

# ***ACTION MAN***

(SHORT FILM PROJECT)

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ACTION MAN

FADE IN:

INT. PRODUCER'S OFFICE WAITING ROOM - DAY - CLOCK

It shows six minutes past three. The hand TICKS - now 3:07.

ON BOB

Seated in a chair in the waiting area, which is decorated with brightly-colored happy cartoon characters. Bob gives them a sour look. He's a ruffled, middle-aged writer type in a Hawaiian shirt, jeans and sneakers. He stares at his hands, glances at the clock, then over at:

THE ASSISTANT

Who ignores him, busy on the phone.

*ASSISTANT (INTO PHONE)*

*Um hm. No, she's booked solid Tuesday.  
How about Thursday, say after... okay,  
Friday then. But it looks like it  
would have to be in the morning... hm.  
Okay, how's next week for you?*

The inner office door opens and STEPHANIE, an attractive no-nonsense television producer type, smiles out.

STEPHANIE

Bob? Sorry for the wait.

Bob has gotten eagerly to his feet.

BOB

'S okay - sounds like you've got a busy schedule.

STEPHANIE

Busy enough.

INSIDE OFFICE

Stephanie closes the door. Her face is serious.

BOB

Good to see you again, Stephanie. Glad you were able to fit me in.

STEPHANIE

Don't be silly. You know you're one of my favorite writers - on action shows. But I told you this isn't an action show.

BOB

I thought the target audience was-

STEPHANIE

Boys, yes. But five-to-eight. Not the eight-to-fourteen audience. Not any more.

BOB

But boys.

STEPHANIE

We're going totally FCC-friendly this season.

BOB

I'm good. Seat belts in the vehicles, helmets for the jetpacks, I can do all that.

Stephanie looks at him for a long moment.

STEPHANIE

Preschool, Bob. No jetpacks. Probably no vehicles unless it's mom's station wagon.

BOB

Um.

STEPHANIE

Look, *Sammy's World* is designed to assist children in coping with real-life situations. Like, in one episode, Sammy finds what he thinks is a lost dog...

BOB  
But it's really a -

STEPHANIE  
Not an alien. Not a werewolf.

BOB  
Uh -

STEPHANIE  
It's an *abandoned pet*. You see what I mean? This is *life*. Sammy and his mother have to take the dog to the animal shelter. Then Sammy worries about it and tries to find someone to adopt it...

BOB  
And hijinks and hilarity ensue.

STEPHANIE  
Exactly!

BOB  
And you expect boys to watch this.

STEPHANIE  
It tested very well with our focus groups.

BOB  
Boys? Or moms?

STEPHANIE  
This is the show, Bob. We're green-lit, we're rolling.

BOB  
What happened to the action shows?

STEPHANIE  
Gone. The older boys are more interested in video games...

BOB  
Maybe because video games are *cool*?

Stephanie smiles to herself for a moment, then stands, walks to the door, and opens it. Always sweet.

STEPHANIE

This is going nowhere. Let's stop  
while we're still friends.

Bob nods in resignation, gets to his feet. The assistant is  
already extending a handful of message slips toward Stephanie.

ASSISTANT

Davis called. And John from the WB  
needs to reschedule.

BOB

Well, I appreciate you giving me the  
time, Stephanie.

Stephanie gives him a sympathetic smile.

STEPHANIE

I promise. The first show we get about  
jet robots and bombs -

Bob smiles wryly.

BOB

I'll be there.

He slouches out. The assistant glances at Stephanie, who rolls  
her eyes. Some writers are hopeless.

INT. ELEVATOR

Bob is already on his cellphone with his agent.

CANDY (PHONE)

*So how'd it go, sweetie?*

BOB

Well, I wouldn't be counting my  
commission yet if I were you.

CANDY (PHONE)

*Oh dear.*

BOB

I just don't get it.

The elevator DINGS open into the parking structure. Bob EXITS  
into:

## THE PARKING STRUCTURE

Where a NINJA and a THUG are trying to break into his car. Bob walks toward them, still talking on the cellphone. With his free hand he pulls a massive automatic from behind his back. As the thug brings up a gun, Bob empties the automatic into his chest. Blood sprays everywhere.

BOB

They know they're losing their audience, but they just make the shows even wussier.

CANDY (PHONE)

*(sympathetic)*

*I know, sweetie.*

The ninja brings up a katana, thrusting it forward. Bob catches the blade under the cellphone arm and smashes the butt of the empty pistol into the man's nose. Blood gushes. The ninja howls and drops, clutching at his face.

BOB

I mean, I've got two boys. I know what they want to see.

CANDY (PHONE)

*Of course you do, sugar.*

Bob opens his car door. Some sort of alien monster lunges out of the back seat, slavering. Bob impales it with the katana and then does a side-kick -

## OTHER SIDE OF CAR

The door bursts open and the alien beast smashes out backwards, collapsing to the floor, ichor spraying as it howls.

## BACK INSIDE THE CAR

Bob starts the car while rolling down the window. He flicks the igniter on a pipe bomb and tosses it out the window.

BOB

I mean, *seriously*, Candy.

ANGLE ON THE NINJA

Reacting in horror as the pipe bomb lands in his lap. Bob's car peels out.

BACK INSIDE THE CAR

Candy's voice is sympathetic. Bob fishtails the car around.

*CANDY (PHONE)*

*Just remember tomorrow's another day.*

BOB

I hope so.

There is a BOOM and the back windshield is plastered in blood. Bob flicks on the rear wipers as he heads for the exit.

BOB

It's just sometimes I wonder what kind of weird fantasy world these executives live in anyway?

CUT TO:

STEPHANIE IN HER OFFICE

Talking to another writer, one far more suitable.

STEPHANIE

So what if instead, Sammy starts doing chores until he can adopt the dog himself? We could call the ep "Working like a Dog."

LEN

I think we're talking Humanitas.

OUT IN THE PARKING STRUCTURE

Bob's car CRASHES out through the barricade in a shower of sparks and we:

FADE OUT

THE END