

"RUDE AWAKENING"

"Trude Awakening" (*2nd draft)

ACT ONE

SCENE ONE

FADE IN:

INT. A.A. MEETING ROOM - NIGHT

BILLIE IS AT THE FRONT, STARTING A SHARE:

BILLIE

Hi, I'm Billie, but all my friends
call me "Oh Crap, Here Comes
Billie."

ALL

Hi Billie.

BILLIE

I just wanted say I woke up this
morning *completely cured!* I can
drink in moderation all I want and I
never have to come back! Wanna know
the secret? *Radish mice!*

BILLIE HAS A "RADISH MOUSE" - AN HORS D'OEUVRE
RODENT WITH A "ROOT" TAIL.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

That's right. Apparently if you eat
one radish mouse a day you're not an

alcoholic any more. So... (BITES
IT) G'bye! See you all around
town, eating radish mice and
drinking *all you want to!*

SHE EATS THE RADISH AND TURNS AWAY, THEN:

BILLIE (CONT'D)

Only kidding! I'm still an
alcoholic and these things just make
you burp.

AT THE BACK OF THE ROOM, CLARK STANDS. HE HAS A
CLIPBOARD.

CLARK

Excuse me? Billie?

BILLIE

I'm sharing, Clark.

CLARK

Sorry to interrupt, but as
Secretary..

BILLIE

What happened to Phil?

BILLIE SCOPES THE ROOM FOR PHIL.

CLARK

Phil "left us" - taking eighteen
dollars of our creamer money, which

is just as well because he licked
all the stir sticks, so now you have
to decide whether to stir your
coffee with the part he licked, or
stir with the dry part and *hold* the
part he licked, or hold the middle
and just stir the very tippy-top
part of the...

BILLIE

Clark.

CLARK

I was elected his replacement at the
Rules Meeting last night at Spago.

MEMBERS NOD AND PAT THEIR STOMACHS; "THAT WAS
GREAT"/"WHAT A NIGHT."

BILLIE

You had a *Rules Meeting* at Spago?

CLARK

I treated; it's one of the few
places I feel safe, because I know
they wouldn't do anything to *Bob*
Newhart's gnocci. We took a "Group
Conscience" and passed some new
rules. Number One; no

interruptions, except by the duly-elected Secretary. Number Two, no gratuitous swearing, just for the sake of my nerves. Number Three, five-minute speaking limit...

BILLIE

WHAAAAAAT??

CLARK

Remember Rule Number One...

BILLIE

Fuck Rule Number One!

CLARK

Rule Two! Sorry!

BILLIE

Last night Naomi talked for two fffu- (OFF CLARK'S RAISED FINGER)...
darn hours. They towed my car. I had to take the bus home.

CLARK SHUDDERS AND STEPS BACK.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

That's right, the bus! Next to a man who showed me pictures of his penis wearing doll's clothes, okay? And as for Rule Three, tonight I'm

sharing about my *mother*; five
 minutes won't get me up to the
 doctor slapping my ass. (TO THE
 GROUP) Judges? "Ass"?

CLARK

You have one more minute.

BILLIE

I didn't start yet! (INSPIRATION)
 Anyone who votes to suspend Rule
 Three gets free Cheez-Its!

SHE GRABS UP A HANDFUL OF CHEEZ-ITS. NO
 REACTION. DISGUSTED, SHE THROWS THEM OVER HER
 SHOULDER.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

Fine! (RAPID:) My mother...

ANGLE: JOAN VAN VANDERS, A WOMAN BILLIE'S AGE
 SITTING AT THE BACK, PAYS PARTICULAR ATTENTION.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

For those of you who never met my
 mother, paint my face on a potato
 and leave it in the back window of
 your car for 6 months. You can't
 miss her; the only thing in
 Hollywood dressed more obvious than
 Trudy Frank is the Wonderbread Tour

Bus.

JOAN LOOKS SCANDALIZED. BILLIE STEAMS AHEAD:

BILLIE (CONT'D)

The first picture of me in my family album, I'm two days old and my mother's breast-feeding the doctor. I used to think my dad beat her until I realized those were champagne-cork bruises. She butted into my life every chance she got. Fourth grade Activity Day; I'm winning the sack race when I turn and hear her bearing down on me, Gimlet in one hand, Chanel sack in the other. She took home the sack race trophy, the apple-bobbing trophy... and my Social Studies teacher, after he saw how well she bobbed for apples...

CUT TO:

ACT ONE

SCENE TWO

INT. DAVE'S COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT

DAVE IS ON THE PHONE, "MAKING AMENDS," REFERRING NERVOUSLY TO A CRIB SHEET IN FRONT OF HIM. MILT LOOKS ON.

DAVE

Hey, Ben. Dave. Listen, man, I've gotta "make amends" to people I wronged when I was drinking, right? and one of them was you, buddy. At your wedding, while you were dancing with your mother-in-law, back when she had both her hips... Laura had all that champagne, plus we always had this sort of unspoken "thing," and... she went down on me under the Head Table. Pretty ironic, huh? "Head" Table? Anyway, say hi to Laura for me. (THEN:) What? You did WHAT? You miserable BASTARD!

DAVE SLAMS DOWN THE PHONE, THEN PACES TO VENT HIS ANGER.

DAVE (CONT'D)

I don't *believe* that guy!!

MILT

(IMPRESSED) Jesus. What did he do?

DAVE

He had an extra Lakers ticket and he gave it to some jerk in a restaurant who pulled a bone out of his throat.

BILLIE STRIDES IN FROM THE MEETING NEXT DOOR, STILL ROYALLY PISSED.

BILLIE

That weaselly, rule-changing little prick. (YELLING BACK) Okay if I say "prick" *on my own time*? (TO DAVE) I'm changing sponsors again.

BILLIE PICKS UP SOME KNITTING.

DAVE

Don't do that. Sponsors are like urinals, it's a bad idea to switch mid-stream. When'd you take up knitting?

BILLIE

Yesterday, when I quit smoking.

Another BAD IDEA!

SHE STABS THE COUNTER FURIOUSLY WITH THE NEEDLES THEN, CLICKETY-CLICK, GOES BACK TO KNITTING.

DAVE

You're pretty good at that.

BILLIE

I was lousy at first, then I

discovered it's the same basic wrist
action as masturbating.

DAVE

Wow. If I'd known that in high
school I could have knitted a
sweater for Chicago.

AT THE PAY PHONE: ANGLE ON JOAN VAN VANDERS.

JOAN

(ON PHONE) Mom? Don't you play
Bridge with that actress's mom,
Trudy Frank? Okay, don't you drink
with her and pretend to play Bridge?

SPLIT-SCREEN: BRINGING IN:

INT. MRS. VAN VANDERS'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

VIVIAN VAN VANDERS, ON THE PHONE.

MRS. VAN VANDERS

Yes dear, what about her?

JOAN

Well I'm at A.A., and the daughter's
here, and you won't *believe* what
she's saying about your friend.

BACK TO COFFEE SHOP, FULL SCREEN.

DAVE IS BACK ON THE PHONE.

DAVE

Mister Colman? You don't know me
but I was a Med student when you
went in to have your nose re-set? I
was drinking in those days, I was a
smart-ass, and I thought it'd be
real funny to change your chart, and
anyway, the long and short of it
is... that's why you have breasts.
(CRINGES, THEN:) Really? No, no,
you're welcome. Glad it worked out.

DAVE HANGS UP AND SHRUGS. BILLIE KNITS.

BILLIE

I started my amends with this nice
guy I was dating but I dropped him
when I discovered he had a glass
eye.

DAVE

How'd you find out?

BILLIE

I was at his place one night, he
sneezed and it popped out and hit me
in the face. I was so shocked and
creeped-out and revolted, the *second*
his coke was gone, I ran out of

there *screaming*.

THIS ANGLE INCLUDES JOAN ON THE PAY-PHONE IN THE B.G., AND...

CUT TO PHONE-CONVERSATION SPLIT SCREEN: FIRST WITH JOAN AND HER MOTHER, SPLIT-SCREEN (MRS. VAN VANDERS WITH HER HOME PHONE IN ONE EAR AND DIALLING A CELL PHONE WITH THE OTHER HAND)...

THEN **WIPE IN TRUDY** ON HER HOME PHONE, MARTINI IN HAND, FOR A **3-WAY SPLIT** WITH TRUDY AS TOP HALF.

TRUDY

Hello?

MRS. VAN VANDERS

Trudy? Vivian Van Vanders. My daughter just called from her A.A. meeting, where apparently your daughter is telling everyone you're a withered drunken whore.

TRUDY SPITS OUT HER MARTINI.

TRUDY

Withered?

BACK TO BILLIE, FULL-SCREEN:

BILLIE CONTINUES:

BILLIE

It's just typical for me, you know?
I need help and I get a lunatic
germ-phobic incest survivor for a

sponsor. Did you know the first
hair he had on his balls was his
Uncle's mustache?

DAVE

Billie, sponsors aren't perfect.

BILLIE

Oh thanks for telling me. Mine had
to buy a separate house to store his
Prince Of Tides memorabilia.

HER CELL PHONE RINGS. SHE ANSWERS, IN A BAD
MOOD.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

No, I don't want to switch my goddam
long-distance company!

WIPE TRUDY IN SPLIT-SCREEN FROM THE RIGHT.
SHE'S FURIOUS, HER HOUSE PHONE IN ONE EAR AND
HER CELL IN THE OTHER.

TRUDY

How dare you tell all your friends
I'm a drunken potato-headed whore??!

BILLIE

(WEAKLY) Mom? I never said that!

**WIPE IN JOAN AND VIVIAN VAN VANDERS AT THE TOP
OF THE SCREEN FOR A 4-WAY SPLIT, AS BILLIE TURNS
AND SEES JOAN ON THE PAY PHONE.**

JOAN

Yes she did!

MRS. VAN VANDERS

(SWITCHING PHONES) Joan says yes she did.

TRUDY

Vivian Van Vanders says her daughter Joan says you did.

BILLIE

I heard her, I'm right here in the room with her!!

BACK TO **INTERCUTTING** BILLIE AND TRUDY. BILLIE SHOTS A GRIM "THANKS A LOT" THUMBS-UP TO JOAN.

TRUDY

Billie, I'm hurt and offended that you would debase the good coin of my name by circulating it among low drunkards and thieves.

BILLIE

It's ex-drunkards! And what do you mean, "thieves"?

TRUDY

Phil, with the creamer money.

BILLIE

How did you...?

TRUDY

Joan told Vivian, and...

BILLIE

Yeah, fine, okay, look how do I know
you don't badmouth me to your
friends when I'm not there?

TRUDY

Because, darling, when you're not
here I forget all about you. Now if
you'll excuse me, I have to go and
upload your address to Ex-Celebrity-
Stalkers-Dot-Com.

TRUDY HANGS UP WITH A SLAM. BILLIE FUMES FOR A
BEAT THEN TURNS TO DAVE.

BILLIE

What would you say is the worst
thing to get out of leather?

DAVE

I dunno; coffee's pretty bad.

Raspberry jam. Why?

(FRAMED WITH JOAN IN THE B.G. LEAVING THE PAY
PHONE) BILLIE PICKS UP A DONUT AND SQUEEZES ITS
JAM INTO A CUP OF COFFEE.

BILLIE

Because Joan drives a convertible.

DISSOLVE TO:

ACT ONESCENE THREE**INT. COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT**

NEXT NIGHT, MILT AT THE COFFEE BAR. DAVE ENTERS, IN AN "UP" MOOD.

DAVE

Hey Milt! Hey everybody!

MILT

You're in a good mood. Did Dick

Button die?

DAVE PULLS OUT HIS "AMENDS" LIST AND JAUNTILY CROSSES OFF A NAME.

DAVE

Just crossed off another name.

MILT

Yeah? Who?

DAVE

Remember that anesthesiologist I was dating and I cheated on her with her sister? I just told her about it and she forgave me. We sat down, had a nice cup of tea, and...

DAVE TAKES OFF HIS JACKET AND TURNS AROUND TO

HANG IT UP. WE SEE A BIG HOLE CUT OUT OF HIS SHIRT-BACK AND "PIG Fucker" TATTOOED ON HIS BACK.

DAVE (CONT'D)

... (PUZZLED) and I don't really remember what happened after that.

MILT

You're lucky, living close to the people you hurt. Most of mine are eight time zones away. Nine, when I was "unofficially" shooting civilians in Laos. (SERIOUS) I would give anything to be able to apologize to those people.

MILT LOOKS AT DAVE'S APOLOGY SHEET.

MILT (CONT'D)

What happened here? Why'd you skip this one?

DAVE

I'm a little nervous about that one. There was this liquor store I used to steal booze from 'cos I didn't have the money to buy it. Actually, I *did* have the money but the lottery jackpot went over \$40 million...

MILT

Dave, you don't get to pick and
choose...

DAVE

I know. But *stealing*...

MILT

Hey, I stole.

DAVE

You did?

DAVE SURREPTITIOUSLY CLOSES THE CASH REGISTER.

MILT

All drunks steal. But the victims
don't get many apologies. You'd be
surprised how appreciative they are.

DAVE

Yeah?

MILT

One time a guy gave me a car.

DAVE

Really?

MILT

Wasn't a new car; don't get your
hopes up.

DAVE

No, sure.

MILT

This guy's auto lot got ripped off all the time; I was the first person to ever come back and cop to it. The man could not thank me enough. You know why? Because I was honest. Because I stood penitent before him. And 'cos his partner had gone to prison for what I'd done. How about I go with you?

DAVE

You'd do that?

MILT

Hey, I'm your sponsor. Plus, if he shoots you I know eight places to stick chewing gum to slow the bleeding.

DAVE LOOKS UNSURE AS TRUDY ENTERS.

TRUDY

Hello!

DAVE

Trudy! What are you doing here?

TRUDY

What sort of greeting is that?
Where's "Trudy, you look marvelous"?
Where's "Trudy, leap over the bar
and let's turn your ankles into
earrings"?

DAVE

Trudy, you look marvelous.

TRUDY

(TO MILT) You're Milt. I
threatened your life once but we
haven't been formally introduced.

MILT

Sorry about trying to brain you with
those coconuts.

TRUDY

C'est la guerre!

MILT

(TO DAVE) See? She appreciates my
apology.

TRUDY

I certainly do. And for my part,
I'm sorry about what I told my nasty
little friend at the IRS about you.

MILT

What?

TRUDY

Keep your receipts. (CHIDINGLY)
Dave, you little scamp, where you in
that room when Billie was *betraying*
me?

DAVE

I don't want to come between you and
Billie.

TRUDY

If only you'd come between me and
me. (PURRRRR)

DAVE

(POINTS) She's in there.

DAVE TURNS AROUND AND TRUDY SEES THE "PIG
FUCKER" ON HIS BACK. TO MILT:

TRUDY

Does he know about that?

MILT

I suppose someone oughta tell him.
Dave?

DAVE

Yeah?

MILT

You got a hole in your shirt.

DAVE FEELS AROUND TO HIS BACK. IRKED:

DAVE

Oh, man!

CUT TO:

ACT ONE

SCENE FOUR

INT. A.A. MEETING PLACE - NIGHT

CLARK IS THUMB-TACKING HAND-MADE "RULES" SIGNS TO THE WALL. (OR PUTTING THEM ON A TABLE)

BILLIE

What's this? What are you doing?

CLARK

Sorry, Billie. Only take a second.

It's the new Rules.

BILLIE

I thought you gave us the new Rules.

CLARK

The new new Rules. We took another Group Conscience last night...

BILLIE

Where, at the Ivy?

CLARK

Heaven no, I have a "bad
association" with whitewashed
pine...

BILLIE

Why, were you raped at a South-West
furniture show?

CLARK

We went to Mortons; it was
wonderful. Everyone was *so open* to
my ideas...

BILLIE

You mean your hors d'oeuvres.
(TAKES OUT A SCRIPT) I've got the
rest of my share down to three
minutes. I took the swear words out
and, actually, it may not even be
three minutes now...

CLARK

Billie, I'm so sorry.

HE POINTS TO A SIGN: "NO SPEAKING 2 CONSECUTIVE
NIGHTS."

BILLIE

What is this shit?

CLARK HOLDS UP THE "NO SWEARING" CARD LIKE A
CROSS BEFORE A VAMPIRE.

CLARK

Rule Two! Sorry!

BILLIE LOOKS UP AND SEES TRUDY IN THE DOORWAY.
SHE CROSSES TO HER MOTHER.

BILLIE

Mom! What are you doing here? You
know, they still only serve *coffee*.

TRUDY

(SOTTO, SMILING) I've come to show
you that when it comes to character
assassination, you are but the
Cowsills to my Megadeath.

BILLIE

You wouldn't!

CLARK

Who'd like to start?

TRUDY GOES TO THE FRONT, AFFECTING A "POOR ME"
LOST SOUL ATTITUDE.

TRUDY

Hello everyone. I'm Trudy and...
thanks to my daughter, I'm afraid I
am an alcoholic.

BILLIE

Cut! Objection!

CLARK

Billie, this isn't Inherit The Wind.

BILLIE

But she can't be here!

CLARK

Our meetings are open to *anyone*...

(QUICKLY) who doesn't use bad language, speak too long, interrupt or talk two nights in a row. And who has 24 consecutive hours of sobriety.

BILLIE

In her LIFE, she doesn't have 24 *cumulative* hours of sobriety.

CLARK

Shh! Rule Number One. Sorry.

TRUDY

I sense my beloved daughter Billie doesn't want me here. Perhaps I should leave...

TRUDY BEGINS A BRIDGE-OF-SIGHS MARCH TO THE EXIT.

CLARK

Don't go, you need our help!

(HISSING TO BILLIE) It's your
mother. Mothers are our most
precious resource.

BILLIE

Okay, granted, mothers *generally*.

CLARK

Our very *lives* begin with their
milk. Except, in my case, I was
given a rice-based formula through a
non-latex nipple... (TO TRUDY)

Madame?

TRUDY

Thank you, kind sir.

TRUDY RETURNS TO CENTER STAGE.

TRUDY (CONT'D)

Ladies and gentlemen, in this room
you've heard many things about me.
Scandalous things. Things involving
young men and rubber tubing. The
charge of being a single mother I
shall attempt to neither palliate
nor deny. As to the passion with
which I approach our all-too-brief

moment on earth: who among us has
 not felt the urge to shed these dull
 wood clogs of care for one last
 giddy barefoot tango as the Carol
 Burnett of Time sweeps the spotlight
 of our youth slowly, slowly,
 (CHOKING) slowly... to black?

TRUDY SWEEPS AN IMAGINARY BROOM IN DIMINISHING
 CIRCLES. CLARK CLUTCHES A HAND TO HIS THROAT,
 TOTALLY ENRAPTURED. BILLIE TRIES TO FIGURE OUT
 WHAT HER MOTHER IS UP TO...

DISSOLVE TO:

20 MINUTES LATER. BILLIE SITS WITH HER HAND ON
 THE TIME BELL, DINGING IT WITH WHAT EVEN SHE
 REALIZES IS POINTLESS OBJECTION. HER WORST
 NIGHTMARE IS REALIZED; THE GROUP IS MESMERIZED
 BY TRUDY. CLARK IS SOBBING.

TRUDY

In conclusion: at close of day,
 when all about me have gone gentle
 into that good night, I shall burn
 and rage, rage against the dying of
 the light. Mark me then, Guilty!
 Of living, loving... (A LOOK TO
 BILLIE) and yes, tasting...

BILLIE: DING! DING!

TRUDY (CONT'D)

Guilty, of shrinking not from life's

viands, but gladly raising its
 fruits to my hungry lips. And I
 pledge to you that should I manage,
 with your spiritual help, to expiate
 this ruinous, loathsome habit...

BILLIE CAN'T BELIEVE THIS.

TRUDY (CONT'D)

... I shall feast from that table of
 life till the plates are bare, the
 chalices -- non-alcoholic -- go dry
 and the music is silenced! (CHOKING
 IT OUT) Thank you!

APPLAUSE. TRUDY GOES TO A CHAIR, PASSING
 BILLIE:

TRUDY (CONT'D)

(SNIDE) Your wicket, darling.

CLARK IS SOBBING INTO A LAVENDER HANKIE.

CLARK

That's one small cry for a man, one
 giant weep for mankind.

CUT TO:

ACT ONE

SCENE FIVE

INT. JAIL - DAY

DAVE GRIPS FILTHY JAIL CELL BARS IN DESPAIR.
MILT STANDS OUTSIDE THE CELL.

MILT

Man, serves him right getting his
liquor boosted. That guy was an
asshole. But I said something like
this could happen...

DAVE

You told me I'd get a car. I'm in
jail! It's a long way from getting
a free car to jail!

MILT

Not in my neighborhood.

DAVE

What am I supposed to do now?

MILT

I would suggest you look on the
bright side.

DAVE

What bright side?

MILT

He didn't shoot you. Gum?

MILT OFFERS DAVE GUM.

CUT TO:

ACT ONE

SCENE SIX

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

WITH A WOMAN BEHIND THE COFFEE BAR, FILLING IN FOR DAVE, DRYING MUGS. BILLIE STRIDES IN, UPSET.

BILLIE

DaveDaveDaveDaveDave? (TO WOMAN)

Where's Dave?

THE WOMAN SHRUGS. BILLIE SITS AND PICKS UP HER KNITTING.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

Great! I have the worst night of my life and the only sympathetic person I know up and vanishes. He's probably at Citrus with Clark, cracking lobsters and voting on Rule Seventy-dash-A: "Billie can only speak on Wednesdays with an **R** in them..."

CLICKETY-CLICK, BILLIE LOOKS AT HERSELF PATHETICALLY KNITTING. DISGUSTED:

BILLIE (CONT'D)

What am I doing?

SHE DROPS THE KNITTING IN FRUSTRATION. IT UNFURLS; IT'S A SWEATER WITH REALLY LONG ARMS.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

I'm sitting here punishing myself
(RE SWEATER)... and some person with
really long arms to be named later.
I'm not the problem here. But I
know where the problem lives. I
have a key to the problem's
apartment.

SHE GETS DETERMINEDLY UP AND SAYS TO THE GIRL
BEHIND THE COUNTER:

BILLIE (CONT'D)

If Dave calls, tell him he's a cold-
hearted, self-absorbed bastard.

BILLIE MARCHES OUT.

CUT TO:

ACT ONE

SCENE SEVEN

INT. TRUDY'S APARTMENT - DAY

BILLIE BURSTS INTO HER MOTHER'S APARTMENT.

BILLIE

Mom, this whole pathetic pretense of
rehabilitation has to stop right

now!

TRUDY HAS COTTON BALLS BETWEEN HER TOES, AND HER TOENAILS ARE PAINTED IN TWO HUES, ONE COLOR ON ONE FOOT, ONE COLOR ON THE OTHER.

TRUDY

(INNOCENT) Why whatever do you
mean? (DISPLAYING HER FEET:) Left
or right?

BILLIE

You know very well what I mean!
(CHECKS THE COLORS) Left. Can't
you just humiliate me somewhere
else?

TRUDY

But darling it's so much more fun to
do it in front of your friends.

BILLIE

Mother, I'm in A.A. for real. I go
every day. It's not a hobby, it's
not a place to pick up guys -- most
of the time. I'm struggling with
sobriety. You haven't even met
sobriety. *Here's* sobriety, *here's*
you!

SHE HOLDS HER HANDS AS FAR APART AS SHE CAN AND

PUPPETS ONE OF THEM AS THE "VOICE OF SOBRIETY."

BILLIE (CONT'D)

"What's that tiny speck way off in
the distance?" (SCREAMS AT HER HAND)
THAT'S TRUDY!

TRUDY

You're upset. Would you like some
Xanax Chip ice cream? They make it
for me specially.

BILLIE

Please, mother, talk to my sponsor.
He'll explain to you so much more
eloquently than I could why what
you're doing is wrong and stinky and
evil.

TRUDY

You're right, perhaps I should do
that. Clark?

CLARK TIP-TOES OUT FROM THE ADJOINING ROOM, ALSO
WITH COTTON BALLS BETWEEN HIS TOES, AND HIS
NAILS PAINTED RED.

CLARK

I like the Banana Bronze, but this
brings out my rosy ankle knobs. You
know, they're the cheekbones of the

leg. (NOTICES:) Billie! What are you doing here?

BILLIE

Oh, living my worst nightmare. How about you?

CLARK

I'm your mother's Sponsor! Isn't that wack... or dope, or I forget, which is the good one?

BILLIE

You can't be. You're my sponsor.

CLARK

I know. I never had a mother-daughter before; I feel so naughty. (CONFIDING) Trudy reminds me so much of my own mother. But she's dead and yours is SO alive.

BILLIE

I'll trade you.

TRUDY

I'm coming to *every meeting* from now on. (ASIDE TO BILLIE) And I hope you like the taste of donut sugar and hobo hair, because I am going to

wipe the floor with you.

ON BILLIE'S HORROR AS HER MOTHER GLOATS.

FADE OUT.

ACT TWO

SCENE ONE

FADE IN:

INT. A.A. MEETING ROOM - NIGHT

BILLIE, ANGRY AND UPSET, FOLLOWS CLARK INTO THE MEETING.

BILLIE

Don't you see she's using you to get
to me, sucking you into her sick,
twisted web!

CLARK

You're so suspicious. That's very
Libra. Ours is purely a
sponsor/sponsee relationship.

BILLIE STARES AT THE SHIRT CLARK IS WEARING AS
IF SEEING IT FOR THE FIRST TIME.

BILLIE

That's *my shirt*. She gave you my
shirt.

CLARK

Don't you want your mother to be cured? If only *mine* could be cured of what killed her.

BILLIE

What was that?

CLARK

A pie truck.

BILLIE

She has you all completely bamboozled, with the emphasis on boozled. She's not doing this to "get better," she's doing it to hurt me.

CLARK

That's an awful thing to say.

BILLIE

Come on, Clark, there's Meetings all over town, she could go to any one of them.

CLARK

God must have wanted her here.

BILLIE

God's not that cruel.

LOOKING IN A MIRROR, CLARK PATS THE FAT UNDER

HIS CHIN.

CLARK

Oh yes he is, dearie.

BILLIE

Well I'm not going to take this
lying down. I'm going to defend
myself, starting right now!

BILLIE GOES TO THE FRONT.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

Good evening, I'm Billie.

GROUP

Hi Billie.

BILLIE

And I'm...

CLARK DINGS A TIME BELL.

CLARK

Time! Sorry.

BILLIE

All I said was "I'm"!

CLARK

And you said it magnificently. But
unfortunately, you only had 2
seconds left from the time you
borrowed Tuesday night.

HE HOLDS UP A NEW RULE CARD:

CLARK (CONT'D)

Rule Seven: Borrowed Time Comes Out
Of Future Shares. So sorry. Trudy?

TRUDY ENTERS FROM THE BACK LIKE MARLENE DIETRICH, DRESSED TO THE NINES. ANTICIPATORY APPLAUSE, AS SHE GETS THE RESPONSE FROM THE CROWD THAT LORNA LUFT HAS BEEN LOOKING FOR ALL HER LIFE.

TRUDY

Thank you. You're sweet.

TRUDY SITS ON A STOOL THAT CLARK PRODUCES FOR HER, AND WHIPS THE MIKE CORD LIKE SHE WAS PUTTING ON A ONE-WOMAN SHOW.

TRUDY (CONT'D)

Good evening. It all began with my legs apart on a delivery table in Croyden. Actually, it began somewhat earlier with my legs apart on the hood of an Aston Martin...

SHE HAMS; EVERYONE IN THE GROUP LAUGHS.

TRUDY (CONT'D)

But enough about me. (HUMBLY)
Let's talk about those 12 steps I'm taking.

CLARK CLASPS HIS HANDS TOGETHER IN DELIGHT.

CLARK

She is so honest!

BILLIE

Are you insane? The only "twelve steps" she ever took was to parallel park. She's got wine in that purse right now. I'll show you!

BILLIE LUNGES FOR HER MOTHER'S PURSE. GROUP MEMBERS GRAB HER AND HOLD HER BACK.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

There's booze in there! Who has a 12-ounce lipstick?? Let go of me!

CLARK

Billie, I'm afraid that pursuant to New Rule Eleven, I have to ask you to leave.

BILLIE BREAKS FREE, NOTICES MILT WALKING THROUGH DOWNSTAGE, AND RUNS TO HIM.

BILLIE

Milt! Have you seen Dave?

MILT

Oh yeah, he's in jail.

BILLIE

What did he do?

MILT

Screamed and begged, mostly. It was

embarrassing.

BILLIE

No, what did he do to get arrested?

MILT

Oh, it was the liquor guy. I'm going back there now. Dave's had a rough day. Sure glad I didn't tell him he's got Pig Fucker tattooed on his back.

BILLIE REACTS TO THIS AND RUNS OUT, PASSING TRUDY WHO'S STILL ENTERTAINING.

TRUDY

So this officer has the nerve to say he'll tear up the ticket if I'll "service" him in front of the real estate billboard.

CLARK

How much was the ticket?

TRUDY

Oh I have no idea... but the houses started at eighty-nine thousand...

LAUGHTER. THEY LOVE HER.

CUT TO:

ACT TWOSCENE TWO**INT. JAIL CELL - NIGHT**

DAVE IS STILL IN JAIL. NOW THERE'S A CHUNKY, ANGRY-LOOKING HELL'S ANGEL IN THE CELL WITH HIM.

THE SPUNKY LIQUOR STORE OWNER, MR. TRANH, ENTERS THE JAIL HALLWAY HOLDING A POLAROID CAMERA.

DAVE

Mister Tranh, thank God! I'd just like to say I've learned my lesson, and I completely understand you putting me in jail for these few short hours so I can reflect on what I did.

TRANH TAKES A CLOSE-UP POLAROID OF DAVE THROUGH THE BARS, BLINDING HIM WITH THE FLASH.

DAVE (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

TRANH

I taking pictures to hang in store:
"This what happen, you steal from me!"

DAVE

It was only 400 bucks worth of booze.

TRANH

It was on sale! That seven hundred-fifty dollar worth!

DAVE

What? I could have stolen it down the street for three-fifty!

TRANH

Smile!

TRANH TAKES ANOTHER FLASH PHOTO.

DAVE

Okay, okay! I'll give you the four hundred.

TRANH

Seven-fifty. It not on sale now.

DAVE

Okay, seven-fifty!

TRANH

I no want money! Your money no good!

DAVE

I apologized to you, I said I'll pay you back. What do you want from me?

TRANH GIVES THIS SOME THOUGHT. AN EVIL SMILE:

TRANH

You marry my sister, get her in

United State, I drop charge.

DAVE

Are you crazy? I'm not gonna do
that.

TRANH

Think about. You very pretty man
for jail.

THE HELL'S ANGEL NODS AGREEMENT. MILT RETURNS.

MILT

Sorry,Dave. No go with the D.A. but
the hearing's first thing in the
morning.

DAVE

(TO TRANH) You have no evidence
except for my confession. I could
have been lying!

TRANH

Were you lying?

MILT

(TO DAVE) You can't lie.

DAVE

(MISERABLE) No, I took it.

TRANH

A-ha!

TRANH FLASHES ANOTHER PICTURE. DAVE APPEALS TO MILT:

DAVE

Milt, you've gotta get me out of here. I've got the Hells Angels over here making eyes at me.

MILT

Dave, Dave, guys like that that don't fuck other men.

DAVE

(RELIEVED) No?

MILT

They carve you into a woman, *then* fuck you.

DAVE GRABS MILT'S SHIRT THROUGH THE BARS.

DAVE

You've gotta get me outa here. He's trying to blackmail me into marrying his sister!

MILT LOOKS HARD AT MR. TRANH, STUDYING HIM HARD, AS AN IDEA FORMS IN HIS HEAD.

TRANH

Everybody steal from me, every time. Drunks, drug, kid, old lady, movie star! This last straw! I come this

country to work, not to chase Sheen
Brother up Sunset at three in
morning.

MILT HAS AN EPIPHANY.

MILT

Mister Tranh, sir? I think you
could be the answer to the hole in
my life.

TRANH BACKS OFF A LITTLE.

TRANH

I got wife.

MILT

I, Milt Johnson, want to apologize
to you.

TRANH

(RAISING CAMERA) You steal too?

MILT

I stole more than liquor from you,
sir.

TRANH

What you steal? Not Turkey Jerky?

MILT

I stole your country's dignity, the
lives of your young, your nation's

innocence.

TRANH

(TO DAVE) What the fuck he talk
about?

THE HELL'S ANGEL SHRUGS. MILT GETS DOWN ON HIS
KNEES.

MILT

I have a unrepayable debt owing to
the yellow man. But this is my
down-payment. I'll marry your
sister.

TRANH & DAVE

What?

MILT

Hell, I could be the reason she's a
widow.

TRANH

She not widdle, she big.

DAVE

Milt, listen to yourself! This is
insane!

BUT TRANH IS LOOKING APPRAISINGLY AT MILT,
CONSIDERING IT.

TRANH

How much money you make?

MILT

I do all right.

TRANH

You drink, like Mister Glue-Finger?

(MEANING DAVE)

MILT

Sir, I haven't had a drink in twenty years. And I haven't shot one of your countrymen in (THINKS)... wow, must be almost thirty.

TRANH

Okay. You show me driver license, pay stub, and a doctor note saying you not die until she become citizen.

DAVE

Milt, please, don't do this for me!

TRANH

He not doing for you, you staying here!

MILT

This is my final amends. (TO TRANH)

But Sir, if I'm marrying your sister, I want Dave set free, to be

my Best Man.

TRANH

(THINKS) Okay, deal, you get papers. (TO DAVE) Till then, you be *everybody* best man.

TRANH AND MILT EXIT ON THEIR SEPARATE MISSIONS.

TRANH (CONT'D)

I got to call Dong Hoi, break it to mother her daughter marrying a schwartzer.

DAVE

Milt! Don't leave me here!

BILLIE ENTERS, DISTRAUGHT.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Billie! Oh, thank God, Billie!

BILLIE

I'm so glad I found you.

DAVE

Me too!

BILLIE

Wait till you hear about the day I had.

DAVE

You had?

BILLIE PULLS UP A CHAIR.

BILLIE

It's my mother. I go to her apartment to clear the air like you said, and guess who's there?

DAVE

Billie --

BILLIE

Clark. He's *sponsoring* her in A.A. This is a woman who until last week thought Al-Anon was an Israeli airline.

DAVE

Billie, I'm in jail.

BILLIE

And Clark's such a drama hag; all the stuff that ruined my life, for him this is Masterpiece Frigging Theater.

DAVE

Billie, this'll be hard but I need you to think of someone other than yourself for a moment...

BILLIE

You know what I'm doing wrong?
 She's cheating and I'm playing fair!
 That's it! I know how to get back
 at her! Thanks, Dave, I'll see you
 tomorrow, oh and be careful in here,
 Milt says you have Pig Fucker
 tattooed on your back.

THE HELL'S ANGEL NODS. BILLIE MARCHES OUT.
 DAVE WHIPS AROUND LIKE A DOG CHASING HIS TAIL.

DAVE

WHAT?

CUT TO:

ACT TWO

SCENE THREE

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE A.A. - NIGHT

BILLIE CATCHES UP TO CLARK AND OTHER GROUP
 MEMBERS IN THE HALLWAY AS THEY HEAD OUT APRÈS-
 MEETING.

BILLIE

Clark! Wait up!

CLARK

We can't dally, we have an eight-
 fifteen at Cicada. Your mom showed
 us your prom pictures, you should

have been in O.A. How *did* you
conquer that (WHISPER) ... tummy-
bulge problem?

BILLIE

The coke helped. And not having
enough money left for food was a
little miracle-worker. But you were
right about my mother, I've been
petty and unreasonable.

CLARK

(JOY-STRUCK) I'm so happy to hear
that! (FANS HIMSELF) Oh, I've got
to be careful, or my narcolepsy will
kick in.

BILLIE

I want to throw her a little
"Welcome to A.A." surprise party, so
you can all get to see the *real*
Trudy Frank.

AS CLARK CLASPS HIS HANDS IN DELIGHT, EVIL
CALCULATION BEAMS FROM BILLIE'S FACE.

CUT TO:

ACT TWO

SCENE FOUR

INT. JAIL - NIGHT

DAVE PLAYS CARDS WITH THE HELL'S ANGEL.

DAVE

Three Queens.

HELL'S ANGEL

Damn. Take off your shirt.

DAVE

No... see, I won.

HELL'S ANGEL

Uh-huh. That's why I'm letting you
take it off.

TRANH AND MILT RE-ENTER THE HALLWAY, TRANH
HOLDING A LARGE FOLDED SHEET OF GLOSSY PAPER AND
MILT WITH A FISTFUL OF I.D.

MILT

Okay, drivers license, three pay
stubs, and a letter from my HMO
saying I've got no illnesses their
doctors ever heard of.

TRANH

(IMPRESSED) You one big healthy
Negro.

MILT

(TACTFULLY) Since we're gonna be family, you call me Milt.

DAVE

Milt, I can't let you do this!

(LOOKS BACK) For at least three more hands.

MILT

I want to do it, Dave. I need to.

DAVE

You're marrying some middle-aged foreign woman you don't even know! Whose brother's a vindictive jerk.

TRANH

(POINTS TO HELL'S ANGEL) Shouldn't you be over there on honeymoon?

DAVE

Couldn't you just write the President of Vietnam an apology?

MILT

I've made up my mind, Dave. No sacrifice is too great for the burden of debt I carry. (TO TRANH) What's this?

TRANH

Picture of my sister. Is only photo
of her I have.

MILT BRACES HIMSELF FOR THE SHOCK. TRANH OPENS
UP THE FOLDED SHEET. IT'S A PLAYBOY-TYPE
CENTERFOLD OF A GORGEOUS YOUNG WOMAN. DAVE
CAN'T SEE IT FOR TRANH AND MILT'S BODIES.

MILT

Jesus H. Carousel! How old is she?

TRANH

Nineteen and half. Baby sister.

DAVE'S EARS PERK UP.

DAVE

What? Let me see that! Move!

TRANH

She not yet speaking much English...

MILT

(MEANINGFULLY) I'll *teach* her!

What does she want to say?

DAVE, CRANING HIS NECK, FINALLY SEES THE
CENTERFOLD.

DAVE

Holy Mother of God! Let me out!

I'll marry her! I'll marry her
right now!

TRANH

Too late for you, Mister Sticky

Pocket. She engaged to a good man
with health insurance.

DAVE

It's an HMO! They kill more people
every year than smoking!

MILT

He's upset.

TRANH

I understand.

TRANH AND MILT START WALKING OFF.

MILT

So, what is she, a student?

TRANH

No, she circus acrobat.

DAVE

Noooooooooo!

DAVE STARTS SMASHING HIS HEAD ON THE BARS.

CUT TO:

ACT TWO

SCENE FIVE

INT. TRUDY'S APARTMENT (AND FOYER) - DAY

THE LIGHTS ARE LOW. CLARK HIDES THE OTHER A.A.
MEMBERS BEHIND THE FURNITURE, BEHIND THE DOOR,
ETC. THEY HAVE NOISEMAKERS AND PARTY HATS.

THERE'S A "WELCOME" CAKE ON THE TABLE.

CLARK

Remember, when Billie says "Welcome"

we all jump out and surprise Mom...

I mean, *Billie's* Mom.

THERE'S A KEY IN THE DOOR AND THEY CROUCH DOWN.

RESET: TO TRUDY'S ENTRANCE FOYER

LIGHTS LOW. BILLIE AND HER MOTHER ENTER. TRUDY IS QUAFFING FROM A GLASS SHE "BORROWED" FROM THE RESTAURANT. BILLIE PLAYS ALL HER LINES "TO THE BALCONY" FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE GANG NEXT DOOR. TRUDY IS TIPSY AND LARGER-THAN-LIFE.

BILLIE

Mom, with you in A.A., are you sure

it's a good idea to drink?

TRUDY

Don't be ridiculous darling, it's

always a good idea to drink. How

else would I get my eight servings a

day of grain products?

BILLIE HELPS HER OFF WITH HER COAT.

BILLIE

But there are people who are

concerned about what happens to you.

TRUDY

You mean those grotty imbecilic

sycophants at your "club"? Please!
Half of them are so mithridated in
self-pity they couldn't tell the
difference between an honest cry for
help and a fart in a Number Ten
envelope.

BILLIE

But surely, Clark, your devoted
sponsor would be upset?

TRUDY

That crapulous Oedipal sodomite?
Last night he wept and hugged me
over an incident from my "tortured
past" that I'd seen the night before
on a rerun of Spenser: For Hire.

BILLIE

But aren't you in Group because
you're genuinely seeking help?

TRUDY

Billie, please. You and I both know
I only go there for a cheap laugh
and to embarrass you. The only
reason that roomful of whining
polyestered coupon-clippers can't

see that is because they have the
collective I.Q. of a pinball
flipper.

THEY HEAD FOR THE LIVING ROOM.

TRUDY (CONT'D)

So, what was it you wanted to tell
me? That you finally bow to my
superior eloquence and cunning?

BILLIE

No. I just wanted to say, on behalf
of everyone in A.A... welcome.

RESET TO: THE APARTMENT LIVING ROOM

AS TRUDY AND BILLIE ENTER AND ALL THE GROUP
MEMBERS AND CLARK STAND UP - SHOCKED AND ANGRY,
THEIR HATS AND NOISEMAKERS DROOPING IN THEIR
ARMS.

BILLIE

(SWEETLY) Oh. And Surprise.

CLARK

You're not my mommy, you're a
horrible deceiving witch! Oh, my
narcot - !

CLARK DROPS IN A SWOON ON THE FLOOR. TRUDY
REALIZES SHE'S BEEN HAD.

TRUDY

(TO BILLIE) Your game darling, hats

off. At least I won't have to drink
out of this damn shoe any more.

TRUDY PULLS OFF A SHOE, "UNCORKS" THE HEEL AND
DRINKS AS THE GROUP MEMBERS LOOK ON IN HORROR.

TRUDY (CONT'D)

And for the rest of you... as the
man said to his proctologist, please
go out the same way you came in.

CUT TO:

ACT TWO

SCENE SEVEN

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

NEXT DAY. BILLIE IS SMOKING AGAIN. DAVE HOLDS
HIMSELF AWKWARDLY, POST TATTOO-SURGERY.

BILLIE

Does it hurt?

DAVE

No more than having a Band-Aid the
size of a sleeping bag torn off your
back. The doctor had to stop half-
way through 'cos he was afraid my
screams would damage his hearing.
Now my back says UCKER.

BILLIE

Gee. If you put SM at the front you could advertise jam. What'd the Judge give you?

DAVE

Community Service handing out food to the indigent, cleaning up vomit. Basically, the same thing I do here. (RE: HER CIGARETTE) Your knitting needle's on fire.

BILLIE

I had to give that up. (DEEP DRAG) I think I read somewhere it's bad for you.

ANGLE: MILT SKIMS A DOG-EARED ENGLISH-TO-VIETNAMESE PHRASE BOOK WITH AN ARMY LOGO.

MILT

"Put your hands on the jeep or I'll blow your fucking head off"...

"Drop that suspicious package or you're dead"... Man, I've gotta get a new phrase book before the wedding.

BILLIE DIALS HER CELL PHONE.

DAVE

Who you calling?

BILLIE

An old friend of my mother's.

INTERCUT: MRS. VAN VANDERS IN **HER APARTMENT**, ON THE PHONE.

MRS. VAN VANDERS

Hello?

BILLIE

Mrs. Van Vanders? Trudy Frank. I'm at A.A. and I thought you'd like to know your daughter's down here talking about you.

MRS. VAN VANDERS

Oh really?

SINGLE BILLIE.

BILLIE

And I think it's wonderful that during the Cold War you personally parachuted behind the Iron Curtain to give crabs to the Communists.

SPLIT SCREEN: MRS. VAN VANDERS JUMPS UP.

MRS. VAN VANDERS

That little cocksucker!

SHE GRABS HER BAG AND RUNS OUT OF FRAME. BILLIE

CONTINUES TALKING, INTO THE DEAD PHONE.

BILLIE

Oh, and how long are your arms?

because I've knitted you a

sweater...

AS BILLIE LAUGHS...

FADE OUT.