

True Vocation

by Matt Potter

Clapping my hands against my cheeks, I shriek, then throw my arms around the chunky woman beside me. Screaming, we hug each other tight, jumping up and down.

“Amazing!” says Cherie. “Did you feel the *emotion*? Was it *real*?”

We nod, gasping for breath. My heart is pumping.

Cherie turns to the class. “*Great* pairwork! *Imagine* what that *feels* like with an entire *audience* doing it? It's *electric*!”

The class claps as we sit down again.

I smile. The four-week training course has boosted my self-confidence: no athlete or dancer or ninja is more dedicated.

A normal day begins with hair, make-up and wardrobe, then the gym for weight training and stamina building and the pool to cool off.

After lunch it's vocal coaching: shrieking, screaming, crying *Oh-my-God!-Oh-my-God!-Oh-my-God!*, panting and face fanning. Next it's 'situational training', where we pretend to be audience members on real talk shows and practice everything we've learned that day.

Every Friday afternoon we're strapped into chairs and tests are run on our excitement levels. We're given a grade on sweat, tears and blood pressure and how much noise we make. (Thursday nights are practice practice practice.)

Rumour says we'll be tested on how we throw ourselves about, but I'm not sure how they'll do that: a padded room with sensors and a camera, maybe?

I start work experience soon. I get to sit in the audience of a real talk show. I'm working on getting so excited, I piss my pants.

