

Untitled Seinfeld-esque Project

"Pilot"

By Mark Sternberg

Writer's Notes: This script is written with ideal locations and actors available. However, I don't think there is a set or actor in here that can't be written around or recreated if the set in question is unavailable - small children being the primary example as you'll soon see.

I don't know what the running time would be on this. I shot for 22-25 minutes. If this script is selected, we could probably cut out or expand from the storylines before the shoot which I'd imagine would be in a week or two.

And to see kancho:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o2FReiTzqEM&feature=related>)

Brief Character Introduction

Writer's Note: I think the actor's real first names will be fine. Until then I use A, B, C, D, etc. names.

Adam - Male - Substitute Teacher - Has a somewhat greater moral grounding than other characters (Jerry-esque)

Betty - Female - Newly Appointed Manager of an Office - Fastidious, well-mannered - though easily frazzled, "supra-moral": holds self to a higher standard than most people, such as being vegetarian perhaps.

Charlie - Male - Lawyer - somewhat ill-tempered, morally groundless. Does not actually have to be unattractive or balding though - his lack of a conscience should make him unattractive enough.

Danny - Male (Female if rewritten somewhat) - General Critic: does films, food, plays, cds, (a later episode will reveal that his reviews are overwhelmingly popular because people will mock them) - laid back, open minded, but a bit more with it than Kramer.

Scene 1

(Coffeeshop-type setting: can be anywhere that people meet parks, front stoops, etc.)

GIRLFRIEND

I'll see you later.

Girlfriend leans in and Adam kisses her on the cheek goodbye. Adam then turns to Danny.

ADAM

So hit me with this again?

DANNY

I was just standing in line to buy this cd...

ADAM

Which you were gonna review for your website...

DANNY

Right. When all of a sudden...

ADAM

A gang of teenagers comes in and steals all of the DVDs on the new release rack.

DANNY

Exactly.

ADAM

And no one did anything?

DANNY

Not a thing. The guys stood there stuffing their shirts and when the shirts couldn't hold anymore, they walked out, setting the alarms off. The employees? They just stood there. I couldn't believe it.

ADAM

Wow.

DANNY

Yeah dude, I didn't even know what to say. I just went to the cashier and was like "You know you've just been robbed?" She just shrugged her shoulders and rang me up. See man, I'm telling you - if no low-level employee gives a crap about theft, my days of paying for stuff is over.

ADAM

Hahaha whoa whoa whoa. Don't you think you're jumping the gun here?

DANNY

Why should I have to pay, when other people can steal stuff in the open and no one stops them? And seriously, with those kids working, they'd probably rather not even bother with the hassle of stopping me.

ADAM

Yeah, but I'm guessing those guys robbing that store looked a bit intimidating. You...

Camera switches to show Danny

ADAM

don't.

DANNY

I guess. But buying all this stuff to review for my website ...cds, movie tickets... it's adding up. And then the candy for movies...

ADAM

You don't think you could maybe, I dunno, trim that out?

DANNY

NO WAY! How am I supposed to watch a movie without candy!?!?

ADAM

Um... yeah... what was I thinking. Ok. Well Mr. Capone, before you start your crime spree, why don't you at least start small.

DANNY

What are you suggesting?

ADAM

I don't know, maybe sneaking food into a movie theater.

DANNY

Awesome.

ADAM
(mockingly)
Indeed.

Betty enters.

BETTY
I GOT IT!

ADAM and DANNY
Congrats!

BETTY
You're looking at the
new office manager of
Eaglethorpe Clingston.

ADAM
Great! So what does the
new job entail?

BETTY
No idea! All I know is
that I'm no longer a
lowly peon.

ADAM
I'm guessing your co-
workers will be jealous.

BETTY
To be honest, I'm not
even sure what it was
that got me the
promotion.

ADAM
Well, you must have been
doing something right.

DANNY
What does E and C do
anyway...

BETTY
(stares at Danny for a moment blankly)
... it's a conglomerate.

DANNY
Ahhh...

Betty is relieved Danny bought her answer and quickly changes the subject.

BETTY
So I hear Charlie's got
a hot date tonight.

ADAM
And if it works out, I
bet you won't stop
bragging for a moment
that you set them up.

BETTY
Come on, who makes a
better matchmaker than
me!?!

DANNY
It does seem weird
though. Why is Eileen
still single? She seems
relatively ideal.

ADAM
For once I have to agree
with Danny here. If
she's single there's got
to be something wrong
with her.

BETTY
HEY, I'M SINGLE! You
saying there's something
wrong with me!?!

ADAM
(dodging having to answer)
Look at the time! Well,
gotta go pick up some
dry cleaning before the
store closes.

DANNY
(trying to follow, but is just not as sharp)
Yeah, I have to head out
too, my... DVR is
overflowing.

BETTY
Mmhhmm... well I'll see
you boys later. Just
let me know if you want
me to set you up Danny!

DANNY
(Loud laugh) Nah that's
really okay!

BETTY
(Folds arms in a fluster)
Hmph!

Scene 2

(walking on the street)

Adam is walking, walks by a guy and does a doubletake

ADAM
Hey!

Frank turns around

FRANK
Hi.

ADAM
I didn't know you got
back yet. How was
teaching English over in
Japan?

FRANK
(looking down sadly)
It was good...

ADAM
Well you don't really
seem all that excited
about it.

FRANK
(looks up eagerly but with sadness)
No. No. It was a great
experience it was just...

(beat)

ADAM
Just what?

FRANK
(quietly)
The kancho...

ADAM
What's...

Frank quickly covers Adam's mouth

FRANK
Don't say it loud. The
kids. They might hear.

ADAM
(quietly)
Kancho?

FRANK
Yeah... it's awful.
It's this game the young
kids play where they...
where they...

Frank starts to tear up, slowly putting
his hands into the kancho gesture.

ADAM

(Looks at the gesture and then at his face)
...play cops and robbers?

FRANK

No... they shove...

Frank reforms the gesture behind his rear end and he thrusts his hands upwards

ADAM

(puzzled)

They shove...
(now it clicks)

Oh my god...

Writer's note: Would love a Spielbergian zoom in, pan out on the "oh my god"

FRANK

(desperately)

Are you still substitute
teaching?

ADAM

(still dumbfounded)

Well... yeah.

FRANK

You must never let them
hear of it. Ever. Do
you understand?

ADAM

Yes...

Frank shakes Adam

FRANK

Do you understand!?!

ADAM

I got it.

FRANK

If it caught on here...
it could be the end of
American civilization as
we know it.

ADAM

(solemnly)

Understood.

They walk separate ways. Scene ends.

Scene 3

(restaurant)

Charlie walks into a restaurant, looks lost for a moment,
Eileen sees him and waves him over.

EILEEN

Charlie?

CHARLIE

And, you must be Eileen.
Betty has told me so
much about you.

EILEEN

Has she. Hope it was
all good.

CHARLIE

Hah, yeah it was.

EILEEN

So I hear you're a
lawyer.

CHARLIE

Yeah, I figured having a
soul was a terrible
thing to waste, so why
not cash in on it.

EILEEN

(laughs)

WAITER

Any drinks while you're
deciding?

CHARLIE

Yeah, I could actually
go for a cup of coffee.

Charlie looks to Eileen

Late night at the office.

EILEEN

(impressed)

Oh.

Eileen looks to the waiter.

You know... I could go
for a cup of tea.

WAITER

I'll be right back with
your drinks.

Waiter leaves.

EILEEN

So have you known Betty
long?

CHARLIE

Well we live in the same
building. Actually, all
of my close friends -
Betty, Adam, Danny...
same place. We met at a
party the building threw
when I moved in about a
year back.

EILEEN

Hah, that's convenient.
Don't even need to walk
outside to be social.

WAITER

And here you are. Miss,
some milk for your tea?

Waiter leans over to pour it in.

EILEEN

NO!!! (and pushes back
from the table reviled)

Cut back to Charlie looking stunned

Quick cut to scene 4

Scene 4

(bagel Shop or some sort of morning place)

CHARLIE

She has a phobia of milk!

ADAM

Knew it. There had to
be something wrong there.

CHARLIE

What do you mean.

ADAM

Is she attractive?

CHARLIE

Yeah.

ADAM

Annoying?

CHARLIE

No.

ADAM

Stupid?

CHARLIE

I wouldn't care about that anyway... but continue.

ADAM

Well there had to be something wrong if she was still single. You think you could handle dating someone afraid of milk?

CHARLIE

I don't know... The main problem I can see... is that it's absolutely hilarious.

ADAM

That is what I like about you. I never have to worry about any sort of conscience interfering with your thought process.

CHARLIE

Honestly though. I really can see this relationship having endless potential.

ADAM

Well, what if she finds out what you're afraid of?

CHARLIE

Please... I'm not afraid of anything.

ADAM

Sure? What about that urban legends show we watched that one time.

CHARLIE
Fine. I'm not afraid of
anything real. Happy?

Adam looks down to his pocket

ADAM
Oh I'm buzzing. They
must need me to sub in.

CHARLIE
Look at you. You're
like a superhero.

ADAM
The only difference is
my secret identity is my
working life.

CHARLIE
That sounds pretty nice.

ADAM
Yeah, except my bank
account doesn't seem to
know about my working
life either.

Scene 5

(supermarket)

Danny holding a movie ticket

DANNY
Now what to get...

Wanders over into the candy aisle. Starts looking at the display of candy bins. Decides to taste one of the candies. Then another. Then another. Keeps going until he notices an employee down the aisle. They meet eyes and Danny is worried he is caught in the act. The employee walks down the aisle. The employee stops just a foot in front of Danny. Then he reaches into the candy bin beside the one Danny was eating from and eats one. They meet eyes and stare for a moment.

EMPLOYEE

Yeah, just stay away
from the jujubes.
They're a couple months
old.

Employee walks away

DANNY

(a bit stunned)
No one really cares.
That's awesome.

Quick edit to SCENE 6

Scene 6

Danny walks into the movie theater, chowing down on candy. Ticket attendant looks at him and then down at his candy then back at him. He looks forward past Danny, rips Danny's ticket and says "theater 4." Danny walks away smug.

Scene 7

Classroom

(now we can either have real kids, or just use kid sound effects. For actual speech, if no kids, we could get a girl to sound like a young boy, like Bart Simpson)

ADAM

Settle down, settle
down. (To himself)
Where's the assignment?

Looks on the desk. Finds only a package. He shrugs and opens it up. Reads the note inside.

ADAM

Well, I don't see any
assignment for today.
But it seems you guys
have a tape here from
your pen pals. Guess
I'll just go ahead pop
it in.

Adam presses play on the remote and walks away from the television set and goes to look out the window.

Tape is playing. It's Japanese, but Adam isn't paying attention. Adam hears "konnichiwa" and mouths it himself and starts realize. He starts to turn. He hears the word "Kancho" and realizes. He runs to the TV and we see him jumping in front of it, shooting the remote at the TV to turn it off (John Woo style).

He hits the ground, panting. A kid shouts "That kid just shoved his fingers up that guy's butt!" Can hear a chorus of "Kancho!" in the room. Adam, terrified, slowly backs out of the room and declares recess for the rest of the day.

Scene 8

On the street. Time stamped 8:49

Betty is walking when a bug flies up her nose (bug sound effect). She can't get it out.

Cut to her getting into an elevator trying to get it out. Her officemate is standing beside her.

GERDIE

Hello Betty.

BETTY

(surprised and withdraws hand)
Oh hi. Sorry this fly
just flew up my nose. I
couldn't get it out.

GERDIE

(dry)

mmhmm...

Betty is now in her new office. Time stamped 9:05

BETTY

Harold! Do you have
those sales reports?

Harold comes in with reports in one hand. Lazily picking his nose with the other hand - it's all up in there.

HAROLD

Here you go.

BETTY

Um... what are you doing?

HAROLD

Oh... this fly. Flew up
in there...

Harold walks out. Betty looks puzzled, but gets back to work and goes for a file in a draw. She accidentally chips a nail. She begins to chew on it. Ingrid walks in.

BETTY

Oh hey Ingrid. Would
you believe it? I broke
a nail.

INGRID

That's a shame. Did
Josephine bring by the
finished inventory lists?

BETTY

(still chewing)

No, I'll go check on it
in a minute.

Edit (to show passage of time), time stamp 9:22

Betty is in the office walking over to Josephine's desk.
Josephine's back is to Betty.

BETTY

Do you have the
inventories?

Josephine wheels around to show herself biting her nails.
Whereas Betty was lightly "rearranging" one nail, Josephine
is doing the full on chompdn.

JOSEPHINE

(while chewing)

Sorry. I'll get them to
you in a half hour.

Betty looks grossed out.

JOSEPHINE

Oh yeah, broke a nail.
Hah.

Betty returns to her office, but then a worker comes in wheeling a chair. She says thanks and looks at it. Ingrid walks in. Betty looks up from chair - not sitting yet though.

BETTY

Oh hi! The new chair.
You like it?

INGRID

It's wonderful. Look,
about those sales
reports...

BETTY

Hold on.

Betty sits down. Loud noise similar to passed gas.

Heh. New chair. Heh.
You were saying?

INGRID

(staring her nose down at Betty)
Nevermind... I just
realized Harold probably
has the info.

Ingrid leaves. Betty smiles and stretches, stacks some papers on her desk and gets to work.

Time stamp 9:41

Betty works for a second and then gets up to get some water. She enters the office when it's like she walks into a brick wall and it smells awful. She finally gets it.

BETTY
 SO WHAT! NOW YOU'RE
 MAKING FUN OF ME? MY
 FIRST DAY AS MANAGER!?!
 Look... there was a fly,
 I broke my nail, and it
 was the f'n chair! So
 stop picking your damn
 noses, biting your nails
 and, for god sakes, stop
 blessing this office
 with your personal
 scents!

Betty returns to her office in a huff. The smell has crept in so she takes out perfume and starts spraying around the room. We see Josephine peer in while Betty's doing it.

Scene 9

(street scene)

Danny is walking home. Eileen calls out and stops him.

EILEEN
 It's Danny right?

DANNY
 Yup. Do I know you?

EILEEN
 Oh no, I'm a friend of
 Betty's.

DANNY
 Oh... are you Eileen?

EILEEN
 Yes, I was just
 wondering did Charlie...

DANNY
 What do you eat cookies
 with?

EILEEN
 ... so he told you...

DANNY

The milk thing. Yeah...
I love milk. It goes
good with so much...
cereal, cookies,
brownies...

EILEEN

Yeah, sure it does.
Listen, I need to be on
an equal footing here.
Charlie and I have
another date tonight.
Do you know anything
he's afraid of?

DANNY

Sure.

(beat)

EILEEN

... and that is...

DANNY

The Jersey Devil

EILEEN

The wha?

DANNY

From 19th century
American folklore. The
13th child of Mother
Leeds... looks like a
cross between a horse
and a bat?

EILEEN

Ok fine. But how the
hell am I supposed to
scare him with that.

DANNY

He's terrified of the
thing. Even a picture.

Scene 10

(anywhere, apartment perhaps)

BETTY

So you have another date
with Eileen I hear.

CHARLIE

Yup. Did Adam tell you
about our first date?

BETTY

No, but Eileen said it
went well.

CHARLIE

(slyly)

It sure did. Most fun
date I've been on in
years.

BETTY

Wonderful. Now you
remember who you have to
thank for matching you
two up! I expect to be
at least a bridesmaid,
if not maid of honor!

CHARLIE

Hah. Don't get your
hopes up. I doubt the
relationship will get
that far.

Scene 11

(at dinner)

CHARLIE

(Slyly)

So how's your week been
going.

EILEEN
(Slyly)
Wonderful. Yours?

CHARLIE
Just great. Just great.

A line of waiters comes in carry a large milkshake and plops it down in front of Eileen.

WAITER 2
Ma'am, happy birthday!

Eileen is already squirming and now she screams. She tries to regain herself. Charlie is laughing.

EILEEN
You, a-hole... This is
all funny to you huh?
Yeah well at least I'm
afraid of something real!

She whips out a picture of the Jersey Devil. Charlie sees it and goes running, screaming, for the door which is a pull door, but he was going full speed and smacks his head on the door, which doesn't open, and falls to the floor.

Scene 12

(morning location)

Adam is sitting, Charlie, with blackeye, enters.

ADAM
What happened to you?

CHARLIE
Ugh... I don't want to
talk about it.

ADAM
Guessing that means the
date went well.
(motioning to the
blackeye).

CHARLIE
Did you tell her?

ADAM
Tell her what?

CHARLIE
Ah, Danny must have.
Next time I see her I'm
gonna bring a Super-
Soaker filled with milk!

ADAM
That's constructive.

CHARLIE
Well speaking of people
being constructive, how
come you haven't gotten
the Bat signal yet?

ADAM
Well I have... it's
just... well I can't go
back to that school.

CHARLIE
Why not?

ADAM
Long story. There's
plenty other schools in
the city.

(Phone buzzes)

And here's one now. I'm
off.

Adam leaves and Charlie gives a lazy salute as Adam goes.

Scene 13

Shot of Betty rising out of bed hitting the alarm. Next shot she gets in the elevator. Then she walks into her office (larger office, not her room). She recoils.

BETTY
Ooof, what is that?

Fellow officemate walks by, stops to answer

INGRID
For some reason,
everyone thought it was
good day to lather on
the perfume.

BETTY
(to herself)
Oh no... they weren't
mocking me... they were
emulating me...

She moves forward in the office. The perfume is getting thicker and harder to move through. (Note: Don't need actual smoke though, the actor's miming should show it).

BETTY
I can't take this... I
can't breathe. They
must be basing
everything they do off
what they think I do,
whether I really do it
or not... They copy me
like I have some secret
to getting ahead?

She keeps trying to move forward.

BETTY
If I can just make it to
my office, it'll all be
okay. How am I supposed
to manage these people?
They're idiots...
morons... all of 'em.

She gets close to the door, she reaches for the handle but before she can make it, she faints.

Scene 14

(school office)

Adam enters principal's office

ADAM

What's my assignment for today sir.

PRINCIPAL

We know, Mr. Adams.

ADAM

Know what?

PRINCIPAL

Don't you think we knew the threat "kancho" posed? And you... in a single day managed to ruin everything! You've doomed us all!

ADAM

But it was a mistake...

PRINCIPAL

We all make mistakes Mr. Adams. We must take responsibility for those mistakes. Nearly all of my faculty has called in sick - I'd imagine you know why. We are therefore having a full day recess. Your assignment will be to watch all the classes during their recess.

ADAM

No... please...

PRINCIPAL

Unless you do this, do not expect to ever be

called in again from any school in this city. Even if you take on this task, I wouldn't be so sure of your future prospects. Now get going. The fruits of your ill labors are awaiting you outside.

Adam leaves.

Scene 15

(playground)

Adam enters.

CHILD (offscreen)
Hey, it's Mr. Adams

ADAM
Hi, kids...

CHILD (offscreen)
Look Mr. Adams! It's
kancho!

Adam's eyes light up with fear and he runs. We recreate a film noir sequence with little kid's hands like guns, poking around corners, use lights and shadows. Adam's heart is beating wildy, he realizes he's surrounded when suddenly we see the thrust of a small hand and Adam screaming "no!" (We could probably just use a shot from someone with small hands if we don't have kids)

Scene 16

(supermarket)

Danny is back at the supermarket when he's heading to the candy aisle. But then he notices a full roasted chicken.

Cut to movie theater

Scene 17

Movie theater

Danny walks in carrying the full roasted chicken.
He plops down in a seat and a woman sits beside him.

WOMAN

How did you manage to
sneak that in?

Danny answers, but is still watching the coming attractions.

DANNY

Hah, I don't sneak stuff
in. I just walked right
through.

WOMAN

Wow, you're pretty
confident aren't you.

DANNY

Yup.

WOMAN

I like bold men.

Danny, as thick as he is, starts to catch on and turns to
the woman.

Scene 18

(restaurant/cafe)

Girlfriend from opening scene is sitting down. Adam limps
in, exhausted and massaging his butt. He painfully sits
down across from her. Girlfriend watches in horror.

GIRLFRIEND

(quickly)

What happened!?! Did you slip?

ADAM

(exasperated)

No it was...

GIRLFRIEND

(quickly)

Are you okay? Did you break anything?

ADAM

(still exasperated)
No, it just burns a
bit... They got a bit
wild...

Girlfriend's mood changes from concern to angry/upset

GIRLFRIEND

I knew it! I could
always tell. You were
too clean, too nice.
Why else would you have
been single!?!

(she starts to tear up)

I'm such a fool.

Adam starts to catch on and begins to get excited.

ADAM

No, no you don't
understand. It was
these little kids and
WAIT... (he stops
himself)

GIRLFRIEND

(Crying)
Little kids?

She is fully packed and leaves. Adam calls out after her.

ADAM

You don't understand!
It's kancho dammit!
It's kancho!

Adam slumps. Betty walks in and sits down. Adam tries to
pay little attention and is pouty.

ADAM

You smell fragrant.

BETTY

And it seems your ass is sore. So says your new ex. I didn't figure you as the type to switch teams.

ADAM

It's not even worth explaining. Not sure it's even worth going to patch it up.

BETTY

Won't be half as hard as trying to explain to my boss why he found me passed out in front of my office door. Getting imitated by my whole office... you'd think it would be flattering, except when they manage to catch you at your least flattering moments.

Charlie enters and sits down. He's also clearly pouty.

BETTY

And what do you have to be unhappy about? Eileen told me you two made up and declared a truce last night.

CHARLIE

Yeah, well apparently she blew up her little photo to life size. Anything but a truce really wasn't an option.

BETTY

So, that's good right?

CHARLIE

No... I really wanted to see what would happen when I hit her with the Super-Soaker.

Finally, Danny enters. He's perfectly relaxed.

BETTY

Well at least it seems one person had a good day.

DANNY

I guess. Hey Charlie, you got the 22nd free? I have a court date.

ADAM

So the 5-0 finally caught up with you, Mr. Capone? Was it the gummy bears or the nonpareils that got you bagged?

DANNY

Neither. Movie theater employees don't care about bringing in food. But they do seem to care about indecent exposure.

FADE TO BLACK
END OF EPISODE