

THE RUNAWAYS

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07 25 08

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We hear A GIRL GIGGLING as a DROP OF BLOOD hits the sidewalk.

EXT. ENCINO VALLEY - BUSY STREET - EARLY EVENING - 1974

A 14-year-old SURFER GIRL with long blonde hair is clutching her underwear, her mini-skirt hiked way up. This is CHERIE CURRIE and she just got her period.

CHERIE
(freaking)
What am I gonna *do*?

GIRL (O.S.)
(giggles, sings)
Misty water-colored meee-mor-ies...

CHERIE
It's not *funny*, Marie!

Cherie stares at MARIE CURRIE. They're *paternal twins* -- the epitome of angelic 70's California. Marie keeps singing...

MARIE
*It's the laughter we'll re-meeem-
beeerrr. Of the waay we weeeeere...*

Cherie sees BLOOD DRIPPING down her leg. She frantically wipes it with her underwear.

CHERIE
Crap!

MARIE
You're such a spaz, Cherie.

Totally cool, Marie takes off her bomber jacket, ties it around Cherie's waist. She drags her towards the bathroom of a PUP 'N' TACO.

Two teenage guy EMPLOYEES at the drive-thru window put down their ZAP COMIX to gawk at them.

SKINNY EMPLOYEE
Checkitout -- the Valley twins are back... Who'd you rather?

FAT EMPLOYEE
Who *cares*, man -- I couldn't tell those chicks apart in the *light*.

Skinny Employee cracks a horndog's grin, rapidly FLICKS HIS TONGUE in the twins' direction.

INT. PUP 'N' TACO BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Marie is all business. She quickly locks the door, grabs Cherie's underwear and tosses them in the trash. She takes off her *own* underwear and hands them to Cherie.

Calmer now, Cherie dutifully puts them on. She pulls some napkins from the dispenser, stuffs them in.

Marie turns to the mirror, skillfully applies a rainbow of colors to her eyes and mouth.

CHERIE

I'm twenty minutes older, why does everything happen to *you* first?

MARIE

I'm taller.

Cherie rolls her eyes. Marie finishes her mouth, kisses the mirror -- leaving OPEN RED LIPS. Then she puts on a pair of TIGHT RED SATIN PANTS and a LOW CUT BLOUSE.

Cherie pulls a pair of SEXY BLACK HIGH HEELS from a backpack. Marie stares at the shoes.

MARIE (CONT'D)

You took Ma's black heels?

CHERIE

Like she's ever worn anything twice? Anyway, you should be more worried about her finding out how old your skanky boyfriend is.

MARIE

I'm sorry, does *your* boyfriend have a car? I'm sorry, do you even *have* a boyfriend?

EXT. PUP 'N' TACO - DRIVE THROUGH WINDOW - MINUTES LATER

The guys watch as Marie drags Cherie from the bathroom. They're running, holding hands, teetering in their high heels. Cherie almost falls, clearly not as comfortable or confident as Marie.

SKINNY EMPLOYEE

You want some *fries* to go with those *shakes*?

FAT EMPLOYEE
 (grabs crotch)
 Or maybe my *grande CHIMICHANGA!*

The boys crack up. Marie smiles -- then sees they're making "oral sex" gestures. She scoffs, but she loves the attention.

Cherie is more combative -- *she flips them off.*

Just then, a BEAT-UP LINCOLN comes to a screeching halt. Bowie's "Young Americans" blares from the stereo. At the wheel is DEREK, 28 years old, scruffy.

DEREK
Dreamy ladies! Pile on in!

Marie rides shotgun, Cherie climbs in back. Derek peels out.

INT. LINCOLN - DRIVING DOWN HOLLYWOOD ST. - NIGHT

Derek takes Marie by the chin and french kisses her. He watches Cherie in the rearview mirror -- WINKS at her. She looks away, grossed out.

Marie pulls away, fixes her lipstick in the pull-down mirror, then whispers something to Derek.

He laughs, turns to Cherie and smiles big.

DEREK
 Congrats, babe, you're officially a *wo-man*. Let's fuckin' *celebrate!*

Cherie glares hard at Marie, shakes her head.

Derek hands Cherie a MICKEY from under the car seat. Cherie smells the bottle -- "yuck."

She passes it to Marie. Marie takes a big swig.

Barry Manilow's "Mandy" comes on the radio. Marie turns it up, sings along with the song. Her voice is terrible.

MARIE
*Well, you kissed me and stopped me
 from shakin'. And I need you today,
 oh MARIE...*

Cherie makes a face, leans forward, turns the station.

MARIE (CONT'D)
Hey!

Marie turns it back, sings *louder*. Cherie groans, retaliates.

CHERIE

Hey Derek, did Marie tell you she's
not wearing any underwear?

Marie stops singing, glares back at Cherie.

Derek looks at Marie's crotch, grins, hits the gas and *howls*.

DEREK

OOOOWWWWWWWW!!!

BRING UP TITLES: THE RUNAWAYS

INT. USED CLOTHING STORE - CHANGING ROOM - EARLY EVENING

CLOSE ON a pair of BLACK PRO KEDS HI TOPS. PAN UP to reveal someone checking themselves out in a mirror, wearing tight black leather pants and a black leather jacket.

We hear a *KNOCK* on the door. It's a HIPPIE SALESMAN whose scraggly ponytail barely warrants a rubber band.

HIPPIE SALESMAN

Everything okay in there?

BLACK LEATHER

(jittery)

Yes, please. I mean...yes. *Thank you.*

Reveal a 16-year-old GIRL, tough, pretty, with dark hair and a pale complexion. She wears a SILVER PACIFIER around her neck. She's cool as hell, but for the BEADS OF SWEAT collecting on her forehead. This is JOAN JETT.

She pulls her SCHOOL UNIFORM PANTS over the leather pants. She looks in the mirror, takes a deep breath.

INT. USED CLOTHING STORE - CHECKOUT COUNTER - MOMENTS LATER

Joan dumps a large pile of LOOSE CHANGE on the counter.

JOAN

I'll take the jacket.

The HIPPIE SALESMAN looks suspiciously at the mound.

JOAN (CONT'D)

It's all there, man. I counted it.

He looks her over. Then squints, noticing something strange.

THE LEATHER WAISTBAND IS PEEKING OUT FROM UNDER JOAN'S SCHOOL UNIFORM PANTS.

HIPPIE SALESMAN
Just the jacket then?

Joan nods. Their eyes meet. A loaded beat.

The Hippie Salesman points to a sign:

SHOPLIFTERS WILL BE PROSECUTED.

He moves between her and the door, blocking the exit...

HIPPIE SALESMAN (CONT'D)
 Stay right where you are.

He picks up the phone, dials what is obviously the police...

Joan panics, eyes darting. She takes a deep breath and --

HIPPIE SALESMAN (CONT'D)
 Yes, hi, is there a cruiser in the
 area. I have a shoplift --

SHE *CHARGES* PAST HIM, OUT THE DOOR LIKE A BAT OUT OF HELL.

The Hippie Salesman can only watch as Joan *books* it down the street and hops a fence. She looks over her shoulder, keeps on running -- *then screams with excitement.*

EXT. ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

Joan turns the corner where she meets up with a 13-YEAR-OLD TOMBOY. She's smoking a Marlboro, carrying a ratty backpack, wearing a STOOGES t-shirt. This is TAMMY. Excited to see Joan, she jumps up and down.

Joan drops her uniform pants, revealing the stolen leather ones underneath. Tammy's jaw drops -- "cool!" She touches them, impressed. Joan struts around like a rock star.

(From here on she wears the same black leather outfit. It gets more worn in and cooler as time goes by. The only thing that changes are her t-shirts and accessories.)

JOAN
 Who am I?

TAMMY
 Elvis!

JOAN
No way, man. *Bowie!*

TAMMY
Bowie... Yeeaah. Aladdin Sane.

A beat. Tammy bugs her eyes, just getting the pun.

TAMMY (CONT'D)
A lad. Insane. Cooooool.

JOAN
Fuck that, man -- I'm a *gal* insane.

TAMMY
(grins, nods)
Yeeeeaaaahhh.

Joan does TOWNSEND'S WINDMILL GUITAR STRUM. Tammy pumps her fist, making DEVIL HORNS, her #1 fan.

She reaches into her backpack and pulls out some GLUE and a PAPER BAG. Joan's eyes light up.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ALLEY - LATER (DUSK)

Joan and Tammy lie on the sidewalk under a lamp post, clearly zonked out of their minds. Joan inhales deeply from the bag, then passes it to Tammy. She inhales, looks up at the sky.

It's quiet but for the sound of CRICKETS. Then Joan breaks the silence with a song sung slow and low.

JOAN
*I met her in a club down in old
Soho, where you drink champagne and
it tastes just like Cherry Cola.
C-O-L-A Cola...*

TAMMY
What's that song about?

JOAN
It's about this girl... She's picks
up a boy...

TAMMY
She picks him up. Tough.

JOAN
Almost breaks his spine.

TAMMY

My brother says guys don't like
tough girls. He says guys like
girls to be soft.

JOAN

Your brother's a fag.

TAMMY

(considering)
He does spend a lot of time doing
his bangs...

A beat. The girls crack up. Joan continues to sing.

JOAN

*Girls will be boys, and boys will
be girls, it's a mixed up, muddled
up, shook up world, except for
Lola...*

Joan leans in close to Tammy, puts her head on her shoulder.
Their lips almost touch.

Tammy leans in closer, kisses her. It lasts a few seconds,
then Joan pulls away.

A long, awkward beat.

Then Tammy pretends like nothing happened.

TAMMY

L-o-l-a, Lola...

Joan looks at Tammy. A beat. Then she smiles, sings.

JOAN

L-o-l-a, Lo-la...

The girls continue to sing as The Kinks' "Lola" fades up into
the night.

INT. CHERIE'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Pieces of PLATINUM HAIR fall through the air, landing on
Bowie's "Aladdin Sane" record. In the mirror's reflection we
see Cherie attacking her NOW-PLATINUM HAIR with a pair of
scissors.

She mixes some makeup with a paintbrush. Then draws the
outline of a large LIGHTNING BOLT over her face -- just like
the Bowie cover.

Marie walks into the bathroom, stares -- not sure whether to laugh or scream.

MARIE
Holy shit. *Cherie*. What the hell
are you doing?

Cherie hypnotically continues painting her face. Marie stares at the hair on the floor.

MARIE (CONT'D)
You look like a *dude*.

CHERIE
Maybe I am.

MARIE
Mom's gonna kill you. It really
looks terrible.

CHERIE
Good.

Marie picks up the Bowie record, looks at it. She stares at her sister as if really trying to understand her.

Cherie's paintbrush wanders outside the lightning bolt.

CHERIE (CONT'D)
Crap.

She licks her finger and starts rubbing the smudge, harder, angrier. Marie looks on. A tender beat.

MARIE
Here, lemme...

Marie takes the brush from Cherie's hand. She sits on the sink directly in front of her, blocking the mirror.

They are no longer each other's reflection.

Marie licks her finger, wipes the smudge, and begins touching it up with the paintbrush. When she finishes, she stands back, looks at the album cover, then to Cherie. It's perfect.

Cherie smiles -- "thanks."

INT. VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - DAY

CLOSE ON: CHERIE'S SILVER PLATFORM BOOTS. She walks across a wooden stage floor. We hear every step.

She stops, turns towards a closed curtain. We can hear her breathing against the LOUD CHATTER of kids on the other side.

The curtains rise and a spotlight hits Cherie, illuminating the lightning bolt painted over her entire face. Her cropped platinum hair has stripes of red and blue. She wears a glittery tight top with a cut-off sleeve. And Marie's red satin pants.

The students have mixed reactions, some gawk, others point and giggle: "Freak!"

Cherie's gaze is steely, intense. Bowie's "Wild is the Wind" starts to play. Her body sways as she meets students' eyes.

She starts to lip-sync, really getting into it.

CHERIE

*Love me, love me, love me, love
me... Say you do, Let me fly away
with you...*

The scene is bizarre and uncomfortable. She makes a bird motion with her arms. Her expressions are melodramatic. The kids continue to laugh at her.

CHERIE (CONT'D)

*You touch me, I hear the sound of
mandolins... You kiss me... With
your kiss my life begins...*

Marie seems embarrassed. She sits with a "cool" crew of jocks and Farah Fawcett look-alikes. Not Cherie's friends. They make jokes, throw stuff. Marie goes along with them but it's clear she's torn.

CHERIE (CONT'D)

*Cling to me, for we're like
creatures in the wind...*

A crumpled ball hits Cherie in the face. She stops lip-syncing. She just stands there as the song continues.

BOWIE (OVER)

*And wild is the wind... Wild is the
wind...*

Cherie's hands turn to fists. She slowly raises both arms above her head, cocks her hip, snarls --

-- and gives the world TWO FINGERS full of "fuck you."

BOWIE (OVER) (CONT'D)

Wild is the wind...

The crowd *erupts*.

Teachers are appalled. Kids are insulted, inspired. Some laugh, some cheer, some boo. The nerds seem mesmerized by her courage. Marie and her friends are blown away.

Cherie walks down the steps center stage. She is now at their level. She stares them all down, defiant.

She lashes out with all her strength at the Jock, who laughs in return. She belts him hard in the face. He looks surprised and taken aback.

A fight breaks out. A nerd gets in a punch to the jock. She gets swallowed up by the crowd.

Marie runs to Cherie's defence.

INT. GUITAR SCHOOL - CORRIDOR - DAY

Joan Jett leans against a wall, holding a guitar case, covering her ears. We hear a student butchering Deep Purple's "Smoke On The Water" on an electric guitar.

The lesson ends. A TEENAGE MALE ROCKER exits the room. The GUITAR TEACHER, a balding 50 year old, holds the door open.

GUITAR TEACHER

Joan Larkin?

JOAN

It's *Jett*. Joan *Jett*, okay?

The teacher looks confused. What he thought was a leather-clad boy is actually a fresh-faced teenage girl.

GUITAR TEACHER

Sure, okay. Come on in, Joan *Jett*.

INT. GUITAR SCHOOL - LESSON ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The Teacher offers Joan a PINK PICK. She scoffs, opens her guitar case and takes out a Sear's model ELECTRIC GUITAR.

Stuck in the strings is a BLACK PICK. She pulls it out.

JOAN

Hey, what kinda amps you guys got?

GUITAR TEACHER

Um, I think for now we'll remain...*unplugged*.

JOAN

No, man, I wanna play like Chuck Berry. "Johnny B. Goode," ya know?

He smiles, patronizing.

GUITAR TEACHER

We'll get there. We'll get to Johnny. But for now...

He plucks the opening chords to "On Top Of Old Smokey." He is overly animated with his finger positioning. He sings:

GUITAR TEACHER (CONT'D)

On top of Old Smoky. All covered with snow. I lost my true lover. From a-courtin' too slow...

JOAN

"Old Smokey"?

(laughs)

That's goofy, man. How 'bout "Smoke On The Water"? Come on, I know you know that song.

GUITAR TEACHER

Finger the E chord. Like so.

He demonstrates the E chord. Joan follows. Then he sings:

GUITAR TEACHER (CONT'D)

On top of Old Smoky...

He looks to Joan. She strums in earnest, sings her own words.

JOAN

All covered with blow... I dumped my poor sweetheart... For a-screwin' too slow.

Joan cracks up. The Teacher doesn't.

GUITAR TEACHER

Ms. Larkin --

KEEERRRAAANNNGGG!

Joan cuts him off with a FEROCIOUS STRUM of her guitar.

GUITAR TEACHER (CONT'D)

I think you're gonna have to --

KEEERRRAAANNNGGG!

She stands, strums the E chord HARDER AND LOUDER.

The teacher looks at her sideways, as if she's some sort of untamed rock n' roll animal.

PRE-LAP THE MC5'S "IT'S A MAN'S, MAN'S, MAN'S WORLD"

EXT. GUITAR SCHOOL - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

Joan kicks open the door of the school. She carries her guitar case, TOSSES THE SHEET MUSIC for "On Top Of Old Smoky" in a trash can. She lights a cigarette and struts off.

INT. JOAN'S HOME - BATHROOM - NIGHT.

Joan rolls a towel and places it along the crack under the door. She turns on the shower full blast, further sound proofing the room from the rest of the sleeping house.

She sits down on the floor and strums some power chords on the guitar from DREAMY LADY. She can figure it out pretty quickly. She is determined to teach herself how to play.

INT. JOAN'S HOME. OUTSIDE BATHROOM. MORNING.

Joan's 5-YEAR-OLD LITTLE SISTER, KNOCKS on the door.

JOAN'S LITTLE SISTER
Joanie - Joanie!

She's peeing on the floor.

JOAN'S LITTLE SISTER (CONT'D)
Ma - -

Joan's mom comes to the door - KNOCKS HARD -

JOAN'S MOM
What are you doing in there?

INT. JOAN'S HOME. BATHROOM. MORNING. CONTINUOUS.

JOAN'S MOM (O.C.)
Joanie!
(to little sister)
I'll get a rag - don't move!

Joan is passed out on the bathroom floor.

JOAN
 (under her breath)
 Shit!

She tries to get up and stumbles.

JOAN (CONT'D)
 (in a groggy voice)
 Hold on.

She puts her head upside down in the sink and turns on the cold water, jolting her awake.

She shuts off the shower that's been running all night and wraps a towel around herself.

She exits the room sheepishly with her guitar hidden under some dirty towels.

JOAN'S MOM
 You're up early. I'll put some Pop
 Tarts in the toaster.

JOAN
 Sure.

INT. CHERIE'S KITCHEN - EVENING

Cherie sits at the table wearing a Bowie t-shirt and underwear. She has a cracked lip and some minor scapes on her arm. She puts a single CANDLE in a picked-at ICE CREAM BIRTHDAY CAKE. We can still make out "15TH BIRTHDAY" and "CHERIE" and "MARIE" in pink icing.

THE PHONE RINGS. Cherie picks it up.

CHERIE
 Hello.

DAD (O.S.)
 Happy Birthday, Kitten!

CHERIE
 Daddy! I saved you a piece of cake.
 The best piece. The piece with my
 name on it. Know why?

DAD
 Tell me...

CHERIE
 Because guess who ruled the talent
 show at school?

DAD

You?

CHERIE

Yup. Well, me and David Bowie.

DAD

Oh? Who's David Bowie?

Cherie smiles, shakes her head.

CHERIE

When're you coming over? The cake's gonna melt and Mom says there's no room left in the freezer.

DAD

I've gotta stay late tonight.

Cherie's face falls.

DAD (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, I'll be by tomorrow, promise. I only have a few minutes to talk now, though, so lemme say hi to Kitten number two.

CHERIE

Marie's out with her friends.

DAD

Oh. You didn't want to go?

CHERIE

No.

DAD

Okay, well, give her a pat for me. I love you, Kitten.

CHERIE

Love you too.

He hangs up. Cherie keeps the phone to her ear. She stares at the BURNING CANDLE in the cake.

She closes her eyes, MAKES A WISH, opens her eyes.

She SNUFFS THE FLAME with her fingers, hangs up the phone.

The room gets dark. A sad beat.

Cherie picks up a BUTTER KNIFE, holds it tight --

-- and SMEARS HER NAME off the cake.

The old Cherie is gone.

PRE-LAP IGGY POP'S "SIXTEEN" AND CUT TO:

INT. RODNEY BINGENHEIMER'S UNDER 18 ENGLISH DISCO - NIGHT

Joan Jett and Tammy lean on a wall, smoking cigarettes next to a poster of the Rolling Stones' "Sticky Fingers" album.

TWO 13-YEAR-OLD GIRLS wearing barely anything stumble by. They giggle and PLANT KISSES right on the poster, leaving LIPSTICK on Mick Jagger's crotch.

The camera follows Joan as she makes her way through the inebriated crowd. There is no liquor license so the club is full of TRENDY TEENAGERS surrounded by OLDER MALE PREDATORS. The crowd floats around stoned, drinking from MICKEY BOTTLES stashed in their pockets and purses.

Joan fixes on a MAN in his late-30's, super-skinny -- a cross between Andy Warhol and Frankenstein. He wears a tight leather jacket and a colorful scarf.

THIS IS KIM FOWLEY. He is ranting to RODNEY BINGENHEIMER, a Davy Jones look-a-like in a tight black suit.

Joan moves closer, trying to eavesdrop. Kim's attention shifts to a trendy CLUB GIRL holding a teddy bear.

CLUB GIRL

Heeyyy, Rodney!

She leaps with open arms and plants a kiss on Rodney.

KIM FOWLEY

Honey, you don't wanna be kissin' him. I'm the one you wanna be kissin'.

The girl laughs at the sight of him, loving the attention.

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)

I know, I cut my hair and now I look like a British homosexual. But trust me, I'd fuck you under my wall of gold records and you'd cry and fall in love with me.

The young girl giggles, not knowing what to make of Kim.

Joan is still listening to the conversation. She sees the bathroom door swing open and she catches a glimpse of CHERIE at the mirror applying concealer.

Joan and Cherie share a look. The door closes.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Graffiti covers the walls: WE KNOW YOUR MANTRA... T. REX... I'M NOT OK, YOU'RE NOT OK..."THICK AS A DICK"...JOIN THE SLA!...ELP SUX...LSD 4 U AND ME...LUDE DUDE IS BACK!

Cherie stands next to a stall with the door off it's hinges. Inside, a YOUNG GIRL wearing a silver dress is having sex with an OLDER GUY. Cherie stares at them through a crack.

Marie comes out of an adjacent stall, holding a WHITE PILL.

MARIE

Open up, Buttercup.

CHERIE

What is it?

MARIE

Remember last Sunday morning at breakfast when I couldn't remember anything from the night before?

Cherie nods.

MARIE (CONT'D)

This is why.

Cherie smiles, opens her mouth. She swallows the pill with a drink from the faucet. They leave the bathroom.

The door closes and we see that the sign 'FEMALE' has been altered to say 'UNISEX.' And 'UNISEX' has been changed to say 'SEX.'

Bowie's "Rebel Rebel" takes over. Cherie moves to the center of the dance floor. She is more confident now, dancing alone, finally free to be herself among her fellow freaks.

EXT. RODNEY'S - PARKING LOT - LATER THAT NIGHT

The lot is full of under-aged kids and older guys. Joan leans on an ICE BLUE CAMARO, sloppily making out with a ROCKER BOY. She's in charge, just like Lola from the song.

They're really getting into it. Until Joan notices --

KIM FOWLEY. He's holding court across the lot.

Joan immediately pulls back, buttons up, wipes her mouth. Rocker Boy leans in for another kiss but Joan pushes him away. She's totally focused on Kim.

JOAN

Y'see that guy over there? That's *Kim Fowley*. He worked with *Zappa*, man. *Fabian*, *Gene Vincent*, the *Byrds*.

Rocker Boy looks over, makes a "jerk off" gesture. He grabs Joan's hand and puts it on his obviously HARD DICK.

ROCKER BOY

Well, this is *Dick Johnson* and he'd like work with you.

Joan laughs at this ridiculous line. She squeezes playfully.

JOAN

Tell Lil' Richard to *heel*.

ROCKER BOY

"*Lil'*"?

Joan fixes her hair, straightens up, pats him on the head.

JOAN

Stay.

She reaches into her pocket, hands him a BLACK BEAUTY, and walks off towards Kim. Rocker Boy pops it, calls after her.

ROCKER BOY

Here? You want me to stay *here?*

Joan can't hear him, she's totally zoned on Kim.

She cautiously approaches...

JOAN

Uh, are you *Kim Fowley*?

He looks her over.

KIM FOWLEY

Lemme guess, you sing in a band. And it's the greatest fucking band in the world. And I'm the luckiest dogfucker because I get to hear it first.

JOAN

I'm, uh... I'm Joan Jett. I play guitar.

(laughs nervously)

I mean I -- I *play guitar*.

Kim quickly studies her style, seems to like what he sees.

KIM FOWLEY

Cool name. You guys gotta demo?

JOAN

No guys, man. All girls. I want to put together an all-girl band.

KIM FOWLEY

Really...

(grins)

Well maybe I *am* the luckiest dogfucker after all...

Kim yells across the lot.

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)

Sandy!

A 15-YEAR-OLD BLONDE is talking to a bunch of SURFER GUYS. She's a tomboy, tough looking, but has a warmth that comes through when she smiles. This is SANDY WEST. She comes over to Kim and Joan.

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)

Sandy the drummer -- this is Joan Jett. She claims to be some sort of *guitar goddess*.

JOAN

Rhythm. Yeah, I play rhythm guitar.

(to Sandy)

I never said that "goddess" thing, though.

Sandy smiles -- "it's cool." Kim SCRIBBLES A NUMBER on a piece of paper, hands it to Joan.

KIM FOWLEY

Get together. See what kind of noise you two can make and call me *if* you have something that won't make me regret giving you my number.

Kim walks away. Joan and Sandy stare at each other, trying to process this weirdo and contain their excitement.

Just then, the ICE BLUE CAMARO screeches past them. Rocker Boy leans out the window and yells:

ROCKER BOY
Fuckin' dykes!

Sandy and Joan both give him the finger at the exact same time. These two are gonna get along.

PRE-LAP THE OPENING CHORDS TO "WILD THING" AND CUT TO:

INT. SANDY'S BASEMENT REC ROOM - NIGHT

Joan is hunched over a guitar, strumming "Wild Thing." Sweat drips from the tips of her hair. She flubs the riff, tries again -- and *nails* it. She's really learning to play.

Sandy hits the drums in perfect time. She sings:

SANDY
*Wild thing, I think I love you.
But I wanna know for sure.
So come on, and hold me tight.
I love you...*

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. KIM FOWLEY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Kim is pacing his apartment, wearing a BAGGY OLD PAIR OF UNDERWEAR, watching MONSTER TRUCKS on TV. He shouts into the phone.

KIM FOWLEY
Pick...up...the dogshit PHONE!

INT. SANDY'S BASEMENT REC ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The phone receiver is on the floor surrounded by A HUGE PILE OF DR. PEPPER CANS, CIGARETTES, JUNK FOOD WRAPPERS, RECORDS.

Joan and Sandy are rocking out. They sound much better now.

Joan hears Kim faintly screaming from the phone receiver. They stop playing, she rushes to pick it up.

JOAN
Hey... Sorry...

KIM FOWLEY (OVER)
 What in the fuck have you girls
 been *doing* over there?

JOAN
 Um... just practicing, ya know.
 Like you said...

Joan looks at Sandy -- "bad news." Sandy hangs her head,
 sadly twirls her drum stick.

KIM FOWLEY
 Well get *back* to it! You bitches
 are gonna be bigger than the
 fuckin' *Moonies*!

Joan's face lights up. She gives Sandy the thumbs-up. Sandy
 STOMPS on the bass drum, wildly CRASHES the cymbals.

DISSOLVE TO:

Kim is now the basement, wearing a mohair sweater and a pair
 of flares. He flips through a big, hardcover book titled
 "Blondes in Cinema."

Joan and Sandy play Kim's "Where The Boys Are." Joan sings.

JOAN
I wanna be where the bo--

KIM FOWLEY
 (interrupts)
*Tougher. I WANNA BE WHERE THE BOYS
 ARE!* There's no music like this on
 the radio right now, there's
nothing. Elvis and Priscilla got
 divorced, the President's a
 prowler, housewives are talking to
 their fucking *plants*. You dogs
 better get *dirty* 'cus all the young
 fuckboys out there are wearing
 dresses, leaving lipstick on each
 other's *cocks*.
 (beat)
 Now lemme hear you fuckgirls *growl!*

The girls are trying to get used to Kim's aggressive manner.
 They resume playing, harder now. Kim shouts out more lyrics.
 Joan snarls, tries to sound tougher.

JOAN
*I WANNA FIGHT HOW THE BOYS FIGHT
 I WANNA LOVE HOW THE BOYS LOVE*

Kim continues to flip through the "Blondes in Cinema" book.

JOAN (CONT'D)
I AM THE BITCH WITH THE HOT GUITAR
I AM THE AIR, THE SUN AND STARS

Kim turns the page, STOPS DEAD. He stares at the book, then at the girls. He is studying them with a funny look on his face. He puts up his hand.

KIM FOWLEY
Halt!

They stop playing once again, look at him. He's been struck by a bolt of inspiration.

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)
 I know what we're missing. I know what we need.

He HOLDS UP THE BOOK as if he's just found the holy grail. Joan and Sandy stare, confused.

C.U. THE OPEN BOOK. IT'S A PICTURE OF BRIDGET BARDOT IN BLACK LEATHER ON A MOTORCYCLE.

EXT. THE SUGAR SHACK CLUB - NIGHT

A MAN in his late-30s shows ID, argues with a boyish DOORMAN.

DOORMAN
 Sorry, Gramps. 'Gotta be *under* twenty one.

MAN
 I'm meeting someone in there.

DOORMAN
 Yeah, you and every other perv in LA.

TWO HOT FIFTEEN-YEAR-OLD GIRLS walk past and show their IDs. The doorman ushers them inside. The older man pouts.

INT. THE SUGAR SHACK CLUB - CONTINUOUS

KIM'S POV: The CAMERA PANS past GIRLS, GIRLS, GIRLS -- AS IF ON A MISSION. Then fixes on Marie who is laughing with some friends. He stares at her for a second...

But then he notices Cherie by herself sipping a Coca-Cola in the corner. He is struck. She is now the FEMALE BOWIE. Androgyny suits her well.

Kim approaches, looks her up and down, PULLS A FLASK from his jacket and offers to spike her Coke. She accepts.

KIM FOWLEY

Kim Fowley. I'm a record producer.
You've heard of me.

CHERIE

Have I...

Cherie looks him up and down, sips her drink.

KIM FOWLEY

I like your style. Yeah, a little Bowie, a little Bardot, and a look on your face that says 'I could kick the shit out of a truck driver.'

Cherie takes another sip. Kim has her attention now. He looks off and yells:

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)

Joan!

Joan approaches, smiles at Cherie.

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)

This is Joan Jett.
(to Cherie)
And you are?

CHERIE

Cherie.

KIM FOWLEY

Cherie?
(smiles slyly)
Cherie what?

CHERIE

Currie.

KIM FOWLEY

Cherie Currie. That's your real name?

Cherie nods. Kim grins a Svengali's grin.

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)
 Tell me, *Cherie Currie* -- can you
 sing or play an instrument?

A beat. Cherie looks at Joan. Joan nods -- "say yes."

CHERIE
 Yeah. Yeah, I can sing. Why?

KIM FOWLEY
Why? asks the maybe-great Cherie
 Currie. Read my lips. We...
 like...your...look. We're *choosing*
 you to be a part of rock n' roll
 history. Do...you want...to be...in
 the band?

Cherie looks around as if maybe this is a joke.

CHERIE
 Are you kidding?!

Cherie looks at Joan -- Joan shakes her head.

KIM FOWLEY (O.C.)
 How old are you?

CHERIE
 Fifteen.

Kim looks to the sky as if to thank the rock n' roll Gods.

KIM FOWLEY
 Jail fuckin' bait.
 (rubs hands together)
 Jack *fuckin'* pot!

Joan rolls her eyes and smiles at Cherie.

JOAN
 You know any Suzi Quattro?

Cherie nods.

KIM FOWLEY
 Good. Learn one of her songs. I
 don't care which one. We audition
 on Saturday. Joan, tell her where.

And Kim walks off, leaving the girls to get acquainted.

INT. CHERIE'S ROOM - DAY

Cherie's side of the room is covered with ARTICLES AND PICTURES OF BOWIE. She tapes the lyrics to PEGGY LEE'S "FEVER" to her mirror. Then drops the needle on the record...

We hear the opening SNAPS. Cherie stands in front of the mirror, sings along, works on her moves.

CHERIE

*Never know how much I love you
Never know how much I care
When you put your arms around me
I get a fever
that's so hard to bear*

Cherie walks to the bathroom and starts to brush her teeth, humming, dancing. She gargles, spits out the water. Now she belts it out, using the TOOTHBRUSH as a mic.

CHERIE (CONT'D)

*They give you Fever
When you kiss them
Fever if you live and learn
Fever 'til you sizzle*

Marie walks into the bathroom.

MARIE

*Would you shut up with that song,
you're gonna give me a brain tumor!*

Cherie begins singing at Marie, louder, seductively.

CHERI

Fever -- what a lovely way to burn.

Marie can't help but crack a smile.

EXT. REHEARSAL TRAILER - DAY

Cherie looks down a driveway, nervous. We see a beat-up TRAILER. She takes out a pack of MENTHOL CIGARETTES, fumbles, drops the pack. She picks it up and takes out a cigarette. She lights it -- but it's the wrong end.

CHERIE

Crap.

She tosses it, makes her way down the driveway, towards the trailer -- past GARBAGE, PILES OF DOGSHIT, CIGARETTE BUTTS.

She plugs her nose, stops at the door of the trailer. She fixes her hair, knocks. No answer. She knocks again. No answer. A beat. She takes a deep breath and --

INT. REHEARSAL TRAILER - DAY

Cherie cautiously opens the door to some of the TOUGHEST-LOOKING GIRLS she's ever seen.

Joan, all business, is hunched over her guitar, practicing a complicated lick. The bass player, ROBIN, 15 years old, tall and slender, is the oldest and most feminine of the group. She's talking with Sandy, working out a part.

LITA FORD is a large-breasted teenage rock chick, total badass. She flips her long hair, just missing Cherie as she enters. Cherie shoots her a look. She returns it.

Kim Fowley is a mix between rocker-boy and Catholic schoolgirl: a uniform kilt and knee socks topped off with a fedora and sunglasses.

Everyone stops what they're doing to look at Cherie.

KIM

Cherie Currie. Welcome. What song did you learn?

CHERIE

(nervously)

"Fever." I learned the Peggy Lee version.

LITA FORD

Peggy Lee?

(gags)

This ain't the Lawrence Welk show.

SANDY

Who's Peggy Lee?

LITA FORD

Kim, you shoulda told her -- we don't play that M.O.R. shit.

CHERIE

M.O.R.?

LITA FORD

(rolls eyes)

Middle. Of. The. Road. Slow-dance, champagne, pansy-ass *crap.*

Sandy does a "ba-dum-bump" on the drums. Cherie looks like she wants to crawl back from where she came.

Joan is the peace-maker.

JOAN

Can you do a different song?

CHERIE

Maybe, but... I mean, that's the only one I --

Kim interrupts, points to Cherie, shoos her away.

KIM FOWLEY

Go outside. You're in the dog house. Go. Go.

(points to Joan)

You. Come with me. Bring your guitar.

Cherie just stands there, frozen. Kim yells at her.

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)

Dog house!

EXT. REHEARSAL TRAILER - LATER

Cherie paces, side-stepping dog shit, smoking a cigarette. She looks at her watch, irritated. She starts to walk away.

Just then, she hears guitars GROWLING from inside. She turns back, peeks through the trailer window.

INT. REHEARSAL TRAILER - CONTINUOUS

Kim yells out lyrics to Joan. He is manically scribbling on a note pad, pacing with his hand on his hip.

C.U. THE NOTE PAD. IT SAYS "CHERIE." AND UNDERNEATH: "CHERRY"

KIM FOWLEY

Cherie. Wild girl. *CHERRY*. Fire cracker!

Joan locks into a groove on her guitar. Kim shouts in time:

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)

Ch ch ch ch ch cherry.

(in a girly voice)

Ch ch ch ch ch CHERRY BOMB!

Cherie opens the door to the trailer. Kim turns to her like she's interrupted his flow. He yells in his girly voice.

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)
I'M NOT READY FOR Y-O-U.

Embarrassed, Cherie closes the door.

EXT. REHEARSAL TRAILER - LATER

Cherie sits on a dirty milk crate. There are several butts by her shoes now. Finally, Sandy opens the door, smiles.

SANDY
 His, uh, Majestic-Hysterical *whatever*
 is "ready" for you now.

INT. REHEARSAL TRAILER - MOMENTS LATER

Kim prances around like a giraffe-girl, provocatively thrusting his hips, sing-yelling.

KIM FOWLEY
Hello Daddy, hello Mom
I'm your ch ch ch ch ch cherry bomb
Hello world, I'm your wild girl
I'm your ch ch ch ch ch cherry bomb

Everyone laughs, but they like it. Kim points to Cherie.

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)
 Your turn. Go.

She looks down to the SCRIBBLED LYRICS on the note pad. She clears her throat, looks around. Then softly into the mic:

CHERIE
Hello world, I'm your wild girl
I'm your ch ch ch ch ch cherry bomb

KIM FOWLEY
Hey street boy, what's your style?
Your dead end dreams
don't make you smile

CHERIE
 (tentatively)
Hey street boy, what's your style?
Your dead end dreams
don't make you smile

Kim's movements become more provocative, bending his knees with his legs spread, rubbing the insides of his thighs.

KIM FOWLEY

*I'll give ya something to live for
Have ya, grab ya til your sore*

The girls laugh. Cherie blushes.

CHERIE

I can't say that.

KIM FOWLEY

No? Okay. Bye-bye. Go sell girl
scout cookies.
(looks around)
Who's next?

Cherie looks to the other girls. No one looks in her direction except for Joan. She bugs her eyes -- "do it."

JOAN

It's just a song.

A beat. Then Cherie leans into the microphone...

CHERIE

(singing/talking)
Have ya, grab ya, til your sore.

KIM FOWLEY

(explodes)
*Dog shit! Urine-stained dog shit!
Rock n' roll is a blood sport, a
sport of men. It's for the people
in the dark, the death cats, the
masturbators, the outcasts who have
no voice, no way of saying I hate
this world, my father's a faggot,
fuck you, fuck authority -- I want
an orgasm!*

He thrusts his hips.

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)

*Now growl! Moan! This ain't women's
lib, kiddies -- this is women's
libido! I wanna see the scratch
marks down their fuckin' backs!*
(to Cherie)
*Now do it again. Again. Like your
boyfriend just fucked your sister
in your parents' bed.*

Kim does an exaggerated PELVIC THRUST.

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)
LIKE YOU WANT A FUCKING ORGASM!

Cherie looks around. Joan nods -- "go on." A beat. Cherie clears her throat...grabs the mic... And roars:

CHERIE
*I'LL GIVE YA SOMETHING TO LIVE FOR
 HAVE YA, GRAB YA TIL YOUR SORE!*

Everyone smiles, especially Joan and Kim -- "whoa!"

PRE-LAP "HOLLYWOOD" BY THE RUNAWAYS AND CUT TO:

INT. MALL - NIGHT

Joan, Cherie, Sandy, Lita and Robin run through an indoor mall, laughing, wreaking havoc, smashing into each other and the occasional passerby.

Sandy runs and rolls on the ground like a bowling ball. Joan helps her up and they go running hand in hand. People stare at them. They couldn't care less.

Sandy pushes Cherie into a store window -- *hard*. IT SHATTERS. They run off in all directions, laughing.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD SIGN - DAWN

The letters are backlit against a cool sky. Joan, Cherie, and Sandy are sitting behind the "O" talking as the sun comes up.

JOAN
 No, man, I like *Airplane* better.
 Jefferson *Starship* sounds like a
 fuckin' *Disney* ride or something.

The girls laugh. Cherie checks her watch.

CHERIE
 My mother's gonna kill me. She's
 gonna take a gun and kill me. Don't
 you guys have any kinda curfew?

JOAN
 Naw, my dad split. He was the
 strict one.

CHERIE

Yeah? Mine left too. Well, he didn't really *leave*, ah, he was kicked out and - *replaced*.

JOAN

Do you take out the garbage now?

CHERIE

Yeah! Well, me and my sister.

JOAN

Yeah, me too.

SANDY

Well you're both way better off, believe me. My parents are still together and it's *gnarly*, man. I swear to God my mom'd rather fuck her pet rock.

(beat)

I think she actually *did* once.

CHERIE

Gross!

The girls crack up. Sandy pulls a BOTTLE OF BABY SHAMPOO out of her bag, takes a drink. She passes the bottle to Cherie.

CHERIE (CONT'D)

What is it?

SANDY

It ain't baby shampoo.

Cherie takes a swig and violently spits it out. Sandy and Joan laugh.

SANDY (CONT'D)

I call it the *dirty sink*. A little bit of everything from my parents cabinet. Just a little so they can't tell I'm dippin' into their stash.

CHERIE

My dad would so notice -- he likes his booze.

Joan takes a swig, makes a bitter face as she swallows.

SANDY

Is he an alcoholic?

CHERIE

No, he just likes it. He says that's the difference. He *likes* to drink. He doesn't *need* to drink.

Sandy takes another swig.

SANDY

I like to drink.

JOAN

The *dirty sink* is where we're gonna be pukin' that shit up tomorrow.

They laugh. Sandy hands the bottle to Cherie. Cherie takes it, sips, gags. She hands it to Joan, who sips.

Sandy stands, stretches.

SANDY

Hey, Salt n' Pepper -- race you down the hill.

Joan gives Cherie a look. A beat.

Then they SUDDENLY JUMP UP, in sync, take off down the hill, laughing the whole way down.

INT. CHERIE'S HOME - AFTERNOON

Cherie and Marie sit in the living room in front of fold out tables. Marie wears a PUP N' TACO uniform. She eats her TV Dinner as Dan Rather talks about Nixon and Watergate.

Cherie is too excited to eat. She picks at her food, smokes a cigarette.

MARIE

What, you think 'cus you're a big *rock star* now you can smoke in the house?

CHERIE

Shut up, I never said I was a rock star.

MARIE

Can those girls even play?

CHERIE

Yeah. They actually wrote a song about me.

MARIE

(dismissive)

You know how many new bands think they're gonna be the ones who make it?

CHERIE

Kim thinks we got a real shot.

MARIE

Kim *Fowley*? That guy's a total creep. Seriously, I heard he has a coat made out of *dog fur*.

CHERIE

Well excuse me if I don't wanna wind up working at the *Pup N' Taco* for the rest of my life.

Marie is stung. Cherie instantly regrets saying it. But before she can retract --

They hear a KEY RATTLING in the door.

CHERIE (CONT'D)

Crap!

Cherie buries her cigarette in the gravy. Marie runs to open the back door, waving the smoke out. Even when they fight, these girls are a team.

In walks MOM, 52, ultra-fashionable with an old-world Hollywood elegance. We see some OLD PHOTOS of her around the house. She used to be some kind of movie star.

Mom is trailed by HER BOYFRIEND, WOLFGANG, 60 yrs old -- a smartly-dressed, distinguished German. He is carrying a bunch of DESIGNER BAGS.

MOM

Okay, *places* everyone. *Places!* I have a big scene for us today.

Cherie and Marie look at each other -- clearly used to this type of routine.

WOLFGANG

Once an actress, always an actress...

Marie and Cherie shoot him a look. They can talk about their mom, but he can't.

MOM

Okay, okay -- this is a "good news" scene. *Good news.* Marie, you stand there, stage left.

CHERIE

Hey, I have some good news, too, Mom!

Mom ignores her, wrapped up in herself.

MOM

Cherie, you go upstairs. Come down when you hear me walk in and yell: *Girls! I have some good news!* That's your cue, okay?

CHERIE

I have some good news, too.

MOM

Okay, we'll do your scene next. Now scoot. Upstairs. Go on.

Cherie walks upstairs, holding her news. Wolfgang stands off to the side. Mom goes outside. Marie takes her place.

A beat. Then Mom bursts in, animated.

MOM (CONT'D)

Girls, *girls!* Come *quick!* I have the most wonderful news!

Marie perks up, theatrical.

MARIE

What is it, Mother dear?

Cherie comes barrelling down the stairs, theatrical.

CHERIE

What's all the commotion about?

Mom glances at Wolfgang. Then she smiles, comes out with it:

MOM

We're moving to *Indonesia!*

A loaded beat. Wolfgang stares at the floor. Marie and Cherie look at each other -- they know this isn't an act.

The air is sucked out of the room. The girls break character.

CHERIE

What?

MARIE

What do you mean?

CHERIE

What do you mean "*we*"?

MOM

Well...

MARIE

You're leaving? You're *leaving* us?

MOM

Nobody's *leaving* anybody. We're a family. We'll always be a family. This is just something we need to do right now.

CHERIE

Why?

Mom looks at Wolfgang. A beat. He bails.

WOLFGANG

I'll...be outside.

He walks out the door, leaving the bags. Cherie looks at the bags, now on the verge of tears.

MOM

You girls are more than welcome to come with.

(half-hearted)

If you want.

MARIE

To *Indonesia*?

MOM

Well... I've talked with your father and you're just as welcome to go and live with him at Aunt Evie's.

CHERIE

And where exactly are we supposed to *sleep* at Aunt Evie's?

MOM

Dad's bought a pull-out sleeper. Top of the line.

The girls look hurt, horrified.

MOM (CONT'D)

Oh, come on... It's not as bad as it sounds.

CHERIE

No, it's worse. Why can't we at least just stay *here*?

MOM

Don't be ridiculous, you're 15 years old. Just last week I told you to get a job, you said you were a *kid*. Today you're a *homemaker*?

CHERIE

I *got* a job! I *got* a job! That's what I've been trying to *tell* you!

MOM

Look, everybody just calm down, okay? This is a *transition*, not a *tragedy*. We're gonna be fine...

CHERIE

Stop saying "*we*"! There's obviously no "*we*" here anymore. There's *you*. There hasn't been any "*we*" since you kicked Dad out for leaving stupid *water rings* on the stupid *furniture*!

MOM

Don't be so dramatic, Cherie. Stop showing off.

CHERIE

Oh, coming from the *actress*?! *Places* everybody! *Places*!

MARIE

(trying to be rational)
Why can't Dad move back home?

MOM

Because this *isn't* his home. Wolfgang and I, we've decided...
(beat)
We're selling the house.

CHERIE

Wolfgang?!

MOM

You girls are more than welcome to
come along... If you want...

Cherie is fuming. Mom looks to Marie. She seems calmer, more
torn between staying or going.

A tense beat. Mom tries to console Cherie.

MOM (CONT'D)

Come on, Cherie, let's do *your*
scene now. Come on... What was it
you wanted to tell me. What's the
good news?

CHERIE

There isn't any.

Cherie walks out of the house. Marie watches her go.

Mom sighs, upset. She fixes her hair, looks to Marie.

MOM

You understand, don't you, baby?

MARIE

You know I can't leave without
Cherie.

Mom nods, she knows. She hugs Marie.

MOM

So... What was this good news? What
did Cherie have to tell me?

MARIE

(shrugs)
It's probably nothing.

PRE-LAP THE SOUND OF GUITARS TUNING, DRUMS BANGING...

EXT. REHEARSAL TRAILER - DAY

We hear music coming from inside. TAMMY AND A FEW TEENAGE
BOYS pick up garbage from around the trailer. They place the
BOTTLES, BRICKS, and RANDOM OBJECTS into milk crates.

INT. REHEARSAL TRAILER - CONTINUOUS

The girls start playing a song. Joan and Cherie sing into the
mic. Kim stands in front of them like a drill sergeant.

JOAN AND CHERIE

*California -- you're so nice.
California -- your paradise.*

Kim waves them off, lays into them.

KIM FOWLEY

*Pig stink! They'll eat you alive
out there! Rock n' roll is tough
music played in tough venues. Men
don't like to see women anywhere
but in their kitchens or on their
knees -- let alone on-stage with
guitars.*

(beat)

*Now buckle up and get ready for
boot camp, babies -- you're gonna
be trained like the Viet fucking
Cong.*

The girls look at each other -- "huh?" Kim shouts outside.

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)

Bring it in!

TAMMY AND THE GUYS from outside filter in, carrying the MILK CRATES FILLED WITH JUNK.

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)

*Okay, filthy pussies, today we have
Heckler's Drill. These degenerates
here are not your fans. They're not
here to tell you how pretty you
look, they don't want your fucking
autographs. They want to hurt you.
They want you to retreat. Do NOT.*

The girls look wearily at the kids holding the milk crates.

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)

*Now move it, move it -- I wanna see
you bitches do the death dance.
Plaaaayy!*

The girls reluctantly kick into the song. Kim makes a "ready-aim-fire!" command to Tammy and the guys.

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)

In-com-iiiiiiiiing!

They start throwing bottles and bricks and garbage -- cautious at first, but with more and more glee.

Kim is running around using a guitar as a shield, showing them how to fight off the enemy.

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)

Dog shit, rat piss, razor blades!

The music sounds terrible as each member periodically stops playing to shield a brick or bottle.

A DOG TURD lands on Sandy's drum. Garbage flies through the air past Cherie. She attempts to sing, clutching the microphone with her eyes squeezed shut.

Joan gets hit, then successfully avoids a beer can, smiles. Lita does the same.

Tammy throws a MILK CARTON that hits Cherie in the face. She stops singing, gives her a death stare. Joan notices.

Another kid throws a SOUP CAN. Cherie swats it out of the air, snarls into the mic. They're getting the hang of it.

The music morphs into a tight version of "Cherry Bomb" and we CUT TO:

INT. KEG PARTY - ORANGE COUNTY - NIGHT

The Runaways are rocking out in the living room of an upper-class suburban house, a party in full swing.

The crowd is mixed: rough and preppy. Kids press against each other, trying to get a better look at the girls.

CHERIE (O.S.)

*I'LL GIVE YA SOMETHING TO LIVE FOR
HAVE YA, GRAB YA TIL YOUR SORE!*

Cherie holds onto the microphone stand, thrusts her hips, trying to figure out her stage persona.

A wasted kid THROWS A BOTTLE and it heads right for Joan. She holds her guitar like a bat and sends the bottle right back in his face.

Joan catches Tammy's eye, who saw the whole thing. She pours a beer over his head. They laugh.

INT. KEG PARTY - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Kim is upstairs in the parents' bedroom, dressed in red leather, a studded collar, and heavy eye make-up.

He sits at the wife's vanity, on the phone, counting a pile of DOLLAR BILLS. He puts the cash in his pocket, shouts over the music.

KIM FOWLEY

I can barely hear you! Yeah,
they're doing a big gig right now!
Killing it!

He flips through a binder full of PRESS PHOTOS of the girls. He holds the receiver to the door -- the music, the yelling.

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)

You hear that? That's the sound of
hormones raging!

C.U. THE PRESS PHOTOS. THE CAMERA GOES FROM GIRL TO GIRL.

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)

Cherie Currie. Cherry bomb. Sex kitten. *Brigitte Bardot* in a trailer park. *Joan Jett*. The rock n' roll heart, street tough brunette. *Sandy West*. Miss California with a joint in her mouth and a chip on her shoulder. *Lita Ford*. The love child of *Sofia Loren* and *Ritchie Blackmore*. You do not wanna fuck with *Lita*.

Just then, a couple of drunk kids barge into the room. A young girl has her top stuck around her head. She falls face down onto the white shag carpet and passes out. The guy just looks down at her while his body rocks back and forth.

Kim doesn't miss a beat.

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)

When do you need the press kits by?

We hear sudden SHOUTING from downstairs.

KID (O.S.)

Cops! Cops!

KIM FOWLEY

(calmly)
No problem, you'll have it then.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - NIGHT

Kids pour out into the street. The girls and Kim are now running, carrying their equipment. Tammy trails behind with Joan's amp. Joan talks to Kim, excited.

JOAN

Hey, hecklers drill really worked. This fucker tossed a bottle and I bashed it right back in his face!

KIM FOWLEY

You girls were doin' the *death* dance tonight. Showed those little pussies how to *cock* fight.

JOAN

Hey, did you get the money before the cops came?

KIM FOWLEY

You played for *free*.

JOAN

What?

KIM FOWLEY

It *costs* money to *make* money in this filthy business. You wanna play living rooms or you wanna pack stadiums?

JOAN

Stadiums.

KIM FOWLEY

Good. 'Cus I just racked up their phone bill booking you a tour overseas.

JOAN

Overseas? *Really* -- when?

KIM FOWLEY

Easy, killer. You need to pay your dues first. Here. On the road. In a van. *Then* come the *jets*.

JOAN

(lights up)
When do we leave?

KIM FOWLEY

We? I don't do the road. I'll talk
to your keepers and --

A SPOTLIGHT shines on them from behind. It's the COPS.

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)

Scatter, you beautiful stray dogs!
Scatter into the night!

And the girls take off running in different directions.

INT. AIRPORT - DAY

Cherie runs through the airport trying to catch her mother before she gets on her flight to Indonesia. She's carrying a large SUN HAT. Marie is lagging behind, trying to keep up.

CHERIE

She just *leaves*? No *goodbye*, no
nothing?

MARIE

You're never around, you're always
at rehearsal. *Wait up*.

They dodge some people, bump into others.

CHERIE

Come on, we'll miss her. She needs
her hat. You know how she gets
about sun burns... She'll *fry* over
there.

MARIE

You don't even know where *there* is.

CHERIE

Like *you* do?

MARIE

It's between Australia and
Singapore, the world's largest
archipelago.

Cherie stops for a second. She doesn't know what an "archipelago" is -- and she had no idea it was so far away.

CHERIE

Australia? It's near *fucking*
Australia!?

Before Marie can answer, Cherie spots her mother who's wearing big, dark sunglasses.

CHERIE (CONT'D)

Mom!

Her mother hears, but puts her head down. She scurries through the security gate without stopping.

Cherie runs after her. But security guards surround her and hold her back.

CHERIE (CONT'D)

Get offa me, that's my *mother!*
She needs her hat! Just let me *talk*
to her! Lemme go!

In the scuffle, the HAT RIPS. But by now Mom has boarded the plane. Cherie gives up, sits on the ground, starts to cry.

In a blast of rage, she *rips the hat in two.*

INT. AUNT EVIE'S HOUSE - DAY

The place is small and cramped. A PILE OF CLOTHES are thrown on a pullout couch. Cherie is frantically packing for the tour, running around, picking up shoes and belts and throwing them into her suitcase.

She pulls a WHITE JUMPSUIT from the closet and shows Marie.

CHERIE

C'I take this?

MARIE

No way, that's my favorite.

CHERIE

Yeah, *right* -- when's the last time you even wore it?

MARIE

Exactly. I save it for special occasions.

(bitchy)

It's not like you're playing the Shrine Auditorium.

Cherie shoots her a look, throws it on the floor.

CHERIE

Forget it.

A beat. Marie feels bad, reconsiders.

She picks it up, puts it in Cherie's suitcase. Cherie smiles. She tries to close the suitcase but it's overstuffed.

Marie SITS ON IT. Cherie zips. Perfect.

AUNT EVIE stands at the window in the kitchen. She looks worried. GRANDMA ONI is oblivious to the commotion, sitting in a rocking chair, reading "Carrie" by Stephen King.

Cherie drags her suitcase by them both. Marie follows with a hanging bag.

CHERIE (CONT'D)

Bye, grandma.

She kisses Grandam Oni on the head. She looks to Aunt Evie.

CHERIE (CONT'D)

What's wrong?

AUNT EVIE

Your father. He didn't come home last night.

Cherie looks out the window.

CHERIE

His car's right there.

AUNT EVIE

His bed hasn't been slept in.

We hear HONKING outside. Cherie leans in to kiss Aunt Evie.

CHERIE

He's a big boy, I'm sure he's fine. I'll call when I get to a phone booth, okay?

Aunt Evie nods, but it's clear she's nervous.

AUNT EVIE

You be safe, okay? And knock 'em dead out there. These kids today, they need a good knocking.

EXT. AUNT EVIE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

A BEAT-UP MOTORHOME idles outside. We see the faces of the Runaways anxiously looking out the window.

SCOTTIE, a roadie with scruffy hair, helps Cherie with her bags. Aunt Evie and Marie stand by the door, giving him a thorough looking over and not liking what they see.

MARIE

Keep an eye on my sister, okay?

Scottie looks at Cherie, smiles.

SCOTTIE

You bet.

Marie makes a face -- "gross." Scottie carries Cherie's bags towards the motorhome.

Joan leans on the hood, smoking a cigarette, a GREEN SQUIRT GUN PUSHED INTO THE FRONT OF HER PANTS.

Cherie hugs Aunt Evie, then Marie.

CHERIE

I love you.

MARIE

I love you too.

Cherie walks off towards Joan. Marie calls after her.

MARIE (CONT'D)

Don't forget the little people.

CHERIE

You're taller!

Marie gets on her tip-toes, smiles.

MARIE

Don't you forget it!

Cherie smiles, walks off, past her father's car --

-- and notices something inside.

She stops, looks closer -- "what the --?"

CHERIE

Dad?!

Lita is now HONKING THE HORN.

Cherie frantically opens the door. Her father rolls out of the car onto the sidewalk. Marie comes running.

A HALF-EMPTY BOTTLE OF JACK DANIELS rolls away from him, rattling down the driveway, towards Joan. She stares at it.

Grandma Oni stands in the doorway.

GRANDMA ONI
Is he dead?

CHERIE
He's passed out.

Cherie pats him on the face. He twitches. There is another HONK from the motorhome.

LITA FORD
Let's go, Currie, we gotta hit the road.

Cherie hesitates for a moment. She looks to her dad, then to Marie, then to Joan.

MARIE
Go. I got it.

CHERIE
You sure?

Marie nods. Cherie hugs her, runs off.

CHERIE (CONT'D)
Thanks, Marie. I owe ya.

MARIE
Yeah. Call, okay?

Cherie nods. Marie reaches down to help her father.

Cherie walks off towards Joan, who is now holding the half-empty BOTTLE OF JACK DANIELS.

They climb into the motorhome and speed off down the road, leaving the suburbs behind.

PRE-LAP "BORN TO BE BAD" BY THE RUNAWAYS AND CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY - DUSK

The motorhome races through an American landscape...

INT. MOTEL 6 - DAY

The girls are weighed down with bags. Sandy puts the key in and unlocks the door to their room. They all walk in, drop their bags, shocked at the tiny size.

There's one queen-sized bed. This is not at all glamorous. This is not what Kim promised.

SANDY

What the fuck?

CHERIE

What, we're supposed to all share one bed?

LITA FORD

Fuckin' *Kim*, man.

Joan walks over to check out the bathroom. It's dingy, but at least there's a bathtub.

JOAN

I'll crash in the tub.

She looks closer and sees a WATER BUG. She stomps on it. Sandy peeks in to take a look, sees the SQUASHED BUG -- "ew!"

SANDY

I'll take the floor.

Robin looks out the window, sees a pool.

ROBIN

Hey, anybody bring a bathing suit?

Sandy looks out the window.

SANDY

I brought my *birthday* suit.

She strips to her bra and panties. Lita laughs, whistles.

LITA FORD

Check out Miss Hawaiian Tropic!

Sandy struts around. The girls crack up.

SANDY

Last one in has to blow Paul Anka!

Lita and Robin strip down. Robin grabs a bottle of Baby Oil. They all run out to the pool.

Joan stays clothed, grabs a backpack, puts on a pair of aviators, and walks out with Cherie.

Cherie sees a PHONE BOOTH outside the lobby.

CHERIE

I'll meet you there, okay? Gotta make a call.

Sandy does a giant cannon ball, just missing Lita. Lita dunks her head, gets on her shoulders, jumps off. Robin slathers on Baby Oil.

Joan sits on the diving board, pulls her SQUIRT GUN and the BOTTLE OF JACK DANIELS from her backpack. She fills the gun with whiskey, then squirts it into her mouth.

INT. PHONE BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

We hear SPLASHING and LAUGHING. Cherie looks around at the dirty, dilapidated surroundings.

CHERIE

It's great, yeah! We each have our own room, there's a huge pool with a wet bar and a waterfall and everything.

MARIE

I wish I was there.

CHERIE

Me too. Next time, for sure. I promise, okay?

MARIE

'Kay.

CHERIE

How'd it go after I left?

MARIE

Grandma Oni keeps asking if Dad's "fulla dope." She's totally gone. But he's gonna be fine.

The girls in the pool start yelling for Cherie.

CHERIE

Shit, they're calling me. We're going to practice. I'll talk to you later, okay?

She hangs up. Cherie goes and plops herself next to Joan by the edge of the pool. She takes off her shoes, rolls her pants, sticks her feet in the water.

Joan points the squirt gun at Cherie, talks like a cowboy.

JOAN

Open up, ya filthy varmint.

Cherie opens her mouth, mock afraid. Joan squirts. Cherie makes a face -- "ew!"

JOAN (CONT'D)

Compliments of your non-alcoholic father.

(beat)

How's he doing?

Cherie nods, smiles, and opens wider. Joan squirts repeatedly. Then takes some for herself.

Sandy and Lita sneak up on Robin who's trying to sunbathe on a raft. They FLIP HER OVER. She screams, they all crack up.

INT. MOTEL 6. LATER.

Joan balances on the back legs of a chair rocking it back and forth against the wall. She talks to Sandy through the closed door of the bathroom while playing with a switch blade.

JOAN

Are you rubbing?

SANDY

It's not working - I don't feel anything.

INT. MOTEL 6. BATHROOM. CONTINUOUS.

Sandy is sitting on the toilet. There are open magazines on the floor beside her sneakers. Naked men and naked woman, teenyboppers stars. She appears to be awkwardly rubbing herself.

SANDY (O.S.)

I think I'm doing it wrong.

JOAN

Think Leaf Garret - Scott Biao.

SANDY

I am - It's not working.

JOAN

Just keep rubbing. How about Farrah Fawcett - everyone's got a crush on Farrah Fawcett.

SANDY (O.S.)

Yeah.

JOAN

Okay, imagine the poster in your brother's room - you can see her nipples sticking out through her bathing suit.

SANDY

I feel something - I feel something!

INT. HOTEL BATHROOM. CONTINUOUS.

Her body seems to vibrate. Her sneaker twists and crumples the magazine page.

INT. MOTEL 6. CONTINUOUS.

Joan throws the knife and it sticks to the wall with a THUD. We can HEAR Sandy making a SOUND of ECSTASY.

Joan LAUGHS.

INT. CLUB - SOMEWHERE ON THE ROAD

Joan is on-stage, doing a sound check.

JOAN

Check. Check. QUEENS OF NOISE.

Sandy pounds on the drums. Joan strums. The camera follows the CORD from Joan's guitar to her amp.

By the amp, we see THE MALE MEMBERS of the headlining band. A BAND MEMBER whispers to a ROADIE. The Roadie giggles, his hand on the cord, ready to pull the plug.

Joan is striking her guitar with total confidence. The band member motions for the roadie to hold off a second. They stop and watch as Joan snarls and leans into the mic.

JOAN (CONT'D)

*WITH A PINCH OF ROCK AND A DOSE OF
RO --*

The roadie PULLS THE PLUG. Joan's guitar goes dead. She looks around, lands on the snickering guys, yells:

JOAN (CONT'D)
Hey, what the fuck?! Plug me back
in!

The roadie now has her cord dangling from the front of his pants, like a limp dick. He grabs it, holds it out.

ROADIE
Come and get it.

BAND MEMBER
Give 'er a *jolt!*

Joan walks over to them, pulls the plug out of his pants.

JOAN
See, I always thought "rock out
with yer cock out" was a stupid
thing to say.

She plugs herself back in.

JOAN (CONT'D)
Asshole.

ANOTHER BAND MEMBER
Watch your mouth, kid, or we'll
have to turn you over to child
services.

JOAN
Fuck you - *old* man!

Offended, he FLINGS HIS LIT CIGARETTE at her, hits her in the face. Joan yells. Sandy hears, looks over. She jumps up from behind the drums, comes over, pushes the guy.

SANDY
What's your fuckin' problem?

He pushes her back. Then Joan kicks him. He readies to throttle her. She attempts to reason with him.

JOAN
I wouldn't, man. It's a lose-lose
situation.

BAND MEMBER
How's that?

JOAN

Well, if you win, you beat up a girl. If you lose, you got beat up by a girl.

SANDY

A teenage girl.

A beat. The roadie breaks in:

HEADLINER'S ROADIE

Sound check *cancel*ed. You'll have one if you ever get to headline. Now go to your rooms, do your fuckin' homework or something.

Joan gives him the finger.

JOAN

Like we *need* a sound check, you prog rock *dick*.

SANDY

Pretty soon you'll be opening for us!

BAND MEMBER

Opening our *legs*, maybe!

INT. BACKSTAGE VENUE - BATHROOM - LATER

HEAVY PROG ROCK MUSIC pounds in the background. Cherie and Scottie are looking at each other. He unbuttons her vest and touches her breasts. He pulls her close, they make out.

And then -- A KNOCKING.

It gets louder and more aggressive.

JOAN (O.C)

Come on, open up. I really gotta pee.

CHERIE

Shit!

She laughs. Scottie kisses her, shutting her up.

INT. BACKSTAGE VENUE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Joan is BANGING hard. Sandy turns the corner.

SANDY
You still haven't peed?

JOAN
I really gotta go!

Sandy drags her down the hall by the arm. She looks up to see a piece of paper taped to the door that says HEADLINER DRESSING ROOM.

Sandy puts her ear to the door. Silence. She opens it --
"come on!"

INT. HEADLINER'S DRESSING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

There is garbage, pornos, liquor, half-eaten food, and bottles everywhere. Lewd graffiti covers the walls. On the table is a large box of Twinkies, Devil Dogs, Ring Dings, a jar of peanut butter, a loaf of bread, and some boxes of tea.

SANDY
Hey, those kooks got better food
than we did.

Sandy grabs the Twinkies, the bread, and a porno.

Joan admires a VINTAGE LES PAUL GUITAR.

Sandy finds a PLASTIC CUP, tosses the contents on the floor, holds out the now-empty cup.

SANDY (CONT'D)
Here, pee in this.

But Joan has already pulled down her pants and is PEEING ALL OVER THE LES PAUL.

Sandy hoots and hollers -- "holy shit!" She can't stop laughing.

They hear VOICES COMING DOWN THE HALL -- "uh-oh!" Sandy drags Joan out the room and into the hallway, her pants still half-way down.

JOAN
Filthy dogs!!

They run back to their room. Cherie and Scottie come stumbling out of the bathroom in a state of undress. Scottie tries to make like nothing happened.

SCOTTIE

Let's go, girls, we're leaving in
ten!

Scottie walks off. Joan looks at Cherie. An awkward beat.

Cherie pulls a HANDFUL OF PILLS from her pocket. She shows them to Sandy and Joan.

CHERIE

Up or down?

Joan points to the sky, opens her mouth. Cherie drops a BLACK BEAUTY in.

SANDY

Down, girl!

Cherie selects a WHITE QUAAALUDE from her palm, drops it in Sandy's mouth.

EXT. VENUE. PARKING LOT. NIGHT. CONTINUOUS.

Joan, Cherie and Sandy climb into the motorhome. It pulls away into the night.

WE HEAR DRUMSTICKS CLICKING. CUE MUSIC AND LAUNCH INTO A MONTAGE OF THE GIRLS PLAYING VARIOUS SMALL TOWN GIGS. THEY'RE GETTING BETTER AND BETTER, TOUGHER AND TOUGHER. MIXED IN ARE VARIOUS PRESS CLIPPINGS AND PHOTOS. THE BAND IS TAKING OFF.

EXT. VENUE - PARKING LOT - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The montage ends as Joan, Cherie, Lita, and Sandy climb into the motorhome, exhausted. They pull away into the night.

INT. MOTEL LOBBY - DAWN

Joan looks beat up and hung over. The MOTEL ATTENDANT watches her as she talks on the phone to Kim.

KIM FOWLEY (O.S.)

I hear you're tearing the place
apart.

JOAN

The crowds've been great, man,
yeah, we're rockin' it, but we're
runnin' outta cash.

KIM FOWLEY

Now's a bad time, Joanie. I'm here
with an A&R scout. Could be big.
Just keep the dogs in line, okay?
Things're happening -- *trust me.*

INT. KIM FOWLEY'S PLACE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

The table is POUNDING against the wall. Kim is wearing a skirt, HAVING SEX WITH A GIRL on the kitchen table as he holds the phone in the crook of his neck.

The girl is wearing nothing but a MERCURY RECORDS t-shirt.

KIM FOWLEY

You know I can't come, Joan. I get
vertigo when I travel and my gimpy
leg acts up. But I'll see about
getting a road manager out --

CRASH!

The TABLE COLLAPSES, sending them to the floor. The phone dies. Kim looks the girl in the eye.

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)

Don't worry, baby -- *you I can come*
for.

She moans, pulls off her t-shirt, pulls him towards her.

INT. MOTORHOME - NIGHT (MOVING)

It's raining. The girls are sleeping, or trying to sleep. Cherie has a pillow against a window. Joan is in the front seat, working on a song.

BARRY MANILOW'S "MANDY" comes on the radio. Scottie quickly turns it to a rock station.

CHERIE

Hey, put that back.

Scottie shoots her a look -- "huh?" Joan turns around.

JOAN

Are you fucking kidding me?

LITA FORD

(groggy)
Off!

CHERIE

Come on, I like that song.

Scottie shakes his head, turns it back. Joan makes throw-up sounds as Cherie looks out the window, mouthing the words.

LITA FORD

Off with his head!

Cherie ignores them, in her own world. Raindrops beat against the windows, illuminated by the passing headlights...

INT. ROLLERSKATING RINK - NIGHT

The RAINDROPS morph into the HEADS OF ROLLERSKATING KIDS lit up by moving colored lights. The girls are on stage. Joan belts out "YOU DRIVE ME WILD." Cherie dances, sweaty, manic.

A crowd forms around them as more and more kids stop skating to watch. *Man, these girls can really play now.* The guys wanna fuck them, the girls wanna be them.

The song ends to wild applause and an announcement is heard:

D.J.

Last song of the night, roller boys
and girls. Come alive *next* Saturday
for more bands and more...f-f-*fun*.

The house lights go on -- too bright for everyone's eyes. Empty cups and candy wrappers are all over the floor. In the dark corners we see kids making out.

Sandy is pressed against a locker by a muscular looking guy. Robin is under a table with her top open; a tanned, blonde guy with a mustache is feeling her up. Lita is necking with the older D.J.

Joan is straddling a guy, smoking a joint, right next to Cherie, who is also making out with a guy. Joan taps Cherie on the shoulder.

SLO-MO: Joan inhales, leans close to Cherie, and blows smoke onto her lips. Cherie reluctantly opens her mouth. Smoke curls out of Joan's mouth and into Cherie's.

Joan moves closer, their lips touch. Cherie is cautious at first, then we see her tongue. Joan touches her face, pulls her closer. They kiss deeper, forgetting all about the boys.

INT. CHEAP MOTEL - NIGHT - LATER

The Sweet's "Love Is Like Oxygen" plays throughout this scene, shot through the fucked-up P.O.V. of Joan and Cherie. They're wearing roller-skates.

A blurry hallway rocks from side to side... The ceiling lights bloom... Roller-skates fight their way on the patterned carpet...

Cherie's back is pushed up against a hotel door with a THUMP. The camera moves closer in on Cherie's face and the image goes blurry...

We hear VOICES of the guests woken up on the other side of the door... Cherie looks up to the room number above her head... Wrong room... She giggles, grabs Joan...

CHERIE

Come on!

Joan laughs, they stumble off, holding hands...

The pattern in the carpet races through frame...

Cherie falls to the ground... A key falls...

Close-on an unstable hand inserting a key. Fade to black.

Close-on a hand on the light switch. A jittery camera pans to the brightly illuminated hotel room.

Precarious... a hand pushes a top up to expose a breast...

Unsteady... a bible on the night stand...

Tottering... white sheets unravel around a leg...

Weak... Toes curl up... roller-skate wheels spin...

Agitation... streaks of light...

A quiver... Cherie's mouth opens...

INT. CHEAP MOTEL - MORNING

Whatever clothes they were wearing the night before are scattered all over the floor. Cherie is sleeping. Joan is in the messy bathroom, talking to Kim.

KIM FOWLEY (O.S.)

I got some bad news, kid.

Joan walks sadly through the bathroom door, stepping over a pair of roller-skates. She wakes up Cherie.

JOAN

I got some bad news, kid...

Cherie wipes sleep from her eyes, groggy.

CHERIE

What's up?

Joan shakes her head, upset.

JOAN

Fuckin' Kim, man. He *snaked* us.

CHERIE

What? What do you mean?

JOAN

'Member how he was all, 'You gotta pay your dues, that's what it takes in this business, we're gonna get a record deal, blah-fuckin'-blah'?

CHERIE

Yeah.

Cherie sits up, concerned now.

Joan opens the blinds. Light floods the room. She jumps on the bed and *explodes*:

JOAN

Well, he did it, man! That Frankenstein-lookin' motherfucker *did* it!

CHERIE

What?

JOAN

Mercury records, baby! *Mercury fuckin' records!!*

CHERIE

Shut the fuck up -- we got *signed?!!*

Joan jumps off the bed, goes to the closet, starts throwing clothes in a suitcase.

Cherie sits up, realizes she's naked. She looks around the room, sees the clothes on the floor, remembers what happened last night. Embarrassed, she pulls a sheet over her.

JOAN

Come on, get your little ass up, we leave for Hollywood in an hour! I'm gonna go tell the girls.

Joan opens the door to find Scottie standing there.

SCOTTIE

Any bags to go down?

Joan plants a huge kiss on him, runs past him down the hall.

Scottie looks in and sees Cherie jumping up and down on the bed, excited, the sheet billowing like a cape.

INT. MERCURY RECORDS OFFICE - HOLLYWOOD - DAY

The walls of the office are covered in GOLD RECORDS. There is a stack of LEGAL PAPERS on a desk. Kim talks with a RECORD EXECUTIVE.

KIM FOWLEY

Yeah, I was gonna form a band of *dwarves*, you know, but their hands were too small. They couldn't hold their instruments.

RECORD EXECUTIVE

Well, these girls can certainly hold their instruments.

KIM FOWLEY

And their *liquor*.

The exec smiles. Joan sits at the desk signing the contract. She looks up. Flash bulbs go off.

KIM FOWLEY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Girls nowadays, they don't have any role models. This band is self-empowerment, man -- Aphrodite, Cleopatra, Eurydice!

Sandy signs the contract and sends a pair of DRUMSTICKS SPINNING IN THE AIR. Flash bulbs go off.

KIM FOWLEY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

No more second-class status, sitting at concerts with asshole boyfriends who worship bands from a Popular Mechanics evaluation of their *amplifiers*.

Cherie signs the contract. She has a mischievous grin.
Flash bulbs go off.

The Runaways stand together around the desk for a group photo with the Record Executive. Kim grins, wearing a T-shirt that reads KING HYSTERIA. Flash bulbs go off.

KIM FOWLEY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

The Runaways have got the most
chance of any group I've seen... To
do what The Beatles did. To tear
this world apart.

The girls attack and hug Kim. Cherie jumps up into his arms.
More flash-bulbs...

CUE MUSIC AND LAUNCH INTO A CELEBRATORY MONTAGE: DRINKS,
DRUGS, DANCING, SEX... THE GIRLS OWN THE NIGHT... THEY'RE A
FAMILY NOW... AND KIM IS THEIR DISTORTED FATHER FIGURE...

CHERIE AND JOAN GO TO A TATTOO PARLOR... THEY'RE DRUNK, THEY
HOLD EACH OTHERS HANDS...

THE MONTAGE ENDS WITH JOAN AND CHERIE ON THE BEACH AS NIGHT
TURNS TO DAWN.

EXT. BEACH - DAWN

Joan sits on the sand and lights a cigarette. She hands it to
Cherie, then lights another one for herself.

She pulls up her t-shirt and reveals a gauze bandage. She
peels it off and we see a tattoo of a JET AIRPLANE on her
pelvis.

Cherie sits down beside her. She peels off a bandage from her
shoulder. It's a tattoo of TWO RED CHERRIES.

They both stare into the orange sun peeking over the water's
edge. They sit in silence.

In a WIDE SHOOT, they look small in the expansive vista.

INT. JOAN'S HOME - BATHROOM - DAY

We see a box of NICE N' EASY BLUE-BLACK HAIR DYE. Joan's
sister sits on the sink, watching, fascinated, as Joan dyes
her hair. She's wearing underwear and a tight black t-shirt
that says "SKIN TIGHT SKIN."

On the floor is a magazine with SUZI QUATRO on the cover, clad in black leather, posing with a bass guitar like it's a weapon.

JOAN'S LITTLE SISTER
What's your shirt say?

JOAN
S-K-I-N T-I-G-H-T S-K-I-N.
Skin. Tight. Skin. Say it.

JOAN'S LITTLE SISTER
Skin tight skin!

JOAN
Yeah!

JOAN'S LITTLE SISTER
(singing)
SKIN TIGHT SKIN! SKIN TIGHT SKIN!

JOAN
(laughing)
Shhh.

She runs out of the room shouting:

JOAN'S LITTLE SISTER
SKIN TIGHT SKIN! SKIN TIGHT SKIN!

Joan washes the dye out of hair, pulls on her leather pants, takes out a pair of new platform boots from under her bed. She zips them up.

She takes her guitar and puts it around her neck. She looks at herself in the mirror, posing, adjusting the guitar until it looks just right. *Tough.*

She takes the guitar off, walks into the kitchen, reaches into the fridge and takes out a bottle of milk. She closes the door and notices --

FIVE MESSAGES FROM TAMMY stuck to the door.

INSERT MESSAGE: Joanie, Tammy called.

INSERT MESSAGE: Tammy called again. Call the poor girl back.

JOAN'S MOM walks in. She seems pretty cool. She looks at Joan's NEWLY-DYED BLACK HAIR. Then points to the messages.

JOAN'S MOM
She called again today.

JOAN
It's nothing, she's fine.

Joan's mom nods. She knows better than to get involved.

JOAN'S MOM
You hungry?

Joan shakes her head. A beat.

JOAN
You didn't say anything about my hair.

JOAN'S MOM
What am I gonna say?

Just then, Joan's little sister comes running in, singing, her hair and face is now COVERED WITH BLACK HAIR DYE.

JOAN'S LITTLE SISTER
Skin tight skin!

She plays air guitar, shakes her hips.

INT. AUNT EVIE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Cherie is sitting at the kitchen table buttering some toast. She looks strung out.

Marie walks in wearing her PUP N' TACO UNIFORM. She's very excited, carrying a PASSPORT, a JAPANESE/ENGLISH DICTIONARY, and TWO MATCHING KIMONOS.

She drops the passport on the table, models the Kimono. She puts her hands together, bows to Cherie.

MARIE
Domo arigato!

Cherie looks up -- "huh?"

MARIE (CONT'D)
That means "thank you very much" in Japanese.

Cherie forces a smile. Something is on her mind. She goes back to buttering her toast, avoiding Marie's gaze.

MARIE (CONT'D)
I was thinking maybe I could do everyone's hair and makeup on the tour. Waddaya think?

CHERIE

(shrugs)

Everybody kinda does their own hair
and make-up, ya know?

MARIE

Yeah... Okay... Well, I also had
this other idea about making tour
bags for everyone, like distressed
black leather with their names on
'em in metal studs or something.
You know, like biker bags.

Cherie glances up from her toast. Her look says it all. Marie
drops the kimono.

MARIE (CONT'D)

I'm not coming, am I? I'm not going
to Japan.

CHERIE

I didn't say that.

MARIE

We're *twins*, Cherie, you don't have
to say it.

(makes telepathy gesture)

I can hear you.

CHERIE

Come on... Nobody else is bringing
their family. Kim says we don't
have the cash. And we don't need
the distraction.

MARIE

But I wouldn't *be* a distraction.
I'd be a *help*.

CHERIE

I know. I know but --

MARIE

You *promised*.

Cherie stares at her toast. She cuts it in half.

MARIE (CONT'D)

So *what* then? I'm supposed to stay
here? Again? Making tacos, playing
nurse, taking out all the garbage?

Cherie shrugs. She looks at the clock -- "uh-oh."

CHERIE

Shit, I gotta go. I'm gonna be late.

Marie shakes her head, disappointed, pissed off. Cherie reaches into her pocket, pulls out something, puts it on the plate in front of Marie's chair.

She picks up her bag and walks out the door. Marie watches her go, then looks at her plate.

Cherie has left her A FEW QUAALUDES.

Marie picks them up and hurls them at the door.

INT. REHEARSAL TRAILER - DAY

The girls look tired and sweaty, on edge.

CHERIE

Robin, if you can't sing in tune, stop singing.

ROBIN

I *am* singing in tune. If you got your timing right, it would sound fine.

Lita kicks the shit out of an amplifier. Sandy throws her drumsticks to the wall. Joan doesn't flinch. She gulps down a Dr. Pepper.

JOAN

If everyone's done with their hissy fits can we get it together and get it right? The sooner we nail it, the sooner we can leave.

Cherie steps away from the microphone.

CHERIE

I'm taking a break.

LITA FORD

Again?

Kim walks into the trailer. He points his long, skinny finger at them, wiggling it at Cherie.

KIM FOWLEY

No you're not. You dogs wanna stay up all night, eating pussy, sucking cock, chewing Quaaludes, that's fine. But not until you get this song down. Now take it from after the guitar solo: One! Two! Three!

He snaps his fingers. Joan's blood-stained fingers attack the strings of the guitar and the girls kick into "NEON ANGELS."

Kim jumps around in his dirty long sleeved t-shirt, doing an obscene derelict dance around the room. He shouts over the music in a British accent.

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)

All you hideous souls, we shall not grow old and horrid and dreadful!

Cherie laughs, loses her place. The song sputters to a stop.

Kim stops dancing, looks at Cherie, dead serious.

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)

What are you laughing at? You think you can sing like that in front of people? In front of *customers*?
(to everyone)

You bitches need to start thinking with your like *men*. No *snips*, no *snails*, no *puppy dog tails* -- men wanna *fuck*! Men want *this*!

He points at Cherie's crotch.

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)

Filthy pussy! And you're gonna give it to 'em. You're gonna put it in their faces just to break their fucking *hearts*!

Cherie yawns, she seems particularly tired of this routine.

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)

What's wrong, Cherie, are you tired?

CHERIE

Yeah.

He strokes her hair, tender.

KIM FOWLEY

Yeah? Are you *bored*?

CHERIE

Yeah, actually.

KIM FOWLEY

Well, guess what? You're not *allowed* to be tired. You're not *permitted* to be bored. You're an *employee*. You are my *property*, and you'll do as I say or you can go flip tacos with your better-looking sister.

CHERIE

Fuck you, Kim. I'm losing my voice. I'm taking a break.

KIM FOWLEY

Hey! News flash, diva: This ain't the *opera*. They're not coming to hear your *chops*.

(to Sandy)

They're not coming to hear you *bang* your *drum*.

(to everyone)

We are in the music *business*. You wanna be artists, cut off your fucking ears and mail 'em to your boyfriends. You wanna be rock stars, *listen up*.

The girls look insulted, especially Joan.

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)

Now, Cherie's lack of *greatness* -- her lack of *rock n' roll authority* -- is getting in the way of our product. What *is* that product?

Kim blatantly points to all the girls' crotches.

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)

Sex. Violence. Revolt.

He takes off his shirt.

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)

Now pay attention, I'm gonna teach you *prima donnas* how to think with your cocks.

He strips down to his BAGGY UNDERWEAR and closes the door on us.

FADE TO BLACK:

INT. AUNT EVIE'S HOUSE - DAY

Cherie irons a WHITE SHEET beside a half-packed suitcase.

The phone rings. She picks it up. The iron sits on the sheet.

CHERIE

Hello.

KIM FOWLEY

Cherie, I just wanted to tell you that you're doing a good job. If you listen to me, you can really become a star.

CHERIE

I'm trying my best, Kim.

KIM FOWLEY

I know you are. Listen, I'm calling to tell you that a photographer is coming to your house in twenty minutes to take pictures for a Japanese magazine.

CHERIE

Twenty minutes?! Is everyone meeting here?

KIM FOWLEY

Solo shots, it's just you for now. They'll get the others later. Be ready, okay?

CHERIE

Sure.

He hangs up the phone. Cherie sees that the iron has BURNED A HOLE into the sheet.

EXT. AUNT EVIE'S HOUSE - FRONT YARD - LATER

Cherie is in BLACK UNDERWEAR AND A SMALL VEST, WEARING A COWBOY HAT, leaning on the garage door. TWO PHOTOGRAPHERS speak Japanese to each other.

Cherie looks at them blankly. They treat her like a prop, moving her arm, her leg.

CHERIE

Hey, watch it. My arm's connected to me, ya know?

They smile, but clearly don't understand her. The photographer gestures for her to turn around with her back towards the camera and look over her shoulder.

She doesn't get it. He turns her body to face the wall and turns her head towards the camera.

CHERIE (CONT'D)
Okay, I get it.

She throws them a sultry look over her shoulders.

CHERIE (CONT'D)
Like that?

They nod, excited, but in a clinical way. They make motions with their hands to do more.

The NEIGHBOR'S BOY looks out from his window.

JAPANESE PHOTOGRAPHER
(in a Japanese accent)
Good -- good.

Cherie is now laying on the grass with the photographer standing on top of her.

She closes her eyes and opens her mouth a crack. She's getting into it. He motions to his assistant to open her legs wider. He takes her foot and drags it along the grass.

Just then, Grandma Oni comes limping out of the house with a CARTON OF EGGS. She looks on, horrified, and begins THROWING THE EGGS at the photographers.

CHERIE
Grandma! What are you doing?
They're taking pictures for a
magazine!

Neighbors stop and stare.

GRANDMA ONI
Perverts! You *perverts*!

The photographer keeps shooting, avoiding the eggs.

CHERIE
(to the photographer)
Did you get everything you needed?

But they don't understand her.

CHERIE (CONT'D)

Grandma!

A small crowd has gathered. The photographers hustle to get into the car. Grandma Oni waves Cherie into the house and shuts the door behind them.

INT. JOAN'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - DAY

Joan sits in a tub full of murky water, smoking a cigarette, re-reading lyrics she's scribbled on a sheet of paper. She sings softly as the ink starts to smear down the page.

JOAN

*Don't wanna leave you again, baby
But ya know I have to someday
Don't wanna be alone again, baby
But I know we found our own way*

She takes a drag from her cigarette and continues...

JOAN (CONT'D)

*You know it's really hard on me
To have to turn an' wave good-bye*

Joan looks around the bathroom. She seems like a little girl on the verge of adulthood, scared to take the leap into the big, wide world.

As she submerges her head, lyrics, and cigarette under water, the ACTUAL SONG FADES UP...

JOAN (CONT'D)

*You know I get so scared inside
When I come back you won't want me*

We see Joan's small figure floating in a vast body of water as the song continues to play...

INT. AEROPLANE - JAPAN BOUND

Joan and Cherie are sleeping on each other. We hear the captain speak in a Japanese accent.

CAPTAIN

Good morning, this is your captain speaking. Today's weather is ten degrees and cloudy. Thank you for choosing Asian Airways. Come fly with us again.

The Captain repeats himself in Japanese.

Scottie turns around and taps Joan and Cherie.

SCOTTIE
Wake up, we're almost there.

They look up, groggy.

SCOTTIE (CONT'D)
Hey, if you're holding any drugs,
get rid of 'em. Now.

Joan and Cherie look at each other for a moment -- then go into panic mode. Cherie goes through her hand luggage, Joan springs from her seat and heads for the bathroom.

INT. AEROPLANE - BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

They're crammed together, standing above the toilet. Cherie pops a pill and stares at another three in her hand. She contemplates dropping them or taking them.

Joan holds some coke in an open foil wrapper.

JOAN
You first.

CHERIE
Together. On three.

The stewardess comes over the intercom in a Japanese accent.

STEWARDESS (O.S.)
Please take your seats now, buckle
up, we're preparing for landing.

CHERIE AND JOAN
One, two, *three*.

Joan begins sniffing her coke. Cherie begins popping the pills with handfuls of water.

JOAN
(wired)
I can't do anymore.

Cherie finishes off Joan's coke.

STEWARDESS (O.S.)
(over the intercom)
We have now begun our final descent
in Tokyo. We'll be on the ground
shortly.

CHERIE

We won't!

Their laughter is drowned out by the roar of the engine.

INT. SUSHI RESTAURANT - JAPAN - NIGHT

We're at a celebratory dinner welcoming the Runaways to Japan. It is a banquet fit for queens. Women in beautifully embroidered kimonos serve exquisitely-prepared sushi platters that look more like pieces of artwork than food.

The camera moves around the table, catching snippets of conversations.

The band sit at a large table among RECORD COMPANY EXECUTIVES, JOURNALISTS, and FANS.

A CAMERAMAN filming on a super 8 camera is constantly moving around the table.

JAPANESE PROMOTOR

A toast to The Runaways first
televised show to over *1 million*
Japanese homes!

The girls are giddy. They cheer and clink their sake glasses. Sandy makes a face at the taste.

SANDY

Hey, you guys got any beer over
here?

Lita looks at the raw fish.

LITA FORD

How 'bout a *stove?*

Sandy laughs. Lita nibbles on some noodles while a record company executive talks to her. She nods along, clearly unable to understand him.

LITA FORD (CONT'D)

Yeah, me too!

The camera moves past them. Joan and Cherie look down at the foreign food placed in front of them. Cherie pokes at hers with a chopstick. It looks alive.

CHERIE

I will if you will.

JOAN
I'll eat it.

Joan puts the sushi on her tongue, debates swallowing.

CHERIE
Ew!

She swallows, makes a face, squirms in her seat.

JOAN
Man, that is *nasty*.

They are interrupted by the cameraman, who is filming Cherie relentlessly -- probing the camera inches away from her face. She smiles, but looks a little unprepared for all the intense attention.

A JAPANESE JOURNALIST pulls up a seat beside Cherie.

JAPANESE JOURNALIST
Do you like Japanese food?

CHERIE
Yes, very much.

JAPANESE JOURNALIST
What is your favorite?

Cherie looks to Joan. They have clearly not touched their food. Joan points to a piece of sushi resembling a tongue. Cherie points to the WASABI.

CHERIE
That one.

The journalist takes note, laughs.

The camera moves over to Robin -- she smiles, holds up a peace sign.

Two young SCHOOLGIRLS peek their heads around the partition.

CHERIE (CONT'D)
Hello?

JOAN
Do you want some sea urchin!

The girls sit down at the table. They are star-struck and shy. The taller of the two HANDS CHERIE A COMB. Cherie reluctantly takes it.

CHERIE

Er, thanks.

Thinking it's a gift, she puts it in her pocket. But the schoolgirl gestures for her to comb her hair with it. She takes an envelope out of her bag. The envelope says "SANDY WEST" on it. She opens it and shows Cherie and Joan what's inside.

SANDY'S BLONDE HAIR.

Joan and Cherie recoil -- "gross!"

JOAN

Hair? You're collecting hair?

The schoolgirls nod. Cherie and Joan laugh. The girls laugh along with them. The other schoolgirl hands Joan a comb.

JOAN (CONT'D)

Sure, I'll do it.

She runs the comb through her hair, making a bit of a show out of it. The schoolgirls giggle with excitement.

The record executive interrupts. He puts a Runaways album in front of Cherie and hands her a marker. She smiles and autographs the cover.

Scottie shows up with a stack of JAPANESE MAGAZINES. He passes them out to the girls.

Joan picks it up and sees that THE RUNAWAYS ARE ON THE COVER!

JOAN (CONT'D)

Checkitout!

CHERIE

(screaming in excitement)

Ahhhhh -- we got the cover!

LITA FORD

Bitchin'!

Sandy kisses the cover, beams.

JOAN

Fuckin' beautiful, man!

The crowd goes wild. Flashbulbs go off.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - JAPAN - LATER

The room is big and bright yellow. A variety of RECORD SINGLES are thrown all over the bed.

Joan drops the needle on a small portable record player, talks into the phone.

JOAN

Here it is, Kim.

She puts the receiver up to the speaker.

The Arrows' "I Love Rock N' Roll" plays:

THE ARROWS

*I saw him dancing there
by the record machine
I knew she must have been about 17
The beat was going strong
Playing my favorite song
And I could tell it wouldn't be
long till she was with me
Yeah with me
And i could tell it wouldn't be
long till she was with me
Yeah with me
Singin' I love rock and roll
So put - -*

CHERIE (O.S.)

(yelling)

Will you take that shit off!

Joan puts the receiver back to her ear.

JOAN

Waddaya think?

KIM FOWLEY (O.S.)

I like it.

JOAN

That *is* a fuckin' hit, man. *Trust* me, we gotta cover it.

CHERIE (O.S.)

I SAID TAKE THE SHIT OFF - I'M NOT DOING IT!

INT. HOTEL BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

We see Cherie from the waist up. She's wearing a WHITE CORSET, practicing a complicated move.

She twirls her microphone around both thighs, trying to make it pop up between her legs. She flubs it, the mic falls.

CHERIE

Shit.

She tries again and hits herself in the head.

CHERIE (CONT'D)

Dogshit!

CUT BACK TO JOAN, OUTSIDE THE DOOR, ON THE PHONE.

KIM FOWLEY (O.S.)

Are you becoming one with Japan?

Joan smirks.

JOAN

Well I dunno know - I learned how to use chop sticks.

KIM FOWLEY (O.S.)

That's my girl.

A fork sits in a half eaten plate with a pair of chopsticks thrown on the floor.

KIM FOWLEY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I need you to keep it together there for me.

JOAN

Yeah. Yeah, okay.

Joan hangs up the phone. She looks at the record and takes the needle off.

Then hears a LOUD BANG coming from the bathroom.

She peeks through the door, sees Cherie in the corset with the cord wrapped around her leg.

We now see her whole outfit: A WHITE CORSET ON-TOP AND BLACK UNDERWEAR WITH BLACK FISHNET STOCKINGS HELD UP WITH GARTERS.

Joan snickers.

JOAN (CONT'D)
What the hell are you wearing?

CHERIE
I'm thinking with my cock.

JOAN
(laughs)
Boner, man.

CHERIE
I think I'm gonna wear it.

JOAN
Where? To the strip club?

Cherie tries again with cord, misses.

CHERIE
Fuck this shit!

Joan plops down on the bed.

JOAN
You're gonna get us arrested.
(smiling)
You do look kinda cute, though.

CHERIE
Sexy. No?

JOAN
Yeah, if the rock star thing
doesn't work out all you need's a
porn name and you'll be ready for
the peep show circuit.

Cherie throws the mic at her -- "hardy har."

EXT. VENUE - BACK ALLEY - NIGHT

Security escorts the band to a CADILLAC LIMO. The girls run to the vehicle wearing Kimonos over their stage clothing.

Cherie's kimono flies open and the kids get a close-up peek at the WHITE CORSET underneath. It's absolute mayhem. Kids surround the car, taking pictures.

Police attack kids with WATER HOSES. They fly in all directions.

The limo pulls away. Cherie looks at the crowd, admiring the sea of kids WEARING T-SHIRTS WITH HER FACE ON THEM.

CHERIE

Jesus, look at their shirts.

Cherie opens the window a crack. The crowd goes insane and tries to grab her. She touches their fingers, sending them into ecstasy.

Lita, obviously jealous, rolls up the window.

Joan shakes her head in amusement as the crowd attacks, rocking the limo back and forth. The driver panics and lurches forward.

It seems as if hundreds of hands are about to flip them over. The girls become seriously scared.

SANDY

Hey bro, can't you get us the fuck outta here?

LIMO DRIVER.

(heavy accent)

Please to remain calm. I trying to get through crowd not hurt any body.

The limo lurches forward. They are almost out of the alley.

JOAN

(nonchalant)

Do you think if we throw them Cherie, they'll leave us alone?

They all laugh, including Cherie.

The limo finally makes it's way out of the alley, turning onto the street.

On the wall of the building we see a HUGE BILLBOARD OF CHERIE advertising the upcoming show.

INT. CHERIE'S ROOM - HOTEL - JAPAN

Music blasts as Cherie dances on the bed wearing her corset. The camera pulls back to reveal Scottie laying half-naked, drinking vodka from the bottle, watching her put on a show for him. He's loving it and so is Cherie.

The phone RINGS.

INT. AUNT EVIE'S HOUSE - DAD'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Marie holds the phone, sitting by her sick father. He looks terrible.

INT. CHERIE'S ROOM - HOTEL - JAPAN - CONTINUOUS

Cherie finally picks up the receiver, shouts over the music.

CHERIE

Yeah.

MARIE

Hello? Cherie, can you hear me?

CHERIE

What?

MARIE

It's me. Marie. Dad's sick. You gotta come home.

CHERIE

Who?

MARIE

Dad. He's sick. You gotta come home, okay? Turn the music down.

CHERIE

*Dad who? I don't know any dads.
(to Scottie)
Do you know any dads?*

Scottie shakes his head. Cherie yells into the phone.

CHERIE (CONT'D)

Sorry, babe, nobody knows any dads here. Try back later.

Cherie hangs up the phone, takes a big gulp of vodka, keeps on dancing.

INT. AUNT EVIE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Marie stares at the phone -- "what the hell?" She tries Cherie back. But the phone just rings and rings.

INT. CHERIE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Cherie yanks the phone out of the wall. Scottie laughs, unhooks her garter.

INT. BACK STAGE VENUE - JAPAN - NIGHT

EXTREME CLOSE ON: Joan taping her pant leg tightly around her calf. She rips the tape with her teeth. She puts on a pair of leather platforms and pulls up the zipper.

The camera spins up to the ceiling to the blooming lights.

PRE-LAP "CHERRY BOMB" AND CUT TO:

INT. STAGE - JAPAN - CONTINUOUS

THE DEAFENING SOUND OF 20,000 SCREAMING FANS.

LIGHTS FLARE THE IMAGE. THE PERFORMANCE IS SHOT IN SUPER CLOSE-UP'S:

A HEAD SWING.

A BLEEDING FINGER STRUMS THE GUITAR.

A PELVIS GYRATES.

CHERIE'S MANIC EYES DART IN ALL DIRECTIONS.

THE AUDIENCE GOES CRAZY.

CHERIE SINGS WITH ROCK N' ROLL AUTHORITY -- KIM WOULD BE PROUD.

CHERIE
*YOUR DEAD END DREAMS
 DON'T MAKE YOU SMILE*

A SILVER PLATFORM BOOT POUNDS THE STAGE FLOOR.

SWEAT POURS DOWN JOAN'S EYES.

SPIT SPRAYS OUT OF CHERIE'S MOUTH.

CHERIE (CONT'D)
*I'LL GIVE YA SOMETHING TO LIVE FOR
 HAVE YA, GRAB YA TIL YOUR SORE!*

We pull out to reveal Cherie wearing her WHITE CORSET, BLACK FISHNET STOCKINGS, AND GARTERS.

She toys provocatively with her microphone, wrapping the cord around her leg in one fluid motion, then catching it between her legs -- just like she practiced.

She gyrates her hips, sings with total sexual abandon.

CHERIE (CONT'D)
 HELLO DADDY, HELLO MOM
 I'M YOUR CH CH CH CH CH
 CHERRY BOMB
 HELLO WORLD I'M YOUR WILD GIRL
 I'M YOUR CH CH CH CH CH
 CHERRY BOMB

Cherie opens her legs and thrusts her pelvis towards the crowd. She embodies the bad girl she sings about. She is the Cherry Bomb. The crowd seems as if it will swallow her up.

Her movements switch to slow motion. She seems more desperate now. *She is no longer singing the song, but the song still plays in real time.*

AUDIENCE
 CHERRY BOMB! CHERRY BOMB!

A sea of JAPANESE SCHOOL GIRLS wave their arms in adoration. Cherie throws her head back in ecstasy, laughing -- a goddess among mortals. Her eyes roll back in her sockets.

INT. BACK STAGE - VENUE - LATER THAT NIGHT

Cherie looks at her sweaty reflection in the mirror. She's totally strung out. She pops a pill, splashes water on her face, stares into her eyes.

Sandy is crushing some black beauties on a table against the wall.

She hears TAPPING AND BANGING on a frosted glass window. There are a bunch of KIDS OUTSIDE trying to get their attention, waving pens and pictures of Cherie and the band.

Cherie keeps staring at herself in the mirror.

Then all of a sudden --

-- a TOUR BOOKLET crashes into the mirror.

Cherie turns, startled, back to reality, and sees --

Lita. She threw it. And she is *pissed*.

CHERIE
What's your problem?

LITA FORD
What's *your* fuckin' problem?

Lita throws a STACK OF BOOKLETS at her. They land all over the room. Cherie picks one up. It's larger than a magazine and has a glossy cover. She flips through it and comes upon the offending pages.

CLOSE ON: Very suggestive photographs of Cherie. It looks more like a spread for Playboy than a rock magazine.

Joan walks in, sees the BANGING KIDS, laughs.

JOAN
Cool.

Lita points to the booklets.

LITA FORD
Not fucking cool.

Joan picks one up. Lita gets right up in her face.

LITA FORD (CONT'D)
Did you know about this?

JOAN
(keeps her at bay)
Mouth wash, babe. About what?

Lita points. Joan flips. Cherie squirms.

CHERIE
Kim sent them over. They just showed up at my house with cameras -
- what was I supposed to say?

Joan stares at the pictures, furious.

JOAN
How 'bout 'No, I'm the singer in a band, not Linda fucking Lovelace.'

The BANGING outside gets louder and more insistent.

Joan turns the magazine vertically to the centerfold.

C.U. THE PHOTO OF CHERIE FROM BEHIND WEARING A BLACK PAIR OF UNDERWEAR. SHE LOOKS OVER HER SHOULDERS WITH SULTRY EYES.

Joan stares, shakes her head in disgust, drops the booklet, as pissed as we've ever seen her.

JOAN (CONT'D)

This is what fucking *Kim* wants us to be. This is what they're gonna say we are. Don't you get it, they're never gonna take us seriously.

CHERIE

It's just publicity, it helps everyone.

JOAN

This is a *band*, we should be publicizing the *music*, not your fucking *panties*.

CHERIE

What's the difference between these pictures and me wearing a corset on stage?

JOAN

I hate that fucking corset!

CA-CRAAACK!

Just then -- THE WINDOW COMES CRASHING IN.

Glass flies everywhere. Kids come rushing. The girls freak, hide for cover.

INT. HOTEL ELEVATOR - LATER

Scottie stands next to Cherie. She watches the numbers go up in a daze.

DING...DING...

Scottie puts his hand on her shoulder. She shifts, uneasy, not wanting to be touched.

SCOTTIE

Don't worry about them... You're the one they want. You're the voice. It's your face on the t-shirts.

Cherie can't hear him, she's focused on the numbers...

DING

She tries to keep her emotions behind the tough facade that she's created...

DING

Her eyes break first...

Then her mouth...

DING

Finally, her body caves in on itself...

DING

The elevator door opens in the lobby and Cherie lands face-down on the carpet in front of everyone.

Flash bulbs.

INT. HOTEL - JOAN'S ROOM - JAPAN - DAY

Joan is making a phone call. The phone rings and rings. Frustrated, she hangs up.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - SCOTTIE'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Joan knocks on the door. No one answers. She begins to write a note, leaning on the door.

INSERT NOTE: *Scottie, gone to visit --*

The door opens. Scottie is shirtless. Clearly she woke him.

Joan looks past him. She can make out Lita's bare back sleeping on an unmade bed.

Joan shakes her head, crumples the note, and walks off.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - JAPAN - DAY

Cherie is sleeping in a hospital bed. Joan sits beside her.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - JAPAN - NIGHT

The room is lit by a small candle on the bedside table. Joan is half-asleep on the chair.

Cherie wakes up, looks around, confused. Joan comes into focus.

JOAN

There's an all girls rock band now
in Korea.

Cherie rustles under the sheets, groggy.

CHERIE

Yeah?

JOAN

Yeah. The lead singer thinks she's
you.

(scoffs)

They're shit, though.

Cherie is shivering. Joan pulls a blanket up, tucking her in. She climbs into bed with her, curls her body around hers.

CHERIE

Did Marie call?

Joan shakes her head. They lay together in silence.

EXT. RECORD STORE FRONT - JAPAN - DAY

A growing mob surrounds the band as photographers snap pictures. Joan and Cherie are out in front.

Then a photographer takes Cherie away from the rest of the band. He positions her in front of a TEN FOOT POSTER OF CHERIE WEARING THE CORSET. OVER THE TOP IT SAYS: THE RUNAWAYS.

The photographers go nuts.

C.U. FLASHES BOUNCE OFF JOAN'S FACE AS SHE STARES AT CHERIE GETTING ALL THE ATTENTION. SHE LOOKS AT THE POSTER -- CHERIE AS THE FACE OF THE RUNAWAYS.

A rage bubbles up inside her.

INT. JOAN'S BATHROOM - HOTEL - JAPAN

BLACK SLIVERS fall into the white sink. Joan is angrily sharpening a black eyeliner pencil. The shavings tumble around the basin.

She stares at her reflection as if on a mission, applying black eyeliner on top of smudgy old makeup, rimming her eyes like a rabid raccoon.

She buckles a SPIKED DOG COLLAR tightly around her neck. She looks harder than she's ever looked.

She is becoming JOAN JETT.

INT. HOTEL - CHERIE'S ROOM - JAPAN

EXTREME CLOSE-UP on Cherie in the shower. Water hits her face. Drops collect on her eyelashes. They stream down her face, drip from her lips.

TOP VIEW: Cherie packs her suitcase on a king-sized bed. There are dozens of MAGAZINES AND GIFTS laid out beside her. She puts some in the suitcase.

She is dwarfed by the size and opulence of the room.

EXT. HOTEL - JAPAN - DAY

Suitcases are being thrown into the back of a white limosine.

A JAPANESE PROMOTOR leans into the car and hands plane tickets to everyone.

JAPANESE PROMOTOR
(in broken English)
It was honor to have Runaways in
our country. Have a safe trip to
back home.

Inside the car everyone sits silent. Joan and Cherie sit next to each other, but stare off in opposite directions.

INT. AUNT EVIE'S HOUSE - ENCINO, CALIFORNIA - DAY

Cherie opens the door, brings in her suitcases. They have Japanese and European stickers all over them.

Marie walks from the kitchen with a HOSPITAL TRAY. She sees Cherie. They look at each other.

Marie now has a SHAG HAIRCUT, identical to Cherie's.

Cherie seems older now. It seems like it's been years.

MARIE

Well, if it isn't Mary, mother of God.

(looks around)

What, no disciples? No cameras?

CHERIE

Just me.

A loaded beat.

Marie notices Cherie's handbag. It's DISTRESSED BLACK LEATHER AND IT SAYS "CHERIE" IN METAL STUDS. Just like she suggested.

MARIE

Nice bag.

Cherie nods -- "thanks."

MARIE (CONT'D)

So *original*. All the girls get one?

Cherie shakes her head -- "no."

She opens her suitcase and pulls out --

AN IDENTICAL BAG. Except it says "Marie" on it.

CHERIE

Only two. One for me, one for you.

A beat. Marie puts the tray down. She takes the bag, puts it on. She's clearly touched.

MARIE

Thanks.

Cherie nods.

CHERIE

So, uh... Do I have to actually say all the stuff I wanna say or do we still have that, you know --

(makes telepathy gesture)

-- sister thing?

Marie smiles, nods. They hug tightly.

Cherie is now taller in her platform shoes.

CHERIE (CONT'D)

How's Dad?

MARIE

Well, he hasn't asked about you today, so that's a good thing.

CHERIE

He was worried?

MARIE

What do you think?

CHERIE

Was he... proud?

A beat. Marie nods.

MARIE

He's been keeping a folder of all your press clips.

Cherie smiles. Marie hands her the tray.

MARIE (CONT'D)

Take it to him.

CHERIE

I'm scared.

MARIE

He's been waiting for you.

Cherie takes the tray and cautiously walks into her father's bedroom. She pauses when she sees him. He's lying in the fetal position, shaking. He is pale, scruffy, skinny, greasy.

She sits down on the edge of the bed. She sees the SCRAP BOOK he's been keeping.

His eyes are barely open, they're yellow and glassy. He tries to smile, mumbles.

DAD

Hi, Kitten.

She's on the verge of tears.

CHERIE

Hi, Daddy.

A beat.

Not sure what to say, Cherie opens her purse and takes out A HUNDRED DOLLAR BILL.

She goes over to him, puts it in his trembling hand.

CHERIE (CONT'D)
We have money, okay?
 (beat)
You have money.

He closes his eyes.

 CHERIE (CONT'D)
We're gonna be fine...

He nods, forces a smile.

 DAD
Bring me a little scotch, wouldjya,
Kitten?

Cherie looks at him, purses her lips, nods -- "okay."

She leaves the room and returns a moment later with a glass of scotch. But her dad's asleep. And the hundred dollar bill has fallen out of his hand to the floor.

Cherie picks up the bill --

-- and USES IT AS A COASTER for the drink next to his bed. Water drops collect on it.

She sits for a moment, looking at the many PRESCRIPTION BOTTLES covering the night table. She scans the labels quickly, knowing just what she's looking for.

She opens two bottles, takes a few pills, and swallows them with a gulp of scotch. She gets up to leave --

-- and sees that Marie has been standing in the doorway.

EXT. SAN FERNANDO VALLEY - SUBURBAN STREET - NIGHT

The street is deserted. Joan and Tammy sit under the same lamp post as before. Joan is totally punked out. She looks so much older now. Tammy still wears the same jeans and an MC5 t-shirt as if preserved in a suburban time capsule.

Joan smokes a cigarette while scribbling lyrics in a notebook. Tammy is playing with Joan's spiked collar. They look disconnected.

Tammy tries on the collar. She feels cool in it, but she definitely can't pull off the look.

She looks at Joan and starts to sing "Lola."

TAMMY

*Girls will be boys, and boys will
be girls, it's a mixed up, muddled
up, shook up world, except for
Lola...*

Tammy tries to get Joan to sing.

TAMMY (CONT'D)

L-O-L-A, Lola...

But Joan has moved on. She keeps scribbling in her notebook.

INT. BROTHER'S RECORDING STUDIO - DAY

Sandy is hitting her drums monotonously. There are a couple of bottles of liquor on a speaker. The environment is tense.

Cherie gulps from a bottle of whiskey as she reads an issue of CRAWDADDY MAGAZINE.

STUDIO ENGINEER

We're ready for you, Cherie.

Cherie ignores him. A beat.

STUDIO ENGINEER (CONT'D)

Cherie?

No answer. Joan looks up to see what the hold up is.

JOAN

Cherie!

Cherie ignores her, totally fixated on the article in the magazine. Lita takes off her guitar, throws her arms up.

LITA FORD

I've had it with her shit, man.
I've fuckin' had it.

Sandy comes from behind the drums. She goes over to Cherie, who's still reading the magazine, drinking. Sandy SEES THE ARTICLE, leans in and reads aloud over her shoulder.

SANDY

*"Fowley says handling Cherie's ego
is like having a dog urinate in
your face. The best thing that
could happen to this band would be
if Cherie hung herself from a
shower rod and put herself in the
tradition of Marilyn Monroe."*

(MORE)

SANDY (CONT'D)

(beat)
Shit, man.

LITA FORD

He's fuckin' *right*.

JOAN

Lita...

LITA FORD

What, it's *true*. Always the center of every photo, always getting the biggest interview in every article, like we're all back-ups in the *Cherie Currie Band*.

CHERIE

I don't ask for that shit!

Joan holds the vocal booth door open for Cherie.

JOAN

Who cares, it's a stupid magazine, let's just finish the song.

All the girls look at each other.

JOAN (CONT'D)

C'mon. Let's play.

A beat. Lita backs off, puts her guitar back on.

But Cherie stays put, takes another gulp of whiskey. She's clearly very upset -- and very drunk.

Lita rolls her eyes, goes after her.

LITA FORD

What's the matter -- no flashbulbs? No one's here to fall all over you while you sing?

JOAN

Stop.

Joan walks into the vocal booth, gestures for Cherie to join her. Cherie resists.

JOAN (CONT'D)

Come on, bring the bottle.

A beat. Cherie glares at Lita, grabs the bottle and takes a swig, but doesn't budge.

Lita immediately lays into her.

LITA FORD

Hey Cherie, listen, I gotta take a piss, would that be okay with you? 'Cus if not, you know, I could hold it in, I could even --

CHERIE

You can *piss* your fucking *pants* for all I care!

Joan throws up her hands. Lita takes off her guitar, walks straight up to Cherie --

LITA FORD

I'm gonna piss down your *fucking throat!*

Lita grabs Cherie's hair. Joan rushes to break it up.

But just then we hear --

KIM FOWLEY (O.S.)

Bravo, kiddies! Bra-vo!

They all stop and look.

IT'S KIM.

Cherie redirects her anger, picks up the magazine, storms right up to him, throws it in his face.

CHERIE

What the fuck is this?

SANDY

That was pretty nasty, Kim.

KIM FOWLEY

That -- is what we call controversy.

He picks up the magazine, rolls it up into a bullhorn and begins shouting through it at Cherie.

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)

*That -- is what we call publicity.
That -- is what we call a juicy story.*

He drops the magazine in the trash bin, looks at Cherie.

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)

And you're *welcome*. Because of me the piece is twice as long and half of it talked about you!

(smiling)

This is *press*, my budding young starlet -- not *prestige*. Get *used* to it.

(beat)

Now get in the booth and finish the song. I got this place on lock-out and I'm paying through the fucking nose. So let's go, let's go. Sing. *Sing!*

CHERIE

No.

Kim's not sure he heard her correctly.

KIM FOWLEY

No?

JOAN

Come on, Cherie, let's just finish and go home.

LITA FORD

Yeah, get in the booth.

JOAN

Shut up, Lita.

LITA FORD

You shut up.

JOAN

(to Cherie, serious)

Come on...

Cherie avoids Joan's gaze, glares at Lita, at Kim.

CHERIE

I'm not singing.

Joan is slowly losing her cool. Kim puts his hands on Cherie's shoulders, rubs them gently.

KIM FOWLEY

Of *course* you're singing. You're a *singer*. That's what you *do*. That's *all* you do. You sing and you strut around in your underwear.

(he squeezes harder)

(MORE)

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)
 You do what I *tell* you to do. And
 right now I'm telling you to get in
 that booth. Now *get*...

Cherie breaks loose from his grip. Kim's smile fades.

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)
 Get in the booth.

CHERIE
 No.

Joan shakes her head. Sandy lights a joint.

KIM FOWLEY
 Get in the booth, Cherie.

CHERIE
 No.

JOAN
 Cherie...

Cherie picks up a half empty beer, downs it.

KIM FOWLEY
 Get in the booth.

CHERIE
 No.

KIM FOWLEY
 Get in the booth.
 (beat)
 Before I lose my patience and send
 you back to where I rescued you
 from.

CHERIE
*Good! Send me back, I don't give a
 shit. I wanna go back!*

KIM FOWLEY
 (warning)
 Careful...

JOAN
 Come on, Cherie. Don't...

KIM FOWLEY
 Get in the booth.

CHERIE
 No!

Joan looks at Cherie -- "please." But Cherie is too far gone to care.

KIM FOWLEY

Get in the booth.

CHERIE

Are you fucking *deaf*, I said *no*.
I'm not your little *lap dog*
anymore. You've been speaking for
me this whole time anyway -- *you*
get in the *fucking booth!* I'm
fucking done!

Cherie storms out of the studio.

A loaded beat. Everyone is quiet, shocked, waiting to see what Kim will do.

Very slowly, he walks over to the 24-TRACK TAPE MACHINE. He puts his finger on the button.

KIM FOWLEY

You dog cunts'll be lucky to get a
gig singing in a *shower*.

JOAN

No...

Kim hits the button and all the lights go out.

The engineer sighs, begins packing up his stuff.

Lita and Sandy look at each other.

Joan stares at the floor, a strange look on her face.

Then all of a sudden --

-- *she erupts*.

She grabs her guitar --

-- AND THROWS IT AGAINST THE WALL.

THE NECK BREAKS.

SHE PICKS UP A WHISKY BOTTLE AND THROWS IT IN KIM'S
DIRECTION.

KIM DUCKS BEHIND THE CONSOLE, STARTS TO LAUGH, YELLING --

KIM FOWLEY

Anarchy! Mayhem! FUCK BITCHES YEAH!

EXT. BROTHER'S RECORDING STUDIO. ALLEYWAY. CON'T.

Cherie can hear the chaos inside. She makes a gesture to leave, but changes her mind and waits outside for Joan.

INT. BROTHER'S RECORDING STUDIO. CONTINUOUS.

JOAN PICKS UP AN AMP AND SMASHES IT AGAINST THE FLOOR.

THE GIRLS BACK UP IN SHOCK.

KIM CONTINUES TO LAUGH, X PRACTICALLY CHEERING HER ON. JOAN CONTINUES TRASHING THE PLACE.

KIM FOWLEY
Rock n' fucking roll, Joanie! ROCK
N' FUCKING ROLL!!!!

EXT. BROTHER'S RECORDING STUDIO. ALLEYWAY. MOMENTS LATER.

Joan, disheveled, storms through the back door past Cherie. She takes a cigarette out of her pocket and lights it calmly.

She looks up and finally notices her. They share a loaded look.

Cherie breaks the ice.

CHERIE
 I can't work with that prick
 anymore!

Joan doesn't look at her.

CHERIE (CONT'D)
 I need a break from the band.

JOAN
 If you haven't noticed, we're in
 the middle of cutting a record.

CHERIE
 I gotta spend time with my family.

JOAN
 Who? Your mom in Indonesia? Your
 drunk dad?
 (beat)
 We're your fucked up family now.

Cherie doesn't respond.

CHERIE

I can't do this anymore. I want my
life back.

Joan finally looks up and their eyes meet.

Cherie stands up to leave, but Joan is blocking her way.

JOAN

Well, *this is* my life.

Joan lets her legs down and lets Cherie pass, watching her
stumble down the alley.

FADE TO BLACK:

OVER BLACK WE HEAR THE SOUNDS OF A ROWDY CROWD...

INT. CLUB - HOLLYWOOD - BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

Joan looks older, darker. She's drinking a beer, tuning her
guitar in a little room backstage.

Behind her is a POSTER OF THE RUNAWAYS.

CHERIE IS NOT IN THE POSTER.

We can hear the crowd through the thin walls.

MAN IN THE AUDIENCE (O.S.)

Where's the Cherry Bomb!

ANOTHER MAN (O.S.)

Cherie Currie! Cherie Currie!

The small audience is getting rowdier. They start a mini
chant, pound their beer bottles on the tables.

AUDIENCE (O.S.)

Cherry Bomb! Cherry Bomb!

Joan yells out angrily yet longingly.

JOAN

THE BITCH IN THE CORSET'S NOT
COMING - ALRIGHT!

INT. KIM'S APT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Nondescript furniture decorates the small white living room.
There are CASSETTE TAPES, STACKS OF PAPER, and empty
PRESCRIPTION BOTTLES.

Hanging crooked on the wall behind him are TWO FRAMED GOLD RECORDS.

An interview is taking place.

A TAPE RECORDER sits on the small, cluttered table in front of Kim. (We never see the interviewer.)

Kim has eye-shadow and lipstick on. He wears an orange suit, which has dozens of patches sewn all over it. He looks odd and elegant at the same time.

KIM FOWLEY

I hate rock n' roll. I hate Hollywood. I hate the whole process of rape that is making it in show biz today. I am a quiet, sensitive type who can appreciate Mahler and Beethoven.

JUMP CUT TO:

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)

They were a conceptual rock project that failed. It's all mechanical anyway. The only guy who's honest is the guy who sings in the shower. Everyone else is a prostitute.

JUMP CUT TO:

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)

I'm glad they turned on me. It shows spirit. If I'm training a wild dog and he bites my hand, I know I've trained him well.

(beat)

My hand is made of iron. I hope they turn on their record company. I hope they destroy hotels and rape their fans. Great rock n' roll comes from torment.

JUMP CUT TO:

Kim takes a full ashtray and dumps the contents on a picture of Cherie.

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)

I don't care if she's sixteen, she can still be a creep.

JUMP CUT TO:

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)

(change in tone)

None of the girls ever sent me so much as a Christmas card or a thank you note.

JUMP CUT TO:

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)

They'll be fine. In a few years they'll be living in a trailer park back in the valley. Fat, pregnant, and happy as fleas on a dog.

JUMP CUT TO:

KIM FOWLEY (CONT'D)

Me, well, I'm on my way to becoming Rock and Roll Legend.

INT. SEEDY MOTEL ROOM - LOS ANGELES - DAY

The shades are drawn, an old black and white movie plays with no sound on the TV.

Cherie is laying on the bed, barely-dressed, smoking a cigarette next to a couple of TWENTY-SOMETHING SURFER DUDES -- ONE BLONDE, ONE LATINO. AND A LARGE DOG.

The Blonde reaches into the bedside table and pulls out a pipe. From his pocket he pulls out a VIAL WITH SOME COCAINE IN IT.

He mixes the coke with some HASH, puts it in the pipe, and lights it. He brings it to Cherie's lips. Cherie inhales deeply, blows it in the dog's face...

Numbness overcomes her...

Black engulfs the scene.

INT. JOAN'S CRASH PAD - SUNSET BLVD - NIGHT

The place is empty except for a small pile of cardboard boxes. It seems as if she's just moved in -- or is moving out. CANNED FOOD and some TOILETRIES are on the counter.

Joan sits against the wall, her eyes searching the room.

A RADIATOR

A DRIPPING SINK

A TICKING CLOCK ON THE FACE OF A STOVE

A COCKROACH ON THE WALL

SCATTERED PILLS

DISSOLVE TO:

Joan's apartment looks like a squat, filled with nasty street punks. It's been a long night -- or series of nights. The sun is rising and these people look like they don't belong in daylight.

Joan just finished making out with a GIRL PUNK on the floor -- she looks half-comatose. She pulls her zipper up.

Some punks are passed out under the kitchen table. Joan pries a half-empty bottle of cheap wine out of a guy punk's hand. Even though he's passed out, she has to fight for the bottle.

She sits down on the floor beside Tammy, who now wears a black leather jacket. You can see Joan's influence on her and it's not good.

Tammy picks up Joan's guitar and plays it badly. Joan sits down beside her and takes a swig from the bottle.

JOAN

Put your finger here.

She adjusts her fingers to make a chord and has her strum that. She strums this over and over.

TAMMY

Cooooo!

(beat)

I wish I could play. I'd be in a band with you.

JOAN

Yeah, well you can't.

TAMMY

I hear Cherie's been hanging out at the Sugar Shack.

Joan ignores her.

TAMMY (CONT'D)

You don't need her. You should go solo. Like Bowie. Bowie's just Bowie, he doesn't need any band.

JOAN

Those were my songs. It was my band. She was a prop.

TAMMY

Yeah, but people always remember the props.

Joan takes another swig, wine spills down her chin. A beat. Then she rips the guitar from Tammy's hands.

JOAN

Get the fuck out.

But Tammy doesn't move. She just looks at her, confused.

Joan throws the bottle to the wall, wine splatters everywhere.

She stands up, yells at everyone.

JOAN (CONT'D)

Everyone, get the fuck out!

But everyone is too fucked up to hear.

JOAN (CONT'D)

Listen to me, you fuckin' maggots! Get. The fuck. *Out!*

Still, nobody listens. Except Tammy. She stands, readies to leave. But Joan pushes her down.

JOAN (CONT'D)

You stay.

Joan grabs her jacket and leaves.

INT. SUPERMARKET - ENCINO - DAY

Cherie wears a sequined tube-top and high-waisted satin pants. She is drunk, pale and disheveled, staggering down one of the aisles.

She's pushing a shopping cart with one item in it -- A BOTTLE OF JACK DANIELS.

She smashes into various displays until she CRASHES HEAD-ON INTO A SHELF FULL OF EGGS, sending them splattering onto the floor.

Everyone turns to stare.

She leaves the mess, wheels to the cashier, pushes the bottle at her. She is a HEAVYSET WOMAN in her mid 20's with red hair and a face covered in zits.

She stares at Cherie as if seeing a ghost.

CASHIER

Um, I can't sell this to you.

CHERIE

(slurring)

I've got ID -- here.

She takes out her ID, sending the contents of her purse onto the floor. She bends down to collect the stuff.

The cashier makes a motion for the manager to come over, clearly not able to confront these kinds of situations.

The manager comes over -- AN OLDER, BALDING MAN.

SUPERMARKET MANAGER

I'm sorry, if you'd like to buy some groceries, we can sell you that, but not the bottle.

Cherie looks up at him coldly. She points at him, slurring, theatrical.

CHERIE

I'll call your mother. I'll have you... fired. *Replaced.* Just like *that.*

She tries to snap, but she misses. She tries again, stares at her hand as if it's broken.

SUPERMARKET MANAGER

Please, I'm gonna have to ask you to leave. Right now.

Cherie poses, smiles, attempting to be sexy.

CHERIE

Don't you recognize me?

He shakes his head -- "er, no."

Cherie grabs a BABY RUTH candy bar and begins singing into it as if it were a microphone.

CHERIE (CONT'D)

Ch-ch-ch-ch-ch --

It's an embarrassing, pathetic moment.

SUPERMARKET MANAGER
Are you...okay?

CHERIE
Ch-ch-ch-ch --

The man looks around, not sure what to do. Then Cherie throws the candy in his face.

CHERIE (CONT'D)
You're nothing but *dog* shit,
Mister.

She sniffs the air, as if he stinks. Then points at the cashier, aggressive.

CHERIE (CONT'D)
And *you*. You're a coward, *flea-bit*
dog cunt.

Cherie laughs. The cashier is horrified, she runs off. The Man picks up the phone, as if about to call the police.

Cherie calmly swaggers out of the store, TEARING A SALE SIGN DOWN as she goes.

EXT. SUPERMARKET - PARKING LOT - PHONE BOOTH - DAY

Cherie is in a phone booth with her forehead leaning against the glass. She's searching for change in her pockets, finds a dime. She pops the coin in and dials a number.

We will intercut between Cherie and Marie.

MARIE
Hola, Pup N' Taco, can I help you?

CHERIE
(slurring)
Marie Currie, please.

MARIE
What're you *doing*, Cherie?

Cherie starts to laugh.

CHERIE
Hola, hermana! I need you...to
come...and pick me up.

MARIE

I can't, I'm at work. I have to go.

CHERIE

(theatrical)

Places, everybody! Places!

The phone goes dead.

CHERIE (CONT'D)

(screaming)

PLA-CES!!!

She repeatedly SMASHES THE RECEIVER against the phone. Her body buckles. She hits the ground and passes out.

DREAM SEQUENCE: INT. AIRPORT - LOS ANGELES

The airport is empty. Marshall amps are stacked high. Cherie stands in front of a microphone wearing the corset and fishnet stockings. Black cords snake across the white marble of the floor. It is a bizarre juxtaposition.

Cherie is staring blankly ahead. Just then, HER MOTHER rushes past her, carrying her suitcases. She's wearing big sunglasses and her BIG SUN HAT.

Cherie reaches out for her, but her boot gets tangled around the cords. She falls. Her mother keeps walking, in a hurry.

Cherie gets up. The airport is now crowded. She frantically chases her mother, bumping into people. Finally, she catches up to her, taps her on the shoulder.

C.U. Mom turns around, removes her sunglasses, revealing regretful eyes.

INT. HOSPITAL - REHAB WARD - DAY

A nurse wheels a tray down a long corridor. We follow her to Cherie who is sitting in a chair watching television.

She looks pale and thin. The nurse gives her a small paper cup with some liquid in it. She drinks it and the nurse continues on.

EXT. HOSPITAL - DETOX WARD - NIGHT

Cherie is wrapped in a blanket looking up at the sky. She is pensive. Marie is next to her, wearing her Pup N' Taco uniform.

MARIE

Mom called. She said they're playing "Cherry Bomb" on the radio in Indonesia.

(beat)

She tells everyone that you're her daughter.

CHERIE

I'm sure she tells them she's my mother.

MARIE

It's been a year, you should at least talk to her.

Silence. Marie doesn't push the subject.

MARIE (CONT'D)

People are asking about you at the Sugar Shack.

Cherie shrugs, looks at Marie in her uniform.

CHERIE

Sorry for calling you at work.

MARIE

It's okay.

CHERIE

How's it going over there?

MARIE

(sarcastic)

Oh, it's a *dream*.

(obvious)

It *sucks*. Except when someone comes in thinking I'm you. I actually signed an autograph yesterday. This guy came in and said it was for his daughter but I totally knew it was for him.

Marie laughs. Cherie smiles.

INT. JOAN'S CRASH PAD - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Among the rubble, Joan picks up the guitar and straps it around her shoulder.

She begins to strum the opening chords to "I LOVE ROCK AND ROLL."

Her voice comes in tough and raspy. It is nothing like we've heard before. It is raw, emotional, and powerful.

She plugs her guitar into the amp and a ROARING SOUND accompanies her.

The recorded version of "I LOVE ROCK AND ROLL" by JOAN JETT AND THE BLACKHEARTS takes over and continues over the next scene...

INT. LINEN SHOP - VALLEY - DAY - 1981

Cherie is carefully folding some linen on a display table. She looks better, but still pale without makeup.

Her hair is a little longer and tied back. She wears an apron and looks pretty square -- not the star she once was.

"I LOVE ROCK AND ROLL" plays on the radio over the speakers.

Cherie looks up, recognizes the song. She smiles warmly.

A Pakistani Manager brings Cherie another box to empty.

MANAGER

Chop, chop.

Cherie nods.

"I LOVE ROCK AND ROLL" ENDS. ON THE RADIO WE HEAR:

RODNEY BINGENHEIMER (O.S.)

That was Joan Jett and the Black Hearts with "I Love Rock and Roll." Joan has surprised us by dropping by the station today. Hello, Joan.

JOAN (O.S.)

Hi Rodney. It's great to see you. I'm a big fan from the English Disco days.

RODNEY BENINGHIEMER (O.S.)

I remember when you would come into the club, you were only about 15 years old. I played a lot of The Runaways' music back then.

JOAN (O.S.)

The Runaways was my baby. We were all so young then, you know. We were growing up on the road together.

Cherie listens -- a flurry of emotions take over her face.

RODNEY BINGENHEIMER (O.S.)
When did you know you wanted to be
a rock n' roll musician?

JOAN (O.S.)
Oh, all my life. Rock n' roll saved
my life -- if it wasn't for that
I'd probably be dead or in jail
now, y'know?

RODNEY BENINGHIEMER (O.S.)
You grow up real fast on the
road.

JOAN (O.S.)
Yeah, real fast.

Cherie goes behind the counter. THE RADIO AND THE PHONE SHARE THE FRAME. She picks up the phone and dials. This image remains static for the entire scene.

RODNEY BINGENHEIMER (O.S.)
We are going to take some calls
now. We have a lot of fans waiting.
Caller you're on.

CHERIE (O.S.)
Hi Joan.
(beat)
It's Cherie.

A long pause. Joan seems taken aback.

JOAN (O.S.)
Hey... How are ya?

CHERIE (O.S.)
Well, I'm not dead or in jail.

They both laugh awkwardly.

RODNEY BENINGHIEMER (O.S.)
This is *Cherie Currie*, former lead
singer of The Runaways, how
exciting. So, Cherie what have you
been up to?

CHERIE (O.S.)
I'm trying to do the acting thing.

RODNEY BENINGHIEMER (O.S.)
 From what I understand, it's been a
 while since you two spoke. I'm sure
 you guys have lots to talk about.

Neither one of them speaks.

RODNEY BENINGHIEMER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Well, maybe not on the air.

CHERIE (O.S.)
 I just wanted to say hi.

JOAN (O.S.)
 Yeah...

The manager catches sight of Cherie on the phone.

MANAGER (O.S.)
 Call your friends on your own time.

CHERIE (O.S.)
 I gotta go.

CLOSE ON: Cherie hangs up the phone, turns up the volume.

RODNEY BINGENHEIMER (O.S.)
 Let's get back to the music. This
 is the *second hit song* from the
 album, *Crimson and Clover*. You're
 listening to Rodney, On-The Roq, on
 KROQ-FM.

Cherie goes back to the table and continues to fold linen as
 she listens to Joan's voice fill the store.

JOAN
*Now I don't hardly know her
 But I think I could love her
 Crimson and clover*

THE END