

Charity
an original screenplay by

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Charity's Mom, CAROL (30's, pretty, delicate, Hippyish) stands in the driveway by a vintage black and white hearse with paisley print curtains, CHARITY (13, wearing a hand made mini-skirt and looking uncomfortable) and her sister, DONNA (16, pretty, trying very hard to be cool, comfortable in her mini skirt) hug her in turn. Their dog, BLACKIE (a 4 year old Belgian Shepherd) watches. The whole scene seems an odd contrast to the Colonial style Victorian era house with large column's and a wrap around porch and balcony.

CAROL

Hey girls...

(turns back to Charity)

I'm trusting you to take care of the house and

(to Donna)

be responsible young ladies.

(to Charity)

You have your inhaler?

(Charity pulls it out of her pocket)

Groovy. Call Mee-maw if you need anything, cool? We'll be back next weekend.

The girls nod as their dad, DEAN (30's, long haired and hip) bounces out to the hearse carrying a small pouch. He sees Charity and tries to hide the pouch. He flips the pouch into the hearse and gestures to Carol.

DEAN

Let's rock'n roll!

DONNA

Why can't we go?

CHARITY

Yeah. Mom? It would be so cool!

CAROL

Honey, you know I would but... you girls just aren't... you know, old enough yet. Next time.

Dean starts the hearse. Music blares from the 8-track. Donna looks very unhappy.

DONNA

It's is going to be really outasite. Janis will be there! And... and Zeppelin.... and... Creedance...

DEAN
Hey, baby, come on!

CAROL
I'm coming!

Turning back to the girls.

CAROL (CONT'D)
Sorry babies, next time. Promise.

Carol climbs in the hearse, blows them a kiss as she closes the door. The girls watch forlorn as they drive off.

DONNA
Baby! It's your fault. If I didn't have to baby sit you, they'd have taken me!

Donna storms into the house and closes the door. Charity sits on the steps, head in hands, Blackie snuggles next to her, butting his head into her arm until she pets him and smiles.

2 INT. CHARITY'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

2

Charity sits on the front porch reading the Good News Bible with Blackie sitting beside her. She reads:

Mathew 6:34 "For do not worry about tomorrow for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

A pickup pulls up in front of the house, burning oil, and honks. Donna comes running out, stops when she see's Charity, straightens and nonchalantly...

DONNA
Goin' out.

CHARITY
Really.

DONNA
Yeah. And you are gonna be cool about it. Got it?

CHARITY
Why should I?

DONNA
You prissy little bi... I'll leave you alone. You leave me alone? Cool?

CHARITY

Yes. I'll be cool. Do what you want. I don't care.

DONNA

I will. And you. Won't. Tell. Mom. And dad.

CHARITY

No. I. Won't. Tell. Mom. And dad.

DONNA

Cool.

Donna runs to the truck, climbs in with music blaring, slams the door shut and the truck smokes off.

Charity looks down at the verse.

3 EXT. BECKY'S BACKYARD - AFTERNOON

3

Large Victorian houses line the street, Charity's is one of the largest. Just across the street is her best friend Becky's house, its an older, frame house in mild disrepair. A portable record player sits on a folding table in Becky's backyard with a stack of 45's playing. BECKY (Charity's limp haired, scrawny, best friend) dances and lip sync's with Charity. They laugh at each other, Blackie leaps around with them.

BECKY

Your folks left you to go to that festival? Wow.

CHARITY

It's okay. I like time to myself.

BECKY

The whole dang house? Nobody but you?

CHARITY

And Donna.

BECKY

She ain't gonna be there.

CHARITY

Isn't. Yeah. Probably not.

BECKY

(poking Charity)
Steve's hot for you.

CHARITY

Is not.

BECKY

(stops dancing)

Yeah. He is. Tommy told me.

CHARITY

Really?

BECKY

Yep. Says he's gonna ask you to go with him.

Charity stops moving. Looks at Becky with awe.

CHARITY

What would the most popular guy in our class want with me?

Becky shrugs and keeps dancing. Charity smiles and joins in.

4 INT. CHARITY'S HOUSE - EVENING - MONTAGE 4

Charity vacuums various rooms.

Charity cleaning bathtub, sink. Donna pops in to use the bathroom, sees her cleaning, shakes her head and turns on her heel.

Charity sweeping kitchen. Sweeps Blackie out of the way.

Charity washing dishes. Blackie watches. Donna and a couple of friends pass through dropping more dirty dishes on the counter.

5 EXT. METHODIST CHURCH - MORNING 5

Charity carries a brown paper bag and her record player as she walks up to a turn of the century brick church. Blackie stops and sits by the door as Charity enters through the recreation room door.

6 INT. METHODIST CHURCH - MOMENTS LATER 6

Charity sets up strobe candles, lit incense, and her record player. The lights are dim as her Sunday school class enters. STEVE, extremely cute and clueless boy, shoves another boy out of the front row so he can have the best seat. The boy laughs and rubs his bruised elbow as he shuffles to the back row. Everyone around Steve tries to get his attention, talking, and flirting. He keeps stealing glances at Charity.

MRS. HELDENBRAND, the class's 30ish teacher, moves gently to the beat of the song as she surveys Charity's set up from the door. The kids giggle and whisper to each other as Charity plays a song on the record player. When everyone is seated, Charity raises her voice.

CHARITY

(reading)

"LOVE IS". Love is Patient. Love is Kind. Yet. I look all around me. I see plastic in smiles. In Laughter. In love. And yes, even in hate. I can see these things made of plastic. An imitation of life. Cold faces.

DANNY, a freckled face class clown class mate makes a deliberately cold face. His neighbor snickers.

CHARITY (CONT'D)

Cold hearts with fake smiles.

Danny makes a huge fake smile. Charity sees this and her face flushes with embarrassment.

CHARITY (CONT'D)

They don't feel the deep pain I feel because they don't know love.

Charity looks up as kids snicker. She puts on another song.

CHARITY (CONT'D)

"GOD IS". God is love. God loves us. Today. Tomorrow. And for always. Love rules yet, people still hate. Love in your heart?

Another kid clutches his heart and fakes dying.

CHARITY (CONT'D)

You say? Then why all the hate? Why not God? Can God be in your heart when love is not? 'love your neighbor as yourself' Mark said. It must be true. What about you? Afraid you say? 'There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear.' Above all else. Love. "Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love'

Mrs. Heldenbrand gestures for Charity to wrap it up.

CHARITY (CONT'D)

OK. You act like you don't get it.
 But Paul was right. "All we need is
 love". And John, not Lennon, the
 Bible one. Says "anyone who does
 not know love does not know God.
 Because God is love"

Charity looks around the class, looking for someone that
 gets it. Steve smiles when he realizes she is finished..

STEVE

Far out man.

Charity smiles wistfully and goes to a free seat.

MRS. HELDENBRAND

Thank you, Charity. That was lovely.
 Remember, children. Having some
 love for each other is how we all
 get along. We're going to have to
 remember that this fall when the
 colored's start coming to our schools.
 And especially those of you bussing
 to their schools. Your gonna need
 to take a lot of love with you.

MRS. HELDENBRAND (CONT'D)

That means you have to set aside
 your fears, and give the colored's a
 chance at your school this fall.

Danny throws a spit ball toward Mrs. Heldenbrand.

The several kids snicker and make faces behind Charity's
 back. Charity, in spite of them, sees them. She fights
 back tears.

Danny leans toward Charity and dramatically mouth's "I love
 you" Charity grabs her things, jumps up, and slams the door
 open as he leaves.

Danny pulls on Steve's arm.

DANNY

(quietly)
 I double dog dare you to go to third
 base with her.

Steve smiles thoughtfully back at Danny.

Blackie sits patiently by the recreation room door. Charity storms out, furious tears stinging her cheeks, her arms full of the record player and paper bag of props. Steve hurries out to catch up. Blackie jumps up and follows her.

STEVE

Hey! Hold up.

Charity slows down, doesn't stop. He makes no effort to help her carry her things.

CHARITY

Oh. Hi.

STEVE

Hey. Where you goin'?

CHARITY

Home.

STEVE

You did good.

CHARITY

(brightens)

Yeah?

STEVE

Yeah. It was nice.

CHARITY

They laughed. I was just... trying to...

STEVE

Well, they're stupid.

Charity smiles at his lame attempt to cheer her up. Blackie glares at Steve.

CHARITY

I guess it was lame.

Steve is stumped, walks quietly beside her. Looking up at her with his charming smile. Charity wipes away her tears and looks at her feet.

STEVE

Well... you're not lame. You're...

Just then she trips over the curb she failed to see.

STEVE (CONT'D)

At least not yet.

CHARITY
I'm doing my best.
(blushing)

They walk looking awkwardly back and forth at each other.

STEVE
So...Are you scared about bussing?

CHARITY
No. Why should I be?

STEVE
You know... all those...N..Coloreds?

CHARITY
Well. I'm not. Don't understand
it, you know? Why's everybody so
scared.

STEVE
You hear stories. You know.

CHARITY
Well you can't believe everything
you hear.

STEVE
(smiles)
I guess not. But I heard you. I
believed you. It was far out.

CHARITY
(blushing)
Thanks.

8 EXT. CHARITY'S HOUSE - LATER

8

Donna and several of her friends carry large garbage bags
full of something in the front door of the house as Charity
and Steve walk up to the front yard.

STEVE
What's going on?

CHARITY
No idea.

STEVE
Are they... hippy's?

CHARITY
I guess.

STEVE

Hey. You wanna help with my paper route next Sunday?

CHARITY

Oh, okay. Can Becky come?

STEVE

I guess so. Four O'clock. Cool. See ya'.

CHARITY

Wait, 4.... AM

STEVE

Yeah. That a problem?

CHARITY

In the morning, its... dark and all.

Steve nods his head 'yes'. Charity thinks just a second

CHARITY (CONT'D)

Sure. Don't know about Becky..

Steve smiles and shrugs before walking off, stealing glances at Charity to see if she's still watching. They both smile and Charity goes inside followed by Blackie.

9 INT. CHARITY'S HOUSE ENTRY - CONTINUOUS

9

Charity walks in the front door carrying the record player and brown paper bag and followed by Blackie. She looks around for her sister and friends. Music and voices come from the basement. She walks through the house to the top of the basement stairs and starts down, still carrying the record player and paper bag.

10 INT. CHARITY'S HOUSE BASEMENT STAIRWELL - CONTINUOUS

10

Charity walks down the stairs carrying the record player and paper bag. The basement sports a pool table, black lights, and a juke box with a long vinyl couch against one wall. Black light posters line the walls. Charity sees the floor is covered with the bags and pot strewn out on top of the bags. Two of the friends are playing pool. Donna jumps up and rushes to Charity. Charity tries to hand her the paper bag but Donna just snatches it and tosses it to the floor before pushing Charity and the record player up the stairs.

DONNA

Charity! Hey. Um...I thought you were at church.

CHARITY

I was but...

Donna pushes her to the top of the stairs.

11 INT. CHARITY'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

11

Charity, pushed by Donna emerges from the basement doorway. Charity angrily slams the record player and bag on the table. Donna stands between Charity and the door.

CHARITY

What are you doing?

DONNA

You are NOT going to fink on me to mom and dad. Got it?

Blackie growls at Donna.

DONNA (CONT'D)

(threateningly)

Swear it.

CHARITY

Okay. Okay. Geez. I swear. Not a word.

DONNA

Or else.

(glares at her, fist
clenching)

CHARITY

You don't have to...

DONNA

Fine. Just... Be cool. Savvy?

CHARITY

I am. I'm cool.

Donna moves out of Charity's way. Charity grabs the record player and darts out the back door.

DONNA

(yelling after her)

I MEAN IT!!!

12 EXT. BECKY'S BACKYARD - AFTERNOON

12

Charity plays 45s in Becky's backyard. She dances in front of Blackie who tries to follow her with his head before giving up and laying his head on his paws and following her with his eyes.

Becky hurries out of the house and excitedly pulls out a few new 45's from a brown paper bag. Blackie watches.

BECKY
 (squeals with delight)
 Oh my gosh. You won't believe this one! I LOVE LOVE LOVE it!!

CHARITY
 Outasite!

BECKY
 Just listen to the words, man.

CHARITY
 Far out...

Becky and Charity dance and listen with their eyes closed for a bit... when the song about war/ peace winds down... They look up to see COLE, a hispanic kid, their age with longish hair walking by. He see's them and waves. Charity wave's back. Becky scowls.

BECKY
 That's that Mexican kid that lives in that house on the corner of Sheridan?

CHARITY
 Oh. Yeah. I think I've seen him at school. He's kinda cute.

BECKY
 Well, my mom says he's bad news. His Dad hangs out at that place on Paseo where all the druggies are. His family might not even be legal!

CHARITY
 Wow... Oh...Steve asked me to help with his paper route.

BECKY
 Stop the presses. What?

CHARITY
 Yeah. He walked me home from Sunday School.

BECKY
 Eh... and you are JUST NOW telling me this??

CHARITY

Sorry. Yeah. He wants me to meet him. Four A.M. You wanna come along?

BECKY

But didn't he... ask you...

CHARITY

I know. He said you could come, too.

BECKY

Four AM! That's like still dark?

Charity nods her head and grins.

BECKY (CONT'D)

Told'ya he liked you.

Charity looks away and nods her head with a grin.

13 EXT. STEVE'S HOUSE - EARLY MORNING

13

Steve and his two friends, TOMMY, and MIKE sit on the porch step of Steve's house. Mike is a small long haired kid, with a Davy Jones cuteness about him. He looks their age or a bit older strumming on an acoustic guitar. Tommy is a greaser looking kid with his hair slicked back wearing a white shirt with a pack of cigarettes rolled up in his sleeve. Steve stands up when he see's Charity and Becky walking toward them with Blackie beside them.

STEVE

Hey, chicks are here.

TOMMY

Cool.

Mike starts a new song.

MIKE

(singing)

Chicks are here, yeah yeah yeah.
Chicks are here. Good time baby...
Yeah, they chicks are here...

Charity and Becky walk up.

STEVE

Hey. Becky.
(to Charity)
You came!

CHARITY

Yeah. Hey. What's going down?

STEVE
Just hangin' out, waiting for the
truck.

CHARITY
Who's that?
(points to Mike)

STEVE
Oh. That's Mike.

TOMMY
Hey there my ladies.

MIKE
Don't mind me I'm just here for the
ecstatic joy of being up at four
A.M.
(starts playing and
singing again)
Fun at four A. M. Yeah. Yeah.
Fun at fur A.M. with the chickees on
Seventeenth street. Its gonna be a
good time... at four A.M. with sweet
Charity...
(looks at Becky before
adding)
And Becky!

Charity and Becky blush. Charity sits on a step and Becky plops next to Mike. Steve tries to sit next to Charity but Blackie is there. Charity shoos Blackie away and smiles at Steve.

TOMMY
Wanna cigarette?

Both girls shake their head.

MIKE
I got something a damn site better.

Mike pulls out a joint and the girls mouths drop.

STEVE
Naw. Man. Not now. That's not
cool.

Mike shrugs and puts the joint away.

TOMMY
Can you believe they are gonna bus
us next year?

BECKY
Yeah. I'm scared.

TOMMY
I'm not. I'm gonna beat them niggers
all up. Show them..

CHARITY
Stop it!!!

TOMMY
Darkies.

CHARITY
What's wrong with you. Why would
you want to do that?

TOMMY
They got no right takin' over our
school and make us go to theirs.

MIKE
No shit. Man. It ain't cool.

BECKY
They'll start the fights anyway.
Everybody knows them Ni... sorry...
coloreds just want to steal your
shit...pick fights.

CHARITY
Becky! Why would you...

STEVE
(to Charity)
Man... be cool. I don't want them
here either. Why're they making us
go to another school?

MIKE
Just like the draft man. My brother's
off fightin' in Nam so we can be
free but we ain't free. We gotta do
what the man says.

Charity looks baffled and upset. Steve puts his arm around
her. This makes her smile.

MIKE (CONT'D)
(singing and strumming)
Do what the man says now, do what he
says, or you go to jail, head between
your tail, go to jail, go to jail,
go to jail.

(MORE)

MIKE (CONT'D)

Do what the man says or go to hell
man go to hell... gotta go to school,
gotta be cool... fire that gun..
Get ya some gooks... yeah... gotta
do what the man says...

A flatbed pick up truck slows up at the corner under the streetlight and a man in the back plops a bundle of papers on the corner without stopping. The boys take their bags to the corner and cut the wire that binds the papers.

STEVE

(hands Charity some
rubber bands)

Here.

Charity and the others assemble the papers, roll them up, slip rubber bands around them and toss them into their bags. Charity pauses to look at the picture on the front page. It shows negro students walking the gauntlet of white students into a school building under the watchful eye of a soldier holding a rifle. Tommy looks over her shoulder

TOMMY

See, nobody wants them there.

STEVE

The army ought to be over there
killing gooks.

Charity looks back and forth, not sure who to be madder at.

CHARITY

They have a right to be there just
like us. The army's just protecting
their rights as Americans.

TOMMY

(snorting)
Americans!

STEVE

They have their own schools, what do
they want with ours?

CHARITY

They're terrible. They don't even
have books or chalk or anything!

MIKE

Bus me there!

STEVE
 (thumb shaking with
 Mike)
 Right On!

The boys stop when they see Charity's disapproving frown. Steve takes the paper from her, rolls it and shoves it into a bag. Charity grabs the next paper, assembles the front page, pauses for a moment and rolls and bands it with a tear in her eye.

14 INT. CHARITY'S BEDROOM- EVENING

14

Charity is on her bed, record player blaring, with Blackie as she writes in her Diary.

CHARITY (V.O.)
 God is love and love is in all of
 us. If that's true why do people
 choose to hate? Where is love anyway?
 God please help me to see it.
 (tears in her eyes,
 then)
 Steve LIKES me!!
 (doodles hearts with
 her and Steve's
 initials)
 Maybe he'll ask me to go with him.
 I'll get to wear his drop!

Charity looks up, dreamy eyed just as her records stop playing. Silence.

CHARITY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 God it's quiet here. I feel so...
 lonely. But I'm not alone. I have
 you, God. And the Moon. I always
 have you, too.

Charity looks out the window at the full moon smiling down at her.

CHARITY (CONT'D)
 (sings)
 I love the moon and the moon loves
 me. I love the moon and the moon
 loves me. I love the moon and the
 moon loves me. I love the moon and
 the moon loves me!
 (sighs)
 Goodnight, Moon.

She closes her eyes for a moment, takes a deep, satisfied breath, and puts the diary and pen on her side table, puts

on her orthodontic head gear, turns off her light and tucks herself into bed.

15 INT. CHARITY'S KITCHEN - MORNING

15

Charity comes down the back staircase, in Pj's with her head gear still on. She steps into a quiet kitchen. Sighs when she see's the stack of dishes left by Donna and her friends strewn all over the counter.

CHARITY

(under her breath)

I didn't sign up for this.

She shoves all the dishes near the sink, pulls out a box of cereal, shakes it. It's nearly empty. Pulls out a bowl, pours the crumbs into her box and searches for another cereal. Pulls out a Bran Cereal, shakes it, it's full.

CHARITY (CONT'D)

Great.

She pours it into her bowl, plops the bowl on the table and opens the fridge. She pulls out a milk carton, opens it and sniffs, pours a few drops in the bowl, barely enough to moisten the flakes. She tosses it in the trash. Goes back to the fridge and finds a pitcher of orange juice, pulls out a jelly jar glass from the cabinet and pours herself a glass of juice. She returns the pitcher to the fridge, sits at the table, pulls off her head gear, dumps two spoons full of sugar into her bowl, and eats in silence, painfully washing down each bite with the orange juice.

16 INT. CHARITY'S HOUSE LIVING ROOM- LATER

16

A large Armoire stands in a corner of the room. The room is set up like a Victorian era home with an antique settee and arm chairs centered around an antique coffee table. Charity enters carrying lemon oil and a couple of rags. She sets them on the coffee table and opens the Armoire. Its filled with LP's and a record player. She pulls out a rock and roll album and puts it on to play. Music blaring, she closes the cabinet, picks up the rags and oil and starts polishing the furniture.

17 INT. CHARITY'S HOUSE ENTRY - LATER

17

Charity is wiping down the entry door windows with Windex and paper towels. Music still blaring from the Armoire's record player. Donna's friends push through and open the door, carrying the large bags of pot back out to their pickup in the front yard. Charity scowls at them. Donna, looking stoned and scruffy like she hasn't slept, carries one.

DONNA
Chill out, chick.

CHARITY
What do you think you're doing?

DONNA
You. Just. Stay. OUT of this.
You hear me?

She shoves Charity as she exits the front door.

18 EXT. CHARITY'S HOUSE - EVENING

18

Donna's friend's pickup truck sits in the driveway as her friends continue to load the pick up with the bags of dried pot. Charity sits on the front porch reading her Good News Bible absently scratching Blackie's head as he sits by her feet. The last of the bags gets tossed onto the back as Donna climbs in the cab. Dean and Carol drive up in the hearse just as the pickup pulls out of the driveway in a cloud of smoke. They look curiously at the pick up as it pulls off. They climb out of the hearse, Dean waves away the smoke, and walk to the front door.

CHARITY
Hey Mom. Dad. How was the festival?

Dean and Carol look the worse for wear, dirty, tired and a bit strung out.

CAROL
Outasite sweetie.

Carol hugs Charity and sits next to her.

CAROL (CONT'D)
What's happening? Who was that with
Donna?

Charity shrugs as Dean heads for the door, casting a look down the road after the truck.

DEAN
Better not of ripped us off!

He opens the door and goes inside.

CAROL
Honey, what did they have in those
bags?

CHARITY
I don't know, Mom. Ask Donna!
Apparently I'm not cool enough.

Dean comes back out.

DEAN
It's all here. What was that in those bags?

CHARITY
I don't know.
(Dean's eyes repeat the question)
Okay?

DEAN
Oh. Well, the house looks great.

CAROL
Thanks, sweetie.

DEAN
(shaking his head)
Man that was some powerful sh..
(sees Charity)
Music.

Carol gives Dean a warning look as Charity looks at him funny. Dean goes into the house.

DEAN (CONT'D)
Ohh my head.

CAROL
We're gonna go to bed. We're trashed.
Can I get you anything?

CHARITY
No. Mom. If, uhh, If you just go for the music, how come I can't go with you?

CAROL
It's not really a good place for a sweet thing like you honey. Sometimes things happen that... you don't need to be thinking about, just yet.

CHARITY
Like what?

CAROL
Charity...
(flustered)
I just need a real bed right now...
real bad. We'll talk later.

Carol hugs Charity.

CAROL (CONT'D)
 You're my good girl. Thanks for
 keeping it together here. Good night.

Carol sniffs herself

CAROL (CONT'D)
 Oh, God, and a shower.

Charity follows her onto the porch and takes her seat as her mother goes inside.

CHARITY
 (yelling after her
 mom)
 I'M GLAD YOU'RE HOME!

She looks down at Blackie, then she looks worried at the door before smiling, shaking her head and returning to her bible.

19 INT. CHARITY'S BEDROOM- EVENING

19

Charity in bed in her pajama's wearing her orthodontic headgear writing in her diary as her record player plays. There is knock on her door. She turns takes the needle off the record.

CHARITY
 Come in.

CAROL
 Hey sweetie.

Sits on the bed next to Charity.

CHARITY
 Hey mom. I missed you. Hope you
 guys had fun. How was Janis?

CAROL
 Totally outasite. What a voice that
 girl has. Don't know how she keeps
 beltin' out all that soul. You'd've
 loved her. Next time. Promise.
 Hey...I have this for you.

Dean walks in and sees Carol hand Charity a ten dollar bill.

CHARITY
 What's that for?

DEAN

We told you we'd pay you a dollar
twenty five for every day you did
the chore list and you did it. We
are really proud of you.

CHARITY

Really?

CAROL

Yes.

Charity thinks and leans in close to her mother.

CHARITY

(whispering)

But a dollar 25 doesn't go into 10
dollars?

CAROL

Close enough.

(leans in)

Don't tell your dad, he'd have a fit
if he knew I paid you one cent too
much.

They both laugh and look at Dean who is looking around to
make sure nothing is missing.

CAROL (CONT'D)

Proud of you. You are such a
responsible young lady.

DEAN

Wish I could say the same for your
sister.

CAROL

(to Dean)

Hush.

(to Charity)

Point is you've done a great job so
we are paying you. A deals a deal.

CHARITY

Thanks Mom. Dad.

CAROL

You are most welcome.

Carol gets up to leave.

CAROL (CONT'D)

Night honey.

DEAN

She all set for Friday night?

CAROL

Oh, that's right. Honey, you want to baby sit Friday? Cream is in concert and we are all going, but Jenna needs a babysitter. She'll pay two fifty an hour! I told her I was sure you would.

CHARITY

Two fifty! Yeah! Umm ... yes! Of course!

Carol kisses Charity on the head and her parents leave, closing the door behind them.

Charity gets out of bed, pulls out a jade glass pepper shaker from her closet and stuffs the bill in with the change inside the jar. She smiles to herself as she puts it back in the closet, turns out her bedroom light and tucks herself into bed.

20 INT. CHARITY'S HOUSE MONTAGE - AFTERNOON 20

Charity dusts and polishes furniture.

Charity polishing silver as Donna walks by.

Charity washes windows as Donna runs out the door to her friend's car. Charity watches her go, looks back at the house and smiles before shining up another window.

21 INT. JENNA'S HOUSE ENTRY- EVENING 21

JENNA, a thin, quick moving hippy dressed in a maxi dress and beads escorts Charity up the stairs in her two story victorian house.

JENNA

Jason is asleep. He'll sleep through the night so no need to worry about him.

CHARITY

Okay.

22 INT. JENNA'S HOUSE SECOND FLOOR LANDING - CONTINUOUS 22

Jenna opens a door and peeks her head in.

JENNA

He's in here. But like I said. He won't be any bother.

Hands Charity a piece of paper.

JENNA (CONT'D)

Here are the emergency numbers.
Just in case. But you'll be fine.

23 INT. JENNA'S HOUSE ENTRY - CONTINUOUS

23

Jenna follows Charity back down the stairs.

JENNA

Your mom and dad are so cool!

Charity nods.

JENNA (CONT'D)

I just love them. They're hip...
smart... must be great.

Jenna exits to the back of the house. Charity stands awkwardly at the living room doorway, her hands on her shoulder strap purse.

24 INT. JENNA'S LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

24

Three or four people come and go through the living room into and out of the kitchen. A couple of them, JEFF, 30's and SARA, 20's, sit on the sofa with Charity. They are all in their 20's, early 30's, very hip and cool. Music plays as they talk.

JENNA

Hey, guys, say "hi" to Charity.
Dean and Carol's kid. Cool, huh?

JEFF

Hey little mama!

SARA

Yeah. So cool. They are totally outasite.

JEFF

Totally, man. Totally.

CHARITY

Yeah. They're cool.

JENNA

(conspiratorially)
Must be great having such hip parents.

JEFF

Yeah. Man. Far out.

SARA

They're trippin' man.

JENNA

Yeah. They trip. Of course, they do. Don't they Charity? They drop acid.

CHARITY

Uh... NO! My parents don't...

JEFF

Oh, yeah, they are so totally groovy. No way, man, they trip out!

SARA

They are too hip. Sam Stone's like Dean's best friend!

JEFF

That underground D.J. Guy? Trippin! That guy wears the coolest threads. I dig it.

JENNA

Yeah. That's what I mean, dude! There's no way they don't drop L.S.D.

CHARITY

I really don't think they....

SARA

You're puttin me on. We're cool. You can tell us.

CHARITY

No. I mean. I don't know... they...

JENNA

Well, I can dig it. You don't know. But I'm sure they turn on, man. They are just so beautiful.

JEFF

Hey man, its about time to cut outta here.

JENNA

I hope we didn't blow your mind, chick. We just love your folks. That's all. They are some cool cats, you know?

Charity nods. The rest of the people, including Dean and Carol file out of the kitchen and out the front door.

Charity sits in silence, overwhelmed.

Charity opens the kitchen door and peeks through.

25 INT. JENNA'S KITCHEN DOOR - CONTINUOUS 25

A hookah sits in the middle of the kitchen table. Jenna stands at the door, looking in, she starts to wheeze, scratches at her throat, pulls her inhaler out of her purse and takes a puff, holds her breath, then takes another.

26 INT. JENNA'S HOUSE DEN - CONTINUOUS 26

Charity pokes around the room, looking at book titles and see's "The Connoisseurs Handbook of Marijuana" and "A child's garden of grass (the official handbook for marijuana users" on a shelf.

27 INT. JENNA'S JASON'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS 27

Jenna's eyes are downcast as she walks in and looks over Jason sleeping. She looks around the room, shakes her head and grimaces before slowly walking out.

28 INT. JENNA'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 28

Sullenly, she sits on the phone table chair and picks up the phone. She dials a number. The phone rings.

STEVE

Hello.

CHARITY

Hey. It's me.

STEVE

Oh. Hey. What's cookin'?

CHARITY

Um... baby sitting. For some of my parents friends.

STEVE

Cool.

CHARITY

Yeah. I guess. They are paying me good. Two fifty and hour!

STEVE

Far out!

CHARITY

Yeah. I just... I... they...

STEVE

What?

CHARITY

Some of their friends, they... they said my parents drop L.S.D.

STEVE

Man. I knew they were hip.

CHARITY

Yeah. It's not true. At least. I don't think...

STEVE

Hey. You're cool though, right? You want me to come over?

CHARITY

Sure. Yeah. Okay.

Charity hangs up the phone, leaves her hand on the receiver for a moment. Closes her eyes, smiles, jumps up and checks her hair in the mirror, frowns pulls a brush from her purse and pulls it through her hair. She takes a last look at her result, satisfied, returns the brush to her purse.

29 INT. JENNA'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

29

Charity leads Steve into the living room, points to the sofa. He sits.

CHARITY

You want a coke. They got lots of them.

STEVE

Sure.

Charity goes to the kitchen, Steve looks around. Picks up the "Child's Garden of Grass" Smirks. Charity comes back in with two opened coke bottles, hands one to Steve, sets the other on a coaster on the table. She sits next to Steve. He scoots closer to her, sets the coke down.

CHARITY

I just don't get it. My parents wouldn't do drugs. Drugs are bad. Really, really bad!

STEVE

Chill out. It's no big deal. Don't sweat it.

CHARITY

But they said they drop L.S.D.!

STEVE

So? Don't think about it, okay?
Just. Here. I'll give you something
else to think about.

He kisses her. She smiles.

STEVE (CONT'D)

You got some music?

Charity nods. Gets up and puts on a record. Steve turns down the lights. Charity nervously sits down beside him. He puts his arm around her and starts kissing her. She responds. She likes it. They kiss for awhile, tongue kissing. He puts his hand on her waist, pulls her shirt out. They keep kissing. He puts his hand under her shirt on her belly. They keep kissing. He moves his hand up to her breast. She pushes his hand away. Steve pulls back.

STEVE (CONT'D)

What'd you do that for?

CHARITY

I don't...

STEVE

(kissing her again)
It's okay. Trust me.

He slips his hand under her shirt again. This time she pushes his hand away and stands up.

CHARITY

Cool it!

STEVE

Aw... man, that's not cool.

CHARITY

You should go.

STEVE

I'm sorry. I rushed you. I shouldn't
have.

Kisses her again.

CHARITY

Its okay. Just. Go.

He turns to leave, reluctantly.

STEVE

You are one foxy chick, man.

She smiles. He leaves.

She stands there looking after him, sighs. Turns away.

30 EXT. CHARITY'S NEIGHBORHOOD - AFTERNOON

30

Charity carries a large brown paper bag of groceries, Blackie walking along beside her. Cole watches from across the street. He crosses the street, approaches her.

COLE

Hi Charity.

CHARITY

Oh. Hi. You're Cole, right?

COLE

Yeah. 3rd period history. Second row.

CHARITY

Yeah. I remember.

Cole gently takes the paper bag of groceries from Charity

CHARITY (CONT'D)

Oh...okay... thanks.

COLE

You're on seventeenth, right?

CHARITY

Yeah. I gotta make dinner. My folks are out tonight.

COLE

Sorry.

CHARITY

No. It's cool. I like to cook.

COLE

Nahhh, really?

CHARITY

Yeah. Especially baking. Just learned how to make angelfood cake.

COLE

Man...

Awkward silence for a bit.

COLE (CONT'D)
You okay going to Central?

CHARITY
Yeah. I guess so. I mean, school's school, right?

COLE
Yeah. That's what I say. Why's everybody so upset.

CHARITY
I don't know

CHARITY (CONT'D)
Stupid.

COLE
People is stupid.

CHARITY
Are. Are stupid.

COLE
See what I mean?

Charity laughs.

COLE (CONT'D)
I mean. What's the big deal? We're all humans, right? It's not like their martians or Italians or something.

Charity laughs at this, too. Cole smiles at making her smile.

CHARITY
I know, right?

Charity studies Cole for a moment before shaking her head and pointing.

CHARITY (CONT'D)
That house.

COLE
The one with the Hippies?

CHARITY
Oh. My sister's friends. Yeah.
(looks embarrassed)

COLE
I've seen them around. Don't like them much.

CHARITY

Yeah. Me either.

The two keep walking. Cole smiling ear to ear. Charity bashfully smiling back.

31 EXT. CHARITY'S FRONT YARD - MOMENTS LATER

31

Cole walks Charity to her door, hands her the bag of groceries.

CHARITY

Thanks.

COLE

Sure. Hey. You ever need anything. Anything at all.

He shoves a piece of paper in her hand with his number on it. She looks down at the number, then back at him. She flushes.

CHARITY

Sure.

She watches him walk off, turns and goes inside. Cole walks down the walkway, turns to watch her go inside.

32 EXT. BECKY'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

32

Playing records again. Blackie at Charity's feet while she puts a new stack of records on the changer. Becky sits on a stump.

BECKY

You gonna watch the moon landing?

CHARITY

Yeah. My folks are even staying home.

BECKY

Cool. So. Steve came over? Spill it.

CHARITY

We made out.

BECKY

What? No way!

CHARITY

Yes. We did.

BECKY

Is he a good kisser? I bet he's a good kisser.

CHARITY

(remembering blissfully)

The best. I was so upset. I forgot all about it.

BECKY

He's so cute.

CHARITY

Yeah. He is, isn't he?

They dance around and lip sync.

BECKY

Hey. Why don't you have him 'n some other people come hang out Friday night? Your folks are goin' out, right? It's Friday. They always go out on Friday.

CHARITY

Yeah. They do. And Saturday. And Monday, and Tuesday, and...

BECKY

You are so lucky. You have the coolest parents.

CHARITY

Yeah. I guess so.

BECKY

It's all set then. I'll bring something to nosh on. You have candles? We'll hang out in your basement. Its far out.

CHARITY

Yeah. Yeah. Okay. Do you want me to ask Steve to bring Tommy and Mike?

BECKY

Does the sun rise in the West?

CHARITY

(nodding her head)

Cool.

(pause)

Oh, and I'm asking that Cole guy.

BECKY
 What? NO! Remember what I told
 you?

CHARITY
 I don't care. He's alright. Nice
 guy.

Becky gives Charity a disapproving glare.

33 INT. CHARITY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

33

Charity, in her pajama's wearing her orthodontic headgear
 sits on the floor in front of the TV, Dean and Carol sit on
 the couch. Donna is on a chair in the corner.

From the TV: "I'm going to step off the LM now. That's one
 small step for man. One giant leap for mankind."

DONNA
 Wow. They really did it. They really
 did it!

CAROL
 Yeah. Yes they did. Okay, it's
 late. Off to bed now.

Charity hugs her mom as she heads off. Dean kisses her head.

DEAN
 Night girls.

Donna leaves, Charity starts out the door and the doorbell
 rings. Carol heads to the door.

34 INT. CHARITY'S HOUSE ENTRY - MOMENTS LATER

34

Charity stands by the stairs waiting. Carol opens the door.

CAROL
 Hello, boys. Can I help you?

STEVE
 Um... Hello Mrs. Dunbar. Is Charity
 home?

CAROL
 You can call me Carol. You're Steve?
 Right?

STEVE
 Why, yes man. And this is Tommy
 (motioning to Tommy)
 And this is Mike
 (motions to Mike)

CAROL

Nice to meet you boys. She was just heading for bed, but I'll see if she is up for company.

35 INT. CHARITY'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 35

Charity stands at the bottom of the stairs with her mouth open.

CAROL

You have some guests. You want me to let them in?

Charity looks at herself in the hall mirror, makes a face, shakes her head "no" then...

CHARITY

No! Wait! Don't send them away. Just... tell them I'll be right there.

Charity runs upstairs.

36 INT. CHARITY'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS 36

Charity is finishing removing her head gear as she reaches her bedroom. She tosses it on the dresser and opens her closet door and goes inside. Throws various clothes out the door, eventually her pajamas as well. She comes out dressed; she quickly runs a comb through her hair frowns at the result, then hurriedly puts on lip gloss. Smiles a full smile at herself which shows her braces, then a changes to a half smile with closed lips. Nods in satisfaction.

37 INT. CHARITY'S HOUSE ENTRY - MOMENTS LATER 37

Charity dressed, hair combed, wearing lip gloss opens the door. The boys gather back around the door from the steps where they had been waiting.

CHARITY

Hi. What's cookin' guys?

STEVE

We... uh... just wanted to know if we could hang out in your basement.

CHARITY

Yeah. Sure. Come in.

The boys lead the way. Charity throws her mom a "can you believe it?" Look as they walk by. Carol watches in amusement.

38 INT. CHARITY'S HOUSE BASEMENT - LATER 38

The three boys sit on the long vinyl sofa listening to music and looking around.

CHARITY

You missed the landing?

MIKE

Aw... man... was that tonight?

STEVE

Not cool. Totally forgot man. So they did it?

CHARITY

Yeah. They did. "One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind."

TOMMY

You just make that up?

CHARITY

No. Silly. He said it... Neil Armstrong... when he stepped off the ladder... it was cool.

MIKE

Dang.

CHARITY

Can I get you something to drink?

TOMMY

That'd be cool.

STEVE

Thanks.

CHARITY

Cokes?

MIKE

Dig it.
(as he looks around)
This place is the boss.

STEVE

I told you, dude.

Charity hesitantly goes upstairs to retrieve the cokes.

MIKE

Shoulda brought my axe man.

STEVE

Shit, dude. You wouldn't remember how to play it.

MIKE

When did that ever stop me?

They chill out looking at the posters on the walls and the colors on their clothes that glow in the black lights.

39 INT. CHARITY'S HOUSE BASEMENT STAIRWELL - CONTINUOUS

39

Charity starts down the stairs with the cokes overhears...

TOMMY

Becky's is a real fox, dude.

STEVE

Not like Charity though.

MIKE

You gonna ball'er man?

STEVE

Yeah. Yeah. Just give me some time dude.

Tears well up in Charity's eyes.

MIKE

Yeah. You get a girl goin' enough, she'll do anything.

TOMMY

Charity's too much, just too much

STEVE

Not for me, dude!

They do the fist bump and dude handshake (wrist to wrist) and snap their fingers.

MIKE

You're trippin' man. You can't get to second base with her.

STEVE

Naw. Dude. I had her this close.

They laugh. Charity sets the cokes on the pool table. Just looks at them for a moment, then...

CHARITY

You guys gotta go.

MIKE

Dude.

CHARITY

No. Now.

They get up to leave, grab the bottles of coke on their way out. Steve stops at her side. Touches her face.

STEVE

What's up? Why aren't you being cool?

CHARITY

You know I'm not like that.

STEVE

Forgive me? It's just... guy talk..
That's all.

Steve kisses her gently, gives her a charming smile. She smiles back sheepishly.

40 EXT. CHARITY'S HOUSE - EVENING

40

Charity sits on the porch writing in her diary, with her Good News Bible and Blackie sitting at her side.

CHARITY (V.O.)

They landed on the MOON!

She looks up at the sky, and the moon.

CHARITY (CONT'D)

Hello moon!

Starts writing again.

CHARITY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Steve, Mike and Tommy came to MY house tonight! MY house! They hung out in the basement. They thought it was far out. I think Steve really does like me!

(draws hearts and initials)

But... if he want's to..

She looks up to see her parents pull away in a blue convertible Corvair with baby moons. She jumps up once they are out of sight and goes inside.

41 INT. CHARITY'S HOUSE ENTRY

41

At the telephone table on the phone.

CHARITY
Coast is clear.

Charity hangs up the phone and heads to the door.

42 INT. CHARITY'S HOUSE BASEMENT - LATER

42

Music plays through speaker in the ceilings. Mike and a girl play pool. Charity and the rest of the kids Cole, Becky, Steve, Tommy, Charity, and two other girls and a third boy are on the floor playing "spin the bottle". The boy spins the bottle, it lands on one of the other girls. They kiss and giggle. Cole spins the bottle and it lands on Charity. He kisses her cheek. She blushes.

CHARITY
You could of really kissed me.

COLE
Not here, man.

Steve glares at her; then at Cole. Some of the kids get up and start dancing.

TOMMY
This games a dud.
(to Becky)
You are too much, foxy lady.

He takes Becky by the hand over to the far corner of the couch and starts kissing her.

Steve goes to the pool table in the corner, turns away trying to hide his activity as he pulls a bottle of whisky out from his jacket and pours some of it into his cup. Mike see's what he's up to and puts out his cup.

MIKE
Dude. You gotta share.

Charity catches them.

CHARITY
What are you doing?

Blackie jumps up from where he had been watching them, stands by Charity's side.

MIKE
Hey, chick, we are just have a bit
of fun. Here, have a sip.
(offers it to Charity)

STEVE

It's cool. Don't get all bent outa shape.

CHARITY

No. It's not cool. You guys just... need to leave.

Charity see's Becky still in the corner with Tommy as he tries to put his hand inside her shirt.

CHARITY (CONT'D)

In fact. It's time for you all to cut out. Just. Go. All of you.

STEVE

Hey, babe. It's all groovy.
(he sidles up close
to her and tries to
kiss her neck)

Cole steps up and pushes him aside.

COLE

She said it's time to go, dude.

STEVE

Who the hell do you think you are?

Steve takes a swing at Cole. Blackie barks at the uproar. Cole dodges it but lands one of his own right on Steve's nose. Blood starts flowing from Steve's nose. He looks startled but is now even more angry.

STEVE (CONT'D)

You son-of-a-....

Steve lunges at Cole, but Blackie pulls Steve's foot out from under him by pulling on Steves pantleg. Tommy jumps up and grabs Cole from behind. Mike steps in front of Steve before he can get back up.

MIKE

Just chill man. Everybody chill out.

Becky glares at Charity. Charity begins to wheeze, looks around for her purse.

COLE

You okay?

CHARITY

No. I need my... inhaler. Its... it's... in my... purse.

Cole helps her look as the kids leave. Cole picks up a purse.

COLE

This one?

Charity nods. Takes the purse from him, pulls out her inhaler, takes a puff, holds it in, takes another.

COLE (CONT'D)

Asthma?

She nods.

CHARITY

Go. I'm okay. Just. Go.

Charity watches him leave. He turns with his hand on the doorknob, looks back at her. She watches him leave, stands looking around at the empty house.

43 EXT. CHARITY'S HOUSE - MORNING

43

Charity writes in her diary with her Good News Bible as she sits on the front porch with Blackie.

CHARITY (V.O.)

I don't know what to think about anything any more. Was Steve going to ask me to go steady? But then that Mike guy brought booze?

(thinks to herself
for a moment)

It was pretty funny when Cole bloodied his nose. And, why doesn't Becky know she deserves more than that? God help me understand." Let all things be done to clarify and offer understanding".

(pause)

I'm so scared. Nothing makes sense.

Cole comes up the walk. He watches her for a moment before he approaches her.

He stands at the bottom of the porch steps. Silent. Charity sees him and looks up.

CHARITY (CONT'D)

What?

COLE

I'm sorry. I shouldn't have...

CHARITY

No. You shouldn't have... but...
thank you.

Cole looks confused.

COLE

Things kind'a got outta hand.

CHARITY

Steve was being a jerk.

COLE

You said that, not me, man.

CHARITY

Well... he was. He's not like that.
He's not. He goes to my church and
everything. But that Mike guy.
He's bad news.

COLE

You know that dude's 16, right?

CHARITY

I thought he was in 8th grade?

COLE

He is. He flunked out like three
times.

CHARITY

Oh. That's awful.

Awkward silence.

CHARITY (CONT'D)

You want to sit?
(he does)
Last night was cool... well..
Until... you know...

COLE

Yeah. Totally was. You throw a
great party.

CHARITY

Thanks.

More awkward silence.

COLE

You like that guy? Steve?

CHARITY

I do.... did... I don't know. He's
sweet but...
(tears up)
Sometimes he's a real jerk, you know?

Cole bristles.

COLE

You tellin' me?

CHARITY

He just needs to be reminded he
doesn't have to be like that Mike
kid. That's all.

COLE

Yeah. Sure. That'll do it.

Blackie nuzzles Cole's hand.

CHARITY

He likes you.

COLE

Yeah. He does.

Cole pet's Blackie and Blackie rolls over, letting Cole
scratch his belly.

44 EXT. BECKY'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

44

Charity carries her record player to Becky's backyard and
sets in on the table. Blackie sits down beside the table.
Opens it up, and puts some 45's on the turntable to play.
When the music starts, Becky comes out.

BECKY

What'cha think you're doin'?

CHARITY

What do you mean?

BECKY

Why the hell did'ja do that last
night? I was having a really good
time!

CHARITY

I'm sorry they were...

BECKY

SO? SO what they had a little booze?

CHARITY
I just... I didn't want... They
were...

BECKY
Tommy was making out with me, Charity!

CHARITY
I know... and I wanted to tell you...

BECKY
What? That he want's to ball? I
know that!

CHARITY
What? He...

BECKY
I can do what I want! He likes me.
Who're you to tell me who I can ball
an who I can't, huh?

CHARITY
(tearing)
I'm sorry.

BECKY
Yeah. Okay. Well, I'll forgive ya.
Just don't let it happen again. K?

CHARITY
Okay.

They dance to the music for a bit.

CHARITY (CONT'D)
Have you ever?

BECKY
Nah. Not even third base.

CHARITY
Second?

BECKY
Yeah.

CHARITY
But...

BECKY
My thing. Remember.

CHARITY
Okay. Cool.

They dance some more.

CHARITY (CONT'D)
But... you know... you really should
save yourself for your husband.

BECKY
Really? Jeez...My thing. Not yours.

CHARITY
Okay. Okay. I'm cool.

They dance a bit more. Becky goes inside. Charity sits
down with Blackie.

CHARITY (CONT'D)
(to Blackie)
Am I the only one who thinks that's
not right? We are only 13!
(Blackie licks her
hand)

Becky comes back with lemonade's in hand. She hands one to
Charity.

Steve walks up, he has tape on his nose.

BECKY
Hey Steve.

STEVE
Becky. Can I talk to you, Charity?

CHARITY
Sure.

STEVE
Alone.

Becky goes back into the house. Blackie growls at him.

CHARITY
What?

STEVE
I'm sorry. I was a jerk.

CHARITY
Yes. You were! What were you
thinking?

STEVE
I don't know. I guess I just wanted
to be cool.

CHARITY
Yeah. Bloody nose. Really cool.

STEVE
Yeah. Well. I have a glass nose.

Charity laughs at that.

STEVE (CONT'D)
I'm sorry. Can you forgive me?

CHARITY
Maybe.

STEVE
I really, really want you to.
(Charity softens)
I messed up, chick. Can I come over
tonight? Your parents'll be out?

CHARITY
Maybe.

STEVE
Pretty please?

CHARITY
No booze.

STEVE
No booze. Just you and me.

CHARITY
Okay.

He kisses her. Blackie growls at him as he leaves. Becky
see's him leave through the window, comes back out.

BECKY
What'd he want?

CHARITY
He apologized.

BECKY
Cool beans.

Charity looks amazed, smitten.

45 INT. CHARITY'S HOUSE BASEMENT - EVENING

45

Charity and Steve kiss on the vinyl sofa. Music plays and
he pulls her shirt out from her pants, puts his hand on her
breast. She starts to stop him, he looks at her, pleading,
she allows it. They keep kissing.

With his other hand he starts unbuckling her belt. She pushes his hand away.

STEVE
You a tease, girl.

CHARITY
NO. Stop it.

She pushes him away altogether.

STEVE
What? You were getting hot!

CHARITY
Yeah. But I'm not ready.

STEVE
What? You want it. I can tell.

He comes at her again. She pushes him away.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Don't fink out on me babe.

Just then someone comes stumbling down the stairs. Donna appears at the bottom of the stairs.

DONNA
Wow. Wow. Wow. What's happening?
(tears streaming)
Bats??
(Screams)
No! No!
(swatting at invisible
bats)

STEVE
She's having a bad trip, man.

CHARITY
Donna?

Steve tucks in his shirt and stands

DONNA
They are crawling all over me! Stop
them! Stop them!

CHARITY
It's okay honey.

Charity looks pleadingly at Steve. He holds up his hands in a "I give" gesture. Charity stares at him in disbelief.

CHARITY (CONT'D)

Go. Just. Go.

Steve shakes his head in disgust and leaves.

Charity gently guides Donna into the kitchen.

46 INT. CHARITY'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

46

Donna sits on a chair at the kitchen table swatting at things and scratching herself. Charity picks up the wall phone and anxiously dials a number.

CHARITY

Cole! Can you come over? Donna's freaking out. I don't know what's wrong with her. My parents are gone and I...

COLE

Hang on chiquita, I'm coming.

CHARITY

Thanks.

Charity hangs up the phone, careful moves toward Donna.

CHARITY (CONT'D)

Donna, come with me. Lets sit on the porch. Okay?

Donna obliges, still crying, batting at invisible objects and shaking.

47 EXT. CHARITY'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

47

Charity and Donna come through the front door to the porch. Charity sits Donna on the swing.

DONNA

I'm really really bad Charity. I'm so bad.

CHARITY

No. No your not. It's going to be okay.

Cole walks up.

COLE

Donna! Hey! Here!

DONNA

Your Jesus!

Cole looks confused and amused.

DONNA (CONT'D)
I think I need Jesus.

COLE
Yeah, probably, but lets try just walking, okay?

CHARITY
Thank you.

DONNA
Can you make them go away?

COLE
Maybe. Them? Cockroaches? Rats?

Charity looks around alarmed.

DONNA
Bats! You don't see them?
(screaming)
THEY'RE EVERYWHERE! HOW CAN YOU NOT
SEE THEM???

COLE
OKAY, sure, I see them. I'll get rid of them for you, okay?

Cole sweeps his arms around Donna dramatically.

DONNA
(crying)
Oh, thank you, Jesus!! Thank you.

Charity takes her hand and they continue walking with Blackie in trail.

Donna starts kicking her leg.

DONNA (CONT'D)
Get it off! Get it OFF!

Charity drops to a knee and sweeps Donna's leg

CHARITY
I got it. There, its gone.

Donna, Cole and Charity continue down the street. Blackie follows them.

DONNA
(conspiratorially)
I saw God.

CHARITY
Really?

Cole shakes his head with a smirk.

DONNA
I did! He said I was bad and would
go to hell.

COLE
He wouldn't say that.

DONNA
God isn't wrong. Is he, Jesus?

Cole shrugs uncertainly.

DONNA (CONT'D)
God is... God.
(she jumps at something
she sees, lets go of
Charity's hand)
Wow. Did you see that?

COLE
She's gonna be Ok.

CHARITY
What did she do?

COLE
L.S.D. I'd guess.

CHARITY
Oh, God!

COLE
It's okay. Its not for ever. It'll
maybe wear off by morning. For sure
by tomorrow night.

CHARITY
Tomorrow!

COLE
No, no, no, it.. She'll probably be
OK in the morning. Well, she won't
feel OK.

CHARITY
How do you know all this stuff?

COLE
My dad's a social worker.

CHARITY
What's that?

COLE
He helps people with problems. At the Center, on Paseo. You know, where all the hippies hang out.

CHARITY
Oh. That explains... Sounds like a good job.

COLE
I guess. He's a good guy.

Charity looks at him.

CHARITY
So are you.

Cole blushes. Donna starts to wander onto someone's lawn. Cole guides her back to the sidewalk.

CHARITY (CONT'D)
My parent's friends told me my parents do L.S.D.

COLE
I'm sorry.

CHARITY
Yeah.
(tearing)
It can't be true!

COLE
Did you ask them?

CHARITY
No.

COLE
Well, maybe you should.

CHARITY
They're gone all the time. My dad owns a lot of houses and stuff. Mom's a teacher so she's been just hanging out with him all the time, over the summer.

COLE
Sounds lonely.

DONNA
Oh, God! Did you hear that? The
Moon just spoke to me!

Charity looks at him with fondness.

48 EXT. CHARITY'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

48

Charity on the porch, writing in her diary with her Good News Bible next to her, Blackie at her feet.

CHARITY (V.O.)
(writing)
I'm so confused. God what is it I
am here for? What am I supposed to
do? I'm just a kid.
(looks up)
Just a kid.
(tears)
(continues writing)
I feel so alone. I don't seem to
matter to anyone.
(looks up at the moon,
then back to her
diary)
But you are with me. So who can be
against me, right?
(Sighs, puts down her
pen)

Blackie puts a paw in her lap, looks up at her. She scratches his head.

CHARITY (CONT'D)
Yeah. I got you, too!

Charity leans her head back, closes her eyes.

49 INT. METHODIST CHURCH - MORNING

49

Charity is all dressed up, sitting in Sunday School with the other kids. Steve is at the desk behind her. He tosses a wad of paper at the back of her head. She turns to look at him with a scowl. He grins back at her sheepishly. He motions for her to pick up the wad of paper.

She picks it up. I reads: Will you go with me? She shakes her head and stuffs it in her pocket.

50 EXT. METHODIST CHURCH - LATER

50

Charity walks out of the recreation room door with Steve following her. Blackie hops up and joins them.

STEVE

Hey!

CHARITY

What?

STEVE

You didn't answer.

CHARITY

I know.

STEVE

Well?

They stop walking.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Will you?

CHARITY

Steve... I don't know. Do you really like me or just want to... you know...

STEVE

What do you mean? Of course I dig you! Why else would I want to go with you?

Charity smiles.

CHARITY

Maybe.

STEVE

Come help me with my paper route again. You can bring Becky, she's cool.

Charity doesn't answer. Keeps walking by herself on the sidewalk.

51 EXT. CONCERT HALL - NIGHT

51

Charity, wearing a shiny nehru paisley mini dress, walks beside Carol and Dean in a small crowd of people.

CHARITY

Wow. Wow. Wow. That was SO cool. Janis Joplin is... wow... just wow! So awesome!

CAROL
 (enjoying her daughters
 pleasure)
 I know. She really isn't like anyone
 else.

DEAN
 Far out. Glad you had a good time.

Charity stops in her tracks. She pulls on her mom to get her to stop walking. We see what she is looking at. In the shadows stands Steve, with his arms wound around Becky, kissing her.

52 INT. CHARITY'S BEDROOM - LATER

52

Charity's bedroom door bursts open, she throws herself on to her bed, sobbing. Blackie chases her in and licks at her elbows. Carol walks in behind her.

CAROL
 Oh, honey! Who was that boy? Was
 he your boyfriend?

CHARITY
 No. Mom. He wasn't "my boyfriend"
 (sobs)
 He's... nobody-

Carol stands awkwardly looking confused.

CAROL
 But... wasn't that Becky?

CHARITY
 Yes.
 (sobs, hits her fists
 on the bed)
 She's supposed to be my best friend!

Carol nods in recognition.

CAROL
 You liked him.

CHARITY
 Yes. Yes I liked him.
 (sits up with tears
 streaming)
 Why would she do that mom?

Carol sits on the bed next to her.

CAROL
I don't know, honey. People do stupid things.

CHARITY
(quoting)
"People is stupid."

CAROL
Are. Are stupid.

This makes Charity smile.

CAROL (CONT'D)
You know, Becky doesn't have a dad. Sometimes girls like that get kind of boy crazy.

CHARITY
I don't care. She was my friend!

Charity throws herself on her bed in tears. Carol covers her with a sheet, pats her head, goes to the door, turns out the light, closes the door behind her as she leaves.

53 EXT. CHARITY'S NEIGHBORHOOD - LATER

53

Charity runs in silence, with Blackie at her heels. Stops catching her breath, wheezing. Takes out her inhaler, takes a puff, and then another. Then

CHARITY
(looking at the moon,
begins to sing)
"I love the moon and the moon loves me. I love the moon and the moon loves me. I love the moon and the moon loves me"

She stops walking and stares up.

CHARITY (CONT'D)
You. You have nothing to say. Ever.
You either, God.

She sits on a curb, head in hands, Blackie licks the tears on her face.

Becky spies her from across the street, crosses the street.

BECKY
Hey.

Charity looks up startled.

CHARITY
Oh. What do you want?

BECKY
I... I just saw you over here. You
okay?

Charity stares at her in disbelief.

CHARITY
Uh, no. I'm not "okay". I saw you.

Becky looks confused.

CHARITY (CONT'D)
I saw you with... with... with...
(can barely get the
words out)
STEVE!

Becky hangs her head.

CHARITY (CONT'D)
Just go.

Becky sits beside her. Charity looks at her confused.

CHARITY (CONT'D)
What? I said "go".

BECKY
I know. But he said you....

CHARITY
I don't care!

BECKY
He told me...

CHARITY
I don't care what he told you. LEAVE!

BECKY
But I can't leave you all alone,
like... like... this.

CHARITY
I'm not alone. I have Blackie. And
I couldn't be more alone than with
you here.

The sting of her words hits Becky like a slap. She
reluctantly gets up and walks away. She stops and turns
back to watch Charity sob into Blackie's fur.

54 P.O.V. CHARITY'S HOUSE ENTRY - AFTERNOON

54

Charity vacuums the floor, Blackie jumps out of the way. She laughs. The doorbell rings, she doesn't hear it, it rings again. She looks up to see Tommy at the door. She opens the door.

CHARITY

Hey.

TOMMY

Hey.

They stare at the floor for a moment.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

I heard about Becky.

CHARITY

Yeah. Sucks for us both.

(pause)

Where did you split to?

TOMMY

I got sick.

(sheepish)

Drank too much.

CHARITY

That'll teach you.

TOMMY

Yeah. I guess so... want to go to "the Street" with me?

CHARITY

Don't they do drugs there?

TOMMY

Its cool. Come with me.

Tommy smiles irresistibly. Charity nods.

CHARITY

Give me a second.

She turns, to put away the vacuum.

55 EXT. "THE STREET" - LATER

55

Tommy and Charity walk down a funky street lined with head shops, bars, and art shops. Hippies walk up and down the street, hang out in doorways. Some sit strumming guitars and singing.

CHARITY
You were right, this is groovy!

TOMMY
Told ya'
(pause)
Hey. This place rocks.

CHARITY
Isn't that a bar?

TOMMY
Yeah, but they're cool. They let
kids hang out there. Just don't
serve them.

Tommy grabs Charity's hand, she smiles bashfully and allows him to guide her down the street.

56 INT. BAR - MOMENTS LATER

56

Charity and Tommy have pool cues in hand. Tommy takes a turn, then it's Charity's turn.

CHARITY
I don't really know how to do this.

TOMMY
It's cool. I'll show you.

Tommy stands behind her, arms around her, taking her hand over the cue and guiding her.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
Like this, just keep your eye on the
ball and slide your hand like this.
(he slides her hand,
strikes the ball for
her)
See?

Charity smiles at him before he stands back up.

57 INT. BAR - LATER

57

Charity puts up her cue, turns to Tommy.

CHARITY
That was fun. Thanks. I feel better.

TOMMY
Yeah. Me too.

Tommy puts his arms around her for a hug, pulls her close. Kisses her. She pushes him away.

CHARITY

I don't want... I mean... I'm not like Becky.

TOMMY

Okay. I just...

A commotion starts up on the other side of the room. Tommy and Charity look up. Someone is being carried outside. It's Donna!

TOMMY (CONT'D)

Isn't that...?

CHARITY

DONNA!

58 EXT. BAR - CONTINUOUS

58

At the other side of the bar, a crowd of people surround Donna who is lying on the ground, passed out. JASON, a 30ish hippy, lifts her head, checks her pulse.

JASON

She's breathing. What'd she take?

Everyone looks sheepish.

JASON (CONT'D)

Whose she with?

No one acknowledges. Charity steps forward.

CHARITY

She's my sister. But I didn't come in with her.

Charity kneels beside her.

CHARITY (CONT'D)

WHO GAVE HER SOMETHING?

(she looks at the faces around her)

MR. TORRES, 40ish hispanic man, makes his way through the crowd. He quickly takes her pulse, smells her breath, turns her on her side. She starts to moan and flutter her eyes open. Then she starts to wretch. People back away. He pulls her up to sitting, supporting her weight, turning her so she can vomit. Charity holds her hair back. Donna's vomiting starts to subside.

MR. TORRES

Somebody help me.

He tries to pick her up, Jason steps forward and takes one arm, Mr. Torres takes the other. Charity follows.

CHARITY

Where we going?

MR. TORRES

To The Center. She'll be okay.
Just drank a bit too much.

Charity walks behind them, looks pale and terrified.

59 INT. THE CENTER - LATER

59

Donna sits on the edge of a very worn sofa, with a bucket in front of her, dry heaving. Charity holds her hair, Tommy stands to one side. A few hippies are in the room. Cole walks in and startles when he sees Charity.

COLE

Charity?

CHARITY

Oh. Hey. What are you doing here?

COLE

My dad works here.
(nods toward Mr. Torres
who is talking to
one of the hippies)
What happened?

CHARITY

I don't know. I was at the bar with
Tommy and... I didn't know...but...
she was there, too... she like...
passed out or something... Your dad...
he... he... took care of her.
(tearing)

COLE

Man. I'm glad he was there.

CHARITY

Me, too.

COLE

What're you doing with that guy?

CHARITY

I... I...

Cole turns and walks out. Charity pales.

DONNA
 Don't you dare tell Mom and Dad.
 (heaves)
 Promise?

Charity hands her a cup of water. Donna takes a big drink, her eyes get big and the water comes back up.

60 INT. CHARITY'S KITCHEN - EVENING

60

Carol puts a container in the refrigerator. Dean sits at the table drinking a cup of coffee and eating a slice of pie. Charity enters.

CHARITY
 Mom. Dad.

CAROL
 Oh. Hi honey.

CHARITY
 Umm... can we... talk?

DEAN
 I'll be in the den.

CHARITY
 NO. Both of you.

DEAN
 Cool.

CAROL
 Okay. What's up, honey?

CHARITY
 I don't know. I don't know anything.
 I'm so confused.

CAROL
 There will be other boys.

CHARITY
 No.. No.. It's not...

Dean looks at her impatiently.

DEAN
 Out with it.

CHARITY
 (tears)
 Your friends. Jenna? Sara? They
 told me you guys are doing L.S.D.

Dean and Carol look stunned.

CHARITY (CONT'D)

Well?

CAROL

I... I didn't know they...

CHARITY

I saw the hookah. I know you smoke pot.

DEAN

Grass.

CHARITY

Grass.

Carol looks at her hands.

CHARITY (CONT'D)

And... Donna... she... she had a "bad trip" or... that's what Cole called it! And tonight? Donna passed out she was so drunk!

Carol tears up.

CHARITY (CONT'D)

What was I supposed to do?

CAROL

Honey... I...

CHARITY

Do you know what was in all those bags? POT! It was bags and bags of POT! Donna's friends were drying it out or something. I don't know.

DEAN

That's like 8 bags times ...

CHARITY

What?

CAROL

Oh, my God!

Dean finishes his mental calculations and his eyes open wide as he thinks.

CHARITY

Yeah? What's he got to do with it?

CAROL

Honey...

DEAN

Charity! Watch your tone with your mother!

CHARITY

My tone?
(looks stunned)
You are so out of it!

CAROL

Charity..

Charity storms out, leaving her parents dumbstruck.

61 EXT. CHARITY'S HOUSE - PORCH - EVENING 61

Charity walks out onto her porch, bible and diary in hand, Blackie at her heels. Looks across the street and see's Becky. Blackie growls.

CHARITY

It's okay boy.

62 EXT. BECKY'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 62

Becky looks across at Charity, then quickly down and goes to her back yard.

63 EXT. CHARITY'S HOUSE - PORCH - CONTINUOUS 63

Charity's face reddens, sets her diary down, opens her bible, reads.

CHARITY

"Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things."

Charity closes her eyes for a moment, puts down the bible then picks up her diary and writes.

CHARITY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

School starts tomorrow. At least that's something. I thought Donna was dead. She was totally passed out. Wasted, on booze I guess. So sick. I was so scared. I don't know what would have happened if Cole's dad hadn't been there. Donna will be pissed that I told about the L.S.D. Mom and Dad don't care anyway. Why would they?

CHARITY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Nothing to them. Now Cole's pissed
 at me for hanging out with Tommy.

She slams the diary down. Blackie jumps.

CHARITY (CONT'D)
 Love. What's the use anyway?

Charity swings in silence. Looking up at the moon.

64 EXT. CHARITY'S NEIGHBORHOOD - MORNING

64

Charity spies Becky across the street. Becky looks down.
 Charity walks up to her.

BECKY
 Hey.

CHARITY
 Hey.

BECKY
 We have to talk sometime.

Becky looks pale.

CHARITY
 You okay?

BECKY
 (clearly anxious)
 I'm scared. I just don't know...
 you know... what's gonna happen!

CHARITY
 Its school. School is going to
 happen.

BECKY
 No you know... with the... the..
 Ni...

Charity shushes her instantly.

BECKY (CONT'D)
 ... they have no soul you know...

CHARITY
 That's silly.

BECKY
 No. It's true. Coloreds are not
 like us. And... they... they are...
 dirty...

CHARITY

Chick. Where did you get that from?

BECKY

My mom. She's worked with coloreds.
She knows.

CHARITY

Well, its not true. The bible says
God is love. Do you think they feel
love?

BECKY

I guess...sure.

CHARITY

Then they have God in them. If they
have God in them then they have souls
And I've practically been raised by
black people. Who are you going to
believe?

Becky looks at Charity with confusion as they round the corner
to the bus stop. A couple of boys, GLENN and BOBBY, and
another girl, DEBBIE stand holding their school supplies and
lunch boxes.

GLENN

Hey Becky.

BECKY

Hey.

Becky turns to Debbie, who is holding her supplies tight and
shaking.

BECKY (CONT'D)

You okay?

DEBBIE

(tears in her eyes)
I just can't believe it.

BECKY

I know. I'm scared, too.

CHARITY

They are just people, Debbie. They
aren't going to hurt you.

BOBBY

Yeah? Well I can't wait for one of
them dirty niggers to..

CHARITY

STOP IT.

BOBBY

What? You a "nigger lover"?

CHARITY

I love you, why not them? Jerk.

The school bus pulls up to the stop. He spits in her direction as he climbs aboard.

Charity takes Debbie's hand and they climb on the bus.

65 INT. SCHOOL BUS - CONTINUOUS

65

Charity goes to sit and no one will make room for her. Finally, Becky slides over and lets her sit.

BECKY

Just... don't say nothing, okay?

Several other kids snicker and point at her. Bobby stands up leans over her.

BOBBY

Nigger lover. Nigger lover. Nigger lover.

Several kids laugh at this and sneer at Charity.

JOHN, the bus driver see's him in the rear view mirror.

JOHN

Sit down back there.

Several spit balls fly in Charity's direction. Becky glares at Charity. Many of the kids are visibly tense, and quiet, while others anxiously kick the backs of the seats and squirm.

Charity looks out the window, a quiet moment to herself amid the noise.

66 EXT. CENTRAL MIDDLE SCHOOL - MOMENTS LATER

66

A throng of black kids ages 12-15 stand and sit cautiously waiting, watching for the first of the white kids to arrive.

One of the older boys, DONOVAN, turns to one of the younger girls, SHERLENE and speaks.

DONOVAN

Stick by me. I'll protect you.

Wide eyed, she steps close, just behind Donovan.

SHERLENE

You won't be in my first period.

DONOVAN

It'll be cool, man. Wayne'll be there. I'll make sure he keeps an good eye on ya'.

SHERLENE

Yeah, well, who's gonna keep you safe?

DONOVAN

They wanna fight we gonna giv'em one.

They look at each other fearfully. The first bus full of white kids pulls up to the curb. The door to the bus opens. Several of the black kids stand up, tense, exchanging glances and tough poses. No one gets off the bus. PRINCIPAL EVANS steps on to the bus. The crowd looks nervous. Slowly the first students, a couple of boys step off the bus. They walk a few steps away from the bus and stop. They look around checking out the crowd before looking anxiously back to the bus. More white students exit the bus and join the group as a police officer walks up. The principal leaves the bus and moves to the front of the group.

PRINCIPAL EVANS

This way students.

He leads them through a small gap in the crowd. He watches the crowd and spies a group of black students whispering furtively. He stares them down and they back down. The two groups stare at each other intently as the white students enter the building. Charity and Becky are near the end of the group. Donovan stands at the edge of the path and as the girls walk past with Bobby right behind them. Donovan and Charity make eye contact. Charity smiles at him, Becky is aghast and Donovan manages a less worried look. Bobby bumps into him hard.

BOBBY

What are you looking at, boy?

Donovan leaps at Bobby and they knock into other white students. As the black students press in to see the excitement OFFICER BEN shoves his way into the crowd and brings his baton down hard on Donovan's shoulders. He drops and rolls away.

OFFICER BEN

(to Bobby)

You okay son?

BOBBY

Yeah, I'll show him later.

Charity stares at him and then steps in his face

CHARITY

You better not!
 (to Officer Ben,
 pointing at Bobby)
 He started it.

OFFICER BEN

You get inside.

Charity looks at the Officer, then Bobby, then around the gallery of black faces surrounding them. Then angrily strides into the building. Reactions in the black faces vary.

67 INT. CENTRAL MIDDLE SCHOOL CAFETERIA - DAY

67

Becky sits at the end of a table full of the white kids, with a sea of blacks around her. Several empty seats between her and the other white kids. She looks around and slides one seat closer to the other white kids. Then she starts to slide again as Charity walks up carrying her tray. Becky looks up at Charity and relaxes. She looks at the seat beside her and Charity cheerfully plops down beside her.

CHARITY

(looking around)
 See, we can all get along.

BECKY

I don't know. I kept getting
 bombarded by spit balls last period.

CHARITY

And that's different how? You said
 the same thing last year.

BECKY

Yeah. But this is different.

CHARITY

How?

BECKY

'Cuz they scare me.

CHARITY

Most of my classes are mostly whites,
 except for Gym. They call this
 "integration"?

(MORE)

CHARITY (CONT'D)
 (looks around at all
 the black students)
 We're still not together.

BECKY
 (sighs)
 Maybe it'll work after all.

Charity smiles.

CHARITY
 Of course it will. You are so afraid.
 You don't even know them, yet.

BECKY
 And I don't wanna.

Becky looks around and sees a table full of black girls are counting dance moves together at the table, changing it up and collaborating. Becky studies them and counts under her breath, making miniature motions. Charity watches her and grins.

68 EXT. CHARITY'S NEIGHBORHOOD - AFTERNOON

68

At the bus stop, the school bus pulls up and the doors open. Kids race out carrying their books, Charity and Becky exit, carrying their books and walking.

CHARITY
 Still scared?

BECKY
 Yeah. Not so bad.

CHARITY
 I'm still mad at you you know.

BECKY
 (stops in her tracks)
 Yeah.
 (pause)
 I'm really sorry. He said you...
 that you weren't into him anymore.

Charity stops, turns to look at her.

CHARITY
 I didn't even know you were going!

BECKY
 Yeah, well, Tommy asked me but then
 split. Steve was trying to cheer me
 up... but...

CHARITY

You know what? You did me a favor.

Charity walks off. Becky looks at her quizzically as Charity walks off by herself.

69 INT. CENTRAL MIDDLE SCHOOL CLASSROOM - NEXT DAY

69

A mixed classroom fills with the groups segregating to different seats. Steve sits and looks around. As Charity enters, Steve is staring at a particularly well endowed black girl. Charity stops and follows his eye line before taking the seat in front of him. She turns back to him.

CHARITY

I thought you didn't like blacks.

Steve grins sheepishly as he adjusts himself and slides his books onto his lap. Disgusted, Charity turns forward. She notices JEREMY, a black boy, staring at her and self-consciously smiles.

PHILLIP

You're Dean Dunbar's daughter.

CHARITY

Yeah. Charity.

PHILLIP

Yeah, that's it. I thought I knew you.

(deciding)

They're cool, man. Saw them after the James Brown concert. Man they were trippin' out. That was some good shit. Anyway they were alright, sharing it and all. They always have good stuff like that?

CHARITY

NO. I don't know.

RONALD

Phillip! What you doin' dude.

PHILLIP

Just talkin.

RONALD

Get back over here on our side. You don't want that lily white junk.

PHILLIP

She's alright. She's a Dunbar, the landlord's kid.

Jeremy looks at Charity and jerks his head toward Ronald

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Gotta go.

Charity nods her head and turns back to the front of the room.

MRS. ROACH

Students! Students! Take your seats.
I know it's been a long summer but we
need to get started. This is going
to be an exciting year in health
class.

Steve taps Charity on the shoulder. She leans back and cocks an ear to him

STEVE

Slut.

Charity's face flushes, she turns her attention back to the teacher, a strained look on her face.

70 EXT. CENTRAL JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

70

Cole leans against a wall with his books as Charity walks out carrying her books amid other kids of all races. Cole jumps up when he sees her. Walks along beside her.

COLE

Charity!

CHARITY

Hey, Cole.

COLE

How's your sister?

CHARITY

She's f... her usual self.

COLE

Oh. Sorry.

They stop at the busses.

CHARITY

Yeah. Well. She wouldn't be if
your dad hadn't been there.

COLE

It's his job.

CHARITY

Still. I'm really glad he was there.

COLE

So... um... you like Tommy, now?

CHARITY

I don't know... maybe... I don't know anything anymore, Cole.

Charity steps on to the bus. Cole stays behind.

71 EXT. CHARITY'S NEIGHBORHOOD - LATER

71

The school bus pulls up to its stop and Becky gets off first. She steps to the side as the other kids climb down until Charity finally appears.

BECKY

Hey. You wanna play records?

CHARITY

Yeah. Okay. I guess.

72 EXT. BECKY'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

72

Becky starts a record, dances a bit. Charity sits on the back steps staring into space with Blackie sitting next to her. Becky stops and looks at her.

BECKY

What's wrong?

CHARITY

I don't know. Just. I don't know nothing makes sense any more.

BECKY

I'm sorry. It's my fault.

CHARITY

No. No, its not you. It's... everything.

Donna walks into the yard.

BECKY

Hey, Donna.

DONNA

Hey Becky. Charity? Can we talk?

Charity walks to her, Blackie follows.

73 EXT. BECKY'S HOUSE - FRONT YARD- CONTINUOUS

73

DONNA
What the hell did you tell Mom and Dad?

CHARITY
Everything.

DONNA
EVERYTHING!?! That is so NOT COOL!

CHARITY
I don't care. Your nearly killing yourself with booze is not cool. Your flipping out on L.S.D. is not cool. NONE of this is COOL!

74 EXT. CHARITY'S NEIGHBORHOOD - CONTINUOUS 74

Tommy watches from down the block.

75 EXT. BECKY'S HOUSE - FRONT YARD- CONTINUOUS 75

DONNA
Well... you are NOT my sister any more. You hear me? No more. You just... stay away. Next time I drink a little its not your problem. Get it?

CHARITY
Yeah. I get it.

Donna walks off. Charity's lips tremble and her eyes well up as she watches Donna leave.

76 EXT. CENTRAL MIDDLE SCHOOL - NEXT DAY 76

Sherlene and two other black girls, DENISE, and VERONICA are practicing dance moves when Charity and Becky exit the school building. Charity notices them and takes Becky's arm, drags her over to where the girls are doing their steps.

CHARITY
That's cool. Can you show us?

Denise and Veronica look at Sherlene skeptically.

SHERLENE
Sure.

Denise and Veronica shrug and start back into their steps. Becky studies them as Charity steps in, attempting to follow their steps.

SHERLENE (CONT'D)

Girl. You got no rhythm!

CHARITY

Sorry.

(she stops)

SHERLENE

Just count it out. One. Two. Three.
Four. and One. Two. Three. Four.
Count with me.

CHARITY

(with Sherlene)

One. Two. Three. Four.

SHERLENE

There you go.

(laughs)

Almost.

Charity laughs. Keeps doing the steps.

CHARITY

One. Two. Three. Four.

Becky joins in without counting.

SHERLENE

Now that girl got some rhythm!

Denise and Veronica step in, in time with Becky, Charity and Sherlene.

DENISE

(singing)

The moment I wake up Before I put on
my makeup I say a little pray for
you While combing my hair now And
wondering what dress to wear now I
say a little prayer for you Forever
and ever, you'll stay in my heart
And I will love you Forever and ever,
we never will part Oh, how I love
you Together, forever, that's how it
must be To live without you Would
only mean heartbreak for me

All the girls chime in as they continue dancing.

DENISE, BECKY, CHARITY, SHERLENE,
VERONICA

I say a little prayer for you I say
a little prayer for you My darling,
(MORE)

DENISE, BECKY, CHARITY, SHERLENE,
VERONICA (CONT'D)

believe me (Believe me) For me there
is no one but you Please love me too
Answer his pray And I'm in love with
you Answer his pray) Answer my prayer
now, babe (Answer his pray)now, babe

CHARITY

That was outasight. Thank you.

SHERLENE

I'm Sherlene.

CHARITY

I'm Charity.

SHERLENE

For real? That's your name?

CHARITY

Yeah. My mom's kind of a hippy.

SHERLENE

It's cool.

CHARITY

Thanks. This is Becky.

SHERLENE

This is Veronica and Denise.

BECKY

You are alright. That was fun.

SHERLENE

(bemused)

Any time.

Becky and Charity walk toward the bus and wave good-bye.

BECKY

They don't seem so bad.

CHARITY

I told you.

BECKY

Well, I won't be askin' them to chill
with us.

Charity smirks a little laugh. They walk to the bus, Becky
at the lead with Charity walking along behind her.

77 INT. SCHOOL BUS - CONTINUOUS

77

Charity and Becky enter the bus. No open seats for both of them. Tommy motions for Charity to sit with him.

TOMMY

You okay?

CHARITY

Yeah. Why?

TOMMY

I saw your sister let you have it yesterday.

CHARITY

Yeah. She's...

TOMMY

I know. Remember?

CHARITY

Yeah.

They sit riding in silence.

TOMMY

You want to come to the bar with me again?

Charity nods.

78 EXT. CHARITY'S BEDROOM - LATER

78

Charity opens her closet door and goes inside. Throws various clothes out the door. She comes out dressed; quickly runs a comb through her hair and frowns at the result, then hurriedly puts on lip gloss. Stops at her bed, where her Good News Bible lays, she picks it up, looks at it for a moment. Tosses it in the trash bin. Stops, looks back in the mirror and unbuttons the top button of her shirt. Leaves.

79 INT. BAR - LATER

79

Tommy and Charity play pool. Some dude walks up and hands Tommy a joint. He takes a hit, offers it to Charity. She looks at him, looks at the joint. Looks back at him. Then with decisiveness, takes the joint.

CHARITY

Like this?

(she tries to take a
hit, coughs)

TOMMY
 (laughs)
 Hold your breath.

Charity takes another hit, holds her breath. Coughs out of control, bent over. She stands up a little wobbly, grabbing the edge of the pool table. Gets her breath back.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
 You'll get it.

They continue laughing, playing pool, taking hits of the joint, dancing around. Other's pass joints to them.

80 INT. BAR - LATER

80

A very stoned Charity sits with Tommy on a bench in the bar, making out. He starts to put his hand inside her shirt. She lamely pushes it away. Suddenly she starts wheezing. Badly. Tommy pulls away.

TOMMY
 You okay.

CHARITY
 No.
 (wheezes)
 No.
 (wheezes)

Charity looks around for her purse. She can't find it. Getting more frantic.

TOMMY
 It's okay.

CHARITY
 No.
 (wheeze)
 My inhaler. I got
 (wheeze)
 to have
 (wheeze)
 my
 (wheeze)
 Inhaler!

Charity stumbles out the door. Tommy follows.

81 EXT. BAR - EVENING

81

Charity bursts through the door. Gasping for air. She looks pale and panicked. Hippies stand around watching. Cole walks through the crowd.

COLE

Charity?

CHARITY

I... can't breathe... My... inhaler...
I lost... my purse!

COLE

You with him?
(nodding to Tommy)

Cole sniffs, then a look of recognition.

COLE (CONT'D)

What'd you do, man?

TOMMY

It's cool. Just a little pot. That's
all.

COLE

No. It's not, dude, it's not cool.
Not for her.

Tommy steps up to Cole's face.

TOMMY

What's your problem?

COLE

She's got asthma, asshole.

Cole pushes Tommy aside goes back into the bar. Charity
sits on the curb, wheezing and gasping for air.

82 INT. BAR - CONTINUOUS

82

The bar is dark, music blaring, people playing pool and
sitting at tables. Cole looks around for Jason, takes his
arm.

COLE

Hey, man, can you turn the lights
on, my girlfriend lost her purse and
it has her inhaler in it.

Jason flips the switches inside the office door.

COLE (CONT'D)

Anyone see a purse, with an inhaler
in it?

A long haired dude picks up Charity's purse.

DUDE
It look like this?

Cole nods and hurries to grab the purse.

COLE
Thanks, man.

DUDE
Sure. Hope she's alright.

He pulls an inhaler out of his pocket and smiles.

Cole nods and shoves his hand in the purse looking for the inhaler as he hurries to the door and the room lights go out.

83 EXT. BAR - EXTERIOR

83

Cole burst back out of the bar carrying Charity's purse in one hand and the inhaler in the other. Charity sits on the curb gasping for air. Tommy standing dumbly by as Cole holds the inhaler out to Charity..

COLE
Here.

Charity grabs the inhaler and takes a puff, holds it in, then takes another.

COLE (CONT'D)
Better?

Charity nods. Cole hands her the purse.

COLE (CONT'D)
I'm taking you home.

TOMMY
She's with me. You aren't taking her anywhere.

COLE
(in Tommy's face)
Says who bozo.

Tommy backs down. Cole takes Charity's arm and leads her away.

84 EXT. CHARITY'S NEIGHBORHOOD - MOMENTS LATER

84

Charity walks with Cole by her side.

CHARITY
Why are you so good to me?

COLE

Why not?

CHARITY

No one else is.

COLE

People is stupid.

CHARITY

(laughs)

Yeah.

They walk in silence.

COLE

What's with this Tommy dude?

CHARITY

I don't know. He likes me.

Cole stops and looks at her in disbelief.

COLE

You can find your own way home.

Cole crosses the street and leaves Charity staring after him.

85 INT. CHARITY'S HOUSE ENTRY - LATER

85

Charity opens the front door, goes inside. The record player is blaring rock music. Donna is on the sofa in the living room, passed out. Charity runs to her.

CHARITY

(shaking her)

DONNA?? DONNA??

(Donna doesn't move,
totally unresponsive)

DONNA?? MOM!!!

Charity desperately picks up the phone, dials a number. Waits as it rings.

CHARITY (CONT'D)

Dad?? Donna's on the couch.

I can't wake her. She just lays
there. Is she dead?

Charity nods and hangs up the phone. She walks to her sister and sits on the edge of the couch. She holds her hand with both of hers and stares at her face.

The sound of sirens, Charity looks out the window.

86 EXT. CHARITY'S HOUSE - PORCH- AFTERNOON

86

Charity sits on her swing, Blackie licking her feet. Picks up her diary.

CHARITY (V.O.)

Donna might die.

(tears)

I don't know what to think about anything. God is dead. Like the song says.

(pause as she thinks)

Cole's a good guy and I blew it. He hates me. Mom and Dad just do what they want. Donna hates me.

(tears)

Becky will probably make out with Cole now. What have I done? I'm so stupid. Stupid. Stupid. Stupid.

Charity throws the diary to the floor. Blackie startles, nuzzles her hand as she sobs.

Cole walks toward Charity's house. Stops when he sees her sitting and crying. Looks at the ground, then back at her. Sighs. Decisively walks up to the walk in front of her house. Stops at the sidewalk. They see each other.

Charity wipes the tears.

CHARITY (CONT'D)

What the heck to do you want?

Cole walks to the steps.

COLE

You okay?

CHARITY

Just great. Great. Life is beautiful. Perfect.

Cole walks up the steps, stands in front of her.

COLE

Uh huh. Always wondered what it looked like.

Charity stares at him confused.

COLE (CONT'D)

You know, perfection.

Charity smiles lamely.

COLE (CONT'D)
Is Donna going to be okay?

CHARITY
Maybe. She's still at the hospital.

COLE
Sorry.

He stands awkwardly for a moment.

COLE (CONT'D)
So...

CHARITY
Tommy's a jerk.

COLE
Could'a told you that.

CHARITY
So am I.

COLE
No. Just, confused.

CHARITY
What's the difference.

COLE
People is stupid. Jerks is... jerky.

Charity smiles

CHARITY
Nobody cares anyway.

COLE
Me?

She looks up at him. He sits next to her.

COLE (CONT'D)
Hey, girl? Why am I nothing? I
could love you.

CHARITY
Love. Right.
(looks at Cole)
Why?

She turns away. He touches her shoulder, she turns back
toward him.

COLE

Look. I don't really know what that means. Like grown up love and stuff. But I always wanna be with you. I can't get enough of you, chick. You're not like them. Not like... anyone. You're... Charity... and I'm just hoping you'll... you'll let me stick around. I don't know, maybe that's love.

Charity tears up.

CHARITY

Maybe.

She reaches for his hand. Cole reaches for hers.

87 EXT. CHARITY'S KITCHEN - LATER

87

Charity dancing at the sink as she dries dishes and puts them in the cabinet. Carol watches her from the kitchen door, Charity has a bounce in her step pulls a bowl up, then a glass.

CHARITY

(singing to herself)

"Why do bird's suddenly appear, every time, you are near... just like me.."

CAROL

Hey, sweetie.

CHARITY

(startled)

Oh. Hey.

CAROL

You seem happy.

CHARITY

Yeah. Groovy.

Charity grabs ice cream from the freezer, sets the carton on the table. Suddenly remembers.

CHARITY (CONT'D)

(panicked)

Is Donna okay?

CAROL

Can we talk?

Charity replaces pulls a bowl and spoon off the dish drainer, sits down to eat.

CHARITY

Yeah.

CAROL

Donna's okay... well, sort of. You're dad and I... We... we are taking her to Miss Alice. You know, that counselor I used to go to?

Charity gets up and gives her mom an hug.

CAROL (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, baby. We... are going to be here more. I promise.

Carol reaches for Charity's shoulder, gives it a comforting squeeze. The two look at each other for a moment.

88 EXT. CHARITY'S BEDROOM - LATER

88

Charity enters, closes the door behind her. Pulls her Good News Bible out of the trash bin, hugs it to her and falls back on the bed. Rolls over, picks up her diary and pen, starts writing.

CHARITY (V.O.)

Cole is - dreamy. Not popular, so much better! He's real. And he see's me! I wanted to kiss him so bad. Donna's going to be okay. Mom and Dad finally get it.

(she stops writing
for a moment, chews
on the pen)

Sometimes you just have to wait to see how much God can help you. How much difference you can make if you just believe.

(starts writing again)

Oh, and its OK if you forget every now and then. As long as you are still listening... when the moon speaks to you again.

She snaps it closed, rolls over, flips open her Good News bible and reads aloud:

CHARITY (CONT'D)

"Don't remember the prior things; don't ponder ancient history. Look! I'm doing a new thing; now it sprouts up; don't you recognize it? I'm making a way in the desert, paths in the wilderness.

She closes it. Smiles. Closes her eyes in total joy.

89 EXT. CENTRAL JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL - NEXT DAY

89

Charity walks toward the bus. Cole comes over and takes her books from her.

COLE

Hey. Hey foxy lady.

CHARITY

Hi.

COLE

I got something.

CHARITY

What?

Cole sets the books down on a wall, pulls out a necklace from his pocket. Dangles it in front of her. Her jaw drops.

CHARITY (CONT'D)

Really?

COLE

Yeah. You wanna wear my drop?

Charity's eyes tear up. She throws her arms around him.

CHARITY

Of course! Of course-

He wriggles free and puts the necklace around her neck. Tears stream down her face.

They walk past Becky, Sherlene, Veronica and Denise doing dance steps on the grass.

CHARITY (CONT'D)

Becky!

BECKY

Hey.

BECKY (CONT'D)

Charity! Oh! You have Cole's drop!

CHARITY

Yeah! Just.

BECKY

I gotta tell you, I'm not scared any more. Still don't know about them, but... some of them are cool.

Charity smiles. Becky resumes dancing with the other girls.

FADE TO BLACK.