

THE BIG BANG THEORY

"The Quantum Entanglement Variations"

written by

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THE BIG BANG THEORY

"The Quantum Entanglement Variations"

CAST

SHELDON COOPER.....JIM PARSONS
LEONARD HOFSTADTER.....JOHNNY GALECKI
HOWARD WOLOWITZ.....SIMON HELBERG
RAJ KOOTHRAPPALIKUNAL NAYYAR
PENNY.....KALEY CUOCO

GUEST CAST

ALICIA.....VALERIE AZLYNN
KRIPKE.....JOHN ROSS BOWIE
STEVEN.....MICHAEL FISHMAN
SHOW RUNNER.....BILL PRADY
"SHELDON".....JIM PARSONS
"LEONARD".....JOHNNY GALECKI

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"The Quantum Entanglement Variations"

SETS

Teaser, Scene A - UNIVERSITY CAFETERIA

Act One, Scene B - SHELDON AND LEONARD'S APARTMENT

Act One, Scene C - LEONARD'S NEW OFFICE

Act One, Scene D - UNIVERSITY HALLWAY

Act One, Scene E - CHINA SHOP

Act One, Scene F - TELEVISION STUDIO

Act One, Scene G - CHINA SHOP

Act Two, Scene H - UNIVERSITY CAFETERIA

Act Two, Scene I - LEONARD'S NEW OFFICE

Act Two, Scene J - TELEVISION STUDIO

Act Two, Scene K - SHELDON AND LEONARD'S APARTMENT

Act Two, Scene L - BOOKSTORE

Tag, Scene M - SHELDON AND LEONARD'S APARTMENT

Tag, Scene N - APARTMENT STAIRWAY

Tag, Scene O - SHELDON AND LEONARD'S APARTMENT

COLD OPENING

FADE IN:

INT. UNIVERSITY CAFETERIA

(LEONARD, SHELDON, HOWARD, RAJ, KRIPKE)

THE GANG EATS LUNCH AS KRIPKE APPROACHES THEIR TABLE.

LEONARD

Don't look now -

SHELDON

Don't look where? Leonard, you're going to have to be more specific than that. Say, "Sheldon, don't look over your right shoulder behind you, or north by northwest at 280 degrees, or don't look using the visible light spectrum between 100 and 100,000 Angstroms.

LEONARD

I'm sorry, "Don't look now, but Kripke is standing approximately 1.25 metres to your right."

SHELDON

Now, see? That's much better.

KRIPKE

Hey guys, did you hear the watest? The Uniwersity was appwoached by a major pubwisher westerday. They want one of us to white a popuwar science book for wide welease. I've already put thwough my pwoposal and been appwoved. Better wine up for the gwavy twain before the swots are aww gone.

HE CHUCKLE-GLOATS AND GOES OFF TO SIT WITH HIS FRIENDS.

LEONARD

Well, what do you think, guys?

SHELDON

(scoffs)

Oh, please! There are only 6 people on the planet who are capable of understanding my work and even then I couldn't possibly teach it within the confines of a single volume book.

(beat)

Teaching ordinary people my research would be like a human attempting to complete the Vulcan Kolinar discipline of pure logic.

RAJ

I'll bet Sheldon could.

SHELDON

Why, thank you, Raj!

HOWARD

- proving he's not human.

SHELDON

Thank you, Howard! Gosh, all this
praise might give me a swelled head.

HOWARD

"Might"? If it were any more swollen
it could be a dwarf planet.

RAJ

Poor Pluto...

LEONARD

Well, I'm up for it. Always wanted to
write a book. "Quantum Mechanics for
Dummies." Sounds like fun!

SHELDON

"Sounds like fun"? A weekend at
ComiCon, that sounds like fun, a visit
to the Sacramento Train Museum, that
sounds like fun, this sounds like...
something not fun.

END OF COLD OPEN

ACT ONE

INT. SHELDON AND LEONARD'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

LEONARD, SHELDON, HOWARD, RAJ, PENNY, AMY, BERNADETTE

THE GANG PLAYS "NUCLEAR WAR" (A CARD GAME NOT UNLIKE "MILLE BOURNES" BUT WITH WARHEADS AND MISSILES.)

HOWARD

And my Polaris launches...
(flips over card)

20 megatons at...
(looks around, considering)

Raj, because his pants are so tight I
can see his balls.

RAJ

My bomber drops 50 megatons on Howard
for looking at my balls!

SHELDON

And my Orbital Weapons Platform
launches simultaneously with my MX-7
to drop 20 megatons on the both of you
potty mouths for saying "balls".

LEONARD

My Killer Satellite shoots down your
Orbital Weapons Platform.

SHELDON

Oh, no it doesn't. My Saboteur stops your Killer Satellite launch. Maybe your engineers studied "Killer Satellites for Dummies". Bazinga!

LEONARD

You could have written your own book, but you said "no". I said "yes".

HOWARD

You say goodbye and I say hello. Can we just play the game? I have weapons of mass destruction waiting to say "Hello, boys!"

PENNY ENTERS, FOLLOWED BY AMY.

PENNY

Hello, boys!

AMY
(to Sheldon)

Hello boy-friend!

SHELDON MAKES A FORCED ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.

PENNY

Guys, I have great news! I got a major part in a sitcom pilot!

LEONARD

Really? That's wonderful!

PENNY

Yeah, it came down to just me and one other actress, and you'll never guess who...

SHELDON

Oh, I think it's unlikely that we'll never guess. Given the variables there shouldn't be more than 3.7 million possibilities. At one guess per 5 seconds, allowing for your response time, it shouldn't take more than 205.5 hours.

HOWARD

Is it Alicia, our "CSI hooker" neighbour from upstairs?

PENNY

Yep, it was the lady
(points to herself)

And the tramp.

PENNY INDICATES "UP".

SHELDON

You see? Even Wolowitz guessed the answer. Next time spare the hyperbole.

LEONARD

So you beat your own Lex Luthor?

PENNY

I...guess?

SHELDON

Alicia isn't her Lex Luthor, she would have to be a bald super-genius inventor-slash-industrialist, in contrast with Penny's Kryptonian superpowers - of which she has none.

HOWARD

Much as it pains me to agree with Sheldon, he's right. She's more like Sinestro to your Green Lantern.

SHELDON

Interesting, Howard. Would she be a Hal Jordan Green Lantern or a John Stewart Green Lantern?

HOWARD

Hmm, not Stewart; I have a hard time picturing her as black - or a guy.

RAJ

Why must you always bring race into it? She could be any Green Lantern. As long as she was a girl.

PENNY

Guys?

THE ARGUMENT DESCENDS INTO A BABBLE OF VOICES.

SHELDON

Gentlemen, please! This argument is pointless!

(MORE)

SHELDON (CONT'D)
(once they're silent)

We won't get anywhere unless we first establish which DC continuity is our frame of reference.

AMY

Ignore this full frontal nerdity. Tell me, Penny, how did they ultimately decide? Did you and Alicia engage in physical combat resulting in perspiration and torn clothing?

PENNY

No, we did a second audition. But get this, Alicia was all -
(mock Alicia voice)

"Good luck! May the best woman win!"
(normal voice)

Can you believe her? What a bitch!

HOWARD

Oh, no...?

SHELDON

Penny is referring to the thespian superstition that it's actually bad luck to wish an actor good luck.

(MORE)

SHELDON (CONT'D)

A preferred blessing is "break a leg" which dates back to the Elizabethan era of the theatre, when actors would take their bows down on one knee, thus, if their performance was superb, they risked injuring their tibia from repeated impacts on the stage.

PENNY
(sarcastic)

Is there anything you're not an expert on?

SHELDON

Sarcasm.

LEONARD

So, tell us about the sitcom; What's your part?

PENNY

Well, I'm the sexy neighbor to a couple of really smart, geeky, nerdy guys, one of them is really picky and weird and hates any change, and the other one is short and sweet, but awkward and has a crush on me.
(confused; off their looks)

What?

LEONARD

Huh!

SHELDON

Fascinating. A parallel universe.

AMY

It could be a coincidence. Many popular sitcoms follow similar archetypes, tell similar stories, and even reuse actors from other shows.

PENNY

Wait, are you saying this reminds you of another show?

LEONARD

No, it reminds me of of us - here.

PENNY

What? I don't get it.

SHELDON

What Leonard is trying to suggest is that the premise of the situation comedy is not unlike your own. You live across the hall from a brilliant scientist and his friend -

(ignores Leonard's reaction)

Both of whom share a love of comic books, science fiction, fantasy, roleplaying games and computers, all pursuits which would label us as geeks or, if you like, nerds.

(MORE)

SHELDON (CONT'D)

You on the other hand, are a classic example of the feminine ideal - what many people would describe in the vernacular as "sexy", ego: "the sexy neighbor."

PENNY
(touched)

You think I'm sexy?

SHELDON

No. I just said "many would".

AMY

I would.

PENNY

Yes, and you have.
(rueful aside)

Many, many times.

LEONARD

Well, congratulations! Break a leg.

PENNY

Thanks, Leonard!

HOWARD'S PHONE RINGS - A DISTINCTIVE, CUTE RINGTONE.

HOWARD

Excuse me. That'll be my missus-to-be.

Hi sweetie!

ON THE SCREEN WE SEE BERNADETTE IN A HAZMAT SUIT.

BERNADETTE

Hi, Howiekins!

HOWARD

Something... happen at work today?

BERNADETTE

Just a level three containment breach.

HOWARD

Is that bad?

BERNADETTE

No, "bad" would be a level four
breach. Nothing to do then but hoard
antibiotics and head for the hills.

HOWARD

So what does a level three breach
involve?

BERNADETTE

The usual. A lock down, head to toe
decontamination scrub, burning our
clothing, high colonics.

HOWARD

For how long?

BERNADETTE

A week, ten days, unless somebody
keels over, then it's longer.

HOWARD

But we have an appointment today at
the china store to pick out our
patterns.

(MORE)

HOWARD (CONT'D)
(hopeful)

Unless you want me to reschedule.

BERNADETTE

NO! We may not get another appointment
before the wedding. I'm sorry,
sweetie, but I just can't leave until
the All Clear Signal. Hey, why don't
you take Raj with you; He has great
taste -

RAJ BEAMS AT THE COMPLIMENT.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

- he can provide the feminine
perspective.

RAJ'S SMILE FADES SOMEWHAT.

HOWARD

Okay, I suppose -
(turns to Raj)

Got any plans this afternoon, buddy?

RAJ TURNS AWAY, LIKE THE STEREOTYPE OF A WOMAN IN A HUFF.

RAJ

I'm not in the mood.

HOWARD

Come on, do it for me...

INT. LEONARD'S NEW OFFICE - NIGHT
LEONARD, SHELDON, DARLA

SHELDON WALKS IN, SEES LEONARD DICTATING NOTES TO A BEAUTIFUL
WOMAN, DARLA AS SHE TYPES THEM INTO A LAPTOP. LEONARD GIVES
SHELDON A FRIENDLY WAVE AS HE DICTATES:

LEONARD
(dictating)

Imagine all the matter in the universe
as a bowl of rice pudding. The rice in
the pudding represents the atoms
themselves, and the pudding itself is
the Higgs Boson.

DARLA

Oh, that's good...

SHELDON TWITCHES A BIT.

SHELDON

No, it's a gross oversimplification.

LEONARD

I suppose you could do a better job?

SHELDON

I could. I choose not to.

DARLA

Should I be getting this down?

LEONARD

No, let's take a break.

SHELDON

Good. It's time for you to drive me
home. Well past that time in fact.

LEONARD

Really? Is it that late?

SHELDON

There are several clocks in plain sight including your phone and the laptop - oh, I see what you're doing. You're using sarcasm, aren't you?

LEONARD

Got it in one.

SHELDON

Good. So, according to our Roommate Agreement, you are obliged to provide me a ride home from work.

DARLA

However, the tertiary clause of that entry stipulates that the roommate is exempt from that obligation if said roommate's automobile is in disrepair or in the presence of pressing work-related deadlines in the area of physics. This qualifies.

SHELDON

No it doesn't. This isn't pressing, nor is it physics.

DARLA

The Dean selected Dr. Hofstadter's proposal and has instructed him to make it his top priority.

SHELDON

But he's not as important as I am.

A FAST FOOD DELIVERY DUDE SHOWS UP. DARLA PAYS HIM.

LEONARD

What's this?

DARLA

We're going to be working late, so I
took the liberty of ordering Chinese.

SHELDON

Tonight is Thai Food Night. We can't
have Chinese food on Thai Food Night.

LEONARD

You don't have to eat it.

DARLA

Oh, I'm so sorry. I only ordered
enough for two. Were you going to be
helping Dr. Hofstadter with his book?

SHELDON

Certainly not.

DARLA

Then I suggest you take the bus home.
If you'll excuse me, I haven't washed
my hands all day and God knows where
they've been.

SHE HOLDS HER HANDS UP IN FRONT OF HER. SHELDON BACKS AWAY
FROM HER, OUT THE DOOR. SHE THEN PULLS OUT A HAND SANITIZER
AND RUBS HER HANDS TOGETHER, LIKE THE EVIL GENIUS SHE IS.
LEONARD IS AMUSED AND IMPRESSED.

INT. UNIVERSITY HALLWAY - NIGHT
SHELDON

SHELDON

How rude! She has no consideration for other people's feelings. I don't understand how he puts up with her.

INT. CHINA SHOP - DAY
RAJ, HOWARD, STEVEN

POSH AND FULL OF EXPENSIVE BREAKABLES. HOWARD AND RAJ BROWSE.

HOWARD

Are you going to be okay? What if we get a hot sales girl helping us?

RAJ

I had a couple of Rob Roys before we left; I'll be fine even if she looks like Daenerys Targaryen.

HOWARD

I have been so dreading this. I don't know where to begin.

RAJ

Pretend you have a million dollars, but only 10 minutes to spend it.

HOWARD

If I had a million dollars and only ten minutes to spend it, I'd be at the comic store.

RAJ

But a fine china set is for life,
something to pass on to your children.

HOWARD

So's debt. Look it won't do us any
good if the plates are so expensive
they stay locked up in a display
cabinet while we eat off paper plates
and drink from Flintstone glasses.

RAJ

Actually, the Flintstone glass market
is pretty bullish.

STEVEN, HANDSOME AND VERY CAMP APPROACHES HOWARD AND RAJ

STEVEN

Hi hi hi! Steven Ashley, Pattern
Consultant. You must be Mr. Wolowitz,
my 3:15.

HOWARD

That's me.
(muttered aside to Raj)

Waste of a couple of Rob Roys.

INT. TELEVISION STUDIO - DAY

PENNY, P.A., DAVID, ROB

PENNY ENTERS THE STAGE DOOR. TWO ACTORS, BOTH HOLDING SCRIPTS
APPROACH, ROB (LOOKS LIKE SHELDON) AND DAVID (LOOKS LIKE
LEONARD), BOTH HOLDING SCRIPTS.

DAVID

Wow. Hi, you must be Penny.

PENNY

Hi, you must be David and Rob. I'm
looking forward to working with you.

DAVID
(stammers like Leonard)

So you'll be my lover - my love
interest. I mean, not "my" love
interest, but my character's,
obviously I'm not talking about - so
you're from Nebraska, that's nice.

PENNY
(nods)

Omaha.

DAVID

Omaha to you too.

PENNY

Omaha, Nebraska; That's where I'm
from. Not "aloha". I don't know where
that is.
(off their looks)

Kidding! I know Aloha's the capital of
Hawaii.

DAVID

Oh, right, of course. Uh, well, have
you been here long?

(MORE)

DAVID (CONT'D)

By the way, I hope you don't mind my asking all these personal questions, I just think we should get to know each other better if we're going to get close - be working close together.

ROB
(scoff; to David)

If that's your best attempt at flirting you should rethink your approach.

(to Penny)

I prefer a professional, strictly platonic relationship - or if possible, ambivalence.

PENNY

Uh, okay. No problem with that.

DAVID

So, uh, what did you think of the script?

PENNY

It was pretty funny, although my character seems kinda -

ROB

It's full of gross scientific inaccuracies, like using the term, "zero gravity" instead of "micro gravity", or page 22, on page 37 when discussing operant conditioning, they use the term "negative reinforcement" when referring to two different kinds of "positive reinforcement", they clearly don't know their musculoskeletal anatomy on page 42, and in the last scene they insult "Babylon 5" - the best science fiction show ever!

DAVID

(soothing pat on shoulder)

There there. Faith manages.

PENNY

Well, maybe they think most people in the audience don't know this stuff.

DAVID

Maybe, but they included some pretty complicated physics in our dialogue.

ROB

Might as well talk about "reversing the polarity of the neutron flow".

PENNY

Guys?

DAVID

What do you suggest?

ROB

Get her to talk to the show runner.

DAVID

Great idea! People react with less hostility to criticism from really attractive people.

PENNY
(flattered)

Aw, thanks!

ROB

So you will talk to him on our behalf?

PENNY

Sure! I've got a few notes of my own.

DAVID

Thank you. That's so nice of you.

PENNY

Well, us actors got to stick together, right?

ROB

DAVID

No.

Sure, yeah, always.

PENNY (CONT'D)

Say, anyone know where I can get a latte around here?

DAVID

Oh, I'll get one for you!

DAVID RUNS O.S., THEN BACK, OUT OF BREATH, A MOMENT LATER.

DAVID (CONT'D)
(wheezing)

What - how - do you want it?

HE TAKES A HIT OUT OF AN ASTHMA PUFFER.

INT. CHINA SHOP - DAY, LATER
STEVEN, HOWARD, RAJ

STEVEN TYPES IN THE STORE REGISTRY COMPUTER AS RAJ DICTATES.

RAJ

And 12 sets of the "Wyndham-Pryce
Autumn Classic" silverware, the
"Garabaldi" crystal, and cross that
with -
(contemplates the room;
Steven is about to speak,
but-)

The "Jean-Claude Forest" signature
series for the serving dishes.

STEVEN

I must say, you really know your
stuff; You have good taste.
(nods to Howard)

You're a lucky man.

HOWARD

Yeah, I'm blessed. Are we done?

STEVEN

We just need your full names for the
listing.

RAJ
(dictates)

Rajesh Ramayan Koothrappali -

HOWARD

Raj -

RAJ

Yes, of course, I'm sorry. "Howard
Joel Wolowitz", and "Rajesh Ramayan
Koothrappali".

HOWARD

He means the bride and the groom, not
the groom and his pushy friend.
(to Steven)

"Howard Joel Wolowitz" and
"Bernadette..." uh...

RAJ

Maryann.
(off his look)

It rhymes with "I'm your man."

HOWARD TAKES RAJ ASIDE.

HOWARD

I thought you'd stopped writing crappy
love sonnets about my fiance.

RAJ

I did. I wrote better ones.
(off his look)

Now I'm writing Haiku: "Lovely
Bernadette. Howard could die in space
soon. We shall grieve naked."

HOWARD

Look, I don't care what form it's in -
STOP!

STEVEN

So about the beard's - bride's name?

HOWARD

"Bernadette Maryann Rostenkowski". For
the bride.

RAJ

"Oh, Rostenkowski, my - "

HOWARD'S PHONE RINGS.

HOWARD

Hello? Sheldon? You're where? How did
you -
(beat)

Well, of course the driver took that
personally. You're lucky he stopped
the bus first.
(eyes Raj)

Yes. We'd be happy to pick you up. Be
right there.

STEVEN HANDS A RECEIPT TO RAJ.

STEVEN

(quietly, to Raj)

There you go. Many happy returns.
(sotto voce)

Call me.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. UNIVERSITY CAFETERIA - DAY

SHELDON, HOWARD, RAJ, LEONARD, KRIPKE, DARLA

SHELDON, HOWARD AND RAJ AT THEIR USUAL TABLE. LEONARD WALKS UP WITH A TRAY OF FOOD.

LEONARD

Hey guys.

BEFORE HE SITS DOWN, SHELDON HOLDS UP HIS HAND -

SHELDON

You can't have lunch at our table any more. I've given your spot away.

LEONARD

(re: the empty spot)

To who? The Invisible Man?

SHELDON

While invisibility is a theoretical possibility which I'm certain I'll eventually crack, no.

KRIPKE ARRIVES AND SLIDES INTO LEONARD'S SPOT.

KRIPKE

Hewwo.

LEONARD

Really?

KRIPKE

Weawwy.

LEONARD

Wook - look guys, I know Sheldon's
being childish about this, but I don't
see why you guys have to.

KRIPKE

Do you always end your sentences on a
pweposition?

HOWARD

Truth is, since you started this
project you've been hogging a lot of
university resources.

RAJ

Like computer time and hot
secretaries.

LEONARD

When the book is released it will
raise the profile of the university,
and with it, grant money for everyone.

KRIPKE

But there's awlways a pwice. There's
no fwee wunch.

DARLA APPEARS AT LEONARD'S SIDE - SEES HIS TRAY.

DARLA

Oh, I could've expense-accounted that
for you.

LEONARD

It's okay, I was just leaving. I don't seem to be welcome here.

DARLA

In that case, I'll treat you to lunch at Willoughby's.

LEONARD

Isn't that expensive?

DARLA

That's what expense accounts are for - expensive things. Come on.

LEONARD

(to the guys)

Well, looks like I'm getting a free lunch. See ya!

LEONARD AND DARLA LEAVE. SHELDON WATCHES THEM GO, ANNOYED.

SHELDON

Well, that didn't work. I'll have to try something else. Kripke, you're dismissed; Sit somewhere else.

KRIPKE

How wude! Fine, but I'm keeping the fifty dowwars.

KRIPKE NOISILY TAKES HIS TRAY AND LEAVES.

RAJ

(his phone beeps)

Oh, another text from my new friend Steven. Excuse me.

SHELDON
(here's a thought)

Wolowitz... you are the most sneaky,
underhanded man I know.

HOWARD

Oh, thank you very much.

SHELDON

You're welcome. I never thought I
would say these words to anyone,
especially you, but, I need your help.

HOWARD

With what?

SHELDON

Leonard, his so-called science book,
and that Woman. As compensation I am
offering an original prop belt buckle
from the cult British science fiction
series, "The Tomorrow People".

HOWARD

(a moment of thought, then)

I've got it. I'll convince Leonard
that his assistant is into him, when
he makes a pass, she'll be offended
and leave. When word goes out, the
project will be kaput.

(MORE)

HOWARD (CONT'D)

Or, they do get romantically involved
and he's so busy getting some, that he
misses his deadline and the project is
also plotz. Work for you?

SHELDON

A Xanatos Gambit. Brilliant.

RAJ

(laughs)

Oh, Steven! You have such a bawdy
sense of humour!

HOWARD

One second, Sheldon. Raj, are you
still texting the china shop clerk?

RAJ

What? Can't I spend time with another
man without you getting suspicious?

INT. LEONARD'S NEW OFFICE - DAY
LEONARD, HOWARD, ASSISTANT

LEONARD WRITES, DARLA WORKS THE PHONES. HOWARD WALKS IN.

HOWARD

Hey, Leonard, you got a moment?

LEONARD

Sure.

LEONARD EAGER FOR A BREAK, MEETS HOWARD IN THE HALL.

HOWARD

Haven't seen you around much any more.

LEONARD

Sheldon "banned me from the lunch table", go figure.

HOWARD

Yeah, sorry about that. You know how he is once he's made up his mind.

LEONARD

Like a Terminator, only not as nice.

HOWARD

I just wanted to let you know Raj and I are still your friends, regardless of what petty nasty things Sheldon says about you.

LEONARD

What nasty things?

HOWARD

Suffice to say, they'd sting if you were in third grade.
(beat)

So, what's it like working with that -
(looks over his shoulder)

Fine specimen of womanhood?

LEONARD

She's great. I wish I had an assistant all the time.

HOWARD

Why not - have her around all the time?

(MORE)

HOWARD (CONT'D)

I mean, she really seems into you.
Maybe she could help you with... all
kinds of stuff.

LEONARD

She's just very dedicated to her job.

DARLA SIPPING HER COFFEE, SEES LEONARD WATCHING AND LICKS HER
LIPS IN A SENSUAL MANNER.

HOWARD

She's very dedicated to you. Give her
a chance, I'm sure there's all kinds
of jobs she could do.

LEONARD

No. I couldn't. I've got Penny...

HOWARD

Do you really? Has she told you she
loved you? Given you any sign of
commitment? Worn the Princess Leia
slave girl outfit for you, ever?

LEONARD

No. Bernadette?

HOWARD
(as Jabba The Hutt)

Grancha, Mesh'la Muni! Ho ho ho!

LEONARD

Still, I don't think Penny would
exactly approve.

HOWARD

Except that Penny said she thought it would be good if you each saw other people.

LEONARD

(upset)

She did?
(calmer)

She did? She never mentioned it to me.

HOWARD

She's not sure how to talk about it without freaking you out, like you are now. Look, she'll be busy on her new sitcom, putting in a lot of hours, maybe she feels she won't be able to love you like want her to, and this'll take the pressure off.

LEONARD

She confided in you? Really?

HOWARD

No, she told Bernadette and Amy, Bernadette told me, then swore if I told, she'd tell my mom we'll raise our kids Catholic.

LEONARD

That I believe. Thanks.

HOWARD

What're friends for? Oh, and this
conversation never took place.

HOWARD LEAVES. LEONARD HEADS BACK INSIDE.

LEONARD

Darla?

DARLA

Yes?

LEONARD

I was wondering, I thought maybe, I -
that is, if you felt -, this is going
to sound silly, but do you - ?

DARLA

Dr. Hofstadter, are you hitting on me?

LEONARD

Well, in a, maybe, kind of, Yes?

DARLA

I've been waiting for you to say
something.
(kisses him)

Let's play Doctor, Doctor.

INT. TELEVISION STUDIO - DAY
PENNY, SHOWRUNNER

(REDRESS OF LIVING ROOM SET. ABOVE IN SCAFFOLDING, A SIGN
WITH THE SHOW LOGO, "THE QUANTUM ENTANGLEMENT")

OTHER ACTORS RUN LINES IN THE B.G., PENNY APPROACHES THE
SHOWRUNNER, (MID-40S) SPEAKING WITH PRODUCTION MINIONS. SHE
TAPS HIM ON THE SHOULDER.

SHOWRUNNER

Yes, uh, Penny, is it?

PENNY

That's right. Look, if you're not busy, I have some feedback on the pilot script - just had a few suggestions, you know, ideas... notes...

SHOWRUNNER

(false perky)

Of course, it's only tape night, we have dozens of minutes for rewrites.

SHE HOLDS UP HER SCRIPT TO SHOW HER MARGIN NOTES.

PENNY

(misses his sarcasm)

Great! Okay, I just think that overall, I think the tone is a little mean. Maybe we could laugh more with the characters than at them. Sure, some nerds are a little "socially awkward", boy, do I know -
(rueful laugh)

But they're not all like that. Oh, and did you know there are girl nerds too? Maybe you could work some in later on.
(continues)

Um, Oh!

(MORE)

PENNY (CONT'D)

In scene three, this bit here, they
don't have transporters in "Star
Wars", that's from "Star Trek" -
everybody knows that. This bit here -
(off his cold expression)

What?

INT. SHELDON AND LEONARD'S APARTMENT - DAY
SHELDON, AMY

SHELDON AND AMY, AT OPPOSITE ENDS OF THE COUCH, PLAY A VIDEO
GAME. THERE'S AN EXPLOSION ON SCREEN AND THEY PAUSE.

AMY

Sheldon, you don't seem to be enjoying
the video mayhem the way you used to.

SHELDON

You might as well go home early;
There's no joy in Mombasa tonight.

AMY

But I have scheduled relationship
activities, otherwise known as "dates"
with you for the entire evening. And I
can't go back to knitting right now,
I'm not in the zone.

SHELDON

It's all Leonard's fault. Sucking up
to the administration with his
"popular science book".

AMY

You may not believe it, but I understand. I've recently lost my bestie Penny to show business, as I always suspected I would, now you've lost Leonard to the glittering strumpet of science book publishing.

SHELDON

Both just as educational.

AMY

There is a reading scheduled at the "Bibliophile and Forget" Bookstore tonight, in little over 1 hour's time. We could go there and heckle Leonard.

SHELDON

Where's the challenge in that?

AMY

None, but it may be just the catharsis you need to purge these feelings of inadequacy from your system.

SHELDON

I am not feeling inadequate! Leonard is a poopy head who... thinks he's not a poopy head!

AMY

Well then, you get out there and tell
him what kind of poopy head he is,
soldier!

SHELDON SALUTES.

SHELDON

Yes, Sir!

THEY GO TO LEAVE. SHELDON PAUSES.

AMY

What?

SHELDON

You know I didn't really mean that
when I called you, "Sir", right?

AMY

Of course. It was merely the standard
military term of respect, no slight on
my femininity was inferred.

SHELDON

No, I mean I didn't want to imply you
were my superior.

AMY

Oh. Okay.

INT. BOOKSTORE - DAY

LEONARD, DARLA, SHELDON, AMY, HOWARD, RAJ

ROWS OF FOLDING CHAIRS AND A SMALL PODIUM HAVE BEEN SET UP IN
A SPARSELY ATTENDED, DARK CORNER OF THE BOOKSTORE. LEONARD,
DRESSED IN A BLACK TURTLENECK AND AMBER JACKET (LIKE A SHORT
CARL SAGAN - HIS CHOICE) PACES. DARLA GROWLS INTO HER PHONE.

LEONARD

What's going on?

DARLA

Sh! Yes? No, it can't wait until
Monday, my company credit card's been
refused, I need to speak with him now.

LEONARD

Refused?

DARLA

Go! Do your reading! I'll handle this!

SHE WANDERS OFF. LEONARD TAKES THE STAND. SHELDON AND AMY SIT
IN THE BACK ROW, AND ARE PREPARED WITH PRODUCE BAGS. RAJ AND
HOWARD NEXT TO AMY. THE HANDFUL OF PEOPLE CLAP, ONE [EXTRA]
IS ALREADY ASLEEP. RAJ SIPs FROM A POCKET FLASK.

HOWARD

Did we miss much?

SHELDON

Not even if you were 4 hours late.

LEONARD

Hello, everyone. I'm Doctor Leonard
Hofstadter and today I'll be reading
from my new book - "The - "
(sees Sheldon and Amy)

...Big Bang Theory and How It Makes
The Universe Go." - We're still
working on a title.

SHELDON

Try working on your science!

LEONARD

Dr. Sheldon Cooper. Such a kidder. We
wanted to call the book "Big Time".

SHELDON

Time has no mass!

LEONARD

But we found out Dr. Hawking has a new
book coming out with the same title -

SHELDON

And the universe was spared!

LEONARD

Sheldon, not now, please?

SHELDON

If not now, when? And if not you, then
maybe a monkey!

DARLA APPEARS AT SHELDON'S SIDE AND GRABS HIS ARM.

DARLA

Hey, buster, if you can't keep it
down, take it outside!

AMY

Unhand my boyfriend!

SHELDON

Oh, I'm not her boyfriend.

AMY

(to Darla)

Hold that thought.

(to Sheldon)

(MORE)

AMY (CONT'D)

Our written agreement states that I can refer to you in public as "my boyfriend". If I can't do that when some manhandling hussy is dislocating your shoulder, what is the point of contract law?

SHELDON

I apologize, you are quite correct.
(to Darla)

Miss, my girlfriend was clear on the subject. Let me go. Please.

DARLA
(pokes finger in Amy's chest)

And what are you going to do about it?

AMY

Ow.

DARLA
(another jab)

Huh?

AMY

Ow. Please stop that.

DARLA'S PHONE RINGS. SHE RELEASES SHELDON AND WALKS AWAY.

SHELDON

You sure told her.

AMY

Yeah, you walk away, bitch!

DARLA TURNS SUDDENLY AND AMY DUCKS HER HEAD.

RAJ

Just when it was getting interesting.

HOWARD

Where's an inflatable swimming pool
and hot oil when you need them?

RAJ

I prefer mud wrestling myself - makes
them all look brown.

AMY

I wish Penny were here for moral
support.

RAJ

Leonard would've appreciated that.

AMY

Not for him, for me. Plus she would've
totally kicked her ass.

LEONARD

So, if we're all settled, I'll read
the first chapter of my book, which

I'll be signing later -
(off Darla's negative look)

Oh, We had hoped to have advanced
copies available tonight, but maybe by
next week.

(another signal from Darla)

Month?

(re: her umpire "strikeout"
gesture)

Never?

SHELDON

And there was much rejoicing.

THE GANG MAKES A LISTLESS "MONTY PYTHON AND THE HOLY GRAIL"
CHEER, "HOORAY." LEONARD RUSHES TO DARLA AS SHE PACKS UP.

LEONARD

What happened?

DARLA

The market research folks realized the
projected income from the book
wouldn't be anywhere near what we need
it to be, so they dropped the project.

LEONARD

But why?

DARLA

What's your name?

LEONARD

(coy)

You know my name.

DARLA

Yeah, that makes one. The good news
is, I still have my job.

LEONARD

What's the bad news?

DARLA

The publisher is sending the expense
account bill to your university. Oh,
and I only date published authors.

(MORE)

DARLA (CONT'D)
(little wave)

See ya.

THE GANG GATHERS AROUND LEONARD TO CONSOLE OR GLOAT.

AMY

At least now you won't have to do a book tour. Those wine and cheese events would be heck on your lactose intolerance.

SHELDON

You could always publish it as an ebook.

LEONARD

Thank you, that's a nice suggestion.

SHELDON

Simple logic. Every other hack who thinks they can write is e-publishing these days, why not you?

RAJ'S PHONE BEEPS WITH A TEXT. HE READS IT, LOOKS ANNOYED.

RAJ

Not again.

AMY

What is it?
(Raj shows her the text)

Woah! That's... shocking.

RAJ

I know. There are much better rhymes for "penis".

HOWARD

Is Steven still "sexting" you?

RAJ

Yes. At least twice a day.
(sigh)

He just wants me for my body. Why
can't someone love me for my mind?

ALL
(rueful sigh)

Yeah.

END ACT TWO

TAG

INT. SHELDON AND LEONARD'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

SHELDON, LEONARD, PENNY, AMY, BERNADETTE, HOWARD, RAJ,
ALICIA, DAVID, ROB

THE GANG'S SHARING A MEAL AT THE APARTMENT.

PENNY

So, Leonard, I hear your former
assistant Darla is recovering nicely.

LEONARD

Uh huh? Wait, what? "Recovering"?
Recovering from what?

PENNY

No big deal. She just tripped and fell
on the sidewalk. Four times.

LEONARD

I didn't know she was the clumsy type.

PENNY

(I know, right?)

Neither did she!

LEONARD

I'm really really sorry.

PENNY

Not yet, you aren't.
(to Bernadette)

So what was it like, being stuck at
work for a week?

BERNADETTE

Oh, my confinement wasn't too bad. We played games to pass the time, like "Find the Blemish" and "What's that thing in my vomit?".

HOWARD

But you're all clear now.

BERNADETTE

Yeah. Although, if anyone notices any unusual symptoms like a high fever or pus in your urine, you get a free tour of my lab.

SHELDON SQUIRMY AND NERVOUS, EDGING AWAY FROM BERNADETTE.

LEONARD

So, Penny, what happened with that pilot you were working on?

PENNY

They went in a different direction with the female lead.

BERNADETTE

What direction is that?

PENNY

Away from me. Actually, It's on right now if you want to watch it.

AMY
(to the room)

No, we'll be supportive of our friend
and not watch it.

A BEAT, THEN ALL GRAB FOR THE REMOTE, SHELDON FIRST,
BERNADETTE TOUCHES IT, WITH A GIRLY SHRIEK HE LETS GO.

INT. APARTMENT STAIRWAY - DAY (ON TV)

"LEONARD", "SHELDON", "PENNY"

"PENNY"

Peggy. New neighbor.

"LEONARD"

I'm Larry, and this is Sherman.

"SHELDON"
(indicates their apartment)

We're over here.

"PENNY"

Cool.

INT. SHELDON AND LEONARD'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

LEONARD, SHELDON, PENNY, AMY, BERNADETTE, HOWARD, RAJ

LEONARD

That is kind of weird.

HOWARD

Yeah, small world, huh?

AMY

You are a much sexier neighbor.

PENNY

Thanks, Amy.

BERNADETTE

You're much more photogenic. With much
nicer hair.

PENNY

Thank you!

HOWARD

And bigger boobs.

BERNADETTE WHACKS HOWARD ON THE BACK OF THE HEAD.

HOWARD (CONT'D)

What?

PENNY

Raj?

RAJ, TERRIFIED GIVES A THUMBS UP TO PENNY AND A THUMBS DOWN
TO THE TV. EVERYONE LOOKS TO SHELDON WHO HADN'T OPINED YET,
STILL WATCHING THE SCREEN, AS IF DEEP IN THOUGHT. HE GOES
BACK TO HIS FOOD.

SHELDON

Nope, I don't believe a word of it.

Nobody's going to watch this show.

END OF TAG / END OF SHOW