



"Pilot"

Written by

DeAnn Heline

&

Eileen Heisler

Directed by

Julie Anne Robinson

Table Draft (white)
January 28, 2009

© 2009 Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc.

This script is the property of Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc. No portion of this script may be performed, reproduced or used by any means, or disclosed to, quoted or published in any medium without the prior written consent of Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc.

CAST LIST

FRANKIE HECK PATRICIA HEATON
MIKE HECK NEIL FLYNN
AXL HECK CHARLIE MCDERMOTT
SUE HECK EDEN SHER
BRICK HECK ATTICUS SHAFFER
BOB CHRIS KATTAN
MR. EHLERTBRIAN DOYLE-MURRAY
GAILAMY FARRINGTON
MRS. RETTIG PATRICIA BELCHER
AUNT EDIEJEANETTE MILLER
PETEPETER BREITMAYER
CHOIR DIRECTOR ANDY KREISS
PILOT (O.S.) TBD
P.A. (O.S.) ROBERT CLENDENIN

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

1 EXT. MIDWESTERN ROAD - ORSON, INDIANA -- LATE AFTERNOON 1

A DESERTED two-lane ROAD -- flat, cornfields... space as far as the eye can see. Suddenly, in the foreground A CELL PHONE POPS UP and into frame. And then HALF OF A WOMAN'S FACE PEEKS UP straining to talk into the phone.

FRANKIE

C'mon, c'mon. Hello? Hello?

(then)

Dammit.

WE POP WAY UP AND WIDE to reveal the LONE FIGURE, FRANKIE HECK, mom, 40's, standing in the middle of the road in an ILL-FITTING SUPERWOMAN COSTUME... leotard, tights... cape. She's trying to get a cell phone signal.

FRANKIE (V.O.)

Some people call this the middle of nowhere. You know, one of those places you fly over on your way from somewhere to somewhere else, but you wouldn't live here?

QUICK CUT TO:

2 INT. AIRPLANE -- DAY 2

Passengers are reading, working on laptops, etc.

PILOT ON P.A. (O.S.)

Folks, right now we're flying over the great state of Indiana, if you'd like to take a look.

Not a single person so much as GLANCES out the window.

FRANKIE (V.O.)

Well, look down next time, and you'll see us, down here in the middle.

3 A colorful retro MAP of the United States. A PIN DROPS DOWN 3

TO MARK where we are. We ZOOM DOWN AND IN to Midwestern Americana in all its glory... malls, lawnmower parades, ceramic lawn geese in sweaters...

FRANKIE (V.O.)

Orson, Indiana. Proud home of Little Betty Snackcakes, the World's Biggest Garage Sale... Nobody famous ever came from here or anything, but they say Gus Grissom the astronaut stopped in for a pop once on his way to the moon.

4 A BRONZE PLAQUE on the side of a local grocery reads, "**Gus Grissom the astronaut stopped here for a pop once on his way to the moon.**" 4

5 EXT. MIDWESTERN ROAD -- DUSK 5

FRANKIE (V.O.)
So how'd I end up by the side of the road in this get up?

QUICK CUTS: Frankie, still trying to get a phone signal, SERPENTINES her way across the road; the CELL PHONE skims along the top of the corn as she moves through the field; Frankie up a phone pole.

FRANKIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Keep your pants on, I'm getting there. Guess it all started a couple weeks ago -- and no, I'm not an actual superhero...

6 EXT. HECK HOUSE -- MORNING 6

One story... middle class. Bicycles and other kid debris on the lawn.

FRANKIE (V.O.)
... not unless you count getting my kids out the door for school every morning.

7 INT. HECK KITCHEN -- SAME 7

THWACK. A freezer door opens. A HAND pulls out a box of frozen waffles, tosses a STUCK TOGETHER WAD of them into the microwave, presses the button.

FRANKIE
(calling)
I made breakfast! Come on! We're late. Let's go!

Morning chaos. Frankie, dressed for work, is doing a million things at once, slapping food into lunch boxes, haphazardly pulling breakfast together, searching through piles of mail for something. A slightly odd 7-YEAR-OLD BOY wanders through the kitchen, reading a book.

FRANKIE (V.O.)
That's Brick. I read somewhere kids go farther in life if they have interesting names. Turns out Brick's a cool name if you're Paul Newman in Cat on a Hot Tin Roof. But if you're my Brick, well...

Brick pulls a soggy clump of yuck out of his inexplicably leaky backpack. Frankie hands him a waffle in a paper towel.

FRANKIE

Now today at recess, no wandering alone on the perimeter. Makes you an easy target -- like the gazelle that gets separated from the pack. You gotta find yourself a group of kids and just -- stand near 'em.

BRICK

You know you're my hero, right Mom?

FRANKIE

That's sweet, honey. Eat your waffle.

BRICK

(taking a bite)
It's still frozen.

FRANKIE

Then lick it, it'll last longer.

(calling)
Mike! Have you seen that envelope with my new drivers' license in it?! I need it for work. Why is this place such a mess?

AXL, 15, typical jock-y teenager -- cute, but kinda gross right now from sleep, comes lumbering into the kitchen wearing only his underwear, rubbing his eyes.

FRANKIE (V.O.)

That's Axl -- Guns N' Roses played a key part in his conception. Since he hit fifteen he's like a bear that hibernates in his room and only comes out to paw through our food and shoot off sarcastic comments.

AXL

(foraging in cabinets)
We're out of chips. Nice job, Mom.

FRANKIE

Can't hear you unless you have pants on. Did you see my envelope from the DMV --

BRICK

Mom! Where's my home --

Without looking up, Frankie hands Brick his homework, and in doing so, finds the envelope she's been looking for.

FRANKIE

A-ha.

She rips it open and pulls out her new driver's license -- looks at it, stunned.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

Oh my God.

(checking herself out
in a nearby mirror)

When did this happen?

Her husband, MIKE, 39, upstanding, Midwestern, honest to the point of annoyance sometimes, enters and starts pitching in to get the family out the door.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

Mike. Look at this.

(shows picture)

It's been seven years since I got my last driver's license picture taken. Look at this one, compared to my old one. What happened to me?

CLOSE ON The two licenses side by side... one hopeful and smiling... the other, well... haggard.

MIKE

(laughing)

Well, back then you were all young and shiny, wondering what your life was gonna be and now, well ...now you know.

Frankie takes this in.

SUE (O.S.)

Mo-om!

FRANKIE

Come in here if you want to talk to me! Axl, put on some pants.

Brick hands Frankie a wet permission slip. She signs it with a BLACK SHARPIE, then quickly begins coloring her grey hairs with it.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

Mike, does it ever bum you out that I'm not all young and shiny anymore? That my, you know, contents kinda shifted during flight?

MIKE

Sure, honey, it's a huge bummer. But what are you gonna do?

(MORE)

MIKE (CONT'D)
(looking in the cabinet)
Shoot, I wanted chips for my lunch.

AXL
(without looking up)
She didn't buy any.

SUE, 14, unremarkable in her averageness, comes in carrying a pair of destroyed leg warmers.

FRANKIE
Sue, why aren't you ready?

FRANKIE (V.O.)
You heard right. Sue. Our success names? Only got two out of three. But it was a promise Mike had made to his Grammy Heck on her deathbed.

8 FLASHBACK -- THE DEATHBED

8

Mike's unbelievably gnarled GRAMMY reaches out and GRABS them with her bony fingers.

GRAMMY HECK
(barely a whisper)
Sue.

And she dies.

9 RESUME SCENE

9

SUE
Mom, the dryer ate my leg warmers. I need 'em 'cause... guess what? I'm trying out for Show Choir this week!

Frankie and Mike share a look of dread.

FRANKIE (V.O.)
I know, that's not an expression parents should have on their faces when their daughter tells them she's trying out for something. But see, Sue had a long history of things she tried out for...

FLASHBACKS -- QUICK CUTS

10 - Sue trying out for FLAGS. She stands in a formation with three other girls, whirling the giant, unwieldy flag around. Unable to hold it up, she falls sideways with it out of frame. 10

11 - Sue trying out for SPANISH CLUB. She speaks in Spanish and in subtitles we learn what she says is, "I should be accepted into Spanish Club because I am breasts." 11

12 - Sue trying out for GYMNASTICS. She jumps over a pommel horse and lands flat on her back, unconscious. 12

13 RESUME SCENE 13

Frankie and Mike instantly plaster smiles on their faces.

MIKE

Show choir? Super. That ought to be fun to try out for.

FRANKIE

Look, your dad's gonna fix the dryer, but right now let's just please get out the door. Here. You can brush your teeth in the car.

MIKE

I don't know if it can be fixed.
(with a grin)
Just like you, Frankie. The old girl's just worn out.

Frankie laughs grudgingly, then takes another look at the driver's license, scrutinizes it.

FRANKIE (V.O.)

He thought he was just being cute, but the driver's license thing had hit me like a ton of bricks. I looked like I'd been hit by a ton of bricks. But who... or what... had done this to me?

FRANKIE'S POV of the license with the haggard picture in her hand. She moves it down and BELOW FRAME to REVEAL the family, now bickering and taunting each other as they get ready to go out the door.

SUE/AXL/BRICK

Mom! Axl ripped my homework! /Mom!
The waffles are frozen. /Mom!/ Mo-
om! /Moooooooooom!

Frankie EYES THEM all with suspicion as the cacophony of "Mo-om's" continues from outside the door.

FRANKIE

(to Mike)
We did teach them the word "Dad" also, didn't we?

They continue out the door, and as the door SHUTS behind them, it serves as our...

SMASH CUT TO:

MAIN TITLE

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

14 EXT. ORSON -- MORNING 14

FRANKIE (V.O.)

*We're a two job family. Two jobs
and no career. Mike manages a bunch
of idiots down at the quarry...*

15 INT. LIMESTONE QUARRY -- MORNING 15

Mike sits behind a desk pushing papers. A sign behind him reads "NUMBER OF DAYS WITHOUT A WORK-RELATED INJURY: 0"

16 EXT. EHLERT MOTORS -- MORNING 16

The sign outside reads, "Free Sno-Cone With Every Test Drive."

FRANKIE (V.O.)

*...And my latest job I'm too smart
for is selling cars at Orson's
foremost new and used car dealer.*

17 INT. EHLERT MOTORS -- CONTINUOUS 17

The place hasn't changed decor since the sixties. Frankie and her friend and fellow salesman, BOB, are opening their monthly paychecks. PETE, THE KING OF SALES, crosses through gloating over his.

PETE

Wow. Wow, wow, wow. What a month,
huh?

BOB

Don't let him intimidate you, Frankie.
He may be the King of Sales here,
but he's been rejected by the Kiwanis
twice. I'm not gonna say by who...

(then)

It was me. Told 'em he's a pedophile.
And he's not!

FRANKIE

(opening check)

Whoa, Bob. This can't be right. My
check this week is lower than the
amount I spent on gas to get here.

18 INT. MR. EHLERT'S OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS 18

Guns, animal heads, Hoosier basketball posters stare at Frankie from all sides. MR EHLERT, 60s, a good ol' boy, looks at her check, slides it across the desk back to her.

MR. EHLERT

Ain't nothing wrong with the check, Frances. That there's your base salary. And that's what it's gonna stay until you sell a car and get a commission. One week left in the month. You sell a car, or we may have to... reevaluate.

FRANKIE

Okay, technically I may not have sold an actual car yet, but I have come real close.

MR. EHLERT

(re: head on wall)
See that buck up there? He came real close to not being hit by a bullet. You see what I'm saying?

He fixes her with an intimidating stare.

FRANKIE

Well, I guess what I'm asking for here is my own personal bailout --

MR. EHLERT

I don't get it. All the articles I've read say women want to buy cars from other women. That's why I went against all judgment and hired one. Now you have the opportunity here to carry a torch for all ladykind, or burn the whole deal down. It's up to you.

Frankie can't believe this guy, but knows she has to be civil.

FRANKIE

Wow. I'm kinda like the Rosa Parks of Ehlert Cars, huh?

MR. EHLERT

Rosa Parks. Don't even get me started on *her*.

(then)

And by the way, you ever get your new driver's license? We've got to post them and that old one didn't look a thing like you.

Frankie reluctantly shows him the new one.

MR. EHLERT (CONT'D)

Oh yeah. Now *that's* you.

19 EXT. EHLERT MOTORS -- A LITTLE LATER 19

Frankie, feeling the pressure, is reeling in a potential car-buyer, MR. YAMAMOTO.

FRANKIE

You know, I don't consider myself a saleswoman. I see myself as more of a matchmaker really for people and vehicles, and I just have a feeling about you and this hatchback. Why don't we go on a little test drive and give you two a chance to get to know each other.

He nods, and Frankie, feeling good, crosses to the back to get the key, hears the aging P.A. system.

P.A. (O.S.)

Frankie, you have a call on line one. Your son's school is on line one.

FRANKIE

No, not now.

(calling to P.A.)

Hurt or in trouble?! 'Cause if it's just in trouble can you ask if I can call 'em back?

The voice on the P.A. sighs an exasperated sigh.

20 INT. EHLERT MOTORS -- A MOMENT LATER 20

FRANKIE

(picks up)

This is Frankie. Is everything okay?

21 EXT. ORSON ELEMENTARY FRONT STEPS -- 3:35 PM 21

Brick sits all by himself, waiting for his ride that hasn't come.

22 BACK TO SCENE 22

FRANKIE

Dammit.

She dials.

23 INT. MIKE'S OFFICE -- LIMESTONE QUARRY 23

MIKE

(into phone)

Dammit. Well, you said you were picking him up.

FRANKIE

No, Mike, you said you were. I even stuck a post-it on your thermos.

24 INT. SHOWROOM FLOOR -- SAME TIME

24

Through the window, Frankie notices Pete sidling up to Mr. Yamamoto. She bangs on the glass with the phone, shoots Pete a stern mom look that makes him step back.

25 INT. CAR -- A FEW MINUTES LATER

25

Frankie and Mr. Yamamoto are on the test drive.

FRANKIE

Sorry about the little delay. Take a left up here...

(he turns left)

Smooth, huh? Now I know times are tough, but we do have great leasing plans available... get in the right lane aaaand -- Pull over right here!

(leaning out window)

Get in! Get in!

And Brick scrambles into the back seat with his backpack. Mr. Yamamoto is startled, but Frankie makes like this is nothing unusual.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

Brick, honey? How do you like those seats?

BRICK

They're amazing. They also come with optional leather trim and Preferred Suede inserts.

She and Brick look at Mr. Yamamoto, sellin' it.

26 EXT./INT. EHLERT MOTORS -- LATER

26

Frankie and Brick sit staring out the window, drinking out of Ehlert Motors mugs, as Mr. Yamamoto PEELS OUT in his own car, dumping his free sno-cone on the ground.

BRICK

At least you're still my hero.

FRANKIE

Thanks, pal.

27 INT. HECK KITCHEN -- THAT NIGHT

27

A BUNCH OF McDonalds is DUMPED on the table.

FRANKIE

(calling)

I made supper!

The rest of the family ambles in. Axl, once again in only his underwear, tries to grab his food and take it to his room.

MIKE

Hey, Underpants! Where do you think you're going?

FRANKIE

We are a family, and we are eating together as a family!

SMASH CUT TO:

28 INT. LIVING ROOM -- A FEW MINUTES LATER

28

The entire family is lined up on the couch, eating their McDonalds and watching *Dancing With the Stars*. Frankie grabs the remote and mutes.

FRANKIE

Commercial! Okay, quick we got three minutes to hear about everybody's day. Mine sucked. Next.

SUE

Well... I'm trying to decide what number I should do for my show choir audition. I'm between --

The whole family shoots each other the familiar LOOK OF DREAD.

SUE (CONT'D)

(noticing)

What?

AXL

Does it really matter what song you pick? There's no way you're gonna make it.

SUE

Mom!

FRANKIE

(glaring at Axl)

Your brother just means you should choose whatever song you like.

MIKE

Me, I like a quick song. Quick. Leave 'em wanting more.

BRICK

You have a meeting with my teacher
Monday.

FRANKIE

What?

BRICK

It's imperative that you both be
there she says.

(whispering to himself)
Imperative.

MIKE

Who's he whispering to? Why does he
do that?

(to Brick)
I told you to knock that off.

BRICK

I like it. It soothes me.

FRANKIE

What kind of teacher meeting? We
never got any note.

Brick spits out a chewed up wad of paper he hadn't been aware
he was chewing, gives it to them. This kind of thing happens.

AXL

You are so weird.

FRANKIE

(reading it)
Great. It's Monday. I gotta work
Monday.

MIKE

Me too. Last time I took off a guy
lost three toes.

BRICK

Sorry.
(whispering to himself)

Sorry.
(to Mike, re:
whispering)

Sorry.

DISSOLVE TO:

29 EXT. HECK BACKYARD -- LATER THAT NIGHT

29

Mike sits on a folding lawn chair, nursing a beer. Frankie
comes out the sliding door.

FRANKIE

I thought you were supposed to be fixing my dryer.

MIKE

I was about to and then I remembered... I don't wanna.

FRANKIE

Come on, if you get it working again
(holding up bag)
I might share some of these with ya from the secret stash I keep from Axl.

MIKE

Chips!

FRANKIE

(pulling them away.
laughing)
I said if you get it working!

He pulls her onto the chair with him. Sue appears in her pajamas.

SUE

Mom, Dad.

FRANKIE

(hiding chips)
Hmmm?

SUE

Are you guys disappointed in me?
You know, that I never make anything?

MIKE

(utterly without sarcasm)
Sure I'm disappointed, honey. This is the twelfth thing you're trying out for. I'm beginning to wonder if it's you, if it's me. Something I did...?

SUE

I'm thinking maybe I won't try out for show choir, if you guys don't think I should.

Frankie and Mike eye each other.

30 QUICK CUTS of STOCK FOOTAGE OF different Indiana show choirs singing and dancing, 30

FRANKIE (V.O.)

Of course she shouldn't. I mean, show choir in Indiana is huge. Next to basketball, its combination of singing and dazzling Broadway-caliber choreography is the most cutthroat competition around.

31 CLOSE ON Sue's oh so average self, absently picking at her braces. 31

FRANKIE (V.O.)

There was no way Sue was getting in.

FRANKIE

Go for it.

SUE

You really think so?

(then)

Dad?

MIKE

(pained smile)

This could be your year.

Frankie and Mike share a look.

SMASH CUT TO:

32 INT. CHURCH -- SUNDAY MORNING 32

Frankie kneels in her own private prayer.

FRANKIE

Dear Lord, I know in your infinite wisdom, there was a reason Sue didn't make swim team, or band, or 4-H, or art club... which frankly seemed weird because everybody gets in to art club. But please, please let her make show choir. Thank you.

(starts to get up,
then)

Oh, and please let the dryer hang on a little longer.

(starts to get up,
then)

Oh, and -- No, you know what, you've got a lot on your plate what with the Middle East and Amy Winehouse and all ...so I'm just gonna stick with those two for now. Amen.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

33 INT. BRICK'S CLASSROOM -- THE NEXT DAY 33

Frankie and Mike sit at a little table with Brick's teacher, MRS. RETTIG, a bureaucrat in a scarecrow sweater.

FRANKIE (V.O.)

I didn't know how I was gonna get time off work for Brick's teacher meeting. Luckily, a customer came in wanting a test drive...

34 EXT. SCHOOL -- SAME TIME 34

THE CUSTOMER sits in a car outside the school waiting, checks his watch.

35 RESUME SCENE 35

MRS. RETTIG

(delicately)

Brick... is a very "quirky" child. Maybe... clinically quirky, even.

Frankie and Mike just look at her.

FRANKIE

We have no idea what you mean.

FRANKIE (V.O.)

We knew exactly what she meant.

QUICK CUTS

36 - A group of KIDS sing "Happy Birthday" to Brick, but Brick 36
faces the opposite way reading a book.

37 - Brick, trying to get Mrs. Rettig's attention, cluelessly 37
pats her boob.

38 - Brick walks to the bathroom pulling down his pants before 38
he gets there, as KIDS laugh.

39 RESUME SCENE 39

MRS. RETTIG

He's very bright, but I feel Brick could benefit from a series of more formal tests... to see if we can help him... be more like everyone else. Our "S is for Special" Success Team is here as --

FRANKIE

Yeah, okay.

(MORE)

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

You know, Brick may not be your typical kid, but he's funny and sweet and probably a genius who's gonna cure diseases or invent a new kinda space phone or something and just because he's not fitting into some cookie cutter mold does not mean something's the matter with him that needs fixing. Our oldest son had a completely pointed head until he was six --

MIKE

(nodding)

Like a candy corn.

FRANKIE

And sure everybody stared at us in the grocery, but you know what we did? We wrapped it in gauze, told people he had a head injury, and eventually, it flattened out all on its own.

MIKE

I think what we're trying to say is thanks for your concern, but our Brick doesn't need any special anything. He's fine.

MRS. RETTIG

His best friend is his backpack.

They sigh.

MIKE

So how much we talking here for this testing?

40 INT. EHLERT MOTORS -- DAY

40

Frankie is urgently trying to sell a car to a somewhat frumpy woman in her 40s, GAIL.

FRANKIE (V.O.)

One week and no sales later I was looking for a miracle.

GAIL

Actually, I am interested in this car.

FRANKIE

(in disbelief)

Get outta town.

GAIL

But I was just wondering if a convertible is too wild for me?

FRANKIE

Are you kidding? Wild on the outside, but dependable on the inside. You know I consider myself a match --

P.A. (O.S.)

Frankie. Call on line one.

FRANKIE

-- a matchmaker for people and vehicles --

P.A. (O.S.)

It's your husband.

FRANKIE

-- And you know, you look --

P.A. (O.S.)

He sounds mad. He's at Axl's school. He needs you to pick up Brick.

FRANKIE

(yelling to P.A.)
Well, you tell him it's his turn!
Tell him to read his damn thermos! --

GAIL

Look, I can always come back another day.

(with a smile)
I'm a mom too. I know what it's like.

Filled with gratitude, Frankie gives her a kiss on the top of her head, and takes off.

41 INT. HECK KITCHEN/FAMILY ROOM - LATER

41

Frankie enters, with Brick in tow. Mike is in the process of laying into Axl.

MIKE

-- and now you're suspended for three games! What the hell's the matter with you? You think you're looking at a scholarship like this?

FRANKIE

What'd he do?

MIKE

He called his football coach a moron.

AXL

You always call him a moron!

MIKE

He called for a bomb on fourth and one! Look, I don't know what's going on with you lately. Do we need to take you to feed the homeless or build a church or something. Cause believe me, mister, we'll do it!

AXL

Whatever.

And Axl storms to his room, SLAMS his door.

MIKE

Yeah, you go to your room! You're gonna want to rest up for all the chores you got ahead of you! You can start by fixing the dryer!

(under his breath)

Moron.

FRANKIE

Dammit. If only he had a cell phone, or TV or car... something good we could take away.

BRICK

Mom, you're my superhero.

FRANKIE

(preoccupied)

That's sweet, honey, but we're busy thinking up a good punishment for your brother.

BRICK

You'll need a costume.

(then whispering)

Costume.

FRANKIE

Huh?

BRICK

I'm doing a book report on Superwoman. You have to come dressed like her Monday so I can show and tell you as part of my project. You could also come as Jungle Girl, but I'd have to know today.

FRANKIE

Dammit, Brick, you have to tell me these things earlier!

BRICK

I did! I've been telling you all week you're my superhero! Didn't you listen?!

Brick bursts into tears, runs into *his* room and slams *his* door.

FRANKIE

Brick, I didn't mean it! Don't cry -- Brick!

MIKE

Let him be.

She plops down next to Mike. They both feel like crap.

FRANKIE

You know what? I always thought I was a pretty good mom. But lately... I don't know.

MIKE

Hey, hey, you're a great mom. Sure, Brick's weird, Sue has no recognizable talent and Axl is flushing his future down the toilet. But all kids are screwed up.

FRANKIE

Not the Donahues across the street.

MIKE

No, those kids are awesome.

They ponder this a moment. Just then, Sue bursts in the front door, full of excitement.

SUE

I did it! I made Show Choir!

Mike and Frankie stare, shocked and skeptical.

FRANKIE

You did?

MIKE

You sure, honey? Is it actually written down somewhere?

SUE

Yes! And they already rotated me in and I've got to learn everything super quick for our first competition next Friday.

FRANKIE

(hugging her)

Well, God, Sue... this is huge!

MIKE

C'mere girl. I am proud of you.

SUE

Thanks, Dad. I better get my homework done 'cause I am going to be so busy!

Sue floats to her room. Mike and Frankie look at each other in amazed disbelief. He picks her up, twirls her around in a hug.

FRANKIE (V.O.)

See? Prayer does work. Suck that, Donahues.

DISSOLVE TO:

42 EXT. HECK BACKYARD -- SUNDAY EVENING

42

A banner reads, "Yay, Sue!" The backyard's full of friends chatting (including Bob) and eating various salads that don't contain lettuce, assorted relatives in lawn chairs nursing beers, kids shivering in the leaf-filled, freezing cold above-ground pool. AUNT EDIE and AUNT GINNY, two ancient fossils both smoking a cigarette, have Sue cornered.

AUNT EDIE

Sue I'm just so proud of you. I never thought you would make anything, here's a dollar.

She pulls a dollar out from under her wig and hands it to her. Frankie looks up from where she was helping Mike work the barbeque.

FRANKIE

(calling)

Come on, everybody! It's getting cold. We should all come in and eat together as a family!

SMASH CUT TO:

43 INT. LIVING ROOM -- A FEW MINUTES LATER

43

Everybody is squashed in front of the TV with plates in their laps, watching *Extreme Makeover, Home Edition*.

ALL

MOVE... THAT... BUS!!!

44 INT. HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM -- A FEW NIGHTS LATER
SPOTLIGHT ON a MALE CHOIR DIRECTOR.

44

CHOIR DIRECTOR

(into mic)

And now ladies and gentlemen... fresh
from their knockout performance at
Hoosier Village Assisted Living in
Terra Haute --

OLD LADY FROM CROWD (O.S.)

Woo.

CHOIR DIRECTOR

-- the Orson Swingsations!

Lots of applause and cheers especially from Frankie and Mike
who are looking pretty darn proud. Frankie gives a little
wave to Bob, who gives a thumbs up back. Axl looks like
he's being held prisoner and Brick's reading a book...

ANGLE ON the ORSON SWINGSATIONS taking the stage. Overly
made-up blondes with flipped hair in Lawrence Welk-ish sparkly
dresses and boys in silky red shirts and jazz pants dance on
while singing "Get This Party Started."

ORSON SWINGSATIONS

"Sending out the message to all of
my friends. We'll be looking flashy
in my Mercedes Benz..."

Frankie scans the stage, then concerned, whispers to Mike.

FRANKIE

Do you see Sue?

Mike scans the stage.

PAN ACROSS the line of singing and dancing girls... None of
them Sue.

MIKE

No. Where the hell is she?

ANGLE ON the stage as just then, CREW MEMBERS dressed in
black appear on the side of the risers to hand out props to
the performers. And there in the darkness is Sue.

MIKE (CONT'D)

(realizing)

... She's on the crew?

AXL

Great. The only thing lamer than
show choir is being on the crew for
show choir.

AUNT EDIE, sitting next to Frankie, leans over.

AUNT EDIE

Where's Sue?

FRANKIE

(vaguely indicating
nowhere in particular)

She's... up there.

AUNT EDIE

I don't see her. I put out my
cigarette for *this*?

FRANKIE

(same motion)

In the middle-ish row. Behind the
pregnant one.

(turning to Mike)

Why didn't she tell us she was only
on the crew?

MIKE

I don't know. She does look really
happy though.

ANGLE ON Sue. She does look happy -- she's smiling while she runs out to place a wooden cube onstage. Seeing Sue so excited does something to Mike. He nudges another parent.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Hey. That's my daughter. That's my
daughter right there!

(jumping to his feet
and applauding)

Go Sue!

Frankie stands and joins him. They're hooting and hollering, nudging Axl and Brick to join in. Everyone around them is giving them strange looks, but they don't care. This is Sue's moment, and dammit they're going to give it to her.

ANGLE ON the stage, where Sue hears them and smiles proudly and waves -- it's a sweet moment. Unfortunately we see that while Sue is waving, other crew people are setting other cubes onstage, but due to the distraction, Sue is late with *her* cube... and the girl who was supposed to step down off a cube onto it instead FALLS FLAILING to the ground. She tries frantically to save herself by GRABBING A NEARBY GIRL... they BOTH GO DOWN, which starts a CHAIN REACTION, all the Swingsations going down in a disastrous tangle of red shirts and dresses leaving Sue the only one standing.

Frankie and Mike cringe in horror. Aunt Edie pulls out a cigarette.

AUNT EDIE

(lighting up)

Screw it, we're already in trouble...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

45 INT. HECK BEDROOM -- MORNING 45

Frankie sits up in bed and looks at her reflection in the mirror across the room.

FRANKIE (V.O.)

No wonder my face looks the way it does. The Swingsation disaster had gotten Sue kicked off crew.

46 CLOSE ON 46

A "PROUD PARENT OF A SWINGSATION" BUMPER STICKER being RIPPED OFF the bumper.

47 RESUME SCENE 47

FRANKIE (V.O.)

So when Brick said it was the day of his book report...

Suddenly, Brick's there poking her.

BRICK

Today's the day of my book report.

FRANKIE (V.O.)

...I had nothing left to give. But then I thought about Brick, and how his best friend is a backpack. I couldn't undo the twenty-seven hours he'd spent in the birth canal, but damn it, I could do this.

With new determination, Frankie throws back the covers. SUPERHERO MUSIC begins to play.

FRANKIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I put on my spanx and went.

VARIOUS SHOTS OF Frankie struggling with her Spanx as the superhero music continues to play.

48 INT. SECOND GRADE CLASSROOM -- CONTINUOUS 48

Frankie, now in costume, enters with a flourish, as the kids sit on the rug listening to Mrs. Rettig.

FRANKIE

Did somebody call for Superwoman?!

The kids and Mrs. Rettig turn and stare at her, surprised.

MRS. RETTIG

Oh. That's next Monday.

FRANKIE

(to Brick)

Are you freaking kidding me?!

She starts to go after Brick. The teacher puts her arms around him, protectively.

49 INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - MINUTES LATER 49

Frankie trudges down the hallway, upset. Her phone rings.

FRANKIE

(into phone)

Hey, Bob.

50 INT. EHLERT MOTORS - INTERCUT 50

Bob speaks conspiratorially into the phone.

BOB

Frankie, it's me, Bob. Listen, that Gail woman came back to purchase a car and she's asking for you, but that dummy Pete's starting to move in for the kill. I'm plying her with sno-cones, but I can't hold on much longer. She's already on her second grape!

FRANKIE

(panicked)

No! That's my customer! Don't let her move! I'll be right there!

She runs out the door, pulling up her tights, her cape flying behind her.

51 INT. MUSTANG -- A LITTLE LATER 51

Frankie, still in Superwoman gear, is in the passenger seat next to Gail. Desperate to sell the car, she's letting the stress get to her, and it shows.

FRANKIE

(losing it)

-- and the braking system is just so great. Cause, it, you know, stops really well, and it's got this awesome -- you know, steering wheel -- you can turn it and honk at people if they're in your way --

GAIL

(gently)

Frankie. Are you okay? You seem a little... stressed.

FRANKIE

(stressed)

What? No, I'm fine. I'm perfect.
Where was I? The horn! You'll love
the horn, see how great it is --

(honking it maniacally)

I'm a matchmaker, did I tell you
that? -- for people and uh... where
was I again?

GAIL

You know, I'm a mom too. I know
what it's like to balance work and
kids. I've got three.

FRANKIE

I've got three too.

GAIL

Isn't it hard?

Frankie looks at her. She can't help herself, but under the
exhaustion, this moment of kindness is more than she can
take and she starts to cry.

FRANKIE

So hard! I feel like I'm spread so
thin I can't do anything right.

GAIL

I know. Some days I swear I just
feel like getting in the car and
driving and driving and never coming
back. You ever feel like that?

FRANKIE

Only every day.

SMASH CUT TO:

52 EXT. TOWN -- DAY

52

FRANKIE

Woo-hoo!

The convertible top now down, Frankie and Gail tear down the
two-lane highway. Thelma and Louise on the open road!

53 INT. MUSTANG -- CONTINUOUS

53

Gail laughs. Frankie feels amazing. She stands up to feel
the wind in her hair, her cape billowing behind her.

FRANKIE

Yeah, baby!

BUMP!

GAIL

What was that?

FRANKIE

What was what?

GAIL

(stopping)

I think we hit something. Is there something wrong with this car? Maybe you better check.

FRANKIE

(climbing out)

I'm sure it's fine.

She gets on her knees on the road and crouches down to peer under the car.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

I don't see anything --

But before she can finish, the car SCREECHES AWAY, Gail behind the wheel stealing it!

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

Hey!

GAIL

(yelling back)

Sorry! I've got three kids in jail!

FRANKIE

Wha --?

(calling)

You'll never get away with this! I have your license back at the office!

(then realizing)

I bet that's not even her real license. The picture was too good.

Frankie stands in the middle of the cornfields with nothing but her Superwoman costume, stunned.

DISSOLVE TO:

54 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD -- BACK TO WHERE WE STARTED

54

Frankie trudges down the road in her costume, exhausted, as the sun is setting. She looks up to see a gleaming, white TRUCK coming her way.

FRANKIE (V.O.)

And then I saw it... a Little Betty truck coming to rescue me.

(MORE)

FRANKIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
*At first I didn't think it was real --
I mean, I have hallucinated trucks
full of chocolate snackcakes before...*

FRANKIE
(waving arms)
Yes! Yes!

The truck passes her by in a WHOOSH!

FRANKIE (CONT'D)
Aww, come on!

Then she notices a lone snack cake has fallen off the truck. Starving, she dashes into the road, rips the package open with her teeth and starts devouring it.

Just when she's sunk about as low as she can go, Frankie turns to see their little old family car with Mike at the wheel.

MIKE
Somebody call for a ride?

Frankie looks up and sees not just Mike, but the whole family -- Axl, Sue, and Brick -- are inside.

FRANKIE (V.O.)
*That's the thing about family. Sure
they eat your food and wreck your
face and you gotta save 'em a thousand
times a day from God knows what...
but every now and then, they save
you.*

Frankie goes to get in, but Mike speeds up. As she goes to grab the door handle again, he keeps going a little faster and faster. Very funny.

MIKE
Not very fast for a Superhero.

Frankie shoots him a look, then finally gets in.

55 INT. CAR -- CONTINUOUS

55

Frankie settles in.

MIKE
Seems like you had a rough day, so
we made you dinner.

Axl tosses a fast food sack into her lap. Frankie laughs and opens it, peers inside.

FRANKIE

Awww, you make it just like I do.
(looking at her family)
I love you guys, you know.

SUE

We know, Mom.

They ride quietly a beat.

FRANKIE

(to Mike)
Hey. How come you never tell me you
love me?

MIKE

I told you I loved you the day I
married you. If anything had changed,
I'd have let you know.

He drapes his arm over the back of her seat. Frankie nestles
in... home.

56 EXT. CORNFIELD - CONTINUOUS

56

The car continues down the road, the wide expanse of green
looking beautiful in the sunset.

FRANKIE (V.O.)

*So yeah, back then on the old license
I didn't know what my life was gonna
be. And Mike's right... now I know.
This is my life. It's not gonna be
in People magazine or anything, but,
you know what? I got it good.*

As the car gets smaller and smaller in the distance, we HEAR
their overlapping voices laughing and talking as they eat
their dinner...

BRICK (O.S.)

Mo-om! He's hogging the french fries.
(whispering to himself)
French fries.

MIKE (O.S.)

I said knock it off...

PAN UP to reveal an airplane passing by overhead, on its way
to somewhere else. And we...

FADE OUT.

END OF SHOW