

-

Golden Girl

by

Scott Lummer

2788 Winberrie Knolls
Santa Rosa, CA 95401

415-819-7588

scottlummer@gmail.com

© 2017 Scott Lummer – All Rights Reserved

Golden Girl

Cast:

Three women, age 70, all former star baton twirlers from the Purdue University Marching Band:

TAMMY: Dressed in gold – she was the Golden Girl, who was the main twirler, known for her poise and classic beauty. After college, she married Pete, the student body president, who became a politician and Governor of Indiana, who then resigned in a bribery scandal.

STACY: Dressed in black – she was the Girl in Black, more of a dancer than a twirler, performed many hip swinging moves during solos. After college she became an actress, then film director and producer. Has been married and divorced five times, including to a member of the Eagles.

MARGARET: Dressed in silver – she was one of the Silver Twins, known for their ability to twirl in perfect synchronicity. After college, she worked in marketing for a consumer products company, eventually rising to the role of CEO, from which she recently retired. She has been married to Doug, who also recently retired as CEO of a defense contracting company, for the past 40 years.

Setting: Present day. The Purdue University Homecoming Parade. Upstage slightly left of center there is a trailer on wheels angled 45 degrees on which the three women will stand, with the center slightly elevated for the Golden Girl. Downstage, slightly right of center is a waiting area (a green room) with table with three bottles of water and three chairs.

Synopsis: The three women have returned and are the main attraction for the Purdue Homecoming Parade. They have animosity toward each other, because of differing career choices, and differing perspectives on an incident during their senior year. By talking out their issues, and revealing their imperfections to each other, they begin to heal.

Golden Girl

Scene opens with the women standing on the trailer smiling and waving to the crowd as the trailer is slowly moving. Until the trailer stops, the women continually smile and wave regardless of what they are saying under their breath. The Purdue Fight Song (Hail to Ole Purdue) is playing. The volume of the music is lowered but can still be heard in the background.

OFF STAGE VOICE

(On a P.A. system) And now approaching the reviewing stand, together for the first time since that memorable Rose Bowl winning season of 1967, three of the most famous twirlers in the world. Margaret Whitfield, one of the Silver Twins, *(pause)*, Stacy Wells, the Girl in Black, *(pause)*, and of course, the legendary Golden Girl, and the former First Lady of our great state of Indiana, Tammy Davidson Christianson. What a homecoming day!

Music off

MARGARET

When's this stupid parade going to end?

TAMMY

Soon I hope. My feet are killing me. And my cheeks are about to split into pieces.

STACY

It should only be a couple more minutes. I'm loving this – reminds me of the old days.

MARGARET

You always did crave the audience.

STACY

Right, and you became a lead twirler for the quiet solitude.

TAMMY

We all wanted some attention. But Stacy, the way you swung those hips, you wanted it a bit more.

Golden Girl

STACY

Look who's talking. The Golden Girl! The face of the whole fucking university. And I'M the one who wanted attention?

TAMMY

I didn't audition – I was just a freshman twirler and the band director asked me.

MARGARET

Maybe, but you never seemed to complain. Even now, look who's standing on the elevated platform.

TAMMY

I didn't create the stand. It was built that way.

STACY

Who said the middle section was for you?

(Stacy and Margaret stare at Tammy – uncomfortable pause)

TAMMY

Well ... I ... I guess I just assumed that –

(The trailer comes to a sudden stop – all three women lurch forward)

STACY

(loud) What the fuck! Hey, you, driver, you high or something?

(Trailer starts moving)

MARGARET

Stacy, language. There are kids around.

TAMMY

I was talking to him earlier. A nice young man. Freshman engineering major. His grandfather was in school with us.

STACY

His grandfather? God, I need a drink.

Golden Girl

(Stacy pulls out a small flask and takes a swig)

TAMMY

You can't do that. People will see.

MARGARET

They'll think its water. Come on – share, girl. *(takes flask from Stacy and takes a drink)* Wanna swig Tammy?

TAMMY

I don't drink. Don't you remember?

STACY

Really? With all your political dinners and cocktail parties? I thought surely you were no longer a teetotaler.

TAMMY

Oh, I have a glass of wine now and then. Until Pete became governor I didn't even have that. But while he was in office there was a movement to promote the wine industry in Indiana. I had to –

MARGARET

Indiana wine? What marketing genius came up with that idea? "Amid the rolling cornfields and soybeans, there's Indiana's true treasure – Hoosier Chardonnay."

STACY

What are the appellations? Logansport Cab? Floyd's Knobbs Pinot? Gary Steel Mill Syrah.

TAMMY

You two always did enjoy mocking this state. I remind you that Hoosiers are the people who paid the taxes that helped fund your education.

MARGARET

We're sorry. Continue – tell us about wine binging. *(hands flask to Stacy)*

Golden Girl

TAMMY

I was saying, I had to have a glass at events promoting the industry. Otherwise my refusal to drink would be what the press would write about.

STACY

So you're not an alcohol virgin – (*hands her the flask*) pucker up girl.

TAMMY

Drinking a glass of wine is one thing. But drinking hard alcohol out of a flask — never. And in public – you shouldn't either.

STACY

That's why I'm using a flask. In private, I drink straight out of the bottle.

MARGARET

Seems pretty desperate.

STACY

I was waiting for that. Miss hoity-toity passing judgment.

MARGARET

What's that mean?

TAMMY

I know what it means. You always acted superior to us.

MARGARET

Superior? You were the Golden G-

TAMMY

(*mocking*) "Girls, you really should focus on more than just twirling. You need to hit the books – not just hope for your M R S degree."

MARGARET

There's nothing wrong with suggesting that female students should concentrate on -

TAMMY

Remember her valedictory speech?

Golden Girl

STACY

How could I forget? “People still think of me as a twirler. But my goal is that in 20 years, no one will remember my days with a baton. To believe otherwise is to live of a life of failure.”

MARGARET

I meant that it’s what you do after graduation that matters.

TAMMY

The way you said it cut like a knife. So typical of you and your (*air quotes*) twin, Sheila. Anytime one of us was talking, you’d whisper to each other and giggle, like our conversation was beneath you.

STACY

Instead of the Silver Twins, we called you two the Scholar Twins.

MARGARET

Imagine that – being mocked for studying in college.

STACY

Have you kept in touch with Sheila?

MARGARET

No. After she left school, I wrote her a couple of times, but she never wrote back.

They lurch forward slightly, as the trailer stops.

STACY

Here we are – under the stadium. What are we supposed to do now?

TAMMY

If you paid attention you’d know that we can either go to our seats, or hang out here until halftime, when they’ll drive us onto the field.

All three step down from the trailer. Tammy trips slightly over a bracket on the trailer.

Golden Girl

MARGARET

(pointing to bracket) That bracket's dangerous –why's it there?

TAMMY

This is the trailer they usually use to transport the World's Largest Drum.

MARGARET

Good Ole Purdue. Only a male dominated university would make a big deal about the size of their ... ummm ... instrument.

TAMMY

I think the drum's neat.

STACY

That's my golden girl. Not a part of the university that you don't love.

MARGARET

She even married a man with the same name as the mascot. Purdue Pete Christianson. Student Body Vice President. Destined for Indiana greatness. *(crosses to green room)* I'm hanging out here – had enough of crowds.

TAMMY

(crosses to green room) Me too. *(looks at Stacy)* Go ahead, your admirers await.

STACY

(crosses to green room) Nah, I'll stay with you. *(to Margaret)*. I haven't seen you at Homecoming before. How many of these have you been to?

MARGARET

Only one other. *(beat)* I had to separate myself from this. I'd walk into business meetings and hear a whisper "Here comes twirler girl." I thought it was best to stay away.

STACY

Wow, I felt guilty, and I've been to ten. Had to cancel a few because of publicity schedules. What about you, Tammy?

Golden Girl

TAMMY

Haven't missed one.

STACY

Figures. I don't know if other alums even remember me from back then.

TAMMY

I'm sure if you start swinging those hips, people will remember.

MARGARET

There goes racy Stacy, miss Tits & Ass 1967.

STACY

What is your problem?

TAMMY

That the way you danced while twirling detracted from our group performance.

STACY

The group performance, or YOUR's? I wasn't like you two. I wasn't the classic statuesque beauty. So when I was asked to be the Girl in Black, I figured I had to do something that worked for me.

TAMMY

I bet you did.

STACY

You two are the only ones who ever had a problem with it. Even other women liked it, because they could relate to me. And yeah, the boys really liked it. You two were the type of women they wanted to marry. But I was the one they wanted to fuck. And I played off of it. What's wrong with that?

MARGARET

What's wrong is it of objectified women. Every time you shook that ass of yours, men thought of us less as coworkers and colleagues, and more as sex objects.

STACY

We're talking about college-age men. They get hard-ons from seeing a nun. Do you think if I danced more conservatively they'd act any differently?

Golden Girl

TAMMY

But you had a reputation. And because of that, we all were tainted.

STACY

I didn't do anything to deserve a rep-u-ta-tion. You know how many times I had sex while in college? Once. Dated a guy for four months freshman year. And after we finally did it, he never called again. (*pause*) So I decided – that's it. No more unfulfilling sex with farm boys. It was a valuable lesson.

MARGARET

Wha'd you learn?

STACY

That I didn't need to have sex to be sexy. And learning to be sexy – that was what it took to be in Hollywood back then. The actresses who believed that you have to have a lot of sex to be sexy – they got chewed up and spit out. I took a different path. As soon as I had the chance, I got into producing.

TAMMY

Seems ... unfulfilling.

STACY

Because?

TAMMY

Because ... because of your -

MARGARET

Maybe cause of your revolving door marriage situation.

STACY

What works for you two in the middle of nowhere might not work for everyone everywhere. You're both in long-term stable marriages. That's cool. Not everyone lives the same lives as you. I don't go into a marriage thinking "until death do us part."

TAMMY

How can you depend on -

Golden Girl

STACY

You can't. I never had someone I could truly rely on. Maybe that'd be nice. But I have no regrets. I've had relationships with some amazing men. I mean, for god's sake, I was married to an Eagle. How cool was that.

TAMMY

Why would you care if he was a good scout?

STACY

Not an Eagle Scout. An Eagle. *(no reaction)* You know, the band? *(no reaction)* Take it Easy? Hotel California? Come on Tammy. Didn't you listen to any music after Frankie Valie?

TAMMY

I got to introduce the Oak Ridge Boys at the State Fair.

STACY

Great. My point is I'm happy. Raised two children from those marriages, and they've given me four grandchildren. I don't have a man in my life, but my family and career keep me plenty fulfilled. *(looks at Margaret)* And I do something in my life besides making money.

MARGARET

What does that mean?

STACY

Figure it out, Ms. CEO.

MARGARET

You're so naïve. You think that all the head of a company does is earn profits. I was responsible for 30,000 jobs – people got paychecks and bought houses and sent their kids to colleges because of the work that I did. And on top of that, as the rare woman who ran a company, I helped pave the way.

STACY

Some role model. My films changed the world. Strong women characters who were inspirational. You became head of a business that pushes consumer products. What changed? The products were the same – the jobs were the same. And when you retired, didn't a man replace you?

Golden Girl

MARGARET

I created an environment in which sexual discrimination wouldn't be tolerated.

STACY

Ha. I serve on the advisory board of the Gender Equity Research Center at UCLA. When the Director found out I went to school with you, she told me your company ranked near the bottom in actions against sexual harassers. She said you just swept it under the rug.

MARGARET

What the hell does she know? There are other ways of dealing with men who harass than simply firing them.

TAMMY

Like what?

MARGARET

By doing what men did to women for years. It used to be if a woman executive refused the sexual advance of her boss, she was shipped out to some outpost where her career languished. I started doing the same thing to men who were harassers. I'd "promote" the men, but send them to the branch in Topeka or Macon, and that'd be that. You can call me the Dexter of workplace equality.

STACY

So you put a few sleazy men in their place. Big deal!

MARGARET

Eventually, word started getting out. Men soon realized there were consequences for their actions. It changed the company culture.

TAMMY

What if they were falsely accused? It's so unfair. It's like those rumors about Pete's friend, Mike Bridgeman, back in school. He had to step down as Student President, and nothing was ever proven.

MARGARET

Tammy, it WAS true. Sheila told me about it.

Golden Girl

TAMMY

Like I said before, you two always stuck together. You weren't there. But I was. Your twin was sloppy drunk. Unbecoming a senior twirler. And Mike offered to help her home, and then gets accused.

MARGARET

Just because he denied doesn't mean it wasn't true. What reason would she have for accusing him of attempted rape? And talk about unfair. She was the VICTIM, and because of all the attention and rumors, she had to withdraw from school.

TAMMY

Then she should have pressed charges. But the truth is, she couldn't remember what happened. You were there Stacy, tell her how drunk Sheila was.

STACY

(pause) Tammy, Margaret's right, it happened.

TAMMY

Oh I forgot I was talking to feminists united. So Sheila told you too. So what?

STACY

Sheila didn't tell me anything. I saw it. I stopped it.

MARGARET

What? What happened?

STACY

I left the main party for a smoke and headed to the hallway. I thought I heard a voice yelling stop. I went to the door, and I heard her say stop again. So I went in. Mike was holding her down with one hand and unbuttoning his pants with the other. I yelled at him to get off of her. He ignored me. So I ran up behind him and planted one of my six inch heels into his ass. I grabbed Sheila and pulled her out of there.

MARGARET

Why didn't you report it?

Golden Girl

STACY

I went with Sheila to the Dean's Office. They were anxious to keep it quiet. The Dean arranged a settlement. Sheila wouldn't file charges, and Mike would step down as Student Body President. Sheila didn't want the publicity so she agreed.

MARGARET

That wasn't good enough. You should have done more.

STACY

I stopped a rape! Does that buy me any points in your corporate agenda? Besides, how's that any different from you shipping out your harassers.

MARGARET

There's a difference between harassment and rape.

STACY

Sheila wanted it that way. I was supporting her. Neither of us knew how things would play out. Rumors started – Mike had a lot of friends. It got to be too much for her. She still got her degree, but she needed to get off of the campus.

TAMMY

I still think that if people are accused of things, they should get the benefit of the doubt until proven guilty.

MARGARET

Like your husband, for example.

TAMMY

How dare you bring that up!

MARGARET

We've explored everyone's past Tammy. Stacy's sordid marriage history. My greedy corporate deeds. What's wrong with shining the spotlight on the Golden Girl?

TAMMY

Those were your activities. I shouldn't have to defend Pete's.

Golden Girl

STACY

But defend you did, Tammy. The stand-by-your-man routine was all over the news. During the arraignment on bribery charges. The settlement. Even halfway through his sentence, Diane Sawyer did a feature on you – how you believed he sacrificed his freedom to spare the citizens the hardship of a trial.

TAMMY

What's wrong with defending your husband?

MARGARET

It made you look weak – it makes all women look weak. No one believed he was innocent. We expected better from you.

TAMMY

You can demean me all you want. You can boast about your accomplishments all day long. But I have one thing neither of you have ever had – a sense of loyalty. That's right – I'm loyal. I'm loyal to my children, to my state, even to that soon to be ex-husband of mine. And, I'm loyal to this school. You mock me because I've been to every homecoming. It's the least I should do. You, you only come back when it fits your publicity schedule, and you didn't come back at all because it wasn't conducive to your corporate image.

MARGARET

What have we got to be loyal about? This school exploited our sexuality for –

TAMMY

Bullshit. We all knew what we were signing up for. And you can say what you want to now, but I remember what you both were like as freshmen. (*to Margaret*) You were so shy you could barely say your name. So where did you get the moxie so start that trek up the corporate ladder. Don't you think the public appearances, however you were dressed, added to your business skill set. (*to Stacy*) And you got to practice your moves and sexuality on a bunch of engineers and farm boys. Might have given you a bit of confidence when you moved to L.A. Yes, you're both self-made. But you got a bit of a head start because of your experiences here. And if I can come back to this place year after year – (*breaks down crying*)

STACY

Did you say soon to be ex husband? Tammy, what's going on?

Golden Girl

TAMMY

We're getting a divorce.

STACY

I've heard prison changes a man. They get used to a solitary life. Sometimes have trouble reconnecting.

TAMMY

He had no trouble reconnecting. That's the problem. He reconnected with his former press secretary. He told me last week he wants to marry her!

MARGARET

What?

TAMMY

He said she waited for him all of the years while he was in jail.

STACY

But you waited too!

TAMMY

I told him that. He said that didn't count – I had nothing else to do.

MARGARET

What a dick.

STACY

Take this card. She's the best divorce attorney in Hollywood. I'm sure she wouldn't mind flying out here for a high profile case.

MARGARET

You carry around the card of your divorce lawyer?

STACY

The number of times I've had to call her, I should have the number tattooed on my ass.

MARGARET

Maybe he'll reconsider.

Golden Girl

TAMMY

No – he was ready to move out last week. I asked him to wait so I could enjoy this event. He agreed, as long as I signed a non-disclosure agreement so that he could announce it on his terms.

STACY

Total ass hole.

TAMMY

It's always been difficult to be compared to the two of you; with all your accomplishments. I always felt that at least I had my marriage. Now I can't even say that. Who ever thought that the one of us with the lasting marriage would be the corporate titan?

MARGARET

You shouldn't feel that way, Tammy.

TAMMY

Nice of you to say, but you have it all. The memories of a great career. And a husband to grow old with you.

MARGARET

My marriage isn't quite what it seems.

TAMMY

How so?

MARGARET

When I met Bill, I was climbing the corporate ladder at my company, and he was doing the same at Elcian.

STACY

The defense contractor?

MARGARET

Yes. We became good friends – we both enjoyed the arts, and we could get each other's perspectives on business. We were both having issues with being single. I was getting hit on by older executives who assumed I was remaining single so I could sleep with them. And Bill was getting a lot of questions.

Golden Girl

TAMMY

In those days, successful men weren't single.

MARGARET

Right. So we decided it would be good idea to marry each other. But there really wasn't love – just mutual like.

STACY

Why you little slut. No love. Just ballet performances, parlays about how to succeed in business, and lots of sex.

MARGARET

Ummmmm ... there wasn't any of that either.

TAMMY

Why not?

STACY

Wait a minute. Are you saying that Bill is –

MARGARET

As gay as Elton John. We were each other's cover.

TAMMY

I know I'm old fashioned. But these days no one cares. Why didn't he come out 10 years ago? Or why doesn't he come out now?

MARGARET

It's still old school in the defense industry. He's still on the board. And most of his friends are from the company – they wouldn't understand.

STACY

Wow, maybe my marriage life wasn't that fucked up. With all of these revelations, I need some nourishment (*drinks from flask – offers to Margaret*)

MARGARET

(*takes flask and drinks, returns it to Stacy*) I'm sorry I've been so bitchy today. You two always seem so relaxed here. For me, it's never been that easy.

Golden Girl

TAMMY

It's really not easy for me – Golden Girl, Governor's wife – all I really wanted to be was a mother and grandmother.

STACY

You always looked perfect with that baton.

TAMMY

I haven't picked up a baton in 40 years. How about you?

STACY

Are you kidding? In Hollywood the only time you touch a long, hard stick is if there's something in it for you.

TAMMY

(to Margaret) Well I'm sure you haven't either.

MARGARET

Actually, that was the one thing I liked about being a twirler – the twirling. Something relaxing about the concentration and focus. Sometimes, before a big presentation or speech, in the privacy of my office, I would take out my baton and twirl it a bit.

(Margaret picks up a baton and starts to twirl. The other two women join her)

TAMMY

We all still got it!

MARGARET

So, which Eagle?

STACY

What?

MARGARET

The Eagle you were married to – which one was it?

Golden Girl

STACY

Doesn't matter. No one could tell them apart. They all had tons of hair and smelled like pot.

TAMMY

Margaret, I'm sorry about your situation. Must have been difficult keeping that secret.

MARGARET

It hasn't been all that bad. Thank goodness for discrete male escorts. And Bill's always been nice to me.

TAMMY

Can't say the same about my Pete.

STACY

After the game, let's drive down to Indianapolis. I'm gonna beat the shit out of him.

TAMMY

Thanks Stacy, but I really never want to see him again. You know the worst thing. All I want to do is put this behind me. But next week, after he announces, reporters will be flocking to my doorstep. And there's really no form of life lower than a political reporter.

MARGARET

You're kidding, right? You should see business reporters. You announce your company's earnings, and they immediately start questioning every part of your financial statement. They're all looking for the next Enron scandal.

STACY

You're both out of your mind. You know the difference between a Hollywood reporter and a sperm cell? At least a sperm cell has a one in a billion chance of becoming a human being.

MARGARET

If you want to avoid the press, you could come back to Chicago and stay with me.

Golden Girl

STACY

Or you can visit me in California. You always said you would sometime.

TAMMY

You're both being so kind, but I think I need to say home and be around my children. But thank you.

MARGARET

I'd love to help. Every time I enjoyed some favorable publicity, I could count on a nice hand-written note of congratulations from you.

STACY

Me too. She even sent me a sympathy card after each divorce.

TAMMY

I always thought it was what I should do.

MARGARET

And that ... that's why YOU are the Golden Girl.

(All three hug)

OFF STAGE VOICE

(On a P.A. system) And that's the end of the half, with the score Purdue 21, Illinois 10.

STACY

Thank god for Illinois. Even when our team sucks, there are always the Illini, who are worse.

MARGARET

Time for us to take our positions.

TAMMY

You know, what you said before, about me assuming I should be in the center. If one of you would rather –

STACY

Stop it. Get up there and be a Golden Girl.

Golden Girl

All three get on the trailer.

TAMMY

Can you do me one favor, Stacy?

STACY

Sure, anything.

TAMMY

Pass me your flask?

Stacy passes Tammy the flask. Tammy drinks, as she does all three lurch backward as if the float lurches forward.

TAMMY (cont)

Watch your driving ass hole.

Tammy covers her mouth. Stacy and Margaret laugh, soon joined by Tammy. The music of Hail Purdue comes on. The three women start to sing the words.

MARGARET, STACY, TAMMY

Hail Hail to Ole Purdue.
All Hail to the Ole Gold and Black
Hail Hail to Ole Purdue
Our Friendship May She Ever Lack
Ever Faithful, Ever True
Thus We Raise our Song Anew
To the Days We Spent with You
All Hail, Our Ole, Purdue.

Lights fade to black

END OF PLAY