

# *Cool, California*

"PILOT"

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WGAE Reg. #I309805

**COLD OPEN**

EXT. LARGE BACKYARD IN LOS ANGELES, CA. - DAY

The crowd is casually but expensively dressed as we move from one conversation to the next, each featuring a different member of THE BENJAMINS, a MIDDLE-UPPER-CLASS FAMILY OF FOUR.

The father, FRANK, 35, handsome enough, is holding court on the back deck with SEVERAL ASSOCIATES.

ASSOCIATE 1

Well, I think you're crazy to leave.

ASSOCIATE 2

Yeah, I don't get it. Look around you, man. You're livin' the dream.

FRANK

So, you're in my dream?

ASSOCIATE 2

Yeah, that's weird.

ASSOCIATE 1

Seriously though. Are you running from something? Is it gambling debts?

FRANK

What? No.

ASSOCIATE 1

Sex trafficking?

FRANK

Really? You went from gambling debts straight to sex trafficking?

ASSOCIATE 1

It's a crazy world.

FRANK

How do you guys not get this? I've been an engineer for almost 10 years here and the most substantial project I've worked on was a retaining wall at Simon Cowell's house.

ASSOCIATE 2

He *did* give that wall a "yes".

FRANK

And that was very flattering. But now I'll be in charge of something significant. Guys, I'm actually building a bridge. Why would I care where I live while I'm doing it? Besides, LA isn't exactly the ideal place to raise kids.

ASSOCIATE 3

Don't be ridiculous. My kids were raised here and they're fine.  
(smiles and waves off-screen)  
Hi Porsche! Hi Spielberg!

CUT TO TWO WILDLY ANNOYING TEENAGERS posing by the pool - a GIRL dressed like a horrifying cross between NICKI MINAJ and LIBERACE, and a BOY decked out in oversized LAKER-GEAR, furry purple UGGS, and SKI GOGGLES. They both flip him off.

Back to Frank, et al.

ASSOCIATE 3 (CONT'D)

Then again, maybe moving's not such a bad idea.

ASSOCIATE 1

The big question is, how does Ellen feel about all this?

FRANK

She's a hundred percent on board with it.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Close on ELLEN BENJAMIN, 35, attractive without effort.

ELLEN

I'm not exactly a hundred percent on board with it.

PULL OUT to reveal she's sitting with SEVERAL FRIENDS, each with a second or third GLASS OF WINE in their hand.

FRIEND 1

Then why are you going along with it?

ELLEN

I don't know. Why not?

FRIEND 2

Do you want my extensive list of reasons now or should I ping you?

ELLEN

Maybe I've just had it with LA. Maybe I'm tired of the traffic and the smog and the spray on tans. No offense, Rita.

QUICK PAN to RITA, age indeterminate. She makes "TAN MOM" look anemic, but she's eerily upbeat.

RITA

None taken!

QUICK PAN back to Ellen.

ELLEN

Honestly, I'm looking forward to taking a break from the firm and spending more time with the kids.

FRIEND 3  
(three-quarters drunk)

Oh, please! That old chestnut?  
Teenagers are the worst. My entire day  
revolves around finding ways to spend  
less time with mine. Just look at them.

CUT TO Porsche and Spielberg seen in the backyard through the  
picture window PASSIONATELY MAKING OUT with each other.

Back to LIVING ROOM, continuous.

FRIEND 1  
Is that even legal?

FRIEND 3  
Only in Beverly Hills, honey.  
And I think maybe West Virginia.

FRIEND 2  
Speaking of the kids, how do they feel  
about all this?

ELLEN  
Press and Zoe? They're a hundred  
percent on board with it.

CUT TO:

EXT. VERY LARGE BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

PRESCOTT "PRESS" BENJAMIN, 17, (think Young Tom Brady) and  
his PATERNAL TWIN SISTER, ZOE, (think Young Tom Brady, but a  
girl) sit on the bed in PRESS'S BEDROOM. The walls are  
covered with FOOTBALL POSTERS and lined with TROPHIES. He's  
wearing a RAIDERS JERSEY. She's not.

PRESS  
I am *not* a hundred percent on board  
with this!

ZOE  
You said the same thing about "This Is  
Us" and now you can't stop watching.

PRESS

It's an emotional roller coaster!

ZOE

Look, I'm not exactly psyched about this myself, but what choice do we have?

PRESS

Maybe we could emancipate ourselves from our parents. Jayden Smith did it.

ZOE

I can't think of a better reason *not* to do something.

PRESS

But I don't want to leave LA, Zoe. I bet this place we're moving to doesn't even have a Starbucks.

ZOE

That's your main concern?

PRESS

Well, I *know* they don't have a pro football team, so I moved on to the next most important thing.

ZOE

So overpriced coffee and bloodsport are more important to you than good schools, services, roads, infrastructure--

PRESS

Ugh!

ZOE

... economic opportunity, maybe a decent light rail system--

PRESS

Did you not just hear me say "ugh"?

ZOE

Oh, I'm sorry. Was I boring you with the basic foundations of a functioning society?

PRESS

Yes! That's what "ugh" means!

ZOE

Well, don't worry. I'm sure they have a Starbucks. We're not moving to Mars.

PRESS

Well, where *are* we moving?

CUT TO:

EXT. "MAIN STREET" OF A VERY SMALL TOWN - 1 WEEK LATER

THE BENJAMINS are clearly out of place standing next to BLACK ESCALADE in this "quaint", but barely in a good way, town. A MAN wearing a SUIT as cheap as his smile is with them. He enthusiastically stretches his arms upwards...

MAN

Welcome to Cool, California!

CUT TO:

SHOW OPEN

"90210"-style music as a HELICOPTER SHOT sweeps over the PACIFIC OCEAN, past the SANTA MONICA PIER, over WEST HOLLYWOOD and the HOLLYWOOD SIGN before the music suddenly turns manic and the camera goes into hyper-drive over CENTRAL CALIFORNIA before settling on a CROOKED SIGN outside a small town...

Cool, CA  
Population 1789

"1789" gets crossed out and "Cool" is scribbled in beneath it.

ACT 1

INT. BENJAMIN HOUSE - COOL, CA - DAY

The Benjamins are wrapping up a tour of a HOME that could fit in their old living room. The guide is BARRY TEWEL, 32, a subservient representative for GLOBALSPAN, the company financing Frank's bridge project. He's a BROWN-NOSER'S BROWN-NOSER and the man in the cheap suit from the cold open.

BARRY

So, whaddya think? You're new home right here in Cool. Nice, huh?

ELLEN

That's not the first word that comes to mind.

ZOE

It's not the *hundred* and first word that comes to mind.

Press enters from a hallway.

PRESS

My bedroom is the size of a closet!

FRANK

No, your closet in LA was the size of a bedroom.

ELLEN

I'm sort of with Press on this one, Frank. I mean, it would be nice if our house was bigger than our couch.

QUICK PAN TO: Small living room dominated by a giant, sectional sofa.

QUICK PAN back to Barry.

BARRY

It's perhaps a bit smaller than you're accustomed to, but you'll grow into it.

ZOE

I think we'd have to *shrink* into it.

BARRY

On the bright side, your very grateful employers at GlobalSpan World Wide took the liberty of providing you with a brand new, family-sized hot tub.

FRANK

Well, that's nice. Right, honey?

ELLEN

I guess.

BARRY

(overselling)

It's the only hot tub in town!

ELLEN

*Annnnd* it just got really sad.

PRESS

At least tell me this town has a Starbucks.

BARRY

Actually, no. But there's a gently-used Keurig machine in the pantry.

PRESS

I'm in hell!

BARRY

Nope. You're in Cool. And we may not have a Starbucks, but the Mayor's house used to be a Der Weinerschnitzel.

SMASH CUT:

EXT. MAYOR'S HOUSE (FORMER "DER WEINERSCHNITZEL") - DAY

MAYOR PRUITT (think Rainn Wilson) and his equally uncool WIFE (Ana Gasteyer) and SON are standing in front of a barely converted A-frame DER WEINERSCHNITZEL. They're smiling awkwardly and waving like they're in a parade for weirdos.

SMASH CUT:

INT. BENJAMIN HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

PRESS

What the hell is a "Dear Weiner Stencil"?

BARRY

No. "Der Weinerschnitzel."

It's kind of like a McDonald's, but with hot dogs... and out of business.

PRESS

I don't get it, dad. There's a really nice city right on the other side of that hole-

BARRY

It's a gorge, actually.

PRESS

Whatever. Why can't we live there?

BARRY

Well, first of all, young man, you have impeccable taste. That's Greenville: a beautiful city filled with fair, upstanding citizens and a wide variety of economic opportunities.

Everyone stares blankly at Barry for a second.

ZOE

This is a joke, right? Are we on a reality show? Is this *Fixer Upper*?  
(yelling out)

Chip! Joanna! You can come out now!

BARRY

I wish! Those two are a hoot.

ZOE

Mom, why do we have to live here?

ELLEN

(passive aggressive)

Yes, Frank. Why do we have to live here?

FRANK

(trying to pass the buck)

Yes, Barry. Why do we have to live here?

BARRY

It's in your contract, Frank. You knew that.

ELLEN

Wait. *What?*

FRANK

(obviously nervous, to Barry)

Yeah, *what?*

BARRY

If I may, Mrs. Benjamin...

Barry rips down a large curtain to reveal a wall painted with a mural showing a bridge connecting Greenville to Cool.

BARRY (CONT'D)

As you can see from this lovely mural GlobalSpan commissioned for you, Frank's bridge will ultimately connect these two highly complimentary locations. But the initial phase begins on what we like to call "the Cool side" of the gorge.

PRESS

You mean hole.

BARRY

It's a gorge, actually.

ZOE

Looks kind of like a valley to me.

BARRY

(frustrated)

It's a gorge!

ELLEN

It doesn't matter!

What's stopping us from living on the side that actually looks habitable?

BARRY

It's mainly a matter of accessibility, Mrs. Benjamin. Your husband's contract stipulates that he live here until phase one is complete.

PRESS

Well, how long is that going to be? Like, a week or two?

BARRY

Probably more like a year or two.

ELLEN, PRESS & ZOE

*What?!*

BARRY

... possibly three. Lots of red tape.

ELLEN

*Three years?!*

Ellen stares daggers at Frank

ELLEN (CONT'D)

Outside. Now.

Ellen heads outside. Frank, Press, Zoe and Barry all follow.

ELLEN (CONT'D)

(to Press, Zoe and Barry)

What the--? No. You three, back inside. Go settle your canyon dispute.

BARRY, PRESS & ZOE  
(SIMULTANEOUS)

Gorge.  
Hole.  
Valley.

ELLEN

Oh, just pick one!

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BACKYARD DECK - MOMENTS LATER

Frank and Ellen are alone outside.

ELLEN

You knew about this?

FRANK

Umm... sort of?

ELLEN

The same way your condom *sort of* broke  
on prom night?

FRANK

That was a manufacturer's defect!  
And God's gift to us, of course.  
Look, Ellen, you know how much you and  
the kids mean to me. And if this  
project succeeds I can set up my own  
company and we can call our own shots.

ELLEN

Where? Here? Look at this place, Frank.  
A kid with a paper route can call his  
own shots. How could you agree to this?

FRANK

I told you, I'm doing this for *us*. I  
mean, I know it's not LA, but you have  
to admit it's pretty beautiful.

Ellen looks around. The house is PERCHED ON A SMALL HILL from which even the MEDIOCRE TOWN OF COOL has its charm. Just beyond the town is a BEAUTIFUL LAKE, and beyond that, the foothills of the SIERRA NEVADA MOUNTAINS. Ellen resists...

ELLEN

No. You lied to us.

FRANK

I didn't lie. I just didn't tell the truth.

ELLEN

What's the difference?

FRANK

One's mean, the other is stupid.

ELLEN

Well, this was stupid.

FRANK

You don't have to be mean.

ELLEN

Don't try to be cute, Frank.  
Get them to change the contract.

FRANK

I can't do that.

ELLEN

Either change the contract or Phase 1 is going to include me and the kids moving back to LA "for a year or two" ... possibly three.

Ellen walks away toward some steps leading off the deck.

FRANK

Where are you going?

ELLEN

For a walk. (She quickly scans the surroundings) Make that a hike.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BENJAMIN HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Barry, Press and Zoe are still in their "gorge" debate.

ZOE

It could be a fjord.

PRESS

Yeah. Like in *Frozen*.

BARRY

It's not a fjord.

PRESS

A loch! I bet it's a loch!  
Maybe there's a monster in there!

BARRY

I'm a hundred percent certain it's a  
*monster-less gorge*.

ZOE

By which you mean "a magical fjord".

BARRY

I didn't say *any* of those words.

Frank enters.

ZOE

Where's mom?

FRANK

She went for a hike.

PRESS

What's wrong with the car?

FRANK

We're not in LA anymore, Press. People walk.

BARRY

Is everything okay, Mr. Benjamin?

FRANK

I don't know. Can you add a second story on to this house and fly it across the gorge?

BARRY

(to Press and Zoe)

Ha! See?! Gorge!(collects himself. to Frank) But no. We can't do that.

PRESS

Dad, I don't want to live here - a closet for a bedroom, no Starbucks, and the school's football team probably sucks.

BARRY

That's not true.

PRESS

You mean they're actually good?

BARRY

No. I mean the school doesn't *have* a football team.

Press stumbles backwards and begins to hyperventilate.

FRANK

Press? Are you okay?

PRESS

You knew! You knew the whole time!

FRANK

No, I didn't. I swear.

Press opens the door to leave.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Where are you going?

PRESS

On one of those things mom went on!

FRANK

A hike?

PRESS

Yes! A hike! Which is also a football  
term and that is *not* helping right now!

Press storms out and Frank turns to Zoe who looks him up and  
down and then walks to the door.

FRANK

You're going for a hike too?

ZOE

(sarcastic)

No. I'm going next door to have lunch  
with the Kardashians. (she turns back  
before walking out the door.) Looks  
like you've got more than one bridge to  
build, dad.

**END OF ACT ONE**

**ACT TWO**

EXT. "MAIN STREET", COOL - AFTERNOON

Ellen is walking down the street WINDOW SHOPPING, which in downtown Cool amounts to staring at new rakes and used clothing. She overhears someone giving a PASSIONATE SPEECH and pokes her head in the open door to listen.

CUT TO:

INT. COMMUNITY CENTER, DOWNTOWN COOL - CONTINUOUS

BELLA MARSHALL (think Jessica Williams) early 30's, earthy, straight-talking activist. She's speaking to a SMALL GROUP OF TOWNSPEOPLE in what appears to be an ABANDONED STOREFRONT.

BELLA

This is nothing short of a thinly  
veiled attack on our way of life!  
(the small crowd shouts their support)  
On our town! On our home!  
(more shouting)

WE SEE RHONDA, early 60's, (think Carol Kane) holding a tote bag with SEVERAL CATS popping their heads out.

RHONDA

And on my cats! My precious cats!

BELLA

Yes... and to a lesser extent, on  
Rhonda's cats.  
But are we going to just sit idly by  
while a bunch of one-percenters in  
Greenville try to upend our community?!

AUDIENCE

NO!

BELLA

Commercialize our lives?!

AUDIENCE

NO!!

BELLA

Strip us of our identity and our  
history?!

AUDIENCE

NOOO!!

CAT LADY

MY CATS!!

BELLA

Oh, enough with your cats, Rhonda!  
(regains her composure)  
We will *not* have our beautiful serenity  
invaded by traffic, noise, crowds and  
every other unwelcome blight that would  
get dumped on us if we allow that  
bridge to be built.

At this, the CROWD ROARS, but Ellen turns white. She quickly  
tries to sneak out, but not before Bella notices her.

BELLA (CONT'D)

Can I help you?

ELLEN

Huh? Ummm, no thanks. I was just  
passing bridge. I mean, bridging past.  
I mean, passing through. Nothing to do  
with bridges. (she winces) Gotta go!

BELLA

Wait. Wait. Please, come in. We need  
all the support we can get. Obviously  
you know about the bridge.

ELLEN

Well, I know what a bridge *is*.

BELLA

Please. Sit.

Ellen reluctantly enters the room and sits in the only seat left which is NEXT TO RHONDA, the cat lady.

BELLA (CONT'D)

What's your name?

ELLEN

Ellen.

BELLA

I'm Bella. Welcome to the resistance.

Ellen forces a smile as she scans the group. HER EYES LAND ON RHONDA who has scooted UNCOMFORTABLY CLOSE.

RHONDA

I'm Rhonda.

ELLEN

Hi.

RHONDA

This is Mittens, this is PurrBall, and this is George Foreman The Third. Sir Scratch-A-Lot had to stay home because he's sick.

ELLEN

I'm sorry to hear that.

RHONDA

He has feline AIDS.

BELLA

(deflecting)

So, what brings you to Cool, Ellen?

ELLEN

Ummm... the beautiful serenity?

BELLA

And you say you're just passing through?

ELLEN

(squirming)

Yeah, well, actually I just moved here with my family.

BELLA

Is that right? That's funny, because there's only one family I know of that just moved here.

(busted!)

You must be Ellen Benjamin.

ELLEN

(very tense pause, then...) Shouldn't we go check on Sir Scratch-A-Lot?

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. A HAY FIELD, COOL - AFTERNOON

Press and Zoe are meandering through a random HAY FIELD.

PRESS

Thanks for catching up to me.

ZOE

Don't mention it. I've been meaning to go on a hike for the past 17 years.

(they share a little laugh)

It's actually really pretty.

PRESS

Pfft! Maybe if they mowed it and put up a couple of goal posts. Outside of that it's just a whole lotta nothin'.

ZOE

I know it's a bit hard to swallow right now, Press, but like it or not, I think this might be home for a little while.

PRESS

Maybe I could run away. I could hitchhike to Oakland and just hang around the Raiders' locker room until they pay me to do something.

ZOE

Wow. That sounds like one bad idea after another. Don't you ever think about anything other than football?

Press's eyes suddenly widen and his jaw drops as he reacts to something he sees but Zoe doesn't.

PRESS

Just one other thing.

Zoe looks up and sees what Press sees. Her eyes also widen and her jaw also drops. They look identical.

From Press and Zoe's POV WE SEE a SOFT-FOCUS, SLOW MOTION shot of LILLY, 17, a SMALL TOWN STUNNER in a simple summer dress and well-worn, red cowboy boots. Her long, curly hair bounces in the rays of the sun as a WILD HORSE runs behind her and REARS UP.

SFX: "Dream Weaver" by Gary Wright

Suddenly everything snaps back to normal. Turns out the horse is just a bush. Lilly is IMMEDIATELY FRIENDLY.

LILLY

Hi.

Press and Zoe can only stare.

LILLY (CONT'D)

Are you guys okay?

PRESS

Huh? Oh! Um, yeah. I'm good.

ZOE

Yep. Me too. Good.

Me good... too.

LILLY

I'm Lilly.

She extends her hand and Press and Zoe race to shake it first but they all just awkwardly bump hands.

ZOE

I'm Zoe.

PRESS

And I'm Press. It's short for  
"Prescott". It's just the first part.  
It's my name.

LILLY

Yeah, that makes sense.  
Are you guys from around here?

ZOE

No. Well, kind of. We just moved here.

PRESS

But we're thinking of staying! For a  
really long time. Maybe even raise a  
family. Not sure. Totally up to you.

LILLY

Aren't you two a little young to be  
married?

ZOE AND PRESS  
(racing to the words)

*What?!*

*No!*

*Gross!*

*Absolutely not!*

ZOE

No, no, no. He's my twin brother.

PRESS

From the same mother.

LILLY

Yeah, that makes sense too.  
(smiling) You have the same eyes.

Both Press and Zoe react shyly.

JIMMY (O.C.)

Who are your little friends, Lilly?

THE CAMERA FINDS JIMMY CONLEY, 18, TOWN BULLY and he looks like it, though he's actually a little smaller than Press.

LILLY

Oh, take a hike, Jimmy.

PRESS

(aside to Zoe)

Man, people are really into hiking around here.

JIMMY

(to Press)

You tryin' to make a move on my girl?

PRESS & ZOE

No.

Press and Jimmy give Zoe a curious glance. Zoe shrugs.

LILLY

I'm not your girl, Jimmy. We kissed once when I was five, and then you punched me on the arm.

JIMMY

Well, around here that makes you my girl.

Just then, ONE OF THE BOYS Jimmy is with PUNCHES ZOE ON THE ARM and gives her a weird, crooked smile.

ZOE

Ew! Gross.

PRESS

Hey, man. Leave my sister alone!

JIMMY

Or what, tough guy?

Jimmy STEPS UP TO PRESS. Press doesn't back down, but there are 2 other boys with Jimmy, so...

PRESS

Or he'll have to buy her dinner, I guess.

ZOE

Press!

PRESS

What? I thought you like the strong, toothless type.

JIMMY

You're the one who's gonna be toothless, buddy.

LILLY

That's enough, Jimmy.  
(to Press and Zoe)  
I guess I'll see you two at school tomorrow.

JIMMY

(threatening)

Yeah. I guess we'll see you two at school tomorrow.

LILLY

(re: Jimmy)

If he can find it.

Lilly WINKS and WALKS AWAY. Jimmy and the other boys FOLLOW.

PRESS

Wow. She was...

ZOE

beautiful.

PRESS

What?! What are you talking about? You can't... wait a minute-

ZOE

Just now figuring it out, genius?

PRESS

I knew it! I knew it!

ZOE

If only there was a prize for solving the most obvious mystery ever written.

PRESS

It all makes so much sense now. You never even looked twice at any of my friends, and they're all awesome dudes with great bodies.

ZOE

Are you sure *you're* not gay?

PRESS

Very funny.

They walk for a moment without saying anything. Then...

ZOE

Are you going to get in a fight tomorrow?

PRESS

Maybe. But at least I don't have to have dinner with the kid from *Deliverance*.

Zoe punches Press on the arm.

DISOLVE TO:

INT. COMMUNITY CENTER, DOWNTOWN COOL - A LITTLE LATER

Things have heated up and Ellen is right in the middle of it.

CITIZEN 1

She's a spy!

CITIZEN 2

Maybe even a Russian spy!

ELLEN

Oh, come on. I was born in Bakersfield.

CITIZEN 2

Yeah! Bakersfield, Russia!

BELLA

Okay, okay. Let's all just settle down. Maybe Mrs. Benjamin would like to explain to us why she and her husband have come here to help the colonizing elitists in Greenville use their money and power to crush the spirit of our peaceful town.

ELLEN

Well, I wouldn't put it quite like that. The fact is I had no idea anybody felt this way.

CITIZEN 1

Prove it!

ELLEN

I'm not sure how to do that.

CITIZEN 2

Show us your birth certificate!

ELLEN

I feel like you're getting a little sidetracked. (to Bella) Look, I have no power to stop this project, but I'm not exactly in favor of it either. And if everything you say is true, then maybe I can help you fight it.

BELLA

And how do you intend to do that?

ELLEN

Well, we could start with you telling me about the specific issues that pose such a threat to you... and your cats.

Ellen and Bella share a smile as everyone else in the room begins yelling out different issues.

BELLA

What's your husband going to think of this?

ELLEN

Something tells me he won't be a hundred percent on board with it.

**END OF ACT TWO**

**ACT THREE**

INT. BENJAMIN HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Frank is sprawled out on the huge couch in the small living room nursing a beer. Ellen enters.

FRANK

How was your hike?

ELLEN

Let's just say I have a new perspective.

FRANK

Does that mean you're staying?

ELLEN

Yes.

(Frank let's out a sigh of relief)  
But you might not like my reasons.

FRANK

I don't care, honey.

Frank struggles awkwardly to get up from the couch without spilling his beer. It doesn't go well.

FRANK (CONT'D)

I just want us all to be together. I want us to be happy.

He leans in to give Ellen a hug. She gently stops him.

ELLEN

Right. About that. During my hike, I stumbled into a town meeting of sorts.

FRANK

Oh, that sounds fun.

ELLEN

Let me finish.  
The topic of the meeting was your bridge.

FRANK

Fantastic. I think it's important for the community to get involved.

ELLEN

Still not finished.  
Frank, the community doesn't want you to build the bridge.

FRANK

See, this is why I think the community should never get involved.  
They don't know what's good for them.

ELLEN

And you do?

FRANK

Yes! Accessibility to services; job opportunities; economic opportunity - that's what's good for them. That's how communities grow. And that's what the bridge will provide.

ELLEN

Listen to yourself. You sound like every politician I've *never* voted for. These people are happy with the way things are, Frank. They don't want to be told what's good for them by people who think money gives them the right to dictate change.  
And at least one of them is pretty sure the bridge is going to kill her cats.

FRANK

That's ridiculous.

ELLEN

I never said *all* their concerns were valid.

FRANK

Projects like this always face  
opposition, Ellen. What am I supposed  
to do about it? Do you really expect me  
to listen to people whose mayor lives  
in an abandoned Der Weinerschnitzel?

ELLEN

Don't be so quick to judge. Do you know  
how high the ceilings are in that  
place? I took a peek. It's spectacular.

FRANK

Really?

ELLEN

Yes. Although it *did* smell like a 60-  
year-old deep fryer.

FRANK

Regardless, I came here to do a job,  
and I'm going to do it.

ELLEN

And I met some good people today who  
don't want that job done... and I'm  
going to help them.

Just then, Press and Zoe enter mid-argument.

ZOE

It's not my fault someone wants to  
punch you in the face.

PRESS

All you have to do is go out with a  
hillbilly and this all goes away.

ZOE

Oh, please! Get your head out of your-

ELLEN

Whoa, whoa, whoa.  
What's going on here?

PRESS

Well, the bad news is I'm probably  
going to have to fight the town bully  
on my first day of school.

FRANK

What's the good news?

PRESS

(dreamy)  
It's a girl.

FRANK

The town bully is a girl?

PRESS

No!  
I *met* a girl. And she's amazing.

ZOE

So amazing.

PRESS

I saw her first!

ZOE

That's not true!  
Wait. Actually, that *is* true.  
But it doesn't matter! She was clearly  
flirting with me.

PRESS

Yeah, right! She couldn't keep her eyes  
off *me*.

ZOE

She must have been mesmerized by your  
drool.

PRESS

At least I didn't talk like I was  
having a stroke.

FRANK

What the hell is going on here?

ELLEN

They're fighting over a girl, Frank.

FRANK

What? Why would Zoe... wait a minute-

ZOE

Oh, God. Not you too.

FRANK

You're gay?

ZOE

How did you not know that already?!

FRANK

How was I supposed to know?

ELLEN

Frank, she has a poster of Tig Notaro  
over her bed.

FRANK

I was wondering who that guy was.

ZOE

I liked rainbow flags before I liked  
actual rainbows!

PRESS

She never thought any of my hot friends  
were hot!

FRANK

Wait. Are you gay too?

PRESS

Why does everybody keep saying that?!

FRANK

I'm very confused right now.

PRESS

That's it. I'm outta here.

ZOE

No, I'm outta here.

ELLEN

No, I'm outta here.

As Ellen, Press and Zoe are walking out of the room...

FRANK

But we just got here!

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BACKYARD, HOT TUB - A LITTLE LATER

Frank sits in the HOT TUB alone. Ellen enters wrapped in a towel. She's surprised to see Frank.

ELLEN

What are you doing here?

FRANK

It's the only hot tub in town,  
remember? You're welcome to join me.  
There's plenty of room.

Ellen is a bit hesitant, but gets in.

ELLEN

Oh, that's nice.

FRANK

Well, at least we agree on something.  
(beat)  
So, what are we gonna do about the  
other thing?

ELLEN

I don't know. Is there anything in your contract that says I have to turn my back on what I think is right even if it means upsetting the man I've been in love with since prom night?

FRANK

I'll check. It's a pretty thorough contract.

And I'm not upset. Okay? Concerned - yes. Anxious - definitely. Constipated - a little. But I think that's unrelated. Look, you're conscientious and compassionate. I love that about you, and I'm not asking you to change.

ELLEN

Good, because I don't plan on changing.

FRANK

Can you at least promise you won't ever be part of a human chain blocking the work site? I don't want to have to pepper spray you.

ELLEN

I promise - if you promise to at least listen to what the people who live here have to say.

FRANK

I promise - except for the cat lady. I still have *some* dignity. So... frenemies?

ELLEN

I prefer "froposites".

FRANK

Fine.  
Fropposites.

ELLEN

It's not gonna be easy.

FRANK

We have teenage twins. When's the last  
time anything we did was easy?

Frank puts his arm around Ellen and they kiss, then they kiss again, then they start frantically making out, then Press and Zoe enter, both in bathing suits holding towels.

PRESS AND ZOE

*No! Ahhh! Ewww! My eyes!*

FRANK

What are you two doing here?

PRESS

It's the only hot tub in town,  
remember?!

ZOE

And now it's ruined!

FRANK

Oh, come on. We were a full 10 minutes  
away from ruining it.

ELLEN

More like 5.

ZOE

Gross!

ELLEN

Just come on in. The water's fine.

Press and Zoe apprehensively tip-toe into the hot tub.

PRESS AND ZOE

Oh, that *is* nice.

ELLEN

Right? We all agree: this is nice. So  
let's all be nice.

They all stretch out and melt into the hot tub for a moment.

ZOE

So, are we really going to live here?

FRANK

Looks like it. Unless somebody has a  
better idea.

PRESS

Maybe we could become Carnies.

ZOE

Or Gypsies!

ELLEN

Isn't that kind of the same thing?

PRESS

No. Carnies can't put a curse on you.

ZOE

Plus, their weddings aren't nearly as  
elaborate.

ELLEN

So, what do you two plan to do about  
this girl?

ZOE AND PRESS

You mean my girlfriend?

They start splashing each other.

ELLEN

Hey! No splashing in the hot tub!

ZOE

Fine. As long as we're making rules, how  
about "no making out in the hot tub"?

FRANK

Whoa! Hold up. One rule at a time.

ELLEN

How about this? As long as we're basically stuck here together, how about "no arguing in the hot tub." This is now the Switzerland of hot tubs.

FRANK

Minus the chocolates.

PRESS

And Roger Federer.

ZOE

And the hidden Nazi loot.

PRESS

Is *everything* a cause with you?

ELLEN

So... Are we good?

Everyone agrees to the terms. It's a truce.

PRESS

Is it okay if we pee in the hot tub?

FRANK, ELLEN & ZOE

NO!!

Frank, Ellen and Zoe all splash water at Press

PRESS

I was asking for a friend!

He splashes them back.

FADE OUT.

*Fin*