

CANDY, GIRL REPORTER

© 2015 by Linda Gould

This screenplay may not be used or reproduced for any purpose including educational purposes without the expressed written permission of the author.

INT. TELEVISION STUDIO - DAY - 1975

A large "Rise and Shine Los Angeles" sign hangs over two chairs and a coffee table with a book on it.

A MAKE-UP ARTIST retouches the MORNING SHOW HOST's make-up.

CANDY COLLINS (24), her short, dirty blonde hair matching her business attire, adjusts the microphone on her lapel.

The FLOOR DIRECTOR scrambles when he realizes they are live.

FLOOR DIRECTOR

You're on!

The make-up artist leaps out of frame.

The host switches to her bubbly personality.

MORNING SHOW HOST

Welcome back to Rise and Shine.

This morning we have author Candy Collins. She has written her first book, *Homegrown*. (Gestures toward it).

CANDY

Thank you for having--

The host demonstrates her special skill for cutting off her guests.

MORNING SHOW HOST

So this is a book about a college band?

CANDY

It's also about love--

MORNING SHOW HOST

Sounds like my diary--

Candy attempts to get a word in edgewise.

CANDY

And rock and roll--

The host looks off camera to the make-up artist.

MORNING SHOW HOST

You've read my diary. Should I
publish it? Like Candy did?

The make-up artist shrugs. The host turns back to Candy.

MORNING SHOW HOST (cont'd)

Should I publish it? How does that work?

Candy maintains her professional demeanor.

CANDY

My book is about the birth of a
dream and the struggles of a young
band, but most of all, it's about
betrayal. You see, I was in love
with a rock and roll musician,
Preston Andrews. More than that,
we were partners. I wrote some of
the lyrics.

The host's interest is piqued and she leans forward.

MORNING SHOW HOST

What happened?

CANDY

It's all in the book.

The host tosses the book off stage.

MORNING SHOW HOST

I don't read. I want to hear it
from you.

CANDY

It's a long story. Do we have
time?

MORNING SHOW HOST

This is my show. Tell me.

CANDY

Okay, well, I got into journalism
in college ...

EXT. UCLA CAMPUS - DAY

Candy, 19, sporting long dirty blonde locks and neat bangs, takes a picture of an elderly JANITOR fixing a water fountain.

JANITOR

Ya see here, this water fountain ain't not been fixed since it broke ten years hence. Don't mean nobody ain't done tried. But those folks weren't me, now was they?

She scribbles notes in her reporter's notebook.

CANDY

What about the rumor that the water fountain is haunted?

The janitor emits a sound that is half cough, half laugh.

JANITOR

I'm darn sure a ghost has better things to do than take up his residence in a rusty ol' water fountain.

Crouched underneath the fountain, he waves for Candy to come closer.

JANITOR (cont'd)

Ya see here, this pipe, here. It's so tiny they done missed it. It's been routed the gosh darn wrong way. Every time a person hits that little button, the water comes in and goes out without it coming out there for someone to drink. You wanna take a picture?

CANDY

Yeah, sure.

Candy snaps another picture.

JOSEPHINE (striding up,
tossing her stringy brown

hair and adjusting her granny glasses)

Candy! What're you bothering with this nonsense for? I have a better idea for your article.

JANITOR

Too late, my dear. I already told her this here water fountain ain't haunted.

Josephine points to her friend FLOYD WINTERS, an attractive grad student, one part surfer, one part hippie.

FLOYD

Hey, what's up.

JOSEPHINE

Floyd, this is my roommate, Candy. Candy, Floyd is part of this growing underground movement at UCLA called The People's Army. The music scene is a big impetus for it. So is avant-garde theatre.

FLOYD

The draft is forcing people into a war they don't believe in. It's time we fight this war with our own army of resistance here at home. The arts, especially rock music and radical theatre, are our best weapons to spread our message.

CANDY

Floyd, it's a pleasure to meet you. I don't know what Jo told you but I have my assignment from the school paper and it's about this water fountain. I'm a rookie reporter, and I have to prove myself before I'll be allowed to take on the bigger stories.

JANITOR

Ya see here--

The janitor presses the button and water flows freely.

JANITOR (cont'd)

It's done fixed.

INT. SCHOOL NEWSPAPER OFFICE - DAY

The drab office is home to a few desks, phones, and some hand-me-down typewriters.

The EDITOR scans Candy's report.

EDITOR (reading)

"In summary, the concert by the band that calls itself Homegrown encompassed a rich package of songs with no theme other than youthful exuberance, set against the reality that the musicians' youth could be snatched away from them if they get called up for the draft."

Candy is on the edge of her seat, trying to read his facial cues.

The editor snaps his fingers and hands the report to an eager ASSISTANT.

EDITOR (cont'd)

For tomorrow's edition. (to Candy)
We haven't had a music reporter in a while. But I can't have you sneaking into shows through alley doors, like you did this time. So get yourself a fake ID, okay?

Joy bubbles out of Candy.

CANDY

Deal. And no more cheesy stories about water fountains!

INT. HOMEGROWN'S HOUSE - DAY

The decor is an eclectic mix. A worn-out chair, a large tie-dyed tarp tacked on a wall, a collection of cushions masquerading as a couch.

The three band members, all 19 and scruffy, lounge on the cushions, smoking pot.

Jamie, 20, their roadie-manager, thin and bespectacled, distributes copies of the newspaper.

JAMIE

Check out page five.

Preston reads the title.

PRESTON

"Homegrown grows up." By Candy Collins. Huh. Candy Collins. Anybody ever heard of her?

JAMIE (longingly)

I told you she interviewed me about Homegrown's history, while she was writing her review. And I told you she was something, didn't I? Not only smart, but pretty.

INT. DORM HALLWAY - NIGHT

Candy slips into the hallway and leaves the door open a crack so the girls in the room can eavesdrop.

PRESTON

I read your article. It was real awesome, man.

CANDY

It's easy to write an awesome article about something I enjoy so much.

PRESTON

See you at our next gig. Except this time, don't hide out in the crowd. Come backstage.

He kisses her on the cheek and starts to walk away. She goes after him, turns him around, and kisses him on the mouth.

INT. DORM ROOM - NIGHT

Candy re-enters.

CANDY

I think he just asked me out.

JOSEPHINE (rolling her eyes)
Good luck with that.

CANDY (sounding hurt)
What do you mean?

JOSEPHINE (gazing at Preston's picture in paper)
Oh, I dunno. I just think your rock star might go for someone a little less innocent. A little more sophisticated.

Candy gazes at her roommate with newfound distrust.

CANDY

What do you mean, sophisticated? You mean someone involved in radical politics? Like you, maybe?

JOSEPHINE

I mean someone who really understands rock and roll, and how it connects to both politics and other art forms in this day and age.

CANDY

And what makes you think I don't understand that?

JOSEPHINE (softening a little)

Candy, I'm not saying your article's bad. You're a good writer, but you think Preston's songs are cute. You think *he's* cute. And you're pretty cute yourself. Wake up and smell the tear gas.

CANDY

Does everything have to be political? Sometimes music is just music. Sometimes it's not about anything radical. Sometimes it's meant for slow-dancing. For making love.

JOSEPHINE (shrugging)

Whatever. Maybe one day someone will persuade Preston to put his music to real use. Like writing an anthem for the People's Army.

CANDY

You're welcome to talk to him about that. But you might as well know, he just kissed me! On the mouth!

INT. UCLA STUDENT NEWSPAPER OFFICE - DAY

The writers sit around a conference table. The morning rush paper shows pictures of a burning theatre.

EDITOR

Good job to everyone who worked the overnight. We got out a solid story about the bombing, but we need more for tomorrow's edition.

WRITER #1

Why the theatre?

WRITER #2

What statement were the bombers trying to make?

WRITER #1

Why not a more conventional target, like the ROTC building?

CANDY

I wonder if it had something to do with the new play that was being rehearsed there.

EDITOR

What about the play?

CANDY

My roommate Josephine -- well, actually, she quit -- but she was helping to put on an antiwar play.

EDITOR

Why'd she quit?

CANDY

She had a fight with her boyfriend, Floyd, one of the playwrights. Creative differences, I guess.

EDITOR

A lover's quarrel? Followed by a bombing? I like it.

CANDY

Not that I think it's anything more than a coincidence--

EDITOR

The lover's quarrel story is yours. If you don't want it, I'll give it to someone else. Your choice.

CANDY

I'll see what I can find out.

INT. OUTDOOR CONCERT - BACKSTAGE - DAY

Candy, Preston, and the other band members, Neal and Clive, arrive backstage. Jamie is close behind.

Preston peers out at the crowd and breathes it in.

Behind him, someone vomits. He turns. Candy heaves into a garbage can.

She wipes vomit from her lips.

CANDY

Sorry, guys. I know that was disgusting. I'm so sorry.

NURSE

Hon, you need help?

CANDY

No, I know what's wrong.

PRESTON

Babe, if you're sick, you can't risk giving it to the rest of us. This is the biggest show of our career. A chance to bring the campus together again, after the bombing.

NEAL (snickering)

Or maybe cause a riot. Who knows?

CLIVE

If that happens, it might be the last gig we ever do. Either way, it's really big.

PRESTON

That's right, babe. So go with the nurse.

CANDY

Preston, I'm pregnant. You're going to be a dad.

Preston steps back.

PRESTON

How do you know it's mine?

CANDY

Who else could be the father?

PRESTON

I don't know who else you've slept with.

He glances at his band mates suspiciously.

CANDY

No one. Why? Have you slept with other people?

Based on his expression, she knows the answer.

CANDY (cont'd)

Of course you have. Who with? My radical roommate Josephine, for example? You prefer a bombing suspect to me, after all I've done for you? I helped you write lyrics!

PRESTON

You don't know—

CANDY

Oh, yes I do. Or at least, I will. She couldn't resist hinting about it to me. She practically dared me to investigate. She wants fame more than anything—even more than she wants you, probably. It'll all be coming out soon.

She walks away. Preston shouts after her.

PRESTON

How'm I supposed to go out and play now?

CANDY (turning back)

Oh, I don't know. Why don't you play a Peace Army anthem? Maybe

start a riot? Josephine would like that.

INT. TELEVISION STUDIO - DAY - 1975

The camera zooms in on Candy's face after the emotional release of retelling the story.

The morning host wipes a tear from her eye.

MORNING SHOW HOST

Well, you landed on your feet, unlike the band. I understand that after the festival turned violent, they were charged with inciting a riot. And by the time the smoke cleared, you'd gotten yourself a husband, right? At least there's a ring on your finger.

CANDY (flaunting ring)

Yes, I married the band's manager, Jamie, and he took responsibility for the baby.

MORNING SHOW HOST

And now you've written a best-seller about Homegrown, which casts your former best friends, Preston and Josephine, as a cheater and an arsonist, respectively. Well done.

But I still must ask—do you miss being part of the band? Do you miss Preston?

CANDY (lying)

No. I mean, not really.

MORNING SHOW HOST

What do you mean, not really?

CANDY (sighing)
Someone had to grow up.