FORM C
COLLEGE SCHOLARS PROJECT APPROVAL

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Scholar

Name: Bonnie A.Gould
Mentor

Project Title: Manufacturing Reality From Many One

COMMITTEE MEMBERS
(Minimum 3 Required)

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As a whole, I think this project was a success. Not only did I have the opportunity to practice what I have already learned, but, as is inevitable, I learned many things from working on this project. The biggest challenge presented, with exception to the artistic challenge, was time management. It was a highly time consuming project, and was happening at the same time as my participation in a main stage Clarence Brown Theater show and a full time class load. The work happened at all hours of the day, starting as early as 10:00AM and ending as late as 11:30 PM.

The decision to take on the task of directing Manufacturing Reality turned out to be a fruitful one. At first, I had second thoughts about whether or not I wanted to direct this show. When I worked on a new work in the past as an actor, the playwright told me he always gets a director, because he is too caught up in the writing to notice acting and blocking problems. I was leaning towards this, partly because I did not feel that I made a very good director when I took directing class last year. Toward the end of the process I realized that bringing in a director would only have bogged down the process, and that the vision I had of the play and my experience on the stage was enough. It seemed to me that the vision for the project was the most important element to success. Granted, you can't execute the vision without the right skills, but this is the second time I have succeeded in an element of theater that I thought I would fail at because of the clear vision I have for this play.

At first, when taking Dana Yeaton's play writing class, I thought I would fail as a playwright, because none of my plays were any good, and I couldn't figure out how to
make them any better. When I finally found a concept I was inspired by, the quality of my work went up significantly. The same thing has happened with directing, at which I felt I was mediocre at best until I directed this play. Now I feel like both directing and play writing are things I might actually be able to do competently.

From the beginning, I made it clear to my actors that I wanted this play to be a collaborative project. I told them I was open to any suggestions they had with regard to both the writing and directing of the piece. I emphasized that I wanted to know any time that they felt lines were awkward to say, redundant, or poorly motivated. While at first I was afraid this might compromise my authority and control of the work, it proved to be the opposite. My consideration for their thoughts and openness about my own thoughts proved to elicit respect, which in the end gave me more control. This respect and comfort afforded me the ability to hear their thoughts but not be obligated to use them, though in many cases I did apply what they had to say. As a result of their input and of my own observations, there were a lot of changes that came to the script over the course of the work. The primary changes took place in the way certain lines were worded. There were also additions to the script as well as changes to who delivered lines that were already in the script for character reasons.

On the other side of this project is my one man show, From Many: One. It saw its own set of changes in the form of both additions and cuts. The addition came when I felt that my show jumped too quickly from pleading for love to railing over a cheating wife, so I added a short monologue of Othello's in which he retorts Iago's suggestion that his wife may be unfaithful. I was very happy with this choice both because of the way it fit into the story I wanted to tell and because of the polar physical and vocal contrast
between it and the following monologue in which was playing a woman. The first cut I
decided to make was that of what was to be my final monologue from This is Our Youth.
One purpose of the monologue, when it was initially made a part of the show, was to give
me time to breathe after the swordfight before I had to sing. I cut it because I could tell
that it would kill the climax of my show. It would be too much time without stakes for the
audience to understand why the final song, "Come Away Death" was so dramatic.

The cut turned out to work well. Not only did it allow for a very strong connection
to the swordfight and the previous monologue from Cymbeline, but being out of breath
actually aided in my acting of the song. I was literally struggling to get it out, which had a
strong emotional effect on me, adding richly to my performance.

The second and more significant cut that I made was to eliminate almost
everything in the show accept for myself and a few pieces of furniture. This cut came as
a result of my work with Brad De Planche. He worked with me on the Friday before my
opening. It was both the first time I had the opportunity to work in the lab and the first
time I had been able to run the whole show at once. His biggest note was something that
Bonnie had suggested at the beginning of the process that I had forgotten. He said all of
the other stuff needed to go. I had actors and props and scenery that I was using in an
attempt to tell a well defined story that could be followed clearly. He told me that all of
the things I had added to tell the story were taking away from the story I was trying to tell.
They were taking away from the work I was doing. So, after sleeping on it, asking Carol's
advice, and then meeting with him to work for 3 hours the next morning, I decided to go
for it.

In those 3 hours Brad and I reworked almost the entire show in his apartment.
While we worked briefly on some physical and vocal variations within the show as well as some acting notes, the primary focus was to get the show working as a one man show. In the end, I decided not to make it a totally one man show, in favor of keeping the swordfight. I had put a lot of time and money into it, I did not think I could do it sensibly by myself, and I thought it added rather than detracted from the show, so I kept it in.

The final product was very well received, though I thought it still had a lot of places to improve. One problem was that I was giving slightly inconsistent performances, though part of this may be due to the nature of a one man show. With no other actors on stage, everything that happened in the play had to be generated by me, so the course of the play was much more affected by what I was thinking and feeling on each particular day than in a normal performance situation. Most likely though, I think this was the result of a relatively short time with the show fully on its feet. I simply hadn't practiced it enough to do it consistently in the way I wanted it. In addition, I was still having some pitch issues on the high notes in my first song, Moving Too Fast. This was primarily caused by the fact that I was running around the stage during the song, though adrenaline was an issue too.

Ultimately, however, I was pleased with the work. I learned many things from doing it, and the audiences were overwhelmingly positive in their responses to it. In fact, they were much more enthusiastic about my work than I was. I must say I was tickled to hear people laughing at my play. This project did exactly what I hoped it would. It challenged almost every skill I have learned in theater. I had to write, direct, act, sing, dance, and produce, all at the same time. It was definitely a worthwhile endeavor.
Philip and Girls:
When I was thirteen years old I had my first sexual experience. I don't mean I had sex. I had my first sexual experience. I KNOW! That's the same thing. I mean, I had an experience of a sexual nature with another person, which is more than a lot of people have ever had. I didn't penetrate or anything. I didn't actually ejaculate at the time. Don't get me wrong, I'd been ejaculating for some time. I mean, from time to time over a period of time, I don't mean like one long stream of semen all afternoon. I mean — Oh you see what I mean!! I was thirteen and I was invited to a friend's house. A girl. I'll call this girl Cathy. I remember her last name, but I'm not going to use it. I don't want to. Not that I think she's here or anything, she's probably dead by now. What a terrible thing to say. I must have a wealth of repressed hostility for this Cathy character. Anyway, I'm still not going to tell you her last name, because one of you might know her and you might tell her about this, that she's being discussed. And then, she might come here and try to shoot me. Who knows what kind of depravity she's lapsed into in the last seven years. I have to protect myself! I think I'll call her Mona. Oh, I already said her name was Cathy — HELLO! She invited me to a party. There were lots of little boys and girls at this party. And Mona had, I assume, a crush on me. Or else, she was insane with a persecution complex and she was punishing herself by leading me to the bathroom, where she turned off the lights and "did things" to me.

And she was not a pretty girl. I realize that's sexist, but fuck it. Mona had these big, buck teeth. Now everything is relative, but these teeth were big and buck compared to just about everything else on the planet today — or then. Big teeth! Like Mr. Ed, whom at thirteen, I found amusing, but not attractive, and certainly not the object of any sexual desire. NO ALAN STRANG ANИ!! She turned off the lights. I was unbelievably grateful. She kissed me ... I kissed her back. We didn't actually kiss each other. It was like tennis. That's odd. But you know what I mean, don't you? I hope so. And then it happened.

I got this big hard-on. And Cathy — I mean Mona — felt it against her leg, reached down to touch it and let out a howl like I had a hermit crab down there, that'd just ripped off her fingers! She burst out of the room, ran into the party, screaming and carrying on and telling everyone about my "boner" and I just wanted to die right then and there.

So I masturbated. Then I tried to off-masturbate. When I turned on the light, I noticed that she'd removed a few of my pants and I knew I couldn't go out there until it dried. That happened to everyone, hasn't it? ... Well, So, I sat on the toilet. Writing. Feeling very ashamed and embarrassed. I don't know why. Nature or nurture? Tidy, no? (He has a deep swing in his somewhat.) The pain in my stomach has evolved from a piercing to a throbbing, like there's an orchestra, tuning up. (A third pool of light comes up. He waves, reluctantly, into it.)

Philip and Girls:
Last year, I was living in London, in Camden, where the young people live. Very now. You know. I was supposedly there studying music composition at the Royal Academy, where everyone has "hair-do's." My mother's idea. But I'd been there about six months and I'd stopped going to my classes completely — DON'T JUDGE ME!! I have terrible insomnia a lot of the time. I was working at The Mrs. Fields Cookie Store on Leicester Square. I figured, if I wasn't sleeping, I might as well be working. And although I am obviously much too intelligent to be shoveling cookies — WELL I AM! — it's hard for Americans to get work over there. So I was working late nights at the cookie store and sleeping during the day, or going to the movies. And mostly the people I was waiting on were creepy tourists: a lot of Germans for Americans who just embarrassed me when I opened my mouth. I didn't. I kept my eyes on my cookies.
and wickedly fostered by—the working classes!" Well!
He looks up at both of them for reaction, but Cliff is
reading, and Alison is intent on her ironing.
(to Cliff). Did you read that bit?

Alison: Oh, yes, I lost my list, and he knows it, but he doesn't leave it.
(to Cliff). You don't suppose your father could have
written it, do you?

Cliff: I just read out, of course. Why should any father have written it?

Alison: Sounds rather like Daddy, don't you think?

Cliff: Does it?

Alison: Is the Bishop of Bromley his nom de plume, do you
think?

Cliff: Don't take any notice of him. He's being offensive.
And it's so easy for him.

Alison: (quickly). Did you read about the woman who went to
the mass meeting of a certain American evangelist at
Earls Court? She went forward to declare herself for
love or whatever it is, and, in the rush of converts to
get to the front, she broke her ribs and fell kicked in the
head. She was yelling her head off in agony, but
with 50,000 people putting all they'd got into "Onward
Christian Soldiers", nobody even knew she was there.
He looked up sharply for a response, but there isn't any.
Sometimes I wonder if there isn't something wrong
with me.

Cliff: What about that tea?

Alison: Still boiling and paper. What tea?

Cliff: Put the kettle on.

Alison: Is it ok up at him.

Cliff: Do you want some more tea?

Alison: No, no, I don't know. No, I don't think so.

Cliff: Do you want some, Cliff?

Alison: I hate Sundays! It's always so depressing,
always the same. We never seem to get any further,
do we? Always the same ritual. Reading the papers,
drinking tea, ironing. A few more hours, and another
week gone. Our youth is slipping away. Do you know
that?

Cliff: I'm not sure. We're all—

Alison: You don't say, lovely.

Cliff: I don't think I'll be able to. Perhaps Jimmy would
like to go. (To Jimmy.) Would you like to?

Jimmy: Am I to have my enjoyment ruined by the Sunday night
you go to the front row? No, thank you. (Aside.) Did you
read Bentley's piece this week? Why, in earth I ask,
I don't know. I know damned well you haven't. Why
do I spend time and effort on that damned paper every
week? Nobody reads it except me. Nobody can be
bothered. No one can raise themselves out of their
delicious sloth. It will ruin my work. I'll drive me round the bend
soon—I know it, as sure as I'm sitting here. I know
you're going to drive me mad. Oh heavens, how I long
for a little ordinary human enthusiasm. Just enthusiasm
—that's all. I want to be a warm, thrilling voice cry
out Hallelujah! (He brings his breast theatrically.)
Hallelujah! I'm alive! I've an idea. Why don't we have
a little game? Let's pretend that we're human beings,
and that we're actually alive. Just for an hour. What do
you say? Let's pretend we're human. (He looks from
one to the other.) Oh, brother, it's such a long time since
I was with anyone who got enthusiastic about anything.

Cliff: What did he say?

Jimmy: (resigned of being dragged away from his pursuit of
Alison). What did who say?

Cliff: Mr Priestley.

Jimmy: What he always says, I suppose. He's like Daddy—
still casting well-fed glances back to the Edwardian
twilight from his comfortable, disenfranchised
Look Back in Anger

JIMMY: What the devil have you done to those trousers?
CLIFF: Done?
JIMMY: Are they the ones you bought last week-end? Look at them. Do you see what he's done to those new trousers?
ALISON: You are naughty, Cliff. They look dreadful.
JIMMY: You spent good money on a new pair of trousers, and then sprawl about in them like a savage. What do you think you're going to do when I'm not around to look after you? Well, what are you going to do? Tell me?
CLIFF: (grinning). I don't know. (To Alison.) What am I going to do, lovely?
ALISON: You'd better take them off.
JIMMY: Yes, go on. Take 'em off. And I'll kick your behind for you.
ALISON: I'll give them a press while I've got the iron on.
CLIFF: O.K. (Starts taking them off.) I'll just empty the pockets. (Takes out keys, matches, handkerchief.)
JIMMY: Give me those matches, will you?
CLIFF: Oh, you're not going to start up that old pipe again, are you? It stinks the place out. (To Alison.) Doesn't it smell awful? JIMMY grabs the matches, and lights up.
ALISON: I don't mind it. I've got used to it.
JIMMY: She's a great one for getting used to things. If she were to die, and wake up in paradise—after the first five minutes, she'd have got used to it.
CLIFF: (hands her the trousers). Thank you, lovely. Give me a cigarette, will you?
JIMMY: Don't give him one.
CLIFF: I can't stand the stink of that old pipe any longer. I must have a cigarette.
JIMMY: I thought the doctor said no cigarettes?
CLIFF: Oh, why doesn't he shut up?
JIMMY: All right. They're your vices. Go ahead, and have a bellyache, if that's what you want. I give up. I give up. I'm sick of doing things for people. And all for what?

ALISON gives Cliff a cigarette. They both light up, and sit down with their ironing.

CLIFF: (To Jimmy.) What a laugh. I thought you were going to be a cross person.

CLIFF: (winks to Alison.)
(Enter Luká; he gives Smirnoff a glass of vodka.)

LUKÁ: You take too many liberties, you know that ...?
SMIRNOFF: (Angry) What?
LUKÁ: Oh, nothing. I just ... Nothing.
SMIRNOFF: Who do you think you're talking to? Just shut up, will you?
LUKÁ: (Aside, as he goes out) How're we going to get rid of him ... ?
SMIRNOFF: Oh, I'm mad! I am so mad! Mad enough to blow up the world! Mad enough to get nasty! (Shouts) Hey, you!

(Enter Popóva.)

POPOVA: (Not looking at him) My dear sir, I have lived so long in retirement I have grown unused to the human voice. I cannot stand shouting. I must earnestly beg you to respect my solitude.
SMIRNOFF: Pay me my money and I'll go.
POPOVA: I have told you in no uncertain terms that I have no money here at the moment and you will have to wait until the day after tomorrow.
SMIRNOFF: And I also told you in no uncertain terms that I need the money today, not the day after tomorrow. If you don't pay me today, I might as well hang myself by the day after tomorrow.
POPOVA: But what can I do, since I don't have the money?
SMIRNOFF: You mean you're not going to pay me? Is that what you mean?
POPOVA: I can't!
SMIRNOFF: In that case, I stay right here—until I get it. (Sits down.)
You're going to pay me the day after tomorrow? Fine—I'll be sitting right here! (Jumps up) Look, don't you believe I have a mortgage—payment due tomorrow? You think I'm joking?
POPOVA: I asked you not to shout! You're not in a stable.
SMIRNOFF: I ask you not to speak like that! (Sits down.)

POPOVA: I do not know how to behave in a lady's presence!
POPOVA: No, you don't! I'm just a silly woman. I can't speak in front of a lady! In French? (With a nasty lip) Madame, je vous prie ... How charmed I am to know that you reject to pay me my money! Ah,
pardon, I seem to be upsetting you! Lovely weather we're having! And my, my, don't you look lovely in black! (Makes a fake bow)

SMIRNOFF: (Mocking) Stupid ... funny ... I don't know how to behave in a lady's presence! Woman, I have seen more ladies in my time than you have seen sparrows in yours! I have fought three duels because of ladies, I have walked out on twelve ladies, and nine ladies have walked out on me! So there! Oh, I used to be an idiot, got crushes on them, sweet-talked, cast my pearls before—Well ... Bow, click my heels, fall in love, suffer, sigh in the moonlight, freeze up, melt into puddles—I did it all. I could rattle on for hours about women's rights: I spent half my life hanging around women, but not anymore! No, thank you very much! No more wool over my eyes! I've had it! Dark eyes, red lips, dimples in the cheeks, moonlight, sighs of passion—no, sir, I wouldn't give you two cents for any of it now. Present company excepted, of course, but all women are pretentious, affected, gossipy, hateful, liars to the marrow of their bones, vain, petty, merciless, they can't think straight, and as for this part here (slaps his forehead) ... well—excuse my frankness—a sparrow has ten times more brains than any philosopher in skirts. Take a good look at anyone of these romantic creatures: petticoats and hot air, divine transports, the whole works; then take a look at her soul. Pure crocodile. (Grabs the back of a chair; the chair cracks and breaks) And the worst part is, this crocodile thinks she has a monopoly on the tender emotion of love! Goddamn it, has any woman ever known how to love anything except her lapdog? She's in love, all she can do is snivel and whine. A man in love, now, he suffers and sacrifices, but a woman, her love shows up how? She swishes her skirt and gets a firm grip on your nose. You're a woman, unfortunately, but at least you know what I mean, what woman's nature is like. Tell me honestly: have you ever seen a woman who was faithful and true? No, you haven't! The only honest and faithful women are old or ugly.

POPOVA: (A Mean laugh) Men are faithful and true in love!
Well, spread the good news! (Hoity) How dare you say that? Men faithful and true? Let me tell you a thing or two! Of all the
Dione
John Gay
@1720

Scene: Arcadia

Dramatic

Lycidas: a young man hopelessly in love with a nymph, 20s

Lycidas has forsaken everything in order to pursue Parthenia, a lovely nymph who eludes his every advance. Here, the love struck young man has finally discovered Parthenia asleep in the woods, and marvels at her sleeping beauty.

LYCIDAS: May no rude wind the rustling branches move; Breathe soft, ye silent gales, nor wake my Love. Ye shepherds, piping homeward on the way, Let not the distant echoes learn your lay; Strain not, ye nightingales, your warbling throat, May no loud shake prolong the shriller note, Lest she awake; O sleep, secure her eyes, That I may gaze; for if she wake, she flies. While easy dreams compose her peaceful soul, What anxious cares within my bosom roll! If thr'd with sighs beneath the beech I lye, And languid slumber close my weeping eye, Her lovely vision rises to my view, Swift fly's the nymph, and swift would I pursue; I strive to call, my tongue has lost its sound; Like rooted oaks, my feet benumm'd are bound; Struggling I wake. Again my sorrows flow, And not one flatt'ring dream deludes my woe. What innocence! how meek is ev'ry grace! How sweet the smile that dimples on her face, Calm as the sleeping seas! but should my sighs Too rudely breathe, what angry storms would rise! Though the fair rose with beauteous blush is crown'd, Beneath her fragrant leaves the thorn is found; The peach, that with inviting crimson blooms, Deep at the heart the cank'ring worm consumes; 'Tis thus, alas! those lovely features hide

Disdain and anger and resentful pride. Hath proffer'd greatness yet o'ercome her hate? And does she languish for the glitt'ring bait? Against the swain she might her pride support. Can she subdue her sex, and scorn a Court? Perhaps in dreams the shining vision charms, And the rich bracelet sparkles on her arms; In fancy'd heaps the golden treasure glows: Parthenia, wake; all this thy swain bestows.
The Great Galeoto
Jose Echegaray
1881

Scene: Madrid

#1—Serio-Comic
Ernest: a frustrated playwright, 30s

The agony of writer's block is here defined by Ernest as he struggles to find words to put down on paper.

ERNEST (Seated at table and preparing to write.): Nothing—impossible! It is striving with the impossible. The idea is there; my head is fevered with it; I feel it. At moments an inward light illuminates it, and I see it. I see it in its floating form, vaguely outlined, and suddenly a secret voice seems to animate it, and I hear sounds of sorrow, sonorous sighs, shouts of sardonic laughter... a whole world of passions alive and struggling... They burst forth from me, extend around me, and the air is full of them. Then, then I say to myself: "Now is the moment." I take up my pen, stare into space, listen attentively, restraining my very heart-beats, and bend over the paper.... Ah, the irony of impotency! The outlines become blurred, the vision fades, the cries and sighs faint away... and nothingness, nothingness encircles me... the monotony of empty space, of inert thought, of idle pen and lifeless paper that lacks the life of thought! Ah! How varied are the shapes of nothingness, and how, in its dark and s-I-e-s-I-e way, it mocks creatures of my stamp! So many, many forms! Canvas without color, bits of marble without shape, confused noise of changes vibrations. But nothing more irritating, more insolent, meaner than this insolent pen of mine (Threws it away.), nothing worse than this white sheet of paper. Oh, if I cannot fill it, at least I may destroy it—vile accomplice of my ambition and my eternal humiliation. Thus, thus... smaller and still smaller. (Tears up paper. Pauses.) And there! How lucky that nobody saw me! For in truth such fury is absurd... unjust. No, I will not yield. I will think and think, until either I have conquered or am crushed. No, I will not give up. Let me see, let me see... if in that way—
1.2 'TIS PITY SHE'S A WHORE

PUTANA But look, sweetheart, look what thing comes now: here's another of your ciphers to fill up the number. O, brave old ape in silken coat! 0, observe.

BERGETTO Didst thou think, Poggio, that I would spoil my new clothes, and leave my dinner, to fight?

POGGIO No sir, I did not take you for so arrant a baby.

BERGETTO Am wiser than so: for I hope, Poggio, thou never heard'st of an elder brother that was a coxcomb, did'st, Poggio?

POGGIO Never, sir, as long as they had either land or money left them to inherit.

BERGETTO Is it possible, Poggio? O monstrous! Why, I'll undertake, with a handful of silver, to buy a head of wit at any time; but sirrah, I have another purchase in hand, I shall have the wench, mine uncle says.

POGGIO Sir, I have seen an ass and a mule trot the Spanish pavan with a better grace, I know not now often.

[Exeunt Bergetto and Poggio]

ANNABELLA This idiot haunts me too.

PUTANA Ay, ay, he needs no description. The rich magnifico that is below with your father, Signor Donado his uncle—for that he means to make this his cousin, a golden calf—thinks that you will be a right Israelite, and fall down to him presently: but I hope I have tutored you better. They say a fool's bauble is a lady's playfellow: yet you having wealth enough, you need not cast upon the dearth of flesh at any rate. Hang him, innocent!

Enter Giovanni [below]

ANNABELLA But see, Putana, see: what blessed shape
Of some celestial creature now appears?
What man is he, that with such sad aspect
Walks careless of himself?

PUTANA Where?

ANNABELLA Look below.

PUTANA O, 'tis your brother, sweet—

ANNABELLA Ha!

PUTANA 'Tis your brother.

ANNABELLA Sure 'tis not he; this is some woeful thing
Wrapped up in grief, some shadow of a man.
Alas, he beats his breast, and wipes his eyes
Drowned all in tears: methinks I hear him sigh.
Scene: London

Dramatic

Lord Darlington: a cad, 20–30

Here, Lord Darlington does his best to seduce the virtuous Lady Windermere.

LORD DARLINGTON: Between men and women there is no friendship possible. There is passion, enmity, worship, love, but no friendship. I love you—

LADY WINDERMER: Nay! (Rising)

LORD DARLINGTON: Yes, I love you! You are more to me than anything in the whole world. What does your husband give you? Nothing. Whatever is in him he gives to this wretched woman, whom he has thrust into your society, into your home, to shame you before everyone. I offer you my life—

LADY WINDERMER: Lord Darlington!

LORD DARLINGTON: My life—my whole life. Take it, and do with it what you will. ... I love you—love you as I have never loved any living thing. From the moment I met you I loved you, loved you blindly, adoringly, madly! You did not know it then—you know it now! Leave this house to-night. I won't tell you that the world matters nothing, or the world's voice, or the voice of society. They matter a good deal. They matter far too much. But there are moments when one has to choose between living one's own life, fully, entirely, completely—or dragging out some false, shallow, degrading existence that the world in its hypocrisy demands. You have that moment now. Choose! Oh, my love, choose!

LADY WINDERMER: (Moving slowly away from him and looking at him with startled eyes): Leave not the courageous.

LORD DARLINGTON (Following her): you have the courage. There may be six months of pain, of disgrace even, but when you no longer bear his name, when you bear mine, all will be well. My love, my wife that shall be some day—yes, my wife! You know it! What are you now? This woman has the place that belongs by right to you. Oh, go—go out of this house, with head erect, with a smile upon your lips, with courage in your eyes. All London will know why you did it, and who will blame you? No one. If they do, what matter? Wrong? What is wrong? It's wrong for a man to abandon his wife for a shameless woman. It is wrong for a wife to remain with a man who so dishonours her. You said once you would make no compromise with things. Make none now. Be brave! Be yourself!
OTHELLO

Why, why is this?
Think'st thou I'd make a lie of jealousy,
To follow still the changes of the moon
With fresh suspicions? No; to be once in doubt
Is once to be resolved: exchange me for a goat,
When I shall turn the business of my soul
To such exsufflicate and blown surmises,
Matching thy inference. 'Tis not to make me jealous
To say my wife is fair, feeds well, loves company,
Is free of speech, sings, plays and dances well;
Where virtue is, these are more virtuous:
Nor from mine own weak merits will I draw
The smallest fear or doubt of her revolt;
For she had eyes, and chose me. No, Iago;
I'll see before I doubt; when I doubt, prove;
And on the proof, there is no more but this,—
Away at once with love or jealousy!
Enter MISTRESS QUICKLY.

MISTRESS QUICKLY.

Good morning, good worship.

CARTER.

Good morning, good wife.

MISTRESS QUICKLY.

What! Can it be your worship?

CARTER.

Good maid, then.

MISTRESS QUICKLY.

I'll tell you. As my master says, the first hour I command.

CARTER.

Believe the sweeter, Mistress Ford.

MISTRESS QUICKLY. Start.

Shall I vouchsafe your worship a word or two?

CARTER.

Two thousand, fair woman, and I'll vouchsafe thee the hearing.

MISTRESS QUICKLY.

There is one Mistress Ford, sir:—I pray, come a little nearer this ways:—I myself dwell with master Doctor Caius—

CARTER.

Well, sir, Mistress Ford, you say,

MISTRESS QUICKLY.
I pray your worship, come a little nearer this ways.

I warrant thee, nobody heare mine own people, mine own people.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Are they so? God bless them and make them his servants!

Well, Mistress Ford, what of her?

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Why, sir, she's a good creature. Lord Lord! your worship's a wanton! Well, heaven forgive you and all of us, I pray!

Mistress Ford, name, Mistress Ford—

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Marry, this is the short and the long of it; you have brought her into such a canaries as 'tis wonderful. The best courtier of them all, when the court lay at Windsor, could never have brought her to such a canary. Yet there has been knights, and lords, and gentlemen, with their coaches, I warrant you, coach after coach, letter after letter, gift after gift; smelling so sweetly, all musk, and so rushling, I warrant you, in silk and gold; and in such alligant terms; and in such wine and sugar of the best and the fairest, that would have won any woman's heart; and, I warrant you, they could never get an eye-wink of her: I had myself twenty angels given me this morning; but I defy all angels, in any such sort, as they say, but in the way of honesty: and, I warrant you, they could never get her so much as sip on a cup with the proudest of them all: and yet there has been earls, nay, which
is more, pensioners; but, I warrant you, all is one with her.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Marry, she hath received your letter, for the which she thanks you a thousand times; and she gives you to notify that her husband will be absence from his house between ten and eleven.

Ay, forsooth; and then you may come and see the picture, she says, that you wot of: Master Ford, her husband, will be from home. Alas! the sweet woman leads an ill life with him: he's a very jealousy man: she leads a very frampold life with him, good heart.

What you say well. But I have another messenger to your worship. Mistress Page hath her hearty commendations to you too: and let me tell you in your ear, she's as modest a civil modest wife, and one, I tell you, that will not miss you morning nor evening prayer, as any is in Windsor, whoe'er be the other: and she bade me tell your worship that her husband is seldom from home; but she hopes there will come a time. I never knew a woman so dote upon a man. surely I think you have charms, la; yes, in truth.
2.5 Cymbeline

SCENE V. Another room in Philario's house.

Enter POSTHUMUS LEONATUS
POSTHUMUS LEONATUS

Is there no way for men to be but women
Must be half-workers? We are all bastards;
And that most venerable man which I
Did call my father, was I know not where
When I was stamp'd; some coiner with his tools
Made me a counterfeit: yet my mother seem'd
The Dian of that time so doth my wife
The nonpareil of this. O, vengeance, vengeance!
Me of my lawful pleasure she restrain'd
And pray'd me oft forbearance; did it with
A pudency so rosy the sweet view on't
Might well have warm'd old Saturn; that I thought her
As chaste as unsunn'd snow. O, all the devils!
This yellow Iachimo, in an hour,—wast not?—
Or less,—at first?—perchance he spoke not, but,
Like a full-acorn'd boar, a German one,
Cried 'O!' and mounted; found no opposition
But what he look'd for should oppose and she
Should from encounter guard. Could I find out
The woman's part in me! For there's no motion
That tends to vice in man, but I affirm
It is the woman's part: be it lying, note it,
The woman's; flattering, hers; deceiving, hers;
Lust and rank thoughts, hers; revenges, hers;
Ambitions, covetings, change of prides, disdain,
Nice longing, slander, mutability,
All faults that may be named, nay, that hell knows,
Why, hers, in part or all; but rather, all;
For even to vice
They are not constant but are changing still
One vice, but of a minute old, for one
Not half so old as that. I'll write against them,
Detest them, curse them: yet 'tis greater skill
In a true hate, to pray they have their will:
The very devils cannot plague them better.

Exit
I was gonna say had sex, but... yeah. (Pause.) Ravishing is kind of like Dracula did. It’s like getting taken, you know, in an overwhelming kind of implies, like, a lack of participation on the woman’s part. It also implies that she enjoys it...

"OK, A+. Julie. Gold star. We’re not writing a thesis."

But what would be wrong, I mean, maybe they are lending the crimes a certain tragic beauty in the re-telling. Is that so bad?

It’s appalling and unseemly. I don’t know. I think maybe that’s the only way you heal, you know?

To re-imagine your... sorrows as gifts.

Stop!

What’s the alternative?

The truth. The alternative is the truth. There’s nothing beautiful about being raped in a bathroom, Julie—

and if you want to... re-enact it authentically and—

The Re-enacting is mechanically it second choice. First choice is just—

the fuck up about....

I’m back?

People in this country don’t know how to grieve. They’re so... estranged from silence and... reverence. Lisa Beamer—my God. That woman makes my father look restrained.

Lisa Beamer... the one whose husband said “let’s roll”?

That woman fucking trademarked her husband’s last words.

She’s on Oprah within a month, she’s got a book out to coincide with the
one-year anniversary. Who ARE these people? When my mother died it was like... I could barely fucking dress myself. And we had all these offers to go on TV and stuff and I thought well of course we won't do that because that would be insane, but my dad.... (Pause.) Do you know who Christopher Collins is?

JUSTIN: He writes really long books and sort of superimposes his neuroses on like, social issues. After my mom died, he started contacting me.

JUSTIN: My dad tried to buddy up to him, but he didn't want Dad. He wanted me to, like, go stay at his house in Iowa so he could "get to know and write an article for a magazine."

JUSTIN: I didn't want to go. It was maybe six months after my mom died and I was still... I was like barely a human, you know. But I went cuz that's what my dad wanted me to do and.... It was actually great. We played video games and ate pizza. We went to theme restaurants with his girlfriend. I needed a friend really badly then because the friends I had were treating me like Quasimoto. No one could deal. So I start feeling good, like, I have a friend who can deal with this, with me. And then it turned. It was like all the good stuff was just fattening me up for the kill. All of a sudden we can't just hang out anymore, it's all creepy conversation like "Did you ever want to fuck your mother, Justin? You can tell me." And I'd be like, "No way, man. Not my thing. Want to go to Denny's again?" And he's all, "I have rape fantasies about my mother, Justin. Nothing you can say would shock me." Finally, I go to bed at, like nine o'clock just to get the fuck away from him. End of the story? His girlfriend crawled into bed with me and we had sex. I lost my virginity. Guy stopped speaking to me. I charged a seven-hundred-dollar flight home on my dad's credit card, kicked in a window in my house and just stayed... by myself till my dad came back from New York.

JUSTIN: It's fine. It's not, like, Bosnia or anything. But it's fucked up! The point is just.... My mother was murdered. I don't know what the aftermath of that is supposed to be, but I don't think it's supposed to be... a book and a TV show and a rap song and a girl in my room. It's like we've lost the truth of it, we've buried it under all this... junk.

JUSTIN: So you don't have a solution. But shutting the fuck up would be a start.

JULIE: I did hit on you because of your mom. I'm sorry.

JUSTIN: I just don't get it. I haven't read Viktor Frankel, though, so... fuck if I know.

JULIE: I talked to you about Viktor Frankel? Shit. I was really drunk. I'm so sorry.

JUSTIN: It's alright.

JULIE: No, it isn't. (Pause.) I wanted to be a writer for a while. I tried. I wasn't good at making things up and I didn't have anything in my life worth writing about—

JUSTIN: Well, that's just lazy.

JULIE: No, it isn't! I mean look at all of Shakespeare.... It's all blood, war, struggle, death, tragic love. I don't have any of that and I don't know how to fake it because... Anyway, I guess I did think... I do think I'd be deeper if I'd experienced more... darkness. I'm embarrassed. I'm gonna shut up.

JUSTIN: Well.... As far as the writing goes.... I still say you're lazy. And reading the wrong books. You should read, like, books by Victorian women on bed rest—

JULIE: What?

JUSTIN: You're the English major. You know what I mean. There's a long proud tradition of bored women going ape shit. From the Brontës to the Carpenters, women with no life experience have held us spellbound—

JULIE: No, you're right. I'm not a writer. I just have to figure out what I am.

(Awkward pause.) I should probably take off before your dad gets here. But I totally mean that about going furniture shopping.

JUSTIN: (A little too enthusiastically.) OK.

JULIE: You can't pick up girls like this.

JUSTIN: I... apologize for the chair.

JULIE: So, you want my number?

JUSTIN: You should stay and get your coffee. You can take it to go.

JULIE: I don't want to make things uncomfortable.

JUSTIN: Actually, my hope was that you'd serve a... buffer, like function.

JULIE: You want me to stay?

JUSTIN: Would you? Just for—

JULIE: Absolutely.

(JULIE settles back in to stay a while. A bit of an awkward silence.)

JUSTIN: So... Julie. Tell me a little bit about yourself.

---

76 Gina Gionfriddo
5.1 Cymbeline

SCENE I. Britain. The Roman camp.

Enter POSTHUMUS, with a bloody handkerchief

POSTHUMUS LEONATUS

Yea, bloody cloth, I'll keep thee, for I wish'd
Thou shouldst be colour'd thus. You married ones,
If each of you should take this course, how many
Must murder wives much better than themselves
For wrying but a little! O Pisanio!
Every good servant does not all commands:
No bond but to do just ones. Gods! if you
Should have ta'en vengeance on my faults, I never
Had lived to put on this: so had you saved
The noble Imogen to repent, and struck
Me, wretch more worth your vengeance. But, alack,
You snatch some hence for little faults; that's love,
To have them fall no more: you some permit
To second ills with ills, each elder worse,
And make them dread it, to the doers' thrift.
But Imogen is your own: do your best wills,
And make me blest to obey! I am brought hither
Among the Italian gentry, and to fight
Against my lady's kingdom: 'tis enough
That, Britain, I have kill'd thy mistress; peace!
I'll give no wound to thee. Therefore, good heavens,
Hear patiently my purpose: I'll disrobe me
Of these Italian weeds and suit myself
As does a Briton peasant: so I'll fight
Against the part I come with; so I'll die
For thee, O Imogen, even for whom my life
Is every breath a death; and thus, unknown,
Pitied nor hated, to the face of peril
Myself I'll dedicate. Let me make men know
More valour in me than my habits show.
Gods, put the strength o' the Leonati in me!
To shame the guise o' the world, I will begin
The fashion, less without and more within.

Exit
MANUFACTURED REALITY
and
FROM MANY: ONE

Cast and Crew:

Author/ Director/ Fight Choreographer/ Solo Performer: Fisher Neil
Executive/Writer Number One: Caroline King
Executive/Writer Number Two: Joshua Lucas
Executive/ Writer Number Three: Lance Harwell
Jack Caruthers: R.C. Croy
Piano: Jimmy Brimer
Stage Manager: Amanda Faye Smith
Lighting Design: Julianne Berney
Sound: Joel Ashton

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Jimmy Brimer
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Brad de Planche
Mike Ponder
Casey Sams
Justin Durham
Kristin Allard

Director’s Notes:

Manufacturing Reality was spawned in my head last spring in Dana Yeaton’s play writing class. The first draft was written as the final for that class, and has since seen several revisions. While the play is intended to make you laugh, it is not without moral intention. This play explores the questionable ethics involved in our nation’s (and others’) indulgence in Reality TV. For many of the shows, the primary action is to humiliate its contestants. I believe that in the future this will be reflected upon as both immoral and primitive, in the same way that we reflect on the Roman Empire’s indulgence in gladiator combat. We wonder how that kind of thing could have been accepted and even used as entertainment, and I think somewhere down the line others will think the same of us. Think of this play as a light hearted allusion to George Orwell’s novel 1984, or Aldous Huxley’s Brave New World, whose purpose is to beg the question: “How far will this go?” so look we can look down the path before making the mistake of following it. I have written the extreme of possibility, to show the flaws in our manufactured reality.

From Many: One is a compilation of 12 monologues, 2 songs, and one swordfight. The initial idea was to tell a cohesive story from one man’s perspective with monologues and songs from all different periods and moods. It was to have silent actors playing in some of the scenes, and more props and scenery to tell the story, but all of that has been stripped away. I realized that the story would be better told through acting than through
anything else, and after all the acting is what this part of my project is all about. The story is still there for me, and though you may not know what it’s details are, I hope you will find yourself taking this journey with me.

From Many: One, Sequence:

Eros Trilogy by Nicky Silver, Phillip
Look Back in Anger by John Osborne, Jimmy
The Last Five Years by Jason Robert Brown, Jamie
The Bear by Anton Chekhov, Smirnoff
Dione by John Gay, Lycidas
The Great Galeoto by Jose Echegaray, Ernest
’Tis Pity She’s A Whore by John Ford, Giovanni
Lady Windermere’s Fan by Oscar Wilde, Lord Darlington
Othello, by William Shakespeare, Othello
Merry Wives of Windsor by William Shakespeare, Mistress Quickly
Cymbeline by William Shakespeare, Posthumus
After Ashley by Gina Gionfriddo, Justin
Cymbeline by William Shakespeare, Posthumus
*Sword fight--self choreographed, performed with Charlie Effler
Come Away Death by Gerald Finzi
Manufacturing Reality

A short play

By Fisher Neal

413 James Ave
Knoxville, TN 37921
Afropuff25@aol.com
Cast of Characters

Jack Caruthers: A man in his early 40s.

Executive one: The chief exec. At Jack's network.

Executive two: The second in command exec.

Executive three: The junior exec.

Writer one: The head of Jack’s writing staff.

Writer two: The second in command writer.

Writer three: The junior writer.

Note: Everyone but Jack should be double cast, with each actor playing an executive and a writer with the same number. ONE or TWO may be cast as male or female, but THREE must be male.

Scene

Jack's office.

Time

Between 2000 and 2010.
Scene 1

Setting: The executive board room. There is a long table with three chairs and one chair on the opposite side and set away from the table. A large clock hangs in the air or on the wall. The execs speak in order of rank.

At Rise: The clock shows 9:29am. The three execs sit behind the table...waiting. As the clock strikes 9:30, and Jack enters.

Jack!

Jack.

Jack?

Yes?

Sit down.

Have a seat.

Make yourself at home.

JACK (sits)

What did you want to talk to me about?

Jack, we’ve got a problem.

Two

There's a slight discrepancy with-

THREE (interrupting TWO)

Your last three shows sucked.
(ONE and TWO eye THREE angrily. He broke order.)

JACK
I know they didn’t do very well but-

TWO
You see Jack, you’re just not getting the job done. We’re losing money on you buddy. If you don’t turn a major profit on your next project, we’re going to have to replace you.

ONE
You have until five o’clock this afternoon to get your proposal on my desk. That is all.

TWO
Have a good day.

THREE
Send the next guy in on your way out.

(Lights fade.)

Scene 2

Setting: JACK’S office. The stage rearranges so that now the table is Jack’s desk with one chair and three chairs sit in front of it.

At Rise: Lights dimly rise on JACK moving about his office trying to come up with something. The clock moves very, very fast towards 5:00pm. JACK’S movement should show that time is passing. The clock strikes 5. Lights up instantly.)

JACK
I need more time!

(Blackout. Spotlight on JACK.)

JACK
We’re doing two things with this show that have never been done before. First of all, this is the first reality show about the making of a reality show; really the first of its
kind. The second is that the goal of this project is to give a backstage look and preview, if you will, at the project we currently are calling the Ultimate Reality TV show. My bosses have made it clear that this is my last chance, so it is critical that we do this thing right. I’m really counting on these guys to pull through for me. They have had some major successes in the past, so I should have a lot to look forward to. If I can keep them from killing each other. If I can do that we’ll be in good shape.

(Blackout. Spotlight on WRITER TWO.)

TWO
I am really excited about this opportunity. All my life I’ve been deprived of opportunity, and now that this one has come I am going to capitalize on it! I think we’ve got a great group together that’s really talented and I don’t think there’s any question we’ll be able to create the ultimate reality TV show.

(Blackout. Spotlight on WRITER ONE.)

ONE
I am the best writer here. I think if I can push these guys to perform at my level then the job will get done. I’ll even find a way around Jack if I have to. Failure is not an option, and if something does go wrong you can bet it wasn't my fault.

(Blackout. Spotlight on WRITER THREE.)

THREE
I just hope it doesn’t take long you know. We’ve got to get in there and do our thing and, you know, prevail. Its like I really want this thing to go well but I don’t really see the point of it, but really I just hope they don’t ask me to, you know, DO anything. Sometimes I have very complicated thoughts where I get going in one direction with a particular thought and then I have a little tangent once in a while but then eventually I have a tangent that won’t make its way back to the original...thought and I...I.... What was the question?

(Blackout.)

Scene 3

Setting: Jack’s office.
At Rise: All three writers and Jack are present.

JACK
Each of you should have brought with you a minimum of five fundamental ideas for the Ultimate Reality TV Show. Each person should present his or her ideas clearly and concisely and then we will have a brainstorm. Number one, we will begin with you.

ONE
Gentlemen, I have already done your work for you.

THREE
Yes!

ONE
Look no further, because I have created the most complex and inventive show ever seen. One which will surpass all expectations and leave this nation glued to its collective television set. My creation is this: Take a dozen people carefully selected to dislike each other and make them live in a house together with nothing to do for six months.

THREE
That’s stupid! That’s the same thing as “The Real World” which has been running for years!

ONE
No its not!

THREE
Yes it is!

ONE
Explain it to him Number Two.

TWO
I think Three may be right.

ONE
But don’t you see how dramatic it could be?

(Lights cut almost to black with a spotlight on ONE. Let this be monologue mode.)

I can already tell that THREE and I are not going to get along. He’s just dumb. That’s all there is to it. He won’t listen to anything I say...
(Lights switch back to normal.)

THREE
It doesn’t matter if there’s another show just like it!

(Lights to monologue mode.)

ONE
... and Two needs to step it up. He’s got to realize that in order for us to accomplish anything, he’s got to make Three understand my ideas, and he’s just not performing...and Jack thinks he’s going to be our leader or something.

(Lights to normal.)

JACK
You weren’t supposed to create an entire show in the first place. We need fundamentals here people. What is the foundation upon which our show will stand?

TWO
I think it would be good if we humiliated people.

JACK
That’s more like it. Now why would humiliating people make a good show?

TWO
Because it's funny.

THREE
How could that be funny?

ONE
Three, have you ever ankled anyone?

THREE (thinks)
Yes.

ONE
Did you think it was funny?

THREE
Yes. (pause) oh.

JACK
Moving forward, what else?
THREE
We should make people do gross shit.

JACK
Why is that?

THREE
Or really scary shit.

JACK
Why is that?

THREE
Because it’d be cool.

JACK
Ooh, appeal to younger audiences, good.

ONE
You mean you’re going to listen to his nonsense and blow me off!

THREE
I did what he said!

(Lights to monologue mode for WRITER THREE.)

One is such an asshole. He thinks he’s better than everybody else you know. He had like all this stuff, that he thought of and he thought everybody would just love it and then he got all pissy when nobody did. Speaking of piss, I really need to hit the John. Have you ever had to fart and piss at the same time? It feels really weird but kinda cool. Its like you’ve got this pressure building up and finally it just all goes at once when you...

(Lights to normal.)

ONE
If any of you had any sense you’d have listened to me!

JACK
Now calm down!

(Lights to monologue mode for WRITER TWO.)

TWO
I think everything is just going great. Jack keeps us right on track whenever we get off topic. If I make head writer one day, I hope I'm just like him. He’s such a great guy.
(Lights to normal.)

ONE
But you’re not listening to what I was saying!

JACK
One, can it or I’m kicking you out.

ONE
Fuck you, I’ll do what I want!

JACK
Then take your chair and sit in the hall.

ONE
Are we in elementary school now?

JACK
Do you want to keep your job?

(ONE reluctantly picks up his chair and carries it out of the room.)

JACK
Ahh, peace. (Chair crashes offstage.) Lets get back to work, shall we? I think we’ve got something to work with here. We need a show that both humiliates people, and makes them do gross or very frightening activities. That can’t be too hard can it?

TWO
I don't know, where do we begin?

JACK
Good point. We'll start by making a list of as many things as we can think of. Three you go first.

THREE
Go where?

JACK
Did you hear to anything we just said?

THREE
Did I miss something?

TWO
Three, we’re trying to figure out how to make our show work. Do you have any thoughts? (Pause)
THREE
I always thought that manta rays were really cool. Their just these huge things that swim through the water all the time. You’d think they’d be dangerous with how big they are but actually they’re really calm and people pet them in the wild with ease. They just eat plankton and shit that’s floating in the water.

TWO
Three, be serious.

THREE
What do you mean?

JACK
Ahh! You guys are going nowhere!

ONE (enters)
Jack, I’ve got an idea.

JACK
Go back into the hall One.

ONE
No really, I’ve been listening through the door and I think-

JACK
I’ll count to three. One...two...

ONE (interrupting)
What if we video taped people singing to the radio in their cars? (Pause)

JACK
Is that all?

ONE
Haven’t you ever been sitting in the car and had your friend start singing at the top of his lungs in the wrong key? Its horrible! They should have to pay for what they’ve done!

TWO
We can get their friends to turn them in and let us tape them!

THREE
And then we’ll show it all over national TV!
JACK
Lord. You guys are worthless.

ONE
If the three of us agree you have to let us do it Jack, those are the rules.

JACK
Fine. Go get your chair and come back in.

(One exits then returns quickly.)

ONE
It's gone!

TWO
What is?

ONE
My chair! Someone has stolen it!

THREE
Then get another one.

ONE
Another one? There is no other chair like it in the world. That was the chair that inspired me to create “Who wants to be a Millionaire?”!

(Pause)

TWO
So it meant a lot to you?

THREE
It reminds me of when my Charlie died. He was always such a good friend, you know. I was closer to him than I have been to any woman, that’s for sure. When I was feeling awful all I had to do was just touch him and I’d feel better.

JACK
Three, are you a homosexual?

NO!

THREE
Then who is Charlie?

ONE

TWO
Leave him alone you two, he has feelings.

THREE

Charlie was my hamster.

ONE

Can we do something about my chair please?

JACK

I’m sorry Number One but you’re going to have to stand. (beat) Now this car singer thing has potential…but we need more. We need more than just humiliation. How can we inflict disgusting and horrifying content on them as well?

THREE

We just do it.

TWO

Why don’t we have a second round? The car thing can be phase one, we can use that to recruit people for the rest of the show.

THREE

And then we can have them vote each other off the show to decide who wins!

TWO

Let’s call the executives!

JACK

Wait! There’s still something missing.

ONE

I know!

TWO

Something missing?

THREE

What do you mean?

JACK

All this stuff has been done before.

ONE

What difference does that make?

JACK

If we only have more of the same, we will never have the ultimate. We have to find something worse than humiliation.
Worse than humiliation?  

Paper cuts!  

Seat Stealing.  

Electrocution.  

Torture!  

Grand Theft Office Chair!  

Farm accidents!  

A Stampede!  

What is the worst possible thing that could happen to somebody?  (Silence) 

They could die!  

That’s it!  

Of course! What is more dramatic than a show where people die!  

Nothing is.  

We should make it so that only one survives!  

I've got it boys.  

(Lights to monologue mode for JACK.)
In the days of ancient Rome, thousands of spectators would watch the Gladiators fight. At the end of every battle, they would cheer and shout whether they thought the loser should live or die. Sounds an awful lot to me like an opportunity to take TV voting to a whole new level!

(Lights to normal.)

Do you know about the Roman Gladiators?

Yes.

Of course.

That’s it!

Scene 4

Setting: The executive board room

At Rise: Execs sit behind their table as Jack enters on the chime of the clock.

Jack!

How are you?

What have you got for us?

JACK

Sirs, I am confident we have succeeded in creating the Ultimate Reality TV Show. We went through every possible avenue to find the ultimate show. What could we do that hadn’t already been done? Where does the path lead? Gentlemen, this is the end of the road. No show has ever come close to approaching this level of drama nor can they surpass it. We’ve raised the bar as high as it will go. We're going to have Roman style gladiator showdown; just like Stalone's boxing show, only this time they fight to the death. In the end, only one will survive...to live on as the ultimate champion.
Silence. The execs exchange glances.

ONE begins to clap, followed by TWO, followed by THREE. The give Jack a standing ovation and then sit.


Thank you. I knew you’d be pleased. Does this mean I can keep my job?

That’s not my job. I’ve done my job. I’m just a creator. Two things still have to happen. We’ve got to turn a profit. I assure you, you will. I’ve got to survive.

I, Jack, please. Does this mean I can turn a profit?

Well that depends.

What do you mean?

Thank you. I knew you’d be pleased. Congratulations.

You’ve outdone yourself. Well done Jack.

Well done Jack.
create.

You can’t do this. 

Why can’t we?

Because it is against the law.

You didn’t read much of your contract did you Jack?

It had 200 pages of fine print! Did you really think I was going to read every word?

You signed your life away.

It says in article 905...

...section 27...

...letter Q:

"I will not hold KBC productions liable for anything which might result in my death for the duration of my lifetime."

Such is the price of fame.

No, you can’t make me do it. I’ll break the contract.

That’s fine Jack.

We won’t try to force you into anything.

Just don’t plan on seeing your family again any time soon.
How dare you threaten my family.

ONE
I don’t remember that. Do you boys?

TWO
Nope.

THREE
Not me.

JACK
I hope you all rot in hell.

ONE
Now I don’t see any reason for you to be upset Jack. It was your idea. We’re going to make you famous.

TWO
Who cares how long life is if no one remembers you?

THREE
Besides, your family will be paid, what do we say boys, 20 million in the event of your death?

(ONE and TWO nod in agreement. JACK is overwhelmed.)

JACK
Okay, I’ll do it. Please don’t hurt my family.

(Starts to leave.)

ONE (stopping him)
There’s one more thing Jack.

TWO
Don’t forget to smile for the camera.

THREE
Send Writer One in on your way out.

(Blackout.)

Scene 5

Setting: The table and chairs are arranged to
form the boundaries of the fighting ring, leaving the downstage side free of obstruction.

At Rise: JACK is the voice of the TV Trailer for the new show.
Spotlight on JACK.

JACK

We’ve hired the best lawyers in the world and taken on the FBI, the Congress of the United States, and the Geneva Convention, and we did it all for you. We’ve created the Reality Show that tops them all. You won’t believe what happens when four people battle to the death in...GLADIATOR CHALLENGE.

(Spotlight on WRITER TWO.)

TWO

I’m really excited about the opportunity to be the Gladiator Champion. I’ve always had a low self esteem and even considered suicide at times, so when the executives asked me to do it I figured hey, I’ve got nothing to lose! If I win, I’ll be a champion and be happy the rest of my life. If I lose, it was just an easy way to end my life without going to hell because I committed suicide.

(Spotlight on WRITER ONE.)

ONE

I am the best and strongest fighter here. None of the others stand a chance. I will be the Gladiator Champion. I wouldn’t have signed up for this unless I had full confidence in my ability to win. Look out America, here I come.

(Spotlight on WRITER THREE.)

THREE

I’m ready to kick some ass boys. I’ve done my homework. I watched SPARTACUS 27 times in the last four days. I’m gonna take this place by storm. Speaking of which I saw a recent study on the affect of storms on baseball games...

(Spotlight on JACK.)

JACK

I have to say I’ve been overcome by an intense fear. I don’t want to die. I could kill a man with no problem, it’s the getting killed part that frightens me. I hope it’s
quick if it happens to me. Dear God, I hope it’s quick.

(Lights up in the arena. ONE and THREE are outside the ring watching the fight. JACK and TWO are in opposite corners holding Roman short swords. Voice Over: Ladies and Gentlemen, KBC studios is proud to bring you, for the very first time in broadcast history, live from an undisclosed location, a one on one battle to the death in the style of the Roman Gladiators! These two contestants have been paired by a lottery. In the left corner is Jack Caruthers, in the right, the man who insists he only be referred to as number two. Let the fight begin! JACK and TWO begin circling each other in the ring.)

THREE
Kick his ass Jack!

ONE
We want to see blood!

(JACK and TWO begin to fight. ONE and THREE regularly shout adlib at the combatants throughout the fight. It is a desperate and ugly struggle. JACK is finally able to disarm TWO and now holds his blade next to TWO’s chest.

VOICE OVER
Jack is the winner! Okay America, vote now! Text *Live if you want to see TWO fight again, Text *Kill if you want to see Jack finish him off. Here come the votes, our supercomputers are calculating the results. (Drumroll) America has voted for the kill!

ONE and THREE (not in unison, ad lib)
Kill! Do it! Finish him! Finish Him! Kill! Kill! Kill! Kill! America has voted for a Kill!

JACK

(Jack drives his sword into TWO’s chest, killing him. ALL and THREE cheer triumphantly.)

What have I done?

(Looks at the audience.)
Did we ever think it could come to this?

(Exits.)

THREE

What’s wrong with him?

(Blackout.)

End of Play