

Humor Me

"It's time for your next act..."

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ACT ONE

EXT. WIT'S END COMEDY CLUB - THURSDAY NIGHT (ESTABLISHING)

Wit's End is a comedy club in Framingham, Massachusetts. It sits in a strip mall between a nail salon and a GNC. AC/DC's *Thunderstruck* spills out into the half-full parking lot. The digital marquee announces the week's line-up: Howie Wagman, Ely Busgang, Eddie Slade. The LED sign flickers ominously.

INT. THE CLUB - NIGHT

Inside the club, *Thunderstruck* plays over the sound system.

We see quick shots of the sparse audience scattered across this club: a STAGETTE committed to getting drunk way too early, an OFFICE PARTY where no one is in danger of sleeping together, and FIRST DATES where they probably will.

INT. THE CLUB - SOUND BOOTH

At the back, in the sound booth, watching is KIM SLADE, 40. Kim's the manager. She'd rather be your friend than boss, but she's good at both. She's funny, blunt, sexy and playful.

EDDIE SLADE, 45, steps inside the booth. He's the club's emcee and Kim's husband. He's a chubby, likable-enough loser, with a slight edge. A home town "hero" with the fame of a local weatherman who never made it in a big market.

They bob to the music, like they have a thousand times before and sing out with Angus Young.

KIM/EDDIE

Thunder! Thunder!

Kim plays with the soundboard, never looking at Eddie.

KIM

When you get out of the shower, know how I can tell if you've masturbated?

EDDIE

(wary)

I'm wet?

KIM

You bring your cell in with you to watch porn. Tonight you left it on our bed.

(to music)

Thunder!

Kim holds up Eddie's cell. He sighs in relief.

EDDIE

Jesus, Kimmy, I thought I lost it.

KIM

Too bad you didn't jerk off tonight, I'd have missed this text from the lovely...

(off phone)

Hannah?

EDDIE

(playing dumb)

Hannah? Hannah? Oh, Hannah! She was a caterer from the club's anniversary party last week. She wants to do stand-up. I said if she had questions to text me.

KIM

What question was she asking when she sent a photo of her huge, naked boobs?

Eddie sees the tit-pic on his phone. He winces.

EDDIE

"Should I be a prop comic?"

(then)

I can explain --

KIM

Don't. All I want from you tonight is what I want every night: not to do anything so stupid you shut us down, you gross dirt bag.

(into the mic, cheerfully)

Welcome to *Wit's End Comedy Club*.

Celebrating 15 years of broken trust and making you laugh. Now, put your hands together for your emcee... Framingham's favorite funnyman -- Eddie Slade.

INT. THE CLUB - STAGE

Eddie bounds up on the stage into the spotlight. He's home.

EDDIE

Thanks for coming out on a Thursday night. How many of you are just here because your Groupon was expiring?

(cheers from the crowd)

I've had a bad day, folks. My wife just found a photo of some chick's hooters on my cell. I told her it was a selfie.

(MORE)

EDDIE (CONT'D)

Now I gotta wax my chest and get a butterfly tattoo by the next time she sees me with my shirt off.

SONYA REDDY, 22, pokes her head into the booth. She's free-spirited, quirky, and sick of well-meaning racists asking where she's from. She gives Sonya a sympathetic look.

SONYA

That true?

KIM

Afraid so.

SONYA

Talk about too soon.

KIM

That's my husband. His first 9/11 joke only had one plane.

INT. THE BAR

ROBERT HAYWARD, 32, fills drink orders. He's sarcastic, and playful. He hates giving bartender advice - even though he's damn good at it.

CLAIRE STUBINSKI, 30, approaches. She's cool, optimistic and almost as confident as she pretended to be in college.

CLAIRE

(teasingly)

Robert, one of the girls at the stagette table wants to know if you're siiiiiingle.

ROBERT

I hope it's the one who's on her fifth Crème de menthe shooter. That's how I like my women - liquored up and sticky!

ELY "BUZZY" BUSGANG, 27, the nerdy, unofficial house comic sits at the end of the bar. He reads off a recipe card.

BUZZY

Hey, is this funny? "Things weren't easy for me as a boy. I was beat up because I was Jewish... So, I left Hebrew school."

CLAIRE

A little anti-Semitic, Buzzy.

BUZZY

But I'm a Jew! Old school circumcision.

Buzzy points at his crotch as Sonya runs in, bursting to tell the Kim-Eddie news.

SONYA

You guys are so not gonna believe it. Kim *just* found a titty-pic on Eddie's cell, and now he's doing jokes about it.

ROBERT

Eddie - doing new jokes? You're right, I don't believe it.

SONYA

It's not funny. It's the worst thing ever!

Claire and Robert give Sonya disbelieving looks.

SONYA (cont'd)

I was gonna ask Kim if I could do weekend sets. Now she'll be all mad and say no.

CLAIRE

Phew. For a second I thought this was somehow not going to be about you.

Sonya jokingly gives Claire the finger.

SONYA

I deserve weekends. I was checking out Howie Wagman on YouTube - he's been doing the same closer for so long, in one video he had a perm and puka shells.

BUZZY

Ah! The sumo wrestler bit. The first time I saw it I was 19. Didn't stop laughing until I was 22.

(off Sonya's look)

But *now*? Now I find it sexist and sophomoric. A sumo wrestler getting orally pleased? Not for me.

SONYA

Should I ask Kim for weekends even though she just found out Eddie cheated on her?

BUZZY

Yes, you should. You have one of the funniest minds on the comedy scene. And I'd say that even if we weren't...

(makes classic finger through hole gesture)

Although, I'm very glad we are.

SONYA
I fucking love you.

She gives Buzzy a big kiss and exits. Claire looks at Buzzy.

CLAIRE
You know you just sent her into the
lion's den, right?

ROBERT
Could be awhile before...
(finger through the hole)
...this happens again.

Buzzy slumps back onto his stool.

INT. THE STAGE

Eddie continues on stage. He's doing... well, okay.

EDDIE
I'm not saying her breasts are fake, but
they said they wanted to be my friend
then stabbed me in the back. Seriously,
her breasts are so fake, CNN called them
news! Okay, that joke was lame.

FRANCIS (O.S.)
The word lame is offensive!

EDDIE
Okay then! That joke was 'disabled'.

Eddie spots FRANCIS HARPER, 35. He has a waxed moustache,
foppish suit and is in a wheelchair. Eddie backs off.

EDDIE (cont'd)
Oops. Didn't see your situation, buddy.
Thanks for coming out.
(to crowd)
Know what's funny, folks?

FRANCIS
Not you.

EDDIE
To spice up our sex life, my wife wanted
to see *Fifty Shades of Grey*. So I showed
her my underwear.

FRANCIS
What a current joke. What's next? Gone
With the Wind?

EDDIE

Sex is important, right? I mean, any guy who tells you it isn't, is either lying... or just finished having sex.

FRANCIS

If humor's the best medicine, you're the placebo.

More people are laughing now at Francis than Eddie.

EDDIE

Pal, you wanna be a stand-up? Then stand up. I may suck at comedy, but I'm good at walking. Look at me, Ma! Look at me!

Eddie tap dances. He ends with a windmill, and STARK SILENCE. Long beat. Francis slowly wheels away. The squeak of his wheels is the only sound we hear.

INT. THE OFFICE

Kim is on the phone in her cluttered office.

KIM

We'll see you Saturday night... I'm also excited about the possibility. Bye, now.

Kim hangs up as Sonya marches in.

SONYA

(blurting out)

Hey, Kimmy, I know this may not be the best time to ask, but we're both here, so why not. Can I open this weekend? I've worked out my stuff at other gigs --

KIM

You're not ready for weekends.

SONYA

I am too. I'm funny.

KIM

You're very funny, Sonya, but your act doesn't build, it just... ends. Maybe that's cool in indie rooms, but in the clubs you need a closer. Watch Howie Wagman's - it's one of the best.

SONYA

It's two-minutes of some sumo dude getting a blow-job!

KIM

Which is longer than any guy's lasted when I gave one.

Sonya snort-laughs in surprise.

SONYA

Oh my God, did you just say that?

KIM

See? Blow job jokes - funny. How's this? If it's okay with Howie, I'll give you 10 minutes tonight. You kill it - we might put you on this weekend.

SONYA

Awesomeness. Thanks! Oh, and I got tons of dick pics on my phone from exes. I can send you some to make Eddie jealous.

KIM

As tempting as that sounds, I'm going to say no. But I'll look at a couple later for kicks.

Sonya exits. Kim goes back to doing paperwork.

INT. THE BAR - NIGHT

Claire leans on the bar as she watches Robert pour.

CLAIRE

Oh my God, last Friday's 15th anniversary party! Man, was I drunk.

ROBERT

You weren't *that* drunk.

CLAIRE

Uhm, then why'd I call in sick on Saturday. Hungover! Because Friday I was hammered. Can't remember a thing. Nothing. Which is very uncharacteristic.

JOE (O.S.)

There's my girl.

Claire spins around to see OFFICER JOE KOENIG, 36. Handsome, shiny, bland, innocuous.

CLAIRE

Joey! What are you doing here?

Joe hands Claire a cup of take-out coffee.

JOE
Bringing my gal her favorite cup of
coffee.

CLAIRE
Aw. Look, Robbie, I got my favorite joe
from my favorite *Joe*.

From a shelf behind the bar, Robert hands Claire a Cheshire
Cat mug. Claire transfers the takeout coffee into it.

ROBERT
What's that? Three weeks in a row with
the favorite coffee, Joe? It's a good
thing Claire doesn't work in a place that
serves their own--
(spots coffee pot on bar)
Oh, my God! Where did that come from?

JOE
Difference is the coffee I bring Claire
is single source. Although, I do see the
humor in what you were going for.

ROBERT
Do you though? Really? 'Cause it was
pretty friggin' funny.

Robert turns and wipes down the bar.

JOE
So, Claire-bear, I got four days off
after tonight. We should go up to my
cabin. We could hunt one day, you could
go into town and shop the next.

CLAIRE
Do cabins have Wi-Fi?

JOE
Not this one. Think about it, and I'll
see you after work?

CLAIRE
You certainly will, Officer Hot-bod.

Joe exits. Claire picks up her coffee and looks at Robert.

CLAIRE (cont'd)
That sounds horrible. Maybe he'll go
Cheney on me and shoot me in the face so
I have an excuse to go home.

ROBERT

If it helps, I was going to ask if you wanted to see the Sox play on Tuesday.

CLAIRE

Against my Tigers?! I'm going to miss Miguel Cabrera! No! That doesn't help!

Frustrated, Claire storms out. Robert goes back to pouring.

INT. THE FOYER

Kim exits her office to see Francis coming out of the bathroom. She runs over to help him manage the door.

KIM

How you enjoying the show, sir?

FRANCIS

So far, not at all. I may be 'crippled' but not with laughter. And, as a man who is disabled, I can make that joke.

KIM

Oh, shit. You're Francis Harper from The Daily News.

FRANCIS

I also do 'Wake Up, Framingham' Friday mornings at 5:00.

KIM

If my husband offended you, let me offer you my apologies.

FRANCIS

You're the wife? Let me offer you my apologies.

Kim has a wonderful fake laugh. She uses it now.

KIM

You're funny! You should be a comedian.

FRANCIS

I hear that all the time
(then)
Better finish reviewing the show. Your husband may mock my disability, but nothing can take away my dignity!

Francis wheels back toward the club. His chair has toilet paper stuck on the wheel. Round and round it goes. Kim toys with taking it off, then decides to let things be.

INT. THE BAR

Robert cleans up. Sonya takes a break at the bar. HOWIE WAGMAN, 38, the headliner, enters. He's slow, sloppy and his dad-bod's morphed into a fat bod.

HOWIE

Hey, minimum-wage earners, good to be back, not really but, let's pretend --

SONYA

Howie, could I do a set before you?

HOWIE

Sure. If I get to serve a few of your tables first! In other words, nope.

(to Robert)

Give me the Ray Romano cheese bread, The Jerk Chicken Wings, Bernie Mac and Cheese, and a piece of Carrot Top Cake.

ROBERT

Sorry. New policy. You're only allowed one pun-named item per night.

HOWIE

Since when?

ROBERT

Since you ate five slices of Louis C Cheesecake. Which we've discontinued, by the way.

INT. THE CLUB - NIGHT

Eddie works the crowd. He sees Claire clearing a table.

EDDIE

That's Claire. She has a doctorate. What was the name of your paper?

CLAIRE

Alice's Vacillation between Childhood and Adolescence in 'Alice in Wonderland'.

EDDIE

Don't worry, on your bill, she'll write 'thanks' and draw a happy face. And give her your business card, she'll enter it in our draw. First prize is two tickets to a show featuring me!

FRANCIS

What's second prize? Four tickets?

EDDIE

You're back? I thought you rolled home.
What a perfect time to bring up your next
act. Please welcome a guy who hangs out
here more than I do, Ely 'Buzzy' Busgang.

Buzzy walks on stage. Eddie exits. Buzzy looks at the crowd.

BUZZY

Why is it tough guys always want to know
what your problems is? They're always,
"You got a problem? What's your problem?"
They always wanna know your problem, but
have no interest in helping you solve it.

INT. THE KITCHEN

Claire approaches Sonya - who's picking up food at the pass.

CLAIRE

I need to talk to you, but you have to
promise to keep it a secret.

SONYA

I can keep a secret.

CLAIRE

You told everybody I farted at yoga.

SONYA

Dude, it went on for 12 seconds. The
world had to know.

CLAIRE

How's your sex life with Buzzy?

SONYA

Amazing. Why is that a secret?

CLAIRE

That's not the secret... Wait, amazing?

SONYA

Why wouldn't it be?

CLAIRE

Because... well, it's Buzzy.

SONYA

The Buzz-man gets the job done. Oh, man!
Does Joe suck at sex?

CLAIRE

No! He's great. Forget I said anything.

SONYA

Uh-unh. A girl can't start talking about her sex life and then leave.

CLAIRE

Really? Because look at me, Claire Stubinkski, not talking about her sex life and leaving.

SONYA

Small penis, right?!

CLAIRE

Wrong! Nice and normal penis! Not too big, not too small. He's got the baby bear of penises.

SONYA

That sounds like it would chafe.

Kim walks up to the pass. She points to a burger and fries.

KIM

Who's the Bill Burr-ger for?

SONYA

Eddie.

Kim grabs it and takes a huge bite.

CLAIRE

We're mad at Eddie too!

Kim hands the burger to Claire. She takes a revenge bite.

KIM

The guy in the wheelchair's from the Daily News. Tonight he puts out his *Best Bets* for the weekend, and we need to be on it. Give him the best service ever.

Claire and Sonya have to give a thumbs up because they're both devouring Eddie's meal.

KIM (cont'd)

What were you talking about?

SONYA

Claire's boyfriend has a baby bear penis.

CLAIRE

He does not! The thing is, even though Joe's solid in the bedroom, he's lacking in one area. You know...

Claire raises her eyebrows, gestures awkwardly, smiles.

KIM

Going down on you. Just say it, Claire.
You're not at grandma's!

SONYA

That's a big thing to be bad at. It's
like having a kitten that's not cute.

CLAIRE

It's sad. He'll be down there forever,
finally look up, and it's like he's
saying, "Anything, do you feel anything?"

SONYA

And you're like, "Well, I feel a little
cleaner!"

The women laugh hysterically. Then, Kim looks at Claire.

KIM

Claire, if Joe's not doing it right, tell
him. Better yet, make him do it until he
gets good or he gets lockjaw.

Kim takes the remainder of the burger and fries and exits.

CLAIRE

So, is Buzzy good at it?

SONYA

Staggering! The boy's tongue is like a
restaurant pager.

Sonya makes a pager humming sound. Claire cringes at this.

CLAIRE

Here's the thing, if Joe can ask Siri
where Tom Brady lives, why can't he ask
Siri to find his girlfriend's damn
clitoris? (pronounces it CLI-tor-is)"

SONYA

It's clitoris. (pronounces it cli-TOR-is)

CLAIRE

Really? Wow. I've been saying it wrong
my entire life.

INT. THE BAR - CONTINUOUS

Claire and Sonya are giggling when they enter the bar.

CLAIRE

They should've taught us how to say it in sixth grade when they took us girls to another room to watch that "special" film.

Sonya snort-laughs as she places Howie's food down.

HOWIE

It just doesn't look like a meal unless there are two other meals beside it.

Claire sees Robert, curiously watching her.

ROBERT

What's so funny?

CLAIRE

Nothing. Waitress humor.

Claire runs over to Sonya. They whisper between each other.

CLAIRE (cont'd)

I already forgot which way to say it.

SONYA

Cli-TOR-is. Rhymes with 'hit OR miss'.

CLAIRE

Which is appropriate, considering how often Joe finds it.

This sends Claire and Sonya back into hysterics. Robert's interest is piqued.

INT. THE OFFICE

Kim takes the last bite of her Bill Burr-ger. Eddie enters.

EDDIE

Aha! I knew you took my supper!

KIM

You sexted to our caterer and I ate your food. I'll let you know when we're even.

EDDIE

I didn't ask her to send that picture. It was non-consensual. If anything, I'm the victim here... Too far?

(then)

I was thinking, you know that corporate gig you got me Saturday?

(MORE)

EDDIE (CONT'D)

They gave me a suite. You should come with. We'll make it a romantic weekend.

KIM

I need to be here. See if "Hannah's" free. You can take naked Instagram photos. Use the Walden filter. It makes white trash look whiter.

EDDIE

You're being ridiculous... they don't allow nudity on Instagram.

Kim shakes her head and gets up from her desk.

KIM

You can't stop making jokes, can you? Just don't make any more about the man in the wheelchair.

EDDIE

Dickbag Professor X?

KIM

That Dickbag is Francis Harper.

EDDIE

New phone, who dat?

KIM

The arts critic. Him making us his *Best Bet* is the difference between a sold out Saturday show and us asking the audience to sit up close to look like a crowd.

EDDIE

Got it. Not one more joke about wheelchair guy, I swear. Besides, it's not like he can stand up for himself.

An exasperated Kim exits. Eddie calls out.

EDDIE (cont'd)

C'mon, you gotta give me that one!
(nothing, then, sighing)
I'm screwed.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. THE FOYER

Robert lurks around the door of the women's bathroom. Sonya exits. Robert steps out in front of her, startling her.

SONYA

AAAHH! Rob! You scared me. Thank God I just peed or I would've just peed.

ROBERT

What were you and Claire laughing about? And you can act like you're not gonna tell me, but we both know you will.

SONYA

Ughhh, you're right. I'm so gonna tell you! I'd suck as a spy.

(then)

Answer one thing first: how many times does a guy need to have sex before he's awesome at it?

ROBERT

If you ask the guy, 5. If you ask the woman, 105 and all with her. Now talk.

Sonya looks around, then leans in to spill the beans.

INT. THE BAR

Eddie's at the bar. Howie eats a sandwich. There's another on a plate. Egg salad spills out of the bread and splats on Howie's arm. He licks it off. Eddie shudders. Robert returns.

EDDIE

Finally. Pour me a drink.

ROBERT

One shot of regret coming up.

Robert pours Eddie his bourbon. Francis wheels into the bar area. Eddie apprehensively turns to him.

EDDIE

Can I help you there, buddy?

FRANCIS

I texted some friends to meet me. Just seeing if they arrived.

EDDIE

That must mean you're enjoying the show?

FRANCIS
Now that you're off, yes.

EDDIE
Yep. I am one unfunny, able-ist bastard.

FRANCIS
(eyeing Howie's food)
Those look good. I'm so hungry I could
eat my foot. Its not like I need it.

Eddie grabs the plate from a stunned Howie.

EDDIE
Have a sandwich on the house, pal.

Francis takes the plate and bites into the sandwich. He chews
as he talks.

FRANCIS
Ever wonder what came first, the chicken
or the egg salad sandwich?

EDDIE
Funny guy. Funny guy.

FRANCIS
Don't even think of stealing it.

Francis exits. Kim enters just in time to see him exit.

KIM
Why was he here? What happened?

HOWIE
Eddie gave away my sandwich to Timmy from
South Park. "TIMMEH!"

Kim looks out to make sure Francis didn't hear this.

KIM
Howie, you can't make jokes like that. We
respect diversity here. Unless you're old
like Eddie, then go for it.

EDDIE
Hey!

KIM
Wait. Sandwiches? We don't serve
sandwiches! I wanted to, but couldn't
think of any comedian puns.

ROBERT
The Adam Sand-wich-ler?

KIM
Ah, it was sitting right there!
(to Howie)
Where'd you get that?

HOWIE
(greedily chewing)
Staff-room fridge.

KIM
Those are leftovers from our party.

Howie stops chewing. He spits a mouthful out.

HOWIE
Which was today at 6:00, right?

ROBERT
Last Friday, and they didn't taste fresh then.

KIM
For Chrissake, Eddie! Francis Harper is now eating food poisoning on rye.

EDDIE
Do wheelchair people call it the runs or maybe just 'the wheels'?

KIM
Enough! Buzzy's almost off. Get back out there and be nice!

Kim and Eddie exit. Robert sees Howie studying his sandwich, sniffing it as he contemplates another bite.

ROBERT
Nope.

EXT. FOYER

Sonya waits in the foyer, pacing and pissed. Buzzy exits from the comedy club and sees Sonya.

BUZZY
You didn't watch my set?

SONYA
Why are you so awesome at sex?

BUZZY

A: Thank you and B: what the hell?

SONYA

I was telling Claire how good you were and she was like, "really?"

BUZZY

Sonya, how I perform in bed is personal. That's why I don't put it on my résumé. That and because I don't know if it's a hobby or special interest. That's funny. Should I do that --

SONYA

Shh. At first I'm like, who cares what Claire thinks, I got me a boy who's good at what's good. Then I thought about it, and it bugged me. So I talked to Robert --

BUZZY

Of course you did.

SONYA

You said you'd hardly been with anyone before me. For a sex newbie, you sure know your way around a vag!

Kim exits from her office into the foyer.

KIM

Buzzy, you're smart. How long does it take egg salad to go bad?

BUZZY

To me, it goes bad the exact moment it becomes egg salad, but to the health board five days - assuming proper refrigeration.

KIM

(counting backwards)
Friday, Saturday Sunday, Monday,
Tuesday... Dammit!

SONYA

Kim, I asked Howie if I could do a set and he said no. Can you ask him?

KIM

Sonya, I love you, but I will drop-kick you if you don't get back to your tables!

Sonya rolls here eyes then heads back to the main room. She calls out to Buzzy.

SONYA
We are not done here!

BUZZY
(to Kim)
I gotta go, but I'll be right back.

KIM
I don't care.

As Buzzy exits out the front door, Kim hears the BEEPING of a van. She looks out to the parking lot. Her face deflates. She drops her head - leaning it on the exit door in defeat.

INT. - THE BAR

Robert cuts limes. Howie drinks Pepto-Bismol from the bottle. Claire walks up and sips coffee from her Cheshire Cat cup.

ROBERT
What are you and Joe doing after work?

CLAIRE
Grabbing a bite.

ROBERT
You gonna eat in or... eat out?

CLAIRE
Out, I think.

ROBERT
Cool. Oh, I've been trying to think of this word and it won't come to me.

CLAIRE
Ask me. I know lots of words. In high school my nickname was Thesaurus-Rex.

ROBERT
No it wasn't.

CLAIRE
Well, it should've been. What's the word?

ROBERT
It's when somebody shows a lack of skill or aptitude... Ooh, it's right on the *tip of my tongue*.

Robert smiles. Claire gets it, just as Sonya enters.

CLAIRE

You have a big mouth.

SONYA

No! No, no, no! This is on you for having such hard secrets to keep.

ROBERT

Don't blame Sonya. We're adults here. And don't worry, Joe will get better. Just don't rub it in his face.

Sonya punches Robert hard on the shoulder as Kim enters.

KIM

Howie, are you okay with disabled people?

HOWIE

No. But I'm ashamed of it. Why?

KIM

The audience is now full of them.

HOWIE

I can deal. I'll bump up my closer. They like blow jobs, right? Shit, what if they don't because they can't feel anything? I'm gonna suck. Augh, the irony!

INT. THE STAGE

Eddie looks out into the audience. Francis and 10 PATRONS who are DISABLED stare back. Breaking the silence is BREATHING.

EDDIE

People are saying that Idris Elba could be the next James Bond. I can see his first movie - *Dr. Oh No You Didn't*.

ROBOTIC VOICE (V.O.)

Racist.

EDDIE

Anyone go to the Women's March? It was great until 100,000 women realized they were all wearing the same hat.

ANGRY DISABLED WOMAN

Hashtag timesup!

Eddie looks to the back. He sees Kim pointing to Howie.

EDDIE

Fuck it. Put your hands together for your headliner -- Howie Wagman.

Weak APPLAUSE-- a nauseous Howie hits the stage.

HOWIE

Hi, everyone. I joined a gym, and that's the joke right there. People say to try swimming to lose weight. Thing is, there's never a two-hour period where I haven't just eaten.

Kim watches from the sound booth as Howie struggles.

KIM

(into mic/over P.A system)
Do the blow job bit, already!

BACK ON STAGE:

HOWIE

Well, that was subtle.
(then)
You know who gets tons of sex? Jocks. Football, hockey, soccer, but what about sumo wrestlers?

This gets a laugh. Howie eases into this bit like a pair of hacky bedroom slippers.

HOWIE (cont'd)

They're athletes, they got groupies, right? With that in mind, my impression of a sumo wrestler getting head.

Howie mimes a sumo wrestler's stance. He slaps his legs, stomps his feet, throws the salt. We realize the "deed" is now happening. As the sumo wrestler gets close to his end, Howie puffs up his face, then his body. LAUGHTER, APPLAUSE. Howie lets out a cry.

HOWIE (cont'd)

ARRRRRRRRRH!

SQUISHY FARTING SOUND-- The bad egg salad has won.

ROBOTIC VOICE (V.O.)

Ha-ha-ha.

Kim watches, stunned at what she just witnessed.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. THE BAR

Eddie, Robert, Claire and Sonya are at the bar. Kim races in.

KIM

I wish I was speaking metaphorically, but our headliner just crapped his pants. Claire, out on the floor. Next round's on the house. Robert, pour like you've never poured before. Eddie, back on stage --

EDDIE

But they hate my guts!

KIM

And that's why you're bringing up Sonya.
(to Sonya)
You up for this?

SONYA

Nah, I'm not feeling it, right now.
(then)
I'm kidding! I'm kidding! Thank you!

Sonya jumps for joy as everyone else does as Kim ordered.

INT. THE STAGE

Eddie lumbers back on the now empty stage. The audience is still shocked. Eddie waves his hand to dissipate the smell.

EDDIE

Talk about shitting where you work.
What's the heaviest thing in the world?
Poop! Even Superman can't hold it.

This gets a tepid response.

FRANCIS

Bring back the defecating man. At least he was *funny* while he stunk up the stage.

EDDIE

All right, that one wasn't bad. Anyway, you may recognize your next act from when she rolled her eyes at you earlier tonight, please welcome... Sonya Reddy.

Sonya practically leaps on stage.

SONYA

What's up, world? This is my impression of that older woman in your fitness class who is shocked but thrilled when the instructor high-fives her.

Sonya does this odd, specific impression. It gets a laugh.

SONYA (cont'd)

Who am I kidding, I don't work out. Only time I run is when somebody barfs near me. Then I'm a fucking antelope!

INT. THE BAR

Claire walks up to Robert.

CLAIRE

Three Harpoons and a gin and tonic.
(then, seething)
You know what bugs me? You know what sticks in my craw?

ROBERT

That you're the only person under 80 who has a craw?

CLAIRE

It's not that you know *that* about Joe. It's that *this* is how you'll define him. Not that he's sweet, kind, he loves me, and I miss him when he's not around.

ROBERT

You didn't miss him last Friday.

CLAIRE

Oh. You wanna go there? Fine! It was a party, I was drunk! We had a one-night stand. Meaning it lasts *one night*. What Joe and I have is real, and our sex will get good. It'll get amazing.

ROBERT

What's bugging you isn't the sex. It's the coffee.

CLAIRE

The coffee from *Cool Beans*? Why would that bug me? No, you know what, forget it. I don't care what you think.

ROBERT

Fine.

Claire starts to exit. She pauses, then returns.

CLAIRE

Why does Joe bringing me coffee from *Cool Beans* bug me?

ROBERT

Because he doesn't know you like drinking it from your favorite cup.

CLAIRE

What?

ROBERT

Your Cheshire Cat cup. The cup that warms your hands as you clutch it, and holds the perfect amount of brew so you just finish it before it gets too cold. The cup you take home every Saturday so, and this is a guess, you can drink from it while you're wearing a cozy bathrobe and doing the Sunday crossword.

CLAIRE

Why would I be mad at that?

ROBERT

Because you can teach a guy how to be better in bed, but you can't teach him to be the kind of man who knows a woman has a favorite cup.

CLAIRE

You pretend telling me this is doing me a favor. But you're glad it makes me sad. And the word for that is *schadenfreude*.

ROBERT

Wow. Your nickname should've been *Thesaurus-Rex*.

Claire takes her tray of drinks and exits. Robert watches her go, feeling like a jerk.

INT. THE CLUB - SOUND BOOTH

Kim watches from the sound booth, making small adjustments to Sonya's sound levels. Laughter is heard. Eddie enters.

EDDIE

She's not doing too bad. Sonya.

KIM

Just so you know, I don't blame you, I blame *An Officer and a Gentleman*.

Eddie fiddles with the levels. He gives Kim a look.

KIM (cont'd)

Richard Gere was my first crush. I was ten. My sister and I watched that movie so many times we wore out the tape. That's what I thought love was. A gorgeous man carrying a less gorgeous woman off to happiness. I guess I expected every man to be my Zack Mayo.

EDDIE

10-year-old Kim got it wrong. You are Richard Gere. The hero. Always.

KIM

And you're who... Debra Winger?

EDDIE

Nah. I'm that dumb friend who claps at the end as Debra Winger's carried away.

(then)

We got a good thing here. Kimmy. You and me, emcee and manager, husband and wife.

Kim looks at Eddie for a couple beats.

KIM

I'm thinking of selling.

EDDIE

Selling what? Your soul? Out? Tupperware?

KIM

The club to *Guffaws*. Their franchising person's coming Saturday. I'd still manage, we'd just be part of a chain.

EDDIE

Were you even gonna ask me?

KIM

No, I was going to tell you. It's my club, Ed.

EDDIE

Sure, your parents' money opened it, but I was the one who did every morning show. Every newspaper interview, charity event. You may own the club but I built it.

(MORE)

EDDIE (CONT'D)

(realizing)

Is that why you got me that corporate gig, you didn't want me here on Saturday?

KIM

Guffaws knows you. They wanted to see who else we had. If I sell, they're fine with you being emcee, most weekends.

Kim exits, leaving Eddie behind. Eddie tears up.

EDDIE

Why couldn't she just be cheating on me?

INT. THE STAGE

Sonya is having her best set ever.

SONYA

I'm watching baseball with my boyfriend and a picture of J.D. Martinez come up. I go, "Oooh, he's hot! And single." My boyfriend's like, "a 'single' is what he hit last bat". I'm pretty sure he made that up so I won't stalk J.D. Martinez.

The audience laughs. At the back of the room, Buzzy enters. He has his knapsack. He's thrilled to see Sonya on stage.

SONYA (cont'd)

Oh, and my fella is great at sex. Thank. God. I had one boyfriend. Horrible. For sake of this joke we'll call him... Travis Dorrance of 924 Learned Street. The only way the guy could please me in bed was by leaving. I'm like, dude, if you can't make me come, ask Siri! "Siri, find my girlfriend's clitoris."

(as Siri)

"Finding girlfriend's Ford Taurus."

(guy's voice)

"No, clitoris!"

(as Siri)

"Hillary Clinton is sore at us."

(her voice)

This one time, he's, let's call it, eating at the "Y", and *nothing* is happening. It was like trying to itch a scratch with a sponge. An hour in, he looks up all puppy-eyed and goes, "Anything? Do you feel anything?" I'm like, "Well... I feel a little cleaner".

The audience goes nuts. Buzzy cheers. Kim walks up to Buzzy.

KIM

The girl got her closer.

INT. THE FOYER

An excited Sonya and Buzzy exit into the foyer.

BUZZY

You were amazing!

SONYA

I know! I heard me!

(then)

How many women have you been with?

BUZZY

You really have to work on your segues.
And you know, I've never asked you how
many guys you've been with.

SONYA

You could. Because there's been a few.

BUZZY

I'm sure there has.

SONYA

What's that supposed to mean?

BUZZY

Nothing.

SONYA

I lost my virginity at 15.

BUZZY

I was 22.

SONYA

Liar.

BUZZY

Losing your virginity at 22 isn't
something guys lie about. It was with
Janice Goldman after a debating
competition. But trust me, that night
there was no deliberation. Then I didn't
have sex until I was 25, and only 4
times. This brings us to my last girl
before you, with whom I had sex 8 times.

SONYA

"With whom"! Wait, eight times? Oh, babe.

BUZZY

So, before you, not only could I count the number of partners I'd had, I could count the number of times I'd had sex.

SONYA

How did you get so good then?

From his knapsack Buzzy dumps out a big pile of books and DVDs. Sonya reads the titles.

SONYA (cont'd)

How to Give Her Absolute Pleasure. The Great American Sex Diet. She Comes First... you have weird porn.

BUZZY

When you're a 27-year-old who's had sex 13 times and you know you'll be spending the night with the most beautiful woman in the world, you'll do whatever it takes to get invited back for a second, third, or as of last night - forty-second time.

SONYA

You ran back to your apartment, brought all this here to show me?

BUZZY

I like my romantic gestures bathed in sadness.

Sonya kisses Buzzy hard. He kisses her harder back.

INT. THE STAGE - NIGHT

Eddie talks to the audience. He knows Kim is at the back and he addresses her as much as the crowd.

EDDIE

Guy walks into a doctor's office and asks about his test results. Doctor says, "I got good news and bad news. The bad news is you have cancer, and not any cancer, you have a rare cancer that'll eat you from the inside, every breath will be like you're swallowing fire. You will leak blood from your mouth, eyes, nose and anus. The man says, "Dear Lord! What the hell's the good news?" Doctor says, "Did you see the hot receptionist out front? I'm banging her."

The audience laughs. So does Kim.

EDDIE (cont'd)
 Now, you all laughed at a man dying of cancer. Who cares? He was made up, but how about if you told that joke and found out the person you said it to had cancer? Wouldn't it be nice if you could look at him and say, "I'm sorry".

Eddie looks to Francis. Francis does a slow, sarcastic clap.

FRANCIS
 Nice try, but people who are disabled won't tolerate being made fun of.

EDDIE
 Then 'people who are disabled' shouldn't be dicks. I didn't make fun of you because of your legs, I made fun of you because you were obnoxious. In comedy, you're supposed to punch up, not down. I punched sideways.

FRANCIS
 (stares at Eddie, then)
 Fair enough. You've earned my *Best Bet*.

Eddie smiles to Kim. A loud, sickening rumbling is heard.

FRANCIS (cont'd)
 That's not good. Was there something wrong with that sandwich?

EDDIE
 Not if you ate it last week.

FRANCIS
 I need to use the facilities. Pronto.

Francis tries to escape but is blocked in by the wheelchairs.

FRANCIS (cont'd)
 Move your wheelchairs, you dumb cripples!

Kim rushes up to Francis, bends over and picks him up out of his chair. Carrying Francis, like Zack Mayo carried Paula Pokrifki, she struts past Eddie, who proudly claps for her.

KIM
 Gimme a hand, you moron!

EDDIE
 Right! Gotchya!
 (to crowd)
 (MORE)

EDDIE (CONT'D)

I've been great, he's gotta go, good night.

Eddie bolts off the stage and follows Kim.

INT. THE MEN'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Kim, still cradling Francis, enters the men's room. Eddie's right behind her. Kim looks down at Francis.

KIM

This may not be the best timing, but are we going to be your *Best Bet*?

FRANCIS

You poisoned me!

Eddie watches as hope drains from his wife's face. He steps forward, opening the stall door.

EDDIE

Look, we're about to launch our *Funniest Person with a Day Job* contest. It'd be great to have you onboard. We can co-host - just make us your *Best Bet*.

KIM

People do say you should be a comedian.

FRANCIS

It has been a dream, but father used to say comedians were the village idiots of the world... It's a deal. Now put me on the fucking toilet!

Kim hands Francis to Eddie. Eddie closes the door. There's a fumbling of pants, a placing of Francis on the toilet, then an ugly sounding poop. Eddie stumbles out, a waft of stench following him. It hits Kim. Kim high-kicks the door shut.

KIM

Wheelchair Jimmy's trying to kill us.

FRANCIS (O.C.)

FYI. Wheelchair Jimmy became Drake.

INT. THE BAR - NIGHT

Robert and Claire close up. There is an icy silence between them. After a few beats, Claire finally speaks.

CLAIRE

Here's what I don't get. Of everyone here, you're the only one who's happy.

(MORE)

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Everybody keeps showing up, waiting for something that's never coming. Everyone but you. What do you want, Robbie?

Robbie looks at Claire for a beat. Then...

ROBERT

You.

They stare at each other. What now?

JOE (O.S.)

Hey, Claire-bear!

There stands Officer Joe. Damn, he looks good in a uniform.

CLAIRE

Hey, you. Put away any bad guys tonight?

JOE

Same shift, different pile. So! You decide about our hunting trip?

ROBERT

(whistling softly)

Take me out to the ball game,
Take me out with the crowd.

Claire looks at Robert, knowing what he's doing, then at Joe. Robert continues to whistle *Take Me Out to the Ball Game*.

CLAIRE

Yeah. Let's do it. Sounds fun.

JOE

Wicked. Make sure you bring bug repellent. The horseflies are so big you can ride them.

Claire turns to Robert. She smiles and gives him her cup.

CLAIRE

Keep this safe for me, will you?

Claire exits with Joe. Robert takes her mug, wipes it and carefully puts it behind the bar. He begins to softly sing.

ROBERT

Let me root, root, root for the home team. If they don't win it's a shame...

EXT. WIT'S END COMEDY CLUB

Eddie sits on the hood of his car. Kim approaches.

EDDIE

It's out!

KIM

Hannah's new boob shots?

EDDIE

You really can't let things go.

KIM

It happened two hours ago!

Eddie holds up his cell so Kim can read it.

KIM (cont'd)

"My *Best Bet* for comedy show is *Wit's End*. It's a line-up so funny you may poop yourself. I'd give this show a standing ovation... if I could."

Eddie hops off the hood to follow Kim as she goes to her car.

EDDIE

Just so you know, I am sorry. I only texted with Hannah because she found me funny. Lots of LOLs, happy faces. When people find me funny, I flirt.

KIM

I remember. We saw *Austin Powers* on what... date three, and afterward I said you were funnier than Mike Myers.

EDDIE

And I flirted my way into your bed for the first time. "Do I make you horny, baby?" I mean, sure it might be a little hack now but that was years ago.

(then)

So... where do we go from here?

KIM

I go home, you go to the comedy condo. You can have one of the spare rooms, then I guess we'll... see.

EDDIE

Don't do this. Don't sell the club, don't leave me. I'm a 45-year-old man. What am I supposed to do?

Kim thinks about this, then...

KIM

What you always do. Make jokes about it.

Kim gets in her car and drives off, leaving Eddie to stand alone beneath the LED digital marquee that flashes his name.

The marquee flickers, then turns to black.

END OF ACT THREE