

LARRY'S BEST FRIEND

Based on the award winning stage play

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. PARK - DAY.

It is a bright afternoon. GINGER, a Golden Retriever, runs alone through the fields of a large city park.

She jumps and catches a frisbee in her mouth.

She returns it to LARRY, a moderately attractive man of slight build, in his mid-thirties. He takes it from her, pats her head and throws it again. His face is not clearly shown.

This action is repeated several times from different angles as OPENING CREDITS roll.

INT. LARRY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

All of the lights are off, so the scene is illuminated only by the streetlights from outside and a full moon. The figure of Ginger paces back and forth before the picture window.

The headlights of a passing car briefly shine into the room. Ginger jumps up onto the couch and barks. The car passes and a disappointed Ginger slinks down from the couch.

INT. LECTURE HALL - NIGHT

A hall with folding chairs on linoleum floor. There are a few new age posters taped to the cinder block wall. RACHEL an attractive, though slightly overweight, brunette about 30, stands arms akimbo and eyes blazing, looking very angrily at Larry. She wears a long peasant skirt and top embroidered with mystic symbols.

RACHEL

(whispering angrily)

What did you just call me?

LARRY

Witch. I said witch. I said you'd make a fine witch, not... anyway why is it so derogatory to call a woman a female dog?

## INT. LARRY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Back at Larry's, Ginger still paces back and forth. She goes to the front door and tries to twist the doorknob with her teeth. Failing that, she tries one paw then the other, finally giving up in disgust. She resumes her pacing.

## INT. LECTURE HALL - NIGHT

RACHEL

What it means-- what both words mean-- is that men like you can't stand to see a woman with even a little bit of power. It used to be, the only way a woman could gain any control over her life was to learn the secret crafts. Often they were burnt at the stake for it.

LARRY

Nope, the word bitch means a female dog...

RACHEL

Or a woman with too much power.

LARRY

If I were a woman, I would consider it the highest of compliments to be compared to a dog. Especially one like Ginger, sweet, and loyal, and trusting!

## INT. LARRY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The headlights of a passing car again shine into the room. Ginger again jumps up onto the couch and barks. The car passes and she slinks down from the couch.

## INT. LECTURE HALL - NIGHT

LARRY

I don't know why I let you drag me to another of Mcallister's voodoo lectures. "Hocus pocus dominocus, on your wallet I will focus."

RACHEL

Now I understand why Caroline left you. You are nothing but a smug, egotistical, know-it all.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

There is no room in your little  
mind for anything that doesn't fit.  
No room for any one else either.

INT. LARRY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Ginger strolls over to a toy box and picks out a ball. She takes it over to Larry's easy chair and bounces it. It doesn't bounce very far.

She picks it up in her mouth and races to the other side of the room. She bounces it there again.

She picks it up and carries it gently back to the chair.

It is as if Larry is there playing ball with her. She repeats this solitary game several times before getting bored again.

INT. LECTURE HALL - NIGHT

Back at the lecture hall Larry spots MCALLISTER coming down the aisle from the stage. He is an imposing, tall man, in his early sixties, wearing a business suit with an incongruous multi-colored shawl.

LARRY

(sarcastically)

Oh, Sh... Here comes your great  
Guru McAllister to lay some more of  
his pointless aphorisms upon us.

RACHEL

You don't know anything. He is not  
a guru. He's a shaman.

LARRY

Same thing...

RACHEL

He has traveled all over the world  
absorbing ancient folk traditions.  
It's a great honor to be his  
apprentice, to absorb his wisdom.

INT. LARRY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The headlights of a passing car again shine into the room. Ginger again jumps up onto the couch and barks. The car passes and she slinks down from the couch.

INT. LECTURE HALL - NIGHT

LARRY

You mean his bullshit! Rachel come on! Can't you see through this guy? Can't you see what he is really after?

RACHEL

For a scientist, you sure keep your mind closed down tight!

LARRY

I believe in reality; things that can be observed, measured, and approached it with a healthy skepticism.

McAllister approaches them from across the hall with a broad, but condescending, smile.

MCALLISTER

Skepticism, like all remedies, is only healthy in small doses. You can read about that in my book.

McAllister holds out his hand toward Larry who hesitates before shaking it.

MCALLISTER (CONT'D)

Hello, you must be Larry. You should be very proud. Rachel here has a strong energy around her. She will become very powerful as I teach her to channel that energy.

LARRY

Energy? Energy is whatever obeys the laws of thermodynamics. People don't have "energy," except when they are in motion.

MCALLISTER

The Mind is always in motion. Sometimes it takes residence in our brains, sometimes it escapes and flies off into other worlds. Rachel tells me you are a scientist-

INT. LARRY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Ginger goes to her water dish. It's empty. She pushes it along the floor with her nose toward the sink. She looks longingly up toward the sink.

INT. LECTURE HALL - NIGHT

RACHEL

Some scientist. He talks to his dog as if it were a person; like it can really understand English. How scientific is that?

LARRY

She understands me better than a lot of humans do. Including--

MCALLISTER

Actually, my daughter, in most of our shamanic traditions animals become our spiritual guides and it is wisdom to converse with them. I am sure, in his way, your dog imparts his wisdom to you.

INT. LARRY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Ginger is still pacing back and forth. She goes to the front door again and tries to twist the doorknob with her teeth. She resumes her pacing.

INT. LECTURE HALL - NIGHT

LARRY

Her wisdom? Ginger is smart as dogs go, but I wouldn't call her wise. You guys just make up a lot of attributes and pin them on dumb animals. Just like you do to some random groupings of stars, or... what have you.

RACHEL

Don't be such a jerk.

MCALLISTER

I take it you harbor a bit of hostility toward the ancient traditions.

MCALLISTER (CONT'D)  
 Maybe if I explained them in terms  
 more acceptable to your world view  
 as a scientist.

LARRY  
 --engineer.

MCALLISTER  
 As an engineer then, surely you  
 believe in atoms and electrons,  
 though you've never seen them.

LARRY  
 Things can be measured without  
 being seen.

MCALLISTER  
 Hold up your hand.

McAllister attempts to take Larry's hand but he pulls it  
 back. McAllister then holds up his own hand.

MCALLISTER (CONT'D)  
 Your hand is a part of you, is it  
 not?

LARRY  
 Of course.

MCALLISTER  
 But suppose we were to magnify it  
 to the microscopic, sub-  
 microscopic, molecular, even to the  
 level of atoms and electrons. Could  
 you distinguish the hand from what  
 is its surroundings? The you from  
 the not you?

INT. LARRY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Ginger goes into a corner near the front door and starts to  
 squat.

FLASHBACK INT. LARRY'S LIVINGROOM - DAY

CU on Larry, from the neck down, with a rolled up newspaper  
 in his hand, menacingly striking the palm of his other hand.

END FLASHBACK

Ginger suddenly stops in mid-squat.

She leaves the living room, goes down the hall and pushes the bathroom door open.

INT. LECTURE HALL - NIGHT

LARRY

There's a point to this?

MCALLISTER

Of course. The point is that reality is merely subjective.... Boundaries are arbitrary ...What you see is whatever you choose to see. Don't be deceived by what you know.

RACHEL

The physical world is not reality. Reality is only in the spiritual realm.

MCALLISTER

There is only one constant, and it is not the speed of light. The only constant is "Love". Love, true spiritual love.

RACHEL

Love! Don't you see how wonderful that could be for us, Larry?

LARRY

Rachel, if you go through with this, there will be no "us."

RACHEL

Is that a threat?

LARRY

No, it's a fact.

RACHEL

You know what your fact is? Living all by yourself in that house alone except for that dog. I'll come by for my things in the morning.

LARRY

At least my life won't be some Disney cartoon with wizards, witches, and talking animals.

INT. LARRY'S BATHROOM - NIGHT.

Ginger goes to the shower and squats over the drain. TINKLE is heard. An expression of relief may almost be detected on the dog's face.

She leaves the shower and CROSSES to the toilet bowl where she eagerly laps up the water.

She EXITS to the living room.

INT. LECTURE HALL - NIGHT

MCALLISTER

Children, children! Do not cause such pain to each other. Love--

LARRY

Butt out of this, witch doctor, or you'll be feeling the atoms of my very real fist smashing into the atoms of your very real nose.

RACHEL

Shaman! Stop him. Cast a spell on him. Call on the spirits of earth, wind and fire!

Larry lunges toward Mcallister. Mcallister avoids his blow and pulls himself up to his full height. Larry backs off. Mcallister addresses him in a very solemn, stentorian voice.

MCALLISTER

Very soon, perhaps even tonight, the Spirits of Earth, Wind, Fire, and Air will bring about a great transformation in your world. They will confound you and your concepts of reality. You will witness the powers of dimensions of which you are not yet even aware, and you will be amazed.

LARRY

(To Rachel)

Fine! If you really prefer all this bullshit to me, go then.

RACHEL

(To McALLISTER)

Shaman, I can get a ride home with you, can't I?

MCALLISTER  
Of course, my child.

INT. LARRY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A half hour later, headlights again stream into the living room but this time the car pulls into the driveway.

O.S. The GARAGE DOOR OPENS followed by the sounds of a CAR DOOR OPENING AND CLOSING. Ginger runs to the kitchen door and barks a soft welcoming bark.

INT. LARRY'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Larry ENTERS from the garage.

LARRY  
Oh Ginger! I'm sorry. I forgot  
all about you, girl. You must  
really need to go out.

Larry opens door to back yard. Ginger stops to lick his hand in gratitude and then EXITS through the door. Larry continues to talk through the door.

LARRY (CONT'D)  
...And your dinner. Poor girl.  
You've got such a thoughtless  
owner, don't you?

He goes to the pantry and takes a bag of dry dog food which he pours into a bowl near the door. Ginger comes bounding back.

LARRY (CONT'D)  
Well, you still love me anyway.  
Pure uncomplicated love. People,  
could learn a lot about love from  
dogs, women especially.

Ginger finishes her food and sits. Larry kneels down before her and holds her head affectionately.

LARRY (CONT'D)  
I should have thought about you,  
but I've had a really bad day  
myself. Rachel and I broke up  
tonight.

Larry leaves the kitchen for the living-room with Ginger following him.

INT. LARRY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Larry sits in his easy chair and Ginger licks his hand before curling at his feet.

LARRY  
You'd never get any crazy ideas  
into your head to go off following  
some witch-doctor guru, would you?

Ginger seems to be straining to understand his words as she looks at him attentively.

Larry gets up and paces, continuing to address Ginger

LARRY (CONT'D)  
Rachel really believes all that  
witchcraft crap. Remember how  
great it was at first. It seemed  
I'd found a smart, educated  
woman... attentive, almost as  
attentive as you,

He leans down to pat her head.

LARRY (CONT'D)  
...great conversation, great sex,  
just what I needed after... you  
know who.

Ginger makes a sympathetic whimper.

LARRY (CONT'D)  
How wrong could I have been. They  
even pretended to put a spell on me  
tonight. McAllister saying there  
would be some "great  
transformation." Earth, wind,  
fire... Great transformation, my  
ass...

He picks up a woman's dressing gown from the couch and holds it at arms length, then drops it.

LARRY (CONT'D)  
Well now that she's gone, we won't  
have to worry about her leaving her  
stuff all over now, will we,  
Ginger? It's just you and me  
again. Good night, Girl.

He turns out the light and EXITS to the bedroom.

INT. LARRY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A few hours later. All the lights are off now, but a full moon now sends beams through the window, partially illuminating Ginger, curled up on the couch.

CU GINGER'S FRONT PAW

SLOWLY A WOMAN'S FINGERS SEEM TO EMERGE FROM THE TOES. THE TOENAILS SHORTEN AND THE HAIR SEEMS TO DISAPPEAR.

PAN ALONG GINGER'S FORELEG TO HER CHEST.

GOLDEN HAIR SEEMS TO SHORTEN REVEALING A WOMAN'S ARM. ONE SHAPELY BREAST EMERGES FROM THE RETREATING, SHAGGY CHEST HAIR.

PAN CONTINUES ALONG GINGER'S BODY

HER TAIL SHORTENS AND DISAPPEARS REVEALING A WOMAN'S SHAPELY BOTTOM.

The first light of dawn reveals her to be a completely nude and strikingly beautiful human, with long blond hair, laying on her side. She stretches. She opens one eye and sees her new hands. She jumps back.

GINGER

Ar-ewww?

She stands, awkwardly, and examines her new body; clearly pleased with it. She tries to speak haltingly.

GINGER (CONT'D)

I... I can... I can talk people talk! I am a person; a real person!

She sees Rachel's bathrobe where Larry had dropped it. She picks it up, puts it on and runs to the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

She stands before the full length mirror and twirls to show off the robe.

Runs to the closed door to the bedroom.

GINGER

Master. I mean Larry.

There is no response. She reaches tentatively toward the doorknob. She discovers she can turn it. She makes an excited gesture with both arms.

GINGER (CONT'D)

Yes!

She opens the door and enters.

GINGER (CONT'D)

Oh, Larry. Look!

She runs to Larry's bedside.

INT. LARRY'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ginger climbs on the bed where Larry sleeps soundly. She bends over him and licks his face. He doesn't open his eyes but puts up his hands protectively.

LARRY

Oh, Rachel. Don't...

He opens his eyes, sees Ginger, and bolts upright in the bed with the sheets around him.

LARRY (CONT'D)

You're not Rachel. Who are you?  
What are you doing here? How'd you  
get in here? Who are you?

GINGER

Larry, it's me, Ginger. Isn't it  
wonderful?

LARRY

Get back! What do you want. I have  
a guard dog...

GINGER

I know, Larry. It's me. Isn't it  
wonderful?

LARRY

Ginger? Ginger? Where are you  
girl? Sic em Ginger. Sic em.

He turns to Ginger angrily. He picks up a lamp from the night stand and holds it over his head as if to threaten Ginger with it.

LARRY (CONT'D)

What have you done with my dog?  
Who are you? What are you doing in  
my house?

He warily climbs out of bed and fumbles for his pants still  
trying to hold the lamp over his head.

GINGER

I am your dog. Or, I was until  
this morning. He said a  
transformation, right?

LARRY

McAlister? Wait a second-- How'd  
you know that. Have you been  
stalking me, eavesdropping? What  
do you want anyway?

Larry backs into the living room. Ginger follows him  
lovingly standing very close to him and bursting with  
enthusiasm.

GINGER

(words tumbling out)

What do I want? I want to be a  
person so I can tell you how much I  
love you. Isn't that what you  
wished for too? I want to be with  
you all the time, even when you go  
in stores and movies. I want to  
talk with you, not just listen to  
you talking to me. I want to be  
your best friend, your real best  
friend, and I want you to be my  
best friend, not just my owner.

LARRY

This is the weirdest dream I have  
ever had. It seems so real. I  
wonder if I'll remember it when I  
wake up.

Larry heads back toward the bedroom door.

GINGER

Where you going, Larry?

LARRY

Back to bed so I can wake up.

INT. LARRY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY.

Ginger wanders through the living room picking up things and examining them with her new hands.

She explores the kitchen where she opens cupboards and drawers. She opens and closes the refrigerator several times, fascinated that she can do so. Suddenly, she pauses and runs to the living room. Something is not quite right.

GINGER

Larry?

LARRY (O.S.)

Leave me alone

GINGER

Larry, I need to go out.

LARRY (O.S.)

Please go out-- Out of this dream so I can wake up.

GINGER

No. I need you to take me out... out for a walk.

LARRY(O.S)

Go away.

GINGER

(Visibly distressed)

Larry, take me for a walk right now or I'm going to forget my puppy training right here on the carpet.

Larry, hastily putting on bathrobe, rushes from the bedroom to witness Ginger starting to squat.

LARRY

If you are a person, use the bathroom.

He gestures toward the bathroom.

LARRY (CONT'D)

If you are a dog wait until I wake up.

He turns to return to the bedroom.

GINGER

Oh. So that's what you do there.

He turns back to her and notices the collar.

LARRY  
Yes, among other things. And take  
that collar off.

Larry removes the dog collar from Ginger's neck and she EXITS quickly to the bathroom. He ponders the collar in his hand.

GINGER (O.S)  
Larry? I don't know how. Can you  
help me?

LARRY  
No! Just sit on the pot. It will  
come to you. This dream gets  
crazier and crazier.

GINGER (O.S)  
You mean this big drinking bowl?

LARRY  
No. I mean yes. That's a toilet,  
not a drinking bowl.

Larry stares at the collar for several seconds. Ginger returns from bathroom.

GINGER  
That's better. Now I'm hungry. No  
more of that dog food. I want  
bacon and eggs now. I love bacon.

LARRY  
We have corn flakes.

GINGER  
A bowl of cereal then. With lots  
of milk.

Ginger sits down at the dinette. Larry gets cereal, two bowls and spoons, and milk. She tries to lap it up.

LARRY  
No, No! With your spoon!

Ginger picks up the spoon and tries to figure out how to hold the spoon.

Larry sits down opposite her.

Ginger, makes a mess of the food trying to get it in her mouth with the spoon, repeatedly failing.

Larry gets up and paces back and forth while Ginger continues eating, her awkwardness rapidly diminishing.

LARRY (CONT'D)

If you weren't a dream you wouldn't speak English.

GINGER

(talking enthusiastically  
between bites)

Larry, I've lived with you and listened to you for four years. I listen carefully, every day, to everything you said. Some I didn't understand, but a lot I did, more than you thought I did. I tried so many times to speak to you, but it never came out right. Now I find I can say words, not just think them.

Ginger finishes the cereal and gets up. She follows Larry who still paces back and forth.

LARRY

(to himself)

Sometimes even the craziest dreams start to make sense.

GINGER

I can talk, but there are so many things I can't do. I can't read, I can't write, I can't drive a car. I need you to teach me these things.

LARRY

Enough of this. I'm going to dream my self dressed and go to work.

Larry goes into the bedroom. Ginger resumes exploring the living room. She uses her new hands to pick up one item and then another, examining them carefully. She turns light switches and door knobs, and opens cabinets and drawers.

INT. RACHEL'S KITCHEN - DAY.

It is the same morning in Rachel's home decorated with oriental and Native American curios and curtains of hanging beads. Posters with New Age themes are on the wall.

Rachel sits alone at the kitchen table with her head in her hands. She wears the shawl which McAllister was wearing the night before, and perhaps not much else.

McAllister ENTERS from the bedroom. He is bare chested, in boxers. She does not look up as he ENTERS. He tip-toes over to her and kisses her on the top of her head.

MCALLISTER  
Good morning, my Child.

She still does not look up.

RACHEL  
You'd better stop calling me "your child". After last night...

MCALLISTER  
Look, what happened--

She finally looks at him.

RACHEL  
--was not supposed to happen. We were supposed to love each other only on an enlightened, spiritual plane.

He puts his hands gently on her shoulders.

MCALLISTER  
Rachel --I can call you Rachel, can't I-- Rachel, you must understand that I am a man. I do have physical needs.

RACHEL  
You were supposed to be a better man. You knew Larry and I had just broken up. My God, we just broke up last night. You took advantage. I was vulnerable.

Rachel stands up to face him.

MCALLISTER  
Vulnerability is the greatest aphrodisiac known to man.

RACHEL  
I don't want you to think I am someone who jumps from bed to bed. I'm not. I usually have more self-control... Did you put some sort of spell on me?

He goes to her and holds her gently, she allows him to do so, putting her head on his shoulder

MCALLISTER

No, to the contrary, the fact is that since you started studying under me, I have been under your spell.

RACHEL

What I was doing under you last night was not studying!

McAllister returns to his pompous lecture mode of address.

MCALLISTER

When I was a young man, about your age, maybe younger, I dreamed. If I looked just so, out of the corner of my mind, I could see a new world, a world just beyond the ordinary one, a world that others could not, or refused to see. I thought, that if I studied and practiced, I could learn to use this ability. Much later I learned that one does not control this world. The spirit world, perhaps because we see it so indistinctly, delights in playing tricks upon us.

RACHEL

Rather like Mickey Mouse in Fantasia.

MCALLISTER looks as if he doesn't quite see the connection.

MCALLISTER

Hmmm.

(pause)

Do you know why this knowledge and power were so important to me?

RACHEL

I guess because you were driven by curiosity?

MCALLISTER

No something much less noble-- impressing girls. The history of mankind is that of little boys doing great deeds to gain the attention of little girls.

RACHEL

Most of the time it doesn't work.  
Men have no idea how to truly  
impress a woman.

MCALLISTER

Then how do I impress you?

Rachel laughs and hugs him. They kiss.

INT. LARRY'S LIVING ROOM - EARLY EVENING

Ginger sits on the bedroom floor watching television. She still wears Rachel's dressing gown. She is surrounded by books and magazines. O.S. The GARAGE DOOR OPENS and a CAR DOOR OPENS AND CLOSES. Ginger jumps to her feet and rushes to the kitchen door where she sits on the floor as she did when she was a dog.

LARRY (O.S.)

Ginger? I'm home. Where are you  
girl?

He opens the door slowly muttering to himself hopefully and looking at floor level.

LARRY (CONT'D)

Please, please be a dog. Just a  
dog.

He raises his eyes and sees that she is still human. He is crestfallen.

GINGER

Larry! This is so exciting. I've  
been watching TV all morning and  
all afternoon. Did you know that  
today is brought to you by the  
letter "R"?

Larry sinks down in the couch and puts his head in his hands.

Ginger comes to him and sits at his feet. She continues enthusiastically.

GINGER(CONT'D)

And that Angela, who was supposed  
to have a sex change operation, is  
now pregnant and the baby's father  
is Eric, her doctor? I have so much  
to learn about being human!

LARRY

No, No. Am I still dreaming or is this some kind of delusion?

GINGER

...and that there are women who marry their mother's boyfriends and tomorrow there will be men who marry their father's girlfriends?

LARRY

There is a simple rational explanation for everything. In this case the simple explanation is that I have, for some reason, gone insane.

Ginger nuzzles his hands with her face.

GINGER

And you know what else? I found out I can read. I don't know how, but reading came with my fully grown body, just like talking.

LARRY

This thing with Rachel the other night must have really sent me over the edge.

She stands and displays her whole figure to him.

GINGER

No, Larry, you're not crazy. I'm real and I'm human. Isn't it wonderful?

LARRY

That, of course, is exactly what a delusion would say. Where are the yellow pages?

He hunts for a while and finds the phone book which he starts to leaf through. Ginger looks over his shoulder with mild curiosity.

LARRY (CONT'D)

"P"; "P" "S"; "P" S" "Y". Or would it be under doctors? Maybe I shouldn't do anything and things will eventually go back to normal by themselves.

GINGER  
Larry! I'm real! Touch me.

LARRY  
That wouldn't prove a thing. You're not a mirage you're a hallucination. There's a big difference.

GINGER  
Touch me anyway. I need to feel your touch.

Larry reaches out to her tentatively. She puts her head under his hand. He pats it. She licks his hand.

LARRY  
They say when someone is psychotic you should humor them. Maybe I should just humor myself.

He pauses then shakes his head

LARRY (CONT'D)  
No. No. I mustn't give in to the madness. You're just my dog and sooner or later I'll be over this and you'll turn back into my dog.  
(beat)  
Do you need to go out?

GINGER  
No thanks. I figured out how to use that toilet thing. Can I go back and watch TV now. Jeopardy is coming on.

Ginger leaves the room. Just as she does so, the front door opens and Rachel backs in, balancing several large cardboard boxes.

RACHEL  
(Frostily)  
I've come for my things. I won't be long.

LARRY  
Oh, Rachel. Thank goodness you're here. Please come back. I've been going crazy without you.

RACHEL  
It's been less than 24 hours.

LARRY

No, literally. I have literally gone crazy. You see...

Rachel ignores him and EXITS to the bathroom. With farcical timing, Ginger ENTERS from the bedroom and EXITS to the kitchen so they do not see each other.

RACHEL (O.S.)

I was a fool to think this would ever work. It's like we are different species living on different planets.

Rachel, carrying a box now filled with toiletries returns from the bathroom and CROSSES the living room directly in front of Larry, to EXIT the front door.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

Well, I am certainly glad I kept the rent up on my own place.

As Rachel EXITS Ginger ENTERS from the kitchen and CROSSES to the bedroom. Again they just miss seeing each other. Rachel RE-ENTERS carrying another empty box. Just as she does, Ginger comes in from the bedroom. They see each other. Rachel drops the box.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

(almost screaming)

That's my robe! Who is this? What is she doing here? You moved someone in already... already. You picked up a... a floozy? You! Get out of my robe!

LARRY

What! You see her too? You can't see her. She's my delusion. Mine. To you she's just Ginger, my dog. Tell her you're my dog.

GINGER

(Matter-of-factly)

I'm his dog.

Rachel circles Ginger examining her carefully.

RACHEL

What ever you are, Miss who-ever-you-are, you are no dog.

LARRY

You don't see a golden retriever standing there? Tell me carefully, exactly what you do see.

RACHEL

What kind of sick game are you playing here, Larry. I see a strange woman wearing my robe.

LARRY

That's what I see!

GINGER

Must be what I am.

RACHEL

(screaming now)

Get out of my robe, bitch!

Ginger starts to remove the robe but Rachel motions for her to stop.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

No, leave it on. I wouldn't want it any more. You can have it. You can have him!

Rachel storms out, slamming the door behind her.

LARRY

How could she and I both see you?

He looks blankly at the door where she had left. After a short pause Rachel storms back in. She picks up the box she had dropped and EXITS to the bedroom.

INT. LARRY'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Larry follows her as far as the door. Rachel is angrily clearing the dresser top.

RACHEL

Since you've moved so fast, let me let you know: I have moved on too. McAllister. McAllister and I...

LARRY

(Absently)

Oh.

Rachel empties a dresser drawer into the box.

RACHEL

Don't let the fact you were right about him make you all smug. Maybe he was more interested in more than my spiritual enlightenment after all.

She opens another drawer and starts emptying it.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

But strangely that comes as a huge relief. I had no idea how to handle a purely spiritual relationship.

Rachel picks up the filled box and carries it past Larry.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

A guy coming on to me, on the other hand, that I've had to deal with since puberty.

Rachel leaves by the front door. Larry looks after her blankly.

LARRY

(To Ginger)

She didn't see a dog.... either. Was she really here, or still in this elaborate dream, too? Believe me, Girl, I am getting really tired of this dream.

GINGER

Does that mean I'm dreaming too.

LARRY

Do dreams dream?

GINGER

Oh yes, dogs have dreams. We have big dreams. And my biggest dream just came true.

INT. LARRY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY.

Several days later. Ginger now wears a dress shirt and slacks which obviously belong to Larry. She sits at the computer and surrounded with piles of books. The GARAGE DOOR and CAR DOOR OPEN O.S.. She jumps up to get into position to greet Larry. Larry opens the door and calls out. He looks down and claps his hands as if hoping she will turn out to be a dog.

LARRY  
Ginger. I'm home.

Ginger gets up, crosses her arms and looks peevishly at him.

GINGER  
Larry, you're late, I've been  
waiting for you.

LARRY  
(disappointed)  
Oh, you're still...

GINGER  
Where have you been?

LARRY  
I had a doctor's appointment.

GINGER  
The vet? You're not feeling well?

LARRY  
No, a head doctor.

GINGER  
Your head hurts?

LARRY  
No a psychiatrist, to help me get  
over these crazy hallucinations.

GINGER  
What are hallucinations?

LARRY  
You are!  
(Beat)  
It means that you are not real. My  
mind is tricking me.

GINGER  
He said I'm not real? I feel real.

LARRY  
No, he says I will perceive you as  
a woman as long as I need to  
perceive you as a woman. It's very  
common... well it's not that  
common, but it is very normal...  
normal for the mind to delude  
itself when it is faced with some  
sort of threat.

GINGER

I'm a threat?

LARRY

For example, it could be that breaking up with Rachel brought out deep fears of abandonment by my mother or something.

GINGER

I was taken from my mother when I was a pup.

LARRY sits on the couch and takes off his shoes. Ginger curls up at his feet and absently chews on one of the shoes.

LARRY

Whenever I can come to terms with that, or whatever other psycho-trauma it is, everything will go back to normal. Until then, the pills just keep me from feeling bad about it.

GINGER

Like my heartworm pills?

LARRY

No. Pills for me to take because I don't see a dog where there's a dog.

GINGER

Pills to turn me back into a dog? Larry, I don't want to go back to being a dog.

LARRY

This one is called Prozac. It will help me to keep from feeling sad about me being crazy. This one is called Xanax, it will keep me from getting anxious about being crazy. And, this one is called Ambien, it will make me sleep when I have insomnia trying to figure out why I am crazy.

GINGER

I don't want you to feel bad about it either. You know what you would do if you were a dog... well a male dog anyway.

LARRY

If I were a dog I wouldn't be having these delusions.

GINGER

Whenever a dog encounters something strange and new and inexplicable, you know what he does? He just lifts his leg, pees on it, and goes on his way.

She illustrates how a male dog would lift his leg.

GINGER (CONT'D)

That's what you need to do, in your mind anyway. If you don't understand something, like what's happened to me, or what's happening to you. Just say piss on it, ignore it, and go on your way.

INT. LARRY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY.

The next morning. Ginger sits at the computer, wearing another of Larry's slacks and his golf shirt. From time to time she sprawls on the floor with one of a pile of books. S

She appears to be leafing through them but in fact she is speed reading with an amazing velocity. Every time she finishes a book she returns to the computer screen where she types a search word from time to time.

MONTAGE of screen shots and book covers.

She is studying mostly from the great works of western philosophy and science, but some more practical works, and some literature, mostly familiar novels featuring dogs.

END MONTAGE

Larry stumbles into the living room wearing his bathrobe. He sees Ginger and collapses into a chair.

LARRY

Ohhhh. When is it going to stop!

GINGER

I know what will make you feel better! I know what will make us both feel better. Let's go to the park like we used to! I bet I could be even better at Frisbee now that I have hands!

LARRY  
I can't take you out in public!

GINGER  
I'll catch it in my teeth if it  
makes you feel better. Let's play,  
Larry. I'm bored. Let's play like  
we used to.

Ginger puts her head in his lap. Larry pushes her back.

LARRY  
You need to be a dog. I need to see  
you as a dog.

GINGER  
I know! Throw something! I can  
fetch.

Ginger jumps up and runs to the kitchen. She returns with a  
rubber ball in her mouth which she drops in Larry's lap.

LARRY  
(laughs)  
You are Ginger!

He throws the ball lightly. Ginger tries to catch it in her  
mouth but fails. They both dive toward the ball.

GINGER  
I may not be a dog anymore but I'm  
still faster than you!

LARRY  
Oh yeah?

Larry wrestles Ginger to the floor. They continue for a  
while. Both are laughing. He pins her and his hands brush  
against her chest.

He pulls back and then gets up. He looks confused.

GINGER  
Larry, what's wrong? Let's play.

LARRY  
No, no, not any more. Not like  
that.

GINGER  
Why not? We used to! What's  
wrong?

LARRY

You have.... you have breasts!

GINGER

Yes. But only two, now.

LARRY

I could accept that my eyes were deceiving me, and even my ears, but touch? Touch is something else, a whole new level of reality.

GINGER

Touch makes things real. Touch is how we know we love each other. That's as true for dogs as it is for humans.

LARRY

But it's more than that.

GINGER

What's more than what?

LARRY

Sex! That's what!

GINGER

What does sex have to do with touch? What does sex have to do with love?

LARRY

You're kidding!

GINGER

No. Sex is something you have to do to have puppies, when it's your time. Love is when you pet my head or scratch my ears-or play. Let's play Larry!

She approaches him on hands and knees and licks his hand.

LARRY

No. I consider myself very open minded but there are some taboos even I can't get around. Sex between people and animals is a biggie.

GINGER

Well, then let's go to the park and play Frisbee. Like we used to.

LARRY

No. I don't trust myself with you  
in public.

GINGER

(firmly)

Larry, you're my owner and I love  
you, but you are being impossible.

(beat)

I'll tell you what. I have hands.  
I can open the door myself.

She goes directly to the front door and opens it.

GINGER (CONT'D)

I know the way to the park. I'll  
go by myself and find someone else  
to play with.

She looks back still hoping Larry will join her. When she  
sees he will not, she strides resolutely out the door.

LARRY

(Calling after her)

Ginger! Wait. There's traffic out  
there. There's a leash law.

EXT. THE PARK - DAY.

Ginger runs through the park as she did in the opening  
credits, but as a human.

GINGER'S POV

She imagines she is again a dog running free.

BACK TO SCENE

She runs through the park as a human again. The wind is  
blowing through her hair. She is barefoot.

Larry's oversized slacks keep threatening to fall down, but  
she doesn't seem to care. She sees a group of people near a  
pond and runs toward them.

INT. LARRY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY.

Larry, now dressed, paces back and forth. He looks at his  
watch. He opens the front door and calls out.

LARRY

Ginger! Ginger, come girl!

He closes the door and resume his pacing. Suddenly Ginger bursts in the door. She is no longer wearing Larry's slacks but still has his shirt on which is now soaking wet, as is her long hair. She has a man's sports coat draped over her shoulders

LARRY (CONT'D)  
Ginger! What happened to you!

GINGER  
I got wet.

Ginger holds the door open. DOUG enters. He is an earnest looking young man in his twenties. He wears seriously horn rimmed glasses. He is in shirt sleeves with a tie. The sports coat is obviously his.

DOUG  
Hello, you must be Larry. I'm Doug; I met Ginger in the park; by the pond in the park.

Ginger approaches Larry and whispers in his ear.

GINGER  
He followed me home. Can I keep him?

DOUG  
Your sister is a real hero! You should have been there.

LARRY  
My what...?

Ginger grimaces and gestures to keep him from giving away her identity. Doug doesn't notice.

GINGER  
Your sister. Sis-ter. I'm your sister, remember?

LARRY  
(With some sarcasm)  
Oh yes, my sis-ter. Better change out of those wet clothes, shouldn't you sis?

Ginger EXITS to bathroom

FLASHBACK EXT. PARK - DAY.

DOUG (V.O.)  
 There was this kid, about two or three I'd guess. He was climbing the railing of the bridge and fell into the deep water. Ginger...you should have seen her...

A TODDLER is intently watching the ducks in the pond.

TODDLER'S POV

He watches the ducks.

BACK TO SCENE

There are three WOMEN, all in late-twenties, are on the bridge with him. One of them is the toddler's MOTHER. Doug is just approaching the bridge.

The women are in an animated discussion M.O.S.. They ignore the child as he ignores everything but the ducks.

The Toddler climbs on the railing and leans over. There is a SPLASH and look of horror on the mother, then a similar look on the face of Doug.

Doug takes off his jacket and starts to take off his shoes. He looks up just in time to see Ginger drop Larry's slacks and jump into the water.

She swiftly swims to the child. She clamps her teeth on the child's collar and dog-paddles back to the shore.

Doug runs to the edge of the pond and helps her and the child out of the water. Mother and friends run and fuss over the child.

Ginger moves a few paces away and begins shaking violently as a wet dog would.

Doug picks up a stick from the ground and puts it in front of her face.

DOUG  
 Here. Bite this.

Ginger bites the stick but then quickly drops it. She is no longer shaking.

GINGER  
 Why?

DOUG  
You're epileptic aren't you?

GINGER  
No. Just wet.

DOUG  
Oh, shivering.

He picks up his coat and places it over her shoulders.

DOUG (CONT'D)  
I'm Doug. You were magnificent!

Doug shakes her hand. The mother, holding her child, offers Ginger an embarrassed smile and mouths a thank you.

GINGER  
I'm a retriever. That's all. My name is Ginger.

Ginger picks up the slacks but does not put them back on though Larry's jockey shorts are sagging somewhat.

DOUG  
Are you sure you are all right?  
Maybe I should walk you home. How far do you live?

GINGER  
I'd like that... Doug.

END FLASHBACK

INT. LARRY'S LIVING ROOM AGAIN - DAY.

DOUG  
She told me all about you on the way here.

LARRY  
Not all about...

DOUG  
She told me you were an engineer and she was very proud of you and that you were just letting her stay with you until she gets established on her own...

Ginger enters wearing different clothes, also Larry's, and also too large for her.

DOUG (CONT'D)  
(to Ginger)  
That's better.

GINGER  
What a hassle. Wearing clothes is  
such a strange habit.

Doug suppresses a nervous laugh.

DOUG  
I guess you're okay now. I'd better  
leave.  
(beat)  
Uh, Ginger?

GINGER  
Doug?

DOUG  
I would like to see you again.

GINGER  
In the park?

DOUG  
Or we could go to a show. Or  
dinner?

LARRY  
A date?

GINGER  
(To DOUG, ignoring LARRY)  
I would like that.

LARRY  
Wait a second, wait a second! She  
cannot go out with you.

DOUG  
Why not?

GINGER  
Yes, Larry, Why not?

DOUG  
Am I missing something? You are  
brother and sister, right? Of  
course you are. I can see the  
resemblance.

LARRY  
(Under his breath)  
That's what they say about owners  
and their dogs.

DOUG  
Huh?

GINGER  
(To Doug, but also  
pointedly to Larry)  
Larry just thinks he's my owner or  
something. Well things have  
changed.  
(beat)  
Doug, will you excuse us a second?

Ginger leads Larry to the bedroom

INT. LARRY'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ginger shuts the door and leans back against it. She  
whispers angrily to Larry.

GINGER  
Larry, I am not your pet anymore!  
I am a woman. A real woman.

LARRY  
(Also whispering)  
You are not a real woman.

GINGER  
Then what am I, Larry? Tell Doug  
what I am.

LARRY  
You know I can't.

GINGER  
Well, I have to find out what I  
am... Who I am.

Ginger opens the door.

INT. LARRY'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ginger marches directly to Doug. Larry follows her at a  
distance.

GINGER

(To DOUG)

Doug? Of course I'll go out with you. Call me tomorrow morning? Here's the number.

Picks up a pad and pencil from the table and writes.

LARRY

You know the telephone number?

GINGER

(Whispering to LARRY)

It was right on my dog tags. I'm not a dumb animal. I know lots of things you don't know I know.

She hands the note to DOUG.

GINGER (CONT'D)

Here.

DOUG

If you're sure it's all right...

GINGER

It's fine. Larry just has to adapt to some changes.

DOUG

Okay then, I'll call you in the morning.

DOUG starts to exit through front door

GINGER

Doug! Wait!

DOUG

Yes?

Ginger runs to the bathroom and returns with Doug's sports coat.

GINGER

Your coat!

Ginger puts the coat around Doug's shoulders. He turns and takes her by the waist. They stare into each other's eyes as if they are going to kiss. Doug breaks it off.

DOUG

Tomorrow.

GINGER

Tomorrow.

Ginger opens the front door for Doug. He EXITS, looking back wistfully. Ginger closes the door and leans back against it. She has a dreamy look on her face.

LARRY

Is he gone?

GINGER

He left.

LARRY

(Agitated)

My Sister. Sister? What on earth-

GINGER

(beat)

I knew right away he was interested in me.

LARRY

How did you know right away?

GINGER

I sniffed him.

LARRY

You sniffed him? His...

GINGER

You know you can tell a lot from sniffing. You humans could avoid a lot of misunderstanding if you just sniffed each other.

LARRY

You can't date him, you know.

GINGER

And why not?

LARRY

For the simple reason that you are a dog and he is a man.

GINGER

Doug didn't think I was a dog.

LARRY

In his condition, how could he notice the difference?

GINGER  
Condition?

LARRY  
He's infatuated, can't you tell.  
See, you don't know anything about  
being a woman.

GINGER  
Well? Teach me.

LARRY  
What do I know about being a woman?

GINGER  
If you don't know anything about  
women, I'll just have to go to  
someone who does, someone who can  
teach me!

LARRY  
And who would this great dog  
trainer be, might I ask?

Pause as Ginger thinks

GINGER  
Rachel!

LARRY  
Rachel? She thinks--

GINGER  
Rachel started this. Maybe she can  
finish the job. She can teach me  
how to really be a woman; how to  
talk like a woman, how to think  
like a woman, how to act like a  
woman. Maybe she can even teach me  
how to understand men.

She goes directly to the front door and EXITS, slamming it  
behind her.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREETS - DAY.

Ginger strides determinedly down streets and around corners.  
She is very familiar with where she is going.

EXT. DOOR OUTSIDE RACHEL'S PLACE - DAY.

Ginger approaches the door and rings the doorbell.

INT. RACHEL'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Rachel is sitting on the floor in a yoga position. The doorbell rings. She goes to the door and sees that it is Ginger. She slams the door in Ginger's face.

EXT. OUTSIDE DOOR OF RACHEL'S PLACE - MOMENTS LATER.

As the door slams, Ginger looks startled, but rings the door bell again. Rachel reopens the door immediately.

RACHEL

You? What are you doing here? You have a lot of nerve.

She starts to slam the door again.

GINGER

Rachel, wait. You're the only one who can help me!

Rachel holds off on slamming the door.

RACHEL

Looks like you've already helped yourself to Larry.

GINGER

I'm Ginger, you know, his dog?

RACHEL

How did you get here. Did He give you my address?

GINGER

I walked. I've been here plenty of times...with Larry. I was here just a few days ago, remember?

RACHEL

Larry hasn't been here since we broke up last week. Last time he was here he was alone except for his....

GINGER

...His dog Ginger, me!

RACHEL

What kind of game--

Ginger pushes past Rachel into the apartment.

INT. RACHEL'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS.

Ginger gets down on her hands and knees and sniffs the carpet in front of the couch.

GINGER

Yes, I remember you had...

Rachel tries to block Ginger reaches under the couch. She pulls out a Native American artifact. It is mostly constructed of feathers and bone with a few bright beads and ribbons.

GINGER (CONT'D)

See, it's still here. Turkey bones.

RACHEL

Turkey bones? That's my missing amulet. He said they were eagle... Wait a second.

(beat)

I remember that night. Ginger was whining and pawing under there. Neither of us could figure out what she wanted.

GINGER

Yes. Yes. I tried to tell you, but I couldn't talk then.

RACHEL

And you have transformed yourself into a woman? How is that possible.

GINGER

I don't know. I didn't do anything. According to Larry you did it, you and your witch doctor friend.

RACHEL

Wait a second, was it last Saturday, the day I left Larry.

Rachel sits on the couch.

GINGER

Yes, Yes. Four days ago.

RACHEL  
McAllister did do some sort of incantation to get Larry off of him. Something about a transformation...

GINGER  
Of course Larry doesn't believe me, and now you don't believe me either.

RACHEL  
Oh, I'm starting to believe you. It's just going to take me some time. I don't understand, but somehow I detect you are telling the truth. I believe in magic. I'm studying magic. I just didn't... I didn't expect it to hit me in the face like this.

Ginger sits next to Rachel. They are now good friends.

GINGER  
All I know is: I was a dog; now I'm a person. It's as simple as that.

RACHEL  
And you want to become a dog again?

GINGER  
No, no. That isn't it. There are lots of advantages to being human.

RACHEL  
Then what do you want from me?

GINGER  
I need to learn how to be a woman. I am still too much like a dog. I need to learn everything you need to know.

RACHEL  
Everything?

GINGER  
This is serious. I need to know everything. What is the biggest difference between a dog and a man?

Rachel thinks for a while and responds with deliberation

RACHEL  
 There is no big difference between  
 a man and a dog. They think pretty  
 much the same and have similar  
 table manners.

GINGER  
 You are a wise woman. Teach me  
 everything you know.

RACHEL  
 Everything? Hmm. Where to start?  
 Can I get you some herbal tea  
 first?

Rachel starts to get up.

GINGER  
 I'm good.

Rachel picks up a box of chocolates from the end table

RACHEL  
 Have a chocolate?

Ginger looks shocked.

GINGER  
 Larry says chocolate is poison to  
 dogs.

RACHEL  
 Poisonous to dogs; poisonous to  
 diets.  
 (beat)  
 That may be a good place to start  
 though.

GINGER  
 With chocolate?

RACHEL  
 No, with Larry. Don't believe  
 everything he tells you. There are  
 too many women out there who just  
 let men tell them what to think.  
 Find things out for yourself!

Ginger takes a chocolate. Enjoys it.

GINGER  
 mmm.

RACHEL

Now, you need the one thing that will become the source of all your womanly powers. Something you must have with you at all times. If you ever become separated from it you will become as weak and helpless as a man. I happen to have an extra one you can borrow. It's called your purse.

Rachel EXITS to her bedroom

RACHEL (O.S. (CONT'D))

Ah! This one is perfect for your coloring.

Rachel ENTERS with a purse

RACHEL (CONT'D)

This was always one of my favorites. Unfortunately I can no longer use it.

GINGER

Why not?

RACHEL

I outgrew all its matching outfits. Some women consider a purse an accessory; a wise woman knows she is an accessory to her purse.

(beat)

A good purse is a universe unto itself. The inside must be many times larger than the outside.

GINGER

Why?

RACHEL

Because of all it must hold, my dear. Because of all it must hold. Here, hand me mine.

Ginger lifts the purse Rachel has pointed out. She is surprised that it is so heavy.

MONTAGE of Rachel taking items out of her purse and explaining M.O.S. their usage to Ginger.

A brush and comb set she runs through her hair;

A set of keys she puts a fist to show their use as a weapon;

A day planner she rips a page out to show that it is extra notepaper;

She holds up a vial of perfume and a similar container of breath freshener, shaking her head.

From a little make-up kit she removes lip gloss, blush, and mascara illustrating the use of each.

She pulls an extra set of underwear and holds it up.

Finally she extracts her wallet

END MONTAGE

RACHEL (CONT'D)

The wallet, the real power of the purse. Some cash, enough for a taxi from anywhere you might find yourself, and credit cards, lots of credit cards. Always keep the one with the lowest balance on top and move it to the bottom when you reach the limit. That is what is known as revolving credit.

INT. LARRY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY.

Meanwhile, Larry is pacing back and forth angrily talking to himself.

LARRY

I know what it is. I'm not crazy, I'm not dreaming. I'm hypnotized. The bastard hypnotized me against my will. That's against the law. I'll have him arrested I'll get a lawyer and sue him. Have him arrested. dognapping, theft, alienation of affection. Somehow that creep robbed me of both my girlfriend and my dog.

INT. RACHEL'S LIVING ROOM - DAY.

At the same time, Ginger is continuing her lesson with Rachel.

GINGER

Rachel, you have shown me so much. But what should I do tomorrow night about Doug?

RACHEL

Doug?

GINGER

I have a date tomorrow. He wants to take me to a restaurant and a movie. I've practiced eating with a fork, and I have seen movies on TV, but when I sniff him, I sense that he expects something more.

RACHEL

A date? You've been a girl, what, a week? And you've already got a date? I should be taking lessons from you.

GINGER

Rachel. I need your help.

RACHEL

OK. For a first date just eat and enjoy the movie. Learn what you can about him and tell him about yourself --er, better not-- better just let him talk about himself. Actually, that's what men prefer, anyway. The more you let him talk, the smarter he'll think you are.

GINGER

Larry always said I was a smart dog... until I began talking.

RACHEL

You are a smart dog. Look how you found my amulet.

GINGER

The turkey thing?

RACHEL

Well, I guess they couldn't use the real bone and feathers, could they, eagles being a threatened species and all. Still, he should have told me.

GINGER

I wonder what my totem is.

RACHEL  
Probably Larry the Human. He  
thinks he is your guardian spirit,  
doesn't he?

GINGER  
(laughing)  
Or maybe Doug the Human. I'd  
better be going. If Larry is my  
totem he should be teaching me how  
to cook dinner.

Ginger starts to exit. Rachel calls after her

RACHEL  
Come over tomorrow morning and  
we'll go out shopping for you.  
Since this is your first date you  
need something special to wear.  
We'll see the magic that Larry's  
credit card can work. I'll give you  
the basic course in makeup and  
styling before he picks you up.  
Then, the next day, you need to  
tell me all about how it went.

GINGER  
Okay. Tomorrow then.

Ginger leaves through the front door. Rachel sinks into the  
couch, shaking her head and smiling to herself.

INT. RACHEL'S LIVING ROOM - DAY.

A half-hour later. Rachel is still sitting on the couch in  
wonder, contemplating the the amulet which she turns over and  
over in her hand. McAllister ENTERS.

RACHEL  
McAllister, you have outdone  
yourself. You have really done it.

MCALLISTER  
Thank you... But what is it that I  
am supposed to have done?

RACHEL  
You have transformed an animal into  
a human, that's all. Just like  
Cinderella's fairy godmother.

MCALLISTER  
I have?

RACHEL  
Remember how you called down a  
spell on Larry?

MCALLISTER  
I did?

RACHEL  
Remember? Well he has... he had a  
Golden Retriever, Ginger. But now  
instead of a dog, she's a gorgeous,  
young woman. A smart one, too.

MCALLISTER  
Are you sure?

RACHEL  
Sure I'm sure. I just spent the  
whole afternoon with her. Of  
course I had my doubts at first...

MCALLISTER  
But she convinced you.

RACHEL  
She didn't have to. Her vibrations  
told me she was telling the truth.  
I sensed them, just the way you  
taught me. Very strong vibrations.

MCALLISTER  
In dreams, the dog usually  
represents either sexual  
sublimation or friendship. But  
neither of these involve shape  
shifting. Wolves on the other hand  
often shape shift.

RACHEL  
Werewolves?

MCALLISTER  
They can be our intermediaries to  
the spirit world. Are you sure she  
wasn't actually a wolf? Maybe a  
coyote?

RACHEL  
She was a golden retriever.

MCALLISTER  
This creature must have been sent  
as a spirit guide then.

RACHEL  
I thought spirit guides usually kept their animal form. They don't become human, do they?

MCALLISTER  
Technically they don't. They remain animals but use thought projection to communicate. In some traditions, though... Are you sure she was really human?

RACHEL  
As human as you or I.

MCALLISTER  
I must go into a trance to divine the meaning of this visitation. Why has she come to us?

RACHEL  
A trance!

MCALLISTER  
Turn down the lights.

RACHEL  
Is it safe for us to do this? A trance takes so much out of you.

MCALLISTER  
There are things that can only be learned in dreams. Our waking life is drawn with hard edges and primary colors. Truth often comes painted in soft clouds of muted pastels. We can see it clearly only by dreamlight.

Rachel CROSSES to light switch. Lights to low. McAllister sits in a chair in the middle of the room.

RACHEL  
(chants as she dances  
around his chair)  
Oh! Ah! My! Ah!...Oh! Ah! My!  
Ah!... Oh! Ah! My! Ah!

McAllister twitches and moans as he slumps into his trance.

INT. WOMANS CLOTHING SHOP. - DAY.

It is the next morning in an upscale woman's clothing shop. Rachel ENTERS towing a reluctant Ginger.

RACHEL  
The Shaman went into a trance for  
you last night.

GINGER  
Why?

RACHEL  
He said you must have a message for  
humankind.

GINGER  
If I had a message, wouldn't I know  
it?

RACHEL  
He said when you deliver it, you  
can go back to being a dog.

GINGER  
I don't want to go back to being a  
dog.

RACHEL  
That's why we're here. You brought  
the credit cards?

Ginger displays a fan of cards.

RACHEL (CONT'D)  
Good. We'll start here. Try these  
on.

MONTAGE of Ginger entering and exiting the changing room trying on various articles of clothing. All are attractive on her and all are expensive looking.

INT. RACHEL'S LIVING ROOM - DAY.

While Rachel and Ginger are out shopping. McAllister sits alone meditating. Suddenly there is a loud knock at the door. Before McAllister can go to answer it, it opens and Larry bursts in holding a key in his hand.

LARRY  
You! Give me my dog back.

MCALLISTER  
What? I don't have...

LARRY  
You hypnotized everybody into thinking she was a human. I want her to be a dog again. Undo what ever you did.

MCALLISTER  
Oh... You mean...

LARRY  
Ginger, my dog. You can have Rachel, but give me back my dog!

MCALLISTER  
I can't. She was sent by--

LARRY  
I don't care what excuse you have. Change her back.

MCALLISTER  
I'll do what I can. I'll have to consult--

LARRY  
Do what ever you do. If she's not a dog again by tomorrow, you will hear from my attorney.

Larry turns and storms out slamming the door behind him.

INT. CLOTHING SHOP - DAY.

Ginger and Rachel are standing in front of the checkout counter chatting.

GINGER  
Rachel, Can I ask you something?

RACHEL  
I guess.

GINGER  
You are in love with McAllister?

RACHEL  
(Surprised to hear herself say it)  
Yes... I guess I am.

GINGER  
How did you know?

RACHEL  
Well in my life I have had to kiss  
a lot of toads...

GINGER  
Toads?

RACHEL  
Loads of toads. And virtually  
every one of them turned into a  
handsome prince.

GINGER  
Toads are fun to chase, but don't  
try to eat one! I did once.

Ginger makes a face at the memory.

RACHEL  
But Snow White and Sleeping Beauty  
left something out. Handsome  
princes, if they're not gay,  
generally turn out to be arrogant  
and vain, thoughtless and immature  
bastards.

GINGER  
Like Larry?

RACHEL  
But when I kissed McAllister, he  
didn't turn into a handsome prince.  
He stayed a toad. It was then I  
realized that maybe I didn't want a  
handsome prince after all... What I  
wanted was a toad! A toad will  
take you seriously, he won't laugh  
at your ideas. A toad isn't afraid  
to share his deepest fears and  
feelings with you.

GINGER  
That's why you love McAllister?

RACHEL  
Yes. He and I are both toads. We  
see this world, and the world  
beyond, through the same big goggle  
eyes. We value the same things.  
We can trust each other. He can be  
my mentor and I can be his Muse.

A SHOP WOMAN brings them a large stack of parcels and a credit card receipt. Ginger looks puzzled and worried.

RACHEL (CONT'D)  
Oh, just scrawl anything. They  
never check.

Ginger does as she is told. They each take half the stack and exit.

INT. LARRY'S LIVING ROOM. - NIGHT.

Ginger ENTERS and turns on a light. She is stunningly dressed in a cocktail gown. Doug follows her but hesitates in the doorway. He is wearing a sports jacket and tie.

GINGER  
Doug, come on in.

DOUG tiptoes in with hesitation.

DOUG  
(Whispering)  
But won't we wake your brother?

GINGER  
No, no. Don't worry about him. Every night he takes his Prozac, his Xanax, and his Ambien, then he washes them all down with a couple beers. It's all I can do to get him up and dressed for work the next morning.

Ginger sits on the couch. She motions to Doug to join her.

GINGER (CONT'D)  
I have so much to learn. Tonight's been the most exciting night in my life. I rode in a taxi for the first time...

Doug tiptoes over and sits beside her.

FLASHBACK EXT. TAXI - NIGHT.

Doug opens the back door of a taxicab for Ginger who slides in. He slides in beside her.

DOUG (V.O.)  
Your head hanging out the window;  
your hair streaming in the wind,  
wild and free.

Taxi takes off. Ginger has rolled down the window and has put her entire head out of it.

GINGER'S TONGUE APPEARS ELONGATED LIKE A DOG'S. It is also extended in the wind.

DOUG (V.O.)  
You have a sort of animal  
magnetism, like no other girl I've  
met.

GINGER (V.O.)  
...I went to my first restaurant...

END FLASHBACK

FLASHBACK INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT.

Ginger and Doug sit across from each other at a candlelit table in an elegant restaurant. He gazes at her lovingly.

DOUG (V.O.)  
I can't believe you've led such a  
sheltered life.

Ginger takes cuts a large piece of her meat and sticks it in her mouth. An expression of ecstasy crosses her face.

GINGER (V.O.)  
...the steak was wonderful...

DOUG (V.O.)  
You ate it so fast; I was barely  
started...

Ginger eats the rest of the meal, finishing it very rapidly. Doug's plate is still full/

GINGER (V.O.)  
...and they let me take home the  
bone...I never knew there was such  
a thing as a doggie bag, what a  
wonderful idea!

Doug pays for the meal though he has not finished it. They rise to leave.

END FLASHBACK

INT. LARRY'S LIVING ROOM. - NIGHT.

They are seated close together on the couch.

DOUG  
I'm so glad you enjoyed it.

He slides an arm around her shoulder.

GINGER  
Oh yes. It was a magical evening.

DOUG  
And you are a magical girl. Those big brown eyes are like pools of honey...

GINGER  
...honey?...

DOUG  
...and if I dove in I know I would be stuck in their sweetness forever. These waves of golden hair have become a sea in which I could happily drown.

GINGER  
I used to have a lot more hair. It used to shed like crazy.

DOUG  
And the way you look at me, with your head cocked to one side.... You are so attentive. No matter what I say, it's as if you've heard it for the first time.

GINGER  
I love the sound of your voice. I could listen to you talk about yourself forever. I never dreamed being an accounts payable clerk could be so exciting!

DOUG  
It has its moments. But I'm not going to be a junior clerk forever.

DOUG (CONT'D)

I have big plans. I'm taking night classes in cost accounting at the community college. That's where the real excitement is! Someday I hope to own my own business, a house in the suburbs, a family.

GINGER

A house with a big yard?

DOUG

Oh yes, a real big yard.

GINGER

It all sounds so beautiful.

DOUG

But, I've been talking about myself all evening. I know next to nothing about you. Tell me about yourself.

GINGER

There's not much to tell, really. Until recently I've had a very ordinary life. Larry brought me home when he was still married. He thought I would keep Caroline, his ex-wife, company when he was traveling on business.

(archly)

What he didn't know was that she already had plenty of company every time he left, one very special visitor in particular.

DOUG

Another man? No.

GINGER

Yes.

DOUG

And they carried on right in front of you, his sister?

GINGER

No, that's the worst part. Every time he came over, she would lock me out of the house and make me sleep outside in the yard all night.

DOUG  
Outside! Didn't you let Larry know  
what was going on?

GINGER  
I would have, if I could have. But  
he figured it out himself  
eventually. Of course, after the  
divorce she got the house and the  
car and Larry got me.

DOUG  
You and Larry are very close,  
aren't you?

GINGER  
Larry has always taken care of me.

DOUG  
Maybe it could be someone else's  
turn to take care of you now.

Doug slides his hand around Ginger's shoulders. She lays down  
on the couch beside him.

GINGER  
Maybe.  
(beat)  
Could you just scratch me behind my  
ear a little?

He hesitatingly scratches her head. She smiles and lays her  
head in his lap. One of her legs vibrates in rhythm to his  
hand.

DOUG  
So... Did you enjoy the show?

GINGER  
(cuddling next to him)  
Oh yes! But it would have been  
better if there had been more  
animals, don't you think?

DOUG  
Animals? It was a romantic comedy.

GINGER  
Precisely! How can you have a  
romantic movie without pets? Only  
pets can understand true love.  
Simple and uncomplicated.

She sits up to make the point.

DOUG

Ginger. I can't get over how different you are from other girls. It's like everything is all new and wonderful to you.

GINGER

Doug, to me you are new and wonderful. You make everything else new and wonderful too.

Doug takes her by the waist. They gaze into each other's eyes for a beat or two. Doug leans in to kiss her. Instead Ginger gives him a long lick on his cheek, knocking his glasses slightly askew. Doug is startled and pulls back. Just then Larry moans from the bedroom. Ginger jumps up and peeks in the bedroom door.

GINGER (CONT'D)

He's OK. He's just having a dream. Probably chasing rabbits.

Doug looks at his watch. Ginger sits back down beside him.

DOUG

I guess... I guess I'd better be...

GINGER

You don't have to go.

DOUG

I don't want to, but I do have to get to work tomorrow.

He gets up to leave. She also rises.

GINGER

...and I do have to get Larry to work tomorrow.

DOUG

So, can I call you. Maybe you'd like to do something this weekend.

GINGER

Oh Doug, I'd love to!

DOUG

I'll call you tomorrow and we can decide.

Doug leans in for a kiss but Ginger puts her hands on both shoulders as if they were paws. Doug is worried he is going to get licked again. He takes her hand down and shakes hands.

GINGER

Good night. I had a wonderful time. I owe it all to Rachel's magic.

DOUG

Who's Rachel.

GINGER

She's my best girlfriend. She knows magic, wonderful magic, at least her friend McAllister does.

DOUG

Now that I've met you, I know what magic is too. I'll call you tomorrow.

He reaches over and gives her a tentative lick on the cheek then quickly exits. Ginger stands enthralled, staring at the door by which he left.

INT. RACHEL'S LIVING ROOM. - DAY.

Rachel is on the living room floor in a yoga position. The phone rings. She slowly disengages herself and goes across the room to answer it.

RACHEL

Hello?

INT. LARRY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY.

Ginger is on the phone to Rachel.

INTERCUT

GINGER

Oh, Rachel! It was wonderful! We went to a movie! We went to a restaurant! Doug was so nice! So kind and thoughtful. He treated me like a real woman!

RACHEL

You are a real woman now. Don't forget that!

GINGER (O.S.)

I know, but Larry still treats me like a dog. I didn't know what to expect from Doug.

RACHEL

Larry treats everyone that way, especially women. I can't remember what I ever saw in him.

GINGER

Doug treats me like I'm his mistress!

RACHEL

Oh, That word mistress means something different when you're not a dog.

She sprawls on the floor, anticipating a long conversation.

GINGER

He is as cute and adorable as a new puppy. I enjoyed being with him so much! All night I just wanted to curl up and cuddle next to him.

RACHEL

And afterwards? Did he take you home? Did you invite him in?

GINGER

Yes! Yes!

RACHEL

With Larry there?

GINGER

Yes, but he was a world away. His pills. Poor Larry. He still thinks something isn't right with his head.

RACHEL

He never has been quite right in the head! It took me a while to realize that he wasn't the one and as unlikely as it seems, Mcallister is.

GINGER

Larry says McAllister is a fraud, you know. Is he?

RACHEL

Everybody is a little bit fake. You know what he says?

GINGER

What?

RACHEL

Anybody who says he isn't a hypocrite, is being a hypocrite.

GINGER

That includes Larry, doesn't it?

RACHEL

How is Larry treating you lately?

GINGER

Better. He doesn't get as upset anymore.

RACHEL

Ah. The pills.

GINGER

I guess. He mostly ignores me. When I was a dog he paid a lot more attention to me.

RACHEL

If you want Larry to accept you, you're going to have to sound all intellectual. You know, like a scientist?

GINGER

How do you mean?

RACHEL

It's easy. Just throw around a lot of big words and scientific jargon.

GINGER

But I don't know any big words or jargon.

RACHEL

That's what the Internet is for. It's just like going to college, but a lot faster.

GINGER

Yes I'm learning...

RACHEL

But forget about Larry. Doug is the one you should be impressing, not Larry.

GINGER

I will. I heard on TV there is a show at the armory. I think I'll ask him to take me. I've never been to a real dog show!

RACHEL

Let me know how it goes, right?

GINGER

I will. Bye now.

END INTERCUT

Ginger hangs up the phone. Larry ENTERS. He is dressed to go out.

GINGER (CONT'D)

That was Rachel.

He walks right past her without acknowledgment and EXITS to the garage.

CAR DOOR OPENS. GARAGE DOOR UP. CAR DRIVES OFF

Ginger looks after the car a little puzzled.

EXT. LARRY'S CAR - DAY.

He is driving resolutely.

INT. AN ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - DAY.

LAWYER is seated behind a large mahogany desk with shelves of law books behind him. He is a rather large balding man, wearing a white shirt and vest. He leans back in his swivel chair. Larry is facing him earnestly explaining something M.O.S.. The Lawyer picks up his intercom and calls a COLLEAGUE who ENTERS. The Lawyer explains the situation M.O.S.. They escort Larry to the door. As soon as he leaves, they shut the door. Leaning against it, they both burst into the laughter they had been suppressing.

EXT. OUTSIDE DOOR OF DOUG'S APARTMENT - NIGHT.

Doug and Ginger walk up to the door, arm in arm. He fumbles in his pocket for the keys.

DOUG

I have to warn you, the place is a bit of a mess. I wasn't expecting company.

GINGER

Wasn't it a wonderful show.

DOUG

Yeah, but I expected it to be, you know, a theatrical performance?

GINGER

But it was! All those beautiful dogs, so well trained and so well groomed! Weren't they magnificent. I was a little jealous. Did you agree with the winner they picked?

Doug finds his keys and puts the key in the lock but does not turn it yet.

DOUG

Look. If this is too soon...?

GINGER

Oh, Doug. It's not too soon. The night is young; you said it yourself. And I really do want to see your stamp collection.

DOUG

You are the first who was so enthusiastic about it.

GINGER

Everything that excites you is exciting to me.

DOUG

Well, let's not keep standing in the hall chatting. We can do that inside much more comfortably.

GINGER

(Puts her arms around him)  
And we can do other things beside chat...

Doug turns his key and starts to open the door. A loud FELINE YOWL is heard from inside. Ginger's face goes through a variety of reactions showing her alarm as she restrains herself with great difficulty from barking and chasing the cat inside.

DOUG  
 Mitzi! What's wrong with you?  
 That's no way to act when we have  
 company.

GINGER  
 You... you... you have a.... a...  
 one of those...

DOUG  
 I'm so sorry Ginger. I don't know  
 what's gotten into her. She can be  
 a little stand-offish with  
 visitors, but I've never seen her  
 act like this.

GINGER  
 You live with this... this vile  
 creature? How could you!

DOUG  
 Oh no! I hope you don't have  
 allergies. If you do I may have  
 some anti-histamines in my medicine  
 cabinet. I understand because I  
 break out terribly from shellfish.

Ginger's face betrays an even greater effort to maintain her  
 composure.

GINGER  
 No, you don't understand. I, I  
 can't... I can't stand... cats.

DOUG  
 I guess you're not exactly a cat  
 person. Are you more of a dog  
 person?

Ginger loses control and plunges into the doorway. There is  
 a LOUD CRASH and CLATTER accompanied by FELINE YOWLS.

INT. DOUG'S APARTMENT. - CONTINUOUS.

Doug turns on the light. MITZI, a tabby cat, is on top of a  
 highboy china cabinet. Ginger is standing in front of it  
 jumping to reach her. There is an overturned dining room  
 chair and an overturned lamp. Ginger turns to see Doug and  
 looks very embarrassed and confused.

DOUG  
 Mitzi! Come down from there right  
 now!

Mitzi lets out another YOWL. Ginger turns from Doug and resumes jumping at the face of the highboy. She suddenly picks up the chair and starts to climb up on it. Doug attempts to pull her back, gently.

Mitzi lets out another YOWL. Dough pushes Ginger back through the entrance door and pulls the door closed behind her.

EXT. OUTSIDE DOOR OF DOUG'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Ginger, her hair and dress now disheveled, attempts to regain some of her composure.

GINGER

A dog person. You might say that.  
In fact you might say I'm more of  
dog person than you can even know.

DOUG

Please make an exception for Mitzi.  
Mitzi's not like other cats; She  
has a great personality.

GINGER

(coldly)  
It's a cat; it's not a person.

DOUG

She always gets along with  
everyone. I have never seen her act  
this way before. She must sense  
your fear.

GINGER

Fear? I am not afraid of cats!  
Why, if I could ever catch one...

A bushy TAIL is beginning to emerge from beneath the hem of Ginger's short skirt. Doug sees it but does not comprehend. Ginger looks down and tucks the TAIL back under her skirt but then notices HAIR growing on the backs of her hands. Also on her legs.

DOUG

Then try to make friends with her.  
You're such a kind and generous  
person. Try to make friends; for  
my sake? I'm sure you'll both learn  
to love one another once you get to  
know each other.

Ginger breaks into tears and runs down the street. Doug follows her. He is left standing alone in a streetlight calling after her.

DOUG (CONT'D)  
Ginger! Come back. Come back,  
Ginger...

INT. RACHEL'S LIVING ROOM - DAY.

Rachel is seated at the table reading. The doorbell rings and Ginger ENTERS before Rachel can get up to answer it. Ginger is visibly upset.

GINGER  
Oh Rachel! I need to talk to you.  
Are you alone?

RACHEL  
Yes. McAllister is in the  
bathroom. That's where he  
meditates. He can stay in there  
for hours.

GINGER  
Oh Rachel, I'm so worried. I don't  
know what's happening to me.

RACHEL  
What's wrong?

GINGER  
I'm turning back into a dog. Feel  
my nose. It's all wet.

Ginger takes Rachel's hand and touches it to the wet nose. Reflexively, Rachel pulls back.

GINGER (CON'T) (CONT'D)  
My eyes are all runny; I can't  
breath without panting. I can't  
think. My chest feels like it's  
about to burst open. What's wrong  
with me? Am I sick or am I turning  
back?

RACHEL  
Wrong with you? You've been crying  
that's all. Those are tears. It's  
perfectly natural.

GINGER  
Crying? Does crying hurt this  
much?

RACHEL  
Tell me, did this start after your  
date with Doug.

GINGER  
Rachel, it was a disaster. At  
first it was so wonderful... but  
then... but then...

Ginger starts sniffing and sobbing so that her words become  
intelligible. She tries to mimic the tail growing and the  
hair but cannot find the words. Rachel goes into the kitchen  
for a tissue.

RACHEL (O.S.)  
Men! What did that beast do to you?

Rachel quickly returns with a box of tissues. Ginger takes  
one and blows her nose.

GINGER  
Oh, no. It wasn't him. He was  
kind. He was wonderful. It's  
just... It's just...

She resumes the sobbing.

RACHEL  
Oh, Girlfriend. This is serious.  
You got it bad. You are in L-O-V-E.

Ginger has to pause a second to recognize the spelling.

GINGER  
Love? I thought love was supposed  
to make you feel good. I feel  
awful. I want to run to him, but I  
keep running away from him. I want  
to be with him, but when he calls I  
can't talk to him. I think about  
him all the time, but I can't face  
being with him.

RACHEL  
I think you will find that human  
emotions are a lot more complicated  
than those you were used to as a  
dog.

GINGER

I can't be in love. I can't be in love with Doug. Doug has a cat!

McAllister ENTERS from bathroom.

RACHEL

Honey? This is Ginger, the woman I told you about. Remember? The woman who used to be a dog?

McAllister falls to his knees and spreads out his arms before Ginger.

MCALLISTER

Oh great, dog spirit. What wisdom do you bring from beyond?

GINGER

(To Rachel)

Does he always talk like that?

RACHEL

Only in public.

MCALLISTER

She was sent to us from the spirit world to provide guidance just as in the tales of old.

GINGER

No, I wasn't.

MCALLISTER

You weren't?

RACHEL

She needs to talk to me, dear. We need to be alone.

MCALLISTER

(Rising)

I understand. I am not chosen to receive the revelations from the world beyond. You are the chosen one. I understand.

RACHEL

(Ushers him back to the bathroom)

No you don't, honey, but why don't you go back to your meditating and maybe eventually it will come to you.

McAllister returns to the bathroom, a little crestfallen

RACHEL (CONT'D)

Now where were we? Oh yes. Your Doug likes cats. What's wrong with that? Do you love him?

GINGER

But Rachel, he has a cat. I'm a dog.

RACHEL

You are not a dog anymore, and anyway; having lived as an animal, you should be sympathetic to all living creatures.

Ginger stands and becomes a little agitated

GINGER

But Rachel, a cat?

RACHEL

What's wrong with cats?

GINGER

You know. They... they... they climb trees.

RACHEL

So?

GINGER

They're dumb; they're devious.

RACHEL

Well which are they, dumb or devious? One can't be both. Let's face it. You are prejudiced!

GINGER

You expect me to actually like cats?

RACHEL

Not necessarily, but learn to accept them for what they are.

GINGER

They are dumb and devious. That's what they are.

RACHEL

The totem of the cat is a very powerful one. In ancient Egypt they were worshiped like gods.

Ginger shudders at the thought

RACHEL (CONT'D)

Yes, They were embalmed as mummies just like the pharaohs. And to the ancient Celts they were sacred advisers to the Goddess.

GINGER

Cats?

RACHEL

In the middle ages, they were persecuted as the representation of evil. They have power over dreams and help us to observe the unseen.

GINGER

I kind of agree with the representation of evil part.

MCALLISTER (O.S.)

Can I come out now?

RACHEL

Just a minute, honey. Ginger is just leaving.

GINGER

I am?

RACHEL

Yes. You need to go home and think about how you really feel and what you really want. Come to terms with your feelings for Doug. Come to terms with feelings for Larry. Come to terms even with your feelings for cats. When you reach that point, maybe Doug's calls won't upset you so much.

GINGER

Oh Rachel, thank you so much. You are my best friend. I'll let you know when I have worked everything out in my mind.

Ginger EXITS through front door. McAllister ENTERS from bathroom.

MCALLISTER  
She's gone? What did she tell you?  
What were you talking about?

RACHEL  
Oh, just girl stuff.

INT. LARRY'S LIVING ROOM. - DAY.

Ginger is seated, wearing casual clothes, speaking on the phone. She is speaking to Doug and her tone is slightly exasperated.

GINGER  
Doug! No, I can't see you. Will  
you please stop calling? (beat)  
There is no us. There is no  
future.... (long beat) No, I can't  
explain....(beat) Doug? Just stop  
it. You need to forget about me  
and get on with your life. You  
have your cat creature. You don't  
need...

O.S. GARAGE DOOR OPENS followed by the CAR DOOR.

GINGER (CONT'D)  
...I have to go now. Larry's home.  
(beat) Doug! I have to go.  
Goodbye!

Larry ENTERS from the kitchen just as she hangs up.

GINGER (CONT'D)  
You know that is the fifth time he  
has called today! What is wrong  
with that man?

LARRY  
Maybe his life is as miserable as  
mine. I feel sick as a dog.

Ginger goes over to Larry and circles him, sniffing him.

GINGER  
Larry? What's wrong? Is there  
anything I can do. Do you need me  
to fetch you something? A beer?

LARRY  
Nothing's wrong.

(beat)  
No, I take that back. Everything  
is wrong. You're all wrong. I'm  
all wrong. The whole freaking  
world has gone wrong.

GINGER  
But Larry, I'm just trying to help.

LARRY  
No, I can't just live like this.  
You know what happened to me today?  
Today I lost my job.

GINGER  
What?

LARRY  
I got laid off, fired, canned,  
kicked out.

GINGER  
Oh, Larry! No!

LARRY  
And you know why? It was because I  
could no longer trust reality. I  
mean if my dog could turn into a  
beautiful woman, why wouldn't my  
keyboard suddenly turn into a  
watermelon? Or my phone into a...  
banana. How can I work under those  
circumstances?

GINGER  
Are you saying you got fired  
because of me? Are you sure it's  
not all those pill you've been  
taking?

LARRY  
Yes. No, In meetings I could never  
be sure my boss wasn't going to  
turn into a hippopotamus or my  
coworkers into zebras and  
giraffes.

GINGER  
Larry, you need a job. We have  
bills to pay; we need to eat!

LARRY

(picks up the phone book  
and puts it back down)  
Maybe this book will turn into a  
slab of roast beef and we can eat  
that.

GINGER

This is serious. You should start  
looking for another job right away.

LARRY

What do you know about earning a  
living? You've had it easy your  
whole life, being taken care of by  
humans, never having to worry where  
your food came from.

GINGER

I know where it comes from.  
There's a factory not far from  
here. In fact, according to the  
paper they are hiring. Why don't  
you try to get a job there?

LARRY

What do I know about dog food? I'm  
an engineer.

Ginger suddenly becomes quite agitated as a monumental idea  
strikes her.

GINGER

Larry! I know! I know a lot about  
dog food!

She dives for the paper on the coffee table and opens it  
searching for the classified ads.

LARRY

You're reading the paper now?

GINGER

I read it every day, every word of  
it, even the classified ads. The  
lost dogs are so sad. But that help  
wanted ad, I could answer that ad  
myself!

LARRY

You think you're qualified after  
just a couple weeks?

Ginger does not look up from the paper but continues searching.

GINGER

Dog weeks, Larry. Every year of a dog's life is equivalent to seven or so human years. That's why it seems to you I'm learning faster.

(beat)

Here it is! "Wanted. Experienced quality control inspector for leading pet food manufacturer" That's me, Larry. That could be me. I can get that job and support us both!

Ginger runs into the bedroom. Larry reaches out toward heaven as if praying

LARRY

Oh, God! Why did you make me an atheist?

Larry starts to paces back and forth talking to himself.

LARRY (CONT'D)

Early man invented you when faced with the inexplicable. He couldn't explain thunder so he made up a thunder God. The sprouting of crops, the motion of the planets, the progression of seasons, all required someone like You. But then, gradually, over the centuries we learned where the thunder comes from, how the plants sprouted, what moved the planets and changed the seasons. The inexplicable shrunk smaller and smaller until it practically disappeared completely.

He again reaches out toward heaven.

LARRY (CONT'D)

Then something like her happens and I find myself needing something like you all over again. If only you existed. That would make everything all so simple. Dog turns human? No need to explain. It's just another of your ordinary, everyday miracles! But since you don't exist, the inexplicable has returned with a vengeance!

He collapses on the couch.

LARRY (CONT'D)  
I've lost my senses; I've lost my  
job; and now even my credit cards  
are inexplicably maxed out!

He collapses on the couch.

Ginger strides from the bedroom, dressed in a smart business  
suit, her makeup and hair perfectly businesslike.

GINGER  
They say every dog has her day.  
Well, today is mine!

She leaves through the front door, not even looking back at  
Larry.

EXT. DOORWAY TO RACHEL'S PLACE - DAY.

Doug approaches the door and rings the doorbell. He is  
dressed in his usual sports coat and tie. He carries a large  
bouquet of red roses. McAllister answers the door.

MCALLISTER  
Not for me, I trust.

DOUG  
(Flustered)  
No.

MCALLISTER  
Though I have at times received  
such offerings from grateful  
admirers, usually elderly and  
female.

DOUG  
They're for--

MCALLISTER  
If you are calling on Rachel,  
however, there are two things you  
should know. First she is not  
home, secondly she already has a  
romantic attachment.

DOUG  
No, they are not for her either.  
They are for Ginger. Larry, her  
brother, said she might be here.

MCALLISTER

Ginger, the great dog spirit! You are bringing gifts to honor her. She has deigned to share her wisdom only with Rachel. She has taken Rachel to a place where she can impart that wisdom. A place known as the mall.

DOUG

But you and Rachel both live here? Maybe I could...

McAllister motions for Doug to enter. He does.

MCALLISTER

For a second I was overcome with primeval fear that a younger man was competing for Rachel's attention. You see, I have reached that age when a man looks back on the promises to himself he has failed to keep.

DOUG

Ginger seems to think you have magic powers.

MCALLISTER

When I was your age, I too thought I did. What I have found since is that the spirit world is like something seen out of the corner of your eye. Look at it directly and it disappears. Look too hard and you doubt you ever saw anything at all. Sometimes I'm not sure I have any powers at all, magic or otherwise. But somehow, whether it be magic or not, an enchanting, young lady has arrived in my arms.

DOUG

Mine too, but Ginger wants nothing to do with me any more.

MCALLISTER

Be patient my son. When everything ordained comes to pass, you may once again hold her in your arms.

Doug looks through the window and sees someone coming up the path.

DOUG  
Look here they come now.

He runs to the door, remembering to grab the flowers. He opens it just as Rachel is about to do so.

GINGER  
Doug! Why do you keep dogging my every step.

He hands her the flowers but she pushes them aside. Rachel intercepts the bouquet and takes it into the house.

GINGER (CONT'D)  
You have to leave. Please. Don't you understand how difficult it is for me to see you.

DOUG  
Yes. That's what gives me hope. But I will leave you alone until you decide.

GINGER  
Promise?

DOUG  
I do.

He smiles wistfully and turns to leave

GINGER  
(quietly, almost to herself)  
Maybe someday...

He half turns to her and catches a tear rolling down her cheek.

DOUG  
Don't cry. I can't stand to see you cry. See, I'm leaving like you asked.

GINGER  
(On the verge of sobbing)  
I'm not crying. Dogs don't cry.

Doug EXITS. Rachel comes up and puts her arm around Ginger leading her into the house. McAllister stands by looking helpless and confused.

INT. LARRY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY.

A couple days later Larry is sitting on the couch watching a soap opera on TV. He is unshaven and still wearing his bathrobe.

Ginger is busy at the computer, fingers and mouse flying. Every once in a while she looks up at Larry with growing annoyance. Finally she jumps up, strides over to the TV and turns it off.

Larry is startled.

LARRY

What are you doing?

GINGER

Trying to concentrate. I have to be ready when I start work.

LARRY

You're not getting that job. It's been two days since your so-called "interview."

GINGER

They liked me. I'm sure of it. They said they would call me as soon as they decide. I don't have much time to learn how to act smart so they won't think I'm just a dumb animal.

LARRY

Why can't you just be a dumb animal again? What was wrong with that? What's wrong with things being the way they are supposed to be?

GINGER

Can't you just accept the fact? I used to be a dog, now I'm a person. It's as simple as that.

LARRY

That is not simple! It's anything but simple.

GINGER

It's the most straight-forward observation. I look like a person. I talk like a person. I walk like a person. Therefore, I must be a person.

LARRY  
Why are you talking like this?

GINGER  
I thought you wanted me to sound logical. You didn't like it when I acted dumb.

Phone rings. Larry answers it.

LARRY  
Miss Golden? I'm sorry, there's no one here by that name. You must have the wrong--

Ginger snatches the phone from his hand. Larry looks stunned.

GINGER  
This is Ginger Golden. I'm sorry. That was my brother Larry.

Ginger shoots a sharp look at Larry

GINGER (CONT'D)  
He's... ill...  
(pause)  
Of course I am!  
(pause)  
Of course I do!  
(pause)  
Oh yes. Tomorrow. I can start tomorrow.  
(pause)  
I'll be there.  
(pause)  
Thank you. I'll see you tomorrow then.

Ginger hangs up the phone and jumps up excitedly

GINGER (CONT'D)  
Larry! I got it! I got the job!

Larry sinks in to the couch and pulls the pillow over his head.

LARRY  
Oh no... no.

INT. RACHEL'S LIVING ROOM. - DAY.

Rachel is sitting on her couch. She looks at her watch. McAllister ENTERS from the front door. He doesn't see her at first.

MCALLISTER  
I'm home! Oh. You're right here.

RACHEL  
Where else would I be?

MCALLISTER  
Come with me. I need you to help me.

RACHEL  
Help what.

MCALLISTER  
Consult with my brothers.

RACHEL  
Brothers? I thought you were an only child.

MCALLISTER  
I need to consult my spirit brothers, Brother Bear, Brother Fox, Brother Coyote.

RACHEL  
You're taking me up into the mountains? To the wilderness?

MCALLISTER  
No, no, no. Just come with me.

Rachel gets her purse and coat and follows him out the front door.

EXT. MCALLISTER'S CAR - CONTINUOUS.

They come to the car. McAllister opens the passenger door for her but Rachel balks at entering.

RACHEL  
Can you at least tell me where we are going?

MCALLISTER  
To the zoo.

RACHEL  
The zoo! How could you. The way  
they lock up the poor animals!

MCALLISTER  
They only appear to be  
incarcerated. As spirits they are  
free, free to roam the astral  
plane.

RACHEL  
Maybe so, but I still don't approve  
of locking them up.

MCALLISTER  
From their point of view, it is we  
who are in the cage, a huge cage of  
our own making. Only by listening  
to the wisdom of our animal spirits  
can we escape.

RACHEL  
You have to learn to tell me why  
before you ask me to do something.

Rachel takes the door and gets in the car.

EXT. THE ZOO - DAY.

Rachel and McAllister are walking along a crowded path past  
the cages and exhibits of a zoo. They come to a bench.

RACHEL  
You need to consult them? About  
what?

MCALLISTER  
About your friend, the dog spirit.  
What is it you call her?

RACHEL  
Ginger.

MCALLISTER  
Ah, yes Ginger.

RACHEL  
Oh! That reminds me. I have some  
great news about her. She got a  
job! Isn't that exciting?

MCALLISTER

But she already has a job. It is her job to bring us her wisdom from the spirit plane.

RACHEL

But don't you understand what a big step this is for her?

MCALLISTER

Not as big a step as becoming human in the first place. She has a special message to convey, and that's what we're here to find out.

McAllister sits on the bench and motions for Rachel to join him.

MCALLISTER (CONT'D)

We are so close to the animals we can use astral projection to communicate to many of them from right here.

RACHEL

How can you tell the difference between thought projection from another being and something in your own mind?

MCALLISTER

Ah! That takes years of study, my dear. At the zoo, I was able to converse with a great many of our spirit brothers at the same time. It's like an astral cocktail party.

RACHEL

But what about Ginger?

MCALLISTER

Let's find out, shall we? Do as I showed you.

He gets up on the back of the bench, closes his eyes and stretches his arms before him, palms up.

RACHEL

Here? With all these people?

MCALLISTER

Yes. Pay them no mind.

She joins him and imitates his position.

EXT. THE ASTRAL PLANE - DAY.

DOLLY glides at low altitude over what seems to be a large dry lake bed. In the distance an indistinct series of objects shimmering in the heat. When the DOLLY approaches the first, it turns out to be a camel.

MCALLISTER (V.O.)

Each animal imparts its own wisdom.  
The wisdom of the camel is to  
traverse the shifting sands of time  
and the vastness of space.

DOLLY glides past the camel there are herds of African antelope.

MCALLISTER (V.O.)

Nyumbu Ya Montu, the wildebeest:  
His wisdom is the value of travel  
and survival in crowds. The gazelle  
has the wisdom of fast thinking and  
leaping to conclusions and then  
there's the gnu...

RACHEL (V.O.)

The new what?

MCALLISTER (V.O.)

Gnu, g-n-u. The wisdom of the gnu  
is open source.

DOLLY continues to glide past the African herds and various other animal groupings likely to be found in a zoo.

RACHEL (V.O.)

You said you went to see the bear  
and fox.

MCALLISTER (V.O.)

There's wisdom in all species.

(pause)

The bear is the shaman's greatest  
communicator. He appears quite  
often in dreams and visions, and  
always has something useful to  
impart.

DOLLY glides until approaching a bear. It is incongruously eating a large Salmon.

MCALLISTER (V.O.)

I will channel him and you can  
question him.

MCALLISTER AS BEAR SPIRIT (V.O.)  
 Why have you come, son and daughter  
 of the hunter?

RACHEL (V.O.)  
 We seek your wisdom, oh Bear  
 Spirit. A dog has been sent among  
 us in human form. We wish to know  
 the meaning of this transformation.

MCALLISTER AS BEAR SPIRIT (V.O.)  
 Have you asked this of the dog-  
 human?

RACHEL (V.O.)  
 She doesn't seem to know.

MCALLISTER AS BEAR SPIRIT (V.O.)  
 Then go to the coyote. The wily  
 coyote is the shape-shifter  
 extraordinaire.

RACHEL (V.O.)  
 Doesn't seem to help him with the  
 roadrunner.

This bit of logic breaks McAllister out of his trance.

EXT. THE ZOO - CONTINUOUS

They are sitting on the bench as before.

MCALLISTER  
 Huh?

RACHEL  
 Never mind.  
 (beat)

MCALLISTER  
 Give me a minute; you can ask him  
 yourself. I'll channel him next.

McAllister begins to rock and moan. He puts his hands down  
 on the ground before him and looks from side to side. He  
 howls. People stop and stare. Parents pull their children  
 away protectively.

RACHEL  
 Are you the spirit of the coyote  
 now?

MCALLISTER AS COYOTE SPIRIT  
Who were you expecting, Chica?

McAllister's voice has changed completely to that of the COYOTE SPIRIT, a wise-cracking, fast-talking, man with a vaguely Hispanic accent.. His appearance stays the same but his eyes remain closed in a trance. Rachel gets up and walks around him.

RACHEL  
I just had a few questions for you.  
You know about shape shifting?

MCALLISTER AS COYOTE SPIRIT  
Do I know shape shifting? Do I  
know shape shifting? I practically  
invented shape shifting. Ask me  
anything.

RACHEL  
Well... I have this friend... she  
was changed from a dog to a  
human...

MCALLISTER AS COYOTE SPIRIT  
A dog? A common, domesticated dog?  
I doubt it. They hang around  
humans too much to have such  
powers... unless...

RACHEL  
Unless what?

MCALLISTER AS COYOTE SPIRIT  
She isn't part coyote, is she?

RACHEL  
I don't think so. She's a Golden  
Retriever.

MCALLISTER AS COYOTE SPIRIT  
Bah!

RACHEL  
She didn't change herself, she was  
changed.

MCALLISTER AS COYOTE SPIRIT  
Changed by whom?

RACHEL  
By you... I mean by McAllister, the  
shaman.

MCALLISTER AS COYOTE SPIRIT  
Never happened. Oh, sorcerers and  
such can change humans to animals.  
They do it all the time. Have you  
ever heard of anyone who changed  
some animal into a human?

RACHEL  
(pauses to think)  
Um... What about Cinderella? In  
the movie didn't her fairy  
godmother change her mice friends  
into coachmen or something?

MCALLISTER AS COYOTE SPIRIT  
A movie? Is that the best you can  
do? No. The shape shifting to  
human from animal can only be done  
by the animal itself. It's usually  
in order to seduce and destroy some  
man.

RACHEL  
Ginger's rather fond of men. I  
don't think she wants to destroy  
them.

MCALLISTER AS COYOTE SPIRIT  
Neither do I, neither do I, and I'm  
the greatest shape shifter of them  
all. It amuses me to walk among  
humans. I chuckle at their foibles  
and foolishness. But seduce them?  
Give me a good coyote bitch in heat  
any day!

He stands and makes an obscene gesture with his hips.

RACHEL  
So, you say that it was Ginger  
herself, not you... not the shaman?  
She doesn't seem to think she did  
anything.

MCALLISTER AS COYOTE SPIRIT  
That is the wisdom of the Coyote,  
take it or leave it.

RACHEL  
Alright then, if you have all this  
shape shifting power, why do you  
live in a zoo?

MCALLISTER AS COYOTE SPIRIT

These questions are starting to become tedious. Figure it out yourself. I'm going back there now.

McAllister collapses into a slump on the bench. Rachel goes to him and embraces him. Some others stop and look but move on when it is obvious he is all right.

RACHEL

Are you all right?

MCALLISTER

(resuming his normal tone of voice)

Yes, a bit exhausted. Did you learn what you needed?

They get up and start moving to the zoo entrance.

INT. PET FOOD COMPANY - DAY.

There are rows of cubicles with desks. There is a large sign on the wall with a picture of a puppy in the arms of a boy and the slogan: "Happiness is a warm owner." In one of the cubicles, Ginger is on the phone. Doug is in a similar office.

INTERCUT

GINGER

Oh, Doug. Please stop calling me at the office. I have a lot of work to do. I am suppose to be on my way to a meeting right now.

DOUG

I can't help it. Can we meet for lunch?

GINGER

Lunch? I usually don't go out... I...

DOUG

I could meet you at the cafe at the end of the block. It wouldn't take long. I need to see you. I need to talk to you.

GINGER  
 OK. At 12:30 at the cafe. But  
 Doug. I really have to go. This  
 is a very important...

DOUG  
 I'll be there at noon. Bye.

END INTERCUT

COWORKER ENTERS, male junior executive, about 35. He pops  
 his head into Ginger's cubicle.

COWORKER  
 Great presentation, G. I wouldn't  
 be surprised if they take a good  
 look at you after Howard retires.

GINGER  
 Thanks, but I don't see how they  
 could make me V.P. of Product  
 Development after less than a year  
 here.

COWORKER  
 We'll see. In any case I would  
 watch my back if I were you. A lot  
 of people resent you.

GINGER  
 Resent me?

COWORKER  
 Like at school, and you're the  
 "teachers pet."  
 (Beat)  
 I'll walk you to the meeting.

They EXIT together to walk down the hall.

INT. LARRY'S LIVING ROOM. DAY.

Larry is seated at the computer, in his bathrobe, unshaven,  
 and disheveled. There is a book on how to find a job beside  
 the keyboard.

INT. LARRY'S KITCHEN. DAY

He shuffles to the kitchen and gets a beer. He opens it and  
 takes a swig before even closing the refrigerator.

INT. LARRY'S LIVING ROOM. DAY.

He then shuffles back to the computer. He looks intently at the screen and works the mouse, after typing some on the keyboard. It might seem that he is job hunting.

He rests the beer on the book. The screen shows a video game instead of a listing of jobs. He closes the window on the game and looks at some soft core pornography which he clicks through rapidly.

The GARAGE DOOR OPENS followed by the CAR DOOR.

Ginger ENTERS through the kitchen garage door. She is dressed in a business suit and carries a briefcase, which she drops as she collapses onto the couch.

GINGER

What a day. Now I really know what it means when they say "dog tired."

LARRY

Hmm. You haven't been on this job six months yet.

GINGER

(wearily)

Dog months, Larry.

LARRY

Dog months, right.

Ginger rises and paces back and forth.

GINGER

Meetings, meetings, interminable meetings all day long! Every time I made a point about the new kibble they would attack me. "Oh it would add too much to the cost to change it." "What's wrong with the way we've always done things."

LARRY

What is wrong?

GINGER

Larry, it tastes awful!

LARRY

You tried it?

GINGER

Of course.

LARRY  
They knew that?

GINGER  
They are all so jealous. They think I just want to be top dog.

LARRY  
It's a dog eat dog world, out there.

GINGER  
Larry! Dogs are not cannibals!

LARRY  
It's an expression.

GINGER  
I know that. You're just jerking my chain aren't you? Don't give me a hard time. I've had a rough day.

Ginger gets up and ENTERS the bathroom where she removes the jacket and skirt.

LARRY (O.S.)  
Things not going so well in the dog food business?

GINGER  
No, I feel so cooped up in that kennel.. er... cubicle. There's talk our supervisor may be leaving, though.

Ginger puts on a house dress and returns to the living room.

LARRY  
Is that good?

GINGER  
It could be. He is really hard to work for. You know, he has this little bell he keeps on his desk to ring when we have our lunch break? This afternoon, he knocked it off his desk, even though it wasn't anywhere near break time. You know what? All of a sudden I felt famished. My mouth started watering. I couldn't get my mind off of food.

LARRY  
Is his name Pavlov?

EXT. OUTDOOR CAFE. - DAY.

Doug is seated alone at a bistro table. He is wearing his sports jacket and tie. Ginger ENTERS the cafe, looks around and joins him at his table. He rises as she takes her seat.

GINGER  
We'll have to eat quickly. I only get a half-hour for lunch.

DOUG  
That's all I get too, but no one seems to notice if I'm late. Sometimes I kind of wish they would.

GINGER  
Most of the time I don't even go out for lunch. I just grab something off the assembly line and take it back to my desk.

DOUG  
Ginger?

GINGER  
Yes, Doug?

DOUG  
I just had to see you again. I apologize for Mitzi. I should have warned you.

GINGER  
Oh, Doug. It's not just your cat. I've gotten over that. It's just...

The WAITER approaches to take their order.

GINGER (CONT'D)  
(To the waiter)  
The New York Strip. Rare and hold the vegetables. And a glass of the Pinot Noir.

DOUG  
I'll have a cheeseburger and a Dr. Pepper.

The waiter leaves

DOUG (CONT'D)

It's just what?

GINGER

Oh. Well, I like you a lot...

DOUG

Oh, no. Here it comes. You just want to be friends, don't you. Well, I want to be more than friends. Friendship is the kiss of death to a new relationship. I'm in love with you. Can't you see that?

GINGER

Doug, you are so sweet and adorable.

DOUG

Sweet and adorable, oh no! When a girl tells a guy he's sweet and adorable, she's telling him she's not attracted to him. I want you to feel for me what I feel for you. I couldn't stand to be just sweet and adorable.

GINGER

I do want to be more than just friends. I just can't. I can't allow myself be in love with you.

Ginger starts to sob quietly.

DOUG

That's what I can't understand. Why?

GINGER

We are too different, you and I. It's like we belong to two different species.

DOUG

Of course we're different. I'm a man and you're a woman. But, like they say south of the border, "Viva el difference."

GINGER

And, I have to stay with Larry.

DOUG  
Your brother? Why?

GINGER  
He needs me to take care of him.

DOUG  
He is a grown man.

GINGER  
I can't leave him. I was bred and trained to be loyal, faithful, and protective.

DOUG  
But you need to be faithful to yourself, too. What do you need to protect him from?

GINGER  
Doug, you don't see what he is going through. I do. Every day he is unemployed he sinks deeper and deeper into depression and self-pity. And he blames me.

DOUG  
You? Why?

GINGER  
Oh, Doug. It's much too complicated to explain. I can't even explain it to myself. Believe me, if there was any way I could walk away and be with you forever, I would. I just can't, that's all.

DOUG  
We can still see each other.

GINGER  
It's hard for me to be with you, without being with you, if you know what I mean. And I can't be with you while Larry still needs me.

DOUG  
Well if that's all it is, after your brother finds a job and is working again, then can we see each other. Right?

GINGER  
I don't know, Doug. Maybe.

Ginger smiles wistfully.

DOUG

Can I keep on calling you, then, until your brother gets a job? It shouldn't take long. Then we can be together, you and I.

GINGER

(Laughing)

Oh, Doug, you're so persistent. Are you sure you're not part bulldog?

DOUG

That's a yes, then?

Ginger nods tentatively. He reaches across the table to hold her hand. She starts to lick his hand but stops herself. They look into each other's eyes. Their food arrives.

INT. LARRY'S LIVINGROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Larry sits at the computer. He wears his bathrobe. GARAGE DOOR and CAR door are heard and Ginger enters with her briefcase.

GINGER

Larry, I'm home.

Larry jumps up and tries to stand before the screen blocking it from Ginger's view.

LARRY

(awkwardly)

Oh, hi.

GINGER

I do get discouraged Larry. I work like a dog, and you never even give me a pat on the head.

(beat)

But what about your day, Larry? How is your job search going? Anything promising?

LARRY

(evasively)

Oh... good... it's going good. I was on the Internet.

GINGER

I hope you weren't just looking for video games and naked women...

Ginger glances at the screen. Larry makes a feeble attempt to shield it from her.

GINGER (CONT'D)

You were, weren't you! Did you do anything toward employment?

LARRY

(Plaintively)

I started to...

GINGER

Larry, I realize I can earn enough to support us both. The Kennel Club calls retrievers a sporting breed, but I think I work as hard as any border collie.

LARRY

(trying to change the subject)

Oh. Your friend Doug called. He seems unduly interested in my job search, too.

GINGER

He's concerned about you. We both are.

LARRY

Why don't you all leave me alone. If you are so concerned, try being a dog again.

GINGER

What you need, Larry, is a clear set of goals and to pursue them doggedly until you can retrieve them.

LARRY

How can I pursue anything if I've lost my senses. My only goal is for you to be a dog again.

GINGER

You know, when I first became human I thought I had lost my senses too. Everything sounded like my head was under a bucket. And smell!

GINGER (CONT'D)  
Everything smelled blurry. No  
details.

LARRY  
Scents made no sense?

GINGER  
But then I realized that I had also  
gained senses. For example, I  
could see colors now. I could  
taste the subtleties of different  
foods when I didn't wolf them down.

LARRY  
Ginger, you do realize when I say I  
can't make sense of things. I'm  
not talking about vision, hearing,  
taste, and all that.

GINGER  
I'm getting there. You just said  
"scents made no sense," right? That  
was a joke.

LARRY  
You didn't laugh.

GINGER  
I didn't say it was a good joke.  
But you see, there is an important  
sense you haven't lost. A sense no  
animal has...

LARRY  
Which is?

GINGER  
...a sense that, according to  
Aristotle, only people can have: A  
sense of humor. If you keep your  
sense of humor, no absurdity can  
ever harm you. Not even the  
absurdity of my being human.

LARRY  
So all I need to do is laugh? Ha,  
ha? And everything will be all  
right? No, what I have lost is the  
sense that life makes "sense."

GINGER  
Life is like this toy.

Ginger runs into the kitchen and reaches behind the refrigerator. Larry follows her. She pulls out a "Kong" dog toy and bounces it on the kitchen floor. It takes an odd bounce but she grabs it out of the air.

GINGER (CONT'D)

You never know which way it's going to bounce. Don't you still have your sense of adventure?

Ginger bounces and catches the toy again.

LARRY

No, I've lost that, too.

GINGER

Larry, look at me. I'm just me. You're just you. You don't have to feel insecure around me. Get that hang-dog look off your face. Where's the Larry I used to know?

LARRY

I don't understand anything anymore. I can't even keep up with you. It makes me feel dumb just being around you.

GINGER

It's because my mind was trapped in a tiny braincase for so long. I guess I was content enough that way, but then-pow-all of a sudden I found it free to expand into a brain over ten times its size.

LARRY

But how did things happen to you so fast. It's only been seven months and you are talking like a PhD.

GINGER

You know I took the Mensa test on the Internet, not long ago? My score registered off the scale. As a dog, even a very smart dog, my I.Q. would have been about twenty or thirty.

LARRY

So, how high is your I.Q. now?

GINGER

It doesn't matter. The results were invalid-- correct, but not in human terms. To get I.Q. you have to divide mental age by physical age. I had put down my physical age as four.

LARRY

You are no four-year old. Look at you.

GINGER

You and I live on different time scales.

LARRY

Yes, dog years. So you've told me, over and over.

GINGER

But, think about it. A little ten-year old girl is just beginning her life; a ten-year old dog is near the end of hers.

LARRY

So? People live longer.

GINGER

How many ten year old humans have arthritis, cataracts, hearing loss? Ten-year-old dogs do.

LARRY

Tortoises live even longer.

GINGER

When I was a dog, I thought like a dog. I didn't worry about the past, or much about the future. Everything was the now. I never thought about death. Now, I think about it a lot. I guess you humans think about death all the time.

LARRY

Sometimes I wish I were dead. If I was, life would make more sense.

GINGER

(Firmly)

No, you don't understand.

GINGER (CONT'D)

I've been human for about seven months, four dog years! At that rate, since retrievers are not a particularly long-lived breed, I will only be around for another six to eight of your years.

LARRY

So wouldn't you prefer spending it as a dog? I would if I were you. No worries, no decisions, no obsessing about death-- or about life.

GINGER

That's all you really want, just a dog. Not me; not the me I am. You would prefer I were just a dog, wouldn't you.

LARRY

(angrily)

Yes. Bingo, good dog. You got it. I want my dog back. I'm going to make that witch doctor undo what ever he did to you. Tomorrow.

GINGER

Larry! No!

Larry EXITS to bedroom..

INT. RACHEL'S KITCHEN. LATE AFTERNOON.

The next day. Rachel and McAllister are sitting at the kitchen table.

RACHEL

Now I'm more confused than ever. The Coyote said you didn't change Ginger; she did it herself. He said people can't change animals; animals can only change themselves.

MCALLISTER

Magic is never simple.

There is a sudden and violent knock at the door. Before either of them can answer, Larry burst in.

LARRY

Dognappers! That's what you are. Dognappers! Give me my Ginger back!

MCALLISTER

We don't have your dog. You have her. She has changed form, that's all.

LARRY

She has a job, she drives a car, she has a boyfriend. Who knows what's next. Will she run for president? Give me my dog back.

RACHEL

You don't own Ginger. Who do you think you are! Get out of my house!

LARRY

I paid a pet store three hundred and fifty dollars for her. She is a valuable pedigreed bitch!

MCALLISTER

Calm down, both of you.

RACHEL

Ginger is a person. She belongs to herself. Not you or anyone else.

MCALLISTER

My spirits tell me she can change herself back at anytime if she just believes.

RACHEL

She wants to be herself.

MCALLISTER

If you can make her believe she is a dog that is what she will be. The way you treat people is what they become.

LARRY

Are you saying I can transform her...

MCALLISTER

No that's not what I'm saying at all...

LARRY

This better work or I'm going to transform your face into a scrambled egg.

Larry storms out.

RACHEL  
He can't hurt her, can he?

MCALISTER  
He won't.

INT. LARRY'S LIVINGROOM. EVENING.

Ginger is at the computer doing research. She wears a simple housedress. The GARAGE DOOR and CAR DOOR are heard. Larry enters from garage.

LARRY  
You are a dog! You were meant to  
be a dog. Let me show you.

He suddenly turns around with his back to her.

LARRY (CONT'D)  
(commanding)  
Ginger! Heel!

Without thinking, Ginger takes her position at his side and one step behind.

GINGER  
You're acting like the dog in the  
manger. You lost your job so you  
don't want me to have mine.

Larry turns and raises a finger

LARRY  
Ginger! Sit!

As if she has no control, she pops down on her haunches before him with her hands on the floor.

GINGER  
Larry, what are you doing? I'm  
trying to carry on an intelligent  
conversation.

LARRY  
(Ignoring her and again  
raising his finger.)  
Ginger! Play dead!

GINGER  
I'm going to be Vice President of  
Product Development.

LARRY  
Ginger! Play dead!

She lies down on her back.

GINGER  
I was going to tell you when I was  
sure I had the promotion.

LARRY  
Ginger! Roll Over!

She rolls over and then starts to get up.

LARRY (CONT'D)  
Now, one more command. This is an  
easy one. Ginger! Be a dog!

HER HAIR BEGINS TO LENGTHEN. HER FIGURE BECOMES MORE DOG  
LIKE. She tries to rise but falls over as her feet are  
starting to change to a dogs.

GINGER  
You forgot one command: Speak!  
That's what I'm trying to do--

Larry picks up a newspaper and rolls it up. He strikes one  
of his palms with it. Ginger covers her head and cowers on  
the floor as if it were a deadly weapon with which she was  
being threatened.

THE CLOTHING FALLS OFF HER REVEALING A LONG TAIL. HER FACE  
IS STILL HUMAN BUT STARTING TO BECOME COVERED IN HAIR AND  
FLOPPY EARS.

GINGER (CONT'D)  
But Larry, look at all I can do as  
a human. If I hadn't been bringing  
home a paycheck, you would have  
been starving. We both would have  
been. You're just biting the hand  
that feeds you.

LARRY  
If you hadn't become human, I  
wouldn't have been unemployed in  
the first place.

GINGER  
It's not my fault, Larry. I just  
wanted...

LARRY

See, the idiot wizard was right. I can make you into a dog again. Why didn't he tell me that before.

Ginger is fully a dog by now. She picks up her fallen dress with her teeth.

GINGER

Ar-ow.

Ginger makes a break for the door the dress trailing behind her.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREETS. EVENING.

In a panic Ginger runs out of the house and down the street with Larry following her. She starts on all fours but rises to two legs. As she runs the EARS, HAIR and TAIL gradually disappear. An OLD WOMAN bystander, out taking a walk, sees this and shakes her head disapprovingly.

OLD WOMAN

Young people!

Larry gives up the chase and returns to his house.

EXT. OUTSIDE DOOR OF RACHEL'S PLACE. IMMEDIATELY

Ginger runs up looking behind her to see if Larry is still chasing her. She slips into the housedress she had been carrying in her teeth. She does a quick check to see if the tail is gone. It is. She knocks on the door. Rachel answers the door and ushers her in.

INT. RACHEL'S LIVING ROOM. - NIGHT.

Rachel and Ginger sit down for a long talk.

GINGER

Oh Rachel! Maybe Larry's right...

RACHEL

No!

GINGER

When he starts to treat me like a dog I start to feel like a dog. When I start to feel like a dog I start to become a dog.

GINGER (CONT'D)

That's what I really am and that's what I need to be.

McAllister enters and pulls up a chair.

MCALLISTER

What do you mean?

RACHEL

Yes, What exactly do you mean? You are a smart, talented woman. As a woman you have the entire world ahead of you. Think of all you could do. Think of all you could accomplish. Think of the example you could give to little girls growing up.

GINGER

I was never a little girl; I was a puppy.

RACHEL

But look at what you have become. In a few short months you have risen to the top of your company. People look up to you with respect. They admire your creativity, your insight, your drive and ambition. Now you are about to give it all up, for what?

GINGER

Rachel, Rachel! I appreciate all you are saying, and all you have done for me. But, this is something I have to do, not just for Larry, but also for myself. I have to be true to who I am and what I am.

RACHEL

Not what you are, what you used to be. Who you are is far beyond...

GINGER

Rachel, please?

MCALLISTER

You are a spirit creature. You can be whatever you wish. You represent all dogs to all humans. You have great things to teach us.

MCALLISTER (CONT'D)

Isn't that why you were transformed?

GINGER

No. I don't think so. One day I was a dog, thinking dog thoughts, and doing dog things. The next day I was... something else...

RACHEL

...but not someone else. You're still the same being in another body. Right?

GINGER

Rachel, when Larry started giving me commands strange things happened.

RACHEL

Strange how?

GINGER

I started to change back into a dog. I started to feel like a dog.

RACHEL

Your wet nose...? Again?

GINGER

No more than that. Physical changes...

RACHEL

Larry did that to you.

GINGER

No. I did it to Larry. I feel responsible. Like it's my fault he lost his job and has to take all those pills. The only way he can be sane again is for me to be a dog again.

RACHEL

Is that what you really want?

GINGER

The life of a dog is sacrifice and loyalty. I live only to please my owner. If this means being what he wants me to be, that is what I must become.

MCALLISTER

One often becomes what one is treated as, especially by someone one loves.

RACHEL

Larry has always treated women like dogs.

GINGER

I don't love Larry, not the way I love Doug. But, he is my owner and I have to care for him.

RACHEL

What did you just say?

GINGER

I have to care for... I just said I love Doug, didn't I?

RACHEL

That's it. We have to get to the bottom of this. Girl, you have a big decision to make.

Rachel runs from the room, retrieves her cell phone and dials. When it is answered she speaks in hushed tones so the others cannot hear. Ginger sits on the couch stunned by her own admission.

GINGER

Oh, no. I am in love with Doug. Now what?

McAllister comes over and puts his arms around her in a fatherly way.

MCALISTER

What you feel for Larry and what you feel for Doug are two very different things both called by the same name. Love. To distinguish them ask yourself a question. Does this "Love" bring together two souls as equals or does this "Love" require one to dominate the other.

GINGER

Yes Doug and I are equal... more or less.

MCALISTER

So go to him.

GINGER

It's not that simple. All I want to be is a real woman... to have a real life, a job, an education, even a family. But all my training and all my breeding demanded loyalty to Larry, my owner. I thought this was just because I was a dog, but more and more I am starting to realize that even being a real woman requires sacrificing yourself for others. I am bound to help Larry, even if it means giving up Doug and everything else.

MCALISTER

If that's what you decide, I can try to undo the spell... I think.  
(Calls out)  
Rachel!

FADE TO:

INT. LARRY'S LIVINGROOM - NIGHT.

A few hours later. Larry, still in his bathrobe, sits on the couch in front of the TV playing a home shopping infomercial.

Ginger ENTERS excitedly. Rachel ENTERS several paces behind her.

GINGER

Larry? You're still not dressed?  
Look who I brought!

LARRY

Rachel! What are you doing here?

RACHEL

There will be more coming.

LARRY

Look Girl, I'm sorry I scared you away. I was just trying to show you what you really wanted: To be a dog.

GINGER

Larry, I used to think of you as this mighty and powerful being. When ever I encountered something inexplicable, I wouldn't let it bother me.

GINGER (CONT'D)

I knew that my owner understood everything. There must always be some reason for it. Even if you failed to notice if I was thirsty or needed to go out, I had faith that you knew what was best for me. Even after I first became human, I retained this trust in you. But gradually, as I learned more and more, fewer and fewer things remained unexplained. You began to look less mighty and less powerful, until I realized you were just like me, or rather I had become just like you. To be honest, I miss having you as an explanation for everything. I miss having someone to figure things out for me. I miss believing in you.

There is a knock at the door. Larry goes to answer it.

LARRY

McAllister?

GINGER

I hope so.

Doug ENTERS with Larry.

GINGER (CONT'D)

Doug? You can't be here.

RACHEL

I asked him to come. I thought if you saw him and realized all the possibilities ahead of you, you'd change your mind.

GINGER

Rachel, if anyone should understand me it's you. You're my teacher, my mentor, my best....

LARRY

You were going to say best friend? As in "Man's best friend?"

GINGER

No, Larry. As in best girlfriend. Soon I'll be your faithful companion again. Loyal, faithful, and dumb.

LARRY

Don't put yourself down. The dog is a noble animal. A magnificent creature, handsome and proud, a companion, faithful and true, why if I had your choice...

DOUG

I had to come. I had to talk to you face to face. I know you care for me.

GINGER

Of course I do, Doug. There are just so many things you just don't know about me.

DOUG

I don't care what I don't know; all I care about is you.

GINGER

Maybe it's just as well you're here to see what's about to happen. Just sit quietly on the couch until it's all over. There will be things you don't comprehend; there will be things you don't believe. You have to sit there and observe without comment or question. Maybe, by the time it's all over you will have some appreciation of the vast gulf between us.

Doug sits. There is another knock at the door.

LARRY

What is this now? Times Square at midnight?

Larry answers the door. McAllister ENTERS. He approaches Ginger.

GINGER

How do we do this?

MCALLISTER

Do you really want this... If you are both sure...?

GINGER

We do.

LARRY

I do.

MCALLISTER

All right.

(aside to Rachel)

I'm not sure I have craft enough to do this.

RACHEL

(whispers)

Of course you do, honey. Remember what the coyote told us. It's just like Dorothy's ruby slippers. Ginger could change herself, if only she believes. She needs you to help her believe.

MCALLISTER

(turning to Ginger)

Oh great dog spirit, don't depart from us without relaying your message for humanity. Isn't that the purpose for which you were transformed?

GINGER

No. No message. One day I was a dog. The next day I wasn't. I don't think there's any purpose behind it. It just happened.

RACHEL

It doesn't matter what she was, what's important is who she is.

DOUG

(To Rachel)

What does she mean "One day she was a dog?" I'm a little lost here.

RACHEL

Ginger here is not Larry's sister.

DOUG

(Alarmed)

He is her... her what?

RACHEL

No, no. It's much more complicated than that. He's her... owner. You see, Ginger used to be Larry's dog.

GINGER  
It's true, Doug.

MCALLISTER  
She is an aumakua, a spirit guide  
in animal form sent to us---

RACHEL  
Slow down, dear. This must be  
explained very carefully. Avoid the  
technical terms.  
(to Doug)  
Ginger is really a dog.

DOUG  
A dog? How do you mean, exactly, "a  
dog."

LARRY  
A dog, an animal that goes bow-wow  
and wags its tail.

GINGER  
Bow-wow, Larry? Who says bow-wow?  
I never met a dog who says "bow-  
wow."

MCALLISTER  
She was a dog who took on human  
form in order to--

DOUG  
You mean like a werewolf.

LARRY  
That would be a were-dog.

GINGER  
I am not!

RACHEL  
Not exactly, but close.

Doug rushes to Ginger, takes off his jacket, takes off his  
tie, pulls down his collar and offers his neck to her.

DOUG  
Alright! Bite me. Please bite me.  
Right now, bite me!

GINGER  
I beg your pardon.

DOUG  
If you bite me then I'll turn into  
a werewolf too. Then we can be  
together for eternity.

RACHEL  
I think that just works for  
vampires.

MCALLISTER  
I'm pretty sure werewolves  
propagate that way too.

DOUG  
Ginger, I'd do anything for you. I  
love you. Please do this for me.

GINGER  
I'm not going to bite you! I'm not  
that kind of dog.

DOUG  
But Ginger...

LARRY  
Ginger snaps, but she doesn't bite.

GINGER  
I enjoy being with you, Doug, and  
I'm sad when I am not with you. If  
I were going to remain human, those  
feelings might lead to something  
permanent. But, I must go back to  
being Larry's dog again. It may  
not be what I want, but it's what I  
decided.

DOUG  
But what about us?

GINGER  
Doug, we can still see each other.  
Maybe Larry would let me take you  
for long walks in the park. You  
would, wouldn't you, Larry?

LARRY  
Only if you had your leash on.

GINGER  
Mr. McAllister, several months ago  
you did something that brought all  
this about.

GINGER (CONT'D)

You don't happen to remember what it is that you did, do you?

RACHEL

Remember, honey, that was the night of your lecture; the night Larry and I broke up. I think it was a Saturday, right?

MCALLISTER

It must have been a Saturday. I can't say I remember exactly what happened.

RACHEL

Larry was going to punch you out, remember.

MCALLISTER

Oh, right...

LARRY

It was something about earth, wind, and fire. You guys only use four elements for your hocus pocus. Think what you could do with the entire periodic table!

MCALLISTER

Okay then. Ginger, are you sure you really want to do this?

RACHEL

Ginger, don't do it. Think how much you have accomplished as a woman. Think of how much you could accomplish in the future with your brains and your looks. What can you achieve as a dog?

GINGER

Rachel, I have to. I have to go back to being who I am.

RACHEL

That's the trouble with so many bright, intelligent women like you. They give it all up to become mere pets for some man. Don't you do it too! You're smarter than that.

GINGER

Rachel, you are my best and only friend. Please do this for me.

RACHEL  
(resigned)  
I won't forget you.

GINGER  
I'm not going anywhere. I'll still  
be here, but in another form,  
that's all. I'll still be me.

LARRY  
She started out as a pet. I paid a  
pet store \$350 for her.

DOUG  
You don't own her. Lincoln made  
slavery illegal.

MCALLISTER  
No one can own a spirit creature.

LARRY  
Didn't I always treat you good?

RACHEL  
Men have treated their dogs better  
than their women for countless  
centuries. But things are  
changing.

GINGER  
Yes, you were a good pet owner.  
But, Larry, understand me. I am  
doing this for only one reason:  
because you are unhappy. I am  
conditioned to making you happy.  
That is how dogs and humans  
survived together for thirty  
thousand years.

MCALLISTER  
Would you be happier, if she were a  
dog?

LARRY  
Yes, of course.

RACHEL  
No! Having power over a helpless  
animal is not happiness. She can't  
make you happy no more than your ex-  
wife could have made you happy; no  
more than I could have made you  
happy.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

No one can make anyone happy.  
Happiness is something you have to  
find inside yourself.

LARRY

Don't listen to them, Ginger!  
Remember how great it was. Weren't  
you happy, girl?

GINGER

I guess I was happy, in a doggie  
sort of way. The greatest  
satisfaction I had every day was  
either playing with my chew toy or  
doing my business on the lawn.

(beat)

Looking back it doesn't seem that  
fulfilling.

As Larry replies, he doesn't notice that his body is slowly  
being covered with BROWN AND WHITE FUR.

LARRY

You never had to worry about where  
your next meal was coming from. You  
could sleep 18 hours a day. The  
world was simple and explicable.

A tail appears from the back of his bathrobe. The others  
look in silent wonder but he remains oblivious.

LARRY (CONT'D)

Humans loved you, petted you, and  
played with you any time you  
wished. Remember playing Frisbee  
in the park, chasing the ducks in  
the pond?

He raises one hand; it is now a PAW. He still doesn't  
notice.

LARRY (CONT'D)

Remember how excited you used to  
get when I came home! It was a  
great life before all these  
complications.

MCALLISTER sudden raises his arms and intones loudly.

MCALISTER

Spirits of Earth, Water, Air, and Fire, your work here has been consummated, your message has been revealed. Restore, now, the mask we call reality.

Suddenly Larry is engulfed by the robe as he shrinks to the size of a small dog. The head of a beagle appears through the robe.

LARRY

(Now a dog)

Arp?

Ginger immediately realizes what has happened and puts her arms around the dog into which Larry has been transformed. She picks him up.

GINGER

Larry! You handsome dog!

Larry's bathrobe drops to the floor from the dog's back as he reaches out and licks her face.

RACHEL

What happened? You're still you.

GINGER

Yes, but look at Larry now.

RACHEL

Larry?

DOUG

Does this mean you are not a were-dog anymore? And, that he is?

GINGER

If that helps you to understand, I guess that's true. And I guess it's also true that you and I can have our beginning.

They embrace.

GINGER (CONT'D)

You have to realize, Doug, I love you, but I don't know what kind of future we can have. Will I stay like this or...?

He kisses her firmly on the lips.

GINGER (CONT'D)

But, I am willing to try, if you are.

He kisses her again.

DOUG

What about Mitzi, can you learn to get along with her?

GINGER

Maybe so, if she can learn to live with me... and with my dog Larry.

DOUG

Men and women are so different from one another. But men and women can learn to get along, so I guess dogs and cats can too.

Ginger kisses him with a real human kiss.

DOUG (CONT'D)

Hey! Do you suppose that guy could transform Mitz--

Ginger puts her hand over his mouth.

GINGER

Don't even think it. I can share you with a dog, I can share you with a cat, but I will not share you with another woman.

McAllister pulls himself up and addresses no one in particular.

MCALLISTER

At times the great Tricksters of the galaxies delight in making playthings of us foolish mortals. Fate and fact intertwine to become knotted into insoluble puzzles. But in the end... in the end...

Rachel stops him with a kiss. A long kiss and he continues with her in his arms.

MCALISTER

...all the world's a screen and we are just shadows thrown upon it.

She kisses him again.

EXT. PARK - DAY.

Larry, the dog, runs through the grass. He jumps to catch a frisbee out of the air. Ginger has just thrown it. Doug stands beside her with his hands on her waist.

CREDITS ROLL over Larry running back to them with the frisbee in his mouth. She throws the frisbee again and again with Larry catching it each time until the credits are finished.

FADE OUT.