

Acoustic Kitty

Feature Film

Nathan Mandel

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[mandel.nathan@gmail.com](mailto:mandel.nathan@gmail.com)

366-242-4421

## Synopsis

Bob Bailey, an animal behaviorist with a history of failed experiments does what he can to escape his life in Arkansas. The man has trained dolphins to find submarines, pigeons to guide missiles, and bats to be suicide bombers—all of which have failed spectacularly, but this time he thinks he's got it—a cat to be used by the CIA to spy on the Russians. His idea is rejected by a mid-level CIA director until Bailey accidentally reveals that they can make money by overcharging the project. The director, looking to make a ton of money, encourages Bailey to fail intentionally this time in order to make as much cash as possible.

Bailey agrees when given the opportunity to use the money and resources to impress an old colleague, Mouse, a woman who he used to work with but left him because his past ideas failed. With the backing of the CIA to goad her, he enlists her help. The problem is—she might actually know how to make Bob Bailey's idea work.

The chaos caused by Bailey and the director as they steal money and deceive Mouse attracts the eyes of higher-ups in the CIA and the KGB as the project flies out of control.

Mouse learns of the deception and leaves the project. The Director leaves Bailey to the mercy of a system looking to blame someone for a failed project.

Bailey comes to terms with the failure of his ideas and his true love for Mouse. He apologizes and the two of them plot their way out of the cloak and dagger milieu that Bailey foolishly got them into.

## Statement of Purpose

Writing has been an inquiry into myself and my attempt to reach out to others for help to understand my human experience. I've found two ways of doing this: literary prose and theatrical comedy. My recent work on this project has been the latter. It has opened a window to peer into the issues of my nation's past as well as its present. Comedy has allowed me to laugh at its shortcomings—the joke being the ounce of truth that precedes the hyperbole of the punchline. It is accompanied by a certain uneasiness—that I might have come to an understanding of something that is immutable, true, and therefore unchanging. Can we escape our nature? Acoustic Kitty partially explains that we are machines with bad programming and the best solution is to manipulate and not replace that programming. Writing this has made me worry that I can only achieve a slightly twisted, more functional image of myself. When confronted with this, I prefer to laugh. I prefer the person reads and watches my material to laugh with me. I find it strangely comforting.

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Screenplay

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INT. BUS - EVENING

BOB BAILEY (30's) is on a bus moving through rural Arkansas. He passes billboards indicative of the late 1950's and early 1960's. One advertises services to build bomb shelters.

EXT. THEATER - EVENING

The theater is an outdoor stage with small wooden bleachers for seating. The stage is connected to a building with the backstage being the interior of the building. Bob enters.

INT. THEATER BACKSTAGE - EVENING

Bailey walks down a corridor. He passes JIM (40'S).

BAILEY

Hey boss.

JIM

Bob.

BAILEY

Maybe we should build a bomb shelter under the theater, just in case.

JIM

Whoever wastes a nuke on a side-show in Arkansas is an idiot. You're late.

Bailey walks up on a stage where animals, grouped by species, are lined up and waiting next to various props they will use in the show.

He mimes various hand signals and the animals react with their conditioned responses. At the end of the line is a rat that jumps on a ball and raises its arms when Bob signals him to.

BAILEY

Carmel, Pickles, stay sharp now. Za Za, Jim doesn't know that I snuck you banana to spike your potassium levels. Let's try not to puke it up on stage. Oscar, a happy pig rolls in mud--a great pig rolls in on a skateboard.

Bailey comes to the rat.

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY CONT'D  
Chuckles, you have always been a failure.

Bailey bends down closer to Chuckles.

BAILEY CONT'D  
No one said you need to stay one.

Bailey tickles the rat's stomach.

BAILEY CONT'D  
I always liked you the most.

EXT. THEATER NIGHT

The stage curtains open to the outdoor seating. There are a handful of people in the crowd. The curtain comes up. The animals emerge and perform various acts in unison.

Raccoons play basketball. The pig rides around on a skateboard. A chicken dances in circles.

BAILEY  
Welcome folks to the IQ Zoo. Here we condition animals to perform wonders. There is absolutely nothing we cannot train them to do!

The animals, one by one, begin to perform. The final part of the act, all the animals performing simultaneously.

Chuckles pushes his ball out onto the stage, but instead of mounting the ball, he pushes it into another act and runs wild causing chaos everywhere.

BAILEY CONT'D  
Give a round of the applause to our glorious pets!

One person in the crowd gives a weak clap. The curtain drops. One half of the curtain closes while the other gets caught and makes a creaking noise as it closes.

INT. THEATER - NIGHT

Bailey sits at a desk drawing up plans. JIM (30's-40's) walks up to him with Chuckles in a cage.

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY

Hey boss, you have got see this. I think I might have found a way to get back into the spy business.

JIM

Were you watching? It was a mess out there.

BAILEY

Jim, sometimes progress is a mess. Haven't you ever wondered where we could take this? There is a market in espionage and we could be tapping it. What if instead of riding a skateboard, Oscar rode a tank?

JIM

And what about Chuckles? Maybe he could operate a bazooka? Maybe he could assassinate Castro.

BAILEY

Holy, you might be on to something.

JIM

What happened out there looked like a car crash Bob.

BAILEY

Next time we will be perfect. It couldn't be Chuckle's fault. We just got the conditioning wrong. We can make it work next time.

JIM

I don't know about next time. You know the difference between us and animals, Bob? They don't bullshit themselves.

Jim leaves Chuckles on Bailey's desk. Bailey takes him out of his cage.

BAILEY

What happened bud? Did you get stage fright? I know what. We probably got you the wrong ball. Next time I'll get you a smaller one.

Bailey drags over a paperweight.

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY CONT'D  
Now hop up little guy.

The rat runs in a circle instead.

BAILEY CONT'D  
Come on, don't misbehave.

Bailey motions to the rat to get on the paperweight and this time he does.

BAILEY CONT'D  
Work hard enough and one day  
someone will take you seriously. I  
promise, when I'm on top, I'll take  
you with me.

Bailey signs a document, then closes it in an envelope.

**CUT TO:**

**TITLE SEQUENCE FOLLOWS:**

Bob Bailey walking the envelope down the street to a mailbox. There are televisions in a store window playing Kennedy's address to nation after the Cuban Missile Crisis.

The envelope is sorted through the mail. Mix to a television in the background playing images of schematics for CIA projects involving animals.

A mailman delivers the envelope to a government building. There is a television playing in the window of a bar with Nikita Khrushchev observing missiles being marched past the Kremlin.

A man opens Bailey's file, laughs, then tosses it in a pile marked 'rejected.' Kennedy is on a television in the background.

INT. CIA HEADQUARTERS ASSISTANT DIRECTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

DALE (40's) sits opposite of the assistant director (late 50's). They stare at each other for a moment.

Overlay: Dale Hartigan, CIA Director of Special Activities, Science and Technology Division.

DALE  
So what's the problem?

(CONTINUED)

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Dale, as assistant director of science and tech, I just can't have nothing going on in one of my divisions.

DALE

Don't give me that. You know better than anyone those pentagon pricks over at DARPA took all the best projects. What have I got to work with?

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

That's your job. Find something.

DALE

Where? The projects dropped on my desk are more like those stupid punchlines to knock-knock jokes.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

If I didn't know better, I figure you were trying to make your career into a knock-knock joke. Dig, Dale.

Dale gets up.

DALE

(mutters)

Dig.

Dale leaves the office and angrily walks down the hall to his office. He sits down. His SECRETARY (a young man, 20's) comes in.

DALE

Get me some projects.

SECRETARY

We don't have any left.

DALE

What do you mean?

SECRETARY

You said if it sounded...stupid--

DALE

Fucking stupid, yes.

(CONTINUED)

SECRETARY

That I shouldn't bring it to you.

DALE

Right, right. And?

SECRETARY

And there are none that are--

DALE

Fucking stupid? Are you serious?  
Then bring me the least stupid  
thing on your desk.

The secretary leaves the room and comes back a moment later.

DALE CONT'D.

Just a moment? That's all it took  
you to decide?

SECRETARY

Well it's sort of subjective, sir.

Dale looks at the secretary like he is an idiot and holds his hand out to take the report. The secretary hands it to him. Dale looks at it. He starts shaking his head as if he is being convinced of something.

DALE

Not bad.

SECRETARY

Really?

DALE

Spy on a Russian embassy with a  
cat. No. We're fucked. America is  
fucked. This is a fucking project  
about spying on the fucking  
Russians with an outfitted spy cat.  
What is it called?

Dale squints at the folder.

DALE CONT'D.

Fucking Acoustic Kitty? Catchy.  
What wakaloon thought that up? This  
was the best you could find? What  
else was there?

SECRETARY

I found a project about making a  
porn tape to discredit an  
Indonesian president.

(CONTINUED)

DALE

That sounds fun. But stupid. Dig deep.

SECRETARY

What was that, sir?

DALE

Get the fuck out of here.

The secretary starts to leave.

DALE CONT'D.

And I don't fucking care if you don't like me because after I get this cat guy on board I'm fucking sunk.

Dale picks up the phone.

INT. THEATER BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

The phone rings next to Bailey.

Bailey picks up the phone.

BAILEY

I'll be there ASAP.

He slams the receiver down, sits back at his desk, and throws up his hands in triumph. He puts Chuckles in the cage. On his way out, he sees Jim.

BAILEY

When Castro is dead you'll know who did it. Chuckles did it, asshole.

JIM

At least someone else is paying you to be a bum.

EXT. THEATER - DAY

Bob Bailey is waiting for the bus at the end of the drive for the theater. He is holding a cage with Chuckles in it. Jim comes driving past him on his way out.

JIM

Enjoy waiting for the bus, asshole.

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

A bus pulls away from the stop. Bob Bailey is standing there with his caged rat. They are opposite the CIA Headquarters.

INT. DALE'S OFFICE - DAY

Dale is staring at Bailey. He makes odd faces at Bailey as if he is searching for something in him. Bailey looks over his shoulder to see if there is something weird going on behind him.

BAILEY  
Is everything alright?

DALE  
I can't tell.

BAILEY  
Tell what?

DALE  
After reading your file, I can't tell if you are a maniac or a crazy person.

BAILEY  
I'm an animal behaviorist.

DALE  
(Nodding his head in conclusion)  
A crazy person.

BAILEY  
I can train animals for a living. There is nothing I can't train. Nothing.

DALE  
I'm not convinced.

BAILEY  
My theories are sound. There is no nature inherent to anything. We're only a collection of programs that help us survive.

DALE  
Like, I only act the way I do because of society?

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY

Yes!

DALE

Liberating.

BAILEY

It can be.

DALE

What about taking a shit? Do I only shit because society tells me to.

BAILEY

Maybe how you shit. You can be quite creative with a toilet if you want.

DALE

How did you get your start?

BAILEY

B.F. Skinner. A genius.

INT. LAB - DAY

A man dressed in a 1940's military uniform is standing opposite B.F. SKINNER (middle-aged), Bob Bailey, and MOUSE (30'S). There is a pigeon tapping away at radar screen in foreground for a while.

DALE O.S.

Who's the girl?

BAILEY O.S.

Mouse. She was a colleague I used to work with. We had some ideological differences.

DALE O.S.

What did that Skinner guy think he could do with the bird?

SKINNER

We can use it to guide rockets.

INT. DALE'S OFFICE - DAY

Dale leans in. He looks serious.

DALE  
Did it work? Did you make pigeon  
guided missiles?

BAILEY  
The army had some hang-ups.

DALE  
Hang-ups?

BAILEY  
About handing a pigeon a warhead.

DALE  
So your training isn't foolproof.

BAILEY  
No, it is. There is the small  
margin of error that we might get a  
mentally deficient pigeon.

DALE  
Retarded pigeons with warheads.  
Can't have that. What else have you  
done?

EXT. DOLPHIN POOL - DAY

Bailey squats at the side of the pool. Mouse is standing  
near him. There is the squeak of dolphins.

BAILEY  
We can use them to find submarines.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

An armed soldier in a field exercise hears the cawing of a  
crow and looks up.

DALE O.S.  
What else did you guys do?

BAILEY O.S.  
We trained birds to find enemy  
positions.

INT. LAB - DAY

Bats fly about above view. Mouse and Bailey are in lab coats and wearing safety goggles. There small, snappy explosions above them. They duck at the explosions.

BAILEY O.S.

We also used bats as precision bombers.

INT. DALE'S OFFICE - DAY

Dales feigns being impressed for a moment.

DALE

Bat bombers. I like the sound of it.

BAILEY

And ever since, I've been working on my theories at the I.Q. Zoo. Until I ran out of overhead that is and Jim came along.

DALE

Who's Jim?

BAILEY

Some asshole. He's got money and a car.

DALE

Hmmm?

BAILEY

It's nothing. But now, my idea. I want to train a cat to carry a listening device into Russian embassy.

DALE

Sub Dolphins, Sniper birds, bat bombers, and now spy cats. So what happened to all these projects?

BAILEY

They were theoretically sound. We just had a few hang-ups.

Dale sits back in his chair. He is cynical.

(CONTINUED)

DALE CONT'D

You're full of shit, Bob. None of these things worked out. You're here because I suspect none of these things showed any results.

BAILEY

But with every animal we came closer to getting it perfect.

DALE

Whether you believe it or not, you have nothing to show for it. Hell, we both know why you aren't here with the girl.

Bailey looks defeated. He slowly gets up, picks up the cage with Chuckles and starts to leave.

DALE CONT'D

I'm curious, Bob. How did you get the cash for your zoo idea after you flunked out of quack college in the army?

BAILEY

I saved a few pennies here and there.

DALE

Here and there? But you failed. How was there any funding left.

BAILEY

I overcharged a few items and kept what was left. It wasn't much, I promise. A couple hundred bucs to move on.

DALE

Why didn't anyone notice? There must be someone in accounting.

BAILEY

They only flag it if they think what you are buying is nonsense. In my job everything is nonsense so it looks normal. If you fail, they try to get rid of it as soon as they can.

(CONTINUED)

DALE

So you are saying that failing at nonsense can make you a ton of money.

BAILEY

No, I only took a little.

DALE

But you could take a lot?

BAILEY

I could but I wouldn't. I'm not that kind of guy.

Dales stands up. He has an idea.

DALE

You can be.

BAILEY

I don't want to be. What are you suggesting.

DALE

I'm suggesting we capitalize on what you do best. Failure. If I write the checks and you sign them, we could overcharge anything.

BAILEY

I don't follow.

Dale picks a stapler from his desk and crams it in Bailey's face.

DALE

See this stapler.

BAILEY

Sure.

DALE

How much do you think its worth?

BAILEY

I don't know, maybe a dollar?

DALE

No, you're wrong. It's worth two, no four, no, ten dollars.

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY

But I'm sure no one would buy it for ten.

DALE

Not until it becomes an 'experimental' stapler, worth ten dollars. And of course after we siphon the other nine into our pockets.

BAILEY

Oh my God.

DALE

We'll be richer than God. And imagine, the longer you keep failing at your job, the longer we can keep overcharging things. So your job will be to fail and often. You're the perfect man for the job.

BAILEY

If I succeed at failing, than I will be rich. But that will mean that I'm a failure.

DALE

Exactly!

BAILEY

No, I can't do it.

Bailey leaves immediately. Dale chases Bailey past his secretary and out into the hallway.

DALE

Bob, wait. Come back.

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

Bailey waits for the bus at the stop. He tries to ignore Dale who is pleading.

DALE

Come on. Don't you want all that money? Don't you need it?

BAILEY

Not bad enough to risk going to jail. I want to succeed. I want to save the world.

(CONTINUED)

DALE

You can. I will help you.

BAILEY

How?

DALE

I can fund research. I can help you spy on the Russians. You just need to fail THIS time.

BAILEY

My goals may be a bit lofty but the life of a con man just isn't for me.

A bus appears in the distance.

DALE

You wouldn't be a con man. You would just be appropriating money for the greater good.

BAILEY

And what greater good do you want the money for.

DALE

CIA guys like me save the world every day. I only want to get paid what I'm worth.

The bus approaches.

DALE CONT'D

(As seriously as he can manage)

Bob Bailey, if you get on that bus you will never get the cash you need. You will never do the research you want to do. You will save no one and most importantly, you and I know that Mouse will never work with you again. This is your last chance before you go back to your side-show in Arkansas.

The bus stops, then pulls away. Only Dale is left. The bus stops a little ways down the road. Bailey gets off and walks back to Dale.

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY

I don't have enough for the bus.

DALE

Great, so how are you going to get Mouse to work with you? If you idea sounds as ridiculous to me as it does her.

BAILEY

Mouse has a thing for cats.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Mouse is walking quickly down the street. She is followed by Bailey. She is rushing to be somewhere. Her CAT (age indeterminate) follows her.

BAILEY

Mouse, Mouse, please. I promise it will work out this time.

MOUSE

Like it did all the other times? I'm sure you told guy, this shady CIA character, all about your previous exploits?

BAILEY

Mouse, we could be on to something here. We never tried it with a cat. It would be the perfect cover. The other times were minor setbacks. It's a process.

MOUSE

A process? How about the mess those suicide bats made? Remember who had to clean that up? Or how when your conditioning breaks down you start using mad Frankenstein contraptions.

BAILLEY

Oh come on. I never strayed that far from the research.

Mouse stops and turns to look him dead in the eye.

MOUSE

Oh yeah, what happened when you couldn't control the search and

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MOUSE (cont'd)  
destroy dogs? What did you do?  
Hmmm?

BAILEY  
I--

MOUSE  
You?

BAILEY  
Attached electrodes--

MOUSE  
Drilled electrodes into their  
brains to guide them left and right  
by remote. And you fried a  
perfectly good chocolate labrador  
retriever in the process.

BAILEY  
The tech guy got the voltage wrong.  
It wasn't my fault.

Mouse continues walking.

MOUSE  
Ah, that's right. It's never your  
fault of the famous Bob Bailey.

Bob nearly trips over the cat.

BAILEY  
I know, Mouse, but this time we  
won't make a mess. This time we  
will get it right. And you can be  
rich. This job with the CIA is  
going to give you everything you  
could possibly want. If you are  
successful, you might even save the  
world. Where are you going anyway?

MOUSE  
To turn in my research on how we  
were all wrong. I'm not looking to  
be rich and famous. I want to be  
respected as a researcher, Bob. I  
certainly can't do that with you.

BAILEY  
I respect you.

MOUSE

Respect me? I don't know if that's  
in your nature. Frankly, I want to  
be done with you and your ideas.  
Skinner was wrong.

BAILEY

(Weakly)

Any animal can be conditioned to  
change.

Mouse and the cat walk up the steps to a building.

BAILEY CONT.

They won't respect you there  
either.

INT. BUILDING - DAY

Mouse and her cat walk down a hallway. There is a desk  
marked 'records' at the end of the hall.

Overlay: Center for Animal Research.

Mouse arrives at the desk. There is clerk at the desk  
sorting files.

MOUSE

I'm here to submit research.

CLERK

(Without looking up)

Did you file a submission form?

MOUSE

I did. Each and every time I  
submitted this research.

CLERK

(Raising his eyebrows)

This isn't the first time you  
submitted?

MOUSE

I've been sending it to you a copy  
every couple months for a year now.

CLERK

Whats your name?

(CONTINUED)

MOUSE

Breland.

The clerk rummages through a filing cabinet.

CLERK

Oh yes. This was rejected.

MOUSE

But why? Why didn't you notify me?

CLERK

It seems you were working with another researcher. A Mr. Bailey. You mentioned his work in the report.

MOUSE

What about him?

CLERK

Yes, you are using research created with him and you need his consent.

MOUSE

But his research was wrong! Why do I need *his* permission to say *he* is wrong?

CLERK

Miss, our organization prefers not to involve itself in you personal issues.

Mouse huffs and turns and starts to leave.

CLERK CONT'D

And don't raise your voice. It wouldn't be ladylike.

Mouse slowly turns back to the clerk and walks up to the desk.

MOUSE

(Feigning interest)

I could use a little help being ladylike. My husband is interested in buying a new car. Would you suggest the one you drive?

CLERK

My 1957 Cheve? I love it.

(CONTINUED)

MOUSE  
Green right?

CLERK  
Right.

MOUSE  
(smiling)  
I saw it on my way in.

EXT. PARKING LOT AND STREET - DAY

Mouse stomps out of the building. Bailey is waiting for her outside. He pays no attention that she is distraught and angry and goes on pleading.

She walks past him, apparently on some sort of mission.

BAILEY  
Mouse, OK, I'm sorry. I've screwed up. I'll give you whatever you want, I just need your help.

MOUSE  
Not now, Bob. I don't need you around right now. Why don't you find someone else anyway?

BAILEY  
They won't accept anyone else--

MOUSE  
They? They need me?

BAILEY  
Don't worry about them, they'll fund whatever you and I want. You can have your own lab.

Mouse leads Bailey into a hardware store.

INT. HARDWARE STORE - DAY

Mouse, Bailey, and the cat walk through the front door of the store. Tools and buckets of paint stuff the place floor to ceiling.

As she passes the front register, the CASHIER (older man) bends over to notice the cat.

(CONTINUED)

CASHIER

Hey, lady. Is that your cat?

Mouse ignores him and leads Bailey through the shopping aisles. She stops every so often to look at something.

MOUSE

I don't know who it is in the CIA funding you, but if you want me then I want you to co-sign the research I've done so far.

BAILEY

OK, that's easy.

MOUSE

It's about how your ideas are wrong, Bob.

BAILEY

(He pauses for moment)

Sure.

MOUSE

Just like that? You must really need my help. And I want your hands off of it.

BAILEY

I won't even come close.

Mouse grabs a jug of liquid.

MOUSE

I mean it Bailey, I am done being second in command.

She brings it to the counter where the cashier rings it up. The cat jumps up on the counter.

CASHIER

You bring him everywhere? That's a lot of fiberglass resin. You need patch a large boat?

MOUSE

A whole sinking ship.

EXT. PARKING LOT AND STREET - DAY

She walks up to the green 1957 Chevrolet.

BAILEY  
Nice car. When did you get it?

MOUSE  
It isn't mine.

She rips the gas cap off and begins dumping the jug into the gas tank. The cat starts rubbing on Bailey's leg.

MOUSE CONT'D  
Horrible seems to like you.

BAILEY  
Horrible?

MOUSE  
I'll need a couple days to get my things together. Would mind taking him until then?

The cat scratches at Bailey's shoelaces.

BAILEY  
Uh, sure.

MOUSE  
Also, you need to get me out of here in fifteen minutes before this chemical reaction takes place.

BAILEY  
That can be arranged. There's a bus stop over there.

MOUSE  
What have you been doing with your life these years? I might as well be making a get-a-way on a bicycle.

BAILEY  
We could walk away confidently as the car explodes instead.

MOUSE  
This is epoxy, Bailey. It hardens into plastic concrete.

She tosses the jug away.

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY

Do you have spare change?

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

Bailey sleeps on a recliner chair in a crappy apartment. There are a line of windows facing the street and the apartment is on the second story. There are half-eaten takeout containers and food wrappers on the counter.

The cat mills about the apartment, eating out of the takeout containers. The cat pushes over the garbage over with a crash.

Bailey wakes up and looks around for a moment, then goes back to sleep.

Horrible sees Chuckles in a cage. He jumps up to the counter with the cage and begins pawing at the door and walls.

Chuckles is distressed and squeals. Frustrated, the cat jumps up to a shelf above the cage.

Horrible edges a pot toward the edge of the shelf. Chuckles runs around his cage terrified. The cat shoves the pot off and it smashes into the cage.

Bailey falls off the recliner and jumps into a wall trying to hide from what he thinks is a home invasion.

He grabs a kitchen knife and bumbles around the apartment searching for an intruder.

He finds the kitchen destroyed, the cage dented, and Horrible nonchalantly licking himself on the shelf. Bailey lets out a an exasperated sigh.

INT. CIA HEADQUARTERS - DAY

In the hallway leading up to Dale's office stand a line of people. They are a menagerie of weirdos. Each and every one of them has a plan to save the world.

Bailey squeezes past ARNIE(30's). Bailey lifts Horrible above everyone's head to get through. Arnie is is dressed in a headband, has a greasy mustache, short-shorts, and knee-high sox.

ARNIE

Hey, I'm Arnie. Are you the new producer? Nice cat.

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY  
Producer? Of what?

ARNIE  
(He motions to Bailey like  
they have something secret  
between one another)  
Our covert porn flick.

BAILEY  
What?

ARNIE  
(Blocking Bailey's way)  
Listen, Man. If you aren't, then  
wait your turn in line.

Dale pops his head out of his office and yells at Arnie

DALE  
Get the fuck out of his way.  
Bailey. Get in here. You've got see  
this.

Bailey shoves his way into Dale's office.

INT. DALE'S OFFICE - DAY

There is a MAN (middle-age) sitting there with bunch of  
plastic dinosaurs.

DALE  
Write a book.

MAN  
What?

DALE  
No one believes that you can bring  
back dinosaurs. Get out of here and  
go write a book instead.

The man gathers his dinosaurs and leaves.

BAILEY  
Who was that?

DALE  
You look awful, what's wrong?

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY

This cat is pure evil. He destroyed my entire house.

DALE

Completely untrainable. He's perfect.

BAILEY

Who are these people?

DALE

I got to thinking--if your stupid idea could make us millions, why not find a couple more dumb ideas.

BAILEY

Dale, wait. I think this is getting out of hand.

Bailey sets the cat down.

DALE

Not at all. We're just getting started. Think of the money, Bob. This could be the biggest cash-cow in history.

BAILEY

I don't know. Taking a risk on one scam is dangerous, but more?

Horrible begins eating out of Dale's trash.

DALE

(Puts his arm around Bailey)  
We're saving America, Bob. If you think this, then you are doing nothing wrong. Say it with me

DALE

We're saving America.

BAILEY

We're saving America.

DALE

(Stuffing a clipboard in Bailey's chest)  
Great. Now sign here. We have some interviews to do.

MONTAGE INT. DALE'S OFFICE - DAY

Dale and Bailey sit behind Dale's desk giving a series of interviews for cockamamie projects.

Intercut between each person individually giving their interview.

DALE

So what have you got for us?

ARNIE

A porn tape. To discredit someone important.

DALE

Great, the boys upstairs want to get rid of some Indonesian communist. Can we make it here?

ARNIE

I was thinking L.A. but I suppose we could move everyone out here but--

DALE

That would cost a lot to turn the CIA Headquarters into a stag den.  
(Looks at Bailey)  
I think we can manage.

LSD GUY (40's) Has a hard time focusing and looking forward. He clearly has been experimenting on himself.

LSD GUY

Use LSD and Ketamine to perfect mind-control.

DALE

The drugs those dirty people in San Francisco are using. I've heard of it. I know where this is going. You want to poison someone's water right?

LSD GUY

We could.

DALE

And that would require a lot of drugs right?

LSD guy shakes his head, 'yes.'

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DALE (cont'd)  
Well, the American people will have  
to foot the bill I guess.

ALIENS GUY (middle age). A scrawny guy with HUGE glasses.

ALIENS GUY  
An early warning system against  
alien invasion.

DALE  
Like Flash Gordon. I like it. If it  
gets out, wouldn't it cause mass  
hysteria.

ALIENS GUY  
Probably.

DALE  
And it would take you how long?

ALIENS GUY  
Presumably until they come--or  
don't.

DALE  
Sounds expensive. Great.

End Montage.

BAILEY  
You know, it's folks like us who  
are destroying America.

DALE  
Who thought the decline would be so  
lucrative? You know, Bailey. You  
should buy something. We'll write  
it off as your first expense. What  
did you always want?

INT. CAR - DAY

Cue upbeat music. Bob Bailey cruises down the freeway in his  
sweet new car. He is loving it. Horrible sits in the  
front-seat.

Bailey looks at the cat and smiles. The cat looks back at  
him.

Horrible starts to claw at the leather.

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY  
No, Horrible. Fuck.

He tries to drive while swatting at the cat. The car swerves a bit and clips a guard rail. A side-mirror is ripped off.

EXT. CIA HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Bailey inspects the scraped paint and damaged mirror. He picks up the cat and the cage with Chuckles and heads in.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

The hallway is a riot of porn actors and workers with electrical equipment. Bob Bailey dodges the chaos. He passes a door labeled, 'MK-ULTRA.' LSD Guy opens the door and pops his head out.

LSD GUY  
Have you seen Dale? We're running  
low on gummy bears.

Bailey looks over the guy's shoulder to see a young man in his tightey-whiteys with electrodes attached to him. He is reclined in a chair, being blasted with colorful light. He is high and totally freaking out.

Bailey looks horrified.

BAILEY  
I'll check-in with him.

Bailey starts his way down the hall. Behind him, the crazed test subject busts out of the lab,

Bailey gets down the hall past a door with a sign reading, 'Happy Days,' and pushes into a door labeled, 'Acoustic Kitty,' next to it.

INT. ACOUSTIC KITTY LAB - DAY

Bailey kicks the door closed and sets the cat and Chuckles on the counter.

BAILEY  
We're home guys.

He walks further into the lab and realizes that it is connected by a large glass observation window to the Happy Days lab where they are shooting the porn.

Bailey rushes out of the room.

INT. DALE'S OFFICE - DAY

Dale is doing lines of cocaine with the porn actors. He is completely unfazed as Bailey comes in, looking distraught.

DALE

Bob! You need to try this. This idea of yours is great.

BAILEY

My idea? Dale, Mouse is going to be here shortly and if she sees this circus, she'll be done with us.

DALE

Right. Arnie? Where are you?

Dale gets up and yells into the hallway.

DALE CONT'D

Get your crew shooting already.

People start shuffling into the Happy Days lab.

BAILEY

And why am I sharing half an interrogation room with a porn production?

DALE

It's great. We get one room and charge for two.

BAILEY

You aren't supposed to do that to MY project.

DALE

Hey, it's money in your pocket. How do you like that new car of yours by the way?

BAILEY

(Shrugging his shoulders)  
It's good, but it could use some work.

DALE

Already?

The phone rings. Dale picks it up.

(CONTINUED)

DALE CONT'D  
Yes, perfect. Send her up.

He hangs up.

DALE CONT'D  
That's her. She's here.

BAILEY  
Shit.

Bob runs out of the room.

INT. ACOUSTIC KITTY LAB - DAY

Through the the viewing window, Bob Bailey jumps around the film set of Happy Days. Arnie yells at him. Bailey puts up his hands in placation.

He grabs the sheet off the bed where two naked actors are setting up for their shoot. They look entirely confused. Bailey pins the sheet over the window then exits into the hallway.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Mouse is passing by Happy Days as Bailey backs out of it. Bailey doesn't notice her.

MOUSE  
So is that our new lab?

Bailey jumps, startled, and turns around.

BAILEY  
No! I mean, it's not ours. We're not welcome there.

MOUSE  
Why? What's going on in there?

There is a woman's squeal from inside the door.

BAILEY  
I think it's an interrogation.

The crazed man in his underwear appears at the end of the hall with LSD Guy and an assistant in hot pursuit. Bailey notices before Mouse.

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY

(Grabbing Mouse and shoving  
her into the Acoustic Kitty  
lab)

Well aren't you excited to see our  
new lab? I am!

The crazed man is tackled to the floor outside the doorway  
as Bailey is shutting the door.

INT. ACOUSTIC KITTY LAB - DAY

Mouse turns away from Bailey, walks over to Horrible and  
starts petting him. Bailey walks over by Chuckles's cage and  
pokes a finger in.

MOUSE

So I want to meet him. The guy  
who is paying our bills.

BAILEY

You don't want to do that.

MOUSE

Why?

BAILEY

He's quite rough around the edges.  
Sort-of greasy too.

MOUSE

That's fine. More than anything, I  
want to know what you told him.  
Where is he?

Mouse goes to open the door but Bailey blocks her.

MOUSE CONT'D

Are you getting in my way?

BAILEY

No, me, no. I only wanted to check  
to see if the hallway is, uh, safe.

He peaks out into the hall. It's empty.

MOUSE

Safe?

Bailey goes out first.

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY

CIA guys might have dangerous things coming through here. Things that could destroy civilizations. A alien, nukes, naked people from clandestine drug experiments.

INT. DALE'S OFFICE - DAY

BAILEY

Mouse wants to make sure we are the same page.

MOUSE

Some small reconnaissance is what I heard. I would like Bob and you to be more specific.

DALE

Well I defer to Mr. Bailey on these matters.

BAILEY

Right. Well I was thinking--

Cue the spy music.

INT. LABORATORY - DAY

A cat walks across a lab table

BAILEY V.O.

Cats are much smarter than we give them credit. We could fit one with a listening device.

EXT. RUSSIAN EMBASSY - DAY

A cat slinks over a wall and past an armed guard.

BAILEY V.O.

With the right conditioning we could have it infiltrate a sensitive Russian location.

DALE V.O.

Like a diplomat's office right.

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY V.O.

Right!

CONTINUOUS INT. RUSSIAN - OFFICE DAY

The cat hides under the desk of a Russian diplomat. 1960's style cartoonish radio waves shoot out from its tail.

BAILEY V.O.

We give it a transmitter and antenna. Probably inside its tail.

INT. DALE'S OFFICE - DAY

Mouse turns to Bailey.

MOUSE

Wait. You are not cutting open my cat and putting a radio inside it.

BAILEY

(Nodding to Dale)

I'm sure we can afford the best medical professional.

DALE

Oh yeah, we've got the money.

MOUSE

Do you know what the size of a radio transmitter is? There's army guys who only job it is to carry one of those things around.

BAILEY

We can invest in research to make it smaller.

DALE

That's the spirit.

MOUSE

And an embassy? What if they find the cat? We could start a diplomatic crisis.

BAILEY

I heard Russians love cats.

(CONTINUED)

MOUSE

(Sarcastically)

Oh yeah, I forgot, the bear isn't the official animal of Russia.

BAILEY

I heard that Ivan the Terrible had a big fluffy cat.

MOUSE

Did he bring it along while pillaging Novgorod?

BAILEY

He was never without it.

Mouse gets up and leaves.

DALE

That went well. You two will be busy for months.

Bailey gets up. He isn't as happy as he thought he would be.

DALE CONT'D

Make sure you find a way to hold up the other projects as well. We don't want them finishing up too quick either.

INT. ACOUSTIC KITTY LAB - DAY

Mouse is irate with Bailey. She throws her arms out. She can't believe that she trusted this guy even a bit.

MOUSE

You want to put a transmitter in MY cat? And when did you actually think either of our training programs could handle infiltrating a building. It's a cat, not James Bond.

There are sex sounds coming from the Happy Days lab. Bailey tries to ignore it.

BAILEY

I promise, Mouse. There will be nothing invasive about what we want to do with the cat. And don't you believe in our ability to train it? We can do anything. We just need to believe in ourselves.

(CONTINUED)

MOUSE

We believed in ourselves for ages,  
Bob. Look where it got us. We're  
sharing a lab with a torture  
program.

The wall shakes a bit. From the other side the muffled  
voices of a man and a woman can be heard.

MAN

Who's your president? Tell me?

WOMAN

(In a fake Russian accent)  
Sukarno is my President.

MOUSE

Jesus, I wouldn't want to be in her  
position.

BAILEY

They must be giving her everything  
they've got. Mouse, give me the  
chance to get the technology  
together for the cat. You can  
choose then what is right for the  
cat.

EXT. ROOFTOP OF CIA HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Aliens Guy is adjusting a satellite dish. He has a  
work-bench full of tools beside him. Bob Bailey comes out of  
stairwell carrying a huge radio.

BAILEY

Have you heard from any aliens yet?

ALIENS GUY

I haven't started listening.

BAILEY

(Presenting the radio)  
We need some help downstairs. Do  
you think you can fit this inside a  
cat?

Aliens Guy sets down what he is doing and takes the radio  
over to his workbench.

ALIENS GUY

What part of it do you need inside  
him?

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY  
The transmitter.

ALIENS GUY  
The heavy part. What about the  
antenna? How far away do you need  
the signal?

Aliens Guy starts messing with the radio with a screw  
driver.

BAILEY  
Not far.

ALIENS GUY  
Mars isn't far from Earth when you  
compare its distance from Pluto.

BAILEY  
I'll be going now. I'm sure this  
will take you a couple weeks at  
least.

Aliens Guy takes out a hammer and smashes open the radio.

ALIENS GUY  
What got you into animals?

BAILEY  
If I can figure them out, I could  
figure us out. They are just  
smaller versions of people.

ALIENS GUY  
How long is your cats tail?

BAILEY  
Maybe fifteen centimeters.

Aliens Guy smashes something on the table and winds wire  
around it.

ALIENS GUY  
If you had a bigger cat, you could  
get another thirty or forty feet of  
signal.

He hands Bailey a small contraption with wire attached.

ALIENS GUY CONT'D.  
The antenna will go up its tail to  
save space.

BAILEY

How did you do that so quickly?  
That should have taken you a year!

ALIENS GUY

Like your animals--it was just  
smaller version of the thing you  
gave me. By the way, it will also  
have terrible sound quality, but it  
works.

BAILEY

If you could invent something like  
that on the spot, why do you spend  
your time looking for ET's?

ALIENS GUY

Am I a product of the times or was  
I born to look into the sky? I  
think that's on you to figure out,  
Bob Bailey.

INT. ACOUSTIC KITTY LAB - DAY

Dale peaks his head into the lab. Mouse is taking notes.  
Horrible is sitting on a counter next to her.

DALE

Hey, how's it going?

There are still muffled sex sounds coming from the room next  
door.

MOUSE

Fine, fine. Do you have any  
reservations about torture?

DALE

Torture?

MOUSE

Yeah, in the next room here.

The sex sounds get louder and there is a rhythmic banging  
sound.

MOUSE CONT'D.

It's like they are hitting her with  
a pine 2x4. And just when it sounds  
like they are done with her, they  
jump right into it again.

(CONTINUED)

DALE

Getting the rhythm down is practically an art--to elicit the right response that is.

MOUSE

Could we get a different room then?

DALE

I'll put in a request. Oh yes, one more thing. You are needed down at the front desk. They have to print you a security card.

MOUSE

Right.

She gets up and they leave. Dale stops at the door and holds it open for her.

DALE

After you.

Mouse smiles at him and leaves down the hallway. Dale turns to Horrible, still perched on the counter.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Dale sneaks open the door to Happy Days. The porn actors are having sex. Arnie sits in his director's chair.

ARNIE

You call that a thrust? No one is going to believe that. You have to bang her like you are the president of a country.

Dale quietly lets Horrible down through the door and closes it after the cat.

INT. DALE'S OFFICE - DAY

Bailey walks into Dale's office and closes the door behind himself like he has a secret to tell.

BAILEY

I've been thinking. You know, why don't we steal a little less money and go through with Acoustic Kitty.

Dale is shocked.

(CONTINUED)

DALE

Less money?!

BAILEY

Yeah, sometimes less is more. You know, we have a real shot at this. I even got this transmitter thing.

DALE

We are so close to striking it rich. You are so close to never needing anyone's help ever again.

BAILEY

But Mouse--

DALE

But what? She already dumped you once. What makes you think she won't dump you again. If you do this you will be able buy a hundred research assistants.

Bailey looks at the device in his hand.

DALE CONT'D

Now give that to me.

Bailey hesitates.

DALE CONT'D

Give it to me or smash it yourself.

Mouse bursts through the door. She is panicked. Bailey puts the device in his pocket.

MOUSE

I can't find Horrible.

Bailey looks quickly to Dale and then back to Mouse.

BAILEY

Well where did he go? How did he get out?

MOUSE

He was gone when I came back.

Bailey and Mouse leave.

INT. ACOUSTIC KITTY LAB - DAY

Mouse and Bailey search around the room.

MOUSE

I don't believe he could just waltz away.

BAILEY

Did you leave the door open?

MOUSE

(Putting a hand to her forehead.)

No but...Dale. He held the door for me. Horrible must have run out without us noticing.

INT. HAPPY DAYS LAB - DAY

The cat, from the other side of the window, hops up on the curtain hanging between the two rooms.

INT. ACOUSTIC KITTY LAB - DAY

The sheet covering the window rips down revealing the entire porn scene going on.

The man and the woman actors are in the middle of dorking each other.

Arnie chases the cat.

ARNIE

Keep rolling. I've got this.

The couple tries to keep having sex.

Arnie swipes at the cat, it jumps up on a light stand. The stand topples over. Sparks fly and the set lights on fire. The porn actors jump around screaming, genitalia jiggling all over.

BAILEY

New interrogation technique?

Mouse and Bailey turn to see the chaos.

MOUSE

Jesus Christ.

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY  
That cat IS Horrible.

INT. CIA HEADQUARTERS ASSISTANT DIRECTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

The assistant director sits at his desk. There is a huge man standing across from him but we can only see him from the back.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR  
I've been hearing rumors about special activities division. You have my authorization to investigate any decisions being made down there.

The huge man turns and leaves. His face is not shown.

INT. DALE'S OFFICE - DAY

Dale opens a can of sardines and begins eating them with a fork. Horrible comes running in with Arnie in hot pursuit.

The cat jumps onto Dale's desk and snatches one of the sardines. Arnie tries to grab Horrible but the cat is too fast and bolts past him.

Mouse is outside the door. She snatches the cat and picks him up. Bob Bailey is with her.

ARNIE  
Those crazy scientists and their weaponized spy cat. What kind of ship are you running around here?

MOUSE  
We're doing actual research. What are you doing?

ARNIE  
It's fucked up, Dale. I can't work here. These conditions are bizarre.

MOUSE  
I could say the same.

DALE  
But we need you to work here. This is top secret work. Indonesia's president is practically a communist already.

(CONTINUED)

ARNIE

We can't. We have to rebuild the set.

DALE

(sarcastically throwing his hand up to his forehead)  
Oh no!

ARNIE

We have to buy new equipment.

DALE

It sounds expensive!

ARNIE

It is. And Billy, our male lead--he's great at his job, but he can't get it up if he's stressed. I think he's afraid of cats.

DALE

Stressed? You couldn't have the LAPD pick up another dark skinned guy to do illegal porn?

ARNIE

It's about continuity, Dale. No two penises are the same We would have the shoot the whole thing from the beginning.

DALE

I never knew productions were so much work.

ARNIE

(Distraught)  
I can't work like this.

ROY MORALES (30's inspired by the Vietnam war-hero Roy Benavidez), the huge man from before, walks into the office.

MORALES

What seems to be the issue gentleman, lady?