

**The Middle**

**"Aunt Irene"**

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. CHURCH. GRAVEYARD - DAY

A funeral is taking place. SEVERAL MOURNERS are clumped together, giving evils to the HECK FAMILY across from them. They all look rather uncomfortable at the glares they're getting.

FRANKIE

(to Mike)

Stop giving me that look, Mike.

(then)

Okay, okay. I messed up.

The PRIEST comes across saying his condolences to everyone until he comes to the Hecks, and just gives them a look of utter disdain before walking away.

FRANKIE (V.O)

It's crazy what the potential of a life changing amount of money can do to someone, isn't it? You know, normal, rational people can suddenly fly off the rails and do some insane things all in the name of money. I'm ashamed to say that I am one of those people.

A rather large casket is wheeled out of the church, and is about to be put into the ground when, suddenly, FRANKIE makes a bolt for it and dives on top of the casket screaming and crying.

FRANKIE

Why Aunt Irene why?! Why did you do this to us?! We deserved that money! We were family! Sue was your penpal!

FRANKIE (V.O)

Yep, there's another one of those crazy things I did in the name of money. That's me riding on top of Aunt Irene's casket.

MIKE, AXL, SUE and BRICK, are extremely embarrassed as they drag Frankie off of the casket and away from the stunned mourners.

FRANKIE (V.O) (CONT'D)

I know what you're thinking. Who the hell is Aunt Irene? Well, I'll get to that bit soon, but in all honesty, I'm still not entirely sure who she is... Or rather, was. But we got the news of her death around a week ago...

INT. HECK HOUSE. FRONT ROOM/KITCHEN - EVENING

Frankie is sat on the sofa, reading some magazine.

FRANKIE (V.O)

Grief, it's a strange thing, isn't it? We all cope with it in different ways. Some can't stop crying, others remember all the great memories, and a few even use laughter as a way to shield themselves. Then there's Mike...

Mike enters through the front door.

MIKE

(matter of fact)

Turns out my aunt Irene has died.

Frankie jumps off the sofa, all shook up.

FRANKIE

What?! Oh my God!

(then)

Wait, who's aunt Irene?

Mike simply shrugs his shoulders.

MIKE

Rusty told me. Apparently, she's a long distance relative who's lived out in the sticks her whole life.

FRANKIE

Aww, I've always wanted to live out in the countryside.

(off Mike's look)

Sorry, go on.

MIKE

Anyway, she died falling out of a boat or something.

FRANKIE

A boat?! See, that's why it pays to be poor sometimes. We could never afford a boat to fall out of.

MIKE

Well, she certainly could. According to Rusty, she was extremely wealthy.

FRANKIE

How wealthy?

MIKE

Well, she could afford her own boat, for one.

FRANKIE

My God, Mike, she's rich! Or was rich, anyway. Oh, you read about this sort of thing in the papers all the time.

MIKE

What sort of thing?

FRANKIE

I was just reading about it actually.

(reads from magazine)

Long lost relative leaves millions of dollars to poor forgotten family.

(then)

You see Mike, that could be us.

MIKE

(sarcastic)

Yeah, I'm sure. Because we're that lucky.

Mike grabs a beer. Frankie follows him.

FRANKIE

So, how old was she anyway?

MIKE

No one knows for sure, but dad thinks she was about 97.

FRANKIE

97? How did she manage to live that long? Clearly she didn't have any children.

(then)

So, when's the funeral?

MIKE

What funeral?

FRANKIE

She's died, Mike. There's gonna be a funeral. Unless she's still at sea. Oh God, that would be awful.

MIKE

No, they found her. Wet and wrinkly, but they found her. We ain't going to the funeral.

FRANKIE

When is it? Come on, I'll just ask Rusty.

MIKE

It's on Friday. We ain't going,  
Frankie.

FRANKIE

What? How can you say that, Mike?  
Your aunt Irene has died.

MIKE

I didn't even know I had an aunt  
Irene until about lunchtime today.

FRANKIE

Still, she's family. It's only  
right we all go to her funeral and  
pay our respects.

MIKE

Frankie, the last thing I wanna do  
is go there. Social gatherings make  
me uncomfortable.

FRANKIE

Everything makes you uncomfortable.  
We're going, and that's the end of  
it.

Axl enters having overheard, grabs a snack.

AXL

Going where?

FRANKIE

Your dad's aunt Irene has passed  
away. We're going to her funeral on  
Friday.

AXL

(to Mike)

Who the hell is aunt Irene?

Mike shrugs his shoulders.

FRANKIE

She's a long lost relative... And  
rich by the sounds of it. 97.  
Boating accident. It don't matter,  
we're going.

AXL

Did it occur to you that I might be  
busy Friday?

FRANKIE

Whatever it is, you can drop it. A  
family member has died, Axl.

AXL

I'm meant to be taking Lexi out on a date Friday. Some sort of anniversary thing. I've forgotten what it is now.

FRANKIE

Well, you'll just have to cancel. I'm sure she'll understand.

MIKE

Frankie, don't you think you're taking this a bit far?

FRANKIE

Mike, we have to pay our respects.

MIKE

What for? We didn't even know she existed, same for her with us.

AXL

I'm with dad on this one.

FRANKIE

Well, that's all the more reason to go so we can hear her loved ones speak fondly about her.

(then)

Where's the funeral anyway?

MIKE

Out in the sticks somewhere.

FRANKIE

Oh my God, this is perfect! We get to have a road trip too.

Sue enters, all excited.

SUE

Did someone say road trip?!

AXL

No, no, no, no, no, no way! I ain't going on no road trip with you guys.

FRANKIE

We can make a weekend of it, it will be great.

AXL

That's what you always say, but name just one trip we've had that didn't end in complete disaster?

FRANKIE (V.O)

He had a point, but I weren't about to give up just yet.

FRANKIE

Axl, it will be different this time. Aunt Irene has died so--

SUE

Aunt Irene has died?

She bursts into tears.

MIKE

What the hell's wrong with her?

FRANKIE

That's what having a heart looks like, Mike.

(then)

It's alright, Sue. She was just a distant relative, none of us really knew her or anything.

SUE

I did.

FRANKIE/AXL/MIKE

You did?

SUE

Yeah, I used to write letters to her all the time. I thought she hadn't replied in a while.

FRANKIE

You see, Mike. Sue spoke to her, but you didn't even know she existed.

MIKE

I don't like talking to the family in this house, let alone some old woman in the sticks.

FRANKIE

(to Sue)

So, what was she like?

SUE

She was lovely. Kind, generous, funny.

FRANKIE

She certainly hasn't got any of your personality, Mike.

AXL

(to Sue)

So why didn't you tell us about  
this aunt Irene?

SUE

I didn't think any of you would  
care, you never usually care what I  
get up to.

AXL

True story.

FRANKIE

Well, we would've with this. I  
can't believe you knew her. What  
was her hobbies?

SUE

She liked knitting, gardening and  
sailing.

FRANKIE

Oh God!

SUE

It was the knitting that killed  
her, right? She kept saying her  
hands were sore from all the  
knitting.

AXL

Shut up, Sue. Who do you know  
that's ever died from knitting?  
Maybe she died from the sheer  
boredom of reading your letters to  
her.

FRANKIE

That's enough, Axl. She died out on  
the boat, Sue.

SUE

Oh, no!

FRANKIE

At least she died doing something  
she loved.

(then)

Did she ever mention her wealth?  
No, that's not important. Did she  
ever speak about Mike or the rest  
of us?

SUE

Yes. She was hoping to meet us all,  
but she could never find the time  
to travel here.

FRANKIE

Hear that Mike? She wanted to see us all.

SUE

She said the last time she met dad he was a baby. All she had were some really old photos of him, so I sent her some new ones of us.

MIKE

Was that why you kept snapping us all the time?

SUE

Yeah.

MIKE

Well, I don't think aunt Irene appreciated the one of me on the toilet. Neither did I, for the record.

SUE

She loved it dad. She loved all the photos. She lived alone, so the thought of coming to see us all kept her happy.

FRANKIE

Aww, this just keeps getting sadder and sadder. How did you both start writing to each other?

SUE

Remember that summer a few years back I was cleaning out Granddad's place? Well, I found these unopened letters in the loft. I asked him about them but he just shrugged, kinda like dad. So, I took them home, read them and her return address was inside so I replied.

FRANKIE

This is like something out of a fairytale.

AXL

What fairytales did you read?

FRANKIE

Right, that settles it. We're going to her funeral.

Brick enters.

BRICK

What's going on?

FRANKIE

Oh, we'll tell you later.

Brick shrugs, walks off.

**INT. HECK HOUSE. BRICK'S BEDROOM - LATER**

Frankie, Mike, Axl and Sue are reading letters. Brick is on his laptop.

FRANKIE (V.O)

So, we spent the rest of the evening looking through the letters sent by Aunt Irene, hoping to get some proper information on the mystery woman such as a surname....

FRANKIE

Anything yet, Sue? We need a name.

MIKE

All I've got so far is that she was a fan of The Golden Girls. Don't think that's gonna help us somehow.

AXL

And all I'm getting is that she was a really, really boring woman. We're talking Sue boring here.

FRANKIE (V.O) (CONT'D)

...It wasn't going very well.

FRANKIE

There must be something we're missing.

BRICK

I've found it.

FRANKIE

You've found it?

BRICK

Yeah. I've been looking up dad's family tree online. It's all here.

They all hurry over.

AXL

See, the internet never fails.

FRANKIE

We've got a name! We've got a name! What is it, Brick? What is it?!

BRICK

It says her name was McCain.

AXL

Oh my God, she created oven chips!

MIKE

Don't be stupid, Axl.

AXL

What? She was old enough to.

FRANKIE

Axl may have a point. Would explain why I don't like cooking. Aunt Irene made it too easy not to.

BRICK

It says she married a John McCain.

AXL

From Die Hard?

MIKE

That's McLane, and he's not even real, Axl.

BRICK

Anyway, this John McCain owned several prestigious businesses in the aircraft and sailing industries, and had a personal wealth of 2.3 million dollars.

FRANKIE

Mike, hold me, I'm feeling faint.

BRICK

When John died, he left all of his belongings and money to his wife, Irene McCain.

FRANKIE

We're rich! We're really rich! I can't believe this is happening!

They all start screaming and hugging each other, even Mike is full of joy, scooping Frankie up in his arms and spinning her around.

END OF ACT

ONE

ACT TWOINT. HECK HOUSE. MASTER BEDROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

Mike is sleeping, Frankie is sat up, wide awake.

FRANKIE

Mike?

MIKE

Mike's sleeping.

FRANKIE

Seriously, Mike? We become millionaires and you can still go to sleep like nothing's happened? We're rich, Mike! I don't think I'm gonna sleep again for at least the next ten months... Or at least until I get one of those big expensive beds that you see in those five-star hotels on TV.

Mike starts snoring. Frankie nudges him awake.

FRANKIE

Mike, come on. Our lives have changed forever. Couldn't you get a bit more excited?

MIKE

I am excited. I was dancing around the room earlier, in case you hadn't noticed.

FRANKIE

Can you believe this, Mike? All those years of having nothing and then some old woman dies and we inherit her fortune. It's incredible.

(then)

So, what's the first thing you're gonna buy?

MIKE

I don't know, haven't really thought about it. I don't know what you're supposed to spend money on when you become a millionaire. I know what I do need though, a new razor.

FRANKIE

A new razor? Really, Mike? You get millions of dollars put into your bank account, and the first thing you buy is a razor?

MIKE

What? I need a new one. I'll get an expensive one though.

FRANKIE

Try and be a bit extravagant for once, Mike.

MIKE

Look, we don't know if she's left us anything for sure yet. I just say, lets wait and see first. What I do know is that I have work in five hours time. Night, Frankie.

He turns over.

FRANKIE

We're gonna get that money, Mike.

MIKE

I hope so too, but let's not get our hopes up too much.

FRANKIE

It's gonna happen, Mike. We're millionaires.

(then)

I mean, why wouldn't she leave her money to us? She didn't have no one else. Her and Sue were penpals, you don't get much closer than that.

MIKE

I agree, but old women can be strange. Especially old women who live out in the sticks. Let's just keep our options open, which means me not getting fired from my job.

FRANKIE

Well, enjoy your shift Mike, because it's gonna be the last one you ever have.

(then)

Okay, that sounded a lot more sinister that I meant it. You know what I mean.

MIKE

Frankie, you're doing that rambling thing again when you're tired. Let's just go to sleep. We'll talk about it in the morning.

Mike goes to sleep, but Frankie remains upright. Unable to sleep.

INT. HECK KITCHEN - EARLY HOURS

Mike wanders in for a glass of water, sees Frankie with a cup of coffee by her side, frantically jotting things down on a piece of paper. Her hair is all bedraggled too.

FRANKIE (V.O)

Yeah, this wasn't my best look. But I couldn't sleep, not after Mike had put the thought into my head that Aunt Irene's fortune may not be ours. I had to work out who else she could possibly give it to...

Frankie rips up another piece of paper, throws it on the floor with the rest of the pile.

FRANKIE (V.O) (CONT'D)

... Okay, it was fair to say I wasn't getting very far.

MIKE

What you doing up?

FRANKIE

It's driving me crazy, Mike. I just can't do it. I've had six cups of coffee already, and I can already feel my heart rate increasing at a rapid rate. It's making me sick, Mike. And it's all your fault.

MIKE

Ah, the money thing? You've just gotta relax, Frankie.

FRANKIE

Relax?! How the hell am I supposed to relax?! There's 2.3 million dollars that could soon be ours, Mike. Then you go and tell me that we might not get it.

MIKE

I was just being practical, that's all. If we have the money, fantastic. If not, we'll get by. We always have.

FRANKIE

That's just it, Mike. I don't wanna just get by anymore. I wanna live. I wanna shop in Prada without being accused of shoplifting.

MIKE

I know, but all I'm saying is that we know how to get by. We've been  
(MORE)

MIKE (cont'd)  
doing it for so long now, we've  
gotten pretty good at it.

FRANKIE  
And you're happy with that, are you  
Mike? That we've become pros at  
just getting by?

MIKE  
I didn't say I was happy. I've just  
accepted it, that's all. Sometimes  
money is the worst thing that can  
happen to someone. Now, come back  
to bed. The coffee's gonna go to  
your head.

FRANKIE  
I want that money, Mike.

MIKE  
Look Frankie, if it will make you  
feel better and stop acting like a  
crazy person, I'll talk to Rusty  
tomorrow and see if he knows  
anything about the will.

Frankie smiles.

**INT. HECK KITCHEN - NEXT MORNING**

Frankie, coffee in hand, is speeding around the kitchen at  
super speed when Axl, Sue and Brick enter.

FRANKIE  
Morning. I didn't get much sleep  
last night, well none to be  
precise. Been up all night drinking  
coffee and trying to think of  
reasons why Aunt Irene won't give  
the money to us. I've written down  
a few. If you wanna check them out,  
maybe you'll be able to think of  
more and--

AXL  
--Mom, even when we become  
millionaires, you make it boring.

FRANKIE  
Don't blame me, blame your father.  
It was him that put all these  
negative thoughts into my head. Now  
he's got me paranoid that something  
will go wrong and Aunt Irene won't  
come good for us.

BRICK

Mom, she was less popular than me. She's got no one else to give the money to.

FRANKIE

That is true. But maybe she was a crazy cat lady? Lots of old women give their money to cats.

AXL

What the hell are a bunch of cats gonna do with a few million dollars, buy an unlimited amount of tuna?

FRANKIE

Ah, that reminds me. We're out of tuna.

SUE

I don't like tuna anyway.

FRANKIE

Well, someone does because we ain't got any left.

BRICK

I fed next door's cat with it.

SUE

Aww, that cat always attacks me. Don't think cats like me.

AXL

It's not just cats that don't like you, Sue.

FRANKIE

Okay, okay, enough of that. Anyway, your dad's gonna speak to Rusty today to see about a will so we'll know for sure. In the meantime, keep this news about aunt Irene and her millions to yourself, okay?

AXL/SUE/BRICK

Absolutely.

**INT. HIGH SCHOOL - LATER**

Brick and CINDY are walking through the school corridors.

BRICK

Can I tell you something?

CINDY

If you want to, good. If not, it won't alter my day.

BRICK

That's where you're wrong because I found out something amazing last night.

CINDY

On a scale of 1-10, how amazing?

BRICK

Well, you can judge for yourself when I tell you. My great aunt Irene has died.

CINDY

How is that amazing?

BRICK

Oh, not that part. I mean, we found out that she's a multi-millionaire and it's a very good possibility that she has left it all to us.

CINDY

So you could be a millionaire?

BRICK

Yep! Now, how amazing is that on a scale of 1-10.

CINDY

Hmmm, probably 6.

She just walks off, leaving Brick alone.

**INT. AXL'S MOTORHOME - LATER**

Axl and LEXI are laying on the bed together looking up at the sky through the massive hole in the roof.

LEXI

(re: hole in the roof)  
You ever gonna get that thing fixed?

AXL

I've grown to like it, actually. And anyway, I won't need to fix it soon, with any luck.

LEXI

What do you mean?

AXL

Well, you may find this hard to believe but there's a very good chance that I'm about to become a millionaire.

LEXI

Oooh really? That will be so cool,  
we'll actually be able to buy  
things together for a change.

(then)

So, you found oil in your backyard  
or a rich relative died?

AXL

Rich relative. Aunt Irene to be  
precise.

LEXI

Who's aunt Irene?

AXL

Beats me. All I know is that she  
was rich and there's a good chance  
she's left the money to us.

LEXI

So, when do you find out for sure?

AXL

Don't know, just supposed to be  
keeping it on the down low until we  
know for sure.

LEXI

(sarcastic)

Well, you seem to be doing a good  
job of that.

AXL

I know, I'm not very good at  
keeping secrets. But I am good at  
one thing.

LEXI

Yeah, what's that?

He leans in and gives her a long kiss.

LEXI

Yeah... That was pretty good, but  
I'm gonna need another one to be  
sure.

Axl smiles, gives her another kiss and cuddle.

**INT. SUE'S APARTMENT - LATER**

Sue is watching MAMMA MIA with BRAD on the sofa. The pair  
are singing and dancing along.

Once the song finishes, they sit back, exhausted.

SUE

Brad, can I ask you something?

BRAD

If it's, "how gorgeous do I look today?" Then, it's Sandy from Grease level gorgeous.

SUE

Thank you, Brad. But actually that's not what I wanted to ask.

BRAD

Okay, colour me intrigued.

SUE

If I was to suddenly change, would you stop being friends with me?

BRAD

What? Why would you ask that? I'd never stop being friends with you. You're like my sister, girlfriend.

SUE

That's a relief, because I'm about to become a millionaire.

Brad's mouth drops open.

SUE

Brad?

BRAD

I'm sorry Sue, but oh my God, shut up! You a millionaire?

SUE

Well, it's not definite, definite yet but it's looking good. Remember Aunt Irene?

BRAD

The penpal from the sticks? Of course.

SUE

Well, she's died.

BRAD

Oh, may she rest in heavenly peace.

SUE

Ahmen.

(then)

Anyway, there's a good chance she's left a will and we're in it.

BRAD

OMG! This is just fabulous!

They hug.

BRAD

You know what this calls for? A re-run of Mamma Mia, the karaoke version!

SUE

I'll go get the outfits!

She rushes off.

FRANKIE (V.O)

It's nice to know they all still listen to me anyway...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT  
TWO

ACT THREEINT. MIKE'S QUARRY - DAY

Mike is at his desk, nodding off. RUSTY enters.

RUSTY

You alright there, Mike?

MIKE

I'm fine, Rusty. I just didn't get much sleep last night, that's all. It's all this Aunt Irene and this money of hers. Frankie was all excited but I told her not to get her hopes up, you know? Things like this don't happen to people like us.

Rusty simply stares blankly at Mike.

RUSTY

Who's Aunt Irene?

MIKE

Seriously?

RUSTY

I'm just messing with you. Was she rich? Dad never mentioned anything about that. Then again, he never said much about her at all. The only thing he did for her was keep her belongings in a lock-up.

MIKE

You saying this Aunt Irene, who neither of us ever met, kept sending dad her money to keep safe somewhere?

RUSTY

Yeah, pretty much. And I know where it is too. Dad couldn't always get to the lock up so I used to drop the envelopes off. Never knew how much I was putting in, but the envelopes were heavy, and there's lots of them in there.

MIKE

Right, you're taking me there.

RUSTY

Ah, there's one problem.

MIKE

What?

RUSTY

I haven't got the key. I mean, I did have, but I lost it. And I can't remember where.

Mike puts his head in his hands.

**INT. HECK HOUSE - LATER**

Frankie is sat at the table, hunched over a pile of papers, looking rather stressed.

The PHONE RINGS. Sue answers.

MIKE (O.S)

Sue, it's dad. Is mom there?

SUE

Yeah, she's here. She's looking rather stressed though.

FRANKIE

Who is it, Sue? If it's those cold callers again, tell them to go to hell!

MIKE (O.S)

(re: Frankie)

So I can hear. Anyway, we may have got a breakthrough with Aunt Irene's money.

SUE

Really?!

MIKE (O.S)

Yeah, Uncle Rusty said she used to send Grandad money to keep safe for her in a lock-up. Did Aunt Irene ever send you anything? Maybe a key or something?

SUE

No, nothing like that. She did send me a brouche once, but I could never get it open.

MIKE (O.S)

Where is it now?

SUE

In my bedside table at college. Want me to go get it?

MIKE (O.S)

Yes. Be quick though, Sue. The lock-up closes at 6 for the weekend. Don't tell your mother

(MORE)

MIKE (O.S) (cont'd)  
 though, don't wanna get her hopes  
 up.

Sue hangs up. Frankie looks at her.

FRANKIE  
 Who was that?

SUE  
 Nobody.

FRANKIE (V.O)  
 Sue's never been a good liar, which  
 I guess is a good thing, right?  
 Well, it's a good thing if she's  
 your daughter and she's telling you  
 a lie. I'm not too sure how good it  
 would be if she went into politics.

**INT. AXL'S MOTORHOME - MOVING - LATER**

Frankie is driving through the streets rather rapidly, with  
 a worried Sue in the passenger seat, and Axl and Brick  
 holding on for dear life in the back.

FRANKIE  
 This is it!

AXL  
 That's what I'm worried about!

FRANKIE  
 The last day we have to worry about  
 anything.  
 (then)  
 Well, anything financial anyway.

The motorhome suddenly breaks down.

FRANKIE  
 What is it? What's going on?

AXL  
 Yeah, I think we've run out of gas.

FRANKIE  
 Axl, I gave you thirty dollars for  
 gas just two days ago.

AXL  
 I may or may not have used all that  
 for snacks.

FRANKIE (V.O)  
 The urge to throttle him there and  
 then was high, but I managed to  
 control myself. We still had time  
 (MORE)

FRANKIE (V.O) (cont'd)  
 to get to the college, get the key,  
 then head to the lock-up before it  
 closed. There was just one thing  
 for it....

**EXT. MIDWESTERN STREET - MOMENTS LATER**

Frankie, Axl, Sue and Brick are running down the street.  
 They pass a shocked DONAHUE FAMILY in their car, but just  
 keep ploughing ahead.

FRANKIE (V.O)  
 Nothing was gonna stop me from  
 getting that money. Not no broken  
 down motorhome, not no Donahue...

Suddenly, a car speeds up and splashes Frankie from head to  
 foot in mud.

FRANKIE (V.O)  
 ... And not no careless driver and  
 a mudbath.

**INT. SUE'S COLLEGE APARTMENT - LATER**

Frankie and Sue are tearing up the room trying to find the  
 brouche.

FRANKIE (V.O)  
 Yeah, we ran all the way here only  
 for Sue to discover that the  
 brouche was no longer in her  
 bedside drawer. So we began  
 searching high and low for it, well  
 me and Sue did anyway, Axl and  
 Brick were otherwise preoccupied...

We see Brick sitting down reading some book, and Axl kissing  
 Lexi on the sofa.

FRANKIE  
 Brick, could you stop reading for  
 five minutes and come help us  
 look?! I'll buy you a library full  
 of the things if we find it.

BRICK  
 Okay, great. I'm not exactly sure  
 we'd have room for all the books,  
 I'd need to have my own place too.  
 There's so many books out there.  
 (whispers)  
 So many books.  
 (then)  
 Damn, I really thought I'd grow out  
 of that by now.

FRANKIE

We all did, Brick. We all did.

(to Axl)

When you've quite finished with Lexi, we could do with your help too.

Axl just gestures with his hand for her to be quiet.

Frankie looks about to explode, when Sue suddenly YELLS out with delight. She is holding something in her hand.

SUE

Yes, I found it!

FRANKIE

Thank God for that! Give it here.

SUE

Okay, sure.

She hands Frankie a fancy bookmark. Frankie stares blankly at Sue.

FRANKIE

What the hell is this, Sue?

SUE

My personalised bookmark. Remember, I lost it last summer?

Frankie is seething.

FRANKIE (V.O)

I had to calm myself down. Sue's bookmark was important to her, but it really was the wrong time to get excited about it.

LEXI (O.S)

Hey, is this what you've been looking for?

Frankie turns to see that Lexi is holding the brouche in her hand.

LEXI

I was cleaning earlier and found it. Thought it was beautiful so I kept it out.

Frankie beams with a smile, locks her in a big hug.

END OF ACT  
THREE

ACT FOUREXT. LOCK-UP - NIGHT

Mike is pacing up and down, growing more and more impatient. While Rusty sits on the floor eating a bag of potato chips.

RUSTY

Take a seat, Mike. No good pacing up and down like that. Here, have a chip.

MIKE

No, I'm good. Where is Sue? She should be here by now. 45 minutes ago, actually. And now it's locked. She's not even answering her phone. None of them are.

Rusty just nods.

RUSTY

There's only one thing for it.

Rusty gets up, and runs at the door, breaking it down. Mike is in disbelief.

INT. LOCK-UP - MOMENTS LATER

MIKE

What the hell did you just do?

RUSTY

I got us in. I also think I've dislocated my shoulder.

MIKE

But why did you do it? We still haven't got the key?

RUSTY

No, but I do have a screwdriver we can use.

Mike contemplates this.

MIKE

Okay, which locker's hers?

RUSTY

I'm not sure, but I know it's one of them.

Mike shakes his head, then starts searching for the locker.

INT. HECK HOUSE. MASTER BEDROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

Frankie, all dejected, enters in her pajamas. She just falls face first onto the bed.

FRANKIE (V.O)

The night didn't turn out as planned. Mike and Rusty got arrested for breaking and entering. And we managed to bust open the brouche only to find nothing was inside. No key, nothing. We'd just about given up when....

The DOORBELL RINGS. Frankie sits up, sighs.

She heads to the door, answers it. No one there. But there's a package on the welcome mat.

Frankie picks it up. Puts it on the table.

FRANKIE (V.O) (CONT'D)

.... This was what we had been waiting for. A gift from the Gods.... Or rather Aunt Irene.

She rips open the parcel, only for her face to then drop.

FRANKIE'S POV: inside, are a few bits of jewellery and knitted items.

Sue enters.

SUE

What's all that?

FRANKIE

It's from Aunt Irene's estate.

SUE

Oooh, what is it?

Frankie holds up the knitted items and bits of jewellery.

SUE

Aww, so cute and thoughtful. I always told her how much I loved her knitting.

FRANKIE

But where's the money?! There's no mention of it here?

Axl enters.

AXL

What's going on?

FRANKIE

This. This is all we got from Aunt Irene. If she thinks we're going to the funeral now she's got another thing coming!

AXL

No family road trip? Aunt Irene's starting to warm on me.

Frankie sits down, holds her head.

FRANKIE

We were gonna be rich. I had it all planned out. Why didn't she give us anything?

Brick enters. Picks out a letter, begins reading.

BRICK

It says here that she donated all of her money to a cancer charity. It's what killed her husband.

FRANKIE

Oh.

BRICK

It also says that there was money put aside for us but Sue told her that we didn't need anything like that.

Everyone glares at her.

AXL

Thanks a lot, Sue!

SUE

What? I was just being polite.

FRANKIE

I can't believe this. All that for nothing.

AXL

Well, we could sell the jewellery, I guess.

SUE

Axl, you can't go doing that. She may haunt us or something.

BRICK

Haunting doesn't actually work like that, Sue. I read a book on it the other week and apparently--

FRANKIE

--Not now, Brick.

(then)

Wait, the lock up! Rusty said he had to deposit envelopes of cash in there every month. No one else

(MORE)

FRANKIE (cont'd)  
 knows about it. So she can't have  
 donated it. We have to get it.

AXL  
 Ah, that led to dad getting  
 arrested.

FRANKIE  
 Well, we have to do something. We  
 can't just leave the money there.

She rushes to the door, only to find NANCY on her doorstep.

NANCY  
 I'm just running to the store,  
 Frankie. And by running, I mean  
 driving. And speaking of driving, I  
 couldn't help but notice you didn't  
 have a vehicle earlier, so I was  
 wondering if you needed anything at  
 the store?

FRANKIE (V.O)  
 To be honest, I've been that fond  
 of Nancy Donahue, but on this night  
 I had never been so happy to see  
 her. She was my gateway to a  
 fortune.

FRANKIE  
 (to the kids)  
 Right, I'm going to the lock-up. If  
 your dad comes back, let him know.  
 If I get arrested, wait for the  
 phone call.

She exits.

**INT. POLICE CELL - NIGHT**

Mike sits with Rusty, who hums some annoying tune. Mike  
 snaps:

MIKE  
 For the love of God, Rusty!

RUSTY  
 Whoa, relax, will you? Things could  
 be worse, you know.

MIKE  
 Really? Because from where I'm  
 sitting, I find that hard to  
 believe.

RUSTY

Remember, no matter what situation you find yourself in, everything can get worse. Dad told us that.

MIKE

He also told us to microwave underwear.

(sighs)

I just wanna be home with my wife and kids, and forget this night ever happened.

RUSTY

If you're talking about forgetting this night ever happened, then you'll need some serious drugs. I can help with that. I know a guy.

MIKE

Rusty, shut up.

RUSTY

I'm just trying to help.

MIKE

Well, don't.

(then)

You know what? I never wanted any of this. I was content with my lot in life. I accepted my hand and I'd made peace with it. But then all that talk about becoming millionaires got in my head, and look how that's worked out.

RUSTY

Well, it's worked out pretty well for me. I've got to spend some quality time with my brother.

MIKE

We're in a police cell, Rusty. This ain't my idea of quality time.

RUSTY

I get that, but it beats some of the places I've slept in lately.

He goes back to humming the annoying song, while Mike bangs his head against the wall.

**INT. LOCK-UP - NIGHT**

Frankie arrives at the lock-up. She reaches the correct locker, tries opening it but it won't budge. She looks for something to wedge it open. She finds a screwdriver and starts to prize it open.

NANCY

You sure we're meant to be here,  
Frankie? I don't feel very  
comfortable.

FRANKIE

Oh, yeah. It's totally fine. I just  
forget the keys, that's all. Keep a  
look out.

DONAHUE

For what exactly?

FRANKIE

You know, the usual. Teenagers,  
wild animals.... Police.

Frankie turns the screwdriver, but it snaps.

FRANKIE

Damn it!

She hits the locker hard with her fist, and it swings open.  
Delight etched on her face, she picks out all the envelopes.  
Starts throwing them in the air.

FRANKIE

Yes! Yes! Yes!

Frankie rips open an envelope but no money falls out.  
Instead, there's some really old diary entries on some dirty  
paper, filled with Aunt Irene's thoughts. Frankie frowns.  
She opens another, to find more of the same.... And another,  
and another, and so on.

Frankie just sits there and cries.

**EXT. CHURCH. GRAVEYARD - BACK TO WHERE WE STARTED**

Frankie trudges towards the family car, along with the rest  
of the clan. She looks up at the sky.

FRANKIE

Why, Aunt Irene, why?

Suddenly, the heavens opens, and Frankie gets soaked in the  
rain. She drops to her knees, crying. Axl, Sue and Brick  
look uncomfortable. Mike approaches, holds out his hand.

MIKE

Come on, Frankie. Let's go home.

Frankie looks up, smiles.

FRANKIE

I don't know what it was about that  
moment, but everything hit me. As  
cliché as it sounds, it all got

(MORE)

FRANKIE (cont'd)  
made clear to me. What's important  
in life is not the fancy clothes  
you wear, the posh car you drive,  
the giant house you live in, or the  
money in the bank. All of that  
means nothing in the bigger  
picture. What matters most is  
family. Whenever you're down,  
they're the ones to pick you up.  
They're all I need. They're all I  
want.

(then)  
Okay, a bit of money wouldn't go  
amiss, but I won't be greedy.

She takes his hand, gets to her feet. They hug in the rain.

AXL (O.S)  
Ah, I don't mean to ruin this  
barf-inducing moment, but Lexi just  
text, I need to get back in twenty  
minutes.

Frankie turns to him, smiles.

FRANKIE  
Come on then, lets go home.

They all head to the car, and we:

FADE OUT.

END OF  
SHOW.