

GUT-HOOKED

"FISH ON!"

(Half-Hour Pilot)

By

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GUT-HOOKED

COLD OPEN

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Sitting on the stoop, slumped in misery, is ANDY (30s). Normally an affable optimist, he's just had the emotional crap beaten out of him.

A few items are scattered around him -- a Brooklyn Dodgers jacket... a baseball glove... a spilled box of CDs...

Andy doesn't even flinch when a pile of sports magazines sails down and SMACKS onto the steps. He twists his head to see what the nearest one is, then grabs it and starts to read. Items of clothing rain down around him.

His two best friends amble up. BRUNO (30s), a wound-too-tight alpha male, carries a battered box with a gift bow.

Holding a neatly-wrapped gift -- obviously a large framed poster -- is NICK (30s), an under-achieving, wise-cracking commentator on life.

NICK

Sorry we're late.

They look at the scattered items.

BRUNO

What'd we miss?

Andy gives him a look -- what do you think?

BRUNO

She dumped you? At your own birthday party?

NICK

You just moved in. What happened?

ANDY

(a pathetic shrug)
I don't know. She just started screaming at me. People couldn't leave fast enough. Like rats deserting the Hindenburg. It was horrible.

BRUNO

Jeez, Andy, what'd you say to her?

ANDY

What, it's automatically my fault?

Bruno looks at Andy until he cracks.

ANDY

I told her I quit my job.

BRUNO

What are you, nuts?

ANDY

No, unhappy.

NICK

What does that have to do with anything? You make twice what I make!

BRUNO

Please tell me you didn't quit to fulfill your rock star dream.

ANDY

No.

An acoustic guitar drops and SPLINTERS on the steps.

BRUNO

Good thing.

NICK

Lucky you didn't play the piano.

ANDY

A little sympathy might be nice.

They sit down, flanking him.

BRUNO

Sorry, pal.

NICK

Yeah. Sorry, Andy.

A very brief moment of compassion, then --

BRUNO

Did she at least give you her present first?

WHACK -- a wrapped gift bounces off Andy's head and lands at Bruno's feet. Bruno picks it up and reads the tag.

BRUNO
Bingo. May I?

Andy shrugs. Bruno tears off the paper. It's a book.

BRUNO
"I'm Okay, You're Screwed Up."

NICK
Cold.

BRUNO
Accurate, but cold.

ANDY
Gee, thanks for --

NICK
I'm starving. Did she at least get
you a --

A birthday cake SMACKS onto the sidewalk, right side up.

NICK
She did.
(shouts up)
Hey Julie! Could we get some
plates and forks, please?

BRUNO
(with contempt)
An ice cream cake? Then you had to
know the end was coming.

Plates SMASH down, followed by a handful of forks.

NICK
Thank you!

Nick scoops up the forks, then looks back up.

ANDY
Please don't ask for a knife.

Nick turns back to the squashed cake. A few candles remain upright, so he digs out a lighter. Bruno offers his gift.

BRUNO
Wanna open your presents?

NICK
No, do the cake first.

Nick lights three candles. He wipes the forks on his shirt and passes them out.

NICK
Make a wish.

BRUNO
Are you serious?

But Andy looks like he has a wish in mind. He leans down to the cake and takes a deep breath.

NICK
But it can't be to find your one true love.

BRUNO
Right.

Andy stops, then leans back and lets out a sigh.

ANDY
I need a drink.

A case of beer SMASHES onto the cake.

NICK
Wow, the service here is fast.

BRUNO
C'mon, before she gets to the couch. You can stay at our place.

ANDY
Thanks, guys.

They gather up Andy's belongings.

NICK
We can pick up a cake on the way.

ANDY
And beer.

BRUNO & NICK
And beer.

They head down the street.

END COLD OPEN

ACT ONE

EXT. PUBLIC ACCESS CABLE BUILDING - NIGHT

A small brick building with a lit sign over the entrance:
THE PUBLIC ACCESS CABLE NETWORK.

A light comes on in a second story apartment window.

INT. BRUNO & NICK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

An open-concept two-bedroom, decorated by All-Things-Puppet.
Macabre marionettes dangle from the ceiling... puppet heads
stare down from a shelf... posters of old puppet acts...

Bruno carries in his gift and a case of beer. Andy follows
with a cake box and a garbage bag with his belongings they
scooped up. Nick trails behind with his gift.

ANDY

...I'm just saying, I'm not feeling
a whole lot of sympathy here.

They dump the cake, beer and gifts on the dining room table.

BRUNO

C'mon, it was obvious your heart
wasn't in it. The only reason you
were still with her was that you
didn't want to hurt her by breaking
it off. You're just too nice.

Nick plucks the gift bow from Bruno's present and
ceremoniously sticks it onto Andy's chest.

NICK

Mensch of the Month.

BRUNO

Plus it's better than being alone.
So you hung in, knowing she'd
eventually figure it out and she'd
pull the plug to save face.

Nick, disappointed in Andy, rips off the ribbon and puts it
back on the gift.

Bruno pulls out three beers and, as Andy snatches a fourth
beer, takes the case to the fridge.

ANDY

Well... I suppose that's true. I
would've known if she was The One.

He catches the others exchange a look.

ANDY
 Look, I'll know when I meet her.
 (sees their doubt)
 My parents knew.

BRUNO
 (heard it all before)
 The first time they laid eyes on
 each other, they knew.

Nick gets plates, forks and a knife, and brings them to the table.

NICK
 Same with the grandparents.

BRUNO
And your aunt and uncle.

Andy pulls the cake from the box and swipes some icing.

ANDY
 It's true. I'll know. There's one
 woman I'm meant to be with, and
 she's out there somewhere.

BRUNO
 Well if she is, she's boinking some
 other shmuck and doesn't know you
 exist.

NICK
 "Boinking?" That what they call it
 at Puppet Ranch?

BRUNO
 (defensive)
Happy Ranch. You know how many
 people watch my show?

Nick SNORTS and STOMPS his foot like a trick horse -- one... two... three... Bruno punches him in the arm.

NICK
 Ow! What are you, twelve?

They sit at the table and open their beers.

NICK
 Hey, you still haven't opened your
 presents.

He slides his gift to Andy, and waits in eager anticipation. Andy rips off the paper -- it's a LADY & THE TRAMP poster showing the romantic spaghetti scene.

ANDY

This is great! Thanks, Nick.

BRUNO

You are a romance addict.

(to Nick)

And you're an enabler.

NICK

Yeah, well what did you get him, Bruno? A puppet hooker?

BRUNO

Here ya go, pal. This'll cheer you up.

Bruno eagerly slides over his gift. Andy opens the box and lifts out a battered old horse puppet. He forces a smile.

ANDY

Hey, it is a puppet.

BRUNO

It's the original Herman the Horse.

ANDY

Your first one? Really? Wow... You sure you wouldn't rather donate it to a museum... or something?

BRUNO

Here. Forget it.

Offended, he grabs for it, but Andy pulls it away.

ANDY

No, no, it's great.

(to the puppet)

I'm Doctor Andy. I'll be your proctologist this evening.

He NEIGHS as he slides his hand into Herman. Bruno glares daggers.

INT. BRUNO & NICK'S APARTMENT - LATER

Sporting silly party hats, the three guys are in the kitchen, replenishing their supply of drinks and snacks.

Already drunk, Andy is liberally pouring vodka and vermouth into an ice-filled blender.

ANDY
 (to Bruno)
 ...So then what are you sayin'?
 I should give up the search 'n just
 settle?

They both look at Nick.

NICK
 I didn't settle. Kim was just
 fine.

BRUNO
 Until she left you for the pool
 boy.

NICK
 He was a Water Quality Technician.

BRUNO
 In grade ten.

Bruno and Andy SNICKER. The blender WHIRRRRRRRRRRRRS to life for two seconds.

NICK
 Well at least I got regular sex for
 a while.

Bruno waits until Nick's head is in the fridge, then --

BRUNO
 I walked in on them once. Believe
 me, there was nothing "regular"
 about it. Nothing.

He shudders. Andy fills a martini glass and a beer stein, then drops olives in both. He hands Bruno the martini glass.

BRUNO
 Thanks.

They return to the table to resume their poker game. Most of the chips are neatly stacked in front of Nick, who gathers the cards and shuffles. Bruno picks up his toy dart gun.

BRUNO
 Your problem is, Andy, you never
 stay with anyone long enough to
 grow tentacles.

He loads a suction dart.

ANDY

Tentacles?

NICK

What kind of women are you dating?

BRUNO

You know, like roots, only wrapped around each other.

He draws a bead on Herman the Horse, who sits across from him, wearing a little party hat.

BRUNO

You barely made it past three months with Julie, and that's your longest relationship in years. You gotta stay connected to someone long enough to figure out if she's right for you. That takes time.

ANDY

No it doesn't. You should know --

WHAP -- a dart to Andy's forehead.

BRUNO

You're never gonna find happiness 'til you give up on this "one true love" myth you bought into. Your soul mate's not out there waiting for you. You don't just find a soul mate. You cultivate one over time. Like you build a friendship.

Andy rolls his eyes. WHAP -- another dart to the forehead.

ANDY

Do you mind?

He POPS the darts off. As Nick finally deals, Andy stares at THE LADY & THE TRAMP poster, lost in thought.

ANDY

...What if I have got it all wrong?
What if I end up all alone?

BRUNO

Oh, you're not gonna start crying, are you?

ANDY
I haven't cried since I was a kid.

NICK
You cried at the Super Bowl.

ANDY
I lost five hundred bucks!

He slumps in despair.

NICK
(as Yoda)
Worry not. Alone you will never be.
Us you will always have.

ANDY
Yeah?

To acknowledge this moment of deep, meaningful emotion, they CLINK glasses. It's a guy thing.

ANDY
How come it's so much easier to
find a same-sex friendship that
lasts decades than it is to find
the right woman to have a lasting
relationship with?
(no response)
I guess that's one question nobody
can answer.

BRUNO
(suddenly animated)
Nobody? Really?

NICK
Oh crap.

BRUNO
Not even...

He jumps up and steps to a cupboard. Nick glares at Andy.

ANDY
I'm sorry, I forgot.

BRUNO
...Swami Sammy?

Bruno swings open the cupboard, revealing a bug-eyed, nightmare-inducing ventriloquist dummy from the 1930s that looks like it's been dragged behind a truck. It's dressed in tattered blue robes with stars, and a jewel-encrusted turban.

Bruno sits down with his pride and joy.

ANDY

That thing still gives me the
creeps.

BRUNO

Tell us, O Great Swami... How do
you find the right woman?

Swami Sammy goes into a trance, MOANING and weaving.

BRUNO

Do you have the answer?

Swami Sammy mutters something. Andy and Nick can't help
themselves -- they lean forward to hear.

SWAMI SAMMY (BRUNO)

(faintly)

...The answer... the answer is...

They lean closer.

Sammy BELCHES.

BRUNO

There is no answer, you morons,
because there is no one right
woman. Did you not hear anything I
said?

ANDY

Like I was gonna take advice on
women from a block of wood.

SWAMI SAMMY (BRUNO)

Maybe if you had more wood, Julie
wouldn't have dumped you.

ANDY

Watch it, dummy.

SWAMI SAMMY (BRUNO)

Said the kettle.

ANDY

Shut up.

SWAMI SAMMY

Make me.

A long beat... then Andy lunges across the table and
THROTTLES Swami Sammy. Bruno struggles to pull him off.

NICK

Andy Hannah, ladies! Come and get
him. He won't be single forever.
Maybe.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. PUBLIC ACCESS CABLE BUILDING - DAY

From Bruno's window, a COFFEE GRINDER screams to life.

INT. BRUNO & NICK'S APARTMENT - DAY

The GRINDER snaps Andy awake on the couch. With great effort, he pries open an eye --

-- Swami Sammy is staring at him.

SWAMI SAMMY
(creepy voice)
Rise and shine!

Andy recoils.

ANDY
Jesus, Bruno! I wish you wouldn't
do that!

BRUNO (O.S.)
Do what?

Andy turns and sees Bruno cooking in the kitchen. He looks back at Swami Sammy, freaking out.

ANDY
Holy --

Nick pops up, his hand up Swami Sammy's back.

NICK
Pretty good, huh?

ANDY
(doing Jackie Gleason)
One of these days, Alice...

BRUNO
Come and get it.

Still drunk, Andy shuffles to the table and plops in a chair. He looks at the plate of greasy bacon and eggs in front of him... and tries not to throw up. Bruno and Nick (still holding Swami Sammy) sit down with plates of food.

BRUNO
Eat up. I gotta go down and do my
show.

ANDY

What's the rush?

BRUNO

It's live. Guru Dave's on for another fifteen minutes, then it's...

(hums a few bars of the theme)

...Happy Ranch!

He mimics the roar of a crowd. Andy and Nick look at him like he's insane. Andy looks back at his eggs... then slides his plate in front of Swami Sammy.

ANDY

You heard the man, eat up.

Swami Sammy's head swivels to look at Andy.

SWAMI SAMMY (NICK)

Drink some coffee. You look like the back end of a goat.

Andy ignores him for a moment... then lightning-fast SLAMS Swami Sammy's face into the eggs.

BRUNO

Hey!

Smug, Andy grabs the vodka and pours some in his juice.

INT. THE HAPPY RANCH SET - DAY

Under studio lights, two stationary cameras focus on a wide table with a barn, farmhouse, and a corral with HAPPY RANCH on its gate.

Bruno busily sets up his puppets and marionettes -- cowboys, horses, cows, Quakers, a T-Rex and an alien.

Andy, still not sober, sticks his hand in the FARMER FRANK puppet and tests it out. Nick picks up the T-Rex puppet and attacks a cow, making SOUNDS OF A SLAUGHTER.

BRUNO

Do you mind! Go annoy Wendy!

Nick looks at the booth window. His face lights up at seeing WENDY (20s), the too-hip-to-be-here tech who runs the controls. He puts down the puppets and heads for the booth.

ANDY
 (to Farmer Frank)
 Let's go find a washroom.

The puppet nods. Andy staggers off, holding up Farmer Frank.

INT. BOOTH OVERLOOKING THE HAPPY RANCH SET - DAY

Wendy work her magic on the control board, bringing up two views of the Ranch on her MONITOR and focusing on a puppet.

NICK
 Hey, Wendy.

WENDY
 Trying to focus here.

Shot down, Nick slumps into a chair.

INT. CABLE STUDIO HALL - DAY

Andy pauses at a wall of posters of the shows filmed here. He starts scanning, impressed:

HOBBIES WITH HANK - an old fart holding a train engine.
 MEDIEVAL REENACTMENT - two "knights" in combat.
 MITZI ON MATING - a sexpot in animal skins.
 SONGWRITERS IN THE ROUND - four musicians playing guitars.
 BEEKEEPING FOR FUN AND PROFIT - a sad-looking man, his face dotted with ointment.

There's plenty more, but his attention is drawn to a WASHROOM sign with an arrow. Following the arrow, he wanders through a door marked "GURU DAVE", not noticing the lit ON AIR sign.

INT. GURU DAVE'S SET - DAY

A space-cadet yoga-surfer, GURU DAVE, sits cross-legged beside a BUBBLING rock fountain, talking to a studio camera. A hidden smoke-machine creates a calming haze behind him. NEW AGE MUSIC plays.

GURU DAVE
 ...and so be at peace with
 yourself, for only then --

ANDY
 S'cuse me.

Guru Dave looks over. Farmer Frank waves.

GURU DAVE

Ah, someone has wandered in from the spiritual desert to our little oasis of enlightenment. What is it you are seeking, my friends?

ANDY

We're looking for a washroom.

GURU DAVE

No, I sense you are searching for something far greater. Are you not seeking... answers?

That gets Andy's attention.

ANDY

Okay, great Gazoo... Is my soul-mate out there somewhere waiting for me? Or is that a crock?

GURU DAVE

Ah, a question for the ages. Since man first crawled out of the primordial soup, we have been wrestling with this conundrum. We seek answers to many questions, but perhaps none so important as --

ANDY

Where's the washroom?

He's shifting uncomfortably.

GURU DAVE

Sadly, I see the sands of time have worked their way through the cosmic hourglass. I invite you all to return with us next week to see whether Guru Dave can help this lost soul find his partner in life.

As he does a little bow of prayer, Andy notices the fountain.

ANDY

Hey, cool urinal.

He steps up to it. The image goes BLACK and CREDITS ROLL.

GURU DAVE (O.S.)

What? NO!

INT. STUDIO HALL - DAY

Relieved, Andy (with Farmer Frank) starts back for Bruno's show. He pauses at a poster for FISHING & HUNTING WITH FRED, showing a rugged old man with a fishing rod and a rifle. A CANCELLED banner has been taped over the poster.

INT. STUDIO A - DAY

Andy steps in and sees two comfy chairs with a pot-belly stove between them. Above is a moose head with a sombrero and a cigar. Rifles and rods adorn the walls.

He spots a plaid jacket and a red hunting cap with fake antlers, hanging by a sign: FISHING TEACHES YOU ABOUT LIFE.

ANDY

(to Farmer Frank)

What a load of carp. All fishing teaches you is how to drink in a boat. And anything less exciting than cricket doesn't qualify as a sport. Not much skill catchin' an animal with no legs 'n the IQ of Jello. Am I right?

Farmer Frank nods his little head.

Andy spots the TV camera and gets a mischievous look. He whips on the plaid jacket and cap, then grabs a rod off the wall. He addresses the camera as if he's hosting a show.

ANDY

(redneck voice)

Welcome to "Cast and Blast," a fishin' and huntin' show that teaches ya'll how to kill varmints on land, sea and air. Today I'm gonna catch me a fish. Lookie yonder, Zeke, thar's one!

Farmer Frank looks across the room at a posed stuffed bear.

ANDY

It's a Grizzly fish. Fire up the barbecue -- we'll be eatin' for a week.

As Andy prepares to cast, he doesn't notice the woman who steps through the door -- HEIDI, 30s, a beauty in an "AVERAGE JOE" T-shirt and khakis. She looks like she walked off the cover of Cosmo and onto the cover of Field & Stream.

She watches with interest as Andy casts. The lure WHIZZZZES across the room and hooks the SINGING BASS on the wall above the bear. She can't believe it.

ANDY

Got one!

He gives a tug, activating the Singing Bass.

SINGING BASS

"Here's a little song I wrote..."

Andy YANKS the rod and the Bass POPS off its plaque. He reels in fast, bringing it bouncing along the floor.

SINGING BASS

"You might want to sing it note for note,
But don't worry, be happy.
In every life we have some trouble..."

Proudly holding it up, Andy turns to the camera and --

-- Heidi is right there. He's dumbstruck by her beauty.

SINGING BASS

"...but when you worry you make it double..."

Feeling like an idiot, Andy tries to shut the fish off. Can't find the switch.

SINGING BASS

"Don't worry, be happy..."

He pulls the hook out, then WHACKS the fish against the stove. It sings LOUDER, repeating the same line.

SINGING BASS

"Don't worry, be happy..."

Heidi just stares. Andy smiles back.

ANDY

I prefer the Bobby McFerrin version myself.

SINGING BASS

"Don't worry, be happy..."

Not knowing what else to do, he WHACKS IT HARDER. The song speeds up into a CHIPMUNKS VERSION.

SINGING BASS

"Don't worry, be happy. Don't
worry, be happy..."

He looks around, desperate. He spots the bear.

SINGING BASS

"...Don't worry, be happy. Don't
worry..."

He STUFFS the Bass into the bear's mouth and pushes it down his throat. The singing continues, but it's muffled now. He forces the bear's mouth shut, then hurries back to Heidi.

Neither knows just what to say, so they stare at one another in silence. Finally --

HEIDI

Not exactly a "River Runs Through
It" moment.

ANDY

Not exactly, no.

HEIDI

Still, it was the most accurate
cast I've ever seen.

ANDY

Well, it's easier when they're
glued to a wall. They don't move
so much.

She circles, evaluating him like she's buying a horse.

HEIDI

Amusing, in a Jerry Lewis sort of
way... A bit scruffy... pale... not
much to look at... but young...

ANDY

If I'd known you were coming, I'd
have worn my top hat and tails.

He's not sure what to make of her, but he's intrigued.

HEIDI

(re: plaid jacket)

You look like you belong in the
outdoors, though not too rugged...
Yes, I see definite potential.

(to his face)

Tell me, are you as good at hunting
and camping as you are at fishing?

ANDY

Probably about the same.

HEIDI

All right... the job's yours.

ANDY

Excuse me?

HEIDI

I'm Heidi Bower. I represent
Average Joe's Sports Equipment.

She indicates the AVERAGE JOE logo on her T-shirt, covering what appear to be, in Andy's mind, the most perfect breasts in existence.

ANDY

Nothing average about --

HEIDI

We were going to use Fred's show,
but he didn't skew well. I need
something new. Younger. We'll
supply a new wardrobe, of course.
Starting, I think, with the hat.

Andy looks up at the fuzzy antlers, and yanks off the hat.

HEIDI

Incidentally, how did you know we
were looking for someone?

ANDY

Uh... Same as how I know where the
fish are biting.

HEIDI

Ah, a man of mystery.

Andy thinks he's winning her over.

HEIDI

I hate mystery.

He feels like an idiot. Again.

HEIDI

We'll beta-test the show here,
before we take it to the networks.
The gear and your contract will be
here tomorrow at ten. We start
taping in two days.

(MORE)

HEIDI (CONT'D)

Don't worry, I've already done the script for the first show -- Fishing With Crank Bait and Poppers.

A blank look from Andy.

HEIDI

Don't play coy. I'm sure you're salivating at the thought of it.

She whips out her business card, sticks it in Farmer Frank's mouth and heads for the door.

ANDY

Wait. You only met me two minutes ago. How can you be sure I'm the right man?

HEIDI

I just know. You're the one.

Hearing that phrase seals the deal. She marches out... then pokes her head back in.

HEIDI

Once more thing... lose the puppet.

She's gone. Andy pulls the card out of Farmer Frank's mouth.

ANDY

Sorry, Frank. That's show biz. Let's go tell the guys!

He rushes back through the studio.

INT. THE HAPPY RANCH SET - DAY

Andy arrives, winded. He doesn't look well.

The show has begun. Crouching behind the ranch set, Bruno works puppets Randy Rancher and Carl the Cow.

RANDY RANCHER (BRUNO)

...That's a great question, Carl. I'll bet Farmer Frank can tell us -- he's a nuclear physicist. Say, where is Farmer Frank? We sure could use him right about now.

Bruno gestures with his face for Andy to give him the puppet. Andy doesn't understand.

CARL THE COW (BRUNO)

Oh, there he is. I'll go get him.

Bruno "walks" Carl off-camera, then frantically gestures for the Farmer Frank puppet. Andy finally gets it. He peels off the puppet and leans into camera-view to pass it to Bruno... but suddenly looks ill. As Bruno's hand reaches up for it --

-- Andy VOMITS into Farmer Frank like it's an air-sick bag. Cloth arms shoot out as they fill with regurgitated beer.

Bruno is horrified.

IN THE BOOTH

Wendy relishes the moment.

WENDY

The kids are going to love that.
The FCC... not so much.

She pushes in tighter to take Andy out of the shot.

ON SET

Carl the Cow makes a hasty reappearance.

CARL THE COW (BRUNO)

Looks like Farmer Frank won't be
joining us this morning, Randy.
He's --

An awful MOAN off-screen. Randy and Carl turn to look.

RANDY RANCHER (BRUNO)

Uh-oh...

They raise their little arms to cover their little heads.

IN THE BOOTH

Nick and Wendy watch in disbelief. An even bigger RAAALPH.
Nick turns away in disgust.

NICK

Ewwwwwwww!

WENDY

God, I love cable.

She mercifully replaces the image. HAPPY RANCH THEME MUSIC plays over a title card:

HAPPY RANCH IS EXPERIENCING TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES. PLEASE DO NOT ADJUST YOUR SET.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. BRUNO & NICK'S APARTMENT - DAY

Bruno, Andy and Nick stomp in.

BRUNO

...What was your encore going to be? Sodomizing Shecky the Sheep?

Bruno heads for the coffee percolator.

ANDY

I said I was sorry! Move on! It's just a puppet show, not Masterpiece Theatre.

BRUNO

It won the Doody Award! Twice!

ANDY

Nobody cares!

BRUNO

I care!

ANDY

You're obsessed with puppets. It's not normal!

Knowing Andy just went too far, Nick escapes into the kitchen and digs out the cake.

BRUNO

What would you know about normal?

ANDY

What's that supposed to mean?

BRUNO

Nothing. Maybe if you had a show, you'd understand --

ANDY

That's what I've been trying to tell you! I do have a show! I'm taking over Fishing with Fred.

Stunned silence, then Nick chokes on his cake.

NICK

Bullshit!

BRUNO
You've never fished in your life!

ANDY
She doesn't know that.

BRUNO
Who doesn't know that?

ANDY
Heidi.

NICK
Heidi, the little orphan goat-herder?

ANDY
No, not Heidi the little orphan goat-herder.

Andy digs out Heidi's card. Bruno snatches it.

BRUNO
Heidi Bower?

ANDY
Who I can assure you has never herded a goat in her life. She's like... the goddess of khaki.

NICK
You sound smitten.
(to Bruno)
Doesn't he sound smitten?

Andy can't deny it.

BRUNO
Do you know who she is? Her mother owns Average Joe Sporting Goods. She's heir to the throne.

ANDY
Well, the princess wants me to host their new outdoors show -- fishing, hunting and camping.

NICK
Why not throw in motocross or alligator-wrestling, which you've also never done before.

ANDY
I've camped.

NICK
You've passed out in the woods.
There's a difference.

BRUNO
No way you're gonna pull this off.

NICK
No way.

ANDY
Nope. Not a chance.

Satisfied looks from Bruno and Nick.

ANDY
(to Bruno)
Not without your help. You know all
about creating a show.

BRUNO
Yeah, but my Give-A-Shit meter is
registering zero. Why would I help?

ANDY
Well... you're my oldest friend.

It's as if he just played a GET OUT OF JAIL FREE card. Bruno
tries to object, but he knows he's been snared.

EXT. PUBLIC ACCESS CABLE BUILDING - DAY

The sound of a TRUCK draws Andy to the open window.

ANDY
That's the Average Joe truck.
They're early.

INT. STUDIO A - DAY

Andy and Bruno walk onto the set... and stop dead. Andy is
awed by the incredible collection of fishing rods and open
tackle boxes bursting with colorful lures.

ANDY
She sure didn't skimp on the
fishing gear.

Bruno WHISTLES at the rows of rifles and shotguns.

BRUNO
If they'd been packing this much
heat at the Alamo, Davy Crockett'd
still be alive.

Andy pulls an outfit from the rack of clothes.

ANDY

Except for, you know, being over
two hundred years old.

He holds the outfit against him and puts on a pith helmet,
looking like a Safari Ken doll.

BRUNO

Marlin Perkins rises from the dead.

ANDY

Who?

Bruno spots a script on the table and picks it up.

BRUNO

Let's hope your little goat-herder
has better taste in scripts than
clothes.

ANDY

You should really stop calling her
that.

BRUNO

Not gonna happen.

Bruno skims the first page... then tosses it in the garbage.

ANDY

Seriously?

BRUNO

I can do better.

ANDY

This is important, Bruno.

BRUNO

Why, because you actually care
about hosting an outdoors show? Or
because you want to impress Heidi?

They both know the answer.

BRUNO

Well then, impress her with your
initiative and creativity. This is
an amazing opportunity. And we are
going to make the most of it.

ANDY

Yeah, but --

BRUNO

Yeah, but nothing. You're in my world now. Trust me.

Andy somehow manages a brave face. JUNGLE DRUMS start to pound...

INT. STUDIO A - DAY

IN THE BOOTH

The dramatic THEME MUSIC rises as Nick, holding Swami Sammy, and Guru Dave watch Wendy work the controls. On her MONITOR, the opening title appears: AVERAGE JOE'S OUTDOOR ADVENTURES.

Wendy signals through the window --

ON SET

-- to Andy, dressed like a genuine outdoorsman. Behind him, the chairs and stove are still there, but the moose head is gone and the walls are covered in Average Joe gear.

ANDY

Welcome to Average Joe's Outdoor Adventure. I'm Andy Hannah, and over the next twenty-four weeks we'll hunt big game, catch trophy fish, and improve our survival skills in the great outdoors, all using Average Joe's top of the line gear.

IN THE BOOTH

Nick and Guru Dave are both surprised.

NICK

Say, he's not bad.

ON SET

ANDY

Joining me on these exciting adventures will be an old friend of mine...

Bruno steps into frame carrying a fly rod and dressed as a Scotsman -- a kilt, puffy shirt, fake red beard, and a tam peppered with flies.

BRUNO
 (thick accent)
 Bruno McNuggets. Great ta be here,
 Andrew.

IN THE BOOTH

Nick can't believe it.

NICK
 It's his old Bay City Rollers
 costume!

ON SET

BRUNO
 Thought I'd surprise ya by bringin'
 a little friend with me today...

Andy can only look on in dread as Bruno digs deep into his
 sporran, the pouch at the front of his kilt.

IN THE BOOTH

Guru Dave averts his eyes.

GURU DAVE
 Oh dear god.

WENDY
 Preparing to go to black...

ON SET

Bruno pulls out a Scottish puppet on his hand.

BRUNO
Wee Angus.

IN THE BOOTH

Wendy turns to Nick and Guru Dave.

WENDY
 What do we think so far?

GURU DAVE
 This is most illuminating.

SWAMI SAMMY (NICK)
 Swami Sammy predicts... Crash and
 burn, baby! Crash and burn!

Watching from the shadows in the back of the booth, Heidi does a slow burn. Good thing none of the guns are loaded.

ON SET - POV OF THE CAMERA

Andy picks a rod off the wall.

ANDY

This week we'll be talking about crank bait and poopers.

BRUNO

Aye! That we will.

ANDY

Then we'll get to the fun stuff.

He swings his rod toward the camera -- the lure flies right at us and CRACKS the lens.

FADE OUT.

THE END