

COMPLETELY
HOLLYWOOD
(abridged)

*Reed Martin &
Austin Tichenor*

additional material by Dominic Conti

BROADWAY PLAY PUBLISHING INC

224 E 62nd St, NY NY 10065-8201

212 772-8334 fax: 212 772-8358

BroadwayPlayPubl.com

COMPLETELY HOLLYWOOD (abridged)

© Copyright 2010 by Reed Martin & Austin Tichenor

All rights reserved. This work is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America.

No part of this publication may be photocopied, reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, recording, or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publisher. Additional copies of this play are available from the publisher.

Written permission is required for live performance of any sort. This includes readings, cuttings, scenes, and excerpts. For amateur and stock performances, please contact Broadway Play Publishing Inc. For all other rights contact the authors c/o B P P I.

First printing December 2010

I S B N: 978-0-88145-485-7

Book design: Marie Donovan

Page make-up: Adobe Indesign

Typeface: Palatino

Printed and bound in the U S A

"You'll nearly fall out of your theater seat laughing. Spectacularly high energy...an absolute scream!"

The Arizona Republic

"A hilarious and speedy take on Hollywood's highs and lows. I loved it! An instant classic!"

B B C

"It's refreshing to know that the globetrotting band is as fresh as ever and can still earn a new wave of accolades. The American premiere of the company's latest foray, COMPLETELY HOLLYWOOD (abridged), is witty and wonderful, wowing audiences with its skillful skewering of American cinema. In short, they are some of the best fast-talking funny men in the business."

Backstage

"Stellar shtick. Highly skilled sketch comedy artists."

Chicago Tribune

"As fresh, unpretentious and funny as (their) earlier shows. The abundant comedy springs as often from the visual as the verbal, spewing forth in a fusillade of playfully irreverent images and inventively juxtaposed ideas."

Pittsburgh Tribune-Review

Critic's Choice! "Their satiric salute to Hollywood got a standing ovation. They are irrepressible. Genuinely funny."

Benedict Nightingale, *Times* (London)

“COMPLETELY HOLLYWOOD (abridged) delivers the goods! One of the funniest troupes in American theater today.”

Saint Louis Post-Dispatch

“Hilarious.”

London Sunday Mail

“Anarchic slapstick delivered at a frenetic pace.”

Reuters

“COMPLETELY HOLLYWOOD (abridged) is two hours of nonstop silliness. Somehow, the three reminded me of the Marx Brothers in their word play. The show is delivered at a chaotic pace.”

Talkin' Broadway

“[They’ve] done it again, an unalloyed audience pleaser. It elicited howls of laughter.”

The Stage (London)

“Inspired, positively side-splitting.”

Fest (Edinburgh)

“This is unleashed theatrical anarchy that will keep even the sleepest of patrons awake and laughing out loud. It’s smart, it’s funny. (They are) fearlessly funny in their irreverence.”

San Francisco Bay Times

“You’ll love this show—fast paced, hilarious, riotous comedy.”

Three Weeks (Edinburgh)

“A hilarious tribute to Hollywood...a terrific night of laughs!”

chicagocritic.com

“For a great evening of uproarious laughter get thee to COMPLETELY HOLLYWOOD.”

Jeffrey R Smith, San Francisco Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle

"Funny... Witty... Very clever."

KFOG Radio, (San Francisco)

"COMPLETELY HOLLYWOOD (abridged) has the kind of hallucinatory sideways comic logic that you find in, say, the films of the Marx Brothers or the early albums of the Firesign Theatre."

KDHX Radio (Saint Louis)

"Hilarity from beginning to end. The energy is phenomenal. A very funny and thoroughly enjoyable romp."

British Theatre Guide

"One of the greatest, sustained pieces of physical comedy I have ever seen. There are brilliant pieces of comic invention. Go see. Buy tickets now."

B B C

"It's impossible not to have a good time. There's a great deal of satisfaction just watching these men do what they do better than just about anybody else could."

Pittsburgh City Paper

"A gargantuan feat of comedic compression"

London Daily Mail, Arts Magazine

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Reed Martin

Reed is a Managing Partner of the Reduced Shakespeare Company, which he joined in 1989. He co-created and performed in the original stage productions of *THE COMPLETE HISTORY OF AMERICA* (abridged), *THE BIBLE: THE COMPLETE WORD OF GOD* (abridged), *WESTERN CIVILIZATION: THE COMPLETE MUSICAL* (abridged), *ALL THE GREAT BOOKS* (abridged), *COMPLETELY HOLLYWOOD* (abridged), and *THE COMPLETE WORLD OF SPORTS* (abridged) —and contributed additional material to *THE COMPLETE WORKS OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (ABRIDGED)*.

Reed has written for the B B C, National Public Radio, T B S, Britain's Channel Four, R T E Ireland, Public Radio International, Sky T V—U K, the *Washington Post*, and *Vogue* magazine. His work has been nominated for a Helen Hayes Award in Washington, DC, an Olivier Award in London, and a San Francisco Bay Area Theater Critics Circle Award.

He has been seen on all the major television networks, and has performed in forty-six states and eleven foreign countries. Prior to joining the Reduced Shakespeare Company, Reed spent two years as a clown and assistant ringmaster with Ringling Brothers Barnum & Bailey Circus.

Reed has a B A in Theater/Political Science from the University of California at Berkeley and an M F A in Acting from the University of California at San Diego, and is a graduate of the Ringling Brothers Barnum & Bailey Clown College. He is a member of both the Dramatists Guild and the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers. Reed lives in Northern California with his wife and two sons, all three of whom are much funnier than he is.

Austin Tichenor

Austin is a Managing Partner of the Reduced Shakespeare Company, which he joined in 1992. He co-created and co-starred in the original stage productions of THE COMPLETE WORLD OF SPORTS (abridged), COMPLETELY HOLLYWOOD (abridged), ALL THE GREAT BOOKS (abridged), WESTERN CIVILIZATION: THE COMPLETE MUSICAL (abridged), THE BIBLE: THE COMPLETE WORD OF GOD (abridged), and THE COMPLETE HISTORY OF AMERICA (abridged); the film *The Ring Reduced*; the television pilot *The Week Reduced*; the television spoof *Lost Reduced*; and the radio productions of *The Reduced Shakespeare Radio Show*, *The Reduced Shakespeare Company Christmas*, and (for N P R's *All Things Considered*) *The Reduced Shakespeare Round Table*. He also co-starred in the P B S film version of *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (abridged)*.

Prior to joining the R S C, Austin was Associate Producing Director of the American Stage Festival in Milford, NH, where he wrote stage adaptations of *A Christmas Carol*, *Frankenstein*, and a version of Kafka's *The Metamorphosis* for young audiences called DANCING ON THE CEILING (published by Broadway Play Publishing Inc).

Austin has played Guys In Ties on many hours of episodic television and, with Reed Martin, wrote the comic memoir *The Greatest Story Ever Sold*, as well as *Reduced Shakespeare: The Complete Guide for the Attention-Impaired* (published by Hyperion).

Austin has a B A from U C Berkeley and an M F A in Directing from Boston University, is a member of the Dramatists Guild, and an alumnus of the B M I Musical Theater Workshop. He and his wife Dee Ryan have two children and too many cats.

SPECIAL THANKS

For their contributions to the script, the authors wish to thank Dee Ryan, Jane Martin, Megan Loughney, Matt Croke, Dominic Conti, Jennifer Harris, and Adrian and Jamee Alperovich for their help along the way; Russell Lees, Sandi Logan, Aliza and Peter Murrieta, Michael Faulkner, Jerry Kernion, Zach Moore, and Jasper Fforde for offering suggestions at various stages; the cast and technicians from the first U K company Aaron Brown, Ruben Crow, Adam D Millard, David Menkin, Gary Fannin, Suu Wernham, Chris Marcus, and Jonathan Hall for coming up with great solutions for our crazy ideas; Bang Comedy Theater in L A, Spreckels Performing Arts Center in Rohnert Park, CA, and the Repertory Theater of Saint Louis for the space and freedom to develop the show on its feet; Pittsburgh Public Theater for producing the American premiere; and all the writers, directors, actors and technicians who created the movies we celebrate in this show.

PRODUCTION HISTORY

COMPLETELY HOLLYWOOD (abridged) was originally produced and performed by the Reduced Shakespeare Company. Directed by the authors, the production had the following technical staff:

Props Liz Fitzpatrick, Jonathan Hall, Jennifer Harris,
Kelly Hilterbrand, Gay Kahkonen, Chris Marcus
Backdrop design Dottie Marshall Englis
Backdrop painting & construction Kim Doyle, Scott
Loebl, Nichelle Kramlich, James Van Well
Sound design..... Zach Moore
Creative consultant..... Steve Smith
Poster & logo art..... hughes-stl, Scott Bushnell

The first public performance was a workshop production at Spreckels Performing Arts Center in Rohnert Park, California, from June 23 to July 2, 2005. The cast was Dominic Conti, Reed Martin, and Austin Tichenor.

COMPLETELY HOLLYWOOD (abridged) had its world premiere at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, Pleasance One Theatre, in Scotland, from 3-29 August 2005. The rotating cast included Aaron Brown, Ruben Crowe, David Menkin, Adam J. Millard. This company then toured Great Britain in the fall of 2005 through the spring of 2006.

COMPLETELY HOLLYWOOD (abridged) had a subsequent workshop production at the Repertory

Theater of Saint Louis from October 26 to November 13, 2005. The rotating cast included Dominic Conti, Michael Faulkner, Reed Martin, and Austin Tichenor.

COMPLETELY HOLLYWOOD (abridged) had its American premiere at the Pittsburgh Public Theater from March 2 to April 2, 2006. The cast was Dominic Conti, Reed Martin, and Austin Tichenor.

Between 2006 and 2010, the Reduced Shakespeare Company toured the show across the globe, including extended engagements at the Royal George Theatre in Chicago, Marines Memorial Theatre in San Francisco, and both the Lansburgh Theater and the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC, as well as as tours to Belgium, Holland, Hong Kong, and Singapore.

FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH

The production elements described in the script are from the original Reduced Shakespeare Company production. Consequently the scenery, props and costumes were all reduced in both quality and number. We'd encourage you to do the same. We have also tried to convey a sense of the timing we used, and have included descriptions of the original physical business. You are, of course, free to come up with your own physical business and improve on ours. You're also free to create physical business that isn't as good as ours but we wouldn't recommend it.

In our experience, the script works best when it is performed simply and seriously. That is to say, the script is funny so play it straight. Keep the show moving. For God's sake, don't linger, and don't apologize for the jokes. Many of the punchlines are meant to be throwaways. You may think the whole script should be thrown away, to which we can only say we tried that and it didn't work nearly as well.

You should use the actual names of the actors in your production instead of ours. There are also a number of topical references in the script, and references to recent(ish) movies. The humor and relevance of some of these will fade over time, so we encourage each production to keep these references as up-to-date as possible. This is not to say that scenes should be rewritten (which is, in fact, strictly prohibited)

but rather we are giving you permission to change a punchline or reference from “Clint Eastwood singing” to “Helen Mirren shooting a gun”, “DeNiro doing comedy”, or to some yet-unheard-of reference to a movie that’s more current to your production.

And yes, we know that, contrary to the line on page fifteen, Eddie Murphy’s character in *48 Hrs* was named Reginald Hammond. But he went by Reggie, not Reginald. The point stands.

IMPORTANT NOTE

The name “Reduced Shakespeare Company®” is a Registered Trademark, and its use in any way whatsoever to publicize, promote, or advertise any performance of this script is EXPRESSLY PROHIBITED.

Likewise, any use of the name “Reduced Shakespeare Company®” within the actual live performance of this script is also EXPRESSLY PROHIBITED.

The play must be billed as follows:

COMPLETELY HOLLYWOOD (abridged)

By

Reed Martin & Austin Tichenor

Additional Material by Dominic Conti

ACT ONE

(Pre-show music plays and the house lights are on as REED enters from the back of the audience. He wears a baseball cap and fishing vest [like a Hollywood movie director] and yells through a megaphone as he makes his way to the stage.)

REED: Alright, quiet on the set! Quiet on the set! Fade the playback.

(Pre-show music fades out.)

REED: Please turn off all cell phones, pagers, beeping watches and pacemakers. Photography of any kind is strictly prohibited. Lose the houselights.

(House lights go out.)

REED: Stage lights to full.

(Stage lights get bright.)

REED: And action! *(Now onstage; suddenly very friendly)*
Good evening, ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the
_____ Theater. I'm Reed Martin—

DOMINIC: *(Entering in blue jeans, Converse high tops, and a light-weight, long-sleeved pullover sweater)* I'm Dominic Conti—

(AUSTIN enters grandly wearing Tom Cruise sunglasses and a long scarf.)

AUSTIN: *(To the audience)* Hello, how are you, good to see you, welcome, you're very excited to meet me. *(He holds pantomime phone to his head and mouths "Call me" to*

some lucky lady in the audience.) I'm Austin Tichenor and as you can probably tell, we have gone—

ALL: —completely Hollywood!

REED: The movies!

DOMINIC: The madness!

AUSTIN: The method!

REED: The images!

DOMINIC: The impact!

AUSTIN: The implants! What do you think, Tony? I just got new pictures taken.

(AUSTIN takes a head shot out of his back pocket and hands it to REED, who turns it around, revealing to the audience a photo of Tom Cruise.)

REED: Looks just like you.

AUSTIN: I thought so, too.

REED: *(Handing photo back)* And stop calling me “Tony”. Well, folks, tonight, in under two hours, we will reduce the one hundred and eighty-six greatest movies of all time. And along the way learn the twelve critical components of a Hollywood movie.

AUSTIN: The whole world is addicted to the movies!

DOMINIC: So it seems only appropriate to look at Hollywood through a twelve-step program.

AUSTIN: We have an awful lot to cover in a very short time, but we've got to do it because Hollywood's taking over the world! It really is the dominant cultural force of the twenty-first-century.

DOMINIC: And an international commodity. Do you know what America's largest multi-billion dollar export is?

AUSTIN: The movies!

DOMINIC: No! Weapons!

AUSTIN: Huh?

DOMINIC: But the movies are a close second.

REED: And movies are so popular because we love to escape, right? I love movies filled with state-of-the-art special effects, like *Avatar*, or where they use miniatures, or where they make it look like they're climbing up the side of a building by turning the camera ninety degrees. *(He uses his hands to demonstrate the camera turning ninety degrees.)*

DOMINIC: I love thoughtful independent totally unbiased films like *Fahrenheit 9/11*.

AUSTIN: Well, I love to watch actors stretching themselves, you know? Doing things they're not necessarily good at. Like Clint Eastwood singing. Or Keanu Reeves acting.

REED: So to get things started, here's the first thing you need to know about the movies.

AUSTIN: Hollywood Lesson #1.

DOMINIC: Write this down.

REED: Every new movie is just a combination of two old movies.

DOMINIC: See, everybody's nodding. You all knew this. Studios don't want to take any risks.

REED: Because movies are incredibly expensive to make. That's why every new movie that comes out is either a straight remake of an old movie—*Casino Royale*, *Batman*, *Karate Kid*...

DOMINIC: ...or a combination of two old movie ideas.

AUSTIN: Like, they combine James Bond and *Home Alone* and get *Spy Kids*.

DOMINIC: Or they mix *My Fair Lady* and *Klute* and get *Pretty Woman*.

REED: Or they mix *Unforgiven* with *The Birdcage* and get *Brokeback Mountain*.

AUSTIN: You know what? Gene Kelly could take Dustin Hoffman to Las Vegas in *Singin' in the Rainman!*

DOMINIC/REED: Yes.

DOMINIC: Or Meg Ryan could fake an orgasm for Clint Eastwood. When *Dirty Harry Met Sally!*

AUSTIN/REED: Yes.

REED: Eddie Murphy. Winona Ryder. *Doctor Dolittle Women*.

(If the audience groans)

REED: Maybe not.

AUSTIN: This one has Oscar winner written all over it. Kevin Bacon teaches a disabled writer to dance in *My Left Footloose*.

DOMINIC: All-singing, all-dancing aboard a German submarine. *Das Showboat!*

AUSTIN/REED: Yes!

REED: And here's how we'll start! Drew Barrymore and Emma Thompson star in a Jane Austen action movie chick flick—

ALL: —*Darcy's Angels!* Yes!

(Blackout. In the darkness, a recorded voice speaks over music.)

REED/DARCY: (V O) Once upon a time, there were three little English girls who only cared about getting married. But I took them away from all that, and now they work for me. My name is Darcy.

(Lights up. Three Jane Austen heroines hold pantomime guns and strike Charlie's Angels-type poses.)

REED/DARCY: (V O) Hello, Angels.

ALL: Hello, Darcy.

REED/JANE: What is it going to be today, Darcy?

DOMINIC/LYDIA: Is an evil lord about to disinherit his impoverished but dutiful young daughter, Darcy?

AUSTIN/ELIZABETH: Will you dive into a pond and stand there with your wet puffy shirt clinging to your magnificent torso, Darcy?

(The gals jump up and down, squealing.)

ALL: Oh do, Darcy! Please do!

REED/DARCY: (V O) No, Angels. It is a truth universally acknowledged that one of you has been kidnapped!

(REED/JANE squawks and runs offstage.)

AUSTIN/ELIZABETH: Good heavens, Lydia. Jane has been kidnapped by Sir Dastardly Whiplash. And look, he's taking her up the side of this castle. C'mon, we'll follow. Grab this rope.

(They look up, reaching for the sky. A long rope is thrown on and lands on the floor in front of them, its other end stretching into the wings.)

(They pick it up and look upward. REED runs on and turns his hands, indicating the camera has turned ninety degrees. AUSTIN and DOMINIC move their heads so they're looking along the length of rope into the wings. REED exits and they start to "climb".)

DOMINIC/LYDIA: This is hard, Elizabeth. I wish we had a man to help us.

AUSTIN/ELIZABETH: Bad idea, Lydia. If we ever wish to make our way in this world we have to learn to do for ourselves. Don't worry. I'll pull you up.

(AUSTIN/ELIZABETH has now "climbed" to the "top" of the castle and starts to pull on the rope. The lights snap to REED, who has a Ken doll dressed as Lydia attached to a string. He pulls "Lydia" up off the floor.)

(The lights snap to AUSTIN/ELIZABETH and DOMINIC/LYDIA who "lands" next to AUSTIN/ELIZABETH with a hop.)

AUSTIN/ELIZABETH: Here we are at the top. Look down there, Lydia. See that beautiful valley? Sir Dastardly plans to subdivide that land and build thousands of modestly-priced rental cottages!

DOMINIC/LYDIA: We've got to stop him, Elizabeth. He wants to pave paradise and put up a parking lot. And there he is!

AUSTIN/ELIZABETH: Gadzooks, Lydia! We've got to follow. Come on, we'll jump into the lake below us. Geronimo!

(AUSTIN/ELIZABETH "jumps." The lights snap to a bucket of water with REED standing beside it, holding a Ken doll dressed like Elizabeth. He drops it into the bucket, making a splash.)

(The lights snap back to AUSTIN/ELIZABETH, just in time for REED to toss a cup of water onto the front of AUSTIN/ELIZABETH's skirt. AUSTIN/ELIZABETH looks at the front of his skirt, then into the wings, where REED has exited. Then he moves on.)

AUSTIN/ELIZABETH: *(Looking up)* Now you jump, Lydia!
(Lights switch to DOMINIC/LYDIA.)

DOMINIC/LYDIA: *(Looking down)* I can't! I'm afraid!
(Lights switch back to AUSTIN/ELIZABETH.)

AUSTIN/ELIZABETH: (*Looking up*) Don't worry, your skirts will allow you to float safely to the ground. Now jump!

(*Lights switch back to DOMINIC/LYDIA. In the previous blackout, he has grabbed a stool and lays down on it, flailing his arms and legs as if he's falling.*)

DOMINIC/LYDIA: Waa... !

(*Lights snap to REED, who throws the Ken doll hard on to the stage.*)

(*The lights snap to DOMINIC/LYDIA, who lands then throws himself to the ground at AUSTIN/ELIZABETH's feet.*)

DOMINIC/LYDIA: (*Pointing upward*) Look, Elizabeth. Sir Dastardly just took off in his hot-air balloon! What'll we do?

AUSTIN/ELIZABETH: There's no way to catch him, Lydia, unless... (*Looking upward*) Yes! There's a giant bird overhead that we can grab onto for a free ride. Hang on, Lydia.

(DOMINIC/LYDIA *slaps his hand very high up on AUSTIN/ELIZABETH's thigh, near the groin.*)

AUSTIN/ELIZABETH: Wo-hoh! A little lower, Lydia.

(DOMINIC/LYDIA *slides his hand lower.*)

AUSTIN/ELIZABETH: Thank you. (*Grabbing the invisible bird*) Here we go!

(AUSTIN/ELIZABETH *acts like he's about to be pulled skyward as the lights switch to REED holding a toy bird flying with two female Georgian Ken dolls holding onto its foot.*)

REED: Caw! Caw! Caw!

(*Blackout as music swells*)

(*Lights up. AUSTIN mops up.*)

AUSTIN: Moving right along—Hollywood Lesson #2. In the movies, "Show It, Don't Say It." In other words,

don't say something if you can show it instead. Try to tell your story visually. Use action, not words. Be physical, not verbal. The old silent pictures and superhero movies are great examples of this. Because movies are a visual medium, unlike the theatre, or novels, or radio, which are obviously more verbal, more literary, media. So your movie should be visual, not aural. Um, o-r-a-l, or a-u-r-a-l, right? The point is, get to the point. Be succinct. Use words sparingly. Don't just stand there talking long after the audience understands what you're saying. You understand what I'm saying? Lemme see if I can explain it better. Cut to the chase! A lesson as old as Hollywood itself.

(Blackout. Silent movie type music begins.)

(The boys act out a silent movie. REED plays the evil DASTARDLY—wearing a black cape, bowler and moustache. He pantomimes making demands of the girl, while in the doorway someone holds up a sign that says, "Marry me and have my babies!")

(Then DOMINIC as PAULINE pantomimes for a very, very long time, then a sign pops out saying, "No.")

(REED/DASTARDLY and DOMINIC/PAULINE leap together, where Dastardly pantomimes tying her up, then steps away to reveal her bound in a rope corset [which DOMINIC has had hidden under his dress and uncovered while REED/DASTARDLY was masking him].)

(REED/DASTARDLY pushes DOMINIC/PAULINE as if toward railroad tracks and tries to force her to lie down. DOMINIC removes his arms from the ropes and gestures, "I'll do it." He lies down, replaces his arms beneath the ropes, and resumes kicking and struggling.)

(REED/DASTARDLY laughs and twirls the ends of his moustache, then stops as hears the sounds of a train whistle and a train headlight.)

(AUSTIN enters with a bright flashlight that looks a train headlight. He tosses away the flashlight revealing that he is really WONDER WOMAN. REED/DASTARDLY is shocked.)

(AUSTIN/WONDER WOMAN pulls the robe corset off of DOMINIC/PAULINE, which causes DOMINIC/PAULINE to roll off the front of the stage. AUSTIN/WONDER WOMAN can't find her, then sees her, picks her up, and throws her upstage. DOMINIC/PAULINE sticks the landing like a gymnast.)

(AUSTIN/WONDER WOMAN beats up REED/DASTARDLY, who spits out a mouthful of fake teeth [dried white lima beans] and exits.)

(AUSTIN/WONDER WOMAN and DOMINIC/PAULINE embrace. We see the sign "The End".)

(Blackout. Lights up on the three guys taking off their costumes from the previous scene.)

DOMINIC: Wow! We're going to be through one hundred and eighty-six movies before we know it.

AUSTIN: You bet.

DOMINIC: This is too easy, guys! You know what? We should make our own movie!

REED: No, no, no...

AUSTIN: Yes!

DOMINIC: I've got the perfect screenplay for the three of us. I've been working on it since high school. Wait right there. (He runs offstage.)

AUSTIN: Wait, if we're making our own movie...

REED: We're not...

AUSTIN: ...I've got a great idea! (A la Miss Prissy) Miss Scarlet! Miss Scarlet! I don't know nuthin' 'bout freein' India from the British. (A la Gandhi) Frankly, my dear, I do give a damn about non-violent social change.

REED: Cut!

AUSTIN: Oh, come on! That was awesome! *Ghandi with the Wind?*

REED: No!

(DOMINIC enters with a ridiculously thick screenplay. It's multi-colored from its multiple revisions.)

DOMINIC: Gentlemen, this is my screenplay!

AUSTIN: Whoah!

DOMINIC: *Revenge of the Soul*. It's like *Karate Kid* meets *Revenge of the Nerds* meets *Say Anything*. We could get Jackie Chan to star and Michael Moore to direct.

REED: How you gonna pay for it?

DOMINIC: I don't know.

REED: Well, we're not making a movie. But if we were, we could pay for it with product placement.

DOMINIC: Right. Bow down to the big corporations.

REED: Hey, corporations would pay big money to put their products in my movie.

DOMINIC: Your movie?

(He pulls the screenplay from his back pocket.)

REED: *Battle Planet*—It's a western set in the future based on *The Wizard of Oz*.

AUSTIN: (To the audience) Ladies and gentlemen, this is Lesson #3. In Hollywood, every pathetic wannabe has written a screenplay. (Revealing his own) Mine is called *Human*. It's the story of tennis great Ivan Lendl. It's based on my very successful one-man play... (He waits briefly for applause which never comes) But for the screenplay, I've turned it into a musical biography, like *Ray* or *Walk The Line*.

DOMINIC: Ivan Lendl wasn't a musician.

AUSTIN: He is now, my friend.

REED: Austin, it's tough to maintain dramatic tension in a historical picture because the audience already knows the story. I mean, look at *Titanic*. Everybody knew how it was going to end, but they still couldn't wait to see Leonardo DiCrappyo freeze to death. That's because James Cameron followed Hollywood Lesson #4: great movies have unforgettable images, like the closeup of the bow in *Titanic*.

(DOMINIC has set down his screenplay and now poses like Kate Winslet.)

DOMINIC: I'm the king of the world!

REED: And no movie is complete without the Shawshank Shot.

(DOMINIC throws his arms upward and drops to his knees, screaming "No!" up to the heavens.)

REED: But who can forget *The Sound of Music*?

(DOMINIC twirls around like Julie Andrews, singing "La-LA-la-la-la...".)

REED: *Marathon Man*?

(DOMINIC runs fast...)

REED: *Chariots of Fire*?

(DOMINIC runs in super slow motion...)

REED: And *Memento*.

(Very quickly and precisely, DOMINIC runs and talks backwards...)

DOMINIC: Al-AL-al-al-al....Own!...World the of king the I'm...! (...through the whole routine that he just did. He punctuates it at the end by picking up his screenplay and saying a couple of gibberish words that sound like running a recording in reverse.)

AUSTIN: That was beautiful. And that leads us right into Hollywood Lesson #5. If you want your movie to be a hit, you need to fill it with beautiful movie stars.

DOMINIC: Yeah, beautiful and tall.

AUSTIN: Actually, a lot of movie stars are shorter than you think. In fact, my idol, Tom Cruise, is legally a hobbit. So that's good.

DOMINIC: Guys, could we just read through the first scene of my screenplay?

AUSTIN: Oh, lovely. Absolutely. *(He takes the script and glances through it.)*

DOMINIC: I've always wanted to have it performed by a really great actor.

AUSTIN: *(Flipping through the script)* Oh thank you so much!

DOMINIC: But you'll do.

AUSTIN: *(Oblivious to the insult, handing script back)* This is good.

(DOMINIC reads from his screenplay.)

DOMINIC: Fade in. Interior. Night.

(Lights fade to a night state.)

AUSTIN: *(Howling)* Ah-ooh!

DOMINIC: Suddenly a shot rings out...

AUSTIN: Bang!

DOMINIC: ...and our hero runs into the room.

(AUSTIN runs in place, then stops)

DOMINIC: Short, like a fireplug—

(AUSTIN bends his knees.)

DOMINIC: —our hero nonchalantly picks up the phone and with typical American directness says—

AUSTIN: (*Miming a phone*) Yeah, it's Butch. What the hell's going on, Inspector? (*In one breath*) It's getting so a guy can't escape his haunted past in a sparsely furnished San Francisco walk-up on a fog-shrouded Saturday night with the street lamp pouring in through the window onto the carpet like a Dali painting without some mug taking a shot at him!

DOMINIC: Meanwhile, tall and dashing—
(*AUSTIN stands tall.*)

DOMINIC: —Reginald has seen it all. With typical British reserve, Reginald goes to the phone and says:

AUSTIN: (*Miming a phone; exaggerated upper-crust accent*) Yes hello, Reginald Studmuffin here. Well, it's the damndest thing. I retired from MI-5 months ago and here I am on the last day of my honeymoon with my lovely wife Becky, whom I met while dancing undercover on the midnight boat to Marseilles and whose limpid blue eyes torment me delightfully... (*He laughs insipidly.*) ...and now I find some devil is shooting at me.

(*Note: When AUSTIN got a good response to his insipid laugh, REED would say his next line, cutting off AUSTIN's last phrase.*)

REED: Cut!

(*Lights bump to a day state.*)

AUSTIN: Tony, I love your screenplay. How old do you see my character?

DOMINIC: Your age.

AUSTIN: Oh, sort of mid-twenties! (*He starts to go.*)

DOMINIC: Yeah. And stop calling me "Tony."

AUSTIN: (*Stopping*) And Tony, what do you see as my character's motivation?

REED: (*Interrupting*) Your paycheck.

AUSTIN: Nice. Good. (*He exits.*)

DOMINIC: Reed, do you see what I'm trying to do with my screenplay?

REED: Yeah, but keep working on your exposition.

DOMINIC: Exposition?

REED: Exposition—the background the audience needs to understand the story, seamlessly woven into the dialogue so the public absorbs it without realizing it. Keep it simple.

DOMINIC: Yeah, but it shouldn't be simplistic. The best films are rich and complex. I learned that when I was president of Fright Club, my high school horror movie society.

REED: But movies should be fun, right?

DOMINIC: I'm not saying they can't be fun. But Hollywood is this huge entertainment machine and we're cultural imperialists. I mean, there are remote tribesman in Borneo who know who Ashton Kutcher (*Or Hannah Montana*) is and that's not right. That's why I want my film to be about something!

(*Note: This reference changes depending on the age and pop-culture savviness of the audience.*)

REED: Okay, but make it about something unspoken. Keep your message subliminal because right now it is way too bliminal.

(*They hear the chords of a piano intro and look around. Austin slides in as Tom Cruise in Risky Business: pink shirt, sunglasses, white socks, underwear. He holds a copy of Dianetics.*)

AUSTIN: Hey, have you guys read about Scientology?

DOMINIC/REED: Get out!

(AUSTIN flashes his Tom Cruise smile and starts to go, but stops at the door. DOMINIC and REED quietly go back to looking at the screenplay.)

AUSTIN: Oh, and guys?

DOMINIC/REED: (Looking up at him) Yeah?

AUSTIN: Thanks.

(AUSTIN goes. DOMINIC and REED go back to their argument.)

DOMINIC: (Flipping through the script) Lemme show you what I mean.

REED: Okay.

DOMINIC: How about the big moment in the second act between Reginald and Becky—

REED: Whoah! Whoah! Your hero's name is Reginald?

DOMINIC: Yeah. Reginald and Becky are sitting on the—

REED: What are you writing, a Merchant-Ivory movie? I thought Butch was the hero, and Reginald was just a quirky minor character.

DOMINIC: I just switched the names because I thought—

REED: He cannot be called Reginald. He's supposed to be one hundred percent pure Grade-A American beefcake. Call him Butch. Hell, call him Jennifer, but do *not* call him Reginald!

DOMINIC: Yeah, but everybody's Butch. In *Pulp Fiction* Bruce Willis is Butch. In *Butch Cassidy* Paul Newman is Butch. Hilary Swank won two Oscars for being butch.

REED: Okay, not Butch. But no American in the history of Hollywood has ever been called Reginald. He needs an all-American Hebrew cowboy name—Abe, Zeke, Zach, Nimrod, Nebuchadnezzar, Beelzebub.

DOMINIC: All six?

REED: No, this is what I'm saying. You've got to choose! And you're over thinking it. Don't write what you know... (*Tapping DOMINIC's forehead*) Write what you know.

(*REED places his hand over DOMINIC's heart.*)

DOMINIC: Ohhh! Well, I did have this idea about this kid who gets bullied and can't get a date for the prom. So he ends up making these kung fu movies because he has all these revenge fantasies.

REED: Is this autobiographical?

DOMINIC: (*Laughs*) No! (*Bows head dejectedly*) Yes.

REED: It's too complicated. Remember Hollywood Lesson #6— Every Hollywood movie can be summed up in a simple tagline.

DOMINIC: "Portrait of the Artist as a Young Dork."

REED: Any other ideas?

DOMINIC: Elderly super heroes?

REED: That's it!