

# THE INTERNET AND THE OMELET

by Jerry Rabushka

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*A Dramatic Comedy Duet*

**by Jerry Rabushka**

**SYNOPSIS:** This dramatic comedy starts off innocently enough as a report on kids who spend too much time on their electronic devices. Suddenly, the most popular guy in school gets in trouble when a seemingly innocuous comment online turns everyone against him.

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

*(2 males)*

JAROD CURRANT (m)..... A high school radio reporter.

*(34 lines)*

CANYON SCRUMBLE (m)..... A high school sports star.

*(34 lines)*

**TIME:** Present day.

**SETTING:** A coffee house.

## COSTUMES

JAROD – May dress up a bit, he might be one of those guys that wears a tie all the time, even loosely.

CANYON –Can be represented in a polo, school sweatshirt, athletic wear, etc.

## PRODUCTION NOTES

This can be done on a bare stage with no props, or at a coffee house, with a couple tables and computers for the characters to use. Canyon has some books out as well as a computer or tablet that engrosses his attention. Jarod has a computer or some sort of device as well. At the start, he addresses the audience as a reporter for his school radio station. Feel free to have some extras at other tables watching and reacting.

**AUTHOR'S NOTE**

Take your audience by surprise – the beginning of this piece plays up the humor but by the end, things take a serious turn, and by moving slowly in that direction they'll never know what hit 'em! Jarod, as the reporter, is always looking for more than he finds, but ends up finding more than he's looking for, and Canyon, as the affable athlete, comes out worse for wear when he realizes that life is more than sports and popularity. If the characters themselves don't "expect" this ending, imagine how your audience might react!

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**AT START:** *Jarod and Canyon are at a coffee house.*

**JAROD:** *(Looks to CANYON, speaks as if starting off a documentary.)*

Phone, computer, social media, or *(Looks around and sees nothing.)* real live interaction? *(Shakes it off.)* The fantasy of a flawless life, or the pillory of harsh reality? I'm at a coffee house where the two meet – where the curated perfection our friends begrudgingly believe in masks the barren landscape of our bare-naked psyches. People say they come here for companionship – yet nobody's talking. *(Becoming philosophical but rather shallow at it, and demonstrating CANYON to make his point, perhaps uncomfortably so.)* We're surrounded by humanity, yet far from human. Soulless. Lifeless. Flitting around like shades in Hades, the Greek Underworld. *(Leaves CANYON to talk to audience.)* I'm Jarod Current, reporting for Xyborg High School's WXHS – The Voice and the Power of Xyborg. Are we disconnected and connected at the same time? Hooked up yet punched down? Included, yet ostracized? *(Goes back to CANYON.)* Let's ask Canyon Scrumble, one of our school's top athletes and justifiably the most popular guy on campus.

**CANYON:** *(In a reverie.)* Have you ever wondered what Hades would be like now? Like if the gods punished you by making you spend eternity trying to make a left turn in Atlanta traffic during rush hour but never catching a break. Or every year your team would lose the Super Bowl to New England with 30 seconds to go.

**JAROD:** Totally disconnected.

*CANYON'S had enough of JAROD'S report and physically stops him from continuing.*

**CANYON:** Totally cliché, Currant. *(As a master of the eye roll.)* “Ooh we're talking to our screens instead of to each other. Ooh dude like that's so original yet derivative at the very same time, and no one's ever thought of that before, yet everyone has.”

**JAROD:** It's true, Scrumble. Once I drove down a street for miles, and every block had a no left turn sign. I was over the river before...

**CANYON:** Why didn't you make three rights?

**JAROD:** *(Taken up short.)* I didn't know I had that right.

**CANYON:** You had three. The right of right turn, the right of assembly, the right of free speech, which you're welcome to exercise... (*Points offstage.*) right that way.

**JAROD:** And I have the right of loud speech, which always wins the debate.

**CANYON:** Here nobody talks. That's why we come. To be left alone.

**JAROD:** Why don't you stay home then?

**CANYON:** (*As his Parents.*) "Canyon, do the dishes. Canyon take out the trash. Canyon do your homework! Canyon help your sister!" (*Sits back at the table.*) Canyon can't take it.

**JAROD:** (*To audience, walking away for a moment.*) Let's see if people are open to friendship or just full of their own nonsense. (*Back to CANYON.*) Hey what's up?

**CANYON:** I'm ensconced in a digital scan of a first printing of a William Faulkner novel.

**JAROD:** (*Circles back around, more intrusive, while motioning to audience he's about to try again.*) Bro, book down, what up?

**CANYON:** Nothin', and (*More of a whisper in JAROD'S face.*) let's keep it that way.

**JAROD:** (*Now right behind CANYON over the shoulder.*) Hey bro-dude is that opera on your screen?

*CANYON keeps trying to turn the screen away and JAROD keeps nosing into it, he points offstage again.*

**CANYON:** That way, Currant.

**JAROD:** I see there's a scandal in the hip hop world.

**CANYON:** "Rapper's Delight."

**JAROD:** Politics are boiling over. Like a pot of noodles on high.

**CANYON:** (*Losing patience.*) I'm the noodles and you're the pot.

**JAROD:** (*To audience, reporting.*) Then there's this kind of coffeehouse huckster – the conversation highjacker. (*To CANYON, affable.*) So I went to Walmart [or current retail store] on the way over here and...

**CANYON:** (*Interrupting and annoying, gets up to take over.*) I never go to Walmart [or current retail store]. Trying to save fifteen cents on the backs of the poor. Did you know that the owners of Walmart

[or current retail store] have more money than more than half the world's population combined?

**JAROD:** *(To audience, pushes CANYON down.)* That's why everyone's looking at their screen.

**CANYON:** *(He gets up and walks about to make his point.)* People see me on screen as popular, friendly, and really really good-looking. Deep down there's a lot more of me worth getting to know.

**JAROD:** How deep am I supposed to look? I've got left turns to make.

**CANYON:** Once we sat in traffic for 40 minutes trying to make a left. Mom and Dad were screaming at each other because three rights would have saved us 35. But Dad wouldn't go out of his way.

**JAROD:** What happened?

**CANYON:** Six car pileup. Marriage counseling.

**JAROD:** That's why our generation talks to a computer. Maybe we don't read *Catcher in the Rye*, we don't listen to "great music" from the sixties, we don't do what our parents and grandparents did, but you all act like we're the first generation to have a mind of its own.

**CANYON:** *(Sees something on his laptop screen and pulls JAROD over.)* Jarod, look, a whole herd of cattle who agree with me on every topic! My point of view, rolled up into a tuna wrap, seasoned and concise... validation! Love! Likes! I feel whole, and my most trifling comment brings 100 responses vs...

**JAROD:** *(Pushing CANYON off, speaks sarcastically.)* Dude, leave me alone, why are you talking to me anyway, like don't you have a bath to take...

**CANYON:** *(Changes mood, talks to audience to share a bad memory.)* And then... it happened. I said the thing.

**JAROD:** Spill it, Scrumble. *(Whisper to audience with a curious smile.)* The thing...

**CANYON:** The thing nobody liked.

**JAROD:** I thought everyone liked everything you said all the time. That's the point of you being you. Perfection that only Zac Efron [or current actor] can surpass.

**CANYON:** I said that thing that no one agreed with. People in my hometown, in Australia, Thailand, Paraguay, and the Northern Marianas were maxed out on outrage about one tidbit of information I shared, and it carried over into real life. My friends weren't my friends, my family wasn't my family, and my dog became my cat and

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