

Kudos peoples. You've used the same precision-engineered practicality that established Ikea to create two spots that reverse engineer Normal into the unexpected. Great. Ikea is for normal people who like to plus up their lives with stylish functionality. The trick to making this work is playing up the friction that happens when our normal situations become non-normal.

Casting and performance are the twin tracks upon which these ordinary moments will roll true. Our players should appear normal. Even, dare I say, typical. They're the everyday everypeople, with the slight endearing flaws of normal everyday everypeople.

So, everything and everybody is normal. Once we exhale because the scene is familiar enough that we relax in to the known then, like Dorothy, we realize we passed the exit for Kansas way back somewhere. This friction is where our funny lives.

The deconstruction of the familiar shouldn't be a cheap segue to surrealism. Or a reckless lane-shift into absurd humor. We're better than that. Our cast and performances have real-life texture and feel. The moments unfold with straight up realism and honesty--even though they're a play on expectation that's so real it hurts when you laugh. Basically Indie film quality qualities.

Like Catherine Keener. Confident like Catherine Keener. Smart like Catherine Keener. Kinda mannishly badass and free of false drama like Catherine Keener. Basically, I like the Indie Cine-ness of Catherine Keener.

We'll aim for this Indie Cine version of normal for our look as well. Punch Drunk Love and Little Miss Sunshine and Being John Malkovich are all perfect examples of a normally lit world that has the wink of a thinking man. Keeping the camera a lil loose so that we can breathe and pan instead of constantly cutting is also part of the genre that we'll tap.

"Garage Talk"

When we open in the bedroom, the atmosphere conveys the same laid-back cool, "I do this everyday" vibe like when guys meet at a bar. Or when they quietly subdue lust to silent reverence in a garage in the company of a lusty ride.

Same deal here. 'Cept it's some women. And the Pax. And it's the equivalent of looking under the hood, checking the tires and giving the

custom interior a quick brush of the hand that must be checked before it turns into a full-on fondle.

And maybe it turns out, chicks are even better at this than guys. Maybe that's why dudes gloss over when women describe in an engineer's love of detail how the rivets on jeans change from one year and model to the next.

Because it could be our women are actually more into gear than the average guy. We just never knew it. We do now. They open a drawer. No, she pulls the handle—it glides open. There's probably as much power in their ever-so-sleight nod, or almost imperceptible lip-crinkle, as the drawer opens as there is in their dialogue. We can play with that a bit. Maybe dial back their convo so it's not too much. Or not too obvious.

It's all about the mood and how their cool is actually the door through which we're granted this privilege to see and be part of this. The performance moment's glide from one to the other like the drawer—smooth transitions, we'll pan from reaction shot to reaction shot instead up breaking it up with a cut. The camera's loose. Doesn't feel bolted to the floor.

Our women are thirtysomethings and probably have a kind of dressed down attractiveness that makes them ordinary, not clunky, pretty, not cute. They have substance. Even if they're built sleight. They are in the Zone and not to be trifled with. We don't over light them, but the room should look naturally lit.

Our heroine isn't Barbie playing house. Even notice how ordinary and pretty Catherine Keener is? But you'd think twice before running up to her character like some hormoned-up teen geekboy to ask her out?

That's our woman. She can hold her own. Has that fem-masculine kind of self-assured confidence that'd make you do a couple of shots before even thinking about hitting on her. Then she'd lance you with wit so intelligently sharpened by superior intellect you'd spend the rest of your life trying to figure out what just happened.

The joke at the end hangs in the air for a beat. Then they crack up. Then, we get it. They're laughing at who they're not. It's that insightful kind of moment where we go "Right, as if...". It's not a philosophical moment. It's not there for levity. And though it provides both, we get the point—there's a kind of cool we just witnessed. And we won't soon

forget it.

### “Bedroom Mediation”

A woman’s bedroom—the styling, design, colors—is her sanctuary, right? Been an adage so long it’s now just a running joke. So let’s take it all the way. Run it like a marathon until the myth becomes reality.

This bedroom actually is a sanctuary. We can see it framed through the hallway door. It’s low-lit. Candles glow. Make the neutral color story of the room radiate a serene, Zen-calm tranquility. Kind of room that lowers your heart rate just looking through the lens.

As we move around the space we pick up mom. She’s so Zen-calm, she’s actually, gone Zen. On her bed, lotus posture. Her hands rest gently on her knees like two still pond lilies. Her face is passive, but present. She’s into it. She feels it. She is it. From an unforced, “deep from within” place, we hear her hum an “Ommmm”. The sound kind of resonates through her, the vibratory echo ripples through the space.

She’s the Mama-lama and from her perspective, we see the world move by her. And her world is her family, and they pass one after the other, intermittently, past the bedroom door that leads to the hallway.

As each family member walks by, Mama-lama shouts out time-honored pearls-of-wisdom like curative candy from the Pez-dispenser of her stress-free, know-all, see-all mind. And the jokes on us. Because as any Buddhist monk worth his robes will tell you, there is no joke.

Each interaction is authentic in the texture of it’s “grounded-in-family-values” dynamic. The dialogue is incidental to the delivery, so we can talk about playing with the words a bit. But each family member gets a dose of what’s-good-for-them counsel from Mama-lama.

This isn’t the modern day Partridge Family version of Chevy Chase riffing “da Lah-ma” from Caddyshack. Instead of spoof or satire, we’re meeting the comedy head on where it intersects with reality. Are there mother’s out there, actually so Zen’d into reality by their bedrooms they channel family advice?

Dunno. In this moment however, there is. And if we keep this moment in the present—then it just is what it is. Each interaction has a quality of “grit meets grace”. Mom’s in her Zen place, but she still delivers a timely message with a mother’s barbed-love that takes no prisoners.

No, her daughter cannot leave the house dressed 'n painted like a teen mallststitute. No, her two boys cannot bludgeon one another with adolescent taunts destined to drive her youngest to trauma incurable by even the best psych-doc. Yes, her husband will have to man-up and realize, perhaps once and for all, how to cook a casserole.

Our family isn't an on-screen, over-styled version of backlit "models-to-be". To a person they're humanly flawed. Interesting enough to not be stereotyped, not so average you get bored seeing them, like Juno's family—even for the few seconds they're on screen. Like in the hallway, getting their own personal life-lesson from the Mama-lama.

We end on Mom in the final shot. Captured in full, still-meditative serenity. Even as off-screen, we hear the sound of a casserole dish hitting the floor, shattering into a thousand pieces. Or her teen daughter screaming at the height of pubescent angst into the phone. Or, at her brothers who though recently enlightened to evolved forms of behavior still have not seen the light.

The point is we're not trying to be clever. Or cute. Life is a paradox. And a punchline. We're just trying to let that truth be self-evident in both our stories. If our stories ring true, even when they ring left field, what's better than that? But first, we have to let normalcy have its moment. However briefly. Then we can crack it open and reveal the idiosyncraticity at wild play in what was, at first blush, just plain 'ole reality.