

The Granny Wars

written by

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FADE IN

INT. SEVENTIES-STYLE CHURCH - HALLWAY - FLOOR - DAY

OVER THE SOUND of PANTING, we see pudgy feet in powder-green heels hurry down a shiny wooden floor, then stop. PANT! PANT!

A pudgy hand reaches down, pulls off one shoe, then the other - OOF! Then bare feet in nylons scurry off to a door at the end of the hallway, as the SOUND of PANTING grows stronger.

INT. SEVENTIES-STYLE CHURCH - BRIDE'S ROOM - DAY

A prim BRIDE (19), in a no-frills 70s wedding dress, checks the wall clock - it's 2:56! She hugs her two BRIDESMAIDS (30, 19), both dressed in green. This is it!

Suddenly, the door behind them BURSTS open, and -

The MOTHER of the Bride (45) - wearing a powder-green suit, clutching matching heels, and sweating rivers - races in, SLAMS the door, and gasps for breath - PANT! PANT!

Bride and Bridesmaids freeze - OMG, what's wrong?!

MOTHER

We can't - find - Eddie!

EXT. SEVENTIES STYLE CHURCH - SIDE DOOR - DAY

With a SEXY girl (19) in pink at the wheel, a pink MUSTANG convertible waits at the side door - where a handsome GROOM (19) dashes out, vaults over the car door, lands at shotgun. Then Sexy drives off, CACKLING. It's the Great Escape!

Suddenly, we hear SHOUTING --

BRIDE (O.S.)

Eddie! Stoppppppp!

Horrified, Groom dives out of view - as Sexy floors it.

Bride and Mother - both shoe-less, and with skirts hiked up to their girdles - give chase

past two CATERERS (20, 25) in uniform,

around a VW BUG dropping off three GUESTS (18-20), and

up to the end of the row, where the Mustang hangs a right,

then careens - tires SQUEALING - to the exit.

BRIDE
Stopppppppp!

Sexy turns onto the highway, BURNS RUBBER past a bus stop.
Bride high-tails it up to the sidewalk, HOLLERS after her --

BRIDE
You - sleazy - cow!

-- as Mother staggers into view and sprawls across the bus-stop bench... GASPING and soaked in sweat.

CLOSE ON: The Mustang, and Sexy's BABY BUMP, showing under her seatbelt. She floors it - zooms off in a CLOUD OF SMOKE.

EXT. LOS ANGELES - FREEWAY FRONTAGE ROAD - DAY

LIMPING ALONG IN A CLOUD OF SMOKE, the Mustang moves down the deserted road, much the worse for wear - it's aged badly.

SUPER: "Forty-six years later."

EXT. ROSE'S MUSTANG CONVERTIBLE - DAY

The 50s hit, "POISON IVY," blares out of the radio of this old deathtrap. And a well-preserved mantrap, ROSE - 60s, sexy, single, and in pink - sits behind the wheel and sings:

ROSE
"Bees'll make you bumpy, and
mumps'll make you lumpy, and
chicken pox'll make you jump and
twitch-uh."

KABANG! KEBANG! Mustang backfires, then dies - both engine and radio. Coasting, Rose guides it to the side of the road.

ROSE
Ohhhhhh - don't do this to me, Pony
Boy. Not again.

She pulls out her cell phone - it's out of juice. Drat! She gets out, props open the hood, undoes the top button on her blouse and poses, shapely leg well displayed. A beat, then -

An aging tow truck appears down the road... and passes Rose.

What? But then it does a U turn... and finally parks in front of the Mustang. Out steps a GRUBBY driver, 40.

He ejaculates chewing tobacco onto the ground, flashes brown teeth. Rose regards her rescuer - ugh - turns on the charm.

ROSE
I don't know what's wrong. My
trusty steed never lets me down.

GRUBBY
Ya need a tow, sweet thang?

ROSE
You're too kind!

EXT. SPANISH-STYLE HOUSE - DAY

A big home, with a Toyota pick-up in the driveway. The truck bed is full of suitcases, floral arrangements, a full-length mirror, a pink loveseat. All topped by a mountain of clothes.

RUTH (24) - smart, sensible, modest - rounds the corner of the house, carrying sexy negligees on hangers - definitely not her style. She hefts them on top of the clothes, plops a high-heeled boot on top, disappears back around the corner.

The tow truck pulls up to the curb, towing the Mustang.

Rose exits the tow truck, spies the pick-up and stares at it - huh? Behind her, Grubby starts unloading the Mustang. She automatically hands him a credit card, then looks up at -

The front door, where - KIMBERLY (40s) emerges, and stands in the doorway. Calmly, she announces:

KIMBERLY
You don't live here anymore.

Rose is flabbergasted.

KIMBERLY (CONT'D)
That doesn't mean I don't love you,
because I do. But everyone has to
grow up sometime, Mother, and now -
is your time.

ROSE
No! Kimberly, please! I will st --

KIMBERLY
I found you a house and I paid
three months' rent, for starters.
After that, you're on your own.
(smiles)
No more loans, and no more fights.

Ruth re-appears, carrying a pink cat cage. A sheepish smile.

RUTH
Hello, Nana.

KIMBERLY
Ruth will help you move.

Rose stares at the Toyota pick-up, incredulous.

KIMBERLY
It's all in there.

ROSE
I'm your mother, you can't do this
to me!

KIMBERLY
You'll thank me when you're older,
Mother. Goodbye.

ROSE
But Pony Boy! He's --

KIMBERLY
Take him with you!

She goes inside, SLAMS the door, engages the deadbolt - BAM!

INT. RUTH'S TOYOTA PICK-UP - day

Ruth drives and Rose is at shotgun - with a fluffy Himalayan cat in the cat cage on her lap. This is HONEYBUNS, the cat with a 'tude. His look says, "Good grief, here we go again."

ROSE
I've never done anything to deserve
this kind of treatment!

Ruth checks - sees the tow truck following them. Good.

ROSE
It was hard enough on me when Eddie
- and Geoffrey - then Rudolph -
Bruno, even Vladymir turned on me.
But my own flesh and blood!

RUTH
Look on the bright side, Nana.
You'll have your own place, and no
one to answer to, except yourself.

ROSE
I don't want to live alone!

EXT. LOS ANGELES SUBURB - ORANGEVEILLE - DAY

A bedroom community sits at the foothills of the Los Angeles basin. Its 1970s decor looks dated, yet comfy.

ON THE MAIN STREET of town, a sign reads -

"WELCOME TO ORANGEVILLE - PRIDE OF THE FOOTHILLS."

Beyond the sign is a Community Center, a Ralph's, a Denny's and a bus shelter - where a big, handwritten sign is posted:

"BIG GARAGE SALE TODAY - TAKE BUS 12 TO LAMBERT ST."

EXT. LAMBERT STREET - CUL DE SAC - DAY

At the end of a narrow *cul de sac*, three 70s style houses circle the sidewalk and almost touch one another, like three peas in a circular pod. In front of the center house, is a "GARAGE SALE" sign, and sale items litter the driveway.

EXT. PATTY'S HOUSE - DAY

At the curb in front of the center house, sits an aging Ford Escort, hood open.

PATTY - 60s, gray, wiry, unadorned, and wearing green - watches a Latino BOY (8), as he studies the engine, waits.

We see the engine barely cranking. WAAH... WAAH...WAAH. Then again. WAAH...WAAH...WAAH.

The car door opens and a Latino GARDENER (40s) emerges. He looks at a sign on the window - \$2500 - hands Patty the keys. She smiles politely, waits. Gardener asks -

GARDENER
(Spanish, subtitled)
How long has it been sitting here?

Patty looks at the boy.

BOY
My father wants to know how long
since you've driven the car.

PATTY
I've never driven it.

BOY
(Spanish, subtitled)
She doesn't drive, Papa.

GARDENER
 (Spanish, subtitled)
 Then her husband, how long since
 he's driven it?

BOY
 Does your husband drive?

PATTY
 No... my husband died last year.

BOY
 (Spanish, subtitled)
 He doesn't drive, either, Papa.

The Gardener debates, pulls out a wad of bills.

GARDENER
 (Spanish, subtitled)
 Twenty-four, fifty!

BOY
 He'll give you twenty-four fifty,
 and keep fifty for a new battery.

Patty's smile widens - we can see her teeth.

PATTY
 The price is twenty-five hundred.

BOY
 (Spanish, subtitled)
 She says we should go suck eggs,
 Papa. Let's leave!

INT. PATTY'S HOUSE - GARAGE - DAY

At a table with a cash box, sits CANDY (21), sorting through a stack of old storage boxes. Cute in jeans and velvet, and with rings on every finger - Candy would be a real sweetie, if it weren't for her temper.

In the b.g. an ancient RADIO blares -

RADIO ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
 The county says they might start
 rationing water, so here's a little
 number - to help bring on the rain!

A big band rendition of "SINGING IN THE RAIN" plays, as Candy watches Patty stride up the driveway, into the garage.

CANDY
 No sale, Grammy?

PATTY
Twenty-four fifty. Bah!

CANDY
But that's only --

PATTY
-- twenty-five loaves of bread,
fifty DVD rentals at the library,
or a hundred bus-trips to town!

Patty furiously folds men's shirts - obviously her husband's.

PATTY
I won't give Grampa's car away to
the first person who waves cash in
my face.

CANDY
Okay.

PATTY
Just because he's "not in the
picture anymore," I'm not gonna
start taking him for granted!

CANDY
Geez, Grammy - take a chill pill.

Patty pastes her polite smile onto her face, leers at Candy. Candy starts to giggle, then frowns. She stands - disappears through the kitchen door, hand over her stomach.

Patty watches, as VOMITING NOISES come from the kitchen. Her look of concern slowly changes to a look... of recognition. She starts toward the door, changes her mind, stops. Instead -

She rolls up her sleeves and approaches the stack of boxes. Then spies a white one. What the...? She opens it, pulls out -

The prim Bride's 46 year-old wedding gown. And grimaces. Ugh!

Fuming, she folds it, puts it back in the box, and stores it up high on a garage shelf. Then dusts off her hands and vows -

PATTY
Lest... I... forget.

INT. PATTY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Patty sits in her dining nook, facing cigar boxes labelled MORTGAGE, UTILITIES, FOOD, MEDICAL, GIFTS, CLOTHES, SAVINGS, and MAD MONEY. Next to the cigar boxes, cash is stacked in piles. Patty collects bills from the stacks, counts -

PATTY
 ... two hundred. And twenty, forty,
 sixty, seventy. And one, two,
 three, four dollars, and...

She reaches into the garage-sale cash box and picks out -

PATTY
 ... fifty six cents.

Pleased, she deposits \$274.56 into her Mortgage Box and shuts the lid. Then opens the Utilities box and turns back to her money. A sound - RIBBIT? RIBBIT? - startles her.

PATTY
 Godzelda!

She turns to an aquarium atop a nearby stand. Inside is frog heaven. A huge frog - GODZELDA - sits on a rock, gazes up at Patty. Gives her a "poor little me" look. RIBBIT? RIBBIT?

PATTY
 I am so sorry, Godzelda.

She pops the lid, puts her hand in, Godzelda hops aboard. She carries her to the sink, deposits her in a plastic tub, mists her with water. Then takes two CRICKETS out of a small cage, drops them in the tub, and rolls plastic mesh over the top.

PATTY
 There. That oughta make you happy.

Yum - it does! Candy enters, hefting a large box.

PATTY
 Candy! You shouldn't be lifting -
 not in your condition.

The truth is out - Candy bursts into tears.

INT. PATTY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

An outdated room, with that cozy, lived-in look. Candy sits in a worn recliner, mug of tea in hand, eyes red.

Opposite her is Patty - on the sofa, surrounded by newspapers and mail. Feet up on a footstool, Patty sips tea and listens:

CANDY
 I'm going to keep my baby, and I'm
 going to give it a happy home.

PATTY
 Of course. And your boyfriend...?

CANDY

Rex doesn't know - he wouldn't even give a rip! His stupid band is more important to him than I am.

(tears up)

I don't even know where Rex is.

PATTY

Oh, not good. But how will you --

CANDY

Pay for everything? I don't know!

PATTY

Oh, not good. But even if you find this "Rex guy" and get some child support, your baby's still going to need a father, Candy Cane.

CANDY

Oh, brother! What do you want me to do, stalk someone?

Candy cries. Patty carries over a box of tissues, pats Candy's head, sits on the sofa again. Candy blows her nose.

CANDY

It's not like I can't get a better job. I can sing, I can cook, and I'm a really good seamstress.

PATTY

You don't need a better job, you need a husband!

She picks up the classified ads and scans the listings.

CANDY

What are you doing?

PATTY

Finding you a husband.

CANDY

It's finally happened, you've lost your mind.

PATTY

Betty Thompson answered an ad in the paper and landed a husband in three months, flat.

Candy stands.

CANDY

A woman does not need a man to make her happy.

PATTY

I wasn't thinking about you.

CANDY

I'm going home.

EXT. PATTY'S HOUSE - DAY

Candy exits the front door, with Patty hot on her heels.

PATTY

A good mother always puts the needs of her child ahead of her own.

Candy looks to her left, at

THE HOUSE NEXT DOOR

and sees Rose's Mustang parked at the curb. Then Patty spies it too, and she stops in her tracks... What!?

In the driveway is Ruth's truck, doors open wide.

The truck is parked behind a VW Bug, painted with pink and white flowers.

Rose and Ruth circle the Bug, peer inside.

CANDY (O.S.)

Hello! That's my car!

Rose and Ruth look over at Candy.

CANDY

Are you moving in?

Four steps, and Ruth's in Patty's front yard.

RUTH

Not me - but my grandmother is.

Rose walks over, oozes charm.

ROSE

How do you do?
(looks at Patty, frowns)
Say, do I know you?

Patty carefully circles Rose... looks her up and down.

PATTY
My... God!

ROSE
(a nervous laugh)
I guess maybe I do know you.

PATTY
Of all the neighborhoods, in all
the towns, in all the world - you
move into mine!? I've waited a long
time for this day... Rose Brown.

ROSE
Brown? I haven't heard that last
name since... Oh my Lord! Ruthie,
we're leaving!

Rose heads for the pick-up.

PATTY
Coward!

Rose freezes, marches back. Gets in Patty's face -

ROSE
I may be a lot of things, Patricia
Thomas, but there's one thing I am
not, and that's a coward!

PATTY
Maybe I should have said, "Slut."

ROSE
I'll take that as a compliment -
coming from a woman who couldn't
keep a man - if he were hog-tied to
the bedpost!

PATTY
Take that back!

ROSE
Never!

OMG, it's a chick fight! Hair and claws fly, until -
Candy grabs Patty, and Ruth grabs Rose.

CANDY RUTH
Grammy! Nana!

CANDY
What's gotten into you?

Ruth stares up at Patty's front door, horror-struck.

RUTH
Bad kitty - no! Bad kitty - bad!

On Patty's front stoop, sits Honeybuns, with Godzelda clamped beneath his teeth. The frog's legs and arms wiggle pathetically, and she looks as if she's about to croak.

PATTY
Godzelda!

ROSE
Honeybuns! Stop that this instant!

PATTY
Honeybuns?? Honeybuns!! I might have known that would be your cat!

ROSE
Oh, shut up and help me rescue your dumb toad.

PATTY
She's not a toad, she's a frog!

ROSE
(to the others)
Here, form a ring so he can't escape.

They advance toward Honeybuns, arms outstretched - as he darts back into the house, with four women in hot pursuit.

INT. PATTY'S HOUSE - DAY

THE ENTRYWAY

Four women pile into the house, and Rose slams the front door. BANG! A pane of glass breaks.

Patty points at Rose -

PATTY
Home-wrecker!

Honeybuns races into

THE LIVING ROOM

and darts behind the recliner. Ruth gives chase, trips over a throw rug. KABOOM! She slams into a curio cabinet. CRASH!

EXT. STERLING'S HOUSE - DAY

A Hummer with Texas plates - TXS BBQ - pulls into the driveway on the other side of Patty's house. It's loaded with suitcases and enough little-girl toys to open up a store.

Two men and a young girl get out, freeze as they hear -

The SOUND of breaking glass coming from Patty's house.

STERLING - 60s, silver-haired, amiable - looks over at the Hummer's driver - LANCE - 30, studly, and Texan.

STERLING
Patty's in trouble!

Lance turns to his daughter, DOLLY (4) -

LANCE
Dolly, ya'all stay right here with Peepaw. Daddy's gonna go help Miss Patty. Back in a minute, precious.

Lance reaches under the driver's seat, extracts an old-fashioned six-shooter, and hustles up to Patty's front door.

INT. PATTY'S HOUSE - DAY

Lance opens the front door and steals...

INSIDE THE ENTRY WAY, six-shooter cocked and ready, then follows RIOT NOISES...

DOWN THE HALLWAY, past wreckage from the chase, then pauses outside a bedroom door. A beat... then he throws open the door to see -

INSIDE PATTY'S BEDROOM -

where four hysterical women stand on a double bed and reach up for Honeybuns, who perches out of reach on a high shelf, gazing calmly down at them - Godzelda in his mouth, wiggling.

LANCE
What the devil...?

Rose SCREAMS, and everybody panics, till Lance shouts -

LANCE
Quiet!

PATTY
Lance?

LANCE
Nice to see you, Mrs. O'Connor.

He notices his six-shooter, tucks it into his belt.

LANCE
I thought... well, never mind what
I thought.

ROSE
You thought she needed help, you
wonderful man. I am very happy to
meet you. Rose. Rose Popanovitch.

LANCE
Lance Rockman. The pleasure's mine.

Rose shoots her arm out and pulls Ruth over.

ROSE
This is my granddaughter, Ruthie.

RUTH
Ruth.

Lance nods politely.

ROSE
Ruthie spends most of her time
studying for the bar exam right
now, but she'll be free soon.

Ruth would love to become invisible.

And now Patty's on the warpath.

PATTY
Lance - you remember Candy? It's
been a few years since you two have
seen each other.

Lance smiles - interested.

LANCE
Howdy, Miss Candy.

CANDY
Howdy, Mr. Lance.

PATTY
She has a very gentle touch.

LANCE
Excuse me?

PATTY
If you can get that god-awful cat
down, then I'm sure she can rescue
Godzelda out of his mouth.

LANCE
Yes, ma'am. We'll try our best.

Patty herds Rose and Ruth out the door, and down to

THE LIVING ROOM

PATTY
(to Rose)
If Godzelda dies - you die!

ROSE
Get your filthy hands off me,
Patricia Thomas.

PATTY
Make that O'Connor, please. I was
married for forty-two years.

ROSE
Don't think I don't know what
you're doing, Patty, because I do -
and I saw him first!

PATTY
"I saw him first." Bah! That never
stopped you from stealing someone
else's man.

ROSE
I never stole... You lost Eddie,
fair and square!

PATTY
You chased Eddie down and pounced
on him like a man-eating tiger!

ROSE
I never chased a man in my life.

PATTY
Carnivore!

ROSE
It's not my fault if men are
attracted to me.

PATTY
 Attracted!? Oh, is that what they
 call it nowadays?

RUTH
 Nana, can we go unload the truck? I
 really need to study tonight.

ROSE
 And leave Honeybuns in this
 madhouse?

She heads back to the hallway, just as Lance and Candy emerge
 from the bedroom. Lance carries Honeybuns - dead cool - and
 Candy carries Godzelda - the queen of tragedy.

ROSE	PATTY
Honeybuns!	Godzelda!

The women scoop up their pets and cradle them like infants.

ROSE
 Oh Lance, I can't thank you enough.

Sterling pokes his head in, from the front hallway.

STERLING
 Is it safe?

PATTY
 Come on in, Sterling - join the
 party.

Patty rinses Godzelda under the faucet, places her in her
 aquarium and the frog submerses herself underwater - safe.
 Patty sighs with relief.

Sterling enters, leading Dolly by the hand. Dolly could be
 Shirley Temple's twin sister - the evil one. She stomps her
 foot, accuses -

DOLLY
 Daddy! You said you'd be back in a
 minute, and you've been gone hours.

LANCE
 Daddy's sorry, sweetheart. I was
 helping this nice lady with her
 kitty. But I'm leaving, now.

ROSE
 Oh, but you haven't introduced us.

LANCE
 Beg pardon, ma'am. My father,
 Sterling, and my little girl,
 Dolly.

Rose stoops down to Dolly.

ROSE
 Would you like to pet my kitty?

DOLLY
 No!

ROSE
 But we're going to be neighbors.

DOLLY
 No we're not!

STERLING
 You'll be my neighbor, Missus, ah --

ROSE
 Rose... Miss Rose.

Rose stands, gives Sterling a 2,000 megawatt smile.

ROSE
 Would you like to pet my Honeybuns?

PATTY
 God, I may vomit.

Candy hustles down the hall to the bathroom and SLAMS the door, but it doesn't muffle the sound of her VOMITING.

EXT. ROSE'S HOUSE - DAY

Lance and Sterling carry the pink loveseat up Rose's walkway. Rose stands in the front door, thinks aloud -

ROSE
 That's not gonna fit in my bedroom.

The men stop.

ROSE
 Maybe it should go in the garage.

The men turn around, head for the garage.

ROSE
 Wait! On second thought...

INT. ROSE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

The tiny room is in chaos. Ruth kneels by a box of PHOTOS of Rose and herself - at all ages, and with different men. She lifts a photo of a younger Rose, standing next to tanned RUDOLPH(45). He carries Ruthie, age 5, on his shoulders.

Rose enters, takes off her high-heeled sandal and uses it to pound in a nail, then hangs a photo.

RUTH

Nana, where's Rudolph these days?
I always liked Rudolph.

ROSE

Let me think. France? Or was it San Francisco. Someplace like that.

RUTH

Well, France is in Europe and San Francisco is in America.

ROSE

Good! Looks like all that college is paying off, honey.

Lance, Sterling, and the loveseat enter.

Rose steps aside, and the guys put it down - OOF!

STERLING

That's the last of the lot, Rose.

ROSE

Wonderful! Ruthie's going for Chinese. Won't you stay?

STERLING

Thanks, Rose, but Patty always cooks my dinner. And tonight she's cooking for Lance and Dolly, too.

ROSE

She is? She does?

STERLING

It's a good arrangement. She doesn't drive, and I don't cook. Welcome to the neighborhood, Rose.

Rose forces a smile, starts to shake hands - laughs - shifts the high heel to her left hand, then grabs Sterling's hand.

ROSE
I just know we're going to be good
friends.

INT. PATTY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Candy sets the table for two, while Sterling stands nearby
and watches Patty wrap a hunk of meatloaf in tin foil.

She's getting Sterling's dinner ready to send home with him.

STERLING
He says he came here to start Texas
Barbecue in California, but I think
he came out, lookin' for a wife.

Patty stops, turns to Sterling, all smiles.

PATTY
Why don't you and Lance eat here,
tonight?

In the b.g., Candy rolls her eyes. Grammy!

LATER

Lance, Sterling, Candy, Patty, and Dolly finish eating dinner
in the dining nook. Animated, Lance explains to Candy -

LANCE
The secret of good barbecue --

He checks out the window, under the table, then whispers -

LANCE
-- is to keep the fire real low,
then smoke your meat all day long,
to keep it nice and juicy.

CANDY
I'll make sure and remember that.

DOLLY (O.S.)
I hate meatloaf!

Lance turns to Dolly, cajoles -

LANCE
Dolly, Mrs. O'Connor made this
special, just for us.

Dolly makes a face - yuck! Lance turns to Patty.

LANCE
 Could I trouble you for some jam?

Patty passes him the strawberry jam.

LANCE
 Thank you kindly.

He spreads a spoonful on top of Dolly's meatloaf.

Dolly looks up at Lance, narrows her eyes. Another spoonful - and she eats.

STERLING
 That's my baby.

DOLLY
 I'm not a baby. I'm four years old!

Laughter. Dolly scowls, throws her fork on the floor. Candy makes a goofy face at Dolly, and Dolly stares back, fascinated. Candy picks up the fork, puts it on the table.

PATTY
 Lance, if barbecue is so easy, then why isn't everybody else as successful as you are?

LANCE
 I did some research on that - choked down some of the worst barbecue in the state of Texas. Folks just won't take the time to make it all soft, and tender...

He smiles at Candy.

ROSE (O.S.)
 Yoo hoo!

STERLING
 Did you hear something?

PATTY
 Owls!

Patty pulls a cord - the mini blinds fall with a CLUNK.

ROSE (O.S.)
 Yoo hoo!

Rose peeks into the kitchen.

ROSE
 I didn't want to disturb you-all,
 so I just let myself in.
 (to Patty)
 I hope you don't mind.

PATTY
 Why should I mind?

Rose carries in a boxed pie.

Behind her comes Ruth, carrying a pot of coffee. She is mortified.

ROSE
 I just couldn't let these men get
 away, without thanking them for
 their services. How's your toad?

PATTY
 Frog.

ROSE
 Good - who wants coffee?

Rose puts the pie down, takes the coffee from Ruth.

STERLING
 I'm always ready for a good cuppa
 Joe.

ROSE
 My kinda man!

Patty looks at Rose, looks at Sterling. Then it dawns on her: Sterling is a man! And Rose is after him.

Suddenly casual, Patty turns to Rose -

PATTY
 Rose, why don't you take the coffee
 into the living room, and let me
 serve the pie?

Patty gloms onto the pie box - a tug o war - then Patty wins.

ROSE
 You are such a love.

Then everyone except Patty moves into

THE LIVING ROOM

where Rose tells Sterling -

ROSE
You know, Patty and I go way back.

STERLING
Is that right?

ROSE
We've been friends, ever since we were girls.

STERLING
I wonder why she never mentioned you.

ROSE
Oh, you know how hard it is to stay in touch, nowadays.

IN THE KITCHEN

Patty takes the pie - a banana cream - over to a hidden corner, then douses it liberally with SALT.

PATTY
Maybe this'll put you back in touch, Rosie baby.

IN THE LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Patty brings in a tray full of pie servings, and Sterling's face lights up. He takes a plate, hands one to Rose.

STERLING
Banana cream! My favorite.

ROSE
Now, how did I know that?

A run on the pie, then...

Sterling takes a bite - and GAGS.

Dolly grimaces, spits hers on the floor.

DOLLY
Yucky!

Sterling gulps hot coffee - SPRAYS IT BACK OUT AGAIN.

ROSE
Oh my Lord, he's choking!

Dolly pulls up her dress, rubs her tongue on her skirt.

LANCE

Baby!

Ruth races to the kitchen, while
Rose thumps Sterling on the back -
but Sterling shakes his head "No!"
and Rose thumps him even harder!
Lance carries Dolly, SCREAMING, to the kitchen -
while Ruth runs to Sterling with a glass of water.
Sterling shoves Rose aside - KABOOM - gulps the water down.
Candy holds her stomach and dashes to the bathroom.
Sterling gasps -

STERLING

More!

and Ruth runs back to the kitchen -
where Dolly kicks and screams -

DOLLY

I want my mommy!

while Ruth re-fills Sterling's glass.

RUTH

Nana! This is for Sterling!

Rose grabs the glass, dashes back to Sterling.
Ruth clamps her hand over Dolly's mouth, gets in her face:

RUTH

Settle down, and stop screaming.

Their eyes lock, and DOLLY STOPS SCREAMING. Ruth gives her
some water - Dolly gulps it down. Whew!

Patty sits and watches it all, enjoys the show.

PATTY

Rose, where did you get that pie?

Rose looks at Ruth.

RUTH

Denny's.

PATTY

Was it their day-old sale? Whipped cream can go bad in a day.

RUTH

Gee, I don't know.

Sterling stands, barely manages to speak.

STERLING

Thank you, Ruthie, you saved my life. Good night Patty, Rose.

ROSE

Oh, don't go!

PATTY

Let the poor man go in peace. You nearly poisoned him, Rose, he looks positively ill.

Suspicious, Rose studies Patty's face: Pure innocence.

LANCE

Ladies, I'm gonna turn in, too. I'm fixin' to spend all day tomorrow, lookin' for a house.

ROSE

Oh, I love house-hunting!

LANCE

My wife did, too.

ROSE

Your wife... did?

LANCE

I lost my sweet Mary Lou, just last year.

ROSE

Oh, I'm so sorry. You know, you really ought to have a woman along with you tomorrow, to give you that unique, feminine perspective.

LANCE

Yes, ma'am. That's why I got myself a lady realtor.

He turns to Ruth - with new respect in his eyes.

LANCE
 Good night, Ruthie. I don't know
 what we would've done without you.

Ruth blushes. As Patty looks on in dismay. What has she done?

EXT. PATTY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Patty and Rose stand on the front stoop and wave, as the men go next door and disappear inside Sterling's house.

Then Rose turns to Patty - with murder on her mind.

ROSE
 You ruined my pie, you slithering
 saboteur!

PATTY
 You ruined my neighborhood, you
 shameless hussy!

ROSE
 How could I do that, I just moved
 in!

PATTY
 Some people just have a knack!

Patty opens her door- one pane is covered with cardboard. She marches inside, SLAMS the door shut - a second pane SHATTERS.

EXT. LAMBERT STREET - CUL DE SAC - LATE NIGHT

The familiar sound of CRICKETS choruses through the air.

INT. ROSE'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - LATE NIGHT

A candle-lit room. Rose luxuriates in a bubble bath. In the b.g., a radio plays a familiar SONG and Rose sings along -

ROSE
 "Come on baby, light my fire. Come
 on baby, light my fire. Try to set
 the night on fire!"

EXT. ROSE'S HOUSE - LATE NIGHT

THE DOORS' MUSIC continues to play, as we pull back from the glow of Rose's bathroom window, and pan left, over to...

EXT. PATTY'S HOUSE - LATE NIGHT

The stark light from Patty's kitchen. Through the window, we see her profile come into view... then out... then back, again. She is pacing.

She stops. Peers out the window. Scans the area between Rose's house and Sterling's. Listens - then resumes pacing, back and forth, back and forth - lost in thought.

We pull back, pan further left, and move over to...

EXT. STERLING'S HOUSE - LATE NIGHT

The still, dark visage of the Rockman home. The MUSIC STOPS, and all is silent for a beat.

CLOSE ON: two side windows. And we hear the RHYTHMIC SNORING of two adult males - snoozing away in blissful ignorance, while feuding females plot their doom.

INT./EXT. PATTY'S HOUSE - PATTY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Daylight enters through closed blinds, revealing more photos of Candy on the bureau. Nearby, Patty sleeps in her bed.

ROSE (O.S.)

Oh, I just can't thank you enough!

Patty opens her eyes and stares at the ceiling:

PATTY

This isn't my life, this is a movie. It's "Nightmare on Lambert Street," and I'm about to kill somebody!

She rolls out of bed and peeks out the window at-

An UBER EATS CAR, parked in Rose's driveway, a few feet away.

INTERCUT

EXT. ROSE'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY

Rose - in bathrobe and slippers - takes her credit card back from the Uber Eats DRIVER (50s). Then he hands her a Denny's to-go bag and turns back to his car.

ROSE

Where would we be without plastic!

PATTY
 (to herself)
 Out of debt, you moron.

Uber driver nods, leaves.

RING-RING! Dolly drives up to Rose's driveway on a tricycle, followed by Lance in jogging clothes.

LANCE
 Morning, Miss Rose.

DOLLY
 Daddy, come on!

LANCE
 Just a minute, baby.

Dolly drives circles around Lance and Rose - RINGING her bell - while Lance tries to talk to Rose.

Patty strains to hear, then tries to open her window. No go. She shoves - it opens with a BANG!

Rose and Lance look over, as Patty dives down to the carpet, out of view.

Unsure, Rose eyes Patty's window.

ROSE
 Come inside for a minute, Lance,
 and I'll give it to you.

Down on the floor, Patty mouths the word, "Damn!"

END INTERCUT

EXT. PATTY'S BACK YARD - DAY

A landscaped area, with an open view to the neighbors.

In her PJs, Patty sneaks over to the chain link fence that separates her yard from Rose's.

Then manoeuvres over the fence and advances, commando-style, up to...

EXT. ROSE'S BACK YARD - DAY

Rose's living room window. Patty peeks inside, sees -

Rose consult her personal phone book, write a number down, and hand it to Lance. He smiles his thanks, turns to go.

Patty ducks out of sight. A few commando manoeuvres, and she's back in her own yard, again.

PATTY
I don't like it. I don't like it!

INT. ROSE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The room has a semblance of order, now. Rose lies on the loveseat and talks on the phone. She sighs:

ROSE
Your very first date ever, and he's so good looking! I told you your day would come. Tell me, darling - what are you going to wear?

INTERCUT

INT. RUTH'S STUDIO APARTMENT - NIGHT

A student lair. Ruth sits, surrounded by brick-and-board shelves full of books, phone to her ear.

RUTH
I don't know - jeans, I guess.

ROSE
Good Lord, where did I go wrong?

END INTERCUT

INT. NORDSTROM DEPARTMENT STORE - FIRST FLOOR - DAY

A busy floor, full of CUSTOMERS and sales ASSISTANTS. Rose and Ruth get off the "Down" escalator, carrying Nordstrom bags. They walk through

THE MAKE UP DEPARTMENT, and Rose stops at

THE CLINIQUE COUNTER

picks up a perfume bottle, sprays some on her neck, and offers her neck to Ruth. Ruth sniffs, SNEEZES.

A heavily made-up beauty CONSULTANT, 20s, approaches.

CONSULTANT
Have you tried our new mascara?

RUTH
Sorry, I don't wear make up.

Rose and the Cosmetologist exchange a look.

INT. CLINIQUE COUNTER - DAY

Ruth sits on a stool, eyes closed, as the Consultant applies foundation over her eyelids. Rose sits on another stool and watches. Cosmetologist talks as she works -

CONSULTANT
She has lovely skin.

ROSE
All the women in my family do. It gives us that unfair advantage.

Ruth opens one eye.

RUTH
Advantage over what?

ROSE
Not what - who!

RUTH
Okay, advantage over who?

ROSE
The competition, of course!

RUTH
You mean other women?

ROSE
Say, you are a quick learner.

RUTH
So you, my mom, my girlfriends - are all "the enemy?"

ROSE
No - not your mother and me, silly. But your girlfriends...

RUTH
Nana! If I can't trust my girlfriends, who can I trust?

CONSULTANT
All she's trying to say, is that women have to compete against other women, to get the man they want.

Two shoppers, a MOTHER (40s) and DAUGHTER (18) join in:

MOTHER

Right! For every good man out there, there are fifty women fighting - pearly tooth and nail polish - just to catch his eye.

DAUGHTER

Haven't you ever watched "The Bachelor?"

CONSULTANT

Oh, I love that show!

MOTHER

So do I! Have you seen Nick and Vanessa's kids? And what about Rachel and Bryan's wedding!

Rose gets in Consultant's face, asks -

ROSE (CONT'D)

Don't you think she needs some color?

CONSULTANT

Absolutely.

Consultant applies blusher to Ruth's cheeks, while Rose gets out her credit card.

RUTH

For a bunch of women who are supposed to be enemies, you guys are awfully chummy.

INT. BIG TOP TENT - ONE RING CIRCUS - NIGHT

A big crowd - and "Kelly-Miller Bros" logos everywhere.

Lance carries Dolly, as he and Ruth find their ringside seats. Ruth sneezes - KERCHOO! - but she's looking good!

A bit of a commotion over seating, until Lance is in the middle - between Dolly and Ruth. He turns to Dolly.

LANCE

Daddy's gonna go get popcorn. You stay here with Miss Ruthie.

RUTH

Ruth.

LANCE

Your meemaw called you Ruthie.

RUTH

Yes, and "my meemaw" is the only one on the planet who's allowed to do so.

LANCE

Yes, ma'am. Dolly, you stay here with Miss Ruth.

DOLLY

No! I want to come!

LANCE

But baby, I can't carry you. I need my hands free to carry popcorn.

RUTH

We just ate dinner, Lance. Why don't you wait a while?

LANCE

Good thinkin'.

He sits, she SNEEZES. He gives her his cloth handkerchief.

LANCE

Are you fixin' to catch cold?

RUTH

Thanks. No, it's just --
(sneezes)
-- perfume.

DOLLY

I want popcorn!

LANCE

We'll get it later.

DOLLY

No! Get it now!

Lance sighs, reaches for Dolly, stands.

INT. PATTY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

THE ENTRY WAY

Patty stands in the front door - now with two cardboard window panes - and stares out at

Rose, who stands on the front stoop, cradling Honeybuns.

ROSE
She's out on a date with him, right
now, as we speak.

PATTY
So.

ROSE
I just thought you might want to
know, that's all. Go on, Honeybuns,
wave bye bye.

She waggles his paw back and forth. Honeybuns gets a smug
look on his face - "heh, heh, heh" - and they leave.

Patty slams the door, races into

THE KITCHEN

and dials the phone:

PATTY
Sterling! How'd you like to take me
out tonight?
(listens)
No, I don't want to go to the
market. I want to go "out" out.
(listens)
Yes, as in "out on a date."

INT. SPORTS ARENA - THREE RING CIRCUS - NIGHT

Ruth has Lance and Dolly's empty seats on her right. She
SNEEZES, then watches three CLOWNS in a fire truck drive up
to a burning house and crash into a parked car. LAUGHTER.

Ruth looks over her shoulder and sees A GIGGLING COUPLE walk
down the steps. But no sign of Lance or Dolly.

INT. ORANGEVILLE BOWLING ALLEY - NIGHT

A busy Saturday night at the local lanes. Sterling steps up
to a lane, readies himself, throw a strike. Behind him at the
scoring table, Patty watches - dismayed.

PATTY
If I'd known you could bowl, I
would have asked you to go
miniature golfing!

STERLING
I haven't bowled in years. Forgot
how much fun it is.

Patty walks over, picks up her ball --

PATTY
Fun for you, maybe.

-- and throws a gutterball.

INT. SPORTS ARENA - THREE RING CIRCUS - NIGHT

Lance and Dolly return - he juggles three boxes of popcorn.
Ruth stands, takes two boxes, lets Dolly and Lance sit.

Ruth SNEEZES,

And popcorn hits Mr. ATTITUDE (40s) on her left.

RUTH
I am so sorry.

Attitude brushes popcorn out of his hair. Ruth sits.

RUTH
I'm allergic to my perfume. Sorry.

ATTITUDE
Yeah? Well I'm allergic to your
popcorn!

He SNEEZES all over her popcorn.

In a flash, Lance has Attitude collared, and is in his face.

LANCE
Where I come from, we don't treat a
lady that way.

Beat.

ATTITUDE
Okay.

LANCE
If I were you, I'd apologize.

ATTITUDE
Ah... sorry?

LANCE
Say it to the lady.

Lance holds Attitude down to Ruth.

ATTITUDE
Sorry... lady.

Lance dumps him in his seat. Throws forty bucks in his lap.

LANCE
I think you better go home now, and
come back tomorrow, after you learn
yourself some manners.

Attitude gets the heck outta Dodge. Lance sits down again.

Ruth stares straight ahead - takes sidelong glances at Lance.
Her face says it all: "Good grief - is this guy for real?"

Then, "Ya know, a girl could get used to a man like him."

LANCE
Sorry it took so long.

RUTH
You didn't miss much - the clowns,
the elephants and the lions.

LANCE
Shoot, that's pretty near half the
show. The lions!

RUTH
Oh, it was standard fare - a whip,
a chair, a death-defying act --

DOLLY
Ponies!

Six pastel-colored PONIES trot into each ring and gallop
around in circles. Dolly claps her hands and giggles.

DOLLY
They're so pretty, Daddy!

EXT. ORANGEVILLE BOWLING ALLEY - NIGHT

Patty and Sterling walk across the parking lot to his Chevy
Impala. Patty is dead cool, a real undercover detective.

PATTY
You ever thought about marrying
again, Sterling?

STERLING
Nope.

PATTY
Not even if the right woman comes
along?

He unlocks the car, lets Patty in.

STERLING
Got it right the second time
around, so I'm quitting while I'm
ahead.

INT. STERLING'S CHEVY IMPALA - NIGHT

Sterling gets in, starts the car, fusses with his seatbelt.

PATTY
Rose seems to like you.

STERLING
And I like her.

PATTY
And...?

STERLING
And somebody's just a little too
nosy, tonight!

PATTY
Just trying to look out for you,
Sterling, that's all.

STERLING
I appreciate it, Rose, but I can
look out for myself.

Sterling turns on his LIGHTS, reveals -

A MAN (50) and a WOMAN (50) in the car in front of them,
kissing passionately.

PATTY
My name is Patty.

STERLING
Huh?

PATTY
You just called me Rose.

INT. BIG TOP TENT - EXIT CORRIDORS - NIGHT

Lance carries Dolly, as he and Ruth walk toward the exit.
They pass VENDORS at a counter. Lance stops.

LANCE
I loved these when I was a kid!

RUTH
So did I!

They stoop down to see three goggle-eyed bright green CHAMELEONS, staring out from inside a large terrarium.

DOLLY
Buy me something, Daddy!

LANCE
Okay, but Peepaw doesn't have much room left, with all our stuff everywhere, so it has to be small.

Dolly points to gigantic stuffed ponies lined up in a row.

DOLLY
I want a pony! Please, Daddy, please!

LANCE
If I bought you a pony, we'd have to move out of Peepaw's house, just to make room for it.

DOLLY
No! I want a pony! Buy me a pony!

LANCE
Baby, I can't.

DOLLY
Yes you can!

Dolly bites the closest flesh she can find - Lance's cheek. He YELPS in pain, as Dolly launches a full-blown temper tantrum, right there in Lance's arms. He panics - what to do? Ruth looks around, shouts -

RUTH
Over here!

and hustles to

AN UNPOPULATED CORNER.

Lance follows, dodging Dolly's arms and legs.

RUTH
Lay her on the floor.
(off his look)
She'll be safe there, Lance.

He does so, jumps back, and Dolly continues her histrionics.

CIRCUS-GOERS stop and stare, shake their heads and move on. Suddenly angry, Ruth shouts -

RUTH
What's the matter! Haven't you ever seen a temper tantrum before?

LANCE
Temper tantrum? I thought she was just acting feisty.

RUTH
Sorry Lance, she was just acting spoiled.

EXT. STERLING'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Sterling's Impala parks in the driveway, and Sterling and Patty emerge. He walks her over to her front door.

EXT. PATTY'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

Sterling turns to go - Patty grabs his shirt, pulls him back.

PATTY
Kiss me.

STERLING
What!

PATTY
It's not gonna kill you. Kiss me.

Sterling takes off his hat, gives her a peck on the cheek, turns to go. She grabs his belt and yanks him back.

PATTY
That's not what I meant.

STERLING
I know what you meant, Patty, but I just can't.

She kisses him on the mouth - he is horror-struck - then she tastes her lips. And shakes her head - nah.

PATTY
I might as well be kissing my brother - if I had a brother.

STERLING
Can I go now... "Rose."

INT./EXT. LANCE'S HUMMER - NIGHT

Lance parks in front of Ruth's apartment building. He turns to face Ruth - and we see bite marks on his cheek.

LANCE
May I call you?

RUTH
I don't really have time for a relationship, right now.

LANCE
Ma'am?

RUTH
I like you, Lance.

LANCE
I like you, too.

RUTH
But you've got - a problem.

Lance looks back at Dolly, asleep in the back seat. He sighs.

LANCE
Cute as a button, and ornerier than a pack of mules.

RUTH
It's traumatic to lose a mother, at her age. You've got to be both mother and father to her, now.

LANCE
You're telling me!?

RUTH
I worked in a pre-school as an undergrad... Hey, I'll be right back!

She gets out of the car, dashes into her apartment building.

MINUTES LATER

Ruth exits the building and hands Lance a well-worn book through the Hummer's window. He reads the title -

LANCE
"Parenting Isn't... For Cowards?"

RUTH
Keep it as long as you want.

He looks at it, unsure. Gently, she touches his bite marks.

RUTH
Or, you could get a whip and a
chair.

EXT. LAMBERT STREET - CUL DE SAC - DAY

Wearing a suit and tie, Sterling sneaks out his front door, quick-walks past Patty's house, scurries up Rose's driveway.

EXT. ROSE'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - DAY

Rose opens the door, wearing a glitzy pant suit and a smile.

INT. ROSE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Sterling enters, looks around: Fake white bear skin rug in front of a pink loveseat.

Peacock feathers in a golden vase. Incense burning on a low table. And Honeybuns, blissfully stretched out on a pink cat bed, next to the loveseat.

STERLING
I like what you've done with the
place.

She touches her iPod and a thousand strings begin to play.

ROSE
Have a seat, I won't be a minute.

She disappears down the hallway, and he sits, leans back, closes his eyes, enjoys the music.

Rose reappears, crosses to the kitchen, puts in an earring. She lifts a SHOEBOX off the counter, holds it at arm's length, takes it to Sterling.

ROSE
Your son bought my Ruthie a present
last night.

The lid has holes. Sterling peeks inside - gets a surprise.

ROSE
She didn't want to leave it alone,
But she had to study at the law
library, today, so --

STERLING
-- she left it with you.

INT./EXT. PATTY'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - DAY

Patty looks out the door at Rose, who holds out the shoebox.

ROSE
-- and I know how much you love
critters, Patty. So do you think
you could possibly...?

Patty glances at Sterling's driveway, where he leans against
his Impala, and waits.

PATTY
Take it with you.

She shuts the door.

Sterling strides over, RINGS the bell.

Patty peeks out.

STERLING
Take the dumb lizard, Patty. I
don't ask for many favors.

She grabs the box and SLAMS the door. Then opens the box and
sees a small green CHAMELEON inside. She thinks for a beat...
a wicked smile. Then peeks outside, to

THE CUL DE SAC

and watches the Impala take off down the street.

She opens the door wide, puts the box on the front stoop, and
disappears inside for a beat. Then reappears and places a
bowl of milk next to the box. Scans the neighborhood, calls -

PATTY
Kitty, kitty!? Heeeere kitty,
kitty, kitty, kitty!

She waits... neither sight nor sound of a cat.

PATTY
Come to mama, little kitty!
(beat)
Stupid cat.

INT. ROSE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Honeybuns is curled up on the loveseat. At the SOUND of a window sliding open, he looks up, peers around the room.

Behind him, Patty's face appears at the backyard window. She takes the screen off and holds out a piece of cheese.

PATTY
Hey, cat! Want some cheese?

EXT. PATTY'S HOUSE - FRONT STOOP - DAY

Patty carries Honeybuns around the corner and places him on the stoop, near the milk. He sniffs, looks up with disdain.

PATTY
What do you want - champagne?

A smile flickers across his face - the cat equivalent of a courtesy laugh. He MEOWS, rubs against Patty's leg.

MOMENTS LATER

Honeybuns eats cheese from a plate, finishes. He sits back, cleans himself, spies the box. Sniffs it. Grows interested.

INT. PATTY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Godzelda sits in her tub, waiting. Patty places TWO CRICKETS inside the tub. Godzelda ignores them - then looks up at Patty with a sad look. RIBBIT? RIBBIT?

PATTY
What do you care? You two haven't even met!

Godzelda turns away, closes her eyes.

PATTY
Oh, pulling a hunger strike, hey?

EXT. PATTY'S HOUSE - FRONT STOOP - DAY

Honeybuns flips the lid off the box, stares at the Chameleon. Yum! A hand descends, and up Honeybuns rises - whoosh - as Patty carries him around the corner to Rose's back yard. His look says, "What'd I do - what'd I do?"

INT. PATTY'S HOUSE - DAY

THE KITCHEN

Godzelda and the Chameleon both sit inside Godzelda's tub. Godzelda flicks her tongue out - ZAP! And slurps up a cricket. ZAP! The Chameleon does the same. They munch away contentedly -

as Patty watches, from above.

PATTY
If you wanted to invite a friend to
lunch, all you had to do was ask.

DING DONG! Patty answers

THE FRONT DOOR and finds -

PATTY
Lance!

Standing there, with a bandaid on his cheek.

PATTY
How's the househunting going?

LANCE
I'm on my way to make an offer.

PATTY
That was quick.

LANCE
Mrs. O'Connor, if it's all right
with you, I'd like to ask your
granddaughter to go out with me.

PATTY
Candy?

LANCE
That's the name! All I could think
of was "Sugar."

PATTY
Sure, I'll go get her number.

Patty heads back to

THE KITCHEN

blows a kiss at the critters, and grabs a pad and pen.

INT. PATTY'S HOUSE - PATTY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Patty dumps her MAD MONEY onto the bed. Counts it, grins.

PATTY
 One hundred and sixty smackeros!
 Time to go a little "mad."

LATER

Patty lies on the bed, phone to her ear.

PATTY
 He knows a keeper when he sees one.
 So, what you gonna wear?

INTERCUT

INT. CANDY'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

It has an artsy, lived-in look. Candy reclines on a purple bean-bag chair and talks on the phone.

CANDY
 Maybe my blue and yellow sundress.

PATTY
 Nah. Let's go shopping! My treat.

Candy stares at the receiver - in shock.

END INTERCUT

INT. HUGE INDOOR MALL - DAY

Candy and Patty stroll down the mallway. Candy stops in front of A SMALL BOUTIQUE and points at a peasant blouse and tie-dye skirt, perfect for a dancing gypsy.

Patty pastes on her polite smile, walks on, stops in front of MACY'S DEPARTMENT STORE - there are sale signs in every window. Patty strides inside. Candy trails behind.

INT. MACY'S DEPARTMENT STORE - DAY

Candy looks through a sale rack, pulls out the same GLITZY PANT SUIT Rose wore with Sterling.

Patty frowns.

PATTY
 It looks cheap.

Candy puts it back, flips through more clothes.

PATTY
 Wait!

Patty points at a tailored blue suit.

PATTY
That's nice.

CANDY
Grammy! My boss wears stuff like that, and she watches "The Brady Bunch!"

PATTY
I like "The Brady Bunch." Oh phooey. There must be something here, we both like.

A svelte SALESLERK (50s) approaches.

SALESLERK
Can I help you ladies find something?

CANDY/PATTY
Yes.

PATTY
Something modest.

CANDY
Something sexy.

SALESLERK
I see. Sexy, but not too sexy. Modest, but not too modest.

CANDY/PATTY
Right!

LATER - OUTSIDE THE FITTING ROOM DOOR

Patty sits on a chair and waits.

SERIES OF SHOTS: CANDY TRIES ON CLOTHES

A) Candy walks out in a yellow pant suit. Patty smiles - Candy frowns.

CANDY
I look like a fireman!

B) Candy walks out in a clingy purple dress. Candy smiles - Patty frowns.

PATTY
You look like a prune.

C) Candy walks out in a sexy shorts outfit, looks at Patty's face - rolls her eyes and returns to the fitting room.

EXT. DENNY'S COFFEE SHOP - ESTABLISHING

A familiar, no-frills, family restaurant.

INT. DENNY'S COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Patty and Candy sit at a booth and argue over hamburgers -

PATTY

A man wants a wife who's sensible
and modest --

CANDY

Oh, brother.

PATTY

-- and who won't send the wrong
signals to other men.

CANDY

I don't give a rip! I just want to
wear something I like.

PATTY

Candy Cane, I love your sense of
style.

CANDY

Then why do you make "that face"
every time I find something I like?

PATTY

Because it's time to settle down,
now, and think about other things,
besides style.

CANDY

I get it - this is a lecture lunch!
Grammy, if you wanted to tell me
your philosophy of life, why didn't
you just write me a letter!

PATTY

Because you need to make a good
impression on Lance! He's the first
decent man who's taken an interest.

Ouch - the truth hurts, and Candy is suddenly quiet.

INT. CANDY'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

A sheer black blouse lands on top of a pile of rejected outfits, on top of an unmade queen bed. On either side of the bed, apple crates serve as bedside tables.

On one crate, sits a photo of a long-haired musician, 25, playing an electric guitar. Written in the corner: "SUGAR CANDY, YOU ROCK MY WORLD!" Signed at the bottom, "REX."

Candy walks into view, buttoning a prim blouse over linen slacks. She stands on tiptoe, looks in the dresser mirror.

CANDY

No way!

Two seconds, then the blouse and slacks land on top of the reject pile, and Candy disappears into an adjoining bathroom. We hear VOMITING NOISES, then see Candy brushing her teeth.

She finishes, walks to her closet, chooses a blue and yellow sundress, puts it on, looks in the mirror.

CANDY

Hmmmm... sexy, but not too sexy.

She adds a short sleeve sweater.

CANDY

Modest, but not too modest.

She twirls, lands face-up on top of the pile. Thank God!

EXT. MINIATURE GOLF LAND - DAY

A fairyland of fun. Lance, Candy, and Dolly approach

THE FIRST HOLE,

where the ball must dodge the blades of a rotating windmill, and go through a tunnel under the windmill to the other side.

Dolly goes first. Lance tries to help - she pushes him away.

DOLLY

No! Let me do it.

Dolly's backswing drives the ball behind her.

DOLLY

Uh oh.

Lance retrieves the ball.

LANCE
Take your time, baby.

Dolly swings, misses. Throws her putter to the ground.

DOLLY
I hate this game!

Candy throws her putter down next to Dolly's.

CANDY
Me, to! I say we lose these stupid
putters. And do it the easy way,
instead.

She walks to the tee, removes Dolly's ball, gives it to her.
Then rolls her own ball down the green, as if she were lawn
bowling. It glides through the opening, between the blades.

CANDY
Woo hoo!

DOLLY
I wanna try!
(then)
Stay away, Daddy.

Dolly throws a humdinger - smack into a windmill blade. WHAP!
It ricochets back, Lance catches it, and Candy CLAPS.

CANDY
Nice one, Dolly! Woo hoo!

Dolly looks up at Candy and smiles.

SERIES OF SHOTS: FUN AND GOOFY GOLF - DAY

A) THE ARROWHEAD: A T-shaped green.

At the top of the "T," an arrowhead protrudes three feet into
the green. To the left of the arrowhead, is the hole. To the
right, is a water trap - minus the water and filled with four
inches of sand. A sign in the middle of the trap reads -

"DUE TO THE DROUGHT, THIS WATER TRAP IS DRY. WE'RE DOING OUR
PART TO CONSERVE WATER - GOLFLAND."

Lance rolls his ball down the green - it strikes the right
side, and lands in the dry pond with a THUD. Candy CLAPS.

CANDY
Good job, Daddy!

Dolly CLAPS.

DOLLY
Good job, Daddy!

B) THE ANT HILL: Twenty feet from the tee is a three-foot "ant hill." The hole is in the center of the hilltop.

Dolly holds onto Lance's hand, leans out over the hole, and drops the ball. It misses the center and rolls down the hill.

DOLLY
Woo woo!

Candy and Lance smile.

C) THE LAST HOLE: Lance sits, tallies up the scorecards. Candy reads over his shoulder.

CANDY
Six hundred and thirty-five? Dolly
has the most points - Dolly wins!

Woo-hoos all round! Lance takes Candy's hand, as they walk off the course.

INT. CANDY'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Still in her sundress, Candy enters the front door, spots the LIGHT blinking on the answering machine, and punches a button. A hip male voice chimes out -

REX (O.C.)
Yo Sugar Candy, what up?

Candy rolls her eyes.

REX (O.C.)
Hey, I'm sorry we had words, baby,
real sorry. But sometimes you can
cop this major attitude, and
then... whoa! I didn't call to rag
on you, baby. Forgive and forget -
is that cool?

Candy frowns - not cool.

REX (O.C.)
So. The band is hot. I mean, really
hot. I wanted to call sooner, but
this bus is a piece of crap, and
it's been a real trip... Hah! Trip!
Hey, I'll call you again next week,
so try and be home, okay?

(MORE)

REX (O.C.) (CONT'D)

(then)

Ya know, you could turn on your
cell phone. I love you.

BEEP - message over. Candy growls, heads to --

INT. CANDY'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Her bed, flops down, picks up Rex's picture, and looks at it.
Then slams the photo under the bed, turns off the light,
curls up into a ball, and stares out into the dark.

EXT. LAMBERT STREET - CUL DE SAC - DAY

Rose and Sterling walk up to Patty's Ford Escort.

STERLING

I can't really tell, 'till I start
it up and look under the hood.

INT. PATTY'S HOUSE - DAY

THE ENTRY WAY

Wearing black rubber gloves, goggles and a black rubber
apron, Patty opens her front door - sees Rose - and balks.

PATTY

Busy! Come back next year!

She shuts the door - but Rose sticks her foot in the doorjamb
and shouts -

ROSE

I want to buy your car!

Patty leans on her side of the door, shouts back -

PATTY

How does it feel to want?

Rose thrusts her hand through the opening.

ROSE

Give me the keys! My money's as
good as the next person's.

Patty shrugs - steps back - and Rose falls inside. KABOOM.
Patty watches - loves it - then walks down the hallway to

THE BATHROOM

where Godzelda's aquarium is in pieces, all over the room.

Patty kneels at the tub and scrubs the tank. Rose enters.

ROSE
Where are those keys!

PATTY
Hand me the filter.

Patty points at the sink. Rose reaches in - jumps in horror.

ROSE
Oh my Lord, it's all slimy!

Patty scoots over, reaches in, brings Godzelda up and shoves her in Rose's face.

PATTY
What'd you expect - fur?

Rose SCREAMS - skedaddles out of the house in a panic.

Patty kisses Godzelda's green head.

PATTY
That's a good little froggy.

Godzelda produces a froggy grin.

A phone RINGS. Patty pulls her portable phone out of her pocket, listens... pleased.

PATTY
So - what did you end up wearing?

She heads for the front door, grabs the car keys from the entry table and opens the door, to find -

Rose, about to knock again. She steps inside, as Patty dangles the keys in her face, then --

PATTY
Say that again, please, Candy Cane?

-- holds the phone out for Rose to hear:

CANDY (O.S.)
Lance says I'm the only girl he's dated that Dolly actually likes!

PATTY
Gotta go - call ya back - bye!

Patty punches the off button. Rose is furious!

PATTY

Pity things didn't work out between Lance and "Ruthie." After he spent all that money - on a lizard!

ROSE

Well ha, ha. Candy might hang onto Lance for a month or two, until she begins to show, that is. You really think he wants a package deal?

PATTY

Oh, get off your high horse!

ROSE

Oooooohh! What's the matter, Patty, did little old Rose hit a nerve?

PATTY

What's wrong with a package deal? It worked for you, didn't it!

ROSE

But my husband wanted to marry the mother of his child. I didn't have to search all over town for a substitute daddy.

PATTY

No. You didn't. You laid a trap for my Eddie, and it worked just the way you wanted it to - you - you Jezebel!

Rose marches outside and SLAMS the door behind her. A third pane SHATTERS. Patty leans against the wall - she is shaking.

EXT. PATTY'S HOUSE - DAY

A scowling Patty exits the front door - it has three cardboard panes, now - and locks it.

She carries a wheeled shopping basket down the stairs - sees Dolly and Sterling standing in his driveway - and keeps on walking, trailing her basket behind her.

STERLING

Hello, Patty.

PATTY

Sterling.

STERLING

Lance found a house!

She keeps walking.

STERLING
He's gonna rent it, 'till escrow
closes - and are we still friends?

PATTY
I thought Rose was your friend,
now.

She walks on.

EXT. DOWNTOWN ORANGEVILLE - BUS SHELTER - DAY

An Orangeville city bus pulls up to the shelter and Patty gets off. She sets off down the road, toward...

EXT. SINGLE-STORY OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

A nondescript building. A row of doors faces the street. Patty enters one marked, "HANK FLANNIGAN, FAMILY LAW."

INT. HANK'S INNER OFFICE - DAY

A book-lined room. HANK Flannigan - 60s, intelligent - WHISTLES softly, looks across his executive desk at Patty.

HANK
You want to leave her your house?

PATTY
Got a better idea, Hank? Know any
single men, on the lookout for an
instant family?

He sighs, pulls out a legal tablet and pen.

HANK
Full, legal name?

PATTY
Candace Patricia Wells.

HANK
Age?

PATTY
Twenty-one.

HANK
Address?

PATTY
1359 Orangeville Drive, number 104.

HANK
I'll have the paperwork ready for
you in a week. Now --

He comes out from behind the desk and sits next to Patty.

HANK
-- you told me Candy's news, but
how're you doing, Patty?

PATTY
Oh, same old, same old.

HANK
You ought to do something fun. Go
on a cruise - remodel your house -
take up square dancing.

Patty laughs, gets ready to go.

HANK
Don't leave everything to your
family. They'll manage just fine,
with half of what you've got,
socked away.

PATTY
My bus'll be here in ten minutes.

HANK
Let me take you to the Harvest
Dance, Saturday night.

PATTY
Sorry, Hank - I never learned to
dance.

EXT. SINGLE-STORY OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

Patty exits Hank's office, starts off toward the bus shelter,
then stops - deep in thought. Suddenly, she crosses the road
and heads toward the COMMUNITY CENTER.

EXT. ORANGEVILLE COMMUNITY CENTER - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The busiest spot in town, cars galore. Candy's Bug drives up,
Patty and Candy get out and walk toward the door - arguing.

CANDY
Oh come on, Grammy - it'll be fun!

PATTY

No! I don't need to land a husband,
you do.

CANDY

I am not taking another step, until
you say, "Yes!"

PATTY

No!

Candy walks back to her car, gets in, and starts the engine.
Patty stomps over, knocks on the window, Candy rolls it down.

CANDY

Is that a yes?

INT. ORANGEVILLE COMMUNITY CENTER - DANCE ROOM - NIGHT

Wooden floors and mirrors on the walls. About twenty STUDENTS
(20-70) are assembled for a class, including Patty and Candy.
The idle chatter stops when MISS ROJAS - 30s, a Latin beauty
and a real hot tamale - enters and CLAPS her hands.

MISS ROJAS

Hola! My name is Miss Rojas, and I
am bilingual. But some words are
better in *Espanol* than English, so
you will bear with me! *Si?*

CANDY

Si!

MISS ROJAS

Gracias, senorita. Tonight, we
start with the cha-cha-cha. Some
people call it the cha-cha, but
when I hear the music, it says to
me, "Cha-cha-cha," so I call it by
that name. *Si?*

Several Students, including Candy, say, "Si!"

Miss Rojas looks over - as Rose and Ruth enter the studio.

ROSE

I am so sorry! We got lost, trying
to -
(sees Patty)
Oh...

PATTY

Great.

Miss Rojas CLAPS her hands.

MISS ROJAS
You will be on time next week, *si*?

ROSE
Oh, *si. Si!*

PATTY
She will be late next week, *si, si!*

Laughter.

MISS ROJAS
No, no, no! Respect! If we respect
each other, then we are free to
make the dance. We can not worry
who might dis-respect us.
(to Patty)
So, no more funny business!

Patty flashes her toothy smile. Miss Rojas looks the group
over, counts heads.

MISS ROJAS
Okay - we have more women than men.
Who volunteers to be a man?

Candy raises her hand.

MISS ROJAS
Mui bien, senorita. You are my star
pupil. Now please get into couples.

Students pair up. Patty gets a BORE (40), Ruth gets a LIVE
WIRE (50), and Candy is stuck with Rose.

ROSE
At least I still get to be a girl.

CANDY
Yeah, but I get to lead!

She gives Rose a twirl, and Rose laughs.

Miss Rojas aims a remote control at a portable player, and
the popular melody, "TEA FOR TWO," begins to play.

MISS ROJAS
Now, listen - and watch!

She cha-cha-cha's around the room and counts -

MISS ROJAS
 One, two, cha-cha-cha! And one,
 two, cha-cha-cha! Do you hear it?

CANDY/ROSE
Si!

LATER

Couples are posed throughout the room, ready to dance.
 Everyone looks at Miss Rojas.

MISS ROJAS
 Let's see what you have learned.

She clicks a remote control, MUSIC STARTS, and couples dance.

MISS ROJAS
 One, two, cha-cha-cha! And one,
 two, cha-cha-cha!

Live Wire bounces Ruth around the floor, as she hangs on for dear life. The Bore dances with Patty, eyes on his feet. Her polite smile is pasted on her face. She looks around, sees -

Rose and Candy dancing like pros. Patty's smile fades. She watches as Candy dips Rose - and Rose comes up shimmying!

Candy spins, claps out the beat - and Rose does it right back at her, still dancing! Candy chants -

CANDY
 Man oh man - I like it hot! Man oh
 man - I like it hot!

ROSE
 Oh baby - what I have got! Oh baby -
 what I have got!

CANDY
 You go girl - you got a lot! You go
 girl - you got a lot!

ROSE
 It's true, it's true. I know you
 know it's true - hey!

The MUSIC ENDS and they fall into one another's arms - to APPLAUSE from other Students who encircle them.

Outside the circle, stands Patty, steaming like Mt. Vesuvius.

INT. CANDY'S VW BUG - NIGHT

Candy and Patty leave the Community Center - arguing.

CANDY
Geez, Grammy, chillax.

PATTY
If you knew what I knew about that floozy, you wouldn't tell me to "chillax!"

CANDY
But I don't know what you know.

PATTY
Just stay away from Rose - if you want Lance to marry you.

CANDY
Grammy, I've had one date with the man!

PATTY
You can't trust a woman like her, she'll ruin your life! It'll be hard enough to keep Lance interested in you, once he finds out you're a package deal.

CANDY
Package deal? Package deal!! Oh, that's a great way to put it.

PATTY
Well?

INT. RUTH'S TOYOTA PICK UP - NIGHT

Ruth and Rose drive home - arguing.

ROSE
I'm sorry, Ruthie. I really shouldn't fraternize with the enemy like that.

RUTH
Excuse me?

ROSE
After all, Lance did dump you for her.

RUTH
Lance didn't dump me. I dumped him!

ROSE
Good Lord, whatever for?

RUTH
For reasons of my own, that's what
for.

ROSE
But you practically threw her at
him!

RUTH
Who? Who did I throw?

ROSE
Candy, of course. The enemy!

RUTH
Lance is dating Candy?

ROSE
What did you expect?

RUTH
(hiding her hurt)
If he wants to date somebody else -
I don't care. After all, we're just
friends.

ROSE
You are mad at me!

RUTH
Nana, get over yourself!

EXT. LANCE'S HOUSE - DAY

A classy, rambling, Spanish stucco. Candy's VW pulls into the
driveway. Candy gets out, walks to the front door and KNOCKS.

INT. LANCE'S HOUSE - DAY

Modern and bright, but not much furniture. And moving boxes
everywhere. Lance, in jeans and tee shirt, answers the door.

LANCE
Candy! Come on in.

CANDY
Your dad gave me your address.

LANCE
Dolly's still asleep, and I just
shut down the computer.

CANDY
My timing isn't always this good.
Sometimes it's really kinda bad.

LANCE
I know I should've called, but --

CANDY
(interrupting)
No, it's not that.

LANCE
Oh.

CANDY
Can you boil water?

INT. LANCE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

Gleaming appliances, and an empty dining room. Candy sits at the breakfast bar, dunks a tea bag in her mug, as Lance pours hot water into his.

CANDY
I just discovered ginger tea.

Lance spoons instant coffee into his mug, stirs.

CANDY
It's very good for what ails me.

LANCE
Mary Lou used to drink ginger tea.

CANDY
Yeah?

LANCE
Yes ma'am... when she was --

CANDY
Pregnant?

He nods. The light dawns.

CANDY
I should've told you before we went
out. But I was just getting used to
the idea, myself - ya know?

He nods.

LANCE
Your fella - is he still around?

Her eyes fill with tears. She shakes her head, no.

CANDY
Trouble is, I still like him.

He hands her his handkerchief.

LANCE
Yes, ma'am. I believe you do.

INT. ROSE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

A negligéed Rose staggers into the kitchen, hand on her back.

ROSE
Ow! You did one too many cha-cha-
cha's last night, girlfriend.

She pours water into a gleaming kettle, stares at her distorted reflection in the surface.

ROSE
I've got a hang over and that awful
morning-after feeling - and I
didn't even have alcohol, or a man!

She puts the kettle on the stove, looks out the window, sees -
Lance's Hummer pull into Sterling's driveway.

ROSE
Well, speak of the devil.

INT. STERLING'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

A small room. Lance and Sterling sit and talk.

Dolly lies on the floor, coloring, her face smeared with chocolate.

LANCE
We like it fine, Daddy, but I still
need to buy more furniture.

STERLING
Either that, or marry some rich old
gal with a truckload of antiques!

They chuckle, while out the window we catch a glimpse of -

Rose, sneaking toward the living room window.

EXT. STERLING'S HOUSE - DAY

Rose slithers along the wall, drops down on all fours, crawls

BEHIND A BUSH, UNDER THE WINDOW

and comes up face to face with

Patty.

And we see

TWO SILENT FEMALE SCREAMING, followed by

TWO SILENT FEMALES PANICKING, until

TWO FEMALE JAWS ARE SET IN STONE, and

Rose mimes, "Get outta here!" to Patty, and

Patty mimes back, "Why don't you try and make me!"

Suddenly, Rose grabs Patty's arm and they freeze, listen to:

LANCE (O.S.)

I guess I'll just have to choose
one or the other.

Rose and Patty's eyes grow wide.

STERLING (O.S.)

Ah - take 'em both, why don't ya?

LANCE (O.S.)

Oh, all right, Daddy - it can't
hurt just this once, I reckon.

The women stare at each other, shocked. The nerve!

Rose crawls out from under the window, jets around to

THE FRONT DOOR

and marches into the house - with Patty close behind.

INT. STERLING'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Rose bursts into the room, with Patty right after.

ROSE

How dare you! How dare you do this
to -

Rose stops, looks at Lance, he sits by the table, a PIECE OF CHOCOLATE in each hand, and a box of chocolates on the table.

LANCE
Howdy, ladies. Would ya'all like a piece of my Daddy's birthday candy?

Rose and Patty stare, mouths open. Backpeddle like crazy:

ROSE
No thank you, not right now, we...

PATTY
Just came about the...

ROSE
Cat! Have you got Honeybuns in here?

PATTY
How dare you take her cat, without her permission!

STERLING
Huh?

PATTY
There are stiff fines in this town for cat-napping!

Lance and Sterling guffaw.

LANCE
Good one, Mrs. O'Connor!

STERLING
Nice to have you talking to me again, Patty. So, what's the real reason you ladies are in my living room at ten-thirty in the morning, hey?

PATTY
(to Rose)
Go ahead - tell him.

ROSE
Well. We'd like to invite you all over to my house tonight, for --

PATTY
A birthday dinner!

ROSE

Yes.

DOLLY

I want to come!

STERLING

Why, thank you ladies. So Rose, did a "little bird" tell you it was my birthday, today?

PATTY

Tweet, tweet! And Rose is inviting Ruth and Candy, too. Aren't you, Rosie dear?

EXT. STERLING'S HOUSE - DAY

Rose and Patty scurry down the walkway and head for home.

ROSE

Thank you for inviting both girls.

PATTY

You're welcome!

ROSE

I like the idea of Lance seeing them, side by side. Is Candy showing, yet?

PATTY

(makes a fist)
How about I show you a knuckle sandwich!

ROSE

Oooh, temper, temper! You don't want any more frown lines on that pretty face of yours.

INT. PATTY'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - DAY

Patty stands in front of the mirror, examines her face.

PATTY

Frown lines?

She holds up a fist towards Rose's house.

PATTY

The only difference between your face and mine, is --
(to the mirror)

(MORE)

PATTY (CONT'D)

-- what is the difference between
her face and mine?

The sound of BRAKES SQUEALING comes through the window, and Patty stands on the toilet, looks out the window, and sees -

An Orangeville taxi cab sitting in Rose's driveway. Rose jumps in, and the cab leaves.

EXT. PATTY'S BACK YARD - DAY

Patty wanders over to the fence, looks around a bit, then hops it and sneaks over to...

EXT. ROSE'S BACK YARD - PATIO - DAY

Rose's back door. She tries the knob, when inspiration hits. She pivots, walks across the patio, toward the gas barbecue.

INT. ROSE'S HOUSE - ENTRY WAY - NIGHT

Rose - sexy in a long skirt and halter top - lets Lance, Dolly, and Sterling in. Lance hands her two bottles of wine.

ROSE

This'll liven up the party!

A throaty laugh, then Rose leads her guests out to...

EXT. ROSE'S BACK YARD - PATIO - NIGHT

Where Candy and Ruth sit on new lawn furniture. Rose turns to Lance -

ROSE

Have a seat, boys.

DOLLY

I'm not a boy!

Dolly stomps off to the back fence and kicks it.

RUTH

Hi, Lance - had a chance to look at my book, yet?

LANCE

No, ma'am. Me and Dolly just moved house - we've been a little busy.

DOLLY (O.S.)

Daddy, come here!

LANCE

Beg pardon.

He walks to the fence, kneels by Dolly. Candy walks over, joins them, and jokes -

CANDY

"Daddy, come here!" This is the most important fence in the world, and if you don't look at it right now, I'll turn you into a pickle!

Dolly pouts. Candy turns to Lance.

CANDY

Hey.

LANCE

Hey.

ROSE (O.S.)

Does anybody know where Patty is?

Rose stands at the patio door, barbecue tongs in hand.

STERLING

Give me those tongs, Rose. This is a man's job.

ROSE

Thank you! You want to light my fire?

STERLING

You bet I do.

The Doors' "COME ON BABY, LIGHT MY FIRE" begins to play.

ROSE

Don't go away, I'll be right back.

Rose goes inside, as HEADLIGHTS shine into the backyard. The sound of a CAR DOOR SLAMMING comes from the street.

A beat, then Patty appears at the side gate. It's -

THE NEW AND IMPROVED PATTY O'CONNOR, in a slinky black dress, with cleavage, strappy sandals, sexy make up, and hair the color of a new penny.

PATTY

Evening, neighbors.

The MUSIC BUILDS TO A CRESCENDO, as Patty glides across the patio to Sterling and whispers -

PATTY
I have a little present for you,
honey, but I can't show it to you
with all these people around.

Sterling about dies. Candy stands up, eyes wide.

CANDY
Grammy!?

PATTY
Find me a drink, honey. I'm a
little thirsty.

Candy nods, heads for the house.

PATTY
Something strong.

Rose appears in the doorway.

ROSE
I got the matches, and --

THE MUSIC SCREECHES TO A STOP.

ROSE
-- who are you, and who told you to
come into my backyard!?

STERLING
Rose, this is Patty!

PATTY
Call me Patrice.

ROSE
I didn't recognize. She looks so --

STERLING
Good?

ROSE
-- different.

Patty takes Sterling's arm, steers him toward the side fence.
Oozes pheromones.

PATTY
I wonder if you could help me with
a little problem I'm having, Sterl.

STERLING

Try me!

PATTY

You see those cute little blue
flowers over there, in my yard?

ROSE (O.S.)

Yoo hoo!

STERLING

I sure do.

PATTY

Well, I've tried everything I can
think of, but --

Rose butts her head in between them, chides Sterling --.

ROSE

You're supposed to light my fire!

STERLING

Later.

(to Patty)

You were saying?

ROSE

But everybody's hungry, Sterling.

STERLING

Not now!

ROSE

But I can't do it, without you.

Sterling sighs. And kisses Patty's hand.

STERLING

I'll be right back.

Patty watches Sterling go. Yes! She savors her victory...
until she sees him at the barbecue --

PATTY

Sterling! Wait!

-- with a lighter in hand. The MUSIC RESUMES:

JIM MORRISON'S VOICE

"Try to set the night on fire!"

PATTY

No!

Sterling lights the gas - KABOOM! A fireball shoots up, and black smoke fills the air. Sterling staggers backward.

Rose grabs the hose, but Ruth knocks it away.

RUTH

No water!

She bangs the lid shut, smothers the flame, turns off the gas. Then Lance leads Sterling to a chair. He sits, dazed.

LANCE

Dad?

Sterling looks up - white eyes stare out from a black face.

LANCE

Are you okay?

STERLING

I... I think so.

ROSE

I used that grill just yesterday,
and it was fine.

RUTH

Better take him to the shower and
run cold water on his face, just to
be safe.

LANCE

Good thinkin', Ruthie. I mean,
Ruth.

EXT. LITTLE TOKYO JAPANESE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Lance opens the door for the party-goers, minus Dolly.

LANCE

Ya'all are gonna love this place.

STERLING

Thank you, son. You saved my party.

Sterling's face is a little red, but otherwise he's fine.

INT. LITTLE TOKYO JAPANESE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

A Japanese HOSTESS (35) in a kimono leads the party to a private room. She stops at a bench outside the door.

Meanwhile, Rose and Patty vie for the only other man present: Lance. He listens, as Rose whispers in his ear. He guffaws.

LANCE
My mama warned me about women like
you!

ROSE
Oh, what does your mama know.

PATTY
A whole lot more than he does!

More guffaws. Patty puts her hand on Lance's arm, flirts -

PATTY
I know a thing or two, Lancey
Pants.

LANCE
I bet you do.

PATTY
But I'm not telling.

Patty bats her lashes. One of them falls off onto her plate. She stares at it for a beat, then stabs at it with her fork.

LANCE
I like a woman with some mystery to
her.

STERLING
Oh my God - my teeth are numb! I
can't feel my teeth!

Lance and his ladies lose it! Candy rolls her eyes, heads for the doorway. Ruth follows.

INT. LITTLE TOKYO JAPANESE RESTAURANT - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Candy and Ruth primp at the mirror.

RUTH
Are you going out with Lance?

CANDY
Nope - you can have him if you want
him.

Ruth is relieved. Nevertheless, she shrugs -

RUTH
Whatever.

CANDY

Hah! Our grannies like him better than we do.

RUTH

Tell me about it. Mine thinks he's Prince Charming, with credit cards.

CANDY

Totally!

(as inspiration dawns)

You know what - we ought to teach our grannies a lesson!

RUTH

Oh, you mean, get them to join the twenty-first century, and let the old one "rust" in peace?

Candy checks under the stalls for feet, then grins at Ruth.

CANDY

I bet we could get Lance to help.

Ruth's eyes light up. Candy whispers in Ruth's ear - Ruth listens, eyes wide. Ruth whispers back into Candy's ear - Candy claps her hand over her mouth, and snickers.

EXT. LANCE'S HOUSE - DAY

Ruth's truck parks in the driveway and Ruth and Candy get out - chatting and giggling - and walk to the door.

INT. LANCE'S HOUSE - DAY

Bleary-eyed and unshaven, Lance answers the door in his bathrobe, mug of coffee in hand.

CANDY

We want to know what you did to our grannies!

LANCE

Ma'am?

CANDY

Last night, after we dropped you off!

RUTH

Or were you too out of it, to remember?

They walk right past Lance and look around the house.

RUTH
Great - two wings. That's handy!

CANDY
Yeah! One wing for your granny, and
one wing for mine.

LANCE
Wait, I didn't do anything to your
grannies.

CANDY
How do you know?

RUTH
Do you remember everything from
last night?

CANDY
Do you remember singing "My Country
Tis of Thee" to the waitress?

RUTH
Or arm-wrestling your dad for the
bill?

CANDY
Or giving horsey rides around the
parking lot?

Lance collapses into a chair.

LANCE
I did all that?

RUTH
No - but you could have.

CANDY
We were only "foolin' with ya."

LANCE
What's gotten into you two? I
thought you were nice girls.

CANDY
We used to be - until our grannies
got ahold of us!

RUTH
And tried to turn us into them!

CANDY
And buy us off with fancy presents.

RUTH
And poison our minds with their
sexist philosophies.

CANDY
And it almost worked, too!

RUTH
Which is why we're here today - to
present our case to you, your
honor.

CANDY
Totally. We need your help, Lance.

LANCE
You do?

CANDY
It's the only way we can teach our
grannies a lesson.

LANCE
Teach your grannies a lesson?

CANDY
Is there an echo in here?

LANCE
How do you figure on doing that?

CANDY
Oooh baby - you asked the right
question!

Both girls CACKLE, and Lance can't help but smile.

INT. PATTY'S HOUSE - DAY

THE KITCHEN

Hair awry and make-up smeared, Patty stands at the sink in
her PJs, scrubs a frying pan, and gives herself a talking to -

PATTY
Stayin' out 'till three in the
morning, drinkin' like a fish, and
flirting like a cow! When you know
you don't give a hoot about the old
coot - or his wet-behind-the-ears
son!

She looks up and sees STERLING'S FACE in her window. CLANG!
She drops the pan. OW! She grabs her foot and hops.

Sterling points at the front door, raises his eyebrows, and grins.

THE ENTRY WAY - MOMENTS LATER

Sterling charges inside and throws his arms around Patty.

PATTY
Sterling?!

STERLING
You said my name - you drive me wild!

He kisses her neck, her shoulder. She struggles -

PATTY
Let me go!

STERLING
Don't fight it, darling, we were meant to be.

She frees herself. He lunges, she dodges - he rams his head into the wall - BONK! He slithers down the wall to the floor.

A beat, and then he comes back up again, smiling.

STERLING
Patrice!

She hobbles into

THE LIVING ROOM

and he chases after.

STERLING
I love you!

PATTY
No you don't - you love Rose!

She hops behind the recliner. He walks toward her, holds out his arms and SINGS -

STERLING
"Strangers in the night, exchanging
glances, wondering in the night,
what were the chances --"

PATTY
You don't love me! You love the
idea of me!

She dodges his arms, hops into

THE KITCHEN

and scoops up the frying pan. Sterling follows.

STERLING

I didn't know it until last night --

PATTY

This hair, this face, I'm only a
cardboard woman on a tinsel-covered
background.

STERLING

-- but I've always loved you!

He advances - she retreats.

PATTY

No! You're just in love with love!

STERLING

I'm miserable without you, Patty.

She positions the pan like a baseball bat.

PATTY

You wanna be really miserable,
Sterling?

He slumps onto a kitchen chair.

STERLING

Don't do this to me, Patty - don't
do this to us!

She lowers the pan.

PATTY

You'll get over me, Sterling. Some
strong coffee, a good meal--

STERLING

Will you make it for me?

PATTY

No.

He puts his head on the table and sobs.

EXT. PATTY'S HOUSE - DAY

An un-glamorous Patty peers out the front door, and over -to Sterling's house. The coast is clear. She exits, locks the door, and hustles down the sidewalk, trailing her shopping basket behind her. She's back to her no-nonsense self.

EXT. LAMBERT STREET - CORNER - DAY

Patty gets on an Orangeville bus, and the bus departs.

ACROSS THE STREET

Ruth ascends from the bushes and watches the bus through a pair of binoculars. She picks up her cell phone and speaks -

RUTH
Elvis has left the building.

She watches the area, waits until she sees Lance's Hummer approach, pull into Lambert Street and head to Patty's house.

INT. LANCE'S HUMMER - DAY

Lance drives, and Candy's at shotgun. The radio blares -

RADIO ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
Good news from the weatherman! We
will have rain, later in the week.

Lance turns the radio OFF as he approaches Patty's driveway, and Candy speaks into her cell phone -

CANDY
We are locked on target.

EXT. LAMBERT STREET - CORNER BUSHES - DAY

Ruth nods, hangs up her cell phone, dials again.

INT. ROSE'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - DAY

Rose applies mascara. Her phone RINGS. She answers.

RUTH
Nana, I think I dropped my wallet
on your front lawn last night.
Could you go outside and check?

EXT. ROSE'S HOUSE - DAY

With only one eye mascara'ed, Rose scans her front lawn.

BAM! A car door slams, and Rose looks over at...

INTERCUT

EXT. PATTY'S HOUSE - DAY

Patty's driveway, where Lance helps Candy out of the Hummer.

Rose darts behind the Mustang, and the soap opera begins:

Candy throws her arms around Lance and kisses him. It's only a "stage kiss," and Rose is the intended audience.

Lance takes Candy's left hand in his, slips a gigantic "diamond" ring onto her finger. His lines sound rehearsed:

LANCE

That sure does look pretty on your hand, Candy baby.

But Candy's a born soap opera queen -

CANDY

Oh, I just wish I could wear it in public, my darling sugar-man.

LANCE

Not until I break things off with Ruth, you sweet thing.

CANDY

'Till then, I must hide my true feelings from the world. Oh, are you sure she doesn't suspect?

LANCE

I pray she doesn't. If Ruth finds out about us, before I can let her down - uh - gently! Then the only noble thing for me to do would be to marry her, instead of you.

CANDY

Oh, Lance - you are so honorable!

They "kiss," she admires her ring, and they walk to Patty's door, so smitten that they don't notice -

Rose, peeking over the Mustang's fender - mismatched eyes as big as saucers.

END INTERCUT

INT. RUTH'S STUDIO APARTMENT - NIGHT

Ruth lets Rose inside, and the soap opera continues:

ROSE
Why didn't you tell me you were
still going out with Lance?

Ruth recites her lines as if she were on stage:

RUTH
Everyone's entitled to a little
privacy.

ROSE
We don't have any time to waste, if
you want to hang onto your man!

RUTH
But Lance loves me, and only me. My
heart tells me that is true.

ROSE
Then your heart better listen to
what my mouth is gonna say - cuz I
know the truth about Lance!

RUTH
The truth about Lance! Oh, can I
bear it?

ROSE
Candy's throwing herself at him so
hard - the poor man is defenseless
against her feminine wiles.

RUTH
(the old Ruth)
Feminine wiles!?

ROSE
Something you know nothing about,
honey.
Candy already has a ring, and she's
just biding her time 'till Lance
breaks up with you. Then she's
gonna grab him for herself, and
leave you with nothing, *nada, el*
zippo! The little gold digger.

RUTH
Oh, Nana - tell me what to do!

ROSE
Well, the first thing you want to do, is to pretend that you know nothing, absolutely nothing, about Candy and Lance...

Ruth nods, suddenly the perfect pupil.

EXT. ROSE'S HOUSE - OVERCAST DAY

Dark clouds overhead, and a rumble of DISTANT THUNDER.

INT. ROSE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - OVERCAST DAY

Rose sorts a stack of overdue bills into piles - 30 Days, 60 Days, Delinquent - then surveys them with concern. The phone RINGS. She answers.

INT. LANCE'S HUMMER - OVERCAST DAY

Lance sits at the wheel and watches Ruth on her cell -

RUTH
Macy's has fake fur jackets at sixty percent off. And the sale ends today!

EXT. ROSE'S HOUSE - OVERCAST DAY

Rose, dressed for rain, hurries out of her house - bright-eyed and happy again - and jumps in an awaiting taxi.

EXT. LAMBERT STREET - CORNER - OVERCAST DAY

Behind a canopy of trees, Candy slouches low in her VW, and peers out at the street, where Rose's taxi stops at the corner and turns left.

Candy speaks into her cell -

CANDY
The bird has flown.

INTERCUT

INT. LANCE'S HUMMER - OVERCAST DAY

Lance and Ruth sit inside, parked in a residential area.

RUTH
(into her cell)
Roger that.

Ruth looks over at Lance. He nods, pulls out, drives two blocks, turns onto

LAMBERT STREET, then drives down to

ROSE'S DRIVEWAY

and parks. Ruth announces into her cell -

RUTH
The eagle has landed.

Candy nods, hangs up, then punches another number.

CANDY
Grammy, I've got a buyer for
Grampa's car! But he wants to know
the mileage, so can you go check,
and I'll call ya back in five?

Candy hangs up, dials again, reports into her cell -

CANDY
Deploy all units.

RUTH
Roger! Ten-four.

Ruth hangs up, and...

END INTERCUT

EXT. ROSE'S HOUSE - OVERCAST DAY

It's soap-opera time! Lance and Ruth exit his car and stand, face to face.

In the b.g., we see Patty, frozen inside her front doorway, staring. She drops down on all fours and listens, as Ruth throws her arms around Lance's neck and sobs -

RUTH
Oh Lance, I'm so unhappy!

LANCE
Baby, I never meant to hurt you.

Their eyes meet in an emotional, tender moment.

Their lips come together, as

romantic MUSIC swells,

the SUN bursts through the clouds overhead,

it begins to RAIN, and
 they are caught in a SUN-SHOWER!
 Water falls on them like liquid gold.
 And both of them are in heaven - from that one kiss.
 Suddenly, their rehearsed lines take on a new meaning:

LANCE

I love you, sweet girl... but I
 already gave Candy a ring! I'm too
 noble to take it back - what else
 can I do... but suffer!?

RUTH

Oh Lance, you always want to do the
 right thing. I love you - you
 wonderful man. Kiss me! Kiss me
 like you mean it... one more time?

Their lips meet - sweet, slow, sexy. Divine!

He picks her up and carries her to Rose's front door... their
 eyes locked in true intimacy. Wow.

CLOSE ON: Patty, hiding behind the bushes by her front door -
 and the look of horror that spreads across her face.

INT. CANDY'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - RAINY NIGHT

Candy opens the door and Patty barges in, wearing rain gear.

PATTY

Everything I warned you about is
 coming true!

CANDY

Why, whatever do you mean?

PATTY

It doesn't matter that you have his
 ring - Ruth has his heart!

CANDY

You know I have Lance's ring!?

PATTY

You've gotta get him out from under
 her spell, and fight for your man,
 before it's too late!

CANDY

Oh Grammy, tell me what to do!

PATTY

Not sure, Candy Cane, but I'll think of something. Just give me a minute, and let me think...

EXT. LAMBERT STREET - CORNER - RAINY NIGHT

Heavy RAIN bombards the neighborhood. Gutters overflow. A city bus pulls up to the curb, wheels submerged in water. Patty gets off, followed by Rose. They open up umbrellas and hustle down the sidewalk, throwing elbows and insults:

PATTY

Your granddaughter is just like you
- you home-wrecker!

ROSE

And your granddaughter is the biggest gold digger this side of the Mississippi!

PATTY

Lance is engaged to Candy - she has a ring!

ROSE

Ring, ding - doesn't mean a thing.

PATTY

You have no respect for marriage.

ROSE

I've been married five times. If that's not respect, I don't know what is.

PATTY

Ruth is throwing herself at Lance - and, well, he's a man, isn't he!

ROSE

He's old enough to know what he wants.

PATTY

And deep inside, he wants Candy! She's not gonna roll over and play dead like I did, when you went after Eddie.

ROSE
Hah! We'll see about that.

PATTY
You bet we will!

They march down their respective walkways, open their respective front doors, and SLAM their doors behind them.

Glass SHATTERS, lightening FLASHES, and thunder BOOMS.

INT. ROSE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - RAINY NIGHT

Rose, still in rain gear, frantically dials the phone.

INTERCUT

INT. PATTY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - RAINY NIGHT

Patty, still in rain gear, frantically dials the phone.

ROSE
Ruthie, Candy knows all about you
and --
(listens for a beat)
Oh my Lord! That's wonderful,
darling.

Rose hangs up, beaming, just as Patty makes her connection -

PATTY
Candy! Ruth knows all about Lance
and --
(listens for a beat)
No kidding? Oh, hooray!

Patty hangs up, full of glee.

END INTERCUT

INT. CANDY'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - RAINY NIGHT

Lance and Ruth relax, side by side on the couch - comfortable together. They watch, as Candy hangs up her cell phone.

CANDY
That'll give the little darlin's
something to think about.

LANCE
(to Ruth)
I have a bad feeling about this.

RUTH
It'll be all right - trust me?

LANCE
It just seems kinda mean.

Ruth pauses... could he be right?

CANDY
We told both our grannies we're
going to elope with you tonight.
That's not mean - that's romantic!

Ruth can't help but laugh.

LANCE
How'd I let myself get roped into
this, anyway!? I'm going home.

He stands. Candy shoves him back, onto the couch.

CANDY
Oh no, you're not. Tonight, when
both of our grannies show up in a
panic at your house, we're going to
show them that a woman does not
need a man to make her happy.

RUTH
Lance, this is important to me. And
tonight'll be the last time, I
promise.
(reluctantly, he nods)
Thank you. Now, we have time for
one more rehearsal.

EXT. LAMBERT STREET - CUL DE SAC - RAINY NIGHT

Patty exits her front door, and Rose exits hers. They march
down to the sidewalk, face-off in the rain.

ROSE
I have something to tell you.

PATTY
Ditto, pie face.

ROSE
Lance is taking Ruthie to Las Vegas
tonight, to get married.

PATTY
Correction! Lance is taking Candy
to Las Vegas tonight, to get
married.

ROSE
Is not.

PATTY
Is too! I just talked to Candy.

ROSE
I just talked to Ruthie.

ROSE/PATTY
Oh my God!

PATTY
He's marrying both of them!

ROSE
He can't do that, you idiot. Not
even in Utah.

PATTY
Then what is he gonna do with two
women --

ROSE
In sin city --

PATTY
In the middle of the night?

Lightening FLASHES, and thunder BOOMS.

EXT. STERLING'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - RAINY NIGHT

Rose and Patty POUND on Sterling's door.

PATTY
Sterling!

ROSE
You have to stop Lance!

PATTY
Ohhhh, I just remembered.

ROSE
What!

PATTY
Sterling left town, yesterday.

ROSE
He did?

PATTY
He said he needed time to think.

ROSE
Think! What does he need to do that for!? Oh, what're we gonna do, now?

INT. PATTY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - RAINY NIGHT

Patty holds the receiver out for Rose to hear -

RECORDED VOICE (O.S.)
-- you are trying to contact is not available at this time.

Rose grabs the phone.

ROSE
Let me try Ruthie.

She dials, listens - no go. She hangs up, thinks, then -

ROSE
Where's Candy meeting Lance?

PATTY
At his house.

ROSE
Oh my Lord! Same with Ruthie!

PATTY
Do you think they - already know about each other?

They stare at one another - horrified!

ROSE
We pushed our poor, innocent granddaughters at that evil man!

PATTY
Now they've fallen under his spell!

ROSE
Oh, if only I hadn't bought Ruthie that expensive perfume.

PATTY
I should have forced Candy to wear that "Brady Bunch" suit.

ROSE/PATTY
It's all my fault!

Lightening FLASHES, thunder BOOMS - and the LIGHTS GO OUT.

INT. CANDY'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - RAINY NIGHT

Plenty of lights on here! Ruth follows along on a printed script and watches, as Candy and Lance rehearse:

LANCE
Then this is goodbye, forever?

CANDY
There's too much I want to do
before I settle down - too many
places to go, people to meet, and
things to do. There's a whole world
out there, just waiting for me!

LANCE
You're a remarkable woman, Candace
Wells. I salute you. Please, kiss
me one more time, before we part.

A stage kiss - THE FRONT DOOR OPENS - and in walks REX (25),
Candy's long-lost, long-haired boyfriend.

Candy stares at him over Lance's shoulder.

CANDY
Rex!?

Candy and Lance separate - and Rex gets in Lance's face:

REX
Who the hell are you!

LANCE
I might ask you the same question!

REX
I'm Candy's boyfriend.

LANCE
Oh, so you're the fool who walked
out on her.

REX
And you're the jerk who's moving in
on her!

CANDY
Rex, no!

Rex slams his fist into Lance's jaw - Lance goes reeling, and lands on the bean-bag chair. Ruth rushes to his side.

RUTH
Sweetheart!

CANDY
(to Rex)
Lance and I were just rehearsing a scene! Look - here's the script.

RUTH
Say something, Lance, anything!

Lance looks up, opens his mouth - and MOANS. Ruth bursts into tears, sobs -

RUTH
His mouth is all crooked!

REX
(to Candy)
So you weren't really kissing him?

CANDY
No.

REX
Baby!

They kiss.

RUTH (O.S.)
I think his jaw is broken!

REX
I missed you so much.

CANDY
And I - where the hell have you been!

She punches him in the gut - OOF!

He whispers:

REX
Road trip.

CANDY
What?

REX
My band - concerts - on the road?

CANDY

Oh baby, you mean it was true? I thought you said all that stuff, just to make me mad.

RUTH (O.S.)

Hello!?

Candy and Rex look at Ruth.

RUTH

We've got to get Lance to a hospital!

Weeping, Ruth takes her off cardigan, ties it around Lance's jaw like an old-fashioned remedy for a toothache, then gently kisses the top of his head. He moans again.

Rex kneels down, says -

REX

I'm sorry I hit you, bro. We're gonna take good care of you, ah --

CANDY

(whispers)
Lance.

REX

-- Lance!
(then to Ruth)
We can't go anywhere - it's a really bad scene out there.

RUTH

We'll take Lance's Hummer.

EXT. ROSE'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - RAINY NIGHT

Patty holds a flashlight, while Rose leans over the Mustang and unscrews the battery leads with a crescent wrench.

ROSE

Pliers!

Patty takes the wrench and slaps the pliers into Rose's hand. Rose pulls up on both wires, and the battery is free.

ROSE

Dear Lord, I hope this works.

EXT. PATTY'S HOUSE - CURB - RAINY NIGHT

Rose double-checks the Escorts "new" battery - it's good!

Then she closes the hood with a BANG - and Patty scrambles into the passenger seat, while Rose gets in as the driver.

INT. FORD ESCORT - RAINY NIGHT

Rose turns the ignition: WAAH... WAAH... WAAH.

ROSE

No!

They sit and watch the rain for a beat, then -

PATTY

Maybe you ought to pump it. That's what Walter always did.

ROSE

Now you tell me!

She pumps the gas pedal, turns the ignition. It STARTS, and they cheer! Rose turns on the lights and wipers, Patty wipes the fog off the window, and they head off down the street.

The whole neighborhood, including the road, is DARK.

ROSE

Which way do I go?

Patty trains her flashlight on a city map.

PATTY

Turn left at the corner, then keep going 'till you reach the highway.

EXT. FORD ESCORT - RAINY NIGHT

The car turns left and slowly moves onto

A FLOODED STREET.

A tree limb sticks out from a storm drain. Water cascades over the limb, into the drain. A child's scooter rushes down the gutter, hits the limb, lodges in a branch, stays there.

Lightening FLASHES and thunder BOOMS.

INT. FORD ESCORT - RAINY NIGHT

Patty uncovers her ears and looks at Rose.

PATTY

Maybe they won't go anywhere tonight. Maybe they'll just stay home?

Rose shakes her head, "No."

ROSE
Nothing stops a Hummer.

PATTY
A what?

ROSE
Hummer! Lance's car, you idiot.

PATTY
I knew that.

Rose guides the car down the middle of the road.

PATTY
Aren't you supposed to drive on the
right?

ROSE
There's not as much water in the
middle. Shut up and watch the road.

Patty sits forward, wipes the window, peers outside.

PATTY
What am I looking for?

ROSE
Something big.

PATTY
How big?

ROSE
Big enough to stop us, you idiot!

PATTY
You don't have to shout.

ROSE
Will you shut up, and --

BUMP! The car comes to a stop, and the wheels SPIN.

ROSE
Nevermind.

She puts it in Park and gets out. Patty meets her at...

EXT. FORD ESCORT - RAINY NIGHT

The front of the car -

Where Patty shines her FLASHLIGHT on a DEAD COYOTE, wedged under the front left tire.

ROSE
Oh, poor little doggie.

PATTY
That's a coyote, "you idiot."

ROSE
"I knew that."

PATTY
I wonder what it's doing down here?

ROSE
Where should it be?

PATTY
Up in the hills.

Patty turns her flashlight OFF, and grabs the tail.

PATTY
Get the head.

ROSE
Gross!

Rose picks up the head, they lift the carcass, and heave it over to the deep water at the side of the road - SPLASH! Rose loses her balance, steps on something slippery, and falls on her buttocks.

ROSE
Ow!

Patty wades over, shines her light at pink water under Rose.

PATTY
What are you sitting on?

ROSE
I don't know - help me up!

Patty pulls Rose to her feet, and as Rose comes up, a MALE MANNEQUIN in white briefs floats out from underneath her.

PATTY
Where'd that come from?

ROSE
Didn't you know - men follow me wherever I go!

Rose takes a step - OW! - and grabs onto Patty. Patty leads Rose, limping, toward the driver's side of the car.

ROSE
Not this side - the other one.

PATTY
Who's gonna drive?

ROSE
You are.

EXT. HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY WARD - WAITING ROOM - RAINY NIGHT

The room is packed with wet, hurting FLOOD VICTIMS.

Two ORDERLIES wheel a stretcher with Lance on it through the entrance, followed by Ruth, Candy, and Rex. They stop at

THE MAIN DESK

RUTH
(to Lance)
Do you have a medical card?

Lance points at his jacket pocket, grabs Ruth's arm.

RUTH
Yes?

He makes writing movements in the air. She grabs a pad and pencil off the counter, gives them to him.

Lance prints huge letters: DOLLY?

RUTH
Oh my gosh!

Ruth turns to Rex and Candy, asks -

RUTH
Can you go get Dolly?

REX
Dolly - who's Dolly?

CANDY
Lance's daughter.

REX
Course we can.
(to Lance)
I owe you, buddy!

EXT. HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY WARD - PARKING LOT - RAINY NIGHT

Rex and Candy dash to Lance's Hummer and hop inside.

INT./EXT. LANCE'S HUMMER - RAINY NIGHT

OVER THE SOUND OF RAIN

Rex starts the engine and turns on the wipers, but Candy taps him on the shoulder and says something in his ear.

Rex pauses, looks at Candy, waits.

Through the rain-drenched window we see her speak to him... slowly... her heart on her face.

Rex listens... then reacts. Wow! Big wow! He enfolds her in his arms, and she cries.

INT./EXT. FORD ESCORT - RAINY NIGHT

Patty inches the car down the middle of the road.

PATTY
Ohmygod, ohmygod, ohmygod.

Rose peers out the windshield, scans the road ahead.

ROSE
Shut up, Patty, you're making me nervous.

PATTY
(whispers)
Ohmygod, ohmygod, ohmygod.

ROSE
Brake!

PATTY
Ohmygod, ohmygod --

ROSE
Hit the brakes!

Patty comes out of her trance, hits the brakes, and the car swerves to the left, then comes to a stop.

PATTY
I don't see anything.

ROSE
What do you call that?

Rose points at a SINK HOLE smack in the middle of the road.

PATTY
I don't know!

ROSE
It's a sink hole, you idiot! It
could be ten, fifteen feet deep.

Patty bursts into tears.

PATTY
I can't do this, Rose!

ROSE
Fine! Great! We'll just sit here
and cry, while our granddaughters
get sold into white slavery, and
their lives are ruined forever.

Patty glares at Rose, puts the car into gear and floors it -
STRAIGHT BACKWARDS.

PATTY
Whoa!

Patty slams on the brakes.

PATTY
One word! Say one word Rose Brown --

ROSE
Popanovitch.

Patty SCREAMS!

LATER

The car stops at a red light. Patty looks over at Rose, wide-eyed. Rose looks back at Patty, wide-eyed. Then they both stare at the intersection in front of them:

THE MAIN HIGHWAY IS A RIVER OF BROWN WATER.

The car begins to move.

ROSE
What are you doing?

PATTY
Nothing!

The car moves faster.

ROSE
Put it in reverse! Reverse!

Patty slams the car into reverse, GUNS the engine, but the car gains momentum, and sails forward -

into the river,
and out of control.

ROSE
Oh my Lord, we're gonna die!

PATTY
But I want to see Candy's baby!

ROSE
And I want to see Ruthie get married!

PATTY
Merciful God --

PATTY/ROSE
Deliver us!

The car stops with a KLUNK.

Patty looks out her window and sees A TREE, lying on its side. The car rests in its branches. She laughs.

PATTY
We're saved!

Rose laughs. They embrace, weeping. The car begins to move. The tree shifts, the car shifts, and - the car sails back into the river.

ROSE/PATTY
Helllllllllllp!

Rose and Patty cling to one another and watch, helpless, as the car races through the gloom - past an upside down car, a floating dog house, the "WELCOME TO ORANGEVILLE" sign bobbing in the current, and a swimming DOG.

PATTY
Rose.

ROSE
Yes, Patty?

PATTY
Is it getting wet in here?

Rose looks down and sees water, seeping under the doors.

ROSE
Yes Patty - it is.

PATTY
Rose?

ROSE
What is it, my darling?

PATTY
I can't swim.

Rose pushes Patty away.

ROSE
Good grief! Can't you do anything!

PATTY
(squeaks)
I'm sorry, Rose.

Rose reaches both hands under her blouse, fishes around for a bit, then pulls out her bra - the "Grow a Bust in Seconds" INFLATABLE BRA from Frederick's of Hollywood.

ROSE
Here, take my boobs! They'll make you float.

Patty takes the bra and gapes - Rose is as flat as a board.

ROSE
What's the matter with you, haven't you ever seen a flat-chested woman before!

Patty puts her arms through the straps, swings the phony boobs onto her back, and fastens it in front. She looks like a twisted fertility goddess.

PATTY
I'm sorry, Rose.

ROSE
Oh, shut up, and help me get the windows down.

She pushes on her window crank - it's stuck. Patty pushes on her window crank - it's stuck. They try the back windows - no go. They POUND on the windows, and the windows remain intact.

They look at one another: They're goners.

ROSE
Patty, I'm sorry I stole your man!

PATTY
I'm sorry I was so mean to you!

ROSE
Eddie was an awful husband - really he was. He left Kimberly and me right after she was born, and I haven't seen him since.

PATTY
The dog!

ROSE
Look on the bright side, honey. I saved you from marrying a real jerk!

They clutch one another and weep, as the water inches up to their waists, and all they can do is cry -

PATTY/ROSE
Helllllllllp! Helllllllllp!

SUDDENLY, A LIGHT SHINES ALL AROUND THEM

ROSE
Patty - we're moving into the light!

THE SOUND OF WINGS SLICING THROUGH THE AIR

PATTY
I can hear angels' wings!

ROSE
Could it be --

BULLHORN VOICE (O.S.)
Hold on! Hold on! We've got a man on the way!

ROSE
A man! Surely this must be --

PATTY
A rescue team!

They hug and cheer, and hug some more.

Suddenly, Rose lights up like the break of dawn.

ROSE
 Oh Patty, does this mean we can be
 friends!? I've never had a
 girlfriend, before.

Patty stares at her. Rose smiles back, full of hope.

PATTY
 Don't rush me, I'm thinking.

EXT. FORD ESCORT - RAINY NIGHT

A Red Cross helicopter hovers over the car, and a DIVER (20s) in scuba gear descends in a sling, down to the roof of the car. He breaks away the passenger window.

Rose sticks her head out, then disappears. A moment later, Patty appears. The Diver helps Patty into the sling, and she is hoisted - phony boobs and all - into the air and up to the helicopter. Arms reach out and pull her --

INT. HELICOPTER - RAINY NIGHT

-- inside the cockpit. A RESCUER (20s) throws a blanket over Patty's shoulders - does a doubletake at her well-endowed back. Huh!?

Dazed and confused, he lowers the sling back down again.

EXT. FORD ESCORT - RAINY NIGHT

The Diver grabs the sling, helps Rose climb into it - then the car lists sideways and raging waters pull the hood down.

The Diver leaps out, straddles the sling - and Rose - then he gloms onto both for dear life. The car goes under, as the two of them are lifted - face to face - up into the air.

Rose is so relieved she can't help herself: She plants a wet one right on his kisser! He is mortified. Helllllp!

INT. HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY WARD - WAITING ROOM - RAINY NIGHT

The two Orderlies wheel Patty and Rose up to the Main Desk. Rose has an air-cast on her right ankle.

ROSE
 But we're fine, I tell you --

PATTY
 And we've got to go find our --

CANDY (O.S.)
 Grammy!?

Candy, Rex, and Dolly walk up - Dolly with chocolate around her mouth.

CANDY
What are you doing here?

Patty hops up, throws her arms around Candy.

PATTY
Thank God you're okay!

Dolly points at Patty's back.

DOLLY
She has balloons! I want some!

Patty peels off Rose's bra, tosses it to Rose, who shrugs and gives it to Dolly.

Patty looks Rex up and down. Turns to Candy, asks -

PATTY
Who's he?

CANDY
Grammy, you remember Rex - my musician friend?

Oh... yes. Patty waivers: should she hug him or deck him?!

RUTH (O.S.)
Nana! Oh my gosh - are you okay!

Ruth exits the Emergency Ward double doors, approaches Rose. Rose pops up and hugs her tight.

ROSE
I'm fine, honey. What happened to you!

RUTH
Well... Rex got jealous when he saw Lance kissing Candy, so he broke Lance's jaw. Then we all brought Lance to the emergency ward - but Rex and Candy had to go back to Lance's house, because somebody had to pick up Dolly.

(then)
They need to practice parenting, anyway, cuz they're getting married and having a baby!

Patty perks up - what was that?

RUTH

Then Lance had emergency surgery,
and afterwards he proposed to me -
even though his jaw is wired shut,
and he's tripped out on drugs.

(to Candy)

Did I leave anything out?

Rose sinks into her wheelchair.

ROSE

Lance proposed? Again!?

Patty jumps up and down, sings -

PATTY

Rex is marrying Candy!

Rex puts his arm around Candy.

REX

Right on, Mrs. O'Connor!

PATTY

Call me Grammy.

CANDY

Oh, brother.

A three-way hug.

DOLLY (O.S.)

I want to see my Daddy!

Ruth kneels, wipes Dolly's face, takes the bra and gives it
to Rose. She kisses Rose on the cheek and Rose begins to cry.

ROSE

Oh Ruthie, I'm so happy for you.
At least...I think I'm happy.
Isn't Lance...?

RUTH

Don't worry, Nana. I'll explain
everything to you, later.

She heads toward the Emergency Ward doors, Dolly in tow.

RUTH

(to herself)
Much later.

They disappear through the doors to the ward. A beat, then -

DOLLY (O.S.)
I want to see my Daddy!

RUTH (O.S.)
We're not going anywhere, until you
calm down and stop shouting.

Another beat, then -

DOLLY (O.S.)
Okay.

INT. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH - MINISTER'S OFFICE - DAY

A large, book-lined office. Rex and Candy - he in a rented tux, and she in a short dress and sequined shawl - stand before the MINISTER (50s), about to be married.

To Rex's right are four long-haired MUSICIANS (20s) in make-shift wedding attire, and Rex's MOM and DAD (mid 40s).

To Candy's left are Patty, Rose, Ruth, and Candy's MOTHER and FATHER (mid 40s).

EXT. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH - DAY

Candy and Rex run out the door and up to a chartered bus. The bus's banner reads: "TOO HOT TO HANDLE, ON NATIONAL TOUR."

The four Musicians climb on board, as Candy and Rex hug their guests goodbye. Then Rex carries Candy into the bus --

INT. CHARTERED BUS - CONTINUOUS

-- and puts her down. She leans over and waves out the window. She is unaware, but her short dress hikes up in back - uh oh! Two Musicians check her out.

REX
What're you two looking at!

The Musicians look away. Candy is mortified. She sits down next to Rex, covers her thighs with her shawl.

He puts his arm around her, and she cuddles up close. Content at last.

INT. LANCE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Lance relaxes on the sofa - his jaw bandaged shut, and his eyes closed.

At his side sits Ruth, reading from her book - Parenting Isn't For Cowards.

RUTH
 "Chapter One: How to establish
 boundaries and enforce them in an
 environment of unconditional love."

Lance opens his eyes, writes on a pad: YOU HAVE TO STUDY?

RUTH
 I am studying.

Confusion... then he gets it. And squeezes her hand.

He writes again: MY NURSE - SUPPOSED TO BE HERE?

She shakes her head, no.

RUTH
 I sent her home. She was way too
 pretty. I'm not gonna let "the
 competition" move in on my man!

He loves it.

INT. LITTLE TOKYO JAPANESE RESTAURANT - DAY

Dressed in a Kimono and wearing a black Geisha wig, Rose shows FOUR BUSINESSMEN (30s) to a table, then returns to the Hostess Desk.

Sterling enters and approaches Rose.

ROSE
 Good afternoon, Mr. Rockman. Are
 you meeting someone?

STERLING
 (a big smile)
 I sure am.

ROSE
 Sorry, but I'm not allowed to
 fraternize with the guests.

STERLING
 How about the neighbors?

ROSE
 Cut it out, Sterling. Do you want
 to get me fired?

STERLING
 You wanna catch a movie tonight?

Rose shakes her head, no.

ROSE
It's my birthday, and I'm giving
myself a very special present.

STERLING
Why didn't you tell me!

ROSE
I'm taking a vacation from men.

STERLING
What!?

ROSE
A woman doesn't need a man to make
her happy.

EXT. ROSE'S HOUSE - DAY

THE FRONT YARD

Rose's daughter, Kimberly, wipes a tear from her eye, then
walks up the driveway and lays an envelope against the front
door. Writing on the front says: "HAPPY BIRTHDAY, MOM."

Through the window, we see Honeybuns, sleeping on the living
room loveseat.

On the coffee table are eight pink cigar boxes labeled -
RENT, FOOD, CLOTHES, BEAUTY PARLOR, UTILITIES, NEW CAR,
FACELIFT, and HAPPY MONEY.

EXT. DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES - DAY

Patty and her lawyer, Hank, exit the DMV and CHEER. Patty
waves her temporary driver's license in the air.

PATTY
Free at last, thank God almighty.
I'm free at last!

They walk to Hank's Volvo and both of them approach the
driver's side.

PATTY
Aren't you gonna let me drive?

HANK
To tell you the truth --

PATTY
I wish you would.

HANK
-- sometimes your driving makes me
a little nervous.

INT. HANK'S VOLVO - DAY

Hank drives, while Patty idly stares out the window.

HANK
So - what's next on your list?

PATTY
Looks like I need to buy a car.

HANK
Good.

PATTY
And I think I'll take swimming
lessons.

HANK
How about dancing lessons?

PATTY
Nah - been there, done that.

HANK
Really! Then we should celebrate
tonight, and go dancing.

PATTY
Sorry, Hank. Tonight, I'm taking a
girlfriend out for a special
birthday dinner.

HANK
Good! I like to see you enjoying
yourself. Where you taking her?

PATTY
Denny's.

ROLL CREDITS

INT. LOS ANGELES INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - GATE 22 - DAY

The departure gate for Cancun Airlines. In the waiting area,
a tan, dark-haired man - wearing a Hawaiian shirt and
sunglasses - sits and reads a Club Med brochure.

At the check-in desk, a LATINA BEAUTY (20s) speaks into the
PA system and announces -

LATINA BEAUTY
Buenos dias! Cancun Airlines,
flight number 234, is now boarding,
rows twelve to twenty-four.

The man shoves the brochure in his vest pocket, stands, takes off his sunglasses, and we see -

It's Sterling - lookin' good in the neighborhood! With dyed hair, a fake tan, and a sexy shark-tooth necklace.

He grabs his carry-on bag, saunters to the gate, gets in line.

Two giggling female passengers step in behind him - a beautiful BRUNETTE (30s) and a bubbly BLOND (30s). The Blond smiles at Sterling, sees the brochure in his pocket -

BLOND
Oh my gosh! Are you going to Club
Med?

STERLING
Sure am.

BLOND/BRUNETTE
We're going to Club Med, too!

All three head toward the boarding tunnel, chatting, *ad lib.*
Sterling's luck has finally turned.

FADE OUT