

SCREENWRITERS PARADISE

AN ORIGINAL DRAMEDY WEBISODE SERIES

S01E01 | "Fade In"

Written & Created by

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Produced by

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SCREENWRITERS **PARADISE**

"Fade In"

MAIN CAST

ANDREW ZAHIR..... MANISH DAYAL

JOSHUA LAWSON..... MATT COHEN

SHAWN LEONIDAS..... ROMEO MILLER

GUEST STARRING

MANNY RODRIGUEZ..... CHEECH MARIN

ON BLACK:

ANDREW (V.O.)

The life of a scriptwriter is a life of imagining the world the way you wish it could be. One moment, you're living the dream; Fame, fortune... all the women you can handle. Or men, whatever. Everything your average Joe spends his entire life trying to gain.

FADE IN:

INT. DWIGHT LOFTS - APARTMENT 205 - NIGHT

ANDREW ZAHIR. Mid-20s, round face with deep brown eyes, and messy, dark brown hair; the stubble on his face tells us that he hasn't picked up a razor in a few days.

He slouches in front of a Macbook Pro. His eyes fixated on the bright screen.

CLICK! CLICK! CLICK! His unnecessarily loud keystroking is enough to drive anyone mad.

ANDREW (V.O.)

Then, a little BITCH named reality slaps you smack-dead across the face, and you know what it tells you?

Andrew's typing begins to slow. His eyelids struggle to remain open, and he's constantly having to catch his head from hitting the desk.

ANDREW (V.O.)

Your life SUCKS and will continue in doing so, one bullshit script at a time.

The typing has stopped. His eyes, now shut and refusing to open again. His head begins to fall...

Three, two, one... he's out. His head bangs against the keyboard and on impact we --

BLACKOUT.

FADE IN:

INT. DWIGHT LOFTS - APARTMENT 205 - THE NEXT DAY

Andrew is in the same place where we left him. Snoring quietly, face planted on the black keyboard.

ANDREW (V.O.)
Hello world. As you've probably
already guessed... that's me.
Andrew Zahir.

Behind Andrew, a man steps out into the living room from the hallway. Tip toeing across the floor.

This is JOSHUA LAWSON, Andrew's roommate. Mid 20s, dark brown hair, a charming look about him, and goofy smile. He's dressed in only a pair of snug, blue briefs.

ANDREW (V.O.)
And there's Josh Lawson. My best
friend... some days at least. He
can be a dick at times but... but
he's my dick, you know?
(beat)
Wait, that didn't come out right.

He peers behind him, putting his finger up to his lips. Then waves his hand, gesturing to a young woman in her underwear and a white T-shirt twice her size. Behind her, a man in even less clothing steps out from his room.

Joshua opens the front door. His guests cross the room, both giving him a grin and a soft peck on the lips as they exit the apartment.

He glances over at Andrew for a moment, rolls his eyes, then slams the door shut.

JOSHUA
Rise and shine, babe!

Andrew's head jerks up from the keyboard, dragging a few keys with it. The letters being K, I, D and C. He jumps to his feet, and looks at his roommate with fear and confusion.

Joshua just stands there, chuckling.

ANDREW
God, Josh. You trying to give me a
heart attack?

JOSHUA

No, but you've got "dick" on your face, and that's pretty hilarious.

Andrew touches the side of his face, causing the keys to drop. He gives Josh a look that could translate to a number of inappropriate things.

ANDREW

Idiot.

Joshua scrunches up his face.

JOSHUA

Look who woke up on the wrong side of the desk this morning...

(beat)

Have you been sitting there since last night?

ANDREW

I've been sitting here since yesterday morning. I haven't showered or brushed my teeth in over 48 hours. Go ahead, take a whiff...

Andrew raises his arm, showing his hairy pits. Joshua puts his hands in the air and starts backing away.

JOSHUA

Nah, I'm good. I'll take your word for it.

(beat)

Just... tell me you at least put an average sized dent in that script.

ANDREW

I've made some progress...

JOSHUA

(surprised)

Oh?

ANDREW

Yes... I didn't have a title page yesterday. Now we've got five. One of them even has one of those animated GIFS.

Long pause, as Joshua narrows his eyes.

JOSHUA
I can't tell if you're being
sarcastic or if that's really your
idea of "progress."

ANDREW
Ugh... I got nothing.

JOSHUA
Why am I not surprised?

ANDREW
Hey! Cut me some slack. It's not
like I've been sitting on my ass
since we got here.

Joshua cross his arms and shifts his stance.

ANDREW (CONT'D)
We've only been in L.A for a few
months. I'm still adjusting to the
new atmosphere. This city is
insane.

Joshua isn't buying a word he's saying.

JOSHUA
You're from Miami. How much
adjusting do you need?

Andrew sighs.

ANDREW
You're right. I'm never gonna get
this done.

JOSHUA
I'm telling you, it would go much
smoother if we just wrote the thing
together. Wipe off that pride...
and drool --

Andrew notices the saliva running down his chin. He wipes it
off with his sleeve.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)
Let me write a page... or an act.

Andrew pauses for a moment, considering the offer. He shakes
his head in disapproval.

ANDREW
No, no. You've been helping me
write for years.
(MORE)

I can't remember the last time I wrote a script on my own!

JOSHUA

Try never.

ANDREW

Thanks!

JOSHUA

Sorry.

(beat)

You know what? I'm not sorry! So what if you'll forever be credited as a cowriter? Who cares if you're probably gonna die an angry, unfulfilled, eighty year old script doctor, if you're lucky.

Andrew's mouth widens.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)

It's not the end of the world. Besides, you got me to make sure that never happens. You wouldn't make a good script doctor anyway. Your grammar hasn't improved since the 10th grade.

Andrew sighs in self-disappointment.

ANDREW

What if one day when I'm stuck in the middle of act two, you're off making the next ... Fringe?

JOSHUA

I preferred The X-Files, but hey...

Andrew stares him down.

JOSHUA

I mean, that's not gonna happen either.

(beat)

What did I say right before take off?

ANDREW

Before or after you popped three pills and told me you'd punch me in the throat if I woke you up before we landed?

JOSHUA

And I would have. Last time I was conscience on an airplane they had to make an emergency landing in Nebraska. You ever been to Nebraska? It's practically where hicks go to die. No thank you.

(beat)

But no... before that. I said "we're in this together, or not at all."

Andrew smirks a bit, then nods in agreement. Joshua heads into the kitchen.

We follow Joshua as he removes out a frying pan from the counter and puts it on the stove top.

BACK ON Andrew.

JOSHUA (O.S.) (CONT'D)

(calling out)

You want eggs?

ANDREW

You know I do.

VVTTZZZ! Andrew's cell phone vibrates on the desk next to him. He picks the phone up and reads his text.

His eyes widen in excitement.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

HOLY SHIT!

JOSHUA (O.S.)

What!?

ANDREW

Remember when Manny said he'd keep an eye out for TV-related events around town?

JOSHUA (O.S.)

Yeah...

ANDREW

Well, he might have just come through for us.

Joshua walks over to Andrew, curious.

JOSHUA

I wouldn't be so quick to trust Manny if I were you. Have you seen the mustache on that man? I mean, the guy's obviously not playing with a full deck.

ANDREW

I could care less at this point. Michael Mayer is having a rooftop party tonight!

JOSHUA

Who the HELL is that? And why does he sound like a serial killer?

ANDREW

Michael Mayer. He was an E.P on that NBC show a couple years ago... what was it... Do No Harm?

JOSHUA

Didn't that show get axed after like... two episodes?

ANDREW

Yeah, what's your point?

Joshua raises his eyebrows.

JOSHUA

Just thought I'd state it for the record.

ANDREW

Well, he's accomplished a hell of a lot more than some people... i.e. us.

JOSHUA

No arguing there.

(beat)

So, what are you thinking? We just show up, uninvited? We're a couple of nobodies. What are we gonna tell him? Some guy named Manny who probably spends most nights watching reruns of some 90s Telenovela gave us your address... mind if we come in?

ANDREW

He... doesn't need to know about Manny.

JOSHUA

Good thinking. How did he even get this information? I thought all he did was scrub toilets and collect late rent money.

ANDREW

I think it's best not to question his tactics. Plausible deniability goes a long way in this town.

Joshua considers his reasoning, and can do nothing but agree.

JOSHUA

But seriously, guys like us don't get into private events like that... not without knowing somebody. Or... being in possession of a really deep throat and unfortunately, I wasn't blessed with one.

ANDREW

With all the sex you have, it's a wonder you haven't hooked up with some big time producer by now.

JOSHUA

You just wanna use me up till there's nothing left...

BOOM! BOOM!

A loud banging sound is heard from outside the apartment.

Andrew and Joshua look at one another with the same disturbed expression, before rushing toward the front door, sneaking a peek through the shades.

On the other side of the apartment complex, a man is kicking the door to the apartment across from theirs, trying to make his way in.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)

OH MY GOD, WE'RE GONNA DIE!!

The door finally gives in and the man makes his way inside, shutting the door behind him. Joshua grabs the pair of jeans sitting on the floor next to the door. Slides into them.

The two roommates slowly make their way out of the apartment and onto the deck.

Another man is seen walking toward them. This is MANUEL "MANNY" RODRIGUEZ (60s, big gut, graying hair and the thickest mustache you'll ever see), the apartment manager.

Joshua and Andrew spot the man, and look at him, curiously.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)

Hey, Manny... I think somebody just broke into that apartment!

MANNY

No... this happens every time that asshole comes back in town. He's always losing his god damned key! I've had to fix that lock a hundred times!

JOSHUA

Oh, quit complaining, Manuel. It's not a good look on you.

MANNY

Fuck you, asshole!

(to Andrew)

Did you get my E-mail? Big party tonight. Lots of pansy ass film geeks. You outta be there.

Andrew doesn't quite know how to take that comment, but he brushes it off.

ANDREW

Yeah, I got it. We're just trying to find a way in... you know, legally.

MANNY

I'm sure you boys will think of something. You're smart... at least one of you is.

JOSHUA

Thanks. I appreciate that, Manuel.

Manny walks away, shaking his head in frustration. Joshua just smirks at him.

Then, their mysterious neighbor with the broken door heads back out. The two stiffen up at the young man, who looks back at them for a second, rolls his eyes, then heads down the stairs, leading to the pool area.

Andrew's mouth widens in surprise, while Joshua looks the man up and down as he heads down the stairs.

ANDREW

I can't believe it!

JOSHUA

I know right. Did you see the way he looked at us. I say we go over there and kick his ass.

ANDREW

Are you kidding!? Don't you know who that was!?

JOSHUA

No. I mean, I didn't say I would be the one to do the ass kicking but... just saying it needs to happen.

Andrew looks astounded.

ANDREW

That was Shawn Leonidas. He's been famous since he was like... three years old. I didn't realize how old he's gotten.

JOSHUA

Leonidas? How much you wanna bet that's not even his real last name? And how do you always know these people, anyway?

ANDREW

I'm trying to make my way into the TV industry. It's kinda my job to know. Do you even watch television!?

JOSHUA

I can't. I'm too busy writing, unlike someone I know.

ANDREW

Spending an hour writing and the rest of the day having sex and smoking weed doesn't make you busy.

JOSHUA

Hey, I get more writing done than you do. And I find time for sex and blow? I call that a job well done.

Andrew sighs.

ANDREW

I can't believe we've been living across from a star and didn't even know it.

JOSHUA

That word is just tossed around too much these days. A star? Please. Now Adrien Grenier... that's a star. Was in real life and he played one on TV.

ANDREW

As uninformed as you are, don't you know what this means? We've got our "in" to that party, and he's right downstairs!

JOSHUA

What... you mean Hollywood Horror Story down there?

JOSHUA'S POV: Shawn is lighting a cigarette by the pool. He takes in the smoke, then exhales.

JOSHUA

He's not a cute kid anymore. He's probably one of those drugged out, child stars always three seconds away from their next mug shot or sex scandal.

ANDREW

You know, you might get to know a person before you judge them.

JOSHUA

I'm just sayin', I don't see this ending well. How are we gonna convince a guy like that to go to a writer's party, on top of making us his plus ones? I mean, even I would probably tell us to go screw ourselves.

ANDREW

That's because you're a dick.

JOSHUA

I know. It keeps me awake at night.

Andrew sighs.

ANDREW

I don't know... we just convince
him. You're a writer...

(beat)

Use your imagination.

Andrew taps Joshua's shoulder twice, before making his way
downstairs. We close in on Joshua, who just stands there,
mortified.

JOSHUA

Here's a thought... is it too late
to take our asses back to Miami?

He sighs, then begins to follow his enthusiastic best friend.

On that, we slowly tilt upward to reveal the "DWIGHT LOFTS"
sign -- CONTINUOUS, as we push further upward into the sky.

PUSHING through the clouds we ...

BLACK OUT.

END OF EPISODE