UGLY BETTY

"FEY'S SLEIGH RIDE"

Written by
Sheila Lawrence

Directed by
Tricia Brock

Episode #105

PRODUCTION DRAFT
August 22, 2006
CAST LIST

BETTY SUAREZ .................. AMERICA FERRERA
BRADFORD MEADE ................. ALAN DALE
WILHELMINA SLATER ............... VANESSA WILLIAMS
DANIEL MEADE .................. ERIC MABIUS
IGNACIO ........................ TONY PLANIC
HILDA .......................... ANA ORTIZ
CHRISTINA ..................... ASHLEY JENSEN
AMANDA ........................ BECKI NEWTON
JUSTIN ........................ MARK INDELICATO
WALTER ........................ KEVIN SUSSMAN
MARC .......................... MICHAEL URIE
MASKED WOMAN .................. ELIZABETH PENN PAYNE
STEVE .......................... STELIO SAVANTE
VINCENT BIANCHI ................ RHYS COIRO
KENNY BRANDON ................
CAROL ........................
BRADFORD'S ASSISTANT ..........
MRS. FRAZIER ...................
SISTER EVA ....................
GALO ........................
SET LIST

INTERIORS:

MEADE PUBLICATIONS
  BRADFORD'S OFFICE
  ELEVATOR
  FURNACE ROOM

MODE MAGAZINE
  DANIEL'S OFFICE
  BETTY'S DESK
  BULLPEN
  CONFERENCE ROOM
  TUBE CORRIDOR
  CLOSET
  ELEVATOR LOBBY
  WILHELMINA'S OFFICE
  MARK'S DESK
  AMANDA'S RECEPTION DESK
  LADIES' ROOM
  ART DEPARTMENT

BETTY'S HOUSE
  LIVING ROOM
  KITCHEN

DANIEL'S LOFT

THE RACK

LIMOUSINE

HMO OFFICE

PHOTO STUDIO

CONVALESCENT HOME

CHURCH CONFESSIONAL (TELENOVELA)

EXTERIORS:

NEW YORK STREET

TARGET STORE
ACT ONE

TITLE CARD: "UGLY BETTY" slams on screen before we go tight on...

INT. THE RACK - NIGHT

HER. Beaming. 1000 watts of light and metal.

We see what Betty's looking at--

A Chelsea bar where 25-30 young fashion industry assistants are mixing. Marc and Amanda lead a thrilled Betty inside.

BETTY
This is so cool. I can't believe all these people are assistants too. I've always wanted to come to Networking Night at The Rack. And there's free grilled cheese.

AMANDA
Okay, ground rules. Stop with the chatty. Don't stand so close to me. And no one eats the grilled cheese.

Betty points out someone from their office who is, in fact, enjoying a grilled cheese.

BETTY
She's having one.

MARCE
Well, of course Fat Carol is eating one. What do you expect?

"Fat Carol," by the way, is a petite size 6.

BETTY
So, how does this work?

AMANDA
You've got to work the room.

BETTY
"Work the room?"

MARCE
Circulate, baby. Introduce yourself. We want everyone to meet you.

(CONTINUED)
BETTY
Okay! Wish me luck.

Betty enthusiastically turns around -- and BUMPS SMACK INTO SOMEONE HOLDING A DRINK. Dirty looks all around.

BETTY (CONT'D)
Sorry.

Amanda and Marc watch her go -- pull out their CAMERA PHONES.

MARC
More classic moments for Betty’s wall of shame.

ANGLE ON: Betty approaching Carol, who’s standing alone in a corner with her sandwich.

BETTY
We haven’t officially met. I’m Betty Suarez.
(then, handing her a card)
I work at Mode too.

Carol looks at her card, sees that she’s Daniel’s assistant.

CAROL
I’ve always thought I’d be good at your job. How long do you think you’ll last?

Odd question, but Betty takes it in stride.

BETTY
Unless you know something I don’t, a while, I hope.

CAROL
That’s too bad.

Undaunted, Betty picks up a sandwich and continues to chat Carol up.

BETTY
I love that you’re having the grilled cheese. Most people at Mode don’t eat.

CAROL
(eyeing Betty’s waistline)
Sometimes they shouldn’t.
Carol walks off. Betty sheepishly puts the sandwich down. Maybe tonight wasn’t a good idea after all.

INT. MEADE PUBLICATIONS – BRADFORD’S OFFICE – NIGHT

The office is torn apart. Files and papers everywhere. An overturned plant. As the camera moves, we see the cause of the destruction... BRADFORD, searching frantically for something. His ASSISTANT appears in the doorway.

BRADFORD’S ASSISTANT

Any luck?

BRADFORD

Does it look like I’ve had any luck?

BRADFORD’S ASSISTANT

Daniel and Wilhelmina are still waiting for you to sign off on the holiday spread.

BRADFORD

(distracted)

What? Oh.

Bradford pulls himself together and heads out. His assistant reacts to his odd behavior.

INT. MODE MAGAZINE – CONFERENCE ROOM – NIGHT

Daniel, Wilhelmina, and Vincent Bianchi are going over final details for the layout. There’s a large mock-up on the wall of a DESERT WASTELAND, complete with A TANK and a large SANTA CLAUS BURIED IN THE SAND, holding up a BABY NEW YEAR (a la the Statue of Liberty in “Planet of the Apes”). A couple BURNED OUT CHRISTMAS TREES and SCRAP METAL REINDEER round out the scene. THREE MODELS in layered, neo-grunge wardrobe and FLAK JACKETS are posing against the backdrop.

DANIEL

(re: wardrobe)

There seem to be a lot of layers here. Don’t we want to see a little more skin?

WILHELMINA

It’s a post-nuclear scene. Exposed skin would melt off their bodies.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

DANIEL  
(to models)  
My bad.

Bradford enters.

BRADFORD  
I understand you’ve got a holiday spread for me.

DANIEL  
We do. And we think you’re going to like it.

WILHELMINA  
In this world of global warming and terrorism, we give you... A Post-Apocalyptic Christmas.

DANIEL  
A “Mad Max-mas” if you will. It’s unlike any holiday spread you’ve seen. Edgy. Topical.

WILHELMINA  
Couture. I discovered an up-and-coming designer out of Vietnam -- Anh Vu-Pham. She’s doing a line of camouflage flak jackets exclusively for Mode.

BIANCHI  
Everything’s on hold for us and ready to shoot Thursday, pending your approval.

DANIEL  
Why don’t we walk you through the mock-ups, give you a better idea what we have in mind.

BRADFORD  
(still distracted)  
Yeah, that sounds good. I have to get back upstairs.

He goes. Daniel and Bianchi look puzzled. Wilhelmina smiles. She knows exactly why Bradford is acting this way.

INT. BETTY’S HOUSE – NIGHT

Betty arrives home for the night.
BETTY
Sorry I'm late. I hope you didn't wait to eat dinner—

She stops, pulled up short by what she sees. WALTER, her ex-boyfriend, is having dessert with the family.

BETTY (CONT'D)
What are you doing here?

WALTER
I always eat here on Tuesdays.
It's tamale night.

BETTY
Walter, we broke up.

HILDA
But he gave you a purse.

BETTY
He cheated on me. I'm not ready to just jump back in.

HILDA
But he gave you a purse.

IGNACIO
I didn't raise you to be rude to guests. Now, we saved you some tamales.

Betty's in too good a mood to let this put a damper on things. She gets her food as she talks.

BETTY
Thank you. I'm starving. I went to this really cool work thing, but it's not "professional" to eat, so all I had was a mango margarita.

Without breaking stride, she grabs Ignacio's coffee out of his hand and pours it down the drain.

IGNACIO
(re: coffee)
Hey!

BETTY
I spent the whole night networking and handing out business cards...

(CONTINUED)
Betty notices Walter looking at her suspiciously.

**BETTY** (CONT'D)

What?

**WALTER**

You're drinking now? You used to get woozy from a Stridex pad!

Betty chooses to ignore him.

**BETTY**

It was really fun. I actually felt like I belonged...

WIPE TO:

**INT. THE BAKK - EARLIER THAT NIGHT (FLASHBACK)**

Betty is surrounded by a small group of assistants, including KENNY BRANDON, a good-looking twenty-something.

**KENNY**

(Extending hand)

Kenny Brandon. I work with the Editor-in-Chief at Harpers.

**BETTY**

Betty Suarez, Daniel Meade's assistant.

**KENNY**

You're the one who saved the Fabia layout. In your first week!

**BETTY**

Oh, no, it wasn't like that.

**KENNY**

Most of us have slaved away for years and are lucky if we're trusted with a dinner order. What's your secret?

**BETTY**

I'm just... doing my job.

**KENNY**

And she's modest too.

WIPE TO:
INT. DANIEL’S LOFT – NIGHT

...where Daniel waits in bed, as a tipsy Amanda tries to undress.

AMANDA
She was so gross. All she did was talk about herself the whole night.

DANIEL
That doesn't sound like Betty.

AMANDA
Well, get a drink in her, it's the Betty show, bragging about the Fabia layout...

WIPE TO:

INT. THE RACK – EARLIER THAT NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Betty (not drinking) is with the same group as above. A few more people have joined their ranks, including Amanda, who's sipping a cosmo in the background, her eyes jealously on Kenny.

BETTY
It was all Daniel's vision. It would be wrong for me to take credit for the layout.

KENNY
Wow. An assistant who doesn't trash-talk their boss.

AMANDA
(trying to bond)
I know -- trash-talking is what I do best!

BETTY
It's easy when you have a good boss. I'm really lucky to work for Daniel.

WIPE TO:

INT. MODE MAGAZINE – WILHELMINA'S OFFICE – NIGHT

...where Marc is reporting on the evening to Wilhelmina.

(CONTINUED)
MARC
She was in rare form, even for Betty. You should've seen when she pulled out her business cards...

WIPE TO:

INT. THE RACK — EARLIER THAT NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Betty, surrounded by even more assistants, pulls a BOX OF BUSINESS CARDS out of her bag and starts handing them out.

BETTY
(re: the box of cards)
I just got them today -- I don't usually carry entire boxes in my purse. At least not since Kleenex came out with the travel size.

The assistants laugh. Marc is at the bar, watching with the bartender.

MARC
Tragic.
(as if to Betty)
They're laughing at you, honey, not with you.
(then, to bartender)
Poor cow has no idea we only invited her so people could see she really exists. She's like a real life Snuffleupagus. And let me tell--

WILHELMINA (V.O.)

Marc!

CUT TO:

INT. MODE MAGAZINE — WILHELMINA'S OFFICE — NIGHT

Marc snaps out of his reverie.

WILHELMINA
What did you find out that's useful to me?

Marc is silent.

WILHELMINA (CONT'D)
No choice gossip? No dirt to help me destroy some lesser magazine?

(CONTINUED)
Marc suddenly has difficulty breathing.

MARC
I... I'll do better next time.

WILHELMINA
Do you know how many curly-haired, effete sycophants there are just waiting to replace you?

MARC
I know you have five of them on speed-dial.

WILHELMINA
Don't make me call.

Worried, Marc starts WHEEZING as he heads for the door...

WIPE TO:

INT. BETTY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Where Betty is finishing up her story.

BETTY
Anyway, it was an amazing night.

JUSTIN
You know, you'd be perfect for my school project.

HILDA
I thought you were doing it on me.

BETTY
What school project?

JUSTIN
They gave us an assignment today to write a paper about someone whose job we admire. We get the day off tomorrow to go observe them. Can you take me to Mode?

BETTY
(surprised and pleased)
Wow. Yeah. If it's okay with your mom.

Walter eyes Betty's remaining tamale.

(CONTINUED)
WALTER
You gonna eat that?
(off her look)
Oh, right. I guess you need it to soak up the booze.

HILDA
You know, Betty's job isn't as glamorous as it sounds. She answers the phone and orders paper clips.

BETTY
Sorry, Hilda, we can't all sell vitamins out of our cars.

IGNACIO
Girls.

JUSTIN
So, can I go to Mode? Please. Can I go? Can I go?
She sees his face -- she can't say no.

HILDA
(resigned)
Just steal me some post-its.

ESTABLISHING SHOT - EXT. MEADE PUBLICATIONS - NEXT MORNING

INT. MODE MAGAZINE - ELEVATOR - MORNING

Betty and Justin get on the elevator. Justin couldn't be more excited.

JUSTIN
You're a celebrity. The Meade security guard knows your name!

Betty spots Amanda and Marc in the elevator.

BETTY
I want you to meet two of my friends.

AMANDA
Just because we're sharing an elevator doesn't mean we're friends.
BETTY
(plunging ahead)
Amanda, Marc, this is Justin.

MARC
Ohhh... so that's pregnancy weight.

BETTY
He's my nephew.

Justin notices Amanda's footwear.

JUSTIN

Amanda looks mortified. Marc is amused.

MARC
Wearing two-year-old shoes. Even I didn't catch that.
(then, to Betty)
Definitely not your son.

They arrive on their floor.

INT. MODE MAGAZINE - BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

The foursome exit the elevator to find...

TOTAL SILENCE. The vibe is very, very strange. Assistants creep around looking scared. No one says a word. Except--

JUSTIN
(reacting to the office)
It's the tube!

BETTY
Shhhh.

They hear muffled shouting coming from the conference room. They head cautiously toward the sound and see through the glass --

VINCENT BIANCHI THROWING A CHAIR AT THE WALL.

INT. MODE MAGAZINE - CONFERENCE ROOM - SAME TIME

Daniel and Wilhelmina are there, trying to calm him down.

(CONTINUED)
DANIEL
Hey. Don't take it out on the furniture.

BIANCHI
We worked months on this spread!

DANIEL
Calm down, Vincent.

BIANCHI
How the hell can I calm down when someone leaked our ideas to Harpers? They stole our feature spread!!!

INT. MODE MAGAZINE - BULLPEN - SAME TIME

From the looks on the faces of Betty, Marc, and Amanda, it's clear that Bianchi's rant was loud enough to be heard... and to scare the crap out of them.

AMANDA
Oh my god... Kenny Brandon.

Off the trio's guilty, terrified faces...

END OF ACT ONE
ACT TWO

INT. MODE MAGAZINE - BETTY'S DESK - MORNING

Squeak, squeak, squeak. Now the only sound in the office is Justin rocking back and forth in Betty's desk chair. Bored out of his mind, he spins it around, as we...

RACK FOCUS TO:

INT. MODE MAGAZINE - CONFERENCE ROOM - SAME TIME

Daniel is furious, Wilhelmina apoplectic. The entire staff of Mode -- from the highest editor to the lowest assistant -- is being dressed down.

DANIEL
Harpers is doing "Post-Apocalyptic Christmas" for their feature spread. They copied our entire concept.

BIANCHI
They didn’t just copy it, they took it! Our wardrobe, our models, our tanks! Try to find tanks laying around New York City!

DANIEL
The holiday issue is our biggest source of ad revenue for the year. With a compromised feature spread, that will certainly drop. Next year’s circulation could be affected as well.

WILHELMINA
Which is precisely why Mode does not tolerate leaks. I’m giving the guilty party one chance to come forward and confess. Did any of you talk to someone from Harpers?

Wilhelmina and Daniel scan the room. No one makes a move. Except BETTY, sitting between Amanda and Marc, who starts to raise her hand. Marc instantly clamps it down, and Amanda kicks her. Daniel and Wilhelmina saw nothing.

WILHELMINA (CONT'D)
Well, then, cowards, we’ll do this the hard way. Everyone will be considered guilty -- and will be treated as such -- until there’s a confession. But by noon on Thursday, someone’s head will roll.
The room looks terrified.

INT. MEADE PUBLICATIONS - FURNACE ROOM - MORNING

Bradford and Steve are mid-conversation in a dark, shadowy furnace room in the bowels of the Meade Building.

BRADFORD
I want to know who took it. Check the security lists of everyone who entered and exited the building, and investigate them all.

STEVE
You should have burned it with the other things.

A furnace suddenly fires up: WHOOSH.

BRADFORD
I couldn’t. The music box was personal.

STEVE
How many people knew about the affair?

BRADFORD
No one. No one but my wife.

This isn’t good.

INT. MODE MAGAZINE - CONFERENCE ROOM - MORNING

The meeting continues.

WILHELMINA
Obviously, we’re not going to do the same spread as that low-rent rag Harpers. That means we have two days to conceive and execute an entirely new concept.

DANIEL
If you have plans, you should probably cancel them. I really need all of us to pull together and get this done.

WILHELMINA
What Daniel’s trying to say is... tell your loved ones good-bye and expect to come home to dead pets.
MARC
(horrified, to himself)
Schmoopy!

The staff are frozen in fear.

WILHELMINA
What are you waiting for??

Everyone jumps up and runs out of the room. Marc and Amanda grab Betty by the wrists--

INT. MODE MAGAZINE - LADIES' ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

-- and drag her into the ladies room. Marc is again WHEEZING. He turns on the hot water to inhale the steam. Amanda is CHAIN-EATING STARBURST FRUIT CHEWS.

BETTY
(to Amanda)
You kicked me with your two-year-old shoes.

MARC
All three of us talked to Kenny Brandon from Harpers last night.

AMANDA
What exactly did you tell him?

BETTY
Not that much...

WIPE TO:

INT. THE RACK - THE NIGHT BEFORE (FLASHBACK)

It's a little later in the evening than before. Betty and Kenny are talking alone -- Kenny is teasing her.

BETTY (V.O.)
He kept trying to get me to bad mouth Daniel, but I wouldn't.

KENNY
You can tell me. Is he a complete incompetent or just like a cute but mildly retarded younger brother?

BETTY
Neither. Daniel's a lot smarter than people think.
KENNY
Really? It’s just so hard to believe.

BETTY
Okay, Thursday, we’re doing our feature shoot -- a Post-Apocalyptic Christmas. It’s really cool -- we even rented tanks for it. And it was all Daniel’s idea.

MARC (V.O.)
Oooooh.

WIPE TO:

INT. MODE MAGAZINE – LADIES’ ROOM – MORNING

MARC
Too bad, Betty. Looks like you’re the leak. Well, you didn’t really fit in here anyway.
(beat)
I want your Herman Miller chair.

BETTY
All I mentioned were tanks.

AMANDA
(to Marc)
And you’re the one gasping for dear life.

BETTY
So, what did you talk to Kenny about?

MARC
Okay, first of all, he talked to me.

WIPE TO:

INT. THE RACK – THE NIGHT BEFORE (FLASHBACK)

Marc is sitting alone at the bar. Steeped in self-pity.

MARC (V.O.)
I think he thought I was cute.

Kenny approaches.

KENNY
What are you doing all by yourself? That’s not like you.

(CONTINUED)
MARC
I just don’t understand it. She’s like Liza Minelli at the Pride Parade.

We see what he’s looking at -- almost all of the assistants have gravitated toward BETTY.

MARC (CONT’D)
(a la Jan Brady)
Betty, Betty, Betty.

KENNY
They just want to hear about the Post-Apocalyptic Christmas spread.

MARC
Is she taking credit for that? Wilhelmina’s the one who got the exclusive on the flak jackets. There’s this hot new designer she discovered -- Ang Vu-Pham -- she’s giving us an exclusive.

KENNY
You featuring anyone else?

MARC
When you’ve got the best, you can forget the rest.

He puts a hand on Kenny’s arm, clearly flirting.

WIPE TO:

INT. MODE MAGAZINE – LADIES’ ROOM – MORNING

They turn their attention to Amanda.

BETTY
So, we’ve got tanks and flak jackets...

MARC
I’m guessing the cosmo fountain might have spilled something too.

AMANDA
I had one drink!

WIPE TO:
CLOSE ON: a row of empty cosmo glasses. FIND Amanda (drinker of said cosmos) and Kenny mid-conversation. There's a lot of arm-touching and flirting -- but this time, it's Kenny flirting with Amanda.

AMANDA (V.O.)
Unlike the two of you, I was actually trying to find out what was going on at Harpers.

AMANDA (CONT'D)
So, what are you guys doing for your holiday issue?

KENNY
Oh, the usual. Boring.
(with bedroom eyes)
I'm much more interested in hearing about you and your magazine.

AMANDA
(a 180)
Well, since you ask, Mode is using one of my ideas. You know the Statue of Liberty scene in "Planet of the Apes?"

KENNY
Of course.

AMANDA
We're doing it with Santa buried in the sand, and instead of holding a torch, he's holding up a new year's baby.
(then)
I only know the movie because I dated a geek once.

KENNY
(self-deprecating flirting)
Maybe you will again. Can I buy you a drink?

WIPE TO:

INT. Mode Magazine - Ladies' Room - Morning

MARC
Kenny's straight?!!
CAROL enters the bathroom. Is surprised to see Amanda and Marc with Betty.

CAROL
Slumming with the plump girl again... no wonder you're hiding.

Carol heads for a stall and THROWS UP. She re-emerges to stares from Amanda, Marc, and Betty. Could she be guilty too?

AMANDA
Have something to be nervous about, Carol?

CAROL
(duh)
I ate half a bagel.

She leaves. The group gets back down to business.

BETTY
So, I guess this means all three of us need to go to Wilhelmina and confess.

Betty starts to head out. Amanda and Marc BLOCK HER WAY.

AMANDA
Are you high?

MARC
Confess what? We don't know it was us.

BETTY
How can you say that?

MARC
We told three tiny parts. Who's to say someone else didn't blab the whole thing? The art department or features or--

AMANDA
Styles. Total gossip whores.

MARC
We have to keep quiet until the real leaker is found.

BETTY
I can't do that. Look, I won't say anything about you guys, but I need to admit what I did.

(CONTINUED)
Betty again tries to head out. The human wall of Marc and Amanda SHIFTS TO BLOCK.

MARC
They know all three of us were at The Rack. If you admit your guilt, it'll draw a line straight to us.

Betty hadn't thought of that.

BETTY
Even if it does... they wouldn't fire all of us.

AMANDA
Wouldn't they? Tell that to the entire 2003 photo department who got axed for mentioning the words, "sepia tones" at a party.

BETTY
I just... I don't like lying.

MARC
Neither do I. Okay, that's a lie. But we're just asking you to omit. It's more like a secret. Our secret.

AMANDA
You're one of us now. The assistants' club. We have to protect each other.

Betty considers the situation.

BETTY
I guess keeping quiet is better than getting you guys fired.

MARC
Then it's agreed -- we're all in this together.

Off Betty's troubled look...

END OF ACT TWO
ACT THREE

INT. BETTY'S HOUSE - DAY

Walter is mid-conversation with Ignacio. While they speak, Walter works on programming the UNIVERSAL REMOTE he had previously given to Betty.

WALTER
I thought the purse was a sure thing. I mean, I'm giving up Netflix for the next two years to pay for it. But maybe she's different now, with the fancy job and the drinking...

IGNACIO
You cheated on her!

WALTER
And I'm really, really sorry about that. But I just... I love her.

Walter pushes a button on the remote. The TV BLASTS ON IN SPANISH.

WALTER (CONT'D)
Sorry. Oh wait, you like it in Spanish.

Ignacio spots WALTER'S CUP OF COFFEE. Takes the forbidden beverage for himself and STARTS SIPPING.

IGNACIO
Many years ago, I had a fight with Betty's mother. A big one. She banned me from the bed for a week.

WALTER
Ouch.

Walter pushes another button on the remote. MUSIC PLAYS from the stereo.

IGNACIO
I knew I had to do something good. So I remembered her favorite movie -- Pretty Woman -- and took a page from Richard Gere.

WALTER
You paid her for--?

(CONTINUED)
IGNACIO
I did the scene at the end, where he climbs up the fire escape and declares his love for her.

Walter pushes another button. All the LIGHTS TURN OFF.

WALTER
(re: lights)
That wasn't supposed to happen.

The LIGHTS COME BACK ON.

IGNACIO
Anyway, it worked like a charm.

WALTER
I don't know if a big romantic gesture will work on the new Betty.

IGNACIO
There is no new Betty!

WALTER
She just comes home late, smelling like spring break in Cancun...

IGNACIO
So she works harder. That doesn't mean anything. Betty's the same.

WALTER
I guess you're right.

IGNACIO
Of course I'm right.

The PHONE RINGS. A beat.

IGNACIO (CONT'D)
Is that you?

WALTER
No, that's really the phone.

As Ignacio crosses to the phone...

IGNACIO
But Walter--you hurt her again, you answer to me.

Walter nods. Sips his coffee. Is puzzled that it's EMPTY.
INT. BETTY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

IGNACIO

Hello.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. HMO OFFICE - SAME TIME

Barbara Frazier, a middle-aged woman, is at her desk.

MRS. FRAZIER
This is Barbara Frazier from AtlanticCare Health. A Betty Suarez made an appointment for you to come in today at 2. I'm just confirming.

IGNACIO
(bristling)
Actually... that's a mistake. I don't need to come in.

MRS. FRAZIER
Are you sure? It sounds like you have some pretty legitimate reasons to discuss your claim.

Suddenly, the BLENDER whirs to a start.

WALTER (O.S.)
Sorry!

IGNACIO
I'm also sick. A virus.

MRS. FRAZIER
Would you like to reschedule? I have a few openings next week.

IGNACIO
I think it's gonna last a while. I'll call you.

He quickly hangs up, looking troubled.

INT. MEADE PUBLICATIONS - BRADFORD'S OFFICE - DAY

Daniel approaches Bradford's office, where his assistant is cleaning up the wreckage from Hurricane Bradford.

(CONTINUED)
DANIEL
Hey... is my father in?
(then, off the office)
What happened in here?

Just then, WILHELMINA appears.

WILHELMINA
I need to speak to--

She sees Daniel.

WILHELMINA (CONT'D)
Oh.

She then notices Bradford's office.

WILHELMINA (CONT'D)
Oh!

ASSISTANT
Mr. Meade stepped out. I can try
to get him on the phone.

DANIEL

WILHELMINA
That's not necessary. Never mind.

INT. MODE MAGAZINE - ELEVATORS - MOMENTS LATER

Daniel and Wilhelmina ride back down to the 28th floor.

WILHELMINA
So... what were you going to tell
him?

DANIEL
What were you going to tell him?

Neither speaks; each knows the other was there to put their
own spin on the leak.

WILHELMINA
You know... we might be better off
not saying anything.

DANIEL
Hide it from Dad? You sure that's
a good idea?

WILHELMINA
As the two top people here, we have
to protect each other.

(MORE)
WILHELMINA (CONT'D)
And even though it's not our fault
the leak happened, we'll both be
blamed if we admit it before we
have a fix.

DANIEL
Good point.

WILHELMINA
Besides, Bradford's so distracted
he may not even notice the
difference.

DANIEL
Yeah, I don't know what's gotten
into him.

(beat)
Okay. This'll be our secret.

WILHELMINA
(Verifying the truce)
And we'll work with each other to
fix it. The spread and the leak.

DANIEL
Absolutely.

WILHELMINA
Perfect. Then we're in this
together.

INT. MODE MAGAZINE - BULLPEN - MOMENTS LATER

Daniel comes across Betty and Justin.

DANIEL
There you are.

A look of panic crosses Betty's face.

BETTY
(forced chipperness)
Here I am!

As they walk back toward their area, Daniel doles out her
assignments for the day.

DANIEL
Call the agency, tell them the
concept is changing. Get any
wardrobe we previously rejected
that hasn't gone back to the
designers and let me see it again.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)
DANIEL (CONT'D)
Dig up back holiday issues of Mode for the last 25 years, copy them and distribute them to all the editors. Then blow up the center spreads to at least 24 by 32, in color, for the conference room.
(then, noticing Justin)
Do you work here?

JUSTIN
(dreamy)
Someday...

BETTY
He's my nephew. He won't get in the way.

Amanda passes by. Daniel turns his attention to her.

DANIEL
Amanda. We need snacks. And water. Flat and sparkling, half cold, half room temperature. When you get back with those, it'll be time to get lunches, because no one is leaving the building.

Amanda gives it all she's got to get out of doing this.

AMANDA
But Daniel... who's going to answer phones?

DANIEL
Get an intern. Today's not the day for shirking responsibility.

Amanda realizes just how serious he is.

ANGLE ON: Betty and Justin get to Betty's desk, where the PHONE IS RINGING.

BETTY
(into phone)
Daniel Meade's office.

She hears a few notes of "Girl from Ipanema." Betty looks puzzled.

(CONTINUED)
JUSTIN
Who is it? Please let it be Narciso Rodriguez.

INT. CONVALESCENT HOME - SAME TIME

MASKED WOMAN (V.O.)
Daniel Meade, please.

BETTY
One moment.

Daniel crosses back toward his office.

BETTY (CONT'D)
It's her.

JUSTIN
Anna Sui?!

DANIEL
Take a message.

BETTY
(into phone)
I'm sorry, he's not available right now. May I take a message?

INT. MODE MAGAZINE - DANIEL'S OFFICE - TIME CUT

Daniel is buried in work. Betty comes in.

BETTY
She said to tell you your dad's been acting strangely. He has many secrets. And one of them is in the music box.

This lands on Daniel.

BETTY (CONT'D)
Should I try to find out what that means? I could look for a music box...

DANIEL
(pulling it together)
No. We're both too busy to deal with this today.

(CONTINUED)
BETTY

Right.

She scurries out, newly fearful for her job. HOLD ON Daniel -- the message clearly troubles him.

INT. MODE MAGAZINE - BETTY'S DESK - CONTINUOUS

Betty beelines for her desk, where she's a whirlwind of activity -- dialing the phone, grabbing files, and getting herself organized for the tasks ahead.

JUSTIN

I can't believe Harpers stole your layout. Does that happen a lot?

BETTY

Not since I've been here.

JUSTIN

How did they find out what Mode was doing?

BETTY

I guess somebody... mingled too much at a bar.

JUSTIN

Why would they do that?

BETTY

(starting to crack)

Maybe they were just really excited to be there... or maybe there was too much free cheese!

(then, into phone)

Hey, it's Betty. We're picking up the clothes.

She hangs up.

JUSTIN

Well, I think whoever did it should just confess.

Off Betty's guilt... INTO: MONTAGE SEQUENCE

INT. MODE MAGAZINE - WILHELMINA'S OFFICE - DAY

Six VERY SCARED looking members of the features department sit there, as Wilhelmina circles them. Finally, she speaks:

(CONTINUED)
WILHELMINA
So... tell me who you know at Harpers.

INT. MODE MAGAZINE - BULLPEN

Betty and Justin lug armloads of magazines and cardboard tubes of artwork into Daniel's office.

INT. MODE MAGAZINE - MARC'S DESK

Marc nervously paces outside Wilhelmina's office, sneaking peeks at what's going on inside.

INT. MODE MAGAZINE - ART DEPARTMENT

Daniel and Bianchi are with the art department, sketches posted on the wall. Daniel pulls down what he doesn't like.

INT. MODE MAGAZINE - MARC'S DESK

Marc watches the features department emerge from Wilhelmina's office. They're relieved and smiling. Marc's not.

INT. MODE MAGAZINE - BETTY'S DESK

Betty is on the phone. Justin looks at items in her desk.

BETTY
You don't have any reindeer available?
(then)
How about a big goat?

As she hangs up, her PHONE RINGS again. As soon as Betty turns her back, Justin takes a few things that say "Mode" on them and shoves them into his backpack.

BETTY (CONT'D)

Hello.

THREE-WAY SPLIT SCREEN TO:

INT. MODE MAGAZINE - MARC'S DESK/INT. MODE - ELEVATORS

Marc is at his desk. Amanda is struggling with stacks of plastic take-out lunch containers.

MARC
Features just came out. They still have jobs. But Styles goes in next. Fingers crossed.
INT. MODE MAGAZINE – CONFERENCE ROOM – LATER

Daniel and Wilhelmina are with the fashion editors. Daniel holds up something he likes.

WILHELMINA
Crushed velvet never catches on.

DANIEL
I like it.

The showdown moment. Are these two really working together?

WILHELMINA
(conceding)
Oh, why not.

INT. MODE MAGAZINE – BUREAUB

Betty rolls a wardrobe rack — realizes it’s heavier than it should be. Sees Justin is riding on the rack. Her PHONE RINGS.

THREE-WAY SPLIT SCREEN TO:

INT. MODE MAGAZINE – MARC’S DESK/INT. MODE – LADIES’ ROOM

Marc is at his desk. Amanda, hiding in the bathroom, is digging into one of the take-out containers.

MARC
Styles went in at 12, came out at 12:20. There were high fives.

INT. MODE MAGAZINE – CONFERENCE ROOM

Daniel, Bianchi, and Wilhelmina are looking at holiday-themed props. Daniel holds up ANTLERS — tries to get Wilhelmina to try them on. She shakes her head no. He continues to hold them out — c’mon, just try ‘em. She finally puts them on. Daniel and Bianchi look at her — shake their heads, “Nah.”

INT. MODE MAGAZINE – BETTY’S DESK

A casting session is about to begin. Justin hands out waters to the forest of TALL MODELS encircling him. Betty’s PHONE RINGS.

BETTY

Hello?

THREE-WAY SPLIT SCREEN TO:
49  INT. MODE MAGAZINE - MARC'S DESK / DANIEL'S OFFICE
Marc is pacing. Amanda delivers lunches.

       MARC
       Photo editors cleared -- they're
       still employed.

50  INT. MODE MAGAZINE - BETTY'S DESK
Justin uses his camera phone to take a picture of himself
with the models. Betty's PHONE RINGS.

       BETTY
       Yeah.

       THREE-WAY SPLIT SCREEN TO:

51  INT. MODE MAGAZINE - MARC'S DESK/INT. MODE - HALLWAY
Marc is lying on his desk. Amanda, shoes off, rubs her feet.

       MARC
       Art department cleared.

       BETTY
       How many departments are left?

       MARC
       Beauty and Accounting.

       AMANDA
       You know those virgins in
       Accounting didn't do it.

       MARC
       Then we'll hope the sluts in Beauty
did.

      END MONTAGE.

52  INT. MODE MAGAZINE - CLOSET - DAY

       CHRISTINA
       I want to strangle the filthy rat
       who leaked the spread. I bet it's
       that bitch, Skinny Carol.

       Betty looks sick. Justin stares at a mannequin.

       JUSTIN
       That dress is fabulous.
CHRISTINA
It's vintage Valentino.

JUSTIN
I think I would cinch it.

CHRISTINA
Go to accessories closet and find a belt. We'll see how it looks.

JUSTIN
Yes!!

He runs off, in heaven.

BETTY
Hurry back. We have to pick up dinners.

CHRISTINA
Eh, leave him here. He's having fun.

BETTY
Really?

CHRISTINA
Sure. Besides, I have some elf costumes I need to fit, and he's the perfect size.

EXT. NEW YORK STREET - EVENING

Betty walks out of an Italian restaurant, carrying bags of take-out. As she walks, she notices A LIMO creeping alongside her. The window rolls down a crack... enough to reveal BRADFORD MEADE inside.

BRADFORD
Why don't you come in.

Just when her day couldn't get any worse...

INT. LIMOUSINE - MOMENTS LATER

Bradford is seated in the back.

BRADFORD
I haven't seen you in awhile.

(CONTINUED)
BETTY
I'm sorry. I've been busy. Doing
my job for your son.

BRADFORD
As far as I'm concerned, you have
two jobs, Betty.

Gulp.

BRADFORD (CONT'D)
So, has Daniel gotten any calls
from the crazy woman?

Betty hates hiding these conversations from Daniel... but
Bradford is the one who hired her -- she has no choice.

BETTY
Actually... just this morning. She
said you've been acting strangely.
That you have many secrets. And
one of them is in the music box.

Inside Bradford's head: all out panic. Outside: the picture
of cool.

BRADFORD
Music box? Did she say what music
box? Where this music box might be?

BETTY
No. That was everything.

BRADFORD
Well... she really is intent on
wasting our time. You can go.

Betty climbs out of the car -- none too soon for either of
them. The moment the door closes, Bradford's cool expression
melts away. He is an UTTERLY SHAKEN man.

EXT. NEW YORK STREET - EVENING

Betty watches as the limo pulls away. Her cell PHONE RINGS.

BETTY
Hello.

THREE-WAY SPLIT SCREEN TO:
Marc and Amanda are at their desks.

MARC
Beauty cleared.

Silence.

BETTY
So... what do we do?

MARC
That depends. Did you hit the Powerball last night?

BETTY
No.

MARC
Then keep quiet.

They hang up. Stay on Betty. Her look tells us she’s not sure she can keep quiet any longer.

Daniel and Bianchi are looking through magazines, bleary-eyed.

DANIEL
Is it Christmas yet?

BIANCHI
We don’t get paid to work this hard. Oh wait, we do.

Betty comes in with plastic take-out containers. Daniel and Bianchi greet her as their savior.

DANIEL
Food! BIANCHI
Thank god!

BETTY
I got the arrabiata extra spicy to keep you up. And there’s tiramisu and some cannolis, because I figured you deserve it.

BIANCHI
(to Betty)
You’re an angel. (MORE)

(CONTINUED)
Continued:

Bianchi (cont'd)

(then)

I'm gonna grab a smoke.

Bianchi heads out.

Daniel

Why don't you take off. Your
nephew must be sick of the Closet.
And you worked hard today.

Betty

Oh. Um... okay.

Betty starts out slowly. Guilt-ridden. Wanting to confess.
Finally, she can't take it any longer.

Betty (cont'd)

Actually, I need to tell you
something.

(deep breath)
The night before the leak, I was at
The Rack, and there was this guy I
was talking to who works—

Daniel realizes where she's going with this... and doesn't
want her to go there.

Daniel

You know, Betty, I don't have time
to hear this right now.

Betty

But... you told me I shouldn't hide
things from you.

Daniel

(with meaning)

Listen to me. I don't have to know
everything. Especially if knowing
it means I'd end up losing you.
So, have a great night.

Betty gets what he's saying and shuts up.

Int. Mode Magazine - Wilhelmina's Office - Night

Marc brings Wilhelmina her dinner.

Marc

I got your favorite salad. Arugula
and endive, no dressing. But I did
pick up extra lemon slices because,
well, you've earned them.

(continued)
WILHELMINA
Is that frisee?

MARC
No.

Wilhelmina's CELL PHONE RINGS. Marc quickly grabs the offending frisee and shoves it in his mouth.

WILHELMINA
(into phone)
Hello. Uh huh. Really? Interesting...

She hangs up. Stares at Marc, who looks very nervous.

MARC
You'll notice I ripped your lettuce
into bite-sized pieces and de-cobbed
your baby corn.

Wilhelmina continues to stare... then asks the fatal question.

WILHELMINA
Was Kenny Brandon at The Rack last night?

Marc immediately starts to WHEEZ.

INT. BETTY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

ON THE TV - THE Telenovela - INT. CONFESSIONAL

Sister Eva yanks Galo into the confessional.

SISTER EVA
It's time for you to confess.

She pulls him toward her and PASSIONATELY KISSES him.

GAZO
I confess. I want you.

She pushes him away just long enough to rip her nun's robes in half, revealing her SEXY BLACK LINGERIE beneath.

JUSTIN (O.C.)
Oh! There's also a product closet.
Hair balms and face creams and--

(CONTINUED)
REVEAL Ignacio and Hilda are watching TV. Rather, they’re trying to watch TV.

HILDA
Justin. Why don’t you put all that in your paper. Upstairs.

JUSTIN
Fine.

He heads out. The DOORBELL RINGS. Ignacio and Hilda don’t make a move. Betty enters wearing her comfy (read: hideous) robe and sporting HAIR-REMOVAL CREME above her lip.

BETTY
Isn’t anyone going to get that?

She answers the door, revealing--

MARC (with his inhaler) AND AMANDA (with a large, almost empty bag of Cheetos, a bit of Cheeto dust on her top). Betty, stunned, just stands there.

MARC
Wilhelmina wants to see us at 9:00 tomorrow.

AMANDA
She knows.

Off their terrified looks...

END OF ACT THREE
ACT FOUR

INT. BETTY'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

60

Everyone is where we left them.

BETTY
She wants to see the three of us?

AMANDA
Yes, just us.

MARC
Um, it's kind-of scary out here.
Can we come in?

BETTY
Yeah. Sure.

Betty -- quickly wiping off her moustache -- ushers them in.

MARC
(sotto, to Amanda)
Actually, it's kind-of scary in here too.

He takes a hit off the inhaler.

AMANDA
So, this is your house. It's very... flea market chic.

MARC
Oh my god, I have that same Jesus nightlight.

Ignacio and Hilda turn off the TV.

IGNACIO
These must be your friends from The Mode.

BETTY
Just "Mode." This is my father, Ignacio, and my sister, Hilda.
This is Amanda and Marc.

AMANDA
(pronouncing the "h")
Hola.

(CONTINUED)
IGNACIO
(correcting her)
Hola.

AMANDA
Nooco. There’s an “h.”

Justin bounds downstairs with some Kiehl’s lotion.

JUSTIN
Hey, Betty, did you know they put kiwi in--
(then, noticing Marc and Amanda)
Oh, hey, I didn’t know you were here.

MARC
(re: the Kiehl’s)
Nice, you stole the good stuff.

Hilda’s not pleased -- Marc isn’t the kind-of guy she’s used to in Queens -- and certainly isn’t the role model she wants for her son.

HILDA
Justin. Homework.

Meanwhile, Amanda has noticed some grapes in a bowl on the table -- heads over to them.

BETTY
Those are plastic.

AMANDA
(defensive)
I know.

IGNACIO
Maybe you should offer your friends a snack. We have flan.

AMANDA
What’s a flan?

IGNACIO
It’s a delicious cust--

AMANDA
Bring it.
INT. MODE MAGAZINE - CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT

BIANCHI
How about a "Lawrence of Arabia" Christmas?

WILHELMINA
I don't even know what that means.

BIANCHI
It means we can use the four tons of sand that are already there.

DANIEL
Okay, off of that -- the sand is desert sand. Like Africa. So, maybe instead of Christmas, we do other winter holidays--
(with the smallest of gestures toward Wilhelmina)

Kwanzaa.

WILHELMINA
Did you just gesture at me when you said Kwanzaa?

DANIEL
 quickly, covering)
No.

WILHELMINA
(moving on)
How about this?

She slides the magazine over to Daniel. It's a very traditional sleigh ride, with Fey front and center holding a LARGE RED MUSIC BOX in her lap.

WILHELMINA (CONT'D)
Fey's Sleigh Ride. From 19--

DANIEL
(a little disturbed)
-86. I know it well.

Daniel fixates on the very thing Wilhelmina was hoping he'd notice -- the music box.
BIANCHI
Let me see.
(taking a look)
That's nice. Traditional.

WILHELMINA
It was the best-selling holiday
issue in the history of Mode. When
Fey put herself in the photo, it
sent shockwaves -- no editor had
ever appeared in a center spread.
It would be a nice tribute in the
year of her death.

DANIEL
(with the slightest
hesitation)
Yeah... let's do it.

INT. BETTY'S HOUSE - NIGHT
Betty, Marc, and Amanda are at the table -- Amanda is
scarfing flan.

MARC
We're pinning it on Fat Carol.

BETTY
What??

MARC
Well, we have to say something when
Wilhelmina calls us in.

BETTY
But that's not fair. Carol didn't
even do anything.

AMANDA
(through mouthful of flan)
You know she calls you "Fat Betty,"
right?

Betty didn't know this.

BETTY
This is why I don't like secrets.
They turn into lies. Which are
much worse.
MARC
Fat Carol hates her job -- didn’t you see the way she was handing out resumes at The Rack? She’ll be out of there in a few weeks.

BETTY
We don’t know that.

AMANDA
(re: flan)
Hey, do you have another pan of this stuff?

MARC
Trust me. She doesn’t value her job the way we do. Would she eat that much grilled cheese if she cared?

Amanda puts down her spoon.

MARC (CONT’D)
We’re doing this for you, Betty. We could get other jobs. But look how long it took you to land this one.

This hits Betty.

BETTY
I just... I didn’t realize part of my job description was keeping so many secrets.

Betty gets up to take Amanda’s empty dish to the kitchen, as Justin runs in, with a stack of magazines.

JUSTIN
I got all my back issues of Mode in case you guys need them. I’m missing August 2002, but crushed velvet never really caught on anyway.

INT. BETTY’S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER
Betty brings the flan pan into the kitchen, where Ignacio is doing the dishes. He’s overheard everything.
IGNACIO
Healthy appetite that girl has.
Don’t tell her we have ice cream.

Betty, beleaguered, doesn’t even crack a smile.

IGNACIO (CONT’D)
You know... sometimes you have to
keep secrets to survive, Betty.

He heads out. His words land on Betty. Even the person she
respects most is telling her to hide things. Off her moral
quandary....

ESTABLISHING SHOT - EXT. MEADE PUBLICATIONS - MORNING

INT. MODE MAGAZINE - ELEVATOR - NEXT MORNING

The morning of the execution. Betty, Marc, and Amanda are in
the elevator. Marc BREATHE IN A PAPER BAG. Amanda eats a
CRUMB BUN. Powdered sugar is on her black sweater. Just as
the doors are about to close...

CAROL (O.C.)
Hold it!

Carol joins them on the elevator. They ride in silence.
The tension of their day weighs upon them, Betty’s guilt
almost unbearable. Finally:

CAROL (CONT’D)
Too bad about your Wilhelmina
meeting. We’ll miss you around
here.

AMANDA
Shut up, Carol.

CAROL
I don’t know if there’s rehab for --
(pointing disdainfully to
Marc and Amanda)
-- whatever this is. But you might
consider it before starting your
job hunt.

(then, to Betty)
And, Betty, I think I’ll miss you
most of all. It was nice having
someone fatter than me.

(CONTINUED)
What a bitch. Marc and Amanda will be happy to see her go. Even Betty doesn’t feel any kinship with this woman. The doors open, and everyone gets off. Our trio walks into--

INT. MODE MAGAZINE – BULLPEN – CONTINUOUS

People stare. There’s subtle pointing, not-so-subtle whispers. Everyone’s heard the news. As the outcasts split off to go their separate ways, they quietly repeat their mantra:

MARC
Fat Carol.

AMANDA
Fat Carol.

BETTY
(a beat)
Fat Carol.

INT. MODE MAGAZINE – DANIEL’S OFFICE – MOMENTS LATER

Betty enters Daniel’s office with coffee.

BETTY
Here’s your coffee. I didn’t know you were getting in ear--

She’s stopped by what she sees--

Daniel, standing behind his desk, with a LARGE RED MUSIC BOX opened in front of him. It’s playing an EERIE WALTZ.

BETTY (CONT’D)
Where’d you get that?

Daniel doesn’t answer.

BETTY (CONT’D)
(seeing his look)
Are you okay? ...Can I get you something?

She slowly crosses to him. A moment as they look at the box.

DANIEL
It all makes sense now.
(putting it together, lost in memories)
When I was 12, I had the worst Christmas of my life.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)
DANIEL (CONT'D)
My dad had just gotten back from
Switzerland, and he brought my mom
a music box exactly like this. She
loved it. Then, two days later,
she hid it away in the attic and
proceeded to burn a thousand copies
of Mode. No one would tell me why.

BETTY
So, that's your mom's?

DANIEL
No. This one showed up here this
morning. Apparently, my father
bought two of them -- one for his
wife. And one...

He's put the pieces together... but can't bring himself to
say the word. Betty sees the inscription -- "To Fey, with my
undying love."

BETTY
...for his mistress.

DANIEL
That's why Fey put herself in the
spread. She was flaunting the
affair in my mother's face.

BETTY
Did you have any idea?

DANIEL
I was 12. I sensed they were
hiding something. Maybe they
thought they were protecting me.

BETTY
I'm sorry,
(then)
So, what was inside?

DANIEL
Nothing. Totally empty.

Betty looks inside the box -- lifts up the inner shelf.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
What are you doing?

She reveals a second level Daniel didn't know about. Their
expressions change as they see what's inside.
DANIEL (CONT'D)

Oh my god.

Daniel pulls out... FEY'S SIGNATURE SUNGLASSES... HALF-MELTED... HIDEOUSLY MANGLED. He then reaches in with his other hand and lifts up... a BURNED, SEVERELY DEFORMED PIECE OF VANITY PLATE: FEY. Off his and Betty's disturbed looks...

END OF ACT FOUR
ACT FIVE

INT. MODE MAGAZINE - DANIEL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Betty and Daniel are where we left them.

BETTY
Who is this crazy woman? Why would she do this?

DANIEL
I have no idea.

BETTY
Clearly, she's trying to connect your father to Fey Sommers.

DANIEL
She's not just trying to do that. She's trying to connect my dad to Fey's death.

The possibility hangs in the air... until Bianchi blows into the room.

BIANCHI
(ranting)
I should go to Sears and take pictures of children. I just got back from the studio -- there are still four tons of sand sitting on the stage.

Daniel closes the music box, snaps back into work mode.

DANIEL
I've got an idea for that.

(then, to Betty)
Get me the art department on the phone.

BETTY
Okay. But... I have a meeting with Wilhelmina in five minutes.

Daniel's pulled up short.

DANIEL
I hope you know what you're doing.

INT. MODE MAGAZINE - BULLPEN - TIME CUT

Betty is on the phone.

(continued)
BETTY
Hold for Daniel.
(transferring to Daniel)
You’ve got the art department.

The PHONE RINGS again.

BETTY (CONT’D)
Daniel Meade’s office.

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. TARGET – SAME TIME

Hilda, upset, sits at a table filled with Herbalux products.

HILDA
Justin’s school just called. He’s not there. Is he with you?

Betty, about to say no, looks up, sees Justin at Marc’s desk.

BETTY
Yeah. He’s here.

INT. MODE MAGAZINE – MARC’S DESK – SAME TIME

Marc, a little distracted by the impending meeting and constantly looking into Wilhelmina’s office, talks to Justin.

MARC
Nice vest.

JUSTIN
Thanks. Hugo Boss. We got it half price, because there’s a small hole, but you can’t even see it.

MARC
What’d the guys at school think?

JUSTIN
They don’t really appreciate fashion...

INT. MODE MAGAZINE – BULLPEN – SAME TIME

Betty continues talking to a still-raging Hilda.

HILDA
The fashion world is no place for a boy his age!

(CONTINUED)
BETTY
You’ve made that clear. But I’m sure
he’s just here to work on his paper.

HILDA
Wake up, Betty. There is no paper.

BETTY
What?

HILDA
He idolizes you. He made the whole
thing up so he could spend more
time in your glamour world.

BETTY
I-- I’m sorry.

HILDA
I just... don’t even know how to
deal with it. I don’t know what to
do with that boy...

(then)
Tell him he’s in big trouble when
he gets home.

They hang up. Betty looks at Justin, flipping through
magazines with Marc. She heads toward them.

INT. MODE MAGAZINE - MARC’S DESK - MOMENTS LATER

BETTY
So, that was your mom on the phone.
I hear there is no paper.

Beat. Silence from Justin. Marc pretends to read a
magazine, but is clearly eavesdropping.

BETTY (CONT'D)
Look... this place that you think
is so glamorous, it’s not all it’s
cracked up to be. It’s people
decieving each other and hiding
things and all kinds of stuff
that’s not very good for a kid
who’s supposed to be in school. If
it’s glamour you want, look at your
mom. I bet you didn’t know she’s a
designer -- she made her own prom
dress. And it was hot. But she
didn’t raise you to deceive people.
That’s not who we are.

(CONTINUED)
Betty's words land on Justin... and on herself. Amanda approaches. It's 9:00.

AMANDA
Show time.

Betty and Marc are jolted back to reality.

BETTY
(to Justin)
Go wait at my desk.
(then, to herself)
While I still have one.

INT. MODE MAGAZINE - WILHELMINA'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Betty, Marc, and Amanda sit before Wilhelmina.

WILHELMINA
Should I ask questions, or do you want to just tell me what you know?

MARC
We were at The Rack Tuesday night. And we just realized we all saw the same thing -- someone talking to Kenny Brandon from Harpers. As much as it hurts us to rat out our friend, we have to tell you -- it was Fat Carol.

AMANDA
I saw her too. Fat Carol leaked the spread.

WILHELMINA
Betty? Is that what you saw?

An excruciating beat. Then:

BETTY
No.

Marc WHEEZES.

BETTY (CONT'D)
It was me. I told Kenny everything.

Off everyone's surprised looks...

END OF ACT FIVE
ACT SIX

INT. MODE MAGAZINE - WILHELMINA'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Wilhelmina slowly, silently circles the three assistants. The anticipation is killing them. Wilhelmina enjoys every second of it. At last--

WILHELMINA
You can go.

AMANDA
What?!! You have to fire her!!

WILHELMINA
Amanda, if I fired her, I'd have to fire all of you. Do you honestly think I'd believe you and Marc would cover for someone else?

Marc and Amanda squirm. She's nailed them.

WILHELMINA (CONT'D)
Besides, you're not the only ones with informants. I know exactly what happened.

WIFE TO:

INT. THE BACK - TWO NIGHTS AGO (FLASHBACK)

It's late. The bar is almost empty. As Wilhelmina speaks, the camera weaves through the room, looking for something...

WILHELMINA (V.O.)
The three of you may have leaked a portion of the spread.

The camera lands on... KENNY BRANDON AND CAROL MAKING OUT. FURIOUSLY. SLOPPILY.

WILHELMINA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
But that disgusting Fat Carol slept with Kenny and spilled everything.

CUT TO:

INT. MODE MAGAZINE - WILHELMINA'S OFFICE - NIGHT

MARC/AMANDA
He slept with Fat Carol?!!

(CONTINUED)
WILHELMINA
He did what he had to for his magazine.

MARC
So... what happens now?

WILHELMINA
Fat Carol gets the axe. As for the three of you... I'm going to consider the last day and a half your punishment. But don't make me show you what next time would involve.

Betty, Marc, and Amanda nod and quickly scatter.

INT. MODE MAGAZINE - BULLPEN - MOMENTS LATER

Palpable relief. Marc throws his inhaler into a trash can. Amanda dumps her snacks into Betty's hands.

AMANDA
(re: snacks)
Yours. I'm gonna go throw up.

MARC
Good idea.
(off her offended look)
For both of us.

They start toward the restrooms.

BETTY
(calling out)
Hey, we've had a rough couple days. Maybe the assistants' club should hit The Rack for mango margaritas.

MARC
(no)
Oooh.

AMANDA
We're not friends.

Betty just shakes her head.

INT. PHOTO STUDIO - DAY

QUICK SHOTS of a photo shoot in the making: models wearing only furs getting made up... large fans being rolled in...

(CONTINUED)
cameras being tested. And, in the middle of it all, a SLEIGH sitting on huge PILES OF SAND.

Betty and Justin walk in. Justin’s a kid in a candy store.

JUSTIN
Oh my god. It’s just like “America’s Next Top Model,” but no one’s crying.

Betty notices Daniel off to the side.

BETTY
Sit there, and don’t talk to anyone unless they talk to you first.

JUSTIN (squeaking)
A director’s chair.

He hops up, as Betty heads after Daniel with some paperwork.

BETTY
Props gave me these purchase orders for you to sign. Obviously, with the crunch, they had to get everything before you approved it.

DANIEL
That’s fine.

He hands the papers back. Neither of them knows what to say to each other. She starts off.

DANIEL (CONT’D)
(calling out)
Betty.

BETTY
Yeah?

DANIEL
You didn’t have to take the fall. They wouldn’t have done it for you.

BETTY
I know.

Betty smiles -- this is just who she is. She heads off, as Daniel shakes his head.

ANGLE ON: Marc approaching Justin in the director’s chair.

(CONTINUED)
MARC
Pretty cool, huh?

JUSTIN
Best day of my entire life.

MARC
The kids at school -- they probably
wouldn't be into something like
this.

JUSTIN
No way. They don't really get me.

MARC
Like "beat you up" don't get you?

From the look on Justin's face, it's clear Marc's dead on.

JUSTIN
(caught)
Please don't tell anyone.

MARC
I won't. But you can't keep hiding
out here forever you know.

JUSTIN
I know.

MARC
Word of advice. Don't get a "look"
until you're older. Or at least
until you can fight back.

Justin nods.

INT. PHOTO STUDIO - TIME CUT

The shoot is close to beginning.

WILHELMINA
All right. We want to shoot in
five. Step it up, people.

Just then, A VOICE booms forth from deep in the shadowy
corners.

BRADFORD (O.C.)
Hold it!

Bradford steps into the light.

(CONTINUED)
BRADFORD (CONT'D)
This isn't the concept I approved.
What the hell's going on?

He looks at Daniel and Wilhelmina, both on the hot seat.
They exchange a glance.

DANIEL
Some things came up at the last
minute that couldn't be helped.

BRADFORD
I've had final say on every holiday
spread for the last 20 years.
Which one of you had the brilliant
idea to keep it from me?

The moment of truth. Are they going to sell each other out?

DANIEL
As your Editor-in-Chief and your
creative director, Wilhelmina and I
came to that decision together.

WILHELMINA
That's right. Our job was to fix
the problem, not burden you with
it. And we worked all night doing
just that.

DANIEL
Wilhelmina found one of Fey's old
layouts that was perfect.

WILHELMINA
And Daniel did a great job
implementing it.

A beat.

BRADFORD
You two are full of crap. I should
shut this shoot down.

WILHELMINA
What?

DANIEL
Oh, come on.

BRADFORD
(grudgingly)
Lucky for you it looks good. Maybe
even better than Fey's.

(CONTINUED)
Daniel and Wilhelmina glance at each other, relief palpable.

WILHELMINA
(calling out)
Okay, let's go--

DANIEL
Hold on a second. Something's missing.

Daniel reaches into a bag. Pulls out a LARGE RED MUSIC BOX. Bradford's eyes widen.

Without a word, Daniel walks it over to the sleigh and sets it on a model's lap. He opens the lid. The same EERIE WALTZ fills the stage.

BRADFORD walks slowly toward the box, unable to resist its pull. All work has stopped.

He reaches the sleigh. Looks at the music box. Then, with a touch of paranoia:

BRADFORD
Where did you get this?

A beat. Daniel watches his father sweat.

DANIEL
The attic. I remembered Mom had it. Looks just Fey's, don't you think?

Bradford peers at the inscription -- "To Claire, with my undying love." It really is his wife's music box.

BRADFORD
(recovering)
It's just like Fey's. Good job.

Bradford walks off.

ANGLE ON: Wilhelmina talking on her cell phone in a corner of the stage.

WILHELMINA
I'm watching it now. Daniel is doing our work for us.

INTERCUT WITH:
INT. CONVALESCENT HOME - SAME TIME

MASKED LADY
Sounds like we have both father and son exactly where we want them.

WILHELMINA
I'm going to get back to the show.

She hangs up.

BIANCHI crosses by.

BIANCHI
Can we get this thing going? My hair is gray and I'm driving to the early-bird special with my blinkers on.

JUSTIN
What about the sand? Isn't that from the old shoot?

Wilhelmina leans over to Justin.

WILHELMINA
Say, "Snow."

JUSTIN
Snow.

And it does. Flakes of snow waft through the air, landing on the brown sand -- slowly at first, but soon covering the dunes with a glistening purity. Justin's face lights up.

WILHELMINA
Snow is a magical blanket. It hides what's ugly, makes everything beautiful.

Even the jaded faces of Mode marvel at the wonder of the scene. All except--

BETTY... who's troubled by the situation she's found herself in, and--

DANIEL... who looks from the music box to Bradford, his face full of doubt. Nothing is as it seems.

MRS. FRAZIER (PRE-LAP)
I'm sorry, but your father's not who he says he is.
82

INT. HMO OFFICE - EVENING

Betty is getting bad news from Mrs. Frazier.

BETTY
I don't know what you're talking about.

Mrs. Frazier looks at Ignacio's file on her computer screen.

MRS. FRAZIER
According to his social security number, Ignacio Suarez is 117 years old. And dead.

BETTY
Well, that's obviously a mistake.

MRS. FRAZIER
Not on our end. The number your father's been using belongs to someone else.

Off Betty, processing the implications of this.

83

INT. BETTY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Betty comes in. Hilda is showing Justin the prom dress she made.

JUSTIN
I like what you did with the bias cut. That was really ahead of your time. But... you were kinda fat in high school.

HILDA
I wasn't fat, I was pregnant. You came to my prom, too. Why do you think you love Jon Secada?

Hilda shoots the smallest of grateful glances at Betty, who continues into...

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INT. BETTY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

...where Ignacio is preparing a snack. Betty looks at him strangely. Could her father be a different person than she's thought him to be all these years?

IGNACIO
Mija. How was your day?
Betty debates mentioning the HMO. Not yet ready to confront him, she settles simply for...

**BETTY**

It was a rough one.

Ignacio nods. He’s certainly had those days himself.

**BETTY (CONT’D)**

I’m going to turn in early.

Betty heads toward her room. She hears a WOBBLY, LOVESTRUCK VOICE coming from outside. She stops. Listens.

**VOICE (O.S.)**

Just a little change
Small to say the least
Both a little scared
Neither one prepared...

Betty’s face breaks into a smile, as she realizes what it is.

**VOICE (O.S.) (CONT’D)**

Beaut y and the Beast.

**BETTY**

Beauty and the Beast.

I’ll be out on the stoop.

She heads outside.

**HILDA**

What the hell is that?

**IGNACIO**

(smiling)

Betty’s favorite movie.

**EXT. BETTY’S STOOP – MOMENTS LATER**

Betty sits on the stoop as Walter, boombox by his side, sings out to his beauty.

**WALTER**

Tale as old as time
Tune as old as song
Bittersweet and strange
Finding you can change
Learning you were wrong...

Off Betty’s beaming face...

**END OF EPISODE**