

INT. FRANKENBERG'S. DOLL DEPARTMENT. MOMENTS LATER

Behind and below the desk, THERESE contemplates sneaking a read of her book, but decides against it. She glances back up and sees a pair of black leather gloves tossed onto the desk. THERESE looks and sees CAROL standing before her.

CAROL

I'm looking for a doll. She's about-
(*she gestures*)- this high and this
wide and... (*rethinking*): Let's
begin again, shall we?

As CAROL steps away from the desk a moment to rummage through her purse, THERESE can't stop staring - at her well-tailored suit, her blonde hair, her green silk scarf. CAROL produces a crumpled slip of paper, steps back up to the desk, gives THERESE a big smile as she hands it to her.

CAROL (CONT'D)

I wonder if you might help me find
this doll for my daughter.

THERESE reads the slip of paper.

THERESE

Bright Betsy. She cries.

CAROL

Oh she does?

THERESE

And wets herself. But we're out of
stock.

CAROL

I've left it too long.

She begins to rummage through her purse.

THERESE

We have plenty of other dolls. All
kinds, umm...

THERESE, suddenly tongue-tied, turns toward the doll display, which CAROL turns to as well.

CAROL

Right. What was your favorite doll
when you were four? Do you
remember?

THERESE

Me? I never... Not many, to be
honest.



CAROL raises a cigarette to her lips, begins to light it, THERESE interrupts.

THERESE (CONT'D)

Sorry. No smoking on the sales floor.

CAROL

Oh, of all the - forgive me. *(beat)*
Shopping makes me nervous.

THERESE

That's okay. Working here makes me nervous.

CAROL laughs, appreciating THERESE'S commiseration.

CAROL

You're very kind.

Their eyes meet for a moment, before CAROL rummages inside her purse again. She produces a billfold, opens it, shows it to THERESE. It's a photo of RINDY, CAROL'S 4-YEAR-OLD DAUGHTER.

THERESE

She looks like you. Around the mouth. The eyes.

CAROL

(glancing at THERESE)

You think so?

THERESE looks up, clocks CAROL watching her, looks down. A bit of an awkward moment that CAROL rescues:

CAROL (CONT'D)

So what did you want? When you were that age?

THERESE

(no hesitation)

A train set.

CAROL

Really. That's a surprise. *(beat)*
Do you know much about train sets?

THERESE

I do actually. And there's a new model, just in last week. Hand-built with hand-painted cars - it's a limited edition of five thousand, with the most sophisticated electric switching system - it's quite...



THERESE checks her own enthusiasm, noticing CAROL'S eyes on her.

THERESE (CONT'D)

You may have seen it. Over by the elevators? Just there-

THERESE points towards the train set and CAROL turns to look, mulling it over. THERESE watches her every move.

CAROL

(turns back to THERESE)

Do you ship?

THERESE

Special delivery. Or courier.
(beat) You'll have it in two, three days. Two days. We'll even assemble it.

CAROL

Well. That's... that. Sold.

They stand there, nodding at each other for a moment.

CAROL (CONT'D)

Shall I pay now?

THERESE

Oh - yes, of course.

THERESE begins writing out a sales slip, then slides it over to CAROL with a pen, glancing up at her. CAROL snaps out of a brief moment of thought, a distance.

THERESE (CONT'D)

We'll need your account details, your shipping address.

CAROL

Of course. *(she begins writing)* I love Christmas. At least I love the preparation. Wrapping gifts, all that. And then... you somehow wind up overcooking the turkey anyway.

She finishes, flashing a bright smile. THERESE doesn't quite follow her, but she doesn't want CAROL to stop talking.

CAROL (CONT'D)

Done.

CAROL hands the pen and sales slip back to THERESE.

CAROL (CONT'D)

Where'd you learn so much about train sets, anyway?



THERESE

I - read... Too much, probably.

CAROL

It's refreshing. Thank you. *(beat)*
And Merry Christmas.

THERESE

Merry Christmas.

CAROL walks away. THERESE watches her, takes her all in - her manner, her style, her walk. CAROL turns back for a moment, and points to THERESE'S cap.

CAROL

I like your hat.

THERESE watches her go off past the train set and elevators. For a moment she watches as the empty spaces left behind are filled by shoppers and staff. She cranes her neck for one last look but it's no good. She's gone. THERESE sighs. She looks down at the doll desk and sees that CAROL has left her gloves behind.

CUT BACK TO:

~~THERESE stares out the window, still wrapped up in thoughts. Up front, JACK is pointing out the West Village apartment building ("Here-here-here!") and the taxi screeches to a halt. Everyone tumbles out as JACK pays the driver. Before she knows it, THERESE is climbing the stairs to PHIL MCELROY'S building. A window is thrown open above them and PHIL MCELROY, with typically unkempt hair, leans out.~~

PHIL

~~It's about time, Belivet. Say hello at least - It hasn't been that long!~~

THERESE

~~Hello - Phil - sorry, I was...~~

~~DANNIE, PHIL'S brother, leans out of the window next to PHIL.~~

DANNIE

~~There she is! Get up here! (picking up on her state): What?~~

THERESE

~~Nothing! There better be beer. Or wine.~~

OTHERS

~~Of beer!~~

