

JOHN C. REILLY IS A ROBOT

A SHORT SCREENPLAY

By

Curtis Lofgren

WGAw # 1576435  
curtislofgren@comcast.net

FADE IN

TITLE CARD: A HOUSE ON A LAKE IN WISCONSIN

INT. LIVING ROOM- DAY

TWO middle-aged MEN watch TV.

KETCHY

I remember this one. John Wayne  
searches for his niece.

Ketchy casually tosses the REMOTE to Joe.

JOE

*Careful!* These are *not* free.  
KABLECOM charges an arm and a leg.

GLADYS, Joe's WIFE, brings in a large PIZZA.

KETCHY

That Duke.... always searchin'.

Joe changes the CHANNEL. He lands on "GOODFELLAS".

JOE

Stop!

DIALOGUE from the film is RECITED, almost a DAILY ritual.

KETCHY

Ma, can I borrow this knife? I  
need it. I hit a deer, ma. I have  
to cut off its.... what do you call  
it? Paw?

JOE

(chewing)  
Hoof.

KETCHY

Hoof. Ma, come on, it's a sin.

JOE

Henry, you don't say much. What's  
wrong?

KETCHY

Oh, I just like to sit and listen.

JOE  
Have I ever showed you my  
paintings?

KETCHY  
Look at this guy. One dog goes  
this way, the other goes that way.

Gladys is CONFUSED.

JOE  
This is delicious.

GLADYS  
Are you saying that or is Joe  
Pesci?

JOE  
Me *and* Joe.

KETCHY  
Gladys, we need you to be Martin  
Scorsese's mother. Joe and I *suck*  
at being Mrs. Scorsese.

JOE  
*Please?*

Gladys puts down her SLICE just as she was about to EAT.

GLADYS  
Where are we in the script?

KETCHY  
Ma, I settle down every night, I'd  
rather be with you, I love you.

Gladys MERGES into the GAME, like she was merging onto I-94.

GLADYS  
Henry, why don't you talk? You  
don't talk much.

Joe WINCES. He signifies "CUT" with a FINGER moving from  
left to right across his THROAT.

JOE  
Where are you? We did that line  
already.

GLADYS  
I'm going into the kitchen and  
visit with Edna. You guys need to  
get some air.

KETCHY  
That's not in the script.

She LEAVES the room.

JOE  
Forgive her Ketch, she gets  
confused at times.

Ketchy is STILL in MOVIE-MODE.

KETCHY  
Give me the wine. Bee-yu-ti-ful!  
Now, we can eat.

They GOBBLE up all the PIZZA.

The REMOTE flips back to the WAYNE film AUTOMATICALLY.

JOE  
Spooky. Where's Maureen O'Hara?

KETCHY  
There are no Maureens in this  
movie. Just Natalie Wood, and  
Jesus Christ.

JOE  
Who?

KETCHY  
Jeffery Hunter. King of Kings.

JOE  
Oh, yeah, good call.

KETCHY  
Where's Scorsese's mom?

JOE  
She went into the kitchen.

KETCHY  
No offense, but she's not into our  
movie game.

JOE  
You can lead a woman to pizza but  
you can't make her Mrs. Scorsese.

KETCHY  
Should we audition *my* wife?

Ketchy channel SURFS.

JOE  
Leave it on *one channel!*

He flips back to the WAYNE movie.

KETCHY  
You ever think about how many  
muscles you utilize when using the  
remote?

He RUBS his THUMBS.

JOE  
Supper is when?

KETCHY  
Depends on the stew.

JOE  
Here comes the Duke's best line.

KETCHY  
I think it's great the two of us  
like the same stuff.

Joe ADDS up their LIKES and DISLIKES.

JOE  
Elvis movies before 1965, anything  
with Patrick Swayze, R-rated Pam  
Grier flicks and the Duke.

Gladys comes back in and GAZES out the front WINDOW.

There's ICE HOCKEY being played on the frozen LAKE.

KETCHY  
Move, Glad, I can't see the TV.

She BACKS away.

JOE  
Now you're in *my* way.

She KNEELS.

GLADYS  
Looks like everyone's gettin' their  
shanties on the lake. The ice is  
solid. The kids are playing  
hockey. You guys going out?

The MEN make a HALF-ASS attempt to GAZE out the WINDOW.

KETCHY

Nobody has driven their Pontiac  
onto the ice and landed in twenty  
feet of slushy water?

GLADYS

I see a Subaru. One guy has an ice  
shanty with a *deck!*

KETCHY

We'll put a deck on ours this year,  
whaddaya say, Joe?

JOE

Sure, sure. We'll go out, just not  
today.

KETCHY

*Aina hey?*

JOE

*Aina hey!*

Joe SLAPS Ketchy's hand and WIGGLES his fingers.

GLADYS

You said the same thing yesterday.  
You were watching the Swayze movie  
about the FBI surfer.

Gladys WATCHES some KIDS enjoying their HOCKEY game.

KETCHY

Along with ROAD HOUSE, the two of  
them would produce *five* hours plus  
of classic film viewing.

Joe DIFFERS with Ketchy.

JOE

More like *eight* hours if it's  
chopped up for commercials on  
Bravo, TNT, AMC, TBS, A&E, CBS,  
NBC, ABC.....

The KIDS wave to GLADYS.

GLADYS

What if it's on TCM?

JOE

Point Break on TCM? *Sir Robert  
Osborn* would never allow it.

KETCHY  
That tidley wink wouldn't know a classic if it bit him!

GLADYS  
You're a couple of bums. I happen to *like* Robert Osborn.

Joe shakes his HEAD.

KETCHY  
It's not like we're *not* going out ice-fishing at *some* point.

They *think* they're creating DAVID MAMET-type dialogue....

MAMET-SPEAK!

JOE  
*At some point.* Just not today.

KETCHY  
Not just *today*. But-

JOE  
-*At some point.*

KETCHY  
*Some point.* I kept a copy!

JOE  
(his best JAMES MASON)  
You kept a copy. Why would you keep a copy?

KETCHY  
I didn't write a *nine*, I wrote a *one*!

JOE  
You didn't write a nine, you wrote a one....

KETCHY  
Objection!

JOE  
Overruled!

KETCHY  
'Ception!

JOE  
Noted. It's noted that I'm tired.

GLADYS

I don't know *what* film you're into,  
but you two seem to be having fun.  
I wish *all of us* could have as much  
fun as you two.

Gladys WALKS out of the ROOM.

KETCHY

Your wife sure has gotten ornery  
since her change of life.

JOE

And yours *hasn't*?

INT. KITCHEN- DAY

Ketchy's wife, EDNA, is braising a STEW. Her work STATION is  
a MESS. Vegetables SCATTERED, meat from *some* dead animal  
BLANKETED with buckets of SEASONING.

BRAISED with PEPSI. Gladys ENTERS.

GLADYS

Those two will never amount to  
anything.

She ATTEMPTS to tidy up, but it's a LOST CAUSE.

EDNA

What do you mean *will*? They're  
almost old enough to collect social  
security.

JOE (O.C.)

Can we get some more beer in here?  
We're a might thirsty.

Gladys GRABS two Miller Lights from the old REFRIGERATOR.

GLADYS

I only *have* two legs.

JOE (O.C.)

And three arms, six heads and  
fifteen fingers.

EDNA

Christ, I know *dogs* that don't yelp  
as much as them two.

GLADYS

Oh, Edna, you're so right.

INT. LIVING ROOM- DAY

KETCHY

Here comes the ending. Duke carries her in his arms, the music swells, John Wayne's face is stoic and.....

JOE

Stoic? Are you taking an extension course from Oshkosh Tech on the sly?

KETCHY

Always trying to improve the noggin, Joe. Always trying to improve the noggin.

Gladys APPEARS with the beer. She's STRUGGLING with SIX.

JOE

Are those going to be enough?

Ketchy is CHANNEL surfing REALITY TV.

KETCHY

Housewives of San Quentin, no. Remodel my mother-in-law's home, no. Hoarders who live in storage lockers and run a pawn shop on the side, then *sell themselves*? Nope.

Joe grabs the REMOTE. He finds a MOVIE.

JOE

Good, a Will Ferrell movie, the one with John C. Reilly.

KETCHY

This is the step-brothers one. They meet, fight, become friends, fight and then decide they're best friends for life.

JOE

Reilly and Ferrell are step brothers... just like you and I.

KETCHY

Let's go for it.

Joe EATS the last piece of PIZZA.

JOE  
That had Gladys' name all over it.

KETCHY  
Unfortunately, she spelled it with  
an "i" instead of a "y". Sorry.

JOE  
The movie's on TBS. There'll be  
four minutes of movie for every  
seven minutes of commercials. I've  
timed it.

KETCHY  
And they call you *slow*.

Edna YELLS from her KITCHEN.

EDNA (O.C.)  
Men, when are you gonna catch me  
some bluegills or perch for dinner?  
I'm hankering for a fish fry.

JOE  
We'll go *out* for a fish fry. Why  
bob that tiny pole with a moldy old  
fish egg on it leftover from last  
winter for an entire afternoon just  
for two or three fish? I don't  
care if we're *in* a shanty or not.

Ketchy LEANS over, LOWERING his voice.

KETCHY  
We could bring a stripper into the  
shanty. She could strip *and* fish.

EDNA (O.C.)  
I *heard* that!

JOE  
The hearing capability of an  
elephant, that one.....

The REMOTE changes channels again on its OWN again.

KETCHY  
*That* is weird! Here comes a Swayze  
movie.

JOE  
That one sucks. Let's watch Will  
and John C.

KETCHY

Alright. But I get first choice on new clicking rights.

JOE

No problem. We'll surf during the scenes with the bald father. He creeps me out.

INT. KITCHEN- LATE AFTERNOON

Edna and Gladys are DREAMING about LIFE.

GLADYS

I've spent my whole life here in this house. It seems like winter 12 months a year.

EDNA

Not true. We get a three day break when it's 100 degrees with 98 % humidity.

Gladys ATTEMPTS to clean the kitchen, but Edna's GIRTH hinders that CHORE. She FANS her RUDDY face.

She's DRIPPING with SWEAT even though it's 5 degrees outside.

GLADYS

There's a window of ten minutes a day I *don't* sweat.

EDNA

It's the global warming. I read about it in the Globe.

GLADYS

Well, if you're gonna read about global warming, it might as well be from the Globe.

Edna STIRS the STEW.

EDNA

I'm *so* bored.

GLADYS

We got to get these jerk-offs to take us on a vacation.

Gladys EDGES her way past EDNA to the TRASH bin.

EDNA  
 Vegas! Viva Las Vegas, baby. Roll  
 the dice, hit the roulette wheel.

GLADYS  
 We have *no* money.

Joe BECKONS from the LIVING ROOM.

JOE (O.C.)  
 More beer, please.

Gladys slowly RAISES her middle FINGER, AIMS it toward the  
 LIVING ROOM, and gets more BEER.

EDNA  
 We should go in February, middle of  
 the month. Lots of deals then.

GLADYS  
 Then we need a plan to get us some  
 money. God knows those two idiots  
 won't come up with any.

Ketchy walks in to the KITCHEN. He's SCRATCHING his ass.  
 His PACKER CHEESE HEAD is on the counter. He puts it on.

KETCHY  
 I need a new hat.

GLADYS  
 What we *need* is a vacation to  
 Vegas. Next month!

Edna FARTS.

EDNA  
 Whoops a doodle.

EXT. LAKE- NIGHT

High school BOYS skate. They have shoveled the snow in the  
 shape of a large PENIS and SCROTUM, complete with a tiny  
 SLASH at the TIP.

The TEAMS play hard, and SOUND OFF when a TEAM scores a GOAL  
 in the TESTICLE net.

GIRLS watch the BOYS.

One girl YELLS to her BOYFRIEND:

HIGH SCHOOL GIRL  
Want a snow job?

INT. MALONE HOME- EVENING

The two STEP BROTHERS are still watching the Ferrell movie.  
Joe notices something STRANGE about JOHN C. REILLY.

JOE  
Hey, Ketch, how many movies have  
you seen with John C. Reilly?

Ketchy THINKS. As he PONDERs the question, he NOTICES a  
water STAIN on the CEILING resembling JESUS CHRIST.

KETCHY  
I've been watching Johnny for a  
long time. The porno film about  
porno films with Burt Reynolds, the  
Tom Cruise car one, even one as far  
back as the early eighties, with De  
Niro and Sean Penn. Why?

JOE  
There's something fishy about him.

KETCHY  
Hey, look at this water stain.

INT. HOME- EVENING

Joe and Ketchy have done EXTENSIVE RESEARCH into John C.  
Reilly's LIFE.

They have come up with an interesting FACT.

JOE  
In each film, Reilly seems to get  
younger and younger. He's younger  
in the Ferrell movie than he is in  
the Tom Cruise movie, a difference  
of over twenty some years.

KETCHY  
I've noticed he likes to work with  
a certain director. You know the  
guy. What's his name?

JOE  
Danny Anderson Thomas?

KETCHY  
Lee Harvey Oswald?

JOE  
Jim Hensen?

KETCHY  
Paul Thomas Anderson?

JOE  
Michael Tilson Thomas?

KETCHY  
Curtis James Lofgren?

JOE  
Gunther-Gabel Williams?

KETCHY  
Michael Phillip Thomas?

JOE  
The Lehman Brothers?

KETCHY  
The Coen Brothers?

JOE  
The Farrelly Brothers?

KETCHY  
The Brothers Karamazov?

JOE  
The Malone Step-Brothers?

KETCHY  
The Smith Cough-Drop Brothers?

JOE  
Hilary Rodham Clinton?

INT. KITCHEN- EVENING

Tonight's STEW is ready. Gladys and Edna dish it up.

GLADYS  
Did you bake the bread?

A LIGHT BULB goes off in EDNA'S head.

EDNA

Damn! Screw 'em. It's either Vegas or Pillsbury French bread for the rest of their lives. They can choose which.

GLADYS

Let's get out there and watch some TV with our loving husbands.

EDNA

No thanks, I'll stay here. I'm reading something interesting.

Gladys' EARS perk up.

GLADYS

Really? What is it?

Edna HOLDS UP up the NATIONAL SUN EXAMINER cover, with a picture of JESUS. (Actually, JEFFERY HUNTER.)

EDNA

It's a scoop on Tom Cruise. I love him. It says Tom hates Jesus and thinks we all came from the planet Zarcon 2,000 years ago.

Edna stands at the SINK eating a BOWL of stew.

INT. LIVING ROOM- CONTINUOUS

Gladys STANDS, waiting for *someone* to offer her a SEAT. The BROTHERS are OBLIVIOUS to her DILEMMA.

JOE

Hey, where's our food, Glad?

TV tables are SET UP for each MAN. There are only TWO.

Gladys sits at ONE and begins EATING in silence.

KETCHY

Where's ours?

GLADYS

Oh, are you hungry? I see only two tables and there are *three* of us.

Joe RUBS his right SOCK-COVERED-FOOT with his LEFT one.

Ketchy GRABS a TV table and SETS IT UP.

KETCHY

Gladys, would you please bring our  
stew into the dining room?

Gladys DISAPPEARS for 30 seconds, then RE-APPEARS with STEW.

JOE PULLS OUT THE CHAIR FOR HER!

GLADYS

Why, such a *gentleman!*

SLURPING AND GOBBLING SOUNDS COMMENCE.....

KETCHY

This is good, Glad. Did you cook  
it?

GLADYS

No. Edna's the Bobby Flay tonight.

KETCHY

It tastes like venison.

The afternoon SUN disappears. Joe CLAPS on a LIGHT.

EDNA (O.C.)

It *should* taste like deer. You  
shot it last year.

GLADYS

You guys went hunting? Why don't I  
remember that?

JOE

You're old?

Ketchy buries his HEAD in a PILLOW.

KETCHY

Uh-oh, spaghetti-o's.

JOE

We're *all* old. *That's* what I  
meant.

GLADYS

Do you remember *shooting* this poor  
deer?

JOE

I can't remember last *Thursday*.

Gladys GRABS the REMOTE. She SURFS.

GLADYS  
What's on guys?

JOE  
Hey, come on! You don't waltz into  
a room and take a man's clicker.

Ketchy SNATCHES it back.

KETCHY  
We're investigating an actor who  
may or may not be a robot. He  
hasn't aged since 1985.

JOE  
*1983!*

The STEW is *definitely* venison.

KETCHY  
We need beer.

JOE  
Food. We crave substance!

KETCHY  
Ah, the late, *great* Philip Seymour  
Hoffman! What a terrific actor.

GLADYS  
Fellas, why don't we just put a  
fridge out *here*?

Joe and Ketchy GLANCE at each other, SMILING.

JOE  
Gladys, you're one smart cookie.

Joe POINTS where the FRIDGE could sit.

KETCHY  
Gladys, you're an idea person. *You*  
should write for the movies.

Gladys TODDLES off to the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN- EVENING

EDNA  
I'm caught up with Cruise and  
Katie's new boyfriend, a space  
shuttle astronaut. Tom cannot make  
it on movie-making only.

She TOSSES the PAPER over to Gladys. She, in turn, throws it on a stack of other GROCERY literary RAGS.

GLADYS

I'm gettin' some beers. You want one?

EDNA

No, I have my diet Coke. I'm good.

Gladys walks out with FOUR BOTTLES close to her bosom, one with the NECK halfway in her mouth.

INT. LIVING ROOM- LATE EVENING

Gladys gives the MEN their beers and waddles to the bathroom.

KETCHY

What do we do about proving he's a robot?

John C. Reilly HELPS Tom Cruise CHANGE A TIRE in the MOVIE. His movements are *stiff, robotic*.

JOE

Doesn't Edna read all those super market celebrity newspapers?

KETCHY

Yep. You've got it! We can call the one Edna reads all the time. They'll find out if Reilly's a robot. And we'll get paid.

Joe looks up at the Jesus WATER STAIN.

INT. BATHROOM- EVENING

Gladys is STUCK on the TOILET with no PAPER.

She YELLS and YELLS, but NO ONE hears her.

She SEES an old NATIONAL SUN EXAMINER slipped in between the TOILET and the WALL. She RIPS off a few pages and utilizes the GIFT in the true manner for which it was intended.

(But first she's COMPELLED to read about the GAL with three BREASTS and two HEADS living a NORMAL LIFE in Tulsa.)

INT. LIVING ROOM- EVENING

JOE

So what did John C act in *before*  
the De Niro-Penn flick?

KETCHY

Another Penn film, with Michael  
Fox. He looks the same as he does  
in the brothers movie!

JOE

God, he *is* a robot! Probably  
manufactured from a schematic found  
at Roswell.

KETCHY

Possibly. Possibly.

Gladys RE-APPEARS, exhausted.

GLADYS

Didn't you hear me *yelling*?

She SITS and FANS herself.

KETCHY

Nope. We've been in a deep  
discussion, something that just may  
save our financial asses.

JOE

Where's the phone number for your  
supermarket newspaper?

GLADYS

Ask Edna. She *buys* them. I just  
*use* them.

JOE

(yelling)  
Ed? Where's...

EDNA (O.C.)

I heard everything you have said  
about Reilly. You're both crazy.

Edna ENTERS the living room.

She slaps Ketchy's HEAD with the NATIONAL SUN EXAMINER.

KETCHY

*Edna?* What's the problem?

EDNA  
You guys *sure* he's a robot?

KETCHY  
Pretty much. Why?

EDNA  
'Cause if he's a true robot, we're gonna get paid!

KETCHY  
Excellent!

EDNA  
They'll ask me for proof when I call. But first, I want to digest our fabulous dinner.

KETCHY  
We should-

EDNA  
-Our *fabulous* dinner.

GLADYS  
Our *fabulous* dinner, you morons!

KETCHY  
Oh, fabulous dinner, honey.

JOE  
Terrific dinner, Ed.

INT. LIVING ROOM- LATE EVENING

All FOUR have GATHERED for the TV news. Edna is sitting on a large BEAN BAG.

KETCHY  
We'll get started tomorrow on our project tomorrow.

Ketchy KISSES his wife Edna.

EDNA  
We're using this money to go to Vegas. Five grand could really give us a great vacation, aina hey?

KETCHY  
We don't *have it yet*. Tell me again, how the hell are we supposed to get that proof?

EDNA

The Examiner guy said he's had similar claims about John C, but if we can get a photograph of him oiling his neck and replacing his batteries, we're home free.

KETCHY

Aina hey.

EDNA

What do you guys want for supper tomorrow night?

GLADYS

Are we shopping for toilet paper?

EDNA

I was thinking rabbit stew. How's that?

Edna pulls off Ketchy's SOCKS and TICKLES his feet.

GLADYS

I'll help.

EDNA

It's good to be a Malone.

IN UNISON

Aina hey.

EDNA

Maybe John C. Reilly really *is* a robot.

GLADYS

Maybe we can keep a few extra rolls of toilet paper in the downstairs bathroom from now on?

EDNA

And maybe you'll go out and find me some fresh fish to fry up this Friday?

JOE

And if he's not a robot, we've got this water mark up here that looks just like.....

Both WOMEN stare at the STAIN.

EDNA  
Oh, my God, it's *Elvis!*

GLADYS  
No, it's *Michael Jackson!*

JOE  
Do you need *glasses?* *It's Jesus!*

KETCHY  
*Anyone* can see it's Aaron Rodgers!

All FOUR stare at the STAIN.

Edna DIALS the NATIONAL SUN EXAMINER.

EDNA  
This is *better* than John C. Reilly  
being a robot. This is *Elvis!*

KETCHY  
*Rodgers!*

GLADYS  
*Michael Jackson!*

JOE  
It's our Lord Savior Jesus.

They ARGUE into the late NIGHT.

EXT. LAKE- DAWN

The PORNOGRAPHIC hockey RINK has FADED with the newly fallen  
SNOW.

Only the very TIP of the PENIS is still VISIBLE.

An OLD MAN begins DRILLING his FISHING hole *right there.*

His FRIEND places their SHANTY over it.

LIFE IS GOOD ON LAKE NIKIWIKIWAUGA.

FADE TO BLACK

THE END