

RUBY

Well, you've given me no other choice but to quit.

BERTIE

Fair enough. What record label are you going to?

RUBY

Whichever one I want. You said I was the best novelty artist.

BERTIE

Sure, but almost no one represents dirty songs. And those who do...well, don't like you.

RUBY

So, I'll make my own label if I need to. I'll do it all by myself

Bertie hadn't considered this.

BERTIE

That's not a bad idea.

RUBY

It isn't. I'll start a label for the bawdy and naughty novelty records that get overlooked. I can get paid what I'm worth.

BERTIE

Incorporate today! We have an office on 4, I can call down now.

RUBY

You're just okay with all of this?

BERTIE

It's just business.

RUBY

Well, this day turned around marvelously for everyone!

INT. THE NAVARRO LOUNGE - MORNING

Mac and Hattie face the crowd of auditionees from the stage.

MAC

Thank you all for coming here. I'm Mac Navarro, the Club owner.

HATTIE

And I'm Hattie Blanc, Mac's assistant. Now there sure are a lot of you. Lot of dreams in this room-

Hattie chokes up.

MAC

-So have fun up there. Let's start with "Andy's Amazing Animals"

Montage:

1. A man in a ringmaster outfit stands next to three mangy dogs. He holds a hoop in one hand and a whip in the other.

RINGMASTER

On my call, these beasts shall leap through this hoop!

He cracks a whip. The dogs immediately attack him.

2. A woman in layers and layers of petticoats and frocks does a slow turn while an 1890s aria plays.

MAC (O.S.)

Vivi St. Claire: Victorian Burlesque

Vivi takes off one of her many coats. She's fully covered but treats each move like it's the most erotic act ever performed

3. A normal guy in a top hat.

MAGICIAN

Can I get a volunteer?

Hattie jumps up, excited. She eagerly cooperates.

MAGICIAN (CONT'D)

Now Ma'am, all I need is your purse. Good. And now your wallet, great. Now turn around

The Magician leaves the bar.

MAC

Hattie, dear, that's not a magician. You were robbed.

2b. Cut back to Vivi the burlesque dancer, who is still fully clothed despite the many, many garments on the ground.

4. A man sings horrifically off-key. Mac brushes his hair aside to reveal his **transistor hearing aid**. He takes out the earpiece (**causing the volume to cut out for the audience**) Hattie sees this.

HATTIE
(mouthing)
If I have to hear him, so do you

Hattie turns the dial back up (**the sound returns**)

5. A man is rolled into a carpet

MAC (O.S.)
Kenneth, the human carpet.

HATTIE
What's your act, exactly?

HUMAN CARPET
You step on me. Like a carpet.

MAC
Alright, this is obviously just
your sexual fetish.

HUMAN CARPET
It's better if you have high heels-

2c. The burlesque act is down to her final petticoat. Mac and Hattie lean forward. She takes off her last skirt to reveal -- Many sets of pants. Hattie gets up and throws her chair.

INT. LEGAL OFFICE - EARLY AFTERNOON

Ruby confidently approaches an unenthused clerk.

RUBY
Hello mister. My name is Ruby
Richmonde. My old manager called
ahead, but I'm forging my own path-

CLERK
License denied. Women with criminal
histories are prohibited from
incorporation in New York State.

INT. PRESTON'S APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

Preston lounges in a midtown apartment financed by family money.

He irons, attempts to feed the macaw, and takes a shower. He's interrupted by loud knocking. He opens the door in his towel to see:

A pissed-off Ruby. He slams the door.

RUBY

Mrs. Richmonde for you.

PRESTON

How did you find-? I can't let you in, I'm not decent.

RUBY

Well, I wouldn't kick you out of bed on a cold night.

Ruby expects to hear a laugh. Silence. She knocks again.

RUBY (CONT'D)

I need your help.

Preston pauses. He lets her in. He goes into the other room to change. Ruby projects her voice.

RUBY (CONT'D)

You said you graduated from business school. This morning? Well, I need you to find me a loophole for a business license.

PRESTON

Well you couldn't get one, you're a woman with a criminal record.

RUBY

That's why I need the loophole.

PRESTON

The law exists for a reason. We can't skirt right and wrong.

(beat)

Why do you need a business license?

RUBY

You're looking at a free agent. After you showed me those financial records, I left Bertie. Even though he *begged* me to stay.

PRESTON

That doesn't answer my question

RUBY

I'm trying to start my own label.
And if I do, you'll never have to
deal with my "nonsense" again.

Preston enters the living room, fully clothed.

PRESTON

That does sound nice.

Preston thinks for a second.

PRESTON (CONT'D)

Well, you can't expunge those
records, but you can be granted an
exemption if--

He goes to his bookshelf and opens an Entertainment Law book.

PRESTON (CONT'D)

Yes, you get a "written
understanding of forgiveness" from
every defendant. I happen to be an
actuary, so we can finish this
today.

RUBY

Oh, this will be a lark! Speaking
of which, we will need to get a
statement from the Bronx Zoo.

INT. THE NAVARRO LOUNGE BACKROOM - AFTERNOON

Mac and Hattie pore over a list of names in the club's
cramped back office. Mac crosses off another name.

MAC

So who are we left with?

HATTIE

If we remove the perverts, weirdos,
and creeps from today... we have
three options.

MAC

Who are these people again?
Everyone's blurring together.

HATTIE

There's "The Marnelles"

INT. THE NAVARRO LOUNGE STAGE - AFTERNOON

There's a static shot of the stage for each description, but the color of the curtain changes for each act.

A Black 60s girl group (a la The Shirelles) sways.

HATTIE (O.S.)

They call themselves a "girl group" whatever the hell that means. They sound good but haven't cracked the phrasing quite yet.

THE MARNELLES

Something 'bout my baby, makes me
wanna shake // Shake Shake my baby-
/ Shaking my baby tonight.

A Drag Queen, LAURA LALU, is dressed like a librarian.

HATTIE (O.S.)

Then there's that great female impersonator, but she only impersonates people she knows:

LAURA LALU

"Julie needs her pecans"

Two men, BENNY and FITZ (Abbott and Costello drawn from memory), lean on opposite ends of the stage.

HATTIE (O.S.)

And there's a comedy duo that's perfect, but they don't quite know their lines.

BENNY

So, Fitz, you're telling me that "What" is the name of the deal, and that "Deal" is the name of *what*?

FITZ

Well, you can't WHAT your WHISTLE when the PORT is SOUTH.

(breaking character)

Sorry, that's in five pages.

INT. THE NAVARRO LOUNGE BACKROOM - AFTERNOON

MAC

So we have three, equally-talented acts.

HATTIE

Easy. Let's just decide and crush some dreams.

MAC

Or, we stay here and wait for the decision to come to us.

They nod vigorously in agreement.

EXT. CONVENT - AFTERNOON

Ruby and Preston stand outside a convent. Preston is nervous.

PRESTON

What *exactly* did you do here?

RUBY

Relax, I didn't offend God if that's what you're after.

Preston relaxes.

RUBY (CONT'D)

I hit the Mother Superior with a car. Don't worry, it wasn't mine.

PRESTON

Despite your ulterior motives, it's noble to make amends and truly apologize to those you've hurt.

RUBY

What? No, I'm going to lie and bribe my way through this baby.

PRESTON

You think your previous defendants will respond well to *more* crime?

RUBY

You might know business, but I know people. And all people want is to have their egos stroked and their wheels greased.

(Excited)

Oh! Mother Superior, 12 O'clock. Let the apologizing begin!

Ruby dons her best "forgive face" and approaches MOTHER SUPERIOR. She's laying it on thick.

RUBY (CONT'D)

Oh Mother Superior, it is you. Look at me -- a devil who has hurt an angel. I beg your forgiveness. I'm not sure if you remember that horrible night with the car.

MONTAGE

We cut between the variations she makes on her stump apology.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - AFTERNOON

Ruby speaks with a park ranger.

RUBY (CONT'D)

That horrible night with the fire

INT. THE FRIARS CLUB - AFTERNOON

Ruby speaks with a producer at the Friar's Comedy Club.

RUBY

That hilarious night -- which of course turned so horrible.

NOTE: Ruby Cycles through the same locations

RUBY (CONVENT) (CONT'D)

I should have never taken a joyride in a house of god-

RUBY (CENTRAL PARK) (CONT'D)

-Lit that tree ablaze

RUBY (FRIAR'S CLUB) (CONT'D)

-Beat Ed Sullivan senseless because I forgot what a roast was-

RUBY (CONVENT) (CONT'D)

-No gift or service could atone for what I did, but I hope you'll accept a donation to the church

RUBY (CENTRAL PARK) (CONT'D)

-A case of liquor

RUBY (FRIAR'S CLUB) (CONT'D)

-A *sincere* apology to Ed Sullivan. I really messed him up, and he wasn't even talking about me.