

# REALITY SHOW

## -A SCREENPLAY WRITING SAMPLE-

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EXT. NETWORK HEADQUARTERS. WOLFEN BROADCASTING. HOLLYWOOD --  
VERY LATE AFTERNOON

A middle-aged female kitchen worker has come out to a dumpster in the back lot of Wolfen Broadcasting. As she steps up to the tall dumpster to throw some away some small bags of garbage, she is hit in the face with an old box of KFC. Her eyes widening, she suddenly is hit by a rain of small random elements of garbage; then, suddenly, a virtual hailstorm of garbage. Afraid, she gingerly steps on a small crate so she can peer down inside. There she sees a man in a black cape and mask, ferociously going through the garbage.

Quickly and quietly, she slams one of the half-doors down. "DeMarco" looks up. She is about to slam the other half-door. He starts to climb up a ladder. But she is faster than he is and slams it shut.

DEMARCO  
(muffled)  
No, don't do that! I'm just hungry-

The door slams down on him.

DEMARCO (CONT'D)  
I'm homeless. How could you do  
this? What kind of people...?  
(AD LIB)

INT. NETWORK HEADQUARTERS -- AFTERNOON

Joe Franks and Charlie Burril are hurriedly walking through the hallways of the Wolfen Broadcasting Cable Company. Joe is a producer and Charlie is a Network Executive in charge of New Programming.

JOE  
You know who we have to fear most?

CHARLIE  
CIA, Al Queda. Insurgents, Saudi  
Secret Police. And how about the

Department of Justice? Oh, I missed the NSA.

JOE

I disagree. It's the networks. They're the ones who'll hire the hitmen. Al Jazeera will be jealous as hell.

CHARLIE

Ooooh, I'm scared of Al Jazeera. What about these terrorists? Will we have to pay them?

JOE

Not really. They're just part of a new story. Wanted criminals- performing live on television. We need to talk to "Cops." Probably a parallel. I'll talk to their legal in the morning.

CHARLIE

Well, I think we should offer them something, retroactively.

JOE

Maybe by the time we turn them in, they'll be allowed to have lawyers. If so, we could chip into their defense fund. That would be nice. Maybe they could have their sentences commuted- to death.

CHARLIE

Very funny.

JOE

Or, if they're executed- we could offer to pay the funeral expenses. The family might not accept. In that case, they get nothing.

Security Guard walks in.

CHARLIE

(annoyed at being interrupted)

What?

SECURITY

Don Juan DeMarco's back again.

CHARLIE

Where is he?

SECURITY

He's trapped in a dumpster in Lot #4.

CHARLIE

Trapped!

SECURITY

Nellie slammed the door shut.

CHARLIE

Well, bring him in. But don't touch his mask.

INT. OFFICE. NETWORK HEADQUARTERS -- MOMENTS LATER

Charlie is at his desk, talking to Joe.

CHARLIE

I can't believe I'm considering this.

JOE

I knew you would. What choice do we have? In a week, the trucks will come in the middle of the afternoon and drag everything out of here. You'll be sitting alone in the middle of the floor. They'll probably even take your lunch.

CHARLIE

So what kind of an idiot would want to take this kind of a risk? I mean this isn't The Fear Factor or You're Fired. This person could get his head chopped off.

Nellie and Security enter with "DeMarco."

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

OK. You two can leave. Good job, Nellie. Herb, there are two Lakers tickets waiting at the receptionist. Take your wife.

Nellie and Herb leave.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Don Juan, I believe.

DEMARCO

That's right.

CHARLIE  
So, what do you have to say for  
yourself?

DEMARCO  
I was hungry.

JOE  
Ever hear of a restaurant? Oh,  
yeah, they still have supermarkets.

DEMARCO  
Very funny.

JOE  
Well.

DEMARCO  
Well, I'm busted, man. What the  
hell do you want me to do?

JOE  
Go get a job.

DEMARCO  
(looking down)  
You people are no help at all.

CHARLIE  
What- you want us to give you a job,  
too?

DEMARCO  
You did give me a job.

JOE  
Hold it! Hold everything, Charlie.  
I know who this is- despite the very  
bad upperclass Spanish accent-

DeMarco continues to stare downwards. Joe rips off his  
mask.

CHARLIE  
Mustafa!

JOE  
(matter-of-factly)  
Mustafa.  
(pause)  
Back again, huh?

MUSTAFA

Yeah.

CHARLIE

Why do you insist on hanging out here?

MUSTAFA

I don't know where to go.

CHARLIE

Look, you had a good idea and you had a bunch of funding. "Crocodile Hunter" with people instead of animals. Great idea. Why on Earth did you have to hit on the old man's chick?

MUSTAFA

I wasn't hitting on her.

CHARLIE

Sure.

MUSTAFA

Anyway, I thought she was his daughter.

JOE

You lost a great opportunity. So what? You march on.

CHARLIE

Incidentally, why the disguise?

MUSTAFA

You know- Don Juan- a little touch of irony. Besides, I was embarrassed. You know- you guys were my friends.

CHARLIE

(shaking his head)

We still are. We didn't fire you. The old man did.

MUSTAFA

You couldn't talk to him-

CHARLIE

Of course, we talked to him. Joe got down on his knees and begged him for Christ's sakes.

Joe nods.

MUSTAFA

(smiling)

You guys really are my friends!

JOE

You know something- there is something You might be able to do for us.

CHARLIE

(shaking his head)

I don't know.

MUSTAFA

(excited)

I can have my program back?

JOE

No, but this might be better. You won't have to fight upstream- against the ratings.

CHARLIE

Now, Joe, you don't know that!

JOE

But it's worth a shot. Mustafa's perfect-

CHARLIE

(shaking his head  
reluctantly))

Yeah, he is.

INT. OLD MAN'S OFFICE -- AN HOUR LATER

Joe and Charlie are talking to the Old Man, who is seated at his desk.

OLD MAN

This is the craziest thing you have ever come up with. You two ought to be committed.

JOE

We are committed. Committed to you and to the Network.

OLD MAN

Shut up!  
(pause)

The legal issues with this thing are unbelievable?

CHARLIE

I just got off the phone with Fred. He's researching it right now. He doesn't think its going to be a problem-

OLD MAN

That's ridiculous-

CHARLIE

We go in as bounty hunters. We could make something like ten million dollars. We just need the right personnel and approach. You see, we aren't actually catching them. We're just catching them in the act. We co-ordinate this with the authorities.

OLD MAN

You mean- like the CIA.

CHARLIE

Yeah.

JOE

And we've got just the person for the job.

CHARLIE

Someone you don't like.

OLD MAN

There are very few people I don't like. I have a very high toleration for human failing-

Charlie throws down Calhaven High School YearBook on table.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

What's this?

CHARLIE

It's our High School YearBook!

OLD MAN

I know you guys went to High School together. I never held it against you.

CHARLIE

Yeah, but you didn't know is that we went to high school with one of your former employees.

Flips open the High School to the middle section. Camera closes in on dark-skinned, middleeastern-looking student. Very robust. Very handsome. Wearing football Jersey.

OLD MAN  
Hmmm... this guy looks very familiar. But I can't place him.

JOE  
You fired him!

OLD MAN  
I never fired anyone so young. I tell you I don't know who he is.

CHARLIE  
Well, let me tell you about him- to rekindle the fires of memory. This guy is Turkish.

OLD MAN  
I don't know anyone who's Turkish

The Old Man recognizes him.

OLD MAN (CONT.)  
The answer is "No!" Once a guy hits on my woman, then I lose my renowned tolerance for human weakness.

JOE  
He thought she was your daughter.

OLD MAN  
That's even worse-

JOE  
Have you really thought this out, Doug! This is Mustafa- captured by terrorists, holding him hostage, with a knife, a huge knife, held right above his neck. What do you think his likelihood of getting out of this- even with a CIA sharpshooter in the next room.  
(makes a slicing motion)  
That's all it takes!

OLD MAN

I don't think his chances are all that good.

(reflecting a bit)

OK, I see your point. If you hire him, I don't have to see him, do I?

JOE

Of course not.

OLD MAN

And you'll keep away from Christie?

JOE

Unless you two want to take a vacation in Saudi Arabia...

OLD MAN

And you're sure his risks of surviving are extremely low...

JOE

Infinitesimal.

