

GOVAN FAIR QUEEN

Written by

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ABIGAIL, 9, dressed in a football kit, ginger hair in a messy ponytail under a broken headtorch, swoops a toy plane through smoke plumed air, shouts in a fake American accent.

ABIGAIL

Engine 2 is down, we're smoking up boys! Brace for impact.

LINDA, 68, with tightly permed brown hair and thick 80s-era glasses, lounges in her armchair, lit cigarette in hand, watching *Countdown* as smoke swirls around her.

LINDA

Waster!

(then)

Naw that's no using all the letters. Eh, Sidewarts.

The theme tune runs down the clock.

TV CONTESTANT

Stewardly?

TV HOST

Correct.

LINDA

Bastard. I woulda got that one as well.

Abigail sits crossed-legged on the carpet beside Linda, fixing her plane with a mini screwdriver, the parts sprawled out around her. Her head-torch blinks. She gives it a tap.

ABIGAIL

(In her real Govan accent)

Gran, you always say that.

Linda's eyes are glued to the TV.

LINDA

Well, I woulda! Just wait until it gets to the numbers bit. I'll show ye.

ABIGAIL

Aye right. You need tae take your shoes and socks aff tae dae sums.

LINDA

Maths is a useless subject. I'll tell ye when I was runner up for the Govan Fair Queen in--

Abigail rolls her eyes and mimics her Gran's voice.

ABIGAIL

--in 1968, Tracey Douglas won just because she was top of her class in maths and she was a wee clipe. I was robbed.

(Drops the impression)

We know!

LINDA

I was robbed. She knew her times tables but couldn't get a decent haircut. She looked a microphone for 10 year.

ABIGAIL

Gran, you can't say that.

LINDA

Actually, I've no had a flyer through yet about this years fair.

Linda's tone become suspicious, drawing her eyes to Abigail.

LINDA (CONT'D)

Have they no mentioned it at school yet? It's getting awfa close to June.

Abigail avoids eye contact. She's a terrible liar. But Linda senses something's afoot. She wags her finger at Abigail.

LINDA (CONT'D)

You remember God tells me everything?

Abigail looks panicked.

ABIGAIL

Did he tell you I binned the flyer because this year you can win a trip to Florida and I knew you'd force me to enter?

Linda's eyes widen as she leaps from her chair and stubs out her cigarette, nearly tripping over in the process.

LINDA

Wit?!

2

INT. KITCHEN. DAY

2

Linda rummages through her bin, and finds the crumpled flyer.
*GOVAN FAIR QUEEN: 260th Anniversary. Open to all Govan girls
 aged 9-12. Win a trip to DISNEYWORLD, FLORIDA! Entry £20.*

LINDA

America?! Where did they get the
 money for that?

Linda pushes the flyer in Abigail's face.

LINDA (CONT'D)

£20 entry is a disgrace. It never
 used to work like this. It would
 come to your school and you'd vote
 and that was it.

ABIGAIL

Well I'm not entering so get that
 idea out your head. Brooklyn said
 this year is a proper pageant with
 talents an all that. Count me out.

Linda sparks up another cigarette whilst analyzing the flyer.

LINDA

Is Brooklyn no Tracey's granwean?
 That's a sign from God Abigail!
 A trip to Florida and beating that
 old biddy. This is our year.
 This is our chance! Imagine me and
 you sunning it up in Orlando! It's
 the Blackpool of America!

(then)

And look, I might no be here
 forever...

Linda puts on a theatrically sad face.

ABIGAIL

Funny you've been saying that for
 years but you're still kicking a
 baw.

Linda fakes outrage as she reaches for her wall-mounted house
 phone. She dials a number and waits for an answer.

LINDA
 (overly sweet)
 Moira! It's me. You'll no believe
 this. I know! I know! Aye... Well
 aye. Could you maybe tap me twenty
 quid tae cover the entry? Abigail
 is dying to enter she's been
 nagging me all day, I wouldn't ask
 if it wasn't--

A disapproving tone can just about be made out on the other
 end of the phone and Linda screws up her face.

LINDA (CONT'D)
 --Aw, piss off, Moira.

She slams the phone back onto the wall.

LINDA (CONT'D)
 Right, I'll try Sadie. You go and
 try Mrs. Carrigan next door.

Linda picks up the phone and dials another number. As the
 phone rings, she grabs an old letter, scribbling on the back
 '*Can I borrow £20, will pay you back on Friday*'. She gestures
 to Abigail to take the letter and shoos her out the door.

ABIGAIL
 No Gran, you said you'd go next
 time.

LINDA
 Just move, hurry up.

Abigail snatches the note and storms off.

3 EXT. FRONT GARDEN. DAY 3

Abigail tears the note into pieces and dumps it in the
 wheelie bin. She sighs, spotting a packet of disposable
 plastic cups at the bottom of the bin.

CUT TO:

Abigail sits on the ground, pulling weeds from the patio, and
 stuffing them into the already dirt filled plastic cups.

4 EXT. MRS CARRIGAN'S HOUSE. DAY 4

Abigail knocks, clutching a cup with a wilted weed inside.
 Mrs. Carrigan answers.

ABIGAIL

Hi, Mrs. Carrigan. Do you wanty buy a plant? They're dead nice for around the house.

MRS CARRIGAN

Oh really? How much?

Abigail pauses to assess an appropriate price.

ABIGAIL

Twenty quid... Each.

MRS CARRIGAN

(laughs)

Tell ye what - I'll give you a Choc Ice for two.

ABIGAIL

Twenty quid and 2 Choc Ices, and you can have them all.

Mrs. Carrigan sighs, takes the 'plants' and places them next to a collection of tat, created by Abigail in the past.

5

INT. ABIGAIL'S BEDROOM. DAY

5

Posters of WWE and Henrik Larsson adorn the wall. Abigail, Choc Ice in hand, stands on her bed wearing an overly frilly pink dress and a pair of football boots. She tugs at the uncomfortable fabric and scrunches up her face.

ABIGAIL

Dear God. If you are really, really real, please burn down the community hall or do the thing from the prince of Egypt with all the frogs. Anything. And I'll tell everybody you're real.

She hears a noise at the door and jumps down to the floor as Linda enters, a pair of pink heels and a dishtowel in hand.

LINDA

Oh my goodness. Wheet wheel! If I could only fit intae that again. You shoulda seen me, I looked like Shirley Temple in it.

ABIGAIL

Is Shirley Temple a fudge Quality Street?

Linda playfully whips the dishtowel into the air towards Abigail, too far away to actually reach her.

LINDA
Hawl! My mammy made that dress with
her bare hands!

ABIGAIL
I'm no wearing those shoes.

Linda huffs, stomping her feet like a child.

LINDA
Aw please. Just for one day, for
me?

ABIGAIL
Fine.

Linda smiles and joins Abigail and her Choc Ice on the bed.

LINDA
Geez a bit.

Abigail shields the treat from her grandmother.

ABIGAIL
Bolt.

LINDA
Watch you don't get chocolate on
that dress! Right I'm putting it
away until Friday, you'll wreck it.

6

INT. COMMUNITY HALL. DAY

6

10 plastic chairs are lined against the back wall of a drab community centre. A few more chairs are stacked up in the corner. Head judge, MAGGIE and assistants DONNA and JOANNE sit behind a folding table. Linda and Abigail sit side-by-side in the 'contestant waiting area'.

LINDA
Ooft, they've got judges and
everything. Who are they anyway? I
should be a judge.

Another contestants mum, AMANDA, mid 30s leans into her.

AMANDA
The one on the middle was on
Crufts.

A montage shows the contestants and their guardians.

MAGGIE

So what are your interests and hobbies?

Amanda and her identical daughter KAYLEIGH, 11, both sit smacking gum around their mouths, checking their nails.

AMANDA

I just love being on the phone. Phoning people, people phoning me. Phoning a takeaway, phoning my maw, then sometimes my maw phones me.

MAGGIE

Sorry I meant the little one.

KAYLEIGH

Eh, listening to my maw on the phone.

MAGGIE takes some notes on her clipboard.

MAGGIE

Fantastic. Next up, what does beauty mean to you?

Next we see GITA, 46 and her daughter LENA, 11 who looks like a motivational speaker from the 80s, backcombed hair, heavy makeup and a pantsuit. She speaks with confidence.

GITA

I think it means when you are beautiful, no matter what people say, because words can't bring you down, so don't you bring me down... Today.

MAGGIE

Did you come up with that yourself?

LENA

Everyday is so wonderful, and suddenly, it's hard to breathe.

Gita nods along, mouthing the words. The pair smile at the judges, feeling accomplished.

Linda watches on, whispering to Abigail.

LINDA

That was quite good actually. Can you come up with something like that?

7 INT. COMMUNITY HALL. DAY

7

Abigail and Linda sit waiting at the side of the hall with various mother/daughter duos. Maggie calls out without looking up from her clipboard.

MAGGIE

Can we have Brooklyn and her mum
Gemma, and her granny Tracey.

Linda nudges Abigail and looks on horrified.

ABIGAIL

Ow!

LINDA

Tracey Douglas.

TRACEY, GEMMA and BROOKLYN, all dressed in a velour tracksuits with the same haircut, head to the judge's table.

MAGGIE

And what would a trip to America
mean to you?

TRACEY

Well she loves the states, always
has, that's why her mammy named her
Brooklyn.

MAGGIE

Oh so you've been before?

BROOKLYN

Naw but my maw says that it's my--

GEMMA

--spiritual home. I've also got my
younger two, Harlem and The Bronx.

TRACEY

Wee Harlem, she'll be in the
competition next year when she's
old enough. Bronx isn't a looker
though.

GEMMA

Brooklyn's hoping to win just like
her Granny.

TRACEY

Awk don't bring that up.

Tracey rolls her eyes but smiles, acting like she doesn't want to talk about it.

TRACEY (CONT'D)
1961, Govan Fair Queen winner.
Can't even mind who was runner up.
What did Granny tell you Brooklyn?

BROOKLYN
Nobody remembers a runner up.

TRACEY
Exactly darling. Now tell the lassie what 12 times 43 is.

Abigail senses Linda's embarrassment so wraps one arm around her shoulder.

MAGGIE
That's all for now thank you.

8 INT.COMMUNITY HALL.DAY

8

Next wee see Michael, an aspiring actor, dressed as a cowboy, performing a powerful monologue to the judges. He puts on his best southern American, country accent. He stands tall, adjusts his hat, and clears his throat.

MICHAEL
Tell you what, we coulda had a good life together! A real good life! Had us a place of our own. But you didn't want it.

He tears up and wipes his face.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
I wish I knew how to quit you.

MAGGIE
Sorry what does this have to do with the Govan Fair Queen?

MICHAEL
I beg your pardon ma'am?

He realises he's still speaking in an American accent.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
I mean, eh wit?

MAGGIE

This is audition for the Govan
Fair Queen.

MICHAEL

Aww fuck sorry, is this no for
Brokeback Mountain?

MAGGIE

Naw that's tomorrow.

MICHAEL

Aw right, sorry, dafty over here.

She gestures for him to leave. Donna, jumps off her seat.

DONNA

Son, that was brilliant.

MICHAEL

D'ye think so?

The participants murmur between themselves about how
impressed they are as they clap. Michael looks chuffed with
himself and tips his hat.

MAGGIE

Is there anyone who isn't going
to be a heidcase?

Donna ponders for a moment.

DONNA

No I don't think so.

MAGGIE

NEXT!

9

INT. COMMUNITY HALL. DAY

9

Abigail sits slouched back before the judges, uncomfortable
in the pink dress, glancing between her watch and Linda.

MAGGIE

So Abigail, who are your top 3
inspirations in life?

Abigail looks to Linda who mouths along her first answer.

ABIGAIL

My granny Linda. Not my other
granny though.

Linda nods along but behind Maggie's smile she's unimpressed.

MAGGIE
Aw, that's lovely. Who else?

ABIGAIL
Henrik Larsson and Nick Knowles.

MAGGIE
Interesting. More like Fashion SOS.

Maggie laughs, nobody else does. Abigail doesn't miss a beat and gestures to Maggie.

ABIGAIL
Says the woman wearing a--

Linda COUGHS loudly, signalling Abigail to stop speaking.

10 INT. COMMUNITY HALL. MONTAGE SEQUENCE 10

The talent show section of the competition. Irish dancing, majorettes, gymnastics, Gita singing *Beautiful* by Christina Aguilera.

11 INT. CORRIDOR. DAY 11

Abigail and Linda sit beside a water fountain as Brooklyn, Gemma and Tracey enter. Linda sits up straight.

LINDA
Tracey Douglas.

TRACEY
Aye.

LINDA
Bet you didn't think we'd meet again like this.

TRACEY
And who are you exactly?

Linda's expression falls.

LINDA
Linda--

TRACEY
--Sorry hen I've got to get her sorted for her talent segment.
(MORE)

TRACEY (CONT'D)

If you're wanting a pirate DVD I don't dae them anymore. It's aww digital.

Linda is speechless. Unaware, Tracey fusses over Brooklyn.

TRACEY (CONT'D)

Right Brooklyn that's you up. Smash it hen. Granny will be there cheering you on.

Tracey leaves as Gemma helps Brooklyn - dressed in a full orange outfit with blue sash - to put a huge drum on her back.

BROOKLYN

(to Abigail)

Have you done your Maths homework?

ABIGAIL

No not yet, had to do this first.

BROOKLYN

Well you can copy mine if you want at break? See you Monday. Good luck.

Gemma and Brooklyn leave. Linda gazes off into the distance.

ABIGAIL

I'm surprised she didn't recognise you Gran cause you've been wearing those glasses for 400 years.

LINDA

That was a tactic. She's trying to psyche me out. Listen, you were nearly cheeky to the judge there. I'll need to go in and say you've got something up with you. Tourettes or something.

ABIGAIL

She was cheeky to me first!

LINDA

Just ignore her. Before you know it we'll be living it up in America. You've done the hard part. You need to go out there and show them you're as talented as you are gorgeous, right?

Abigail sighs. Linda catches it.

LINDA (CONT'D)
 Look, you canny be doing your
 talent show in those daft heels.

Linda pulls Abigail's football boots from her bag.

ABIGAIL
 Aw thank god!

LINDA
 Right, you better go back in. And
 make sure you are polite. You
 better act like the queen mother
 herself.

Linda pulls a 'posh face' and holds her handbag in front of
 her like the queen. Abigail chuckles.

ABIGAIL
 But you always said the queen was a
 Lizard, Gran.

Linda nudges Abigail, noticing someone walking past.

LINDA
 I certainly did not! I said her
 name was Liz. You need to get your
 hearing checked.

12 INT. COMMUNITY HALL. DAY

12

Abigail walks to the performance area - her heels swapped out
 for football boots - wearing a headtorch, and carrying a
 cardboard box under her arm.

LINDA
 Woo!

MAGGIE
 Can you turn that light off? I
 can't see anything.

ABIGAIL
 I need it for my talent.

MAGGIE
 Fine.

Abigail hits 'go' on an electric timer and quickly assembles
 a flat packed shoe rack, as Maggie looks on in disbelief.

LINDA
 Come on Abi hen!

Linda nudges the people next to her who start cheering Abigail on too. Abigail smashes STOP on the timer at 2 minutes 35 seconds. Linda jumps from her chair and claps!

LINDA (CONT'D)

Yass!

MAGGIE

Sorry, what was that exactly? Think you are missing a key part of the *talent* section...

Abigail catches her breath.

ABIGAIL

I can build any small sized flat pack furniture in under 3 minutes.

MAGGIE

Oh come on that is not a talent.

ABIGAIL

You ever tried an IKEA malm double wardrobe by yourself?

MAGGIE

Does it look like I sit and build wardrobes? I've got a man for that!

She chuckles, tries but fails to engage the contestants.

LINDA

Who put you in charge anyway? You're no even fae Govan.

MAGGIE

Excuse me, I am a former Miss Scotland and I've been on Crufts. I can assure you I am more than qualified to be here. Your granddaughter however, well I've seen more grace and poise in a German Shepard.

Maggie looks for the other contestants to side with her--

BROOKLYN

Shocking patter.

--but is met with disapproval.

MAGGIE

Oh come on. You know what it's your fault, all of you, for letting this delusion go unchecked. You have all encouraged her. I've seen a Labrador with more--

TRACEY

--Hawl, enough of the dug patter.

AMANDA

Aye I think you should be struck off for your cheek. Or we'll all leave. You canny compare lassies to dugs.

The crowd murmurs in agreement as Linda comforts Abigail.

GITA

I would still like to win the prize to Orlando, very much thanks, so I will stay.

Linda turns to Maggie.

LINDA

If you think for a second I'm going to let a Poundland Carol Smilie tell us how we should conduct ourselves as a community, you can shove that trip to Florida up your arse. My lassies got more talent in her pinky than you've got in that shocking hair do. I don't know what American pish you are trying to turn this fair into, but this isn't Miss Universe. You're on Govan Road! This is for the weans. So I suggest you apologise to her and also to the nation of Scotland for whatever that accent is meant to be.

Maggie is speechless. Tracey looks to Gemma.

TRACEY

Here, I think I recognise that mental woman.

LINDA

And we don't want yer shitey wee crown anyway. C'mon Abigail.

Linda grabs Abigail's hand and leads her out. As they go, Linda makes a quick dart for the crown, grabs it and RUNS!

MAGGIE
Put that down!

13 EXT. STREET. DAY.

13

Abigail and Linda run down Govan Road. But Linda lasts only a few seconds before stopping and sparking up a cigarette.

LINDA
Go!

She passes Abigail the crown and Abigail keeps on running, laughing with every step.

14 INT. LIVING ROOM. EVENING

14

Linda and Abigail eat Choc Ices on the couch, watching TV.

LINDA
Winning is for losers because you
may win the rat race but...

ABIGAIL
A rat is all you'll be.

Abigail gets up, grabs the crown, puts it on Linda's head and cuddles into her.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)
I didn't even want to go to Florida
anyway.

LINDA
Aye I'd prefer Santorini. Bitta
culture. And God's just telt me I
was going to win the lottery or die
by the time I was 70, so fingers
crossed my numbers come up.

CUT TO END CREDITS.