

Girls On the Run

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EXT. LOEWS GRAND THEATER, ATLANTA - 1939

BLACK AND WHITE FLASHBACK:

A determined girl, BELLA(9), squeezes through a crushing crowd with a bouquet of pink camelias. In her finest dress. A heart-shaped pendant around her neck.

BELLA

Mom!

Behind Bella, her dressed to the nines MOTHER(29) tries to keep up.

BELLA'S MOTHER

Go on, Bella. We're almost there.

Mother and daughter push on towards their goal -- front row view of a long red carpet, blocked by waist-high barriers and rows of police officers.

Beyond the red carpet, a beautiful cinema with a grand marquee: "**World Premiere - Gone With the Wind**".

The atmosphere is electric. Searchlights sweep over the fans. Photographers flashes go off no end.

Then, suddenly the crowd erupts in SCREAMS --

A brand new cream-colored Packard convertible pulls up to the red carpet. In the backseat, a dashing Clark Gable and his wife, Carole Lombard.

The crowd surges forward, pinning Bella against the barricades. A dangerous situation. Terrified, she struggles to breathe, her pendant squished against her neck.

BELLA

MOM! MOM!

STANLEY (O.S.)

Mom.

END FLASHBACK

INT. PACIFIC GARDENS NURSING HOME - PRESENT DAY

An old hand nervously fiddles with a heart-shaped pendant (*same is in opening). It belongs to Bella (89), now a white-haired elderly lady. She scans the sight before her:

An adjustable bed on wheels with its collapsible safety side-bars; a generic desk with a lamp; a cheap framed pastel landscape on the wall -- a clean single occupancy room.

Behind Bella, in the doorway, a tall gray-haired regal woman, SWEET SUE(80), waits. Dread and disgust all over her face.

Next to Sweet Sue, Bella's son STANLEY (50), nervously eyes his mother. His daughter, Bella's grand-daughter, APPLE (16), is glued to her cell phone nearby.

STANLEY (O.S.)

Mom?

Bella hears him. She knows that this room, this place, is what her son wants for her. This is what life has come to.

Resigned, she turns to Stanley with a smile. A nod. He breathes a huge sigh of relief.

Bella locks eyes with Sweet Sue, who, devastated, walks out.

EXT. ASSISTED LIVING COMPLEX - EVENING

Bella waves as Stanley pulls out in his car with Apple returning the wave with a hand blown kiss.

Bella turns to Sweet Sue. The best friends eye each other. Then Sweet Sue holds out her elbow, and Bella gently puts her hand on it.

The close friends walk in silence. Eventually --

BELLA

What's for dinn --

SWEET SUE

I don't get it.

Sweet Sue stops, angry.

BELLA

Which?

SWEET SUE

Why a nursing home? Isn't our assisted living here sufficient? Someone helps with shopping, cooking, medical stuff...

Sweet Sue shakes her head. Takes a deep breath, then holds out her elbow. When Bella grabs it, they walk on.

A second later, Sweet Sue stops again --

SWEET SUE

Here, we still have our freedom. To not be told when to eat, when to poop, when to go to bed! That has value.

Bella understands her point.

With another sigh, Sweet Sue holds her elbow out once more, and they walk on. Until, Sweet Sue stops again.

SWEET SUE

Your son has no right to --

BELLA

Stop. You know why Stanley thinks it's necessary.

SWEET SUE

I forget things all the time too.

BELLA

You need a notebook to remember your dead husband's name? When you last ate? Where you live?

Sweet Sue could go either way. Angrier or calmer. Then takes a deep breath.

Bella smiles.

BELLA

You'll come visit.

Sweet Sue softens. Nods.

They walk on.

SWEET SUE

Drunken noodles?

BELLA

What?

SWEET SUE

Dinner. You started to ask.

BELLA

Ah, yes. With shrimpziz.

SWEET SUE

I'll pick it up.

BELLA

I don't understand why you never
just let them deliver.

SWEET SUE

I like my food hot. And crispy.

Sweet Sue turns around and strides off.

BELLA

Wait!

SWEET SUE

(over her shoulder)

I'll be right back. Set the table.
20 minutes.

Sweet Sue is gone. Bella turns back, but then stops. Suddenly unsure of where she is. Makes a left turn. Then stops. Tries to gauge the buildings. Nothing seems familiar.

INT. ASSISTED LIVING COMPLEX, LUCINDA'S APARTMENT - EVENING

"Mary Kay - Diploma of Beauty."

Stepping back, LUCINDA (83), an elegant lady in heavy, but expertly applied makeup, adjusts the newly hung diploma.

Next to it, another frame. A sepia photo: *a young Lucinda with a sash across her front, "Miss Kentucky 1957."*

She assesses the two wall pieces.

LUCINDA

That'll do.

Behind her, unopened moving boxes in a undecorated living room with a lavender couch still wrapped in plastic. A pile of flattened boxes.

A small bedroom is visible through a doorway. Also a small kitchen with a small table and a small chair.

She takes a resigned breath.

LUCINDA

Small.

Her cell phone RINGS.

Lucinda's demeanor changes completely. With a girly energy, she picks up.

LUCINDA

Roger! Are you on the road?

As she listens, her smile wanes.

LUCINDA

That's what you said last week.

(listens)

No, I'm not trying to pressure you.

(listens)

Oh, okay, I'll call you tomorrow
then. I love you --

Roger has hung up.

Lucinda eyes a photo stuck in a large mirror frame next to her. A tanned man, ROGER (60), hugs a laughing Lucinda.

Lucinda shifts her gaze to her reflection. With sudden sadness, she eyes her heavy lipstick, her thick pink rouge, her pale powder too much.

She grabs the photo, the flattened cardboard boxes and exits her apartment.

EXT. ASSISTED LIVING COMPLEX, RECYCLING - EVENING

Lucinda hurls the photo and trash into a recycling container. As she turns to go back, a figure in the dark scares her.

LUCINDA

Who's there?

Bella, dazed, emerges into the faint light.

LUCINDA

Crap, you scared me... What are you
doing out here in the dark, hon?

Bella doesn't respond.

LUCINDA

Wait, I know who you are. I saw you
this morning.

Lucinda holds out her hand.

LUCINDA

Lucinda. Your new neighbor.

Bella looks confused. Shivers in the cold night air.

LUCINDA
Is everything alright?

BELLA
I left my memory aid.

LUCINDA
Your what?

BELLA
My notebook. I forget things.

LUCINDA
I see. Where did you leave it?

BELLA
At home, but I can't seem to
remember where I live.

Lucinda takes her cardigan off and drapes it around Bella.

LUCINDA
Thankfully, I do. Let's get you
home. I'll make us a cup of tea.

Grateful, Bella lets herself be led away.

LUCINDA
Do you know what day it is?

BELLA
I... I'm not sure...

LUCINDA
It's today. My favorite day.

Lucinda smiles. Then Bella too. She likes that.

INT. BELLA'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

An apartment door is unlocked.

LUCINDA (O.S.)
Here you are. Home.

Holds out keys to Bella.

LUCINDA
Where do you want these?

Bella points to a hook on the wall by a large old poster of Clark Gable. Underneath, on a table, a purple notebook with hand drawn flowers on the cover.

Relieved, Bella grabs her memory aid.

BELLA

My granddaughter made this for me.
She's so gifted.

Bella opens the notebook and shows Lucinda. *Inside: a map of the assisted living complex. A list of people and who they are. Phone numbers.*

BELLA

I should put you in here too. Name
and relation to me?

With a pen, Bella looks at Lucinda expectantly.

LUCINDA

Well, Lucinda. Friend? Neighbor?

Bella likes that. Enters both.

Lucinda hangs the keys on the hook. She looks around. A LOT of Clark Gable memorabilia.

LUCINDA

How about that tea?

BELLA

Lovely.

Lucinda goes to the kitchen.

LUCINDA (O.S.)

I'm guessing you like Clark Gable?

BELLA

No. I love him. His biggest fan.

LUCINDA (O.S.)

I read something somewhere about
"Gone With the Wind." Some kind of
announcement. I'll see if I can
find the article.

BELLA

Oh?

LUCINDA (O.S.)

Didn't he famously have bad breath
from his wooden teeth?

BELLA

Did he? I don't --

The front door is pushed wide open.

SWEET SUE

Thai!

Sweet Sue holds up a bag of food.

SWEET SUE

Don't let me get food when I'm
starving. This'll feed an army.

BELLA

Possibly enough for three?

SWEET SUE

Anything is possible. Why?

BELLA

(at kitchen)

You had dinner?

Lucinda pops her head out from the kitchen.

LUCINDA

Actually, I didn't.
(at Sweet Sue)

Hi.

Sweet Sue's demeanor changes. Her smile wanes. Not pleased.

BELLA

This is Sweet Sue. This is --

SWEET SUE

Yes, I know who she is. She's the
one that blocked the front
elevators all weekend for her stuff
to be moved in.

LUCINDA

I'm super duper sorry about that.
No one told me service elevators
were down on weekends.

Lucinda holds out her hand.

LUCINDA

Good news is that I'm all done.
Stuck for life. I'm Lucinda.

Sweet Sue eyes the outstretched hand.

Awkward.

SWEET SUE
I'm Susan. Friends call me Sweet
Sue.

LUCINDA
Sweet Sue, nice to --

SWEET SUE
Susan.

A moment between the two women. Lucinda retracts her hand.

LUCINDA
Susan. Got it. Nice to meet you.

Bella attempts to diffuse the tension.

BELLA
Hope you got eggomame?

LUCINDA
Got what?

SWEET SUE
She means edemame.

MOMENTS LATER

The three women eat in silence.

Sweet Sue eyes Lucinda's emerald green nail polish.

Lucinda waves her fingers.

LUCINDA
Divine decadence.

Sweet Sue smiles, cooly.

SWEET SUE
Or just plain tacky.

Bella is appalled at her friend's rudeness.

BELLA
Sweet Sue, really...

Lucinda LAUGHS.

LUCINDA
It's all good. What is it they say,
children and drunks tell the truth?

SWEET SUE
I don't drink.

LUCINDA
Maybe you should.

Lucinda stands up with a smile and takes out \$20.

LUCINDA
On that note, I say thank you for
dinner --

BELLA
No need for money.

SWEET SUE
Thank you.

Sweet Sue grabs the cash.

LUCINDA
Thank you.
(to Bella)
A cup of tea tomorrow?

BELLA
I have to pack, I move in a week.

LUCINDA
Oh, I'm sorry to hear that. We just
became friends.

BELLA
To a nursing home. My dementia --

SWEET SUE
Stop calling it that!

BELLA
But my physician says that's --

SWEET SUE
It's outrageous. No one knows
exactly what dementia is. Yes, you
forget bits and pieces. Who
doesn't? Everyone has some --

BELLA
Sue.

Sweet Sue catches herself.

LUCINDA

Well, you let me know if I can help
in any way. I have a car. I drive.

SWEET SUE

(sarcastically)

Super duper.

Bella stands and hugs Lucinda.

BELLA

Thank you. For saving me earlier.

LUCINDA

Good night, Susan.

SWEET SUE

And you.

Lucinda exits.

Bella sighs. Eyes Sweet Sue.

SWEET SUE

What?

BELLA

Why are you like that?

SWEET SUE

She just moved in! I saw her.
Talking to everyone as if she knew
them. All lovey dovey, charming,
smiling. Around here, last I
checked, you earn friendships. I
know her type. The high school
cheerleader. Apparently, she told
Agnes she used to do beauty
pageants. Can you imagine?

BELLA

You're no longer a school
principal.

Sweet Sue eyes Bella. *Meaning?*

BELLA

Be kind. Life is short.

SWEET SUE

No. Life is what you make it! An
adventure! Aren't there things you
are still dying to do? To
experience?

Bella admires her best friend's gusto.

SWEET SUE
What are you smiling about?

BELLA
You're so tough.

Sweet Sue is disarmed by Bella's sweetness.

BELLA
Sometimes I think you make things
so hard for yourself. Don't you
want to be liked?

Sweet Sue shakes her head.

SWEET SUE
Absolutely not. I couldn't care
less.

Bella sees through her friend's harsh exterior.

BELLA
You'll make new friends. I promise.
Just be sweet.

Bella gently pats Sweet Sue's hand. Sweet Sue enjoys the moment, then catches herself. Gets up with a sigh.

SWEET SUE
I hope you're still hungry --

BELLA
I'm not.

SWEET SUE
-- I got a vat of rice pudding.

INT. BELLA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

A black and white framed wedding photograph hangs on the wall: *A very young Bella and a handsome man.*

Bella lies in bed, going over notes in her purple book.

BELLA
Apple, granddaughter. Stanley, son.
Frank, husband. Clark Gable, other
husband. Sweet Sue, best friend.

Adds a note: *Rice pudding - never again.*

Scans further down her notes.

BELLA
Lucinda. Friend, neighbor.

She turns her head to the wall on her left. Smiles. Then puts her notebook down. Turns off the light.

EXT. ASSISTED LIVING COMPLEX - MORNING

Sunrise. Morning haze. Birds awake.

INT. ASSISTED LIVING COMPLEX, HALLWAY - MORNING

In a sweat suit, with a sweat head-band, in full makeup and blowdried hair, Lucinda exits her apartment. Small power-walk weights in one hand, a folded paper in the other.

When she reaches Bella's apartment, she slides the paper under the door. Then takes the stairs down (12th floor).

INT. SWEET SUE'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Determined, Sweet Sue is up on a ladder, painting the ceiling. It looks dangerous. Not easy.

The ladder wobbles, and for a second, Sweet Sue thinks she's done for. Somehow, she manages to stabilize it. Climbing down, she catches her breath. A close call.

She sips from a cup of coffee nearby and inspects the ceiling. It's sloppy work. Lots of missed spots.

SWEET SUE
Jesus. I'm useless.

She shakes out her arm and wipes sweat from her brow. After another sip of coffee, she climbs the ladder --

A KNOCK on the door.

SWEET SUE
Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

She carefully climbs down the ladder and opens the door.

Bella. With an odd expression on her face.

Sweet Sue is instantly worried.

SWEET SUE

Bella? What are you doing up so early?

Bella just holds out Lucinda's piece of paper.

Sweet Sue is confused.

SWEET SUE

Are you having another episode?

Bella breaks into a smile. From ear to ear.

SWEET SUE

Bella, answer me. Should I call someone?

Sweet Sue eventually takes the paper from Bella. Scans the magazine article:

A black and white photo of Clark Gable.

The digitally restored "Gone With the Wind" is world premiering anew at Grauman's Chinese Theater in Los Angeles this coming Saturday."

Sweet Sue doesn't get it. Looks up at Bella.

BELLA

My favorite movie.

SWEET SUE

I know. So?

Bella pushes in, past Sweet Sue, and opens up a map she brought in her other hand. Flips it open.

She points to New York.

BELLA

We're here.

SWEET SUE

Yes?

BELLA

And here?

SWEET SUE

Bella, I taught geography.

SWEET SUE

Los Angeles. Grauman's Chinese Theater!

Sweet Sue has no clue what Bella, so thrilled, is hinting at.

BELLA

You asked me if there wasn't something I'm dying to do. To experience.

SWEET SUE

Yes?

BELLA

I want to go back to where I met Clark Gable.

SWEET SUE

You met him when you were nine. In Atlanta, at the Loews grand Theater. It burnt down.

BELLA

I met him with this movie. I want to go back to that. One last time.
(excited)
Give me a marker.

Sweet Sue, incredulous, opens a drawer. Hands Bella a marker.

Bella, focused on the map, draws a red line across the US, from New York to Los Angeles.

Excitedly, she looks up at Sweet Sue. Then it dawns on Sweet Sue what Bella is excited about and bursts out LAUGHING.

Bella doesn't react.

Sweet Sue's laughter slowly dies out. Then, dead serious --

SWEET SUE

You're not kidding.

Bella shakes her head. Excited.

BELLA

A road trip! Like Thelma and Louise.

SWEET SUE

They drove off a cliff.

BELLA

Really?

SWEET SUE
Doesn't matter. We're not doing
this. No.

Bella's light dims a little.

SWEET SUE
You're moving this week!

BELLA
It can wait. One last big
spectacular adventure before --

SWEET SUE
What about Stanley? The room?

BELLA
Stanley will be fine. This is about
unfinished business. Leaving
nothing undone!

SWEET SUE
When would you supposedly do this?

BELLA
We. We leave tomorrow. Back in a
week.

SWEET SUE
Bella, this is silly.

BELLA
Silly? You said --

SWEET SUE
I know what I said!

Sweet Sue sits down. Blown away by Bella's initiative.

SWEET SUE
We can't. I mean, it's far. We're
old.

BELLA
Why can't we? You said my dementia
isn't real. We can do anything.

SWEET SUE
I can't reach my toes.

BELLA
Apart from that.

SWEET SUE

Look, even if I wanted to go, which I don't, and even if I agreed to go, which I won't, it's not possible.

BELLA

Anything is possible. You said that!

SWEET SUE

Stop saying what I said!

BELLA

Just think about it.

SWEET SUE

I hate flying.

BELLA

As do I.

SWEET SUE

I can't do busses.

BELLA

They're awful.

SWEET SUE

Trains smell.

BELLA

I agree.

SWEET SUE

That leaves a car and you know I don't drive.

BELLA

Me neither. Clark used to drive.

SWEET SUE

Frank.

BELLA

What?

SWEET SUE

Your husband's name was Frank!

BELLA

What did I say?

Eye-roll. Sweet Sue is incredulous.

SWEET SUE
So, what? We can't Uber across
America.

There is A KNOCK on the door.

Sweet Sue looks from to the door to Bella who smiles
nervously.

BELLA
Be sweet.

With deep dread, Sweet Sue begins to suspect what Bella's
plan is. Goes to the door and opens it. And there --

Lucinda.

Smiling. With two thumbs up. Way up.

Sweet Sue shuts the door in her face. Turns to Bella.

SWEET SUE
Absolutely not.

EXT. ASSISTED LIVING COMPLEX, FRONT GATES - EARLY MORNING

The sun is coming up.

Bella and Sweet Sue wait on a bench, each with a small carry-
on suitcase. Sweet Sue shakes her head to herself.

SWEET SUE
(under her breath)
This is insane.

Bella doesn't respond.

SWEET SUE
You're not even supposed to leave
the premises without supervision.

BELLA
You're here.

Sweet Sue takes a deep breath.

BELLA
Do you know what day it is?

SWEET SUE
It's Tuesday.

BELLA
No, no. It's --

Suddenly, Bella stands, her eyes fixed, with a big smile.
Sweet Sue follows her eye line to --

A pink, sleek '65 LINCOLN CONVERTIBLE swings up the avenue.
Pink and white leather cover the seats. A spare white rim
tire adorns the trunk. The top is down.

Lucinda, in retro sunglasses and a silk scarf over her hair,
pulls up in front of the women. Glamorous, behind the wheel.

LUCINDA
Girls, meet *Lucy*.

Sweet Sue stares at the car, at Lucinda, then at Bella.

BELLA
(to Lucinda)
Do you know what day it is?

Lucinda smiles.

LUCINDA
It's today.

BELLA
My favorite day...
(to Sweet Sue)
That's what you're meant to --

SWEET SUE
I'm not riding in that.

Sweet Sue stands and holds out her hand to Bella.

SWEET SUE
Come on, we're going back.

Bella is unsure what to do.

SWEET SUE
Let's go.

BELLA
No.

SWEET SUE
You'll go without me?

BELLA
No. But --

SWEET SUE

Let's go.

Bella tears up.

Sweet Sue stares Lucinda down, blaming her.

SWEET SUE

You did this.

LUCINDA

Nope. All Bella.

Sweet Sue feels awful for Bella. A dilemma. Thinks for a second. Then, with a deep breath --

SWEET SUE

Oh, for Pete's sake.

Bella stands, excited.

BELLA

Yes?

SWEET SUE

We go now. Before I change my mind.

Lucinda parks *Lucy* and pops the trunk.

LUCINDA

I just to have to get my luggage.

She heads inside the nearest building.

Sweet Sue grabs both Bella's and her own suitcase and drops them in the petite trunk. Shut it. Then they wait.

LATER

And wait.

Sweet Sue impatiently checks her watch.

SWEET SUE

Where is she? Is the whole trip going to be like this?

BELLA

She'll be here.

Sweet Sue looks over at the path to the buildings.

SWEET SUE

Hell no.

Lucinda drags a massive pink hard edged rectangular suitcase on wheels as well as a large makeup case and handbag.

LUCINDA
 Sorry for the wait, girls!
 (to Sweet Sue)
 Give me a hand here, would ya?

Sweet Sue looks like she's ready to kill.

SWEET SUE
 It won't fit in the trunk.

LUCINDA
 'Course it will.

MOMENTS LATER

The large suitcase is upright in the back, occupying half of the seat.

LUCINDA
 I could have sworn it used to plop
 right in.

Sweet Sue seethes. Bella pats her arm.

BELLA
 I'll sit in the back.

LUCINDA
 Okay. Everyone has eaten? Everyone
 has water? Everyone has peed?

Bella nods, smiling ear to ear.

Sweet Sue crosses her arms. A final stand. Eyes Lucinda.

SWEET SUE
 Why are you doing this? You just
 moved in. You don't even know
 Bella. Or me.

Lucinda debates what to say, exactly. Then shrugs.

LUCINDA
 Wanderlust? Love of driving? Truth
 is, I have some unfinished
 business.

Sweet Sue doesn't buy it, about to get into it, when --

BELLA (O.S.)
 Can we go? We have a screening to
 catch in four days.

Sweet Sue and Lucinda look over at Bella sitting in the
 backseat of *Lucy*.

The two women exchange a glance. They're both doing this for
 Bella. Decision time. No turning back.

With an almost imperceptible nod, they head for the car.

LUCINDA
 Here we go.

As Sweet Sue sits into the shotgun leather seat, it makes a
 fart noise. She's mortified.

LUCINDA
 Sweet Sue! Really!

SWEET SUE
 My name is Susan. And I didn't do
 that.

Lucinda LAUGHS out loud.

LUCINDA
 I'm kiddin'. It always makes that
 sound. There's a hole on the side.
 You okay back there, Bella?

BELLA
 A OK.

Lucinda starts up the car. It revs beautifully.

Sweet Sue unfolds the map with the red marker line. Full of
 handmade circles, arrows and scribbles. Phone numbers.

LUCINDA
 Okay, I know I'm the sole owner of
 a cell phone in this trio, but I
 feel like GPS is the way to go.

Sweet Sue assertively shakes her head.

SWEET SUE
 I marked this, so no. We're good.
 Holland Tunnel. Take a left on
 14th.

LUCINDA
 Okay. Girls! We're off!

She steps on the gas and --

SWEET SUE

STOP!

Lucinda slams the brakes. Bella nearly falls out of her seat.

LUCINDA

What?

SWEET SUE

The indicator! If you enter traffic, you put it on.

Lucinda smiles. Puts on the indicator.

LUCINDA

Says the non-driver. Off we go!

She starts to pull out --

SWEET SUE

JESUS CHRIST!

Lucinda slams the brakes.

SWEET SUE

Are you insane? If you don't check the mirrors, how will you know that no one is coming?

LUCINDA

Sweet Sue --

SWEET SUE

Susan.

LUCINDA

-- I had just checked.

SWEET SUE

Fine. Go.

Lucinda demonstratively puts the indicator on, demonstratively checks the mirrors, revs up and pulls out.

LUCINDA

And we're off!

SWEET SUE

SLOW DOWN!

Lucinda slams the brakes. Cars HONK at them.

LUCINDA

Right! That does it.

MOMENTS LATER

Lucinda happily drives.

Bella sits in the front. Quite enjoys it. Looks back at:

An angry Sweet Sue trying to get comfortable by the huge trunk in the back. It's not easy. Plus it's windy.

They enter the Holland Tunnel, when a swirl of wind grabs Sweet Sue's map and blows it out the back. She makes a desperate grab for it, but the map is gone.

BELLA (V.O.)

Dear Stanley. I'm going on a spectacular trip with my friends while I'm still able. Please don't be angry.

INT. BELLA'S APARTMENT - DAY

A stunned Stanley sinks to a sitting position on a mover's box. A letter in his hand. Reading.

BELLA (V.O.)

I'll be back very soon. Don't worry. Love, Mom. PS. Don't call the police. I have not been kidnapped.

Apple smiles from ear to ear.

APPLE

Go Grandma! Awesome!

Stanley eyes his daughter.

APPLE

What? It is.

STANLEY

It's a ticking bomb! She can have another episode any time. They are not equipped to handle it.

Apple didn't think about that.

EXT. LUCY, HIGHWAY - MORNING

The shiny grill of *Lucy* reflects the asphalt in full speed.
Bella has a blissful smile on her face. Her book in her lap.

LUCINDA

What do you mean "the map's gone"?

SWEET SUE

The wind ripped it from my hands.
You drive like a mad woman.

Sweet Sue's hair is a mess from the wind.

Lucinda reaches over and grabs a scarf from the glove compartment. Hands it back to Sweet Sue.

SWEET SUE

No, thank you!

Lucinda gives the scarf to Bella.

SWEET SUE

Just follow the coast line.

LUCINDA

GPS it is.

SWEET SUE

No, thank you. I remember the route.

Lucinda pulls right following a sign for **US 9, Atlantic city.**

SWEET SUE

No, no. Straight. Toward Louisville. We're going straight.

LUCINDA

Yeah, well about that, we have a teeny detour.

SWEET SUE

A detour?!

Bella turns to Sweet Sue, smiling.

BELLA

We're going to surprise Lucinda's boyfriend. Unfinished business.

SWEET SUE
 What? No, we're not. Turn around!
 (to Bella)
 You knew about this?

LUCINDA
 What day is it, Bella?

BELLA
 It's today.

LUCINDA
 My favorite --

SWEET SUE
 Don't say it! I'm serious! I swear
 to god, I'll jump out of the car.

EXT. CHINESE THEATER IN LA - DAY

A huge "**Gone With the Wind**" banner is unrolled down the front of the cinema.

EXT. HIGHWAY - LATER

Lucinda drives.

Sweet Sue wears the scarf over her hair after all.

They pass a police car. Lucinda tightens up a little, and keeps an eye on them in the rear view mirror. Sweet Sue studies Lucinda. Something is not right.

BELLA
 You're a good driver.

LUCINDA
 Thanks.

Bella points to the radio.

Lucinda nods.

Bella finds a pop music station.

SWEET SUE
 No.

Bella searches. Another pop music station.

SWEET SUE
 No.

Bella searches. Rock music.

SWEET SUE

No.

Bella searches. Hip hop.

SWEET SUE

No.

Classical. Sweet Sue likes it.

LUCINDA

Nope.

Lucinda reaches in and finds a station. Country music.

SWEET SUE

No!

Lucinda turns it up.

SWEET SUE

I SAID NO!

LUCINDA

Can't hear you.

Sweet Sue attempts to reach in, but as she does, Lucinda swerves the car dangerously.

Sweet Sue sits back, incredulous. Then tries to reach in again. Lucinda swerves again.

Sweet Sue gives in. Begrudgingly.

Lucinda lowers the volume and the women settle in.

It's a beautiful day. Bella enjoys the sun in her face.

A sign: **Atlantic City - 38.**

The Lincoln is an amazing sight among all the generic cars as it speeds down the highway.

INT. CASINO - LATER

Sweet Sue and Bella are frozen in the midst of ringing slot machines and blinking lights.

Bella is amazed. Sweet Sue is disgusted.

It's hard not to notice rows and rows of elderly folks pressing buttons, zombie-like.

Lucinda returns, disappointed.

LUCINDA
Roger called in sick.

SWEET SUE
Is it always like this?

LUCINDA
Pretty much. Want to try? We have time.

Bella is excited at the prospect.

SWEET SUE
Bella doesn't want to waste her time on these mind numbing pointless money-grabbing machines. Right, Bella?

Bella's smile drains away. Shrugs.

SWEET SUE
Let's go.

Sweet Sue clears her throat.

SWEET SUE
THESE PEOPLE ARE STEALING YOUR MONEY! EVERYONE SHOULD GO HOME. TRAVEL! READ!

The old folks look up at her.

Lucinda is stunned.

LUCINDA
What are you doing?

SWEET SUE
Calling it like it is.
(to the crowd)
THEY ARE USING YOU!

LUCINDA
You are actually crazy.

SWEET SUE
DON'T LET THESE PEOPLE TAKE YOUR RETIREMENT FUNDS.

SECURITY GUARDS arrive and take Sweet Sue by the arm.

SECURITY
Time to go, Lady.

SWEET SUE
What are you doing? Let go of my
arm. RIGHT NOW!

EXT. CASINO - MOMENTS LATER

Sweet Sue, Lucinda, and Bella stand in the sunshine. The security guards walk back inside.

LUCINDA
Sorry again, Raoul! Sorry, Ben!
Thank you.

SWEET SUE
Don't apologize for me.

Lucinda gives Sweet Sue the stink-eye.

LUCINDA
Let's go.

EXT. ROGER'S APARTMENT - LATER

A door opens.

In his underwear, Roger. His face drops when he sees Lucinda, and behind her, Bella and Sweet Sue.

ROGER
Lucinda? What are you doing here?

BELLA
Hello, Roger.

A young naked woman appears behind him.

NAKED WOMAN
You're out of toilet paper.
(sees the women)
Oh, howdy.

LUCINDA
Oh, howdy.

Lucinda addresses Roger. Indicates the box by her feet.

LUCINDA

These are your clothes, Roger. And
your viagra. And herpes creme.

The naked woman freezes - *what?*

Lucinda's smile freezes. Goes cold.

LUCINDA

Don't call me. Finished business.
Girls, let's go.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Lucinda drives, stone faced.

Bella eyes her with genuine concern.

SWEET SUE

What did you expect? He's clearly a
charlatan. And he must be a good
twenty years younger than you. Why
would you let yourself sink so low
as to --

BELLA

Susan! Shut your mouth!

Sweet Sue is stunned. Bella never speaks like this.

Lucinda smiles, grateful.

EXT. HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS

The pink car drives under a bridge. Onwards.

INT. PACIFIC NURSING HOME - SAME TIME

In Bella's intended room. Moving boxes. Unopened.

A sweating Stanley is on his knees desperately trying to
assemble an old chest of drawers. A leg drops off.

STANLEY

Damn it!

He eyes his daughter, who's chatting on her phone.

STANLEY

Apple. Apple!

Apple doesn't even look up.

STANLEY
Can you hold this up? APPLE! NOW!

APPLE
You don't even know if she's coming
back.

She knows how to push her Dad's buttons. This one landed. She
feels a little bad.

APPLE
(into the phone)
Got to go.

Apple hangs up and holds the dresser.

STANLEY
Thanks.

APPLE
Grandma will be okay, right?

Stanley has no answers.

EXT. OUTSIDE LOEWS GRAND THEATER, ATLANTA - 1939

BLACK AND WHITE FLASHBACK

Women scream and swoon as Clark Gable waves to the crowd.
Police officers desperately lock arms to keep the adoring mob
from bursting through the barricades.

The crowd surges forward, pinning Bella against the fence.

BELLA
MOM!

Bella's mother realizes her daughter is in serious danger,
and desperately tries to push the crowd back.

BELLA'S MOTHER
MOVE BACK! BELLA! MOVE BACK!
PLEASE!

Bella is smothered, unable to breathe.

BELLA'S MOTHER
PLEASE, STOP PUSHING. MY DAUGHTER.
BELLA?

It's useless, no one pays attention to her. She fights to get to the front, near Bella.

BELLA'S MOTHER
OFFICER, HELP ME! MY DAUGHTER.
HELP! OFFICER!

A disheveled officer, his cap knocked off, struggles just to stay put, locked arms and arms with an officers on either side of him. He can't do anything.

Just then, a pair of arms reach over the barricades and pull Bella to safety on the red carpet.

BELLA'S MOTHER
Thank you, Officer, thank you --

She looks directly into Clark Gable's beautiful eyes. Her heart nearly stops.

In Clark's arms, Bella's flowers falls from her weak hand.

The crowd goes silent.

Clark Gable gently strokes Bella's cheek. She looks up into her rescuer's dazzling smile.

BELLA
Your teeth are so white.

Clark Gable looks up to the crowd.

CLARK GABLE
She's fine.

The crowd goes wild.

Putting her down, Clark Gable does a little waltz with Bella. Photographers snap pictures.

Bella glances back at her mother, who has her hands clasped to her chest, emotional.

END FLASHBACK

EXT. HIGHWAY - LATER

Bella is asleep in the front, clutching her notebook.

Lucinda enjoys the quiet evening. Loves the driving.

Sweet Sue dozes in the back.

They pass a sign: **Welcome to Kentucky.**

EXT. KAELIN'S RESTAURANT, LOUISVILLE, KY - EVENING

Lucinda deliberately steps on the brakes a little too hard as she parks near the restaurant's large red awning.

The women wake up.

LUCINDA
Girls! Louisville.

Bella reads a large sign over the restaurant. In awe.

BELLA
"Birthplace of the Cheeseburger."

Sweet Sue eye-rolls.

SWEET SUE
Birthplace of false advertising.

INT. KAELIN'S RESTAURANT, LOUISVILLE, KY - MOMENTS LATER

The three hungry women sit at a corner table as a waitress plops down their orders:

Lucinda and Bella's plates boast large juicy cheeseburgers. Sweet Sue's plate sports a sad dry turkey sandwich.

They eye each other's food.

LUCINDA
You can still change your mind.

SWEET SUE
No, thank you.

Bella isn't sure how to eat the large burger. Lucinda demonstratively grabs her burger with her hands and takes a big bite.

Bella happily imitates her.

BELLA
Mmm, my goodness... so... good.

LUCINDA
(with her mouth full)
I told you. The best.

Sweet Sue eyes the burgers enviously, but stoically cuts into her sandwich with her knife and fork. Her first bite is not very good.

SWEET SUE
Mmm, not bad at all. Mmm...

Sweet Sue takes a sip of water to wash the dry mouthful down.

Lucinda is amazed at Sweet Sue's stubbornness.

SWEET SUE
Pass the mayo, please.

LATER

Bella and Lucinda are alone at the table with two empty plates and a half eaten turkey sandwich.

BELLA
I'm sorry about your... boyfriend?

LUCINDA
I should have seen it coming. How long were you married?

BELLA
58 years.

Lucinda WHISTLES, impressed.

LUCINDA
My third lasted about 58 hours.

BELLA
How many times were you married?

LUCINDA
Four.

BELLA
"With enough courage, you can do without a reputation." Clark used to say that.

Lucinda laughs.

LUCINDA
Thanks. I think?

BELLA
I was lucky to meet Frank. It's not easy to find the right one.

LUCINDA

My problem is that I can't say no
when a handsome man proposes.

Lucinda places her credit card in the bill tray.

LUCINDA

Four times I was asked, four times
I said: heck yes. If it wasn't for
this trip, I might have done it
again.

BELLA

At your age?

Lucinda smiles at Bella's innocent honesty.

LUCINDA

Is one ever too old for love?

Bella hadn't thought about that.

LUCINDA

Clearly, it would have been a
miserable marriage, just like the
last three.

BELLA

Didn't you say four?

LUCINDA

My first marriage was great. He was
such a good guy.

BELLA

What happened?

Lucinda hands the check to the waitress. A wry smile.

LUCINDA

I wasn't such a good girl.

INT. KAELIN'S RESTAURANT, HALLWAY - SAME TIME

Sweet Sue is on the pay phone. Stressed. In her hand, the
"Gone With the Wind" newspaper clipping.

SWEET SUE

How is it not a public event? It
was in the papers.

(listens)

(MORE)

SWEET SUE (CONT'D)

Okay, please, listen, my friend is coming all the way from New York to be there, so maybe you could...

(listens)

No tickets? Really? I need to speak with your manager, right now!

(listens)

Hello? Hello?

Furious, and distressed, she bangs the receiver against the wall. A patron stares at her.

SWEET SUE

Keep walking!

The patron hurries on.

INT. KAE LIN'S RESTAURANT - MOMENTS LATER

When Sweet Sue returns, she has composed herself. Lucinda and Bella are waiting.

LUCINDA

Everything sorted?

Sweet Sue hesitates. Then --

SWEET SUE

Yes. Of course. All's good.

LUCINDA

Tabs settled. Off to Hank's Motel for the night.

SWEET SUE

Econolodge will do.

LUCINDA

My friend will take good care of us. Let's go.

EXT. HANK'S MOTEL - EVENING

Sweet Sue is disgusted. Bella doesn't know what to say. Even Lucinda is not convinced.

The women stare at the motel in front of them. It's a dive. A sign buzzes on and off: **Va_a_cy**.

LUCINDA

My Mary Kay days were a while back. It used to be... nicer.

SWEET SUE
We're not staying here.

Bella eyes a group of tall women hanging out by the entrance. Something is "different" about them.

LUCINDA
I'm sure the rooms are fine.
Besides it'll be free.

SWEET SUE
Nothing in life is free. Stay in
the car, Bella.

Bella is torn. Eventually, she makes a choice and accepts Lucinda's outstretched hand.

Sweet Sue is stunned at the "betrayal."

BELLA
(to Sweet Sue)
Maybe it's not so bad. Come inside.

Lucinda and Bella go inside.

Swallowing her pride, Sweet Sue follows.

INT. HANK'S MOTEL - MOMENTS LATER

Lucinda presses a button on the ratty check-in counter. What was once a bugle "Reveille" is now an angry BUZZ.

Nothing happens.

LUCINDA
Hank! Get your lazy butt out here!

HANK (O.S.)
No way...

Lucinda winks reassuringly at Bella.

A huge 6'6" hairy man, HANK(56), pops out in disbelief.

HANK
Luce?! It's really you?!

Lucinda throws out her arms.

LUCINDA
Come here, you big ogre.

Hank gives Lucinda a bear hug.

LUCINDA
Whoa, easy. Leave some for the
osteoporosis.

He let's go, horrified.

LUCINDA
Just kiddin', hon.

Lucinda pulls at the hair protruding from his neckline.

LUCINDA
Someone needs a waxing.

Embarrassed, Hank glances at Bella and Sweet Sue.

LUCINDA
Arw, sweetheart, it's okay. These
are friends of mine. Bella and
Sweet Sue...san. Susan.

BELLA
Hello, Mr. Hank.

HANK
How many rooms? I can get you the
suite.

LUCINDA
Sweet.

SWEET SUE
The suite, yes. On my credit card.

Sweet Sue's pleased she has taken charge.

HANK
Oh, that's alright. Miss Luce don't
pay here.

Lucinda "sweetly" hands Sweet Sue's credit card back to her.

Hank takes a key off a numbered board behind the counter.

LUCINDA
How's your Mama?

Hank's smile fades.

HANK
Last year...

LUCINDA

I'm so sorry. One of my best clients and a good woman, despite everything.

HANK

Let me show you the room.

Hank leads the way.

BELLA

(whispers to Lucinda)
Despite everything?

LUCINDA

His Mama was serving 20 years at the West Virginia Penitentiary for armed robbery.

Bella is shocked, Sweet Sue merely disgusted.

In the hallway, some of the women from outside, in six inch heels, pass by.

One of them is particularly tall.

BELLA

You're so tall.

The woman smiles shyly.

CROSSDRESSER

(male voice)
Thank you, Ma'am.

Excited like a child, Bella spins around to her friends. *Wow.*

Lucinda smiles. Even Sweet Sue can't help herself.

INT. HANK'S MOTEL, SUITE - MOMENTS LATER

In the doorway, Lucinda's smile wanes.

Sweet Sue and Bella look over her shoulder with concern.

The suite is done in oranges and browns with a thick wall-to-wall rug way past its prime. The TV is ancient, and the beds - one double and one single - sag in the middle.

LUCINDA

It's exactly the way it was twenty years ago. Exactly.

Hank fails to recognize the irony. Nods proudly.

HANK

Sure is.

LUCINDA

Girls, home for the night.

SWEET SUE

No. No. No.

Bella follows Lucinda into the room.

Sweet Sue refuses to go in, when Hank SNIFFS her.

HANK

You remind me of Mama.

Expressionless, Sweet Sue stares at him. Then she enters the room and with her heel, slams the door behind her. Locks it.

INT. HANK'S MOTEL, BATHROOM - LATER

Sweet Sue enjoys her shower. Lathers up. But as she turns to wash her face, the shower sputters, and the water flow stops.

She can't believe it! Soap in her eyes, she feels around for the faucets, turning them on and off. Nothing.

LUCINDA (O.S.)

(through the door)

Give it a second.

Furious, Sweet Sue gets out of the shower with shampoo in her hair. As she starts to dry off, the shower starts up again.

Dropping the towel, she rushes back in only to have the water slow to a thin stream of droplets. Sweet Sue has to make do. It's slow going getting the shampoo out.

INT. BEDROOM - SAME TIME

Lucinda lies on her single bed in her nightgown negligee. Tired, she puts on her eye mask.

LUCINDA

G'nite, hon.

Bella doesn't answer. She stares into her open suitcase. Confused.

INT. BATHROOM - SAME TIME

Sweet Sue starts up her old flesh colored hair dryer.

With equal amounts of disdain and curiosity, she eyes all the Mary Kay stuff lined up next to the sink.

Carefully, she puts the hair dryer down, still on, and picks up one of Lucinda's lipsticks. Tentatively, puts some on.

She puckers suggestively in the mirror when the hair dryer makes a weird WHIRR, spews sparks and with a POP, cuts out. It smells burnt.

SWEET SUE

Damn it.

BELLA (O.S.)

Sue?

SWEET SUE

Yes?

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sweet Sue closes the bathroom door behind her. Her hair is wrapped in a towel.

SWEET SUE

What is it?

Something is not right. Bella points to her suitcase.

SWEET SUE

What?

Sweet Sue looks in it: a pillow, a blanket and a large amount of socks. She doesn't understand.

SWEET SUE

Where is the rest of your clothes?

Bella has no answer.

SWEET SUE

This is all you packed?

Lucinda realizes something is up from Sweet Sue's tone of voice and removes her eye mask.

BELLA

I don't remember.

SWEET SUE
Bella!? You have no clothes here!

Lucinda gets out of bed and grabs a nightgown from her bag.

LUCINDA
Here, hon. I always, always
overpack. Tomorrow we'll get you
some more stuff, that's all.

Lucinda eyes Sweet Sue warningly.

SWEET SUE
Of course, but what happened --

LUCINDA
Let's get some sleep. We'll figure
it out. Sweet dreams, girls.

Bella happily changes into Lucinda's nightgown.

They all go to bed.

Silence.

LUCINDA
Susan?

SWEET SUE
What?

LUCINDA
Good color on you.

Mortified, Sweet Sue remembers she's wearing lipstick. About to wipe it off, she decides to leave it on.

EXT. HANK'S MOTEL - MORNING

Lucinda revs Lucy. The three women are ready to go.

Hank, in a tank top revealing a newly waxed back, waves:

HANK
Mind the bugs in Oklahoma. They got
cattle.

SWEET SUE
Bugs? What kind of bugs?

Lucinda steps on the gas, the tires screeching as they take off. Bella loves it. Sweet Sue hates it.

LUCINDA
BYE KILLER!

EXT. GRAUMAN'S CHINESE THEATER IN LA - MORNING

A couple of workers carry a big roll of red carpet.

Behind them, set pieces, southern decor, are up. Leaning up against a tree, Clark Gable -- one of several life size cut-outs -- appears to eye the workers.

EXT. HIGHWAY - MORNING

Gliding along the Tennessee highway, the pink Lincoln's top is down. Lucinda drives.

BELLA
I left him a message. Frank's
always on the go.

SWEET SUE
Stanley. Stanley's always on the
go.

BELLA
Stanley, yes.

Bella looks around for her notebook.

Lucinda points to a huge sculpture in the distance.

LUCINDA
The largest Jesus statue in the
world. Supposedly.

SWEET SUE
If you ignore the 125 feet Redeemer
in Rio, Brazil.

LUCINDA
I'd like to ignore both.

BELLA
Where's my notebook?

Bella gropes the floor in front of her.

Sweet Sue scans the backseat.

SWEET SUE
It's not back here.

BELLA
I had it before.

SWEET SUE
It's here somewhere.

Bella's getting increasingly upset.

BELLA
Where? I must have my notebook.
Where is it?

SWEET SUE
Calm down. We'll find it.

Bella is furious.

BELLA
Don't fucking tell me to calm down!

SWEET SUE
Bella???

Sweet Sue and Lucinda are stunned at the aggression.

BELLA
Who took it?

LUCINDA
We're looking. We'll find it.

BELLA
I NEVER LEAVE IT ANYWHERE! WHICH
ONE OF YOU TOOK IT?

LUCINDA
Sweetness, we'll find it.

BELLA
FIND IT! MAYBE YOU HAVE IT.

SWEET SUE
Did you look under your seat?

BELLA
WHY IS NO ONE HELPING ME FIND IT?
HELP ME!

Bella trembles with frustration.

Lucinda reaches over and opens the glove compartment, and there it is. Bella's purple notebook.

Bella grabs it, her panic immediately subsiding.

Lucinda and Sweet Sue are rattled. Share a glance.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Lucinda and Sweet Sue get out of the car.

Bella has calmed down, studying her memory aid.

LUCINDA

You go pay. I'll fill her up.
Tinkle after.

SWEET SUE

I'll fill her up. You go pay.

Lucinda is surprised.

LUCINDA

Really? I didn't think you knew
anything about cars.

SWEET SUE

Well, I do. Right, Bella?

They both eye Bella in the car. She doesn't respond.

The two women share a concerned glance. Then, Lucinda hands
the nozzle to Sweet Sue.

LUCINDA

Fine. The gas cap is under --

SWEET SUE

I know where it is! Pee and pay.

Lucinda shrugs and walks to the restroom.

Sweet Sue goes to stick the nozzle in where she expect the
gas cap to be. Nothing. Goes to the other side. Nothing.

She searches the whole side of the car. Even inside. Nothing.

Panicking now, she looks around for help, when Lucinda exits
the restroom.

LUCINDA

(yells to Sweet Sue)
You got it?

SWEET SUE

Of course, I got it.

LUCINDA

Give me thumbs up when you're done
so I can pay.

Lucinda enters the store.

SWEET SUE

What'd she say? "The gas cap is
under..." Under what?

Just then, by fluke, she sees someone lifting their license
plate to refuel.

Could it be? Sweet Sue flips the license plate up, and bingo!
Instant relief. Victorious, she puts the nozzle in --

Nothing comes out! Sweet Sue shakes the nozzle. Still
nothing. Lucinda waves from inside the store. Sweet Sue waves
back with a smile.

She checks if Bella has noticed the mayhem. She hasn't.

Sweat beads of frustration, Sweet Sue finally tries pressing
the handle. Gas pours out, soaking her pants and shoes.

SWEET SUE

You little pisser...

Finally, Sweet Sue manages to get the nozzle back into the
fuel inlet and pump gas.

Bella is oddly disconnected. Staring straight ahead.

MOMENTS LATER

Lucinda returns, holds the seat for Sweet Sue to get in.

LUCINDA

Alright then, girls. To the mall to
shop for Bella.

Lucinda sniffs the air, the smell of gasoline is significant.
She realizes it comes from Sweet Sue.

LUCINDA

You okay?

SWEET SUE

I'm fine.

BELLA

I smell gasoline?

Lucinda can barely contain her laughter as she eyes Sweet Sue in the rear view mirror.

INT. MALL - LATER

A promotion for Dollywood is on in the middle of the mall - a faux shoot'em up gun fight.

The three women weave their way through the show.

LUCINDA
Are you feeling better, hon?

Bella, clutching her book, nods vaguely.

LUCINDA
Maybe we should go see Dolly?

SWEET SUE
Maybe not.

When Lucinda heads for a GAP store, Sweet Sue stops.

SWEET SUE
GAP is unnecessarily expensive. You go. Bella and I are going to TJ Max. We'll meet you later.

Sweet Sue grabs Bella's hand.

LUCINDA
TJ Max is fine.

Lucinda grabs Bella's other hand.

Together, the three of them head to the escalator, but both Lucinda and Sweet Sue try to be next to Bella. Childishly, they end up being squeezed onto one step.

If Susan's look could kill, Lucinda would be dead.

Bella seems oblivious to the whole situation.

INT. TJ MAX - MOMENTS LATER

Bella absentmindedly pushes a cart with some clothes.

Lucinda holds up a bright flowery shirt to Bella.

LUCINDA
This is darling.

SWEET SUE
If you like flamingos and Barbies.

Lucinda tries to be positive and upbeat.

LUCINDA
(to Susan)
Maybe we should get you something?
(under her breath)
Like a muzzle.

SWEET SUE
What was that?

Lucinda holds a top up to Sweet Sue, who, annoyed, rips it out of her hands and throws it back on the pile.

SWEET SUE
It's hideous. Come, Bella.

Sweet Sue walks off.

Bella doesn't know what to do.

LUCINDA
The storming off routine is getting really old. HEY! SUSAN!

Leaving Bella behind, Lucinda catches up with Sweet Sue.

LUCINDA
Why are you being such a bitch?

A young girl nearby looks up at her mother - *the old lady said a naughty.*

Unlike Sweet Sue, Lucinda doesn't care people are looking.

Sweet Sue hurries away, anywhere. Enters a lingerie store.

Lucinda notices the little girl.

LUCINDA
Run along, hon. This won't be pretty.

Lucinda goes after Sweet Sue.

INT. LINGERIE STORE - CONTINUOUS

Lucinda strides in.

Sweet Sue pretends to be looking at items on the racks.

LUCINDA
Dungarees are the other way.

SWEET SUE
I can't hear you.

LUCINDA
'Cause you're too damn proud to get
hearing aids like the rest of us.

SWEET SUE
Just stick to tiaras and world
peace, why don't you?

Sweet Sue smugly thinks she's won the "debate", when a thong hits her shoulder. Incredulous, Sweet Sue looks up at Lucinda at a sales bin full of thongs.

LUCINDA
What is wrong with you?

Sweet Sue gives Lucinda the silent treatment until another thong hits her square in the face.

LUCINDA
Hey. Bea Arthur. Don't ignore me!
Over here.

Sweet Sue refuses to engage.

Lucinda flicks another thong at Sweet Sue, but it misses her and hits a young SALES CLERK(24) clear across the room.

The Clerk picks up the thong, mystified. He looks around, but only sees the two elderly ladies at the sales bin.

A barrage of thongs hit Sweet Sue.

SWEET SUE
Now really, this is stupid --

LUCINDA
I told you, don't ignore me.

Fuming, Sweet Sue pulls a red thong off her shoulder.

SWEET SUE
Baby Jane Hudson wants a fight?

She grabs a bra and flings it, hitting Lucinda in the eye.

LUCINDA
OUW!

Sweet Sue is pleased until a thong hits her in the jaw.

LUCINDA
You throw like a girl.

Lucinda takes cover.

Sweet Sue grabs some "ammo"(bras) and ducks.

SWEET SUE
I knew it was a mistake to travel
with a goddamn pageant queen.

A "thong/bra" warfare ensues across the lingerie department.

LUCINDA
Aha, you think I'm too pretty...

Sweet Sue ducks behind a mannequin. Launches a bra.

SWEET SUE
Mud-thick layers of makeup is not
pretty, trust me.

Lucinda hides behind a fake fichus. Launches a thong.

The Sales Clerk realizes with horror what's going on.
Frantically, he attempts to collect the flying lingerie.

LUCINDA
You can't stand the fact that I
might get more attention than you.

SWEET SUE
Attention? Try pity!

SALES CLERK
Excuse me, Ladies.

LUCINDA
Your upper lip mustache would make
Village People proud. Ever heard of
waxing?

SWEET SUE
There's more to life than flirting
with men half your age. You're
pathetic.

SALES CLERK
Excuse me.

LUCINDA
 If you'd be willing to pay a little
 attention to yourself, you could
 look lovely.

SWEET SUE
 Like you?

LUCINDA
 Yes.

SWEET SUE
 Sorry, you mean slutty?

SALES CLERK
 EXCUSE ME!

SWEET SUE AND LUCINDA
 WHAT?

Both women glare at the frightened Sales Clerk.

SALES CLERK
 You're scaring our customers.
 (sniffs the air)
 Is that gasoline?

Sweet Sue and Lucinda let his words hang in the air, then get
 back to their fight.

SWEET SUE
 You married and divorced five
 times, like some --

LUCINDA
 Four times.

SWEET SUE
 -- harlot.

LUCINDA
 Harlot? Harlot. Who are you? Jane
 Eyre? Who even uses that word
 anymore?

SWEET SUE
 I meant whore.

LUCINDA
 Maybe I did marry too easily but at
 least I had men who wanted to marry
 me. At least I got married.

Sweet Sue stands.

SWEET SUE
 I MARRIED! AT 19, I GOT MARRIED!
 BUT RIGHT AFTER THE CEREMONY, HE
 LEFT A NOTE AND TOOK OFF. I WAS
 HUMILIATED. HAPPY?

Lucinda didn't see this coming.

Sweet Sue is mortified. She's said too much. Rushes away,
 into a changing room.

The Sales Clerk pulls the thong-ammo out of Lucinda's hands.

INT. CHANGING ROOM STALL - MOMENTS LATER

A gentle KNOCK, and Lucinda carefully pushes the door open.

Sweet Sue sits on a stool, quiet, red-eyed.

Lucinda hands her a tissue from her purse.

Sweet Sue blows her nose, long and hard, and tosses it in the
 trash can that Lucinda holds out.

LUCINDA
 I'm afraid I'll take Roger back.

SWEET SUE
 Why would you?

LUCINDA
 I don't want to be alone. I got no
 one else.

Sweet Sue can understand that.

SWEET SUE
 No one likes me.

LUCINDA
 Well, you don't make it easy.

SWEET SUE
 True.

LUCINDA
 I do wear too much makeup.

SWEET SUE
 I am a bitch.

Beat.

LUCINDA
Definitely.

They look at each other in the mirror. Then LAUGH.

Lucinda reaches out to Sweet Sue's upper lip.

LUCINDA
Seriously, I can destroy this fuzz.
A little wax --

Sweet Sue bats Lucinda's hand away.

LUCINDA
Too far too soon?

Sweet Sue smiles. Then --

SWEET SUE
Where is Bella?

INT. LINGERIE DEPARTMENT - DAY

Sweet Sue and Lucinda rush out, but Bella is nowhere to be seen. They scan the area.

SWEET SUE
She was right here.

LUCINDA
I'll go this way.

Sweet Sue heads off in the opposite direction.

SWEET SUE
BELLA?

LUCINDA
BELLA?

INT. MALL - DAY

Sweet Sue, Lucinda and a security guard search floor by floor. Anxiously.

Other Security Guards search as well.

The mother of the young girl from earlier approaches them, and points toward the exit.

EXT. MAIN ROAD - DAY

Confused and distressed, Bella pushes her shopping cart along the narrow shoulder of a busy road.

Cars zoom by, HONKING their horns, scaring Bella each time. She has no idea where she's going, but somehow wants to cross the road. It's dangerous. Bella pulls back, then tries again.

Cars fly by, barely missing her. Each time, she jolts in fear.

The pink Lincoln pulls in ahead of her, hazard lights on. Sweet Sue jumps out.

SWEET SUE
BELLA! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

Sweet rushes to Bella and pulls her away from the traffic.

BELLA
You were gone. I tried to find you.

Relieved, Sweet Sue hugs Bella.

SWEET SUE
I'm sorry.

BELLA
It's so loud out here. All the cars. I couldn't find Frank.

SWEET SUE
Shh, shh. I won't leave you ever again. Promise.

Lucinda approaches.

LUCINDA
We should get off the shoulder.

Bella's happy to see Lucinda.

BELLA
You're here too?

LUCINDA
Yes, I'm right here.
(refers to the cart)
And it looks like you really did some shopping.

Down the road, Security Guards appear. They spot Bella and her cart. Starting to yell, they run towards them.

Sweet Sue realizes the truth.

SWEET SUE
I'm guessing you didn't pay for
these?

LUCINDA
Whoopsies.

BELLA
I must have forgotten. I've never
stolen anything.

LUCINDA
Never?

Sweet Sue sees where this is heading.

SWEET SUE
No, absolutely not.

LUCINDA
Oh, come on.

SWEET SUE
No! Lucinda. NO!

Lucinda takes some clothes from the cart and rushes to *Lucy*.

LUCINDA
C'mon, Bella! Grab something!

Excited, Bella senses it's now or never and grabs a sock.

Sweet Sue yanks the sock out of Bella's hands.

SWEET SUE
If there's one thing you don't
need, it's a sock.

Sweet Sue hands the notebook and a bunch of skirts to an
excited Bella.

SWEET SUE
Go!

BELLA
Ooh, we're bad.

LUCINDA
(from the car)
Let's go, girls. NOW!

As Sweet Sue and Bella rush into *Lucy*, Lucinda steps on the gas, leaving the Guards and the empty shopping cart behind.

EXT. HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS

The women pass a state sign: **Welcome to Arkansas!**

A skirt flies out from *Lucy's* back seat.

MONTAGE:

- A guy on an overpass with his bike appreciates the beautiful pink convertible as it passes underneath him.

- Various car shots on the road.

- Driving under an overpass sign: **The World's largest McDonalds.**

- Lucinda takes a picture of Bella and Sweet Sue in front of a two-story ramshackle outhouse with GranMaw and GranPaw doors on the ground floor and Maw and Paw doors upstairs.

- Sweet Sue, terrified, drives *Lucy* around an empty parking lot. Lucinda gives instructions. It's not smooth sailing, the convertible jerking along. Bella watches from a bench.

- There's a small dent in *Lucy's* fender as she glides along the highway. The women are somber until - Lucinda starts laughing. Then Sweet Sue and Bella join in. All good.

EXT. STANLEY'S HOUSE - MORNING

Breakfast is on the table.

Apple is on her cell phone. Scrolling.

STANLEY

(on his cell phone)

It can't make a difference if she moves in this week or the next?

(listens)

You can't just cancel her admittance, she was guaranteed a room --

(listens)

One week? But I can't guarantee --

(listens)

Fine.

Stanley hangs up. Tired. Frustrated.

APPLE

Gran's going to Los Angeles.

STANLEY

What are you talking about?

Apple shows her Dad the cell phone. Points at large photo of the Grauman's Chinese Theater:

"The newly restored Gone With the Wind opens in LA later this week at a star-studded gala-event..."

STANLEY

No way.

Stanley can't quite wrap his head around it but the more he thinks about it, maybe Apple is right.

STANLEY

That would be crazy...

INT. OZARK MOTEL - NIGHT

Bella is fast asleep.

Lucinda and Sweet Sue WHISPER in the dark.

SWEET SUE

She's getting worse.

LUCINDA

Dementia is on and off.

SWEET SUE

I shouldn't have taken her away.
This trip is a mistake.

LUCINDA

We can always turn back.

SWEET SUE

There's something else.

Lucinda senses the defeat in Sweet Sue's voice.

LUCINDA

What?

SWEET SUE

I don't have tickets.

Lucinda stiffens. Doesn't move.

LUCINDA

Susan...

SWEET SUE

I know. I've called every day since we left and they are not for sale. No one can help me.

Lucinda pays no attention to Sweet Sue. Points.

LUCINDA

There!

Something scurries across the floor.

Horrified, the women immediately recoil.

SWEET SUE

It had a tail.

LUCINDA

Wait, what?

SWEET SUE

It had a tail.

LUCINDA

No. Before that. What did you say?

SWEET SUE

Shhh. Keep your voice down.

LUCINDA

You don't have tickets to the screening?!

The critter SCRAPES away at something. Sweet Sue nervously scans the floor in the dark.

LUCINDA

You said you did. How could you do that to Bella?

SWEET SUE

I didn't think it would be a problem.

The critter darts across the floor again.

LUCINDA

Get it!

SWEET SUE

Me?

LUCINDA
Yes, you're the butch one.

SWEET SUE
I'm retired. You get it!

The women huddle on the bed.

LUCINDA
What are we going to do?

SWEET SUE
Throw a shoe or something.

LUCINDA
No. About the gala event?

In the dark, they listen to the critter CHEWING on something.

INT. OZARK MOTEL - MORNING

Bella wakes up refreshed. Looks to the others and her face changes, puzzled -- *what on Earth..?*

In the far corner, Lucinda and Sweet Sue sleep awkwardly up against each other on Lucinda's bed.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Driving along, the women admire the vast plains spread far and wide. Occasional cattle graze by the endless road.

They pass a road sign: **Welcome to Oklahoma!**

Sweet Sue reaches up her arms and takes a deep breath.

SWEET SUE
(sings)
Oklahoooo -

A bug hits her in the face. Then another, in her mouth. She HARKS it up.

Bugs start to hit the windshield en masse.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Lucy's top is up. The windshield is covered with splattered bugs.

The women are grossed out.

They pass an artsy sign: **Cathedral of Junk - 25.**

LUCINDA

The bugs might go away. We're
making good time.

EXT. CATHEDRAL OF JUNK, TX - DAY

The three women stare at what looks like a two storied, huge
pile of a vast junk heap in someone's back garden.

Sweet Sue is not impressed.

SWEET SUE

Good call.

INT. CATHEDRAL OF JUNK, TX - CONTINUOUS

The women step through an impressively crafted wooden door.

The Cathedral of Junk is a hollow framework in multiple
levels. Rooms with vaulted ceilings of improvised trusses.

The walls consist of all kinds of mass produced cast-offs:
Lawnmower wheels, car bumpers, kitchen utensils, ladders,
bottles, circuitry boards, etc.

The women are amazed at the odd beauty surrounding them.

BELLA

Incredible.

VINCE (O.S.)

Thanks.

The women scan the tall room for the source of the voice.

VINCE(50), a hippie with a beard and glasses is perched in a
huge armchair on a second floor balcony. He climbs down a
narrow spiral staircase.

VINCE

Welcome, goddesses.

Sweet Sue politely extends her hand, but, much to her
surprise, Vince ignores it and warmly hugs her.

VINCE

Peace.

He also hugs Bella and Lucinda.

VINCE
Let me give you the tour.

SWEET SUE
There's a tour?

BELLA
I'd like that.

Vince holds out her hand to Bella. She grabs it, and they follow Vince through one impressive room after another.

VINCE
All this junk was either bought, or made, by someone who at one time thought it served a purpose. Now, in a way, it still does.

Bella is mesmerized by all the detailed objects.

LUCINDA
Misunderstand me correctly, hon, but why did you build it?

VINCE
Well, A., I'm a little nuts.

Lucinda and Sweet Sue smile.

VINCE
No, I am. Seriously. I take meds.

Their smiles fade.

Vince walks on.

VINCE
But most importantly, B., old junk have stories to tell.

He stops by some old ballet shoes tied around a metal pipe.

VINCE
As a lawyer got mowed down by a car, did her mind go to these, hidden in the back of her closet, the only evidence of her dreams of becoming a dancer?

Nearby, he rotates a cog wheel and points to some dots on it.

VINCE

Are these specks of blood from the drilling machine in the plastics factory that took a worker's thumb off in a careless moment?

Bella's disturbed at the thought.

SWEET SUE

(reassures Bella)

Probably not.

VINCE

Granted, all these items may be broken, useless even, but they've survived up til this point in time. That deserves respect.

BELLA

If you live long enough, you see everything.

Vince likes the sentiment. He appreciatively pats a wooden crutch stuck in the wall.

VINCE

People know I'm not a religious man, but I believe in the equality of it all.

Bella presses a big blue button and a MACAW-CALL starts somewhere in the structure. She shrinks apologetically, but she needn't have. Vince loves when people discover things.

VINCE

My point is that this junk, item by item, represent moments in time where they mattered to someone.

SWEET SUE

Finished business.

Vince smiles.

VINCE

Something like that.

SWEET SUE

I have something I'd like to donate.

INT. CATHEDRAL OF JUNK, TX - MOMENTS LATER

In his big armchair, Vince happily reads a book in the light of a floor lamp stuck horizontally into the wall.

Sweet Sue's flesh colored hair dryer dangles like an odd fruit over his head. It fits in perfectly.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

The pink convertible has its top down as the women cruise along. Sunshine.

Lucinda loves this. Even Sweet Sue enjoys the ride now.

A car covered in fraternity stickers drives up next to the women. Four FRAT BOYS stare at *Lucy*, impressed. They roll down their window.

BLOND FRAT BOY

(yells)

HEY, LADIES. OUT FOR A CRUISE?

SKINNY FRAT BOY

SHE WANTS YOU, TONY, GO FOR IT.

LUCINDA

(yells back)

WHO SAID WE WERE LADIES?

The Frat Boys LAUGH.

Bella wakes up and eyes the young men with apprehension.

BLOND FRAT BOY/TONY

WHAT ARE YOU THEN?

LUCINDA

WE'RE GIRLS. GIRLS ON THE RUN.

Sweet Sue leans in from the back seat.

SWEET SUE

Ignore them and they'll go away.

LUCINDA

Why on earth would I want them to go away?

CREW CUT FRAT BOY

IS THAT YOUR MOTHER IN THE BACK?

The Frat Boys LAUGH again.

LUCINDA
COME NOW, BOYS, PLAY NICE.

SHAVED FRAT BOY
(to Sweet Sue)
HOW ABOUT A LITTLE ACTION, GRANDMA?

He opens his mouth for an exaggerated tongue kiss.

SWEET SUE
(to Lucinda)
Step on it a little.

Lucinda speeds up slightly until Sweet Sue is directly across from the guys.

Sweet Sue didn't run a school for nothing:

SWEET SUE
IF YOU'RE MEN, NOT BOYS, WHY NOT
PULL IN AT THE NEXT REST STOP? YOU
CAN WHIP OUT YOUR BIG HARD - (car
noise) -

Bella's shocked at the words from Sweet Sue's mouth.

SWEET SUE
AND SLIDE THEM ALL THE WAY INTO MY
WET HUNGRY - (car noise) - WHILE MY
FRIENDS HERE WATCH?

Lucinda is stunned, but impressed.

LUCINDA
WELL, HOW ABOUT IT, BOYS? GERIATRIC
VAGINA?

The Frat Boys are repulsed into silence.

SKINNY FRAT BOY
(to the driver)
GO! GO! MOVE! GO!

They accelerate away.

Lucinda high five's back to Sweet Sue.

SWEET SUE
School yard vernacular. Punks.

They all LAUGH, but when a police car passes them, Lucinda's laughter stiffens.

Sweet Sue notices her behavior.

As the police moves on, Lucinda relaxes a bit.

Sweet Sue leans in.

SWEET SUE
Are you wanted for murder?

LUCINDA
What? No.

SWEET SUE
Then what?

LUCINDA
What are you talking about?

SWEET SUE
The police makes you nervous.

LUCINDA
Don't be silly. No no.

Then it hits Sweet Sue.

SWEET SUE
Can I see your driver's license?

No response.

SWEET SUE
Lucinda?

LUCINDA
No.

SWEET SUE
Why not?

LUCINDA
I don't have one.

BELLA
You don't?

LUCINDA
They damn well took it! Why do you think I had to settle in the assisted living complex? Put *Lucy* in storage? I was stuck!

SWEET SUE
Why?

Lucinda is reluctant to say.

SWEET SUE
Lucinda?

LUCINDA
My peripheral vision isn't what it
used to be.

SWEET SUE
As in...

LUCINDA
As in, it's gone. Completely.

Bella is suddenly a little worried.

Sweet Sue leans back, smiling at Lucinda.

SWEET SUE
You got guts. I'll give you that.

The three women drive onwards into the evening.

INT. GRAUMAN'S THEATER, LA - DAY

Celebrity name tags are placed on the plush red velvet seats.

Lights are polished, carpets are vacuumed.

EXT. HIGHWAY - EVENING

In the back, Bella sleeps again.

A road sign reads: **Albuquerque - 2.**

LUCINDA
You sure about this?

Sweet Sue shoots Lucinda a sharp glance.

SWEET SUE
Unfinished business. Besides, we
need a place for the night.

Lucinda puts on the indicator and turns onto the exit ramp.

INT. ADAM'S NIPPLE INN, LOBBY - DAY

STEVE(82), an elderly gentleman in a loud cowboy outfit, is
at the registration desk.

Homoerotic art/porn covers the walls and the lamp on the counter is a miniature man whose penis is the off/on switch.

He flirtatiously signs a young GAY COUPLE in.

STEVE
Anthony, love?

ANTHONY (O.S.)
Yes?

STEVE
Which room for two hung -- I mean,
handsome -- young men?

ANTHONY (O.S.)
Slutty?

STEVE
(whispers)
It's a trick question.

The Young Guys look questioningly at each other.

GAY GUY 1
We're married if that's what you
mean?

STEVE
Let me.
(calls back)
They don't come much sluttier.

The Guys don't know what to make of the odd situation.

INT. ADAM'S NIPPLE INN, BACK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Surrounded by rolls of material, dress designs and a sewing machine, ANTHONY(79), a small round man with designer glasses, hand-stitches sequins onto a mannequin'ed dress.

ANTHONY
Give them the Oprah suite.

STEVE (O.S.)
It has the lezzies from Delaware.

INT. ADAM'S NIPPLE INN, LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Steve smiles at the men.

ANTHONY (O.S.)
The Farley Granger suite?

STEVE
Perfect, love.
(to the Guys)
It has a saddle and stirrup set-up.

Steve holds out a key. The men share quick glance at each other, then accept it.

EXT. ADAM'S NIPPLE INN - DAY

Sweet Sue, Lucinda and Bella stare from the car.

A large sign reads: "**Adam's Nipple Inn.**"

They are looking at a cute house with a white picket fence, surrounded by beautiful flowers and bushes. Two rainbow flags frame the front door.

Wind chimes tinkle from the porch.

SWEET SUE
What if he has a new wife and kids?

Lucinda eyes the rainbow flags.

LUCINDA
Somehow, I don't think that will be your problem.

Sweet Sue gets out of the car.

LUCINDA
Remember, we'll be right here, hon.

BELLA
If you need us.

INT. ADAM'S NIPPLE INN, LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

Sweet Sue enters unnoticed by Steve who's processing papers. The Gay Couple nod to her as they head up the stairs.

Sweet Sue sees the penis-switch lamp. Something in the inn is a little "off" to her. Can't place it.

On the counter, a little Eros statuette wearing pants reads: *Ring me for full service.* She pulls the string and an erect penis with a little JINGLY bell pops up from the pants.

Sweet Sue quickly lets go of the string. The penis goes away.

STEVE
(without looking up)
You need help?

SWEET SUE
I do.

Amused, Steve looks up at Sweet Sue.

STEVE
Sounds like we just got married.

SWEET SUE
We were. We are. Hello, Stephen.

Beat.

Steve's smile fades, then his eyes roll back in his head and he sinks to the floor.

SWEET SUE
Stephen? Help. HELP!

Anthony comes rushing out, and sees Steve on the ground.

SWEET SUE
He passed out.

ANTHONY
Steve? Dear? Big Daddy?

As he cradles Steve's head in his lap, Steve 'comes to'.

STEVE
What happened?

ANTHONY
You tell me! Are you okay?

STEVE
I thought I saw...
(he sees Sweet Sue)
Susan!

Who? -- Anthony turns to Sweet Sue.

SWEET SUE
Hi, I'm Stephen's wife.

Anthony looks at Steven, who quietly nods.

Shocked, Anthony's eyes roll back and he passes out.

SWEET SUE
Oh, for God's sake.

STEVE
Anthony, LOVE? Baby?

INT. ADAM'S NIPPLE INN, LIVINGROOM - LATER

Anthony, Sweet Sue, and Bella sit in an ornate lounge.

Steve, hands trembling, pours tea for Bella.

BELLA
Thank you.

Sound of a toilet FLUSHING.

Lucinda appears.

LUCINDA
Tinkle time. Y'all know how it is.

She happily pours herself a tea and sits down.

The atmosphere is super tense and the silence is deafening.

Lucinda waves to Sweet Sue to get her attention. Points to the tray with cookies.

Sweet Sue passes it.

After loudly biting into a crunchy cookie, Lucinda offers the tray around. Only Bella takes one.

LUCINDA
Mmmmyummy...

Steve and Anthony smile politely.

SWEET SUE
I...

Everyone looks at her, hopeful the atmosphere will improve.

SWEET SUE
No, nothing.

Everyone settles, disappointed.

Silence.

LUCINDA

At least this "chat" can't get much worse.

Lucinda smiles. Then --

MOANS can vaguely be heard.

Everyone stares up at the ceiling as the moans get louder -- the two guys upstairs are having sex.

SWEET SUE

You had to jinx it.

Bella tries to figure out what's going on above her, transfixed on the ceiling.

Sweet Sue wants to distract her.

SWEET SUE

Can I get you something, Bella?

Bella holds a finger up to her lips -- *shh*.

The noises gradually build, until the men reach -- CLIMAX.

Lucinda appreciatively claps her hands. Bella likes the gesture and happily joins in. Then Steve and Anthony, and finally Sweet Sue.

Loud APPLAUSE for the men upstairs fill the living room.

GAY GUY (O.S.)

(from above)

Thank you, guys. Please come again.

Everyone LAUGHS.

INT. ADAM'S NIPPLE INN, DININGROOM - LATER

Bella, Lucinda, Anthony, and the Gay Couple eat dinner together. Everyone's having a great time.

EXT. ADAM'S NIPPLE INN, PORCH - SAME TIME

Sweet Sue and Steve sit on a swinging couch, sipping coffee.

They listen to their friends' muffled CHATTER, when -

SWEET SUE

Why did you marry me?

Steve thinks about it carefully.

STEVE

Love.

Sweet Sue didn't expect that.

STEVE

Or what I thought was love.

SWEET SUE

I didn't know there were several kinds.

STEVE

Susan, I never meant to hurt you. I didn't know what to do.

SWEET SUE

Dad wanted to kill you.

STEVE

Please, I wish I could --

SWEET SUE

Stop.

Steve senses the fury in Sweet Sue's voice. She has waited a long time for this.

SWEET SUE

Refresher course: A small rural town. A young woman who isn't the prettiest flower in school but envied none the less for her good grades and smarts. A young man who sees her for the person she thinks she can be: attractive and desired. He proposes. The young woman's parents get a second mortgage on their home to pay for a beautiful wedding after which they will send their only daughter off to a life of contentment and purpose. There's envy from others that the ugly girl is the first in her class to get married, but she herself is proud. Happy to prove them all wrong.

Sweet Sue's trembling hands betray her cool exterior.

STEVE

Susan --

SWEET SUE

Not yet.

Steve accepts the reproach in silence.

SWEET SUE

I thought you weren't well when you stepped out right after the vows. After a while the organist stopped playing but I stayed at the altar. And waited. My shoes hurt. They were too small, but the beautiful crochéed lilies on the heel matched my bouquet, so I wanted them. I could hear people whisper. The priest felt bad for me. He knew. He smiled at me, but I hated him. I wanted to say "you don't know anything!" Then when I heard someone walk up the aisle, my heart rose and I glared at him: "See?" I turned, only to see the driver of the hired limo hand a note to my dad and walk away in his cheap grey polyester pants.

Steve relives it all in his mind.

SWEET SUE

I had never seen my dad cry before. My mother held his hand and I knew he was crying for me. Everyone started to realize what had happened and as people shuffled out, I remember trying to catch everyone's eye: "Don't pity me. Don't."

A round of LAUGHTER erupts from the dining room. Sweet Sue 'comes to' and looks at Steve. Tears roll down his face.

SWEET SUE

Life goes on, Stephen. It did and it has. But I'll always go back to that day at the altar, knowing you weren't coming, because that was the last time I felt absolutely broken.

STEVE

I thought I did the best thing for everyone.

SWEET SUE
How could you possible think that?

STEVE
It doesn't matter anymore.

Sweet Sue's anger bubbles up.

SWEET SUE
Doesn't matter?

STEVE
Susan --

SWEET SUE
It may be pathetic to you that for
a lifetime, I have been wondering
what happened that day --

STEVE
A wife, two kids and seven
grandchildren later, I could have
been caught by the police jerking
another man off in some airport
bathroom. Or having sex with some
guy in the bushes in the local park
next to our kids' school.

Stunned, Sweet Sue flinches at the harsh pictures.

STEVE
How does that sound? Because that's
what would have happened. You would
have realized then, that your
husband, cheating on you for
decades with members of the same
sex, had no respect for you. No
respect for himself. Accept that
your lifetime of marriage had been
a big elaborate lie, based on
cowardice and deceit.

This isn't going the way Sweet Sue had imagined it.

STEVE
I understand your pain. Trust me, I
understand pain. Maybe I should
have contacted you and told you the
truth.

(MORE)

STEVE (CONT'D)

But if you think for one second that taking off that day was an easy thing to do -- facing up to the fact that I was different to other men, deciding to leave everything I knew behind, disgraced, knowing I could never return -- then you are sorely mistaken, Susan. I feel miserable about the hurt I have caused you. I really do. But sometimes we have to look beyond ourselves. We have to acknowledge that there are two sides to every coin, that no one is perfect, and that sometimes we have to forgive and let go.

Silence -- apart from a spinning propeller, in a breeze, on the hat of a cheeky gay garden gnome.

Sweet Sue looks at the man she hated for so long and sympathy rolls over her. She grabs his hand. Squeezes it.

Grateful for her sign of forgiveness, Steve squeezes back.

Holding hands, they have come full circle. To a passer-by, they look like an old married couple on their porch.

EXT. ADAM'S NIPPLE INN - MORNING

The sun rises.

The three women, in the pink Lincoln, are ready to go.

Anthony hands a bag to Bella.

ANTHONY

For tomorrow. It should fit. Knock 'em alive.

Bella peeks in the bag.

ANTHONY

And miss Kentucky, come visit ANY time, you hear? And you...

(to Sweet Sue)

You come back and help us here. We could use an extra hand.

STEVE

Think about it. We mean it!

Sweet Sue nods, she will.

SWEET SUE
Goodbye, Stephen.

Lucy accelerates away.

INT/EXT. GRAUMAN'S THEATER IN LA - MORNING

Extras in civil war era costumes rehearse their moves on the red carpet.

Lights are mounted and levels set.

The gala is nearly ready.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Lucinda drives.

Bella is in her element. She is bubbly and happy, her eyes sparkling.

BELLA
He smelled of men's cologne and
cigarettes. And then he gently put
me back down. A perfect gentleman.

Sweet Sue has heard the stories a million times before. Gives the next cue --

SWEET SUE
Was that the end of it?

BELLA
No, no, before I knew it, both
mamma and myself were escorted into
the premiere as his personal
guests.

Lucinda smiles at Bella and Sweet Sue.

BELLA
You think he'll be there?

Confused, Sweet Sue and Lucinda share a glance.

LUCINDA
Who, dear?

BELLA
Clark Gable. It's the premiere. He
should be there.

SWEET SUE

That would be nothing short a miracle considering he has been dead almost 60 years. You know that, right?

Bella is confused.

BELLA

Yes, yes, of course.

Silence.

BELLA

But he'll be there. We will dance again.

SWEET SUE

Bella, no, he won't. He's dead.

Lucinda sees a sign: **Blue Lake National Park**, and desperate to change the mood, calls out.

LUCINDA

Girls! Let's cool down!

EXT. BLUE LAKE STATE PARK - DAY

Lucy is parked on the shoulder of a road.

Down a hill, further down, is a lake and the three women.

Lucinda is in the shallow water, bare feet, skirt lifted up.

LUCINDA

It feels sooo good. C'mon.

SWEET SUE

Should we?

Bella nods.

Sweet Sue throws all usual caution to the wind and extends a hand to Bella.

Sweet Sue pushes her shoes off. Bella too. Carefully, they wade in.

SWEET SUE

Oh my god, it's freezing.

Lucinda playfully splashes Sweet Sue.

SWEET SUE

No. NO.

Bella splashes Sweet Sue from the other side.

SWEET SUE

No. Stop it. No splashing!

Sweet Sue playfully pushes Bella away, a little too hard. Bella tumbles over, and falls all the way in.

SWEET SUE

Bella! Bella?

Bella reemerges.

BELLA

My hip...

Ashen, Sweet Sue rushes as best she can, over to her.

SWEET SUE

Can you stand?

As Sweet Sue reaches down to help, Bella pulls Sweet Sue, head first, into the water next to her.

Bella stands, nearly tumbles backwards with LAUGHTER.

Lucinda can't believe it, Bella just pulled the oldest trick in the book on Sweet Sue, who reemerges looking like a drowned rat.

SWEET SUE

Your hip?

BELLA

It's fine.

SWEET SUE

Witch!

Lucinda's smile suddenly freezes.

LUCINDA

Someone's in *Lucy*!

They look up the hill and see another car parked in front of *Lucy*. A SKEEVY MAN is rummaging through the Lincoln.

LUCINDA

HEY! HEY! STOP!

SWEET SUE
GET AWAY FROM THE CAR!

Sweet Sue struggles up the hill as fast as she can.

SWEET SUE
STOP THE THIEF. STOP HIM!

The guy calmly finishes rifling through the car as he watches Sweet Sue trying to scale the hill. When he's finished, he rushes to his own car and speeds off.

Lucinda helps Bella up the hill, it's not easy.

When they finally reach *Lucy*, Sweet Sue is leaning against the car, clutching her an open empty handbag. Breathing hard.

SWEET SUE
He took...credit
cards...money...everything.

Lucinda finds her handbag. Open and empty also. She leans in and pulls out the ashtray. It's full of quarters.

LUCINDA
He missed the toll money.

Sweet Sue can't quite catch her breath and slides down the side of the car. She looks pale.

LUCINDA
Are you okay? Sweet Sue?

SWEET SUE
I... can't... breathe.

Bella doesn't what to do. Strokes Sweet Sue's arm.

LUCINDA
You need a doctor. Let's go.

SWEET SUE
No... I'll... be... fine... just...
need to... catch my... breath.

Bella and Lucinda get Sweet Sue into the front seat.

INT. RTE. 66 DINER - DAY

Rte. 66 memorabilia decorate the walls around Sweet Sue and Bella's booth. They have two coffees and a tea.

Sweet Sue is still short of breath. Her hair a wet mess.

Lucinda eyes her with concern.

SWEET SUE
Really. I'll be okay.

Bella is oddly upbeat.

BELLA
I'm hungry.

Lucinda hands Bella a unopened soup cracker bag left behind on the table.

Bella eats a cracker.

BELLA
Mmm.

SWEET SUE
How much gas do we have?

LUCINDA
Less than a quarter full.

SWEET SUE
How far will that get us?

LUCINDA
Halfway to LA from here.

BELLA
It'll be fine. Clark is waiting for me. We will dance.

Sweet Sue stares at Bella.

Bella eats a cracker.

BELLA
Mmm.

And another.

BELLA
Mmm.

Sweet Sue locks eyes with Lucinda.

SWEET SUE
That settles it. This trip is over.

Lucinda silently has to agree.

BELLA

No, no. I can't go back. Not yet.

SWEET SUE

How are you going to get to LA? Let
alone back to New York?

Bella fiddles with a cracker wrapper, until frustrated, Sweet
Sue grabs it from her.

SWEET SUE

Bella! How? Tell me.

BELLA

He's waiting for me.

SWEET SUE

Who is? Frank or Clark? Do you even
know? Clark Gable is dead! So is
your husband, Frank. No one is
waiting for you!

LUCINDA

Susan --

SWEET SUE

Do you even know where we are,
Bella? No? We're in Gallup,
Arizona, with 460 miles to LA and
\$3.75 in quarters.

Bella stubbornly meets Sweet Sue's glare.

BELLA

He is waiting for me!

SWEET SUE

THIS IS NOT A GODDAMN MOVIE, BELLA.
WE HAVE NO MONEY AND YOU ARE SLOWLY
LOSING YOUR MIND!

Diner guests turn to see what's going on.

Lucinda feels the heartache of both Sweet Sue and Bella.

LUCINDA

That's enough.

Silence.

Both Bella and Sweet Sue feel bad.

WAITRESS (O.S.)

More coffee?

A WAITRESS(43), a stout woman with exceptionally badly applied lipliner and pink eyeshadow hovers by their table.

LUCINDA
Sure, thanks.

The Waitress pours the coffee, but doesn't leave.

LUCINDA
I think we're good, thank you.

WAITRESS
Your eyeliner is perfect.

Lucinda looks up - *what a strange compliment.*

LUCINDA
Thanks.

WAITRESS
I pay attention when I go to the mall and they do these demos, you know? But my boyfriend says I do makeup like a damn retard.

Lucinda sees the eyebrows and kinda agrees.

LUCINDA
Well, retard is a bit harsh.

The Waitress shrugs, then turns to leave.

Lucinda gets an idea.

LUCINDA
Actually... I offer easy makeup sessions by the mall all afternoon.

Sweet Sue looks up: *you're what?*

LUCINDA
I was Miss Kentucky and Mary Kay's top selling makeup lady for three decades.

WAITRESS
For real?

LUCINDA
Yup. Just look for the pink Lincoln in the parking lot.

WAITRESS
Can I bring some of my girlfriends?

LUCINDA

Sure. Bring as many as you like.

The waitress walks away, pleased with the prospect.

SWEET SUE

What are you doing?

Lucinda smiles at Sweet Sue.

LUCINDA

We need money. *"Mary Kay - doesn't
age a day!"*

EXT. CORNER OF A PARKING LOT - LATER

One of Lucy's pink leather car seats is missing. Also, the spare tire on the trunk.

The tire is now on the ground with a rod attached to its middle, connecting to the car seat, creating a freestanding makeup chair in a quiet corner of the mall lot.

Sweet Sue sits in the chair with a makeup band holding her hair back. She's very uncomfortable. A wax strip is pressed on her upper lip.

A group of women, including the Waitress, watch intently.

LUCINDA

The wax is 100% organic. From
darling hardworking honeybees.

Sweet Sue really doesn't want to do this.

SWEET SUE

(whispers)

Is this really necessary?

LUCINDA

(whispers)

For cash. Yes.

(loudly)

Everyone, count to three.

Sweet Sue braces herself.

SWEET SUE/WOMEN

One. Two --

Lucinda yanks the strip off Sweet Sue's lip.

Sweet Sue is speechless, her eyes watering, her upper lip burning.

SWEET SUE
(through gritted teeth)
Holy mother of god, what happened
to three?

LUCINDA
(whispers)
Smile!

Sweet Sue does. Too much.

LUCINDA
(loudly)
How was that, ma'am?

Sweet Sue valiantly remembers her rehearsed line:

SWEET SUE
Mary Kay is the only way!

The crowd of women are impressed. APPLAUSE.

LUCINDA
My assistant will give you a time
slot. Next, tips to apply lipliner
correctly.
(to the Waitress)
I believe you're up?

MONTAGE:

- Lucinda works on numerous women. Show and tell.
- Bella helps as a beauty assistant.
- Before/after treatment PHOTOGRAPHS of various women.
- Sweet Sue counts a wad of money.
- A woman takes a PHOTO of Lucinda (posing like a starlet), Bella (laughing at Lucinda) and Sweet Sue (with a red upper lip, holding a fan of dollars) in front of *Lucy*.

EXT. WIGWAM VILLAGE MOTEL #6 - NIGHT

Lucy, with seat and tire back in their places, is parked in front of a large teepee shaped building -- one in a long row of many.

INT. WIGWAM VILLAGE MOTEL #6 - CONTINUOUS

Bella sleeps soundly under the conic ceiling.

Through the small round window in the tip of the ceiling,
clouds clear to reveal the moon.

Moonlight illuminates a troubled Sweet Sue and Lucinda. They
whisper in the dark.

LUCINDA

Tomorrow we'll be in Los Angeles.
Too late to turn back.

SWEET SUE

I know.

LUCINDA

Two definites: we don't have
tickets and Clark Gable has been
dead for 60 years.

SWEET SUE

Agreed. So what do we do?

LUCINDA

The main thing is that we made it
this far. She'll put on her new
dress and I'll do her up
beautifully.

SWEET SUE

Then what?

LUCINDA

I don't know.

They think. No solutions.

SWEET SUE

I feel ill.

LUCINDA

What, your heart again? I can --

SWEET SUE

No no no. Tomorrow! I'll feel
dizzy in the car and we'll have to
go to the emergency room!

LUCINDA

Not exactly PC, but it'll work.

SWEET SUE

I've never lied to her before.

The women lie back in the dark. Worried.

EXT. GRAUMAN'S THEATER IN LA - MORNING

Work men roll out a long red carpet from the theater entrance to the sidewalk. Barricades are placed on either side of the long carpet.

MONTAGE:

- Cool LA shots, changing from daylight to evening.

EXT. CHINESE THEATER IN LA - EVENING

A large fan crowd is gathering behind the barriers on one side of the red carpet. On the other, media and press.

It's NOISY and busy with activity.

INT. STARBUCKS - EVENING

Alone at a table, Sweet Sue fidgets nervously until Lucinda emerges from the restroom with a proud smile.

LUCINDA

Come on out, Hon.

Sweet Sue turns to watch. Then --

Bella steps out in Anthony's dress: floor-length, heavy silk, sparkling with tasteful rhinestones. It drapes around her surprisingly great figure.

Her long hair has been arranged Grace Kelly style. Her makeup beautifully accentuates her bone structure and green eyes. Stunning.

Sweet Sue is blown away. Tears up.

SWEET SUE

Oh, Bella. Look at you.

Even the Starbucks personnel take an impressed peek.

Bella beams.

Lucinda and Sweet Sue share a pained glance.

EXT. RED CARPET, SPECTATOR AREA - EVENING

MUSIC blares from loudspeakers hidden in the set pieces.

A smarmy tuxedo'ed ANNOUNCER, a model-looking guy, makes glib small talk and star arrival-reports in his microphone.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
Ladies and Gentlemen, my basic
instinct tells me: Sharon Stone.

The crowd CHEER.

Spotlights playfully wash over the crowds, and in the very back -- Apple, lifted high aloft, her foot in Stanley's lifted "horseshoe" hands, scanning the scene.

STANLEY
Do you see her?

APPLE
Yes! She's kissing a man. No wait,
a woman!

STANLEY
Mom?

APPLE
No. Sharon Stone.

STANLEY
Just look for Grandma, please!

EXT. HOLLYWOOD BOULEWARD, LA - EVENING

Lucy, with her top down, idles in the heavy traffic amidst a sea of black limousines.

Bella, in the back, enjoys the warm evening breeze, blissfully unaware of the frantic discussion in the front.

LUCINDA
Right or left? Which lane?

SWEET SUE
Get into the left. We'll drive
right by. Go. Go.

LUCINDA
Are you sure?

Cars HONK at them from behind.

SWEET SUE
Just stay to the left. We'll be
fine. Get into the left lane.

LUCINDA
I can't! It looks like the whole
street is blocked off.

More HONKS.

SWEET SUE
Just GO!

Lucinda attempts to change lanes, but it's impossible. She
blocks the right lane with *Lucy*.

A police officer on a motorcycle quickly pulls up.

POLICE OFFICER
You have to move along.

LUCINDA
Yes, Officer, I'm trying to change
lanes.

BELLA
She doesn't have a license.

Bella smiles, very friendly like.

Sweet Sue and Lucinda are shocked.

The police officer indicates his helmet for not hearing well.

POLICE OFFICER
What was that?

SWEET SUE
Nothing!

BELLA
I said, she doesn't have a license.

Lucinda LAUGHS loudly, too loudly. Sweet Sue too.

SWEET SUE
Oh, Bella. She's joking.

POLICE OFFICER
Pull over!

BELLA
THERE!

Bella points to Grauman's Chinese theater ahead.

POLICE OFFICER
Oh, you're here for the premiere?

LUCINDA
Yes. Yes, we are, Officer. But
we're in the wrong lane!

The police officer glances at Bella. Gets it.

POLICE OFFICER
No, no, this is correct. Just go
straight ahead.

LUCINDA
Really? Thank you, Officer.

Lucinda speeds forward, relieved.

EXT. RED CARPET - EVENING

As a limousine pulls away, *Lucy* appears with Bella sitting up on the trunk, feet on the backseat. Like a queen.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
Who do we have here?

The crowd's CHEER and APPLAUSE SURGES around Stanley. Apple is still being lifted by her Dad, keeping an eye out.

STANLEY
What now? Tell me what you see.

Apple can't believe her eyes!

APPLE
OMG! I SEE GRAN!

The Announcer checks his notes - *who the hell is this?*

ANNOUNCER
Ladies and Gentlemen, arriving in
the pink Lincoln Continental is..?

Bella admires the red carpet and the setting. Loves it.

In the front, Lucinda and Sweet Sue are panicking.

LUCINDA
THIS IS FOR CELEBRITY GUESTS! THE
OFFICER THOUGHT BELLA WAS A MOVIE
STAR! WE'RE IN THE WRONG LANE!!

SWEET SUE
 STAY CALM! STAY CALM! PULL OUT!
 PULL OUT! LEFT LANE!!

Lucy is blocked in. Indicator on. No use.

LUCINDA
 WHERE? I CAN'T GET OUT.

The Security Guards are confused too. The Lincoln is not on the security list and yet looks like it should be.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
 Well, we have a mystery guest here.

The Announcer LAUGHS awkwardly to hide his embarrassment, and hisses angrily into his headset:

ANNOUNCER
 Who the fuck is that? I need info
 stat!

He stalls for time.

ANNOUNCER
 What a great evening, huh? Can we
 hear a cheer from the crowd?

The crowd CHEER.

Lucy arrives at the red carpet celebrity drop off. Lucinda and Sweet Sue are mortified.

SECURITY OFFICER
 Your invite, please.

LUCINDA
 Yes...

Desperate, Lucinda looks at Sweet Sue.

SWEET SUE
 Yes. Yes. One moment.

Sweet Sue pretends to search the glove compartment.

EXT. RED CARPET AREA - EVENING

Stanley has climbed onto a planter next to Apple. He spots his mother.

STANLEY
 Oh...my...God!

APPLE
I know, right?! Awesome!

The Announcer is desperate for things to say.

ANNOUNCER
Mystery lady, give us a wave! Yes,
you!

Bella realizes he's referring to her. She waves to the crowd.

The crowd CHEER.

SECURITY OFFICER
Does the lady have a ticket or not?

Lucinda stalls for time.

LUCINDA
First of all, she's no lady, she's
a girl.

Security guard is not smiling.

LUCINDA
Secondly, she... eh... she was
Clark Gable's girlfriend!

Lucinda is proud of her improvised lie.

SECURITY OFFICER
Who?

LUCINDA
Clark Gable?

SECURITY OFFICER
Never heard of him.

She points to the large poster of "***Gone with the Wind.***"

SECURITY OFFICER
Sorry. I can't let her in if she
doesn't have a ticket. Move on.

He indicates to security the car needs to move.

A huge limo pulls up behind Lucy.

SWEET SUE
No, please, sir --

ANNOUNCER

Ladies and gentlemen, now arriving
is none other than Ryan Reynolds!
Or, from the upcoming feature
"Tears of Tara", should I say mr.
Clark Gable?

The crowd erupt in cheers, cameras flash.

Stanley and Apple manage to push their way to the
barricades, halfway up the red carpet.

SECURITY OFFICER

(to Lucinda)

You have to move your car, NOW!

The Security Officer motions for assistance.

SWEET SUE

Listen to me, please...

RYAN REYNOLDS jumps out of the limo behind them. He has
attempted to look exactly like Clark Gable. White shirt,
pencil mustache, male breaches.

Female fans SHRIEK and SCREAM as Ryan strikes a pose.

Bella turns to the noise behind her and amazed --

BELLA

Clark! Susan, I told you!

Bella points.

Flustered, Sweet Sue follows her eye-line. Then gets a wild
idea.

Quickly, she jumps out of *Lucy*.

LUCINDA

Susan? What are you doing?

SECURITY OFFICER

Ma'am, get back in the car!

Sweet Sue makes her way back to Ryan Reynolds.

SWEET SUE

Mr. Reynolds. MR. REYNOLDS!

Amused, Ryan Reynolds focuses on Sweet Sue. He holds up a
reassuring hand to the Officer: *It's OK.*

RYAN REYNOLDS

Who?

Milking the moment, Ryan Reynolds dramatically SHUSHES the crowd. Sweet Sue has no clue what he's doing.

SWEET SUE

You, Mr. Reynolds, I need to ask --

RYAN REYNOLDS

Who?

The crowd LAUGHS as he puts a hand behind his ear. They love the "show."

Sweet Sue is totally bewildered.

SWEET SUE

Ryan? Reynolds? I don't know what you mean.

BELLA

Susan!

Sweet Sue looks back at Bella.

BELLA

Don't you see who it is?

It dawns on Sweet Sue what's going on.

SWEET SUE

Mr. Gable?

Ryan Reynolds bows obligingly. APPLAUSE from the crowd.

Sweet Sue plays along.

SWEET SUE

Please, "Mr. Gable", I need your help.

RYAN REYNOLDS

A damsel in distress. My specialty.

LAUGHS from the crowd.

RYAN REYNOLDS

What can I do for you?

Uncomfortably, Sweet Sue realizes all eyes are fixed on her. However, for Bella, she'd do anything.

Head held high, Sweet Sue strides over to Ryan Reynolds. To his surprise, she leans in and whispers in his ear.

He looks over at Bella. Nods.

When Sweet Sue steps aside, Ryan Reynolds gallantly struts over to the pink Lincoln and extends his hand to Bella.

RYAN REYNOLDS

Miss Bella?

Bella is calm but elated at the same time.

BELLA

Mr. Gable.

She places her hand in his and carefully steps out of *Lucy*, leaving her notebook behind in the back seat.

Supported by Ryan Reynold, Bella glides up the red carpet.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

Now, if this isn't time travel
back to the original premiere of
1939, I don't know what is.

With the old music, and the decor, it really is like stepping back in time.

Sweet Sue, Lucinda, Stanley and Apple couldn't be prouder.

The press photographers are going nuts. Flashes.

RYAN REYNOLDS

Care to dance?

BELLA

I'd love to.

Bella accepts his hand, and together, they dance a slow waltz to the delight of the hushed crowd.

EXT. LOEWS THEATER IN ATLANTA - 1939

BLACK AND WHITE FLASHBACK

Clark Gable waltzes with the nine year old Bella.

It's magical.

The crowd watches in awe. Bella's mother too, thrilled.

Little Bella stops dancing as she spots Stanley in the crowd.

The black and white changes into color.

END OF FLASHBACK

EXT. RED CARPET - AS BEFORE

Bella is happily surprised to see her "husband" in the crowd.

BELLA

Frank?

Stanley waves from the crowd.

STANLEY

Stanley, Mom. Your son.

Bella is confused for a second, then looks around, puzzled to be where she is. Panics for a second --

STANLEY

Mom. Mom? It's okay. Come to me.

Bella calms down and walks over to her son leaving a bewildered Ryan Reynolds behind.

RYAN REYNOLDS

Miss Bella, you can be my guest if you like --

But Bella has already walked off, security opening the barricades for her to get through.

Ryan Reynolds shrugs, waves to the crowd and continues up the red carpet.

ANNOUNCER (O.C.)

Ladies and Gentlemen, just arriving is Anne Hathaway, or should I say, Vivien Leigh?

The crowd CHEER.

Bella stops Stanley.

BELLA

You know it was always you, Frank.

Stanley realizes and accepts in that moment that this woman who has raised him, fed him, cared for him, is mentally slipping away and there's nothing he can do to stop it.

STANLEY

I know, Mom. I know.

Stanley offers his arm and Bella accepts it. The crowd makes room for them to leave.

EXT. VENICE BEACH, LA - NIGHT

The near-full moon is reflected in *Lucy's* hood.

Sweet Sue, Bella and Lucinda sit on a bench over-looking the Pacific ocean, resting.

LUCINDA

Well, that was spectacular.

SWEET SUE

And Bella, you were right. Clark was waiting for you.

Bella nods.

APPLE

Dad's getting ice cream for everyone. You want to come, Gran?

BELLA

I'm a little tired. Maybe Aunt Susan or Lucinda will help you?

Apple looks at Sweet Sue and Lucinda.

APPLE

You want to?

LUCINDA

I'll go.

Lucinda extends her hand. Apple takes it.

LUCINDA

Want to come? Susan?

Sweet Sue smiles.

SWEET SUE

Sweet Sue.

Lucinda smiles.

LUCINDA

Sweet Sue. Want to come?

Sweet Sue is exhausted. Pale.

SWEET SUE
I'll stay with Bella.

LUCINDA
What flavor would you like?

SWEET SUE
I trust you.

LUCINDA
And I like you.

BELLA
See? You're likable.

Sweet Sue nods. She locks eyes with Lucinda. Mutual respect.
Lucinda turns to Apple.

LUCINDA
None of that low-fat stuff, okay?

Apple grins as the two walk away, chatting.

Sweet Sue and Bella are left alone on the bench.

SWEET SUE
God help her.

BELLA
Which one?

They LAUGH.

Bella affectionately takes Sweet Sue's hand and squeezes it.

BELLA
Thank you. For this. For all of it.

Sweet Sue squeezes Bella's hand back. They share a glance.

SWEET SUE
What day is it?

BELLA
Today.

SWEET SUE AND BELLA
My favorite day.

Sweet Sue puts her head on Bella's shoulder. A rare soft gesture from her.

SWEET SUE
Where to next, Sundance?

As the waves break on the shore, Bella and Sweet Sue rest.

EXT. ICE CREAM VENDOR - NIGHT

Lucinda and Apple struggle to balance five ice cream cones.

Stanley comes to their rescue and grabs one. They make their way back to the elderly ladies on the bench, chatting and laughing.

EXT. VENICE BEACH, LA - NIGHT

Bella's mouth is open, her head back against the bench. She doesn't appear to be breathing.

Sweet Sue's head is slumped on Bella's shoulder.

They still hold hands.

At first Lucinda, Apple and Stanley enjoy the sight of the two old women snoozing, but then sense something is wrong.

STANLEY

Mom?

Bella doesn't respond.

STANLEY

MOM?

Nothing.

Worried, Stanley touches Bella's shoulder --

and she wakes up with a big yawn.

Relief.

BELLA

We just took a little nap. Sweet
Sue, dear? Your ice cream is here.

Bella pats Sweet Sue's hand but as she does, Sweet Sue's arm drops down, lifeless.

Everything stops.

Stanley rushes around to check for a pulse. His face says it all.

Lucinda covers her mouth in shock.

Bella doesn't move.

BELLA

Oh, no.

Silence, apart from the LAPPING WAVES.

STANLEY

I'll call 911.

Apple bursts into tears.

STANLEY

Come on, sweetie. Let's make sure
they can find us.

Apple takes her Dad's hand and they walk away.

Lucinda sits on the bench on the other side of Sweet Sue.

Together, they gaze at the moonlit ocean.

Bella gently strokes Sweet Sue's hand.

BELLA

It's so peaceful.

Lucinda quietly weeps.

Bella too. For the loss of a friend. A journey's end.

BELLA

Tomorrow's another day.
(whispers)
Sweet dreams, my dear.

EXT. HIGH ABOVE VENICE BEACH - CONTINUOUS

Bella, Lucinda and Sweet Sue are on the bench far below.

Lucy is parked nearby.

The moon is reflected on the ocean as the flashing lights of
ambulances and police arrive.

INT. ASSISTED LIVING COMPLEX, HALLWAY, NEW YORK - DAYS LATER

An elevator opens and an exhausted Lucinda drags out her
large suitcase and makeup case.

She schleps it down the hallway, when she spots a huge bouquet of flowers in a vase by her door.

Then behind her, sitting in the stairwell --

ROGER

I missed you, Beautiful.

Lucinda freezes. Turns.

Roger looks great. Contrite. Humble.

ROGER

I thought I didn't need you, but I realize I do. I'm so sorry.

LUCINDA

You are?

And with that, Roger drops to a knee and holds out a ring.

ROGER

Marry me.

LUCINDA

Oh, Roger. You don't know how much this means to me.

ROGER

I think I do.

Lucinda smiles, grabs his hand.

LUCINDA

A week ago I'd have said yes with open arms.

Roger is confused.

LUCINDA

Now, I will absolutely not marry you. Just know, I really appreciate your offer.

(indicates the flowers)

And the flowers.

Roger gets up. Instantly wounded.

ROGER

You're making a big mistake.

LUCINDA

Goodbye, Roger. And thank you.

Roger takes the stairs down.

Lucinda smiles to herself as she unlocks her door.

EXT. PACIFIC GARDENS NURSING HOME, DAY - **6 MONTHS LATER**

Snow covers the ground and frost whiten the trees.

Stanley parks the car and Apple jumps out excitedly, her breath visible in the frigid air.

APPLE

Aunt Lucinda!

Lucinda warmly holds her arms out. They hug.

STANLEY

You are coming for dinner, right?

LUCINDA

Have I missed a Saturday yet?

INT. PACIFIC GARDENS NURSING HOME, BELLA'S ROOM - DAY

The formerly drab room has been made cosy and warm with personal things and paintings.

Bella is in a wheelchair facing the window dressed in a thick woolen coat, fur hat and gloves.

STANLEY (O.S.)

Hi Mom.

Bella, expressionless, looks up at her son as he kisses her cheek.

STANLEY

It's Stanley, your son.

Bella's eyes run over Apple and Lucinda.

APPLE

I'm Apple, your granddaughter.

Lucinda reassuringly brushes a hand over Bella's head.

LUCINDA

Hi, sweetheart, I'm Lucinda. I do your hair twice a week, remember?

No response.

STANLEY
Are you ready, mom?

Bella throws out her arms as if to say: *What do you think?*

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Snow has started to fall.

Stanley is behind Bella's wheelchair. Next to them, Lucinda holds Apple's hand.

Solemnly, they all stare at a large headstone:

*Susan "Sweet Sue" Harris 1939-2019
Life is what you make it.*

Bella holds out a bunch of tulips for Stanley. Next to a dried wreath with two small rainbow flags, he exchanges dead flowers in a vase for the fresh ones.

From her bag, Lucinda shows a framed photo to Bella.

Expressionless, Bella studies the photo before looking up at the snow. She leans her head back and opens her mouth trying to catch snowflakes on her tongue.

Apple joins her attempts.

By the headstone, Lucinda places the framed PHOTO:

From the makeup session in the parking lot, Lucinda (poses as a starlet), Bella (laughs at Lucinda) and Sweet Sue (with a red upper lip, holds a fan of dollars) in front of *Lucy*.

LUCINDA
You got it exactly right, Sweet
Sue. Life is what you make it.
Happy Birthday, hon.

MUSIC - (Talk Talk's: Life Is What You Make It.)

THE END

During credits:

MONTAGE of snapshots of the 3 women in various moments throughout their journey.