

UNTITLED BRIAN GALLIVAN ABC PROJECT

"Pilot"

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COLD OPEN

FADE IN:

EXT. THE BAMBI COTTAGES - (DAY 1)

New Hampshire. Summer of 1976. Six run-down, almost-cute cottages surround a scrubby yard with picnic tables where the Burkes are having a family meeting. Our patriarch TEDDY (40s) is charming, likable, and hates words like "patriarch". Teddy describes himself as a dreamer. His wife CATHLEEN describes him as dangerously optimistic. Cathleen (40s, deadpan funny, think Amy Poehler) is an exhausted but loving mother. She's crazy about Teddy, and even when she makes fun of him, it's always with a smile. Teddy and Cathleen stand before their six kids (ages 7 to 17).

TEDDY

(to Cathleen)

Are you ready for a pep talk?!

CATHLEEN

(weary)

God yes.

Teddy turns to the children. Cathleen pulls him back.

CATHLEEN (CONT'D)

Wait. We have to GIVE one? I thought I was getting one.

(then)

And I really need it. Because all those kids are mine. And I am very tired.

TEDDY

(laughs)

All those kids are mine too.

CATHLEEN

You look too rested for that to be true.

TEDDY

Cathleen, I think your exhaustion gives you a certain radiance.

CATHLEEN

Not your best. But I'll take it.

TEDDY

(smiles)

So can you be excited about this?

CATHLEEN

(unsure)

I can definitely try.

TEDDY

If you're not excited, why did you let me buy these cottages?!

CATHLEEN

Because you're very cute. And I was too tired to say no to you.

(then)

Which also explains the great number of children.

Teddy smiles. So does she. After nineteen years together, they're still very much in love. They turn to the children.

TEDDY

(very enthusiastic)

Okay, Burkes! Opening day for the Bambi Cottages is coming up, and I'm feeling really good about it!

CATHLEEN

(big smile)

And I am not!

(catching herself)

...SURE...that I can contain my excitement!

TEDDY

(pleased with her save)

Well, don't contain it, Cathleen! Let that stuff loose!

(then, to the kids)

Now! Starting a business can be tough, but I'm not worried. Because I know that HE wants this.

ELLIOT (9), gay but too young to know it, raises his hand.

ELLIOT

When you say "HE", do you mean God?

TEDDY

Close.

(big smile)

I mean Carlton Fisk.

CUT TO:

FOOTAGE OF FISK HITTING HIS FAMOUS HOME RUN IN THE 1975 WORLD SERIES. IT ALMOST GOES FOUL, BUT HE WAVES HIS ARMS LIKE CRAZY, AND THE BALL GOES FAIR! HOME RUN! RED SOX WIN!

BACK TO:

EXT. THE BAMBI COTTAGES

TEDDY

(so inspired)

Do you guys remember how we HONORED
HIS MIRACLE?

Teddy points at NATHAN (15, nerdy cute, way too polite).

NATHAN

We all played hooky, and you lied to your principal at the high school and said you were too sick to teach, and we drove to Carlton Fisk's hometown in New Hampshire.

TEDDY

And did we find that hometown?

EVERYONE ELSE

No we did not!

TEDDY

That's right! We got very, very lost! But what we DID find was THE BAMBI COTTAGES. And they were for sale. HE led US here! And now we're doing something AMAZING! Just like Carlton Fisk did!

CATHLEEN

(smiling at Teddy)

That's right, you guys! We're taking a huge financial risk... because a man named PUDGE...hit a home run...that almost went foul!

TEDDY

(proud, emotional)

Yeah we are.

Cathleen shakes her head, but then she smiles again. There's something about his enthusiasm that she can't resist. Elliot's sitting next to PHYLLIS (7), who never speaks. They are almost always together. Elliot raises his hand again.

ELLIOT

Phyllis and I want to know if we're talking about "Carlton the Doorman" from *Rhoda*.

TEDDY

No, we are not.

Elliot and Phyllis exchange a look.

ELLIOT

That's disappointing.

CATHLEEN

(kindly)

Yes it is.

INT. BURKE KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

VERONICA (17, prettier than she knows, old beyond her years) cleans the counter and has a roll of paper towels under her arm. (She ALWAYS has a roll of paper towels under her arm.)

TEDDY

Veronica, let's see how you handle rental calls. I'll pretend I'm a customer, and you try to sell me.

(using customer voice)

So your family lives in one of the cottages! That must be wonderful! Are you enjoying New Hampshire?

VERONICA

Enjoying? Ha! I'm like a second mother to five younger siblings-- with all the work that entails. So I'll answer the way any mother would: I enjoy nothing.

TEDDY

(to Cathleen)

She's like a young you.

CATHLEEN

She's like an old me.

INT. BURKE KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Teddy and Cathleen stand with way-too-polite Nathan.

TEDDY

Nathan, you love it here, right?

NATHAN
Um, yes. Yes I do.

CATHLEEN
Not fair, Teddy. Nathan agrees
with everyone about everything.

NATHAN
She's right. Good point, Mom.

TEDDY
She's not right!

NATHAN
I hadn't looked at it that way.

The phone rings and Nathan answers.

NATHAN (CONT'D)
Bambi Cottages. Do we have a pool?
I guess you could call it that.
It's like a very, very shallow
pool.

He looks at Teddy and Cathleen.

CATHLEEN
It's a yard.

NATHAN
(into phone)
It's a yard.

INT. BURKE KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Teddy and Cathleen watch LAZY RUSSELL (14, a male Darlene
from *Roseanne*) groan as he reaches for the ringing phone.

LAZY RUSSELL
(into phone)
Hello. Bambi Something.

RENTER ON PHONE
I'd like to rent a cottage.

LAZY RUSSELL
(not looking at schedule)
I'm sorry we're booked that week.

RENTER ON PHONE
I haven't told you what week.

LAZY RUSSELL
It's a busy summer.

He hangs up and slumps in his chair.

LAZY RUSSELL (CONT'D)
Can I take a break?

INT. BURKE KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Cathleen and Teddy stare at Wally (12, a loud, enthusiastic weirdo), who holds a match under the phone.

WALLY
(into phone)
Can you feel that?!

TEDDY
Where did Wally get the matches?
Cathleen, are you smoking again?

CATHLEEN
No, I only smoke when I'm pregnant.
And it's fine for the baby.
(then, looking at Wally)
I think.

INT. BURKE KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Phyllis is on the phone. Teddy and Cathleen watch nervously.

CATHLEEN
Teddy, she never talks.

TEDDY
I told her she's a secretary. She
seemed excited.

RENTER #2 ON PHONE
Hello? Is this Bambi Cottages?

Phyllis nods.

RENTER #2 ON PHONE (CONT'D)
Is anyone there?

Phyllis nods.

CATHLEEN
They can't hear you nod, honey.
You know that, right?

Phyllis nods.

TEDDY
She's definitely the best so far.

INT. BURKE KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Young gay Elliot waits by the phone with his parents.

TEDDY
How are things, Elliot?

ELLIOT
May I have a diary? With all these changes, I think it will be a good way to work through my feelings.

TEDDY
Typical little boy response.

ELLIOT
(answering phone)
Bambi Cottages. Yes. We do have a vacancy. Is this for a family or singles? This isn't a party place.

TEDDY
He's great! Get my boy a diary!
(then)
Never thought I'd say that.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE BAMBI COTTAGES - MOMENTS LATER

Teddy and Cathleen are back in front of the kids.

TEDDY
So Elliot will answer all rental calls! Now, let's talk about--

LAZY RUSSELL
Let's talk about how none of us wanna be here this summer.

CATHLEEN
Russell! If I can't say that, then you can't say that!
(then, to Teddy)
Um. I mean--

TEDDY
It's okay, Cathleen.
(knows he has to inspire)

TEDDY (CONT'D)
 Look, guys, I'm excited about these cottages because I had a very tough school year. The new school where I'm teaching math is pretty rough.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. BOSTON PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL CLASSROOM - A MONTH AGO

Teddy's in front of an angry class. Several compasses fly by his head. The pointy ends stick into a bulletin board.

TEDDY
 Guys, I've asked you not to throw compasses at my head.

A large math book flies by Teddy.

TEDDY (CONT'D)
 (beat, then)
 Thank you.

Lots of books start flying by his head.

BACK TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE THE BAMBI COTTAGES

TEDDY
 And the rest of you weren't that happy this year either. Some of you never got to hang out with friends your own age.

Veronica scowls and shrugs.

TEDDY (CONT'D)
 Some of you got picked on at school.

Nathan looks down. Then Russell does. Then Wally does.

TEDDY (CONT'D)
 Wow. Okay. I only meant that for one of you. But, good to know.
 (then, looks at Cathleen)
 And some of you are just exhausted by your every day life.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. BOSTON NEIGHBORHOOD - A MONTH AGO

Cathleen's at a red light in the station wagon with all the squabbling kids. She looks exhausted. The man in the car next to her tries to get her attention.

MAN IN NEXT CAR

There are two lunch boxes and a can of Tab on the roof of your car.

CATHLEEN

(exhausted)

I don't care.

BACK TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE THE BAMBI COTTAGES

CATHLEEN

Okay, I lost two lunch boxes, but that Tab made it home! Which is the miracle I'm grateful for.

(dead serious)

Cause Mama needs her Tab.

TEDDY

This is a crucial moment for our family! Right now we're like that famous ball that Fisk hit. And we are all in danger of going foul!

ELLIOT

(worried, to Phyllis)

Oh dear.

TEDDY

We need to make sure we end up in Fair Territory, you guys! FOUL TERRITORY is the unhappy life we live in the city. Where we never see each other! Where we all try to solve our individual problems, on our own, but we never do!

ELLIOT

We sound very sad.

TEDDY

We are! We WERE. But FAIR TERRITORY is all of us up here for the summer! TOGETHER! Trying new things! Taking on the challenge of running this business as a family!

TEDDY (CONT'D)

If we unite to achieve this shared goal, I promise you, our individual problems take care of themselves! Believe me when I say this: BAMBI COTTAGES IS OUR FAIR TERRITORY!

Teddy looks very proud of his speech. He turns to Cathleen.

CATHLEEN

Okay. You bought some cottages, you didn't free the slaves.

TEDDY

Still a pretty good speech though.

CATHLEEN

Stop focusing on problems. I think we're all doing fine! Even if I do complain about our kids sometimes.

THE KIDS

ALL THE TIME.

CATHLEEN

Quiet, you horrible children.

The kids laugh.

TEDDY

But Cathleen, what about Phyllis? Wouldn't you like to hear her talk? The doctor says she can, but she hasn't. Not in years.

CATHLEEN

Teddy. Of course I'd like that.

LAZY RUSSELL

She said "Amen" in church once.

ELLIOT

No. That was just a burp.

CATHLEEN

OR...it might have been a comment on the priest's homily. My point is: Whether she talks or not, I think Phyllis is great as she is! We don't need cottages to fix us, Teddy. We are all doing fine.

(sees Wally's demented smile)

For the most part.

TEDDY

But we're settling! When that ball was almost going foul, Fisk didn't settle! HE TRIED SOMETHING NEW! HE HAD FUN! He jumped up and down and waved his hands like an idiot! We gotta jump up and down and LOOK LIKE IDIOTS WAY MORE!

Teddy demonstrates and really looks crazy. Cathleen smiles.

CATHLEEN

Well, idiot-wise, we're off to a great start.

The kids laugh and join in. As they jump around, you can see that they're tempted by Teddy's vision of a better life.

CATHLEEN (CONT'D)

But this is just for ONE summer.

TEDDY

Yes! ONE amazing summer! And you better get on board, Cathleen! Because the Bambi Cottages are going to be a huge success!

CATHLEEN

You know, the mother dies in *Bambi*. That does not bode well for me.

TEDDY

Cathleen, focus on the positive.

Cathleen takes a moment.

CATHLEEN

Well, she does die quickly.

TEDDY

That's the spirit!

FADE OUT.

END COLD OPEN

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. BURKE KITCHEN/LIVING ROOM - (DAY 2)

Veronica is making breakfast. In the living room, Russell, Nathan, and Wally are watching the *Super Friends* on TV.

VERONICA
Russell, turn that off.

LAZY RUSSELL
No way. I'd have to get up.

WALLY
(loud, weird)
WHY DO WE HAVE TO TURN IT OFF?

VERONICA
Because it's opening day, and we don't have time! Plus it's animated pornography.
(pointing at Wonder Woman)
What kind of woman dresses in her underwear and carries around a rope?

NATHAN
(so in love)
Wonder Woman.

WALLY
(guessing loud and wrong)
UMMM...A LADY RANCHER! WHO'S REALLY WARM!

Veronica turns back to the kitchen where Elliot's taking some Strawberry Quick out of the cabinet for himself and Phyllis.

VERONICA
What is THAT?

ELLIOT
It makes Strawberry Milk.

VERONICA
(not pleased)
Pink milk?

Elliot and Phyllis look scared.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
You want pink milk?

ELLIOT
(solemnly)
We want pink everything.

VERONICA
(throwing Quick away)
No. It's garbage.

ELLIOT
But our real Mom lets us have it!

Teddy enters and pulls the Quick out of the trash.

LAZY RUSSELL
Dad, Veronica's trying to be our
mom again! Tell her to stop!

VERONICA
Dad, someone needs to light a fire
under Russell's ass!

Elliot and Phyllis are NOT impressed by Veronica's language.

TEDDY
(smiling)
Veronica, let the kids be kids!
And maybe try it yourself!

VERONICA
Ha. Good one. My youth is gone.

Cathleen enters like a crazy woman.

CATHLEEN
Why didn't you wake me? It's
opening day! Why did you give me
the gift of beautiful, beautiful
sleep, when we have so much to do?!

TEDDY
(hugs/restrains her)
Cathleen, we're ready.

CATHLEEN
(amazed)
Oh my god. We've never been ready.
For anything.
(then, big smile)
I'm not ready to be ready.

TEDDY

Well you have to be. Because this is the new us! Where we all come together and work hard and do everything we're supposed to.

(proudly)

I even got Elliot a diary.

He hands a very excited Elliot a diary.

ELLIOT

Yay! Thank you so, so, so much!

TEDDY

Go write your first entry, buddy!

CATHLEEN

Now you have a sacred place to record your private thoughts!

Teddy and Cathleen wave to Elliot as he runs off.

TEDDY

We're gonna read it, right?

CATHLEEN

Every single night.

They both smile and keep waving.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE BAMBI COTTAGES - LATER

WE SEE A SUPER SPED UP MONTAGE OF A SMILEY CATHLEEN AND TEDDY SHOWING SMILEY RENTERS WHERE THEIR COTTAGES ARE.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE BAMBI COTTAGES - MOMENTS LATER

Teddy and Cathleen are beaming.

CATHLEEN

(amazed)

This isn't a disaster!

TEDDY

And look. I think I see someone's life changing for the better.

Teddy points to Veronica, who's being approached by one of the renters, a handsome teenage boy named DANNY CAMPBELL. Teddy looks hopeful. Maybe Veronica will act like a teenager instead of a crotchety old woman.

DANNY
 (sexy voice)
 Hey, I'm Danny.

VERONICA
 (not interested)
 Hey, I'm raising five children.
 (then)
 Keep walking.

Cathleen gives Teddy a look.

TEDDY
 Was it just me, or did they have a
 Tracy and Hepburn kind of vibe?

Just then Russell screams and they all see him running around the yard with his shorts on fire.

CATHLEEN
 What the hell?!

LAZY RUSSELL
 (running by them)
 Wally lit me on fire!

WALLY
 Veronica said someone needed to
 light a fire under his ass! I WAS
 HELPING!

Teddy has grabbed a hose and puts out the pants fire. All of the renters surround Cathleen and Teddy.

RENTER WOMAN
 We want our money back.

Cathleen looks stunned.

CATHLEEN
 My family's usually not like this!

RENTER WOMAN
 It's more than just your extremely
 weird family.
 (handing her a brochure)
 These cottages are nothing like the
 brochures promised.

Cathleen reads the brochure and looks shocked.

CATHLEEN
 (pulling Teddy aside)
 Teddy! What did you put on here?!

CATHLEEN (CONT'D)
"Nightly Entertainment"? "Crafts"
"A Teen Dance"? "Walk to Beach"?
Teddy, the beach is a mile and a
half from here.

TEDDY
It's 1.2 Miles. And technically
you CAN walk to it.

CATHLEEN
Teddy! You lied about EVERYTHING
in this brochure!

WALLY
(lighting it on fire)
What brochure?

We go out on Cathleen's crazed face.

CATHLEEN
(to herself)
Bambi's mother. Going down.

FADE OUT.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. BURKE LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The family watches as Teddy tries to close their door on the angry renters.

TEDDY
(as he closes the door)
Just give us a minute, please!

ANGRY RENTER #1
You're a liar and a cheat!

ANGRY RENTER #2
Bambi would be ashamed of you!

He finally closes the door. Cathleen looks pissed.

TEDDY
Cathleen, may I just say that your irritation gives you a lovely glow?

CATHLEEN
(firmly)
NOPE.

TEDDY
There it is. Even brighter!

CATHLEEN
I am not taking your compliments today! Because like your brochure, they're full of lies!
(then, looks at brochure)
Wait a minute! I have an idea. The renters can't ask for their money back IF...you make all the brochure promises come true.

Teddy stares at her. Cathleen looks suspicious.

CATHLEEN (CONT'D)
What?

TEDDY
I love you so damn much.
(then)
And you really are glowing.

CATHLEEN
 (not proud)
 I'll take it.

TEDDY
 I'll handle this Cathleen! But I
 may need help making the brochure
 stuff come true. So who's with me?

Everyone is silent.

ELLIOT
 We're all with you, Dad. Because
 families always help each other.
 Right, Mom?

CATHLEEN
 (mumbles to herself)
 Why do I let him watch PBS?
 (then, brightly)
 Yes. Of course, sweetie. Of
 course they do. We'll all help.

TEDDY
 Great! You're in charge of crafts,
 Cathleen.

Cathleen's expression reveals her hatred of crafts.

INSERT SHOT:

The Brochure. Zoom in on the word "Crafts!"

EXT. OUTSIDE THE BAMBI COTTAGES - LATER

Cathleen sits with Veronica and a bunch of renter kids at a
 picnic table. Some parents stand and watch.

CATHLEEN
 (fake happy)
 Okay. Craft time! Veronica, do we
 have our crafting supplies?

VERONICA
 (looks at a pile of crap)
 We have a box of envelopes and some
 broken crayons.

CATHLEEN
 Yup. That's everything! Pass them
 around, kids!

The renter parents who are watching are not very impressed.

CATHLEEN (CONT'D)
Okay, everyone imagine a dream.

Veronica turns to the teenage girl next to her.

VERONICA
Like I still have dreams at my age.

The girl looks uncomfortable.

CATHLEEN
Good. Now put your dream in your envelope. And then lick it, close it, and write "My Dream" on it.
(holds up envelope)
Now you'll always be able to hang on to your dream! What a piece of craft, huh kids?!

YOUNG RENTER BOY
(earnestly)
Did all your dreams come true?

She gives him a long look. Then she laughs hard. He laughs a little too.

CATHLEEN
You know what? My dream was to hear something very funny. And you made that come true. Good job!

The kid smiles. Cathleen helps him color his envelope.

INSERT SHOT:

The brochure. Zoom in on the words "Nightly Entertainment!"

INT. BURKE LIVING ROOM - LATER

Teddy sits with Elliot and Phyllis.

TEDDY
So we need some entertainment, and if I remember correctly, you two like to perform.

ELLIOT
But no one ever wants to watch us.

TEDDY

Well, you guys don't always pick
the best moments.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. BURKE LIVING ROOM IN BOSTON - LAST OCTOBER

The Burkes watch as Fisk is about to hit his famous home run.
Then Elliot and Phyllis step in front of the TV.

ELLIOT

We made a play. Would you like to
see it?

EVERYONE ELSE

GET OUT OF THE WAY!

ELLIOT

But we like you so much!

BACK TO:

INT. BURKE LIVING ROOM IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

TEDDY

This time I can get people to
watch. So, any ideas?

Elliot and Phyllis look at each other and smile.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE BAMBI COTTAGES - THAT NIGHT (NIGHT 2)

A crowd is gathered. Teddy gets their attention.

TEDDY

Ladies and gentlemen, Donny and
Marie Osmond!

Elliot and Phyllis climb up on a picnic table dressed in
costume. The crowd looks excited.

ELLIOT

(singing)
I'm a little bit country...

PHYLLIS

(not singing)

...

ELLIOT
 (jumping in)
 And she's a little bit rock and
 roll!
 (then, speaking)
 But it's like a quiet rock and
 roll, you know? Because she's
 Mormon.

The renters actually smile. A couple even laugh. Cathleen and Teddy look pleasantly surprised.

INSERT SHOT:

The brochure. Zoom in on the words "Teen Dance!"

EXT. OUTSIDE THE BAMBI COTTAGES - LATER

There are five teens. And no one's dancing. The Teenage Girl from crafts talks to Mean Renter Boy. Russell and Nathan aren't far away from them. Veronica thinks she's chaperoning. Inside the house, Teddy holds a clock radio up to the window. It plays "Young Americans" by David Bowie.

NATHAN
 (amazed by the pretty
 teenage girl)
 She is beautiful.

LAZY RUSSELL
 One of us should talk to her.

They remain frozen where they are, still staring.

VERONICA
 (for everyone to hear)
 Hey! Russell and Nathan! If
 you're gonna ask that girl to
 dance, you better hurry up. It's
 almost time for your bath!

Russell and Nathan look mortified. The Mean Boy laughs.

LAZY RUSSELL
 We DON'T take baths!

VERONICA
 Well, Nathan doesn't, but you do.

LAZY RUSSELL
 Only because I get tired from
 standing for that long!

LAZY RUSSELL (CONT'D)
 God, Veronica! You're more
 embarrassing than an ACTUAL parent!

TEDDY
 (through window)
 Just gonna say it. Offended.
 (then)
 Russell, come here.

As Russell heads over to Teddy, we see Danny, the cute renter boy, walking out of his cottage.

TEDDY (CONT'D)
 Russell, this battle with Veronica?
 It's Foul Territory. It's the old
 version of you guys. What's the
new version? You're in a new
 place, with new strategies! So
 what are you gonna do?

Russell looks around and then notices that Danny is clearly checking out Veronica. Suddenly Russell knows what to do.

LAZY RUSSELL
 If she has some fun, she won't ruin
 ours!

Teddy nods and smiles. Russell rushes over to Danny.

LAZY RUSSELL (CONT'D)
 Hey, buddy, if you want my sister
 to like you, you gotta talk about
 things she likes.

DANNY
 Great. What does she like?

LAZY RUSSELL
 Well...
 (at a loss, then)
 Actually it'll be easier if we
 focus on things she hates.

ANGLE ON:

Veronica still stands alone.

VERONICA
 (to herself)
 All these kids should be in bed.

Danny approaches her again carrying two cups of punch.

DANNY
Want some punch?

VERONICA
No thanks.

DANNY
I'm just glad it's not something
crazy...
(using Russell's info)
...like strawberry milk.

VERONICA
(a little impressed)
Yeah. I hate that stuff.

DANNY
Me too. It's garbage.

Veronica gives him a big smile. He smiles back.

DANNY (CONT'D)
Wanna dance?

VERONICA
Oh. No.

DANNY
Come on. One dance.

VERONICA
No way.

TEDDY
(through the window)
Just dance with him!

VERONICA
No!

TEDDY
Veronica!

VERONICA
I said NO! NO!

TEDDY
Come on! Why not?

VERONICA
(whispers angrily to Teddy
through the window)
Because I don't know how.

Veronica storms off. Teddy suddenly understands what his daughter has missed out on by being an assistant mother.

DANNY

(calling after Veronica)
Don't go! We could just talk about
what a slut Wonder Woman is!

INT. TEDDY AND CATHLEEN'S BEDROOM - LATER

Cathleen lies in bed. Teddy enters with a big smile.

CATHLEEN

What are you smiling at?

TEDDY

(teasing her)
I saw you having fun today!

CATHLEEN

(smiles, but denies it)
That can't be true. I haven't had
fun since Woodstock. When the news
showed the hippies falling in the
mud.

TEDDY

I knew you had fun! And you have
to admit, the family really came
together to make it happen today.

CATHLEEN

It was pretty impressive.
(then)
But also...pretty stressful. Look,
we can have this one summer up
here. That's fine. But I'm really
looking forward to September when
you go back to teaching, and we all
go back to our regular lives.

He looks a little thrown. She puts a hand on his shoulder.

CATHLEEN (CONT'D)

But cheer up, Mister.
(smiles mischievously)
Because we are going to have a
little more fun tonight.

TEDDY

Wait. Do you mean?

Cathleen nods in a naughty way.

SMASH TO:

INT. ELLIOT'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Cathleen and Teddy quietly laugh and read Elliot's diary while he sleeps in the background.

TEDDY

(reading from diary)

"Dear Diary, The motto of New Hampshire is Live Free or Die. So Phyllis and I are living as free as we can. Because we don't want to get killed."

(laughs, then)

He's smart and dumb at the same time. So it's fun.

CATHLEEN

My turn! My turn!

(reading from diary)

"I guess we're living in New Hampshire for good. I heard my dad on the phone saying he quit his job as a teacher."

TEDDY

(guilty, tries to cover)

Now, he just sounds dumb. Ha ha!

(then, honest)

Cathleen, I was waiting for the right time to tell you.

CATHLEEN

(stunned)

We're in New Hampshire forever?

TEDDY

Yes.

CATHLEEN

We're gonna "Live free...or..."

She can't say it. Off Cathleen's betrayed face...

FADE OUT.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. TEDDY AND CATHLEEN'S LIVING ROOM - NEXT DAY (DAY 3)

Cathleen carries suitcases into the living room where Elliot and Phyllis are watching *All My Children*. Teddy looks upset.

CATHLEEN
(upset, yelling)
Kids! Pack your things! Now!
We're going to Grandma's.

TEDDY
You can't be serious!

CATHLEEN
No, Teddy, YOU can't be serious.
You quit your job without even
telling me.

TEDDY
Because I believe in this family!

An angry renter, MR. MALLEY, knocks on the door and enters.

MR. MALLEY
(launches in, no greeting)
Most of the renters are charmed by
your efforts, but I want my money
back. And if I don't get it, I
will go to the Town Hall where I'm
sure you have failed to file the
permits required to run this
business. I will shut you down.

CATHLEEN
Please come in.

TEDDY
Mr. Malley, give us a break. We
made all the promises on the
brochure come true.

MR. MALLEY
Not this one.
(pointing to the brochure)
"Walk to beach"?

TEDDY
Technically, you CAN walk to the
beach. Very technically.

MR. MALLEY

No family can walk all the way to
that beach!

The older kids are all there now with their suitcases.

TEDDY

I know a family that can.

He looks at Cathleen, who refuses to meet his eyes.

ELLIOT

We'll walk with, Dad. Right, Mom?

CATHLEEN

(with some difficulty)
Not this time, sweetie.

Veronica, Nathan, and Russell are shocked at Cathleen's determination. They've never seen her this upset with Teddy.

TEDDY

(defeated, to Mr. Malley)
I guess I don't know a family that
can walk to that beach. I'll go
get the checkbook.

The kids are shocked, especially Elliot and Phyllis, who have never seen Teddy give up this easily.

MR. MALLEY

(frowning at the TV)
What is your family watching?

ELLIOT

All My Children. It's so good!

MR. MALLEY

It seems very inappropriate. They
should be watching *Sesame Street*.
Something educational. What are
they learning from *All My Children*?

PHYLLIS

(points at actress on TV)
Donna's a prostitute.

Everyone stares at Phyllis.

CATHLEEN

(too stressed to realize
what's happened)
Please excuse her. She doesn't
know what that means.

CATHLEEN (CONT'D)
 She never talks. I don't know why
 she's starting with that.
 (suddenly realizes)
 Wait a minute. She never talks.
 Phyllis, what did you just say?

PHYLLIS
 (shy, but proud)
 Donna's a prostitute.

TEDDY
 (whispers)
 My god. I knew she had it in her!

Every member of the Burke family starts to smile excitedly.

CATHLEEN
 (hugging Phyllis, very
 emotional)
 Donna's a prostitute!

TEDDY
 YEAH SHE IS! DONNA'S A PROSTITUTE!

The whole family starts clapping and cheering for Phyllis.
 Veronica picks up Phyllis, who looks thrilled.

ALL THE BURKES
 Donna's a prostitute! Donna's a
 prostitute!

PHYLLIS
 (points at TV, explains to
 Mr. Malley)
 But Donna's starting a new life.
 (then, smiling)
 Just like us.

Cathleen's stunned. Teddy is very moved. Mr. Malley is not.

MR. MALLEY
 So THIS is your family's big
 accomplishment?

CATHLEEN
 (turning on him)
THIS is just one of our many HUGE
 accomplishments! And our next
 one's gonna be walking to the beach
 right now to make sure you don't
 get one cent of your money back!

MR. MALLEY

(not backing down)

Fine. But you have to do it with ALL your kids and ALL your beach stuff. Chairs, umbrellas, coolers-

TEDDY

We will! Come on, you guys! Let's do this!

The kids check with Cathleen, who nods. They run off to get ready. Mr. Malley storms off, and Teddy turns to Cathleen.

TEDDY (CONT'D)

Phyllis spoke!

CATHLEEN

I know! I know!

TEDDY

I'm so excited!

CATHLEEN

(intense fake smile)

And I'm still very mad at you!

TEDDY

(scared)

Got it. I will walk...far away from you.

EXT. ROAD TO THE BEACH - LATER

Teddy has a cooler on his head. Wally carries the big beach umbrella like a parasol. Everyone else carries rafts, pails, chairs, etc. But the Burkes are enthusiastic and energetic. Mr. Malley follows in his car (along with other renters in theirs). "Gonna Fly Now (Theme from Rocky)" plays.

WALLY

WE CAN DO THIS, GUYS!

TEDDY

That's the spirit, Wally!

WALLY

And if we light all this stuff on fire when we get there, we won't have to carry it back!

TEDDY

And that is not. Do you have matches? Give me the matches.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ROAD TO THE BEACH - LATER

The family is MUCH less energetic and enthusiastic. The Judy Collins version of "Send in the Clowns" plays now.

WALLY

(drags umbrella on ground)

WE CAN'T DO THIS, GUYS! TIME TO GIVE UP!

LAZY RUSSELL

(sits in the road)

Yes! I love giving up!

TEDDY

No! Get up! We can do this!

CATHLEEN

(enthusiastic)

Dad's right! This is our time to--
(the raft she's carrying
hits a tree and pops)
...shine.

The entire family looks unsure but keeps going.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ROAD TO THE BEACH - LATER

The Burkes are really dragging, and there's no music playing. But suddenly Teddy looks up, and he sees...THE OCEAN! And then Barry Manilow's "Looks Like We Made It" kicks in.

TEDDY

We're almost there you guys! BEACH AND VICTORY IN SIGHT! Wait. Where are Elliot and Phyllis?

They turn and see the tired little kids wandering off the sidewalk in the wrong direction. But the family cheers them on and waves them into "fair territory" Fisk-style. The Burkes make it to the beach! As Mr. Malley drives off, Cathleen starts a REVERSE arm wave pushing him away from them. The rest of the family joins in.

EXT. THE BEACH - LATER (NIGHT 3)

The Burkes party at the beach. Most of the renters do too, and Teddy hands out beers. There's a bonfire (which Wally stares at longingly). Danny Campbell comes over to Veronica.

DANNY

I stole some beer. Want some?
(off her judgmental look)
Actually your Dad gave it to me.
He said you've been working really
hard, and you deserve a break.

Veronica looks over at Teddy who smiles and raises his beer.

DANNY (CONT'D)

We don't have to dance or talk or
drink. I just wanna hang out.

VERONICA

(thrown by his sincerity)
Look, kid, that's sweet, but I
don't have time for puppy love.
I've got responsibilities.

DANNY

You're only 17! There must be
something young and fun about you.
Tell me one thing. Please.

VERONICA

(beat, then, reluctantly)
I like the song "Thunder Road" by
Bruce Springsteen.
(then)
Especially the line "You ain't a
beauty but hey you're all right."

DANNY

But you are a beauty.

VERONICA

Ha! No, I'm not.

DANNY

Yeah, you are. You act like a
cranky middle aged lady, but you
look like a pretty, young girl.

No one's ever said anything like this to Veronica.

VERONICA

(very moved)
Screw it. Those kids aren't mine.

She swigs from Danny's beer and starts making out with him.

ANGLE ON:

Across the beach, Veronica's siblings give a little cheer. They toast each other with plastic cups of strawberry milk.

LAZY RUSSELL
That should keep her off our backs!

NATHAN
I agree!

LAZY RUSSELL
(good-naturedly)
Of course you do.

The girl from the "Teen Dance" comes over to Nathan.

TEEN DANCE GIRL
You look a lot like David Bowie.

NATHAN
(stunned, goes to default)
Yes. Um. I agree.

TEEN DANCE GIRL
Wow. You're kind of cocky.
(then)
I like it.

Russell's jaw drops. Nathan smiles. Cathleen's been watching this, and she smiles too. Teddy approaches.

TEDDY
He looks happy.

CATHLEEN
He is.

TEDDY
Cathleen, I'm so sorry. I know quitting my job was very risky. And not telling you was very stupid. But I did it because...I didn't want to be able to go back to that old life. To that Foul Territory. Because in that life, it seemed like thrilling things only happened in games that I watched on TV. And I wanted us to be doing the thrilling things! In real life! In our great new life!

TEDDY (CONT'D)

But when you were about to leave today, I realized that I don't need the "thrilling" and the "new" as much as I thought.

(a little choked up)

But I really need the "us".

Cathleen is teary.

TEDDY (CONT'D)

Fair Territory is us together. No matter what. So I promise I'll do anything I can to get my teaching job back. Just, please, please, don't leave me.

CATHLEEN

(cry yelling)

I'm not leaving you!

TEDDY

You're not?!

CATHLEEN

No!

(wiping nose on sleeve)

I'm not taking care of those kids by myself.

Teddy laughs. Cathleen pulls herself together.

CATHLEEN (CONT'D)

Plus, you can't run the Bambi Cottages into the ground all by yourself.

TEDDY

(stares at her, stunned)

We're doing this?

CATHLEEN

We're doing this.

(then, firmly)

Year round.

Teddy hugs Cathleen hard, and she laughs. Then they kiss and start dancing to "Thunder Road," which plays on a nearby radio. It's a slow part, but they see Wally thrashing like a punk rocker. Elliot and Phyllis are doing a choreographed routine. Phyllis isn't talking, but that's okay because they know that she can when it counts. Nathan dances with his girl, while Russell lies on a beach chair giving him a thumbs up. Veronica's making out with Danny and running her hands through his hair, but she suddenly stops and says...

VERONICA
(in her mom way)
Someone needs a haircut.
(then)
Get it short. It will last longer.

Teddy and Cathleen laugh, then smile, proud of the progress their family's made, but knowing there's more work to do.

CATHLEEN
Hey, we never had to give anyone
their money back!

TEDDY
Next batch of renters tomorrow!
Bambi Cottages is on a roll, baby!

SMASH TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE THE BAMBI COTTAGES - THE NEXT DAY (DAY 4)

The Burkes stand in the yard with the new renters.

UNHAPPY NEW RENTER
(looking around)
We want our money back.

Teddy and Cathleen turn to the kids.

VERONICA
I'll get the "craft supplies".

ELLIOT
We'll go get our Donny and Marie
costumes.

WALLY
I'll get the matches.

Teddy and Cathleen are proud of their family. Then...

TEDDY
Wally! We don't need matches!

CATHLEEN
(scared)
Wally?!

FADE OUT.

END ACT THREE

TAG

INT. ELLIOT'S BEDROOM - LATER (NIGHT 4)

Cathleen and Teddy read Elliot's diary while he sleeps in the background.

CATHLEEN
 (reading Elliot's words)
 "I love my parents so much.
 They're funny and very smart."

Cathleen and Teddy actually pat themselves on the back.

CATHLEEN (CONT'D)
 (keeps reading)
 "There's only one thing wrong with
 my parents..."

In the background, we see that Elliot was faking asleep and is now sneaking out of bed and creeping up behind his parents with a big smile on his face.

CATHLEEN (CONT'D)
 (keeps reading)
 "They lied about not reading my
 diary."

Cathleen and Teddy look guilty.

CATHLEEN (CONT'D)
 "But that's okay because I like any
 attention I can get from them--"

Right then, Elliot scares the shit out of Cathleen and Teddy. They scream, and he starts laughing, and then they laugh too. And then they start tickling Elliot, which makes him scream. The rest of the family comes in when they hear the screaming, but instead of saving Elliot, they tickle him too. It's a lovely, fun, sweet family moment. Almost too sweet. Then Teddy asks where Wally is. And then, in the background, we see that one of the cottages is on fire.

FADE OUT.

END OF SHOW