

# HOLLYWOOD'S WORST SCREEN TESTS

A Short Play By:  
Stephen Garvey

**ACTOR'S SCRIPT**



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Hollywood's Worst Screen Tests. A Short Play by Stephen Garvey

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## **FINAL REMINDER:**

Send us your performance dates so we can shout about your show (and trust us, we will), send them to [productions@dramallama.com](mailto:productions@dramallama.com) at least seven days before opening night.

Questions? Comments? Or just need someone to chat about how cute llamas are? We're all ears (and hooves!)

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## ***ABOUT the SHOW***

Alex, a casting agent, is given the challenge of her career when she's tasked to run screen tests for multiple films in the course of just one day. The order comes from Gerry, a studio head who has fast-tracked ten scripts into production in a desperate move to save her job. Unfortunately, because of the rush, none of the actors (from silver screen stars to Hollywood hopefuls) are even remotely ready for their close-ups. Making matters worse, the screenplays are uniformly awful, including an absurd rom-com, a shameless Oscar-bait drama, a superhero flick that reads more like a toothpaste ad, an ill-advised sequel, and more. Can Alex somehow find the perfect casts for ten imperfect movies in 24 hours? And will she still have her sanity when she's done?

# ***CHARACTERS***

13 Actors + can be expanded to 30+ actors

## **THE MOVIE STUDIO FOLKS**

ALEX (20s, F) – Hollywood casting agent who gave up her dream of being an actress to pay the bills.

GERRY (50s, F) – Long-time Hollywood producer—a fast-on-her-feet ideas-woman...if only her ideas were good! [Could be male.]

VIDEOGRAPHER (20s, F) – There to record the auditioners. [Could be male.]

THE GATEKEEPER (60s, F) – Movie studio lifer who has likely spent her entire career in the audition hall, wrangling actors and ushering them in and out of auditions.

## **THE SCREEN TEST TALENT**

MALE ROM-COM ACTOR (20s, M) – Recently dumped by his S.O. and not doing great.

FEMALE ROM-COM ACTOR (20s, F) – Trying her best working with a struggling partner.

ANNABELLE STRONG (50s, F) – Famous, award-winning actress, a la Meryl Streep.

HORROR MOVIE ACTOR (20s, M) – Makes bold choicest...just not great ones.

HORROR MOVIE ACTRESS 1 (20s, F) – Trying her best working with a lousy partner.

HORROR MOVIE ACTRESS 2 (20s, F) – Ditto.

SCARLETT (20s, F) – Young Hollywood starlet and a former classmate of Alex's.

PIERRE (30s, M) – A mime.

DUSTIN (50s, M) – Serious actor with a capital "S."

"12 ANGRY MEN" Sequel Auditioners

"SUNSET IN THE SAVANNA" Auditioners

"TIMECOP: THE MUSICAL" Auditioners (AKA Singing Auditioners 1-6)

MUSICAL INGENUE

AUDITION HALL HOPEFULS 1, 2, 3

SCREENWRITER

TALENT AGENT



# SCENE 1: THE CASTING EMERGENCY

*(Lights half up on the Screen Test Room. A long fold-up table is set up stage left with a few chairs on one side, facing the room. Center stage are two chairs, meant for auditioning actors, with a stool or two stationed upstage. By the long fold-up table is a five-foot-tall tripod on wheels.*

*Stage right is a door leading to the Audition Hall area. All we see of the Audition Hall is a small desk and chair by the door, and a holding area for actors.*

*Lights fully up on Screen Test Room to reveal a body lying down, sound asleep on the long fold-up table. This is ALEX, a casting agent.*

*GERRY ALLEN, a Hollywood producer, charges into the room carrying two large coffees and a bloated satchel slung over her shoulder. She stops at the sight of ALEX sleeping and smiles to herself. She tip-toes around her quietly.*

*VIDEOGRAPHER enters with a digital video camera. GERRY gives her the "Shhhhhh" sign. VIDEOGRAPHER moves to the tripod and quietly attaches the camera, removes the lens, sets the focus, checks the lighting, etc.*

*ALEX begins stirring, mumbling to herself.)*

**ALEX**

Low mileage. No money down.

**GERRY**

Awwwww. She must be dreaming.

**VIDEOGRAPHER**

We should wake her up. People are already filing in.

**GERRY**

Let's give her a few more minutes. We have a long day ahead of us.

*(ALEX tosses and turns)*

**ALEX**

*(still talking in her sleep but much more troubled)*  
Don't make me go back. It's awful there.

**VIDEOGRAPHER**

Gerry, I think she might be having a nightmare.

**GERRY**

The dream state is restorative, even with unpleasant dreams.

**ALEX**

*(now in full terror)*

Gerry's a she-devil!!

**GERRY**

Then again, the day isn't getting any younger.

*(to ALEX)*

Morning, Alex! Rise and shine.

*(ALEX stirs to life and slowly slides off the table and onto one of the chairs)*

**ALEX**

Wow, I was having the worst dream that I was working all --

*(looks around...realizing)*

Oh.

**GERRY**

Maybe it was something you ate.

**ALEX**

Did you say something I "hate"?

**GERRY**

"Ate."

**ALEX**

No. Wasn't that.

*(GERRY places the two coffees down on the long table and sets her satchel on one of the other chairs. She opens the bag and shuffles through it.)*

**GERRY**

Did you get it done?

**ALEX**

I called every actor my agency reps. Every teacher and actor I went to school with. Every actor friend of an actor friend. It took all night, but yes, all the slots for today are filled.

**GERRY**

That's what makes you Hollywood's greatest casting agent. How can I repay you?

*(ALEX grabs one of the two coffees and toasts GERRY)*

**ALEX**

Well, this is a start.

**GERRY**

*(grabbing the coffee from ALEX)*

Hey! That's for me.

**ALEX**

Both of these coffees are for you?

**GERRY**

I had a rough night, too, Alex. There was a "Dance Moms" marathon last night. The return of the Candy Apples. I'm lucky if I got three hours last night.

**ALEX**

That's two and a half more than I did. I just don't understand, Gerry. I've never had to line up this amount of screen tests in one day before. I've lost track on how many scripts we're even casting.

*(ALEX pulls a stack of scripts out of his satchel and slams them on the table)*

**GERRY**

Ten.

**ALEX**

Why so many at once?

**GERRY**

*(making sure they're out of VIDEOGRAPHER'S earshot)*

I got a tip yesterday that this studio may get gobbled up by Paramount. That'll make a lot of jobs redundant. Including mine. Unless...

**ALEX**

Unless what?

**GERRY**

Unless I sink enough studio money into new projects that they have to keep me around to complete them. Either that, or they'll eat hundreds of millions in dead productions. It's the perfect plan!

**ALEX**

I'm not sure about that. Did you happen to read these scripts?

**GERRY**

Of course I did and they're great.

*(off ALEX'S reaction)*

Okay, I didn't actually read them. I just found out about the takeover yesterday. But I thoroughly read the one-page synopses of each script.

*(off ALEX'S reaction)*

Okay. I read the one-liners.

*(off ALEX'S reaction)*

Okay. I looked at the artwork. But when you're a producer this long, that's all you need to smell a winning film.

**ALEX**

Yeah, I was smelling something too when I read them.

**GERRY**

So, I saw some people in the lobby. What's the first script we're casting?

**ALEX**

The rom-com.

*(GERRY notices ALEX'S worried expression)*

**GERRY**

Alex, I know today seem like a lot. But it's all about perspective. You know what they say: "How do you eat an elephant?"

**VIDEOGRAPHER**

"One bite at a time."

**ALEX**

I've never eaten an elephant.

**GERRY**

Well, if you're on the set of...

*(sorting through scripts)*

...“Sunset in the Savanna,” our sprawling African adventure, you may get your chance!

*(clapping her hands excitedly)*

Okay, let's cast a rom-com!

*(sips her coffee)*

Ugh. Too much milk.

*(GERRY throws both coffees out. ALEX reaches out to stop her but is too late.)*

*(Lights dim on the Screen Test Room.)*

## SCENE 1 A

*(Lights up on the Audition Hall, stage right, where THE GATEKEEPER sits at her small desk by the door, clipboard in hand, baseball cap on head, and an unlit cigarette in mouth. Standing in front of her is MUSICAL INGENUE.)*

### THE GATEKEEPER

Sorry, dearie. You're not on the list.

### MUSICAL INGENUE

That can't be, I was up talking to the casting director until two o'clock last night. I've been gargling lemon honey tea ever since to lubricate my cords.

### THE GATEKEEPER

For a rom-com?

### MUSICAL INGENUE

For the musical.

### THE GATEKEEPER

Dearie. That's in eight hours. They're casting six other films before the then.

### MUSICAL INGENUE

What am I supposed to do for eight hours?

### THE GATEKEEPER

You can get me a Red Bull.

### MUSICAL INGENUE

I guess?

*(MUSICAL INGENUE holds out her hand for money or debit card. THE GATEKEEPER hands over her baseball cap instead.)*

### MUSICAL INGENUE

I need money. What am I supposed to do with this?

### THE GATEKEEPER

Go to the corner of Hollywood and Orange, hold out the cap and work those lubricated cords. Your singing should be good enough to buy me a can or two.

*(A confused and deflated MUSICAL INGENUE takes the cap and exits. Lights dim.)*

## SCENE 2: CASTING THE ROM-COM

*(Lights up on GERRY and ALEX sitting behind the table as MALE ROM-COM ACTOR and FEMALE ROM-COM ACTOR enter and approach the chairs center stage, scripts in hands. VIDEOGRAPHER frames them in the shot.)*

**ALEX**

*(to actors)*

Welcome, guys. Thanks for making it on such short notice.

**FEMALE ROM-COM ACTOR**

*(super excited)*

I love rom-coms. I was up all last night studying my sides.

*(MALE ROM-COM ACTOR waves to GERRY and ALEX while holding a damp tissue. His face looks red and puffy.)*

**MALE ROM-COM ACTOR**

*(trying to keep it together)*

I was up all night, too.

**ALEX**

Great. We all share something in common.

*(The two actors take their seats, sitting across from GERRY and ALEX. MALE ROM-COM ACTOR blows his nose.)*

**FEMALE ROM-COM ACTOR**

I do have some questions. I'm not quite sure I understand my character, "Billie."

**ALEX**

That would make sense. You see, Billie used to be a pool table.

*(to GERRY)*

Correct me if I don't have this right, Gerry.

**GERRY**

No, that about covers it.

**FEMALE ROM-COM ACTOR**

Ohhhh, so, that's why it's called "Pool for Love." I thought it was a typo.

**ALEX**

So, the main character, Jimmy, is a widower who becomes a pool hustler to forget about his late wife, but when her ashes fall onto his favorite table --

**GERRY**

-- at the stroke of midnight on pool legend Minnesota Fats' birthday --

**ALEX**

-- yes to all of that. At that moment, the pool table --

**VIDEOGRAPHER**

-- Isn't it a billiards table? Hence the name "Billie"?

**ALEX**

*(getting annoyed at the interruptions)*  
Whatever!

*(back to FEMALE ROM-COM ACTOR)*  
The table transforms into this mysterious, beautiful woman.

*(MALE ROM-COM ACTOR bursts into tears)*

**GERRY**

I know. It really is quite beautiful when you think about it. Just let it out. This is a safe space.

**MALE ROM-COM ACTOR**

I'm sorry. Maybe we should just start.

**ALEX**

Okay. This is the big romantic finale, where you to declare your love for each other.

*(reads from script)*  
Interior. Building Rooftop. Sunset. A candlelit dinner is set against an orange-hued city skyline.

*(Big sniff and shaky inhale from MALE ROM-COM ACTOR)*

**FEMALE ROM-COM ACTOR**

This is delicious. I've never had linguine before. Once, someone dropped a chicken wing into my side pocket, but it didn't taste anything like this.

**MALE ROM-COM ACTOR**

*(through sobs)*  
I'm so happy you like it.

**ALEX**

Can we stop for a second?

*(to MALE ROM-COM ACTOR)*  
Is everything okay?

**MALE ROM-COM ACTOR**

I'm sorry. Right after I got the call from you guys last night, my wife left me.

**ALEX**

Oh, no. I'm sorry.

**MALE ROM-COM ACTOR**

She left me for my brother...on our anniversary.

**GERRY**

That's terrible. Do you need a minute?

**MALE ROM-COM ACTOR**

I'll be okay. I suppose it could be worse.

**VIDEOGRAPHER**

I can't imagine how.

*(more sobs)*

**MALE ROM-COM ACTOR**

I'm fine. I'm like a cat. I always land on my feet.

*(to FEMALE ROM-COM ACTOR)*  
Please continue.

**FEMALE ROM-COM ACTOR**

*(in character)*  
You should be a chef instead of a pool hustler --

**MALE ROM-COM ACTOR**

*(breaking down again again)*  
I'm sorry. I just remembered she took our cat too.

**ALEX**

We should stop.

**MALE ROM-COM ACTOR**

Please, I need all the distractions I can get right now.

**ALEX**

It's just the sobs are kind of bringing down the romantic feels.

**MALE ROM-COM ACTOR**

This is all I have left.

**ALEX**

Not sure that's helping the mood, but okay, continue.

**FEMALE ROM-COM ACTOR**

*(in character)*

You should be a chef instead of a pool hustler...I know you don't like cheating people.

**MALE ROM-COM ACTOR**

*(sarcastic laugh)*

Cheating. Sure. I'm the cheater.

**ALEX**

Please stick to the script.

**FEMALE ROM-COM ACTOR**

*(in character)*

I can tell every time you rest your hand on my green, felt surface that you're a good man, Jimmy. You have so much more to offer than trick shots.

**MALE ROM-COM ACTOR**

*(in character...but darker)*

Maybe I tricked you into loving me.

**FEMALE ROM-COM ACTOR**

*(in character)*

It's not trick. I loved you from your very first break shot.

**MALE ROM-COM ACTOR**

Love is dead.

**ALEX**

That is not in the script.

*(MALE ROM-COM ACTOR puts the script down, too despondent to continue)*

**MALE ROM-COM ACTOR**

It's all a lie. Rom-coms are just reminders of how short we fall in real life when it comes to love. None of them are based in reality.

**FEMALE ROM-COM ACTOR)**

Who's to say a pool table can't become a woman? Science makes new advances every day.

**MALE ROM-COM ACTOR**

You're unbelievable, Cheryl.

**FEMALE ROM-COM ACTOR**

Who's Cheryl?

**MALE ROM-COM ACTOR**

Fifteen years of my life. And for what?

**FEMALE ROM-COM ACTOR**

You're in pain. I want you to know I see you right now. You wanna go somewhere and talk about it?

**ALEX**

Yes, maybe you should both go.

**MALE ROM-COM ACTOR**

There's a coffee place downstairs.

*(The two make their way to the exit)*

**FEMALE ROM-COM ACTOR**

Sounds great.

**ALEX**

Wait! If you're getting coffee, could you get me a --

*(Too late. They exit.)*

**ALEX**

Never mind.

**GERRY**

Well, let's hope the next --

*(looks at sheet)*

-- fifteen couples bring a little less bleak despair to their roles.

*(Lights dim on the Screen Test Room)*

## SCENE 2 A

*(Lights up on the Audition Hall. AUDITION HALL HOPEFUL 1 and AUDITION HALL HOPEFUL 2, both women in their 40s, apply makeup, using their cell phone cameras as mirrors.)*

**AUDITION HALL HOPEFUL 1**

Can you believe the role we're up for?

**AUDITION HALL HOPEFUL 2**

Life changing. It's the most tragic script I ever read.

**AUDITION HALL HOPEFUL 1**

They sent you the script? They wouldn't send it to me.

**AUDITION HALL HOPEFUL 2**

Well, not the script, but the sides.

**AUDITION HALL HOPEFUL 1**

They wouldn't even send me the side.

**AUDITION HALL HOPEFUL 2**

Well...me neither. But they did say it was life-changing.

**AUDITION HALL HOPEFUL 1**

Sure-fire Oscar winner. I was about to give up on acting until today.

**AUDITION HALL HOPEFUL 2**

Me too! I've been waiting my whole career for a role like this.

**AUDITION HALL HOPEFUL 1**

You have an acting career?

**AUDITION HALL HOPEFUL 2**

Well, I'm a gym trainer, but I work with actors.

**AUDITION HALL HOPEFUL 1**

Well good luck! I feel like one of us is bound to get the part!

**AUDITION HALL HOPEFUL 2**

Me too.

*(ANNABELLE STRONG, famous drama actress, enters and passes the two, passing a smile to them as she moves directly to the Screen Test Room.)*

**AUDITION HALL HOPEFUL 1**

Was that four-time Oscar winner Annabelle Strong?

**AUDITION HALL HOPEFUL 2**

*(deflated)*

Yeah.

*(long beat)*

**AUDITION HALL HOPEFUL 1**

Any openings at that gym?

## SCENE 3: CASTING THE OSCAR-BAIT DRAMA

*(ANNABELLE STRONG does some warm-up exercises in a corner of the room. VIDEOGRAPHER fumbles to get her in frame. ANNABELLE notices.)*

**ANNABELLE**

I'm sorry. Is there a mark where I should stand?

**VIDEOGRAPHER**

*(star-struck)*

No, Ms. Strong. Anywhere you stand will be perfect.

**ANNABELLE**

You're sweet. Call me Annabelle.

**VIDEOGRAPHER**

Sure thing, Ms. Strong.

*(ALEX shuffles through the pile of scripts on the table)*

**GERRY**

I'm very excited about this next script. This is going to guarantee Annabelle another Oscar...if there's any truth to the one-line description.

**ALEX**

And where is the script, exactly? I still haven't seen it. All I was allowed to tell the actors is the role would assure them a star on Hollywood Boulevard.

**GERRY**

And it will. It's that powerful a story.

**ALEX**

It better be. I put my reputation on the line to get Annabelle Strong in here.

**GERRY**

I'll handle this.

*(GERRY approaches ANNABELLE)*

**GERRY**

Annabelle. What an honor. I appreciate you taking time out of your busy schedule to be here.

**ANNABELLE**

I must say this is quite unorthodox. Producers call me with offers...not requests to do screen tests. I haven't done one of these in twenty years.

**GERRY**

This is a very different movie. I'm afraid we simply had no choice.

**ANNABELLE**

*(points to ALEX)*

Well, I'm only here because of the casting agency she works for. They've never failed me.

**ALEX**

*(to herself, through a frozen, petrified smile)*

...yet.

**ANNABELLE**

So, tell me about my role.

**GERRY**

It's both groundbreaking and heartbreaking. It's about a woman who rises above her station in life, overcoming her fears and her disabilities --

**ANNABELLE**

Oh! Disabilities. I haven't had the chance to add that to my repertoire.

**GERRY**

Well, today's your lucky day. You play an aspiring concert pianist.

**ANNABELLE**

Wonderful. Classical music, I hope? The Academy loves that.

**GERRY**

Naturally. But your character can only play by ear.

**ANNABELLE**

She can't read sheet music? Maybe dyslexic? I can do that. What else?

**GERRY**

She has no legs.

**ANNABELLE**

Oh my. What a tragic character.

**GERRY**

Also, no arms.

**ANNABELLE**

No arms? Wait, how does she play the pia--

**GERRY**

Or torso, really.

*(ANNABELLE lets this sink in)*

**ANNABELLE**

So, it sounds like you're saying she's just a head.

**GERRY**

It takes place in the near future, where that kind of thing is possible. And it's not really a head per se. It's more like...an ear.

**ANNABELLE**

*(growing irritated)*

My character is an ear...who plays piano...by ear?

**GERRY**

Your right ear. That's actually the name of the script. "My Right Ear."

**ANNABELLE**

I don't understand.

**GERRY**

It makes perfect sense when you read it.

**ANNABELLE**

Can I read the script?

**GERRY**

No.

**ANNABELLE**

I'm a little baffled, Gerry. Tell me, is there anything else I should know about my character besides being an ear?

**GERRY**

You're deaf.

*(ALEX sinks in her seat)*

**ALEX**

I'm never working in this town again.

**ANNABELLE**

So, I don't have a speaking role, do I? What am I even doing a screen test for?

*(VIDEOGRAPHER gets up close to ANNABELLE'S right ear and records it)*

**GERRY**

We just need to get a really good shot of your right ear.

**ANNABELLE**

You can't shoot my right ear. I injured it two years ago making "Requiem for a Female Kick Boxer."

**VIDEOGRAPHER**

She's not lying. There's a lot of scar tissue here.

**ANNABELLE**

Shoot my left ear.

**GERRY**

We can't. Then we'd have to change the title, and it would be too similar to the film "My Left Foot."

*(ANNABELLE turns angrily to the exit)*

**ANNABELLE**

I'm done.

*(to ALEX)*

Girlie, tell your agency I'm changing my phone number to ensure you never call me again.

**ALEX**

That is so understandable.

*(ANNABELLE storms off)*

**VIDEOGRAPHER**

What a shame. Her left ear truly is stunning.

*(Lights dim on the Screen Test Room)*

## SCENE 3 A

*(Lights up on the Audition Hall and the GATEKEEPER at her desk.  
SCREENWRITER enters and marches towards the Screen Test Room.  
GATEKEEPER lowers an arm in front of the door like a toll gate.)*

**THE GATEKEEPER**

Where do you think you're going?

**SCREENWRITER**

I wrote the script they're about to hold auditions for.

**THE GATEKEEPER**

And...?

**SCREENWRITER**

I should be there. I created the characters. No one knows them better than I do.

**THE GATEKEEPER**

It's a horror film. What was your biggest challenge? How to spell the screaming sounds?

**SCREENWRITER**

I'll have you know, horror is a valid film genre. Some of Hollywood's greatest screenwriters have a horror script on their list of credits.

**THE GATEKEEPER**

My apologies. I didn't realize I was talking to one of Hollywood's greatest screenwriters.

*(With a nod, SCREENWRITER starts to walk in but is stopped)*

**THE GATEKEEPER**

Unfortunately, you still can't go in.

**SCREENWRITER**

Why not?

**THE GATEKEEPER**

You're just the screenwriter.

**SCREENWRITER**

*(defeated)*  
Yeah, I get that a lot.

*(Lights dim)*

## SCENE 4: CASTING THE HORROR FILM

*(Spotlight on ALEX, on her cell phone)*

**ALEX**

Hi, Mom. Must have just missed you. Just checking in. Hope all is well. Things are great here, but quick question: Does Uncle Joe still need help at his auto dealership? I'm asking for a friend who's probably going to be unemployed in about six hours and wouldn't mind moving to Arkansas right now. Okay. Let me know!

**GERRY**

Alex!

*(Lights up on GERRY, standing with HORROR MOVIE ACTOR, HORROR MOVIE ACTRESS 1 and HORROR MOVIE ACTRESS 2, each with a script in hand.)*

**GERRY**

We're ready. If you could just set the scene.

**ALEX**

Of course!

*(ALEX disconnects the call and heads over to the pile of scripts as VIDEOGRAPHER sets the shot)*

**ALEX**

Okay. This film is called "Doll-cano." It's about volcanic erupting next to a vintage toy shop and unleashing a pack of killer porcelain dolls. Any questions—I didn't think so.

*(ALEX approaches the actors with their sides)*

**ALEX**

*(to HORROR MOVIE ACTRESS 1)*

You play the shop owner who has no idea her store was once a haunted orphanage.

*(to HORROR MOVIE ACTOR)*

You play a volcanologist with a background in occult studies.

*(to HORROR MOVIE ACTRESS 2)*

You're the local beauty pageant winner, who the writer thought would help sell the script.

## **HORROR MOVIE ACTOR AND ACTRESSES**

*(ad-libbing)*  
Got it!

**ALEX**

In this scene, you're in a school building, hiding from the killer porcelain dolls, okay? Great. Have fun with it.

*(ALEX points to the VIDEOGRAPHER to start rolling. She takes a seat next to GERRY.)*

**ALEX**

And action!

**HORROR MOVIE ACTRESS 1**

*(in character)*  
This is all my fault. I should have researched the building's past before buying it. Or at least asked if that volcano next to it was active.

**HORROR MOVIE ACTRESS 2**

*(in character)*  
It could have happened to anyone! Right now we need to hide!

**HORROR MOVIE ACTRESS 1**

Let's go to the basement.

**HORROR MOVIE ACTRESS 2**

Perfect. We'll be cornered, but hopefully they won't look for us there.

*(HORROR MOVIE ACTOR approaches them, contorting his face in a monstrous fashion.)*

**HORROR MOVIE ACTOR**

The basssssement is the firsssst place they'll look.

*(No one know what to do with this. ALEX interjects.)*

**ALEX**

Okay, let's pause a second.

*(to HORROR MOVIE ACTOR)*  
So, what was your motivation there? It was a little...menacing.

**HORROR MOVIE ACTOR**

Yes. You said my character was into the occult.

**ALEX**

*(correcting him)*

Studied the occult. But he's a good guy. You're all good guys running from the bad guys, okay?

**HORROR MOVIE ACTOR**

Ohhhhh! My bad. Read too much into it, I guess.

**ALEX**

That's fine. We're exploring. Let's just keep rolling. Where you left off.

*(The actors get back into character)*

**HORROR MOVIE ACTRESS 1**

Look around the classroom. Are there any weapons we can defend ourselves with?

**HORROR MOVIE ACTRESS 2**

*(mimes holding up pencils)*

Just these sharpened pencils.

*(HORROR MOVIE ACTOR pretends to grab the pencils, looking just as monstrous as before)*

**HORROR MOVIE ACTOR**

*(threateningly)*

Hand the pencccccils to me! I will protect you!!!!

*(ALEX jumps up)*

**ALEX**

Okay! So, you're still kind of acting like a monster.

**HORROR MOVIE ACTOR**

I am?

**HORROR MOVIE ACTRESS 1 & 2**

*(ad-libbing)*

Yeah. That was totally giving monster.

**ALEX**

Remember, you're a good guy.

**HORROR MOVIE ACTOR**

I was trying to be intense.

**ALEX**

But you're also making snake noises.

**VIDEOGRAPHER**

And monster faces.

**HORROR MOVIE ACTOR**

I do that sometimes when I'm intense. I can totally dial that back. Promise.

**ALEX**

*(growing doubtful)*  
Great. Okay, keep rolling.

**HORROR MOVIE ACTRESS 1**

We should crawl out the window. Make a run to the jeep.

**HORROR MOVIE ACTRESS 2**

But the car battery's dead!

*(HORROR MOVIE ACTOR is, yep, still in monster mode)*

**HORROR MOVIE ACTOR**

I have jumper cables in my trunk!!!

**ALEX**

That's not even a remotely monstrous thing to say. Let the dialogue guide your choices.  
Keep rolling.

**HORROR MOVIE ACTOR**

*(ignoring her advice)*  
I'll pull my car up next to yours!!! Then I will eat you!!!

**ALEX**

Stop! Stop! Stop! "Then I will eat you"? That's not in the script.

**HORROR MOVIE ACTOR**

It felt right.

**ALEX**

If you were the monster, sure. But you! Are! A good guy!

**HORROR MOVIE ACTOR**

But it's a horror film, right.

*(looking around defensively)*

I mean...is it me?

*(ALEX'S phone rings. She looks at the screen.)*

**ALEX**

*(to GERRY)*

It's my mom. Can I take this?

**GERRY**

Yes. And gauge her interest in playing a volcanologist/occult specialist.

*(Lights dim)*

## SCENE 4 A

*(Lights up on the GATEKEEPER at her desk. MUSICAL INGENUE reenters empty handed, except for the baseball cap.)*

**THE GATEKEEPER**

It's still not your time. And where's my Red Bull?

**MUSICAL INGENUE**

I was singing for three hours and made nothing.

**THE GATEKEEPER**

You're that good, huh?

**MUSICAL INGENUE**

What are they auditioning for now?

**THE GATEKEEPER**

Superhero movie.

**MUSICAL INGENUE**

Can I audition for that, too?

*(THE GATEKEEPER looks her up and down)*

**THE GATEKEEPER**

No.

*(gets up)*

Tell you what you can do. Cover for me, will you? I need a smoke. My doctor said I need to move around every twenty minutes for my circulation.

**MUSICAL INGENUE**

Move around to smoke cigarettes?

**THE GATEKEEPER**

Hey, I don't tell him how to do his job. Look, just cover for me and I'll give you the prime time spot for the musical auditions.

**MUSICAL INGENUE**

Okay.

**THE GATEKEEPER**

Great. I'll be back in an hour.

**MUSICAL INGENUE**

An hour?

*(THE GATEKEEPER is gone. MUSICAL INGENUE takes reluctantly takes a seat)*

*(Lights dim)*

## SCENE 5: CASTING THE SUPERHERO MOVIE

*(Lights up on SCARLETT, an actress around ALEX'S age...and height...and general look. She walks with confidence into the room, carrying a take-out cup of coffee. She smiles broadly when she sees, ALEX.)*

**SCARLETT**

My queen!

*(SCARLETT places the coffee on the fold-up table and embraces ALEX)*

**ALEX**

Scarlett! So glad you could come in.

**SCARLETT**

For you, anything! Besides, my agent's been pushing me to make one of these movies.

*(GERRY approaches the two)*

**ALEX**

Gerry, this is Scarlett --

**GERRY**

No introduction necessary. Not for the most celebrated young actresses of the last four years.

**ALEX & SCARLETT**

Five.

**ALEX**

Yep, ever since we graduated together.

**SCARLETT**

USC.

**ALEX & SCARLETT**

Acting for Stage and Screen.

**SCARLETT**

I never thought I'd be the one to break out. Gerry, you should've seen Alex's Ophelia. Her Electra. Her Marian the Librarian and Harold Hill in one of the most experimental productions of "The Music Man" ever staged. She could do it all. She was the real star.

**ALEX**

Except for the whole becoming a star or being cast in anything part.

**SCARLETT**

We were up for all the same roles. I got the first one, and it just sort of snowballed from there. Blah blah blah. Fame fame fame. Money money money.

*(to ALEX)*

How are you, darling?

**ALEX**

Tired.

**SCARLETT**

Well, if you need a shot of caffeine, feel free to have my coffee. They got my order wrong and gave me pumpkin spice instead of butternut squash.

*(Before ALEX can move for the coffee, GERRY grabs it and takes a big gulp. She nearly gags on it and spits it back into the cup.)*

**GERRY**

Ugh. They call this coffee? Disgusting. I've never had pumpkin spice before and I never will again. It tastes like hot, liquid earth.

*(She tosses it out)*

**ALEX**

I was about to drink that, Gerry.

**GERRY**

Um...you're welcome.

**SCARLETT**

Can we get started? I have to be back on set at noon.

*(VIDEOGRAPHER enters with a 6' x 6' green screen, which she props up behind SCARLETT. She then runs behind the camera to frame the shot.)*

**ALEX**

Of course. We're going to put you in front of the green screen over here.

**SCARLETT**

Very exciting. I can't believe I may finally get to play a superhero!

**GERRY**

Thanks to modern technology, our Videographer will be using virtual software to implement the background and other characters into the shot in real-time. Unfortunately, you won't see any of that. You're going to have to use your imagination a little.

*(SCARLETT pulls out her phone and searches through her emails)*

**SCARLETT**

I haven't had time to look at my lines. So, is this like a Batman or X-Men character?

**GERRY**

No, all those characters are tied up with other studios...along with about 100 other superheroes. But we did some digging and finally found one that hasn't been immortalized on the silver screen yet.

**SCARLETT**

Is it DC or Marvel?

**GERRY**

Tell her, Alex.

**ALEX**

Really?

*(to SCARLETT)*

It's...Crest toothpaste. There's was a campaign in the '80s. Your superhero is...Gel-ina. And you protect the city of...Toothopolis from the...Cavity Creeps

*(There's a long beat before...)*

**SCARLETT**

Okay! Crest is a well known IP. I mean, who thought "Barbie" would work, right?

**GERRY**

Exactly. Let's take it from the top of the page. Scarlett, you play Gel-ina, Alex, you can play everyone else.

*(GERRY stands next to VIDEOGRAPHER, looking into the monitor with her.)*

**GERRY**

This looks great. Picture a city, protected by a circular barrier of giant white teeth. And action.

**SCARLETT**

*(in character)*

It's finally ready, our powerful new secret weapon.

*(ALEX is all in on her performance, bringing nuance to each character.)*

**ALEX**

*(as CREST TEAM MEMBER 1)*

Advance-formula Crest Gel!

**SCARLETT**

That's right, Enamella. We're now fully prepared to defend Toothopolis.

**ALEX**

*(as CREST TEAM MEMBER 2)*

And just in time! Here come the Cavity Creeps.

**SCARLETT**

Raise the bridge!

**GERRY**

Picture a bicuspid lifting up like a drawbridge.

**ALEX**

*(as CREST TEAM MEMBER 3)*

Bridge raised, but they're swimming across the moat!

**SCARLETT**

We'll hit them with our Crest Gel with our patented Flouro-stat!

**ALEX**

*(as CREST TEAM MEMBER 4)*

It strengthens teeth and tastes delicious!

**SCARLETT**

Look out! A Cavity Creep is trying to break through!

**GERRY**

Alex! You're the creep. Pretend you're wielding a jackhammer.

**ALEX**

*(as CAVITY CREEP, chanting)*

I make holes in teeth. I make holes in teeth!

**SCARLETT**

Not today, creep-o!

*(SCARLETT in character, socks ALEX in the jaw, sending her to the floor)*

**ALEX**

Ow!!!!

*(SCARLETT rushes to her side)*

**SCARLETT**

Oh, no! Alex! I'm so sorry.

*(GERRY rushes to ALEX as well, looking legitimately concerned)*

**GERRY**

Are you okay, Alex. That obviously wasn't supposed to happen.

**SCARLETT**

You were just so believable as a Cavity Creep! I got carried away.

**ALEX**

*(holding nose)*

It's okay.

**SCARLETT**

I'll run down to the corner deli and get an ice pack.

*(SCARLETT rushes to the exit)*

**ALEX**

Or an iced coffee!

*(Too late. She's gone.)*

**GERRY**

Sure you're okay?

**ALEX**

Par for the course today.

**GERRY**

Just relax for a minute.

*(to VIDEOGRAPHER)*

Did you get that?

*(VIDEOGRAPHER offers a thumbs up. GERRY comes over to look.)*

**VIDEOGRAPHER**

Want to see it in slow motion?

**GERRY**

*(clearly for ALEX'S benefit)*

Don't be insensitive. She was injured.

*(Out of ALEX'S eyeline, GERRY walks over to VIDEOGRAPHER to watch the replay)*

**GERRY**

Oh, man. Thanks gonna leave a mark.

*(Lights dim)*

## SCENE 5 A

*(Lights up on the Audition Hall. MUSICAL INGENUE is still manning THE GATEKEEPER'S post. AUDITION HALL HOPEFUL 3—a French actor—enters.)*

### AUDITION HALL HOPEFUL 3

Bonjour, je suis ici pour le test écran.

### MUSICAL INGENUE

*(confused)*  
Huh?

### AUDITION HALL HOPEFUL 3

Auditionner pour le film français.

### MUSICAL INGENUE

Ummm, you know you're in America, right?

### AUDITION HALL HOPEFUL 3

J'ai été appelé à venir ici.

### MUSICAL INGENUE

Look. We're auditioning actors for American movies. So...

*(waving goodbye)*  
Au revoir!

*(French actor turns and exits, shaking his head and muttering to himself in French.)*

### MUSICAL INGENUE

Idiot. Hundreds of actors coming in and he thinks we need French speaking...

*(looks at list on clipboard)*  
Oh...

## SCENE 6: CASTING THE FOREIGN FILM

*(ALEX sits alone at the table, holding a crumpled paper towel to her nose with one hand, and a headshot in the other. Sitting across from her is PIERRE, dressed in black leggings and tight long-sleeve black shirt. VIDEOGRAPHER frames the shot.)*

**VIDEOGRAPHER**

All set. Whenever you're ready, Alex.

**ALEX**

Thanks!

*(looking at resume)*

Welcome, Pierre! I'm Alex. You'll have to excuse us. The producer had to pick up a VIP and I was recently punched in the face, so...

*(PIERRE stands quickly stands and makes a shocked expression, holding his hands to his face in an exaggerated manor)*

**ALEX**

Everything okay?

*(PIERRE covers his horrified face with his hand, then lifts it to expose a wide grinning face)*

**VIDEOGRAPHER**

I think he's a mime.

**ALEX**

He can't be a mime. We're casting a foreign film. I asked the agency for French actors... that speak French...or at the very least speak. There's no way they would send me a...

*(PIERRE pretends to cry and blows his nose into a non-existent tissue)*

**ALEX**

Oh, no. You're a mime, aren't you.

**VIDEOGRAPHER**

Told you.

**ALEX**

Not that I don't love mimes...

*(correcting herself)*

...actually I don't love mimes. They sort of infuriate me. But that's not the point. We're casting a French film.

**VIDEOGRAPHER**

Maybe he thought you meant it had a French aesthetic. You know, given France's strong ties to mime...mimeography?

*(ALEX gets up and paces the room, barely holding it together. A concerned PIERRE gets up and follows right behind, shadowing her with the grace of a mime.)*

**ALEX**

What did I do? What terrible crime did I commit without realizing it earned this awful punishment? Did I anger a witch? Offend the muses?

*(ALEX turns and almost bumps into PIERRE, who's right behind her. Annoyed, she marches away from him)*

**VIDEOGRAPHER**

It'll be okay, Alex.

**ALEX**

How? We've looked at a hundred and sixty-three actors...and one mime. And I'm nowhere closer to done than I was when we started. On top of that, I've pissed off enough big-name people that I may not even have a job when this day is done.

*(a realization)*

Not that that would be so terrible a thing.

**VIDEOGRAPHER**

What do you mean by that?

*(PIERRE, also invested, pats the seat next to him and mimes ALEX to come over)*

**ALEX**

That's okay.

*(PIERRE twirls a mime lasso over his head and casts it towards her)*

**ALEX**

Please don't do this.

*(PIERRE mimes roping her in)*

**ALEX**

This demeans us both.

*(PIERRE keeps miming away)*

**ALEX**

Fine, but stop.

*(ALEX takes a seat next to PIERRE)*

**ALEX**

*(to VIDEOGRAPHER and PIERRE)*

I was a gymnastics prodigy when I was a kid. The beam. The floor. The bars. The vault. Coaches and trainers from across the country were fighting to sign me at one point...until my wrist fracture. I never recovered. Then all that interest vanished...except for my original coach. He asked me to stay on as his assistant. Help out with scheduling and be there to cheer the team on. I said yes. It was my first job. It was in the field I loved. And I was never more miserable. Years later, I find acting, and I'm even more passionate about that, and I pour even more of myself into it...And I was good! But the jobs never came. To pay the bills, I got talked into casting. And here I am, my first career job, in the field I love, helping out with scheduling and being there to cheer them on...and I didn't learn one thing from that first job. I shouldn't be doing this. It hurts too much. I think I'd be happier selling used cars.

*(PIERRE looks on sympathetically. He pretends to hold something in his hand and mimes unwrapping it.)*

**ALEX**

And here we go.

*(PIERRE places the "unwrapped gift" inside his jacket, then points to ALEX'S hand, imploring her to tap that part of the jacket. She does. He pulls out an actual rose and presents it to her. She's touched.)*

**ALEX**

That's nice. Thank you.

**PIERRE**

My pleasure!

*(ALEX does a double take at the sound of PIERRE'S voice)*

**ALEX**

Wait! You talk?

**PIERRE**

Yeah, I just do mime stuff in parks, venues, kid's parties...

*(ALEX jumps up, excitedly)*

**ALEX**

This is great. I guess we can get started then. I'll read with you. One caveat: I haven't taken any foreign language since high school, so you'll literally have to pardon my French.

**PIERRE**

Don't worry. I don't speak French at all!

*(ALEX takes a beat to let this sink in)*

**ALEX**

Get out.

*(PIERRE moves for the exit. Through the door to the Audition Hall is currently open, PIERRE pretends to open it, then "closes" it behind him as he exits. VIDEOGRAPHER steps away from the camera to console ALEX.)*

**VIDEOGRAPHER**

Hey, Alex. You know, a lot of people go through life without any passion for their careers. You found something you love doing...twice. It may not have worked out so far, but I think you got a jump on most of us. Don't give up on yourself.

**ALEX**

*(smiles to VIDEOGRAPHER)*

Thanks.

*(She looks down at the flower as the lights fade)*

## SCENE 6 A

*(Lights up on GATEKEEPER at her post. TALENT AGENT enters, looks around.)*

**TALENT AGENT**

No, no, no. This simply won't do.

**THE GATEKEEPER**

Can I help you?

**TALENT AGENT**

Teddy Z. Dustin Shula's agent. He'll be here any minute. Did no one get my email?

**THE GATEKEEPER**

Regarding...?

**TALENT AGENT**

The conditions for his appearance here. First. No autographs. No selfies. No eye contact from any other actors auditioning. And why are you dressed like that?

**THE GATEKEEPER**

Like what?

**TALENT AGENT**

The screen test is for a period piece and Mr. Shula is fiercely method. You're supposed to be dressed like a 1940s receptionist.

**THE GATEKEEPER**

I must have missed that part when I was deleting the email.

**TALENT AGENT**

And most importantly, where are the M&Ms? There's supposed to be a bowl waiting for him with all the "M"s removed. Do you people know nothing about his process?!?!

*(MUSICAL INGENUE enters and bounces over like an eager puppy)*

**MUSICAL INGENUE**

Is it time yet??

**THE GATEKEEPER**

*(to TALENT AGENT)*

I got just the person for the job.

*(Lights dim)*

## SCENE 7: CASTING THE BIO-PIC

*(GERRY enters laughing with DUSTIN SHULA, major celebrity in his late 40s. VIDEOGRAPHER follows behind them and stations herself behind the tripod.)*

**DUSTIN SHULA**

...And then Spielberg said, "I've worked with a two-ton shark before, but this guy is two tons of pure ham!"

*(GERRY busts a gut as she shows DUSTIN his seat)*

**GERRY**

Have a seat, Dustin. Can I get you anything? Coffee?

**ALEX**

*(to herself)*  
You gotta be kidding me.

**DUSTIN SHULA**

I was hoping for my M&Ms, but I suppose we should just get on with it.

*(GERRY rushes to the table. ALEX is holding out the pages for her.)*

**GERRY**

Dustin, this is Alex. My favorite casting agent.

**ALEX**

*(to DUSTIN)*  
Mr. Shula, it's a pleasure. We think "Let's Roll" will be a great departure for you.

**DUSTIN SHULA**

*(defensive)*  
What do you mean by that exactly?

**ALEX**

Oh, just that Winston Hamlich probably isn't a character your audience sees as a "Dustin Shula role."

*(GERRY shushes her)*

**DUSTIN SHULA**

*(offended)*  
I think just the opposite.

**GERRY**

*(damage control)*

I'm sure what Alex means is, as far as inventors go, Hamlich is lesser known than ones you've played in the past, like Edison and Jonas Salk.

**DUSTIN SHULA**

I would argue Hamlich's contributions to society were no less important. Where would this world be without two-ply toilet paper? I intend to bring the same gravitas to this role as I've brought to my other character studies.

**ALEX**

You're right, Mr. Shula. My apologies.

*(to GERRY)*

Does he not know this project is a comedy? I told his agent it was.

**GERRY**

Doesn't look like it, but whatever you do, don't say anything. He hates being corrected. In fact, he throws things when someone tries to.

**DUSTIN SHULA**

I spent half the night studying his life. And when we're done today, I'm flying to St. Andrew's Mills in England, where the magic all began in 1942.

**GERRY**

Your meticulous attention to detail is truly admirable, Dustin.

**ALEX**

Okay. Let's begin with your monologue to the board, pitching the idea of two-ply toilet paper.

*(DUSTIN stands up, studying his lines with a serious look as he paces the room)*

**DUSTIN SHULA**

If cast, I will bring great dignity to this role.

*(spots something by the door, turns to ALEX)*

Could you pass me a stool?

*(ALEX starts to giggle but stifles it)*

**ALEX**

Sorry.

*(points to her throat)*

Tickle. One stool coming up.

*(ALEX brings a stool over to DUSTIN. He takes a seat as he clears his throat.)*

**DUSTIN SHULA**

*(in character, with a British accent)*

Gentleman. I've been holding something pretty massive inside me and I think the time has come to finally let it out.

*(ALEX giggles again. GERRY gives her a stern look. DUSTIN continues, oblivious to the monologue's many scatological double entendres. Throughout DUSTIN'S monologue, ALEX is hanging on for dear life not to break.)*

**DUSTIN SHULA**

As you know, we're the number two company right now, but if we bear down and push a little harder, we can make something really solid. Something our competitors can't eliminate or wipe away with smear campaigns. Sure, they'll say we should dump our plans. That making a two-ply product is a colossal waste, but that's not what we do. I'll tell you what we do do: (pronounce the "colon") make the best toilet paper available. You can call me corny...say I run on sometimes. But I believe this is something we must get behind. This is not the time to loaf and let this opportunity slip through the cracks. Each one of us needs to make this our duty...not just to achieve success, but to create an epic movement!

*(ALEX can't take it anymore. She runs for the exit.)*

**ALEX**

*(stifling laughter)*

I'll be right back.

*(ALEX exits. GERRY looks to DUSTIN.)*

**GERRY**

Wow, I think that really got to her.

**DUSTIN SHULA**

You think so? I thought it was crap.

*(GERRY peers at DUSTIN, trying to determine if that was an intended joke... but apparently it wasn't.)*

*(Lights dim)*

## SCENE 7 A

*(Lights up on the GATEKEEPER crowded in by a pack of loud AUDITIONERS. It's chaos. ALEX is with her trying to keep track of all the bodies.)*

**ALEX**

This is getting out of control. What's next?

*(looks at clipboard)*

The musical.

**THE GATEKEEPER**

*(looks around the room)*

Now, where did that kid go?

**ALEX**

We're way behind schedule.

**THE GATEKEEPER**

You're way behind schedule.

*(gathering her things)*

Not my circus. Not my monkeys.

**ALEX**

Where are you going?

**THE GATEKEEPER**

Home. My shift ended over half an hour ago.

**ALEX**

What am I supposed to do with all these people?

**THE GATEKEEPER**

Collect their headshots. Say you'll be in touch. Never contact them again. The usual.

*(THE GATEKEEPER exits, leaving an overwhelmed ALEX in her wake)*

*(Lights dim)*

## SCENE 8: CASTING THE SEQUEL, THE SPRAWLING PERIOD PIECE, AND THE MUSICAL

*(Lights up on a frantic GERRY, looking for ALEX. She turns to VIDEOGRAPHER.)*

**GERRY**

Where is she?

*(VIDEOGRAPHER shrugs.)*

**GERRY**

Alex!!!

*(ALEX rushes in)*

**ALEX**

There's a ton of people in the lobby, Gerry. We still have three movies to cast. "Sunset in the Savanna," "Timecop: the Musical," and the "Twelve Angry Men 2: Courting Disaster." Should we reschedule?

**GERRY**

We'll just have to combine them. Bring them all in!

**ALEX**

Everyone?

**GERRY**

We have to get these people in and out by six. Do you know what SAG's overtime rates are?

*(ALEX moves to the door and leans her head into to the Audition Hall waving people in)*

**GERRY**

*(to VIDEOGRAPHER)*

Just pan the room. Get as much action as you can. We'll study the tape later.

**VIDEOGRAPHER**

It's not tape, it's digital --

**GERRY**

I really don't care.

*(VIDEOGRAPHER takes her camera off the tripod and prepares to move about the room. The remaining AUDITIONERS enter. [This can really be as large as you want. It should be chaos.] GERRY stands in front of them all.)*

**GERRY**

Okay, everyone, the clock's doing a job on us, so forget the scripts you've been given and just improvise with the people around you. For the purposes of the exercise and to get you into character:

*(points to one group)*

"12 Angry Men" sequel people: You voted the accused not guilty but turns out he really is a killer and now he's on the lam...

**VIDEOGRAPHER**

Oh, man. I gotta record a lamb now?

**GERRY**

No! The accused character is on the run. The lam—never mind.

*(points to musical people, speeding her delivery)*

He meets you people from "Timecop, the Musical." You live in a world where time-travel has been perfected. So, the accused goes to...

*(turns to Savanna People, going even more quickly)*

...the African savanna circa 1850 to, what, hunt a rhino? I don't know, it's improv. You figure it out, but note to everyone: whatever reason this actor comes up with, roll with it. First rule of improv.

*(points back to "12 Angry Men" people, quicker still)*

And you, Juror 12, you got everyone into this mess by convincing your peers he wasn't guilty, so you have to time-travel to the savanna and catch him before he kills again.

*(with a deep breath)*

And go!

*(Bedlam as the actors interact and legitimately improvise their parts. [This could be 20 seconds of incoherent babble or a couple of minutes of inspiration if the cast is rocking it.]*

*(VIDEOGRAPHER films as ALEX frantically tries to take notes on all the actors, dropping her script pages, pens and notebook along the way, until finally...)*

**GERRY**

Fantastic. Okay. Thank you. We'll be in touch.

**GERRY (CONT'D)**

*(turns to "TIMECOP" AUDITIONERS)*

Oh, and the actors auditioning for the musical, on your way out, please sing a few notes for the Videographer and hand your headshot to our casting agent, Alex.

*(The actors make their way to the exit. The singers audition for the VIDEOGRAPHER on their way out. GERRY nervously looks at her watch.)*

**SINGING AUDITIONER 1**

Something has changed within --

**GERRY**

You're hired. Next!

*(SINGING AUDITIONER 1 hands her headshot to ALEX as she leaves. This continues...)*

**SINGING AUDITIONER 2**

On the outside, always look--

**GERRY**

Stunning! Next!

**SINGING AUDITIONER 3**

The sun'll come out --

**GERRY**

No notes! Next!

**SINGING AUDITIONER 4 (WHITE GUY)**

Old Man Riv--

**GERRY**

Questionable choice! Next!

**SINGING AUDITIONER 5**

Don't cry for me --

**GERRY**

Muy bonita! Thank you, all!

*(ALEX, armful of headshots, scripts, and notebook, collapses in her seat)*

## SCENE 9: CASTING RESOLUTION

*(All have exited. The VIDEOGRAPHER gathers her tripod.)*

**VIDEOGRAPHER**

I'll send you a link to the server once I upload everything!

**GERRY**

That won't be necessary.

*(ALEX looks to GERRY, confused)*

**GERRY**

Have a good night, camera person.

**VIDEOGRAPHER**

My name is Blair.

**GERRY**

That's super.

**ALEX**

Thank you for everything, Blair.

*(VIDEOGRAPHER smiles to ALEX before exiting. ALEX turns to GERRY.)*

**ALEX**

Hey, why won't it be necessary to see the video?

**GERRY**

*(shaking her head)*  
I just don't know...

**ALEX**

*(getting agitated)*  
Don't know about what?

**GERRY**

I don't think I've seen enough.

**ALEX**

*(sitting up)*  
We've seen two hundred and seventy-eight actors today, Gerry.

**GERRY**

I was looking for something specific. Just didn't find it, I'm afraid.

**ALEX**

*(standing up, venom in her eyes)*  
Oh, you should be afraid, all right.

**GERRY**

You know what? I think we better...

**ALEX**

*(barely controlling her rage)*  
"Better" what?

**GERRY**

Maybe...

**ALEX**

"Maybe" ...?

**GERRY**

Start over. Go back to your rolodex, Alex. Call anyone you didn't reach last night. Get them here first thing tomorrow. Just one suggestion though...

**ALEX**

*(can't even form words)*  
Mmm?

**GERRY**

Go home first and grab a pillow. It really pained me to see you sleeping on that table without one.

**ALEX**

That does it!!! I don't believe you! I spent the last twenty-four hours calling everyone under the sun! Every casting agent I ever worked with! Every producer I've ever auditioned for! Every actor friend I lost touch with! Every cast member from every high school production I was in. Explaining over and over and over again why I don't act any more. How I needed a real job to pay off the student loans for the dream job I don't have time to pursue. That I don't have the courage to pursue...that I don't have the talent to pursue...

*(ALEX loses her anger for a beat...but then it comes raging back)*

**ALEX (CONT'D)**

But I did it, Gerry. I brought in two hundred and seventy-eight actors that I literally gathered overnight. I ushered them in and out. I got reprimanded by one starlet. I got punched in the face by another. I got lassoed by a mime, and was nearly trampled by an ensemble of singing Timecops. But I did it, with kindness and patience, and without complaint. And you! You can't do me the courtesy of casting roles in projects you don't even like to begin with?

**GERRY**

Is that it?

**ALEX**

No! I happen to love pumpkin spice coffee, and I really, really, really wanted to drink it, you butt-face!!!

*(GERRY let's this all sink in. She nods to herself. Finally...)*

**GERRY**

Two hundred and seventy-nine.

**ALEX**

What's that?

**GERRY**

You said you brought in two hundred and seventy-eight actors. It was two hundred and seventy-nine.

*(GERRY goes through her satchel. She pulls out another script.)*

**GERRY**

You're counting is off.

**ALEX**

Well, so is yours. We've only run screen tests for nine films today. Not ten.

**GERRY**

That's not entirely accurate.

*(GERRY hands ALEX the script)*

**GERRY**

This is number ten. And P.S., I've seen everything I need to see. There's no need to call anyone back tomorrow.

*(points to the script she's holding)*

Read the title.

*(ALEX looks at the cover)*

**ALEX**

"Hollywood's Greatest Casting Agent"?

**GERRY**

It's a cute comedy about an outrageously overworked casting agent who has twenty-four hours to cast a slew of terrible movies.

**ALEX**

Wait... So, your job's not in jeopardy?

**GERRY**

There's no job on the line. No insane timeline. No terrible scripts about magical pool tables, volcanic dolls, or toothpaste superheroes.

**ALEX**

So, this whole thing was...

**GERRY**

The ultimate Hollywood screen test...for you. The camera guy was recording you the whole time. And Alex, you passed with flying colors. I wasn't entirely sure until that final monologue.

**ALEX**

Sorry about the whole "butt-face" thing.

**GERRY**

I've been in this industry for nearly forty years. "Butt-face" is a compliment next to some of the things I've been called.

*(sincerely)*

Speaking of butts, Alex, you've saved mine countless times over the last five years. And during those five years, I've seen the talent and passion you bring just when your running lines with other actors. I've been waiting for a while for the right part to come your way. It never did...so, I wrote you one myself. The only question I have is: would you like the role?

**ALEX**

I would.

**GERRY**

Well then, congratulations, Alex. Let's celebrate. Dinner—and coffee—is on me.

**ALEX**

Sounds great. Can I just make a call real quick?

**GERRY**

I'll meet you outside.

*(GERRY exits as ALEX punches a contact on her cell phone and presses it to her ear)*

**ALEX**

Mom! Must have just missed you again. I've got incredibly good news...and kind of bad news for Uncle Joe. Call me back as soon as you can!

*(ALEX exits. Bursting through the door dramatically, holding a Red Bull in one hand and a bag of M&Ms in the other is MUSICAL INGENUE)*

**MUSICAL INGENUE**

Raise your ya ya ya --

*(looks around – deflation turning to anger)*

-- Oh, come on!!

*(Lights out)*

**END OF PLAY**



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