

ART

Well, a big good evening to our radio listeners and welcome to Arts Showcase with your host yours truly, Art Flanagan. Tonight on Arts Showcase we have two incredibly talented singers and performers. We have Miss Carly Speranza (*Carly beams*), professional opera soprano, who will be making a special appearance tomorrow night. And we also have Mr. Ford Fairlane, bandleader and singer for the top country music band in this region—I think we can safely say you're the top band, can't we Ford?

For Perusal Only

FORD

Well, that's mighty nice of you, Art. I'm just happy to be part of the band that plays for the wonderful Miss Pinto Packard.

ART

Now tell us, Ford, a little about the band. Let's start with the name. How did that come about?

FORD

Well, I had been singing and playing professionally for a few years under the name Ford Fairlane, and when my girlfriend started singing as Miss Pinto Packard I thought, hey, Ford and Packard: that's two cars! So we decided right then that we'd start a band called the Car Men.

Carly looks worried.

ART

And we've got a big night coming up for the Car Men. Tell us about it.

FORD

Well, of course, everybody knows and loves Earl Conway.

FORD nods to CARLY, who is blank.

ART

Country music recording artist. In fact, one of country's top stars, wouldn't you agree?

FORD

He's breaking records right and left! I mean, not breaking records, but, you know. Now, Earl Conway is going to perform at the state fair this year. And we—that is, Pinto Packard and the Car Men—are going to be the opening act.

ART

That's quite a break for your band.

FORD

That's right, Art, this is the biggest show we've ever done. They're expecting record-breaking crowds. Well not record breaking, but you know. People will be coming from all over to hear Earl Conway. We're totally excited and honored to be chosen to open the show for him.

ART

And when is the big show?

FORD

Tomorrow night.

CARLY squirms in her chair. During the following dialogue between Art and Ford, CARLY's emotions, written on her face, progress from suspicion to fear to anguish to blind rage.

ART

Tomorrow night at the state fair, opening act for Earl Conway, Pinto Packard and the Car Men. Now your fans are going to see something different tomorrow night, aren't they?

FORD

Yes, Art, Pinto—or Dody, that's her real name—

ART

Dody?

FORD

Yeah, Dody had to have some emergency surgery and it has affected her voice.

ART

I'm sorry to hear that. I hope it wasn't too serious.

FORD

It was just a tonsillectomy. Of course it means she can't sing for a while. Or talk, even.

ART

So you had to find a replacement.

CARLY's looks could kill.

FORD

That's right. I called every singer I could think of. Now it takes a very special talent to stand in for a singer like Dody. I interviewed a mess o' sopranos—

CARLY

Mezzo-soprano!

FORD

—and none of them worked out. Then somebody recommended a young lady who's going to work out real well for us. She's sung at the Grand Ole Opry!

CARLY

Grand opera!

FORD

Not only that, she already knows all the Car Men songs!

CARLY

Aughhh!

ART

Well, let's meet her now. Carly Speranza, appearing at the state fair as Miss Pinto Packard!

CARLY's demeanor approaches that of a trapped animal.

ART

Let me start with your name. Carly. Now that's a perfect name for the Car Men, isn't it? Is Carly your real name?

CARLY

Yes. Well, it's short for—for—

ART

Short for what?

CARLY

(wincing) Carlotta.

FORD

Car Lot! I couldn't have come up with a better name myself!

CARLY

Excuse me, Art, do you have a five-second bleep filter?

ART

Yes we do, why?

CARLY

Because WHAT THE—