

C A N D I D H O P E

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FADE IN:

EXT. DREAM: POND -- NIGHT

Lonesome trees rise out of the moving mist. A pale new moon enhances the terrain's contour. Zigzagging in the pond, a GOLDFISH disrupts the moon's reflection on the surface. A WOLF HOWLS in the distance.

Sleek CANDID HOPE (12) gropes her way through the darkness, stumbles, and falls into the water. A big SPLASH shatters the stillness.

EXT. DREAM: MAGIC HOUSE -- MOMENTS LATER

Candid approaches a fence. She climbs over it. The mist clears, and in front of her appears the silhouette of a Victorian, almost fairy-tailish house. The mist thickens. Darkness absorbs the little moonlight. Candid feels her way onward.

She brushes against something which protrudes in the dark.

The falling object, a huge, old-fashioned key, becomes visible as from the keyhole red light streams out.

It projects into the dark blue night the keyhole's shape which is in an archetype of beauty known as the KA rune (could also stand for the "A" in CANDID HOPE).

Though mesmerized, Candid reinserts the key. Curious, she KNOCKS.

DOLLS (O.S.)

Come in, please.

She unlocks the door. Opening it causes a SCREECHING ECHOING SOUND as though the door had been shut for centuries. Finally Candid thrusts it open, and a burst of breathtaking red light floods out.

Entering the . . .

INT. RED ROOM

. . . Candid faces motionless MAGIC DOLLS in human size, staring at her. Each wears a dress with a different flower pattern. Some have corresponding buds in their hair.

CANDID

Wow.

(puzzled)

Haven't you seen a girl before?

Silence.

CANDID

What a difference with Hector, Tudor,
and Victor.
(beat)
Pirates . . .

VERVAIN, who does not look so fresh as the others, reveals her thoughts by emanating waves of light. Her lips barely move.

VERVAIN

You are so beautiful.

CANDID

YOU are telling me that?

VERVAIN

The light shining from you fills us
with joy. I don't have words to express
it.

CANDID

Again, if Hector Woodleg would see
this, he'd flip out. Not that he hasn't
already.

HEATHER and AGRIMONY, with corresponding flower patterns on their dresses, speak up in the same fashion as Vervain did.

HEATHER

Look at her aura --

AGRIMONY

Like a million happy dolls.

CANDID

Am I glad Schnautzy isn't around.
Weird creature, guys. That is, dolls. --
By the way, I'm Candid. Who are you?

VERVAIN

I'm Vervain. She's Heather and this
is Agrimony.

CANDID

Honorina could use some of your flowers
to ornate herself.
(beat)
You all have flower names?

VERVAIN

We perennially blossom.

CANDID

Honorina has a chip on her shoulder
that perennially blossoms. You spot
it from a mile.

The Dolls smile.

CANDID

What a difference with Nightmarewaters.
. . . Sailed through it before. Is
this the lobby to paradise? I feel so
good.

VERVAIN

You're beginning to feel how good it
is to believe.

CANDID

What?

VERVAIN

Just to believe.

HEATHER

And to enjoy.

CANDID

It was rough out there.

AGRIMONY

Whatever impressions from outside are
doomed in here.

CANDID

I feel so light. But tell me, d'you
always speak without . . . without
talking?

VERVAIN

You can do it too.

CANDID

(incredulous)

Oh yeah, I can do it too . . .

Her lips slow down. Agrimony, Heather, and Vervain look at
her, amused.

CANDID (V.O.)

. . . I can do it too. Just like that.

VERVAIN

We hear you.

CANDID (V.O.)

Vervain.

(beat)

It works.

AGRIMONY

Of course it does.

VERVAIN

Any time.

CANDID (V.O.)

Come on.

HEATHER

Here's a mirror. Look for yourself.

Candid turns to it and watches her reflection.

Her lips do not move, but her face shows expression. Gentle waves of light spread out from her.

CANDID (V.O.)

Candid. Candid! Are you out of your mind?

VERVAIN

Yes, Candid, you're out of your mind.

CANDID (V.O.)

Wait, wait a sec. Is this me?

Not corresponding to her inquisitive mood, in the mirror she reflects with a bright smile. She turns around, takes a few steps, and stops. She turns back to the Dolls.

CANDID

This isn't some trick? D'you wanna make fun of me?

AGRIMONY

What is that?

HEATHER

Make fun of you?

Candid sits down and smiles.

VERVAIN

Candid, could you redo my eyebrows please?

CANDID

Sure, my pleasure.

VERVAIN

Ages have passed since a doll maker gave me some makeup.

CANDID

Yikes, I forgot the beauty case. -- Anybody else coming?

VERVAIN

Was expecting somebody, but she never showed up.

CANDID

And I left my case to Millegambs . . .

The Dolls do not follow her.

CANDID

. . . a guest on the pirate ship before.

VERVAIN

Actually . . . there should be a beauty case in the blue room.

CANDID

Blue room?

AGRIMONY

That's where the most creative of us are.

Candid does not understand.

VERVAIN

Go to the mirror! See for yourself!

She does it and a blue whirl fades in over her throat's reflection. The whirl slows down and stops. Four portraits of ANGELICA, an elegant Magic Doll in blue light, appear.

CANDID

You the makeup artist?

The four portraits spin and disappear.

VERVAIN

Whenever they get excited, they spin.

HEATHER

It's the same for all of us.

VERVAIN

Why don't you go to the blue room?

CANDID

Blue room?

VERVAIN

Yeah, and bring the beauty case with you on the way back.

CANDID

You don't mind?

VERVAIN

Of course not. We're glad that you've visited us.

CANDID

Okay, dolls. See you later.

EXT. DREAM: MAGIC HOUSE -- NIGHT

Candid approaches another door in the dark. She pulls the key out, and a yellow light streams out.

CANDID

Oh.

About to reinsert the key she cannot help but peek through its hole, into the:

INT. YELLOW ROOM

where GLASSES-WEARING MAGIC DOLLS float in midair, asleep. They are in yellow overalls in yellow light.

CANDID (O.S.)

Rather bright for a sleeping room.

EXT. DREAM: MAGIC HOUSE -- NIGHT

Candid reinserts the key.

CANDID

Sorry. See you some other time.

She moves to another door.

She takes out the key and blue light streams through the same archetype shape toward her.

CANDID

(glances at key)

What are these for?

(louder)

Anybody inside?

DOLLS (O.S.)

Come in.

Entering the . . .

INT. BLUE ROOM

. . . hues of blue light welcome Candid as she steps in. Hues of blue also reflect out of impressive paintings of sea waves, of an azure horizon with dramatic clouds, and of the night sky illuminated by a full moon.

In a corner in most intense blue sits a blue SIRENE.

SIRENE

Don't worry.

CANDID

Not a Sirene, huh?

SIRENE

Won't enchant visitors.

CANDID

You wouldn't get rid of Victor and Tudor.

SIRENE

I don't have a Sirene's voice.

CANDID

And they may not be Grecians. But they're pirates.

Candid moves on and stops in front of a spinning portrait of Angelica.

Spinning Angelica divides into two heads and into four.

CANDID

Yes, definitely, this must be you.

The faces smile.

CANDID

I was supposed to get the beauty case.

The four Angelica portraits turn in one direction as if to invite Candid to do the same. She does it and spots a beauty case nearby. It fades into two and into four.

MAGIC DOLL HEADS IN BLUE enact the same in the background and, one by one, spin a quarter of a turn clockwise.

CANDID

Cool.

They rotate counterclockwise for a quarter of a turn. One group of four doll heads turns in one direction, and the next in the opposite.

Continuing in a crescendo of imagination, the choreography ends and all groups of four doll heads revert to one as a CLOCK STRIKES. It is the first preliminary stroke to announce the full hour. All doll portraits freeze. They shrink, and their bodies in blue gowns appear.

CANDID

Midnight? Time for the ghosts? --
They'd have to dress up near you.

Angelica turns to Candid.

ANGELICA

You said it.

CANDID

What?

ANGELICA

Ghosts do not fit in. They'd have to dress up.

Candid turns toward the clock which is suspended in the air under a night sky as ceiling.

Made of light whose intensity is strongest in the center, the clock features glittering dots dancing in a regular fashion at the circumference and around the clock itself.

Its hour and its minute arms, made of silvery dots flashing from the center to the top, point at close to the "12."

Beneath it, two Lilliputian golden fish, one swimming clockwise in tiny circles and the other counterclockwise around the first, increase their speed.

CANDID

What's the time?

The dots dancing around the clock slow down. The intermitting silvery dots forming the hour and the minute arms increase in speed and intensity.

The whole clock flashes. Its overall light weakens. The AQUARIUS Figurine emerges from behind. His hand grabs the edge above the "12."

ANGELICA

See the hand on top of the clock?

The Aquarius places a vessel on the edge and climbs up.

CANDID

Yeah, he just placed this . . . vase.

The Dolls stop breathing.

He freezes.

ANGELICA

Withholding our breath, we freeze his coming.

CANDID

What's wrong with him?

ANGELICA

When he pours the water, the new era begins. It's a few breaths from that event.

CANDID

How much is a breath?

ANGELICA

We're slowing down time. Out in the world you'll have a few more moments.

CANDID

A few more moments? What does that mean?

ANGELICA

A few more chances, in your language. It's not that we can do much . . .

Confused, eager to move on,

CANDID

Which beauty case can I take with me?

ANGELICA

What d'you need that for?

CANDID

Vervain, in the red room, she needs a new make over.

ANGELICA

Has already happened.

CANDID

How? D'you have some makeup artist?

ANGELICA

No, your desire to help has done it.

Intrigued,

CANDID

Who are you?

ANGELICA

I'm Angelica.

Absorbed, Candid mimics a makeup artist analyzing her work.

ANGELICA

Go pay a visit to the violet room and remember what you've witnessed.

CANDID

How could I forget it.

She walks away in front of a row of Magic Dolls in blue frozen in graceful poses.

EXT. DREAM: MAGIC HOUSE -- NIGHT

Candid comes to the next door. She extracts the key. Violet light shines out. She reinserts the key and KNOCKS.

ABIGAIL (O.S.)

Welcome. I know you're one of us.

Entering the . . .

INT. VIOLET ROOM

. . . hundreds of huge violets welcome Candid. They emanate intense violet light from their opening and closing petals, and turn toward Candid as she passes by.

Mesmerized, she reaches numerous shining candles, many of which with purple flames. The door shuts.

CANDID

Oops. Sorry, folks.

She turns around between two candlestick holders whose candles reflect in her eyes.

CANDID

Wow.

She spots a corner where uncounted metallic strips hang down from an unseen ceiling. Still responding to the breeze with their moving reflections, the strips multiply the glittering of the candle flames.

She gently blows toward them and revitalizes the scene.

CANDID

Cute.

ABIGAIL (O.S.)

What a gentle breeze.

Candid exhales with more force.

ABIGAIL (O.S.)

Too much! Getting ticklish.

CANDID

Ticklish? A breath of air?

Candid exhales again, and LAUGHTER can be heard.

ABIGAIL (O.S.)

Please, darling, not so strong.

CANDID

Wonder what a megasneeze of private Sneezer would do to your place.

ABIGAIL (O.S.)

Only who's suited finds this place.