

MARVIN'S ROOM
by Scott McPherson

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EXT. FLORIDA BEACH HOTEL. DAY

1

Blue sky, splashes of water rise into frame, as a brightly colored ball lyrically arcs back and forth in space. PAN lower to reveal fingertips then hands, then arms move into the frame and then lower out of sight again. The camera then moves lower to reveal YOUNG PEOPLE playing pool volleyball.

CUT TO:

An old COUPLE sitting in the hot sun staring at the ocean. They are wrapped in layers of sweaters, a blanket on their legs.

2

CUT TO:

The ball being given a terrific wallop. Swish pan back to the COUPLE as the ball bops the man on the head. He barks at the young people off screen.

3

EXT. HALLENDALE MAIN DRAG. DAY

4

A water tower, brightly painted, HALLENDALE, floats by. What almost appears to be a fleet of driverless cars creep along the road. A side view shows us several elderly drivers barely visible behind their wheels peering over the dash. A car with a young BLONDE couple in the front seat and a surprising number of BLONDE CHILDREN in the back whisk by. CHURCH of CHRIST is emblazoned on the trunk. A slow car turns into a restaurant with a large rotating marquee, reading "EARLY BIRD SPECIAL". It dominates the vibrant blue sky. A long line of elderly people, dressed in wide brimmed sun hats, sunglasses, flowery skirts, and lime green shirts wait to get in. A few chat away in folding chairs.

INT. ALL PURPOSE GROCERY STORE. DAY

5

A BLONDE MAN'S sandy muscular back is being wiped off by a beautiful BLONDE WOMAN. They are both in swim suits, their hair is wet from the beach. Pan to the background following the BACK OF A WOMAN as she is concentrating on her shopping list. The camera moves with HER BACK and reveals in an other aisle the OLD MAN who was hit with the ball and his WIFE buying band-aids for his ear. PAN off them to the toy aisle to a plastic fish, being dropped by the WOMAN'S HAND into a cart. A flood of fish soon follow.

CUT TO:

(CONTINUED)

Low Angle MOVING CONVEYER BELT the fish, mixed with medical products such as adult diapers, a water bottle, and baby food parade past, followed by suntan lotion, condoms, and water wings. Tilt up to reveal BESSIE'S FACE for the first time. She doesn't want the 'fun things' confused with her stuff. They belong to the BLONDE COUPLE behind her. TILT DOWN with BESSIE'S HAND as it brings the check-out divider bar down hard separating her goods from the others.

INT. MARVIN'S BEDROOM. DAY

6

The camera is looking up at a ceiling Fan slowly turning overhead. Attached, flowing like wind chimes in lazy circles are the brightly colored lifelike fish. The ceiling is painted a light blue so the overall effect is that of fish swimming in the ocean. A reverse angle from above the fan reveals the room. There is a glass FISH bowl on MARVIN'S ROOM night table. Everything in the room is a monochromatic pale blue, except for the blanket on Marvin's Bed which is blood red. The room has the quiet power of a cathedral. A window dominates one wall. MARVIN, rail thin, eighty some years old with a full head of white hair lies in his sick bed with a blank expression.

Oddly, a pair of woman's legs, BESSIE'S, stick out from under his bed, the way a mechanic's legs stick out from under a car.

The steady hum of the room air conditioner mixes with the bubbling of MARVIN'S oxygen. From another part of the house the muffled sound of a TV soap opera.

CUT TO:

The narrow space under the bed which BESSIE is almost too big for. She struggles with the wire connectors.

CUT TO:

BESSIE'S hand as it appears above the mattress, brushing against MARVIN'S hand as she blindly feels the side of this automatically adjusting bed for the right button to push. We are struck by how old MARVIN'S hand appears next to forty year old BESSIE'S. She pushes the button, MARVIN'S feet start to rise. BESSIE looks disappointed.

INT. LIVING ROOM. DAY

7

A small TV sits squarely in front of the glass sliding patio doors. The soap opera plays against the too bright, too lush Florida landscape seen in the background through the doors. RUTH, a small woman in her seventies with a slight hunchback, is glued to the soap opera. An afghan sits on her lap, as she stretches her foot comes through a hole in it, a pain shoots through her back, she turns a dial of a control box at her waist. A look of pleasure comes across her face.

INT. MARVIN'S BEDROOM. DAY

8

BESSIE pushing with all her might on the elevated foot of MARVIN'S bed. She repeatedly presses the button with no result. With a resounding click Bessie forces the bed back into a level position. The jostled MARVIN gives a small sound of pleasure at the sudden movement. He smiles. BESSIE smiles back.

CUT TO:

INT. BATHROOM. DAY

9

Bessie bangs on the faucet with a wrench and the water pressure doubles.

INT. HALLWAY. DAY

10

RUTH looks towards the bathroom and scurries the other way, BESSIE enters the hallway and chases after RUTH. The camera stops in front of Marvin's room in time to catch the foot of the bed rising on it's own.

INT. BATHROOM. DAY

11

As BESSIE soaps RUTH'S back, she leans her head forward, and her glasses drop into the water.

EXT. BACK PATIO. DAY

12

BESSIE looks disappointed as she nips dead leaves off a scraggly climbing plant on a tressel.

CUT TO:

Empty bowl with the smiling face of a cartoon character looking up at us. Baby food looking stuff is plopped over face.

13

INT. MARVIN'S ROOM. DAY

4.
14

The baby food sits in a bowl on a tray across MARVIN's bed. BESSIE is pushing with all her might on the elevated foot of his bed. The bed clicks back into place. MARVIN smiles again with the sudden movement. BESSIE smiles back.

INT. KITCHEN. DAY

15

CU on baby pink, lime green and cold yellow pills pouring in and out of vials BESSIE is filling the slots of MARVIN'S daily pill tray. She works with the smoothness of a bartender mixing drinks.

INT. MARVIN'S ROOM. DAY

BESSIE enters MARVIN'S room with pills and finds him snoring loudly.

INT. MARVIN'S ROOM. NIGHT

16

BESSIE checks the reading on MARVIN'S oxygen. Bedside she places a small compact mirror in her HAND and uses it to bounce the light from MARVIN'S lamp onto his walls and ceiling. MARVIN's face holds a look of joy as he follows the flashing light with his eyes, using one hand to try to catch the light. This is the most animated we have seen him.

EXT. HOUSE. NIGHT

17

The street is peaceful. An OLD WOMAN takes her trash to the front curb. The receptical is as big as she is.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

18

BESSIE closes the shutters and makes sure the front door is locked.

INT. HALLWAY. NIGHT

19

BESSIE looks in on RUTH.

INT. RUTH'S ROOM. NIGHT

20

RUTH is asleep, her hand on the TV remote. The TV broadcasts static. BESSIE quietly turns it off, RUTH's reflection is on the screen, BESSIE leaves.

CUT TO:

RUTH's hand on the remote turns the TV back on. The TV glows with late night static. RUTH gives a sigh of security.

INT. BESSIE'S ROOM. NIGHT

21

BESSIE is setting her alarm for MARVIN's next pill when she notices a large frighteningly dark bruise on her thigh. She presses her free hand against it. The alarm she holds in her other hand suddenly goes off, startling her.

CUT TO:

A lush tropical landscape, palm trees blow in front of an inviting ocean, hold for a beat, then a dry cough is heard, pull slowly back to reveal.

22

INT. DR. WALLY'S WAITING ROOM. DAY

23

BESSIE, who has been looking at the landscape in a magazine is startled out of her reverie by this cough, coming from the only other PATIENT waiting. The room is sterile and uncomfortable. The canned strain of musak is heard. The tired and irregular tap/tap/tap of the receptionist's typewriter. BESSIE turns to look at him. He smiles at her and stops. She turns back to her magazine and the COUGHER lets loose with a loud hack. It makes Bessie jumpy. She gets up and approaches JACKIE.

CUT TO:

BESSIE's P.O.V. of the reception island as JACKIE, a ripe young woman types with one finger. JACKIE would rather be on the beach. Behind the reception island, a large window reveals bright blue sky and lush green Florida vegetation, carefree people pass by, another world entirely.

CUT TO

The camera looks over JACKIE'S shoulder as she types "Dear Dr. Wally, I qui_". We watch the "t" in "quit" snap into place. BESSIE is at the reception desk, balancing her cleaning and groceries.

JACKIE

Have you seen the Dr. here before?

BESSIE

I haven't been to the Doctor for myself since I was a kid.

JACKIE

I'll be right back.

JACKIE having finished her resignation letter, abruptly pulls it from the carriage and lays it on her desk.

(CONTINUED)

6

JACKIE loads her purse with all her personal belongings (snap shots, coffee mug, etc.), and leaves. The lights on JACKIE's phone blink unanswered. The COUGHER and BESSIE stare at each other, not sure what to make of JACKIE's sudden departure. A beat of silence. He erupts with a short hack. DR. WALLY enters from the examination room.

DR. WALLY
Jackie, send in the next
patient, please.

DR. WALLY exits back into the examination area. BESSIE waits a moment, expecting the DR. to realize he just gave an order to an empty room, but the DR. does not return. BESSIE follows the DR. back into the examination area.

INT. LONG HALLWAY LINED WITH EXAMINATION ROOMS. DAY 24

BESSIE stands at the front of the empty hall lined with floating curtains caught in the breeze of the noisy fan, the door slowly closing behind her.

BESSIE
Hello?

DR. WALLY'S VOICE
(coming from a back
room.)

Hello?

BESSIE expects the DR. to come out and meet her. He doesn't.

BESSIE
Hello?

INT. DR. WALLY'S LAB. DAY 25

Dr. Wally takes his eye from the microscope and looks towards his door wondering who is calling him. There are tubes and specimens everywhere. It's a room for studying tests, not a place for patients to sit.

DR. WALLY
(just as before.)
Hello?

INT. EXAMINATION ROOM. DAY

7.
26

The DOCTOR readies a syringe to draw BESSIE's blood.

BESSIE

I suppose I should tell you
needles bother me a little.

DR. WALLY

Oh,

(he shudders.)

I know what you mean. All right
Augustina, could you give me your
arm please? Do you mind if I
call you Augustina?

BESSIE

Well, my name is Bessie.

DR. WALLY

Bessie.

(looks down at her
file)

Of course. I'm sorry. Dr. Serat
is away on vacation he usually
deals with the patients....
where'd I put the
whatchamacallit? The uh...Do you
see it?

BESSIE

What?

DR. WALLY

You know, that um, um, I tie it
around your arm to make your
veins pop out.

BESSIE

Tourniquet?

DR. WALLY

Yes, that's it. Oh, I'm sitting
on it. How'd that happen? Okay,
give me your arm please.

BESSIE

(reluctant to give him
her arm.)

Why did Jackie walk out like
that?

DR. WALLY

If I had to guess I'd say she was
harboring a deep seeded phobia
about cockroaches. She
complained on more than one
occasion that working here made
her itch.

(CONTINUED)

BESSIE
(looking about for
bugs.)

Oh?

The DOCTOR reaches for her arm again. BESSIE stalls.

BESSIE
You know Dr. Serat is my
father's regular physician.
And my Aunt's.

DR. WALLY
(senses BESSIE'S
uncooperativeness.)
How is your father?

BESSIE
Oh, he's fine. He's dying, but
he's been dying for twenty
years. He's doing it real slow
so I don't miss anything. And
the Doctor has really worked a
miracle with Ruth. She's had
constant pain from her back
since she was born and now Dr.
Serat had her get an electronic
anesthetizer, you know, they
put the wires right into the
brain and when she has a bad
pain she just turns her dial.
It really is a miracle.

DR. WALLY
That's wonderful.

BESSIE
If she uses it in the living
room our automatic garage door
goes up but that's a small
price to pay, don't you think?

DR. WALLY
It's amazing what they, I mean,
we can do.

The DOCTOR finally has BESSIE'S arm. HE wraps the
tourniquet around it. HE has a hard time tying the
knot. BESSIE has to help him.

BESSIE
When does Dr. Serat get back
from his trip?

(CONTINUED)

DR. WALLY
Not till the end of the month.
I'll have to hire a new
receptionist without him.

BESSIE
What will you do about the
bugs?

DR. WALLY
Bugs? She saw bugs everywhere.
Granted there are bugs
everywhere in Florida. But
none in these offices.
(readies some vials.)

BESSIE
Are all those for me?

DR. WALLY
These here, I have a few in my
pocket, and I'll have to scrape
up a couple more out of one of
these drawers.

BESSIE
That seems like a lot of blood.

DR. WALLY
Well June, if it seems like a
lot of blood, that's because it
is. So if you're feeling
anxious because we're drawing a
lot of blood, you should. So,
what you're feeling is
perfectly normal.

BESSIE
Bessie.

DR. WALLY
I'm sorry.

BESSIE
My name is Bessie.

DR. WALLY
Did I call you Augustina?

BESSIE
You called me June.

DR. WALLY
I did?

(CONTINUED)

BESSIE

You're confusing me with your other patients.

DR. WALLY

No, I'm not.

BESSIE

You called me June.

DR. WALLY

June is the name of my dog. So, why don't we get this over with. Where is the uh, the um...

BESSIE

What?

DR. WALLY

(finds a bag of cotton balls)

The bag is sealed so they're still sterile.

(He tears open the bag with his teeth.)

BESSIE

(collecting her groceries)

I think I'll wait. Dad and Ruth have been seeing Dr. Serat for so long. I wouldn't want to be disloyal. And you say it's just a vitamin deficiency, so...thanks for your time and I'll call and set up an appointment. Thanks.

(She has made it out the door.)

INT. HALLWAY LINED WITH EXAMINATION ROOMS. DAY

27

Bessie is about to exit into the waiting area. DR. WALLY enters from the examination room at the far end of the hall and calls after her.

DR. WALLY

Bessie.

BESSIE stops.

DR. WALLY

I said it might be a vitamin deficiency

EXT. BESSIE'S HOME. DAY

28

BESSIE's car pulls up to a sturdy home that has fallen into minor disrepair.

INT. LIVING ROOM. DAY

29

BESSIE enters carrying her shopping, the light outside is incredibly bright, she shuts the door. The high speed ceiling fan spins. BESSIE shakes with a chill. AUNT RUTH has fallen asleep in front of the TV, BESSIE gently wakes her.

BESSIE

Aunt Ruth? Ruth.

RUTH

You're home! Don't you look pretty.

BESSIE picks up a sweater as she walks towards Marvin's room.

BESSIE

You shouldn't sleep in the chair honey, it's bad for your back.

INT. MARVIN'S ROOM. DAY

30

MARVIN is asleep. BESSIE comes in, picks up a pill bottle.

RUTH (O.S.)

You tell me right away when I'm sleeping because I don't always know.

INT. LIVING ROOM. DAY

31

BESSIE has the pill bottle in her hand.

BESSIE

Did you give Dad his five o'clock?

RUTH

What did I do? What time is it now?

BESSIE

Five twenty five.

RUTH

I'm so stupid, I'm useless. I know.

(CONTINUED)

BESSIE

You never forget to watch your program, do you? You never forget what time your show comes on.

RUTH

You usually give Marvin his pills.

BESSIE

Today I asked you to.

INT. BESSIE'S KITCHEN. DAY

32

BESSIE takes the groceries from the bag and puts them away. She seems a little frustrated. Ruth comes in a bit sheepishly.

RUTH

What did the doctor say?

BESSIE

Oh, he made a big to do so I wouldn't feel like I was wasting my time.

RUTH

(Noticing a bruise in the crook of BESSIE's arm.)

Bessie, oh, what happened to your arms?

BESSIE

They took a little blood.

RUTH

It looks tender. Should you see a doctor?

BESSIE

I just came from the doctor.

RUTH

Did you show him your arms?

BESSIE

I have a vitamin deficiency, Ruth. That's all. You sure you don't want to go lie down.

RUTH tries to help BESSIE but ends up in the way.

RUTH

It's because you don't make stinky often enough.

(CONTINUED)

BESSIE

I do so.

RUTH

Stinky is poison. You have to get rid of it. That's why when you're constipated, you have a headache.

Ruth picks up a vitamin bottle from the grocery bag.

RUTH

Do you want to take one of mine for your deficiency?

BESSIE

I'll get some real vitamins later.

RUTH

These are real. They're just easier to swallow because I don't like to swallow things. Do you want Pebbles or Bam-Bam.

BESSIE

Ruth-

RUTH

How about Dino?

BESSIE

Dino's fine.

RUTH pops the vitamin into BESSIE's mouth.

RUTH

Chew it up good. We have to take care of you too.

INT. HALLWAY. NIGHT.

33

RUTH's door is ajar and she is already in bed. SHE calls to BESSIE as BESSIE passes with a basket of clean towels in her arms.

RUTH

Bessie?

BESSIE stops in RUTH's doorway.

RUTH

What if Marvin dies one day while you're out of the house.

(CONTINUED)

BESSIE
(Gently.)
Then you'll call me and I'll
come home. Goodnight Pumpkin.

CUT TO:

BESSIE putting the towels in the linen cabinet. She looks down the hall to find that RUTH has gotten up and is in MARVIN's room bouncing the light off the compact.

EXT. MOON MOVING THROUGH A LINE OF PALM TREES SET
AGAINST A GREY, LUMINOUS SKY. NIGHT. 34

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. A LINE OF SMOKESTACKS, THE INDUSTRIAL LANDSCAPE OF
A OHIO TOWN. NIGHT 35

Thick black clouds pump from the decaying factory
smokestacks.

EXT. TUTTLER HOUSE, THE STATE INSTITUTE FOR DISTURBED
CHILDREN. NIGHT. 36

A hanging tire swings in the wind, part of a child's
playground seen through a bared wire fence.

INT. THE REC. ROOM OF TUTTLER HOUSE. NIGHT. 37

A group of teenage boys, unkempt, some half dressed, ready for bed, are gathered around a fight. We can't see who is fighting because of the crowd. The boys are egging it on but in hushed tones so as not to get caught. It's strange to have a fight be so quiet. The camera comes through the crowd. HANK, 17 moves into frame, looking furious, he is on top of the other boy, the camera fast tracks into HANK'S bloody face as it fills the screen for a moment. HANK is about to land another punch when the lights in the room suddenly come on. Everybody freezes. A couple of orderlies stand with accusatory authority in the door way. HANK looks at them and then defiantly lands one more devastating punch.

INT. THE DIRECTOR'S OFFICE. MORNING.

38

HANK sits in the corner. The director taps his pencil against his desk, trying to decide what to do with HANK. Dr. CHARLOTTE sits across the desk waiting for the director to speak. Dr. Charlotte gives HANK a look of support. The DIRECTOR picks up his phone.

INT. BETTY'S INSTITUTE OF COSMETOLOGY

39

CUT TO:

C.U. of a hand picking up a bright pink phone emblazoned with the logo Betty's Institute of Cosmetology. The camera keeps moving past a series of women in chairs all who have been given the exact same hair style. The camera stops on the cover of a beauty instruction book, "Beauty IS skin deep," being read by LEE. LEE lowers the book and we see her face. She's about 35 and was once an innocent beauty, but her looks have now grown hard from over use. LEE looks at the picture of the hairdo in the book. It is the hairdo that we have just seen on all the other women. Then LEE compares the picture to her just completed work on JOAN, the woman in her chair.

JOAN

(unhappy with her new
hairdo.)

It feels so...hard.

LEE

Then don't touch it. There's
no reason to be putting your
hands in your hair all the
time. Unless you're a nervous
person.

BETTY

(From the far end of
the shop, phone in
hand.)

Lee. Phone. Something about
your boy Hank.

LEE

I'm not here.

BETTY

What?

LEE

I'm not here.

BETTY goes back to the phone.

(CONTINUED)

BETTY
I'm sorry but Lee isn't-

INT. DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

40

DIRECTOR
(on the phone.)
I heard her. Thanks.
(hangs up and looks
again at
Hank.)

INT. BETTY'S INSTITUTE OF COSMETOLOGY. DAY

41

The other women in the class are looking at LEE disapprovingly. One woman is heard muttering-

BEV
Well, do you know what he's in
there for?

LEE hears her and walks directly to her station. The room expects a fight. Lee stares directly into her eyes and picks up a spritzer bottle.

LEE
Can I borrow this.

The terrified woman responds.

BEV
Sure Lee.

Tight on LEE'S face, enjoying her power as she moves back to her station past the other women.

INT. DIRECTOR'S OFFICE. DAY

42

HANK's corner is now empty.

DIRECTOR
Does he have other family?

DR. CHARLOTTE
A younger brother.
(Pause)
I don't want to give up on him.

(CONTINUED)

DIRECTOR

I'm not suggesting we give up on him. I am suggesting we try a different therapeutic approach.

INT. HANK'S ROOM. DAY

43

HANK is being strapped into his bed by an orderly.

INT. THE PRIVATE OFFICE OF DR. WALLY. DAY

44

BESSIE waits in a huge high backed chair. No matter how she sits she can't seem to fill the chair. There is almost no sound in the room. Dr. WALLY enters.

DR. WALLY

Just couldn't find a place to lock my bike.

BESSIE

Oh.

DR. WALLY snaps off his bicycle clips and drops them into a empty specimen jar on his desk.

DR. WALLY

So, how are we today?

BESSIE

You tell me.

The phone rings. The Doctor answers.

DR. WALLY

Dr. Wally speaking. Yes, I know I have someone waiting in my office. I am in my office. That's all right.
(hangs up.)

BESSIE

Is there a problem?

DR. WALLY

No. He's just new. He'll get the hang of it.

BESSIE

I meant the blood test. I suppose it can't be good news or you would have just told me over the phone.

(CONTINUED)

DR. WALLY

It's our policy not to give any test results over the phone.

BESSIE

Oh. Because I really got myself worked up. I was thinking all sorts of horrible thoughts.

DR. WALLY

I certainly didn't mean to worry you. But I did think it would be a good idea for me to see you again.

INT. EXAMINATION ROOM. DAY

45

The Dr. turns on a surgical lamp next to the examination table. The light bounces off a silver tray full of surgical instruments. BESSIE stares at the tray.

DR. WALLY

Now, there is no reason to be nervous.

(Guides BESSIE from her chair to the table.)

What I am going to do is this. I am going to give you a local anesthetic and then I'm going to remove a little bone marrow from your hip.

(He is holding up a rather nasty looking instrument used for extracting bone marrow.)

BESSIE

What?

DR. WALLY

You won't really feel it. Maybe a slight pinching. Now, it will make a little noise but don't let that bother you.

BESSIE

You're going to take bone marrow out of my hip?

DR. WALLY

Just a little. There will be a crunching noise. If you've ever had your wisdom teeth pulled, you know the sound. And you also know that it sounds worse that it actually is.

(CONTINUED)

BESSIE

I've never had my wisdom teeth out.

DR. WALLY

Really? Hmmm. Maybe you should see somebody.

BESSIE

I've never had a problem with them.

DR. WALLY

I've never had a cavity in my life.
Do you floss?

BESSIE

Not as often as I should.

DR. WALLY

Who does. Could you hike up your dress please?

BESSIE

I don't mean to be nosey but could you tell me why you're going to take bone marrow out of my hip?

DR. WALLY

(as he prepares the
anesthetic.)

There's not a lot of flesh on the hip.

BESSIE

But what is the test for?

DR. WALLY

Why don't you let me do the worrying for now.

BESSIE

Is it serious like a brain tumor?

DR. WALLY

No, no.

BESSIE

M.S.?

DR. WALLY

No.

(CONTINUED)

BESSIE

Cancer?

The Doctor doesn't respond.

BESSIE

Cancer?

DR. WALLY

(Picks up his phone.)

Hold my calls please.

(He hangs up.)

Bessie-

(His phone rings. He answers.)

Dr. Wally speaking. Yes, that was me just then. Didn't you recognize my voice. You can tell by which little light blinks on your phone. That's alright.

(He hangs up)

That's what I get for hiring my own brother.

BESSIE

Should I be worried?

DR. WALLY

No, no. Would you like a cup of coffee?

BESSIE

I'd love one.

DR. WALLY

(Picks up the phone.)

This is Dr. Wally speaking.

Please bring a cup of coffee to 3C.

(He hangs up)

As he hangs up two unseen cockroaches scurry from under the base of the phone.

BESSIE

Could it have to do with whether or not I poo regularly?

DR. WALLY

We'll want to look at everything. But your blood work shows abnormally low levels of red cells, platelets and mature white cells.

(CONTINUED)

BESSIE

I haven't felt as bad lately.
I haven't been nearly as tired.

DR. WALLY

That's good. Now, your spleen
and your liver, on your last
visit, felt slightly enlarged.

BESSIE

Is that bad?

DR. WALLY

Well, one of the possibilities
I'm hoping to rule out is
leukemia.

(Pause.)

BESSIE

Uh-huh.

The phone rings. The Doctor lets it ring, pretending it
isn't happening, hoping it will stop. It doesn't.

DR. WALLY

I don't have to answer it.

BESSIE

Pick it up.

DR. WALLY

(answers the phone.)

Dr. Wally speaking.

(He cups the receiver
and speaks to

BESSIE.)

Do you take cream?

BESSIE

Yes.

DR. WALLY

Yes. And don't call me any
more Bob. I mean it.

(Hangs up.)

BESSIE

Odds are it's leukemia, right?

DR. WALLY

This is why I was reluctant
to...you're worried now, and
you may not have cause to be.

(CONTINUED)

BESSIE
Is it still fatal?

DR. WALLY
You must remember there are a
variety of leukemias and a
variety of treatments.

BESSIE stands and POPS up into frame. She is in the
foreground, looking at the camera and only we can see
her face.

BESSIE
My mother had leukemia.

DR. WALLY
I know.

BESSIE
You know?

DR. WALLY
But today we have the benefits
of radiation therapy, chemo
therapy. A bone marrow
transplant, which a few years
ago was considered
experimental, is now a very
real option. You do have
family?

BESSIE
Dad and Ruth.

DR. WALLY
No others?

BESSIE
No.

DR. WALLY
Are you sure?

BESSIE
Yes.

DR. WALLY
I thought your file mentioned a
sister.

BESSIE
Oh. Yes. I have a sister.
Lee. Yes.

INT. CONVENT. DAY

46

CU of a big crucifix on a wall, raucous laughter fills the room, pan down to LEE, smoking a cigarette surrounded by nuns cutting out communion hosts from a sheet of dough. LEE uses a red shot glass that matches her nails. Laughter dies down.

LEE

I hope CHARLIE'S in his room
cause he'd hate it if he knew I
was telling bed wetting
stories.

This sets off another round of twitters from the nuns.

INT. CATHEDRAL. DAY

47

WS of pews, only CHARLIE'S hard soled shoes are visible. The laughter continues off screen as the MOTHER SUPERIOR floats down the aisle, as she passes CHARLIE, she taps his pew. He sits up and is revealed reading WAR AND PEACE. He is a 12 year old boy with coke bottle lenses and is small for his age.

INT. CONVENT DAY

48

The Mother Superior, with an envelope in hand, is quietly sneaking up behind LEE, CHARLIE follows her. A giggle of anticipation passes through the others.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

Lee?

LEE turns around. LEE's youth is contrasted against the ancient worn face of the MOTHER SUPERIOR as she gives Lee an envelope.

LEE

What, what is this?

She looks in the envelope. It is full of money.

LEE

You guys! What is this?

MOTHER SUPERIOR

So you and the boys can be with
your sister.

LEE

Gee Charlie, that's great huh?

INT. VOCATIONAL THERAPY BODY SHOP. DAY

49

HANK, covered in motor grease, is jacking up an old Buick when the SHOP TEACHER comes up behind him.

SHOP TEACHER

Hank, your Mom's here.

Surprised, HANK lets the jack strip itself and the Buick slides to the ground, the other students quickly move back from the car.

INT. WAITING AREA. DAY

50

A big room, high ceiling, fenced windows, a pool table with torn felt, a pair of sneakers dangle from the ceiling light fixture, empty now except for LEE and DR. CHARLOTTE.

A large no smoking sign is on the wall behind LEE who has just taken a cigarette from her purse. She looks at the sign, then at the DOCTOR.

DR. CHARLOTTE

They had reservations about letting Hank go at all. A week's all we could get approval for.

LEE responds in anger by lighting her cigarette. HANK looks in through the WINDOW in the door, then comes in.

HANK

Hey.

LEE

Look at you. You look like a pig.
Don't they let you shower.

HANK

They told me you were here and I was suppose to come here.

LEE

You're not going in the car like that.

(HANK starts to sit.)

Don't sit down Hank. You'll get the chair all-

(He sits.)

greasy.

(slight pause.)

You behaving yourself?

(CONTINUED)

HANK

They're not strapping me down anymore.

LEE

Well, don't abuse that privilege.

INT. SHOWER ROOM. DAY

51

Big shower room with lots of shower heads and no individual stalls, HANK scrubs away the motor grease.

INT. HANK'S ROOM. DAY.

52

Small and depressing. LEE sits on one of the two beds and looks at the few personal items. LEE spies an old black and white snapshot of a man in a denim jacket standing in a forest preserve. She gets a closer look. The picture brings back a good feeling but it is more complicated than that. There is also regret. The picture is creased in two. LEE unfolds the picture to find that a younger she is in the other half of the photo but has been folded out of view. She puts it back the way it was. HANK enters in a bathrobe.

LEE

You're Aunt Bessie isn't doing too well. They are really hoping one of our bone marrows is going to match, otherwise...

HANK

Who's Aunt Bessie?

LEE

My sister, your aunt.

HANK

I never knew you had a sister.

LEE

She's been to the house.

HANK

When?

LEE

Right after your Dad and I got married.

HANK

I wasn't born yet.

(CONTINUED)

LEE
 Oh, I guess you
 weren't. (getting
 really fed up.)
 You know how at Christmas I
 always say, it looks like
 Bessie didn't send a card this
 year either.

HANK
 Oh, yeah.

LEE
 That's your Aunt Bessie, my
 sister.

HANK
 Okay.

LEE
 And she's dying.

HANK
 Mom?

LEE
 What?

HANK
 I gotta get dressed.

The camera is in front of LEE as HANK kicks the door
 closed behind LEE. It shuts with a surprisingly loud
 bang.

INT. HALLWAY. DAY

53

LEE and DR. CHARLOTTE are leaning against the wall
 talking.

LEE
 See, you have your visiting
 days on Saturdays and Saturdays
 are just about the worse for
 me.

INT. HANK'S ROOM. DAY

54

As he dresses, HANK hears his Mom talking with Dr.
 Charlotte in the hall.

LEE (O.S.)
 We're still living in the
 basement of the church because
 of our house,

(CONTINUED)

The reference to the house stops HANK a moment. He looks toward the door, knowing his Mom meant for him to hear that.

INT. HALLWAY. DAY

55

LEE is looking at HANK's door, obviously having sent her last comment his way. SHE turns back to the DR.

LEE

And on Saturday I help the nuns, since they took us in I feel I should do something around the place.

DR. CHARLOTTE

Do you think the nuns would understand if you told them you had to visit your son?

LEE

I'm here today, aren't I?

INT. RECEPTION DESK. DAY

56

LEE is signing out. HANK has his backpack with him.

DR. CHARLOTTE

Hank, is there anything you wanted to say to your mother before you leave?

HANK

No, just...I'm really sorry I burnt the house down.

LEE

(Doesn't know what to say.)

Is that it, cause we should go?

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD. DAY

57

As LEE'S car drives into frame, in the background we see that the fire has leapt from each house on the block doing more and more damage as it progressed. The last house is a pile of burned out rubble and this is the driveway that the car pulls into.

EXT. THE BURNT OUT REMAINS OF THEIR HOUSE. DAY

58

WS of CHARLIE kicking about in the rubble. He finds something and holds it high above his head. It is shiny and catches the sun, sending the light flashing back into the sky.

CHARLIE

Look what I found.

LEE

Leave it!

CHARLIE drops whatever he found back into the ashes and runs towards the car.

In the background LEE is at the house next door, standing on the porch, giving a paper with BESSIE's address on it to the neighbor lady.

LEE walks over to the car and finds HANK sunning himself on the hood.

HANK

What if I don't want to get the test?

LEE

What?

HANK

I don't know her. Why should I let them test my bone marrow?

Silence.

LEE

This is my sister we are talking about and maybe I haven't mentioned her to you before but that doesn't mean she isn't on my mind a lot and we are not going to let her die just so you can have one of your moods. Do you understand?! Do you understand?!

LEE opens the front passenger door for Hank, to defy her, he gets in the back.

EXT. CAR. DAY

59

Driving through multi-lane highway.

INT. CAR. DAY

60

HANK from the front seat tries to get a bag of Cheeto's from CHARLIE in the back. The Cheeto bag explodes. HANK turns front with a fist full of Cheetos.

HANK

This car belonged to my DAD and
if he were here I'd bet he'd
let me drive.

CU on CHARLIE as he eats Cheeto's off of his shirt. LEE floors the car.

EXT. CAR. DAY

61

The car speeds by.

CUT TO:

EXT. BUS STOP. DAY

62

CU of front of a bus as it comes to a stop and fills the frame.

INT. CROWDED BUS. DAY

63

BUS DRIVER

County Hospital.

RUTH stands immediately behind the bus driver.

RUTH

Are you sure?

BUS DRIVER

Yes mam.

Bus Driver opens the door. RUTH'S POV as she slowly goes down the stairs wondering what is out there. She stops on the last step, turns and makes her way back to the driver.

RUTH

You did say County?

Reaction shot of impatient fellow passengers.

EXT. OUTSIDE HOSPITAL

64

Bus pulls away showing RUTH totally alone on the sidewalk.

CUT TO:

CU of RUTH squinting at the sun.

DISSOLVE TO:

A WHITE SCREEN, Pull back to reveal.

INT. BESSIE'S HOSPITAL ROOM. DAY

65

A nurse pulling back a white sheet from BESSIE in bed who is much thinner than the last time we saw her. She is quite pale. She wears a wig because of her chemo. RUTH swings Bessie's lunch tray in front of her. BESSIE is nauseated by the sight of her lunch. RUTH finds it appetizing.

BESSIE

Do you want any of this?

RUTH

No, no that's all for you. You eat that and be strong. Have you made a stinky today?

BESSIE

Yes.

RUTH

That's good. That's important. Do you want your orange?

BESSIE

You can have it.

RUTH

Not if you want to have it.

BESSIE cuts the orange in half and hands it to her.

BESSIE

Everything okay at home.

RUTH

I wish we could do something about that garage door. I feel like the whole street knows my business.

CUT TO:

EXT. HALLWAY OF HOSPITAL. DAY

66

Bessie with RUTH at her side moves through the hallway.

RUTH

Nothing happens that God doesn't have a reason for.

(CONTINUED)

BESSIE
(humoring her)
I am sure He does.

RUTH
I often ask Him why he made me
crippled. I also ask Him why he
let Marvin buy this house down
here to take care of me then
strike Marvin with a stroke.
Why? And then have him lose his
colon to cancer. Why? And then
lose the sight in one eye and
the use of one kidney and yet
keep a full head of hair. Why?

RUTH and BESSIE turn a sharp corner and are out of site.

INT. SOLARIUM FOR PATIENT'S VISITORS. DAY

67

CU on mail and tilt up to BESSIE as she sorts through
it.

BESSIE
How's Dad? Does he miss me?

RUTH
Well, I haven't actually told
him you're gone.

BESSIE
(Bessie attention is
draw away from the
mail)
What? Doesn't he wonder where
I am?

RUTH
When he asks I say you're just
in the other room busy with
something. Then he falls
asleep for awhile and when he
wakes up I say he just missed
you.

BESSIE
Ruth.

RUTH
It would upset him.

BESSIE
Who does he think that nurse is
living with you?

(CONTINUED)

RUTH

Well, I pretend not to notice her.

BESSIE

What do you mean?

RUTH

If she comes in the room while I'm there, I pretend she's not real. That she doesn't exist.

BESSIE

Then what does Dad think?

RUTH

I think he thinks he's hallucinating.

BESSIE

What.

RUTH

I never told him he was hallucinating. He came up with that himself. I didn't know what to do. I was going to try to tell him you were in the hospital and- and she walked in before I was ready so I didn't - I - I - pretended she wasn't there.

BESSIE

You have to tell him.

RUTH

But he's used to it now. The only time it seems to bother him is when she carries him to the bath. And I say, oh look Marvin, you're flying. Bessie will want to see this. And I go into the other room to get you.

CUT TO:

INT. BESSIE HOSPITAL ROOM. DAY.

68

BESSIE flops on the pillow.

BESSIE

He must think he's losing his mind.

RUTH

It's better than telling him. You

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

RUTH (CONT'D)
 don't know. He would be so
 upset. He's still your father.
 What am I suppose to tell him?
 That his little girl is...?
 How can I tell him? Then he'll
 really think he's losing his
 mind. He'll be so upset. It
 would be so upsetting to him.
 He's your father.

BESSIE
 All right. All right.

RUTH
 I wouldn't know what to say.

BESSIE
 Tell him I'm going to be fine
 Ruth.
 I know I am.

CUT TO:

Television playing RUTH's soap opera. A man and a woman
 on a mist covered dock.

LANCE
 There's never been anybody for
 me but you. Marry me Coral.

CORAL
 Lance, this is all so sudden.

INT. BESSIE'S HOSPITAL ROOM. LATER

69

RUTH has gotten into bed with Bessie and they are
 watching the show together.

RUTH
 Isn't it wonderful. I think
 she'll say yes. They really do
 love each other.

BESSIE
 But is he the same character
 who raped her at one point?

RUTH
 Oh, that was months ago. He's
 really a nice boy.

EXT. HIGHWAY. NIGHT

LEE is tired. She squints and adjusts the mirror. It goes into focus revealing HANK sitting in back now with CHARLIE who has fallen asleep. LEE is smoking. Her cigarettes sit on the seat beside her. HANK reaches over and takes one. His match glows in the dark of the back seat. LEE watches him in the mirror. They both smoke. CHARLIE'S voice comes from his dark corner of the car.

CHARLIE

Mom, what's Grandpa like.

LEE

I don't know, Charlie. It's been a while.

LEE's attention is back on the road. CHARLIE has shifted to a new sleeping position. HANK picks up CHARLIE's book and neatly tears out a page. HE lets the page slip out the window and it is snatched away by the wind.

INT. BESSIE'S HOME. DAY

71

WS shot of the living room. BESSIE awkwardly tries to hang a paper "Welcome" sign. She looks much better. RUTH enters the screen at one end and slowly makes her way toward her chair at the other end of the screen.

RUTH

(Still crossing the
expanse of the
screen toward her
chair)

You don't want to do too much.

BESSIE

Ruth, I'm in remission honey
and I feel pretty good and the
family will meet Dad and Dad
will meet the whole family.

BESSIE leaves the screen. RUTH is almost to her chair.

BESSIE enters the screen again with a tray of cupcakes that she places on the center of the coffee table. Little plastic ballet dancers decorate the tops of the cupcakes.

BESSIE

Cupcakes, streamers, napkins...

(CONTINUED)

RUTH
(has finally made it
to her chair. She
sits and takes in
the room for the
first time.)

Oh my!

EXT. FLORIDA STREET. DAY

72

LEE'S car drives by a tacky "Welcome to Florida" sign.

EXT. GAS STATION. DAY

73

LEE's car is parked in front. The station sells gas and
mail order fruit. An orderly orange grove looms behind.

INT. GRIMY GAS STATION LADIES ROOM. DAY

74

LEE is finishing attaching a hair piece to the back of
her head. She gives her head a shake to make sure it's
in place. She practices potential greetings in the
mirror.

LEE
Bessie!...Hi, Bessie...thanks
Bessie.

INT. GRIMY GAS STATION MEN'S ROOM. DAY

75

HANK sits on the closed toilet smoking. CHARLIE is in
front of the mirror trying to fix his hair. CHARLIE has
put too much water from the faucet on his head in an
effort to make it look nice.

CHARLIE
How do I look?

HANK
You look good.

The door suddenly opens and LEE is standing there.

LEE
Ready?

HANK
(his privacy invaded)
Jesus.

(CONTINUED)

LEE
What'd you do Charlie? Put
your head in the toilet?

EXT. STREET. DAY

76

LEE's car passes, a closed off building and a public pool that's being painted.

EXT. BESSIE'S NEIGHBORHOOD. DAY

77

HANK and CHARLIE stare out the window. The car comes up behind an attractive woman walking. The car pulls forward and the boys see from the front that she is old.

INT. MARVIN'S ROOM. DAY

78

BESSIE goes into MARVIN's room to make one last check. The only color in the room is a bright red blanket that has been placed across his bed. At first glance everything seems fine. Then BESSIE notices a large wet spot spreading on the blanket. MARVIN has wet himself.

BESSIE

Oh, Dad.

EXT. BESSIE'S HOUSE. DAY

79

Lee and the boys pull into the drive. LEE turns off the car, cutting off the radio as it says "And now for the number 8 song this week-". HANK gives his MOM an annoyed look. LEE checks herself in the rear view and gets out of the car. LEE rings the doorbell and is shocked to see that she is alone on the stoop.

INT. LEE'S CAR. DAY

80

HANK is laying down on the front seat. He has pulled two wires from the steering column. He touches the wire together and the radio sputters back to life. HANK reacts to the music. CHARLIE is reading in the back seat.

LEE is turning around, about to go back for the boys just as BESSIE answers the front door holding MARVIN'S soiled sheets in her hands.

BESSIE

Lee!

LEE

Bessie.

BESSIE

Oh my goodness. Look at you.

LEE

(Expecting a
compliment)

What?

BESSIE

Look at you. Are you that old?
How old does that make me then?

LEE

Why? Do I look old?

BESSIE

Well, you're a lot older. Here,
I've just got to put these to
soak. Dad had himself a little
accident.

LEE

How is he. Can I help?

BESSIE

NO! No, you sit down.

LEE

You look good Bessie. You
really do. I like your hair.

BESSIE

This is a wig. It's from my
chemo.

LEE

Oh. I know it's a wig. I
don't know why I pretended I
didn't. Not that it looks like
a wig.

BESSIE

Thanks.

LEE

I'm wearing a fall. I only
wear it when I want to look
nice.

(CONTINUED)

BESSIE
This will only take a second.

LEE
You sure I can't help?

BESSIE
I've been doing it this long.

INT. WASH ROOM. DAY

82

BESSIE's face is reflected in the gray water of the sink. BESSIE is flustered and has to stop and remember what she came in here to do. As her hand splashes the water the image of her face breaks apart.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE OF MARVIN'S ROOM. DAY

83

Alone, LEE's attention is caught by odd objects that bring back a flood of memories which lead her to knock lightly on MARVIN'S closed door.

LEE
Daddy? It's me, Lee. All the
way down from Ohio.
(She waits for a
response. There is
none.)
The nuns had a big bake sale
for us to pay for our trip
down. Can I come in?
(No answer. LEE goes
in.)

INT. MARVIN'S ROOM. DAY

84

Angle only on LEE who sees her father for the first time in twenty years. She is shocked and disturbed by how much he has deteriorated. She tries to hide her reaction from her father, who makes a small sound of embarrassed greeting. The CAMERA catches glimpse's of MARVIN'S feet or hands, and the intensity of his eyes focusing on her.

LEE
Hi, Daddy.

LEE turns and leaves the room.

INT. LIVING ROOM. DAY

85

LEE makes a beeline for her purse and gets her cigarettes. She lights one and takes a deep, deep drag, she peeks at the car out the window. RUTH enters.

RUTH

Look who it is!

LEE

Aunt Ruth?

RUTH

And isn't she pretty!

LEE

Aunt Ruth.

RUTH

You remember an old thing like me?

LEE

You're up and about.

RUTH

Oh, I've got my cure. I'm part machine. I hope you don't think I'm being rude, but I'm watching my program and I just hate to miss it. I knew you'd come right when it starts.

THE MUSIC FROM THE SOAP IS HEARD O.S.

LEE

Oh, no. You watch your program.

RUTH

Are you going to give me a hug?

LEE hugs RUTH.

RUTH

Give me a real hug. I won't break.

LEE give RUTH a strong hug. This hurts Ruth.

RUTH

Oh Jesus! Oh sweet Jesus! Oh Jesus!

RUTH turns her dial to alleviate the pain. We hear a loud sound.

CUT TO:

CU OF GEARS GRINDING

86

EXT. BESSIE'S DRIVEWAY

87

A gossip neighbor, standing on his front porch is staring hard at something off screen. HANK and CHARLIE watch out the back window of the car as the wide garage door slowly, noisily, rises.

INT. RUTH'S BEDROOM. DAY

88

High Angle on RUTH who is laying down, drinking a glass of water, the TV is on at the foot of her bed at the moment with a commercial. LEE hovers near her. BESSIE comes in the room.

RUTH

Lee hurt my back.

LEE

I didn't mean to.

BESSIE

I'm sure she didn't mean to.

RUTH

I know she didn't mean to.
She's a sweet girl.

BESSIE

Lee where are your boys. Don't tell me they couldn't come. Dad's been so excited. Couldn't you get HANK out of the mental institution.

LEE

Bessie, we don't like to call it the mental institution.

BESSIE

Oh. What do you call it?

LEE

We call it the looney bin or the nut house to show we've got a sense of humor about it.

INT. LIVING ROOM. DAY

89

BESSIE and LEE look out the window at the boys in the car.

LEE

He's just trying to make me mad.

(CONTINUED)

BESSIE

Well, what if-

LEE

No, Bessie. If I ask him to come in the doctor says I have to make him come in. I'm not up for that.

BESSIE

Oh now.

LEE

He hasn't agreed to be tested for the transplant yet because he knows it will make him the center of attention. You just have to ignore him.

BESSIE

He hasn't?

LEE

But don't worry. He will. I'll make him if I have to.

BESSIE

How are you going to make him Lee? You can't make him come in from the drive.

LEE opens the front door. HANK and CHARLIE are standing there with their bags, about to knock.

BESSIE

Oh, you must be ...

LEE

Thanks for coming in Hank.

HANK

We were coming in Mom. They were doing the top ten count down on the radio and we wanted to hear number one.

LEE

You've been listening to the stupid radio the whole way down. You don't have to sit in the drive, we're here, we're at your Aunt Bessie's.

Bessie watches as Charlie shrinks away down the hall.

HANK

I like it, so it's stupid, that's the way it is.

(CONTINUED)

LEE

You're just trying to make me
look bad in front of your Aunt
and she sees right through it.

RUTH enters the room.

BESSIE

(Calming everything
down.)

Well, you're here now and I'm
your Aunt Bessie who you have
never laid eyes on and I don't
care if you are all grown up I
expect a big fat hug.

HANK hesitates.

HANK

Sure.

Lee notices Charlie is about to go into MARVIN'S room.

LEE

Charlie!

HANK and BESSIE hug.

RUTH

And I'm Ruth your Aunt.

HANK hugs Ruth. 'RUTH reacts in pain. The echo of the
garage door is heard.

CUT TO:

INT. RUTH BEDROOM. DAY

90

WS high angle of RUTH in bed with BESSIE and LEE at her
side.

INT. LIVING ROOM. DAY

91

The boys' suitcases have exploded all over the room.
The TV is on too loud. They're looking at the tray of
cupcakes. They think the ballerinas are stupid.

HANK

She thinks we're twelve.

CHARLIE

I am twelve.

BESSIE enters the room, turns off the TV, and looks at
the boys' mess.

(CONTINUED)

BESSIE

Oh, Hank, you've unpacked.

(still making the
best of it.)

Now you're going to have to
wait a minute I'm sorry but
I've got to get your Grandad
cleaned up. Then we can all go
in and say hi.

BESSIE exits. The boys share a look of who cares. Hank
with the remote turns on MTV, CHARLIE starts reading.

INT. MARVIN'S ROOM. DAY

92

BESSIE sits on the edge of the freshly made bed,
smoothing MARVIN's hair. He looks nice. She puts his
glasses on.

CUT TO:

INT. RUTH BEDROOM. DAY

93

Bessie interrupts Ruth and Lee. Photos of cats cover the
walls.

BESSIE

We're ready.

Her face glows with the thought of her whole family in
one room.

EXT. MARVIN'S ROOM

94

The camera is on Marvin's open door and we glimpse him
inside the room. The camera wanders off him and onto
the family outside his doorway and then travels back to
the doorway as the family enters.

BESSIE

Now remember he's changed a lot
since you saw him last.

LEE

I wish we could have been down
here more.

BESSIE

Well you were always welcome.

LEE

I didn't have any money.

(CONTINUED)

BESSIE
I would have sent you money
Lee.

LEE
If you just gave me my half of
the house.

BESSIE
That's Dad's money. That's for
Dad and Ruth.

LEE
You're living off it aren't
you.

BEAT

BESSIE
Let's just go in.

INT. MARVIN'S ROOM. DAY

95

C.U. MARVIN'S face. Beneath his glasses his eyes move
back and forth in his head as he watches the strangers
file in.

CUT TO:

The family gathered at the foot of the bed. A family
portrait of sorts.

BESSIE
Dad, this is Lee your daughter.
And this is Hank and Charlie,
your grandkids.

MARVIN remains unresponsive. HANK reaches out to shake
MARVIN's hand.

HANK
Hey, nice to meet you.

The gesture frightens MARVIN.

BESSIE
It's okay. It's okay. Hank
didn't mean anything.

HANK
No, I-

MARVIN's noises grow louder and he starts thrashing
around a bit.

(CONTINUED)

LEE
(Thinking they should
leave.)

Maybe we should-

HANK leaves the room.

BESSIE
No. He's just not used to a lot
of...Dad, it's okay. Hank.

BESSIE is trying to keep MARVIN'S arms from thrashing
around. MARVIN knocks a BOWL from his bedside table.

LEE
Okay.

CHARLIE, who is fascinated by his grandfather, looks
over his shoulder at MARVIN as LEE ushers CHARLIE out of
the room.

BESSIE
No, he's fine. Just give him a
second. Lee.

LEE has left the room with CHARLIE.

RUTH
Marvin, they're real. They're
real. Don't be scared of your
own grandkids.

RUTH, leaves to play host to the boys. MARVIN, alone
with BESSIE, calms down. BESSIE, disappointed, sits on
the foot of his bed which, without provocation, starts
to rise causing BESSIE'S feet to leave the floor,
leaving her stranded in mid-air.

NIGHT MONTAGE

96

Everyone has now retreated to their own world. CHARLIE
sits reading outside on the air conditioner, his change
falls in and breaks it, guiltily he takes his copy of
CRIME AND PUNISHMENT and goes inside. The air
conditioner stops in RUTH'S room. It stops throughout
the house. A static frame is suddenly filled with HANK
as he sits alone on the front porch swinging in a
hammock, he sits up bored, restless he leaves. HANK
turns on the hanging light in the closet and as it
starts to swing, he looks at the heavier jackets that
hang there. CHARLIE is in his sleeping bag on the
floor. LEE has a sleeping mask on, the heat causes her
to shift in her sleep and throw off her blanket. BESSIE,

(CONTINUED)

in MARVIN'S Room, is feeling his forehead. Pan off her to the closet door. From inside it we see BESSIE'S hands are shining the light from the compact mirror. It is HANK's POV. BESSIE finishes and leaves.

CUT TO:

INT. CLOSET. NIGHT

97

HANK finds an old vest, tries it on. Drops it on the floor. Finds an old pocket watch that is no longer running, he snaps it with his finger and it starts to tick.

INT. MARVIN'S ROOM. NIGHT

98

The shadows from the closet slice across a President of Farmer's Credit union plaque, a Track Award, several American classic books and a 4H prize winning ribbon for "Livestock," above the roll top desk in the room. The Camera tilts down as HANK opens the roll top desk. The compact mirror lies open beside a very old bottle of after-shave lotion. HE opens it and smells it. MARVIN makes a noise which scares HANK. HANK stares at the silhouette of MARVIN trying to discern if he is awake. HE steps back into the closet to turn off the light. HE sees the vest on the floor, under it lies an old tool box.

CUT TO:

Hank picks up the tools.

INT. KITCHEN. NIGHT

99

HANK is passing through the kitchen carrying the tools when the tray of cupcakes catches his eye.

INT. HALLWAY. NIGHT

100

The light at the bottom of BESSIE'S door comes on.

INT. KITCHEN. NIGHT

101

BESSIE enters and quietly makes herself a cup of coffee in the dark. She looks at the tray of cupcakes. The ballet dancers have been rearranged to look like they are all fucking on top of the cupcakes. Bessie feels the heat in the house.

(CONTINUED)

She opens the kitchen drawer and pockets a small transistor radio and makes her way outside.

INT. BACK DOOR. NIGHT

102

BESSIE exits from the lighted house and seems to be swallowed up by the dense black of the back garden.

EXT. BACK YARD AREA. NIGHT

103

Start on radio, pan to BESSIE watering her garden. The garden is BESSIE'S unfinished hobby. An elegant hanging Spanish Moss is contrasted against a gaping hole, a lily pond that BESSIE has never finished. As she listens to the music the water cascades from the hose, and the fine mist shimmers in the moonlight. But a new song, changes her mind, and BESSIE stops concentrating on the plants and begins to sway and hum to the music as the still sprinkling hose moves with her. A much needed moment for her alone.

The Camera finds HANK on the other side of the trellis looking at the tools, he too is captivated by the haunting music. A WS reveals that HANK and BESSIE are unaware of each other. HANK falls back on the grass as he hears the music, into the light. HANKS POV of the trees swaying above him. BESSIE'S face comes in upside down, startling HANK. The music stops abruptly and turns to static. The camera moves right side up as HANK sits up. During the following scene the trellis throws harsh patterns over BESSIE and HANK as the move through pools of light and shadow.

BESSIE

Hank, what are you doing out here?

HANK

Nothing.

BESSIE

It's kind of late to be up doing nothing.

HANK

What are you doing?

BESSIE

I'm just... can't you sleep.

HANK

I don't need much sleep.

(CONTINUED)

BESSIE
Growing boys need their sleep.

HANK
I'm done growing.

BESSIE
I'm not used to finding someone
else back here.

HANK
Do you want me to go inside?

BESSIE
No. Unless...Are you not
supposed to be out here? Will
your Mom care?

HANK
She's asleep.

BESSIE
I don't see any harm in it.
But don't tell your Aunt Ruth
that I wander away from the
house at night.

HANK
She's not my Aunt.

BESSIE
Sure she is.

HANK
She's my great Aunt. You're my
Aunt. Marvin's my Grandfather.
I got a whole new family.

BESSIE
I guess you do. Must seem kind
of strange.

HANK
No stranger than anything else.

BESSIE
We're all glad that you're
here.

HANK
Yeah, we should do it again in
another 17 years.

(Pause.)

(CONTINUED)

BESSIE

Nights like this are nice. You can just see a patch of the Gulf right through there.

HANK

Where?

HANK tries to see the water, and can't.

BESSIE

Well, you used to before they built that elementary school. I don't know where they thought the kids would come from.

(Pause)

Your Mom and I haven't always gotten along. That's why I haven't been in touch so much.

HANK

Uh-huh.

He does a pull up on a tree branch, his legs dangle in space.

BESSIE

I wish you could have really known your Grandfather. He'd a liked having a boy around.

HANK

Kind of gave me the creeps.

BESSIE

Well, He's been sick for a very long time.

HANK drops out of the tree.

HANK

Don't you ever wish he'd just die.

BESSIE

Hank...Don't ask that.

HANK

Why not?

BESSIE

It's rude.

(CONTINUED)

HANK

I haven't made up my mind about getting tested yet.

BESSIE

The odds are much better that your Mom will be a match so hopefully you boys won't have to bother.

HANK

Even if she isn't. I just...

BESSIE

Is that what you were doing? Sitting out here thinking about that?

HANK

No.

BESSIE

Oh. What were you thinking about?

(Pause.)

You don't have to tell me, of course.

(Pause)

Did you get those tools from Dad's room?

HANK

I was just looking at them.

(HANK going towards the tools)

I was going to put them back.

CUT TO:

HANK picks up the tools.

BESSIE

I didn't think you were stealing them, Hank. You can have them if you want.

HANK

Really?

BESSIE

Sure.

HANK

You're giving them to me?

BESSIE

Sure.

(CONTINUED)

HANK
You're just giving them to me?

BESSIE
Sure, why not?

HANK
These are really cool tools.

BESSIE
Are they?

HANK
Yeah, they're ancient.

BESSIE
I think your Grandfather would
like you to have them.

HANK
They won't let me keep these,
though.

BESSIE
Who won't?

HANK
The hospital.

BESSIE
Well, you won't be in there
forever.

HANK
I turn 18 in three weeks.

BESSIE
Oh. Happy Birthday.

HANK
When I go back they're moving
me to a place for adults.

BESSIE
Why?

HANK
They want to be sure I'm not
some kind of threat.

BESSIE
You're not a threat. I'm sure
they'll see that. You're
probably the best one there.

(CONTINUED)

HANK

There's this one dude on my floor held a razor blade under his tongue for five hours. Talked to the orderlies and ate and everything.

BESSIE

Why on earth did he do that?

HANK

He was trying to break my record.

BESSIE

Hank, when I look at you I see a lost little boy.

As she says this, BESSIE raises her hand to brush a lock of hair from HANK's face. HANK slaps her hand away. BESSIE leaves.

HANK

Then get your eyes checked.

INT. KITCHEN. NIGHT

104

BESSIE is rinsing out her coffee cup when HANK comes in from the yard with the tool box. The kitchen is too small for them both.

HANK

So Marvin liked to fix stuff?

BESSIE

Maybe that's where you get it from.

HANK takes a very old photo from the toolbox.

HANK

Hey, who is this?

BESSIE

Let me see.

They look at the photo together. It is a picture from the 1940's of a young woman.

BESSIE

That's your Grandmother.

HANK

Looks kind of like Mom.

(CONTINUED)

BESSIE
She takes after her.
(with photo)
Your Grandfather used to have
this taped above his workbench.

HANK
She's young.

BESSIE
She was young. Do you want
this too?
(the photo)

HANK
I don't care.

BESSIE
Then I'll keep it.
(She slips it into
the pocket of her
robe)

HANK
I don't think I'll get the
test. What do you think about
that?

BESSIE
Can I ask why?

HANK
No reason.

Pause. HANK sits on the kitchen table.

BESSIE
Maybe your Mom wouldn't want
you up this late.

HANK
(The rejection he
always expected.)
Okay.

HANK takes the toolbox from the kitchen table and slides
it down the kitchen counter toward BESSIE hitting an
object of BESSIE's and setting it into a spiral.

HANK
Nobody just gives you stuff
they want something for it.

BESSIE
What?

(CONTINUED)

HANK

People don't just do things
without expecting something
back.

BESSIE

You believe that?

HANK

Yeah.

BESSIE

Why have I spent the last
twenty years
of my life down here? Because
I enjoyed it? Because I got
something out of it?

HANK

Yeah, or you wouldn't have done
it.

BESSIE

No, Hank, no. Sometimes I can
barely...no.

HANK

First time I hear from you is
when you need something.

BESSIE

Oh, Hank-

HANK

Maybe you did it because maybe
you thought you'd never land a
husband. Or maybe you just
wanted to hide out. When
you're not around, a nursing
home will do it for the cash.

BESSIE

Your Mom wouldn't let them go
to a home.

HANK

Why not? She doesn't give a
shit about anybody.

LEE

(Appears in doorway.)

Hank. Go to bed.

Pause. HANK goes into the living room.

(CONTINUED)

LEE

If you let him talk to you that way, Bessie, he'll run all over you.

LEE goes back to the sun room. BESSIE is alone in the kitchen. BESSIE takes the toolbox into the living room.

INT. LIVING ROOM. NIGHT

105

HANK is on the couch. CHARLIE is still wrapped in his sleeping bag on the floor. BESSIE puts the tools next to HANK. BESSIE starts to leave the room. She turns in the doorway.

BESSIE

Hank. You're my nephew and I love you no matter what you've decided.

HANK turns his back towards the wall. Bessie closes the blinds on the camera.

CUT TO:

EXT. MORNING BESSIE'S HOUSE. DAY

106

A series of windows, and glass doors being opened.

INT. MARVIN'S ROOM. DAY

107

BESSIE is opening MARVIN'S window. LEE stands in the door in her slip holding a mini fan.

LEE

When are they coming to fix it because I'm going to die?

BESSIE

Maybe Friday.

LEE

Bessie don't you think that blanket is too hot for Dad right now?

LEE leaves. BESSIE reacts.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM. DAY

108

RUTH is hunting for the TV remote. CHARLIE watches from behind his book, CRIME AND PUNISHMENT.

(CONTINUED)

RUTH
It's a little thing, CHARLIE to
change the TV.

CAMERA tilts down to reveal the remote in the BOOK.

CHARLIE
Haven't seen it.

INT. SUNROOM. DAY

109

BESSIE plugs in a portable fan which causes a hanging
dress of LEE'S to flutter. BESSIE feels the fabric of
the dress and seems lost in thought.

INT. KITCHEN. MORNING

110

HANK is cooling off in front the OPEN FRIDGE drinking an
orange juice. LEE walks in dressed, and shuts the
refrigerator door. HANK leaves. LEE sits at the table
and begins to write out a check. BESSIE enters with
MARVIN'S blanket. LEE THRUSTS her check out to BESSIE.

BESSIE
What's this?

LEE
It must have been expensive
having that nurse come in.

BESSIE
Oh, Lee, no, that's okay.

LEE
Don't worry it's not much.

BESSIE
But-

LEE
I just got to get my purse.

LEE exits. BESSIE is alone. She picks up the check and
thinks about it for a moment, then she TEARS the check
into little pieces. LEE suddenly comes back in.

LEE
Which car do you want to take?
You tore up my check?

(CONTINUED)

BESSIE

Lee, I'm glad you're here but we've been getting along fine by ourselves for a long time and not because we've wanted to. It was your choice to run away and get married.

LEE

We didn't run away.

BESSIE

Well, elope.

LEE

We didn't elope.

BESSIE

None of us were invited.

LEE

You know you could have come.

BESSIE

I had my hands full down here.

Pause.

LEE

Which car?

INT. DR. WALLY'S EXAMINING ROOM. DAY

111

C.U. of a syringe filling with LEE's blood. C.U. of LEE's face.

EXT. BACKYARD. DAY

112

LEE, in the foreground, is in a bikini, fingering the radio, ready to tan. BESSIE is only across the yard in the background, watering the climber on the trestle close to the house, yet the sisters are a world apart.

CUT TO:

BESSIE, in the foreground, the water hose dribbles to a stop. She tries to untangle it. Nothing works. BESSIE's eyes follow the line of the hose to the background to find it is trapped under LEE's chair. CU of LEE unaware of the hose sliding through the grass underneath her.

EXT. BACKYARD. DAY

113

BESSIE in the foreground makes her way to the garage as we see LEE in background.

INT. GARAGE DAY

114

BESSIE comes in to get garden clippers. Hank is on the ladder trying to fix the automatic garage door. He is trying to reach a tool from his spot on the ladder but he can't quite get it. As BESSIE crosses out of the garage, she stops and passes him the tool.

EXT. BACKYARD. DAY

115

LEE is watching HANK and BESSIE in the garage in the panel of her silver sun reflector. LEE's face is seen reflected in the other panel, she seems a little jealous.

CUT TO:

Overhead shot of LEE as she lies in her lawn chair alone.

CUT TO:

CHARLIE sits on top of the air conditioner pushing a stick into the blades, trying to fix it.

CUT TO:

HANK takes a chip from the bowl that sits on the patio table in the foreground, LEE sees him. He is about to put it in his mouth.

LEE

Hank. Did Bessie offer you a chip yet?

BESSIE turns from clipping the vine and walks to the table.

BESSIE

Oh, that's what they're there for.

LEE walks toward the table.

LEE

He has to wait to be asked, Bessie. Put the chip back Hank.

(He doesn't)

Put it back.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LEE (CONT'D)
(He doesn't)

BESSIE
Lee!

LEE
Put back the chip.

LEE crumbles the chip in HANK'S hand.

BESSIE
Lee, I put them out for the kids.

LEE
You have to understand, Bessie.
He has to wait to be asked.

BESSIE
Hank, would you like a chip?

HANK
No thank you, Aunt Bessie. Not right now.

LEE
Your Aunt offered you a chip.
The polite thing to do would be to take it.

HANK
I don't want one right now.

LEE
Eat a chip or no Disney World.

HANK
I could give a fuck about Disney World.

LEE
That's it! Get out of my sight. I don't care where, just so I can't see you.

HANK bolts into the house.

EXT. FRONT STOOP. AN HOUR OR SO LATER. DAY

116

Hank sits on the stoop, smoking a cigarette and listening to a Walkman. BESSIE comes out the door, keys in hand.

(CONTINUED)

BESSIE
Thanks for fixing the garage.

HANK does not hear her. She bends down.

BESSIE
Hank, do you want to keep me
company?

EXT. STRIP MALL PARKING LOT. DAY

117

Bessie pulls in by the pharmacy.

BESSIE
Do you want to come in or do
you want to wait here?

HANK
I'll wait.

JUMP CUT TO:

BESSIE comes out of the pharmacy and back to the car.
HANK has moved into the driver's seat.

BESSIE
Would you like to drive?

HANK
Sure.

BESSIE is in the passenger's seat, HANK behind the wheel. HE starts to back up and stalls out. HE starts the car again, and grinds the gears. The car is jerking it's way out of the parking lot. HANK stalls out again before making it to the street. HANK wants BESSIE to think he's in control. BESSIE watches, not wanting to say anything that might embarrass HANK.

BESSIE
Hank, do you know how to drive?

EXT. A DESERTED ROAD. DAY

118

BESSIE and HANK are in the parked car.

BESSIE
Now try to find first. Can you
feel it? Now second. You can
feel it click in. That's
right. That's good.

HANK is learning the gearshifts.

(CONTINUED)

NOW the car is moving with HANK behind the wheel.

BESSIE
You want to shift now. You can
hear the engine when it...

HANK
I know how the engine works.

BESSIE
Okay, then you want-

HANK shifts smoothly.

BESSIE
You are a natural born driver.

HANK smiles, enjoying the car.

EXT. BUSY STREET. DAY

119

HANK is moving in and out of traffic. BESSIE is hiding
her nerves.

BESSIE
I know where we should go.
Turn here.

HANK turns sharply, scaring BESSIE, who keeps it to
herself.

EXT. PARKING LOT BY THE GULF. DAY

120

BESSIE and HANK sit in the car eating ice cream, looking
at the water.

HANK
Did you know my Dad?

BESSIE
Doesn't your Mom talk about
him.

HANK
I know our car used to be his.

BESSIE
Really? I know that your Mom
was nuts about him. I only got
to meet him once.

(CONTINUED)

HANK

When?

BESSIE

It was when I pretty much knew that I was going to be down here with Dad and Ruth for longer than I thought. So I went back home to sell off Dad's house.

HANK

They have you over for dinner or something?

BESSIE

No. I just sort of stopped by. I was curious to see this guy who could take up absolutely all of your mother's time. It wasn't much of a visit. He was asleep on the couch. Lee didn't want to wake him up and she had just mopped the kitchen floor so we stood in the hallway and talked for awhile. When I left he was still asleep.

HANK

How'd he seem?

BESSIE

(Knowing this is important, wishing she had more to tell.)

He seemed nice enough.

Pause

BESSIE

We should go. I shouldn't be gone this long.

HANK starts the car, but instead of backing up, HE floors it, driving the car over a steep incline onto the beach.

BESSIE

Hank!

HANK is driving with great speed right toward the water. At the last moment he turns and races along the water's edge. BESSIE screams.

BESSIE

Stop! I mean it! Stop!

(CONTINUED)

Water suddenly crashes through BESSIE's open window, drenching her. She is shocked. Then she starts to laugh. HANK stops the car on the beach. BESSIE's laughter runs away with her. HANK starts laughing too.

EXT. GULF. DAY

121

HANK shoots out from below the surface of the water. BESSIE feels out of place on the shore. Her senses bombarded, she warily picks her way past a family, their 3 kids playing in a bucket, older people playing cards at a bridge table and several teens with their dogs playing frisbee. BESSIE is reflected in the sand as she walks along the water's edge humming to herself. The heels of her red shoes dig into the sand, and soon they are left behind. They float out to sea - BESSIE looks to shore for help from the people lounging on the beach. They seem distant, caught in their own world. Everyone is self absorbed - she wades into the water to go after the shoes - It's the first time she has had fun as she playfully catches up to them. The camera circles her victorious, as she pulls the shoes to her and lifts them over her head, she feels free, filled with energy and life. From this moment, she sees the world as it really is. On the beach, a few people are dancing their heads thrown back laughing. Everyone is having fun. Wide and open it's all new to her. She sees a school of shimmering fish jump high out of the water.

HANK'S face pops into the frame calling BESSIE'S name. LOW ANGLE on the car like a magic carpet floating up to the water's edge. From inside the car HANK opens the door, revealing BESSIE standing in the water. HANK has a long, slow smile - looking like a prince as he welcomes BESSIE to come to the car - BESSIE reaches toward the car door.

MATCH CUT to LEE's hand yanking the car door open.

EXT. BESSIE'S DRIVEWAY. END OF DAY

122

LEE is standing by the car, wearing rubber gloves and holding a sponge waiting. BESSIE is soaking wet as she and HANK share a playful look as they get out of the car. RUTH and CHARLIE are playing cards on the patio.

LEE

You were gone five hours. Do you know that? You left me here. You're all wet.

(CONTINUED)

BESSIE

We went down to the water. I'm
sorry-

LEE

Dr. Wally called.

BESSIE can see in LEE's face that LEE wasn't a match.

LEE

He'd like to test the boys
next.

LEE looks at HANK who abruptly walks toward the house.

CHARLIE

Do you have any sevens?

RUTH and CHARLIE look at HANK as he passes through, then
back to their game.

RUTH

Go fish.

INT. BESSIE'S BEDROOM. SECONDS LATER

123

With the PILL BOTTLES in the foreground, BESSIE sits on
the edge of her bed looking tired and wet. The pill
alarm on her bed stand sounds, BESSIE'S response is
slow. She turns off the alarm and looks down the hall
towards MARVIN's room. She takes off her shoe and some
sand and a shell pour into her hand. BESSIE'S back fills
the frame and as she walks away from the camera, she is
silhouetted from the daylight in MARVIN's room.

CUT TO:

INT. HOBBY ROOM, NURSING HOME. DAY

124

A GIRL singing off key, track to the choir moving
rhythmically with her. Four old hands are playing a
organ (FASCINATING RHYTHM). Their audience is a
smattering of old people. Lots of vacant chairs. Two
old women get up and dance together as LEE looks on
through a glass wall.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY BESIDE GLASS WALL. DAY

125

LEE stands and BESSIE is seated on the other side of the
wall.

LEE

Isn't this perfect.

The DIRECTOR joins them.

(CONTINUED)

DIRECTOR

Shall we?

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY. DAY.

126

DIRECTOR

We have a complete range of
activities for our residents.
Computer games, nerf
basketball, date nights.

BESSIE

Who is Dad going to date?

DIRECTOR

You'd be surprised. Women out
number the men five to one.

BESSIE LOOKS AT LEE.

INT. DOORWAY. DAY.

127

The DIRECTOR guides BESSIE and LEE through a doorway.

DIRECTOR

There is a licensed physician
on the premises at all times.
We're very proud of that.

INT. NATATORIUM. DAY

128

The DIRECTOR leads BESSIE and LEE in the vast space.

DIRECTOR

Our residents just love this.
It's real special to us. It's
olympic-sized.

LEE

I wouldn't mind living here.
This is great.

A man is floating on a raft in the water.

DIRECTOR

Hello Doctor. Just giving a
tour.

The DOCTOR waves. BESSIE and LEE flank the DIRECTOR who
waves back. Track into BESSIE's aghast expression.

INT. HALLYWAY. DAY.

129

The DIRECTOR and LEE walk ahead. BESSIE lags behind.
BESSIE hears a muffled cry. BESSIE'S POV as she's
drawn towards the door. Nurses in white flash by her.
BESSIE is about to look in the room that the others have
already passed. BESSIE cautiously opens the door.
BESSIE'S face, jarred by what she saw in the room.

INT. MARVIN'S ROOM. DAY

130

BESSIE is gently giving MARVIN a drink, LEE quietly appears in the doorway.

LEE

I know that was hard. We're just doing the mature thing and seeing what our options are. But none of it means anything anyway. I know Charlie's bound to match.

BESSIE

I don't want you pressuring Hank.

LEE

You've done amazing things Bessie.

BESSIE

I haven't done so much.

LEE

The way you handle Daddy and Ruth. I wouldn't last a week. You should be proud.

BESSIE

I just did what anybody would do.

BESSIE exits, LEE reacts.

INT. KITCHEN. DAY

131

BESSIE peels carrots. As LEE enters BESSIE crosses to get milk from the fridge.

LEE

I get my degree next quarter.

BESSIE

You should be proud of that.

LEE picks up a potato and takes over the peeling. BESSIE is mildly surprised to see her helping.

LEE

I already had one freelance job. Doing hair for a TV commercial. It was just local, but guess how much they paid for one day.

BESSIE

I don't feel like guessing.

(CONTINUED)

BESSIE is chopping vegetables.

LEE

Guess. Guess.

BESSIE

Three hundred dollars?

LEE

That's right. Three hundred dollars. Why did you guess that?

BESSIE

It just popped into my head.

LEE

Most people would have guessed lower.

BESSIE

Three hundred dollars is a lot of money.

LEE

It's a lot for one day. I feel like my life is finally starting.

They begin working together.

BESSIE

Dad would never have done this. Do you remember how he cared for Mom?

LEE

I was little. I wasn't allowed in her room.

BESSIE

You'd come in. You'd run around. You'd knock things over.

LEE

I was a little girl. You'd stand guard by her door and not let me in.

BESSIE

I was told to do that.

LEE

Mom was just a vague presence in a shut room at the end of the hall.

BESSIE pauses.

(CONTINUED)

BESSIE

Why can't you take Dad and Ruth?

LEE

The nuns would love it.

LEE stops working.

BESSIE

Why can't you?

LEE

I've got Hank to think about.

LEE moves to the far side of the counter.

BESSIE

He's very unhappy there.

LEE

Of course he's unhappy there.
If he were happy he wouldn't be there.

BESSIE

You could find a nice place for him here, Lee. You'd have the whole house. The sunshine. You could find work down here.

LEE

No.

BESSIE

Give me one good reason.

LEE

Just no.

BESSIE

Why?

LEE

Because I don't want to! I made this decision once already. When Daddy had his first stroke. I made this decision then. I wasn't going to waste my life.

BESSIE

You think I've wasted my life?

LEE

Of course not.

(CONTINUED)

BESSIE

I can't imagine a better way to have spent my life.

LEE

Then we both made the right decision.

BESSIE

You are the most....!

LEE

Say it! You've been saying it a million different ways since I've got down here!

LEE starts to go.

BESSIE

I have not. I have bent over backwards to avoid having this conversation with you.

LEE

You think you know Hank, but you don't. He's my son. I know him. You have no idea what it means to be a mother. You have no idea.

The camera cuts to BESSIE as these words sink in.

INT. SHOPPING MALL. DAY

132

HANK and CHARLIE are looking at a C.D. display table in front of a record store. HANK finds one he likes and considers taking it. BESSIE comes up from behind.

BESSIE

The guard said it's the second floor.

INT. DR. WALLY'S NEW OFFICE. DAY

133

The DOCTOR stands in front of HANK, CHARLIE and BESSIE explaining the procedure. BOB listens from the reception counter.

DR. WALLY

So, is everyone clear on the procedure we're about to do? Are there any questions?

A small voice comes from behind DR. WALLY.

(CONTINUED)

BOB
How long does the anesthetic
take to work?

DR. WALLY
It's not so important that you
understand the procedure, Bob.

BOB
Could I have your medical
history card please?

CHARLIE rises and gives it to him. BOB shuts his
sliding glass window.

DR. WALLY
Ready Hank?

CHARLIE
I'm Charlie.

DR. WALLY
I'm Dr. Wally.

They exit. BOB comes around from behind the reception
area. He has a card for HANK to fill out.

BOB
You have to fill one out too.

BESSIE
No, he's not here to get-

HANK
(Takes the card.)
Okay.

BOB returns to the reception area. BESSIE watches HANK
silently fill out the card, knowing this means he's
changed his mind and will be tested. HANK returns the
card to BOB.

BOB
Hank, am I reading your medical
card correctly? Are you
currently on lithium?

HANK
Yeah.

BOB
It's a great drug, isn't it?

(CONTINUED)

HANK

Uh...

BOB

Can I ask you something? Did you find you put on a lot of weight since?

HANK

No.

BOB looks disappointed as he slides his window shut. HANK sits back down. HANK seems embarrassed. BESSIE knows better than to make a fuss. HANK sits for a moment, and fidgets.

BESSIE

These are new offices for them. Their old ones became infested with bugs.

HANK

Bugs don't bother me.

BESSIE

No?

HANK

One dude in my room catches bugs and puts them on a leash.

BESSIE

A leash?

HANK

A hair leash. He pulls out a strand of his hair and ties it around the bug and the other end he tacks down under his bunk. He had this whole zoo of bugs walking in little circles under his bed.

BESSIE

Hank.

HANK

Till this other dude smashed them all with the back of this cafeteria tray. It was funny.

BESSIE

Why do you make up these stories?

(CONTINUED)

HANK

What?

BESSIE

These stories. Razors under
the tongue, hair leashes.

HANK

I'm not making anything up.

BESSIE

Why did you pretend you weren't
going to get tested? Why did
you put me through that?

HANK walks out of the Doctor's office into the mall.
BESSIE sits for a moment then gets up and follows.

INT. MALL. DAY

134

BESSIE comes out of the office which is on the second
level of the mall. She looks from the balcony and picks
out HANK disappearing in the crowd below. She bumps into
a family with a baby carriage.

INT. EXAMINATION ROOM. DAY

135

CHARLIE has taken an instrument from the tray and is
looking at it.

DR. WALLY

Just hop up on the table.

(Notices CHARLIE with
the instrument.)

No, no, that's not a toy.

DR. WALLY takes it from him. The DOCTOR turns his back
to put on his rubber gloves. CHARLIE picks up another
instrument and looks at it.

DR. WALLY

You'll see them in action if
you'll get on the table.

CHARLIE hops on the table.

INT. CLOTHING STORE. DAY.

136

BESSIE walks through the racks of clothes, searching for HANK. A woman comes up and sprays a preoccupied BESSIE with a perfume sample.

INT. ANOTHER PART OF THE CLOTHING STORE. DAY

137

HANK comes out of the dressing booth where he was hiding. They see each other and he goes back in. BESSIE goes up to the door of the booth.

BESSIE

Hank?

INT. DRESSING BOOTH. DAY

138

HANK doesn't answer, hoping she'll go away.

INT. CLOTHING STORE. DAY

139

BESSIE talks through the shut door of the booth. The camera cuts between the two.

BESSIE

Hank?

HANK

I haven't told you shit. You don't know anything about where they've got me.

BESSIE

Well, you can tell me if you want. I was in the hospital. I was scared and it was boring.

HANK

You don't know.

BESSIE

Then tell me.

BEAT

A salesperson comes up.

SALESPERSON

Is your son all right?

BESSIE

Yes.

CUT TO:

HANK'S reaction to being called BESSIE'S son. The salesperson has walked away.

HANK

There's this one dude-

BESSIE

Hank, if this is another tall tale, I'm going back up.

Silence from HANK'S side. She waits a moment but still nothing from HANK. Then she leaves.

The camera looks down on HANK who slides to the bottom of the floor of the claustrophobic dressing room.

INT. DR. WALLY'S WAITING ROOM. DAY

140

BESSIE is reading a magazine. After a moment, HANK comes in and sits down. It is hard for him to start talking.

HANK

I played in a pool tournament in my ward. Did Mom tell you?

BESSIE

No.

HANK

I came in fourth. It's true. She doesn't think it's such a big deal.

BESSIE

That's great.

HANK

A lot of drugs float around in there.

BESSIE

Do you take them?

HANK

Most of the time I keep to myself. Most of the time I think what would it be like to be someone else. Someone I see on the TV or in a magazine. A lot of the time I think about getting this house with all this land around it. And I'd get a bunch of dogs and I'd let them run wild. They'd never know a leash. And I'd build a go cart track

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HANK (CONT'D)
on my property. Those places
pull in the bucks. I'd be
raking it in, and nobody would
know where I was. I'd be gone,
someplace else.

BESSIE
Why aren't you someplace else?

HANK
What do you mean?

BESSIE
You're the one who told me
people only do what they want.

HANK
Yeah.

BESSIE
So you must want to be in
there.

HANK
No. I've got no choice

BESSIE
Then show them you don't need
to be in there.

HANK
It's not that easy. People
start thinking of you a certain
way and pretty soon you're that
way.

BESSIE
I don't want you wasting your
life in there.

HANK
Neither do I.

BESSIE
Then why are you still there?

HANK
Because I burned down the
house.

BESSIE
Why did you burn down the
house?

PAUSE. DR. WALLY comes from the examination area..

(CONTINUED)

DR. WALLY

Hank, we can get you started while we're waiting for the anesthetic to start working on little Sammy.

HANK

Charlie.

DR. WALLY

I'm sorry. Did I call you Hank. It's the new offices.
(sniffs the air)
Somebody smells very nice.

BESSIE

Thank you.

DR. WALLY

So why don't you come on back.

The DOCTOR exits. HANK follows, then he turns.

HANK

Would you come back there with me?

BESSIE

Sure I would.

INT. SUNROOM. NIGHT

141

Silence. LEE, her robe billowing in the draft of the sliding glass door moves toward the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN. NIGHT

142

LOW ANGLE on BESSIE as she moves about making coffee, TILT up to her face, when LEE suddenly clicks on the kitchen light, violating her privacy. For the first time, BESSIE is not wearing her wig. BESSIE covers her exposed scalp with her hands.

LEE

Oh.

BESSIE

I was just going to bed.

BESSIE quickly escapes to the privacy of her room. LEE stands still for a moment, then she pours a glass of orange juice from the refrigerator and takes a flask out

(CONTINUED)

of her robe pocket and pours a healthy shot into her glass. BESSIE comes back in wearing her wig.

BESSIE
I forgot my coffee.

LEE
Why are you drinking coffee so late?

BESSIE
I like it. Why are you up?

LEE
Guess I was thirsty.

BESSIE
Did you find everything you need?

LEE
Yes. Thank you.

BESSIE
You're welcome. The boys didn't eat much at supper.

LEE
No. You have a way with Hank.

BESSIE
I don't.

LEE
You do. You have a way with him.

BESSIE
He's a good boy.

LEE
Is he?

BESSIE
Sure he is.

LEE
I wish I knew your secret.

BESSIE
I just talk to him.

LEE
Are you saying I don't?

Slight pause.

(CONTINUED)

BESSIE
I'm tired and we've got Disney
World tomorrow.

BESSIE goes to her room. LEE turns out the kitchen
light.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM. NIGHT

143

WS of Living Room as the spill of light reveals the
boys. The light clicks off. BEAT. A voice out of the
darkness.

CHARLIE
Hank?

HANK
Yeah.

CHARLIE
Do you ever think about
actually dying?

HANK
No. Do you?

CHARLIE
No.

Pause.

CHARLIE
Do you think Aunt Ruth would
ever visit us at home?

HANK
Sure. Maybe we'll come down
here for Christmas this year
not tell Aunt Bessie just show
up. She opens the door we're
standing there with a live
turkey. That would be a good
surprise, huh?

CHARLIE
Yeah.

CHARLIE pulls the sleeping bag over his head.

HANK
Can you breathe like that?

(CONTINUED)

CHARLIE

Yeah.

Pause.

CHARLIE

Hank?

HANK

Yeah.

CHARLIE

Are you excited about Walt
Disney World?

HANK

Yeah. Are you?

CHARLIE

Yeah.

(Rolls over to go to
sleep.)

INT. BESSIE'S ROOM. NIGHT

144

BESSIE is about to take off her wig and get in bed when
LEE knocks on the door and comes in.

LEE

You know I could style your wig
for you. I know how.

BESSIE

Why, does it look bad?

LEE

No. But if you've got a wig
you should have fun with it.

BESSIE

I just brush it out now and
then.

LEE

I've got my makeup kit down
here too. How about it?

INT. SUNROOM (LEE'S BEDROOM). NIGHT

145

Close on LEE'S huge make-up kit as it snaps open and
unfolds revealing compartment after compartment. LEE'S
finger flicks a switch, a series of lights bordering the
mirror pop on. TIGHT ON BESSIE'S face, her mud mask

(CONTINUED)

makes it difficult to speak. Makeup is spread about, giving the room a feeling of a slumber party.

BESSIE
You use all this stuff?

LEE
Well, not all at once.

CUT TO:

BESSIE'S face in the mirror as she wipes the last bit of mud mask off.

BESSIE
I never really bother with cosmetics.

LEE
You should. I mean because it's fun. And you never know when you might meet someone.

BESSIE
Meet someone?

LEE
Sure.

BESSIE
A man?

LEE
Yes, a man.

BESSIE
I haven't thought about a man in years.

LEE
You're lying.

Pause. LEE touches her own face up.

BESSIE
I'm sorry we haven't been seeing eye to eye. I don't want us to fight.

LEE
I don't think we have been.

BESSIE
I want us to get along.

(CONTINUED)

LEE

We do get along.

BESSIE

I don't want us to just get along. I don't want us to be polite.

LEE

I've never had a problem with that.

BESSIE

I want us to...I want...Not much seems important to me right now.

LEE

(not wanting to talk about it.)

We're sisters.

BESSIE

The past is-

LEE

We're sisters.

BESSIE

I want you to know-

LEE

(Getting louder, uncomfortable with this conversation.)

I do know.

The sound of MARVIN stirring. BESSIE turns to look. She sees the fish quietly circling over MARVIN'S bed.

LEE

Should we-

BESSIE

No. He scares himself sometimes but then he goes right back to sleep.

The sound of MARVIN settling back to sleep. BESSIE picks up one of LEE'S necklaces, LEE draws the curtain.

BESSIE

Are you seeing anybody now, Lee?

LEE

Usually.

(CONTINUED)

BESSIE

I hope you have someone real in your life.

LEE

I don't have much trouble with that.

BESSIE

I'm not talking about that.

LEE

You should be. There's no reason you haven't had love in your life.

BESSIE

I think I've-

LEE

Men. There's no reason. You're not ugly, Bessie.

BESSIE

Thank you.

LEE

You're not. I know lot's of boys were interested in you. They just thought you were stuck up.

BESSIE

I had a true love.

LEE

Did he know?

BESSIE

Yes.

LEE

You mean you had a boyfriend?

BESSIE

Yes, I had a boyfriend. Why is that such news?

LEE

Who? You can tell me Bessie. It's not like I'm going to tell anybody.

BESSIE

Clarence James.

(CONTINUED)

LEE

Who?

BESSIE

He was only around in the
summers.

Pause. LEE catches on.

LEE

You went with a carny worker?!

BESSIE

This is why I kept it a secret.

LEE

I didn't say anything. Daddy
would have killed you. Which
one was he?

BESSIE

He mostly ran the Ferris wheel.

LEE

Uh-huh.

BESSIE

I knew he liked me because he
always gave me an extra turn.

LEE

That's sweet.

BESSIE

Once he kept my car swaying at
the top until I started to cry.

LEE

He was a flirt.

BESSIE

He had these big ears.

LEE

I remember him. Those big
arms, he was a looker.

BESSIE

Oh, he was very...strong. He'd
make a big deal out of his
manners because his name
sounded English, Clarence
James. He had the funniest
laugh. He'd open his mouth
real wide and no sound would
come out.

(CONTINUED)

LEE

He was only there about three summers.

BESSIE

Four summers.

LEE

Then he stopped coming.

BESSIE

That's right.

LEE

What happened?

BESSIE

Nothing like you think.

LEE

What happened?

BESSIE

They always have a last picnic down by the river and Clarence goes swimming. And he knows everybody is watching him. Everybody is there, his family, his friends, me. And he's laughing, making that monkey face, which gets all of us laughing, and he dunks under the water and pops up somewhere else laughing even harder which gets us laughing even harder. And he dives under again and then he doesn't come up and he doesn't come up and he doesn't come up. Laughing and choking looked the same on Clarence. He drowned right in front of us.

LEE

Bessie, you should have told me.

BESSIE

If I couldn't tell people I had a carny boyfriend, I couldn't tell people my carny boyfriend drowned.

LEE

You should have told me anyway.

BESSIE

We were never that close.

(CONTINUED)

LEE
Weren't we?

BESSIE
No.

Pause.

LEE
Do you want me to do something
with that wig?

BESSIE
What?

LEE
I don't know. Let me look at
it.

BESSIE turns her head giving LEE a look.

LEE
No, you have to take it off.

BESSIE
Oh.

LEE
I won't hurt it.
(BESSIE is
reluctant.)
This is a nice wig, Bessie.
It's nicely ventilated. We can
do something with this. Do you
want me to?

BESSIE
Sure.

BESSIE takes off her wig and gives it to LEE. LEE tries
to hide her reaction from BESSIE.

LEE
I'm glad we made this trip. I
only wish we could stay longer.
(Not wanting BESSIE
to see she is
upset.)
Let me get my brush.

LEE leaves the room. BESSIE takes a moment and then
wraps a scarf around her head.

INT. BATHROOM. NIGHT.

146

LEE steadies herself, looking in the mirror. She doesn't want to cry. She takes her hairbrush, which she had all the time, from the pocket of her robe. She opens the bathroom door and in a loud whisper-

LEE

Found it.

INT. SUN ROOM. MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT.

147

LEE has a box of hair ornaments and chooses just the right one. The wig is in front of her.

INT. LIVING ROOM. MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT.

148

LEE sits in a chair and watches her boys sleep.

INT. SUNROOM.

149

LEE lights a cigarette and blows out a match.

CUT TO:

The screen goes bright orange and we tilt down as the new sun breaks over BESSIE'S wig, which sits in the window on one of LEE'S wig dummies. A hand takes the wig out of frame.

INT. BESSIE'S ROOM. MORNING.

150

BESSIE is dressed for Disney. She sits in front of her mirror wearing the newly styled wig. She turns her head back and forth to see how she looks. She finishes the look with lipstick.

INT. KITCHEN. DAY.

151

LEE is putting plates of food in front of HANK, CHARLIE and RUTH as BESSIE comes through the kitchen.

BESSIE

Everybody almost ready?

HANK, CHARLIE and RUTH are all surprised by BESSIE'S new look.

INT. CAR IN DRIVEWAY. DAY.

152

BESSIE is behind the wheel. LEE is getting in front with some snacks.

LEE

I hate thinking we might have to leave before we find out about the boys.

BESSIE

Things will work out.

EXT. BESSIE'S FRONT WALK. DAY.

153

The boys are coming toward the car.

CHARLIE

You had the window on the right the whole way down here.

HANK

So what? There's no difference between the right and the left.

CHARLIE

Then why can't I sit on the right?

HANK

Because that's my side.

They get in the car.

An excited RUTH, wearing a large sun hat, bustles out the front door past the camera. As the car pulls away a NURSE stands on the stoop waving good-bye.

INT. MOVING CAR. DAY.

154

LEE is driving. BESSIE is in the passenger seat. RUTH is in back between HANK and CHARLIE.

LEE

Hank, is that too much wind for you?

HANK

What?

LEE

Is that too much wind?

(CONTINUED)

HANK

(Not sure why his mom
is being nice.)

No. It's okay.

RUTH

Put your hand out the window
Charlie. It's like an
airplane.

CHARLIE puts his arm out the window and lets it be
buffeted by the wind.

BESSIE (O.S.)

Oh, Charlie, be careful.

EXT. HIGHWAY. DAY.

155

The camera is behind the car. We see CHARLIE'S lone arm
sticking out the back window. Then HANK'S arm comes out
the window on the opposite side. From this rear
viewpoint the arms seem like wings, and the car could
take off into the air. RUTH'S scarf flutters out
CHARLIE'S side and we hear RUTH-

RUTH (O.S.)

Wheee.

CUT TO:

RUTH'S horrified scream as she plummets down the
steep side of a roller coaster hill in Disney World.

156

INT. DISNEY WORLD

157

The family walks to another attraction, RUTH in a
wheelchair pushed by CHARLIE.

RUTH

It's like a piece of heaven
fell from the sky.

A bunch of kids on roller-skates emerge from behind
RUTH'S wheelchair like a flock of birds. They envelop
her for a moment as they race past.

CUT TO:

The family is entering the 360 degree theater. LEE
holds the door for HANK who doesn't understand why his
mom is being nice. LEE has to motion HANK through.
HANK enters, suspicious.

158

CUT TO:

Inside the theater the group stares at the film
of the Grand Canyon that wraps completely around them. 159

CUT TO:

RUTH and LEE are enjoying Bumper Cars, HANK looks
like it's beneath him. CHARLIE crashes into RUTH. 160

CUT TO:

Outside the Bumper cars HANK and CHARLIE, stride
away like serious adults, while BESSIE and RUTH enjoy
blowing bubbles like children. LEE stops the boys, the
family can't make up their minds where to go to next. An
argument breaks out. 161

The camera is high above the park. BESSIE, RUTH and
CHARLIE can just be picked out of the milling crowd. 162

LEE (O.S.)

There they are. I can see
them. Going to the Hall of
Presidents.

EXT. TREE HOUSE ATTRACTION. DAY. 163

LEE and HANK are on top of a mock tree house. They are
not comfortable alone together.

LEE

I'm proud of you Hank, getting
tested for Bessie.

HANK makes his way down the other side of the tree. LEE
catches up to HANK on the landing. A feeling of space
surrounds them. Odd sounds and bubbles waft up from
below.

LEE

This tree house was a movie. We
saw it. Do you remember?

HANK

No.

LEE

I took you both to that movie.

Pause. Happy tourists shouting to each other walk by.

HANK

I remember Dad took us to see
The Planet of the Apes.

(CONTINUED)

LEE

No, he didn't

HANK

He didn't?

LEE

I took you to that but you were older then.

Pause.

HANK

That was a good movie.

LEE

The one with the apes? Oh, good. I'm glad you liked it. So, are you having a good time.

HANK

Charlie and I want to go to Space Mountain.

LEE

We'll do that.

HANK

We want to go off by ourselves.

LEE

No. Uh-uh. I've already gone back on my ultimatum just letting you come. I think you're doing really well this trip. I think everyone is going to hear how well you did. I think it will mean a lot to them. For the most part your behavior down here has made me very happy, but no.

Pause. Angle on the submarine ride that LEE point to.

LEE

That submarine ride, now that's a movie too.

HANK

Did we see that one?

LEE

Did you? I don't think so. I don't remember.

(CONTINUED)

HANK
(Pointed)
With Dad?

LEE
No, no, no! Not with your Dad.
(Pause.)
Do you like apes? Do you like
animals?

HANK suddenly throws his Coke, with a great arc, into
the air.

LEE
Hank?

The Coke explodes against the pavement, causing a few 164
tourists to sidestep to avoid getting wet.

LEE 165
You are not getting another
one!

Almost immediately two men in white overalls are 166
there. They clean up the Coke and disappear.

HANK moves up the stairs away from his Mom. 167

LEE
Hank.

HANK stops.

LEE
You want to know something
about your Dad?

HANK looks at her but LEE doesn't continue. She looks
out over the park with out moving. HANK walks back
toward LEE, to get her to say more.

LEE
You know, on Saturdays I worked
and your Dad took care of you.

HANK
He did?

LEE
Yeah.

(CONTINUED)

LEE

(This is incredibly
hard for LEE)

And sometimes on Saturdays
you'd get...hurt. And I know
you rough-housed too much, and
I'd yell at you for rough
housing too much, but you'd
still get...hurt. And I
started leaving my job early so
I could get home and...I'd yell
at you and yell at you and beg
you to please stop hurting
yourself because he was my
husband and I loved him and
what was I supposed to do?
Then Charlie came and I
just...I packed you kids up
and...

My feelings for you Hank are
like a big bowl of fish hooks.
I can't just pick them up one
at a time. I pick up one, they
all come. So I tend to leave
them alone.

EXT. DISNEY WORLD RESTAURANT. DAY.

168

BESSIE is buying Cokes.

EXT. PICNIC TABLE AT RESTAURANT. DAY.

169

HANK is distant from the group, each member of the
family is preoccupied. CHARLIE wears a Goofy cap and is
reading. RUTH'S wheelchair has all kinds of bags and
trinkets hanging off it.

LEE

Charlie, don't read. You're at
Disney World. Look around.

(SHE snatches the
book from him.)

RUTH

Do you want me to hold your
book on my lap?

CHARLIE

No.

LEE

Read your book if you want. It
doesn't matter.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LEE (CONT'D)
(SHE gives it back.)

RUTH
You should have come with us.
You don't know what you missed.

LEE
You liked the Hall of
Presidents?

RUTH
It was so nice to see F.D.R.
again.

BESSIE joins them with a tray of Cokes.

BESSIE
Here we are. I hope everybody
is thirsty. Hank.
(Gives him a Coke.)
Lee.

LEE
I already have one.

BESSIE
We have an extra then. Hank
you look extra thirsty.

BESSIE gives HANK a second Coke. HANK gives a gloating
look to his MOM. RUTH starts to roll out of frame.

LEE
Did you like the Hall of
Presidents?

BESSIE
It was kind of fun to see
J.F.K. again.

CUT TO:

RUTH
Lee, here's one of those
cartoon characters, oh, get a
picture, get a picture!

CUT TO:

A large, somewhat strange looking cartoon
character, surrounded by a ring of children, making his
way through the park. HE waves at everybody.

170

CUT TO:

The women rush over to RUTH. The adults are very
excited by this. The kids seem kind of bored.

171

(CONTINUED)

LEE
Who is that, Pluto?

RUTH
It looks more like a gopher
than a dog.

BESSIE
They look like horse ears.

CHARLIE
Who's Pluto?

LEE
Let's get our picture taken
with it.

HANK
I don't want my picture taken
with some mutant.

BESSIE
Should we wait for something
more Disney?

LEE
But we're all together now.

LEE runs after the cartoon character, GOPHER MAN.

HANK
Charlie, let's go to Space
Mountain.

CHARLIE
Okay.

BESSIE
I don't think your Mom wants
you to go off alone.

HANK
She doesn't care.

BESSIE
I think she does.

HANK
We'll be right back.

BESSIE
Hank, stay here.

HANK
We'll only be gone a second.

(CONTINUED)

BESSIE

Hank, Please.

HANK

Okay.

They all look towards LEE and the GOPHER MAN. LEE 172
has somehow gotten into a terrific argument with the
cartoon character. We can't hear what she's saying, but
she's yelling and pointing with great anger. The
children have backed away, somewhat afraid.

CUT TO:

A couple of the kids crying because of LEE. 173

EXT. AMUSEMENT PARK. DAY. 174

The family is coming out of IT'S A SMALL WORLD. LEE has
not let go of the incident with the cartoon character.

LEE

No, that was the rudest cartoon
character I have ever met.
What was I supposed to do, tip
him?

CHARLIE

No.

BESSIE

You all go ahead. I want to
sit here a bit.

BESSIE sits on a nearby bench. The family share worried
looks of concern.

LEE

We can all sit. Maybe we
should eat something.

BESSIE

No. I'm fine. I just feel
like sitting in the sun. I'll
catch up to you.

LEE

Where?

HANK

How 'bout Space Mountain?

(CONTINUED)

LEE
Space Mountain in an hour? You
sure?

BESSIE
I'll be there.

LEE starts to push RUTH'S chair, CHARLIE won't let her.

CHARLIE
I like pushing.

RUTH
You're a good driver.

EXT. AMUSEMENT PARK. DAY.

175

BESSIE sits alone on a bench. She watches the people in the park, the children, having a good time, running, laughing. SHE turns her face to the sun. She looks back at the children, they now seem distant and odd. BESSIE looks disoriented. She tries to settle herself, and in so doing finds blood in her mouth. The shock makes her react. BESSIE stands, then faints to the pavement.

BESSIE opens her eyes for a moment to find that the GOPHER MAN cartoon character is looking down at her. She shuts her eyes again.

INT. THE LOST CHILDREN'S HUT. LATER

176

BESSIE waking from a nightmare pops into frame. LEE is sitting by the child size bed on a tiny chair. Everything in the room is small and decorated with cartoon characters. A cheerfully decorated partition has been set up to give BESSIE some privacy as she sleeps.

LEE
You're alright.

BESSIE
Hmmm.

LEE
You're alright.

BESSIE
Where am I?

(CONTINUED)

A worried MOTHER comes into the HUT on the other side of the partition her five year old daughter runs into her arms.

LEE

You're in the Lost Children's Hut.

BESSIE

Where?

RUTH comes from the other side of the partition.

RUTH

Bessie?

LEE

She's okay, Ruth.

BESSIE

Ruth?

RUTH

Bessie?

BESSIE

I'm fine.

RUTH

Are you alright now?

BESSIE

I just got real tired.

RUTH

You should rest.

BESSIE

I am.

RUTH

You do too much. You always do too much.

BESSIE

I won't do so much anymore. I promise.

LEE

She's fine Ruth.

BESSIE starts trying to sit up, but she still feels woozy.

(CONTINUED)

BESSIE
We've only paid Dad's nurse
till seven o'clock.

LEE
Don't worry about that.

BESSIE
Is there a phone?

RUTH
I'll call.

RUTH exits with great determination and purpose, in
search of a phone.

LEE
Dr. Serat and Dr. Wally are
meeting us at the hospital.

BESSIE
Dr. Serat?

LEE
He's back.

BESSIE
I have to go back in the
hospital?

LEE
They want to look at you. If
you feel good there's no reason
you can't come home.

BESSIE
I feel good.

LEE
What happened?

BESSIE
I fainted.

LEE
From the heat?

BESSIE
There was blood in my mouth.

LEE
Is your mouth still bleeding?

(CONTINUED)

BESSIE

No. Did a doctor look at me?

LEE

No. He just thought you
fainted so he carried you in
here to lie down.

BESSIE

Who's he?

LEE

The Gopher Man.

BESSIE

The Gopher Man?

LEE

Yes.

BESSIE

Carried me to the Lost
Children's Hut?

LEE

He just thought you fainted.
He didn't know you had been
bleeding.

BESSIE

I couldn't have bled that much.

LEE

Maybe you were kind of faint
from not eating too. That
might be all it is.

BESSIE

I fainted because...I was
scared.

LEE

You're alright.

BESSIE

I was so scared.

LEE

That's okay.

BESSIE

What's happening to me?

LEE

Shh.

(CONTINUED)

BESSIE

I can't sleep. I never sleep.
I'm afraid to close my eyes.
I'll close my eyes and I won't
wake up. So I jerk myself
awake. I yank myself awake all
night long.

LEE

Bessie...

BESSIE

I pour myself some coffee.

LEE

It's okay.

BESSIE

I just want to find some place
to hide.

LEE

You're okay.

BESSIE

I'm trying to be brave.

LEE

Shh. Shh.

BESSIE

But I'm scared. I'm so scared.

LEE hugs BESSIE.

LEE

Shh. Shh. You're okay. Oh,
you're okay.

LEE just hold her for a moment.

LEE

What have you got to be scared
of? Everything is going to be
okay. You'll see. There's
still Hank and Charlie. Are
you forgetting about that?
You're okay.

BESSIE

Where are they?

LEE

They're sitting out front.

The camera starts slowly circling around to the other
side of the partition.

(CONTINUED)

BESSIE
Was Space Mountain fun?

LEE
Uh-huh. It was real fun.

BESSIE
You're lucky to have those boys.

The camera continues its circle, revealing that HANK is sitting in a small chair, his back against the other side of the partition. He's been listening the entire time. HIS eyes are moist. BESSIE and LEE'S silhouette can be seen on the other side of the curtain. 177

LEE (O.S.)
I know I am.

BESSIE (O.S.)
They're good boys. Both of them.

LEE (O.S.)
Yes, they are.

BESSIE (O.S.)
And you know?

LEE (O.S.)
What?

The camera continues its circle, moving past HANK and returning to BESSIE and LEE. 178

BESSIE
I'm lucky to have Dad and Ruth...

LEE
Mm-hmm.

BESSIE
I've had such love in my life.
I look back and I've had such love.

LEE
They love you very much.

BESSIE
I don't mean...I mean I love them. I am so lucky to have been able to love someone so much. I am so lucky to have loved so much. I am so lucky.

(CONTINUED)

LEE
Yes, you are. You are.

BESSIE
We're fooling ourselves, Lee.

LEE
How?

BESSIE
Hank and Charlie aren't going
to match.

Cut to a close up of HANK as he listens from the
other side.

179

LEE (O.S.)
We don't know that.

BESSIE (O.S.)
They're my nephews. They're
once removed.

LEE (O.S.)
It could still happen.

BESSIE (O.S.)
I don't want to pretend any
longer. We have too many
decisions to make before you
leave.

The camera returns to LEE and BESSIE.

180

LEE
We don't have to make them
right now.

HANK'S shadow comes through the partition.

LEE
Hank, would you find me a
wheelchair.

HANK
Okay.

EXT. AMUSEMENT PARK. DAY

181

HANK is racing through the park, pushing an empty
wheelchair.

INT. LOST CHILDREN'S HUT. DAY

182

LEE

Do you feel up to going to the car?

BESSIE

Oh, sure.

BESSIE sits up. HANK comes in, out of breath, with the wheelchair. CHARLIE comes in behind him.

BESSIE

Hank, you didn't have to run.

BESSIE tries to stand, but she is too weak to get up. HANK suddenly lifts BESSIE from the bed and carries her to the chair. A reverse Pieta. From the wheelchair BESSIE looks at the tiny bed.

BESSIE

I don't remember ever being that small.

They leave.

INT. RUTH'S ROOM. DAY

183

CU on RUTH'S profile wearing one earring, CHARLIE is scrutinizing her face. He turns to reach for a new color off of LEE'S make-up palette and reveals he is wearing an earring that matches RUTH'S. Ruth has a diamond tiara on her head, she is very dressed up. LEE'S makeup kit is spilling open. CHARLIE has put too much makeup on her face. He starts applying the eyeliner.

RUTH

I haven't had reason to pretty myself up since, I can't think when.

CHARLIE

Today is the day.

RUTH

I hope nothing goes wrong. They almost got married once before but the church caught fire.

CHARLIE

Is Coral the same character who shot Lance's Dad in the head?

RUTH takes the earring off of CHARLIE and puts it on.

(CONTINUED)

RUTH

Mm-hmm.

CHARLIE

And now they're getting
married?

RUTH

Well, he lived. And she felt
awful about it.

CHARLIE hands her a mirror so she can see herself. She
is surprised by the amount of makeup she has on, but she
hides this from CHARLIE.

RUTH

Oh my, what a good job.

INT. LIVING ROOM. DAY

184

LEE is putting some chips in a bowl, other snacks are
laid out, RUTH comes in and presents herself with a
flourish.

LEE

Ruth, you look beautiful.

RUTH

I'm a silly old woman dressing
up for a TV show.

LEE

You are not.

LEE moves the plates around, RUTH notices the food.

RUTH

Oh my. It's becoming such a
production.

LEE

It's so nice to have you up and
about, Ruth. It must be
wonderful to be rid of that
constant pain.

RUTH

Oh yes. Though I do sometimes
miss it.

INT. BESSIE'S ROOM. DAY

185

BESSIE is getting out of bed. She doesn't have much
energy.

INT. KITCHEN. DAY

186

LEE is putting the chip bag away when BESSIE in her robe, comes in and goes to the pill tray.

LEE

What are you doing up?

BESSIE

I'm going to give Dad his one o'clock.

LEE

I was going to do that.

BESSIE

Oh, I can do it.

LEE

You're supposed to be taking it easy.

BESSIE

I am.

LEE

Do you want something to snack on?

BESSIE

Better just cut me up some fruit.

The telephone rings. LEE answers.

LEE

Hello? Hello Dr. Serat. Yes, she's right here.

BESSIE

What is it?

CUT TO:

EXT. KITCHEN DAY

187

In the foreground we see a water sprinkler as its' wide jet waves across the screen. In the background we see LEE behind the sliding glass doors as she passes the phone to BESSIE. BESSIE sits down.

CUT TO:

BESSIE

(on phone.)

Um...uh, what is-- I see. I see. Uh huh. Then should I keep taking what I'm taking now? No, I understand. I'm not. Thank you Doctor. Goodbye.

(Hangs up.)

They got Hank and Charlie's test results back and it looks like it didn't work out.

LEE

Oh, Bessie.

BESSIE

That's pretty much what we expected. We knew the odds were against it.

LEE

Maybe we should do them again. Maybe they made a mistake.

BESSIE

Maybe but I don't...I'm supposed to continue with the therapies I'm doing now and see what kind of luck I have.

LEE

That's right. Those are good things to be doing.

BESSIE

I was in the middle of doing something. What was I...? Oh, Dad's pills.

BESSIE reaches for the pills and knocks the bottle to the floor. The pills hit the floor and explode away from each other, the harsh sound of them bouncing away fills our senses. As the last pill slowly cascades across the floor BESSIE'S hand stops it. There is silence. BESSIE is overwhelmed by the pills. After a beat... She stands up and moves through the glass doors. Everything looks and sounds a little different to her. Shadows play over her face. LEE'S presence in the doorway behind her, breaks the mood.

BESSIE

It's what we thought. It's not a surprise. It's what I always had in the back of my head. Now, I don't have to think about it anymore.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BESSIE (CONT'D)
 (Bessie looks up, her
 gaze lost in the
 trees.)

Oh, I can quit thinking about
 it. We should tell Hank.

LEE reacts.

LEE
 Hank! Hank!

INT. GARAGE. DAY

189

Close on HANK'S face as the news is sinking in. As the camera tracks right he moves left to face the workbench filling the screen with his back.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM. NIGHT

190

A pin point of light blinks out of the darkness. The light is exploring CHARLIE'S face. CHARLIE wakes up to find HANK with a pen light straddling him.

CHARLIE
 What are you doing?

HANK
 This is cool. Your eyes shrink
 when I shine the light on them.

CHARLIE
 Get off me.

HANK
 How come you do so bad in
 school?

CHARLIE
 I don't know.

HANK
 You gotta study more.

CHARLIE
 Get off. I can't breathe.

HANK
 And quit letting Mom buy all
 your clothes for you. You look
 like a geek.

(CONTINUED)

CHARLIE

You're going to make me blind.

HANK

And pay more attention. Okay?

CHARLIE

Okay. Okay.

HANK throws the sleeping bag over CHARLIE'S head and leaves. After a beat, from inside the bag...

CHARLIE

I don't think I look so bad.

INT. MARVIN'S ROOM. NIGHT

191

Overhead shot of MARVIN, resting in bed. The camera finds HANK'S legs sticking out from under the bed just like BESSIE'S did in the beginning. CUT TO HANK working on the wires under the bed.

EXT. ROAD EARLY MORNING

192

The roaring ocean, the camera pulls back revealing HANK'S car as it shoots by disappearing into the distance.

INT. LIVING ROOM. MORNING

193

LEE looks quizzically at the empty couch while the sound of bacon frying is heard. CHARLIE is still asleep.

EXT. ROADSIDE. DAY

194

HANK driving on the highway, he pulls over by the sign that says "THANK YOU FOR VISITING SUNNY FLORIDA". HANK sits behind the wheel and puts the car in park.

CUT TO:

HANK sitting on the hood of the car deep in thought he is flipping MARVIN'S wrench. It falls and accidentally dents the hood of the car. 195

CUT TO:

HANK looking at the dent, he suddenly brings the wrench down hard in the same spot, his anger fuels his action.

CUT TO:

INT. CAR. DAY

196

Passenger door jerks open, HANK yanks the toolbox out of the car and throws it in the air. The tools fly out of the box and disappear into the marshy grass.

INT. LIVING ROOM. DUSK

197

LEE is in the background talking to the cop while BESSIE, in the foreground is opening her pill bottle. It is empty except for a note, TO BESSIE, is written across the folded bit of paper. BESSIE opens it and reads..."Aunt Bessie, gone someplace else. Goodbye. Good luck. I love you too. Hank." As she reads it we here the front door shut. BESSIE turns to LEE and gives her the note. LEE reads it and crumbles it into a ball.

EXT. FIELD BY THE ROADSIDE. DUSK

198

HANK is on his hands and knees in the marshy grass, feeling around for his tools. As he finds them he puts them back in the box. The car pulls away. One tool remains.

EXT. PATIO NIGHT

199

Track on to BESSIE'S hands as she works with her plant on the patio. TILT up to BESSIE'S face she is crying. HER sounds are joined by noises from MARVIN in his room. BESSIE'S tears stop as she listens. She moves to him.

EXT. HANK'S CAR. NIGHT

200

Headlights flash across HANK'S face.

INT. MARVIN'S ROOM. NIGHT

201

LIGHTS dance around MARVIN'S room from the compact mirror. BESSIE reflects the light around the room as she hums to quiet MARVIN. HE enjoys this, as HE follows the light with his eyes. His enjoyment brings a smile to BESSIE'S face.

INT. LIVING ROOM. NIGHT

202

LEE is sleeping in her clothes on top of HANK'S couch. A pair of headlights sweep the Living Room falling across LEE'S face, her eyes flutter.

INT. MARVIN'S ROOM. NIGHT

203

BESSIE is still flashing the light. SHE looks into the compact mirror and something there startles her. It is the REFLECTION of HANK standing in the door way. BESSIE drops the mirror and leaves the frame, the mirror lands on MARVIN'S bed beside his hand. BESSIE whirls back into frame holding on tightly to HANK, they are too large for the frame and block all else from view. As BESSIE hugs HANK she PULLS him into her frame. MARVIN mutters, annoyed that his entertainment is interrupted. HANK'S hand picks up the compact mirror. LEE appears in the empty doorway and is relieved to see HANK. HANK looks to LEE wondering what she is going to do. LEE gives Hank a wide birth as she moves deep into the room. BESSIE looks on with concern. HANK'S hand tenses around the mirror. Marvin mutters, LEE gives HANK her tacit approval. As HANK starts flashing the light, the glow fills the room, and the CAMERA pulls back out of the window.

EXT. HOUSE. NIGHT

204

The camera continues to move away from the house and over the neighborhood. The light from MARVIN'S window is seen, small but bright, from quite a distance.

FADE TO BLACK.