

Halley
Donor

Mortgage
Down
Mort
Death

Show II
Hacky

THEME SONG

NARRATOR

Who lives in this house full of writers? He's the one in the big upstairs bedroom with beautiful black hair, an easy smile and an ability to forget to pay even the most important bills. It's Sam! She lives on the stairs and carries the keys to her back door in the pockets of her Dashiki: It's Steph! Lying on his princess bed, strapped to a pair of metal roller skates, held together by a tight, white man thong: It's Herbach! And down deep in the dark basement, wading in the pungent wading pool of his soul: It's Brady! And who am I? I live in the attic, singing songs and entertaining guests. I'm Dave. I narrate this show.

What
about
the cups
of my
spoons

X

There is a mortgage crisis in this country. Lax laws have given financial institutions the ability to concoct all kinds of wild mortgage products aimed at individuals who do not have the wherewithal to afford traditional mortgages. These mortgages have tiny initial costs and tiny interest rates that then adjust, balloon, explode, until the poor souls who have bought into the American dream of home ownership find they have no ability to make the payments. The writers in this house were not immune from the crisis. Were they the victims of predatory lending practices? No, they'd simply forgotten to make payments... for several years.

One evening Steph, Sam and Brady were watching the season premier of Biggest Loser on NBC.

ANNOUNCER

Jared, a construction worker and father of thirteen, eats submarine sandwiches everyday and weighs 472 pounds.

Mispronounce

STEPH

Those people are not that fat!

BRADY

Steph, they're the size of rhinoceroses.

STEPH

Rhinoceroses aren't that big.

SAM

My dad had a rhinoceros-sized tumor removed from his hamstring.

STEPH

I've seen far bigger tumors.

NARRATOR

When Herbach walked in, a crumpled piece of paper in his hand.

HERBACH

Hey, I found this bill thingy stuck in my armpit just now.

SAM

Yeah. I stuffed that in your armpit while you were sleeping.

BRADY

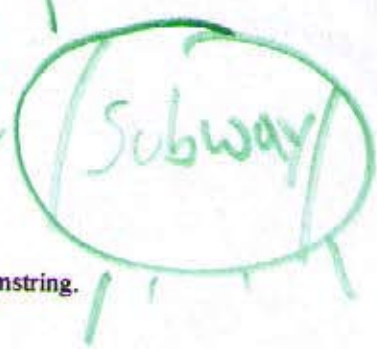
What is it?

NARRATOR

Steph yanked the paper out of Herbach's hand.

STEPH

Omigod! It's a foreclosure notice.



Mortgage
Donny

Tickles!

Back =
Steph

SAM
What's a foreclosure notice?

Question?

BRADY
We have to do something! Turn off the TV!

ANNOUNCER
Jezebel, a former fast-food worker, has been stuck in a wine barrel for three months. She weighs 397 pounds. The barrel has really cramped her style.

HERBACH
Oooh! She's cute!

NARRATOR
Brady made a panicky phone call and within minutes an emergency mental health professional had been dispatched to the house.

--Sung--

Put your mind at ease
The wind in the trees
(spoken) Here, have some tea
Weekly therapy

DOOR BELL

SOUND OF BRADY RUNNING TO THE DOOR, FLINGING IT OPEN

BRADY
Thank god you're here!

MARY MACK
Uh, hi! You were expecting me?

BRADY
Of course I was. I called for you to come.

MARY MACK
(Uncertain)
That's nice? Can I help you with something?

BRADY
We're being foreclosed on! We're going to lose the house!

MARY MACK
I play clarinet.

BRADY
Are you a musical therapist?

MARY MACK
No. I just play clarinet. You look stressed out! Your head is sweaty!

BRADY
Where's the therapist? We need help! We need help!

Mary Mack

← She rides snowmobiles
And Demolition
Derby.

MARY MACK

That's Alan Greenspan's tree house out back, isn't it?

BRADY

I keep dreaming of cigars and train tunnels! That's Freudian! Am I right?! What a crisis!

MARY MACK

I'll just go out to that tree house, then.

NARRATOR

Actually, the therapist who was dispatched never showed up. The clarinetist who came to the door was simply looking for Alan Greenspan and nice duet. Therapy had never failed Brady more. And, the problem remained. Herbach had found a foreclosure notice in his armpit. What would these four writers do without their house? Night descended with more television and then sleep.

In the light of morning, however, Steph wrestled with the loss of the house.

STEPH

I have a body, and — because I have no car and no money and no job and am forbidden by law to smoke in most public places — I am most often at home. I suppose, semantically, this makes me a homebody. But if you take out the "d" in homebody, I'd be a homeboy, and I don't to be a homeboy. I want to be a woman. A really hot one, that people desire. This is the deep mystery of woman: *Please think I am hot. And also, Wash the dishes. And Give me \$50. And Take me out for sushi, but not anywhere where I have to wait in line, and don't make me get dressed, this is my favorite sports bra.* This is the mystery of woman.

So I thought, so what if we lose the house? None of my roommates have every taken me out for sushi, so I might as well be dead. Herbach won't eat sushi because the smell of seaweed provides him with a disabling sense of longing for a childhood near the ocean, though he was raised on a bean field in Wisconsin and only developed a disabling longing for a childhood near the ocean when he read *Moby Dick* and Proust in the same week. Brady won't go to a sushi restaurant because of the danger that fish parasites and ~~Asian~~ ~~women~~ might come into contact with his skin there. Sam will eat sushi, but he won't take me out for it because that might ruin the chance of other women taking *him* out for sushi, though the day we found out about the potential eviction he did make me a tuna fish sandwich for nothing.

SAM

Thanks for letting me make you this tuna sandwich, Steph. With the bad news about the house, I just need to do something with my hands. Hey, uh, don't tell anyone else about this. Okay Steph? If word got out...uh....

STEPH

All your girlfriends would be expecting kindness?

SAM

Don't even say that out loud!

STEPH

I took my tuna fish sandwich outside...

[SOUND OF DOOR OPENING AND CLOSING]

...and I ate it on the front porch, wearing my black sports bra with the underwires because someone stole the white one with the underwires off the line. I was thinking, *I kinda hope we get evicted.* And, also, *This sandwich is light on mayo.* But then, the sound of singing down the street:

MOHAMMED

cheap
silk- you
can't be
a friend of
Asian
Women
unless
you
want
to get
your
butt
kick
by 4/5
band in
obje

(faraway strains of singing)
I am her Paper Man!.....

STEPH

Mohammed! It was the time of day that Mohammed the paper boy comes by to deliver my paper and occasionally collect my check for 75 cents, which I post-date ten years. I took my sandwich and I crouched behind the porch wall and the singing grew closer.

MOHAMMED

[Singing]

*A smoker outlaw in a tight sports bra.
She makes me brave, if brave is awe.
If I ran this rag, that I schlep in this bag
And throw her way everyday, I'd brag:
Extra! Extra! She shows her armpit hair!*

*She's the woman on the front-porch stair.
I am her Paper Man!*

[bridge]

*Oh, maybe I'm just a paper boy.
Just a kid, in mid-dle school.
It's just a crush,
The kind of mush
that brings the hush
to any lame-o musical*

STEPH

OH! Mohammed made me feel like a woman!

*I am her paper man! I
am her paperman!*

Suddenly, I thought: I can't get evicted from this house! I can't lose my Mohammed! I am his *muse*!

I popped up from the porch and yelled.

Mohammed!

MOHAMMED

AAAiiii!

STEPH

Mohammed! I don't love you, because you're only thirteen, but I can't live without being your love object!

MOHAMMED

Okay.

[SOUND OF RUNNING AWAY]

STEPH

He ran away!

[SOUND OF RUNNING BACK]

STEPH

And then he came back!

MOHAMMED
I forgot my bike.

STEPH
Oh.

MOHAMMED
Ummm, Steph, uh, would you like to go to Dairy Queen sometime and get a Moolatte..with,,,me?

STEPH
Dairy Queen? Moolatte?

MOHAMMED
Or not, that's cool.

STEPH
Oh, man, Mohammed, you're just a boy, aren't you?

MOHAMMED
Maybe. A boy named Mark.

STEPH
Mohammed, you know nothing about women!

MOHAMMED
I know I like them. I think.

STEPH
Well do you know what women like, Mohammed?

MOHAMMED
Not really. But Sam told me they like soccer.

STEPH
That's a bunch of crap, Mohammed. Women....

MOHAMMED
Yeah?

STEPH
...like sushi.

MOHAMMED
Oh.

Hey! I think you're right. My mom really likes sushi.

STEPH
(whispering)
Come on Mohammed. Come on....

MOHAMMED
Uh.... Maybe you'd like to go get some sushi....sometime....or something.

STEPH

But I was already sitting on his handlebars. I said, "Giddy-up, Mohammed. That sushi ain't gonna eat itself."

[MOHAMMED BIKE RIDING MUSIC BEGINS]

MOHAMMED

[with exertion] You're dragging your feet!

STEPH

Well, you're only 13!

[MOHAMMED BIKE RIDING MUSIC GOES ON A LITTLE WHILE MORE]

MOHAMMED

So how 'bout those Vikings?

STEPH

Yeah. How 'bout 'em.

[MOHAMMED BIKE RIDING MUSIC GOES ON A LITTLE WHILE MORE]

[M[MOHAMMED BIKE RIDING MUSIC ENDS]

MOHAMMED

[Out of breath] Okay. This is the place my mom likes.

STEPH

Mohammed? This is Super Target.

MOHAMMED

She gets sushi from here all the time. They have unagi. That's eel.

STEPH

[melting] Oh Mohammed, I love unagi.

And that was the first date I'd had for sushi in a long time. Mohammed bought me a little box of unagi and himself a Twix, and we took it over to the cheap furniture on display and we sat and we ate and we just talked. Mohammed talked about all the people in the neighborhood—Clerky at the liquor store and how she pays for the paper in dirty one-dollar bills, and how Bushmanov the Russian inventor rigged up Mohammed's Gameboy to shoot an actual laser beam, and how Mohammed's mom and dad are opera critics and at night he can hear them fighting over the politics of putting up Wagner's work to Jewish audiences...

MOHAMMED

....and I just want to say, "Shut up already and just give me my allowance! Gheez!"

STEPH

...oh man, it was boring. But the unagi was delicious. It melted in my mouth, and I was happy.

MOHAMMED

Uh, Steph?

STEPH

Yes, Mohammed?

MOHAMMED

I stole your white sports bra from the line. But I made it into a shrine in my bedroom, I even put some rose petals in the cups, because.... you are so wonderful.

STEPH

[sweetly] Oh, Mohammed. You are such a pansy.

MOHAMMED

[angry] Am not!

STEPH

No! Pansy is good!

MOHAMMED

Oh, right. [under breath] Stupid, stupid stupid.

STEPH

Mohammed. I'm about to ~~do~~ ^{tellyou} something that's going to change your whole life.

~~MOHAMMED~~

~~(Gulp)~~

~~Okay. Should I close my eyes?~~

~~STEPH~~

~~No.~~

~~MOHAMMED~~

~~Should I take off any of my clothes?~~

~~STEPH~~

~~No.~~

MOHAMMED

Okay.

STEPH

I'm going to tell you something. Mohammed:
We're being evicted!

MOHAMMED

Huh?

STEPH

We didn't pay our mortgage and we're being forced out of the neighborhood!

MOHAMMED

[heavy breathing, then, with great angst] Nooooooooo!

STEPH

I knooooooooooooow!

STEPH

And then I did something else I hadn't done in months. I sat and sobbed in Super Target's furniture department with a teenage boy.

No - Mohammed
can NOT take
off his clothes.

Because without Mohammed in my life, who would buy me sushi? Who would put rose petals into the cups of my sports bras? Who would ever want me for his, or her, muse?

MOHAMMED

[slowly, mournfully, and with grief, singing]

I am her paper man....

INTERSTICE #1

NARRATOR

All that mournful singing. Song is the last bastion of hope for hopeless, sometimes. It's also the greatest medium for love. And speaking of love, Alan Greenspan, had invited many wonderful musicians into his trehouse.

- CLARINET MUSIC -

GREENSPAN

You're a wonderful clarinetist Mary Mack.

MARY MACK

Yer good too!

GREENSPAN

You might be the perfect human being. Do you know the economics game?

MARY MACK

Do I? Ever heard of Freddie Mac, Alan Greenspan?

GREENSPAN

You mean the congressionally chartered private mortgage funder, that Freddie Mac?

MARY MACK

Freddie Mac is also my dad.

GREENSPAN

Dee-licious, Mary Mack. You know there is some mumbo jumbo in the media that claims I am responsible for the sub-prime mortgage crisis. I only said a certain segment of the home-buying population could benefit from using adjustable rate mortgages, or ARMs.

MARY MACK

I believe Arms are best used for playing clarinets.

GREENSPAN

Raawwr. I love musicians. Speaking of musicians, Mary Mack, have you ever heard Miss Haley Bonar sing a song.

MARY MACK

She sings? You mean Haley Bonar who is standing here with a guitar? I thought she was one of your economist friends.

GREENSPAN

She's a great musician Mary Mack. I think she should play us a song.

HALEY BONAR

Thanks. I've always wanted to get in your tree house, Mr. Greenspan (or something).

This is not the first time Greenspan has love interest. Gonna get Boring?

Right Mack Makes Fresh

Mary Mack the Freshmaker

HALEY BONAR SONG #1

GREENSPAN

Haley Bonar! Wonderful!

-wait for applause-

MARY MACK

Is she an accountant, too? Because I am good with numbers and I am a good clarinetist.

GREENSPAN

(LOVINGLY)

Indeed you are Miss Mack. RAWWWRR...

NARRATOR

Early in the morning, the sun rising above the birch trees that encircle the neighborhood cemetery the Old Lady Dickinson sat in her lawn chair, at her husband Ronald's grave.

SUNG -

Old Ronald is gone.

But she talks to his stone.

It's Old Lady D at the Cemetery.

Old Lady D at the Cemetery.

OLD LADY D.

Oh Ronald, you old scandihoo, may yuh rest in eternal peace. I been thinking about when we first moved into the neighborhood. We were about to get our baby boy Paulie from that dirty Irish St. Paulie girl because I couldn't carry your seed in my own belly. So when we were moving in, you made me put a pillow under my housecoat so all the neighbors would think I was pregnant.

And while the neighbors were watching us carry our brand-y new davenport to the door, that darny pillow fell right out onto the street! Ooooooh!

But none of the neighbors ever said one word. Except that one time at that key party down at the Henderson's in '77 when all the men wanted my keys.

I thought it was because I couldn't make a baby. But you were such a good husband to me, Ronny. You said, "Woman, it ain't 'cause you're barren. It's 'cause yuh got such a sweet can."

Oh, Ronnie, this neighborhood is a changin' all the time, all our good neighbors with their strong morality movin' out and all these weirdos with no jobs movin' in. But rest in peace, Ronnie, I still got our same davenport. And I ain't gonna throw it away, either. It took us a long time to pay the damn thing off.

END INTERSTICE #1

NARRATOR

Of all the writers living in this dreary house, Herbach is the lowest functioning in terms of his ability to deal with real world concerns.

HERBACH

It is true. I do not function very well. I have never had a checkbook.

NARRATOR

way
too
long

That's saying something... lowest functioner. What would Herbach do if the bank took the house away? Herbach was going stir crazy. He put on his roller skates, took off his clothes and rolled up and down the stairs...

(disco music – clunking noises – Herbach whooping)

...until Brady surprised him, by speaking to him.

BRADY

Please, stop making this racket. I'm trying to fill my wading pool with tears.

NARRATOR

Herbach tried to stop, because he likes Brady. Unfortunately he stopped at the top of the stairs then lost his balance and tumbled down them...

(tumbling sounds)

(Herbach shouts)

(Brady cries out, "Oh Dear")

...knocking himself out. And then Herbach fell into a dream of his past.

(tinkling pixie music)

NARRATOR CONTINUES

Let's look in on Herbach's dream. Between 2001 and 2004, Herbach lived in a dumpster behind the McDonald's in Uptown. He called that dumpster his writing box and he hawked his writing to McDonald's customers who walked through the parking lot. Herbach?

HERBACH

Nothing goes better with a quarter pounder than a pound of hearty prose!

MOM

Get in the car! Don't look at him!

BOY CHILD

But I like Oscar the Grouch.

HERBACH

I'm no grouch! I'm a cartoon sponge.

BOY CHILD

Yay!

MOM

Get in the car, junior!

NARRATOR

Herbach made six dollars between 2001 and 2004, all of which he donated to the AARP to honor his grandmother, who lives in Wisconsin. Here he is writing a card to the AARP.

HERBACH

God save the cheese eaters! They get old, too! Some of them.

NARRATOR

What a good boy! And Herbach was happy and well-fed.

HERBACH

French fry!

NARRATOR

But sometimes he would get cold. One day he was approached by a man child named Sam who made him an offer. Sam lifted the dumpster lid and found Herbach scribbling on a McDonald's bag in red crayon.

SAM

Hey-o artist. I think I got a new house. It's going to be a artist house. You should live there and write your art. We'll be best pals!

NARRATOR

Herbach wasn't impressed. He already had a home.

HERBACH

No thanks, man-child. I could use a best pal, but this dumpster is the white hot center of my art. I cannot leave.

SAM

Oh no! Well, I'm going to keep coming around, because I like your style kemosabe!

HERBACH

You're a nice fellow!

NARRATOR

Later that day while Herbach was napping in the parking lot, he was run over by a McDonald's truck...

(Truck beeping, crunching)

A truck that had a big picture of an Egg McMuffin rising over the earth on it. Dear Audience, we're about to fall into a dream within a dream. While Herbach was in a coma, he was visited by an angel of love, one who'd visited him before.

(pixie sounds)

BJORK

Oh Herbach, you are flat like street car man hole.

HERBACH

Bjork, is that you? You're my angel!

BJORK

I am your angel. I'm am a pixie. I am Bjork.

HERBACH

Where am I Bjork? Where am I?

BJORK

You are floating in the McDonald's meadows where the mewling cattles are made into patties and trucked to America for the hungry to eat, but the hungry stay hungry.

HERBACH

I am hungry, Bjork. French fry?

BJORK

You are not home, Herbach. Remember your childhood? In your childhood, you lived in a real home with walls and tiny animals whom you befriended and to whom you sang songs. Remember...

BJORK SINGS – HIGH PITCHED WHISPER

Kitty in the wall wall
Wrap it in a towel towel
Dry its little head dry
Kitty don't you die die!

HERBACH SINGS

Kitty with your fluff fluff
I blow your furry puff puff
Wake up kitty or I'll cry
Kitty don't you die die!

*bite your
nose!*

BOTH

Kitty kitty itty bitty
Kitty kitty bite your nose!

HERBACH

I remember Bjork. I loved my home!

BJORK

If you remember, Herbach, why do you live in the corporate refuse bin of a hungry nation? The man-child has offered you a new home with sturdy walls, a place to write your art, a place to be best of pals.

HERBACH

But you're my best pal, Bjork! Dream lover!

BJORK

I am dust and crystal. I am shivering away.

HERBACH

Wait Bjork! You're leaving? Aren't we going to make out!? No kiss... no... Nothing!?

BJORK

You smell of ca-ged animals and blood sport. Good bye! Good bye!! (whispered) Good bye.

(tinkling pixie music)

NARRATOR

When Herbach awoke from his dream, back into his other dream, he found himself in a princess bed, under a Hello Kitty Comforter, in a big room, in a house. It was this house, the Lit 6 House. Sam walked into the dark room carrying a plate with a sandwich upon it.

SAM

You awake, sleepy? Do you want a tuna sandwich?

HERBACH

You really are my best pal. What's your name, man-child?

SAM

Samma lamma ding dong. But you can call me Sam.

HERBACH

And I am Herbach. You can call me Herbach.

SAM

Oh Herbach, I know. Welcome home.

NARRATOR

It was intense for Herbach to remember the past. Let's get back to the present. Herbach had fallen down the stairs on his roller skates. He awoke with Brady standing over him. Tears were pouring down Herbach's face.

HERBACH

Hi, I'm Herbach.

BRADY

Thank God, you're alive.

HERBACH

Brady, I don't want to leave this house. Bjork wants me to be here and so does samma lamma ding dong. I don't want to live in a dumpster.

BRADY

Nor do I.

HERBACH

Brady?

BRADY

Yes.

HERBACH

Would you mind if I roller-skated in your wading pool?

BRADY

You have good timing. I've just drained my wading pool. Would you mind if I rode on your back?

HERBACH

You bet, Brady.

NARRATOR

The two housemates climbed down the stairs into the basement together.

sound of stair climbing down –

HERBACH

Whoa, Brady! You've broken all of your basement stuff.

BRADY

I'm so sad.

NARRATOR

Then, with his hip-waders still on, Brady jumped onto Herbach's naked back and they skated into the wading pool. Herbach—skated so fast, fueled by friendship, best pal-dom and his art, which of late had evolved from writing into naked-thong-roller skating. Herbach skated the best skate of his life. Back and forth the two friends glided under the enormous strength of Herbach's thighs. Brady continued to weep.

HERBACH

Brady, we're never going to stop skating! We're going to skate and skate and skate! No one can stop us!
This is our home!

BRADY

Skate on! Skate on! Skate on!

NARRATOR

And Brady's tears, mixed with Herbach's, slowly began to fill the wading pool.

INTERSTICE #2

NARRATOR

Speaking of home, isn't going through puberty a little like leaving home? You move from your child body into your adult body and for awhile nothing around you fits. Let's hear from Mohammed, the paper boy.

MOHAMMED DIARY

(THEME SONG):

Delivering papers in the neighborhood
Seeing things that no boy should
Getting where the getting's good
He's the paperboy, Mohammed

rock n' roll

MOHAMMED

My name is Mark!

Mwah-Mohammed

Dear diary, What is it about me that drives women so wild? Perhaps it is my incredible newspaper-throwing bicep. Or perhaps it is my rugged good looks. Or could it be my impossible wit? Whatever it is, I have no less than three secret admirers at school. And I heard that from a very reliable source, so I know it's true. Plus, I've noticed girls in the hallway looking at me funny lately. Let's face it, I'm a catch. My dad said he saw some hair on my upper lip and that I was starting to look like Tom Selleck. I Googled Tom Selleck and, I must say, it was like looking in a mirror. But don't worry, dear diary. I'm not going to change just because of my new animal magnetism (note Kurt: pronounce Frenchy). I'm still Mark, the paperboy. I just happen to be an incredibly good-looking paperboy. But I'm only human. I put on my pants one leg at a time.

In related news: none of the girls who have a secret crush on me is Steph. Water water everywhere, but not a drop to drink! C'est la vie, diary.

Mark.

NARRATOR

The writers seemed destined to lose their homes. Leaving home is something so many of us, other than those of us who live with our parents forever, must face. In the neighborhood, two local shopkeepers remembered leaving their homes. Clerky leaned on a broom, her country eyes watery, she stared vacantly at a cardboard Bacardi display. And, she sang...

CLERKY SONG

(so sad)

My daddy was broke by work and alcohol
I was just a teen girl
But I heard my daddy's call
I fed him his breakfast
And cleaned from floor to roof

But ain't nothing could stop the pull of my sweet tooth
My dreams were big, my desires would be soothed.

The hills were filled with fear and pheromones
my body was like lightening
the waters they all rose
then a man in a pick up truck
broke down my shot gun shack
and with him I left my sweet daddy on his back
Yes, with him I left my sweet daddy on his back.

NARRATOR

And in the adjacent store front, a Russian émigré, Yevgeny Bushmanov, or Bushy as he is called, put down the screw driver he was using to attach a uranium canister to a technologically advanced refrigerator. He looked to the store ceiling, a tear in his eye. And, he sang...

A great inventor cannot get
what great inventor deserve
in land that takes the cake from innovate
no rubles just oodles of bread lines that aggravate

A great inventor cannot take
His daddy's anger, his Mommy's mistake
In home with radio Bushy always break!
No kiss, just gristle steak and reprobate.

Bushy want no government handshake
Bushy want to drink milkshake!
Bushy want to float by cabin in lake!
To mother Russia (to mother Russia)
To mother Russia... Bushy never return.

END INTERSTICE #2

NARRATOR

Now let's get back to our story.

Brady woke up in the morning refreshed, having forgotten that the housemates seemed to be losing their house. He would end the day destroying his basement. Why? Brady is a delicate man.

BRADY

I am a delicate man. People are often fooled by my robust body and large collection of ascots. But a man's man I am not. I can't even touch an aluminum can let alone drink from one. And, for goodness sakes, I'm afraid of turtles. So, needless to say, my cuticles are not cut out for manual labor, which is why I hired our 13-year-old paperboy, Mohamed, to install the new high-definition flat screen television I purchased for my basement room.

MOHAMED

(struggling under the weight)

Ah, sir, could you lift that end? I'm kind of losing it here.

BRADY

Mohamed, as you are well aware, as a subcontractor you are required to supply your own additional labor if so required.

MOHAMED

But I'm going to drop it. And my name's Mark.

BRADY

Very well, Mohamed. Listen, I just got a delivery of ascots back from the laundress, and if I don't get them on their hangers soon they aren't going to fold right. Let me know when you're done.

MOHAMED

(groaning?)

BRADY

That Mohamed is an industrious lad.

[sound of drilling a hole]

Many a time he has lent me a hand to improve my basement abode, my cherished home.

[sound of drilling a hole]

Yes, I owe him a great deal. Why, he dug my entire wading pool, granted it is only 18 inches deep, but he did have to jackhammer through the cement floor. And he hand-built my walk-in ascot closet out of reclaimed Brazilian rosewood that he found on eBay.

But I had been awaiting the arrival of the big-screen television for weeks for my new screening room. There are some things that just require a large screen for proper viewing. As Mohamed wired everything up, I picked out an extraordinary black ascot, suitable for any red carpet premiere, and when I came out of the ascot closet, Mohamed had the television hung on the concrete wall.

BRADY

Oh, Mohamed. It is glorious.

MOHAMED

It is nice. (beat) And heavy. My dad has one that he watches baseball on.

BRADY

Yes, Mohamed, but enough about the proletariat. Put this DVD in. You are not going to believe the picture quality.

[sound of DVD drawer opening and shutting?]

Mohamed and I sat down on the futon, which he had folded up into the couch position, and I pressed play on the remote. Ooooh, Mohamed, this is the stuff. Welcome to High Definition, HD TV.

MOHAMED

What is this we're watching?

BRADY

Antiques Roadshow.

MOHAMED

I thought we were going to watch a movie?

BRADY

Ha. You know I don't approve of modern cinema. No style. Besides, this is real drama. The only program worthy of watching. This is the infamous Charlotte, North Carolina episode from Season 3. Oh, oh, look at what this guy has.

MOHAMED

It's a dresser.

BRADY

A gentleman's bureau, Mohamed. A nice example of Art Nouveau. With this Hi-Def you can really note the beauty of the chisel work.

MOHAMED

I think that's actually Art Deco.

BRADY

No, it's not.

MOHAMED

Yes, it is.

BRADY

No, it's not.

MOHAMED

Yes, it is.

BRADY

Is not.

MOHAMED

Is to.

BRADY

Is not.

MOHAMED

Is to.

BRADY

Nouveau.

MOHAMED

Deco.

BRADY

Nouveau.

MOHAMED

Deco.

BRADY

Nouveau.

MOHAMED

Deco.

BRADY

Wait...here it comes.

BRITISH GUY (MIKE BRADY)

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Mike Brady'. The signature is stylized with a large 'M' and a long, sweeping underline.

What we have here is a classic example of Art Deco.

BRADY
Nooo.

MOHAMED
Yes!

BRITISH GUY (MIKE BRADY)
It's a lovely dresser. Thank you for bringing it down.

BRADY
Shut it, Mohamed.

MOHAMED
Don't worry about it sir. Anyone could mistake an Art Deco dresser for an Art Nouveau Gentleman's Bureau. Not! (beat) You know, I'm surprised you put this tv up what with all the questions over the ownership of the house?

BRADY
What?

MOHAMED
I saw Sam eating a tuna fish sandwich. He never eats, so I knew he was upset. When I asked why, he mumbled something about mortgage papers and eviction.

BRADY
Oh, Mohamed, you're right. The foreclosure notice in Herbach's armpit. But, my basement. All the boy hours that have gone into constructing this palace.

MOHAMED
You don't have to tell me. Sucks to be you. See you later.

BRADY
Where are you off to in such a hurry?

MOHAMED
I have to pee.

BRADY
Very well, Mohamed. You go pee.

MOHAMED
Thank you, sir.

BRADY
No need to thank me, Mohamed. The good health of your urinary tract is thanks enough for me.

NARRATOR
As Mohamed rushed off to empty his tiny bladder, Brady wept. Brady is a loner. His dark, cold basement is the closest thing he has to a friend. It is his Xanadu. He needed to process the news he had received from the paperboy, that the house was lost. So he strapped on his hip waders...

[slapping of two rubber suspenders]

...and stepped into his wading pool...

[water sloshing back and forth, melancholically]

What to do...what to do...Brady thought...one choice was to take heroic action: lock the basement down and refuse to move...but that was not Brady...no, Brady was more inclined toward the self-destructive, tragi-heroic...if he couldn't live in Paradise, no one would.

BRADY

First, I packed my ascot collection into two-dozen steamer trunks, which I then had Mohamed carry to his dad's wine cellar for storage. And then, with an axe I stole from our neighbor the Punk Poet Paul D's shed, I began to dismantle the ascot closet.

[sound of axe into wood, over and over with grunting and/or crying, perhaps like an old field holler with a group refrain, the chopping being the rhythm]

(singing)

They can take my home...

[chop]

But they can't take my soul...

[chop]

I have a shiny dome

[chop]

They can't take my soul

[chop]

The closet's gone

[chop]

They can't take my soul

[chop]

And when I was done with the ascot closet, I hurled the axe into the big-screen television.

[glass crashing]

I'm sorry PBS. But I cannot imagine you with someone else. It must end here.

And finally, I pulled the plug on my wading pool.

[pop, followed by water draining]

[as water drains I whimper, goes on longer than necessary]

And as the last drops swirled away, I knelt over the drain and the tears that ran desperately from my cheeks chased after the pool water as if to say 'we cannot live without you.' And then I plugged the drain and watched my tears gather on the pool floor.

(disco music – clunking noises – Herbach whooping)

NARRATOR

Then Brady heard Herbach upstairs making an incredible racket. The racket upset Brady. He went upstairs to stop Herbach from roller skating and whooping. Brady caused Herbach to fall down.

BRADY

Herbach landed at my feet, unconscious. He lay there for several minutes, eyes closed, crying, and then he woke.

HERBACH

Hi, I'm Herbach.

BRADY

Thank God, you're alive.

HERBACH

Brady, I don't want to leave this house. Bjork wants me to be here and so does samma lamma ding dong. I don't want to live in a dumpster.

BRADY

Nor do I.

HERBACH

Brady?

BRADY

Yes.

HERBACH

Would you mind if I roller-skated in your wading pool?

BRADY

Can I ride on your back?

HERBACH

You bet your finely-suited tukus you can.

NARRATOR

The two writers climbed into the basement. With his hip-waders still on, Brady jumped onto Herbach's naked back and they skated into the wading pool. Herbach—skated so fast, and Back and forth the two friends glided under the enormous strength of Herbach's thighs. Brady wept.

[Brady weeping]

but this time because he had the support of a friend. Herbach's sensitive skin chafed under the constant pressure of Brady's hip-waders.

[squeaking rubber on skin]

Herbach, too, cried, not because of the chafing, though it hurt terribly, but because as long as he had roller skates and friends it no longer mattered where he lived. A dumpster would do. Herbach began to sing, an ethereal female voice joining him

BJORK KITTY SONG -- MAYBE JUST INSTRUMENTAL UNTIL END WHERE BJORK WHISPERS
LAST KITTY KITTY ITTY BITTY?

Kitty in the wall wall
Wrap it in a towel towel
Dry its little head dry
Kitty don't you die die!

Kitty with your fluff fluff
I blow your furry puff puff
Wake up kitty or I'll cry
Kitty don't you die die!

Kitty kitty itty bitty
Kitty kitty bite your nose!

BRADY
Who was that singing?

HERBACH
Our Guardian angel, Brady! Skate! Skate!

NARRATOR
And skate they did. It is not known how long, or how many laps, Herbach skated with Brady on his back. They were found comatose in six inches of water that could only have come from the tears the two produced. How could they not own this house? They cried rivers.

INTERSTICE #3

(Greenspan Clarinet)

Out in the tree house, Alan Greenspan, economist and clarinetist was having a hootenanny with Mary Mack, the Clarinetist and Haley Bonar. Suddenly an ice breeze blew through Greenspan's tree home, tickling the hairs on his ears.

GREENSPAN
Oh, well. I'm tickled. Who is this pixie who has just appeared from thin air?

BJORK
I am Bjork.

GREENSPAN
Are you an economist, Ms. Bjork?

BJORK
I am shattered snowflakes.

GREENSPAN
A musician! Deelightful.

MARY MACK
I play clarinet, Bjork.

(MARY MACK CLARINET)

BJORK
I know your dreams. You are here to de-rationalize this Greenspan with your shiny instrument.

GREENSPAN

Mary Mack has certainly put her mojo in my heart.

BJORK

That is not why I come. My heart is for Haley Bonor. I am here to hear her sweet song.

HALEY BONAR

Well, I'd be happy to oblige.

(HALEY BONAR SONG #2)

GREENSPAN

Haley Bonar! What good singing!

BJORK

You are beautiful, Haley Bonor.

MARY MACK

We should all play music together.

GREENSPAN

Home is where my soul sings.

(CLARINET DUET - HALEY STRUMS, TOO?)

END INTERSTICE #3

SAM STORY

NARRATOR

Sam was the fellow who found this house. Sam was apparently in charge of the mortgage. Would Sam be the one to find the solution to this mortgage crisis?

SAM

I bought an Apple iPhone, but the language is set to Yiddish. And I can't figure out how to fix it. I'm such a shmok. But that's the least of my problems. You wanna talk problems? I got problems that'll make you gevald until you're shvitzn.

First off, me and Herbach and Steph and Brady found a letter in the mail that said we were going to be evicted from the house. Oy! When I stopped paying the mortgage several years ago and nothing happened, I just assumed we were...I don't know...paid up. But the letter said we had thirty days to either vacate or pay what we owed. I envisioned us living in the dumpster behind McDonald's, where I first met Herbach. We would be homeless. I immediately put in a call to our mortgage broker, Mortgage Donny.

So that's the first problem. The second problem is literally ten quadrillion times worse than being evicted and living in a dumpster. Literally. Quadrillion.

(Cue scary music)

And here it is, the second problem: wait for it...my special lady.

(Scary music falls apart)

That's right. I had a new girl in my life. Really, though, her name was Gyrl, with a Y. And overall, she was great. Very smart, driven—that is to say she was chauffeured; she had a driver. She was fairly motivated,

And by together, I mean me and Greenspan.

(per Mary's suggestion)

S.W.A

too, I guess. Very pretty. And, by all accounts, she liked me and I liked her. And I'm no k'vetcher, but the problem is as clear as the nezer on my ponem.

(This paragraph could be paired with sound effects)

I'm a busy guy, and I have a daily routine. And I like my daily routine.

(alarm clock)

I wake up around 8 and have coffee.

(stretching sounds) At 9 Joolie, my yoga instructor, comes over and we go through a dozen sun salutations and a few other poses.

(padding on meat) At ten Joolie gives me my aromatherapy massage. I hit the treadmill from ten to eleven while watching the Price is Right.

(nondescript talking sounds, a la Charlie Brown) From 11 to noon I gab on the phone with my dear old friend, Gayle. Then I have a light lunch and watch Magnum, P.I.

(Typewriter sounds) I start doing the important work, writing, my life's work, my heart and soul work, at 2.

(Disco music) At 2:15 I practice my dance moves in front of the mirror. This lasts until about six.

(Running water) Then I shower,

(squeezing from a tube sound, like a splattery farting noise) moisturize, and I'm off for the night.

See? I'm a busy dude. I have no time for relationships. But I like Gyrl. I was talking to my dear old friend Gayle on the phone the other day.

SAM

(On phone)

I don't have time for a relationship, Gayle.

GAYLE

Sam, you have time to do anything you want to do.

SAM

No way, I'm so busy all the time. What am I gonna do, ask A&E to stop being so terrific in the afternoons? I don't think so, Gayle. I don't think they'd listen.

GAYLE

Don't give me that nonsense, Sam. If you wanted to have a girlfriend, you'd make time. Do you like this girl? What's her name again?

SAM

It's Gyrl, with a Y.

GAYLE

What kind of a name is that?

SAM

I think it's Portuguese.

GAYLE

So do you like her?

SAM

I do! I like the H out of her. But what if she ruins my life?

GAYLE

There it is, Sam. That was your aha moment. You're scared, Sam. You're so scared of getting hurt again. Physically hurt, I mean, like with the last one. But I think it's time you put yourself out there again. And if she starts trying to ruin your life, you just say, "Get over yourself, Gyrl!"

SAM

Gayle—you're meshugeneh! I'm so glad we're dear old friends.

SOUND

CALL WAITING

SAM

Gayle, that's my other line. Can you hold on a second?

GAYLE

NO ONE PUTS GAYLE ON HOLD!!! Just call me later.

SAM

Okay.

SOUND

CLICKING OVER TO OTHER LINE

SAM

Hello?

MORTGAGE DONNY

(barking voice—like he's got a cigar in his mouth)

This is Mortgage Donny, returning a call from some crazy person named Sally Osterhout

SAM

Oh, that's me.

MORTGAGE DONNY

You're name is Sally?

SAM

No, no. My name is Sam, but I'm the one who called you.

MORTGAGE DONNY

You're name's not Sally?

SAM

No.

MORTGAGE DONNY

You givin' me the run around, you nut job?

SAM

I don't think so. But I do have a question for you.

MORTGAGE DONNY

Okay, but just for the record, I got my eye on you, Sally. Now what is it?

SAM

I got a notice that we're being put out of our house.

MORTGAGE DONNY

What's that gotta do with Mortgage Donny?

SAM
You're our mortgage broker.

MORTGAGE DONNY
So what's your question?

SAM
Is there any way we can, I don't know, refinance so that we can lower our monthly bill?

MORTGAGE DONNY
Hm. Good question you weirdo. What's your monthly payment now?

SAM
Not sure.

MORTGAGE DONNY
What would you like it to be?

SAM
As close to, say, zero as possible. If there's any way that, perhaps, the bank could write us a check every month, I'd be willing to explore that option, too.

MORTGAGE DONNY
Lemme see if I can find your file. I'll do some digging around and call you back later.

SAM
Okey doke.

MORTGAGE DONNY
Don't you okey doke me, you friggin' lunatic.

SAM
Okey...doke.

(PHONE CLICK)

SAM
As soon as Mortgage Donny hung up the phone, Gyrl walked into my bedroom.

GYRL
Hi sweetheart. You wouldn't believe the day I've had!

SAM
Hmph. Wouldn't I?

GYRL
I saw my old friend from...baby, what's the matter? Your sweet little face looks so sad.

SAM
Don't you schmeikel me!

GYRL
What does schmeikel mean?

SAM
According to my iPhone, it means to sweet talk.

GYRL

What is that, Yiddish?

SAM

Yoh.

GYRL

I'm not sweet talking you, baby.

SAM

Do you take me for a schmegegi?

GYRL

I don't think so. Why are you doing this?

SAM

Because I know what's going to happen. You're going to make me start to have feelings for you, and then you're going to make me start to have big feelings for you, and then you're going to make me stop getting erotic massages from Joolie.

GYRL

Who's Joolie?

SAM

Don't change the subject.

GYRL

Sam, I have no such plans. In fact, I don't have any plans at all.

SAM

You don't?

GYRL

No. I like you, and I think you like me, and I think we should just hang out and have fun. And if something develops, then fine. But I would never try to change you. I like you just the way you are.

SAM

Hmmm.

(PHONE RINGS)

SAM

Hold that thought. Let me get that. (on phone). Hola? Como estas?

MORTGAGE DONNY

Is Sally there?

SAM

This is she.

MORTGAGE DONNY

Look, lady. I don't know what kind of sick joke you're playing on me, but I couldn't find no record of your mortgage, so I did an address search. And lemme tell you, there isn't a map in print or on the Internet that even shows your house exists.

SAM

But can you lower my monthly payment?

MORTGAGE DONNY

You ain't got a house, according to all known records. If you ain't got a house, you ain't got a mortgage, and you ain't got no monthly payment. Now if you'll be so kind as to excuse me, I got enough wing nuts in my life already. So long.

(click)

SAM

So I guess this is the end of my story.

(BEGIN ROMANTIC MUSIC)

SAM

I looked over at Gyrl. If she was telling the truth, then what did I have to lose? And, anyway, I really had nothing left to give away. No money, no time, all my energy went into A&E's afternoon programming. And several years ago I bought this house, and according to Mortgage Donny, all it cost me was my dignity.

Alright, Gyrl, let's take a soak in my hot tub.

NARRATOR

So, apparently, the foreclosure notice wasn't meant for the Lit 6 house. No bank knows the house even exists! But the foreclosure notice was real. Whose house was being foreclosed on? The sun went down. Herbach and Brady slept on their tears. Steph dreamed of sushi. Mohammed dreamed of Steph. Sam and Gyrl splashed all night in the hot tub. And out of the dawn mist, I figure arose, carrying a cloth bag filled with cash... It was the Punk Poet Paul D.

PAUL D'S POEM

NARRATOR

Why are you carrying a bag of cash, Punk Poet Paul D?

PAUL D

Mom doesn't know this, but before dad died, he took out a second mortgage on the home. He wanted to start a Salmon farm in our backyard, but he died right after he got the money. All the cash is in the suit he got buried in. We get foreclosure notices all the time. I put them in Sam's room. Usually he doesn't notice.

NARRATOR

Is your house going to be taken by the bank? Will your mom, The Old Lady Dickenson be homeless?

PAUL D

No. Every six months or so, I go over to my scrap heap and sell enough to pay off the past due amount. That's why I got this bag full of cash.

NARRATOR

You're a good son, Punk Poet Paul D.

PAUL D

I have no idea who you are.

NARRATOR

I live in the attic of the Lit 6 house. I narrate this show. I'm Dave.

PAUL D
Whatever, homes.

NARRATOR
As the Punk Poet walked away, Mary Mack, the Clarinetist looking tired, but happy, climbed down from the tree house.

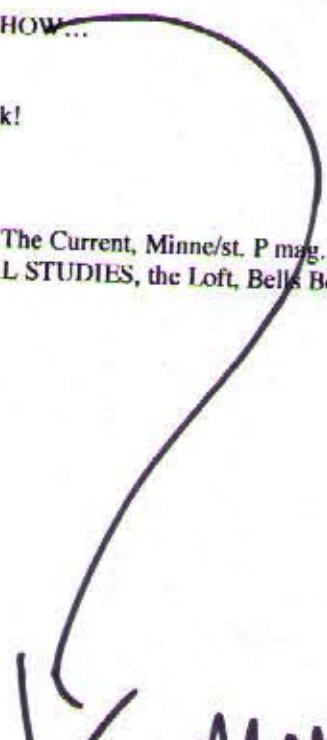
MARY MACK LESSONS FROM SHOW...

NARRATOR
Thank you for being here, Mary Mack!

SAM
And thank you...
DON'T FORGET SPONSORS: 89.3 The Current, Minne/st. P mag. HAMLINE UNIVERSITY'S
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF LIBERAL STUDIES, the Loft, Bell's Beer, and Joe's Garage. Let's all meet
over there for a drink!

NARRATOR
Hey, let's play our song

[Theme Song]



Mary Mack
adds her
thing.