

THE ACTIVIST

Written by
Rachel Shin

1 INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Alex sits on a bench, vibrating with nervous energy.

GAME HOST (THROUGH SPEAKERS)

Tonight, an epic season begins! One roomguest. Zero contact with the outside world, and three bowls of porridge a day. The record stands at seven months... will Alex be the one to break it for the charity of his choice? The door will be unlocked the entire time! If he leaves before three months, he gets nothing. Six months? 50 grand. But one full year? One. Million. Dollars. Alex, the clock starts when you enter the room. See you in three months!

Alex takes a deep breath and walks in. He looks around the room. It's your standard living room. On the wall is a TV screen of a fundraising thermometer, tracking Alex's progress. On another wall is a sign: Smile, you're on camera! Alex gives a toothy grin and two thumbs-up.

2 INT. THE ROOM - DAY

MONTAGE:

Alex does push ups, jumping jacks, air-boxing..

Alex meditates.

Alex eats porridge.

Alex stares at the door, tempted?

The fundraising thermometer is slowly rising.

ALEX (V.O.)

Hey, *Guest Room!* I'm Alex and I'm auditioning for Season 53. I grew up loving this show because you guys actually care. Shows like Love Island and Survivor waste so much money that could be going towards people who actually need it. But I wanna go on

Guest Room because you guys are saving the world.

3 INT. THE ROOM - TWO MONTHS LATER

The room is slightly messier. Alex is sleeping on the couch, muttering about saving kids in Africa.

GAME HOST (THROUGH THE SPEAKERS)
Alex is one of our stronger contestants! But, will he survive our new twist? Alex? Wake up sleepy head!

Alex wakes up, confused, looking around the room.

ALEX
Hello?

GAME HOST
Congratulations! You've made the 3-month mark! Historically, more than half of our contestants have dropped out at this point. How do you feel?

ALEX
Really? Oh, wow. Geez

GAME HOST
Technically, you've lasted 3 months and 14 minutes. If you want to, you can walk out and earn \$50,000 for charity! What do you say?

ALEX
No, I can make it at least another 3 months.

The audience cheers in the background. Alex smiles softly.

GAME HOST
All-righty! We'll check back on you in 3 months. Hang in there!

The audience claps. Alex stares blankly at the door.

4 INT. THE ROOM - DAY

ALEX (V.O.)

Being on this show, it's a chance for me to help change people's lives. I see these weak contestants leave after two weeks and it makes me sick. When you walk out of that room, you're literally stealing food from hungry mouths.

MONTAGE:

Alex counts every single little pattern on the wallpaper.
Alex leans his head against the door.

Alex

Don't leave, don't leave, don't leave,
don't leave, don't leave, don't leave...

Alex tries out different laughs.
Alex tries out different expressions on the camera.
The fundraising thermometer gradually reaches halfway.

ALEX

(screaming at camera)

Fuck everyone who act like they care
when you really don't! You see me on
this show? I'M A GODDAMN HERO! WHAT ARE
YOU GUYS DOING? NOTHING!

5 INT. THE ROOM - FOUR MONTHS LATER

Alex is silently receiving flattering compliments from his porridge bowl, who praises him for his charitable efforts.

GAME HOST (THROUGH THE SPEAKERS)

Such tenacity! Such spirit! Folks, our casting producers are getting a raise this year! Let's check in on Alex with our second surprise twist. Alex? Hey Alex, you little goof!

Alex is startled. He raises his fists and looks around the room like a paranoid hyena.

ALEX

Who goes there?! I'm not scared to throw my feces at you, I'll DO IT!

GAME HOST

Alex, it's me, the host! You didn't forget already, did you?

Alex lowers his fists.

GAME HOST

Congratulations! You've made it to the 6 month mark! How are you feeling?

ALEX

Fuck, I can't lie. The past three months were a lot harder than I expected.

GAME HOST

Well, lucky for you, we bring some good news! We've all been in such awe of your performance. You truly do care about charity and the less fortunate. Now, you, our lucky guest, have an opportunity to walk out of this room with \$2 million.

Alex's eyes widen. Is this for real? He looks over at the half-filled fundraising thermometer.

GAME HOST

The choice is yours! You can continue playing as normal for 6 more months and earn \$1 million. Or, if you make this basketball hoop in one throw, you can walk out of this room right away with double the prize money for charity. If you don't make it, NOTHING. You will have to either restart your year, where you can still compete for the million dollar prize, or you can go home with zero dollars. What will it be?

ALEX

Bring me the goddamn basketball hoop.
Let's fucking go.

Alex tosses the mini ball into the mini hoop and misses. On the TV screen, a hand is seen erasing the Expo-marker filled thermometer, now completely blank.

GAME HOST

That was hard to watch. So, Alex, what will it be? Will you start over and stay in the room or will you take your exit?

Alex pauses for a long time, staring at the door. The memory of his audition tape comes back to him.

ALEX (V.O.)

I see these weak contestants leave after two weeks and it makes me sick. When you walk out of that room, you're literally stealing food from hungry mouths.

ALEX

I'll stay.

6 INT. THE ROOM - DAY

MONTAGE:

Alex shrieks at the cameras

Alex sniffs at yellow liquid in a cup. Ew, is that pee?

Alex blocks the door with the furniture, table, anything.

ALEX

DON'T LEAVE! YOU CAN'T LEAVE THIS ROOM!
STOP THINKING ABOUT LEAVING, ALEX!
FUCK!

The fundraising thermometer slowly fills up completely.

7 INT. THE ROOM - ONE YEAR LATER

Alex gallops around the room on all fours, panting with his tongue out.

GAME HOST (THROUGH THE SPEAKERS)
Congratulations Alex! You've earned a million dollars for charity! You truly are a hero. How are you feeling about your historic victory, Alex?

Alex barks and runs around the room.

GAME HOST
That's wonderful to hear! Now, Alex, you can exit the room with no consequences! OR... since world poverty has just spiked 400%, you can stay for two more years and we'll bump that prize to Ten Million. What do you say?

Alex continues barking and running around the room.

GAME HOST
He's staying! What a humanitarian! While Alex continues his journey, let's meet Roomguest 54, Saul Watson, who just moved in next door! Don't go anywhere!