

"HEALTH AND RACKETS"

an episode for Seinfeld

Written By

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(Andy and I wrote this script after only two episodes of the show had aired- without the book typically prepared by a TV show for freelance writers that details information on the show about the characters, etc. Some ideas from this script actually ended up in later episodes- what's known to writers as parallel development, when two people independently come up with the same idea. Other stuff might be inconsistent with what came later in the show as far as character development and biographical information revealed about the characters, but that's typical of early free-lance TV scripts.

Remember, this was written back when the show had three stand-up routines per episode- at the beginning, middle and end of the show, as the original idea for the show was that what happened in the show would inspire his stand-up routines. Enjoy!)

FADE IN:

INT. NIGHT. COMEDY CLUB

Jerry on stage.

JERRY

Last week after doing a show in Maine, I flew back on one of those commuter airlines, the K-Mart of aviation. When we were flying over the Long Island Sound, I saw some guy below us rowing in a scull, you know a crew shell. We buzzed right past him. A couple of minutes later, he caught up and passed us, and we never saw him again.

(pause)

Did I mention he was 70? But he was in great shape-- he was the Yugoslavian national champion.

(pause)

They say flying is safer than driving. Not if you eat the food.

INT. DAY. JERRY'S APARTMENT

Jerry and Elaine enter the apartment, Jerry carrying a pizza. Jerry is out of breath, but Elaine isn't nearly as tired.

George, already in the apartment, is sitting on the couch; he turns around when Jerry and Elaine walk in.

GEORGE

What took you two so long?

ELAINE

Both elevators were out of order.

JERRY

(putting pizza box down on counter)

How come you're not out of breath after walking up five flights?

ELAINE

I take two aerobics classes at my health club.

Kramer enters energetically, carrying Jerry's bicycle. He leans the bicycle against the side of the couch.

KRAMER

Good as new. Sorry I broke it.

Jerry tries to climb onto the bicycle, but the seat is way too high.

JERRY

Are the elevators back on?

KRAMER

No, I don't think so.

JERRY

You just carried that up five flights of steps?

Kramer nods yes.

JERRY

How come you're not tired either?

KRAMER

I always take the steps. Beats joining a health club. Besides, every time I get into the elevator, somebody looks at me funny and gets out.

GEORGE

Jerry, you have to get into shape.

JERRY

What about you?

GEORGE

I'm in shape. The shape I'm in just happens to be a sphere.

ELAINE

Jerry, you should come by my health club.

JERRY

Why? Do they have an opening for a comedian?

ELAINE

You do need to get some exercise. Besides, it's a great way to meet someone.

GEORGE

Come on, no one ever meets anyone at places like that. They're too crowded.

JERRY

Did you ever go out with anyone you met there?

ELAINE

Are you kidding? I wouldn't let any of those sweaty guys touch me.

GEORGE

Perfect. Now you can be sure of meeting just the right type of woman.

JERRY

I suppose I could stop by and take a look around.

GEORGE

Those gorgeous women selling memberships will eat you alive.

Kramer crosses to the window and looks outside.

KRAMER

He's right. If you're lucky. Blessed bovine! It's the mailman.

ELAINE

Wow, you're actually salivating.

GEORGE

It's the uniform.

KRAMER

Gotta go. I'll get your mail too, if you want.

JERRY

Yeah, sure.

Kramer exits.

GEORGE

I know how to deal with high-pressure salespeople; I used to get them all the time at the office. I remember a couple of months ago someone came in selling tool kits.

JERRY

That's stupid. Why would anyone buy tools at the office?

GEORGE

Jerry, in the health clubs all the saleswoman are very sexy. They'll be wearing low-cut silk blouses and have big blue eyes and long, fluffy red hair...

JERRY

Red hair? Why do you say they all have red hair?

GEORGE

Shut up; this is my fantasy.

ELAINE

And they're all brain dead.

JERRY

Elaine, you belong to a health club, so you know what to look for; why don't you come with me?

GEORGE

You can't bring a girl.

JERRY

Why not?

GEORGE

Because. It's like having your mother take you to your first baseball practice. It's a guy thing, guys have to do it.

Kramer comes in the door, waving a handful of envelopes.

ELAINE

Well then if that's the case
why don't you go with him?

Kramer tosses Jerry's mail on the coffee table.

KRAMER

So yesterday I got into this
cab; the driver's name was
Julio Fernandez. I swear, my
first thought was, thank God...
an American. And he was; he
spoke English, and he even had
heard of Broadway.

(pause)

Seventy-second Street he had a
little trouble with.

ELAINE

Cabs? Who's talking about
cabs?

KRAMER

I was. Didn't you just hear
me? Mail's here.

Kramer starts to open his mail.

GEORGE

It's always here; it comes
every day.

KRAMER

Did you see what I got? An
invitation to Gustav and
Donna's party.

JERRY

I got one yesterday. We all
got them.

GEORGE

I didn't get one. Why didn't I
get one?

JERRY

It's no big deal.

ELAINE

No big deal? No big deal?
They throw great parties! It's
an event never to be missed. I
can't go.

JERRY

Me neither-- I'll be working in
Baltimore all week.

GEORGE

Why can't you go?

ELAINE

I promised my mother I'd go to
my aunt's sixtieth birthday
party. My uncle died last year
on her birthday. She lives in
Philadelphia.

KRAMER

A lot of people seem to die in
Philadelphia.

GEORGE

So? You know how long their
parties go on-- you'll have a
great time. Leave Philly by
eleven, catch the train back,
and we can be at the party by
one-thirty. Where is it this
year?

JERRY

At their apartment, same as
every year.

ELAINE

Where are they living now? It
seems like they move every
year, right after they have
their party.

GEORGE

So Elaine, can I go as your
guest?

KRAMER

No guests.

ELAINE

Why no guests?

JERRY

Remember what happened last year?

ELAINE

No.

KRAMER

No one remembers what happened last year, but it didn't happen to anybody they knew, so no more guests.

INT. DAY. THE HEALTH CLUB

Having completed a tour of the health club, Jerry and George walk into a tiny room and find chairs. They are followed by JANICE, a red-headed woman, who sits down at the desk. George is overwhelmed by Janice's beauty.

GEORGE

(staring at Janice)

Boy, Jerry, this is some club. I broke a sweat just touring the place.

JERRY

Yes, I think you need a cold shower.

JANICE

If you don't have any further questions I can sign you up right now and you can start working out today. If you need work-out gear, we can sell them to you.

JERRY

I'm not sure I want to join right away. As I told you, I'm just beginning to look at clubs and I'd like to compare a few.

GEORGE

He's just kidding, we'll join now.

JERRY

What are you talking about? I thought you said we were going to compare clubs.

GEORGE

Why look when you have the best
right here?

JERRY

What happened to: 'Those
gorgeous women selling
memberships will eat you
alive'?

GEORGE

He's such a kidder, you know
he's a professional comedian.

JANICE

A comedian. Oh how nice. What
do you do for a living?

GEORGE

I'm in real estate.

JANICE

Real estate. Oh how nice. I
think you'll find that we have
the finest facilities and the
best price. We're running a
special; if you join today you
get eighteen months for the
price of twelve.

JERRY

Twelve what?

JANICE

(missing the joke)

Twelve months. You get
eighteen months for the price
of twelve months.

GEORGE

See that? What a bargain.

JERRY

I don't know, some of the
machines seemed pretty
complicated. I'd feel
embarrassed not knowing how to
work them.

JANICE

They're not that complex once you're familiar with them. Besides, as new members you'll have a free personal training session. We'll give you an exercise program, tell you your body fat content and instruct you on how to use each machine in your program. If you want to experiment on your own there's always a staff member on the floor to ask how to use a machine. You can always ask for help. You seemed to like the double shoulder machine.

JERRY

Was that the one where the girl with the... was doing...

JANICE

Yes.

JERRY

Well, in my line of work I travel a lot. I spend a lot of time away from home, and I wouldn't want to pay for time I can't use.

JANICE

Oh, what do you do for a living?

Jerry and George exchange glances.

JERRY

I'm a comedian.

JANICE

A comedian. Oh how nice.

GEORGE

And I'm an Elvis impersonator.

JANICE

Oh Elvis impersonator how nice.
If you're away for a while we
can put a hold on your
membership. The time you spend
here will provide a base to
come back to, and when you're
travelling, if the hotels you
stay at have health facilities,
you'll know right away how to
use them. And when you're in
good shape you'll suffer much
less from jet lag.

JERRY

I still would like to compare a
few other clubs.

JANICE

That's perfectly
understandable.
*(bends down to a bottom
drawer in a filing
cabinet behind her)*
Here, let me give you a one day
pass to use our facilities so
you'll know what you're
comparing. It was a pleasure
meeting you.

GEORGE

Okay, I'll join. Are you free
for dinner?

INT. DAY. A BOOTH AT THE DINER

Jerry, George, bagels, orange juice and coffee.

TWO OLD LADIES sit having breakfast at the booth behind
Jerry.

Elaine, carrying a plastic bag, enters and sits down.

ELAINE

(excited)
They were replacing a clothes
dryer in the basement of
Jerry's building.

GEORGE

So?

ELAINE

So? There were all these single socks.

JERRY

So what?

ELAINE

So what, you ask? They were all stuck in the duct where the hot air blows out.

Jerry and George still haven't joined Elaine's state of blissful amazement.

ELAINE

Don't you realize? I've solved the mystery-- where all the socks go. I'll be famous.

GEORGE

Who cares?

ELAINE

Who cares? Here, are any of these yours?

Elaine reaches into her bag and throws a bunch of lint-covered socks down on the table.

Using a fork, Jerry carefully lifts and begins to examine the socks.

GEORGE

Are there any matching gym socks?

ELAINE

Speaking of the gym, did you find one you liked?

JERRY

We looked at only one.

ELAINE

Why just one?

JERRY

That's all that George could afford.

GEORGE

She was a piranha. You saw her.

(imitates Janice)

Here, let me give you a free pass.

(pause)

No man could resist.

JERRY

So I took the free pass, and George joined. But I'm not going to use it. I don't even have a decent pair of sneakers.

(lifts a sock and examines it from different angles)

Hey! My other red sock-- bought them last year in Cincinnati; I lost one right after I got back. I thought I was going to have to make a handpuppet out of the other one.

GEORGE

So, Elaine, what's new at work?

ELAINE

Like you care.

GEORGE

I just wanted to get off the topic of socks.

ELAINE

I read this new manuscript last week. It was a horror story, and it gave me the creeps. I've been having nightmares, it was so horrific.

One of the old ladies 'shushes' the other in order to eavesdrop better on Jerry, Elaine and George.

JERRY

So you rejected it?

ELAINE

Rejected it? I recommended it to the senior editor- it's a great book. People who like that kind of stuff will love it. But today the author called me, and he sounds just like I imagined the main character to sound, and I think he likes me.

JERRY

But you've never met him, right?

ELAINE

Yeah, but in the story, the killer is in phone sales, and he preys on people he does business with over the phone.

(pause)

I think I'll give him my boss's number.

(to Jerry)

Have you ever thought about writing a book?

JERRY

Why do you ask?

GEORGE

Probably because you give her the creeps.

JERRY

Then I wouldn't need a book.

ELAINE

Well, have you ever considered it?

JERRY

No.

ELAINE

Why not?

The old lady behind Jerry and Elaine again shushes her friend. George gives her a dirty look.

JERRY

Why haven't I considered it?
Do I need a reason not to do
something?

Elaine nods yes.

JERRY

Well, first of all I'm a
comedian, not a novelist.
Secondly, I don't have the
time, and anyway there's not
much money in it.

GEORGE

I'd write a book.

JERRY

What kind of book?

GEORGE

About a guy who kills people
who listen in on other people's
conversations in diners.

George smiles at one of the old ladies; she quickly
glances away.

INT. DAY. THE SHOE DEPARTMENT OF A SPORTING GOODS STORE

Jerry browses the wide variety of sneakers on the wall.
Elaine looks at sneakers on a table while George sits
schlumped on a chair.

GEORGE

Did you check with Gustav?

ELAINE

Yup.

GEORGE

What did he say?

ELAINE

He said no guests at the party.

GEORGE

And what did Donna say?

ELAINE

She said she remembers you from the time we all went to the beach.

GEORGE

Oh, right. I guess I'm not going.

A gorgeous SALESWOMAN, dressed in shorts and a tank top, approaches Jerry.

SALESWOMAN

May I help you?

JERRY

Yes, thank you, I'm looking for something to wear while I work out.

The saleswoman takes a sneaker from the shelf. The price tag reads "\$249.95".

SALESWOMAN

These are our newest model, with the latest in scientific design.

George leans over the back of his chair and watches, mesmerized.

SALESWOMAN

They have an air-cushioned insole, reverse fiber for stiffness where it's needed most, ample padding in the curves, and the softest, smoothest, most comfortable tongue you'll find anywhere.

Jerry takes a less expensive sneaker from a shelf.

JERRY

I'm sure something less fancy would suit me just fine. I'd like to try this in a size ten, please.

SALESWOMAN

Sure, I'll go see what we have in stock.

George watches the saleswoman enter the stockroom.

GEORGE

Jerry, I think I need to borrow
two hundred and fifty dollars.

INT. NIGHT. JERRY ON STAGE AT A COMEDY CLUB

JERRY

Why is it that people assume
that the later you stayed out,
the more fun you must have had?

(pause)

Wow, I didn't get home till
four-thirty on Saturday night.

(pause)

I'm a comedian; I work nights
and weekends, so I stay out
even later. People assume that
entertainers always have to be
having more fun than everyone
else. And we do, but even we
have to run errands once in a
while, get our shoes repaired.
Of course, we can go to those
special 'entertainers only'
shoe repair places.

(pause)

Hey Jerry! How was Baltimore?

(pause)

I had a great time. I had so
much fun I didn't get home
until Thursday.

INT. DAY. JERRY'S LIVING ROOM

Jerry and George.

GEORGE

So you just went up to her and
asked?

JERRY

Yup. I said I didn't know how
to use the machine, and could
she help me.

GEORGE

You admitted you didn't know
how to use it.

JERRY

Sure.

GEORGE

You can't do that.

JERRY

Why not?

GEORGE

You just can't do that. Guys don't do that.

JERRY

So what am I supposed to do? Lie?

GEORGE

YES you're supposed to lie.

JERRY

It doesn't matter; I'm not joining anyway.

GEORGE

You met a girl on your first time there and you're not going to join?

JERRY

Why should I? I can get one-day passes at any health club in the city, and there's hundreds of them.

GEORGE

What does she do for a living?

JERRY

I don't know.

GEORGE

What do you mean you don't know? Didn't you ask her?

JERRY

I did. Of course I did.

GEORGE

And she didn't tell you? That's a bad sign.

JERRY

She did tell me.

GEORGE

So?

JERRY

It's something in finance, but I don't understand it.

GEORGE

You're really not going to join?

Elaine enters, out of breath.

ELAINE

Can you believe this? Personnel sent every employee in my company a memo urging everyone to save paper. By the way, the elevator's out again.

GEORGE

Why are you out of breath?

ELAINE

Kramer chased me up the steps with a hedge clipper.

GEORGE

What's he doing with a hedge clipper in an apartment building?

ELAINE

That's what I said. He said it was a perfectly good item and someone was throwing it out.

GEORGE

So how was the party?

ELAINE

I'll let Kramer tell you when he gets here. How was the health club?

GEORGE

Jerry isn't joining.

ELAINE
Why not, competition too tough?

JERRY
It's just not for me.

ELAINE
Then who is it for?

JERRY
It's for you, and for Annette.

ELAINE
Ooo. Annette. Tell me about her.

GEORGE
She doesn't have a job.

JERRY
She does too. I just don't understand what it is.

ELAINE
So where'd you meet her?

GEORGE
At the double shoulder machine.
And get this, the line he used on her...

ELAINE
What?

GEORGE
(imitating Jerry)
Excuse me, how do you use this machine?

ELAINE
(shocked)
You admitted you didn't know how to use it?
(pause)
How novel.

JERRY
The instructor wasn't around.

GEORGE
He was pinned under the triple shoulder machine.

JERRY

Anyway, I don't need a health club.

Jerry disappears into the bedroom.

Kramer enters the apartment and sits down.

GEORGE

Kramer, how was the party?

KRAMER

It was so much fun... I didn't get home till after nine in the morning.

ELAINE

Yeah, but we left at three.

GEORGE

So why did it take you six hours to get back?

ELAINE

Because the car that Kramer here borrowed broke down in the Bronx.

KRAMER

Wasn't that tow truck cool?

ELAINE

Yeah? You didn't sit in the back with the greasy wrenches.

KRAMER

I wanted to.

Jerry returns from his bedroom carrying a basketball.

GEORGE

That's it? That's your better idea?

JERRY

There's a schoolyard right down the block. All I need is a pair of sneakers, not some fancy chrome health club.

ELAINE

What if there's no one to play with?

JERRY

Then I'll go riding.

Jerry puts down the basketball and starts fiddling with his bicycle.

JERRY

By the way, Kramer, you left the seat too high and I can't get it back down.

KRAMER

Of course not; you need an allen wrench... I know where there's a tow truck full of them.

JERRY

I'm not going to call a tow truck to come adjust my bicycle seat because I don't have an allen wrench.

GEORGE

Don't worry; I have a whole set I bought a few months ago.

INT. NIGHT. COMEDY CLUB

Jerry on stage.

JERRY

I keep meeting women, but I don't always understand what they do for a living. I have a college education, but the world's just getting too complicated. Comedian, that's simple. I tell jokes... people pay me to make them laugh, or, more correctly somebody pays me to make people laugh so hard that they don't notice how much the drinks are watered down. I don't think we need any job that takes more than ten words to explain...

(bends toward audience)

member)
What do you do for a living?

FIRST AUDIENCE MEMBER
I'm a third grade teacher.

JERRY
Fine. And you?

Jerry bends over and holds the microphone to ANOTHER
AUDIENCE MEMBER.

SECOND AUDIENCE MEMBER
I'm an aeronautical engineer; I
design rocket engines.

JERRY
Great. The job may require
precise technical skills, but
the explanation is simple.
(pause)
I met this girl... she's...
(mimics voice)
...an investment banker.
(normal voice)
Okay, I know what a bank does.
You give them your money, they
lend it to someone else and you
never see it again. But what
does an investment banker do?
I asked.
(mimics voice)
I arrange swaps to arbitrage or
defease the bank's bond
portfolio.
(normal voice)
What does that mean?
(mimics voice)
We want to make sure that our
risk exposure, both by duration
and currency-
*(makes game show BUZZING
NOISE)*
Sorry, took too long-- your
position in society has been
eliminated.

FADE.