

JUST THE TEN OF US

"Little Diva"

written by

James Larry Sanders Jr.

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CAST

GRAHAM LUBBOCK.....BILL KIRCHENBAUER
ELIZABETH LUBBOCK.....DEBORAH HARMON
MARIE LUBBOCK.....HEATHER LANGENKAMP
CINDY LUBBOCK.....JAMIE LUNER
WENDY LUBBOCK.....BROOKE THEISS
CONNIE LUBBOCK.....JO ANN WILLETTE
J.R. LUBBOCK.....MATT SHAKMAN
SHERRY LUBBOCK.....HEIDI ZEIGLER

GUEST CAST

JUDITH REYNOLDS.....FLORENCE STANLEY
DOOSLER.....EVAN ARNOLD

COLD OPEN

INT. DANNY'S PIZZERIA - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

THE LUBBOCK BABES ARE ON STAGE SWAYING TO THE MUSIC, SNAPPING THEIR FINGERS ALONG WITH THE BEAT. CINDY STEPS FORWARD.

CINDY

*Baby, I need your loving
Baby, I need your loving
Although you're never here
Your voice I often hear
Another day, another night
I long to hold you tight
'Cause I'm so lonely*

CINDY/CONNIE/MARIE/WENDY

*Baby, I need your lovin'
Got to have all your lovin'
Baby, I need your lovin'
Got to have all your lovin'*

AS GRAHAM, ELIZABETH, J.R. AND SHERRY ARE WATCHING THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS, THEY THINK TO THEMSELVES AS THEY CONTINUE TO SING.

GRAHAM (V.O.)

Wow! My daughters have grown into quite the vocalists. They've reduced this crowd of drunk truckers to total silence. I wonder how much they'd pay for an autographed picture? Nah, forget it. The last thing I want is for these lugnuts to have a picture of my daughters on their nightstand.

J.R. (V.O.)

I'd never admit it out loud, but my sisters really sound good. They really could be stars. Which will make it all the more sweet when they get a load of that spring-loaded gila monster I hid in their dresser. They're so going to wet themselves.

CINDY/CONNIE/MARIE/WENDY

*Baby, I need your lovin'
Got to have all your lovin'
Baby, I need your lovin'
Got to have all your lovin'*

ELIZABETH (V.O.)

I've always been proud of my girls, but I don't think I've ever been prouder than I am right now. They're not only helping provide for our family with their performances, but they're performing so well.

ELIZABETH PAUSES.

ELIZABETH (V.O.)

I promised myself I wouldn't cry. It's all so beautiful.

SHERRY (V.O.)

They're dying out there. It's bad
enough they're dressed like extras
from Midnight Caller, but to see the
good work of Levi Stubbs get dragged
through the mud by these sluts? I have
to do something. But what?

SHERRY LOOKS AROUND, SEEING A SERVER DROP SOME BREADSTICKS ON
THE FLOOR AND PUTTING IT BACK IN ITS BASKET AND SERVING IT,
THEN WATCHING A GUY SNEEZE INTO HIS PIZZA AND PROCEEDING TO
EAT IT. HER EYES FINALLY SETTLE ON THE JUKEBOX. SHE NODS
APPROVINGLY.

CINDY

*Empty nights echo your name
Whoa! Sometimes I wonder
Will I ever be the same?*

SUDDENLY, THE MUSIC STOPS, WITH SOME MORE UPBEAT TUNES TAKING
THEIR PLACE. A SPOTLIGHT TURNS ON NEAR THE PIANO, REVEALING
SHERRY FACING THE WALL. SHE TURNS AROUND AND STARTS TO HIJACK
HER SISTERS' PERFORMANCE.

SHERRY

*Sugar pie honey bunch
You know that I love you
I can't help myself
I love you and nobody else
In and out my life
You come and you go
Leaving just your picture behind
And I've kissed it a thousand times
When you snap your finger
Or wink your eye*

(MORE)

SHERRY (CONT'D)

I come runnin' to you

I'm tied to your apron string

And there's nothing I can do!

CINDY STARTS DANCING TO THE MUSIC

CINDY

Hey, she's pretty good.

CONNIE PULLS CINDY DOWN AND LOOKS HER IN THE EYE.

CONNIE

Don't...encourage her.

GRAHAM AND ELIZABETH LOOK DISAPPROVINGLY AT SHERRY, SHE JUST KEEPS SINGING.

SHERRY

I can't help myself

No, I can't help myself

'Cause sugar pie honey bunch

I'm weaker than a girl should be

I can't help myself

I'm a fool in love you see...

FADE TO BLACK.

ACT I

EXT. DANNY'S PIZZERIA - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

THE LUBBOCKS WALK OUT OF DANNY'S.

ELIZABETH

(furious)

I can't believe it, Sherry, I just can't believe it! What makes you think you can just hijack your sister's performance?!

SHERRY

What do you mean "hijack"?! I was saving them from themselves.

GRAHAM

Sherry, listen to me very carefully. What you did up there was wrong! Wrong! Wrong! Wrong!

SHERRY

How is it wrong, Dad? You let these four sing on stage all the time.

GRAHAM

I'm not talking about that! "I'm tied to your apron string?!" No daughter of mine is falling in love with a man who wears an apron!

ELIZABETH

Graham, you wear an apron. You know, the one that says "Kiss The Coach"?

GRAHAM

That's not an apron, it's a barbecue
pit master uniform!

J.R.

Wait a second, here. How do we know
this wasn't all a ruse by "The Lubbock
Babes" here?

THE LUBBOCK BABES STOP AND STAND IN INDIGNATION.

CONNIE

A ruse?!

MARIE

J.R.! What makes you think you can
make an accusation like that?!

J.R.

Easy, after everyone got a load of
Sherry bleating through Motown's
greatest hits, you four sound like The
Supremes by comparison.

WENDY

J.R.! How can you say something like
that?!

GRAHAM

Yeah! How do you know who The Supremes
are?

SHERRY

You're just jealous that I have a talent everyone wants, and you're only talent is making fake elk blood.

J.R.

Hey, it's not elk blood! It's made out of elk blood!

ELIZABETH

Can we stay on topic here! Sherry, promise us you'll never do that again.

SHERRY

Why not?!

MARIE

Because showbusiness is a den of sin! It's no place for an innocent child such as yourself.

SHERRY

What do you mean "no place for an innocent child"? You let Cindy sing with you.

WENDY GESTURES TOWARDS CINDY.

WENDY

Come on, does this look like a child to you?

JUDITH (O.S.)

You did good out there, kid.

CINDY TURNS AROUND

CINDY

Wow! Thanks! I've been singing along
with Raffi.

THE REST OF THE FAMILY TURNS AROUND.

CONNIE

Cindy!

CINDY
(increasingly ashamed)

I mean, singing along with my baby
sister, singing along with...Raffi.

JUDITH

I wasn't talking to you, I was talking
to the one in the hairband.

SHERRY

Who me?

JUDITH

What's your name, kid?

SHERRY

What's it to you?

JUDITH

I'm Judith Reynolds, I'm a talent
scout for the Weinberger & Weinberger
agency.

WENDY

Oh, who cares what her name is?! I'm
sure you're here to talk to me. Say,
what's your commission?

(MORE)

WENDY (CONT'D)

Because I won't accept anything higher than three percent.

JUDITH

To tell you the truth, I did come here to see you and your sisters. I was told you four were the next Supremes.

J.R.

Only in comparison.

WENDY

Shut up, Ratboy!...So if The Lubbock Babes are so great, why are you talking to Shirley or whatever?

JUDITH POINTS TO WENDY.

JUDITH

Because you're just a poor man's Debbie Gibson, that's why.

JUDITH POINTS TO MARIE.

JUDITH (CONT'D)

And you're poor man's Martika.

JUDITH POINTS TO CINDY.

JUDITH (CONT'D)

And you're...

CINDY

A poor man's Tiffany?

JUDITH

Don't be silly. At least Tiffany has fine motor skills.

CINDY

Hey. Nobody told me you can't eat
pizza with chopsticks.

CONNIE

Why are we still standing here talking
to you if you're just going to insult
us?

JUDITH POINTS AT SHERRY.

JUDITH

Because this one right here, she's got
something. She's got sparkle. She's
got spunk.

GRAHAM

Gee, I don't know. My dad always hated
spunk.

JUDITH

Do you have any idea what an
effervescent moppet like your daughter
could make in a year?

GRAHAM

No, I don't.

JUDITH

Let's just say it's a lot more than
your Lubbock Babes can make per annum.

GRAHAM

Hey! What goes on with my daughters' per annum is no one's business but their doctor.

ELIZABETH

Listen, ma'am; I'm sure Sherry's flattered by the offer, but we're going to have to pass.

SHERRY

Speak for yourself, Mom! It's about time the world knew who the real talent in this family is.

GRAHAM

Sherry, listen to your mother.

SHERRY

What's the deal, Dad?! You don't trust my judgment? Come on, I'm almost thirteen.

JUDITH

Did I mention at least half of my clients have appeared on at least one network sitcom?

GRAHAM

I don't want my daughters on some dumb sitcom.

JUDITH

Did I mention one of my young clients
got twenty thousand dollars in
residuals last year.

GRAHAM

Yeah, so?

JUDITH

Did I mention that, as a minor,
everything your daughter makes belongs
to you legally?

GRAHAM PAUSES.

GRAHAM

Sherry, go with the nice lady.

SHERRY

All right!

SHERRY RUNS TO JUDITH.

ELIZABETH

Graham!

GRAHAM

Oh right...make sure you're back
before bedtime, Sherry.

SHERRY

I wouldn't wait up, Dad. We've got a
lot of business to attend to.

SHERRY STARTS WALKING AWAY WITH JUDITH.

JUDITH

So, tell me, kid. Have you taken any acting classes?

SHERRY

I've seen Wendy lie to my dad lots of times. That's as good as any acting class I know of.

FADE TO:

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

GRAHAM IS SITTING AT THE KITCHEN TABLE DRINKING A BEER WHILE ELIZABETH LEERS AT HIM DISAPPROVINGLY. AFTER A PREGNANT PAUSE, GRAHAM BREAKS THE SILENCE.

GRAHAM

What?!

ELIZABETH

You know good and well what.

GRAHAM

So what if I have a beer before bed?

ELIZABETH LOOKS EVEN MORE STERNLY AT GRAHAM.

GRAHAM (CONT'D)

Okay, so I had that nightmare I woke up next to Bob Uecker. I swear it had nothing to do with the beer.

ELIZABETH

Graham Theodore Lubbock. You let our prepubescent daughter walk away with a total stranger.

GRAHAM

Yeah, so? We could use the money.
Isn't that why we let our other
daughters sing at Danny's?

ELIZABETH

Graham, this is completely different!
Not only are they older, but we know
exactly where they are. Who knows
where Sherry is now?

GRAHAM

Elizabeth, she's with a talent agent.
She had a card and everything.

ELIZABETH

She never gave us her business card.

GRAHAM

I looked in her purse back at Danny's.

ELIZABETH

You looked in her purse?!

GRAHAM

Yeah, and not only is Ms. Reynolds a
talent agent, she's a type O negative.
So, if Sherry needs an emergency blood
transfusion, she's good to go.

ELIZABETH

Wait a minute. Why did you look in her
purse at Danny's? You had no idea who
she was at that point.

GRAHAM

Well, if you must know...I dropped a pepperoni in there when she walked past us; and when I reached in to get it, I caught a glimpse of her personal information.

ELIZABETH

Well, isn't that just so convenient.

SHERRY WALKS IN THROUGH THE BACK DOOR.

SHERRY

Hi, Dad. Hi, Mom.

ELIZABETH

Don't "Hi, Mom" me, young lady. I don't know where you get off stealing your sisters' performance, and then go walking off with a stranger on top of it; but your defiant escapades end right here, missy.

SHERRY

Geez, Mom. I thought you'd be happy, especially after I reeled in this big, fat, juicy contract.

SHERRY PUTS SOME LEGAL PAPERS ON THE TABLE IN FRONT OF HER PARENTS.

ELIZABETH

No amount of paperwork is going to get you out of this, Sherry.

GRAHAM

Well, hold on a minute, Elizabeth.
Just what is in this contract?

ELIZABETH

It doesn't matter, Graham; we aren't
signing away our daughter to some
scummy talent agent...

GRAHAM LOOKS IN AWE AT THE TERMS OF THE CONTRACT.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

Your mouth is watering; isn't it,
Graham?

GRAHAM

Oh, I can't help it. Sherry said "fat,
juicy contract" and my Pavlovian
instincts kicked in. But look at these
guarantees, Elizabeth! This could put
Sherry and our six other kids through
college!

ELIZABETH

Graham, we have eight kids.

GRAHAM

Well, I figured Wendy would be in
jail, by then.

SHERRY

Besides, Mom! Ms. Reynolds is already
working with some of the biggest young
stars today! Cody B, Connor T, Cory G!

ELIZABETH

Who's Cory G?!

GRAHAM

You know, Elizabeth. The guy with the saxophone and the goofy hair.

ELIZABETH

Graham, that's Kenny G.

GRAHAM

See, she's working with adult clients, too!

ELIZABETH

Graham, what has gotten into you?! You're always gnashing your teeth about your other daughters getting up on stage. Now Sherry gets the performing bug, and suddenly you're all gung ho.

GRAHAM

Well, she hasn't gone through puberty yet.

ELIZABETH

What difference does that make? She's probably going to start puberty any day now.

GRAHAM

Oh, quit being pessimistic.

SHERRY

You want to know what I think?

ELIZABETH/GRAHAM

No!

SHERRY

Well, I figure if "The Lubbock Babes" can get up on stage and wheeze through the hits weekend after weekend, it's only fair that I get a shot to show the world what I've got.

ELIZABETH

But honey, they're older than you, they're more mature.

SHERRY

More mature?! Cindy still sleeps with a night light!

ELIZABETH

Sherry, I've told you before; Cindy is a special case.

SHERRY

Okay, if you're still afraid of signing the contract, look...

SHERRY POINTS TO THE CONTRACT.

SHERRY (CONT'D)

There's a thirty-day out clause. If any of us want out of the contract after a month, we can annul it with no penalty. So, what do you say?

GRAHAM AND ELIZABETH THINK ABOUT IT FOR A SECOND.

GRAHAM

Why are we still listening to her?!

SHERRY

Dad! You're on my side, remember?!

GRAHAM

Oh, right.

ELIZABETH

We can really get out of this after thirty days?

SHERRY

Have I ever steered you wrong before?

ELIZABETH

And they're not going to have you do anything sleazy?

SHERRY

First class all the way! I insisted upon it.

ELIZABETH SIGHS.

ELIZABETH

Well...if this is what you really, really want...

GRAHAM GRABS THE CONTRACT AND STARTS SIGNING IT.

GRAHAM

All right! One of my stinkin' kids is finally paying off!

ELIZABETH

Graham! Aren't you even going to read it?!

GRAHAM

Hey, she's never steered us wrong before.

SHERRY

Great! I'm going to go practice my vocal technique.

SHERRY STARTS HEADING INTO THE LIVING ROOM.

ELIZABETH

Sherry, it's way past your bedtime!

SHERRY

Sorry, Mom. I'm under contract.

SHERRY LEAVES. GRAHAM AND ELIZABETH START EXASPERATEDLY REFLECTING ON WHAT THEY'VE JUST AUTHORIZED.

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF ACT I

ACT II

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

CAPTION: "ONE MONTH LATER".

CONNIE IS READING A BOOK WHILE J.R. IS WATCHING TV.

CONNIE

J.R., don't you have anything better
to do than sitting in front of the
idiot box?

J.R.

Come on, Connie. You of all people
could use some time in front of the
boob tube.

GRAHAM ENTERS THE ROOM.

GRAHAM

J.R.? Is that Mister Belvedere?

J.R.

Yeah.

GRAHAM

Well, turn it off. Now.

J.R.

Why?

CONNIE

Did you have the Bob Uecker dream
again, Dad?

GRAHAM

What?!...No! Just turn it off, we got to get ready to see Sherry at the Eureka Playhouse.

J.R.

You really want to watch your own flesh and blood humiliate herself in front of the whole town?

GRAHAM

I don't see your name on that marquee, J.R.. Last time I checked, they don't give out big contracts for making fake elk blood.

J.R.

I keep telling you, it's not elk blood, it's made out of elk blood!

CONNIE

Geez, we've been singing for two years now, and we're still stuck at Danny's. Sherry only got into this a month ago, and she gets to perform at the Playhouse?

GRAHAM

Hey, she's been practicing really hard. We've barely seen her at all this past month.

J.R.

Yeah, all that practicing just so the whole town can see her fall on her...

CINDY AND MARIE WALK IN.

CINDY
(distraught)

...as I was saying, Marie, Sherry is gone. She's never coming back.

MARIE

For the last time, Cindy, when somebody leaves the house, they're not gone forever; they're just in a different place.

GRAHAM

Hey, you two. Be sure to put on your Sunday best, tonight. We want to look our best for Sherry's debut.

MARIE

Hey, how come you never put on your Sunday best when we perform?

GRAHAM

Because, Danny has a reverse dress code. No black socks, no long pants.

WENDY STOMPS DOWN THE STAIRS IN A HUFF.

WENDY

Geez Louise, what makes Sherry so freakin' special?!

MARIE

Am I sensing a bit of sibling rivalry?

WENDY

Yes! We've been singing for two years now, and we're still stuck at...

GRAHAM

Can't you stinkin' kids just be happy for your little sister. This could be her big break!

ELIZABETH COMES IN FROM THE KITCHEN, CARRYING LITTLE MELISSA.

ELIZABETH

Ohhhh, this is so exciting! Our little Sherry's about to be a star!

GRAHAM

Elizabeth! You've been spending the past month wringing your hands about the long nights Sherry's been spending with Ms. Reynolds.

ELIZABETH

Yeah, but now that all that work is about to pay off for her, and for us...yippee!

ELIZABETH DOES A PIROUETTE, WITH MELISSA STILL IN HER ARMS.

GRAHAM

Oh, geez, look at the time! Girls, J.R., upstairs. We've got to get ready for the big show.

THE FAMILY STARTS MAKING THEIR WAY UPSTAIRS.

WENDY

Look at us, we're all getting bent out
of shape over that little runt,
Shelly.

J.R.

Yeah, she's probably having the time
of her life right now.

INT. EUREKA PLAYHOUSE - BACKSTAGE

SHERRY IS BALANCING A STACK OF BOOKS ON HER HEAD, WITH JUDITH
WATCHING FROM A DIRECTOR'S CHAIR.

SHERRY

Ms. Reynolds? How much longer do I
have to keep doing this?

JUDITH

Until your posture improves, kid. You
have a hereditary risk of early onset
hunchback.

SHERRY

How do you know that?!

JUDITH

I looked at your sister, Connie.

JUST THEN, A STAGEHAND WALKS IN.

DOOSLER

Uh, Ms. Reynolds, somebody ripped a
big hole in the curtains.

JUDITH

It's the theater's problem, kid. Not mine.

SHERRY

Doosler?!

DOOSLER

Oh, hi Sherry.

SHERRY

What are you doing here?

DOOSLER

Oh, they said I could get extra credit if I volunteer at the Playhouse.

SHERRY INCREDULOUSLY QUESTIONS DOOSLER, THE STACK OF BOOKS REMAINING UNDISTURBED UPON HER HEAD.

SHERRY

But St. Augie's doesn't own the playhouse!

DOOSLER

Yeah, but Father Hargis has been trying to get season tickets here for years.

A CRASH IS HEARD IN THE DISTANCE.

DOOSLER (CONT'D)

Oh no! Not another light!

DOOSLER RUNS OFF.

SHERRY

Ms. Reynolds, can I take off these books, now?

JUDITH

Has it been sixty minutes, yet?

ANOTHER CRASH IS HEARD. JUDITH GETS UP.

JUDITH (CONT'D)

Keep those books on your head, kid. I need to check on the stagehand.

SHERRY

I thought that wasn't your problem.

JUDITH

It isn't. I have a running bet on how long it takes for that Doosler boy to end up in the E-R.

SHERRY

A running bet?! With who?!

JUDITH

Don't ask so many questions, kid. You'll sleep a lot better at night.

JUDITH LEAVES, AND GRAHAM AND ELIZABETH ENTERS.

ELIZABETH

Sherry!

GRAHAM

Hey, Sherry! How's it shakin' for our little diva?!

SHERRY

Happy.

ELIZABETH

You don't look too happy.

SHERRY

Of course I'm happy! Sure, every hour of my day is either being spent in school or doing some sort of vocal training. Sure, I haven't had a good ten hours of sleep in over a month. But you know what? I finally have some real autonomy. I'm finally in control of my own destiny, and my destiny is clear. I'm going to be a star!

GRAHAM

Really? I don't remember Elizabeth Taylor ever having a library on her head.

SHERRY

It's a small sacrifice, but soon I will be free. Free from sharing a room with incontinent toddlers. Free from leftovers of leftovers. And free from quote-unquote "older" siblings.

CINDY, CONNIE, MARIE, AND WENDY WALK IN. CINDY IMMEDIATELY BREAKS OFF.

CINDY

Sherry!!!

CINDY RUNS TO SHERRY, PICKS HER UP, AND EMBRACES HER TIGHTLY; CAUSING SHERRY TO LOSE HER BOOKS.

SHERRY

Aaah!

CINDY BEGINS TO TEAR UP.

CINDY

I thought I'd never see you again!

SHERRY

You see what I have to deal with,
Mom?!

WENDY

Cindy! Let go of her!

GRAHAM

Yeah, Cindy, remember what happened
when you did that to Hooter?

CINDY PUTS SHERRY DOWN. SHERRY LOOKS AT THE BOOKS ON THE
FLOOR.

SHERRY

Great, now I have to start all over.

SHERRY PUTS THE BOOKS BACK ON HER HEAD.

MARIE

Sherry, what are you doing?

SHERRY

I'm trying to stave off early onset
hunchback.

CONNIE

Early onset hunchback?

SHERRY

You should know, Quasimodo.

CONNIE STARTS WORRYINGLY INSPECTING HER SHOULDERS.

ELIZABETH

Honey, I think we're going to go to
our seats, now.

GRAHAM

Yeah, break a leg!

THE FAMILY LEAVES. SHERRY TAKES THE BOOKS OFF HER HEAD AND
DECIDES TO LOOK AT HERSELF IN THE VANITY, AND THEN THE
CONTRACT.

SHERRY

"If after thirty days, the client is
unsatisfied with the terms and
conditions of representation, the
client may terminate said contract
without penalty."

SHERRY THINKS FOR A COUPLE OF SECONDS, BEFORE THROWING IT ON
THE VANITY'S COUNTER.

SHERRY (CONT'D)

Yeah, right!

JUST THEN, J.R. WALKS IN.

J.R.

Hey, Sherry.

SHERRY

What do you want?

J.R.

Just wanted to see what being a star
looks like.

SHERRY

Hey, if you're here to throw me off my
game, it's not going to work.

J.R.

I'm not going to do anything. I just haven't seen you in a while.

SHERRY TURNS TO J.R. IN DISGUST.

SHERRY

Just go back to your seat, I have a show in five minutes.

J.R.

I just thought it would be nice to have someone to talk to, for once.

SHERRY

What are you talking about? There are eight other people with you in that house.

J.R.

Well, Mom and Dad don't talk to me as much as yell at me, and I think Harvey's vocabulary is only up to ten words at this point.

SHERRY

So talk to your other sisters.

J.R.

Yeah, their vocabulary when talking to me is just one word...Ratboy.

SHERRY

Even Cindy?

J.R.

Hey, I'd rather be called Ratboy than get stuck listening to her meandering nonsense. You can only hear someone talk about shades of lipstick so long before you start losing brain cells.

SHERRY

I didn't know you had any to lose.

J.R.

You know, at least when you insult me, you put some thought into it.

SHERRY

J.R., is this some kind of joke?

J.R.

A joke?

SHERRY

If I'm not wrong, and when am I ever wrong, I would say you're...being nice to me.

J.R.

I can't believe it, either. I guess absence does make the heart grow fonder.

SHERRY

Stop wasting my time, J.R.

SHERRY TURNS BACK AROUND. J.R. STARTS TO LEAVE, BUT TURNS BACK TOWARDS SHERRY.

J.R.
(emphatic)

I miss you, okay! Are you happy?!

SHERRY TURNS BACK TOWARD J.R.

SHERRY

Oh, puh-leeze.

SHERRY TURNS BACK TOWARD THE VANITY. J.R. REMAINS STANDING.
AFTER A SECOND, SHERRY TURNS BACK AROUND.

SHERRY (CONT'D)

Oh god, you're serious, aren't you?

J.R.

I am serious. And if you go out there,
and do as well as you think you're
going to do, I know you're going to go
off to Hollywood, and get a whole
bunch of offers to do a whole bunch of
dumb sitcoms. And then you'll start
your new jet set lifestyle where
you'll have everything your heart
could desire...everything except your
family. And when you end up in the
gutter somewhere between Sherman Oaks
and Van Nuys, who's going to be there
to get you out?

SHERRY

The Betty Ford Center.

J.R.

I just wish you'd think about this.
Once you go out there and sing that
first bar, there's no going back.

SHERRY

Our sisters have been singing at
Danny's for two years, and they
haven't gone anywhere.

J.R.

They're not you, though, Sherry.

J.R. LEAVES. SHERRY TAKES ANOTHER LOOK AT THE CONTRACT.

SHERRY

"After thirty days have elapsed, the
signee will be bound to the terms of
the contract until the end of
March...Two Thousand One?!"

SHERRY PAUSES FOR A SECOND.

SHERRY (CONT'D)

"The signee will be required to
perform the duties outlined for the
duration. Failure to perform will
result in termination, and litigation
against the signee...and their parent
or legal guardian." Mom and Dad...

SHERRY LOOKS IN THE MIRROR.

SHERRY (CONT'D)

...Two Thousand One.

INT. EUREKA PLAYHOUSE - THEATRE

JUDITH STANDS ON STAGE. THE LUBBOCKS SIT IN THE FRONT ROW, WAITING WITH VARYING DEGREES OF EAGERNESS, AS THE CROWD APPLAUDS.

JUDITH

Thank you, Eureka. Reynolds Productions, in association with the Weinberger & Weinberger agency, are pleased to present the next great child star. A star that will forever be eager to please her public, no matter the personal sacrifice. I should know, I got it in writing. Please give a warm welcome to the one, the only, Sherry Lubbock.

JUDITH BECKONS SHERRY TO THE STAGE. SHE WALKS ON, STEPPING ONTO A PEDESTAL NEAR THE MICROPHONE, AND ONCE THE SPOTLIGHT SNAPS ON, SHE BEGINS TO SPEAK.

SHERRY

I know you are all expecting a big song and dance right now. Not sure how I can dance on this little pedestal...

THE AUDIENCE STARTS LAUGHING. SHERRY SMILES.

SHERRY (CONT'D)

Wow. You all must really like me!

SHERRY TAKES A DEEP BREATH, AND THEN LOOKS AT HER FAMILY. HER PARENTS ARE BEAMING, HER OLDER SISTERS SHOWING VARYING DEGREES OF SUPPORT AS WELL, AND J.R. IS SITTING AND WAITING FOR SHERRY TO BEGIN HER NEW LIFE WITH THE FIRST BAR OF THE FIRST NUMBER.

SHERRY (CONT'D)

Wait a minute. All my life. All of my twelve, grueling years of life; I've wanted to be a star. To have the whole world looking at me, only me.

SHERRY LOOKS AT HER PARENTS AGAIN, AND THEN AT JUDITH, WHO'S LIGHTING A CIGARETTE OFF STAGE.

SHERRY (CONT'D)

And maybe someday I will, but I just don't think it's the right time. I'm sorry...

SHERRY STEPS OFF OF THE PEDESTAL, AND WALKS OFF. THE CROWD MURMURS, AND GRAHAM AND ELIZABETH ARE LOOKING AROUND CONFUSED. SHERRY APPROACHES JUDITH AND HANDS HER THE CONTRACT.

SHERRY (CONT'D)

I'm exercising my out clause. Don't call me.

SHERRY WALKS AWAY. JUDITH LOOKS AT THE CONTRACT, FORLORN.

JUDITH

Now who'll be my big star?

DOOSLER WALKS ON STAGE, A BIT CONFUSED HIMSELF, AND STANDS IN FRONT OF THE MICROPHONE.

DOOSLER

So, what would it be like if Richard Nixon was in the Rolling Stones?

DOOSLER PUTS HIS HANDS UP WITH TWIN "PEACE" GESTURES.

DOOSLER (CONT'D)
(Nixon-esque voice)

I can't get no...satisfaction.

THE CROWD STARTS TO BOO.

JUDITH

Well, he's better than nothing. Hey,
kid!

JUDITH WALKS TOWARDS DOOSLER.

FADE TO:

I/E. LUBBOCKS' SUBURBAN - NIGHT

THE FAMILY IS STUFFED IN THE SUBURBAN, DRIVING BACK HOME.

GRAHAM

Sherry, what was that about?!

SHERRY

I changed my mind.

ELIZABETH

Why did you do that?!

SHERRY

We're women, Mom! That's what we do!

WENDY

I guess The Lubbock Babes were just
too hard of an act to follow, huh?

SHERRY

Don't flatter yourself, Wendy. I had
my reasons. Reasons you couldn't
possibly understand.

SHERRY SITS BACK IN THE REAR SEAT, NEXT TO J.R., BOTH BETWEEN
HARVEY AND MELISSA.

J.R.

I knew you'd chicken out.

SHERRY

Chicken out?! You were the one who was trying to get me to quit!

J.R.

I guess my whole "I miss you" routine really worked.

SHERRY

Nice try. That's the first time I've ever seen you act sincere about anything.

J.R.

Sincere?

SHERRY

You're not backtracking on me, Mister Sentimental. Now, I know. I'm your favorite sibling, and you would die without me.

J.R.

Don't flatter yourself.

SHERRY

I'm not, I've got you to do that for me.

J.R.

I'm starting to wish you did go Hollywood.

SHERRY

Some other time. Maybe by then you'll
start making some practical effects
that aren't made out of elk blood.

J.R.

It's not elk blood, it's made out
of...

J.R. STOPS HIMSELF, REALIZING SHERRY KNEW HIS EFFECTS WERE
ONLY *MADE OUT* OF ELK BLOOD. SHERRY PROCEEDS TO PULL HIS HEAD
DOWN AND GIVE HIM A GREAT, BIG NOOGIE.

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF ACT II