LIBERATION

"Pilot"

Written by
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FADE IN:

EXT. MIDDLE SCHOOL - BEVERLY HILLS - DAY

The year is 1975, the middle of the “smiley face” decade with a dollop of “have a nice day” thrown in for good measure. People are roaming about dressed in that unmistakable 70’s “style” of bell bottoms, plaid jackets, polyester and clogs as a real life sound track plays. Disco is king of the 70’s and “The Village People” are the queens.

The wicked old witch known as Nixon is dead and the country is ready for change. There’s a feeling that anything is possible. Morals are changing. Values are being scrutinized. Old ideas are just that. Old. Social roles are in flux; especially for women. They want more than lime green appliances and a pat on the cheek for making a nice dinner. They want to be taken seriously. They want respect. They want equality. And they’ll get it. But not without a fight.

Inside the school WE HEAR the faint sound of a bell ringing. The double doors of the school open and a flood of uniformed students rush out from beneath the arched Spanish portico of the school and cross the well manicured lawns.

A red EXCALIBUR makes a wide turn with tires squealing and speeds down the street.

JESSICA NOLAN, 11, dark haired, big blue eyes, with the innocent wonder of a young Zooey Deschanel is sitting on the steps. She watches the Excalibur as it lurches to a halt at the curb.

The window on the driver side rolls down. Sitting behind the wheel is BONNIE NOLAN, 35, wearing a fantastic mink coat, full make-up and her hair up in CURLERS. Bonnie smiles at Jessica and it’s electric. She takes a long drag from the Virginia Slim cigarette in her perfectly manicured hand. When she speaks it’s with a distinct pronunciation and articulation, the result of countless hours of elocution lessons.

BONNIE

Hello, stranger. Get in.

Jessica climbs into the car. As she does, Bonnie notices a group of WOMEN standing together outside the school. Prim and proper, they are a stark contrast to Bonnie’s flamboyant style. One of the women turns and looks at Bonnie. Bonnie smiles and gives a quick wave.
BONNIE (CONT’D) *
Hello, Samantha! *

The woman says nothing. She gives Bonnie a tight smile and turns back to the group. Jessica clocks the moment from the passenger seat. Bonnie takes a long drag from her Virginia Slim.

BONNIE (CONT’D) *
Might be time to start thinking about that hearing aid, dear. *

She tosses the cigarette out the window.

INT. EXCALIBUR - DAY *

They drive off. The HUGHES CORPORATION sings “ROCK THE BOAT” on the radio.

BONNIE
(re: car)
Good god! It’s like driving the Titanic.

JESSICA
Why did Daddy buy such a big car?

BONNIE
Oh, darling. The discussion as to why men drive big cars is something you’re just not ready for.

A beat.

JESSICA
Melissa’s Mom doesn’t like you very much.

BONNIE
No she doesn’t, Jessica. And neither do the rest of those witches in her little coven. They’re all just worried their husbands are going to have an affair with me.

JESSICA
Seriously, Mom.

BONNIE
Okay. The truth is they don’t like me because I don’t fit in. Or more correctly, I won’t. I march to the beat of a different drummer as they say. I always have. And that’s the way it is.
JESSICA
Doesn’t that make you sad?

BONNIE
Not on your life. The only thing you can control in this world is the kind of person you are. And if I have to pretend to be someone I’m not so that I can stand around talking about nothing with a giant stick up my ass, do you know what I say to that?

JESSICA
Passadena!

Bonnie looks over and smiles at her.

BONNIE
That’s right, darling. Pasadena.

INT. JEWELRY STORE - BEVERLY HILLS - DAY

A GOLD ROLEX WATCH is sitting on a perfect square of black velvet.

MAN (O.C.)
The Rolex President in eighteen carat gold.

WHITE GLOVED HANDS pick up the watch.

MAN (O.C.) (CONT’D)
Officially certified chronometer with an automatic self-winding movement in an eighteen carat yellow gold case. Of course, the famous Rolex crown here. The bezel is eighteen carat yellow gold in a bark finish. Rolex crystal with cyclops magnifying glass on date aperture.

ANGLE ON ANDRE, 50’s, leisure suit, horn rimmed glasses, all business, holding the watch.

ANDRE
Any questions, Mrs. Nolan?

Bonnie is there. Her raven black hair is now perfectly coiffed. She looks like a movie star.

BONNIE
No. Thank you, Andre. I now know more about that watch than I do about my own children.
Somewhere on Rodeo Drive, a car drives by and we hear Donna Summer singing “Love to Love You Baby” on the radio.

ANDRE
It’s a handsome watch, Mrs. Nolan. What’s the occasion?

BONNIE
Mr. Nolan’s forty-fifth birthday. And everything has to be perfect. Which reminds me. I’d like it engraved.

Bonnie jots something down and hands it to Andre.

ANDRE
Very good. I’ll put the watch on Mr. Nolan’s account.

BONNIE
No. I mean, that won’t work. You see, it’s a surprise for Mr. Nolan. He can’t know anything about it.

ANDRE
I see. Perhaps you’d like to pay using another method. A check perhaps?

BONNIE
I can’t do that. I don’t have my own checking account. I’ll pay you cash when I pick it up.

ANDRE
I’m sorry. Without Mr. Nolan’s approval, I can’t give you the watch. My hands are tied. You can understand that, I’m sure.

Bonnie smiles through this humiliation.

BONNIE
Please, Andre. I understand perfectly. Mr. Nolan pays the bills and I don’t. That is the reality of the situation.

ANDRE
Exactly.

Andre starts to put the Rolex back in the case.

BONNIE
Of course there is the finer point that I decide where Mr. Nolan spends his money.

(MORE)
BONNIE (CONT'D)
So if we’re unable to reach an understanding that would be unfortunate. Because I’ll see to it that my husband closes his account here and takes his business, which has included many substantial purchases, elsewhere. I’ve been a very loyal customer, Andre. And I’d like to continue to be one. But if I don’t get the watch, well... my hands are tied. You can understand that, I’m sure.

Andre stares at Bonnie, tight jawed.

ANDRE
Will Thursday be satisfactory?

BONNIE
Thursday will be fine, Andre.

INT. NOLAN HOME - KITCHEN

Bonnie walks into the kitchen. The maid, JULIETTA, is there washing some dishes.

BONNIE
Julietta? Mr. Nolan and I will be dining out tonight so you’ll just need to make dinner for the girls.

JULIETTA
Yes, Mrs. Nolan. And Miss Diana and Miss Kathleen are on the patio.
   (whispering)
   And Miss Kathleen has a man with her.

Bonnie peers out the kitchen window.

BONNIE
How intriguing. Let’s hope this one isn’t another gold digger who’s just after her money.

Bonnie’s oldest daughter REBECCA [BECCA] 14, shag haircut, a defiant teen-age Jane Fonda wanna-be enters in bell bottoms, fringed vest and a FREE ANGELA DAVIS T-shirt.

BONNIE (CONT’D)
Becca. How was the bus ride?

REBECCA
It was hot and smelled like barf.
BONNIE
Well darling, I told you. Become a * 
Communist first and then later you could * 
support mass transit. Doing both at the * 
same time is just exhausting. *

EXT. NOLAN HOME - PATIO - DAY

Bonnie, in a sky blue kaftan sits with her two best 
friends. DIANA, 40, blonde, fashionable, the epitome of 
California chic. Diana is the prototype for the new 
"working girl" of the mid-seventies. A real life Mary 
Tyler Moore ten years in, she wears cool white linen and 
Jackie O. sunglasses. She lounges on a chaise sipping a 
martini.

Next to her is KATHLEEN, 39, boozy and gorgeous. Kathleen 
is an aging Farrah Fawcett complete with a Dallas drawl 
that speaks of big oil and old money. She’s sporting a 
canary yellow bikini that reveals a bit too much of her 
insanely thin body.

GREG, 32, blonde, handsome and fit is Kathleen’s current 
boy toy. He sits nearby in bell bottoms and a tank top.

Bonnie is looking over some papers from a catering 
company.

BONNIE
Is there something I’m missing here? The 
caterers want to put the food in a tent. 
It’s a birthday party not a scene from 
“Lawrence of Arabia”.

KATHLEEN
Speaking of parties, my friend Jill went 
to a key party last night in Newport 
Beach.

KATHLEEN (CONT’D)
That’s where all the men put their car 
keys in a bowl by the door. And at the 
end of the night the women pick a set of 
keys and whatever keys you pick...

DIANA
...decides your evening prick?

They all laugh.
BONNIE
Seriously. The women have no choice but to go be with some slob with a Saab? No thank you. Clearly a game made up by men.

DIANA
That’s because men call the shots. Or they try to. I made it very clear that I wasn’t going to take any grief from my boss at the bank. And there’s nothing he can do about it because I practically run the damn place. He knows he’d be lost without me.

Greg turns to Bonnie.

GREG
Kathleen tells me you studied to be an actress back in New York.

BONNIE
True. But then talkies came in and I was out on my ass!

GREG
I’m just curious as to why you didn’t pursue your career?

BONNIE
I got pregnant. And that was not what proper unmarried girls from nice New York families did in those days. So I married my husband and we moved out here. To La-La land. So, one day I had a career. And the next day --

Bonnie raises her drink.

BONNIE (CONT’D)
-- I had a martini.

GREG
Have you ever thought about getting your daughters into acting?

KATHLEEN
Greg works in casting at Paramount.

BONNIE
No. My daughters do not work. The one thing I did right was to marry well. Now let’s talk about something more interesting. How long have you two been dating?
KATHLEEN
We met two weeks ago while I was back in Dallas for Daddy’s birthday. We had a party at our summer place in South Padre. I took a walk on the beach and there he was.

BONNIE
How romantic.

KATHLEEN
Oh my god. Diana?
(sotto)
The pool boy keeps looking over here.

A HOT LATINO POOL BOY, mid 20’s, shorts and no shirt is lazily skimming the pool. He smiles flirtatiously.

KATHLEEN (CONT’D)
I think he’s interested in you.

DIANA
Oh, yes. I’m sure he’s dying to jump into the sack with a single working woman who’s old enough to be his mother.

GREG
Would it be all right if I took a dip?

BONNIE
You can change in the pool house.

Kathleen reaches into her bag and takes out a prescription bottle.

DIANA
I don’t know why you’re taking those diet pills, Kathleen. You’re already too thin.

KATHLEEN
Do you read Cosmo, Diana? There’s no such thing as too thin.

She pops a pill into her mouth and washes it down with her drink.

KATHLEEN (CONT’D)
All four of my sisters are married. I’m the only one left! And I’m the oldest! That’s all I heard about from Momma and Daddy when I was back home. Well now I’ve got a man. And I’m doing everything I can not to lose him.
DIANA
Why are you worried about losing him?

KATHLEEN
I’m not worried. Greg is great. We have fun. And he’s so sweet. But there’s just no spark. Sometimes I think I might not be his type.

BONNIE
Well, what is his type?

INT. POOL HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER
Greg exits the bathroom wearing a bathing suit. The door opens and the pool boy enters. They exchange nervous smiles. The pool boy locks the door and starts to unbutton his shorts.

INT. NOLAN HOME - FOYER - EVENING
Bonnie is standing at the bar, making a drink. She is dressed in an orange dress with a bold geometric pattern. Her hair is up in a French twist and she is wearing a pair of spectacular drop pendant earrings. She looks elegant. Sexy.

STEVE NOLAN, 44, masculine, confident and handsome enters through the front door, dressed in a suit and tie. Bonnie greets him.

BONNIE
Hello, handsome.

She hands him the drink. They kiss.

STEVE
You look fantastic. Is that a new dress?

BONNIE
Got it today.

STEVE
I love orange.

BONNIE
I know. Why do you think I bought it?

They kiss again. Steve holds her close.
STEVE
How long will it take you to get out of it?

BONNIE
Steve, we have dinner plans.

STEVE
Don’t remind me. I can barely keep my eyes open.

They walk arm in arm across the room.

BONNIE
Well, you’re not getting enough sleep. You work such late hours. And playing racquet ball before work? If you ask me it’s all too much.

STEVE
The guys at the office keep getting younger, honey. I have to keep up.

BONNIE
Well, if you’re not feeling up to it maybe we should cancel tonight.

STEVE
I can’t. Paul and his wife are new in town. And they don’t know anyone. They remind me of us when we first started out.

They walk past the television. On TV, the feminist Bella Abzug is giving a press conference.

STEVE (CONT’D)
Why do they even show this junk?

THEIR POV Bella Abzug makes an impassioned speech. ANGLE ON Steve and Bonnie. Steve points at the screen.

STEVE (CONT’D)
This is a joke. Women don’t have rights? Give me a break. Even the girls at the office don’t get it.

BONNIE
I don’t think the things she’s talking about are that outrageous, darling. Women should be able to work, don’t you think?
STEVE
Who’s going to take care of the kids? I don’t understand. All of a sudden women don’t want to stay home anymore. It’s no picnic out in the real world. You’re not missing anything.

He hands her his empty glass and exits. Bonnie looks at it with disdain. He doesn’t know where the kitchen is?

INT. NOLAN HOUSE - STEVE’S CLOSET/BEDROOM/BATHROOM - NIGHT

Bonnie is picking out Steve’s outfit for the evening. She pulls out a brown suede blazer. From the look on her face, she’s never seen it before. She walks out and into the bedroom. She opens the bathroom door.

BONNIE
Where did you get this? I didn’t buy --

Bonnie freezes as she sees Steve doing a line of coke off the bathroom sink. Steve turns.

BONNIE (CONT’D)
(speechless)
I... I didn’t recognize this blazer.

STEVE
I’ll be out in a minute.

Bonnie nods and exits.

INT. STEVE NOLAN’S JAGUAR - NIGHT

Steve is driving. Bonnie is in the passenger seat. Barry White is singing “YOU’RE THE FIRST, THE LAST, MY EVERYTHING” on the radio. Bonnie eyes Steve nervously then checks her make-up in the mirror to try and appear casual.

BONNIE
Oh, this is the tiniest thing. Some unexpected expenses have come up and I need more cash for your birthday party.

STEVE
What? Jesus. This party is getting out of control. Are you trying to bankrupt us?
BONNIE
Of course not. But why is it every time I ask you for money you get like this?

STEVE
Are we having this conversation again? Because women don’t understand how money works.

BONNIE
Is that written in stone somewhere? If Moses brought that one down from the mountain with him it must have broken off because I’ve never seen it! Any time I try to talk to you about our finances you treat me like a child. And I think I have a right to know.

STEVE
A right? This isn’t a democracy honey, it’s a marriage. One person is in charge and that’s me. Now I’m not giving you another penny for the damn party and this discussion is closed. Am I making myself clear?

BONNIE
Yes. Very clear.

And as Bonnie fumes we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE
FADE IN:

ACT TWO

INT. CHASEN’S RESTAURANT - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Bonnie and Steve are having dinner with another couple MARGO, mid 20’s blonde and perky, is with her husband PAUL, 27.

STEVE
I proposed at the drive-in. During Ben-Hur. I was going to wait until the movie was over and the place was empty. I thought that would be romantic. But I was so nervous I asked her in the middle of the chariot race.

BONNIE
I still don’t know who won the goddamn thing!

They all laugh.

BONNIE (CONT’D)
And we moved to California right after our daughter Becca was born.

STEVE
California was a very different place back then. Now we’ve got Jerry Brown. He is going to be the worst thing that ever happened to this state. He’s one hundred percent anti-business.

MARGO
(to Bonnie)
He’s dating Linda Ronstadt. Do you like her?

BONNIE
I’m not that familiar. My mother insisted I only listen to the classics.

PAUL
Well, she’s a fine looking piece of ass. (genuine) But not as good as you, sweetie.

MARGO
(smiling)
That’s my fella. (then) (MORE)
I’m going to pop into the ladies room for one moment. Bonnie?

BONNIE

Excuse us.

Both men stand up as the ladies grab their purses and leave the table.

INT. LADIES ROOM - NIGHT

Margo and Bonnie are checking their faces in the mirror.

MARGO

Paul loves selling real estate. And Steve has been so nice to him. He’s really taken him under his wing. Showing him the ropes as it were.

BONNIE

How long have you and Paul been married?

MARGO

Two years.

BONNIE

Any children?

MARGO

Gosh, Bonnie. I barely know you. That’s a little personal, don’t you think?

BONNIE

Oh. I was just making conversation. I don’t mean to pry.

Bonnie goes back to doing her make-up. Margo turns to Bonnie, a little sad.

MARGO

I’m sorry. I’m a little sensitive about it. I’m pregnant. But Paul wants me to get an abortion. He says it’s not a good time, you know? And he’s right. He’s just starting out in his career and a baby isn’t what he wants right now.

BONNIE

He wants? What about what you want?

MARGO

Well, I’m Catholic so we don’t believe in abortion. Not because of the sin.

(MORE)
I don’t care about that. But I would like to have a baby. I’ve always wanted that. To be a mom.

Margo gets a little emotional.

I’m sorry.

She checks her mascara in the mirror.

Darn it. I just fixed that.

Margo dabs at the corners of her eyes with a tissue and pulls herself together.

Anyway, it’s not about me. It’s about Paul. We’re the wives. We have to support our husbands, right? Isn’t that what you do?

Bonnie forces a smile.

Of course, darling. But remember, we women still have ways of getting what we want.

Bonnie is sitting at her dressing table, putting on lipstick. She’s wearing a very sexy negligee. She looks hot. She gives herself one last look in the mirror.

The First National Bank of Bonnie is open for business.

Steve is at his desk, working. Bonnie enters.

I wanted to say good-night.

In that?
BONNIE
I found it in my closet. I wore this that time we were in Cabo, remember? Does it remind you of Mexico?

STEVE
(making a joke)
I’ll say. Especially those maracas.

They giggle like high schoolers. She wraps her arms around him.

BONNIE
I’m sorry we quarrelled. I didn’t mean too. I just want your party to be spectacular. Because there’s nothing you could ask for that I wouldn’t do for you, my darling. Nothing. In. The. World.

She kisses him passionately.

STEVE
How much more money did you need?

INT. BONNIE’S BEDROOM – NIGHT
Bonnie and Steve are in the middle of having sex. Steve is on top of Bonnie. Bonnie sneezes.

STEVE
What’s wrong?

BONNIE
Nothing. This is fantastic. I just had a little tickle in my nose.

She sneezes again. Bonnie stretches toward the night stand.

STEVE
Now what are you doing?

BONNIE
I just need a tissue. Keep going.

Steve reaches over and grabs a tissue. In the passion of the moment, he drops it on Bonnie’s face and continues on. Bonnie grabs the tissue and blows her nose. She sniffs and tries to stay in the moment.

STEVE
How’s that feel?
BONNIE
Better, I think. I can’t tell. There’s just a lot of congestion.

STEVE
I meant me.

BONNIE
Oh. Of course. Sorry, darling. It’s wonderful. I want you to --

Bonnie sneezes again. And again. And one more. Steve stops. It’s no use. He rolls off of Bonnie, panting. Bonnie blows her nose again.

BONNIE (CONT’D)
Sorry. I’m so sorry, darling.

STEVE
Are you catching a cold or something?

BONNIE
I must be. The girls bring so many things home from school it’s a wonder we don’t all have the plague.

STEVE
(re: her sneezing)
You stopped.

BONNIE
You’re right. I have.

Steve leans over. He starts to kiss Bonnie again. She sneezes.

BONNIE (CONT’D)
Steve, darling. I think it’s you. Am I allergic to you?

She sniffs him and sneezes.

BONNIE (CONT’D)
You smell odd.

STEVE
What?

BONNIE
What is that? You don’t smell like you.

STEVE
Oh. I have on different cologne.
BONNIE
You’ve worn Old Spice since the day I met you.

STEVE
This is Aramis. It’s named after one of the Three Musketeers.

BONNIE
I didn’t know there was a Musketeer that smelled like a Persian rug salesman.

STEVE
I’ll go shower it off.

BONNIE
Don’t bother. It’s getting late. We should just get some sleep.

STEVE
No, I’ll be quick.

Steve jumps out of bed.

STEVE (CONT’D)
I’ll be right back.

Steve rushes to the bathroom. He re-enters the bedroom and turns on the overhead light.

STEVE (CONT’D)
Don’t fall asleep.

INT. JEWELRY STORE – SEVERAL DAYS LATER

CLOSE ON Bonnie’s hand, examining the back of the gold Rolex we saw earlier. We can clearly see the INSCRIPTION which reads:

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO MY DARLING HUSBAND,
STEVEN
ALL MY LOVE NOW AND FOREVER,
BONNIE

ANGLE ON Bonnie who smiles and puts the watch away.

EXT. RODEO DRIVE/INT. BONNIE’S CAR – DAY

Bonnie walks up to her car, the Excalibur, which is waiting at the valet. A LITTLE BOY is looking at the car. Bonnie smiles.
BONNIE
Do you like this car? Isn’t it pretty?

LITTLE BOY
That’s my uncle’s car. He drives me in it sometimes.

Bonnie smiles, a little confused.

LITTLE BOY (CONT’D)
Why did you take it?

Bonnie hands her packages to the valet who loads them into her car. Bonnie gets in. BONNIE’S POV on a gorgeous RED HEAD, mid 20’s, who walks out to the valet stand. She picks the little boy up and kisses him. She turns and looks directly at Bonnie but her eyes are impossible to read behind dark sunglasses.

EXT. TENNIS CLUB – DAY

Greg is seated in a chair across from Kathleen. He is holding her hand and gazing at her intently.

GREG
I don’t want you to do this if you don’t want to. So if it doesn’t feel right, say no. And we’ll just keep going the way we are. Because I love you no matter what.

KATHLEEN
You do?

GREG
Of course.

He kisses her.

KATHLEEN
Then my answer is yes.

They kiss again. Bonnie and Diana walk up, dressed in tennis clothes. Kathleen smiles.

KATHLEEN (CONT’D)
I’m glad you two are here. You can be the first to congratulate us.

DIANA
Really? You’re getting married?
KATHLEEN
No! We’re going into business together! Greg is opening his own casting agency.

DIANA
But you don’t know anything about casting.

KATHLEEN
I know. Greg’s in charge of that. I’m just putting up the money.

GREG
I’ve always wanted to get out of the studio and work for myself. But I’ve never been able to afford it.

Bonnie and Diana share a look.

BONNIE
And now Kathleen can help you achieve your dream. How wonderful.

GREG
It’s our dream now. Anyway, I’d better go. But I’ll swing by later. Maybe we go to English Disco tonight and celebrate?

KATHLEEN
Groovy.

He gives her a peck on the cheek and exits. Bonnie and Diana sit down and look over the lunch menus.

DIANA
Did you order?

KATHLEEN
I’m not eating. I want to lose a few more pounds before Steve’s party. I need to watch my figure.

BONNIE
You’re probably right. The only thing Greg wants to see fat on you is your pocketbook.

KATHLEEN
Bonnie, it’s an investment. We’re going to split the money fifty-fifty. I like that we’re a couple going into business together. It’s very modern thinking. I saw a couple on “Donahue” that opened a nudist colony together.
DIANA
I am obsessed with that show. I tape it on my VCR and then watch it at night. The other day this woman from New York discovered that her husband had been flying to Miami every other weekend because he’s secretly married to another woman. And do you know what made her suspicious?

BONNIE
His sudden craving for Cuban food?

KATHLEEN
No. He changed his cologne.

This hits Bonnie.

INT. NOLAN HOME - DINING ROOM - DAY

The table is set with china, a table cloth and Bonnie’s good crystal. Bonnie lights candles in silver candle sticks. The phone rings in the kitchen.

INT. NOLAN HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Bonnie enters and answers the phone.

BONNIE
Hello.

STEVE
Hey it’s me. I’m stuck at work so I’m going to be late. I think you should have dinner without me.

BONNIE
That’s alright, darling. I’ll just keep everything warm until you get here.

STEVE
No, don’t. I’m going to be really late. This is an emergency.

BONNIE
Really? You have emergencies in real estate? Seems a bit dramatic.

STEVE
I’ve got to go. Don’t wait up.

INT. BONNIE’S CAR – NIGHT

Bonnie is at the wheel of the car, driving like a crazy person. Jessica and Becca are being thrown around in the back seat. Bonnie takes a corner hard and the girls fly to the other side of the car.

BECCA
Mom, slow down! American cars are death traps. Haven’t you read “Unsafe at Any Speed” by Ralph Nader?

BONNIE
Quiet! You’re always wanting to go on those ridiculous amusement park rides that throw you around like a rag doll. This is just like that and it’s free.

Bonnie pulls into the parking lot. Steve’s car is parked in his spot. He’s at his office, just like he said on the phone. Bonnie puts her head on the steering wheel and breathes a sigh of relief. Bonnie looks up. She holds her mouth and stifles a laugh.

JESSICA
Mom, are you okay?

BONNIE
Yes. I was just being silly. Let’s go home. We can go home now.

Bonnie pulls out of the driveway. She is just about to drive off when she sees Steve exit the building. He gets in his car and drives away, but going in the opposite direction of their home. Bonnie follows him.

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD – NIGHT

Steve’s car drives down the street. Bonnie’s car follows at a discreet distance. Steve’s car pulls over and parks in front of a house halfway down the block. He gets out.

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD – NIGHT

Bonnie and the girls run through neighbors’ yards as they make their way down the block, trying not to be seen. The three of them look ridiculous. Jessica cries out.

JESSICA
I’m getting bit by mosquitos. How can I try out for cheerleading with welts all over my legs?
BONNIE
Wear pants. You’ll be the Katherine Hepburn of your school.

The three of them duck behind a hedge.

BONNIE’S POV

Steve is standing on the porch of the house next door. The door opens and the unforgettable Red Head from Rodeo Drive steps out. Steve puts his hands on her and pulls her to him. They kiss passionately. CLOSE ON BONNIE who looks shell shocked. Becca checks her shoe.

BECCA
Eww. I stepped in dog poop.

BONNIE
That makes two of us.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO
FADE IN:

ACT THREE

EXT. PIONEER CHICKEN PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Bonnie is in a phone booth, smoking and talking to Diana. The girls are sitting in the car.

DIANA
Are you sure he’s having an affair with this woman?

BONNIE
Either that or he sold her a house but she thought her tongue was a pen and the deed was half way down his throat.

DIANA
Do you want to come over? Where are you?

BONNIE
I’m not sure. I’ve just been driving around. Somewhere on Olympic I think.
(looking around)
Are there parts of this city that they just decided not to finish?

INT. PIONEER CHICKEN - NIGHT

Bonnie is at the counter ordering from a WORKER. Jessica and Becca stand nearby.

BONNIE
I’d like the eight piece dinner.

WORKER
Is that for here?

BONNIE
That depends. Is there another room that doesn’t look so much like a free clinic?
(off her look)
To go.

JESSICA
Can we have biscuits?

BONNIE
Biscuits? Does it feel like we’re celebrating to you?
EXT. PIONEER CHICKEN - NIGHT

A CREEPY LOOKING GUY and his friend are standing outside. Bonnie and the girls exit. The creepy looking guy holds up a cigarette.

CREEPY LOOKING GUY
Excuse me. Do you have a light?

Bonnie ignores him and ushers the girls to their car.

CREEPY LOOKING GUY
(CONT’D)
What’s your hurry, mama?

They all get in. Bonnie starts the car and drives off.

INT. BONNIE’S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Bonnie is at the wheel, looking nervous. She checks the rear view mirror. Becca looks out the back window.

BECCA
Why are they following us, Mom?

BONNIE
Well, it certainly isn’t for the food.

JESSICA
(through tears)
Why won’t they go away?

Bonnie seeing panic and fear overwhelming her daughters suddenly pulls the car over. She turns to Jessica and Becca.

BONNIE
You keep these doors locked until I come back.

JESSICA
Where are you going?! Don’t leave us!

BONNIE
Becca, take care of your sister.

BECCA
Okay. Whatever you do, don’t tell them you voted for Nixon.
EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Bonnie gets out of the car, unsure of herself. The other car pulls up behind her. She takes a moment to steel herself, then marches over to the car and knocks on the window.

CREEPY LOOKING GUY
This isn’t a safe neighborhood lady.

BONNIE
You listen to me you little punk. My husband is a detective with the LAPD. I’ve written down your license plate number and the make and model of your car. You mess with me or my children, you will have the entire Los Angeles police force so far up your ass you’ll be shitting blue for weeks.

Bonnie starts back and kicks the car as she exits.

BONNIE (CONT’D)
And your brights are on!

INT. BONNIE’S CAR - NIGHT

Bonnie pulls away. Jessica and Becca look out the back window as the car turns down a side street.

JESSICA
They’re gone!

Bonnie sighs, relieved. She speaks as if there were never any doubt.

BONNIE
Let that be a lesson to you girls. Never let a man intimidate you. Under any circumstances. You always have to stand up for yourself.

INT. NOLAN HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Bonnie is mixing a martini. She takes a chilled glass from the freezer. As she does, she hears the front door open. Steve enters. Bonnie pours the martini into the glass.

STEVE
Little late for a night cap, don’t you think?
Bonnie picks up a kitchen knife and slices the skin from a lemon. She drops the lemon twist into her drink with a flair.

BONNIE
Well, as the old saying goes, darling, when life gives you lemons, make a martini.

STEVE
What is that supposed to mean?

BONNIE
Nothing. Tell me all about your evening. What happened? It’s past midnight so I’m assuming you not only sold the house, you also built it?

STEVE
It was just a lot of business stuff that you wouldn’t understand.

BONNIE
Keep it simple and I’ll try to follow along. I really am interested, darling. For instance, were you on top or did you shake it up a little bit and give the human Barbie doll a break from having to stare at the ceiling all night.

Steve stares at her, speechless.

BONNIE (CONT’D)
So now what do we do? Tell me how we can fix this and I’ll do it. Should we see a therapist?

STEVE
Okay. Fine. So I’m having an affair. So are half the guys in my office. So what?

BONNIE
Steven, we have to do something. We’re in trouble.

STEVE
No, we’re not. Nothing has changed. Everything’s the same. We’re still here, aren’t we?

BONNIE
What? You’re not making any sense.
STEVE
I had an affair. It’s nothing. It doesn’t mean anything.

BONNIE
And that’s it?

STEVE
What do you mean?

BONNIE
That’s your answer? You ruined our marriage for something that doesn’t mean anything. Is that supposed to make me feel better?

STEVE
You’re not the only one who’s disappointed, Bonnie. This marriage didn’t turn out the way I thought it was going to for me, either. But that’s where we are. And we just have to live with it.

BONNIE
I thought you were someone else. I thought you were a good man. And I thought you loved me. But you don’t, do you?

Steve is silent.

BONNIE (CONT’D)
I want you out of the house. Tonight. I have to think.

STEVE
Are you insane? How would that look? I have a reputation to protect.

BONNIE
You should have thought about that before you started screwing around.

STEVE
Now you listen to me. I am not going to throw away everything I’ve worked for. This is a private matter and that’s the way we’re going to keep it. Do you understand me?

Steve starts to exit. Bonnie grabs the kitchen knife and rushes up to Steve. She puts the knife under his throat.
BONNIE
If you think I’m going to live a lie and be the punch line of other people’s jokes so that you can sell more houses, you’re sadly mistaken. I married you and left New York because I didn’t have any choice. I was ashamed of what I had done. I was ashamed of my stupidity. So I tried to build a new life here. And I always put you first. Before me and before what I wanted. But I won’t do this. I won’t be shamed by you, Steven. Not this time. I don’t take orders from you anymore. Now I want you out of this house tonight.

Bonnie throws the knife down on the table. She picks up her drink and exits the kitchen.

EXT. NOLAN HOUSE - NIGHT

Steve throws a suitcase in the back of his car and gets in. Bonnie walks up to him and tosses him the Rolex.

BONNIE
You might as well take this. The watch works, the inscription doesn’t.

Steve gets in and drives off. On the back of Steve’s car Bonnie had taped a sign that says “CHEATING ASSHOLE”.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Bonnie walks down the hallway. Jessica opens the door from her bedroom.

JESSICA
Where’s Daddy going?

BONNIE
Go back to bed.

JESSICA
I want Daddy!

BONNIE
Your father is gone.

Jessica is stunned and begins to cry.

JESSICA
You made him go! You’re horrible! I hate you!
She exits back into her room, slamming the door behind her. Bonnie turns and walks away.

INT. BONNIE’S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Bonnie is drinking a martini and smoking a cigarette. She stares at Steve’s empty closet. She wipes a tear from her cheek. She’s not going to cry. Not for that man.

INT. BANK - DAY

Diana is sitting at her desk at the bank where she works. Bonnie sits across from her. Diana is looking at some papers.

DIANA
So, based on what you told me I put a list together of what it’s going to take to keep the house going.

Diana hands her the paper. Bonnie looks it over.

BONNIE
I hope you included a case of vodka.

DIANA
I know we’re not there yet, but I also got the name of a good divorce attorney. Just in case.

BONNIE
I don’t know if I want to divorce Steve. But even if I do, I don’t want anything from him except the house. It’s my girl’s home. No one is taking that away from them.

MR. BISHOP, (50) paunch, denim suit, wide tie, longish hair and side burns enters from his office.

MR. BISHOP

DIANA
Yes, sir.

He notices Bonnie.

MR. BISHOP
What’s going on here?
DIANA
Mr. Bishop, this is my friend Bonnie Nolan. Bonnie, this is my boss, Mr. Bishop.

BONNIE
Hello, Mr. Bishop.

MR. BISHOP
Call me, Charles. I have to be honest with you, Bonnie. I don’t approve of friends stopping by during bank hours.

DIANA
Sorry, sir but Bonnie was --

Mr. Bishop puts his hand up.

MR. BISHOP
But I can make an exception when they’re as attractive as you are.

BONNIE
You’re very kind.

MR. BISHOP
(to Diana)
And when you get my coffee bring me that CIF file, too. Nice to meet you, Bonnie.

Bonnie smiles. Mr. Bishop exits into his office.

BONNIE
What a delightful person. The hours must just fly by for you.

DIANA
Bonnie, forget about him. Can we get serious for a minute? I’m worried about how you’re going to survive.

BONNIE
My parents offered to give me a little bit of money. And I’m letting Julietta go. The gardener, things like that.

DIANA
Honey, that’s short term. You’ve got a much bigger problem here.

BONNIE
I’ll find a way.
DIANA
Well, at least now that Steve is gone you won’t have to have that ridiculous party.

BONNIE
I’m having the party. Without Steve.

DIANA
Bonnie, listen. I know you’re upset. But being on your own isn’t easy. You have to be careful.

BONNIE
Careful about what?

DIANA
When I got here, I thought in five years I’d be the general manager of this branch. I heard how hard it was for women to go out on their own but I was convinced it was going to be different for me.

BONNIE
Diana. I don’t understand. You’ve always told me you’re doing very well here.

DIANA
If by very well you mean I don’t go into the ladies room more than once a day and cry or that I manage to get out of here without that idiot telling me I have nice tits, then yes I guess I’m doing very well. I want more than that, Bonnie. But there aren’t a lot of options out here for us. Believe me, I know.

BONNIE
What should I do, Diana? Should I lock myself in my room and cry poor me? For him? Do you think he’s going to do that over me? Does any man ever do that? I’m not going to fall apart because I married the wrong man. He cheated on me and I got out. And I don’t know what I’m going to do next. But whatever I do, for the first time in my life, I get to decide.

Bonnie heads out. She stops at Mr. Bishop’s office.

BONNIE (CONT’D)
(sweetly)
Charles?

(MORE)
I’m so sorry but might I suggest the next time you want coffee you get off your fat ass and get it yourself?

She blows him a kiss and exits.

INT. JESSICA’S ROOM - NIGHT

Jessica is laying on her bed. Bonnie knocks and enters.

BONNIE
Got a minute?

She crosses over to Jessica.

BONNIE (CONT’D)
I’m sorry. I know you’re probably mad at me. And I wish you didn’t find out about your father leaving the way you did. But I thought I had to tell you the truth. I didn’t want to be a liar. Because that’s the worst thing in the world you can be.

(then)
A stripper is also bad.

She smiles and kisses her on the forehead.

BONNIE (CONT’D)
I want you to know that I’m here if you want to talk to me. And try to make it before you reach your teens darling, or we’re both doomed.

Bonnie gets up and starts to exit.

JESSICA
Is Daddy going to live with that other lady now?

BONNIE
I don’t know.

JESSICA
Did you want him to leave?

BONNIE
No. I didn’t. But he needed to.

JESSICA
Are you sad?

BONNIE
A little.
JESSICA
Me, too. I wish he’d come back. I wish everything was like it used to be.

BONNIE
I know you do. But I’m going to try very hard to make things better. I promise you.

JESSICA
I’m sorry about what I said. You’re not horrible.

BONNIE
It’s alright, darling. Sometimes I am.

INT. BONNIE’S BATHROOM/BEDROOM – NIGHT
Bonnie steps out of the bathroom, a towel wrapped around her. She crosses to her closet and picks out a dress. She turns and stops, then walks over to Steve’s closet. It’s empty. Bonnie lingers there for a moment, then crosses to the bed and lies down, hugging her legs in close. For the first time we see her without her armor. She looks small, like a child. Unprotected. Frightened. She quietly cries.

INT. NOLAN HOME – TERRACE – NIGHT
MUSIC CUE: MARILYN MCCOO AND BILLY DAVIS SING “YOU DON’T HAVE TO BE A STAR”

The yard is filled with party guests. Japanese paper lanterns hang from the trees. Candles light the numerous tables. It looks magical. A live band plays as the guests mingle. Bonnie moves through the crowd looking radiant in an amazing Diane Von Furstenberg-style wrap dress. Becca and Jessica are with her. Diana and Kathleen walk up to her.

A FEMALE SINGER approaches the microphone on the stage where the band is playing. She sings the first few bars “a cappella”.

FEMALE SINGER
AT FIRST, I WAS AFRAID/I WAS PETRIFIED.
KEPT THINKIN’ I COULD NEVER LIVE
WITHOUT YOU BY MY SIDE/BUT THEN I SPENT
SO MANY NIGHTS THINKIN’ HOW YOU DID ME
WRONG/AND I GREW STRONG/AND I LEARNED HOW
TO GET ALONG.
The band kicks in. Bonnie smiles and gulps down the rest of her martini. She begins to clap along with the beat. Diana and Kathleen join in.

FEMALE SINGER (CONT’D)
AND SO YOU'RE BACK/ FROM OUTER SPACE.
I JUST WALKED IN TO FIND YOU HERE
WITH THAT SAD LOOK UPON YOUR FACE.
I SHOULD'VE CHANGED THAT STUPID LOCK/
I SHOULD'VE MADE YOU LEAVE YOUR KEY/
IF I HAD KNOWN FOR JUST ONE SECOND/
YOU'D BE BACK TO BOTHER ME.

Bonnie starts to dance. All the pain and sadness and fear that has surrounded her for the past few days begins to fall away. Her dancing becomes joyous, free and infectious. Diana and Kathleen cannot help themselves and join in as do Jessica and Becca. The crowd whistles and claps along as the night truly becomes a celebration for this new version of the Nolan family.

FEMALE SINGER (CONT’D)
DID YOU THINK I'D CRUMBLE?
DID YOU THINK I'D LAY DOWN AND DIE?
OH NO, NOT I! I WILL SURVIVE!
OH, AS LONG AS I KNOW HOW TO LOVE,
I KNOW I'LL STAY ALIVE!

FADE OUT.

INT. NOLAN HOUSE - LATER THAT NIGHT

The party is over. Bonnie walks through the empty house, a bit tipsy, smoking a cigarette and picking up the occasional glass here and there as DOROTHY MOORE sings “MISTY BLUE.” The doorbell rings. She crosses to the front door and opens it. A SHERIFF’S DEPUTY is there.

SHERIFF’S DEPUTY
Is this the Nolan residence?

BONNIE
What’s the charge, Officer? Operating a home while under the influence?

He looks at her stone faced.

BONNIE (CONT’D)
Considering the hour I thought that one was pretty good.
SHERIFF’S DEPUTY
I have a warrant for the arrest of Steve Nolan. Is he here?

BONNIE
Thankfully, no. Is he in trouble?

SHERIFF’S DEPUTY
I guess that depends on whether you consider committing bank fraud and embezzlement being in trouble. Are you his wife?

BONNIE
Yes.

SHERIFF’S DEPUTY
I’d get a lawyer if I were you.

And on Bonnie’s shocked face we...

FADE OUT.

END OF PILOT