



"Take Me To The Pilot"

by

Tommy Wallach

ACT I

INT. OVERTON HIGH - DAY

We're just inside the front doors of a large public high school. We pan around the room: a wall covered in construction paper posters about American presidents; a water fountain dribbling gently; the girls bathroom, which opens to disgorge JUDY, 16. She looks upset.

For a brief moment, we hear her voice-over, which fades away as she walks out of frame.

JUDY (V.O.)

But if Colin doesn't like me then
why did he ask me to help him
with his homework...

We're still panning: the front doors; the boys bathroom; and finally we're back where we started. Only now, someone in a BULLDOG mascot costume stands in front of the posters, looking vaguely sinister.

He pulls a cigarette out of a pocket and lights it. He raises it to his grilled mouth. The tip flares up, and a moment later, smoke seeps out of the grill.

We hear the SQUEAKING of rubber sole on tile. The bulldog looks over and sees FRANNY BLEVINS, a 15-year old Elvis Costello, who stops in front of a flier.

Close on Franny's face as his eyes scan the text. After a moment, we hear a TEARING SOUND, and Franny disappears, leaving the bulldog in the background, staring after him.

EXT. SEATTLE STREETS - AFTERNOON

Franny, chased by a small dog, bikes along a commercial street. He looks 2D, like a game of Excitebike.

FRANNY (V.O.)

I was struck by the flier, and
decided I had to meet its author
immediately.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - AFTERNOON

PV GORNICK, 15, a bespectacled girl with long black hair and torn-up clothes, sits writing in a notebook. On the table are two small white Casio keyboards and a glockenspiel.

She wears thimbles on all of her fingers, which makes writing difficult.

Suddenly, a flier slams down in front of her.

FRANNY (O.C.)
Is this your flier?

INSET: The flier reads "Seeking bandmates. Influences include Sonic Youth (except NYC Ghosts & Flowers), James Blake, James Dean, James Taylor, James Baldwin, and Rick James. Find me after school at that one coffee shop."

PV looks up at Franny, examines him.

PV (V.O.)
I didn't think much of him at first.

PV
No.

She continues writing.

FRANNY
Have we met before?

PV
Not to my knowledge. I only started at Overton this week. I used to be home-schooled, but my tutor died.

INT. PV'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - FLASHBACK

PV sits opposite her TUTOR, an ancient woman who appears to be asleep. PV glances up from a geometry textbook.

PV
Mrs. Llewelyn?

INT. COFFEE SHOP - CONTINUOUS WITH BEFORE

FRANNY
No, I'm pretty sure we've met. Then again, I have a terrible memory. They say that's a prerequisite for happiness. Not so good for history exams. What's your name?

PV pauses in her writing.

PV (V.O.)

But he was persistent. And persistence is important in any artistic endeavor. Did you know that the Beatles played more than 600 shows before they even got signed?

PV

Did you know that the Beatles played more than 600 shows before they even got signed?

FRANNY

I didn't. But I do know that there are more than 350,000 different kinds of beetles. I'm Franny.

PV

PV. I'm sorry I was brusque before. I just hate meeting new people. And old people.

FRANNY

PV like the amplifier?

INSET: A picture of a Peavey amplifier.

PV

Mm-hm.

FRANNY

That's your real name?

PV

I had it legally changed.

INT. CITY HALL - FLASHBACK

PV stands at the desk. A REGISTRAR looks over her application.

REGISTRAR

You need to be eighteen to change your name without a guardian present.

PV

I am eighteen.

She presents a driver's license.

INSET: PV's fake driver's license. Her real name is blurred out, and her birthday is shown as 12/25/2004.

REGISTRAR
Did you laminate this yourself?

PV
Of course not.

INT. KINKO'S - ANOTHER FLASHBACK

PV stands at the desk. A KINKO'S EMPLOYEE looks over the as-yet-unlaminated fake driver's license.

KINKO'S EMPLOYEE
Are you trying to get me to laminate
a fake driver's license?

PV
Of course not.

We hear the SOUND of a copier. PV looks over and sees Franny making copies.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - CONTINUOUS WITH BEFORE

FRANNY
I knew we'd met before!

Franny sits down opposite PV.

PV
I guess we have. What were you making
copies of, anyway?

INT. KINKO'S - CONTINUOUS WITH PREVIOUS FLASHBACK

Franny pulls one of the fliers out of the tray.

INSET: Franny's flier shows a very ugly dog along with the text, "Trying to lose this dog. Answers to 'Lemur.' Please, if you see him, do not return him to me. -Franny"

INT. COFFEE SHOP - CONTINUOUS WITH BEFORE

PV
Did it work?

Franny points. Lemur is waiting outside the coffee shop, just next to Franny's bike. Man, that's one ugly dog.

PV
Sorry.

FRANNY

It's okay. So you want to start a band?

PV

No. I want to continue a band, but with more musicians than I have now.

FRANNY

How many musicians do you have now?

PV

One. What do you play?

FRANNY

Guitar.

PV

Lead or rhythm?

FRANNY

...yes. What about you?

PV

Primarily Casio VL-tone Monophonic Synthesizer and glockenspiel.

FRANNY

Cool. So what do you want to call the band?

PV

What's your name again?

FRANNY

Franny.

PV

Hm. Probably just "PV," then.

FRANNY

Okay. What about the album?

PV

I'm torn at the moment. Either "My Sorrow is Depthless," or "Where's my Pony?"

FRANNY

They're both really good.

PV

I know. You wanna hear a song?

FRANNY

Sure.

PV stands up and shouts at the barista, who has been playing a tranquil Norah Jones tune.

PV

Hey!

He turns off the song. She sits cross-legged, cracks her knuckles.

PV (cont'd)

This one's called "Don't Touch Me."

SONG: Don't Touch Me.

PV begins. We hear a full band, even though it's just her playing.

PV (cont'd)

DON'T TOUCH ME, DON'T TOUCH ME
IF YOU TOUCH ME, I THINK I'M GONNA
SCREAM

DON'T TOUCH ME, DON'T TOUCH ME
IF YOU TOUCH ME, I THINK I'M GONNA
SCREAM (AHHHH!)

DON'T DON'T TOUCH ME, DON'T DON'T
TOUCH ME
IF YOU DON'T TOUCH ME, I THINK I'M
GONNA SCREAM

DON'T DON'T TOUCH ME, DON'T DON'T
TOUCH ME
IF YOU DON'T TOUCH ME, I THINK I'M
GONNA SCREAM (AHHHHH!)

I DON'T LIKE YOU, I THINK I EVEN HATE
YOU

I DON'T HATE YOU, I THINK MAYBE I
LOVE YOU

I DON'T LOVE YOU, I DON'T EVEN LIKE
YOU

DON'T TOUCH ME, DON'T TOUCH ME!
DON'T DON'T DON'T TOUCH ME
DON'T DON'T DON'T TOUCH ME
IF YOU DON'T DON'T DON'T DON'T DON'T
(AHHHHHH!)

DON'T DON'T DON'T TOUCH ME
DON'T DON'T DON'T TOUCH ME
IF YOU DON'T DON'T DON'T DON'T DON'T
(AHHHHHH!)

(MORE)

PV (cont'd)

I DON'T LIKE YOU, I THINK I EVEN HATE
YOU

I DON'T HATE YOU, I THINK MAYBE I
LOVE YOU

I DON'T LOVE YOU, I DON'T EVEN LIKE
YOU

DON'T TOUCH ME, DON'T TOUCH ME!
AHHHH! AHHHH! AHHHH! AHHHH!

DON'T TOUCH ME!

Silence. A number of customers have left. Franny is clearly in love. After a beat, the barista turns Norah back on.

FRANNY

That was awesome.

PV

(proudly humble)

Thank you. Now, if we're thinking of starting a band, obviously I'll have to audition you. How's your lunch period looking tomorrow?

FRANNY

Wide open.

INT. OVERTON LUNCHROOM - THE NEXT DAY

We're in a traditional high school lunchroom. Franny enters. He spots PV alone at a table.

FRANNY

Hey. So you want to go straight to the music room, or should we eat--

PV

Somebody hates me.

FRANNY

What?

PV

Somebody hates me. I got a hate note in my locker. We have to figure out who put it there.

FRANNY

What about the audition?

PV

This *is* the audition. A band is a family, Franny.

(MORE)

PV (cont'd)
 We have to support each other
 holistically. Now, who do you think
 wrote it?

She glances around the lunchroom.

PV (cont'd)
 What about him? He looks mean.

FRANNY
 I doubt it. That's Dale Wilson, the
 world's nicest bully.

We slide over to DALE WILSON, who does indeed look super
 mean. A SMALL KID walks over and fearfully deposits a
 handful of change on the table.

SMALL KID
 Here's my lunch money, Dale.

DALE
 (sincere)
 I've told you a million times, I
 don't want your money.

SMALL KID
 I'm sorry it's not more. I'll do
 better tomorrow.

He scurries off. Dale looks confused, even hurt.

DALE
 (calling after him)
 Please don't!

We slide back to PV and Franny.

PV
 Okay. What about her? She's got crazy
 eyes.

FRANNY
 That's Erin Coltrera, editor-at-large
 for the Overton Free Press.

ERIN COLTRERA, a mousy girl in over-large hipster glasses,
 is interviewing the bulldog mascot.

ERIN
 (strident)
 For the last time, who's inside that
 costume?

BULLDOG

No comment.

We slide back to PV and Franny.

FRANNY

Erin's always looking for dirt, but she's mostly harmless.

PV

Okay. Then what about *that* girl?

FRANNY

Her? That's Judy Courtland. She's weird, but only because she thinks she's the protagonist.

We pull back to find Judy sitting at a table directly in front of PV and Franny, who suddenly go blurry, as if they've become background characters.

JUDY (V.O.)

There's Colin over there. I'm not going to look at him.

(she looks)

Crap, I looked at him.

FRANNY

(shouted over Judy's voice-over)

See what I mean? Everybody else is just a side character in her story. It's super annoying.

JUDY (V.O.)

What are those two weirdos doing looking at me? I bet they're just jealous of what I have with Colin.

We return focus to PV and Franny.

FRANNY

You aren't important enough to her to merit a hate note.

PV

Then who did it?

FRANNY

Well, have you wronged anyone recently?

PV

Hm. I did stop by a rehearsal for the Overton orchestra yesterday.

INT. MUSIC ROOM - DAY

The orchestra wraps up a pretty terrible rendition of "When the Saints Go Marching In." After the last note is farted out, PV stands up at the back of the room.

PV

That was terrible! None of you can be in my band!

She storms out. The triangle player dings the triangle.

INT. OVERTON LUNCHROOM - CONTINUOUS WITH BEFORE

PV

You're right, Franny! It must've been one of those terrible musicians! You've passed your audition. Let's start a band.

She puts out a hand to shake, but as Franny reaches for it, PV pulls back.

PV (cont'd)

Just to be perfectly clear, once we're in a band together, there can never be any sort of romantic relationship between us.

FRANNY

(shocked)

Oh. Uh...why? I mean, not that it, but...why, exactly?

PV

(intensely)

Because artistic collaboration and romance are incompatible.

FRANNY

What about Fleetwood Mac?

We see a brief picture of Stevie and Lindsay. We will see brief flashes of every band-couple Franny mentions.

PV

Sure, but--

FRANNY

And the White Stripes. The Cramps. Arcade Fire. Sonic Youth. ABBA. New Order. Blondie. Stereolab. The Cocteau Twi--

PV

Those are just the many exceptions
that prove the rule, okay? So you can
take it or leave it.

She offers her hand again. Franny agonizes.

FRANNY

No way...could I have any problem
with that. So...I'm shaking your hand
now.

Eventually, he does.

PV

Great! Platonic bandmates for life!
First rehearsal tomorrow?

FRANNY

Sure. Oh wait, I can't. I've got
Chinese class. We'll have to do
Wednesday.

PV

You speak Chinese? Say something.

FRANNY

Okay. Wo xiang wen ni de zuiba.

A subtitled translation appears: "I want to kiss your
mouth."

PV

What's that mean?

FRANNY

I...dumpling.
(beat)
See you Wednesday.

Franny turns and walks off.

INT. CHINESE CLASSROOM - EVENING

The class is being led through some drills by a CHINESE
INSTRUCTOR. "Phrases for wooing and courtship" has been
written on the board.

Franny is distracted, covering his workbook with "PV"
written in the style of the Peavey amplifiers logo.

FRANNY (V.O.)
 Even though we were bandmates now, I
 couldn't stop having romantic
 thoughts about PV. It made it
 difficult to concentrate.

CHINESE INSTRUCTOR
 Wo xiang wen ni de zuiba.

Subtitle: I want to kiss you on the mouth.

CLASS
 Wo xiang wen ni de zuiba.

CHINESE INSTRUCTOR
 Women huí dào wo dì dìfang.

Subtitle: Let's go back to my place.

CLASS
 Women huí dào wo dì dìfang.

FRANNY (V.O.)
 By the time Wednesday night rolled
 around, I was a ball of nerves.

CHINESE INSTRUCTOR
 Ni de pengyou zenme yang? Ta keyi ma?

Subtitle: What about your friend? Is she single?

<p>FRANNY (V.O.) (over class) I had to be charming, and I've never been very good at charming.</p>	<p>CLASS (under Franny) Ni de pengyou zenme yang? Ta keyi ma?</p>
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CHINESE INSTRUCTOR
 Ni zài zhìxí wo wo juédé wo bùnéng
 huxi.

Subtitle: You're smothering me. I feel like I can't breathe.

<p>FRANNY (V.O.) (over class) So I invited my best friend over to advise me.</p>	<p>CLASS (under Franny) Ni zài zhìxí wo wo juédé wo bùnéng huxi.</p>
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INT. FRANNY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Close on AJAY VASHER, a young 15. He's extremely dorky, but
 with an unshakable and frankly inexplicable--

AJAY

Confidence, Franny. It's all about confidence. If you think you're cool, then *she'll* think you're cool. Look at me. I *know* I'm cool, which makes me even cooler than if I just *thought* I was.

We PULL BACK to see that the two of them are playing Magic: The Gathering.

AJAY (cont'd)

And I'll remove three tokens from Chandra, Torch of Defiance, to deal four damage to your Angel Avacyn.

FRANNY

I don't know, Ajay. I'm not sure confidence can be simulated.

AJAY

That's just something unconfident people say.

FRANNY

Exactly.

AJAY

(RE: the Magic game)

Attack, attack, attack...and I think you're dead. That's 4, 6, 9 damage. Yeah, you're dead. Sorry. You got any food?

FRANNY

No. But my mom left money so I could order something.

Franny points to a fan of \$5 bills pinned to a bulletin board. A note says "For anything but pizza."

AJAY

Pizza?

FRANNY

Obviously.

EXT. SEATTLE STREETS - AFTERNOON

Franny bikes along the streets, holding his guitar in one hand. Lemur is still running along behind him.

FRANNY (V.O.)

On the way to PV's house, I was nearly overcome with anxiety, even with the encouraging notes I'd written on the backs of my hands.

Franny glances down at the back of his hands. On the left, he has written, "You are cool." On the other, "See other hand."

EXT. PV'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Franny looks up at the house...it's a castle. You could host royalty here. Franny ties up Lemur and passes through a gate.

EXT. PV'S HOUSE - GARDENS - CONTINUOUS

Franny passes through an elaborate Japanese Garden.

Franny crunches across the gravel of a wilder, English-style garden.

Franny crosses a tennis court, overgrown with weeds. Then a croquet pitch. Then a putting green, where a creepy GROUNDSKEEPER is trimming the grass with nail scissors. They make eye-contact.

Franny finally arrives at the enormous front door. He presses the doorbell. Beat.

GROUNDSKEEPER (O.S.)

Don't go in there.

Franny turns. The groundskeeper is very close.

GROUNDSKEEPER

Don't go in there.

FRANNY

(scared)

Why not?

GROUNDSKEEPER

Because...

(pregnant pause)

...we're renovating the foyer.

FRANNY

Oh.

INT. PV'S BEDROOM - A WHILE LATER

PV's room is gigantic. A large portion of it is given over to musical instruments and recording equipment.

Franny marvels at a nearly wall-size poster of the band *The Stranglers*.

PV (O.S.)
You a Stranglers fan?

Franny turns to find PV sitting on the bed.

FRANNY
I don't think I know them.

PV
Well, you should. We'll do an overview of seminal punk rock musicians at a future rehearsal.

PV notices Franny's guitar.

PV (cont'd)
You didn't have to bring that. I've got plenty of guitars here.

PV gestures towards a rack of at least twenty guitars.

FRANNY
I can see that.

PV
Yeah, my parents buy me a lot of presents. It's how they make up for their lack of...

FRANNY
Presence?

PV
Exactly. I think they're getting divorced. And it'll be contentious too, because of all the money. Money makes people crazy. Even more than love, I think.

FRANNY
Where'd it come from?

PV
Who can say where love comes from? Pheromones, I guess?

FRANNY
I meant the money.

PV
Oh. Bottled water.

FRANNY
Bottled water?

PV
Yeah. You know Tap Water Bottled
Water?

INSERT: A still image of Tap Water Bottled Water. The catchphrase on the label says, "Who's got time to walk to the sink?"

FRANNY
Oh yeah. That stuff's great.
Really...quenching.

PV
My grandfather invented it. Which
meant my parents never had to work.
So they make music. Terrible music.
By which I mean classical.

FRANNY
My parents were never together. And
my mom's a pilot, so I don't see her
much. That's why I do so many extra-
curricular activities.

PV
Like Chinese class?

FRANNY
Yeah. And drama club. And guitar
lessons. Book club. Aerial
gymnastics.

INT. BLACKSMITH - DAY

Franny stands next to an anvil.

FRANNY
I'm apprenticed to a blacksmith.

EXT. STABLE - DAY

Franny brushes the mane of a miniature horse.

FRANNY
I groom miniature horses, even though
I'm allergic.

He sneezes, spooking the horse.

EXT. GARDEN - DAY

Franny is drying a cactus with a hair dryer.

FRANNY
(shouted over the
dryer)
And I'm a member of the Succulent
Horticultural Society of Seattle.
It's difficult to grow cacti here,
because of all the rain. So we do a
lot of drying.

INT. PV'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS WITH BEFORE

Franny sits down at the mixing board.

FRANNY
Anyway, how do you want to start?
Should we write a song?

PV
I think I should hear one of your
originals. Then we can attempt to
synthesize our styles into a cohesive
whole.

FRANNY
Okay.

Franny takes out his guitar: a cheap, busted-up acoustic. He
takes a deep breath.

FRANNY (cont'd)
How about a love song?

ACT BREAK.

ACT II

INT. PV'S BEDROOM - DAY

Franny is tuning his guitar.

FRANNY

Always the B string. It's like it hates me.

(having finished tuning)

Okay. Here we go.

He takes a deep breath...and plays.

SONG: I Don't Know Anything.

FRANNY (cont'd)

WHY DOES THE MOON LOOK SO BIG
AND OTHER TIMES LOOK SO SMALL?
WHY IS IT UP THERE AT ALL?
AND WHY DOES THE SUN GET SO HOT
AND OTHER TIMES IT IS NOT
LIKE NIGHTTIME, WINTER, AND FALL?

I DON'T KNOW
I DON'T KNOW...ANYTHING
ANYTHING
ANYTHING...EXCEPT THAT I LIKE YOU

WHY DO THOSE WEIRD COLORED LIGHTS
WAY UP AROUND THE NORTH POLE
DANCE THROUGH THE NIGHT SKY
SOMETIMES?
AND DOES THAT MAGICAL SWIRL
SOMEHOW EXPLAIN HOW A GIRL
CAN SHIMMER, SPARKLE, AND SHINE?

I DON'T KNOW
I DON'T KNOW
I DON'T KNOW...ANYTHING
ANYTHING
ANYTHING...EXCEPT THAT I LIKE YOU
OOOO

HOW CAN A LOVE FEEL SO BIG
AND MAKE YOU FEEL OH SO SMALL?
WHY DO I BOTHER AT ALL?

A beat while Franny waits for PV's reaction.

PV smiles. Then Franny smiles. Then...

JOANNA (O.S.)
That was depressing.

PV and Franny look to the doorway. Standing there is JOANNA, 18, one of PV's infinite sisters.

PV
Get out of my room, Joanna!

JOANNA
Fine. But, Franny, you should consider a diminished three chord instead of the minor four. It's less trite.

Joanna leaves.

FRANNY
Who was that, and how did she know my name?

PV
That's Joanna. She's one of my sisters.

FRANNY
She doesn't look like you.

PV
And she has awful taste in music. Maybe she's adopted. Or I am. Now, take a look at this.

PV takes out a photograph.

FRANNY
What is it?

PV
The Overton orchestra. We need to figure out who wrote my hate note.

FRANNY
Oh. Okay.

INSET: A picture of the Overton orchestra.

PV (O.S.)
The handwriting definitely belongs to a boy, so we can eliminate all the girls.

Two faces in the photo are X'd out.

FRANNY (O.S.)

Not super helpful. What else do you know?

PV (O.S.)

Well, the text of the note wasn't particularly brassy, and everyone knows string players struggle to express themselves in words.

Brass and strings are X'd out, leaving only the percussionists: timpani and triangle.

FRANNY (O.S.)

That leaves the timpani and the triangle. The timpanist is Max Angler. He's good. Real good.

INT. MUSIC ROOM - DAY

The band is playing. MAX ANGLER is reading a biography of Buddy Rich. With his left hand, he hits the timpani in time with the music, then turns a page.

INT. PV'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS WITH BEFORE

FRANNY

The trianglist is Ryuzo Kibe. Immaculate timing, but his dynamics can be questionable.

PV

We'll interview both of them tomorrow.

FRANNY

Okay.

(beat)

Why is this so important to you, anyway?

PV

I don't know. I just hate the thought that someone hates me. Wouldn't that bother you?

FRANNY

No. I assume most people hate me.

JOANNA (O.S.)

They probably do.

Somehow, at some point, Joanna has re-entered the room.

PV
Get out of here, Joanna!

JOANNA
Remember, Franny: diminished three
chord.

She holds up three fingers and uses them to make one of those "I'm watching you" gestures, then leaves.

PV
Sorry. Though she's probably right
about the chord.

INT. OVERTON HIGH - HALLWAY

Just outside the music room, the members of the orchestra have begun to file in for practice. PV and Franny wait outside until they spot Max.

FRANNY
Hey, Max!

Max notices Franny and approaches.

MAX
What's up?

FRANNY
Do you hate PV?

MAX
Who's PV?

PV raises her hand.

MAX (cont'd)
Do I know you? Wait, didn't you come
to our practice last week and say we
all suck?

PV
I did.

MAX
(to Franny)
Yeah, I guess I do sorta hate her.

FRANNY
So you wrote the note?

MAX

What note?

PV holds up a folded note.

MAX (cont'd)

Nah. The only notes I write look like this.

He holds up his sheet music and points to a musical note, then heads off.

PV

I guess that means it's Ryuzo, the trianglist.

FRANNY

Unless our methodology is flawed.

PV

Well, we're about to find out. Which one's Ryuzo.

Franny points him out.

PV (cont'd)

I'll handle it this time.

She goes off to talk to Ryuzo. Franny watches. They talk for a few moments, then PV comes back.

FRANNY

Was it him?

PV

Yeah.

FRANNY

What'd he say?

PV

That it was him. Then he asked me out on a date. Then I said yes.

FRANNY

What?

PV

A date. Like, a movie, or dinner--

FRANNY

I know what a...let me see that note.

PV hands over the note. Franny unfolds it.

INSET: The note is written in a small and serious hand. "PV, I think you are extremely beautiful."

FRANNY (cont'd)
This isn't a hate note! It's a love note!

PV
I guess I read it more ironically, you know? Like...
(sarcastic)
"I think you're extremely beautiful."

FRANNY
Why would you read it that way?

PV
Anyway, mystery solved. Thanks for your help, Franny.

Franny looks on helplessly.

INT. FRANNY'S HOUSE - EVENING

Franny sits on the couch, staring at the TV, which isn't on. His mother enters.

MARIAN BLEVINS is a loving but strident woman who believes the world can be shaped by those with the fortitude to bother trying.

MARIAN
I love this show.

FRANNY
Hey, Mom.

MARIAN
Something's wrong. What's wrong?

FRANNY
I like a girl.

MARIAN
That's the problem?

FRANNY
Yes. No.

Marian sits down on the couch.

FRANNY (cont'd)
She says we can't date since we're in
a band together.

MARIAN
She's right. You should never date a
neighbor or a coworker. Or a yoga
instructor.

FRANNY
But I really want to date her,
because she's amazing.

MARIAN
So don't be in a band with her.

FRANNY
But I really want to be in a band
with her, because she's amazing.

MARIAN
Hm. That's tough. She sounds amazing
though.

FRANNY
She is.

Marian puts an arm around Franny.

FRANNY (cont'd)
I just wish--

MARIAN
Quiet.

Marian gestures towards the TV, which still isn't on.

MARIAN (cont'd)
This is the best part.

Franny smiles.

INT. OVERTON HIGH - GYMNASIUM

A dodgeball game is on. Franny is with Ajay. They dodge
balls as they talk.

FRANNY
And now PV and Ryuzo are going out on
a date.

AJAY
I'm sorry, Franny. That sucks.

Ajay pegs a kid hard in the stomach.

AJAY (cont'd)
 (to said kid)
 You're an embarrassment to this
 court! Walk off, bitch!

FRANNY
 The worst part is that it's my fault.
 I agreed to be in a band with her. I
 shook on it and everything.

AJAY
 Why can't you be in a band and date
 at the same time? Fleetwood Mac did
 it.

FRANNY
 That's what I said!

Ajay beans someone else.

AJAY
 I bet your *momma* felt that! I bet her
 momma felt it. I just shook your
 whole family tree, son!

FRANNY
 Anyway, there's no arguing with her.
 She's dating Ryuzo now. I have to
 accept it.

AJAY
 Unless...

Ajay spots someone about to throw a ball at him.

AJAY (cont'd)
 I dare you! I'm beggin' you to throw
 that ball.

The thrower chickens out.

AJAY (cont'd)
 That's what I thought!

He turns back to Franny.

AJAY (cont'd)
 If PV won't date a bandmate, you just
 need to convince Ryuzo to join your
 band.

FRANNY
Of course! Ajay, you're a genius!

AJAY
I know.

Ajay hits Franny with a ball.

FRANNY
We're on the same team.

AJAY
And?

INT. OVERTON HIGH LUNCHROOM - LATER

PV is at the front of the lunch line, paying for lunch: a Butterfinger, two packages of Reese's Peanut Butter Cups, and a Red Bull.

LUNCH LADY
New state law says I have to tell you
to eat a salad.

PV
Okay.

LUNCH LADY
Eat a salad.

PV leaves the line and runs into Franny.

FRANNY
Oh, hey!

Franny notices PV's lunch.

FRANNY (cont'd)
You know, sugar is really bad for
you. I've got a book about it.
(beat)
But you don't have to read it.
(beat)
I'll probably just burn it. Anyway, I
had an idea.

PV
What's that?

FRANNY
What if we added Ryuzo to the band?

PV

You said his triangle playing was dynamically uneven.

FRANNY

We can work on that.

PV

Hm. We *could* use a percussionist. And now I know he doesn't hate me...

(shrugging)

Fine.

Suddenly, Erin Coltrera, editor-at-large of the Overton Free Press, appears behind PV and Franny.

ERIN

You guys are in a band? This could make for a great trend piece.

PV

What's the trend?

ERIN

Bands are popping up everywhere. Look.

Erin points towards a table full of NERDS playing a board and dice game. One of the nerds rolls the dice. They make a cool clattering sound that everyone picks up on. He rolls them again. Another nerd shuffles a stack of cards in rhythm. Someone else taps metal figurines together. The improvisation concludes with a collective distant explosion noise made by all the nerds at once.

A NERD

Wicked beat, yo.

We're back on Erin.

ERIN

See? So, do you plan to enter the Gentle Mediation of the Bands next week?

FRANNY

What's that?

Erin points to a poster on the lunchroom wall. The title reads: "Gentle Mediation of the Bands: Many will enter. Only everyone will receive a participation trophy."

ERIN
Principal Kinney thinks "battle of the bands" sounds too violent. So, are you guys in?

FRANNY
Of course. And we're going to win.

PV
(to Erin)
Uh, Erin, would you excuse us for a moment?

(beat)
All of this was off the record.

Franny drags PV away, accidentally knocking into the Bulldog mascot on the way out of the lunchroom.

ERIN
(shouting after them)
Can I at least cite you as an anonymous source?!

PV
No!

ERIN
Democracy dies in darkness!

INT. OVERTON HIGH - MOMENTS LATER

PV drags Franny to the hallway outside the lunchroom.

FRANNY
What's wrong?

PV
We've only had one rehearsal, Franny. We shouldn't be entering competitions. Or doing interviews.

FRANNY
Why not?

PV
Just talk to Ryuzo, okay? We need to get our line-up in place before we start thinking about winning prizes.

FRANNY
Okay.

PV walks off. Franny looks over at a trash can and sees a KID hidden inside.

HIDDEN KID

(quietly)
I'm playing hide and seek. I've been in here since yesterday. Nobody's found me.

FRANNY

Impressive.

HIDDEN KID

Yeah.
(beat)
It isn't as satisfying as I'd expected.

They both consider this.

INT. OVERTON HIGH - PRACTICE ROOM - AFTERNOON

A very small practice room with sound-proofed walls and a grand piano. Ryuzo, who is very serious, sits with his eyes closed, listening to a "Mastering the Triangle" tape.

Franny enters.

MASTER TRIANGLIST

(on tape)
You must treat the triangle like a lover. Be gentle but firm. Be caring, but independent.
(darkly)
Never let her sense your fear.

FRANNY

Um...hello?

Ryuzo switches off the tape deck.

RYUZO

Franny. How are you, my friend?

FRANNY

Sorry to interrupt. I just wanted to let you know you have been, uh, invited to join my band. Our band. Me and PV.

RYUZO

(excited)
PV wants me to join her band?

FRANNY

Yes. We both do. Our band. So...
rehearsals are on Thursdays. I'll
text you the address.

Ryuzo suddenly hugs Franny.

RYUZO

Thank you, my friend. My brother. My
bandmate. I'm going to treat PV just
like my triangle.

FRANNY

...okay.

Franny leaves. Ryuzo joyfully taps the triangle.

INT. PV'S BEDROOM - THE FOLLOWING THURSDAY

Franny enters. PV is at her recording station.

FRANNY

Hey, PV. Where's Ryuzo? He isn't here
yet?

PV

He's out of the band.

FRANNY

(upset)
What? Why?

PV

I ran into him yesterday at school.

EXT. OVERTON HIGH - HALLWAY - FLASHBACK

PV, wearing a face mask, is spray-painting the inside of her
locker black. Ryuzo approaches.

RYUZO

PV, I just wanted to tell you how
excited I am to be in the band.

PV

(through the mask)
We're excited too.

They shake hands.

RYUZO

Also, I thought we could perhaps plan our date now.

PV takes off the mask.

PV

Didn't Franny tell you? I don't date my bandmates. It's a rule I have.

RYUZO

But what about Fleetwood Mac?

PV

Exception that proves the rule.

RYUZO

Okay. Then I don't want to be in the band.

PV

It was good having you.

They shake hands.

RYUZO

So we can still go out on Friday?

PV

Looking forward.

INT. PV'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS WITH BEFORE

Franny is shell-shocked at his plan's failure.

FRANNY

But...but I...

PV

It's fine. I heard him play the triangle, and you were right: dynamics all over the place. Besides, I think we're better as a duo.

FRANNY

(comforted)

We are, aren't we?

PV

And you know what? This right here, the relationship between bandmates, that's the most intimate relationship there is. Way deeper than some stupid boyfriend.

FRANNY

Totally.

(beat)

Wait, Ryuzo's your boyfriend now?

PV

Anyway, I guess we should start rehearsing. That Gentle Mediation of the Bands isn't going to win itself.

FRANNY

I thought you didn't want to enter.

PV

I know it's a long shot, but I believe in us. Sure, it won't be easy. There will be setbacks. It might even take the whole season.

FRANNY

The whole what?

PV

All of fall semester. But it'll be worth it when we hoist that first-place participation trophy over our heads, knowing that we accomplished something nobody thought we--

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

LIU CHIN, a small Chinese girl wearing an accordion, receives an extremely large trophy from PRINCIPAL KINNEY, 40s. The audience applauds wildly.

PRINCIPAL KINNEY

And our winner is Liu Chin, for that stirring rendition of Gorka Hermosa's "Fragilissimo."

Liu raises the massive trophy overhead.

PV and Franny watch from the audience. They each hold a very small participation trophy.

PV

On the other hand, early success can
have its own drawbacks.

The weight of the trophy causes Liu to fall over backward.
Students rush to help her.

FRANNY

I think that's very true.

PV

You wanna go write a song?

FRANNY

I do.

They walk out of the auditorium. On the way, they throw
their participation trophies in the trash. We stay on the
trophies for a beat.

Then a large, fuzzy mitt reaches into the trash and pulls
one of the trophies back out.

Pulling back, we see it's the bulldog mascot. He scans the
plaque on the front of the trophy. It reads:

Congratulations

PV & Franny

It is better to have participated and lost than never to have participated at all.

The Bulldog looks up, watching as PV and Franny leave the
auditorium together.

Who's in there anyway? What is he thinking? We don't know,
and maybe we never will know, because that's the end of this
unproduced television pilot.

END.