

TILTING AT WINDMILLS
"The First 14 Pages"

Written by

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INT. ANDY'S APARTMENT - LIVING AREA - DAY

OFF-SCREEN, an AMATEURISH RADIO COMMERCIAL.

ON-SCREEN, a jigsaw puzzle, the 1000-piece kind, on a counter and near completion. It's of a country highway ensconced in trees heading straight towards a full moon. The remaining pieces complete the highway at the horizon around the center upper-third.

ANDY ANDREWS, 24, modestly cute and moderately built, sits at the counter. He's wearing T-shirt and shorts. With a cup of coffee his companion, Andy works to complete the puzzle.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
(from radio, amateurish)
So, when your kids scream --

KIDS' VOICES (O.S.)
(from radio, amateurish)
Ice cream!

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
-- take them to Bert and Betty's
Ice Cream Igloo! Their friendly,
courteous staff --

As the COMMERCIAL CONCLUDES, Andy rolls his eyes.

ANDY
Friendly, courteous staff. Bert and
Betty, I think I can help you.

Andy adds "Bert and Betty's Ice Cream Igloo" to a list of businesses he's compiled with tally marks next to each. He adds a single tally mark next to Bert and Betty's.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
(from radio)
Today's music, W-T-V-T; a
Travertine Radio Group station.

MUSIC FROM THE RADIO as Andy returns his attention to his jigsaw puzzle. His expression of accomplishment builds with each piece, until --

-- he's missing the last piece: the highway at the horizon.

ANDY
You've gotta be kidding me.

He looks in and under the puzzle box and on the floor; no puzzle piece. He shrugs an "Oh, well."

EXT. ANDY'S APARTMENT - LATER THAT DAY

A gorgeous summer afternoon. A sign reads "Rockville Apartments." Off-screen, WATER FROM A SHOWER HEAD.

ANDY (O.S.)
 (singing)
 A man gets an inkling to write a
 love song --

INT. LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS

A photo of a BEAUTIFUL, VOLUPTUOUS BRUNETTE IN HER 20S. Off-screen, WATER FROM A SHOWER HEAD continues.

ANDY (O.S.)
 (singing)
 -- when he finds the right woman
 for him --

INT. SHOWER - CONTINUOUS

Andy lathers up soap as water cascades upon him.

ANDY
 (singing)
 For every Karl, there's a Karla;
 for every Gene, there's a Gina; and
 for Kyles, you can bet there's a
 Kim --

INT. LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS

Four framed jigsaw puzzles adorn a wall.

ANDY (O.S.)
 (singing)
 Well, I've finally found the right
 woman for me; the one I've sought
 after so long --

The jigsaw puzzles from left to right:

- a lone horse wandering a desert.
- a knight rescuing a damsel from a fire-breathing dragon.
- the Consuegra Windmills.
- the country highway with that one piece missing.

ANDY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 (singing)
 And she's a country fan, so this
 love-sick man chose to write a cute
 country love song --

Hanging on another wall are, from Lance Broadcasting, a Sales-Assistant-of-the Year Award for the year prior and two Account-Executive-of-the-Month Awards for June and July of the current year.

ANDY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 (singing)
 Oh, I love my Abby --

A framed photo of Andy and the brunette embracing.

ANDY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 (singing)
 She's a helluva girl! She's my
 beautiful day, my Milky Way, she's
 my sun, my moon, and my world!

EXT. ANDY'S APARTMENT - THAT NIGHT

The sunny summer day has given way to a summer storm.

ANDY (O.S.)
 (singing)
 To no woman before her would I
 pledge my love gladly --

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

OFF-SCREEN RAIN as Andy, well-primped in suit and tie, ties his dress shoes.

ANDY
 (singing)
 She's my reason for being; she
 gives my life meaning; my point --
 I love my Abby!

EXT. ANDY'S APARTMENT - PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

THUNDER and lightning as RAIN POURS DOWN upon the low-income cars. One of the parked cars has its headlights on.

INT. ABBY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

The TORRENTS OF RAIN BEAT ON THE CAR as the brunette from the photos, ABBY, sobs. She's dressed formally; her make-up is tear-streaked by mascara.

She fixates on a first-floor window. A silhouette walks by the shade; her sobbing intensifies!

ABBY

Pull yourself together, Abby!

She grabs a few tissues from her purse and wipes away the streaks, then checks her reflection in her visor mirror.

ABBY (CONT'D)

Stop it! This is his night; don't you dare ruin it for him!

EXT. PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Her jacket over her head, Abby exits her car with her purse and hustles up the sidewalk to the door of an apartment unit.

She RINGS THE DOORBELL.

INT. LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS

Andy opens the door.

ANDY

Abby!

Abby finishes shaking the rain off her jacket, then enters. She then embraces and kisses Andy.

ABBY

Did the rain muss me?

ANDY

Not at all! You're beautiful!

Abby blushes. Andy gets an umbrella from the closet.

ANDY (CONT'D)

I wish you would've let me pick you up.

ABBY

Andy, it makes no sense you driving to Travertine to pick me up so we can drive back to Rockville.

ANDY
 (genuinely)
 It does to me.

Abby smiles.

ABBY
 Don't ever change.

She abruptly embraces Andy as she fights back her tears!

ANDY
 Is something wrong?

ABBY
 Everything's fine!

On her left ring finger, a dazzling engagement ring. THUNDER and lightning!

EXT. ANDY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Andy holds the umbrella over Abby as they scamper to his old white Ford Bronco. He opens her door for her; she gets in.

INT. ANDY'S BRONCO - CONTINUOUS

Abby watches through the rain-rippled window Andy scurrying around the front of the Bronco to the driver's side. A half-laugh-half-sob escapes her, as does a tear.

Andy gets in and tosses the umbrella in the back seat. Abby stares at him lovingly; he notices.

ANDY
 What?

ABBY
 You're always so good to me.

Andy smiles, then notices --

ANDY
 I wasn't so good this time.
 (gesturing to his eye)
 A little rain got you.

Abby pulls down the visor and sees in the mirror that the mascara of the tear's source streaked.

ANDY (CONT'D)
 Sorry about that.

ABBY

It's not your fault, Andy.

She extracts a tissue from her purse; within, an envelope with "Andy" written on it. THUNDER and lightning!

EXT. ROCKVILLE RESORT & LOUNGE - LATER THAT NIGHT

There's no doubt there's a lounge, but to refer to this hotel as a resort would be hyperbole. The STORM CONTINUES.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The sign outside the lounge reads "Saturday, August 6: Lance Broadcasting Annual Awards Banquet."

RON (O.S.)

(total douche)

And now to present the award for
Account Executive of the Year --

INT. LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

RON, 40s, tall and lanky; he wears a suit. He stands at the podium talking into the mic.

RON

-- our fearless leader --

(douche laugh)

-- Greg Lance!

The inebriated crowd, sixty-or-so in number and most dressed casually, APPLAUDS ENTHUSIASTICALLY!

GREG LANCE, 50s, well-built and wearing a tuxedo, kisses his wife before leaving his table.

AT A TABLE IN THE BACK, Andy and Abby sit with RHONDA, 30s with a slim build which betrays her breast implants, and Rhonda's date who is sorely under-dressed compared to Rhonda.

Andy applauds with admiration as Lance commandingly makes his way to the podium.

AT THE PODIUM, Lance takes it over from Ron.

LANCE

(into the mic)

Thank you, Ron. First, I --

Lance stops when the gooseneck holding the microphone jerks away from him; Ron has gotten his foot tangled in the microphone's cord. The crowd LAUGHS.

RON
Sorry about that, Lance.

LANCE
Forget it, Ron.

RON
What?

Lance pulls the gooseneck back towards him.

LANCE
(into the mic)
Forget it, Ron.

The only one not finding this funny is Ron.

LANCE (CONT'D)
That's why you're a Director of
Sales and not on Dancing with the
Stars!

MORE LAUGHTER as Ron returns to his seat at a table.

LANCE (CONT'D)
Is everyone having a good time?

The crowd APPLAUDS! Lance has a hint of the tipsy Welshman.

LANCE (CONT'D)
Some advice to any of you thinking
of someday owning your own
broadcast company: get your
employees drunk once a year and
they'll love you!

The crowd CHEERS! Lance takes a drink.

LANCE (CONT'D)
I want to thank you all for being
here, and I especially appreciate
those of you from our Humboldt and
La Grange stations for making the
hour-trip. Many of you suggested I
move the awards banquet from
January to August so winter
conditions wouldn't be an issue,
and I'm glad you did as we're all
together tonight.

Lance looks at the award in his hands.

LANCE (CONT'D)

I also want to apologize for being somewhat sentimental towards the award I'm about to give. It's not just because I started out as an Account Executive way back when, and it's not just because I've been drinking. I know every one of you works hard and takes considerable pride in putting out a quality product over our airwaves. But the Account Executives work hard to generate the revenue needed to support your hard work and craft. Remember that! Everyday, they must meet with business owners to persuade them into advertising on our stations, and too often they are met with mistrust and disdain; guilty of nothing but being a salesman.

Andy slightly cringes at "salesman." Abby notices and smiles knowingly.

LANCE (CONT'D)

But that's the way it is. They must walk into those dragon lairs and thank those owners for their disparagement. And it shouldn't be that way! Our motives, to genuinely want to help them, should be welcomed!

ON ANDY, he nods in agreement.

LANCE (CONT'D)

But they're not.

ON RHONDA, she nods in agreement.

LANCE (CONT'D)

The Account Executive, with such noble intentions, must tolerate day-after-day indignation in spite of our intentions. It's unfortunate -- and alliteration -- but that's the way it is. I remember --

While Lance slurs through an experience of abuse from a customer in his early days, Abby leans over to Andy.

ABBY
You're gonna win.

ANDY
I'm not gonna win.

ABBY
Yes, you are!

ANDY
I wouldn't even be eligible!

ABBY
You're gonna win, Andy!

She kisses Andy's cheek, then holds her glance on him.

LANCE
That's the kind of treatment the A-Es have to put up with, so that's why I give this award to the A-E who not only exceeds his or her sales projections, but demonstrates vigorous gusto in the face of such adversity. Now, what's unusual about this year's award is that because it's August, there have only been seven full months. But what's exceptionally unusual about this year's winner: he's only been an A-E for five.

ON ANDY, he reacts!

LANCE (CONT'D)
I am pleased and incredibly proud to announce that the award for Account Executive of the Year goes to, from our Rockville stations, Andy Andrews!

The room fills with APPLAUSE! Abby rises enthusiastically applauding! So does Rhonda!

RHONDA
You go, Andy!

Andy is dazed by surprise for a moment, then rises, gives a kiss to Abby, then makes his trip to the podium.

Lance hands Andy the award and shakes his hand.

ANDY
Thank you, Lance.

A wink and a nod from Lance.

LANCE
You earned it, kid.

As Andy makes the return trip to his seat, he passes by the only ones not applauding for him -- Ron, TOM, DICK, and DAVE, aged 40-60; they resent "the kid."

LANCE (CONT'D)
Now let's get this party started!
If you would, Mister DeeJay!

The crowd CHEERS! DANCE MUSIC fills the lounge as stage lights flash.

Andy returns to his table.

ANDY
I can't believe it!

ABBY
I told ya you'd win!

Abby embraces him tightly.

ANDY
I couldn't have done it without
you, Abby --

Andy stops when Abby's eyes well with tears.

ANDY (CONT'D)
Are you crying?

ABBY
I'm just so proud of you!

She embraces Andy again.

INT. LOUNGE - LATER THAT NIGHT

Lance, drunk, regales Andy, Abby, and Lance's wife.

LANCE
And then what's-his-name -- what's
that fucker dentist's name?

ANDY
Doctor Perry.

LANCE

That's right. Anyway, what's-his-name starts pushing Andy around, saying he can get cheaper rates going with See-More Signs and advertising in the bathrooms of bars and restaurants. You know what this son of a bitch says?

Lance grabs Andy by the back of his neck and shakes him.

LANCE (CONT'D)

This little bastard, unfazed, looks that prick in the eyes and says -- tell 'em what you said, kid!

ANDY

Do you really think porcelain caps will sound appealing to someone using a urinal?

The women laugh.

LANCE

That asshole not only signed with Andy, he upped the buy! Why? 'Cause the kid was right! No one wants to think about getting their teeth capped with something they just pissed on!

Lance kisses Andy on the cheek.

LANCE (CONT'D)

I love this kid!

Abby kisses Andy on the other cheek.

INT. LOUNGE - LATER THAT NIGHT

A SLOW DANCE SONG. Inebriated couples dance and kiss, a few going beyond public decency.

Andy and Abby dance romantically as if in their own world.

ABBY

(in his ear)

Do you remember the first time we slow danced together?

ANDY

(in her ear)

This isn't the first time?

ABBY
 (laughs)
 You dork!

ANDY
 New Year's Eve.

ABBY
 That was the first time I told you
 I loved you. Then you said you
 loved me, too.

ANDY
 Well, at the time it seemed like
 the thing to say.

Abby laughs.

ABBY
 What did I do to deserve you?

ANDY
 No, Abby; what did I do to deserve
you?

Abby clings to him tightly as she fights back her tears.

ANDY (CONT'D)
 Before you, Abby, I was lost --
 wandering! You mean so much to me
 that --

ABBY
 Kiss me.

They kiss as they dance.

EXT. ANDY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Rain. Cloudy; gray.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

The digital alarm clock reads "8:07."

Andy lies sleeping in bed. Then, his outstretched arm feels
 around and finds nothing but bedsheet.

Eyes freshly open, Andy's vision at first blurry focuses on
 what is atop the pillow next to him --

-- the envelope with "Andy" written on it and Abby's engagement ring!

Andy becomes frantically alert!

ANDY

Abby?

INT. LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS

Andy rushes in! Wearing only his boxers, envelope in hand he looks in the bathroom; she's not there, nor is Abby in the kitchen! He darts to --

EXT. ANDY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Andy comes out on the porch and sees the spot where Abby had parked is vacant! Andy races back to --

INT. LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS

-- and into --

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Andy grabs his cell phone and places a call. He opens the envelope and reads the letter for the first time as the other end RINGS.

THE LETTER:

Dearest Andy,

I'm sorry, but I can't marry you. Please don't call me. Just know I'll always love you.

Eternally Yours,

Abby

ON ANDY, he ends the call, then sets his phone on his desk.

INT. LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS

Andy plods to the open front door as he reads and re-reads the letter.

At the front door, something builds within Andy; he fidgets raving! He searches for an outlet, something upon which to unleash his torment --

-- the front door! He SLAMS IT SHUT --

-- and the Consuegra Windmills puzzle drops to the floor; the puzzle shatters!

Andy walks up to and looks down at the scattered pieces; he stares bleakly and blankly at them.