

SIMON / TOM

41.

D: (3)

RICKY can sense that she's not quite with them.
starts to walk away--

RON

We're all gonna stick together on this
Harriet.

HARRIET

Yeah.

PT moves on, she doesn't hear RICKY, under his breath,

RICKY

(quietly)

Bitch.

DIFFERENT PART OF THE PARTY - NIGHT

TOM WETER and SIMON STILES who we saw at the beginning and who, along with Harriet, are the three biggest stars of *Studio 7*, are sitting in a more private area of the party. A few other cast members and writers are there, along with some beautiful women and the gorgeous women who seem to be around SIMON whenever he goes. SIMON's a good looking black man and no occasional dosage of hip-hop attitude is gonna disguise the fact that he went to the Yale School of Drama.

TOM might be a couple of years younger than SIMON. He's witty with a nimble comic mind. It isn't that he's on all the time, it's just that when he's not crafting a joke in his head, he's not sure what he's supposed to be doing.

TOM and SIMON are united by their mutual respect, their dedication to their show and nothing else.

TOM

An ad parody. Ephedra or Wellbutrin.

ALEX

Wait, listen to this.

TOM

Through a Vaseline lens we shoot skinny supermodels with attitude. Despite the fact that they're young, rich, beautiful, famous and don't work for a living, they're sad and they don't know why.

(looks around for an example)

Like that one over there. So we're seeing these gauzy shots and I don't know what the voice over is but the tag line is: "Ask your doctor if food is right for you."

(MORE)

SCENE ONE

START →
SCENE

(CONTINUED)

1/5

CONTINUED:

TOM (CONT'D)

(beat)
It's an ad for food.
(beat)
Generically.

SIMON

Are you pitching me a sketch?

TOM

Yes.

SIMON

Now?

TOM

It came to me.

SIMON

How 'bout we do a sketch where a madman
blows up a network television show and I
spend what's left of my career playing
the Ben Vereen part in *Pippin* at the Burt
Reynolds Dinner Theatre in Jupiter,
Florida--No wait, we just did that one!

TOM

I saw *The King and I* there, it was good.

SIMON

(beat)
What?

TOM

The Burt Reynolds Theatre, it's good.

SIMON

So help me Hannah, I am this close to
going Russell Crowe on your ass.

TOM

(seeing her)
Harry.

HARRIET sees them and comes over.

HARRIET

I had to navigate 14 people asking me if
I was offended by the sketch and if I'd
spoken to Matt.

SIMON

Does anybody know where Wes is?

HARRIET

He's at his house, he's meeting there
with somebody.

(CONTINUED)

2/5

CONTINUED: (2)

SIMON

Has anybody talked to Felicity?

HARRIET

She was gone after the good-byes and I think she deserves a medal for making it that far.

TOM

We should probably send her a fruit basket.

SIMON

Yeah, that should do the trick.

TOM

Have you talked to Matt?

HARRIET

Matthew and I broke up.

SIMON

Over the damn Star Spangled Banner?

HARRIET

It wasn't over the Star Spangled Banner and it doesn't matter so let's just...not...in any way ever talk about him again.

DAPHNE comes over--

DAPHNE

Harriet, you want some nice news on a bad night? Matt just won the Writers Guild Award.

HARRIET

That's wonderful. Really. I'm so happy I could kill myself.

And a young guy, DYLAN, a little too cool for himself--maybe a Jack Black wannabe--speaks out from the other end of the group.

DYLAN

Hey Harriet. You pray before every show. What happened tonight, did it not work?

Suddenly a sense of humorless tension sets in on the group.

DYLAN (CONT'D)

(beat--laughs)

Did it not work?

(CONTINUED)

3/5

: (3)

TOM
(quietly to HARRIET)
He's drunk.

DYLAN
Why'd the sketch get cut?
(beat)
Why'd the sketch get cut? Did somebody
who's going to heaven complain to
Standards?

HARRIET
(pause)
You know what, rook? When you start
making a contribution to this show you
can talk to me any way you want. But you
had two lines tonight and you stepped on
one of them. So until you either accept
Jesus Christ as your personal savior or
make somebody laugh, why don't you go
drink at another table.

The ... frozen silence for a moment until...

SIMON
(staring him dead)
Do exactly as she said.

DYLAN gets up, along with a couple of his friends, and they
move on...

TOM
(to HARRIET)
Were you offended by the sketch?

HARRIET
I was offended I wasn't in the sketch. I
thought the writing was of a level we
haven't had in years, and frankly I was
surprised that Wes was capable of it.

SIMON
Are we sure that Wes wrote it?

TOM
Well it wasn't Ron and Ricky.

SIMON
You sure?

TOM
Ron and Ricky suddenly being able to
write like that would be like me suddenly
being able to play the cello.

DAPHNE's hanging up her cell phone--

(CONTINUED)

4/5

MURD: (4)

 DAPHNE
You're being called back to the studio.

 TOM
Who?

 DAPHNE
Everybody.

END OF ACT TWO

SIMON / TOM

53.

CONTINUED: (3)

MARTHA

Yeah. But I don't think you're gonna have time 'cause my reporter's instinct says you're gonna agree to take over the show.

DANNY

I don't mean to insult you twice in the same minute but your reporter's instinct sucks.

DANNY heads for a black BMW--

DANNY (CONT'D)

(to the valet)
Right here.

MARTHA

(calling)
Danny.

DANNY

(calling back)
Yeah.

MARTHA

(pointing to a different black BMW)
That one.

DANNY

(calling back)
Thank you.

DANNY gets in the car and screeches away from the hotel as fast as he can as we

CUT TO:

INT. SOUNDSTAGE CORRIDOR - NIGHT

HARRIET is coming the down the hall with two cups of coffee. The hall is lined with framed photos from 20 years of Studio 7. She stops at one and looks at the picture of herself with SIMON and TOM, laughing at rehearsal with MATT and DANNY. She regards the photo for a moment before she moves on into--

INT. SIMON'S DRESSING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

TOM's got his feet up on the table, smoking a cigarette and SIMON's lying down on the couch. They're waiting...and while they're waiting, TOM's doing some talking...

TOM

We're witnessing the rise of the hack. A sort of celebration of mediocrity.

START →
SCENE

(CONTINUED)

1/4

SCENE TWO

HARRIET
(giving the coffee to TOM)
Here.

TOM
Thanks. You mind if I smoke?

HARRIET
No.

TOM
You can blame the blogs, but I blame The New York Times. They quote the blogs like they've found a source. CNN quotes the blogs. "Beverly, Editor-in-Chief of the BeverlyBlog, says the Fed should cut interests rates to counter the drop in consumer spending over the past fiscal--" who hell is Beverly? I don't believe in free speech, I think it should require a license. What happened to credentials? What happened to being impeccably credentialed, and when did elite stop being a good word?

SIMON
They should be Ethiopian.

TOM
Who?

SIMON
In the Wellbutrin ad parody. Instead of skinny models, they should be Ethiopians.

TOM
You want to do jokes about starving children?

SIMON
It has more bite.

TOM
Yeah, 'cause it's a joke about starving children.

SIMON
No, it's a joke about Pfizer or Kaiser or whoever makes it and it's a joke about us. They need the minimal elements for survival and we have a pill for when you're not in a good mood.

TOM
I just think you made the whole thing not funny in a hurry.

CONTINUED: (2)

HARRIET

What in the hell are you two talking about.

TOM

An ad parody shot like Ephedra or Wellbutrin. Gauzy images of glum supermodels.

HARRIET

Or Ethiopian children.

TOM

Yeah. The tag is "Ask your doctor if food is right for you."

HARRIET

(pause)

Okay, well it's definitely not the Ethiopians.

SIMON

All right, the skinny models.

TOM

"Side effects may include energy, cohesive thought and hip bones you can't carve trophies with."

SIMON

Fine.

(to HARRIET)

Ricky and Ron are up in Wes's office right now with Jamie McDeere and Jack Rudolph. The smart money's saying they're the new Executive Producers.

TOM

(completing his point)

The rise of the hack.

HARRIET

(pause)

I'm gonna go see what's going on. People are running around like chickens out there. I think the best thing is not to listen to rumors and be calm.

She gets up to walk out and walks right into MATT who's just stepping into the doorway--

HARRIET (CONT'D)

(screaming from surprise)

Aaggh!

(CONTINUED)

3/4

D: (3)

MATT
How you doin'?

SIMON
Matty.

TOM
Matt.

MATT
What did you guys do that made that man
go that crazy?

SIMON
Just the same stuff we used to do to you.

HARRIET
Can I speak to you for a moment please?

SHELLY, the P.R. lady we met in the first act, has been
entering MATT.

SHELLY
They want me to put you in the green
room.

HARRIET
This'll just take a second.

SIMON
Hey congratulations.

TOM
Yeah.

HARRIET
(to TOM and SIMON)
Do the two of you have to be nice to
everybody?
(to MATT)
Come with me.

HARRIET leads MATT down the corridor and through two steel
doors onto--

INT. STAGE - CONTINUOUS

They're standing under the bleachers in one of the
vomitoriums.

HARRIET
Two things. What are you doing here and
could you please stop telling people we
broke up because of the Star Spangled
Banner.

(CONTINUED)

4/4