

I'm not kidding about this being a tiny room. We're seeing it from above, and all four corners fit comfortably on the screen.

Bing (early 20s, male) is asleep in a small bed; so small he's almost touching both walls. Despite being undersized, the bed touches three of the surrounding bedroom walls.

Walls which seem to be made of black reflective glass.

Except they're not black glass. They're screens. And now they flicker into life, with a startup noise, to display a computer-generated sunrise over a cornfield. A cheesy screensaver to start the day. On every wall of the room.

Gentle acoustic guitar accompanies the pixellated sunrise. A cartoon cockerel leaps atop a fencepost somewhere near Bing's head. It opens its beak and crows.

Bing grunts, swats the cockerel away by swiping in the air. That's what these walls are like: monolithic iPad screens working in harmony.

He lies there for a moment rubbing his eyes. Up pops a short 'loading' message on the wall, as the software scans his face. Meanwhile he inserts two small rubberized earpieces -- one in each ear -- part of his morning routine. As he slips them in, we hear a little ambient background noise on the soundtrack. Soothing background minimal stuff, like you might hear in a spa.

Then, with a soft 'ping' sound, the system logs him in -- just like the XBOX Kinect system recognizing someone from their face alone. A small 'Top Trumps' style dialog box appears on the wall containing a vaguely toonlike CGI dopple of Bing -- rather like an XBOX Live or Wii customizable dopple -- accompanied by a number: '15,002,944 M'.

(NB - rather than a straight 'M', how about some kind of iconic logoette -- like the Bitcoin logo  
(<http://mining.bitcoin.cz/media/img/bitcoin.png> )

Bing swipes his hand up in the air to guide a movement. The sunset scrolls upwards, like a theatrical curtain. Behind it, notionally at any rate: an LCD clock. The time is 7.30am.

Bing grunts, sits up and rolls to the edge of his bed. He stands up and enters the bathroom.

We can hear a shower, see condensation on a mirror, which has an M number on it, ticking down: it falls two numbers every second. The water stops, the counter stands at 15,002,599. Bing, with a towel wrapped round him, is now in the mirror - which is also doubling as a screen.

Icons hover near the side and a ticker-tape providing entertainment news scrolls across the top.

Using a wall-mounted mini-pump, like a miniature petrol pump nozzle, he dispenses a small amount of bright green toothpaste onto a brush. The number on the screen drops another fifteen points to 15,002,584m. He brushes, spits, rinses.

Bing checks his face in the mirror. Suddenly his reflection is replaced with the face of an attractive scantily-clad young woman moaning; she seems to be having sex. There's a lascivious growling voiceover.

VOICEOVER

New! From Wraithbabes! The hottest girls in the nastiest situati--

Bing makes a 'shooing' gesture in the air before him, as though telling it to shoo. The video freezes and over it, a dialog box pops up. 'RESUME?'. He shoos it away again. There's a soft ping as the system registers this.

'SKIPPING INCURS 1000m PENALTY. RESUME?'. He impatiently shoos it away *again*. And the number counter drops 1000m to 15,001,584m.

The advert is replaced by his reflection once more.

Surveying his reflection uninterrupted this time, Bing realises he needs a shave. He pulls out the same nozzle as earlier, cups his hand over the end, taps an icon on the mirror. Shaving foam schtooms out of it.

The number on the screen drops some more. Bing keeps an eye on the screen -- he's trying to stop the nozzle at a nice round number, like someone filling a car with petrol trying to stop on an even figure: 15,001,500m. He fails. He gets 15,001,499m and looks marginally deflated.

He selects an icon with a musical note on it -- music starts to play, causing his M number to drop by another 1000m to 15,000,499. Surprisingly, the music is a cover version of ABBA song - the opening bars of 'I Have a Dream'.

2A INT. LIFT - DAY 1. MORNING.

2A

BING is standing in a lift, amongst a group of people in identical clothing, all looking ahead, a bit bored, all listening to their own music (maybe one is nodding their head in time to a different beat). They're like commuters.

3 INT. PEDAL CHAMBER 59A - DAY 1

3

The bland ABBA continues as Bing, now clothed in discrete grey sweatpants and a slim grey T-shirt -- halfway between a uniform and exercise gear -- walks through a 'pedal chamber' filled with futuristic exercise bikes -- it's a bit like a modern gym.

SINGER

*I have a dream, a fantasy  
To help me through reality...*

As he walks past, a shy, relatively bookish-looking girl sitting on a bike, looks at him. Her name is SWIFT.

We also see a ginger-haired guy called KAI, watching a video of SELMA TELSE on his screen.

At the far end of the chamber, a slightly out-of-shape cyclist called OLIVER puffing away. He looks red and sweaty.

BING sits upon something resembling an exercise bike with a plasma screen mounted on the wall in front of him.

As he sits down, the screen recognizes and signs him in. The bike adjusts to his settings: shifting the seat slightly for his height and weight. His toon-style avatar - known as a 'dopple' - appears on screen.

SINGER (CONT'D)

*And my destination  
Makes it worth the while*

And accompanying the avatar is that number again: 15,000,499m. He starts to pedal. And the number starts to rise. Roughly one digit per revolution.

It's about this point we realize the figure equate to the distance pedalled. The number (still rising as he pedals) shrivels to the bottom right, where it remains visible.

SINGER (CONT'D)

*Pushing through the darkness  
Still another mile  
I belie--*

Around here we cut to a wider shot -- outside of Bing's little bubble -- we can no longer hear the music, just the quiet whooshing of all the exercise bikes in this quadrant, and the occasional bit of noise leaking from the pedaller's headphones.

Up pops a series of 'Available Streams': not unlike the 'album view' in iTunes -- Bing can swipe through them. The first says NOW PLAYING and it shows a woman called Selma ("HOT SHOT SENSATION SELMA") performing 'I HAVE A DREAM'.

Bing swipes it off-screen, like he's flipping pages. The music abruptly stops.

The next is a show called 'Botherguts'. It looks like some kind of reality show. A group of fat people are standing in tissue paper smocks in some kind of indoor funspace. He quickly flips past this and selects 'Rolling Road' -- which displays a toon-style landscape rolling past as he pedals. His merit total has been rising as he pedals - it stands at 15,000,559 and then decreases by 250m to 15,000,309m.

Quick glimpse of SWIFT, several bikes down -- she's sneaking a glance at Bing, who's oblivious.

As Bing watches the rolling road, and Swift watches Bing, we pull out to reveal they aren't alone.

In fact they are *exceptionally* far from alone.

This place is like a warehouse. A vast warehouse filled with hundreds of people on hundreds of cycles, all of them pedalling, all of them staring at screens on the handlebars.

There are cleaners passing between the bikes, wearing yellow jumpsuits, scooping up discarded water bottles and face towels with little dustpan-and-broom combos. Every one of them, without exception, is overweight.

Next to Bing's pedal cycle a cycle belonging to a stocky 28 year old called Dustin. He's wearing identical clothing to Bing - his credit number is increasing considerably faster because he's pedalling faster.

Dustin is watching Botherguts. We see a bit more of the show on his screen. In front of the fat people a host is standing with a man and a woman -- both examples of prime physical fitness, in revealing black swimwear. They've got gunge hoses.

HOST

3... 2... 1... Go!

The hoses kick into life. The hosers squeal with glee as they aim the jets at the fat people, who get knocked over by the spray, their tissue smocks dissolving almost instantly. Beneath they're wearing thongs.

HOST (CONT'D)  
Go for his face!

The girl with the hose aims at one of the fat men's faces. He splutters and falls on his arse. She laughs.

He guffaws as one of the fat men tumbles over. Then it cuts to a shot of said fat guy with blood pouring from his nose and mouth. The host finds this hilarious.

HOST (CONT'D)  
Ouch! Wash the blood off!

They direct a hose near his face.

HOST (CONT'D)  
Chuck him a bun! That's it!

They lob cream buns at the fat guy's bleeding face. He's crying.

HOST (CONT'D)  
Not hungry? That's a first, eh?

Dustin laughs like a drain with a pig in it

As Dustin laughs, at the side of the screen he's watching, a little 'scanning' icon at the side of the screen spins round - then resolves to a little icon of his avatar's head, with a 'laughing' expression. This is accompanied by a soft ping.

At the top of BING's screen, a small notification briefly appears: DUSTIN LIKED BOTHERGUTS next to a small image of DUSTIN'S avatar's face.

4 INT. SNACK AREA - DAY 1

4

This is the snacking / kitchenette area of the pedal chamber. It's where people buy energy drinks and snacks. It's not dissimilar to the kind of food court you get in the Westfield centre. Bustling yet anonymous. Everyone in identical grey clothing.

Swift, sitting at one of the tables, notices Bing as he enters and approaches one of the wall panels. It brings up a vending machine as he approaches.

Bing is attempting to buy a drink and an apple from it. The drink plops into the tray immediately but the apple doesn't seem to come out. He puts his hand in the dispensing slot, frustrated. His total merits have risen since we last saw them but now drop by 5500m from 15,014,829 to 15,009,329m.

Behind him, SWIFT emerges, shy.

SWIFT

That one does that sometimes. Hang on.

She reaches into the slot.

SWIFT (CONT'D)

There's a little nubbin in here somewhere... it's...

We hear a soft 'clunk'. The apple falls into the tray. SWIFT pulls it out and offers it to him.

SWIFT (CONT'D)

(indicating apple and vending machine)

Almost the only real thing in there and even that's probably grown in a petri dish. Y'know?

She laughs nervously, faintly. Meanwhile the vending machine is replaced by an animation showing PEOPLE WHO LIKED [IMAGE OF APPLE] ALSO LIKED [IMAGE OF BANANA]

BING

Thank you.

Bing takes the apple and sits down to eat it. We sense Swift wants to talk a bit longer.

Behind BING we can catch glimpses of the sheer scale of the atrium...

5 INT. PEDAL CHAMBER 59A - DAY 1

5

Bing is back on his bike. Pedalling, pedalling, pedalling into the rolling road.

Swift, playing an avatar violin game, glances at him.

Beside Bing, Dustin is now watching lesbian pornography on his screen, intensely, like he's trying to cycle inside it.

At the far end of the chamber, OLIVER is clearly having difficulty cycling -- he seems on the brink of some kind of asthma attack.

An overweight female cleaner passes by DUSTIN's bike. She stares at the screen for a moment. Dustin spots her reflection, grimaces, and addresses it.

DUSTIN

Oh for Christ's sake.  
(turns to address her)  
Way to moodkill, blubbernaut.  
Cheers for the reflection.

The cleaner just looks at him.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)

One minute I'm in slitsville,  
the next there's a haunted pig  
gawping at me. They may as well  
have cut to a war crime.

He stops pumping the handles and reaches for a teeny-tiny bottle of water, unscrews the top, sweating. He continues glaring at her. She goes to move.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)

Oi.

He finishes the bottle and tosses it by her feet.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)

Missed a bit.

She glumly sweeps the bottle into her contraption and starts moving off.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)

(shouting after cleaner)  
Pie ape!

Dustin starts rewinding the footage to the point where he was interrupted. He glances at Bing.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)

(raising voice above  
pedalling)  
See that? What a fucking pie ape.

Bing looks back at his screen. He doesn't really want to talk to Dustin. Just then OLIVER has another asthmatic coughing fit. Both BING and DUSTIN look at him.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)

(to BING, about OLIVER)  
He'll be in lemon before long and  
all.

Bing keeps pedalling and remains focussed on his screen.

It's later that same evening. Bing is relaxing on the bed, playing a videogame. He is using his finger to mime a gun. Fat CGI people are running at him, making grotesque grunting sounds as they approach. He's blowing their heads off. It's all very graphic. He looks bored.

Suddenly the action pauses. Time for a commercial break.

The game dissolves -- and is replaced by a hyper-graded shot of an attractive female singer hitting a climactic wailing note. A huge caption reads SELMA TELSE

BOOMING MAN (V.O.)  
Selma Telse!

Whoosh! And Selma is replaced with a wiry young man singing.

BOOMING MAN (V.O.)  
Howie Mandelbrot!

Whoosh! And now we're watching a pair of early twenty somethings robot-dancing.

BOOMING MAN (V.O.)  
Toy Soldiers!

Now we see they're performing on a stage in front of several judges. NB Judge Wraith isn't there. In his place is JUDGE REISZ (appearance TBC).

BOOMING MAN (V.O.)  
Today each headlines their own  
tentpole content on one of your  
eight daylight streams. But they  
started here. Like you. Putting  
their back into giving back -- for  
a brighter now.

CCTV footage of Selma, Howard and several members of the Toy Soldiers, all pedalling away on individual bikes. This is not one shot: it's a compilation of shots from different cameras on different days.

This is 'before they were famous' material.

BOOMING MAN (V.O.)  
Each paying their dues - like you --  
hoping to become a Hot Shot.

Then a 'whoosh' as we see Selma in the embryonic stages of fame - nervously waiting to walk onstage, in the wings of the Hot Shot theatre.

Another 'whoosh' -- she's performing on stage, hitting a high note, wearing the same regulation grey clothing as Bing. She's just finished singing.

The three judges are sitting in a row, in front of a screen with an audience of doppel avatars. A deadpan man on the end is looking at her. He is Judge Hope. He pauses.

JUDGE HOPE

That wasn't good.

Selma looks like she might die of sadness.

JUDGE HOPE (CONT'D)

That. Was. Beyond. Incredible.

An explosion of applause.

Then we see shots -- almost CCTV style -- of people sitting in tiny rooms just like Bing's -- watching Hot Shot -- one of them punches the air -- then we see an avatar in the audience punch the air. (NB needs to be someone we don't see elsewhere in the story -- an extra basically -- about 23 yrs old).

VOICEOVER

YOU decide the victors! YOU control their fates! YOU make the call on --

BING's had enough and abruptly shoos it away. Up pops the dialog box:

'RESUME?' He shoos it away. 'SKIPPING INCURS PENALTY. RESUME?'

Bing glances at the number beside his head -- it reads 15,015,829. He's spent too much today skipping adverts. But he shoos it away regardless. His credit drops by 1000m to 15,014,829.

The walls fade to black for a moment (a little 'LOADING' icon?) -- like the gap between adverts on television. Then up pops the porn ad again.

VOICEOVER (CONT'D)

New! From Wraithba--

Bing shoos this away too. Up pops the dialog box:

'RESUME?' He shoos it away.

'SKIPPING INCURS PENALTY. RESUME?'

Bing glances at the number beside his head again, and sighs. He makes a sort of quick beckoning motion -- like when you're trying to indicate 'keep reversing' to a driver. And the commercial resumes.

Tired, he lies back and absent-mindedly covers his eyes with his hand. The commercial pauses. A large caption reads 'VIEW OBSTRUCTED'.

Bing removes his hand. His eyes are still closed. He yawns. The commercial is waiting.

The walls turn red. A high-pitched sound -- almost dog-whistle high -- starts sounding.

INSISTENT VOICE

Resume viewing. Resume viewing.  
Resume vi--

Bing blearily, reluctantly opens his eyes. The commercial continues from where it left off.

VOICEOVER

New! From Wraithbabes! The hottest girls in the nastiest situations. Select 'VIEW' now to see fresh babes do the foulest things. Exclusively on Wraithbabes XL! Hey! What else are you planning to do with that hand?

Bing sits patiently waiting for it to stop.

GIRL

(woodenly)

You're going to see it all.

The girl blows a kiss.

Up pops a caption: VIEW NOW: 10,000m

Bing gives a guilty, weary beckoning motion. The counter decreases to 15,004,829m.

7        INT. BING'S TINY ROOM - MORNING. DAY 2.

7

It's the morning again. Bing's wake up routine, condensed: Black screens give way to a cornfield sunrise. The cockerel silenced.

8        INT. BING'S BATHROOM - MORNING. DAY 2.

8

Bing brushing his teeth. The Wraithbabes ad tries to interrupt him again -- he shoos it away.

8AA INT. BING'S TINY ROOM - AT THE DOOR. MORNING. DAY 2. 8AA

BING is 'opening the door' to leave for 'work'. We see him make some kind of clever door-opening gesture -- see the graphic for the door mechanism --

POLITE VOICE  
Portal activated.

-- and the door opens and he steps out.

8A INT. LIFT - MORNING. DAY 2. 8A

Bing is standing in the lift amongst the group. A pretty girl -- ABI -- gets in. He clocks her and is clearly interested, but says nothing. She doesn't notice him.

9 INT. PEDAL CHAMBER 59A - DAY 2. 9

Bing is approaching his bike. He notices an empty seat where OLIVER was yesterday.

SWIFT  
It didn't let him sign in. Told him  
to report to 22 down.

DUSTIN breezes past.

DUSTIN  
Told you. Gone lemon, the lazy  
fuck.

SWIFT pulls a face at DUSTIN's back, looks back at BING -- they share a brief moment.

10 INT. PEDAL CHAMBER 59A - DAY 2. 10

A short time later.

On the onscreen interface, KAI is shopping for customisable avatar items. Trying out different haircuts for his character -- all ginger, like he is. The haircut becomes an afro, a spiky mohawk -- he gets SWIFT's attention.

KAI  
(to SWIFT)  
What you think?

SWIFT  
It's a bit much.

KAI looks a bit disappointed, goes back to his screen and settles on a dopple hairdo similar to his existing one.

DUSTIN is watching a video of SELMA singing one of her hits. KAI is watching a TALKING HEAD INTERVIEW with SELMA, shot against an indistinct backdrop. It's illustrated with stills occasionally, like a nostalgia package VT. Briefly we move to a vantage point where we can hear DUSTIN's audio.

SELMA  
(on screen, pondering  
question she's been  
asked)

The best thing about my new  
lifestyle...? Uh... where do I  
start... I love choosing my own  
clothes, I love red, I think it  
really expresses a truth about who  
I am... I love looking out over  
(the outside)

While she burbles on, we move away, out of KAI's audio bubble... Then we notice OLIVER walking through, in a yellow cleaner suit. Sweeping up. DUSTIN clocks him.

DUSTIN  
Hey, nice outfit.

OLIVER doesn't respond, but numbly keeps on cleaning.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)  
Suits you.

Bing notices this. Rubs his eyes a bit and stops cycling.

11 INT. 59A LAVATORY - LATER. DAY 2.

11

Bing is standing at a urinal, urinating. As well he might.

The urinal is mounted on another wall-sized screen. On it is a kind of animated graphic advert showing two happy, smiling people pedalling on generator bikes- a man and a woman. It's vaguely reminiscent of vintage Soviet propaganda.

RIDING FOR A BRIGHTER NOW reads the legend.

As he stares at the screen, blankly, Bing hears a sweet female voice, singing. The song is 'Anyone Who Knows What Love Is' by Irma Thomas, but that's not important right now.

ABI  
(singing)  
*You can blame me... try to change  
me... but still I'll care for you..*

Bing registers the beauty of the voice.

ABI (CONT'D)

(singing)

*The world may think I'm foolish...  
they don't see you like I can...  
But anyone who knows what love  
is... will understand.*

CUT TO Bing standing at the washbasin. His avatar is displayed in the mirror above the sink. He holds his hand under a soap dispenser -- his M credit drops ten points to 15,010,861m.

Behind him, a cubicle door opens. Out steps Abi: 21 years old. A strikingly pretty girl. She radiates innocence. She also wears the grey sweatpants / grey T combo. *Everyone does.*

Just then someone else, a man, enters, and stands at one of the urinals.

Bing places his hands in a light-dryer. Abi is washing her hands. Bing wants to say something. He looks at her hesitantly; opens his mouth, closes it again. She catches him looking. Now it's awkward.

Bing breaks the silence.

BING

Drying my hands.

ABI

Impressive.

Just then the man at the urinal breaks wind and spits into the urinal as he pisses. Abi good-naturedly points to the door, indicating that she's about to go.

BING

Have fun. I mean. On the.

Bing mimes pedalling. Abi looks vaguely confused, but smiles.

Just then the mirror bursts into an advert. For the porn service again.

VOICEOVER

New! From Wrai--

Bing makes the shoo gesture.

Up pops the dialog box. 'RESUME?' He impatiently shoos it, then shoos it again when the 'SKIPPING INCURS PENALTY - RESUME?' message pops up. His merits drop to 15,009,861m.

Bing watches her go, then looks in the mirror.





ABI

Abi Khan. Short for Abi Khan.

They start moving toward the table.

BING

You're a new person. I've not seen you.

Abi takes a bite of the apple.

ABI

(mouth full)

Just went 21 last week. Wanted to go to Airedale, my sister's there. Full apparently.

She savours the taste.

ABI (CONT'D)

Proper fruit. Worth the revs.

BING

Most natural thing in there and it's probably grown in a petri dish.

ABI

Yeah. Worth it though.

BING

That's the right way round. When you get the cheap lardy gunk you end up having to pedal it off. Then you want more sugar and you're playing catch up... Been there. Vicious circle.

ABI

Can't you just use that CBT app?

BING

What's that?

Abi takes a seat at a nearby table. Bing hovers anxiously at the edge. As she sits, she carefully unfolds the wrapper, smoothing it flat.

ABI

(as she sits)

This Cognitive Behavioral thing which realigns your thinking so you pick healthy food. Whispers you into it while you sleep.

BING

Yeah I should try that.

Bing doesn't have any more to say about that. And Abi is munching that apple.

BING (CONT'D)  
I liked your singing the other day.

ABI starts folding the wrapper.

ABI  
(embarrassed, smiling)  
I was trying to sing so no-one could hear me pee. I'm not Selma or anything.

Bing finally sits down.

BING  
You've got a phenomenal voice. Really. It was the most beautiful song --

He notices she's looking at him with disbelief.

BING (CONT'D)  
You think I'm being cheesy. I am being cheesy. But it was beautiful. So, you know, reality is cheesy sometimes. Not often, admittedly, but now, yes.

ABI  
(mouthful of fruit)  
Well thank you. It's just noises though. Noises in the right order.

ABI is folding the wrapper -- another penguin taking shape.

BING  
Don't downplay, you're good.

ABI  
The song's good. It's old. My mum used to sing it. And she learned it from her mum. A hand-me-down.

Bing nods sheepishly, and smiles.

BING  
You thought of trying out for Hot Shot?

He gives her a look.

ABI  
What, me?

BING

Why not?

ABI

Sing for Judge Hope? I'd die;  
seriously, I'd be halfway to the  
afterlife come the chorus.

BING

You'd walk it.

ABI

A) I wouldn't and B) I don't have  
the clockage. It's what, 12 mil  
just to enter? How much  
biketime's that, six months?

BING

Yeah, but -

ABI has nearly finished the penguin sculpture.

ABI

I'm hand to mouth. I know people  
save and starve to get on that  
stage, I know "that's what Selma  
did"...

BING

Yeah, but --

ABI

... but you know what? I'd rather  
not kid myself.

BING

Yeah, but I'll gift it to you.

That shuts her up. The penguin is finished.

BING (CONT'D)

The full 12. I'll gift it.

Abi looks at him. She gets up from the table. Bing follows  
her.

ABI

Don't be stupid.

BING

Seriously. I've got spare.

ABI

(scoffing)

You've got 12 mil *spare*?

She starts walking away.

BING

My brother left it me.

ABI

Own a channel does he?

BING

No. He died. He died last year.  
It transferred to me. Just over  
three months worth, but I've kept  
it.

Abi pauses, then continues walking; not looking back at  
him. This is too much.

ABI

Why aren't you spending it on you  
then?

BING

And buy what? Some new shoes for my  
dopple to wear?

ABI

I don't know; upgrade your room OS...

BING

Get a Fattax season pass...

ABI

Buy one of those wall buddies;  
the new ones talk to you after  
shut-in and solve your problems.  
They guide your dreams, like  
gurus. It's amazing what they  
(can do these days).

BING

A mirror plugin that shows me how I'd  
look as a werewolf? What's the point.

ABI

Well it (can be quite funny) --

BING

But that's all just stuff. It's stuff.  
It's confetti. You've got something  
real. What better to spend it on?

ABI

You heard me singing in a toilet  
and that's real?

BING

More than anything that's  
happened all year.

She stops and looks at him.

ABI  
I can't take that kind of  
clockage off you. 12 mil, no way.

BING  
Let me do this.

Bing surveys the chamber. The scale of it. We see a wide full reveal of the Pedal Atrium over Bing & Abi's shoulder and cut to a (non VFX) closer shot of Dustin shot on our pedal chamber set.

BING (CONT'D)  
I look around here and I want  
something real to happen. Just  
once.

Abi regards him more thoughtfully. He means it.

ABI  
I'd mess up.

BING  
You wouldn't and I don't care  
anyway.

Abi is seriously wavering now

BING (CONT'D)  
I'll go with you. No, better:  
I'll force you. I'll force you to  
go.

Abi stops and looks at him; she's teetering on the brink of agreeing.

BING (CONT'D)  
It's tomorrow. Come on.  
(he waits)  
Say yes.

He looks at her until she smiles.

ABI  
I'll go as far as 'okay'.

BING  
This proves acceptable.

ABI  
Thank God for that. I'm walking  
away from you now. You loon.

She's smiling as she walks away.

BING  
I can live with it.

And Bing smiles for virtually the first time this year.

18 INT. PEDAL CHAMBER 59A - LATER. DAY 3.

18

SWIFT is back to her violin game. KAI is watching HOT SHOT highlights.

ABI has placed the next penguin on her monitor. BING glances over at her. They share a shy smile.

DUSTIN is walking past BING's bike, on his way back to his own. He clocks BING's eyeline and leans in for a surreptitious mutter as he passes.

DUSTIN  
(under breath)  
Yeah I'd like to fucking *ruin* that  
and all.

BING gets back to his rolling road.

OLIVER walks past ABI's bike, cleaning again. He looks sadly at the penguin.

ABI  
(not angry with him)  
I know.

He flicks it into the bin bag with an apologetic look.

19 INT. BING'S TINY ROOM - NIGHT 3.

19

Bing sits on the bed, accessing the wall. He's browsing a Hot Shot audition interface, which has animated images of Selma belting out her song, and profiles of the judges, lit as imposingly as possible.

He selects 'BUY ENTRY TICKET'

Up pops another dialog box.

'You will be charged 15,000,000m for this ticket.'

BING  
(to self)  
Fifteen.

Up pops a nagging dialog box. 'Proceed?'

Bing looks at his credit rating. He has 15,009,407m.

He pauses. Then beckons.



BING  
You're babbling.

ABI  
I'm babbling.

She looks at him a moment and remembers something.

ABI (CONT'D)  
Oh! Made you this.

She gives him an origami penguin.

ABI (CONT'D)  
Never get to keep them more than a  
day but there it is anyway.

BING awkwardly looks for somewhere to keep it -- he doesn't  
have pockets. None of them do.

ABI (CONT'D)  
It folds flat. You can keep him in  
your waist band.

BING  
Thank you.

He holds her hand.

ABI  
It's, you know, something.

They continue holding hands as the lift ascends -- we see ABI  
is stroking his hand slightly with her thumb.

23

INT. AUDITION CENTRE ENTRANCE - MOMENTS LATER. DAY 4.

23

BING and ABI turn a corner from a corridor and approach a  
desk with the HOT SHOT logo and the word REGISTRATION on it.  
A dark red carpet leads to the desk, behind which sits a  
smiling woman with a HOT SHOT logo on her T-shirt. There's a  
screen behind her.

WOMAN  
Face the screen please.

ABI faces the screen; it signs her in. Up pops her dopple and  
a ticket.

WOMAN (CONT'D)  
(to ABI, about BING)  
And is he your Friends and Family  
allocation?

ABI  
Yeah.

WOMAN  
(to Bing)  
Hand please

She takes Bing's hand and holds a small egg-shaped device over it.

WOMAN (CONT'D)  
This may tang a bit.

The device laser-stamps the back of his hand with a 'F&F' mark. It does indeed 'tang' a bit. Bing holds his hand, wincing.

BING  
(soothing his hand)  
Yahh.

ABI  
That's not permanent is it?

WOMAN  
Oh no, two months max.

BING  
Thanks for that.

Bing and Abi look at each other, and laugh a bit.

WOMAN  
Holding area's round to the right  
and through the scanner.

They walk round to the right.

24 INT. AUDITION CENTRE BACKSTAGE - DAY 4.

24

Bing and Abi are now into the main holding pen for wannabes.

It's a claustrophobic area because of the sheer number of people here - not unlike an overcrowded departure gate at an airport, broken up by flat columns of screens. People are singing to themselves, practicing dance moves, etc. It's a cross between a holding pen and Bedlam.

But before BING and ABI can even get into the main area they have to pass through something resembling a walk-thru airport scanner -- with a guard beside it - a big guy in black garb with the HOT SHOT logo on it as a small crest.

BING and ABI pass through the scanner - which doesn't go off. The guard nods them through.

They stand in the very crowded area and look around for a moment. BING looks round at the guard.



BING and ABI are still gawping at the brouhaha by the scanner - a rudimentary 'prison knife' consisting of a razor blade embedded in a toothbrush handle - has been found on the lad.

Suddenly HAMMOND is right next to them. He touches ABI on the shoulder.

HAMMOND

They want to preview you.

ABI hears a shriek -- looks round and the knife lad is being tasered by the guard.

ABI

Mmm? What?

HAMMOND

Preview, come on.

He starts leading her away - she indicates BING.

ABI

Wait, wait, he's with me.

HAMMOND

(to BING)

Hand.

BING looks confused.

HAMMOND (CONT'D)

Show me your hand.

The penny drops -- BING shows him the F&F icon on his hand.

HAMMOND (CONT'D)

Okay. You too.

As they're following HAMMOND, a girl aged about 25 named GLEE sees this and starts moaning and following, lobbying HAMMOND.

GLEE

(badgering HAMMOND)

That's not fair. She's new. That's not fair.

HAMMOND

(autopilot response)

I don't pick the order.

GLEE

I've been waiting all week -- she's just walked in...

HAMMOND

Everyone gets seen eventually; I don't pick the order.

The girl stands in front of him.

GLEE

But I'm a good singer, I can sing,  
I'm a good singer, I am...

HAMMOND

Step aside.

GLEE

(almost crying)  
But it's not fair!

HAMMOND exits with BING and ABI - ABI looking back at the weeping girl, sorry for her.

27

INT. SMALL BACKSTAGE ADJUNCT - MOMENTS LATER. DAY 4.

27

ABI has been led to a small area, made to stand in front of a screen with a looping HOT SHOT logo animation on. An INTERVIEWER is standing off, facing her, with another screen behind them.

INTERVIEWER

Would you like to be as big as  
Selma one day?

ABI

Uh. Well yeah. I mean I suppose.

INTERVIEWER

Could you say that as a self-  
contained sentence?  
(indicates screen behind him)  
Into that screen.

ABI

I guess I'd like to be as big as  
Selma one day.

INTERVIEWER

Okay. Proceed to the stage area.

ABI

We're done?

The INTERVIEWER doesn't answer - just points in the direction of the stage wings. ABI moves off. BING, who's been keeping his distance during this interview, joins her.

28

INT. STAGE WINGS - DAY 4.

28

Abi and Bing pass through another weapon scanner and bingo they're into the (slightly shabby) wings. ANNA, an AP in a Hot Shot uniform with an earpiece approaches them.

ANNA  
Both performing?

BING  
Just her.

He flashes the 'F&F' brand on his hand at her. She nods mechanically.

ANNA  
What are you?

ABI  
Singer.

ANNA  
Cuppliance. \*

She proffers a small white carton with a pharmaceutical feel -- it's a drink called 'CUPPLIANCE'. The lettering is like a Prozac-style product.

Abi looks at the carton, not understanding.

ABI  
No thanks.

ANNA  
Wasn't a question, all contestants  
have to drink it. It's a *compulsory*  
mood stabilizer. \*  
\*  
\*

ANNA pulls a small straw from the side of the carton and plugs it in.

ANNA (CONT'D)  
More to the point it stops you  
puking with nerves. \*

BING  
She's got to perform.

ANNA  
Well duh.  
(to Abi)  
Just sip it; you'll be fine. Make  
the most of it; you can't get this  
anstuff on the outside for love nor  
merits. \*  
\*  
\*  
\*

Abi sips some. Almost immediately she looks giddy. BING goes to help her.

ABI  
Woah.

ANNA

Just a touch of lightfoot. It'll  
pass.

Abi is looking around.

BING

You okay?

ABI

Yeah, just. Everything's, I dunno, wider apart.

(she shakes her head)

No. I'm fine.

BING

Really?

ABI

I'm fine.

A low beep goes off.

ANNA

You're on.

Abi passes the empty Cuppliance carton to Bing, and walks onto the stage, blinking into the lights a little more woozily.

**END OF PART**

29

INT. STAGE - DAY 4.

29

Abi steps out to near-silence.

It's a cavernous stage with the Hot Shot logo at the back, digitally projected, undulating like an outsized national flag. This is like some kind of neon Nuremburg.

At the front of the stage, three judges sit in a line behind an illuminated desk. Behind them - the dopple audience.

Judge Hope is about 50, white, male, with close-cropped white hair.

Judge Charity is in her mid-30s to early 40s - -and very glamorous in appearance.

Judge Wraith is the youngest. He's like an LA porn dude. Quite ripped. Tattoos down his arms and visible up his neck.

There's a brief pause as Abi stands not quite in the centre.

JUDGE HOPE

A little closer please.

Abi looks confused. Woozy.

JUDGE CHARITY  
A little closer?

Abi doesn't get it.

JUDGE CHARITY (CONT'D)  
Into the light, love.

Abi steps forward into the spotlight.

JUDGE HOPE  
And who's this we're looking at?

ABI  
Abi Khan

JUDGE HOPE  
And what're you doing for us  
today Abi Khan?

ABI  
(softly)  
I'm going to sing.

Her voice is scarcely audible.

JUDGE CHARITY  
Speak up.

Abi gingerly cranes her neck a bit closer.

JUDGE HOPE  
We don't bite.

The crowd titters. Abi smiles. Judge Wraith is regarding her coolly.

ABI  
(more confidently)  
I'm going to sing.

JUDGE WRAITH  
(out of nowhere)  
Would you mind lifting your top  
for me?

WRAITH has an American accent. Someone in the crowd lets out an embarrassed laugh. Abi stares at him, befuddled. Did she hear that?

30

INT. DUSTIN'S TINY ROOM - CONTINUOUS. DAY 4.

30

DUSTIN is in his room, watching HOT SHOT LIVE. On the wallscreen, ABI is looking befuddled by Wraith's comment. Then it cuts back to WRAITH again.

JUDGE WRAITH

Can you take your top off? I  
wanna check out your titties.

(clapping)

Come on, mucho pronto.

DUSTIN whoops -- punches a fist in the air.

31      INT. DOPPLE AUDIENCE - CONTINUOUS. DAY 4.      31

As Dustin does this, we see his dopple whoop and punch its fist in the air.

32      INT. STAGE - CONTINUOUS. DAY 4.      32

Wraith is developing his theme.

JUDGE WRAITH

Aw come on. No titties?

JUDGE HOPE

(mild admonishment)

She says she's here to sing.

JUDGE WRAITH

But I gotta see those titties.

(to ABI)

I mean damn girl, you hot.

Abi looks very confused and slightly hurt.

JUDGE CHARITY

(wearily)

Please, sing for us.

ABI looks at Judge Wraith. He shrugs as if to say "go ahead; whatever".

Music starts up. The first twinkly notes of the backing track. Judges Hope and Charity are watching intently. Abi looks at Judge Wraith, who's staring back at her blankly.

Judge Charity mimes 'fingers crossed', in a gesture of solidarity. Abi looks down with her eyes closed, breathing slowly, trying to calm herself. Everything sounds far away; that drink has turned it all faintly dreamlike.

Then comes her cue. She looks up, opens her mouth, and sings:

ABI

*You can blame me*

*Try to shame me*

*And still I'll care for you...*

Judge Hope sits up. Abi really does have a heartbreakingly beautiful voice. It flutters out of her, a soft-winged surprise.

ABI (CONT'D)  
*You can run around  
Even put me down  
Still I'll be there for you...*

Judge Charity is nodding slowly in time, smiling: this girl is good.

ABI (CONT'D)  
*The world  
May think I'm foolish  
They can't see you  
Like I can...*

Judge Hope chews his pen.

ABI (CONT'D)  
*Oh but anyone  
Who knows what love is  
Will understand*

Abi looks into the wings, at Bing. Who smiles back at her, which causes her to smile a bit. This is all starting to look quite desperately feelgood.

ABI (CONT'D)  
*I feel so sorry  
For the ones  
Who pity me.*

She locks eyes with Judge Wraith. He's rapt.

33     INT. SWIFT'S TINY ROOM - CONTINUOUS. DAY 4.     33

SWIFT is sitting in her room, watching ABI sing. Almost annoyed by how good she is.

34     INT. DOPPLE AUDIENCE - CONTINUOUS. DAY 4.     34

Cut to SWIFT's dopple in the audience, looking flatly at the stage.

35     INT. STAGE - CONTINUOUS. DAY 4.     35

ABI continues to sing.

ABI  
*Cause they just don't know  
No they don't know  
(MORE)*



JUDGE HOPE

But I have to say. I have to say.  
(gesturing for people to  
calm down)  
Despite that... I'm actually with  
Wraith on this one.

Some of the audience let out a low boo. HOPE ploughs on talking to shut them up.

JUDGE HOPE (CONT'D)

Good though your voice is, and it is good, not the most magical sound in the world -- just good... I don't think anyone's really hearing it. Certainly not the guys in the audience.

ABI looks confused.

JUDGE HOPE (CONT'D)

These looks you've got going on kind of get in the way. Men'll want you; women'll hate you. All the time you were performing, I couldn't help picturing you in an erotic scenario, and getting pretty turned on if I'm honest.

ABI

Right...

JUDGE HOPE

What can I say? It's honesty. You've got a pure beauty, what seems to be a knockout figure, and this sort of interesting innocence thing going and that's something I think Wraith's erotica channels could really play with.

JUDGE WRAITH

Absolutely what I thought the moment I saw you. The *moment*.

JUDGE HOPE

I'd watch. Not a man here who wouldn't.

JUDGE CHARITY

To be honest some of us girls might join you.

The audience laugh. During this, in the wings Bing is trying to get onstage, put a stop to this. But he's bundled away by security.

BING  
No. Get off me.

On the stage, Abi is thinking over the offer - she doesn't understand.

ABI  
It's not quite what I was af...

JUDGE WRAITH  
You'll never have to pedal again,  
not one minute. We could really  
work with you.

JUDGE HOPE  
Last year we had singers,  
singers, singers.

JUDGE CHARITY  
(nodding)  
So many singers.

JUDGE HOPE  
So to make it as a singer you've  
got to be truly exceptional.

JUDGE CHARITY  
True, true.

JUDGE HOPE  
There's just no slots left for  
'above average' singers. Not on  
my streams, not for the next few  
years at least. Charity?

JUDGE CHARITY  
Saturation point, singer-wise.

JUDGE HOPE  
We've said from the off we're  
looking for something different  
this season.  
(indicating Wraith)  
That's why he's on the panel.

JUDGE WRAITH  
You'll be a star on our stream.  
On his you're furniture at best.

Abi is feeling very woozy. Wraith's voice is echoing.

JUDGE WRAITH (CONT'D)

Hey forget shame, we medicate  
against that. You'll just have  
pleasure, forever.

Abi looks to Judge Charity for some kind of lifeline.

JUDGE CHARITY

Realistically sweetheart, it is  
that or the bike.

ABI

I don't think I want to --

JUDGE HOPE

Okay. Know what, this is starting  
to annoy me.

Abi stares at him. She's peering into bright light, and it's  
making her unsteady on her feet.

JUDGE HOPE (CONT'D)

You should think very carefully  
before dismissing something like  
this.

JUDGE WRAITH

Yes.

Abi peers into the lights. She's not focussing.

JUDGE HOPE

Who do you think's powering that  
spotlight?

ABI

I --

JUDGE HOPE

Millions of people, that's who.  
All out there right now, putting  
in an honest day on the bike,  
giving back to the world, while  
you stand in the light they're  
generating and dither. And you  
know what? They would give  
anything, do anything to be where  
you are now, to have what you  
have.

(to audience)

Am I right?

The audience cheers

JUDGE HOPE (CONT'D)

And you want to cock a snook at  
that, as though it's nothing.

(MORE)



42A INT. LIFT - DAY 5

42A

BING is standing amongst the group, looking blank again. ABI isn't in the lift.

43 INT. PEDAL CHAMBER 59A - DAY 5.

43

Now BING's in the saddle. Pedalling slowly, staring blankly at the low number on his screen.

6,828 metres.

Beside him, Dustin is pedalling hard, watching a pornographic broadcast. Abi is sitting, fully clothed, on a sofa. The camera swings around, handheld, gonzo style.

JUDGE WRAITH (O.S.)

And who are you?

ABI

I'm Abi.

WRAITH's reaches in and caresses her cheek

JUDGE WRAITH (O.S.)

(laughing)

Like I didn't know; met you on Hot Shot. You were real impressive.

Judge Wraith's thumb circles Abi's lips with faint aggression.

JUDGE WRAITH (O.S.) (CONT'D)

You're all clean and shit.

Dustin is staring hard at his screen, when the reflection of the overweight cleaner spoils his view again. He spins in his seat.

DUSTIN

Christ's sake! I pay for this! I! Pay! For! This! I pump my arse off and you -- fuck you

He throws a handtowel at her; she walks away.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)

Yeah keep waddling, pigtits. Find the horizon and fuck off over it.

Bing stares fixedly at his screen, when an advert comes on. For the porn service.

VOICEOVER  
New! From Wraithb--

He shoos it, then shoos it again, angrily.

His metres drop by 1000 again to 5,828. He increases his rate of pedalling.

He stares at his hand, where the 'F&F' mark is still clearly visible. He stops pedalling.

At the top of BING's screen, a small notification briefly appears: DUSTIN LIKED A VIDEO: WRAITHBABES ABI KHAN SPECIAL next to a small image of DUSTIN'S dopple's face

Bing keeps looking at his hand.

44 INT. TINY ROOM - EVENING 5.

44

BING is in his room, lying on the bed. He reaches under the mattress. Can't find it. Jump cuts as he frantically tosses the mattress, looking for the origami penguin or the Cuppliance cup -- nothing there. He looks distraught. Then has a thought and looks determined.

44A INT. 59A LAVATORY - EVENING 5

44A

BING stomps into the communal lavatory area, where OLIVER is cleaning. His bin bag is nearby. BING approaches.

BING  
Where is it?

OLIVER  
What?

BING snatches OLIVER's bin bag, starts looking in it.

OLIVER (CONT'D)  
Hey, that's (my quota)

BING  
Did you clean my room?

OLIVER  
We clean all the rooms.

BING upends the bag -- a small load of rubbish spills out -- not much -- wrappers and the odd plastic bottle. OLIVER looks worried -- he'll get in trouble.

OLIVER (CONT'D)  
We clean all of them.

BING starts rooting through it on the floor as OLIVER looks on, pathetically. He finds the Cuppliance carton, but not the penguin.

OLIVER (CONT'D)  
It's not my fault.

BING doesn't answer - he's sorting through the stuff on the floor, separating the items. He finds the Cuppliance carton, but not the penguin.

BING  
Where's the rest?

OLIVER  
I don't (know)-

Then BING finds the remains of the penguin -- it's had orange juice and something slimy spilt on in -- bin bag mush -- it's ruined.

As he stares at it, OLIVER starts picking the other items back up and putting them in the bag. He goes to take the Cuppliance carton. BING won't let him take it.

OLIVER (CONT'D)  
I'll get docked if (they find out).

But BING just starts walking away with the carton, tucking it into his waistband.

45 INT. PEDAL CHAMBER 59A - DAY 6.

45

The next day.

BING is pedalling. KAI is shopping for customisable dopple items again -- trying out different T-shirts. They appear on his dopple -- he can't quite decide.

KAI  
(to SWIFT)  
What do you reckon?

SWIFT glances at it, uninterested.

SWIFT  
Yeah.

DUSTIN is watching a talking head interview with ABI, similarly shot to SELMA's interview.

ABI looks dead behind the eyes. Not miserable, but unenthusiastic, kind of valium-smacked. Faking.

We get close enough in DUSTIN's audio field to hear a bit of what she's saying.



Another freeze-and-zoom, accompanied by a huge SFX boom

BOOMING MAN

What happened next shocked them  
all.

JUDGE WRAITH

We could really work with you.

JUDGE HOPE

Do we have a decision?

Bombastic freeze-frame zoom into Abi's face.

BOOMING MAN

Now! Watch her stunning erotic  
debut.

Bing stands up and starts pacing up and down, muttering  
under his breath.

BING

(scarcely audible)

No. No. No. No. No.

As he does so, up pops a girl. It's Abi, standing, looking  
drowsy, in scanty attire, one strap hanging off her  
shoulder.

ABI

*Anyone who knows what love is...  
will understand*

Bing turns round to face the other wall -- but the image  
switches with him, like an iPad auto-correcting to display  
a picture the right way up no matter which way it turns.

BING

No.

The image of Abi now switches to display the handheld  
footage of her sitting on the sofa we saw earlier. This  
time it's more heavily edited -- like a preview. We see  
she's in a room with three heavy-set guys.

Any overt explicitness is not shown -- after all, you're  
meant to pay for that -- but there's no doubt whatsoever  
about the animal squalor of what's going on.

BOOMING MAN

(his voice revelling its  
own lurid awfulness)

You'll see everything. *You'll see  
it all.*

BING

No no no

He puts his hands over his eyes. The advert falls silent, but the walls turn red.

The low klaxon starts sounding.

INSISTENT VOICE

Resume viewing. Resume viewing.  
Resume viewing.

BING

No!

INSISTENT VOICE

Resume viewing. Resume viewing.  
Resume viewing.

The walls turn darker red. The klaxon grows louder.

INSISTENT VOICE (CONT'D)

Resume viewing. Penalty imminent.  
Resume viewing. Penalty imminent.

BING

No no no no no

He's now face to face with a shot of Abi -- a close-up of her face, sweating, makeup smeared, groaning, but still singing.

BOOMING MAN

See purity fucked asunder in the  
relative privacy of your lifepad.  
Every which way, in High  
Definition.

During this Bing gets up; tries to leave the room, but the door graphic won't respond to his motions. He tries opening it regardless.

BOOMING MAN (CONT'D)

Choose 'view': not because you  
can, because you want to!

Up pops a dialog box. On the door.

POLITE VOICE

Portal disabled during  
commercial.

In the video, WRAITH's thumb is circling Abi's mouth again.

JUDGE WRAITH

Take it in. Take it.

Bing screams and throws himself against the wall, against this horrorshow.

He pounds at the screens, again and again, trying to make it stop. If anything the soundtrack grows louder.

He overturns his mattress -- throws the Cuppliance carton at the wall.

He smashes his whole body against the wall. Slams it hard. The glass starts to crack.

Finally, with an almighty thump, he crashes his full weight against one of the wallscreens. The glass cracks, splinters, from floor to ceiling. The image pixellates; distorts; freezes.

There is silence. Bing slides down to the floor, whimpering, crying.

Then he stands up. Looks at the frozen image. Surveys the splits in the screen. He peers at it. And he removes a sharp shard of perspex, about the length of a forearm, from the wall.

He holds it in front of his face. Stares at it. Turns it in his hand. Runs his finger along the edge.

He holds it against the 'F&F' branded onto his right hand. Pushes it against the skin. He's going to hack that mark right off his hand.

The edge of the perspex pushes against his skin at the edge of the 'F&F'. He winces. It draws a little blood.

But suddenly, Bing stops. He stares at the shard. Looks at the empty Cuppliance carton. And he thinks.

**END OF PART**

48

INT. PEDAL CHAMBER 59A - DAY 7 (MONTAGE).

48

NB IT WOULD BE FANTASTIC IF WE CAN GET A 'SEASON CHANGE' INTO THE ROLLING ROAD GFX FOR BING TO BE CYCLING THROUGH. IF NOT, LET'S DO IT LIKE THIS:

We take in the full width of the hall: all those cycles, standing empty. It's the start of the day.

Big wide shot of Pedal Atrium devoid of riders into which Bing walks - a lone figure enters: it's Bing, up impossibly early.

He walks to the bike and gets on.

Now we're in a montage.

Bing is cycling, watching the units rack up.

150,000 metres.

Then we see him at home, sitting blankly through an advert in the evening.

We see him in his bathroom, carefully applying a miniscule amount of paste to his brush, keeping an eagle eye on the amount so he doesn't overspend, not by one metre.

We see him cycling again: 300,000 metres

We see him hovering in the background in the eating area. Two people are sitting in the foreground, chatting and eating. They get up and leave. Bing comes over, swipes the leftovers (a few crusts) and eats them greedily.

We see him cycling again: 700,000 metres.

Dustin is laughing at an episode of Botherguts where a fat guy is being force fed cake and appears to have suffered a fatal heart attack. Comedy noises are dubbed over the top.

HOST  
(on screen)  
Fatality! Yes!

DUSTIN  
Mahahaha!

Bing stares at the 'F&F' mark on his hand. It's starting to fade.

2,000,000 metres.

We see Bing in his room - AUTUMNAL SCENES on the cornfield - apparently performing some kind of dance routine -- a cross between robot dancing and striptease by the looks of it. He's clumsy and not very good.

Now we see him cycling again. We cut between the tachymeter ratcheting up -- from 3 million, to 4, to 5...

-- to shots of his face, his concentration.

-- to shots of the 'dance routine' - WINTER SCENES on the cornfield - he's apparently practicing, as the moves gradually gets slicker.

-- to shots of him watching someone use a vending machine -- looking frustrated checking the flap thing -- the item they chose (an apple) hasn't come out. They give up and move off -- Bing slides and does his sneaky nubbin trick to get the snack (an apple).

-- to shots of his hand, as the 'F&F' logo gradually fades further and further from view.

-- to a final shot of the 'dance routine' -- SPRING SCENES on the cornfield -- he's got phenomenally good.



53

INT. AUDITION CENTRE BACKSTAGE - MOMENTS LATER. DAY 8. 53

The audition room is currently empty. Bing is approaching the weapon scanner. The guard is looking at him impassively. Some emphasis for us on the area in the small of his back where the shard is. He passes through the scanner. The guard squints at a screen. Nothing. Bing passes through.

He enters the room. Just stands there. GLEE enters and looks disappointed and surprised not to be the first one there.

Then a cut -- it's now full. Bing still waiting patiently in the holding area. Bedlam and jostling everywhere.

HAMMOND takes some performers through. GLEE kicks off again as he takes one. BING stands impassively still.

Some more cuts -- time passes. HAMMOND is listening in his earpiece.

HAMMOND  
(responding to earpiece)  
A whatnik one?  
(beat)  
An ethnic one?

Then HAMMOND spots BING again from across the way.

HAMMOND (CONT'D)  
(to earpiece)  
On it.

54

INT. SMALL BACKSTAGE ADJUNCT - MOMENTS LATER. DAY 8. 54

BING has been led to the small area, made to stand in front of that screen with the HOT SHOT logo animation on. The INTERVIEWER is standing off, facing him, with another screen behind him.

INTERVIEWER  
So what are you, a magician?

BING  
An entertainer.

INTERVIEWER  
Could you say that down the screen, as a self contained sentence?

BING  
I'm an entertainer.

He looks a bit creepy. The INTERVIEWER has already had enough.

INTERVIEWER

That'll do.

The INTERVIEWER gestures toward the STAGE WINGS.

55      INT. STAGE WINGS - MOMENTS LATER. DAY 8.      55

BING passes through the second weapon scanner. ANNA is there again, with her Cuppliance

ANNA

Before you go on I'll need you to  
drink a Cuppliance--

\*  
\*

Bing produces the crushed Cuppliance can. He has a slightly beatific smile.

BING

They gave me one back there.

\*

ANNA

Really? Oh. Okay well you're good  
to go.

\*

And she ushers him toward the stage.

56      INT. STAGE - DAY 8.      56

Bing steps out, shielding his eyes from the light. He takes his mark.

JUDGE HOPE

And who are you?

BING

Bing Madsen.

56A      INT. SWIFT'S TINY ROOM - DAY 8. CONTINUOUS.      56A

SWIFT is sitting on her bed -- she perks up as she sees BING.

(NB throughout Bing's 'performance' it may be worth cutting to our viewers eg Swift, Kai and Dustin)

56B      INT. DUSTIN'S TINY ROOM - DAY 8. CONTINUOUS.      56B

DUSTIN is also watching.

DUSTIN

What the fuck?

56C

INT. STAGE - DAY 8. CONTINUOUS.

56C

JUDGE HOPE

And what are you planning to do  
for us?

BING

A sort of performance.

JUDGE HOPE

A sort of performance.

BING

Yes.

JUDGE CHARITY

A man of mystery.

The audience titters nervously.

BING

Mnn.

JUDGE HOPE

Well I suppose we'd better see it  
then.

BING

Okay.

Bing signals offstage, and music starts up.

The music from the Wraithbabes video starts up.

Bing starts performing strange, jerky 'dance' movements, as  
we saw him practicing earlier.

The judges look quite confused, but interested. Apart from  
Judge Wraith, who couldn't care less because there's no  
tits involved.

Bing's performance appears to be segueing into some kind of  
striptease -- some girls in the audience squeal. Judge  
Charity starts clapping in time.

Now he starts removing his top. Judge Hope raises his  
eyebrows in a slightly weary way, wondering when he should  
jump in and put a stop to this.

Now the shirt's off -- louder cheers. He windmills it  
round, tosses it behind him like a stripper -- a loud cheer  
for that -- then unveils the shard of perspex.

Judge Hope snaps to attention at that.

Judge Charity looks confused.

Bing holds the shard to his own throat.

Backstage, the producer kills the music. A guard starts walking on from the wings.

BING (CONT'D)  
Stop. Stop there or I'll do it.  
(pushing shard against  
neck)  
This is a main artery. Keep  
walking and you've killed me.

The guard hesitates; looks at Judge Hope. Judge Hope gives him a nod. The guard backs down.

Quick cut to:

56D INT. SWIFT'S TINY ROOM - DAY 8. CONTINUOUS. 56D

SWIFT is sitting on her bed, heart in mouth, watching the live broadcast.

56E INT. STAGE - DAY 8. CONTINUOUS. 56E

BING still has the shard at his throat.

BING  
No-one stops me. Not till I've  
said my piece. Then you can do  
what you like.

Bing looks at Judge Hope.

JUDGE WRAITH  
Oh just fucking kill yourself.  
(to Bing)  
Get any on me bro and I'll kick you  
back to life and cut your goddamn  
head off.

JUDGE CHARITY  
I think we should let him speak.

Judge Wraith looks at Judge Hope.

JUDGE WRAITH  
Well, that kinda makes you the  
decider doesn't it?

Judge Hope ponders.

The crowd, getting rowdy now, starts settling into two camps -- one half baying for Bing to cut his own throat, the other demanding he should speak.

JUDGE HOPE

Let's hear what he's got to say.

Bing pauses.

JUDGE HOPE (CONT'D)

Well come on, you've got our attention, as requested. So what do you want to say?

Bing is staring, blinking into the light.

JUDGE HOPE (CONT'D)

Have you prepared a speech, is that it?

(shouting)

Speak!

BING

I haven't got a speech. I didn't plan words, I didn't even try to. I just knew I had to get here, to stand here, now, and I knew I wanted you to listen...

Judge Hope goes to open his mouth. Bing shuts him off--

BING (CONT'D)

(addressing Hope directly)

-- to really listen, not just pull a face like you're listening, like you do the rest of the time. A face like you're feeling instead of processing. You pull a face and poke it toward this stage and lah di dah we sing and dance and tumble around and all you actually see and hear -- it's not people, you don't see people up here...

Bing starts pacing, getting into the flow. The guard eyes him anxiously, seeing if he's got a chance to pounce.

BING (CONT'D)

... It's all fodder, and the faker that fodder is, the more you love it, because fake fodder's the only thing that works any more. Fake fodder is all we can stomach.

He looks up, beyond the judges.

BING (CONT'D)

Actually not quite all. Real pain, real viciousness: that we can take. Stick a fat man up a pole and we'll laugh ourselves feral *because we've earned the right*. We've done saddletime and he's slacking, the scum, so ha ha ha at him. We'll happily meld with the sheer callous madness of it because we're so out of our minds with desperation we don't know any better.

In the audience, people are rapt with attention. They're actually listening.

(During the next bit we cut to KAI'S TINY ROOM to see KAI watching the mention of hat-buying during the LIVE BROADCAST)

BING (CONT'D)

All we know is fake fodder and buying shit. That's how we speak to each other, how we express ourselves; buying shit. "I have a dream"? The peak of our dreams is a new hat for our dopple. A hat that doesn't exist, that's not even there. We buy shit that's *not even there*. Show us something real and free and beautiful? You couldn't. Cos it'd break us. We're too numb for it; our minds would choke. We've grown inside this machine, breathed its air too long. There's only so much wonder we can bear.

\*  
\*  
\*

Back on Bing's face now, as he's becoming increasingly animated. This is becoming a manic sermon.

BING (CONT'D)

That's why when you find any wonder whatsoever, you dole it out in meagre portions -- and only then when it's been augmented and packaged and pumped through ten thousand pre-assigned filters till it's nothing more than a meaningless series of lights to stare into while we ride, day in, day out: going where? Powering what? Powering the whole distraction engine. All tiny cells and tiny screens and bigger cells and bigger screens and FUCK YOU.

\*  
\*  
\*

He shouts directly at the judges.

BING (CONT'D)

Fuck you! That's what it boils down to, is fuck you! Fuck you for being part of this landscape, fuck you for sitting there slowly knitting things worse, fuck you and your spotlight, and your sanctimonious faces and -- Fuck you, fuck you all for taking the one thing I ever came close to feeling anything real about, anything -- for oozing round it and crushing it into a bone, into a joke, one more ugly joke in a kingdom of millions of them. Fuck you for happening. Fuck you from me, for us, for everyone. Fuck you.

Bing is exhausted. Panting.

There is silence and tension in the audience.

JUDGE HOPE

That was without a doubt...

He glares at Bing.

JUDGE HOPE (CONT'D)

... the most heartfelt thing I've seen on this stage since Hot Shot began.

The audience goes nuts, standing up and applauding wildly.

JUDGE HOPE (CONT'D)

You're semi-articulating something I think we all -- and I mean everyone in this hall -- something we all agree on, even though we may not comprehend all of it, I think I'm right in saying we do feel it; even me, I know you've got me down as this creature, but you know. Hey. I get where you're coming from. I like your stuff.

BING

It's not stu--

JUDGE HOPE

Bad choice of words. It's truth, am I right?

Bing looks wary

JUDGE HOPE (CONT'D)

*Your truth, admittedly, but truth nonetheless, and you're right, authenticity is in woefully short supply. I'd like to hear you talk again.*

Bing is almost deflated -- he wasn't expecting this.

BING

How so?

JUDGE HOPE

With a slot on one of my streams. Where you can speak just like that.

Bing is so stunned and bewildered he can't speak.

JUDGE CHARITY

I'd watch it. Great passion.

Judge Wraith shrugs.

JUDGE WRAITH

He's okay. A little 'out there' but hey. The throat cutting thing's a neat gimmick.

JUDGE HOPE

What do you say? 30 minutes, twice a week?

Bing stares into the lights.

The crowd starts slow-clapping, chanting, "do it".

JUDGE CHARITY

Beats the bike.

JUDGE HOPE

She said it.

The crowd starts clapping and chanting more quickly.

56F INT. KAI'S TINY ROOM - DAY 8. CONTINUOUS

56F

KAI is clapping and chanting.

56G INT. DUSTIN'S TINY ROOM - DAY 8. CONTINUOUS

56G

So is DUSTIN.

56H INT. SWIFT'S TINY ROOM - DAY 8. CONTINUOUS 56H

But SWIFT is not.

56I INT. STAGE - DAY 8. CONTINUOUS. 56I

The clapping and chanting reaches a crescendo. Bing looks like he's about to speak, when we abruptly cut to:

57 INT. PEDAL CHAMBER 59A - DAY 9. 57

One year later.

We see OLIVER is now a contestants in BOTHERGUTS, which is being watched by DUSTIN. Oliver is being forcefed cake (intercut with shots of the host laughing his arse off). \*

Dustin is chuckling, slurping a diet smoothie. He tosses it over his shoulder where the female cleaner picks it up. DUSTIN then flips channel and settles on what appears to be ABI starring in some more porn.

A new rider sits in BING's seat. On their screen, they're watching a BIG SHOT audition in which GLEE has finally had her chance to perform. She's hitting the final notes of 'I HAVE A DREAM'. Not very well. She pauses, having given it her all, very nervous. \*

JUDGE HOPE thinks for a while before he delivers his verdict. \*

JUDGE HOPE \*

(on screen) \*

That was achingly terrible. You don't just sing badly, you *molest* the music in a manner I find personally offensive. You have the magnetism of a towel and an inherent allergy to anything approaching even basic talent. Awful. I don't even want to look at you. \*

GLEE is destroyed. Utterly. CHarity chips in. \*

JUDGE CHARITY \*

Have to agree: sorry love but you came across as fundamentally unlikeable and quite worthless really. \*

JUDGE HOPE \*

Wraith? \*

JUDGE WRAITH

Does nothing for me. Fill that cunt  
with honey and I still wouldn't  
fuck it.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

JUDGE HOPE

Three nos. Bye bye.

\*  
\*

GLEE is silent but utterly utterly devastated. Finally:

\*

GLEE

You're wrong! You're all wrong! I'm  
a good singer. I can sing. It's my  
destiny, I'm a good singer.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

SECURITY come on and bundle her away while the audience jeer.

\*

KAI is shopping. He's buying a 'BING SHARD' for his doppel --  
a shard of perspex his doppel can hold to its own throat.

Over this, we can hear Bing's voice.

BING (O.S.)

15,000 new doppel wardrobe options  
launched last week alone, which  
effectively translates as 15,000  
new ways to kill time in your cell  
before you explore an afterlife  
which doesn't exist anyway. But  
with any luck it'll take your mind  
off those saddlesores, eh?

We pan across to SWIFT's bike.

She's watching Bing on her screen. It's a tight shot. He's  
sitting on the tiny bed in the cell we saw at the start,  
hemmed in by the walls, holding the perspex shard to his  
throat.

BING (CONT'D)

You know the only thing stopping  
me slashing myself open right  
now? I might not die right away.

(with dry humour:)

And before I went they'd find a way  
to charge my twitching half-dead  
cadaver 20,000 merits for swabbing  
the walls clean.

\*

This makes KAI laugh -- he's now watching the broadcast on his screen too.

KAI  
(snorting agreement)  
Yeah.

SWIFT looks at him. She deselects BING's programme, selects the ROLLING ROAD instead and silently goes back to pedalling.

58

INT. LARGE APARTMENT - DAY 9.

58

We see a wider shot of the scene Bing is sitting in. The tiny bed he's seated on, in front of a small pencil-sized camera, is part of a set in one corner of an apartment far bigger and glossier than the one he had at the start.

BING  
Anyway, till next week: hang on in there. If you must. And you must. Because what else are you going to do? We're all in this together they say. Yeah right. Farewell forever - till the same time next week.

Bing salutes the camera.

We hear some closing music playing (the LAPDANCE track). Then a beep.

Bing relaxes, carefully takes the shard and gently places it in a case on a console table. Beside it, a small table with fresh flowers in a vase.

Next to that, an ornate carved wooden penguin.

Bing pours himself a glass of freshly squeezed orange juice from a clear glass jug.

And he stands before an immense window overlooking a beautiful green forest, resplendent beneath deep blue skies.

**END OF EPISODE**