

THE LOVE NEST

Or

"Words were not necessary, because we were one."

Scene from THE CAROUSEL

An original screenplay by Ross E Cooper

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INT. LIMOUSINE - CONTINUOUS

ETHAN CROSSE (50), a real estate mega-mogul, is on his daily limo commute with longtime chauffeur, MARCUS (42). They both look out their windows and notice that traffic is beginning to slow down.

MARCUS

How're the boys doin' at school?

ETHAN

You mean Brown and Yale? I don't have to worry; they take their education very seriously.

It's really quite distressing ...
I always have to remind them to
leave time for booze and broads!

Marcus laughs heartily.

ETHAN

The world in front of them and
they can't wait to graduate and
join me in the business!

MARCUS

What's wrong with that??

ETHAN

Certainly, there's no satisfaction
having your future handed to you?

MARCUS

I think it's flattering they do.

ETHAN

I know, I know ...
They think they've discovered what
motivates me, but they really
don't have a clue.

MARCUS

Excuse me for saying ... but you've
had a pretty good life.

ETHAN

Sure ... so you'd think ...
but do you know what moment in my
life has meant the most to me?

MARCUS

The christening of Crosse Towers?

ETHAN

Hardly!

MARCUS

I'm surprised ... didn't you
once say that --

ETHAN

-- Geez, Marcus! You know me
better than anybody and that's the
best you can come up with!

ETHAN

The great glory of my life was not
of brick and mortar, but rather --

MARCUS

-- It wasn't a building?

ETHAN

A month before Eva and I were
married, we found our first
apartment, in Fort Lee. Giddily,
went to see the super ...

INT. QUICK FLASH: BASEMENT OFFICE - SUMMER 1982

Ethan and Eva, with trembling hands, count the cash deposit
into the SUPER'S palm. The super, a slothful, fat man with

a well chewed cigar in his mouth, accepts their money disinterestedly and nonchalantly tosses them the keys.

INT. QUICK FLASH: ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

The love-birds nestle in the elevator to the 15th floor and talk romantically in their impassioned anticipation.

INT. QUICK FLASH: EMPTY APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

The newlyweds open the door, enter and are momentarily taken aback by the space's vacant vastness. The bright sunlight washing through the uncovered windows enhances the sense of emptiness. The glare makes them squint. Ethan and Eva sniff the pungent smells of freshly painted walls and varnished wood floors.

ETHAN (V.O.)

To us ... the acrid smell of fresh paint and varnish was the scent of lavender or lilac.

Hand in hand we dreamed of all the ways we were going to make this empty, generic space our own. Words were not necessary ...
... because we were one.

They sit on the floor with their backs against the wall. Ethan and Eva rest their heads upon one another, the image of youth and beauty glowing from a shared romantic dream.

The mid-summer sunshine pours through the windows illuminating their faces with an angelic radiance. They appear to melt into one another as they drift dreamily into a state of contentment, without the need for words.

ETHAN (V.O.)

We sat there for hours ...
... not uttering a word ...
... our hearts beating in unison a happy rhythm, as we dreamed the same happy thoughts of a better world we'd make our own. It was optimism born of innocence.

END QUICK FLASH

INT. LIMOUSINE - THE PRESENT - CONTINUOUS

ETHAN

The great moment of my life was a feeling I thought impossible. Endless love was ours and no one else could possibly understand.

MARCUS

That's beautiful Mr. C!

ETHAN

Yes it was ... and Eva's been patient and understanding, as I've allowed the real world to decay our little romantic nucleus.

The business has hardened me, year after year, eroding the softness that allowed me to be vulnerable and open to that kind of joy. Every victory has had its price, Marcus. I know that Eva has suffered in silence.

MARCUS

But you and the missus still have a good relationship and two admiring sons who want to follow in your footsteps.

ETHAN

I'll be honest with you ...
... I'm not that keen on having Brown and Yale in the business.

MARCUS

New blood brings healthy change?

ETHAN

Yeh ... I'll tell you what kind of change it'll bring ...
The boys will run the business and I'll buy a new 'Vette to cruise Route#66 looking for adventure, bypassing the mid-life crisis waiting for my meltdown.

MARCUS

You're very on point today, Mr. C.

ETHAN

Nah ... Just my nerves talking.

A teenage boy waiting for a bus distracts Ethan. He is peculiarly dressed in a mode more typical of Ethan's youth. Ethan is fascinated by the boy's appearance. Ethan hears the distant sound of a CALLIOPE.