

Treball de fi de grau

Títol

Autor/a

Tutor/a

Departament

Grau

Tipus de TFG

Data

Full resum del TFG

Títol del Treball Fi de Grau:

Català:

Castellà:

Anglès:

Autor/a:

Tutor/a:

Curs:

Grau:

Paraules clau (mínim 3)

Català:

Castellà:

Anglès:

Resum del Treball Fi de Grau (extensió màxima 100 paraules)

Català:

Castellà:

Anglès:

Compromís d'obra original*

L'ESTUDIANT QUE PRESENTA AQUEST TREBALL DECLARA QUE:

1. Aquest treball és original i no està plagiat, en part o totalment
2. Les fonts han estat convenientment citades i referenciades
3. Aquest treball no s'ha presentat prèviament a aquesta Universitat o d'altres

I perquè així consti, afegeix a aquesta plana el seu nom i cognoms i el signa:

***Aquest full s'ha d'imprimir i lliurar en mà al tutor abans la presentació oral**

SUMMARY

Terrible Hudson is born by the will to create a great female character; a woman that is a good professional, that is sharp, inquisitive, harsh, charismatic and still human. This is the story of a person getting over a great loss through an excessive life and an inescapable passion for her vocation.

The project focuses on the creative process of writing a story on the basis that is the pillar for any film. Therefore, it is going to cover all the necessary steps to write a story. These are research, the development of the idea, and the process of writing.

A place and a moment; this project appears on the moment I really realize I am living in California. The story, the characters, the lifestyle want to be a portrait of this dreamed land.

This is a story to, someday, somehow be placed on the big screen. During my years at the university I've had the chance to write different screenplays, mostly short films and TV pilots. Now, somehow, I dared to write a feature film.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

Motives & Justification.....	3
Goal.....	4
Methodology & Parts of the Project.....	4

Professional Project: The process of developing a fiction story

1. Story context research:	
1.1. United States Media System.....	6
1.1.1. Television in the United States.....	6
1.1.2. Cable.....	7
1.1.3. Politics & Media.....	10
1.1.4. Media bias: TV channels and their ideology.....	11
1.2. The Show.....	12
1.2.1. Genre of <i>Late Night with Terry Hudson</i>	12
1.2.2. TV character.....	14
1.2.3. Conclusion.....	14
1.3. California Lifestyle.....	16
1.4. Los Angeles.....	19
1.5. American Politics.....	28
1.5.1. The 3 Branches of the Government.....	28
1.5.2. National Parties.....	29
1.5.3. Federalism.....	31
1.6. Californian Politics.....	32
1.6.1. California Government.....	32
1.6.2. Political Culture in California.....	33
1.6.3. California Political Issues.....	35
1.6.4. California Elections.....	35
1.7. Political Corruption Cases.....	36
2. The development of the Screenplay.....	38
2.1. Synopsis & Treatment.....	38
2.2. The Process of Writing.....	40
2.2.1. From the Paradigm to the Treatment.....	41
2.2.2. The post-its and the actual writing.....	43
2.2.3. Application and use of the research on the writing process.....	44
3. Screenplay: <i>Terrible Hudson</i>	46

References

Annexes

INTRODUCTION

Motives & Justification

A good story, so a good screenplay, is a key for the success of any good movie, show or any audiovisual project. Then, there's also the writing. The feeling of creating a story is thrilling. Because of that, and making the most of my time in California I am developing a screenplay and I am immersing on the path of creating a story.

The fact that I am in America gives me a lot of great chances for this project. I am living in the place where the story is set. I get to know this land. That should allow me to capture the atmosphere, the lifestyle and the people of California in the story. On the other hand, that gives me the chance to talk to people who know about this place. Moreover, I am lucky enough to learn and have advice from different worlds and perspectives as I can count both on Catalan and American professors.

Another important motive for this project is the wish to create an interesting and powerful female character in an industry where the role of women, both in fiction and in production itself, still has a lot to improve.

Creating a story is not an easy job. Neither is writing a screenplay. Also, as an aspiring screenwriter, and being this one my first feature film screenplay I have ever written, I want to focus on the creative process of developing a script. The origin of my idea appears due to a combination of elements and influences. Strangely enough, my influences for this film come more from television shows than films. I have been soaking up American shows my whole life, specially these last years. The idea of *Terrible Hudson* takes shape in my head when I put together *Californication*, *The Wire* and *House of Cards*. The Catalan ingredient here comes from my free version of a well-recognized journalist in our country, Mònica Terribas.

According to my background on screenwriting theories, one of the first questions a writer should ask herself is "what do I want to tell?" In this story, I want to tell that life is hard but worth it; that is very important to have a vocation, a motivation and that anyone can screw up in life at some point but there's still the chance to redeem yourself. I want to tell that humans are complicated and illogic and that's what makes us humans. So, "what's the message", would ask Harold Lasswell? Life's hard, but harder is Terry Hudson.

Goal

The goal of this project is to gain experience on writing stories for the audiovisual industry. This script wants to be a germ for a career as a screenwriter. Therefore, this project should be one of the pillars of my own portfolio in order to, one day, professionally write for movies or TV.

As for the story itself, my goal is to write a story that talks about things I care; things I am interested in. So, a movie that I would like to watch and that I could sympathize with in different aspects of life. The creation of the characters is one of the most important parts to accomplish that, putting special emphasis on the main character, without ever losing the Feminist perspective. Also, writing wise, one of the goals is to be able to create a good plot, with the handicap of writing about politics and media in California, which requires research.

Finally, this script is not only written to be as a *Treball de Fi de Grau* but I would like to do something else with it. First of all, it is going to be registered as an intellectual property product. Aside from being part of a portfolio, the idea is to submit it in screenwriting awards or production companies.

Professional area

The professional area of this project is screenwriting. This project is focused on the creative process of developing a story and writing a full-length script. It does not mean to go further than that for now, so it will not cover the whole preproduction of the film.

Methodology & Parts of the Project

This project is based on three different parts. The first part consists on the research needed to develop the story. The second, is an exploration of the writing process and finally, the main one, is the screenplay itself.

The research is aimed to learn about the context of the story. That is to be realistic in terms of the topics that surround the story: politics, media and lifestyle in California - Southern California-. There are two main methodological tools for this part. One consists in looking up a selection of articles, books and websites on the topics named above. Also, since I am studying at the University of California (UCSB), another rich source are interviews or lectures from UCSB professors on the English and Film & Media departments. Through the combination of these two methodological tools, I should get a good background to write a truthful story set in California.

The second part of the project consists in improving my screenwriting knowledge and skills through an exploration of the writing process. Despite my background on screenwriting from school, this is the first feature film I write and that demands some guidance and hints for the process of writing it. For that, I used Syd Field's *The Screenwriter's book: Exercises and step-by-step instructions for creating a successful screenplay*. The book has worked as a manual to develop the story, the characters and the structure. I don't agree on everything written on the book but it is a good guidance for a first time writer. Ideally, on following screenplays I would like to look up more authors and methods since I find the development of a screenplay a very interesting process. The theories and hints of this book are included on the Process of Writing the section.

Ideally, another important method to improve my screenwriting skills would have consisted on interviews to professional screenwriters to get advice on their stories and writing methods. The writers were selected to provide knowledge on the following topics: politics in fiction, television newsroom in fiction and Californian lifestyle in fiction. Ideally, I would have interview Beau Willimon, writer of *House of Cards* and David Simon, creator of *The Wire* for the political plot, Aaron Sorkin for a television newsroom –despite it is a different TV genre- and Tom Kapinos, creator of *Californication* for the Californian lifestyle. Despite being in California, I couldn't get in touch with any of these screenwriters because they all are busy with professional projects.

Finally, the third and main part of the project is the screenplay. Both the first part, the research, and the second part, the exploration of the writing process, are aimed to help write a good screenplay, a story that works and is truthful on the atmosphere and place where it is set.

Professional Project: The process of developing a fiction story

1. Story context research

An important part of the process of developing a fiction story is research. Despite writing fiction, the story needs to be believable to be able to reach and hopefully touch an audience. This research pillar of the project is aimed to learn about the context of the story. That is to be realistic in terms of the topics that surround the story: politics, media system and lifestyle in Southern California and in Los Angeles.

1.1 UNITED STATES MEDIA SYSTEM

This research is aimed to help determine the production characteristics – broadcast or cable television, channel, genre of the program, schedule - of the main character's show, *The Terry Hudson Show*.

1.1.1 Television in the United States

The media in the United States is crowded, competitive, and opinionated. There is a centralized media system with a model of constitutionally recognized, lightly regulated and privately owned communications media. (Lichter, 2008). The television in the US is divided into two domains: television broadcasting and cable and satellite services. The television broadcasting is dominated by what are named the “Big Four”, which are the four largest television networks. These are ABC, CBS, Fox, and NBC. (Turow, 2009). As a noncommercial network, there is The Public Broadcasting Service (PBS). However, as Lichter states, commercial television has more influence than public television in the US.

Terrestrial broadcasting in the United States is regulated by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), which grants broadcast licenses and maintains limited oversight under a “trusteeship” model of broadcasting. From the beginning, fixed-term licenses were granted to mostly commercial organizations to broadcast on preset frequencies to local markets. Local stations could affiliate to national networks to achieve an approximation of national services. (Stevenson, 2008:2)

Most commercial TV stations are affiliated to one of the three traditional networks – CBS, ABC, or NBC – that provide news and prime-time entertainment programming, or Fox or the CW network. The Big Four commercial networks are the giants of the broadcast television as they coordinate the distribution of shows to hundreds of local

stations, which then transmit the shows to homes. (Turow, 2009:). Locally produced programming on the networks is limited and usually consists of local news with coverage of crime, fires, and accidents, local weather and sports. (Stevenson, 2008)

1.1.2 Cable

Most American households can receive six or more terrestrial TV stations just with a regular antenna. However, cable television is the standard delivery system, providing, in some cases, more than 200 programs as well as high-speed Internet access and telephone service. In 2005, 85 percent of all TV households were cable subscribers. Private commercial cable companies, some of the largest being Comcast, Time-Warner, or Cox, operate as monopolies with franchises granted by local governments. The cable and satellite carry different channels depending on the consumer's subscription. Federal regulations require cable providers to carry all local terrestrial stations and local governments usually require that cable channels be set aside for use by local government and for public access. Otherwise, the providers themselves make the content decisions. Since the federal government's authority to regulate content does not apply to cable or satellite broadcasting or cable content on pay services such as Home Box Office (HBO), these often include nudity, rough language, and other elements prohibited on traditional channels. (Mullen, 2008)

The channel capacity of a cable system makes it possible for a cable television system operator to provide many services. In addition to over-the-air television broadcast signals, cable systems offer a wide variety of programming networks, including, for example, news, weather, business information, movies, sports, general and special entertainment services, and programming designed for specific audiences such as children, women, and ethnic and racial groups. Cable systems also offer programming on an on-demand and pay-per-view basis, and increasingly are allowing their subscribers to access programming on mobile devices. (FCC, 2012)

Cable services are often provided in tiers. A tier is a category of cable service or services provided by a cable operator for which a separate rate is charged by the cable operator. There are three types of cable service: basic service, cable programming service, and per-channel or per-program (sometimes called pay-per-view or premium) service. Basic service is the lowest level of cable service a subscriber can buy. It includes, at a minimum, all over-the-air television broadcast signals and any public, educational, or government access channels required by the system's franchise agreement. It may include additional signals chosen by the operator. (FCC, 2012)

In order to see what channels are in each cable service, let us examine, as an example, the tiers offered by Cox, one among the main cable providers companies in the US. As it is shown in Table 1, Cox basic cable carries HD versions of the broadcast networks, local and educational channels, generalist Spanish speaking channels and basic cable channels such as QVC (home shopping channel), USA Network (owned by NBC, TV series, films and sports), HSN (shopping channel), TBS, (owned by Time Warner, sitcoms and sports) CNN (news), Lifetime (film, reality and dramatic programming aimed to women), MSNBC (news coverage and political opinion, more info, could be an option) or Spike (owned by Viacom, general entertainment channel), among others.

Table 1. TV Starter: the basic cable service by Cox.

TV Starter				
2 QVC	10 PBS - KOCE	18 City of Santa Barbara Govt. Access Δ	44 AZTECA - KSBO	97 Jewelry TV
3 ABC - KEYT	11 Fox - KKFX	19 City of Goleta Govt. Access Δ	45 Spike	129 IND - KCET Δ
4 USA Network	12 CBS - KCOY	20 SB County Govt. Access Δ	46 The Weather Channel	130 V-Me - KCET Δ
5 CW - KSBY	13 Me-TV - KEYT	21 City of Carpinteria Govt. Access Δ	47 C-SPAN Δ	131 KCETIINK Δ
6 NBC - KSBY	14 TBS	22 CNN	48 Tr3s LA - KBEH Δ	132 NKH Wolrd - KCET Δ
7 HSN	15 Telemundo - KTAS	41 Lifetime	49 truTV	
8 Cox 8	16 Univision - KPMR	42 msnbc	71 TVSB Culture Δ	
9 IND - KCAL	17 TVSB Voice Δ	43 UniMas - KPMR	72 UCSB Education Access Δ	
TV Starter HD				
1002 QVC HD	1006 NBC HD - KSBY	1011 FOX HD - KKFX	1016 Univision HD - KPMR	1045 Spike HD
1003 ABC HD - KEYT	1008 PBS HD - KOCE	1012 CBS HD - KCOY	1022 CNN HD	1046 The Weather Channel HD
1004 USA Network HD	1009 IND HD - KCAL	1014 TBS HD	1041 Lifetime HD	1049 truTV HD
1005 CW HD - KSBY	1010 KCET HD	1015 Telemundo HD - KTAS	1042 msnbc HD	

Source: Cox Cable Channel line-up

Cable programming service includes all program channels on the cable system that are not included in basic service, but are not separately offered as per-channel or per-program services. There may be one or more tiers of cable programming service. (FCC) Indeed, Cox has two tiers, TV Essential and TV Economy. Some of the cable programming services included are, among others, HLN (entertainment news), AMC (movies and series), TNT (films, television series and sports), Nickelodeon (children programming), Disney (children programming), TLC (reality style content), Discovery and “zone channels” like Animal Planet, ESPN, Fox Sports, MTV, ION (general entertainment), History Channel, Bravo (reality TV, movies and series reruns, aimed to women), Comedy Central (comedy programming), WGN (entertainment programming), Golf Channel, Food Network, E! Entertainment (general entertainment), POP (general entertainment), Fox Business Channel, Hallmark Channel (family programming) or National Geographic.

Table 2. TV Essential: a tier of cable programming service by Cox.

TV Essential (Includes TV Starter.)				
23 HLN	33 Animal Planet	54 Cartoon / Adult Swim	64 Food Network	75 Hallmark Movies & Mysteries Δ
24 CNBC	34 ESPN	55 History	65 TWC Sportsnet	77 GSN Δ
25 Fox News Channel	35 ESPN2	56 A&E	66 E! Entertainment	78 FXX Δ
26 AMC	36 Fox Sports Prime Ticket	57 Bravo	67 NBC Sports Network Δ	79 Fox Business Channel Δ
27 FX	37 Fox Sports West	58 Travel Channel	68 TV Land	80 Investigation Discovery Δ
28 TNT	38 MTV	59 BET	69 TCM	84 Fox Deportes LA Δ
29 Nickelodeon	40 ABC Family	60 Golf Channel	70 Fox Sports 1 Δ	85 TWC Deportes Δ
30 Disney	51 Syfy	61 HGTV	73 POP Δ	86 Univision Deportes Δ
31 TLC	52 Galavision	62 Comedy Central	74 MoviePlex Δ	127 National Geographic Δ
32 Discovery	53 ION Δ	63 WGN Δ	75 Hallmark Δ	216 WeTV Δ
TV Essential HD				
1023 HLN HD	1034 ESPN HD	1055 History HD	1066 E! Entertainment HD	1080 Investigation Discovery HD
1024 CNBC HD	1035 ESPN2 HD	1056 A&E HD	1067 NBC Sports Network HD	1086 Univision Deportes HD
1025 Fox News Channel HD	1036 Fox Sports Prime Ticket HD	1057 Bravo HD	1068 TV Land HD	1127 National Geographic HD
1026 AMC HD	1037 Fox Sports West HD	1058 Travel Channel HD	1069 TCM HD	1216 WeTV
1027 FX HD	1038 MTV HD	1059 BET HD	1070 Fox Sports 1 HD	1701-1708 NBC Premier League Extra Time HD
1028 TNT HD	1039 VH1 HD	1060 Golf Channel HD	1073 POP HD Δ	1775 Velocity HD
1029 Nickelodeon HD	1040 ABC Family HD	1061 HGTV HD	1074 MoviePlex HD	1780 Universal Sports HD
1030 Disney HD	1051 Syfy HD	1062 Comedy Central HD	1075 Hallmark HD	1785 Palladia HD
1031 TLC HD	1052 Galavision HD	1063 WGN HD	1076 Hallmark Movies & Mysteries HD	
1032 Discovery HD	1053 ION HD	1064 Food Network HD	1078 FXX HD	
1033 Animal Planet HD	1054 Cartoon / Adult Swim HD	1065 TWC Sportsnet HD	1079 Fox Business Channel HD	
Zone Channels				
996 Kids Zone Δ	997 News Zone Δ	998 Sports Zone Δ		

Source: Cox Cable Channel line-up

Table 3. TV Economy: one of the tiers of cable programming service by Cox.

TV Economy (Includes TV Starter.) Δ				
4 USA Network	28 TNT	42 msnbc	55 History	68 TV Land
22 CNN	29 Nickelodeon	46 The Weather Channel	59 BET	69 TCM
23 HLN	30 Disney	49 truTV	62 Comedy Central	73 POP
25 Fox News Channel	32 Discovery	51 Syfy	63 WGN	77 GSN
26 AMC	33 Animal Planet	52 Galavision	64 Food Network	78 FXX
27 FX	41 Lifetime	54 Cartoon / Adult Swim	66 E! Entertainment	127 National Geographic
TV Economy HD				
1004 USA Network HD	1028 TNT HD	1042 msnbc HD	1059 BET HD	1078 FXX HD
1022 CNN HD	1029 Nickelodeon / Nick at Night HD	1046 The Weather Channel HD	1062 Comedy Central HD	1172 National Geographic HD
1023 HLN HD	1030 Disney HD	1051 Syfy HD	1063 WGN HD	
1025 Fox News Channel HD	1032 Discovery HD	1052 Galavision HD	1064 Food Network HD	
1026 AMC HD	1033 Animal Planet HD	1054 Cartoon / Adult Swim HD	1066 E! Entertainment HD	
1027 FX HD	1041 Lifetime HD	1055 History HD	1069 TCM HD	

Source: Cox Cable Channel line-up

Per-channel or per-program service includes those cable services that are provided as single-channel tiers by the cable operator, and individual programs for which the cable operator charges a separate rate. (FCC, 2012). Some traditional premium networks are HBO and its competitor Showtime, which charge subscribers directly for access to their programs, which are original produced shows. (Mullen, 2008) As it is shown in Table 4, the premium cable channels offered are HBO, Cinemax, Showtime, The Movie Channel, Starz and all their subsidiary channels.

Table 4: Premium Channels: per channel cable service by Cox.

Premium Channels A				
300 HBO	311 HBO2 (East)	333 5 Star MAX	344 SHOWTIME Extreme	363 Starz in Black
301 HBO2	320 Cinemax	334 Cinemax (East)	345 SHOWTIME Next	364 Starz Kids & Family
303 HBO Zone	321 More MAX	340 SHOWTIME	347 SHOWTIME Family Zone	365 Starz Cinema
305 HBO Family	322 Action MAX	341 SHOWTIME 2	350 The Movie Channel	366 Starz Comedy
306 HBO Latino	323 Thriller MAX	342 SHOWTIME Showcase	361 Starz	
310 HBO (East)	331 Movie MAX	343 SHOWTIME Beyond	362 Starz Edge	
Premium Channels HD				
1300 HBO HD	1306 HBO Latino HD	1323 Thriller MAX HD ◊	1344 SHOWTIME Extreme HD ◊	1362 Starz Edge HD
1301 HBO2 HD	1310 HBO (East) HD ◊	1326 More MAX (East) HD ◊	1348 SHOWTIME 2 (East) HD ◊	1363 Starz in Black HD ◊
1302 HBO Signature HD ◊	1311 HBO2 (East) HD ◊	1333 5 Star MAX HD ◊	1350 The Movie Channel HD	1364 Starz Kids & Family HD ◊
1303 HBO Zone HD ◊	1320 Cinemax HD ◊	1334 Cinemax (East) HD ◊	1351 The Movie Channel (East) HD ◊	1365 Starz Cinema HD ◊
1304 HBO Comedy HD ◊	1321 More MAX HD ◊	1340 SHOWTIME HD	1352 TMC Extra HD ◊	1366 Starz Comedy HD ◊
1305 HBO Family HD ◊	1322 Action MAX HD ◊	1342 SHOWTIME Showcase HD ◊	1361 Starz HD	1369 Starz (East) HD ◊

Source: Cox Cable Channel line-up

As the ongoing digitization of cable systems has led to increased bandwidth and channel capacity, content providers have focused increasingly on even narrower niche audiences ideological and otherwise). The “Mapping Digital Media: United States” report concludes that, while an increase in the number of outlets does not necessarily equal an increase in viewpoint diversity, in this case the added outlets do indeed represent viewpoints that were not previously as easily accessible on television. Unlike newspapers, which have always had opinion columns, television news before the advent of cable was confined to the “big three” networks, which strived to remain politically neutral to attract the widest audience. With the expansion of outlets, companies have responded by choosing to cater to both the mainstream and niche audiences (ideological and otherwise). (V.V.A.A, 2011:23)

1.1.3 Politics & Media

“The media have become so pervasive and so tightly integrated into American social and political life.” (Lichter, 2008: 218). As Terrible Hudson will have a plot involving the relationship between media and politics it is interesting to explore briefly this topic.

According to Lichter, the extraordinary power of television brought a massive expansion of media influence in every major sector of political life –the electoral process, the business of governing and making policy, and the mechanisms of public opinion that form the backdrop for political activity-. For the author, the national media became the single most influential factor in transforming political life into what it is today. *Journalists’ judgments not only help select the candidates who survive and the issues that emerge; they shape the perceptual environment in which the campaign takes place. Television in particular has developed an almost fetishistic fascination with the presidency. On a “normal” news day, absent other events of great magnitude, the*

lead story on any newscast usually flows from president's activities or agenda. (Lichter, 2008: 218).

In an age of mediated politics, the president proposes and the media opposes. This is not to say that relations between the media and the government are purely adversarial. Rather, the media have become something of a political institution in their own right, engaging in constant interplay with the three formal branches of government in ways that are often mutually beneficial. Thus, journalists and politicians criticize each other so much partly because they need each other so much. "Image had triumphed over substance. In televised political debate, however, image trumps substance. (Lichter, 2008:198-199)

1.1.4 "Media Bias": TV channels & their ideology

As no medium is completely neutral and, specially, regarding that the Terry Hudson's TV program would be a news satire show, it is necessary to briefly examine media relation to political ideology on the United States.

According to Holt, media is not very critical in the United States as there is not a wide range of perspective on political topics and issues. For her, in depth substantive type of reporting can be found on PBS, on shows like *Democracy Now* but, overall, "depth news", are not predominant on the American television "as no one is interrogating anything, questioning politics or issues"(Holt, 2015). Lichter sustains that today's news environment is becoming more vibrant but less reliable. The broadcast networks in particular have been steadily abandoning substantive coverage in both domestic and international reporting. Since the 1990s, there has been a trend towards soft news and lifestyle coverage, entertainment, and consumer-oriented reporting.

According to Lichter, today, the model still remains close to the ideal type of press that is free from government intrusion. Media in the United States have less identifiable ideological slants than in Europe. (Lichter, 2008). Indeed, as stated earlier, the networks have traditionally remained politically neutral. However, the "Mapping Digital Media: United States" reports that the most significant transition in news consumption over the past five years is the migration to increasingly partisan news sources. *Many 24-hour cable news networks, including Fox News, MSNBC, Fox Business explicitly target certain segments of the political spectrum. The audiences for these networks are becoming increasingly homogeneous in terms of political orientation (i.e. primarily Republicans watching Fox News; primarily Democrats watching MSNBC).* (V.V.A.A,

2011:20)

For Holt, generally, the media is considerably centrist right leaning. Holt agrees that there is an entrenched conservative perspective on some channels such as Fox or a more left leaning position on MSNBC but emphasize that what predominates is a centrist type of news, especially on the networks (Holt, 2015. See the complete interview to Professor Holt on Annex 1). Lichter (2008) agrees on Fox being widely regarded as more conservative than the other networks.

1.2 THE SHOW

1.2.1 Genre of the *Late Night with Terry Hudson*

The first idea for the genre of *Late Nigh with Terry Hudson* was a news program focused on politics and with interviews. The idea was that Terry Hudson is a very good political journalist and most politicians fear her interviews. However, a very important part of the character is her sarcasm and that she is a charismatic and famous person. Finding that these characteristics are more typical from late shows hosts, regarding the popularity of this genre and the influence of news satire shows, I came to the conclusion that the program the character should run would be a late show focused on politics and politics related guests.

Silverblatt (2007) states that TV news satires like *The Daily Show* or *The Colbert Report* have a long tradition in America. According to the author “because these satiric news programs are free of “objective” journalistic constraints, they are able to point out many of the absurdities and ironies of the day’s events.” (Silverblatt, 2007:70). The author says that this parody of broadcast news has become a credible news source among young people. According to an article by the Pew Research Center study, 12% of the online Americans cited *The Daily Show* as a place they got their news. (Gottfried, 2015)

Holt reinforces this idea as, for her, comedy programs are doing a better job than anybody on the treatment of politics and news on television. According to her, some of the most relevant shows of that genre are *The Daily Show*, *The Colbert Report* (now off the air), John Oliver’s new show, *Last Week Tonight* or Larry Wilmore’s show, *The Nightly Show*. She explains that, ironically, most of her students are getting their news from comedy shows because they are the ones who are asking the difficult questions and pointing up *the obvious, you know, crimes against humanity that are taking place, so, not the actual news broadcasters, they don’t do that* (Holt, 2015). Lichter (2008)

confirms that many young people either rely on the Internet as their sole news medium or obtain news indirectly through popular culture. According to the author, in this new arena of alternative news media, the likes of Jon Stewart, the *Wonkette* (an online satiric magazine), and Youtube may become successors of Rather, Jennings, and Brokaw -networks newsmen-. Also, Lichter argues that public consistently gives high marks to talk shows and campaign debates because these venues allow them to hear the candidates discuss issues at greater than sound-bite length and, in some cases, to participate in the discussion themselves.

According to Holt, TV news' satires are popular because comedy is essential for any culture to laugh at their selves and because much more can be said with comedy and with satire than in straight reporting of the news. For her, people are hunger for more commentary that they cannot find in straight news. People want to feel part of a culture that is critiquing and thinking about information and that often comes in form of comedy. (Holt, 2015)

As Silverblatt says, it must be noted that the manifest function of news parodies is not information but entertainment. However, on his book *From Cronkite to Colbert*, its author argues that "fake news" should be understood as a new kind of journalism, one that has the potential to save the news and reinvigorate the conversation on democracy in today's society. (Baym, 2009) This controversy about infotainment also works for the personality of the main character and as a dramatic source: although Terry Hudson used to be a journalist, she found parody and satire more useful to reach audience so she sacrificed her journalistic ethics to reach more people.

Talks shows and, specially, late night shows are a long tradition in the United States. All the networks and some cable channels have a late night show on air. Comedy Central, a popular American comedy channel, has traditionally released late-night talk and news satire shows such as *The Daily Show with John Stewart* (1999-present), the now off *The Colbert Report* (2005-2014) or its substitute, *The Nightly Show with Larry Wilmore* (January 2015-present). Last season, HBO premiered its first news satire program hosted by John Oliver. These shows run during half-hour (commercials included*) and are usually aired Monday to Thursday after Eastern Time prime time, between 11 and 11.30PM and on prime time on the West Coast, at 8/8.30PM PT. *The Daily Show* is aired at 11PM and is followed by *The Nightly Show*, which starts at 11.30PM, the same time as its predecessor, *The Colbert Report*. *Last Week Tonight*, as a week review, is aired on Sundays and is at 11PM (ET).

1.2.2 TV Character

According to Jennifer Holt, a charismatic and popular host of a news satire show usually is conventionally beautiful and with a type of humor something in the middle of dry humor and physical comedy. She follows saying that hosts need to have a definite “something”, similar to the others but with something different from everyone else. Holt emphasizes the importance between the combination of humor and harshness on a political comedy host, which John Oliver perfectly represents. (Holt, 2015)

As women who are doing comedy and are also harsh, Holt names Amy Schumer and her sketch show, *Inside Amy Schumer*, also on Comedy Central and emphasizes that she is harsh and raunchy, is not conventionally beautiful and deals with very political topics. Holt also talks about Chelsea Handler and her harsh performance on her late show, *Chelsea Lately* (on E-network), a kind of entertainment news channel. About newswoman that could also inspire the character of Terry Hudson, Holt mentions Amy Goodman, host of *Democracy Now*, news on public television. Holt emphasizes Goodman’s good job on her unrestrained and hard-hitting journalism as well as her physical appearance with grey hair and no make up which breaks the mold. Finally, Holt also names Rachel Maddow, who does the show on MSNBC (“cable news channel that is like leftie”), a left leaning and harsh newswoman out as a lesbian. (Holt, 2015)

1.2.3 Conclusion

Therefore, after this analysis it is easier to determine the production characteristics of *The Terry Hudson Show*. The program would work better on a cable channel than on a broadcast network. Traditional networks are more politically neutral than cable channels and precisely Terry Hudson is clearly a left-leaning woman that, although she is critical both with Republicans and Democrats, is openly anti-Republican (which dramatically, is one of the things that moves the story forward). Also, as the networks offer general programming, their late shows are entertainment more than satirical, as they offer general entertainment with starts as guests, and do not usually treat politics issues. Regarding the present news satire programs, it is clear that they are cable channels, Comedy Central –with its long tradition with news satire - and HBO the ones that bet for this genre. Also, as stated before, cable channels are aiming to ideologically narrower audiences. For all these reasons, *Late Night with Terry Hudson* would also be released on a cable channel like Comedy Central, for its news satire tradition, MSNBC, which is openly left-leaning and has tried with satire late shows before, or on HBO, which, in addition to their television series programming, has

recently bet for a political comedy show with John Oliver. Regarding the schedule, as it is characteristic of its television genre, it would be aired on weekdays on prime time on the West Coast and late night on the East Coast.

About the genre, Terry Hudson's show would be a TV news satire similar to the shows referred earlier except for the fact that it is hosted by a woman and produced in Los Angeles, instead of New York, where they traditionally are set. That was, at first, a personal decision regarding the fact that I know California better than New York City. However, it is also a matter of creativity and originality as I find more interesting for the main character to live in Los Angeles and for the story to be set in California. Also, Holt sustains that, although most of the late shows and news satire programs are done in New York, there is not a relevant reason why they could not be done in Los Angeles. She says that having the program in Los Angeles is an interesting element to add and could be the pitch of the show because of the lifestyle that Los Angeles offers, which, according to her, is much more fun and interesting than in New York City, where everyone is so serious.

1.3 CALIFORNIA LIFESTYLE

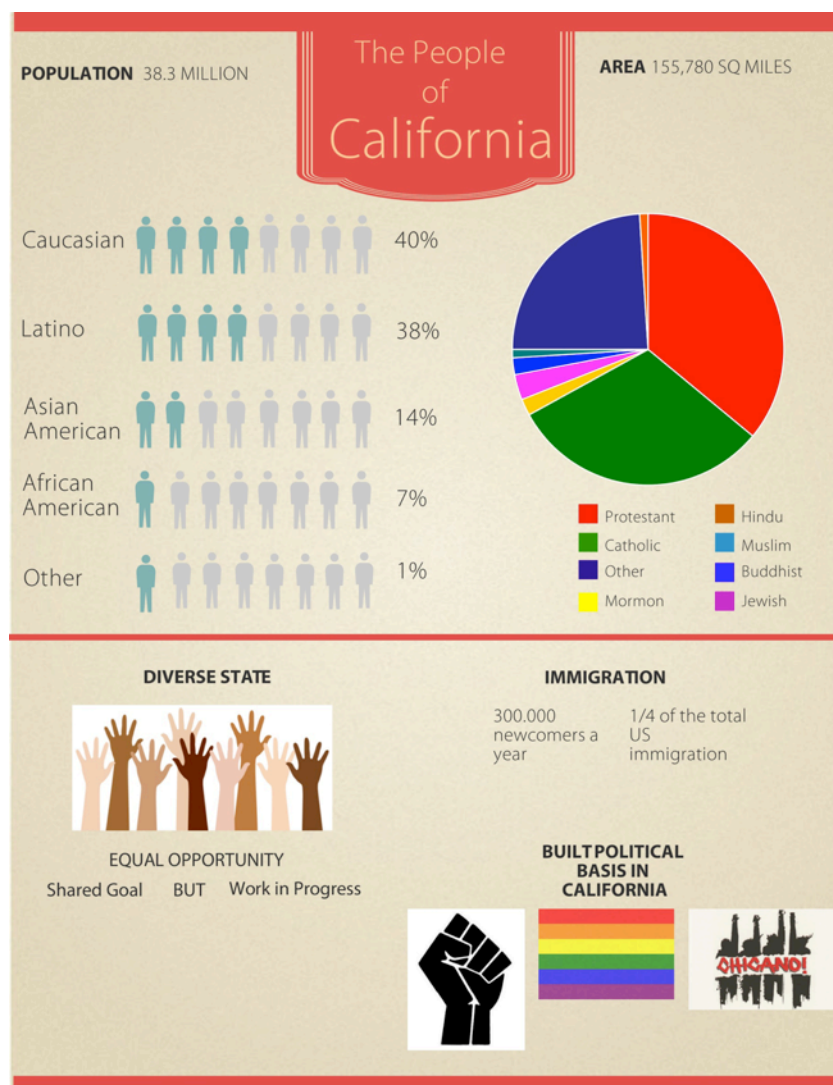
In the California of the dream world you wake up, have your shot of wheatgrass and roll down to the beach while the surf's up. Lifeguards wave to you as they go jogging by in their bathing suits. You skateboard down the boardwalk to your yoga class where everyone admires your downward dog¹, a food truck pulls up with your favorite: low-carb, sustainable fish tacos with organic mango chipotle salsa. Wait, can anyone honestly make this dream come true? (VV.AA, 2015:705)



Source: Author on data provided by California Lonely Planet

¹ Downward dog is a yoga position

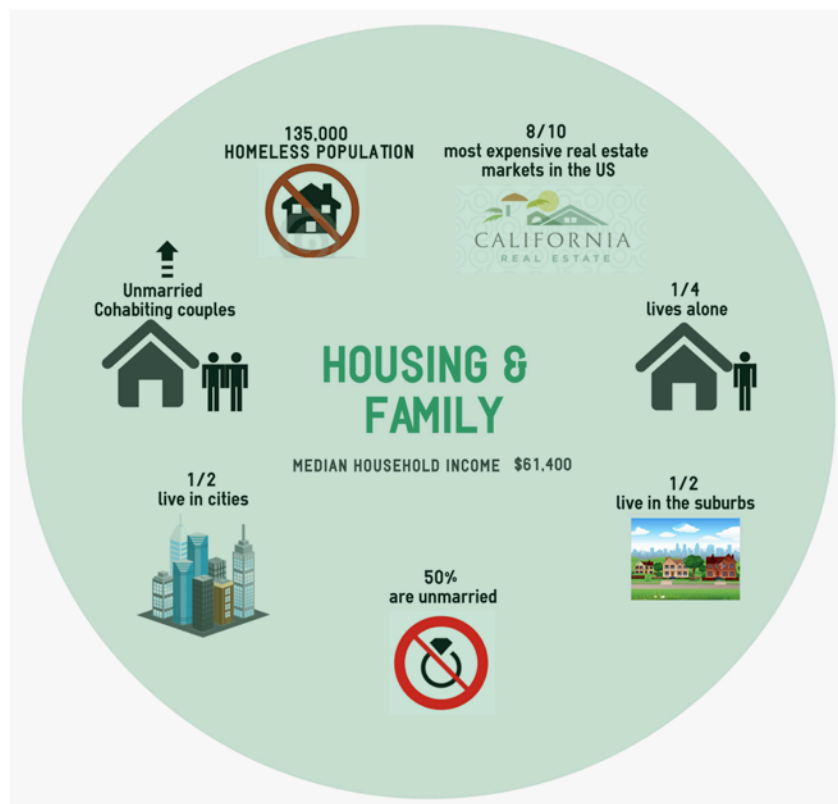
The infographic above represents California's characteristics and lifestyle since all these elements are to be kept in mind when writing the fiction story. The image of how lifestyle in California is usually relates to what has been called the California Dream. That is the general idea that life in California is associated to symbols like the sun, beach, palm trees, surf, pools, movie stars, glamour and nice houses. Although the California Dream is a term that has evolved since its first connotation -related to the 19th century Gold Rush-, a good contemporary definition is provided by Glenna Matthews (2003:6): *The expectation that the good life will be even more available in the Golden State than in other parts of the United States, because of California's salubrious climate and abundant resources.* And she goes on: *From fruit-crate labels to promotional literature to movies and television to songs such as "California Dreamin'" by the Mamas and the Papas or "California Girls" by the Beach Boys, generations of Americans and those abroad have been schooled to believe that California is the place where dreams come true.* (Matthews, 2003:6).



Source: Author on data provided by California Lonely Planet

However, as Newfield, professor of English Literature at UCSB;² usually says, California has a unique mix of sunshine and “noir” for its interactions of vision and violence, transformation and conflict, pleasure and disaster. According to the professor, and as he states on the student guide of the literature course *Noir California*, some key issues that portray the idea of this dual California since the 1950’s are the growth of the suburbs, the bohemian culture boom, immigration then and now, the rise of the University of California, sexual revolt and political protest, Chicano blowouts and civil rights, Dogtown surfing culture and the environmental crisis, Hollywood and celebrity, the Contra wars and the crack epidemic, the tech industry and the actual surveillance state.

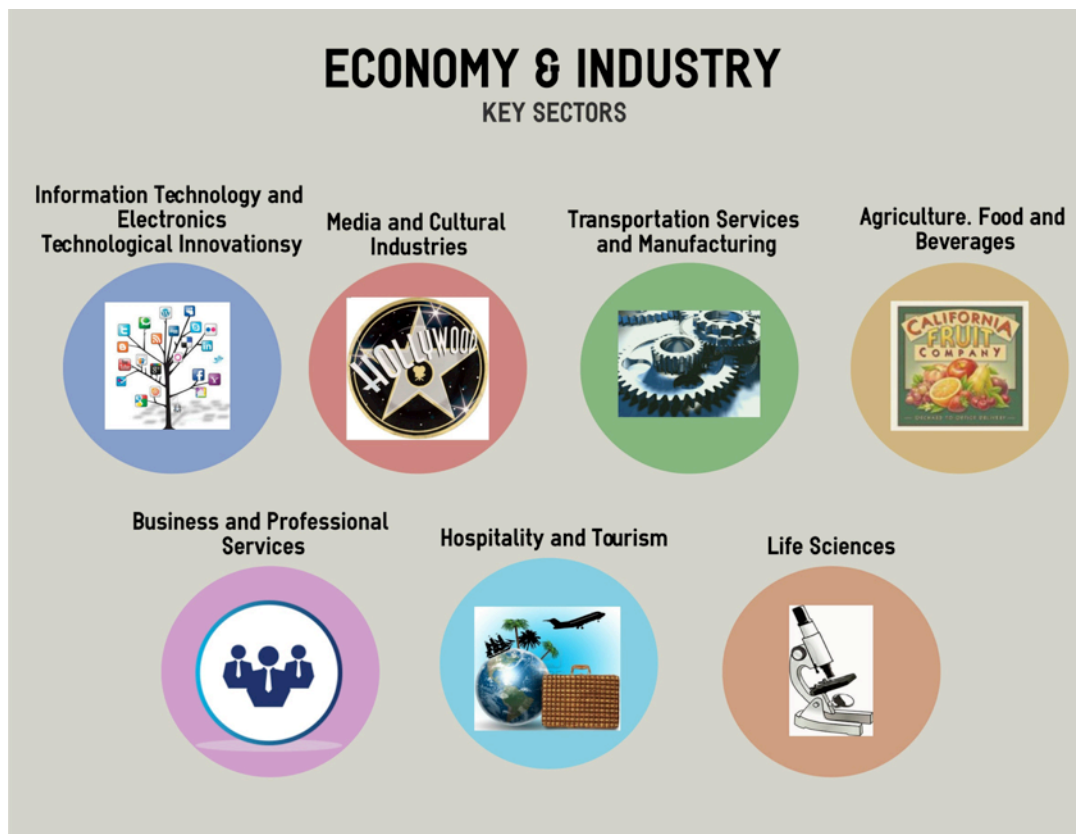
Ferrell & Deakin’s article (2001) serves as an introduction to Californian lifestyle trends. According to the authors, California has a reputation as a trendsetter in terms of social developments and public policy driven by the dynamic shifts in lifestyle choices of their state’s residents. Some of these trends are the existing and growing importance of non-work travel, the increasingly consumption and entertainment-oriented lifestyle, the California’s unique status as an increasingly multiethnic society or the use of the automobile.



Source: Author on data provided by California Lonely Planet

² I attended a California Literature class taught by Christopher Newfield called *Noir California* at the University of California Santa Barbara

All the infographics above, as well as the following one, are based on the information by the California Travel Guide (Lonely Planet, 2015). Despite not being an academic text and besides the touristic information, the guide has a very useful context on California history, culture and lifestyle. This context is important for my project to help me understand California society and lifestyles so I can reproduce them in my fiction story. A compilation on a context of California by the guide can be found on Annex 2.



Source: Author on data provided by California Lonely Planet

1.4 LOS ANGELES

Los Angeles is a big and spread city and, the same way as California, it has a very diverse population, so that also very different neighborhoods. As the location is a very important element on a story and often acts as a character itself, it is necessary to think about where would Terry Hudson and the characters that interact with her live.

For the following context of Los Angeles, I have used different sources. First, I kept using the California Travel Guide for some of the descriptions of the areas and neighborhoods. Second, I looked up the Los Angeles tourist website, called Discover LA. From this website, I obtained a small introduction of the city of Los Angeles as well as information about its regions as well as a division of them –that differs from other

sources-. I also found a very useful application from the Los Angeles Times, that besides having their own proposal for mapping the regions of neighborhoods of LA, offers a very useful tool to look up demographic characteristics in percentages – such as ethnicity, income, education, age, housing or families – that gives you a quick idea of the neighborhood. Also very valuable is the information extracted from the Los Angeles County Los Economic Development Corporation website. Although its focus on economics, the information they provide on the Regions of LA County, as well as their own mapping, has been very useful for this context.

Since its founding on 1781, Los Angeles has grown into a dynamic metropolis with its eye on the future, while preserving its extraordinary cultural heritage. LA is one of the most ethnically diverse cities in the world, making it a truly global city. As the entertainment capital of the world and home to creative residents, LA has a long history with film, TV, music and literature. From the world class LA Philharmonic to the Walt Disney Concert Hall, J. Paul Getty Museum and LACMA and the city's different cuisines, LA's cultural legacy continue to grow. (Discover Los Angeles. LA Heritage, S.N.).



Source: LAEDC. Regions of the LA County

Popularly, Los Angeles refers not only to the city itself but also to the cities and areas nearby grouped together as Los Angeles County. Mapping the districts of the Los Angeles County is not easy, as there are some differences regarding limits and names between sources. However, according to the LAEDC³, most people think of the LA County as having eight distinct regions. These are Antelope Valley, Central Los Angeles, Gateway Cities, San Fernando Valley, San Gabriel Valley, Santa Clarita Valley, South bay and the Westside Cities (or Westside). Following there is a map of the LA County.

In order to understand and see both where the story and characters fit better, here it is a brief consideration of the distinct regions and cities of Los Angeles. Most of this information is taken from the LAEDC regions website but also extracts from the LA touristic website (Discover LA) and the California Travel Guide (2015) have been used.

There might be some specific streets or places on the examination above that might seem irrelevant. Thus, it is worth mentioning these very precise details about parks, restaurants or cultural or entertainment places about the regions have been named with the aim of potentially using them in the story. The story may happen in different regions of LA. Let us imagine the main character meets with someone in Pasadena or goes shopping in West Hollywood; using real restaurants or places give the story more credibility and a more “made it LA” essence.

One of the reasons why the main character lives in the city, besides her job, is the cultural, entertainment and fun that this one offers. During this whole part of the research, different places, museums, restaurants and activities are going to be mentioned as they can potentially appear on the story.

Antelope Valley

In the northern reaches of Los Angeles County, about an hour out of Downtown L.A., there are the cities of Lancaster, Palmdale and their surrounding communities, which encompass an area home to aerospace and agriculture industries. Antelope Valley has some of the Southern California’s most affordable home prices that, along with fresh air, a good climate, and an abundance of family-oriented activities have drawn many new residents to the zone. The area offers many cultural and recreational opportunities with a lively theater scene and is home to important universities like, UCLA, USC and

³ Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation

four California State Universities. (LAEDC. Regions of the LA County, S.N.)

Central Los Angeles

Central Los Angeles, home of Downtown LA, is undergoing a metamorphosis that is leading to a major revitalization. In recent years, the City's center has seen an explosion of residential building and developments reinventing the area have made Downtown a vibrant center of activity. Home to the largest concentration of government offices and employment, Central LA is the economic and financial hub of the West Coast. Also, located three miles south of downtown, there is the University of Southern California, an international world's leading university. (LAEDC. Regions of the LA County, S.N.)

Beyond the tall towers, downtown offers several vibrant areas including the Flower and Produce Districts,; the Fashion District,; the Toy District,; and the Jewelry District, From the world-famous Walk of Fame and Kodak Theatre in Hollywood to the Frank Gehry-designed Disney Concert Hall, Downtown makes Central Los Angeles a cultural and events center of the region. Some of Central LA neighborhoods, besides Downtown, are Hollywood, Hollywood Hills, Los Feliz, Silver Lake, Mid- City, Little Tokyo, Chinatown and Koreatown. (VV.AA, 2015)

Gateway Cities

Los Angeles County's Gateway Cities cover the land along the southeast edge of the County. The region is known for the Ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles where millions of containers of cargo are transported. From modest homes and apartments close to luxurious waterfront properties, the Gateway Cities offer many different lifestyles. An abundance of parks and tree-lined streets are found in the area as are many shopping centers including the famous outlet Citadel. The area has several superior educational institutions being the Cal State University, in Long Beach, one of the largest universities of the area. (LAEDC. Regions of the LA County, S.N.)

San Fernando Valley ("The Valley")

San Fernando Valley is home to more than 1.8 million residents. The Valley is the center of motion picture and television production in America. Disney, Warner Bros., Universal Studios, and Dreamworks Animation are all headquartered here. ABC, CBS, and NBC, as well as several cable networks, also have major facilities in the Valley. (LAEDC. Regions of the LA County, S.N.)

As for quality of life, more San Fernando Valley residents own homes, go to college, and achieve higher incomes than the County as a whole. The Valley's unique entertainment focus makes it a great place after hours with scores of landmark restaurants, nightspots and theaters. Universal Studios and its unique City Walk entertainment scene are at the heart of the Valley. Ventura Boulevard, the Valley's main thoroughfare stretches from Studio City to Calabasas. Griffith Park, home to the Griffith Observatory, the nation's largest municipal park, occupies over 4,200 acres, much of it within the San Fernando Valley. It also has a lot of family activities like the Los Angeles Zoo and hiking trails and a wide range of retailers from hip boutiques to upscale department stores. (Discover Los Angeles.Regions of LA, S.N.)

San Gabriel Valley

Located east of Downtown Los Angeles, the San Gabriel Valley, has almost 1.8 million residents. It is a dynamic region with a great example of L.A. County's diversity with a variety of lifestyles from the smaller foothill communities and historic places to its bigger cities such as Pasadena. Cultural icons from the San Gabriel Valley are the Rose Bowl and its annual New Year's celebration in Pasadena, the Huntington Library and Gardens in San Marino, Arcadia's Arboretum, and La Cañada's Descanso Gardens.

Housing choices in the San Gabriel Valley range from quaint bungalows and rustic cabins in the foothills to suburban subdivisions, to palatial estates. It is a diverse area with residents ranging from rocket scientists from the NASA and entertainment industry professionals to trade workers. (LAEDC. Regions of the LA County, S.N.)

Santa Clarita Valley

Santa Clarita Valley, located in northern Los Angeles County offers small-town charm and urban style. As for quality of life, Santa Clarita Valley is a safe community and a great place to work, raise a family. (LAEDC. Regions of the LA County, S.N.)

South Bay

Beautiful beaches, scenic harbors, and the lure of the Pacific surf and a temperate coastal climate have brought many visitors and residents to South Bay. Home of the Port of Los Angeles, over the past two decades, LA's southernmost seaside enclave has reinvented its downtown making it an attractive place to live. Restaurants and, clubs and bars along lower Pine Avenue and the Promenade, a new upscale loft district, are abuzz with everyone from "buttoned-down conventioners to hipsters to frat

boys". LA's own Golden Gate Bridge links San Pedro with Los Angeles International Airport. The ethnically rich communities of the South Bay offer many parks and recreational activities close at hand to pleasant neighborhoods and museums and cultural attractions. (Discover Los Angeles. Regions of LA, S.N. & VV.AA, 2015)

Westside

With the coastal attractions and the advantages of the city, the Westside is an overall district. L.A. County's Westside region has 36 miles of beaches and has some of the most valuable real estate in the world. The cities of Beverly Hills, Culver City, Malibu and Santa Monica, are all on the Westside as are many of L.A.'s best known communities including West Hollywood, Bel Air, Hollywood or Venice. (LAEDC. Regions of the LA County, S.N.)

With academic and research institutions including UCLA the Westside is an intellectual, creative and lively neighborhood. It is the cultural hub of Los Angeles with the world-famous Getty Center, Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), Hollywood Bowl, and a lot of theaters. The Westside is also known for its top restaurants, high end shopping, and acclaimed cultural attractions. Some of the world's most famed shopping is found on the Westside including Rodeo Drive, Santa Monica's Third Street Promenade, the Beverly Center, and the Grove at Farmer's Market. Robertson Boulevard is known for its celebrity-magnet restaurants and chic, high-end boutiques. Also, three major studios (Fox, Paramount, and Sony) are located here. With a population of nearly a million residents the Westside is an upscale and culturally rich district whose homes range from cozy apartments in Culver City to the gated estates of Bel Air. Their neighborhoods are among LA's most sought. (VV.AA., 2015)

Now, finished this summary of the regions of LA some clearer ideas on where some sets and actions of the story would happen arise. One of the main things that define the character and her lifestyle is where she lives. But also important are other places of the story like the studio of the show where and what she does for fun – bars, shopping places, restaurants, the beach, etc.- or where supporting characters like the politicians haunt and live.

Let us start with the area where she lives. After this point, 6 of the 8 districts are discarded for reasons of location –like to far from the studio or cultural hubs and entertainment-, lifestyle and demographics –like income, demographics or family areas-. That leaves it with two potential districts, Central LA and the Westside. Within

these districts, some neighborhoods have been discarded too. Hollywood, for example, is not a particularly safe or nice place to live while Beverly Hills and Malibu are really rich and posh neighborhoods that doesn't fit with Terry's character or income. Therefore, that leaves the neighborhoods of Los Feliz or Silver Lake, Downtown, and neighborhoods and cities like West Hollywood, Santa Monica or Venice in the Westside.

Also, the interview to Jennifer Holt helped to some guiding. Holt suggests some areas, depending on Terry's character personality and lifestyle, such as West Hollywood, the East Side or Santa Monica. About West Hollywood, on the West Side of LA, she says it is a predominantly gay neighborhood and a great place for women to live because it is safe, very nice, full of shopping and fun. She also names Silver Lake or Los Feliz, on the East Side, as "hipster" neighborhoods or Santa Monica, a rich beach area with the type of people who "likes yoga or organic food". (Holt, 2015)

It appears that the selected areas after the examination and the areas Holt suggested coincide. Thus, let us explore some of neighborhoods within these two regions, Central LA and the Westside. For the description of the neighborhoods, they key sources that have been used are Discover LA –the LA tourism website- and, once again, the California Travel Guide.

Central LA

Los Feliz

About twenty years ago, Los Feliz emerged as LA's next great neighborhood. It is blessed with the presence of the huge and beautiful Griffith Park, one of the country's largest urban green spaces crowned by the Griffith Observatory. (VV:AA, 2015)

Silver Lake

Nearby downtown LA, Silver Lake offers low-key dining and trendy boutiques with a neighborhood feel. Silver Lake has revitalized modernist homes, hip bistros, coffee-houses and boutiques patronized by a real community of upwardly mobile, progressive creatives. Silver Lake used to be a working-class Latino neighborhood but now has higher rents and has gentrified with young professionals (VV:AA, 2015)

Downtown

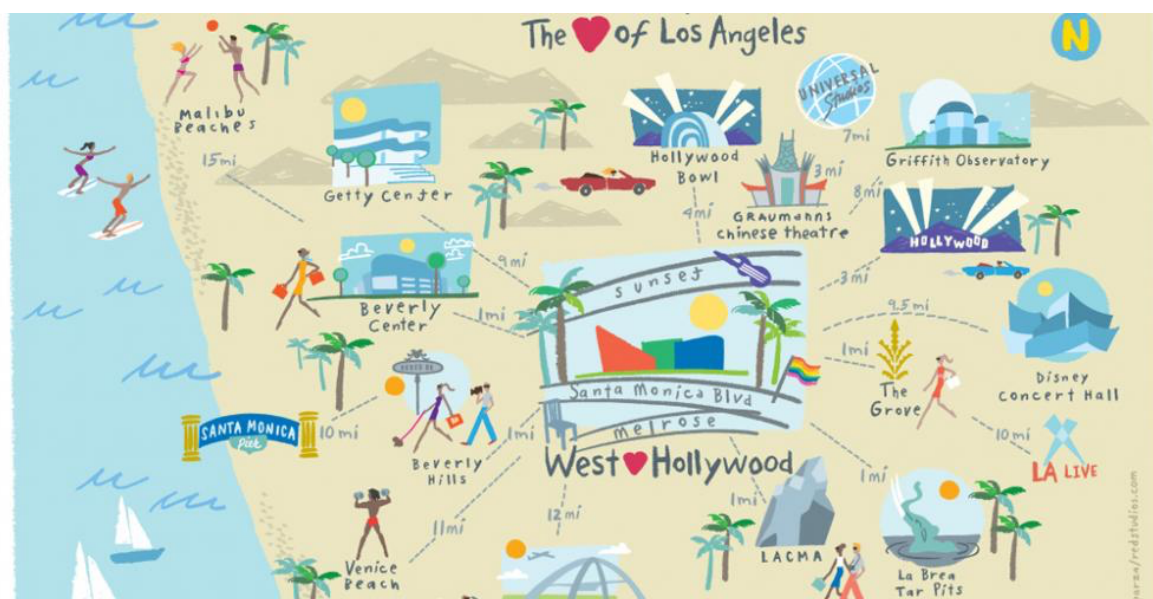
Downtown Los Angeles is a historical, multi-layered and fascinating neighborhood. Crowned by the skyscrapers of the Financial District, Downtown is a cultural and lively

hub. Home of the City Hall, the courts and the hall of record, Downtown Los Angeles offers attractions -like the modern Walt Disney Concert Hall or the Museum of Contemporary Art-, restaurants, a great nightlife and walkable streets. STAPLES Center hosts major concerts and sporting events. The arena is home to the Lakers, Clippers, Kings and Sparks. Yet, Downtown can be a relative ghost town too. Despite the work in progress, Downtown is home to a large homeless population. However, its streets are also alive with young professionals, designers and artists who have snapped up stylish lofts rehabbed art-deco buildings and the growing gallery district, and street art. (VV:AA, 2015 & Discover Los Angeles. Regions of LA, S.N.)

Other neighborhoods of Central LA include Downton, Mid-City, Hollywood Hills, Griffith Park, Chinatown, Koreatown and Little Tokyo.

Westside

West Hollywood



Source: Infographic by Official Guide to West Hollywood

West Hollywood (aka WeHo) is one of LA's top neighborhoods with landmarks like Sunset Strip, fashionable Robertson Blvd., and a vibrant gay community. The Sunset Strip is a very lively Street with entertainment venues like the House of Blues and the Comedy Store, the lively Saddle Ranch Chop House or fine dining like raw kitchens and bright market cafes. Another famous West Hollywood street is Robertson Blvd., known for its high-end fashion boutiques. WeHo is home to Southern California's largest LGBT community, and is the site of the annual Gay Pride parade in June, and

the Halloween Costume Carnaval, which attracts a lot of partiers. WeHo's has numerous tequila bars and clubs, like famous The Abbey, mainly located on Santa Monica Blvd. Also, some of LA's best hotels are located in West Hollywood. (Discover Los Angeles Regions, 2015) West Hollywood is an upscale and reasonably priced-rent neighborhood. As for its people, besides the gay community, it is also known to be a *Russian-ghetto chic and fashionists* neighborhood. (VV:AA, 2015:562)

Santa Monica

Santa Monica is LA's hippie-chic little sister. (VV:AA, 2015:509) With its oceanfront and the glorious Pacific Ocean setting, Santa Monica is one of the top neighborhoods of the LA County. Santa Monica has urban energy, a beach town atmosphere and natural beauty that represent the perfect California beach experience. It is home to the iconic Santa Monica Pier, stocked with rides and arcade games and blessed with spectacular views, and the Third Street Promenade, with endless restaurants, shopping and cultural attractions. Santa Monica also has a great culinary scene with the fresh Farmers Market, diverse international influences and al fresco dining with ocean views as well as trendsetting boutiques, like the celebrity favorite Fred Segal and Santa Monica Place, a three level open-air shopping haven. Key Santa Monica local lifestyle trends are beach yoga, surfing and cycling. Santa Monica is a small city with forward-thinking social and environmental ideals alive with surfers, skaters, beachgoers, "yoguis", psychics, street performers and homeless population. (VV:AA, 2015)

Venice

Venice is a beach town longtime home for *artists, New Agers, road-weary tramps, freaks and free spirits* (VV:AA,, 2015:509). Known for its lively Ocean Front Walk, Venice Beach is also home to Muscle Beach, the Venice Skate Plaza, right next to the beach, and numerous basketball, handball and paddle tennis courts. Venice's Abbot Kinney Boulevard, aka the "Coolest Block in America", has eclectic shopping and fine eateries. A few blocks from the beach, there are the Venice canals, a quiet and beautiful neighborhood iconic for its canals and bridges. (VV:AA, 2015)

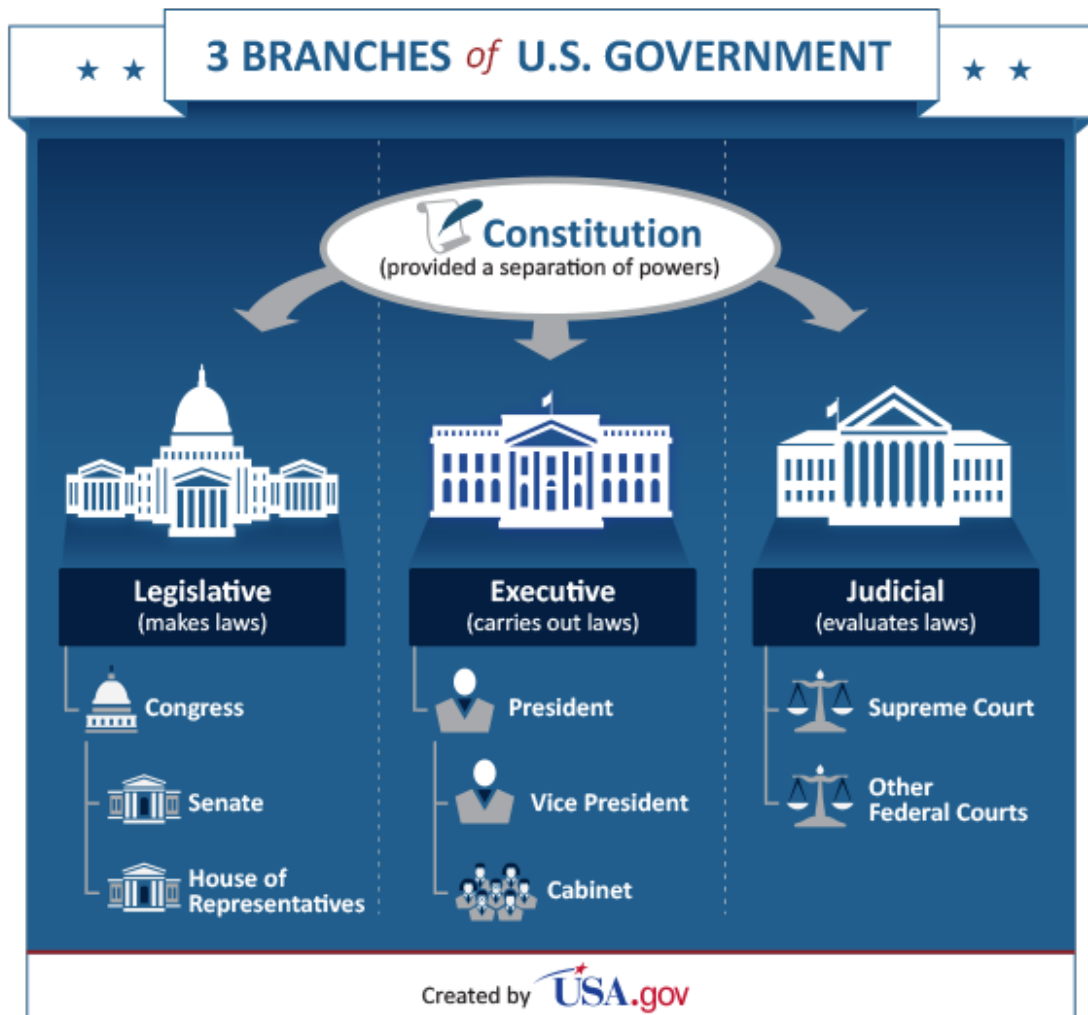
Other neighborhoods of the Westside include are Bel Air, Century City, West LA and Culver City.

Finally, after exploring different regions and neighborhoods of Los Angeles, I find West Hollywood a good place for my character to live. It is a lively and safe neighborhood and is also centric, so it is close to most of the other "cool" place of Los Angeles.

1.5 AMERICAN POLITICS

The same way it is necessary to do research on the US media, and the story's set lifestyle, the political plot of the screenplay demands a brief look on American politics, and particularly, California politics. Therefore, this research will consist on a short explanation on the structure of the United States Politics but will mostly cover the Californian Government characteristics, the powers California has as state (as opposite to national powers) and issues on Californian Politics. It will also cover a brief selection of real corruption cases so it will help develop the story's one.

1.5.1 The 3 branches of the US government




As explained on the USA.gov infographic (USA Government, S.N.) above the government on the United States has three branches, the legislative, the executive and the judicial. This graphic gives a clear explanation on the basics of how government on the United States works. Yet, in the Annex 3, there is a more developed explanation by

the government website on the three branches. This is just a brief research because my story is not directly affected by the national government system as both the story and the political plot are set in California, so what it needs is a research on the state government. However, it is still necessary to know the basics, to understand what is Congress, the Senate, the House of Representatives or what is the Cabinet.

1.5.2 National parties

Main US Political Parties



Democratic Party

Progressivism

American Liberalism


Modern Liberalism

Belief in a robust government.


Promotion of community and social responsibility.

Demographics

Electoral States



*States carried by the Democratic candidate for president in the last four presidential elections.



Republican Party

Conservatism

Fiscal Conservatism

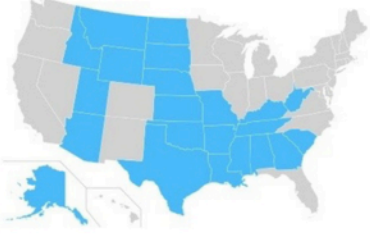
Social Conservatism

Belief in a limited government.

Promotion of individual rights and justice.

Demographics

Electoral States



*States carried by the Republican candidate for president in the last four presidential elections.

Data and Electorate States Map provided by InsideGov.com

Source: Author on data provided by InsideGov

The United States has always been a bipartisanship country. Although there are and there have been smaller parties, politics in the US is dominated by the Democratic Party and the Federal Party. (Derthick, 2008) The infographic above states the main political philosophy ideals of the main US political parties, the Democratic Party and the Republican Party.

Each of the two American major parties is in most respects a loose coalition of state parties. These coalitions are not structured alike. Democrats are primarily a mosaic of interests making claims on government; Republicans are bound together much more by ideological agreement.

According to Polsby, besides common key political philosophy points the Democratic and Republican Party are large and ideologically diverse parties. Both have different factions, groups within the large group of the party that have more specific political philosophies. For example, within the Republican Party, there can be more right-leaning members like the Social Conservatives – oppose abortion and same-sex marriage and support a greater role of religious organizations- or more centrists like the moderates - fiscally conservative and socially moderate or liberal -. The same way, Democrats also have factions that go from the center, with the centrists - supportive of using military force and reducing government welfare- to left-leaning with the progressives - advocate a center-left economic and left-wing social agenda to establish social and economic equality-. (InsideGov. Compare U.S. Political Parties, S.N.) A detailed table on both parties' factions can be found on Annex 4.

For instance, when Democrats took control in 2006, this sweep included a mixture of vocal progressives, some centrists, and a few conservatives. (Polsby, 2008) Also, Holt says that distinguishing exclusively by the Democrat or the Republican parties is a little simplistic. For her, “not all the Republicans are the same, or Democrats are the same and I don’t even think they’re very different”. Holt states there is a radical wing of the Republicans but claims that there are no “radical lefties”, according to her, the “best you can do as a Democrat is be a centrist”. She says, that overall, “all is too centrist, centrist or right leaning”. (Holt, 2015)

Federalism also contributes on endorsing the American party system. (Polsby, 2008) In California, like most states, the two main political parties and the only ones that have ever governed the state are also the Democrats and the Republicans. (The Governor’s Library, S.N.) However, there are other parties like the American Independent Party,

the Green Party, the Libertarian Party and the Peace and Freedom Party, which are also present nationwide. (California Secretary of State. Qualified Political Parties, S.N.)

1.5.3 Federalism & the sharing of powers

The U.S. Constitution establishes a government based on "federalism," or the sharing of power and responsibility between the national, state (and local) governments. While each of the 50 states has its own constitution, all provisions of state constitutions must comply with the U.S. Constitution. Under the U.S. Constitution, both the national and state governments are granted certain exclusive powers and share other powers. (Longley, 2015) Knowing the sharing of powers between the state and the national government is also necessary to develop the topics and the dialogues on Terry's show.

Exclusive Powers of the National Government	Exclusive Powers of State Governments	Powers Shared by National and State Government
Print Money (bills and coins)	Establish local governments	Setting up courts
Declare war	Issue licenses (driver, hunting, marriage, etc.)	Creating and collecting taxes
Establish an army and navy	Regulate intrastate (within the state) commerce	Building highways
Enter into treaties with foreign governments	Conduct elections	Borrowing money
Regulate commerce between states and international trade	Ratify amendments to the U.S. Constitution	Making and enforcing laws
Establish post offices and issue postage	Provide for public health and safety	Chartering banks and corporations

Make laws necessary to enforce the Constitution	Exercise powers like setting legal drinking and smoking ages.	Spending money for the betterment of the general welfare
		Taking (condemning) private property with just compensation

Source: Author from data provided by About News. US Government

Therefore, although during the years centralization has occurred, fifty state governments and thousands of their local subdivisions retain a large responsibilities on fields like education, law enforcement, land-use regulation, transportation, and much of health care. (Derthick, 2008)

States and regions have their own distinctive political cultures arising from the peculiarities of their original and subsequent settlement, their historic and contemporary economic interests, and the local political institutions that have emerged in their varied climates and soils. These cultures, these institutions, send to Congress widely varying representatives who in turn participate in the system of separation of powers, thus linking two of the most prominent elements of the American political order, the separation of powers and federalism. (Polsby, 2008:21)

1.6 CALIFORNIA POLITICS

1.6.1 California Government

California Government is similar to the nation structure regarding the separation of powers and the three branches of government. However it does have particularities on the job positions of the executive branch. A detailed organizational chart on the executive branch of the state of California can be found on Annex 5. Following is a brief explanation on the characteristics and function of the branches of government in California.

Under the leadership of the Governor, the executive branch is responsible for administering and enforcing the laws of California. The Governor is elected by the people to a four-year term and if elected can serve a second four-year term. The Governor is also the sole official of communication between the state and the federal government and other states of the United States. In practice the executive branch

works closely with the legislative branch in shaping proposed legislation. The executive branch includes many state departments. These executive departments are directed by publicly elected officials. (California State Capitol Museum. Branches of Government, S.N.)

The legislative branch of government enacts legislation and confirms or rejects the governor's appointments. It is composed of the State Assembly, the State Senate, and several other departments. Together they are the principle law-making powers in the state. (California State Capitol Museum. Branches of Government, S.N.)

The State Assembly is made up of 80 members that are elected to two-year terms while the State Senate is made up of 40 members and elected to four-year terms with one-half reelected every two years. Assembly and Senate districts are apportioned on the basis of population. (California State Capitol Museum. Branches of Government, S.N.)

The judiciary branch of government is responsible for interpreting the meaning of laws, applying laws to individual cases, and deciding if laws violate the State Constitution. The California Supreme Court's decisions can only be reversed by the U.S. Supreme Court if they are in conflict with the U.S. Constitution. The Supreme Court is headquartered in San Francisco, however it holds sessions regularly in Sacramento and Los Angeles. (Capitol Museum California: (California State Capitol Museum. Branches of Government, S.N.)

Sacramento is the political capital of California and where the State Capitol, home of the California legislature, is. Both the State Senate and the State Assembly are set in the State Capitol. Also, the Governor office and other political offices like the Treasurer or the Secretary of State are situated in the State Capitol. Therefore, the main state political activity happens in Sacramento. That arises as an issue for the story as it is set in Los Angeles. (California State Capitol Museum, S.N.)

1.6.2 Political Culture of California

To have an idea of the California Political Culture and be coherent with the state political characteristics and trends, here is a context on California Politics based on the article by Soneshein (2015).

California politics draws on reformist, non-partisan, big media politics and complex

political movements and expressions. The state has remained Democrat for the last four presidential elections although it once was a Republican state. However, now, California Republicans are in a minority status and are controlled by their most conservative wing despite the last Republican Governor, Schwarzenegger, was a moderate that achieved political success.

California government is now progressive and yet, it is very difficult to implement progressive policies. According to Sonenshein that is mainly because of three reasons; the state's odd governance structure, the limits on the will of the majority and the centrism of the state's voters.

Both the political system of California and the government structure have been undergoing change. However, the state still has an odd system. For instance, the governor and lieutenant governor are elected separately and could easily turned to be of different political parties. This creates an odd situation of a leadership team disunited by party. Also, there is a large number of statewide elected officials so the governor's cabinet is not really under the executive control. This turns in a "plural executive" so that the executive branch can be fractured by party. Also, California government has a bizarre budget situation. The state requires a two-thirds vote of both houses of the Legislature to pass the budget that creates a budget gridlock. Therefore, a determined minority can hold up the budget and prevent majority programs from winning passage.

California is a state shaped by political reform movements more than by organized party politics. The state has been deeply influenced by Latino immigration and how the state deals with the influx of Spanish-speaking residents is their fundamental issue of diversity.

For Sonenshein it is likely that California enters a new era of public investment, backed by public opinion and by voters willing to pay for first-class services and infrastructure. Also, Sonenshein states, *"Whether or not California becomes the pivot for the nation in the twenty-first century depends on whether political structures can be revised and rebuilt to empower majorities; whether immigrant communities can become part of the mainstream; whether the two major political parties can avoid either demoralization or overconfidence."* (Sonenshein, 2008:3)

1.6.3 California Political issues

Sonenshein also discusses some political challenges California will need to deal with on the 21st century. Following are those issues compiled and renamed. The following “political challenges” are the same topics discussed on political dialogues. Also, on Annex 6 is a table with those topics and a broad description on each one. From that table is where I took all the content to develop the dialogues related to politics.



Source: Author from the content of the article by Sonenshein (2008)

1.6.4 California Elections

As stated on the Elections code of California, statewide elections –elections on the state of California- are held every 2 years. According to the Elections Code, the statewide general election shall be held in November of each even-numbered year. Also, the statewide direct primary shall be held in June of each even-numbered year. (California Legislative Information. California Elections Code, S.N.)

In the primary election, the two candidates receiving the most votes—regardless of party preference—move on to the general election regardless of vote totals. If a candidate receives a majority of the vote (50 percent + 1), a general election still must be held. Even if there are only two candidates for an office in the open primary, a general election for that office is still required. (California Legislative Information. California Elections Code, S.N.)

1.7 CORRUPTION CASES

Following are some selected paragraphs of newspaper's articles about political corruption cases. In order to come up with a corruption plot, I searched corruption cases on the Internet and checked several cases from newspapers articles.

Lawmaker Criticized for PAC Fees Paid to Wife

In the past two years, campaign and political action committees controlled by Rep. John T. Doolittle (R-Calif.) paid ever-larger commissions to his wife's one-person company and spent tens of thousands of dollars on gifts at stores such as Saks Fifth Avenue and Tiffany & Co. and a Ritz-Carlton day spa.

The use of such committees, especially "leadership" PACs, for purposes other than electing politicians to Congress is a common and growing phenomenon, but campaign finance watchdogs say Doolittle has taken it to new heights.

Doolittle's wife, Julie, a professional fundraiser, has collected 15 percent of all contributions to Doolittle's leadership PAC and additional commissions on contributions to his campaign committee -- a total of nearly \$140,000 since 2003, according to Federal Election Commission records. (Weisman & Birnbaum, 2006)

Ex-Rep. Jefferson Convicted in Bribery Scheme

Former Louisiana Representative William J. Jefferson was convicted Wednesday afternoon of using his office to try to enrich himself and relatives through a web of bribes and payoffs involving business ventures in Africa.

A federal court jury in Alexandria, Va., deliberated for five days before finding Mr. Jefferson, 62, a New Orleans Democrat who served in Congress for 18 years until being defeated in 2008, guilty of 11 of 16 counts of bribery, racketeering and money

laundering. He was acquitted of obstruction of justice and violating the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, which makes it illegal to bribe foreign government officials. (Stout, 2009)

Ex-Governor of Virginia Is Indicted on Charges Over Loans and Gifts

Former Gov. Bob McDonnell of Virginia and his wife, Maureen, were indicted Tuesday by a federal grand jury on charges of accepting more than \$140,000 in loans and gifts in exchange for promoting the business of a political patron who was seeking special favors from the state government.

The indictment accuses the McDonnells of accepting some \$135,000 in cash from Mr. Williams, thousands of dollars in golf outings, designer clothing and a Rolex watch engraved "71st Governor of Virginia" on the back. It accuses the former first couple of lying about the gifts on loan statements and to government investigators. (Gabriel, 2014)

Rod Blagojevich

Rod Blagojevich was the 40th governor of Illinois. He was first elected in 2002 and was re-elected in 2006. Blagojevich was born in Chicago in 1956. He graduated from Northwestern University and earned his law degree from Pepperdine in California. Before being elected governor, Blagojevich was a Cook County assistant state's attorney and was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1996. Late in 2008, Blagojevich was arrested for political corruption and later convicted on several charges, most notably for his attempts to control who would replace Barack Obama in the Senate following his first presidential election victory. The Illinois House of Representatives impeached Blagojevich, and the Senate voted in early 2009 to remove him from office. In 2011, Blagojevich was sentenced to 14 years in prison and began serving that term in 2012. (Chicago Tribune, 2015)

2. The development of the screenplay

2.1.1 SYNOPSIS

Terry Hudson, influential, charismatic and harsh news satire late show host ruins her career as she falls into a life of excess after the death of her life-partner.

2.1.2 TREATMENT *TERRIBLE HUDSON*

Dramatic recreation Opening Scene

Terry is chilling at her messy place just drinking alone on a man's T-shirt when the doorbell rings. She ignores it the first time but goes check it when it rings the second time. She sees through the door hole it is a police officer so she opens the door. She soon discovers he is a stripper that was mistaken on the house number. He asks her to use the restroom and then she offers him a drink and they get into a small talk that leads to them having sex. He makes a comment as if he knew who she is.

Narrative synopsis ACT I

Terry is acclaimed on several episodes of the news satire show she runs. We see her commenting the news and interviewing the two democrat candidates running for governor of California, Congressman Edwards and Governor Martin, with who she has a mediated rivalry. We also see her in the writer's room developing the show. On one occasion someone makes a comment about her not wanting to have time off sick. She meets with her friends, Emma and Nick, who seem concerned for her well-being and meets the young artist Emma is promoting in her gallery, Alex. She also hangs out with her head writer, Rachel Bowen. On her free time she just drives around LA, drinks, smokes and eats shitty food in her place. Also she discovers a new hobby, going to the karaoke and laugh at the performances. She also has another sex encounter with a stranger. There is a phone message at Terry's apartment for John Harper. She quickly stops the answering machine.

Dramatic recreation Plot Point Act I

Terry interviews the Republican candidate to Governor of California, Samantha Parker. It is a tense interview in which Terry looks impatient and angry and where their mutual dislike is evident. Finally, Terry rudely tells her to shut up and humiliates her. After this event, Terry gets fired.

Narrative synopsis ACT II

After getting fired her messy lifestyle gets worse. She dismisses any attempt of her friends or the show team to get in touch with her. She spends most of the time drinking, smoking or eating delivery food in front of the TV. When reaching the point she feels oppressed at her place she roams around on her car, goes to the karaoke to make fun at people's performances or to a bar and she often ends up sleeping with someone. Also, as she spends a lot of time at home, she acts weird and stupid like when having fights with flies or mosquitoes or watching TV all day. Concerned about her lame life, Emma gives her a cat so she has to take care of something and go for walks.

As, an ex popular host Terry is a famous person. However, Terry's troubled life and her current indifference about everything, lead to her becoming a polemic public character. Humiliating Sarah Parker was only the start but it gets worse. In one occasion, she runs into Parker and they end up having a fight in which Terry punches her. Of course, the event is everywhere in the media. Also, on another occasion, she ends up singing drunk in the karaoke. It also appears in the media. She seems a little upset at the events but she basically makes fun at herself.

Despite her mess, before getting fired Terry still had a reason to wake up every day. Now, she doesn't have any motivation in life, except for the cat. She doesn't look interested on anything or anyone, and she only meets her concerned friends because they make it happen. However, she gets along with Alex, an introverted young painter, who is also a very indifferent person. Besides, by chance, she finds out about a plot against her long-life rival on TV, the California governor Arthur Martin, which somehow leads to them working together.

Terry's life-partner, Jack Harper, with who she had a life together died recently but she hasn't assimilated it yet. She doesn't talk about it with anyone like pretending he never existed. Although she doesn't openly show it, on a self-defense attempt, she misses him a lot and it is killing her. Her pain about him gone is just noticeable in little things like wearing or inhaling his clothes.

Dramatic recreation Plot Point Act II

Terry receives a worried call from Emma telling her she's heard Terry is having an affair with Arthur Martin and is worried about her as he is a married and Terry has enough trouble. Terry gets really upset and hangs up on Emma. After that, she also fights with Arthur. Emma shows up at her place and realizes, because of the mess, that

Terry is feeling even worse than she thought. Terry is upset and reproaches Emma how she can say she moved on. She burst into tears and verbalizes that Jack is gone. Emma consoles her like a mum consoling a child. The day after, Emma makes her breakfast and Terry tells her she needs her job back. She knows she screwed up good but she'll make it back to the show.

Narrative synopsis ACT III

Terry cleans her extremely messy place as if she were cleaning her own personal mess too. She watches some videos of the best moments of "Late Night with Terry Hudson". She stops her abusive habits of shitty food and alcohol and starts to go running. She is also working on her plan to have her job back and contacts Rachel after their fight weeks ago. Terry asks Martin to make a show of the uncovering of the corruption case in order to have a strong show that helps her to get her job back. He accepts in the end and, together with Rachel's help and the rest of the writers, they pitch a show to Terry's boss. Although he is at first reluctant, he accepts.

Dramatic recreation Ending

Terry does the best show of her career uncovering the corruption case live on her news satire. The show is presented as a debate between the two main California candidates for governor, Martin and Parker. Of course, the Republican and the audience are clueless of what awaits Parker. During the show, Terry also makes fun of herself with several jokes referring to her public right mess episodes in a clever way that gets the audience to sympathize with her in order to achieve the public forgiveness. The story ends right before the debate with Martin and Parker begins.

2.2 THE PROCESS OF WRITING

This project started one evening at the UCen (University Center) of the University of California Santa Barbara when having trouble to keep developing another screenplay. Tired of the representation of women in most of American movies, I started thinking in order to come up with a female character that not only has feelings, like all human beings do, but that is also smart, powerful, is a great professional, is funny and sarcastic and, finally, troubled. Therefore, a tridimensional character whose role wasn't only to fall in love, cry and finally get a happy ending. A female character that could be appreciated for being interesting, curious, with cultural interests, sharp, intelligent, fun and successful. Then, I thought about woman I admire for their job, and I decided my character would be a famous and influential American journalist.

Suddenly, I felt very motivated and from that moment on, I started writing a screenplay, born directly from that character. Directly. With no previously thought structure, no treatment, or no beat sheet, just my laptop, Final Draft and me. I did 30 pages in a week, somewhat an equivalent of the first act. I did my research while writing which is not the best way. After this first version of ACT I, I started doing the research on the topics of media in the US, lifestyle in California and LA and politics in California. During the research phase, my ideas on the story changed, I learnt a lot about the US and California and I got a good foundation on the named topics so I could write the screenplay in a better condition.

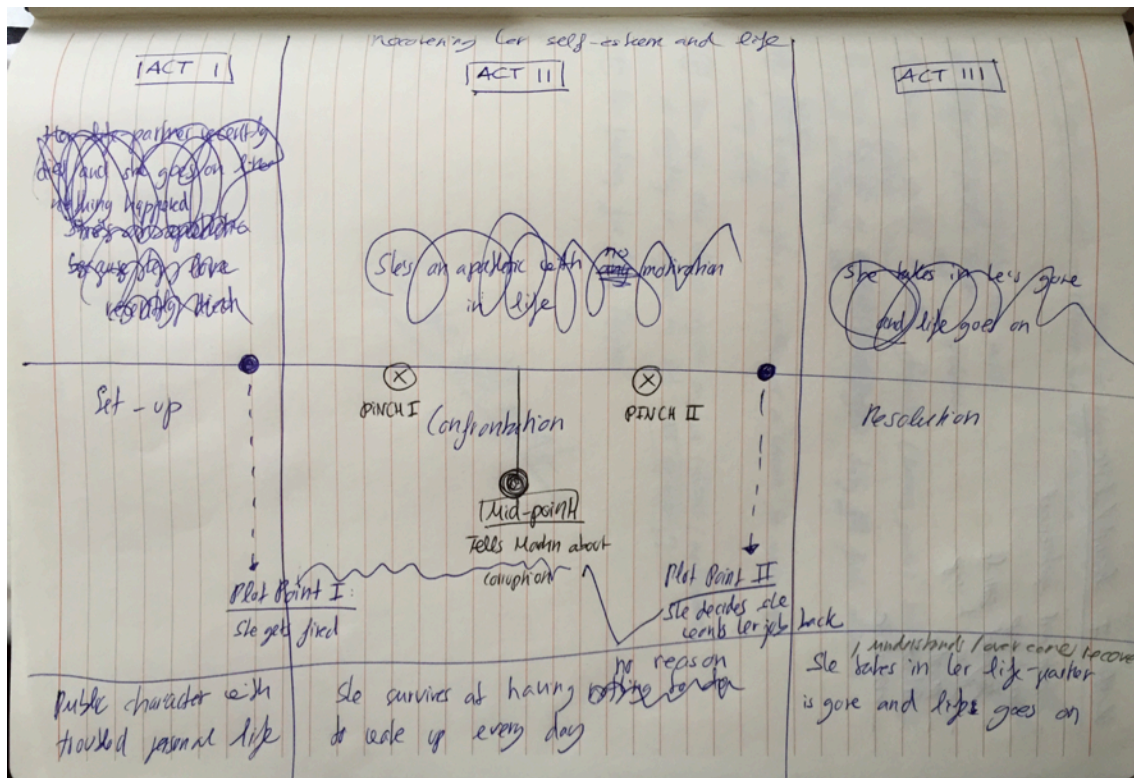
Then, after almost half year, I took my screenplay and read it. There were a lot of improvements to make but it didn't feel bad reading it, which is good. Then, like I did earlier when I started this screenplay, I took my laptop and kept writing. I did that for around a week until I was too stressed because I didn't know where I was going. I realized I needed some structure and some kind of plan so I grabbed the book *The screenwriter's workbook* I got months ago by Syd Field, one of the "gurus" of the screenwriting technique. That really helped me clear my mind. Despite personal and random life stories he tells, the book has been a great guidance for the development of my screenplay. Following is an explanation of the writing process told through Field's theories and my own experience.

2.2.1.1 The paradigm

First thing I did was drawing what Field calls the paradigm. That is a diagram of the structure of the story. As Field defines it *the paradigm is a model, an example, a conceptual scheme of what a screenplay looks like* (Field, 2006:43). It is divided in Act I, Act II and ACT III – not necessarily in that order- which is how screenplays and any other dramatic medium are usually structured. The Act I is the set-up for the story, Act II is the confrontation -the obstacles the character confronts to achieve his/her dramatic need – *what your character wants to win, gain, get or achieve during the course of your screenplay* (Field, 2006:52)- and Act III is the resolution, the ending of the story. Act I is brought to Act II by what Field calls Plot Point I, a story progression point - *any incident, episode or event that "hooks" into the action and spins it around into another direction* (Field, 2006:49), and Act II to Act III by Plot Point II.

At least, being my first experience on writing a feature film I totally agree on the following: *Before you can write a word on paper, you must know four things: your ending, your beginning, Plot Point I, and Plot Point II. These four elements are the*

structural foundation of your screenplay. (Field, 2006:51). I drew the paradigm and then I struggled to fill those blanks for a while. I had the story in my mind but it clearly didn't have a defined structure. Finally, I came up with the sentences defining the set-up, the confrontation and the resolution. Setting the Plot Points was easier. However, Plot Point I changed from the first version of Act I I wrote months ago to what it is now. It was writing the paradigm that cleared my mind. Following there is a drawing of the paradigm. The drawing also includes the Mid-point and Pinch I and Pinch II, which will be discussed on a further stage of the writing process.



Paradigm of the structure of *Terrible Hudson*

2.2.1.2 The treatment

The next step after laying down the storyline on the paradigm is putting that in words through a narrative synopsis from the ending, the beginning, Plot Point I and Plot Point II. It is really helpful to develop a screenplay to put the story down on paper as a summary – or treatment-. Field says that it pays-off to write a short, four-page treatment: a narrative synopsis of your story line. It helps articulate and define structural events that hold the story together. It allows you to take those unformed, fragmented ideas that are running around your head and put them down on paper. It does pay off during the actual writing process.

Field breaks the treatment down into two distinct categories, dramatic recreation a *visually specific description of the action*” (Field, 2006:68) and narrative synopsis, a *general description, a summary of the action that takes place during the rest of the Act* (Field, 2006:69). Therefore, the treatment consists on a dramatic recreation of the opening scene, a narrative synopsis of the rest of Act I, a dramatic recreation of Plot Point II, a narrative synopsis of the rest of Act II – developed from a list of four obstacles either external or internal that interfere with the character’s dramatic need and move the story forward-, a dramatic recreation of Plot Point II, a narrative synopsis of the rest of Act III and a dramatic recreation of the Ending.

2.2.2 The post-its and the actual writing



Pre-final appearance of the scenes wrote down on post-its. The yellow ones are Act I, the blue ones Act II and the pink ones Act II.

Once I finished the treatment, I had, in one hand, a paradigm and treatment and, in the other hand, about 50 pages of a screenplay not previously structured. Then, I read the

Act I on the treatment and broke it down into scenes on cards. I wrote a sentence or a word describing every scene of Act I on post-its and post them in the wall. I stood for a few minutes checking the scenes, changing the order and content on what made more sense, no *raccord* mistakes, etc. That was very useful to have an idea of the content and order of Act I and to put some order and structure to the story. Then, I put the same scenes in the same order on Final Draft on the Index Cards view –which is a digital version of the post-its idea- and I finally started writing again.

The process was similar for Act II and Act III. Act II, for being the longest functions a little different than the others. Field suggests establishing plot points within the Act II, that he calls Midpoint, Pinch I and Pinch II. Plot points, in general, are events or scenes that makes the story progress. Field defines Plot Point I –also called inciting incident- and II as the key plot points of the screenplay, but then, there are also other plot points during the story. An important one is what he calls the Mid-Point, which breaks Act II in two halves connected by this Mid-Point event. It is a plot point that functions as *“a link in the chain of dramatic action; it connects the First Half of Act I with the Second Half of Act II. That incident is a story progression and leads us into the 2nd Half of Act II and keeps us on track to get to Plot Point II”* (Field, 2006:205). Also, he establishes two smaller plot points, one in the 1st Half of Act II and another one in the 2nd Half of Act II. Therefore, before writing Act II, while structuring the post-its, I took the paradigm I draw earlier and added the Mid-Point, which was clearly the scene when Arthur asks Terry to help him solve the corruption issue.

Therefore, the process was the following. Right before start writing, I wrote the scenes on post-its, put them on the wall, think about it, change some scenes, the order, then repeating the same on the screenwriting software, and then, write. I had some scenes done for my previous writing that I only had to rewrite –I also deleted a few- and then, most of the work was developing the scenes I had in mind and on post-its.

2.2.3 Application and use of the research on the writing process

Although it is also explained on the research part, it is worth explaining the application of the research during the writing of the screenplay. Actually, the research continued while the actual writing was taking place. Although most of the work was done, which was very useful, I often find myself looking for details or inspiration.

On the media part, for example, I watched several videos of shows like *the Colbert Report*, *The Daily Show* and other late shows to get inspired both for the tone, the

dialogues style and topics as well as for the description of a typical late show set. Also, I read an interview to a writer of the *Colbert Report*, to have an idea of the how a late show writer's room work, possible sections or topics and kind of jokes. (See Annex 7) Also, while writing the actual screenplay, I changed the name of the show. It was first called *The Terry Hudson Show*, but then while writing, I came up with *Late Night with Terry Hudson*, which fits more with the character, with that flirting with the camera and the audience Terry has and obviously allows to make double meaning jokes.

On lifestyle and locations, I just tried to keep it like what is described on the research and Annex 2. Also, I decided where Terry lives, West Hollywood, and used different places of LA where the scenes actions happen, like West Hollywood, Downtown LA or Santa Monica.

On politics, I used the previous research a lot. I checked the California Issues of Annex 6 to elaborate the dialogue that appears on *Late Night with Terry Hudson*. In the show, she discusses and makes jokes about politics and interviews two politicians. The statements of both Martin, Democrat, and Parker, Republican had to be coherent with the party ideals. Once again, I used the compiled information on California Issues, that includes a lot on both parties, and elaborated the dialogues. The story happens during California Statewide Elections, precisely during the Primary election. For that, I also checked the information on how the elections in California work. Finally, I also checked the compiled pieces from newspaper articles on political corruption scandals to get inspired and be able to come up with and develop that plot of the story.

Finally, another element while writing is making up names or topics. For people names, company names or establishments names I sometimes turned to my imagination or just Google things to come up with names. Also, as you write is fun to play with current news issues and put them on the screenplay. Some examples are the pink Viagra or the reference to Ashley Madison – that I called Legon-.

TERRIBLE HUDSON

Written by

Júlia Solé Oliveras

Address
Phone Number

1. INT. TERRY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Typical fancy New Yorker apartment. Except because this is Los Angeles. It is a stylish but also unique apartment. It is decorated with objects from around the world, beautiful pictures and paintings. In a buffet, several pictures of a happy -but not cheesy- couple. Great apartment. But messy as hell. It has the look of a divorced or a bachelor apartment. It is full of empty pizza boxes, chips bags, and delivery food boxes. There are also beer bottles and some Jack Daniel's left. There is a woman sitting on the couch. Terry, late 30's, beautiful dark eyes, she's an attractive woman but she looks bad and damaged. She has a sad look to her. She's wearing a man's pajamas. She is smoking a cigarette and watching crap TV with no interest. She puts out a half-smoked cigarette and takes a sip of Jack. The doorbell rings. She ignores it. It rings again. She walks to the door and checks from the hole. It's a police officer. She sighs and opens.

POLICE OFFICER

Good night Madam. You're under arrest.

TERRY

You're kidding me.

The Police Officer show her the cuffs with a seductive look.

POLICE OFFICER

No, for real. You've been a bad girl...

All of a sudden, Terry laughs out loud.

POLICE OFFICER (CONT'D)

(offended)

What's so funny?

Terry keeps laughing.

TERRY

Man, I thought you were a real police officer.

The stripper looks at her confused.

TERRY (CONT'D)

Anyways. What's a stripper doing in my apartment?

STRIPPER

This's 3B, right?

TERRY
Is there a bachelorette party in 3B?

STRIPPER
Yes.

TERRY
Then I guess this is not 3B, right?

Terry opens the door so he can see the apartment.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Although it does look like an after
bachelorette party.

A beat.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Anyways, it is not here.

STRIPPER
Oh, OK. Yeah. I am sorry. I was
mistaken. It's my first day...

TERRY
I see.

The stripper keeps standing in front of her. Terry looks at
him expectantly waiting for him to leave.

STRIPPER
Excuse me. Could I use the
restroom?

TERRY
(a little surprised)
Sure. Down the hallway to the left.

The Stripper nods at her. As he walks to the bathroom, Terry
checks him out. Then she lights another cigarette grabs the
Jack Daniel's and leans against the back of the couch. She
takes a few sips while smoking. The stripper comes back.

TERRY (CONT'D)
What are you, really?

Terry puts off the cigarette.

STRIPPER
What do you mean?

TERRY
Are you a professional stripper?

STRIPPER

No, I am an actor. Kind of...

Terry nods while holding the Jack bottle.

TERRY

You want a sip before your
premiere?

The stripper flashes her a sexy look as he takes the bottle.
He takes a sip and looks at her.

STRIPPER

Wait... I know you... You're...

Terry cuts him off grabbing and kissing him with passion.

CUT TO

2. INT. TERRY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

There's the couch. Two spread legs are resting on the coffee
table. Someone is moaning. Terry is having fun.

3. INT. TV SET - EVENING

Loud audience clapping and acclaiming. The shot opens
progressively. It is a typical late night show set. Through
the fake window you can see a landscape montage with several
symbols of LA. The skyscrapers of Downtown LA are next to a
beach with palm trees and the famous Santa Monica Pier. In
front of the window there is Terry Hudson sitting on the
host's chair.

TERRY

Today, we spotted Congressman
Edwards laying on the beach and
kidnapped him for an interview.

Dramatic pause. A montage of a picture of the Congressman
with a bathing suit sunbathing in a Malibu beach. People
laugh.

TERRY (CONT'D)

(with a sad expression)

Poor Congressman, he just came back
to California to chill and enjoy
our balmy weather.

(she suddenly gets a
serious expression)

(MORE)

TERRY (CONT'D)
But no politician comes here and
gets away without paying a visit to
me. Cause...

A beat.

TERRY (CONT'D)
(with a very harsh but
also comic expression)
I'm Terrible Hudson.

People in the audience acclaim her and applause.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Also in "Everyone cares about
regional politics" California may
again lead the nation in public
investment.

Dramatic pause. Terry puts an incredulous face.

TERRY (CONT'D)
I know. But I swear to you, surveys
say so. Apparently, the Republican
voters are finally speaking up.

People laugh.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Oh, speaking of my dearest friends.
Despite the last anti-immigrant
statements Ms. Parker did last
week, her campaign manager says
they still have hopes of winning
Latino support.

Dramatic pause. Terry puts a very serious and worried
expression.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Isn't this a mysterious world?

A beat.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Please, give me some whiskey.

People laugh.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Good night gentleman...

Beat. Terry does a face.

TERRY (CONT'D)

And ladies, welcome to the one and only West Coast late show, welcome to Late Night with Terry Hudson...

Terry winks to the camera with a naughty face.

FADE OUT.

4. EXT. WEST HOLLYWOOD STREET - EVENING

Terry is walking on the sidewalk of Downtown LA. She approaches an exterior cashier of a movie theater.

CASHIER

Good evening.

TERRY

Hello. Two for the French one, please.

CASHIER

Sure.

TERRY

(interrupting him)
No, sorry. Just one.

Terry looks suddenly disconcerted.

CASHIER

(smiling)
OK.

TERRY

Thank you.

By the cashier's surprise, Terry walks out the movie theater instead of coming in. She lights a cigarette and starts walking. She looks concerned and a little sad. She sees a bar from the outside that catches her attention. She finishes her cigarette and comes in.

5. INT. THE KARAOKE FACTORY - EVENING

Terry comes in. It is a big place that looks like a remolded old factory. She doesn't pay much attention to it and goes directly to the bar. There's music on. It's "Heroes" by Bowie but it doesn't sound very good. Terry does strange faces like if she were trying to figure out why does it sound that bad. The waiter approaches her.

WAITER
(with an expression half
worried half judgemental)
You OK?

TERRY
Why are you guys playing such a bad
version of "Heroes"

The waiter points to the stage. Someone is singing in the
karaoke.

WAITER
Welcome to the Karaoke Factory!

TERRY
(ashamed)
All righty. Yeah, that makes sense.

The waiter laughs.

WAITER
You should pay attention to him.
He... knows how to make a show.

TERRY
A frequent?

WAITER
Unfortunately.

Terry laughs and takes a look at the singer. Then she shifts
to a sad smile.

WAITER (CONT'D)
So, some whiskey?

Terry looks at him surprised.

WAITER (CONT'D)
(he winks at her)
Good.

Terry exaggeratedly smells her breath and clothes.

TERRY
Do I still smell like whiskey from
last night?

He laughs at her and pours some whiskey. Terry's phone rings.
She checks it. The name Emma is on the screen. She puts the
phone in silence and gets the attention back to the waiter,
who has a judgemental look but says nothing.

TERRY (CONT'D)

So...

Terry makes a gesture like asking for his name.

SAM

Sam.

TERRY

Sam, do you guess the drink
according to the customer's
appearance?

SAM

Yep.

Terry looks at him with a questioning look.

SAM (CONT'D)

(teasing her)

You look like a tough woman.

Terry has a funny skeptical look. The waiter laughs.

SAM (CONT'D)

"Please, give me some whiskey". One
of your punch lines.

TERRY

(smiling)

Oh, OK, yeah.

The waiter smiles. Three guys approach the bar and the waiter turns to them. Terry enjoys her drink while watching at the karaoke stage. The guy the waiter told her about is fighting with another guy for the microphone. The other guy gives up and he starts another song, "Chandelier" by Sia. He is very focused and looks very into it. He moves his body and hands like trying to express the feelings from the song in a very exaggerate way. Also he opens both his eyes and her mouth, articulating. He interprets the words of the song like going down or making a heart with her hands when the song says so. He looks like she really feels the song and it is very funny. On the highs, he just shouts. Terry is laughing out loud. She is almost crying. The waiter looks at her and laughs.

WAITER

Good show, huh? Told you so.

TERRY

(drying her tears and with
an incredulous face)

Oh my God!

6. INT. WRITER'S ROOM - DAY

Four people are sitting around a table. The central seat is free. In the room there are several pictures from "Late Night with Terry Hudson". Some are Terry with guests, some Terry and her staff and there are also funny or epic moments of the show.

ETHAN

Have you talked to her?

A beat.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

Besides work.

Rachel says no with her head with a sad smile.

RACHEL

She didn't even want to take any time off sick. Bill insisted, but no way.

A beat. They all put a sad smile.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

And I haven't seen her lately. Just here in the studio. It's like...

Terry comes in and Rachel shuts up.

TERRY

Good morning everyone.

Terry takes her seat.

ALL

Morning!

Terry grabs a notebook and a pen and checks some documents. Then she turns to them.

TERRY

So, who has the magic libido pill?

There are some laughs. Karen raises her hand.

KAREN

Ricardo and I got it.

TERRY

Good. Go ahead. Wait, first. Reich, are you already with Martin's interview? Thursday, right?

RACHEL

Yes, Thursday. I have the guidelines of the interview. Ethan and I are working on the jokes now.

TERRY

Awesome. Let me know when you guys are done with the first draft. Oh, I saw he has been on holiday down here and is very tan. Write it down to make a joke on it.

RACHEL

In contrast with the Congressman?

TERRY

Yeah, exactly. Good. Back to tonight. Karen?

Karen grabs a documents and reads.

KAREN

The FDA approves 'pink Viagra' for sexual dysfunction women. A beat.

Imitating Terry's style, she stares at "the camera", looks down as she sighs, grabs her glass, hits it against the table and looks back to the camera.

KAREN (CONT'D)

Please, give me some whiskey

RICARDO

Please, give me some whiskey.

They all laugh. Terry does too but has kind of a sad smile.

KAREN (CONT'D)

An FDA panel just recommended the drug to help increase the women's libido. It's the first of its kind...

FADE OUT

7. INT. GALLERY DOWNTOWN LA- LATE DAY

It is a white and wide space. There are 3 paintings on the wall. A young man is hanging a fourth one. He is blond with blue eyes. He is attractive but is wearing oversized clothes that don't fit him. Terry comes in. He doesn't notice. He is very focused on hanging the painting even.

TERRY

Hi.

ALEX
(without even turning to
the newcomer and still
focused on the painting)
It's closed.

TERRY
Yeah, I can tell. Is Emma here?

He turns to her.

ALEX
She went to get some more line.

TERRY
All right. I'll wait.

He turns again and keeps fixing the painting. He is very focused. He keeps moving the painting some inches down, some inches up and also to the left and to the right. Terry spends a minute just looking at the action. It is kind of a show just watching him.

TERRY (CONT'D)
I'd say it's even.

He ignores her and keeps holding it as he repeatedly covers and uncovers his eye. Finally, Terry loses her patience and walks towards him.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Ok. I'll handle it. You move away
and tell me when it's even.

He looks at her with a mistrust look.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Kid, I am not going to run away with
your painting. No offense.

ALEX
Al'right.

Alex moves away from the painting. He starts making signs with his hands up and down, left and right.

ALEX (CONT'D)
More, more, more... Stop. Now!

Terry affixes the painting and moves away from the wall. Then she takes a look at the other paintings for the first time. Alex takes another painting from a pile supported on the floor.

TERRY
A lonely boy?

ALEX
(without looking at her)
That's all you can tell?

TERRY
And... a bit of a jerk.

Alex smiles and then looks at her. He turns again and starts positioning the painting on a spot on the wall. Terry sighs.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Do you know when Emma will be back?

ALEX
(not looking at her)
No.

TERRY
Of course. Well, tell her I passed by.

ALEX
Who passed by?

Terry looks surprised and pleased at the same time. He keeps focusing on the wall.

TERRY
Terry.

ALEX
All right.

Terry smiles and leaves.

CUT TO:

8. INT. TERRY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Terry is in the couch of her messy apartment drinking beer and smoking while watching TV. They're talking about the state primaries. She is wearing a man's T-shirt, sitting like in a fat man's position. The phone rings. It says Emma. She sighs and picks up.

TERRY
Hey.

EMMA
Finally!

TERRY
Hey, I passed by the gallery today.

EMMA
And lucky you I wasn't there.

TERRY
Not my fault.

EMMA
How are you?

She looks pretty lame.

TERRY
Good. I'm good.

EMMA
(not very convinced)
Good. Let's go the Italian Friday.

TERRY
OK, sure.

EMMA
Sweet. We'll see you Friday then.
Take care.

TERRY
Yeah. Later.

Terry leaves the phone, drinks a sip of beer and gets back to the "fat man's" position.

CUT TO:

9. INT. TV SET- EVENING

Terry is sitting on her chair and checking the script. There is some people on the set hurrying to get everything prepared to be on air. Rachel Bowen rushes to Terry. She's carrying a notebook and wearing headphones.

TERRY
He ready?

RACHEL
He's on the phone on an important call, but he said he can make it. You're in on 4 minutes. He is in 6.

TERRY
All right. Thanks Reich.

RACHEL
How was the off-air encounter?

TERRY
(smiling)
Interesting.

RACHEL
(also smiling)
Of course. Well, break a leg.

TERRY
Thanks.

Rachel rushes. Terry keeps checking the script. A tall man wearing a suit approaches Terry. That's Steve Johnson, mid-thirties.

STEVE
Ms. Terrible.

TERRY
Mr. Johnson. What's with your boss?

STEVE
(teasing her)
He's hiding. He's afraid of you.

TERRY
(kidding)
Oh, is he? Who wouldn't?

Steve laughs.

STEVE
No, he's prepared for the fight really.

TERRY
Good.

STEVE
Good luck.

TERRY
No need.

Terry winks at him. They smile to each other and Steve leaves.

RACHEL
(to Terry)
We'll be on in one minute.
(MORE)

RACHEL (CONT'D)
(to everyone on set,
yelling)
Everyone! We're going in 1 minute!

TV program opening. Audience clapping.

TERRY
Please, let me welcome the governor
of my beloved state, California
(Terry winks to the
camera)
Arthur Martin!

The audience claps. The camera shows the entrance of Arthur Martin: mid-forties, green eyes and grey hair that looks good on him. He looks sharp. Terry stands to receive him.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Good night sir.

ARTHUR
Ms. Terrible.

Terry looks at the audience and does a mocking face as she moves her hands like faking a shake. Then she looks at him and they shake hands.

TERRY
Nice tan, governor. Congressman
Edwards, here on Tuesday, confessed
his envy for your bronzed skin in
our off-air encounter.

ARTHUR
That is just natural Californian
tan. But if spending too much time
in the National Capitol... I guess
you lose it.

People in the audience shout and clap. Terry watches at her arms and legs like checking her white skin. She makes a fake cough like trying to bring attention to her.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
Yeah, you have so much to learn.

Audience claps. Terry laughs.

TERRY
Well, just hit me up when you're
free to go to the beach.

The audience claps and whistles. Arthur and Terry laugh. She makes a gesture offering him to sit down and they both do.

TERRY (CONT'D)
So, Mr. Martin. Long time no see. I
was afraid you wouldn't visit me
again after last time.

She looks directly to the camera with a mocking face.

ARTHUR
It is always a pleasure to visit
you Ms. Hudson

TERRY
(making a naughty face)
Of course. Even if discussing some
politics?

ARTHUR
Specially that.

TERRY
(looking at the audience
and the camera)
Oh! He looks so ready.

ARTHUR
I am.

TERRY
(looking to the camera
with a naughty face)
Great. Let's start.

FX of two fire beams coming both from Terry's and Arthur's
eyes.

TERRY (CONT'D)
I'll let you do some campaign. I
feel generous today.

Arthur smiles

TERRY (CONT'D)
So, today's immigrants to
California are subject of a
divisive political debate. What's
the deal?

ARTHUR
Immigrants should stop being a
convenience in California and start
being a core piece of the social
fabric.

(MORE)

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

What Republicans don't understand is that immigrants may be able to consolidate social and economic gains in the next generation. I mean, California is becoming a more non-white state and that is a fact. Shouldn't this shift come with a greater degree of integration?

TERRY

(sarcastic)

Integration... Easy job.

ARTHUR

Of course it's not. OK, let's think it through. California is the most diverse state of the nation. I believe Californians have proved to be among the most inclusive citizens of the nation. Half the job is done by our citizens. And the other half of the job comes from our integration policies that California government has been working on.

TERRY

Work? I thought Californians just spend the day on the beach. Wait, do they work too?

A montage of Congressman Edwards and Arthur Martin sunbathing in the beach appears to the screen behind them. The audience laugh and so does Arthur Martin.

TERRY (CONT'D)

Back to it. Latinos have strengthened the Democratic Party in California. How do citizens know you aren't just talking votes here?

ARTHUR

(teasing her)

Oh, well, well, well. I didn't know you were working for Ms. Parker now.

TERRY

(joking)

Arthur, you didn't want to hire me. I had to look for new options.

Audience laughs.

TERRY (CONT'D)
So, wait what sets you apart from
your democrat opponent?

ARTHUR
Besides my bronzed skin?

The audience and Terry laugh.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
I'm the only candidate in this race
that can implement his vision by
moving forward because I'm the only
one who's already gotten things
done for Californians. I am the
one, who is really going to make
sure we grow good middle-class
jobs, we build affordable housing
we improve our schools so children
can be everything they want to
be...

FADE OUT

10. INT. ITALIAN RESTAURANT - EVENING

Terry enters a restaurant. She checks out the place looking for someone. She finds a short-haired blonde with a kind expression smiling and waving at her. She is Emma. A man sitting next to her turns and waves too. That is Nick. She walks towards the table. Emma and Terry hug and Emma kisses her on the cheek.

EMMA
How are you?

Emma holds Terry and stares at her with a compassion smile for too long. Terry rolls her eyes and goes to hug Nick. They all sit down.

NICK
You're looking good.

Terry smiles.

TERRY
Yeah, I'm good. You, guys?

EMMA
(with her sad smile)
Good.

NICK

You were great with Arthur Martin.
I'd say you one that round too.

Terry smiles.

TERRY

Yeah? Well, he is good though.
Damned!

NICK

Come on, you were great. Harsh and
funny, like always. It was a good
show. It's amazing how you can keep
working... and on the same level.

EMMA

Strength.

Terry nods and rolls her eyes as the waiter arrives with the
menu.

WAITER

Buonasera ladies and gentleman.

EMMA

Good evening. Thanks.

The waiter gives them the menu and leaves.

TERRY

So, quite a character you're
promoting.

Emma and Nick laugh.

EMMA

You liked him, huh?

TERRY

(nodding)
He's an ass.

Nick nods at Terry's comment. They all laugh.

EMMA

Well, it is a way to say it. You
liked his work?

TERRY

I did. What I saw, yes.

NICK

Yes, he's good.

Emma nods.

EMMA

He's talented. He has good technique... And his topics are uncommon for such a young artist. He is...

FADE OUT

11. EXT. STUDIO- NIGHT

Terry leaves the studio and walks to the parking lot. She enters her car and leaves. She looks at the exit to West Hollywood and finally skips it. She takes de 101 North.

CUT TO:

12. INT. TERRY'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Terry is sitting on the couch as usual, smoking and drinking beer. She has a bored face. She has loud music on. All of a sudden sounds "Girl, you'll be a woman soon". She starts singing and dancing trying to imitate Mia Wallace (Uma Thurman in "Pulp Fiction") as she goes to the bedroom and gets dressed. By the time the song finishes, she's leaving the apartment. She looks pretty good.

FADE OUT

13. INT. TERRY'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Terry gets home in the morning with the same clothes as last night. She takes her heels off and starts undressing as the phone machine starts talking. She walks to the kitchen and drinks some water. Then, she lights a cigarette and grimaces in disgust. She puts it off. Then she pushes a button on the phone answering machine.

ANSWERING MACHINE

You have one new message.

Beeep.

ANSWERING MACHINE (CONT'D)

"Hello, this is a message for Jack Harper.

Terry is biting her lip trying to keep the tears.

ANSWERING MACHINE (CONT'D)
We're calling from Liberty Travel
to remind you to pick up the trip -

All of a sudden, Terry walks fast to the answering machine and stops it. She has a strong and serious look. She walks out of the living room.

FADE OUT.

14. INT. TV SET - EVENING

Terry is sitting on her chair. Next to her, Samantha Parker, late 40's, glasses, long hair, and wearing a horrible dress.

TERRY
So, I've been told you support
public investment.

People laugh. Susan looks skeptical.

SAMANTHA
I want what's best for
Californians. But this government
is just wasting taxes money.

TERRY
(sarcastic)
So, I take it you defend tax
increases.

People laugh. Samantha shakes her head.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Everybody the same taxes?

SAMANTHA
Equality above all, right?

Terry laughs.

TERRY
Sure. So a middle class family and
a rich guy with 4 mansions and 3
yachts should pay the same...

SAMANTHA
I don't understand what is it with
this redistribution of wealth.
Wealthy people in this state are
already paying a fare share.

TERRY

You afraid you won't be able to
finance your own campaign again?

Samantha does a presumptuous laughter.

SAMANTHA

No, I'm not.

Terry laughs incredulous.

TERRY

(sarcastic)

Unless the democrats win that one
and they raise taxes to infinity
and beyond!

SAMANTHA

Right. Except they will not win.

A beat.

TERRY

Clearly, you turned the state
Republican Party to its most
conservative elements.

SAMANTHA

Well, we are the Republican Party,
right? What's the surprise about?

TERRY

Well, the last Republican Governor
of California was a moderate. It
looked like the party was moving to
the center. What makes you think
your shift will work?

As Samantha speaks, Terry expression of repugnance is
increasing. She takes a noticeable deep breath.

SAMANTHA

That was 4 years ago. Now we've had
a Democratic governor that is
harming California. And I'm here to
recover that.

TERRY

(sarcastic as she does a
gesture as if she were
venerating her)

I bless you savior.

The audience laughs. Samantha doesn't know how to react for a second.

SAMANTHA

Thank you Ms. Hudson. Indeed,
Democrats are over.

A beat.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

In this state and in the whole
nation. Californians deserve more.
Mr. Martin and company just promise
a perfect world but they deliver
only special interest dominated
politics. They are trying to run
this state by these measures...
halfway to socialism while...

TERRY

Will you please shut up?

The audience make sounds of surprise. They look confused;
some laugh, some people clap, some boos. Terry's expression
is very serious.

SAMANTHA

Excuse me?

TERRY

This is bullshit.

SAMANTHA

How dare you talk to me like that?

TERRY

I can't stand your demagogic crap
anymore. Please, just shut up.

There's a terribly awkward silence in the TV set.

CUT TO:

15. INT. BILL'S OFFICE - EVENING

Small office with beautiful views of Los Angeles at night.
Bill Reynolds, late 40's, beard, a little fat, is furiously
yelling at Terry, who is standing at the other side of the
desk.

BILL REYNOLDS

Are you out of your mind?! What the
fuck were you thinking Terry?

(MORE)

BILL REYNOLDS (CONT'D)
You're nuts. Have you forgot what
this job is about? How the hell are
we going to solve this, Terry? You
crossed the fucking line.

A beat.

BILL REYNOLDS (CONT'D)
Shit!

Terry doesn't look upset at the fact she is being given a
good telling-off. She looks indifferent.

TERRY
Just fire me, Bill. Please, just
fire me.

BILL REYNOLDS
Shit, Terry. I'm really sorry...

TERRY
Yeah.

Terry leaves.

CUT TO:

16. EXT. LOS ANGELES STREET - NIGHT

Terry gets out of the studio building, lights a cigarette and
walks to the studio parking lot.

FADE OUT.

17. INT. TERRY'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Terry's sitting on the couch eating chips trying to find
something worth watching on TV. The phone rings. She ignores
it. The phone rings twice and the voice mail is activated.

RACHEL
(from the voice mail)
Hey Terry. It's me again. I'm kind
of tired of talking to this stupid
voice mail. Look... everything
lately has been fucked up. But it's
been a week and no one has heard
from you. I know you're locked in
your apartment. But you need to get
out. I'm serious. At least open the
door to me. I tried to come over
twice and you won't open the door.

Beeep! Terry keeps eating chips in a gross way. She switches the channel and finds the CNN. She leaves it on. They're talking about the primaries for governor of California. Now, her cell phone rings. It's Emma. She ignores it. In the cell phone screen we can see messages and like 10 missed calls. She realizes the chips are over. She throws the bag on the messy table and grabs the packet of cigarettes. There's just one left. She sighs. She gets dressed in the first thing she finds looking pretty lame. She lights that last cigarette and leaves the apartment.

CUT TO:

18 A. EXT. WEST HOLLYWOOD STREET - NIGHT

Terry is walking on the street. They're lively. She puts off the cigarette and enters a 7/11 supermarket.

CUT TO:

18 B. INT. 7/11 SUPERMARKET - EVENING

Typical sad 7/11 supermarket. The cashier is watching a small TV. Terry is at the cashier with her items. Finally, the cashier realizes he has a customer.

CASHIER

Good evening.

TERRY

Hi.

The cashier looks at the products as he checks each one out. A cigarette pack, a bottle of whiskey, a chocolate bar, a chocolate and peanut butter brownie and chips. He looks at her with a judgmental look. She gives him a feigned and unfriendly smile. He puts the items on a bag and hands it to her.

TERRY (CONT'D)

(with the unfriendly
smile)

Have a good night!

CASHIER

You too.

Terry leaves the place.

FADE OUT

19. INT. TERRY'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Terry is lying down on her bedroom wearing a man's shirt. She is hugging hard the opposite pillow to her spot. She looks absent. She inhales the pillow.

20 A. INT. TERRY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Terry's is having breakfast in front of the TV on her "man's T-shirt-pajama". The doorbell rings. She ignores it. It rings again. She ignores it. It rings again.

DELIVERYMAN
(from outside the
apartment)
Ma'am? Is there anyone here? I can
hear the TV.

Terry sighs and walks to the door. She checks the hole.

TERRY
Not a police officer. Too bad.

She opens the door with an impatient look.

DELIVERYMAN
Good morning, ma'am. I have a
present to deliver.

Terry looks at him, skeptical. With a friendly smile, the Deliveryman shows her a box with a kitty inside.

TERRY
(surprised and disgusted)
What the hell is that?

The Deliveryman looks a little disconcerted.

DELIVERYMAN
It's a kitty. It's a present from
Mrs. Emma Williams. Here's the gift
card.

Terry looks at it with a disgust face.

DELIVERYMAN (CONT'D)
(very excited)
And this is a welcome-kitty pack
with two different food boxes, a
litter-box, a walking leash and a
castle scratcher.

Terry looks disconcerted and still has a disgust face.

DELIVERYMAN (CONT'D)
Aren't you excited?

TERRY
Do I look excited?

DELIVERYMAN
No ma'am. Not really. No.

Terry nods and makes a sarcastic smile.

DELIVERYMAN (CONT'D)
But it's a lovely kitty. Look at him!

TERRY
(skeptical)
Yeah, I see. Is there a return policy?

DELIVERYMAN
No, ma'am... It's an animal, not an object.

TERRY
All right.

She grabs the kitten and the welcome pack.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Thank you.

She closes the door.

DELIVERYMAN
(from outside)
It's a great kitten. Enjoy him!

Terry leaves the pack and the box containing the kitty on the floor. She looks for the phone and finds it on the table. She dials a number as she looks at the kitten with mistrust.

CUT TO:

20 B. INT. GALLERY DOWNTOWN LA- DAY

Emma is at the gallery counter checking the agenda. Her cell rings. It's Terry. She smiles. She looks happy.

EMMA
Finally!

TERRY
What the hell, Emma?

EMMA
Nice to hear you.

TERRY
I'm not keeping it.

EMMA
Come on! I can't keep it. Toby and him won't get along.

TERRY
I hate animals.

EMMA
Please.

CUT TO:

20 C. INT. TERRY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Terry is checking the welcome kitten pack with a weird face. Meanwhile, the kitten has jumped from the box and is running towards Terry. Terry finds a leash. The kitten jumps like attempting to climb Terry's leg. She moves aside.

TERRY
Why is there a leash on the welcome pack?

EMMA
Oh, it's a special cat breed. They need to be walked.

TERRY
What?

EMMA
Yeah. It's a very unique breed apparently.

TERRY
I hate you.

EMMA
I love you too. Friday is the opening. Please, be there.

TERRY
OK.

Terry hangs up and looks at the kitten with a skeptical look.

CUT TO:

21A. INT. GALLERY DOWNTOWN LA- EVENING

Emma's gallery is very crowded. The painting Terry helped Alex hang is admired for a bunch of people. The rest of the walls are also filled with Alex paintings. There are a couple of waiters offering champagne and food to the guests. Emma is chatting with a couple. Terry is absorbed on a painting and holding an empty glass. The painting is a woman from the back sitting on a couch on a modern and impersonal apartment dominated by geometrical furniture and where everything has the same tone. The woman is looking at the huge TV but the television is off, so the only thing there is the reflect of her absent-minded expression. Emma approaches her smiling but Terry doesn't notice.

EMMA

You like it.

Terry has a scare.

TERRY

Shit.

EMMA

(laughing)

Sorry.

Emma smiles.

EMMA (CONT'D)

You're very into it.

They look at the painting in silence for a while.

TERRY

That kid... He is good. I mean, you see him with that look he has... and then, not only he has great artistic skills but.. how he expresses...

EMMA

(with a sad smile)

Loneliness.

TERRY

Yeah.

EMMA

Let's go get some champagne.

TERRY

Please.

They walk into the crowd searching for a waiter. Some people wave to Emma and when they see Terry, they whisper and stare at her. They finally see a waiter.

TERRY (CONT'D)

Excuse me, can we have some?

WAITER

Please.

The Waiter serves them two cups with a great smile.

EMMA

Thank you.

TERRY

Thanks.

(to Emma)

And where is the artist?

EMMA

I haven't seen him in a while. I bet he sneaked out. He doesn't like people.

TERRY

Good. It wasn't just me.

Emma laughs.

EMMA

Any artist would be shining and smiling today. But he is not. I had to force him to show up.

TERRY

(laughing)

Yeah?

Emma shakes her head.

EMMA

So, how's the kitty doing?

TERRY

(shrugging her shoulders)

He's alive.

Emma looks at her skeptical and laughs. Terry has a look like asking for advice or approval.

TERRY (CONT'D)
I didn't bring him cause I figured
he would get stressed with the
crowd.

Emma does her characteristics kind smile.

EMMA
Yeah, you did good.

A beat.

EMMA (CONT'D)
How are you, Terry?

TERRY
I'm fine.

EMMA
Are you, really?

Nick approaches with a couple interrupting them.

NICK
Hi!
(to Emma)
It's going great, right? I'm just
hearing positive comments.

EMMA
(with her smile)
Yeah.

NICK
Oh, let me introduce you. John, Amy
you know my wife.

JOHN
Hi.

AMY
Hi.

EMMA
Hey, how are you?

NICK
And this is Terry Hudson.

They shake hands.

TERRY

Hi.

JOHN

Nice to meet you.

Some people realize it is Terry Hudson and approach them.
There is some whispering.

AMY

Hi. It is a pleasure meeting you.
I'm a big fan. It's a pity you're
no longer on the show.

TERRY

Yeah, thanks.

JOHN

And what are your professional
perspectives now? Something in TV?

Terry feels people's whispers binding in her mind:

WHISPERS

"And what is she doing now?" "Is it
true that her boyfriend" "She
crossed the line" "Poor woman"

TERRY

Ahm... I don't know. Still,
figuring things out.

Amy smiles.

AMY

Of course.

TERRY

Excuse me.

Terry leaves and crosses all the gallery until she reaches a
back-door. Emma looks at her with a worried expression but
lets her go. Terry leaves from the back-door.

21B. EXT. GALLERY DOWNTOWN LA- EVENING

It is a small pedestrian street that has access to the
gallery. Terry takes a deep breath, searches for a cigarette,
lights it and stands against the wall, closes her eyes and
relaxes.

ALEX

You want some?

Terry gets a scare. It's Alex. He's standing on the wall smoking a joint.

TERRY

Shit!

Alex looks at her with a skeptical face and half a smile.

ALEX

You look like you could use some.

Alex hands her the joint. She gives a drag. They both stand in silence with a blank stare. Terry has another drag and gives it to Alex.

TERRY

Thank you.

Alex has a drag. Terry is observing him. She smiles. Then she turns, standing on the wall looking towards the other side of the street. Alex is in the same exact position a few feet away from her.

TERRY (CONT'D)

A split?

Alex doesn't turn or react.

TERRY (CONT'D)

It's not the Californian way.

ALEX

My parents are European.

TERRY

(teasing him)

So they taught you the European way?

Alex gives her a skeptical look and turns back.

TERRY (CONT'D)

(still teasing him)

I don't like your paintings very much.

ALEX

(without looking at her)

You're lying.

TERRY

How so?

ALEX

I saw you looking at "Untitled 8"

Terry laughs.

TERRY

Deep title it is. Why not titles?

Alex doesn't bother to answer.

TERRY (CONT'D)

Cause everything that needs to be
said is on the painting.

Alex nods and gives her the joint.

TERRY (CONT'D)

(with a forced game show
host voice)

Oh, and here is the prize for the
correct answer.

(now with a skeptical
voice)

Thank you Alex.

12. INT. THE KARAOKE FACTORY- NIGHT

Terry enters The Karaoke Factory. It's really crowded.

SINGER

I want to dedicate this to my most
devoted fans.

A beat.

SINGER (CONT'D)

(shouting)

"Living on a Prayer"!

She looks at the stage. The guy tries to move like a sexy
rock star but doesn't really success. Terry walks to the bar.
It is crowded. She finds herself a spot. Sam, the waiter,
notices her.

WAITER

Hey, you're back.

TERRY

(smiling)

How are you?

WAITER
(while serving other
clients)
Good, thanks. Give me a second.

TERRY
Sure.

Sam is busy preparing drinks around the bar.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Is that the blonde that keeps
trying with Rihanna?

There is a man's laughter. It is not Sam's.

RYAN
She is.

Terry turns, surprised by the man's voice.

RYAN (CONT'D)
You're a fan too?

TERRY
I guess.

RYAN
(shaking hands)
Ryan Hackman, talent agent.

TERRY
Oh, I see. Terry Hudson.
(skeptical)
And how's that going?

RYAN
I do find some talent once in a
while. You'd be surprised. But, I
guess I just like the place.

TERRY
Well, it is good entertainment.

RYAN
Not as good as your show.

She smiles at him not very convinced and turns to Sam. Sam
appears with a drink.

TERRY
Thanks.

Terry hands him some bills.

SAM
(smiling)
Thank you, Terry.

She smiles at Sam.

RYAN
Do you sing?

TERRY
No Gosh, no!

RYAN
You sure you don't want to try-out?
I guess you need a job now.

Terry gives him a skeptical look.

RYAN HACKMAN
(laughing)
I'd love to see you singing.

TERRY
In your dreams.

CUT TO:

22B. INT. KARAOKE - NIGHT

Terry is on the stage. She looks drunk. She's holding one drink and is singing Spice Girl's "Wannabe". She's looking at Ryan as she sings. Ryan looks at her from the bar, smiling and applauding. It's not such a bad performance considering how many drinks they had. People start whispering.

A WOMAN
It's Terry Hudson!

A MAN
Yes, it's her!

People are paying more attention to the singer now. A couple of people start recording and taking pictures with their phones. She finishes the song and walks to the bar.

RYAN HACKMAN
My dreams come true.

Terry grabs his butt.

TERRY

Not yet.

CUT TO:

23A. INT. RYAN HACKMAN BEDROOM - MORNING

Fancy bedroom with nice views. Terry wakes up, stretching and making weird "just woke up" sounds. She realizes where she is and looks at the other side of the bed. There's a man watching her, smiling.

RYAN HACKMAN

Morning beautiful.

TERRY

Ah, yeah, morning.

He kisses her and she kind of kisses him back not very convincingly. She is still confused.

RYAN HACKMAN

I am gonna make some breakfast.
Wait here.

Ryan Hackman gets out of bed and starts walking.

TERRY

Don't you.. Don't you have that job
to go to?

RYAN HACKMAN

(smiling)

I am a freelance. I can take as
much time as I want.

Terry makes a feigned smile. He walks out of the bedroom. She quickly gets out of bed, tries to find her clothes, gets dressed and walks barefoot to the door holding her hills and gets out of the apartment. The door closes. The man hears it, checks the bedroom and sighs sadly.

23B. EXT. WEST HOLLYWOOD - MORNING

Main door of a beautiful building in West Hollywood. Terry leaves from the door and puts her heels and her jacket on. She starts walking and sees Arthur Martin walking in the opposite direction. She tries to hide using her scarf. Too late.

ARTHUR MARTIN

Ms. Terrible... You look good.

Terry doesn't look pleased to see him.

TERRY

Hi.

ARTHUR MARTIN

Have a good day.

TERRY

(sarcastic)

Yeah, you too.

Terry keeps walking. Arthur looks at her with an expression between a smile and pity.

24. EXT. WEST HOLLYWOOD STREET - DAY

A pretty and crowded West Hollywood street with trees, restaurant and shops. Two pedestrians are getting closer to the camera. Terry and Rachel are walking and having a conversation.

RACHEL

It's not working Terry.

TERRY

Rachel I saw it. It's not going bad. Harry might not be the best but he will improve. But you're doing a good job, as always. The script is good. How are the ratings?

RACHEL

Bad.

TERRY

You just need to be able to adjust to the changes. That's all. It'll get better.

Rachel sighs.

RACHEL

Sorry I'm bothering you with that. How are you doing?

TERRY

Good.

They find newspaper boxes on the way. Rachel puts a coin on one of the boxes and purchases Los Angeles Times. They keep talking as they check the news.

RACHEL
What have you been up to lately?

TERRY
Not much. Well, I have a cat now.
That's new.

RACHEL
Oh, right. Yeah. How come you're
not walking him?

TERRY
That is strange question to ask.
How do you know? I'll walk him
later.

Rachel laughs. She is reading the paper when she finds a picture of a drunk Terry singing on stage. Headline says: "From television host to a pop star. The Great Career of Terrible Hudson".

RACHEL
Shit, Terry!

TERRY
What's up?

Rachel shows her the picture and the headline on the paper. Terry starts laughing.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Holy shit! "From television host to
pop star. The Great Career of
Terrible Hudson".

RACHEL
(offended)
What the hell is wrong with you
Terry? What's so funny?

TERRY
Oh, you know... The picture... and
the headline. The headline is good.

RACHEL
(very upset)
This is lame. Don't you have any
self-esteem? I can't recognize you.

Terry looks at her but says nothing.

RACHEL (CONT'D)
Call me when you're back. When the
Terry I always admired is back.

Rachel leaves with the paper, walking fast.

TERRY

Rachel! Rachel, come on! Wait!

Rachel walks faster. She's pretty far already. Terry sighs and walks on the opposite direction.

FADE OUT

25. INT. TERRY'S APARTMENT - DAY

The apartment is messy as always. Terry is eating pizza and watching TV with the kitten on her lap. Suddenly, she sees a fly. She follows her with an anger look.

TERRY

Don't you dare touch my pizza.

The fly flies around the apartment and finally stops at the coffee table, close to the pizza. Terry moves forward like in a warning position. The kitten suddenly wakes up. Terry leaves him on the couch and goes to the kitchen. The kitten is stretching. Then he starts smelling. Terry comes back with a dish towel. She has a very focused face looking at the fly and, all of a sudden, she tries to hit her with the dish towel. She fails. The fly flies away. The kitten gets a scare. Terry tries to chase the fly and the kitten follows her. The fly is on the floor now. The kitten notices her and plays with her.

TERRY (CONT'D)

Hey, you!

The fly flies away again. Terry tries to follow her but can't see her. The kitten does. Terry notices the kitten found her. She grabs the kitten carefully with one hand so the fly doesn't fly away. With the dish towel, she quickly hits her and the corpse of the fly falls from it.

TERRY (CONT'D)

(with a hate look)

Die in hell.

Terry strokes the cat with affection.

TERRY (CONT'D)

(stroking him with
affection)

Good job, buddy! Here, you earned
getting some pizza.

She throws the dish towel somewhere on the furniture and sits on the couch with the kitten. She grabs a piece of pizza and gives him a small piece. The cat eats it and goes back to sleep at Terry's lap.

CUT TO:

26A. EXT. GALLERY DOWNTOWN LA - LATE DAY

Terry is walking the kitten, who looks very excited about everything outside. They arrive to the gallery door. Alex is in the counter with a bored look. He sees them through the display window. They come in.

26B. INT. GALLERY SOMEWHERE - DAY/EVENING

ALEX

Are you walking a cat?

TERRY

(skeptical)

Yeah. Apparently, this kind of breed needs to be walked. Or that's what Emma told me.

ALEX

You don't know shit about animals, do you?

TERRY

No, not a clue. No.

A beat.

TERRY (CONT'D)

So, you're in charge, huh?

ALEX

Yeah. Emma is not here.

TERRY

OK.

Terry frees the cat so he can investigate the gallery.

TERRY (CONT'D)

So, how is it going? Many people?

ALEX

Some.

TERRY
That's good.

ALEX
Emma says so. I prefer quiet.

TERRY
Why?

ALEX
Cause people comments about the
paintings are stupid.

Terry laughs.

TERRY
What's your story?

ALEX
What do you mean?

TERRY
I don't know. You don't like
people, you always look unhappy.

ALEX
So, you too.

Terry laughs.

ALEX (CONT'D)
I'm closing now. You should start
grabbing your kitten and leave.

Terry laughs again. It is like Alex's "ass personality" makes
her laugh.

TERRY
Sure.

Terry walks out as Alex sets the security alarm. Terry comes
back with the kitten on her arms. Alex switches off the
lights and they walk out the gallery together. Alex closes
the roller shutters.

TERRY (CONT'D)
You feel like nachos?

ALEX
I like nachos.

TERRY
Well, you're welcome to join me.

They start walking in silence. Terry smiles. Alex looks at Terry and the walking kitten.

ALEX
You look ridiculous.

Terry laughs.

CUT TO:

27A. EXT. SOMEWHERE - LATE DAY

Terry is driving. On the passenger seat there's a basket with the kitten. Terry has loud music on and is singing the song. She is driving next to the ocean. The kitten is trying to sneak out from a rack hole.

CUT TO:

27B. EXT. VENICE BOARDWALK - LATE DAY

Terry is happily walking the kitten. Some people look at her and some come say hi to the kitten and stroke him. They walk towards the beach. She sits on the sand and puts him on her lap while watching the ocean and the sunset.

FADE OUT.

28A. INT. FANCY SUSHI RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Terry enters a Sushi Restaurant. She looks for her friends and finally finds Emma waving at her. She walks there.

TERRY
Good night guys. Sorry I'm late.

Nick hugs her and kisses her on the cheek. Then Emma hugs her.

EMMA
You look gorgeous.

TERRY
Thank you.

They sit on the table.

TERRY (CONT'D)
How are you guys?

NICK

Good. Busy with the exhibition.

TERRY

Yeah. How is it going? I asked Alex but, you know, he's no very expressive.

EMMA

Don't remind me. He's the worst.

The waiter comes.

WAITER

Good evening. Just three?

TERRY

Yes.

WAITER

Perfect. Here you have the menu.

EMMA

Oh, we already know. We'll have the sampler. Thank you.

WAITER

Great. For drink?

TERRY

The wine you think fits best with the menu.

WAITER

All right.

TERRY

No pressure.

Terry winks at him. He blushes, smiles back and leaves.

TERRY (CONT'D)

(teasing them)

So, you guys put him at the counter.

Terry finds Steve Johnson smiling at her a couple of tables away. She nods at him. Emma notices.

EMMA

Who's that?

TERRY

It's Steve Johnson. Arthur's Martin campaign manager.

EMMA

Huh. He's handsome.

TERRY

Yes, he's okay. So, how's Alex at customer-oriented work.

NICK

Well, what do you think?

TERRY

I think he's funny.

NICK

Really?

Terry laughs.

TERRY

Somehow.

EMMA

It's in the contract. He has shifts at the gallery as long as the exhibit is on.

The waiter comes with the wine.

WAITER

Who's going to try the wine? Miss. Hudson?

TERRY

Sure.

The waiter pours the wine. Terry tries it.

TERRY (CONT'D)

Perfect choice. Thanks.

As the waiter pours the wine to Emma and Nick, Steve looks at Terry again. He takes his wine and toasts from the distance. She toasts back. The waiter leaves.

TERRY (CONT'D)

How did you find him anyways?

NICK

He showed up in the gallery one day after school.

(MORE)

NICK (CONT'D)
He's at California Institute of the
Arts. He said he was good and he
deserved a chance. Just like that.

Steve keeps looking at her. This starts to annoy Terry.

TERRY
He's not wrong.

EMMA
No. People like his work too. We've
had quite a lot of visitors.

NICK
Yeah. And half of the paintings are
gone already.

TERRY
Sweet.

EMMA
And you? How've you been?

Terry keeps looking at Steve. She looks annoyed by his
persistant look.

TERRY
Excuse me, I am gonna go to the
restroom.

Terry walks to the restroom looking at Steve with an angry
face. He follows her. They meet in the restroom hall.

TERRY (CONT'D)
What do you want?

STEVE
You.

Terry laughs.

TERRY
That is a straight answer.

A beat.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Not interested.

STEVE
Are you sure?

Terry nods and does a skeptical face.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Here's my card. Just in case.

Terry grabs it and leaves.

TERRY
Great. Have a good night.

Terry goes back to the table.

CUT TO:

28B. EXT. MANHATTAN STREET - NIGHT

Emma and Nick are in front of the restaurant cuddling. Terry gets out from the restaurant at the moment they kiss and hug. They realize she's there and pay attention to her.

EMMA
It's been great to see you.

Emma hugs Terry.

NICK
Good night Terry.

TERRY
Good night guys.

They leave. Terry sighs, takes Steve's card from her purse and stares at it.

CUT TO:

29. INT. STEVE'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Terry is in bed. She is waking up. Steve is getting dressed.

STEVE
Hey, love.

TERRY
(interrupting him)
Don't "love" me.

STEVE
Sorry woman. I thought you had a good time.

TERRY
I did. But that doesn't allow you calling me "love".

STEVE

All right. Anyways, I'm in a hurry,
but you take your time. Help
yourself if you want some
breakfast. Just shut the door when
you leave.

TERRY

All right.

STEVE

Have a good day!

Terry nods. Steve leaves. Terry gets out of bed and walks to a fancy open kitchen. As she is making coffee a desk full of documents gets her attention. She sits on the desk with the coffee and starts checking it out.

CUT TO:

30. INT. ARTHUR MARTIN'S OFFICE - DAY

Arthur is in his office. His desk is full of documents, folders and post-its. He is working on the computer. Someone knocks on the door and comes in. That's Amanda, late 20's, intelligent look. He looks at her.

AMANDA

Mr. Martin. You have a visitor.
It's Terry Hudson.

ARTHUR MARTIN

Terry Hudson?

AMANDA

Yes, Sir.

ARTHUR MARTIN

Ahm... all right. Tell her to come
in. Thank you Amanda.

Amanda is leaving the room.

ARTHUR MARTIN (CONT'D)

Amanda!

AMANDA

Yes, sir?

ARTHUR MARTIN

She's not back in TV, is she?

AMANDA
Not that I am aware.

ARTHUR MARTIN
Okay. Thank you.

Amanda leaves and comes back in with Terry. Then she leaves.

ARTHUR MARTIN (CONT'D)
Miss Terrible.

TERRY
(half smiling)
Not anymore.

Terry walks in and sits.

TERRY (CONT'D)
How's the campaign?

ARTHUR MARTIN
Nuts. It's supposed to be, I guess.

TERRY
And the funding?

ARTHUR MARTIN
Pretty good. You know, calling
around, but we'll make it. Steve
just got a big private investor.
But... wait. I am being interviewed
here?

TERRY
Do you trust Steve?

ARTHUR MARTIN
Of course. He's my campaign manager
and has been my best advisor for 2
years. Why?

Terry takes a folder from inside her briefcase and throws it
on Arthur's desk. Arthur takes the folder and checks it out.
Terry puts her jacket on and takes her briefcase.

TERRY
(as she walks toward the
door)
I didn't take a picture of all the
documents. There's more.

A beat.

TERRY (CONT'D)
But I guess these will be enough to
help you.

Arthur Martin looks very confused.

ARTHUR MARTIN
What is going on?

Terry keeps walking.

ARTHUR MARTIN (CONT'D)
Terry.

Terry stops and looks at him.

ARTHUR MARTIN (CONT'D)
What is that all about? Why should
I trust you?

TERRY
I don't care whether you do or not.

ARTHUR MARTIN
I'm confused. I'm sensing you're
helping me.

TERRY
Look, I don't particularly like you
but I can tell you didn't know
about this. If you screw it up, it
should be because of your own
mistakes and decisions, not because
someone is trying to screw you
over.

Terry opens the door.

ARTHUR MARTIN
How did you get the documents?

Terry leaves. Arthur keeps staring at the door, very absent.
Finally, he dials the phone.

ARTHUR MARTIN (CONT'D)
(on the phone)
Amanda. I need a background
research on Terry Hudson.
Everything you can find. Thanks.

CUT TO:

31. INT. THE KARAOKE FACTORY- NIGHT

Terry enters the karaoke and goes to the bar where Sam is.

SAM
(surprised)
Terry!

A beat.

SAM (CONT'D)
(with a kind smile)
I'm glad you're back.

Terry smiles him back.

TERRY
I'm a shameless person.

Sam laughs as he is preparing her drink.

SAM
I swear to you. It was one of the
best performances I've seen here.

Terry laughs.

TERRY
Sure.

SAM
Have you seen it? The video?

TERRY
No, just the picture. Is it doing
good publicity for you guys?

Sam laughs as she puts her the drink.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Thanks.

SAM
We have some of our singers dream
team today. Enjoy the show.

Terry smiles and turns to the stage.

CUT TO:

32. INT. TERRY'S APARTMENT

Terry is sitting on the couch eating pizza and having a beer wearing only her man's T-shirt. She is watching "The Big Bang Theory" on TV. Sheldon does something and she laughs out loud there alone. The kitten is very excited scratching his castle scratcher.

TERRY

Shit! Pee, pee, pee!

She hurries to the bathroom. She pees with the door open so she can keep watching TV. She finishes and while washing her hands and watching herself to the mirror spots a blackhead on her forehead.

TERRY (CONT'D)

Bastard!

She starts squeezing it trying to get it out. Finally, it comes out.

TERRY (CONT'D)

Yes!

The doorbell rings. She finishes cleaning her forehead but the signs of the fight are noticeable. She walks to the main door.

TERRY (CONT'D)

Yeah?

ARTHUR

(through the speaking
machine)

Arthur Martin.

Terry looks surprised.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Can I come in?

TERRY

What do you want?

ARTHUR

Please.

Terry sighs. She pushes the button to open the front door. She leaves the apartment door half open and stands there while watching TV. Finally, Arthur arrives.

TERRY

Hi.

ARTHUR
(offering to shake her
hand)
Ms. Hudson.

He looks at her outfit with a disapproval look. The smell of the apartment might not be pleasant to the politician. He notices the wound on her forehead, which looks worst than it actually is.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
Are you OK?

TERRY
Yeah.

ARTHUR
(not very convinced)
OK.

Then he realizes the mess of the apartment.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
Wow!
(trying to conceal the
surprise)
Nice place!

TERRY
(skeptical)
Right? Come in, Mr. Martin.

ARTHUR
(still looking around the
apartment)
Yeah, thanks.

The kitten approaches to check out the visitor. Arthur sees him and strokes him. Terry offers him to seat in the couch.

TERRY
You want a beer or something?

Terry is walking to the kitchen as Arthur sits on the couch.

ARTHUR
Just a glass of water please.

TERRY
All right. Serve yourself with the
pizza.

As Terry grabs a glass of water, Arthur checks the mess of the apartment once again with a surprised expression.

The kitten joins him at the couch and is playing with him.
Terry comes back with the glass of water and hands it to him.

ARTHUR

Thank you.

Terry grabs her beer, and gets the remote control to switch the TV off. Right before doing it, she laughs at another gag. Finally, she sits down.

TERRY

What do you want?

ARTHUR

I've been through the documents you brought me.

A beat.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

I'm fucked up.

Terry laughs, surprised at him using bad language.

TERRY

I know.

ARTHUR

I need to fix this. Otherwise, my career is over.

Terry nods. Arthur is staring at her like expecting her to talk.

TERRY

Yeah.

A beat.

TERRY (CONT'D)

So, what?

ARTHUR

This is very serious Ms. Hudson. I thought you'd be a little more sensible. After all, you brought it to me. I was expecting some kind of support from you.

TERRY

What? I warned you already. You should be thankful.

ARTHUR

And I am. But I need play the cards
with that information now.
Otherwise, it is worthless.

A pause.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

I need someone intelligent I can
trust, out of the politics world
but that understands them. I can't
trust anyone from my team now, Ms.
Hudson. I feel betrayed and I don't
know who is with me and who is not.
I'm desperate.

A beat.

TERRY

Should I feel sorry for you?

Arthur sighs. He looks disconcerted at her indifference and
harshness.

ARTHUR

Ms. Hudson. Do you have anything
better to do in life?

Terry laughs.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Then, please help me.

A beat.

TERRY

Wouldn't it be easier to just tell
the police?

ARTHUR

I'm screwed if the police finds
out. Even if I'm declared innocent
in the end, everything points to
me. I'm done.

TERRY

(looking deeply at him)
But you're innocent.

ARTHUR

Yes.

A beat.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
Are you proving me?

TERRY
(serious)
First thing is trust.

Arthur looks at her with a serious expression.

TERRY (CONT'D)
All right.

Arthur smiles. He looks hopeful.

CUT TO:

33A. EXT. GALLERY DOWNTOWN LA- LATE DAY

Terry is walking with her kitten on the gallery street. They arrive to the entry door and come in.

33B. INT. GALLERY - LATE DAY

Alex is in charge again.

ALEX
Don't you have anything else to do?

Terry laughs.

TERRY
I really don't.

A beat.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Just walking my cat.

Alex does an skeptical look.

ALEX
I'm closing now.

Terry nods and waits for him to close everything. They walk off.

ALEX (CONT'D)
I'm going to have a smoke at the beach. Feel free to join.

Terry laughs.

TERRY
Hey, you're getting it!

ALEX
Getting what?

TERRY
Social skills.

Alex gives her a skeptical look and rolls his eyes. They walk in silence until they're indistinguishable.

CUT TO:

34. INT. TERRY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Terry is on her T-shirt pajama and having cereal for breakfast as she reads a novel. The door bell rings. She sighs and answers.

TERRY
(on the answering machine)
Yeah?

MICHAEL
(from the microphone)
It's Michael Hill.

Terry puts an expression like wondering "who the hell is Michael Hill".

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
I'm Mr. Martin's chauffeur.

TERRY
Come in.

She pushes the button to open the front door and leaves her door half open. Then, she comes back to her cereal and her book.

MICHAEL
(from outside the
apartment)
Ms. Hudson?

TERRY
Yeah.

Michel comes in. He's a middle-age fit man with a serious expression. He is carrying a whiteboard and a big bag. He looks upset by the mess but says nothing.

MICHAEL
Good morning Ms. Hudson.

TERRY
What's up? Isn't the Governor here?

MICHAEL
No ma'am. He's working at his
office. He asked me to bring some
equipment.

Terry pays attention to him and notices the big bag and the
whiteboard.

TERRY
Wait, wait, wait! What's all that?

She leaves her cereal and approaches him.

MICHAEL
The Governor asked me to bring some
equipment so you can start working.

TERRY
Here? We're working here? Why here?

MICHAEL
Safety.

Terry sighs.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Yeah, OK. Leave it, wherever.
Thanks.

Terry comes back to her breakfast. Michael puts the
whiteboard next to the TV and leaves the bag on the dinning
table. The kitten appears out of the blue and goes say hi to
the newcomer.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Hey, buddy!

Michael strokes him. Terry notices it and smiles.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Thank you Ms. Hudson. Have a good
day.

TERRY
All right. Nice meeting you. Have a
good day.

MICHAEL
You too, Ms. Hudson.

Michael leaves.

CUT TO:

35. INT. TERRY'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Terry is sitting on the couch and Arthur is writing on the whiteboard.

ARTHUR
OK. Let's start drawing the main points.

Terry laughs.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
What?

TERRY
This is going to be fun.

Arthur gives her a skeptical look.

ARTHUR
First, finding out Steve's objective. He wants to destroy me in favour of what. Who's behind it. Second, check all the companies involved in the funding. Third point. How do we fix this?

TERRY
(sarcastic)
Least, but not last.

ARTHUR
Yeah.

The door bell rings. Terry looks at Arthur with a questioning look.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
We need food other than pizza and beer.

Terry makes him a disapproval look. She opens the door and offers Michael to come in. He is carrying a bag from a food place.

TERRY
Hi Michael.

MICHAEL
Good evening Ms. Hudson.
(to Arthur)
Sir.

Arthur nods and smiles to Michael.

TERRY
It smells good.

ARTHUR
You can leave it here. Thank you,
Michael.

Michael leaves the food on the coffee table.

MICHAEL
Chicken and mashed potatoes, ma'am.

TERRY
Sweet.

A beat.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Thanks.

Michael nods to Terry.

MICHAEL
I'll wait outside, sir. Good night,
Ms. Hudson.

TERRY
Good night.

Michael leaves. Terry is taking the food from the bag.

ARTHUR
OK. Let's go on. So if...

Terry cuts him off.

TERRY
Mr. Martin, please bring me a copy
of all the companies that helped
fund your campaign. That we'll be
the starting point. Now, I'm very
hungry. Can we eat?

Arthur is surprised and a little upset by her harshness.

ARTHUR

Sure.

Arthur is staring at her. Terry feels it.

TERRY

What now?

ARTHUR

You never told me how did you find the documents.

TERRY

They were at Steve's desk.

ARTHUR

You sneaked into his office?

TERRY

No! Why would I do that? It was at his place.

Terry hands him a food box. A silence. Then.

ARTHUR

Do you have a personal relationship with him? Are you close? I'm sorry to ask personal questions but I need to be sure I can trust you.

(Talking with food at her mouth)

TERRY

Yeah, whatever. No, we don't have a personal relationship.

ARTHUR

OK. I'll trust you, Ms. Hudson.

TERRY

Yeah, well. You don't have that much of a choice.

ARTHUR

True.

CUT TO:

36 A. INT. SOMEONE'S APARTMENT

Terry and a guy enter an apartment passionately making out. Terry's phone rings. They are undressing.

It keeps ringing but they ignore it. It stops and after a few seconds it starts ringing again.

TERRY
(exasperated)
Oh, for God's sake!
(to the guy)
Sorry. One sec, let me turn it off.

Half naked, she tries to find her phone in her bag. It stops ringing when she finally finds it. All of a sudden it starts ringing again and Terry has a scare. She sees it's Arthur Martin. She looks at the guy with an apologizing expression as she answers it.

TERRY (CONT'D)
What do you want?

36B. EXT. TERRY'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Arthur Martin is at Terry's front door with the phone. His car is waiting for him on the street.

ARTHUR
Why don't you open the door?

TERRY
(sarcastic)
Cause I'm not home?

Arthur smiles.

ARTHUR
I figured you just spend all day in
your apartment.

TERRY
Most of it.

ARTHUR
All right, sorry. I just needed
you. Will you be home tomorrow
night?

TERRY
Yeah.

Terry hangs up.

FADE OUT.

37. INT. TERRY'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Terry is on the couch with a laptop and Arthur is standing next to the whiteboard. On the board, there is a list of different companies.

TERRY

Hoffer Brothers. Editorial company. Founded by Hoffer Brothers, of course. No other weird names, here. No. OK, yeah, they've published real books. Shit, this could take ages? What if the Hoffer Brohters are the second cousins of congressman Edwards?

Arthur laughs.

ARTHUR

Let's make a basic research, first. If we get nothing... Then, it does get more complicated.

TERRY

How many companies funding?

ARTHUR

96. This was number 25.

TERRY

Oh, Gosh. You should pay me.

Arthur laughs.

TERRY (CONT'D)

Anyways. Next one?

ARTHUR

Adams & Böhmer.

TERRY

Oh, these are the Californian jewelry company, I think. Is the congressman Jewish?

ARTHUR

Don't think so.

TERRY

Let's see. Correct. Founded by Ethan Adams and Martin Böhmer. Jewelers since 1942, blah, blah.

She keeps reading.

TERRY (CONT'D)
They're fine. Next.

ARTHUR
Travison.

TERRY
Ahm. Let's see. Thomas Travison,
Medicine, Boston University.
Travizon, with z, travel company.
It spells with S, right?

ARTHUR
Yeah.

TERRY
OK. There's a Travison with PhD,
blah, blah. Nothing on Travison
Inc. on a basic investigation
basis.

A pause. Terry looks at Arthur and smiles.

TERRY (CONT'D)
It doesn't exist.

ARTHUR
Sweet.

Arthur writes it down.

TERRY
Pause for dinner?

Arthur sighs and nods. Terry gives him a feigned smile.

DISSOLVE TO:

38 INT. TERRY'S APARTMENT - ANOTHER EVENING

Terry is on the couch with a cup of coffee and looking very tired. Arthur is with the whiteboard. He has a cup of coffee too and looks tired. He forces excitement on the way he speaks.

ARTHUR
And 96! Legon.

Terry Googles Legon.

TERRY
Legon, adventures for married
people.

Terry gives him a skeptical look.

TERRY (CONT'D)
A hook-up company is funding your
campaign.

Arthur laughs and shrugs his shoulders.

ARTHUR
Good, we're done for now. We've
been through them all. The
finalists: Travison, Smil, Maidens,
and Silversteins.

TERRY
Can I sleep now?

Arthur laughs. Terry stands and walks towards the bedroom.

ARTHUR
Tomorrow morning?

TERRY
Why morning?

ARTHUR
We have to do the calls. People
don't usually work at 12 PM.

Terry does a faces and sighs.

TERRY
Good night.

Terry stands and walks to the bedroom.

ARTHUR
Good night, Ms. Hudson.

Arthur walks out of the apartment.

CUT TO:

39. INT. TERRY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Arthur is at his spot, standing next to the whiteboard with a cup of coffee. On the whiteboard, there are the names Travison, Smil, Maidens and Silversteins written. Next to each name there is an arrow and another name, Sam Robinson. Only Travison is missing the second name. Terry is roaming around the apartment on the phone. She has the look like she just woke up and is also drinking coffee.

TERRY

Good Morning. Yeah, I'm calling on behalf of Governor's Martin campaign. We're sending thank-you cards to all our donors.

A pause.

TERRY (CONT'D)

Yeah. Travison. We couldn't find the person we should address the card. Could you check? Thank you.

A long pause.

TERRY (CONT'D)

Sam Robinson.

She and Arthur smile.

TERRY (CONT'D)

Great. Thank you. Have a nice day.

Terry hangs up.

ARTHUR

Great! They all have the same name. That has to be it.

TERRY

It looks like.

Terry nods.

ARTHUR

Good job, Ms. Hudson. I really appreciate it.

Terry nods.

TERRY

Well, now we need to find out who the hell is Sam Robinson.

Arthur smiles and nods.

ARTHUR

Yeah. I'm going to the office now. I'll call you. Have a good day.

Terry nods and Arthur leaves. Terry goes to the bedroom and comes back to sleep.

CUT TO:

40. INT. FANCY BAR - NIGHT

Terry is flirting with a guy at a bar. Samantha enters the place and sees Terry. Parker approaches her. They speak in a sarcastic and intentionally fake tone.

SAMANTHA
(teasing her)
Ms. Terrible

Terry turns and sees Parker. She sighs.

TERRY
Ms. Parker.

SAMANTHA
(in a fake tone)
How are you?

TERRY
(also in a fake tone)
I am good. How are you?

SAMANTHA
Good. We're having a private party
on the roof. To celebrate we made
it to the Primary.

TERRY
(bitter)
Congratulations. Have fun.

SAMANTHA
Surely not as much as you.

TERRY
Excuse me?

SAMANTHA
(teasing her)
It's good to see you're moving on.
You know, that you're over your
husband... or was it boyfriend?

Terry stands and slaps her. Everyone in the bar is looking at the scene. People whisper. A guy captures a picture with his phone. Terry takes her purse and leaves.

FADE OUT

41. INT. TERRY'S BEDROOM - MORNING

She enters her bedroom with a towel around her. She opens the closet. It's full of men's shirts and suits. She takes a shirt and puts it on. She smells it. She takes it off and deeply smells it. A tear runs down her cheek at the same time she draws a sad smile. She lays on the bed holding the shirt and inhaling it. Her other hand starts touching her body sensually and desperately.

CUT TO:

42. TERRY'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Arthur Martin's worried face. He is entering Terry's apartment. She is standing next to the door she just opened.

TERRY

I'm not in the mood today.

Arthur nods.

ARTHUR

How are you feeling?

TERRY

(still holding the door)

Fine.

Arthur comes in carrying food. Terry sighs and closes the door. Arthur leaves the food on the coffee table and sits on the couch as Terry brings two beers from the fridge. She arrives with the drinks and sits next to him. He does a disapproval look at the beer but says nothing.

ARTHUR

How are you handling the media?

TERRY

There's no way to handle it. Just ignoring everyone.

ARTHUR

What happened Terry?

Terry shakes her head. She takes the food, grabs a box for her and gives the other one to Arthur.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Something bad should have happened so you slap her. That's not you.

TERRY
(sarcastic)
Like you know me well.

ARTHUR
Terry...

TERRY
It had nothing to do with the case.
Now, if came to scold me, you can
leave.

A pause. She keeps eating and has a sip of beer.

ARTHUR
What she'd she tell you?

TERRY
I don't wanna fucking talk about
it.

ARTHUR
All right, all right.

A beat.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, Terry.

They eat in silence. The TV is on. The cat is between them on the couch.

REPORTER
(on the TV)
It looks like the public fight
between Samantha Parker, Republican
candidate running for Governor and
the famous host Terry Hudson is not
over. An incident happened last
night in a famous bar of the city
of Los Angeles. Several people
confirm that after a short
conversation, Terry Hudson punched
Samantha Parker in the face. Then,
she left the place.

A poor quality picture of Terry punching Samantha Parker
appears on TV. Terry sighs and hides herself under a red
blanket.

ARTHUR
In your defense, it looks like a
great slap.

Terry starts laughing from under the blanket. Arthur follows. Then, still hidden under the blanket, Terry takes a deep breath. Arthur surrounds what would be Terry's shoulders like comforting her. A weird, red figure is sitting on the couch with Arthur Martin.

43A. TERRY'S CAR-DAY

Terry is driving next to an ocean road. The cat is on the passenger seat inside a basket. She is listening to chill music and looks absent-minded. The phone rings and she answers on the cell device of the car.

EMMA

Terry?

TERRY

Hey.

EMMA

How are you doing?

TERRY

Good. I'm driving with the cat.

Emma laughs.

EMMA

Sweet.

A pause.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Hey, I'd like to talk to you.

TERRY

What's up?

A silence.

TERRY (CONT'D)

Emma?

CUT TO

43B. INT. EMMA'S & NICK'S PLACE-DAY

Emma takes a breath.

EMMA

Are you having an affair with Arthur Martin?

TERRY
(over the phone)
What? No! Wha...? Why are you
asking me that?

EMMA
Someone saw him at your door.

TERRY
Is it in the media?

EMMA
No, it was Nick.

A silence.

TERRY
Look, I'm just worried. I'd be glad
to see you're moving on but Martin
is married. You have enough
trouble.

Terry hangs up.

EMMA
Terry? Terry?

Emma sighs.

44. EXT. MANHATTAN BEACH - LATE DAY

Beautiful Southern California beach with a pier. It's late day. There is a figure walking barefoot on the sand. She is walking a cat.

45. INT. TERRY'S APARTMENT-NIGHT

Terry is lying on the couch. She looks worst than usual. She looks hangover. Arthur is standing at the entrance of the apartment. He is looking at the empty bottles on the table and the mess which is also worst than usual. Also, on a corner there is the dirty cat litter-box.

ARTHUR
Terry I never wanted to mention it
before so you don't get offended,
but this place is a mess.

A pause. Terry says nothing.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
I'll ask Michael to contract a
cleaning stuff so we can put some
order.

TERRY
Don't.

ARTHUR
Terry this place is gross. We can't
work here and you shouldn't live
like this either.

There's no reply. Silence.

TERRY
What do you care?

Arthur walks towards the main door. He stops.

ARTHUR
I do.

A pause.

TERRY
Terry, I thought I could count on
you. But you're a mess. This is not
working any more.

Arthur leaves. Terry sighs, lies upside down and hides
herself under a blanket.

FADE OUT

46. INT. TERRY'S APARTMENT- EVENING

The apartment is a real mess. Terry is not at her usual spot
on the couch. The door bell rings. Twice.

EMMA
(from outside)
Terry?

Silence.

EMMA (CONT'D)
Terry! Terry, I'm coming in. I'm
using the backup key, OK?

Emma puts the key and enters the apartment. She looks very
surprised by the big mess.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Oh, God!

A pause.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Shit!

Emma walks in and checks every detail of the apartment, the dinning table, the kitchen, the couch, the coffee table. She looks very worried and surprised. The kitten appears with a meow.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Hey buddy!

Emma holds him and strokes him as she crosses the living room and goes towards the corridor to the bathroom and the bedroom. She finds Terry on one of Jack's shirt lying on the bed.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Terry?

Emma sits next to her with the kitten and strokes Terry's hair.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Terry.

TERRY

(still lying down)

How dare you tell me I'm over him?

EMMA

(in a very delicate way)

Terry, he's gone. He's been for three months now. You'll need to move on someday.

A silence. Terry moves and sits on the bed looking at Emma.

TERRY

He's gone.

Terry starts crying.

EMMA

(also has her eyes wet)

Yes, honey.

A pause.

EMMA (CONT'D)

I'm so sorry.

Terry bursts into tears. Emma hugs her. Terry is just motionless and crying. Emma looks at her, looking very touched and impotent. Terry lets herself fall on the bed, still crying, grabs his pillow and hugs it. Emma strokes her hair as they stay in silence. The kitten jumps on the bed and sits on Terry's back.

FADE OUT

47. INT. TERRY'S APARTMENT- MORNING

Emma is in the kitchen making breakfast. She has done some cleaning in the kitchen. Terry wakes up and walks to the kitchen. Emma notices her.

EMMA

(with her kind smile)

Morning.

TERRY

Hi.

Terry looks at her messy apartment like if she had a new perspective.

TERRY (CONT'D)

Shit!

Terry walks in, checking the mess out with disgust.

EMMA

Here's some breakfast.

Emma puts the breakfast on the kitchen table. Terry sits and Emma joins her. Terry starts eating.

TERRY

Thank you.

EMMA

There's nothing to thank about.

They eat in silence.

TERRY

I'm not having an affair with Martin. It's work.

EMMA

OK.

A pause.

EMMA (CONT'D)
I'm sorry I brought it up. It's
just that.

A beat.

EMMA (CONT'D)
I didn't like the idea. I was
worried.

TERRY
I know.

They keep eating in silence. The kitten appears from the
bedroom and looks at Terry. She stops eating and prepares the
cat's food. Emma smiles.

TERRY (CONT'D)
There is no cat breed that needs to
be walked, is it?

Emma laughs.

EMMA
It is very impressive that you made
him get used to it.

Terry gives her a skeptical look.

EMMA (CONT'D)
It was a way to make you get out of
this place.

A pause.

EMMA (CONT'D)
And have something to do.

TERRY
(skeptical)
Yeah. It worked.

They both make a shy laugh.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Emma.

EMMA
Yeah?

TERRY
I need my job back.

Emma draws her kind smiles and nods. Emma deeply looks at Terry. Emma looks happy. They finish breakfast.

EMMA

Do you want help with this?

Emma points to the mess of the apartment, in the living room.

TERRY

No, I'll do it. Thanks.

Emma nods. They get into a strong hug.

TERRY (CONT'D)

Thank you.

Emma smiles and nods. She leaves. Terry closes the door and stands against it where she has great views of the mess.

TERRY (CONT'D)

Well, now it's just you and me.

MONTAGE

Terry grabs all the bottles and puts them in plastic bags. She takes the rest of the trash and puts all the trash bags next to the door.

Terry uses dish towels to clean the furniture and the tables.

Terry cleans the cat litter-box. She puts new sand in it. The kitten realizes and quickly goes pee.

Terry sweeps the whole apartment. The kitten chases the sweep and makes it harder.

Terry vacuums the apartment. The kitten is scared and runs to hide in the bedroom.

Terry mops and leaves.

Terry prepares food and then eats healthy.

CUT TO

48. INT. TERRY'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Terry is reading a book with her glasses when the door bell rings. She goes to open the door. It's Arthur.

ARTHUR

(awkward)

Hi.

TERRY
I didn't expect you'd come back.

ARTHUR
At least to thank you and
apologize.

He comes in.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
Wow!

TERRY
No need for a cleaning team.

They laugh.

ARTHUR
It's a great apartment.

Terry nods. He seats on the couch and Terry brings two water cups. She seats next to him.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
Do you want to keep doing this?

TERRY
I do.

Arthur nods and smiles. Terry goes grab the laptop.

ARTHUR
You've been working?

Terry nods. She sits on the couch with the laptop on her lap, opens the screen, clicks a tab on the browser and shows it to Martin. It's an online newspaper's library. Arthur Martin reads it out loud.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
"The son of the Parker Family to be married." Rick Parker, the oldest son of the family Parker is getting married this weekend. The bride is Samantha Robinson, daughter of a family...."

TERRY
Sam Robinson.

Arthur smiles.

ARTHUR
Bitch.

TERRY
We got her.

Terry and Arthur are looking at each other, proud.

CUT TO:

49. EXT. PARK - DAY

Terry is running. She looks both exhausted and happy.

50. INT. TERRY'S APARTMENT- DAY

Terry prepares coffee. She brings the cup to the couch and takes the laptop. She opens Youtube and searches "Late Night with Terry Hudson". The first entries refer to her singing at the karaoke or slapping Parker. She laughs, shakes her head and sighs. She rolls down and finds some best of "Late Night with Terry Hudson". She plays it. We see her in the show. Opposite to the laptop, the real Terry alternates her smile with some laughs.

CUT TO:

51. GRAND CENTRAL MARKET DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES- DAY

Terry is sitting on a table. Rachel spots Terry, approaches her and seats.

TERRY
I'm ashamed and I feel sorry for
myself.

Rachel smiles.

RACHEL
That's a start.

A silence.

TERRY
Black?

Rachel nods. Terry stands and goes to make the order. Rachel looks at her with a smile. Terry comes back.

RACHEL
You look good.

Terry nods.

TERRY
I'm sorry it took that long to call
you. I've been a complete mess.

Rachel nods.

TERRY (CONT'D)
How've you been?

RACHEL
Good. It's not the same now. The
show.

Terry nods.

TERRY
Yeah, he's no the best fit.

Rachel laughs.

RACHEL
Audience share is still bad.

TERRY
I watched some episodes of our show
last night.

A pause.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Good times.

Rachel smiles.

RACHEL
How did you feel?

A pause.

TERRY
It was weird.

A beat.

TERRY (CONT'D)
I couldn't recognize myself as the
same person running that show at
first. Then

A beat.

TERRY (CONT'D)
I understood it was me.

A beat.

TERRY (CONT'D)
And I felt proud.

Rachel smiles at her.

TERRY (CONT'D)
I want my job back.

Terry smiles, looking proud.

RACHEL
You have a plan?

TERRY
Sort of.

Rachel nods.

CUT TO:

52. INT. TERRY'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Terry walks from the kitchen carrying a tray with a soup and fish. She leaves it on the coffee table. She grabs a notebook from a bookcase and a pen and puts jazz music. When she comes back to the couch the kitten is about to make a bite at the fish.

TERRY
Shh! You bastard!

The kitten runs away. Terry laughs. She sits on the couch and starts eating as she writes on the notebook. She alternates looks at Arthur Martin's whiteboard, with the food, the writing and long pauses where she looks like she is thinking.

CUT TO:

53. INT- THE KARAOKE FACTORY- LATE DAY

Sam is pouring some drinks to a couple of customers. Terry and Rachel come in.

RACHEL
A karaoke?

Terry smiles.

TERRY

Well, it's not like you didn't see
the picture.

Rachel does a skeptical face.

RACHEL

So that's the great new place.

Rachel nods like approving it. Terry nods. They walk towards
the bar. Sam notices her.

SAM

Terry!

Terry smiles to him.

TERRY

Hey, Sam!

SAM

It's been a while. How've you been?

TERRY

Good. Look, I even have friends
now.

They laugh.

RACHEL

Hi.

SAM

Hey. So, wiskhey and?

TERRY

No, I'll just have a beer today.

Sam smiles.

RACHEL

Corona, please.

SAM

Great.

Sam leaves to prepare the drinks.

RACHEL

This place is cool.

TERRY

Wait for the singers to start.

RACHEL
Do you often sing?

Terry laughs.

TERRY
No, it was only that one time.

RACHEL
But you did come here often.

Terry nods.

RACHEL (CONT'D)
What for?

A silence. Sam comes back with the beers.

TERRY
Thanks Sam.

Sam nods and goes attend to other customers.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Cause I got to laugh.

A silence.

TERRY (CONT'D)
At other pathetic people.

Rachel nods.

RACHEL
Look, someone is approaching the stage.

They turn to the stage.

CUT TO:

54. INT. GALLERY -DAY

Emma is on the counter talking with Alex. Terry comes in with the kitten. Emma looks glad.

EMMA
Hey!

Emma and Terry hug.

EMMA (CONT'D)
You look beautiful.

To Alex.

EMMA (CONT'D)
Right?

Alex shrugs his shoulders. Emma shakes her head.

EMMA (CONT'D)
You'd be lucky to have a "Late
Night with Terry Hudson".

Emma winks at Terry.

TERRY
Emma! He's a kid!

Alex looks indifferent and like he doesn't understand what they're talking about. Emma's phone rings.

EMMA
Excuse, me.

Emma picks up and goes inside the gallery to talk.

ALEX
What was that about?

TERRY
I used to run a late show called
"Late Night with Terry Hudson".

ALEX
On TV?

Terry nods. Alex nods back.

ALEX (CONT'D)
I don't watch TV.

TERRY
I figured.

Terry frees the cat and takes a walk at the gallery, checking the paintings one more time. She comes back to Alex, at the counter.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Most of them are sold.

A beat.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Are you happy?

Alex shrugs his shoulders.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Are you unhappy?

Alex deeply looks at her. Finally, he nods.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Look at you, you have feelings.

Alex makes her a face.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Why are you unhappy?

ALEX
I'd like to keep them.

Terry smiles. Emma comes back.

EMMA
Let's grab some lunch?

Terry nods.

EMMA (CONT'D)
(to Alex)
You got it?

Alex nods.

TERRY
Bye Alex.

Alex nods.

CUT TO:

55. INT. TERRY'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Terry and Arthur are sitting at Terry's dinning table and drinking water.

ARTHUR
I don't know.

A beat.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
I'm not sure.

TERRY

Arthur, it has to go public sooner or later. Otherwise, they'll make it public, Steven or Samantha.

A beat.

TERRY (CONT'D)

And they'll tell their version.

ARTHUR

I know.

TERRY

We knew it had to be put on legal authorities at some point. You have a good lawyer, don't you?

Arthur nods.

TERRY (CONT'D)

Unless...

Arthur pays attention to her, like excited for any other way to handle it. Terry laughs.

TERRY (CONT'D)

No, you won't like it.

ARTHUR

I'm listening.

TERRY

I want my job back.

Arthur looks at her both curious and confused.

TERRY (CONT'D)

Let's make a show of it.

Arthur looks confused.

ARTHUR

You want to discover it live on TV?

Terry nods and shrugs her shoulder.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

That's crazy.

There's a brief silence.

TERRY

OK. Try to picture a debate on my show style, between Parker and you. Some jokes here, some scorn there. And, then, all of a sudden, gee whiz you thank a very generous donor called Sam Robinson.

A beat.

TERRY (CONT'D)

Or some like that.

Arthur smiles. He looks like he's thinking about it.

ARTHUR

It's crazy.

TERRY

Media politics. Haven't you heard about this concept?

ARTHUR

That'd be media politics taken to the extreme.

Terry nods and shrugs her shoulders.

TERRY

Come on, we've had two Hollywood Governors.

Arthur shakes his head.

TERRY (CONT'D)

You'd be helping me a lot.

A beat.

TERRY (CONT'D)

I need a strong show to get my job back.

Arthur says nothing. He looks like he's thinking about it, processing the idea.

ARTHUR

It's risky. It can turn out good or bad.

Terry takes a sip of water.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
I'll make it up to you somehow. All
your help. But I don't know about
that.

Terry nods.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
I'll think about and tell
everything to my lawyer. I'll be in
touch.

Terry nods. Arthur leaves.

CUT TO:

56. TERRY'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Terry, Emma and Nick are at the kitchen counter drinking a
cup of wine and chatting.

NICK
So, any job perspectives?

Terry is checking the oven.

TERRY
Hamm... Just some ideas.

She takes the food out of the oven and puts it on the
prepared dinning table.

TERRY (CONT'D)
So, eggplant parmigiana. Well, you
know, the only thing I know how to
make.

EMMA
It smells delicious.

Nick brings the opened bottle of wine to the table. Terry
brings the water and they all sit.

TERRY
So, what's new?

Terry serves Emma.

EMMA
We just closed a deal with our next
artist.

TERRY
Sweet. What's he like?

EMMA
A photographer.

TERRY
Nice. How many days is Alex's
exhibit on?

Terry serves Nick.

EMMA
Until the end of the week.

A beat.

EMMA (CONT'D)
I reserved "Untitled 8" for you.

Terry smiles at her.

TERRY
You guys got any?

NICK
Yeah, I gave "Untitled 5" to Emma.

TERRY
The rest are all sold?

NICK
Yes, all except, "Untitled 7". It's
a little creepy. I guess no one
wants hanging on the living room.

Terry serves her plate.

TERRY
Oh, is it the one of the guy at the
bridge?

EMMA
Yeah. Of course, it's Alex's
favorite.

Terry nods. They start eating.

TERRY
I'll take it.

Emma smiles.

NICK
It's delicious Terry.

TERRY
Thank God.

Terry's phone sounds. It's a text message by Arthur Martin. It says "OK. But I need to read the script first. I'll send you a confidentiality agreement for you and your team to sign. In touch". Terry looks very happy.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Yes!

CUT TO:

57. INT. TERRY'S APARTMENT

Terry, Rachel, Ethan, Karen and Ricardo are spread in Terry's apartment. Rachel is at Arthur's whiteboard, Terry is at her spot on the couch, Ricardo and Karen on the dinning table and Ethan on the chair next to the whiteboard.

RACHEL
OK. Let's go over the points of the debate. Immigration & Multiculturalism, Economy, focusing on the buget, Drought, Public Investment, Campaign Funding.

A pause.

TERRY
OK. We proceed like a normal show until Campaign Funding but put some jokes like anticipating the big boom.

RACHEL
OK. Ricardo, Karen you got Immigration and Economics?

RICARDO
Yeah.

RACHEL
Cool. Ethan and me we'll work on Public Investment and Campaign Funding. Terry you have the headlines and dialogues you wanted to include?

TERRY
Yeah, here.

RACHEL
Cool.

TERRY
Great. Let's work on it in groups.
We do the first pitch it in 3
hours.

ALL
Yeah.

CUT TO:

58. INT. GALLERY -DAY

Emma opens the door and Terry enters the gallery. It is closed and there's a curtain on the window display. Alex and Emma are taking down the paintings.

EMMA
Hey!

TERRY
Hi.

Terry approaches Alex.

TERRY (CONT'D)
That's not as hard as hanging them,
luckily for you.

Alex doesn't reply. Terry and Emma look at each other. Terry, to them.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Can I help out?

EMMA
Sure. Thanks.

Terry walks in and goes take down "Untitled 8", excited. Next to it, there's "Untitled 7", the creepy one and Alex's favorite. Alex and Emma are with other paintings on the main hall. Terry walks back to the entrance with her painting and leaves it standing on the counter. Then, she comes back to "Untitled 7". She takes it down and comes back to the main hall. Alex notices it.

ALEX
Terry.

Terry turns.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Thank you.

Terry smiles and nods.

CUT TO:

59. BILL'S OFFICE

Terry and Rachel are at Bill's office. He is sitting on he chair. They are standing.

TERRY

First I need you to sign here.

BILL

What's this?

TERRY

A confidentiality agreement.

Bill gives them a skeptical look.

BILL REYNOLDS

What are you up to?

TERRY

Sign.

BILL REYNOLDS

Terry.

A beat.

BILL REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

You know what I think about your work. This show was great with you and it is not the same now but you screwed up too bad. First, Parker. Then, you know, the karaoke and, Parker again.

TERRY

I know, I know. I just want you to give the script a shot. Just that, please.

BILL REYNOLDS

All right. I'll read the script. But that's it.

Terry hands him the confidentiality agreement. Bill sighs.

BILL REYNOLDS (CONT'D)
Since when do I have to sign this
for a script?

TERRY
Since this show is going to be a
bomb in the media.

Bill gives her a skeptical look and sighs. He takes the confidentiality agreement and reads it. Then he signs. Terry and Rachel smile.

RACHEL
You were worried about the ratings?

Rachel leaves the script on his table.

RACHEL (CONT'D)
That is good ratings.

TERRY
Give me a call when you're done.

Terry winks at him. She and Rachel leave.

CUT TO:

60. LATE NIGHT WITH TERRY HUDSON SET- EVENING

Loud audience clapping and acclaiming. The shot opens progressively and we see Terry.

TERRY
And now, gentleman and ladies. You
might wonder how the -

Beeep! Terry nods, like approving the censure.

TERRY (CONT'D)
My boss would let me host the show
once more after my good popularity
lately.

She waves in an undetermined direction.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Well, it is because I promised him
a great and special show.

People in the audience acclaim her. Terry smiles.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Why are there two lecterns today in
set?

A pause.

TERRY (CONT'D)
It is not a public argument between
me and my boss.

A beat.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Although that surely would be fun.
Right, Bill?

People laugh.

TERRY (CONT'D)
My return had to big.

A pause.

TERRY (CONT'D)
And of course, controversial.

A beat.

TERRY (CONT'D)
But mainly, big. Well, then.
Gentlemen and ladies, welcome to
the first candidates to California
Governor debate on Late Night with
Terry Hudson.

People acclaim her and whistle.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Welcome to Arthur Martin and
Samantha Parker!

People whistle and applause. Arthur enters the set from the
left side and Samantha through the right side. They're
walking towards Terry.

TERRY (CONT'D)
I know, I know. This woman has been
so kind to join us tonight,
regarding

A beat.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Our history.

Terry turns to Samantha and shakes her hand.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Thank you Ms. Parker. I really
appreciate it.

A beat.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Apologies for my behavior.

Parker nods and shakes her hand.

PARKER
Thank you for having me.

Terry turns to Arthur. They look at each other for a few seconds and then smile to each other.

TERRY
Mr. Martin.

They shake hands.

ARTHUR
Ms. Terrible. A pleasure visiting
you.

TERRY
Break your leg.

Terry smiles at him. Terry looks at the camera and does a naughty expression.

TERRY (CONT'D)
I'll leave you to alone now.

Terry winks to the camera. Arthur and Parker shake hands and walk to their respective lecterns. Terry looks at the camera with an expression between happy and mean. She moves her hand like meaning "she does not know what awaits her".

FADE TO BLACK.

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Democracy Now! (2001, different public channels)

Inside Amy Schumer (2013-, Comedy Central)

Last Week Tonight with John Oliver (2014-, HBO)

The Nightly Show with Larry Wilmore (2015-, Comedy Central)

The Rachel Maddow Show (2008, MSNBC)

Annexes

"Terrible Hudson": the process of developing a fiction story

ANNEX 1: TRANSCRIPTION OF THE INTERVIEW TO JENNIFER HOLT, UCSB PROFESSOR ON MAY 7TH 2015

(0.07) So, is media critical in political issues in the United States, like is there enough perspective about political topics and issues?

Holt: I don't think there is a very wide range of perspective, there's a very kind of entrenched conservative perspective that's on Fox News for example, and there's a more left leaning position that is on something like MSNBC ahm, there's very centrist... what I see is centrist type of news on the networks, you can get a little bit more, I don't know, a little more in depth substantive type of reporting from PBS, from shows like *Democracy now*, ahm, but there isn't... you have to go to many sources and on television it's pretty limited in the US, I think.

(1.12) So, it's more like newspapers and...

Holt: yeah, the Internet, ah, news from other countries, I mean I am sure you've learned from being here and watching the news there's like nothing on global affairs, right? I mean it's pathetic, so it's like the rest of the world isn't happening, maybe they'll talk about 30 seconds about Syria or something like that but that's it and there's no context and no discussion for everything that's happening, you know, so it's very very limited.

(1.45) So, can you identify Democrat media and Republican media?

Holt: Ahm, I think that's a little simplistic, right, I mean, I don't think all Republicans are the same, or Democrats are the same and I don't even think they're very different, I feel like, you know, there's a radical wing of the Republicans that are very vocal and have, in my view, taken over quite a bit of the seats in Congress.

(2.22) You mean the Tea Party?

Holt: Yeah, the Tea Party and other crazy people who deny the existence of science for example, ahm, but there is no radical lefties, right, like the best you can do as Democrat is be a centrist. There's maybe two vocally left people, you know, Bernie Sanders is pretty vocal and now he's running for president, ahm, Dennis Kucinich used to be in Congress and was pretty vocal, Elizabeth Warren, I don't think she's radical or anything but she's the only Democrat who's seem fit to take on the financial institutions, right? But there's not, ahm, it's all too centrist, centrist or right leaning for me.

(3.11) So, the same in the media, then?

Holt: Yeah, pretty centrist right-leaning, yeah. Nobody is interrogating anything. Are we watching the news and having our wars interrogated? Our programs to spy on American

citizens interrogated? No! We just, I mean, this what should be happening, this is what the media should be doing. The fact that the only person who's serving prison time for leaking information is the person who leaked information about war crimes that were being committed, I mean, "general betrays leaked information to his mistress and he's just is in probation but Chelsea Manning is serving years, what 35 years in a military prison, for leaking information about who perpetrated those crimes and none is in jail, well turn on the news, right? So, this is what I am talking about.

(4.17) What kind of programs and genres cover political issues in the American television?

Holt: Well, there's news... I think that comedy programs are doing the better than anybody, *The Daily Show*, *The Colbert Report*, which is now off the air but he did a pretty good job, John Oliver new show does an excellent job, it's called *Last Week Tonight*, ahm, Larry Wilmore's new show called *The Nightly Show* which comes after *The Daily Show* on Comedy Central, but these are in comedy channels, right? So, most of my students are getting their news from comedy shows, which is pretty sad, but they're the ones who are asking the difficult questions and pointing up the obvious, you know, crimes against humanity that are taking place, so, not the actual news broadcasters, they don't do that.

(6.03) Okay, so is the general public interested in politics?

Holt: No, I don't think we are very political country. I mean, you know, we don't... I think there've been some moments, you know, we just had a moment in Baltimore (...) of protest but not enough people... I don't know, I've seen the kind of engagement with politics wend significantly so I, it's very... I ask my students all the time but I think they feel disconnected, they feel hopeless, they feel frustrated and that's how I feel too. Ahm, I think a lot of people have kind of given up. It's depressing. (Brief conversation about politics in Catalonia). **(7.18)** It's like what? We're gonna have a Bush and a Clinton run again, I mean, come on, this is not supposed to be dynastic ruled, this is supposed to be something else and it's not, so you just feel like, okay the richest more influential people will just run the country, what do I have to say, nothing. Very depressing.

(8.00) Which politics programs do people watch? What about Sunday political shows?

Holt: Yeah, my students don't watch that, some people do. I think they're willfully out of touch, they're just a bunch of politician's regurgitating, like they ignore questions, there is no meaning dialogue or debate, I think they're a waste of anyone's times. I think they have some audience, that's old and untouched, but not my students, not anyone young, that's for sure.

(8.36) The programs you talked about before, in what channels are they?

Holt: They're in Comedy Central, they're on HBO... The Colbert Report, The Daily Show and The Nightly Show are in Comedy Central and the John Alliber's show is on HBO. Yeah, watch it, it's great.

(9.05) These are more concrete questions, directly related to my screenplay: so I'm writing about the host of a news' satire show. She's progressive and she gets fired after humiliating a Republican candidate in the show. So, then after running her career and falling into a life of alcohol and sex she finds herself discovering a political corruption case which she reveals in television back on her show. So, I thought about different criteria like audience, channel, schedule to decide in what channel her show would work, so I am gonna ask you about that. Where do you think the program could work? In what channel and schedule? So from all the national channels, in which one could that work?

(10.40) Holt: MSNBC, could be one, where the left leaning reporting is, or ahm, CNN.

(11.00) And what about the ones you told me before like Comedy Central or HBO?

Holt: Yeah, Comedy Central.

(11.09): Is that in New York?

Holt: Yeah.

(11.18) What's the time and the frequency of these shows?

Holt: They're like at 8 o'clock. You can look it up, they're on at 8 o'clock, 9 o'clock, 10 o'clock at night. Primetime. So, yeah, you can think about whether your show is prime time or late night but I think it should be primetime. Every weekday, prime time on the West Coast, on the East Coast is between 8 and 11 at night; in the middle of country is between 7 and 10 at night, so we kind of do it an hour earlier.

(12.04) I always pictured the story in LA but all this political shows are more in New York, so do you think that a show like that in LA makes sense? Are there any studios from this kind of program in LA?

Holt: Most of them are done in New York, but I don't see why they couldn't be done in LA. And I think that's kind of an interesting element to add, cause then you can have her be living the life in LA which is much more funny and interesting than in New York City, where everyone is so serious. It would be more fun, she would go to yoga and, you know, go to beach, wherever.

(13.02) Yeah, yeah. Like I like the LA lifestyle but I didn't know if it works.

Holt: I think it'd be cool! Like that could be part of the pitch of the show, like, she is in LA, she's a woman, like this is crazy, she's doing the news.

Julia: Cool, yeah, I am excited!

Holt: Good, good! I can't wait to read it. Will you send it to me after...?

Julia: yeah, for sure.

(13.45): If you were to write a show about LA news satire host discovering a corruption case, would you set the political plot in a local, federal or a national level?

Holt: That's a good question. Maybe it could start local and then go up to national and then, can be one think, but maybe, I think it should at least should be two, like local that connects you to the state level, and then, ahm, once it's the state level in California, it's a big deal, cause California is the world's best largest economy, it's a huge EO, so it's not just California, it's the country, so, you know. Yeah, local isn't enough... well, it starts local and maybe that's why she can care about it and no one else will, but then she can start connecting it to state politics, which are always so fucked up. You should read about state politics in California. It's crazy; I mean you know we elected Arnold Schwarzenegger our governor that tells you everything, you should look at the recall election of Gray Davis I mean, there's a lot of great California politics that you can...

(15.10) Could you say that again?

Holt: The recall election of Gray Davis the one that wended up putting Arnold Schwarzenegger into office. That was, you know, there is a movie called *Enron: the smartest guys in the room*, and it's about a scandal, a documentary about a scandal that involved corruption in the energy industry and it got great deal was the California governor ousted Arnold Schwarzenegger to come in but it was all scam, so you should watch this movie. It's amazing.

(16.00) How's the local politics in LA?

Holt: I don't live in LA anymore but contentious, there's like the gay community in West Hollywood, there's all the rich people in Malibu, there's like the businesses in downtown, it's not simple. It's very diverse, there's, you know, undeserved communities, minorities, it's a complicated city, it's not a simple city to figure out, like Santa Barbara where everyone is kind of the same, rich white people, it's not complicated, very complicated down there.

(16.52) Where do you think that a woman like the character I told you could live in LA?

Holt: She could live in West Hollywood, she would live on the west side in west Hollywood, which is a predominately gay neighborhood but it's a great place for women to live, cause it's like you don't get hassle, you know, it's really nice. And it's cool, full of shopping and fun, or she could live on the East side, where in like Silver Lake or Los Angeles, but those are more like hipster neighborhoods, do you want her to be a hipster, put her on the East side, if you want her to be like, or if she's like a yogi organic, you know, beach kind of person, she could live in Santa Monica. Yeah, we can talk more, as you develop her character, we can talk more about what kind of person she is and then we can figure out exactly where she lives.

(18.06) What do you think is a profile to become a charismatic and popular host of a late show or a news satire show?

Holt: I think you have to be conventionally beautiful, I think you have to be, you know, bubbly and weedy, I don't know how like dry you can be, you know, I don't think you can be, there's different spectrum on like how's the sense of humor, there's the kind of super dry people, and there's the super like physical comedy, I think you have to be something in the middle there. Ahm, but with a definite... something that's different from what everyone else has, right? The same but different, like Hollywood wants everyone the same but different, you know, like we don't want them too different cause you I don't understand you, but, different from everyone else.

(19.10) Do you think she could be kind of harsh at the same time?

Holt: It's like, can women...? Maybe this could be a thing she deals with, like men can be, like watch those shows John Oliver's show and she how harsh he is, can women be that harsh? Oh, Amy Schumer, you have to watch Amy Schumer show, *Inside Amy Schumer*, it's also on Comedy Central. She is the one women who is doing this, and she's not... Oh, well... and *Chelsea Lately*, which was in E-network, her Chelsea Handler, but the show is, *Chelsea Lately*, and she is harsh, and Amy Schumer is super harsh, and Amy Schumer is like, ugly and she's not conventionally beautiful and she is really raunchy. But she deals with these very political topics. And Chelsea Hummer was like entertainment news so, there are two women but they're interesting versions of like how far you can push it. And then there's Amy Goodman, on a show called *Democracy Now*, and she's like older and you can tell she doesn't care what she wears; she doesn't do her hair, she just reads the news, she's like so doesn't give a shit about any of that stuff but her work is the best and her journalism is the most hard-hitting and she's not funny, she's not fun at all, but then also you should look at Rachel Maddow, who does the show on MSNBC (cable news channel that is like leftie) at 6'oclock and she's a news woman and a left leaning news woman and she's out as a lesbian and I don't think she could be the host of a network show, you know, broadcast network

show, cause they don't hire lesbians. In the broadcast networks they wouldn't say that, but they don't hire lesbians, they better hire woman than gay women, you know, so there's a few women you can look at to see... And Amy Goodman is on public television, on *Democracy Now*. That's news and then Chelsea Handler and Amy Schumer are comedy.

(22.08): Yeah. Because I was like... thinking for my character like she used to be a journalist but somehow she just realized like, okay, the way to do that is through comedy, so.

Holt: Yeah interesting so okay, Chelsea Handler and Amy Schumer would be more relevant, yeah. Good!

(22.40): So TV news' satires are a long tradition in America, why do you think so?

Holt: Oh, God, because, you know, comedy is essential for any culture to laugh at their selves, right? And we can say so much more with comedy and with satire than we can in straight reporting of the news. So, I think people hunger for more of that commentary that they're not gonna get just in straight news and they wanna feel part of a culture that is critiquing and thinking about this information and these developments and often comes in the form of comedy. Yeah.

(23.45): Do you think that they can be as powerful and influential as straight news?

Holt: Oh, yeah, look at John Stewart, totally, definitely. Yeah, absolutely. If done right, yeah.

ANNEX 2: COMPILATION OF CHAPTERS OF *CALIFORNIA* BY LONELY PLANET ON A DESCRIPTION OF CALIFORNIA

Lifestyle

“There is some truth to California’s dreamscape” (California Travel Guide, 2015: 705) South California (SoCal) has a perpetually balmy weather. It is said that it has over 315 days of sunshine per year. Some 80% of Californians live near the coast rather than inland, even though California beaches are not always sunny or swimmable. Thus, Southern Californian’s inescapable associations with surf, sun and prime-time TV soaps like *Baywatch* and *The OC*. (California Travel Guide, 2015)

However, the great Californian lifestyle image is actually not the rule. Few Californians can afford to spend entire days tanning and networking. Still, although they are a very diverse society, most Californians have some common lifestyle trends or characteristics. According to a recent Cambridge University study, creativity, imagination, intellectualism and mellowness are all defining characteristics of Californians, compared with inhabitants of other US states. Most Californians “live” in their car. They commute an average of 30 minutes ride each way to work and spend at least 1\$ out of every \$5 earned on car-related expenses. Other curiosities about Californian people are that they are among the fittest in the nation thanks to exercise and healthy food, that more than half a million Californians have prescriptions for medical marijuana or that self-help, fitness and body modification are major industries throughout state. (California Travel Guide, 2015)

Since the 1960s –especially after the fatal Santa Barbara oil rig on 1969- Californians have been pioneers on environmental movement by choosing more sustainable foods and low-impact lifestyles, preserving old-growth forests, declaring nuclear-free zones, pushing environmentally progressive legislation and establishing the USA’s biggest market for hybrid vehicles. Even conservative California politicians may prioritize environmental issues. That said, the state’s long-term drought has resulted in a suspension of some key environmental legal protections, as well as more intense, prolonged and ultimately costly wildfire seasons. Climate change and the ongoing drought are a great concern to many Californians. Also “green” trends such as organic and non-GMO crops, veganism, grass-fed versus grain-fed meat, biodynamic vineyards, fair-trade coffee and the importance of buying local have arose in California. (California Travel Guide, 2015)

Population & Multiculturalism

California is a very diverse state regarding ethnicity, income, background or lifestyle. However, all these different people live in California, a state where tolerance for other people's lifestyles and beliefs, be they conservative or liberal, somehow coexist. "Yet as LA police beating victim Rodney King famously asked "Can we all get along?". Sometimes yes, sometimes no." (California Travel Guide, 2015: 703)

With more than 38 million residents, California is the most populous US state. It is also one of the fastest growing states, with three of America's biggest cities (Los Angeles, San Diego and San Jose) and over 300.000 newcomers every year. California is a very ethnicity diverse state. One of every four immigrants in the US lands in California, with the largest segment coming from Mexico, followed by Central America. In addition nearly three million undocumented immigrants are estimated to currently live in California. (California Travel Guide, 2015)

"Most Californians see their state as a laid-back, open-minded multicultural society that gives everyone a chance to live the American dream." (California Travel Guide, 2015: 705) No one is expected to give up their cultural or personal identity to become Californian: Chicano pride, Black Power and gay pride all built political bases here. But historically, California's Chinatowns, Japantowns and other ethnic enclaves were often the result of segregationist sentiment, not created by choice. While equal opportunity may be a shared goal, in practice it is very much a work in progress. Even racially integrated areas can be quite segregated by ethnicity in terms of income, language, education and, perhaps most surprisingly, Internet access. (California Travel Guide, 2015)

California is the USA's most racially and ethnically diverse state. Until recently, White people used to be the main race followed by Latinos, but California's Latino and Asian populations are steadily increasing. Over one third of nation's Asian American live in California, while Latinos became the state's majority ethnic group in 2014, positioning White people as the second main ethnic group. Latino culture is deeply enmeshed in Californian culture, from Tejano music tunes to burritos and margaritas. African Americans, despite being just over 6% of the population, have also defined West Coast popular culture, from jazz and hip-hop to fashion and beyond. (California Travel Guide, 2015)

Likewise, there is religious tolerance. Although Californians are less church-going than the American mainstream, and one in five professes no religion at all, California is one of the most religiously diverse US states. About a third of residents are Catholic, in part due to a large Latino population, while another third are Protestants. There are almost two million

Muslims and four million Hindus statewide. Also important are Jewish communities and Buddhists. (California Travel Guide, 2015)

Economy & Industry

California is the home of most of the technological innovations of the last decades and has the headquarters of companies like Apple or Google. Indeed, with Silicon Valley and a growing biotech industry, Northern California is competing with Southern California's movie, TV and entertainment industry as the state's main economic engine. The energetic industry also has a role on the Californian industry. The Pacific Ocean makes the oil-industry an important, and also polemic, industry. Plus, although less than 10% of Californians live in rural areas, they are responsible for one of the state's other powerhouse industry, agriculture. There are over 80.000 farms statewide raising 42\$ billion worth of food for the rest of the country and the world each year. (California Travel Guide, 2015)

Housing

Few Californians can afford a beach dream home, and most rent rather than own on a median household income of \$61.400 per year. However, eight of the 10 most expensive US housing markets are in California, and in the two most expensive areas, Newport Beach and Palo Alto, the average price is over \$1.5 million. Almost half of all Californians reside in cities, but most of other half lives in the suburbs, where the cost of living is also high. Yet Californian cities, especially San Francisco and San Diego, have constantly top national quality-of-life indexes. Half of Californians aged 18 to 24 live with roommates. Among adult Californians, one in four lives alone, and almost 50% are unmarried. Of those who are currently married, 33% will not be in 10 years. Also, the number of unmarried cohabiting couples has increased 40% since 1990. (California Travel Guide, 2015)

"Homelessness is not a part of the California dream, but it is a reality for at least 135.000 Californians, representing over 20% of the total US homeless population." (California Travel Guide, 2015:706). Some are teens who have run away or been kicked out by their families, but the largest contingent of homeless Californians are US military veterans –estimated at 31.000 people. In the 1970s mental-health programs were cut, and state-funded drug treatment programs were dropped in the 1980s, leaving many Californians with mental illnesses and substance-abuse problems no place to go. Also standing in line at homeless shelters are the working poor, unable to afford rent even a small apartment on minimum-wage salaries. Rather than addressing the underlying causes of homelessness, some California cities have criminalized loitering, panhandling, even sitting on sidewalks. Also,

more than three out of every 1000 Californians are in the state's notoriously overcrowded jails, mostly for drug-related crimes. (California Travel Guide, 2015)

Entertainment & Arts

About sports and entertainment, California has more professional sports teams than any other state, and loyalties to NFL football -San Francisco 49ers-, NBA basketball -with the Warriors, the Lakers and the Clippers- and major-league baseball -with teams like the San Francisco Giants or the LA Dodgers- are very well established in society. Also relevant is the long skateboard and surf tradition.

California has produced and inspired several artists and its rich culture diversity has given birth to very different styles, genres and artist. However, they all often point out similar topics regarding both the California Dream and its imperfections. Concerning music, California has been protagonists of several songs from bands like the Beach Boys or the Mamas and the Papas to the Red Hot Chili Peppers. California's diversity has brought bands from very different genres. As for painters, while age of the suburbs development during the postwar American West, Californian painters captured the abstract forms of manufactured landscapes on canvas and pop artists captured the ethos of conspicuous consumerism, through Wayne Thiebaud's gumball machines, David Hockney's LA's pools and Ed Ruscha's studies of SoCal pop culture. Today's California contemporary art scene brings all these influences together with muralist-led social commentary and a dedication to craft and new-media milieu pierced by cutting-edge technology. (California Travel Guide, 2015) As for literature: two key authors of the Californian literature of the 20th century are Joan Didion and Charles Bukowski. (California Travel Guide, 2015)

ANNEX 3: THE 3 BRANCHES OF THE US GOVERNMENT BY USGOV.COM

Legislative Branch

The legislative branch enacts legislation, confirms or rejects presidential appointments, and has the authority to declare war. The legislative branch includes Congress, formed by the Senate and House of Representatives, and several agencies that provide support services to Congress. The Senate has two elected senators per state, totaling 100 senators. A senate term is six years and there's no limit to the number of terms an individual can serve. The House of Representatives has 435 elected representatives, which are divided among the 50 states in proportion to their total population. A representative serves a two-year term, and there's no limit to the number of terms an individual can serve.

Executive Branch

The executive branch performs and enforces laws. It constitutes of the president, vice president, the Cabinet, executive departments, independent agencies, and other boards, commissions, and committees. Let us examine the key roles of the executive branch. The president leads the country he (it has always been a man, so far) is both the head of state and the leader of the federal government, and is also commander-in-chief of the United States Armed Forces. The president serves a four-year term and can be elected no more than two times. The vice president supports the president and, if the president is unable to serve, the vice president becomes president. He/she can serve an unlimited number of four-year terms. Then, the Cabinet members serve as advisors to the president. They include the vice president and the heads of executive departments. Cabinet members are nominated by the president and must be approved by the Senate (with at least 51 votes).

Judicial Branch

The judicial branch is in charge of interpreting the meaning of laws, applying laws to individual cases, and also decides if laws violate the Constitution. The judicial branch is comprised of the Supreme Court and other federal courts. The Supreme Court is the highest court in the United States. Their justices are nominated by the president and must be approved by the Senate. It is the Congress that decides the number of justices. Currently, there are nine. There is no fixed term for justices. Finally, the Constitution grants Congress the authority to establish other federal courts. (USA Government. Branches of Government, S.N.)

ANNEX 4: REPUBLICAN AND DEMOCRAT PARTY FACTIONS

REPUBLICAN PARTY FACTIONS

Traditionalist	Carry views favorable to business, a strong national defense, and the business community. Favor cultural traditions, old-fashioned teaching methods, and natural law.
Fiscal Conservative	Call for a large reduction in government spending, free trade, and less economic regulation.
Social Conservative	Oppose abortion and same-sex marriage, and support a greater role of religious organizations in delivering welfare programs. Also known as the "religious right."
Paleoconservative	Generally socially and culturally conservative, and carry non-interventionist views on foreign policy.
Neoconservative	Promote an interventionist foreign policy to promote democracy and defend Israel.
Moderate	Generally fiscally conservative and socially moderate or liberal, with some supporting same-sex marriage, abortion, gun control, environmental regulation, and other liberal causes.
Liberal	Often support a liberal-to-moderate fiscal policy and liberal social causes.
Libertarian	Emphasize free markets, minimal social controls, and non-interventionism in foreign policy.

Elaborated with data provided by InfoGov.com

DEMOCRATIC PARTY FACTIONS

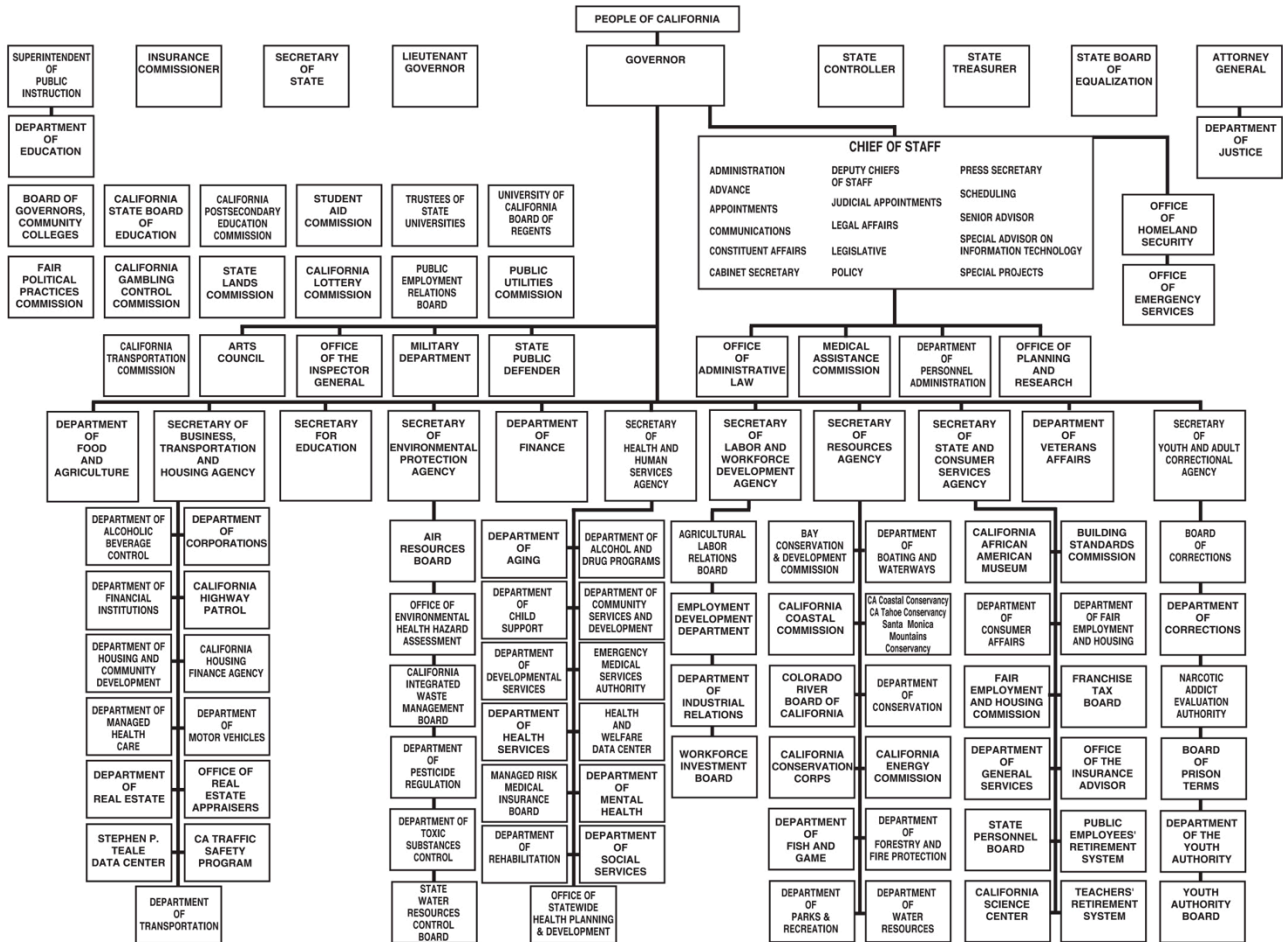
Progressive	Advocate a center-left economic and left-wing social agenda. Generally support government action as a means to establish social and economic equality.
Liberal	Generally advocate fair trade, a less militaristic foreign policy, and social liberalism.
Organized Labor	A critical component of the Democratic Party coalition that supplies a great deal of the money, political organization, and voting base of the party. Support unionized manufacturing jobs, raising the minimum wage, and promoting broad social programs.
Christian Left	Generally share many of the same economic and social policy goals of mainstream Democrats, but come from a religious Christian background.
Secular	Share a common belief in atheism, but otherwise represent a diverse group that includes fiscal conservatives.
Socialist	Support the Democratic Party in many of its policies in addition to espousing a socialist worldview.
Centrist	More supportive of using military force and reducing government welfare.
Conservative	Hold relatively conservative social and conservative views and are generally found in Southern and rural Western states. Also known as "Blue Dog Democrats."
Libertarian	Made up of civil liberties advocates and people against national debt. Often support Democrats because of their positions on issues like civil rights and the separation of church and state.

Elaborated with data provided by InfoGov.com

ANNEX 5: CALIFORNIA STATE GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

CALIFORNIA STATE GOVERNMENT - CURRENT ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

CALIFORNIA STATE GOVERNMENT - THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH



Source: California Department of Technology

ANNEX 6: DESCRIPTION OF THE CALIFORNIA POLITICAL CHALLENGES ON THE 21ST CENTURY

Political Challenge	Description
Multiculturalism & Immigration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Immigrants have been a convenience in California rather than a core piece of the social fabric.- Immigrants have been subject to nativist attacks.- Today's immigrants to California are the subject of divisive political debate. It emerges election after election.- Conservative voters demand all sorts of punitive actions against them- Key issue on Republican primaries- Incorporation of immigrant communities will have major political consequences for the state- Latinos has strengthened the Democratic Party in California- Major changes in citizenship may further alter the political system
Public Investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- California might lead the nation in public investment (particularly in schools, environment, transportation)- Latinos support public investment even if that means tax increases- Tax revolts: Conservatives managed to change the rules by which tax increases are approved = tax have disproportionate impact- As the state becomes more progressive there will be strong public sentiment for investment in infrastructure and education- New ways of raise revenue might be

	<p>explored</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There might be a revision of the strictures of the previously inviolated Proposition 13 - Great support for public investment since the state's electorate is generally progressive on social issues
Budget Gridlock ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The state is held hostage every budget cycle because a small minority can block the budget. That leads to ineffective government. - There could be a statewide measure to eliminate the two-thirds requirement for passing budget - There could be a statewide measure to eliminate the two-thirds requirement for new taxes
Partisan Gridlock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Democrats are dominant in contemporary California but their reign is by no means assured - California Republican Party has turned to its most conservative elements rather than following the lead of their popular moderate former governor, Schwarzenegger - As the Democrats gain power, Republicans act as a resistant block to Democratic proposals (through the two-thirds rule for the budget and limitations on majority votes for tax increases). If those structures eliminated, the Republican strategy

¹ A government, business or institution's inability to function at a normal level due either to complex or conflicting procedures within the administrative framework or to impending change in the business. (Investopedia.com)

	<p>could doom the party to irrelevance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Republicans stand outside the emerging consensus for public investment - Republicans are losing Latino support by their anti-immigrant rhetoric and resistance to supporting public education with tax dollars - Weakness of the state Republicans could easily lead Democrats to overreach. Although the state's electorate is generally progressive on social issues there are limits (in the 90's Democrats supported driver's licenses for undocumented residents, going well past the consensus of public opinion) - If taxes go too high to support public investment there will be a reaction - As a coastal party, Democrats are in disadvantage with the new suburban developments. Democrats have to be able to build strength in the growing Inland Empire. The leadership of the Democratic Party is from the Bay Area and Southern California, and they will have to learn the language of the moderate voters, up for grabs by both parties, who live in the suburban developments.
Drought	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - California's growth and shrinking water access are certain to create new regional politics of water scarcity that will affect the relationship between Northern and Southern California (the north has resented what it sees as the south's squandering of water.

Role in National Politics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If the Electoral College were revised nationwide, California would be a great prize in national politics. - Attempts to enact this reform only for California are properly seen as a partisan attempt to weaken the Democrats in national politics.
Offbeat Politicians & Media Politics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Because California's political parties have been weakly structured, and because there are numerous openings for creative political action unusual characters and career paths have emerged in the state's politics. - Knowledge of the media and how to reach the broad public are essential to reach the top in a state where politics is not a central activity of the public. Those who make it to the top of the system in California may well have an extraordinary sense of the media version of the public pulse. - In an age of media politics, with billionaires financing their own presidential campaigns, and with generals considering quests for the nation's highest office, California's offbeat politicians are not to be dismissed so lightly.

INSIDE THE WRITER'S ROOM

Behind the Scenes of *The Daily Show* and *The Colbert Report* with Writer Eric Drysdale

BY RACHAEL MASON • DECEMBER 14, 2010



Eric Drysdale wrote for *The Daily Show* for six years before helping to develop and then writing for *The Colbert Report*, where he currently works. You may recognize him as Colbert's stage manager "Bobby," although that character hasn't been seen since April of 2008, when Colbert ate him. Naturally.



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In addition to his work for *The Daily Show* and *The Colbert Report*, he's also created a 3-D ViewMaster show, "The Man with F.E.E.T.," which recently premiered in NYC and is **now available for order online**. He talked to me about breaking into the comedy writing game, his experience at *The Daily Show*, what it was like to develop *The Colbert Report*, and bringing comedy to the exciting field of ViewMasters.

Rachael Mason: What led you to comedy writing?

Eric Drysdale: I don't know. It was something I always wanted to do. I don't remember not wanting to do it. I think it came from moving around a lot. When I was a kid, we moved from place to place and I always had to make new friends. My sense of humor was the way in, because I wasn't going to do it by being the star athlete or the star academic or anything like that. So class clown worked. It didn't necessarily get me in with the most popular group of people, but it was a way to get to know people, or for people to get to know me.

RM: Do you remember the first comedy-related thing you did?

ED: I would get together with friends and do skits from *SNL* from the night before for family and friends. And at summer camp I did musicals and the

Numbers'

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drama program. I did standup for the first time at summer camp when I was 12, and it was terrible.

RM: When did it dawn on you that you could do it for a living?

ED: I don't know if I looked at it that way. I think I just did it. And then assumed that I could make a living. Which turned out to be wrong, because it certainly didn't happen right away, or as fast as I wanted it to.

RM: So what was your path then? What was your progression that led you to where you are now?

ED: I was in a community college in Vancouver, and a couple of friends who I had made a couple of short films in high school with, we saw an ad in a local paper, and they were looking for teens for a teen sketch comedy show. And we didn't have interest in being on camera so we went to the audition and brought writing packets and they hired us. I was 19 at the time. We worked for 7 or 8 months on this Canadian sketch show. And it was an education, for sure. We thought we were the greatest thing in the world, nineteen-year-old kids, getting hired and making a living doing that. And I think we were a little naïve and we were not quite ready. Of course we thought we were, because they said that we were, because they hired us. But we weren't. So there was



a lot of “Why aren’t you putting this thing that I wrote on TV?” Well, because it wasn’t right, of course. And the show wasn’t good.

RM: So that ended, and then what happened after that?

ED: Then I didn’t work for 12 years.

RM: What did you do during that lean 12-year period?

ED: I ended up at Emerson [College] after that, I did a sketch group there, and I did standup. And after that, I meant to move to New York immediately, but I ended up sidetracked to Montreal for a year. And while I was there I didn’t have anything to do. I was working weird little day jobs here and there. And just because I needed something to do, I would go and do standup at a couple of the clubs there. There were two English-speaking clubs. And I guess I did pretty well, because within 6 or 8 months I was middling for road comics, and I wasn’t getting paid a fortune, but I couldn’t believe that someone would pay me \$50 to tell jokes. It was very exciting. So I thought “Oh, this is easy, so I’ll go to New York and be a standup comic there.”

And I came to New York and moved in with a friend in the Village and started going to comedy clubs, and because I



had had this experience in Montreal, I thought that was what you do. But it doesn't work that way in New York -- there are a lot of comics and they are not necessarily looking for something different and I was doing some weird character-y or high concept stuff. I was poor -- I was a PA at an industrial film house, and all my friends were poor. And you'd have these bringer shows where you had to bring 10 people, and after a two or three times of asking my friends to spend \$50, I just sort of gave up. I just thought, "This is not worth it, I'm not getting anywhere, I am not feeling good about the kind of company I'm in." Like I didn't feel like I was in the right place and I didn't know there was another place where I should have been instead.

I stopped in '95 and started again in late '97, so there was about three years where I didn't do any comedy. Which was fine, because I had a lot to learn about just having a job and being an adult. And then I started doing standup again, and I found the alternative scene, which I hadn't known about, and I found like-minded people -- I performed at Luna Lounge, and then UCB opened up. I ended up there because of standup shows and some people would see me and bring me into their shows. Louis C.K. had seen me at Luna and put me up at UCB in his "Filthy Stupid Comedy Show," and that was a big boost. That was in '98 or



'99. From there I got invited to do Comedy Central's *Premium Blend* [standup showcase] -- my first TV thing. And by that point I had become kind of a known quantity in the standup world and managed to get someone at *The Daily Show* to pay attention to me.

RM: Were you constantly sending stuff out around that time? Did you have an agent?

ED: I was doing it on my own. Some people had shown interest in representing me, but I was working a day job and it was decent and -- I didn't want to do something that I didn't want to do just because it was comedy and I didn't want to go to LA. And one person asked me if I wanted to submit to the *Man Show* and there are like eleven reasons why I don't want to submit a packet for the *Man Show*. It's not my voice, I didn't want to move to LA and I said "No" and he said "Do you want to be a comedy writer or not?" which struck me as so wrong.

RM: Do you remember what your *Daily Show* packet was at that time?

ED: The show was very different back then. But the packet was three headlines. It was a much more regimented show then, so they had "This Just In" which had like six jokes in it. Almost magazine style. I



remember I wrote one story about the Vatican having a phone card, because that was big news, I guess, at the time, and I wrote something on the Golan Heights, but I don't know why that was funny. But I guess it worked.

RM: So you started at the *Daily Show*. What was the job like when you got hired?

ED: I started in January 2000. And Jon Stewart had just started the July before. It was not a political show. So it was in that transition period. It was very different from what it is now. I was absolutely scared shitless at first. It took years to become comfortable doing what I was doing there. And also the job changed, because the show changed so quickly. I mean I remember my first couple of weeks there, we did a story about a guy with the longest fingernails in the world, and a model living in a glass house and really important things like that. But once the 2000 recount started, Jon [Stewart] began to see this other side of the show, bringing it out, which was very exciting to be a part of. I mean when Steve Carell got on John McCain's bus, we felt like we had crashed the gates in such a huge way. That was really super exciting, and then we did the midterm elections, and just the reputation of the show kept growing and growing.

When Stephen [Colbert] was asked to



do this spin off [*The Colbert Report*], they asked me to go almost as a consultant, because I had worked with Stephen at *The Daily Show*, and he said I should bring my voice, meaning Stephen's voice, over to the new show. He used the words "to infect the staff with my -- Stephen's -- voice." And the idea always was I would go back, because nobody knew, I mean it could have been a huge failure. So I had promised to go back, and then it worked out that I got to stay. I think that saved me from burning out in a huge way and I credit my bosses for understanding that. It was really fun to be part of creating that and being there at the beginning of something.

RM: Can you talk about the process of that?

ED: There was a small group of five of us [writers] – Allison [Silverman], the head writer, the [executive producer] Rich Dahm, and Stephen, of course. It's amazing how dead on Stephen got it right away. I mean there are definitely things from those first couple shows that don't exist on the show anymore, but, for instance, the "Word" on the first show, it's very much like the "Word" now, to a degree– the format is the same. It happened really, really fast. And I give a lot of credit to Stephen and Allison -- they just knew what they wanted and made it happen.



And everybody was worried, “Is it too much Stephen?” and that was the reason I ended up on the show at first [as the character, Bobby, the stage manager]. We were doing these test shows, before the set was even built. We sat in the head writer’s office and the graphics guys came in with a computer with the graphics ready to go, and the videotape guys would come in with a videotape, and press the button when it was time to introduce a clip. So while that was going on, and because I was the only person in the room that he knew, he would turn to me and say “What do you think, Bobby?” and I would be forced to come up with something. So that became part of the show. Of course, as it turns out Stephen is perfectly capable of carrying a show, which I guess in hindsight nobody should be surprised by, but at the time...

We had this plan where we were going to have this backstage element to the show. And it sort of existed in the beginning but it became clear we didn’t need it, because Stephen is really good and people don’t mind watching him for half an hour.

RM: What is the difference between the day-to-day on *The Daily Show* and *The Colbert Report*?

ED: They are fairly similar. I think that

the *Daily Show* is a little more day-to-day reactive than *Colbert Report* is. In terms of the process, I will explain it for *Colbert* since they are more or less the same. We have a writer's meeting or two in the morning and pitch ideas for the show or come in with a story we think is interesting but that we don't have a particular take on yet, and everyone throws in jokes. The head writer culls those down. Then we meet with Stephen and then he picks the ones he likes. We break off into groups of two and then write for the morning. Those assignments are due around one o'clock so we usually have two hours to write a piece. Usually the morning is for something that day -- something more reactive to that day's news. Then in the afternoon we do longer term segments that aren't as timely, like "Cheating Death," or field segments. The "Word" is the toughest part and it's gotten tougher because it's become more structured in a way — the way we structure an argument has become more set. If we're pitching something and we find it has enough of a shape to it and can sustain an argument for that long, we'll turn it into a "Word."

RM: How does rewriting work there?

ED: There is a lot of rewriting that happens during the course of the day. When you're working in the morning you are putting together your best shot

at getting a skeleton down, making sure you hit all the issues, and, if you're lucky, three or four blockbuster jokes that will make it in. So in the afternoon, the head writers and Stephen will go through and say, there is a missing piece of information that will make the story make sense, or more often, that's a really good piece of information, we need a different joke off of it. We write a lot of jokes every day. Especially if you look at the shows early on in the run, there are fewer jokes. It was more about Stephen's attitude and character. But at a certain point it became too easy to have him say something that a guy like him would say, and the focus became more and more about jokes, which is great because I think the show is really funny. But it's also a lot of work.

RM: You have also done your own projects, including standup, while you were working on both *the Daily Show* and *Colbert Report*.

ED: I think I did it for a while because I had this leftover worry about my career. It didn't matter that I had an Emmy at this point. If I wasn't out there being "Eric Drysdale" and telling everyone who Eric Drysdale was, I would disappear and nobody would ever hire me again. I honestly didn't have any idea what I would do after *Colbert*, and I still don't. And that was the reason I kept performing for all

those years, doing standup. I never loved doing standup which took me a long time to realize. I really just stopped a couple of years ago.

RM: What led you to doing those other shows [at UCB] that are more sketch-oriented? [“The Drysdales Present: A Comedy Show,” “The Daryl Hall and John Oates Mumbo Jumbo Hour” and “The Chipperton Family Vocal-Tainers’ Shooby-Dooby-Dooby Hour.”]

ED: The political aspect of *The Daily Show* crept up on us and I happen to give a shit about politics. And because it was such a big part of my job, I became very invested in having a point of view on the news. And my job still today is “find the worst news and try to make it funny.” And after six or seven years it really started to get to me. It was an antidote to that. I wanted to do something silly. The things I did outside ended up being a vent for my sillier side. And I did The Chippertons show absolutely just for the fun of it. I loved the source material, the 70’s variety show stuff, and I always wanted to do it and so I did it. And I got to take it to Aspen [comedy festival] and it was really fun and rewarding.

RM: What is your upcoming project, “The Man With F.E.E.E.T: about? How did it evolve?

ED: I took up 3D photography as a

hobby in 1995. I found, in my wife's grandmother's closet, a 3D camera and just started shooting with it for fun and I always thought I would do something funny with it, but I never really figured out what that would be. It's just something I've been doing on the side for a long time. And shooting on slide film, it's very arcane technology from the 50's. It's this very clunky analog, time consuming process. But when you see the results of it, it's very striking. So I really enjoyed the process. What really attracted me to the medium was looking at these analog slides on a viewer, instead of on a screen, because it is a different thing. So I went back to the View-Master. And I wrote an original story, kind of a spoof of "The Six Million Dollar Man." I wrote a three-reel View-Master set with a little story booklet, and I premiered it with a staged reading. People will click through viewers along with it.

RM: Do you have any advice for people who want to get into comedy writing?

ED: I get asked this question all the time. And what it really comes down to is: Be really good. The only time that anything ever happened was when I did something that somebody noticed and asked me about it. And when nobody's noticing, work on being better. And at this point, there is really no excuse, there are so many outlets. You can get together with friends and

put a sketch on YouTube. There are no barriers to entry. That's nice in some ways and it's also terrifying in some ways, because it's harder and harder to distinguish yourself and anyone can be funny for five minutes on YouTube and how do you make a career out of that? So, I guess, be really funny. A lot.

RM: Any comedy you recommend?

ED: It's very easy to get caught up in "What comedy should I see?" and I think you can learn as much by seeing things that are not comedy. Reading things. I go to museums a lot. You have to know something about the world that you are making fun of, so the more experience you have with things other than comedy the better. Also, many skills are hugely transferable to comedy. I always recommend that people find and nurture passions for other things, too.

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