

TRADING SCHEDULES

By Chris Stiles

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CHARACTERS

PERFORMER 1, playing the part of an announcer and other side characters.

PERFORMER 2, also playing the part of an announcer and other side characters.

REGINALD, a gifted high school junior (*played by Performer 1*)

JOEY, a less gifted high school junior (*played by Performer 2*)

**The script can be performed with one or two additional actors (male or female) playing the parts of the other characters.*

SETTING: A bare stage.

AT RISE: PERFORMERS 1 & 2 on stage.

PERFORMER 1: You're watching the Reality High Network, the television network devoted entirely to high school reality television. Tonight, on Reality High, the final exciting episode of Trading Schedules.

PERFORMER 2: Last week, we met Reginald, an honor student, 4.0 grade average, future valedictorian, and destined for an Ivy League school.

PERFORMER 1: And we met Joey, who will be lucky to graduate and will probably spend his life working at his dad's bowling alley.

PERFORMER 2: Last week, they traded class schedules...

PERFORMERS 1 & 2: ...and changed their lives forever.

PERFORMER 1: Tonight, on Trading Schedules, Reginald and Joey reflect on the past week.

PERFORMER 2: First, we hear from Reginald.

REGINALD: The first class I have is wood shop. I didn't even know the school had a wood shop, to be honest, let alone an entire class devoted to the mastery of the wood arts. Nor did I realize that the class had a required uniform of a baseball cap and a NASCAR t-shirt. I tried to go into the class with a positive attitude. But no matter how hard I tried, I could not break the ice with the guys in this shop class. They didn't understand my humor at all. For instance, I was assigned to work with a fellow named Bruce Wiley. Bruce said little to me at first, but finally he said...

PERFORMER 2: Hey. Get me the circular saw.

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REGINALD: And I said, “Is this saw so-called because it is circular in shape, or because it’s designed to cut circles? Ha ha ha.”

PERFORMER 2: Mr. Commons? I want a new shop partner!

REGINALD: Mr. Commons gave me a new partner. He put me with Pete Jackson, who was cutting a piece of plywood with a different kind of saw. “What kind of saw is that?” I asked, trying to be friendly.

PERFORMER 2: It’s a saber saw. Because of the saber teeth on the blade.

REGINALD: “A saber toothed saw? I thought those went extinct with the wooly mammal! Ha ha ha.”

PERFORMER 2: Mr. Commons!

REGINALD: Pete asked for a new partner, and this time I was stuck with Mr. Commons. He asked me to get him some tools.

PERFORMER 2: Get me a Phillips head screwdriver.

REGINALD: I said I would prefer to do a research paper about who Phillips was and why he had a screwdriver named after him. After the hour was over, the entire class met me in the hall and shoved me into a locker. They shut the door, and then I heard a click. A voice said...

PERFORMER 2: Hey Reginald, guess which kind of saw cuts through a combination lock?

REGINALD: I’m pretty sure it was Mr. Commons who said that.

PERFORMER 2: A tough start to the week for Reginald...

PERFORMER 1: And meanwhile, Joey makes adjustments to his own schedule.

JOEY: My first class with the new schedule was Calculus. I didn’t even know what Calculus was. I mean, I knew it was either some kind of math, or some dead language used to write the Bible...turns out it’s math. Hard math. The teacher puts me with Bethany Blaskey, the smartest girl in the school. She starts talking about functions and integrals and derivatives and all these other big huge words. I says, how am I supposed to do these kinds of problems? Bethany gives me this shotty look, and says...

PERFORMER 1: Use your graphing calculator, stupid.

JOEY: But this calculator has all kinds of weird buttons and symbols and I can’t even figure out how to turn it on! Bethany says...

PERFORMER 1: I wouldn’t worry about it. You’ll never need math for what you do in life.

JOEY: “Hey Bethany, here’s a math problem for you. How many guys will ask you to prom? Answer: it’s an imaginary number!” Man, I can’t wait to get back to my schedule.

PERFORMER 1: Joey seems to have as much difficulty fitting in as Reginald does...

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PERFORMER 2: Let's check in on Reginald as he continues his way through Joey's schedule.

REGINALD: Next class was Automotive Technology. And it was the same guys in that class as it was in wood shop. When class started, everyone was gathered around this old pick-up truck. I asked, "What are you guys doing?" Pete Jackson said...

PERFORMER 2: We're changing the carburetor. Can you change a carburetor?

REGINALD: And I said, "I don't know. Can you spell carburetor?" After school, I went out in the parking lot, and my car is in pieces. The wheels are off. The fan belt's lying on the ground. The spark plug wires are wrapped around the antenna, and the battery is nowhere to be found. There was a note on the windshield. The note read:

PERFORMER 2: Here's your mid-term, Reggie-boy. Good luck.

PERFORMER 1: Yes, Reginald continues to have difficulties with Joey's schedule. Let's see if Joey is doing any better.

JOEY: The next class was advanced placement English. I go in there, and everybody's sitting in a circle. I ask Daniel Greever, so what do you do in this class? He says...

PERFORMER 1: We read the classics and discuss them.

JOEY: Cool, I think. I'm not much for reading, but I love to talk. And the book they're talking about it is Moby Dick, which is also cool, because I did read that one. Well, I didn't read it, but I remember it from that show "Wishbone." So everybody's talking, and they're all talking about all this allegory and symbolism stuff that I don't understand, and Mrs. Fambrough asks...

PERFORMER 1: Joey? Do you have anything to add to the discussion?

JOEY: "Yeah," I says, "why does the whale have to represent anything? Why can't it just be a good whale-hunting story?" And Bethany Blaskey looks at me, dead serious, and says...

PERFORMER 1: Because the whale is white.

JOEY: "I had a white hamster once. Does that mean God was living in a Habitat in my bedroom?" ...I got a detention for that, and I was late for work at the bowling alley.

PERFORMER 1: Meanwhile, as the week of Trading Schedules comes to a close...

PERFORMER 2: ...Reginald looks to gain something positive from the experience.

REGINALD: I have to admit, I was getting tired of fighting with the people in my classes. It's just that they act so stupid. How hard can it be to get through school? Especially these kinds of classes. Like Remedial Algebra. Remedial Algebra. What you take when you flunk regular Algebra twice. We were working on a problem in class. $2x + 1 = 5$. And nobody's getting it! Mrs. Sublette can't get it

through to anybody, no matter how hard she tried. Then she said to me...

PERFORMER 2: Reginald, maybe you can explain it to them.

REGINALD: I tried to remember how I first learned Algebra, back in the second grade. I remembered how all math I did at that age I put in terms of Skittles, Skittles instead of numbers, because I loved Skittles. I told the class, don't think of x as an undetermined variable. Think of it as missing Skittles, Skittles you need to find. And the truth is, I still love Skittles, and I had a big bag in my backpack. I got them out, and the entire class starts doing Algebra with candy. And you know what? They got it. The whole class understands Algebra, at least on a basic level. Even Paul Jackson. I have to admit, that was a cool feeling, helping these guys out. They ate all my Skittles, though.

PERFORMER 2: To his surprise, Reginald ends his week with a positive experience.

PERFORMER 1: Can Joey do the same?

JOEY: My last class was Physics. This will be no problem, I figured. I'm good at gym. But it turns out it's not a P.E. class. It's a flippin' science class. And a hard one! And they're having a midterm. A test over Newton's three principles. Bethany Blaskey says...

PERFORMER 1: Do you even know who Newton is?

JOEY: Sure. He invented the fig-filled cookie.

PERFORMER 1: Once again, you're a failure.

JOEY: And I look at the test. It's all about gravity and mass and acceleration.

PERFORMER 2: Can't do it, can you?

JOEY: No, but I bet I can show you. I tell Mr. Anderson that we're going to take a field trip.

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