

"PANDORA"

an original screenplay by

J. Ronald Gildart

J. Ronald Gildart  
7129 Dumfries Street  
Vancouver BC V6P 3C3

604-873-5231  
SKYPE: jrgildart  
ron.gildart@gmail.com

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INT. SAM'S OFFICE - NIGHT

SAM DUNN, mid-thirties, an aspiring scriptwriter, is staring at his computer screen, with a despondent look on his face. His messy office, with dozens of paper balls on the floor and on the divan, compliments his disheveled hair and the five-day growth on his face.

Pissed, he hurls a cordless mouse across the room, splattering it against the wall.

Walking over, he picks up the pieces, then lets them drop aimlessly to the floor.

He paces back and forth like a caged tiger, when suddenly the light in his head flicks on. Despite sheer exhaustion, he sits down and begins to bang away at the keyboard.

Suddenly the office is outshined by a BRIGHT LIGHT, and we're transported to the very kitchen where the scene takes place.

INT. KITCHEN - EVENING - EARLY 1960'S

BOBBY, twenty-eight, wearing an apron, is doing the dishes while his new bride PAM, thirty, is sitting at the kitchen table working on a crossword puzzle.

PAM  
(to herself)  
Thirty six across, microscopic, six...

BOBBY  
Tiny?

PAM  
(in prissy fashion)  
No silly, I was just about to say,  
six letters. Oh, and it starts with  
the letter 'A'.

BOBBY  
I would guess 'atomic'...

PAM  
Look at that, it fits...

She tip-toes behind him, unties the apron, and massages his shoulders.

PAM (CONT'D)  
You are so smart mister, and smart  
men really turn me on...

Bobby turns and looks passionately into her eyes.

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BOBBY  
(imitating John Wayne)  
Why don't you mosey on upstairs while  
I round up these here dishes, and  
I'll be along pronto.

Ignoring him she unbuttons his shirt...

PAM  
Why go upstairs, when you can have  
me right here on the kitchen counter.

BOBBY  
(visibly nervous)  
You mean right here?

PAM  
(sassy and bold)  
This is the kitchen counter, no?

BOBBY  
Well yes, but...

PAM  
Are you going to heave me up cowboy  
or do I need to get on the horse by  
myself?

His heart beats a mile-a-minute as her raises her level to  
the countertop.

SLOW MOTION:

Her legs clinched to his waist, as though she were riding a  
mechanical bull, she sways her head side-to-side, causing  
her hair to brush gently against his face. Then tilting her  
head back some, her breasts bulge outward, staring Bobby  
straight in the eyes.

END SLOW MOTION:

Aroused, Bobby swallows nervously at the sight of her.

As he lowers her on the counter, she rubs her nose against  
his, then moves her mouth closer to his ear, and whispers  
softly...

PAM (CONT'D)  
Remember our marriage vows cowboy;  
*'As long as we both shall live?'*

As she utters these final words, she stabs him repeatedly in  
the back with a butcher knife.

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DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SAM'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Tapping a pen on his keyboard, Sam goes over what he's written so far.

SAM

Shit this is great! Hitchcock would be proud of me right now... O.k. scene two.

(beat)

Exterior, let's see, what should I call him... Phil? No, Kenneth! Here we go Ken old buddy...

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

EXT. MANSION - NIGHT - 1986

Large mansion, home to KENNETH and SUZIE DRAPER. Rolls Royce parked in a circular driveway. A slight DRIZZLE.

CUT TO:

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

KENNETH, forty-five, snaps out of a bad dream, and sits upright in his bed, beads of NERVOUS SWEAT evident on his forehead.

His wife SUZIE, thirteen years his junior, rolls over quietly.

WIDE ON: Kenneth pacing the floor, chewing away on a thumbnail.

SUZIE

The recurring dream again?

Kenneth continues to pace back and forth, cupping his head into his hands.

KENNETH

This has got to stop or I'll go mad!

Half asleep, Suzie mumbles away.

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SUZIE

You mean we'll both go mad...

(beat)

What's so nightmarish about a girl who wants to fuck her husband on the kitchen counter? I should be so lucky...

(beat)

Stabbing the poor son of a bitch in the back, that's nightmarish I suppose. But shit happens, right? Now come to bed darling...

CLOSE ON

Kenneth, baseball bat in-hand, is ready to take batting practice with her head. On the first swing he splatters her brain all over the headboard.

CUT TO:

INT. SAM'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Sam, sitting back in his chair, stares at the ceiling.

SAM

I can't believe I'm writing this!

He stands up, rubs his hands together, and looks closely into the monitor..

SAM (CONT'D)

Oh, this is sooo good.  
(mimicking Gollum  
from 'Lord of The  
Rings')

Where do we go from here my precious!  
(back to his own voice)  
Let's try this...

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

INT. DINNING ROOM - EVENING

Three generations of the Garland family are gathered around a large table about to enjoy a splendid "Thanksgiving" dinner. Lots of laughter, and glass raising. A young boy, NORTON, nine years old, and his younger cousin CAROLINE, seven, poke each other in friendly banter.

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CAMERA PANS along the table revealing bottles of wine, a large turkey, stuffing, cranberry sauce, candied carrots, asparagus tips, artichokes with butter, peas, baked yams, and freshly baked rolls.

GRANDPA stands and raises his glass.

GRANDPA

Let's give thanks to our Lord and Savior... Dear God, we thank you for seeing us through, once again, to this Thanksgiving day, and for bestowing this gluttonous repast upon our detestable selves. We thank you for having abstained from striking us down with any of your hundreds of indescribably agonizing diseases or through some seemingly senseless accident, like being trampled under the massive hooves of an enraged bull. We thank you for being the version of yourself that is worshipped at our local church, and not some other similar version of yourself, that is revered as worthwhile by heathen hordes in far-off lands. We thank you for smiling upon our family so that the just sunlight of truth reflects off your enormous teeth and warms and comforts us in our times of trial. We thank you for escorting us to the wonderful world of America and granting us the will and the resilience to commit genocide on its native peoples whose love of casinos and malt liquor tarnishes your greatness. And finally, we thank you for granting our family enormous wealth and power, and the genetic fortitude to endure prolonged and gratuitous exposure to unwashed persons so distressingly lesser than ourselves.

(raising his glass  
higher)

God Bless.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DINNING ROOM - LATER

Halfway through the meal, grandpa begins to choke and presses both hands against his chest. His son FRANK, forty-five, rushes to his side.

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FRANK  
(turning to his wife)  
I think he's having a heart attack!  
Call 911!  
(beat)  
C'mon Dad, stay with me! Keep looking  
in my eyes.

Frank's WIFE, forty-one, dashes out of the room. Grandpa motions to his son, who lowers his ear close to his father's mouth.

The suspense mounts, you could hear a pin drop.

FRANK  
(feeling relief)  
Whoa! Hold the phone sweetheart...  
He's not having a heart attack, the  
old geezer went and swallowed the  
wishbone!

The room erupts in side-splitting laughter. Frank drags his father off the chair and lays him flat on his back.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
Kids, get over here and pull on  
grandpa's legs.  
(beat)  
Norton, you pull this way, towards  
the wall, and Caroline you yank the  
other leg in that direction... Now  
make a wish!

CUT TO:

INT. SAM'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Sam's shaking his head in disbelief.

SAM  
Now this is hilarious!

He paces back and forth, rubbing his eyes.

SAM (CONT'D)  
God I'm exhausted...

Too tired to continue, he lies on the divan and is fast asleep.

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FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

INT. MOVIE HOUSE - NIGHT - 2009

An empty seat separates JIM & SALLY, an overly obese and nerdy couple in their mid-teens. Both are squeezed into front row seats at the local movie house. Jim's balancing a tub of popcorn on his lap, while gulping on a super-sized soft drink resting on his belly.

Sally, a tub of popcorn crammed between her legs, is munching comfortably on chocolate-covered raisins which she pours into her mouth straight out of the bag. Two more tubs of popcorn, an assortment of chocolate bars and several unopened candy bags occupy the seat between them.

Sally, her mouth half-full...

SALLY  
(southern drawl)  
This movie sucks!  
(wipes her chin)  
The whole plot's making me dizzy.  
You have any idea what's going on  
honey-pie?

Jim ignores her.

SALLY (CONT'D)  
I mean, this wacky chick stabs her  
husband to death, then this guy whacks  
his wife with a baseball bat...  
(beat)  
Now here's grandpa being used as a  
wishbone while he's chocking to death.  
Who's dreamin' who or what here?

Jim hands her the junk-food on the seat between them, and she stacks everything neatly on the folded seat to her right.

Meanwhile, he sits next to her, slowly stretching his arm along the back of her seat until his hand comes to rest on her shoulder.

She turns her head, the contours of her mouth covered with melted chocolate, and shoots him a grin.

JIM  
(southern drawl)  
Wanna feed me some of those little  
chocolate units there sweet-thing?

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SALLY

Sure honey-bunch, there's a fresh bag here somewhere, if I can just find 'em... It's so dark in here.  
(feeling her way around)  
Here they are. The bag fell in the crack of the seat...

She rips the bag open with her teeth.

SALLY (CONT'D)

Here, cup your hands, I'll pour some.

JIM

That's awright cupcake, just toss the bag.

She hands him the bag while he licks some of the chocolate off the side of her mouth.

SALLY

I think all the confusion's upset my stomach.

JIM

Don't worry about it, maybe you're dreamin' all this up yourself...

SALLY

OH MY WORD! What you just said is as creepy as creepy gets!

JIM

C'mon I was just fuckin' with ya.  
(beat)  
Here, let me feed ya some of these here bonbons and make it all better...

SALLY

I don't know if I should trust you after what you just said.

JIM

C'mon open wide.

SALLY

Awright, but be careful you don't spill any...

With her mouth wide open and her eyes shut, Jim crams the entire bag down her throat, chocking her to death.

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DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SAM'S OFFICE - MORNING

Half asleep, Sam stretches a bit then sits on the edge of the divan.

From his POV we see the COMPUTER MOUSE, intact, on his desk.

Somewhat confused, he looks toward the wall then walks over to his desk, picks up the mouse, looks towards the wall again, then flicks the monitor on.

From his POV we see a TITLE PAGE with the words:

'PANDORA - AN ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY BY SAM DUNN.'

He tabs out of the title page to find the next page blank.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

CLOSE ON:

THREE PAIRS OF FEET under the kitchen table.

VOICE #1(O.S.)

(male)

The damn news is getting worse by the minute. War, weapons of mass destruction, social unrest, drugs, the economy. As far as I'm concerned there's too much damn anger on this fucking planet!

(beat)

And speaking of bad news, we've run out of money.

VOICE #2 (O.S.)

(female)

C'mon tiger, we've been there before, and we've always come up smelling roses...

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VOICE #1 (O.S.)

Well the rosy days are over. The market collapse took everything we had.

(beat)

Shit, that was like being robbed by a member of your own family; speaking of which, if we could only get this lazy son of a bitch of a son of ours to go out and get a job, it'd take the edge off.

A leg, we can only presume belongs to his son, starts to bounce nervously up and down.

VOICE #1 (CONT'D)

I don't know that my heart can take much more of this...

(to his son)

Tell me, what the fuck do you do locked up in your room all day long, beat-off to porn on the 'net'?

VOICE #2 (O.S.)

That is sick! How can you say such a thing?

(getting up)

Hand over your plate son, I'll get you seconds...

CAMERA RISES to table level, revealing VOICE #1, with his face veiled by the morning paper. The HEADLINE on the FRONT PAGE reads: PEACE PACT POSSIBLE - OR JUST PIPE-DREAM?

Suddenly, he lowers the paper to give his son the evil eye, and we realize that it's KENNETH DRAPER. He shakes his head in disgust.

KENNETH

(to son)

You need to get out more, maybe find a decent job, meet someone, and if you're lucky you might even get laid.

(beat)

Forget about getting laid... The only place you have the slightest hope of getting any is at the zoo.

ANGLE ON SON

On close inspection we recognize the son to be non-other than JIM, patiently waiting for his food.

JIM

Mom, can you toss me a pop-tart?

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WIDE ANGLE ON JIM AND VOICE #2

We now recognize Jim's mother to be PAM, as sexy and cunning as ever.

PAM

Here you go Jimmy...

While Jim shifts his weight to one side to grab the pop-tart, we hear a loud PWANG! as Pam hits him square in the face with a cast iron skillet.

FADE TO BLACK: