

THE REAL WORLD

A.K.A.

DON'T TELL MOM THE BABYSITTER'S DEAD

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REVISED
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FADE IN:

1. EXT. CRANDELL FAMILY TWO-STORY FARM HOUSE - MORNING

1.

An old, beat-up Volvo station wagon is parked in the driveway of the run-down house, located in a remote suburb. The front lawn is months overgrown, as are the trees and hedges. Sunbathing on a plastic chaise lounge is ZACH: 12 years old, gawmier than he'd like to admit, wearing shades and a Walkman, a rake in his hand.

2. INT. CRANDELL HOUSE - MORNING

2.

The legs of a late 30ish WOMAN ascend a carpeted staircase. The feet, in fuzzy animal bedroom slippers, move at an almost sinister pace, calculatingly, with SINISTER MUSIC to match. They step over assorted toys. The slippers stop outside a door, and a hand quietly reaches for the doorknob.

3. INT. KENNY'S ROOM - MORNING

3.

A disaster area of assorted junk, dirty dishes, dirty laundry, and marijuana paraphernalia. KENNY (15), wearing a torn Guns N' Roses T-shirt, is fast asleep on a mattress on the floor, a sandwich in his hand. His STEREO BLASTS a HEAVY METAL RADIO STATION. He has long, greasy brown hair; his high-top sneakers are unlaced, but still on his feet. Posters of Heavy Metal bands, big-boobed babes in skimpy bikinis, and "stoner culture" cover the walls.

Forcefully, the door is pushed open. MRS. CRANDELL (MOM) bursts in. She has dirty blond hair and bags under her eyes. She's attractive but harried, harassed, hassled.

MOM

All right, get up! You've had fourteen-and-a-half hours of sleep. I thought you were in a coma.

KENNY

It's summer vacation.

MOM

You're a kid. You're always on vacation. Get up. Mow the lawn. Now!

KENNY

Make Zach do it.

MOM

Zach's out front raking leaves.

KENNY

Make Melissa do it.

MOM

She's barely ten years old. You want me to trust her with a power mower?

KENNY

She's a butch kid. Just show her how to turn it on.

MOM

(walking out; calling down the hall)
Sue Ellen? Swell?!

No response. She returns to Kenny's room.

MOM (cont'd)

(exasperated)
Where's Swell?

4. EXT. MELROSE AVENUE - LOS ANGELES - DAY

4.

A cross-section of L.A. style, all colors, shapes, and sizes: PUNK ROCKERS with black leather and Mohawks, BOHEMIAN ARTISTS, BEVERLY HILLS PRINCESSES, and WOULD-BE ROCK 'N ROLLERS crowd the hip and trendy shopping district. A Rastafarian STREET MUSICIAN PLAYS BONGOS. HOMELESS PEOPLE watch the activity, some panhandling. TEEN-AGED GIRLS loaded with shopping bags eat designer ice cream. Expensive and exotic cars HONK and weave their way through traffic.

5. INT. TRENDY THRIFT SHOP - MELROSE AVENUE - DAY

5.

Mom's daughter, SUE ELLEN (nicknamed "SWELL"), 17 years old, expertly appraises an array of shirts, tossing possibilities aside to her friend. She's a beautiful girl with long blond hair; she wears a combination of thrift shop "finds" in funky colors, and unique modern accessories; it's a style all her own that really works.

Her friend, NICOLE -- diamond earrings, too much make-up, expensively dressed -- catches Swell's selections, trying desperately to keep up with Swell's pace. Swell's four other GIRLFRIENDS browse.

SWELL

So, are you guys excited?

NICOLE

Yeah, I guess. It's just Europe. It's just my parents getting rid of me for two months.

GIRLFRIEND #1 (BECKY)

My mom says it's gonna be a real growing experience for us.

GIRLFRIEND #2 (JILL)

Swell, when's your mom leaving for Australia?

SWELL

In about an hour-and-a-half. I can't wait. I'm getting rid of her for two months.

Girlfriend #3 comes out of a dressing room and looks in the mirror, unsure about the blouse she's trying on.

NICOLE

How come she can afford to go to Australia but can't afford to send you to Europe for graduation?

GIRLFRIEND #3 (TESS)

Yeah, aren't you pissed you can't go?

SWELL

Her boyfriend's paying for it. He wants her to see his sheep ranch... I don't care...she needs the "growing experience" more than I do.

Swell effortlessly adjusts the new blouse on Girlfriend #3 -- cuffs the sleeves, turns up the collar, hands her a scarf to jazz it up -- now the blouse looks stylish.

GIRLFRIEND #4 (KATRINA)

She leaving you guys all alone? What about the kids?

SWELL

(shrugging)

She left me in charge. I'll feed and water them. What's to do?

NICOLE

Don't you think your mom should get a babysitter? Kids are such a pain in the ass.

SWELL

I'll handle it. There's no way I'm having some sitter around. Kenny'll watch Zach. Melissa'll watch Walter. I'll have my mom's car. I can go to the beach...stay out all night if I want to. I won't have to do anything. I'm a free woman.

NICOLE

God, that's great. Your summer's made.

6. INT. CRANDELL HOUSE - DAY

6.

Mom drags a suitcase and garment bag through the cluttered living

(blue)

room: toys, clothing, dirty dishes, magazines everywhere. WALTER, 6 years old, in pajamas, sits on the couch watching HOLLYWOOD SQUARES * on an antiquated color television with lousy reception.

WALTER

(shouting at T.V.)

Agree! Agree!

(calling)

Mommy? Who d'you think's sitting in the Secret Square? *

MOM

(preoccupied)

Not now, Walter.

The T.V. jumps; Walter BANGS on it.

7. INT. CRANDELL KITCHEN - DAY

7.

Unwashed dishes, old newspapers, piles of junk mail, assorted toys litter the room. A handmade sign hangs above the kitchen table: "DON'T FEED THE DOG PEOPLE FOOD!" The table is set for lunch: a bowl of cereal, a sandwich, and Chef Boyardee Ravioli.

Mom enters, followed by Elvis the family mutt, walks out onto the porch steps, where her 10-year-old daughter, MELISSA, is frying insects with a magnifying glass and pouring salt on snails. Melissa is a tomboy in ripped, grungy clothes. The backyard is a jungle of thick, high weeds.

MOM

Melissa! Lunch, honey! Come on!

Mom snaps open a briefcase, removes traveler's cheques and a passport from the mass of paperwork, glares at the papers in disgust, then smiles, slams the briefcase shut.

MOM (cont'd)

(calling)

Melissa! Right now! And Elvis needs fresh water!

Melissa ignores her. Zach and Walter enter the kitchen. Zach sneaks a ten dollar bill from Mom's purse.

MOM (cont'd)

Zach! Put it back! Right now! If you need money, ask me first!

ZACH

Okay. Mom, can I have ten bucks?

MOM

Forget it!

7A. EXT. BACKYARD

7A. *

Mom comes out on the porch, hands on hips, glares at Melissa, who sighs and heads toward the house. *

MELISSA
How come you gotta go?

MOM
(calmly)
Because. I've been having a very rough
thirty-seven years and I need a break.

MELISSA
You swore you'd sign me up for baseball.

MOM
Little League will be there next year.

MELISSA
So will Australia. I wish Dad was around.

MOM
No, you don't.

7B. INT. KITCHEN

7B. *

Zach and Walter are eating lunch. Mom enters, followed by Melissa. *

ZACH
Mom, Cynthia's dad's gonna drop her
off tonight. Can we sit in your car
and listen to the crickets under the
moonlight?

MOM
(a beat)
Sure, honey.

ZACH
(warning Melissa)
And don't try to scare Cynthia. She's
already afraid of you.
(to Mom)
Last time, Melissa was in her Friday
the 13th phase and stalked us all night
with a butcher knife.

MELISSA
It was a spatula!

Kenny enters in the same clothes, grabs a bag of Fritos from the
pantry.

MOM
Kenny, did you turn the air conditioner on?

*

KENNY
I was hot.

MOM
(adjusting thermostat)
I want this kept at seventy-six. And
turn off the lights when you're not
upstairs. And what about the lawn?

KENNY
(walking out)
I gotta go.

8. EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

8.

Kenny exits the house, heads to a pick up truck full of scruffy
HEAVY METAL GUYS; Swell and her Girlfriends swing into the driveway.

MOM
(at front door; ominously)
Kenny!

KENNY
(to Swell)
Stay away from her. She's in one of
her David Horowitz moods. Hey, Nicole.

Nicole begrudgingly nods at him.

SWELL
(to Girlfriends)
Bye, guys! Nicole, call me later!

GIRLFRIENDS
(leaving)
Bye! Enjoy your freedom!

HEAVY METAL BUDDY (LIZARD)
Hey, Swell. Have my baby.

Swell ignores him, heads toward the house.

MOM
(to Swell)
Why did you leave your dishes in the
sink for me?

SWELL
God, you take these things so personally.
The dishwasher's full, okay?

MOM

So empty it.

SWELL

(entering house)

That's Kenny's job.

Kenny and his Buddies back out of the driveway.

MOM

(shouting)

Kenny! Get back here! Right now!!!

KENNY

(calling)

I'll do it later. I promise.

The pick-up truck SKIDS OFF, leaving Mom in the distance.

HEAVY METAL BUDDY (HELL HOUND)

Hey, Scruff, isn't your mom like,
leaving today for, like, months?

KENNY

(realizing)

Oh, shit, that's right.

(standing, yelling back)

Bye, Mom. Have a blast.

(to his Buddies)

Fuckin' A, man!

9. INT. KITCHEN - DAY

9.

Zach, Melissa, and Walter are eating at the kitchen table. Walter digs in the bottom of the cereal box for the prize, spilling cereal on the floor. Swell enters, goes through the mail.

WALTER

Hi, Swell.

Swell ignores him. Mom walks in, starts to do the dishes.

MOM

Well, as usual your brother's proven
he's not the least bit involved with
this family.

SWELL

Relax, Mom. I'll keep him in line.

(holding up card)

Have you seen his report card? He got
all D's. You yell at him?

MOM

I couldn't. It's an improvement.

10. EXT. HOUSE - DAY

10.

A vintage black Buick pulls into the driveway. A white-haired, ancient woman, LIL STURAK, climbs out, groaning loudly. She's built like a tank, with a sweater over her broad shoulders, support hose, white earth shoes. An enormous trunk rests in the back seat. Lil stands there a moment, checks out the run-down house.

11. INT. KITCHEN - DAY

11.

ZACH

So, Mom, just running away from home?
Shirking that parental responsibility,
huh?

MOM

(nervous)
Oh...I'm sure everything'll be taken
care of.

SWELL

Yeah. Relax, Mom. Everything'll be
great when you're gone.

The DOORBELL RINGS.

12. INT. ENTRANCE HALL - DAY

12.

Swell opens the door to reveal Lil Sturak.

LIL

(grandmotherly)
Hello, dear. I'm Mrs. Sturak. I'm the
babysitter.

SWELL

(a beat)
What?

13. EXT. CRANDELL HOUSE - DAY

13.

A SuperShuttle van is parked in the driveway, the ENGINE RUNNING. Swell is planted on the plastic chaise lounge, sunglasses on, smoking a cigarette. Zach lies on the lawn next to her. Melissa watches from a tree. Walter sits in the porch swing.

MOM

(apprehensive; to Swell)
She seems very nice, right? And she
has lots of experience....

SWELL

Of course she does! She's two-hundred
years old!

MELISSA

Babysitters suck!

Lil comes out of the house with a yarn bag, sits on the porch steps, crocheting a doily.

MOM

(approaching Lil)

Mrs. Sturak, you know, there are five children. Do you think you can handle the job?

LIL

Well, of course I can. My family is all gone now. Taking care of other's little ones is my whole life.

MOM

The older ones, Swell and Kenny, are gonna try to walk all over you, but don't let them. They have an eleven o'clock curfew, they have chores, and they have to let you know where they are at all times.

LIL

Oh, don't you worry.

MOM

Well....

(handing Lil manila envelope)

Okay, I didn't have a chance to get to the store, but there's plenty of money in here for groceries, and some spending money for the kids. There's a list of instructions, and the phone number in Australia, just in case. Oh, and here are the keys to my car. If Swell doesn't behave, she doesn't drive.

LIL

(jangling keys)

Oh, I'm sure she'll be a little angel. Have a lovely time.

MOM

Thanks.

(a beat)

Walter! Come say good-bye, honey.
Melissa, want to come down from there?

MELISSA

No.

MOM

Get down from there.

Melissa climbs down. Melissa and Walter hug and kiss Mom.

MOM (cont'd)

Swell? Zach?

Zach kisses Mom. Swell doesn't budge. Mom walks over.

SWELL

I can't believe you're doing this to me. A babysitter?!

MOM

God, you take these things so personally.

Swell glares at her.

MOM (cont'd)

Honey, I couldn't leave you kids all alone. You're not capable of running the show while I'm gone. You're not an adult yet. And put out that cigarette!

Swell refuses to respond.

MOM (cont'd)

I know we've been over this a thousand times, but please don't do anything you know I'd be against. Wait until I get back, okay? And stay out of my closet. And no parties. Period. I don't want to come home and hear you've given this nice old lady a hard time, okay?

SWELL

You're gonna miss your flight.

MOM

Just promise me you'll go register at City College for fall, okay?

SWELL

(sore subject)

I haven't decided on that yet.

MOM

(kissing Swell)

Bye, everybody. I'll miss you.

WALTER

Will you call us every day?

MOM

Well, see, honey, this is Mommy's vacation. Mrs. Sturak knows where to reach me.

She boards the van, leaves, looking back nervously. The kids and Lil Sturak watch them go. As soon as the van is out of sight:

LIL

(BLOWING WHISTLE)

All right, you little maggots! Time to go over the rules! *

The kids look at each other, confused. This grandmotherly woman is now acting like a prison matron.

SWELL

(lowering sunglasses)

Excuse me? Are you serious?

LIL

You can't run a tight ship without rules. Now move!

Intimidated, Zach, Melissa, and Walter run inside.

SWELL

Look, lady, I don't know what your deal is, but you're not here to order us around.

LIL

I've had about enough lip from you, Missy! Cooperate or I'll make your summer a living hell!

Lil takes the cigarette out of Swell's mouth, stamps it out. Lil heads toward the house, kicking Elvis out of the way.

14. INT. CRANDELL LIVING ROOM - EARLY EVENING

14.

Walter is watching WIN. LOSE, OR DRAW; the picture jumps. Lil marches in with a clipboard, SNAPS off the T.V.. Walter is outraged. *

LIL

T.V. rots your brains.

She yanks the plug from the wall, stashes it on a high shelf, hands Walter volume "A" of the Encyclopedia Britannica.

LIL (cont'd)

Go to your room. I expect a full report tomorrow on the life of the aardvark!

15. EXT. DRIVEWAY-LATER - NIGHT

15.

Zach and his girlfriend CYNTHIA, a pretty 11-year-old, are sitting in the front seat of Mom's Volvo station wagon.

16. EXT.-DRIVEWAY - VOLVO - NIGHT

16.

ZACH

You're my Moon Goddess, Cynthia.

Lil BANGS ON THE WINDSHIELD.

LIL

Time for little boys to be in bed!

ZACH

(humiliated)

Can't you see I'm in the middle of a date?!

Lil opens Cynthia's door, yanks her out.

LIL

And time for little trollops to go home!

Cynthia, terrified, runs down the driveway. Lil grabs Zach by the ear, pulls him into the house.

ZACH

(calling to Cynthia)

I'll call you later, darling!

*

17. INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY-LATER - NIGHT

17.

Lil exits Melissa's bedroom.

LIL

(barking back to Melissa)

...time for little girls to dress like little girls! Sugar and spice!

As Lil closes the door, behind her back Melissa, wearing a big pink bow in her hair, flips her off.

18. INT. KENNY'S ROOM - NIGHT

18.

Kenny isn't there. Lil barges in, but the sight of this pig sty/pot den shocks her out of patrol mode. She lets out a choked gasp of horror, clutches her chest, grabs the doorway for support.

19. INT. SWELL'S ROOM-LATER - NIGHT

19.

Clothes, accessories, cassettes, Vogue magazines, shoes, are everywhere. Some stuffed animals, remnants from childhood, are on the bed. An ashtray on the floor is overflowing with cigarette butts.

A sewing machine is set up in the corner of the room, fabric still in it, threads hanging out. A SINEAD O'CONNOR CASSETTE plays. Swell is on the phone, smoking, one eye on a Vogue; she's doodling fashion improvements on an ad.

SWELL

(into phone)

...God is definitely pissed off at me.
Yeah, I know. I mean, I have no money,
no boyfriend, you guys'll be in Europe
all summer, and my mom left us with
this deranged Mary Poppins....

Zach, Melissa, and Walter KNOCK and enter. They all wear "Hello My Name Is" name tags. Melissa is wearing a frilly pink party dress, with a big pink bow in her hair.

MELISSA

We gotta get rid of the old lady.

SWELL

(into phone)

Wait...Nicole, hang on.

(to kids)

Why are you wearing name tags??

WALTER

Says she has trouble remembering.

MELISSA

(ripping tag off)

We're supposed to wear them at all
times. And she's getting us up at the
butt crack of dawn to "tidy up" the
garage!

ZACH

(deadpan)

"Idle hands are the devil's handmaiden."

SWELL

(into phone)

I'll call you back.

(hangs up)

ZACH

I don't think I can live like this.

SWELL

(putting out cigarette)

Okay. I'll talk to her. It's time
we let her know the rules.

ZACH

Yeah, we outnumber her!

MELISSA

Let's kick some ass!

20. INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

20. *

Swell and the kids pass through on the way to the guest bedroom. A large chart is set up on an easel: "LIL STURAK CHORE SCHEDULE," listing all the kids' names, duties, and responsibilities from sunrise to sunset. Swell shakes her head at it. Melissa kicks a leg of the easel -- it collapses.

21. INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

21.

Swell and the kids stand outside the guest bedroom. Swell KNOCKS loudly. No answer. Swell barges in alone, SLAMS the door.

22. INT. GUEST BEDROOM - NIGHT

22.

Lil is sitting in a chair, her doily and crochet hook in hand. Swell enters, determined.

SWELL

Okay, look, Mrs. Sturak, whether you think you can push us around or not, we decided we're not gonna take any more of your crap. First of all--

Swell stops, looks a little more closely at Lil; her mouth is hanging open slightly, and she's not breathing.

SWELL (cont'd)

Mrs. Sturak? Lil?

Swell nudges her; Lil tips over, lands with a loud THUD. Dead.

23. INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

23.

Swell walks out of the guest bedroom.

ZACH

Well? You lay down the law?

SWELL

Uh...yeah...she won't bother us anymore.

The front door opens and SLAMS.

24. INT. CRANDELL LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

24.

Kenny bounds up the stairs with a couple of big, brown grocery bags.

25. INT. KENNY'S ROOM - NIGHT

25.

Kenny removes potted marijuana plants from the grocery bags, carefully sets them up on his window sill. Swell walks in.

KENNY

Hey! Get out!

SWELL

Kenny, come downstairs. You're not gonna believe this....

26. INT. GUEST BEDROOM - NIGHT

26.

Swell, Kenny, Zach, Melissa, and Walter stand looking down at dead Lil Sturak. The manila envelope of money and instructions Mom left with Lil is on the nightstand. *

ZACH

We told you to talk to her. We didn't tell you send her to the glue factory!

SWELL

(covering body with Smurfs towel)
I didn't kill her! She died in her sleep.

MELISSA

(sniffing body)
Probably choked on her whistle.

WALTER

She doesn't look dead. *

ZACH

That's 'cause it just happened. So you can't really tell. Like on MacGyver.

KENNY

What do we do?

SWELL

Call an ambulance? Call the cops? I don't know...they'll come get her, ask lots of questions.

KENNY

They could blame us.

SWELL

They'll definitely call Mom.

MELISSA

She'll blame us.

KENNY

Yeah...she'll hop the next flight home and be in our face.

SWELL

I don't want Mom to come home.

ZACH

I don't either.

Long beat; they look at each other with the same idea in mind....

27. INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

27.

Swell, Kenny, Zach, Walter, and Melissa struggle to wheel dead Lil Sturak out, using a skateboard as a dolly. She is still covered with the Smurfs beach towel. Her arms and legs hang over; Melissa supports them on one side; Zach supports them on the other. Kenny supports the head; Swell supports the feet, wearing rubber gloves.

KENNY

Careful!

SWELL

I got her!

KENNY

No, I mean my skateboard.

28. EXT. DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

28.

Walter waits by the Volvo, next to Lil's big trunk. Swell, Kenny, Zach, and Melissa wheel the body over, survey the size of the trunk.

KENNY

You sure she's gonna fit?

SWELL

How the hell should I know? I've never done this before.

KENNY

Well neither have I!

ZACH

I think we should measure her first.

MELISSA

Let's hack off some limbs.

SWELL

Just go get that metal tape-measure thing from the garage.

KENNY

Stop ordering us around. You're not the babysitter.

SWELL

That's right. The babysitter's dead. Just do it!

29. EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - NIGHT

29.

Swell and Kenny drive the Volvo; the trunk sticks out of the car's

trunk, secured by rope.

30. EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - VOLVO - NIGHT

30.

SWELL

We're saving the ambulance people a trip, right? When they find her, they'll care take of everything.

KENNY

(agreeably)

And no one has to know she was our sitter.

SWELL

She said she didn't have any family. This is really the decent thing to do.

31. EXT. MORTUARY PARKING LOT-LATER - NIGHT

31.

Swell and Kenny are parked at a distance, watching the back entrance where the trunk sits with a sign that reads: "NICE OLD LADY INSIDE. DIED OF NATURAL CAUSES." Two WORKERS exit the mortuary, notice the trunk, read the note, look at each other.

32. EXT. STREET - NIGHT

32.

As Swell and Kenny drive away:

SWELL

God, I feel terrible! I should've been nicer to her! I should've cooperated!

KENNY

(saddened; fondly)

Yeah, she was a great babysitter.

33. EXT. CRANDELL DRIVEWAY - NEXT MORNING

33.

Swell gets in the driver's seat of Lil's vintage Buick. Zach and Melissa rush out of the house.

ZACH

Where are you going?

SWELL

We're out of food. I'm going marketing.

Kenny bounds out of the house with the manila envelope.

KENNY

(getting in Buick)

Yeah, massive party supplies!

ZACH
You're taking Mrs. Sturak's car?

SWELL
Zach, life goes on. This car's a classic.
I think she'd want it this way.

34. EXT. ROAD - DAY

34.

Swell drives; the Buick is packed with kids.

35. INT. BUICK - DAY

35. *

SWELL
How much did Mom leave us?

KENNY
(opening manila envelope;
going through it)
There's no money in here.

SWELL
Yeah, there is. I saw Mom give it
to Mrs. Sturak.

KENNY
Well, Mrs. Sturak must've taken it out!

36. EXT. ROAD - DAY

36. *

Swell SCREECHES the car into a U-turn.

37. INT. GUEST BEDROOM - DAY

37.

Everyone frantically turns the room upside down -- no luck.

SWELL
She must've had it on her!

MELISSA
It's ours! Go back and get it from
the old hag!

SWELL
Right, we go and say, Excuse me, we left
our money on our dead babysitter?!
No way.

38. INT. BUICK - DAY

38.

Swell and Kenny are in the front seat, the others are in back.
Walter is sorting out change from his Yoda piggy bank.

SWELL
Okay, how about a garage sale?

KENNY
We live in the boonies.

SWELL
What about calling Dad?

KENNY
Dad doesn't care.

ZACH
What about blackmailing Dad?

MELISSA
What about donating blood? They pay you.

KENNY
Have to be over eighteen.

SWELL
There goes our great summer.

39. INT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

39.

Swell pushes the shopping cart down an aisle. Walter, SINGING LOUDLY, tap dances down the aisle. Melissa rides an empty cart, like a scooter, terrorizing the other SHOPPERS. Zach slips a bottle of Old Spice aftershave into the cart. Kenny stands at a closed check-out stand, flipping through the "National Enquirer." All the kids toss items in the cart at random; Swell looks at the prices, takes items out and replaces them on the shelves.

ZACH
(re: aftershave)
Hey! I wanted that!

SWELL
We only have twenty-seven dollars!
God, this stuff's expensive.

Walter tap dances into a display of paper towels; the display collapses, rolls of paper towels fly everywhere.

SWELL (cont'd)
(frantically approaching Kenny)
Kenny, what're we gonna do?! We don't
have enough money! We have too many
kids! We've gotta get rid of some!

CUT TO: WHEEL OF FORTUNE ON TELEVISION

The wheel stops on "BANKRUPT".

WALTER (o.s.)
Loser!

40. INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

40.

Walter is on the couch watching WHEEL OF FORTUNE.

41. INT. KITCHEN - DAY

41.

Swell, Zach, and Melissa unpack junk food. The PHONE RINGS.

SWELL

(into phone)

Hello? Mom! Hi...how's Australia?

(motions to kids to be quiet)

Yeah...they're fine, everything's fine.

Oh, Mrs. Sturak? Uh, she's not here

right now. She...had a date. Yeah,

some guy...a widower. Mom, relax, I'm

looking after things while she's gone.

Oh, they're all outside playing. So,

this call must be pretty expensive, huh?

Yeah, just send us postcards...relax,

Mom. I'll tell them...okay, bye. Bye.

She hangs up. Kenny enters.

KENNY

You only got one bag of Fritos?

SWELL

We could only afford the necessities.

KENNY

This is a crock. We'll never make
it two months. I'm gonna hole up at
Lizard's?

SWELL

That's real brotherly. Don't you have
any pride?

KENNY

(simply)

No.

MELISSA

When our food's gone, we can eat Elvis.

Elvis looks up.

SWELL

(angry)

Look, what do you guys want from me?!

You want me to call Mom back?!

KENNY

No.

SWELL

You want to call Aunt Pat or go crawling
to one of Mom's semi-wretched friends? *

KENNY

No.

WALTER (o.s.)

Buy a vowel! Buy a vowel!

SWELL

We don't need a warden. We don't need
some adult around to tell us when to
eat and sleep and vacuum, right?

ZACH & MELISSA

Right!

SWELL

We can still have a summer of freedom.
We just have to stick together, okay?

ZACH/MELISSA/KENNY

Okay! Yeah!

SWELL

One of us just has to get a job.

Long beat. They all look at each other.

KENNY

Well I'm not gonna.

SWELL

We don't have a choice. We'll flip for
it.

Swell looks around the kitchen, picks up a mini frozen pizza box.

SWELL (cont'd)

Okay, Mama Celeste's face up, I go to
work. Mama Celeste's face down, you're
selling carnations on the freeway off
ramp.

Swell flips the frozen pizza box. IN SLOW MOTION, Mama Celeste
lands face up. Kenny smirks.

SWELL (cont'd)

(saving face)

Okay, fine. I'll go to work. But
you're gonna have to watch the kids.

KENNY

Hey, no problem, twisted sister.

SWELL

Yeah, I'll just get a job...at a clothing store or something. They'll hire me in a second. It'll be great.

42. EXT. CLOWN DOG ESTABLISHMENT-A FEW DAYS LATER - DAY

42.

A bright, overly-plastic facsimile of a circus big-top tent, with a ten-foot plastic Happy Clown in front.

43. INT. CLOWN DOG - DAY

43.

Lots of colorful helium balloons. Throngs of ROWDY, HUNGRY TEENAG- *
ERS and FAMILIES WITH OBNOXIOUS KIDS are everywhere, eating, drink-
ing, blowing straw wrappers. Behind the counter, the Manager (MR.
EGG), who looks like a middle-aged Howdy Doody, and a teen-aged guy
frenetically take and fill orders. The guy, BRYAN, is 17, tall,
handsome in an off-beat way; he's at once insecure and self-assured,
playful, a little wry; he's wearing a Clown Dog uniform and cap.
Bryan and Mr. Egg wear name tags.

Under a sign ("RESPECT THE MEAT"), a uniformed, wilted, frenzied
Swell, wearing a hairnet and name tag, is slapping buns, hot dogs,
and burgers on the grill. She glances over at Bryan, not wanting
him to see that she's checking him out.

Working the grill with Swell is PAM, a sweaty, bony, 25-year-old
burger frying pro, with jet-black hair in a hairnet, chewing sun-
flower seeds and spitting the shells into the metal garbage pail on
the floor.

PAM

...you know, I been at this place about
six years now, I really got the routine
down, but I'm not gonna be here forever.
Hey, you gotta squeeze the fat outta
those burgers better. My boyfriend Remo
says I'm dreamin', but one day I'm gonna
be one of those classy receptionists in
those humongous office buildings with
the tight skirts, I could just read all
those magazines like they got at my
manicurist's and talk on the phone all
day -- yeah, you're gettin' the hang of
it -- my boyfriend Remo's gonna help me
put a killer resume together, 'cause,
you know, you gotta have a killer resume
with lotsa experience and all that
education shit and stuff...

Taking an order at the counter, Bryan puts two straws in his mouth *
like walrus tusks, makes a funny face at a Cute Little Boy. The *
little boy smiles, takes two straws, does the same. Swell looks *
on, impressed, thinking Bryan's a nice guy. He sees her looking at
him, sheepishly takes the straws out of his mouth. He walks over,

reaches behind Swell for a package of napkins.

BRYAN
(pointing at name tag)
Hi. Bryan.

MR. EGG
(chipper)
Swell, remember, put on a happy face!

SWELL
Hi...did he just finish reading Dianetics
or something?

BRYAN
No, he's just on helium....

MR. EGG
Bryan! You got another happy delivery
to make! Hey, Swell! You gotta put
chili on those dogs! Keep it moving!

Bryan smiles and nods "see ya" at Swell, who self-consciously touches her hairnet, feeling ugly. She confronts a vat of brown, congealed chili, recoils in horror, dribbles chili over the hot dogs.

44. EXT. ROOF OF HOLIDAY INN - HOLLYWOOD - NIGHT

44.

Kenny and his Heavy Metal Buddies hang out, drinking beer, passing a joint, enjoying the view.

KENNY
...it's great. My sister's working,
no one's around ragging on me. Born
free.

HELL HOUND
Hey, let's get outta here. Let's go
to Guitar Center.

SKULL
We seem to be experiencing a negative
cash flow.

MOLE
Let's go to my place. I'll rip off my
Mom's MasterCard again, master the
possibilities.

LIZARD
Nah. Gotta get home. My old man's
still pissed about my report card.
I gotta kiss ass for a couple more
days.

KENNY

You know, we keep this up, we're never
getting outta school.

EVERYONE

(enthusiastically)
Fuckin' A!

KENNY

(urinating off roof; singing)
Born free...as free as the wind blows...
as free as the mountains....

45. INT. CLOWN DOG - NIGHT

45.

The place is closed. Swell is scraping chili out of a large vat;
her hands slip, chili spills all over the floor. Bryan enters from
the back, holding keys to the delivery van. He sees Swell strug-
gling to clean chili off the floor, walks over to help. *

SWELL

(a little flustered)
Uh...thanks....

BRYAN

Yeah, sure.

SWELL

Did you have a lot of deliveries?

BRYAN

Yeah...I'm the stork of fast food....

SWELL

(going back to work)
You're lucky. Better than being here.

BRYAN

Yeah, I guess....

He takes a rag, twirls it around, walks down the length of the
counter, snapping at dirt and grime. Swell, exhausted, pulls off
her hairnet; it's caked with chili. She shakes out her long hair,
sighs. She's even prettier than he thought. She notices him look-
ing at her; he casually looks away. *

SWELL

(disgusted with gross hairnet)
God, this place is so disgusting.... *

BRYAN

Yeah...but you get used to it. Like a bad haircut. You know, Mr. Egg used to be a clown? Seriously. He got laid off from Barnum and Bailey's, opened this place.

(mock-quoting)

"The Greatest Chow on Earth."

SWELL

Mr. Egg's not watching. You can probably stop smiling now if you want.

BRYAN

Thanks...yeah...it's kind of a demented habit.

SWELL

This job sucks. How can you stand it?

BRYAN

Hey, I just try to hang with it. *

Brian picks up a mop, begins mopping the floor.

BRYAN (cont'd)

So, do you, like, live in this area code? I live in this area code.

Swell drops more fat on the floor.

SWELL

Shit!

BRYAN

Not your dream job, huh?

SWELL

You got that right. You think I woke up this morning and thought Gee, I'd love to scrub fat vats! I'd love to smile and work with raw meat!

Bryan sees a discarded hamburger bun on the floor; using the mop like a hockey stick, he dribbles the bun like a puck. He slams the bun into a trash can on its side: a goal.

BRYAN

But, hey, gives you some extra cash, huh?

SWELL

I'm not working at the Big Top from hell
for pocket money!

BRYAN

(trying to lighten the mood)
Were you, by any chance, traumatized
at the circus when you were a kid?

SWELL

It isn't funny. My mom's out of town
for a while. I have my sister and
brothers to feed.

(ranting)

And no one'll hire a teenager to do
anything that isn't disgusting! I mean,
look what I'm doing! I hate this!
Why can't I get a job in some nice,
clean office or something? I'd make
a great receptionist! I mean, how
old do you have to be? I could--

*

BRYAN

Hey, just quit.

*

MR. EGG

(entering; whistling circus music)
Swell, how's the scrub-a-dub-dubbing
going? Now you're almost doing it
correctly. But you're forgetting one
very big thing!

SWELL

What? Not enough cleanser?

MR. EGG

Nope! Forgot to put on a happy face!
But I tell ya, looks like you're in for
a bright, shiny future here!

He giggles like an idiot. Swell just stares at him.

MR. EGG (cont'd)

Next, you can scrape spitballs off the
drive-thru window with a really fun
squeegee!

SWELL

(a beat)

Look Mr. Egg, finish the happy fat vats yourself.

(to surprised Bryan)

Thanks for your advice. Maybe I'll see ya around.

(walking out)

I'm moving on.

MUSIC OVER:

46. INT. MOM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

46.

Pan across Mom's bed, past an empty bag from Walden Books, past a new book entitled The Perfect Resume, to the Los Angeles Times Classified Ads, folded to the HELP WANTED section. Swell is lying on the bed, going through the ads, a red pen in her mouth. The ads all demand "EXPERIENCED ONLY." She stops at one ad, circles it.

THE AD:

"GLAMOROUS FASHION INDUSTRY. IMMEDIATE
OPENING FOR RECEPTIONIST. EXCELLENT
FRONT OFFICE APPEARANCE. HEAVY PHONES.
TYPING, 45 WPM. BENEFITS. EXPERIENCED
ONLY. APPLY IN PERSON, 444 MARSHALL BLVD."

*

47. INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

47.

Swell sits at the kitchen table, painstakingly typing, copying a resume from the resume book. Kenny looks on, eating Fritos.

KENNY

You're just copying it out of that book?

SWELL

Of course not. I changed the name.
And I'm adding some glamorous fashion
stuff.

QUICK CUTS:

48. INT. MOM'S CLOSET - NIGHT

48.

Swell examines Mom's conservative business suits and blouses. She appraises herself, unsatisfied, in a mirror as she tries on:

1) a navy blue skirt and ruffly peach blouse. The tight skirt is too long. The matching jacket is constricting. 2) a red plaid skirt and white blouse; the high neckline with "power bow" strangles her. 3) a hideous baby blue cowl neck sweater dress with sash. 4) a matronly dress with pearls; the matching pumps pinch her feet.

49. INT. SWELL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

49.

Swell, holding several of Mom's things on hangers, flips through her

own blouses and accessories, mixing and matching, selects a few.

50. INT. MOM'S BEDROOM - MORNING

50.

Swell sits before a vanity table, putting make-up on -- heavier than usual, a more sophisticated, older look. She wears a bathrobe; her hair is pulled back in a ponytail.

Swell refers to a Working Woman magazine. The women in the ad are sleek, executive-types. Using a blow-dryer, hot rollers, a curling iron, hair spray, she experiments with several of their hairstyles: an upsweep with button clip-on earrings; a bun complimented by a pair of Mom's big glasses; a bouffant Marilyn Quayle flip. She cringes. Back to her hair just hanging -- she's at a loss.

51. EXT. DOWNTOWN FASHION DISTRICT - MORNING

51.

A BEEHIVE OF ACTIVITY. Swell strides down the street; she's dressed in a combination of Mom's business suit and her own funky accessories -- the effect is striking and attractive. She carries Mom's briefcase; her hair is in a French twist. She easily looks like she's in her late 20s. She finds the address she's looking for: 444 Marshall Blvd. -- a sign reads: "GENERAL APPAREL WEST." Feeling confident, she's about to enter the warehouse building when she smashes into a Belligerent Man wheeling a rack of dresses, who glares at her. Intimidated, she enters the building.

52. INT. GENERAL APPAREL WEST OFFICE LOFT-RECEPTION AREA - DAY 52.

A vast, open space, with multicolored mesh cages and glass brick walls. WORKERS filter in and out from various stairwells, cubicles, hallways, cages, carrying bolts of fabric, mannequins, portfolios.

The receptionist, CAROLYN, is at her desk; she's a 25-year-old redhead, pretty in a slick sort of way, with a chip on her shoulder. But there's a touch of vulnerability underneath it all.

CAROLYN

(into headset)

...yes, but all I can do is give him
the message. Again. Well, that's not
really my problem, is it? You're right,
I don't care.

*

ROSE LINDSEY enters. She's 40ish, good-natured, attractive, intense, dressed in flowing Laise Adzer bohemian executive chic.

CAROLYN (cont'd)

(calling)

Oh, excuse me, Rose?

ROSE

(annoyed)

What is it, Carolyn, something?

CAROLYN
Have you read that memo saying I'm
your new administrative assistant?

ROSE
You mean the one suggesting I consider
you for the job? Never saw it.

CAROLYN
(warning)
I'm next in line, Rose. You know that.

ROSE
Of course. And you're still next in
line. I hired someone else.

Rose sweeps past Carolyn, disappears behind a cubicle. Carolyn is
angry. The freight elevator JOLTS open. Swell steps out, carefully
walks forward in Mom's pumps, nervously touching her French twist.
She hesitates, walks over to Carolyn.

SWELL
Excuse me...? I'm here applying for
the receptionist position...?

Carolyn's PHONE BUZZES.

CAROLYN
(to Swell)
Hold.
(into headset; impatiently)
Reception? I can't right now. I have
to stay to redirect all the incompetents
coming up here instead of going straight
down to Personnel like they're supposed
to.
(another line BUZZES)
General Apparel West? No, she's not
in. Your name? Can you spell that a
little faster? Your number? Thank you.
(punching another button)
Look, I just can't drop everything.
All right. I'll be right there. You'll
have about twelve seconds.

Carolyn takes off her headset, stands.

CAROLYN (cont'd)
(to Swell; condescending)
You're supposed to go down to Personnel.
That's on the first floor. There's a
great big sign that says "Personnel."
Do you understand?

SWELL

Yeah, okay....

Carolyn disappears behind a glass brick wall. Rose re-enters. She quickly glances around the crowded reception area, then spots Swell.

ROSE

Where's Carolyn? Red hair, gives you a headache...

SWELL

(nodding)
...talks like she's chewing her face?

ROSE

That's her!

SWELL

Oh, she'll be back in a few seconds.
I'm here for the receptionist job...?

ROSE

Is this your resume?
(takes resume from Swell;
scans it)
Very impressive...this is fabulous....

SWELL

Thank you.

ROSE

(gripping Swell's arm)
Okay, listen. They're looking for a new receptionist to replace Carolyn, and she's supposed to move up to be my executive administrative assistant. I can't stand her. So do me a favor. You be my assistant. I've told them I hired from outside the company. They can't stop me. I'm Senior V.P..

*

Carolyn appears down the hall.

SWELL

What about the receptionist job?

ROSE

What are you, burnt out? You want to take a step down? Well, I won't let you! I need you, and you're so over-qualified for entry level it's ridiculous! For God's sake, you're a Vassar gal! You'd much rather be my executive assistant. Please say yes.

SWELL
(shrugging)
Yes.

53. INT. EXECUTIVE SUITE - DAY

53.

ROSE
(leading Swell through hallway)
Okay, we're up here with the other vice-presidents, the executive staff, and our advertising people...below us are the designers, our warehouse and showroom, and our manufacturing and assembly line...you got your degree six years ago, you're what, twenty-seven, twenty-eight?

SWELL
Oh, yeah.

ROSE
Well, you don't look it. My last assistant was only twenty-three and wet behind the ears. Anyway, thank Christ.

*

54. INT. SWELL'S OFFICE - DAY

54.

There are trees and exotic flowers in oversized pots everywhere, a large glass topped desk. Rose enters, followed by Swell.

ROSE
...okay, this is your office, mine's through that archway. These are your things, your Rolodex, there's your computer, WordStar and Lotus, there's your mouse. Our refrigerator is over there; leave a list with Carolyn and she'll stock it for you, all right?

Rose pulls out the chair from Swell's desk, pats it for Swell to sit down, smiles brightly. Swell sits. Rose pushes the chair in; Swell feels trapped.

SWELL
(intimidated)
Yeah...so these are my things. Uh...when do I get paid?

ROSE
First and fifteenth of every month.
Okay, I think that does it.

GUS BRANDON enters; he's in his mid-30's, a little funny looking, but cute in his own way, wearing executive attire.

ROSE

Gus, hi! This is my new administrative assistant, Sue Ellen. Sue Ellen, this is Gus Brandon. He's Vice-President of Marketing, and he brings me breakfast in bed.

GUS

(playfully)
Only when she deserves it. Hi, nice to meet you.

SWELL

(a beat)
Good morning.

GUS

(to Rose)
See you for lunch?

ROSE

(to Gus)
I'll let you know. I'm interfacing with New York at three and I have a report due by the end of the day. Maybe I can meet you in the cafeteria.

GUS

Okay. We'll play it by ear.

ROSE

Talk to you later.

GUS

Bye...Sue Ellen, right?

Swell smiles, nods. Gus squeezes Rose's hand, leaves.

ROSE

Life is so much more like high school than people really want to admit. Okay! Have a great weekend, see you Monday, eight o'clock sharp.

Rose disappears through the archway. Swell looks around blankly.

ROSE (cont'd)

(returning)

By the way, I'm Rose Lindsey. I'm Senior Vice-President of Operations. When Beatrice from Personnel calls, she's really a pushy broad, tell her you're the one I hired. And find out about your medical benefits and pension
(more)

ROSE (cont'd)
plan. Oh, one more thing. This is so
important: whenever we're not alone or
I'm on the phone and I ask you something,
it doesn't matter what it is, you always
say, "I'm right on top of that, Rose."
(a beat; throws arms around Swell;
hugs her effusively)
Welcome aboard!

Rose returns to her office. Swell sets down her briefcase, walks to the floor-to-ceiling window, gazes at the stunning panoramic view of downtown Los Angeles. She smiles.

55. INT. CHUCK E. CHEESE'S PIZZA TIME THEATER - NIGHT 55.

Swell and Kenny scarf down a large pepperoni pizza. Swell is dressed as her usual teenage self. Melissa and Walter frolic in a large pile of colorful plastic balls. Zach buys a "Star Scroll," reads his horoscope.

SWELL
(excited)
...and I have my own office with trees
and there's this little fridge stocked
with Diet Sprite and Tab, and there's a
great view!

KENNY
What's the job?

SWELL
I'm Executive Administrative Assistant
to the Senior Vice-President of Operations.

KENNY
What the hell is that?

SWELL
I don't know. She loved my resume.

KENNY
I thought you were gonna be a receptionist.

SWELL
Yeah, but I'm overqualified.

KENNY
What're they gonna pay you?

SWELL
Thirty-seven thousand and five hundred
dollars a year!

*

*

KENNY
No way! Shit...you're gonna drown. *

SWELL
(defensive)
I'm a fast learner. I'll catch on.
This job's gonna be fun. *

KENNY
You're never gonna get to the beach.

SWELL
So who cares? I'm a career woman now. *

56. EXT. CHUCK E. CHEESE'S PARKING LOT - NIGHT

56.

Swell, Kenny, and the kids exit the restaurant.

KENNY
You better bring home some bucks
tomorrow. We're totally out of food.

SWELL
Wait a minute. I don't get paid for
two weeks!

Kenny starts singing "WE ARE THE WORLD." Swell notices three DRAG QUEENS, a Dolly Parton, a Liza Minelli, and a Marilyn Monroe, breaking into the vintage Buick.

SWELL (cont'd)
Hey! That's our car!

Liza and Marilyn hop into the front seat; Dolly gets in back. Liza hot-wires the car, starts the ENGINE.

KENNY
Hey!

The car SCREECHES OFF. They all chase after the Buick, then give up. They stand in the middle of the road, huffing and puffing.

SWELL
Shit! I loved that car!

ZACH
Call the cops!

SWELL
Oh, right. What're we gonna say, Liza
Minelli stole our Buick?

KENNY
It wasn't even our Buick.

MELISSA
How're we gonna get home?

WALTER
(crying)
I miss Mommy.

57. EXT. CHUCK E. CHEESE'S PARKING LOT (PHONE BOOTH) - NIGHT 57.
They stand outside a phone booth. *

KENNY
Call Nicole.

SWELL
All my friends are in Europe. What
about Lizard? Or Hell Hound?

KENNY
We don't have any money.

SWELL
You mean you'd have to bribe them?

KENNY
(unfazed)
Yeah. Come on, who else you know that
drives?

SWELL
(frustrated)
Anyone else we call'll get suspicious.
We'll walk it.

The kids sigh, cranky and lazy. A faint breeze blows a piece of
trash by; it's a greasy Clown Dog bag.

SWELL (cont'd)
(desperate)
Oh, wait...I think I got somebody....

58. EXT. CHUCK E. CHEESE'S -LATER - NIGHT 58.

They all sit on a wall in silence, waiting. A beat. HAPPY, PERKY,
RINKY-DINK CIRCUS MUSIC plays in the distance; a van with an enor-
mous clown's head on top bearing a demented smile pulls up -- it's
Bryan. He stops, idles the ENGINE. The CIRCUS MUSIC stops briefly,
then picks up a new refrain.

KENNY
(to Swell)
Who's the Bozo?

Swell smiles at Bryan, grateful, a little embarrassed.

SWELL

Hi...um, thanks for showing up.

BRYAN

(smiling)

No problem. I kinda like being a hero.

(patting dashboard of van)

Me and my trusty steed.

59. EXT. CRANDELL HOUSE-LATER - NIGHT

59.

The Clown Dog van is parked in the driveway, Bryan in the driver's seat. Swell lingers at the driver's window.

BRYAN

Wasn't that your car I saw at Clown Dog? Cool chrome, whitewalls...?

SWELL

Oh, yeah...it was sort of a loaner....

MELISSA (o.s.)

Swell! What're you doing out there?
C'mon!

SWELL

(shouting back)

Okay! Hold on!

(a beat; to Bryan)

Sorry I was kind of a bitch to you the other night, walking out....

*

BRYAN

Yeah, Mr. Egg really cracked when you left.

SWELL

Did you get stuck finishing the fat vats?

BRYAN

Yep, that's okay...lard is my life. At least until college...I'm glad you called. Really.

SWELL

Yeah...uh, me, too.

They look at each other, liking each other but feeling awkward.

KENNY (o.s.)

Swell! Would you get in here?! Zach and Melissa are beating each other up over the last Sno Ball. It's the last food we got!

BRYAN
Are you guys really out of food?

SWELL
(laughing it off)
Oh, no...they're just being really
obnoxious. I'm gonna go to the market
first thing in the morning.

Bryan reaches in the back of the van.

BRYAN
'Cause, you know, I, uh, had a lot of
leftovers from my dinner delivery.
So, you know, if you want 'em....

*

Bryan holds out bags of food.

SWELL
Well, no, that's okay.

Melissa SCREAMS inside the house.

SWELL (cont'd)
Thanks. We'll take 'em.

BRYAN
Well, sure...yeah...you know.

They hesitate, smiling nervously.

BRYAN (cont'd)
Yeah...so...you wanna go to the beach
and watch the grunion run Monday night?

*

SWELL
(surprised)
You mean, a date?

BRYAN
Yeah, well, I'm free. I'll have to
check with the grunion, but....
(feeling sheepish and stupid
at his joke)
Yeah, a date.

SWELL
Sure...I like grunion.

BRYAN
Me, too.

Swell tears off a corner of the Clown Dog bag, finds a pen in her
purse, writes on the paper scrap, hands it to him.

SWELL
Here's my number...it's in your area
code.

They smile.

60. INT. MOM'S MASTER BEDROOM - MONDAY MORNING 60.

Swell's stuff is everywhere; she's taken over the room and is blissfully asleep on the king sized bed. A merciless ALARM CLOCK BUZZES. It's 5:30 A.M.

61. INT. MOM'S BEDROOM - MORNING 61.

Swell hurriedly puts her hair in a French twist hairstyle.

62. INT. CRANDELL LIVING ROOM - MORNING 62.

Swell rushes downstairs in Mom's skirt and blouse and pumps, tugging up her panty hose, cursing, glancing at her watch.

63. INT. CRANDELL KITCHEN - MORNING. 63.

Zach, Melissa, and Walter wait impatiently at the kitchen table in their pajamas. Swell rushes in, adjusting an earring.

SWELL
You guys are up? Already?

MELISSA	ZACH	WALTER
It's summer.	I'm a morning person.	I'm hungry.

SWELL
Where's Kenny?

MELISSA
Dead to the world.

SWELL
Yeah, okay, what do you guys want for
breakfast?

MELISSA	ZACH	WALTER
A steak.	Cheese omelette.	Spaghettios.

Swell pours Life cereal into a giant punchbowl, pours in a gallon of milk, puts it on the kitchen table, hands out three spoons.

SWELL
Breakfast is served.

64. EXT. FREEWAY - MORNING 64.

Swell sits in gridlock, trying not to worry about being late. *

Carolyn mans her post, reading Elle. The freight elevator JOLTS open, and Swell comes out with her briefcase, along with several other EMPLOYEES. Swell sees Carolyn, and attempts to sneak past the reception desk in the group.

CAROLYN
(spotting Swell)
Excuse me, where do you think you're going?

SWELL
Oh. Rose Lindsey's office. I...work for her now.

CAROLYN
You?!

SWELL
(nervous)
Yeah...hi, I'm Sue Ellen.
(extending hand)

CAROLYN
(icy; shunning handshake)
Well, don't bother getting too settled in, hmm?

Intimidated, Swell heads toward her office.

A huge, cluttered, antique mahogany desk, surrounded by exotic plants, paperwork, bronze Art Deco figurines, a computer terminal. A Tiffany lamp and a huge jar of M&Ms are on the desk. Etchings and lithographs cover the walls. Rose is on the phone, smoking a cigarette, buried in paperwork. VARIOUS EMPLOYEES vie for Rose's attention, with papers to sign, fabrics to approve, etc.. Swell sticks her head in. Rose gestures for Swell to come in.

ROSE
(into phone; closing file)
...well, anytime you'd like to come back to G.A.W...right...well, thanks for telling me personally. Bye bye.
(hangs up; to Employees)
Listen, would you all excuse us a moment? Fabulous.

Employees shuffle out.

ROSE (cont'd)

(to Swell)

We just lost another account. Costs are up, overhead is high, sales are down...New York's gonna be none too thrilled with their industrial uniform division.

SWELL

Well...is that bad?

ROSE

(a beat)

Sue Ellen, we are the industrial uniform division.

67. INT. G.A.W. UNIFORM WAREHOUSE/SHOWROOM - DAY

67.

Rose leads a mortified Swell past an assembly line of SEAMSTRESSES, CUTTERS, and STITCHERS, who are working on industrial uniforms. Mannequins and dummies are everywhere, dressed in polyester waitress, nurse, Carl's Jr., Little League uniforms, etc..

ROSE

(shouting over noise; sarcastic)

This is our spring line. Lovely, isn't it?

SWELL

(completely dazed)

Yeah...I thought we made designer clothes.

ROSE

(laughing)

Oh God, no! Sue Ellen, we're in the bowels of the fashion industry. General Apparel West is one of thirty-two subdivisions of Chemtec America, one of our nation's leading chemical corporations. They're based in New York. Our parent company is the same people who make insecticide and non-dairy dessert topping.

SWELL

(aghast)

Really?

ROSE

(leading Swell around corner)

...this is our production staff, that's Franklin, our head designer....

FRANKLIN, a stout, disgruntled man with a cigar, nods at Rose.

ROSE (cont'd)

...you'll be verifying his purchase orders, pending my approval, and consulting with him on budget estimates. You'll also be coordinating our sales, advertising, and manufacturing people. I'll need biweekly reports from you... basically, you're the hub of our communication network.

68. INT. FREIGHT ELEVATOR - DAY

68.

ROSE

Chemtec America isn't crazy about our receding profit margin. Losing the damn Our Lady of Perpetual Grace Academy account doesn't help. And we've run out of corners to cut.

SWELL

So, I guess this wouldn't be a great time to ask for an advance on my salary.

The elevator JOLTS to a stop.

ROSE

(laughing)

You're kidding, right?

Rose steps off the elevator; Swell looks worried.

69. INT. SWELL'S OFFICE (FOYER TO ROSE'S OFFICE) - DAY

69.

Swell sits at her desk. Rose goes into her office, returns with a huge pile of paperwork, plunks it down in front of Swell.

ROSE

Start getting updated reports from our department heads and coordinating them. You can access the format on your C drive. Until you lay it out on a spreadsheet, the market analyses are too amorphous, right? Oh, and FAX this to New York. And this is the Q.E.D. Report. I've made some notes; see if you can make a dent after lunch. Don't feel overwhelmed. Just do one thing at a time.

70. INT. G.A.W. RECEPTION AREA - DAY

70.

Carolyn is sitting at her desk, eating a Clown Dog. A large Clown Dog bag sits beside her. Swell enters with a folder, a little lost.

CAROLYN

Looking for something, Sue Ellen?

SWELL

Yeah, uh....

(re: Clown Dog)

Where did that come from?

CAROLYN

I had it delivered. Do you have a problem with that?

SWELL

(nervous)

Well, why would they deliver here?
It's pretty far. I mean, I know where Clown Dog is. I don't understand. Why would they drive all this way just to bring you a chili dog?

CAROLYN

My little brother drives the delivery van. Occasionally he goes out of his way to bring me lunch. All right?

SWELL

Oh. That's nice. Your little brother. Nice. Uh...I need to FAX something. How do I...?

CAROLYN

Well, gosh Sue Ellen, being an Executive Administrative Assistant, I'm sure you can figure that out.

71. INT. XEROX/FAX ROOM - DAY

71.

Swell enters with some papers, looks down at the FAX machine, unsure. She rests her papers on the machines as she looks at the buttons, confused, and punches one; the machine BEEPS and starts eating the papers. Panicked, Swell grabs the papers and starts fighting with the machine to pull them out. The FAX PHONE RINGS. She picks it up, then slams it down, finally grabs her now-wrinkled papers from the machine; suddenly CATHY, a perky, pretty, chubby brunette in her early 30s, a big red bow in her hair, enters.

CATHY

Oh, hi! Are you a temp?

SWELL

Uh, no. I'm Sue Ellen. I work for Rose.

CATHY

Oh, hi! I'm Cathy. So, you're Rose's new Executive Administrative Assistant. Wow! Congratulations! I submitted my
(more)

CATHY (cont'd)
resume, but it wasn't good enough. Wow,
working with Rose must be really neat.
Oh, I'm sorry, am I cutting in front of
you? Are you FAXing?

SWELL
No, that's okay...I'm still organizing...
my...spreadsheet...projection...amorphous...
hub...stuff. You go ahead.

Swell carefully observes as Cathy operates the FAX machine.

72. INT. SWELL'S OFFICE - DAY

72.

Cathy follows Swell in; Swell's desk is piled high with work.

CATHY
...so anyway, I'm Fred Kibrick's secretary
over in Sales. It's been really slow...
gosh, you're swamped.

*

SWELL
(weakly)
Yeah....

CATHY
Yeah, well, I'm a whiz on the computer.
So if you ever have anything for me...
just ask, really.

SWELL
Well, hey, if you want...are you familiar
with the Q.E.D. Report?

CATHY
Oh, wow! Really? Thanks!

Cathy gathers up a stack of Swell's work.

SWELL
Don't feel overwhelmed. Just do one
thing at a time.

73. INT. CRANDELL KITCHEN - DAY

73.

The PHONE RINGS. Dirty dishes are strewn everywhere; spaghetti is
dangling from the counter tops; crushed soda cans and pizza boxes
are on the floor. It's a war zone. Kenny staggers in, half asleep,
answers the phone. In the background, Walter and Elvis are watching
\$25,000 Pyramid in the living room;

*

KENNY
(into phone)
Hello?

INTERCUT WITH:

74. INT. SWELL'S OFFICE - DAY

74.

Swell sits at her much cleaner desk, smoking a cigarette.

SWELL

Hi, how's it going?

KENNY

What do you mean?

SWELL

You know, how are you? Are the kids
O.K.?

KENNY

(sarcastic)

No, I smeared them with honey and tied
them to a red ant hill. Did you get
some money?

A cocky, macho guy with a clipboard, BRUCE, enters Swell's office. *

BRUCE

Hey, who are you? What happened to
that other broad, Mona?

SWELL

(into phone)

Not yet, there's a problem.

(to Bruce)

I'm Sue Ellen. I work for Rose. Can
I help you?

KENNY

Why? What'd they do, fire you?

BRUCE

I need a copy of the Bqb's Big Boy
account figures.

KENNY

(munching on Clown Dog)

Swell! What're you gonna do? That
Clown Dog shit's gone.

SWELL

(into phone)

Look, what do you want from me? We
have a receding profit margin!

BRUCE

Yo, Gidget! Can you get on it?

SWELL

(to Bruce)

I can't right now. I'm on an important phone call.

KENNY

Swell, if you didn't snag the money, why the hell'd you call?

BRUCE

I don't have all day!

SWELL

(into phone)

Kenny, hold on.

(to Bruce; getting riled)

What's your name? What do you do here?

BRUCE

Bruce. I'm Head Inventory Clerk. Why?

SWELL

(smoothly)

Well, Bruce, I'm an Executive Level Administrative Assistant. So, when I get those figures ready, I'll give you a buzz and you can run on up and fetch them. All right?

BRUCE

(put in his place)

Yeah. Sure. Sorry.

(leaves)

SWELL

(into phone)

Look, I just called to say "hi"!

KENNY

(nasty)

Aren't you busy at your career?

SWELL

I'm between important meetings! Sorry I disturbed you!

KENNY

Well, you did! We're busy!

SWELL

Okay, fine! Screw you!

KENNY

Up yours!

Swell and Kenny hang up. Kenny's PHONE RINGS again.

KENNY (cont'd)
 (into phone; pissed off)
 What?!? Oh, yeah, hi Mom....yeah,
 everything's cool...no, Mrs. Sturak's
 not here. She...went to the yarn store.
 She's crocheting this massive doily for
 the couch....

75. INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

75.

which is a shambles: dirty clothes, scattered toys, piles of popcorn, grimy dishes, discarded cans and bottles, magazines, overflowing ashtrays, pizza crusts, etc. are everywhere. Kenny enters, flops onto the couch next to Walter, puts his feet up.

KENNY
 Don't you ever go outside?

WALTER
 Nah. No T.V. out there. No prizes.

Kenny CLICKS the remote control, stops at JULIA CHILD.

WALTER (cont'd)
 Hey!

JULIA CHILD IS EXPLAINING VARIOUS INGREDIENTS. He CLICKS the remote control. SANTA BARBARA. CLICK. CARTOONS. CLICK. JULIA CHILD. CLICK. A WESTERN. CLICK. WIN, LOSE, OR DRAW. CLICK. Back to JULIA CHILD -- lousy reception. *

ON THE T.V.

JULIA DEMONSTRATES THE ART OF MAKING CHOCOLATE CAKE. *

Kenny looks at the luscious melted chocolate, his mouth watering. *

KENNY
 Take a good look, Walt. Could be the
 last real food we see for a long time.

The lousy reception flares up again; Walter pounds on the T.V., frustrated.

76. INT. G.A.W. RECEPTION AREA - DAY

76.

BRUCE
 (entering)
 Hey, babe. Who's the void in Lindsey's
 office?

CAROLYN

(pissed off)

She applied for the receptionist job.
Suddenly she's an executive. I don't
get it....

77. INT. SWELL'S OFFICE - DAY

77.

Swell is struggling at the computer, referring to a computer manual and a dictionary. Cathy brings back a pile of completed work, happily takes another section of the Q.E.D. Report, leaves. Rose comes out of her office, smoking.

ROSE

Sue Ellen, why don't you call Siam Mania
and order lunch in for us. The naked
shrimp is to die from.

SWELL

Right. Yum.

ROSE

They'll deliver. You can pay out of
petty cash.

SWELL

Petty cash?

ROSE

Yeah, cash box is in your locked bottom
drawer. There should be plenty -- you
can cash personal checks for employees.
We work such hellish hours around here,
no one ever has time to get to the bank.

(handing Swell key; emphatic)

Guard it with your life. And leave
receipts for whatever you take. I'll
authorize it.

She picks up work Cathy just completed, riffles through it.

ROSE (cont'd)

Oh, this looks exquisite. We're so in
sync!

Rose leaves. Swell pauses, then unlocks the bottom right drawer.
She removes a small metal cash box, slowly opens it.

THE CASH BOX

Stacks of twenties and fifties. Swell quickly shuts the box, puts
it back in its place, closes the drawer. She thinks a moment,
considering it. Then opens the drawer again, shrugs, takes a couple
of twenties, slips them in her purse.

78. EXT. CRANDELL HOUSE-LATER - DAY

78. *

Swell pulls Mom's Volvo into the driveway. Zach, in a suit and tie, sits on a lawn chair, morose. Swell gets out of the car, bogged down with her briefcase and several bags of groceries, approaches him. More grocery bags are in the back seat.

SWELL

What's wrong?

ZACH

Cynthia and me are having some problems.
I think she likes Jacob better.

SWELL

Maybe she's just trying to make you
jealous.

(pulling Cosmo from grocery bag)
There's an article in here on game
playing. You really should read
it. And take the quiz afterward.

A CAR HORN HONKS. Zach takes the magazine.

ZACH

That's Cynthia's mom. Bye.

SWELL

(calling after him)
Don't you want to know about my first
day at work?

He's gone.

79. INT. ENTRANCE HALL - DAY

79. *

Swell enters and takes off her pumps; her feet are killing her.

SWELL

Hi! I'm home!

No one answers; no one cares.

SWELL (cont'd)

Can I get some help with the groceries,
please?

No reaction.

80. OMITTED

80.

80A. OMITTED

80A.

81. INT. KENNY'S ROOM - DAY

81. *

Kenny and his Buddies lie around like blobs, taking massive hits of

marijuana from a huge glass bong. Elvis lies on his back, probably buzzed. HEAVY METAL MUSIC PLAYING.

82. INT. MOM'S BATHROOM - EVENING

82.

Swell sits in a bubble bath, puts her head back, sighs, closes her eyes. Kenny's HEAVY METAL MUSIC BLASTS. The bathroom walls vibrate. Swell opens her eyes.

83. INT. KENNY'S ROOM - EVENING

83.

Swell enters, wrapped in a towel, shouts at Kenny, but he and his Buddies hear nothing over the MUSIC. She throws a sneaker at him.

KENNY

(turning the MUSIC DOWN)

What?!

SWELL

Look, I've been working! I've had a rough day. Turn the music down!

KENNY

It's down, Cavelady.

He starts laughing at her, uncontrollably. Kenny's Buddies give Swell lewd glances.

SWELL

Kenny, why don't you save your last three brain cells? I mean, what if you need them?

KENNY

I won't.

(turns the MUSIC BACK UP)

SWELL

(yelling)

You're right, you'll never need them! There'll always be some jerk around stupid enough to take care of you!

KENNY

What's your problem?!

SWELL

(upset)

You couldn't even mow the lawn today! You're worthless! I'm doing everything, and I'm trying to get ready for a date! When are you gonna start helping me, you lazy little prick!?

She storms out, SLAMS the door. Kenny LOWERS THE MUSIC.

KENNY
P.M.S. City, Man.

83A. EXT. SANTA MONICA BEACH - LATER - SUNSET

83A.

Swell and Bryan, both wearing shorts, walk barefoot.

SWELL
...well, Kenny's sort of a pain in the
ass sometimes...what about you?

BRYAN
Yeah, I have a sister. Carolyn.

SWELL
Uh huh...are you guys close?

BRYAN
Well, you know, she's my sister. She
gave me the chicken pox...taught me
how to ride a bike...she's seen me
naked...I don't know....

SWELL
Well, what's she like?

BRYAN
She's O.K., I guess. She's been all
pissed off lately.

SWELL
Yeah...? Why?

BRYAN
I don't know...something about some
promotion at her work, but she got
shafted.

SWELL
Yeah? So, what happened?

BRYAN
Why do you want to know so much about
my sister?

SWELL
Well, I mean, I'm a sister, too, so....

BRYAN
Well, some shark-lady came in off the
street and stabbed her in the back.
Really sucks, huh?

*

SWELL

(nodding)

Yeah....

BRYAN

So what happened with work for you?
Did you land another job?

SWELL

Uh, yeah....

BRYAN

Oh, great. What is it?
(sympathetic)
Is it really crummy?

SWELL

Oh...some office. It's not too bad.

BRYAN

Hey, an office. Big step up. No chili
in your hair. What do you do there?

SWELL

Oh...I, uh...make coffee, sharpen
pencils. I'm lowly office dreck.

BRYAN

Dreck, yeah...like this....

He picks up a clump of mangled, slimy seaweed, playfully swings it toward her. She shrieks, laughs, throws seaweed back at him. She splashes him; he splashes back, then starts running away. She races after him; he trips, falls in the water. She goes to help him up; he pulls her down, too. They laugh, splashing each other again.

84. EXT. BEACH - UNDER THE PIER - LATER - NIGHT

84.

A blanket and picnic basket is spread out on the sand. The moon glows on the water. Swell sits on the blanket Indian-style, towel-drying her hair, watching Bryan drive four tall tiki-torch candles into the sand at the corners of the blanket. JAMES TAYLOR'S "SOMETHING IN THE WAY SHE MOVES" PLAYS.

SWELL

Bryan, what are "grunion"?

BRYAN

(sitting next to her)

Oh, they're these fish that get washed
up here on shore, right after the
highest tide on the full moon. Or
the new moon. The, uh, female lays
her eggs in the sand, and then the
guy grunion fertilizes them.

*
*

SWELL

Oh...so, they don't...do it...together?

BRYAN

Uh, no...not like us. I mean, like humans.

(a beat)

You wanna walk down to the water and watch for them?

SWELL

Uh...sure.

Bryan stands, holds out his hand to help her up. She takes his hand, stands. An awkward beat as they realize they're holding hands. PULL BACK; the Clown Dog van is parked nearby; the demented clown's head is smiling down on them. JAMES TAYLOR plays over the van's P.A.. Swell and Bryan stroll down to the water.

BRYAN

Are you going to college? Or...what? What do you want to do?

SWELL

I'm supposed to register at City College... maybe take some design classes...or fashion...I don't know. What about you?

BRYAN

My parents want me to go to UCSD. They have a good oceanography program there...but I'm not sure. Figured I'd keep saving up for it anyway. That's why I'm working at Clown Dog. I always thought my parents had this big college fund for me....

SWELL

Yeah, but that's only on those savings and loan commercials.

BRYAN

Yeah, where everyone has a piece of the rock...I don't know, I haven't really decided on anything yet. Like a "career." It's like, once you decide on something, it's all planned out. Your life's planned.

SWELL

Yeah, it's like, all of a sudden, anything you do means that's your life. But I'm not even sure yet how I want my life to be.

BRYAN

Yeah...and then you're stuck in this plan, cause you decided, and you're old. Or older. I don't know. I guess I'm stalling...You know what I mean?

A beat. She looks at him thoughtfully, smiles.

BRYAN (cont'd)

What?

SWELL

Nothing...I just...know what you mean.

They gaze into each other's eyes, then lean forward, as if to kiss, but start laughing self-consciously.

BRYAN

Uh, this is always....

SWELL

Yeah, I hate this part...I mean, I like this part, but...oh, God....

BRYAN

No, it's O.K.....come here.

SWELL

No...I ruined the moment.

BRYAN

No, I ruined it. 'Cause I talked about it. When you talk about it, you ruin the moment. I ruined the moment.

A beat. They look at each other, then kiss gently, passionately. Gads of grunion wash up on shore, slithering and flopping over Swell and Bryan's feet; they're oblivious, still kissing.

85. EXT. CRANDELL HOUSE - LATER - NIGHT

85. *

The Clown Dog van is parked in the driveway.

86. INT. CLOWN DOG VAN - NIGHT

86.

Swell plays with a piece of seaweed.

SWELL

Thanks a lot for tonight.

*

BRYAN

Yeah...I had a good time...you want to go out again, like Thursday?

*

SWELL

Yeah...that'd be great. *

BRYAN

Yeah, we'll find another really good moment. *

She pecks him on the cheek. They look at each other a moment, about to kiss again, when Melissa throws herself in front of the windshield, wearing a catcher's mask and brandishing a spatula. Swell and Bryan shriek, startled.

87. INT. CRANDELL LIVING ROOM - MORNING

87.

Kenny is sacked out on the couch, fast asleep. Swell, dressed "adult" for work, comes in, angry.

SWELL

Kenny, the food I bought yesterday is already gone!

KENNY

(groggy)

Hey, I was entertaining some friends last night. We had the munchies.

SWELL

I'm not working to feed your scummy friends!

KENNY

You're a career woman. We can afford to be hospitable.

SWELL
(taking money from purse)
Here. Buy more food for the kids.

KENNY
Hey, all right! You got paid!

SWELL
Well...not exactly. It's office money.
They call it "petty cash." My paycheck's
gonna be for, like, over a thousand
dollars. I'll be able to put it all
back. I gotta go.

Swell grabs a stack of piled-up mail, heads out.

SWELL (cont'd)
I don't want your friends hanging around
my house! And mow the lawn! And do
the dishes!

88. EXT. CRANDELL HOUSE-LATER - DAY

88.

Kenny and his Buddies are on the roof, beside a stack of the Cran-
dell dirty dishes, shooting "skeet" with an air rifle; Kenny aims.

KENNY
Pull!

Lizard throws a plate in the air; Kenny SHOOTs it to pieces.

KENNY (cont'd)
The dishes are done, man!

✱

LIZARD
Cleans right down to the shine, man!

✱

89. INT. SWELL'S OFFICE-EARLY AFTERNOON - DAY

89.

Swell is struggling at the computer. Rose enters from her office,
breezy, feeling perfectly fine.

✱

ROSE
Sue Ellen, do you have any Darvon?

SWELL
No...sorry. Are you O.K.?

ROSE
Yeah, I'm just going to get a bikini
wax on my lunch hour. Oh, well...be
back at one-thirty.

Rose leaves. Swell takes the Crandell mail out, starts opening it;
it's all bills. Cathy enters.

CATHY

Oh, hi! I finished those sales projections for you.

(re: mail)

Oh, bills...don't you hate that? It's the only mail I ever get. Wow, a pink notice...I got a pink notice once, and I couldn't pay it, 'cause I had to get my cat spayed. They turned off my electricity. Have you ever tried making Jiffy Pop with Sterno? They're ruthless.

*
*

SWELL

Yeah, and I'm broke till payday...did you finish the Q.E.D. Report?

CATHY

No, not yet, I'm sorry. But I'll finish it as soon as I can, I swear!

SWELL

(feeling guilty)

Cathy, are you sure?

CATHY

Oh, Sue Ellen, I can handle it, really! The Q.E.D. Report is terrific training for me. I mean, I really appreciate this. Maybe they'll move me up to administration some day. Can I cash a check?

SWELL

Yeah, sure.

(removing cash box from drawer)
Sterno, huh...?

Swell cashes Cathy's check.

CATHY

Yeah.... Thanks again!

Cathy leaves. Swell is about to put the petty cash box away, when she glances at the Crandell bills, then at all that money in the petty cash box. She thinks a moment, then scoops up all the cash, slips it with the bills into her purse.

90. INT. G.A.W. ASSEMBLY LINE - DAY

90.

HUM OF MACHINES. WORKERS run about with bolts of cloth, racks of uniforms. Franklin, the head designer, has Swell approve a purchase order. Several mannequins are set up, all wearing school uniforms. Swell examines the boring uniform. Gus Brandon passes by.

GUS
Sue Ellen, hi, I was just gonna see
if Rose wanted to grab some lunch in
the cafeteria.

SWELL
Oh, you missed her. Sorry.

GUS
(a beat)
Hungry?

91. EXT. LOVELY, EXPENSIVE RESTAURANT - DAY

91.

Swell and Gus ZOOM up to valet parking in Gus' red Ferrari. An Attendant opens Swell's door, helps her out. She loves this.

92. INT. LOVELY, EXPENSIVE RESTAURANT - DAY

92.

A STRING QUARTET PLAYS. Swell and Gus are seated on the patio, at an intimate table for two. The Maitre d' pulls out Swell's chair, puts her linen napkin on her lap; Swell has never been treated like this before. She looks around at the Elegant Lunch Patrons, trying to seem sophisticated, and pulls out a cigarette. Unexpected, Gus lights it for her.

SWELL
Thank you. So, how long've you and
Rose been together?

GUS
Well, we're not really "together." A
few months. We agreed, we're not
exclusive.

SWELL
Oh.

GUS
Yeah, I date other women. Dinner,
movies, jazz clubs, the symphony. Do
you like classical music?

SWELL
I played the cello in my high school
orchestra.

He laughs; she smiles.

GUS
Do people always tell you how young you
look?

SWELL
No, not usually.

GUS

Married?

SWELL

No....

GUS

I didn't think so. You're not wearing a ring. You just look so...youthful.

(laughing)

I'd ask how old you are, but most women don't really like that.

SWELL

(smiling weakly)

No, we don't....

GUS

It baffles me. A woman gets older, she matures, she ripens, the juices start flowing...what's to hide?

A white-on-white, ultra-proficient WAITER advances on them.

WAITER

Would you like something from the bar?

GUS

Have a drink. It's a special occasion.

SWELL

Oh...all right...

(she goes blank; a beat)

I'll have...a Martini and Rossi. On the rocks.

WAITER

(a beat; deadpan)

Ah. Yes. And for you, sir?

GUS

White wine spritzer.

The Waiter zips away.

SWELL

What's the special occasion?

GUS

(charming)

It's our first lunch together.

SWELL

Oh.

GUS
This'll give us a chance to break down
some of those corporate barriers.

SWELL
Right.

GUS
(laughing)
By the end of lunch, we'll probably be
sharing our intimate histories. Stories
of our "first time."

Swell looks around, a little uncomfortable.

GUS (cont'd)
And next thing you know, we'll be
sharing a cigarette in post-coital
bliss.

He laughs. Swell blinks.

SWELL
(confused)
Are you talking about us having sex?

GUS
Hey, hold on! Slow down. You're moving
too fast for me. But if that scenario
interests you, it can be arranged.
(joking)
And if it doesn't, I was kidding.
(looking at menu)
The rosemary chicken is delicious here.
Very tender.

Gus smiles at her. Swell looks at her menu, at a loss for words.

93. INT. G.A.W. RECEPTION AREA - DAY

93.

Swell hurries out of the freight elevator, followed by Gus.

SWELL
Well, thanks for lunch.

GUS
Anytime.

They head to their separate offices. Carolyn and Bruce overhear.

CAROLYN
(suspicious)
Now she's kissing up to Brandon. I
can't stand that conniving little snot!

X
X

94. INT. ROSE'S OFFICE - EVENING

94.

Swell and Rose, both smoking, are sitting on the floor, putting together a presentation. They're bogged down with piles of paper, stacks of computer print-outs, files, newspapers, magazines, and Chinese food containers. Rose pulls out a newspaper clipping.

ROSE

...here's another one. In Minneapolis an eleventh-grader beat up a schoolmate over a rhinestone leather jacket and a pair of Fiorucci jeans....

SWELL

I just don't think students are gonna want to wear uniforms. I mean, don't you think they're kind of plain? Boring?

ROSE

Frankly, it's not up to the students to decide. Next week, I'll sit the Superintendent of the School System down over Eggs Florentine and convince him that mandatory school uniforms are necessary. For the safety of our schoolchildren. Not to mention for boosting G.A.W. sales. It'll be absolutely perfect.

SWELL

I don't know, Rose...kids like to wear stuff that's...them. My high school was like a fashion show.

ROSE

Sure, back then it was safe. But times they are a-changin'.

(glancing at watch)

That's it. Let's stop. I'm exhausted, I'm late to meet Gus.

SWELL

Yeah...so, do you think you and Gus are gonna end up together?

Rose opens the drawer to a file cabinet (armoire or desk), flips open a lighted, magnifying vanity mirror; from another drawer or compartment she finds hairspray and cosmetics, begins primping.

ROSE

Well, I brought up the cohabitation topic recently, and we gave it some serious thought...and we decided it was really more practical and convenient if we maintained our separate space. Which basically means he isn't ready to commit.

Rose goes behind her Japanese screen to change her blouse, draping the old one over the screen.

ROSE (cont'd)

You know how they are. They're all little boys, pretending to be men, right?

SWELL

Yeah...all the guys I've dated are boys....

ROSE

Precisely. It's the Peter Pan Syndrome. You've been a big help. Go home, have a glass of wine, and put some cucumber slices on your eyes. You'll feel better.

SWELL

Oh, I'm all out of cucumbers.

Rose emerges in a sexy, sheer, black chiffon blouse.

ROSE

Sue Ellen, every woman over twenty-five should have a cucumber in the house.
(gathering paperwork into briefcase)
God, I really need to get away. Gus's been trying to talk me into a wild, dirty weekend in Santa Barbara, which I really want to do, but I didn't want him to know that, so I haven't been too enthusiastic about it, but I think tonight I'll start letting him persuade me...

95. Omitted

95.

Swell flips off the lights.

*

96. INT. PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT

96.

Swell and Rose walk to their cars.

ROSE

...I think it's always good to keep 'em guessing. Otherwise, they adopt that Henry the Eighth mentality. Besides, I think it's hard for a man to date a Senior V.P. when he's just an ordinary V.P. The whole castration thing. Are you seeing anybody?

SWELL

Yeah...someone new. He's...uh...a marine biologist.

ROSE

Wonderful. May you make it through the summer together and have a date for New Year's Eve.

97. EXT. BOULEVARD-LATER - NIGHT

97:

Swell and Bryan drive in the Clown Dog van.

98. INT. VAN - NIGHT

98.

Swell, dressed in her funky "teenage" clothes, is flipping through an L.A. Weekly.

SWELL

Do you have plans yet for New Year's Eve?

BRYAN

What? It's July.

SWELL

Yeah...I was just kind of wondering.... Hey, have you ever been to Club Lingerie?

BRYAN

Nope. Gotta be twenty-one.

SWELL

Oh...drag.
(yawns)

BRYAN
They must be running you ragged.

SWELL
Yeah, well, I guess they haven't heard
about child labor laws.

BRYAN
Hey, I know what we can do. *

99. INT. "TOYS R US" TOY STORE - NIGHT

99.

Swell and Bryan browse down aisles, looking at toys. Bryan heads down the model airplane aisle; Swell picks up a Barbie doll, smiles, remembering. A moment later, she hears a BIG BOUNCING SOUND.

BRYAN (o.s.)
Hey, Swell? Come here!

Swell turns down another aisle; Bryan is sitting on a bright red "Hoppity-Hop." He BOUNCES down the aisle toward her.

BRYAN (cont'd)
Remember these things? They're great!
Here, bounce with me!

He BOUNCES another Hoppity-Hop over to her.

SWELL
(self-conscious)
No...I'd feel stupid. We're too old
to bounce....

BRYAN
(teasing)
Bouncing is an ageless pastime.

SWELL
Bryan, come on....

BRYAN
(mock-earnest)
Would you feel more comfortable if I
started bouncing first?

SWELL
(laughing)
I don't know....

Bryan BOUNCES down the aisle. Swell reluctantly climbs on her Hoppity-Hop, barely BOUNCES, then gets into it. They BOUNCE with abandon, laughing. Customers look at them curiously. Bryan stops BOUNCING, watches Swell BOUNCE. Realizing she's BOUNCING alone, Swell stops.

SWELL
(exhausted; laughing)
Why'd you stop?

BRYAN
Good moment.

He leans over and they kiss, precariously, trying not to lose their balance...until they are interrupted by an OFFICIOUS STORE CLERK in a red Toys R Us vest.

OFFICIOUS CLERK
Hey! Get off those things!

100. EXT. CRANDELL HOUSE-LATER - NIGHT

100.

Bryan walks Swell to the door.

BRYAN
Hey, I'm off tomorrow. Going to the beach with some buddies. You want to go? *

SWELL
(disappointed)
I can't...work....

BRYAN
Oh, yeah. The grind. Hey, you wanna go to a Dodger game tomorrow night?

SWELL
Yeah. Great.

BRYAN
Yeah, my sister and her boyfriend have some extra tickets. Box seats.

SWELL
No! Wait! We can't...I...just remembered, I hate baseball. *

BRYAN
Well, okay, I guess...we'll do something else. Just the two of us, huh? *

SWELL
(relieved)
Yeah. Good....

BRYAN
I'll pick you up at work. Around six?

SWELL

No! Don't do that! I'll call you when I get home.

BRYAN

Swell, what's going on?

SWELL

Nothing. Going out tomorrow night's great.

BRYAN

Why won't you tell me where you work?
I mean, I--are you doing something illegal?
Are you working for "the Mob"?

SWELL

No, no...I just...don't want you to know.

BRYAN

Well, what if I wanted to send you flowers or something?

SWELL

You could send them to my house.

BRYAN

Who'd sign for them?

SWELL

One of the kids.

BRYAN

Well, what if they're not home? Why are you making this so complicated?

SWELL

Then don't send me flowers!

BRYAN

I just want to know what you do all day!

SWELL

Look, just drop it! Stop acting like Henry the Eighth!

BRYAN

What's Henry the Eighth got to do with this? Just forget it! Sorry I cared!

SWELL

That's a shitty thing to say! You're just pissed off because I don't want to meet your sister!

BRYAN

(confused)

Who cares about my sister?! All I said
was she's been in a slump 'cause of
that backstabber at her office! Just
come to the game. What's the big deal?
They're box seats!

*
*
*

SWELL

How do you know that woman at her office
is a backstabber? Maybe she's nice!
Why are you being so judgmental about
her?!

*

BRYAN

Look, Swell, what's up with you? Are
you are you seeing someone else? If
you're seeing another guy, just tell
me! Just be honest!

*

SWELL

No, no, there's nobody else...I'm just...
it's just...I really wish you could
respect my privacy.

He walks to his van, gets in.

BRYAN

I'd respect your privacy if you weren't
so secretive!

SWELL

I'd tell you more if you didn't want
to know so much!

BRYAN

Okay, fine. Don't tell me anything.
I'm outta here.

He turns the ENGINE on; CIRCUS MUSIC BLARES. He drives off. Swell
runs into the house, frustrated.

101. INT. MOM'S BEDROOM - DAWN

101.

The merciless 5:30 A.M. ALARM BUZZES. A sleeping Swell groans.

102. INT. CRANDELL KITCHEN - MORNING

102.

Kenny, in jeans and a T-shirt, is obsessively preparing Belgian waffles. Already there is a towering stack of deformed and broken ones. Zach, Melissa, Walter, and Elvis sit at the kitchen table; on Zach's plate is a burnt-to-a-crisp waffle; on Melissa's plate is a goopy waffle. Kenny puts a the ruin of a waffle on Walter's plate.

WALTER

(shaking head)

Doesn't look like Julia's.

KENNY

Shut up, quizoid.

Swell rushes in, yawning, dressed in "adult" clothes for the office. Overflowing bags of garbage are everywhere; she CRASHES into one, knocking it over.

SWELL

(to Kenny)

You're up?

Kenny proudly waves a spoon at the stack of waffles.

KENNY

Been at it all night. Check these babies out. Belgian waffles! Julia made 'em on her show yesterday.

*
*

SWELL

Did you turn the air conditioner on?

*

KENNY

I was hot.

SWELL

(adjusting thermostat)

I'm stuck with the bills. I want this kept on seventy-six.

KENNY

Wow, man, you take these things so personally....

Swell puts her purse down, take a carton of orange juice out of the fridge, opens the cabinet for a glass; the cabinets are bare. Zach sneaks a few bills from Swell's purse.

SWELL

Where are all the dishes?

KENNY

(covering)

Oh...they're all in the dishwasher.

SWELL

So empty it.

KENNY

That's Zach's job.

ZACH

I'll do it later. *

SWELL

Melissa, it's your turn to dump the trash.

MELISSA

Couldn't fit it into my schedule.

Frustrated, Swell kicks a trash bag across the room. Walter sneaks a large wad of cash from Swell's purse. Then, thinking it may be too much, puts some of it back.

ZACH

Bryan still hasn't called, huh?

MELISSA

Just call the stud-horse.

SWELL

I'm letting him cool off. I'll call him in a few weeks. When all this is over. When I can go to the beach and take a towel and a Walkman and lie in the sun and rub oil on myself and not interface with anybody and get tan.

MELISSA

Hey, Little League sign-ups at eleven-thirty. Don't forget!

SWELL

Oh, Melissa, I can't today. I have a sales meeting. Shit....

MELISSA

You promised! *

SWELL

(sighing)
I know. I'm sorry....

WALTER

You're gonna be late for work.

SWELL

Yeah, yeah, yeah, I'm going. Enjoy your childhood.

103. EXT. DRIVEWAY - MORNING

103.

Swell is backing Mom's Volvo out of the garage. Kenny comes out.

KENNY

Hey, Sheena Queen of the Jungle, wait up.
I'm out of my cookie jar money.

SWELL

Fine. You have to take Melissa to
Little League.

KENNY

Hey, no way, man!

SWELL

(shrugging)

Hey, no cookie jar money, man!

He sighs, giving in. Swell fumbles in her purse, grabs a few
bills, hands them to Kenny.

SWELL (cont'd)

Make sure she's on time.

KENNY

Hey, the big exec plays hardball now.

104. EXT. LOS ANGELES FREEWAY - MORNING

104.

Swell sits in gridlock, clutching a spill-less mug of coffee, va-
cantly listening to KFWB NEWS. A convertible Mustang packed with
GIGGLING TEEN-AGED GIRLS in bikinis and their TEEN-AGED SURFER
BOYFRIENDS is in the lane next to her; they're ROCKING OUT TO K-ROQ
ON THE RADIO. Swell looks at them, wistfully, daydreaming about
those glorious days of youth gone by. The car behind her HONKS for
her to advance in traffic. She is startled out of the moment.

105. INT. G.A.W. RECEPTION AREA - MORNING

105.

The FREIGHT ELEVATOR JOLTS open. Swell steps out with other Employ-
ees, passes Carolyn sitting at the reception desk.

SWELL

Morning, Carolyn. Any messages?

Swell takes messages from her, heads to her office, then stops.

SWELL (cont'd)

Carolyn, I just want you to know that
I know you've been going through a
rough time, and I'm...sorry.

CAROLYN

Sue Ellen, why don't you run along?
I'll be just fine.

Swell shrugs, looks at her messages more closely.

SWELL

Um...Carolyn, these are all smeary. I
can't really read them.

CAROLYN

(insincere)
Oh, damn. Must be the ring from my
coffee cup. Sorry.

Swell heads to her office. Carolyn smirks to herself.

106. INT. SWELL'S OFFICE - DAY

106.

Swell enters, finds a dozen long-stemmed roses on her desk. She
takes the card out of its envelope marked "SUE ELLEN CRANDELL."

THE CARD

"YOU'RE THE ONE I WANT TO LISTEN TO BEAUTIFUL MUSIC WITH. GUS."

Enclosed are two tickets to the symphony. Swell, reading the card,
is stunned, and worried. Rose enters abruptly.

ROSE

Sue Ellen, operation Eggs Florentine was
a rousing success! The School Board's
gonna vote on it; the Superintendent needs
cost estimates from us by Wednesday.
This is going to triple our profit
margin -- we'll finally prove ourselves
to New York. Ooh, you got roses!
Who are they from?

SWELL

(too fast)
They're for you.

She crumples up the envelope, thrusts the roses and card at Rose.
Rose reads the card, delighted.

ROSE

Well! Obviously this weekend away in
Santa Barbara was the turning point
for us. Flashes of real intimacy.
Sue Ellen, have you ever had a forty-
eight hour orgasm?

SWELL

No...I've never been to Santa Barbara.

ROSE
Look at me, I'm glowing. The man makes
me glow. Am I glowing?

SWELL
Yeah, you're a little shiny.

ROSE
Oh God, I'm acting like a teenager.

SWELL
Here are your messages.

ROSE
Thanks. I'm gonna go glow in my office.

107. INT. XEROX ROOM - DAY

107.

Carolyn and Bruce are talking under cover of the XEROX NOISE.

CAROLYN
...I stole her resume from Personnel...
checked her out...I had a feeling.
None of those companies ever heard
of her. I'm going to Rose.

*

BRUCE
Yeah, but wait a minute. The void's
getting by.

The XEROX MACHINE STOPS. Carolyn RESTARTS THE MACHINE.

BRUCE (cont'd)
And Rose loves her. She's not gonna
care. You're gonna have to get something
better on her than that.

CAROLYN
(incredulous)
I mean, what did she do, copy it out
of a resume book?!

108. INT. CRANDELL LIVING ROOM - DAY

108.

Walter opens the door revealing two burly DELIVERY MEN with enormous
cardboard boxes propped on a dolly.

DELIVERY MAN #1
(showing invoice)
Crandell house? We got your Home
Entertainment Center.

WALTER
Yeah, set it up.

109. INT. ROSE'S OFFICE-LATER - DAY

109.

Swell enters with some files. Rose is on the speaker phone.

SUPERINTENDENT (o.s.)
...and it's all been pushed up. Can
you get me those cost estimates by
this afternoon?

ROSE
(too calm)
Oh. Robert. We'll messenger them over.
I don't see that being any dilemma at all.

Rose scribbles on a pad.

ROSE (cont'd)
(calling loudly)
Sue Ellen, how are those cost estimates
for the Superintendent coming? He needs
them this afternoon.

SWELL
(a beat)
I'm right on top of that, Rose.

Rose gives her a "thumbs-up," and holds up the pad:

"Q.E.D. REPORT A.S.A.P.!"

110. INT. LONG HALLWAY - DAY

110.

Swell races out of her office, down the hallway.

111. INT. FRED KIBRICK'S OFFICE - DAY

111. *

Sitting at a desk with the name plate "CATHY HENDERSON" is a cheer-
fully indifferent TEMP wearing a leather dress and wild make-up.

SWELL
(hurrying in; urgently)
Hi. Where's Cathy?

TEMP
Oh, I don't know. I'm a temp. Can I
help you? Probably not, I don't know
how to do anything around here....

112. INT. LONG HALLWAY - DAY

112.

Swell rushes out of Fred Kibrick's office in a panic.

*

113. INT. G.A.W. RECEPTION - DAY

113.

Carolyn is at her desk. Bryan, in his Clown Dog uniform, is

slouched in a chair.

CAROLYN
Bryan, just call her!

The FREIGHT ELEVATOR JOLTS open; Cathy steps out in a sweat suit, sneezing, congested, sick. She's carrying a large folder.

CATHY
Oh, hi, Carolyn. I'm sick. This is the Q.E.D. Report. I promised Sue Ellen I'd do it for her. Can you see she gets it? It's really important.

Carolyn takes the Q.E.D. Report with a sly smile. Cathy leaves just as Swell rushes into the reception area. She sees Bryan, freezes. His back is to her.

BRYAN
She's playing games. She's playing Twister with my heart. I don't know why. But she's keeping something from me. Maybe I should take some big, dramatic stance and...I don't know...but how can I compete with some mystery guy?!

CAROLYN
Bry, just forget about her. She's not worth it. You deserve better.
(noticing Swell)
Is there a problem, Sue Ellen?

Swell violently shakes her head "no" and ducks into the nearest office before Bryan can see her.

114. INT. OFFICE - DAY

114.

Swell enters, SLAMS the door.

GUS
Sue Ellen?

Swell turns, realizes she's ducked into Gus' office.

SWELL
Gus! Hi! I....

GUS
(twinkle in his eye)
Don't say anything. I understand.

SWELL
Wh--What do you understand?

GUS

Well, either the scenario is that you want to politely thank me for the roses. Or, you burst in here wanting to be impulsive and ask me to go to Carmel with you this weekend. Sure, we'll fly. I have my pilot's license.

*

SWELL

Gus, no! Maybe I've given you the wrong idea, but I'm not interested in you.

GUS

Then why'd you burst through my door? So determined...so eager....

SWELL

Well, I...why are you doing this to Rose?

GUS

Hey, look, I'm kidding. Maybe I've given you the wrong idea. Why don't we just start with the symphony?

SWELL

(leaving)

I'm not starting anything with you!

115. INT. RECEPTION AREA - DAY

115.

Swell slips past Bryan, escapes into the adjacent restroom.

116. INT. RESTROOM - DAY

116.

Swell enters, catches sight of her "adult" self in the mirror. She leans against the sink, sighs, overwhelmed.

117. INT. CRANDELL LIVING ROOM - DAY

117.

The Home Entertainment Center is set up: a 30" T.V., VCR, and stereo. The burly Delivery Men leave.

WALTER

Thanks! Bye!

Walter happily turns on the new big-screen T.V.; snowy interference on all channels. He hits the T.V., frustrated.

118. INT. KENNY'S BEDROOM - DAY

118.

Kenny and his Buddies are getting high, and munching on deformed Belgian waffles.

LIZARD
Hey, Scruff, next batch do more mocha
Swiss Amaretto ones!

MOLE
Gourmet munchies, man. Yeah!

WALTER (o.s.)
Kenny?!

SKULL
Someone's beckoning, man.

WALTER (o.s.)
Kenny?! I need you. Come help!

KENNY
(opening bedroom door, shouting
downstairs)
I'm in a meeting! Have Bob Barker
help you!

Kenny laughs, kicks the door shut.

119. EXT. CRANDELL HOUSE - DAY

119.

Walter peers up at the master antenna on the roof.

120. EXT. GARAGE - DAY

120.

Walter drags an aluminum ladder out, struggles to prop it against
the side of the house.

121. EXT. ROOF - DAY

121.

The ladder has been set up, and Walter reaches the top. He scram-
bles across the wood shingles, precariously, toward the antenna at
the peak of the roof. Walter reaches out to the antenna, loses his
footing, starts sliding backward. Just as he's falling off the
roof, he grabs on to a tree branch.

*

122. INT. KENNY'S BEDROOM - DAY

122.

HEAVY METAL MUSIC BLASTS. They are eating and partying heartily,
when they look up and see Walter's little body, legs flailing, swing
past the window from the tree branch; the branch snaps and he falls.

*
*
*

LIZARD
(stoned stupor)
Whoa.

Kenny goes over to the window, looks down.

KENNY

Walter?
(shocked)
Holy shit!

123. INT. G.A.W. RECEPTION - DAY

123.

Swell peeks out of the restroom, watches Bryan leave in the freight elevator. She comes out. A MAILROOM CLERK wheels a cart by.

MAILROOM CLERK

Oh, Sue Ellen, here.
(handing her envelope; leaving)
Your paycheck.

Swell looks at the Mailroom Clerk, slowly takes the first paycheck she has ever earned in her entire life. CELESTIAL MUSIC PLAYS as she gazes at her name on the check through the window envelope. She is about to open it when:

ROSE

(abruptly approaching)
Sue Ellen, where have you been?!
Where's the Q.E.D. Report?

SWELL

(doomed; pocketing paycheck)
Rose...I....

CAROLYN

Ah, yes. The Q.E.D. Report. I have that for you, Rose.

ROSE

Why do you have it? Sue Ellen, what is Carolyn doing with it?

CAROLYN

(triumphant)
Cathy Henderson dropped it off. It seems she's been covering for Sue Ellen, doing her work for her.

ROSE

(to Swell)
You let Cathy do the Q.E.D. Report?

Carolyn raises an eyebrow.

SWELL

(at a loss)
Uh huh.

ROSE

I was wondering how you were going to get that and the research for the school presentation done! Well, bravo! You know how to delegate responsibility. Carolyn, you want to become executive material? Keep an eye on Sue Ellen.

(to Swell)

You're a paragon.

Carolyn's PHONE BUZZES.

GUS

(entering)

Rose? Lunch?

ROSE

(smiling)

Love to. Thanks for the roses.

GUS

(glancing at Swell)

Don't mention it.

CAROLYN

(into phone)

General Apparel West?

One moment please....

CAROLYN (cont'd)

Sue Ellen, River Ridge Hospital is on line three. There's an emergency with your son...?

SWELL

My son? Oh, my son!

ROSE

Your son?

GUS

Her son?

SWELL

(picking up extension)

Hello? Yes, this is Mrs. Crandell... what?! Oh my God! Okay, okay. I'm on my way! Tell him I'm on my way!
(hangs up)

ROSE

Is everything O.K.?

Swell takes the Q.E.D. Report from Carolyn, gives it to Rose.

SWELL

Yeah...I hope so.

ROSE
I didn't know you were married.

SWELL
(upset; rushing back to office)
I'm not. I'm...divorced. Painful
memory. I don't like to talk about it.

124. EXT. BOULEVARD - DAY 124.

Swell frantically speeds along.

125. EXT. RIVER RIDGE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL - DAY 125.

Swell SCREECHES into a parking space.

126. INT. HOSPITAL - DAY 126.

Swell enters an automatic sliding door, races toward the emergency room, tensely clutching her adult purse, her high heels CLICKING.

127. INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - DAY 127.

Kenny sits in the waiting room, shaken. Swell arrives.

KENNY
Swell, I don't know if he's O.K.! He's
in with the doctor. He better be O.K....
oh, God...oh, man....

SWELL
Okay, okay, what happened?!

Walter, wearing a cast to his knee, is helped out of the examining room on crutches by a DOCTOR.

DOCTOR
Mrs. Crandell? I'm Dr. Perlmutter.

SWELL
Yes, hello. I'm Mrs. Crandell.
Walter's mom. How is he? What
happened? Walter? How do you feel,
honey? Does it hurt?

Walter nods. Kenny drops his head in his hands, upset.

DOCTOR
It's a clean break. Should heal nicely.

WALTER
I fell off the roof.

SWELL
You...what was he doing on the roof?!

KENNY

I wasn't there! I should've been! I mean, not on the roof, but with him! Taking care of him! Reading Green Eggs and Ham or some shit like that!
(embracing Walter)
Walt, I'm sorry, man!

*

DOCTOR

(a beat)
Mrs. Crandell, you'll need to bring him back for a walking cast in about six weeks.
(handing prescription)
Have him take one of these if he's in any pain.

KENNY

Walt, we'll stop and get you an ice cream cone, okay?

Walter nods.

SWELL

That doesn't make up for your irresponsibility.

KENNY

I screwed up, O.K.?! I'm sorry!

DOCTOR

(to Swell; re: Kenny)
Is he your son, too?

SWELL

Oh, no...he's my stepson.

KENNY

Yeah, that's why we don't get along.

SWELL

Well, I better get us home for supper. I'm making...pot roast. Walter's favorite. Come on, kids. Chop, chop!

128. INT. VOLVO - DAY

128.

Swell drives. Kenny sits in back with Walter, drawing an elaborate peace sign on his cast. Swell opens her paycheck envelope.

SWELL

Wait...shit!

KENNY

What?

SWELL

My paycheck's only seven hundred and thirty-five dollars!

KENNY

Thought you were getting, like, over a grand!

SWELL

Taxes! They took half my money away for taxes! And some pension and savings plan! Did you know they do that?

129. EXT. CRANDELL PORCH - DAY

129.

Swell and Kenny help Walter to the front door.

SWELL

(re: paycheck)

...at least I made enough to cover what we've spent from petty cash....

130. INT. INCREDIBLY MESSY CRANDELL LIVING ROOM - DAY

130.

Swell, Kenny, and Walter enter. Zach and Melissa are watching Hollywood Squares on the new, giant color television set -- part of a new Home Entertainment Center. Elvis chews a big rawhide toy. *

ZACH

Walter, how're you doing?

MELISSA

(trying to be nice)

Hollywood Square's on. *

Melissa and Zach help Walter recline on the couch.

SWELL

(noticing T.V.)

Where did that come from?

KENNY

Hey, bitchin'!

ZACH

Yeah, it's state of the art.

SWELL

(to kids)

Where'd you get the money?

ZACH

Well...it's petty cash money. You were spending petty cash money.

SWELL

(exploding)

Zach, I bought a pair of boots and a magazine! You bought a Home Entertainment Center?!

ZACH

It was Walter's idea.

SWELL

It's going back!

MELISSA

We can't take it back. We bought it on sale.

SWELL

How could you do that?!

ZACH

He got a great deal.

SWELL

It wasn't your money! It was my money!

KENNY

You know, it wasn't even your money. You embezzled it.

SWELL

I didn't embezzle it. I borrowed it. I was gonna put it all back when I got my paycheck. But we can't afford this stuff!

She drops onto the couch, anxiously goes through her wallet.

SWELL (cont'd)

How could you do this?! You'd never steal from Mom!

ZACH

Mom never has that much.

SWELL

(re: wallet)

There's only thirty bucks left!

MELISSA

You should see the Zsa Zsa diamond ring he bought Cynthia.

SWELL

You bought her a diamond?! How much was it?

ZACH

It was a ship! And she's the love of my life. You can't put a price tag on that.

SWELL

Get it back from her!

ZACH

Hey, a diamond is forever!

MELISSA

And I needed a new bike. And I got Walter the Home edition of Super Password. And Elvis got a chew toy.

Elvis is busy chewing.

SWELL

You spent over three thousand dollars! You're grounded! You're all grounded! How could you steal from me?!

KENNY

They didn't steal. They borrowed. They followed your irresponsible example.

SWELL

Shut up, Kenny! I'm in debt!

MELISSA

Quit your job. Get out while you can.

SWELL

I'm an embezzler. They'll throw me in prison.

ZACH

Judge'll probably go easy on you. You're a minor.

MELISSA

Go underground!

WALTER

(yelling at T.V.)

Take the 4-Runner!

SWELL

No! I won't give up! We'll economize! I'll keep working! I'll put in some overtime! In a few more paychecks I'll be able to put it all back, and no one'll know! I'm innocent!

131. INT. SWELL'S OFFICE - EARLY NEXT MORNING

131.

Rose enters abruptly with an empty cardboard box and slams the door.

ROSE

G.A.W.'s history! We're all gonna be
out of a job!

SWELL

What?!

INT. ROSE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Swell follows Rose in; Rose is frantically throwing arbitrary personal belongings into the cardboard box.

ROSE

The School Board rejected it! You
were right, Sue Ellen. The students
got wind of it and held a big protest
last night. They burned uniforms in
effigy! It got ugly! The parents
gave in. This was our last hope!
We'll all probably be canned tomorrow!

Rose accidentally knocks the M&M's jar off the desk; M&M's spill
out.

SWELL

(removing item from Rose's box)
Rose, can't you talk to New York?
Convince them to give us a little more
time? So we can keep working?

ROSE

(on her knees; picking M&M's off
the floor)
Why bother?! Let's get out with some
dignity! Oh my God, I'm gonna have to
refinance my condo! And there goes my
trip to Italy! Listen, it's just a job!
It's not the end of the world! I'm gonna
blow an aneurysm!

SWELL

(unpacking another item from Rose's box)
But Rose, I need this job! I...have
kids to feed!

ROSE

Kids? I thought you had just the one son?

SWELL

(thinking fast)
And my little girl! And Rose...I have
to tell you...I have a problem--

ROSE
(compulsively eating M&M's and lighting
a cigarette at the same time)
Oh, you're not going to have any problem.
You'll be fine. Believe me, with your
qualifications and background, you'll
land an even better job. Trust me.
You may as well start cleaning out your
desk. Close out petty cash. Do me a
favor and break the news to Franklin?
You're so good at dealing with staff.
(hysterical, smoking, chewing)
I absolutely refuse to get upset about
this!

132. INT. G.A.W. MANUFACTURING/ASSEMBLY LINE - DAY

132.

Swell looks helplessly at Franklin, who is slumped over his drawing board, weeping, the cigar in his hand.

SWELL
...Franklin, believe me, with your
qualifications and background, you'll
land an even better job....

FRANKLIN
Yes, thank you, Sue Ellen...you've been
a trouper to the end...I--

He starts crying harder. Swell hands him a fabric swatch; he blows his nose.

Swell, stricken, walks in a daze past the Seamstresses, Cutters, racks and racks of uniforms. She stops at a rack of plain-Jane schoolgirl uniforms, shakes her head, and sighs. She turns, bumps into a BELLIGERENT MAN wheeling a rack of bellhop uniforms. He grunts, moves on. As he passes, Swell grabs the last bellhop jacket from the rack. She holds it up, appraises it thoughtfully; it's burgundy, tailored, short in front, long in back, with gold fringed epaulets. She looks at another rack of candy-cane pink waitress uniforms, back at the schoolgirl uniforms. A beat. She smiles to herself, suddenly energized.

133. INT. ROSE'S OFFICE-IMMEDIATELY - DAY

133.

Rose is clutching the vase with Gus' roses. Swell bursts in.

SWELL
Rose, I have an idea!

134. INT. NON TEX-MEX RESTAURANT-LATER - DAY

134.

An elegant, trendy restaurant. Swell and Rose are sitting at a table for two, looking over a folder of notes.

ROSE

(excited)
...this is going to save our collective
ass. It's fabulous. But I don't want
New York to know about it. They'd
never approve funding. You should
have more than enough in petty cash
to work with. And be sure to get an ice
sculpture. I love those.

SWELL

Petty cash?

A HOSTESS leads Bryan and a 16-year-old cheerleader-type, JULIET,
past Swell and Rose's table. *

BRYAN

(meeting Swell's eyes; startled)
Oh...hi! Uh....

SWELL

(very shocked, almost choking)
Bryan! Hi! Bryan!
(wiping mouth with napkin)

BRYAN

Yeah...serendipity, huh? I've never seen
your hair like that.... How's it going? *

SWELL

(very adult)
Just fine. Things are fine. Yes.... *

The Hostess seats Juliet. Bryan lingers, feeling guilty.

BRYAN

Uh, that's Juliet over there....

SWELL

(concealing jealousy)
And she seems like a very sweet young
lady. Very poised.

BRYAN

(sheepish)
Uh, yeah, my sister wants me to meet
her...she's having lunch with us....

SWELL

Really? Your sister? Check, please?!

BRYAN

We should really talk about what
happened the other night. It was
really stupid.

SWELL
(still very adult)
Oh. Yes. I'm sorry about what occurred.
Waiter?! *

BRYAN
Yeah...maybe it was just a communication
meltdown...so, let's talk about it.
Thrash it out?

SWELL
Yeah, fine. Perhaps another time?
(to WAITER) *
Can we please have our check?

WAITER
(annoyed) *
Yeah, it'll happen, ma'am.

Swell goes back to her folder, business-like.

BRYAN
(covering feeling rejected)
Yeah, well, this isn't a good time for
me, either...maybe I'll see you around
some time.
(to Rose)
Bye.

ROSE
Bye-bye.

Bryan joins Juliet on the other side of the restaurant. Swell looks
at them, feeling frustrated and jealous.

ROSE (cont'd)
Who's the kid?

SWELL
(snapping out of it)
Oh. He's my pool-man. Pool-boy.

ROSE
(laughing)
Oh...you know, for a minute there, it
almost sounded like....

SWELL
(laughing too hard)
With my pool boy? Are you serious?
He's seventeen years old! He's a baby!

ROSE
Well, he and his little girlfriend are
adorable.

Swell looks back at Bryan, feeling terrible, as Rose puts bills down on the table. They leave.

134A. EXT. FASHION DISTRICT STREET

134A.

Swell and Rose exit the restaurant, walk back to the office. Lots of Business People on their hectic lunch hours. TRAFFIC WHIZZES BY.

ROSE

...so you'll need to rent a banquet hall.
You have enough in petty cash to cover
that, right?

SWELL

Oh...well....
(feeling trapped; about to confess)
Rose I have something I have to tell you...
(a beat; thinking)
Banquet halls are so impersonal. My
house is fabulous. We can have it
there. It'll be absolutely perfect.

135. INT. INCREDIBLY MESSY CRANDELL LIVING ROOM-LATER - DAY

135.

Kenny, Zach, Melissa, Walter, and Elvis look up at Swell, who's holding a clipboard.

SWELL

We're a family of felons! Now I want
this place spic n' span by Saturday
night, or I'm turning us all in! Are
you with me?

KENNY

We're with you, Big "S"! All right!

*

BEGIN MONTAGE: MUSIC OVER:

136. EXT. CRANDELL HOUSE - DAY

136.

Kenny attempts to pull the cord on the lawn mower to start it up -- no luck. Melissa is ripping out weeds with a vengeance. Zach confronts a month's worth of unopened newspapers, loads them into Walter's Big Wheel; Elvis runs up with a newspaper in her mouth, drops it in the Big Wheel. Kenny tries spraying the lawn mower with Pam (cooking spray), the motor still won't start. Zach gets the mail; there's a "kangaroo" postcard from Mom. Kenny is still struggling to start the lawn mower; Melissa walks by, gives the cord a good yank -- it starts right up.

137. INT. G.A.W. MANUFACTURING WAREHOUSE - DAY - QUICK SHOTS

137.

Swell directs EMPLOYEES with racks of uniforms. Rose and Franklin look over several dress dummies as Swell shows them sketches and gestures adjustments to be made in style and fit.

138. INT. CRANDELL HOUSE - DAY

138.

Kenny is vacuuming the living room; Elvis BARKS at the vacuum; a corner of the living room carpet gets sucked up; Kenny pulls it up,

revealing a hardwood floor; he drops the vacuum, begins to rip the carpet off the floor in the whole room. Zach mops the kitchen floor, dancing with the mop, like Fred Astaire. Melissa pokes a bag of trash out the door with her toy machine gun. Walter is camped out on the couch with Elvis watching WIN, LOSE, OR DRAW, feeding Elvis Cheetos; his cast is propped up on a big pillow. *

139. INT. G.A.W. XEROX/FAX ROOM - DAY

139.

Swell is FAXING like a pro; she's got the office routine down pat.

140. INT. CRANDELL KITCHEN - DAY

140.

Zach washes pots and pans. Melissa drags piles of laundry into the laundry room. Kenny is watching JULIA CHILD on the portable T.V. while chopping vegetables. He has a phone at his ear.

141. INT. SWELL'S OFFICE - DAY

141.

Swell is on the phone.

KENNY (o.s.)

...but the recipe calls for shrimp.
I need some more cash.

SWELL

...Kenny, I told you, we have to economize. There's nothing left in petty cash! I've taken it all!

Bruce, passing by, overhears.

142. EXT. CRANDELL BACKYARD - DAY

142.

Swell talks to Lizard and the Heavy Metal guys, who are eager to please her; she hands them bow ties and black vests. Kenny is unloading wood. Mole is on top off his pick-up truck, unscrewing the headlight rack. Lizard and Skull unload enormous speakers and amps from the back of the truck. Zach and Melissa are attacking the weeds. Walter sits and watches. Melissa finds something strange in the weeds, digs; it's a section of a plastic cover; she tugs at a flap of it, looks underneath.

MELISSA

Hey, what is this? Hey, Kenny, what the hell is this?

KENNY

(walking over)

Oh, yeah, that's the pool.

ZACH

(remembering)

Hey, yeah! The pool! *

MELISSA & WALTER
We have a pool?!

KENNY
(pulling pool cover off)
Yeah, before you tykes were born.

MELISSA
(diving in)
Bitchin'!
(emerging from scummy pool)
Swamp thing!

*
*
*
*

143. INT. G.A.W. CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT

143.

Swell enters briskly, carrying a portfolio. A dozen EMPLOYEES, looking tired, sit up, slurping coffee. All eyes focus on Swell.

SWELL
Thanks for staying, everyone. We're gonna pull an all-nighter.

144. INT. SWELL'S OFFICE-SIMULTANEOUS - NIGHT

144

Bruce, holding a flashlight and a screwdriver, looks on as Carolyn opens the petty cash box.

CAROLYN
(gleeful)
I knew she was a phony...I didn't think she was a thief....

There's no cash, only a pile of receipts: "KC Catering," "Distinctive Valet Parking," "European Models, Inc.," "Classical Accompaniment Musicians," "Bodacious Sculptures in Ice."

CAROLYN (cont'd)
(disdainful)
She didn't steal from petty cash. She paid for the buyers' shindig. It's all legit.
(suddenly depressed)
Let's get out of here. I give up.

Carolyn returns the box, notices Swell's purse again. She pauses, decides to go through the purse. She glances over Swell's driver's license -- something catches her eye. She takes the flashlight, examines the license more closely:

DOB: 12/19/73.

Carolyn looks up at Bruce, victorious.

145. INT. CRANDELL LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

145.

Swell and Kenny carry a sleeping Walter, with a feather duster in his hand, up the stairs.

146. INT. MELISSA'S ROOM - NIGHT

146.

Tidy. Little girl furniture clashes with posters from slasher movies, Rambo action figures, Garbage Pail Kids, a dart board, sports posters and pennants. Swell covers Melissa with a blanket, kisses her forehead.

146A. INT. MOM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

146A.

Swell is lying on the bed, cucumber slices on her eyes. She takes them off, looks at the phone. She sighs, picks up the phone, starts to dial, then hangs up. She picks up the seaweed memento, looks at it, looks out the window, depressed.

147. INT. CRANDELL KITCHEN - MORNING

147.

Swell, dressed for the office, rushes in. Zach, Melissa, and Walter are seated at the kitchen table as Kenny proudly serves perfect, symmetrical Belgian waffles with gourmet toppings on the good china. Swell is impressed.

KENNY

(to Swell)
Coffee, dear?

148. OMITTED

149. EXT. CRANDELL FRONT YARD - DAY

149.

Lizard hacks away at a huge block of ice with hammer and chisel.

Swell talks to Mole, Hell Hound, and Skull, who are eager to please her; she hands them bow ties and black vests. *

150. EXT. LITTLE LEAGUE FIELD - DAY

150.

A practice game is in progress. A nervous Melissa is at bat. Kenny sits with other PROUD PARENTS. The pitch; Melissa swings, misses.

UMPIRE

Stee-rike two!

Melissa looks around for Kenny, who's nervously biting his nails.

KENNY

Come on, Mel! You can do it! I know
you can!

The pitch; Melissa, emboldened, swings, CRACKS the ball deep into left field, and runs frantically.

KENNY (cont'd)
(leaping to his feet)
All right! Way to go! That's my girl!

151. EXT. CLOWN DOG - THROUGH THE WINDOW - NIGHT 151.

Swell drives by, sees Bryan working; she drives on, depressed.

152. INT. SUPERMARKET CHECK STAND - DAY 152.

Kenny waits with the kids. The cart is full of fruits, vegetables, eggs, milk. The Checker is ringing up a can of Ajax.

KENNY
Hey, wait, I have a double coupon for that!

153. OMITTED 153. *

153A. OMITTED 153A. *

153B. EXT. CRANDELL BACKYARD - DAY

The pool is drained. Melissa and Zach are in the pool, scrubbing it clean. Kenny, Lizard, and Skull are building a wooden platform, hammering, measuring around the pool, sawing. Mole is on the roof of the house, setting up the headlight rack. Hell Hound is wiring up the amps and speakers. Swell is planting flowers. The house is looking better and better.

153C. INT. SWELL'S OFFICE - NIGHT 153C. *

Swell is working late, sketching with wild creativity. Framed photos of Melissa and Walter in precious poses are on her desk. Exhausted, she drops her head onto her desk.

END MUSIC. END MONTAGE.

154. INT. CRANDELL KITCHEN - NIGHT 154.

The kitchen is spic 'n' span. Kenny, in clean jeans, T-shirt, and white sneakers, is cleaning the oven with Easy-Off. An exhausted Swell, dressed in her business clothes, enters with her portfolio.

SWELL
Hi.

Kenny looks up, gives her a dirty look, SLAMS the oven door.

SWELL (cont'd)
Where are the kids?

KENNY
(cold; clipped)
Zach's at Cynthia's. Melissa's upstairs.
Walter's asleep.

Kenny SLAMS pots and pans into the sink.

SWELL
What's wrong with you?

KENNY
(very defensive)
Nothing is wrong with me!

Swell shrugs, grabs a Tab from the fridge, looks around the room.

SWELL
Did you burn something?

KENNY
(furious)
Yeah, well, maybe if you'd called and
told me you were gonna be three and a
half hours late I could've planned my
dinner better!

SWELL
I had to work late, okay?

KENNY
You still should've called! I sat and
waited! I went ahead and fed the kids!
I worked all day on that casserole!

SWELL
Well, sorry.

KENNY
And you haven't even said how nice the
house looks! You're off at the office
all day doing interesting things. I'm
stuck here cooking, cleaning, mowing,
helping Melissa with her fast ball,
being a role model for Zach, spending
quality time with Walter, doing your
party shit! You've got the car and
don't take me anywhere! We don't even
go out to dinner anymore! I'm sick
and tired of not being appreciated!

SWELL
I appreciate you!

KENNY
Eat shit!

He storms into the living room.

155. INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

155.

Kenny grabs a whisk broom, and violently WHISKS the couch. Swell comes in from the kitchen.

SWELL

I don't believe this! I get to get up at five-thirty every morning and fight rush hour traffic so I can go sit behind a desk for eight hours and miss Oprah Winfrey everyday in the middle of my summer vacation, and then I get to drive home in gridlock, in a Volvo, with no air conditioning, just so I can take care of you guys, and put food on the table! It's a rat race and it sucks, so what do you want, a medal?!

Kenny stops whisking, looks at her. Stalemate. The PHONE RINGS.

SWELL (cont'd)

(calm)

You know, you don't have to do all this. I mean, I never asked you to whisk the couch.

KENNY

(suddenly self-conscious)

Well...it needed it....

They smile at each other. The PHONE RINGS again. A beat.

MELISSA

(calling from upstairs)

Swell? Some big zit's on the phone?
Said he was in school orchestra with you?

SWELL

(to Melissa)

Oh, yeah. I called him for Saturday night. I'm coming.

KENNY

(a beat)

So, uh...looks like we're gonna get to have our massive party.

Swell smiles.

DISSOLVE TO:

156. EXT. CRANDELL BACKYARD - EARLY EVENING

156.

Tivoli lights are blinking in the trees. Spotlights and fresh wild flowers are set up around the wooden platform and ramp; the ramp is built over the sparkling, swimming pool, where lily pads with small candles float. Chairs face the platform. A long buffet table is set up next to a bar area. The lawn and flower beds are manicured; the house looks beautiful.

157. INT. LIVING ROOM - EARLY EVENING

157.

The room is immaculate. Swell descends the staircase. Her hair is up; she looks sophisticated and stunning. Melissa follows her, wearing her Little League outfit. They both wear name tags.

SWELL

Okay, now don't go wandering off. My boss wants to meet you. And remember to call me Mommy.

MELISSA

(put out)
Yeah, yeah, yeah.

158. INT. KITCHEN - EARLY EVENING

158.

Swell enters with Melissa to find Melissa's coed LITTLE LEAGUE TEAM-MATES, all wearing their uniforms, hanging out in the kitchen, bored. Walter, dressed in knickers with suspenders and a white Oxford shirt, is watching WIN, LOSE, OR DRAW on the portable T.V.. *
He is clean-scrubbed, combed, every mother's pride and joy.

PRETTY LITTLE LEAGUER

Hi, Mrs. Crandell.

SWELL

Hi, kids! Thanks for helping out.
Where's Kenny?

WALTER

Getting ready.

PRETTY LITTLE LEAGUER

What are we supposed to be doing?

KENNY

Good evening, Mrs. Crandell.

Swell turns as Kenny enters. He's wearing an oversized white dress shirt, black tie, black trousers, black loafers and a name tag: "Kenneth." His hair is pulled back in a ponytail; he looks spiffy.

SWELL

(smiling; adjusting his tie)
You look great, Kenny.

KENNY

That's Kenneth.

He hurries to put finishing touches on trays of hors d'oeuvres.

KENNY (cont'd)

Your guests are starting to arrive.

Everyone, man your trays!

(to Swell)

Better get your ass out there, Mrs.
Crandell.

159. EXT. CRANDELL BACKYARD - NIGHT

159.*

Swell rushes out. Lizard, wearing a bow-tie and a black vest over a torn Van Halen T-shirt, is tending bar. A high school-aged STRING QUARTET are TUNING THEIR INSTRUMENTS. *

MUSICIAN #1

Hi, Swell!

SWELL

Oh, hi...Sue Ellen. I go by Sue Ellen now. Thanks for coming, you guys.

MUSICIAN #2

No problem. You still playing the cello?

160. EXT. CRANDELL FRONT YARD - NIGHT

160.*

Rose arrives in a vintage Mercedes 280 SL, with the license plate "SR VP". She is met by the Valet Parking Attendants: Hell Hound, Mole, and Skull, in clean T-shirts, bow ties, black vests, and ripped Levis. They all wear name tags. Swell spots Rose, as Hell Hound hands her a ticket.

ROSE

(laughing; enchanted)

Thank you, Hell Hound! Sue Ellen, you look radiant!

The MUSICIANS PLAY.

SWELL

Thanks. So do you. Uh...where's Gus?

ROSE

Oh, he'll be here. Separate cars, separate space. I think all that's gonna change soon. I love the valet parking team! They're so colorful!! I gotta tell you, some of the other V.P.'s were a little concerned about my putting the

(more)

ROSE (cont'd)
fate of the whole division in your hands.
But I told them, summa cum laude, your
internship at Comme des Garcons in Tokyo,
and all those years at Esprit...your
style, maturity, integrity...I told
them, I have utter faith in you.

SWELL
(a bit uneasy)
Good....

ROSE
(laughing)
I mean, why would you orchestrate all
this, and tell me you could handle it
if you couldn't? Why would you do that
to me? My entire life is on the line,
right?

Walter comes out on his crutches.

SWELL
Uh...yeah...
(spotting Walter)
Walter! Come meet Ms. Lindsey. Rose,
this is my little boy, Walter.

ROSE
Hi, Walter! Call me Rose.
(to Swell)
He looks just like you. Where's your
Little Leaguer?

SWELL
Oh, Melissa's around.

ROSE
I don't know how you pull it off!

SWELL
(nervous)
What do you mean?

ROSE
Raise two kids, run a household, have
a successful career. You're the
quintessential career mom for the
nineties -- I think it's fabulous!

161. EXT. HOUSE-BAR - NIGHT

161. *

SWELL
(to Lizard/Bartender)
A couple of white wine spritzers.

Rose lights a cigarette, offers one to Swell, who declines.

ROSE

Have you quit?

SWELL

(surprised at herself)
Yeah...I guess I did. I've been smoking
since I was a teenager. Guess I've
outgrown my rebellious phase.

ROSE

I started when I met Gus.
(taking wine from Lizard)
Thank you, Lizard!

More G.A.W. EMPLOYEES and GUESTS arrive in the background, and are
met by Little Leaguers offering hors d'oeuvres.

MELISSA

(approaching with tray)
Hi, Mommy.

SWELL

Rose, this is my daughter Melissa.

MELISSA

Hey, boss lady. Creole mushroom?

ROSE

(taking stuffed mushroom)
Well, hello, Melissa! Don't those look
scrumptious.
(to Swell)
I love that the kids are wearing our
uniforms! Perfect touch!

Cathy arrives with a Jell-O mold and her nice-looking, bespectacled
husband, HOWARD.

CATHY

(to Swell)
Oh, hi! I brought a Jell-O mold, in
case you needed one. This is my husband,
Howard. I love your house! Wow!

162. INT. HOUSE KITCHEN - NIGHT

162.

Swell enters with the Jell-O mold as an EGG TIMER BUZZES. Little
Leaguers bustle about.

KENNY

(to Swell)
Take the baked brie out of the oven.
It'll caramelize.

Zach slumps in, bummed out, dressed exactly like Kenny.

KENNY (cont'd)
Zachary, where've you been? You're
maitre d'!

ZACH
Cynthia dumped me for Jacob!

SWELL
(putting maternal arm around him)
Honey, I'm sorry....

ZACH
I just don't understand. I gave her
my all! I gave her space. I treated
her as my equal while respecting her
femininity...she was my Moon Goddess....

SWELL
I know....

KENNY
(to Zach)
Get over it!

SWELL
Did you get the diamond back? *

PRETTY LITTLE LEAGUER
(entering)
Kenny, I'm out of rumaki.

Zach, noticing her, perks up considerably.

ZACH
Well, hey, let me get those for you.
(showing off; proud)
I'm maitre d'.

Zach smiles at her; they get to work. Rose enters.

ROSE
Sue Ellen, some of the buyers are
arriving. And Contempo Casual's
already here.
(noticing Kenny)
Oh, hello.

SWELL
Rose, this is our caterer, Kenneth.

ROSE
Yes, K.C. Catering. Your ravioli in
dill cream sauce is to die from.

KENNY

Thank you, Rose. Enjoy the buffet.
We also do weddings.

Swell gives him a "look." Rose hurries out. Nicole and Swell's Girlfriends come in the back door.

NICOLE

Hi, it's us! What do we do?

SWELL

Go up to my room and change. I'll be
up in a minute.

Nicole and her Girlfriends go to leave.

NICOLE

(noticing the new Kenny)
Kenny?

163. EXT. CRANDELL BACKYARD - NIGHT

163.*

The party is in full swing, with over fifty Guests, G.A.W. Employees, and BUYERS wandering the grounds, CHATTING.

164. EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

164.*

Carolyn and Bruce arrive in a Toyota, Carolyn in the driver's seat.

165. INT. CAR - NIGHT

165.

CAROLYN

(wicked smile)
This is going to be so much fun!

BRUCE

(calling out window to Mole)
Yo, Mad Dog! You wanna park the car?

166. EXT. DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

166.

HELL HOUND

We're on a break.

MOLE

Park it yourself, Metallica-breath!

The Heavy Metal guys guffaw. Gus ZOOMS up behind Carolyn's car in his Ferrari. Hell Hound, Skull, and Mole race past Carolyn and Bruce's car to go park the Ferrari.

167. EXT. CRANDELL BACKYARD - NIGHT

167.*

Rose, chatting with several Buyers, spots Swell.

ROSE
Sue Ellen, I'd like you to meet Ellen
Svaco, regional buyer for Bullocks.
And this is Duane Capizzi, from Macy's.
Sue Ellen Crandell, our hostess.

SWELL
Welcome to my home. It's a pleasure.

168. EXT. HOUSE-BUFFET TABLE - NIGHT

168.

Kenny is putting the final touches on a lavish spread of gourmet delicacies as EATING GUESTS OOH AND AAH. A huge ice sculpture of an electric guitar in flames is the centerpiece. Rose walks toward the platform, is intercepted by Carolyn.

CAROLYN
Excuse me, Rose?

ROSE
(annoyed)
What is it, Carolyn, something?

*

CUT TO:

169. EXT. HOUSE-BEHIND THE PLATFORM - NIGHT

169.

Rose is looking at a xerox of Sue Ellen Crandell's driver's license.

CAROLYN
...just thought you'd want to know this
all rests in the hands of a child.
A child you hired.

ROSE
(a beat)
Carolyn, this is far and away the most
spiteful, petty, and vindictive
machination you've ever concocted.

Rose crumples up the xerox, tosses it aside.

ROSE (cont'd)
(walking away)
Grow up, Carolyn.

Carolyn is stricken.

170. INT. CRANDELL LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

170.

Swell sweeps down the stairs as Gus enters the front door.

GUS
Ah, Sue Ellen! I was just looking for
you. Great house. You look lovely.

SWELL

(clipped)
Thank you.

GUS

I know you said you're not interested--

SWELL

That's right. I'm not.

GUS

But I understand why. And I want you to know, I'm not taking this lightly. You're a woman I could really...see myself with. I don't mind that you have kids. I have a biological clock, too--

SWELL

Gus, it's just--

GUS

Yeah, yeah, I know my timing is off, I know you're getting over a divorce--

SWELL

Gus, you can't even imagine how off the timing is. Forget it.

GUS

Or...we could just have a wild, sweaty fling. What do you think?

Swell, exasperated, picks up Melissa's toy machine gun.

SWELL

Gus, I think the scenario here is that you're a sleazeball.

GUS

(joking)
Hey, I'm kidding! I surrender!

She pulls the trigger; water BLASTS Gus in the crotch. He YELPS as Rose enters. She views the scene, suspicious.

ROSE

What's...this? What is this?

GUS

Oh, just a little accident.

SWELL

(feeling terrible)
Rose...Gus' been...trying to...he has sort of a crush on me--

ROSE
He's been coming on to you?

GUS
Rose, come on. You know how I feel about you. "You're the one I want to listen to beautiful music with." You.

SWELL
He sent those roses to me.

GUS
That's not true! Rose, believe me--

ROSE
Okay. We're all adults here. And we have a presentation to get through. Gus, the Buyer from Saks is looking for you. I choose not to deal with this aspect of life right now. Sue Ellen, it's showtime!

She walks out.

171. EXT. CRANDELL BACKYARD-LATER - NIGHT

171. *

All Guests and G.A.W. Employees, including Gus, Franklin, Cathy and her husband, are seated in the chairs facing the curtained platform. The dozen or so Buyers have seats of honor in the front row. A morose Carolyn and Bruce sit in the back. Kenny, Melissa, and Walter look on from the front porch. The Heavy Metal Buddies look on from the driveway -- sitting on Carolyn's car. Zach stands to the side of the platform, with the Pretty Little Leaguer, in charge of lights. Swell cues him; he turns a spotlight on the podium and Rose steps up to the microphone.

ROSE
Good evening. I'm Rose Lindsey, and on behalf of General Apparel West, I'd like to welcome you. I'm sure you're all on the edge of your seats wondering what we have in store for you, so to conduct our presentation, let me introduce to you our hostess, our recently named Employee of the Month, and the woman responsible for everything you're going to view tonight: Sue Ellen Crandell!

The Kids and G.A.W. Guests and Employees APPLAUD and CHEER as Swell takes the podium. The Buyers are more skeptical. Gus stands, extends his hand to help Rose off the stage; she ignores him, and sits next to the Buyers. Suddenly, Gus becomes very aware of his wet crotch, and sits down quickly.

6/15/90

SWELL

Thank you, Rose. Welcome everyone. For twelve years, General Apparel West has enjoyed a solid reputation as the manufacturer of quality uniforms. But times they are a-changing. We're growing, we're expanding. We're approaching the millenium with a fresh attitude, a fresh look. And what we have for you tonight is a preview of the General Apparel West to come.

Swell cues Zach. He turns on footlights, spotlights and JANET JACKSON LIKE STRUT MUSIC. The curtain is drawn back, and TESS, MARCY AND DONNA dance out onto the platform wearing modified GAW uniforms.

MORE wild applause from GAW employees, Guests and Kids. The Buyer's sit up in their seats, curious. Swell motions to Zach to fade the music.

SWELL (con't)

Ladies and Gentleman, General Apparel West proudly presents the teenage fashion wave of the future.

(reading off index cards)

Tess, Marcy and Donna are wearing bellhop uniforms in fuschia, purple, and teal hand-airbrushed slubbed silk with matching caps. The epaulet and cuff detailing are antique gold lace. The jackets in varying lengths, are matched with either sporty black trousers or sleek miniskirts. As you can see the basic General Apparel West uniforms have been modified and accessorized to create a fun and sexy fashion statement for the teemage girl.

Tess, Marcy and Donna do some twirls and finish up at the end of the ramp.

Nicole comes out to wild applause.

SWELL (con't)

Nicole is wearing a form fitting nurse's uniform with mini hemline, sure to speed up any boy's PULSE. The black diamonds on Nicole's cap and dress are hand air brushed on fuschia spandex. Her pink high top sneakers are laced up her tangerine tights. And of course no nurse would be complete without her stethoscope necklace.

Nicole does a few last turns and playfully takes her own pulse and exits down the ramp. DISCREET APPLAUSE from the buyers.

JILL comes out and performs various referee signals as she dances across the platform blowing whistles and waving flags.

SWELL

Jill our referee is wearing an oversized silk jersey in bold black and turquoise stripes, black tights and high-top sneakers; her whistle earing and necklace and black baseball cap complement this carefree and spirited look for the girl who's playing the field and calling the plays.

The FAINT STRAINS OF CLOWN DOG CIRCUS MUSIC play in the background. In the distance the circus music gets progressively louder. Swell can hear it now and she starts to fumble in her presentation.

SWELL

Katrina our chef is really cooking in... uh

The Clown dog music draws closer than abruptly changes to romantic music to be determined.

SWELL

...VIBrant....with....a scarf....to whip up excitement in boots. THANK YOU, KATRINA!

Now the music stops and Bryan starts to plead with Swell over the lous speaker.

Swell motions to Zach. He turns the DANCE MUSIC up.

BRYAN

Swell it's me. It's Bryan. We gotta talk. Forget about this other guy, we can work it out. Trust me Swell. I've tried to forget you but I can't. I don't know. It's something about you. I think you have this power over me. I'm not gonna forget you. I don't know what it is. I feel better around you than anyone else.

Swell rushes Katrina off and introduces Becky.

SWELL

Our last model is Becky, our Boy Scout-..... wearing.....uh.... THANK YOU, BECKY.

Guests leap to their feet amazed. Rose looks at Swell confused.

CAROLYN

Bryan!? That's my brother.

Bryan gets out of the van in his Clown Dog uniform; a spotlight is on him; he's confused by the scene he's blundered into. Everyone looks to Swell

SWEEL

(trying desperately to cover)
And everyone, the highlight of our fabulous fashion extravaganza: young Bryan our Clown Dog server.

The buyers applaud, mightily impressed. Everyone joins in.

BRYAN

You're having a party?!

KENNY

(at foot of podium)
Swell!?

*

SWELL
(into mike)
Bryan is wearing a Clown Dog uniform
and classic wedge cap...

KENNY
Swell?!

*

SWELL
...evoking the charming nostalgia of--

KENNY
(urgently)
Mrs. Crandell?!

SWELL
(covering mike)
Kenny, what?!

KENNY
Mom's home.

Swell turns; Mom is standing in the driveway with her luggage. She stands there, awed by the spectacle. Swell is finally overwhelmed.

SWELL
(into mike)
So, everyone, that concludes our
presentation. Good night.

Everyone continues to APPLAUD. Rose hurries over to Swell.

ROSE
(under her breath)
What the hell is going on?

SWELL
(smiling)
I'm right on top of that, Rose.

ROSE
Will you please continue the presentation?

SWELL
(laughing nervously)
I don't think I can, Rose.

ROSE
Why?

MOM
(calling)
Swell?!

MOM

You're in big trouble, young lady!

SWELL

(shaky)

I'm sorry. I can't handle it anymore!
I don't know what to do, what I'm doing...
I applied for the receptionist job!
I want out! I don't even know what
an executive administrative assistant
does! I...lied to everyone. About
everything! I'm sorry! I...I'm only
seventeen...I have a curfew...I just
finished high school...I can't even
vote yet! This is supposed to be my
summer vacation! I'm not supposed to
be a career mom! I can't be the hub
of your communication network! I'm
not ready for all of this! I'm sorry!

ROSE

I'm not panicking, I'm not panicking,
I'm not panicking....

Swell walks off the ramp, near tears. Various reactions from
Guests, Friends, Family: confused, or concerned, or understanding.

CAROLYN

(to Bruce; delighted)

How humiliating! I love it!

BRUCE

Yeah, babe. Justice is served!

GUS

(to Rose)

So, do you believe me now? Or are you
just gonna believe some kid?

ROSE

(a beat)

I'm gonna believe some kid. Go to hell,
Gus!

Rose hurries over to consult with the Buyers.

CAROLYN

(approaching confused Bryan)

Bryan, what are you doing here?!

Guests and G.A.W. Employees start heading to their cars, bewildered. *

171A. INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

171A. *

Swell enters, followed by Mom, Kenny, Zach, and Melissa, helping Walter. *

MOM

-Sue Ellen, I'm not real clear on what's been going on around here. But I want these people off my property, and I want you to start doing some heavy-duty explaining! I'm never trusting you again! I specifically said no parties!

ZACH

You weren't supposed to be home till next week.

MOM

(outraged, confused)
Who are these people?! Sue Ellen, I swear to God--

SWELL

(gaining composure)
Mom, calm down.

MOM

(enraged)
I'm not going to calm down!
(noticing Walter's leg)
Walter! What happened to Walter?!

SWELL

A little accident. He's been taken care of. I have excellent medical coverage. And we'll clean up the party.

(a beat; mature)

Now, come on, Mom, you've had a long flight and you're cranky. I've had a rough night. Why don't you go and take a nap. Tomorrow morning, Kenny'll whip up a batch of Belgian waffles and we can all sit down and discuss this like adults. All right? Fine. Zach, Kenny, let's wrap up the party. Melissa, please help Walter to bed.

Zach, Melissa, and Walter kiss Swell, follow instructions. Mom watches this, perplexed, does a double take at Kenny's new look.

MOM

Kenny? What did you do to yourself?

SWELL

(to Mom)

We'll talk about it over breakfast.

I'll take care of everything. For now,
why don't you just...

(gently)

...go to your room.

Mom hesitates a moment, looks around at the immaculate kitchen;
dazed, she walks into the living room. *

172. INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

172.

Mom enters, is shocked by the perfection. The house has never
looked better. A little overwhelmed, she heads to her room.

173. EXT. FRONT YARD - NIGHT

173.

Rose sees Guests off as they hurry to leave. Carolyn gives Rose a
victorious smile. Mole pulls up with Carolyn's car; it's been
covered with shaving cream and some toilet paper. Carolyn glares at
the Heavy Metal Guys, who play innocent. Carolyn and Bruce get into
the car; Carolyn turns on the windshield wipers and drives away.

The last of the Guests leave. Kenny wanders off to his Buddies.
Rose lights a cigarette, turns as Swell comes up to her. A long
beat. They look at each other.

SWELL

Rose...I am so sorry.

ROSE

Sue Ellen, the buyers didn't care
anything about that scene. They're
whores! They see dollar signs in your
ideas. They even complimented me on
hiring a teenager to gain "market
perspective." They want the new G.A.W.
line! *

SWELL

What about everything else? I lied
to you...I'm a terrible person. *

Rose looks at her a moment, smiles. *

ROSE

Well...I suppose you'll grow out of it. *

Rose puts an arm around her. They head to Rose's car. *

174. EXT. CRANDELL BACKAYRD - NIGHT

174. *

Kenny and Lizard stretch out.

LIZARD

Superior party, man. Superior eats.

KENNY

Yeah. Thanks for helping out.

LIZARD

Beer bust tomorrow night?

KENNY

Can't. Got a date with Swell's friend.
Nicole.

LIZARD

(impressed)

The nurse?

Kenny nods.

LIZARD (cont'd)

Cool...school starts next week. Lazy
days....

KENNY

I don't know...I think I might go to
class more this year...

LIZARD

Why?!

KENNY

Time to finish up school. Maybe take
some Home Ec, graduate...then maybe go
to the Culinary Academy or some shit...
or...I don't know....

*

LIZARD

Yeah...could be cool....

KENNY

Yeah, time to do something.

175. EXT. CRANDELL HOUSE-ROSE'S CAR - NIGHT

175. *

ROSE

...oh, please reconsider. I'm offering
you a wonderful opportunity.

SWELL

I know. I appreciate it. A lot. But...
I think I'm gonna try college. Or
design school. I still, you know, have
a lot to learn.

ROSE

Listen, if you want to get into Vassar,
I can pull some strings. *

SWELL

Maybe...why don't you hire Cathy for
my old job? She deserves it. *

ROSE

She's certainly proven herself...well,
it'll be hard for her to fill your
shoes, but okay. Done.

SWELL

What about Carolyn?

ROSE

I'll move her up into Cathy's job. Let
Fred Kibrick deal with her.

SWELL

And you and Gus?

A beat. Rose takes a final drag on her cigarette, drops it in the
dirt, grinds it out with her shoe, shrugs sadly.

ROSE

Oh...there are other men...I absolutely
refuse to have a scarcity mentality.
Or...maybe I'll get a cat.

(a beat)

I'll miss you.

SWELL

I'll miss you, too.

Rose hugs her, gets in the car.

ROSE

Well, listen, we'll get together Monday
night. We'll have dinner. Bye! *

Rose drives away, waves. *

176. EXT. CRANDELL BACKYARD - NIGHT

176. *

Swell walks over to Bryan at the Clown Dog van parked on the lawn.
She looks at him, a little apprehensive, awaiting her sentence.
Bryan is looking down, shaking his head, still trying to digest the

whole scene.

SWELL

I'm really sorry....

BRYAN

Yeah, well, Carolyn and I both pretty much figured out what's been going on. Is that everything? Is there anything else you haven't told me? You're not really a man, are you?

She shakes her head. He nods. A beat.

SWELL

Did you mean what you said about working this out? Unless Juliet's waiting for you, or something....

BRYAN

Juliet? Come on, Swell, we broke up, remember?

SWELL

We didn't break up, we had a fight!

BRYAN

Because you were lying to me.

SWELL

Yeah. But that's over.

(a beat)

So if you thought we broke up, I guess you thought we were together?

BRYAN

Well...yeah. I don't know. Juliet was just a blind date. I saw her once. Anyway...I guess now I know the truth....

SWELL

Yeah....

He turns away from her, opens the door to the van, as if to leave.

SWELL (cont'd)

(defeated)

Well...thanks for sticking around.

BRYAN

(a beat)

So...do you have plans yet for New Year's Eve?

He faces her, smiles. She throws her arms around him.

BRYAN (cont'd)
I think this is another really good
moment.

He looks over his shoulder, making sure they won't be interrupted,
then kisses her.

BRYAN (cont'd)
How'd you think you'd get away with
all this?

SWELL
(shrugging; a little sheepish)
Well, I pretty much did....

Mom sticks her head out the front door, takes another look at the
mowed lawn, the trimmed hedges, and the flower beds, pleased.

MOM
Oh, Swell? One more thing....

Swell and Bryan look over.

SWELL
Yeah, Mom?

MOM
Where's the babysitter?

Swell just looks at her.

SMASH CUT TO BLACK.

THE END