

BUNHEADS

"Pilot"

Written By

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WRITER'S DRAFT

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TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. LAS VEGAS - NIGHT

We float over the town at it's glittering best. From the air it sparkles. The strip is packed, the sidewalks bustle with hopes, dreams, and excitement. We PAN DOWN and find ourselves at THE HILTON hotel. We hear LIVE MUSIC playing.

CUT TO:

INT. HILTON SHOWROOM - SAME TIME

A packed room of people all dressed up for a night out on the town. WAITRESS'S crisscross the room with drink trays hoisted in the air. On stage a line of glamorous DANCERS in glittery bodysuits and feather head dresses are dancing their hearts out with perfect smiles plastered on their faces. We PUSH IN on the dancer in the middle, MICHELLE SIMMS, late thirties, mile long legs, and clearly the best kicker in the bunch. They finish their routine, pose and freeze.

ANGLE ON: THE DANCERS POINT OF VIEW

From the wings A line of TOPLESS SHOWGIRLS stroll out in even larger feather headdresses. They take their places right in front of the dancers blocking them completely. (The topless girls will be shot from the back, Michelle's P.O.V., so no tits will be seen) The audience applauds enthusiastically.

Michelle turns to the dancer next to her, THALIA.

MICHELLE

Sure. We dance out asses off for two hours and then five minutes from the end they walk out and stand there, and bring the house down.

TALIA

I know.

MICHELLE

That's all they do. Twice a show, walk out and stand there.

TALIA

And they get paid more.

MICHELLE

(sighs)

And they get paid more.

(MORE)

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

Great message we're sending to the girls of America. "Hey girls, forget about actually learning to do something, just take your top off and stand there."

TALIA

And you'll get paid more.

MICHELLE

And it's not even about the face. It's all about boobs. I mean half of them aren't even pretty.

TALIA

No one looks at the face when they can look at the boobs.

MICHELLE

I mean, Mara over there looks like Moammar Gadhafi but who cares?

TALIA

She still gets paid more.

MICHELLE

So so wrong.

The curtain comes down. Everybody breaks their poses. Stagehands hand the topless girls white bathrobes to put on.

TALIA

I'd take my top off if I could. But I'm flat as a board. Maybe I should buy some. I mean, how much could they be?

MICHELLE

Five to seven grand.

TALIA

What? No!!

MICHELLE

Each.

TALIA

You pay per boob? If anything in the world should be sold in a pair, it should be boobs.

They walk off stage and head toward the dressing area. A girl in a bathrobe walks past.

MARA

I heard that Gadhafi comment by the way.

She crosses off.

TALIA

Well, I'm depressed. Where do you want to go get drunk tonight?

MICHELLE

I can't.

TALIA

Why not? It's Tuesday. We always get drunk on Tuesday. And Wednesday, and Thursday...

MICHELLE

Tonight I am going straight home and straight to bed. I have to be in perfect shape tomorrow.

TALIA

Why?

MICHELLE

Because....
(a big smile breaks out)
I got it.

TALIA

No! The audition for "Love"?

MICHELLE

Tomorrow at ten sharp.

TALIA

I can't believe it.

MICHELLE

I'm finally going to get to really dance again. With steps and pointed toes and everything.

TALIA

God, I'm so jealous. How?

MICHELLE

My buddy Jimmy Hewson's the new dance captain. He arranged the whole thing.

A make STAGEHAND walks up to Michelle.

STAGEHAND
Hey Michelle, Prince Charming is
here for you again.

MICHELLE
(stops short)
What? Oh no. Where is he?

STAGEHAND
(points)
By your dressing table.

The stagehand heads off.

MICHELLE
Oh crap. Not tonight.

TALIA
Come on he's sweet and harmless.
Everytime he comes to town he
brings you presents, he buys you
dinners...

MICHELLE
He's odd and weird and technically
a stalker.

TALIA
He's lonely.

MICHELLE
He wears gym socks with a suit.

TALIA
Well, at least you have an admirer.
I've got nothing. I buy my own
dinners.

MICHELLE
Go distract him so I can get my
stuff and slip out the back?

TALIA
That's mean.

MICHELLE
I know. I am a mean girl. The
sooner he learns that the better.

TALIA
He's been coming here once a month
for a year. I think he's a slow
learner.

MICHELLE

Please, Thalia, I have to be perfect tomorrow. Perfect, and glowing, and twenty-nine by 10 a.m. Sharp.

TALIA

Twenty-nine? Who's going to believe that?

MICHELLE

Canadians.

HUBBELL (O.C.)

Michelle! Hey!

MICHELLE

Rats.

Michelle turns to see Hubbell FALLS racing over to her. Hubbell is in his forties, bad suit, hang dog face, kind eyes, with just the slightest whiff of loser surrounding him. He holds a giant bouquet of flowers and a shoebox.

HUBBELL

Wow. You look great. I thought I missed you but then I saw your purse on your chair. Did not go through it, but I figured what lady leaves without her purse?

(holds out the flowers and the box)

For you. African roses and the new fall pumps. Hot off the assembly line.

MICHELLE

That's very sweet, Hubbell. Thank you.

HUBBELL

You are welcome. Gosh, seeing you again, you just get prettier, you know that?

MICHELLE

Oh, I don't think so.

HUBBELL

Well, you do. Listen, I took the liberty of making a reservation at "Cut" tonight. It's a steak restaurant, Wolfgang Puck.

MICHELLE

Oh Hubbell...

HUBBELL

I didn't get a chance to take you to dinner last time I was in town. You had that terrible sudden flu, remember?

MICHELLE

I do. That was a doozy.

HUBBELL

So, this time, I wanted to make sure dinner was extra special.

MICHELLE

Hubbell, I'm afraid I can't go to dinner tonight.

HUBBELL

Are you still sick?

MICHELLE

No. I actually have a really important appointment tomorrow and I have to go home and sleep. But, I bet that Talia...

Michelle grabs TWO MORE BUXOM SHOWGIRLS standing by.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

And Hillary and Lucy would love to go with you to "Cut". Right girls? Dinner? Steak? Yum.

HILLARY

Uh...sure.

LUCY

I'll eat.

MICHELLE

Great.

(to Hubbell)

Now, you have a harem. Very Vegas.

Michelle quickly gathers her stuff together.

HUBBELL

(trying to hide his
disappointment)

You sure you couldn't have one drink first?

MICHELLE

I can't. I'm sorry. I wish I had known you were going to be in town...

HUBBELL

Well, I left three messages and sent a telegram...

MICHELLE

But next time. I promise. Okay?
(tosses her coat over her costume)
Thanks for the gifts! Super sweet!

Michelle runs out.

HUBBELL

(calling after her)
There are a pair of Dr. Scholl's in the box so open it carefully.

Hubbell looks after her wistfully.

TALIA

(pats his shoulder)
We're just going to change.

Talia, Gin and Hillary head off.

LUCY

So, what do we have to do for this dinner?

TALIA

Nothing.

HILLARY

Really? Guys just get weirder and weirder.

FADE OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. MICHELLE'S BEDROOM - MORNING

The alarm blares. We PAN OVER A RUMPLED EMPTY BED and onto the floor where Michelle is doing sit-ups.

MICHELLE
...Ninety-Seven, ninety-eight,
ninety-nine, one-hundred.

She lays down and pulls her right leg up over her head. Then her left leg up over her head. She sits up and bends over both legs grabbing her ankles. She slowly rolls herself up and lets out a deep breath and smiles satisfied.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)
It's showtime.

EXT. VEGAS STRIP - MORNING

A beat-up Volkswagon bug zips between cars and into the "Mirage" driveway.

EXT. MIRAGE - MOMENTS LATER

The bug screeches to a halt. Michelle gets out. She's wearing tights and a sleek black leotard and a "Love" baseball jacket over it. A young Valet stands there.

MICHELLE
(to valet)
So the jacket - sucking up or
classy touch?

OLDER VALET GUY
Uh...

MICHELLE
Sucking up. Right.
(she throws the jacket
back in the car)
Okay. I'm good. I'm ready. How
old am I? I'm twenty-nine. You
buy it? Cause, I didn't get into
sunscreen till the late nineties.

OLDER VALET GUY
Sure. Why not. It's Vegas.

MICHELLE
Thanks!

She tosses him the keys and runs into the hotel.

INT. HOTEL - MOMENTS LATER

Michelle makes her way towards the "Love" theatre. She stops at the "Employees Only" door.

MICHELLE
(whispers to herself)
You can do this. You have to do
this. Please, just...do this.

Deep breath. She pushes the door open.

INT. THEATRE - CONTINUOUS

Michelle enters. The room is filled with performers going through their paces. A couple of acrobats hang from the rafters. The place is organized chaos, energy, and talent. Michelle looks around happily. JIMMY HEWSON, dance captain spots her and hurries over.

JIMMY
Michelle! You're on time!

MICHELLE
Jimmy! Hi. I'm ignoring the
surprise in your voice.

JIMMY
I'm sorry. It's just a little
crazy here today.

MICHELLE
Hey, how do I look? I picked this
leotard cause it's simple from the
front but it goes way up my ass so
it's kind of Vegas family friendly.

JIMMY
You look great.

They start walking.

JIMMY (CONT'D)
Now, the director is Dominic
Champagne. I've told him all about
you...

MICHELLE
Whoa!

JIMMY
With editing.

MICHELLE

Thank you.

JIMMY

He likes you to act it, not just dance it. Cover space, use the stage, and smile.

(calling out)

Dominic.

They walk up to DOMINIC CHAMPAGNE. He stars at the ceiling and wears a "Love" baseball jacket.

MICHELLE

(to herself)

Should've worn the jacket.

Jimmy walks up to Dominic.

JIMMY

Dom, this is Michelle Simms. I told you about her. She's auditioning for the swing position.

MICHELLE

I'm so excited to dance for you.

JIMMY

(to Dominic)

I've already run her through the routine so whenever you're ready...

Dominic glances over at Michelle. He stares a beat.

DOMINIC

No.

JIMMY

What?

MICHELLE

But...I'm twenty-nine.

DOMINIC

She's not right.

JIMMY

She's really good.

MICHELLE

Just let me show you the routine. I swear you won't be sorry.

A cry is heard from above.

HANGING GIRL (O.C.)
 Dominic!!!! I have been hanging
 here for ten minutes! What the
 hell are they doing?

DOMINIC
 (calling up)
 We're going as fast as we can!

Michelle looks at Jimmy pleading.

JIMMY
 Dom, please. For me.

DOMINIC
 I'm sorry, Jimmy.
 (calling off)
 Just cut her down if you have to!

Jimmy looks over at a crushed Michelle.

MICHELLE
 (bitterly)
 And that's showbiz. Kid.

CUT TO:

INT. MICHELLE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

A breeze blows through an open window. We PAN AROUND the dark apartment. White walls, aluminum blinds, a smattering of miss matched furniture. No decoration or life evident anywhere, like the occupant is just passing through. Pictures are on the floor leaned up against the wall never hung. We linger on a picture of Michelle taken when she first got to Vegas ten years ago. A real showgirl glamour shot. Smiling, sexy - she looks like a movie star.

The front door opens and Michelle walks in. She tosses her dance bag on the floor and grabs a beer out of the empty fridge. She pops the top, takes a swig, goes over to the wall unit and flips it on. It makes a sad, gurgling death rattle and then nothing. She gives it a kick. Still nothing. She takes off her shoe and beats it till her arm hurts then tosses her shoe aside and lopsidedly goes outside.

EXT. MICHELLE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

The two story complex looks an awful lot like "Leaving Los Vegas" but not so cheery. Michelle comes out and leans on the railing overlooking the sad dirty pool and swigs her beer. DELILAH, a heavily made-up woman in a bad wig, super silver glitter mini skirt, and ratty pink fuzzy slippers passes by with a bucket of ice.

DELILAH
Geez. Who died?

MICHELLE
Your fashion sense.

DELILAH
Well, take that tragic face inside.
I have guests coming over and that
is going to spoil the party.

MICHELLE
As long as my face doesn't look
like Chris Hansen your guests will
be fine.

Delilah sniffs indignantly and goes inside. Michelle takes another swig of her beer. We pull back high and wide revealing the colorful lights of the strip blazing in the distance behind the sad apartment complex. The glamorous life sure looks a long ways away.

INT. BACKSTAGE - THE NEXT NIGHT

Michelle walks in, her coat over her costume. The costumer walks up to her furious.

COSTUMER
I swear to God, the next time you
leave this theatre in your costume
you will be fined. A lot. I mean
it! I'll ruin you.

MICHELLE
Too late. I got there first.

Michelle drops down in her chair. Talia sits next to her.

TALIA
Should I ask?

MICHELLE
Nope.

TALIA
So, where should we go get drunk
tonight?

MICHELLE
Someplace close.

Off in the distance we hear:

HUBBELL (O.C.)
Excuse me, I was wondering if
Michelle was here yet?

MICHELLE
Are you kidding me? He's still
here?

TALIA
He talked about you all night long.
(as Hubbell)
"Michelle's so beautiful,
Michelle's so smart, usually tall
girls are intimidating, Michelle's
not intimidating, she's wonderful."
Dinner was delicious though. He's
not cheap, this guy.

MICHELLE
I can't deal with this now.
(gathering up her stuff)
Look, just tell him I died and I'll
see him next month.

Michelle stands up and turns right into Hubbell. He holds a
large bouquet of flowers and a fancy wrapped box.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)
(startled)
Ahhh! Hubbell! You scared me!

HUBBELL
I'm sorry. I should've walked up
slower. Gosh, you look wonderful.

MICHELLE
Thank you.

HUBBELL
How did your audition go?

MICHELLE
It went fine. Great.

HUBBELL
I knew it. I knew it would. Here.

He hands her the flowers and the box.

MICHELLE
Thanks. Look, I really need to get
ready for the show, so...

HUBBELL
Open your present first.

MICHELLE
(no fight left in her)
Okay. Sure.

She opens the box and pulls out a beautiful black velvet watch with diamonds around the face.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)
(stunned)
Oh Hubbell...

HUBBELL
Do you like it?

MICHELLE
Do I like it? Who could not like this? It's stunning.

HUBBELL
I got it wholesale from my friend Drew who's in the diamond biz.

MICHELLE
(looks at the watch and
tears up a little)
I've never gotten anything this beautiful in my entire life.
(beat, then sadly)
My audition did not go great. It was a disaster.

HUBBELL
I can't believe that.

MICHELLE
He didn't even let me dance. He just looked at me and said "no".

Hubbell studies her for a beat.

HUBBELL
(gently)
Michelle, can I take you to dinner after the show? If you like we can order nothing but dessert.

Michelle looks at him. He's awfully sweet.

MICHELLE
(smiles a little)
Sure. Dinner would be great.

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - LATER

Michelle and Hubbell sit in front of giant steaks. Michelle's halfway through a giant martini, and judging from her slurring and half closed eyes, it's clearly not her first.

MICHELLE

"No". That was it. "No". "Hey Dominique, this is Michelle".

"No." Just like that. "No".
(she knocks back the rest
of her drink)

It was so humiliating. Everybody in that theatre just watching the over the hill loser get the big heave-ho.

(she waves her empty glass
at a waiter)

You know, I have been trying to get this audition for a million years. And then I get it and I don't even get to dance.

HUBBELL

You are not over the hill.

MICHELLE

If a director can just look at me and say "no" in like three seconds, it's not "no" cause I'm so young and hot, it's "no" cause I'm starting to look like an IHOP cashier.

The waiter puts another drink in front of her.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

(to waiter, annoyed)
Seriously dude, "keep 'em coming" was not a euphemism.

The waiter takes her empty glass and goes.

HUBBELL

Maybe you were too tall.

MICHELLE

And old.

HUBBELL

I have seen that show. Everyone seems very tiny.

MICHELLE

And not old.

HUBBELL

You should eat something.

MICHELLE

Yes. So I can be fat and old.

(her new watch's sparkle
catches her eye)

Oh man, this is so pretty. You are
so nice to me. Why are you so nice
to me?

HUBBELL

Oh, I'm not that nice to you.

MICHELLE

What are you talking about? You
bring me shoes and flowers, and
sparkly watches and you feed my
friends and you keep coming back
even though I blow you off like
ninety per cent of the time.

HUBBELL

I don't think the percentage is
that high.

MICHELLE

Oh, it is. I'm awful to you. I'm
just...awful.

HUBBELL

I don't think you're awful.

MICHELLE

You don't?

HUBBELL

I think you are the most
spectacular girl in the world. The
first time I saw you on stage I
thought "wow".

MICHELLE

Did I fall?

HUBBELL

You did not fall. You smiled. You
were perfect. And I thought,
"there's no way a girl like that
will talk to me", but you did.

MICHELLE

Well, you offered to take me to dinner.

HUBBELL

That wasn't it.

MICHELLE

It was the end of the month. I was really hungry.

HUBBELL

If you were my girl, I'd make sure you'd never be hungry ever again.

MICHELLE

(taken aback by that statement)

Well, it's not like I was "Oliver" or anything...

HUBBELL

Have I ever told you about where I live?

MICHELLE

I don't remember.

HUBBELL

I live in this beautiful town called Paradise.

MICHELLE

(dreamy)
Paradise.

HUBBELL

It's on the coast. Right near the ocean. So, it's always breezy. And my house is the best house on the street. It's up on a bluff with big trees in the back yard...

MICHELLE

For the woodland creatures to play in.

HUBBELL

And my favorite room in house is my bed room.

MICHELLE

Well, yeah. Cause of sex.

HUBBELL

Well, no, I mean, yes, but in my bedroom there is this huge picture window the whole length of the room and all you see when you look out is the beautiful blue ocean.

MICHELLE

(entranced by his story)

Wow.

(beat)

I live next door to a hooker.

HUBBELL

Michelle, I know you don't know me from Adam....

MICHELLE

I've never understood what that meant...

HUBBELL

But, I want to take care of you.

MICHELLE

That's so nice.

(to a passing couple)

Isn't that nice?

(to Hubbell)

Do we know them?

Hubbell takes her hand.

HUBBELL

Michelle, let me take care of you.

MICHELLE

I don't understand what you...

HUBBELL

Marry me.

MICHELLE

(she finally gets it)

Oh. Hubbell. No.

HUBBELL

I can make you happy.

MICHELLE

You don't understand. I suck at relationships. I'm like Godzilla. Men run from me. They flee.

(MORE)

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

And not just Japanese men. All nationalities flee.

HUBBELL

I won't flee.

MICHELLE

Buy some comfortable shoes.

HUBBELL

(firmly)

I promise you, I won't flee. I'll be the one scientist who understands you. The one who knows that you're not burning down Japan because you're evil, you're burning down Japan to protect the giant lizard eggs you just laid in a cave by the ocean. A cave no one knows is there. But me.

MICHELLE

(overwhelmed)

God, that's beautiful.

HUBBELL

No. You're beautiful. And you deserve to be happy. What do you say?

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. HUBBELL'S CAR - MORNING

Michelle's head hang out of an open window. Her hair blows wildly and last nights make-up is smeared all over her face. She slowly wakes, blinks in the sunlight, and tries to remember where she is. She glances over and sees Hubbell happily driving. She lifts her left hand. A tiny diamond ring glitters on her ring finger. It's all coming back. She drops her head back down and stares out the window.

WE CUT WIDE to see Hubbell's Volvo driving up the California coast as we:

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. FLOWER'S DANCE ACADEMY - DAY

We push in on a converted barn surrounded by trees and flowers. Cheery and weathered, a sign outside reads "Falls Dance Academy". Piano music drifts out of the studio.

INT. FLOWERS DANCE ACADAMY - CONTINUOUS

A large well-worn room with mirrors and barres on every wall. An older distinguished man plays piano as a roomful of girls, ages thirteen to seventeen, go through their barre routine.

FANNY (O.C.)
Grand battements and other side.

The whole room turns and begins the other side.

ANGLE ON: the feet of the dancers. Some in Pointe shoes, some in regular ballet shoes, as they point and work. A pair of bright red character shoes walk into frame, the person wearing them has a cane that pounds out the beat of the music. We PAN UP the back of the teacher and see the faces of the girls she's teaching.

FANNY (CONT'D)
And posse, knees out, higher
please...shoulders Melanie...

She passes MELANIE SEGAL 15, super skinny, too tall for her age, has some posture issues.

FANNY (CONT'D)
...Extend out...lovely, Sasha...

She passes SASHA TORRES, 17, perfect. Perfect body, extension, technique. The only thing she doesn't have is the soul of a dancer. The spark. The fire.

FANNY (CONT'D)
...Lift higher...po-po in, Boo!

The cane raps BETTINA "BOO" JORDAN, 15, on the butt. Boo is a little tubby, not fat, but compared to the others, she feels huge. Plus she wears a leotard with a dancing "Snoopy" on the stomach which doesn't help matters much. Boo idolizes Sasha and would give anything to be able to do what she does. She does not have the body, but she has the heart.

FANNY (CONT'D)
 ...Lift the knees...where are you
 looking Ginny?

GINNY THOMPSON, 14, snaps her gaze back from the mirror. She used to be the best in the class until she stopped growing up and her boobs started growing out.

FANNY (CONT'D)
 ... And grand battement...other
 side. Hold.

The room switches sides. The teacher turns and we meet FANNY FLOWERS. A handsome, timeless woman, dressed in flowing skirts and shawls, a scarf wrapped theatrically around her head. She looks like a high end gypsy. She is imperious, theatrical, a queen and this is her kingdom. She holds up her hand dramatically. The music stops. No one breathes.

FANNY (CONT'D)
 And - sixteen grand battements.
 One! Two! Three!

The girls kick their legs up as high as they can. All faces red from effort except for Sasha who doesn't have to try. Her perfect leg seems to float up to her ear. She almost looks like she's going to yawn.

FANNY (CONT'D)
 (moving over the piano)
 ...Fifteen, sixteen - hold...

Legs are held in the air. They shake, some drop, until...

FANNY (CONT'D)
 And relax. Everyone on the floor.

A loud collective sigh of relief.

FANNY (CONT'D)
 Oh please. Mr. Balanchine once made us do grande battements for two and a half hours until was satisfied. He only stopped when three of the dancers fainted. One never returned. She went to work at Macy's.

Fanny sits on the piano bench next to MICHAEL RIMBAUD, her longtime friend, pianist and, the rumor is, one time lover.

MICHAEL
 (sotto to Fanny)
 Is that true?

FANNY

No. It was Bloomingdales. But
Macy's sounds so much more
depressing.

(to the class)

Alright. Everyone stretch.

The girls move to the middle of the room. Sasha lays down
and casually pulls her leg up over her head. Boo looks at
the leg jealously.

BOO

I started stretching every night.
I'll be able to do that soon.

SASHA

I'll alert the media.

Sasha holds her foot and rolls over into the splits. She
lays her head down on her knee like she could sleep there.

BOO

Oh, now you're just showing off.

SASHA

It's just a stretch, Boo. So, you
don't have extension. You can
jump.

BOO

Boys jump.

MELANIE

So, be a boy. Ballet always needs
boys.

BOO

Funny, Melanie.

GINNY

At least you don't have to wear two
bras under your leotard.

MELANIE

You really wear two bras?

GINNY

I don't want to talk about it.

MELANIE

You brought it up.

Sasha sits up in her split, bends her back knee, arches back
and touches her foot to her head.

BOO
 (sighs)
 I'm think I'm going to be sick.

EXT. PARADISE - SAME TIME

Hubbell's car drives through the streets.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

Michelle gazes out the window at her new home town. Blue collar is the polite way of putting it. There's a hodgepodge of houses with the occasional trailer and mobile home thrown in. An older woman in a straw hat and a pig on a leash frowns as she watches the car drive past. Michelle glances over at Hubbell. He looks at her and beams. She turns back to the window.

MICHELLE
 (sotto)
 And I've moved to green acres.

HUBBELL
 What was that sweetheart?

MICHELLE
 (a la Eva Gabor)
 Nothing Dahling.

INT. FLOWERS DANCE ACADAMY - A LITTLE LATER

The class is finishing up their floor combination. Sasha is front and center and Boo is hidden in the back. They finish the and immediately go into their reverence (the bows at the end of class). They all hold -

FANNY
 And, thank you ladies.

The girls applaud.

FANNY (CONT'D)
 Now before you go, we still have not found the missing tutu. If we do not find it by the 15th we will have to cut the Sugarplum Fairy out of the Nutcracker which will make us look ridiculous. Check your brothers' closets. That's how we found the black swan costume last year.

(MORE)

FANNY (CONT'D)

Also, next week Anna Cheselka, the head of the Joffrey school of ballet, will be coming here to hold auditions for their summer scholarship program. This is a prestigious program and I want all of you who participate to be at your best. Do not humiliate me. I am old. Any shock could kill me. The sign up sheet's on the wall.

The girls head off to the dressing room. Boo goes up to Ginny, Melanie, and Sasha.

BOO

Ginny, are you going to sign up?

GINNY

No.

BOO

Why?

GINNY

There's no way I'll get in.

BOO

You're a really good dancer.

GINNY

They want bodies like Sasha. I'm going to end up selling real estate like my mother.

Boo looks over at Sasha. Then back to Ginny.

BOO

You think I should try out?

MELANIE

Not in a Snoopy leotard.

BOO

I'm talking to Ginny.

SASHA

Try out. Don't try out. Who cares? It's school. A whole summer of school. That's fun.

BOO

But, you're going to try out, right?

SASHA

It's not like I've got anything
better to do.

Sasha heads off. Melanie and Ginny follow. Boo hangs back eyeing the sign up sheet.

INT. HUBBELL'S HOUSE - SAME TIME

The front door opens. Hubbell and Michelle stand there.

HUBBELL

This is it. Our home.

MICHELLE

Huh.

Beat. She makes no move to go in.

HUBBELL

(gently taking her arm)
Shall we?

Hubbell walks Michelle into the room. The place is homey, too much furniture, a lot of color, and hundreds of little statues, all with faces. Frog faces, dog faces, glittery saxophone playing clown faces - stuffed animals are big, too.

HUBBELL (CONT'D)

It's a little eclectic, I know. I
let my mother decorate the place.

MICHELLE

How very Graceland of you.

HUBBELL

Well, she enjoys things being a bit
theatrical. Dramatic. There's a
lot of...well, you'll just have to
meet her for yourself.

MICHELLE

I can not wait.

She wanders into the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Michelle peeks her head in.

MICHELLE

Wow. That's a lot of cookie jars.

HUBBELL
 (appearing in the doorway
 behind her)
 They're from all over the world.
 Mother traveled.

MICHELLE
 Sure.

HUBBELL
 You hungry?

MICHELLE
 Nope. Not hungry. Just a
 little...

She knocks over a home made shrine set up on a side table.
 Incense and statues go flying everywhere.

HUBBELL
 Mother's a Buhddist.
 (takes her hand)
 Come on.

INT. HUBBELLS HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Hubbell leads her down a hallway that has pictures covering
 the walls literally from floor to ceiling.

MICHELLE
 The whole house is looking at me.

Hubbell stops in front of a door.

HUBBELL
 This is our room.

Michelle braces herself. Hubbell opens the door.

INT. HUBBELL'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

It's like she walked into another dimension. Open, airy,
 tastefully decorated, and best of all, floor to ceiling
 windows that have perfect unobstructed views of the ocean.
 Michelle wanders over to the window and opens it. The ocean
 breeze feels amazing on her face. She sinks down into the
 window seat and stares at the water.

MICHELLE
 Oh Hubbell.

HUBBELL
 You like it?

MICHELLE
I could sit here forever.

HUBBELL
That's my plan.

Michelle smiles at him. A genuine smile.

MICHELLE
You didn't let your mother take a crack at this room, huh?

HUBBELL
No. She got the rest of the house. This is mine.

MICHELLE
Well, I can see why you love it.

HUBBELL
You're going to love it, also.

MICHELLE
Yeah. If I never leave this chair.

HUBBELL
Hey, this is your house now. We can do whatever you want to make it comfortable.

MICHELLE
Really? Can we get rid of the -

FANNY (O.C.)
What?

Startled, Michelle and Hubbell turn to find Fanny standing in the doorway.

HUBBELL
Mom!

FANNY
Yes. Mom. I'm here. Who's this?

HUBBELL
This is Michelle.

MICHELLE
Namaste.

FANNY
What?

MICHELLE
Cause you're...Buddah.

HUBBELL
Ist.

MICHELLE
Ist. Buddhist.

FANNY
Well, hello Michelle. I am Fanny.
Hubbell's mother. What was it in
my house you wanted to get rid of?

MICHELLE
Your house?
(to Hubbell)
Her house?

HUBBELL
Our house actually.

MICHELLE
Our house? Like...
(motioning to herself,
Hubbell, and Fanny)
...our house?

FANNY
No like...
(motions to herself and
Hubbell)
...Our house.

MICHELLE
But...you live with your mother?
Like a serial killer?

HUBBELL
Michelle, could I just have a
second with Mom please?

MICHELLE
Yes. I'll just be...somewhere.

FANNY
Don't throw anything out.

Michelle leaves. Fanny turns to face Hubbell.

FANNY (CONT'D)
Something to tell me, dear?

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Michelle stands in the hall not sure where to go. She glances at the pictures. Many of them are of a young ballerina. Publicity stills. She looks closely for a beat.

FANNY (O.C.)
You what?!!!!!!!

Michelle runs off down the hall.

EXT. HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Michelle bolts out the back door. The sounds of Fanny and Hubbell arguing waft after her. She looks around and notices a structure behind the house. She strolls past the sign announcing "Flower's Dance Academy" and up to the open door and peers in. Inside she sees Boo working on her arabesque. She's not having much luck. She teeters and falls. She tries again. Sasha and Melanie comes out of the dressing room dressed in their street clothes.

SASHA
Class is over, Boo.

BOO
Five minutes.

MELANIE
Five minutes is not going to help.

BOO
(does another arabesque)
How does it look?

SASHA
I'm starving.

BOO
Is my line long?

MELANIE
There's a mirror right there.

BOO
If I look I'll fall.

SASHA
Let's get pizza.

BOO
Just look first.

The girls look. Sasha shrugs.

BOO (CONT'D)
I don't know what you did. What
did you do?

MICHELLE
You have to square off your
shoulders.

Melanie and Sasha suddenly notice Michelle in the doorway.

BOO
Who said that? Who's talking?

MICHELLE
Your right shoulder's pulled too
far back. Square it off.

Boo shifts her shoulder forward. Her arabesque steadies.

BOO
Hey! It's working!

MELANIE
(whispers to Sasha)
Who's that?

Sasha shrugs.

MICHELLE
Now lift your leg a little higher,
chin up, and walla.

BOO
(whirls around happily)
That was so cool. It was like,
suddenly I could hold it!

MICHELLE
That's how it works. One day it
just clicks.

BOO
That was so satisfying.
(beat)
Who are you?

MICHELLE
Oh, well I am...

Fanny appears at the door.

FANNY
She is my daughter-in-law. Aren't
you?

MICHELLE

Uh...

FANNY

Well, at least according to my son
and my son never lies.

(to the girls)

They got married in Las Vegas.
Isn't that romantic?

(to Michelle)

Did Elvis do the ceremony?

MICHELLE

No.

FANNY

Wayne Newton?

MICHELLE

No.

FANNY

Charo?

MICHELLE

Just the guy who owned the drive-
through.

FANNY

Well, I see you're a very
traditional girl. Anyhow, girls
I'd like you to meet -

(to Michelle)

What's your name?

MICHELLE

Michelle.

FANNY

Michelle. Like Madonna. And
Michelle, meet some of the girls in
my advanced class. Sasha, Melanie,
Ginny, and Boo.

MICHELLE

Hey here.

FANNY

Now, if you'll excuse us, we have a
lot to do.

(to Michelle)

I have decided to throw you a
little "welcome to the family"
party tonight.

MICHELLE

Oh, that's not...

FANNY

I've already called everyone, told them to spread the word, you're welcome. Of course, you girls are all invited too.

The girls seem genuinely pleased.

MICHELLE

Oh no. You guys don't have to come. You'll be so bored.

GINNY

No, we won't.

MICHELLE

It's just a bunch of old people.
(off Fanny's look)
Including me. I'm an oldie too.

SASHA

Do you not want us to come?

MICHELLE

Well, first of all, I don't know you. Second, it's Saturday night. Don't you have like young people Saturday night stuff to do?

BOO

No.

MICHELLE

Really?

BOO

Not since the movie theatre closed.

MICHELLE

Wait. There's no movie theatre in this town?

MELANIE

It's not so bad. They open the skating rink in November.

GINNY

And sometimes Mr. Feldstein forgets to lock the library door and we go in and read.

BOO
Yeah, that's cool.

TINA
Or we just hang here.

MICHELLE
(beat)
You're all screwing with me, right?

FANNY
Paradise is a sleepy town. But we love it. And I'm sure you will too.

MICHELLE
Uh huh. So, I'm sorry, how far away is the nearest movie theatre?

FANNY
(to the girls)
Okay, girls go home and get pretty we'll see you back here at six.

The girls hurry off.

FANNY (CONT'D)
Now, I have to see about some champagne. Paradise is dry so I have to figure out who stockpiles.

MICHELLE
Dry?

FANNY
Don't worry. I promise you'll have something bubbly at your party.

MICHELLE
Fanny, I really don't need a party.

FANNY
My son just got married. I didn't get to be at the ceremony so I'd like to be at the party.

MICHELLE
Sure.

FANNY
You understand?

MICHELLE
I do.

FANNY

You approve?

MICHELLE

Of course.

FANNY

Because, God forbid I offend you.

MICHELLE

I am not offended.

FANNY

You're not offended that I want to throw you a wedding party after missing the wedding? Oh thank goodness. Now you go get changed and I will see to everything else.

MICHELLE

Oh. Uh, I don't really have anything else to wear.

FANNY

You must've packed something that works.

(beat)

You must've packed.

(beat)

Goodness. You're not pregnant are you?

MICHELLE

No! No, no, no. Not pregnant. We just got so carried away in the moment that I didn't think about clothes. Is there someplace around here that I could buy something?

FANNY

Absolutely. Just go down the street here and make a right and look for a store called Sparkles.

MICHELLE

Okay. Thanks. I'll go now.

She starts off down the street. Fanny's smile fades as we:

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

EXT. PARADISE TOWN CENTER - A LITTLE LATER

Michelle wanders down the sidewalk staring at the various mom and pop stores, interspersed with crap stores, and the "gone out of business" stores. Sleepy doesn't describe it. Comatose is more like it. Michelle sees the big "SPARKLES" sign which is actually missing most of its sparkles.

INT. SPARKLES - CONTINUOUS

A room full of handmade clothing and trinkets. Michelle looks around. TRULY STONE, small mousy perpetually depressed and ironically owner of a place called "Sparkles" comes over.

TRULY

I'm Truly. Can I help you?

MICHELLE

Oh. No. I'm just looking for something. A dress.

Truly holds up a dress.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

Oh. I'm not a duck person but it's great. Really.

Truly puts the dress back.

TRULY

Is there something specific you're looking for?

MICHELLE

A dress. It's for a party.

TRULY

Birthday party? Graduation party?

MICHELLE

Wedding party, actually. My wedding. So something black, with a veil.

Truly whirls around.

TRULY

You're her.

MICHELLE

I'm...

TRULY

(welling up)

You're the pole dancer from Reno.

MICHELLE

I'm not a pole dancer. Who told you I was a pole dancer?

TRULY

They said you weren't pretty.

(tears starting to slide
down her cheeks)

You weren't supposed to be pretty.

MICHELLE

Wait. Don't cry. Please.

A WOMAN, SAM, DRESSED COMPLETELY IN DUCKS comes out of the back room.

SAM

Truly? Are you okay? What's the matter?

(sees Michelle)

Oh God. It's the stripper from Tahoe.

MICHELLE

I'm not a stripper.

TRULY

She's pretty, Sam. She wasn't supposed to be pretty.

SAM

She's not pretty.

TRULY

She is.

SAM

Well, it's a manufactured pretty. It's a kit. A pretty kit.

MICHELLE

Okay. I'm going to go.

TRULY

You can't go. You need something for your party.

MICHELLE
Look, It's fine...

TRULY
It's not fine. This wedding party,
it's for you and Hubbell, right?

MICHELLE
Uh...yes.

TRULY
This is the first time he's
introducing you to the world as his
wife, he can't see you in a tank
top and shorts.

MICHELLE
Well, he's already seen me pee
behind a cactus in Pahrump so I
don't think a little casualwear is
gonna kill the deal now.

TRULY
Wait here.

MICHELLE
It's okay really -

TRULY
(exploding)
You took the one man I've ever
loved in my life so the least you
can do is wait!!!! Here!!!!!!

Truly storms off to the back room. Michelle stands there,
Sam staring at her with hate in her eyes.

MICHELLE
It was Vegas, by the way. Not
Tahoe.

SAM
No one cares.

MICHELLE
Right.

Truly comes back out holding a little black dress.

TRULY
Here.

MICHELLE

(genuine)

Oh wow. This is, forgive the pun,
truly beautiful.

TRULY

I know.

SAM

She knows.

MICHELLE

Could I try it on?

TRULY

It will fit. I made it so I know.
It will fit and it's going to look
really good on you cause you're
tall and you have really long legs.
Do you need shoes?

Michelle looks at her guiltily. Truly's eyes well up again.

TRULY (CONT'D)

Follow me.

Truly heads off.

MICHELLE

(to Sam)

It was nice meeting you.

SAM

I'll be at the party tonight.

MICHELLE

Really. Okay. There's something
very John Hughes-y about this
situation don't you think?

Truly comes back holding a pair of pumps.

TRULY

How do want to pay for this?

MICHELLE

In dollar bills and chlamydia.
(off the horrified looks)
Visa. Visa'a good too.

EXT. HUBBELL'S HOUSE - EVENING

The place looks festive. A banner reading "Congratulations
Hubbell" hangs above the front door.

INT. LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME

The room is crowded. People snack on Ritz crackers and white wine. Sasha, Boo, and Ginny sit on a couch. Boo eyes the crackers on the table. Ginny eyes her own chest.

GINNY

I swear they're bigger today than yesterday.

Sasha grabs a handful of crackers and starts eating. Boo watches jealously.

SASHA

I think you have an unhealthy obsession with your boobs.

GINNY

I know. Just like my mother.

Sasha notices Boo watching her eat.

SASHA

(holds out a cracker)
You want?

BOO

No. I'm on a diet. The Joffrey auditions are next week.

SASHA

How much thinner are you going to be in a week?

BOO

I don't know. Thinner.

Sasha shrugs and stuffs the rest of the crackers in her mouth.

SASHA

I'm bored. I'm going to find beer.

Sasha gets up and heads off. Boo looks after her.

GINNY

(sighs)
I couldn't have gotten my mother's nose.

Melanie comes over.

MELANIE

Sorry I'm late. Where's Sasha?

BOO
She's looking for beer.

MELANIE
Oh. Cool.

Melanie trots off.

INT. DANCE STUDIO - SAME TIME

Fanny paces back and forth, clearly agitated. Michael comes in dressed in a suit complete with ascot.

MICHAEL
You know the party and the people
are in the house.

FANNY
My darling Hubbell. He goes out to
work and brings home Heidi Fleiss.

MICHAEL
You're his mother. You're supposed
to hate his wife.

FANNY
I just don't understand why she's
with him. Any girl who wears her
shorts that short usually wants a
rapper.

Fanny looks at herself in the mirror.

FANNY (CONT'D)
God, I'm old.

MICHAEL
And on that note I am going to go
get a glass of that cheap wine
you're serving. Are you coming?

FANNY
In a minute.

Michael exits off. Fanny looks at herself in the mirror. She does a little dance step. She still looks good. She smiles a little to herself.

BOO (O.C.)
Madame Fanny?

Fanny turns to see Boo in the doorway.

FANNY

Yes, Boo?

BOO

Can I ask you something?

FANNY

You can.

BOO

Well, about the Joffrey auditions next week, I was thinking I was going to try out, so I wanted to ask you...should I?

FANNY

Well, it certainly can't hurt.

BOO

I know but, should I? I mean, am I wasting my time?

Fanny looks at her sympathetically.

BOO (CONT'D)

I mean, if I could dance like Sasha...I know I can turn and jump, but I'm not a boy, so I just thought I'd ask...I should I? Try?

FANNY

(beat)

Ballet is very hard, Boo. And a lot of it does depend on how you're made. You have to be realistic. You're not tall, you have a tummy, your feet are terrible...

BOO

Okay. Thank you.

FANNY

But none of that means you shouldn't try. Right?

Boo nods sadly.

FANNY (CONT'D)

Now, if you'll excuse me I should probably make my appearance. I'll see you inside?

Fanny heads out. Boo stares at herself in the mirror.

INT. HUBBELL'S ROOM - SAME TIME

Michelle stands in front of a mirror wearing the dress. It's perfect.

MICHELLE

She was right, the little freak.
Okay. Here goes nothing.

Michelle walks out of the room.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The room is lively. Lots of chatter. Michelle appears in the doorway and looks for Hubbell. She starts to make her way into the room. As she does the chatter subsides. By the time she hits the table with the wine the room is silent, staring at her. She smiles, pours herself a plastic cup of wine. She lifts her cup to the room then takes a sip and almost chokes on it.

MICHELLE

(coughing up wine)
Oh God, this is terrible.

HUBBELL (O.C.)

There she is!

MICHELLE

Hubbell! Thank God.

Hubbell comes up to her and she throws her arms around him.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

I've never been so happy to see anyone in my entire life. Where have you been? People are staring and pointing and this wine, have you had this wine?

HUBBELL

My mother is kind of known for her cheap booze. It reminds her of her gypsy days touring with the Ballet Russe. Wow. That is some dress.

MICHELLE

Yeah?

HUBBELL

You look so beautiful.

MICHELLE

You look nice too.

HUBBELL

Okay, well, let me introduce you to everyone.

(to the room)

Everyone, this is my wife.

(he laughs)

I can't believe I get to say that. My wife. Anyhow, this is my wife, Michelle. Michelle this is everyone.

The room murmurs their "hello's".

MICHELLE

Hey, there everybody.

Sobbing is heard from the back of the room.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

Hi Truly.

A "hi" is sobbed back.

HUBBELL

I'm sure Michelle will make her way around the room eventually, we have all evening. But I just want to say, thank you all for coming and some better wine is on the way.

A chorus of "Thank God's" rumble through the room. Fanny sweeps in.

FANNY

Well, I am insulted. What is wrong with my wine? It has a nun on the label and everything.

HUBBELL

Hello mother.

Fanny kisses Hubbell.

FANNY

So? How do you like your party?

HUBBELL

It's a great party.

MICHELLE

Good turnout.

FANNY

Well, it's not everyday we have a Playboy playmate in our midst.

MICHELLE

Yeah, I'm not a...

FANNY

That is some dress. Truly has outdone herself. You met Truly?

MICHELLE

I did.

FANNY

You know she and Hubbell used to date.

HUBBELL

Mother...

FANNY

Oh honey, it was going to come out eventually. Let's see, that man is my oldest friend and pianist Michael Rimbaud. So handsome.

(walks her to a couple)

And these my are my next door neighbors Mel and Sissy Gordon.

SISSY

Tell me, is Hugh Hefner nice?

MICHELLE

(beat, then:)

Yes he is.

FANNY

(pointing)

That's Joseph Roo, Nina Smalls, oh and that's Rene Lewis, she owns a lovely restaurant on Whipple if you like beets. Now, over there is...

MICHELLE

Uh, you know, I'm sorry. I think I...I need to get a little air.

Michelle hurries off. Hubbell follows after her.

INT. HUBBELL'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Michelle flies in and rushes to the picture window and collapses down on the window seat. Hubbell comes in.

HUBBELL
Michelle? Hey. You alright?

MICHELLE
This is a really beautiful view.
You said it was a beautiful view
and it is.

HUBBELL
I'm glad you like it.

MICHELLE
But you didn't tell me you lived
with your mother.

HUBBELL
I know.

MICHELLE
And I mean, you really live with
your mother. She's everywhere.
It's her house.

HUBBELL
It's my house. I paid for it. I
bought it.

MICHELLE
She has a dance studio in the back.
Her whole life is here. You didn't
tell me any of that.

HUBBELL
I was so stunned when you said yes
I didn't want to jinx it.

MICHELLE
Well, that's a big thing to keep
from someone. And you have this
whole town, and friends, and
Truly's got some serious "I'm
driving cross country in diapers to
kill you" potential. And your
mother just hates me.

HUBBELL
She's proud. She's hurt. She'll
come around. She just...

MICHELLE
(beat, softly)
I don't love you, Hubbell. I'm so
sorry, but I don't. I've never
loved anybody, really.

(MORE)

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

I'm just not made that way. And you are so wonderful. You deserve to have someone love you.

HUBBELL

I know you don't love me. I'm not an idiot. But I don't believe you're not made that way.

MICHELLE

Hubbell...

HUBBELL

You want to love. You just haven't found the right person yet. Maybe you don't trust that anybody is going to understand you. Well, I do. I know exactly what you want. You want to laugh. You want to travel. You want to be surprised. Challenged. You want to live an unexpected life. And I intend to give you exactly that.

MICHELLE

Wow. Good speech.

Hubbell takes her in his arms and kisses her.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

Wow. Good kiss.

Hubbell pulls her back in and they kiss again.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

Where did you learn to kiss like that? Oh God, don't say your mother...

He kisses her again. This time she kisses him back. They slide off the seat and sink to the ground as we:

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

INT. LIVING ROOM - A LITTLE WHILE LATER

The party is still going strong. Fanny has been cornered by Truly.

TRULY

You hire that girl to jump out of a cake. You don't marry her.

FANNY

Well, Hubbell has some quirky ways.

TRULY

But, I make dresses, he sells shoes...I mean...

FANNY

I know.

TRULY

I just...

FANNY

I know.

TRULY

We're so...

FANNY

Truly. Listen to me. This won't last. I'm telling you. That girl is too fast for Hubbell. He will bore her. Mark my words.

TRULY

How do you know that?

FANNY

Because, he's boring. She's a Vegas girl. Give it time. She'll be high tailing it out of here as fast as those freakishly long legs will take her. And then you'll be here waiting I assume?

TRULY

Of course.

FANNY

Well then, dry your tears and get
some more wine.

Suddenly Michelle and Hubbell burst into the room. They are smiling, laughing, their hair's mussed up. It's very clear what they've been doing. The room erupts in whispers.

MICHELLE

Wow, party's still happening huh?
(sotto to Hubbell)
Did the new wine show up yet?

HUBBELL

Let's go check.

ANGLE ON: FANNY FROWNING AT HER SON AND MICHELLE

FANNY

Will you excuse me, Truly?

Fanny heads over to the happy couple.

ANGLE ON: MICHELLE AND Hubbell

They are at the wine table looking for the good stuff.

HUBBELL

Yes. Here we go. No nuns.

FANNY

Whoo-hoo.

Fanny comes up.

FANNY (CONT'D)

(under her breath)

What do you two think you're doing?

HUBBELL

We are about to toast our wedding.

MICHELLE

And not do a spit take after.

FANNY

(leans in, whispers angry)

Have you had sex?

MICHELLE

(whispers back)

Ever?

FANNY
 (still whispering)
 Don't be smart.

HUBBELL
 Mom, that's none of your business.

FANNY
 (exploding)
 This is my party! I did not throw
 this party so the two of you could
 have sex during it!

MICHELLE
 (looking around
 uncomfortable as people
 stare)
 Okay, so we've clearly dropped the
 whispering...

FANNY
 Oh, are you embarrassed? Am I
 embarrassing you by announcing to
 the room that you have just had sex
 with my son? You think they don't
 know? That they can't tell? Your
 dress is on backwards!

HUBBELL
 Okay, you need to calm down...

FANNY
 I need to calm down? Oh that's
 rich. You go off on a -
 (air quotes)
 "Business trip"...

MICHELLE
 Completely wrong use of air
 quotes...

FANNY
 And you come back and say to me,
 "here's the cheese you asked me to
 pick up in Baker and oh, I got
 married"!

HUBBELL
 I'm sorry.

FANNY
 And then you bring her in here and
 she proceeds to parade around, in
 shorts....

MICHELLE

What do you have against shorts?

FANNY

No real lady wears shorts.

MICHELLE

In what century are we having this conversation?

FANNY

Oh, my god! The quips. The chatter. Do you ever just shut up?

HUBBELL

Mother!

Michelle stares at her a beat then turns and storms out of the house.

HUBBELL (CONT'D)

Now you listen to me, you can all listen to me, that woman is my wife. I am sorry if I didn't break it to you the way you would've liked, but this is my house and I will not have her talked to like that by you or by anyone in this town! Got it?!

Hubbell glares at the room and then heads off passing Truly.

TRULY

God. He's wonderful.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Hubbell angrily goes to the fridge. Fanny enters.

FANNY

Looking for the pie to throw in my face?

Hubbell sighs.

FANNY (CONT'D)

I mean, you've done everything else to humiliate me today.

HUBBELL

(slams the fridge shut)
Why is there never any food in this damn house?

FANNY
Hubbell!

HUBBELL
(whirls around on her)
I love her. Do you hear me?

FANNY
You don't know her.

HUBBELL
I love her.

FANNY
You just think --

HUBBELL
I love her.

Fanny realizes he's serious.

HUBBELL (CONT'D)
Nothing more to say.

INT. DANCE STUDIO - A LITTLE WHILE LATER

Sasha, Melanie, and Ginny sit in the middle of the room with a six pack of beer that Sasha has snagged. Boo is practicing dance steps around them.

SASHA
I think my dad's gay.

MELANIE
Based on what?

SASHA
(shrugs)
Just a feeling.

GINNY
More dads are these days.

MELANIE
I'd love to have a gay dad.

GINNY
Why?

MELANIE
Just seems fun. Like there would be a lot of shopping and baking.

GINNY
You have no idea what you're
talking about.

SASHA
Boo! Beer!

BOO
No thanks.

SASHA
More for me.

BOO
You're going to make yourself sick.

SASHA
Am I?
(hands her beer to Ginny)
Hold please.

Sasha gets up, faces Boo, takes fifth position, preps and
does a perfect triple pirouette, finishes and smiles.

SASHA (CONT'D)
Two beers I can still do that.
What about you?

BOO
You're a mean drunk.

SASHA
I'm not drunk. I'm bored. This
town is --
(yells)
So boring!!

GINNY
Maybe. But the property values are
going through the roof.

SASHA
(sighs)
I have to get some new friends.

EXT. DANCE STUDIO - SAME TIME

Michelle wanders up. She hears the girls talking inside.

MELANIE (O.C.)
Well, why don't you suck up to
Hubbell's wife? She can be your
new friend.

SASHA (O.C.)
 God, I can't believe someone
 married Hubbell. Talk about too
 many beers.

GINNY (O.C.)
 What's wrong with Hubbell?

INT. DANCE STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

SASHA
 His hair looks like it's on
 backwards.

MELANIE
 Oh my god. It totally does.

The door swings open. The girls jump.

MICHELLE
 Hiya gals!

The girls look around guiltily.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)
 Having a little private party? Can
 I crash?

Michelle takes the beer out of Sasha's hand and looks at it.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)
 (feigning disappointment)
 Domestic? Really? See, if you're
 going to consume totally empty and
 might I add illegal calories then
 at least it should be imported.
 Something Belgian perhaps.

Michelle grabs the rest of the six pack, takes a swig of
 Sasha's beer and studies the room.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)
 Cool pictures. Hey, is this you
 guys?

The girls all look at each other.

BOO
 That's the Christmas recital.

MICHELLE
 Nice. Are you dressed as...socks?

GINNY

It was an original ballet based on really bad gifts.

MICHELLE

Fanny's a little twisted. You gotta give her that.

GINNY

So, we heard you're a dancer.

MICHELLE

(surprised)
You did?

MELANIE

Are you?

MICHELLE

I am.

BOO

Where do you dance?

MICHELLE

Well, until yesterday, Vegas.

SASHA

You were a showgirl?

MICHELLE

Yep.

SASHA

So you walked around with feathers on your head?

MICHELLE

Okay, "A" I did not walk, I danced, and "B", there were a lot of feathers on my head. Like a flock full. And you think a double pirouette is hard in point shoes...

SASHA

You can do a double pirouette?

MICHELLE

I trained at ABT.

The girls look at her surprised.

GINNY

You do ballet?

MICHELLE
Ever since I was three.

MELANIE
How did you end up in Vegas?

MICHELLE
It paid better.

SASHA
So, not in it for the art of it,
huh?

BOO
(softly)
Why are you being so mean?
(to Michelle)
I think Vegas sounds exciting.

MICHELLE
It has a lot of Victoria's Secrets.

MELANIE
You're the first professional
dancer I've ever met. Except for
Fanny.

GINNY
Fanny danced with Ballet Russe de
Monte Carlo.

BOO
(points to a picture on
the wall)
That's her in Copellia.
(fixated on the picture)
I think being a ballerina is the
most wonderful thing in the world.

MICHELLE
You want to be a bunhead, huh?

BOO
Next week they're having auditions
for the Joffrey summer program.

SASHA
God, I'm so tired of hearing about
the Joffrey summer blah, blah,
blah....

BOO

(getting angry)

That's 'cause you'll almost definitely get in. I'd give anything to get accepted but I won't.

MICHELLE

Why not?

BOO

Look at me.

MICHELLE

Well, auditions are tricky. Do you have a good audition outfit?

BOO

A what?

MICHELLE

You have to have a kick ass audition outfit, something that makes you feel really powerful. My go-to outfit was a fire engine red unitard, with a thin gold belt that had a tiny rhinestone charm hanging from it. Classy.

BOO

If I wore a red unitard I'd look like a crime scene.

MICHELLE

Everyone's outfit differs. It just has to make you feel strong. That's the key to any audition, you know. Attitude.

SASHA

She's talking about a ballet audition not a Vegas audition.

MICHELLE

An audition is an audition. You have to show up confident and ready to do or be anything they want in an instant. I once got a call to audition for a Broadway show. Totally last minute. I grabbed my bag, ran thirty blocks, walked in the door - it was for "Dreamgirls". I was supposed to be black.

GINNY

No way!

The girls all laugh.

BOO

What happened?

MICHELLE

I got a callback.

MELANIE

Shut up.

MICHELLE

Attitude my friends.

BOO

What exactly happens at an audition? I mean, what's it like?

MICHELLE

Well...it's...

The girls look at her expectantly. Even Sasha seems interested.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

Okay. Up. Everybody up.

The girls look at each other. Ginny and Melanie jump up. Boo excitedly joins them. Sasha stays seated.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

So, first we need...

She spots a post-it pad over on the small check in desk.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

Ah ha!

Michelle goes to the table and quickly writes something on four post-it's. She heads over to the girls.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

(bored assistant
choreographers voice)

All right ladies, welcome to the audition for the sequel to "Cats" working title "Dogs". Sorry about the sixteen hour wait in the alley. Didn't know it would rain. Friggin' weather channel.

GINNY
Sixteen hour wait?

MICHELLE
Every audition makes you wait at
least sixteen hours.

MELANIE
That's terrible.

MICHELLE
That's show biz. Okay, here you
go...
(she hands each girl a
post-it. Each post-it
has a number on it)
...That is your number. Put it on.
Your number is your name for the
duration for the audition. If we
call number "6" and you don't
answer because you are waiting to
hear "Kathy" you are out of luck.

BOO
This is inhuman.

MICHELLE
Okay, numbers on...
(holds the last post-it
out to Sasha)
You auditioning?

SASHA
This is stupid.

MICHELLE
If you're not auditioning get your
butt off my floor before someone
jete's through your head.

Sasha sighs and takes the post-it. She gets up.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)
Okay, places on the floor please.
Move, move, move.

The girls stick their numbers on and spread out on the floor.
They assume the positions they usually take during ballet
class. Sasha front and center, Melanie to her left, Ginny to
her right, and Boo in the back, hidden behind all of them.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)
(looking around)
Okay, music, music, music...ah!

She spots an ancient boom box and a pile of cd's.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)
 (off the boom box)
 Wow. Where's Shabba-doo when you
 need him?
 (flips through the cd's)
 Okay, what do we have here. No,
 no, no, no, bye...
 (tosses a cd over her
 shoulder)
 ...uch!
 (throws a CD in the trash)
 Oh! This will work.

She puts a CD in the boom box and presses "play". The Beatles "I SAW HER STANDING THERE" starts to play. Michelle takes her place in front of the group.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)
 A five, six, seven, eight!

Michelle dances out a few steps. She turns to them.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)
 Got it?

The girls just look at each other.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)
 Wow. Okay. One more time.

She does the steps again.

SASHA
 You have to slow it down.

MICHELLE
 Do I? I have a job. Okay, one
 time, half speed.

Michelle works out the routine half speed. The girls are starting to pick it up. Especially Boo.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)
 All right. From the top! A five,
 six, seven, eight!

With Michelle in front, they do the routine full speed. They are fairly successful.

Fanny appears in the door. They don't see her.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

That last turn is a double, and you have to give me an end. A real clean end. Got it? Good. This time by yourselves. Ready? Five, six, seven, eight!

The girls try it without Michelle. They are a little hesitant and super sloppy. Sasha especially seems to be having trouble remembering the routine.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

Oh my god. Terrible. Where's the attitude?

SASHA

It's too fast.

MICHELLE

It's as fast as it's supposed to be. Last time half speed.

ANGLE ON: FANNY WATCHING MICHELLE TAKE THESE KIDS THROUGH THE DANCE.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

Okay, now this one's for the job. Impress me! Five, six, seven, eight!

The girls dance the routine. This time with more confidence. All except Sasha. She's having trouble so she's pretending not to care, not really trying.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

Again!

They do the routine again. Fanny watches fascinated. This time Ginny forgets about her boob size. Melanie almost straightens up completely. But the revelation is Boo. She is nailing this routine. Michelle watches her.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

Okay! Better. Number 6!

The girls look at her confused.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

Yo! 6! Who's number six?

The girls remember to check their numbers.

BOO

Oh, me. I'm 6! I'm 6!

MICHELLE

Great. 6 up front, number 12, back where 6 was.

Boo looks around a beat. Sasha realizes she's number 12.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

Let's go girls. I have forty thousand people waiting outside in a tsunami.

SASHA

But...I did the whole thing that time.

MICHELLE

Just switching things up. 12 in back. Let's move.

A stunned Sasha moves to the back. Ginny and Melanie look at each other shocked. Sasha in the back, Boo in the front? What the hell is going on?

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

Okay! Everything you have! Five, six, seven, eight.

The girls dance their hearts out. Sasha frowns, suddenly dancing as hard as she can. For once she's really trying. And Boo beams. She's front and center for the first time ever and she earning every second of it.

The music ends and the girls hit their last poses.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

Great. Thank you, ladies. Leave your numbers at the door. We will call you. Or not. Yo, 6!

Boo comes up to her. Michelle grins at her.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

Joffrey's gonna get rocked next week.

Boo looks so happy she might cry.

BOO

(whispers)

Thank you.

Michelle notices Fanny standing at the door.

MICHELLE

You guys, you should get going now.

GINNY

That was fun!

Melanie, Ginny and Boo rush out.

MELANIE

Boo, you were so good!

BOO

I know, right?

Sasha grabs her shoes and turns to Michelle.

SASHA

Next week's audition is ballet.
With toe shoes. Totally different.

She storms out. Michelle looks at Fanny.

MICHELLE

I was just showing the girls what
it was like to audition.

FANNY

For what?

MICHELLE

"Dogs". It's a sequel to "Cats".
(beat)
I made it up.

FANNY

(beat)
Let's go.

MICHELLE

Go? Where?

Fanny's gone. Michelle looks after her confused.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

EXT. OYSTER SHACK BAR - NIGHT

We PUSH IN on a creaky crumbly but apparently hugely popular dive bar. Fanny, with Michelle in tow, marches right up to the enormous man perched on a stool outside the door. He opens it for her like she's the queen.

INT. OYSTER SHACK BAR - LATER

It's sticky, darkly lit, and not the place to order a mojito, but the jukebox is full and always on. Fanny and Michelle enter.

MICHELLE

What happened to this being a "dry" town?

FANNY

Who said that?

Fanny sits at the bar. Michelle sits next to her.

FANNY (CONT'D)

(to the bartender)

Sonya dear, two shots. Jack Daniels. And leave the bottle.

(to Michelle)

What's the matter?

MICHELLE

Nothing. This is just...weird.

FANNY

What, sitting here? You're used to dancing on top of the bar, is that it?

MICHELLE

Okay, see I was not a stripper. Or a hooker, or a Playmate.

FANNY

I know.

(beat)

I googled you.

MICHELLE

You did?

FANNY
You're surprised?

MICHELLE
Well, you have a boom box.

FANNY
I am not one of those old women who
can't use a computer.

MICHELLE
And that CD collection.

FANNY
What's wrong with my CD collection?

MICHELLE
So sad. You have got to give those
poor girls some better music or
there's going to be an uprising.

FANNY
Oh please.

MICHELLE
I'm just saying, it's Arab Spring
if you don't discover iTunes
pronto.

FANNY
I teach ballet. Classical ballet.
Those cd's are for fun.

Sonja pours two shots and leaves the bottle.

MICHELLE
What's fun about Rick Astly?

FANNY
You should've been a radio
personality. Or an auctioneer.
Instead you decided to dance.

She picks up her shot. Michelle follows suit.

FANNY (CONT'D)
To Hubbell.

MICHELLE
I will drink to that.

They knock them back. Fanny pours them two more.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)
You've done this before.

FANNY
Of course I have. There's no movie
theatre in this town.

They knock back the shots. Fanny pours them two more.

FANNY (CONT'D)
ABT. Full scholarship. Accepted
into the company at 17. Very
impressive.

MICHELLE
Thank you.

FANNY
And then after a few years you left
the company, did some chorus work
on Broadway, and then...Vegas.

MICHELLE
Yep.

FANNY
Did you get injured?

MICHELLE
No.

FANNY
Have a break-down?

MICHELLE
No.

FANNY
Double cross a bookie?

MICHELLE
I just...needed a change.

FANNY
So, you picked Vegas. That was
different.

Fanny tosses back another shot. She refills her glass.

MICHELLE
A friend of mine got a job at
Ceasers and asked if I wanted to
come along and I did. I thought it
would be temporary.
(MORE)

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

It was fun for a while. Dance,
party all night, sleep all day.
And then...

(she shrugs)

...Time slips away, you know?

FANNY

I do know. I know very well.

MICHELLE

I hear you danced with Ballet
Russe.

FANNY

I did. I was a soloist.

MICHELLE

That's amazing. When did you
retire?

FANNY

When I got pregnant.

MICHELLE

Oh. How very "Turning Point".

FANNY

It was unplanned, and I thought
well, I can go back after I have
the baby, but the father did not
decide to stay around and bills had
to be paid, so I started teaching
to make ends meet and...well, time
slips away, you know?

Michelle drinks her drink. Fanny fills her glass back up.

FANNY (CONT'D)

You squandered a lot of potential.

MICHELLE

I know.

FANNY

Are you sorry?

MICHELLE

Every day of my life. I was a
really stupid twenty year old.

FANNY

Everyone's stupid in their
twenties.

MICHELLE

No, I was really really stupid. I had all the gifts, all the tools, I just had absolutely no focus.

FANNY

Just like Sasha.

MICHELLE

Yeah, what's with that kid? She doesn't seem to like dancing at all.

FANNY

Sasha doesn't know what she likes. Her mother is, well, she travels a lot. And her father is gay.

MICHELLE

Really.

FANNY

He won't come out. He thinks it's a giant secret but everyone knows. It's too bad. There are some lovely single gay men in this town and Sasha would be so much happier if he smiled once in a while.

MICHELLE

Well, everyone in their own time, I guess.

FANNY

That's crap. Every moment you waste in life is a sin. Nothing waits for you. It all just moves on. Then you turn around one day and your son is married.

MICHELLE

Look how you brought that back around to me. Nice moves.

FANNY

Do you love him?

MICHELLE

He knows I don't.

FANNY

He thinks love will come.

MICHELLE

It could. He's a terrific guy.

FANNY

And what about you? Are you a terrific girl?

MICHELLE

I'm super handy around the house.

FANNY

That might be better than love, actually.

MICHELLE

I know you think I'm some flighty bimbo who's using your son and is going to break his heart.

FANNY

Okay.

MICHELLE

I didn't plan this. He just caught me at a really bad time. My career is pointless, my apartment is a nightmare, I'm sick of partying, I'm sick of Vegas. I'm sick of me, actually. I don't know what I'm doing, or where I'm going and he's just so kind. I've never had someone so kind in my life. I think I could fall in love with him. I'd sure like myself a lot more if I did.

FANNY

Have you ever thought about teaching?

MICHELLE

Teaching what?

FANNY

Dance?

MICHELLE

Uh no.

FANNY

I watched you with those kids. With Boo. It was something to see.

MICHELLE

Well, thanks but...

FANNY

My studio does not make a lot of money. Half the kids are on scholarship because their parents are out of work and I don't believe in turning anyone away who wants to dance. But, if I could add some classes, jazz, modern, maybe I could build it up a bit. I can't do that by myself. And since you will now be living here I thought maybe you'd like to contribute something. Think about it.

Fanny gets up, goes over to the jukebox, and picks a tune.

FANNY (CONT'D)

I love my son. I want him to be happy. So...

JIM CROCE'S "YOU DON'T MESS AROUND WITH JIM" plays.

FANNY (CONT'D)

...let's see if you and I can dance together.

MICHELLE

To this?

FANNY

(starting to dance)
I love Jim Croce.

MICHELLE

Okay, seriously, iTunes.

FANNY

Get over here right now.

Fanny takes Michelle's hands and starts to jitterbug.

FANNY (CONT'D)

My God, you're terrible at this.

MICHELLE

Well, you made me be the guy.

FANNY

Just follow me.

Michelle stares at Fanny's feet mimicking her.

FANNY (CONT'D)

(sings)

"You don't tug on Superman's cape,
you don't spit into the wind, you
don't pull the mask off the ol'
lone ranger and you don't mess
around with Jim"...

MICHELLE

Hey, I think I'm getting it.

She is. They are now dancing as a unit. And they look pretty damn good together. Other people have joined them on the dance floor. The place is starting to feel like a party.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

Maybe this is gonna work!

FANNY

Maybe!

MICHELLE

So tell me, that Michael guy, you two have some sort of creepy Sunset Boulevard thing going?

FANNY

Just dance please!

The door to the bar opens. The local CHIEF OF POLICE comes in followed by Michael. Michael spots them on the floor.

MICHAEL

There they are.

He rushes over and grabs Fanny.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

(clearly upset)

Fanny, I need you to come with me.

FANNY

There's a bottle on the bar. Pour yourself a shot and get out here.

MICHELLE

Yes. There are some unanswered questions you can help us with.

MICHAEL

Please. We have to go.

MICHELLE

Where?

Fanny notices Michael's face. She stops dancing.

FANNY

Michael, what's the matter?

Michael looks at Michelle, then back to Fanny.

MICHAEL

Hubbell...

MICHELLE

(getting concerned)

What about Hubbell?

MICHAEL

(blurting it out)

He didn't know where you two had gone. He went driving around looking for you. And, you know that damn blind corner on Myrtle - how many times have we asked for a stop sign, or a flashing light or...

FANNY

Michael! What's happened?

MICHAEL

(he can't look at her)

It just came out of nowhere...

Michael shakes his head. Hubbell's gone.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, honey.

Fanny and Michelle stand there frozen. The music plays, the bar patrons dance on as if nothing at all has changed. But everything has.

FADE OUT:

END OF SHOW