AIRWAVES

by

Jonathan Garland

Characters suggested by the music of

Weird Al Yankovic

Music and lyrics by

Weird Al Yankovic

You should know:

1. I don't have Al's permission for this.

2. I've changed some lyrics to suit the story.

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Cast of Characters

There are ages suggested but the only real rule is that FRANK, AMY and JIM have to be the same age.

Frank: Wild hair and wild imagination. Manages the TV station. Former classmate of Amy and Jim. Probably late 20s, like AMY and JIM.

Amy: Program/on-air manager of the TV station. Former classmate of Frank and JIM. Probably late 20s, like FRANK and JIM.

"Diamond Jim" Dennison: A confident, calm businessman. Owner of a chain of dance studios and a TV dance show. Former classmate of Frank and AMY. Probably late 20s, like FRANK and AMY.

Max: Cameraman and station engineer. Cynical. Trapped in a loveless marriage. Probably middle-aged or older.


Scene

UHF32, the local UHF TV station.

Time

Present day.
ACT I

SCENE 1

SETTING: The broadcast facility of the TV station. Much of the stage is studio floor. There is a small, control room area on the Prompt side. There is a single TV camera, patched together from bits of scrap. There are bits of set about. Like costume and equipment (and everything else), the staging and set is cheap and gaudy. There are two exits - a downstage door on the OP side leads to the front offices and another door is set into the wall of the studio behind the control room, leading to storerooms.

AT RISE: The opening bars of "UHF" signal the dimming of auditorium lights and underscore dialogue. The first lines are delivered behind closed curtains.

AMY

Live in 30 seconds.

FRANK

30 seconds to air, folks. Max, you ready?

MAX

Camera is rigged and ready.

FRANK

Amy, what's our status?

AMY

Same as it was 10 seconds ago. Power is up and lights are green.

(Curtains open. There is enough backlighting to see movement, but no direct lights.)

FRANK

Ellen, Karen, ready to go?

ELLEN

I don't feel so good.

AMY

20 seconds.

FRANK

You'll be fine. Where's Karen?
She's not here yet.

What!

Karen's late again.

Then she'll just have to catch up. 10 seconds.

(KAREN enters.)

I'm here, I'm here!

For God's sake, Karen!

It's not my fault!

Places, people.

Five, four, lights up, showtime!

Okay team. Let's make some TV.

Hi and welcome to UHF32, your local station serving you great big dollops of entertainment from the most talented people in the region. Later today we'll bring you all the action from the annual custom car rally at Big Bill's car yard. They had a monster turnout this year, with eight entries and a crowd of more than 30 turning up to see the latest in chrome exhausts. Next up is a look at the fresh new window display at Mike's Meat Market. Boy, that man can display his meat better than anyone in town! But right now, adjust your cushions and sit back as the UHF32 Crooners pour honey in your ears and make your life worth living!
FRANK

PUT DOWN YOUR REMOTE CONTROL, THROW OUT YOUR TV GUIDE
PUT AWAY YOUR JACKET, THERE'S NO NEED TO GO OUTSIDE
DON'T YOU KNOW THAT
WE CONTROL THE HORIZONTAL
WE CONTROL THE VERTICAL TOO
WE'RE GONNA MAKE A COUCH POTATO
OUT OF YOU
THAT'S WHAT WE'RE GOING TO DO

DON'T CHANGE THAT CHANNEL, DON'T TOUCH THAT DIAL
WE'VE GOT IT ALL ON UHF
KICK OFF YOUR SNEAKERS AND STICK AROUND FOR A WHILE
WE'VE GOT IT ALL ON UHF
DON'T WORRY 'BOUT YOUR LAUNDRY, FORGET ABOUT YOUR JOB
JUST CRANK UP THE VOLUME AND YANK OFF THE KNOB
WE'VE GOT IT ALL
WE'VE GOT IT ALL ON UHF

DISCONNECT THE PHONE AND LEAVE THE DISHES IN THE SINK
PUT AWAY YOUR HOMEWORK, PRIME TIME AIN'T NO TIME TO THINK
ALL YOU DO IS
MAKE YOURSELF A TV DINNER
PUT YOUR FACE RIGHT UP AGAINST THE SCREEN
WE'RE GONNA SHOW YOU THINGS
YOU AIN'T EVER SEEN
IF YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN

DON'T CHANGE THAT CHANNEL, DON'T TOUCH THAT DIAL
WE'VE GOT IT ALL ON UHF
KICK OFF YOUR SNEAKERS AND STICK AROUND FOR A WHILE
WE'VE GOT IT ALL ON UHF
DON'T WORRY 'BOUT YOUR LAUNDRY, FORGET ABOUT YOUR JOB
JUST CRANK UP THE VOLUME AND YANK OFF THE KNOB
WE'VE GOT IT ALL
WE'VE GOT IT ALL ON UHF

YOU CAN WATCH US ALL DAY, YOU CAN WATCH US ALL NIGHT
YOU CAN WATCH US ANY TIME THAT YOU PLEASE
YOU CAN SIT AROUND AND STARE AT THE PICTURE TUBE
UNTIL YOUR BRAIN TURNS INTO COTTAGE CHEESE

DON'T CHANGE THAT CHANNEL, DON'T TOUCH THAT DIAL
WE'VE GOT IT ALL ON UHF
KICK OFF YOUR SNEAKERS AND STICK AROUND FOR A WHILE
WE'VE GOT IT ALL ON UHF
DON'T WORRY 'BOUT YOUR LAUNDRY, FORGET ABOUT YOUR JOB
JUST CRANK UP THE VOLUME AND YANK OFF THE KNOB
WE'VE GOT IT ALL
WE'VE GOT IT ALL ON UHF

(END SONG)

AMY

And we're clear. Tape is rolling, prerecord is going out.

MAX

Another victory for the forces of mediocrity.
FRANK
Okay, staff meeting. Let's bring it in, folks. Amy, would you come join us, please?

KAREN
Do we have to do this now?

FRANK
Whatever today's beauty treatment is, it can wait. I've got something to say that everybody needs to hear.

KAREN
Is this about me being late? Because...

(They all join in)

ALL
...it's not my fault.

AMY
It never is.

MAX
Aliens steal your watch?

ELLEN
Don't be silly, Max. Earth watches are useless to aliens. They have a 26-hour day.

(General groans)

MAX
More wisdom from the tabloids.

AMY
Ellen, why do you read that trash?

ELLEN
Mainstream media never prints the truth. Only an independent paper like the Midnight Star can publish what's really going on.

AMY
By the way, Max, your wife called.

MAX
What did she say?

AMY
Nothing.

MAX
Damn that woman!

FRANK
Fascinating as this is, let's get to work. Amy, is the programming schedule ready for next month?
Amy
It should be. It's the same as this month.

Frank
Max, have you finished the technical audit?

Max
Sure. Our farsighted investment in duct tape has ensured that the same cruddy equipment probably won't fall apart for another few weeks.

Frank
Funny. Karen, are the accounts in order?

Karen
We nearly broke the bank getting Max his duct tape but, yes, the columns add up.

Frank
Ellen, how's the front office?

Ellen
I rearranged the furniture for better feng shui and hung some crystals by the door to enhance the positive energy flow.

Frank
That's... good, Ellen. Now, you're probably wondering why I've asked you to get everything shipshape this past week. I wasn't able to tell you before but the papers were signed this morning. Mr McKendrick has decided to surrender his interest in the station. As of today, UHF32 has a new owner.

(General disbelief)

Max
You mean he finally found someone to unload this dump onto?

Frank
Mr McKendrick has always been fond of this station...

Karen
He's had it on the market for years!

Amy
It's no secret, Frank. McKendrick has wanted to be rid of this place for years. The only reason he hasn't bulldozed it is because the land isn't worth what it would cost to hire the machinery.

Frank
Regardless, the new owner is coming in to look over the property this afternoon.

Ellen
Who is it?

Max
Yeah, who's the moron?
You may have heard the name. Our new boss is James Dennison. Jimmy Dennison?

Diamond Jim Dennison?

Of Dennison Dance Studios?

The prime time Dennison Dance Hour? That Jim Dennison?

None other. Our most famous citizen has returned to his birthplace to contribute to the community that nurtured him. Maybe we can finally fix this place up. I hear he's rich. I hear he's single.

I hear he's secretly an international hitman.

Whatever he may be now, he was a nerd in high school and I doubt anything much has changed, right Amy?

(AMY makes a noncommittal gesture)

Wait a minute. You were at school with Diamond Jim Dennison?

We both were.

What was he like, Amy?

Well, he was kind of a loner.

That's because he was a complete loser.

I'll admit, he had a few problems in high school.

(Amy makes a noncommittal gesture)

A few problems?

(MORE)
FRANK (CONT'D)

He couldn't count to 20, he had no social skills and couldn't catch a ball to save his life. This guy had no redeeming qualities. Let me tell you what I remember.

(SONG - THAT BOY COULD DANCE)

FRANK

WE ALL USED TO CALL HIM JIMMY THE GEEK
HE WAS A DUMB-LOOKING SCRAWNY LITTLE FOUR-EYED FREAK
HE NEVER USED TO HANG AROUND WITH THE GUYS
HE'D JUST SIT IN THE CORNER ATTRACTING THE FLIES

AMY

HE WASN'T MUCH TO LOOK AT, HE NEVER WAS VERY BRIGHT
BUT AT LEAST THERE WAS ONE THING THAT HE COULD DO ALL RIGHT

FRANK AND AMY

THAT BOY COULD DANCE
THAT BOY COULD DANCE

FRANK

HE WAS KIND OF A JERK, HE WAS KIND OF A BORE
BUT THE WOMEN WOULD SCREAM WHEN HE WALKED IN THE DOOR

FRANK AND AMY

ONE THING I COULD TELL YOU FOR SURE
THAT BOY COULD DANCE

AMY

PICKING TEAMS HE WOULD ALWAYS BE LAST
HE COULDN'T RUN VERY FAR, HE COULDN'T THINK VERY FAST
IF HE WAS ON YOUR SIDE YOU'D ALWAYS LOSE
THE GUY HAD A PROBLEM EVEN TYING HIS SHOES

FRANK

HE NEVER PASSED HIS DRIVERS TEST, HE WAS ALWAYS AFRAID OF CARS
AND HE HAD A COMPLEXION THAT RESEMBLED THE SURFACE OF MARS

FRANK AND AMY

BUT THAT BOY COULD DANCE
THAT BOY COULD DANCE

AMY

HIS HAIR WAS A MESS AND HIS CLOTHES DIDN'T FIT
HE SMELLED PRETTY BAD AND HE DROOLED JUST A BIT

FRANK AND AMY

BUT YOU'VE GOT TO ADMIT
BOY THAT BOY COULD DANCE

AMY

NOW THAT BOY IS MUCH OLDER, HE'S GOT HIS OWN DANCE STUDIO

FRANK

HE'S GOT A TEENYBOPPER FAN CLUB, HE'S GOT HIS OWN TV SHOW
AMY
HE OWNS HALF OF MONTANA, THEY ALL CALL HIM DIAMOND JIM

FRANK
AND YOU KNOW I'D DO ANYTHING IF I COULD BE JUST LIKE HIM

FRANK AND AMY
THAT BOY COULD DANCE
THAT BOY COULD DANCE
THAT BOY COULD DANCE

(END SONG)

ELLEN
Wow. Local boy makes good.

FRANK
(to Amy)
Maybe you should have let him take you to the prom, after all.

AMY
Maybe. He certainly danced better than you.

KAREN
Well, if I'm going to meet a millionaire, I'd better get out of this op-shop reject and into something sexy.

(She crosses to the exit, followed by ELLEN)

ELLEN
I thought you liked these outfits!

KAREN
Oh, Ellen, no offence to your sewing. But honestly, I feel like I'm wearing Liberace's curtains.

ELLEN
Liberace's things are all in storage, just like him.

(KAREN and ELLEN exit)

AMY
I'd better cue up the rest of the day's programming.

(AMY moves to the control room.)

MAX
And I'd better go check the storeroom is still a good place to sleep.

(MAX exits. FRANK goes to the control room and sits. AMY ignores him. After a pause, FRANK moves close to AMY's ear)
What are you thinking about?

Jesus, Frank! Will you stop that?

I just want to know what my girl's thinking.

Again, Frank? Do we have to do this again?

Do what?

For the last time, there is no us! The relationship is over.

It's not over.

It is over, Frank. You may have noticed the subtle clues - I moved out, I don't return your calls, and I promised to set fire to your car if you come near my mother's house again.

We've been together since high school. You can't just throw that away.

God, you are so stubborn! If only you could focus even half of that determination into running this station, we wouldn't have been living hand-to-mouth all those years. You've got such a creative mind. But you come up with all these ideas and never make any of them real. You just go on to the next crazy idea and nothing ever gets done. Well, I've had enough of it, Frank. I can't live like that any more.

You know you love me.

Frank, you are the most irritating, obnoxious, dumb person on the face of the Earth.

(Underscore "I'm so sick of you")

You just can't take a hint, can you? Let me see if I can spell it out for you.

(SONG - I'M SO SICK OF YOU)
AMY

YOU TELL A JOKE AND FORGET THE PUNCHLINE
WHY YOU ALWAYS WASTING MY TIME?
HEY BABY TRUST ME, YOU JUST DISGUST ME
YOUR HAIR'S A MESS AND YOUR FACE IS CRUSTY
YOU SEND ME DISGUSTING E-MAILS,
YOU MAKE A HABIT OF BITING YOUR TOENAILS

EVERY TIME YOU CALL YOU DRIVE ME UP THE WALL
HONEY JUST THE SIGHT OF YOU MAKES MY FLESH CRAWL
I'M SURE WE'D BE HAPPY TOGETHER
IF ONLY ONE LITTLE THING WEREN'T TRUE
BABY I-Yi-Yi-Yi-YI I'M SO SICK OF YOU

YOU DRINK YOUR MILK RIGHT FROM THE CARTON
WHAT ARE YOU, IN KINDERGARTEN?
BELCHING EVERYWHERE, FOULING UP THE AIR
THEN YOU USE MY RAZOR TO SHAVE YOUR BACK HAIR
YOU DON'T HAVE AN OUNCE OF CLASS
YOU'RE JUST ONE BIG PAIN IN THE NECK
HOW MUCH MORE CAN I TAKE NOW, GIVE ME A BREAK NOW
YOU EVEN SNORE WHEN YOU'RE WIDE AWAKE NOW
YOU TELL ALL YOUR FRIENDS WE'RE THE PERFECT COUPLE
WELL MAYBE YOU SHOULD GET A CLUE
CAUSE BABY I-Yi-Yi-Yi-YI I'M SO SICK OF YOU
BABY YOU'RE SO NAUSEATING
I-Yi-Yi-Yi-YI I'M SO SICK OF YOU

AND WHEN YOU SOFTLY CALL MY NAME IT'S LIKE
I'M LISTENING TO A SQUEAKY CHALK SOUND
AND WHEN YOU LOOK AT ME THAT SPECIAL WAY
IT'S HARD FOR ME TO KEEP MY LUNCH DOWN
AND WHEN YOU ASK ME WHAT I'M THINKING
HONEY USUALLY I'M THINKING
HOW I'D REALLY LIKE TO TIE YOUR HEAD
COMPLETELY UP IN DUCT TAPE
SO I WOULDN'T HAVE TO LISTEN TO YOU
ASKING ME THOSE STUPID QUESTIONS
OVER AND OVER AGAIN
THAT DISGUSTING NOISE YOU MAKE WHEN YOU LAUGH
GIVES ME A THROBBING MIGRAINE
UNTIL YOU CAME ALONG I NEVER DATED
ANYONE THIS LOW ON THE FOOD CHAIN
YOU'VE GOT INHUMAN BODY ODOUR
YOU'VE GOT THE HAIR OF A BOXING PROMOTER
YOUR TEETH ARE ALL YELLOW, YOUR BUTT'S MADE OF JELLO
YOU WAKE UP IN A PUDDLE DROOLING ON YOUR PILLOW
I HATE THE WAY YOU CRACK YOUR KNUCKLES
I HATE YOUR WHINY LOSER BUDDIES TOO
BUT MOSTLY I-Yi-Yi-Yi-YI I'M SO SICK OF YOU
REALLY NOW YOU'RE AGGRAVATING
I-Yi-Yi-Yi-YI I'M SO SICK OF YOU
NOT TO MENTION IRRITATING
I-Yi-Yi-Yi-YI I'M SO SICK OF YOU
WELL NOW WON'T YOU GIVE MY BEST REGARDS TO SATAN
I-Yi-Yi-Yi-YI I'M SO SICK OF YOU

(MORE)
(CONT'D)
I'M SO SICK OF YOU
I'M SO SICK OF YOU
I'M SO SICK OF YOU

(END SONG)

(AMY exits)

FRANK
So, we'll talk about this later?

(Underscore "You don't love me anymore")

FRANK
Frank, it's time to face the truth. The facts all point to one thing — she's crazy in love with you. So I tend to exaggerate. So I embellish the facts a little. What's wrong with making the world a more interesting place? Things are so much more fascinating when you apply a little imagination. How does that make me the bad guy?

(SONG - YOU DON'T LOVE ME ANYMORE)

FRANK
WE'VE BEEN TOGETHER FOR SO VERY LONG
BUT NOW THINGS ARE CHANGING, OH I WONDER WHAT'S WRONG
SEEMS YOU DON'T WANT ME AROUND
THE PASSION IS GONE AND THE FLAME'S DIED DOWN
I GUESS I LOST A LITTLE BIT OF SELF-ESTEEM
THAT TIME THAT YOU MADE IT WITH THE WHOLE HOCKEY TEAM
YOU USED TO THINK I WAS NICE
NOW YOU TELL ALL YOUR FRIENDS THAT I'M THE ANTICHRIST
WHY DID YOU DISCONNECT THE BRAKES ON MY CAR
THAT KIND OF THING IS HARD TO IGNORE
GOT A FUNNY FEELING, YOU DON'T LOVE ME ANYMORE

I KNEW THAT WE WERE HAVING PROBLEMS WHEN
YOU PUT THOSE PIRANHAS IN MY BATHTUB AGAIN
YOU'RE STILL THE LIGHT OF MY LIFE
OH DARLING I'M BEGGING, WON'T YOU PUT DOWN THAT KNIFE
YOU KNOW I EVEN THINK IT'S KIND OF CUTE THE WAY
YOU POISON MY COFFEE JUST A LITTLE EACH DAY
I STILL REMEMBER THE WAY THAT YOU LAUGHED
WHEN YOU PUSHED ME DOWN THE ELEVATOR SHAFT
IF YOU DON'T MIND ME ASKING, WHAT'S THIS POISONOUS COBRA
DOING IN MY UNDERWEAR DRAWER
SOMETIMES I GET TO THINKING, YOU DON'T LOVE ME ANYMORE

YOU SLammed MY FACE DOWN ON THE BARBECUE GRILL
NOW MY SCARS ARE ALL HEALING BUT MY HEART NEVER WILL
YOU SET MY HOUSE ON FIRE
YOU PULLED OUT MY CHEST HAIRS WITH AN OLD PAIR OF PLIERS
YOU THINK I'M UGLY AND YOU SAY I'M CHEAP
YOU SHAVED OFF MY EYEBROWS WHILE I WAS ASLEEP
YOU DRILLED A HOLE IN MY HEAD

(MORE)
FRANK (CONT'D)
THEN YOU DUMPED ME IN A DRAINAGE DITCH AND LEFT ME FOR DEAD
YOU KNOW, THIS REALLY ISN'T LIKE YOU AT ALL
YOU NEVER ACTED THIS WAY BEFORE
HONEY SOMETHING TELLS ME YOU DON'T LOVE ME ANYMORE
OH NO, NO
GOT A FUNNY FEELING YOU DON'T LOVE ME ANYMORE

(END SONG)

END SCENE 1
ACT I

SCENE 2

AT RISE:

MAX is conducting maintenance on the camera. ELLEN and KAREN escort JIM into the studio. KAREN is all over him.

KAREN

And this is the studio floor, where we produce all our local programming.

ELLEN

Max, come meet Mr Dennison, the new owner.

MAX

Pleased to meet you, sir.

JIM

Please everyone, call me Jim. If you keep calling me sir I'll never be able to relax.

KAREN

Jim. I like the sound of that.

ELLEN

It feels kind of strange, you being a millionaire and all. Is it true you were taught to dance by a previously unknown tribe of pygmies in South America?

JIM

Not exactly, no. I've just got good feet.

KAREN

I bet you've got great hands, too.

MAX

What I want to know is, why come back here? You're a rich, big shot success. You could have a New York penthouse, or a Hollywood mansion. Why come back to a nothing blip on the highway that everyone else is trying to get away from?

JIM

Well, I do have a New York penthouse. And a Hollywood mansion. I own a chain of dance schools around the nation and I'm producer of the most popular dance show on TV. I've got a garage full of cars and more money than I know what to do with. And with all of that... well, it's just nice to escape to reality once in a while, you know?

MAX

Sounds like you're trying to make us jealous we're not rich. That's not going to work.

ELLEN

Money isn't everything, Max.
KAREN
I think I could stand to try it for a while.

(Underscore "This is the life")

KAREN
Ritzy nightclubs, holidays in Europe, parties with movie stars and enough shoes for a family of centipedes. That's my idea of heaven.

JIM
Oh, don't get me wrong. I'm not complaining. Money certainly has its compensations. Some of the things I could tell you...

(SONG - THIS IS THE LIFE)

JIM
I EAT FILLET MIGNON SEVEN TIME A DAY
MY BATHTUB'S FILLED WITH PERRIER
WHAT CAN I SAY
THIS IS THE LIFE
I BUY A DOZEN CARS WHEN I'M IN THE MOOD
I HIRE SOMEBODY TO CHEW MY FOOD
I'M AN UPWARDLY MOBILE DUDE
THIS IS THE LIFE

THEY SAY THAT MONEY CORRUPTS YOU
BUT I CAN'T REALLY TELL
I'VE GOT THE WHOLE WORLD AT MY FEET
AND I THINK IT'S PRETTY SWELL
I'VE GOT WOMEN LINED UP OUTSIDE MY DOOR
THEY'VE BEEN WAITING THERE SINCE THE WEEK BEFORE
WHO COULD ASK FOR MORE?
THIS IS THE LIFE

YOU'RE DEAD FOR A REAL LONG TIME
YOU JUST CAN'T PREVENT IT
SO IF MONEY CAN'T BUY HAPPINESS
I GUESS I'LL HAVE TO RENT IT
YEAH EVERY DAY I MAKE THE FRONT PAGE NEWS
NO TIME TO PAY MY DUES
I'VE GOT A MILLION PAIRS OF SHOES
THIS IS THE LIFE

I'VE GOT A SOLID GOLD CADILLAC
I MAKE A FORTUNE WHILE I SLEEP
YOU CAN TELL I'M A LIVING LEGEND
NOT SOME ORDINARY CREEP
NO WAY, I'M THE BOSS, THE BIG CHEESE
I'VE GOT THIS TOWN ON ITS CRUMMY LITTLE KNEES
I CAN DO JUST WHAT I PLEASE
THIS IS THE LIFE

THAT'S RIGHT I'M THE KING, NUMBER ONE
I BUY MONOGRAMMED KLEENEX BY THE TON
I PAY THE BILLS, I CALL THE SHOTS
I GREASE THE PALMS, I BUY THE YACHTS
ONE THING I CAN GUARANTEE
THE BEST THINGS IN LIFE, THEY SURE AIN'T FREE
IT'S SUCH A THRILL JUST TO BE ME
THIS IS THE LIFE
THIS IS THE LIFE

(END SONG)

(FRANK enters. AMY follows, but far enough back that she's not immediately noticed)

FRANK
Mr Dennison, sorry I wasn't at the door to meet you. I got hung up.

JIM
Frank, how are you? It's been a long time.

FRANK
A very long time. I see you've already met Ellen, Karen and Max. And I don't know if you remember...

(JIM moves past FRANK, eyes only for AMY)

JIM
Amy Thatcher. Of course I remember.

AMY
Hello, Jimmy.

JIM
How have you been?

AMY
Good. Not as good as you, though. Congratulations. You've really done well for yourself.

JIM
Well, I guess I just have a head for business.

FRANK
And speaking of business, perhaps you'd like to have a look around your TV station.

JIM
In a minute. First I have to make an announcement. Is everyone here?

MAX
This is all of us, chief.

JIM
Okay. Folks, I'm a native of this town and it's always been special to me.

(MORE)
I've been pretty successful with my dance schools and I'm going to bring a bit of that success back home by opening a dance studio right here.

FRANK
That's great! The town will love it and it'll give us a new source of stories to run on-air.

JIM
No, Frank. I mean I'm opening it right here in this building. I'm closing the station.

(General disbelief)

FRANK
You can't be serious!

JIM
Sorry, Frank. This TV station has been barely scraping by for years. It isn't profitable to keep it operating. It's nothing personal. Just business.

(He pauses. Silence)
I can see you're all shocked, and I can understand why. I'll leave you to talk about it. Amy, maybe you could show me around the rest of the building.

AMY
Uh, sure, Jimmy. This way.

(AMY and JIM exit. There is a frozen moment while the others look to FRANK, then FRANK follows AMY and JIM)

MAX
Pack your bags, girls. It's time to poke around for souvenirs.

KAREN
I don't believe it.

ELLEN
My horoscope warned me there would be upheaval in my daily routine. I thought they meant another alien abduction.

MAX
There goes my retirement plan.

ELLEN
Well, at least you get to spend more time at home with your wife.

MAX
Yeah. I think I'll shoot myself.

KAREN
It isn't fair.
MAX
You're right. I'll shoot her instead.

KAREN
No, I mean it isn't fair to me! You've got job skills, you can fix toasters or something. Ellen can go live in a commune and make cheese out of chicken milk, but what about me? Except for perfect skin and incredible dress sense, what have I got? I'm going to wind up back behind the counter of the 7-11 in a uniform like a grey cotton Volvo and no hope of a normal life. I swear to God, the whole world is against me.

(Underscore "Why does this always happen to me?")

ELLEN
Karen, this is a big shock to all of us, but the world has bigger problems than we do. You should try and keep a little perspective.

KAREN
I do. It's just hard to keep a normal sense of balance when something like this happens.

(SONG - WHY DOES THIS ALWAYS HAPPEN TO ME?)

KAREN
I WAS WATCHING MY TV ONE NIGHT WHEN THEY BROKE IN WITH A SPECIAL REPORT ABOUT SOME DEVASTATING EARTHQUAKE IN PERU THERE WERE THIRTY THOUSAND CRUSHED TO DEATH EVEN MORE WERE BURIED ALIVE ON THE RICHTER SCALE, IT MEASURED EIGHT POINT TWO AND I SAID GOD, PLEASE ANSWER ME ONE QUESTION WHY'D THEY HAVE TO INTERRUPT THE SIMPSONS JUST FOR THIS? WHAT A DRAG, CAUSE I WAS TAPING IT AND EVERYTHING AND NOW I'LL HAVE TO WAIT FOR THE RERUN TO SEE THE PART OF THE SHOW I MISSED WHY DOES THIS ALWAYS HAPPEN? WHY DOES THIS ALWAYS HAPPEN TO ME? WHY DOES THIS ALWAYS HAPPEN? WHY DOES THIS ALWAYS HAPPEN TO ME? BAH, BAH, BAH, BAH BAH, BAH, BAH, BAH, BAH I WAS DRIVING DOWN THE HIGHWAY WHEN ALL THE TRAFFIC SLOWED TO A CRAWL THERE WAS A 12-CAR PILE UP, EVERYBODY DEAD AND I SAW BRAINS AND GUTS AND VITAL ORGANS SPLATTERED EVERYWHERE AS WELL AS MY FRIEND ROBERT'S DISEMBODIED HEAD AND I THOUGHT, POOR ROB, I JUST HAD LUNCH WITH HIM HEY WAIT A MINUTE, HE STILL OWES ME MONEY, WHAT A JERK WELL THERE'S FIVE BUCKS THAT I'M NEVER GONNA SEE AGAIN PLUS ON TOP OF EVERYTHING ELSE, IT LOOKS LIKE
I'M GONNA BE LATE TO WORK

WHY DOES THIS ALWAYS HAPPEN?
WHY DOES THIS ALWAYS HAPPEN TO ME?
WHY DOES THIS ALWAYS HAPPEN?
WHY DOES THIS ALWAYS HAPPEN TO ME?
BAH, BAH, BAH, BAH
BHAH, BAH, BAH, BAH
BHAH, BAH, BAH, BAH, BAH

BEFORE I LEFT MY LAST JOB
WE WERE RUNNING LOW ON TONER
AND MY BOSS SAID I SHOULD BUY ANOTHER CASE
WELL I TOLD HIM I WAS BUSY
BUT HE STILL JUST KEPT ON ASKING
SO I TURNED AROUND AND STABBED HIM IN THE FACE
OH AND WOULDN'T YOU KNOW IT, MY KNIFE GOT STUCK
I GUESS THAT'S PROB'LY BOUND TO HAPPEN NOW AND THEN
BUT I'M AFRAID I MAY HAVE BENT THE TIP A LITTLE
AND I KNOW THAT BLADE WILL NEVER EVER
BE QUITE AS SHARP AGAIN

WHY DOES THIS ALWAYS HAPPEN?
WHY DOES THIS ALWAYS HAPPEN TO ME?
WHY DOES THIS ALWAYS HAPPEN?
WHY DOES THIS ALWAYS HAPPEN TO ME?
WHY DOES THIS ALWAYS HAPPEN TO ME?
WHY DOES THIS ALWAYS HAPPEN TO ME?

BAH, BAH, BAH, BAH
BAH, BAH, BAH, BAH
BAH, BAH, BAH, BAH
BAH, BAH, BAH, BAH

(END SONG)
ACT I
SCENE 3

AT RISE: AMY is at her chair in the control room. FRANK and JIM enter from the front offices.

FRANK
All I'm saying is that UHF32 has been a part of this town for decades.

JIM
So has Big Bill's Car Yard, and if it wasn't for his advertising, UHF32 would have folded up like one of his clunkers long ago.

FRANK
What about the people who work here? Have you thought about what they're going to do when you kick them out?

JIM
I have, and I regret that I can't employ all of you. Look, Frank. I'm sorry you feel bad about the station closing. I feel bad about it, too. Things were different in the old days but now the networks have way more to offer. Your programming hasn't changed since we were in high school and now... you just can't compete. It's nothing personal, Frank. Just business.

(After a strained pause, FRANK turns and exits back to the front offices. JIM makes his way to the control room and sits by AMY)

JIM
He's not taking it well, is he?

AMY
Yesterday's announcement was a shock for all of us. But Frank has always wanted to work in TV. This was his dream job, ever since high school.

JIM
Dreams don't always come true.

AMY
Being rich and famous wasn't your dream?

JIM
I don't object to it. But no, my dream in high school was for something else.

AMY
Did you get it?

JIM
Only a taste. But I've never forgotten.
AMY

(realising)
The prom, Jimmy?

JIM

I've danced with hundreds of women, Amy. But that one dance with you tops them all.

AMY

It was nice, wasn't it?

JIM

Such a shame it was only the once.

AMY

Things rarely turn out the way we plan, do they Jimmy?

(MAX enters from the storeroom with a plate of waffles)

MAX

Grub's up!

JIM

What's this all about?

AMY

Max thought we should have a wake for the station.

(MAX puts the plate down in the studio and goes to the other door)

MAX

(yelling to offices)

Party time! Come get your vittles.

(JIM and AMY move into the studio)

JIM

Smells good. What is it?

MAX

You are looking at the finest waffles on this continent. Get your teeth into one of those, rich man.

(JIM takes a waffle and bites into it. ELLEN enters from the front office, with a copy of the Midnight Star)

AMY

I've got to admit, Max's waffles are something special.

MAX

Believe it, missy. I have the magic touch.
Max, this is amazing. Where did you learn to cook like this?

You learn to fend for yourself when you spend all your time away from home.

That reminds me, Max. Your wife called.

What did she say?

Not a word.

Damn it!

Ellen, you want a waffle?

No, thanks. They're full of animal products and can also cause loss of hair and short-term memory.

They what?

If it's in the Midnight Star, it's gospel. You get used to it.

(KAREN enters from the office)

Sorry I'm late! I swear...

...it wasn't my fault.

(Did I miss anything?)

Only these fantastic waffles. Max, have you ever thought about selling these things?

Nah. But now I don't have a job, maybe I'll have to consider it. Wouldn't that be something?

(I'll start with a little shop in the main street, and expand to a national franchise.)
MAX (CONT'D)

Get me a couple of celebrity sponsors and pretty soon I'll have the glitterati beating down my door. I'll be rolling in cash and more famous than the President. I will rule the world with my waffle empire!

(SONG - WAFFLE KING)

MAX

IT TOOK A LIFETIME BUT I FINALLY FOUND
THE PERFECT WAFFLE RECIPE
YOU'LL NEVER FIND A BATTER ANY BETTER IN THIS WHOLE STINKING TOWN
ONE LITTLE BITE AND I'M SURE THAT YOU'LL AGREE
YOUR EYES ROLL BACK AND YOUR KNEES GET WEAK
AH, YOU'RE GONNA LICK YOUR PLATE CLEAN
PEOPLE COME FROM MILES AROUND JUST TO STUDY MY TECHNIQUE
I MAKE THE BEST DARN WAFFLES THIS WORLD HAS EVER SEEN

I'M THE WAFFLE KING, YEAH
WAFFLE KING, THAT'S WHAT THEY CALL ME
WAFFLE KING, HEY, I'M THE WAFFLE KING

EVERYWHERE I GO NOW THE PEOPLE CHEER
I NEVER HAVE TO WAIT IN LINE
PEOPLE SAY, RIGHT THIS WAY SIR, YOU'RE MONEY'S NO GOOD HERE
SOME DAY I BETCHA THEY'LL BUILD ME A SHRINE
EVERYBODY SAYS, I'M YOUR BIGGEST FAN
I'VE SEEN YOUR PICTURE IN PEOPLE MAGAZINE
FOLKS COME FROM AROUND THE WORLD JUST TO SHAKE MY HAND
IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE IN THE POWER OF THE WAFFLE
LET ME SHOW YOU JUST WHAT I MEAN

I'M THE WAFFLE KING, MAKE YOU WANT TO SCREAM AND SHOUT
WAFFLE KING, THAT'S MY NAME, DON'T WEAR IT OUT
WAFFLE KING, MAKE NO MISTAKE ABOUT IT
I'M THE WAFFLE KING

ROLL OUT THE RED CARPET, 'CAUSE HERE I COME
ALL YOU PEONS BETTER SCRAM
OUT OF MY WAY NOW, YOU WORTHLESS PIECE OF SCUM
DON'T YOU KNOW WHO I AM?

I WANNA SEE YOU GROVEL, YOU WAFFLE EATING FOOLS
EVERYBODY ON YOUR KNEES
YOU WANNA BUY A WAFFLE, YOU'RE PLAYING BY MY RULES
GO ON, BEG ME, LET ME HEAR YOU SAY PRETTY PLEASE
CAN'T YOU TELL, THE UNIVERSE REVOLVES AROUND ME
DON'T YOU KNOW, YOU SUCKERS OWE ME EVERYTHING
AND CAN'T YOU SEE THAT I'M THE HIGHEST FORM OF LIFE
THAT THERE COULD EVER BE
EVERYBODY ALL AROUND THE WORLD, STAND UP AND SING

WAFFLE KING, HEY BATTER BATTER
WAFFLE KING, HOT ON YOUR PLATTER
WAFFLE KING, SAY WHAT'S THE MATTER
DON'T YOU KNOW WHO I AM?
DON'T YOU KNOW WHO I AM?
(END SONG)

(FRANK enters from the office)

KAREN
Yeah, like that's ever going to happen.

JIM
You never know. I'm living proof that the right talent in the right place at the right time can result in big changes.

FRANK
You've certainly made big changes around here.

Frank, give it a rest.

AMY

KAREN
(all over Jim)
Don't listen to him, Jim.

MAX
Have a waffle, Frank.

FRANK
Will you listen to yourselves? This man just sacked you and you're defending him.

JIM
Frank...

FRANK
Doesn't this station mean anything to you? Are you going to let him just take it away from us?

MAX
This place has been on borrowed time for years, Frank.

AMY
You've got to move on. See this as an opportunity to do something new.

ELLEN
You know, Frank, we all feel threatened by change. It shakes us when something new comes along and turns everything we know on its head. But often, it's the best thing that could have happened.

(Underscore "Midnight Star")

ELLEN
When I first picked up this newspaper, I was shocked at how badly I'd been misled. But now I know the truth and I'm grateful for the karma that led me to this periodical of righteousness. My outlook has changed completely, and yours can too. Just listen...
I WAS WAITING IN THE EXPRESS LANE WITH MY 12 ITEMS OR LESS
AT THE CHECKOUT COUNTER OF MY LOCAL GROCERY STORE
I WAS ONLY PASSING BY, BUT A PAPER CAUGHT MY EYE
AND I LEARNED A FEW THINGS I NEVER KNEW BEFORE
IT SAID YOUR PET MAY BE AN EXTRATERRESTRIAL
IT SAID THE GHOST OF ELVIS IS LIVING IN MY DEN
YOU CAN LEARN TO COPE WITH STRESS
AND YOU CAN BEAT THE IRS
AND THE INCREDIBLE FROG BOY IS ON THE LOOSE AGAIN

OH, MIDNIGHT STAR
IT'S IN THE WEEKLY MIDNIGHT STAR
ALIENS FROM OUTER SPACE ARE SLEEPING IN MY CAR
MIDNIGHT STAR, I WANT TO KNOW, I WANT TO KNOW

EAT JELLY DONUTS AND LOSE 20 POUNDS A DAY
HEAR THE STORY OF THE MAN BORN WITHOUT A HEAD
AND TOP PSYCHICS ALL AGREE THAT THE TELEPHONE COMPANY
WILL HAVE A BRAND-NEW SERVICE THAT LETS YOU TALK TO THE DEAD

OH, MIDNIGHT STAR, YOU CAN BELIEVE IT
IF YOU READ IT IN THE WEEKLY MIDNIGHT STAR
THEY'RE KEEPING HITLER'S BRAIN ALIVE INSIDE A JAR
MIDNIGHT STAR, I WANT TO KNOW, I WANT TO KNOW

JIM
(reading the Midnight Star)
Millionaire dance tycoon Diamond Jim Dennison is rumoured to be passing secret government information to terrorists through a tap-dance code on his prime-time TV show, The Dennison Dance Hour.

ELLEN
TELL ME, TELL ME, TELL ME HOW TO MAKE MY PROSPECTS GROW
MIDNIGHT STAR I WANT TO KNOW

OH, MIDNIGHT STAR, WELL DON'T YOU KNOW
I READ IT, I READ IT IN THE WEEKLY MIDNIGHT STAR
THE UFOS HAVE LANDED AND WE'LL TELL YOU WHERE THEY ARE
MIDNIGHT STAR, I WANT TO KNOW, I WANT TO KNOW

MIDNIGHT STAR
WELL YOU CAN READ ALL ABOUT IT IN THE WEEKLY MIDNIGHT STAR
YOU CAN USE YOUR ESP TO LEARN TO PLAY GUITAR
I WANT TO KNOW, I WANT TO KNOW

OH, MIDNIGHT STAR, I WANT TO KNOW, I WANT TO KNOW
OH, MIDNIGHT STAR, I WANT TO KNOW, I WANT TO KNOW

(END SONG)

KAREN
Ellen, I can't believe you swallow that garbage.
Scoff all you like, Karen, but this paper has a readership of thousands. They wouldn't print it if people didn't want to hear about these stories, would they?

That's it! Ellen, you're a genius!

I am?

Yes! This is exactly what people want! It's so obvious. Why do people watch reality TV? Because it's quality entertainment? No! They want to know what their neighbours are up to. They want to see what other people do in their own homes. They want to escape their sad, pathetic lives and take comfort in the fact that everyone else is just as weird as they are. This is the answer!

What was the question?

This is how we can save the station. Jim, you said we couldn't compete with the networks. You're right, we can't - not on their turf. But if we give people something they don't get from the networks, the whole situation changes.

Not everyone will go for this stuff, Frank.

Enough of them will. Make it broad enough and there's something for everyone. Don't tell me you didn't get a kick out of reading that bizarro-world story about you. That's what we'll give them.

Reality TV?

No. You think this is real? (He waves the newspaper)

We'll do what they do. We'll make it up. All we have to do is translate it to a new medium.

(Underscore "Talk Soup")

We'll come up with the most unbelievable, twisted, in-your-face bizarre stories humanly possible. We'll hypnotize them so they can't look away. Imagine this...

(SONG - TALK SOUP)
FRANK
I DATED SIAMESE TWINS, I SLEPT WITH BIGFOOT TOO
GET ME ON SALTY JESSY, PUT ME ON DONAHUE
'CAUSE I WANT TO TELL THE WORLD ABOUT IT, RIGHT NOW
MY DOG'S A NARCOLEPTIC, MY MOM'S A CIRCUS FREAK
I'VE GOT TO GET A SPOT ON GERALDO'S SHOW THIS WEEK
'CAUSE I WANT TO TELL THE WORLD ABOUT IT, RIGHT NOW
I'M JUST AN ANOREXIC, CO-DEPENDENT, BINGO ADDICT
STRIPPER BORN WITHOUT A CHIN
AND I'M ONLY COMFORTABLE TALKING ABOUT IT
WHEN THE WHOLE WIDE WORLD IS LISTENING IN

TALK SOUP, TALK SOUP
LISTEN TO ME, LISTEN TO ME, LISTEN TO ME

(They're getting into it now)

MAX

MY WIFE RAN OFF WITH ELVIS

ELLEN

MY BOSS SHAVED OFF MY HAIR

AMY

I'VE GOT A THING FOR POODLES

KAREN

AND RUBBER UNDERWEAR

ALL

AND I WANT TO TELL THE WORLD ABOUT IT, RIGHT NOW

ELLEN

I HAD A CLOSE ENCOUNTER

JIM

I NEVER CHEW MY FOOD

KAREN

I GOT ELEVEN NOSE JOBS

MAX

I YODEL IN THE NUDE

ALL

AND I WANT TO TELL THE WORLD ABOUT IT, RIGHT NOW

FRANK
I'M JUST A CROSS-DRESSING, ALCOHOLIC, NEO-NAZI
PORNO STAR AS YOU MAY HAVE GUESSED
AND I'M REALLY GONNA FEEL A WHOLE LOT BETTER
IF YOU LET ME GET THIS THING OFF MY CHEST

ALL

TALK SOUP, TALK SOUP
LISTEN TO ME, LISTEN TO ME, LISTEN TO ME
FRANK
I'M JUST YOUR AVERAGE, SCHIZOPHRENIC, NYMPHOMANIAC
ALBINO Go-GO DANCER YOU SEE
NOTHING SO BAD THAT I CAN'T SHARE IT WITH
A BILLION FRIENDS ON NATIONAL TV

JIM
I don't know, Frank. You're talking about a huge risk.

FRANK
If it doesn't work, you get to close the station and run your
dance studio. You haven't lost anything but time. What do you say?

(JIM considers)

JIM
All right. I'll give you six weeks to prove you can make it work. If the viewing audience improves by a big enough margin, UHF32 stays on the air. Deal?

FRANK
Deal. Okay team, let's make some TV!

I HAVE NO GENITALIA

ELLEN
I SOLD MY KIDS FOR CHEESE

JIM
I LOVE MY BLOW-UP DOLL

FRANK
(reacting to JIM's line)
BRING OUT THOSE CAMERAS PLEASE!

ALL
'CAUSE I GOTTA TELL THE WORLD ABOUT IT, RIGHT NOW

TALK SOUP, TALK SOUP
LISTEN TO ME, LISTEN TO ME, LISTEN TO ME
TALK SOUP, TALK SOUP
LISTEN TO ME, LISTEN TO ME, LISTEN TO ME

(END SONG)
ACT II

SCENE 1

SETTING: As before.

AT RISE: The opening bars of "UHF" signal the dimming of auditorium lights and underscore dialogue. The first lines are delivered behind closed curtains.

AMY
Live in 30 seconds.

FRANK
30 seconds to air. Max, you ready?

MAX
(flatly)
Standing by to feel the love.

FRANK
Get it right, Max. Jim's in the building. We can't afford to blow this.

MAX
Stop worrying, Frank. We know how to do this.

(Curtains open. There is enough backlighting to see movement, but no direct lights.)

FRANK
Ready in control?

AMY
Control is ready. Jimmy's here, Frank. 20 seconds.

FRANK
Where else would he be? Ellen, are you ready?

ELLEN
I don't know if I can do this.

FRANK
Sure you can, Ellen. You're a natural. You're perfect for this.

ELLEN
I think I'm going to throw up!

AMY
10 seconds.

(KAREN enters. The UHF theme segues to a bass beat)
I'm sorry! But, really...

It wasn't my fault!

Places, people.

Five, four, lights up, showtime!

Okay, team. Let's make some TV!

Hi and welcome to UHF32, your local station bringing you the entertainment and news you can't get anywhere else. We're about to go to our midday movie, "Wolfman in Outer Space". Classic fiction or documentary? You decide. But before we do, it's time to get some direction into your life from the guidance counselor with a direct link to the spirit world. Ladies and gentlemen, please give your attention to that fantastic psychic chick, Madame Ellen!

(Asshe is announced, ELLEN comes forward to take center stage, as if born to it)

(A SONG - YOUR HOROSCOPE FOR TODAY)

AQUARIUS, THERE'S TRAVEL IN YOUR FUTURE WHEN YOUR TONGUE FREEZES TO THE BACK OF A SPEEDING BUS FILL THAT VOID IN YOUR PATHETIC LIFE BY PLAYING WHACK-A-MOLE 17 HOURS A DAY PISCES, TRY TO AVOID ANY VIRGOS OR LEOS WITH THE EBOLA VIRUS YOU ARE THE TRUE LORD OF THE DANCE NO MATTER WHAT THOSE IDIOTS AT WORK SAY ARIES, THE LOOK ON YOUR FACE WILL BE PRICELESS WHEN YOU FIND THAT 40-POUND WATERMELON IN YOUR COLON TRADE TOOTHBRUSHES WITH AN ALBINO DWARF THEN GIVE A HICKEY TO MERYL STREEP TAURUS, YOU WILL NEVER FIND TRUE HAPPINESS (MORE)
ELLEN (CONT'D)

WHAT YOU GONNA DO, CRY ABOUT IT?
THE STARS PREDICT TOMORROW YOU'LL WAKE UP
DO A BUNCH OF STUFF AND THEN GO BACK TO SLEEP

THAT'S YOUR HOROSCOPE FOR TODAY
THAT'S YOUR HOROSCOPE FOR TODAY
THAT'S YOUR HOROSCOPE FOR TODAY
THAT'S YOUR HOROSCOPE FOR TODAY

GEMINI, YOUR BIRTHDAY PARTY WILL BE RUINED ONCE AGAIN
BY YOUR EXPLOSIVE FLATULENCE
YOUR LOVE LIFE WILL RUN INTO TROUBLE
WHEN YOUR FIANCE HURLS A JAVELIN THROUGH YOUR CHEST
CANCER, THE POSITION OF JUPITER SAYS THAT
YOU SHOULD SPEND THE REST OF THE WEEK FACE DOWN IN THE MUD
TRY NOT TO SHOVE A ROLL OF DUCT TAPE UP YOUR NOSE
WHILE TAKING YOUR DRIVERS TEST
LEO, NOW IS NOT A GOOD TIME TO PHOTOCOPY YOUR BUTT
AND STAPLE IT TO YOUR BOSS'S FACE, OH NO
EAT A BUCKET OF TUNA-FLAVOURED PUDDING
THEN WASH IT DOWN WITH A GALLON OF STRAWBERRY QUICK
VIRGO, ALL VIRGOS ARE EXTREMELY FRIENDLY AND INTELLIGENT
EXCEPT FOR YOU
EXPECT A BIG SURPRISE TODAY
WHEN YOU WIND UP WITH YOUR HEAD IMPALED UPON A STICK

THAT'S YOUR HOROSCOPE FOR TODAY
THAT'S YOUR HOROSCOPE FOR TODAY
THAT'S YOUR HOROSCOPE FOR TODAY
THAT'S YOUR HOROSCOPE FOR TODAY

NOW YOU MAY FIND IT INCONCEIVABLE OR AT THE VERY LEAST
A BIT UNLIKELY THAT THE RELATIVE POSITION OF THE PLANETS
AND THE STARS COULD HAVE A SPECIAL DEEP SIGNIFICANCE OR
MEANING THAT EXCLUSIVELY APPLIES TO ONLY YOU, BUT LET ME
GIVE YOU MY ASSURANCE THAT THESE FORECASTS AND PREDICTIONS
ARE ALL BASED ON SOLID SCIENTIFIC DOCUMENTED EVIDENCE
SO YOU WOULD HAVE TO BE SOME KIND OF MORON
NOT TO REALISE THAT EVERY SINGLE ONE OF THEM IS ABSOLUTELY TRUE
WHERE WAS I?

LIBRA, A BIG PROMOTION IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER
FOR SOMEONE MUCH MORE TALENTED THAN YOU
LAUGHTER IS THE VERY BEST MEDICINE, REMEMBER THAT
WHEN YOUR APPENDIX BURSTS NEXT WEEK
SCORPIO, GET READY FOR AN UNEXPECTED TRIP
WHEN YOU FALL SCREAMING FROM AN OPEN WINDOW
WORK A LITTLE BIT HARDER ON IMPROVING
YOUR LOW SELF-ESTEEM, YOU STUPID FREAK
SAGITTARIUS, ALL YOUR FRIENDS ARE LAUGHING
BEHIND YOUR BACK - KILL THEM
TAKE DOWN ALL THOSE NAKED PICTURES OF ERNEST BORGNINE
YOU'VE GOT HANGING IN YOUR DEN
CAPRICORN, THE STARS SAY THAT YOU'RE AN EXCITING
AND WONDERFUL PERSON, BUT YOU KNOW THEY'RE LYING
(MORE)
IF I WERE YOU, I'D LOCK MY DOORS AND WINDOWS
AND NEVER NEVER NEVER NEVER NEVER LEAVE MY HOUSE AGAIN

THAT'S YOUR HOROSCOPE FOR TODAY
THAT'S YOUR HOROSCOPE FOR TODAY
THAT'S YOUR HOROSCOPE FOR TODAY
THAT'S YOUR HOROSCOPE FOR TODAY

(END SONG)

AMY
And we're clear. Tape is rolling and the movie is going out.

(AMY and JIM join the others in the studio)

FRANK
Well done, everyone. Ellen, that was great.

MAX
You did good, Ellen.

ELLEN
(a bit dazed)
Wow! That so different to just being in the background. It was kind of... I got a real charge out of it, you know?

JIM
Ellen, I've seen professionals who were less polished than that. You were excellent.

AMY
Well done.

ELLEN
Wow.

KAREN
How was I, Jim? Did you like what you saw?

JIM
Er... yes, Karen. Very good.

FRANK
So, what do you say, Jim? UHF32 has increased its audience by 28 per cent in the last six weeks, thanks to this new programming.

JIM
I've got to hand it to you, Frank. You've done an amazing job.

FRANK
And now we're on a roll, there'll be no stopping us. You wait and see. I'm going to go over the new schedule again. I've got a few more ideas I think we should try.

(FRANK exits to the offices)
ELLEN
Wow. That was so much fun. Do you think it'll be, like, a regular spot?

You'd have to ask Frank.

(KAREN)
Unless you can, like, see the future.

(Beat)

ELLEN
I'll go ask Frank.

(ELLEN exits to offices)

KAREN
So, Jim, are we going to keep you around? Does UHF32 have a future?

JIM
Well, the audience increase is encouraging. But there are other factors to take into account.

(KAREN)
(flirting)
Well, we'll have to see what other factors we can use to influence you.

MAX
All these pheromones are making me dizzy. I think I'll go out back for a breath of fresh air.

JIM
Max. You're one of the few people who doesn't seem all that worked up about the station's future. Mind telling me why?

MAX
Once you get married, you learn there's no point having an opinion on anything.

AMY
Max, I'm sorry. She called again.

MAX
And?

AMY
Nothing.

MAX
Son of a... Time to put that voodoo doll in the microwave again.

(MAX exits to the storeroom)

JIM
Is he all right?
AMY

He'll be fine.

KAREN

Amy, you should make sure he's okay. I want to have a chat with Mr Dennison, anyway.

JIM

I don't think that's necessary...

AMY

I'm sure he's fine...

KAREN

Nonsense! You have to take care of your co-workers, don't you Jim? Caring for one another is very important in such a close group.

(dragging JIM into the control room)

You go ahead, Amy. Jim will just be in here with me, going over a couple of things. Thanks. Bye now!

(AMY reluctantly goes to the storeroom as KAREN drags JIM into the control room)

JIM

Karen. Er... what did you want to discuss?

KAREN

I wanted to thank you for everything you're doing for this station. And to tell you how personally excited I am that you're here.

JIM

Well, it's just business...

KAREN

Oh, but business should bring you pleasure, don't you think? Otherwise, what is there to enjoy when you're alone at the end of the day?

JIM

Karen, I feel uncomfortable about...

KAREN

Well, then let's get you comfortable.

(KAREN pushes him into a chair, sits on his lap and starts loosening his clothes)

JIM

Karen, this has to stop.

KAREN

Oh, yes. It isn't fair we have to pretend to be disinterested. We should stop playing and admit our feelings.
I don't have any feelings for you.

Then let me give you some.

(KAREN kisses JIM passionately. He is stunned)

Oh, boy.

(Underline "Wanna B UR Lover")

I can't bear to think of you all alone in your mansion, with only your money for company. Let me in to your life, Jim. I can make you feel so much better.

(Song - Wanna B UR Lover)

I DON'T HAVE A LIBRARY CARD
BUT DO YOU MIND IF I CHECK YOU OUT?
I LIKE YOUR SKELETAL STRUCTURE, BABY
YOU'RE AN ECTOMORPH, NO DOUBT
YOUR FACE IS REAL SYMMETRICAL
AND YOUR NOSTRILS ARE SO NICE
I WISH THAT I WAS CROSS-EYED, BABY
SO I COULD SEE YOU TWICE
YOU SMELL LIKE FRITOS
THAT'S WHY I'M GIVING YOU THIS HUNGRY STARE
YOU'RE SO HOT, YOU'RE GONNA MELT
THE ELASTIC IN MY UNDERWEAR
I BET YOU'RE MAGICALLY DELICIOUS
LIKE A BOWL OF LUCKY CHARMS
YOU'D BE AS CHISELED AS THE VENUS DE MILO
IF I JUST CUT OFF YOUR ARMS
WHAT I'M TRYING TO SAY IS

I WANNA BE YOUR LOVER, BABY
I NEED SOMEBODY TO LOVE
YOU KNOW I WANNA BE YOUR LOVER, BABY
NOW I NEED SOMEBODY TO LOVE

DO YOU BELIEVE IN LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT
OR SHOULD I WALK BY AGAIN?
MY LOVE FOR YOU'S LIKE DIARRHEA
I JUST CAN'T HOLD IT IN
STOP, DROP AND ROLL NOW
'CAUSE BABY, YOU'RE ON FIRE
I BET YOUR OUTFIT
MAKES A LOT OF NOISE IN THE DRYER
YOU'RE ABSOLUTELY PERFECT

(MORE)
(CONT'D)

DON'T SPEAK NOW, YOU MIGHT SPOIL IT
YOUR EYES ARE EVEN BLUER
THAN THE WATER IN MY TOILET
SAY, HAS ANYONE EVER TOLD YOU
YOU'VE GOT YUGOSLAVIAN HANDS?
NO, OF COURSE NOT, THAT WOULD BE STUPID
JUST FORGET I EVER BROUGHT IT UP
THE POINT I'M TRYING TO MAKE IS

I WANNA BE YOUR LOVER, BABY
I NEED SOMEBODY TO LOVE
I JUST WANNA BE YOUR LOVER, BABY
NOW I NEED SOMEBODY TO LOVE

WANT YOU TO BE MY KRAKATOA
GET THAT LAVA FLOWING INSIDE OF YOU
WANT YOU TO BE MY ANACONDA
AND MY HEAT-SEEKING MISSILE, TOO
WANT YOU TO BE MY BEEF BURRITO
AM I MAKING THIS PERFECTLY CLEAR?
WANT YOU TO BE MY LOVE TORPEDO
ARE YOU PICKING UP THE SUBTLE INNUENDO HERE?

I HOPE I'M NOT BEING FORWARD
BUT DO YOU MIND IF I SQUEEZE YOUR BUTT?
YOU CAN TELL ME TRUTHFULLY
AM I A STEAMING HUNK OF LOVE NOW OR WHAT?
THERE JUST AREN'T ENOUGH "O"S IN SMOOTH
TO DESCRIBE HOW SMOOTH I AM
MAYBE YOU'VE SEEN MY PICTURE
IT'S IN THE DICTIONARY UNDER "KERBLAM"
MY LIPS ARE REGISTERED WEAPONS
CAN I INVADE YOUR PERSONAL SPACE?
YOU MUST HAVE FALLEN FROM HEAVEN
THAT WOULD EXPLAIN HOW YOU MESSED UP YOUR FACE
WELL, HOW'D YOU GET THROUGH SECURITY?
'CAUSE BABY, YOU'RE THE BOMB
I'D LIKE TO TAKE YOU HOME RIGHT NOW
SO YOU CAN MEET MY MOM
BECAUSE I

I WANNA BE YOUR LOVER, BABY
I NEED SOMEBODY TO LOVE
YOU KNOW I JUST WANNA BE YOUR LOVER, BABY
NOW I NEED SOMEBODY TO LOVE

(KAREN presses a button,
which starts a reel-to-reel player, from which comes the harmony accompaniment for the rest of the song.)
(This is actually provided by other members of cast singing from backstage)

ALL

BOY, YOU MUST BE JAMAICAN
BECAUSE JAMAICAN ME CRAZY
BOY, YOU MUST BE JAMAICAN
BECAUSE JAMAICAN ME CRAZY

I WANNA BE YOUR LOVER, BABY
I NEED SOMEBODY TO LOVE
YOU KNOW I JUST WANNA BE YOUR LOVER, BABY
NOW I NEED SOMEBODY TO LOVE

(END SONG)

JIM

Karen, this won't work.

KAREN

Come on, Jim. I know you're attracted to me.

JIM

You're a beautiful woman. But I'm in love with someone else.

(There's a frozen moment, then KAREN drops the seductive act)

KAREN

It figures.

JIM

Nothing personal.

KAREN

Oh, give me a break! I swear to God, the whole world's against me.

(AMY enters from the storeroom and reaches a position outside the control room in time to hear the following)

JIM

Karen, listen to me. A lot of pretty girls have tried to land this eligible bachelor. Shallow won't do it.

KAREN

Are you calling me shallow?

JIM

(kindly)

Yes. There may be a caring person in you, but we never see her. It isn't the world shutting you out. It's you shutting out the world.
KAREN
(upset to face her inner
whining child)
You want me to adopt orphans?

JIM
Just show you care about more than yourself.

KAREN
Like this mystery girl of yours?

(KAREN follows JIM's look
to the doorway and sees
AMY standing there)

KAREN
I see.

(She moves to leave)

AMY
Karen. We know you're better than you pretend. Show us.

(KAREN exits the control
room and goes to the
front offices. There's
an awkward pause)

JIM
She's a force of nature, that one.

AMY
She is.

JIM
How's Max?

AMY
He's fine. This is his third voodoo doll this year.

JIM
What's that all about?

AMY
Bad relationships can be hard to escape.

JIM
Are we still talking about Max?

AMY
Jimmy, please.

(AMY exits to the studio
floor. JIM follows)

JIM
Come on, Amy. You know how I feel.
AMY
Jimmy, I can't make any decisions until I know the future of
the station.

JIM
Would that make a difference to you?

AMY
It would make a difference to Frank.

JIM
I thought that was over.

AMY
It is. But he hasn't really accepted it. If the station closes,
he'll always blame you for me leaving.

(Beat)

JIM
(chuckling)
Well, this is familiar. You turning me down for Frank.

AMY
The prom was a long time ago, Jimmy. I was in love with Frank.
He had ideas... plans. You were...

JIM
Jimmy the Geek. I know. He must be quite a guy.

AMY
He thinks big.

JIM
Maybe one day he'll make it big.

AMY
Like you. You're a good guy, Jimmy.

JIM
And rich. And single. Any of this helping?

AMY
It's working on Karen.

JIM
It isn't Karen I've dreamed about since high school, Amy.

(They lean in, about to kiss. MAX enters with a
roll of duct tape)

MAX
Oops.

AMY
(busted)
We were... just talking about Frank.
MAX

Right.

JIM
Amy was telling me how he always thinks big.

(MAX starts repairing the camera with duct tape)

MAX
(snorts in derision)
Tell him about the TV.

JIM
What TV?

MAX
Amy doesn't like to talk about it. She was saving for a holiday.

AMY
He had a TV custom made, as big as possible. It wouldn't fit in the house.

JIM
I heard about that! It was on the news. He had to build a shed for it.

(underscore "FRANK's 2000-inch TV")

AMY
It's typical of Frank. He dreams big without any consideration of practical factors. He's all creative spark and no follow-through.

(SONG - FRANK'S 2000-INCH TV)

AMY
RISING ABOVE THE CITY
BLOCKING OUT THE NOONDAY SUN
IT DWARFS THE MIGHTY REDWOODS
AND IT TOWERS OVER EVERYONE
I STILL REMEMBER
WHEN THAT DELIVERY TRUCK CAME DOWN OUR BLOCK
WHAT A LUCKY GUY

I HEAR HE GOT THE LAST ONE IN STOCK
AND THE NEIGHBOURS ARE JUST GREEN, THEY SAY
THAT'S THE BIGGEST SCREEN WE'VE EVER SEEN

ALL
IT'S FRANK'S 2000-INCH TV
EVERYBODY COME AND SEE
FRANK'S 2000-INCH TV
AMY
THERE'S FRANK'S REMOTE CONTROL,
YOU CAN LOOK, BUT DON'T TOUCH IT PLEASE
'CAUSE FRANK'S THE ONE IN CHARGE
AND HE DECIDES WHAT EVERYBODY SEES
THE PICTURE'S CRYSTAL CLEAR
AND EVERYTHING IS MAGNIFIED
ROBERT DE NIRO'S MOLE
HAS GOT TO BE 10 FEET WIDE
EVERYBODY IN THE TOWN
CAN HEAR THOSE 90,000 WATTS OF DOLBY SOUND
AND I'M MIGHTY PROUD TO SAY
NOW I CAN WATCH THE SIMPSONS FROM 30 BLOCKS AWAY

ON FRANK'S 2000-INCH TV
EVERYBODY COME AND SEE
FRANK'S 2000-INCH TV
EVERYBODY COME AND SEE

AMY
(to JIM)
YOU OUGHT TO GET ONE OF YOUR OWN REAL SOON
IT'S LIKE HAVING A DRIVE IN MOVIE IN YOUR OWN LIVING ROOM
HEY NOW, HEY NOW, NA NA NA NOW
HEY NOW, HEY NOW, NA NA NA

FRANK'S 2000-INCH TV
EVERYBODY COME AND SEE, YOU WON'T BELIEVE IT
FRANK'S 2000-INCH TV
EVERYBODY COME AND SEE
FRANK'S 2000-INCH TV
GOT A TWO-YEAR WARRANTEE ON PARTS AND LABOUR
FRANK'S 2000-INCH TV
FRANK'S 2000-INCH TV

(END SONG)

AMY
And now he's broke, with this super-size gadget in the backyard
that's completely useless to him.

JIM
That depends. It's all in how you market it. He got media
coverage, he just didn't capitalise on it. You could run it as
a tourist attraction, or turn it into a drive in theater. At
the very least, it could work as advertising for UHF32.

MAX
It would brown out the city to run it.

AMY
But none of that would occur to Frank. How do you come up with
all this stuff?

JIM
It's just business. You've got to be able to convince people
that what you have is what they want.
(Underscore "The Check's in the Mail")

JIM
All it takes is a product, a little fast talking and a few promises.

(ELLEN enters from the offices. JIM greets her in "businessman mode")

(SONG - THE CHECK'S IN THE MAIL)

JIM
WELL HEY, HOW YOU DOING, HAVE A SEAT, HAVE A DRINK
BOY IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU, WHAT CAN I SAY?
OH SORRY, GOTTA RUN, WE'LL GET TOGETHER AGAIN
SAY WHAT WAS YOUR NAME ANYWAY?
WELL, WE'RE WORKING ON THE PROBLEM, WE'LL GET BACK TO YOU SOON
BUT DON'T TRY TO CALL ME, I'LL BE IN A MEETING EVERY AFTERNOON
FOR A YEAR, MAYBE LONGER, KEEP IN TOUCH, THANKS FOR DROPPING BY
AND HAVE A NICE DAY

THE CHECK'S IN THE MAIL, YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL
DON'T EVER CHANGE, YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN
MY GIRL WILL CALL YOUR GIRL, WE'LL TALK, WE'LL DO LUNCH
YOU'LL LEAVE A MESSAGE ON MY MACHINE
SO BABY, WON'T YOU SIGN ON THE DOTTED LINE
GONNA MAKE YOUR DREAMS COME TRUE
THE CHECK'S IN THE MAIL
WOULD I LIE TO YOU?

(KAREN enters. JIM switches his sales talk to her)

JIM
WELL HEY, WAIT A MINUTE, WHAT'S THE MATTER, HOLD ON
YOU WANT ME TO FORK OVER THE LOOT?
YOU SAY YOU HATE MY GUTS, YOU WANT TO TAKE ME TO COURT
AND YOU'VE GOT YOURSELF A LAWYER WITH A THREE-PIECE SUIT
WELL I'M PROUD TO SAY YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY CRITIC OF MINE
SO IF YOU WANNA SUE ME I'M AFRAID YOU'RE GONNA HAVE TO WAIT IN LINE, TAKE A NUMBER, THANKS FOR CALLING, WHO LOVES YA BABY
DON'T FORGET TO READ THE FINE PRINT

THE CHECK'S IN THE MAIL, YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL
DON'T EVER CHANGE, YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN
MY GIRL WILL CALL YOUR GIRL, WE'LL TALK, WE'LL DO LUNCH
YOU'LL LEAVE A MESSAGE ON MY MACHINE
SO BABY, WON'T YOU SIGN ON THE DOTTED LINE
GONNA MAKE YOUR DREAMS COME TRUE
THE CHECK'S IN THE MAIL
WOULD I LIE TO YOU? OH, TRUST ME!

KAREN, take a letter.

(MORE)
Dear Mr Gates, thank you for your generous investment in our product. Research is continuing, and we feel confident of significant market share by the end of the millennium. However, with reference to the contract brokered by this office between yourself and the Prince of Darkness, you are in default of your payments. Please forward your first born by the end of the month, or we will be forced to foreclose. Sincerely yours, etc

THE CHECK'S IN THE MAIL, YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL
DON'T EVER CHANGE, YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN
WHY DON'T YOU LEAVE A MESSAGE WITH MY GIRL
I'LL HAVE LUNCH WITH YOUR MACHINE
SO BABY, WON'T YOU SIGN ON THE DOTTED LINE
GONNA MAKE YOUR DREAMS COME TRUE
THE CHECK'S IN THE MAIL
WOULD I LIE TO YOU?
THE CHECK'S IN THE MAIL
WOULD I LIE TO YOU?

(END SONG)

(FRANK has entered in the last bars of the song)

Now that's the way to run the place.

ELLEN
No wonder you've done so well.

AMY
If only Frank could be a little more business-savvy like that, instead of...

FRANK
Instead of what?
(no response)
No, really. I want to know. You don't think the way I do things is good enough? You want me to be more like Jimmy the Geek? A suit with the creativity of a car park? Well, I'm never going to be like that. All of you should have figured that out by now.

(Underscore "I'll be Mellow When I'm Dead")

FRANK
I refuse to turn into something I'm not just to fit in with your idea of who I should be. And that isn't going to change as long as I'm breathing.

(SONG - I'LL BE MELLOW WHEN I'M DEAD)
FRANK
I DON'T CARE ABOUT YOUR KARMA
I DON'T CARE ABOUT WHAT'S HIP
NO SPACE CADET'S GONNA TELL ME WHAT TO DO
I WON'T SWIM IN YOUR JACUZZI
YOU CAN'T MAKE ME SETTLE DOWN, I'D RATHER
KICK AND JUMP AND BITE AND SCRATCH AND SCREAM UNTIL I'M BLUE
I MAY AS WELL BE HYPER
AS LONG AS I'M STILL AROUND
'CAUSE I'LL HAVE LOTS OF TIME TO BE LAID BACK
WHEN I'M SIX FEET UNDERGROUND

I'LL BE MELLOW WHEN I'M DEAD, I'LL BE MELLOW WHEN I'M DEAD
I'LL BE MELLOW WHEN I'M DEAD, I'LL BE MELLOW WHEN I'M DEAD
WHEN ARE YOU COSMIC COWBOYS GONNA GET IT THROUGH YOUR HEAD?
I'LL BE MELLOW WHEN I'M DEAD, I'LL BE MELLOW WHEN I'M DEAD

I CAN'T STAND THE SMELL OF INCENSE
I DON'T REALLY LIKE TO JOG
NO JOANIE MITCHEL 8-TRACKS IN MY CAR
I HATE ANYTHING ORGANIC
EVEN HEALTH FOOD MAKES ME SICK, YOU WON'T
CATCH ME SIPPING PERRIER DOWN IN SOME SUSHI BAR
I TELL YOU, NOW'S THE TIME TO GO FOR
ALL THE GUSTO YOU CAN GRAB
YOU'LL HAVE PLENTY OF TIME TO BE LOW-KEY
WHEN YOU'RE LAID OUT ON THE SLAB

I'LL BE MELLOW WHEN I'M DEAD, I'LL BE MELLOW WHEN I'M DEAD
I'LL BE MELLOW WHEN I'M DEAD, I'LL BE MELLOW WHEN I'M DEAD
WHEN ARE YOU COSMIC COWBOYS GONNA GET IT THROUGH YOUR HEAD?
I'LL BE MELLOW WHEN I'M DEAD, I'LL BE MELLOW WHEN I'M DEAD

AMY
Frank, stop trying to prove something to us.

KAREN
Take a break from the Gestapo imitation, okay?

ELLEN
Are you channeling Genghis Khan? Or maybe Miss Piggy?

FRANK
Don't you get it? Listen to me!

DON'T WANT NO PART OF THAT VEGETARIAN SCENE
I WON'T BUY ME A PAIR OF DESIGNER JEANS
NO REDWOOD HOT TUB TO MY NAME
I'VE GOT ALL THAT I WANT, AND IF IT'S ALL THE SAME TO YOU
I DON'T NEED A COURSE IN SELF-AWARENESS
TO FIND OUT WHO I AM
AND I'D RATHER HAVE A BIG MAC OR A JUMBO JACK
(MORE)
FRANK (CONT'D)

THAN ALL THE BEAN SPROUTS IN JAPAN

SO DON'T ASK ME WHAT I'M INTO
I DON'T NEED TO PROVE I'M COOL
I'LL BREAK YOUR ARM IF YOU ASK ME WHAT'S MY SIGN
I WON'T TELL YOU WHERE MY HEAD'S AT
I DON'T NEED TO SEE NO SHRINK
PSYCHOSIS MAY BE IN THIS YEAR, BUT I'M REALLY NOT THAT KIND
AND I'M IN NO HURRY TO BE CASUAL
IN FACT, I THINK I'LL WAIT
UNTIL I'M PUSHING UP THE DAISIES
LIKE WOW MAN, CAN YOU RELATE?

I'LL BE MELLOW WHEN I'M DEAD, I'LL BE MELLOW WHEN I'M DEAD
I'LL BE MELLOW WHEN I'M DEAD
I'LL BE MELLOW WHEN I'M DEAD, I'LL BE MELLOW WHEN I'M DEAD
I'LL BE MELLOW WHEN I'M DEAD
I'LL BE MELLOW WHEN I'M DEAD, I'LL BE MELLOW WHEN I'M DEAD
I'LL BE MELLOW WHEN I'M DEAD
I'LL BE MELLOW WHEN I'M DEAD, I'LL BE MELLOW WHEN I'M DEAD
I'LL BE MELLOW WHEN I'M DEAD
I'LL BE MELLOW WHEN I'M DEAD, I'LL BE MELLOW WHEN I'M DEAD
I'LL BE MELLOW WHEN I'M DEAD

(END SONG)

(The song has become a personal attack on AMY, who runs distraught from the room towards the offices)

ELLEN

Amy!

(ELLEN follows AMY to give comfort)

KAREN

(subdued)

Frank. That was... really mean.

(KAREN exits to the offices. JIM moves to follow. He pauses at the door and turns back to FRANK)

JIM

It's just business, Frank. Don't make it personal.

(JIM exits)

FRANK

Aren't you going to storm out on me, too?

MAX

Sit down, Frank.
FRANK
I can't believe you're all turning on me like this...

MAX
SIT DOWN!

(Beat. FRANK sits)

MAX
Frank, you're a smart guy. I'm not talking about book learning or business sense. You've got imagination like I've never seen. When you get excited about something, you make people believe in you. They want to be near you so they can feel a little bit of the magic you feel. But then you lose interest, or go on to something else and it makes the rest of us feel cheapened. Disappointed. It's not that you tried and failed - we could understand that. You show us a magic land and then leave us stranded without ever seeing it up close.

FRANK
I don't need...

MAX
I'm not finished. What you had with Amy was great for both of you. But she's tired of waiting to get to that magic land, Frank. And if you're not going to take her, she'll go with someone else.

FRANK
You're hardly in a position to give relationship advice, Max.

MAX
You know what I admire most about Amy? She knows it's time to get out and she's doing it. She's not staying in a bad relationship because she doesn't know what else to do.

(Underscore "She Never Told Me She Was A Mime")

MAX
You think I wanted to marry a woman who never talks to me? You think I want to sleep in the storeroom because I hate to go home? Trust me, Frank, Amy's got the right idea. When it goes bad, it's time to get out.

(SONG - SHE NEVER TOLD ME SHE WAS A MIME)

MAX
WHEN WE FIRST MET SHE SEEMED PERFECTLY NORMAL
I NEVER DREAMED SHE'D MAKE MY LIFE SO HARD
YOU SEE MY BABY SHE STARTED TO CHANGE
STARTED LOOKING KIND OF STRANGE
WEARING ALL THAT WHITE MAKEUP AND THOSE BLACK LEOTARDS
WELL I GUESS SHE KEPT HER LITTLE SECRET PRETTY WELL
NOW EVER SINCE I LEARNED THE HORRIBLE TRUTH
MY LIFE HAS BEEN A LIVING HELL, THAT'S RIGHT, YOU SEE

(MORE)
MAX (CONT'D)

SHE NEVER TOLD ME SHE WAS A MIME
SHE NEVER TOLD ME SHE WAS A MIME
ACTING LIKE SHE'S TRAPPED INSIDE A
BIG GLASS BOX ALL THE TIME
SHE NEVER TOLD ME, SHE NEVER TOLD ME
SHE WAS A Ma-Ma-Ma-Ma-Ma-Ma-MA MIME

I WISH WE BOTH COULD JUST TALK IT ALL OVER
BUT MY BABY WON'T EVEN MAKE A SOUND
NOW SHE MAKES EVERYBODY SICK
DOING THAT PANTOMIME SH*TICK
EVEN OUR OLD FRIENDS HAVE STOPPED COMING AROUND
MY PARENTS CAN'T STAND HER AND THE NEIGHBOURS HATE HER GUTS
SHE'S REALLY REALLY EMBARRASSING ME
THIS SILENT TREATMENT'S DRIVING ME NUTS, YOU SEE

SHE NEVER TOLD ME SHE WAS A MIME
SHE NEVER TOLD ME SHE WAS A MIME
NOW SHE'S ACTING LIKE SHE'S TRAPPED INSIDE A
BIG GLASS BOX ALL THE TIME, WHAT A CRIME
SHE NEVER TOLD ME, SHE NEVER TOLD ME
SHE WAS A MIME

SHE WALKS AGAINST THE WIND EVERYWHERE WE GO
STOPS AT EVERY CORNER, GOT TO PUT ON A SHOW
CARRIES ROUND A PICTURE OF MARCEL MARCEAU
ALWAYS WAS THE QUIET TYPE, BUT HOW WAS I TO KNOW

SHE NEVER TOLD ME SHE WAS A MIME
SHE NEVER TOLD ME SHE WAS A MIME
ACTING LIKE SHE'S TRAPPED INSIDE A BIG GLASS BOX
ALL THE Ti-Yi-Yi-YI Yime
SHE NEVER TOLD ME, SHE NEVER TOLD ME
SHE WAS A MIME

(END SONG)

(JIM enters)

MAX
I'll leave the two of you to talk it out.

JIM
Max, would you ask the others to step in for a minute, please?

(MAX exits to offices)

JIM
Do we wait in silence, or would you like to insult me some more?

FRANK
I don't have anything to say to you.

JIM
It's odd, you know. You never said anything to me in high school
because you looked down on me as a loser. Now you look down on
me as a success.
FRANK
You had nowhere to go but up.

JIM
That's true of all of us, Frank. We've got to seize our dreams, but first we need dreams to seize.

(ELLEN, KAREN, MAX and AMY enter)

JIM
Come in, everyone. I've got an announcement to make. Six weeks ago, I came here to close UHF32 down. You convinced me, all of you, to give you a chance to try something new. I agreed, and even stayed to see what you would do with that chance. But I've got to get back to things I've been neglecting, so I wanted to give you my decision before I left.

AMY
Wait. I have to say something first. Frank, when Jimmy leaves, I'm going with him.

(Beat. Underscore "You Don't Love Me Anymore")

FRANK
Why?

AMY
I haven't been happy for the longest time, Frank. We had such good, good times but they were over a long time ago. I want to see if I can find a place to be happy again.

FRANK
And you think he's the one to take you there?

AMY
I don't know. Maybe. But I want the chance to try.

FRANK
Are you doing this deliberately? Just to get back at me?

AMY
Can't you be happy for me, Frank? Can't you let me have my own dream?

(FRANK backs away and looks at JIM)

FRANK
I don't suppose you've got any good news for me, either, have you?

JIM
UHF32 has had an increase in viewing audience. (MORE)
JIM (CONT'D)
But not big enough. The station just doesn't broadcast to a big enough population to make it worthwhile to maintain.

FRANK
Congratulations, Mr Dennison. You've managed to steal my girl and close my station. I hope it makes up for the way I mistreated you in high school.

JIM
Frank, you're wrong on two counts. First of all, Amy was never your girl, and she isn't my girl now. She's her own person. She makes her own decisions.

ELLEN
And the second thing?

JIM
I didn't say I was closing the station.

(End underscore)

KAREN
But I thought...

MAX
What's the angle?

JIM
What I said was, this town doesn't have a large enough population to support a UHF station. But I've been really impressed by what you've done in the last six weeks. Your problem isn't that you don't have a product. Your problem is that you have the wrong audience. We're going to fix that. UHF32 is going global.

AMY
How?

JIM
Do you know how many people in this country have broadband internet connections? Do you know what that means? Live streaming television through cable connections the world over. It's cable TV evolved to a higher form of life. And when you can reach that many people, you're bound to find an audience. But I can't do it. I don't have the creativity needed to pull in that crowd. There's only one person I know who can. And that's you, Frank. What do you say? Are you ready to seize the dream?

(FRANK considers)

FRANK
Max?

MAX
Take me to that magic land, Frank.

FRANK
Ellen?
ELLEN
Think globally, act locally.

FRANK
Karen?

KAREN
Why didn't I get the good-looking rich guy?

(Beat)

FRANK
Amy, if I do this, if I make UHF32 successful as a broadband station, will you come back?

AMY
No, Frank. I'm not coming back.

(Beat)

FRANK
I'll run your station, Mr Dennison. (looking at AMY) But don't think I'm agreeing to anything else.

(FRANK exits)

JIM
I'm sorry, Amy.

AMY
No, it's all right. Some things never turn out the way we plan. And it takes time to come to grips with it.

KAREN
(wryly) Isn't that the truth.

MAX
Come on, team. Let's get to work. As Frank would say...

ALL
Let's make some TV.

END SCENE 1
ACT II

SCENE 2

SETTING: As before.

AT RISE: As we cut to black from the previous screen, start the underscore of "UHF". Cast have a fast costume change. Backlit stage for the dialogue.

MAX

Live in 30 seconds.

FRANK

30 seconds to air, folks. Max, are we set?

MAX

Camera is up. Remote says the control room is on-line.

FRANK

You ready, Ellen?

ELLEN

Oh my God, doesn't this ever get any easier?

FRANK

You're my rock, Ellen. Where's Karen?

MAX

She's waiting to bring in Amy and Mr Dennison.

FRANK

Amy knows the way. Tell Karen to get in here.

(KAREN enters from the office. AMY and JIM are with her, and they go stand near the control room behind the camera)

KAREN

I'm here.

MAX

20 seconds.

FRANK

Are you ever going to be on time?

KAREN

Sorry. My fault.

MAX

Welcome back, Amy.

AMY

Hi, Max.
Focus on the job, Max.

MAX

I'm a bachelor now, Frank, I can multitask. 10 seconds.

FRANK

All right, folks. Our boss is here, so let's do it right. Just the way we rehearsed it.

JIM

You're all doing great.

KAREN

Thanks, Jim!

ELLEN

Where's my bucket?

MAX

Five, four, lights up, showtime!

FRANK

Okay team. Let's make some TV.

(Stage lights come up to reveal MAX behind camera, ELLEN and KAREN in identical outfits in "backup singers" pose and FRANK at the center of the chaos. JIM and AMY are hanging back behind camera near the control room. FRANK turns to camera.)

FRANK

Hi everybody, and welcome to UHF32, your Internet gateway to the greatest entertainment on the World Wide Web. Kick back and prepare for another dose of square eye, because we've got some fantastic viewing lined up for you. We're celebrating today, because in the six months we've been surfing the web with you, we've gained mirror sites and supporting programming in Canada, Britain, India, Japan, Australia and Russia. So to celebrate that milestone, I'm going to do something you haven't seen me do before. I'm going to get serious. Max, cut the music.

MAX

What?

FRANK

The music, Max. Cut it. Turn it off.

(MAX pushes a button on a remote hanging from the camera and the music stops.)
FRANK
Now, lock off the camera and come join the girls.

(MAX walks over to KAREN and ELLEN)

FRANK
I wanted you folks at home to meet the team who make UHF32 the success it is. Say hello to Karen, Ellen and Max. They're here with me every day but, ladies and gents, we have special guests in the studio today. Let me introduce you to Diamond Jim Dennison, the owner of the station. Come on out here, Mr Dennison.

(JIM makes gestures to indicate he doesn't want to)

FRANK
Come on, out in the spotlight where you belong. You deserve this.

(JIM moves out to join FRANK)

FRANK
Folks, this is the man who rescued UHF32 from oblivion and delivered to me an important personal lesson. Say hi to the people at home, Mr Dennison.

JIM
Hello everyone, wherever you are. Thanks for supporting UHF32 and its associated webcasters.

FRANK
And that's why he's so rich. He never stops sounding like an advertisement. But let's meet the rich man's richest prize. Come join us, Amy.

(AMY doesn't want to)

FRANK
Well, I knew this wasn't going to be easy. I'll be right back.

(FRANK goes and grabs AMY and hauls her in front of the camera)

FRANK
This, people, is Amy Thatcher. The love of my life for many years, who dumped me for the rich, good-looking man next to her.

AMY
Frank!

JIM
(warning)

Frank.
Oh, and look! (Grabs AMY's hand)
Is that an engagement ring I see? Wow, that's more rock than came out of the sixties!

AMY
(snatching her hand back)
I can't believe you're doing this, Frank. I love Jimmy.

FRANK
(angry)
Like you loved me?

JIM
That's enough, Frank.

FRANK
You're right, Mr Dennison. Time for some entertainment. Here's a little song for you, Amy. Just to let you and the world know how I feel.

(to Ellen, Karen and Max)
Sing.

ELLEN
Frank, maybe this isn't such a good...

FRANK
Sing!

(SONG – SINCE YOU'VE BEEN GONE)

FRANK
SINCE YOU'VE BEEN GONE
WELL I FEEL LIKE I'VE BEEN CHEWING ON TINFOIL
SINCE YOU'VE BEEN GONE
IT'S LIKE I'VE GOT A GREAT BIG MOUTHFUL OF COD LIVER OIL
WELL I'M FEELING LIKE I STUCK MY HAND
INSIDE A BLENDER AND TURNED IT ON
YOU KNOW I'VE BEEN IN A BUTTLOAD OF PAIN
SINCE YOU'VE BEEN GONE
I COULDN'T FEEL ANY WORSE IF YOU DROPPED
A TWO-TON BOWLING BALL ON MY TOES
IT COULDN'T HURT ANY MORE IF YOU SHOVED
A RED-HOT CACTUS UP MY NOSE
SINCE YOU'VE BEEN GONE
WELL IT FEELS LIKE I'M GETTING TETANUS SHOTS EVERY DAY
SINCE YOU'VE BEEN GONE
IT'S LIKE I'VE GOT AN ICE CREAM HEADACHE THAT WON'T GO AWAY
EVER SINCE THE DAY YOU LEFT ME
I'VE BEEN SO MISERABLE MY DEAR
I FEEL ALMOST AS BAD AS I DID
WHEN YOU WERE STILL HERE
(END SONG)

(At the close of the song, FRANK holds out his arms to AMY with a big "only kidding" look on his face. She grins and gives him a big hug. Tension is broken and everyone smiles)

AMY
Thank you, Frank.

FRANK
Be happy, Amy.

JIM
(still tense)
Is there something you want to tell me?

AMY
How about... I love you.

(AMY and JIM kiss and hug and he visibly relaxes)

MAX
Congratulations, you two.

ELLEN
I knew this was going to happen.

KAREN
Me, too, damn it.

AMY
Read it in the Midnight Star, did you Ellen?

ELLEN
Don't believe everything you read in the papers.

JIM
Sorry to bring this back down to earth, but haven't we forgotten something?

(JIM indicates the camera)

FRANK
Are you kidding? True love betrayed, true love found, happy ending, all is forgiven. We'll get better ratings from this than anything else on the schedule.

(off Jim's look)
Okay, boss. Back to work it is. Go dance with the girls. Max, camera! Cue the music.

(JIM and AMY join KAREN and ELLEN.)
(MAX, back behind the camera, presses a button on the remote. Underscore "Cable TV").

FRANK
(to camera)
Thanks for joining us on that emotional roller coaster, boys and girls. Now let's put some meaning back into your dull, empty lives, the way we do with viewers the world over.

(remove a piece of paper from his pocket)
We recently received an email from a Mr Daniel "Whiplash" Crawford of Wonthaggi in Australia. G'day, Whiplash. I want to share with all of you good people the special message I hold here in my hand about the way UHF32 has affected this sad, broken man. He writes...

(SONG - CABLE TV)

FRANK
I USED TO THINK MY LIFE WAS SO EMPTY
I USED TO THINK LIFE WAS PASSING ME BY
WELL I WAS JUST ABOUT READY TO CURL UP AND DIE
THEN ONE DAY SURFING THE WORLD WIDE WEB
A SEARCH REVEALED YOUR SITE TO ME
I SIGNED RIGHT UP, GOT MY PLUG INS FOR FREE
NOW I'VE GOT BROADBAND CABLE TV
NOW I GET TO WATCH THE STOCK REPORT IN KOREAN
MIDGET WRESTLING ON CHANNEL THREE
IT COSTS ME FIFTY BUCKS A MONTH JUST TO SEE THEM
YEAH BUT THAT'S ALL RIGHT WITH ME
I'VE GOT CABLE TV
CABLE TV
EIGHTY-THREE CHANNELS OF ECSTASY
I LOVE MY CABLE TV
I'VE GOT BROADBAND CABLE TV

I'VE GOT THE SIAMESE FAITH HEALERS NETWORK
THE NEWS AND WEATHER FROM PERU
I'VE GOT CELEBRITY HOCKEY AND RACQUETBALL CHANNEL TWO
BUGS BUNNY DIRECT FROM ATLANTA
MR WIZARD IS ON AT FIVE
I'VE GOT A SATELLITE DISH ON THE TRUNK OF MY CAR
SO I CAN WATCH MTV WHILE I DRIVE
I'M TALKING 'BOUT REAL QUALITY PROGRAMS
THE KIND YOU JUST CAN'T GET FOR FREE
NOW I NEVER WANT TO LEAVE MY APARTMENT
'CAUSE THERE'S JUST SO MUCH FOR ME TO SEE
ON MY CABLE TV
CABLE TV
WELL IF YOU NEED TO FIND ME YOU KNOW WHERE I'LL BE WATCHING MY CABLE TV
I'VE GOT BROADBAND CABLE TV
'CAUSE I LOVE MY CABLE TV
LOVE THAT CABLE TV

MY FRIENDS ARE GETTING KIND OF WORRIED
(MORE)
FRANK (CONT'D)

THEY THINK I'M TURNING INTO SOME KIND OF FREAK
BUT THEY'RE JUST JEALOUS, 'CAUSE I'VE SEEN PORKY'S
TWENTY-SEVEN TIMES THIS WEEK
ON MY CABLE TV
CABLE TV

THE GREATEST THING THAT'S EVER HAPPENED TO ME
IS BROADBAND CABLE TV
I LOVE MY CABLE TV
I'VE GOT TO HAVE CABLE TV
I NEED MY CABLE TV
I LOVE MY CABLE TV
MY BROADBAND CABLE TV
I CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT CABLE TV
I LOVE MY CABLE TV

(END SONG)

CURTAIN

THE END