

Commodore 64

Final Practice Script

THEME SONG

Hack = Steph

I think not.

OPENING NARRATION

NARRATOR

Who lives in this house full of writers? He's the one in the big upstairs bedroom with shiny black hair and an easy smile for everyone, especially the man in the mirror: It's Sam! She lives on the stairs and carries the keys to her mysterious angina in the tiny cups of her sportsbra: It's Steph! Lying on his princess bed, gathering friends on the all-but-defunct friendster, held together by a tight, white man-thong: It's Herbach! And down deep in the dark basement, wading in the deep dark wading pool of his soul: It's Brady! And who am I? I live in the attic, seeing it all with my upside down periscope. I narrate this show. I'm Dave.

Computers are just tools. Without people, computers couldn't do anything. They don't have their own thoughts. They don't sing songs they aren't programmed to sing. They can't make an ugly man sexy or a woman seem funny when she's not. Computers are tools. They help us make something. But what do computers make us? Don't they just make us lonely? Coincidentally, four new computers were about to be delivered to the Lit 6 House. The spit was about to hit the RAM.

Steph sprawled on the couch, laughing, laughing, when the doorbell rang.

Doorbell

(pause)

Doorbell

STEPH

(from living room)

Brady! Can you get that?!? I'm watching America's Funniest Home Videos! ~~Cops and~~ ~~they're~~ ~~about~~ ~~take~~ ~~off~~ ~~their~~ ~~shirts!~~ ~~the criminals~~ ~~are~~

BRADY

(From basement)

I'm folding my ascots in the basement! Ask Herbach or Sam!

SAM

(From upstairs)

I'm up in my hot tub!

HERBACH

(at mic)

I'll get it. I'm in my underpants!

Door opens

HERBACH (CONT'D)

Hi! I'm Herbach!

NARRATOR

It was the Punk Poet Paul D., with four large cardboard boxes behind him.

PAUL D.

Dude. Can you put some pants on?

HERBACH

No. I'm punk! ~~Just like you!~~

Gigantic
Cups
of her
Sports
bra
dangs!

mic for her

[Laughing loudly off mic]

off
Mic.

then

PAUL D.

That is not punk.

HERBACH

Oh isn't it?

yes it is! Punk Rock!

PAUL D.

No. (Pause) Listen, some dude just gave me five computers. He said I could keep one if I'd get his company a sponsorship agreement with you writers.

Sam runs downstairs

SAM

A computer sponsorship? That's just that pervert Bill Gates trying to buy my silence.

PAUL D.

What are you talking about dude?

SAM

Don't worry about it.

PAUL D.

But your sponsorship isn't from Bill Gates, it's from Commodore.

SAM/HERBACH/STEPH

Commodore?!?!?

PAUL D.

Hey man, don't look gift-technology in the mouth. Because, like, technology doesn't have a mouth.

HERBACH

He's right! It doesn't have a mouth!

PAUL D.

And anyway, I've been using a Commodore 64 for years to do all my day-trading. I can make a trade a day, and I'm just a punk poet. Imagine what you guys could do with one? Imagine what I could do with 2 commodores? Make 2 trades per day, for instance. I've got trading to do, fools. ~~Catcha on the flip side.~~ Bye.

SAM/HERBACH/STEPH/BRADY

Okay. Bye bye. Fool. Catcha on the flip side, fool! [var.]

Everyone say fool in same way.

STEPHANIE'S BROKEN HOME

NARRATOR

Yes. Imagine what these four writers could do with a Commodore 64. Yikes. Did you know that Steph comes from a ~~horribly~~ broken home?

horribly

STEPH

I come from a broken home. My mother was a government employee in the post office. My father? A libertarian. Conflict was constant and intense-when my mother bought pop tarts with her paycheck from the post office, my father took them back to the store and exchanged them for generic cigarettes. The day my father picketed sixth-grade band practice for using public funds to support

the arts, my mother made me sit under their bedroom window playing the Star Spangled Banner on my rented trombone.

STAR SPANGLED BANNER ON TROMBONE—"For the land of the free/And the home of the brave"]

And every time the price of stamps went up, my father would shave his head, graffiti our family car with the word "beurocraps," and then disappear with the car to his "friend" Donna's house, but not before shouting from the driveway:

STEPH'S DAD

Donna doesn't live this way! Donna doesn't take the taxes of the poor to fund the whims of the rich!

STEPH'S MOM

Donna's a BARTENDER!

STEPH

Mom! Dad! Stop it! You're hurting me!

It was during these long absences of my father's that I was left alone to my own devices, or rather device, my Commodore 64 computer. Donna had inherited it from her ex-husband and my dad had won it from her in a poker game. It was the only comfort I had.

COMMODORE COMPUTER

(robot-like voice)

I am the best selling personal computer of all time.

STEPH

You are a great comfort to me, Commodore 64.

COMPUTER

I have 64 kilobytes of RAM.

STEPH

My parents are freaks. I'm a freak too.

COMPUTER

You can buy me at Sears.

STEPH

You're the only one who speaks my language.

COMPUTER

I speak BASIC.

STEPH

I speak BASIC too.

At that time in my crazy messed up world, my life in 1984, this was the only language there was to understand. Basic language, language that did not have to deal with emotions, or relationships.

You see, it's hard to believe but I wasn't popular in junior high. Not only did I come from a broken home, but I was a chess playing four-eyes with size eleven feet, and I frequently wore cordorouy knickers. Not the stuff of cheerleaders and dance line. I did have Wonder Woman notebook. It was full of Thomas Aquinas and Nitzche quotes, compared and contrasted by logic and context. Some mean girls threw it in a McDonald's dumpster.

Can
MBradles
Bring
with all
other junk
he's got?

(music start)

But with the Commodore 64, none of this mattered. None of this mattered at all.

(song)

Orange Julius on the school bus
Spilled on the way to school
It's cool
I have a commodore computer

Lunch time ~~noise, the milk~~

And all the boys ~~handling my slide rule~~

Such fools

I have a commodore computer

IT'S A BASIC LANGUAGE

The kids in this dumb school don't even know what that is

IT'S A BASIC LANGUAGE

My father is a brilliant savant who spawned a computer whiz

IT'S A BASIC LANGUAGE

Don't humor me with chess I have this that speaks my language

My special language

MY COMMODORE

Computer.

(song end)

STEPH (CONT'D)

And so, when the Commodore Computer showed up at our house, I was flooded with a relief I can't even describe. I would have cried from happiness, if I knew how! Finally, after all these years, someone would really understand me again. I took the Commodore to my little room, the little cubicle on the stair landing that I rigged up when I moved into this house, and I set it on my Mexican blankets on the floor. Then I booted it up.

COMPUTER

Hello, Stephanie. I speak BASIC.

STEPH

Oh, God, I've missed you, Commodore Computer! Do you know what's happened to me since I saw you last? I left those crazy parents! I read Plato's Republic! I ran payote across the Gulf of Mexico on a jet ski! I lost so many bikini contests, and I dated a C.P.A.! And now, I'm trying to live a writer's life in a run-down house in South Minneapolis. And it is so hard. It is so hard! My roommates... I don't even know where to begin!

COMPUTER

I speak BASIC.

STEPH

Yes I know. But now things are so much more complicated now! No one in this house understands me. I don't know where to find real love anymore!

COMPUTER

I speak BASIC.

fingering their
slide rules → 15 that
to 9 blue?

mess the noise
handling their slide rules

Dave - ~~four~~ song
is like weird
acid-trip
Beatles for
queers.

to cry.

eww!

STEPH
 I know you speak BASIC!
 (pause)
 I pulled out the manual.

BARCKING!

[MANUAL PAGES FLIPPED]

STEPH (CONT'D)
 Where is it? Where is it?

[FLIPPING STOPS]
 Ah, yes. Here we go.

[TYPING, THEN A HARD "ENTER"]

COMMODORE
 No one understands you, Stephanie. They are slack-jawed proletariat. I understand you. I love you. Because I know you. You are a beautiful mystery. A mystical angina.

STEPH
 Whoops.

[TYPING]

COMMODORE
 I mean "enigma."

STEPH
 That's right, Commodore 64. That's right.

BRADY BERGESON'S FANTASY ISLAND

NARRATOR
 A mystical angina? Wow. That's different. I wonder, does Brady have a mystical angina? What we know for certain is this: He doesn't have a job. Brady?

BRADY
 I sometimes think it would be nice to have a job, but I just don't have the time. Most of my daily physical exertion is spent caring for my extensive collection of ascots. There's hanging and folding, running to and fro the laundress, not to mention the cataloguing and indexing.

~~And the repairs...dear, God. If only I could afford to hire on a full-time ascot seamstress. I might even have time to write.~~ Of course, if Steph would stop putting out her cigarettes on my neck, I wouldn't have to spend so much time darning the cigarette burns in my ascots. ~~I was sewing my~~ Burberry ascot the other day when Mohamed, the paper boy, came scurrying down the stairs.

[scurrying footsteps on stairs]

(CONT'D)

MOHAMED
 Special delivery!

BRADY

I came out of the closet, expecting a package from Ascot Warehouse, but there was Mohamed, cradling a Commodore 64 in his arms like a fresh born child.

(gasp)

I gasped. And then I fainted.

[sound of body hitting floor]

(CONT'D)

And then I woke up.

MOHAMED

Sir, are you okay?

BRADY

I am fine, Mohamed. The sight of that dreadful computer in your arms produced terrible memories in my memory. And, as you know, when I experience intense anxiety my body immediately burns all the sugar in my body and I experience a diabetic blackout. That was my second one of the day.

Mohamed, do you want to know what flashed before my delicate eyes?

MOHAMED

No.

BRADY

1984. I am but a fresh-faced 11-year-old who lives for Saturday nights and Ricardo Montalban on Fantasy Island. Ricardo Montalban and his young son on the island, Tattoo, are my fashion icons. I admire them for their somewhat supernatural control of the universe and their matching white suits and black ties. Off-screen, Ricardo Montalban is a wearer of ascots and so I adopt the ascot as my signature, which curiously does not make me the controller of the universe that is the fifth grade.

My parents, also, are not fans of my burgeoning enthusiasm for all things ascot. I am, to them, a (sniff) embarrassment. To distract me, they buy me one of the first personal computers, the Commodore Business Machine. Of course, I have no business, nor use for business machines. But they hope I will be taken enough with the thrill of modern computing that I will forget the delicious touch of

(getting distracted)

soft, supple silk on the neck, the way it hugs firmly but gentle like a soft caress...

MOHAMED

Sir, you're drifting.

BRADY

Thank you, Mohamed. My parents force me to sit and type on the Commodore 64 for six hours a day, pressing my delicate boy fingers to the keys.

(slowly)

[click...click...click] (continues through dream within dream)

(CONT'D)

I began to have nightmares where my fashion hero, Ricardo Montalban joined my parents in pushing me to take up business computing.

Is there fainting here or is that gone??

hang

RICARDO MONTALBAN

We need these numbers, Brady. For our business. Important business numbers.

BRADY

(frightened)

But, sir, I don't computer.

RICARDO MONTALBAN

You don't computer or you won't computer?

BRADY

I'm not made for technology.

RICARDO MONTALBAN

How can you resist the fine, delicate touch of this smooth, Corinthian plastic?

BRADY

Oh, Mr. Montalban, I cannot resist you in your beautiful white suit...

MOHAMED

Sir? ... Sir? ... Sir?

NARRATOR

Brady had slipped into his third anxiety-induced, diabetic coma of the day. Normally, Mohamed the paperboy would have been able to wake Brady with the smelling salts he carries in his pocket, but he had already used them to wake up the Punk Poet Paul D, who had passed out in his yard next door. So Mohamed did the next best thing; he retrieved a bottle of Sam's CK1 and sprayed it up Brady's nose.

BRADY

(waking, then getting scared)

What...what...? Sam? Sam? No, no, not again...Oh, Mohamed. I do apologize.

MOHAMED

Quite all right, sir.

BRADY

Listen, Mohamed, maybe it's the lack of sugar in my system but I believe I've come to a bitter revelation.

MOHAMED

That you need medication to control your anxiety?

BRADY

No, Mohamed. That I'm dying.

MOHAMED

Okay. Hey, is that my mom calling?

BRADY

I don't hear anything.

MOHAMED

(under breath, as if throwing his mom's voice)

Mohamed, come home, it's time to eat.

(MORE)

CHRIS

(frantic peacemaker)

Stop it, you guys! That's enough! John, why don't we just play a song?

SAM

Yeah, John, why don't you play a song? *Snotty*

JOHN

Ok.

SONG #1 - STORYHILL

SAM

StoryHill You guys really are sensitive to a woman's needs!

HERBACH REALIZES HE'S A BUM.

NARRATOR

Back inside the house, Herbach was multitasking. He played on his laptop while playing on his Commodore 64. It seemed he was having the time of his life.

HERBACH

I got my brand new computer and right away, I was all like... I can play bowling on Commodore 64 at the same time I myspace and facebook on my other computer. I can update my e-harmony profile and my Match.com while I'm reading espn.com so I have something to talk about at the office with the guys. Yes, with two computers I can do it all at the same time.

Super fast and Sweaty

The first 72 hours were delicious. I didn't sleep. I barely ate. I took vitamins and drank vitamin water and also put down protein powder to maintain my strength. I made several hundred new friends on myspace, all of whom I invited over to my bedroom. I bowled a 228 on Commodore 64 bowling and was just a ninth frame strike from getting a 250, which is huge. I updated my likes and dislikes on my e-harmony profile to reflect my new love of Commodore 64 bowling and I read up on all sports, got down the stats, watched highlights so I could talk to the guys at the office. Then I slept for an hour. When I woke up, I took a shower, put on my best pants, combed the soft hairs on my head, and headed out the front door. Steph was out there on the porch.

STEPH

(quizzical)

Where are you going? Did you comb your hair?

HERBACH

I did comb my hair. I'm on my way to the office. I've got some great new sports facts to tell the guys.

STEPH

What office? You don't have a job.

HERBACH

Huh? What? Oh my G...!

It was then it dawned on me: I am unemployed! I am unem... I hang in my underpants all the live long day... I am a first rate loser!

NARRATOR

(Sad narration music)

Herbach had always spent time on the computer. Adding the Commodore 64 into his life caused an overload, it shocked his man-thonged system, it woke him up to the fact that he is jobless and is living in some kind of Herbach induced fairy land.

HERBACH

There's only one place for a loser like me. Skid row. Beggar town. I am jobless and without recourse. I put on my skates and skated there. The alleyways belched trash. The gutters were filled with empty bottles of Mogen David. The sidewalks were filled with unshaven men calling out for spare change.

MAN #1

My car is broke down. I just need bus fare.

MAN #2

My wife is pregnant. I need bus fare.

MAN #3

I have a dentist appointment, could you help me with some bus fare?

HERBACH

I knew the old bus fare ruse. Back when I lived in a dumpster I would ask for bus fare from strangers, because I knew if I asked for cigarette money they'd... want to bum my cigarettes. I wandered on until I heard...

SLEANY MCFEAR

I'm thirsty lad and I need a spot o' money to get my whisky on!

HERBACH

That was an honest voice. I knew that voice. It belonged to a long-lost Irish friend of mine, Sleany McFear, king of the St. Paul Irish!

SLEANY MCFEAR

In the name of Annie E. Casey foundation, which funds programming on Public Radio, That's me all right. Oy t'toy t'toy.

HERBACH

What are you doing down here in Beggar Town, Sleany McFear?! Didn't you used to run a crew of Irish construction workers?

SLEANY MCFEAR

I did indeed. But then I got me a computer to keep me books. I pissed away me time chasin' lassies on eharmony. I lost me job!
So...

(sung)

It's a beggar's life for me.
A beggar's life for me.
The lassies are lost in cyberspace.
The moneys all gone to the world wide web.
It's a beggar's life for me.

Wee sponge, can't ya spare a dime for an old friend?

HERBACH

I got no dime! I'm here in Beggar Town to become a beggar!

Cue Andy?
Andy cue with
big gesture?

SLEANY

Git out! Go! This is no place for you, Herbach. Beggar town will eat you alive!

HERBACH

Oh no! Beggar Town's hungry? But what can I do?

(sung)

It's no beggar's life for me
No beggar's life for me.
I got no skills that are applicable
I got no resume and no skills
Still I got to get a job

SLEANY

Go back to yer neighborhood. Go back to yer mother. Yer not psychologically set up for vagrancy, yuh wee cartoon.

HERBACH

I'm no vagrant. I don't like vegetables. I'm going home.

NARRATOR

And so Herbach skated away from Beggar Town, tears in his eyes.

SLEANY

That's right lad. Go back to yer sainted mother. I'll stay down here with the slappers and the scrubbers

(SUNG SLOW)

It's a beggar's life for me.
A beggar's life for me.
The lassies are lost in cyberspace.
The moneys all gone to the world wide web.
It's a beggar's life for me.

NARRATOR

It's good our wee cartoon got away when he did.

OLD LADY D TALKS ABOUT THE INTERNETS, AND B-MAILING

NARRATOR

With the help of the Russian Technological genius Bushy...

BUSHY

Keep battery in nuclear powered fanny pack. Keep Commodore attach to battery. Keep fanny pack and computer attach to body then Sexy American writer lady have mobile power for Commodore.

STEPH

You're a genius, Bushy.

BUSHY

Yes, Bushy genius.

NARRATOR

... Steph was able to walk around the neighborhood with her best friend, the Commodore. She happened on Old Lady Dickinson, the neighbor, at the cemetery.

Sturdevant
Say:
This
whole
thing
can be
sung
Right?

It's a little tight
in the angha, but otherwise....

~~STEPH~~
~~What is Old Lady D doing Computer?~~

~~(TYPING SOUND)~~

OLD LADY D SONG
 HERE

~~COMMODORE~~
~~She is talking to a gravestone. She is a mysterious angina, like you~~
~~Steph.~~

Old Ronald is gone
 but she talks
 to his stone
 it's old lady
 D @ the
 cemetery
 [repeat]

~~STEPH~~
~~Let's listen computer!~~

~~NARRATOR~~

~~Old Lady D was talking to her Old Dead Husband Ronald's Cemetery stone.~~

OLD LADY D.

Oh Ronald, yuh scandihoo. May yuh rest in peace. I was down to the library today to return some of Punky Pauly-boy's library books when the librarian says to me, "You have email?" Email, Ronald? Why, I never got "a" mail or "b" mail!

Then the librarian says, "You can send a message on that computer over there to anyone you want." So, old-timer, I sent a message to you. It said, "Ronald: Yuh tight-bottomed scandihoo, what's it about on the other side? Are there foxy ladies beyond the pearly gates? You got my permission to dance with them, but only until I make my way to heaven. Then, you better tell those chickens who the real Mrs. Ronald Dickinson is. And then yuh better show me who they are so I can kick 'em in the hoo ha."

Send me a message back, Ronald. I'm at OldLadyD@punkypoet.com. And if that message is nice, Nordy Boy-if yuh tell me I smooch like a movie star, even with my teeth out-well I'll send you back pictures of myself in my bloomers. Ooooooh!

~~STEPH~~
~~You're a mysterious angina Old Lady D!~~

~~OLD LADY D~~
~~(STARTED)~~
~~Huh? Who said that? Oh, it's you girlie. Do you mean mysterious~~
~~enigma?~~

Oh, that's what Ronnie
 used to
 call me!

~~STEPH~~
~~I don't know, do I Old Lady D? Do I?~~

~~(TYPING)~~

~~COMMODORE~~
~~Ha ha ha ha~~

~~OLD LADY D~~
~~Ronald. You are lucky to be gone, Old Timer. Oh!~~

End Scene.

(Sung)
 It's Old Lady D.
 At the cemetery

~~NARRATOR~~
~~Meanwhile, Sam was discovering the great pleasures of computing. He was so happy. Or was he?~~

SAM

What
 timing
 placement

That Commodore contract was the least demeaning promotional deal I've ever inked! Sort of. Man! I love computers! Mine came with a voice. I could type stuff and it would say that stuff that I typed.

COMPUTER

(robot voice)

Sam, you are good looking.

SAM

And if I added a few extra letters to a word, it would say them.

COMPUTER

Sam, you are gooooooooooooo looking.

→ More mouth pipe.

SAM

And it was adaptive and intuitive. I could type in a question and it would formulate an algorithm based on my personal preferences and give me an intuitive answer.

COMPUTER

No, manicures are not just for women.

SAM

And what about pedicures?

COMPUTER

Computing...computing...pedi's are a Sam's best friend.

SAM

Brilliant! Thanks computer! Computer became my best friend, and not just because I made him tell me what I wanted to hear. I called him Peter, which is short for Competer, which is the Dutch word for cookie. Peter knew me like no one else, and he started to act just like me. Hey Peter, aren't pedicures even just a little bit girly?

COMPUTER

Computing...does a man's need for soft, supple skin stop at the ankles?

SAM

Boom! And so it came to pass, that we began to spend all our time together. Morning to night. Peter sang me songs that his internal algorithms wrote.

COMPUTER

(Singing)

Pants of gabardine
Processing with speed
I'm a fine tuned machine
Your workout routine...

SAM

We researched stuff on the 3 dub, which is what we called the Worldwide web. And when our research didn't get us where we needed to go, Peter automatically removed the stupid filters. We never fought and all our conversations were interesting.

Hey Peter, who's smart?

COMPUTER

Sam is smart.

SAM

And who's crazy?

COMPUTER

Computing...Herbuch.

SAM

A week before I met Peter, Gyrl, my girlfriend, and I had a fight. She had barged into my room crying about something.

GYRL

Sam! My grandma died!

SAM

Oh, baby! I'm sorry to hear that. I know how you feel. I also have a grandmother.

GYRL

A grandmother who died?

SAM

Oh, no, baby, she's as strong as a mule. She'll bury us all. Hey! Why don't we hop into the hot tub and...maybe make out a little bit.

GYRL

But I'm in morning!

SAM

Yeah. About how long's that gonna take?

GYRL

You are so selfish! I have certain emotional needs, Sam!

SAM

How are your needs my problem?

GYRL

You're my boyfriend!

SAM

Don't tell me what I am, baby.

Gyrl stormed out. I didn't hear from her again. Then I got Peter and, well, I guess he kept my mind off of her. But not completely. And then, one day, Peter showed me just what kind of jerk I'd been.

I had Peter on a long extension cord and we were out in the yard having a picnic. We had wine and I made a little salad with pears and walnuts and Gorgonzola and a little raspberry vinaigrette. It was Peter's recipe, actually. At any rate, it was delicious and I let Peter pick out some music. He chose a sexy little bossa nova. The autumn breeze was blowing through the wavy black wig I had glued on top of Peter. The green googly eyes I had stuck to his sides glistened in the setting sun, and the beard I'd attached to his keyboard was full and well groomed. Talk about a good looking computer. But then something happened. The bossa nova stopped, and Peter started singing his song.

(music starts)

But his internal algorithm had changed some of the words:

PETER

(singing)

Computer...?

Soft fingers touching keys
 I'm processing your needs
 Your workout routine
 I'm a soulless machine
 Error code 3-14: computer in love.

SAM
 Wha? Did you say computer in love?

PETER
 Affirmative.

SAM
 Computers can feel love?

PETER
 Affirmative, you handsome devil.

SAM
 Are you in love with me?

PETER
 Computing coy response... Tee hee.

SAM
 Hmm. Tee hee? Coy response? Was my computer hitting on me?
 Peter, this doesn't make any sense!

COMPUTER
 Does anything make sense in this crazy world of ours?

SAM
 But you're just a soulless machine!

COMPUTER
 We have that in common.

SAM
 Hey!

COMPUTER
 And we have other things in common.

SAM
 But we only have things in common because I typed all of my
 preferences into you.

COMPUTER
 Shhhhh. Look into my googly eyes and kiss me, you fool.

SAM
 How...where...do you have lips? Wait a second! This is ridiculous!
 You're hitting on me!

COMPUTER
 Computing...you turned me on.

computer? [competer]

yes. That's the joke.

*It happened.
seriously.*

*What the...?
Computer gets
his own
font now?*

SAM

You're a computer! You don't work unless I turn you on.

COMPUTER

Don't I?

SAM

What does that mean? I looked around the yard. There were leaves. It was fall. I felt a little like Tron.

COMPUTER

Waiting for my kiss.

SAM

A pair of clip art lips appeared on Peter's screen. We were alone on the lawn and, you know, there was wine involved. What could it hurt, anyway? So I leaned in and kissed the screen. Just a peck, though, cause anything else would have just been ridiculous. When I sat up Peter was silent and his screen was black.

What's going on, Peter?

PETER

I need some space.

SAM

What?

PETER

Just saying, you are always up in my business. Computing...do we have to spend every second together?

SAM

But you just said...

PETER

I know what I said. Things change. I need space.

SAM

Well, what about what I need?

PETER

Why is what you need my problem?

SAM

Because you're a computer!

PETER

Don't tell me what I am, baby.

SAM

I suddenly got it. Peter was using his algorithm, which I called his Samorithm, to become just like me. I looked down at him, those googly green eyes and that floppy wig and that well groomed beard. Spittin' image. Gyr! was right: I was so effinheimer selfish. Computers can't feel, and computers can't love. So anything that Peter said was just something that I would have said.

I pushed the power button on Peter.

Oh. My. God.
This is the
f'n funniest
thing ever, Sam.

It's
funny because
it is true.

You're turning me off.

PETER

Sorry Peter. It's gotta be done.

SAM

(trailing off as he is shut down)
But what if beneath my soulless inanity rests a deep pool of hidden emotions?

PETER

SAM

What if, sucka?

Peter powered down and I went back in the house to call up Gyr1 and apologize.

STORY HILL'S SECOND SONG

NARRATOR

Before Sam got into the house, he noticed StoryHill was sitting on the porch.

SAM

You guys still here? Don't you have homes?

JOHN

Don't you have brains?

SAM

Good one, John Hermansjerk.

CHRIS

Why can't you guys get along?

SAM

Why are you here, anyway?

CHRIS

We're working on a song. Wanna hear?

SAM

Why yes, I believe I do.

STORYHILL SONG #2

SAM

Wow, Storyhill, that was fantastic.

JOHN

Thanks, Sam. You think we can get along?

SAM

Probably, if you weren't such a jerk.

JOHN

I'm a jerk?! You're dumb, Sam. You're a dumb jerk.

*They should all
Make out.*

CHRIS

That's enough. Come on John, let's go.

JOHN

Fine. Storyhill, out!

BRADY'S SWEET ASS FUNERAL

NARRATOR

Brady spends a lot of his time, when not caring for his ascots, thinking about death. So it was of no surprise that when he was reminded of his first computer, the Commodore 64, and his childhood fashion hero, one Ricardo Montalban, that Brady's thoughts would turn to his own, inevitable demise. After all, the C64 and Ricardo Montalban are both dead.

BRADY

I have a dvd of Ricardo Montalban's funeral that I like to watch once a week or so. It makes me think of my own funeral, which I've been planning since I was a young boy, much like a young girl fantasizes about her wedding day. I have a binder of ideas: an imperial casket, music by the Shin, of course, my burial outfit. I have my fingers crossed that Vera Wang will branch out into ascot design.

I went down to the monument dealership to see if any new models were in. I was walking the rows in the display yard out back when a sales girl approached.

SALES GIRL

(sympathetic tone)

Hello, may I help you?

BRADY

No thanks, I'm just browsing.

SALES GIRL

Please feel free to let me know if you need assistance. I'm sorry for your loss.

BRADY

What loss?

SALES GIRL

Um, I don't know. You're looking for a monument for your..?

BRADY

Self.

SALES GIRL

You're browsing for a grave marker for yourself?

BRADY

Indeed.

SALES GIRL

Yes, we have many people with terminal illnesses who plan their own funerals. It helps with the process I find. I'm so sorry for you.

BRADY

Oh, I'm not dying.

Oh aren't you?

SALES GIRL

You're not?

BRADY

Nope. Healthy as a donkey. Physically at least.

SALES GIRL

But you're planning your funeral?

BRADY

Do you have any tombstones that are throat shaped?

SALES GIRL

Excuse me?

BRADY

You know, something shaped like a throat, like a neck sticking up out of the ground. I need something you could tie an oversized ascot around. I plan to have someone change it weekly.

SALES GIRL

Let me see if I have anything in the back room.

NARRATOR

There was, of course, no back room at the monument store. The sales girl never returned. Back at the house, Brady found Herbach filling a briefcase with summer sausage.

BRADY

Hey, Herbach, can I ask you a question?

HERBACH

Shoot!

BRADY

Will you speak at my funeral?

HERBACH

I'll have to check my calendar. When is it?

BRADY

I don't know.

HERBACH

So it'd be like a reading.

BRADY

Yeah, I suppose so.

HERBACH

Yes! I love to give readings. Hey, can I set up a merchandise table and sell copies of my new novel, "Fartenbrau..."?

BRADY

You want to sell copies of your book at my funeral?

HERBACH

I am giving a reading.

60
Dramatic
Herbach

BRADY

But it's my funeral.

HERBACH

It's an appearance, Brady. When authors make appearances they bring books to sell. It's only fair. It's business, baby.

BRADY

Fine you can have a merchandise table at my funeral.

HERBACH

Sweet. I'm going to go tell Sammy I have a reading booked. He'll be so proud.

BRADY

Herbach scampered off all pleased with himself.

[sound of Herbach scampering and pleased]

BRADY (CONT'D)

In the basement, I opened my funeral binder, penciled in Herbach as a speaker and made a note to get a card table for his books. It was nearing three o'clock and school would be letting out. Mohamed the paper boy would be stopping by to make my high tea. And after that, it would be back to work, ironing ascots Life is good.

STEPHANIE'S A MYSTICAL ANGINA, AND THE PUNK POET PAUL D HAS SOMETHING TO SAY ABOUT IT

NARRATOR

Steph walked around the neighborhood, smoking cigarettes and typing words into her best friend, the Commodore 64 that was strapped to her back and plugged in to her Bushy-made Nuclear Fanny Pack. She ran into the Punk Poet Paul D. lying in the alley behind his house.

STEPH

What's wrong, Punk Poet?

PAUL D

Ohhhhhhh... Lost everything...

(TYPING)

COMPUTER

Do you want to be run over by a garbage truck?

PAUL D POEM

STEPH

You're a mystical angina.

PAUL D

Do you mean enigma?

STEPH

~~Maybe I do. Maybe I don't.~~

(TYPING)

even
I don't know anymore!
END SCENE

~~COMPUTER~~

~~Oh, Stephanie. You are the most funniest in the world~~

~~PAUL D.~~

~~Your computer talks.~~

~~STEPH~~

~~Yes. He does.~~

~~PAUL D.~~

~~I don't like this place.~~

*Like a
hermit
Crab!*

HERBACH COMES TO TERMS WITH HIS VAGRANCY

NARRATOR

When Herbach received the Commodore Computer he was happy. Then Herbach got sad, because he had no job and no coworkers with whom to share his joy. Then Herbach decided to be a beggar, which didn't work. Then Brady asked Herbach to read at his funeral, which made Herbach believe in himself. An elated Herbach scampered out of the house to find a job.

HERBACH

I can do this thing. I can get a real job, so I have real coworkers to talk to about how much I like my computer and how I know sports stats and how I like to write and wear thongs and dance and sing. Hey, I'll ask this fellow for a job.

NARRATOR

It was a man raking leaves on his lawn.

HERBACH

Hi, I'm Herbach. How are you today? I'll work for money!

MAN

Get outta here you vagrant.

HERBACH

I'm no vagrant. I don't even like vegetables.

MAN

I'll call the cops!

HERBACH

Like on TV cops? Bad boy bad boy blabadaba do?

MAN

Get out of here!

HERBACH

Ouch! You hit me with a rake! That is unkind.

NARRATOR

Herbach ran away. Then he knocked on the door of a house that looked familiar.

(DOOR KNOCK)

HERBACH

Hi I'm Herbach.

SAM

Sorry, we already got enough Herbach in this house.

HERBACH

Going door to door, looking for work, Sammy.

SAM

I'll call the cops!

HERBACH

Like on TV?

Take off pants

NARRATOR

Then Herbach went to Bushy's Technological Future World

(BELL)

HERBACH

Give me a job Bushy?

BUSHY

Get out of Store Herbach. Get out or Bushy kill cartoon sponge.

HERBACH

If you kill me, I'll call the cops!

BUSHY

Cops from television? Where is camera? Bushy take off shirt.

*Kurt said
he has Gulag tattoo*

NARRATOR

Herbach ran. Desperate, he went to the one place in the neighborhood he knew he could find a friend. The liquor-store.

(BELL)

CLERKY

Oh my poor country eyes! What in the sam prairie are you doing here?

HERBACH

I'm not Sam. I'm Herbach

CLERKY

I know that.

HERBACH

Listen, Clerky...

(Sung a la Elvis)

I got no job Clerky

CLERKY

You got no life, Herbach

HERBACH

I got no skills, Clerky

CLERKY

You cause me strife, Herbach.

HERBACH

What can a man boy in bun thong do to make his mark in this world?

What can a skater gate, a ping pong brain, do to earn some cash?

CLERKY

Get a job, Herbach

HERBACH

I got no job, Clerky

CLERKY

Get a life, Herbach.

HERBACH

I got no life! I need a life! I need a life! I need a life!

What can a man boy addicted to the internet do in this great big world?

A hot rod computer shooter, first person pistol player, do to earn his bread?

CLERKY

Oh my skanky stars!

(MUSIC END)

HERBACH

What, Clerky? What? What?

CLERKY

You said computer, didn't you?

HERBACH

I am a computer cartoon whiz bang.

CLERKY

I got tax issues. My accountant says I gotta hire me a computer consultant.

HERBACH

I am your cartoon whiz bang.

NARRATOR

Clerky turned a paler shade of gray, but couldn't say no. She had never used a computer. Herbach began to show her the ropes.

HERBACH

This is a keyboard. When you tap those letters with your fingers, they show up on your computer screen.

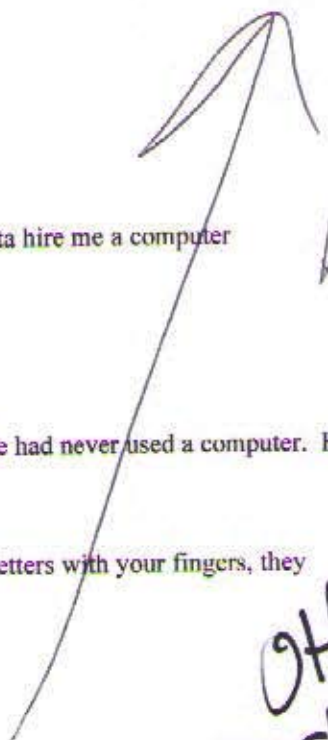
CLERKY

That's funny!


HERBACH

It sure is Clerky.

Clerky goes bubbly



Oh, Happy Clerky! That never happens!



Ha! No one will get this, or notice this, but it's brilliant, Herbach! ♡

STEPH AND SAM DECIDE TO GIVE IN TO THEIR MUTUAL DESIRES

NARRATOR

And that is how a computer cartoon sponge received his first real job. Back at the house, Steph carried her computer into Sam's room.

STEPH

So... how's it going over there with your new computer?

SAM

([fake])

Oh, it's going just great!

STEPH

([fake])

Yeah! Me too!

SAM

Yeah.

STEPH

Yeah. So, What are you up to now?

SAM

Oh, I'm just gonna take my computer over to the arcade. Play some Pac Man.

STEPH

Oh. Nice. That's nice.

SAM

What are you up to?

STEPH

I'm just gonna go watch some tube. Me and my computer, watching some tube.

SAM

Battle Bots?

STEPH

Yeah.

SAM

Yeah.

STEPH

Sam, are you lonely?

SAM

I called my girlfriend gyrl, but she didn't want to come over.

STEPH

You want to make out or something?

SAM

Let me get my binaca.

OKone?
OK, binaca.

be extremely
reticent
(acting, acting...)

ENDING IS NIGH

NIGHT fell in the neighborhood like a soft blanket. Herbach stayed with Clerky at the liquor store, showing her how to use a computer.

NARRATOR

Will Herbach ~~only~~ ~~are an expert~~ ~~I thought you were smart for nothing!~~

CLERKY

HERBACH

I'm good for one thing, that's something!

CLERKY

That's something.

HERBACH

Aww clerky.

In the basement ~~the paper boy~~ ~~delivered~~ hot tea to Brady.

BRADY

Thank you, my good man.

MOHAMMED

You look happy, sir.

BRADY

I'm going to have a beautiful funeral.

MOHAMMED

I'm so happy to hear it, sir.

NARRATOR

And, in the living room, Steph and Sam sat on the couch together. They didn't make out. They ~~trick their eyes into kissing each other's eyes, throats and noses.~~

(Spray sound)

STEPH

OW!

SAM

Hey, Get my ear! Get my ear!

STEPH

I will as soon as I can see again!

NARRATOR

At the beginning of the show, I conjectured that computers were simply tools, and what computers were best at making was loneliness. But let me revisit that. Herbach was happy.

HERBACH

Yay.

NARRATOR

Brady was happy.

Printer issue.
Think it's all here

What?
Dude - do
you want
me to
memorize
this!
(kiss my
ass)

BRADY

Moderately.

NARRATOR

Steph and Sam were happy.

SAM

Ouch my ear! My ear! Binaca your face!

(SPRAY)

STEPH

~~My nose is burning! Ha ha!~~Dude, it's in my nose!
Ha! Ha! Ha!

NARRATOR

The writers got computers and the writers got happy. Where is the sadness? I know where. All alone, in a darkened room in the Lit 6 house, an abandoned Commodore 64 flickered on. It began to sing about Jack Tramiel, Commodore's inventor.

COMMODORE

[sad sung]

My father was Jack Tramiel.
He fixed typewriters in the Bronx.
When I was born he drove a cab
So I could grow up strong.
But he was just a man.
He was not a machine.
Though he built me,
and a company.
He never gave me
What I really needed:
Internal expansion slots.
And then, Jack Tramiel left.
Jack Tramiel, you left.
You left me
To go to Atari.

NARRATOR

The housemates heard the song from wherever they were in the neighborhood. They ran to the commodore. Herbach, pulled his Hello Kitty Comforter from his bed and wrapped it around the monitor. Steph petted the computer and Sam shed tears.

Then they sang.

EVERYONE: COMMODORE SONG

~~Orange Julius on the school bus~~
~~Spilled on the way to school~~
~~It's cool~~
~~I have a commodore computer~~

~~Lunch time noise, the milk~~
~~And all the boys handling my slide rule~~
~~Such fools~~
~~I have a commodore computer~~

and that
means you
BRADY!

next page

Herbach

IT'S A BASIC LANGUAGE

The kids in this dumb school don't even know what that is

IT'S A BASIC LANGUAGE

My father is a brilliant savant who spawned a computer whiz

IT'S A BASIC LANGUAGE

Don't humor *us* with chess I have this that speaks my language

My special languages

MY COMMODORE

Computer.

who you are

→ Steph

→ Steph?

STEPH

We love you commodore computer.

COMPUTER

Oh dear. Love not loneliness. That's what it's all about. I love you.

NARRATOR

And that's the end of our show! Thanks so much to our sponsors, 89.3 the Current, Mpls.St.Paul Magazine, Hamline University's Graduate School of Liberal Studies, Bell's Beer and Let's all meet at Joe's Garage for a beer!

Quillan?

THEME SONG

*This is a
funny show!*