

THE MADISON

Written by

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Half-Hour Pilot

COLD OPEN

FADE IN:

EXT. HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA - EVENING

Bright office buildings are reflected the harbour. The twin bridges glow off in the distance.

INT. OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

We move past a row of small, identically lit offices. Despite the lack of sunlight, everyone works away. We rest on one office, exactly the same as the others, except for the GIANT PAPIER-MACHE BEAR MASK sitting on the desk. Frantically typing away at said desk is PATRICK SIDDIQI (34, smartly dressed, and full of nervous energy). He cradles a phone under his shoulder.

PATRICK

(INTO PHONE) Yes, I'm sorry I'm calling you back for the 3rd... 4th time... I just really need these figures before I can leave...

Patrick looks desperately at his desk clock. It reads 7:53PM.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Yeah. Yeah. No. Yeah. You got them - could you e-mail them over... Great, thank you!

Patrick hangs up the phone. He looks at his clock again, then the computer, then the giant papier-mache bear mask.

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER

Patrick sprints out of the office building, his briefcase and running laptop under one arm, and the bear mask under the other. He barely catches a METRO TRANSIT BUS.

INT. METRO TRANSIT BUS - CONTINUOUS

Patrick sits on the packed bus, laptop open, typing away. The bear mask sits on the open seat next to him.

The bus stops, and an ELDERLY LADY steps on. Patrick looks at her, picks up the bear mask, and puts it on his head. He keeps typing. The Elderly Lady warily sits next to him.

EXT. BUS DEPOT - LATER

Commuters swarm from the bus to the car park. Patrick pushes through them clumsily hauls ass in the opposite direction.

EXT. THE MADISON - MOMENTS LATER

Patrick charges down the street towards a small storefront theatre. The lights are on in the lobby. The sign above the door looks decades old, and reads "MADISON HARDWARE STORE".

INT. THE MADISON - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Behind the front desk is MIKE MACDONALD (35, casually dressed, unflappable). He is reviewing a pamphlet with a PROSPECTIVE STUDENT (21, male).

MIKE

We have a beginners improv class on Saturdays...

Patrick bursts through the door, sweating, still clutching his laptop and bear mask.

PATRICK

Did I miss it?!

MIKE

Don't worry, you're early.

PATRICK

Really?

MIKE

No.

Mike hurries out from behind the counter. Patrick hands his laptop to the prospective student.

PATRICK

Tiny favour? Could you take this laptop down to the wifi cafe, take this e-mail right here... right here... and hit send?

Patrick turns down the hallway, spins around to double check the e-mail, then bolts down the hallway with Mike. The baffled prospective student is left clutching the laptop.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
(OVER HIS SHOULDER) Welcome to The
Madison!

Mike hurriedly follows Patrick down the hallway. We glimpse old show photos and faded paint on the walls.

MIKE
They're coming up on the end right
now. Leroy...
(TO A PATRON)
You have to push the bathroom door
handle in, and lift.
(TO PATRICK)
Leroy covered for you in the
guidance counselor scene, and
Bethany said she'd stall...

They silently slip through the stage doors into...

INT. THE MADISON - STAGE - CONTINUOUS

A 100-seat black box theatre, with a show underway. LEROY
UPSHAW (28) and BETHANY MATTHEWS (21) sit on stage, but we'll
meet them later...

BETHANY
I told you, my Dad's gonna come
home any minute...

LEROY
Which is why we've gotta hurry up.

The audience laughs. Mike slams the bear head on Patrick.

MIKE
(WHISPERS) You're up, champ.

Patrick slips into the GREEN ROOM. Mike continues to watch
the show from the side of the theatre.

BETHANY
There's something I forgot to tell
you about my Dad...

LEROY
Oh yeah?

Just then Patrick emerges through the black stage curtain.

PATRICK
Rooooaaarrr!

As Patrick advances on Leroy, the lights quickly blackout.

BETHANY (V.O.)
Thanks bear-dad!

The audience howls with laughter and applauds. The lights come back up. Patrick, Bethany, and Leroy take a bow. They bound off stage past Mike.

PATRICK
Great house tonight!

ANGLE ON: The audience, which is about a dozen people strong. In a 100 seat venue.

Mike steps onto the stage to address the audience.

MIKE
Wasn't that great?!

The audience, though slight, continues to cheer.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Alright, let's keep this show moving. Can we have our "second half cast" up here now?

ANGLE ON: The audience. About 8 of the audience members stand up and take the stage. They are the "second half cast". Patrick, Bethany, and Leroy take their seats.

Mike takes this in. Still he smiles...

MIKE (CONT'D)
Up next we have a real treat for you...

SMASH CUT TO:

MAIN TITLES

END OF COLD OPEN

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. HALIFAX STANFIELD INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - MORNING

Passengers depart from a flight. The sign reads "TORONTO to HALIFAX". Through the crowd strolls ADELE MACDONALD (32, attractive, confident), pulling her wheeled carry-on baggage behind her.

She walks one direction, stops, looks around, and then heads in the opposite direction.

As she heads for the escalator a YOUNG WOMAN (22), stops her.

YOUNG WOMAN

Sorry. Weren't you on TV?

ADELE

Yeah. Yeah I was on...

SMASH CUT TO:

OPENING TITLES - "CANADIAN COMEDY FACTORY" TV SHOW

Wacky music plays. Adele stands in front of a bright background.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

It's the "Canadian Comedy Factory"!
Celebrating 17 Years! Starring
Adele MacDonald...

TV SHOW - "CANADIAN COMEDY FACTORY" - FLASHBACK

A sketch from Adele's TV show ("*taped in front of a live studio audience*"), depicting a press conference. An actor in a bad wig plays Stephen Harper. Adele plays a reporter.

ADELE

(AS REPORTER) Prime Minister
Harper, you've got some 'splaining
to do...

The studio audience laughs.

INT. HALIFAX STANFIELD INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - CONTINUOUS

Adele is still speaking with the young woman.

YOUNG WOMAN
... "Canadian Comedy Factory"! Could
I maybe get a picture with you?

ADELE
Absolutely.

The young woman pulls out her cell phone, and leans in to take the picture. Adele smiles.

YOUNG WOMAN
My Nana loved your show.

Adele's face sinks as the young woman takes the picture. The young woman doesn't notice, and looks at the phone.

YOUNG WOMAN (CONT'D)
I wonder how I can print this out
to mail to my Nana... Thanks!

The young woman rushes off. Adele watches her go.

CUT TO:

TV SHOW - "CANADIAN COMEDY FACTORY" - FLASHBACK

The earlier sketch continues.

ADELE
Prime Minister Harper, you've gone
too far and the Canadian people
want an answer... when are you
going to ditch that haircut?

The actor playing Harper mugs for the camera. The audience dutifully laughs.

INT. HALIFAX STANFIELD INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Adele is still standing in the terminal.

ADELE
(TO HERSELF) I need a coffee.

INT. MIKE'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - LATER THAT MORNING

Light pours into the bedroom. Piles of clothes, half-read books, and mismatched furniture. Mike is sprawled on his half of the queen-sized bed, dead to the world.

The cordless phone rings. Mike doesn't move. The phone rings again, and Mike groggily wakes.

MIKE
(YELLING OUT) Sweetie!? Bruce!
Jack! Get up, you'll be late for...

Mike picks up the alarm clock radio. It reads 11:36AM.

MIKE (CONT'D)
...school.

Mike rubs his eyes, and grabs the still-ringing phone.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Hello.

ADELE (V.O.)
S'up. I need a ride.

MIKE
Adele?

ADELE (V.O.)
Wake up and give your sister a
ride.

MIKE
Are you in Halifax?

ADELE (V.O.)
Yeah, and I need a ride.

MIKE
You haven't been home in, like, 3
years.

ADELE (V.O.)
Which means you haven't given me a
ride in, like, 3 years.

MIKE

Uh... yeah. (LOOKS AT THE CLOCK)
Look, it's awesome that you're
here. But do you think you could
maybe get to the house yourself?

ADELE

I tried.

Mike looks confused.

INT. ELDERLY COUPLE'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Adele stands in a living room, with her luggage at her feet.
She speaks into her cell phone. An ELDERLY KOREAN COUPLE sits
on the couch, eyeing her suspiciously.

ADELE

When did you guys move?

INT. MIKE'S MINIVAN - AFTERNOON

Mike drives while Adele rides shotgun, looking out the
window. The floor of the van is littered with candy bar
wrappers, stray hockey equipment, and ancient popcorn.

ADELE

(RE: THE STREET) When did Saluzzo's
close?

MIKE

Um, when it burned down.

ADELE

Huh. That makes you think. (TO
MIKE) So what've you been up to?

MIKE

Family, kids, work. Pretty much the
same since we talked at Christmas.
Angie has the kids at their
grandparents' this weekend, so you
get your choice of "Attack Of The
Clones" or "Generic Dinosaur"
sheets.

An awkward silence.

MIKE (CONT'D)

How've you been?

ADELE

Aw, you know, keeping at it. My agent's getting me out a lot, which is good. They're still showing the reruns of the show, which is whatever... The trip to Costa Rica was pretty sweet - did you guys get the hats I sent?

MIKE

Yes. They're good hats.

ADELE

So like I said, lots of auditioning and stuff. I actually have to get back on Monday for a couple, so...

MIKE

Cool.

ADELE

How's Angie? And Bruce and Jason?

MIKE

Jack.

ADELE

Gotcha.

MIKE

Eat me. (BEAT) Um, they're good. Great. Jason's starting hockey. Mostly 'cause Bruce started hockey last year...

ADELE

Aww... following his big brother around?

Mike looks at her. Another awkward silence.

MIKE

So I gotta swing by the theatre to do a couple of things. You mind?

ADELE

Naw, that'd be great.

EXT. THE MADISON - LATER THAT AFTERNOON

Mike and Adele walk up the street to THE MADISON. Adele points up to the sign.

ADELE

You still never got a new sign?

MIKE

I'm not made of signs. Besides, you found it when we moved in.

Mike picks up a bundled stack of the local free weekly newspaper (The Coast).

ADELE

Found it so you could chuck it out.

Mike unlocks the door, and they step inside.

INT. THE MADISON - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

We finally get a better look at the theatre. The lobby is cramped, with a wall of posters for various comedy shows. "The Tuesday Night Open Jam". "Saturday Sketch Night". "Improvaganza". The walls are brightly painted, but needed a new coat years ago. Mike drops off the newspapers and picks up a stack of mail off the floor.

MIKE

If I may direct your attention to The Madison's "Famous Alumni Wall"...

Adele looks up at the wall.

ANGLE ON: Famous Alumni Wall. We see an old headshot of Adele. Below that is a printed screengrab from a security video.

ADELE

Is that guy robbing a liquor store?

MIKE

Yeah, but he did take our beginner improv class once. Funny guy.

Mike heads down the hallway with Adele following him. She looks at the photos from various shows on the wall.

Even though they're all ridiculous, each person looks like they're having the time of their life.

MIKE (CONT'D)

We spruced up Studio 2 a bit.

Adele peeks into the workshop space. It is a decent sized-room, mostly empty, with some plastic chairs.

ADELE

Did you guys ever add a Studio 1?

MIKE

Nope.

They continue down the hallway towards the stage.

INT. THE MADISON - STAGE - CONTINUOUS

They walk into the stage, and Adele takes it in. The black velvet curtains have several holes sewn in them, and dust is collecting along the top. The lighting grid is functional, but clearly second hand. A tech booth the size of a shark diving cage sits at the back of the room. The stage may have been painted black, but the paint is worn through. Still, it's everything you need...

ADELE

Aww... is this like when a kid moves away, and the parents keep their bedroom the exact same?

MIKE

Naw, we just couldn't afford to change anything.

ADELE

So... how are things going?

MIKE

You mean, have we resorted to armed liquor store robbery yet?

ADELE

Pretty much.

MIKE

We rent the space out on off nights, helps make ends meet.

INT. THE MADISON - STAGE - FLASHBACK MONTAGE

We see some of the various groups who rent out the theatre:

- A group of girl scouts glues popsicle sticks to felt.
- A senior's bingo night, with thick clouds of cigarette smoke in the air. The bingo caller leans in and hands Mike an extra \$100.

MIKE
(TO BINGO CALLER) I didn't see
cough nuthin'.

- A meeting of the Communist Party of Nova Scotia. The PARTY LEADER stands on stage.

PARTY LEADER
Comrades, no longer will we be shut
out of the political process!
Workers of the World unite!

Members of the assembled crowd laugh.

PARTY LEADER (CONT'D)
No, your improv comedy show is
tomorrow night!

INT. THE MADISON - MIKE'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Mike leads Adele into his office - actually a converted storage closet. The room is a mess of post-it notes and unhung photos. Mike checks his e-mail.

MIKE
We're doing alright. We could use a
new air conditioner.

ADELE
What happened to the old one?

MIKE
It exploded.

Adele nods.

ADELE

Well, isn't it the law that whenever the scrappy upstart theatre company needs something, they hold a benefit show?

MIKE

(PERKS UP) You wanna do a show?

ADELE

Uh, no, I was thinking you guys...

MIKE

Yeah, you could do an improv show, maybe teach a workshop!

ADELE

Well, yeah, but, I have to be back Monday and that's not enough...

Mike starts typing away.

MIKE

Naw, we'll do it all tomorrow. It'll be great. Our most famous alumni teaching a class. I'm throwing the event up here on the Facebook.

ADELE

Awesome...

Mike finishes typing and turns the monitor around to her.

MIKE

We've already got 3... 5 people confirmed attending. Thanks so much for doing this, Del.

Adele smiles painfully.

ADELE

You screwed me on this, Mike.

MIKE

I really did.

INT. THE MADISON - STUDIO 2 - THE NEXT AFTERNOON

A group of 8 students, among them Patrick, Bethany, Leroy, and CHRISTOPHER (53).

Mike is there, and everyone is chatting. The whole class is casually dressed, but buzzes with excitement.

Adele bursts in, and sets her bag down.

ADELE

Hey, sorry I'm late everyone.

MIKE

(TO ADELE) That's okay, I listed the class start time as 12:13PM.
(TO CLASS) Hey guys, this is Adele, you probably already know her. Don't give my little sister any crap.

Mike heads for the door.

MIKE (CONT'D)

(TO ADELE) They're all yours. If anyone needs me, I'll be in the theatre plugging up an air conditioner-shaped hole.

Mike closes the door behind him. Adele turns to the class.

ADELE

Okay. Um, welcome to our improv workshop. I'm Adele. I'm sure your grandparents know me from TV. Let's all get in a circle.

The class stands in a circle.

ADELE (CONT'D)

How's this, why don't you all tell me your name and something interesting about yourself?

PATRICK

Okay. My name is Patrick Siddiqi. Umm... as we speak my fantasy baseball picks are getting their asses handed to them.

ADELE

Cool. Patrick. Next.

Next is Leroy. He wears Converse All-Stars and a faded Led Zeppelin T-shirt. He may or may not be stoned.

LEROY

Hey, I'm Leroy. Why aren't there more bike lanes?

Next to Leroy is Bethany. She's probably the girl at the comic book store every guy has a crush on.

BETHANY

Hi, I'm Bethany. The high point of my week was punching Leroy in the balls in a scene.

LEROY

She did.

BETHANY

And I'd do it again.

ADELE

Noted.

Next up is CHRISTOPHER FORD, 53. Oldest person in the room, but 100% enthusiasm.

CHRISTOPHER

Christopher H. Ford, Creative Flare Talent. I recently appeared as "Pozzo" in the Dartmouth Players' Godot. You can also see me in an upcoming spot for Lancaster Used Auto. (TO ADELE) Big fan.

Adele points to Christopher's "Dalhousie" sweater.

ADELE

Did you go to Dal?

CHRISTOPHER

This? No, I'm just a professor of Computational Chemistry there. But my heart... is in the theatre.

ADELE

Would've thought you'd have led with that. Next?

THE MADISON - STAGE - MOMENTS LATER

A toolbox sits open on the stage. Mike holds a step ladder while someone stands on top.

MIKE

I mean, do we really need an air conditioner?

VOICE (O.S.)

Only if you want your audience to not asphyxiate when the theatre's full. Although if we keep getting crowds like last night, that won't be a problem.

MIKE

You always know just what to say, Dot.

Down from the step ladder steps DOT AUCOIN (25), Theatre Technician. She went to school for this shit.

DOT

I'm just saying that the air conditioner wouldn't need replacing if people weren't jerks. Stupid, stupid jerks.

MIKE

Come on, that's...

Mike thinks for a moment.

CUT TO:

INT. THE MADISON - STAGE - FLASHBACK

Leroy and Christopher are on stage during an improv show.

LEROY

(AS 'OLD TIMEY REPORTER') The giant ape's getting away!

CHRISTOPHER

(AS 'KING KONG') Rooaar!

LEROY/ REPORTER

He's climbing the Empire State!
Whatta scoop!

Christopher climbs up on top of a speaker next to the stage. He grabs hold of the lighting grid to steady himself.

CHRISTOPHER/ KONG

ROOAAAR! Kong want... to... live!!!

Christopher reaches for the ceiling-mounted AIR CONDITIONING UNIT. He, the air conditioner, and a healthy chunk of ceiling come crashing to the floor.

Leroy watches, shocked. Beat. He mimes snapping a picture.

INT. THE MADISON - STAGE - CONTINUOUS

Mike and Dot are where we left them.

MIKE

Yeah, that was pretty stupid.
(THEN) So how much will this cost
to fix?

DOT

Well, I'd recommend at least a 3-
ton unit, maybe a Ceiling Cassette
LG model. The unit'll run you about
forty-five hundred, plus
installation and repair on the
drywall that Christopher destroyed
in a fit of artistic expression...
but minus the Provincial commercial
development tax rebate you'd be
eligible for... You're looking six
grand.

Mike looks as though he's considering it.

MIKE

Okay... how much will it cost us?

DOT

I'll go check Craigslist.

MIKE

That's why you're the only person
here who gets paid, Dot.

Dot packs up her tools.

DOT

Grumble.

Mike's CELL PHONE rings (his ringtone is "The Simpsons" theme song).

MIKE

Hello.

A beat. A worried look sets into Mike's face.

MIKE (CONT'D)
I gotta take this Dot.

DOT
I'll just be here putting your
theatre back together for minimum
wage.

Mike exits the stage area.

INT. THE MADISON - STUDIO 2 - LATER

The improv class stands in a circle.

ADELE
...Alice, Tom, Bethany, and
Christopher. Okay, first let's...

The studio door opens. In walks KIM JOHNSTONE (33, the
funniest person in the room). From the hallway we hear kids
tearing around.

KIM
Oh, I thought you guys were gonna
be in the Theatre.

LEROY
Mike and Dot are in there cleaning
up air conditioners and asbestos.

ADELE
(THINKS) Kate?

KIM
Close. Kim. Hey Adele. Welcome
back.

The two of them look at each other. They're remembering...
something.

LEROY
(SOTTO TO BETHANY) *Time stands
still...*

KIM
Cool, Kids Class'll move to the
basement. Have a great class guys.
Del knows what she's talking about.

Kim turns and leaves.

KIM (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Alright kids, today we're gonna
learn about not touching the
furnace!

Adele turns back to address the class.

ADELE
Ookay. So how many of you here
remember "Whose Line Is It Anyway"?

Everyone's hands shoot up.

ADELE (CONT'D)
How many remember the superior
British version?

Only a couple of hands go down.

ADELE (CONT'D)
Smart cookies. Well, that's only
part of what improv is. I'm going
to take you guys through some easy,
beginner exercises that we do in
Toronto...

Bethany puts her hand back up.

ADELE (CONT'D)
Umm... Bethany.

BETHANY
Would it be cool for us to warm up
a little first?

ADELE
Uh, yeah, sure.

The class lines up loosely along the back wall. Patrick steps
out from the line.

PATRICK
What's the first place you'd go if
you got out of jail?

ADELE
Uh... steakhouse.

PATRICK
Steakhouse. Thank you.

Patrick turns and mimes holding a pad of paper.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
(AS A "WAITER") Would you like to
hear the specials on your
anniversary?

Bethany and Christopher immediately pull out two chairs, sit
and become the "couple".

BETHANY
(AS WIFE) They have so many steaks
here!

CHRISTOPHER
(AS HUSBAND) Bring us two of every
steak!

Leroy darts in and taps Patrick on the shoulder. Patrick
instinctively slips out of the scene.

LEROY
(AS "NEW WAITER") Would you like to
download the specials on your
anniversary?

Without missing a beat Bethany and Christopher are the same
characters, only 50 years older.

BETHANY/ WIFE
They have so many steak pills here!

CHRISTOPHER/ HUSBAND
Download us two of each steak!

Leroy mimes flying away on a jetpack. He returns with two
imaginary cables in his hands, and plugs them into Bethany
and Christopher's heads. From the sideline Patrick makes
modem noises.

BETHANY/ WIFE
Mmmmmmm.....

CHRISTOPHER/ HUSBAND
Mmmmmmm.....

The class laughs. Adele laughs too, but mostly out of
surprise. She wasn't expecting the class to be this advanced.

Bethany and Christopher continue eating in the improv scene. Suddenly, Adele jumps up and tags the two of them on the shoulder. They move to the back line, leaving Leroy and Adele in a new scene.

Leroy looks expectantly at Adele. Her smile is quickly replaced with panic. She has nothing to say.

LEROY/WAITER
(HELPFUL) Uh, man, that was a long
day at work!

ADELE
(REACHING) ...Yeah.

More awkward silence. Patrick and Bethany share a curious glance. Leroy mimes chopping some carrots.

LEROY/WAITER
So I was thinking sweetheart...

ADELE
Son, you need to-

The scene hits a bump. Clearly, they're not on the same page.

After a moment Patrick runs out in front of the scene, "sweeping it" away. Two more students walk out and start a new scene.

STUDENT
Excuse me, I'd like to return this
monkey.

Adele sits back at the front of the room. Her face betrays a mix of confusion and fear. It has been a while...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. THE MADISON - MIKE'S OFFICE - LATER THAT AFTERNOON

Mike claps his cell phone closed. Whatever that call was, it didn't go well. He looks around at his office - his theatre - and thinks.

Adele bursts through the door.

ADELE

I couldn't accept Leroy's carrots!

MIKE

Toronto has changed you.

ADELE

Mike, I can't do this show tonight. You'll have to find someone else.

MIKE

I'd ask our next biggest alumni, but he's doing 3-5 on armed robbery. Come to think of it, he played a lot of bank robbers in class...

ADELE

Mike seriously, I tried to join in the improv in class, and I had no game. No game!

MIKE

Wait, shouldn't you be teaching your class?

CUT TO:

INT. THE MADISON - STUDIO 2 - CONTINUOUS

The class puts on their coats, puzzled.

BETHANY

That class was only 23 minutes long.

CHRISTOPHER
(TO PATRICK) I can still claim this
on my taxes, right?

CUT TO:

INT. THE MADISON - MIKE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS
Mike and Adele are as we left them.

ADELE
Mike, it's... it's been a really
long time since I actually
performed in front of people. I'm
sorry, but I can't do this show
tonight.

MIKE
Del, it's one show. I've already
sold out half the theatre. No show
means no air conditioner means dead
theatre patrons. Is that what you
want?

ADELE
Mike, come on, I just wanted to
come back to Halifax and see you.

MIKE
Yeah, for a whole weekend after...
3 years.

ADELE
You're right. I should have come
for longer. Why don't I catch an
early flight back, and we'll set
something up for the Fall? When's
Jake's birthday?

MIKE
Jack!

ADELE
Dammit!

MIKE
So you're just gonna bail on me? I
would accuse Toronto of making you
self-absorbed, but you've been
doing this for years!

ADELE

Excuse me?

MIKE

(IMITATING ADELE) *"Let's start a comedy theatre". "It'll be the best". "Look at this awesome sign I found".*

ADELE

That's a terrible "me".

MIKE

Well I haven't seen you in person in 3 years, I'm a bit rusty. I did, however, watch you on your big TV show. Hey, do you remember when we used to get baked and make fun of that TV show?

ADELE

Is that what you're mad about? The fact that I actually made a living doing comedy in Canada? Do you have any idea how hard that is

MIKE

Well, speaking of Canada, I know that the forum guys on Can-Com.ca called your show "the hackiest thing since 'The Littlest Hobo Christmas Special'".

ADELE

To hell with you.

MIKE

Seriously, did you even like the show you ditched me for?

ADELE

It's Canadian TV! You're not supposed to like it!

Adele turns and storms out. Mike sits, stewing.

Christopher pokes his head in the office.

CHRISTOPHER

Hey Mike, is it too early to get a receipt for the workshop?

INT. FAIR TRADE COFFEE - EVENING

Adele sits at her laptop, furiously reading internet forum comments.

ADELE

(TO SCREEN) Screw you, I worked really hard on that Jack Layton impression!

A BARISTA walks over to bus Adele's table.

BARISTA

Excuse me, can I get you anything else?

ADELE

What?!

BARISTA

It's just... you bought a latte and then yelled at your laptop for about 4 hours.

ADELE

Look, have you ever heard of a site called "Can-Com.ca"?

BARISTA

'Fraid not.

ADELE

Listen to this pile of balls:
"Adele MacDonald burned more of my tax dollars in her umpteenth Anne Murray sketch this week. She is teh hack". He can't even spell "the" right!

BARISTA

(READING) "Pandering", "Weak Sauce", "FAIL". Ouch.

ADELE

(TO HERSELF) It's not like I wrote those Anne Murray sketches...

BARISTA

It's the internet. It's just a bunch of people competing to see who can be more anonymously horrible.

ADELE

"Canadian Comedy Factory Fan" here seems to defend me. But then he starts to get really rascist...

BARISTA

"Canadian Comedy Factory", is that what they're talking about? That show does blow.

He turns away.

BARISTA (CONT'D)

My grandma loved it though.

Adele sits, absorbing the accidental insult. She stands, grabs her laptop and bag and heads for the door. Along the way she walks up to the TIP JAR, reaches in, and grabs her change back. She storms out the door.

EXT. THE MADISON - LATER THAT EVENING

There is a line-up out the door. The show must be packed.

INT. THE MADISON - GREEN ROOM/ LOUNGE - LATER

The lounge is full of discarded furniture, ancient paperbacks, and years worth of show posters. Mike, Kim, Bethany, Patrick, Leroy, and Christopher sit backstage. The sounds of a packed house and rockin' pre-show music can be heard outside.

Dot pokes her head in the door.

DOT

Two minute call.

KIM

Thanks two minute.

Dot scans the room as if looking for someone. She rolls her eyes and leaves.

BETHANY

I dunno, maybe she was just having an off day.

PATRICK

The ocean air can really mess with you if you've been away. I think I read that in MacLeans.

Leroy sits on the sofa reading a yellowed "Choose Your Own Adventure". Christopher sits next to him.

CHRISTOPHER

Leroy, we gotta bring back our King Kong scene tonight.

LEROY

Dude, that King Kong scene is the reason we're doing this fundraiser.

CHRISTOPHER

But the audience thought it was hilarious!

LEROY

Only until they realized you were okay.

Kim leans into Mike.

KIM

If we have to, we'll do the show ourselves.

MIKE

Yeah, I'm sure the capacity crowd out there will love that.

KIM

No, I'm pretty sure they'll hate it. But we'll probably win them over anyway.

The door opens, and Adele calmly walks in. She drops her bag.

ADELE

I got lost.

MIKE

(DRY) Outstanding. Alright guys, let's have a great show.

Patrick lightly places his hand on Bethany's back.

PATRICK
Got your back.

Soon the entire cast is touching each other on the back, each time adding "Got your back". Adele takes a second to remember, but soon joins in. So it goes until each back has been touched by each person.

Mike slips out the door. Everyone else chats excitedly, keeping their voices low, except Adele.

INT. THE MADISON - STAGE - CONTINUOUS

The lights and house music fade out. The audience cheers.

DOT (V.O.)
Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to
The Madison's special "In No Way
Annual Air Conditioner Fundraiser"!
Please welcome to the stage... Mike
MacDonald!

The stage lights come up, and Mike takes the stage. BOB, the house musician, pounds out intro music on his keyboard.

MIKE
Good evening everyone, and welcome
to our fundraiser. Your generous
donations will keep future patrons
comfortable.

The audience laughs.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Let's get this show started. First,
let's bring out The Madison's house
cast!

The audience cheers. The cast (minus Adele) takes the stage.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Now, let's bring out the MacDonald
you actually came here to see,
straight from Toronto, the co-
founder of this very theatre and my
little sister... Adele MacDonald!

The audience goes nuts. They're a mix of young theatre regulars, and fans of Adele's show. Adele calmly takes the stage. Too calmly...

MIKE (CONT'D)
(TO ADELE) Well, they're all yours.

With that Mike leaves the stage and heads out to the lobby. Adele seems surprised. She turns to the house.

ADELE
Hey guys. Can I get a word? I mean,
an occupation.

Half the audience all shouts at once. "Plumber"! "Astronaut"! "Lion Tamer"! "Gynecologist"!

Adele strains to make any of the suggestions out.

ADELE (CONT'D)
I think I heard... Farmer.

She didn't. But she starts the scene anyway. Bob underscores the scene.

Bethany runs out and addresses the audience. As she speaks, she indicates what she's describing with her hands.

BETHANY
We see a dusty family farm, in the
midst of the Great Depression.
Crows sit on the telephone lines in
the distance. As the Farmer's Wife
tends the field, a bead of sweat
clings to her forehead...

Bethany clearly indicates the Adele is the Farmer's Wife. Leroy runs out and poses as a Scarecrow. Christopher steps out from the sidelines.

CHRISTOPHER
(AS "FARMER") Mae, I'm afraid we're
going to have to sell our least
favourite cow.

ADELE
(AS "LABOURER") 'Scuse me, I'm told
I could find work on this farm.

Christopher is thrown. Adele is clearly on the wrong page again. On the sideline Kim leans over to Patrick.

KIM
(SOTTO) Why isn't Mike here?

INT. THE MADISON - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mike furiously plunges the toilet.

MIKE
What.. are... you... people...
eating!?!?

INT. THE MADISON - STAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Patrick and Leroy play two seedy ticket scalpers.

PATRICK/ SCALPER
I got two to the Ballet! Deuce for
the Bolshoi!

LEROY/ SCALPER
It'll make ya weep!

The audience laughs. Adele stands on the sideline. She keeps stepping to enter the scene, but stops herself each time. Finally she charges forward.

ADELE
I've got two for the... ballet!

Crickets. Adele knows she's tanking.

INT. THE MADISON - MIKE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Mike clutches the phone.

MIKE
If I just entered the last 4 digits
of my PIN, why do I have to enter
the whole PIN?!

INT. THE MADISON - STAGE - CONTINUOUS

Bethany and Kim are in a scene.

KIM
I don't know, you'd have to ask the
hobo!

The audience roars. Adele sweeps the scene away, and begins a new one.

ADELE
Prime Minister Harper... you've got
some 'splainin' to do...

Worse crickets. It's all up there on Adele's face.

Leroy slips behind the curtain, through the green room, and out of the theatre.

INT. THE MADISON - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Mike addresses the assembled Communist rental group. Clearly, this isn't Mike's day.

MIKE
Well I'm sorry if you had the space
tonight, comrades! But the
socialist utopia isn't gonna fix my
theatre's damned air conditioner!

The group starts shouting. Mike matches their volume.

Leroy runs out from the hallway and whispers into Mike's ear. All the anger drops from Mike's face.

MIKE (CONT'D)
(SMOOTH) I'll could please direct
you to my public relations liaison.

Mike dashes back to the theatre. Leroy stares at the angry communists.

LEROY
You dudes like improv?

INT. THE MADISON - STAGE - CONTINUOUS

Adele sits, deer in the headlights, in the middle of another scene. If she could be anywhere else, she would.

Patrick and Kim are on the other side of the stage.

KIM
(AS "MOM") Sweetie, we could go to
the park. Does that sound... fun?

PATRICK
(AS "DAD") That's our little girl!

Suddenly Mike is on stage. He tags Patrick, then Kim on the shoulders. They vamoose. He places his hand on Kim's shoulder.

MIKE
Excuse me, miss?

Adele looks up, and sees her brother.

ADELE
What?

MIKE
(AS "DOCTOR") Miss, you've been stuck in a terrible dream world for the past several years.

ADELE
I have?

MIKE/ DOCTOR
Yes. We call it "General Hospital" syndrome.

The older half of the audience laughs.

ADELE
(AS "PATIENT") Well, how do I know this isn't a dream too?

Mike attempts to "2 finger poke" her, 3 Stooges-style. Adele, without missing a beat, sticks her hand up to block him.

Mike mimes writing on a chart:

MIKE/ DOCTOR
Reflexes excellent.

The audience laughs.

ADELE/ PATIENT
Doctor, if I've been out this long there's so much I have to make up for!

Patrick calls out from the back line:

PATRICK
Cut to a Prom!

Mike leaves the scene. Instantly Patrick is slow-dancing with Adele, while Christopher and Kim dance in the background.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
(AS "TEEN") Umm... are you one of
the teachers here?

Adele strokes his hair wistfully.

ADELE/ PATIENT
Just keep dancing...

PATRICK/ TEEN
You smell like disinfectant.

The audience laughs. Bethany tags everyone except Adele out.

MIKE
(AS "OLD LADY") If it were up to me
I would have pulled the plug on you
years ago!

ADELE/ PATIENT
But I'm still here, thanks to
socialized medicine.

Adele broadly indicates offstage.

ANGLE ON: The audience. The communist group sits in the front row, laughing away.

COMMUNIST PARTY LEADER
(TO HIS COMRADE) That one was for
us!

Leroy sweeps the entire scene away. As Kim and Leroy begin a new scene, Adele grabs Mike and drags him backstage.

INT. THE MADISON - GREEN ROOM/ LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

Adele and Mike are charged from the show. Mike grins, more than we've seen him do... ever.

Adele gives him a CHARLIE HORSE.

MIKE
Ow!

ADELE

All the times used to carry your
ass in how many improv shows, and
it takes you how long to get out
there?

MIKE

I had toilets.

ADELE

That web forum really messed me up.
Thanks a load.

MIKE

Oh God, you read that?

ADELE

The grammar hurt my brain...

MIKE

I shouldn't have told you about
that... But hey, did you see the
guy who chivalrously defended your
honour?

ADELE

Wait, that was you? (THEN) What was
with all the angry racial slurs?

MIKE

I was in character.

Adele is weirdly touched. She grabs her brother and hugs him.
He hugs her right back.

MIKE (CONT'D)

So, you still have to get back to
Smog-town for your auditions on
Monday?

ADELE

One's a Tim's commercial. No lines.
The other's one line... on
"Degrassi".

MIKE

Parent?

ADELE

Gym Teacher.

MIKE

Ugh.

ADELE

It's not even the money. I'm set
for money. I just...

She searches for the words.

MIKE

Well, maybe you could stick around
for a bit? I could always use
someone to share the blame.

Adele opens her mouth to protest... but realizes she can't
think of a reason.

ADELE

If you're screwing up that bad,
sure.

MIKE

Great. There's a toilet I never
unclogged; The lobby windows need
new weather stripping; someone
punched a hole in the Studio 2
wall...

Adele smiles.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Oh, and Angela wants a divorce.

Adele's jaw drops. She doesn't know what to say. Mike gives
her a double thumbs up, turns, and slips back out on stage.

Adele stands dumbfounded. After a beat she follows Mike right
back out.

We hear the show onstage. It's muffled, and all we can make
out is the audience's sporadic laughter.

We push in on a show poster, over a decade old. It reads:

"MACDONALD x 2 - LIVE COMEDY AT THE BLUE DANUBE, PWYC" As we
move in, we see a picture of Mike and Adele, early 20's,
having the time of their lives.

FADE OUT.

END OF SHOW