

Bertha

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INT.BEDROOM.EVENING

Open on a messy, child's bedroom, clothes and toys piled to heights seemingly taller than a kid could even reach. It's dark from the piles of junk blocking light from coming through the windows. The only piece of decor in the room that gives it some semblance of order is an empty white, vase that sits on a desk. We see a human shaped lump scampering under the piles of clothes on the floor.

MOM (O.S.)
(shouted, angrily)
DEBBBBBBY!

The lump stops moving.

MOM (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Clean up your room!

From under the piles of clothes on the floor emerges DEBBY, a fiesty, independent, eleven year old girl, clever (sometimes too much for her own good) dressed in yellow overalls and holding up a vinyl record.

DEBBY
What's that, mom?

MOM (O.S.)
Clean up your room, Debby; It's a mess in there!

DEBBY
But ma! My room isn't a mess,
everything is exactly where it's
supposed to be. Look, I just found
my favorite record!

Debby looks at the record in her hand.

DEBBY (CONT'D)
(Quietly to herself) OOOF,
that's not right

Debby tosses the record off screen

MOM (O.S.)
Listen hun, you're not gonna get
the money for the concert tickets
you've been asking for all week
until your room is spic and span!

Debby emerges fully from the clutter pile.

She steps on top of the mess as she scans the room. It begins to dawn on her how big a task she has at hand. The camera moves around the room: we see piles of clothes, open books, records strewn about, etc. We return to Debby's face and see how distraught she is.

She picks up an article of clothing and tries to fold it, but she can't get it right. She groans and throws the clothes back on the floor. Standing next to her desk frustrated, she folds her arms, looks at the vase and kicks the foot of the desk. The vase wobbles, tips over, and shatters. Debby throws her arms to her side in fists and fumes. She turns her back to the mess, gets into bed, shuts the light and clutches her blanket as she uneasily tries to fall asleep.

INT.BEDROOM.NIGHT

Open on Debby tossing and turning in bed. She is clearly not sleeping well.

 BERTHA (O.S.)
 (quietly)
 Darling...

Debbie, remains asleep continuing to toss and turn, mumbling some nonsense indicating unrest.

 BERTHA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 (slightly louder)
 Darling...

Debbie remains unfazed.

 BERTHA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 (shouting)
 DARLING...

Debbie's eyes jump open and she instantly sits up in bed. She awakens to see before her BERTHA, a homely lady dressed in a simple maids outfit with her silver hair kept in place with a bonnet. She is donning large spectacles which magnify her eyes and a messy apron over her floral dress. Imagine a crossover of Mrs. Doubtfire and Julie Andrews in Marry Poppins.

 BERTHA (CONT'D)
 (slightly coy)
 Oh darling sweetie, did I wake you?
 I thought I was being as mum as a
 field mouse.

Debbie blinks a few times

DEBBY

Who are you?...Am I dreaming?

Bertha begins to walk around, taking mental notes of the mess in the room.

BERTHA

Oh darling, how would I know if you're dreaming? I can barely tell when I'm dreaming myself. And if you ask me, who cares! People these days always expect the simplest answer to things...

(Bertha sighs)
but c'est la vie.

Debbie doesn't respond and just looks at the confusing sight before her.

The name's Bertha sweetie! And oh my is it a dreadful mess in here, even worse than the rumors. You see, I work for an agency, "Perfect House"

DEBBY

Huh? Agency?! What agency? What are you doing here?

BERTHA

I'm here to see if the rumors were true, darling. Turns out this place truly is as dreadful as they said.

You see, darling, your room is the talk of the town, and we at Perfect House Agency could never let a situation like this go on. Something just had to be done, sweetie. And I am the best in the business! At your service!

Bertha extends her arms as she curtsies, but as she bows down, she knocks over a pencil box which falls to the floor.

BERTHA (CONT'D)

Oh...oh dear, don't worry about that darling, I'll clean that right up...

Bertha pushes the pencils on the floor out of the shot with the tip of her toe.

BERTHA (CONT'D)
You see I'm a problem solver.
Here's my card darling.

Bertha hands Debby a business card that only includes her name, the agency title and is blank white besides that.

Debby holds the business card in both her hands. Her cunning smile grows into a mischievous smirk -- she thinks this could be her way out.

BERTHA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Darling, I promise I'll have this
place spick and span in 3. 2.

We hear a SNAP -- cut to next scene.

INT.BEDROOM.MORNING

It's morning. Debby is still in bed, a mirror of where she was at the beginning of the previous scene. Her eyes open wide with shock. She see's that her room is immaculately clean: her clothes have been folded and put back in her closet, her records neatly returned to where they belong, her desk arranged beautifully.

On it lies the vase, now overflowing with a brilliant bouquet of flowers. Behind them shines the sun of springtime filling the room with sunlight. The camera pans around the room and returns to Debby's shocked face. Her expression clicks into an ecstatic smile and she leaps out of the covers onto her bed. She puts her hands to the sky while singing and dancing

DEBBY
YEE! I got my roooooom clean! I got
my roooooom clean!

We hear a KNOCK on the door. Debby stops jumping and looks towards the door.

MOM (O.S.)
(yells from behind the
door)
Everything ok in there?

DEBBY
Better than ok, mom! Come in!

We hear the door CREAK open and footsteps as the mom walks in.

MOM (O.S.)

Oh my god, it looks amazing in here. You did this all on your own?!

DEBBY

That's right mom! All on my own!
Can I get my concert tickets now!!!

MOM (O.S.)

(caught of guard)

Oh...um, right. Of course!

Debby reaches out and swipes the tickets. We see Debby looking gleefully at the tickets as we hear the mom walk towards the door.

MOM (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I'm so proud of you Debby.

The door SHUTS closed. Debby's eyes move from the door back to the tickets and her smile fades to a guilty frown.

Debby puts the tickets aside; she doesn't want to look at them anymore. Her eyes move towards the bouquet of flowers illuminated by the sunlight. She takes a step forward, buries her head in the bouquet, takes a deep breath and lets out a sigh of relief. Mmmm...Debby can get used to this new room!

FADE TO BLACK.

INT.BEDROOM.NIGHT

One week later. Debby is asleep, the room is a bit disheveled; you can see that Debby has already reverted to her bad habits. Some clothes remain on the floor and several records are out of place.

We see a heap full of clothes fall on Debby's head. She jolts up to see Bertha cleaning her room once again.

DEBBY

Huh! Bertha? You're back?! What are you doing here?

BERTHA

Back?! Darling, I've been here every night this week, making sure your room stays spic and span.

(MORE)

BERTHA (CONT'D)
You're an awfully messy little
girl, you know Debby.

Bertha gives a playful wink.

Who do you think has been cleaning
your room every night?

DEBBY
Oh Bertha, I knew it was you.

BERTHA
Yes, darling, of course it was me.
But today is my final day on the
job. Alas darling, it is time for
me to leave.

DEBBY
Oh no, Bertha! Don't leave just
yet. I love you!

BERTHA
But my job here is done, darling;
Perfect House agency has many other
clients I must attend to. Now it's
your turn to continue on your own.
Good luck, Debby!

DEBBY
Ok, Bertha! I won't let you down!

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. BEDROOM. AFTERNOON

Cut to a continuous wide shot of Debby in her room. She walks to her neatly organized record collection, easily pulls out the one she was looking for and puts it in the record player. She sits at her desk and starts doodling and happily bobbing her head. Time starts to move faster around her. She continues to move at normal speed, but the mess in her room begins to accumulate once again. We see piles of clothes begin to rise up, records fall out of their organized spots, etc.

In the window behind her we see the sun rising and setting, weather changing from what once was a beautiful springtime morning to a darker and rainier atmosphere. Beside her the flowers are wilting slowly.

Debby's gleeful attitude fades, her energy softens, and her eyes start to dim as her head eventually rests on her desk. The music grows more discordant as Debby falls asleep at her desk in a room that was just as messy as before.

We hear a SNAP. The music stops.

INT.BEDROOM.MORNING

Close up of Debby back in bed, she wakes up in a jolt. She sees a lump moving around the mess of her clothes. Out pops Bertha.

BERTHA

Oh darling dear, don't mind me. I just came back to pick up some very important documents I left behind, but I can't for the life of me find them. But golly roger, darling. It's an absolute pig sty in here. What happened?!

DEBBY

(holding back tears)
I...I don't know

Bertha looks at Debby and then moves to the now dead flowers.

BERTHA

Oh dear.

Bertha removes her sunglasses and puts them down. She walks towards the bed and sits beside Debby. She tenderly touches her face.

BERTHA (CONT'D)

Don't worry darling. I know what happened here. It's not your fault. You see, I didn't actually leave a *Perfect House*...I broke my promise.

Debby tearful eyes meet Bertha's

DEBBY

Everything around me just fell apart...Bertha, you always seem so...magical. How do you do it?

BERTHA

There is no magic. The secret is to start one step at a time. Here let me show you. It's time to pick things up darling!

Bertha begins to fold clothes as Debby watches her

BERTHA (CONT'D)
(in a light tune)

BERTHA (CONT'D)
*If you have a task and don't know
where to start,
And you feel like your world is
falling apart,*

*Too scary, too hard; you might want
to quit,
But no! The answer is to start bit-
by-bit!*

(returning to her regular
tone, with gusto)
Come along now, darling! Just
follow me.

Upbeat music kicks in as the mood in the room suddenly changes. Debby gets up and starts to mimic Bertha. We begin a playful cleaning montage between the two, as they begin to have fun cleaning up. Bertha starts to dance a bit to the rhythm, as she's moving junk around and Debby follows suit.

Soon they are both fully dancing as they clean up the room. We see them have a fashion show as they move the clothes from the floor to the closet. Bertha frisbees records to Debby as she puts them into their correct spot. Bertha and Debby both have brooms and sweep together with musicality in perfect sync. As Debby becomes more spirited, Bertha takes a step back and begins exclaiming

BERTHA (CONT'D)
Yes, darling! You're a natural!
You're a star! You're a queen! Yes,
darling! Yes, that's it!...

Bertha begins to fade away, leaving behind Debby who continues to clean with a smile on her face. We hear her continue to sing to herself when we hear a KNOCK on the door

INT.BEDROOM.MORNING

MOM (O.S.)
(yells from behind the
door)
Everything ok in there?

Debby, not noticing her mom, continues to clean and dance. We hear the door CREAK open and Mom walks in.

MOM (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Oh Dee, it looks amazing in here.

Debby smiles with glee.

MOM (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I am so proud of you, darling.

We see Debby sweeping from behind. She turns her head back to her mom.

DEBBY
Thanks mom, I learned from the best.

MOM (O.S.)
Learned what, honey?

Close up on Debby's face as she smiles

DEBBY
*If you have a task and don't know
where to start,
And you feel like your world is
falling apart,

Too scary, too hard; you might want
to quit,
But no! The answer is to start bit-
by-bit!*

Cut to the flowers glowing on her clean desk, with the sun shining brightly behind as the credits roll.

The End.