

*17's Company – Series 999*  
*"Open for Business"*  
*Episode Eight:*  
*Secrets of a Successful Script*

Open Discussion Pub – Worm Mad is looking at a newspaper.

Worm Mad: Oh...

PinkWorm: Oh – what?

Worm Mad: It says here that one of the script writers for “The Fish Files” died last weekend.

SomePerson: (having overheard) Not Cecil Scriptures! That man’s a legend!

Worm Mad: No, not him. Jerry Fission.

SomePerson: Who?

Worm Mad: He did all the crap episodes in Series Two and Four.

SomePerson: Oh yeah, he was responsible for “Not Today, Salmon”, that episode was terrible! (Pause, guiltily) I’m glad he won’t be writing any more episodes, anyway...

Worm Mad: Well, apparently they haven’t touched his house or anything in it, yet. (Pause) They’re waiting for the reading of the will.

PinkWorm: Hey, that gives me an idea! Why don’t we break into the house and see if we can find anything cool from the set of “The Fish Files”?

Worm Mad: Meh...

SomePerson: Hey, I’ve got a great idea! Why don’t we break into the house and see if we can find anything cool from the set of “The Fish Files”?

Worm Mad: That’s a brilliant idea, SomePerson!

PinkWorm: But, I just said exactly the same thing as him and you said ‘Meh’

Worm Mad: Don’t be ridiculous, PinkWorm! (Pause) I quite clearly said ‘Meh...’

SomePerson: So, are we going to go?

Worm Mad: Sorry, I can’t – I’ve got to find Pickleworm’s gold. (mysteriously) I’m sure he’s buried it around here somewhere.

Pickleworm: (from off-screen) YU’LL NEVAR TUCH MY GOOOOLD!!!

SomePerson: (to everyone in the pub) Who else wants to come?

Paul.Power: Count me in!

Mischief: Pick Me! Pick Me!

Star Worms: Okey-day!

Squirminator2k: I’ll come!

SomePerson: Then let’s go!

SomePerson, PinkWorm, Paul.Power, Mischief, Star Worms and S-2k leave the pub together.

SargeMcCluck: (to thomasp) Weren’t we supposed to be looking for tundraH?

thomasp: (shrugging) Meh, I’m sure he’ll be back some day.

Cut to Titles.

## Title Music Lyrics

*There's a pub - in your imagination,  
There's a pub - where all your dreams come true,  
There's a pub – that is a real sensation,  
There's a pub – for me and for you.*

*But this isn't the pub.  
But this isn't the pub.  
This isn't the pub – you're – looking for.*

*This is a pub – of laughter and disaster,  
This is a pub – where pickles are dispensed,  
This is a pub – of crazy crazy people,  
This is a pub – but of pubs it's the best.*

*Things aren't always in black and white,  
Things aren't always simple,  
Things aren't always wrong or right.  
This is the pub.*

*Open the door if you dare,  
Open the door if you care,  
For we are here and we're going to win the war.  
This is the pub.*

*This is the pub.*

*Beer and grub.*

*This is the pub.*

## Cast

1. Worm Mad (clip of Worm Mad dropping a Ming vase),
2. Paul.Power (three short clips of Paul.Power mixing various potions),
3. SargeMcCluck (clip of a shocked Sarge chin-driving down a hill),
4. thomasp (shot of a scared thomasp running as X-Boxes fall from the sky),
5. FatWhitey (shot of FatWhitey throwing a cake aside and eating a plate of crisps),
6. Pickleworm (shot of Pickleworm serving drinks from the bar),
7. Squirminator2k (shot of S-2k with half his face showing the robotics beneath)
8. Blinx (shot of Blinx levitating),
9. KamikazeBananze (joint shot with MtlAngelus, they stand next to each other looking out on the city, KamikazeBananze has detective clothes on)
10. MtlAngelus, Ghost of (see KamikazeBananze)
11. K^2, Ghost of (Shot of darkened room with creepy flickering computer)
12. PinkWorm (shot of PinkWorm playing ice hockey)
13. SomePerson (shot of SomePerson swimming under water with various fishes)

14. Ploegman (shot of Ploegman playing cards)
15. Star Worms (Shot of a burnt out spaceship)
- ~~16. MonkeyforaHead (shot of an ape attacking MFAH)~~
17. tundraH (shot of an asleep tundraH)

#### Also Starring

The truly demonic, Neo-Casket (shot of furious flaming NC) and  
The downright odd, Mischief (shot of Mischief holding a Viking hammer and  
grinning)

#### Watch Out For...

Run (shot of Run with glowing red eyes) and  
Reddi Myal (shot of Reddi Myal eating crisps)

The assorted group are walking towards the house. As they walk, they find themselves walking alongside KamikazeBananze and MtlAngelus.

PinkWorm: Evening.

KamikazeBananze: Good Evening.

Star Worms: (to KamikazeBananze) You wouldn't happen to be -?

Ghost of MtlAngelus: Be?

Star Worms: Oh, nothing. (Pause) It's just...

KamikazeBananze: Just - what?

Star Worms: You're not on your way to the Fission House, are you?

Ghost of MtlAngelus: I don't see how that's any of your business.

Squirminator2k: We're on our way, there.

KamikazeBananze: Ah!

PinkWorm: Ah – what?

KamikazeBananze: We're going there as well.

PinkWorm: I see... (Pause) Why are you going there?

Ghost of MtlAngelus: I don't see how that's any of your business.

Squirminator2k: We're going to break in and steal some stuff.

KamikazeBananze: Ah!

PinkWorm: Ah – what?

KamikazeBananze: We're going there to investigate some paranormal goings on, which are said to have occurred there.

PinkWorm: I see...

They carry on. Cut to OD Pub. Blinx walks in with a guitar.

Blinx: Hey, Sarge!

SargeMcCluck: Yeah?

Blinx: Wanna hear my latest song?

SargeMcCluck: Go on, then...

Blinx sits motionless and silent for a couple of minutes.

Blinx: What did you think?

SargeMcCluck: What did I think of what, Blinx?

Blinx: The song!

SargeMcCluck: You didn't do anything!

Blinx: It's a new type of Buddhist song that I'm working on. It doesn't involve singing or any musical instruments. (Pause) I call it... THE MUSIC OF SILENCE!

SargeMcCluck: Heh, funny, I call it 'a waste of my time'.

Cut to the group walking into the Fission House.

Star Worms: Gah! This place gives me the creeps!

PinkWorm: Of course it does! It's a dead guy's house!

Ghost of MtlAngelus: (annoyed) Hey!

PinkWorm: Sorry.

Squirminator2k: (looking at a book, reading aloud) "I knew how to make a successful script. All it took was a little magic. Come on, I mean 'Daring the Sky to Dream' was classic, wasn't it? Ah, well. Just open the damned jar, okay?" (looking up from the book) Jar? What jar?

Mischief: (holding up a jar which has 'Secrets of a Successful Script' written on it) Perhaps he means this. (her hands slip and she drops it) Oops! (the jar smashes)

Fog obscures the screen. A voice speaks out of the dark.

Voice: Hi, I'm the Ghost of Jerry Fission and I'm here to tell you about my (loudly) 'Secrets of a Successful Script' (normal) Now, the first thing you should have when you write a successful script is a group of characters that people can relate to. (Pause) So, with a little bit of editing, here are our characters – The young male lead (SomePerson appears wearing cruddy young male lead clothes), The sport-obsessed friend (PinkWorm appears wearing full ice-hockey gear, he grins cheerily), The ditsy girlfriend (Mischief appears wearing a cheerleading outfit and with her hair in bunches), The old yet wise professor (Paul.Power appears with a grey wig and moustache and old-professor style clothes), the non-emotional robot (S-2k appears looking bored) and the extra guy who's only there for cannon fodder (Star Worms looks around nervously). Let's see what happens, shall we?

The fog vanishes and the group are left standing around.

SomePerson: You were right when you said this place was creepy, Star Worms! There's definitely something very fishy about all this!

Mischief: (grabbing SomePerson's arm and looking around nervously) I'm scared, Somey. There's something (dramatic) EVIL (non-dramatic) about this house!

Paul.Power: (laughing light-heartedly) Ha ha. Don't worry, Miss Chief. If there was anything wrong with this house, I'd have picked it up on my Patent-Pending Sup-Scanner by now. It reads for twenty-two varieties of evil, you know? (he smiles, removes his glasses and begins to polish them)

Squirminator2k: (in a dead-pan voice) I only wish I was capable of feeling an emotion such as fear. But, alas, I am a robot and cannot. (Pause) Nevertheless, I do sense an evil presence nearby, Professor Power. Perhaps your calculations were incorrect.

Mischief: (grabbing SomePerson's arm more tightly) I just knew it! Oh, Somey!

Paul.Power: (to S-2k, moodily) My Sup-Scanner? Make a mistake? Absolutely Preposterous!

Squirminator2k: Nevertheless, I am still detecting an evil entity in this building.  
PinkWorm: (laughing stupidly) Yo, guys! Can we hurry this up? I want to get to a ice-hockey game this afternoon!  
Star Worms: (screaming, running off) Ahhhhhhh! I don't want to be cannon-fodder, I don't want to dieeeee!

Ghost of Jerry Fission: (the action freezes) Freeze-Frame a moment! Here you can see that the character which we've marked down as 'cannon-fodder' is also doubling as the popular generic – 'guy who goes crazy under pressure ultimately leading to his/her death'. You can mix and match character conventions at your leisure when making a script but try not to mix too many! (the action unfreezes)

SomePerson: (calling) Star Worms! Come back!  
PinkWorm: No use calling him now, SP, he's long gone!  
SomePerson: Damn it!  
Paul.Power: (shaking his head) Look, there's no need to worry. There's absolutely nothing evil in this house!

The lights go off. A scream is heard and when they turn back on, Mischief is gone.

SomePerson: (grief-stricken) Oh, merciless Glod! They've taken Mischief!  
PinkWorm: (laughing) Quick, let's get out of here, before they bring her back! (everyone looks at him sternly. Calmly) Right, never seen "Red Dwarf", eh?

Ghost of Jerry Fission: (the action freezes) References are clever! People love references because they show that the script writer doesn't just write stuff but reads/watches/plays stuff as well! Use references as much as possible to show that you're cool but don't overuse them or you might *ALIENATE* your audience! (the action unfreezes)

Paul.Power: (patting S-2k on the back) It looks like I owe you an apology, old boy! There's definitely something evil in this house, after all.  
Squirminator2k: There was no need for an apology, professor. I am incapable of feeling anger or any other emotion. Nevertheless, I thank you for the gesture.  
SomePerson: (angrily) There's no time for this! We've got to find my girlfriend!  
PinkWorm: (grinning) Keep your hair on, SP! I'm sure she's hanging around here somewhere!

A giant TV screen appears and Run appears on it, wearing a top hat, fake curly moustache, monocle and grinning caddishly. The group gasp in amazement.

Ghost of Jerry Fission: (the action freezes) Here we have the villain of our story! Whenever you're writing a script, make sure that there's a villain. If you don't do this, then the TV studios won't read it! (Pause) Also, make sure that your villain is instantly recognisable as just that – A villain. (Pause) People will get confused if the bad guy looks like everyone else so give them a curly moustache, a scar or something else to show that they're EVIL. Oh... and they have to reveal their plan straight away – that one's a must! (the action unfreezes)

Run: (in an evil voice) Quite right, Mr Worm. (to SomePerson) Your girlfriend is 'hanging around' – literally! Bwahahahahahahahahaha!

SomePerson: (angrily) You fiend! What have you done to her?

Run: She is quite safe. (Pause) I locked her in a cage with that meddling tundraH and they're both hanging over... (dramatically) A shark-infested moat full of acid!

Paul.Power: Um, surely the sharks can't survive in the acid, you old cad!

Run: (sadly) No...no, they can't. (lightening up) But anyway – if you ever want to see your friends again, then come into the next room...(dramatically) and into my trap! (the screen turns off)

SomePerson: (instinctively) Come on, let's go!

Squirminator2k: He mentioned that it was a trap, sir. I recommend caution.

SomePerson: Nah, that was just a bluff. Let's go!

They all go into the next room where a net is thrown over them.

Run: Ha-ha! Got you!

Paul.Power: Curses! He's right!

PinkWorm: Not quite. (with a great effort, he throws the net off)

SomePerson: (to PW) Wow! I didn't realise you were so strong, PinkWorm!

PinkWorm: (flexing his muscles) Well, I am an athlete.

Run: (screaming) RUN AWAY! (he runs off)

Paul.Power: (chuckling) Ho ho ho, that's him dealt with!

Squirminator2k: Yet tradition dictates that he will be back.

PinkWorm: But that's for another day!

Caption: Later...

Cut to the group in the entrance hall. They are all alright.

Mischief: Oh, SomePerson!

SomePerson: Oh, Mischief!

Mischief: Oh, Somey!

SomePerson: Oh, Missy!

Mischief: Take me, now! (they kiss)

Paul.Power: (gruffly) Eh-hem, company!

PinkWorm: (perversely) Shhh, Prof! I'm trying to watch this!

Ghost of MtlAngelus and KamikazeBananze walk in.

Ghost of Jerry Fission: (the action freezes) Ah, so we've had our traditional romantic kiss but now it's time for those two clueless detectives to arrive and give the audience a sensational twist ending! Let's watch! (the action unfreezes)

Ghost of MtlAngelus: Ah, there you all are!

tundraH: Yeah, we're all fine now.

KamikazeBananze: Look, we've got some bad news, I'm afraid.

Mischief: (worried) Oh no! What is it, detective?

KamikazeBanaze: It's Star Worms, he's...well...he's...

Ghost of MtlAngelus: He's dead.

Mischief: Oh, how dreadful! (she starts to cry on SomePerson's shoulder)

The door is opened and Star Worms steps through – he is now a vampire.

Star Worms: (creepily) Undead, you mean!

Mischief: (shrieking) Ahhhhhhhhh!

Ghost of Jerry Fission: (the action freezes) Two twists are always better than one.  
(unfreeze)

Paul.Power: (brandishing a stake) Back, back! Foul creature of the night!

Star Worms: (laughing) Don't worry, I'm still good. Which is less than I can say about Run. (Pause) He bit me and tried to persuade me to join his evil band which is lead by the demonic extra-terrestrial, Reddi Myal! (Pause) Obviously, I refused and escaped.

KamikazeBananze: So, Reddi Myal and Run are in cahoots, eh? How very interesting.

Paul.Power: We'd better get back to the pub and discuss this.

Ghost of MtlAngelus: Agreed.

They leave the house.

Ghost of Jerry Fission: So there you have it. Nicely finished off but left open for a sequel! The best I could do under the circumstances. Goodnight all! (he disappears)

### Calm after the Storm – What the Characters Said...

SomePerson: I asked Mischief if she'd really be my girlfriend but she just laughed in my face and hit me over the head with her hammer. Oh well.

PinkWorm: I didn't even have an ice-hockey match today. That's so weird!

Paul.Power: What in heaven's name is a Sup-Scanner? And why did my hair turn grey while I was in that house? That's just crazy!

Star Worms: A vampire? Haven't we had enough vampires for one lifetime? And a vampire that likes Star Wars... well, that's just odd.

Squirminator2k: NO EMOTIONS! NO EMOTIONS, EH? I'LL SHOW YOU NO F\*&%!NG EMOTIONS, ARRRRRRRRRRRRRRRGGGGGGHH!

Mischief: Ewww! Ewww! Ewww! Ewww! Eww!

Ghost of MtlAngelus: Where the hell were me and Kam? We just went into the manor, disappeared and all of a sudden we were explaining about Star Worms! That's some bad mojo!

KamikazeBananze: On the plus side, I did find a signed picture of I.C Salmon in that house, so it wasn't all bad.

Run: What an awful plan! Now, I've revealed that I'm working with Reddi Myal! How could I have been so stupid? Aggh! Lousy Magic House!

Zero72: I wasn't even in this episode! When's my next cameo?