

COUPE D'ETAT

Transcribed by Alan Back

(Opening shot: the city skyline in the pouring rain.)

Narrator: The city of Townsville! *(Zoom in slowly on one area.)* Where the Professor is completing his next big project.

(Dissolve to the Professor's car on the road and pan to follow it.)

Narrator: Replacing the windshield wipers on his car.

(On the end of this line, he pulls up in front of an auto supply store. Inside, he walks across the floor with a paper bag in hand—and suddenly stops, his eyes turning slowly back to study something he has just passed. Cut to a slow pan along a rack of gleaming custom wheel rims, then back to him. His gaze shifts upward; near the ceiling, a set of rear spoilers shines on its perch. Looking ahead of himself, he spots a kit box showing a car that has been modified to ride very low to the ground, with lights added down there. Up and ahead: a high-performance air filter is on those shelves. Finally he turns his head and looks straight at the camera; cut to a display of a well-endowed young woman showing off a custom muffler. Through this entire sequence, the Professor is positively transfixed by what he is seeing. He starts to push a shopping cart quickly from one section to another, piling in the automotive goodies.)

(A windshield wiper blade sweeps across the screen; behind its trailing edge, the view changes to the exterior of the girls' house during the day. The rain has stopped. An instant later, cut to the Professor as he steps into the kitchen. He has traded his usual clothing for a mechanic's coveralls, which are stained with grease, and he is wiping his hands on a rag.)

Professor: Girls! *(They are by the table; he rushes to them.)* Come to the garage quickly! *(pushing them out the door he came in by)* You've gotta see my newest and greatest invention!

(On the end of this line, cut to the garage. A tarp covers a large, car-shaped object, and he is about to uncover it as the girls watch. Close-up of him.)

Professor: Girls, I give you...

(He whisks away the tarp, which billows out to cover the screen. Behind its edge, the view changes to show the girls looking at a vehicle that is recognizable as the Professor's car only in its color and body type. To protect the tires, special risers have been set into the floor and the vehicle parked on these. It is tricked out from bumper to bumper: rims, lights, spoilers, vents in the hood and side panels, new paint job, the works. Pull back slowly.)

Professor: *(from o.c.)* ...KARR!

(Close-up of the front end, panning slowly to the rear.)

Professor: *(from o.c.)* Pretty tight, huh?

(The girls stand mute for a moment as they try to assimilate this into what they know of the man. Finally Blossom speaks.)

Blossom: That's great, Professor. You, um, souped up your car. Um, what's for dinner?

Professor: No, no, no, no, no, no, you don't understand. This isn't just any car—it's *KARR*.

(As he continues, the first letter of each of the next four words appears over his head to spell out the name of the vehicle.)

Professor: Kinetic Automatic Robotic Roadster. *(Inside; they peer in at the high-tech dashboard.)* It has all the latest advancements.

(As he continues, pan slowly away from them across the rest of the dashboard. Gauges and electronic readouts are jammed into every square inch of space, there is a computer screen in the middle—showing the oBey auction site from “Girls Gone Mild,” with a Zorlon doll listed—and a horizontal recessed compartment that produces a steaming cup of coffee.)

Professor: Seven-function RC-control steering wheel... *(now o.c.)* ...eighty-terabyte hard drive with a fifteen-inch flat-panel display...and a programmable six-cup latte maker! *(Cut to the group; he gets in.)* Ooh, and it has multiple configurations.

(He presses a button on the steering wheel. The wheels rotate 90 degrees to a horizontal position and pull into their wells as the spoilers retract and metal plates extend from the underbody. With the girls watching, completely mystified, the plates fold upward to encase nearly the entire car in a tank body. Only a bit of the windshield and windows has been left free, as has the roof—on which a tank cannon pops up.)

(Another button press, and the tank transformation is instantly reversed. Now airplane wings sprout from the sides, the wheels retract and are covered over, a tail and jet thrusters replace the spoiler, landing-gear wheels extend, and anti-aircraft artillery of various sorts pops up.)

Professor: *(laughing)* And this one's really cool.

(He presses another button; cut to the girls, who look up in awe as a shadow extends over them. Cut to the spot where KARR stood; now there is only a pair of huge metal feet. Tilt up to show this rig as a mammoth robot, with the Professor under the glass dome of its head—this used to be the windshield. The headlights and grille form a face below it.)

Professor: A giant fighting robot! *(Missiles extend from the shoulders.)*

Buttercup: Fighting robot? For what?

Professor: *(lowering, as transformation reverses)* So all the nerds out there will think I'm cool. *(Cut to the unimpressed girls, watching the descent; he continues o.c.)* And here's the best part.

(Cut to him as he reaches normal car level.)

Professor: It talks!

(KARR promptly does just that, with a voice that sounds somewhere between Lenny Baxter and KITT on Knight Rider.)

KARR: Hello, Powderpuff Girls. How are you? *(Bubbles is worried, Buttercup annoyed.)*

Blossom: Um...actually, it's Powerpuff Girls.

KARR: *(smiling with grille/headlights)* Of course. How adorable.

(Lights on the dashboard pulsate in rhythm with its voice as it laughs mechanically. The Professor follows suit, but thinks better of it when he sees the girls' disapproving glares, as do we once the camera pans to frame them by the driver's-side door.)

Buttercup: Enough talking. Let's go for a ride!

(She reaches for the door handle, but the lock button—which had been up—slides down to secure the vehicle.)

KARR: *(chuckling)* Not so fast. The number of safety belts are not sufficient for the three of you.

Professor: *(starting engine)* Besides, KARR and I need to take this first run alone.

(Close-up of the girls, who turn their heads to follow the o.c. departure of the Professor with some trepidation. They trade a deflated look as the screech of tires drifts back to them. Fade to black.)

(Snap to KARR, speeding down a road that runs along the shore of a body of water, then cut to a patch of flowers on a hill. The action shifts to slow motion. The Professor skips blissfully through them, his hair—grown out, with a visible gray streak—blowing in the breeze and his lab coat and tie replaced by a more casual piece of attire. KARR rolls after him a moment later. Next the man is seen in close-up; he has picked a flower whose leaves are blowing off in the breeze. He looks tenderly behind himself, and the camera cuts over there to show KARR pulling slowly into view, with its grille and lights smiling back at him.)

(Normal speed resumes. Dissolve to a view of the vehicle approaching the camera, the Professor at the wheel, as flowers race away past it on all sides. When KARR is about halfway to us, dissolve again to an overhead view of the blissful driver reclining in his seat, his shirt open to the waist, and rotate/pull back. This is an overhead view of KARR, and the roof has been retracted. Cut to a ledge overlooking the water at sunset. The automobile is parked there, still in convertible mode with its headlights glowing softly.)

(Dissolve to the exterior of the house at night. Inside, the girls sit gloomily on the living room couch; the glare of the TV washes over them, and an action program is heard. They look up at the creak of the front door's hinges. It begins to open, and they stare wide-eyed.)

Girls: Professor?

(Cut to the doorway, in which a pair of legs in garishly colored and striped pants can be seen. Tilt up to show the rest of this individual—it is indeed the Professor, who has undergone a remarkable set of changes. The clothing is styled after a race car driver’s jumpsuit, and his hair remains loose. He is still lost in memories of the day’s automotive nirvana.)

Professor: *(distractedly)* Oh. Hi, girls.

(He closes the door. Cut to the stairs; he starts to go up, the jumpsuit’s jacket slung over his shoulder. He continues to sound as if his attention is elsewhere.)

Bubbles: *(from o.c.)* Professor? *(He stops.)*

Professor: Yeah? *(Back to the couch.)*

Bubbles: We were wondering, um, if you could...read us a bedtime story?

Professor: Um...not tonight, girls. I, uh, need the rest. *(He starts up again.)*

Buttercup: Professor doesn’t care about us anymore since that stupid KARR came along!

Blossom: I know.

(Brief silence. Suddenly she has a thought and smiles wickedly.)

Blossom: I think it’s time we had a little chat with Mr. KARR.

(Cut to the darkened garage. The door creaks open, allowing the girls to peek in from the kitchen. KARR sits quietly on its risers; the girls tiptoe very carefully across the floor near its front end. After a few seconds, though, the headlights blaze to life and they freeze in the glare.)

KARR: Hello, girls. Up past our bedtime? *(They squint and shield their eyes.)*

Blossom: We wanted to talk to you about the Professor, KARR.

KARR: Oh, what a coincidence. Me too. *(Back to the girls; it continues o.c.)* You know, the Professor has devoted so much of his life to taking care of you girls— *(They trade a nervous look.)* —but I’m afraid that’s going to change from now on.

(Extreme close-up of the ignition switch, which turns by itself as the vehicle’s mad laughter echoes through the garage. The engine and dashboard spring to life; pull back to frame the smoke boiling up from the screaming tires. The red glow of the taillights makes that smoke look as if it is coming from the devil’s own repair shop. However, the girls do not budge from their position before the front bumper. Extreme close-up of one headlight as its “eyebrow” lowers, then back to the girls.)

Blossom: *(softly)* Let’s get out of here!

(They float cautiously to the door that will lead them back into the kitchen; it has a deadbolt set above the knob. Extreme close-up of the former, which rotates by itself into the locked position, and tilt down to the knob as that lock secures itself as well. Pull back; Blossom tries unsuccessfully to open the door.)

Blossom: Um...this isn't very funny. Open the door, KARR!

KARR: I'm sorry, Blossom. I'm afraid I can't do that. *(Buttercup flies through the smoke to the door.)*

Buttercup: Look out!

(She prepares to strike it a mighty blow—one that would either reduce it to splinters or knock it into the next area code—but before she can do so, the Professor bursts in from the kitchen and turns on the lights. He is more than a bit annoyed at the commotion.)

Professor: What's going on in here?

(KARR shuts itself down completely and looks innocent, and the smoke from the tires starts to clear. As he coughs heartily, the girls fly over to him.)

Blossom: We didn't...it was...

Buttercup: It started itself!

Professor: A little jealous of Professor and his new friend, aren't we?

Blossom: But, Professor, you gotta listen to us!

Professor: *(pointing into house)* In bed now!

(This stuns the girls; they float sullenly past him. Once they are gone, he waves tenderly to KARR, shuts off the lights, and pulls the door shut as he retreats into the kitchen. Head-on view of the vehicle, pulling back slowly a short distance. The darkened headlights come on after a moment, and it smiles evilly to itself. Fade to black.)

(Fade in to the exterior of the house at night—not too many days after the one in which the previous scene took place. There is the rumble of KARR's engine from o.c., and it rolls into view to park in the driveway. Fully attired in his racing jumpsuit, the Professor goes to the front door and lets himself in—after which the girls poke their heads out from the front corner of the house opposite the garage. They have traded their everyday dresses for head-to-toe ninja black; only the eyes and a fringe of hair tell which girl is which. Long shot: their silhouettes tiptoe between KARR and the garage door. Close-up of them.)

Blossom: Okay. Remember the plan.

Bubbles, Buttercup: Yeah. Got it.

(Blossom flies to the hood and opens it gingerly. Removing the engine's oil cap, she produces a bottle labeled "Engine Stop 2000"—with a skull and crossbones, no less—and begins to pour in the contents. While she is doing so, however, the headlights snap on and register KARR's instant disapproval, along with its front grille. The hood slams down; Blossom pulls her head out just in time to avoid losing it.)

KARR: Very clever.

(Close-up of three very worried girls and zoom in.)

KARR: *(from o.c.)* The old Engine Stop 2000. *(Back to it; the engine starts up and it inches forward.)* Unfortunately, I'm immune to it. So I won't be going anywhere for a long, long time.

(It grimaces at them, the tires squeal, and the girls find themselves staring down a few thousand pounds of accelerating metal and glass at point-blank range. Cut to the front door; the Professor opens it and stares out. His eyes go wide as he voices a terrified gasp. The girls jump up to avoid being flattened, while KARR slams on the brakes in order to keep from taking out the lowered garage door. Now the girls fly over to the Professor; their hoods are gone.)

Blossom: You saw what happened, Professor. Your car is trying to get rid of us so it can have you all to itself. *(Close-up of him; she continues o.c.)* You saw it with your own eyes!

(Long shot of the automobile, now dormant, and zoom in slowly.)

Professor: *(from o.c.)* I...I don't understand. *(Cut to Blossom.)*

Blossom: All you do anymore is spend all your time with that car. *(Pan to Bubbles.)*

Bubbles: You used to read us bedtime stories and tuck us in and take us to the beach and stuff. *(To Buttercup.)*

Buttercup: You love that car more than you love us! And the worst part is that outfit you wear!

(Cut to a close-up of the Professor's waist, then tilt up to his head as she continues. For the first time, he seems to see himself as she sees him.)

Buttercup: *(from o.c.)* You look like some bad '80s TV show or something!

Professor: I...I... *(leaning down to girls)* ...oh, you're right. I don't know what's come over me. *(sighing a bit)* I mean, look at me! What am I trying to—

(He cuts himself off sharply and pulls at his hair. It all comes off, revealing his usual coiffure underneath—this was only a wig—and he unzips himself out of the jumpsuit. When he shrugs it away, we see that he has been wearing his normal outfit under the lot. He kicks the discarded clothing away and kneels to the girls.)

Professor: Girls, I want you to know there's nothing more important to me than you. From now on it's just me and the three of you.

(Their faces brighten at this pronouncement, and he gathers them into a hug. Carrying them into the house, he nudges the front door shut behind himself. Pan from here to the driveway, where KARR registers its fury at this turn of events in its typical manner. Zoom in slowly on the front end, then cut to the Professor asleep in his bedroom. As he snores heavily, the engine can be heard starting up outside. This causes him to blink sleepily, after which he awakens fully and sits up in bed. Now he descends the stairs; cut to outside the front door as he opens it. From o.c., the headlights' glare plays across the view. Suddenly it becomes much more intense, accompanied by the screech of tires and a startled cry from the man—KARR is zeroing in on him. The glare brightens until the entire screen has gone white.)

(Snap immediately to the exterior of the house the next morning and zoom in slowly. KARR and the Professor are nowhere in sight. Knocking is heard within.)

Bubbles: *(from inside)* Oh, Professor! We made you breakfast!

(In the second-floor hallway, the girls stand outside a closed door—that of the Professor’s bedroom. Blossom knocks, while Bubbles has a tray with a coffeepot and a bowl of cereal on it.)

Blossom: Professor? *(Cut to inside the door; she opens it partway.)* Rise and— *(Door opens fully.)* —huh?

(Cut to a long shot of the bed and zoom in. It is empty, the covers still rumpled from last night. Inside the garage, the door opens to admit the girls from the kitchen. KARR is parked here.)

Blossom: Professor, you in here? *(The door swings shut behind them.)*

KARR: Hello, girls. *(Extreme close-up of the grille; it smiles dementedly.)* Looking for somebody?

(Tilt up to the windshield. It is opaque, but the view quickly clears to expose the Professor in the driver’s seat. He is gagged and firmly buckled up; all he can manage is a little squirming and mumbling. Pull back to frame the entire car and the girls.)

KARR: I believe I have something we both want.

Buttercup: That does it! *(jumping up)* Time to kick some tin-can butt! *(Blossom grabs her.)*

Blossom: No! We’ll only end up hurting Professor!

(Close-up of the scared hostage on this last word, then pull back; KARR laughs mechanically, as it did during its first exchange with the girls.)

KARR: Oh, what a predicament. *(It chuckles; extreme close-up of one headlight.)* I guess I’ll just have to destroy you—

(Pull back. It starts to reconfigure itself into the fighting-robot configuration seen earlier.)

KARR: —so the darling Professor will be all mine!

(On these last two words, cut to the girls in the growing shadow of the contraption. Finally it stands fully erect and laughs down at them. One giant hand is raised and balled into a fist; this swings down and the girls dodge the strike, which puts a hole in the garage wall. KARR growls in frustration. Now the Professor struggles more fervently against his bonds. A monstrous metal roundhouse fails to connect with the girls thanks to a timely sidestep. The headlights glow red and fire laser beams that also miss their mark—though they do ventilate the garage door quite effectively.)

(Still straining to get himself loose, the Professor suddenly directs his attention at a certain part of the dashboard. Close-up of this and zoom in; it is a red button marked "Seat Ejector." KARR gets ready to attack the girls again.)

Bubbles: *(pointing)* Look! The Professor's trying to reach the seat ejector button!

(Back to him on the end of this line. He leans closer and closer as his gag starts to slide down his chin; it gives way suddenly, and he lashes out his tongue toward the button. However, he is just short of the mark. Back to the girls.)

Buttercup: Let's give him a little assistance!

(They kick the rear windshield in unison. The impact throws the Professor forward so that his face smashes into the desired button, causing the entire windshield to flip open and his seat to pop up on a spring. The man is flung clear of the driver's seat and floats safely to the ground with the help of a parachute.)

KARR: NOOOO!!

Girls: Powerpuff Punch! *(It starts to back up as they advance.)*

KARR: No! Please! Wait! *(crying motor oil tears)* I didn't want it to be this way!

(In one swift instant, it completely falls apart. As the girls look on, greatly puzzled, we see that it has reduced itself to a pile of battered components that bears only a vague resemblance to the sleek machine the Professor showed off so proudly. Oil and other fluids pool beneath the wreck as KARR continues to sob.)

KARR: I was jealous of you girls, okay? *(Close-up of the front end; tears running down.)* All I wanted was Professor to spend some time with *me!* To read *me* a bedtime story! To take *me* to the beach and stuff!

(Cut to the girls and the Professor, all of whom look on with a new sadness.)

KARR: *(from o.c.)* And to love me! *(Shift to frame all five; pull back.)* Was there something so wrong with that? *(drawing itself up, screeching tires)* Huh?

(Tears well up in the other four pairs of eyes, and their owners start crying fit to burst after a second or two. The Professor soon gets himself under control and steps to one side.)

Professor: Girls, as a scientist, I can solve this problem.

(Wipe to the family outside the front door. KARR is heard speeding away as they wave.)

Professor: Bye-bye, KARR! Take care, now!

(He chuckles. Cut to behind them, the camera pointing down the street; the repaired vehicle is zooming off down the street. After it is gone, back to them.)

Professor: Yes, KARR's going to be just fine...now that he has PROF.

(This last bit of news gives Blossom cause for alarm.)

Blossom: PROF?

(Close-up of the steering wheel, which is now held by a pair of robotic hands.)

Professor: *(voice over)* Yes, PROF.

(Pull back. The robot is styled after the Professor and is wearing the discarded jumpsuit; its hair is long in back, matching the wig he threw away. The first letter of each of the next four words appears on the screen to spell out the acronym.)

Professor: *(voice over)* Person Replacing Original Father.

PROF: *(mechanical voice)* Ha. Ha. Ha. Ha. Ha. Ha.

(Long shot of a highway running over the water at sunset. During the next line, KARR roars into view and follows the asphalt toward the great orange ball at the horizon.)

Professor: *(voice over)* Yes, I think that this story is going to have a happy ending after all.

(Back to the family. A thought occurs to Blossom.)

Blossom: What are we gonna drive now?

(He is taken entirely by surprise, not realizing until this moment that he has given away the family's sole means of four-wheeled transportation. All three girls look worriedly to him for an answer.)

(The background for the end shot comes up.)

Narrator: And so once again the day is saved—

(The Professor appears, his brain still spinning its wheels.)

Narrator: —thanks to the Professor! That looked like an expensive car, Professor. Hope you enjoy taking the bus! *(He laughs.)*