BUDDING PROSPECTS

Episode #101

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BUDDING PROSPECTS
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CHARACTER LIST

Felix ................................................................. Adam Rose
Phil ................................................................. Joel David Moore
Gesh ................................................................. Will Sasso
Vogelsang ......................................................... Brett Gelman
Aorta ................................................................. Natalie Morales
Boyd Dowst ..................................................... Ali Ghandour
Rudy ............................................................... Michael X. Sommers
Marianna ......................................................... Cyrina Fiallo
Nelda ............................................................... Clare O’Kane
Linda ............................................................... China Crawford
Martha ............................................................ Jen Tullock
Mission Girl #1 ............................................... Rachel Brunner
Busboy ............................................................ Alfonso Felix Godinez
Celia ............................................................... Mary Baird
Tracy .............................................................. Emily Scott
Joey ................................................................. Jackson Dabney
Girl with Singed Hair ................................. Val Garrahan
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SET LIST

INTERIORS

- Pop’s Tavern D
- Pop’s Tavern - Entrance D
- Survival Research Labs Warehouse D
- Mission District Greasy Spoon D
- Felix Apartment D
- Felix Apartment N
- Felix Apartment - Hallway N
- Taqueria N
- Gesh’s ’62 Cadillac N
- Gesh’s Cottage D
- Vogelsang’s House D
- Vogelsang’s House - Library D
- Vogelsang’s House - Dining Room D
- Felix’s Car / Rural Highway D

EXTERIORS

- Felix Apartment D
- Felix Apartment - Driveway D
- Mission Streets D
- Survival Research Labs (SRL) Show N
- Mission Police Station N
- Gesh’s ’62 Cadillac N
- Gesh’s Cottage D
- Pacific Heights/Clay Street D
- Vogelsang’s House D
- Vogelsang’s Driveway D
- Palace of Fine Arts D
- City of San Francisco D
- Golden Gate Bridge D
- Felix’s Car/North of GG Bridge D
- Felix’s Car/ Rural Highway D
- Rural Highway D
MONTAGE OF VINTAGE STOCK FOOTAGE


Images travel through various neighborhoods showing iconic, but not clichéd, landmarks & signs (i.e., Mabuhay Gardens, Doggie Diner), finally arriving in the Mission District (i.e., Roosevelt’s Tamale Parlor, Pop’s Tavern).

END STILL MONTAGE

CUT TO:

INT. POP’S TAVERN - DAY (NOON)

A punk rock dive bar. QUICK MONTAGE of FELIX (30’s) opening.

Turns on lights. Mops. Takes down the stools. Pours ice into bar well. Pulls a garbage bag out of a box. Cuts three holes in it. Pulls it on, finally revealing his face. Heads back to the bathroom wearing the Hefty bag like a hazmat suit and carrying a plunger. Hauls a keg. Back behind the bar, slices lemon and lime wedges. Opens the door.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. POP’S TAVERN - DAY (A FEW HOURS LATER)

Three young, drunk PUNKS, with a hyper little DOG. At the other end of the bar, an old woman (CELIA) sits next to her walker sipping a beer. Felix listens to NPR.

GIRL PUNK (TRACY) waves FELIX over from down the bar.

TRACY
Hey - psss - bartender -

He approaches her. She leans in his ear and yells...

TRACY (CONT’D)
THREE MORE’A THESE.

FELIX
(winces)
I can hear you. The time to whisper is now. The time to yell is when I’m on the other end of the bar.

She laughs drunkenly in his face. Her breath is awful. He pours the drinks, takes their wadded up bills.

(CONTINUED)
FELIX (CONT’D)
(as he walks away)
Jesus, do you own a toothbrush?

They do shots. One of them (JOEY) goes to the bathroom.
Felix unwads their grimy singles near Celia.

FELIX (CONT’D)
How’re you doing there, Celia?

CELIA
You don’t wanna know.
(beat)
I thought Dominic worked this shift.

FELIX
I got called in. He didn’t make it back from tour, and I’m low man on the totem pole.
(pours her a drink)
This one’s on me.

CELIA
Thanks, dear. I gotta hit the head.

She gets up. Her walker has tennis balls on its feet, and as she makes her way to the bathroom, JOEY’s dog attacks it.

CELIA (CONT’D)
Hey! Offa me! Shoo!

FELIX
Hey, can you watch your dog?

TRACY
(grabs the dog)
It’s Joey’s! Sorry. Sorry lady.

Celia frowns. Opens the restroom door.

CELIA
Oh, hellfire. Felix! You better get in here.

Felix shakes his head, mouths “Fuck” and grabs the plunger. Opens the restroom door and sees JOEY on the toilet, needle in his arm, unconscious.

FELIX
Jesus... JOEY? JOEY?!
He yanks the needle out of Joey’s arm. Sits him upright. Joey starts to fall over. He shakes him.

FELIX (CONT’D)
JOEY! WAKE UP! CRAP! SOMEONE GET ME SOME ICE!

TRACY and other PUNK run to the bathroom to look and then leave in a hurry. The dog is excitedly running in circles.

Felix feels for a pulse. He puts his head against Joey’s chest to listen, when - Joey pukes.

FELIX (CONT’D)
What the fuck?!

JOEY
(unintelligible)
Iwasjuzindawrhz

CUT TO:

INT. POP’S TAVERN - ENTRANCE (CONTINUOUS)

Felix shoves them out the door.

FELIX
OUT! OUTTA THE BAR! GO!

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. POP’S TAVERN - DAY (MOMENTS LATER)

Felix finishes washing the puke out of his hair. He’s changed into a crisp new Pop’s Tavern T-shirt. He picks up some dimes left as a tip on the bar. The phone RINGS. Felix picks up.

FELIX
Pop’s.

INTERCUT:

INT. SURVIVAL RESEARCH LABS WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

A loud, grungy industrial shop filled with machinery parts. PHIL has a rock-a-billy pompadour, and leather work gloves tucked under his arm.
PHIL
(imitating the Red Tape in bad Bronx accent)
Yeah. I dug up yer mudder’s grave and fucked ‘er skeleton.
(regular voice)
What time you off?

INTERCUT PHONE CONVERSATION

FELIX
You manage to score that sheet music?

PHIL
Getting high is now on the agenda.

FELIX
Miracle of miracles.

PHIL
So what time?

FELIX
NOW.

Felix hangs up. We stay on his side of the scene.

FELIX (CONT’D)
Celia, you’re in charge. I quit.

Felix tosses the keys.

CUT BACK TO:

6A INT. SURVIVAL RESEARCH LABS WAREHOUSE (SAME TIME)

Phil hangs up. He walks over to MARTHA, a brawny female wearing goggles. She welds a crab-like machine with a blowtorch. Another SRL GUY and SRL GAL work in the background.

PHIL
(yelling over the shop noise)
I gotta head out.

Martha turns off the blowtorch.

(CONTINUED)
MARTHA
Hey, did you check the propane in the flame thrower?

PHIL
I’m sure it’ll be fine. How’s the hand?
Martha holds up a bloody, bandaged thumbless stump.

PHIL (CONT’D)
Jeez, Martha, you gotta be more careful. You’re all thumbs. Or rather, you’re no thumbs.

MARTHA
I’m only down one.

PHIL
Maybe in a few months they can graft on a toe. But then you’ll be walking all gimpy. It’s a trade off.

MARTHA
Is that belligerent friend of yours helping us move shit tonight? Because, uh...

She brandishes the stump again.

PHIL
Who, Gesh? Nah, he’s gotta work.

CUT TO:

INT. MISSION DISTRICT GREASY SPOON - DAY

Everyone who’s ever had hepatitis has worked here. A broad swath of San Francisco. Gay, straight, questioning. A BUSBOY dumps a pile of dishes in front of GESH (30’s), the dishwasher. Gesh is a giant bear of a guy. He grabs an uneaten hunk of hamburger off a plate and chases it down with a beer.

GESH
(hoists beer to Busboy)
Another day in paradise, ’ey?

BUSBOY
Yo, homes. You get hepatitis that way.

GESH
Oh yeah? You can’t catch that shit twice.

BUSBOY
You got it all figured out, Gesh.

(continues)
Hey, lemme get another six ‘ludes offa you.

The Busboy shakes them out of a plastic bottle in his apron, smoother than a pharmacist. Gesh gives him a wad of bills.

Those are the “real”, man. Don’t do anything I wouldn’t do.

Already done ‘em.

Gesh gulps down two pills with his beer and stashes the rest in a cellophane he slips off his Camels.

EXT. FELIX’S APARTMENT - LATE AFTERNOON

Phil rings the doorbell to Felix’s apartment. It’s in an old Mission District Victorian; a once regal painted lady.

Hey Felix.

He’s buzzed in.

INT. FELIX’S APARTMENT - LATE AFTERNOON (MOMENTS LATER)

Phil sorts stems and seeds from pot in the crux of the Captain Beefheart “Trout Mask Replica” double album cover. Felix is in the bathroom.

Hurry up, I got shit to do.

MARIANNA, 27, comes out of the kitchen in pajamas. She looks pretty straight but for the dozen piercings going up the cartilage of each ear. She’s eating a bowl of muesli. She puts it down and blows her nose. She’s got a cold.

What are you doing here?
MARIANNA
Couch surfing.

PHIL
(lights up joint)
What about Joey?

MARIANNA
Eh, that’s not happening. He dumped me for some chick he met in rehab.

Felix comes out of the bathroom. Phil passes Felix the joint. He takes a hit and hands it back. Felix looks at a pile of Kleenexes on a plate.

FELIX
(pleads with her)
Are you saving these for re-use? I eat off these plates.

MARIANNA
Oh, that reminds me – Felix, before you go, I have no food.

She hands him a punk band flyer.

FELIX
Blue’s Hammer at Chatterbox?

She turns the flyer over. She’s written a list on the back.

FELIX (CONT’D)
What’s “orangutang”?

MARIANNA
Yeah, I want an orangutang. It says “orange juice.”

He knits his brow as he attempts to read it.

MARIANNA (CONT’D)
That’s “Turkey Tetrazzini.”

FELIX
You write in cuneiform. You have the handwriting of a drunk Sumerian.

MARIANNA
It’s like, five things.
FELIX
I’m not buying your groceries.

MARIANNA
I don’t have any money.

FELIX
I know. Maybe you should get a job.

MARIANNA
Really? Believe me, if I could get a job, I would. And I wouldn’t quit on some whim because I was having a bad day. It’s not like it’s easy out there.

FELIX
Maybe I should quit letting you stay on my couch.

PHIL
(to Marianna, re: joint)
Here, hit off this. We gotta go.

MARIANNA
(coughing)
Is this from Gesh?

PHIL
Everyone’s dry. I had to go to the Haight.

MARIANNA
It’s tourist pot. I can’t even smoke this.

She passes it to Felix. He declines taking it.

FELIX
I don’t need your cold.

PHIL
Okay then, always a pleasure!

She collapses back on the couch as they leave.

CUT TO:

EXT. FELIX’S APARTMENT - LATE AFTERNOON

They come down the stairs and head to the Mission District.

(CONTINUED)
PHIL
You are a glutton for punishment.
You two fucking again?

FELIX
Lord, no.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE OF MISSION DISTRICT STILL IMAGES
A few static shots of details, signs, etc.

CUT TO:

EXT. MISSION STREETS - LATE AFTERNOON (MOMENTS LATER)
At 24th Street, Phil pauses to staple flyers for that night's SRL show.

PHIL
You know, once you’re divorced, you’re no longer obligated to feed her.

FELIX
I know. She’s driving me nuts. I think about smothering her with a pillow when she’s asleep.

We see one of the Mission District’s creative lunatics that once made it great, The RED MAN. He’s a Latino man with a John Waters mustache and fedora, who paints his face and hands red. Always around, completely nuts.

PHIL
Red Man, how’s it going?

He grabs two Bay Guardians from a vending box.

PHIL (CONT’D)
Wanna a “Gay Bardian”?

FELIX
No.

PHIL
Current events in our fair city, Felix. Where’s your civic pride?
FELIX
It went the way of my dignity.

Phil slips an SRL flyer into a Guardian and puts it back in the box. They continue their walk.

They turn the corner into an alley. TWO GUYS are charging the battery of their low-rider. Phil reads the Guardian as they walk past an especially goofy mural.

PHIL
Those Republican slimebags are defunding the NEA.

FELIX
I’m all for it if it gets rid of crap like this.

A hooker (LINDA), on a nod, leans against the wall smoking a cigarette.

LINDA
Hey - got a cigarette?

FELIX
You’re smoking a cigarette.

She stares at him with taxidermy sloth eyes.

FELIX (CONT’D)
Okay, here.

He gives her one. She stashes it behind her ear.

LINDA
How ‘bout a blowjob? Fifty bucks.

PHIL
That’s kinda steep.

LINDA
Reaganomics, baby. It be hurtin’ us all.

They continue on - approach MUDDY WATERS CAFE. It’s crowded with YOUNG PEOPLE sipping lattes at outdoor tables.

FELIX
All these people have nothing to do but drink $2 cups of coffee all day. Soon the cafes are gonna outnumber the taquerias.
PHIL

Phil hands a couple of cute MISSION GIRLS a flyer.

PHIL (CONT’D)
Hey, we’re doing a show tonight. Survival Research Labs. You should come.

MISSION GIRL
That’s a lame name for a band.

PHIL
It’s not a band. It’s socio-political satire with teleoperated weaponry and robotics. It’ll blow your mind.

CLOSE ON FLYER: Black and white collage of a maniacal child puppeteering a metal dinosaur.

CUT TO:

EXT. SURVIVAL RESEARCH LABS (SRL) SHOW – NIGHT

Giant metal behemoths battle it out in a parking lot. A crowd of CHAOS ENTHUSIASTS watch the show. It’s a bedlam ballet.

Felix stands next to the Mission Girl. Even he is on the cusp of a good time. They’re cheering. Phil works a remote that triggers a smoke cloud and noises from a weird sculpture.

Phil is now struggling with a crab-like robot. It breathes fire so close to the audience that it singes A GIRL’S hair. She screams, her hair smoking. The show stops. A few people gather around her to help.

FELIX
(to the Mission Girl)
Well, that’s the end of that.

A hand clasps Felix’s shoulder.

VOICE (O.S.)
Ah! So, you are here!

Felix turns to find VOGELSANG; tall with long hair, eccentrically cool, dressed in a paisley shirt and leather jacket.

(CONTINUED)
FELIX
Vogelsang! I was gonna give you a call. I was thinking we should partner up again. Make some money. We made a good team.

VOGELSANG
What I’m doing now, it’s not painting gingerbread on Victorians for Yuppies. That bubble has burst.

FELIX
What are you doing?

VOGELSANG
This and that. Nothing up your alley.

FELIX
What’s that mean? What’s “my alley”?

VOGELSANG
I don’t know. I was considering Rudy –

Vogelsang gestures to RUDY, a gravelly voiced vibrating sleaze-bag, standing off to the side watching the chaos.

FELIX
He’s completely strung out! I wouldn’t trust that guy to take a quarter to the jukebox.

VOGELSANG
I like Rudy. I don’t care what a man does in his private life. He’s an American dreamer.

They look at Rudy. He sucks so hard on a roach from a clip that it’s vacuumed down his throat and he starts choking.

FELIX
He’s an idiot! He legitimizes the “Just Say No” crusade.

Vogelsang makes a conciliatory gesture.

VOGELSANG
Perhaps he is that, too.
SIRENS. An ambulance and a police car pull up. AORTA (24), beautiful and inscrutable, and DOWST, an oddly straight fellow in a polo shirt walk up to Vogelsang.

VOGELSANG (CONT’D)
Ah, Aorta. This is Felix.

She puts her arm around Vogelsang.

VOGELSANG (CONT’D)
And Felix, this is Boyd Dowst.

DOWST
Felix. Finally. Good to meet you.

AORTA
(to Vogelsang)
Let’s get the hell outta Dodge.

VOGELSANG
(to Felix)
We’ll talk.

Vogelsang, Aorta, and Dowst quickly slither away. Rudy follows.

INTERCUT:
EMT WORKERS tend to the Crab Victim near the ambulance. Her hair is still smoldering.

A couple of fairly restrained COPS approach the crew.

CUT BACK TO:
Felix. He walks towards the action, then freezes as he sees A COP slam Phil up against one of his robots, and cuff him.

FELIX
Oh, fucking hell.

CUT TO:

EXT. MISSION POLICE STATION – NIGHT (4AM)

Felix comes out with Phil, who’s reading his paperwork.

PHIL
“Unlawful burning and use of explosive materials.” They say I’m a “public nuisance.”
FELIX
Few would argue that fact.

PHIL
Thank God they didn’t find my stash. I’d be on a bus to San Quentin.

FELIX
(horrified)
You had dope on you?

PHIL
I dumped it when the cops pulled up.
(looks at paperwork)
They want to ban me from “effectuating future demonstrations” in the County of San Francisco. They’re shutting us down.

FELIX
Just so you know, I emptied my bank account bailing you out.

PHIL
I appreciate it. I do. But we have to look at this as an opportunity. Do you know what the word “chaos” translates to in Chinese?

FELIX
No. I don’t speak Chinese.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FELIX’S APARTMENT - NIGHT (LATER - 5AM)

Felix is in his flannel bathrobe making Jiffy Pop on the stove. Marianna is SNORING on the couch. Her stuff is everywhere. A zombie movie plays on TV.

The DOORBELL RINGS. Marianna pulls the blanket over her head.

FELIX
Who’s there?

VOGELSANG
Felix.

(continues on next page)
As Felix opens the door...

FELIX
It’s 5AM.

VOGELSANG
You have to be somewhere?

Felix ignores him. He sniffs as Vogelsang walks by him.

FELIX
What is that smell?
VOGELSANG
I was at a sex party. It’s a medley of pussy juice.

Felix is slightly more repulsed than intrigued.

FELIX
Fantastic.

MARIANNA
(groggy)
You guys are disgusting. I’m taking the bed.

She drags her blankets into Felix’s room.

Vogelsang sits down. He picks up a baggy of pot on the coffee table, sniffs it, and scrunches his face in disapproval. He tosses the bag back down.

FELIX
You want a beer?

Felix searches the fridge.

VOGELSANG
I don’t drink beer.

FELIX
How about a water. You drink water?

VOGELSANG
Yes, great. No ice.

Felix gets Vogelsang’s water.

FELIX
So, to what do I owe this pleasure?

VOGELSANG
I just closed a deal on 390 acres in Mendocino - remote as the moon, with a cabin on it. (smirking)
I’m going to start a summer camp.

FELIX
Sure. What parent wouldn’t want to leave their kid with you and Aorta for a month?

(CONTINUED)
VOGELSANG
(leaning forward)
Listen, Felix. Maybe we can do each other a favor. How would you like to make half a million dollars, tax-free?

FELIX
Ahh, yeah. For what? Being a counselor at your summer camp?

VOGELSANG
Boyd’s just finished up his Master’s degree at Yale. In botanical science.

FELIX
Good for Boyd. He’s even more boring than he looks.

VOGELSANG
You don’t understand. Botanical science. He can grow anything, anywhere.

Vogelsang produces a plastic vial of breath neutralizer and squeezes two quick shots into his mouth.

VOGELSANG (CONT’D)
I’m going to grow cannabis sativa. Two thousand plants. I want you to farm my land.

FELIX
(a bit staggered)
Really?

VOGELSANG

FELIX
Wow... I’m flattered... but, I can’t even keep a houseplant alive. I don’t know anything about farming, or -

(Continued)
VOGELSANG
You don’t have to. That’s Boyd’s department. You do have to be willing to give up the next nine months of your life, which doesn’t look like such a sacrifice.

FELIX
What about the cops?

VOGELSANG
Leave it to me. There won’t be any. Just follow my rules.

FELIX
So, out there, on an isolated farm?

VOGELSANG
You won’t be alone. You’ll need two other people to work with you – whoever you want.

FELIX
I just, I see myself as more of an urban guy. I mean, I don’t exactly see myself on a farm...

VOGELSANG
I’m not talking about a corn field in Iowa. This is the Emerald Triangle. This is the place to get your head together, away from all the chaos of the city.

FELIX
Half a million dollars?

VOGELSANG
Yes. You’re ready for this, Felix. I’m giving you the chance to make some money and move on with your life.

CUT TO:

INT. FELIX’S APARTMENT HALLWAY – NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

Marianna is standing in the hallway wrapped in the blanket, covertly listening.

CUT TO:
Felix and Phil sit at a table drinking beer.
PHIL
Wait, he offered you half a million dollars?

FELIX
Yeah, but whadda I know about growing pot?

PHIL
Why do you have to know anything. He told you he’s got it covered. He’s got his guy, that botanist. We just have to do the labor.

FELIX
Great. The easy part.

PHIL
Vogelsang knows how to make money. The entire time we’ve known him, he’s never had a real job and he’s lived like a king. The guy finds money like a dog sniffs out truffles.

FELIX
I got news for you: Pigs sniff out truffles.

A cute LATINA peaks in, decides she doesn’t want to eat there and leaves. Phil winks, she smiles.

PHIL
I know that girl.

FELIX
Why am I not surprised?

PHIL
(refocuses)
Hey, the point is, he’s got killer instincts. He doesn’t make mistakes.

FELIX
It’s just so risky. And Phil, farming land, it’s really hard work. That doesn’t seem to be our strong suit.
PHIL
Growing plants? How hard can it be? Anyway, what’s the alternative? Get a job in a cubicle? Wear a suit and tie and wind up like your Dad who never took a risk in his life?

Felix gives Phil a look – he’s using Felix’s own lines on him.

PHIL (CONT’D)
Look, SRL is over. Give me a chance to pay you back. We’re free agents. Why not take this job? We do this and we’re set for life.

FELIX
I dunno.

PHIL
Nine months of good old-fashioned work, away from the city, tilling the soil. Nothing but fresh air and green acres, and dirt under your fingernails and the wind in your hair.

Felix nods. There’s not much to lose.

PHIL (CONT’D)
C’mon. Guys like us, we don’t get chances like this very often. And Felix – half a million dollars.

FELIX
(sighs)
Fuck it. I guess, I’m in.

PHIL
(cheers!)
Alright!

They clink their bottles with a still-worried Felix.

PHIL (CONT’D)
Now who’s the third?

FELIX
We need a real workhorse -

(CONTINUED)
FELIX/PHIL
(it hits them at the same
time)
Gesh!

CUT TO:

INT/EXT. GESH’S ’62 CADILLAC – EVENING

MEDIUM CU Gesh’s face. His eyes are fluttering bloodshot slits, in an apparent war with gravity to keep from rolling completely back into his head. Oh, and he’s driving.

Gesh pulls out his cellophane of 4 Quaaludes, pours them all into his mouth and chews. (ALT: Gesh picks up a whippet with a balloon filled with nitrous oxide. He starts inhaling from the balloon.)

The top of Bernal Heights Blvd. No other traffic, and a nice view of the city lights. He’s only two blocks from home, navigating blindly on instinct, when he hits the guardrail and shears off the front passenger-side tire. Sparks fly as he continues on as if it’s a minor hiccup – in fact, his response is to let out a BELCH.

We see a trail of SHOOTING SPARKS as his tire-less rim carves a rut into the road. He turns up his dirt driveway. Nice. Made it home. Bedtime.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. GESH’S COTTAGE – NEXT DAY (D3)

Felix and Phil walk up Gesh’s driveway following the rut in the road that leads to the ’62 Cadillac. They knock on the door and wait awkwardly as we hear: a yelling female, banging, more yelling. Finally, NELDA(20s) lets them in. She’s wearing a T-shirt, but she’s naked from the waist down. Her eyebrows are shaved as is her head, apart from a single braided strand hanging in front – other than that, the only evidence of hair on her body is in the form of a giant bush. She looks pissed off and insane.

FELIX
Hey - oh sorry! Didn’t mean to -

NELDA
Laundry day.

(CONTINUED)
FELIX
Oh - Is, uh, Gesh here?

NELDA
Sleeping Beauty! You got visitors!

CUT TO:

INT. GESH’S COTTAGE – DAY (LATER)

Gesh is slurping coffee. Felix and Phil have been trying to convince him to join them.

GESH
I don’t know... I gotta a pretty good set-up here. Nelda’s disability came through. We got the rent covered...

Nelda, still without pants, now carrying a laundry basket, comes into the kitchen to grab bug spray out from under the sink.

GESH (CONT’D)
Nelda, for crying out loud, cover that shit up. We got guests.

Nelda drops the basket at the doorway.

NELDA
Fuck you, Gesh! Who the fuck appointed you Pope? You do the fucking laundry!

Nelda retreats to the bedroom, slams the door. Gesh winces at the sound.

PHIL
She’s quite a gal, that one.

Felix gets the coffee pot off the table and refills Gesh. Gesh adds bong water to his coffee as if it’s half & half.

FELIX
Look, it’ll just be us. You won’t be busting your ass all day working for somebody else.
PHIL
Yeah, and then being so depressed you have to blow all your money on pills and booze.

Felix pulls his chair closer to Gesh.

FELIX
This is a chance to set yourself up. For life.

Still no response.

PHIL
All the weed you can smoke.

This last bit seems to hit a chord with Gesh who looks up at them now. He stands up and walks into the next room.

He grabs a pile of dirty underwear off the floor. He walks back in. He stuffs the underwear into a paper grocery bag.

GESH
Packed.

CUT TO:
Phil and Gesh help Felix fasten a mattress to the roof.

GESH
Th’ fuck, Felix. They’re gonna have beds up there.

Phil snakes a ratty clothesline through the windows.

FELIX
I need firm back support. Besides, I know it’s clean.

PHIL
I spent a week sleeping in the front seat of a Volkswagen Bug.

GESH
I slept on a moldy, shag bath mat first month I moved here. Then, after I set my futon on fire, I slept in a dog bed for six weeks. I can sleep on anything.

FELIX
You’re confusing a good night’s sleep with a drug coma. I need this mattress.

Felix pulls on the clothesline.
FELIX (CONT’D)
You sure this is going to hold?

Phil adds a showy knot.

PHIL
Are you kidding? That’s a Double Fisherman’s and a Figure Eight. You could take this thing through a hurricane and then drive coast to coast and back again.

He pats the mattress.

PHIL (CONT’D)
No. This baby ain’t going nowhere.

CUT TO:

EXT. FELIX’S APARTMENT DRIVEWAY – DAY (MOMENTS LATER)
FROM OVERHEAD as they exit frame: The car pulls out with Felix at the wheel. The mattress mushrooming over the top.

CUT TO:

EXT. PACIFIC HEIGHTS / CLAY STREET – DAY
Car/mattress emerges over the crest of a hill; the city, and the bay in the background.

CUT TO:

EXT. VOGELSANG’S DRIVEWAY – DAY
Felix, Phil, Gesh exit the car.

CUT TO:

EXT/INT. VOGELSANG’S HOUSE – DAY
A large Victorian-era home.

Aorta answers the door wearing a strategically ripped T-shirt, miniskirt, and Doc Martins.

AORTA
Hey.

(CONTINUED)
FELIX
Hey. I met you at the show.

AORTA
Yes, you did. Follow me.

CUT TO:

INT. VOGELSANG’S HOUSE - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

She leads them into a cavernous room with exposed beams. The Boswell Sisters is blaring from a stereo system. On the far end of room, a table is set for five.

The walls are covered with artwork - odd and dark stuff, old poster ads for Absinthe and Heroin. Beautiful art nouveau lamps. An opium pipe collection displayed on the wall. They’re sucked into another world.

GESH
Nice set up you got here.

PHIL
Where’d he get all this stuff?

AORTA
Auctions, mostly. Vogelsang loves a good auction. Bidding’s like a sport for him.

PHIL
It’s like a museum in here.

AORTA
He won’t even go into a museum. He has no interest in things he can’t own. Just hang. He’s cooking.

She leaves them there alone. Gesh immediately turns down the music and inspects an erotic bronze on the coffee table.

GESH
How’d you get involved with this guy Vogelsang?

FELIX
Well, I met him through Rudy.

GESH
That’s a ringing endorsement.
PHIL
Vogelsang’s been around forever. He made his money off LSD, but he backs shit, y’know?

GESH
LSD. What’s this fucker’s first name?

FELIX
It’s Herbert - but don’t call him anything except “Vogelsang”. We went to see The Maltese Falcon at the Castro and he was with this girl, and afterwards she started calling him “Vogie”, like “Bogie” - and he sent her home in a cab. She was--

Vogelsang bursts through the door. He’s wearing an apron.

Gesh remains seated.

VOGELSANG
Welcome! You must be Gesh. Phil, Felix - What can I get you to drink?

FELIX/PHIL
Whatever you’ve got is fine./Yeah.

GESH
Beer.

VOGELSANG
Beer. Of course. Okay, friends, make yourselves at home. I’m about to drop the pasta in the water, and then we’ll have a feast.

FELIX/PHIL
Great, thanks.

Vogelsang leaves. Gesh plunks his boots up on the coffee table.

Felix walks over to a painting. Aorta comes back in.

AORTA
What’s the verdict?

(CONTINUED)
FELIX
It’s a masterpiece.

AORTA
It’s mine. I begged him for a month to get it for me for my birthday. And when I go, it goes with me.

Felix isn’t sure if she’s joking.

AORTA (CONT’D)
C’mon. I’ll show you around.

CUT TO:

INT. VOGELSANG’S LIBRARY – DAY

Aorta takes him into the library.

AORTA
Lots of art books. Books on chemistry. Not a lot of fiction.

FELIX
I like fiction. Reality’s unpleasant.

AORTA
I like ‘em mixed. I’m not even sure there’s a difference.

But sometimes I’d rather just play music.

FELIX
Oh yeah? You play an instrument?

AORTA
Yeah, and I sing, in my band.

FELIX
Oh yeah? Whadyou play?

AORTA
Romanian pan flute.

FELIX
Really?

AORTA
No. I play bass. Wanna see something cool?

(CONTINUED)
She slides an old wooden library ladder over.

AORTA (CONT’D)
Hold the ladder.

She languidly ascends the ladder so that he can see up her skirt. She picks up a child’s skull with exposed dentin and shows it to Felix.

AORTA (CONT’D)
It’s a child. That’s why it looks like it has two sets of teeth.

FELIX
Like an Alien. From that movie.

AORTA
You don’t think about all those mature teeth lurking under a kid’s face, but they are there.

She places one foot on the highest rung. Felix tries to focus on the skull.

AORTA (CONT’D)
I guess we’re all just freaks when you scratch the surface.

FELIX
Yeah.
(clears his throat)
I guess so.

AORTA
See anything else you like?

FELIX
Uh, yeah ...

Before things can heat up, Vogelsang barges in.

VOGELSANG
Ah, there you are. Exploring the anatomy.

FELIX
Vogelsang! She was just showing me the skull -
(unfazed)
Of course, the guided tour. Lunch is served.

CUT TO:

INT. VOGELSANG’S DINING ROOM – DAY

Aorta pours Amarone. Everyone is engaged and animated, except for Gesh who looks sullen.

VOGELSANG
I’ve made *gnocchi* from scratch with *three cheeses from neighboring farms.*

They dig in.

FELIX/PHIL
This is great.

GESH
I can really taste all the cheeses.

Vogelsang sits in front of a bowl of brown rice.

GESH (CONT’D)
Why aren’t you eating?

VOGELSANG
Oh, God. This is much too rich for me.

AORTA
He’s a bit of a health nut. He eats things like fish flakes.

VOGELSANG
But I love to cook. I know the chef at Vanessa’s, and have been, on occasion, invited into his kitchen where he’s shared some of the finer nuances of the craft.

GESH
I’ve spent a lot of time in kitchens, and I don’t know how you can cook it if you don’t eat it, Vogie.

(CONTINUED)
VOGELSANG
Maybe after lunch, you can show off your expertise. We’ll have plenty of dirty dishes.

GESH
I’ll pass.

Phil tries to salvage the mood.

PHIL
Well, whatever you eat, you’ve mastered this meal.

VOGELSANG
So, down to brass tacks. I’m sure you have some questions.

FELIX
Why don’t you fill us in on the house? You know, what we can expect up there.

GESH
Yeah, we’re gonna be living out there in the asshole of nowhere for the next nine months while you’re chewing the fat down at Vanessi’s. I wanna know what kinda shape the place is in, does it have running water and electricity and all?

Vogelsang retrieves a framed old photo off the mantle. A pastoral scene of a welcoming-looking cottage.

VOGELSANG
It was used as a hunting lodge back in the 20’s. It has all the essentials. A generator for electricity. Water from a big redwood holding tank. With a little work, it could be quite cozy.

PHIL
Nice. Looks idyllic.

FELIX
If the cops come, what do we tell them?

PHIL
I’m sure Vogelsang has us covered.
VOGELSANG
You'll be fine. No one will even
know you're there. I bought the *
land as an investment, I don’t know *
anything that’s going on up there. *
Under the table of course, I pay *
all legal fees. *

Felix looks concerned. *

VOGELSANG (CONT’D) *
I have a very connected attorney. A *
fine, maybe probation at worse. *

DISSOLVE TO:
EXT. VOGELSANG’S DRIVEWAY – AFTERNOON

Tools and rolled wire fencing, etc. in the driveway. The guys get in the car. Gesh downs two Quaaludes with the remains of a mug of beer as he climbs in the back seat. He hands his empty mug to Vogelsang.

GESH
Keep this chilled for me, Chief.

VOGELSANG
Good luck. Boyd’ll be up with the rest of this stuff in a few days. I’ll come up soon and check in on you. Here’s something for the drive.

He hands Phil a bag of good, green pot. He sniffs it.

PHIL
Sens. Nice. Thanks!

GESH
Work will set us free!

PHIL
Adios, Vogelsang!

FELIX
Hey, where’s Aorta?

VOGELSANG
You need to talk to her?

FELIX
What? No. I was just... uh...

(CONTINUED)
Felix starts the car. As he does so, he catches sight of Aorta leaning out an upstairs window. He looks up at her as she blows him a kiss goodbye.

FELIX (CONT’D)
(invigorated)
Alright, let’s hit the road.

They drive out of frame.

BEGIN DRIVING MONTAGE WITH UPBEAT MUSIC. The greatest, wildest, craziest version of “You Are My Sunshine”.

30  EXT. PALACE OF FINE ARTS - AFTERNOON
Wide shot of car with mattress driving past.

31  EXT. CITY OF SAN FRANCISCO - AFTERNOON
Wide shot glides North toward city skyline.

32  EXT. GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE - AFTERNOON
Panning wide shot: their car drives across the bridge.

33  EXT. FELIX’S CAR / NORTH OF GG BRIDGE - AFTERNOON
They drive along winding roads, beautiful forests. Sunny skies.

CUT TO:

34  INT. FELIX’S CAR / FOREST - AFTERNOON
They’re all in exceptionally good spirits. Gesh passes a joint to Phil. It’s good stuff and they’re feeling it.

GESH
Whaddayou gonna do with your share?

PHIL
Check it out -- I’m gonna get my own warehouse like Warhol, finance a whole subversive art movement. You know, wallpaper it in tinfoil.
(MORE)
PHIL (CONT'D)
We could have bands, and just, make shit. Like the Factory, but more explosions.

FELIX
You just wanna fuck Edie Sedgwick.

PHIL
Well, yeah. The alive version. What’re you gonna do?

FELIX
My dad’s been pestering me to pay him back for school. He says it was a bad investment.

PHIL
What?

FELIX
Yeah, so get that off my back, and then, I dunno, maybe I’ll invest in something. What’s the next big thing?

PHIL
Computers?

GESH
Cabbage Patch Dolls.

FELIX
Yes! Cabbage Patch Dolls. Or those dolls with the faces, the trolls. Ten years from now, those things’ll be worth a fortune. And then, finally have time to write my book.

PHIL
That nine to five job was really holding you back. How bout you, Gesh?

GESH
I’m getting my car fixed, that’s numero uno. Then, lots of good liquor and bad drugs. And a big fuckin’ upgrade in pussy.

They all laugh.

CUT TO:
As the guys joyously, obliviously, drive along the highway, a gust of wind rips the mattress off the roof. They continue, unaware as it tumbles onto the road. We stick with it as our heroes venture onward, to find their fortune at the summer camp, until there’s nothing but the road, an abused, abandoned mattress, and the majestic sunset of the glorious West.

A SHERIFF’S CAR drives down the highway and slows down as it approaches the fallen mattress in the middle of the road. As he passes it, he turns on his RED LIGHTS and SIREN and speeds off.

As they continuing driving, Phil studies a map.

FELIX
Where the hell are we?

PHIL
I’m trying to figure it out.

GESH
We’re in the middle of fuckin’ nowhere, that’s where.

Felix notices, in the rearview mirror, the Sheriff's car rapidly approaching them from behind.

FELIX
Ah, shit! A cop!

PHIL
Eat the pot!

Gesh & Phil start eating fingerfulls of pot.

GESH
Give me that!

Gesh stuffs a giant handful of pot in his mouth and then eats the rest, including the plastic baggie.

(CONTINUED)
FELIX

Oh, great.

The Sheriff car is now right behind them. The red lights flashing on our three heroes.

END OF EPISODE