PUSHING DAISIES

Episode 3T6501

"Dummy"

Written by
Peter Ocko

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ACT ONE

FADE IN:

1

EXT. BOARDING SCHOOL

YOUNG NED, blazer, white shirt and tie, stands alone, looking up at the façade of a brick and ivy prep school building.

NARRATOR
At this very moment, in the town of North Thrush, Young Ned was 9 years, 33 weeks, 6 hours and 17 minutes old.

Another BOY, books in hand, (the same school uniform) runs past toward the building, late for class, bumping him.

NARRATOR (CONT’D)
He stood on the exact spot where, 4 weeks and 2 days previously...

The GHOSTLY IMAGE of several suitcases and a steamer trunk appear beside Ned...

NARRATOR (CONT’D)
...his father had deposited him at the Longborough School for boys.

CLOSE ON NED

The hand of his FATHER (whose face we do not see) pats his shoulder, brushes the hair from Young Ned’s eyes...

NARRATOR (CONT’D)
As Young Ned’s mother had died recently, there was reassuring physical contact and parting words.

TIGHT on Dad’s LIPS that mouth:

NARRATOR (CONT’D)
“I’ll be back,” he lied.

We WIDEN as the father, suit coat, workingman’s felt fedora, turns and walks away. As Ned looks back at school, Dad and the bags FADE AWAY... PULL BACK and we are...

2

INT. SCHOOL SCIENCE CLASSROOM

FIND Young Ned at a lab table, as several other UNIFORMED BOYS talk and wrestle around him. A TOUGH classmate slides a note down the lab table in front of Young Ned. It reads “your dead” [sic].
NARRATOR
The sadness and dread which the boy felt were not so much a product of the Longborough School...

A SEPIA PHOTOGRAPH --

Four distinguished OLD MEN and a severe OLD WOMAN, in tweed.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)
...which had been founded by Social Darwinists with a common love of the novel Lord of the Flies...

BACK TO CLASSROOM --

NARRATOR (CONT'D)
Or even the passing of his mother.

INT. YOUNG NED'S KITCHEN (PILOT)

MOM drops.

BACK TO CLASSROOM --

The SCIENCE TEACHER, male, 50s, SLAPS a ruler on his desk, returning order to the room. He begins writing on the blackboard...

NARRATOR
Young Ned's acute discomfort came from the knowledge that when he touched a dead thing, it came back to life.

With a flourish, the teacher underlines and we reveal: "FROG DISSECTION." Young Ned looks anxious.

A crumpled paper ball hits Ned in the head. He turns to see a group of mean BOYS at another table laughing and pointing. SLOW PUSH IN on Young Ned, growing angry...

NARRATOR (CONT'D)
The other boys assumed his introverted nature was a product of weakness and coddling.

ANGLE - DISSECTION TRAY

A splayed-out dead frog, held on its back to the tray with colored ball-ended pushpins.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)
Thinking of revenge, and also not thinking at all, Young Ned volunteered to assist with that day's science project.
YOUNG NED

Moves down the center aisle, sets one tray down at each table, careful casually to brush each frog with a finger as he does...

EXTREME CLOSE-UP

As his finger touches frog belly: the small SPARK.

BACK WIDE

As he continues setting down the trays, one to a table...

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Young Ned's secret gift simply followed the rules, of which there were three:

OUR "TOUGH"

Greedily pulls his tray toward him, picks up a scalpel...

TIGHT ON THE FROG

As the knife approaches its belly... the frog’s EYES SNAP OPEN with a look of surprise.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Touch a thing once: alive.

TIGHT ON THE WEBBED FRONT FROG LEG

As the leg struggles, then POPS out the PIN holding it down.

WIDE ON THE CLASSROOM

The other frogs do the same, LEAPING now from their trays. The room ERUPTS in YELLING and PANIC. Young Ned drops to his hands and knees to CRAWL out of the chaos.

ON THE FLOOR

With Young Ned, surrounded by the melee of legs and flying papers. A FROG with PINS still in its flippers lands in his path. He GRABS it with both hands and we see the FLASH from a SPARK within. He opens his hands, the frog is DEAD again.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Touch a thing again: dead forever.

EXT. BOARDING SCHOOL

The doors burst open. Young Ned races out to a large nearby--
TREE

He hides behind it, slides down to sit at the base...

NARRATOR

Keep a thing alive for more than a minute, and something else has to die.

SIX DEAD BIRDS fall out of the tree. Ned is horrified.

BACK TO TREE

A passing TEACHER approaches...

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

His gift had once again brought him great distress in place of great joy. He vowed to keep the strange details of his strange life secret from the world forever.

The teacher looks from the dead birds to Young Ned with a growing look of shock and disgust.

TEACHER

Did you do this?

NARRATOR

So Young Ned did what his father had done to him only 31 days before...

YOUNG NED

Of course not!

NARRATOR

He lied.

The Teacher scrutinizes him a moment, then turns and walks away. Young Ned's outrage slides into a smile. PUSH IN...

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

For the next 19 years, 34 weeks and 3 days, lying worked beautifully.

The smile STRETCHES into the bigger, more mature smile of ADULT NED, reveal we are--

INT. NED'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - MORNING

Ned lies in bed.

NARRATOR

The boy became the Pie-Maker and the Pie-Maker deceived with ease.
REVEAL Ned lies in bed next to CHUCK. They are both dressed.

CHUCK
This is strange. Is this strange?

NARRATOR
Until Chuck.

NED
This is not strange.

CAMERA MOVES to REVEAL they are not next to each other, but in twin beds on opposite sides of the room.

NED (CONT’D)
Unusual maybe. Eccentric in a quaint way.
Like a dessert spoon.

NARRATOR
Charlotte Charles had been alive for 28 years, 24 weeks, 3 days, 11 hours and 51 minutes before she was murdered and her body dumped at sea. Revived by the Pie-Maker and given a second chance at life, she had many questions.

CHUCK
I have so many questions. My mind wanders.

NED
You need to feed it warm milk and a turkey sandwich. Let it curl up in a sunny spot and take a nap.

INT. NED’S APARTMENT - KITCHEN

Chuck at the stove scrambles eggs. Ned sits at the table set for two.

CHUCK
How many other people have you touched?

NED
People or animals?

CHUCK
Digby doesn’t count.

NED
Digby does count. No one has been through as much with me as Digby.

Ned smiles at DIGBY across the room, who wags his tail.
CHUCK
How many other humans have you brought back to life?

NED
It's not like I walk around reviving childhood sweethearts willy-nilly.

CHUCK
What about with Emerson? You touch lots of people with Emerson.

NED
For work.

CHUCK
Just because you kill them again as soon as you get what you need, doesn't make it any different.

NED
Yes it does. And can we not say "kill"? I touch them again is all. They snap right back to where they're supposed to be.

Chuck looks at him--

CHUCK
What am I? The rubber band that broke?

NED
(a breath, reassuring)
Chuck, you are the only human being I have ever brought back to stay.

NARRATOR
The Pie-Maker was not used to telling the truth, yet lying to Chuck was difficult.

NED
No one else has ever even made it past sixty seconds.

NARRATOR
But not impossible.

Ned covers with a smile. It comforts Chuck.

CHUCK
This is such a small cheese box.

She opens the refrigerator.
INT. CHUCK’S AUNTS’ KITCHEN (ONE WALL) – FLASHBACK

YOUNGER (early 20s) CHUCK steps up to the older-model refrigerator with a large wheel of cheese. Balancing it in one hand, she opens the door to REVEAL a very full and well-organized (labels on every shelf) fridge full of many different cheeses.

NARRATOR

The aunts who had raised Chuck had taught her to believe that the large white appliance in the kitchen had a fairly narrow purpose.

YOUNGER CHUCK (ANNA)
(calls out)
Aunt Lily, is it okay to freeze the Camembert? I’d rather not wedge it between the Edam and the Paneer. Or I could air out the Gouda.

As Chuck starts to make room...

NARRATOR

In fact, Young Chuck did not refer to a refrigerator as anything but a “cheese box” until she was seventeen.

BACK TO PRESENT DAY CHUCK

As we start to pull back OUT THE WINDOW...

NARRATOR (CONT’D)

As Chuck considered the life she could never go back to...

EXT. OLIVE’S APARTMENT

OLIVE has climbed out her open window and hangs off horse-pattern drapes, stretching to spy into Ned’s apartment with a mirror on a stick.

NARRATOR

Olive Snook considered the changes in her own life. Foremost, the mysterious brunette cooking breakfast for the man she loved.

OLIVE
That should be me in his breakfast nook, you witch with a “B.”
NARRATOR
From her perch, the jealous-yet-agile neighbor
was able to confirm only one pleasing detail.

OLIVE
There is a surprising lack of physical contact.

Olive loses her footing and swings into the wall, dropping the mirror. It smashes (O.S.) on the pavement below.

OLIVE (CONT’D)
Ouch!

NARRATOR
One mile to the West...

INT. EMERSON’S OFFICE (TWO WALL SET)

The classic gumshoe frosted glass door: “Emerson Cobb - Private Investigator.” SLOW PUSH IN on the SILHOUETTE of EMERSON, knitting as fast as he can...

NARRATOR
Emerson Cobb was also adjusting to the arrival of the dead girl who was not dead. Keeping busy had always helped to put his mind at ease. He found the stockinette stitch to be especially relaxing.

His PHONE RINGS, we watch him answer--

EMERSON
Emerson Cobb.

NARRATOR
But no stitch was a substitute for a good murder case.

EMERSON
Got it. I’ll be at the morgue in fifteen minutes.

He hangs up, returns to knitting--

NARRATOR
As he finished purling the row, he wished aloud:

EMERSON
She better not come.
10 INT. NED’S CAR / EXT. MORGUE - DAY

Emerson waits on the sidewalk as the car pulls up. Chuck gets out of the backseat wearing her sunglasses/kerchief disguise.

CHUCK
Hi, Emerson.

Not missing a beat, Emerson steps past her into the front seat.

11 INT. NED’S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Emerson shuts the door, locks the doors before Ned can get out. Chuck bangs on the window--

CHUCK
(muffled)
Hey!

Emerson holds up a finger to her ("one moment"), turns to Ned.

EMERSON
What she doing here?

NED
Said she didn’t climb out of a coffin for me to keep her in a box.

EMERSON
She the boss of you?

NED
I am the boss of me.

EMERSON
Dead girl’s gotta go.

NED
Could a dead girl do that?

Ned gestures behind Emerson. REVEAL Chuck has written with lipstick “open the [smudged expletive] door!”

EMERSON
What do you even know about her, ‘side from she had soft lips when she was ten.

NED
That should be enough.

EMERSON
I don’t like it.
Emerson unlocks the doors, gets out. In a flash, Chuck gets in the back, slams, locks the doors. Emerson bangs on the window.

EMERSON (CONT’D)  
(muffled)  
Hey!

Chuck holds up the same “one moment” finger to Emerson. He reacts, turns and heads toward the morgue.

CHUCK  
What’d you guys talk about?

NED  
I’d really like to get out of this car soon.

CHUCK  
Emerson’s not mad you brought your childhood sweetheart back to life?

NED  
He barely knows you’re here.

NARRATOR  
In fact, Emerson Cobb had finished knitting a sweater-vest and two toaster cosies in the week since Chuck’s return.

CHUCK  
Do I really have to sit in back from now on?

NED  
It’s for your own safety.

CHUCK  
You sound like my dad.

NED  
If we touched by accident, you’d be dead.

CHUCK  
He never said that. Thanks for bringing me, by the way.

NED  
Back to life?

CHUCK  
To work. But back to life, too.

They share a sweet smile... She UNLOCKS her DOOR. He LOCKS THEM AGAIN.
NED
So, it’s probably better if you stay in the car for these morgue visits. Someone might recognize you. You really can’t come in.

12 INT. MORGUE OFFICE - DAY
Ned, Chuck and Emerson stand before the CORONER.

NED
(honest mistake)
Did I say can? Because I’ll swallow my consonants sometimes. N’t. N’t. Can’t come in.

EMERSON
You got the hit and run?

CORONER
Who are you?

NED
We’re from the government safety place?

EMERSON
Was that a question?

NED
(correcting)
Government safety place.

CORONER
Mnnn.

NARRATOR
The facts were these: One Bernard Slaybaugh.

SLOW PUSH IN ON A PHOTOGRAPH:
A smiling group of three men and two women in white lab coats, holding clipboards. Bernard is in the middle.

NARRATOR (CONT’D)
An automotive safety specialist, 45 years, 10 weeks, 7 hours and 3 minutes old, was found dead by the side of the road...

13 EXT. RURAL STREET
A BRIGHT YELLOW “BUMPS” SIGN spattered with blood. FIND BERNARD, laying nearby.
NARRATOR
...the apparent victim of a hit-and-run driver. As there were no witnesses, the police are offering a reward for information leading to the arrest of the killer.

14 INT. MORGUE - DAY

The sheet-covered body is slid out.

EMERSON
I’ll wait over there.

CHUCK
You don’t like dead bodies, do you?

EMERSON
I don’t like it when they sit up and talk.

He looks at her, moves away. Ned pulls back the sheet.

BERNARD

His face has been FLATTENED, like Play-Doh against a window.

CHUCK
The poor man.

EMERSON
Touch the mother.

NED
I’m starting the watch.

Ned STARTS HIS WATCH, touches Bernard who sits up, looks around.

BERNARD
Hey.

NED
Hey.

BERNARD
Why’s everything so blurry?

NED
I think it’s because your eyeballs are flat.

EMERSON
Ask the question.

NED
Mr. Slaybaugh, do you--
Chuck cuts in front--

CHUCK
Do you have any last requests? Unfinished business from this life we can help with?

EMERSON
Don't let her do this.

BERNARD
Is this Heaven?

CHUCK
Could be.

EMERSON
No, it’s not.

BERNARD
Is that God?

EMERSON
No, it’s not.

BERNARD
I’m just a little confused because I’m a Buddhist.

CHUCK
Buddhism is fascinating. Did it help you in your final moments?

EMERSON
She’s wasting my minute.

CHUCK
Your minute?

EMERSON
Sure as hell ain’t yours.

NED
HEY. It’s everybody’s minute. (checks)

Or, you know, twenty-two seconds.

EMERSON
Who killed you, Bernard?

BERNARD
Hang on.

(to Chuck)
Can you get a message to Earth? Can you tell Jeanine from Promotions that I loved her.
Of course.

NED  
(checks, very quickly:)
Oh, boy. Mr. Slaybaugh, if you could just tell us who was driving the hit-and-run vehicle that killed you, I think we can get you some justice.

BERNARD  
What hit-and-run? I was murdered by a crash test dummy.

Ned touches Bernard and he slumps back onto the table. Off our confused Mod Squad--

END OF ACT ONE
FADE IN:

15 INT. PTE HOLE - BOOTH

Ned, Chuck and Emerson enter...

EMERSON
I'm not God. But if I was, I would be an angry God.

NED
We gave it our best shot. So a crash test dummy killed Bernard. It's a clue.

EMERSON
It's a dead end. And not the kind of dead end you can un-dead and then re-dead again. (pointed)
Like you're supposed to.

CHUCK
It's my fault?

EMERSON
When you get all jabberwocky in my minute, it's hard to follow up on "the dummy did it." I gotta get some real leads now.

CHUCK
Wow. You might actually have to do some real PI work. (then)
How hard can your job be when Ned gives you all the answers?

EMERSON
You'd be surprised.

CHUCK
What do you call a crime novel where the PI can ask the dead guy who did it? (beat)
A leaflet.

Chuck exits for the kitchen. Ned is amused...

NED
That was funny. (off Emerson)
Funny-strange.

Ned heads for the back, Olive steps into his path--
OLIVE
Hi ya, Ned. You need me to walk Digby today?

NED
(distracted)
That'd be great, Olive.

She watches him join Chuck in the kitchen, sides up to Emerson at his booth--

OLIVE
So what's the poop?

The poop?

OLIVE
The poop. The scoop, the skinny, the haps, the dealio, the four-one-one.

(then)
PI lingo.

EMERSON
Rhubarb.

OLIVE
What's that mean?

EMERSON
PI secret code for "bring me a damn slice of rhubarb."

OLIVE
You know this isn't Pies-R-Us, or Pie City, or Thousands-of-Pies-in-One-Place-Dot-Com. This is a bells-on-the-door, pies baking, Mom-'n'-Poppy place. We chitchat here. Chit.

She holds his gaze with her smile, waiting...

EMERSON
Chat?

OLIVE
You got it. Who's the funny girl stuck to Ned?

EMERSON
Childhood sweetheart.

OLIVE
It still sweet? His heart?
EMERSON
Do I get my pie?

OLIVE
Almost there.

EMERSON
You want the truth?

NARRATOR
Olive Snook did not want the truth. But her heart was so full of love for the Pie-Maker that it reached up and nodded her head.

She nods.

EMERSON
He digs her.

She collapses on the inside.

OLIVE
I’ll go get your pie.
(turns back)
Do they touch much?

EMERSON
Wish they would.

Olive looks back to the--

16 INT. PIE HOLE - KITCHEN 16

Ned watches Chuck try to roll out pie dough.

CHUCK
I was just trying to help Bernard. Emerson thinks I’m useless.

Ned takes over, careful not to touch her.

NED
Useless is an empty soap dispenser in a restroom. Standing around reminding people what you could be doing but doing nothing at all. You are not useless. More flour.

Chuck sifts more flour onto the counter.

CHUCK
I can’t be alive-again for no reason. I suppose I could be, but I can’t be because I can’t bear that. So maybe I’m alive-again to help someone like Bernard.
NED
We’ll find the killer. Emerson’s good at what he does.

CHUCK
All Emerson cares about is the reward.

NED
Maybe that’s enough.

CHUCK
(re: Bernard)
It’s not enough.

NED
Flour.

Chuck stops sifting.

CHUCK
What about Jeanine?

NED
From Promotions?

CHUCK
We should visit where Bernard worked. Jeanine needs to know Bernard loved her. It was his dying wish.

NED
It’s so sad.

CHUCK
We’ll cushion the blow.

NED
Not a big fan of the blow.

CHUCK
We’ll bring pie. Someone dies, you bring food. It’s what’s done.

Ned blows off the excess flour, BLOWING OUR SCREEN to WHITE.

NARRATOR
With his head in a cloud of flour and desire, the Pie-Maker realized that the fear he’d felt for so long was being baked by Chuck into something new.
NED

I’m actually excited.

PULL BACK as he and Chuck (carrying a pie in a box) exit from the kitchen and out the front door.

OLIVE

Watches the happy couple walk away.

NARRATOR

As a rule, Olive never cried on the job. As a very, very large lump rose in her throat, she calmed herself by imagining she was a speck of space dust floating in the cosmos.

TRACK OLIVE as she walks back toward the counter, the b.g. behind her slowly becoming a MOVING STAR FIELD in--

EXT. DEEP SPACE

As floating Olive recedes into the distance, WE PAN off to REVEAL the EARTH, also floating in space. COMMERCIAL MUSIC begins...

FEMALE NARRATOR

The Earth is our only home. If we don’t take care of it...

The EARTH morphs into a DANDELION (a sphere of spores).

FEMALE NARRATOR (CONT’D)

Who will?

A WIND blows the spores away, and we FOLLOW ONE as the sky behind becomes blue and the spore MORPHS into a DANDY LION CAR.

EXT. RURAL ROAD - DAY

The car dives by--

FEMALE NARRATOR

Imagine a vehicle so revolutionary, it produces no emissions...

Another angle.

FEMALE NARRATOR (CONT’D)

...because it runs, not on gasoline, but on an extraordinary fuel derived from a renewable plant found everywhere...
A SMILING LITTLE GIRL

watches the car zoom by. She bends and picks a dandelion.

FEMALE NARRATOR (CONT’D)

...the dandelion.

THE DANDY LION CAR

Spins in space.

FEMALE NARRATOR (CONT’D)

Introducing the Dandy Lion SX. It’ll blow you away.

PULL OFF the image to find it is on SEVERAL MONITORS in--

INT. DANDY LION CAR COMPANY SHOWROOM - DAY

A REAL DANDY LION CAR turns on a platform in the center of the dandelion-themed room. TWO MODELS, dressed as sleek dandelion flowers, bright yellow eye-masks and flower headdresses, stand on either side of the car, gesturing to its various features. OTHER FLOWER MODELS circulate.

The room is full of PEOPLE who gawk at the car, talk with suited REPRESENTATIVES who wear big flower-shaped buttons reading “THE REVOLUTION IS BLOOMING!” Chuck, with pie box, and Ned watch the monitor. As the commercial starts to repeat--

CHUCK

A car that runs on dandelions. That is so cool.

NED

Let’s find Jeanine.

A well-dressed executive, MARK ETTER, mid-30s, tall, fit, handsome, ALL SMILES, leads a DOZEN JAPANESE BUSINESSMEN and BUSINESSWOMEN on a TOUR.

MARK ETTER

This way, people. Over here.

(in Japanese)

I want to show you what you’ve been waiting for. The Dandy Lion SX.

The Japanese Businesspeople nod and gasp with excitement, looking at the rotating car...
MARK ETTER
(in Japanese)
I remind you that the car you see before you
does not run on gasoline but on new fuel made
from the dandelion weed. Please inspect the
car at your leisure for the next few minutes.

Mark backs off to let the group get close, Chuck approaches.

CHUCK
(also in Japanese)
Excuse me, my name is Charlotte. I like your
car very much.

MARK ETTER
(in Japanese)
I am Mark Etter, Vice President, Marketing for
Dandelion Worldwide Industries.

As they speak, several of the Japanese Businessmen take note of
the two Caucasians speaking their language, watching the
conversation like a tennis match.

CHUCK
(in Japanese)
It is nice to meet you. I was sorry to hear
about your employee, Bernard Slaybaugh.

MARK ETTER
(in Japanese)
Did you know Bernard?

CHUCK
(in Japanese)
He was an old friend.

REVEAL NED

Watching the "tennis match" from the REVERSE ANGLE, just as
surprised and impressed.

MARK ETTER
(in Japanese)
How can I be of assistance?

CHUCK
(in Japanese)
Can you tell me how to find...
(in English)
Jeanine from Promotions? It is a personal
matter.

MARK ETTER
"Jeanine from Promotions"?
CHUCK  
(in Japanese)  
Yes.

MARK ETTER  
(in English)  
Second flower from the right. 

He gestures to one of the flower models on the rotating turntable.

CHUCK  
Thanks a lot.

MARK ETTER  
Have a nice day.  
(in Japanese)  
Who would like to see all the colors available for the Dandy Lion SX?

As the Japanese all eagerly raise their hands, Chuck and Ned approach the turntable...

NED  
You speak Japanese?

CHUCK  
"Hi." When you take care of shut-ins your whole life, there’s plenty of time to read.

NARRATOR  
In fact, Chuck’s love of language had begun upon the discovery of a portable cassette tape player and several boxes of language courses.

INT. CHUCK’S AUNTS’ KITCHEN (ONE WALL) – DAY – FLASHBACK  

YOUNGER CHUCK (Anna) sits at the kitchen table, wearing a Walkman and big headphones, looking at a big slice of cheese.

NARRATOR  
The player and cassettes had been purchased by her aunts for their Darling Darling’s World Water Ballet Tour ‘77.

YOUNGER CHUCK  
(in French)  
The Jarlsberg is on the table.  
(in German)  
The Jarlsberg is on the table.  
(in Swedish)  
The Jarlsberg is on the table.  
(in Chinese)  
The Jarlsberg is on the table.
INT. DANDY LION CAR COMPANY SHOWROOM

Chuck and Ned have reached JEANINE on the TURNTABLE...

JEANINE

Hi! Flex your Flower Power!

She hands them each a promotional foot-long PLASTIC FLOWER from a big bunch...

JEANINE (CONT’D)

Would you like a fact sheet on the Dandy Lion SX, the “spores car of tomorrow”? Get it? “Spores car”? I think it’s cute.

NED

Are you Jeanine?

JEANINE

Am I in trouble for making up slogans? ‘Cause I’ll say the “blow you away” thing, but it seemed kind of redundant with the commercial playing all the time.

CHUCK

Actually, we’re here to deliver sad news. About Bernard Slaybaugh...

Chuck and Ned continue to speak to Jeanine, who listens, but remains neutral...

NARRATOR

As Chuck and the Pie-Maker relayed an appropriately-detailed lie of how they had come to know of Bernard’s last wishes, they studied her face for a reaction, but found it an unreadable mask.

JEANINE

Do you mind if I take off this mask?

NED

Please.

Jeanine removes her yellow flower eye-mask.

JEANINE

Maybe you got the wrong flower, but I didn’t know any Bernard from Safety Testing.

NED

You’re sure?
JEANINE
I know what I know. Is that pie?

Jeanine grabs the box, won’t let go.

CHUCK
Actually, it was baked specifically for the recipient of Bernard’s message.

JEANINE
Well, it’s silly to waste a perfectly good pie. Man it smells good.

Ned reaches out and dabs the corner of her mouth with a tissue.

NED
You’re drooling.

CHUCK
But Bernard--

JEANINE
Well, he’s dead, right?

NED
Yeah. He’s dead. Enjoy the pie.

Ned and Chuck watch Jeanine rotate away from them. Across the room, Mark Etter calls out:

MARK ETTER
Time to move on to our next stop, people!
   (in Japanese)
We need to move on, everyone. Next stop is the...
   (in English)
   “Crash Test Facility”

As the group “Oooohs”...

CHUCK
A “crash test faci-rity” could mean...

NED
Dummies. Feel like taking a tour?

Chuck smiles, excited. As they blend into the tour group and head out of the room, we DISCOVER--

JEANINE

ROTATING AROUND to the back of the platform, IN TEARS, ravenously devouring the pie... She begins WALKING IN PLACE so as to stay hidden...
NARRATOR
Safely out of sight, the flower began to weep, knowing full well that, like the rich sugary dessert she binged on, her tears would remain with her for only the next ten to fifteen minutes, before they would be purged from her body, like they had never existed.

23
INT. CRASH TEST FACILITY - OUTER DOOR - DAY

Mark leads the tour group and Chuck and Ned to a large set of SECURITY DOORS. A SECURITY GUARD stands nearby.

MARK ETTER
Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the Dandy Lion Worldwide Crash Test Facility...

With a FLOURISH, he swipes his ID BADGE through a SCANNER and the DOORS SLIDE OPEN with a whoosh, REVEALING--

24
INT. CRASH TEST FACILITY

A LARGE WAREHOUSE-SIZED SPACE, no windows. The prominent feature is a yellow line drawn down the middle of the floor, leading to a BRICK WALL.

A DANDY LION SX sits at the end of the yellow line, a group of LAB TECHNICIANS (from the first photo) surround the car, making notes and checking on two ROLLING COMPUTER STATIONS with cables connecting to the TWO CRASH TEST DUMMIES in the front seat of the car.

MARK ETTER
Science Guys, I'd like you to meet the newest Dandy Lion Dealers from a little territory I like to call Asia.
(in Japanese)
Asia rules! Number-one!

The Businesspeople respond "Hi!" as a group.

MARK ETTER (CONT'D)
Tell them what happens in here, Science Guy.

The tour group turns, listens attentively as a TECHNICIAN steps forward, not accustomed to public speaking--

LAB TECHNICIAN
Um, this is where we use electronic anthropomorphic units--

MARK ETTER
"Dummy-des..."
LAB TECNICIAN
...to test the Dandy Lion SX for structural integrity as well as the viability of all the restraint and impact-initiated safety systems.

MARK ETTER
(in Japanese)
We crash things in here! Boom-des ka?!

A CHEER from the group. The Technician steps back as A SECOND TECNICIAN pulls a BIG HOOK on a strong CABLE extending from a small hole in the brick wall (many meters away) and hooks it on the front of the TEST DANDY LION SX.

MARK ETTER (CONT'D)
Who wants to pull the lever?

All hands SHOOT UP, including Chuck’s. Ned indicates for her to put her hand down.

Mark picks a member of the group. The MAN steps forward and pulls the lever--

THE CABLE goes taught, pulling the car, faster and faster toward the brick wall where it CRASHES in a dramatic explosion of dust and sparks. The GROUP CHEERS.

NARRATOR
As the group thrilled to the sight of twisted metal and simulated loss of life and limb...

CHUCK
has wandered to a curtained-off area on the side. Pokes her head through--

NARRATOR (CONT'D)
Chuck came upon an equally-chilling sight of her own...

She GESTURES for Ned to come see. Ned backs away from the group and joins her at the--

INT. CRASH TEST FACILITY - DUMMY HOLDING AREA

From the REVERSE, we see them poke their heads in together, very curious at what they see...

CHUCK
One of these dummies is not like the other dummies.

REVEAL the REVERSE -- a crash test dummy storage area, MANY ROWS DEEP (DIGITAL EXTENSION?). SIX IDENTICAL CRASH TEST DUMMIES on
the front row, hanging from hooks. One on the end is missing its ORANGE JUMPSUIT and PLASTIC FACE MASK.

NED
The mask is missing.

CHUCK
And the jumpsuit, too.

CHUCK AND NED

CHUCK (CONT’D)
Maybe Bernard wasn’t crazy.

Smile, give each-other a soft-“five” with the plastic giveaway flowers.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO
ACT THREE

FADE IN:

26  EXT. PIE HOLE (STAGE) - NIGHT
WE PUSH IN, through a window to find--

27  INT. PIE HOLE - BOOTH
Chuck and Ned and Emerson, seated. Three OTHER CUSTOMERS, buying, eating. Olive behind the counter...

CHUCK
The dummy did it.

NED
Or at least someone in a dummy mask and orange jumpsuit.
      (helping)
Chuck found the clue.

CHUCK
      (smiles)
I found the clue.

EMERSON
Clue’s a board game. “Professor did it in the parlor with a rubber mallet” -- that’s a clue. We find evidence.

NED
C’mon, Emerson. You gotta admit this means something.

EMERSON
Could be a lead. I did some checking up on the car company, too. They got a lot riding on this Dandy Lion.

CHUCK
We gotta get back in there tonight.

NED
That’s not how we do.

EMERSON
We gotta get back in there tonight.

Ned looks to Emerson--

EMERSON (CONT’D)
See if whoever took that dummy mask left behind any evidence.
Chuck smiles, excited.

OLIVE

Watches the Mod Squad talk. She fantasizes quietly to Digby by her feet as Ned stands, approaches...

   OLIVE
   Where are they going now, Digby? He’s walking over here, see him? Here he comes. Maybe they’re going dancing. They need a fourth. “Would I mind?” No, I wouldn’t. And you’re sorry you’ve played so hard to get? It’s only because I make you stupid with love? But what of your dark-haired mysterious sweetheart? Your sister you say? Why, you could never have sex with your sister. This is wonderful news, I’ll go get my dancing shoes.

Ned has arrived behind her--

   NED
   Olive?

She startles--

   OLIVE
   Hi ya!

   NED
   I’m going to be out late tonight. A frivolous thing, hardly worth explaining.

   OLIVE
   Oh.

   NED
   Can you close up?

   OLIVE
   I think I just did.

   NED
   Sorry?

   OLIVE
   See you in the morning.

Ned follows Chuck and Emerson out the door, holding it for Chuck as they walk away into the night. Olive watches, turns around the CLOSED sign, alone now.
NARRATOR
Olive often imagined there was an orchestra in her heart. Musicians, heard only by her, except for those moments when her heart broke open, and they were allowed out to play.

MUSIC RISES...

Olive SINGS. Greater minds than mine will choreograph this well, but the point is that Olive belts it out when no one’s listening. If we ripped off the tone from “Singin’ in the Rain,” it wouldn’t be the worst thing.

As she starts to put the chairs up on the tables--

OLIVE
(sings)
GUESS MINE IS NOT THE FIRST HEART BROKEN, MY EYES ARE NOT THE FIRST TO CRY, I'M NOT THE FIRST TO KNOW, THERE'S JUST NO GETTIN' OVER YOU. HELLO--

The BELLS JINGLE as a YOUNG COUPLE, all smiles, ENTER--

OLIVE (CONT'D)
Hello. We’re closed.

They retreat, hand in hand, into the night. As the door shuts, music returns, Olive finds DIGBY now--

OLIVE (CONT'D)
(sings)
I'M JUST A FOOL WHO'S WILLING, TO SIT AROUND AND WAIT FOR YOU, BUT BABY CAN'T YOU SEE, THERE'S NOTHIN' ELSE FOR ME TO DO, I'M HOPELESSLY DEVOTED TO YOU--

BELLS JINGLE as the door’s unlocked. MANUEL, Latino, mid-50s cleaning guy enters, pulling a large floor polisher.

MANUEL
Hi, Olive.

OLIVE
Hi, Manuel.

He locks the door.

MANUEL
Wednesday is floor day.

OLIVE
Yeah, okay.
He puts on HEADPHONES, begins POLISHING THE FLOOR with the machine, safely in his own world and looking in the opposite direction. MUSIC UP! Olive CONTINUES, brave enough to move right behind him when necessary...

OLIVE (CONT’D)
(going BIG)
BUT NOW... THERE'S NOWHERE TO HIDE...

Digby starts to HOWL along with the singing (real howls).

OLIVE (CONT’D)
...SINCE YOU PUSHED MY LOVE ASIDE, I'M NOT IN MY HEAD, HOPELESSLY DEVOTED TO YOU, HOPELESSLY DEVOTED TO YOU.

Manuel pulls off his headphones, turns. Both Olive and Digby STOP--

MANUEL
You say something?

OLIVE
Nope.

He puts back on his headphones. Olive finishes quietly, wiping down the counter...

OLIVE (CONT’D)
HOPELESSLY DEVOTED...
(tears)
TO YOU.

Spent, Olive crumples with a SIGH. Digby walks over and licks her face.

NARRATOR
While Olive considered how much she loved Digby for paying attention to her when the Pie-Maker would not. And Digby considered how much he liked salt...

28 INT. DANDY LION CAR COMPANY SHOWROOM - NIGHT

Dark and spooky now. The CAR, headlights on, still rotates, giving an eerie effect. The monitors are freeze-framed on the company LOGO. Emerson, Ned and Chuck walk cautiously across the showroom floor.

NARRATOR
The Pie-Maker considered what the sentence would be for breaking and entering with no prior convictions.
CHUCK
Couldn’t they turn this thing off at night?

NED
Maybe it runs on dandelions, too.

As they exit, we see the—

SHADOW OF A PERSON
Cast against the wall in the light from the turning car...

INT. CRASH TEST FACILITY - OUTER DOOR - NIGHT

They approach the high security doors which are locked shut.

NED
We’ll never get through these without an...

Emerson SNAP-PRODUCES an ID BADGE, holds it up--

NED (CONT’D)
ID badge. How you badge?

EMERSON
Contacted the company that makes this door under false pretenses. They gave me a sample ID badge which I digitally altered with the magnetic code that matches up to the serial number of this machine.

(to Chuck)
That cheating?

CHUCK
I dunno. Is this?

Chuck SNAP-PRODUCES her own, faces off against Emerson--

CHUCK (CONT’D)
I gave the security guard a hug goodbye. My upper body distracted him while these things I call “hands” took this off his belt.

Chuck SLIDES her card through the slot. The DOORS WHOOSH OPEN. Chuck walks through. Ned looks at Emerson, who stews.

NARRATOR
At that moment, the Pie-Maker felt a mixture of happiness and guilt.

INT. CRASH TEST FACILITY - NIGHT

NED
Why is it always a mixture?
REVEAL he sits in a Dandy Lion SX with Chuck, a DUMMY between them.

NED (CONT'D)
This job was so humdrum before you came.

CHUCK
I love solving murders. Maybe it’s a little strange that the first one I solved was my own. But I love this.

NED
I love that you love it. But it is dangerous. And I never even asked Emerson if it was okay.

Chuck ruffles at this. They watch Emerson looking around the far end of the room...

CHUCK
What do you even know about Emerson, besides he privately investigates?

NED AND CHUCK

NED
What is so great about knowing? You lift up a rock, do you find whipped cream? No, you find worms. I say no to knowing.

CHUCK
We haven’t seen each other for twenty years. Don’t you want to know about me? I want to know about you.

NED
But we’ve all done things we’re not proud of. We all have secrets.

CHUCK
Secrets?

Before this can be pursued, Emerson leans into the car--

EMERSON
Skeletons in the closet.

NED
Exactly.
(rolling with it)
How long have you been listening?

EMERSON
(indicates the dummy room)
There are skeletons in the closet.
INT. CRASH TEST FACILITY - DUMMY HOLDING AREA

The curtain is pulled back as our Mod Squad looks in at us, their BREATH IS VISIBLE...

NED
It's freezing in here.

CHUCK
Those aren't skeletons.

REVEAL the REVERSE

CREEPY SILHOUETTED FIGURES hang from the hooks now, HEAVY PLASTIC SHEETS hanging between them. Chuck turns on the LIGHTS, REVEALING--

NED
They're dead bodies.

Indeed, they are. Hung where the crash test dummies used to be are rows (it's the front row that we see the best) of silver leotard-wearing bodies, burlap sacks over their heads.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE
FADE IN:

INT. CRASH TEST FACILITY - DUMMY HOLDING AREA

Ned, Chuck and Emerson stare at the hanging bodies, aghast. Emerson SHIVERS again.

CHUCK
Are they dead?

NED
Pretty sure.

CHUCK
Murdered?

EMERSON
Let’s hope so.
(off their looks)
Murder victims have families, and families offer rewards. We pin these dead corpses on the Dandy corporates, we’ll never have to work again.

CHUCK
How will you know the difference?

EMERSON
Your candy-ass won’t be blocking my view.

NED
Can we please get this over with?

A reluctant Emerson decides to stay. He hugs the edge as Ned removes the HOOD off a body to find a MIDDLE-AGED MAN, RICK. Ned touches his hand, and we see the familiar POP of ELECTRICITY as he comes to life, unfazed...

NED (CONT’D)
Hi.

RICK
Hey.  
(extends his hand)
Rick. Rick Page. Last thing I remember I was reading a sales forecast in the bath. Geez, those things are dull.

CHUCK
You ever hear of the Dandy Lion Car Company?
RICK
Nope. You wanna open the kimono on why I'm in a silver leotard, hanging from a hook?

CHUCK
Do you have any thoughts or last requests --

Emerson ROLLS his eyes, takes Ned’s hand and re-deads Mark.

NED
Hey!

CHUCK
This too creepy for you, Emerson?

EMERSON
If I wanted to mingle with a bunch of geeks in leotards, I would have stayed in art school.

NED
You went to art school?

In his surprise, Ned ACCIDENTALLY BRUSHES the hand of another hanging corpse, BETH, who awakes SCREAMING. Emerson SCREAMS, too. Ned wheels and pulls off her mask.

They both stop, Emerson shivers. Beth looks around curious, notices Ned and Chuck.

BETH
Hi.

CHUCK
What’s up?

BETH
I was just riding the Ferris wheel at the State Fair and the teenager running it said I could stay an extra turn.

CHUCK
Have you ever heard of the Dandy Lion Car Company?

BETH
No.

EMERSON
Moving on.

BETH
Wait a sec. I did donate my body to science, and I checked a box that said I could be used to test automobile safety.
Is that... legal? Donating your body to a car company?

Absolutely. Auto industry’s been using crash test cadavers since the ‘60s.

Human crash test dummies?

Sounds scary, but you know, when you’re dead, you’re dead.

Am I dead?

Spark! Ned re-deads her.

The doors slide open and our Mod Squad burst out.

So there’s nothing illegal about any of that?

Why would Dandy Lion replace all of their crash test dummies with dead bodies?

They enter--

And what happened to all the real dummies?

Emerson smiles slyly, about to open his mouth--

Before Emerson Cobb could reply with a clever, if slightly insulting, remark...

(stops short)

They all freeze, looking at the showroom.

Did you see that?

What?
NED

There!

ANGLE - THE WALL

WE SEE, in the sweep of the revolving Dandy Lion Car’s HEADLIGHTS, the huge shadow of a MENACING FLOWER. Chuck GASPS.

THEN:

JEANINE

Steps out of the shadows, holding her flower costume, looking scared.

CHUCK

Jeanine?

A WHOLE PIE

Ravenously attacked with a hungry fork...

NARRATOR

Returning to the Pie Hole with the wispy flower-model, the Pie-Maker and his accomplices got the break they’d been waiting for.

35 INT. PIE HOLE - BOOTH - NIGHT

Jeanine sits across from the Mod Squad, eating a pie.

JEANINE

(mouth full)

I coln’t ell oo ing afoe coe ay er a-ting ee.

CHUCK

What?

Jeanine holds up a finger, chews some more, takes a big sip from a glass of milk, then--

JEANINE

I couldn’t tell you anything before because they were watching me.

NARRATOR

And as Jeanine continued to eat her shoofly pie, she told them the story of her love affair with Bernard Slaybaugh.
INT. DANDY LION CAR COMPANY SHOWROOM - DAY

Mark Etter stands on the (NOT TURNING) turntable in front of a row of DANDELION MODELS (including Jeanine), gesturing gracefully to the Dandy Lion SX. They copy his move.

NARRATOR
They had met when the scientist had come to watch sales training on a long lunch.

BERNARD sits out of the way, eating a BIG SANDWICH.

JEANINE is clearly distracted, keeps looking over at him (and the sandwich).

CAMERA PUSHES IN as Bernard, mid-bite, makes his first eye contact with Jeanine the Dandelion Model. She winks at him. He smiles.

INT. DANDY LION CAR COMPANY SHOWROOM - NIGHT

The fogged-up bulb of a (ever-so-slightly rocking) Dandy Lion SX as it ROTATES in the empty room.

NARRATOR
The scientist and the waif fell deeply in love, hiding their affair from the world like a trade secret.

A SWEATY HAND entwined in a DANDELION LEAFY HAND smears against the inside window à la “Titanic”...

INT. DANDY LION CAR COMPANY SHOWROOM - ANOTHER LATE NIGHT

Jeanine waves goodbye to the other models, checks her watch as they leave. No sign of Bernard.

NARRATOR
But Jeanine from Promotions felt a chasm growing between them.

INT. CRASH TEST FACILITY - OUTER DOOR

Jeanine waits outside the closed doors. The Security Guard reads the paper. The doors open, her face brightens, but TWO OTHER SCIENTISTS exit past her, the doors closing behind them.

NARRATOR
As the launch of the flower car grew closer, Bernard’s hours grew longer. He became distant and hard to reach.
Jeanine eats a fast-food burger as she follows a car on an empty road (all we see are the taillights).

NARRATOR
Suspecting her Safety Scientist of being unsafe, she began to spy. But there was no other flower, only mysterious trips into the darkness.

RESUME - PIE HOLE - BOOTH

Jeanine’s seat is empty, a scraped-cleaned plate in front of her. Emerson sits down across with a slice of pie.

EMERSON
Where’d she go?

Jeanine enters from the back, popping a mint into her mouth, offering up the mints as she sits again.

JEANINE
Sorry. Restroom. Mint, anyone?

Chuck eyes her knowingly...

CHUCK
No thanks.

NED
Where was Staybaugh going on these night drives?

JEANINE
I dunno. I could never see. And when I confronted him about it, he wouldn’t tell me anything. I thought he was being paranoid, till he turned up dead.

(to Emerson)
You gonna finish that?

EMERSON
Yes.

CHUCK
I wish we knew what he was doing.

JEANINE
Oh, I figured it out.

They look at her. She looks at Emerson’s pie. Ned SLIDES it across to her--
Jeanine gets into her Dandy Lion SX.

JEANINE
It's just easier if I show you. Follow me.

As Jeanine pulls away, and Ned gets into his Mercedes, parked just behind--

CHUCK
Shotgun.

NED
Chuck...

CHUCK
C'mon. I really hate the back.

NED
Dead. Again. Forever.

CHUCK
Fine.

Emerson shoots her a smile as she gets in--

EXT. RURAL ROAD - NIGHT

Ned's vintage Mercedes tails the Dandy Lion SX.

CHUCK
Why is she driving so slow?

NED
That car can't have a very big engine.

EMERSON
Maybe she ate it.

Ned giggles.

CHUCK
It's not funny. She obviously has a very serious disorder.

NED
Sorry. You're right.

CHUCK
Don't do that. Don't make me that girl.

NED
What girl?
CHUCK
The goody-good girl who you have to be so
careful with. I’m not made out of glass beads
or balsa wood. If you really knew me, you’d
know that. You make me that girl and I will
jump out of this car.

EMERSON
Hardly get a bruise at this speed.

NED
Jeanine won’t go any faster.

Ned HONKS the horn.

CHUCK
Maybe I did lead a sheltered life, but that’s
all gonna change now. And I wasn’t even as
sheltered as you think. Aunt Lily had a very
extensive collection of historic erotica
hidden in the milk cellar.

NED
The “milk cellar”?

CHUCK
Whatever. The cheese-floor. The spooky place
under the house.

NED
Chuck, I don’t think you’re that girl.

CHUCK
How do you even know if you don’t ask?

EMERSON
I will pay you both not to have this
conversation in front of me.

CHUCK
Except it’s not in front of you, is it? It’s
to the side and behind you.

NED
You can’t sit up here, Chuck.

CHUCK
I like the front seat!

EMERSON
You can have the seat. I want you to have the
seat.

As Emerson starts to try to climb in back:
NED
Stop. Stop it...

KA-BOOM!

OUT THE WINDOW

The Dandy Lion SX EXPLODES into a ball of fire.

NED SLAMS on the brakes as FLAMING CAR PARTS rain down on them. A SIDE MIRROR... A HUBCAP... A CHARRED DAISY HEADDRESS.

Beat. And then --

A BURNING BOX OF LAXATIVES drops onto the windshield.

Emerson and Ned look on in stunned silence as Chuck leans INTO FRAME from the backseat.

CHUCK
Oh, poop.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR
FADE IN:

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Jeanine, her head completely WRAPPED IN BANDAGES, lies in a hospital bed. TUFTS of BURNT HAIR and EYES are all that are visible of the model beneath the mummy.

As a show of support, Chuck draws beautifully-ARCHED EYEBROWS on the bandages over Jeanine’s eyes with a BLACK SHARPIE.

CHUCK
There you go. Just like new.

Chuck steps back to admire her work, REVEALING she’s already drawn a set of LARGE, RUBY-RED LIPS around Jeanine’s bandaged mouth with the RED SHARPIE in her other hand.

JEANINE
Do I look okay?

Ned and Emerson stand at the foot of the bed, trying to remain positive.

NED
I’ll say. You’re runway ready.

JEANINE
Really? You don’t think these bandages make me look fat?

NED
Not at all.

Jeanine turns to Chuck.

JEANINE
That’s so sweet. Is he always this sweet?

CHUCK
I wouldn’t know.

Chuck and Ned share a look.

EMERSON
Look, some crazy car bomber went to a lot of trouble to stop you from showing us whatever it is you were going to show us.

Chuck takes Jeanine’s hand.
CHUCK
Jeanine, what didn’t the killer want you to show us?

JEANINE
The bodies.

NED
What bodies? The dead bodies? We already --

JEANINE
No. The ones in the big hole.

EXT. FIELD/DITCH - NIGHT
Emerson, Ned and Chuck stand with their backs to camera -- their shapes轮廓ed against the night sky.

CHUCK
How sad.

NED
Why would somebody do this?

CAMERA POPS IN CLOSE on the threesome as Emerson shrugs his shoulders.

EMERSON
Only one way to find out.

Taking a step forward, Emerson drops out of frame. Ned and Chuck leap after him. Camera pans down to reveal they are all standing in --

AN ENORMOUS DITCH
Fifteen feet long and eight feet deep and filled with crash test dummies.

CHUCK
Dummies.

NED
I don’t get it. Why are there dead people on hooks and plastic dummies in a grave?

EMERSON
‘Cause dead people don’t talk. Usually.

Suddenly, a nondescript shape in the foreground of the frame moves, blocking our view. Camera rack focuses to reveal the nondescript shape is a man’s torso (shoulder to waist). Our heroes are not alone.
IN THE DITCH

Ned and Chuck join Emerson, who is kneeling over a crash test dummy with his COMPUTER INNARDS EXPOSED. Chuck kneels next to Emerson, staring at the dummy’s CIRCUITRY in awe.

CHUCK
What is all that?

EMERSON
Each one of these guys is fitted with a computer hard drive. And where there’s a hard drive in a hole, there’s usually something to hide.

NED
Couldn’t they just erase it?

EMERSON
Not that easy.

Ned glances off and frowns.

EMERSON
Yeah, I know ‘cuz I just said that. But the question is who?

NED
Actually, the question is mute.

CHUCK
What?

Ned points OFF CAMERA.

Everyone swings around to see --

A FIGURE

Standing on the ridge above them. He steps from the shadows to REVEAL he’s wearing a CRASH TEST DUMMY JUMPSUIT AND MASK.

BACK IN THE DITCH

Chuck inches back, terrified.

CHUCK (CONT’D)

Ned?
NED

Emerson?

EMERSON

Run!

As Emerson turns to run, the crash test dummy points two TASER GUNS at them and FIRES.

ZAP! ZAP! Emerson and Ned are hit by the Taser’s BARBS and fall to the ground, writhing in pain. Chuck runs for the far side of the ditch, but the dummies beneath her feet make running almost impossible.

Chuck falls.

As she scrambles to her feet, a set of legs in crash test dummy overalls jump down in front of her.

CHUCK’S POV

The crash test dummy killer blocks her path. Reaching into his pocket, he pulls out a STUN GUN. ELECTRICAL CHARGE CRACKLING, he drives it into CAMERA and we SMASH TO BLACK.

INT. OLIVE’S APARTMENT - NIGHT

“Brady Bunch” faux darkness as Olive SPOONS on her horse-themed sheets, with Digby.

NARRATOR

As the Pie-Maker’s brain crackled with 10,000 volts of electricity and then lost consciousness, Olive would have no such luck.

OLIVE

Digby? You awake?

He is.

OLIVE (CONT’D)

I can’t sleep either.

She takes a breath and closes her eyes again.

NARRATOR

Closing her eyes only made her visions of the Pie-Maker’s late-night date with the perky brunette from nowhere more vivid and uncensored.

Her eyes pop open and she sits up, shivering with disgust...
OLIVE
Oooohhh. Yuch.

(to Digby)
C’mon. We need to walk.

As Digby happily hops off the bed--

CLOSE UP ON NED

He wakes, trying to get his bearings.

NED’S POV - FOGGY AND DISTORTED

Chuck is staring at him -- just inches from his face. He pulls away from her in a panic.

ON NED - BEHIND THE WHEEL OF A DANDY LION SX

Sitting up straight INSIDE a CLEAR PLASTIC BODY BAG. CAMERA POPS WIDE TO REVEAL --

INT. CRASH TEST FACILITY - NIGHT

Emerson (backseat) and Chuck (passenger seat) are also seat-belted into a Dandy Lion SX. And like Ned, they too are cocooned in CLEAR PLASTIC BODY BAGS, their HANDS TIED. From the backseat, Emerson nudges Ned.

Ned spins around to see Emerson gesturing frantically to the front windshield. He turns back to see --

THE CRASH TEST DUMMY KILLER

Lugging the crash test CABLE toward them, he stops in front of the car. BAM! With a villainous flourish, he drops the cable’s heavy steel hook on the hood and lets it slowly scrape down the front of the car.

SCCCCRREEEEEEEECH.

INT. DANDY LION SX - NIGHT

CAMERA PUSHES IN on our heroes. As they grimace, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FIVE
ACT SIX

FADE IN:

INT. CRASH TEST SITE - NIGHT

Strapped in the Dandy Lion, our heroes stare at the BRICK WALL looming before them at the end of the long yellow line. The dummy, hook in hand, pauses to admire his handiwork.

MARK

Guess I don’t need this anymore.

He whips off his mask -- it’s Marketing Executive Mark Etter.

MARK (CONT’D)

Spin control is a dirty business.

He notices that a SPLOTCH OF GREASE has gotten on his hand. He withdraws a nicely-pressed HANDKERCHIEF from his pocket...

MARK (CONT’D)

Luckily the body bags keep things nice and neat.

As the Marketer dabs at the grease splotch on his hand with a handkerchief, CAMERA PUSHES IN CLOSE.

EXT. RURAL ROAD - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

CLOSE ON the same handkerchief dabbing a different stain off the Marketer’s hand. This stain is BLOOD.

CAMERA PULLS OUT TO REVEAL Mark Etter, dressed as the crash test dummy, standing at the side of the road (with the “BUMPS” sign). At his feet is a body bag holding a body.

NARRATOR

Murder was not new for Marketer Mark Etter...

He unzips the bag and dumps Bernard’s BODY onto the road.

NARRATOR (CONT’D)

He had previously perfected his stain-free slaughter style on Bernard Slaybaugh, erstwhile lover of models and automotive safety...

INT. CRASH TEST SITE - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Bernard Slaybaugh struggles to pull a badly-burned crash test dummy (still smoking) out of a post-crash-test Dandy Lion SX. He lays the dummy on a table and examines it with tender concern.
NARRATOR
The facts were these: through a series of crash test experiments, Bernard Slaybaugh had learned...

CAMERA PULLS BACK REVEALING a mountain of crash test dummies -- all similarly burned and destroyed. Off Bernard’s horror:

NARRATOR (CONT’D)
...that the Dandy Lion was a deadly dud.

52 INT. CRASH TEST FACILITY – DAY – FLASHBACK

Bernard shows Mark a mangled and burned crash test dummy.

NARRATOR
Bernard begged the Marketer to cancel the car’s launch. But Mark Etter had other plans...

Mark Etter offers Bernard a wad of cash to buy his silence. Bernard rejects the bribe with a flourish and storms away.

NARRATOR (CONT’D)
The company had invested millions in the Dandy Lion campaign...

Left alone, Mark Etter studies Bernard’s mangled crash test dummy. Slowly, he reaches down to its chin and RIPS OFF ITS MASK.

NARRATOR (CONT’D)
...He knew that paying off the inevitable lawsuits would still be cheaper than halting production of the car.

CAMERA PUSHES IN ON Mark Etter holding the dummy’s mask up to his face.

53 INT. CRASH TEST FACILITY – OUTER DOOR – LATE NIGHT – FLASHBACK3

Bernard approaches the security doors. The security guard’s chair is empty.

Bernard swipes his card in the scanner. The doors don’t open. He tries again and again. He hears a noise and turns and stares as the “crash test dummy” takes out a TASER and ZAPS him. Bernard crumples to the ground.

NARRATOR
He would ensure that the Dandy Lion SX would bloom on time...
INT. CRASH TEST FACILITY - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Bernard is body bagged in the driver’s seat of a crash test Dandy Lion. The dummy pulls the lever and the car is pulled by the cable into the brick wall.

NARRATOR
...and no one would stop him.

RESUME - CRASH TEST SITE - AS BEFORE

Mark Etter continues his villainous rant:

MARK
I’m determined to launch the car and no one will stop me! Not Bernard Slaybaugh, not some dandelion model and certainly not...

INT. DANDY LION CAR - CONTINUOUS

OUR HEROES’ POV

Mark Etter gesticulates wildly as he RANTS, MUZZLED AND UNINTELLIGIBLE.

Off our heroes befuddled expressions:

NARRATOR
As Mark Etter continued his monologue, unaware that it was completely inaudible from within the sealed body bags within the car...

Resigned to her fate, Chuck looks at Ned, who still struggles to get free...

NARRATOR (CONT’D)
Chuck pondered why it was she always seemed to die just as things were starting to get good.

She turns forward with a sigh. We see through the bag--

CHUCK
(M.O.S.)
Son of a bitch.

Ned gives up, looks over at Chuck...

NARRATOR
And though he couldn’t hear her, Ned suddenly wanted to tell her everything: pet peeves and favorite foods, his fears, his dreams and all the pure joy she had brought into his life.

Ned gazes at Chuck, still unable to voice his feelings.
NARRATOR (CON'T)

But mostly, he wanted to tell her the one personal detail he dreaded the most.

NED
I'm sorry about your dad. I didn't mean to kill him.

Chuck cocks her head, quizzical and unable to hear him.

INT. CRASH TEST SITE - NIGHT

Mark crescendoes to the end of his crazy rant:

MARK
...and that is why you meddling idiots must die!

He waves the hook threateningly at our heroes, then crouches to attach it to the car's underside.

INT. DANDY LION CAR - NIGHT

Seeing the end is near, Chuck and Ned look at each other.

CHUCK
(mouths)
Goodbye.

They lean in for a LONG, DEEP KISS through their body bags.

BACKSEAT

Behind them, Emerson struggles with tied hands to pull something from his pocket. Finally, his fingertips inch out the KNITTING NEEDLES. SEIZING THEM, he JABS them through his body bag as...

INT. CRASH TEST FACILITY - NIGHT

Mark Etter struggles to attach the crash test hook to the car. It slips from his hand to the ground.

INT. DANDY LION CAR - NIGHT

Emerson, hands freed, unzips Ned...

EMERSON
Drive!

Ned reaches for the KEYS in the ignition as Emerson unzips Chuck. She smiles, happy to see him--

CHUCK
Thank you.
60  INT. CRASH TEST FACILITY - NIGHT
Mark Etter, still crouched in front of the car, hears the REV of
the engine. With a YELP, he jumps out of the way as the car
PEELS OUT.

61  INT. DANDY LION CAR - NIGHT
Ned turns hard, accelerating toward a TUNNEL ENTRANCE.

62  EXT. DANDY LION CAR COMPANY - NIGHT
Our heroes hurtle out a driveway onto the street. Behind them,
Mark Etter runs out and gets in his own CAR to give chase.

63  EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT
The Dandy Lion SX rounds the corner with Mark Etter’s car on its
tail.

64  INT. MARK ETTER’S CAR - NIGHT (STAGE)
Gripping the wheel tightly, Mark bears down on his prey.

65  INT. DANDY LION SX (STAGE)
Ned glances to his rearview mirror.

    NED
    I can’t lose him!

    NARRATOR
    If only the Pie-Maker had heard the killer
    exclaim that the Dandy Lion SX was much more
    than the eco-friendly car of the future...

66  INT. DANDY LION SX - NIGHT
The dashboard controls go haywire -- BLINKING AND FLASHING as
the RADIO cycles through static and stations.

    NARRATOR
    If only he’d heard it was also a deathtrap. A
dandelion-fueled time bomb...

Ned, Chuck and Emerson look on in confusion.

67  INT. MARK ETTER’S CAR - NIGHT (STAGE)

    MARK ETTER
    Come on. Just a little faster...
ON THE DANDY LION’S SPEEDOMETER

Inching toward twenty-nine miles per hour.

**NARRATOR**

*...that upon reaching a cruising speed of thirty miles per hour, a cataclysmic chain reaction would occur that would blow the car and its precious human cargo to smithereens.*

CHUCK (O.S.)

LOOK OUT!

CAMERA POPS OUT WIDE to reveal Chuck frantically pointing to a FIGURE standing in the road in front of them. IT’S OLIVE walking Digby. OLIVE SCREAMS in the headlights.

The Mod Squad SCREAMS as Ned slams on the brakes.

EXT. PIE HOLE - NIGHT

OLIVE’S POV

As the car skids to a halt just inches away from her, Olive’s gaze falls on Ned behind the wheel of the Dandy Lion.

ON OLIVE

Smiling dreamily, squinting into the headlights.

**NARRATOR**

*Olive was pleased.*

Ned leans out of the Dandy Lion--

NED

Are you okay?

OLIVE

I am now.

**NARRATOR**

*Whatever the Pie-Maker had been doing that night did not seem especially romantic.*

NED

Can you help us get out of these body bags?

As she smiles--

INT. MARK ETTER’S CAR

He sighs, puts his head down on the steering wheel. We hear a SIREN, see the RED AND BLUE FLASH of police lights from behind.
EXT. DANDY LION CAR COMPANY - DAY

The building FADES AWAY, replaced by a field of flowers.

NARRATOR

Unlike the Pie-Maker and his friends, the Dandy Lion Car Company did not survive the cloud that settled over it once the day's events were brought to light.

INT. POLICE MUG SHOT ROOM (ONE WALL) - DAY

Mark Etter holds up his PRISON NUMBER, squints for a FLASHBULB.

NARRATOR

Those responsible were punished for their wicked ways.

PULL OUT to A NEWSPAPER--

Mark's MUG SHOT is front page news. Above it, the headline reads: "Dandy Liar sentenced to Dandy Life Behind Bars."

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY OR NIGHT

Jeanine, in her bed, now wearing a JET-BLACK WIG (no bandages), looks at a FRAMED PHOTO of Bernard.

NARRATOR

Others, strengthened by the news that their loved ones had not died in vain...

REVEAL she is finishing a plate of hospital food.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Reached out for the help they wanted.

REVEAL the BIG, IMPOSING NURSE who sits across from her, watching her. Jeanine smiles, pushes the tray away and picks up a modeling magazine...

INT. EMERSON'S OFFICE - DAY

Emerson knits.

NARRATOR

Emerson Cobb realized he would not be quitting his hobby anytime soon, as the dead girl who was not dead appeared to be staying put.

He finishes and stuffs a HUGE WAD OF REWARD MONEY into the newly-knit sock, slides it into a hole in the wall.
EXT. PIE HOLE - DAY

Ned leads Chuck to his Mercedes.

NARRATOR
A fact the Pie-Maker celebrated.

NED
Get in. The front.

Chuck smiles and they both sit into--

INT. NED’S CAR - DAY

Ned has installed a PLEXIGLAS DIVIDER between the two front seats. There are AIR HOLES cut for communication and INCUBATOR GLOVES attached to the partition. Chuck seems shocked.

CHUCK
You did this?

NED
You can drive now, too, if you want.

CHUCK
(re: the gloves)
What are these?

NED
They’re for... uh, steering emergencies.

NARRATOR
He lied.

CHUCK
Perfect. That’s what I thought.

NARRATOR
She lied, too.

Chuck uses her rubber incubator glove to take Ned’s hand in hers. They smile.

FADE OUT.

END OF SHOW