

## **"PRIVATE LINES"**

an episode for Seinfeld

Written By

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(I wrote this script after only maybe three episodes of the show had aired- without the book typically prepared by a TV show for outside writers that details information on the show about the characters, etc. Some of what's here 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, 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.)

FADE IN:

INT. NIGHT. COMEDY CLUB

Jerry on stage.

JERRY

Why do they put pictures of 'America's Most Wanted' on the wall at the post office? Nobody looks at them anymore. With so much crime, there just isn't room on the walls for all the posters anyway, even if you have all day, waiting in line, to read. If they wanted to get our attention, they should put photos of dangerous criminals right on the stamps... and the postage could be a percentage of the reward. Really dangerous criminals go on the express mail stamp. Fifteen bucks to mail, a hundred fifty thousand dollars for catching them. No so bad guys, ten thousand reward, go on the ten cent stamp. People wanted for robbing the post office, they could go on the 'do not bend' stickers-- no postage, no reward. Actually, last week somebody tried to rob the post office. By the time the clerk finished stuffing all the money into a bag, it was closing time, and they accidentally locked him inside. I've got a great new slogan-- help lick crime.

INT. DAY. JERRY'S APARTMENT

Jerry and George sit on the couch, watching a sporting event on the television.

GEORGE

"Private Lines" (Seinfeld) - 2

Let's call and get some Chinese food.

JERRY  
I don't want Chinese food.

GEORGE  
Sure you do.

ANNOUNCER  
*(O.S., from television)*  
He shoots! He scores!

Kramer, waving a piece of paper in his hand, enters the apartment.

JERRY  
Hi Kramer.

GEORGE  
Hi. Bring anything to eat?

KRAMER  
So did you see it?

JERRY  
The goal?

KRAMER  
No, channel three.

JERRY  
What's on three?

GEORGE  
Isn't that the municipal channel, the one with the garbage collection schedules?

KRAMER  
No, it's the building's new security camera.  
*(waves the paper in his hand)*  
Didn't you get the tenants memo?

JERRY

"Private Lines" (Seinfeld) - 3

Yeah, I saw that. They put a camera in the lobby.

Jerry clicks his remote control.

GEORGE

*(unenthusiastic)*

Look at that. The lobby.

*(pause)*

This is the nineties. Why is it only in black and white?

KRAMER

They're cheap. It's a cheap camera.

GEORGE

Hey, look at that.

KRAMER

It's only a dog.

GEORGE

I'm allowed to look at dogs. I happen to be quite fond of spaniels.

KRAMER

You're not supposed to look at other people's dogs.

GEORGE

Why not? Jerry, can't I look at dogs? What's wrong with admiring a pretty puppy?

JERRY

Don't get me involved with your petty disagreements.

GEORGE

So now what? You're saying that we can't even talk about dogs?

JERRY

Actually, what I'm saying is that a producer is coming here

"Private Lines" (Seinfeld) - 4

in fifteen minutes, and you guys have to go.

KRAMER

You're meeting a producer here?  
At your apartment?

JERRY

She's from L.A., and her company's New York office is being repainted. We thought it might be nicer to meet here than her hotel room; they're so impersonal. And she said she wanted to see how I live.

GEORGE

What's this about?

JERRY

A TV show. They're thinking of doing a show, a sit-com about a stand-up comedian.

KRAMER

And they want you to play one?

JERRY

No, they want me to fly the company helicopter. Of course to play a comedian.

KRAMER

Maybe she was looking for a writer.

GEORGE

He's got you there, Jerry.

JERRY

Maybe you guys should go.

KRAMER

Come on, George, mister big-shot TV star doesn't need his friends anymore.

JERRY

It's not like that at all...  
It's just that I don't like you  
little people anymore.

GEORGE  
Oh, sure, now we're not even  
good enough to be ignored.

The doorbell buzzer SOUNDS.

JERRY  
She's early.

GEORGE  
Come on, Kramer, let's get  
something to eat.

Kramer and George leave.

JERRY  
*(into intercom)*  
Come on up, elevator's to your  
left.

Jerry looks at the TV, seeing the lobby.

JERRY  
So THAT'S what she looks like.

He turns off the television and straightens a few things  
on the coffee table.

There is a KNOCK at the door. Jerry goes to the door and  
opens it, finding MADELEINE, an elegant-looking forty-  
year old.

They shake hands, Madeleine's grip on Jerry's hand  
lingering.

MADELEINE  
It's nice to meet you.

JERRY  
Come on in, have a seat. Can I  
get you anything to drink?

MADELEINE  
No, thanks, but I appreciate

"Private Lines" (Seinfeld) - 6

the opportunity to get to know  
you after seeing your live  
routine and speaking with you  
on the phone.

JERRY

Where did you catch my act?

MADELEINE

San Fran, around two weeks ago,  
on a Thursday.

JERRY

So tell me about the TV show--  
my agent didn't really give me  
any details...

INT. DAY. THE DINER

Jerry, Elaine and George are at breakfast.

GEORGE

Hey, how'd the meeting go?

ELAINE

What meeting?

GEORGE

Jerry's gonna be on a TV show.

JERRY

Don't say that. I haven't been  
cast, and even if I get offered  
the part I'm not sure I'll take  
it. Plus, most new shows never  
get off the ground anyway.

ELAINE

You're gonna be on TV! That  
sounds so exciting.

JERRY

I've been on TV before.

ELAINE

Yeah, but you've never been  
exciting.

INT. NIGHT. JERRY'S APARTMENT

Jerry and George are standing at the counter, eating Chinese food, right out of the containers, with chopsticks. The bag the food came in, with a menu stapled to it, rests on the counter between George and Jerry.

GEORGE

Last week for lunch I had Chinese FAST food... five minutes later I was hungry again.

JERRY

Leave comedy to the professionals.

GEORGE

Do not attempt this at home.

Jerry puts his container down and turns the bag upside down. Fortune cookies and a dozen little sauce packets slide out onto the counter.

George picks up a packet of duck sauce.

GEORGE

What are you supposed to do with all these?

JERRY

You're supposed to eat them; I think they're food.

GEORGE

I know, but they give you so many. Nobody could use ten packages of soy sauce on eight dollars worth of food.

JERRY

*(examining a packet)*

China Pack Noodle Company. These aren't noodles.

GEORGE

I guess they're not very

expensive, or they wouldn't give you so many. What do you do with them?

JERRY

I throw them out. What do you do with them?

GEORGE

I save them.

JERRY

Save them? What for?

GEORGE

Not FOR anything. I just don't like to throw food away. Some day I'll find a use for them.

JERRY

Like what?

GEORGE

I don't know. Maybe somebody'll invent a recipe that calls for duck sauce, soy sauce and Chinese mustard. He'd be famous.

JERRY

Who?

GEORGE

The guy who invented the recipe. Everybody'd use it.

JERRY

I wouldn't.

GEORGE

How do you know? You don't even know what it's for yet.

JERRY

I can be pretty sure I don't want to eat anything that has that combination. I don't even put that stuff on my noodles.

There is a KNOCK at the door.

JERRY

Who are you?

Kramer enters, carrying a videotape and one end of a coaxial cable fed into a signal splitter.

KRAMER

I'm Kramer, who do you think I was?

GEORGE

What do you do with the leftover sauce packages from Chinese food?

KRAMER

I save them.

GEORGE

See! What for?

KRAMER

I have a recipe that calls for them. I call it rice a la Kramer.

JERRY

Never heard of it. What's with the tape and wire?

KRAMER

*(hands tape to Jerry)*

Play this.

JERRY

What is it?

KRAMER

'Bambi and the Beast'. It's a porn movie.

JERRY

I don't want to watch 'Bambi and the Beast'. Or even 'Beauty and the Beast'. I don't want to see a beast at

all.

KRAMER

You don't have to watch, just  
play the tape.

Kramer takes the output of the splitter and plugs it into  
the back of Jerry's VCR.

JERRY

What are you doing?

KRAMER

I don't have a VCR, but the  
other end of this wire runs,  
through an amplifier I built,  
into the master antenna in my  
apartment.

GEORGE

Why?

KRAMER

So when people turn on the  
security channel three, instead  
of seeing the lobby, they'll  
see the more powerful signal  
coming out of my apartment.  
The videotape of...

KRAMER AND GEORGE

'Bambi and the Beast'.

Kramer, sitting down on the couch, turns on the  
television and VCR, inserts the tape and pushes the start  
button on the remote control.

The sound of MOANING comes from Jerry's television.

George walks around behind the couch to get a better look  
at the television.

JERRY

I'm not sure I like this  
concept.

KRAMER

Is that a complaint?

"Private Lines" (Seinfeld) - 11

GEORGE

Of course not. You never hear him complain. Jerry never complains.

JERRY

I hired someone to do my complaining for me.

*(pause)*

But he doesn't do a very good job.

Kramer picks up the remote control and turns down the sound. George slowly tilts his head as he watches 'Bambi and the Beast', following some unexplained action on the television.

GEORGE

Kramer, this is brilliant. Where did you get the idea?

KRAMER

Geniuses frequently don't reveal the sources of their inspiration.

*(pause)*

I saw two kids kissing in the lobby.

GEORGE

*(still watching the movie)*

How can she do that with her legs?

KRAMER

*(looks up at television)*

Those aren't her legs.

GEORGE

Oh.

There is a KNOCK on Jerry's door.

JERRY

Who is it?

VOICE

Mrs. Weinstock, from down the  
hall.

JERRY  
Come on in, it's open.

MRS. WEINSTOCK enters; she's in her eighties.

MRS. WEINSTOCK  
Have you seen what they're  
doing in the lobby? They're  
having sex right in the lobby.  
In our building, right in the  
lobby! Oh, hi Mr. Kramer.

KRAMER  
Hi. I'm really sorry about  
your cat.

MRS. WEINSTOCK  
Everybody forgets things. I'll  
get someone else to look after  
her next time I go away.  
*(notices Jerry's TV)*  
Oh, I see you're getting it  
too.

*(pause)*  
How come yours is in color?

INT. NIGHT. COMEDY CLUB

Jerry on stage.

JERRY  
Who here has a pet? I love  
pets, but it's tough keeping an  
animal in the city. Dogs have  
to be walked and cleaned up  
after. Cats are okay, I guess.  
But New York City has been a  
bad influence on my cat.  
Instead of scratching furniture  
like other cats do, he uses  
spray paint. I don't even  
understand why people bother to  
name their cats? I mean, a  
dog'll come running when you  
call its name. But not a cat.

The cat thinks...

*(in a deeper voice)*

-You want me, buddy, you come over here-

*(pause)*

The only thing my cat responds to is the sound of the electric can opener. So I named him Buzz.

INT. DAY. JERRY'S APARTMENT

Jerry and Elaine are sitting on the couch; Kramer, wearing a baseball jacket, paces back and forth next to the kitchenette.

A box of chocolates on the table is slowly being devoured by Elaine, who, every time she takes a piece, pushes the box farther away from her. Eventually she's reaching all the way across the table, but she continues to eat.

KRAMER

...So I said to the judge, hey judge, if she were a real psychic, she would have known I didn't have any money.

Elaine bites into a piece of chocolate and examines its insides before eating the other half.

ELAINE

Isn't there something more normal in your life you'd rather share with us?

Jerry gives Elaine a dirty look, then closes the box of chocolates.

KRAMER

Well, I have been having this recurring nightmare lately... I've been dreaming that my arms are stuck in these long, thin tubes and it keeps getting hotter and hotter and I can't do anything about it.

Kramer tries to take his jacket off over his head. He's

"Private Lines" (Seinfeld) - 14

unsuccessful, and gets his arms tangled in the sleeves. With his arms over his head, he whips his upper torso around, banging into the furniture, waving back and forth.

In mortal fear that his friend will destroy the apartment and all its human inhabitants, Jerry stands up and helps Kramer off with the jacket.

The door BUZZER sounds; Jerry goes to answer.

JERRY

Who is it?

MADELEINE

It's Madeleine.

JERRY

*(engaging buzzer)*

Come on up.

KRAMER

Well, I'm off.

ELAINE

I'll say.

Kramer leaves. Jerry goes into the kitchen.

ELAINE

Who's Madeleine?

JERRY

The TV producer.

KNOCK.

JERRY

Come on in.

Madeleine enters.

JERRY

Madeleine, this is my friend Elaine.

ELAINE

*(standing up)*

Nice to meet you.

MADELEINE

*(looks Elaine over)*

Oh, don't get up.

*(goes into the kitchen)*

Jerry, I ran the tape you gave me past my partner, and she's interested.

JERRY

Great. What's the next step?

MADELEINE

Come out to L.A. for a few days-

*(fingers Jerry's lapel)*

I can put you up if you want.

Elaine, not liking what she's seeing, gets up and walks into the kitchen, standing behind Jerry.

MADELEINE

*(seductively)*

I've been a fan of stand-up comedy from way back...

In a refined, crafty motion, Madeleine reaches behind Jerry and opens a kitchen cabinet, interposing the cabinet door between Elaine and Madeleine/Jerry. This done, she puts her arm around Jerry, pulls him close, and kisses him passionately.

Jerry, caught by surprise, neither pushes away nor kisses back. Eventually Madeleine stops kissing Jerry, but continues to press herself against him.

MADELEINE

My friends in Beverly Hills and I have slept with most of the big name comedians in the industry.

JERRY

*(freeing himself)*

What about your husband?

MADELEINE

Of course not, he doesn't sleep  
with comics...

ELAINE

I think what Jerry means is-

MADELEINE

-Of course, not the older ones,  
I mean, I wouldn't sleep with  
George Burns, or Jack Benny.  
But the younger comics...

ELAINE

What Jerry meant-

MADELEINE

Oh, are you two...

Elaine shakes her head up and down violently. Jerry is  
still facing Madeleine, so he doesn't see this.

MADELEINE

Well, if that's the case,  
Elaine, you're welcome to join  
us; my bed has room for six if  
need be.

ELAINE

That's disgusting!

JERRY

I don't think it's so  
disgusting... but it's not what  
would be best for my  
relationship with Elaine right  
now.

INT. DAY. THE DINER

Elaine, George and Jerry.

A gorgeous WAITRESS serves bagels and lox.

ELAINE

What did you mean it wouldn't  
be best for our relationship  
right now?

JERRY

It would put a strain on our friendship if I slept with her... because you'd never let me hear the end of it.

GEORGE

Sure she would.

ELAINE

How can you be so sure?

GEORGE

Because the producer lady would cast him in a show and he'd move to LA... end of story.

The gorgeous waitress refills Jerry's water glass and walks away as Jerry and George watch.

ELAINE

*(indicating the waitress)*

You like her, don't you?

JERRY

I don't know her.

ELAINE

Why don't you ask her out and get to know her?

GEORGE

She'd never go out with him.

JERRY

I could get her to go out with me. If I wanted to.

ELAINE

He's going to be a TV star.

GEORGE

I'll bet you twenty bucks you couldn't get her to go out with you.

JERRY

"Private Lines" (Seinfeld) - 18

That's not right, gambling  
about a date.

GEORGE  
Ten to one odds. Two hundred  
bucks if you win.

ELAINE  
Go on, Jerry. You like her.  
And two hundred bucks could pay  
for quite a night on the town.

JERRY  
Make it twenty to one.

GEORGE  
Fifteen to one. Three hundred  
if you win.

JERRY  
Done.

Jerry and George shake hands.

The waitress approaches with a pitcher of water.

WAITRESS  
May I get you anything el...

Before she has finished her sentence, George quickly  
interrupts.

GEORGE  
-Will you go out with me?

WAITRESS  
I'm sorry, but I really don't  
think that would be a good  
idea. Can I get any of you  
anything else to eat?

ELAINE  
No thank you.

The waitress leaves.

ELAINE  
*(in announcer's voice)*

George, in a pre-emptive first strike, attacks without mercy, swiftly destroying the opposition's chances for any type of victory.

JERRY  
*(standing up)*  
Excuse me.

Jerry leaves the table and approaches the waitress.

ELAINE  
I don't think what you did to Jerry was fair... but it was clever.

Jerry whispers in the waitress's ear for a few seconds; she nods yes.

Jerry gets change from the cashier and returns to the table.

JERRY  
We all done here?

ELAINE  
I'm finished eating.

GEORGE  
*(proudly)*  
My work is done.

JERRY  
*(to waitress)*  
Could we get the check, please?

The waitress returns to the table, totals the check, and places it in front of Jerry.

JERRY  
Thank you.

WAITRESS  
*(hands Jerry a piece of paper)*  
Here's my address and number.  
See you tonight, then?

JERRY

*(smiling)*

I'm looking forward to it.

Jerry leaves a twenty dollar tip as he, Elaine and George leave.

INT. DAY. JERRY'S APARTMENT

George and Jerry are standing around the kitchen counter, soda cans in hand.

GEORGE

So what's the problem?

JERRY

I'm not even sure there is a television show. I think there's a chance that she made the whole thing up just to come on to me.

GEORGE

Why would she do that?

JERRY

She and her friends collect comics.

GEORGE

Some people collect baseball cards, or porcelain cats. She collects comics. So what?

JERRY

Not comic books. Comedians. She told me, right in front of Elaine, too, that she's slept with some of the biggest names in the stand-up comedy business. I called a couple of guys I know who work in television, and they say that except for 'Beverly Hills Orthodontist', she's never produced anything, that she's all talk.

GEORGE

I cried when they canceled  
'Orthodontist'. So what are  
you going to do?

JERRY

I'm letting my agent handle  
everything.

GEORGE

I've heard that he's slept with  
some of the biggest names in  
the producer business.

JERRY

He has screwed a lot of people,  
but I think mostly using the  
telephone.

GEORGE

Long distance... it's the-

Kramer enters, carrying bread slices on a large cutting  
board.

KRAMER

*(to George)*

Taste this.

GEORGE

What is it?

KRAMER

Taste it first.

GEORGE

No thanks. I make it a rule  
not to eat anything unless I  
know what it is first.

JERRY

Where's your sense of culinary  
adventure?

GEORGE

It went away when I ate sheep  
intestine pudding in Scotland.

KRAMER

What did they taste like?

GEORGE

Breaded sheep intestines.

JERRY

I'll try the bread.

KRAMER

It's freshly baked, right out of the oven.

JERRY

Who made it?

KRAMER

I did.

JERRY

You baked it yourself? Since when do you make bread?

KRAMER

Since I got a machine that does all the work.

JERRY

*(tasting bread)*

This is good, really good.

KRAMER

It's cinnamon apple honey bread.

GEORGE

You could have told me that; I would have tried it.

KRAMER

Try this.

Kramer hands George a slice of bread, which George tastes.

GEORGE

It's stale. How could it be fresh and already be stale?

KRAMER

That's from yesterday's loaf,  
whole wheat potato zucchini  
bread.

GEORGE

*(putting back the rest  
of the slice)*

No thanks. I don't need any  
stale zucchini bread. I don't  
like zucchini.

KRAMER

That is one problem with the  
machine. Without using  
preservatives, the bread does  
get stale very quickly.

GEORGE

What's the point of having a  
machine?

KRAMER

You can have hot bread anytime  
you want it; you just pour in  
the ingredients, and it takes  
only a few hours to make. It's  
no work at all.

JERRY

So? I can buy fresh bread  
anytime I want it. We have  
food stores in New York, and  
unlike some places, you don't  
even have to wait on long food  
lines.

KRAMER

But when you buy it in a store,  
the bread's not warm anymore.

GEORGE

How much was your machine?

KRAMER

A hundred forty nine dollars.

GEORGE

Well, I have a better machine.  
Fifteen dollars, it's called a  
toaster.

JERRY

What kind of bread it can make?

KRAMER

Anything-- rye, whole wheat,  
peanut chocolate chip potato  
pickle bread, anything you  
want.

JERRY

Well, I can be pretty sure I  
won't ever want chocolate chip  
pickle bread, with or without  
the nuts.

KRAMER

How can you be so sure?

JERRY

The marketing people at food  
companies are pretty  
sophisticated, and I'm sure  
that if ANYONE wanted something  
like that, anywhere in the  
country, that they would have  
tried to sell it to us.

GEORGE

Forgive him, mister  
conservative, he's still  
getting used to the concept of  
cherry cola, so don't even  
think about giving Jerry bread  
with nuts or chips in it.

INT. NIGHT. COMEDY CLUB

Jerry on stage.

JERRY

So my girlfriend sent me to the  
supermarket to buy tampons.  
Now when a guy's in a store,  
alone, buying tampons,

everybody, all the other men in the store, they look at him-- what a wimp, his lady makes him buy that for him. Is she really worth all the embarrassment? I found a way out. With every box of tampons, I'll also buy five HUNDRED condoms.

*(pause)*

Speaking about condoms, I heard that Trojan and Baskin-Robbins are working on a joint venture to produce ice cream cones that don't leak.

*(pause)*

So anyway, if anybody here needs any condoms, see me after the show. I have HUNDREDS of them.

FADE.