NewsRadio

"Review"

#301

Written by
Josh Lieb

Directed by
Tom Cherones

REVISED TABLE DRAFT
August 8, 1996

BRILLSTEIN / GREY COMMUNICATIONS
NewsRadio

"Review"

#301

Revised Table Draft - 8/8/96

CAST

DAVE .................................................. DAVE FOLEY

JIMMY .................................................... STEPHEN ROOT

MATTHEW ............................................... ANDY DICK

LISA ........................................................ MAURA TIERNEY

BETH ........................................................ VICKI LEWIS

JOE .......................................................... JOE ROGAN

CATHERINE ............................................... KHANDI ALEXANDER

and

BILL ..................................................... PHIL HARTMAN

---------------------------------------------------------------

JOHNNY CASH ............................................ TBA *

COUNTERMAN ............................................. TBA

TROY ........................................................ TBA

CHET ....................................................... TBA

PATTY ..................................................... TBA

GUY ........................................................ TBA
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SETS

INTERIORS

BREAK ROOM (D)
BULLPEN (D)
COFFEE SHOP (D)
DAVE'S OFFICE (D)
MEN'S ROOM (D)
<p>| I/A | INT. COFFEE SHOP - MORNING (D-1) (1) (Matthew, Dave, Joe, Counterman) |
| I/B | INT. BULLPEN - MORNING (D-1) (6) (Dave, Lisa, Bill, Catherine, Beth) |
|      | INT. DAVE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS (9) (Dave, Jimmy, Catherine, Bill) |
|      | INT. BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS (15) (Dave, Lisa, Matthew, Beth) |
|      | INT. DAVE'S OFFICE-SIMULTANEOUS (18) (Beth, Jimmy, Dave, Lisa, Catherine) |
|      | INT. BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS (22) (Bill, Dave, Matthew, Lisa, Beth) |
|      | INT. DAVE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS (25) (Dave, Matthew, Bill) |
| I/C | INT. BULLPEN-MOMENTS LATER (D-1) (27) (Matthew, Dave, Bill, Joe, Beth) |
| I/D | INT. DAVE'S OFFICE - A LITTLE LATER (D-1) (29) (Matthew, Joe (O.C.), Dave) |
| II/E | INT COFFEE SHOP - MORNING (D-2) (32) (Dave, Lisa, Matthew) |
| II/H | INT. DAVE'S OFFICE - A LITTLE LATER (D-2) (34) (Dave, Beth, Lisa, Bill) |
| II/J | INT. COFFEE SHOP - A LITTLE LATER (D-2) (38) (Beth, Dave, Matthew, Troy) |
| II/K | INT. BULLPEN -SIMULTANEOUS (D-2) (41) (Jimmy, Lisa) |
|      | INT. BREAKROOM - CONTINUOUS (42) (Lisa, Jimmy, Chet, Patty, Johnny Cash) |
| II/L | INT. MEN'S ROOM - A LITTLE LATER (D-2) (47) (Dave, Bill, Jimmy) |
|      | INT. BULLPEN - SIMULTANEOUS (49) (Catherine, Johnny Cash) |</p>
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<td>INT. COFFEE SHOP - 5:15PM (D-1) (51) (Dave, Matthew, Lisa, Bill, Catherine, Joe, Beth, Guy)</td>
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Running Time 21:27
ACT ONE

SCENE A

FADE IN:

INT. COFFEE SHOP - MORNING (D-1)
(Matthew, Dave, Joe, Counterman)

A line of people stands at a Starbucks-Type coffee counter. A "Grand Opening" banner hangs over the counter. In the middle of the line are JOE and MATTHEW. DAVE enters.

MATTHEW

(WAVES) David! David! Over here!

Matthew grabs Dave's sleeve and pulls him to his place in line.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

Come with me... (LOUD) We've been saving your place in line.

DAVE

Morning, Joe.

JOE

Dave.

MATTHEW

So how did you discover our new little secret coffee spot?
DAVE

Well, I overheard some people
talking about it, and then I saw it
in the lobby of our building... and
of course, the ads on the side of
every bus in the city... and of
course, you called me three times
last night to remind me that the
grand opening was today...

The line moves forward as they talk.

JOE

This place sucks.

DAVE

I take it you didn't come here for
the coffee.

JOE

I came to look at the espresso
machines.

DAVE

Oh?

JOE

Buddy of mine says a lot of these
things are made out of recycled
steel from dismantled nuclear silos.
Dave

Is this the same "buddy" who says the Zapruder film was done by Korean animators?

Joe

Laugh all you want. I just wouldn't drink any espresso here unless I was looking for a cheap non-surgical vasectomy.

A couple of people in line leave, obviously spooked by Joe's information.

Matthew laughs loudly; he's reading a comic strip that is taped to the front of the cash register.

Matthew

That is so funny. Have you read this?

Dave/Joe

No.

Matthew

It is so funny. (Reads it again) Ha!

The guy in front of Matthew walks away. The counterman turns to Matthew.

Counterman

What'll it be?

Matthew

Huh?

Counterman

What'll it be?
MATTHEW

(RE: CARTOON) Can you tell me who

drew this?

COUNTERMAN

What?

MATTHEW

Who drew this cartoon? It is so

funny.

COUNTERMAN

I don't know. Do you have an order--

Matthew yells to the coffee workers in the back.

MATTHEW

Hey! Which one of you guys drew this
cartoon with the little dog?

Dave grabs Matthew.

DAVE

(QUIETLY) None of them drew it,

Matthew. It's a comic strip called

"Dilbert." It's in the newspaper
every day.

MATTHEW

You're kidding me.

DAVE

I assure you, I am not kidding you.

MATTHEW

But it's sooo--
DAVE

Funny. I know. Now just make your order
and leave these good people in peace.

MATTHEW

Oh. Okay.

Matthew turns to the counterman.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

Do you have any fresh fruit
smoothies?

COUNTERMAN

No. Just coffee.

MATTHEW

(TO DAVE & JOE) They don't have smoothies.

DAVE

(MOCK-SURPRISED) They don't? This is
an outrage! I say we take our
business elsewhere.

MATTHEW

Damn straight!

Matthew exits -- not realizing that Dave and Joe
aren't following.

JOE

I can't believe that worked.

DAVE

Sometimes you get lucky.

CUT TO:

OPENING CREDITS
ACT ONE

SCENE B

FADE IN:

INT. BULLPEN/DAVE'S OFFICE/BULLPEN/DAVE'S OFFICE/BULLPEN/DAVE'S OFFICE - LATER THAT MORNING (D-1)
(Dave, Lisa, Bill, Catherine, Beth, Jimmy, Matthew)

Dave enters, carrying his briefcase and a coffee cup from the place downstairs. LISA's at her desk, thumbing through a magazine.

DAVE

Good morning.

LISA

(LOOKING UP) Well, what a relief.

DAVE

Come again?

LISA

Matthew came up a few minutes ago, white as a sheet, mumbling something about how you and Joe had disappeared into thin air.

She tosses the magazine aside as Dave gives her a kiss.
LISA (CONT'D)

Ahh... Nothing lights me up in the morning like a good strong dose of coffee breath.

DAVE

I thought I was the only one who found that sexy.

Dave notices the magazine and picks it up, very interested.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Hey, this is the new *New York Media Guide*.

LISA

Yeah. Just as boring as last year's *New York Media Guide*.

Dave starts leafing through it -- then starts flipping through it faster and faster, obviously looking for something.

DAVE

Well, come on, how was our review?

LISA

Haven't read it.

DAVE

You're not interested in how our peers rate my first full year as news director?
LISA

It's the New York Media Guide.
Nobody reads it except for psychotic geeks who are obsessed with every little detail about the incestuous world of New York radio...

BILL has walked up.

BILL

Is that the '96-97 New York Media Guide. (GRABS IT) It is, isn't it?
(TO ROOM) It's here, everyone! It's here! The alpha and the omega has arrived!

Bill wanders away, engrossed in the magazine.

DAVE

Is there another copy around?

LISA

Conference table.

Dave crosses eagerly to the conference table. Just as quickly, CATHERINE appears.

CATHERINE

Oh my God. Is that the '96-97 issue?

Catherine grabs it from Dave and walks out of the frame. Dave spots a copy sitting on Beth's desk.

DAVE

Can I borrow this for a second?

BETH

You don't want this one.
DAVE

You're not even reading it.

Dave grabs it from her.

BETH

No, but I am parking my gum there.

Dave hands the magazine back to Beth. The cover tears off and sticks to his hand. Dave exits into...

INT. DAVE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Dave enters to find JIMMY sitting at his desk, punching buttons on the phone.

DAVE

Mr. James? Anything wrong?

JIMMY

Your mom change her home number again?

DAVE

Why do you ask?

JIMMY

No reason. How about this review, huh?

DAVE

I'm sorry, sir -- I actually haven't had a chance to read it yet.

JIMMY

Don't worry about it -- it's not like we're in the radio business or anything.
DAVE
Believe me, I am extremely eager to read it.

JIMMY
I bet. An important critique of your first full year at the helm. Just the kind of thing that can really send a career into orbit.

DAVE
True, but I'm more interested in getting an objective opinion of our...

JIMMY
Or it can smash you on the rocks like last year's lobster pot.

DAVE
The thought had occurred to me. Which is why I'm understandably anxious...

JIMMY
Okay, okay. Read away. I won't bother ya.

A beat while Dave starts to read. Jimmy plays with some stuff on Dave's desk.

JIMMY (CONT'D)
So, you got any recent pictures of your mom?
DAVE

(DOESN'T LOOK UP) Mr. James, that is
quite possibly the most distracting
question I've ever heard.

JIMMY

Strike it from the record. Read on,
read on -- you won't even know I'm
here.

Catherine storms in, upset.

CATHERINE

Dave, what are you going to do about
this review?

DAVE

I don't know, Catherine. I haven't
had a chance to read it yet.

CATHERINE

Well, then read it.

DAVE

I'm trying.

Catherine grabs the magazine from his hand and points
to a specific section.

CATHERINE

Here. Read this.
DAVE

(READS) "Katherine Duke is one of the best news anchors in the city, though chronically underused" -- (TO CATHARINE) I know, I agree, and I promise with time we will find ways to use you more.

CATHARINE

Yeah, I've heard that noise before. (POINTS) But what are you going to do about this? They spelled my name wrong. It's Catherine with a 'C', not with a 'K.'

JIMMY


DAVE

Oh, come on -- it's not such a big deal, is it? (OFF HER LOOK) Yes, of course it is.

CATHARINE

Catherine with a "C" is regal. Majestic. Melodious. Katherine with a "K" is the name of every two-bit biker chick in North Jersey.
DAVE
Yeah -- like that cheap slut
Katharine Hepburn. (WITHOUT LOOKING
AT HER) Please don't hit me -- I'm
only joking.

CATHERINE
Catherine with a "C" would never
raise her hand against a coworker.
But Katherine with a "K"'s liable to
snap at any time.

Catherine exits.

Bill, in a very good mood, enters, holding a copy of
the review.

BILL
So... I guess we may safely say the
critics have shined their rays of
adulation upon me once again.

He shows Dave his copy of the review, pointing out a
sentence he's highlighted.

DAVE
(READS) "Bill McNeal is adequate."

BILL
Adequate!

DAVE
(DISAPPOINTED) "Adequate"?

BILL
Yeah. (THEN) Read it again.
DAVE

"Bill McNeal is adequate." I'm sorry, Bill...

BILL

Sorry? Sorry that you weren't singled out and deemed "adequate"?

DAVE

I don't think "adequate" is the superlative you think it is.

BILL

I beg to differ. After all, adequacy is the hallmark of great journalism.

DAVE

No, it's the hallmark of adequate journalism.

BILL

And what is adequate journalism if not great journalism?

Before Dave can answer, Bill cuts him off by putting his finger to Dave's lips.

BILL (CONT'D)

Ah ah ah. We'll finish this later -- after I fulfill my duties -- with my customary... adequacivity.

DAVE

That's not a word.

BILL

(EXITING) It is now.
Exit Bill. Dave wipes his lips. He starts to read the review again.

JIMMY

Well, Dave? Can we bust out the bubbly yet?

DAVE

Just let me finish reading it, sir.

JIMMY

Right. Sorry. (BEAT) Moment of truth, huh? Yes, sir. Is Dave working out, is he in over his head--

Dave springs up.

DAVE

Going to the breakroom, sir.

JIMMY

I'm driving you nuts, huh?

DAVE

Sure are.

Dave exits into...

INT. BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

Dave crosses toward the breakroom, reading the magazine as he does. He passes Lisa.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Read it yet?

LISA

Oh, all right. Yes, Master.
He passes Matthew's desk and exits. A big stack of New York Daily News is on his desk, and Matthew is cutting at them with a scissors and laughing hysterically. Beth is reading them over his shoulder and giggling.

A beat. Dave re-enters the frame and walks back to Matthew's desk.

DAVE

Matthew, what are you doing?

MATTHEW

Dilbert strips. I'm cutting them out of the newspaper.

DAVE

Why?

MATTHEW

Research. I think there's a really good story in this. I mean they're sooo funny...

BETH

They are really funny, Dave.

DAVE

Beth, don't you have some work to do?

BETH

(READING A STRIP) Did it.

MATTHEW

I feel like I’ve made a big discovery here, David. I mean, I've got a strong hunch that this Dilbert thing might get really popular. We could be on the ground floor of this thing.
DAVE

It's not really a discovery,
Matthew. Millions of people have
already discovered the magic of
Dilbert, and enjoy it every day.

MATTHEW

Not me. I usually only read
"Apartment 3-G."

BETH

That Margo is such a bitch...

MATTHEW

Well, I wouldn't use that word, but
you're right.

DAVE

(TO BETH) I hardly need you
encouraging him.

BETH

Oh! Oh! When he says that he looks
just like Dogbert.

MATTHEW

Oh my God, he does. Say, "Hi
Dilbert, how's Ratbert?" Say it.

BETH

Say it, Dave. Please? (OFF DAVE'S
LOOK) Fine, I'm leaving.

Beth walks away.
MATTHEW

David, just promise you won't give my Dilbert story to anyone else.

DAVE

Well, I do have a lunch with Woodward and Bernstein later today, but I'll try to keep it under my hat.

MATTHEW

So I can do the story?

DAVE

No. Now, please, just clean off your desk and get back to work.

Dave exits towards his office. Matthew looks down at one of the comic strips and laughs.

MATTHEW

(CHUCKLING TO HIMSELF) Oh, what kind of mess has Mr. D. gotten himself into this time?

INT. DAVE'S OFFICE - SIMULTANEOUS

Jimmy sits at Dave's desk, talking to Beth.

BETH

(GIGGLING) And then at home, he's got this dog that talks to him about his day at work.

JIMMY

Does the dog wear glasses also?
BETH

Yes!

JIMMY

Now this is something, I have got to see!

BETH

(EXITING) Wait here, I'll show you!

JIMMY

Great!

Beth exits.

DAVE

You've never read Dilbert?

JIMMY

Hey, I stopped reading the funnies when I realized that Beetle Bailey was never going to actually shoot anybody.

DAVE

Well, I read the review.

JIMMY

It's about time. What did it say?

DAVE

You haven't read it?

JIMMY

Hey, I've been busy in here, okay?

Just summarize for me.
DAVE
It's good.

JIMMY
Yeah!

DAVE
Except for Bill being called adequate, it's great. It says we're reliable, we do a "fine job" with complex issues. It even says we're the "workhorse of New York news stations."

JIMMY
Thank God. The suspense was killing me.

Catherine and Lisa enter.

JIMMY (CONT'D)
(PROUD) Hey, ladies -- didja hear? We got a good review! I don't have to fire Dave!

LISA
The review stinks.

DAVE
Actually, I think it's very complimentary.

LISA
What?
DAVE
It says that we do a fine job--

LISA
Yes, it says we do a fine job. It calls us a "workhorse" station -- a workhorse -- and says that I, in particular, am a reliable reporter.

JIMMY
I thought that was good...

DAVE
It is. But Lisa's always fancied herself the bad girl of AM radio journalism.

LISA
Reliable's only good if you're a car or a flashlight. It means everything we do here is not great, is not innovative, just ... adequate.

JIMMY
Bill seems happy with adequate.

CATHERINE
Bill thinks having a bird crap on him is a compliment from the gods. Plus they spelled my name wrong.
DAVE
It's a great review. As a newsman,
I've been striving all my life to be
a reliable workhorse.

LISA
Okay, fine. You guys are right.
Mediocrity is great. Now, if you'll
excuse me, I have a very good story
I wrote that I need to go put
through the... mediocrifier.

DAVE
That's not a word.

LISA
Wow. No wonder you're in charge of
the news department the critics call
"competent."

Lisa exits.

INT. BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

Lisa enters and crosses to her desk. Bill is on the phone at his desk.

BILL
(TO PHONE)... It's one thing, of
course, to know you're adequate, but
to have a fellow member of the press stand up and say, "Yes! You, sir,
are adequate" -- well, let me tell you, it's a very special feeling.
Lisa exits into the foyer. Dave exits his office and follows her.

DAVE

(CALLS) Lisa...

But he stops at Matthew's desk, which has "Dilbert" strips taped all over it. Matthew is nowhere in sight.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Matthew?

Matthew pops up from behind his desk, with a roll of tape in his mouth and comic strips in his hand.

MATTHEW

(THROUGH TAPE) Mm-Mmph Mm-ing Mph --

DAVE

What?

Matthew takes the tape out of his mouth.

MATTHEW

I just thought that if people in the office read these, we might be able to do a story on how "Dilbert" is affecting our workplace harmony...

As Dave speaks, he rips Dilbert strips off Matthew's desk for emphasis.

DAVE

Matthew. There will (RIP) be (RIP) no (RIP) Dilbert story. Now just put back the rainbows and unicorns you usually cover your desk with and get to work.
MATTHEW
You know, sometimes you're just like
the boss in "Dilbert."

DAVE
Matthew, the boss in "Dilbert" is
short, and bald, and mean, and
stupid...

Dave starts to walk away.

MATTHEW

(UNDER HIS BREATH) Well, if the shoe
fits--

DAVE

Just get rid of them. Now.

Lisa is back at her desk, dialing the phone. Dave
points to the article.

DAVE (CONT'D)
If you don't like "reliable" and
"workhorse," how about this. We're
also "consistent."

LISA
Shh. (TO PHONE) Hello, is this Eugene
Myer of the New York Media Guide? Me?
Just call me "Miss X." And listen up,
Eugene -- it's cretins like you that
are destroying everything good about
radio. You wouldn't know a great
station if it bit you on your stupid,
overstuffed ass.
Lisa hangs up, a slight smile on her lips. A beat.

DAVE

Funny. I thought you didn't care about the Media Guide.

LISA

You're going to tell me that was immature.

DAVE

No, I'm going to tell you that he probably has Star 69 on his phone...

LISA

What's Star Sixty --

Her phone rings.

LISA (CONT'D)

Hang on a sec. (TO PHONE) Lisa Miller, WNYX. (FLUSTERED) Uh... hang on -- I'll check. (CALLS OUT) Is there a "Miss X" here?

Beth walks up.

BETH

(WHISPERING) Tell him I'm not here.

INT. DAVE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Dave enters. There is a Dilbert doll sitting on his desk.

DAVE

(CALLING INTO BULLPEN) Matthew!

From under Dave's desk, we hear...
MATTHEW
(DOING FUNNY VOICE) Dave? It's me. Dilbert. Matthew wanted me to tell you--

DAVE
How many times do I have to tell you this? No. We are absolutely not--

Bill enters, sees Dave talking to Dilbert doll.

BILL
Oh, I'm sorry, I didn't know you were in the middle of a meeting.

Bill exits.

Matthew gets up from behind the desk.

DAVE
What's wrong with you?

Matthew closes the door.

MATTHEW
(SINCERE) David, finding Dilbert this morning was something of a revelation to me. I used to think I was the only one who felt threatened in the workplace, who was scared of his boss and co-workers. Now I know better. I am Dilbert. You are the mean boss. Lisa is... Dogbert or something... but the point is--

HARD CUT TO:
ACT ONE

SCENE C

INT. BULLPEN - MOMENTS LATER. (D-1)
(Matthew, Dave, Bill, Joe, Beth)

Dave's door flies open. Matthew comes flying out. The door slams.

MATTHEW

David, I am going to stand here
until you read at least one--

The door opens a crack. Dave arm reaches out, holding the Dilbert doll.

DAVE (O.C.)

Matthew, this is Dilbert. Dave
wanted me to tell you that there is
absolutely no way--

Bill walks up.

BILL

Hey, little guy, when you and Dave
are done with your meeting, I need
to get in to see him.

Bill walks away. A beat. Dave exits his office, looking a little embarrassed.
DAVE

(TO OFFICE) I am going to go take a nice long walk to cool down. When I get back, I do not want to see a single Dilbert cartoon anywhere near here, and especially not in my office. (TO JOE) Do not pick the lock for him.

JOE

You got it.

DAVE

Do not dismantle the window.

JOE

Check.

DAVE

Do not, in any way, allow him to set foot in my office.

JOE

Roger.

BETH

Hey, is that a Dilbert doll? Can I see it?

DAVE

Just the head, actually. The other half's in the trash if you want it.

HARD CUT TO:
ACT ONE

SCENE D

INT. DAVE'S OFFICE - A LITTLE LATER (D-1)
(Matthew, Joe (O.C.), Dave)

The door is closed, the office is empty. Suddenly, Matthew drops from the ceiling, suspended by wires, a la Tom Cruise in "Mission Impossible." He's holding a Dilbert strip in one hand, a piece of tape in the other.

MATTHEW

(LOOKING UP) Is this really how they did it in the movie?

JOE (O.C.)

Trust me. I saw "Mission Impossible" five times.

MATTHEW

"Mission Impossible?" I thought we were talking about "Peter Pan."

Matthew tapes the comic strip to the monitor of Dave's computer. He is hanging five inches above Dave's desk.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

Okay, haul me back--

The cables snap and Matthew falls face-down on the desk.
JOE (O.C.)

You alright?

Matthew just lies there.

MATTHEW

(WEAKLY) Yeah...

JOE (O.C.)

(LAUGHS) That was really funny...

Dave opens the door and enters. Matthew is splayed on the desk.

MATTHEW

David... have a nice walk?

DAVE

What did I say about coming into my office?

MATTHEW

You said don't pick the lock, don't go through the window, and... (TO JOE) What was the other thing?

JOE (O.C.)

Don't drag me into this.

DAVE

You'd better start explaining. Fast.

Matthew stands on the desk.
MATTHEW
Alright. Because you would not
listen to me, because you locked me
out, both literally and spiritually,
I have staged a commando raid on
your office to force you to read and
learn.

Matthew taps the monitor of Dave's computer. Dave
walks over, looks at the strip.

DAVE
You want me to read this?

MATTHEW
Read it or I will be forced to
tender my resignation.

Dave takes it off the computer and rips it in half.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)
Alright, then, you leave me no
choice...I cannot continue to stay
in such a stifling work environment.

I quit. Good day, sir.

Matthew strides off the desk, not realizing that a
rope is still attached to his leg. It pulls taut, and
he takes a terrible fall.

FADE OUT

END OF ACT ONE
ACT TWO

SCENE E

FADE IN:

INT. COFFEE SHOP - MORNING (D-2)
(Dave, Lisa, Matthew)

Dave and Lisa stand in line at the coffee shop.

DAVE

Thanks for dinner last night.

LISA

You know me, ol' reliable.

DAVE

Would you stop sulking about it?

LISA

Who's sulking? I'm bitching. There's a big difference.

The people in front of them move on, and Dave and Lisa go to the front of the line.

DAVE

Okay, here we go--

And then he sees, behind a cash register covered with Dilbert comic strips, Matthew is the counterman.
MATTHEW

Good morning, sir. Would you care to
order our Mocha Frappy Deluxe?

LISA

Matthew -- what are you doing here?

MATTHEW

I'm taking your order. What'll it be?

DAVE

Alright, you've made your point, albeit
in perhaps the most moronic way
possible. Now come on up to the office.

MATTHEW

I'm sorry, David, from now on the
only place I'll be taking orders
from you is (SLAPS REGISTER) right
here. Now, do you want anything?
We're very busy...

DAVE

Matthew--

MATTHEW

(LOUD) Next!

LISA

C'mon, Matthew--

MATTHEW

Next! Next! Next!

Matthew shoos them away with his yells.

CUT TO:
ACT TWO

SCENE H

INT. DAVE'S OFFICE - A LITTLE LATER (D-2)
(Dave, Beth, Lisa, Bill)

Beth is curled up on Dave's couch; moping. Dave and Lisa enter.

DAVE

Feet off the couch.

Beth remains curled up, but lifts her feet so they're no longer touching the couch.

BETH

I can't believe he's really gone.

LISA

Matthew's not gone. He's right downstairs... working at that new coffee place.

Lisa starts laughing despite herself. Dave starts laughing too. Beth looks up; Lisa soberes immediately.

LISA (CONT'D)

(TO DAVE) This is really not a laughing matter.
BETH
Oh my God. That must be so demeaning
-- making coffee for people all day.
Wait a minute.

DAVE
Don't worry. I'm sure I can persuade
him to come back.

BETH
You better persuade him to come
back, seeing as you were the one who
"persuaded" him to quit.

DAVE
No, I didn't. Though I played an
active role in the development of
this dire situation, I wasn't the
one who threw a major-league spaz.

BETH
And what do you call ripping the
head off a Dilbert doll?

DAVE
Executive privilege.

LISA
Look, Matthew's probably incredibly
embarrassed about all the... "spaz
activity" that went on. Can you find
a way to get him back with
humiliating him?
DAVE
Well, seeing as how he quit in a
huff over a cartoon character, that
will be difficult. But yes -- I'll
find a way.

Bill enters.

LISA
Why don't you just agree to read his
stupid comic strips and be done with
it?

BILL
Is this about Spaz?

LISA
Yes.

BILL
May I make a suggestion?

DAVE
Please.

BILL
Let him sling coffee for a few more
hours. He'll get bored, he'll
realize he misses all of us, he'll
come back on his own. And when he
does come crawling back, that's when
you kick him away. Those of us who
are adequate don't need his type
around.
DAVE

Look, I'm just gonna go back down
and talk to Matthew in an hour or
so.

BETH

Why don't you go now?

DAVE

Because I don't need a refill yet.

Beth exits. Bill follows.

BILL

Well, I'm off to astonish the world
with more feats of...
adequatiquaticism.

DAVE

Not a word.

BILL

Don't care, my friend.

DISSOLVE TO:
ACT TWO

SCENE J

INT. COFFEE SHOP - A LITTLE LATER (D-2)
(Beth, Dave, Matthew, Troy)

Dave and Beth stand in line as Matthew waits on a customer in front of him. The cash register and counter are plastered with Dilbert cartoons.

BETH

Look at the poor guy. He looks so, so...

DAVE

The same...

BETH

Yeah. But I bet he's dying inside.

Thanks to you.

Matthew finishes with the customer in front of them. Dave moves to the front of the line.

MATTHEW

Well, hello, good sir. How may I be of service to you today?

DAVE

Matthew, please come back to work.
MATTHEW
Ah, begging now, are we? Well, no
thank you. Although, I have had to
take a pay cut, at least now I work
in a place where freedom of
expression is tolerated, nay
couraged.

DAVE
Please, Matthew. I feel awful about
this. And I am very, very sorry.

MATTHEW
Can I write my Dilbert story?

DAVE
I am not that sorry.

MATTHEW
Then forget it.

Matthew gestures to two beefy, punky, pierced
coworkers standing behind him.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)
Although I've only worked here a
short time, I've already grown to
love the free and open communication
that exists between Troy and Hector
and myself.

Matthew puts his arm around Troy.

TROY
Hey, new guy -- what did I tell you
about touching me?
Matthew pulls his arm back and returns to Dave.

MATTHEW

Anyway, are you going to order something or what?

DAVE

Just give me a large coffee and...

Beth? What do you want?

BETH

Do you have any fresh fruit smoothies?

MATTHEW

No, but I've already put up a petition about it in the back room.

TROY

Yeah, I tore that down. Now go mop the john.

Troy slaps Matthew on the back. As Matthew walks away, we see a napkin taped to his back which reads "SPAZ."

CUT TO:
ACT TWO

SCENE K

INT. BULLPEN/BREAKROOM - SIMULTANEOUS (D-2)
(Jimmy, Lisa, Chet, Patty, Johnny Cash)

Jimmy is standing at the door to the breakroom. Lisa walks by.

JIMMY

Oh, Lisa, there you are. Thanks for the memo.

LISA

So you think it's a good idea?

JIMMY

You want me to (READING) "buy the New York Media Guide, fire all the editors, and then use my enormous power to make sure none of them are ever hired again"?

LISA

I wrote that very quickly. I actually have a few more ideas, involving their families...
JIMMY

Why don't you just step in here for
a second?

INT. BREAKROOM - CONTINUOUS

Two men and a woman are scattered around the break
room. One of the men is hunched over in a corner,
reading something.

LISA

What's going on?

JIMMY

You remember Chet, don't you?

LISA

I'm not sure I do.

JIMMY

Of course you do. You reviewed
Chet's restaurant on the air a few
years back.

LISA

(DOESN'T RECALL) I don't think...

CHET

You remember. "Cafe Homestyle?"

LISA

(REMEMBERS) Oh my god...

CHET

It's alright. Maybe my chicken was
-- as you said -- "rubbery and
bland" the night you came in.
LISA
I'd be happy to come back and try it again.

CHET
That's nice. But the restaurant closed within a week of your review.

LISA
I'm so sorry.

CHET
Really? I thought you'd be happy, considering that in your review you said, "I predict this restaurant will close within a week".

JIMMY
Alright, easy there, Chet. Now, Patty, here, is a curator at the Guggenheim.

PATTY is a middle-aged woman with a ponytail.

LISA
Oh, right -- the Chagall exhibit.

PATTY
That's right. The "uninspired, predictable" Chagall exhibit.

LISA
To be fair, you'll have to admit that it made the limitations of the artist's vision woefully apparent.
PATTY

Maybe you're right. Maybe I should have dug him out of the ground, brought his corpse back to life, and taught him to paint better. My mistake.

JIMMY

Okay Patty, you're scaring me a little bit, so let's move on. This gentleman, of course, needs no introduction.

The man in the corner rises. It's JOHNNY CASH.

LISA

Johnny Cash?

JOHNNY CASH

(RE: PAPER HE'S HOLDING) Young lady, did you write this?

LISA

(LOOKS) Well, yeah... but that was for my high school paper.

JOHNNY CASH

I was "just going through the motions" with "Ring of Fire?"

LISA

I'm sorry, I--
JOHNNY CASH
I always give it one hundred
percent, especially when I sing
"Ring of Fire." You hear what I'm
sayin'?

LISA
I know, I was just trying to...
(THEN) You read high school
newspapers, and keep the bad reviews
they give you?

JOHNNY CASH
Nah, Jimmy just gave it to me now.
(SLAPS PAPER) That burns me up.

JIMMY
Alright, gang, your work here is
done.

Chet and Patty exit.

JOHNNY CASH
We still on for tonight, Jimbo?

JIMMY
Got my conga drums in the car, my
man!

Johnny exits. Jimmy turns to Lisa.

JIMMY (CONT'D)
Alright, Lisa, what lessons have we
learned today?
LISA
That holding a grudge about a bad review is about the worst thing you can do...

JIMMY
Yes, go on.

LISA
That the review we got wasn't even such a bad one...

JIMMY
Two for two. Now, let's go for the hat trick...

LISA
And...

JIMMY
C'mon, think.

LISA
That you're on a first-name basis with the man in black.

Jimmy puts his arm around Lisa.

JIMMY
Hot damn! I feel like I just deprogrammed you from a cult or something.

DISSOLVE TO:
ACT TWO

SCENE L

INT. MEN'S ROOM/BULLPEN - A LITTLE LATER (D-2) (Dave, Bill, Jimmy, Catherine, Johnny Cash)

Dave enters. Bill is washing his hands.

DAVE

Everything going adequately today,

Bill?

BILL

Very adequately, sir. I'm virtually overflowing with adequasticism.

Bill exits. Dave shakes his head. A beat. Bill re-enters and closes the door.

BILL (CONT'D)

(HUSHED) Okay, look -- you think I don't know that "adequate" sucks? Of course I do. Being called "adequate" is like getting a C-minus in grade school. And I'm not used to getting C-minuses.

DAVE

Well, I can understand when you're used to being an A student--
BILL

I wasn't an A student. I was never an A student. I got straight C-minuses all the way -- but I never got used to it.

DAVE

Why didn't you just admit that it hurt?

BILL

I tried to talk to you about yesterday, but you were behind closed doors with your little doll friend. Everything else about the station is "reliable" and "workhorse-like" and I'm merely adequate?

Dave opens the door, looks outside to make sure no one's listening, closes the door.

DAVE

You think I was actually happy with "reliable"? With "workhorse"? You know what a workhorse is? It's a Budweiser Clydesdale pulling a fake beer truck through a state fair parking lot while a bunch of drunken yahoos throw cherry bombs at it.

BILL

(BEAT) You miss Wisconsin, don't you...
DAVE

That review was like a dagger
through my heart. I just didn't want
Mr. James to know we'd gotten a bad
review.

A toilet flushes. Jimmy exits one of the stalls and
crosses to wash his hands.

JIMMY

Do me a favor, fellas. The next time
I pay off a magazine editor to give
us a glowing review, why don't you
two pick out the words yourself?

BILL

You bought the review?

JIMMY

I bought the magazine.

DAVE

Isn't that a conflict of interest?

JIMMY

(SARCASTICALLY) Oh yeah -- that
never happens in the media world.
The only mistake I made was spelling
Catherine's name wrong, and I've
taken care of that.

HARD CUT TO:

INT. BULLPEN - SIMULTANEOUS

Catherine sits at the conference table with Johnny
Cash.
JOHNNY CASH
And it was supposed to be called "A Boy Named Lou," but someone typed it up wrong so it said "A Boy Named Sue." "Sue"? What kind of name is that for a boy. But that started me thinking and... well, I think you know the rest.

CATHERINE
I never thought of it that way.

JOHNNY CASH
Honey, when you've been in Folsom Prison, you realize spelling ain't nothing but a bunch of letters.

DISSOLVE TO:
ACT TWO

SCENE M

INT. COFFEE SHOP - 5:15 PM (D-2)
(Dave, Matthew, Lisa, Bill, Catherine, Joe, Beth, Guy)

Matthew is wiping the counter, no one is standing in line. The entire staff, except Jimmy, enters and approaches him.

DAVE
Matthew... we've come to ask you to come back to work.

MATTHEW
(DOESN'T LOOK UP) Nothing doing. I'm very happy here.

LISA
Please, Matthew, doesn't it mean anything to you that we've humbled ourselves by coming like this?

BILL
Oh, I didn't realize I was humbling myself. Goodbye.

Bill starts to walk away. Catherine grabs him.
CATHERINE
Get back here.

JOE
Dude, just come back to work.

MATTHEW
No! Not unless I can write my
Dilbert story.

DAVE
Matthew, do you know who this is?

Dave beckons. A slightly balding guy with glasses
walks up.

MATTHEW
I don't believe we've met.

GUY
Hi, Matthew. Scott Adams.

MATTHEW
Oh my god. The Scott Adams? The
creator-of-Dilbert Scott Adams?

GUY
One and the same. Now Dave here has
told me a little about the
situation, and I have to say...
Dilbert would never do this.

MATTHEW
He wouldn't?
GUY
No. Dilbert would never quit a job
at a place where people loved him,
and cared about him, and accepted
him for who he is.

MATTHEW
I guess, but...

GUY
Come on, Matthew. Come back to your
family. Do it for Dilbert. Do it for
Dogbert. Do it for Matthewbert.

MATTHEW
Wow. Matthewbert...

Matthew thinks a beat, takes his apron off, tosses it
on the ground, and vaults over the counter. The staff
applauds and exits. Dave and Catherine remain.

CATHERINE
I didn't know you knew Scott Adams.

DAVE
I don't. That guy's just an out-of-
work actor who lives across the hall
from me.

CATHERINE
Oh. Does he know how to draw?

DAVE
No -- why?
CATHERINE

(LOOKING OUTSIDE) Because I think
Matthew's trying to get him to draw
a Dilbert on his chest.

Dave bolts out the door.

FADE OUT

END OF ACT TWO