

Off to the Island!



Genre: Comedy screenplay

Website: <https://OffToTheIsland.com> or <https://themikemeier.com/off-to-the-island>

Inspired by the purchase of an island off Belize by a group of people:



This comedy centers on a group of people who move to an island to get away from technology and must learn to live without it. It could become a fun movie that offers a message about our modern society, our place in it, and human nature in general. It also has the potential to become a TV series.

LOGLINE: Disillusioned by modern society and technology’s oppressive presence, a varied bunch of people buy and then move to an island to begin a new nation—but it doesn’t turn out to be what they’d hoped.

SYNOPSIS: In Brooklyn, New York, **Jett Pudersack** (30s, Caucasian) runs a small bookstore. Rather old-fashioned, he dislikes big technology.

QUOTE:

“A pot of tea in hand, he approaches the only remaining CUSTOMER, who reads in an armchair.

JETT
A little more for you?

CUSTOMER
Oh sure, thank you.

JETT
If you want that book, I can ring you up anytime.

CUSTOMER
Well, I’ll probably buy it on Amazon later. That’s cheaper.

Jett glances at a book on a nearby shelf: Joseph Kesselring’s Arsenic and Old Lace.

JETT’S IMAGINATION:

INT. SMALL BROOKLYN BOOKSTORE – DAY

Jett pours a green liquid, bubbling and smoking, from a chemistry flask into the customer’s cup. The customer drinks it and drops dead on the spot.

BACK TO REALITY.”

When he receives a final eviction notice, Jett’s concerns boil over: big technology, like Facebook, Google, and Amazon, are peddling the personal information of their users and disrupting people’s lives. His fiancée, **Qarma** (30s, African American), cannot quiet him down. Jett then writes an emotional editorial about his concerns, which he sends to the *New York Times*. Later that day, he sets up a crowdfunding campaign to support the purchase of a Caribbean island.

His campaign receives unexpected attention. Several other people, dissatisfied with the world for various reasons, want to get away from it all and contribute to the island project, among them:

Kate (30s, ethnic) and her partner **Kelly** (30s, transgender), reside in Texas. Kelly, a LGBTQIA+ TV personality, gets a call from her agent, who informs her that the network has canceled her show. The agent explains that they want the next big thing, and it's not Kelly.

QUOTE:

"MARTY (V.O.)

Apparently—and I totally disagree with this, and think you're great—trans and/or LGBTQIA+ is just not enough of a hook anymore.

Kelly closes her eyes and shakes her head in disbelief.

MARTY (V.O.)

Hello? You still there?

KELLY

Yeah. But since I'm getting surgery anyway . . . how 'bout if I, I don't know . . .

(looks to Kate)

got some fancy body modifications? Maybe the lower body of a horse, or an elephant trunk?

Kate laughs.

KATE

Tell him you can get some machine parts attached—maybe a bunch of mechanical arms, like an octopus.

(beat)

Marty?

MARTY (V.O.)

Yeah, I gotta jump off. But trust me, I'll think about what you just said. That 'trunk' thing could be a winner.

CLICK, and the call ends."

Sieglinde (early 40s), from Frankfurt, Germany, is afraid of the approaching Russian army and was just dumped by her husband.

In Yorkshire, UK, **Stanley** and his wife **Emmeline** (50s) are ready for a change.

Emmeline is deeply entrenched in her soap operas. They bring their pug, **Archie**, along to the island.

Two of the world's billionaires become interested in the island project, though for different reasons. **Beff Jezos**, the former *Forbes* "richest person in the world," is jealous of **Zach Muckerberg**, to whom *Forbes* has just transferred the title. Thus, Beff begins spying on Zach to see if he can somehow take the title back.

Zach finds the project laughable. Just for fun, he contributes most of the money needed to purchase the island and set up a camp there.

With the help of his **Alexa**, Beff sends incriminating information about Zach to federal prosecutors, causing Zach and his ex-stripper girlfriend **Bambi** to flee to the island.

All the contributors assemble on the island. Each of them has their own agenda: Jett and Qarma want an escape from technology; Kelly is keen on producing a new social media show based on island life; Sieglinde just wants to hang out nude at the beach; Stanley wants to observe the women at the beach through binoculars; and Zach needs a place to hide from law enforcement. On top of that, they find a hermit living on the island. Kelly tries to make the best of the situation by including him in her undercover social media show.

QUOTE:

"Kelly looks at him intently. A thought crosses her mind.

KELLY

You know what? If you got rid of the glasses and shook your hair loose . . . I think you would look really good, just like the plain-looking librarians in movies who do that. You know what I mean? Can you do that for me?

HERMIT

Well, I guess—

KELLY

Great!

(fiddles with her phone)

I'm gonna call this video 'From Hermit to Handsome!'

POV: PHONE CAMERA

In slow motion and the light of the flashlight, the hermit takes off his thick glasses, removes the rubber band from his ponytail, and shakes his hair loose.

He still looks terrible—a missing tooth, dry and wrinkled skin, dark rings under his eyes, and gray, greasy hair. He smiles at Kelly.

HERMIT

So? How do I look?

KELLY

Um, yeah.

She lowers the phone.”

Meanwhile, Russia’s Putin orders nuclear testing in the Arctic, which causes the world’s water levels to rise.

QUOTE:

“A REPORTER (blond, strong German accent) interviews VLADIMIR PUTIN on the news (use actual Putin footage, but change the dialogue and use computer effects to modify images).

REPORTER

(In Russian, subtitled)

Supreme Ruler Putin, observers report that your troops have largely defeated the Polish defense forces and you’re close to declaring victory over Poland.

PUTIN

(In Russian, subtitled)

Thank you, thank you, thank you.

REPORTER

But you just annexed the Arctic. Isn’t that more than enough land for the moment?

PUTIN

No, they’re not making it anymore. So one can never have enough. Taking over the Arctic was just to have a little more room for stuff like nuclear weapon tests. All that ice is useless anyway.

REPORTER

But what about the Indigenous population? And the wildlife?

PUTIN

I have strongly suggested they leave.

REPORTER

OK . . . but why invade Poland?

PUTIN

Three words: I love the yummy kielbasa sausage. Come to think of it, Germany has a lot of sausage, yes?

REPORTER

No. No, we don't."

Missing her soap operas, Emmeline eventually finds island life unbearable. To appease his wife, Stanley proposes to write a soap opera just for her.

QUOTE:

"STANLEY

Here, let me pour you a brandy.

EMMELINE

I don't want a brandy. I want to go home!

She curls into a ball and sobs even harder.

STANLEY

Look, I can see that...—Hmm.

(beat)

STANLEY

How's this? Since you miss your TV dramas so much, I'll write you a play. It'll be full of misery, treachery, betrayal, and horrible, disfiguring diseases. Would that cheer you up?

She sits up, excited.

EMMELINE

Oh, yes! Yes! You'd really do that for me?

STANLEY

Yes. I do love you, after all, and I want you to be happy. Otherwise, you'd make my life complete doo-doo, wouldn't you?

Emmeline nods.

STANLEY

Then there we have it—I'll write you a play and get the others to perform in it."

The islanders agree to perform in it. But the soap opera's premiere quickly gets out of hand as the islanders break character and make personal confessions on stage.

QUOTE:

“EXT. ISLAND CAMP – NIGHT

Torches illuminate the area. There is a makeshift stage with primitive curtains and an improvised director’s chair on the side. Stanley sits in it, script in hand. Emmeline is seated at the table with Archie on her lap, dressed in a costume tuxedo. She pours herself a drink from a bottle as the hermit peeks through the curtains at the audience of one.

EMMELINE

Isn’t this exciting, Archie? Just like back home, when we’d watch the telly together!

She takes a beet chip from a dish and munches on it. She takes out another and holds it out for Archie.

EMMELINE

Beet chip?

Archie sniffs at it briefly and turns away. Emmeline pops it into her mouth.

EMMELINE

Shh! I think it’s starting!

The curtains open, revealing a set reminiscent of a 1980s sitcom, with a sofa as the centerpiece. Jett (with his guitar) and Qarma, Kate, Kelly, Sieglinde (three-inch roots now showing in her blond hair), Zach, and the hermit sit around casually, facing Emmeline. They’re wearing makeshift costumes.

MUSIC CUE: first eight notes of SYMPHONY NO. 5 BY BEETHOVEN

Jett STRUMS his guitar, playing the show’s theme song. Throughout the show, Jett plays all the music and sound effects, most of them on his guitar.

END MUSIC CUE

EMMELINE

Ooh, Archie, it’s a musical!

The show begins. Jett SLAPS the back of his guitar, imitating the sound of someone falling down the stairs.

KATE

Grandmother fell down the stairs and broke her hip!

HERMIT

No!

Jett blows into a balloon and releases the air as if it were flatulence.

ZACH

And Uncle Walter has irritable bowel syndrome!

HERMIT

He's faking it!

MUSIC CUE: first few bars of MARCHE FUNÈBRE BY CHOPIN''

Then disaster strikes the island . . .

