

# KING OF COMEDY

1982

Embassy International. Screenplay by Paul D. Zimmerman. Directed by Martin Scorsese. Produced by Arnon Milchan.

Setting: New York City, 1982

Rupert Pupkin wants to be a stand-up comedian. More specifically, he wants to be the King of Comedy. It is his dream to appear on the Jerry Langford show, a Johnny Carson-style talk show whose host he idolizes. Rupert waits outside the studio every day, hoping for an opportunity to speak with his hero, Jerry. Joining him in this endeavor is Marsha, a psychotic young woman who is also obsessed with Jerry.

Driven over the edge by Jerry's rejection of a tape of his comedy monologue, Rupert joins with Marsha in a plot to kidnap Jerry. When they have the talk-show host in their clutches, Rupert notifies the show's producer that unless he is allowed to present his comedy monologue on the show, they will never see Jerry alive again.

Rupert is arrested immediately after the show, but spends his time in jail writing a best seller that will forever confirm his place as the King of Comedy.

## MARSHA

*Crazy Marsha lives out many fantasies as she tells a bound and gagged Jerry about her feelings for him. Toward the end of her monologue, she loses control and practically rapes Jerry.*

I feel completely impulsive tonight. Anything — anything could happen. I've so much to tell you. I don't know where to start. I just want to tell you everything. I want to tell you everything about myself. Everything you don't know. Do you like these glasses? Crystal; beautiful. I bought them just for you. I don't know, something about them reminded me — just the simplicity of them — but if you don't like them, if there's even an inkling that you have doubt in your mind . . . You

son?" That's you, Harold.

I have here, Harold, the form sent out by the National Computer Dating Service. They screen out the fat and the ugly; so it is obviously a firm of high standards. "Here is the personality interview which you are to fill out and return." Are you ready, Harold? Here is the first question. "Are you uncomfortable meeting new people?" Well, I think that's a "yes." Don't you agree, Harold? "Should sex education be taught outside the home?" I would say no, wouldn't you, Harold? We'll give a "D" there. Three — "Should women run for president of the United States?" Well, I don't see why not. Absolutely, yes. "Do you remember jokes and take pleasure in relating them to others?" You don't do that, do you, Harold? No, absolutely no. "Do you often get the feeling that perhaps life isn't worth living?" Hmmm? What do you think, Harold? "A"? "B"? I'll put down "C" — "not sure." "Is the subject of sex being overexploited by our mass media?" That would have to be "yes," wouldn't it? "Is it difficult for you to accept criticism?" No. We'll mark "D." "Do you sometimes have headaches and backaches after a difficult day?" Yes, I do indeed! "Do you go to sleep easily?" I would say so. "Do you believe in capital punishment for murder?" Oh, yes. I do indeed. "In your opinion, are social affairs usually a waste of time?" Heavens, no. "Can God influence our lives?" Oh, yes. Absolutely yes. "Does your personal religion or philosophy include a life after death?" Oh, yes indeed. That's absolutely. "Did you enjoy life when you were a child?" Oh, yes. You were a wonderful baby, Harold. "Do you think the sexual revolution has gone too far?" It certainly has. "Do you find the idea of wife-swapping distasteful?" I find the question distasteful. "Do you have ups and downs without obvious reason?" That's you, Harold.