

CRYBABIES

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FADE IN:

INT. LAURA'S BEDROOM - MODEST S.F. FLAT - MORNING

Wind and rain SLAM the windows.

LAURA WEISS (30s), golden haired, frazzled and irresistible, ignores the deluge.

She faces a much bigger problem.

POV LAURA: A distorted fun-house image of her ASS expands - alive and breathing - in the mirror.

ANOTHER ANGLE: *Exaggerated* mirror-ass notwithstanding, Laura's violin curves are sexy, even in old underwear.

She rips open a *Miracle Suit Thigh Slimmer* package and stuffs her body into it.

Sweating now, she gulps coffee from her "#1 Mom" mug and reassesses the situation. The fun-house ass has shrunk. But her (slight) muffin-top spills over the spandex.

She glares at an empty Ben and Jerry's ice cream carton.

LAURA

We are so finished, Chunky Monkey.

Laura pushes the muffin top under the spandex. It pops out. She repeats the process. No luck.

She moves to the dresser, studies a framed family photo of DAVID (13), RICHARD (30s), GRANDPA GRUMPS (70s), AUNT FRANNIE (40s), and GRANDMA HONEY (70s).

Laura arranges ribbon around the photo, calls out:

LAURA (CONT'D)

Davie-honey, you awake?

INT. DAVID'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

DAVID WEISS (13), small for his age, lies in bed - cell phone pressed to one of his Obama-sized ears.

DAVID

(shouts)

Please don't call me Davie. It's infantilizing.

He huddles under his blanket, WHISPERS into the phone.

DAVID (CONT'D)
Morning, sweet cheeks.

KISHANA (O.S.)
(yawning)
When did I fall asleep?

David checks the clock. His bedroom is jammed with Whitney Houston, Lil Wayne, Usher, and Chris Brown posters.

DAVID
Six hours ago.

KISHANA (V.O.)
I'm so embarrassed.

DAVID
Don't be. I love listening to you sleep. You sound like a kitten - with tuberculosis. Dying.

KISHANA (V.O.)
Very funny, *Davie*.

David reaches under the sheet, strokes his privates.

LAURA (O.S.)
You practicing your Haf Torah?

David contemplates the erect tent under his sheet.

DAVID
Yeah, but it's really *hard*, mom.

LAURA (O.S.)
I know, honey, just keep at it.

DAVID
I will. Promise.

LAURA (O.S.)
And get ready for Hebrew school.

DAVID
Seriously, on Good Friday? Besides, I'm suffering from Olfactophobia.

LAURA (O.S.)
Oh yeah, what's that?

DAVID
Fear of bad odors. Rabbi Simon smells like garlic farts.

INT. LAURA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Laura has ripped open a *Miracle Suit Hi-Waisted Thigh Slimmer* package. She's squeezing it over the first slimmer.

LAURA
So stay home with me.

DAVID (O.S.)
Not the correct moral choice, mom.

Laura, rolling her eyes, mimics David's words.

LAURA
Excuse my breach in ethical
guidance.

DAVID (O.S.)
Plus, dad needs me to hang with
Aunt Frannie.

LAURA
Why? Where's he going?

DAVID (O.S.)
To Vegas. With Anika.

Laura recoils as if punched. Slumping onto the bed, she hits speed dial on her cell. PHONE RINGS.

LAURA
Duke, thank God.

INT. Duke' BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Duke, 30s, an adonis, lies in bed next to a sleeping WOMAN, barely 20. He strokes her plump backside with his foot, speaks into the phone - irritated.

DUKE
Laura? You butt call me again?

Duke slides the sheet off his bed guest, kisses her back.

INT. LAURA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

LAURA
It's Richard, he's taking the
Kielbasa to Vegas. On *our*
anniversary weekend.

She picks up the framed photo with ribbon, fights back tears.

LAURA (CONT'D)
I framed the photo to give him.

DUKE (V.O.)
Great. Stick with the game plan,
you'll get him back. You eating
right, exercising?

LAURA
I'm starting Zumba today, but your
stupid adjustment didn't work. My
neck's killing me. I want a refund.

DUKE (V.O.)
You haven't paid in three months.

LAURA
That's just petty.

She turns her head toward David's room, shouts.

LAURA (CONT'D)
All packed, baby?

DAVID (O.S.)
Do not call me 'baby.'

LAURA
Don't forget your retainer.

DAVID (O.S.)
Gawd, mom.

INT. DUKE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Duke spoons the woman, grinding his hips into her.

CUT BETWEEN LAURA'S AND Duke' BEDROOMS:

DUKE
What the hell's a Zumba?

LAURA
God's wrath for Ben and Jerry's.

DUKE
We need to confront your sugar
issues.

LAURA
No, we need to confront my husband
sticking his schnitzel into that
kielbasa.

Duke navigates her head down to his hips.

Laura struggles to pull up her leggings over the Miracle Suits. When she hears Duke MOAN Laura grimaces.

LAURA (CONT'D)

You're having sex? That is so unprofessional, even for a quack chiropractor.

DUKE

You called *me* at *home*, Laura.

LAURA

Please see me.

DUKE

On Good Friday? No way.

LAURA

Show some mercy. Christ isn't the only one who's suffered.

Duke tries to focus, but is distracted by his guest.

DUKE

I know you're upset about Richard and losing Grandma Pony -

LAURA

(tears come)

Grandma Honey, you idiot.

DUKE

(sighs)

All right, ten o'clock.

INT. RICHARD'S BEDROOM - S. F. - CONTINUOUS

RICHARD WEISS, a lanky slice of manhood with a perpetually worried brow, paces the opulent room.

RAIN PUMMELS the windows. THUNDER RUMBLES.

RICHARD

On this day of all days, Jews should not fly. It's tempting fate.

ANIKA WOJCIECHOWSKI (20s) Polish, pretty and sturdy, she jams her third suitcase with a hand blender and Green Vibrance.

She pulls out a pair of black lace thongs.

ANIKA

I'll tempt *your* fate in Sin City.

Richard starts to smile, but GRANDPA GRUMPS' YELLING from the next room stops him.

GRANDPA GRUMPS (O.S.)

Lying bastards.

ANIKA

I can't wait to have privacy.

Richard nods, empathetic. THUNDER STRIKES. He tenses.

RICHARD

If we survive the fucking flight.

ANIKA

Please, Richard, foul language makes me uncomfortable.

She packs her flute case, metronome, and music sheets.

RICHARD

Just a wild guess, but being incinerated at 35,000 feet might also make you uncomfortable.

The TV's financial report BLASTS LOUDER through the wall.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Shoot me now.

Richard slumps onto the bed, drops his head into his hands. Anika kneels before him, massaging his thighs.

After a moment, he stops her, covers his lap with a blanket.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Sorry. Too stressed.

ANIKA

When I have anxiety before a performance I use visualization.

Richard frowns, skeptical. But then Anika slowly undresses.

ANIKA (CONT'D)

Imagine we're on the jet plane and I'm your sexy-girl airline hostess.

Mesmerized by her swaying bare hips, he mumbles:

RICHARD

I think they're called flight attendants.

She opens her flute case, cleans her flute with a phallic-like stick rag, pumping in and out.

ANIKA

Sit back and enjoy Hostess Wojciechowski's in-flight service.

Anika rubs the flute between her thighs. Richard, aroused, reaches under the blanket. No luck.

Anika doesn't see. Her eyes are closed as she begins to play the flute. GORGEOUS MUSIC. The MELODIC LINE ascends faster. Anika gyrates against Richard's thigh.

GRANDPA GRUMPS (O.S.)

Greedy bastards.

Richard, exasperated, moves her off his leg.

ANIKA

What's wrong, sweetheart?

RICHARD

Flying in a storm? Leaving David with my crazy sister? Living with my asshole dad who's possessed by Suzie fucking Orman? And, oh yeah, my mom died six months ago. Other than that, I'm great.

ANIKA

I'm so sorry.
(hesitates, uneasy)
You left out your wife leaving.

RICHARD

(smiles at her)
I'm over that, thanks to you.

They embrace. Anika picks up her flute, shakes it, and hears SPITTLE INSIDE. Blushes.

ANIKA

Gracious goodness, I *was* very excited.

She shakes harder. Spit flies out of the flute onto Richard's face. Disgusted, he wipes it off. She doesn't notice.

ANIKA (CONT'D)

Wait, I have it.

RICHARD

Have what?

ANIKA

The thing that will make you feel better.

She hurries for the bedroom door.

INT. GRANDPA GRUMPS' S.F. PALATIAL HOME - CONTINUOUS

Anika walks into the marbled hallway, peeks into the adjoining bedroom.

GRANDPA GRUMPS, distinguished, 70s, sits slumped in a chair staring at SUZIE ORMAN on the TV. The bedroom is dark except for the television's eerie glow.

Grandpa is dapperly dressed but the back of his hair swirls in psych-ward disarray. His face is etched with grief.

ANIKA

Feeling better, Mr. Weiss?

GRANDPA GRUMPS

Pardon me?

ANIKA

Are. You. Feeling better today?

He tenses, swallows his irritation.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

Much, thank you.

He RAISES THE VOLUME. After a moment, Anika leaves.

The PHONE RINGS. THREE TIMES. Grandpa just stares at it. VOICE MAIL clicks on.

MR. BEAN (V.O.)

Mr. Weiss, it's Mr. Bean again, phoning about the nature center honoring your wife. *In three days.*

Grandpa starts to reach for the phone, then stops.

MR. BEAN (V.O.)
We're expecting you and your
children. It's imperative that you
call me. Please, Mr. Weiss.

The message CLICKS OFF. Grandpa, distraught, turns away.

INT. WEISS LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Anika walks through the Town and Country living room, into the hallway past a closed bathroom door. A WOMAN'S SING-SONG VOICE stops her.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Shower on full blast, steam engulfs the bathroom.

Next to the shower is a satchel with a plastic sleeve that displays the Weiss family photo that Laura had framed.

In the shower, the shadow of a woman's finger, visible through the plastic curtain, traces a map of America's National Parks (printed on the curtain).

FRANNIE (O.S.)
Four Corners Monument. Remember,
mom, when I laid down? My fingers
and toes touched *four* states!

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Anika, walking by the door, hears Frannie talking.

ANIKA
Frannie? You all right?

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Inside the shower, FRANNIE (40s) freezes. She's got big, guileless eyes and the emotional maturity of a fourth-grader.

FRANNIE
I think so, thank you.

Frannie throws open the shower curtain.

FRANNIE (CONT'D)
Ready for your flight?

ANIKA (O.S.)
 Just about. Your brother's feeling
 a bit nervous.

 FRANNIE
 He hates to fly. Not like mom and
 me. We flew to many national parks.

 ANIKA (O.S.)
 You've told me. That's wonderful.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Anika starts to leave.

 FRANNIE (O.S.)
 Mom was an avid birder like me -
 Frannie's voice breaks. Anika leans closer.

 ANIKA
 Frannie, you sure you're all right?

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Frannie is not all-right, but she forces a smile

 FRANNIE
 Tip-top, thank you.

 ANIKA (O.S.)
 Okay, then. See you in a bit.

Frannie waits, listening, then slowly closes the curtain.

INT. DAVID'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

David adjusts his yarmulka. He moves to his computer, clicks
 on his doctored RECORDING OF WHITNEY HOUSTON'S FUNERAL.

PIXELATED IMAGE: A split screen with photos of David's
 Grandma Honey and KEVIN COSTNER'S eulogy for Whitney.

David recites with COSTNER.

 DAVID AND KEVIN
*"Now you are gone, too soon,
 leaving us with memories of a
 little girl who stepped bravely in
 front of this church, in front of
 (MORE)*

DAVID AND KEVIN (CONT'D)
 (David's voice quivers)
...the ones that loved you first.

INT. LAURA'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Looking hot in her spandex, Laura stiffly walks through the kitchen carrying the framed photo and gulping coffee.

LAURA
 Time to go, sweetie.

INT. DAVID'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

David slips on a large crucifix necklace and conceals it under his hoodie...just as Laura appears in the doorway. David winces when he sees the way his mom is dressed.

LAURA
 Am I going to wow your father, or what?

INT. RICHARD WEISS' BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Anika enters carrying a pot of coffee, cooling with ice cubes. Richard, slouched on the bed, jerks upright.

RICHARD
 No fucking way.

ANIKA
 Richard, we've discussed our livers being the seat of blocked emotions and yours are toxic. You're all staccato, no melodic flow.

She pulls an enema bag out of her suitcase.

ANIKA (CONT'D)
 Please let me help you.

RICHARD
 Not by pumping Starbucks up my ass.

ANIKA
 (thinks for a moment)
 I'll let you play with my tee-tees.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Frannie dresses in a white Polo-labeled shirt, blue jacket, and red skirt. She parts her hair, securing each side with metal American Flag barrettes.

INT. RICHARD'S BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Richard, still clothed, lies on the floor, his head in Anika's lap. He unbuttons her blouse as she pours coffee into the enema bag.

ANIKA

When my family immigrated to America I was so proud to join the high school band. I was chosen to play lead flute. I'd never felt so happy. But then two jealous, very mean girls shoved something into my instrument.

Richard slides his hand into her underpants. She slaps it.

ANIKA (CONT'D)

No *yani*, only tee-tees.

RICHARD

Can I at least look at it?
 (she shoots him a look)
 Sorry, your "tee-tees" are arousing my wee-wee.
 (again, the look)
 So, your flute...?

ANIKA

I took it to the front of the orchestra, to the bandmaster. He pulled a Tampax out of it. Everyone laughed at me...

RICHARD

My God, that's horrible.

ANIKA

Yes, it was, but not the point of my story. Like my flute -
 (looks at his penis)
 - you poor darling - have obstructions in your instrument.

Surgeon-like, she holds up the enema tube and smiles.

ANIKA (CONT'D)
Prepare to be healed.

INT. LAURA'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Laura, already edgy, gulps a Red Bull. Weaving between cars in the rain, she glances over, catches David staring at her.

DAVID
Should I worry about you - the weeks I'm with dad?

LAURA
Nah, I'm great. Love having time to myself. Really.

David stares at her, concerned.

Laura tries to stop her hands from shaking. She pulls up in front of Temple Beth Shalom, forces a smile.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Bye, sweetie. Be here, nine sharp.

Laura watches him walk into the Temple. Fighting back tears, she pulls into traffic.

As soon as Laura's car disappears, David reappears in the Temple's doorway.

He's holding hands with KISHANA WOODS, 13, adorable, African-American and at least 20 pounds heavier and a foot taller than he is. She's wearing a black choir robe.

They race across the street toward the Baptist Church.

INT. WEISS LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Frannie walks to Grandpa's bedroom door. He hasn't budged.

FRANNIE
Good morning, dad. Feeling better?

He SIGHS, nods without shifting his gaze from the TV.

She stares at the back of his head, with its swirling, disheveled hair. Frannie, disturbed by the sight, moves to fix it, but freezes, as if to touch him is forbidden.

FRANNIE (CONT'D)
David is coming. He'll cheer us up.

She walks to the living room sofa and sits, staring forward.

EXT. SOUTHERN BAPTIST CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

David and Kishana rush to the church steps where CHOIR MEMBERS line up to enter.

MISS ALTHEA, 60s - African-American, dressed in a choir robe - greets David with a warm embrace.

DAVID
Morning, Miss Althea.

MUSIC RINGS OUT from the church. The procession of choir members begins to move inside, SINGING:

PROCESSION
*Walking the light, the beautiful
light. Come where the dew drops of
mercy shine bright.*

Miss Althea helps David slip on a (too-large) choir robe.

MISS ALTHEA
Can't keep the Lord waiting on Good
Friday.

David hesitates, moves closer to her.

DAVID
Miss Althea, why did Jesus have to
suffer so much only to die?

Miss Althea notices Kishana frown, squeeze David's hand.

MISS ALTHEA
Child, you talking about Christ or
that poor grandma of yours?

CHOIR MEMBER
C'mon, y'all.

Miss Althea helps David slip on his robe, hugs him.

MISS ALTHEA
We'll have ourselves a talk later.

They join the procession. David's robe drags on the ground. He's hopelessly out of step. And out of tune.

MISS ALTHEA, DAVID, KISHANNA
*No need to worry. No need to fret.
 All of my needs, the man named
 Jesus has met.*

INT. GRANDPA GRUMPS' LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Frannie hasn't moved. PHONE RINGS. She looks at it, then to Grandpa's door. RINGS again. Frannie scoots closer to phone.

It RINGS. Frannie, nervous, answers.

FRANNIE
 Weiss resident..ial treatment.
 (flustered)
 I mean *residence*. This isn't the
 treatment center. I *was* there...
 (beat)
 Oh, hello, Mr. Bean!

She listens, saying "Yes" repeatedly. Her eyes grow wide with excitement. She SCREAMS, runs toward Grandpa's room.

FRANNIE (CONT'D)
 The cocks. The cocks. Mom's being
 honored for her cocks.

Grandpa, alarmed, races out of his bedroom.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
 What the hell?

FRANNIE
 That was Mr. Bean at Loveland's
 Nature Center. Mom's being honored.

She races to Richard's door, throws it open.

FRANNIE (CONT'D)
 Richard, mom is -

Frannie stops dead in her tracks, as does Grandpa behind her. Shock, then revulsion, overtake their faces.

INT. RICHARD'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Startled, Anika yanks the tube out of Richard. Coffee sprays all over Richard and the bathroom. He's horrified.

ANIKA
 Whoa, Nelly boy.

RICHARD
Get the hell out.

Frannie doesn't move. She's too stunned. So is Grandpa.

Richard leaps up and totters, pants around his ankles, to the toilet room. He SLAMS THE DOOR, releases a THUNDEROUS FART.

ANIKA
He should flow much better now.

Frannie half-smiles, nods. Grandpa, disgusted, walks into the hallway. Frannie SHOUTS at the closed toilet door.

FRANNIE
They're honoring mom for her cocks.

RICHARD (O.S.)
Woodcocks, Frannie, W-O-O-D-cocks.

FRANNIE
It's only three days to the unveiling. We're the V.I.P. guests.

RICHARD (O.S.)
What?

FRANNIE
Mr. Bean sent the invitation weeks ago. We'd better pack.

She races out of the room. Richard FLUSHES and emerges from the bathroom. Angry.

RICHARD
Dad, where are you?

Grandpa reappears.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
You'll have to take Frannie. I have a lecture at the conference -

GRANDPA GRUMPS
I can't.

RICHARD
You mean you won't.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
I mean I can't.

RICHARD

Like you *couldn't* have a memorial service? Why was that? Too busy trying to forget mom ever existed?

GRANDPA GRUMPS

Of course not, you idiot.

RICHARD

Please explain to me, how the hell you missed that mom was being honored?

GRANDPA GRUMPS

Easy. I stopped reading people's maudlin cards and listening to their sappy messages. You should try it.

RICHARD

Sorry, no can do, I'm still a functioning adult.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

Who lives at home -

RICHARD

I moved in to take care of mom. God knows, you didn't.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

Couldn't. I had a *real* job.

RICHARD

Number One Favorite Excuse for selfish workaholics who neglect their families.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

At least I have something to show for my effort. Besides lecturing college kids - *part time* - about that pervert Henry Miller, what do you have?

RICHARD

A good conscience.

INT. ZUMBA CLASS - CONTINUOUS

Laura, sweating and caffeine-amped, is repeatedly pushed to the back by WOMEN manically following the Brazilian ZUMBA INSTRUCTOR.

MUSIC BLASTS. The Brazilian SHOUTS DIRECTIONS.

The other class members, dressed scantily, far surpass Laura's dancing ability.

The young skinny WOMAN next to Laura - also not able to keep up - eyes Laura competitively, intent on out-dancing her. Even though Laura PANTS like a dying beast, she fights for dominance over the second weakest in the pack.

Laura and the woman accidentally crash into each other. The woman shoots Laura a dirty look. Laura shoots it back.

The instructor BLASTS "*If You're Happy and You Know it, Clap Your Hands*" through the speakers. The class falls into pairs, dancing, SINGING, and clapping each other's hands.

The only two left to pair off are Laura and her nemesis.

They don't so much clap as beat at each other. Emotions escalate. Laura's partner misses her hands and SMACKS Laura in the chest.

Angry now, Laura SLAPS back. The woman pushes Laura.

INSTRUCTOR

Ladies, let's try to be happy.

LAURA

(gasping for air)

I'm too miserable to be happy. And I hate Zumba.

(whispers to skinny woman)

And Zombies.

The teacher mouths 'sorry,' then cranks the MUSIC LOUDER. The SINGING CONTINUES. Laura limps to her belongings, takes a swig of Red Bull. The young woman walks up to her, drinks her blueberry smoothie.

YOUNG WOMAN

(under her breath)

Thanks for ruining my class. Spaz.

LAURA

You're the spaz. Spaz.

YOUNG WOMAN

At least I'm not a flabby, old spaz.

Laura loses it, flings Red Bull at the woman, who in turn, throws her blueberry goop at Laura.

INT. GRANDPA GRUMPS' LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Richard paces. Anika sits on the sofa across from Grandpa.

Frannie rolls her carry-on into the room, holding the shower curtain and photo-satchel.

FRANNIE

Packed and ready to fly, ground and weather conditions permitting.

(holds up shower curtain)

I've mapped out our route.

Frannie sees the expressions on their faces. The light drains from her eyes.

RICHARD

Frannie, I'm sorry, I can't go. I have the conference in Vegas.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

And it's not a good time for me.

FRANNIE

A good time? Is sitting on your bed watching TV a good time? I don't think so, dad. The unveiling will be a good time.

(shows the family photo)

This was a good time. Why won't either of you remember?

Richard and Grandpa, upset by the photo and Frannie's unhappiness, sit speechless.

ANIKA

Frannie, I know it's difficult to lose your mother -

FRANNIE

I did not *lose* my mother. She DIED. You *lose* your car keys. Oh wait, maybe I just forgot to check under the cushions.

Hysterical now, Frannie pulls cushions off chairs, SHOUTING.

FRANNIE (CONT'D)

Mother, are you there? Mother?

GRANDPA GRUMPS

Frannie, that's enough. I'm sorry, but we are not going to Loveland.

Frannie freezes, staring first at her father, then Richard. She silently turns, dragging the shower curtain. Walks behind the massive dining table. Drops to the ground with a THUD, followed by SILENCE.

Richard, Anika, and Grandpa stare at the table. Nothing.

RICHARD

Frannie?

No sound. They stand and walk to the table.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

Frannie, please come out.

No response. They reach the far side of the table.

Frannie has rolled herself - head to toe - into the plastic shower curtain. She'll suffocate soon.

ANIKA

Oh, mój Boze w niebie!

Richard rushes to unwrap his sister, who is GASPING FOR AIR. He embraces her. Frannie begins to cry.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

(voice shaking)

Are you trying to kill me?

FRANNIE

No, I'm trying to save you. Save our family. We're drowning, all alone in the same house.

Richard and Grandpa, shaken, look away from Frannie.

FRANNIE (CONT'D)

Please, let's go to Loveland. We can be a real family again -

GRANDPA GRUMPS

(snaps)

There is no "family" without your mother.

Frannie and Richard recoil. Grandpa is also aghast at his outburst. Frannie runs to her bedroom, SLAMS THE DOOR.

EXT. TEMPLE BETH SHALOM - MOMENTS LATER

Laura, a drowned rat in sweat and blueberry-stained clothes, gets out of the car and paces. No David.

A CHUBBY BOY, 13, exits the temple.

CHUBBY BOY
Hey, dude. Where's David been?
How'd he escape this shit?

INT. BAPTIST CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

David and Kishana, ecstatic, wave their arms, SINGING and CLAPPING WITH other CHOIR MEMBERS.

DAVID AND CHOIR
*So I'll sing of Your grace, and
I'll live in the light of Your
love, 'cause I know that I am free!*

INT. WEISS HALLWAY/OUTSIDE FRANNIE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Richard, with Anika and Grandpa behind him, KNOCKS at Frannie's door. SOUND OF HER CRYING.

RICHARD
Frannie-bananie, open the door.

He glares at his father, who steps forward.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
I didn't mean what I said. I'm
sorry. Honey, please open the door.

Silence now. Worried, Richard tries the door knob. It's locked. Grandpa moves him aside and KICKS OPEN THE DOOR.

INT. FRANNIE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Frannie, nearly lost in mounds of women's clothes, sits on the floor. She's wearing a "Loveland Nature Center" hat.

Grandpa picks up a cashmere sweater from the pile, as if it were a lost treasure, and slumps onto the bed.

Richard kneels beside Frannie, examines the clothing.

RICHARD
Didn't we give mom's things to
charity?

FRANNIE
I wasn't ready to let her go.

Richard lifts a silk blouse to his face.

RICHARD
Smells nice...like mom.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
(voice trembling)
Chanel Number 5.

Frannie and Richard reach for each other's hands, sit without speaking. Frannie, eyes red and swollen, turns to Richard. Their eyes meet and hold.

INT. RICHARD'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Richard watches Anika throw her vibrator and lingerie out of the suitcase.

RICHARD
I'm sorry. Please, Ankie, try to understand. Frannie needs this.

ANIKA
(holds up a dildo)
Yes, but I need this, just for once, without hearing your father shouting or Frannie going cuckoo.

He moves behind Anika, presses his body against hers.

RICHARD
Please come with me to *Love-land*.
(muzzles her neck)
I promise, we'll have privacy.

Richard's PHONE RINGS. He looks at it, frowns and answers.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
David's *missing*? What have you done with him?

EXT. TEMPLE BETH SHALOM - CONTINUOUS

Laura paces, scanning the neighborhood.

LAURA
I haven't *done* anything with him.
(listens, upset)
Loveland? Without me? How could you? I loved your mother too.
(listens, upset)
No, *she* would understand why I needed a...break.

Laura hears SINGING across the street, frowns.

INT. SOUTHERN BAPTIST CHURCH - MOMENTS LATER

David and the choir are BELTING OUT A HYMN.

CHOIR AND DAVID

*Anybody ask me where I'm going, I'm
going up yonder to be with my Lord.*

Laura appears in the doorway with the phone at her ear. David sees her. Stops singing and visibly gulps.

LAURA

I found him. Buying candy at 7-11.

INT. LAURA'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Laura, upset, drives too fast. David scans her strained face, and sweaty, stained hair and clothes.

DAVID

You don't look so good. Are you
freaking about this Loveland thing?

LAURA

(avoids answering)
You lied to me, said your Holy
Roller kick was over.

DAVID

Sorry, but being a normal
adolescent, I sometimes tell my
parents what they need to hear.

LAURA

Being a *lying* adolescent, you need
to hear that you are *grounded*.

DAVID

This is religious prosecution, a
fundamental violation of Article 18
of the Universal Declaration of
Human Rights.

LAURA

So sue me.
(beat, softening)
Look, I know things haven't been
easy, but it's not a reason to
abandon your religion.

DAVID
Not abandoning, just augmenting.

LAURA
Like topping pie with ice cream?

DAVID
Mom, would you just stop? This is a
difficult day for me.

Laura, touched, gently pats his hand.

LAURA
Are you sad about leaving me?

He just shrugs. Disappointed, she withdraws her hand.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Is it flying? I know you have
tendencies toward aviophobia like
your nutty father. I really should
come with you -

DAVID
Gawd, you're so clueless.

LAURA
About what?

DAVID
Good Friday? The Passion of the
Christ? Our Lord's unbearable
suffering and crucifixion on a
Roman cross?

LAURA
Yeah, but he comes back to life and
flies around in 72 hours.

DAVID
That's blasphemy.

LAURA
Speaketh the Jew for Jesus.

DAVID
You converted to Judaism. What does
that me you, a Christian for Moses?

LAURA
Very funny. We're not talking about
me.

DAVID
We should be. You and Dad are the
lost souls, chugging Prozac like
candy.

LAURA
(surprised)
Your dad takes Prozac?

DAVID
(defensive of father)
He did just lose his mother. And,
oh yeah, his wife left him.

LAURA
Yeah, but three days later he rose
from the dead and schtupped a
teenager.

DAVID
It was two months and Anika is
twenty-three.

LAURA
Same difference. Is she gorgeous?

DAVID
I've told you, I won't triangulate.

LAURA
Sending you to therapy was a huge
mistake.
(sighs)
Anyway, this Baptist thing, it
would kill Grandpa Grumps. His -

DAVID
- father was in the holocaust. I
know. I'm not going to tell him.

Laura slows the car, easing into a parking place three houses
down from Grandpa's house. Her brave facade fades.

DAVID (CONT'D)
Why are we stopping here?

LAURA
I can't let your father see me like
this.

DAVID
(nods, understanding)
It really sucks, you're not coming
to Loveland.

Laura lays her hand on his, fights back tears.

INT. RICHARD WEISS' BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Richard lugs Anika's three large suitcases to the door.

RICHARD
What happened to "carry-on" only?

ANIKA
I'm an artist. Please don't try to
impose normal limits on me.

INT. GRANDPA GRUMPS' S.F. ESTATE - CONTINUOUS

Richard, dragging the bags, stops in front of Grandpa's
bedroom. He's back to watching TV.

RICHARD
We're leaving soon.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
Good for you.

RICHARD
Excuse me for trying to be polite.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
That's your problem, son, always
trying to please other people. Try
growing a sack.

RICHARD
And you try turning down your
fucking TV once in a while.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
(smiles)
That's a start.

Richard, exasperated, drags the bags away.

INT. LAURA'S CAR - DAY

Laura embraces David, takes his face in her hands.

LAURA
Have a good trip, sweetie.

POUNING ON CAR WINDOW. Laura, startled, turns to find
Frannie, carry-on and photo-satchel in tow.

FRANNIE

Laura, come with us to Loveland.

Laura rolls down the window.

LAURA

Sorry, Frannie, I've...got work.

Frannie puzzles at Laura's disheveled appearance.

FRANNIE

You're all blue. Cool.

Before Laura can stop her, Frannie climbs into the back seat.

FRANNIE (CONT'D)

Want to see my new Facial Gestures?
I'm performing at the Vallejo
Senior Center next month.

Laura nervously glances at the Weiss house.

LAURA

Frannie, now is not a good time -

FRANNIE

Oh, I don't mind.

Frannie opens her carry-on. While removing her Pig Ipod dock, she notices - on the back seat - the frame with her family's photo in it. She plucks out the attached card.

FRANNIE (CONT'D)

"To Richard, on our anniversary -

Laura grabs the card/photo, shoves them into her purse.

LAURA

This is our little secret, okay?

Frannie, picking up Laura's discomfort, nods.

FRANNIE

I hope you can you help me. I'm in
an artist's dilemma.

She CLICKS ON A SOUND TRACK OF CAR ALARMS. Frannie contorts her face in wild, twisted movements to the alarms.

David and Laura smile with affection. Frannie stops.

FRANNIE (CONT'D)

I worry the sounds don't capture
the full import of my Gestures.

It begins raining again. POUNDING ON WINDOW. Laura spins around. Richard and Anika stare through the fogged glass.

RICHARD
What's going on?

FRANNIE
Quick, come in.

Frannie opens the back door. Laura, miserable, sinks further into her seat. Richard and Anika climb in.

DAVID
Mom, this is Anika. Anika, my mom.

The women force smiles, nod to each other. Awkward silence.

FRANNIE
Anika's from Poland.

LAURA
So I've heard. That's very nice.

INT. WEISS LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Grandpa wanders into the deserted, dark room. Looks around.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
Richard? Frannie? Richard?

Anxiety growing, Grandpa rushes toward Frannie's room.

GRANDPA GRUMPS (CONT'D)
Frannie?

He trips and falls. Grandpa's veneer of grumpiness collapses, revealing his loneliness and grief. Grandpa drags himself up. HORN HONKS OUTSIDE. He rushes to the window, looks outside. Closes his eyes with relief.

INT. LAURA'S CAR- CONTINUOUS

David looks back and forth between the silent adults. Finally, Anika clears her throat.

ANIKA
Richard said you produce a home remodeling show on TV?

LAURA
Not anymore. I work in...event planning now.

ANIKA
Sounds glamorous.

Grandpa's face appears at the passenger window. When he sees David he lights up.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
Boychick. I've got the Wilson
Pickett LPs for you.

David rolls down his fogged-up window.

DAVID
That's great, thanks.

They hug. Grandpa's eyes briefly meet Laura's.

LAURA
Hi, Steven. How are you?

He ignores her. David, uncomfortable, pats Grandpa's hand.

DAVID
It's so cool we're going to
Loveland. We haven't been there,
together, since I was a kid.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
(hesitates)
I wasn't planning to go.

DAVID
Grandpa Grumps, why not?

RICHARD
Yeah, why not?

DAVID
This is the only time we have to
see each other. I'll be at mom's
all next week. Please come.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
I don't know, *boychick*.

FRANNIE
It would mean the whole world to
us, dad.

Grandpa looks between David and Frannie's imploring faces.
The heavens open up with torrential rain. Frannie jumps out.

FRANNIE (CONT'D)

Come inside, dad. You'll catch your death.

(waves to car)

Bye, Laura. Wish you were coming.

They hurry into the house. Laura turns to Richard.

LAURA

Tell me again, why aren't I coming?
I loved your mother like my own.

RICHARD

You're the one who left our family.
We've moved on. So should you.
Goodbye, Laura.

He and Anika get out. Laura watches, devastated.

DAVID

Got to go, mom. I'm sorry.

LAURA

Not a problem, sweetie. Really.

Laura kisses David goodbye.

EXT. WEISS NEIGHBORHOOD - CONTINUOUS

Laura drives down the block, sneaks out of the car, and climbs through neighbors' bushes to watch her family load into a limo. At the last minute, Grandpa runs from the house with his carry-on behind him. They drive away.

Laura sinks into the wet bushes, crying. A DOG appears and licks smoothie out of her hair.

EXT. S.F. AIRPORT - DAY

The limo stops in front of the terminal. The family piles out dragging their bags.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

Hurry up. We'll miss our flight.

Frannie, panics, runs ahead into the terminal. Richard struggles with Anika's large suitcases.

RICHARD

(to David)

We have to check these. Stay with Aunt Frannie.

INT. AIRPORT TERMINAL - MOMENTS LATER

PASSENGERS are herded into the security line. Frannie, unnerved by the tense atmosphere, is several PASSENGERS ahead of Grandpa and David.

A TSA AGENT BARKING ORDERS startles her. She spins around. He checks her papers, then signals her to the screening line.

A second AGENT calls out commands.

AGENT

Remove your hats. Jackets off. No belts. Empty your pockets. Shoes in the bins. Separate lap-tops from cases. Use separate bins for personal belongings.

(to Frannie)

Remove those metal barrettes.

Frannie, becoming more anxious, and assuming he means to separate each item into a different bin, places one barrette in each bin. Then she places her belt and each shoe in a bin.

ANOTHER ANGLE: Grandpa and David are herded to a different check point. Grandpa turns to David and pats his shoulder.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

Know the drill, Davie?

(David nods)

Of course you do, *boychick*. You're the brains of the operation, just like your grandma.

Grandpa moves through the line. David holds back, fiddling with his hidden crucifix.

A TSA AGENT opens Grandpa's bag, points to his C-Pap machine.

TSA AGENT

What's this, sir?

GRANDPA GRUMPS

A goddamned C-Pap machine. What the hell does it look like?

ANOTHER ANGLE: Frannie, unnerved by the chaos and over-eager to comply, removes her jacket...then her blouse and skirt, until she's wearing only her slip and socks.

Passengers and agents stop and stare.

ANOTHER ANGLE: Grandpa is pulled aside by TSA AGENTS.

David takes this opportunity to take off the crucifix and sneak through the imaging machine.

ANOTHER ANGLE: Richard with Anika in tow, is being allowed to move ahead by other PASSENGERS. Richard waves to David. But David is staring at...

- Frannie being taken to a security check point. She GIGGLES and jumps around as she's patted down by an AGENT.

- Grandpa YELLING at TSA agents as he repacks his bag.

Richard rushes toward David, who's putting on his crucifix.

RICHARD
David, I'm here.

This draws Grandpa's attention. He sees the crucifix just as Richard does. Grandpa face hardens into anger.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
What the hell is that?

DAVID
(hesitates, then)
Our Lord, on the cross.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
(shouts)
Shande von de goyim.

Frightened, Frannie stops giggling, stares at her father.

INT. AIRPORT TERMINAL - MOMENTS LATER

Richard thanks the TSA agents and hurries past his waiting family. They follow in tense silence.

INT. STARBUCKS - CONTINUOUS

Laura waits to order, downing her Prozac. The FEMALE BARISTA forces a repulsed smile at the wreck of a woman before her.

LAURA
One tall latte and a currant scone.

BARISTA
Name?

LAURA
How about Aaannnnika?

BARISTA
Is that your name?

LAURA
Why, do I look too old to be Anika?

The barista just stares at Laura. Laura's CELL RINGS. She answers, listening as she pays.

LAURA (CONT'D)
No, Richard, I just found out too.
There are worse things than being a
Southern Baptist.
(beat)
A Hara Krishna? David would look
silly bald. His ears are huge.

Another BARISTA waves Laura's latte and scone.

BARISTA II
Anika. Latte and scone for Anika.

LAURA
(into phone)
Frannie will be fine. Just be
patient and nice. You really should
let me come. I could help with her.
(beat, upset)
No reason to be mean.

The first barista plops Laura's order down.

BARISTA
"Anika."

LAURA
Of course not. She said "Monica."

INT. AIRPORT TERMINAL GATE - CONTINUOUS

Richard CLICKS OFF. He notices David grinning at his iPhone. Suspicious, Richard sneaks up behind him.

CLOSE ANGLE: Video of Kishana, face aglow, SINGING A HYMN. The video ends with Kishana moving in close, blowing a kiss.

ANOTHER ANGLE: David smiles, clicks off his phone.

In spite of himself, Richard is touched by the tenderness between the two kids. He backs away.

FLIGHT ANNOUNCER
Flight 805 to Cincinnati now
boarding at gate 64.

INT. DUKE'S CHIROPRACTIC OFFICE - DAY

A RECEPTIONIST shows Laura - eating her scone - into Duke's treatment room. Photos of Aborigines line the walls.

RECEPTIONIST
Dr. Alexander, Ms. Weiss is here.

Duke, dressed professionally (except he's barefoot), sits at his desk, writing. The receptionist leaves. Laura takes a bite of her scone, and watches Duke work.

LAURA
Don't mind me. I'm only on the
verge of self-annihilation.

Duke glances up, frowns at Laura's appearance.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Duke, I'm a total wreck. As we
speak, Richard, the kielbasa, and
his family are flying to Loveland.
(voice quivers)
Without me.

DUKE
Why?

LAURA
Because they hate me.

DUKE
No, why Loveland?

LAURA
Grandma Honey is being honored.

DUKE
Sorry. First things first.

Duke grabs Laura's scone and tosses it into the trash. He points to the Aborigine photos.

DUKE (CONT'D)
Laura, what do you see?

She SIGHS, having been through the lecture before.

LAURA
Beautiful skin. Wide jaws and
strong teeth.

DUKE
Because?

LAURA
Aborigines don't eat grains.

DUKE
Exactly, now lie down.

He guides her to the treatment bed. She SIGHS.

LAURA
I met Anika. She was nice. And has
perky breasts. Mine look like tube
socks filled with sand.

She's crying now. Duke winces, hands her a Kleenex.

LAURA (CONT'D)
I *have* to get to Loveland.

She blows her nose. He's repulsed.

DUKE
Please, do go.

LAURA
Can't. King Richard won't allow it.

DUKE
I mean this in a very loving way:
you're the most conniving and
manipulative person I know. You can
make this happen.

LAURA
(brightens)
You're right. I am conniving.

DUKE
You make Machiavelli look like a
pussy.

LAURA
I'll enlist David and Frannie
without them even knowing it.

Duke can't fake being interested anymore.

DUKE

Good. Now, we have work to do.

LAURA

First I have to call Frannie.
Listen and learn, my son.

INT. PLANE - CONTINUOUS

Richard leading the way, the Weiss family pushes along, crushed in the line of PASSENGERS locating their seats.

Frannie's phone RINGS. She digs in her satchel, answers.

FRANNIE

Hello? Laura, hi!

Richard, tensing when he hears Laura's name, points to a row.

RICHARD

Dad, Anika and David here.

ANIKA

We're not sitting together?

RICHARD

Sorry, I need to baby-sit Frannie.

Anika is not happy. Frannie clicks off her phone, tears through the satchel for something. Can't find it.

FRANNIE

I forgot my headphones.

A GRUFF MAN behind them MOANS. Richard pokes Anika.

RICHARD

Please give Frannie your
headphones.

ANIKA

I need them.

Richard looks like he's going to stroke out. Anika reaches in her purse and tosses the headphones at him.

DAVID

Dad, don't put me with Grandpa
Grumps. He hates me.

RICHARD

So do I. Just sit down and *do not*
start speaking in tongues.

GRUFF MALE
Any time now, people.

Grandpa, Anika and David slump into their seats.

Meanwhile, Frannie is staring in horror at hers and Richard's row. A HANDSOME MAN, 60s, sits in the window seat.

FRANNIE
Mom always made sure I had a window seat - on the north facing side of an eastbound flight. America's national parks are more visible that way.

GRUFF MALE
(calls to attendant)
We need help here.

RICHARD
I'm the one who needs the damned window seat. I've been officially *diagnosed* with claustrophobia and aviaphobia.

FRANNIE
Grandma Honey wouldn't want me to miss the splendor of our national parks.

The handsome man stands up, speaks with a southern accent.

HANDSOME MAN
Excuse me, y'all. Couldn't help but overhear this young lady enjoys the window seat.

He smiles at Frannie. She smiles back, love at first sight.

HANDSOME MAN (CONT'D)
Please, be my guest, Miss. I'll have to take the aisle seat, though. Too broad in the shoulders for the middle.

He regards Richard's slim frame, not hiding his disdain for Richard's lack of chivalry.

NICE MAN
Little fella like yourself should be just fine.

GRUFF MALE
Now could you sit the hell down?

Richard hesitates, then complies. Frannie is thrilled. She leans across Richard to face Scott.

FRANNIE

Thank you, y'all. My name is Frannie Weiss.

SCOTT

Scott Newhall. I, too, enjoy our national parks.

FRANNIE'S face lights up. She assumes this nice man *wants* her. Eyes wide, she leans back and smells her armpits.

INT. DUKE'S CHIROPRACTIC OFFICE - DAY

Laura is face down on the treatment bed, her head in Duke's crotch as he straddles her, manipulating her neck.

SOUNDS OF CAR MUFFLERS REV from an iPod.

DUKE

Imagine the vibrations are energizing your spinal column.

LAURA

Can't. I'm finessing my plan.

DUKE

Explain to me again how telling Frannie to share her knowledge about aeronautics, birds, and national parks is going to get you to Loveland?

LAURA

All shall be revealed in due time.

DUKE

Just in case your scheme doesn't work, you need to think about getting a life. And getting laid. What about TV Builder Bob?

LAURA

He was a huge mistake. I'd only ever been with Richard, *vaginally*, anyway. Thought I needed to experiment. So wrong.

(jerks up)

Ouch. I miss him, Duke.

DUKE
Really? I hadn't heard.
(pats her arm)
Done. Go home and get some sleep.

LAURA
I have to work. Thanks, Duke.

They hug goodbye. She walks out the back door to the elevator, turns around.

LAURA (CONT'D)
My family, we'll be together again,
won't we, Duke?

He nods, but as soon as Laura turns around, his face falls. Entering the elevator she waves goodbye, and drops her purse.

She leans out of the elevator to pick it up. The doors close on her head. Open and close again.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Ouch.

Duke, unable to bear watching, closes his office door.

INT. AIRPLANE - CONTINUOUS

JAMES, a gay attendant on the verge of narcolepsy, waits for Grandpa to make up his mind.

JAMES
Sir, your order?

Grandpa is transfixed, staring at Anika. She's blending green powder and water with her hand-blender.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
Bourbon, rocks. A double.

DAVID
Make that two.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
David!

DAVID
Gawd, I was joking. Make that an
apple juice. Rocks. Single.

The unflappable James turns to Anika.

JAMES

And you, Miss?

Anika takes a sip of her herb drink. It leaves a hideous green mustache on her upper lip.

ANIKA

I came prepared, thank you.

James smiles at the charming sight, moves to Scott.

SCOTT

Bourbon, neat.

James looks at Frannie, his eyebrow raised. She's lined up travel-size lotions on her tray table.

FRANNIE

A coke, please. No rocks in it.

RICHARD

(whispers)

Vodka, straight. A double.

Anika twists around. Her green moustache drying in place.

ANIKA

Pushkin, I thought we agreed: No alcohol. It's dehydrating.

Grandpa grimaces and mouths "Pushkin?" Frannie pops open her lotion. Glop flies into Anika's face.

FRANNIE

Sorry.

Richard tries not to laugh. Upset, Anika twists around in her seat. Frannie leans over Richard to speak with Scott.

FRANNIE (CONT'D)

My lotion's trajectory is an excellent example of how cabin pressure causes air expansion. That's why, in-flight, we pass gas.

An ATTENDANT approaches. James, smiling, whispers to her.

JAMES

I'm having the *best* time.

Frannie stirs her drink, never taking her eyes off Scott.

FRANNIE

We're about 150 miles northeast of Death Valley National Park, which boasts the largest elevation gain from sea level to summit in the U.S. of A.

(smiles at Scott)

Known as the "Devil's Race Track."

RICHARD

Fascinating, Frannie. Now please sit back and be quiet.

Frannie frowns, but puts her headphones on. She stares out the window, HUMMING. Sees something, SHOUTS to Scott.

FRANNIE

We're above Death Valley. The *hottest* place on earth.

Fed up, Richard lifts the headphones off Frannie's ears.

RICHARD

I need peace and quiet, Frannie. I'm trying not to freak out. You know I *hate* flying.

SCOTT

(clears his throat)

So, you folks related?

FRANNIE

Richard's my little brother. He was mom's menopause baby.

James comes to collect trash.

FRANNIE (CONT'D)

We're going to Loveland, Ohio. For the cocks.

Properly amused, James nods and moves on.

RICHARD

Wood-cocks. Our mother is being honored posthumously at the nature center with a new woodcock wing.

FRANNIE

Mom was instrumental to their survival in Ohio.

Grandpa listens to them. His face softens, remembering.

SCOTT
And, woodcocks are?

RICHARD
Woodland birds.

FRANNIE
Who only feed at night.

RICHARD
And are said to mate exactly 22
minutes after sunset.

FRANNIE
Or when the light level reaches .05
foot-candles.

RICHARD
My mother and Frannie were devoted
to their preservation. But we had
to move to California for my mom's
cancer treatments, three years ago.

Grandpa and Frannie tense at the mention of Elaine's cancer.

FRANNIE
(voice quivering)
I performed mating calls during
mom's nature tours.

Frannie closes her eyes, lets loose WOODCOCK MATING CALLS.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
(turns to Richard)
Keep your sister quiet. Give her
back the damned headphones.

Frannie, stung by his words, sinks into her seat.

INT. AIRPLANE - LATER

Frannie quietly listens to music. Grandpa and David are
asleep. Anika practices her flute/iPhone. Richard, appearing
close to relaxed, regards his son and father until...

TURBULENCE STRIKES. The plane RATTLES.

PILOT (O.S.)
Folks, we've hit some turbulence on
our approach to Denver. Please
remain seated, seat belts fastened.

The plane drops sharply. GASPS emit from passengers.

Richard, hyperventilating, wipes sweat from his face. He turns to find Frannie MOANING, her eyes closed in auto-erotic bliss, squirming in her seat.

RICHARD
 Seriously, Frannie?

FRANNIE
 Sorry. The bouncing, it tickles.

Richard opens the Valium bottle - just as Anika turns around.

ANIKA
 You're sneaking chemicals? No wonder the Little General won't salute.

Grandpa and David glance at each other, embarrassed.

FRANNIE
 All this bumping, I've got to go to the ladies room.

Frannie stands. Richard grabs her arm.

RICHARD
 Sit down. It's not safe.

FRANNIE
 Don't worry. Fatal crashes due to wind shears and air pockets, or in this case, *mountain waves* caused by disturbances in the horizontal air flow over the Rockies, are rare.

She stands and scoots in front of Richard.

RICHARD'S POV: Frannie's ass bouncing and shaking.

ANOTHER ANGLE: Richard slams his eyes shut. Frannie moves to Scott. Swaying her hips in his face, she shoots him a smile.

Scott, eyes wide with disbelief, sits frozen in his seat.

James arrives with the cart. Turbulence JOLTS the plane. Frannie loses her balance. Her ass smashes into Scott's face.

SCOTT
 (garbled through her ass)
 Somebody, help me.

RICHARD
 (losing it, to Frannie)
 I'm never going anywhere with you
 again. You're fucking nuts.

DAVID
 Don't yell at Aunt Frannie.

ANIKA
 Don't talk to your father that way.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
 Don't speak to Davie that way.
 (to David)
 And you, David Brom Weiss, show
 some respect for your father.
 You're already a disappointment to
 your people.

JAMES
 Everyone, just calm down.

The plane jerks. Frannie falls against Richard.

FRANNIE
 I'm not disappointed in David. I'm
 people. Aren't I?

GRANDPA GRUMPS
 Of course. That's not the point.

Richard tries to shove her off. He's hyperventilating.

FRANNIE
 (confused, upset)
 What is the point? I'm so confused.
 What is the point?

More TURBULENCE HITS. Richard's really GASPING now.

RICHARD
 I can't breathe. I'm dying here.
 Get me off this fucking plane!

EXT. DENVER AIRPORT - DAY

The family plus Anika squeeze into a minivan cab.

INT. MINIVAN CAB - MOMENTS LATER

The DRIVER who could be Willie Nelson's twin, weaves through
 traffic.

With glazed eyes, he looks in his mirror at the miserable family. Then he glances over to Richard, who rides shotgun. He's talking into his phone.

RICHARD

Only two sleepers left?

(beat)

Fine, just book them.

(clicks off)

We're set to leave tomorrow
afternoon on the California Zephyr.

FRANNIE

I love trains.

(turns to father)

How about you, dad?

GRANDPA GRUMPS

I suppose they're better than
airplanes, in terms of safety.

ANIKA

Did you say there are only two
sleeper cars available? Exactly how
will that work?

RICHARD

Not now. Please.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

I need my privacy, Richard.

The driver glances at Richard and mouths "uh oh."

FRANNIE

Me too. Seclusion is necessary to
prepare for my performance at the
Vallejo Senior Center.

ANIKA

I need privacy to rehearse for my
real performance with the
Philadelphia Symphony next week.

DAVID

Dad, I need privacy to practice my
Haf Torah.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

(surprised)

You're having your Bar Mitzvah?

DAVID

I remain a Jew, a Jew for Jesus.

The driver grimaces. Grandpa goes stone quiet. Gloom descends on the car. Frannie looks at her mother's photo on her lap.

FRANNIE

Mom helped us get along.

DAVID

So did my mom. At least she's nice.

FRANNIE

I miss Laura. We need Laura. She's like mom. She knows what to do.

(to Richard)

Why did you stop loving her?

RICHARD

(snaps at Frannie)

She stopped loving me, okay?

The driver SCREECHES up to the Hilton Hotel.

INT. LAURA'S CAR (PACIFIC HEIGHTS) - DAY

Laura, freshly dressed in a *Party Store* uniform, sits at a stoplight. Her car is stuffed with dozens of balloons, several of which drift into her face.

She listlessly swats at the balloons and dips her fingers into the Chunky Monkey carton on her lap. Licks them.

A HORN HONKS behind her.

She hits the gas. The car LURCHES FORWARD. Dies. The ice cream flies onto her legs.

LAURA

Shit.

Laura scoops up ice cream slop. Her uniform and legs now a fudgy mess. HORNS HONK. She STARTS THE ENGINE.

Laura barrels through a swanky neighborhood. Zips into a driveway. Ignores a THUMPING SOUND.

EXT. PACIFIC HEIGHTS - CONTINUOUS

Laura exits the car, hauls out the balloons. Three POP during the ordeal. Glancing down, she GASPS in horror.

A GIANT PERSIAN CAT lays lifeless behind her tire. Laura, still clutching the balloons, pokes the cat. No response.

She ties the balloons to her wrist and bends over - ass in the air - attempting cat CPR. She pumps its furry chest, holds its nose while breathing into its mouth. No luck.

A BOY (8) appears on the porch, SCREAMS.

Panicked, Laura tosses the cat in her car, hiding it.

WOMAN (O.S.)

Jim, help. Someone's stealing
Balzac!

A WOMAN (40s), dressed a skimpy cocktail dress and Jimmy Choo heels, runs to Laura and tackles her. BALLOONS POP.

The cat SHRIEKS back to life, leaps from the car and runs away. The boy chases it.

EXT. PACIFIC HEIGHTS HOME - MOMENTS LATER

The woman, her son (clinging to Balzac) and the FATHER - arrogant, 60s - stand on the lawn glaring at Laura. She has possession of the remaining few balloons.

LAURA

Again, I apologize about Ball Sack.

FATHER

(condescending)
It's *Balzac*. The French writer?

He tries to grab the balloons. Laura pulls them back.

LAURA

Sorry, sir, not unless you pay.

FATHER

Don't be ridiculous. You nearly
killed our cat.

Her cell phone RINGS. She answers.

LAURA

David? You okay?

The man snatches at the balloons. She jerks them away.

LAURA (CONT'D)

(whispers to man)
Company policy.
(into phone)
Dad made you get off the plane?
(MORE)

LAURA (CONT'D)

(beat)

A train? Wow. I love trains.

FATHER

(incredulous, angry)

Screw you and your company policy.

The family marches into the house. Laura calls after them.

LAURA

(perfect French accent)

It's pronounced *Balzac*. *Honoré de Balzac*.

(back to David)

Nothing. What are you doing?

(beat)

Go shake parked cars. You'll get great sounds. Sure, it's legal.

INT. HILTON HOTEL RECEPTION - CONTINUOUS

At the reception desk, Grandpa takes his credit card from the HOTEL CLERK. Richard watches, embarrassed.

RICHARD

Sorry, I'd pay if I could.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

No, I'm sorry.

RICHARD

About what?

GRANDPA GRUMPS

Don't you have a list? I can't blame you. I know I've been...less than...tolerable. It's just...since your mother got sick I've felt -

(voice catches)

Anyway, about Loveland, not wanting to go. Being there will -

RICHARD

Bring back memories? For me, too, dad. It's weird but I miss mom more everyday, not less.

Grandpa nods in agreement. David runs up to them, excited.

DAVID

Can I go outside with Aunt Frannie?

RICHARD
Okay, but be careful.

David runs toward Frannie. Anika walks up, hugs Richard.

ANIKA
All set?

Richard and Anika walk arm-in-arm to the elevator. Grandpa pulls out his phone, dials.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
Mr. Bean? This is Steven Weiss.
There's been a minor delay.
(listens)
We'll be there, okay? We're
arriving in Chicago early Monday
morning - plenty of time to drive
to Loveland by the afternoon.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Richard bolts the door, turns to Anika, grinning.

RICHARD
Free at last, Lord, free at last.

He strolls around the room, glancing outside to the parking lot. He turns to Anika, still grinning.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
Who needs a view of the Rocky
Mountains when one has a view of
Air Hostess Wojciechowski?

He takes Anika in his arms, kisses her. They back up to the bed, bodies entwined, and fall onto the bed together.

Outside, a CAR ALARM SCREECHES. Then ANOTHER.

Richard barely notices. He's busy unzipping his pants.

TWO MORE CAR ALARMS SCREECH.

Richard glances toward the window, but then moves his lips to Anika's ear.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
We've got lift off.

Fevered kissing until MORE CAR ALARMS SCREECHING distract Richard. He bolts upright.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
What the hell?

ANIKA
Come back, Pushkin.

He moves to the window, erection saluting through his boxers. He stares, horrified. BANGS HIS FOREHEAD ON THE GLASS.

ANIKA (CONT'D)
Richard? Stop. What is it?

Anika rushes to the window.

POV ANIKA: David runs from parked car to parked car, shaking them to make their alarms go off. Frannie, aiming her IPig at the cars, follows David and makes facial gestures.

ANOTHER ANGLE: Anika, miserable, goes to the bed, plunges face down into the pillows.

ANIKA (CONT'D)
I can't take this anymore. Call your crazy ex-wife. Bring her here to baby-sit Frannie and David or I'm leaving.

Richard stares at his - once again - deflated penis.

INT. BALLOON STORE - DAY

CLOSE ANGLE: Flaccid tube balloon is pumped erect with air.

ANOTHER ANGLE: Laura, working in a tiny room, is drowning in balloons. She presses the phone to her ear as she inserts a tube into another limp balloon. Pumping it with air, she can barely contain her glee.

LAURA
David did what? No wonder Anika is upset. I suppose I can get away.

EXT. HILTON HOTEL PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Richard paces back and forth, talking into the phone.

RICHARD
When did you quit the *Build Your Dream* show?

CUT BETWEEN RICHARD AND LAURA:

LAURA
Two months ago.

RICHARD
Builder Bob dump you?

LAURA
The other way around. Didn't David tell you?

RICHARD
He won't tell me anything about you. He calls it -

LAURA
Triangulating. I know.

RICHARD
Biggest mistake we ever made -

LAURA
Sending the little shit to therapy.

Richard almost smiles, but catches himself. Laura ties ribbon around the knot in the balloon.

LAURA (CONT'D)
I'd better go. Lots of loose ends to tie up if I'm leaving tomorrow.

She CLICKS OFF, then quickly speed dials.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Duke, I'm going to Loveland! I need a makeover. Fast. Where do your bimbos go?

INT. AMTRAK TRAIN STATION, DENVER - DAY

The Weiss family plus Anika pace outside the station.

FRANNIE
Laura!

Laura languidly steps out of a cab. A *knockout* in her red designer suit, she strolls toward them in high heels that perfectly accent her spray-tanned legs.

Her hair, retouched with blond highlights, flows in the gentle breeze. She wears fake Prada sunglasses and smiles with shimmering red lips.

DAVID

Mom?

RICHARD

Laura?

Laura holds out her arms to embrace Frannie and David.
Richard and Grandpa silently watch. Anika looks stricken.

LAURA

Greetings, everyone.

DAVID

Mom, you're so...fancy.

LAURA

I had an important meeting this morning.

(fans herself)

Is it unseasonably warm?

She removes her suit jacket, juts out her uplifted Miracle-bra breasts through the black silk camisole.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Let's get going, shall we?

Anika's face brightens. Frannie's sinks. David turns away.

DAVID

Mom, gross.

Laura's left nipple - being pushed upward by the heavily-padded bra - is poking out of her camisole top.

ANIKA

(whispers)

Your nipple.

LAURA

Pardon me?

ANIKA

(whispers again)

Your left nipple. It's showing.

LAURA

(to Richard, smiling)

Help me out. I can't understand her. Is she speaking Polish?

GRANDPA GRUMPS

Your damned nipple, it's saluting the entire train station.

Laura, mortified, shoves her breast under the camisole.

Grandpa leaves. Richard herds David and Anika away. Frannie steps forward, gently takes Laura's hand.

FRANNIE

It's okay, Laura. I like your nipple. It's nice and pink.

(smiles)

It worked, by the way.

LAURA

What worked?

FRANNIE

Telling David to pound on parked cars and your advise to "share my knowledge." I drove my little brother nuts.

LAURA

You knew what I was up to?

FRANNIE

(nods)

I also stuck my butt in a strange man's face. That was all my idea.

EXT. AMTRAK BOARDING - CONTINUOUS

Grandpa, Richard, David and Anika move through a CROWD OF 20 ELDERLY WOMEN dressed in garish RED HATS AND PURPLE CLOTHES. Some use canes, others walkers. An ELDERLY MAN in a wheelchair with oxygen waits with them.

IRENE, 50s, waves a sign that reads: *Happy Travelers Senior Mystery Tour.*

IRENE

Have your boarding passes ready.

Grandpa looks at Richard and grimaces.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

Definition of hell: being trapped on a train with Red Hatters.

BETTY (O.S.)

I agree, and I'm one of them.

Grandpa turns around to find BETTY, early 70s, pretty with silver hair.

She wears a red baseball cap and a purple leisure suit. Her massive breasts put Dolly Parton's to shame. Grandpa's jaw drops. He blushes.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

I'm sorry. I didn't mean -

BETTY

Relax, gramps.

(easy laugh)

This is your family, I assume?

Betty extends her hand to the family.

BETTY (CONT'D)

Hello, my name is Betty. I'm a Red Hatter on the Happy Traveler Mystery Tour.

EDNA, late 70s, wears a plumed red hat.

EDNA

Betty Anne, here you are.

Edna stops, looks past everyone except Grandpa, who winces.

EDNA (CONT'D)

Hello. I'm Edna, Betty's sister.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

My name is Steven. This is Anika, my son Richard, grandson David. I wouldn't characterize us as "Happy Travelers" but we are on a kind of mystery tour.

BETTY

Sounds interesting.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

Not really, but it beats sitting in a dark room waiting to die.

RICHARD

Dad.

BETTY

I've sat in that room myself, Steven. It's nicer out here, don't you agree?

He shrugs. In spite of his gruffness, Betty and Edna smile.

MORE ELDERLY WOMEN from the tour push in for a closer look.

IRENE
Stay with your assigned buddies.

BETTY
Nice meeting all of you.

They are herded away. The Weiss' move to the train.

INT. AMTRAK TRAIN - WOMEN'S SLEEPING CAR - DAY

Frannie and Laura stuff themselves and their luggage into the car. Anika hesitates near the door.

Frannie jumps on the lower bunk that is perpendicular to the third bed. She points to it, addresses Laura.

FRANNIE
Sleep here. We'll be nose to nose.

LAURA
Or, toes to toes.

Anika, looking like the third wheel, watches them laugh.

INT. AMTRAK TRAIN - MEN'S SLEEPING CAR - DAY

Grandpa, Richard and David silently stow their luggage.

INT. AMTRAK TRAIN - WOMEN'S SLEEPING CAR - CONTINUOUS

Frannie sits next to Anika as she rummages through her suitcases. Frannie's eyes widen when she sees the enema bag.

RICHARD (O.S.)
You decent?

ANIKA
Never.

Anika glances at Laura, opens the door.

RICHARD
Want to explore?

ANIKA
Love to.

RICHARD
(to Laura)
You'll keep an eye on Frannie?

She nods. Richard leaves with Anika. Miserable, Laura stares at the closed door. Frannie, however, has moved her focus to Anika's suitcase.

LAURA
I need a drink. Want one?
(Frannie shakes her head)
Be back in a minute.

Laura leaves. Frannie slowly opens Anika's bag, pulls out the enema. She goes to the sink, fills it up and squirts water like a fountain.

DAVID (O.S.)
Aunt Frannie?

David appears in the doorway. Frannie spins around and fires water into his face, LAUGHING.

INT. AMTRAK BAR CAR - DAY

The bar car is empty except for the elderly man in a wheelchair with the oxygen tank, his wife, the BARTENDER, and Grandpa, who is on his second scotch.

The inebriated elderly man motions to the bartender.

ELDERLY MAN
Another Jack Daniels.

WIFE
I think you've had enough.

ELDERLY MAN
Bullshit.

The BARTENDER delivers the drinks. He then changes the TV channel. Grandpa stares at the screen with disgust.

Laura walks into the bar car, sees the TV.

PIXILATED ON THE TV: The *BUILD YOUR DREAM* HOST, BOB, 50s, SMASHES through aging dry wall with a massive hammer.

BOB
Today, the art of demolition.

LAURA AND GRANDPA GRUMPS
(in unison)
Turn that off.

Grandpa spins around. Their eyes meet. He almost smiles but stops himself, then turns back around to the bartender.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
The financial report. Please.

Laura takes a seat at the bar.

LAURA
You ever going to speak to me?

GRANDPA GRUMPS
Don't have anything to say.

LAURA
After 14 years, you can't even
muster a "Why, did you leave?"

GRANDPA GRUMPS
All right, why *did* you leave?
(nods to TV)
Was it because of that moron?

LAURA
God, no.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
Then why?

LAURA
(hesitates, sighs)
It's complicated.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
Fine. Can we stop now?

The elderly man shouts to no one.

ELDERLY MAN
Bullshit.

LAURA
You were part of the problem,
Steven. If Richard and I hadn't
been forced to move in, take care
of Elaine for three years -

GRANDPA GRUMPS
Nobody twisted your arms.

LAURA
You left her with strangers. You
were always away on business -

GRANDPA GRUMPS
What was I supposed to do?

LAURA

Be there for her, for Frannie.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

I *couldn't* stand to see the love of
my life suffer -

DAVID'S SHRIEK, followed by water squirting across the bar car, stops Grandpa. David is being chased by Frannie. She blasts him with the enema bag.

It misses David and hits the elderly man. Barely flinching, he reaches under his pants leg, pulls out his urine bag, and fires back.

ELDERLY MAN

Take that.

Except he misses Frannie and hits his wife. She SCREAMS.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

Frannie. David. Stop.

Frannie slumps onto a bar stool next to him.

GRANDPA GRUMPS (CONT'D)

(to elderly wife)

I'm so sorry, ma'am.

The wife nods to Grandpa, rolls her husband out. Laura grabs the enema bag, turns to David.

LAURA

That's it. You're grounded.

DAVID

Dad already did that - after the
car alarms.

(lowers his voice)

Another one of your shitty ideas.

LAURA

Watch your mouth. What's going on
with you?

David holds up 1, 2, and then 3 fingers as he speaks.

DAVID

A: Adolescence. B: My parents have
split up and gone nuts.

(MORE)

DAVID (CONT'D)

C: None of you even notice or care about me anymore unless I act out - a classical case of negative attention being better than no attention at all.

Laura starts to protest but stops. Even Grandpa can't fault his reasoning. Laura puts her hands on David's shoulders.

LAURA

Okay. A: No more therapy for you. I can't win an argument anymore. B: We haven't gone nuts. We're just temporarily off course. C: Everyone in this family adores you, you little shit, so shape up.

Laura turns her son around and shepherds him toward the door.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Now we're going to spend some quality time together, even if it kills you.

Meanwhile, Grandpa and Frannie sit side by side in silence. Finally, she WHISPERS.

FRANNIE

I told you.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

What?

FRANNIE

Laura. She knows what to do. Like mom did.

Grandpa can't disagree. Frannie motions to the bartender.

FRANNIE (CONT'D)

A Bloody Mary, please.

(winks at him)

And not a *virgin*.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

Frannie.

FRANNIE

Seriously, dad, not a virgin. I'm 48 years old.

The bartender gets to blending. Grandpa rubs his temples, stares at the Financial Report.

Frannie takes her drink and CRUNCHES the celery stalk. She gently takes Grandpa's hand, holds it. He doesn't protest.

After a moment, Frannie pulls out a guidebook, reads it.

FRANNIE (CONT'D)

Any minute we should pass through
Fort Morgan, the childhood home of
Big Band great Glenn Miller.
How about we take our drinks to the
connector car and watch for it?

INT. AMTRAK DINING CAR - DAY

The Happy Travelers, still wearing red hats - except for Betty who is bareheaded - finish their meals.

SUZY

Time to rest before tonight's
mystery surprises.

Betty rolls her eyes. Edna, however, is intrigued.

EDNA

I hope the Sweet Adelines perform.
No one advances the art of
barbershop harmony like they do.

Betty winces. Deep in thought, Edna's face drops.

EDNA (CONT'D)

Lord, what if it's that fatso
Elvis? Last year he flung sweat
into my *mouth*, for god's sake.

Irene walks up, seniors in tow. Sees that Betty is hatless.

IRENE

Where's your hat?

BETTY

It threw itself under the train,
like *Anna Karenina*.

IRENE

Very droll, Betty, but don't lose
sight of the Red Hatter's Five F's.

IRENE AND EDNA

"Fun. Friendship. Freedom.
Fulfillment. Fitness.

BETTY

But no Fornication, unfortunately.

Edna's mouth drops open. Irene whispers in Betty's ear.

IRENE

Speak for yourself, dear.

(gestures to women)

This way, ladies.

INT. AMTRAK CONNECTOR CAR - CONTINUOUS

Frannie and Grandpa sway with the motion of the train. The Great Plains race before them. They smile at each other.

The door WHOOSHES OPEN. Two Happy Travelers push their way through - squashing Frannie and Grandpa against the window - to the next car, followed by more WHOOSHING OF DOORS and more women (with canes and walkers) crowding through the car.

FRANNIE

Hi. Hi. Hi. Hi. Hi. Hi. Hi.

Betty squeezes in. Grandpa tries to hide his interest.

BETTY

Hello.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

Hello.

The train's gyrations reek havoc with Betty's breasts. Grandpa blushes, tries not to stare at the bouncing beauties.

BETTY

No need to blush, Steven. Ever since I was 12, I've been trying to get you boys to look me in the eye.

Betty, using both hands, motions from her breasts to her eyes and winks. In spite of himself, Grandpa half-smiles.

Frannie is enthralled, watching their exchange.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

You're an...unusual person. Where did you come from?

BETTY

Iowa City.

The door WHOOSHES OPEN. Edna enters.

FRANNIE

Hi!

GRANDPA GRUMPS

Betty, Edna, this is my daughter,
Frannie.

FRANNIE

(looks out window)

Yay, the Fort Morgan train depot,
constructed not only for service
but for beauty in 1923.

They look at the dilapidated station. Edna frowns.

EDNA

You're kidding, right?

FRANNIE

Next we enter Nebraska where Kool-
Aid is the official state beverage.

Edna does a double-take at Frannie. Her face brightens.

EDNA

I get it, this act of yours, it's
for our group, right?

FRANNIE

Yes, my act is expressly designed
for seniors and nursing homes.

EDNA

I knew it, you're part of the
Mystery Tour.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

What exactly is a Mystery Tour?

EDNA

The best vacation ever. Betty and I
come every year, with no idea where
we're going.

BETTY

Our husbands -

EDNA

God rest their souls.

BETTY

Wouldn't allow a pee break unless
it was on the itinerary.

EDNA

Last year, the Mystery Tour made a surprise visit to Smithville, Virginia where Luter's Lard is made. Here Betty and I had assumed it was a North Carolina product. That was a shocker, right, Betty?

Betty manages a weak nod.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

I prefer to know where I'm going.

BETTY

Sugar, at our age, we all know exactly where we're going.
 (peeks over her bifocals)
 Even still, it's nice to have a little mystery along the way, don't you agree?

Their eyes meet. And hold.

FRANNIE

Welcome to Nebraska!

INT. MEN'S SLEEPING CAR - DAY

Laura and David sit together on his bed - iPhone aimed at their faces, RAPPING Eminem's *Not Afraid*.

DAVID AND LAURA

*We'll walk this road together,
 through the storm. Whatever
 weather, cold or warm. Just let you
 know that, you're not alone.*

Finishing the song, they fist pump. David presses send.

LAURA

Your father's going to love it.

INT. TRAIN HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Richard, smiling, watches the video David sent. Anika tries to join in his enthusiasm but can't.

INT. MEN'S SLEEPING CAR - CONTINUOUS

Laura waits while David send their song to Kishana.

LAURA

So, you really like this girl?

DAVID

I think I love her. I've never felt this way, my whole life.

LAURA

Your whole long life of 13 years?

DAVID

Gawd, Mom.

LAURA

Do we need to have the 'sex talk?'

David is too horrified to respond.

LAURA (CONT'D)

I'm sure I looked at my mother the same way, right before your dad knocked me up in college.

DAVID

Gawd, mom, gross.

Richard opens the door, Anika behind him. His smile fades when he looks around.

RICHARD

Where's Frannie? You were supposed -

The LIGHTS FLICKER. The train SCREECHES TO A HALT. Anika tumbles forward onto the floor.

Laura takes this opportunity to "fall" off the bunk into Richard's arms. He collapses onto the floor, Laura on top of him. He's CRIES OUT. She whispers in his ear.

LAURA

Happy anniversary. I love you.

RICHARD

Ouch, my back. Are you insane? Get off me.

The LOUD SPEAKER CRACKLES.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

Attention, passengers. There's an obstruction ahead. We'll be stopped until further notice. Thank you for your patience.

INT. AMTRAK CONNECTOR CAR - CONTINUOUS

The sudden force of the stop has thrown Betty against Grandpa. She glances down at the protrusion in his pants.

BETTY

Oh, my.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

(shocked, emotional)

I'll be damned, there's still bread
in the old basket.

BETTY

It's an Easter miracle.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

(finally a smile)

A true resurrection.

Meanwhile, Frannie helps Edna back to her feet.

FRANNIE

Are you all right?

EDNA

I think so. But this is disturbing.

FRANNIE

Yes, it is.

(beat, confused)

What is?

EDNA

To be stranded in the middle of
nowhere. What will we do until the
train resumes?

Frannie stands straighter, almost diva-like.

FRANNIE

I could perform my virtuoso piece
created especially for the Vallejo
Senior Center.

EDNA

That might be all right.

FRANNIE

Father, please ask David to bring
my iPig. Immediately.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

Frannie, this isn't a good idea.

INT. MEN'S SLEEPING CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Grandpa throws open the door.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
 Whatever the hell an iPig is,
 Frannie wants it. She's going to
 perform for the old ladies.

INT. AMTRAK DINING CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Frannie stands in front of the growing crowd of seniors,
 including the elderly man in the wheelchair.

FRANNIE
 This is a challenging composition
 so, please, no flash photography.

Her family arrives. She waves off their CONCERNED WHISPERING.
 David shows her the iPig. Frannie turns to the audience.

FRANNIE (CONT'D)
 Welcome, Happy...Red Mystery...Hat
 Travelers. My name is Frannie
 Weiss. Today I will interpret our
 sound scape *facially* in order to
 raise consciousness about urban
 noise. My first motet: "Auditory
 Assaults by the Motor Vehicle."

She nods to David. He CLICKS ON SCREECHING CAR ALARMS.

Frannie launches into her bizarre but *amazing* facial
 gestures. The seniors, shocked, MUMBLE among themselves.

EDNA
 It's okay. She's *trying* to scare
 us. It's part of the Mystery Tour.

ELDERLY MAN
 Bullshit.

Others quiet him as Frannie continues. The seniors stare,
 open-mouthed, confused, but eventually captivated.

Richard watches with appreciation, scans his family: Grandpa,
 worried, glances at Betty. She pats his hand. David and Laura
 grin with admiration. Anika checks her watch.

Frannie finishes. Spent, she slumps forward.

The crowd is silent until Laura and David CLAP. The crowd
 follows suit. They surround Frannie.

ANIKA
I've got to rehearse.

She slips out.

After congratulating Frannie, Grandpa and Betty ease out of the door.

Richard and Laura, left alone, awkwardly stare forward.

LAURA
Frannie was amazing.
(he nods)
Do you ever miss...us?

He finally glances at her.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Me-you, us.

RICHARD
Why would I?

Laura turns to him, emotional.

LAURA
Richard, I'm sorry. I was such a coward, afraid of the grief, the pain. But you were so...

RICHARD
I was so what, Laura?

LAURA
Sad. Distant. Angry.

RICHARD
Sorry if I had to deal with my mother's cancer and death -

LAURA
I didn't mean...Richard, I loved her too.

Laura takes the framed photo from her purse.

LAURA (CONT'D)
A gift, for our anniversary.

RICHARD
What the hell? We're separated. You fucked Builder fucking Bob.

LAURA

I'm sorry about that. We weren't together when it happened. I swear to you. Can you ever forgive me?

Richard SIGHS, turns away from her.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Please, Richard, let's spend some time together when we get back, see where it leads. I miss you so much.

RICHARD

Sorry, I'm with Anika now.

Frannie - Irene in tow - runs to them, beaming.

FRANNIE

Irene's invited me to be the opening act at Easter Brunch tomorrow.

(turns to Irene)

I'll need brief profiles of all your group members.

They move away. Richard follows without a word to Laura.

INT. AMTRAK BAR CAR - CONTINUOUS

Through the windows, dusk fires the Great Plains' skies with red and gold. Grandpa and Betty CLICK MARTINI GLASSES.

Betty glances to her left. Her face falls. The Mystery Travelers are moving toward them.

BETTY

The hordes descend.

Grandpa grabs their drinks, motions her to follow.

MOVING SHOT: Grandpa and Betty hurry through the observation car. He hands Betty the drinks and tries to open doors to the outside. No luck.

ANOTHER ANGLE: Grandpa takes a Swiss Army knife out of his pocket, jimmys the lock, and forces the door open. Betty climbs out. He follows.

INT. DINING CAR - CONTINUOUS

The elderly "bullshit" man watches them run away.

EXT. GREAT PLAINS, NEBRASKA - CONTINUOUS

LAUGHING like teenagers, Grandpa and Betty toss their martini glasses and veer toward a rusted-out Dodge truck.

INT. TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

They climb in and slump down into the shredded seats. Betty turns to Grandpa, trying to catch her breath. Grinning.

Grandpa grins back. She glances at the train.

BETTY

I'm so sick of "Fun and Friendship
and Fulfillment, I could puke.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

And I'm so sick of my family's
judgement that I could puke.

BETTY

Judgement?

GRANDPA GRUMPS

At how I failed my wife. The
cancer, the treatments, I didn't
know what the hell to do.

BETTY

Who does? Too bad we can't practice
the *right* way to help a spouse die.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

I should've tried harder.

BETTY

I should've tried *less* hard. Made
my husband sicker, forcing him to
undergo one torturous treatment
after another. None of them worked.

They sit in silence. Grandpa grabs the steering wheel.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

Where to?

BETTY

How about Paris?

GRANDPA GRUMPS

Is that...I mean...something you'd
ever consider?

She looks over to the train. A parade of Red Hatters are being herded into the diner car.

BETTY

I don't know. At my age it's hard to imagine being with anyone new. I can't even sleep without one of those ridiculous c-pap machines.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

Either can I. A mouth guard, too.

BETTY

I have dentures.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

I take blood pressure, prostate, and cholesterol medication.

BETTY

(sighs, blushes)
I wear depends.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

(points to himself)
Hemorrhoids.

BETTY

(laughs)
Stop, I'm getting aroused.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

(not laughing)
So am I, Betty.

Their eyes meet and hold, until his drift to her breasts.

GRANDPA GRUMPS (CONT'D)

Please don't be offended, but ever since we met, I've been obsessed with the thought burying my face...

BETTY

Is that a request?

GRANDPA GRUMPS

More like the desperate pleading of a dying man.

BETTY

(alarmed)
Are you...dying?

GRANDPA GRUMPS
I would gladly do so, if it would
further my cause.

She laughs. Under her blouse, Betty slips off her bra and gently guides his face into her cleavage. He MOANS, then falls silent. Betty becomes concerned.

BETTY
Can you breathe?

GRANDPA GRUMPS
(muffled by her breasts)
Who cares? Could you shake them?

She does. He MOANS again, then lifts his eyes to meet hers.

GRANDPA GRUMPS (CONT'D)
Is it okay, doing this?

BETTY
Because we barely know each other?
(he nods)
Does it mean we love our spouses
any less or that we've stopped
grieving?
(he shakes his head)
Don't you think they'd want us to
live what little is left of our
lives, even find a bit of comfort?

They search each others eyes for a long moment, then their lips meet. They kiss, long and passionate.

He pulls away, begins to cry. So does she.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
I'm sorry.

BETTY
Me, too.

They hold each other crying, then blow their noses.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
What a couple of crybabies. I never
thought I could feel this -

She lurches over and kisses him. Hard.

INT. AMTRAK TRAIN - WOMEN'S SLEEPING CAR - CONTINUOUS

Anika, perched on her bunk, softly plays her flute.

Frannie sits on her bunk bed, ears stuffed with wads of Kleenex, writing in a notebook.

Laura lies on the lower bunk, staring at Anika's smooth - albeit chubby - young legs and silver painted toenails. She listens to the music, moved and tortured by its beauty.

Laura speed dials Duke on her iPhone.

LAURA
(whispers)
Duke, listen to Anika play.

DUKE (V.O.)
Debussy. Beautiful.

LAURA
Should I kill myself now or later?
At least she has chubby legs.

DUKE (V.O.)
I love chubby legs. Introduce me.

LAURA
You slut.

DUKE (V.O.)
How's your plan coming along?

LAURA
Richard still hates me. Gotta go.

Laura CLICKS OFF THE PHONE. Anika stops playing.

LAURA (CONT'D)
That was beautiful, Anika.

ANIKA
Thank you.

Anika hangs her head over the bunk.

ANIKA (CONT'D)
We are being very civil to each other, no?

LAURA
I'm trying - sort of.

ANIKA
Me too. Although I would not have had you come if I'd known what you looked like without sweat and blueberries in your hair.

LAURA

I had a makeover before I came.
 (beat)
 Anika, I'm sorry, but I want my
 husband back.

ANIKA

I did not know that.
 (tensing)
 Really? So, we are dueling bitches
 in competition for our pack leader.

LAURA

(winces)
 I always thought of Richard as more
 "Hello, Kitty" than alpha dog.

KNOCK ON THE DOOR.

RICHARD (O.S.)

Ladies? It's dinner time.

ANIKA

Come in.

The door opens to reveal Richard and David.

LAURA

If it isn't Rin Tin Tin.

Anika jumps down from the bunk, tousles David's hair.

ANIKA

And his little pup.

DAVID

Gawd, Anika.

David jerks back, presses down his hair.

RICHARD

(to Laura)
 Have you seen my dad?

LAURA

Not since he left with Betty.

RICHARD

He's a big boy, I suppose.
 (to Frannie, loud)
 Ready for dinner?

FRANNIE

No time. Working on my performance.
I'm dedicating it to the memory of
our mother.

RICHARD

That's sweet. Do you want me to
bring you something?

Frannie shakes her head.

ANIKA

Well then, it's just our cozy trio.

Anika guides Richard and David out of the car, shooting Laura
a *look*. Laura, watching them disappear, opens a bottle of
Valium and swallows two pills.

The train's engines ROAR ON. The car lurches forward.

INT. ABANDONED TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Grandpa startles awake, shivering in the cold. Betty SNORES
beside him. He looks out the fogged window. No train.

Grandpa's GASP awakens Betty, who's also shivering.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

The train, it's gone. Oh God, I
can't make my family miss Elaine's
ceremony. They'll hate me.

INT. AMTRAK TRAIN - WOMEN'S SLEEPING CAR - CONTINUOUS

Laura is dead to the world, drooling in her Valium sleep.

Frannie, wads of tissue still stuffed in her ears, wears a
flannel nightgown. She writes in her notebook.

POUNING ON DOOR doesn't phase Laura or Frannie.

EDNA (O.S.)

Betty, you in there?

MORE POUNDING. Irritated, Frannie opens the door.

EDNA (CONT'D)

Where's my sister?

Not removing the tissue wads from her ears, Frannie shrugs.

FRANNIE

Please do not disturb me. I'm deep within my artistic process.

EDNA

Drop the retard act. My sister is missing. So is your father.

Frannie GASPS with fear.

FRANNIE

My father? Missing?

EDNA

I've searched the entire train.

Frannie violently shakes Laura, who can barely open her eyes.

FRANNIE

Dad and Betty are gone.

Frannie pushes past Edna, runs down the corridor, SHOUTING.

FRANNIE (CONT'D)

Call 9-11. Call 9-11.

INT. AMTRAK DINING CAR - CONTINUOUS

The dining car is crowded with HAPPY TRAVELERS, including elderly "bullshit" man.

Richard, Anika and David are seated at a table eating.

FRANNIE (O.S.)

Call 9-11. Call 9-11.

Alarmed, Richard drops his fork. The door flies open. Frannie runs in wearing her nightgown, tissues in her ears.

Laura, hair in disarray and wearing old PJs, stumbles into the car with Edna behind her.

FRANNIE (CONT'D)

Dad and Betty, they're missing.

ELDERLY MAN

Bullshit. The lovebirds escaped. I saw 'em.

INT. AMTRAK ENGINEER'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Richard, Laura, Frannie, David, Anika and Edna crowd into the car with the ENGINEER.

RICHARD

You have to go back. They'll freeze to death.

Laura, drowsy, rests her head on Richard's shoulder, slurs her words.

LAURA

You should listen to my husband.

ENGINEER

Don't worry. I've contacted the local police. They'll find them.

Anika pushes between Laura and Richard, takes his hand.

ANIKA

I'm sure they will, darling.

EXT. GREAT PLAINS, NEBRASKA - CONTINUOUS

A POLICE CAR speeds along the railroad tracks in the black, frigid night. COUNTRY MUSIC BLASTS FROM THE CAR.

INT. POLICE CAR - CONTINUOUS

Two corn-fed cops, TOMMY and JACK (40s) are balding and overweight. Tommy drives too fast across the rugged plain. The car swerves and bounces.

This does not deter Jack, the fatter one, from shoving corn nuts into his mouth. He SLURPS coffee.

They SHOUT to each other over the MUSIC.

TOMMY

Turn up the heat, be-atch. My balls are freezing.

Jack BLASTS the heat, throws a corn nut at Tommy's crotch.

JACK

Wouldn't want be-atch's corn nuts to freeze.

TOMMY

You're the be-atch, be-atch.

Jack sees something on the ground. Frightened, he YELLS.

JACK

Stop!

Tommy SLAMS ON THE BRAKES. The car swerves, HITS something and sails upward and over it. Jack CHOKES on the corn nuts, COUGHS them across the dashboard.

Tommy SCREECHES to a stop. Coffee flies onto Jack.

JACK (CONT'D)

Ouch. Damn it, Tommy.

All bravado gone, they are shaken to the core.

TOMMY

Shit, we killed the old people. I saw 'em, lying on the ground.

JACK

Maybe they were already dead.

TOMMY

Like, frozen to death?

JACK

Probably. You better look.

TOMMY

You look. Please, Jack?

JACK

No, Tommy. C'mon, you killed 'em. We're in trouble, man. Running over farm animals and pets is one thing -

TOMMY

This isn't the time to dredge up past mistakes, okay? Just pray for me. Real hard.

JACK

Okay, Tommy. But after this, you gotta slow down.

EXT. GREAT PLAINS, NEBRASKA - CONTINUOUS

Tommy exits the car, shines his flashlight on the ground.

TOMMY

Sheeee-at.

Tommy, bravado back, aims the light on a long boulder.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
Be-atch, it was a rock.

JACK
(shouts)
Hell, yeah. Now baby don't gotta
cry no more.

Tommy turns to walk back to the car when he notices the abandoned truck 100 feet in front of them.

TOMMY
Hey, Jack, see the truck? Is that
fog on the windows?

Jack heaves himself out of the car.

JACK
Looks like loam to me.

TOMMY
(uneasy)
What the hell is loam?

JACK
Loam is marl, Tommy.

TOMMY
(frightened)
Marl?

JACK
You know, your basic Muck? Sludge?

TOMMY
Ya mean *dirt*, dildo brain?
(Jack nods)
Then just fucking say "dirt."
Christ almighty. C'mon.

Tommy takes off running toward the truck. Jack tries to keep up but can't. Tommy reaches the truck. It's windows are thick with condensation.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
I told you it was fog.

He looks into the window and jumps backwards - horrified.

JACK
They dead?

TOMMY

Worse. They're old and they're
naked.

Jack joins him at the window. They peer in.

POV JACK AND TOMMY: Betty's legs - thick and white and bare except for nylons rolled down to her ankles - are spread wide and flopping in the air. Grandpa's naked ass humps her. His black socks are pulled to his scrawny, pasty-white knees. There is a pair of Depends on the dashboard.

JACK

I'm gonna be sick.

INT. AMTRAK TRAIN - WOMEN'S SLEEPING CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Richard throws open the door.

RICHARD

Dad and Betty are safe.

Laura, David and Frannie - huddled together on one bunk, jerk awake. Anika, on her bunk, opens her eyes.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

They're fine and will catch up with
us tomorrow.

The family embraces, relieved. Richard even hugs Laura until he realizes what he's doing. He quickly pulls away.

Frannie's happiness gives way to concern.

FRANNIE

But will dad make my performance?

INT. AMTRAK DINING CAR - MORNING

The dining car, stuffed to the hilt with Red Hatters, is decorated for Easter with paper bunnies.

Brunch finished, the crowd eats (bunny) spongy Peeps.

A disheveled Grandpa and Betty hurry through the rear door and join the Weiss group.

Richard shoots his father a searing look, nods towards Betty.

RICHARD

I see you've moved on.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

Not "on," over - just enough to let
some light in. I hope you'll try to
understand.

Richard and Grandpa's gaze meet and hold just as...

Frannie enters dressed in all black. She carries a Shruti (a
tiny accordion that sounds like a single-note organ).
Searching the faces, Frannie sees her father and smiles with
relief. She walks to the microphone.

FRANNIE

Welcome to the premiere of *The Red
Hatters Happy Mystery Tour Magnum
Opus on an Easter Sunday.*

The audience CLAPS. Fannie assumes the aura of an enlightened
being. She rhythmically squeezes her shruti.

The STEADY, TRANCE-LIKE DRONING accompanies Frannie's
mesmerizing, sing-song voice.

FRANNIE (CONT'D)

*A drone, the same note repeated
over and over, is what you hear on
my shruti. The yogis believe it is
the Breath of God. See the shruti
breathing?*

EDNA

Yes!

The transfixed Red Hatters nod. The elderly man BURPS.

FRANNIE

*You need to be the drone. Listen to
the steady drone of the divine,
listen as you near death. Not you,
dad or Betty, but you, sir -
(turns to elderly man)
- with the colostomy bag and oxygen
tank. You need to listen to the
drone, and then you'll die.*

ELDERLY MAN

Bullshit.

The elderly man's wife smiles, then checks herself. The other
Red Hatters are jolted from their mesmerise, uneasy now.

EDNA

Don't worry, it's part of the act.

FRANNIE

Sing along with me.

IRENE

Yes, sing along, everyone.

FRANNIE

*Listen to the drone, listen to the
drone, take your last breath now,
take your last breath now.*

Audience members start to sing with Frannie but fade to only a few, including the elderly man's wife and the Weiss family, who look worried - sans Grandpa. He's smiling.

FRANNIE (CONT'D)

*Listen to the drone, it will help
you die.*

Richard motions to Frannie to stop.

ANIKA

Get her off. This is a disaster.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

Leave Frannie be.

Frannie turns to a hugely OBESE WOMAN sitting in a jumbo wheelchair, biting the ears off a chocolate bunny.

FRANNIE

*Mrs. Peterson, 300 pounds
overweight, a diabetic on dialysis -
What are you hanging around for?
What are you hanging around for?*

Audience members GASP. Some are confused, others angry. A WIZENED OLD WOMAN throws a yellow Peep at Frannie.

VERY OLD WOMAN

Shut the crazy bitch up.

FRANNIE

*I understand, Mrs. Peterson: you
sneak Snickers bars to shoot your
glycemic levels high, causing you
to slip into diabetic shock when
you almost die -*

ANOTHER WOMEN

Stop her, now.

FRANNIE

- then your family rushes to your bedside. It's the only time they visit - when you almost die, but you never do. It's time for you to - Take your last breath now. Take your last breath now. Listen to the drone, it will help you die.

Red Hatters WHISPER, horrified. Edna jumps up, waving her arms. Frannie ignores her.

EDNA

Stop, right now.

Frannie points at an emaciated woman with no hair.

FRANNIE

And you Mrs. Durban...

Irene begins to frantically CLAP AND SHOUT.

IRENE

Isn't she a hoot, everyone?

Frannie SINGS LOUDER. Audience members start to leave.

FRANNIE

Mrs. Durbin, with the bald head from all the chemotherapy. After 40 years of smoking, you've got Terminal Cancer. What are you hanging around for?

A Red Hatter throws a chocolate bunny at Frannie. Emboldened, others follow with bunnies and Peeps.

FRANNIE (CONT'D)

A cure? I don't think so. Need I remind you, Mrs. Durbin, not stage 1, not stage 2, 3 or 4, but Terminal. It's time to -

She SINGS LOUDER as the crowd erupts into chaos.

Grandpa moves toward the stage, SINGING along with Frannie.

A woman's walker crashes into another woman's walker.

The elderly man rolls his wheel chair over Edna's foot. She SCREAMS and slaps him.

Frannie and Grandpa continue SINGING, undaunted.

FRANNIE AND GRANDPA
*Take your last breath now. Take
 your last breath now. Listen to the
 drone, it will help you die.*

The door flies open. An overweight, GREASY ELVIS bursts in and grabs the microphone from Frannie. She jerks it back.

FRANNIE
*Listen to the drone, it will help
 you die.*

Irene jumps in, trying to wrench the microphone from Frannie. Now it's two against one.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
 Leave her alone.

Grandpa jumps into the fray. Then David. The security guard tries to break them up.

Laura, Richard, and Anika watch. Anika is horrified.

ANIKA
 Richard, please do something. Your
 crazy family will get us thrown off
 the train.

LAURA
 How dare you call -

ANIKA
 Just stay out of this. For once.

LAURA
 I will not.

RICHARD
 Laura, Anika, stop.

ANIKA
 (voice trembling)
 I'll stop when you tell *her* to stop
 butting into our lives.

LAURA
 This is still *my* family, not yours.

ANIKA
 (begins to cry)
 You're right, it is. How can I
 possibly compete with funny, whacky
 Laura, who everybody's known and
 loved for years?

Anika runs through the erupting crowd to the door.

RICHARD
 (calls after her)
 Anika, wait.
 (turns on Laura)
 You satisfied now? What? You
 couldn't stand the thought of me
 being happy?

LAURA
 You don't seem very happy to me.

RICHARD
 That's because you ruin everything.

LAURA
 I'm sorry. I just wanted us to be a
 family again.

He walks away, calls over his shoulder.

RICHARD
 Too late for that.

INT. AMTRAK TRAIN - WOMEN'S SLEEPING CAR - CONTINUOUS

Laura, Anika, and Frannie - miserable - zip up their
 suitcases. Frannie drags hers out of the sleeping car.

LAURA
 Anika, I'm sorry. I've been awful
 and incredibly inconsiderate.
 Please forgive me.

Anika just nods, continues packing. Laura hesitates, then
 grabs one of the two iPhones sitting on her bunk.

LAURA (CONT'D)
 Maybe we can start over when we get
 back to San Francisco.

Richard appears in the doorway, ignores Laura.

RICHARD
 Almost ready, Ankie?

Laura, fighting back tears, silently rolls her bag out of the
 car. Anika slumps onto the bunk.

ANIKA
 Sorry, Richard. I'm not coming.

RICHARD

Ankie, please. I won't let her get between us anymore. I promise.

ANIKA

It's not just Laura. It's your whole life and, truthfully, our age difference. You're such a...father, son, brother, and even still very much a husband. I'm an artist, Richard. A young artist. This trip, it's become clear - our priorities are different. I need room to explore, to breathe. You seem to need to need no room at all. It's as if you enjoy being suffocated.

RICHARD

"Suffocated" is a bit harsh.

ANIKA

Smothered? Asphyxiated?

RICHARD

Okay, I get it.

(beat)

I'm sorry if I let you down.

ANIKA

You didn't let me down anymore than I let you down. This has been a good growth experience for me. I thank you for that.

RICHARD

Me? A 'growth experience?' Now I really feel old.

(they embrace)

I'll miss you, Ankie.

Frannie races toward them.

FRANNIE

It's dad. He's freaking out.

Richard and Anika's gaze holds for a long moment before he turns to Frannie and ushers her away.

Anika watches them disappear. The iPhone on her bunk RINGS.

ANIKA

Hello?

DUKE (V.O.)

Laura?

ANIKA

No, Anika.

(checks phone)

We must have switched phones.
Laura's gone. They got kicked off
the train.

DUKE (V.O.)

What a surprise.

ANIKA

(heavy sigh)

The family is a bit cuckoo, no?

DUKE (V.O.)

Certifiable. My name is Duke, by
the way.

(beat)

So, you and Richard?

ANIKA

Kaput.

DUKE (V.O.)

What a terrible shame.

(beat)

Laura mentioned that you're
extremely health conscious, and a
devotee of the coffee enema.

ANIKA

One has to keep one's vessel
flowing.

DUKE (V.O.)

I couldn't agree more.

EXT. TRAIN STATION/OTTUMWA, IOWA - CONTINUOUS

Grandpa, upset, paces and talks on his cell phone. David and
Laura stand among the family's mountain of luggage nervously
watching. Frannie and Richard join them.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

(into phone)

You're telling me there's not one
rental car available in all of
goddamned Ottumwa?

Angry, he clicks off his phone.

RICHARD
Don't stroke out, dad.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
How the hell will we get to
Loveland in time? I promised
Frannie we would. But there's no
cars, no flights.

RICHARD
We'll take a bus.

LAURA
Where's Anika?

RICHARD
Not coming.

LAURA
(guilty)
Because of me?

RICHARD
Don't flatter yourself.

Richard hauls away his luggage. The others follow, except Grandpa who scans the train's windows. He finds Betty watching from the window. The eyes meet and hold until he turns and reluctantly walks away.

INT. BUS STATION/OTTUMWA, IOWA - LATER

Richard POUNDS his fist on the counter's ledge. The TICKET PERSON SLAMS his window.

Richard turns to his dispirited family and shakes his head. Slumped into plastic chairs in the shabby depot, the family's faces are pale and exhausted in the florescent light.

FRANNIE
What are we going to do?

RICHARD
Goddamned nothing. No buses to
Loveland until tomorrow.

Richard sits down, drops his face into his hands.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
We'll miss mom's ceremony.

FRANNIE
 (starts to cry)
 It's my fault. I'm sorry.

SOUND OF HORN HONKING. Grandpa stands to discover Betty waving from the open window of a battered Ford Taurus.

Grandpa rushes to the bus depot door, followed by his family.

EXT. BUS STATION - CONTINUOUS

Betty leaps out of the car into Grandpa's arms.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
 How did you get a car?

BETTY
 A Red Hatter. From Ottumwa.

Frannie wraps her arms around Betty and her father.

FRANNIE
 Betty! You stole a car!

BETTY
 Wouldn't have missed this for the world. Let's get going. You've got a ceremony to attend.

Betty pops the trunk. Richard and David squeeze luggage into it. Grandpa takes Betty's hand.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
 What about your sister, your plans?

BETTY
 Watching you leave the train station, I made a decision to replace my Bucket List with a Fuck-it List. Fuck Happy Traveling. Fuck red hats and purple clothes. Fuck waiting for you to ask me to go with you.

Betty climbs into the driver's seat. Grandpa takes shotgun. The rest of the family squeezes into the back. Richard and Laura exchange uneasy glances.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
 I'll call Mr. Bean. Tell him we're going to make it after all.

FRANNIE
Can we really?

BETTY
You bet your tushie we can.

Betty hits the gas, hard. TIRES SCREECH as they speed away.

INT. FORD TAURUS - NIGHT

MONTAGE:

MIDNIGHT: Betty's still speeding. Her passengers - sans Frannie who is asleep - watch cars and buildings race by.

TWO A.M. Grandpa drives now. Betty has shotgun. They hold hands and stare at the dark, deserted highway. Passengers in the back seat are asleep. Betty points to sign. It reads: *Welcome to Illinois, The land of Lincoln.*

PREDAWN: Richard drives with Grandpa asleep next to him, as are the other passengers. Richard pulls into the Waffle House parking lot. Grandpa startles awake.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
What time is it?

RICHARD
Four a.m.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
Where are we?

RICHARD
Near the border of Indiana.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
Well done. Everybody, eat fast.

They hurry out of the car and rush to the restaurant.

DAWN: Laura drives with Betty awake next to her. The rest, except for Richard, sleep. Grandpa's head falls onto Richard's cheek. He SNORES. They pass a sign: *Welcome to Indiana, the Crossroads of America.* The women fist pump.

EARLY MORNING: At the gas station, Richard pumps gas as everyone else runs to the bathrooms.

MORNING: Grandpa drives. His passengers pass around McDonald's Egg McMuffins. Everyone but Frannie takes off the ham. She collects it all, rolls the hams slices into a ball and eats it.

Rain begins to fall. Frannie points to a sign: *Ohio welcomes you to the heart of it all*. Spits out ham as she shouts:

FRANNIE

Ohio!

She sticks her head out the window, takes deep, long breaths.

FRANNIE (CONT'D)

I smell Ohio.

Grandpa opens his window, sticks his head out too.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

That's the dogwoods in bloom. Your mother loved that smell.

The CLOUDS BURST OPEN with SLAMMING RAIN. Frannie and Grandpa close their windows, LAUGHING and wiping their wet faces.

Richard, worried, CLICKS ON HIS CELL, punches numbers.

RICHARD

Mr. Bean? It's Richard. We still on for three o'clock?

(listens)

The rain, is it an issue?

FRANNIE

(alarmed)

Is it?

RICHARD

No, the center has a tent.

Relieved, Grandpa punches the gas.

LATE MORNING: Torrential rains now. Flooding on the highway. Grandpa brakes the car behind a long line of stopped traffic.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

Damn it.

A sign reads: FLOODING AHEAD. ROAD CLOSED. Betty and the family fall into a depressed silence.

LAURA

Is there another route -

RICHARD

(snaps at her)

It's too late. We'll never make it.

DAVID

Gawd, dad, it's not mom's fault.

Grandpa BEATS his hands against the steering wheel. Betty pats his thigh. He jumps out of the car.

Frannie, distraught, bites her nails. Laura reaches for Richard's hand. He pushes her away. David, upset by this, climbs out of the car and follows his Grandpa.

EXT. FLOODED OHIO HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS

Grandpa and David rush past other stranded cars to a massive R.V. The DRIVER, who is *massive* himself, REVS THE ENGINE. His WIFE, also formidable, picks at her blue fingernail polish.

Grandpa BANGS ON THE R.V. DOOR. The driver rolls down his window, regards Grandpa with suspicion.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

Can you drive through the flooding?

DRIVER

In this baby, no *problemo*.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

If I give you \$1,000, would you take me and my family to Loveland?

DRIVER

(more suspicious)

You wouldn't be transporting illegal drugs, by any chance?

DAVID

Just my parents' Prozac.

The driver winces, points his finger and lets it go flaccid.

DRIVER

The pecker-wrecker?

INT. R.V. - LATER

The R.V. RATTLES and swerves in the storm. Betty and the Weiss family crowd into the tiny living room and, backs to each other, struggle to change into clean clothes.

Frannie loses her balance putting on slacks and falls into Laura, who falls into Richard - knocking him over.

RICHARD
Would you just stay away from me?

GRANDPA GRUMPS
Hey, ease up on her.

RICHARD
(surprised)
Et tu, Brutus?

The driver WHOOPS with excitement and whips makes a sharp right turn - throwing the Weiss family into each other. The driver's wife startles awake. Drool slides down her chin.

DRIVER'S WIFE
(dreaming, cries out)
Daddy, don't kill piggy Jean.

DRIVER
Wake up, mother. It's Loveland
Nature Center!

Frannie releases a WHOOP. Grandpa laughs, high-fives David.

EXT. LOVELAND NATURE CENTER - MOMENTS LATER

Betty and the Weiss family climb out of the R.V. into the pouring rain. Their smiles fade when they see the deserted parking lot. Grandpa pauses by the driver's window.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
Mind waiting?

The driver shrugs. Grandpa joins the others. Drenched within moments, they hurry to the large rented tent.

EXT. TENT - CONTINUOUS

MR. BEAN, mid-west nerd dressed in a suit and tie, sits alone on the deserted stage. He's clutching a stuffed woodcock. Behind him a banner - half blown down reads: ELAINE WEISS MEMORIAL WOODCOCK WING.

The tent sags with moisture. Flaps SLAP OPEN in the merciless wind. Rain blows into the tent, soaking rows of empty chairs.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
Mr. Bean?

MR. BEAN
Mr. Weiss. I tried to reach you -

GRANDPA GRUMPS
Where is everyone?

MR. BEAN
We had to cancel. I'm so sorry.

FRANNIE
No, Mr. Bean, you can't do this.
(frantic)
You can't do this to my mother, to
our family. You don't understand,
we *need* this.

Richard holds his sister. The others sink into wet chairs,
despondent. Finally, Grandpa stands up.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
We'll have our own damn ceremony.

MR. BEAN
But, Mr. Weiss, the tent is about
to collapse.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
Then we'd better hurry. Everybody,
up on the stage.

Wind and rain rage. The tent is giving out. Even still,
Grandpa herds the group onto the stage. They're all shivering
and wet. Grandpa turns to Mr. Bean.

GRANDPA GRUMPS (CONT'D)
What's first?

MR. BEAN
A chorus was supposed to sing.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
Davie, sing one of those goyisha
hymns. But no Christ on the cross
shit. And hurry.

David hesitates, looking to his parents. They nod.

DAVID
(singing sweetly)
*O mother loved, be my life, my
stay. O Mother loved, watch over me
-So helpless, tossed on life's
rough sea;*

Everyone is moved by David's heartfelt lyrics.

DAVID (CONT'D)
*Kindly shed from heaven above. A
 Mother's sweet fond smile of love -*

THUNDER AND LIGHTNING strike. Wind gusts and torrential rain slam the tent. The back half CRASHES DOWN. A collective GASP from the group. Grandpa pokes Mr. Bean.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
 Skip to the award.

Mr. Bean, hands shaking, removes a plaque from his coat.

MR. BEAN
 It is my privilege to bestow Elaine
 Beth Weiss the honor of having the
 new Woodcock Wing of the Loveland -

The tent all but caves in. Water crashes down on their heads. They rush toward the exit. Grandpa grabs the plaque.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
 (shouting above the storm)
 On behalf of the entire Weiss
 family, thank you for this honor.

INT. R.V. - MOMENTS LATER

Wrapped in towels and blankets, the family sits huddled together. Frannie releases a MOURNFUL SIGH. Everyone studies her, worried she's going to blow.

BETTY
 David, your song was beautiful.

Everyone but Frannie MUMBLES agreement.

LAURA
 And, Mr. Bean's speech was lovely.

FRANNIE
 No it wasn't. It all sucked. The
 ceremony was a disaster.

Tense silence. Waiting for Frannie to fall apart.

FRANNIE (CONT'D)
 Just like the rest of my life.
 (heavy sigh)
 But as of this moment, I'm starting
 my own Fuck-it list. We tried our
 best but things don't always work
 out the way we want.
 (MORE)

FRANNIE (CONT'D)

That's what mom would say. So,
let's just FUCK the whole fucking
thing.

RICHARD

Frannie, stop.

LAURA

No, she's right. We should fuck it.

RICHARD

Laura.

DAVID

I vote to fuck it, too.

RICHARD

David, that is not appropriate -

LAURA

He's my son too and I say "Fuck it"
is the *most* appropriate response.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

Let's not fuck it just yet.

RICHARD

What are you talking about?

GRANDPA GRUMPS

Coney Island.

RICHARD

(incredulous, irritated)
In New York?

GRANDPA GRUMPS

Cincinnati. Try trusting me, just
for once.

(to David)

Go ask Shamu if he'll drive us for
another thousand dollars.

EXT. CONEY ISLAND/CINCINNATI - TWILIGHT

Grandpa stares at the massive pavilions and enormous water
park. He appears exhausted, as does Betty and his family.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

I hardly recognize a thing.

RICHARD

Like I said, this was a bad -

DAVID
 (points, yells)
 Grandpa Grumps, bumper cars.

INT. BUMPER CAR PAVILION - MOMENTS LATER

Betty and the Weiss' family stand in line for the bumper cars. Grandpa slips his arm around David.

GRANDPA GRUMPS
 This is where Grandma Honey and I met. She kept banging into me, laughing. She was always a shitty driver.

RICHARD
 Dad.

LAURA
 Lighten up, Richard.

RICHARD
 Somebody has to be the grown-up.

LAURA
 Being uptight and being grown-up aren't the same thing.

DAVID
 Gawd, mom and dad, can't you try to get along like you used to?

He walks away. Frannie starts to go after David.

LAURA
 Give him a minute.
 (to Grandpa)
 So what happened next?

GRANDPA GRUMPS
 After several rounds of smashing into each other, she climbed into my car and gave me a big, wet kiss.

RIDE OPERATOR
 Next group.

Laura, Betty, Frannie, Grandpa and Richard move into the ring and climb into bumper cars.

RICHARD
 David, come on.

David doesn't respond to his father.

GRANDPA GRUMPS

Davie, get your ass in a car and
have fun with your family.

Shocked by his grandpa's tone, David reluctantly joins them.

The RIDE BEGINS.

As OTHER RIDERS circle the ring and politely bump into each other, the Weiss family and Betty, SMASH into each other with increasing veracity.

Everyone but Laura and Richard are laughing. Laura repeatedly SMASHES her car into Richard's car. He grows angrier.

RICHARD

Get away from me.

LAURA

No. I'm never getting away from you
again. I love you.

RICHARD

Great way to show it, as usual.

LAURA

I'm sorry for leaving. Sorry for
screwing Builder Bob, and for being
weak and selfish and confused.

RICHARD

I'm sorry you were so miserable
that you had to leave. That I
wasn't enough for you.

LAURA

It wasn't you. It was *us*, the whole
terrible situation.

RICHARD

But you left me, Laura. How can I
ever trust you again?

LAURA

Please, just try. Take a risk for
once in your life, give me another
chance. Us another chance. Our
family another chance. Richard?

He's turned away from her. She SMASHES into him again.

RICHARD

Could you stop being such a lunatic?

LAURA

Could you stop being such an asshole?

She jumps out of her car.

LAURA (CONT'D)

I love you, you asshole.

She climbs over the top of hers and Richard's cars, and kisses him. He starts to push Laura away, but then grabs her in his arms, and KISSES her.

The ride operator, upset, YELLS from his perch.

RIDE OPERATOR

Hey, get back in your car!

Grandpa Grumps watches and smiles until Frannie SMASHES into his car. She climbs over the top of her car into her father's car. Lays a big, wet kiss on him.

FRANNIE

I love you, too, daddy.

RIDE OPERATOR

All of you, get back in your cars!

David laughs, SMASHES grandpa's car.

Furious now, the ride operator storms toward the Weiss cars until Betty bumps him with her car. He falls head first into Betty's massive breasts. She pats his head.

- THE END -