

RAISED BY WOLVES

"Pilot"

By

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ACT 1

INT. COST CLUB (CHECKOUT) - DAY

SHEILA GABEL, late 30s, drags a sizable Cost Club haul to the register. Sheila wears utility pants, a black tank top, "Dirty Harry" aviators and a stoic expression. Sheila's a no-nonsense individual who treats everything like a mission. When you're Sheila, you go hard or go home.

Sheila's son BANKSY, 6, hovers next to her in an old Chicago Bears jersey and Minnesota Vikings sweatpants. (Such is the Iowan's dilemma.)

As Sheila hefts three big bags of Fruity-Os (off-brand Froot Loops) onto the conveyor, the ELDERLY CASHIER, STAN, makes casual conversation.

STAN

That's a lot of Fruity-Os.

SHEILA

Yeah, I like to get my kids jacked up on corn syrup in the morning.

'Course a few hours later, they come down and it's like a noon flight out of Vegas. Depressing.

(distracted)

Oh wait, I have more. It's two for one this week, right?

She puts another bag of cereal on the belt, followed by a few more grocery items. Then Sheila begins tossing economy-size boxes of tampons onto the belt.

STAN

How many of those you got there?

SHEILA

Wondering why I need so many?

STAN

Nope, just need to key in--

SHEILA

(interrupting)

Well, I have three adolescent daughters and we all need different sizes. Slim Juniors for my youngest, "Grandé" for yours truly. And we're all synched up too. Every 28 days-- BOOM!

(MORE)

SHEILA (CONT'D)
Remember when they blew up the
shark at the end of Jaws? It's like
that.

Stan nods mutely.

SHEILA (CONT (CONT'D)
You men are so lucky. I can't wait
to turn 50 and clock out of the jam
factory.

The cashier really wants out of this conversation now. Sheila
puts a GLASS RIFLE filled with tequila onto the belt.

SHEILA (CONT'D)
I'm so glad this tequila gun is on
final clearance. I've been eyeing
it for months.

STAN
(totaling up)
That'll be \$201.53.

Sheila winces and turns to Banksy.

SHEILA
Yikes. We pulled a deuce. Okay. I
have to put something back.

She glances at the tequila gun, then takes the "Slim Juniors"
tampons off the belt.

SHEILA (CONT'D)
Yoko can just wash the mitten.

STAN
What?

Sheila props an E-CIG between her lips.

SHEILA
Don't worry about it.
(swiping credit card)
Okay, here goes nothing!

It's an incredibly tense moment as they wait for the card to
process. Sheila and Banksy both bow their heads and whisper
SUB-AUDIBLE PRAYERS. (This is their usual ritual.)

As it processes, we hear the sound of a bell: DING!

INT. GABEL HOUSE (LIVING ROOM) - DAY

A HAND slamming down on a FRONT-DESK STYLE BELL.

Reveal DUSTY GABEL, 14, chubby and fucking fabulous in a Sonic Youth T-shirt, skirt and tights. She's lying on a couch that has seen better days. Dusty is outspoken, flamboyant, and comfortable in her own skin-- maybe a little too comfortable.

I Dream of Genie is playing on an old-school Zenith tube TV. The living room itself looks cramped and cheap.

DUSTY

Cheese me!

BEEBEE, Dusty's 4 year-old sister, dashes into the room with a stick of STRING CHEESE.

DUSTY (CONT'D)

That was good, Beebee. Three seconds. Let's get it down to two.

Beebee plops down on the adjacent couch with her sweet, bespectacled sister YOKO, 11. Dusty tosses her cheese wrapper on the ground-- we see it's her FOURTH.

DOLLY, 13, glances up from her Ted Hughes book. She's the reserved, cool-headed intellectual of the family.

DOLLY

Take it easy, or you'll get backed up like a Krispy Kreme drive-through. How many of those have you had?

DUSTY

Keep your questions off my intestines.

DOLLY

Cute.

DUSTY

I know.

Dolly rises and reaches for the remote.

DOLLY

All right guys, I think five hours of screen time is enough.

She turns off the television. Beebee SCREAMS in protest.

DUSTY

How can you wrench a child from the
teat of knowledge?!

DOLLY

She's not learning anything!

DUSTY

Sure she is. She can recite the
entire pelvic mesh lawsuit
commercial!

Dolly, defeated, flops down and picks up her book again.

DUSTY (CONT'D)

Look, I was raised by that
television and I'm our household's
greatest mind. And thanks to
reruns, we know everything about
pop culture of yesteryear. Yoko:
what's the difference between Bill
Paxton and Bill Pullman?

YOKO

Bill Paxton is more of an Everyman.

DUSTY

You're damn right he is!

DOLLY

Mom said she wants the lawn raked
and the bathroom cleaned before she
gets back.

DUSTY

You know the saying: If "wants" and
"needs" were chicken feed, we'd
have a chicken orgy.

DOLLY

That's not a saying.

EXT. DAVENPORT, IOWA (VARIOUS) - DAY

Sheila-- a determined, purposeful look on her face-- speeds
down a rural highway in her beat-up VAN. Her eccentricities
(and misfortunes) are laid bare in the van: The driver's side
door is mended with DUCT TAPE. There's a MALE HULA GIRL
"dancing" on the dash, and a bumper sticker that says "LIES
IN THE SKIES" on the glove compartment. An AM TALK SHOW ABOUT
CONSPIRACIES blares on the radio.

CRAZY HOST (ON RADIO)
If you are a citizen of this
country, you will be abducted by an
alien! And soon!

On Banksy: silent, but unnerved. From the car window, we see
a FAMILY FARM. A group of INDUSTRIOUS CHILDREN are picking
bushels of corn.

SHEILA
See how hard those farm kids work?
Why can't I get you guys to pitch
in more?

BANKSY
Dusty says life is too short. She
says we're all gonna die because
the ice cubes are melting.

SHEILA
(annoyed)
Ice *caps*.

They pass more LOCAL LANDMARKS: a Waffle House, and then, the
ABANDONED "AMERICAN WIENER" FACTORY.

BANKSY
There's your factory.

SHEILA
Factory's closed, baby. They've
extruded their last wiener and I've
cashed my last check.

BANKSY
(sniffing)
But I can still smell it.

SHEILA
Jobs are temporary. The stench of
death is forever.

BANKSY
Are you ever going to get another
job, Mom?

SHEILA
Of course. I'm sure there are
plenty of employers out there who
are dying to hire a mother of 5
with a G.E.D and a pre-existing
condition.

(MORE)

SHEILA (CONT'D)
Which reminds me-- I still haven't
received my settlement in that
pelvic mesh lawsuit.

INT. GABEL HOUSE (LIVING ROOM/BATHROOM) - SAME

The DOORBELL chimes. Beebee runs to the door.

DOLLY
Make sure it's not a sex offender.

Beebee opens the door, revealing her grandfather, PAUL
"GRAMPY" KOSINSKI. an old hippie, a selfish Baby Boomer, a
joker, a smoker, etc. He looks like he's had a rough day.

BEEBEE
Hi, Grampy!

DUSTY
(to Beebee)
What did Dolly just say?

Grampy walks in. Beebee clings lovingly to his leg. He
detaches her as if she's a pest.

GRAMPY
There. Grampy likes his space.

DOLLY
Why'd you come here then?

GRAMPY
I love to see how my genes have
expressed themselves in my
grandchildren!

DOLLY
Isn't that a bit self-absorbed?

GRAMPY
It's the whole point of
procreation. Don't kid yourself.
(then)
Actually I came here to ask your
mother for something...

DOLLY
Shocker.

YOKO
(cheerful)
Mom's at the store.
(MORE)

YOKO (CONT'D)
We're out of lady products. I've
got a mitten in my pants!

Dusty is peering past Dolly and Grampy, out the still-open
front door. She GASPS.

DUSTY
Brayden Gitch!

GRAMPY
Who?

As she dashes toward the door--

DUSTY
Do you know what a twin flame is?
It's like a soul mate, but more
serious. Brayden's my twin flame.

GRAMPY
You're horny; got it.
(to Dolly)
I'm gonna go take a nap in the
master.

DOLLY
Mom doesn't like when you do that.

GRAMPY
I won't get completely nude this
time.

EXT. GABEL HOUSE - DAY

Dusty emerges from the house. The Gabels live in LIBERTY
WINDS, a public housing development in Davenport, Iowa. A
charmless sign reads: Liberty Winds: Welcome Home For Now!

Dusty watches hungrily as her crush, BRAYDEN GITCH, walks
down the street with a pack of ADOLESCENT FRIENDS. Dolly
emerges from the house behind Dusty.

DUSTY
(to Dolly)
Watch me employ some slang I
learned on Urban Dictionary.

DOLLY
Please don't...

Dusty attempts to be "cool" even though we can see she's
anything but. She calls out to the group of teens

DUSTY
 (calling out)
 Hey fam! What's Gucci?

The kids glance at Dusty and keep walking.

DOLLY
 There must be a German word for
 what I'm feeling.

Dolly, temporarily validated, sees Sheila's CAR arriving.

DOLLY (CONT'D)
 Winter is coming. Look alive.

The girls shudder and straighten up. Yoko picks up a rake and taps it feebly against the ground. Sheila parks and gets out, looking disgruntled.

DUSTY
 (to Sheila)
 Did you get it?

Sheila pops the trunk and tosses a GIANT SACK OF BRIGHT ORANGE CHEESE POPCORN to Dusty. Dusty embraces the bag rapturously.

DUSTY (CONT'D)
 It's so big! It's like having an
 orange boyfriend. I love you, Ed
 Sheeran.

She hugs the giant bag of orange popcorn lovingly. Dolly and Sheila exchange glances as Dusty waltzes into the house.

INT. GABEL HOUSE (LIVING ROOM) - SAME

Sheila enters, greeted by various children. She struggles under several bags of groceries and drops them on the ground. She spots Dusty's STRING CHEESE WRAPPERS all over the floor by the couch. There are at least five.

SHEILA
 What is this?

DUSTY
 Oh, sorry. Those are my empties.

As Dusty stoops to pick up the wrappers--

SHEILA
 Your empties?

DUSTY
Yeah, you know. Dead soldiers?
Queso condoms?

Sheila hides a smile-- Dusty infuriates her, but also cracks her up.

SHEILA
You mindlessly consumed all that
cheese? Snacks cost money!

DUSTY
I'm sorry. Hey, speaking of money,
can I have twenty bucks for Pajama
Jeans? They *look* like jeans, but--

SHEILA
(interrupting)
Dusty, I have friggin' had it with
you. I always imagined my eldest
child would be my co-captain.
Helping me guide the ship. Instead,
you're steering us right into the
rocks.

DUSTY
You're hitting me where it hurts
with the *Love Boat* metaphors.

SHEILA
Well, much like the original Love
Boat-- which is now dismantled in a
Turkish shipyard-- this family is
in a bit of a mess.

We can see Dusty and Sheila speak the same language.

DOLLY
What's going on, Mom?

SHEILA
(sighing)
Guys, it's been eight months since
the wiener factory closed. Most of
our savings is gone. We're
officially broke.

A sobering moment...

YOKO
Maybe we could raise money with a
lemonade stand or something?

SHEILA

No lemonade stand has ever been profitable. It's just a photo op for yuppie parents.

DOLLY

We could start a GoFundMe.

SHEILA

We're not sympathetic enough for that to work.

DUSTY

Have you heard of financial domination? It's when you make an Amazon wish list and you humiliate some guy into buying you everything on it!

Sheila just stares at Dusty.

DUSTY (CONT'D)

Too edgy?

END ACT ONE

ACT 2

INT. GABEL HOUSE (LIVING ROOM) - DAY

The gang continues to fret and brainstorm.

BANKSY

So we don't have any money? How are we going to eat?

SHEILA

(reassuring)

We can still eat, honey. I'll always get food on this table. But we should think of ways to consume less and spend less.

YOKO

Hey, I have an idea!

SHEILA

Yoko has the floor.

YOKO

Remember the foraging badge I got in Girl Scouts, before they kicked me out for delinquent dues? We could go outside and find edible plants.

Dusty has torn into her orange popcorn already.

DUSTY

Who wants to eat *plants*?

SHEILA

No-- that's a good idea. Foraging. It's like dumpster diving with cute Disney bunnies instead of rats.

(excited)

Yoko-- do you still have that foraging guide?

Yoko nods enthusiastically.

SHEILA (CONT'D)

Then I suggest you all change into sensible outdoor clothing. Not baby hooker shoes, a "Dubuque tuxedo," pirate legs, or a shame-cocoon.

As she lists these items, we cut to Bebe's plastic CINDERELLA HIGH HEELS, Bansky's SHIRTLESS TORSO, Dusty's STRIPED TIGHTS, and Dolly's FUNNEL-NECK SWEATER.

SHEILA (CONT'D)

The six of us are going to hit the woods and work together. The Able Gabels, remember? No distractions...

Grampy enters, nursing a beer.

GRAMPY

What's this about hookers?

SHEILA

(surprised)

What are you doing here, Dad?

GRAMPY

I need a favor, Sheila.

SHEILA

Shocker. What?

GRAMPY

Your mom kicked me out again. I need to stay here for a while.

YOKO

Yay!!!

SHEILA

Yoko, I know you're desperate for a father figure, but you need to aim higher.

(then, to Grampy)

Sorry, Dad. There's no room.

GRAMPY

A foolish innkeeper once said that and turned away Christ himself.

SHEILA

You can't just come here and announce you're moving in.

GRAMPY

Why not? You did it to me. One day you just showed up and demanded food and lodging.

SHEILA

I was a newborn baby.

GRAMPY

You were constantly on your mother's breast. It's like you wanted me to suffer.

SHEILA

I was the one suffering. That milk was mostly Canadian Club.

GRAMPY

Don't talk that way about Mommy. She's a magnificent woman. But, she says she wants a trial separation.

SHEILA

What, were the last nine trials inconclusive? Look, I'm taking my kids to the woods. You can come if you want. You can even stay for supper, but you're not living here.
(then)
All right guys. Time to embrace our new outdoor lifestyle.

The kids and Grampy MOAN in collective horror.

SHEILA (CONT'D)

(sharply)

Yoko, don't help her get up.

We see Yoko holding Dusty's outstretched hands and pulling her to her feet.

EXT. GABEL HOUSE (DRIVEWAY) - DAY

Sheila, wearing sunglasses and rubber boots, ushers the troops toward the van.

SHEILA

Into the van! Chop-chop! If you're not dressed properly that's on you.

She eyes Dusty, who has changed into something that looks like one of Stevie Nicks' Tango in the Night stage costumes.

SHEILA (CONT'D)

(to everyone)

All right. If you didn't pee, you can do it when we get there. The forest is nature's toilet.

DUSTY

Is the rainforest nature's bidet?

All the kids have climbed into the van. Grampy turns to Sheila.

GRAMPY
I'll wait for you in the house.

SHEILA
It's already locked.

INT. VAN - DAY

MUSIC UP: "I Touch Myself" by the Divinyls

Sheila drives, Grampy rides shotgun, and everyone else is configured snugly in the back. Sheila, Dusty, Yoko, and Banksy sing "I Touch Myself" by the Divinyls in loud, triumphant unison. Dolly looks mortified.

Sheila admires her view of the Centennial Bridge.

SHEILA
Would you look at that scenery?

DOLLY
What scenery.

SHEILA
Your home. The Quad Cities.
America's Four-Way.

DUSTY
I wonder what Brayden Gitch is
doing right now.

DOLLY
He's probably with his girlfriend,
Kaycee Funkweiler.

DUSTY
They're just friends.

DOLLY
Really? Because I saw him exploring
her body at Ken-Taco-Hut.

SHEILA
Who's Brayden Gitch?

DOLLY
This guy that Dusty likes. He
didn't even say hi to her today.

DUSTY

Sometimes guys don't notice that the right girl is standing right in front of them. It's Rom-Com 101.

SHEILA

Honey, don't waste your time chasing the chuckwagon. Wait for a boy who knows how special you are right off the bat.

DUSTY

Those guys are *never* cute.

SHEILA

I just don't want you waiting around for some pimply sock-jockey who will never give you what you deserve. I've been there, done that and peed on a stick. Trust me.

Dusty is clearly annoyed by this dose of reality.

DUSTY

Why are you so mean?

SHEILA

I'm not. I'm *direct*.

DOLLY

Direct?

SHEILA

Yes. Being direct is your birthright as Midwesterners. We're not Southern bitches. We're not New York snobs. We're not West Coast weirdos. We're Midwestern assholes. We speak the truth and we don't candy-coat anything unless it's something that would taste better with a candy-coating. Like ham.

EXT. THE WOODS (TO ESTABLISH) - DAY

Sheila parks the van near the woods, acres of secluded woodland splendor in the heart of river country.

EXT. THE WOODS (MEADOW) - DAY

The kids and Grampy line up in a meadow/picnic area near the perimeter of the forest.

Sheila hands Dolly a large SACK and begins pacing like a drill sergeant. She holds Yoko's Foraging book in her hand.

SHEILA

Welcome to the woods. You may recognize them from Animal Planet. Today, we're going to learn how to gather our own food. Luckily, according to this book I just glanced at, there's a buffet closer than you think.

BANKSY

Is it a Golden Corral?

SHEILA

No, Banksy. We're not here to put fried shrimp on a sundae and dare Dusty to eat it. This buffet is a natural bounty of leaves, roots and seeds.

She flips through the book.

SHEILA (CONT'D)

If you find something that looks like it could be edible, you're going to look it up in this book, and put it in the bag. And make sure Beebee doesn't swallow anything toxic. We don't need a repeat of the soap-on-a-rope incident.

GRAMPY

Thank God for that rope.

SHEILA

Are we clear?

Dolly gives her a sarcastic thumbs-up.

DOLLY

Crystal Pepsi.

SHEILA

Okay. You're surrounded by nature's bounty. Now go put it in a plastic bag!

The kids SCATTER off toward the woods. Sheila hums the HUNGER GAMES THEME as they disappear. Grampy stays behind.

SHEILA (CONT'D)

What?

GRAMPY

Can't you do me a favor for once?

SHEILA

For *once*? You've been burdening me with requests since I was nine. Remember how I used to help you cover up your affairs?

GRAMPY

And you were terrible at it! I'll never forget getting busted at Applebees in front of those people.

SHEILA

You can't stay with us. I'm out of money. I even sold plasma last week. I tried to sell my eggs but they apparently want donors who are "young" and "educated" and have fewer than eight tattoos.

GRAMPY

It's just for a couple of weeks. And I'll help out around the house. I can tell you need it.

As Sheila whips out her e-cig she notices that Banksy has stayed behind. He gives Sheila a pitiful look.

SHEILA

Banksy, are you staying with me?

BANKSY

I don't want to go with the girls.

SHEILA

I know it's tough being the only XY in this family.

GRAMPY

It'll all even out when you're adults, Banksy. As a man you'll become more desirable with age while your sisters hit the wall.

Disgusted, Sheila nods toward the woods, beckoning Grampy to get out of her sight.

SHEILA

You said you'd help out. Go help.

Grampy begins jogging awkwardly toward the woods. He makes it about 20 feet at that pace and then gives up, panting.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

The kids meander through the woods, with Dolly and Yoko dutifully leading the way and Grampy bringing up the rear. Yoko spots a BERRY BUSH and kneels down to examine the fruit.

DOLLY

What do those berries smell like,
Yoko?

YOKO

Mom's wiener factory.

Dolly consults the book.

DOLLY

Foul odor... Those might be gingko
berries. The book says they help
with dementia.

Grampy catches up.

DUSTY

Grampy, eat one and tell us if you
notice any improvement.

GRAMPY

Ha. I'm as tack as a sharp.

Yoko points to some FAMILIAR-LOOKING LEAVES.

YOKO

Hey, I think those are nettles.

DUSTY

I think you're right! Mom said
nettles are nature's spinach.

YOKO

Isn't spinach nature's spinach?

Dolly flips to a dog-eared page in her book.

DOLLY

The book says nettles are also
nature's antihistamine and nature's
Viagra.

GRAMPY
(serious)
Start picking, Dusty.

INT. MEADOW - DAY

Sheila and Banksy are foraging together in the meadow. Sheila picks a FRILLY PURPLE FLOWER and examines it.

SHEILA
I think this could be a thistle.
Does this look delicious to you?

Banksy shakes his head. Sheila tosses it aside.

BANKSY
Why can't Grampy live with us?

SHEILA
How do I put this in kid-friendly terms? Grampy's a tool.

BANKSY
(disappointed)
Oh. I just wish there was another boy in the house.

Sheila considers this, sympathetic. Then:

SHEILA
Look, we can't afford to have Grampy live with us right now.

BANKSY
Are we poor?

SHEILA
(taken aback)
I prefer the term "broke."
"Poverty" is cyclical and hard to escape. "Broke" is a temporary condition that ends as soon as your scratch ticket hits.

BANKSY
Oh, okay.

SHEILA
And I'll get another job soon. I have a second interview at Checkers next week. It's between me and a high school sophomore, and frankly, I hope the little brat chokes.

BANKSY
You'll get the job, Mom.

SHEILA
Oh yeah? Why are you so sure of that?

BANKSY
Because you're a genius and pretty.

This is the first real smile we've seen out of Sheila.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Dolly, Dusty, Yoko, Grampy and Beebee move deeper into the woods. They all look SWEATY and DIRTY.

BEEBEE
I'm tired.

DOLLY
Not much longer, sweetie.
I'm sure the organic mangos are right around the corner.

YOKO
What is that bad smell? I thought the forest was going to smell good, like the little trees Mom has on her car mirror.

Grampy and Dusty amble a few paces behind.

DUSTY
Can I ask you a question?

GRAMPY
Of course, Dust-Bunny.

DUSTY
How do I get a boy I like to notice me?

GRAMPY
Well, you know, men have all different interests. Some like asses. Some like feet. If you have nice feet, marry one of those foot-guys that goes on foot websites.

DUSTY
I guess I meant like, how should I act?

GRAMPY

If you like a boy, you need to make your intentions known. Men aren't great at reading signals. You have to really put it all on the glass, so to speak.

DUSTY

(derisive)

Well, *Mom* says if a guy isn't into you right away, you should MoveOn.Org.

GRAMPY

Your mother has five kids by three different men. Listen to me. I've only been married once!

We hear Yoko calling from up ahead.

YOKO

I think we found wild potatoes!

Dusty and Grampy run ahead to join the group in a remote and somehow foreboding clearing. There are dozens of dirty WHITE BALLS scattered all over the earth.

DOLLY

I don't think those are potatoes.

GRAMPY

I believe those are... moth balls.

YOKO

Hey, what's that?

Reveal a DILAPIDATED SHACK standing starkly in the clearing, surrounded by detritus. Grampy sniffs the air suspiciously.

GRAMPY

(alarmed)

Moth balls. Sulfurous smell. Dead vegetation...

GRAMPY (CONT'D)

It's a meth lab!

DUSTY

I thought you were talking about Dolly's panty drawer.

On their shocked faces, we...

END ACT 2

ACT 3

EXT. WOODS - DAY

As Grampy ushers the gang a safe distance away from the shack:

GRAMPY

We have to get out of here. Those things can go sky-high.

DOLLY

How did you know that was a meth lab?

GRAMPY

I used to sell fertilizer to a drug lord in Keokuk. Nice guy. He called me Mac and I called him Scabby. We still exchange Christmas cards.

YOKO

Does this mean we get to leave the woods?

DOLLY

(gleeful)

Yes Yoko. It does.

YOKO

Forever?

Dolly nods happily. The five of them LEAP into the air and we FREEZE on their joy in the style of one of their favorite, cheesy old T.V. shows.

INT. VAN - DAY

Sheila drives everyone home, grim-faced. They cruise through downtown Davenport. The kids and Grampy look disheveled and traumatized, like they've been in the woods for days.

SHEILA

Well, that was a waste. We didn't forage so much as a dandelion. And you guys were only out there for 20 minutes-- why do you look like the end of *The Revenant*?

Suddenly, Dusty SCREAMS, interrupting.

DUSTY
It's Brayden Gitch!

We see Brayden hanging out with a group of BOYS on the corner of a park/"green space" in downtown Davenport. Brayden points and laughs at a LITTLE, MANGY STRAY DOG taking a crap.

BRAYDEN
Look!

Brayden's stupid friends double over at the sight.

DUSTY
He's so hilarious.

DOLLY
He's a regular Bill Hicks.

DUSTY
Pull over, Mom.

SHEILA
What?

GRAMPY
That's my girl!

Sheila, exasperated, pulls over.

DUSTY
Grampy said I need to make my intentions known.

SHEILA
(pissed off)
Oh, he did?

DUSTY
Yes. I know you think I'm unloveable but--

SHEILA
What? I do not think that! I think you're the most lovable organism on earth! You just deserve better than a kid who's been blowing you off! I've dealt with my share of Graydon Bitches!

DUSTY
Brayden. Gitch.

DOLLY
Dusty, don't throw yourself at him!

DUSTY

I'm sorry you're so repressed,
Dolly. It's weird that you were
named after the woman who wrote "9
to 5" because you are not
liberated.

DOLLY

It's weird that you were named
after Dusty Springfield because she
was known for her restraint as a
vocalist.

DUSTY

Restraint is overrated.

She tries to open the van door to punctuate the sentence.
It's locked. Tries again; still locked. Finally, she reaches
through the window and unlocks it from the outside.

SHEILA

(to Grampy)

Dad, Dusty does not need
encouragement in this department.

GRAMPY

So we should rain on her parade?

SHEILA

No. We love the parade. There's
tubas, and drag queens and lots of
fun to be had. But sometimes, we
have to keep the parade from going
off a cliff.

DOLLY

There it goes...

We see Dusty jogging over to Brayden Gitch.

EXT. TOWN PARK - DAY

Dusty walks up to Brayden and his three moronic FRIENDS.
They're already smirking in her general direction.

DUSTY

Hi, Brayden.

(nodding to other boys)

Jayden. Justin. Hayden.

The other boys barely acknowledge her.

BRAYDEN
What do you want?

DUSTY
Well, I'm a big believer in honesty. Hashtag "real talk" as you and your peers might say, on your smartphone apps.

Brayden just looks confused.

DUSTY (CONT'D)
I don't really keep up with that stuff. I'm more of a pen and paper girl.

Brayden stifles a laugh. His henchmen cackle.

DUSTY (CONT'D)
Sometimes I use a word processor. I pretend I'm Stephen King in the '80s... coked out, cashing checks... thinking about directing but not wanting to leave my comfort zone.

Dusty, as confident as she is, realizes she's drowning.

INT. VAN - DAY

Through the window, Sheila sees Dusty's pained expression and the laughing boys. Grampy looks guilty.

SHEILA
We can't let this happen to her.

DOLLY
(conflicted)
Well, it is a natural consequence.

SHEILA
I know what a "natural consequence" is. That's the bedrock of my parenting philosophy. But this isn't harmless and funny, like when Banksy got his penis stuck in the Coke bottle. This is Dusty's soul getting trampled.

DOLLY
I'm not going out there.

SHEILA

Either you go after her, or I will.
And I am loud, embarrassing and
braless.

DOLLY

You're not braless.

SHEILA

Yet.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. TOWN PARK - DAY

Dolly hurries up to Dusty, interrupting the disastrous
conversation.

DOLLY

Hey, are you going to get him or
what?

DUSTY

(confused)
What?

Dolly turns to the boys and explains, apologetic.

DOLLY

That's our dog. Come here, buddy.

She claps her hands and scoops up the dog, who surprisingly
complies. Poor Munchie looks like a homeless version of Toto.

DOLLY (CONT'D)

We've been driving around for hours
looking for him. He's always trying
to escape our fine home and well-
kept lawn.

DUSTY

(mouthing)
What?

BRAYDEN

Maybe you should put a collar on
him or something.

DOLLY

(babbling)
We don't believe in collars. Except
on consenting adults. Come on,
Dusty, let's go.

DUSTY
Yes, we'd better go or we'll be
late for our modeling job.

They head off toward the van; Dolly clutches the dog.

DUSTY (CONT'D)
(hissing)
That's not our dog.

DOLLY
(whispering)
I know. I'm rescuing him. Now we
have a rescue dog like all our
favorite celebrities.

Dusty immediately gets in the spirit of things.

DUSTY
Who rescued who, am I right!?

DOLLY
There you go.

DUSTY
But why did you just clam-jam me?

DOLLY
"Clam-jam?"

As Dusty takes a breath to explain--

DOLLY (CONT'D)
(interrupting)
Okay, look: Males like the thrill
of the hunt. You need to play hard
to get for a while. Set up a will-
they-or-won't-they kind of dynamic,
like Luke and Lorelei. Or Ross and
Rachel.

DUSTY
Or Niles and Frasier.

Dolly can't help but feel affection for her poor sister.

DOLLY
You got it, Dus.

Dolly's relieved that her white lie has worked-- for now.
They climb in the van. Dusty wistfully waves goodbye to
Brayden. He's not even looking in her general direction.

INT. VAN - DAY

The girls climb in; Dolly holds the dog on her lap.

YOKO
(delighted)
A dog!

Bansky and Beebee are thrilled, exclaiming over the dog.

SHEILA
What the hell is that thing? Look
at his weird beard. He looks like a
biker.

DUSTY
Fun fact: Did you guys know the one
guy in ZZ Top who doesn't have a
beard is named...

Everyone interrupts, having heard this anecdote 500 times.

ALL (IN WEARY UNISON)
Frank Beard.

SHEILA
Now I've got two more mouths to
feed. Just what I needed.

DUSTY
Wait... wait. Mom! I just thought
of something!

SHEILA
Yeah? What's that.

DUSTY
You know the Crime-Stoppers
commercial that they always show
during *The Price is Right*?

SHEILA
No?

DUSTY
It says the county has this new
number where you can call and
report any illegal drug activity.
Like a meth lab.

SHEILA
Dusty, you don't know what people
are going through.
(MORE)

SHEILA (CONT'D)
You wanna narc someone out? Be a
brick in the wall?

DUSTY
They offer cash rewards.

CUT TO:

EXT. SIDE OF THE ROAD - DAY

SCREECH! We see the van pulled over to the shoulder.

INT. VAN - DAY

Sheila and the kids are crowded around the phone. Sheila speaks to the police in a phony "do-gooder" tone.

SHEILA
Yes. Hi. We'd like to report a
possible drug manufacturing
operation we discovered near Lake
Manitou?... Oh, of course. It would
be wrong of us *not* to call. Lives
could be lost... And can we swing
by the precinct and pick up that
cash reward? Thank you!

She rolls her eyes at the kids. Then, covering the mouthpiece of the phone.

SHEILA (CONT'D)
We're going to Golden Corral.

The kids and Grampy CHEER. Sheila reaches back and gives Dusty a grateful pat on the shoulder.

SHEILA (CONT'D)
Well done, Dusty.

INT. GABEL HOUSE (LIVING ROOM) - NIGHT

Night has fallen. Sheila and Grampy sit on the couch, watching a classic episode of Press Your Luck on GSN and passing a the TEQUILA GUN back and forth.

GRAMPY
No Whammies! No Whammies! Stop!

The on-screen CONTESTANT hits a Whammy. Bankrupt. Grampy shoots tequila into his mouth.

SHEILA

There's always a Whammy, isn't there? You think you're gonna catch a break for once, and there he is on his stupid pogo stick. Pass the tequila gun.

GRAMPY

Sweetie, I don't like seeing the world get you down. You used to be so spunky. Remember, you were my little cheerleader?

SHEILA

That was Colleen. Your other daughter.

GRAMPY

Right. Look, try and be optimistic. Things will get better.

SHEILA

When have things ever gotten better? I've had three different men screw me over. I've made so many mistakes that I don't even know what it's like not to. I've forgotten what it feels like to have a win, you know?

GRAMPY

You made some bad choices.

SHEILA

(defensive)

I learned from the best!

(then, softer)

I have five kids, Dad. Five humans I have to keep alive. It's a turbulent world and I just wanna secure their little oxygen masks, you know?

GRAMPY

You're doing a good job. And hey-- at least this flight has drink service.

He squirts the tequila gun into his mouth. It's endearing. Sheila experiences a moment of affection for the old asshole.

SHEILA

You can stay for a little bit.
Maybe it'll even help me out a
little, you know, to share expenses
with someone.

GRAMPY

Oh, I don't have any money.
(chuckling)
Your mother moved it all to some
new account. Vindictive tigress!

He winks at Sheila and shuffles off toward the kids' room.

INT. THE KIDS' BEDROOM - NIGHT

The kids are snug in their beds: Dolly and Dusty share one
bed, Yoko and Banksy are crowded into another. Grampy is on
the floor on the trundle bed. Yoko cradles the dog.

DUSTY

How long do you think you're going
to stay, Grampy?

GRAMPY

Have you ever heard of the
"Elephant's Foot?" It's a pile of
radioactive sludge in Chernobyl.
It's still highly dangerous even
after all these years. That's
Grandma.

DOLLY

Do you ever wonder why you didn't
pursue a more stable relationship?

GRAMPY

Well, you know what they say about
crazy.

YOKO

What?

DOLLY

Don't ask.

DUSTY

Let it go, Yoko.

GRAMPY

Well, good night everyone.

The kids and Grampy reply in chorus: Good night, etc.

DUSTY

Goodnight, God. Thank you for all
your wonderful creations, like
komodo dragons, natural hot
springs, and Rihanna. Good night,
elemental spirits. Earth, air, fire
and--

Sheila sticks her head in the door.

SHEILA (O.S.)

Go to sleep. It's crucial for brain
development and you don't have
genetics on your side.

She shuts the door. We hear Dusty's voice one more time.

DUSTY

Goodnight, Dwayne "The Rock"
Johnson.

TAG

INT. HALLWAY- NIGHT

Sheila shuts the door, exhaling. She walks a few paces down
the hallway, treading on Banksy and Beebee's LEGOS with every
step and barely even wincing-- now that's a badass!

INT. SHEILA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sheila climbs into bed. Beebee pops out of the covers.

SHEILA

You're sleeping in here tonight,
Beebee?

BEEBEE

Yeah.

Sheila gets into bed. She stops and flinches. Ouch. She
reaches under the covers and tosses out another LEGO.

BEEBEE (CONT'D)

Goodnight, Mommy.

She flings her little body horizontally across the bed.

SHEILA

Goodnight, Beyonce.

END OF EPISODE