

SCHMIGADOON
EPISODE 1

Written by

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TITLE CARD: "OVERTURE"

EXT. NEW YORK - NIGHT

"Angels" by The xx (or something in that vein) plays over shots of the city at night. It is busy and crowded and dirty and cold. [NOTE: the filming style pre-Schmigadoon should be ultra-realistic, handheld, etc.]

EXT. NEW YORK PRESBYTERIAN HOSPITAL - NIGHT

The city's biggest hospital.

INT. OPERATING ROOM - SAME

A WOMAN sweats and gasps as she strains to give birth. Standing between her legs is her ob/gyn, DR. MELISSA KLIPPEL, compassionately encouraging her. The woman's HUSBAND and a NURSE are also there, everyone helping. The scene is kinetic and emotional. Melissa is deep in it.

INT. OPERATING ROOM - SAME

In stark contrast a MAN under anaesthesia lies on a surgical table as his emotionless orthopedic surgeon, DR. JOSH SKINNER, calmly operates on his knee. An attentive NURSE assists. The scene is calm and sterile.

INT. OPERATING ROOM - SAME

The action in the delivery room builds to a climax as Melissa delivers the baby. She holds it up and the new mom bursts into tears. Melissa bursts into tears. Everybody bursts into tears.

INT. OPERATING ROOM - SAME

Josh calmly sews up his patient.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING AREA - NIGHT

A drained Melissa stands in front of a SNACK VENDING MACHINE in a deserted hospital corridor. She puts in money and selects a Snickers bar. Nothing happens. She selects it again. Nothing. She pushes the coin return button. Nothing.

Josh stands behind her. He motions for her to give the machine a kick in a certain spot. She makes a face--no way. He tells her to do it. She looks to see if anyone's watching, then gives the machine a kick in the spot.

Suddenly EVERY SNACK drops down at the same time. It's unbelievable. Melissa stares in open-mouthed shock/delight, then turns to Josh. Their eyes lock.

INT. MELISSA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

VARIOUS CANDY hits the floor as Melissa and Josh passionately kiss, all over each other as they shed clothing and flop down on the bed.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING AREA - NIGHT

Melissa stands waiting at the vending machine. Josh shows up. Their eyes meet.

INT. MELISSA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Again Melissa and Josh make out and flop down on the bed.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING AREA - NIGHT

Melissa and Josh both arrive at the vending machine, moving at a rapid pace. Their eyes meet.

INT. MELISSA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

They make out and flop on the bed again.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING AREA - NIGHT

Josh arrives at the vending machine to find Melissa waiting there with her friend VANESSA. Melissa introduces Vanessa to Josh. Josh makes a joke and Vanessa laughs. Melissa smiles. Vanessa excuses herself. Josh and Melissa make eye contact.

As they leave, Melissa gets a text. It's from Vanessa and is a series of emojis: champagne, applause, confetti, heart, bride and groom.

Melissa smiles. This means a lot.

INT. JOSH'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Melissa enters Josh's apartment for the first time. It has a definite man-cave feel, with YANKEES MEMORABILIA on display and a BASEBALL-THEMED VINTAGE PINBALL MACHINE. Josh's German Shepherd MICKEY rushes over to her, jumps up on her, licking her face as she pets him. It's love.

Josh watches. This means a lot.

INT. MELISSA'S FACEBOOK PAGE - DAY

On Melissa's Facebook page we see that she and Josh are now in a relationship. Lots of her friends are liking/loving this.

INT. JOSH'S FACEBOOK PAGE - DAY

The same announcement is also on Josh's page. It's the only thing posted besides his profile picture, which he added twelve years ago and is a blurry photo of him in med school.

INT. MELISSA'S INSTAGRAM - DAY

We see a series of pictures of Josh and Melissa together on Melissa's Instagram: at a restaurant, in Central Park, in front of Yankee Stadium, at a Women's March downtown, celebrating Melissa's birthday, celebrating Christmas, celebrating Josh's birthday, etc.

INT. JOSH'S APARTMENT - DAY

Josh helps Melissa move into his apartment. She's got a lot of stuff.

INT. THEIR APARTMENT - NIGHT

Moved in, they slow dance together in the family room. Mickey stands up against Josh's back and joins in.

INT. THEIR APARTMENT - DAY

Melissa shows Josh that she's rearranged all the clothes in his closet so the hangers are facing the same way. He nods.

INT. THEIR APARTMENT - NIGHT

Josh and Melissa sit on the couch watching a Yankees game together. There is a lot less of Josh's memorabilia on display. Mickey is curled up in his bed next to the couch.

INT. THEIR APARTMENT - DAY

Melissa opens up the closet to find Josh's clothes are hanging every which way. Frustrated, she fixes them again.

INT. THEIR APARTMENT - NIGHT

Josh and Melissa struggle to get a Christmas tree through the door of the apartment. The pinball machine is gone.

INT. THEIR APARTMENT - DAY

Melissa opens the closet and finds one jacket hung up the wrong way. Fixes it.

INT. THEIR APARTMENT - NIGHT

Josh tries to watch the baseball game on TV while an upset Melissa stands between him and the TV and tries to talk to him. Mickey is curled up in his bed as usual.

INT. THEIR APARTMENT - NIGHT

Melissa comes home to find Josh tending to Mickey, who's sick in his bed. Josh looks worried.

INT. THEIR APARTMENT - NIGHT

Josh sits on the couch watching TV, zombie-like. Mickey's bed is empty. Melissa sits next to him. Puts her arm around him and gives him a kiss. Trying to help.

INT. MELISSA'S INSTAGRAM - DAY

A series of pictures of Melissa as a bridesmaid at multiple weddings. Her smile gets increasingly forced until it finally looks kind of insane.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING AREA - DAY

Josh talks with a group of INTERNS who hang on his every word. He tells a joke and a PRETTY INTERN laughs. Josh notices.

INT. OPERATING ROOM - DAY

Melissa delivers a baby. Holds it and stares at it.

INT. OPERATING ROOM - NIGHT

Post-surgery, Josh is removing his mask and gloves when the Pretty Intern asks him a question. As she asks she touches his arm. Josh notices.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING AREA - NIGHT

Melissa puts money in the vending machine and makes a selection. Nothing happens. She makes the selection again. Nothing happens. She kicks the machine. Nothing happens. Kicks it again. Still nothing. She starts crying.

INT. THEIR APARTMENT - NIGHT

Josh is sound asleep on the couch. Melissa sits next to him, awake and on her laptop. She searches: "How to get the magic back in your relationship." One search result is "Sacred Heart Love Trail in Montana." She clicks on it, and opens up a page showing a beautiful woodland scene and a testimonial from a happy couple: "The Sacred Heart Love Trail saved our relationship!"

EXT. MONTANA TRAILHEAD - SAME

A hippie couple in their late 60's, MARV and JOANNA, address us at a trailhead in the Montana forest.

MARV

So what is the Sacred Heart Love Trail all about? Well, six years ago Joanna and I looked around and were bummed at all the relationships falling apart, all the heartbreak out there in the world.

JOANNA

Danny DeVito and Rhea Perlman? I mean, is no one safe?

They're addressing a group of COUPLES gathered at the trailhead, all with hiking gear and backpacks. Among them are Melissa and Josh. Several nod their heads in agreement.

MARV

Now we're not perfect--

JOANNA

Although we have been together for fifty-one years now--

She pauses and eventually people realize they're supposed to applaud. Melissa claps, touched by their longterm devotion. Josh claps because it's expected. Marv and Joanna kiss as the applause dies down.

MARV

What's our secret? For us it's all about aligning ourselves with nature. Disconnecting from the world and connecting with Mother Earth. There is so much we can learn from the trees.

JOANNA

Do trees lie? Do they start wars? No. They do not.

Josh reacts to this. What? Exchanges looks with a LIKE-MINDED GUY. What are we doing here?

MARV

And that's why we created the Sacred Love Trail.

JOANNA

Five days. Forty-three miles. A time to heal. To explore. And find each other again. Now Marv is going to hand out a couple of items to help you along your journey.

Joanna gives Marv a nudge and he begins handing items out to the couples.

JOANNA (CONT'D)

The first is an index card with some daily love affirmations we've found helpful in our own lives.

(MORE)

JOANNA (CONT'D)

Many you'll probably recognize from the movie Forrest Gump.

MARV

We love that movie.

JOANNA

It's just so good. And the second is a token--a heart carved out of sacred Chippewa stone with your name on it. We ask that you give it to your partner every morning. And as you carry your partner's heart with you throughout the day, think about what that really means. To give your heart to someone. And be entrusted with someone else's heart.

Marv hands Melissa a STONE HEART with her name on it. She smiles, loving it. Marv hands one to Josh. He stares at it. Unimpressed. Exchanges looks with the Like-minded Guy again.

MARV

And that's it. Keep close to the trail, but feel free to go off on your own, at your own pace. Just don't wander off too far. There's no cell service here in the wild and we don't want anyone dying out there!

Everyone laughs at this.

MARV (CONT'D)

But seriously, people died last time. It was pretty bad. So be careful.

JOANNA

But most of all use this time as a way to grow the love you have for each other. Because there is nothing--nothing--more beautiful than that.

Melissa nods and gives Josh's arm a squeeze. He attempts a smile.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Two days later. It is pouring rain. A soaking wet Melissa marches determinedly through the forest, upset. An equally soaking wet Josh chases after her.

JOSH

Mel!

MELISSA

Leave me alone!

JOSH

All I said was we should bail on the hike! I wasn't talking about us in general! I just meant the hike!

Melissa keeps marching in silence.

JOSH (CONT'D)

I mean, come on. We've been lost for hours, our phones don't work, we're wet and miserable, you're pissed at me for some reason--

Melissa stops and turns to face Josh.

MELISSA

For some reason?

JOSH

Okay--

MELISSA

You lost my heart. I gave you my heart, and you just lost it.

JOSH

It was a ROCK!

MELISSA

It was a METAPHOR! I imbued it with meaning when I gave it to you!

JOSH

So what, you want me to go back and look for it? Okay, I'll do it. I'll go back and search the whole forest until I find that one vaguely heart-shaped rock. Is that what you want?

MELISSA

Yes.

Josh stares at Melissa.

JOSH

Babe, it's a rock. And I already looked for it. There's no way--

MELISSA

What's the point of doing this if you won't even put in the effort?

JOSH

I don't know what the point of this is at all!

MELISSA

So you don't want to make our relationship better?

JOSH

Babe, our relationship is fine. I love it just the way it is. Why do you always feel the need to fix everything?

MELISSA

Fine. Shut it all out. Keep pretending nothing's wrong.

JOSH

This is exhausting.

They stand there in silence.

MELISSA

Maybe we should do one of the affirmations they gave us.

JOSH

(pained)
Really?

MELISSA

So you're negating the affirmation?

JOSH

"Stupid is as stupid does"? How is that helpful?

Suddenly through the rain comes the sound of CHURCH BELLS RINGING.

MELISSA

Wait, what's that?

JOSH
Church bells?

MELISSA
You hear them too?

JOSH
You sometimes hear church bells
that no one else hears?

MELISSA
No. Come on.

They head in the direction of the bells.

EXT. BRIDGE - DAY

Melissa and Josh emerge to a clearing and find a STREAM with a STONE BRIDGE stretching over it leading to a small village. The bells are definitely coming from there.

MELISSA
It's a town.

The two of them quickly head for the bridge. They step onto it together and start to cross. And as they cross the halfway point--

They both react, having felt something weird. [**NOTE: there should be a dramatic change in the shooting style from now on. Everything--day or night--should look like it's filmed on a soundstage: artificial lighting, painted backdrops, etc., with scenes shot in long single takes.**]

JOSH
Whoa.

MELISSA
You felt it too?
(realizing)
It stopped raining.

They look around and realize it's no longer raining. And it's sunny and bright.

JOSH
Weird.

They continue off the bridge. Josh examines the grass, confused.

JOSH (CONT'D)
 Wait--is this grass fake?
 (points to bushes)
 And those bushes aren't real
 either.
 (looks up)
 And what's up with the sky?

They see a sign: "WELCOME TO SCHMIGADOON, pop. 267."

MELISSA
 "Welcome to Schmigadoon."

JOSH
 "Schmigadoon"?

They look up ahead and see a classic American town, c. 1918, peopled with CITIZENS wearing the garb and attitude of the period. BOUNCY MUSIC STARTS UP. Josh looks around, confused.

JOSH (CONT'D)
 Where is that coming from?

And then suddenly THE ENTIRE TOWN STARTS SINGING TO THEM. As if they were in a musical (SPOILER: THEY ARE).

SONG: "WELCOME TO SCHMIGADOON"

TOWNSPEOPLE
*Welcome to our little town
 A great place to settle down
 Oh, you'll never see a frown
 In Schmigadoon!*

Melissa smiles, enjoying it. Josh frowns--what is going on?

TOWNSPEOPLE (CONT'D)
*Kind faces are all you'll meet
 As you mosey on down the street*

A guy named PETE waves to everyone from the front of his saddle shop.

PETE
 Hey everyone!

TOWNSPEOPLE
 Hey there, Pete!
 (singing)
That's Schmigadoon!

JOSH
 What sweet hell is this?

TOWNSPEOPLE
Welcome to Schmigadoon
We hope you won't leave soon

A WOMAN approaches Melissa and Josh with a plate of
 MACAROONS.

MACARON WOMAN
Here, have a macaroon

TOWNSPEOPLE
Welcome to Schmigadoon!

Melissa turns to Josh with a smile as she eats her macaroon.

MELISSA
 It must be something they do for
 tourists. It's kind of charming.

JOSH
 Really? Because I find it deeply
 disturbing.

The townspeople all point to the CHURCH as its BELLS PEAL.

TOWNSPEOPLE
There's the Schmigadoon church
And the Schmigadoon steeple
Now let's get to know some of the
Schmigadoon people!

JOSH
 Do we have to?

MELISSA
 Josh.

The townspeople point to EMMA TATE, the pretty but severe
 town schoolmarm.

TOWNSPEOPLE
Our schoolmarm is Emma Tate
She helps our kids to punctuate

CATTY WOMAN
Still unmarried at twenty-eight!

The town reacts as if this were the worst thing possible.

TOWNSPEOPLE
In Schmigadoon!

Now they point to FARMER MCDONOUGH, a grizzled and grumpy
 farmer never without his handy SHOTGUN.

TOWNSPEOPLE (CONT'D)
*Farmer McDonough craved a son
 But he had daughters every one*

McDonough's SEVEN DAUGHTERS, including the flirty and incredibly sexy 20-year-old BETSY, appear behind him. He brandishes his shotgun.

FARMER MCDONOUGH
*Touch 'em and you'll answer to my
 gun!*

TOWNSPEOPLE
In Schmigadoon!

BANG! His gun accidentally fires. There's a PAINFUL CRY offscreen.

FARMER MCDONOUGH
 Sorry, Pete!

PETE (O.S.)
 I'm okay!

The townspeople continue the musical number, pointing out more citizens of Schmigadoon.

TOWNSPEOPLE
Larry Freen puts out our fires

A FIREMAN in full gear tips his hat to the crowd.

TOWNSPEOPLE (CONT'D)
Mildred Pritt conducts the choirs

The elderly MILDRED PRITT conducts with her baton.

TOWNSPEOPLE (CONT'D)
If you're sick see Dee the nurse

A NURSE attends to Pete, who has a wounded and bleeding shoulder.

The town UNDERTAKER sings with a deep bass voice as he puts the finishing touches on a CASKET.

UNDERTAKER
*And come see me if things get
 worse!*

Everyone laughs. Melissa looks concerned.

MELISSA
 Is Pete okay?

TOWNSPEOPLE
Henry Orville brings our ice

HENRY holds a BLOCK OF ICE in tongs.

TOWNSPEOPLE (CONT'D)
Madam Cosma gives advice

MADAM COSMA is a fortune-teller.

TOWNSPEOPLE (CONT'D)
In that shack is Buford Riggs

They point to a broken-down SHACK in the distance. Out of the shack steps the sketchy farmhand BUFORD RIGGS holding a PIG.

BUFORD RIGGS
I do unspeakable things to pigs

Everyone laughs.

TOWNSPEOPLE
Gertrude Schmidt runs the general store

GERTRUDE SCHMIDT waves from the front of the town General Store.

TOWNSPEOPLE (CONT'D)
And we could name a hundred more!

Josh relaxes, relieved it's almost over. But it keeps going.

TOWNSPEOPLE (CONT'D)
Like Grampa who tells dirty jokes

GRAMPA smiles dirtily.

TOWNSPEOPLE (CONT'D)
And Little Red who's got no folks

A LITTLE RED-HEADED ORPHAN GIRL in a red dress smiles and waves.

TOWNSPEOPLE (CONT'D)
Tyrone eats mud

TYRONE, the town idiot, sits in the mud and happily eats some.

TOWNSPEOPLE (CONT'D)
Pete's losing blood

The nurse tends to Pete, whose bloodstain has expanded considerably.

Suddenly a cute young boy with a lisp, CURTIS, runs into the town square.

CURTIS
It'th the Mayor!

Everyone separates as the cheery avuncular MAYOR ALOYSIUS MENLOVE and his stoic wife ELLEN MENLOVE arrive at the town square. Handing out "RE-ELECT MAYOR MENLOVE" buttons.

JOSH
Is this never going to end?

MELISSA
Shush! It's the Mayor!

He steps up to a flag-draped podium flanked by "RE-ELECT MENLOVE" signs and banners and speak-sings.

MAYOR MENLOVE
*As Mayor of Schmigadoon
I feel that I must stress
Our motto is "We always strive for
peace and happiness."*

TOWNSPEOPLE
*Our motto is
We always strive
For peace and happiness!*

JOSH
What are we, in Munchkinland?

CURTIS
It'th the Reverend'th wife!

MARGARET LAYTON, a battle-axe who is in everybody's business, approaches the podium accompanied by her husband, the gentle REVEREND LAYTON. She moves the Mayor aside with a smile. He tries to hide his annoyance.

MARGARET LAYTON
*But if Schmigadoon is to endure
It must be kept pristine and pure
This land on which our fathers trod
Must ever obey the laws of God!*

A CHILDREN'S CHOIR conducted by Margaret sings earnestly.

CHILDREN'S CHOIR
*We must obey with all our hearts
 And never ever fiddle
 With our naughty parts
 Our naughty parts!*

The Mayor, disturbed by this, calls out to the townspeople.

MAYOR MENLOVE
 Everybody!

They all gather for one last rousing chorus directed at
 Melissa and Josh.

TOWNSPEOPLE
*Welcome to Schmigadoon
 Life's sweet July to June
 Safe as a warm cocoon*

A WOMAN holds out a pair of delicious PIES.

PIE WOMAN
My pies'll make you swoon

Margaret Layton stands with a HATCHET.

MARGARET LAYTON
I closed down the saloon

The Mayor points proudly to a shiny new SPITTOON in front of
 the Town Hall.

MAYOR MENLOVE
Try out our new spittoon

A MAN does and it RINGS in time with the music.

HARPOON MAN
I bought my first harpoon

The HARPOON GUN accidentally fires. There's a painful cry
 offscreen.

HARPOON MAN (CONT'D)
 Sorry, Pete!

PETE (O.S.)
 Still okay!

TOWNSPEOPLE
Welcome to Schmigadoon!!!

After striking a grand, final pose everyone immediately goes
 back to their business. Melissa bursts into applause.

MELISSA

Woo hoo!

Josh just stares. Annoyed and disturbed. Melissa shoots him a look and he half-heartedly joins in.

JOSH

Yay.
(to Melissa)
Can we go now?

Before Melissa can answer, Mayor Menlove appears.

MAYOR MENLOVE

Howdy, folks! Mayor Aloysius
Menlove at your service!

He shakes both their hands enthusiastically.

MELISSA

Hello, Mr. Mayor.
(to Josh)
Look, Josh. It's the Mayor.

JOSH

(shrugs)
Okay.

MELISSA

Wow, that was just delightful. I'm
Melissa and this is Josh.

The Mayor smiles and hands them "RE-ELECT MENLOVE" buttons.

MAYOR MENLOVE

Nice to meetcha! Have a button. I'm
running unopposed--again--but who
doesn't love buttons?

Suddenly a PHOTOGRAPHER appears with an ENORMOUS OLD CAMERA.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Mr. Mayor! For the Daily News!

The Mayor re-creates his handshake with Melissa as the the photographer ducks behind the camera and holds a FLASHLAMP. FOOMP! The flash goes off in a tiny explosion and cloud of smoke. The photographer pops out, all smiles.

PHOTOGRAPHER (CONT'D)

Hot dog!

Josh looks confused.

JOSH

How is this news?

MAYOR MENLOVE

It's always news when we get visitors! Now you two'll be staying at the Schmigadoon Inn, of course.

ELLEN MENLOVE

Oh, you are just going to love it. The softest beds this side of St. Louis.

JOSH

Actually, we were just headed out.

Melissa turns to Josh.

MELISSA

Can't we stay the night? A bed sounds soooooo nice right now.

Melissa looks up at Josh with puppy dog eyes. The Mayor smiles.

MAYOR MENLOVE

It's settled, then!

Mayor Menlove calls to Curtis, who's running by rolling a hoop with a stick.

MAYOR MENLOVE (CONT'D)

Curtis! Run down to the inn and tell Harvey we've got two very special guests checking in.

Curtis' eyes couldn't be wider as he smiles from ear to ear.

CURTIS

Yeth thir, Mithter Mayor!

Curtis tosses his stick and hoop and takes off running down Main Street. As Josh and Melissa watch him go, Margaret Layton swoops in.

MARGARET LAYTON

So. No wedding rings, I see.

MELISSA

Oh. No. We're not married.

JOSH

Definitely not.

MELISSA

Really?

MARGARET LAYTON

And traveling together?

(raises eyebrows)

Well.

(beat)

Anyhoo. I'm Margaret Layton. And this is my husband, the Reverend Layton.

The mousy Reverend Layton greets them.

REVEREND LAYTON

Hope you folks can stay 'til Sunday. I would love to see you in the congregation.

JOSH

Oh, I can promise you we'll be long gone by then.

(claps his hands together)

So where's this inn?

MAYOR MENLOVE

(waving them on)

Right this way!

The Menloves and Laytons lead the way down Main Street. Melissa pulls Josh aside.

MELISSA

Be nice. Yes, it's cheesy, but it's kind of fun. Like Tony and Tina's wedding, but with a whole town.

JOSH

Literally my worst nightmare. And probably just a scam to make money. They suck you in with all this "down-home charm" and next thing you know they're charging you up the wazoo for the "Schmigadoon Experience Deluxe Package"!

MELISSA

The wazoo?

JOSH

Dammit, they're already in my head.

Melissa laughs and they continue down Main Street, passing by the entrance to the carnival-like TUNNEL OF LOVE, complete with swan-shaped boats. DANNY BAILEY, the ruggedly handsome ride operator, smiles at Melissa as she passes by. He is trouble with a capital T.

DANNY

What do you say, little lady? Want
the thrill of a lifetime?
(suggestively)
First ride's on me.

Melissa stares at Danny, his look definitely stirring something in her. And then Margaret Layton intervenes, shaking her parasol at Danny.

MARGARET LAYTON

You just keep your distance, Danny
Bailey. Our town would be a far
more decent place without the likes
of you!

DANNY

Now, Mrs. Layton, you don't mean
that.

MARGARET LAYTON

Oh yes I do! You are nothing but a
roustabout and a rapsallion and a
bad influence.

(grabs Melissa)

Come on, dear. You don't want to
waste any more time with that man.

She pulls Melissa away. Josh smiles.

JOSH

Ooh. Looks like the town
rapsallion's got a thing for you.

MELISSA

Stop it.

Melissa laughs. But then glances back at Danny. He catches her eye and tips his cap with a sly smile. She turns away, bothered by how that makes her feel.

INT: INN - EVENING

DING! Josh rings the bell at the front desk and the
INNKEEPER, a timid little bald man, comes running out.

INNKEEPER

Sorry to keep you waiting! You must be the visitors everybody's talking 'bout! S'pose you're looking for a room?

MARGARET LAYTON (O.S.)

Two! Rooms.

Josh and Melissa turn around and see Margaret Layton suddenly standing right behind them. It's unnerving.

MARGARET LAYTON (CONT'D)

They're not married, Harvey, and I'm sure you're aware of the town rules regarding such things.

The Innkeeper trembles under her gaze.

INNKEEPER

Yes. Of course, Mrs. Layton. Two rooms.

Josh and Melissa exchange looks. Seriously? Josh turns to Margaret.

JOSH

Okay, I get it. You're the preacher's wife and we're "living in sin."

(in mock fear)

Aah...we're going to hell!

(beat)

Cute. Thanks.

(to Innkeeper)

Just the one room, please.

Margaret Layton shoots the Innkeeper a threatening look. He turns to Josh apologetically.

INNKEEPER

Sorry, sir, but town policy is town policy.

JOSH

Okay, listen, "Harvey the Innkeeper," I'm not interested in your little show, and--

MELISSA

Josh, it's okay. It's one night.

(to Innkeeper)

We'll take two rooms.

Margaret Layton smiles, triumphant. The Innkeeper looks relieved.

INNKEEPER

Great. That'll be a dollar.

Josh stares back at the Innkeeper, beyond annoyed.

JOSH

A dollar?

INNKEEPER

Yessir.

JOSH

All right, I'll play your game.
(slaps a dollar on the
counter)
Here's a *dollar*. For *two* rooms.

INNKEEPER

Thank you kindly.

The Innkeeper takes the dollar and places it in the old-fashioned register. Then slides two keys across the counter. Josh shakes his head.

JOSH

This is ridiculous.

MELISSA

So to clarify. You're mad because two rooms only cost a dollar?

JOSH

No, I just--I'm not interested in an "interactive experience" with quaint characters from the olden days right now. I just want to get a freaking room with my girlfriend, where there's wi-fi and I can check the score of the Yankees game and read my email.

The Innkeeper looks confused.

INNKEEPER

Sorry, sir, but the mail wagon won't be here 'til next week.

JOSH

I hate you.

Josh grabs the keys and storms toward the stairs. Melissa follows, smiling back at the Innkeeper and Margaret Layton.

MELISSA

You guys are really so great.

INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Josh and Melissa head down the hallway looking for their rooms.

MELISSA

Okay, granted, this is a little over the top.

JOSH

(throwing arms in the air)
Thank you!

Josh puts his hands on Melissa's shoulders.

JOSH (CONT'D)

It's important to me that we can hate things together.

MELISSA

I know.

They kiss. Melissa finds her room number on a door.

MELISSA (CONT'D)

Well, this is me.

JOSH

It's been a while since I've heard you say that.

They both smile, remembering. Josh softens.

JOSH (CONT'D)

Sorry I've been such a jerk. I just really hate people singing. And smiling. Okay, I hate people. But mostly these people.

(off her look)

What?

MELISSA

After we clean up can we please go on the Tunnel of Love? I know it's cheesy, but it might be fun. And romantic.

She looks up at Josh pleadingly. Josh sighs, then smiles.

JOSH
Sure. Pick you up at seven?

MELISSA
(smiles)
I'll be waiting.

They kiss.

MARGARET LAYTON (O.S.)
Ahem!

Josh and Melissa turn and see Margaret Layton at the end of the hall, giving them the evil eye. Josh holds his hands up and backs away.

JOSH
Okay, okay!

EXT. INN - NIGHT

Establishing.

INT. MELISSA'S HOTEL ROOM - SAME

Melissa, showered and dressed, looks into a tiny vanity mirror as she applies lipstick. Happy with the results, she sits on her bed. Waiting. She checks her watch. It's almost 7:20. She frowns.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Melissa knocks on Josh's door. No answer. She frowns and tries again.

MELISSA
Josh?

Concerned, she turns the doorknob. CLICK! The door opens.

INT. JOSH'S HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The door creaks open and Melissa steps inside. Her face falls upon seeing--

Josh. In his boxers, passed out asleep on the bed. Snoring loudly. She looks down at him, knowing he's out for the night. She sighs.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Melissa exits back into the hallway. Heads for her room. Then stops, having a thought.

EXT. TUNNEL OF LOVE - NIGHT

Melissa approaches the Tunnel of Love [**NOTE: this should definitely have the feel of "soundstage night." The trees and other plants are clearly not real, nor is the backdrop of the town at night.**]. Danny, who's working on one of the boats, sees her coming and smiles. Tips his cap.

DANNY

Evening, miss.

MELISSA

Evening. Mister.

DANNY

I don't believe we were properly introduced. The name's Danny. Danny Bailey.

He holds out his hand to shake.

MELISSA

Ah yes, the rapsCALLION. I'm Melissa. Klippel.

She shakes his hand. Then, feeling awkward, looks up at the sky.

MELISSA (CONT'D)

It's so beautiful here at night.

DANNY

It's not alone.

Danny gives her a look. Melissa goes flush, finds her heart beating faster. Danny gestures to one of the swan boats.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Offer's still open. First ride's on me.

MELISSA

Oh. No. I'm just here to look. Around.

Danny closes the door and shrugs.

DANNY
You're a funny kid.

Suddenly a GUST OF WIND blows through the trees, sending BLOSSOMS flying everywhere around Melissa and Danny. Melissa looks at them, amazed.

MELISSA
Wow. Look at all the blossoms.

DANNY
(shrugs)
Happens a lot this time a' year.
Whenever the wind blows.

Danny approaches Melissa. He moves close and removes a blossom that was caught in her hair. And stays close.

DANNY (CONT'D)
So. You have a feller?

MELISSA
Yes. I have a feller.

DANNY
And he lets you go walking on your own at night? Talking with strange men?

Danny moves even closer. Melissa gets flustered.

MELISSA
Well. He. What was the question again?

DANNY
Don't matter. As long as the answer's yes.

MELISSA
Okay, I appreciate your commitment to the whole "bad boy carnie guy" thing, but I've actually got a boyfriend, in real life, and--

DANNY
This ain't about any of that. It's only about this moment. You. Me. Here. Now. That pull you feel? That's nature. Telling you to let go.

MELISSA
Um...

Suddenly MUSIC STARTS UP. And Danny sings.

SONG: "LOVE'S A MOMENT IN TIME"

DANNY

*When a squirrel wants another
squirrel
He don't wonder if she's attached*

MELISSA

(stunned)
Okay. You're. Singing?

DANNY

*And a robin don't think about the
future
When she's got an itch to be
scratched*

Melissa looks around, confused. Where is the music coming from?

MELISSA

So is this like. Part of the show
or?

DANNY

*Nothing's purer than nature
Where our wants and needs hold sway
Every creature, even vermin
Is a preacher with a sermon
Listen closely and you'll hear them
say...*

MELISSA

So you're just full on singing a
song right now. Okay. Cool.

DANNY

*Love's a moment in time
Satisfying a need
Poets sing about Cupid's darts
Claiming love resides in our hearts
But it's more about other parts
Love's a moment in time*

MELISSA

Okay, so. What am I supposed to do
here? Do I just stare at you or--

DANNY

*Sometimes wedding bells chime
And true love is decreed
Man and woman both say "I do"
Promising they'll be ever true
'Til somebody else comes in view
Love's a moment in time*

MELISSA

Seriously, where is the music
coming from??

DANNY

*Now I ain't got no quarrels
With other folks's morals
But when it comes to my pursuits
I'll take my cue from the bears and
newts*

Danny takes Melissa by the hand and begins to dance with her. He is strong and graceful, moving like Gene Kelly. She has no idea what she's doing.

MELISSA

Um. Wow. Okay. I didn't. I took
like one year of tap. Sure. Yeah.
Why not? I'll just.

DANNY

Shh. Let's let our bodies talk.

MELISSA

Okay. But mouths are technically
parts of our bodies, so--

Danny resumes singing. And finally Melissa relaxes and gets caught up in it. Getting caught in Danny and the music's spell.

DANNY

*Oh, man evolved from the slime
Learned to write and to read
We got religion and airs and then
Turned to ladies and gentlemen
But dim the lights and we're slime
again
Ain't no way that's a crime
Love's a moment
It's just a moment
Love's a moment in time*

As Danny finishes the song they are face to face, about an inch apart. The tension is incredible.

They are clearly meant to kiss. And then Melissa breaks it, backing away and clapping.

MELISSA

Great. That was really good. Bravo!

Danny looks confused. Melissa feels for him.

MELISSA (CONT'D)

Look, I'm flattered. And that was a really sweet song. But--

DANNY

(confused)
Song? What song?

MELISSA

The one you were just singing to me?

DANNY

(confused)
Singing?

MELISSA

(done with this now)
O-kay. It's late, and I'm tired, and this is getting weird, so thank you. And goodnight.

Melissa quickly heads back to the inn. Shakes her head, laughing to herself. What was that?

Danny watches her go. Confused. What was that? FADE OUT.

EXT. SCHMIGADOON INN - DAY

It's the next morning in Schmigadoon. Townsfolk hustle and bustle and go about their business. Josh and Melissa sit at a table in the inn's outdoor cafe. Melissa looks Josh in the eyes, very serious.

MELISSA

Josh, this morning, as an emblem of my love for you, I'd like to give you my heart.

She holds out a fist and opens it. Revealing--nothing.

MELISSA (CONT'D)

(playfully)
Oh, that's right. You lost it.

JOSH

Okay, I'm sorry. I'm sorry I fell asleep last night. And that I've been acting like such a jerk.

(beat)

So to make it up to you, today we can do the Tunnel of Love ride as many times as you want.

Melissa quickly glances over at the Tunnel of Love, then turns back to Josh.

MELISSA

Yeah, I'm good.

JOSH

Really? 'Cause last night--

MELISSA

(looks at menu)

I'm really hungry. Can we order?

(spots waitress)

Waitress!

The waitress comes over to the table. It's Betsy McDonough, Farmer McDonough's oldest daughter. Gorgeous, innocent, flirty and oozing sexiness.

BETSY

Good morning! How're we doing?

Sleep well last night?

Josh takes in Betsy. She is stunning.

JOSH

Yes.

(looks at nametag)

Betsy. Slept like a log.

BETSY

(laughs)

Oh my gosh! "Like a log"? That is hilarious. Logs don't sleep! You are so funny.

She puts her hand on Josh's arm. Melissa is annoyed. Josh smiles like an idiot.

JOSH

I'm not that funny.

MELISSA

He's really not. Anyway, could we maybe order something?

BETSY

Sure! And you're in luck, 'cause today we've got our world-famous corn puddin'.

MELISSA

Corn puddin'? What's that?

Suddenly MUSIC STARTS UP.

BETSY

What? You mean to tell me you never heard of corn puddin'?

(to townsfolk)

She's never heard of corn puddin'!

Josh looks around, panicked.

JOSH

Oh no. It's a song.

(to Melissa)

You just started another song!

SONG: "CORN PUDDIN'"

A group of townsfolk start singing at Josh and Melissa.

TOWNSPEOPLE

Corn puddin'

Corn puddin'

Corn puddin' corn puddin'

Corn puddin' corn puddin'

All of the men sing together.

MEN

My gal loves corn puddin'

She eats it constantly

Sometimes I get to wonderin'

Does she love it more than me?

TOWNSPEOPLE

Does she love it more than me?

All of the women sing together.

WOMEN

My guy loves corn puddin'

I've got the recipe

So if he wants my puddin'

He'll have to marry me

TOWNSPEOPLE

Yes, he'll have to marry me!

Melissa smiles, enjoying this. Josh is horrified.

JOSH
 (raises hand)
 Can we opt out of this?

TOWNSPEOPLE
*You put the corn in the puddin'
 And the puddin' in the bowl
 You put the bowl in your belly
 'Cause it's good for the soul!
 You put the corn in the puddin'
 And the puddin' in the bowl
 You put the bowl in your belly
 'Cause it's good for the soul!*

A COOK sings next to a GIANT VAT of corn pudding.

COOK
Who wants corn puddin'?

TOWNSPEOPLE
We want corn puddin'!

COOK
Who wants corn puddin'?

TOWNSPEOPLE
We want corn puddin'!

Suddenly everyone turns expectantly to Josh and Melissa as the music vamps.

JOSH
 What?

MELISSA
 I think they want us to take a
 verse.

JOSH
 Oh no. I am not singing. And you
 are not singing.

MELISSA
 Come on, it might be fun.

JOSH
 Mel--no. Do not.

Melissa gives Josh a look--really? Then stands up on her chair and starts singing.

MELISSA
Never had corn puddin'

JOSH
 What the hell.

MELISSA
*And it might be a waste
 But if you've got some extry*

JOSH
 "Extry"?

MELISSA
I sure would like a taste

TOWNSPEOPLE
*Oh, she sure would like a taste!
 A taste of corn puddin'!!!*

And it's the big finish. The townspeople turn to each other, smiling and laughing and eating corn pudding. That's it for Josh. He immediately pulls Melissa off the table and away from the crowd.

JOSH
 What is wrong with you?

MELISSA
 That was so weird. As soon as I started singing, it's like I knew what to say.

JOSH
 Okay, now you're freaking me out. We're leaving.

MELISSA
 What, why?

JOSH
 Are you serious? The entire town just spent five minutes singing about corn pudding!

MAN (O.S.)
 Did somebody say "corn puddin' "?

The SONG STARTS UP again. Josh turns to Melissa.

JOSH
 We are out of here. Now.

EXT. BRIDGE - DAY

Josh and Melissa head towards the bridge, backpacks on [**NOTE: again, no attempt at realism should be made here, we are clearly on a soundstage and the trees, bushes, grass and stream are man-made.**].

MELISSA

I just feel bad. Everybody was so nice and we didn't even say goodbye.

JOSH

Since when do you say goodbye to a town? They'll be fine.

The two of them step onto the bridge. They walk across it.

But when they get halfway across, find they are heading back to Schmigadoon. Josh stops.

JOSH (CONT'D)

Wait a minute. What?

He turns around and Melissa follows suit. They head away from town. But as they hit the halfway point once again find themselves heading back to town.

JOSH (CONT'D)

What is going on?

MELISSA

It's like we can't leave.

JOSH

Of course we can leave!

They try again. But once again when they get to the halfway point they're heading back to town. They turn to each other, freaked out.

JOSH (CONT'D)

What the hell?

MELISSA

Okay, this is freaky. It's like it's. Magic. Or--

JOSH

It's not magic.

MELISSA

Then what is it?

JOSH

I don't know. It's a trick bridge
or something.

MELISSA

A "trick bridge"? What would that
even be?

JOSH

I don't know!

Josh gets a determined look and suddenly attempts to cross
the bridge again, this time sprinting.

And he once again finds himself still on the Schmigadoon side
of the bridge.

JOSH (CONT'D)

Holy shit.

MELISSA

(freaking out)

Okay, what the hell is going on??

As if in answer to their question--POOF! A LITTLE LEPRECHAUN
appears in front of them. They stare at him, stunned. He
calmly takes a puff on his pipe and then addresses them in a
thick Irish brogue.

LEPRECHAUN

"Once ye have entered Schmigadoon
'Tis true ye won't be leaving soon
Within its borders ye are bound
Until at last TRUE LOVE ye've found
But 'til ye've found it ye must
stay
Where life's a musical every day."

Melissa and Josh stare at the Leprechaun.

JOSH

Wait--WHAT??

POOF! The Leprechaun is gone.

MELISSA

Nooo! Come back! Mr. Leprechaun!
Please! Mr. Leprechaun!!

JOSH

What the hell was that??!

MELISSA

I told you this was magic!
Okay, think. What did he say?

JOSH

I don't know! It was in old-timey
rhyme, he had a thick accent--
honestly I was more focused on the
fact THAT HE WAS A FREAKING
LEPRECHAUN!

Melissa thinks.

MELISSA

All right. "Something something
Schmigadoon, something won't be
leaving soon."

JOSH

And "life's a musical every day."
What's that supposed to mean?

MELISSA

(realizing)

It means this isn't an act for
tourists. These people aren't
pretending. We're actually in a
musical.

JOSH

Oh please God no.

MELISSA

But he said we're only here until
we've found "true love." Which--
(turns to Josh)
I love you. Do you love me?

JOSH

What? Yes. Of course.

MELISSA

Then maybe we should try the bridge
again. Now that we know the
requirements.

JOSH

Yes. Let's do it.

The two of them head for the bridge. They stop in front of
it. Exchange a look. Then clasp hands.

MELISSA

I love you.

JOSH
I love you too.

MELISSA
(calls up to sky)
You hear that, Mr. Leprechaun?
We're in love!

They walk across the bridge. And when they get to the halfway point--

They find themselves heading back towards Schmigadoon.

They turn to each other. Exchange looks.

BLACKOUT