

AMERICAN IDLE: MURDERING THE MUSIC

A COMEDIC PARODY IN TWO ACTS

By Randall David Cook

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CHARACTERS

THE HOSTS

RYAN SEASUNK, male, hyperactive California surfer host

BRIANNA DUNKLEFUNKLE, female, deadpan, sardonic Canadian co-host

THE JUDGES

SIMON CALLOUS, male, British, snooty, always dressed in black

PAULA ABOMINABLE, female, relentlessly positive has-been singer, always dressed as a cheerleader

RANDY JACKALACKA, male, larger-than-life, bejeweled music producer

THE PRODUCER

JOANNE LOOSEMORALS, female, British, avaricious, very spiky hair

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

HANNAH HAPLESS, female, bored, matter-of-fact assistant

THE DIRECTOR

FABIENNE LA FLEUR, female, gray-wearing French depressive

THE CONTESTANTS

JENNY LEE LARKSONG, female, Deep-in-the-Heart-of-Texas sweetie

DEXTER SHAQ, male, big hair, big smile, big ego

KENEISHA GRAY, female, high heels and very tight clothes

NIKKI STIKKI, female, pastel-colored hair, gregarious

CARLOTTA CHRISTENING, female, beautiful, shy, somewhat snobby, glam

JJ MACNEIL, male, cute but anxiety-ridden

DJ PLAY, male, too cool for school, never removes his unglasses

MICKEY VERMIN, male, glasses, slightly nerdy, mentally deranged

TIFFANY STARMITE, female, husky-voiced and outrageously clothed

DOROTHY DANIELLE, female, southern belle, precious yet brutal

THE STUDIO AUDIENCE

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SETTING

A studio setting. Center stage is the performance/stage area. Stage right is the table where the JUDGES sit and pass judgment on the CONTESTANTS, and stage left are a few rows of chairs (preferably on a slightly elevated incline) for the STUDIO AUDIENCE.

A NOTE ABOUT THE STUDIO AUDIENCE

The STUDIO AUDIENCE can be as large or small as desired but should be, above all else, colorful. Some fans should carry posters; some should have obvious favorites among the finalists, and all should be fairly hyper. During commercial breaks, and until revealed, the STUDIO AUDIENCE should be behind an obvious miniature curtain that is open and closed at appropriate times, totally and absolutely controlled and manipulated.

SCENE ONE

(Lively introduction music plays. RYAN SEASUNK jumps on stage and unveils the curtain for the STUDIO AUDIENCE as BRIANNA DUNKLEFUNKLE makes her far more casual entrance.)

RYAN: Wowza! Hello there! Hiya! Hey hey hey hey hey! Welcome supercool fanzies! My name is Ryan Seasunk. Co-hosting with me tonight is the lovely...

BRIANNA: ...and far calmer Brianna Dunklefunkle. ***(RYAN jumps up and down and waves at the STUDIO AUDIENCE, yelling and screaming.)***
Ryan, you're up.

RYAN: I'm always up.

BRIANNA: Like a helium balloon. One that needs desperately to be popped.
Read the prompter, surfhead.

RYAN: Oh yeah, how cool! We're your hosts for *American Idle: Murdering the Music*, the show where the singer who blows the most gets decimated by industry professionals. My name is Ryan Seasunk.

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BRIANNA: We've already introduced ourselves.

RYAN: Can you believe I get paid to do this?

BRIANNA: I spend a great deal of time trying not to think about it. Without further nonsense from my co-host, let's go ahead and meet those esteemed industry professionals who make up our panel of judges. First off, a Grammy-winning record producer, the dude who believes that just as there ain't no mountain high enough, there ain't no gold chain thick enough... It's Randy Jackalacka!

(RANDY JACKALACKA enters, pumps his fist in the air.)

RANDY: Wassup dawgs?

(RANDY ambles to his seat at the JUDGES' table.)

RYAN: Next up, the always lovely and supportive Paula Abominable!

(PAULA ABOMINABLE bounds in dressed in a cheerleading outfit shaking her pom-poms.)

PAULA: S-T-R-A-I-G-H-T! Straight up! I'll tell ya if I really want to hear ya forever! Yeah! Yeah! Yeah!

BRIANNA: Enough. ***(PAULA cartwheels to her middle seat at the JUDGES' table.)*** Finally, last and least, all the way from not-so-great Britain, the man who gave such hard knocks to Little Orphan Annie that she no longer believes the sun will come out tomorrow, it's the one, and thankfully only, Simon Callous.

(SIMON CALLOUS enters.)

SIMON: Who hired you idiots?

(SIMON scowls at the hosts and takes his seat at the JUDGES' table.)

RYAN: Wow. He's in a good mood. Exciting. Is it time for a commercial break?

BRIANNA: Not yet, Seasunk. But the good news is that tonight's show is live, so no matter what happens, we keep going till the last singer's standing.

RYAN: Super cool! How are the singers?

BRIANNA: We're going to find out in just a minute when the first of our ten finalists comes out to face the judges.

RYAN: Let's introduce the judges!

SIMON: We're already here, you noxious numbskull.

RYAN: Wow! I get paid for this.

BRIANNA: America truly is the land of opportunity.

RYAN: Also with us tonight in da house is our studio audience, randomly selected from the millions of you who faithfully watch our show each and every week. How you guys doing?

(THE STUDIO AUDIENCE goes wild.)

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BRIANNA: Lovely. In order to test the range of our top ten contestants, our esteemed judges have decided to surprise the finalists with a different *cappella* musical challenge in each round.

RYAN: Apple what?

BRIANNA: A *cappella*. That means they sing alone, without accompaniment.

RYAN: That's rough.

BRIANNA: That's right, Seasunk.

RYAN: Good thing Britney Spears was never on this show!

BRIANNA: She's already famous, Seasunk.

RYAN: But if she were on this show, I wonder if she would, like, "Be a Slave 4 Me," if you know what I'm saying.

BRIANNA: I never understand a word you're saying.

RYAN: You're really uptight for a co-host. Are all Canadians like that?

BRIANNA: Must we have this discussion again?

RYAN: Yo, chill. Just trying to make some convo.

BRIANNA: May I continue? Please? As I was trying to say, in the first round each contestant will be asked to sing the first line from their favorite nursery song and then create the second line on their own.

RYAN: New lyrics. Retro rad cool.

BRIANNA: You obviously didn't attend rehearsal.

RYAN: **(holding up a soft-drink bottle)** That's because I was busy drinking Yummy-Cola, the most popular beverage around the world. Yum yum goody! Yummy-Cola!

BRIANNA: Speaking of popular, let's hear it for our first contestant, straight from the churning bowels of a California shopping mall... it's Tiffany Starmite!

(TIFFANY STARMITE enters wearing an outrageous outfit of stars and moons.)

TIFFANY: Twinkle, twinkle, little star, I like driving my new car.

(Loud clapping sounds as TIFFANY turns and faces the judges.)

BRIANNA: That's it?

TIFFANY: Big things come in small packages.

RYAN: Judges, shout it out!

RANDY: Tiffany, Tiffany, Tiffany! How's it goin'?

TIFFANY: Awesome, man.

RANDY: How'd you feel about your performance?

TIFFANY: I thought it was good, man. Really good. I mean, like, I got a product placement in and all.

RANDY: I thought it was okay. Not your best, but that outfit rocks.

RYAN: Paula!

PAULA: **(while shaking her pom-poms)** Take a T and double it please - for totally terrific!

RYAN: Simon!

SIMON: Just because you wear stars doesn't mean you're going to be one.

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TIFFANY: Thanks, man.

SIMON: I think you may be too relaxed to really compete on this show. I mean, not to be rude, but you're so laid back you're practically horizontal.

TIFFANY: Like, thanks again, man.

BRIANNA: Next up, all the way from Hotlanta, it's Keneisha Gray!

(Loud clapping sounds as TIFFANY exits and KENEISHA GRAY enters, dressed in the tightest clothes and highest heels possible. KENEISHA enunciates everything perfectly and renders highly dramatic readings of everything SHE says and sings.)

KENEISHA: Itsy, bitsy spider climbed up the water spout.

Spout spout spout spout spout!

Down came the rain, and my heart...

It just gave out out out out out.

(Thunderous clapping sounds as KENEISHA turns and faces the JUDGE.)

RYAN: Judges! Randy!

RANDY: Keneisha, Keneisha, Keneisha! It's all going on, girl. I mean, when I worked with Mariah, she sounded just like that.

KENEISHA : Thank you. Like Mariah, I too have a vision of love.

RYAN: Paula!

PAULA: You have more than that! You have an infection! An infection of perfection! Perfection! Perfection! Yeah, yeah, perfection!

KENEISHA: It's fun being perfect.

RYAN: Simon!

SIMON: No one in England has ever sung about spiders the way you just did. Brilliant. Just brilliant.

KENEISHA: Thank you, judges. It's okay to fear creatures with eight legs, so I dedicate this song to all the arachnophobes back home in Hotlanta. That was for you. You're not alone. Peace out.

BRIANNA: Next up, JJ MacNeil!

(KENEISHA exits as JJ MACNEIL enters, stands stage center, and starts dancing.)

RYAN: What's up, dude? You haven't started singing yet.

JJ: I get nervous and my legs start shaking and I can't control them, so I start to move like this and people applaud and I pretend I'm dancing and...

BRIANNA: Sorry to interrupt, but we're ready to start when you are.

JJ: Well, I get nervous and my legs start shaking and I can't...

BRIANNA: Sing your song already!

JJ: London Bridge is falling down, falling down, falling down.

London Bridge is falling down. My fair lady!

RYAN: Judges, your comments!

RANDY: JJJJJJJJ. I just lost count.

JJ: Hey, Randy.

RANDY: Yo, dawg, you were supposed to create your own second line.

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JJ: I know. I forgot.

RANDY: That's okay. Bruce used to do the same thing when he first started out.

RYAN: Paula!

PAULA: **(shaking one pom-pom)** JJ is Ooooooooookay! Yeah!

RYAN: Simon!

SIMON: Thank goodness you Americans actually bought London Bridge in the sixties. Because after that horrible rendition, I imagine it will *indeed* be crashing down to the ground. **(JJ starts moving uncontrollably.)** Stop moving.

JJ: You're making me nervous.

SIMON: Well, losers make me nauseous. I'm sorry, but they do, and you are a big loser. Next!

(JJ MACNEIL exits as DJ PLAY enters, cool as ice.)

RYAN: Next up, it's DJ Play!

(DJ strikes a pose. PAULA cheers spastically.)

SIMON: Control yourself.

DJ: Jack and his girl Jill went up the hill, BRO',
To fetch a pail of H2O, YO!
Jack fell down and broke his crown, BROKE IT,
So Jill dragged his butt to the house of slaughter.
SO LONG, JACKO!

RYAN: Randy!

RANDY: DJ, DJ, DJ... Why do all you guys have names with J in them?

DJ: Lack of creativity, yo.

RANDY: Well, you're one slamming dude. Good looks, smooth moves... and I like your efforts to compensate for a total lack of a singing voice. Great job, dawg.

RYAN: Paula!

PAULA: All I have to say is...

(PAULA stands up and pretends to faint from being overwhelmed, then stands up again and starts cheering madly.)

RYAN: Okay. I guess she likes you. Simon?

SIMON: Paula, you've disappointed the millions of viewers who actually hoped you had just died.

PAULA: That's funny, Simon, especially considering -- shish boom bah, hip hip hoorah -- you're the judge who's been getting the death threats.

SIMON: Death threats?

PAULA: Oopsie doopsie! No one told you cha cha cha?

RYAN: Simon, any comments for DJ?

SIMON: Is some nutty Yank really trying to off me? Why wasn't I told?

PAULA: Scaredy cat! Meow! I'm sure it's just a prank. And if it isn't, well, maybe you should start wearing a bulletproof vest. Hope you can find one in black.

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SIMON: Isn't it time for another Yummy-Cola advert?

DJ: Yo, what about me?

SIMON: That's a good question. What about you? Nothing! You're a no-talent cartoon. Paula likes you cause you've got a nice...

RYAN: That's my cue to go to commercial! We'll be right back folks, but while we're gone, why don't you pick up your AP&P wireless phone and let us know how you would bump off Simon if you could. Dial 1-800-555-1234 if you think he should be forced to eat broken glass, or 1-800-555-5678 if you think he should be tossed into a tank of piranhas. You lucky AP&P users can also text your vote in at the following numbers, because AP&P is a proud sponsor of this show and is equally proud to be an obnoxious presence in your lives during one of those odd moments when their connections actually work! We'll be right back!

(RYAN closes the curtain to the STUDIO AUDIENCE.)

SCENE TWO

(HANNAH HAPLESS darts in carrying a clipboard. SHE wears a headset and carries a couple of cell phones with her at all times. Throughout all her scenes, SHE is seen coming and going, never standing still.)

HANNAH: Commercial! Four minutes!

(Everyone scatters. PAULA moves to the side and practices her cheers and dance steps, RANDY pulls out a flask, BRIANNA exits, and SIMON runs up to RYAN and gets in his face.)

SIMON: Seasunk, you're fired.

RYAN: You wish. That's not your decision to make.

SIMON: We will see about that. Joanne! Fabienne!

(As JOANNE LOOSEMORALS and FABIENNE LA FLEUR enter, RYAN pulls out a hidden bag of sugar, opens it up, pulls out a spoon and starts shoveling the sweets in. FABIENNE carries a large tote bag from which a small stuffed dog sticks out its head.)

JOANNE: Coming! Coming!

FABIENNE: *J'arrive! J'arrive!*

SIMON: Death threats! Against me? Why have I not heard a word about this?

FABIENNE: Ssssh! Simon, you speak so loud you will upset little Georgie.

(FABIENNE pets Georgie on the head as SIMON swipes the bag away. RYAN exits.)

SIMON: Get that mutt away from me.

JOANNE: Calm down, Simon.

FABIENNE: It's a hit show. What is ze problem?

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HANNAH: Three minutes! Three minutes!

SIMON: Why didn't you tell me?

FABIENNE: *C'est rien, c'est rien!* There iz no evidence of a killer.

JOANNE: Simon darling, we're live. Imagine the ratings.

SIMON: If I die, you have no show.

FABIENNE: Ooh la la. So dramatic. Like Spielberg and those running dinosaurs. Come on Georgie, let's go talk to the other pretties.

(FABIENNE walks over to PAULA.)

JOANNE: Never underestimate the producer, Simon. Security was beefed up this afternoon. We didn't tell you because we didn't want you to be anxious. That's all. Come back to my office. There's something we should discuss in private.

(SIMON and JOANNE exit.)

FABIENNE: Paula, *bonjour*, may I ask a favor, *un petit cadeau pour moi?*

PAULA: Y-E-S, yes, Fabienne! Anything for my favorite director in the whole wide world!

FABIENNE: You are too nice, Paula.

PAULA: No, really. You are my favorite director in the whole wide world.

FABIENNE: No, really. You are too nice. *Trop sympathique. C'est ennuyeux.*

PAULA: Hey, Georgie! What a cute doggie woggie!

FABIENNE: Don't touch *le chien*. No touch, Paula. Listen. Be more like the French. Be mean. Be cruel. Be spineless.

PAULA: But I don't know any French!

HANNAH: Two minutes! Two minutes!

PAULA: Not a single word! I can't even find France on a map!

FABIENNE: *Quel dommage.* Randy, what iz that?

(RANDY puts the flask away.)

RANDY: Hey, Fabi!

FABIENNE: You know ze rules, Randy. No tickle-the-throat fancy till the show iz finish. You promise me this.

RANDY: *Oui, oui*, Fabienne. Just had a slight itch in my chest. Thought a few gulps of the super juice would be good for medicinal purposes. Hey, dawg.

FABIENNE Don't touch *le chien*.

RANDY: You are one hip chick, Fabi baby.

PAULA: Wait! I do know a French word. *Croissant!*

FABIENNE: Very good, *cherie*. That iz perfect.

HANNAH: One minute, folks! Places, everyone! Places!

(SIMON enters; JOANNE trails right behind.)

SIMON: Fire him, Joanne.

JOANNE: But why? He's wonderfully American!

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SIMON: He just held a phone survey asking viewers to decide if I should be devoured by piranhas or forced to eat broken glass!

JOANNE: But viewers pay for those calls! Revenue is good, Simon. I know we're British, but we too can learn to become good capitalists.

SIMON: I don't think you're having any problem with that.

JOANNE: And considering how bad food is back home, broken glass isn't really such an awful option, is it?

HANNAH: Thirty seconds! Thirty seconds!

(BRIANNA and RYAN enter.)

BRIANNA: Seasunk, you promised no more sugar.

RYAN: And I've kept that promise.

BRIANNA: Liar! I see the sparkly little granules all over your upper lip.

RYAN: You like my upper lip? You want to kiss me, Brianna?

HANNAH: Counting, ten, nine, eight...

RYAN: Salt. It's salt.

HANNAH: Six, five, four...

BRIANNA: You are so full of...

HANNAH: Show time!

(HANNAH pulls the STUDIO AUDIENCE curtain open as SHE exits.)

SCENE THREE

RYAN: Wowza! Great to be here! I'm Ryan Seasunk, and this is...

BRIANNA: A very long day.

RYAN: Studio audience, are you having a good time?

(THE STUDIO AUDIENCE erupts and RYAN does a little dance for them.)

BRIANNA: Thank you, Baryshnikov. Next contestant up is the southern belle of our ball, Miss Dorothy Danielle!

(DOROTHY DANIELLE enters, the prissiest southern debutante ever to cross over the Mason-Dixon line.)

DOROTHY: Now y'all feel free to join in if ya' like!

There was a farmer had a dog,

And Bingo was his name-o.

B-I-N-G-O! B-I-N-G-O! B-I-N-G-O!

And Bingo was his name-o!

And on this dog there were some fleas,

Which feasted on its skin-o.

(Clap)-I-N-G-O! (Clap)-I-N-G-O! (Clap)-I-N-G-O!

And Bingo went insane-o!

As insane Bingo lost control,

The barking would not stop-o.

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(Clap, clap)-N-G-O! (Clap, clap)-N-G-O! (Clap, clap)-N-G-O!
And Bingo lost his voice-o!

So now that Bingo had no bark...

BRIANNA: Stop! Stop! Stop!

DOROTHY: But I'm not finished!

BRIANNA: But you are! Judges!

RANDY: Dorothy, Dorothy, Dorothy...

DOROTHY: Hello, Mr. Randy.

RANDY: I don't know what to say.

SIMON: Well, I do.

PAULA: Too bad it's not your turn.

BRIANNA: Someone say something.

DOROTHY: Thank you, Miss Brianna.

RANDY: Yo. I don't know another way to say this... I just don't dig your style,
dawg.

DOROTHY: And what style would that be?

RANDY: You're a little too yee-haw country for me. It just ain't my thing.

DOROTHY: Apparently grammar isn't either. And keep your doggies to
yourself.

RYAN: Paula!

PAULA: Very nice, very nice! As the French would say: Warm and flaky, like a
croissant!

DOROTHY: Thank you very much, Miss Paula.

RYAN: Simon!

SIMON: Dorothy, I think you're what this contest is all about. If there's any
justice in your country, you will advance to the next round.

DOROTHY: Thank you, Simon. You know, I think England is a wonderful
country. All those royal people seem so nice. I'd like to take this special
moment to give thanks in advance to all my wonderful fans. Y'all vote for me
so I can come back now, ya hear?

BRIANNA: Next up, it's our very own princess of funk and punk, Nikki Stikki.

(DOROTHY exits to glares from NIKKI STIKKI as SHE enters in a don't-mess-with-me get-up.)

NIKKI: Mary had a little lamb, little lamb, little lamb.

Mary had a little lamb,

Its fleece was white as snow.

Everywhere that Mary went, Mary went, Mary went.

Everywhere that Mary went,

The lamb was sure to go. ***(screaming)***

Then Mary turned that lamb into a wool sweater and a pair of mutton
chops!

RYAN: Wowza! Randy?

RANDY: Nikki, Nikki, Nikki... I love mutton chops, dawg, you know what I'm
saying?

NIKKI: Yeah, but the song's not about you. Can't you say something insightful?

RYAN: Paula!

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PAULA: Sorry, Nikki. That song was not like a *croissant*. You know I'm an animal rights activist... Save the dolphins, save the whales, cause ocean life is swell! Yeah!... so I have to say that I found your new, original lyrics to be deeply offensive.

NIKKI: You're too soft. After the show, I'm gonna slap your face.

RYAN: Simon!

SIMON: Well, Nikki...

NIKKI: Shut it.

SIMON: I haven't said anything yet.

NIKKI: Then quit while you're ahead. This is rock and roll, baby. I don't care about you. I don't care about what you think. I don't need some lame critique from an Earl Grey-drinking British priss miss.

SIMON: How did you get this hostile? Are you dating Eminem?

NIKKI: Ha! He's so establishment. Look at him! He's a freakin' Academy Award winner, like Charlton Heston! Or Liza Minnelli! No, no... He was scared of me. He's weak. You're weak. Men are weak.

SIMON: This is pointless. Go away.

NIKKI: Shut your face. I'll go when I'm ready. Okay. I'm ready.

(NIKKI exits scowling at everyone around her and particularly to CARLOTTA CHRISTENING, who moves out of the way as NIKKI exits.)

BRIANNA: And now for something completely different, it's the ever classy Carlotta Christening.

CARLOTTA: Humpty Dumpty sat on the wall,
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.
All the king's horses and all the king's men
Couldn't put Humpty Dumpty together again.
So he suffered.
Yes, he suffered.
Poor, broken Humpty, deserted in the Dumpty.

RYAN: Judges, your comments!

RANDY: Carlotta, Carlotta, Carlotta... When I worked with Whitney, I remember thinking to myself that she had a voice as beautiful as her face, and that is what I am thinking right now, dawg.

CARLOTTA: Thank you, Randy.

RYAN: Paula?

PAULA: That top! Where did you get that top?

CARLOTTA: You like it!

PAULA: Like it? I lalalalalala LOVE IT! IloveitIloveitIloveit!

CARLOTTA: It was a gift from my fiancé.

SIMON: You're engaged?

PAULA: As if, Simon. As if.

SIMON: Listen, pom-pom pipsqueak.

RYAN: Paula, your comments?

PAULA: Ryan, any results from your AP&P wireless survey?

RYAN: Nope! Not yet! Any comments for Carlotta?

PAULA: Carlotta, someone with your gorgeous voice and face deserves a wonderful husband, someone close to your own age, someone as

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handsome as you are beautiful, someone who can actually claim to have a heart...

SIMON: You finished yet?

PAULA: N-O! NO!

SIMON: Actually, I don't know why I bothered to ask. Your career was finished a long time ago.

PAULA: And Carlotta, might I add that the English have, as a nation, a terrible reputation in the romance department. You want a *croissant*, not an English muffin.

RYAN: Let's move on to Simon.

SIMON: Thank you, Ryan. I thought the has-been would never stop. Carlotta... What can I say? That was awful. I'm sorry, but it was really horrible. How you could perform so dreadfully after so many great prior performances is beyond me. I mean it. You sounded like a feral cat being eaten alive by a pack of Scottish terriers.

CARLOTTA: Excuse me, Simon, but...

SIMON: That's all. **(CARLOTTA starts crying.)** Get off the stage.

CARLOTTA: I can break off the engagement!

SIMON: It would give you more time to rehearse. Would enable you to not be distracted. I would recommend it.

CARLOTTA: Then it's done. **(to the camera)** Ashton, we're finished! Don't call! Don't write! Goodbye!

(CARLOTTA flings the ring in front of the JUDGES' table and runs off. PAULA and RANDY jump for it, falling on top of each other and clawing each other.)

PAULA: Mine! Mine! All mine!

RANDY: Back off!

PAULA: You have enough jewelry! Stop pulling my hair!

RYAN: I think now's the time to take another commercial break. We'll be right back folks!

(RYAN closes the STUDIO AUDIENCE curtain.)

SCENE FOUR

(HANNAH, FABIENNE and JOANNE run in.)

HANNAH: Three minutes, folks! Three minutes!

FABIENNE: *Très bien, tout le monde!*

RANDY: I got it. Get off me.

FABIENNE: Even Georgie liked it, didn't you Georgie? Tears and laughs, laughs and tears. Like kissing Woody Allen.

(PAULA gets off RANDY, then makes another last grab for the ring. RANDY throws it in his mouth and swallows it.)

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RANDY: Down the hatch. Who knew diamonds were so delish?

PAULA: I'm surrounded by pigs. **(PAULA walks up to SIMON as RANDY pulls out his flask.)** A has-been? **(PAULA slaps SIMON across the face three times with her pom-poms.)** Pow! Pow! Pow! Third time's the charm, right?

(PAULA cartwheels off the stage.)

HANNAH: Two minutes! Two minutes!

SIMON: Joanne! Joanne!

JOANNE: Yes, Simon.

SIMON: Fire her.

JOANNE: The Americans love her.

SIMON: Then they are without taste.

JOANNE: I think we need to have another talk backstage. Oh, Ryan, how did the product placement in the last segment go? I missed it.

RYAN: I didn't do one.

JOANNE: Exactly. See that it doesn't happen again, or I'll be taking points away.

(JOANNE grabs SIMON by the arm and leads him offstage. RYAN is about to do the same as BRIANNA grabs his arm and makes him stay.)

HANNAH: One minute! One minute! Places!

BRIANNA: Points? What kind of points is she talking about?

RYAN: Pointers. She said pointers, like suggestions... I need to...

BRIANNA: Liar! She meant points as in percentage points, didn't she? You're getting a percentage of the profits?

RYAN: Gotta show the green to keep the talent.

BRIANNA: You've got to be kidding me. How many?

RYAN: A couple.

BRIANNA: A couple? You're getting rich while I... This is not right.

RYAN: That's the way it goes. Hey, I'm not alone. I know Fabienne is getting points, as is Simon. And Paula.

HANNAH: Counting, ten, nine, eight...

(The JUDGES take their places.)

RYAN: Now if you'll excuse me...

BRIANNA: I'll do more than that. Better watch your back, pretty boy.

HANNAH: Show time!

(HANNAH pulls the STUDIO AUDIENCE curtain open as SHE exits.)

SCENE FIVE

RYAN: Welcome back! Thank you for watching *American Idle: Murdering the Music*. Without you, I couldn't afford these outrageously bad clothes! But

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enough about me. How's the show so far, folks? (**The STUDIO AUDIENCE shrieks in appreciation.**) Our next contestant is so hot that he provides new meaning to the phrase "warm welcome." Put your hands together for Dexter Shaq!

(DEXTER SHAQ struts in waving and blowing air kisses and propping up his huge hair, stopping right in front of the JUDGES' table.)

BRIANNA: Dexter, what are you doing?

DEXTER: Waiting for my comments from the judges!

BRIANNA: You have to sing first.

DEXTER: Oh yeah. Let me do my warm-up. (**DEXTER pulls out a huge container of hair gel, squirts it on his head and whips his hair into a moussed frenzy.**) Ready!

BRIANNA: Fantastic.

DEXTER: Hush-a-bye, baby, in the tree top.
When the wind blows, the cradle will rock.
When the bough breaks, the cradle will fall,
And down will come baby cradle and all.
But fret not, my baby, I am quite strong.
I will protect you, my arms are long.
As you come crashing, down from your tree,
I'll sing a nice ballad, thinking of thee!

RYAN: Judges! Randy!

RANDY: Dexter, Dexter, Dexter...

DEXTER: Wassup, dawg?

RANDY: Hey, man. You did your thing. You did your thing.

DEXTER: Cool, dawg.

RYAN: Paula!

PAULA: I am speechless.

SIMON: Then prayers *do* get answered.

DEXTER: You look so beautiful tonight, Paula.

PAULA: Oh, Dexter...

SIMON: All right. Can I say something?

RYAN: The floor's yours, Simon.

SIMON: You sound great, you look great, and you've got the whole package.
Only one slight problem... You sing a ballad every week. It's getting boring.
Show us some range.

DEXTER: Range. Like free-range chicken?

SIMON: Precisely.

DEXTER: Cool. I am so into poultry.

BRIANNA: Next up, all the way from Topeka, Kansas... It's Mickey Vermin!

(DEXTER puts his hand up to give MICKEY VERMIN a high five. MICKEY slaps it, but his hand gets stuck to DEXTER's.)

DEXTER: Nerdo, release the hand.

(DEXTER scampers off as MICKEY, visibly terrified, looks in shock at the STUDIO AUDIENCE.)

MICKEY: Ring a-round the roses,
A pocket full of posies,
Ashes! Ashes!
We all fall down!

(MICKEY drops to the ground and starts rolling around wildly.)

Down down down down down down down!

(MICKEY stops suddenly and sits up, barking a bit before starting...)

What are little boys made of?
Snips and snails,
And puppy dog tails,
That's what little boys are made of.

(MICKEY jumps up and does a cheerleading routine with...)

I Scream,
You scream,
We all scream,
For ICE CREAM!

RYAN: Wowza. Judges?

RANDY: Mickey, Mickey, Mickey... You really were a dawg.

MICKEY: Ruff ruff gimme gimme chew toy.

RANDY: Are you feeling okay, dawg?

MICKEY: Arf arf!

RYAN: Paula!

PAULA: That cheerleading bit was very special. Did you know I used to be a cheerleader?

MICKEY: Rah rah rah. Pom pom pity party patty potty putty pet me.

PAULA: Okay. Good job.

RYAN: Simon!

SIMON: Mickey, I've got to be honest with you. I think you're disturbed. This business is a pressure cooker, and clearly you're slipping down that slippery slope we call sanity, and... **(MICKEY runs up to SIMON.)** Help! Security!

MICKEY: Ruff ruff arf arf!

PAULA: He's just barking at you, Simon! Give him a little pet.

(PAULA pats MICKEY on the head. SIMON starts to do the same, but MICKEY starts snarling as if HE's going to bite.)

SIMON: Randy clearly mentioned canines one time too often this week.

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