

Herbach  
Blank = Steph



Season 5, Episode 5

11.10.07

"Hart to Hart... of Darkness"

Live from the Theatre at the Woman's Club

Featuring musical guest Mary and JG Everest

Theme Song

OPENING

NARRATOR

Who lives in this house full of writers? He's a self-made millionaire, if you're counting long eye-lashes and not dollars. He's Sam! And oh, she's gorgeous. This is one lady who knows how to take care of herself: She's Steph! Although he isn't, he could be my boss, with his naked maniac dreams and his enthusiasm for organizing military marches: He's Herbach. And you want the low down, the deep down, the trembling and the sad? He's quite a guy, a bald guy: He's Brady. And by the way, I live in the attic. I moved into this house a long time ago. I see everything. I hear everything. I smell everything. I narrate this show. I'm Dave. I don't care for these writers, but I should take care of them. Because when they met... it was murder!

HERBACH

(VOICE DROPPING INTO BRANDO)

Hi, I'm Herbach! In Minnesota, getting back to one's roots means traveling north, traveling up the river to where the tree stands and meadows stretch for miles and miles. The northwoods are also filled with swarming black flies and the smell of organic decay, animal and vegetable. It is time to go up that river. The horror. Up... Up... Up... Into the Hart to Hart of Darkness!

(Building music)

(SUNG)

Why is it that human kind has a need to look behind at the bones and the tree stands where we've been

All the most modern of people look out from under the shadow of the steeple and try to find the meaning in the meadows

Romantics and Nazis gave themselves to nature myths and so do red neck hunters in their orange hats

Hobbes said natural is war of all against all

Nature to me is water skiing, water skiing,

Playing volleyball on the beach

And eating brats

HERBACH IS NEARLY RABID

HERBACH

I do not feel myself, of late. The world is plastic and I am organic. I am Herbach. Tiny plants die and rot and turn to soil. Barbie dolls live forever in the landfills. Who is Herbach in this world? ~~Soil, earth.~~

And so it came to pass that I received an invitation from the sibling musicians Mary and James Everest. I was meditating in the yard when they approached.

MARY E

Herbach. My brother wants you to go camping up north with us.

JAMES

Although we're a little... freaked about how you run around naked all the time... We think you'd be an enjoyable camping partner. We think you'd really like the youth camp we're going to.

MARY E

Uh yeah, we're made really uncomfortable by your nudity...

Damn straight!

a la Hart to Hart

Herbach stand and Stare.

Brando as squirrel

Make up own line



JAMES

We think you're fun.

MARY

James needs a friend.

(Male)(boy)

HERBACH

Really? You want to take Herbach away from the plastic city?

MARY E

What's wrong with your voice?

JAMES

Leave him alone, Mary. Yeah, Herbach... Fall, leaves changing, and with global warming, chances are we'll get to do a little inner tubing. I love to float on country rivers.

HERBACH

At first I was intrigued by this venture, then James Everest said Inner Tubing. I stood up and shouted: Inner tubing? ~~Should~~ rubber tire intestine man made trash. No! No floating. No lite beer and backwards baseball caps, Everests! No floating in filth.

MARY E

Filth? God, you're a freak, Herbach. I told you we shouldn't ask him, James.

JAMES

But... I want a little freak in my life.

HERBACH

I will not inner tube! No rural streams filled with the decaying fecal matter of genetically altered cattles.

MARY E

Suit yourself, Herbach.

JAMES

I'm so sad.

Say if James.

HERBACH

Had the Everests said we'd build a raft of water reeds and sunflower stalks, I'd have said yes. But I cannot go to the Northland ~~and bring~~ my plastic disease with me. What would we read in the car? ~~People magazine and~~ dirty catalogs from Abercrombie and Fitch? ~~The~~ the northland is pristine, primeval, primordial and it is not to be inner tubed upon. ~~Rubber.~~

But before I lay my ~~weary~~ head to rest, Samuel came into my room and said...

SAM

You know who Robert Wagner is, don'tcha?

HERBACH

Perhaps no.

SAM

You do, too. He starred in the hit television series Hart to Hart. He played Number Two in the Austin Powers series. And he was in...he's a star. And you owe him \$10,000.

more  
maybe?

## HERBACH

Plastic-faced Robert Wagner with his diamond promises. I had to run. And so, as the dawn uncurled its pink fingers in the 5am sky, I stole down the stairs into the kitchen and there shotgunned (GLUGGING SOUNDS) a six pack of premium beer, which grew my courage and rotted in my stomach and then I fled to the Everests home and stow away, stretched out in the back of their old station wagon, which was already packed full of tents and inner tubes and a cooler of beer, (CAR SOUND) which I drank (GLUGGING) on the road in hidden silence, until my stomach wretched (STOMACH NOISES) and my bowels burned and toxic exhaust poured in to the car through rotten holes in its ancient under carriage and the Everests sang loudly together (The WHEELS ON THE BUS GO ROUND AND ROUND, ROUND AND ROUND, ROUND AND ROUND - High five!) and I was silent and ill and hallucinating wild kingdoms and did vomit and it was hours before we made it to the north country.

Listen  
for  
Sturdevant

## SAM CONFRONTS AN OLD FRIEND

## NARRATOR

Wait. Herbach had always been afraid of real nature. Terrified of it. He loved the city. Yet, he'd stowed away to the thick, wooded forests. Why exactly was Herbach running? Sam?

## SAM

There are no famous people in Kansas. That's where I grew up. The only way to become famous if you're from Kansas is to hang out with a famous person. In grade school, my best friend, Josh Cruise, had an aunt who knew the one-armed drummer from Def Leppard. Everyone adored Josh Cruise. I've always wanted to be adored like that, but I never knew anyone famous, so I've always just been a schlubb. That is, until recently. Herbach's selfish. And you know what I do to selfish people? Kill 'em. Yep, I'm gonna kill Herbach. How am I gonna do it? Oh, I really don't want to give too much away. Let me just say it involves a knife, and some stabbing. You give a guy the world--a chance to be adored by everyone--and how does he repay you? The other day the doorbell rang.

(ding dong)

...but it wasn't its regular ring. It was a foreboding ring.

(ding dong - same ring)

Yeah...like that. It shook me to my core. I slowly opened the door

(creak)

and found Robert Wagner on the front porch.

## SAM (CONT'D)

Robert Wagner. Star of television's hit series, Hart To Hart.

## ROBERT

I also played Number 2 in the Austin Powers series, starring the hilarious Mike Meyers.

## SAM

Yeah, we all know about that. What the H do you want, ~~you stupid~~ jerk hole?

## ROBERT

I want my money.

> Sturdevant



SAM

Do you realize that just a week ago we were sharing a hammock in Aspen, drinking fancy drinks and talking about all the famous people you know? What to happened to us?

ROBERT

Herbach.

SAM

Yeah, that happens to a lot of people.

ROBERT

Herbach hasn't happened to Carol Burnett, although I know her, too.

SAM

You do? Dang. I don't wanna be a schlubb anymore, Robert. The way you talk about all those famous--I can really feel that. In my heart, and in my pants. Think we can ever patch things up?

ROBERT

No, Sam. Like I was telling Tom Hanks the other day, cheese is delicious.

SAM

What does that have to do with Herbach?

ROBERT

Let's not drag this out, Sam. I want my money back.

SAM

Herbach's your man. He's the one who owes you. Why are you taking his sins out on me?

ROBERT

Because he's your best pal, and he's not famous.

SAM

Whoppers! He's not my best pal anymore. If you want to find him, he fled up the river.

ROBERT

Then I guess we're going up the river, too.

SAM

We could do that. Or you could tell me more about Tom Hanks' cheese.

ROBERT

CHHHH! We are going to find Herbach and my money, or my name isn't Johnathon Hart.

SAM

You're name's Robert Wagner.

ROBERT

To find Herbach, you can bet it's going to take some bourgeois sleuthing on the river. It's a good thing I brought my boat.

*Yes. He has.*

SAM

I looked past him. Out in the street was a white, 1979 Mercedes convertible that looked to have been modified into a large boat with an onboard motor. On the trunk, I could make out the boat's name: The RW. SOFT

SAM (CONT'D)

Who's RW SOFT?

ROBERT

Robert Wagner, Star of Film and Television. I had the Mercedes from Hart to Hart converted into a boat just for this trip-I knew this mystery would lead us to the river. I'm not a dick in real life, but I played one on TV.

SAM

How much did that boat cost you?

ROBERT

\$400,000.

SAM

But Herbach only owes you \$10,000.

ROBERT

I nailed Estel Getty on that boat.

SAM

Wow! Who's that?

ROBERT

Someone...famous.

*almost whispered*

NARRATOR

In the basement, Brady laid down on the moist futon mattress for his morning therapy session. Mohamed, the 13-year-old paperboy, sat on a milk crate next to him with an Etch-a-Sketch in his lap.

MOHAMED

Shall we begin?

BRADY

My soul is open to you, Mohamed. Put on your miner's helmet and focus your beam of light deep into my horrible insides.

MOHAMED

Okay, then. How are you feeling today?

BRADY

Terrible.

MOHAMED

Good. An improvement over yesterday then.

BRADY

Oh, yes. A thousand suns better than yesterday.

MOHAMED

But still terrible.

*Woody  
Woody  
Woody  
Brady*

BRADY

Most definitely.

MOHAMED

Let us consider the reasons for your improved state. Perhaps then we will have a tool to move you up toward...oh, let me check my custom scale of emotional states...ah, yes, I think awful would be a good goal.

BRADY

Awful sounds lovely, Mohamed.

MOHAMED

Are you able to pinpoint when you took the leap up to feeling terrible?

BRADY

I met a girl.

MOHAMED

(skeptical)

What's her name?

BRADY

Annie.

MOHAMED

(disgusted)

Brady, don't do this to yourself.

BRADY

We met at a vegan restaurant. This place was so vegan it had air on the menu.

MOHAMED

Sir, you are doing Woody Allen again.

BRADY

No, this time its for real, Mohamed. Annie and I drove up to a cabin on the coast and we made lobster. She took pictures of me trying to drop the lobster in the boiling water. I couldn't do it. And then one of the lobsters crawled behind the fridge and I tried to get it out with a broom. Oh, how we laughed. I think we have a real future.

MOHAMED

That's Annie Hall. The movie.

BRADY

No it's not.

MOHAMED

Yes it is.

BRADY

Mohamed was right. I live vicariously through Woody Allen films. Whenever I'm at my most troubled I turn to Woody and walk in his shoes. It grounds me. Let's me know what it's like to be a highly functional, well adjusted man.

MOHAMED

Excuse me, sir. Brady...Woody?

boom



BRADY

It's me Mohamed. I'm back.

MOHAMED

Thank god. For a minute there I thought you were going to make me  
dress up like Soon-Yi again.

Too much? EE.

He can  
do it!

BRADY

Not today, Mohamed.

MOHAMED

So how are you feeling right now?

BRADY

Mohamed, I'm afraid that I've sunk so low that I've reached the place  
where the bottom once again meets the top, where low and high  
converge in a fantastical purgatorio of everything that is beautiful and  
horrible. I am Herbach.

MOHAMED

(gasp)

Dear, God.

BRADY

The only way out of a Herbachian state is to face the man himself. We  
must return the Herbach to its home, Mohamed. We must go to him.

MOHAMED

But, didn't you hear? Herbach's gone.

BRADY

Gone?

MOHAMED

He's gone off to the woods.

BRADY

What?

MOHAMED

With some singer songwriters.

BRADY

I stood up from the futon. The Herbach pulsed in my veins. I was about to say something I'd never  
thought I'd say. Mohamed?

MOHAMED

(enthusiastically)

Yes, sir.

BRADY

To the woods!

NARRATOR

And so Brady joined Sam and Robert Wagner, and Old Lady Dickenson-who had never been Up  
North-in Robert Wagner's speedboat. They donned puffy orange life vests around their necks.  
Everyone looked anxiously to the river, except Steph, who stood on the banks of the river and  
shouted.



STEPH

You're doomed! Doomed! You'll never make it out alive!

SAM

Are you coming or what?

STEPH

*Yeah,* Let me get my cigarettes.

NARRATOR

And so Steph got on the boat too, and they all began their journey. But Steph wasn't happy about it.

STEPH

*Princesses*  
Oh, they were naïve. Urban princesses in their Uptown glasses who couldn't tell free-growing marijuana from poison oak. They had no idea that there is no French Roast coffee Up North, no artisan ceviche sauce, and that the bathrooms are still separated by gender. I knew it. I am spawn of Up North. I kept telling them. I said:

They don't call them sushi joints, Up North, brothers! They call them fish houses! They don't call them lap dogs Up North, either, they call them *squirrels* *→ large*

BOYS

Oh, can it, Steph! Shut up! Etc.

STEPH

Oh, they did not want to heed. Luckily Old Lady D. was on the boat to listen to me. She hadn't been out of our neighborhood since she went to St. Paul to pick up her adopted baby boy, the Punk Poet Paul D, 47 years ago. And so she brought 47 years worth of stuff along.

OLD LADY D.

I brought my raincoat and my galoshes, and I brought my parka, case there's a hard frost, and my mosquito head netting, so I don't get the West Nile disease, it's from Africa. And I brought my syrup of Epecac, in case anyone on the boat needs to vomit.

STEPH

([sarcastic])

Good thinking, Old Lady! But I stayed civil with her. All the other crewmates were ignoring me, except Robert Wagner.

ROBERT WAGNER

You know, my detective partner and amorous wife on my show, Hart to Hart, which ran from 1979 to 1984, was played by a red-headed actress named Stefanie.

STEPH

That's interesting. My sister's name was Natalie Wood and she died when she fell off your yacht twenty-six years ago this month.

ROBERT WAGNER

([booming nervous laughter])

STEPH

I took to pointing out my childhood landmarks to Old Lady D, even though it broke my heart. See, Old Lady D? That swirling whirlpool of muck over there?

[SOUND OF SWIRLING WHIRPOOL]

That's where I was bitten by a water snake while tubing down the river, and a Norwegian farm boy sucked the juice out of the wound!

OLD LADY D.

Ooooh!

STEPH

And see that metal barrel half-buried in the riverbank over there? That's an empty keg of beer I buried when I was 19 because I was too lazy to return it to the liquor store.

OLD LADY D.

Oooh, we should tell our liquor store Clerk about it.

STEPH

Yeah, and there, just beyond that cow pasture, that's where I lit a hay bale on fire when I was jilted at the Harvest Ball by Hans Osmundsen.

[SOUND OF LIGHTER BEING FLICKED?]

STEPH (CONT'D)

I thought Hans was hiding in the hay bale at the time, but he wasn't.

OLD LADY D.

Oh.

STEPH

I know, what can you do?

OLD LADY D./STEPH

Sigh.

NARRATOR

Big things had happened to Herbach. ~~How~~. How did he become what he was to become? He had stowed away North in a station wagon.

HERBACH

(CAR SOUND THEN STOPPING)

Covered in my filth, I stumbled from the parked Everest wagon, when James and Mary stopped to buy their booze.

MARY

I like schnaaps!

JAMES

Root beer schnaaps? You're on, little sister!

(CAR DOORS OPENING AND SLAMMING)

HERBACH

We were far north. The log cabin store was surrounded by trees and I opened the hatch and I stumbled from parking lot into dark woods where the spider webs clung to me and I crashed through hole and hollow, the thorny underbrush tearing my clothes, twisting into mud holes, scraping across sharpened rocks, and finally falling into a thick bramble from which I was too exhausted to climb. And there I slept. When I awoke it was pitch-black night (CRICKETS) (WOLVES HOWL) and I could hear the caw of the black bird (CAW CAW CAW SOUND) and was terrified. Oh no! I am not of the earth, but of the pavement and the carpeting, as if I didn't drop wet from a womb but was fermented, incubated under warm lights in a dressing room in a Macy's department store. I am of the pavement and the bus stops, not of the woods where the blackbirds

What does this mean?

OLD LADY D. I just burn 'em & turn 'em, honey....  
Steph  
Okay.

?  
(See how it plays?)

Cot

Down



pick at your ears because they think you are not alive.

NARRATOR

From the boat, while the others were on the lookout for Herbach, Sam watched the tops of the trees blur together and wondered where Herbach was. The events of the previous week festered inside him.

SAM

Robert Wagner and I and were eating sushi at Matzuhitza in Aspen last week. Robert was wearing a pastel yellow windbreaker jacket and a polo shirt underneath with the collar up. Popped top. Classic. He even smelled like a winner. We were drinking sake, good sake, the kind you drink cool. Robert said:

ROBERT WAGNER

You're looking good, Sam. Have you been lifting weights?

SAM

*few wait for it...*  
Are you trying to seduce me? Because it's working.

We laughed and sipped our sake. I was eating edamame like I was a crazy man. Robert didn't like edamame, so he was eating Rock Shrimp. I tried some of that, too. When I reached for it he jokingly slapped my hand.

(SLAPPING SOUND)

We laughed again. I had invited Steph and Brady and Herbach to dinner with us, but Steph had gas and Brady is afraid of food, so it was just Herbach and Bobby Wagner and I. Bobby had said that if dinner worked out, he might invite us out for dinner the next night, too, but the next night there would be more celebrities, like Lee Majors and Angela Lansbury, and Kid Rock. I was feeling less and less schlubby every second. But Herbach was drinking sake like it was water, and I could tell he was about to come apart at the seams.

Earlier that day, Herbach and I were sitting around the pool while Steph was at a chili cook off and Brady was crocheting. Herbach looked so distraught and sad, and when he gets that way, all I want to do is take care of him. I'll make him soup, or I'll take him a blanket when he falls asleep naked in the juniper bushes. But in Aspen, he looked worse than I'd seen him in a while.

SAM (CONT'D)

What's the matter, buddy?

HERBACH

*Remember Real Herbach?* I thought this was supposed to be the real deal! Mountains! Trees! Real earth, authenticity! But I haven't seen anything real since we've been here. It's all plastic surgery and plastic designer clothes and fake food! I need something real!

SAM

Oh, Herbach! I'll take care of you buddy. I've got plans that are going to make you so happy and adored by everyone!

HERBACH

What plans?

SAM

First, we're getting facials! That's not fake! Then we're getting a couple's massage. And then I'm going to introduce you to a television star! That's the real deal, Holyfield!

↑  
High  
Boy



HERBACH

Oh Herbach!

SAM

I grabbed him by the arm and dragged him to the spa where we got facials. I got his eyebrows waxed and his forehead exfoliated. He looked so pink and pretty. Then we got a couple's massage.

HERBACH

(being massaged)

I appreciate the massage, Sammy, but can't we just play some frisbee?

SAM

(being massaged)

Sure we could! If we were dirty hippies who didn't like to hang out with Hollywood types! But that's not us, is it?

HERBACH

(massaged)

Yes?

SAM

(Massaged)

When we tell everyone who we know, they'll adore us! I saw Mona from Who's the Boss yesterday!

HERBACH

(massaged)

Crikey!

SAM

Then I took Herbach shopping and got him a pair of designer jeans and a tight polo shirt that showed his little tummy and that had a perma-pop-top: a collar that could simply not be pushed down. He looked so cute. But later, at dinner with Robert Wagner, Herbach ruined everything.

NARRATOR

At the rear of the Robert Wagner's Mercedes skiff, the motor's vibrations made Steph's body prickle. It was a prickle that reminded her of St. Cloud.

STEPH

We hit St. Cloud, and Robert Wagner cut the motor of the boat, so we could catch the scenery...the Target, the Bed Bath and Beyond, the Olive Garden. It was quiet, spooky quiet, and then, the sound that let us all know we were past the point of No Return-the sound of a loon.

[OBNOXIOUS CAWING]

STEPH (CONT'D)

It triggered a painful memory for me...

OLD LADY D.

Oh honey, you having a painful memory?

STEPH

Yes. That sound reminds me, Old Lady D., of Madonna humping the stage at the Video Music Awards in 1984.

OLD LADY D.

Oh.

Crowdite  
me here

Oh. My.  
God.

STEPH

Because, as I watched her doing that, while I was growing up right on this very river, I was thinking to myself: Can one person really ever know another? Don't we play so many roles as human beings, ricocheting between all of our roles and getting so scarred in the transitions that maybe we cannot even be known to ourselves?

OLD LADY D.

Well, I don't know....

STEPH

Well it keeps me up at night, Old Lady D. I lie awake on my Mexican floor rugs terrified, and wondering: Will ever know myself well enough to love another person completely?

OLD LADY D.

No girly, you won't.

STEPH

~~I know that Old Lady D. And so, I also know of know what Herbach lives, and dies, up there, up there, up the river.~~

OLD LADY D.

~~Ooooh. Well it sure is pretty! It reminds me of Northeast Minneapolis, but without all the naked lady bars!~~

STEPH

~~Yup. Pretty...ugly. Old Lady D.~~

NARRATOR

Just then, as the boat skimmed along the west bank of the river, Punk Poet Paul D sprang from the forest. His face was painted and he was wearing a black leather jacket around his waist like a loin cloth.

STEPH

Dear god! What is Joan Jett doing in the forest?

PAUL D

I'm not Joan Jett. It is I, Punk Poet Paul D, here to rock you. Hi mom!

Chief Seattle said: there is no peace in the White man's city- that's why I live here

Notebooks in flames fueling acid rain  
and flowers that bloom to death metal tunes  
kingdoms crumble and rise from glorious ashes.

The ball point Buddha smashes the gate doing 98  
saying let those truckers roll

Me

I'm just a troll  
hiding under every bridge  
peering into limousines  
beautiful fragments of the night gleaming everywhere  
I capture them for my dreams  
and it seems  
like I can't go wrong  
as long as I don't open my eyes  
just revel in my own  
sweet demise

PD

w/conniction!

End Scene



Every day I'm out  
on stainless steel tumblers of emotions  
I am sliced by the wind and the rain and the jagged edges of life  
With what is left of me I head down to the river  
I stare into the water  
for hours  
and overhear  
absolutely  
nothing.

NARRATOR

Paul D scampered back into the forest and was gone.

SAM

Oooohkey.

NARRATOR

Herbach. What had Herbach done? While his housemates continued slowly up the Majestic Miss, he survived.

HERBACH

I could not move from the bramble. And for what felt like days survived by eating grubs and animals. Squirrels unknowing would happen by me as I did not move to conserve my energy and I would grab them and snap their necks and tear their fur with my incisors and swallow their meat and their eyes and their bones and their innards whole, until, after three days and three nights, and 200 grubs and 27 squirrels, I had gained a new mass, which would protect me in the forest.

NARRATOR

To no one's surprise, Brady was afraid of boats. Let's face it, he was also afraid of the fresh, northwood's air. So as Robert Wagner's band of Merry Men and Steph sped up river in search of Herbach, Brady searched for a comfortable spot on the boat.

BRADY

As much as I like to pretend, I have to admit that I am not an outdoorsman. The primitive forest terrifies me. It is dirty, wet, prickly yet moist, a little moldy; it was like we were speeding upriver back into the womb. On deck, the wind was wreaking havoc with my blaze orange ascot so I squeezed below deck into the storage area of the hull. There, I found a life jacket, which I fastened to my torso.

[click, click, click]

It was dark in the hull of the boat. And even though I was lying under the floor, I decided to put on some sunscreen, SPF 50, just to be safe.

[flip of lid, squeezing of sunscreen bottle]

[sound of hand lathering lotion on skin]

[more squeezing of bottle]

[more lathering]

Once I was safe from the harmful rays of the treacherous sun, I tried to rest, but the Herbach in me kept me restless. I tried to reconcile the feelings of great despair and unencumbered joy that was the meeting of Herbach and my emotional states. At once, I wanted to kill myself and also make love to myself. I tried to rest, for I knew that what lay ahead, deep in the terrifying forest, would require every bit of strength I could muster. But the Herbach was moving into my thoughts: I suddenly had an idea for a 1300 page novel called Fartenbrau in the Palace of Goldstein. It was terrible. I have no idea how to write a legal thriller.

NARRATOR

Up above, Robert Wagner navigated the crew further North. The Mercedes skiff hit a bend in the river and a tiny city.



## STEPH

Look, Old Lady D, there's Bemidji State. It reminds me of...

OLD LADY D.

### Your unhappy childhood?

## STEPH

It reminds me of when Madonna's Like a Prayer came out. My junior-high best friend Erica Jorgensen and I first heard that song while driving to a church lock-in. We were supposed to experience spiritual renewal, but it was only Erica who had a spiritual experience, with a foreign exchange student from...Mesopotamia, or something.

ERICA

It was like being filled all up with something warm and soft on the outside, but super hard on the inside, like if you wrapped a bunny around a curling iron.

## STEPH

She made it sound so awesome.

So later that night, I found Hans Osmundsen picking his nose in the rectory. But it wasn't like what Erica said at all. It was more like a lizard with a pencil stuck up its butt.

~~OLD LADY D~~

OoOooohh, honey. Hey now, how come we don't hear any loons anymore?

### STEPH

Because they're all dead!

NARRATOR

Herbach's story begins to crystallize. He had eaten enough squirrel to move from the wooded  
bramble where he'd left himself for dead.

HERBACH

Following the sounds of high-pitched motors, of civilization, or so I thought, crushing through the flora and fauna, devouring any animal fool enough to remain within hand's reach. I found an encampment of rural teens and because of my mighty girth became their leader.

Have you seen Lord of the Flies?

~~EVERYONE~~

(group sings Lord of the Flies)

HERBACH

I wanted to be a man of books, of learning. But primal MTV beach parties dominate. I do not want to be like Sponge Bob Square Pants. But Lite Beer and Wet T-shirts and bikini contests have replaced cardigan sweaters and snuggly blankets. Should I weep? Should I not live? No, I will live in this world. Miller Lite is beautiful. Men who wear zubas are beautiful. Muffin tops and long-legged girls drunkenly diving for volleyballs are beautiful. As are cartoon boots and cold can cozies. But it is a terrible beauty. A horrible, natural beauty. A state of nature not culture. A war of all against all played in sand volleyball pits and on snowmobile trails. Oiled body against oiled body... I was ripe for love. Mary Everest. She was at the youth camp. I saw her next to a fire pit, drinking root beer schnaaps. I approached her wearing no shirt, bloated au natural, but draped in a blanket of squirrel.

MARY

Herbach? Is that you? Are you the one every one calls the colonel?

Steph  
Wow. That's great!

smelled like curry?

Per Jenny  
Suggs

End scene

HERBACH

It is I, Mary Everest. Do you find me disgusting?

MARY

You're enormous... and round... and... and I love your furry blanket.

HERBACH

I am the squirrel king, the colonel of these young roustabouts.

MARY

How did you get here? You refused to come up north with us.

HERBACH

Mary Everest, the most beautiful of all forest imp. Come, let me cover you in my blanket and let us walk together hand in hand on the trails where the four-wheeled motor bikes scream. I will tell you the story of life...

MARY

Sounds hot. James, I'm going for a walk with fat Herbach.

JAMES

Herbach's here!? Can I come?

MARY

No.

HERBACH

And so we ventured into the woods and were swept away by the smell of fecund biology and decay. The night sky shone down, showing us our insignificance and then, because there is no other way, we made love, we coupled, two impatient animals straining to create life. Our passion was imperative.

was herbach  
every done this?

In the morning I rolled off Mary Everest and cried, Be my Squirrel Queen! Be my wife and the mother of my many children, my brood. I am an animal.

MARY EVEREST SONG

Umm... I can only answer you with this song, Herbach.

### WHAT A GREAT NIGHT

HERBACH  
The horror.

NARRATOR

Meanwhile, on the Mercedes Boat, the other housemates were approaching the still headwaters of the Mississippi.

OLD LADY D.

Do you think we'll see your old friend Erica?

STEPH

I lost track of Erica after college. I know it's weak but I was busy with my dance remixes, and my Golden Globe nomination for Evita.

OLD LADY D.

Oooh.



STEPH

I heard that Erica married Hans Osmundsen, and that together she and Hans often solve the murders of their many dead friends. When they aren't doing that, I hear they make passionate love while looking into each other's eyes and giving compliments.

OLD LADY D.

Oooh, that's nice.

STEPH

The fear, Old Lady D, it seeps into me up here, the way Sam's cold cream slowly seeps through Robert Wagner's leather-like skin....

OLD LADY D.

Oh, now I get it! You're afraid of your own inferiority!

STEPH

Aaaaaah!

NARRATOR

Steph screamed and Brady heard it from below. Something was happening above on the deck.

BRADY

In the dark hull of the boat, I heard the rustle of feet on the deck above me.  
[feet rustling]

And muted voices.

[unintelligible mumbling]

I knocked on the floor for someone to open the hatch.  
[knocking]

And the hatch opened and a hand pulled me out of the hole. But the sun was so bright I couldn't see. I tried to open my eyes but it was like they were locked shut. I thought I'd gone blind.

BRADY (CONT'D)

(panicky)

I can't see. I can't see. Oh, god, I am blind.

And then Steph slapped me.

[face slap]

STEPH

Suck it up, fancy pants. ~~I'm afraid I'm not good enough.~~

BRADY

I slowly opened my eyes and suddenly the world was beautiful. Everything was so pure. For the first time, I realized that the sky is blue and the trees are green. And the world was populated with amazing creatures.

An majestic eagle soared overhead.  
[cawing (crow like)]

BRADY (CONT'D)

Steph, I said, do you see that eagle?

STEPH

That's a crow, ~~moron~~

Some one on this ship has  
to be a man, and  
I just can't  
do it  
any more.



BRADY

[frog croak] And over there, on the bank. A glorious turtle.

STEPH

That's a frog.

BRADY

I looked over the edge of the boat and saw the biggest fish I'd ever seen in my life.  
I said, Steph, you've got see this fish.

STEPH

Uh, Brady, that's not a fish.

BRADY

Then what is it?

STEPH

~~That's a log.~~ *That's a dead body.*

BRADY

Brilliant. Hey, what are Sam and Robert Wagner doing?

STEPH

~~You think I see?~~ *[something gross....]*

BRADY

Sam and Robert Wagner were huddled together at the bow of the boat. Robert Wagner was preparing food in a bowl.

BRADY (CONT'D)

Hey, what are you making.

SAM

Robert Wagner caught a river trout. He's make ceviche.

ROBERT WAGNER

You see Brady, I've cleaned and cut the trout into large chunks, which I have drizzled with fresh lime. The citric acid in the lime will denature the proteins in the trout. This pickles, or cooks, if you will, the trout without the need for heat.

*Must  
Tcy*

BRADY

But where'd you get a lime?

ROBERT WAGNER

I always carry a fresh lime. Weren't you ever a Boy Scout?

BRADY

No. What's going on? Have we found Herbach yet?

ROBERT WAGNER

We are close, Brady. Robert Wagner has picked up Herbach's scent.

BRADY

What? Why are speaking in third person?

ROBERT WAGNER

I'm not. Robert Wagner is my dog. He's a bichon frise.

BRADY

I looked over and there was a white, poufy dog perched at the edge of the boat, one leg up, pointing toward the thick woods.

BRADY (CONT'D)

Mr. Wagner, we need to find Herbach soon. I'm beginning to itch.

ROBERT WAGNER

It won't be long sport. Not long at all.

SAM

At dinner in Aspen, Herbach was getting drunker and drunker.

ROBERT WAGNER

Your friend keeps looking at us, Sam. And he's drinking an awful lot of sake.

SAM

I know. He's jealous.

ROBERT WAGNER

Jealous of you? Or jealous of me?

SAM

Oh, Robert...

ROBERT

Abe Vigoda does not like sake.

SAM

Abe Vigoda!? Wow!

We laughed and Robert Wagner fed me edamame and wiped sea salt from my chin with his thumb. Just then, my so-called best pal stuffed his right hand into his left armpit.

(farting noises)

BOBBIE

(clears throat)

What is he doing?

SAM

Oh! Uh...he's making farting noises! He's just like Britney Spears! She's famous!

BOBBIE

Those don't sound like Britney's farts. Those sound...pedestrian!

SAM

Isn't Britney rather pedestrian?

BOBBIE

No, she's plebian! Look, Sam, perhaps this isn't a good idea.

SAM

Or perhaps we are and Herbach is going to stop doing that now. Right HERBACH! Just then Herbach jumped out of his seat, grabbed a handful of edamame and threw it across the bar. Then he yanked his new designer jeans to his ankles and scooted quickly out of the restaurant, knocking over tables as went.

ROBERT

Sam!?!?

SAM

Just like Britney Spears! You go Herbach! Well, Bobbie, if you'll excuse me. Shall we continue this conversation tomorrow night with a whole bunch of famous people, or what? Just then the waiter brought our tab. Robert Wagner looked at it.

ROBERT

That plebian monkey just drank \$10,000 worth of sake.

SAM

Righty O! Call me!

SAM (CONT'D)

After that night, Robert never called me again and my chances of having a brush with fame and being adored went back to nil, and I was again a schlub. On the boat, Robert and I were making nice, but it was awkward.

ROBERT

Sam, I noticed you're carrying a knife. What is it for?

SAM

Stabbing.

ROBERT

Stabbing what?

SAM

I don't know. Not Herbach.

ROBERT

Sounds schlubby.

ROBERT WAGNER

Wait! Kill the motor.

(Motor dies)

ROBERT WAGNER (CONT'D)

Look! Up on the left bank! What is that?

NARRATOR:

Everyone on board squinted. On shore there appeared to be letters made from something that looked to be bleached-white sticks.

SAM

What does it say?

STEPH

(Reading, but poorly)

Hier...blick?



## SAM

No, that's not it. It says Kreplach.

STEPH

Why would it say kreplach?

**NARRATOR**

Without waiting for the others to decipher the letters on shore, Brady jumped overboard and began swimming.

## SAM

He must love kreplach.

NARRATOR

Brady swam to shore quickly, and as soon as he stood over the letters, he turned to the others on the boat and yelled.

BRADY

(from an extreme distance)

I lhhheeeenttrrrrrbaaaacccccchhhhh!!!!

NARRATOR

Herbach. This was it. Robert Wagner pulled the boat up to the shore and they all disembarked. The lettering was made out of squirrel femurs.

## SAM

Where is that son of a biscuit? I'm gonna stab him.

BRADY

Can you stab him after he cures my Herbach?

## STEPH

We've got to find him, first. And we're not gonna find him by standing here.

ROBERT WAGNER

I'm three steps ahead of you! Over here!

NARRATOR

Robert Wagner was at the edge of the woods, bent over, examining something on the ground.

## STEPH

### What is it?

ROBERT

It's scat.

NARRATOR

Sam leaned in and examined it.

## SAM

It's Herbach's.

STEPH AND BRADY

Ooooh. Gross.

ROBERT

No, he's right. Look at the cigarette butts. Onward.

Bring up that  
R.W. Played  
#2 in Austin  
Powers Again?  
or too  
gross?

NARRATOR

The writers and Robert Wagner hurried down a dirt path. Old Lady Dickinson trailed behind. The scraggly Northwood trees towered over them like bony fingers reaching for the sky. Soon they heard music.

(JAMES EVEREST MARCH)

BRADY

What's that music?

STEPH

~~It sounds like death march. Oh God!~~

ROBERT

Courage. Courage.

OLD LADY DICKINSON

Wait for me, you whippersnaps!

NARRATOR

The searchers began to notice eyes peering at them through the dark of the forest. There were large eyes, hidden behind Oakley blade sunglasses, and there were tiny eyes very close to the ground and also high in the trees. The darkness was soon broken by the flame from a torch, and they could see that the large eyes belonged to teenagers dressed in White Snake and Def Leppard t-shirts and also tracksuits purchased at Walmart.

BRADY

I'm scared.

NARRATOR

The tiny eyes belonged to thousands of squirrels, scurrying along the ground and through the trees.

SAM

Those squirrels look fat...and tender...and delicious.

ROBERT

(Yells)

Onward!

NARRATOR

They came around a bend in the path and saw in a clearing a most amazing site. Squirrel Bodies were hung like ornaments from trees all around. Great fires were lit in giant Weber grills casting shadow and fire into the darkening canopy above. Teenagers all dressed in hair band concert t-shirts and knock off Oakley wraparounds marched in front of a mighty throne, constructed from something bone white. Inexplicably, The Punk Poet Paul D. also marched with the group. He saw the searchers and ran to them. He'd was dressed in an Iron Maiden t-shirt with cut off sleeves. He'd grown a mullet and was carrying a can of Miller Lite in one hand and a bratwurst in the other.

PAUL D

Hey dudes. Hey Mom.

OLD LADY D.

How did you get here before us, sonny?

PAUL D

I swum. Hey, you want to try a squirrel brat?

NARRATOR

That's d North Woods  
death march, my  
friends.

→ Paul D enthusiasm



Before the housemates could respond they heard Herbach's voice thunder.

HERBACH

It is time to sing!

SAM

Where is Herbach shouting from?

STEPH

Oh my God! He's a top that throne made of tiny Squirrel Skulls.

BRADY

Herbach's a wonderful engineer. Has he ever showed you the popsicle stick synagogue he built?

HERBACH

Sound the alarm, James Everest.

JAMES EVEREST

I shall, your immense monstrosity!

Band switch

(SONG: LOST IN THE PALACE)

Sirens/band switch

NARRATOR

At the end of the song, the crowd of teenagers and the Punk Poet Paul D went wild. They shotgunned beer, headbanged, threw footballs everywhere, pulled each other's mullets, stuffed bratwurst in their faces and then stripped down to their neon bathing suits. Herbach scaled down his thrown to join the fray.

STEPH

He's ~~Herbach's~~ coming down!

BRADY

Is that Mary Everest in a neon bikini?

NARRATOR

Then Herbach saw his housemates. He warbled to them. He wore a Quiet Riot Metal Health t-shirt that only covered his enormous breast.

SAM

Holy hancock, Herbach's a fatty gone maddy.

HERBACH

Yes... Brady Bergeson, I see you've seen Mary Everest, whom I've loved. And what brings you to my wild kingdom?

NARRATOR

Brady took a deep breath. He was visibly shaken.

BRADY

Herbach stood in front of me, his naked body wrapped in a squirrel blanket. And there was I in a dripping wet vintage 1952 Sears gray Executive suit. And yet, at that moment, we shared the same soul.

HERBACH

Speak, Brady. The time has come.

Steph  
No, I haven't seen  
that-...

BRADY

Herbach, I am tired. I came here on a journey, a man torn between two psyches, uncomfortable in his own skin.

HERBACH

I've been waiting for this time.

BRADY

And now here in this magical place, I realize that what is inside me is not you.

HERBACH

It is not.

BRADY

It is me.

HERBACH

It is you.

BRADY

And then what happened next cannot be explained. I was in a trance. I took off my suit coat and then my pants. My shirt, my boxers, and finally I untied the ascot from around my neck and let it fall to the forest floor. Herbach spread his arms wide, opening his squirrel blanket for me and I stepped in. Herbach closed his arms around me, hugging me tight, covering me in squirrel. I felt so warm. So safe.

Herbach, I said. I am free. I am at peace. I am...happy.

NARRATOR

Meanwhile, Steph saw someone else she knew in the crowd. A fat, pasty, balding man wearing a Coors Light t-shirt with the sleeves cut off.

HANS OSMUNDSEN

Hey, what's up, Steph?

NARRATOR

It was Hans Osmundsen. Steph punched him in the gut.

[SOUND OF GUT PUNCH]

HANS OSMUNDSEN

Uaagh!

(Then, in mild agony)

You wanna go get a cup of coffee?

STEPH

Yeah!

HANS OSMUNDSEN

(in mild agony)

Cool beans.

NARRATOR

Back by the fire, Sam approached Herbach. He was carrying a tiny knife.



HERBACH

You've got a tiny knife.

SAM

You've got a tiny butt.

HERBACH

You do not in the remotest know of what you speak, Sam.

NARRATOR

Herbach showed Sam his vast hind quarters.

SAM

I just wanted to make you happy, and I just wanted to be adored. But you wouldn't let that happen.

NARRATOR

Suddenly, Herbach was surrounded by a chorus of squirrels who all began to hum.

HERBACH

I didn't want to leave you Sam, but...  
(song)

The first time I saw your eyes  
I knew the tears must rain from them  
For your hair to grow so thick

And your nose hairs and leg hairs  
Are gifts of your moisture  
The first time I saw you, I knew you were sad.

But sad doesn't make you a good friend, Sammy  
And narcissism and womanizing don't help, no.  
I need a man who will hold me up when I'm feeling sad

I need a friend.  
I need a pal  
A guy to play Frisbee with  
I need a friend  
Who thinks of me  
As a buddy to have sandwiches  
I just need a friend

Remember when you said to me  
Are you obstacle or vehicle?  
And I ate some fries and shook my head  
Cause I didn't know what you meant  
And I need a friend  
A need a pal  
A dude to arm wrestle  
I need a friend  
Who knows my mind  
And brings me soup  
I just need a friend.

SPOKEN: I don't think you're that guy Sammy.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

And then Robert Wagner punched Herbach with all his might, rendering Colonel Herbach

Sing like  
very fat  
Brando  
Squirrel.

unconscious.

ROBERT

Didn't see that one coming, did you fat ass? I can't wait to tell Sue Ann from Mary Tyler Moore about this.

NARRATOR

They dragged Herbach to take him home. They loved Herbach. Back in the forest, the party raged on. The teenagers and the squirrels were unaware their king, Colonel Herbach, had been taken... except for Mary Everest, the singer in her neon bikini... Her brother James saw color drain from her face.

JAMES

Mary, Mary... Oh My God... what's wrong?

MARY E

I... I... suddenly feel like a piece of me of missing. The darkest and best piece...

JAMES

The horror.

NARRATOR

And through the dark night, slipping over black silk water, a tiny speedboat made its way south... On board, a fully integrated Brady, a fearless Steph, a well-groomed Robert Wagner, and two sad fellows, Sam and Herbach, who might have lost their best pals. Old Lady D. stayed behind.

That's our show! Thanks so much to our sponsors, 89.3 The Current, Minneapolis St. Paul Magazine, Hamline University's Graduate School of Liberal Studies, The Loft, Bell's Beer, and let's head over to Joe's Garage for a beer! Don't forget to join us for our season finale, Dec. 8 right here!

THEME

End  
→ scene...

↓  
stet.