

# *NewsRadio*

"Review"

#301

Written by

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Directed by

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REVISED TABLE DRAFT  
August 8, 1996

**BRILLSTEIN / GREY COMMUNICATIONS**

# NewsRadio

"Review"

#301

Revised Table Draft - 8/8/96

## CAST

DAVE..... DAVE FOLEY  
JIMMY..... STEPHEN ROOT  
MATTHEW..... ANDY DICK  
LISA..... MAURA TIERNEY  
BETH..... VICKI LEWIS  
JOE..... JOE ROGAN  
CATHERINE..... KHANDI ALEXANDER  
and  
BILL..... PHIL HARTMAN

---

JOHNNY CASH..... TBA \*

COUNTERMAN..... TBA

TROY..... TBA

CHET..... TBA

PATTY..... TBA

GUY..... TBA

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## SETS

### INTERIORS

|               |     |
|---------------|-----|
| BREAK ROOM    | (D) |
| BULLPEN       | (D) |
| COFFEE SHOP   | (D) |
| DAVE'S OFFICE | (D) |
| MEN'S ROOM    | (D) |

|      |   |  |  |  |  |
|------|---|--|--|--|--|
| I/A  | <u>INT. COFFEE SHOP - MORNING (D-1)</u> (1)<br>(Matthew, Dave, Joe, Counterman)   |  |  |  |  |
| I/B  | <u>INT. BULLPEN - MORNING (D-1)</u> (6)<br>(Dave, Lisa, Bill, Catherine, Beth)<br><br><u>INT. DAVE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS</u> (9)<br>(Dave, Jimmy, Catherine, Bill)<br><br><u>INT. BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS</u> (15)<br>(Dave, Lisa, Matthew, Beth)<br><br><u>INT. DAVE'S OFFICE-SIMULTANEOUS</u> (18)<br>(Beth, Jimmy, Dave, Lisa, Catherine)<br><br><u>INT. BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS</u> (22)<br>(Bill, Dave, Matthew, Lisa, Beth)<br><br><u>INT. DAVE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS</u> (25)<br>(Dave, Matthew, Bill) |  |  |  |  |
| I/C  | <u>INT. BULLPEN-MOMENTS LATER (D-1)</u> (27)<br>(Matthew, Dave, Bill, Joe, Beth)  |  |  |  |  |
| I/D  | <u>INT. DAVE'S OFFICE - A LITTLE LATER (D-1)</u> (29)<br>(Matthew, Joe (O.C.), Dave)  |  |  |  |  |
| II/E | <u>INT COFFEE SHOP - MORNING (D-2)</u> (32)<br>(Dave, Lisa, Matthew)  |  |  |  |  |
| II/H | <u>INT. DAVE'S OFFICE - A LITTLE LATER (D-2)</u> (34)<br>(Dave, Beth, Lisa, Bill)   |  |  |  |  |
| II/J | <u>INT. COFFEE SHOP - A LITTLE LATER (D-2)</u> (38)<br>(Beth, Dave, Matthew, Troy)  |  |  |  |  |
| II/K | <u>INT. BULLPEN -SIMULTANEOUS (D-2)</u> (41)<br>(Jimmy, Lisa)<br><br><u>INT. BREAKROOM - CONTINUOUS</u> (42)<br>(Lisa, Jimmy, Chet, Patty, Johnny Cash)   |  |  |  |  |
| II/L | <u>INT. MEN'S ROOM - A LITTLE LATER (D-2)</u> (47)<br>(Dave, Bill, Jimmy)<br><br><u>INT. BULLPEN - SIMULTANEOUS</u> (49)<br>(Catherine, Johnny Cash)  |  |  |  |  |

|      |   |  |  |  |  |
|------|---|--|--|--|--|
| II/M | INT. COFFEE SHOP - 5:15PM (D-1) (51)<br>(Dave, Matthew, Lisa, Bill,<br>Catherine, Joe, Beth, Guy) |  |  |  |  |
|------|---|--|--|--|--|

Running Time 21:27

ACT ONE

SCENE A

FADE IN:

INT. COFFEE SHOP - MORNING (D-1)  
(Matthew, Dave, Joe, Counterman)

A line of people stands at a Starbucks-Type coffee counter. A "Grand Opening" banner hangs over the counter. In the middle of the line are JOE and MATTHEW. DAVE enters.

MATTHEW

(WAVES) David! David! Over here!

Matthew grabs Dave's sleeve and pulls him to his place in line.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

Come with me... (LOUD) We've been saving your place in line.

DAVE

Morning, Joe.

JOE

Dave.

MATTHEW

So how did you discover our new little secret coffee spot?

DAVE

Well, I overheard some people  
talking about it, and then I saw it  
in the lobby of our building... and  
of course, the ads on the side of  
every bus in the city... and of  
course, you called me three times  
last night to remind me that the  
grand opening was today...

The line moves forward as they talk.

JOE

This place sucks.

DAVE

I take it you didn't come here for  
the coffee.

JOE

I came to look at the espresso  
machines.

DAVE

Oh?

JOE

Buddy of mine says a lot of these  
things are made out of recycled  
steel from dismantled nuclear silos.

DAVE

Is this the same "buddy" who says  
the Zapruder film was done by Korean  
animators?

JOE

Laugh all you want. I just wouldn't  
drink any espresso here unless I was  
looking for a cheap non-surgical  
vasectomy.

A couple of people in line leave, obviously spooked by  
Joe's information.

Matthew laughs loudly; he's reading a comic strip that  
is taped to the front of the cash register.

MATTHEW

That is so funny. Have you read  
this?

DAVE/JOE

No.

MATTHEW

It is so funny. (READS IT AGAIN) Ha!

The guy in front of Matthew walks away. The COUNTERMAN  
turns to Matthew.

COUNTERMAN

What'll it be?

MATTHEW

Huh?

COUNTERMAN

What'll it be?

MATTHEW

(RE: CARTOON) Can you tell me who  
drew this?

COUNTERMAN

What?

MATTHEW

Who drew this cartoon? It is so  
funny.

COUNTERMAN

I don't know. Do you have an order--  
Matthew yells to the coffee workers in the back.

MATTHEW

Hey! Which one of you guys drew this  
cartoon with the little dog?

Dave grabs Matthew.

DAVE

(QUIETLY) None of them drew it,  
Matthew. It's a comic strip called  
"Dilbert." It's in the newspaper  
every day.

MATTHEW

You're kidding me.

DAVE

I assure you, I am not kidding you.

MATTHEW

But it's sooo--

DAVE

Funny. I know. Now just make your order  
and leave these good people in peace.

MATTHEW

Oh. Okay.

Matthew turns to the counterman.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

Do you have any fresh fruit  
smoothies?

COUNTERMAN

No. Just coffee.

MATTHEW

(TO DAVE & JOE) They don't have smoothies.

DAVE

(MOCK-SURPRISED) They don't? This is  
an outrage! I say we take our  
business elsewhere.

MATTHEW

Damn straight!

Matthew exits -- not realizing that Dave and Joe  
aren't following.

JOE

I can't believe that worked.

DAVE

Sometimes you get lucky.

CUT TO:

OPENING CREDITS

ACT ONE

SCENE B

FADE IN:

INT. BULLPEN/DAVE'S OFFICE/BULLPEN/DAVE'S  
OFFICE/BULLPEN/DAVE'S OFFICE - LATER THAT MORNING (D-1)  
(Dave, Lisa, Bill, Catherine, Beth, Jimmy, Matthew)

Dave enters, carrying his briefcase and a coffee cup from the place downstairs. LISA's at her desk, thumbing through a magazine.

DAVE

Good morning.

LISA

(LOOKING UP) Well, what a relief.

DAVE

Come again?

LISA

Matthew came up a few minutes ago,  
white as a sheet, mumbling something  
about how you and Joe had  
disappeared into thin air.

She tosses the magazine aside as Dave gives her a  
kiss.

LISA (CONT'D)

Ahh... Nothing lights me up in the morning like a good strong dose of coffee breath.

DAVE

I thought I was the only one who found that sexy.

Dave notices the magazine and picks it up, very interested.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Hey, this is the new *New York Media Guide*.

LISA

Yeah. Just as boring as last year's *New York Media Guide*.

Dave starts leafing through it -- then starts flipping through it faster and faster, obviously looking for something.

DAVE

Well, come on, how was our review?

LISA

Haven't read it.

DAVE

You're not interested in how our peers rate my first full year as news director?

LISA

It's the *New York Media Guide*.

Nobody reads it except for psychotic  
geeks who are obsessed with every  
little detail about the incestuous  
world of New York radio...

BILL has walked up.

BILL

Is that the '96-97 *New York Media  
Guide*. (GRABS IT) It is, isn't it?  
(TO ROOM) It's here, everyone! It's  
here! The alpha and the omega has  
arrived!

Bill wanders away, engrossed in the magazine.

DAVE

Is there another copy around?

LISA

Conference table.

Dave crosses eagerly to the conference table. Just as  
quickly, CATHERINE appears.

CATHERINE

Oh my God. Is that the '96-97 issue?

Catherine grabs it from Dave and walks out of the  
frame. Dave spots a copy sitting on Beth's desk.

DAVE

Can I borrow this for a second?

BETH

You don't want this one.

DAVE

You're not even reading it.

Dave grabs it from her.

BETH

No, but I am parking my gum there.

Dave hands the magazine back to Beth. The cover tears off and sticks to his hand. Dave exits into...

INT. DAVE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Dave enters to find JIMMY sitting at his desk, punching buttons on the phone.

DAVE

Mr. James? Anything wrong?

JIMMY

Your mom change her home number again?

DAVE

Why do you ask?

JIMMY

No reason. How about this review, huh?

DAVE

I'm sorry, sir -- I actually haven't had a chance to read it yet.

JIMMY

Don't worry about it -- it's not like we're in the radio business or anything.

DAVE

Believe me, I am extremely eager to read it.

JIMMY

I bet. An important critique of your first full year at the helm. Just the kind of thing that can really send a career into orbit.

DAVE

True, but I'm more interested in getting an objective opinion of our...

JIMMY

Or it can smash you on the rocks like last year's lobster pot.

DAVE

The thought had occurred to me. Which is why I'm understandably anxious...

JIMMY

Okay, okay. Read away. I won't bother ya.

A beat while Dave starts to read. Jimmy plays with some stuff on Dave's desk.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

So, you got any recent pictures of your mom?

DAVE

(DOESN'T LOOK UP) Mr. James, that is quite possibly the most distracting question I've ever heard.

JIMMY

Strike it from the record. Read on, read on -- you won't even know I'm here.

Catherine storms in, upset.

CATHERINE

Dave, what are you going to do about this review?

DAVE

I don't know, Catherine. I haven't had a chance to read it yet.

CATHERINE

Well, then read it.

DAVE

I'm trying.

Catherine grabs the magazine from his hand and points to a specific section.

CATHERINE

Here. Read this.

DAVE

(READS) "Katherine Duke is one of the best news anchors in the city, though chronically underused" -- (TO CATHERINE) I know, I agree, and I promise with time we will find ways to use you more.

CATHERINE

Yeah, I've heard that noise before. (POINTS) But what are you going to do about this? They spelled my name wrong. It's Catherine with a "C", not with a "K."

JIMMY

Really? (COMPARING) Catherine. Katherine. Catherine. Katherine. (TO CATHERINE) Yeah, I see what you mean.

DAVE

Oh, come on -- it's not such a big deal, is it? (OFF HER LOOK) Yes, of course it is.

CATHERINE

Catherine with a "C" is regal. Majestic. Melodious. Katherine with a "K" is the name of every two-bit biker chick in North Jersey.

DAVE

Yeah -- like that cheap slut  
Katharine Hepburn. (WITHOUT LOOKING  
AT HER) Please don't hit me -- I'm  
only joking.

CATHERINE

Catherine with a "C" would never  
raise her hand against a coworker.  
But Katherine with a "K"'s liable to  
snap at any time.

Catherine exits.

Bill, in a very good mood, enters, holding a copy of  
the review.

BILL

So... I guess we may safely say the  
critics have shined their rays of  
adulation upon me once again.

He shows Dave his copy of the review, pointing out a  
sentence he's highlighted.

DAVE

(READS) "Bill McNeal is adequate."

BILL

Adequate!

DAVE

(DISAPPOINTED) "Adequate"?

BILL

Yeah. (THEN) Read it again.

DAVE

"Bill McNeal is adequate." I'm  
sorry, Bill...

BILL

Sorry? Sorry that you weren't  
singled out and deemed "adequate"?

DAVE

I don't think "adequate" is the  
superlative you think it is.

BILL

I beg to differ. After all, adequacy  
is the hallmark of great journalism.

DAVE

No, it's the hallmark of adequate  
journalism.

BILL

And what is adequate journalism if  
not great journalism?

Before Dave can answer, Bill cuts him off by putting  
his finger to Dave's lips.

BILL (CONT'D)

Ah ah ah. We'll finish this later --  
after I fulfill my duties -- with my  
customary.. adequativity.

DAVE

That's not a word.

BILL

(EXITING) It is now.

Exit Bill. Dave wipes his lips. He starts to read the review again.

JIMMY

Well, Dave? Can we bust out the bubbly yet?

DAVE

Just let me finish reading it, sir.

JIMMY

Right. Sorry. (BEAT) Moment of truth, huh? Yes, sir. Is Dave working out, is he in over his head--

Dave springs up.

DAVE

Going to the breakroom, sir.

JIMMY

I'm driving you nuts, huh?

DAVE

Sure are.

Dave exits into...

INT. BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

Dave crosses toward the breakroom, reading the magazine as he does. He passes Lisa.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Read it yet?

LISA

Oh, all right. Yes, Master.

He passes Matthew's desk and exits. A big stack of *New York Daily News* is on his desk, and Matthew is cutting at them with a scissors and laughing hysterically. Beth is reading them over his shoulder and giggling.

A beat. Dave re-enters the frame and walks back to Matthew's desk.

DAVE

Matthew, what are you doing?

MATTHEW

Dilbert strips. I'm cutting them out of the newspaper.

DAVE

Why?

MATTHEW

Research. I think there's a really good story in this. I mean they're sooo funny...

BETH

They are really funny, Dave.

DAVE

Beth, don't you have some work to do?

BETH

(READING A STRIP) Did it.

MATTHEW

I feel like I've made a big discovery here, David. I mean, I've got a strong hunch that this Dilbert thing might get really popular. We could be on the ground floor of this thing.

DAVE

It's not really a discovery,  
Matthew. Millions of people have  
already discovered the magic of  
Dilbert, and enjoy it every day.

MATTHEW

Not me. I usually only read  
"Apartment 3-G."

BETH

That Margo is such a bitch...

MATTHEW

Well, I wouldn't use that word, but  
you're right.

DAVE

(TO BETH) I hardly need you  
encouraging him.

BETH

Oh! Oh! When he says that he looks  
just like Dogbert.

MATTHEW

Oh my God, he does. Say, "Hi  
Dilbert, how's Ratbert?" Say it.

BETH

Say it, Dave. Please? (OFF DAVE'S  
LOOK) Fine, I'm leaving.

Beth walks away.

MATTHEW

David, just promise you won't give  
my Dilbert story to anyone else.

DAVE

Well, I do have a lunch with Woodward  
and Bernstein later today, but I'll  
try to keep it under my hat.

MATTHEW

So I can do the story?

DAVE

No. Now, please, just clean off your  
desk and get back to work.

Dave exits towards his office. Matthew looks down at  
one of the comic strips and laughs.

MATTHEW

(CHUCKLING TO HIMSELF) Oh, what kind  
of mess has Mr. D. gotten himself  
into this time?

INT. DAVE'S OFFICE - SIMULTANEOUS

Jimmy sits at Dave's desk, talking to Beth.

BETH

(GIGGLING) And then at home, he's  
got this dog that talks to him about  
his day at work.

JIMMY

Does the dog wear glasses also?

BETH

Yes!

JIMMY

Now this is something, I have got to  
see!

BETH

(EXITING) Wait here, I'll show you!

JIMMY

Great!

Beth exits.

DAVE

You've never read Dilbert?

JIMMY

Hey, I stopped reading the funnies  
when I realized that Beetle Bailey  
was never going to actually shoot  
anybody.

DAVE

Well, I read the review.

JIMMY

It's about time. What did it say?

DAVE

You haven't read it?

JIMMY

Hey, I've been busy in here, okay?

Just summarize for me.

DAVE

It's good.

JIMMY

Yeah!

DAVE

Except for Bill being called  
adequate, it's great. It says we're  
reliable, we do a "fine job" with  
complex issues. It even says we're  
the "workhorse of New York news  
stations."

JIMMY

Thank God. The suspense was killing  
me.

Catherine and Lisa enter.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

(PROUD) Hey, ladies -- didja hear?  
We got a good review! I don't have  
to fire Dave!

LISA

The review stinks.

DAVE

Actually, I think it's very  
complimentary.

LISA

What?

DAVE

It says that we do a fine job--

LISA

Yes, it says we do a fine job. It  
calls us a "workhorse" station -- a  
workhorse -- and says that I, in  
particular, am a reliable reporter.

JIMMY

I thought that was good...

DAVE

It is. But Lisa's always fancied  
herself the bad girl of AM radio  
journalism.

LISA

Reliable's only good if you're a car  
or a flashlight. It means everything  
we do here is not great, is not  
innovative, just ... adequate.

JIMMY

Bill seems happy with adequate.

CATHERINE

Bill thinks having a bird crap on  
him is a compliment from the gods.  
Plus they spelled my name wrong.

DAVE

It's a great review. As a newsman,  
I've been striving all my life to be  
a reliable workhorse.

LISA

Okay, fine. You guys are right.  
Mediocrity is great. Now, if you'll  
excuse me, I have a very good story  
I wrote that I need to go put  
through the... mediocrifier.

DAVE

That's not a word.

LISA

Wow. No wonder you're in charge of  
the news department the critics call  
"competent."

Lisa exits.

INT. BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

Lisa enters and crosses to her desk. Bill is on the  
phone at his desk.

BILL

(TO PHONE)... It's one thing, of  
course, to know you're adequate, but  
to have a fellow member of the press  
stand up and say, "Yes! You, sir,  
are adequate" -- well, let me tell  
you, it's a very special feeling.

Lisa exits into the foyer. Dave exits his office and follows her.

DAVE

(CALLS) Lisa...

But he stops at Matthew's desk, which has "Dilbert" strips taped all over it. Matthew is nowhere in sight.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Matthew?

Matthew pops up from behind his desk, with a roll of tape in his mouth and comic strips in his hand.

MATTHEW

(THROUGH TAPE) Mm-Mmph Mm-ing Mph --

DAVE

What?

Matthew takes the tape out of his mouth.

MATTHEW

I just thought that if people in the office read these, we might be able to do a story on how "Dilbert" is affecting our workplace harmony...

As Dave speaks, he rips Dilbert strips off Matthew's desk for emphasis.

DAVE

Matthew. There will (RIP) be (RIP) no (RIP) Dilbert story. Now just put back the rainbows and unicorns you usually cover your desk with and get to work.

MATTHEW

You know, sometimes you're just like  
the boss in "Dilbert."

DAVE

Matthew, the boss in "Dilbert" is  
short, and bald, and mean, and  
stupid...

Dave starts to walk away.

MATTHEW

(UNDER HIS BREATH) Well, if the shoe  
fits--

DAVE

Just get rid of them. Now.

Lisa is back at her desk, dialing the phone. Dave  
points to the article.

DAVE (CONT'D)

If you don't like "reliable" and  
"workhorse," how about this. We're  
also "consistent."

LISA

Shh. (TO PHONE) Hello, is this Eugene  
Myer of the *New York Media Guide*? Me?  
Just call me "Miss X." And listen up,  
Eugene -- it's cretins like you that  
are destroying everything good about  
radio. You wouldn't know a great  
station if it bit you on your stupid,  
overstuffed ass.

Lisa hangs up, a slight smile on her lips. A beat.

DAVE

Funny. I thought you didn't care  
about the *Media Guide*.

LISA

You're going to tell me that was  
immature.

DAVE

No, I'm going to tell you that he  
probably has Star 69 on his phone...

LISA

What's Star Sixty --

Her phone rings.

LISA (CONT'D)

Hang on a sec. (TO PHONE) Lisa  
Miller, WNYX. (FLUSTERED) Uh... hang  
on -- I'll check. (CALLS OUT) Is  
there a "Miss X" here?

Beth walks up.

BETH

(WHISPERING) Tell him I'm not here.

INT. DAVE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Dave enters. There is a Dilbert doll sitting on his  
desk.

DAVE

(CALLING INTO BULLPEN) Matthew!

From under Dave's desk, we hear...

MATTHEW

(DOING FUNNY VOICE) Dave? It's me,  
Dilbert. Matthew wanted me to tell  
you--

DAVE

How many times do I have to tell you  
this? No. We are absolutely not--

Bill enters, sees Dave talking to Dilbert doll.

BILL

Oh, I'm sorry, I didn't know you  
were in the middle of a meeting.

Bill exits.

Matthew gets up from behind the desk.

DAVE

What's wrong with you?

Matthew closes the door.

MATTHEW

(SINCERE) David, finding Dilbert  
this morning was something of a  
revelation to me. I used to think I  
was the only one who felt threatened  
in the workplace, who was scared of  
his boss and co-workers. Now I know  
better. I am Dilbert. You are the  
mean boss. Lisa is... Dogbert or  
something... but the point is--

HARD CUT TO:

ACT ONE

SCENE C

INT. BULLPEN - MOMENTS LATER (D-1)  
(Matthew, Dave, Bill, Joe, Beth)

Dave's door flies open. Matthew comes flying out. The door slams.

MATTHEW

David, I am going to stand here  
until you read at least one--

The door opens a crack. Dave arm reaches out, holding the Dilbert doll.

DAVE (O.C.)

Matthew, this is Dilbert. Dave  
wanted me to tell you that there is  
absolutely no way--

Bill walks up.

BILL

Hey, little guy, when you and Dave  
are done with your meeting, I need  
to get in to see him.

Bill walks away. A beat. Dave exits his office,  
looking a little embarrassed.

DAVE

(TO OFFICE) I am going to go take a nice long walk to cool down. When I get back, I do not want to see a single Dilbert cartoon anywhere near here, and especially not in my office. (TO JOE) Do not pick the lock for him.

JOE

You got it.

DAVE

Do not dismantle the window.

JOE

Check.

DAVE

Do not, in any way, allow him to set foot in my office.

JOE

Roger.

BETH

Hey, is that a Dilbert doll? Can I see it?

DAVE

Just the head, actually. The other half's in the trash if you want it.

HARD CUT TO:

ACT ONE

SCENE D

INT. DAVE'S OFFICE - A LITTLE LATER (D-1)  
(Matthew, Joe (O.C.), Dave)

The door is closed, the office is empty. Suddenly, Matthew drops from the ceiling, suspended by wires, a la Tom Cruise in "Mission Impossible." He's holding a Dilbert strip in one hand, a piece of tape in the other.

MATTHEW

(LOOKING UP) Is this really how they  
did it in the movie?

JOE (O.C.)

Trust me. I saw "Mission Impossible"  
five times.

MATTHEW

"Mission Impossible?" I thought we  
were talking about "Peter Pan."

Matthew tapes the comic strip to the monitor of Dave's  
computer. He is hanging five inches above Dave's desk.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

Okay, haul me back--

The cables snap and Matthew falls face-down on the  
desk.

JOE (O.C.)

You alright?

Matthew just lies there.

MATTHEW

(WEAKLY) Yeah...

JOE (O.C.)

(LAUGHS) That was really funny...

Dave opens the door and enters. Matthew is splayed on the desk.

MATTHEW

David... have a nice walk?

DAVE

What did I say about coming into my office?

MATTHEW

You said don't pick the lock, don't go through the window, and... (TO JOE) What was the other thing?

JOE (O.C.)

Don't drag me into this.

DAVE

You'd better start explaining. Fast.

Matthew stands on the desk.

MATTHEW

Alright. Because you would not  
listen to me, because you locked me  
out, both literally and spiritually,  
I have staged a commando raid on  
your office to force you to read and  
learn.

Matthew taps the monitor of Dave's computer. Dave  
walks over, looks at the strip.

DAVE

You want me to read this?

MATTHEW

Read it or I will be forced to  
tender my resignation.

Dave takes it off the computer and rips it in half.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

Alright, then, you leave me no  
choice...I cannot continue to stay  
in such a stifling work environment.  
I quit. Good day, sir.

Matthew strides off the desk, not realizing that a  
rope is still attached to his leg. It pulls taut, and  
he takes a terrible fall.

FADE OUT

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

SCENE E

FADE IN:

INT. COFFEE SHOP - MORNING (D-2)  
(Dave, Lisa, Matthew)

Dave and Lisa stand in line at the coffee shop.

DAVE

Thanks for dinner last night.

LISA

You know me, ol' reliable.

DAVE

Would you stop sulking about it?

LISA

Who's sulking? I'm bitching. There's  
a big difference.

The people in front of them move on, and Dave and Lisa  
go to the front of the line.

DAVE

Okay, here we go--

And then he sees, behind a cash register covered with  
Dilbert comic strips, Matthew is the counterman.

MATTHEW

Good morning, sir. Would you care to  
order our Mocha Frappy Deluxe?

LISA

Matthew -- what are you doing here?

MATTHEW

I'm taking your order. What'll it be?

DAVE

Alright, you've made your point, albeit  
in perhaps the most moronic way  
possible. Now come on up to the office.

MATTHEW

I'm sorry, David, from now on the  
only place I'll be taking orders  
from you is (SLAPS REGISTER) right  
here. Now, do you want anything?  
We're very busy...

DAVE

Matthew--

MATTHEW

(LOUD) Next!

LISA

C'mon, Matthew--

MATTHEW

Next! Next! Next!

Matthew shoos them away with his yells.

CUT TO:

ACT TWO

SCENE H

INT. DAVE'S OFFICE - A LITTLE LATER (D-2)  
(Dave, Beth, Lisa, Bill)

Beth is curled up on Dave's couch, moping. Dave and Lisa enter.

DAVE

Feet off the couch.

Beth remains curled up, but lifts her feet so they're no longer touching the couch.

BETH

I can't believe he's really gone.

LISA

Matthew's not gone. He's right downstairs... working at that new coffee place.

Lisa starts laughing despite herself. Dave starts laughing too. Beth looks up; Lisa sobers immediately.

LISA (CONT'D)

(TO DAVE) This is really not a laughing matter.

BETH

Oh my God. That must be so demeaning  
-- making coffee for people all day.  
Wait a minute.

DAVE

Don't worry. I'm sure I can persuade  
him to come back.

BETH

You better persuade him to come  
back, seeing as you were the one who  
"persuaded" him to quit.

DAVE

No, I didn't. Though I played an  
active role in the development of  
this dire situation, I wasn't the  
one who threw a major-league spaz.

BETH

And what do you call ripping the  
head off a Dilbert doll?

DAVE

Executive privilege.

LISA

Look, Matthew's probably incredibly  
embarrassed about all the... "spaz  
activity" that went on. Can you find  
a way to get him back with  
humiliating him?

DAVE

Well, seeing as how he quit in a huff over a cartoon character, that will be difficult. But yes -- I'll find a way.

Bill enters.

LISA

Why don't you just agree to read his stupid comic strips and be done with it?

BILL

Is this about Spaz?

LISA

Yes.

BILL

May I make a suggestion?

DAVE

Please.

BILL

Let him sling coffee for a few more hours. He'll get bored, he'll realize he misses all of us, he'll come back on his own. And when he does come crawling back, that's when you kick him away. Those of us who are adequate don't need his type around.

DAVE

Look, I'm just gonna go back down  
and talk to Matthew in an hour or  
so.

BETH

Why don't you go now?

DAVE

Because I don't need a refill yet.

Beth exits. Bill follows.

BILL

Well, I'm off to astonish the world  
with more feats of...  
adequatiquaticism.

DAVE

Not a word.

BILL

Don't care, my friend.

DISSOLVE TO:

ACT TWO

SCENE J

INT. COFFEE SHOP - A LITTLE LATER (D-2)  
(Beth, Dave, Matthew, Troy)

Dave and Beth stand in line as Matthew waits on a customer in front of him. The cash register and counter are plastered with Dilbert cartoons.

BETH

Look at the poor guy. He looks so,  
so...

DAVE

The same...

BETH

Yeah. But I bet he's dying inside.  
Thanks to you.

Matthew finishes with the customer in front of them.  
Dave moves to the front of the line.

MATTHEW

Well, hello, good sir. How may I be  
of service to you today?

DAVE

Matthew, please come back to work.

MATTHEW

Ah, begging now, are we? Well, no thank you. Although, I have had to take a pay cut, at least now I work in a place where freedom of expression is tolerated, nay encouraged.

DAVE

Please, Matthew. I feel awful about this. And I am very, very sorry.

MATTHEW

Can I write my Dilbert story?

DAVE

I am not that sorry.

MATTHEW

Then forget it.

Matthew gestures to two beefy, punky, pierced coworkers standing behind him.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

Although I've only worked here a short time, I've already grown to love the free and open communication that exists between Troy and Hector and myself.

Matthew puts his arm around Troy.

TROY

Hey, new guy -- what did I tell you about touching me?

Matthew pulls his arm back and returns to Dave.

MATTHEW

Anyway, are you going to order  
something or what?

DAVE

Just give me a large coffee and...  
Beth? What do you want?

BETH

Do you have any fresh fruit  
smoothies?

MATTHEW

No, but I've already put up a  
petition about it in the back room.

TROY

Yeah, I tore that down. Now go mop  
the john.

Troy slaps Matthew on the back. As Matthew walks away,  
we see a napkin taped to his back which reads "SPAZ."

CUT TO:

ACT TWO

SCENE K

INT. BULLPEN/BREAKROOM - SIMULTANEOUS (D-2)

(Jimmy, Lisa, Chet, Patty, Johnny Cash)

Jimmy is standing at the door to the breakroom. Lisa walks by.

JIMMY

Oh, Lisa, there you are. Thanks for the memo.

LISA

So you think it's a good idea?

JIMMY

You want me to (READING) "buy the *New York Media Guide*, fire all the editors, and then use my enormous power to make sure none of them are ever hired again"?

LISA

I wrote that very quickly. I actually have a few more ideas, involving their families...

JIMMY

Why don't you just step in here for  
a second?

INT. BREAKROOM - CONTINUOUS

Two men and a woman are scattered around the break  
room. One of the men is hunched over in a corner,  
reading something.

LISA

What's going on?

JIMMY

You remember Chet, don't you?

LISA

I'm not sure I do.

JIMMY

Of course you do. You reviewed  
Chet's restaurant on the air a few  
years back.

LISA

(DOESN'T RECALL) I don't think...

CHET

You remember. "Cafe Homestyle?"

LISA

(REMEMBERS) Oh my god...

CHET

It's alright. Maybe my chicken was  
-- as you said -- "rubbery and  
bland" the night you came in.

LISA

I'd be happy to come back and try it  
again.

CHET

That's nice. But the restaurant  
closed within a week of your review.

LISA

I'm so sorry.

CHET

Really? I thought you'd be happy,  
considering that in your review you  
said, "I predict this restaurant  
will close within a week".

JIMMY

Alright, easy there, Chet. Now,  
Patty, here, is a curator at the  
Guggenheim.

PATTY is a middle-aged woman with a ponytail.

LISA

Oh, right -- the Chagall exhibit.

PATTY

That's right. The "uninspired,  
predictable" Chagall exhibit.

LISA

To be fair, you'll have to admit  
that it made the limitations of the  
artist's vision woefully apparent.

PATTY

Maybe you're right. Maybe I should  
have dug him out of the ground,  
brought his corpse back to life, and  
taught him to paint better. My  
mistake.

JIMMY

Okay Patty, you're scaring me a  
little bit, so let's move on. This  
gentleman, of course, needs no  
introduction.

The man in the corner rises. It's JOHNNY CASH.

LISA

Johnny Cash?

JOHNNY CASH

(RE: PAPER HE'S HOLDING) Young lady,  
did you write this?

LISA

(LOOKS) Well, yeah... but that was  
for my high school paper.

JOHNNY CASH

I was "just going through the  
motions" with "Ring of Fire?"

LISA

I'm sorry, I--

JOHNNY CASH

I always give it one hundred  
percent, especially when I sing  
"Ring of Fire." You hear what I'm  
sayin'?

LISA

I know, I was just trying to...  
(THEN) You read high school  
newspapers, and keep the bad reviews  
they give you?

JOHNNY CASH

Nah, Jimmy just gave it to me now.  
(SLAPS PAPER) That burns me up.

JIMMY

Alright, gang, your work here is  
done.

Chet and Patty exit.

JOHNNY CASH

We still on for tonight, Jimbo?

JIMMY

Got my conga drums in the car, my  
man!

Johnny exits. Jimmy turns to Lisa.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Alright, Lisa, what lessons have we  
learned today?

LISA

That holding a grudge about a bad review is about the worst thing you can do...

JIMMY

Yes, go on.

LISA

That the review we got wasn't even such a bad one...

JIMMY

Two for two. Now, let's go for the hat trick...

LISA

And...

JIMMY

C'mon, think.

LISA

That you're on a first-name basis with the man in black.

Jimmy puts his arm around Lisa.

JIMMY

Hot damn! I feel like I just deprogrammed you from a cult or something.

DISSOLVE TO:

ACT TWO

SCENE L

INT. MEN'S ROOM/BULLPEN - A LITTLE LATER (D-2)  
(Dave, Bill, Jimmy, Catherine, Johnny Cash)

Dave enters. Bill is washing his hands.

DAVE

Everything going adequately today,  
Bill?

BILL

Very adequately, sir. I'm virtually  
overflowing with adequasticism.

Bill exits. Dave shakes his head. A beat. Bill re-  
enters and closes the door.

BILL (CONT'D)

(HUSHED) Okay, look -- you think I  
don't know that "adequate" sucks? Of  
course I do. Being called "adequate" is  
like getting a C-minus in grade school.  
And I'm not used to getting C-minuses.

DAVE

Well, I can understand when you're  
used to being an A student--

BILL

I wasn't an A student. I was never  
an A student. I got straight C-  
minuses all the way -- but I never  
got used to it.

DAVE

Why didn't you just admit that it  
hurt?

BILL

I tried to talk to you about  
yesterday, but you were behind closed  
doors with your little doll friend.  
Everything else about the station is  
"reliable" and "workhorse-like" and  
I'm merely adequate?

Dave opens the door, looks outside to make sure no  
one's listening, closes the door.

DAVE

You think I was actually happy with  
"reliable"? With "workhorse"? You  
know what a workhorse is? It's a  
Budweiser Clydesdale pulling a fake  
beer truck through a state fair  
parking lot while a bunch of drunken  
yahoos throw cherry bombs at it.

BILL

(BEAT) You miss Wisconsin, don't  
you...

DAVE

That review was like a dagger  
through my heart. I just didn't want  
Mr. James to know we'd gotten a bad  
review.

A toilet flushes. Jimmy exits one of the stalls and  
crosses to wash his hands.

JIMMY

Do me a favor, fellas. The next time  
I pay off a magazine editor to give  
us a glowing review, why don't you  
two pick out the words yourself?

BILL

You bought the review?

JIMMY

I bought the magazine.

DAVE

Isn't that a conflict of interest?

JIMMY

(SARCASTICALLY) Oh yeah -- that  
never happens in the media world.  
The only mistake I made was spelling  
Catherine's name wrong, and I've  
taken care of that.

HARD CUT TO:

INT. BULLPEN - SIMULTANEOUS

Catherine sits at the conference table with Johnny  
Cash.

JOHNNY CASH

And it was supposed to be called "A  
Boy Named Lou," but someone typed it  
up wrong so it said "A Boy Named  
Sue." "Sue"? What kind of name is  
that for a boy. But that started me  
thinking and... well, I think you  
know the rest.

CATHERINE

I never thought of it that way.

JOHNNY CASH

Honey, when you've been in Folsom  
Prison, you realize spelling ain't  
nothing but a bunch of letters.

DISSOLVE TO:

ACT TWO

SCENE M

INT. COFFEE SHOP - 5:15 PM (D-2)

(Dave, Matthew, Lisa, Bill, Catherine, Joe, Beth, Guy)

Matthew is wiping the counter, no one is standing in line. The entire staff, except Jimmy, enters and approaches him.

DAVE

Matthew... we've come to ask you to  
come back to work.

MATTHEW

(DOESN'T LOOK UP) Nothing doing. I'm  
very happy here.

LISA

Please, Matthew, doesn't it mean  
anything to you that we've humbled  
ourselves by coming like this?

BILL

Oh, I didn't realize I was humbling  
myself. Goodbye.

Bill starts to walk away. Catherine grabs him.

CATHERINE

Get back here.

JOE

Dude, just come back to work.

MATTHEW

No! Not unless I can write my  
Dilbert story.

DAVE

Matthew, do you know who this is?

Dave beckons. A slightly balding guy with glasses  
walks up.

MATTHEW

I don't believe we've met.

GUY

Hi, Matthew. Scott Adams.

MATTHEW

Oh my god. The Scott Adams? The  
creator-of-Dilbert Scott Adams?

GUY

One and the same. Now Dave here has  
told me a little about the  
situation, and I have to say...  
Dilbert would never do this.

MATTHEW

He wouldn't?

GUY

No. Dilbert would never quit a job at a place where people loved him, and cared about him, and accepted him for who he is.

MATTHEW

I guess, but...

GUY

Come on, Matthew. Come back to your family. Do it for Dilbert. Do it for Dogbert. Do it for Matthewbert.

MATTHEW

Wow. Matthewbert...

Matthew thinks a beat, takes his apron off, tosses it on the ground, and vaults over the counter. The staff applauds and exits. Dave and Catherine remain.

CATHERINE

I didn't know you knew Scott Adams.

DAVE

I don't. That guy's just an out-of-work actor who lives across the hall from me.

CATHERINE

Oh. Does he know how to draw?

DAVE

No -- why?

CATHERINE

(LOOKING OUTSIDE) Because I think  
Matthew's trying to get him to draw  
a Dilbert on his chest.

Dave bolts out the door.

FADE OUT

END OF ACT TWO