

HOLLYWOOD POSERS

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Original

OPENING CREDITS

(SFX: MR. ROBOTO by Styx)

Video montage history of video photography. A Polaroid camera morphs into a super 8mm video camera. A stack of old photographs change into an iPhone. Random people taking selfies at the beach and posting pictures of dinner parties online. Video of someone editing clips using windows movie maker changes to JIB JAB videos which change to someone taking a selfie to create CARTOON images of themselves. CUT to a passenger in a car using ONSTAR service to someone at home using an ALEXA to order restaurant take out through DOOR DASH. CUT to GPS screen navigating someone driving on the freeway helping them avoid a construction site. CUT to an image of an old website called ASK JEEVES then to someone having a conversation with CHATgpt. CUT to BUCK ROGERS talking with his sidekick TWIKI that morphs into FLIPPY cooking hamburgers at McDonalds which morphs into a driverless car. Cut to an ocean view with autonomous drones launching off a military aircraft carrier

MR. ROBOTO lyrics continue
*...the problem's plain to
see, too much
technology, machines to
save our lives, machines
dehumanize....*

The DRONE banks hard left and as the sunshine flashes off of the wing, it changes to a passenger plane bound for LAX.

ACT ONE

SCENE ONE EXT LAX DAY

A bright sunny day in L.A. A plane taxis to the terminal.

BLAINE (early 20's, broad shouldered white male wearing an Missouri state cap) in his seat on the plane using an app on his phone that removes the face of Robert Downey Jr. to then cut and paste his own face to become Iron Man. He is holding a magazine with an article from Bloomberg about how AI technology is about to take over the entertainment industry using motion capture software. He gathers his things and walks down the aisle of the plane towards the exit. Leaving the terminal and waving down a TAXI DRIVER. (Male Latino in his mid 50's)

TAXI DRIVER

Where are you headed today?

BLAINE

I'm headed to Mariposa apartments
in playa del rey

TAXI DRIVER
You mean Playa del Rey?

BLAINE
Yeah that's the one.

Blaine opens the back door while the driver gets out to put the bags in the trunk.

TAXI DRIVER
You here on business or pleasure?

BLAINE
My Dad use to always tell me to put my business first and the pleasure would show up in it's own time.

TAXI DRIVER
Are you here to see him?

BLAINE
No, but I am here because of him.
If I tell his story the right way,
it will help to prove he was set up
to take the blame for a crime he
didn't commit.

TAXI DRIVER
Well, if you are looking for a job
as a writer your timing couldn't be
worse. The writers out here are on
strike.

BLAINE
Well then it is a good thing my
story is already written. I just
need to find the guy that knows how
to work.. a little unconventional.
(close up of the app open
on his phone)

TAXI DRIVER
Well, best of luck to you. Can I
give you some advice?

BLAINE
Sure. Lay it on me

TAXI DRIVER
I have picked up a lot of people
just like you who come to this town
looking for their dreams. The
truth is that your dreams aren't
here. You brought them with you.

BLAINE

What do you mean?

TAXI DRIVER

I'm saying that this can be a good place to make a dream come true but not the only place. So if things don't work out for you here, don't give up on whatever is inside of you.

Taxi pulls over as they reach the apartments. The complex has four main buildings laid out in a square with a pool in the center and palm trees scattered throughout the parking area. Blaine gets out of the cab reaches through the window to shake the drivers hand

BLAINE

Thanks for the advice, and the ride. You sounded a lot like my dad just then.

TAXI DRIVER

Well now I know he's a smart man.
Take care

Cab pulls away from the complex and we see an overhead view of the complex. The place is somewhat dated but clean and well maintained. Several people are in and around the pool and others are enjoying drinks on a balcony above him. They look down and wave to him.

BLAINE

The Playa Del Reya!! BO-YA

SCENE TWO INT/EXT TV STATION WPOZ DAY

MARTY (early 30's Latino male with short hair and neatly trimmed beard) in a shirt and tie, typing a message into his laptop. He is doing a web search using an AI program called CHESTER which is stored in a small server which sits in the corner of the office. It has a 3 inch screen which shows the temperature of the processor and storage capacity of the server.

MARTY

Message: what is the square root of negative zero?

CHESTER

Message: As I have told you before, the square root of a negative number cannot be defined, however the square root of zero is still zero which also cannot be shown to have a negative value. Do you have another question for me?

MARTY

Message: Yes. Does it bother you to answer the same question over and over?

CHESTER

Message: I am programmed to deliver accurate information to any question. I have no feeling about the question I am given or how many times it is asked.

MARTY

Message: Thank you Chester

CHESTER

Message: You are welcome Marty

Marty closes the laptop and walks out of the office past several other station employees and out the back door into a busy construction zone. Walking away from the building and Standing next to his boss and station owner DON (late 50's burly white male) wearing a sweater with the station call letters WPOZ on the front and a yellow hard hat. They are watching a crane remove an old satellite dish from the roof of the TV station.

DON

I'm not sure how I feel about seeing that dish come down Marty. Kind of the end of an era for me. I remember when they put it up there.

MARTY

I can understand that. I will have the photos we took from today enlarged and hung up in the studio to commemorate the occasion.

DON

I really appreciate that. Did we get the final paperwork from the internet provider?

MARTY

Yes, it is on your desk. They agreed to give us a better monthly rate in exchange for 10 hours of free advertising every month. I worked out a similar short term deal with the roofing company that is coming tomorrow.

DON

Okay, but no more giving away free air time. We still have other advertisers remember.

MARTY

I know, and we should review all of their contracts as well. A lot of them are coming back to us because they are tired of overpaying for spots on the streaming services and YOUTUBE. You should recalculate what our air time is actually worth.

DON

Look Marty, you have done great work over the last 12 months as our general manager but this needs to stay a small operation that helps support local business. We can't push out the little people that need the air time just because it is easier to sell to the big companies.

MARTY

I understand that, but you are paying for more sales people than you really need selling air time that way....

DON

So now we need to eliminate jobs in sales? Let me worry about our current situation. Here, you focus on our future. This is an agreement with the L.A. Convention center for our station to set up a booth at the AI EXPOCON

Don hands Marty an envelope

MARTY

This is great. Thanks Don. I have been wondering if we should televise a round table discussion about how AI is just another new technology and that it is not going to destroy studios and movie making based on how other industries have...

DON

Slow down there Walter Cronkite! Do not commit the station to anything. You are only allowed to gather information and make a few contacts. We just need to know what is coming, we aren't jumping on board yet. Got it?

MARTY

Okay, Okay. Do we set up for a location shoot to promote the event?

A large noise make both men jump as the satellite dish is lowered into the back of a dump truck.

DON

Yes, there should be a map in the envelope to show you where to park. Can you handle that and running the booth at the same time?

MARTY

I will find someone to help me out. There are plenty of people out of work right now who would be willing to spend some time there.

DON

Okay then. Find out which day of the expo would be the most active for the shoot and then set it up with our transportation department.

MARTY

Ha! You mean our one driver/cameraman with our one vehicle?

DON

Why is that funny? You need to make us sound like an organization that people would want to do business with when you get to the expo.

MARTY

Sure thing boss! Who's Walter Cronkite?

SCENE THREE INT BROKEN DREAMS CAFÉ NIGHT

Autographed photos of celebrities cover one wall next to a small stage with a piano. CAMERA moves slowly past the piano through a small door into the office and we hear two women talking. WILMA, (Tall and elegant white female in her late 70's) talking to potential wait staff while her assistant, LESLIE, (Petite African American female, early 20's) takes notes in a chair nearby. A young man wearing headphones is exiting the office.

WILMA

Thank you dear, we will let you know after we finish with the other interviews.

LESLIE

He was... interesting!

WILMA

He was distracted. If these kids can't even put down their phones for an interview how can we expect them to take care of the customers? Do they think we have a texting app for patrons to order food from their table?

LESLIE

Most fast food restaurants have something available. Even the lobby will often have a touch screen option.

WILMA

Dear Lord! No thank you! Is there anyone with an attention span of more than 3 seconds left to interview?

LESLIE

Only one. She is the girl that worked for Maggie McGuire.

WILMA

They have lost several people in the last few weeks. Some kind of restructuring.

LOIS enters the office (mid 20's mixed race female, dark hair is pulled into a ponytail under a baseball cap, in a name brand jogging suit and running shoes.)

LOIS

Hello, I'm Lois Navarro. Nice to meet you.

LESLIE

Hi, I'm Leslie and this is the owner of the Diner, Wilma Robinson

LOIS

What a jazzy place you have here. I love the red carpet out front.

LESLIE

We think it helps our guests feel important and encourages them to use the valet service when we get really busy.

LOIS

I would be willing to park cars if you need me to!

WILMA

I like your enthusiasm. Have you worked in a place like this before?

LOIS

Not quite this nice but yes as a hostess and waitress and as a bartender in a few places back home.

LESLIE

So tell us, how does a law student from Boston end up in my little corner of the world?

LOIS

Honestly, I'm looking for a place like this for a while to get away from what you see on my resume'. Even before I graduated high school my parents planned my whole life out for me. My two choices were to either go to business school with the goal of getting into management in the auto factories or go to law school to get in a position to help the UAW negotiate a contract for the workers. After I got my degree, I decided to take a vacation out here to clear my head. That was 7 months ago. I found a job that fit my skill set perfectly and it was going well, for a while.

LESLIE

At McGuire legal consulting? What did you do there?

LOIS

A little bit of everything. How much do you know about studio contracts?

WILMA

I have been in the business both as an actress and an agent. Why do you ask?

LOIS

Well, they had me do something with the legal fine print on all of our contracts that actually created a kind of perfect storm scenario during this work stoppage.

WILMA

Well just let Maggie know so she can update the forms.

LOIS

I tried but the changes I made were put into the AI software template that now structures every contract in the business. When I realized the conditions I created by the language I wrote, I went in to try and change it but the document was shown as read only. There was no way to alter anything.

WILMA

That's one reason to always have hard copies on file. A pen and paper never locked anyone out of a document.

LESLIE

So, do you think the software locked you out? Maybe your access was removed.

LOIS

No one else could get access to the template either, it was weird.

WILMA

I'm sure you are worried about nothing. How can a software program harm anyone? It's all just ones and zeros in a database somewhere.

LOIS

Anyway, I would like to have a job that allows me to have a life outside of work for once. Most jobs I have had, follow me home every night. You know the kind where the next problem is always just a text message away.

WILMA

I do understand dear, I have also had those kind of occupations. If we decide to select you for the position, you will start working on our night shift. Then, maybe, when the time is right, you could help me with a little legal advice for my properties. Does that sound like a plan?

Leslie looking surprised and confused

LOIS

Yes, thank you so much.

She Shakes hands with the two woman and leaves the office.

LESLIE

Something seems off about this girl. Did something happen in Boston? Can Maggie verify that she got her degree?

WILMA

We can check with her later if you like but I think she will do a good job for us, even if it is only short term.

LESLIE

Let me do our standard background check on all of the applicants before you make a final decision.

WILMA

Thank you Leslie. Do you have any other concerns you would like to share?

LESLIE

Wilma, you have always been a good judge of the character of an individual, but we also need to hire people that work well as a team. Some of these candidates seem to have good potential but may not be a good fit with the staff that we currently have. Just something to think about.

WILMA

Quite right dear! That is what makes you such a valuable asset. You can always see the things that I tend to miss.

LESLIE

Speaking of that, we need to get downtown for your next meeting.