

#2305.

HARDCASTLE AND McCORMICK

"GAMES PEOPLE PLAY"

by

Carol Mendelsohn

A STEPHEN J. CANNELL PRODUCTION

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#2305

HARDCASTLE AND McCORMICK

"GAMES PEOPLE PLAY"

CAST

JUDGE MILTON C. HARDCASTLE
MARK McCORMICK

LT. FRANK HARPER

J. WALTER RUXTON
HARVEY BAXTER
ART HEALY
BRYCE BENSON
DIANE TEMPLETON
ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
GUARD
STAGE MANAGER
AGNES O'TOOLE

#2305

Rev. 10/1/85

HARDCASTLE AND McCORMICK

"GAMES PEOPLE PLAY"

SETS

EXT.

KCED STATION
GULL'S WAY

*

/MAIN HOUSE
/POOL AREA
/GARAGE

*

"TRIVIA MASTER" TV STUDIO
/PARKING LOT

INT.

J. WALTER RUXTON'S OFFICE
KCED LOBBY
GULL'S WAY

*

/HARDCASTLE'S DEN
/KITCHEN

"TRIVIA MASTER" TV STUDIO

/INTERVIEW ROOM
/BAXTER AND HEALY'S OFFICE
/BACKSTAGE
/BACKSTAGE HALLWAY
/STAGE
/AUDIENCE
/CONTROL BOOTH
/BENSON'S DRESSING ROOM
/HALLWAY, BENSON'S DRESSING ROOM
/DIANE TEMPLETON'S OFFICE
/CATWALK

HARDCASTLE & McCORMICK"GAMES PEOPLE PLAY"ACT ONE

(X)

1 FADE IN: 1

EXT. KCED, CHANNEL 10 - ESTABLISHING - DAY

A sign in the f.g. identifies the headquarters of KCED, Channel 10, Los Angeles.

BAXTER (V.O.)

We know the ratings have been a little...disappointing.

2 INT. RUXTON'S OFFICE - DAY 2

as a set of ratings sheets are tossed contemptuously on the desk by J. WALTER RUXTON, the 27 year-old wunderkind and director of programming for KCED. The guy has a heart of steel.

RUXTON

Disappointing?...Not to the competition. Not to the networks.

ANGLE ADJUSTS to include HARVEY BAXTER and ART HEALY, the producers of "Trivia Master" and deans of the TV game show format. They are facing Ruxton, standing --- clearly they have not been invited to sit --- feeling every minute of their sixty-odd years.

RUXTON

Fellas, KCED is just a local independent station. We have to compete with the networks. And your ratings - well, let me put it this way - "Trivia Master" is now the lowest rated game show in the country.

BAXTER

Look, Jay, all the show needs is a little more time to find its audience. You wouldn't remember, but back in '58 when Artie and I did "Celebrity Quest", the show didn't have legs 'til the second thirty-two week pickup. And, "Auction America".

Baxter shoots Healy a look.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

HEALY

Right. It took a couple of months to iron out the kinks. Out with Daly, in with Ludden. Hired that former Miss America. Show ran eleven years.

RUXTON

Look, I know you guys were big network producers...once. But this isn't the network and you're not network producers anymore... You gotta change with the times, that's what I keep tellin' you.

BAXTER

And Artie and I keep listening. As a matter of fact, we're working on some big changes...as we speak.

Healy looks over at Baxter with surprise.

BAXTER

Artie and I didn't want to tell you about it...you know what perfectionists we are...until we'd worked out all the details. But, we have this idea to take the game show where it's never been before.

HEALY

(confused)

Where's that?

Baxter throws his arm around Healy and squeezes him tight... a little too tight.

BAXTER

(to Ruxton)

I love this guy. What a straight man. I say "We want to take the game show where it's never been before." He says "Where's that?"

Ruxton checks his watch.

RUXTON

Look fellas, you got four minutes. Go.

BAXTER

(overriding)

And I say...to the biggest cash prize ever offered on television.

RUXTON

The networks already have \$100,000 quiz shows. *

BAXTER

\$100,000 is small potatoes. We're talking bigger. *

(off Healy's look)

A lot bigger. Big bigger.

RUXTON

You're killin' me with suspense. How much bigger?

Healy's eyes are riveted on Baxter.

BAXTER

(hesitates)

One million dollars.

Healy chokes on the words.

RUXTON

C'mon, you guys don't have that kind of dough.

HEALY

(trying to discourage)

You're right, we don't.

BAXTER

That's why we've been talking to our bankers. With a little creative financing...we can raise the money like...

(snaps his fingers)

...that.

HEALY

(dissuading)

Don't listen to him. It's a gimmick.

RUXTON

(brightening)

Yeah, but it's fresh. I like it.

CONTINUED

BAXTER

What's not to like?

(off Healy's
murderous look)

A million dollar grand prize and
a new kind of contestant. I was
thinking along the lines of a
Rocky. A Rambo. A guy who's
fought his way up through the
school of hard knocks. A guy who's
been down for the count and picked
himself right back up. A guy
America can root for.

A beat as Ruxton considers Baxter's "hard" sell.

RUXTON

One month. Get the ratings up. Or
you're off the air.

CUT TO

INT. LOBBY - DAY

as Baxter and Healy shoulder their way out of the just-arrived
elevator.

HEALY

I should have you committed.

BAXTER

You should pin a medal on me.

HEALY

Harvey, you lied.

BAXTER

No I didn't. I fudged.

HEALY

Fudge is what they put on ice cream.
Fraud is what they're gonna put on
the indictment when they find out
we don't have a million bucks...
Between us, we don't have fifty
thousand.

Baxter grabs Healy's arm and steers him over to a secluded
corner of the lobby.

CONTINUED

BAXTER

Maybe we don't need the money. On our other shows, how many times did we pay off?

HEALY

You need help, Harvey.

BAXTER

How many times?

HEALY

(off his lock)

A couple.

BAXTER

And that's when we left it to chance. Now, if we put in the fix...

HEALY

No. No. No.

BAXTER

Yes. Yes. Yes...Artie, to that kid back there, we're old enough to be his grandfather. You think he wants to do business with us? He wants us out on the street collecting social security so he can cut deals with yuppies. This is the end of the line. We're not gonna get another shot... So, are you in?

HEALY

I'm out.

BAXTER

(ignoring)

Artie, I'm telling you, everything's gonna be fine. We'll get the numbers up. Get back on our feet. This thing's gonna work...All we gotta do is find a good loser.

SMASH CUT TO

INT. HARDCASTLE'S DEN - DAY

TIGHT ON McCORMICK. Standing, munching on a bowl of nuts, watching Hardcastle watch "Trivia Master" on the TV.

CONTINUED

4 CONTINUED

MCCORMICK

I can't believe you actually watch this show, Judge.

5 INSERT - TV SCREEN

We GLIMPSE BRYCE BENSON, failed comic, failed actor and now aging host of "Trivia Master". Next to him, the contestant, AGNES O'TOOLE, a "Where's the Beef?" Clara Peller type. The canned THEME MUSIC from the show starts up in the b.g. and the show breaks for commercial.

MCCORMICK (V.O.):

Where are the cowboys? The Indians? The fist fights at the O.K. Corral?

WIDEN TO INCLUDE HARDCASTLE sitting on the sofa in front of McCormick.

HARDCASTLE

Listen, kiddo. Every once in a while I need a little intellectual stimulation.

MCCORMICK

I thought your idea of intellectual stimulation was watching John Wayne doing intellectual things like drawing the wagons in a circle, stampeding the cattle, rustling the rustlers.

(off Hardcastle's
sarcastic grin)

But Agnes O'Toole, from East Chicago, Indiana?

HARDCASTLE

Agnes just happens to be an ex-NASA scientist and grandmother of four.

MCCORMICK

With a Phd in physics, an MA in brain surgery, and in her spare time she plays cello with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Give me a break.

McCormick moves around the sofa and plops down next to Hardcastle. Hardcastle reaches a hand into the bowl of nuts.

HARDCASTLE

You know, if they gave a degree in sleeping past ten, you could be a contestant on this show

CONTINUED

5

CONTINUED

5

MCCORMICK

C'mon, any idiot can answer these questions.

HARDCASTLE

Okay. How fast does light travel?

MCCORMICK

Why don't you ask me something important?

HARDCASTLE

You don't know, do you?

MCCORMICK

It's not a fair question. Physics isn't my category.

HARDCASTLE

And what is? Breaking and entering 101?

MCCORMICK

I don't know...race car driving.

The THEME MUSIC starts up again in the b.g. We HEAR the SOUND of AUDIENCE APPLAUSE. Hardcastle ssshshhs McCormick.

6

INSERT - TV SCREEN

6

as flashing colored lights fill the screen, illuminating the show's garish logo: "Trivia Master." Benson, flanked by Agnes, flashes a big, cheesy grin for the camera.

BENSON

This is the moment we've all been waiting for. Agnes, you've won a total of \$10,000. Under the rules, you can take the \$10,000 you've won and go home. Or you can risk it all in Trivia Master's \$25,000 bonus round.

6A

INT. TV STUDIO - ON BENSON AND AGNES

6A

BENSON

What will it be, Agnes? \$10,000? Or a shot at the big \$25,000 bonus question?

CONTINUED

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7A.
(X)

6A

CONTINUED

6A

AGNES

I'll risk it all, Bryce.

BENSON

Alright, Agnes.

The audience APPLAUDS

BENSON

It's all or nothing. Answer this next question right and you win \$25,000. If you don't, you go home empty-handed...For \$25,000, Agnes...

7

A NEW ANGLE

7

As the show continues to play in the b.g., McCormick enters frame and blocks Hardcastle's view.

MCCORMICK

Go ahead. Ask me a question.

CONTINUED

7

CONTINUED

7

HARDCASTLE

(straining to see)

You're in my way.

MCCORMICK

You can't chicken out. You started this.

HARDCASTLE

I started watching this show. Now I'm sorry I did.

MCCORMICK

Why don't you ask me who won the '56 Indy 500? Or who set the first land speed record?

HARDCASTLE

(straining to see)

Wait, wait, this is the big question.

Hardcastle jumps up, crosses over to the TV and muscles McCormick out of the way.

8

POV - TV SCREEN

8

BENSON

Ladies and gentlemen, "Trivia Master" won't be back next week. But in its place, offering the biggest cash prize in television history, we'll be back with the all new "One Million Dollar Trivia Master." We hope you'll join us.

(applause)

For "Trivia Master" this is Bryce Benson. Until next time...

9

RESUME SCENE

9

as Hardcastle REACHES INTO FRAME and switches off the TV.

HARDCASTLE

Great. Now I'll never know whether Agnes answered the big question.

MCCORMICK

Will ya' forget about Agnes? What about my question?

CONTINUED

HARDCASTLE

What makes you think you're an expert in anything?

McCORMICK

Because thanks to the Hardcastle brand of truth, justice and the American way, I spent two years of my life on my knees scrubbing floors...and in my leisure time, reading everything I could on race car driving.

HARDCASTLE

Yeah, well, even if you did know the answers, you're not the right type.

McCORMICK

What do you mean, not the right type?

HARDCASTLE

You're not bubbly McCormick. You're a lot of things, but bubbly isn't one of them.

McCORMICK

Well, I got twenty bucks here says I can bubble like champagne.

McCormick reaches into his pocket and fishes out a bill.

HARDCASTLE

Don't waste your money.

McCORMICK

Twenty bucks. Put up or shut up.

Hardcastle plucks the bill out of McCormick's hand.

HARDCASTLE

Forget it. You'll never get past the interview.

SMASH CUT TO

PAN DOWN from the "Trivia Master" logo on the wall to DIANE TEMPLETON, Trivia Master's contestant coordinator, caught in mid-laugh. Mid-twenties, a little too cute and intelligent to be a knock-out, she's sitting across the desk from McCormick. She's trying her best to remain cool and professional, but is obviously charmed by McCormick.

DIANE

Mark...

MCCORMICK

Trust me, Diane. It's not a date.

DIANE

You want to pick me up, take me out to a Chinese restaurant and a movie, and bring me home. What do you call it?

MCCORMICK

I call it a heck of a way to get to know the man behind the contestant. Besides, it's not a real date 'til I invite you out for pizza and bowling.

DIANE

(smiling)

Mark, it's against station rules for an employee to go out with a contestant, date or no date.

MCCORMICK

C'mon, you're not going to let some dumb rule stand in the way of two new 'friends' spending an evening together.

DIANE

(evading)

Rules are rules...Now, getting back to the interview, what exactly is it that you do as a custodial engineer?

MCCORMICK

I do the gardening, fix the plumbing, clean the pool, take care of the cars. Go out to Chinese restaurants. To the movies.

CONTINUED

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10A.

11

CONTINUED

11

DIANE
(trying hard not
to crack a smile)
In other words, you're a handyman?

CONTINUED

11

CONTINUED

11

MCCORMICK

I can be a very handy man to have around. But why take my word for it. You like moo goo gai pan? Dim sung pang? Tae kwon do?

Diane shakes her head, smiles. A beat.

DIANE

Make it pizza and bowling, and I'll take a raincheck.

As McCormick grins.

CUT TO

12

INT. BAXTER AND HEALY'S OFFICE - DAY

12

Baxter and Healy are watching McCormick's interview on a video monitor.

MCCORMICK (V.O.)

I know how it looks. Grand Theft Auto. A two-year, all expense paid vacation to San Quentin. Believe me, everything always looks worse on paper.

13

INSERT - THE MONITOR

13

MCCORMICK

Actually, Diane, it was all a big misunderstanding. You won't believe this, but the Judge and I sit at home at night, watching old John Wayne movies, laughing ourselves silly over what a big misunderstanding it all was.

14

RESUME SCENE

14

as Baxter switches off the sound on the monitor and the interview continues to play in the b.g.

HEALY

McCormick's an ex-con?

BAXTER

Served two years...It would have been better if he'd served more time. Death row, had his sentence commuted... I guess we'll have to live with it.

CONTINUED

HEALY

Harvey, we can't put an ex-con on TV.

BAXTER

Wait, it gets better. McCormick lives with the Judge who sent him up. Works for him. Helps him bust criminals.

HEALY

Harvey...

BAXTER

Artie, he's paid his debt to society. Why shouldn't we give a break to a kid who's trying to turn his life around? A kid who's trying to make something of himself?

HEALY

A kid from San Quentin who's gonna be able to write us a letter of introduction when we get sent up.

BAXTER

(considering this last)

I like it.

HEALY

I hate it.

BAXTER

Not my idea. Yours.

HEALY

Harvey, the only idea I have is to get the hell away from you.

BAXTER

(quoting)

"The Kid from San Quentin"...Get it? The "San Quentin Kid." They'll eat it up, Artie. The audience'll go crazy. We'll use it in all our advertising. I can hear it now - "The San Quentin Kid" goes for the gold. You have to admit, it has a certain ring.

HEALY

More like a death knell.

Healy shrugs -- another battle lost.

CUT TO

15 OMITTED 15

16 EXT. GULL'S WAY - LATER THE SAME DAY 16

TIGHT on Hardcastle counting out \$20 in bills.

HARDCASTLE (O.S.)
Eighteen...nineteen...twenty.

PULL BACK as Hardcastle hands the money to McCormick. We can see Hardcastle has been out on the basketball court. He's sweating, has a basketball under one arm. McCormick can't contain a smirk, looking extremely pleased with himself, and this irritates Hardcastle even more.

HARDCASTLE
You got lucky.

MCCORMICK
I get it. When Agnes O'Toole is a contestant, you say she's another Einstein. McCormick gets a shot at a cool million and it's 'you got lucky.'

HARDCASTLE
Real lucky.

MCCORMICK
According to Diane Templeton, the show's contestant coordinator, I have what every successful game show contestant has.

HARDCASTLE
An attitude problem?

MCCORMICK
The three P's. Personality. Poise. And proficiency.

HARDCASTLE
So does Miss America, McCormick. Only you wouldn't make it through the evening gowns.

MCCORMICK
Laugh all you want, Judge, because I'm going to be laughing all the way to the bank.

HARDCASTLE
You really think you're gonna win a million bucks?

CONTINUED

16

CONTINUED

16

McCORMICK

That's the general idea. They ask questions. I answer them. And I win whatever's behind door number three.

HARDCASTLE

Then they ask one more question, that you can't answer, and you end up with a year's supply of fabric softener.

McCORMICK

Maybe.

HARDCASTLE

Take my advice, McCormick. Maybe you'll get lucky. Maybe you'll get one right. If you do, count your blessings, grab the money and jump ship.

Off McCormick's look, we

CUT TO

17

INT. BAXTER AND HEALY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

17

Healy is packing his belongings, pulling up stakes. He packs a bronze plaque in a box, Baxter immediately unpacks it.

BAXTER

Thirty years together in the business and you're jumping ship. Even a secretary gives two weeks notice.

HEALY

So sue me... 'Cause I know if I stay the FCC and the station are gonna sue me, not to mention the California Attorney General and the District Attorney.

Baxter grabs Healy's hand.

BAXTER

Artie, will you listen for a minute, please. I got the bases covered. I've prepared for every contingency. Nothing, absolutely nothing can go wrong.

HEALY

Harvey a million and one things can go wrong.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

BAXTER

Name one.

HEALY

Okay. What if McCormick turns out to be a whiz kid? What if he knows all the answers? What if he goes all the way?

BAXTER

That's simple. There's always a question so obscure that even a person with all the answers can't answer it.

Baxter looks at Healy. Smiles a small smile.

HEALY

Knowing how devious you can be, Harvey, I'll give you that one.

(tries a different tack)

But what if McCormick doesn't know beans? What if he's an idiot? Harvey, you gotta get him into the final round to build the audience and get the ratings up.

BAXTER

That's even easier. We only ask McCormick what he knows.

HEALY

(sarcastic)

That's easy?...What are you, now, clairvoyant?...How the heck are we going to know what McCormick knows?

Baxter reacts, with a knowing smile. And we:

CUT TO

EXT. GULL'S WAY - DAY

Early morning along the Pacific shore and we can see a van bearing the logo: SOUTH COAST GAS COMPANY OF CALIFORNIA parked out in front.

NEW ANGLE

We PICK UP the GAS MAN, standing outside the house, next to

CONTINUED

19

CONTINUED

19

an open den window. He reads the meter, logs the numbers into an official looking notebook, flips the notebook shut. He looks around, then climbs through the open window and into...

20

INT. HARDCASTLE'S DEN

20

He swings into action, removes a miniature bugging device from his pocket.

21

INSERT - THE BUG

21

as it's attached to the underside of Hardcastle's desk. On that:

CUT TO

22

EXT. TELEVISION STUDIO - DAY

22

in the b.g. we can see the parked Coyote in the lot. Camera MOVES IN on a marquee that reads:

THE NEW ONE MILLION DOLLAR
TRIVIA MASTER

A long line of tourists and game show afficianados file under it, past a PAGE and into the studio. *

CUT TO

23

INT. BACKSTAGE

23

We can see a lot of bustling, pre-show activity. McCormick, dressed in a suit and tie, and Hardcastle are milling about, getting in the way of electricians, stagehands, cables.

HARDCASTLE

Remember, just breathe easy and don't forget what I told you. *

McCORMICK

This isn't natural childbirth, Judge. I don't need a coach. *

HARDCASTLE

But you need someone to tell you, if you answer the first question right, take the money and run. *

CONTINUED

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CONTINUED

23

MCCORMICK

If I answer the first question right,
I only win \$500.

*

HARDCASTLE

Which is more than you make in a
week, kiddo.

CONTINUED

23

CONTINUED

23

MCCORMICK

And if I answer the second question right, I win another \$500, which is more than I make in three weeks.

HARDCASTLE

And if you don't, you get the big goose egg, which is a heck of a lot less than what you'll get if you take my advice and cut your losses.

24

ANGLE - DIANE

24

as she walks up.

MCCORMICK

Diane...Judge, I'd like you to meet Diane Templeton. Diane, this is my employer, Judge Milton C. Hardcastle.

Hardcastle and Diane shake hands.

DIANE

Mark's told me so much about you. I'm glad you could be here.

HARDCASTLE

Wouldn't miss it for the world, Diane.

DIANE

Would you like someone to assist you to your seat?

HARDCASTLE

No thanks.

DIANE

I can get a P.A. to help you.

HARDCASTLE

No, I'm fine.

DIANE

It must be one of your better days.

Hardcastle shoots McCormick a look.

CONTINUED

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17A.
(X)

24

CONTINUED

24

HARDCASTLE

One of my better days?

MCCORMICK

(covering)

What Diane means, Judge, is a
better day in the sense of a day
off from your busy schedule.

CONTINUED

DIANE

I guess ever since Mark pulled you from that burning wreck, the pain gets pretty bad sometimes.

Hardcastle regards McCormick.

HARDCASTLE

You know, Diane, it's a funny thing about pain. Some people don't even know the meaning of it, 'til they've experienced it...first hand.

McCormick checks his watch.

MCCORMICK

Well, hey, look at this...only five minutes to showtime.

Hardcastle and McCormick exchange a look. Hardcastle starts to leave.

HARDCASTLE

I'm goin', I'm goin'...Just remember what I said. Don't go out there and act like a monkey at the end of a string. Answer the first question right, take the money, and go home.

As McCormick fixes Hardcastle with a look, we PAN UP to the control booth, glassed in so you can see Baxter and Healy and the activity inside.

CUT TO

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19.

25

INT. CONTROL BOOTH - BAXTER AND HEALY

25

We can tell right off the bat that this is a high-class, high-tech operation. There are a double bank of TV monitors which show the stage, backstage, Baxter and Healy's office, the corridor leading to the executive offices, etc. Healy, having seen Diane with McCormick, grimaces. Baxter picks up on this.

BAXTER

Now what's wrong?

HEALY

Did you ever stop to think how much Diane knows about our operation? She's involved in every facet of the show, Harvey. What if she gets nosy? What if we let something slip? What if she figures out what we're up to?

BAXTER

What if you relax? Stop worrying.

HEALY

I can't. I have to do the worrying for the both of us. What are we going to do about Diane?

BAXTER

We're not going to do anything.

(off Healy's look)

If Diane gets out of line, which she won't, trust me, Artie, I'll take care of it.

SMASH CUT TO

26

INT. STAGE - DAY

26

Colored lights, flashing lights, strobing lights everywhere. A giant tote board fashioned something like an oversized thermometer dominates centerstage. We GLIMPSE CAMERAMEN and STAGEHANDS in murmured efficient activity. The canned THEME MUSIC starts up in the b.g. The "Trivia Master" logo flashes on and off. And as the STAGE MANAGER cues the "Don Pardo" ANNOUNCER --

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

From the television capital of the world, it's time to play TV's only million dollar game...The all new "One Million Dollar Trivia Master."

27

INSERT - THE APPLAUSE SIGN

27

as it flashes on and off and the audience reacts, exploding into applause.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

And now, here's our host, the star of "Trivia Master"...Bryce Benson!

28

ANGLE - BENSON

28

as he bounds onstage, microphone in hand. He plants himself on his mark, takes an exaggerated bow and flashes a big, cheesy grin for the camera -- his pearly whites a monument to modern dentistry.

BENSON

Thank you very much and welcome.
(a beat as applause fades)

As you all know, we're making television history here today, inaugurating television's first million dollar game show.

(more applause)

So, without any further ado, let's meet TV's first million dollar contestant. He's a handyman from Malibu, California. A real life Rocky. Please say hello to Mark McCormick.

29

ANGLE - McCORMICK

29

as he's escorted onstage by two beautiful HOSTESSES. He smiles, playing a bit too much to the camera.

BENSON

Welcome Mark and thank you girls... Aren't they lovely folks?

The audience APPLAUDS.

BENSON

Mark, I know our audience is going to be very interested in your particular life story. You were an up and coming race car driver on the Can-Am circuit until your career was cut short by --- a brush with the law?

CONTINUED

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20A.

29

CONTINUED

29

McCORMICK

That's right, Bryce. I was
falsely accused and convicted of
auto theft.

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21.

30

INTERCUT - HARDCASTLE

30

in the audience, surrounded by a clot of oddly dressed and overly enthusiastic spectators. He reacts.

BENSON

Now correct me if I'm wrong, but you served two years in San Quentin.

MCCORMICK

Tow very long years, Bryce.

BENSON

Mark, I know for a fact, that with a little help from the Judge who sent you up, you've managed to dramatically turn your life around. ...Folks, for the last three years, Mark has been paroled in the custody of a retired Los Angeles Superior Court Judge. And working side-by-side, they've aided law enforcement officials in apprehending a number of notorious criminals.

(APPLAUSE)

Mark, you're one heck of an inspiration to us all and I know everyone out there is rooting for you.

More APPLAUSE.

BENSON

Now you know how the game is played. Each round has 10 questions. Each question is worth \$500. You can stop at any time, take the money you've won and go home.

(beat)

An incorrect answer and you're out of the game. However, if you correctly answer the first ten questions of the round, you earn the right to answer the "Trivia Master" bonus question worth \$5,000. Making the total winnings for each round \$10,000. And that's not all.

(beat)

Once you reach \$100,000, Mark you win the right to risk it all and play the new one million dollar "Trivia Master" bonus round. One question, worth \$1,000,000.

More APPLAUSE.

CONTINUED

30

CONTINUED

30

BENSON

So, if you think you could find
some ways to spend a million dollars,
Mark, step into the player's circle
and let's play "Trivia Master"!

As the audience applauds, McCormick steps into the circle rimmed
with flashing colored lights.

BENSON

Mark, your category is --

As Benson points.

31

INSERT - THE BOARD

31

"RACE CAR DRIVING" flashes across the screen.

BENSON

Race car driving.

32

RESUME SCENE

32

As Benson reads the question from a colored envelope or card.

BENSON

...For \$500, name the driver who
won the first Indianapolis 500.

McCORMICK

Ray Harroun.

BENSON

That's right.

The audience APPLAUDS.

BENSON

Mark, you've won \$500. It's time
to make your first decision of
the game. Do you want to take the
\$500 and go home or do you want to
go on to Question Number Two?

33

ANGLE - HARDCASTLE

33

We can see him silently mouth the words: "Go home."

34

RESUME MCCORMICK

34

as he breaks out in a big grin.

MCCORMICK

Bryce, I'm going on.

35

A MONTAGE OF SHOTS

We play Hardcastle and McCormick's reactions as McCormick continues to correctly answer the questions. Hardcastle shakes his head as McCormick answers the second question and the thermometer rises to the \$1,000 mark. Then, with each succeeding question and answer, Hardcastle gets more involved in the game, caught up in the flashing lights, the rising thermometer, \$2,000...\$3,000...\$4,000...\$5,000...\$10,000. And as we come out of this series of shots, we should sense that Hardcastle is even more hyped on the outcome than McCormick. *

CUT TO

36

INT. STAGE

36

Benson and McCormick are centerstage.

BENSON

Congratulations, Mark. You're well on your way to becoming TV's first million dollar winner...But first, you have a decision to make. Mark, will you take the \$10,000 you've won here today, \$10,000 can make a whole lot of dreams come true, and go home? Or will you come back, same time, same place to play for another \$10,000...on your way to a bonus prize of \$1,000,000?

McCormick hesitates, considering.

37

CLOSE ON - HARDCASTLE

37

out of his seat, on his feet, shouting encouragement.

HARDCASTLE

Go for it! Go for it!

We play the moment, then:

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

38

EXT. GULL'S WAY/POOL AREA - DAY

38

TIGHT on McCormick's "San Quentin Kid" T-shirt. It has a picture of McCormick on the front, behind bars, with the inscription on the back: I'D DO TIME WITH THE SAN QUENTIN KID.

McCORMICK (V.O.)

...with his boyish good looks and churlish charm, the 'San Quentin Kid' has singlehandedly taken the daytime game show to an all-time ratings high.

ANGLE ADJUSTS TO INCLUDE McCORMICK, lounging in a chair, reading aloud from a fan magazine. Hardcastle is sitting next to him.

HARDCASTLE

Listen, ---

McCORMICK

Wait, wait - there's more. Breezing to victory in four straight wins, McCormick has racked up a total of \$40,000. Las Vegas odds-makers are laying odds of McCormick winning the \$1,000,000 bonus prize at 10,000 to 1.

McCormick lowers the magazine.

McCORMICK

Do you believe that? What some people won't do to hype a game show.

HARDCASTLE

(Re: McCormick's
T-shirt)

Like wearin' their face on their chest.

McCORMICK

Judge...I didn't ask for this, they gave it to me. Kind of a souvenir, you know...something to remember.

HARDCASTLE

You may need something to remember.

McCORMICK

You still don't think I have a chance, do you?

CONTINUED

HARDCASTLE

(frowns; a beat)

Look kiddo, you already won \$40,000. Now, I'm not gonna tell you what to do, but you oughta put that money in the bank. Open a savings account. Buy yourself a small business. . .

*

McCORMICK

C'mon, Judge. \$40,000? That's peanuts in today's market. What am I gonna buy, a burger stand on Pacific Coast highway. I don't think you'd look too good in a paper hat.

*

HARDCASTLE

You could buy that body shop you're always talkin' about. Or an interest in a car dealership. Maybe even get your foot back in racing.

McCORMICK

Wait a second...am I wrong, or wasn't it you that said "Go for it, go for it"?

HARDCASTLE

Okay, so maybe I got a little excited.

McCORMICK

Judge, I can read you like a fifty cent paperback. You think I'm all caught up with the bright lights, and the interviews and the public adulation.

Hardcastle picks up a magazine and shows McCormick the cover.

*

HARDCASTLE

"Daytime's Daring Dandy"?

McCORMICK

I didn't give them that picture. They got it off my licence.

(beat)

What do you think? You think my sideburns are a little too long?

(beat)

(MORE)

*

CONTINUED

38

CONTINUED - 2

38
*

MCCORMICK (Cont'd)

Look Judge, this doesn't mean anything - I just don't want to fold my hand before the last cards are dealt.

HARDCASTLE

Meanin' what?

MCCORMICK

Meaning, my whole life I always stopped short. With race car driving, women, you name it. I'd get to the one yard line and stop. Never take the last run at the goal-line. Never take that last step...Something better came up, I was scared, I went to prison. But the result never changed. I always stopped short.

HARDCASTLE

Which is why you should take the forty thousand and go home a winner.

MCCORMICK

Maybe you're right, Judge. I don't know. All I know is this is something I have to do for me. I can't stop short. Not this time.

HARDCASTLE

Even if it means comin' home empty-handed?

MCCORMICK

Even if it means winding up where I started. This time, I'm goin' out there and give it my best shot.

Hardcastle reacts. Picks up a racing text lying on the table next to him. Flips it open.

HARDCASTLE

Allright. Who was the winner of the 1955 Italian Mille Miglia?

CUT TO

39

CLOSE ON - A TAPE MACHINE

39

as it plays back the conversation between Hardcastle and McCormick

MCCORMICK (V.O.)

Stirling Moss. Driving a Mercedes Benz, a 3-litre 300 SLR.

The lines disengage as the CAMERA PANS UP TO INCLUDE --

40

INT. BAXTER AND HEALY'S OFFICE - DAY

40

We find Baxter and Healy sitting there, listening. Healy is taking notes.

BAXTER

Write that one down, Artie. I like it. Adds a little foreign flavor.

Healy reaches over, keys the stop button on the machine, sits back, folds his arms and just stares at Baxter.

BAXTER

Alright, you don't like it, we won't use it.

HEALY

I don't like the question. I don't like the setup. And I particularly don't like the fact that you fired the research company that prepares all our questions. What's the station going to say, Harvey, when they find out? *

BAXTER

They're going to say, that Baxter and Healy are two smart fellows. They know enough not to trust their questions to outsiders when they got a million bucks riding on the game.

HEALY

And Diane? What about when she finds out?

BAXTER

I told you not to worry about Diane. I can take care of Diane.

CONTINUED

40

CONTINUED

40

Baxter keys the playback button.

HARDCASTLE (V.O.)

How many world driving titles did
Jackie Stewart win?

41

ANGLE - DIANE

41

as she appears in the open doorway of the office. She's about
to knock, stops, listens.

MCCORMICK (V.O.)

Three, in a nine-year Formula One
career.

42

DIANE'S POV - THE TAPE MACHINE

42

on the desk.

HARDCASTLE (V.O.)

I told you, don't give 'em any
information they don't ask for.
Pretend like you're on the witness
stand. Just answer the question.

43

RESUME DIANE

43

as she reacts, not quite sure she knows what's going on, but
sure enough. She turns to leave, a little too quickly, making
noise as she exits.

44

ANGLE - BAXTER AND HEALY

44

as Healy goes white with fear, keys the stop button on the
machine and Baxter creeps to the door.

45

HIS POV

45

as he looks down the hallway and sees Diane, a locomotive with
a full head of steam, hurtling around the corner and disappearing.

46

RESUME BAXTER

46

And off his "oh shit" look, we:

CUT TO

47 INT. STAGE - DAY 47

The ninth round in progress. McCormick and Benson are centerstage.

BENSON

Let's show the audience at home
Mark's total earnings through nine
and a half rounds.

48 INSERT - THE BOARD 48

as it registers \$85,000.

49 RESUME SCENE 49

BENSON

\$85,000. Mark, that's more than
most people earn in a year. And
now, Mark, for \$5,000 and the
right to go on to Round Ten on
your way to the \$1,000,000 Bonus
Round...here's your bonus question...
Can you tell us? How many world
driving titles did Jackie Stewart
win in his nine-year Formula One
Career?

50 INTERCUT - HARDCASTLE 50

in the audience. He looks down at a notepad on which he's
tracked the questions, and reacts.

51 ANGLE - DIANE 51

in the wings. Her eyes go wide. She thinks a long time. She
looks up.

52 HER POV - THE CONTROL BOOTE 52

She sees Baxter and Healy congratulating themselves.

53 RESUME McCORMICK 53

McCORMICK

He won three world driving titles.

CONTINUED

53

CONTINUED

53

BENSON

Let's see what the answer is.
(flips over the
card; reading)
Three! And Mark, you've just
won Round Nine and \$90,000!

Whereupon, the stage lights up like the Las Vegas "Strip."
BELLS are ringing. The audience is going wild. And we:

CUT TO

54

EXT. KCED STUDIO - PARKING LOT - LATER

54

as Hardcastle and McCormick walk over to the Coyote.
Hardcastle is deep in thought.

McCORMICK

I'm on a roll, Judge. If I keep
this up, I could end up the Pete
Rose of game shows.

HARDCASTLE

That's great.

McCORMICK

Y'know, maybe they'll give me my own
show... "McCormick."

(off HC's look)

Don't worry, you can co-star.
Y'know, crusty old curmudgeon judge
and a kid from San Quentin go out and
round up the bad guys every week.

HARDCASTLE

(flat)

Great idea.

McCORMICK

I never knew studying could be so
much fun. If I had, maybe I'd
have gone to law school. Hey, I'm
young, maybe I'll still go...
Mark McCormick, Esquire. Judge
Mark McCormick. Maybe a middle
initial would help.

CONTINUED

HARDCASTLE

Maybe it would help if you came
down offa' that cloud for a minute.

McCORMICK

I kinda' like the view from up
here, Judge.

HARDCASTLE

Yeah, well, don't get used to it.

*

They arrive at the Coyote.

McCORMICK

Y'know, you're too much. I'm
finally doing something on my own
and getting credit for it.

*

(MORE)

CONTINUED

54 CONTINUED 2

54

McCORMICK (CONT'D)

And it's pressing all your buttons...
Why don't you just admit it, Judge,
you were wrong. I do know the answers.

*

HARDCASTLE

That's the problem, kid. You
also know too many of the questions.

*

As Hardcastle and McCormick get in the car, we PAN UP to the executive office building. And, as we HEAR the Coyote SCREECHING out of the lot, we MOVE INTO:

55 INT. BENSON'S DRESSING ROOM - EARLY EVENING

55

Benson is sitting in front of a makeup mirror, applying cold cream, wiping it off, inspecting his face, relishing the ritual. Diane, in an agitated state, is on the pace.

DIANE

I'm telling you, something is going on. First, I get a call from the research company telling me their contract has been terminated. Then, when I go to talk to Harvey and Art about it, I hear Mark's voice coming from their office. Only Mark isn't there.

BENSON

Diane, maybe it's as simple as Harvey and Art listening to a tape of an old show.

DIANE

I know what I heard, Bryce. And it wasn't an old show.

BENSON

How can you be sure?

DIANE

Because Mark was answering questions I never heard before. And I'm

(MORE)

CONTINUED

DIANE (Cont'd)

almost sure, Judge Hardcastle was asking them.

(beat)

I hate to even bring this up, but we both know Harvey and Art are having money problems. You don't think they would --

BENSON

C'mon Diane. Harvey and Art? They built their whole career on game shows. They're not going to do anything to tarnish the image.

DIANE

Well, something very serious is going on, Bryce. I just hope you're right and Harvey and Art aren't involved because there's a whole system of FCC rules, state regulations, station controls intended to prevent just this sort of game-rigging. And if Harvey and Art are involved, they're going to wind up in jail. *

BENSON

(turning)

Diane, I think you've been watching too many cop shows.

DIANE

You're joking?

BENSON

No. Cop shows, detective shows, soap operas. The news. Have you noticed the bad guys always outnumber the good guys?

DIANE

But the good guys always win.

BENSON

Not always. And I honestly believe if you watch too many of those shows, you begin to get suspicious... of the guy standing next to you on the bus, the guy behind you in the check-out line.

CONTINUED

DIANE

I don't.

BENSON

But a lot of people do, Diane. And that's why I love our show. We're all good guys. There's not a rotten apple in the bunch.

DIANE

Fun and distraction.

BENSON

Exactly. You don't have to fill the screen with cop shows and sitcoms to keep the viewer entertained

Diane regards Benson. She's not shocked, just resolved to the fact no two people see life the same way.

DIANE

Well, I guess I know where to find you when the 11 o'clock news is on... watching tapes of old game shows.

BENSON

You bet.

Diane smiles and moves toward the door.

BENSON

Diane, if you want me to talk to the guys, I will.

DIANE

I hate to put you in the middle, Bryce.

BENSON

Look, it's my show, too. Besides, Harvey and Art are like my brothers. We've done six shows together. They'll open up to me.

CUT TO

56 INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE DRESSING ROOM

56

As Baxter moves down the corridor. He sees Diane open the dressing room door and step out -- she doesn't see Baxter who edges into a second doorway. He listens as:

DIANE

I don't want to be a traitor. I owe Harvey and Art. But, if they're trying to cheat Mark out of his winnings, my first responsibility is to the station. And I won't stand by and keep quiet.

Play Baxter's reaction, a mixture of "We've been found out!" and "What do we do now?" And then:

57 INT. GULL'S WAY - KITCHEN - NIGHT

57

Hardcastle on the phone. McCormick making a sandwich, trying not to hear his conversation, but hearing it.

HARDCASTLE

...No, that's very interesting.
Uh, listen Lou, thanks for talkin' to me. Go back to your dinner.
...Yeah, we'll 'do' lunch. Bye.

Hardcastle hangs up and turns to McCormick.

HARDCASTLE

It's startin' to turn moldy, kiddo. That was an old pal of mine, Lou Steiner. Used to be a big theatrical agent. But you probably heard the rest. *

McCORMICK

Judge, I don't make it a practice of intruding on other people's conversations or their good fortune. *

HARDCASTLE

Ignoring the truth isn't gonna make it go away. *

McCORMICK

That depends on which version of the truth you're talking about. The real truth or the gospel according Saint Milton.

CONTINUED

57

CONTINUED

57

McCormick crosses over to the refrigerator, takes out a jar of mayonnaise, etc.

HARDCASTLE

Well, according to Lou, Harvey Baxter and Art Healy have been ridin' a pretty rocky road the last coupla' years. And they got the cuts and bruises to show for it. Seems all their shows, except for "Trivia Master", have been cancelled... 'cause of poor ratings.

MCCORMICK

You got a hot scoop there, Judge. Shows cancelled due to poor ratings. Maybe you should call Rona Barrett.

HARDCASTLE

The point is, these guys sunk a lot of dough into their shows and lost everything but their shirts.

MCCORMICK

So they made a couple of mistakes, big deal. Along the way they produced some of the classics... Y'know, everyday, shows get cancelled, new shows come on the air. But hey, isn't it interesting, all of a sudden, my good fortune makes these poor guys crooks.

HARDCASTLE

Game shows have been fixed before.

MCCORMICK

Not for thirty years. They have rules against that sort of thing.

HARDCASTLE

Rules or no rules, I'm tellin' you, McCormick, there's no way these guys could raise a million bucks.

McCormick slaps a slice of bread on his triple decker sandwich.

MCCORMICK

Judge, if you don't mind, I'm gonna raise this sandwich to my mouth and do some work.

Play the beat as McCormick and his sandwich sweep past Hardcastle and:

CUT TO

58 INT. BAXTER AND HEALY'S OFFICE - NIGHT 58

OPEN in darkness. A match is struck and Diane is illuminated. The match continues to burn down toward Diane's fingers as she opens the door to a small refrigerator in the corner. Blows out the match. Using the refrigerator's glow, Diane crosses over to Baxter's desk. She picks up the desk calendar and removes a small key taped to the underside. She uses the key to unlock the side panel of drawers. Opens the drawers...one by one.

59 INSERT - THE BOTTOM DRAWER 59

and the cassette tapes of Hardcastle and McCormick's conversations. Diane extracts one of them from the drawer. It's clearly marked: MARK McCORMICK. *

60 OMITTED 60

60A RESUME DIANE 60A

as she moves over to the tape machine and inserts the cassette.

60B A NEW ANGLE 60B

as a shadow slowly passes under the crack of the door.

61 RESUME DIANE 61

Unaware she's not alone, she keys the playback and listens. In the b.g. we HEAR the SOUND of METALLIC CLICKING as McCormick clips the hedges.

HARDCASTLE (V.O.)

Name the three drivers who won both the Indy 500 and the World Championship.

McCORMICK (V.O.)

Y'know, Judge, it's a little difficult to trim hedges and answer questions at the same time.

HARDCASTLE (V.O.)

You learned how to walk and chew gum at the same time, didn't you? This should be a piece of cake.

CONTINUED

#2305

38A.
(X)

61 CONTINUED

61

The shock of the above propels Diane backwards. She inches further and further away from the machine until...she bumps into something...whirls around...it's a coat rack. She breathes a sigh of relief. She starts to eject the tape... a noise in the hallway jars her.

SMASH CUT TO

61A INT. DIANE'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

61A

as Diane seals the tape inside a manilla envelope, writes McCormick's name on the front, and sticks it in her desk drawers. She grabs her purse and hurries out.

SMASH CUT TO

62 OMIT

62

#2305

39.
(X)

63

INT. BACKSTAGE

63

as Diane pushes in through the swinging double doors, past a mop wagon belonging to the cleaning crew, and into the darkened studio.

64

INSERT - THE MAIN POWER PANEL

64

as Diane brushes past. A beat. A red light BLINKS ON.

65

ANGLE - DIANE

65

She's progressed halfway across the stage. Suddenly! In front of her the stagelights flicker on. She reacts. Whirls around.

DIANE
(her pulse at
triple digits)
Who's there? Is somebody there?

Silence. She takes a deep breath. Then a step. MORE LIGHTS. She turns again. An explosion of LIGHTS.

66

INSERT - THE MOP WAGON

66

as the bucket of water tips over. The water spills out. Makes its way like a meandering stream toward Diane.

67

RESUME DIANE

67

She continues forward, tentatively.

68

INSERT - AN ELECTRICAL CABLE

68

As it's dragged free from its socket by some unseen force.

#2305

40.

69

RESUME DIANE

69

as the water reaches her. She slips. Falls down on the wet floor.

70

INTERCUT - THE ELECTRICAL CABLE

70

as it's thrown into frame. A couple of SPARKS SPIT. Then, we *
HEAR an ominous, SIZZLING BUZZ as thousands of volts surge
through Diane.

71

EXTREME LONG SHOT

71

CAMERA PANS the empty seats in the audience, smoke still
rising from the stage and in the b.g. the "APPLAUSE" sign,
FLASHING on and off...on and off...on and off.

FADE OUT

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

72

FADE IN:

72

INT. STAGE - THE NEXT DAY (EARLY)

OPEN TIGHT on Diane's body wrapped in plastic. A MORGUE GUY REACHES INTO FRAME, zips up the body bag and ---

73

WIDER ANGLE

73

There are police around now. In the b.g., we can see McCormick off in a corner, doing his damndest not to let Hardcastle's suspicions intrude on his thoughts; Baxter and Healy with a UNIFORM; a distraught Benson. And as the morgue guys wheel the gurney containing Diane slowly past CAMERA ---

74

ANGLE - HARDCASTLE AND FRANK HARPER

74

HARPER

It looks like an accident, Milt. The janitor went home at his usual time. Left his mop wagon over by the doors. She must've come from her office. It was dark. She tripped over the wagon. The water spilled out, came into contact with a live electrical cable and...

HARDCASTLE

Maybe.

HARPER

Did I miss something?

HARDCASTLE

I'm not sure. I just get the feelin' that somethin' about this show's not on the level.

HARPER

So far, everything we've come up with points to accident. Y'know, Milt, just because the kid's taken home ninety g's, doesn't mean the fix is in. Maybe he's just good.

HARDCASTLE

Maybe a little too good.

CONTINUED

HARPER

I think it makes you jumpy to watch Mark win all that money. I think you're worried that maybe he'll get a little independent on you.

HARDCASTLE

You tradin' in your badge for a couch, Frank?

HARPER

Think about it, Milt. What are you gonna do if Mark walks out?

HARDCASTLE

I'm gonna do what I always do. Only I'm gonna do it with a little less lip and a lot more peace and quiet.

HARPER

Sounds a lot like retirement to me.

HARDCASTLE

Just run a check on these producers and call me. Okay?

Harper nods, watches Hardcastle exit. And we

CUT TO:

75 EXT. GULL'S WAY - POOL AREA - THE NEXT DAY 75 *

Hardcastle comes out of the main house. He sees McCormick trimming the hedges...with a vengeance. And he approaches.

76 ANGLE - McCORMICK 76

who continues to trim the hedges, pointedly avoiding Hardcastle.

HARDCASTLE

I got some bacon and eggs in the frying pan. Whattya' say?

McCORMICK

I got a lot of work to do.

HARDCASTLE

You've been takin' it out on these hedges for hours, kiddo.

Hardcastle looks at the hedges and cringes. Then, barely restraining himself:

HARDCASTLE

Even the President of the United States takes time out to eat.

McCORMICK

That's because he's got more job security than me, Judge. He was voted in. I was paroled out.

HARDCASTLE

You got all the security you need.

McCORMICK

Yeah, \$130 a week, doing what I do best - raking leaves, fixing cars, polishing silver.

CONTINUED

HARDCASTLE

What happened to McCormick's millions?

MCCORMICK

I may be slow, Judge, but I'm not stupid... Diane's death wasn't an accident, was it?

HARDCASTLE

Probably not.

MCCORMICK

We had a date to go out for pizza and bowling.

(beat)

Heck of a time to try and not stop short.

HARDCASTLE

It's still fourth and goal, kiddo. We gonna go for seven?

They exchange a look and we:

CUT TO

INT. BAXTER AND HEALY'S OFFICE - DAY

Baxter and Healy rush in. Bickering. Healy makes a beeline for the desk.

BAXTER

What do you mean, you're going to destroy the tapes?

HEALY

Just what I said. I'm getting rid of the evidence. And then, I'm getting out.

Healy starts fumbling with the lock on the desk drawer.

CONTINUED

BAXTER

We've gone too far to bail out now.

HEALY

No, you've gone too far. I should have my head examined for listening to you in the first place. But now we got a dead girl on our hands. It's every man for himself.

Healy unlocks the drawer, slides it open to reveal the tapes, neatly stacked, one missing. He picks up a metal trash can and moves it over by the desk, under ---

BAXTER

Look, Artie, I know you're upset about Diane. So am I. But I don't see what Diane has to do with McCormick and our plan. Everything's going according to schedule.

HEALY

Everything's going according to schedule?...What about a little arson or armed robbery to round out the week?

BAXTER

Artie, Artie...
(he looks over)
Everything's gonna be fine. There's no way the cops are gonna find out what we're doin'.

Baxter watches as Healy slides the desk drawer off its track, and unceremoniously dumps the tapes into the trash can.

HEALY

I wouldn't count on it, Harvey. If I were you, I'd get out of town. As for me, I'm saving my own can.

as the tapes ignite like the eternal flame at Arlington National Cemetery. Healy extracts a blue envelope from the desk.

CONTINUED

#2305

47.

78

CONTINUED

78

HEALY

(re: envelope)

Now all I got to do is throw
McCormick this question and hope
he can't answer it.

As Baxter shakes his head in a mixture of amazement and
disgust.

SMASH CUT TO

79

INT. STAGE - LATER THAT SAME DAY

79

TIGHT ON the tote board/thermometer as it registers a new
mark...\$95,000. ANGLE ADJUSTS TO INCLUDE McCormick and
Benson centerstage.

BENSON

That's right, Mark! Mauri Rose
drove a Blue Crown Special to
victory in the 1947 Indianapolis
500.

Audience APPLAUDS.

80

ANGLE - HARDCASTLE

80

sitting in the audience, surrounded by a dozen cheering females
sporting "San Quentin Kid" T-shirts. Hardcastle excuses him-
self across half a row and exits.

CUT TO

81

INT. BACKSTAGE

81

as Hardcastle peeks out from behind a flat. He waits a
discreet beat until the stagehands are momentarily distracted
by McCormick and the wild CHEERS of the audience, then shuffles
past them, heading for the swinging double doors. He pushes
out past --

82

INSERT - A SIGN

82

that warns in no uncertain terms: EMPLOYEES ONLY BEYOND THIS
POINT.

CUT TO

83

INT. HALLWAY - ON HARDCASTLE

83

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

sprinting down the corridor toward Diane's office. He comes around the corner...as down the adjoining hallway a UNIFORMED SECURITY GUARD approaches. Hardcastle continues on, portraying utter nonchalance.

HARDCASTLE

Hi there.

Hardcastle gives a little wave and, for an instant, it looks like he's going to get away with it. Then:

GUARD

Where do you think you're going?

Hardcastle slowly turns around and starts backing down the hall, under:

HARDCASTLE

You talking to me?

(off Guard's nod)

Well, you see, I'm...uh...just looking for the men's room.

GUARD

The men's room? Didn't you see the sign? Employees only. Brother, nobody reads anymore. Nobody stops for pedestrians. Nobody pays their taxes. Whatever happened to law and order?

HOLD ON Hardcastle as he shrugs, and:

CUT TO

INT. HALLWAY

as the guard escorts Hardcastle to a fork in the corridor.

GUARD

Now you go back down the hall the way you came. Through the double doors. On your right. You can't miss it.

HARDCASTLE

Thanks, officer.

Hardcastle starts off down the hall. He turns back, smiles, then continues around a corner and out of view. Satisfied, the guard turns and continues his rounds.

85 ANGLE - HARDCASTLE

85

CAMERA is shooting down the hall. A beat. Hardcastle pokes his head out, looks toward camera. All clear. He hustles back the way he came to Diane's office.

CUT TO

86 INT. DIANE'S OFFICE

86

as the door opens and Hardcastle enters. He closes the door behind him. Turns on the light. Looks around. Crosses to the desk, slides into the chair and starts rummaging in the desk. He opens the bottom drawer.

87 INSERT - THE MANILLA ENVELOPE

87

with McCormick's name printed on the front. Hardcastle pulls it out. Shakes it. Then, suspicious, rips it open to reveal the cassette.

88 RESUME HARDCASTLE

88

as he inserts the tape into the machine on the desk. Keys the playback. We CLOSE IN on him as:

MCCORMICK (V.O.)

I didn't know they had cars when you were a kid, Judge.

HARDCASTLE (V.O.)

And baseball, and radios, and respect for older people.

Play Hardcastle's reaction, then:

CUT TO

89 INT. HALLWAY

89

as Hardcastle high-tails it down the hall.

BENSON (V.O.)

Remember you have seven seconds... For \$5,000, Mark, and the right to go on to Trivia Master's million dollar bonus round. The question is in two parts...

CUT TO

#2305

50.

90

INT. STAGE

90

as Benson reads the question in the now familiar blue envelope.

BENSON

Where was the world's first auto race held? And, what was the winner's average speed?

The clock starts to TICK off the seconds.

91

INTERCUT - HARDCASTLE

91

as he re-enters the audience. Starts down the aisle. Slips back into his seat.

92

RESUME McCORMICK

92

This is a question he didn't study. McCormick tightens up his face as he tries to force the answer from his brain.

McCORMICK

It was held in France...Paris to Bordeaux.

BENSON

That's correct. And the average speed?

McCormick delays his response, thinking.

93

INTERCUT - THE CLOCK

93

as it continues to tick off the seconds...the hand jerking closer and closer to the red deadline.

McCORMICK

Average speed, 24...

Bryce's face falls a good foot.

BENSON

Oh, I'm sorry, Mark.

A low MOAN escapes the audience.

94

INTERCUT - BAXTER AND HEALY

94

as Healy sags from relief. Baxter shakes his head.

RESUME McCORMICK

the answer still percolating behind his eyes.

McCORMICK

24 kilometers, that converts to...
(calculating)
15 miles per hour.

The BUZZER sounds. McCormick looks to Benson. Benson just stands there for one endless moment more, then suddenly throws his arms in the air.

BENSON

You just won Round Ten and \$100,000.
The correct answer was the first organized motor race was held in 1895, from Paris to Bordeaux, the winning time, fifteen miles an hour. Let's hear it for the "San Quentin Kid."

Most of Benson's above is quickly drowned out by the tumult of the audience, the strobing LIGHTS, the BELLS. Play the beat, and:

CUT TO

INT. BACKSTAGE - BAXTER AND HEALY - LATER

Healy tries to exit, Baxter blocks his path.

HEALY

We'll ask him a question he can't answer?...Now we're into McCormick for a hundred thousand dollars. This is all your fault, Harvey. My mother warned me you were trouble.

BAXTER

Look, I'm not taking the blame for the kid answering that last question.

HEALY

Okay, Harvey. I'll take the blame for the last question. But I won't take the fall for Diane's murder.

BAXTER

Murder? What are you talking about?

CONTINUED

HEALY

I'm talking about..."If Diane gets out of line, I'll take care of it, Artie." "Don't worry about a thing, Artie." "I can take care of Diane, Artie."

BAXTER

Artie...Artie...Artie... All I meant was, if Diane got in the way, I'd fire her. Or send her down to the Caribbean to scout remote locations.

HEALY

Killing her is a far cry from putting her on a slow boat to the Caribbean... How did I get into this? How did I let you talk me into this?

BAXTER

Artie, slow down. I didn't have anything to do with Diane's death.

HEALY

Harvey, I know you did it. I know you killed the girl.

BAXTER

I didn't.

Healy sidesteps Baxter and starts away. He takes a few steps and comes face-to-face with Benson who steps out of one of the dark areas of the stage.

HEALY

(spooked)

Bryce...

Benson fixes Baxter and Healy with a look.

BENSON

You two are just lucky Diane came to me first.

BAXTER

Bryce, we didn't know you were here.

CONTINUED

BENSON

Y'know, she was on to you.

BAXTER

On to us? What are you talking about?

BENSON

She knew you bugged McCormick's house. She had one of the tapes.

HEALY

Harvey...

BENSON

What she didn't know was you and I are on the same team. I know how important our work is. I know we have to hold out against the cop shows, the soap operas, the news.

BAXTER

Bryce, this is crazy.

BENSON

I'll tell you what's crazy. All the darkness and suspicion on television. That's crazy. That's the reason we can't let the station cancel us. That's the reason we need more game shows. More game shows mean less cop shows, less sit-coms.

HEALY

(to Baxter)

Got any answers for this one, Harvey?

BENSON

Diane was going to the station. She was going to have them take us off the air.

BAXTER

(to Healy)

Hey, I wanted to hire Nick Nickelodeon. You wanted this guy.

BENSON

But I watched her. I watched her go into your office. I watched her play the tape. And then, I stopped her.

#2305

54.
(X)

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97

CONTINUED - 2

97

HEALY

Bryce, are you crazy?

BENSON

Crazy? I'm not crazy. I'm a
game show host.

Baxter and Healy exchange a definitive "oh shit" look
as Benson flashes a big smile. And we:

FADE OUT

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

98

FADE IN:

98

INT. HARDCASTLE'S DEN - DAY

CLOSE on a tape machine. We can see the tape winding its way around. And we HEAR:

HARDCASTLE (V.O.)

Who was the youngest driver to win a Formula One World Championship?

McCORMICK (V.O.)

Emerson Fittipaldi.

PULL BACK to see we are in the den. Hardcastle moves up behind McCormick and looks over his shoulder as McCormick punches the eject button.

McCORMICK

You ever get the feeling if you listen to something long enough, the words are going to change? The next time around, you're going to hear what you want to hear?

Hardcastle sets a handful of bugs on the table. *

HARDCASTLE

You never had a chance, kiddo. *

McCORMICK

Just a chance of looking like a fool on national television. "Daytime's Daffy Dunce." *

The PHONE rings, interrupting.

HARDCASTLE

I'll get it.

CONTINUED

Hardcastle hands the bugs to McCormick and crosses to answer it. McCormick crosses over to the sofa, sits down and stares at the bugs.

HARDCASTLE

Hello...Yeah, Frank...got it...
About thirty minutes.

Hardcastle hangs up the phone, walks over to McCormick.

MCCORMICK

At least I don't have to go back
to the station and add insult to
injury.

HARDCASTLE

Grab your coat.

McCormick gets up, grabs his jacket off the back of the chair and follows Hardcastle towards the door, under:

MCCORMICK

Why?

HARDCASTLE

We gotta go down to the station
to tape the last show.

MCCORMICK

(pulls up)

Un unh, Judge, you do it. You go
down there. I gotta polish the
silver.

HARDCASTLE

Just one more time, kiddo, 'cause
if you don't show up, these guys
are gonna smell somethin' and
take off.

CONTINUED

98

CONTINUED - 2

98

MCCORMICK

Judge...

HARDCASTLE

"Race car driving, women, you name it, I always stopped short."...
Well, kiddo, you got your chance.
You gonna take it or not?

McCormick and Hardcastle exchange a look. McCormick nods, then follows Hardcastle out the door and we:

CUT TO

99

OMITTED

99

100

INT. DRESSING ROOM - ON BENSON

100

Seated in his chair in front of the makeup mirror, his coat draped across the back. The STAGE MANAGER approaches, brandishing a red envelope.

CONTINUED

100

CONTINUED

100

STAGE MANAGER

Here's McCormick's question.

He hands the envelope to Benson.

STAGE MANAGER

Hard to believe that one question
could be worth all that money.

As Benson smiles,

CUT TO

101

INT. BAXTER AND HEALY'S OFFICE

*

as Baxter and Healy move to the door. Healy is carrying a box
full of memorabilia.

BAXTER

We got just enough time to make it
to the airport, if we hurry.

*

Baxter throws the door open to REVEAL:

102

ANGLE - HARDCASTLE AND McCORMICK

102

flanked by several UNIFORMS.

HARPER

Going somewhere, fellas?

Baxter and Healy blanch visibly.

BAXTER

Lieutenant Harper. Look, if you're
here with more questions about the
other night, we have a show to tape.

HARDCASTLE

You got a show to tape? What's in
the boxes? Consolation prizes?

*

HARPER

You're both under arrest for the
murder of Diane Templeton...

(to a uniform)

Read 'em their rights.

As the uniform steps forward.

BAXTER

Hold on a minute, Lieutenant, Artie
and I didn't murder anybody. It was
Bryce.

*

CONTINUED

HARPER

Bryce Benson? What's he got to do with this?

HEALY

He's a looney tune. When Diane told him what we were up to...ah...

HARDCASTLE

Fixin' the show?

HEALY

(points to Baxter)

It was his idea, his mistake...My mistake was making him the senior partner.

BAXTER

We did that fair, Artie. We flipped a coin.

HARDCASTLE

Are you two through?

(to Healy)

Now, you're gonna have to back this up a couple of moves for us.

Play the moment, then:

CUT TO

#2305

60.
(X)

103

INT. BACKSTAGE

103

OPEN on Benson as he moves past McCormick, smiles. McCormick pumps up a shallow grin. Impatiently checks his watch. The THEME MUSIC starts up in the b.g. We HEAR the audience begin to applaud. And:

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

From the television capital of the world, it's time to play TV's only million dollar game --- the all new "One Million Dollar Trivia Master."

During the above, McCormick looks around for Hardcastle. Checks his watch again. The "Trivia Master" logo flashes on and off.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

And here's our host, the star of "Trivia Master"...Bryce Benson.

104

ANGLE - BENSON

104

as he bounds onstage to APPLAUSE. The red envelope protrudes noticeably from his breast pocket.

BENSON

All right. Thank you. Thank you and welcome to "Trivia Master."

Benson takes several bows. The applause dies down.

BENSON

(to the audience)

It's a pleasure to have you all with us for what is, no doubt, the greatest moment in television history. Now I'd like for you to meet, Mr. History-Maker himself... going for the biggest cash prize ever...a young man who's captured the heart and spirit of America... please say hello to Mark McCormick, The "San Quentin Kid."

105

ANGLE - McCORMICK

105

We HEAR the audience APPLAUD and see McCormick flanked by the two familiar blonds. His eyes search in vain for Hardcastle and Harper. Reluctantly, he lets himself be half-escorted, half-dragged onstage.

106 ANGLE - MCCORMICK AND BENSON

106

BENSON
(to blondes)
Thank you girls...Aren't they
lovely folks...

McCormick appears ready to bolt.

BENSON
Well, Mark, this is the moment of
decision. After ten rounds, each
round worth \$10,000, you've won
more than any contestant in the
history of "Trivia Master." One
hundred thousand dollars...Now,
you have the chance to risk it all
to win more than any contestant in
television history. One
million dollars...So, Mark, do you
want to take the \$100,000 you've
won so far and go home or...

Benson breaks his concentration as he looks up and sees:

106A POV - UNIFORMS

106A

starting down the aisles toward the stage.

107 POV - HARDCASTLE AND HARPER

107

As Benson looks offstage and sees them moving into position.
Baxter and Healy are there in handcuffs.

107A RESUME - MCCORMICK AND BENSON

107A

McCormick reacts to the commotion. Benson tries to pick up
where he left off for a beat.

BENSON
Or...ah...Do you want to take the
\$100,000 or...go home...
(looks at Hardcastle)
or...risk it all for \$1,000,000.
(long beat)
Mark, I need a decision.

CONTINUED

107A

CONTINUED

107A

McCORMICK

Bryce, I think we're all going home.

McCormick starts off the stage.

BENSON

No, Mark...please...

(trying to
wing it)

Well, I guess that's it. Mark
McCormick, the "San Quentin Kid"
is going to take the money and run.

The flashing lights stop flashing, the "Trivia Master" logo
falls dark.

BENSON

Let's give him a big round of applause.

Silence from the audience. Harper moves closer.

BENSON

You ready to meet our next
contestant? Let's give a big
"Trivia Master" round of applause
to...

(checks his pockets;
then upset)

Can someone get me a card?...I don't
have a card.

(a beat; to the
audience)

How's that folks? You ready for
another round?

More silence.

BENSON

Hey look, we're the good guys,
right, the Mark McCormick's, going
for the brass ring. Doesn't that
mean anything?

Silence.

BENSON

Maybe Mark will change his mind.
Maybe if he hears how we feel, we
can get him back out on the stage.

HARPER

It's over, Bryce.

Benson moves downstage to the audience.

CONTINUED

107A

CONTINUED

107A

BENSON

You have to help me. You have to get up on your feet. Shout that you're sick of all the sit-coms and news programs on television. You don't want cop shows. Detective shows. Soap operas. You want good shows. Game shows. More game shows than ever before.

The audience is silent.

BENSON

They'll listen to you. They have to listen to you. You're the viewers. You watch their shows. You make their ratings. You can turn off your sets. You can turn off all the TV sets in America.

(beat)

Doesn't anybody understand?...

Doesn't anybody understand?

And as Harper and Hardcastle close in, Benson makes a break for it. He slings the tote board over at Hardcastle. Hardcastle goes down. Benson takes off backstage. McCormick races over to Hardcastle, checks he's okay, then bolts after Benson.

108
thru
114

OMITTED

115 INT. BACKSTAGE - THE CHASE

115

More uniforms closing on Benson. McCormick on his heels. Benson races over to the stairs, starts climbing to the catwalks that run the length of the stage. He hurtles a sandbag down at McCormick. McCormick ducks. Bolts up the stairs after him. Closing in. Benson stops, waits, boots McCormick in the chest. McCormick loses his footing, slips, hauls himself back up. He takes off again after Benson.

116 INT. THE CATWALK - THE CHASE

116

as Benson scurries frantically along the catwalk overhead. McCormick rockets toward him. Catches him. They struggle. Benson slips, then regains his footing, pushes McCormick. McCormick falls, grabs onto a wooden beam at the last instant. He struggles to haul himself up. Overpowers Benson. They wrestle. Below, a uniform takes aim at Benson/McCormick. Hardcastle stops him. McCormick and Benson continue to struggle. Benson goes over the edge, holds on with one hand. McCormick grabs his hand, starts to haul him up. Benson's hand slips with each beat. McCormick can't hold on any longer, Benson slips out of his reach, falls. The red envelope flutters slowly to the ground next to the stairs. Play Hardcastle and McCormick's reactions, then:

TIME CUT TO:

117 INT. STAGE - LATER

117

TIGHT ON an injured Benson as he's wheeled out by two attendants.

118 ANGLE ADJUSTS to include McCormick over by the stairs. He picks up the familiar red envelope. Takes a deep breath. He's about to read the question, when Hardcastle and Harper approach.

HARPER

(re: envelope)

Sorry, Mark. But I'm gonna need
that for evidence.

McCormick fixes Hardcastle with a look, then hands the envelope
to Harper. Harper sticks it in the right pocket of his jacket.

HARDCASTLE

That's it? You're not gonna put
up a stink?

McCORMICK

Law and order, Judge, by the book.

HARPER

You're rubbin' off on him Milt.

McCORMICK

This has nothin' to do with
Hardcastle. I've watched you long
enough to know how hard you guys
try. You need the question to
make your case. I know how
important that is. The two of you
together have taught me a lot and
I just want to thank you.

This plays over McCormick patting Harper on the left shoulder,
while reaching his other hand into Harper's pocket and plucking
the red envelope.

McCORMICK

(to Hardcastle)

I'll meet you out in the car.

as he exits with the envelope in hand. He rips it open. Reads
the question. A huge grin sweeps across his face and we

FADE OUT

END OF ACT FOUR

TAG

119 EXT. GULL'S WAY - DAY

119

A van is parked out front. A steady stream of cartons is being unloaded and wheeled on dollies to the garage.

HARDCASTLE (V.O.)

McCormick, what is all this?

120 EXT. GARAGE - DAY

120

As Hardcastle approaches. McCormick is walking in and out of the garage stacking boxes. They're surrounded b cartons.

McCORMICK

This Judge, is my consolation for being made a fool of on national television.

McCormick reaches into one of the nearby cartons and pulls out a box of pastries. He hands it to Hardcastle.

HARDCASTLE

Fruitie pies?

McCormick opens more cartons.

McCORMICK

Yeah, and a year's supply of fabric softener.

HARDCASTLE

What are we going to do with all this stuff?

McCORMICK

What are we going to do with it? I don't recall the station saying anything about we when they called to say they'd be sending over my consolation prizes.

HARDCASTLE

I guess loyalty and friendship doesn't count for much these days.

McCORMICK

Loyalty and friendship? 'Give it up, McCormick'? 'Cut your losses'? 'Take the money and run, kiddo'?

CONTINUED

HARDCASTLE

I was just tryin' to help.

McCORMICK

(indicates camera in
carton)

You can help me bring this video
camera into the garage.

Hardcastle puts down the pies, moves over to the carton. Pulls
out a video camera.

HARDCASTLE

(admiring)

They sent you a video camera?

McCORMICK

Yeah.

HARDCASTLE

With high resolution, power zoom
lens and auto iris control.

McCORMICK

And a year's supply of videotape.

HARDCASTLE

Y'know you hook this up to a video
recorder and you can make your own
movies.

McCORMICK

I can see it now... "A Milt for All
Seasons." "The Wind and the Milt."
"The Good, the Bad and the Milt."

Hardcastle fixes McCormick with a look. Replaces the camera.
Crosses over to another carton. Looks inside.

HARDCASTLE

Hey, wow, camping equipment, too?

McCORMICK

I was thinking of donating it to
charity.

HARDCASTLE

Charity. Kiddo, this is expensive
stuff. Two thermal down, expedition
insulated, won't rot or mildew sleeping
bags. A four-season self-supporting
teepee tent with zip-lock air vents.
And an electric stove with
detachable barbecue and grill.

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57.

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120

CONTINUED - 2

120

McCormick watches Hardcastle cover the equipment.

McCORMICK

You know, Judge, you're right.
Loyalty and friendship has to count
for something.

Hardcastle smiles...to the victor belongs the spoils.
McCormick reaches into a carton. Pulls out a box of
dog food. Hands it to Hardcastle.

McCORMICK

Here, you can have the year's
supply of "Puppy Chowder."

HARDCASTLE

The last time I looked, McCormick,
we didn't have a puppy.

McCormick reaches into yet another carton and retrieves...

121

ANGLE - A PUPPY

121*

with a red ribbon tied around its neck.

McCORMICK

No, but we do now.

McCormick hands the puppy to Hardcastle. And, as the puppy
licks Hardcastle's grimacing face, we FREEZE FRAME.

FADE OUT

THE END