# SCRIPT – MURIEL’S WEDDING

***SCENE 1***

***INNER CITY***

***EXT (DAY)***

*Muriel, looking dazed, walks down an inner city street and stops outside a bridal shop. She stares in the window at a bridal model. A sign reads, Cinderella’s Bridal Wear. She enters the shop.*

***SCENE 2***

***BRIDAL SHOP***

***INT (DAY)***

*The shop is pink and mauve, with white wedding dresses hanging on racks. In a far corner is a small platform facing three full length mirrors. Muriel is drawn to a mannequin wearing a white silk dress. She gently takes the fabric of the billowing skirt between her fingers. A middle aged manageress moves up behind Muriel.*

**Manageress** Silk. Chantel. Imported. When’s your big day?

**Muriel** September.

**Manageress** Spring. Ivory.

*Close up as the zip is fastened. The shoes are sating. The train is beaded. Muriel stares at herself in the mirrors. She is dressed as a bride and the effect is stunning. She removes the veil as the manageress approaches.*

**Manageress**  What’s your fiancé’s name?

**Muriel** Bill.

**Manageress** Well Bill’s in for a big surprise. Will your mother be coming out to see the dress?

**Muriel** No. Well, she can’t. She’s in hospital. She’s got a tumor in her spine. She has to have an operation.

*The manageress looks moved. She crosses to a desk*

**Manageress** We usually don’t do this.

*She takes a Polaroid camera from the drawer. The assistance impulsively takes a*

*single white lily from a case and places it in Muriel’s hands. Holding the lily like a*

*bouquet, Muriel smiles into the camera and the manageress takes her photo.*

**Manageress** You mother has to see how beautiful you look in that dress.

***SCENE 3***

***FLAT***

***INT (DAY)***

*Muriel’s hands tear off the plastic that covers a new white wedding album. Gold embossed letters on the cover read ‘Our Wedding Day’. She sits on the floor of the lounge room. Her fingers peel back the transparent adhesive plastic on the first page of the album. She carefully mounts four Polaroid photos showing her in the wedding dress. Muriel soothes down the plastic and admires the photos.*

***SCENE 4***

***HOSPITAL***

***INT (DAY)***

*In the rehabilitation center gym, Muriel walks alongside Rhonda, who is working on the parallel rails under the supervision of a female physiotherapist.*

**Physio** You’re doing well. Isn’t she doing well Muriel?

**Muriel** You’re doing really well.

**Physio** Now, this foot forward. You can do it. Good. Now the other one. Good, that’s good. And…

**Rhonda** I have to sit down.

**Physio** Come on…

**Rhonda** I have to sit down!

**Physio** Alright, alright. I’ve got you. Don’t panic. Swing around. That’s it. Your hand back. Take a break honey, you’re doing really well.

*Rhonda sobs as she sinks into the wheelchair. Muriel kneels beside her.*

**Rhonda** How can you stand this? You push me around in this chair. You cook for me. You even have to dress me! I hate this!

**Muriel** When I lived in Porpoise Spit, I’d just stay in my room for hours and listen to ABBA songs. Sometimes I’d stay in there all day. Since I’ve met you, I’ve moved to Sydney, I haven’t listened to one ABBA song. That’s because now my life is as good as an ABBA song. It’s as goof as Dancing Queen.

**Rhonda** Come off it! Promise me something? We never go back there.

**Muriel** What do you mean?

**Rhonda** I mean I can’t go back and live in Porpoise Spit with Mum. Not in a wheelchair, not with her…

***SCENE 5***

***FLAT***

***INT (DAY)***

*Muriel’s fingers trace Bridal Boutiques in her directory. She circles Hugs For Brides.*

***SCENE 6***

***FLAT***

***INT (DAY)***

*Rhonda is in her wheelchair watching TV. There is knock at the door. Rhonda answers it.*

**Driver** Taxi for the rehabilitation center?

**Rhonda** Hang on, I have to get my smokes.

**Driver** Okay.

***SCENE 7***

***VIDEO SHOP***

***INT (DAY)***

*Muriel takes a Polaroid camera from behind the counter and leaves the shop. A sign on the door reads ‘Back in 10 Minutes’.*

***SCENE 8***

***FLAT***

***INT (DAY)***

*Rhonda wheels into her bedroom, she takes a cigarette packet from beside her table. It’s empty. She moves to Muriel’s bedroom and opens a cupboard, revealing a small carton of cigarettes. She takes out a full packet and turns for the door. She stops…*

***SCENE 9***

***BUS STOP***

***EXT (DAY)***

*Muriel misses the bus.*

***SCENE 10***

***FLAT***

***INT (DAY)***

*Rhonda finds Muriel’s photo album hidden behind the door. The cover inscription reads ‘Our Wedding Day’.*

***SCENE 11***

***BUS STOP***

***EXT (DAY)***

*Muriel waist at the bus stop. She gazes at the mannequin bride in the window of a bridal shop.*

***SCENE 12***

***FLAT***

***INT (DAY)***

*Rhonda picks up the album and opens it. On the first page are 8 Polaroid photos of Muriel, modeling a pair of wedding dresses… She rapidly flips through the album, revealing page after page of photos of Muriel wearing dresses of different styles, colours and cost. In all photos Muriel has the same misty eyed look of satisfaction.*

***SCENE 13***

***BRIDAL SHOP DOOR***

***EXT (DAY)***

*Muriel enters the bridal shop.*

***SCENE 14***

***TAXI***

***EXT (DAY)***

*Rhonda sits in the back of the taxi. She sees the sign on the door of ‘Video Heaven’, readying ‘Back in 10 Minutes’.*

**Rhonda** Keep going. *She lights a cigarette and looks out her window. She glimpses Muriel outfitted in a flowing white bridal gown.*

**Rhonda** Stop the car! *The taxi screeches to a halt.*

***SCENE 15***

***BRIDAL SHOP***

***INT (DAY)***

*In the bridal store, a manageress and her assistant admire Muriel in the dress.*

**Manageress** Beautiful. I hope the photos help your sister out of that coma. *Muriel poses and giggles as the manageress aims the camera.*

**Rhonda** Muriel! What are you doing?

**Muriel** *Squeals and whirls around…* N-nothing.

**Rhonda** Why didn’t you tell me that you were going to marry Tim!

**Muriel** Who?

**Rhonda** Tim Simms, your fiancé.

**Manageress** Now wait just a minute, you can’t come in here and threaten brides. I don’t care how unfortunate you are.

**Rhonda** Oh shut up!

*The manageress gasps. Muriel retreats into a back storeroom. Rhonda follows,*

*cornering Muriel amongst dismembered mannequins and unfinished dresses.*

**Rhonda** What’s going on Muriel? I’ve seen your wedding album. You’ve tried on every dress in Sydney.

**Muriel** That doesn’t mean I’m getting married.

**Rhonda** What else could that mean?

**Muriel** I want to get married! I’ve always wanted to get married! If I can get married, it means I’ve changed. I’m a new person.

**Rhonda** How?

**Muriel** Because who’d want to marry me?

**Rhonda** Tim Simms.

**Muriel** There is no Tim Simms. I made him up. In Porpoise Spit no one would even look at me. But when I moved to Sydney and become Muriel, Brice asked me out. That proves I’m already different than I was and if someone wants to marry me, then I’m not ‘her’ anymore. I’m me.

**Rhonda** Her?

**Muriel** Muriel! Muriel Heslop! Stupid, fat, useless. I hate her! I’m not going back to being her again. *Weeping…* Why can’t it be me? Why can’t I be the one?

*Muriel sinks to the floor, sobbing, as the manageress approaches Rhonda.*

**Manageress** Have you been in a coma?