

DAMNED SHOES

By

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INT. THRIFT SHOP. UPSTATE NEW YORK 1969 --DAY

FADE IN:

A plain young woman in her early 20's with dark hair and a patch over her left eye browses through a rack of shoes at a small run down thrift store.

Her sluggish movements tell us that she is unmotivated and bored.

We see a large portrait of Jesus on the wall.

Near her, a masculine female CLERK with a tank top t-shirt checks out a customer.

The GIRL finds a pair of old brown loafers amongst a multitude of used shoes on a rack. She examines them and sets them back on the rack. She begins to move down isle.

We see an older red-haired woman standing near her watch her intensely. She blesses herself before slipping a piece of paper from her purse into one of the loafers.

The red head moves out of the way as the young GIRL goes back and picks up the loafers.

With shoes in hand, the young GIRL moves over to the check out counter.

CLERK

Those are a dollar.

The CLERK takes the shoes and examines them.

The plain GIRL reaches into her brown purse and pulls out a dollar, giving it to the clerk.

The CLERK rings it up.

CLERK (cont'd)

You want a box?

GIRL

Yes please.

The woman bends over and picks up a small box.

CLERK

You still working at the library?

(CONTINUED)

GIRL

Yeah. I hate it though. I'm thinking about getting another job. It's so boring. I have a slow metabolism though...and my lazy eye...

CLERK

You'll find something.

GIRL

Thanks.

The CLERK smiles and hands her the box of shoes.

The GIRL turns and slowly makes her way out of the building.

The red-haired woman purposefully makes her way out the door behind her.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING --DAY

The young GIRL hastily rubs her feet on the door mat to her apartment, turns the door knob and lets herself inside.

At the bottom of the stairs, we see the red haired woman spying on her from behind a door.

Inside the apartment, we hear a vacuum cleaner and see her short dark-haired MOTHER eagerly vacuuming the living room of the small apartment. She notices her daughter and smiles.

The MOTHER is wearing black framed coke bottle glasses. She turns off the vacuum.

MOTHER

Pam did you wipe your feet?

PAM

Yes mother.

The MOTHER looks sternly at her daughter.

MOTHER

Now don't be a smart ass!

(CONTINUED)

PAM

I did!

MOTHER

Did you do anything productive today?

PAM

Define productive.

The older woman lets out a heavy sigh.

MOTHER

You should go into your room and do something. I've got cleaning to do. This place is a mess. You'll be right in the way out here as usual.

PAM slowly walks past her mother to a door on the corner of the living room. She slowly opens it and enters, closing the door behind her.

PAM moves over to her double bed and throws herself down onto it.

We see on the wall behind her a poster of the group "The Turtles".

She sighs deeply and stares down at the floor for a moment. The camera zooms in on her expressionless face.

PAM pulls herself onto the edge of the bed, takes the box beside her and pulls off the lid.

Inside we see the pair of well worn brown loafers. PAM pulls the shoes out and proudly holds them in her hands.

She gently sets them on the floor before her, slips off her shoes, and slides her right foot half way into one of the shoes. She pulls her foot back out.

PAM reaches down and picks up the shoe. She slides her hand inside and extracts a small piece of folded white paper. She drops the shoe and unfolds it.

We can see that it is written on business letterhead as she opens it. Across the top we see the words: PILNER'S AUTO SALES.

The rest of the note is neatly typed.

It reads:

(CONTINUED)

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN. MY NAME IS MARGARET PILNER AND THESE LOAFERS BELONGED TO MY HUSBAND JACK. JACK RAN PILNER'S AUTO SALES IN BRENTON FOR 15 YEARS. THIS IS GOING TO SOUND INSANE BUT I KNOW FOR A FACT THAT THESE SHOES ARE EVIL. PURE EVIL. MY HUSBAND DABBLED HEAVILY IN SORCERY AND THE BLACK ARTS BEFORE WE MARRIED. THESE SHOES HAVE THE POWER TO BRING YOU YOUR INNERMOST DESIRE. MY HUSBAND HAD SEVERE TENDINITIS WHEN WE MARRIED AND AFTER A WITCH WOMAN GAVE HIM THESE LOAFERS HE WAS MIRACULOUSLY CURED. MY HUSBAND OUTSOLD SEVERAL OTHER MEN WHEN HE WAS A CAR SALESMAN AS WELL BECAUSE HE WAS WEARING THESE SHOES AND BECAUSE BEING THE BEST SALESMAN WAS HIS INNERMOST DESIRE.

I'M A GOD FEARING CHRISTIAN WOMAN. I DIVORCED MY HUSBAND SHORTLY AFTER I FOUND OUT THAT HE WAS INTO BLACK MAGIC. THESE SHOES SCARE THE LIVING HELL OUT OF ME. TOO MUCH TO THROW THEM AWAY. MY ADVICE TO YOU IS THIS:

PLEASE FOR YOUR OWN GOOD AND EVERYONE ELSE'S- GET RID OF THESE DAMNED SHOES!!

MARGARET PILNER

PAM chuckles to herself, crumbles up the letter and tosses it into a small trash can on the side of her room.

She puts the loafers side by side on the floor, and slides her feet easily into them. A perfect fit.

The awkward girl stands to her feet and admires her new footwear.

FADE TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

PAM and her MOTHER are in the living room. The lights are low and the television is blaring an episode of "The Lucy Show".

PAM'S MOTHER sits close to the screen with her eyes locked to it.

PAM stands in the doorway to the kitchen staring down at her new loafers with glee. Slowly she brings up her left knee and kicks out her foot. She puts it down then repeats with her other leg.

She then begins effortlessly moving about the living room.

Her MOTHER'S attention is still directed at the television.

(CONTINUED)

PAM kicks up her knee and throws out her foot again, in typical Rockette fashion.

Her MOTHER notices her.

MOTHER
Are you alright?

PAM continues to prance her way around the room.

PAM'S MOTHER stares at her in curious disbelief. Her mouth hangs open.

MOTHER
Are you having your metabolism
checked tomorrow?

No answer.

MOTHER
You should have him look at your
brain while you're there too.

Her MOTHER'S attention goes back to the television.

PAM continues to prance.

CUT TO:

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE -- DAY

PAM is standing at her doctor's office reception area. Twin secretaries are seated before her.

The musical sounds of "Spirit In The Sky" comes over the speakers above them.

PAM
Hi. I'm Pam Prine. I have a two
o'clock appointment to see Dr.
Jackson.

SECRETARY
O.K. Pam is that about your lazy
eye?

PAM
No. It's about my metabolism.

SECRETARY
O.K. then why don't you have a seat
and we'll be right with you.

(CONTINUED)

PAM

Thanks.

PAM goes and sits at one of several chairs on the opposite side of the room. Next to her, a man and woman both in their late thirties sit reading magazines.

The sound of Norman Greenbaum's song is drifting through the waiting area.

PAM crosses her legs and grabs a Good Housekeeping magazine off the table next to her. Soon afterward, her foot starts to move to the music, followed by her leg.

Suddenly PAM climbs out of the chair and begins to dance.

The two other patients sitting with her watch in surprise as she moves to the beat of "Spirit In The Sky".

One of the SECRETARIES motions for the other, and they too stand, awestruck as PAM'S evil shoes cause her to kick and move like never before.

A moment of gyrations follow before the song finally ends.

PAM stands stunned and surprised at her new found abilities.

Her two fellow patients stand to their feet and applaud.

The SECRETARIES follow suit.

PAM takes a bow.

FADE TO:

INT. APARTMENT--DAY

The mysterious red-haired woman is in PAM'S apartment. She carefully moves through the living room.

We see her peer under the sofa. Then under a chair.

She creeps her way over to PAM'S bedroom door. She opens it and sticks her head inside.

Suddenly the front door lock rattles.

PAM'S MOTHER suddenly appears with a bag of groceries.

The red-haired stranger quickly darts inside of PAM'S bedroom. She closes the door firmly but quietly behind her.

PAM'S MOTHER puts the bag onto the dining room table and throws herself into the chair next to it, exhausted.

INT. LIBRARY --DAY

PAM is standing behind the counter of the local library with an open book. With date stamper in her right hand, she stamps the book and closes it hard. She grabs another book and repeats the process.

The book falls on the floor. She bends down and picks it up.

A heavy-set male LIBRARIAN with dark hair in his mid thirties stands near her dealing with a patron. He gives her a concerned gaze.

PAM notices him as she stands upright. She then notices a poster on a nearby wall.

She opens the half door and walks out from behind the counter to observe it more closely.

We see her evil brown loafers move across the library floor.

The sign reads:

TOWN DANCE. COLNER HIGH SCHOOL. FRIDAY NIGHT OCTOBER 3.
DANCE CONTEST. ALL WELCOME.

Standing at the poster, PAM feels her legs starting to move. She begins to raise her knee up and begin her dance.

A few library patrons watch in silence as she moves.

Suddenly her male co-worker comes over. He too watches her seemingly possessed body. His expression conveys anger and disbelief at what she's doing.

Suddenly the dancing stops.

Everyone looks at each other quizzically.

The male LIBRARIAN speaks.

LIBRARIAN
What the hell was that?

PAM stands silent, unsure of how to respond but pleasantly surprised.

(CONTINUED)

PAM

I don't know, I've got all this energy suddenly. (Pause) It's incredible Ed. I've never felt like this. I know it sounds crazy but I think it's my shoes...They're making me dance!

LIBRARIAN

(cynically) Oh, great. You're shoes are making you dance...

PAM

I think they're evil.

PAM stares down at the aged loafers. She clicks her heels together.

PAM (cont'd)

It's these shoes. I'm sure of it.

The LIBRARIAN looks impatient and disgusted.

LIBRARIAN

(Regretfully) I'm sorry PAM but we're going to have to let you go. The library is no place for dancing. Your dropping things again...you're distracted...

The patrons offer little support as they disperse and go their separate ways.

LIBRARIAN (cont'd)

This ain't no disco.

The LIBRARIAN turns and walks away.

PAM looks down at her new shoes and smiles knowingly.

She centers her eye patch, turns and runs happily out the library.

FADE TO:

EXT. LOCAL PARK --NIGHT

PAM is running in the towns small park. It's raining.

In a scene reminiscent of "Singing In The Rain", PAM dances from lamp post to lamp post and kicks the rain in the puddles before her.

(CONTINUED)

FADE TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM --NIGHT

PAM sits barefoot, curled up on the sofa in the dimly lit living room of her home. We see that she is alone and reading a book called "Good Cheese, Bad Cheese".

She yawns, stretches, and puts the book down on the stand next to her. She briefly fiddles with her eye patch before extending her body on the sofa and closing her eyes.

Seconds later the red-haired woman appears through a crack in the bedroom door. Her hair is messed and she looks tired. She waits to see if the coast is clear.

She very slowly opens the door.

WOMAN
(Whispering to herself) Jesus,
Mary and Joseph!

She then begins to creep across the room. She happily spots the loafers on the floor in front of her and gently picks them up.

PAM is sound asleep.

The WOMAN slowly opens the door and exits.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM --DAY

PAM'S MOTHER runs her vacuum cleaner quickly across the living room floor.

The noise wakes up PAM who had been fast asleep on the sofa.

PAM
(groggy but loud) Why are you
vacuuming again?

MOTHER
(shouting) Because you got mud
all over the floor when you
came in last night.

PAM reluctantly pulls herself upright on the sofa. She looks down at the floor.

Her shoes are gone.

(CONTINUED)

PAM
(shouting)Where are my shoes?!

MOTHER
(shouting)What?!

PAM
(shouting louder)Where are my shoes?!

MOTHER
(shouting)I don't know where they are. They're wherever you left them I suppose.

PAM
(Angrily) What?

Her MOTHER shuts off the vacuum cleaner.

MOTHER
I don't know!

PAM starts to get up.

PAM
I just bought those. Where did you put them?

Still tired, PAM leans back on the sofa and glares at her MOTHER.

MOTHER
Why aren't you at work?

PAM
They fired me.

MOTHER
What?

PAM
They fired me. I was dancing.

MOTHER
Dancing?(Pause) Now how stupid is that? Dancing in the library...

PAM
Those shoes made me...help me look for them!

PAM'S MOTHER looks at her watch.

MOTHER

Oh, I've got to pick up Carol. We're going shopping together this morning. You're a very strange girl PAM. I'm worried about how stupid you are. You've lost your shoes.

The MOTHER drops the vacuum cleaner hose and runs to the kitchen. She grabs her car keys off the table and urgently opens the door.

MOTHER (cont'd)

I'll be back later honey. Do me a favor will you?

PAM

What.

MOTHER

Finish vacuuming the floor. And Pamela...?

PAM

Yes.

MOTHER

Get a job.

PAM'S MOTHER quickly leaves, closing the door behind her.

PAM gets up and begins uprooting everything trying to find the shoes. We watch this for a moment.

She then picks up the book that was next to her on the stand and throws it against the wall in frustration.

FADE OUT:

"Spirit In The Sky" plays over the closing credits.

THE END