

**"PRIVATE LINES"**

an episode for Seinfeld

Written By

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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

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

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 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 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?

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 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

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.