

#2217

HARDCASTLE AND McCORMICK

"What's So Funny..?"

By

Patrick Hasburgh

A STEPHEN J. CANNELL PRODUCTION

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#2217

HARDCASTLE AND McCORMICK

Rev. 11/27/84

"What's So Funny...?"

CAST

MILTON C. HARDCASTLE
MARK McCORMICK

SONNY AUSTIN
TONY FARGO
T.K.
DENNY FRY

DESK CLERK
FIREMAN
LT. BILL GILES
BOOTS DIKEMAN
PAMELA BAYER
CHICK MILES
LEO DIKEMAN

SHECKY RABBINOWITZ

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SETSEXTERIORS

GULL'S WAY

THE BELL STAR HOTEL
DENNY FRY'S DRESSING ROOM
/DOOR
/HALLWAY
THE SHERMAN WAY PLAZA (Hotel)
THE GRIN BIN (Comedy Club)
RESIDENTIAL HOUSE (Pamela Bayer's - 213 Redland) .
STREETS (Various)
LAS VEGAS
/CASINO
LAUGHIN LEO'S (Comedy Club)
/DRESSING ROOM DOOR
HIGHWAYS (various)
DONNELLY'S JEWELRY STORE
SONNY AUSTIN'S OFFICE BUILDING
LOS ANGELES AIRPORT
/RUNWAY
ROADBLOCK
CAR CHASES (Various)

INTERIORS

GULL'S WAY

/DEN
SEDAN
BUNGALOW (The Bell Star)
THE GRIN BIN (Comedy Club)
/HALLWAY
/DRESSING ROOM
SHERMAN WAY PLAZA HOTEL
/LOBBY
/HALLWAY
/BATHROOM
/STAIRWELL
/ROOM (Denny Fry's)
RESIDENTIAL HOUSE (Pamela Bayer's)
/FRONT DOOR
/DEN
T.K.'S SEDAN
LAS VEGAS CASINO
SONNY AUSTIN'S OFFICE
LAUGHIN LEO'S (Comedy Club)
/HALLWAY
/DRESSING ROOM
/DOOR
COYOTE
SONNY AUSTIN'S SEDAN

(X)

#2217

HARDCASTLE AND McCORMICK

Rev. 11/28/84

"What's So Funny..?"

ACT ONE

FADE IN

1
thru
3

OMITTED

1
thru
3

1A

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

1A

As a luxury sedan wheels past CAMERA.

PAMELA VAYER (V.O.)

You've been real nice about
this, Leo.

1B

INT. SEDAN - NIGHT

1B

LEO DIKEMAN drives and next to him sits PAMELA BAYER.
She reaches over and touches his hand.

PAMELA

Thank you.

Leo nods and smiles.

DIKEMAN

What, thanks? You're a
sweet kid.

PAMELA

Yeah, but y'know... The way
Sonny gets when I date a guy...
Well, it scares me.

DIKEMAN

So, who's gonna tell him.
(smiles)
Denny Fry's nice guy, huh?

PAMELA

He's real special, Leo. I
really like him a lot.

CONTINUED

1B CONTINUED

1B

DIKEMAN
Hey, I knew you would...
(smiles)
That's why I fixed you up.

1C RESUME - EXT. SEDAN

1C

as it pulls up in front of THE GRIN BIN and Pamela gets out and leans toward Leo.

PAMELA
Thanks, Leo.

DIKEMAN
(nods)
Hey, Pammy, let me know what you think of Denny's act, huh? I might wanna give him a job.

She smiles and shuts the car door, walking toward the club. On that, Leo picks up a car telephone and:

DIKEMAN
Yeah, this is Leo. Look, I know Sonny isn't gonna like this, but Pamela's got another comedian... The guy's name is Denny Fry.

and we,

CUT TO:

5 EXT. GULL'S WAY - NIGHT 5

McCORMICK (V.O.)

This Denny Fry is supposed
to be a funny guy, huh?

6. INT. GULL'S WAY - DEN - NIGHT 6

Hardcastle and McCormick are having dinner and Hardcastle
regards an invitation.

HARDCASTLE

Yeah, had me crackin' up
when I sentenced him to ten
years for armed robbery.

McCORMICK

Sounds hysterical.

HARDCASTLE

Yeah, Denny Fry. A lousy
bank robber but a very funny
guy. He couldn't make regular
money as a comic, so he
started holding up banks.

McCORMICK

Don't tell me, he used a
squirt gun.

CONITNUED

HARDCASTLE

He probably would'a if he thought of it. Says here he works over at a place on Sunset now. Wants me to come and see his show.

(thinks back)

Oh yeah, used to tell this story... What was it? Yeah, this dog goes into a bar, no, a saloon, yeah, that's it. Anyway, so ya' see this dog goes into a saloon in the old west and orders a drink, but one'a the cowboys says they don't serve dogs and shoots him in the foot.

(laughs)

And then the next day the same dog comes back wearing a six shooter and one'a them gun-slinger hats and says--

McCORMICK

I'm looking for the man who shot my paw.

HARDCASTLE

You heard it?

McCORMICK

About seventy times.

(Re: invitation)

Oh, I see, Denny wants you to come down and do the yuk, yuks on his ancient dog jokes, right?

HARDCASTLE

(shoots McCormick
a look)

What he wants, wise guy, is for me to come down and okay his new act.

(Re: invitation)

It says here that I'm rather obliquely referred to in a number of his routines and he wants to make sure that I'm not offended.

(Beat)

Actually, I'm flattered. Denny Fry is a very funny guy.

CONTINUED

MCCORMICK

Let me get this straight, Denny Fry, an ex-con no less, is doing a comedy routine about the judge who sent him up to prison for armed robbery?

HARDCASTLE

Yeah, that's right.

McCormick laughs.

HARDCASTLE

What's so funny about that, McCormick?

MCCORMICK

Nothing. That's the point.

(Beat)

I mean, unless he's making a fool out of you. That could be funny.

Hardcastle shoots McCormick another hard look.

MCCORMICK

But it would be very difficult, Judge. Very. Real hard. Almost impossible.

HARDCASTLE

Look, kiddo. Fry is not gonna make a fool outt'a me, okay. I mean, they make jokes about the President of the United States and there's nothing funny about him either. It's a form of flattery.

MCCORMICK

In other words, old Denny Fry is just paying a compliment to an ex-judge who does the Jitter Bug with Lady Justice. Lady Justice, of course, will be played by Phyllis Diller.

CONTINUED

6

CONTINUED - 3

6

HARDCASTLE

No. What he's doing, is having a little fun with a guy like me who has a good sense of humor and can take a joke.

HARD CUT TO:

7

CLOSE ON - DENNY FRY

7

as he works the audience of the Grin Bin. Fry is unassuming and in his mid-thirties: dressed as an exact replica of Hardcastle with ragged sneakers, worn out sweats, baseball cap, etc. The crowd loves the show.

FRY

Look at these clothes...
Hardcastle wears clothes like these...all the time.

(Beat)

Hard--Castle, sounds like San--Quentin doesn't it..?
Judge Milton C. Hardcastle, yeah, kind'a a cross between Cyndi Lauper and John Wayne, tough guy, but doesn't know how to dress. He sent me to jail for ten years and I had nicer clothes... Anyone here ever been to prison? It's a nightmare. Picture an all night stop and shop with jump suits...

(Beat)

Hardcastle sent me to prison for ten years, but then again, how can you expect a guy named Milllllttttoooonn to have a sense of humor. In my high school, anyone named Millllttoonn got punched in the arm every fifteen seconds. Millllttoon, whack!

8

REVERSE ANGLE - INT. THE GRIN BIN

8

The place is jammed and everyone in the place is laughing, except, of course, Hardcastle who glares at McCormick, laughing hysterically.

McCORMICK

I was wrong about this guy,
Judge. He's hysterical.

Hardcastle grimaces and:

FRY (V.O.)

Here's what happened. I need money. I've given all the blood I could give. I innocently decide to go into a bank. It's midnight... All of a sudden bells are going off, lights are coming on, cameras are clicking.

9

RESUME - DENNY FRY

9

FRY

I figure, great. I'm the millionth customer, I can take anything I want, free toasters, a couple of bags of cash, a fancy check book, a handful of deposit slips... Then I realize, lights blinking, camera rolling, I'm in a movie... It's Dog Day Afternoon. I'm Al Pacino --
I pull out my shirt tails and get hysterical... Hardcastle enters, dressed like this, he's also hysterical, I know that because he's got foam on his mouth. He's got a gun, I figure great, he's in the scene, I say "put down the gun or somebody's gonna get hurt." This was a mistake. I had not gun and no one to hurt. I wait for Hardcastle's line, he says, bang bang bang, freeze!

(Beat)

MORE

CONTINUED

FRY (cont'd)

Funny man.

(Beat)

A week later, I'm in court, I watch the case before me. Jaywalking. Hardcastle sentences him to death or ninety hours community Service working for him. The guy chooses death. Doesn't hesitate. Skips away with a smile on his face. I'm scared.

HARDCASTLE

(to McCormick)

You think this is pretty funny, don't you?

McCORMICK

I thought that was the point, Judge.

FRY (V.O.)

Then, it's my turn. Hardcastle offers me five years of hard time. I told him I'd think it over... He made it ten...

(Beat)

Funny man... I went up and punched him in the arm.

(Beat)

What a guy, on Valentine's Day he gave his girlfriend a chocolate gun rack.

(Beat)

She punched him in the arm.

(reacts to crowd)

Thank you, thanks...and before I say goodnight, I like to thank the original Judge Milton C. Hardcastle...

(nods)

Judge?

10

CONTINUED

10

Hardcastle doesn't want to stand, but McCormick pushes him to his feet.

FRY

The man who's made my life
absolutely miserable.

Then Fry shoots a warm look to Pamela Bayer.

FRY

And to the woman who's making
my life better every day.

And on that,

SMASH CUT TO:

11A

OMITTED

11A

12

OMITTED

12

11B

BLACK SCREEN

11B

Then, as a DOOR is kicked open, we find ourselves in a bungalow of the Bell Star Hotel. SONNY AUSTIN and TONY FARGO enter as T.K. pulls out a revolver and stands guard by the door. Austin turns on a light and paces around, half nuts.

FARGO

T.K. put that away, c'mon.
Hey, Sonny we don't even know
if she's been staying here.

Austin goes to a closet and pulls out about three very expensive dresses. He sniffs one and throws it at Fargo.

AUSTIN

Yeah? I paid six hundred
dollars for that dress at
L'Andre's last month. You
can still smell about a hundred
bucks worth'a perfume on it.

Austin goes to a drawer and rips out a bunch of clothes and lingerie. Then he regards a picture of Pamela Bayer (with CHARM). He glares at Fargo, then:

AUSTIN

What did Leo tell you,
c'mon?! What?!

FARGO

(hedging)
He said, that maybe, you know--

AUSTIN

(to Fargo)
You, shut up! T.K., what?
He said what?!

T.K.

He said that maybe she was
seeing this guy.

AUSTIN

Who?

CONTINUED

11B

CONTINUED

11B

T.K.

I don't know, another
comedian, maybe.

Austin moves up real close to T.K. and speaks to him
in a deadly whisper.

AUSTIN

The name... I want this
creep's name!

T.K.

Fry, Denny Fry. Does a show
over at the Grin Bin.

AUSTIN

(settles)

Okay...

(paces)

Yeah, okay. But this guy...
This guy, we don't beat up.
No, we don't beat this guy
up like those other three
clowns. No... This funnyman,
this Denny Fry, is going for
a flight...

And on that, Austin throws a lamp through the window
of the bungalow.

HARDCASTLE (V.O.)

You're being a little hard
on me, don't you think?

*

CUT TO:

13

INT. DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

13

Denny Fry towels off from the show and we can see Hardcastle shuffling awkwardly as McCormick smiles. Fry is perplexed.

FRY

Me?

HARDCASTLE

I mean, I love a good joke as well as the next guy. But, ah, that thing about me sentencing that jaywalker to death, well, ah, I never did that...

McCORMICK

No. He was from Jersey and you sent him to jail for stealing his own car.

Hardcastle shoots McCormick a look.

HARDCASTLE

Don't get me wrong, Denny, but I have a kind'a responsibility to my fellow jurists who may think that the dignity of the--

FRY

Hey, Judge...sorry. I mean... I guess I thought you were a guy who could take a joke.

HARDCASTLE

I can...

McCORMICK

He's a lot like our President that way.

FRY

Look, Judge. I'm kind'a in a spot here. I mean, I just locked up a spot on the Merv Griffin show with this bit.

McCORMICK

Merv Griffin? Hey, Judge, what a compliment.

CONTINUED

HARDCASTLE

(whispers)

Shut up, McCormick.

(Beat)

So, old Merv is gonna get a kick outta the guy who celebrates the Lone Ranger's birthday. Gees, Denny, I don't know.

FRY

(disappointed)

I thought you'd like the show... and, well, I need you to sign off on the release... I'm sorry.

Fry hands Hardcastle the release forms.

HARDCASTLE

Yeah well, it's just that, I don't want people all over the country to laugh at me. I mean, they can laugh at you, but ah, well not when you're supposed to be doing me.

FRY

I'm not doing you, not exactly.

Hardcastle regards Denny Fry's sweatshirt, sweatpants, baseball cap and torn sneakers. Then, he regards his own.

HARDCASTLE

You're not?

FRY

Okay, maybe a little.

HARDCASTLE

Face it Judge, you're an incredibly rich library of comic relief. What can I say?

Hardcastle shoots McCormick a look.

CONTINUED

HARDCASTLE

I think you've said enough,
McCormick.

(to Denny)

Have you ever heard'a something
called defamation of character?

FRY

Yeah...and that's why my
attorney wants you to sign
off on the release.

Hardcastle is hedging.

FRY

But, I mean, okay... The
Merv Griffin gig is maybe the
biggest break in my career as
a comic, but if you're offended
by the material, I'll pull it.

HARDCASTLE

You would.

FRY

Although, it would be a deal
breaker with the Griffin
people, they love the bit.

CONTINUED

There is a beat.

MCCORMICK

Now, Judge... Don't tell me you wanna deprive maybe thirty million Americans from laughing at something I've been getting a kick outta for the last couple of years.

FRY

He's right, Judge. You're a national treasure.

There is a beat.

HARDCASTLE

A national sap is more like it.

(Beat)

But, okay, okay, I'll sign the release.

Fry hugs Hardcastle and then shakes hands with everybody in the room.

FRY

(to McCormick)

Love this guy, Mark. He's aces. Get Merv on the telephone and tell him that Denny Fry is going national... Judge, what can I say... Merv Griffin. This is the happiest day of my life.

HARDCASTLE

Yeah, well... Break a leg. We'll see you later, Denny.

Hardcastle and McCormick start to leave and Fry grabs Hardcastle's arm.

FRY

Forget it... We meet at the Sherman Way Plaza for champagne in an hour. I'm staying there. Whatt'a ya say?

CONTINUED

13 CONTINUED - 4

13*

HARDCASTLE

Thanks, Denny, but--

FRY

Dom Perignon, my treat.
I'll go back to my room,
change and meet you in the
lobby in an hour.

Hardcastle shoots McCormick a look.

McCORMICK

I could go for some Dom,
Judge. Up until last year
I thought it was the name
of the tennis pro at Ma
Maison.

Off Hardcastle's look we,

CUT TO:

14 EXT. THE SHERMAN WAY PLAZA - NIGHT

14

This is an elegant hotel in downtown L.A. We can see the
Coyote parked out in front.

McCORMICK (V.O.)

Well, y'know what they say,
Judge?

15 INT. THE HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

15

Hardcastle and McCormick are strolling through the lobby.
Hardcastle looks a bit chagrined and McCormick tries to
cheer him up.

HARDCASTLE

No, I don't know what "they
say".

CONTINUED

15 CONTINUED

15

McCORMICK

"Put a lampshade on the right head and you get the whole world to laugh."

HARDCASTLE

You're getting a real kick outt'a this, aren't you.

McCORMICK

Major kick.

HARDCASTLE

Well, what was I supposed to do, stand in the way of maybe the only break Denny Fry might ever get? I mean, what if I said no and he had to go back and rob banks to pay his rent.

Hardcastle moves up to the desk clerk and checks his watch.

HARDCASTLE

(to desk clerk)

Would you try his room again please?

McCORMICK

Oh, I get it. This is all in the name of rehabilitation.

HARDCASTLE

Rehabilitation is unfortunately something you know very little about.

McCORMICK

Oh, so now we're getting personal?

HARDCASTLE

Personal! The man's making a living off'a personal. My personal! And on Merv Griffin, no less!

CONTINUED

15 CONTINUED - 2

15

DESK CLERK
I'm sorry, Mister Fry's room.
is still busy.

MCCORMICK
Probably doing the Johnny
Carson show by telephone.

HARDCASTLE
Funny. Let's go up and bang
on his door.

CUT TO:

16 INT. DENNY FRY'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

16

We can see that the telephone is off the hook and a typewriter sits on a table next to the bed, a piece of paper in its roller with some typing on it. We can hear the shower running and the sound of someone knocking on the door.

HARDCASTLE (V.O.)
Denny? Hey, Denny. It's
Hardcastle.

CUT TO:

17 INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - NIGHT

17

Hardcastle and McCormick are standing outside the door of Denny Fry's room and Hardcastle knocks.

HARDCASTLE
What the hell is this?

MCCORMICK
Maybe he's asleep...

HARDCASTLE
How could a guy that excited
go to sleep?
(bangs again)
Denny.

CONTINUED

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18.

17 CONTINUED

17

McCormick tries the door and it's open.

McCORMICK
Maybe he's in the bathroom
and he can't hear us.

McCormick pushes open the door and:

18 THEIR POV

18

And we can see the telephone on the nightstand with its
receiver off the hook.

19 RESUME - INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

19

as Hardcastle and McCormick enter.

HARDCASTLE
Denny?

McCormick nods to the sound of the shower.

CUT TO:

20 INT. HOTEL BATHROOM - NIGHT

20

Hardcastle and McCormick stand in the steam.

HARDCASTLE
Hey, Fry... You taking a
shower?

And, of course, there is no response. Hardcastle reacts
concerned and pulls open the shower curtain.

21 THEIR POV

21

And we can see that there is no one in the shower.

CUT TO:

22 CLOSE ON - A PICTURE

22

of a very pretty BLONDE WOMAN of about thirty years old.

CONTINUED

22 CONTINUED

22

It is signed:

To the man who makes me laugh,
Love, Pamela.

And attached to the picture is a SOLID GOLD CHARM in the shape of the classic mask of comedy.

23 RESUME - INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

23

McCormick regards the picture.

MCCORMICK

I didn't know these comedians
made out so well. This lady
is a fox...

He fingers the gold charm.

MCCORMICK

And this thing looks like
it's solid gold.

(Re: inscription)

Love, Pamela - December '84.

HARDCASTLE

That's personal stuff, McCormick.

Hardcastle moves toward the typewriter and glances down at the paper.

HARDCASTLE

Leave it alone...

(Re: paper)

Oh, my God.

MCCORMICK

What is it?

Hardcastle pulls the paper out from the typewriter and hands it to McCormick.

MCCORMICK

(reads)

Now that I've finally made it,
all I can do is fail. Tell my
mother I love her... Good bye..
Denny Fry.

(Beat)

What is this, a suicide note?

CONTINUED

23 CONTINUED

23

HARDCASTLE

Can't be. Maybe one'a the routines he's working on.

MCCORMICK

Not a very funny routine, Judge.

And on that we hear the sound of sirens and McCormick and Hardcastle run to the window and:

24 THEIR POV

24

as a fire truck pulls in and SHOOTS A LARGE SPOTLIGHT toward the roof of the hotel.

P.A. (OVER FROM THE
FIRE TRUCK)

Don't jump, we have a doctor
on the way, please just give
us a little time.

25 RESUME - MCCORMICK AND HARDCASTLE

25

as they bolt from the room.

HARDCASTLE

He must be on the roof, I'm
going up there. You go down-
stairs and try to get in
touch with his family, anyone.

*

As they bolt out the door,

CUT TO:

26 EXT. THE SHERMAN WAY PLAZA HOTEL - NIGHT

26

We are shooting straight up at Denny Fry who stands on the very edge of the roof's ledge. He is teetering slightly and sweating profusely.

27 HIS POV

27

A couple of fire trucks with spotlights pointed toward the top of the hotel are circling in and a small crowd is gathering. We can see a FIREMAN with a megaphone.

FIREMAN

Is there anyone you might want to talk to...?

CUT TO:

28 INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - NIGHT

28

As Hardcastle blasts down the hallway and through a door marked "Stairwell".

CUT TO:

29 INT. HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

29

As McCormick blows out of an elevator and races toward the crowd that is gathering outside.

CUT TO:

30 INT. STAIRWELL - NIGHT

30

As Hardcastle bolts up the stairs, taking the steps five at a time.

31 RESUME - MCCORMICK

31

as he exits the hotel and sprints toward the fireman with the megaphone and regards Fry who is still standing on the ledge.

MCCORMICK

(out of breath)

His name's Fry... Denny Fry. Maybe he's got a girlfriend named Pamela, I don't know. He's a comedian.

*

32 RESUME - HARDCASTLE

32

as he gets to the top of the stairwell and finds that the

CONTINUED

32 CONTINUED

32

door that leads out to the roof is locked. He bangs on it.

HARDCASTLE

Denny! Denny! It's me,
Hardcastle. C'mon, Denny.
Open the door!

33 RESUME - DENNY FRY

33

CAMERA SHOTS UP at him as he sweats it out on the ledge.

34 RESUME - VERY CLOSE ANGLE - McCORMICK

34

looking up and in SLOW MOTION we can see him SILENTLY MOUTH the word "DON'T" and:

35 RESUME - HARDCASTLE

35

Another silent cut in SLOW MOTION as he bangs on the door and:

36 ANGLE - DENNY FRY

36

And once again in SLOW MOTION he topples off the roof of the hotel and:

37 INTERCUT - HARDCASTLE

37

as he bangs on the door...

38 ANGLE - DENNY FRY

38

falling toward the ground...

39 ANGLE - McCORMICK

39

as he watches Fry fall in horror and then turns away on

CONTINUED

39 CONTINUED

39

impact. The crowd groans and the sounds of the sirens swell.

40 ANGLE - DENNY FRY

40

as he is covered with a blanket by the firemen. Play the moment and:

FADE OUT

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN

41 EXT. THE SHERMAN WAY HOTEL - NIGHT

41

It's maybe an hour after Fry's final performance and we can see an AMBULANCE pull away from the scene. LT. BILL GILES exits his sedan and walks toward Hardcastle and McCormick who are standing with a FIREMAN and regarding the chalk marks that surrounded Denny Fry's body. McCormick looks up toward the roof of the hotel and then back to the chalk. Giles walks up and we can see that he carries a file of paperwork. *

GILES
(to Fireman)

Did you get the exact time?

FIREMAN

Twelve seventeen. The coroner's gonna go by our clock. Routine suicide.

Giles notes down the time on his report.

HARDCASTLE

I don't know, Bill, what do you think?

CONTINUED

Giles shoots McCormick a look and then to Hardcastle.

GILES

What am I supposed to think?
The guy climbs up to the roof
of a hotel and does a swan dive.

HARDCASTLE

We were just with the guy. Denny
was a friend of mine, and he was
in a great mood.

GILES

Yeah, I know. Ex-con turned
comedian. You sent him up for
armed robbery. I got all that
when I pulled his package and,
over the past few years Denny
Fry was under treatment for
manic depression. He had a
tough life, Milt. It happens
all the time.

MCCORMICK

Look, Bill, an hour and a half
ago this was the best day of
his life.

GILES

No offense, but I'm a cop and
have better things to do than
chase down the reasons why some
comic wanted to kill himself.

HARDCASTLE

Unless he didn't.

There is a beat and Hardcastle shoots a look to the
chalk marks and then, back to Giles

GILES

Look, Milt. I mean, I got guys
out there holding up gas stations
every fifteen minutes...and
unless I get some evidence, I'm
writing this one off a a suicide.

*

Off Hardcastle's look,

CUT TO:

*

42 EXT. THE GRIN BIN - DAY

42

The Coyote is parked out in front.

VOICE (OVER)

There is no way Denny Fry
committed suicide.

43 INT. THE GRIN BIN - DAY

43

and a MAN of about fifty-five years old, squat and balding is cleaning off the tables from the previous night's show. Hardcastle and McCormick follow him around the room and maybe help with the glasses. This man's name is BOOTS DIKEMAN. And on stage we can see a sign that reads:

"DENNY FRY COMES ALIVE"

BOOTS

No way... Every good comic that worked this club in the last year has gotten a beating. And it was only a matter of time before one of them got killed.

HARDCASTLE

And what you're saying, Mister Dikeman, is that you think your brother killed Denny Fry?

CONTINUED

43 CONTINUED

43

BOOTS

Number one, call me Boots.
Number two, I'm not a cop,
I own a comedy club, so I
can't book anyone on a murder
beef. And number three...
Leo Dikeman is not my brother.
He's a competitor.

McCORMICK

Leo Dikeman. He owns another
comedy club over on Fifth
Street, right? "Laughin'
Leo's".

BOOTS

That's the place. We just used
to do a brother act back in vaude-
ville. I was the funny one...
that was it, we're not related.
Trouble is, if I went back to my
old name, I couldn't cash a check
in this business.

HARDCASTLE

Why would Leo Dikeman kill Denny
Fry?

BOOTS

Because his judge Hardcase bit
was gonna be a smash. Did you
ever see it? Very funny.

HARDCASTLE

Hysterical.

BOOTS

Yeah, and hysterical enough to
get him a spot on the Merv
Griffin show. And that would'a
put this club back on the comedy
map.

CONTINUED

43

CONTINUED - 2

43

MCCORMICK

If you're so sure it was Leo
Dikeman, why not go to the cops
and try to prove it?

BOOTS

I tried, but they wrote it off
'cause they thought I was just
trying to bad-mouth an ex-partner
who's doing better'n me.

HARDCASTLE

Look, Boots, anything these
comics, Denny Fry and the other
guys who got beat up, might
have in common?

BOOTS

Yeah. Except for Denny every
one of them ended up working
at Dikeman's club.

CONTINUED

*

43

CONTINUED - 3

43

HARDCASTLE
 (ignores McCormick)
 Look, Boots, could you give us
 a name'a one of these comics?

*
*

BOOTS
 Yeah...Chick Miles.

*

HARDCASTLE
 And where could we find him?

*

BOOTS
 Where do you think? "Laughin'
 Leo's", you can catch Chick's
 show there tonight at eight.

And off of Boot's look, we:

CUT TO

44

CLOSE ON - NEWSPAPER

44

And we can read the HEADLINE over a picture of Denny Fry.

L.A. COMIC COMMITS SUICIDE IN
 HOTEL DIVE

45

WIDEN ANGLE TO INCLUDE - PAMELA BAYER

45

This is the girl from the photograph in Denny Fry's dress-
 ing room. Pamela Bayer is thirty years old, gorgeous and
 at this moment incredibly upset. As she reads the headlines
 we can see her fingering a GOLD CHARM in the shape of a
 comedy mask that she wears around her neck. It is exactly
 like the gold charm that was in Denny Fry's dressing room.

CUT TO

46 EXT. RESIDENTIAL HOUSE - DAY

46

As Pamela Bayer exits the front door and walks toward her cream colored sedan that is parked in the driveway.

T.K. (V.O.)

Where to you think she's going?

47 ANGLE - SEDAN

47

parked a short way down the street. T.K. is at the wheel and next to him sits TONY FARGO. They both watch Pamela Bayer get into her car and drive off.

FARGO

If she read this morning's paper, you can bet she's going to the police. Sonny is playing this girl way too hard.

T.K. starts up the sedan and pulls out after Pamela.

T.K.

Well then get him on the phone, 'cause I don't want that animal chewing me up if his squeeze gets away.

48 EXT. STREET - DAY

48

Pamela's sedan wheels up to an intersection and in the b.g. we can see T.K. following.

49 INT. T.K.'S SEDAN

49

T.K. follows Pamela and Fargo is on a car telephone.

FARGO

(into phone)

Yeah, Mister Austin. She left the house just now.

*

CUT TO:

50 EXT. LAS VEGAS CASINO - STOCK - DAY

50

A high tower built-in tribute of gambling and greed.

CONTINUED

50 CONTINUED

50

AUSTIN'S VOICE
Where is she going?

And we,

CUT TO:

51 INT. SONNY AUSTIN'S OFFICE - DAY

51

And we can tell right off the bat that this guy makes a pile of dough. The place is gorgeous and apparently almost some kind of shrine to Pamela Bayer: her pictures are all over the place. Austin sits at his desk and holds a telephone to his ear.

52 INTERCUT - FARGO AND AUSTIN AS NECESSARY

52

FARGO

I don't know. But, Denny Fry made the papers here pretty big. She might go to the police.

AUSTIN

She wouldn't do that to me, Tony, never, she wouldn't.

Fargo shoots T.K. a look and shrugs.

FARGO

Well she might, Mister Austin. I mean, she really liked the guy.

AUSTIN

Shut up! She didn't. Look, just make sure she stays put. I told you to sit on her!

FARGO

We're trying to... But if she goes to the cops...

CONTINUED

52 CONTINUED

52

AUSTIN

She's not going to the cops!
Just make sure she's okay...
I'm coming in tomorrow. You
take care of this, Tony or
I'm coming at you hard... And
don't hurt her. Don't, just
don't hurt. When I talk to
her it'll be fine. Fine.

*

Austin hangs up and looks to one of the pictures of Pamela
Bayer on his desk. He picks it up and looks at it.

*

AUSTIN

Just fine, Babe.

*

and we:

53 RESUME - INT. T.K.'S SEDAN - DAY

53

Fargo hangs up the telephone and shrugs.

FARGO

He's completely fried, T.K.
He wants us to pick her up.

54 EXT. STREET - DAY

54

As T.K. pulls his sedan up next to Pamela's car and Fargo
motions for her to pull over. Of course, she doesn't and
steps on the gas. We play a chase here and after some
real action, T.K. forces Pamela's sedan off the road. Fargo
joggs to her car and helps her out, pulling toward T.K.'s
sedan.

PAMELA

Who are you?! Leave me
alone, please...! Leave
me alone!

FARGO

Someone just wants to talk
to you, Pamela.

CONTINUED

54 CONTINUED

54

As Pamela is pushed into the rear seat.

VOICE (OVER)
California, huh? What a place.

And we,

CUT TO:

55 EXT. LAUGHIN' LEO'S - NIGHT

55 *

This is another comedy club located in downtown L.A. By the size of the crowd waiting in line outside we have to know that business is booming.

VOICE (OVER)
(continuing)
Like, take Los Angeles.
I mean...

CUT TO:

56 INT. LAUGHIN' LEO'S - NIGHT

56 *

And right off the bat we can see that this club is more upscale than the Grin Bin. The place is jammed and a comic of about thirty-five years old, wearing a great suit, whips his white hot rap on the audience. This is CHICK MILES, and he is a very funny guy. He also wears an IDENTICAL GOLD CHARM to the one that was in Denny Fry's hotel room: solid gold in the shape of the comedy mask.

MILES
(continuing)
fifteen million people living in
nine suburbs looking for a city
and everyone of them is an EST
graduate with a Scorpio rising.

57 ANGLE - HARDCASTLE AND McCORMICK

57

as they regard Miles and McCormick notices the gold charm around Chick's Miles neck.

CONTINUED

57 CONTINUED

57

MILES (V.O.)

My father was an unemployment rising. And I was born under a sign, too. Yeah, "Rooms for Rent".

No Scene 58No Scene 58

59 RESUME - CHICK MILES

59 *

MILES

Ya'see, I'm from New Jersey, and I'm not used to this California stuff. I mean, "fat" farms? Like, what do they grow? Yeah, and my girlfriend took me to some seminar called "Prosperity Interfacing", I got interfaced outt'a about two grand and she ran off with an accountant who lifts weights... Hey, and out here, you gotta have a gardener, and a front lawn that looks like a golf course... You wanna know what they call golf courses in Jersey? Chemical Dumps. Yeah, they do. Every year we hold the Three Mile Island Open. Whoever can play eighteen holes without coming down with Leukemia wins a trip to Love Canal and a free chest X-Ray...

(beat)

And I always thought a driving range was where cap drivers went to practice.

and we,

CUT TO:

60 EXT. DRESSING ROOM DOOR

60

off a hallway in the rear of "Laughin' Leo's".

*

CONTINUED

60

CONTINUED

60

Who?

MILES (V.O.)

Denny Fry.

HARDCASTLE

61

INT. DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

61

Chick Miles is winding down from his show and changing as Hardcastle and McCormick watch his reaction. Miles is very nervous.

MILES

(thinks)

No...don't know him. Fry?
You guys cops?

HARDCASTLE

Not exactly...Fry was a friend
of mine.

MILES

Well, I never met the guy. Try
over at the Laugh Factory, may-
be this Denny what's it, is working
there.

McCORMICK

Well, ya see Chick, Denny what's
it, isn't going to be working
anywhere. It seems he fell off
a hotel last night.

We can see Miles go white with fear and McCormick starts
to glance around the room.

CONTINUED

61

CONTINUED

61

HARDCASTLE

And seeing that back when you were booked in the Grin Bin, you got beat up along with a couple of other comics. There might be a connection.

MILES

I get beat up all the time, I got a wise mouth.

Something catches McCormick's eye and he walks over toward the dressing table. We can see that it's the gold charm: next to it is another picture of Pamela Bayer. *

HARDCASTLE

I can see that.

Then, LEO DIKEMAN enters the dressing room. He is a bald and strong guy in his sixties with about a million dollars worth'a clothes on his rather fat frame.

DIKEMAN

Hey, am I interrupting here, Chick?

MILES

No. These guys were just leaving.

62

CLOSE ANGLE - MCCORMICK

62

as he reaches for the gold charm that has been placed back in its jewelry box next to Miles' car keys, wallet, etc. The jewelry box reads: "DONNELLY JEWELERS, 13234 Wilshire Blvd." McCormick pockets the charm and jewelry box.

63

RESUME - SCENE

63

HARDCASTLE

Well, I wasn't really planning to leave until we cleared this up.

MILES

It's cleared up. I never heard'a this guy.

CONTINUED

63

CONTINUED

63

*

Miles and Dikeman exchange looks.

DIKEMAN

(re: Hardcastle &
McCormick)

What, you guys looking for trouble?
'Cause I could phone for some.

HARDCASTLE

Not yet...just wondering if what
Boots Dikeman told us is true.
Y'know, that when good comics
work his club they get a beating
and then end up working here.

DIKEMAN

I just pay them a lotta money.
Boots doesn't. And ever since
his house went cold he's been
spitting up that story about me
scaring off his talent. He's nuts.

MCCORMICK

Yeah, well now he's spitting up
one about you throwing guys like
Denny Fry off'a roof tops...

Off Dikeman's look, Hardcastle and McCormick leave. Miles
paces as Dikeman looks to him.

MILES

What's goin' on?

Dikeman breaks into a smile.

DIKEMAN

Relax.

CONTINUED

63 CONTINUED - 2

63

Miles is not relaxing.

MILES

Fry got thrown off a
roof...?

DIKEMAN

Suicide, Chick. Denny Fry was
a sad guy.

*

and we,

CUT TO:

64 EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

64

The Coyote streaks by through the night.

MCCORMICK

You think Leo Dikeman did it?

*

65 INT. COYOTE - NIGHT

65

Hardcastle rides shotgun and gazes out the window.

HARDCASTLE

Well, I think somebody did.
Leo Dikeman's a little shy
on method, but if Boots is
right about these two guys
competing for comedy talent,
Leo's got a motive. Opportunity
is wide open though.

*

*

Hardcastle looks out the window and thinks for a beat.

HARDCASTLE

There is a missing piece in the
center of this, kiddo. None'a
these guys are rubbing together
quite close enough. There's got
to be someone in the middle who's
touching all three.

CONTINUED

65

CONTINUED

65

MCCORMICK

Like maybe the mystery girl
with the blonde hair. Denny
Fry had a picture of her, so
did Chick Miles. Her first
name's Pamela.

*

HARDCASTLE

I don't think it's the girl,
McCormick.

*

MCCORMICK

I do.

*

*

HARDCASTLE

Oh, yeah...?
(beat)
Why?

McCormick reaches into his pocket and pulls out the
jewelry box, handing it to Hardcastle. He opens it.

MCCORMICK

...Chick Miles was wearing
that during his show.

Hardcastle opens the jewelry box and takes out the gold
charm.

MCCORMICK

And it is exactly like the charm
that was in Denny Fry's hotel room.
(beat)
Read the back.

Hardcastle flips over the charm and read the inscription.

HARDCASTLE

Love Pamela, February '83.

CONTINUED

65 CONTINUED - 2

65

McCORMICK

Fry's was inscribed: Love Pamela,
December '84. Solid gold, Judge,
and they look like they're
custom-made.

Hardcastle shoots McCormick a look.

HARDCASTLE

Where'd you get this?

McCORMICK

I found it in Miles' dressing
room.

HARDCASTLE

You stole it?

McCORMICK

Borrowed, Judge. Borrowed.
I'll give it back.

HARDCASTLE

I shouldn't have to point this
out to you after all this time,
but "borrowed" evidence doesn't
stand up in court.

McCORMICK

Hey, Judge, before we book
anyone for murder, let's first
find out where this girl is.

HARDCASTLE

How?

McCormick takes back the jewelry box and shows it to
Hardcastle.

McCORMICK

Donnelly's Jewelry, 13234 Wilshire?
I figure if they are custom-made,
they have to have an address on
a customer who buys solid gold
charms for the men in her life.

*

CONTINUED

65 CONTINUED - 3

65

HARDCASTLE

Y'know, Mark, you might be starting to pay off.

MCCORMICK

Don't get sentimental, Judge. I stole it.

HARDCASTLE

Borrowed... And we'll give it back.

Hardcastle smiles and hands McCormick back the charm and,

CUT TO:

66 EXT. DONNELLY JEWELRY - DAY

66

A store on Wilshire. McCormick exits and walks toward the Coyote that is parked out in front of the jewelry store... he gets in.

66A INT. COYOTE - DAY

66A

McCormick starts up the motor and hands an address to Hardcastle.

MCCORMICK

Pamela Bayer. 213 Redland.

Hardcastle shoots McCormick a "How did you do it" look.

MCCORMICK

The guy's a business man, Judge.

HARDCASTLE

So?

MCCORMICK

So, I just told him I wanted to ask Pamela Bayer to marry me, and if she said yes, I'd buy the engagement ring from him...he thought I was a comedian.

CONTINUED

#2217

43.
(X)

Rev. 11/29/84

66A

CONTINUED

66A

HARDCASTLE

Well, I can understand
that.

MCCORMICK

He gave me the address,
Judge.

HARDCASTLE

Y'know, I admit it.

MCCORMICK

What?

HARDCASTLE

That I hate it when you're
right.

As they drive off,

CUT TO:

67

OMITTED

67

68 CLOSE ON - A DOORBELL

*
68

as Hardcastle's finger pushes the button and we:

69 WIDEN ANGLE - TO INCLUDE - 213 REDLAND - DAY

69

This is the same residential home that we say Pamela Bayer leave early in the script. The Coyote is parked out in front by the curb and T.K.'s sedan is in the driveway. Hardcastle rings the doorbell again and then knocks.

MCCORMICK

If she's not home, Judge, maybe we should just take what we have to Lieutenant Giles. Let him figure it out.

70 INT. THE HOUSE - DAY

70

And we can see T.K. in the den and holding a gun on

CONTINUED

70 CONTINUED

70

Pamela Bayer. Fargo moves toward the front door.

FARGO

You stay cool and keep her quiet.

71 RESUME - FRONT DOOR - DAY

71

as Hardcastle presses the door bell again.

HARDCASTLE

Figure out what? All we have is an address of a blonde lady who gives gold charms to comics...

And on that the door opens and Fargo stands and checks out Hardcastle and McCormick.

FARGO

Yes.

HARDCASTLE

Hi. We're looking for Pamela Bayer, I believe she lives here.

FARGO

What if she does?

HARDCASTLE

We'd like to talk to her.

FARGO

Sorry guys.

Fargo goes to close the door and Hardcastle sticks his foot in and jams it open. On that, Fargo pulls a gun and McCormick rams the door open and pulls Fargo outside and onto the lawn.

72 INT. DEN

72

as T.K. stands and moves toward the door, holding his gun on Pamela.

CONTINUED

72 CONTINUED

72

T.K.

What's going on?

He hears a crash and scrambles out of the den...

73 RESUME - EXT. THE HOUSE

73

As McCormick and Fargo go at it on the lawn and Hardcastle scrambles for his gun... In a flash, T.K. is out the door and firing lead as McCormick rolls for cover and Hardcastle returns fire. Fargo climbs to his feet and:

FARGO

Let's go out of there!

They sprint toward the sedan that is parked in the drive and dive in. T.K. starts it up and roars out the drive.

HARDCASTLE

See if you can stay on those guys. I'll check the girl.

McCormick sprints toward the Coyote and leaps in, peeling out in a cloud of smoke and dirt. Hardcastle goes into the house.

74 INT. THE DEN - DAY

74

And crying in the corner is a badly shaken Pamela Bayer. Hardcastle moves to her gently.

PAMELA

I just want him to leave me alone.

HARDCASTLE

It's okay, no one is going to hurt you.

and we,

CUT TO:

75 EXT. THE COYOTE - DIRECTOR'S SEQUENCE - CAR CHASE - DAY

75

As it wipes past CAMERA and closes in on T.K.'s sedan.

CONTINUED

75 CONTINUED

75

We play a huge chase here with Fargo hanging out the window of the sedan and throwing lead as McCormick dodges the Coyote in and out. We play this for as long as it holds and then the sedan careens out of control and flips over a guard rail, rolling down an embankment. McCormick squeals up in the Coyote and jumps out...

76 HIS POV

76

as he looks down the embankment and sees T.K. and Fargo sprinting up the other side of the embankment and disappearing into a line of traffic.

77 RESUME McCORMICK

77

And off his look, we:

FADE OUT

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN

78 EXT. LAS VEGAS - NIGHT 78

A series of shots with all the bright lights and flashing neon of a world run by the roulette wheel of life.

79 EXT. SONNY AUSTIN'S OFFICE BUILDING - NIGHT 79

We can hear his voice breaking in anger.

AUSTIN (V.O.)
Whatta'ya mean, she got away?!

80 INT. SONNY AUSTIN'S OFFICE - NIGHT 80

And we can see that Austin is almost apoplectic. Fargo and T.K. are getting their asses handed to them.

FARGO
What did you want us to do?
Shoot her?

AUSTIN
I wanted you to keep her until
I could talk to her. That's
what I pay you bums for...

T.K.
Look, Mister Austin. Maybe she's
got friends, who knows? Maybe
these guys were helpin' her keep
you outta her life.

AUSTIN
All I ask you guys to do is take
care'a my girl and you blow it.

FARGO
She ain't your girl. Look, man,
you've completely spun out over
this. Can't you see what's been
going on here? Leo Dikeman,
your good buddy who's been keeping
an eye on Pamela, has been bird-
dogging for her.

AUSTIN
You're lying.

CONTINUED

FARGO

Am I? Look, Leo Dikeman has
 been trying to lock up all the
 comedy club action in L.A. And
 your sweet Pamela has got a
 thing for comics that makes
 you nuts. Well, Leo sets her
 up with a comedian who works at
 a competing nightclub....
 you go koo-koo and have him
 punched out. You even had one
 of them thrown off'a a roof top...
 After a while word gets out that
 working for anyone but Leo
 Dikeman can be dangerous.

*
*
*

There is a beat and Austin is just about on fire.

*

FARGO

You supply the muscle and
 Dikeman walks away clean. He's
 been playing you like a drum, Sonny.

Austin takes a beat and then flicks on his desk INTERCOM.

*

AUSTIN

(into intercom)
 Tell Tommy I'll be flying
 into L.A. tonight.
 (deadly)
 Get out, you guys are through
 with me.

*
*
*

There is a beat.

FARGO

She doesn't love you, Sonny,
 never did...

CUT TO:

as a private Lear Jet touches down and we:

CUT TO:

82 EXT. THE AIRPORT - DAWN 82

As Sonny Austin exits and moves toward a line of rental cars. He is alone and looks like he hasn't slept for days: crazy. Then he gets into a rental car and drives off.
Over this: *

PAMELA (V.O.)
I never loved Sonny.

CUT TO:

83 EXT. GULL'S WAY - DAY 83

The Coyote and pickup truck are parked out in front.

PAMELA (V.O.)
I never even liked him
that much.

84 INT. HARDCASTLE'S DEN - DAY 84

Pamela Bayer sits with Hardcastle and McCormick, sipping coffee and finally starting to calm down.

PAMELA
I felt sorry for him mostly.
(Beat)
I mean, I like guys who make
me laugh.

HARDCASTLE
Like Denny Fry?

PAMELA
Yeah, he was a sweetheart...
I can't believe he was killed
because of me. I mean, that's
the way it was, I date a guy a
couple of times and Sonny would
go nuts. That's why I moved to
L.A. so he'd leave me alone.

MCCORMICK
You could've gone to the
police.

CONTINUED

PAMELA

I was scared, Mark. I mean, you start seeing a guy like Sonny, 'cause he's got dough and it's a good time... And it was at first. We'd go to his casino and I'd be a queen... But he's also enough power to hurt people if they don't do what he likes.

(Beat)

And I liked comedians.

HARDCASTLE

You and Chick Miles had a thing?

PAMELA

Yeah, Chick was a friend. What? I dated him three times and he'd almost got his head kicked off by Sonny Austin.

(Beat)

I mean, you're new out here in L.A. and unless you wanna go out with some jerk who eats wheat germs there isn't a wide selection... So, I started hanging around the comedy clubs. I'd see a guy's act who I thought was kind'a cute and a friend would make the introduction. There's nothing wrong with that, is there?

McCORMICK

Not unless that friend might be a guy named Leo Dikeman?

PAMELA

Yeah, how'd you know it was Leo?

McCORMICK

Just a hunch. There's the missing piece, Judge.

CONTINUED

PAMELA

Leo's a good guy, Mister
Hardcastle. He wouldn't have
anything to do with this.

Hardcastle goes to his desk and dials the telephone.

HARDCASTLE

He might if it was a way for
him to cover up how he was
keeping all the hot comedy
talent in his own club.

(Beat - into telephone)

Yeah, Bill... Have'an open
warrant drawn up for a Leo
Dikeman, he owns the comedy
club over on Fifth. A place
called "Laughin' Leo's"... I
fill you in when we get there.

Off Pamela's look, we:

CUT TO:

A couple of squad cars are parked down the block and we can see Hardcastle and McCormick walking toward the comedy club with Bill Giles. Hardcastle's pickup truck is in the b.g. and we can see a couple of cops with Pamela Bayer.

HARDCASTLE

If Boots' Dikeman was the
funny one, Leo Dikeman definitely
must'a been the smart one... He
has this thing wired up pretty
good. He spots a hot comic and
fixes him up with Sonny Austin's
girl, Austin goes wacko and teaches
the guy Pamela's been dating a
lesson. Every comic in town is
scared to death not to work in his
club.

CONTINUED

85

CONTINUED

85

GILES

Which means we could book both Austin and Dikeman on murder one and conspiracy to commit.

McCORMICK

Except a guy like Sonny Austin's got a ton of juice. It's gonna be real tough.

HARDCASTLE

That's why we have to go real slow with this... We lose Leo Dikeman and we blow our whole case against Sonny Austin. It's real fragile.

They get to the front of the comedy club. Here is a beat and then Giles motions to TWO UNIFORMED POLICEMEN and they draw their service revolvers: the group enters the club and:

86

INT. LAUGHIN' LEO'S - DAY

86

It is dark and the chairs have been turned up onto the tables. Hardcastle and McCormick walk with Giles toward

CONTINUED

86 CONTINUED

86

the back of the club. They get to an office door and knock... There is no answer.

GILES
(calls out)
Leo Dikeman? L.A.P.D.
open up...

They knock again and still there is no response... McCormick tries the door and it opens.

87 THEIR POV

87

And we see Leo Dikeman slump over his desk, dead as a boot.

88 RESUME - SCENE

88

as Hardcastle, McCormick and Giles enter Dikeman's office and Giles checks Dikeman's pulse.

GILES
Looks like the case on
Austin's already been
blown.

*

Off Hardcastle's and McCormick's look, we:

FADE OUT

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN

89 EXT. GULL'S WAY 89

Late afternoon on the Southern California coast and we can see Lieutenant Giles' car parked out in the front drive along with Hardcastle's pickup truck and the Coyote.

GILES

Austin's private jet is
at LAX. *

90 INT. HARDCASTLE'S DEN - DAY 90

Hardcastle, McCormick, Pamela Bayer, and Giles are there.

HARDCASTLE

I guess that doesn't surprise
any of us, now does it. You
get anything from his pilots?

GILES

What? Austin is a business
man, he comes to L.A. all the
time. *

McCORMICK

But this time it looks like
it was to kill Leo
Dikeman, and only God
knows what he has planned
for Pamela. *

HARDCASTLE

(to Pamela)

You scared?

PAMELA

A little, yeah.

HARDCASTLE

We have to find this guy, Bill.

CONTINUED

90 CONTINUED

90

GILES

And that's not going to be easy. Scare up a guy like Austin in this town? He's got friends and connections everywhere, someone fingers him and they get hurt bad.

(to Pamela)

You're entitled to police protection if you want it.

Hardcastle thinks for a beat.

HARDCASTLE

We'll keep an eye on her, thanks. Look, stay by the phone, huh?

Giles goes to leave.

GILES

I'm a cop, I have to.

(Beat)

Hey Milt, if he's as nuts about her as I think he is, he's gonna try something.

HARDCASTLE

Yeah, I know... So, what we gott'a do is make sure he tries it on our playing field.

(nods)

thanks, Bill.

Giles leaves and Hardcastle exchanges a look with McCormick.

McCORMICK

Hey, wait a minute.

HARDCASTLE

What?

McCORMICK

I know that look...

HARDCASTLE

What look?

CONTINUED

MCCORMICK

The one that says, "Now I know this is gonna sound a little weird at first, kiddo... But let's give it a try."

HARDCASTLE

(to Pamela)

He's always saying stuff like that to me.

(Beat)

But, now that you mention it, I do have kind'a a funny idea.

MCCORMICK

Here it comes.

HARDCASTLE

Now, we know that Austin has a real thing for Pamela here...and Pamela, with all due respect, has a kind'a soft spot for comedians. Austin knows that... So, we have to figure that if he's gonna try and connect up with Pamela, he'll probably be checking out the comedy clubs.

PAMELA

In other words, to get Sonny out in the open we have to find a comedian for me to have a date with?

Hardcastle smiles.

HARDCASTLE

I like this girl.

MCCORMICK

Okay... Yeah. I guess this plan makes about as much sense as they ever do...

(to Pamela)

Very little.

(to Hardcastle)

But, one thing.

CONTINUED

HARDCASTLE

What's that?

MCCORMICK

How are we gonna talk some comedian into making himself a target for Sonny Austin I mean, now that Dikeman and Denny Fry have both been murdered, it won't be easy.

HARDCASTLE

You mean finding a comedian?

MCCORMICK

No. I'm talking about cutting the lawn.

Hardcastle laughs.

HARDCASTLE

You're a very funny guy, McCormick. Did I ever tell you that?

*

BOOTS (V.O.)

Eggplant...

And we,

CUT TO:

91 CLOSE ON - BOOTS DIKEMAN

91

as he shakes his head.

BOOTS

Ya'see, kid, eggplant is funny. Celery isn't....

92 PULL BACK TO INCLUDE - INT. THE GRIN BIN - DAY

92

McCormick and Dikeman are on stage and Hardcastle watches

CONTINUED

along with Pamela.

McCORMICK
Eggplant is funny?

BOOTS
Hysterical.

McCormick shoots Hardcastle a look; he doesn't like this much.

BOOTS
He had an arm like an eggplant.
That's funny... Remember that
and you'll get into any comedy
club in town.

McCORMICK
But I don't want to get into
any club in town.

HARDCASTLE
Well, you're in this one,
kiddo. So pay attention.

McCORMICK
That's funny, Judge.

BOOTS
No, it isn't... Now, look,
timing is essential, guys like
Berle, Hope, Cosby, it's all
in their timing. I mean, look,
you know what's funny about
Richard Pryor....?

McCORMICK
Not exactly.

BOOTS
Who he is... A comic's best
material always comes from his
own experiences. Okay, what
was the funniest thing that ever
happened to you?

McCORMICK
(thinks)
I had a blind date once with a
girl who turned out to be my cousin.

CONTINUED

BOOTS

So...okay, what was funny about it?

MCCORMICK

She was my cousin.

BOOTS

That's it?

MCCORMICK

Yeah.

BOOTS

Okay, we're in trouble here. Look, maybe I can dust off one'a my old routines. A little dated maybe, but you can bet it'll be funnier than your cousin.

(Beat)

Was she fat...? Dumb, anything?

MCCORMICK

She was nice. We had a good time.

BOOTS

Forget it.

(Beat)

Listen, this dog goes into a saloon back in the old west and orders a drink.

MCCORMICK

Oh, c'mon... That joke's older than Hardcastle's sneakers.

Hardcastle laughs.

HARDCASTLE

There, now you're getting the hang of it.

BOOTS

The reason old jokes get old is because they're funny... Now, one'a the cowboys in the saloon says--

CONTINUED

92 CONTINUED - 3

92

and off Boots' smile:

McCORMICK (V.O.)
We don't serve dogs...

CUT TO:

93 CLOSE ON - McCORMICK

93

He is dressed in a nice sports coat and sweating profusely.

McCORMICK
But, one'a the other cowboys
in this saloon, says: "I like
dogs, give him a drink." Well,
a gun fight breaks out, and the
dog gets shot in the foot.

94 REVERSE ANGLE - INT. THE GRIN BIN - NIGHT

94

And there is not a chuckle in the audience. We can see
Hardcastle and Pamela sitting at the center table, trying
to laugh, but it ain't easy. McCormick is, as they say in
comedy, taking a dump.

McCORMICK (V.O.)
Well, anyway, the next day the
same dog comes back into the
saloon, but this time he's
wearing a black Bart cowboy hat...

95 RESUME - WIDER ANGLE - McCORMICK

95

as he dies in front of this crowd.

McCORMICK
...and has a six-shooter strapped
to his leg. He moseys up to the
bar, flips back the brim of his
hat and says, "I'm looking for the
man who shot my paw...!"

There is not a sound in the joint and we can see Boots
Dikeman put his head in his hands.

CONTINUED

95 CONTINUED

95

MCCORMICK

Ya see, his paw... Like it was his dad? Looking for the man who shot his paw?

*

Maybe we hear a boo.

MCCORMICK

Y'know, once I had a blind date with a girl and it turned out to be my cousin...

There is not a sound...

MCCORMICK

(tries to laugh)

She had an arm like an eggplant.

Again, no one laughs... McCormick tries to gather his thoughts and we:

CUT TO:

96 EXT. THE GRIN BIN - NIGHT

96

as Sonny Austin enters the club.

*

97 RESUME - INT THE GRIN BIN - NIGHT

97

as McCormick dies on stage and Austin takes a spot in the rear watching Pamela Bayer as she watches McCormick with a warm smile on her face.

*

MCCORMICK

You know what's so funny about Bob Hope, Milton Berle, Bill Cosby? Timing... Yeah, they have great timing... Anyone knows what time it is?

Maybe there is a chuckle and we,

CUT TO:

98 EXT. THE GRIN BIN - NIGHT

98

It is after the show and McCormick and Pamela Bayer

CONTINUED

98

CONTINUED

98

exit arm in arm and romantic as they walk toward the Coyote that is parked in the alley. They get in and:

99

INT. COYOTE

99

And we can see that McCormick is not happy.

PAMELA

It was your first time, you did great.

McCORMICK

What I did was make a fool of myself.

PAMELA

I liked it...

He leans to kiss her.

*

McCORMICK

You did?

And on that we hear the crackle of a two-way radio.

HARDCASTLE (V.O.)

You wanna get to work, kiddo or read your reviews?

McCormick picks up a two-way radio and:

McCORMICK

On our way...

And they drive off and,

CUT TO:

100

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

100

As the Coyote pulls away from the Grin Bin... In the b.g. we can see Sonny Austin pull out and follow.

101

INT. COYOTE - NIGHT

101

McCormick regards Austin's sedan in his rearview mirror and picks up the two-way radio.

CONTINUED

101 CONTINUED

101

McCORMICK

We've got company, Judge...
I'm gonna take him up Coldwater
and over Gloaming Drive...

McCormick steps on the gas and:

102 EXT. CAR CHASE - NIGHT

102

as Austin roars up in his sedan, maybe a foot off of the Coyote's bumper. We play this for as long as it holds and maybe Austin hangs out the window and fires a revolver as McCormick dodges the gunfire and Pamela hunkers down in her seat. Then:

*

*

103 NEW ANGLE - EXT. STREET - NIGHT

103

The Coyote roars past CAMERA with the sedan about a hundred yards off its bumper: disappearing around a blind curve...

104 NEW ANGLE

104

And around the curve we can see that a road block has been set up. Giles and Hardcastle stand behind a couple of squad cars as about four cops lean over the hood and hold riot guns.... In a flash the Coyote squeezes through the opening between the squad cars and:

105 INT. THE SEDAN - NIGHT

105

Austin reacts to the road block..... But it is clear he isn't going to stop.

*

106 RESUME - ROAD BLOCK - NIGHT

106

As Austin's sedan careens out of control and tries to miss the road block, he hits one of the squad cars and spectacularly flips end over end into the ravine.. Play this as the cops scramble down toward his wreck and pull him out: bruised but conscious.

*

107 ANGLE - McCORMICK

107

as he and Pamela walk up to Hardcastle and Giles and Austin is dragged past by a couple of cops. He wears handcuffs and maybe bleeds from the bridge of his nose, shooting a look of rage at Pamela. McCormick puts his arm around her.

*

McCORMICK

Y'know, the trouble with guys like that is they have no sense of humor.

And we,

FADE OUT

END OF ACT FOUR

TAG

FADE IN

108 EXT. THE GRIN BIN - NIGHT 108

And by the number of cars parked outside, this place must be jammed inside

VOICE (OVER)

This dog walks into a saloon
back in the old west.

and we,

CUT TO:

109 INT. THE GRIN BIN - NIGHT 109

And a COMIC named SHECKY RABBINOWITZ is working a crowd that he clearly has in the palm of his hand. Rabbinowitz, at best, is a boarder line nerd, short and balding with a rather chubby face and toothy smile. Hardcastle, McCormick and Pamela Bayer sit center table, enjoying the show, except for McCormick who is watching Pamela as she laughs like crazy at this guy.

RABBINOWITZ

He mosey's up to the bar...
"Hey, bartender...gimme a
drink"...

McCORMICK

Not this old stone.

PAMELA

Ssshhhh...

RABBINOWITZ

The bartender says, "I'm sorry,
but we don't serve dogs in this
saloon."

McCORMICK

Oh, please...

HARDCASTLE

Ssshhh....

CONTINUED

109 CONTINUED

109

RABBINOWITZ

Well, one'a the cowboys who's been drinkin' in there all day says, "Give'm a drink, I like dogs..." Another one says, "Don't give him a drink, I hate dogs." Well, a gun fight breaks out, lead starts flying wverywhere and the dog gets shot in the foot and scampers out the door...

McCORMICK

(to Pamela)

Y'know, Pam, you and I have hardly had a chance to get to know each other.

(Beat)

Maybe after the show we could drop Hardcastle off and go for a ride or something?

Pamela doesn't take her eyes off the show.

PAMELA

Did you say something?

RABBINOWITZ

(continuing)

So, the next day the dog goes back into the saloon, but this time he's got a colt 45 strapped to his leg, a black leather vest and a cowboy hat tilted over one eye... He moves up to the bar real slow and reaches out and grabs the bartender by the shirt...and says: "I'm looking for the man who shot my paw"...

The place goes crazy and everyone laughs but McCormick.

109A ANGLE - TABLE

109A

PAMELA

This guy kills me.

CONTINUED

HARDCASTLE

Me too.

MCCORMICK

Gimme a break.

PAMELA

You didn't like him?

MCCORMICK

Well, I mean, if you like that kind'a low brow silly stuff, I guess it's worth a laugh or two... Personally though, my sense of humor is a bit more sophisticated.

HARDCASTLE

Yeah, that story about you dating your cousin is a scream and a half.

MCCORMICK

(to Pamela)

So what do you think?

PAMELA

About what?

MCCORMICK

I've been trying to ask you out on a date for the last ten minutes.

PAMELA

I'm sorry, I must have been laughing. Didn't hear you...

MCCORMICK

Well, after the show?

And on that Shecky Rabbinowitz comes up to the table and takes Pamela's hand. She gets up and starts to leave with him.

PAMELA

Sorry Mark, I've got plans...

CONTINUED

109 A CONTINUED - 2

109

She smiles and walks off with Rabbinowitz and McCormick
watches them go as Hardcastle shoots him a look and smiles.

HARDCASTLE
(Re: Pamela and
Rabbinowitz)

It's a funny world isn't it,
kiddo.

MCCORMICK
Hysterical.

and:

FREEZE FRAME

THE END