

Road Trip

© 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.

EXT. MARY ELLEN CLEMENS LADIES' DORM, AT GLENDARY, A
SMALL-TOWN COLLEGE - AUTUMN, 1981

A squat stone building. As the girls enter they pass
a large, no-nonsense sign proclaiming DORM RULES and
CURFEW.

INT. MARY ELLEN CLEMENS LADIES' DORM - DAY

A group of DORM MATES gather in the cozy common room,
around a table with snacks laid out. The room is
abuzz with excited conversation.

One voice, at near-frantic pitch, rises above the
rest. CAROLYN (21), a desperately bleached blonde
with a few extra pounds, wears an expression of
worry that belies her attempt at enthusiasm.

CAROLYN

I can hardly believe it's almost here!
We're seniors, and it's our last
Homecoming. Ever. It's so ...
exciting. Don't you think? Everyone
has their dates squared away, right?

She glances around at the others.

CAROLYN (CONT'D)

Everyone who can get a date, that is.

The expressions on the other girls' faces range from
smugness to anguish to disdain -- all depending on
their date status.

Carolyn looks to her friend IMOGENE (21), a cute but
unassuming ingénue.

CAROLYN (CONT'D)

I suppose you've got old reliable Steve
lined up, don't you, Imogene?

IMOGENE

I - well --

CHRISTINE (21), a pretty cheerleader type, tilts her
head with false sympathy.

CHRISTINE

Carolyn, it's not the end of the world if you, or anybody else, doesn't go to Homecoming.

CAROLYN

Oh, I'm not worried about getting a date myself. Jack already asked me.

A few girls eye her with envy.

CHRISTINE

Then why are you going supersonic?

CAROLYN

It's just ... he's so cocksure. Like we're a foregone conclusion. If we go to Homecoming, sooner or later he'll propose, right? It's tradition. And, I don't know ... all he's ever going to be is a boring accountant. I want to get some excitement out of life before I wither away. Like maybe date someone on the football team. You don't have a monopoly on those guys, Christine, just 'cause you're a cheerleader.

A ripple of incredulity spreads through the girls; to them, walking away from a potential marriage proposal is risky.

Carolyn looks again to IMOGENE for backup. But Imogene seems lost in her own thoughts.

CAROLYN (CONT'D)

So how about it, Imogene? Do you ever wonder ... is Steve *it*?

SHELLEY (22), a chubby, sarcastic girl, snorts through her Diet Coke.

SHELLEY

Imogene better hope there's someone other than Steve, considering...

CAROLYN

Considering what?

All eyes turn to Imogene.

Shelley's matching bookend, BETTY (21), stuffs a handful of popcorn in her mouth, enjoying the show.

SHELLEY

Considering Steve hasn't popped the Homecoming question yet...

Imogene bites her lip, blushing furiously at the girls' chorus of GASPS.

CHRISTINE (not
sorry at all)

Oh, Imogene. I'm so sorry.

SHELLEY

What's he waiting for?

IMOGENE

It's not like he's *not going* to ask me.
He's my boyfriend--

Shelley snorts into her Diet Coke again. This time, Imogene meets it with a defiant look.

IMOGENE

He's coming over tonight. He'll probably ask me. But if he doesn't, what's the big deal? I'll stay in and get some homework done. I've got my senior honors thesis to write, and I haven't even picked out a topic yet.

CAROLYN

God, that's pathetic. We're talking about your future, and you're talking about homework.

Imogene's confidence wavers. Some of the girls exchange knowing looks. Christine even clucks a little under her breath.

BETTY

Ah, who cares if you have a date for the magical Homecoming dance? It's -- just -- a -- dance. You ladies do realize that, don't you? Clinging to some lame guy just so he'll ask you to Homecoming, just so he'll propose, just so you can check that off the list? I'd

rather sit at home than hook my wagon
to someone I'm just so-so about.

CHRISTINE

(catty whispering)

Like she has a lot of options...

CAROLYN

Yeah, Betty. Who are you to judge?

As the girls' attention shifts, Imogene quietly slips
away from the crowd.

INT. IMOGENE'S DORM ROOM - EVENING

Imogene hurries around the room, setting up for a
night of romance. In quick shots we see:

- She spreads a clean sheet over an end table.
- Lights a couple of mismatched candles.
- Sets out plates and silverware.
- Accepts a pizza delivery box from a scruffy
DELIVERY GUY.
- And finally, wedges two bottles of beer through the
partially open window -- a makeshift chiller.

She surveys her work with satisfaction. No detail
left untended. She checks her watch.

INT. IMOGENE'S DORM ROOM - HOURS LATER, AFTER CURFEW

A DRAMATIC ROCK BALLAD blasts on the stereo as
Imogene sings along, while wiping her eyes with a
Kleenex. A textbook is open in front of her, but
she's not making much headway studying.

IMOGENE

*Like an angel
Just out of reach...
She moves me...
She moves me...*

So lost in her performance, Imogene doesn't notice
the window open and SARA (22), a stunning brunette,
climb into view.

Sara pauses, perched halfway in, to eye the sad, empty room and her roommate's performance.

SARA

Wow, guess I didn't miss much of a party here tonight!

Imogene startles and makes a motion to turn off the music. But Sara stumbles the rest of the way into the room and semi-drunkenly joins in, singing along with equal passion. When the song ends, she flops on her bed with a laugh.

SARA (CONT'D)

So why the heartbreak music?

IMOGENE

Oh, I don't want to go into it. I mean, you probably don't want to hear about it--

On the bed, Sara's already losing interest.

IMOGENE (CONT'D)

Steve and I broke up. He was supposed to come over tonight, but he called with some lame excuse. I told him not to bother ever coming over again.

Imogene sighs, waiting for the sympathy to flow. But Sara gives an excited whoop and jumps to her feet.

SARA

That's a cause to celebrate!

IMOGENE

What do you have against Steve?

SARA

Nothing to do with Steve. It's you -- you're a free, independent woman now! That's something worth toasting, and I have just the thing.

She winks at Imogene and flings open her closet door, revealing a case of champagne.

SARA (CONT'D)

A gift from my big brother, a rock
star in more ways than one!

Sara grabs a bottle and POPS the cork, letting out a
WHOOOP of delight. She swigs right out of the bottle
before pressing it into Imogene's more hesitant
hands.

SARA (CONT'D)

That's what I'm talking about!

Imogene shrugs and takes a drink of the champagne.

SARA (CONT'D)

How do I look when I'm drinking and
singing? Just like Jake?

IMOGENE

There's quite a family resemblance.

SARA

Yeah, my brother didn't get all the
talent!

Sara continues to dance and sing around the room.
Imogene watches her with a mixture of adoration and
envy.

SARA (CONT'D)

If I tell you a secret do you promise
not to tell anyone? I mean *anyone*.

Imogene nods eagerly, her interest growing.

SARA (CONT'D)

I have a little surprise planned for
Homecoming.

IMOGENE

What kind of surprise?

SARA

The kind that will make this
Homecoming absolutely unforgettable.
It will go down in Glendary history.
(a beat) Are you ready?

Sara clearly relishes the spotlight, even with an
audience of one.

SARA (CONT'D)

My brother and his band, the Sunburst,
are coming back to campus.

IMOGENE

No!

SARA

One night only. A very special show. Be
there or be sorry!

IMOGENE

Ohmygod, this is huge!

SARA

I know. We're going to blow everyone's
minds!

Sara gleefully resumes singing and dancing around the
room.

SARA (CONT'D)

I've been assigned the awesome
responsibility of driving to New York
City this weekend to pick up the band
and bring them back.

IMOGENE (wistful)

Wow. I can't believe it. A homecoming
at our homecoming. The Sunburst,
returning to the small-town college
campus where they first got started.
And incidentally, the place they were
expelled from.

SARA

That's what makes it super-special.
Now that they're stars, the
administration is ready to eat some
crow about kicking them out.

Sara eyes her, and Imogene tries to play it cool, but
fails.

IMOGENE (CONT'D)

Sara, let me go to New York with you.
If I can't get a date for the dance,
the next best thing is hanging out
with the band. In fact, it's better.
And I can smell a senior thesis. I'll
interview your brother as one of the

most influential lyricists of our generation. A true voice for our times.

SARA

There you go, bringing homework into everything. But you're damned right he is.

IMOGENE

What a perfect topic. No more of those suicidal poets that my advisor thinks I should write about.

Imogene goes to her desk, picks up the book she was reading earlier, and drops it in the wastebasket.

IMOGENE (CONT'D)

So what do you say?

SARA

I say ... road trip!