

A Thesis Presented to  
The Faculty of Alfred University

King of Hearts: A Live Radio Show

by

Rachel Romack

In Partial Fulfillment of  
the Requirements for  
The Alfred University Honors Program  
April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Under the Supervision of:

Chair: Dr. Becky Prophet, Professor of Theatre

Committee Members:

Dr. Steve Crosby, Professor of Theatre

Dr. Nancy Furlong, Professor of Psychology

## Table of Contents

<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Final Draft of Script.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Rough Draft of Script.....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Original Rehearsal Schedule.....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>Final Rehearsal Schedule.....</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>Director’s Script with Rehearsal Notes.....</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>Example of Run-Through Notes.....</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>WALF and Nevins Shows Responses</b> .....	<b>82</b>
<b>Props/Sound/Lighting/Scenic/Costume Lists.....</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>Poster.....</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>Playbill.....</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>Appendix, Rehearsal Log Samples.....</b>	<b>91</b>
<b>DVD</b>	

As a double major in both theatre and psychology, I constantly feel my attention and interest pulled in two directions: creative expression and scientific curiosity. Naturally, because of this I wanted to create an experience that would combine the two; a creative endeavor that would be analyzed through a psychological perspective for my senior project and honors thesis. It would have been enough to simply have written a radio show and held a staged reading. It would have been enough to propose, conduct, and then present a psychological study. But I committed to writing, directing, and producing a live radio show because I wanted to stretch myself creatively. Additionally, I wanted to analyze the differences in performance when a cast of actors performs in front of an indirect audience, or, in this particular case, a radio studio compared to when the same cast of actors perform in front of a live audience they can with which they can interact. As a performer myself, I know only what I perceive to be differences in performance quality that depends on the presence or absence of an audience. Facilitating a project where a direct audience was not completely necessary allowed me to interview actors about their own personal performative experiences. While this particular section will focus on the theatrical aspects of this endeavor as well as the creative processes involved, I will examine *King of Hearts* through a psychological perspective in a later section labeled “WALF and Nevins Shows Responses”.

As with any form of expression, there were a multitude of things, experiences, people, and reasons that inspired me to write *King of Hearts*. One of the biggest inspirations for writing a radio show rather than a stage play was my love for *Prairie Home Companion*, a show I had grown up listening to. The summer previous to the start of my senior year, I had the chance to see *Prairie Home Companion* performed live. This experience solidified the idea that I wanted to write and direct a live radio show as part of my honors thesis. There was no real inspiration for

me to write about a human organ trafficker who cannot find love other than the sheer fact I thought the idea was funny and interesting enough for me to actually want to follow through with writing an entire script based on that particular character. I did, however, find inspiration for the lesson Allen learns by the end of the story and the love (or the painful lack thereof) stories of the side characters from experiences and events close friends of mine and I myself had gone through. I wanted to write about love because it is something that unifies everyone's human experience, whether it be platonic, familial, romantic, or self-love. I believe as college students, the majority of us are, in some form or another, constantly preoccupied with love because we are all in the midst of learning and understanding what exactly love is. Inspiration for and my commitment to the news stories and the news anchors came much later than that of *King of Hearts*. I studied abroad in the United Kingdom for the first half of my senior year. During that time, I would be regaled with stories of events on and around Alfred's campus. These stories made me think how great it would be to have a radio show that was dedicated to the small happenings on campus, and then I realized *I* could do that, although I did not fully decide to make it a part of *King of Hearts* until after the spring semester had started. While half of the news stories were completely fictional, half of them were actual events that did occur on campus. Inspiration to write a full show was only half the battle, in terms of putting up this show.

While there were multiple past productions in Alfred that inspired me to not only do two radio shows in WALF, but direct and produce the live show as well, the past productions that gave me the most confidence to pursue this venture were *Campfire Stories are Best Told in Whispers*, *Letters to No One*, and *Almost, Maine*. The most recent production was *Campfire Stories are Best Told in Whispers*, the senior project and honors thesis of J.J. Davis, which was presented in the spring semester of 2015. *Campfire Stories are Best Told in Whispers* served as a

motivator for me because J.J. faced a number of issues while trying to direct and produce the show, but in spite of the setbacks she faced, she persevered and ended up putting up a great show. *Letters to No One* was Becca Hayes's senior project in the spring of 2014. *Letters to No One* was incredibly inspiring to me because this was the first full length show I had ever seen that was completely written by a student. The entire show was beautifully crafted and I found it to be creatively inspiring. However, not only did Becca Hayes's show serve as a creative spur, but it simultaneously made me realize that I could, in fact, write, direct, and produce a show of my very own. Finally, participating in the university's production of *Almost, Maine* by John Cariani, which was directed by Holly Durand in the spring of 2013, motivated me to direct because Holly Durand was a student director who was able to take control of and direct a large cast of student actors. Being a part of the aforementioned cast, I learned that it was actually feasible for a student to take on such a large project and successfully put up an impressive production.

The writing process was a new experience for me. While I am very comfortable writing academic papers and formal reflection papers, I had very little experience writing creatively at a collegiate level. I started to write the initial script in the last couple weeks of my fall semester while I was studying abroad in England and then finished it, after a lot of hemming and hawing, over winter break before coming back to Alfred to start the spring semester. Originally, the script was only 13 pages long, not including sound effect cues, and the news segment was only a vague idea in the back of my mind. After the spring semester started, a few weeks before I planned to hold auditions, I finally decided to commit to the idea of creating two newscaster characters and writing the news stories that would precede the "drama" portion of the show. The first four news stories were easy enough to come up with and they were written the day after I had cast my

show. The creation of the script was one of the most daunting and arduous tasks of the whole experience. I found writing daunting because I had really never done anything on this scale before so I was not sure where or how to start. I considered it an arduous process because I would write in spurts; for a few minutes the dialogue would come easily for me and then the ease would stop and I would be left sitting in front of my laptop for long periods of time racking my brain to think of what to write next. However, in the end I realized that writing a script must be similar to giving creative birth; a long, laborious procedure that yields satisfying fruit. The editing process, by comparison, was much easier for me and more enjoyable. I really liked objectively reading the script over for clunky phrasing, inconsistencies, typos, and bad jokes. The most editing occurred after the first read-through. After hearing the whole script read aloud by my actors, I realized *King of Hearts* was in need of some polishing. My protagonist, Allen, who was supposed to be rather naïve and oddly romantic was coming off as very strange and rather creepy and my side characters were only serving as temporary distractions from Allen's odd behaviors. Looking at the script with fresh eyes allowed me to finesse the dialogue and, more importantly, round out and color my characters and give them lives of their own.

Holding auditions and subsequently casting the show was also a novel experience for me. I held auditions in C.D Smith, the black box theatre located in Miller I along with the other student directors hoping to cast actors for their Directing II finals. The other directors and I had a relatively small turn out; only fifteen actors showed up to audition over the course of two days. Luckily, I had no problems casting for *King of Hearts* as I only needed four actors (two men and two women) to fill all of the roles in the show. Watching different people come in the theatre and read different parts for my shows and the other directors' shows was a bit odd at first because I had never sat in and objectively watched other performers audition that I was not competing

against for a part. After settling in and learning to simply enjoy watching the auditions it became increasingly easier for me to be able to tell whether or not I was interested in considering an actor for a part in my show. Some of the qualities I was looking for in all of my actors were a willingness to be silly, the ability to do different accents, and competence with improvisation; not many actors exhibited all three of these traits. After both audition dates had passed, the other directors and I gathered together to discuss casting. This was a simple task because all of us wanted different actors for our shows and we ended up with little to no overlapping actors. Luckily for me, none of my actors were cast in more than two shows. In the end, I decided to cast Patrick Soper and Maggie Longchamp as the news anchors and various side characters, Chloe Theodosiou as Carol, and Brian O'Connor as Allen, the lead of *King of Hearts*.

I started holding rehearsals shortly after casting was settled. I decided early on that I would be utilizing the Rod Brown room to begin the rehearsal process, and then move into the WALF studio and Nevins Theater as time went on. I chose the Rod Brown room because it was much more easily bookable than the WALF studio and Nevins Theater. Another reason for rehearsing in Rod Brown was the fact that Rod Brown is equipped with a plethora of props and set furniture that my actors could use if they so wished. The first rehearsal was, of course, a read-through. After the full read-through, the cast and I discussed logistics: what to expect with a radio show, what kind of sound effects they would be making, and how much time per week rehearsals would take up. After the read-through, I decided to break the cast up into two teams: Patrick and Maggie; the newscasters and bit characters and Brian and Chloe; the leading *King of Hearts* characters. This was done so I could focus on developing the characters and their voices with the actors without wasting other group's time. I would hold one rehearsal each week per team and then one full cast rehearsal each week to work on things as a whole group. I did,

however, warn the cast that after the first month or so, we would then add more individual rehearsal time as well as an extra group rehearsal per week. Rehearsals went pretty smoothly for the first half of the project. I had a lot of fun working the teams and the cast as a whole. I was also given a lot of good feedback in terms of tweaking clumsily phrased lines. I dedicated entire rehearsals to character work, voice work, physicalizing lines and using gesture, and then eventually making sound effects and working with props. As the rehearsal process went on and my actors and I became increasingly busier as the semester went on, rehearsals occasionally had to be cancelled and rescheduled or shortened, however, despite these changes did not weaken morale or greatly hinder the rehearsal process. After the halfway mark, I added an extra full cast rehearsal per week. This extra rehearsal really made a difference in the rate at which we were making progress in tying the show segments together. It also helped the two teams come together more seamlessly into a legitimate full cast. It also gave the cast and I a better idea of what the show would sound like as a whole and what really needed fine tuning. During the final days of rehearsal, I held three dress rehearsals. The first two were before we performed on WALF, the radio station. I held the first dress rehearsal in the Rod Brown acting studio because I wanted to first run a speed through (a run of the show were the actors say and do everything at twice the normal speed) and then do a full run of the show with blocking and costume changes. I held the second dress rehearsal in the WALF studio in order to give my actors a final chance to get used to the space and become more comfortable with talking into DJ microphones. Both dress rehearsals went smoothly and I felt confident both my cast and I were ready for the shows.

Like a good number of the other aspects of this project, directing and producing were both relatively new jobs for me. In the past I had directed short scenes and sketches for the Alfredian Dramatists and I had co-produced my own radio show, *Michigan Munchies*, but I had

not directed or produced anything of this scale before. Because of this, *King of Hearts* acted as a crash course for both directing and producing. In terms of directing, I learned to always be patient, to guide actors rather than force, and to remain critical yet supportive during rehearsal. It occurred to me that my directing style is similar to the person-centered, or client-centered, approach to therapy. This is because I heavily rely on focusing on my actors' senses of worth and value as a performer and try to provide them with a judgement free rehearsal zone which enables them to easily connect to their character and themselves. Directing my first one act was very different from self-directing scenes and sketches I had been in for two large reasons: the first being I was not in the show and the second being I had never directed anything this long before. I found myself constantly thinking about the pace of the show and worrying that my actors were not articulating enough. As a performer attempting to be a director, I found it difficult to resist the urge to give my actors line readings when scenes were not quite working. Nevertheless, I did not give in to that urge and allowed my actors to work things out themselves. Producing was a new, hefty task as well. I had to coordinate the schedules of my cast to arrange rehearsals, book rehearsal spaces and the show venues, design and print my own posters, and personally advocate for my show to drum up publicity. I also had to create the social media publicity, design my own programs, find ushers, and run the entire sound tech for both the WALF shows and the live show. I had no idea producing entailed so many responsibilities.

Like the protagonist in a well written piece of dramatic literature, I inevitably encountered my fair share of setbacks and consequently find ways to overcome them. As a first-time director, working with unexperienced and shy actors was a challenge. One of my actors had never been in a play before and one of my actresses had not done theatre in a long time so she would get really self-conscious during full cast rehearsals. To help my unexperienced actor, I had

a long talk with him about what to expect during the live show and coached him through some of the stranger scenes in the show. I also made sure he felt very solid with his character work and taught him some different warm ups to get into character. After the first couple rehearsals, he was no longer worried about performing poorly in comparison to his cast mates. In order to help my actress overcome her shyness, I made sure to be very supportive of her character choices. I also started holding more full cast rehearsals which helped her become comfortable with being “silly” in front of people she was not close friends with. While both of these things helped a little bit, this particular actress did not fully overcome her self-consciousness until I started having one-on-one talks and short coaching sessions with her. After she and I had a long conversation about her characters and her feelings of shyness which stemmed from a fear of inadequacy as an actress, she started to blossom and embrace her “silliness”. Another hindrance to *King of Hearts* was the initial feeling of separation within the cast. For the first few weeks of rehearsal I divided the cast in two in order to efficiently focus on character work and work on the creation of different character voices. This led to the cast feeling like two casts and an initial lack of a sense of ensemble. This was overcome by cast bonding exercises and the addition of an extra full cast rehearsal per week. Using the medium of radio also presented some small problems for my cast. None of my cast members had ever used radio as a medium for expression before, so understandably, some feelings of apprehension were evoked by this fact. I did my best to dispel these feelings by explaining what it would be like to be on the radio and telling them what to expect when you’re performing to an invisible audience. I also held rehearsals in the WALF studio so they could get used to the space and the idea of talking into a microphone while performing. The biggest problems I faced throughout the entire process, however, were all the issues I had trying to book Nevins Theater for my live performance venue. I had originally

requested the space for a March show in the fall semester via email. When I came back to Alfred's campus in the spring semester, the people who were in charge of booking the space had lost my reservation and therefore I lost my original show date. I quickly tried to reserve the space again for a later March date, but this time I received no reply as to whether or not I could book the space. Finally, I decided to visit the people in charge of the space in person. It was only then that I learned the space was booked for the dates I had requested and I had to settle for reserving the space for the first weekend in April. However, there was a problem with the April date: the first weekend of April would be the beginning of tech week for Arcadia, the mainstage production I was in at the time. Once again, I was forced to move the show date further back into April and pay the Nevins people another visit to ensure my third reservation. During my third visit I made sure to reserve Nevins for the entire day starting at approximately 10:45 in the morning. Reserving the space that early in the day would allow me to get into the space and run sound tech before the actors and my honors committee arrived for a final dress rehearsal starting at 11 am. All was going well until the week of the show, when I returned to meet with the Nevins people to make sure my reservation was still there and it seemed that they had somehow accidentally reserved Nevins under my name for the wrong dates. This was quickly rectified at my clarification and luckily the space was open for the date I actually wanted to use it. When the date of the final dress rehearsal and show came all was not well in terms of booking the venue. While I had booked the space starting at 10:45 am, the engineering college had been double booked to use the space that morning as well. I was not able to get into the space until approximately 11:15 am, a full thirty minutes later than I was scheduled and therefore was not able to run sound tech before the actors and my honors committee alike came into the rehearsal. Because of this, the final dress rehearsal not only started late, but was also very rough in terms of

tech and acting performance. After the final dress rehearsal, I gather my actors together and gave them a pep talk stating that even though we had a rough dress rehearsal, we would have a great show that evening so they should not worry about the show. After the actors left, I stayed in Nevins all afternoon so I could work out all the sound and microphone glitches that had happened during the dress rehearsal.

My honors committee ameliorated the more difficult portions of this journey. Becky Prophet was always willing to give advice and lend a listening ear whenever my stress levels rose or unforeseen complications arose. She also gave me some good writing pointers for ways that I could strengthen the script. Steve Crosby and I had several discussions about directing in general as well as what I was learning throughout the directing process. Steve also was very good about giving me advice when I was not sure how to proceed as a director. Nancy Furlong was very understanding and supportive when she learned that my dress rehearsal would be postponed due to a scheduling misunderstanding the morning of the Nevins show. All three committee members were caring and supportive throughout the entire process.

Rehearsing and mentally steeling yourself for a live show can only prepare you so much for the real thing. The live shows and rehearsals were a completely different animal. The first WALF show was rougher than I had wanted but it was a good learning experience for the cast and I. During the first radio show, some cues were dropped and some lines were stumbled over, yet overall, acting-wise, it was a decent show. The biggest factor that made the premiere show rockier than expected was the fact that WALF had recently changed their software. Previous to the show, it was feasible to run music and sound effects under dialogue, however, with the new software that was completely impossible; a fact I had not been aware of until the very first show. I quickly finagled my way through the sound effects and had to cut out half of

the sound effects and only play the most important, most basic ones. While I was disappointed I couldn't use as many sound effects as I would have liked, the show as a theatrical piece did not lose any credibility. The second show in WALF went much more smoothly and was the best show out of all three shows. The cues were tight, the actors were really committed to their characters, and we did not have any technical difficulties and I found ways to add more sound effects without having to change software systems. Unsurprisingly, the Nevins show was very different from the radio shows. The biggest differences were the use of a real theater and the presence of a live audience for the actors to feed off of. During the Nevins show, the actors were able to interact with the audience and receive immediate feedback in the form of the audience's reactions. The Nevins show also contained some surprises for me as a director: the actors created several new lines and adlibs which they had never done in previous rehearsals. The new improvised lines sometimes caused confusion between actors or caused some of them to break character. The new improvisations also made the storyline a little confusing at times which made me worry that the audience would not be able to understand what was going on throughout the show and it also caused me to worry about what the audience would think of the plot as a whole. Despite the "new material" created, the audience seemed to enjoy the show nonetheless.

With all the new things I tried and experienced over the course of this project I learned a plethora of things. I learned a lot about writing. For example, I learned about the importance of having a clear throughline while writing a script. I was also enlightened to the positive impact editing has during the writing process. I also realized how much I enjoy creative writing and how much effort it takes to create a script. I also learned how to be a director and hone my newly formed directorial skills. This project forced to me recognize the importance of time management and the dangers of procrastination when other people are relying upon you as a

leader. I learned how to be a producer. I learned how to advocate and advertise not only my work but also myself as a creator. This endeavor has taught me to be a more patient person with others and myself. This experience has stretched me creatively and personally teaching how to be more of a creator rather than just a performer.

I believe this project was successful in many different ways. *King of Hearts* was successful because we reached audiences through the medium of radio and through live performance. It was successful because the actors learned a lot about performance through a new medium and I learned a myriad of things about writing, directing, producing, and creation. I consider the show as successful because both the cast and I had a great time working on it as a group. *King of Hearts* was also successful because it made audience members laugh, sigh, and smile. Finally, it was successful because we completed all of the shows despite all the complications along the way. While this experience was successful, it was not flawless. There are a few things I would do differently, if I could do it all over again. The first would be I would have started editing the script sooner to allow my actors more time to get used to the new material and changes in phrasing. Another thing I would have changed is I would have added a stage manager to the team so tech would have gone more smoothly. If I could start this project over and do it another time, I also would have had more cast bonding time so we would not have struggled with our sense of ensemble. The final thing that I would do differently would be I would not have used Nevins Theater as a show venue. I would have liked to use either the Knight Club or Holmes Auditorium as a show site instead. Changing the venue would have saved me and my cast a lot of stress over whether or not we could feasibly perform a show in front of an audience.

**King of Hearts: A Live, One Act Radio Show**

**Written By Rachel Romack**

(Final Draft of Script, Used March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016 to April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016)

Bolded text indicates edits made to the Original Script

Diane: Hi I'm Diane Johnson.

Mark: And I'm Mark O'Brian...

Diane: It's 7:09 pm and before we get to our scheduled broadcast, King of Hearts, we're here with the latest local news.

Mark: That's right, Diane. WALF 89.7: The News Station With the Most Complete Local News Coverage.

Diane: Live. Local. Latebreaking.

Mark: It's a balmy 54 degrees Fahrenheit, this evening.

Diane: Perfect weather to chill white wine!

Mark: I'm sure it is Diane, I'm sure it is. You are an expert after all.

Diane: Thank you, Mark. How are your toy trains coming along?

Mark: They're MODEL trains!

Diane: I'm sure they are Mark, I'm sure they are. Let's get into the news, shall we? I know it's hard to remember what we're here for when it's only your second day on the job.

Diane: Second Floor Secretary Changes Candy in Dish

The second floor of Seidlin is buzzing with gleeful energy. One professor giggled: "You just walk in and the entire feng shui of the building is different!". Indeed, the second floor is different these days. The cause? The new addition of the shiny, pastel wrappers of the candy found on the secretary's desk. "They're pastel because they were meant for Easter, but I got them on sale." Beamed the secretary. "They look so much better than the previous candy I had - they were so dreary! But I guess that's what happens to Christmas candy after a couple months of sitting in the sun." After careful investigation, this reporter can confirm the rumors floating around campus: the pastels really do tie the room together.

Mark: That's quite a sweet story.

Mark: Student Contemplates Which Cereal to Eat at Ade Hall

Alfred, New York - After a grueling 50 minute lecture, an Alfred University student, who has chosen to remain anonymous, trudged through the April snow toward Ade Dining Hall. It has been speculated that the student had decided to make the long, treacherous trek from the Science Center to Ade in hopes of enjoying a nutritious bowl of cereal and not the dreaded "Ade Food". Throughout the course of his journey, the anonymous student was, reportedly, a cereal (serial) flip-flopper. "Maybe some raisin bran would be good, Ade usually has that. But... if they have froot loops, I might get those instead. So, raisin bran or froot loops... froot loops or raisin bran..." When questioned about his liquid of preference, he enthusiastically replied "2% is the way to go!" Sources have confirmed that upon arriving to Ade, the student was terrified to find neither raisin bran nor froot loops were available. He was forced to consume "Marshmallow Mateys", a knock off brand of crowd pleaser "Lucky Charms".

**Diane: I'm a *Special K* gal, myself, Mark.**

**Mark: Of course you are, Diane.**

### **Local Man Opens Up to Dentist**

What started out as a routine dental cleaning turned into so much more, sources confirmed this past Friday. "It was a pretty routine day. I got up, ate some toast, brushed my teeth, came to the office, put on my scrubs and started seeing my patients. Well, I should say it was routine until my 10:30 appointment." Dr. Edwards explained. "I walked into the room, and everything seemed like it was going to be your standard cleaning until I said 'Open up'. That's when Bill started telling me about his struggles of reconnecting with his father." It was reported Dr. Edwards did his best to keep the atmosphere professional, but area man Bill Waters refused to stop recanting his life story, despite Dr. Edwards repeatedly stating "I am a dentist Bill, you know what I meant." Dr. Edwards' colleagues do not think any less of him as a dentist or man despite his lack of control of Bill Waters behavior during his appointment. "Yeah, finally I gave in and told him we could get a beer some time. I think the guy just needs a friend." At this time the two have not set up a specific time or place to meet up to "talk about things".

## **Mark: University Student Still Offended**

Back in February of 2016, campus drama club, the Alfredian Dramatists put on their annual "Sex on Stage" show, a show dedicated to "no love, just sex" in order to besmirch the pomp of Valentine's Day. When invitations to view the free show were sent out via the social network Facebook, one student had a lot to say. "Really..." **Seth McFreshman, a freshman**, wrote. A heated debate on the event's facebook page ensued. One student performer wrote "Yep! The Dramatists have been doing this show for years! It's a hit since we're all mature adults here on campus." Freshman Seth countered this by saying "It's not about being an "adult". Though I must say, there is a great deal of immaturity involved with having a show dedicated to sex and goofing around about it. But that's beside the point. It's a matter of values. It's a matter of dignity. Good lord, did I go to the wrong college or what? This is borderline pathetic! First off, I didn't know that I had to be asked for my opinion. Second off, you may call it "art" and "diversity", I call it a bunch of drugged up indoctrinated left-wingers without religion, values, dignity, or a moral compass, who call everybody who doesn't agree with them on an ideological basis "haters" and "ignorant" and "close-minded". But to each their own, right? As long as it doesn't disagree with you of course. Otherwise I would just be "judging" . In short, I disagree with you. Call me a privileged and hateful bigot, but I simply disagree on an ideological and personal basis. " It has now been approximately two months since the controversial performance. Our news team decided to follow up with Seth to see how he was coping. "I'm so disappointed Sex on Stage was allowed to be viewed by our student body." When questioned what he was currently focusing on, he graciously elaborated. "Netflix has just taken Duck Dynasty down, a show about the importance of family and honest business practices. There are five movies purely dedicated to sex on Netflix and two purely dedicated to drugs. What does that say about the company's morals? They will be hearing from me shortly."

**You and me both, Seth McFreshman.**

**Diane: Local Nostradamus Predicts Trump Will Not Be President, Ben and Jerry's Will Discontinue Ice Cream Flavor**

(Pause)

Mark: That's it?

Diane: That's the whole story.

Mark: Huh. I guess that's it.

Diane: I guess so. Get out there and vote, folks!

Mark: And with that, we end our news segment.

Diane: Yes, this has been the local news with WALF 89.7.

Mark: I'm Mark O'Brian...

Diane: And I'm Diane, signing off.

Mark: And now, we bring to you the radio comedy, King of Hearts!

MUSIC: LOVE LETTERS - METRONOMY. FADE OUT.

**Allen:** The greatest place on earth. The city that never sleeps.

**Seattle Guy:** Man, I LOVE Seattle! Best. Coffee. Ever. I haven't slept in four years!

**Allen:** What?! God, no. No! This is New York, ya dingus! Jeeeeeze, would ya have some respect for the big apple? You think Seattle is the best place on earth? You're dead wrong, buddy. What's Seattle got going for it? Overpriced coffee and passive aggressive people! "Seattle hates you, too!" No, it doesn't buddy, last time I checked Seattle was not a person with freakin feelings, your population just happens to hide behind a façade of lame garage grunge and ambiguous weather!

*(SEATTLE GUY STARTS BLUBBERING)*

Oh god, are you crying?

**Seattle Guy:** No, you're crying.

**Allen:** Ah, jeez man. I'm sorry okay? I take it back. Seattle's a fine city (even if it is on the west coast). I take it back. Wait, no I don't. I am sorry though. Really, guy. I didn't mean to make you cry, okay? Please stop crying, huh? You're human and you have feelings too. I know, I flew off the handle a minute ago. Shhhh. I know. Better? Good. Hey, you have yourself a nice day!

**Seattle Guy:** Thank you.

**Allen:** Anyway. NEW YORK CITY. The place where dreams do come true! Even if you don't know what you're dreaming about! New York just has a way of making things happen. I heard it's because of the latitude or longitude or something. Some weird cosmic hotspot. Also, I guess all the parks used to be mass cemeteries so there's a lot of paranormal mumbo jumbo that messes with the city. I don't know. Regardless, it's my home. My one and only. I wanna talk a little bit about me. I'm Alan. I am 28 years old. I live in the Meatpacking District. I'm a pretty average guy, I do one weird thing: I traffic

human hearts from my apartment for a living. I know it sounds sketchy, but hey, a guy's gotta make rent. And as far as organ trafficking goes, human hearts are what you wanna specialize in. Do you really wanna smell like liver? Didn't think so.

You might be wondering, if you're a decent human being "Alan! Where the heck do these hearts come from? Are you a killer?" To be completely thorough and honest: **I don't know**. I don't know where the hearts come from or from whom, and I don't want to know. I'm just the middle man. I don't ask questions, I just check to make sure the blood type is the correct one for my customers. That's all. Am I a killer? No. I don't think I have it in me to kill another person. **That crosses the line**.

Uh, let's see... what else do you need to know... um, I like dogs. I think that's it...

Oh! So recently there's been this reoccurring thing going on. It's weird, it's almost like a theme in my life. I keep on accidentally bringing these... couples together? Like, my customers and people I work with keep on falling in love with each other, almost at the drop of a hat! The first time wasn't a big deal.

**Man 1:** Excuse me, I think you dropped this?

**Woman 1:** Oh! Thank you so much!

**Man 1:** That's a lovely perfume you're wearing, what is it?

**Woman 1:** (breath taken and smitten) Vick's vaporub. I have bronchitis.

**Man 1:** Would you like to share a cab? I'm going uptown.

**Woman 1:** I'd be delighted!

**Man 1:** **This might be seem forward, but I would love to take you to lunch. I know of this great little place that has the best soup in the city. The soup could help your throat.**

**Woman 1:** Oh myyyyyy.

**Allen:** But then there was this:

**Delivery Man:** Yeah man, I got your heart right heereee.... Uh, whoa.

**Allen:** **This one really ground my gears. Twice in a row! Are you kidding me?**

**Anne:** My hero! I can't ever begin to tell you how important this is to me! Is there a way I could ever repay you?

**Delivery Man:** (bashfully) Well, it's all in a day's work ma'am.

**Anne:** **Please, ma'am is so formal. My name is Anne. You are really a life saver.** (pause) Do I know you? From somewhere? I feel like I've met you before.

**Delivery Man:** No, I don't think we've met... *in this lifetime...*

**Allen:** And...

**Nancy and Janet:** I need a heart with an A positive blood type as soon as possible!

**Nancy and Janet:** I'm sorry?

**Allen:** Oh, no.

**Nancy:** No, I'm sorry. You go ahead.

**Janet:** Oh, I couldn't possibly! You go first. I'm sure you're a very busy woman.

**Nancy:** I am, but my situation isn't terribly urgent. Please, you go first.

**Janet:** That's very kind of you. I'm Janet.

**Allen:** Alright, that's enough. You people have got to stop meeting each other in my apartment!

**Janet:** Excuse me?

**Nancy:** What do you mean "you people"?

**Allen:** No, I didn't mean "you people" as in you people, I just meant all these couples keep on-

**Nancy:** I'm Nancy. Janet, I may be an incredibly successful business woman with an extraordinarily fulfilling life and very little free time, but even I can't waste another minute without you in my life. Here's my card.

**Janet:** Nancy, I may be a freelance artist with all too much free time and a slew of evil ex lovers, but I feel as if the universe is giving me a sign that I should have you in my life? Would you like to run away to Brazil with me?

**Nancy:** I can't think of anything else I'd rather do. Let me call my assistant and tell him to cancel all of my meetings until Monday.

(IN THE BACKGROUND WE HEAR THE OVERLAPPING VOICES OF OTHER COUPLES COOING CLICHÉS SUCH AS "I'VE WAITED ALL MY LIFE TO MEET A MAN LIKE YOU!" "DO YOU BELIEVE IN LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT?" "THIS IS HAPPENING SO FAST... AND I COULDN'T BE HAPPIER!" ETC. )

**Allen:** (talking over the voices) There were more too. I became some sort of a sick, twisted Cupid! I'm tired of this crap! They're all just so... (struggles to find an appropriate term) dumb. **Dumb but happy.** Why are their lives so easy? **And why am I the one who keeps bringing them together?! You'd think an organ trafficker's apartment would be the least romantic place on Earth. Ugh, I don't need this... whatever *this* is in my life.**

**Gross.**

Maybe I want something like that too!? Maybe I'm tired of seeing these randoms meet right in front of me while I don't have anything like that going on in my life!? Maybe I'm jealous. I don't know. I don't know.

SOUND: THE SOUND OF THE DOORBELL DINGING AND FOOTSTEPS.

**Allen:** (to the audience) Hold on, I need to take care

of this.

(to Carol) Hi, can I help you?

**Carol:** I certainly hope so.

(A MOMENT OF AWKWARD SILENCE.)

**Allen:** You- you sure you're in the, ahem, right place, lady?

**Carol:** Carol.

**Allen:** Carol.

**Carol:** Is that sign accurate? The one behind your desk?

**Allen:** What? CUSTOMER CONFIDENTIALITY GUARANTEED? Yeah, of course! I try my be-

**Carol:** Wonderful. I need one. I need a heart.

**Allen:** Wonderful! Do you know what blood type you're looking for?

**Carol:** O negative.

**Allen:** (echoes) O negative. That's my blood type! (trying and failing to flirt) You can have my heart!

(CAROL UNWRAPS A PIECE OF GUM AND LOUDLY STARTS CHEWING AND BLOWING BUBBLES. SHE DOES NOT VERBALLY RESPOND.)

**Allen:** (sheepishly) Yes, well, uh, I... I will see what I can do. O negs are rare, so it might take a while to get one in. I'll let you know when it's ready!

**Carol:** (after popping a final bubble) Thanks. My number is on my card.  
(SHE WALKS OUT. )

SOUND: THE SOUND OF FOOTSTEPS AND THE DOORBELL RINGING AS THE DOOR SHUTS.

**Allen:** (In awe) Wow. **She's gorgeous... so... alluring...** She dropped her gum wrapper...

SOUND: THE SOUND OF DREAMY HARP.  
Enter the fantasy world of Allen's  
imagination.

**Carol:** (Sighs contently) Allen, how did you know I love botanical gardens? This is the most wonderful place for a picnic.

**Allen:** I could see it in your eyes. They... speak to me.

**Carol:** Allen, that's so... romantic.

**Allen:** Stick with me babe, there's a lot more where that came from! Roses are red...

**Carol:** Poetry!

**Allen:** ...Violets are blue,  
You are the prettiest girl I ever knew.

**Carol:** Oh, Allen!

SOUND: INTERRUPTION SOUND .  
Back to reality.

**Delivery Man:** Hey... hey! Hello? Allen!

**Allen:** What? Oh, sorry.

**Delivery Man:** You feeling ok, man? Your eyes are all glazed over. You take too much of something?

**Allen:** No, no I'm fine. Thanks.

**Delivery Man:** (not convinced) Okay... well, here's the AB heart. Careful with it though, it's a bit slushy.

**Allen:** Slushy?

**Delivery Man:** Yeah, the preservation solution keeps squirting out of the aorta.

**Allen:** Oh, sure, thanks.

**Delivery Man:** What's that on your desk?  
(DELIVERY MAN PICKS UP THE FRAMED GUM WRAPPER.)

**Allen:** Hey!

**Delivery Man:** Is this a framed gum wrapper? Why did you frame a gum wrapper?

(ALLEN SNATCHES IT BACK.)

**Allen:** None of your business! It's not a big deal! It's fine!

**Delivery Man:** (amused) Alright man, take it easy. Oh no... are you stalking someone? Don't tell me you've gone off the edge and started stalking people.

**Allen:** Stalking? No! I'm not a creep. It's from this... well there's this lady... she dropped her gum wrapper and-

**Delivery Man:** So you framed it? That's borderline, Allen. I'm saying this because you're my friend: get rid of the gum wrapper. It's weird.

**Allen:** I know, don't you think I know that? (sighs) I'll trash it. I just wanted to keep it as a memento of the first time we met; I don't have anything else to remember her by. I think I really like her.

**Delivery Man:** How long have you been seeing each other?

(SILENCE.)

Are you guys friends?

(SILENCE.)

Allen, is this some kinda love at first sight thing?

**Allen:** Yes! Maybe. I don't know! I saw her once and it was like I got punched in the gut. I can't shake this feeling. I felt this intense connection... or something. I think we might be soulmates.

**Delivery Man:** Soulmates! You're a dreamer Allen, always have been, always will be no matter how hard you've tried over the years to act like a cynic. Hit the breaks on the soulmate talk, though.

Al, you might want to consider that this might be stemming from some sort of unconscious yearning to fill

a need in your life. Maybe it's because your best buddy here has just had a similar experience to the one you seem to be going through.

Allen: I don't need to justify my heart. Well, my mind heart, not my physical one.

Delivery Man: Mind heart?

Allen: My emotions.

Delivery Man: Yeah, that's true. You feel what you feel. But the thing is, when I met Anne, sure, there was an instant romantic connection, but I made sure to take the time to get to *know* her after we met... (his words get drowned out by the sound of a dreamy harp.)  
Fantasy.

Allen: I'm so sorry.

Carol: No, it's not your fault. I just, I wanted to tell you. That's why I'm so guarded sometimes. Or that's why sometimes I get nervous about opening myself up to you... It was a really long period of all these ups and downs... **I couldn't believe someone that I cared so much about was actually capable of treating me like I was nothing. He had this incredible way of getting into my head and making me feel like I was lower than dirt.** It was really bad for me. **He was really bad for me.** It took me a long time to heal because I was so scared. For a minute there, I lost *myself*.

Allen: Carol.

Carol: But that was a long time ago. **I love myself more than ever and I've learned to always be cautious about watching for warning signs. I know how I deserve to be treated.** I'm better. Stronger. And now, I'm trying to be braver.

Allen: Carol, I will never let you get hurt like that again. I promise.

Carol: I trust you.

Allen: Hey, I know what it's like. I've been there too.

**Carol:** You have?

**Allen:** Yeah. I don't normally tell people about it though. Things were so bad that I actually had to seek professional help after that relationship ended.

**Carol:** Allen, that's terrible!

**Allen:** I'll spare you the details, but it really sucked at the time.

**Carol:** I used to be so angry at myself for letting one or two bad experiences make me suspicious of everyone, but, in the end, it turned out to be a big learning experience and I think it worked out for the best.

**Allen:** I think you have to go through the rough, the dark, and the difficult times to appreciate all the good moments in life. And I think we have a lot of good, between the two of us. I think... I think we could be something big.

**Carol:** Allen, I'm really glad I'm with you. And I think so too - we could be something big.

**Allen:** I know this is kinda fast, but do you want to move in? With me?

**Carol:** Into your apartment? No thank you.

**Allen:** Oh.

**Carol:** But you could move into my apartment with me!

**Allen:** Oh!

**Carol:** Think about it, your lease is up soon, I live in a nicer neighborhood, and I actually own my own furniture.

**Allen:** Okay. Sounds like a plan!

**Carol:** What would you ever do without me?  
(THEY LAUGH.)

SOUND: INTERRUPTION SOUND.

Reality.

**Delivery Man:** ...but that's my two cents. Think about it, okay? Hey! The guys are coming over to my place later; we're gonna have a couple beers and try out this board game we invented. You should come up!

**Allen:** Yeah, yeah, sounds good! I'll see you then.

**Delivery Man:** Cool. Later. Think about what I said!

SOUND: DOORBELL RINGS AS HE EXITS.

SOUND: DOORBELL RINGS AGAIN AS WOMAN 1 ENTERS.

**Woman 1:** Allen, I gotta tell you, I really think he could be it!

**Allen:** What are you talking about?

**Woman 1:** The guy I met here, in your apartment, I think he's the one!

(A PAUSE.)

**Allen:** Are you for real? Seriously?

**Woman 1:** Dead serious.

**Allen:** Get out of here! That's wonderful!

**Woman 1:** I know! He met my parents and they ab-so-lutely ADORE him! **He's so honest about everything, they said. God knows it's about time I was with an honest man.** They kept on asking me before we met, "When are you going to bring a man home? We are so tired of you bringing home these stupid boys!" And I said "I don't know! Maybe you should stop forcing it and let me do it in my own time! For crying out loud!" and they said "Okay, but if you don't bring anyone home for Thanksgiving we are set-ting-you-UP!" And sure enough, I brought him home for Thanksgiving and he killed it! Can you believe it? **This is the best relationship I've ever had. Honesty really is the key in a relationship. I've never not lied about how busy I am, what my favorite movie is, or what my interests, passions, and goals are before. You know, the usual**

**stuff.**

**Allen:** Wow! That's great! I'm happy for you!

**Woman 1:** You sure?

**Allen:** I am. Really. (He is)

**Woman 1:** Fabulous! You know, I wasn't sure if you were at first because you should've seen the look on your face when we first met! Ugh, I could have died! You looked like such a sourpuss!

**Allen:** Things change.

**Woman 1:** Boy, do they ever! You look different. **Something must have happened to you- you seem happier.** You look good.

**Allen:** **Thanks,** I guess I am different.

**Woman 1:** Glad to hear it! **I was worried about you; you were so mopey for a while there. I have to go walk my poodle. You still game to dog-sit while I'm away for the weekend?**

**Allen:** **Unless an emergency comes up, you betcha!**

**Woman 1:** **Faaaaaabolous.** Ta taaaaaaa!

SOUND: SOUND OF DREAMY HARP.

Fantasy.

SOUND: THE SOUND OF A PUPPY BARKING.

**Carol:** Names. Go!

**Allen:** Harold.

**Carol:** Demitri?

**Allen:** Scout.

**Carol:** Blue.

**Allen:** Rubik's cube?

**Carol:** Rubik's cube? No. Chicago?

**Allen:** Definitely not. Oedipus?

**Carol:** Rex?

**Allen:** Gob.

**Carol:** Bueller.

**Allen:** Bueller?

**Both:** Ferris Bueller!

**Ferris Bueller:** Arf! (Yes!)

**Allen:** Yes!

**Carol:** I like it!

**Both:** Ferris Bueller.

**Carol:** Hello, Ferris! Welcome to your new home! We're so glad you're here! Yes, we are!

SOUND: MORE PUPPY BARKING.

**Allen:** You're perfect.

**Carol:** Stop. You're going to make me blush!

**Allen:** You're so beautiful, and wonderful, and cute, and funny, and sweet....

**Carol:** (laughing) Not in front of the puppy! You're going to make him uncomfortable!

**Ferris Bueller:** Bark!

**Allen:** Carol, I have something to ask you...

**Carol:** (Gasps) Is that a...

**Allen:** It's a ring.

**Carol:** Oh, Allen! Yes, yes, yes of course!

SOUND: INTERRUPTION SOUND.  
Reality.

**Allen:** I have to tell her.

**Customer:** Have to tell who what?

**Allen:** I have to tell Carol the truth because that's what people do when they have something important to say! I understand now: honesty is the foundation of true human connection. I am in love with Carol!

SOUND: SQUIRTING SOUND AND SOUND OF SPLASHING LIQUID.

**Customer:** Oh gross!

**Allen:** Huh?

**Customer:** That heart just sprayed blood all over your shirt. You got some on me too. Watch where you point that thing!

**Allen:** That's okay, I don't mind.

SOUND: THE PHONE RINGS.

**Janet:** Hi, Allen? I'd like to return my heart. I tried it and it's not going to work out.

**Allen:** You tried it out? How are you still alive?

**Janet:** Don't worry about that. The heart was a bust just like Brazil.

**Allen:** You and the business woman.

**Janet:** I'm not talking about that right now. Our higher selves did not communicate as well on the astral plane as I would have liked.

**Allen:** You weren't compatible.

**Janet:** It's all so convoluted. Anyway, I think this heart is broken. I'm going to keep my original one for

now. I'll have someone drop off the broken one tomorrow. Goodbye, Allen.

Allen: Bye.

Customer: You might want to mop the floor.

SOUND: THE PHONE RINGS AGAIN.

Allen: Hello?

O Negative Man: Are you, uh, are you the guy?

Allen: I dunno, you tell me.

O Negative Man: The, ah, king of hearts?

Allen: Oh. Yeah, that's me.

O Negative Man: We've got it. The O neg. We're on our way to you.

Allen: Fantastic!

SOUND: HE HANGS UP. THE SOUND OF NUMBERS BEING PUNCHED ON A PHONE.

Allen: Carol? Can you be here in two hours? Yeah. It's in.

SOUND: THE SOUND OF A STOPWATCH TICKING.

SOUND: A CRASH OF THUNDER. THE SOUND OF THE DOOR SLAMMING OPEN.

CAROL RUSHES INTO THE OFFICE LOOKING GAUNT YET STILL ATTRACTIVE, HER COMPLEXION IS PALE AND DARK CIRCLES SURROUND HER EYES. SHE IS WEARING DARK CLOTHING THAT DRAPES AROUND HER; SHE'S CLEARLY LOST A SUBSTANTIAL AMOUNT OF WEIGHT.

Carol: Allen.

Allen: Carol, I'm so glad you're here. I was hoping we could talk-

Carol: (desperately) Allen, I need a favor. I need to

have an operation, now. I'm dying.

**Allen:** What?

**Carol:** (locking eyes with him) Please, I can trust you. Your sign.

CAROL GESTURES TO THE SIGN ON THE WALL DECLARING 'CUSTOMER CONFIDENTIALITY GUARANTEED!'

(A PAUSE.)

**Allen:** (to himself) Customer confidentiality guaranteed. (sighs) Okay.

**Carol: Doc?**

A WINDBLOWN WOMAN IN A LAB COAT WEARING THICK, ROUNDED GLASSES THAT SO INTENSELY MAGNIFY HER EYES SHE LOOKS QUITE SIMILAR TO SOME SORT OF INSECT ENTERS. THE WINDBLOWN WOMAN APPEARS TO BE A SCIENTIST OF SORTS.

**Woman in Lab Coat:** I'm in? I'm in! The doctor is in!

**Carol:** Allen meet my doctor, Doc, this is the man who gave me- *sold* me his- *my* heart.

**Woman in Lab Coat:** (to Allen) Oh, hi there! You must be Aaron? No, Eric!

RUMMAGING THROUGH HER POCKETS, THE WOMAN IN LAB COAT PULLS OUT TWO CRUMPLED RUBBER GLOVES AND SNAPS THEM ONTO HER HANDS.

**Allen:** You're sure about this.

**Carol:** Have to be.

**Allen:** You'll be okay? I can take you to a real hospital.

**Carol:** Can't afford a real hospital. How would I explain the transplant heart? (More to herself than to Allen) I'll be fine. I'm going to be fine. If I make it through this I might marry you! That's a joke.

**Woman in Lab Coat:** We're gonna need a surgical area.

**Carol:** What about the desk?

**Woman in Lab Coat:** Yup! Let's just push all of this junk off it.

SOUND: THE SOUND OF VARIOUS ITEMS CRASHING TO THE FLOOR.

**Carol:** Why do you have a framed gum wrapper?

**Allen:** No reason! I'll take that. **Doc, could Carol and I have some privacy before you start?**

**Carol:** **Allen, we don't have a moment to spare.**

**Woman in Lab Coat:** Alright, darling, take your shirt off and then go ahead and lie down.

**Allen:** (to himself; star struck) She's taking her shirt off.

**Woman in Lab Coat:** Let's just attach this here heart monitor.

SOUND: THE HEART MONITOR STARTS BEEPING.

Good! And we'll just pop this IV in your arm for the anesthesia... This is anesthesia, isn't it?  
(SHE DEEPLY AND AGGRESSIVELY INHALES.)  
Whooooeee! Yessir, that's the good stuff! You're gonna have a great time, darling. Night-night! Alright, let's tango.

SOUND: THE SOUND OF A STOPWATCH TICKING. HEART MONITOR BEEPING.

**Allen:** You're sure you know what you're doing?

**Woman in Lab Coat:** Don't be ridiculous!

SOUND: THE SOUND OF A STOPWATCH TICKING. HEART MONITOR BEEPING.

**Woman in Lab Coat:** (muttering) Oh, this looks different from vet school. Very different indeed.

SOUND: THE SOUND OF A STOPWATCH TICKING. HEART MONITOR

BEEPING. THE SOUND OF ORGANS SQUELCHING AND LIQUID SQUIRTING.

**Woman in Lab Coat:** Oh, I... what's this? I've never seen this before... (she laughs hesitantly to herself) And now...

SOUND: THE HEART MONITOR GOES SILENT.

...time for the new heart... There.

(A MOMENT OF SILENCE.)

SOUND: THE HEART MONITOR STARTS BEEPING AGAIN.

Wow, I... I did it!

**Allen:** You did it!

**Woman in Lab Coat:** I did it!

DISREGARDING THE WOMAN IN LAB COAT, ALLEN RUSHES TO THE DESK AND CRADLES CAROL'S HEAD. SHE STARTS SLOWLY STIRRING. CAROL SLOWLY OPENS HER EYES, MUCH LIKE SLEEPING BEAUTY.

**Allen:** (Gently) Carol...? Carol, I, I love you.

CAROL GASPS AND HER EYES WIDEN. HER LIPS PART AS SHE CHOKES OUT A SOUND. HER HAND SHOOTS UP AND SHE CLUTCHES ONE OF ALLEN'S HANDS. HER GRIP SUDDENLY TIGHTENS. ALLEN IS SURPRISED AND WINCES FROM PAIN. CAROL'S BODY THEN BECOMES LIMP AND HER EYES ROLL INTO THE BACK OF HER HEAD.

SOUND: THE HEART MONITOR FLATLINES.

**Woman in Lab Coat:** Oh...

(SILENCE. )

**Allen:** It's been weeks. I don't know how many. I'm surprised I'm not still hurting. The initial shock was bad, the disappointment was worse. But, I think I'm okay now. I thought I'd be broken, or at least my heart would be, but I'm not, it's not. I guess I've been thinking about it a lot, no, I **have**

been thinking about it a lot. I thought I was in love with her. With Carol. I really did. **At least, I wanted to be... and I wanted her to love me too. But how could I be? How could she love me?** How could I relate to somebody who I never even had a real conversation with? It feels like I was just treading water. **Love isn't something you can fall into based off of the way someone looks or how they speak. You can't love someone because of the way you think they are and hope for them to be.** Love takes time. Real love is understanding. Real love is knowing someone, like really knowing someone and honestly accepting both the light and the dark parts. Real love is respect. If you don't have those components, it's just not true. **You are only in love the idea of the person.** Or maybe you just love the possibility of what could be. What can you do with that? Nothing.

It still sucks though. But hey, life goes on and you can't really do anything about that. At least now I know. Now I know.

SOUND: THE SOUND OF RUNNING FOOTSTEPS.

**Woman 1:** (Off mic) Allen, Allen! (On mic) We have to tell you!

**Man 1:** Just show him, honey.

**Woman 1:** Look! It's a riiiiiiiiiiiiinnnggg!!!

**Man 1:** This is all thanks to you!

SOUND: THE SOUND OF THE COUPLE PASSIONATELY SMOOCHING.

**Allen:** (enraged) ARE YOU KIDDING ME!?!

THE END.

MUSIC: FADE IN. LOVE LETTERS - METRONOMY

**King of Hearts: A Live Radio Show**

**Written by Rachel Romack**

(Original Script used January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016 to March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2016)

## Local News

### Student Contemplates Which Cereal to Eat at Ade Hall

Alfred, New York - After a grueling 50 minute lecture, an Alfred University student, who has chosen to remain anonymous, trudged through the April snow toward Ade Dining Hall. It has been speculated that the student had decided to make the long, treacherous trek from the Science Center to Ade in hopes of enjoying a nutritious bowl of cereal and not "Ade Food" due to a life threatening allergy. Throughout the course of his journey, the anonymous student was, reportedly, a *cereal (serial)* flip-flopper. "Maybe some raisin bran would be good, Ade usually has that. But... if they have froot loops, I might get those instead. So, raisin bran or froot loops... froot loops or raisin bran..." When questioned about his liquid of preference, he enthusiastically replied "2% is the way to go!" Sources have confirmed that upon arriving to Ade, the student was terrified to find neither raisin bran nor froot loops were available. He was forced to consume "Marshmallow Mateys", a knock off brand of crowd pleaser "Lucky Charms".

### Second Floor Secretary Changes Candy in Dish

The second floor of Seidlin is buzzing with gleeful energy. "You just walk in and the entire feng shui of the building is different!" giggled one professor. Indeed, the second floor is different these days. The cause? The new addition of the shiny, pastel wrappers of the candy found on the secretary's desk. "They're pastel because they were meant for Easter, but I got them on sale." Beamed the secretary. "They look so much better than the previous candy I had - they were so dreary! But I guess that's what happens to Christmas candy after a couple months of sitting in the sun." After careful investigation, this reporter can confirm the rumors floating around campus: the pastels really do tie the room together.

### Local Man Opens Up to Dentist

What started out as a routine dental cleaning turned into so much more, sources confirmed this past Friday. "It was a pretty routine day. I got up, ate some toast, brushed my teeth, came to

the office, put on my scrubs and started seeing my patients. Well, I should say it was routine until my 10:30 appointment." Dr. Edwards explained. "I walked into the room, and everything seemed like it was going to be your standard cleaning until I said 'Open up'. That's when Bill started telling me about his struggles of reconnecting with his father." It was reported Dr. Edwards did his best to keep the atmosphere professional, but area man Bill Waters refused to stop recanting his life story, despite Dr. Edwards repeatedly stating "I am a dentist Bill, you know what I meant." Dr. Edwards' colleagues do not think any less of him as a dentist or man despite his lack of control of Bill Waters behavior during his appointment. "Yeah, finally I gave in and told him we could get a beer some time. I think the guy just needs a friend." At this time the two have not set up a specific time or place to meet up to "talk about things".

### **University Student Still Offended**

Back in February of 2016, campus drama club, the Alfredian Dramatists put on their annual "Sex on Stage" show, a show dedicated to "no love, just sex" in order to besmirch the pomp of Valentine's Day. When invitations to view the free show were sent out via the social network Facebook, one student had a lot to say. "Really..." freshman Seth wrote. A heated debate on the event's facebook page ensued. One student performer wrote "Yep! The Dramatists have been doing this show for years! It's a hit since we're all mature adults here on campus." Freshman Seth countered this by saying "It's not about being an "adult". Though I must say, there is a great deal of immaturity involved with having a show dedicated to sex and goofing around about it. But that's beside the point. It's a matter of values. It's a matter of dignity. Good lord, did I go to the wrong college or what? This is borderline pathetic! First off, I didn't know that I had to be asked for my opinion. Second off, you may call it "art" and "diversity", I call it a bunch of drugged up indoctrinated left-wingers without religion, values, dignity, or a moral compass, who call everybody who doesn't agree with them on an ideological basis "haters" and "ignorant" and "close-minded". But to each their own, right? As long as it doesn't disagree with you of course. Otherwise I would just be "judging". In short, I disagree with you. Call me a privileged and hateful bigot, but I simply disagree on an ideological and

personal basis. " It has now been approximately two months since the controversial performance. Our news team decided to follow up with Seth to see how he was coping. "I'm so disappointed Sex on Stage was allowed to be viewed by our student body." When questioned what he was currently focusing on, he graciously elaborated. "Netflix has just taken Duck Dynasty down, a show about the importance of family and honest business practices. There are five movies purely dedicated to sex on Netflix and two purely dedicated to drugs. What does that say about the company's morals? They will be hearing from me shortly."

Scene: 1

SOUND: Heavy traffic and beeping cars. Muffled voices and footsteps. "city sounds"

MUSIC: love letters - metronomy

Allen: The greatest place on earth. The city that never sleeps.

Seattle Guy: Man, I LOVE Seattle! Best. Coffee. Ever. I haven't slept in four years!

Allen: What?! God, no. No! This is New York, ya dingus! Jeeeeeze, would ya have some respect for the big apple? You think Seattle is the best place on earth? You're dead wrong, buddy. What's Seattle got going for it? Overpriced coffee and passive aggressive people! "Seattle hates you, too!" No, it doesn't buddy, last time I checked Seattle was not a person with freakin feelings, your population just happens to hide behind a façade of lame-ass garage grunge and ambiguous weather!

*Seattle Guy starts blubbering.*

Allen: Oh god, are you crying? Ah, jeez man. I'm sorry okay? I take it back. Seattle's a fine city (even if it is on the west coast). I take it back. Wait, no I don't. I am sorry though. Really, guy. I didn't mean to make you cry, okay? Please stop crying, huh? You're human and you have feelings too. I know, I flew off the handle a minute ago. Shhhh. I know. Better? Good. Hey, you have yourself a nice day!

Anyway. NEW YORK CITY. The place where dreams do come true! Even if you don't know what you're dreaming about! New York just has a way of making things happen. I heard it's because of the latitude or longitude or something. Some weird cosmic hotspot. Also, I guess all the parks used to be mass cemeteries so there's a lot of paranormal mumbo jumbo that messes with the city. I don't know. Regardless, it's my home. My one and only. I wanna talk a little bit about me. I'm Alan. I am 28 years old. I live in the Meatpacking District. I'm a pretty average guy, I do one weird thing: I traffic human hearts for a living. I know it sounds sketch, but hey, a guy's gotta make rent. And as far as organ trafficking goes, human hearts are what you wanna specialize in. Do you really wanna smell like liver? Didn't think so. You might be wondering, if you're a decent human being "Alan! Where the heck do these hearts come from? Are you a killer?" To be completely thorough and honest: I don't know. I

don't know where the hearts come from or from whom, and I don't want to know. I'm just the middle man. I don't ask questions, I just check to make sure the blood type is correct for my customers. That's all. Am I a killer? No. I don't think I have it in me to kill another person. That crosses the line. Uh, let's see... what else do you need to know... um, I like dogs. I think that's it...

Oh! So recently there's been this reoccurring thing going on. It's weird, it's almost like a theme in my life. I keep on accidentally bringing these... couples together? Like, my customers and people I work with, they keep on falling in love with each other almost at the drop of a hat. The first time wasn't a big deal.

Man 1: Excuse me, I think you dropped this?

Woman 1: Oh! Thank you so much!

Man 1: That's a lovely perfume you're wearing, what is it?

Woman 1: (breath taken and smitten) Vick's vaporub. I have bronchitis.

Man 1: Would you like to share a cab? I'm going uptown.

Woman 1: I'd be delighted!

Allen: But then there was this:

(Delivery) Man 2: Yeah man, I got your heart right heereee.... Uh, whoa.

Woman 2: My hero! I can't ever begin to tell you how important this is to me! Is there a way I could ever repay you?

Man 2: (bashfully) Well, it's all in a day's work ma'am.

Woman 2: Well you're really a life saver. (pause) Do I know you? From somewhere? I feel like I've met you before.

Man 2: No, I don't think we've met... in this lifetime...

Allen: And...

Woman 3 and Woman 4: I need a heart with an A positive blood type as soon as possible!

Woman 3 and Woman 4: I'm sorry?

Woman 3: No, I'm sorry. You go ahead.

Woman 4: Oh, I couldn't possibly! You go first. I'm sure you're a very busy woman.

Woman 3: I am, but my situation isn't terribly urgent. Please, you go first.

Woman 4: That's very kind of you! I'm Janet.

Allen: Alright, that's enough. You people have got to stop meeting each other in my office!

Woman 4: Excuse me?

Woman 3: What do you mean "you people"?

Allen: No, I didn't mean "you people" as in you people! I just meant all these couples keep on-

Woman 3: I'm Nancy. Janet, I may be an incredibly successful business woman with an extraordinarily fulfilling life and very little free time, but even I can't waste another minute without you in my life. Here's my card.

Woman 4: Nancy, I may be a freelance artist with all too much free time and a slew of evil ex lovers, but I feel as if the universe is giving me a sign that I should have you in my life? Would you like to run away to Brazil with me?

Woman 3: I can't think of anything else I'd rather do. Let me call my assistant and tell him to cancel all of my meetings until Monday.

SOUND:

In the background we hear the overlapping voices of other couples cooing clichés such as "I've waited all my life to meet a man like you!" "Do you believe in love at first sight?" "This is happening so fast... and I couldn't be happier!" etc.

Allen: (talking over the voices) There were more too. I became some sort of sick, twisted Cupid! I'm tired of this crap! They're all just so... dumb. Happy and dumb. Why are their lives

so easy? And why are they always meeting because of me?! I don't need this... whatever it is in my life. Gross. Maybe I want something like that too!? Maybe I'm tired of seeing these randos meet right in front of me while I don't have anything like that going on in my life!? Maybe I'm jealous. I don't know. I don't know.

SOUND: the doorbell dinging and footsteps.

Allen: (to the audience) Hold on, I need to take care of this.

Scene: 2

Carol enters.

(to Carol) Hi, can I help you?

Carol: I certainly hope so.

**A moment of awkward silence.**

Allen: You- you sure you're in the, ahem, right place, lady?

Carol: Carol.

Allen: Carol.

Carol: Is that sign accurate? The one behind your desk?

Allen: What? CUSTOMER CONFIDENTIALITY GUARANTEED? Yeah, of course! I try my be-

Carol: Wonderful. I need one. I need a heart.

Allen: Wonderful! Do you know what blood type you're looking for?

Carol: O negative.

Allen: (echoes) O negative. That's my blood type! (trying and failing to flirt) You can have my heart!

*Carol unwraps a piece of gum and loudly starts chewing and blowing bubbles. She does not verbally respond.*

Allen: (sheepishly) Yes, well, uh, I... I will see what I can do. O negs are rare, so it might take a while to get one in. I'll let you know when it's ready!

Carol: (after popping a final bubble) Thanks. My number is on my card.

She walks out. The sound of footsteps and the doorbell ringing as the door shuts.

Allen: Wow. (In awe) She dropped her gum wrapper...

Scene: 3

SOUND: Dreamy Harp

(Enter the FANTASY world of Allen's imagination.)

Carol: (Sighs contently) Allen, how did you know I love botanical gardens? This is the most wonderful place for a picnic.

Allen: I could see it in your eyes. They... speak to me.

Carol: Allen, that's so... romantic.

Allen: Stick with me babe, there's a lot more where that came from! Roses are red...

Carol: Poetry!

Allen: ...Violets are blue,

You are the prettiest girl I ever knew.

Carol: Oh, Allen!

SOUND: Interruption sound

(Back to REALITY.)

Delivery Man: Hey... hey! Hello? Allen!

Allen: What? Oh, sorry.

Delivery Man: You feeling ok, man? Your eyes are all glazed over? You take too much of something?

Allen: No, no I'm fine. Thanks.

Delivery Man: (not convinced) Okay... well, here's the AB heart. Careful with it though, it's a bit slushy.

Allen: Slushy?

Delivery Man: Yeah, the preservation solution keeps squirting out of the aorta.

Allen: Oh, sure, thanks.

Delivery Man: What's that on your desk?

*Delivery Man picks up the framed gum wrapper.*

Allen: Hey!

Delivery Man: Is this a framed gum wrapper? Why did you frame a gum wrapper?

*Allen snatches it back.*

Allen: None of your business! It's not a big deal! It's fine!

Delivery Man: (amused) Alright man, you take it easy.

SOUND: Dreamy harp

(FANTASY WORLD)

Allen: I'm so sorry.

Carol: No, it's not your fault! I just, I wanted to tell you. That's why I'm so guarded sometimes. Or that's why sometimes I get nervous about opening myself up to you. It was a really long period of all these ups and downs... It was really bad for me. It took me a long time to heal because I was so scared. I think I lost myself for a while.

Allen: Carol.

Carol: But that was a long time ago. I'm better now. Stronger. And now I'm trying to be braver.

Allen: Carol, I will never let you get hurt like that again. I promise.

Carol: I trust you.

Allen: Hey, I know what it's like. I've been there too.

Carol: You have?

Allen: Yeah. I don't normally talk about it to people though.

Carol: Allen, that's terrible!

Allen: It really sucked at the time. But I think you have to go through the rough times and the dark and difficult ones to appreciate all the good times. And I think we have a lot of good, between the two of us. I think... I think we could be something big.

Carol: Allen, I'm really glad I'm with you. And I think so too - we could be something big.

Allen: I know this is kinda fast, but do you want to move in? With me?

Carol: Into your apartment? No thank you.

Allen: Oh.

Carol: But you could move into my apartment with me!

Allen: Oh!

Carol: Think about it, your lease is up soon, I live in a nicer neighborhood, and I actually own my own furniture.

Allen: Okay. Sounds like a plan!

Carol: What would you ever do without me?

*They laugh.*

SOUND: Interruption sound.

(REALITY.)

Woman 1: And I gotta tell you, I really think he could be it, Allen!

Allen: (snapping out of his fantasy) I'm sorry, what?

Woman 1: I said the guy I met here, in your office, I think he's the one!

A pause.

Allen: Are you for real? Seriously?

Woman 1: Dead.

Allen: Get out of here! That's wonderful!

Woman 1: I know! He met my parents and they ab-so-lutely ADORE him! They kept on asking me, "When are you going to bring a man home? We are so tired of you bringing home these stupid boys!" And I said "I don't know! Maybe you should stop forcing it and let me do it in my own time! For crying out loud!" and they said "Okay, but if you don't bring anyone home for Thanksgiving we are set-ting-you-UP!" And sure enough, I brought him home for Thanksgiving and he killed it! Can you believe it?

Allen: Wow! That's great! I'm so happy for you!

Woman 1: You sure?

Allen: I am. Really. *(He is)*

Woman 1: Fabulous! You know, I wasn't sure if you were at first because you should've seen the look on your face when we first met! Ugh, I could have died! You looked like such a sourpuss!

Allen: Things change.

Woman 1: Boy, do they ever! You look different. Happier. You look good.

Allen: I guess I am different.

Woman 1: Glad to hear it! Ta taaaaaaa!

SOUND: Dreamy HARP.

(FANTASY WORLD.)

SOUND: puppy barking.

Carol: Names. Go!

Allen: Harold.

Carol: Demitri?

Allen: Scout.

Carol: Blue.

Allen: Rubik's cube?

Carol: Rubik's cube? No. Chicago?

Allen: Definitely not. Oedipus?

Carol: Rex?

Allen: Gob.

Carol: Bueller.

Allen: Bueller?

Both: Ferris Bueller!

Ferris Bueller: Arf! (Yes!)

Allen: Yes!

Carol: I like it!

Both: Ferris Bueller.

Carol: Hello, Ferris! Welcome to your new home! We're so glad you're here! Yes, we are!

SOUND: more puppy barking.

Allen: You're perfect.

Carol: Stop. You're going to make me blush!

Allen: You're so beautiful, and wonderful, and cute, and funny, and sweet....

Carol: (laughing) Not in front of the puppy! You're going to make him uncomfortable!

Allen: Carol, I have something to ask you...

Carol: (Gasps) Is that a...

Allen: It's a ring.

Carol: Oh, Allen! Yes, yes, yes of course!

SOUND: interruption sound.

(REALITY.)

SOUND: SQUIRTING AND SPLASHING OF LIQUID.

Allen: I have to tell her.

Customer: Oh gross!

Allen: Huh?

Customer: That heart just sprayed blood all over your shirt. You got some on me too. Watch where you point that thing!

Allen: That's okay, I don't mind.

SOUND: THE PHONE RINGS

Allen: Hello?

O Negative Man: Are you, uh, are you the guy?

Allen: I dunno, you tell me.

O Negative Man: The, ah, king of hearts?

Allen: Oh. Yeah, that's me.

O Negative Man: We've got it. The O neg. We're on our way to you.

Allen: Fantastic!

*Allen hangs up.*

SOUND: the punching of numbers on the phone.

Allen: Carol? Can you be here in two hours? Yeah. It's in.

SOUND: stopwatch ticking. A crash of thunder. The sound of the door slamming open.

Carol rushes into the office looking gaunt yet still attractive, her complexion is pale and dark circles surround her eyes. She is wearing dark clothing that drapes around her; she's clearly lost a substantial amount of weight.

Behind her, is a windblown woman in a lab coat wearing thick, rounded glasses that so intensely magnify her eyes she looks quite similar to some sort of insect. The windblown woman appears to be a scientist of sorts.

Woman in Lab Coat: (to Allen) Oh, hi there! You must be Aaron? No, Eric!

Allen apprehensively regards her, not replying. The Woman in Lab Coat begins to curiously inspect Allen's office.

Allen: Carol, I'm so glad-

Carol: (desperately) Allen, I need a favor. I need to have an operation, now. I'm dying.

Allen: What?

Carol: (locking eyes with him) Please, I can trust you. Your sign.

Carol gestures to the sign on the wall declaring 'CUSTOMER CONFIDENTIALITY GUARANTEED!'

A PAUSE.

Allen: (to himself) Customer confidentiality guaranteed. (sighs) Okay.

Woman in Lab Coat: I'm in? I'm in!

Rummaging through her pockets, the Woman in Lab Coat pulls out two crumpled rubber gloves and snaps them onto her hands.

Woman in Lab Coat: We're gonna need a surgical area.

Carol: What about the desk?

Woman in Lab Coat: Yup! Sounds good! Let's just push all of this junk off it.

SOUND: various objects crashing to the floor.

Carol: Why do you have a framed gum wrapper?

Allen: No reason! I'll take that.

Woman in Lab Coat: Alright, 52arling, take your shirt off and then go ahead and lie down.

Allen: (to himself; star struck) She's taking her shirt off.

Woman in Lab Coat: Let's just attach this here heart monitor.

SOUND: heart monitor beeping.

Woman in Lab Coat: Good! And we'll just pop this IV in your arm for the anesthesia... This is anesthesia, isn't it?

She deeply and aggressively inhales.

Whooooeee! Yessir, that's the good stuff! You're gonna have a great time, darling. Night-night! Alright, let's tango.

SOUND: stopwatch ticking. Heart monitor beeping.

Allen: You're sure you know what you're doing?

Woman in Lab Coat: Don't be ridiculous!

SOUND: stopwatch ticking. Heart monitor beeping.

Woman in Lab Coat: (muttering) Oh, this looks different from vet school. Very different indeed.

SOUND: stopwatch ticking. Heart monitor beeping. Organs squelching and liquid squirting.

Woman in Lab Coat: Oh, I... what's this? I've never seen this before... (she laughs hesitantly to herself) And now...

SOUND: heart monitor going silent.

...time for the new heart... There.

SOUND: a moment of silence then the heart monitor starting again and beeping.

Woman in Lab Coat: Wow, I... I did it!

Allen: You did it!

Woman in Lab Coat: I did it!

Disregarding the Woman in Lab Coat, Allen rushes to the desk and cradles Carol's head. She starts slowly stirring. Carol slowly opens her eyes, much like Sleeping Beauty.

Allen: (Gently) Carol...? Carol, I, I love you.

Carol gasps and her eyes widen. Her lips part as she chokes out a sound. Her hand shoots up and she clutches one of Allen's hands. Her grip suddenly tightens. Allen is surprised and winces from pain. Carol's body then becomes limp and her eyes roll into the back of her head.

SOUND: the heart monitor flatlines.

Woman in Lab Coat: Oh...

SOUND: silence.

Scene: 4

Allen: It's been weeks. I don't know how many. I'm surprised I'm not still hurting. The initial shock was bad, the disappointment was worse. But, I think I'm okay now. I thought I'd be broken, or at least my heart would be, but I'm not, it's not.

I guess I've been thinking about it a lot, no, I have been thinking about it a lot. I thought I was in love with her. I really did. And I wanted to be. I wanted her to love me too. But how could she? How could I? How could I relate to somebody who I never even had a real conversation with? It feels like I was just treading water. Love isn't something you can fall into based off of the way someone looks, how they speak, the way you think they are. The way you hope for them to be. Love takes time. Real love is understanding. Real love is knowing someone, like really knowing someone and honestly accepting the light and the dark parts. Real love is respect. If you don't have those components, it's not true. You just love the idea of the person.

Or maybe you just love the possibility of what could be. What can you do with that? Nothing.

It still sucks though. But hey, life goes on and you can't really do anything about that. At least now I know. Now I know.

SOUND: running footsteps.

Woman 1: Allen, Allen! We have to tell you!

Man 1: Just show him, honey.

Woman 1: Look! It's a riiiiiiiiiiiiinnnnggg!!!

Man 1: This is all thanks to you!

SOUND: the couple passionately smooching.

Allen: (enraged) ARE YOU KIDDING ME!?!

THE END.

MUSIC: LOVE LETTERS - METRONOMY

## Original Rehearsal Schedule

Used from February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016 to March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Brian and Chloe: 6-7 pm in Miller on **Mondays**

Full Cast: 6-7 pm in Miller on **Tuesdays**

Maggie and Patrick: 6-7 pm in Miller on **Wednesdays** (unless *Arcadia* rehearsal starts at 6 pm, in which case we will meet in Powell at 10:45)

Goals:

- February 21-27: Character Work
- February 28-March 5: Finesse character work, read-through of revised script
- March 13-19: Start sound effect work
- March 20-26: Start blocking
- March 27-April 2: Polish voice work
- April 3-9: Polish blocking
- April 10-16: Dress rehearsals/SHOW TIME!!!

## Final Rehearsal Schedule

Used from March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016 to April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016

### March 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
						FULL CAST: 11-12
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	Brian and Chloe: 6-7	FULL CAST: 6-7	Pat and Maggie: 10:45-11:45			FULL CAST: 11-12:30
27	28	29	30	31		
	Brian and Chloe: 6-7	FULL CAST: 6-7	Pat and Maggie: 10:45-11:45			FULL CAST: 11-12:30
Notes:						

### April 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
						FULL CAST: 7-8 pm
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
FULL CAST: 2-3	ARCADIA	ARCADIA	ARCADIA	ARCADIA	ARCADIA	ARCADIA
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
FULL CAST: 7-8	Dress Rehearsal 7-9	Dress Rehearsal: 7-9	WALF SHOW! 10 pm Call at 9:30	WALF SHOW! 10 pm Call at 9:30	CHAMBER SINGERS CONCERT	Final Dress at 11 am SHOW! Call @ 6, show at 7 pm
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Notes						

**King of Hearts: A Live, One Act Radio Show**

**Written By Rachel Romack**

Director's Script with Rehearsal Notes

sitting Ad lib before (How was your weekend? etc)

@ Diane: Hi I'm Diane Johnson.

desk Mark: And I'm Mark O'Brian...

Diane: It's 7:09 pm and before we get to our scheduled broadcast, King of Hearts, we're here with the latest local news.

Mark: That's right, Diane. WALF 89.7: The News Station With the Most Complete Local News Coverage.

Diane: Live. Local. Latebreaking.

Mark: It's a balmy 54 degrees Fahrenheit, this evening.

Diane: Perfect weather to chill white wine!

Mark: I'm sure it is Diane, I'm sure it is. You are an expert after all.

Diane: Thank you, Mark. How are your toy trains coming along?

Mark: They're MODEL trains!

Diane: I'm sure they are Mark, I'm sure they are. Let's get into the news, shall we? I know it's hard to remember what we're here for when it's only your second day on the job.

Diane: Second Floor Secretary Changes Candy in Dish

The second floor of Seidlin is buzzing with gleeful energy. One professor giggled: "You just walk in and the entire feng shui of the building is different!". Indeed, the second floor is different these days. The cause? The new addition of the shiny, pastel wrappers of the candy found on the secretary's desk. "They're pastel because they were meant for Easter, but I got them on sale." Beamed the secretary. "They look so much better than the previous candy I had - they were so dreary! But I guess that's what happens to Christmas candy after a couple months of sitting in the sun." After careful investigation, this reporter can confirm the rumors floating around campus: the pastels really do tie the room together.

Mark: That's quite a sweet story.

Mark: Student Contemplates Which Cereal to Eat at Ade Hall

Alfred, New York - After a grueling 50 minute lecture, an Alfred University student, who has chosen to remain anonymous, trudged through the April snow toward Ade Dining Hall. It has been speculated that the student had decided to make the long, treacherous trek from the Science Center to Ade in hopes of enjoying a nutritious bowl of cereal and not the dreaded "Ade Food". Throughout the course of his journey, the anonymous student was, reportedly, a cereal <sup>emphasize</sup> (serial) flip-flopper. "Maybe some raisin bran would be good, Ade usually has that. But... if they have froot loops, I might get those instead. So, raisin bran or froot loops... froot loops or raisin bran..." When questioned about his liquid of preference, he enthusiastically replied "2% is the way to go!" Sources have confirmed that upon arriving to Ade, the student was terrified to find neither raisin bran nor froot loops were available. He was forced to consume "Marshmallow Mateys", a knock off brand of crowd pleaser "Lucky Charms".

**Diane:** I'm a *Special K* gal, myself, Mark.

**Mark:** Of course you are, Diane.

#### Diane Local Man Opens Up to Dentist

What started out as a routine dental cleaning turned into so much more, sources confirmed this past Friday. "It was a pretty routine day. I got up, ate some toast, brushed my teeth, came to the office, put on my scrubs and started seeing my patients. Well, I should say it was routine until my 10:30 appointment." Dr. Edwards explained. "I walked into the room, and everything seemed like it was going to be your standard cleaning until I said 'Open up'. That's when Bill started telling me about his struggles of reconnecting with his father." It was reported Dr. Edwards did his best to keep the atmosphere professional, but area man Bill Waters refused to stop recanting his life story, despite Dr. Edwards repeatedly stating "I am a dentist Bill, you know what I meant." Dr. Edwards' colleagues do not think any less of him as a dentist or man despite his lack of control of Bill Waters behavior during his appointment. "Yeah, finally I gave in and told him we could get a beer some time. I think the guy just needs a friend." At this time the two have not set up a specific time or place to meet up to "talk about things".

**Mark: University Student Still Offended**

Back in February of 2016, campus drama club, the Alfredian Dramatists put on their annual "Sex on Stage" show, a show dedicated to "no love, just sex" in order to besmirch the pomp of Valentine's Day. When invitations to view the free show were sent out via the social network Facebook, one student had a lot to say. "Really..." Seth McFreshman, a freshman, wrote. A heated debate on the event's facebook page ensued. One student performer wrote "Yep! The Dramatists have been doing this show for years! It's a hit since we're all mature adults here on campus." Freshman Seth countered this by saying "It's not about being an "adult". Though I must say, there is a great deal of immaturity involved with having a show dedicated to sex and goofing around about it. But that's beside the point. It's a matter of values. It's a matter of dignity. Good lord, did I go to the wrong college or what? This is borderline pathetic! First off, I didn't know that I had to be asked for my opinion. Second off, you may call it "art" and "diversity", I call it a bunch of drugged up indoctrinated left-wingers without religion, values, dignity, or a moral compass, who call everybody who doesn't agree with them on an ideological basis "haters" and "ignorant" and "close-minded". But to each their own, right? As long as it doesn't disagree with you of course. Otherwise I would just be "judging" . In short, I disagree with you. Call me a privileged and hateful bigot, but I simply disagree on an ideological and personal basis. " It has now been approximately two months since the controversial performance. Our news team decided to follow up with Seth to see how he was coping. "I'm so disappointed Sex on Stage was allowed to be viewed by our student body." When questioned what he was currently focusing on, he graciously elaborated. "Netflix has just taken Duck Dynasty down, a show about the importance of family and honest business practices. There are five movies purely dedicated to sex on Netflix and two purely dedicated to drugs. What does that say about the company's morals? They will be hearing from me shortly."

break up quotes by pausing and using slight character voices

pause

You and me both, Seth McFreshman.

collect papers

**Diane: Local Nostradamus Predicts Trump Will Not Be President, Ben and Jerry's Will Discontinue Ice Cream Flavor**

(Pause)

**Mark:** That's it?

**Diane:** That's the whole story.

**Mark:** Huh. I guess that's it.

**Diane:** I guess so. Get out there and vote, folks!

**Mark:** And with that, we end our news segment.

**Diane:** Yes, this has been the local news with WALF 89.7.

**Mark:** I'm Mark O'Brian...

**Diane:** And I'm Diane, signing off.

**Mark:** And now, we bring to you the radio comedy, King of Hearts!

Get up, M stage R, P stage L w/chairs

MUSIC: LOVE LETTERS - METRONOMY. FADE OUT.

standing → **Allen:** The greatest place on earth. The city that never sleeps.

standing → **Seattle Guy:** Man, I LOVE Seattle! Best. Coffee. Ever. I haven't slept in four years!

**Allen:** What?! God, no. No! This is New York, ya dingus! Jeeeeeze, would ya have some respect for the big apple? You think Seattle is the best place on earth? You're dead wrong, buddy. What's Seattle got going for it? Overpriced coffee and passive aggressive people! "Seattle hates you, too!" No, it doesn't buddy, last time I checked Seattle was not a person with freakin feelings, your population just happens to hide behind a façade of lame garage grunge and ambiguous weather!

(SEATTLE GUY STARTS BLUBBERING)

Oh god, are you crying?

**Seattle Guy:** No, you're crying.

go over + comfort **Allen:** Ah, jeez man. I'm sorry okay? I take it back. Seattle's a fine city (even if it is on the west coast). I take it back. Wait, no I don't. I am sorry though. Really, guy. I didn't mean to make you cry, okay? Please stop crying, huh? You're human and you have feelings too. I know, I flew off the handle a minute ago. Shhhh. I know. Better? Good. Hey, you have yourself a nice day!

**Seattle Guy:** Thank you. Sit

slow down → **Allen:** Anyway. NEW YORK CITY. The place where dreams do come true! Even if you don't know what you're dreaming about! New York just has a way of making things happen. I heard it's because of the latitude or longitude or something. Some weird cosmic hotspot. Also, I guess all the parks used to be mass cemeteries so there's a lot of paranormal mumbo jumbo that messes with the city. I don't know. Regardless, it's my home. My one and only. I wanna talk a little bit about me. I'm Alan. I am 28 years old. I live in the Meatpacking District. I'm a pretty average guy, I do one weird thing: I traffic

start flow of consciousness

human hearts from my apartment for a living. I know it sounds sketchy, but hey, a guy's gotta make rent. And as far as organ trafficking goes, human hearts are what you wanna specialize in. Do you really wanna smell like liver? Didn't think so.

You might be wondering, if you're a decent human being, "Alan! Where the heck do these hearts come from? Are you a killer?" To be completely thorough and honest: **I don't know**. I don't know where the hearts come from or from whom, and I don't want to know. I'm just the middle man. I don't ask questions, I just check to make sure the blood type is the correct one for my customers. That's all. Am I a killer? No. I don't think I have it in me to kill another person. **That crosses the line.**

Uh, let's see... what else do you need to know... um, I like dogs. I think that's it... *starts to turn away*

*snaps back to and*

Oh! So recently there's been this reoccurring thing going on. It's weird, it's almost like a theme in my life. I keep on accidentally bringing these... couples together? Like, my customers and people I work with keep on falling in love with each other, almost at the drop of a hat! The first time wasn't a big deal.

*P go to M*

*standing* → **Man 1:** Excuse me, I think you dropped this?

→ **Woman 1:** Oh! Thank you so much!

**Man 1:** That's a lovely perfume you're wearing, what is it?

**Woman 1:** (breath taken and smitten) Vick's vaporub. I have bronchitis.

**Man 1:** Would you like to share a cab? I'm going uptown.

**Woman 1:** I'd be delighted!

**Man 1:** This might be seem forward, but I would love to take you to lunch. I know of this great little place that has the best soup in the city. The soup could help your throat.

**Woman 1:** Oh myyyyyy. *← draw out*  
*M sit*

**Allen:** But then there was this:

*C stand*

**Delivery Man:** Yeah man, I got your heart right heereee.... Uh, whoa.

**Allen:** This one really ground my gears. Twice in a row! Are you kidding me?

**Anne:** My hero! I can't ever begin to tell you how important this is to me! Is there a way I could ever repay you?

**Delivery Man:** (bashfully) Well, it's all in a day's work ma'am.

**Anne:** Please, ma'am is so formal. My name is Anne. You are really a life saver. (pause) Do I know you? From somewhere? I feel like I've met you before.

*← warm, but not gushing*

*← dramatic pause*

**Delivery Man:** No, I don't think we've met... in this lifetime... P sit

**Allen:** And...

**Nancy and Janet:** I need a heart with an A positive blood type as soon as possible! *M + C look @ each other*

**Nancy and Janet:** I'm sorry?

**Allen:** Oh, no.

**Nancy:** No, I'm sorry. You go ahead.

**Janet:** Oh, I couldn't possibly! You go first. I'm sure you're a very busy woman.

**Nancy:** I am, but my situation isn't terribly urgent. Please, you go first.

**Janet:** That's very kind of you. I'm Janet.

**Allen:** Alright, that's enough. You people have got to stop meeting each other in my apartment!

**Janet:** Excuse me? *offended*

**Nancy:** What do you mean "you people"?

**Allen:** No, I didn't mean "you people" as in you people, I just meant all these couples keep on-

*Ignore Allen*

**Nancy:** I'm Nancy. Janet, I may be an incredibly successful business woman with an extraordinarily fulfilling life and very little free time, but even I can't waste another minute without you in my life. Here's my card.

**Janet:** Nancy, I may be a freelance artist with all too much free time and a slew of evil ex lovers, but I feel as if the universe is giving me a sign that I should have you in my life? Would you like to run away to Brazil with me?

**Nancy:** I can't think of anything else I'd rather do. Let me call my assistant and tell him to cancel all of my meetings until Monday.

*All stand, ad lib?*

(IN THE BACKGROUND WE HEAR THE OVERLAPPING VOICES OF OTHER COUPLES COOING CLICHÉS SUCH AS "I'VE WAITED ALL MY LIFE TO MEET A MAN LIKE YOU!" "DO YOU BELIEVE IN LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT?" "THIS IS HAPPENING SO FAST... AND I COULDN'T BE HAPPIER!" ETC. )

*All sit quiet*  
**Allen:** (talking over the voices) There were more too. I became some sort of a sick, twisted Cupid! I'm tired of this crap! They're all just so... (struggles to find an appropriate term) dumb. Dumb but happy. Why are their lives so easy? And why am I the one who keeps bringing them together?! You'd think an organ trafficker's apartment would be the least romantic place on Earth. Ugh, I don't need this... whatever **this** is in my life.

Gross.

Maybe I want something like that too!? Maybe I'm tired of seeing these randoms meet right in front of me while I don't have anything like that going on in my life!? Maybe I'm jealous. (I don't know. I don't know.)

SOUND: THE SOUND OF THE DOORBELL DINGING AND FOOTSTEPS. *Chloe stamel*

**Allen:** (to the audience) Hold on, I need to take care

of this.

(to Carol) Hi, can I help you?

**Carol:** I certainly hope so. *Bausque*

(A MOMENT OF AWKWARD SILENCE.)

**Allen:** You- you sure you're in the, ahem, right place, lady?

**Carol:** Carol.

**Allen:** Carol.

**Carol:** Is that sign accurate? The one behind your desk?

**Allen:** What? CUSTOMER CONFIDENTIALITY GUARANTEED? Yeah, of course! I try my be-

**Carol:** Wonderful. I need one. I need a heart.

**Allen:** Wonderful! Do you know what blood type you're looking for?

**Carol:** O negative.

**Allen:** (echoes) O negative. That's my blood type! *← start getting gum out*  
(trying and failing to flirt) You can have my heart! *← flirter*

(CAROL UNWRAPS A PIECE OF GUM AND LOUDLY STARTS CHEWING AND BLOWING BUBBLES. SHE DOES NOT VERBALLY RESPOND.)

**Allen:** (sheepishly) Yes, well, uh, I... I will see what I can do. O negs are rare, so it might take a while to get one in. I'll let you know when it's ready!

**Carol:** (after popping a final bubble) Thanks. My number is on my card.

(SHE WALKS OUT. ) *Chloe take a step back from audience*

SOUND: THE SOUND OF FOOTSTEPS AND THE DOORBELL RINGING AS THE DOOR SHUTS.

**Allen:** (In awe) Wow. She's gorgeous... so... alluring... She dropped her gum wrapper...

SOUND: THE SOUND OF DREAMY HARP.  
Enter the fantasy world of Allen's  
imagination.

over  
the  
top  
cheerful

**Carol:** (Sighs contently) Allen, how did you know I love botanical gardens? This is the most wonderful place for a picnic. *Grab C, hold*

**Allen:** I could see it in your eyes. They... speak to me.

**Carol:** Allen, that's so... romantic.

**Allen:** Stick with me babe, there's a lot more where that came from! Roses are red... *Out to world*

**Carol:** Poetry!

**Allen:** ...Violets are blue,  
You are the prettiest girl I ever knew. *to Carol*

**Carol:** Oh, Allen!

SOUND: INTERRUPTION SOUND .  
Back to reality.

*Patrick up,  
Chloe sit*

**Delivery Man:** Hey... hey! Hello? Allen!

**Allen:** What? Oh, sorry.

**Delivery Man:** You feeling ok, man? Your eyes are all glazed over. You take too much of something?

**Allen:** No, no I'm fine. Thanks.

**Delivery Man:** (not convinced) Okay... well, here's the AB heart. Careful with it though, it's a bit slushy.

**Allen:** Slushy?

**Delivery Man:** Yeah, the preservation solution keeps squirting out of the aorta.

**Allen:** Oh, sure, thanks.

**Delivery Man:** What's that on your desk?  
(DELIVERY MAN PICKS UP THE FRAMED GUM WRAPPER.)

**Allen:** Hey!

**Delivery Man:** Is this a framed gum wrapper? Why did you frame a gum wrapper?  
(ALLEN SNATCHES IT BACK.)

**Allen:** None of your business! It's not a big deal! It's fine!

**Delivery Man:** (amused) Alright man, take it easy // *A new thought*  
no... are you stalking someone? Don't tell me you've gone off the edge and started stalking people.

**Allen:** Stalking? No! I'm not a creep. It's from this... well there's this lady... she dropped her gum wrapper and-

**Delivery Man:** So you framed it? That's borderline, Allen. I'm saying this because you're my friend: get rid of the gum wrapper. It's weird.

**Allen:** I know, don't you think I know that? (sighs)  
I'll trash it. I just wanted to keep it as a memento of the first time we met; I don't have anything else to remember her by. I think I really like her.

**Delivery Man:** How long have you been seeing each other? *confused*  
(SILENCE.)

Are you guys friends?

(SILENCE.)

Allen, is this some kinda love at first sight thing? *More Confused*

**Allen:** Yes! Maybe. I don't know! I saw her once and it was like I got punched in the gut. I can't shake this feeling. I felt this intense connection... or something. I think we might be soulmates.

**Delivery Man:** Soulmates! You're a dreamer Allen, always have been, always will be no matter how hard you've tried over the years to act like a cynic. Hit the breaks on the soulmate talk, though.  
Al, you might want to consider that this might be stemming from some sort of unconscious yearning to fill

*Best Friend  
talk, chummy*

a need in your life. Maybe it's because your best buddy here has just had a similar experience to the one you seem to be going through.

**Allen:** I don't need to justify my heart. Well, my mind heart, not my physical one.

**Delivery Man:** Mind heart?

**Allen:** My emotions.

**Delivery Man:** Yeah, that's true. You feel what you feel. But the thing is, when I met Anne, sure, there was an instant romantic connection, but I made sure to take the time to get to **know** her after we met... (his words get drowned out by the sound of a dreamy harp.)  
Fantasy.

Sincerely

**Allen:** I'm so sorry. *take C's hand*

**Carol:** No, it's not your fault. I just, I wanted to tell you. That's why I'm so guarded sometimes. Or that's why sometimes I get nervous about opening myself up to you... It was a really long period of all these ups and downs... I couldn't believe someone that I cared so much about was actually capable of treating me like I was nothing. He had this incredible way of getting into my head and making me feel like I was lower than dirt. It was really bad for me. He was really bad for me. It took me a long time to heal because I was so scared. For a minute there, I lost myself.

**Allen:** Carol.

**Carol:** But that was a long time ago. I love myself more than ever and I've learned to always be cautious about watching for warning signs. I know how I deserve to be treated. I'm better. Stronger. And now, I'm trying to be braver.

**Allen:** Carol, I will never let you get hurt like that again. I promise.

**Carol:** I trust you. *Take Allen's hand*

**Allen:** Hey, I know what it's like. I've been there too.

**Carol:** You have?

**Allen:** Yeah. I don't normally tell people about it though. Things were so bad that I actually had to seek professional help after that relationship ended.

**Carol:** Allen, that's terrible!

**Allen:** I'll spare you the details, but it really sucked at the time.

**Carol:** I used to be so angry at myself for letting one or two bad experiences make me suspicious of everyone, but, in the end, it turned out to be a big learning experience and I think it worked out for the best.

**Allen:** I think you have to go through the rough, the dark, and the difficult times to appreciate all the good moments in life. And I think we have a lot of good, between the two of us. I think... I think we could be something big. ← I love you

**Carol:** Allen, I'm really glad I'm with you. And I think so too - we could be something big.

**Allen:** I know this is kinda fast, but do you want to move in? With me?

**Carol:** Into your apartment? No thank you. ← A joke

**Allen:** Oh.

**Carol:** But you could move into my apartment with me!

**Allen:** Oh!

**Carol:** Think about it, your lease is up soon, I live in a nicer neighborhood, and I actually own my own furniture.

**Allen:** Okay. Sounds like a plan!

**Carol:** What would you ever do without me? ← A joke  
(THEY LAUGH.)

SOUND: INTERRUPTION SOUND.

Reality.

**Delivery Man:** ...but that's my two cents. Think about it, okay? Hey! The guys are coming over to my place later; we're gonna have a couple beers and try out this board game we invented. You should come up!

**Allen:** *slowly coming out of dream, half listening* Yeah, yeah, sounds good! I'll see you then.

**Delivery Man:** Cool. Later. Think about what I said!

SOUND: DOORBELL RINGS AS HE EXITS. *Maggie stand*

SOUND: DOORBELL RINGS AGAIN AS WOMAN 1 ENTERS.

**Woman 1:** Allen, I gotta tell you, I really think he could be it!

**Allen:** What are you talking about? *← Not aggressive, confused*

**Woman 1:** The guy I met here, in your apartment, I think he's the one!

(A PAUSE.)

**Allen:** Are you for real? Seriously?

**Woman 1:** Dead serious.

**Allen:** Get out of here! That's wonderful!

*Ramble*  
↓  
**Woman 1:** I know! He met my parents and they ab-so-lutely ADORE him! He's so honest about everything, they said. God knows it's about time I was with an honest man. They kept on asking me before we met, "When are you going to bring a man home? We are so tired of you bringing home these stupid boys!" And I said "I don't know! Maybe you should stop forcing it and let me do it in my own time! For crying out loud!" and they said "Okay, but if you don't bring anyone home for Thanksgiving we are set-ting-you-UP!" And sure enough, I brought him home for Thanksgiving and he killed it! Can you believe it? This is the best relationship I've ever had. Honesty really is the key in a relationship. I've never not lied about how busy I am, what my favorite movie is, or what my interests, passions, and goals are before. You know, the usual

stuff.

**Allen:** Wow! That's great! I'm happy for you! *sincere*

**Woman 1:** You sure?

**Allen:** I am. Really. (He is) *Grounded*

**Woman 1:** Fabulous! You know, I wasn't sure if you were at first because you should've seen the look on your face when we first met! Ugh, I could have died! You looked like such a sourpuss!

**Allen:** Things change.

**Woman 1:** Boy, do they ever! You look different. Something must have happened to you- you seem happier. You look good.

**Allen:** Thanks, I guess I am different.

**Woman 1:** Glad to hear it! I was worried about you; you were so mopey for a while there. I have to go walk my poodle. You still game to dog-sit while I'm away for the weekend?

**Allen:** Unless an emergency comes up, you betcha! *← Nonchalantly*

**Woman 1:** Faaaaaabulous. Ta taaaaaaa!

SOUND: SOUND OF DREAMY HARP.

Fantasy.

SOUND: THE SOUND OF A PUPPY BARKING.

**Carol:** Names. Go!

**Allen:** Harold.

**Carol:** Demitri?

**Allen:** Scout.

**Carol:** Blue.

*go sit at Carol  
and Allen's feet*

**Allen:** Rubik's cube?

**Carol:** Rubik's cube? No. Chicago?

**Allen:** Definitely not. Oedipus?

**Carol:** Rex?

**Allen:** Gob.

**Carol:** Bueller.

**Allen:** Bueller?

**Both:** Ferris Bueller!

**Ferris Bueller:** Arf! (Yes!)

**Allen:** Yes!

**Carol:** I like it!

**Both:** Ferris Bueller.

**Carol:** Hello, Ferris! Welcome to your new home! We're so glad you're here! Yes, we are!

SOUND: MORE PUPPY BARKING.

**Allen:** You're perfect.

**Carol:** Stop. You're going to make me blush!

**Allen:** You're so beautiful, and wonderful, and cute, and funny, and sweet....

**Carol:** (laughing) Not in front of the puppy! You're going to make him uncomfortable!

**Ferris Bueller:** Bark! ← beagle bellow

**Allen:** Carol, I have something to ask you...

**Carol:** (Gasps) Is that a...

**Allen:** It's a ring.

MAKE IT  
A JOKE

**Carol:** Oh, Allen! Yes, yes, yes of course!

SOUND: INTERRUPTION SOUND.  
Reality.

**Allen:** I have to tell her.

**Customer:** Have to tell who what?

**Allen:** I have to tell Carol the truth because that's what people do when they have something important to say! I understand now: honesty is the foundation of true human connection. I am in love with Carol!

} Fast, like  
little kid

SOUND: SQUIRTING SOUND AND SOUND OF SPLASHING LIQUID. ← Pat

**Customer:** Oh gross!

**Allen:** Huh?

**Customer:** That heart just sprayed blood all over your shirt. You got some on me too. Watch where you point that thing!

**Allen:** That's okay, I don't mind. ← Dreamy

SOUND: THE PHONE RINGS. ← Maggie

**Janet:** Hi, Allen? I'd like to return my heart. I tried it and it's not going to work out.

**Allen:** You tried it out? How are you still alive?

**Janet:** Don't worry about that. The heart was a bust just like Brazil.

**Allen:** You and the business woman.

**Janet:** I'm not talking about that right now. Our higher selves did not communicate as well on the astral plane as I would have liked.

**Allen:** You weren't compatible. ← Understanding

**Janet:** It's all so convoluted. Anyway, I think this heart is broken. I'm going to keep my original one for

now. I'll have someone drop off the broken one tomorrow. Goodbye, Allen.

← Like getting flushed down a toilet

**Allen:** Bye.

**Customer:** You might want to mop the floor.

SOUND: THE PHONE RINGS AGAIN. ← Maggie

**Allen:** Hello?

**O Negative Man:** Are you, uh, are you the guy? ← sketchy

**Allen:** I dunno, you tell me.

**O Negative Man:** The, ah, king of hearts?

**Allen:** Oh. Yeah, that's me.

**O Negative Man:** We've got it. The O neg. We're on our way to you.

**Allen:** Fantastic!

SOUND: HE HANGS UP. THE SOUND OF NUMBERS BEING PUNCHED ON A PHONE. ← Maggie

**Allen:** Carol? Can you be here in two hours? Yeah. It's in.

SOUND: THE SOUND OF A STOPWATCH TICKING.

SOUND: A CRASH OF THUNDER. THE SOUND OF THE DOOR SLAMMING OPEN.

CAROL RUSHES INTO THE OFFICE LOOKING GAUNT YET STILL ATTRACTIVE, HER COMPLEXION IS PALE AND DARK CIRCLES SURROUND HER EYES. SHE IS WEARING DARK CLOTHING THAT DRAPES AROUND HER; SHE'S CLEARLY LOST A SUBSTANTIAL AMOUNT OF WEIGHT.

Chloe stoned

**Carol:** Allen.

**Allen:** Carol, I'm so glad you're here. I was hoping we could talk-

**Carol:** (desperately) Allen, I need a favor. I need to

have an operation, now. I'm dying.

**Allen:** What?

**Carol:** (locking eyes with him) Please, I can trust you. Your sign.

CAROL GESTURES TO THE SIGN ON THE WALL DECLARING 'CUSTOMER CONFIDENTIALITY GUARANTEED!'

(A PAUSE.)

**Allen:** (to himself) Customer confidentiality guaranteed. (sighs) Okay.

**Carol:** Doc? *↑ takes time making decision*

A WINDBLOWN WOMAN IN A LAB COAT WEARING THICK, ROUNDED GLASSES THAT SO INTENSELY MAGNIFY HER EYES *Maggie stand* SHE LOOKS QUITE SIMILAR TO SOME SORT OF INSECT ENTERS. THE WINDBLOWN WOMAN APPEARS TO BE A SCIENTIST OF SORTS.

**Woman in Lab Coat:** I'm in? I'm in! The doctor is in!

**Carol:** Allen meet my doctor, Doc, this is the man who gave me- *sold me his- my heart.*

**Woman in Lab Coat:** (to Allen) Oh, hi there! You must be Aaron? No, Eric!

RUMMAGING THROUGH HER POCKETS, THE WOMAN IN LAB COAT PULLS OUT TWO CRUMPLED RUBBER GLOVES AND SNAPS THEM ONTO HER HANDS.

**Allen:** You're sure about this. *← just to Carol, trying to be intimate*

**Carol:** Have to be.

**Allen:** You'll be okay? I can take you to a real hospital.

**Carol:** Can't afford a real hospital. How would I explain the transplant heart? (More to herself than to Allen) I'll be fine. I'm going to be fine. If I make it through this I might marry you! That's a joke.

*↑ Allen smiles/gets excited*

**Woman in Lab Coat:** We're gonna need a surgical area.

**Carol:** What about the desk?

**Woman in Lab Coat:** Yup! Let's just push all of this junk off it.

SOUND: THE SOUND OF VARIOUS ITEMS CRASHING TO THE FLOOR. ← Patrick

**Carol:** Why do you have a framed gum wrapper?

**Allen:** No reason! I'll take that. Doc, could Carol and I have some privacy before you start?

**Carol:** Allen, we don't have a moment to spare.

**Woman in Lab Coat:** Alright, darlin, take your shirt off and then go ahead and lie down.

**Allen:** (to himself; star struck) She's taking her shirt off. Like Scott Pilgrim

**Woman in Lab Coat:** Let's just attach this here heart monitor. Mimes 2

SOUND: THE HEART MONITOR STARTS BEEPING.

Good! And we'll just pop this IV in your arm for the anesthesia... This is anesthesia, isn't it?  
(SHE DEEPLY AND AGGRESSIVELY INHALES.) ← Bigger  
Whooooeee! Yessir, that's the good stuff! You're gonna have a great time, darling. Night-night! Alright, let's tango.

SOUND: THE SOUND OF A STOPWATCH TICKING. HEART MONITOR BEEPING.

**Allen:** You're sure you know what you're doing?

**Woman in Lab Coat:** Don't be ridiculous!

SOUND: THE SOUND OF A STOPWATCH TICKING. HEART MONITOR BEEPING.

**Woman in Lab Coat:** (muttering) Oh, this looks different from vet school. Very different indeed.

SOUND: THE SOUND OF A STOPWATCH TICKING. HEART MONITOR

BEEPING. THE SOUND OF ORGANS SQUELCHING AND LIQUID SQUIRTING.

**Woman in Lab Coat:** Oh, I... what's this? I've never seen this before... (she laughs hesitantly to herself) And now...

SOUND: THE HEART MONITOR GOES SILENT.

...time for the new heart... There.

(A MOMENT OF SILENCE.)

SOUND: THE HEART MONITOR STARTS BEEPING AGAIN.

Wow, I... I did it!

**Allen:** You did it!

**Woman in Lab Coat:** I did it!

DISREGARDING THE WOMAN IN LAB COAT, ALLEN RUSHES TO THE DESK AND CRADLES CAROL'S HEAD. SHE STARTS SLOWLY STIRRING. CAROL SLOWLY OPENS HER EYES, MUCH LIKE SLEEPING BEAUTY.

**Allen:** (Gently) Carol...? Carol, I, I love you.

CAROL GASPS AND HER EYES WIDEN. HER LIPS PART AS SHE CHOKES OUT A SOUND. HER HAND SHOOTS UP AND SHE CLUTCHES ONE OF ALLEN'S HANDS. HER GRIP SUDDENLY TIGHTENS. ALLEN IS SURPRISED AND WINCES FROM PAIN. CAROL'S BODY THEN BECOMES LIMP AND HER EYES ROLL INTO THE BACK OF HER HEAD.

SOUND: THE HEART MONITOR FLATLINES.

**Woman in Lab Coat:** Oh... *disappointed and annoyed*

(SILENCE. )

**Allen:** It's been weeks. I don't know how many. I'm surprised I'm not still hurting. The initial shock was bad, the disappointment was worse. But, I think I'm okay now. I thought I'd be broken, or at least my heart would be, but I'm not, it's not. *// ← winking*  
I guess I've been thinking about it a lot, no, I **have**

been thinking about it a lot. I thought I was in love with her. With Carol. I really did. At least, I wanted to be... and I wanted her to love me too. But how could I be? How could she love me? How could I relate to somebody who I never even had a real conversation with? It felt like I was just treading water. Love isn't something you can fall into based off of the way someone looks or how they speak. You can't love someone because of the way you think they are and hope for them to be. Love takes time. Real love is understanding. Real love is knowing someone, like really knowing someone and honestly accepting both the light and the dark parts. Real love is respect. If you don't have those components, it's just not true. You are only in love the idea of the person. Or maybe you just love the possibility of what could be. What can you do with that? Nothing.

It still sucks though. But hey, life goes on and you can't really do anything about that. At least now I know. Now I know.

Build

SOUND: THE SOUND OF RUNNING FOOTSTEPS.

**Woman 1:** (Off mic) Allen, Allen! (On mic) We have to tell you!

**Man 1:** Just show him, honey.

**Woman 1:** Look! It's a riiiiiiiiiiiiinnngggg!!!

**Man 1:** This is all thanks to you!

SOUND: THE SOUND OF THE COUPLE PASSIONATELY SMOOCHING.

**Allen:** (enraged) ARE YOU KIDDING ME!?!

THE END.

MUSIC: FADE IN. LOVE LETTERS - METRONOMY

**Dress Rehearsal Notes from April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

## Brian

- “Even if it is on the west coast” – make that line more to self and not to Seattle Guy
- Cheat out more
- Look at script for parts you aren’t as familiar with – paraphrasing gets redundant/confusing
- Don’t snap out of fantasy mode until you hear the record scratch/interruption sound
- Customer confidentiality... needs to be bigger.
- Take a moment to think before agreeing to the surgery
- React to Carol’s “I might marry you... That’s a joke” more

## Patrick

- Don’t start saying lines until you are finished with costume change
- Look at script when you aren’t as comfortable with the lines, especially with sound cue lines
- “It’s weird” needs to be louder
- “Love at first sight?” needs to be more of a question than exclamation
- Articulate
- Cheat out during Allen/Delivery Man scene

## Maggie

- Missed a couple lines, look at script
- Take a bigger pause after Local Nostradamus...
- Bark sooner
- Visibly/Audibly inhale during doctor scene
- Bigger “Oh” after Carol dies
- Cheat out more

## Chloe

- Faster costume change
- More vocal range with Janet
- Louder during Carol and Allen’s intimate scene
- Die more loudly and slowly
- Speak more slowly when you are Carol
- Louder gum chewing/bubble popping

**Actors' and Director's Responses to the WALF Shows and Nevins Show**

WALF Dates: April 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Nevins Theater Date: April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016

When you are involved in show, whether you are the director, an actor, or an audience member, the natural instinct after the run of the show has ended is to reflect upon the show went and gauge how well it went, whether you liked it or not, and think about how well the show went as a whole. Because this thesis aims to explore the differences in performance quality between the radio studio shows and the live show, I decided to create a survey for myself and my actors. The survey contained seven questions total, which were as follows:

1. On a scale of one to ten, one being very poorly and ten being extremely well, how do you feel your personal performance went during the Thursday night WALF show?
2. On a scale of one to ten, one being very poorly and ten being extremely well, how do you feel your personal performance went during the Nevins show?
3. On a scale of one to ten, one being very poorly and ten being extremely well, how do you feel the cast's performance as whole went during the Thursday night WALF show?
4. On a scale of one to ten, one being very poorly and ten being extremely well, how do you feel the cast's performance as whole went during the Nevins show?
5. Which performance do you think was your strongest?
6. Which performance was the cast's strongest?
7. In terms of performance quality, what were the biggest differences between the WALF and Nevins shows?

I personally responded to the survey and administered the survey orally to my cast a week after the shows had ended so they would have time to reflect upon the entire experience. Their responses were as follows:

Patrick Soper:

1. 7/10
2. 6/10
3. 8/10
4. 7/10
5. I think the WALF show was my strongest, I was able to focus more because there was not an audience to look at and get distracted by.
6. I also think the WALF show was the cast's strongest performance wise.
7. The biggest reason why there was a difference in performance quality between the WALF and Nevins shows was due to the audience's presence. I think the WALF shows

were better because during the live show I was worried about visuals and blocking which hindered my performance and possibly the cast's as well. But, what we lacked in focus during the live show I think we made up for in energy and our group dynamic. The biggest difference between the performances was that during the live show it was really personal for me because I could look at, physically interact with, and connect to the other cast members.

I think Patrick gave himself lower scores than everyone else in the cast because he was the actor with the least experience. His lowered levels of performance confidence may have been caused by performance anxiety which often leads to lowered self-esteem and confidence in one's abilities. Overall, I would have given Patrick's performances higher scores than he gave himself.

Maggie Longchamp:

1. 7.5/10
2. 7/10
3. 8/10
4. 8/10
5. The live show was my best show, personally, because I am used to live theater so I was more comfortable during the Nevins show. I also didn't have to listen to my own voice through headphones, which was weird for me during the WALF shows.
6. I think the WALF show was the strongest for the cast as a whole, though.
7. The blocking definitely changed the quality of performance during the show, I think it made it seem less scripted. Nerves also changed the performance quality as well, but we all worked well during both the WALF and Nevins shows. Being able to get feedback from the audience during the live show also helped our energy levels, but we didn't focus as well as we did when we didn't have to interact with our radio audience.

Throughout the course of King of Hearts, Maggie tended to display symptoms of low confidence despite her acting talents. I think she gave herself lower ratings because she was struggling with feelings of inadequacy both inside and outside of rehearsals due to a recent personal trauma she faced. In terms of her acting performance, I would have given Maggie much higher ratings than she gave herself.

Chloe Theodosiou:

1. 7.5/10
2. 7/10
3. 8/10
4. 7/10
5. WALF was better for me. I felt very comfortable in the radio setting and there were fewer distractions.
6. The WALF show was also better for the entire cast, again, because we were able to focus more and relax more.
7. The performance quality wasn't as good during the live show because of nerves. We all knew we only had one shot in front of a crowd that we could see and getting instant responses from them was nice, but it threw us off a bit.

Like Patrick and Maggie, Chloe also gave herself lower ratings than I would have given her as her director. I can only speculate the reason for this is because Chloe tends to be her own worst critic which may stem from growing up with an extremely critical mother.

Brian O'Connor:

1. 8/10
2. 6.5/10
3. 8.5/10
4. 7/10
5. WALF was my strongest show, for sure. It was a more relaxing atmosphere than live shows typically are.
6. The cast did its best during the Thursday night WALF show.
7. There was definitely a difference in performance quality between the radio and live shows. During the WALF shows we were focused and really in character but during the Nevins show we were less focused but more energized because of the audience.

Unlike his fellow cast mates, Brian's self-scores were the closest to what I would have given him. This may be due to Brian's extensive experience in traditional productions and Friday Night Live, a club that produces shows similar to Saturday Night Live's shows, which enable him to relatively accurately gauge how well he performs during shows. I also think it is interesting that all of my actors gave themselves better ratings during the WALF show, despite the fact that all of them are more comfortable with traditional theatre rather than radio.

Rachel Romack:

1. Not applicable.
2. Not applicable.
3. 9/10
4. 6.5/10
5. Not applicable.
6. The WALF show was the cast's strongest performance by a big margin.
7. The biggest difference between the shows in terms of performance quality was, for me, the overall quality of the show as a whole. I think the reasons why the Nevins show was not as strong as the WALF shows were because the actors were more easily distracted during the live show because they had friends and family in the audience, they were not as focused because they were giddy and nervous to perform in front of an audience, and they had blocking and costumes to work with as well as everything else they had to do during the radio studio shows. Another thing that changed the performance quality, not necessarily for the better, was that during the live show the actors started improvising lines and that threw them off of the course of the script's plot, so they had to compensate with energy and silly antics on stage.

While this is not a proper psychological study, this survey gave me a better idea of what other people feel and perceive to be differences in performance quality between different runs of shows. Previous to gaining the responses from my actors, I had predicted the performances would differ because they would be more focused during the WALF show, but more energized during the live show due because they would be able to interact with a present audience. I also predicted that the ratings of quality of performance given by the actors individually and as a cast as a whole would be even and consistent throughout all the shows. However, it seems the differences in performance quality seem to stem from nerves produced by the presence of an audience and the distractions that come from receiving feedback from an audience rather than solely the actors being able to interact with and draw from the audience's energy and feedback. The ratings of performance qualities were close, but they were not even or consistent throughout all the shows like I had expected.

## **Props, Scenic, Lighting, Sound, and Costume Lists**

### **Props**

- Four microphones
- Table bell (Brian)
- Heavy books (Patrick)
- Clay slip (Chloe)
- Chewing Gum (Chloe)
- High heels? (Chloe and Maggie)
- Table cloth for News Team
- Cell phone (Maggie)

### **Scenic**

- Table
- Four chairs

### **Lights**

- General stage wash (up/down)

### **Sound (Prerecorded)**

- Preshow music playlist
- News Intro music
- Love Letters – Metronomy (intro/outro music)
- Cityscape sound effects
- Dreamy Harp sound effect
- DJ record scratch
- Phone ringing
- Oven timer ticking/ding
- Heart rate monitor beeping and flatlining

### **Costumes**

- Costumes will be provided by the actors
- Allen (Brian):
  - Letterman jacket
  - Pink or red shirt
  - Jeans
  - Hat
  - Sneakers

- Carol (Chloe):
  - Dark dress or skirt with dress top
  - High heels
- Diane (Maggie):
  - Blazer
  - Black dress pants
  - White dress shirt
  - Glasses
  - Flats
- Mark (Patrick):
  - Sport coat
  - Polo
  - Khakis
  - Loafers or dress shoes
- Bit characters will be indicated by easily removable costume piece(s) like a scarf, hat, or jacket



**APRIL 16th,  
7:00 pm  
NEVIN'S  
THEATER**

# **KING of HEARTS**

**A LIVE RADIO SHOW**

**FREE ADMISSION**

**APRIL 13th  
& 14th,  
10:00 pm  
WALF 89.7 fm**



## **Playbill**

## Appendix

### Rehearsal Log Samples

#### March 14<sup>th</sup>, Brian and Chloe Rehearsal

- Further explored character work
- Chloe concerned about differentiating Fantasy Carol vs. Reality Carol, focused on voice work and making a distinct “Janet”, “Anne”, and “Carol” voices
- Need to work on monologues with Brian – need to find a flow of consciousness
- Worked on physicality during dream scenes
  - Brian – cheat out towards audience more
  - Chloe – don’t be afraid to touch/interact with Brian and don’t recoil when Brian moves towards you

#### March 16<sup>th</sup>, Patrick and Maggie Rehearsal

- Finished character work for all King of Hearts characters
- Discussed different ways to get into character with Patrick
- Held character interviews
- Worked on different character voices/inflections for King of Hearts characters
- Improved news anchor banter – more genuine/realistic
- Patrick – Don’t forget who your characters are; they’re blending together
- Maggie – Faster character transition from Woman 1 to Nancy

#### March 22<sup>nd</sup>, Full Cast Rehearsal

- Warm ups (physical/vocal) – Maggie still acting self-conscious
- Trust exercises
  - Back dancing
  - Silly secrets
  - Massage circle
  - Trust falls
- Read-through of entire show
- Got up on feet, worked through entire show focusing on physicality and gesture
- Need to figure out actor order and placement for mics
  - Need chairs for actors to sit in when not acting
- Need to work on couple transitions/timing in the beginning of play
- Maggie – more of a distinct voice for Nancy, more of a stereotypical 1930s announcer voice, need to work on getting comfortable with doctor voice

- Chloe – need to slow down speech, more volume (especially during Allen/Carol dream #2), wear high heels for next rehearsal, need to start working with rehearsal gum/blowing bubbles
- Patrick – can't understand first delivery man line, ARTICULATION, volume
- Brian- tone it down, too cartoony