

ONE HELL OF A SCRIPT

Written by

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FADE IN.

INT. OFFICE HALLWAY - DAY

An ominous hallway stretches past endless office doors. Fluorescent lights flicker with that annoying BUZZING HUM.

INT. SOAP OPERA DOORWAY - DAY

NEEDLE DROP MUSIC: Melodramatic DAYTIME DRAMA THEME.

A "SOAP OPERA" sign hangs by the first office door. Beyond the open door lies a mass of frothing soap bubbles. Two streams of bubbles take turns wafting out of the doorway.

SOAP WRITER #1 (V.O.)

I know! There's a terrible car crash!  
Both twin brothers end up in a coma!

SOAP WRITER #2 (V.O.)

Nah, won't work. One of 'em has to be  
able to talk, or else what's the  
point of a plot with identical twins?

SOAP WRITER #1 (V.O.)

Get this. Their long-lost other  
brother shows up at the hospital.  
They're identical triplets!

SOAP WRITER #2 (V.O.)

Ooh. And he impersonates a doctor.

SOAP WRITER #1 (V.O.)

A sexy doctor. Who comforts his two  
brothers' gorgeous grieving wives.  
They have sexy sex. A threesome.

SOAP WRITER #2 (V.O.)

Then, sexy evil doctor orders  
gender transition surgery on his  
brothers, while they're both still  
in their comas! Castration! Penis  
removal! Two shiny new vaginas!

SOAP WRITER #1 (V.O.)

Couple episodes later, plot twist! The  
psychic bond between twins? It's triple  
for triplets. Sexy doctor knew all  
along his brothers were females trapped  
in male bodies! He's sexy hero doctor.

SOAP WRITER #2 (V.O.)  
And now, his brothers are... his  
sisters!

SOAP WRITER #1 (V.O.)  
But a previous blood transfusion  
mixup means they're also... his  
daughters!

SOAP WRITER #2 (V.O.)  
They're his sisters!

SOAP WRITER #1 (V.O.)  
They're his daughters!

SOAP WRITERS #1 & #2 (V.O.)  
They're his sisters and his daughters!

INT. WESTERN DOORWAY - DAY

NEEDLE DROP MUSIC: Fifties wide-open-spaces COWBOY THEME.

A "WESTERN" sign hangs by an open office door. Dust swirls  
out. Old cowboy boots and a spittoon sit against the wall.  
Just inside, a cheap backdrop of Monument Valley inches past.

SFX: Attacking Indian WAR WHOOPS.

STAGECOACH DRIVER (V.O.)  
Heeyaw!

The Monument Valley backdrop moves faster, bumps up and down.

SFX: Rifle SHOTS RICOCHET. Bullet holes appear in the door.

SFX: Whip CRACKS. Stagecoach wheels RUMBLE. Horses NEIGH, RUN.  
Six-shooters FIRE. WHOOPS get closer. Arrow WHOOSH and THUNK.

An Indian arrow flies from inside the room, pierces the door.

NEEDLE DROP MUSIC: Tinny PLAYER PIANO in a saloon.

A stream of tobacco juice PINGS as it hits the spittoon.

LACONIC COWBOY (V.O.)  
Howdy, ma'am.

FLIRTY SALOON GAL (V.O.)  
Is that yer gun? Or are ya just  
happy to see your genre comin' back  
in style?

NEEDLE DROP MUSIC: Lonesome campfire HARMONICA.

INT. CRIME DOORWAY - DAY

A "CRIME" sign hangs by an open office door. Yellow "POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS" tape crisscrosses the door.

The room inside is pitch black, except for two flashlight beams randomly searching for forensic evidence.

SEARCHER #1 (V.O.)

Keep looking. There's got to be an original idea in here someplace.

SEARCHER #2 (V.O.)

We just need to find a microscopic trace of a plot. Any plot.

One flashlight beam sweeps across the camera. The beam flares, backtracks, holds a moment, then moves on.

SEARCHER #1 (V.O.)

Hey. What if our bad guy's a writer? He stabs the vic in the jugular with a pencil, then grinds off the blood in an electric pencil sharpener? Nobody'd look for DNA evidence there.

SFX: CRUNCH and TINKLE of light bulb glass underfoot.

SEARCHER #2 (V.O.)

Shit. I just stepped on our last light bulb.

SEARCHER #1 (V.O.)

Great. We're not only out of ideas. We're out of lame symbols for our ideas. Keep looking. Maybe we'll find a metaphor.

INT. ROMANCE DOORWAY - DAY

SFX: Rhythmic THUMPING from the far side of the door.

A "ROMANCE" sign hangs by a closed office door. A bouncing "DO NOT DISTURB" sign swings from the doorknob. Hinges CREAK and the door throbs as people inside hump up against it.

COMEDY DOORWAY - DAY

SFX: Canned LAUGH TRACK goes on for a bit, then peters out.

A "COMEDY" sign hangs by an open office door. Colorful helium balloons fill the doorway, blocking any view inside.

The balloons part and a cream pie flies out from inside the office. It splatters all over the "COMEDY" sign.

SFX: Cream pie SPLAT.

WRITER #1 (V.O.)  
(gasping with laughter)  
That was fucking great! Read it again.

WRITER #2 (V.O.)  
Uh, I didn't write it down. Didn't you write it down?

WRITER #1 (V.O.)  
Fuck, no, I didn't fucking write it the fuck down. Somebody was using the fucking pencil.

WRITER #2 (V.O.)  
I'm too busy being brilliant to write it down. You write me down. Hack.

WRITER #1 & WRITER #2 (V.O.)  
(both violently angry)  
Up your orifice. (BLEEP BLEEP BLEEP).  
(BLEEP) off, pie-hole. (BLEEEEEEEEEEP).

INT. PORN DOORWAY - DAY

NEEDLE DROP MUSIC: Suggestive bass guitar PORN THEME.

A "PORN" sign hangs by an open office door. A sexy bra dangles from the door handle, swinging slightly. Panties and kicked-off stiletto heels trail off into the dimly lit room.

SFX: DOORBELL RINGS.

SULTRY WOMAN (V.O.)  
(from behind closed door  
throughout)  
Who is it?

STUDLY YOUNG MAN (V.O.)  
Pool boy.

SULTRY WOMAN (V.O.)  
But, I don't have a pool. And yet somehow, I managed to get all wet.

SFX: DOORBELL RINGS.

STUDLY PLUMBER (V.O.)  
Plumber.

SULTRY WOMAN (V.O.)  
But, I didn't call a --

STUDLY PLUMBER (V.O.)  
-- I'm here to caulk your grout.  
Give you a good soldering.

SULTRY WOMAN (V.O.)  
I just had my pipe laid this morning.

STUDLY PLUMBER (V.O.)  
I'm a professional, ma'am, got the top  
three plumbing skills. Proven ability  
to access tight, confined spaces. High  
tolerance for gettin' dirty. And I'm a  
deeply experienced plunger.

SULTRY WOMAN (V.O.)  
But I'm only wearing a skintight  
edible tank top. My ass-less chaps  
are still at the cleaners.

STUDLY PLUMBER (V.O.)  
(in a pumping rhythm)  
Lemme. Getcha. Up. To. Code.

SULTRY WOMAN (V.O.)  
Hmm. I do have a little hair clog.

SFX: DOORBELL RINGS.

SEXY REPAIR MAN (V.O.)  
Stiletto repair man.

SFX: DOORBELL RINGS.

INSINUATING NERD (V.O.)  
Lube delivery.

SFX: DOORBELL RINGS.

SULTRY WOMAN (V.O.)  
Good thing I ordered a pizza.

SFX: DOORBELL RINGS.

YOUNGER MAN (V.O.)  
It's me, your husband's broodingly  
handsome brother who majored in chick  
lick. Oh, and there's a cheerleader  
out here? Says she's your babysitter?

SULTRY WOMAN (V.O.)  
Send her next door.

INT. HORROR DOORWAY - DAY

NEEDLE DROP MUSIC: Scary VIOLIN and ominous OBOE.

A "HORROR" sign hangs by a closed office door that starts to open slowly. All. By. Itself.

SFX: Door CREAKS.

It's completely dark inside. Low ground fog creeps out.

FEMALE WRITER (V.O.)  
 Okay, let's run through this again.  
 You do sound effects. An owl hoots.

SFX: Pages of paper RUSTLE.

MALE WRITER (V.O.)  
 Hoo. Hoo.

FEMALE WRITER (V.O.)  
 Car engine won't start.

MALE WRITER (V.O.)  
 (makes sputtering sounds)  
 Battery's dead.

FEMALE WRITER (V.O.)  
 Now what?

MALE WRITER (V.O.)  
 We get out and walk. Hoo. Hoo. A  
 twig snaps.

A bloody axe THUNKS into the door from inside the room.

FEMALE WRITER (V.O.)  
 What was that?

MALE WRITER (V.O.)  
 What was what?

FEMALE WRITER (V.O.)  
 Scary footsteps crunch on gravel.  
 Step. Drag. Step. Drag.

MALE WRITER (V.O.)  
 Eh, it's just some guy with a bum  
 leg. Prob'ly took a fall on the  
 ice. Dude's wearin' a hockey mask.

FEMALE WRITER (V.O.)  
 Great. We can ask him for help.

MALE WRITER (V.O.)

Uh oh.

FEMALE WRITER (V.O.)

Look! His arm! It's a --

MALE WRITER (V.O.)

(imitates chainsaw  
revving)

Niiinnnggg, ning, ning, ning, ning.

A pool of blood oozes out into the hallway.

INT. ESPIONAGE DOORWAY - DAY

NEEDLE DROP MUSIC: Tense, pulsating ACTION MOVIE THEME.

An "ESPIONAGE" sign hangs by a closed office door surrounded by two security cameras, an iris scanner, and an entry keypad.

A throbbing blue glow comes from below the digital doormat. Multiple red laser beams crisscross in front of the door.

WHINY FEMALE WRITER (V.O.)

I seriously need to pee. What's the code to get out?

SNARKY MALE WRITER (V.O.)

Again? You just went a minute ago.

WHINY FEMALE WRITER (V.O.)

You know I can't be creative on a full bladder. Gimme the fucking exit code.

SNARKY MALE WRITER (V.O.)

Ask me again, only this time, do it with a husky foreign accent.

WHINY FEMALE WRITER (V.O.)

Geev me ze focking exeet code now, so I ken go pee. Or I veel keel you veeth a kleenex.

SNARKY MALE WRITER (V.O.)

See? That's good. We can use that in the obligatory confrontation scene. Suffering for your art makes you a better writer.

INT. DOCUMENTARY DOORWAY - DAY

NEEDLE DROP MUSIC: Old recording of tedious BLUEGRASS FIDDLE.

A closed office door, neglected, grimy, a hole where the knob used to be. Nailed to the door is a tattered sepia sign that reads "DOCUMENTARY" with fly poop and a dead fly stuck on it.

A rolled-up yellowed newspaper HITS the door, KNOCKS the sign loose. It swings by one nail, reveals a clean spot in the grime.

CAMERA MOVES IN ON SIGN. RACK FOCUS from sign to clean spot is a sly, self-referential, documenting-the-documentary comment.

INT. REVISIONS DOORWAY - DAY

SFX: JERKY, ABRUPT TICKING from the second hand of a wall clock. Monotonous CLACKING rhythm of a pendulum desk toy.

A "REVISIONS" sign. An open door. Thousands of crumpled-up white paper balls fill the office and spill into the hall.

From inside, two paper balls arc toward a basketball hoop on the door. Both balls miss the hoop and land on the pile.

INT. REVISIONS ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A black office desk and two black office chairs are nearly submerged in crumpled paper balls piled four feet deep.

On the top shelf of a black bookcase sits one of those desktop toys with metallic pendulum balls CLACKING back and forth in constant motion.

On the wall, a black-and-white clock hangs upside down. The minute and hour hands point almost straight up at the top number, 666. The second hand jerks from second to second.

TICK. TICK. TICK. The CLACKING. The TICKING. It's torture.

Black ceiling tiles are punctured by hundreds of yellow No. 2 pencils stuck in at jagged angles. Only the ceiling tile directly above the desk is clear of pencils.

WRITER DUDE and WRITER CHICK, 30s, sit opposite each other, chest deep in paper balls. Both wear tragically hip eyeglasses.

Writer Dude sprawls, casual in a skinny black suit, black shirt, black tie. His sideburns emote a vintage sixties vibe.

Writer Chick sits ramrod straight in a retro, short-sleeve black dress. Dark, short, sixties Twiggy hair. Dark eyebrows. Smudged circles of black makeup under world-weary eyes.

Writer Chick takes off her glasses and pinches the bridge of her nose. She CRUMPLES another piece of paper in one hand.

WRITER CHICK  
The boss hated it. Again.

WRITER DUDE  
He always hates it. When has he  
ever not hated it?

He CRUMPLES a fresh paper ball. Shoots at the hoop. Misses.

WRITER CHICK  
We've rewritten this godforsaken  
scene a trillion goddamn times.

WRITER DUDE  
And your point would be?

She settles her glasses back on her nose and glares over the  
top of them at Writer Dude.

WRITER CHICK  
Would it kill him to like just one  
idea? Just once?

WRITER DUDE  
Kill? Him? Ha! Death is not an  
option. Not for him. Nor us.

He CRUMPLES up another piece of paper. Shoots. Misses.

Writer Dude shoves back from the desk. Stands up. Fakes  
stabbing himself in the heart, yanking a noose around his  
neck, shooting himself in the head. He drops in a dead-fall  
face-plant and disappears underneath all those paper balls.

WRITER CHICK  
What revision number is this, anyway?

WRITER DUDE  
(from under the pile)  
Infinity. Plus one.

He emerges from the pile. She CRUMPLES up a piece of paper  
and fires a chest pass at him. He catches it, shoots. Misses.

He grabs up another paper ball and struggles to wade through  
the massive paper pile, trying to dunk on the hoop. He misses.

Writer Chick allows herself a luxurious stretch and levels her  
gaze at the clock. Only a hundred TICKS until 666 o'clock.

WRITER CHICK  
Screw this. Time for a smoke break.  
You ready?

## WRITER DUDE

More than.

She swings her feet up on the desk and fits an unfiltered cigarette into a 1920s Gatsby cigarette holder. She blows Writer Dude a KISS, then pokes the holder between her lips.

She shakes another cigarette loose from the pack and flips it end-over-end at his head. He catches it in his lips, no hands.

He wades back to the desk, sits, and puts his feet up, too.

She flings the lighter underhanded at the empty ceiling tile. He nonchalantly reaches out, left hand behind his back, and catches the lighter as it falls. He's done this before.

He thumbs the wheel. A foot-high flame shoots up. He lights his ciggie and gallantly hands the flaming lighter to her.

She lights up, inhales elegantly, and drops the flaming lighter on the desk onto the crumpled-up pages of paper balls.

Flames flicker. Smoke rises. He savors a puff. She blows a string of perfect smoke rings. They remain calm as fire rages.

The pendulum CLACKING abruptly stops. The second hand on the clock makes one last TICK. It's straight-up 666 o'clock. There's the sudden CRACKLING WHOOSH as huge flames ignite.

## INT. CLOSEUP ON FLAMES - DAY

Artsy, overlapping images of burning paper, the clock ablaze. When the smoke clears, two smoldering, tragically hip eyeglasses with cracked lenses sit among the glowing embers.

## INT. REVISIONS ROOM - THE NEXT DAY

Everything is as it was. Clock TICKS. Pendulum CLACKS.

The clock hands point straight down at an upside-down numeral twelve. Snow-white paper balls are piled four feet deep.

Writer Chick and Writer Dude sit in the same places, wearing the same clothes. They each launch a crumpled paper ball at the basketball hoop at the same time. They both miss.

## WRITER CHICK

Ah. What fresh new hell is this?  
Frankly, my dear, I don't give a damn. Open the pod bay doors, Hal.

FADE OUT.

CUT TO:

BARS AND TONE (MIXED HOT).

Image zigzags, tone DISTORTS, then bars and tone return to numbing sameness.

SUPER END CREDITS:

Black type over bars and tone.

STORY AND SCREENPLAY BY

Joyce Koch

DIRECTOR AND ACTOR CREDITS

PRODUCTION LOGOS

LOGO: Distilled Brainery Scripts

(c)MMXX Any resemblance to persons living or dead or walking while dead in downtown Hades is purely coincidental.