ALEX He got it! Benny got it!

JORDAN Don't stand up.

ALEX I'm not standing up. I'm leaning with purpose.

beat

JORDAN Okay. It's just the two of them left.

ALEX Benny and Zara?

JORDAN Benny and Zara.

ALEX So now we're...

JORDAN Rivals.

ALEX Are we?

JORDAN Only for the next four minutes. Then we're friends again.

ALEX Can I borrow the clipboard?

JORDAN Absolutely not.

The Sofa on the Stairs

Sitcom, roommates · Young adult (18-25) · Neutral American · 2 minutes

Cast: KYLE OMAR

A narrow stairwell in an old apartment building. KYLE, 22, at the top, holding one end of a sofa. OMAR, 21, at the bottom, holding the other

KYLE Okay. Tilt your end up.

OMAR Up where?

KYLE Up toward the ceiling.

OMAR There is no ceiling. It's just more stairs.

KYLE Then tilt it toward the stairs.

OMAR It's already against the stairs. The sofa is the stairs now.

KYLE Okay. New approach. Pivot.

OMAR What does pivot mean?

KYLE Rotate it. Like this.

OMAR I can't see what you're doing. There's a sofa between us.

KYLE Turn your end to the left.

OMAR My left or the sofa's left?

KYLE Does a sofa have a left?

OMAR It does now. I just turned it.

SFX: a scraping thud

KYLE What was that?

OMAR The sofa's stuck.

KYLE How stuck?

OMAR The arm is in the banister.

KYLE Can you pull it out?

OMAR I've been pulling for a minute. The banister's winning.

KYLE Okay. I measured the stairwell before we bought it.

OMAR You did?

KYLE I did. Thirty-two inches.

OMAR How wide is the sofa?

KYLE Thirty-four inches.

pause

OMAR Kyle.

KYLE I thought it would squish.

OMAR Sofas don't squish!

KYLE It said "plush" on the label!

OMAR Plush doesn't mean squish!

KYLE Okay. What if we take the legs off?

OMAR The legs aren't the problem. The problem is the whole sofa.

KYLE We could take the cushions out.

OMAR Then it's a sofa without cushions. Still two inches too wide. Still stuck.

KYLE We could cut it in half.

OMAR It's a sofa, not a pizza.

KYLE Okay. Okay. Let's just think.

OMAR Where are you going?

KYLE Nowhere. I'm sitting down.

OMAR Where?

KYLE On the sofa. It's actually really comfortable.

OMAR You're sitting on it? In the stairwell?

KYLE Try it. Climb over.

OMAR ...Okay.

SFX: a creak

OMAR Oh. That is nice.

KYLE Right? Good choice of sofa.

OMAR The best.

SFX: a door opening above. A NEIGHBOR calls down, asking to get past to the laundry room

KYLE Hi! Welcome to our living room.

Up, Up and Away

Sitcom, old couple · Mature (55+) · Neutral American · 2 minutes

Cast: WALLY EDNA

A hot air balloon basket, rising over farmland at dawn. EDNA, 72, holding the edge with both hands, eyes shut. WALLY, 74, her husband, beaming

WALLY Isn't this wonderful, Edna?

EDNA I wouldn't know. My eyes are closed.

WALLY You'll want to open them.

EDNA I'll open them when we're on the ground. In a car. In a parking lot. Inside a building.

WALLY We're forty feet up.

EDNA Don't tell me numbers, Wally!

WALLY Okay. We're a little bit up.

EDNA How little?

WALLY About a tree.

EDNA A tree is huge!

WALLY A small tree. A shrub.

EDNA We've been married fifty years and you thought this was a good gift?

WALLY You said you'd always wanted to see the valley from above.

EDNA In a photograph, Wally! In a book! On the television!

WALLY Just open one eye.

EDNA Fine. One eye. If I faint, you'll have to explain it to the children.

pause

EDNA ...Oh.

WALLY See?

EDNA Is that the river?

WALLY That's the river.

EDNA It's so small. It looks like a ribbon.

WALLY Open the other eye.

EDNA I'm not ready for two eyes.

WALLY Edna.

EDNA All right. Both eyes.

beat

EDNA Oh, Wally. Look at the fog on the fields. It's like a blanket.

WALLY Told you.

EDNA Don't say "told you." I'm still holding on.

WALLY You can hold on to me instead.

EDNA You're not as sturdy as the basket.

WALLY I've held up for fifty years.

EDNA ...That's true.

pause

WALLY Edna. Look down. Over there. By the farm.

EDNA Look down? Are you mad?

WALLY Just for a second. By the big barn.

EDNA ...Is that writing in the field?

WALLY The farmer's an old friend. He mowed it in last week.

EDNA It says "Fifty more?"

WALLY With a question mark. I didn't want to assume.

EDNA Wally Pruett, you have made me cry at a hundred feet.

WALLY Hundred and twenty.

EDNA Don't tell me numbers!

WALLY Is that a yes?

EDNA It's a yes. Now get me down.

Best Man Rehearsal

Sitcom, friends · Adult (30-45) · Neutral British · 2 minutes

Cast: JULIAN TOBY

A living room the night before a wedding. TOBY, 35, the groom, on the sofa. JULIAN, 36, his best man, standing with a stack of index cards

JULIAN Right. Ladies and gentlemen. Thank you all for coming.

TOBY Good. Strong start.

JULIAN I've known Toby for twenty years, since we met at school, when he was sick on a coach to Bath.

TOBY No.

JULIAN What?

TOBY Not the coach.

JULIAN It's a lovely story.

TOBY I was sick on a geography teacher, Julian.

JULIAN That's what makes it lovely.

TOBY Next card.

JULIAN Fine. Toby has always been a romantic. At university, he once serenaded a girl from beneath her window—

TOBY No.

JULIAN You don't even know where it's going!

TOBY I know where it's going. It's going to the fire brigade.

JULIAN The fire brigade were very understanding.

TOBY I was stuck in a tree for three hours.

JULIAN Which shows commitment.

TOBY Next card.

JULIAN Toby is a man of many talents. He once tried to make his own wine—

TOBY Absolutely not.

JULIAN The kitchen was fine in the end!

TOBY The kitchen was not fine. The landlord kept the deposit and the ceiling.

JULIAN How many of these have I got left?

TOBY How many did you write?

JULIAN Forty.

TOBY Then about one.

JULIAN Okay. Last card. "When Toby met Hannah, I knew something had changed. Because the next morning, he rang me at seven o'clock, which he has never done in his life, and he said, Jules, I think I've met the person who's going to make me a better man. And he was right. He's still sick on coaches. He still can't climb down from trees. But he's kinder, and he's calmer, and he calls his mum every Sunday, which he started doing because Hannah does. So please raise your glasses to Toby and Hannah, and to whoever invented travel sickness tablets."

pause

TOBY ...You can keep that one.

JULIAN Really?

TOBY Keep that one.

JULIAN Can I add the coach back in at the start?

TOBY No.

The Ghost Hunters

Sketch, amateur investigators · Adult (30-45) · Neutral American · 2 minutes

Cast: SKYLER MORGAN

A dark, creaky farmhouse. SKYLER, 33, holds a flashlight and a recorder. MORGAN, 35, holds a thermos of coffee

SKYLER Welcome back to Things That Go Bump. I'm Skyler.

MORGAN And I'm Morgan. And it's eleven at night and I'm cold.

SKYLER Tonight we're investigating the old Thornbury farmhouse. Locals say this house has been haunted since 1890.

MORGAN Locals also said the diner has the best pie in the county.

SKYLER Was it?

MORGAN It was fine. Middle of the pack.

SKYLER Shh. Did you hear that?

SFX: a long creak

MORGAN That's the floor.

SKYLER Or is it a presence?

MORGAN It's the floor. I stepped on it. Look. Creak.

SFX: a creak

SKYLER Okay. We're entering the kitchen. The kitchen is where the original owner, Mrs. Thornbury, spent most of her time.

MORGAN Because it was 1890 and she had no choice.

SKYLER It's very cold in here.

MORGAN The window's open.

SKYLER Who opened the window?

MORGAN I did. Earlier. You were eating my granola bar.

SKYLER Wait. The temperature's dropping fast.

MORGAN It's November.

SFX: a cupboard door slowly swinging open

SKYLER Did you see that? The cupboard opened on its own!

MORGAN The latch is broken.

SKYLER How do you know?

MORGAN There's a sign. It says "Latch broken, please hold door."

SKYLER That could be a message from the other side.

MORGAN It's written on a sticky note. In ballpoint.

SKYLER Okay. Let's try to make contact. Mrs. Thornbury, if you're here, give us a sign.

pause

MORGAN ...Nothing.

SKYLER Mrs. Thornbury, knock once for yes.

pause

MORGAN She's busy. It's a big house.

SKYLER Mrs. Thornbury, are you angry that we're in your kitchen?

SFX: a single knock

MORGAN That's the pipes.

SKYLER Mrs. Thornbury, do you like our show?

SFX: two knocks

MORGAN Two knocks is no, isn't it?

SKYLER We didn't agree on what two means.

MORGAN She doesn't like the show, Skyler.

SKYLER Mrs. Thornbury, what's wrong with the show?

SFX: a kettle starts to whistle

pause

MORGAN ...I didn't put the kettle on.

SKYLER Neither did I.

MORGAN There's no power to this house.

SKYLER So who put the kettle on?

MORGAN Okay. I can't explain that one.

SKYLER She wants us to have tea.

MORGAN That's honestly a better ending than the pie.

Stuck on the Chairlift

Sitcom, blind date · Adult (25-40) · Neutral American · 3 minutes

Cast: GREG NINA

A chairlift halfway up a mountain. The lift has just stopped. Snow falling lightly. NINA, 33, and GREG, 34, on their first date, set up by a mutual friend

GREG So. It's stopped.

NINA It has.

GREG Does it do that?

NINA Sometimes. For a minute or two. While they load people at the bottom.

GREG Great. So it's normal.

NINA Very normal.

pause

GREG It's been four minutes.

NINA I know.

GREG Is four minutes normal?

NINA I don't know what's normal, Greg. I'm not the lift.

GREG Okay. Sorry. So, Leah said you work in accounting?

NINA Actuarial science.

GREG What's that?

NINA I calculate risk.

GREG Oh. So, what's the risk of us being stuck on this lift?

NINA Low. It happens all the time. They always get it going again.

GREG How long, on average?

NINA I don't know. I'm not a lift actuary.

GREG There are lift actuaries?

NINA There's an actuary for everything.

SFX: a gust of wind, the chair sways

GREG Okay. That was a sway.

NINA Chairs sway. They're on a cable.

GREG I know they're on a cable, I can see the cable. It's very thin.

NINA It's steel.

GREG It looks like a shoelace.

NINA Are you scared of heights?

GREG No. Yes. A little. Mostly when I'm high up.

NINA Then why did you agree to a ski date?

GREG Because Leah said you love skiing. And I wanted you to like me.

NINA ...You don't ski?

GREG I skied once. When I was eight. I hit a lodge.

NINA Hit it?

GREG Into the side of it. There was a man inside eating soup. He wasn't happy.

NINA Greg. You came up a mountain for a date.

GREG I came up a mountain for a date with someone who calculates risk for a living. I figured it was the safest place to be terrified.

pause

NINA Can I tell you something?

GREG Please. Distract me.

NINA I don't love skiing.

GREG What?

NINA I told Leah I love skiing because I said it once, at a party, three years ago, and she never forgot it. I've been skiing twice. I spend most of the time in the lodge.

GREG Eating soup?

NINA Eating soup.

GREG So we're both on a mountain neither of us wanted to climb.

NINA For each other.

GREG That's either very romantic or very stupid.

NINA In my professional opinion, it's both.

SFX: the wind picks up. The chair sways

GREG Oh no. Oh no. Okay. Talk to me.

NINA Hold my hand.

GREG What?

NINA Hold my hand. It reduces panic. There's research.

GREG Is there?

NINA I don't know. I just said it.

beat

GREG ...It helps.

NINA Good.

GREG Your hand's cold.

NINA We're on a mountain, Greg.

pause

GREG So when this starts again, and we get to the top, what do we do?

NINA We could ski down.

GREG Neither of us can ski.

NINA Then we take the lift back down.

GREG The same lift? That's the worst idea I've ever heard.

NINA Or we find the lodge, and get soup, and tell Leah it went great.

GREG Did it? Go great?

NINA Ask me again at the bottom.

SFX: a jolt, then the hum of the lift starting

GREG It's moving!

NINA Told you.

GREG You said you didn't know.

NINA I didn't. I'm very good at sounding like I do.

GREG Can I keep holding your hand?

NINA Until the soup. Then you need both hands.

The Duck Race Committee

Sitcom, village committee · Adult (40-55) · Neutral British · 3 minutes

Cast: COLIN PATRICIA

A cold village hall. COLIN, 54, chair of the Summer Fete Committee. PATRICIA, 51, the secretary, holding the minutes of last night's meeting

COLIN Right, Patricia. Let's go through last night's minutes before they go in the newsletter.

PATRICIA Of course. "Minutes of the Summer Fete Committee, Thursday the fourth. Present: Colin, Patricia, Mrs. Abbott, Mr. Singh, and Mrs. Abbott's dog."

COLIN Does the dog need to be in the minutes?

PATRICIA He was present.

COLIN Fine. Carry on.

PATRICIA "Item one. The duck race. Colin proposed that this year's duck race use real ducks."

COLIN I didn't propose that.

PATRICIA "Colin said, and I quote, 'What if this year, we go bigger?'"

COLIN I meant bigger rubber ducks.

PATRICIA "Mr. Singh asked, 'Real ducks?' and Colin said, 'Why not?'"

COLIN It was a rhetorical why not.

PATRICIA "The motion was carried, three to one, with the dog abstaining."

COLIN Can we take that out?

PATRICIA It's what happened, Colin.

COLIN We are not having a race with real ducks.

PATRICIA Mrs. Abbott has already rung the farm.

COLIN Has she?

PATRICIA Forty ducks are booked for the twelfth.

COLIN ...Carry on.

PATRICIA "Item two. The cake stall. Mrs. Abbott asked whether shop-bought cakes would be allowed. Colin said absolutely not. Mrs. Abbott asked whether Colin's own lemon drizzle last year was shop-bought."

COLIN That's not relevant.

PATRICIA "Colin said that was not relevant. Mrs. Abbott produced a receipt."

COLIN Why would she keep a receipt from last year?

PATRICIA "Mrs. Abbott said she had kept the receipt from last year for exactly this moment."

COLIN That woman is a menace.

PATRICIA "Item three. The tombola. Mr. Singh reported that the tombola drum has been missing since March. Colin said he thought it might be in his garage. Mr. Singh asked why the tombola drum would be in Colin's garage. Colin said he had borrowed it."

COLIN For a perfectly good reason.

PATRICIA "Mr. Singh asked what the reason was. Colin said he had been using it to make compost."

COLIN It turns very nicely. It's ideal.

PATRICIA "Mr. Singh said he would not be putting his hand in it this year."

COLIN I've rinsed it.

PATRICIA "Item four. Fancy dress. It was agreed that the theme will be 'Famous Ducks,' in keeping with item one."

COLIN Who agreed that?

PATRICIA You did, Colin. You said, and I quote, "If we're doing real ducks, let's commit."

COLIN I was tired.

PATRICIA "Item five. Any other business. Mrs. Abbott proposed a vote of no confidence in the chair."

COLIN What?

PATRICIA "The vote was tied, two to two."

COLIN Who voted against me?

PATRICIA Mrs. Abbott and Mr. Singh.

COLIN And who voted for me?

PATRICIA Me.

COLIN And?

PATRICIA The dog.

COLIN The dog voted?

PATRICIA He raised his paw. I counted it. Somebody had to.

pause

COLIN Thank you, Patricia.

PATRICIA Don't mention it.

COLIN Is that the end of the minutes?

PATRICIA Nearly. There's one more line. "The meeting closed at nine forty. After the meeting, the secretary was asked by the chair whether she would like to get a drink at the Red Lion. The secretary said yes."

COLIN You put that in the minutes?

PATRICIA It was said in the meeting room, Colin. It's on the record.

COLIN Can we take it out?

PATRICIA No. I'd quite like to keep that one.

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