

PARKS AND RECREATION
"Kids Talent Show"

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COLD OPEN

FADE IN:

INT. PARKS DEPARTMENT OFFICE - MONDAY - MORNING

The office has been decorated like a kindergarten classroom. Childish motivational posters and coloring book pictures all labeled "By Andy" cover the walls.

TOM, APRIL, ANDY, DONNA, and JERRY work at their desks as FOUR KIDS run around, driving April crazy.

LESLIE TALKING HEAD

LESLIE

This week I volunteered the parks department to mentor a few kids because the Pawnee after-school program was shut down for the week. Pawnee kids aren't exactly, well, fit, so the building eventually collapsed.

EXT. PAWNEE AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM BUILDING- CONTINUOUS

The building is literally in shambles.

LESLIE TALKING HEAD - CONTINUOUS

LESLIE

So that's what happens when a building exceeds its weight capacity. I should probably go make sure nobody makes any fat jokes.

INT. PARKS DEPARTMENT OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

BEN walks in and sees the kids.

BEN

Oh, no.

BEN TALKING HEAD

BEN (CONT'D)

I never told Leslie this, but I have a tendency to lose kids. When I was nine years old, I lost my little brother for seven hours at a bowling alley.

(MORE)

BEN (CONT'D)

When I was fifteen, I lost my two little cousins at a Toys-R-Us for an entire weekend. When I was nineteen, I left my niece on a bus. I just walked off the bus and forgot she was there...My parents don't really expect grandkids anytime soon.

ANDY TALKING HEAD

ANDY

I love kids. And of course someday I want my own. But don't tell April that. You know, it's one of those subjects in marriage that you avoid talking about at all costs.

APRIL TALKING HEAD

APRIL

I hate kids. I don't want them.
(and then)
This week's gonna suck.

END OF COLD OPEN

ACT ONEINT. PARKS DEPARTMENT OFFICE - LATER

The kids are lined up. Leslie addresses them and the others.

LESLIE

(to everyone)

So everyone will get a kid today! And I decided we're gonna have a talent show on Friday, because who doesn't love a good talent show?!

APRIL

That sounds like work for us.

LESLIE

(ignoring this)

Okay, so Ann and I will be with Isabella.

ISABELLA, (9, prissy) steps forward, arms crossed.

LESLIE (CONT'D)

Andy and April will be spending the week with... Flynn.

Flynn, (9, excited tomboy) jumps up.

FLYNN

That's me!

She bumps fists with Andy. April puts her fist out, then retracts it before Flynn can bump.

APRIL

Oops. That was your only chance.

LESLIE

And Tom will be with...Denzel.

TOM

There's a kid named Denzel?! Like Denzel Washington?!

Leslie looks awkwardly back and forth between Denzel (9, indifferent, African American) and Harold (11, tubby, Caucasian).

DENZEL

You don't have to pretend to be guessing who that is.

TOM

Cha-ching! I get the cool one! What up, my brother.

He stands up to greet Denzel, who's way taller than Tom.

LESLIE

Wait, why do we have four kids? I only signed up for three.

ISABELLA

(pointing to Harold)

That's Harold. He needed somewhere to go because nobody loves him.

LESLIE

That's ridiculous. I'm sure your parents love you.

HAROLD

No. My mom didn't even stop the car when she dropped me off here.

TOM

(realizing)

Holy crap, Jerry! He looks just like you!

DONNA

Yeah, he totally looks like a Jerry Jr.

APRIL

Harold, that's what you're gonna look like in eighty years.

JERRY

Eighty years? How old do you think I am?

TOM

Jerry, stand next to him. Let me take a picture!

LESLIE

Okay, Harold. You'll be with Donna.

DONNA

What? Oh, no way! I did not sign up for this! Leslie, I have important things to do today outside the office.

LESLIE

I'll give you the rest of the day off.

Donna stares at Leslie, waiting for more.

LESLIE (CONT'D)

And I'll give you a twenty-dollar gift certificate to Chili's.

DONNA

I love my baby back ribs. Fine, I'll take him, but only for today.

ISABELLA

What do we get if we win?

LESLIE

Pawnee Community College has generously donated a fifty-five dollar scholarship!

ISABELLA

Ew.

5

INT. LESLIE'S OFFICE - LATER

5

Leslie, Ann and Isabella.

LESLIE

So, Izzie--

ISABELLA

Isabella. Are you two a lesbian couple?

LESLIE

No...although I'm flattered that you think I could...

(peering at Ann awkwardly)

Never mind. So Isabella here is a dancer. Ann, you used to be a dancer, right?

ANN

I mean, when I was five...

LESLIE

Well, I'm going to choreograph a dance for you two.

ANN

Are you really qualified to do that?

LESLIE

Um, I did choreograph my high school's
spring musical my junior year.

6

LESLIE TALKING HEAD

6

LESLIE

Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor
Dreamcoat.

(beat)

It was the only show that wasn't "too
gay" for Pawnee High School.

Off her deadpan, "that's the gayest show of all time"
look...

INT. PARKS DEPARTMENT OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Flynn, Andy and April eat popsicles.

APRIL

(to Flynn)

So do you, like, have any talent?

ANDY

What do you like to do for fun, Flynn?

FLYNN

I've written a bunch of books. Maybe I
could read one on stage!

APRIL

No, no books. This isn't the sixteenth
century!

ANDY

Yeah, let's think of something practical.
What else do you like to do?

FLYNN

I like eating.

ANDY

Okay, now we're getting somewhere. What
else?

FLYNN

I like watching monster movies, like
Godzilla and King Kong.

ANDY

Yes, now that's better than books! So how can we turn that into a talent?

EXT. PARKS DEPARTMENT OFFICE - COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

Tom shines a flashlight in Denzel's face.

TOM

You better get used to the spotlight, Denzel. YOU are gonna be a star.

DENZEL

I don't really like people looking at me.

TOM

(laughing)

What?! Good one, my new friend-zel. Now, I have a plan that'll blow everyone's MINDS. All the haterz are gonna be BEGGING for your autograph.

DENZEL

I don't have any haters.

TOM

Sure you do! So, what's your favorite Denzel Washington movie?

DENZEL

I don't know.

TOM

I'm thinking we could do a scene by scene rendition of one of his films. How about you be Dr. Jerome Davenport and I'll be Antwone Fisher.

DENZEL

I've never even seen that movie.

TOM

Fine, I'll be Tom Hanks. You be Joe Miller. We'll do a remake of "Philadelphia."

DENZEL

You look nothing like Tom Hanks.

INT. CHILI'S GRILL AND BAR - SIMULTANEOUS

Donna and Harold share a rack of baby back ribs.

DONNA

So, Harold. Let's get two things straight. One, I'm doing this for the ribs. These are damn good ribs. And two, I had plans for today, and just because I have you, doesn't mean I'm gonna cancel. So we're gonna take a field trip. To a place you've never been before.

HAROLD

Where are we gonna go?

EXT. PAWNEE STATE PRISON - LATER

Harold and Donna walk towards the prison.

DONNA

I just gotta visit a friend. Don't worry. This will be good for you.

Harold GULPS.

EXT. SWEETUMS FACTORY - CONTINUOUS

ANDY TALKING HEAD

Andy eats an ice cream bar.

ANDY

We know what Flynn's talent will be, but it's a SECRET. First we gotta eat an enormous amount of ice cream bars. So I went to the Sweetums gift shop and spent my life savings on 682 ice cream bars and popsicles. This week is gonna be amazing!

INT. PARKS DEPARTMENT OFFICE - TUESDAY - DAY

Donna and Jerry are working. Harold's nearby. Leslie approaches them.

LESLIE

You took Harold to a prison yesterday?

DONNA

The kid had a blast! He loved it.

HAROLD

Yeah, Chico, Spider and Walter showed me how to properly throw a dagger knife. And I taught them how to play the harmonica!

DONNA

You want to go there again today?

HAROLD

Yeah!

LESLIE

No, that is not happening. Jerry, I need you to take care of Harold.

JERRY

Oh, all right. But what should I do with him?

LESLIE

You work for the Parks Department! Take him to the playground. Everyone needs exercise, right?

nd Isabella enter. Andy has chocolate fudge smeared all over his face.

ANDY

Hey, can you guys help us out? We have four days to eat 597 more ice cream bars!

Ron hears this from his office and walks out.

RON

Son, it would be my pleasure to help you on this journey.

Ron opens a chocolate nutty bar. April shoves a popsicle in front of Jerry's face.

APRIL

Here, Jerry. Help us out.

JERRY

But I'm a diabetic.

LESLIE

Do it for the kids, Jerry!

JERRY

But you just told me I should exercise.

ISABELLA

Damn it, Jerry!

LESLIE

(impressed)
Thank you, Isabella.

INT. PARKS DEPARTMENT OFFICE - COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

Tom and Denzel argue.

TOM

Okay, I'll be Colonel Robert Gould Shaw
a.k.a. Matthew Broderick a.k.a. Ferris
Bueller, and you be Private Trip and
we'll do the last scene from "Glory."

DENZEL

No. Who's Ferris Bueller?

TOM

Who's Ferris Bueller?! This is what your
fans are expecting from you! Do you want
to be booed off stage?!

Denzel looks like he couldn't care less.

TOM TALKING HEAD

TOM

I may have been booed off stage once - in
a fifth-grade talent show. Apparently
"Don't Go Breaking My Heart" is supposed
to be a duet.

EXT. PARKS DEPARTMENT - COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

Tom and Denzel continue to argue.

TOM

Fine, Denzel. Be a little lame dude with
the coolest name ever! What on earth do
you want to do, then?

DENZEL

(ponders, and then)
I want to do poetry.

TOM

(laughing)
Poetry! That's hysterical!

Tom laughs more until he realizes Denzel isn't joking.

TOM (CONT'D)

You really want to do poetry? At a talent
show...Wait, like Slam Poetry. Of course,
that's what you mean! We'll slam it up!

INT. PARKS DEPARTMENT OFFICE - CONTINUOUSANDY TALKING HEAD

Andy eats a lemon popsicle.

ANDY

It's day two of Operation Eat 682 Ice Cream Bars and Popsicles. We only have 554 to go. There's nothing to this! This mission is awesome!

But physically, Andy does not look awesome at all.

INT. PAWNEE HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - CONTINUOUS

BIG BAND MUSIC (ideally "Sing, Sing, Sing") BLARES as Leslie shows Ann and Isabella their "dance," which appears to be a random set of motions.

LESLIE

One, two, kick ball change, fix, six, jazz hands, jazz hands, jazz hands.

ISABELLA

(to Ann)

We have to do this in front of PEOPLE?

ANN

I know it seems silly and...totally illogical, but it'll be fun.

Ben enters and watches. Leslie finishes and he APPLAUDS.

ISABELLA

Ooh. Who's that?

ANN

Ben. Leslie's boyfriend.

ISABELLA

Seriously? He's... so cute. I wanna touch his hair.

LESLIE

(to Ben)

How was it? Too many jazz hands?

BEN

Of course not. You can never have too many jazz hands.

He turns to Ann and Isabella, who shake their heads.

BEN (CONT'D)
You must be Izzie.

LESLIE
Oh, she doesn't like being called--

ISABELLA
Ben can call me whatever he wants.

ISABELLA TALKING HEAD

ISABELLA
Ben's hot. Not cute. Hot. And I WILL
dance with him instead of Ann, no matter
what it takes.

EXT. PAWNEE PARK - PLAYGROUND - SIMULTANEOUS

There's a man who appears to be stuck in a tunnel.

REVEAL: Jerry in the tunnel, grunting, struggling to
move.

JERRY
Gosh, dang it.

HAROLD TALKING HEAD

HAROLD
Jerry took me to the playground to play
hide and go seek. Thirty seconds later,
he got stuck.

Behind Harold, Jerry tries to move, but no luck.

HAROLD (CONT'D)
That was three hours ago. I'm just gonna
walk home.

Harold walks away from the park.

INT. PARKS DEPARTMENT OFFICE - WEDNESDAY

Leslie addresses Tom, Andy, April, Ben and the kids.

LESLIE
Does anyone know where Jerry is?

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. PAWNEE PARK - PLAYGROUND - CONTINUOUS

THREE TEENAGERS hit Jerry's butt with baseball bats.

TEENAGERS
Piñata! Piñata!

JERRY
I'm not a piñata! I'm a real man!

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. PARKS DEPARTMENT OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Everyone, including Harold, shrugs their shoulders.

CHRIS walks in.

LESLIE
Chris, you love kids, right?

CHRIS
I love everyone!

LESLIE
Perfect. Meet Harold. Can you watch him?

CHRIS
Literally nothing would make me happier!

INT. LESLIE'S OFFICE - LATER

Leslie works while Ann and Isabella rehearse next to her.

LESLIE
Good, good. Kick higher, Ann! Higher!

ANN
(struggling)
I'm not five anymore!

Isabella suddenly sticks her foot out. Ann trips over it and topples over.

LESLIE
(rushing over)
Ann! Are you okay? Oh my gosh! Somebody get me a nurse!

END OF ACT ONE