

# THIS IS SPINAL TAP

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Written by

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FADE IN:

1 INT. SOUNDSTAGE

A bare floor, illuminated by a couple of baby juniors with a discreet gel. It looks like an empty stage, but it's been carefully arranged to look that way. MARTY DIBROMA (Rob Reiner) enters the area and casually walks over to a motion picture camera, leans a casual elbow on it and casually talks to the audience.

MARTY

In the late fall of 1982, one of the world's great underrated rock and roll bands embarked on its first tour of the United States in almost ten years. That band, of course, was Britain's legendary Spinal Tap. Through fifteen years and seventeen albums, Spinal Tap had earned a distinguished place in rock history as one of England's loudest bands. I first had the privilege of seeing Tap perform in 1967 in New York City's now defunct Electric Banana. I was knocked out by their raw power, their boyish exuberance and their punctuality. So when I was given the opportunity to direct a documentary film of this historic tour, I was more than happy to give up a chance to work with Sandy Duncan on the new series of Wheat Thins commercials. This film is more than just a celebration of rock and roll survival. It's more than a unique glimpse at a long-standing friendship and musical collaboration between Spinal Tap's twin creative forces, Nigel Tufnel and David St. Hubbins.

(MORE)

## MARTY (CONT'D)

It's more than what I just said because... The rockumentary you are about to see is a microcosm, a macracosm, even -- if you will; a bit of a minicosm of a world most of us can only fantasize about. The world of rock and roll. So, what do you say -- let's boogie.

On Marty's self-important look, we...

FADE OUT.

2 OPENING MONTAGE - INT. CONCERT HALL - SHOTS OF MEMBERS

Of a band's road crew adjusting lights, testing mikes, uncrating equipment, positioning drums, the thousand and one activities that precede a rock concert. INTERCUT with this activity is STOCK FOOTAGE of a jetliner arriving at New York's JFK Airport.

CUT TO:

3 EXT. CONCERT HALL - DAY

We see interviews with some of the teenage rock fans who lined up to see the show. The kids in the front of the line have camped out the previous night. They're now sitting on portable camp chairs or standing in their sleeping bags. Two moronic teenagers argue about whether David or Nigel is the hottest guitarist in England. Heavily sedated yaks would articulate their love for Spinal Tap more clearly than these people. A young groupie proudly

Jeanine suggest that if Fleckman won't take care of stuff, "we" should find someone who can. The conversation is interrupted as Derek, who's been going through the metal detector, sets off the alarm. He's pulled aside by the SECURITY GUARD, who gives him a going over with the hand-held scanner. It makes its ordinary electronic warbling, indicating nothing suspicious, until the guard passes it over Derek's engorged crotch area. The electronic sound indicates pay dirt.

On the reactions we --

CUT TO:

53 INT. AUSTIN, TEXAS HOLIDAY INN

In his room, Nigel is watching Gumby cartoons on TV, trying to second-guess the plots.

54 IN ANOTHER ROOM

Ian is on the phone with an executive of another record company. He's not talking about Spinal Tap, he has to explain, he's talking about a young group, "The Dead Geezers." Unlike Spinal Tap, they are a band with nothing but potential. Interrupting this phone call, POLLY DEUTSCH, a smartly-dressed freelance art director in her late twenties, lets herself in Ian's room and plunks down on a coffee table a miniature replica of the monument

at Stonehenge. Ian excuses himself from the phone conversation and explodes angrily at Deutsch: "This isn't a set." She angrily produces what she was given to work from: it is a napkin from Sambo's on which Nigel drew his quick sketch of the set. She points out the dimensions he quickly indicated: eighteen inches. Ian insists he meant eighteen feet. Finally, he just loses control: "Use your brain," he yells. "What the fuck am I supposed to do with this?"

CUT TO:

55 INT. AUSTIN CONCERT VENUE

The band performs "Stonehenge," an overblown musical suite depicting a poorly researched fantasy of life in early England. At a climactic point in the song, a single spotlight indicated where a mammoth set is supposed to descend onto the stage. What descends, instead, is Polly Deutsch's little Stonehenge model. The musicians onstage stare in stunned disbelief, then exchange looks with Ian, standing in the wings; and Jeanine is standing on the other side offstage, giving Ian a look that says "you're a total idiot for letting this happen." As HALF A DOZEN RENTED MIDGETS in elf suits enter from both sides of the stage to do

jig dancing around the tiny monument, it is a show stopper in all the wrong ways.

CUT TO:

56 INT. HOLIDAY INN HOTEL SUITE, AUSTIN, TEXAS

It is the night after the Stonehenge debacle. The band, Ian, and Jeanine are in the midst of a quietly furious fight about whose fault all of this is. Ian, rationalizing heavily contends that on a certain level, Stonehenge worked -- where the whole stage functions as a sort of miniature. Finally, David voices a suggestion that he's been afraid to bring up: Maybe Jeanine and Ian should co-manage the band for a while. He looks for support to Nigel and Derek. Derek pretends to be busy making lines of cocaine. He's not about to be the deciding vote. A man who's about to go through an expensive divorce, he's fearful of doing anything to endanger the meal ticket. David persists. Nigel throws something at the table and begins stalking around the room. He's quietly seething at Jeanine injecting herself into the band's business. Ian, frustrated that no one will side with him openly, finally suggest that Jeanine co-manage his reproductive organ. Amid some protests from the other band members, Ian quits and stalks out of