

THIS BOY'S LIFE

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Based on the book by
TOBIAS WOLFF

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FOR EDUCATIONAL
PURPOSES ONLY

THIS BOY'S LIFE

FADE IN:

1 EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY 1

It is 1957, and we are in the deserts of Utah. TONY BENNETT sings "Rags to Riches" on the SOUNDTRACK. Breath-taking scenery stretches out on either side of a highway.

The CAMERA MOVES to reveal a Nash Ambassador as it labors up a hill. Twelve cars are caught behind the thirty-mile-per-hour pace. Two cars decide to ignore safety and cross the solid yellow line to pass the pokey car.

2 INT. NASH AMBASSADOR - PARALLEL TIME 2

Two people are in the straining car -- a woman and her son. The woman is CAROLINE WOLFF. Somewhere in her 30s, she is a pretty woman who can look beautiful if she works at it. (Just now, though, her prettiness is marred by a fading bruise on her right cheekbone.) She is bright and energetic and lively. Even more important than these qualities, though, is her humor. And most important of all is a sensual quality she exudes. Her sensuality is effortless -- as natural to her as the color of her eyes and hair. Men turn on the street to stare at her.

The boy is TOBY WOLFF. A pleasant-faced boy with wonderful eyes, he is 13 -- teetering on the brink of adolescence, so that one moment he seems like a self-assured teenager, and the very next like a ten-year-old kid.

Just now the ten-year-old kid has the upper hand: bored and weary with the long trip, Toby has been arguing with Caroline, who is ignoring him.

TOBY

... Well, I mean it. I'm serious -- I do. You promise and promise, and then you change your mind, just like that.

CAROLINE

(totally oblivious)
... Uh-huh.

TOBY

You wait 'til you ask me for something. Just wait. See if you get it.

(CONTINUED)

CAROLINE

(as above)

Toby, hush. Let me just...

So concentrated on her driving she doesn't even finish her sentence, she nurses the car upward. Finally the car crests the hill and starts down. Caroline sighs with relief. She turns to Toby with a smile.

CAROLINE

What'd you say?

TOBY

I said -- for the twentieth time -- if a person promises somebody something, they can't just turn around and take it back.

CAROLINE

Oh, honey, Jesus. Don't start with that again.

TOBY

Why not?

CAROLINE

Because I'm the mother, and I get to tell you what to do every minute of your life 'til you're eighteen. Seriously, we've got no money. I can't buy you the moccasins.

TOBY

I bet if you'd promised Roy some moccasins he'd of got 'em.

CAROLINE

No talk about Roy, okay? And ditto the moccasins. We, can't, afford, them.

TOBY

Yeah, but you did promise...

CAROLINE

Sue me. Take me to court. Oh, Toby, I know you're disappointed, but...

TOBY

Jack. Call me Jack.

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: (2)

2

CAROLINE

You're going to drive me to an early grave: I'm never going to make Salt Lake City.

TOBY

Seriously. If a person can't get a stinking miserable pair of moccasins, at least he ought to be able to choose his own name...

(loud)

... and I wanna be called Jack!

CAROLINE

Fine. And you can call me...

(she thinks)

... Jeanette. Jeanette Marie.

TOBY

Oh, you're so stupid sometimes, I...

The BAWLING of an AIRHORN interrupts him. Both of them look through the back window and see a huge tractor-trailer truck, out of control, bearing down on them. Caroline brakes and steers a hard right, SKIDDING the NASH safely onto the side of the road.

The truck, its HORN BLASTING steadily, shimmies and slides past them, and then, hideously, fails to make the next curve: it smashes through the guard rails and into empty space, its HORN still BLARING.

Caroline and Toby look at each other, then scramble out of the car.

3 EXT. BROKEN GUARD RAIL - DAY

3

Other drivers have stopped to look: hundreds of feet below, the truck lies on its back among boulders. Caroline glances, then turns away. She pulls Toby away, one arm around his shoulder.

4 EXT. NASH AMBASSADOR - MINUTES LATER

4

Caroline fills the Nash's steaming radiator with a can of water.

CAROLINE

(not much heat)

Goddamn thing.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

4

She glances back to where a larger crowd of people stare avidly down at the truck. She bites her lip.

CAROLINE

Oh, that poor man.

There is a pause. Then Toby speaks:

TOBY

I hope to hell this isn't some kind of omen.

Caroline turns to Toby, her face worried. Then she sees the look in Toby's eyes -- he's ragging her. She grins and gives his shoulder a light, affectionate shove.

5 INT. NASH AMBASSADOR - NIGHT

5

Toby (feet up on the dashboard wearing a brand-new pair of Indian moccasins) and Caroline sing "Mood Indigo" together. Toby holds a complicated-looking, black contraption which looks something like an antique flashlight.

TOBY

How's this thing work, anyway?

CAROLINE

(not confident)

It makes a black light that, uh, causes uranium traces to glow.

TOBY

And we just walk along the street and find this glowing uranium?

CAROLINE

Well, it was everywhere in Moab, they say -- just like gold in the gold-rush days.

TOBY

But we were too late in Moab, and that guy at the office said nobody'd found any uranium in Salt Lake City.

CAROLINE

Well, that means we'll have the place pretty much to ourselves, huh? Honey, this could be a big break for us. If this works out, oh, just think: we'll get us a house, get rid of this damn Nash Ambassador -- no money worries... It'll be like heaven on a June day.

6 INT. CAR - DAWN

6

We hear "MOOD INDIGO" on the car RADIO and see that a weary Caroline has driven through the night and Toby is slumped against the passenger door. Toby stirs, then opens his eyes.

CAROLINE

Ask me how far we are from Salt Lake City.

Toby is instantly awake, excited. Caroline points to a small highway sign and both she and Toby yell out.

CAROLINE/TOBY

Forty-seven miles to go!

Both of them are laughing with excitement. Toby claps his hands together once, very hard, and Caroline yells --

7 EXT. HIGHWAY - MORNING

7

Well, hell. The Nash Ambassador sits by the side of the road, its hood up, its radiator steaming. Caroline and Toby sit in a patch of shade by the car.

CAROLINE

If I could have one wish right now -- only one wish -- you know what I'd like? I'd like to burn this damn Nash Ambassador to a crisp.

(as Toby laughs)

I'm serious. I hate it. I hate the factory that produced it, and I hate the man who invented it.

TOBY

It almost makes me want to see Roy -- he was the only one could make the thing stop overheating.

(a beat)

My God, he was boring. Boring and mean: you sure got crappy taste in boyfriends.

At the mention of Roy's name, Caroline lightly touches the bruise on her right cheekbone. Not enjoying the talk about Roy, she pours the water into the radiator, and speaks directly to the car.

CAROLINE

I'd like to burn you to the ground.

(to Toby; big smile)

Let's go get rich in Salt Lake City!

8 EXT. SALT LAKE CITY (DOWNTOWN) - DAY 8

Toby waits beside the Nash Ambassador, looking toward a three-story concrete building. He holds a portable RADIO, which PLAYS DEAN MARTIN singing "Volare."

9 INT. BUILDING - PARALLEL TIME 9

Caroline, holding the imitation Geiger counter, stands across the counter from a MAN who is looking at her very strangely.

MAN

You're pulling my leg, right?

CAROLINE

No, I came here to look for uranium.

MAN

My God, lady. If you're looking for uranium, why didn't you go to Moab?

CAROLINE

We went there, but everybody'd beaten us there. We were too late.

MAN

So you came here just on the chance you'd find uranium? Listen, you mind me saying something to you might sound rude? Lady, you got more courage than you got common sense.

10 EXT. NASH AMBASSADOR - DAY 10

Caroline exits the building, dumps the Geiger counter in a trash can and strides to the car. She gets in, and says two words:

CAROLINE

Don't ask.

11 INT. NASH AMBASSADOR - DAY 11

Caroline turns the key in the ignition and gets only a maddening RER-RER-RER-RER noise from the ENGINE: wearily, she rests her forehead on the steering wheel.

Caroline and Toby have the hood up and are peering into the engine.

TOBY

That mechanic in Colorado said it needed points.

CAROLINE

I know. Don't tell me what I already know. This thing's a bottomless pit. I don't know what to do. No matter how much money I pour into it...

Suddenly a WOMAN in pedal-pushers and a thin, inexpensive sweater stops. She's vaguely low-class, but friendly and sympathetic.

WOMAN

I'd rather be whipped with a belt than have car trouble. 'Course these days I don't have to worry about that. My husband got laid off at the mill, and they repossessed the car, so wherever I wanna go, I just have to hoof it, you know?

Caroline smiles, then her face changes.

CAROLINE

You don't have a car?
(as the Woman
shakes her head)
You want this one?

Shocked, the Woman says --

WOMAN

I... uh... I...

TOBY

You're gonna give our car away?

CAROLINE

(to the Woman)
Seriously. It needs points, and it overheats constantly, but you can have it if you want it, because my hand to God, I can't look at it one more minute.

WOMAN

Well, sure...

(CONTINUED)

CAROLINE

Get the bags out. Get the owner's slip out of the glove compartment. We're rid of this son-of-a-bitch pink and white albatross. You don't mind taking a car with a big dent in the passenger door?

WOMAN

Hell, no.
(she looks)
There's no dent there...

Caroline draws back her leg and delivers a terrific, flat-footed kick to the door, leaving a dent the size of a dish-pan.

CAROLINE

Oh, yes there is!

Toby hands the Woman the owner's slip, Caroline gives her the keys.

WOMAN

... you really just giving me this car?

CAROLINE

It's done. It's yours. You got yourself a Nash Ambassador!
(to Toby)
Let's go!

Both of them pick up two bags apiece -- all they have in the world -- and off they go, feeling good.

1957 is all around us: gas is 29.9 cents a gallon; bread is 19 cents a loaf; cars are curved and heavily chromed; people occasionally nod and smile at strangers; children carry hula hoops. In all, a gentler time. Caroline and Toby stride along briskly, as if they knew where they were going.

CAROLINE

... find ourselves a cheap room someplace, we'll get you into school, I'll brush up on my typing and get a job, and things'll start looking up. I feel it: the good times are coming. And at least we're rid of that damn Nash Ambassador!

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED:

13

TOBY

Yeah, and like Dad used to say, 'We may be broke, but we're never poor.' And later, if we get a house with a big yard, I could get a collie, you know? One like Lad or Grey Dawn. And someday maybe a palomino. And I'm going to try harder in school, too...

The two of them walk on -- a bit foolish, but, in an odd way, brave as hell.

14 INT. VICE PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY

14

A subdued Toby sits in front of the VICE PRINCIPAL.

VICE PRINCIPAL

... like to give new boys the benefit of the doubt, but this is the second time in two weeks that you've been in front of me, and I don't like that.

(picks up a telephone)

Now I think you better just call your mother and tell her to come down here.

TOBY

She works. She's working.

Silent, the man continues to hold out the telephone to Toby. Finally he takes it and dials.

15 EXT. SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

15

Caroline and Toby exit. Toby sullen; Caroline angry.

TOBY

It wasn't me broke their stupid windows.

CAROLINE

Liar.

TOBY

Gee, thanks a lot, Mom -- believe them instead of me.

CAROLINE

If you care anything about me at all, you'll shut up.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

15

TOBY

Yeah, well if you'd stayed married to Dad none of this would've ever happened.

CAROLINE

Look, don't you put that on my back: I can't make your father call you. I can't make your brother write you. They dumped you. Yes. But it's not my fault.

16 INT. CAROLINE AND TOBY'S ROOM - AFTERNOON

16

The place is pretty bleak: a room and a half, Murphy beds, linoleum floors, and a bath down the hall.

Caroline and Toby enter. She pulls down the Murphy bed and falls onto it fully dressed, saying:

CAROLINE

My head is killing me.

Toby heads for his room.

16A SAME SCENE - DUSK

16A

Caroline wakes up with a start, then sees Toby sitting in a chair, watching her.

CAROLINE

What time is it?

TOBY

Seven. Almost.

CAROLINE

Why didn't you wake me?

TOBY

I started dinner. The potatoes are frying, and I'm heating up the hot dogs.

Caroline sees that he's trying to make it up to her, and pats the bed for him to sit down next to her. He moves to sit beside her.

CAROLINE

Hold your mother's hand.

(CONTINUED)

16A CONTINUED:

16A

TOBY

I'm sorry.

CAROLINE

I know you are, honey. Ah, well -- it wasn't fire, and nobody bled, so I guess we're okay.

The TELEPHONE RINGS and she answers it. When she hears the VOICE on the other end she once again touches her right cheekbone with a finger -- the spot where the bruise had been. She sags back against a wall.

CAROLINE

Yes...

(listens)

Yes...

(listens)

Yes, I know...

(listens)

You're right...

(listens)

All right, yes... in an hour, then.

Caroline hangs up.

TOBY

Who was that?

She closes her eyes.

TOBY

Who was that?

Caroline laughs aloud, then slides down the wall until she's on the floor still laughing.

CAROLINE

We've got a guest for dinner: it's Roy. He tracked us down.

Toby groans and falls full-length onto the sofa.

17 INT. CAROLINE AND TOBY'S KITCHEN - ONE HOUR LATER

17

Caroline, Toby and ROY are eating at the tiny table. Roy is good-looking in a meaty, hairy-chested sort of way. Though he is on his very best behavior just now, there is a mean streak in him.

Toby, delighted, holds a Winchester .22 rifle across his lap -- a peace-making gift from Roy.

(CONTINUED)

ROY

... I found me a room, but it's clear the hell and gone 'cross town. And I think I got a job lined up doin' tune-ups in a Texaco station. How you like it at Winstead's?

CAROLINE

How do you know where I work?

ROY

I been here almost a week.

CAROLINE

You followed me around? For a week? Watching?

Roy doesn't answer. He just wiggles his eyebrows like Groucho Marx.

CAROLINE

And how did you ever find me?

Again, Roy does the Groucho Marx. He turns to Toby.

ROY

You like the rifle, Toby? 'Jack,' I mean.

TOBY

It's the best present I ever got. I just love it.

(to Caroline)

I'm going to pretend I'm shooting.

CAROLINE

Don't point that thing at anybody or I won't teach you to shoot.

TOBY

It's not loaded!

CAROLINE

You heard me: anybody or any thing.

TOBY

It's got no bullets, for God's sake.

CAROLINE

Don't make me speak to you again.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED: (2)

17

TOBY

I'll point it at the sky, then.

Caroline sighs. Toby opens a screenless window and points the gun up into the night sky, pretending to fire it over and over. Caroline starts to clear the table. Roy jumps up to help her.

18 INT. LIVING ROOM - TWO HOURS LATER

18

Caroline and Roy are kissing on the sofa, and he is all over her: his hands are on her breasts, her thighs, everywhere. Aroused in spite of herself, Caroline pulls away, indicating the light in the other room.

CAROLINE

Don't. Toby's still up.

Roy leans back, smiling, and eyes Caroline.

ROY

You are one sweet thing, baby:
just the sight of you makes my
dick hard.

He pulls her to him, starting to kiss her. She fends him off, looking worriedly toward the room where Toby's light burns.

ROY

Aw, he won't hear anything.

Again he pulls her toward him; again she turns her head from the kiss.

Then it happens.

A spasm of anger passes across his face and he shoves Caroline away from him. It's a hard shove, but nothing that could really hurt her. Violence has happened before between these two, and they recognize it. Caroline is immediately on guard, and Roy is apologetic.

ROY

Shit, baby, I'm sorry. I didn't
mean that. I'm just so glad to
see you.

He slides toward Caroline, kisses her. This time she accepts the kiss -- feels she has no choice.

19 INT. KITCHEN - PARALLEL TIME

19

Dressed for bed, Toby stands by an open window. He can hear every WORD of ROY'S, who continues to apologize between kisses. The room is illuminated by a nearby streetlamp. The frosty air from the open window causes his breath to steam. He raises two fingers to his lips, pretends to take a drag on a cigarette and blows out the steam from his breath. The VOICES in the other room grow a bit LOUDER, almost to an argument, and then SUBSIDE again. Toby takes another drag from his pretend cigarette. He looks very young.

20 EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - AFTERNOON

20

Toby wanders toward the rooming house. He stops to watch TWO fiftyish WOMEN who are working in a garden. One Woman looks up.

WOMAN #1

Hi.

TOBY

Hello.

The Woman stops to take a breather, lights a cigarette, pokes her companion.

WOMAN #1

My Lord, look at the eyes on him -- won't he be a heartbreaker in three, four years?

WOMAN #2

Bedroom eyes.

Toby smiles.

WOMAN #1

You live in the neighborhood, sweetie?

TOBY

Over there.

(a beat)

I won't be here long, though, 'cause my dad's coming to get me.

WOMAN #1

Oh, yes?

TOBY

Yeah. I'm gonna live on his ranch in Phoenix. The "Lazy B," it's called.

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED:

20

WOMAN #2

That sounds like fun.

TOBY

It is. I've got a palomino horse and a collie, and Dad lets us go on hunts all by ourselves. He gave me this Winchester .22, and last year I shot a mountain lion with it. And Lad -- that's my dog -- found a nest of rattlesnakes one time, and killed all twelve of them...

The two Women exchange a glance. It's obvious the boy is lying.

21 INT. CAROLINE AND TOBY'S ROOMS - AFTERNOON (SAME DAY)21

Toby enters. Four packed suitcases lie on the bed behind Caroline.

TOBY

What're you doing home so --
(as he sees
suitcases)
We going someplace?

CAROLINE

We sure are.

TOBY

Where?

CAROLINE

I don't know. Got any suggestions?

TOBY

Phoenix.

CAROLINE

Good. I was thinking of Phoenix or Seattle -- lots of opportunities in both those places.

TOBY

What about your fabulous boyfriends? What about the fabulous, boring Roy? Is he coming, too?

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

CAROLINE

Not if I can help it. I looked out the window at work today, and he was parked across the street, watching.

TOBY

Roy's so uncool. So boring.

CAROLINE

You liked him well enough last night.

(imitating Toby)

'Oh, Roy, I just love my rifle so much! It's the bestest present ever!'

TOBY

Oh, shut up.

But he's smiling, completely unbothered.

Suddenly Caroline laughs, stands up, and begins to close the suitcases. Toby laughs, too.

TOBY

Now? We're going now? What about all the food?

CAROLINE

Leave it.

TOBY

Even the canned stuff?

CAROLINE

Leave it!

They grab the four heavy suitcases and head out the door. Both of them are laughing.

22 INT. BUS STATION - AFTERNOON

22

Caroline and Toby stand at a ticket counter, disappointed.

TOBY

Well, ask him when the next one to Phoenix is.

TICKET SELLER

Tomorrow morning, eleven forty-five.

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED:

22

Toby and Caroline groan, then Caroline brightens.

CAROLINE
What about Seattle?

TICKET SELLER
(consults a list)
Leaves in nine minutes.

They look at each other.

23 EXT. BOARDING AREA

23

Toby and Caroline hurry onboard a Greyhound bus with Seattle as its destination.

CAROLINE
... I've always had a good head for figures, and if I could get my C.P.A. license, I believe we could make a real go of it in Seattle. I'll advertise for roommates, and I bet we find us a real cute house to rent.

TOBY
If there's a big yard, can I get a collie?

CAROLINE
Sure. Oh, honey, I feel a wind at my back: I think this is going to work out good.

TOBY
(as they board
bus)
Yeah -- like heaven on a June day.

The DOORS of the bus close. WHOOSH! The bus begins to move. Caroline and Toby's faces are at the window: Seattle or bust.

DISSOLVE TO:

24 EXT. TRACT HOUSE (SEATTLE, WASHINGTON) - AFTERNOON

24

The house is a nasty little thing with peeling paint. From inside we hear:

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED:

24

CAROLINE (O.S.)

... and if you cut school again
I'll just wear you out -- do you
hear me? I'm tired of it!

TOBY (O.S.)

Yeah, yeah...

Toby exits the house.

But, Jesus, what a new Toby: he's turned cool. A few months have passed. He now wears T-shirts and jeans which ride way low on his hips. As he walks along, he combs his hair into a duck's ass in back, and forward into a curl at the center of his forehead. He's 1957 hip -- or thinks he is. He strolls on, feeling cool.

24A EXT. TRACT HOUSE/FURTHER DOWN STREET - AFTERNOON

24A

From one of the houses TERRY TAYLOR emerges, falling into step with Toby. He's Toby's age, and is almost an exact replica of him.

TOBY

Hey, Terry.

TERRY TAYLOR

Hey, Jack. What'd your mom say
about skipping school today?

TOBY

Who listens?

TERRY TAYLOR

You go over to Wanda's house last
night?

(as Toby nods)

You make out good?

(as Toby nods again)

How good?

TOBY

I fucked her 'til her nose bled.

TERRY TAYLOR

Sure you did! Oh, Wolff, you're
rich.

25 INT. APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

25

TERRY SILVER opens the door to admit Toby and Terry Taylor. Silver is a clone of both Toby and Terry Taylor.

26 INT. LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

26

As the three boys troop through the room, they pass Terry Silver's two SISTERS, who are sprawled sensually on a sofa.

SISTER #1

Oh look -- it's Elvis, Elvis,
and Elvis.

TERRY TAYLOR

Excuse me, but does your face
hurt? 'Cause it's killing me.

With that piece of high wit, they're out of the room.

27 INT. TV ROOM - AFTERNOON

27

The boys light up three cigarettes (opening a window so the smoke will disappear), then throw themselves onto the floor in front of a black-and-white TV.

Superman is ON. When Lois Lane comes on, Terry Taylor starts moaning as if sexually aroused; Terry Silver jumps to his knees and licks the TV screen repeatedly, also moaning. Toby closes his eyes, also as if in sexual transport.

TOBY

Oh, Lois. Oh, baby, come here --
I got six hot inches just waiting
for you.

TERRY TAYLOR

Man, look at her! Look at that
body-y-y-y.

TERRY SILVER

(continues licking
screen)

Um-m-m-m. M-M-M. Oh, Annette, I
want you. I want you so bad.

TOBY

Oh, babybabybabybabybaby...
You make my dick hard!

The three carry on for a few more seconds.

THREE OF THEM

Yum, yum, yum.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

27

Making wet kissing noises, or just rocking their heads back and forth as if tempted beyond endurance. Then, slowly, they shut up and lie back down.

27A SAME SCENE - LATER

27A

And this is what they really wanted: absolutely silent, all three boys stare fixedly at the screen. They are totally absorbed, caught up in the sweetness and warmth of the show.

Not one of these boys has ever touched a girl's breast; all three are at least two years from their first shave; all three are pre-pubescent, and their sexuality is all bravado -- now we see them for what they are: three skinny-armed 13-year-olds, fascinated by Superman.

28 INT. TOBY AND CAROLINE'S KITCHEN - DUSK

28

Caroline pirouettes for her two roommates, KATHY, a diffident, sweet-faced young woman, and MARIAN, a heavysset, loud, red-faced woman who eats compulsively from a package of oatmeal cookies. Both of the women ooh and aah over Caroline's dress.

KATHY

That belt just makes it.

CAROLINE

It does pick up the green, doesn't it?

MARIAN

And you say he's getting serious already?

CAROLINE

Yes, I think. He keeps talking about marriage, keeps saying he wants to meet Toby.

MARIAN

Well, that's it -- three dates and you got 'im good.

CAROLINE

I don't know if I want him --

She stops as Toby enters the kitchen.

(CONTINUED)

TOBY

Don't want who?

KATHY

(about Toby)

Little pitchers...

MARIAN

Well, it's the tough guy who can't be bothered to go to school.

CAROLINE

(to Toby)

Oh, it's nothing -- we were talking about Dwight. I told you about Dwight.

TOBY

He the one drives down from the boondocks? The mechanic? Dwight. What a stupid name.

(he draws the name out)

Dwiiiiight. Duhhhhhwight. Dwight-tah-h-h-h. Dwighttahhhhh.

There is a KNOCK on the front door. Toby sticks his head around the door, looking into the living room. A man is outlined against the sunset, only his black silhouette is visible. It is our first glimpse of DWIGHT.

Has the man heard him? Toby doesn't know for sure.

Caroline brings Dwight into the kitchen. He is older than her, an attractive-enough man. He is well-built, has a full head of brown hair, and very white teeth. Those are his good points. On the minus side: his over-eagerness to please, his nervous smiles and his clothes. He wears two-tone shoes, a hand-painted tie, and a monogrammed handkerchief, folded beyond perfection, in the pocket.

Caroline introduces him to Marian and Kathy. Then she introduces Dwight to Toby.

Dwight is all smiles.

CAROLINE

Would you like coffee before we go? Or a Coke?

DWIGHT

You know, I believe I could stand a cup of java.

(CONTINUED)

As Caroline pours the coffee, Dwight turns to Toby.

DWIGHT
So you're Toby.

TOBY
No.

DWIGHT
You're not Toby?

TOBY
No.

CAROLINE
Oh, he wants to be called 'Jack.'
It's so silly... ever since he
read Jack London.

DWIGHT
Well, I'll call him anything he
wants.

(to Toby,
confidential)
I always say people can call me
anything they want, long as they
don't call me late for supper!

Kathy and Marian think it's pretty funny. They laugh.
Caroline smiles. Toby just stares.

DWIGHT
So, Jack, you like school?

TOBY
No.

MARIAN
He might like it if he ever went
there and tried it.

TOBY
Oh, have another cookie, Marian --
keep your strength up.

MARIAN
I'd like to just yank that nasty
tongue of yours out by the roots.

CAROLINE
(to Dwight, light)
My son's decided to try to drive
me into an early grave. Truly.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

(to Toby; not so
light)

You straighten up and be polite,
you hear me?

Dwight takes a swallow of the coffee. His eyes widen.

DWIGHT

Who made this?

CAROLINE

I did...

DWIGHT

Well, well, well, all I can say is
that you people are pretty lucky
to live in a house where -- oh.

Marian puts a cigarette into her mouth. Dwight jumps up, pulls a velvet case from his pocket and extracts a monogrammed Zippo. He snaps open the top of the lighter against his leg, and holds the flame in front of Marian's face. She lights her cigarette. Then Dwight perform the Zippo drama in reverse.

What a conversation stopper. Finally, Kathy speaks to Toby.

KATHY

I hear you're invited up to
Dwight's next week for
Thanksgiving.

DWIGHT

Aw, you'll love it. Great air,
great water. For scenery, all you
have to do is step outside your
front door and open your eyes.
And there's a turkey shoot
Thanksgiving Day. Your mom said
you might like it, so I signed you
up.

Toby sits up, eager.

TOBY

Really? I can shoot my Winchester?
Great! I bet I could be the one
to get the turkey.

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED: (4)

28

CAROLINE

Well, amazing: it can sit up and
talk like a normal human being.

(notices the time)

Dwight, we're going to be late.

She grabs her coat (which Dwight jumps up to hold for her) and they exit. As Dwight leaves he kisses his hand, then throws the kiss toward Marian and Kathy. The instant the front door slams:

TOBY

What a geek.

MARIAN

I love a man knows
how to dress.

KATHY

He's so appealing.

29 EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - AFTERNOON

29

We hear SCREAMING. Toby and Terry Taylor race BY the CAMERA on stolen tricycles, yelling as if they're attacking Indians. Behind them comes Terry Silver, on foot.

Atop a small hill, both boys jump off, letting the TRICYCLES SMASH into a parked car. Then they run like hell with Terry Silver bringing up the rear.

30 INT. CAROLINE AND TOBY'S LIVING ROOM - MORNING

30

Caroline is dressed casually. Toby has on a shirt and sweater. He is pretending that he's buck-toothed. Caroline finishes packing a small suitcase.

CAROLINE

I want you to be polite to Dwight
this weekend.

TOBY

(buck-toothed speech)

Okay.

CAROLINE

I mean it, now.

TOBY

(buck-toothed speech)

I said 'Okay,' didn't I?

CAROLINE

Hey, c'mon, maybe the weekend'll
be fun... maybe Concrete will be
pretty.

(CONTINUED)

TOBY

(buck-toothed speech)
Oh, Concrete, my favorite town.
Welcome to beautiful Concrete!

CAROLINE

And stop that.

TOBY

(buck-toothed speech)
Stop what?

CAROLINE

Sometimes I could kill you as free
as I could eat a bite.

TOBY

(buck-toothed speech)
Ditto.

A car stops and through a window, we see Dwight.
Caroline turns to Toby.

CAROLINE

Please be nice.

Toby stops the buck-toothed thing and speaks normally.

TOBY

All right.

We see Dwight driving his shiny Buick, Caroline and Toby
beside him. As the CAMERA TRACKS the car with VARIOUS
SHOTS, we hear:

DWIGHT (V.O.)

... air like wine at my place, and
I don't mind saying I wouldn't
live anywhere else, and that's the
God's honest truth. There's good
schools, honest people, and some
of the best fishing in the world.
Ted Williams -- you like baseball,
Toby? That is, Jack, I mean --
you like baseball? 'Cause Ted
Williams, whom I believe is one of
the all-time greats, is also a
world-class angler. Many's the
day he and I've talked over the
best way to get a fish to say yes
to a hook.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED:

31

DWIGHT (V.O.) (CONT'D)

(a beat)

Hunting, too: there's game everywhere you look. I don't think I flatter myself by saying that I'm something of a whiz with a rifle, and Concrete gives me every opportunity to prove it...

32 EXT. SMALL BRIDGE - DAY

32

The three stand by the edge of the bridge, looking down into the water.

They see salmon fighting the last few yards of their yearly battle to spawn. Against the rapid current, they leap again and again. Long strips of flesh hang from their bodies.

DWIGHT

They always show you salmon fighting to get upstream, but they never show you what they look like when they get there.

Her face strained, Caroline leans over for a closer look. The salmon swim in slow, stunned circles, some with an eye missing or hanging by a membrane, a hideous sight.

CAROLINE

It's pitiful. Awful.

DWIGHT

They'll spawn, and then they'll die. They're dying now.

As Toby and Caroline move to the passenger side of the car, Toby speaks so Dwight can't hear:

TOBY

I hope to hell it's not an omen.

Caroline has to fight back a smile.

A33 EXT. CONCRETE SILO - DAY

A33

The Buick drives into town past an enormous disused Concrete silo where "Welcome To Concrete" is painted in huge faded letters.

(CONTINUED)

A33 CONTINUED:

A33

DWIGHT

So here we go. Welcome to Concrete. Dwight's home sweet home. Finest people in the whole state of Washington, you ask me. Lots of churches, too. A neighbor of mine says, "Looking for nice churches, come to Concrete. Looking for sin, go to hell." I think that's funny...

Caroline and Toby are severely underimpressed with their first impression of Concrete.

33 EXT. DWIGHT'S HOUSE - DAY

33

Dwight's Buick pulls to a stop; Dwight, Caroline, and Toby get out. The scenery is as beautiful as Dwight said it was.

DWIGHT

All the houses are converted Army barracks, made into duplexes --

Three children exit the house. SKIPPER, a pleasant boy who is average in every way, is 17. NORMA is 18, slow-spoken and sensual, Toby cannot take his eyes off her. The third is PEARL, two years younger than Toby. Pearl has a bald spot the size of a dollar, high on the side of her head.

DWIGHT

Well. Let's see here. Kids, this is my pretty friend, Caroline Wolff, and her boy To...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED:

33

DWIGHT (CONT'D)
 (he catches himself)
 Jack Wolff. These are my kids:
 Skipper, Norma and my baby, Pearl.

Everybody says hello, shakes hands, then they all head into the house.

34 INT. DWIGHT'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

34

They enter and look around: well, it's not awful, but it sure as hell isn't wonderful. The room is dark, on the small side, and shows the lack of a woman's hand. Caroline looks a bit taken aback, but tries to hide it by saying the word "nice" over and over.

The CAMERA FOLLOWS them FROM room TO room:

DWIGHT
 Okay, so that was the living room;
 over here is the kitchen -- I plan
 on getting all new fixtures in
 here -- and down that hall are the
 three bedrooms and the bath.

He stops at an extra, no-particular-purpose, nondescript room furnished only by two easy chairs and a card table.

DWIGHT
 This is sort of a lounging area.
 (as nobody says
 anything)
 You know, just in case you want
 to...

He searches, can't think of how to finish the sentence in any impressive way. He gives up, finishes weakly:

DWIGHT
 ... lounge.

Skipper snorts with laughter, but cuts it off when Dwight gives him a look. Toby, trying to be good, bites his lip to keep from laughing.

35 EXT. BUSINESS STREET - DAY

35

The business area is small and rather forlorn. The six of them walk in pairs -- Dwight and Caroline, Skipper and Norma, and last, Toby and Pearl. (Toby's eyes are glued to the movement of Norma's body.)

(CONTINUED)

DWIGHT

(about a gas station)
And over there's where I work.

CAROLINE

(to Skipper and Norma)
How about you guys? You like it here?

They glance at each other.

SKIPPER

Fine.

NORMA

Yeah, it's fine.

NORMA

It's a little isolated, is all.

DWIGHT

Not that isolated.

NORMA

Well, maybe not that isolated.
Pretty isolated, though.

DWIGHT

Aw, there's plenty to do in Concrete if you kids would take a little initiative. When I was growing up we didn't have T.V. -- we used our imaginations. We read the classics. We played musical instruments. You show me a bored kid, I'll show you a lazy kid.

CAROLINE

I didn't know you played an instrument, Dwight. What do you play?

DWIGHT

(one-half second's
hesitation)

Sax. Tenor sax.

Skipper and Norma glance at each other, then look away. Caroline takes a cigarette from her purse. Again Dwight jumps to her service: we are once more treated to the mini-drama of Dwight unsheathing the Zippo from its velvet case, opening the top on his pants leg, etc.

CAROLINE

(back to Skipper and
Norma)

How's the school here?

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED: (2)

35

SKIPPER

There isn't one. We go to
Chinook.

NORMA

Chinook High.

DWIGHT

It's a few miles downriver.

SKIPPER

Forty miles.

DWIGHT

Come off it -- it's not that far.

SKIPPER

Yeah, I clocked it: thirty-nine
miles.

In spite of the fact that he's eager for this day to go well, Dwight's bottom teeth begin to show.

DWIGHT

Ah, you'd bellyache if the goddam
school was in your fugging
back yard. Just shut your god-
damn pie-hole.

They all shut their pie-holes. The six walk in a tense, uncomfortable silence for five full beats. Then Pearl tries to help out:

PEARL

I'm in fifth grade.

Nobody seems to care.

36 INT. DWIGHT'S LIVING ROOM - HOUR LATER

36

Dwight has recovered his good mood. Dressed in a marksman's coat with a padded shoulder, Dwight is laughing as he attempts to assemble Toby's Winchester .22.

(CONTINUED)

DWIGHT

'Turkey shoot' is just a figure of speech.

TOBY

There's no real turkey?

DWIGHT

No, it's just regulation paper targets. It's a test of skill.

(a beat)

And, Jack, I just found out yesterday that they won't let kids shoot.

TOBY

But you said I could!

DWIGHT

I know, but they got it all screwed up somehow and told me wrong at first.

Toby starts to argue, but Caroline touches his arm.

CAROLINE

Dwight, you did tell him.

DWIGHT

(an edge)

I don't make the rules, Caroline. If I made the rules, I might make different ones, but I don't make the rules.

A sullen Toby stands with Pearl. Dwight is giving his name and the entry fee to a MAN. As the Man moves away, Caroline stops him and holds out some money.

CAROLINE

Wolff. Caroline Wolff.

MAN

You mean you want to enter? I think it's against the rules.

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED:

37

CAROLINE

Well, that sign says this is an N.R.A. club, and I'm a dues-paying N.R.A. member. That gives me the right to participate in the activities of other chapters.

MAN

You'll be the only woman shooting.

Caroline just smiles. The Man shrugs, takes her money and writes down her name.

38 EXT. SHOOTING RANGE - DAY

38

The shooting match has begun. The contestants have ten turns to fire ten shots apiece at a large paper bull's-eye fifty yards away. The scores and rankings are on a portable scoreboard.

A contestant finishes SHOOTING. There is a pause. Everyone watches as his score is raised from behind the concrete wall on which the bull's-eye hangs.

The score comes: 84.

There is a smattering of applause, and it's Dwight's turn.

From his stance, Dwight looks as if he is a pretty good shot. He's nervous, though, because Caroline is going to shoot, and he squeezes off his TEN SHOTS in RAPID SUCCESSION, hardly pausing to breathe. A pause, and then his score is raised: 73. Dwight smiles an inappropriate smile and hands the Winchester to Caroline.

There are a couple of whistles as Caroline takes her position, and someone in the crowd yells out, "Oh, Mama, shake that thang!" Caroline ignores it, taking her shooting stance, which is surprisingly graceful and professional-looking.

She SHOOTS her TEN BULLETS, taking time to breathe once, deeply, between each shot. The pause, and her score is raised: 93. There is a moment of surprised silence, and then the crowd gives Caroline a sincere round of applause.

SAME SCENE - LATER

Dwight looks stunned, and Toby is almost equally surprised.

(CONTINUED)

On the scoreboard, we see that Caroline is in second place and by only two shots. As the next-to-last round finishes, Caroline is surrounded by a few people who are complimenting her shooting. Dwight's smile is even bigger: Oh, he wanted to be the one to win.

The last round starts. A MAN, evidently the one in first place, heads to the shooting alley for his turn. As he passes Caroline, trying to rattle her, he speaks confidently.

MAN

That second-place trophy ain't bad, honey.

CAROLINE

(big smile)

Then you won't feel too bad about carrying it home, will you?

Several people laugh, and the Man, bested, turns away. Everyone turns quiet to watch the Man shoot. He is evidently the one who's nervous, though, for after he SHOOTS and waits, the score is raised: 95. There is an immediate stir -- Caroline can win if she shoots a virtually perfect round.

Dwight's name is called. He takes his position, but clowns around, SHOOTING first left-handed, then right-handed, then with both eyes closed.

His score is raised: 24. There is scattered laughter, and Dwight leads it -- hell, it's all a joke to him, his attitude says.

Caroline takes her stance. Rock-steady, she SHOOTS her TEN SHOTS and waits. And then it comes: 98. She's won. The second-place Man wheels away angrily, but everyone else congratulates the laughing Caroline, as an official presents her with a small trophy of a gold rifle on a pedestal, and a huge ham.

In the midst of the hubbub, Toby manages to get close enough to congratulate his mother. Caroline glances toward Dwight as she whispers to Toby:

CAROLINE

That was for you, honey.

TOBY

(impressed)

I didn't know you were a member of the N.R.A.

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED: (2)

38

CAROLINE

I'm a little behind in my dues --
Thirty-six years behind.

39 INT. DWIGHT'S KITCHEN - DAY

39

Caroline, Toby and Pearl enter. Norma is cooking Thanksgiving dinner. Dwight WALKS HEAVILY down the hall to his bedroom and SLAMS the DOOR.

NORMA

What gives?

TOBY

Mom won the turkey shoot.

NORMA

Oh, boy. Now we're in for it --
he thinks he's some kind of big
hunter.

PEARL

Well, he killed a deer once.

NORMA

That was with the car.

They all laugh.

40 INT. DINING ROOM - AFTERNOON

40

Though there are some occasional sentences like "Could I have the potatoes, please?" or "This dressing is really delicious," mostly there is just silence and the noise of SILVERWARE ON PLATES. Dwight is working hard on the wine.

DWIGHT

I got just one thing to say.
(as everyone
stiffens)

I'm sitting at the table with the
best damn shot in the county!

Everybody relaxes, and general conversation begins.

41 INT. DWIGHT'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

41

Norma plays "Blue Monday" on an upright piano whilst Toby sings it. After finishing the song, Norma launches into "On Moonlight Bay." Everybody joins in.

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED:

41

Toby and Caroline glance at each other and smile.

41A SAME SCENE - MIDDLE OF NIGHT

41A

Caroline, who is sleeping on the sofa bed, returns from the bathroom. She sees that Toby's awake on his pallet on the floor. She sits on the floor beside him. (The whole conversation is conducted in whispers.)

CAROLINE

So what do you think?

TOBY

They're okay. What's that bald spot on Pearl's head? Ugh.

CAROLINE

Some sort of infection.

TOBY

Norma's nice.

CAROLINE

They're all nice, but Dwight keeps rushing me, keeps talking about marriage. And I don't really want to get married -- not now anyway.

TOBY

That's fine with me.

(a beat; new tone)

I wish you would've stayed married to Dad.

CAROLINE

Oh, don't wish Duke back on me. God.

TOBY

That woman he married? Is she really rich?

CAROLINE

Like King Midas. Okay, look, we'll go back to Seattle and see how things go. I've been thinking about taking a course in stenotyping. A court reporter's pay is real high. Kathy got engaged, so either I find us another roommate or I've got to make some more money. And this stenotyping thing sounds just right. This could turn out good, honey.

42 INT. BOYS' BATHROOM AT SCHOOL - DAY

42

Toby, Terry Silver and Terry Taylor lounge against the wall, smoking.

TOBY

I mean I blew it off, man -- I
blew his fuckin' turkey's head
off.

Terry Silver takes a long slow drag on his cigarette.
The other boys glance at each other: they don't buy it.

TERRY TAYLOR

With a .22.

TOBY

Fuckin' A. Winchester .22. Pump.

TERRY TAYLOR

Wolff, you are so full of shit.

TOBY

Don't believe me -- see if I care.

TERRY TAYLOR

All a .22 bullet would do is make
a hole in his head.

Toby takes a drag on his cigarette.

TOBY

One bullet, maybe.

TERRY TAYLOR

Oh. Oh, I see -- you hit the
turkey more than once. While he
was flying. In the head.

Toby nods. Silver and Taylor howl with laughter.
Furious, Toby says "Fuck you" over and over. He pulls
out a rat-tail and scratches the words "FUCK YOU" onto
the soft paint of the bathroom wall.

43 EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - AFTERNOON

43

Toby stands at the top of a small hill with Terry Silver
and Terry Taylor. They are too casual, their faces too
innocent: something's up.

They wait until a middle-aged man raking leaves turns
and disappears around a corner. Then the three of them
open the door of a car, take off the emergency brake, and
start it rolling down the hill.

(CONTINUED)

43 CONTINUED:

43

The car rolls silently down the hill. It CRASHES into another car at the bottom, making a LOUD NOISE.

The three boys run like the wind out of sight.

44 INT. CAROLINE AND TOBY'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

44

Caroline, Toby, Marian and Kathy sit at the table eating dinner.

KATHY

... exactly what I wanted for my dress. It's a Simplicity pattern, and I'm pretty sure I can make it myself. It's got big puff sleeves...

Caroline takes out a cigarette. Then everybody jumps as Toby yells and jumps up knocking his chair over backwards.

TOBY

Oh!

Toby grabs Caroline's lighter, and begins to imitate Dwight: saying, "Oh!" and "Oh, yes!" and Oh, my!" and "Here, let me!" and "I'll do that!"

It's a mean, accurate imitation of Dwight. All three women laugh in spite of themselves. Caroline keeps saying "Jack, that's enough," and Marian says, "Dwight's not that bad." But they can't help laughing. Toby offers the other two women a light, then offers a broom, the back door, and the refrigerator a light.

45 INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY

45

The principal, MR. SHIPPY, sits behind his desk. Toby, looking scared, sits across from him. A secretary lets Caroline into the room. Mr. Shippy rises and introduces himself. Caroline doesn't respond to the introduction.

CAROLINE

What did he do?

MR. SHIPPY

He violated the school property and flouted the law.

CAROLINE

Can you say that in English?

(CONTINUED)

MR. SHIPPY

He wrote obscene words on the wall.

CAROLINE

(to Toby)

Did you do it?

(as he shakes his head "no")

He didn't do it.

MR. SHIPPY

(strong)

He wrote obscene words on the wall.

CAROLINE

What obscene words?

MR. SHIPPY

(after a beat)

'Fuck you.'

CAROLINE

That's one obscene word.

Mr. Shippy looks stymied. There is a pause.

MR. SHIPPY

Look, Mrs. Wolff, Jack's teachers, like him but they think he's fallen in with the wrong kind of friends.

(peers at Toby's hand)

Is that nicotine stain on your fingers?

(as Toby shakes his head "no")

I hope not. Let me tell you a story: I started smoking in college. Two packs a day. I ate 'em.

(a beat)

One night I went to have a cigarette and lo and behold, the pack was empty. I went downstairs and started to rummage through the garbage cans. But as I reached down -- I mean, right down into a garbage can -- I suddenly thought, 'Whoa. Hold on right there, Buster.' I went back to my room and to this day I haven't smoked another cigarette.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED: (2)

45

MR. SHIPPY (CONT'D)

(a beat)

After that, every day I saved the exact amount of money I would've spent on cigarettes. In three years, I put it all together, and you know what I bought? I bought myself...

(a dramatic pause;
big finish)

... a Nash Ambassador.

Caroline gives a bark of laughter. She brings out a handkerchief and coughs, as if she has a cold. Mr. Shippy looks puzzled.

MR. SHIPPY

Well, back to the point: I think two weeks' suspension.

46 INT. CAROLINE AND TOBY'S HOUSE - SAME DAY (LATER)

46

Caroline and Toby enter the house. Caroline goes into the bedroom, shuts the door. Toby sits on the couch.

46A SAME SCENE - NIGHT

46A

Late afternoon sun slants through the venetian blinds. Toby sits exactly as he sat before. Then Caroline comes out of the bedroom, ominously calm. She sits down.

CAROLINE

So what shall we do?

TOBY

What do you mean?

CAROLINE

Ever since Duke and I got divorced, you're a different boy. I know he never calls you and I could kill him for it -- but that's how Duke is. And Gregory's in Princeton now, so I guess...

(refocusing)

So what shall we do? Because this isn't working.

(a beat)

We barely have enough money, Kathy's moving out, and on top of it all, you've gone wild. You lie...

(CONTINUED)

TOBY

No I don'...

CAROLINE

Yes, you do. You steal from Marian's purse -- I just can't handle you anymore, and it scares me. I don't know what to do. So, you tell me what to do.

TOBY

(he means it)

I can be better. I will be.

(it bursts out of him)

And I hate the way I am anymore! I don't know why I do it!

(a beat)

What about that stenotyping thing you were gonna do?

With peculiar intensity, Caroline speaks in a soft, odd voice:

CAROLINE

It won't happen. It won't happen. It won't happen. Things aren't going to turn out well, things aren't going to start looking up, and it's never going to be like heaven on a June day. There is no uranium. There is no stenotyping. There is no C.P.A. license. There isn't...

She stands for a few moments as if listening for a far-off sound.

CAROLINE

... I talked to Dwight: after Christmas, he wants you to come up to Concrete and live with him for a few months -- go to school there.

TOBY

What are you going to do, just give me away to him?

CAROLINE

If you two can get along, if it works out, then I guess he and I might get married.

(CONTINUED)

46A CONTINUED: (2)

46A

The two stare at each other.

CAROLINE

I can't think of anything else to do. But first I want your approval.

Again the two stare at each other.

TOBY

All right.

Caroline nods, turns away.

47 INT. CAROLINE'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

47

Christmas is over: a few scattered pieces of wrapping paper lie scattered on the floor, and a small Christmas tree with bubble-lights glows in a corner.

Caroline shuts a suitcase and looks at Toby.

CAROLINE

I put in both your sweaters. You wear them now, the nights are so chilly up there.

TOBY

Okay. I will.

CAROLINE

You don't have to go if you don't want to, honey.

TOBY

No, it's okay. I'll go.

O.S. we hear a KNOCKING and Dwight's cheery voice.

DWIGHT (O.S.)

Here I am, you lucky people!

48 EXT. CAROLINE AND TOBY'S HOUSE - DUSK

48

Dwights hustles the bags into the trunk, tells Toby to kiss his mother, and hops into the car, all smiles, all cheeriness. The Buick pulls away, leaving Caroline white-faced and miserable.

49 INT. BUICK - NIGHT

49

Dwight takes a pull from a pint bottle of whiskey and gives Toby a sneering, contemptuous look. Toby reaches over, SNAPS ON the RADIO. Immediately Dwight SNAPS IT off. Then, in the headlight's glare, Toby sees a dark shape.

TOBY

Hey, look: is that a raccoon or
a beaver.

Dwight swerves deliberately to hit the animal. There is a sickening THUMP, and Dwight stops. As he backs up:

DWIGHT

Go get it -- the pelt's worth
fifty bucks, minimum.

TOBY

That thing's probably got rabies...

DWIGHT

(low)
Get it!

50 EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

50

Toby moves to where the dead beaver lies on its back, its eyes open, in the red glow of the taillights. Toby picks the thing up and lugs it back toward Dwight, who has the trunk open.

51 INT. BUICK - NIGHT

51

Dwight is still drinking, between swallows, he gives Toby sneering glances. Dwight is driving very fast. The road begins a series of curves. Dwight doesn't slow down, and the TIRES begin to SCREAM on the curves.

The road runs along a steep gorge. Dwight increases the speed, and the car begins to fishtail.

TOBY

I'm a little sick to my stomach.

DWIGHT

Sick to your stomach? A hotshot
like you?

TOBY

I'm not a hotshot.

(CONTINUED)

DWIGHT

That's what I hear. I hear you're a real hotshot. Come and go where you please, do what you please. Isn't that right? Yeah, regular man about town. Performer, too. That right, Jack? You a performer?

TOBY

No, sir.

DWIGHT

That's a goddamned lie.

Dwight keeps glancing from the road to Toby, and back again.

DWIGHT

If there's one thing I can't stomach, it's a liar.

TOBY

I'm not a liar.

DWIGHT

Sure you are. You or Marian. Is Marian a liar? She says you're quite the little performer. Is that a lie? You tell me that's a lie and we'll drive back to Seattle so you can call her a liar to her face. You want me to do that?

TOBY

No.

DWIGHT

Then you must be the one's a liar, right?

(as Toby nods)

And you're a performer?

TOBY

I guess.

DWIGHT

You guess? You guess? Let's see your act. Go on. Do your act.

(when Toby is silent)

I'm waiting.

TOBY

I can't.

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED: (2)

51

DWIGHT

Sure you can.

TOBY

No, sir.

DWIGHT

Do me. I hear you do me.

Again Toby shakes his head, and then gasps as the CAR SKIDS hideously close to the cliff's edge. Dwight is oblivious to the danger.

DWIGHT

Yeah, I hear you're good at doing me. Here. Do me with the lighter. Go on. Take it.

Dwight holds out the velvet-covered Zippo, driving with one hand, and the car is all over the road. Dwight puts the lighter back into his pocket. The car slows a bit.

DWIGHT

Hotshot. You pull that hotshot stuff around me and I'll break every bone in your body. You understand me?

(a beat)

You're in for a change, mister. You got that? Huh? You got that good?

(so scary)

You're in for a whole 'nother ballgame.

52 EXT. DWIGHT'S HOUSE - NIGHT

52

Dwight's Buick pulls to a stop as Norma, Skipper and Pearl come out to meet them. Dwight is calmer now.

DWIGHT

Skipper, go get that washtub out back, and Pearl, bring the hose around and fill it up. Hotshot and me hit a beaver. We'll salt him down.

Skipper and Pearl move out on the run. Dwight slits the beaver from throat to testicles, guts it, then pulls the skin off.

(CONTINUED)

DWIGHT

I know you think you're better than me. Caroline told me all about your rich daddy and your prep-school brother, but your fancy days are over: you're a Concrete boy now. I'm gonna give you a big injection of Concrete. That's right -- inoculate you. Oh, my, yes. You're gonna find out that in Concrete we have to be able to do more than sing Fats Domino songs, we work...

Skipper and Pearl bring the tub with four blue stars painted on its side, Dwight plops the skinned beaver into the water. The hairless carcass stands in the tub, its chin on the edge. Pearl shudders and turns away.

53 INT. DWIGHT'S KITCHEN - SAME NIGHT (LATER)

53

Dwight, Toby, Norma, Skipper and Pearl are eating dinner at the kitchen table. Norma speaks to Toby.

NORMA

You'll be in Miss Graham's class?

TOBY

Yeah, is she nice?

NORMA

She's okay. She's pretty.

TOBY

I hate changing schools.

DWIGHT

Speaking of changing, I had a talk with Jack on the way up here, and he says he wants to be a better boy. And that's good, 'cause things weren't going well for him in Seattle: the police actually came to his house to talk to Caroline about him. Uh-huh, the police.

PEARL

(very low; to Toby)
Criminal.

(CONTINUED)

DWIGHT

So here's what I think: I think idle hands are the devil's workshop, and so I found our Jack a little something to do.

(to Toby)

I picked up two barrels of horse-chestnuts in the park. You can spend your evenings hulling 'em. And I enrolled you in the Boy Scouts, and you've got a paper route, starting Monday, every afternoon from three to six-thirty -- pays fifty-five bucks a month. What d'you say?

Toby glances around the table, he is subdued.

TOBY

I'll do it.

(means it)

I want to be... better.

DWIGHT

That's what I like to hear. Okay, you guys get these dishes cleaned up. Let's show Jack how we do it in Concrete.

MISS GRAHAM stands in front of the class. Toby is midway back in the room.

MISS GRAHAM

(reading)

'Of course I prayed -- and did God care? He cared as much as on the air a bird had stamped her foot and cried, "Give me".' Now. What is the tone of this short poem?

GIRL

Is it religious?

MISS GRAHAM

No -- even though it talks about God, I wouldn't say it was religious.

BOY

It's sad.

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED:

54

MISS GRAHAM

Well, closer, maybe. But no.

There is a pause. Finally, Toby raises his hand.

MISS GRAHAM

Jack?

TOBY

It's angry, sort of bitter.

MISS GRAHAM

Very good, Jack. Bull's-eye.

From the front of the room, a tall, thin, effeminate boy, ARTHUR GAYLE, turns to look at Toby and holds the gaze for three full beats, then turns around and faces the front. What the hell does it mean?

55 INT. SKIPPER AND TOBY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

55

The room is dark. Skipper is asleep. Toby lies in a cot. Dwight leans against the wall near the head of Toby's bed. He speaks in a low, reasonable voice:

DWIGHT

... 'cause I don't believe that crap, you know? I believe there is such a thing as a bad boy -- bad clear through. And it's gonna be my job to turn you around, to kill or cure. Kill. Or. Cure. Understand? And I'm up to the job, oh yes, believe me, hotshot, I am ready, willing and able to take you on -- you and that jibagoo music you like to sing. I'm just the guy to knock that music out of your head and put in some respect and obedience.

(a pause)

Now your mother has just about washed her hands of you -- that's obvious, 'cause she's shipped you off up here. I mean, she has had it with you. She told me: she said 'Dwight, I just can't handle him anymore.' So don't go crying to Mama, 'cause Mama won't listen. Mama is sick to death of her baby boy.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DWIGHT (CONT'D)

(a beat)

And your rich Daddy Warbucks and your Princeton brother don't give a shit about you, 'cause Caroline told me they haven't even written in over two years. So it looks like I'm all you got now -- it's just you and me. Feels sort of inevitable, doesn't it, hotshot? It's like we were fated for each other, like I'm the one guy on Earth could set you straight. And don't you ever think I won't enjoy doing it, 'cause...

DISSOLVE TO:

SERIES OF SHORT SCENES TO INDICATE TIME PASSING

55 A) (AFTERNOON) Toby delivers papers in a sack filled 55
with papers slung over one shoulder which thuds
against his hip with every step making him tilt
to one side against the weight.

55 B) (NIGHT) Toby sits in a utility porch. The floor 55
around him is two feet deep in horse chestnuts. With
a knife and a pair of pliers he husks the chestnuts.
His hands are covered with scrapes and cuts and the
chestnut hulls bleed a juice that has dyed them a
bright yellow.

CAROLINE (V.O.)

Dear Toby, I sure do miss you,
honey -- the house is like a tomb
since you left. So quiet. My
only entertainment tonight was
watching Marian eat a whole pint
of ice cream. I hope you're
liking it up in Concrete. I just
know you'll try hard in school and
be good and mind Dwight. I worry
about you so much, and I hope this
will be just what you need.

55 C) (DAY) Toby rubs futilely at his yellow hands with 55
a cloth and watches Norma, who is drying her hair
in her bedroom. She bends over so her head is in
a patch of sunlight. Toby is riveted by the girl
and her hair gleaming in the sunlight.

(CONTINUED)

- 55 CONTINUED: (2) 55
- 55 D) (AFTERNOON) Again see Toby delivering his papers. 55
He sees Arthur Gayle coming toward him in the street. His hips sway as he walks, and his head tilts to one side. As he and Toby pass one another, he raises one arm and points at Toby. The he walks on.

TOBY (V.O.)

Dear Mom, Thanks for the birthday present. It fit fine. You don't have to worry so much. I'm okay here. The weather is nice, and I like Scouts a lot. Dwight took us all to see Bridge on the River Kwai. I liked it. So things are all right with me, except for stupid Pearl, who I hate. Don't worry all the time...

- 55 E) (NIGHT) Dwight introduces Toby at a Scout meeting. All the other boys have on Scout uniforms. 55
- 55 F) (DAY) Toby is on the utility porch husking the 55 horse chestnuts. His hands are now orange. Pearl stands in the doorway watching him work. Norma appears beside Pearl. Norma's face turns sympathetic.

NORMA

You remind me of that boy in the fairy tale who had to spend twenty years sifting sand to find a golden needle. Remember that one?

Toby doesn't answer. The two girls move away. Toby sighs, and picks up another chestnut.

- 55 G) (DAY) Toby, keeping an eye on the door to make 55 sure he's unobserved, reaches under the mattress of Skipper's bed and pulls out several billfold-sized black and white pornographic photographs. The hair styles of the women in them are decades old. Toby takes the photographs into the bathroom, shutting the door behind him.

CAROLINE (V.O.)

Dear Toby, Just a note before going to bed. Dwight tells me that the two of you are getting along like a house afire. I'm so glad. I wanted this to work out for you. You left your sock cap here. Do you need it...?

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED: (3) 55

55 H) (NIGHT) Skipper is asleep in his bed. Across the room, Toby lies with his portable RADIO against his head. We hear, very, very softly, ROSEMARY CLOONEY crooning "Hey, There." He's tired. He's lonely. He's miserable. 55

DISSOLVE TO:

56 INT. DWIGHT'S LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON 56

Toby and Pearl are playing a card game called "Slap-Jack." Toby slaps a card down hard, yelling "I win again!" and Pearl pouts.

PEARL

That's no fair. You make me sick. I don't know why you have to live here, anyway. Daddy says we should think of it like you were a charity kid.

Toby takes out his comb, combs his hair a bit, then holds it out to Pearl, an exaggerated look of innocence on his face.

TOBY

Wanna comb your hair, Pearl?

Pearl covers her bald spot with one hand.

TOBY

Probably you do, since you've got such pretty hair. I know if I had hair as pretty as yours, Pearl, I'd comb it all the time.

Pearl is on the verge of tears. There are THREE TREMENDOUSLY LOUD FLAT-FOOTED KICKS against the front door.

DWIGHT (O.S.)

Open the hell up! I got us a treat!

Pearl opens the door revealing a beaming Dwight holding two dishpans piled high with snow. We see through the doorway that the sun is shining and there isn't snow anywhere.

PEARL

We're gonna have snowcream!

57 INT. DWIGHT'S KITCHEN - LATER

57

Dwight, Toby, Skipper, Norma, and Pearl are enjoying the snowcream.

DWIGHT

... heard there was a fresh snow this morning, so I drove up to the mountains. I stopped in a field where it was all clean. I was finished packing it up high when somebody said...

(prissy voice)

This's private property, in case you're interested.

(normal voice)

I turned around and there was this woman...

(he shudders)

Yechh! Ugliest woman I ever saw -- ugly as a madman's ass she was. And frowning on top of it.

Everybody laughs.

NORMA

Oh, Daddy!

DWIGHT

She was!

TOBY

(to Pearl; soft;
happy)

You're ugly as a madman's ass.

PEARL

No, you are.

SKIPPER

What'd you say to the ugly woman?

DWIGHT

I didn't say nothin' -- I ran.

Everybody laughs again. They eat in silence for a beat.

DWIGHT

I'm gonna get you a Scout uniform, Jack.

TOBY

(surprised, pleased)

Really?

(CONTINUED)

PEARL

Can I join the Girl Scouts?

DWIGHT

I'm getting one for me, too.
Don't believe in doing anything
halfway. If you're serious about
the Scouts...

(as Toby nods)

... then I want you to do it right.
We'll do it right together.

Dwight takes out a magazine entitled Boy's Life. He hands it to Toby.

DWIGHT

I got you a subscription to this.
I'll take the price out of your
paper route money.

TOBY

Boy's Life?

DWIGHT

It's the official Scout magazine.
Tells about what it means to be a
Scout, what kind of boy you need
to be, and, oh, about merit badges
and stuff like that.

Toby opens the book at random, reads from it.

TOBY

'Suggested good turns a Scout can
do: assist a foreign boy with
some English grammar. Help put
out a burning field. Give water
to a crippled dog.' I could do
those.

DWIGHT

Hell, yes, you could. You're a
bright kid. I want this Scout
thing done right, okay?

Toby nods, enthusiastic, happy.

Toby stands in front of a full-length mirror wearing a huge Scout uniform that's been unsuccessfully cut down for him.

(CONTINUED)

The shirt-sleeves have been shortened but the shoulders extend two inches beyond the ends of his shoulders. The pants legs have been cut off and hemmed but the crotch of the trousers hangs down three inches too low, giving him a stumpy, dwarfish look. Toby yells to someone O.S.

TOBY

I'm not going.

DWIGHT (O.S.)

The hell you say.

TOBY

I'm not. Cut down Skipper's old stuff, and he's twice as big as me -- I'm gonna stay home.

DWIGHT (O.S.)

You're gonna shit and fall back in it -- that's all you're gonna do. Now get out here.

As Pearl watches Dwight also stands in front of a mirror, adjusting his hat. He is resplendent in a brand-new Scout uniform. Toby stalks into the room. Pearl laughs loudly.

DWIGHT

(to Pearl)

Shut your pie-hole.

(to Toby)

You look fine.

TOBY

I look like an idiot.

DWIGHT

You act like an idiot, you look fine.

TOBY

You said you'd get me a new uniform.

DWIGHT

I said I'd try to get you a new uniform. Beside, this one is new -- new to you.

(CONTINUED)

TOBY

But look at the sleeves and how it hangs down between my legs!

DWIGHT

Oh piss and moan -- all you can do is piss and moan.

TOBY

Yeah, piss and moan -- I notice you're all jazzed up in new stuff.

DWIGHT

They didn't have second-hand uniforms in my size.

TOBY

Oh, yeah, pull the other leg, it's got bells on it!

Toby throws himself down on the sofa.

DWIGHT

And what're you gonna tell Caroline this weekend? You gonna say you wouldn't join the Scouts because... him didn't wike his widdle uniform?

Dwight picks up the copy of Boy's Life and thumbs through it, He reads:

DWIGHT

'No boy given over to dissipation or negativity can stand the gaff. He quickly tires and gives up. He is the type who usually lacks courage at the crucial moment. He cannot take punishment and come back smiling.'

Dwight looks at Toby expectantly. Toby hesitates, then gives up.

TOBY

All right, but this stinks.

Toby walks outside. Dwight follows.

DWIGHT

Hotshot, you don't know it yet, but me and Concrete are in your blood. We're going to make a man of you yet -- and in years to come you'll thank me. You'll remember me. Me and Concrete.

60 EXT. CAROLINE'S HOUSE - DAY

60

Dwight's Buick pulls up and Caroline bursts out the front door. She runs to the car and hugs Toby.

CAROLINE

Oh, I missed you!

TOBY

Me, too.

CAROLINE

You look good. How are you?

TOBY

I'm okay. I'm fine.

Dwight comes around the car, kisses Caroline, and the three head into the house.

CAROLINE

I said to hell with the budget and bought a roast. I made dumplings -- God, what's wrong with your hands?

TOBY

It's just juice from some chestnuts -- it'll wear off.

CAROLINE

I hope so. My, your hair's short.

61 INT. CAROLINE'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

61

Dwight, Caroline and Marian are having a drink. Toby plays FATS DOMINO'S "Blue Monday" on the RADIO, the VOLUME LOW.

MARIAN

(to Dwight)

Well, it's done him a world of good to be up there with you.

DWIGHT

Oh, we have us some pretty good times. Don't we, Jack? Have us some good times?

Toby, not looking away from the radio, nods.

DWIGHT

We go to the Scouts together every week. He's got a good start already on merit badges...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED:

61

DWIGHT (CONT'D)

(to Toby)

... though he does concentrate too much on the easy ones, like the one for dental hygiene...

(to Caroline)

... and we had snowcream one night, and, oh, just lots of stuff.

Caroline glances at Toby, then at Dwight, then back again.

62 EXT. CAROLINE'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

62

Toby and Caroline walk slowly, idly down the rail tracks. Toby avoids her eyes.

CAROLINE

How is it in Concrete?

TOBY

It's fine.

CAROLINE

School?

TOBY

School's school. My grades are okay.

CAROLINE

You haven't been in any trouble?
(as he shakes his head)

Good. How're you and Dwight?

TOBY

He made us all snowcream, like he said.

CAROLINE

Stop that, honey.

TOBY

What?

CAROLINE

(stops walking)

Well, you've got your eyes out of focus. Look at me. Now, are things all right?

(CONTINUED)

62 CONTINUED:

62

TOBY

I'm fine.

CAROLINE

You swear? You act odd.

TOBY

No, I'm fine.

CAROLINE

Well, good. I'd feel awful if it hadn't worked out.

A pause.

CAROLINE

I told Dwight I'd marry him. In two weeks. I don't know what else to do. I mean, he's been helping me with the rent since Kathy left. And you need a father. I think it's the best thing all the way around -- what d'you think?

There is a pause as they look at each other.

TOBY

I think it's the best thing.

CAROLINE

I think it's the best thing, too.

Caroline smiles, smooths his hair, then goes into the house. Toby continues to walk. Suddenly, he spins around and tears out toward the house. By God, he'll tell her just what's been going on. He bangs through the front door and up the stairs.

63 INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

63

Toby stops dead as he sees Dwight and Caroline locked in a busy kiss. He stops dead and shrinks back into the hallway, defeated.

DISSOLVE TO:

64 INT. SKIPPER AND TOBY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

64

Toby is alone in the room in his Boy Scout shirt and hat in front of a mirror. A copy of Boy's Life magazine is open in front of him with drawings of Indians performing sign language. Watching himself in the mirror, Toby makes a sign.

(CONTINUED)

64 CONTINUED:

64

TOBY

Hungry.

He makes another sign.

TOBY

Food.

He makes another sign.

TOBY

Want.

He makes another sign.

TOBY

Great mystery.

He makes another sign.

TOBY

Father.

He stares silently at himself in the mirror.

A65 INT. DWIGHT'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

A65

Tarpaulins are everywhere. Toby stands surrounded by seven five-gallon cans of paint. Carrying paintbrushes, Dwight enters, dressed in old clothes singing "In The Still Of The Night."

DWIGHT

Now that's a song. Not all this
Elvis Presley shit. Elvis sings
about like I do brain surgery.

He imitates Elvis -- moves his hips slightly and sings a few notes:

DWIGHT

'... uh-huh-huh, my blue suede
shoes.'

Dwight gives Toby a flash of his teeth and Toby smiles back.

DWIGHT

Let's get this place ready for
Caroline.

They begin painting. After only a few strokes, though, Toby looks doubtful.

(CONTINUED)

A65 CONTINUED:

A65

TOBY

It's so white.

DWIGHT

I got a good deal on this paint.

(stands back;

appraises)

It'll darken up when it dries.

65 SAME SCENE - LATER

65

The walls and ceiling are almost finished, but the paint has not darkened.

As he paints, he absentmindedly sings "Blue Suede Shoes." Then he stops painting, as he notices Toby looking at the walls.

DWIGHT

What? I like it. It looks clean.

TOBY

Yeah, but it makes everything else look so dark.

Dwight's face changes. He has an idea.

MONTAGE

65 A) SAME SCENE - LATER

65

On the SOUNDTRACK, ELVIS BLASTS OUT "Blue Suede Shoes." Dwight and Toby paint the coffee table and lamp base white.

65 B) SAME SCENE - LATER

65

Dwight and Toby, working faster, are painting the end tables white.

65 C) INT. DINING ROOM - LATER

65

The walls and ceiling are white, Dwight and Toby are painting the dining table white.

65 D) OMITTED

65

(CONTINUED)

- 65 CONTINUED: (2) 65
- 65 E) INT. KITCHEN - LATE NIGHT 65
Dwight and Toby are painting the cabinets and kitchen table white.
- 65 F) INT. LIVING ROOM - NEXT MORNING 65
Everywhere we look is white, the walls, ceiling, furniture -- all of it. Only the old Baldwin upright piano has escaped painting. Dwight eyes it suspiciously.
- DWIGHT
Sort of stands out, doesn't it?
- TOBY
Yeah, you could say that.
- 65 G) SAME SCENE - LATER 65
They paint the Baldwin white. Dwight hesitates, then starts to paint the foot pedals.
- 65 H) SAME SCENE - LATER 65
Dwight's face tells us that something still doesn't suit him. He glances at Toby, Toby nods, and they converge on the piano.
- 65 J) SAME SCENE - LATER 65
Very carefully, Dwight and Toby finish painting the dark ivory keys to match the rest of the room. ELVIS SCREAMS OUT the last line, "You can do anything, but stay off of my blue suede shoes!"

They stand up, look around -- Arctic white is everywhere. Dwight likes it. Toby is less sure.
- The MONTAGE ENDS.
- 66 EXT. DWIGHT'S HOUSE - DAY 66
Skipper and Norma are carrying Caroline's suitcases into the house from Dwight's Buick. From inside the house we hear a WOMAN'S LAUGHTER.
- 67 INT. DWIGHT'S LIVING ROOM - PARALLEL TIME 67
Caroline is trying to stifle her laughter, as she stares at the wilderness of white. Dwight and Toby, Skipper, Norma, and Pearl all stand watch.

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED:

67

CAROLINE

Oh! Oh, I'm so sorry... don't know what's the matter with me... you're right... it does look clean...

But she can't stop laughing. Her laughter has just a tinge of hysteria.

68 INT. SMALL CHURCH - MORNING

68

Dwight and Caroline are being married. Caroline wears a pale blue suit, and Dwight looks good in a navy single-breasted. Aside from Toby and Dwight's children, the only guests are Marian, Kathy, and three people we haven't seen before -- friends of Dwight's.

69 INT. DWIGHT AND CAROLINE'S BEDROOM - LATE NIGHT

69

The bed is a rat's nest of twisted sheets as Dwight and Caroline make love. He takes his lips away from Caroline's breast and moves so that his head is at the bottom of the bed. Holding her foot up, he kisses the instep, then runs his tongue over the same spot and then down under the arch of her foot. A sexy scene.

DWIGHT

M-m-m. There's not a straight line on you -- everything's curved.

Caroline draws him up to her, and they kiss. Then Dwight turns Caroline on her side, away from him, preparing to enter her. Caroline makes a small sound of protest, turning back toward him.

CAROLINE

Oh, Dwight, not like that. Not this time -- not tonight.

DWIGHT

It's good this way.

CAROLINE

But I want to see your face while we make love.

DWIGHT

(uncomfortable laugh)
Oh, no -- I just don't... uh... like that way.

(CONTINUED)

69 CONTINUED:

69

Dwight continues to stroke Caroline, his hands everywhere, but now she is unresponsive.

CAROLINE

You mean you don't like to make
love face to face?

DWIGHT

(same laugh)

No, I don't like it. I can't
handle it -- I don't like to see
the face.

CAROLINE

You mean ever?

Dwight murmurs an assent. Caroline is appalled.

CAROLINE

But that's grotesque...

DWIGHT

(stung; flares up)

Look, you can get it doggie-style
or you can get it laying on your
side -- those are your only
choices. This is my house, and I
get to say. Wherever McGinty sits
is the head of the table, you
know?

Disgusted, Caroline turns back away from Dwight. He shifts down on the bed a few inches, again preparing to enter her.

70 INT. KITCHEN - NEXT MORNING

70

Toby is eating toast at the kitchen table. Norma has made a big breakfast, and she hurriedly pours the coffee when she hears Dwight and Caroline's bedroom DOOR OPEN.

NORMA

Happy Wedding Breakfast!

Caroline's eyes are red and swollen. Dwight turns ON a RADIO, sips his coffee, and chats with Norma. Toby gives Norma's rear-end an appreciative glance, then comes up behind Caroline, speaking sotto voce:

TOBY

So how's the bride?

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED:

70

CAROLINE

Don't.

TOBY

The bride doesn't want to chat?

CAROLINE

Stop it.

TOBY

Well, the bride is sure snotty
this morning.

Smiling, Toby waits for some response to his teasing, but there is none. She turns away and sits at the table.

71 EXT. RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD - AFTERNOON

71

Toby, his news bag slung over his shoulder, stands talking idly with two boys from school, OSCAR BOOKER and JIMMY VOORHEES. One of them says, "Uh-oh," and jerks his head to indicate where Toby and the other boy should look.

They look in the direction indicated, and see Arthur Gayle coming down the road toward them, followed by a small black dog called Pepper. As the boys watch Arthur's approach:

TOBY

What's his name again?

OSCAR

Arthur Gayle.

JIMMY

What a homo.

TOBY

He sure walks like a girl.

JIMMY

And runs like one and talks like one and throws like one. Probably takes a pee like one too -- just squats right down.

TOBY

He smarted off to me the other day -- told me I was a bourgeois.

JIMMY

What the frig's a bourgeois?

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED:

71

OSCAR

(to Toby)

Call him a sissy.

TOBY

Why?

OSCAR

Just see what he says.

JIMMY

Yeah, do it.

By this time Arthur is next to them. Smiling a superior smile, he stops and glances at all three of them as if they were just the oddest things he's ever seen. Then his eye falls on Toby's yellow hands.

ARTHUR

Oh, my, my -- look at all that yellow: Didn't your mama teach you to wash your hands after you pee?

TOBY

Oh, shut up.

ARTHUR

(rolls his eyes;
heavily sarcastic)

Now that's what I like -- an insult with some originality. Did you just make that up? Just now? So clever.

TOBY

Why don't you take a long walk off a short pier?

ARTHUR

(though he's not
nearly close enough
to smell Toby's
breath)

Excuse me, but has anyone ever told you your breath would gag a maggot?

Both of Toby's friends laugh.

TOBY

Well, at least I'm not a great big sissy!

Two things happen instantly: the superior smile vanishes from Arthur's face, and Toby's friends exchange a single expectant look: "Here it comes."

(CONTINUED)

Without warning, Arthur swings a fist at Toby, catching him on the ear. Arthur's second blow hits him in the back of the head.

The fight is on.

Arthur throws punches sidearm, with lots of wrist action, but there are so many of them. Before Toby can react, Arthur has hit him four times, including one wild haymaker that puts Toby on his knees.

While Toby's still on his knees, Arthur tries to kick him in the stomach. The kick is deadened by the papers in Toby's bag, Arthur bends over Toby, screaming as if he has lost his mind:

ARTHUR
GET UP! GET UP, YOU SON OF A
BITCHING MAGGOT GAGGER! I'LL
STOMP YOUR GUTS OUT! I'LL KILL
YOU!

Toby gets up, and again Arthur sails in with those wild roundhouse swings. Then Toby gets in a solid punch to Arthur's face that rocks the bigger boy back on his heels. Arthur grabs his head and roars like a wounded buffalo. Almost immediately Arthur's eye puffs and begins to swell shut. Snot streaming from both nostrils, still roaring, Arthur flies at Toby again. Toby closes with him, to hold those flailing arms still, and the two stagger around the street like drunken dancers. They separate, exchange a few blows, then grapple with each other again.

Then Arthur hooks Toby's leg, trips him, and the two roll off the shoulder of the road and down an embankment. They hit the muddy bottom of the gully still hitting, flailing, kicking -- first Toby is on top, then Arthur, then Toby, then Arthur. By now they are panting, each breath is a heave, a gasp. Then, suddenly, Arthur gives out completely -- he falls on top of Toby, pressing him deeper into the mud. With his last bit of strength Toby throws the bigger boy off him and sits up, while PEPPER BARKS FURIOUSLY at him and threatens to nip his leg. Toby staggers to his feet and starts to climb the gully. He looks relieved -- at least it's over.

No, it's not.

From behind him he hears three words.

ARTHUR
Take it back.

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED: (3)

71

Toby turns to see a bloody-faced, swollen-eyed Arthur clambering up the hill after him, like some monster that won't die. Both boys reach the top and stand facing one another.

ARTHUR

Take it back.

Arthur's words are not angry anymore. Toby's worn out too...

TOBY

Okay.

ARTHUR

Say it.

TOBY

Okay. I take it back.

ARTHUR

No, say 'You're not a sissy.'

Toby glances at Oscar and Jimmy. Their faces are gleeful but he doesn't care what the hell they think.

TOBY

You're not a sissy.

Arthur immediately turns and walks away, but Toby ignores them and walks away in the opposite direction, delivering his hated newspapers.

72 INT. DWIGHT AND CAROLINE'S LIVING ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON 72

Caroline is painting the white walls a soothing buff color. On the sofa lie half-finished curtains she's making. She is totally focused. She hears Toby, turns, sees his filthy clothes. Her shoulders sag.

CAROLINE

I won't do it, you know. I won't be a referee between the two of you.

TOBY

Who asked you?

CAROLINE

You both do. You do. Just by coming home like this you ask me to take your side when he raises hell.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED:

72

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

Well, the answer's 'No.' I'm going to make this marriage work. No fights.

TOBY

Oh, the bride is calm. Who the hell cares?

Caroline refuses to argue. She picks up a piece of material and holds it up to the window to see if her choice of color was a good one.

CAROLINE

(to herself)

... seems like this place is so ugly. Seems like everywhere I look there's something... ugly.

73 INT. SKIPPER AND TOBY'S ROOM - EVENING

73

A worried Toby sits dreading Dwight's arrival. Behind him, on the wall, Toby has pinned the covers of fifteen copies of the Scout magazine: so that, above Toby's head are the words BOY'S LIFE fifteen times.

There is a MURMUR of VOICES, and FOOTSTEPS COMING toward Toby. Toby expects the worst. But, surprisingly, Dwight is beaming.

DWIGHT

Who won?

TOBY

(surprised)

Uh, well, uh... he's the one can't see out of one eye.

DWIGHT

Hot damn! You actually gave little Lord Gayle a black eye?

TOBY

Well, it wasn't black yet.

DWIGHT

But it was all puffed up?

(as Toby nods)

Then it was a shiner.

(CONTINUED)

73 CONTINUED:

73

Dwight sits down next to Toby, eager for details.

DWIGHT
How'd it start?

TOBY
I called him a sissy.

Dwight hoots with laughter and slaps his leg.

DWIGHT
Well, he sure's hell can't sue you for slander. That boy fights for the pink team. Did you make him cry?

TOBY
Well... he was just ready to. I called him a big-assed, squat-to-pee sissy.
(as Dwight slaps his leg again)
I'd have won bigger except he hit me when I wasn't looking.

DWIGHT
(suddenly serious)
He dry-gulched you. Now that's your fault. You gotta keep your guard up. There's no excuse for getting dry-gulched. I'll show you a couple moves after supper that'll leave Miss Arthur Gayle wondering what month it is.

74 INT. DINING ROOM - EVENING

74

Still excited, Dwight is holding forth for the whole family. (We hear THUNDER of an approaching storm)

DWIGHT
... so he says, 'You and who else's army?' 'Just the three of us,' I say. 'Me, myself and I.'
(a beat)
Well, after school he's waiting for me and he yells something -- I tell you, with people like that, you got to hurt 'em, gotta inflict pain, or they'll never leave you alone.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DWIGHT (CONT'D)

(a beat)

So it was real hot out, okay? And there were these horse turds laying all over the place. I picked one up and went up to him, but not acting tough, okay? Acting more like, 'Oh gee, I'm so scared, please don't hurt me.' Sort of like this:

Dwight slumps his shoulders, drops his chin, and looks up through his eyebrows, a simpering expression on his face.

DWIGHT

So I say, 'Excuse me, but what's the problem?' And he starts in on me again, blah, blah, blah, and I jam a horse turd right into that big mouth. Then I give him a sucker punch in the breadbasket, and he goes down like a...

Dwight goes on, relishing the story.

A steady downpour falls outside the porch. Dwight and Toby, both stripped to the waist, are boxing. Dwight is totally serious about this, absolutely sincere.

The sweat streaming off the two, Dwight patiently corrects Toby's movements, or catches the boy's fist to suggest better form. Their feet shuffle, squeak on the floor.

DWIGHT

No, no. From the shoulder. Straight.

(demonstrates)

Like this. This. Otherwise you leave yourself wide open.

(as Toby tries)

Yeah, better, better... and keep those feet moving, shuffle, shuffle, that's right... now try for my face... good...

Caroline is on the telephone, her voice low. (Behind her, through a doorway, we can see Dwight and Toby boxing.)

(CONTINUED)

CAROLINE

... not good, to tell you the truth not good at all.

(listens)

No, he's not mean to me...

(listens again)

No, he's good about that: comes home right after work every night.

(listens again)

Oh, Marian, I don't know -- maybe I just got my hopes too high, although I don't think so. All I want is a little...

(searches)

... a little son-of-a-bitching sweetness. That's all.

(listens; laughs)

You think so, huh? You always did have an eye for Dwight, didn't you?

(leans back; watches

Dwight and Toby)

The thing is, he's out on the porch teaching Jack to box right now. I keep thinking if I can hang on, things'll settle down. If I can just hang on long enough, it'll work out and my kid'll have a father. You know?

77 EXT. UTILITY PORCH - LATER

77

Both Dwight and Toby sweating heavily. They lean against a wall, resting.

TOBY

You said you'd show me how to dry-gulch somebody.

DWIGHT

Okay. Now you can always kick somebody in the balls, but I like this one better: What you do is hit 'em in the throat with the side of your forearm. You wait 'til -- hah!

Without warning, Dwight lunges at Toby and swings the side of his arm toward Toby's throat. Toby dodges wildly, falling backward over a box of sports equipment.

(CONTINUED)

DWIGHT

Now that's dry-gulching. Hit 'em in the throat, but do it before they're expecting it. Now you try.

TOBY

I'm afraid I'll hurt you.

DWIGHT

You won't.

TOBY

But I might.

Finally Toby gives a half-hearted "Hah!" and swings the side of his forearm toward Dwight's throat. Dwight catches the arm easily.

DWIGHT

Come onnn. You're not trying.

Again Toby hesitates, again he says "Hah!" and gives a lukewarm swing at Dwight's throat.

DWIGHT

Well, don't go all shy and delicate on me -- you're as sissy as little Miss Arthur Gayle. Yeah -- I'll just call you 'Little Miss Jackie Wolff.' Ooh, my, yes -- Hello, Jackie.

Toby's eyes flare up, then he lowers his head, biting his lip, sniffing a bit.

DWIGHT

Aw, Jesus Christ, if you're gonna --

Without warning, Toby lunges at Dwight, screaming "HAH!" trying for the man's throat. Caught off guard, Dwight stops the main force of Toby's arm, but is slammed onto the ground stunned.

TOBY

You just about got dry-gulched, my man.

Dwight manages a grin, but he is not happy to have been bested.

Dwight and Caroline lie on the bed, kissing passionately. It is clear that Caroline is as excited as Dwight.

(CONTINUED)

CAROLINE

I know you may think this is silly, Dwight, but it seems like... I don't know, like an emblem or something. I want to be able to see your face when we make love. How else can we be
cl --

The rest of the word is jerked out of her as Dwight turns her onto her side, away from him, and proceeds to make love again in his favorite manner.

DWIGHT

You just don't know what's good, Sugar. You're too tense. You just relax and Dwight'll take you on a little trip. Okay? You'll have a good time.

Caroline closes her eyes.

78A SAME SCENE - HOURS LATER

78A

Dwight leans back against the headboard of the bed. Caroline sits between his legs, her back against his chest. With one hand, Dwight strokes Caroline's hair. The other hand is curled around her throat.

DWIGHT

... are the prettiest thing I've ever seen. I mean it. You are. The way your hair curls up right there. So pretty. I just love you so much. I don't know what I'd do if you ever left me. I couldn't take it.

(smiles)

Guy I knew in the Navy had a saying: 'If you love her, here's what to do: Let her go visit places new. If she loves you, she'll come back to you. If she don't come back... hunt the bitch down and kill her.'

(laughs)

That's awful, I guess. I don't feel that way, but close. My pretty thing...

We see that Caroline realizes the enormity of her mistake.

79 INT. DWIGHT AND CAROLINE'S LIVING ROOM - MUCH LATER 79

Smoking a cigarette and wearing a nightgown, Caroline walks to the front door.

She opens the front door and stands looking out. Then she puts her finger on the door and slowly pushes it shut with one finger. She does this once more. Then she does it again. She turns, walks toward Toby's room.

80 INT. SKIPPER AND TOBY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 80

Caroline enters and stands by Toby's bed. She bends over the boy and she starts to touch his hair, decides not to. She stares at Toby for a few beats.

81 INT. DWIGHT AND CAROLINE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 81

Caroline enters, looks down at the sleeping Dwight. She gets back into the bed and Dwight throws a sleepy hand over her. Caroline hesitates, but forces herself to put a hand over Dwight's.

82 INT. DWIGHT AND CAROLINE'S KITCHEN - MORNING 82

THROUGH a window, Dwight, dressed in his coveralls, leaves for work. Caroline is sewing on a machine whilst Toby leans against the kitchen sink.

TOBY

... but ask him again, why don't you? I hate it so much.

CAROLINE

(never stops sewing)

I asked him a week ago, I asked him this morning -- he wants you to keep the paper route.

TOBY

Then make him give me the money. It's mine, I earned it. It's \$220.00 already.

CAROLINE

He won't. He says he'll keep it for when you really need it.

TOBY

That's not fair. I ought to be able to have my own money.

(as Caroline shrugs)

But it's mine.

(CONTINUED)

CAROLINE

You remind me of a baby bird -- you know those frantic little things with their mouths wide open, wanting, wanting.

TOBY

Well, at least ask him about my gym shoes again. I can practice barefoot but for games I gotta have shoes.

CAROLINE

I'm not a referee. I won't do it.

TOBY

Oh, we know, we know: the bride won't argue. The bride won't raise her voice.

CAROLINE

Well, I'll tell you what the bride will do: the bride will get up and walk over there and slap hell out of the bride's son. Now does the bride's son want his face slapped?

TOBY

Oh, I hate it here! I wish we could just get up and go.

CAROLINE

I don't have another 'get up and go' left in me! You understand? I'm telling you I've hit a god-damn wall. I can't run anymore. Now this whole thing isn't perfect for me, either... let me impress that on you real strong, okay? I don't wake up singing every morning. But I'm going to make this marriage work -- I won't join in any fights, you got that? I won't even raise my voice!

Caroline points to the sink.

CAROLINE

See those two roses? He picked them for me on his way home last night.

(CONTINUED)

82 CONTINUED: (2)

82

TOBY

Big deal.

CAROLINE

I'm trying to concentrate on the good stuff.

Norma appears in the kitchen door, wearing her cap and gown. She strikes a pose.

NORMA

What d'ya think? I think I look like a fool.

(shrugs)

Who cares? Six weeks to graduation, and California, here I come!

Norma snaps her fingers and goes back to her bedroom.

CAROLINE

(lamely)

Seriously: you have to concentrate on the good stuff.

Caroline turns her attention back to the curtains.

83 INT. DWIGHT AND CAROLINE'S LIVING ROOM - SAME NIGHT (LATER)

83

"The Lawrence Welk Show" is ON the TELEVISION. Dwight, Caroline, Skipper, Norma and Pearl and Toby watch an Irish tenor sing a lugubrious ballad. Dwight stands in a corner of the room, his saxophone to his lips. He's playing along with the MUSIC, but silently.

Occasionally he gets overcome and accidentally causes the saxophone to squawk.

The Irish ballad ends, and Lawrence Welk's Champagne Orchestra strikes up a lively polka. Dwight takes a sip of his drink and grabs Caroline, pulls her to her feet, and begins to dance with her.

A polka can be a decorous, contained dance. He dances Caroline vigorously around the living room, out into the kitchen, around the table, and then back again.

Dwight is really good, and Caroline matches him every step of the way. Skipper turns the VOLUME UP and Dwight kicks the dance into an even higher, wilder gear: The kids clap on the beat, the two whirl and stamp and spin.

(CONTINUED)

83 CONTINUED:

83

Faster and faster -- Caroline's heel catches an end table and sends it spinning and faster they go. Caroline's head is thrown back; she's laughing with pleasure.

As the MUSIC reaches its CLIMAX, Dwight spins Caroline back to the sofa, lets her go, and WHAM! she lands back where she was seated exactly on the last note of the song. Amid the general laughter and applause, Caroline smiles at Toby.

CAROLINE

(breathy)

Try to find the good stuff, honey.

84 INT. DWIGHT AND CAROLINE'S LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

84

Dwight and Toby face one another in the living room. Both wear their Scout uniforms. Dwight holds a box of chocolate-coated cherries in one hand.

TOBY

I'm telling you I didn't.

DWIGHT

And I know damn well you did.

TOBY

Well, you're wrong.

DWIGHT

About some things, yeah. Not about this. You're a goddam hog, and I proved it.

TOBY

How do you know Skipper didn't eat it? Or Norma? Or Pearl?

DWIGHT

I told all three of them to stay away from this candy for twenty-four hours.

TOBY

Well, how do you know I even ate any?

DWIGHT

(a triumphant smile)

I counted them. You hogged down eleven chocolate covered cherries since yesterday afternoon.

(CONTINUED)

TOBY

So what?

DWIGHT

So that makes you a hog. I just wanted to establish that fact, and now I have.

Caroline and Skipper enter, carrying throw pillows and materials.

DWIGHT

(to Caroline and Skipper)

Hey. Mr. Hotshot Hog and I've just been establishing some facts, and what we come up with is this: One, he's a pig who gobbles down everybody's candy; two, he lies about it; three, he lays around on his lazy ass day and night reading, reading; and four, he's not getting any ten-dollar gym shoes. That's about what we've come up with so far.

SKIPPER

Oh, Dad...

DWIGHT

(a high, mincing voice)

Oh, Dad!

Skipper leaves the room. Caroline sits down, begins to try various materials as coverings for the pillows.

TOBY

(to Caroline)

Why don't you ever take up for me?

DWIGHT

(to Caroline)

Why don't you ever help me straighten that boy out?

Caroline doesn't even look up. She threads a needle and begins to sew. Whilst Dwight paces around the room.

DWIGHT

All he does is read or listen to records or sing.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DWIGHT (CONT'D)

(he sings five seconds
of a grotesque
"Blue Monday")

I'm so sick of that shit! And
when he isn't singing, he's
watching T.V.

(to Toby)

And don't say you don't 'cause
when I come home I always put my
hand on top of it to see if it's
warm, and it always is. This is
the news, kid -- I'm wise to you.

TOBY

Oh, big, big deal, who cares, and
as long as we're passing out news
here, I don't want to do my paper
route anymore.

DWIGHT

I bet you don't -- big lazy candy
hog like you'd rather lay on his
ass and read, wouldn't you?
Let me tell you something: you're
gonna deliver those papers if I
have to walk behind you with a
horsewhip ever' step of the way.

TOBY

Then give me the money I earn!

DWIGHT

Hell, no. I'm putting that in the
bank for you for when you really
need it -- cuss me now, thank me
later.

TOBY

Mom, won't you at least make him
let me have the shoes for gym?
How can I play basketball without
gym shoes? I'm the only one who --

Toby stops suddenly. He looks at Dwight for a beat or
two, and then speaks in a different tone:

TOBY

It's not the shoes, is it? Or the
candy. It's me, isn't it? You
just can't stand the fact of me.

Dwight glances at Caroline, who still looks at her
sewing.

(CONTINUED)

DWIGHT

I, well, no, it's not that -- I just want you to be well-behaved. Your rich daddy 'Duke' doesn't care anything about you, and so somebody's got to train you, and one of the things you've gotta be trained about is not to be a hog and eat everybody's candy like a --

Dwight stops short as Caroline says one word.

CAROLINE

Oh.

Dwight and Toby glance at each other nervously. What is this?

CAROLINE

(her eyes still on her sewing; soft)

Oh.

DWIGHT

What's the matter, honey?

CAROLINE

(louder)

Oh.

TOBY

Are you sick, Mom?

DWIGHT

Don't you feel good?

CAROLINE

OH-H-H-H!

A furious Caroline raises her head, doubles up both fists, and yells.

CAROLINE

I. Will. Not. Referee.

DWIGHT

(taken aback)

Jack, I think you've made your mother nervous, so why don't we just go on to Scouts and let her rest?

(to Caroline)

You lay down and rest awhile.

Dwight and Toby grab their caps and hotfoot it out the door.

85 INT. SCOUT MEETING - NIGHT

85

Father and son photographs are being taken. Dwight is the only father who wears a complete uniform and cap. When Dwight and Toby's turn comes, Dwight puts on a big smile and throws an arm around Toby's shoulder.

DWIGHT

Check for the tongue tonight --
you forgot it last week.
Otherwise you won't get your
life-saving badge.

85A SAME SCENE - LATER

85A

Six boys are lying on the floor pretending unconsciousness. Six other boys, Toby among them, are going through several life-saving steps such as turning the bodies over, checking for pulses, etc.

The BOY on whom Toby is working is a heavy, pimple-faced lout.

Toby checks if the Boy's breathing is obstructed. Gingerly, he tugs on the Boy's chin, starting to open the Boy's mouth.

Suddenly the Boy opens his mouth wide, exposing a half-chewed mass of cheese n' crackers. Toby gives the lout a knee in the ribs.

TOBY

Bastard. Swallow that.

BOY

(laughing)
Give my pud a big squeeze while
you're at it, why don't you?

Toby and the life-savers on either side of him laugh a bit.

86 EXT. SCOUT HALL - NIGHT

86

As Toby kneels down to tie his shoelace, a small black dog runs up to him. Toby pets it. Arthur Gayle, his black eye healed, stands ten feet away.

ARTHUR

You like my dog?

TOBY

Yeah, he's nice.

(CONTINUED)

86 CONTINUED:

86

ARTHUR
Smart, too -- he can talk.

TOBY
(smiles)
Sure -- I just about believe you.

ARTHUR
Hey, Pepper -- what's on a tree?

As PEPPER BARKS TWICE:

ARTHUR
Bark! Way to go, Pepper -- pretty smart. Oh, I was wondering, Pepper -- I wanted to ask you something: how's the world treating you?

As PEPPER BARKS ONCE:

ARTHUR
Rough! Yeah, I know what you mean.

TOBY
That's dumb. A little funny, though. How come your dad never comes to meetings with you?

ARTHUR
I don't have a dad. Never did. I sprang full-blown from my mother's forehead. You want to walk home with me and Pepper?

TOBY
Sure -- compared to a ride home with Dwight, it'll be like heaven on a June day.

87 EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - NIGHT

87

Toby and Arthur are eating ice cream cones and smoking cigarettes at the same time. They walk slowly, desultorily. Though still effeminate, Arthur has dropped much of the flounciness that he uses in public.

ARTHUR
... Tobias? Your real name is Tobias? Toby... Tobias... I like it -- it's very elegant.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

My real parents would probably have given me an elegant name, too. I say 'real parents' because I suspect I'm a foundling. Somebody royal -- or at least very, very beautiful had me and gave me to my poor but honest mother.

(a beat)

Tell me more about you.

TOBY

(shrugs)

Every day of my life feels like a mile on the Bataan Death March.

ARTHUR

(laughs)

I knew I'd like you.

TOBY

Why'd you point at me that day?

ARTHUR

Because you're an alien. You don't belong in Concrete any more than I do. This place would like to kill us because we're different.

TOBY

Oh, come on, Arthur. That's a little dramatic.

ARTHUR

Think so? You know what chickens do if one chicken's born with a little difference? With a few black feathers on its head, say? They peck at the black spot 'til the chicken's dead -- they can't stand the fact that it's different. Now we're both different. Your difference is something other than...

(husky-voiced
actress)

... my difference...

(normal tone)

But we're both aliens here.

TOBY

I don't exactly feel like an alien. I've got friends here.

(CONTINUED)

87 CONTINUED: (2)

87

ARTHUR

Yes, and they're fools. And you act like a fool when you're around them. A prediction: if you stay in Concrete, you'll wind up working at the A&P -- either that or you'll go on a rampage with a hunting rifle.

TOBY

Yeah, and you'll wind up a recluse that everybody says likes to dress up in his mama's old clothes.

ARTHUR

(laughs)

Maybe, maybe, but no matter how many times I have to repeat: my primary goal's to get out of Concrete.

TOBY

Burma-Shave!

Arthur and Toby laugh. As they walk on, though, Toby's face is thoughtful.

88 INT. SCHOOL GYMNASIUM - NIGHT

88

Toby and ten other boys are practicing lay-ups. All the boys, Toby included, wear basketball uniforms. All the other boys wear gym shoes. Toby is barefooted. He is however, a smooth, skillful player.

89 EXT. EDGE OF TOWN - AFTERNOON

89

Toby tosses his last newspaper into a yard, folds his sack, and stands wearily for a few beats.

90 INT. UTILITY PORCH - EARLY EVENING

90

A large, ugly DOG next to the box of baseball bats and gloves GROWLS and snaps at Toby as he goes past.

91 INT. DWIGHT AND CAROLINE'S LIVING ROOM - EARLY EVENING

91

As Toby enters the room, Norma exits, wearing theatrical makeup and a gypsy costume. Behind her, drink in hand, sits Dwight, wearing a suit and tie, watching the TELEVISION NEWS with the SOUND VERY LOW.

TOBY

Whose dog is that on the porch?

(CONTINUED)

91 CONTINUED:

91

DWIGHT

Yours.

TOBY

Mine?

DWIGHT

You said you wanted a dog.

TOBY

A collie, though. Not this one.

DWIGHT

Well, he's yours. You paid for him.
Go get ready for Norma's play.

TOBY

What d'you mean I paid for him?

But Dwight doesn't answer. Toby waits, then shrugs and leaves the room.

92 INT. SKIPPER AND TOBY'S ROOM - AFTERNOON

92

Toby gets out his book of Indian signs. He reaches up for his rifle, but it is gone.

93 INT. LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

93

Toby walks in, Dwight is petting the dog.

TOBY

My Winchester's gone.

DWIGHT

(eyes never leaving
the TV)

This dog is pure-bred Weimaraner.
A champion.

TOBY

I don't want it.

DWIGHT

(as above)

Well, you're purely out of luck,
aren't you, 'cause that rifle's
on its way to Seattle.

TOBY

I want my rifle!

(CONTINUED)

93 CONTINUED:

93

DWIGHT

Well, want in one hand and shit in the other -- see which gets full first.

TOBY

But, Dwight, that Winchester was mine.

DWIGHT

And Champ's your dog. Jesus, I trade some old piece of crap for a valuable hunting dog, and all you can do is piss and moan.

TOBY

I'm not pissing and moaning.

DWIGHT

The hell you aren't. You can just make your own deals from now on.

94 EXT. HOUSE - AFTERNOON

94

Toby sits on the front stoop. Caroline approaches carrying groceries. She notices Toby's expression.

CAROLINE

What's wrong?

TOBY

Dwight traded my rifle for a dog. He says the dog's for me, but it's some stupid dog he wanted.

For a moment Caroline doesn't respond. Then she nods her head.

CAROLINE

All right. Okay, Dwight. You stay here. Don't come inside.

Toby nods. Caroline heads inside, loaded for bear.

95 INT. KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

95

Norma, dressed up for her play, and Pearl are setting the table. Dwight is fixing himself another drink. Caroline enters, puts down the groceries, and goes to the dish cabinet. Calmly, in total control, she takes a PLATE and SMASHES it against the countertop.

(CONTINUED)

95 CONTINUED:

95

CAROLINE

(calm)

Get his rifle back.

DWIGHT

But that dog's a champion!

Caroline calmly SMASHES another PLATE on the countertop.

CAROLINE

Get his rifle back.

DWIGHT

Am I supposed to go clear to
Seattle just to get...

Before he finishes the sentence, Caroline SMASHES a GLASS
on the countertop.

CAROLINE

Get his rifle back.

DWIGHT

Jesus Christ, woman, I don't even
know the guy's last name.

Caroline picks up a bowl.

DWIGHT

All right, all right. The guy's
supposed to send the A.K.C. papers.
When he sends 'em, I'll know his
name and address, and I'll go get
the god-damn rifle back. Jesus.

Caroline exits leaving Dwight, Norma, and Pearl with
their mouths open.

96 EXT. HOUSE - EVENING

96

Caroline walks to Toby, sits next to him on the stoop.

CAROLINE

Well, I did it -- and the bride
didn't even raise her voice: he
says he'll get the rifle back as
soon as the guy who sold him the
dog sends the papers.

Toby nods. Caroline looks up at the evening sky and then
shrugs.

(CONTINUED)

CAROLINE

'Course, having seen that dog, I wouldn't suggest you hang by your thumbs 'til those papers come. I mean, that dog is ugly.

Toby gives her a dirty look, but Caroline's smile makes Toby grin.

CAROLINE

That's nice -- I haven't seen a real smile out of you in a month.

TOBY

Oh, Mom, can't we leave here? I hate it so much. You don't like it either -- all you do is stick your head in a sewing machine night and day. Let's just leave and start over someplace else.

CAROLINE

'Start over.' Do you know how many times I've started over, sweetheart? I don't want to do it anymore. This is as far as I want to go. This place. I have to make this work somehow. We do. You're fourteen now -- you have to help me.

TOBY

But if...

CAROLINE

But me no buts, honey. I told you: I've hit a wall. And besides, it's not so bad here, if you just try to --

TOBY

If you say 'look for the good stuff,' I'm gonna get Dwight's 30/30 and shoot myself!

CAROLINE

Seriously, though: give the place a chance. Give him a chance.

TOBY

Great. Just great. What a life: I gotta live with Dwight... I got a sissy for a new best friend...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

96 CONTINUED: (2)

96

TOBY (CONT'D)

I got no rifle... I got no gym shoes...

CAROLINE

Well, look on the bright side... You got a dog.

In spite of his disappointment over the rifle, in spite of all that Caroline had said about staying with Dwight, Toby is happy to see Caroline completely back to her old self again, joking with him. He grins and, with the palm of his hand, he gives her shoulder a gentle shove. She returns the gesture. And the two of them sit on the steps, staring into the twilight.

97 INT. ARTHUR GAYLE'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

97

Arthur is playing the piano. He and Toby sing an old song called "I Wandered Today To the Hill, Maggie." Both of them are enjoying it. As they finish the song, Arthur says a dry "Will you be able to use your musical abilities at the A&P?" Toby laughs and gives him a hard elbow in the ribs.

98 INT. TOBY'S ROOM - NIGHT

98

Toby is using a nail clipper over a wastebasket when he hears:

DWIGHT (O.S.)

Heh Hotshot!

He looks up just in time to see a flashlight fly through the air toward him. He catches it. Dwight stands in the doorway.

DWIGHT

If you can tear yourself away from your pedicure, I want you to fetch me some of that paint from the attic.

Dwight switches the room light off.

TOBY

Yeah.

DWIGHT

Is now too soon.

TOBY

God!

99 INT. DWIGHT'S ATTIC

99

Dwight and Toby are looking for something. They both shine flashlights around the dark attic, illuminating old magazines, dolls, etc. Dwight says, "I know I put 'em up here somewhere." Then Toby's flashlight lands on the unusual tub with the four blue stars which had held the beaver. Forgotten all this time, the beaver has transmogrified into a weird, two-foot high pile of what looks like cotton candy. And, hideously enough, the cloud-like stuff is still in the shape of the beaver. Then Dwight says, "Shit -- the roof must've leaked on 'em." Toby turns to where Dwight shines his flashlight on the ten boxes of chestnuts.

Also forgotten, the chestnuts are covered with mold, too -- but a different kind: this is wet, slick-looking stuff that rises off the chestnuts like dough in a breadpan. A spasm of rage crosses Toby's face, and he turns and bangs out of the attic.

100 INT. DWIGHT AND CAROLINE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (LATER) 100

A drink in one hand, idly fondling Champ's ears with the other, Dwight is watching the NEWS.

On the TELEVISION we see a distraught Lana Turner and her daughter, Cheryl Crane, as the teenaged girl is led into a tall building. While we see this, and then a photograph of a stockily handsome Italian man, we hear:

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)

... Cheryl Crane, daughter of Lana Turner, was held for questioning today in the stabbing death of Johnny Stompanato, Miss Turner's companion. A spokesman for Miss Turner said today that the stabbing was an accident, and that Miss Turner's daughter will not spend even one night in jail for what the spokesman called a 'tragic accident.'

Suddenly aware of another presence in the room, Dwight turns and sees Toby, who is standing in the doorway, also listening to the NEWSCAST. Toby is not watching the television, though, he is staring fixedly at Dwight.

Dwight reacts then glances back at the set, where the Stompanato murder story continues. He turns slowly back to Toby, whose eyes are still locked onto his face. The SOUND on the TV FADES.

101 INT. GYMNASIUM - NIGHT

101

A WHISTLE FADES UP.

Toby's basketball game against the Van Horn team is starting. Alone among all the other players, Toby wears his street shoes. Heavy squarish brogans, they CLOMP, and THUD as Toby runs up and down the court.

The leather soles slip like skates on the highly-polished floor, and Toby falls repeatedly. At first the crowd is silent, collectively embarrassed at the boy wearing these strange shoes. Then Toby takes a particularly hard fall, and somebody laughs. The crowd in general takes it up, and soon there is GENERAL LAUGHTER whenever Toby's shoes SQUEAL particularly loudly, or whenever the shoes trip him up or cause another boy to stumble.

Soon one WOMAN'S HIGH-PITCHED LAUGH DOMINATES the gymnasium. The laugh is hideous, shrill and mindless, like some ringer planted in the audience of a situation comedy.

Toby sees Norma necking with some guy and is horrified.

Toby slips and slides, falls and rises. All the while his expression is hard as stone: he will get through this or die. And, like a mantra, he mutters one phrase over and over: "gotta get out, gotta get out, gotta get out, gotta get out." Finally he makes a basket. One VOICE from the audience YELLS out "Okay, kid -- way to go!" and then two or three people APPLAUD. Instants later, Toby catches a rebound and makes another basket. The fickle crowd decides to love an underdog and APPLAUDS heartily for the boy in the funny shoes. But Toby's expression never changes.

102 INT. DWIGHT'S GARAGE - SAME NIGHT (VERY LATE)

102

The Buick, rolls silently down the driveway pushed by a straining but cautious Toby. Champ runs into the street, Toby tries to shoo him away. The DOG BARKS ONCE, and Toby quickly opens the car door and lets him in, STARTING the ENGINE.

103 INT. BUICK - LATE NIGHT

103

Toby drives fast leaving Concrete behind. He turns the RADIO ON, and a VOICE bawls out "Oh, Maybelline," Toby turns the VOLUME UP, turns it UP AGAIN, so that the MUSIC is DISTORTED. Toby begins to accelerate. The needle creeps past ninety, and hovers close to one hundred.

(CONTINUED)

103 CONTINUED: 103

Trees flash past in the headlights, occasional cars are overtaken and passed in an instant. Toby starts laughing hysterically and sings loudly along with the THROBBING MUSIC.

The Buick begins to shudder and wobble -- Toby hits the brakes but the Buick spins and goes sideways into the ditch. SILENCE.

104 EXT. BUICK - LATE NIGHT 104

The car is caught so that two of the wheels are off the ground, and can get no purchase. Toby starts walking back toward Concrete.

105 EXT. ROAD - LATE NIGHT 105

Toby and Champ have been walking a long time. A truck comes from behind Toby, pulls over.

DRIVER

That your car in the ditch back there?

(as Toby nods)

How'd you do that, anyway?

TOBY

It's hard to explain.

DRIVER

Get in.

106 EXT. BUICK - VERY LATE NIGHT 106

The man is winching the Buick out of the ditch.

107 EXT. DWIGHT AND CAROLINE'S HOUSE - DAWN 107

Toby silently closes the garage door, the Buick inside and heads for the house.

107A SKIPPER AND TOBY'S ROOM - NOON 107A

The clock shows noon. Toby is in bed reading Boy's Life, holding a sandwich and trying to stay awake. Suddenly Dwight appears. Dwight puts his hands into his pockets, leans against the doorway.

(CONTINUED)

107A CONTINUED:

107A

DWIGHT

Your mother said you were sick.
Feeling better?

TOBY

Yeah, I am.

DWIGHT

Good, good. Get some sleep, did
you?

TOBY

Yeah, I slept about four hours.

DWIGHT

Must've needed it.

A pause:

DWIGHT

Oh, by the way, you didn't happen
to hear a funny ping noise in
the engine, did you?

TOBY

What engine?

DWIGHT

I was downtown with Champ a few
minutes ago, and I met a guy who
recognized him. Said he'd seen
my dog this very morning. Told me
an interesting story of how he and
the dog happened to meet. What
d'you think about that?

TOBY

I don't know what you --

Suddenly Dwight is across the floor and onto the bed.
He straddles Toby and slaps him across the face with the
left hand then the right, again and again.

Toby holds a forearm protectively across his face.
Dwight holds both Toby's hands with one of his and, slaps
the boy's face again and again.

Finally Toby manages to get his right hand loose. He
slams his forearm across Dwight's throat.

Dwight rears back, choking and gagging. Toby throws off
the covers and tries to run. Still choking, Dwight
grabs the back of Toby's hair and forces the boy's face
down against the mattress.

(CONTINUED)

107A CONTINUED: (2)

107A

Then he doubles up his fist and slams it into the back of Toby's neck. Toby goes rigid with pain. Dwight stumbles up gasping for breath.

DWIGHT

Only me. On this whole earth, to straighten you out. And I will do it kill or cure. Now get your ass up -- you're going to school.

108 EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - NOON

108

A BELL RINGS as Dwight's BUICK SCREECHES to a stop and Toby gets out. As he heads toward the doors. Toby then turns to stare at Dwight's car. They lock eyes, then Dwight smirks and pulls away. Toby watches the car disappear, then spins around and walks into the school.

FADE OUT.

FADE UP TO:

108A SAME SCENE - AFTERNOON

108A

The CAMERA is in the EXACT SAME SPOT.

The school seems a bit seedier, and two newly-planted saplings established in the previous scene are both eight feet taller, with wide spreading branches.

Students pour out the door. Among them Toby, taller and a bit heavier, he now wears black leather boots, and a pack of cigarettes rolled into the sleeve of his T-shirt. His hair is still pure Elvis.

Toby comes back out the door with four very different friends. CHUCK BOLGER, the most reasonable-looking of Toby's companions, is the son of a minister. A second boy, known as PSYCHO, is a hulking boy with a tendency toward sadism. JERRY HUFF is handsome in a pouty, heavy-lidded way. His Elvis pompadour is even higher than Toby's. ARCH COOK is an amiable simpleton who sometimes talks to himself or laughs for no reason.

Toby and his four friends pile into Chuck Bolger's '53 CHEVY, and they PEEL OUT.

109 INT. CHUCK BOLGER'S CAR - NOON

109

As the car barrels through downtown Concrete, we see a movie marquee reading...

(CONTINUED)

109 CONTINUED:

109

... The Apartment, and a five foot poster that says,
"ELECT JOHN KENNEDY, 1960."

In the back seat, Psycho pours vodka into a half empty
can of Hawaiian punch, then takes a huge swig.

PSYCHO
(screams it)
Ag-Hhh! Gorilla blood.

JERRY
Oh, Psycho, shut up.

CHUCK
(pointing)
Oh, look -- there goes Carol
Baumgarten. Ain't she sweet?
She's hot for Wolff.

TOBY
I wish.

CHUCK
Won't do her any good, though --
Jack's saving himself for Rhea
Clark.

TOBY
Knock it off.

JERRY
You know what he said about Rhea?
Said even the inside of her arm
turned him on. You slay me,
Wolff. She is pretty though.

ARCH
(after a pause;
wistful)
I'd sure like to eat Rhea Clark's
pussy.

There is general laughter, mixed with groans.

JERRY	PSYCHO	CHUCK
God, here we	Eatin' pussy	Jesus, give it
go again.	is all that	a rest, Arch.
	man knows.	

ARCH
No, I mean it. I'd like to get
down and really grovel on it.
Spend about a week with my face
right in it.

(CONTINUED)

109 CONTINUED: (2) 109

There is a pause while all the boys dwell on this thought. It sounds good to them.

PSYCHO

Aghhh, pussy!

110 EXT. DWIGHT AND CAROLINE'S HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON 110

Chuck Bolger's CAR SCREECHES to a halt, and Toby exits, followed by an empty Hawaiian Punch can which someone tosses after him. Toby gives a wave, starts toward the house, and the CAR LAYS RUBBER, while OVER that we hear Psycho SCREAMING, "AGH-H-H!"

111 INT. DWIGHT AND CAROLINE'S KITCHEN - LATE AFTERNOON 111

Pearl is setting the table and singing the Everly Brothers hit, "Bye, Bye, Love." The passage of two years has improved Pearl. Her bald spot has grown back in, and she has learned to fix her hair and use makeup. She smiles and nods to Toby, never stopping her singing for a moment. Toby stands next to her and sings harmony for a few notes. It is clear that their relationship has improved. Toby stops singing.

TOBY

Where's Mom?

Still singing, Pearl points to the living room.

112 INT. LIVING ROOM - EARLY EVENING 112

Caroline is watching a newscast of John Kennedy and Harry Truman at a press conference outside Truman's Missouri office. She hears Toby, turns to him.

We see that the last two years have marked her. She's changed. Her expression is fixed, almost as if she were wearing a mask. Even the words are cheerful, but some of the old optimism is gone.

CAROLINE

Oh, honey, good news -- Truman's going to campaign for him.

(lowers her voice)

I gave twenty-five dollars to his campaign office today. I've been thinking I'd like to work...

She is interrupted by Dwight's voice O.S.

(CONTINUED)

112 CONTINUED:

112

DWIGHT (O.S.)

Here I am, you lucky people!

Toby and Caroline exchange a glance. It speaks volumes.

113 INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

113

Dwight, Caroline, Toby and Pearl sit at the table, eating. Champ sits by Dwight's chair -- obviously his dog.

Dwight seems unchanged by the two years.

Just now, Dwight is in the middle of telling another of his "Dwight Is The Best" stories. From the bored faces around the table, this is another in a long series.

DWIGHT

... So the S.O.B. had been on my back for a week at work, okay? Sayin' I stole his wrench, an' poured oil all over his tools, as if! Anyway, he went just one step too far with old Dwight, okay? Spat on the floor as I walked by. I turned around and walked back to him, acting so dainty and humble and scared, you know, all innocent -- and the minute he took his eyes off me, BLAM, I dry gulched him! I shut his water off good! Never gave me another second's grief to this very day.

There is a pause. One more story. Nobody has much of a reaction.

CAROLINE

I heard Kennedy on the news again tonight -- I don't know: I hate the Democrats and the Republicans, but then once in a while somebody comes along who doesn't seem like...

(she searches)

... a liar.

DWIGHT

Kennedy -- the senator from Rome.

CAROLINE

He gives me hope.

DWIGHT

I know what he gives you, and it sure as hell isn't hope.

(CONTINUED)

113 CONTINUED:

113

CAROLINE

(laughs)

It's true he is attractive! And it may just be those white teeth that I respond to. But I don't think so.

(a beat)

I'm going to work for his campaign.

DWIGHT

No. Too many Republicans in this town. They hear my wife's working for the Democrats, they'll take their cars someplace else to be fixed. Bad idea. No.

There is a brief silence. Suddenly Caroline leans across the table and speaks to Dwight in a loud, exaggerated disappointed whine:

CAROLINE

Oh, Rickyyy!

(louder; same whine)

Oh, Ricky-y-y! Please let me come down and work at the club!

DWIGHT

What the hell are you doing?

CAROLINE

Well, you treat me like Lucy, I'll act like her. I'll be working for Kennedy's campaign.

114 INT. LIVING ROOM - SAME NIGHT (LATER)

114

The four of them are watching "The Untouchables." We watch as a frightened man speaks to Al Capone, who sits behind a large desk.

FRIGHTENED MAN (V.O.)

(on T.V.)

... please, Mr. Capone, it'll never happen again, I swear it. It was an accident. I can promise you faithfully it won't be repeated.

Finally Al Capone speaks. He leans across his desk, bugs out his eyes, and hisses:

(CONTINUED)

114 CONTINUED:

114

AL CAPONE (V.O.)
 (on T.V.)
 Why don't you take a little ride
 with Frank?

The man's eyes bulge with fear, and he cries, "No! No!"
 as two men escort him out the door.

In the next shot we see a long black car parked on a
 country road, and we hear a SHOT.

115 INT. BATHROOM - SAME NIGHT (LATER)

115

Toby is brushing his teeth when Dwight enters.

TOBY
 I'll be through in a minute.

Dwight looks around.

DWIGHT
 You left the lid off the damn
 toothpaste again.

TOBY
 (not looking at him)
 Oh, Dwight, is that the best you
 can come up with?

Angered, but keeping his voice low. He pushes Toby's
 shoulder.

DWIGHT
 This is my bathroom, and I say
 about the toothpaste, got it?
 (pushes again)
 Huh? Have you? Huh? Now if you
 lived with your daddy Duke and
 his rich wife, maybe things'd be
 different, but he's not here now,
 is he?
 (high, flutey voice)
 Oh, Duke? Duke, are you here?
 Dukie? Oh, how sad -- Duke's not
 here. Oh, boo hoo!
 (normal voice)
 My bathroom. I get to say. Got
 that?

Still Toby doesn't respond -- Dwight reaches out and
 pinches the skin on Toby's waist, hard. Toby still
 doesn't respond, when Dwight begins to twist it. Toby
 spins around, eyes blazing.

(CONTINUED)

115 CONTINUED:

115

DWIGHT

Come on. Oh, come on. Give me
an excuse.

Toby hesitates, then leaves the bathroom, humiliated.

116 INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

116

Toby exits the bathroom, then sees Caroline in a doorway. She's heard it all. They look intently at each other. Toby nods and walks on down the hall.

117 INT. TOBY'S ROOM - INSTANTS LATER

117

Furious, Toby throws himself onto the bed, and snaps on a reading light.

(Behind him, the wall is now completely papered with the front pages of the Scout magazine, so that we see the words BOY'S LIFE BOY'S LIFE BOY'S LIFE BOY'S LIFE repeated one hundred and twenty times.) Then Toby takes a slick brochure from under his pillow -- it's a brochure of Princeton. Photographs of beautifully tended lawns, and students on their way to class. Toby stares at the photographs, smoothing the pages carefully, longing in his face.

118 INT. SCHOOL BUS - NEXT MORNING

118

Toby bangs onto the bus, throws himself into a seat beside Arthur. He hands a grade card to Toby.

ARTHUR

You didn't pick this up yesterday
-- congratulations, you got
nothing higher than a C.

TOBY

Shut up.

He signs the grade card, saying, "Presto."

ARTHUR

You're gonna get caught some day.
(as Toby laughs a
moronic laugh)

You act more like those morons you
hang around with every day. Aghhh!
I'm psycho! I'm retarded!

(CONTINUED)

118 CONTINUED:

118

It's a good imitation of Psycho, and Toby laughs.

TOBY

He hears you do that, you're dead. Hey, lemme copy your math homework.

ARTHUR

No, but I'll show you how to work the problems.

TOBY

I tell you I'm thirsty, you offer me a sandwich thank you and fuck you.

ARTHUR

Oh, Jack.

TOBY

Oh, Jaaack!

ARTHUR

I take it back you don't act like Psycho, you act like Dwight.

TOBY

(new tone)

I know it. He's winning. I do act like him. I feel like him sometimes. I've gotta get out of this place or I'm a dead one.

ARTHUR

I know, but you've said that for two years.

TOBY

I mean it. I may go live with my brother Gregory in Princeton.

ARTHUR

You mean the brother Gregory in Princeton who never calls you? That brother Gregory?

TOBY

He wrote me.

ARTHUR

And he asked you to live with him?

(CONTINUED)

118 CONTINUED: (2)

118

TOBY

No. But I'm going. Or maybe I could go to a prep school like Gregory did. Like my dad did.

ARTHUR

What about your grades? And what would you use for money?

TOBY

I don't know. Dwight owes me over twelve hundred bucks! If I hadn't let him keep my paper route money, I'd be okay.

ARTHUR

If the dog hadn't stopped to pee, he'd have caught the rabbit.

Suddenly Toby is angry. He stands up, moves to another seat.

TOBY

I think Dwight was right about you I think you fight for the pink team.

Toby falls into another seat, then, pulls his head back and bangs it against the window. Then does it again, harder.

119 EXT. RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD - AFTERNOON

119

His mood even fouler, Toby toils at his paper route. He throws the papers against the houses with all his might. Suddenly Chuck Bolger's CAR SCREECHES to a stop next to Toby. We hear Psycho's "Arghhh!" and Toby climbs into the car.

120 EXT. DERELICT CRUSHER PLANT - NIGHT

120

We see the Concrete silo dimly-lit in the distance. We can read "Welcome To Concrete" on it. Toby is leaning against a wall in a large derelict Concrete plant staring at the silo. Behind him is a small campfire where the other guys are slumped around talking. Toby takes a long, angry pull on a bottle of whiskey, then turns around and heads toward them.

(CONTINUED)

ARCH

Nobody in your family ever even been in a Corvette, let alone owned one.

CHUCK

You wait and see if I don't get one. I'm gonna move down to Seattle, get a job at Bendix and drive a 'Vette to work every day.

JERRY

My uncle can have any car he wants. He makes big bucks as an electrician.

ARCH

Yeah? How big?

JERRY

Hundred seventy-five a week, take home.

PSYCHO

Bullshitter!

JERRY

Fuck you, it's true.

CHUCK

Even the supervisors at Bendix don't make that.

JERRY

So how are you ever gonna make enough to drive a 'Vette then, fuck-face?

The others all laugh at Chuck. Toby has reached the group and stands on the lip of the large wooden platform that they are on and listens while leaning on a large hook.

PSYCHO

I'm gonna drive a T-bird, someday.

CHUCK

An' I'm gonna own a Corvette if I have to hold up the Bendix payroll to get it.

JERRY

Fuck you.

(CONTINUED)

ARCH

Me. I want to eat a big
red-haired pussy.

The others all laugh at him. Toby regards them with a
sneer.

TOBY

Losers. What a bunch of losers.

CHUCK

Who you calling a loser,
fuck-face?

TOBY

All of you.

(to Chuck)

You're gonna drive a Fairlane
just like your daddy does.

(to Psycho)

How you ever going to drive a
Thunderbird when you're a janitor
like the rest of your family?

(to Jerry)

An' you can forget being an
electrician, you can't even pass
tenth grade math.

JERRY

Well fuck you. Who died an' made
you King Shit?

PSYCHO

Yeah, you're no better than us.

TOBY

I know that, Psycho. That's my
point: Ha, ha, ha. You guys are
my buddies. You guys are my pals.
And my dear old dad's called
Dwight.

(he spreads his
arms wide)

Welcome to Concreeee...

Toby topples over and falls down a bank of rubble. The
other burst out laughing and hooting. The CAMERA MOVES
off them and CRANES DOWN to a spread-eagled Toby's face.
The LAUGHTER ECHOES around the building. Toby begins to
laugh, but it soon turns to bitter tears.

DISSOLVE TO:

122 INT. KENNEDY CAMPAIGN OFFICE - DAY

122

Toby enters the small office where Caroline is running hundreds of flyers on a duplicating machine. Surprised she sees Toby's expression.

CAROLINE

What is it?

TOBY

I called Gregory at Princeton.
 (as Caroline reacts)
 He's sending me applications for prep schools. I need you to take me to Seattle to take some entrance exams.

CAROLINE

Would a prep school take you with, uh, your school record?

TOBY

I've got to get out of here, Mom. I've got to. I've got to get away.

CAROLINE

When are the tests?

TOBY

Saturday.

CAROLINE

You'll be there.

TOBY

He won't let you have the Buick.

CAROLINE

You'll be there!

123 EXT. LAKESIDE SCHOOL IN SEATTLE - DAY

123

Graceful buildings, green lawns, a CARILLON CHIMING. Toby walks toward a large building.

124 INT./EXT. TESTING ROOM - DAY

124

Twenty-three boys and Toby stand waiting restlessly for the tests to begin. Toby looks very different from the other intelligent looking, well-bred boys in his Elvis hairdo.

124A SAME SCENE - LATER

124A

All the boys are taking the test, working hard.

125 INT. DWIGHT'S BUICK - LATE AFTERNOON

125

Caroline turns as Toby gets into the car.

CAROLINE

How was it?

TOBY

Hard. I think I did okay. I'll
know Monday.

126 INT. DWIGHT AND CAROLINE'S KITCHEN - EVENING 126

Dwight sits at the table, a drink in his hand. Caroline hurriedly prepares dinner. She tosses a milk carton into a brimming waste basket, then speaks to Toby, who enters the room.

CAROLINE

Take that trash out for me,
honey.

Toby grabs the trash and exits.

127 EXT. REAR OF DWIGHT AND CAROLINE'S HOUSE - EVENING 127

Toby opens a metal trash can, dumps the trash, puts the lid back on, and then hesitates. He lifts the lid again and peers into the trash can, almost hidden, are the tips of four white envelopes made of heavy, expensive paper. He pulls them up and, though covered with tomato seeds, are undamaged.

128 INT. KITCHEN - EVENING 128

Toby walks in, fans out the four envelopes, speaks to Caroline.

TOBY

My application forms must've come today, and he threw them away.

DWIGHT

Hey, I thought I was helping him -- thought I'd save him some trouble 'cause he's got no chance of getting into some fancy prep school.

CAROLINE

You've always got your nose pressed up against the bake shop window, don't you, Dwight?

DWIGHT

What?

CAROLINE

You feel like everybody else is inside, and you're stuck on the outside. It turns you mean. It turns you ugly. And one day do you hear me, Dwight? One day all that ugliness is going to snap back and hit you in the face.

(CONTINUED)

128 CONTINUED:

128

DWIGHT

Ooooooh, oh, I'm so scared. Oooh.

129 INT. TOBY'S BEDROOM - SAME NIGHT

129

Toby has the applications open in front of him. We see the words "Official Transcript Required" on one application. On another we see spaces for the applicant to list "Community Services" and "Athletic Achievements" and "Foreign Travel" and "Languages." Toby looks despairingly at the forms.

130 INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - MORNING

130

Between classes, Toby and Arthur are at a row of lockers.

ARTHUR

I won't do it.

TOBY

But why? You work right in the office -- nobody'll ever know.

ARTHUR

I'm surprised you'd want help from anybody who fights for the pink team.

TOBY

I'm asking you to help me, man. I got word yesterday that I did really well on those tests -- but that's not enough. I've got to cheat and lie -- but I don't care: this is my one chance to get out of here!

ARTHUR

No. Why should you get to be the one? Why not me?

131 INT. SCHOOL WORKSHOP - DAY

131

Toby is working with a table saw. Suddenly a two-inch-thick manilla envelope plops down beside him. He looks up to see Arthur standing beside him. Glancing around to see that he's unobserved, he checks the contents of the envelope: we see school stationery, blank transcript forms, and a stack of official envelopes. Toby closes his eyes. He's saved.

(CONTINUED)

131 CONTINUED:

131

TOBY

You could leave too, you know.

ARTHUR

No, I've grown progressively fond of Concrete. I think I'll stay here all alone and dress up in my mama's old clothes sometimes -- like you said.

Arthur turns and swishes away. Toby pats the manilla envelope, turns back to the saw. Suddenly he jerks, looks down, and sees that the ring finger of his left hand is spurting blood. Toby says a mild, astonished "Hey," and sinks to his knees.

132 INT. TYPING LAB - SAME DAY (AFTERNOON)

132

With his hand bandaged Toby sits at a typewriter with a blank transcript. He carefully types "TOBIAS WOLFF."

Then, he begins to type the letter "A" in every slot for grades.

133 EXT. STREET - EVENING

133

Toby mails five letters.

134 INT. TOBY'S BEDROOM - DAY

134

Toby lies in bed reading the paper. He still holds his hand in the air (the white bandage is now dingy).

Caroline appears in the doorway.

CAROLINE

Come help me stuff envelopes.

TOBY

I'll do some this afternoon.

CAROLINE

No, I need to take them with me.

TOBY

I'll be in in a minute. Let me finish this article.

(CONTINUED)

134 CONTINUED:

134

CAROLINE

Boy, you irritate me.

(new tone)

I think maybe you ought to...

Yeah -- I think maybe you should just...

(hisses)

... TAKE A LITTLE RIDE WITH DWIGHT.

Toby laughs, and gets up to help her.

135 EXT. DWIGHT AND CAROLINE'S HOUSE - EARLY EVENING

135

Toby starts up the sidewalk, Pearl exits the house with several letters in her hand.

PEARL

'You got letters from those schools!'

Toby grabs them as if they were the very stuff of life. Pearl stands expectantly. Toby notices her, then walks off holding the letters to his chest.

136 EXT. FIELD - EARLY EVENING

136

Three letters lie crumpled on the ground. Toby sits with his back against a tree trunk. Slowly Toby opens the fourth letter. Another refusal. Toby tosses it onto the ground with the others, leans his head back against the tree trunk, and closes his eyes.

137 INT. DWIGHT AND CAROLINE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

137

Dwight, Caroline and Toby read the papers. Caroline notices Toby's sad face.

CAROLINE

Maybe that last school will come through.

DWIGHT

Yeah, or maybe he'll get a contract in the mail asking him to be a singing star on T.V.

(on Caroline's look)

Well, he's got about as much chance of one as of the other.

Toby gets up and leaves.

138 EXT. CONCRETE - SAME NIGHT 138

A beauty shop with a tired sign... "ARLENE'S GOLDEN COMB BEAUTY SALON," a beer joint, a pool hall, a woman's clothing store with headless mannequins.

Toby surveys the scene, with an expression of despair.

Toby catches his reflection in a store window. He stares at himself.

TOBY

A Concrete boy.

139 INT. A&P GROCERY STORE - EVENING 139

Toby, wearing khakis, a shirt and a tie stands before the store manager.

MANAGER

We only take boys who really want to work hard. Is that you?

(as Toby nods)

I'd want you to start evenings now, and I'd want you all summer -- no vacations.

(as Toby nods)

Food service work isn't easy. It's not something that comes to you in a year or two. So. You think you have what it takes to be an A&P management trainee?

TOBY

(straight)

That's exactly what I've got.

139A SAME SCENE - LATER 139A

Toby now wears a regulation black bow tie and an apron. An employee is showing him how to price, stamp, and stack canned goods. Toby's face is expressionless.

140 INT. DWIGHT AND CAROLINE'S LIVING ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON 140

Dwight is listening to a PERRY COMO ALBUM. Caroline and Pearl work on a jigsaw puzzle. Toby enters the kitchen, coming from his paper route. He puts down his paper sack and immediately puts on his black bow tie, preparing to go to the A&P.

(CONTINUED)

PEARL

I can't find where this green piece goes -- it's gotta be grass.

Dwight sighs with irritation at the interruption of his listening pleasure, and turns UP the VOLUME on the record.

CAROLINE

(to Toby)

Don't go off without eating.

TOBY

I'll get a sandwich after work.

Exasperated that conversation is continuing when he's trying to listen, Dwight reaches over, presses his hand down on the arm of the record player, then SCRAPES it back and forth on the record. It's a violent action, and it makes a GROTESQUE SOUND. The NEEDLE BOUNCES around on the scarred record. As the three of them stare at him, Dwight speaks calmly:

DWIGHT

I was trying to listen to a record.

Dwight rises, walks outside into the back yard. Then the TELEPHONE RINGS. Pearl answers it, listens, then says,

PEARL

"Yeah, he's here,"

She holds the receiver out to Toby, whispering, "Are you Tobias?"

TOBY

Hello? All right. Tomorrow, then. Goodbye.

Toby hangs up, turns to Caroline, quietly:

TOBY

It's Hill School -- the last one I applied to. They haven't accepted me, but they're sending somebody up to interview me.

Caroline upsets the puzzle getting up to hug Toby.

141 INT. DRUGSTORE - AFTERNOON

141

Toby is sitting in a booth with MR. HOWARD, a man in his late thirties.

Toby has made a real attempt to look good. His hair is modified, and he wears a tie and a suit.

TOBY

... Yeah, I enjoy my classes, especially the ones that are advanced, but I've been feeling a little restless lately. It's hard to explain.

MR. HOWARD

Well, you're probably bored. Not being challenged. Your application was very good, Toby, but we have many boys who want to go to Hill. Not everybody is comfortable at a prep school.

TOBY

I think I would be. My father and brother went to prep schools.

MR. HOWARD

Is that right? Where?

TOBY

Deerfield and Choate.

Mr. Howard is impressed.

MR. HOWARD

I see. Well, maybe you'd like it. Hill was difficult for me, though -- classes were hard, and the boys seemed cold -- interested in money and social position.

(laughs)

And I hated those snowy Pennsylvania winters! But then in my last year, something changed. The guys in my class grew close, so close that I still think of them as a second family.

TOBY

(honest)

I want that. I do, and --

(CONTINUED)

141 CONTINUED:

141

He stops talking as we hear, O.S., "AG-H-H-H!" Psycho and Arch have entered the drugstore. Toby's back is to the door, and he slouches deeper into the booth, praying that he won't be seen.

Arch and Psycho buy cigarettes.

ARCH

... so she said, 'No, I don't want you to do that,' and I said 'Oh, baby, let me get down and grovel on it.' I mean, I ate her pussy 'til my tongue was calloused, and then...

Arch moves toward the back of the store toward the area where Toby sits. Toby inches down a bit farther into the booth. Arch stops at a sunglass rack five feet from Toby and tries on a couple of pairs.

ARCH

... so anyway, she went off like a Roman candle -- I mean that woman can scream. I said, 'You liked that, didn't you, baby?' I said, 'You liked the old Arch Cook special, didn't you?'

Arch decides to let the sunglasses go. He and Psycho move toward the front of the store, he talks about pussy. Toby exhales.

MR. HOWARD

Toby, boys at Hill talk roughly sometimes too -- you'd have to be ready for that. I can see you've had sort of a sheltered life.

Toby nods his head.

142 EXT. DRUGSTORE - AFTERNOON

142

Mr. Howard shakes Toby's hand.

MR. HOWARD

You seem like a fine boy, and I'll give you a good report tomorrow. But there are lots of boys applying, and we'll just have to wait and see whether --

From O.S., we hear Dwight's voice, and Toby goes rigid.

(CONTINUED)

142 CONTINUED:

142

DWIGHT (O.S.)

Ohh, it's the Hotshot Boy.

Both Mr. Howard and Toby turn to see Dwight, wearing his coveralls, ten feet away.

DWIGHT

Yeah, it's the guy who thinks he knows everything. Thinks he's so smart, but fella, what you don't know would fill a book.

(glances at Mr.

Howard's new

Chevrolet; offhand)

General Motors makes shit cars.

Dwight turns and enters the drugstore.

TOBY

(weakly)

That's, uh, that's this guy... he's a mechanic... did some bad work on our car...

It's not much of an explanation, but Mr. Howard seems to buy it. He says goodbye to Toby, gets into his car, drives away. Toby stares after him.

DISSOLVE TO:

143 INT. A & P GROCERY STORE - NIGHT

143

A few weeks have passed. Toby (his Elvis hairdo further modified) again prices and stacks food. His face is serious, his manner industrious.

144 INT. DWIGHT AND CAROLINE'S KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

144

Toby walks in; his Elvis hair disappearing. Pearl, who is boiling hot dogs, turns:

PEARL

I know something'll make you feel good: that man called -- you got the scholarship.

Toby grits his teeth and clenches both fists victoriously. He's won.

(CONTINUED)

PEARL

He said they're gonna give you two thousand three hundred dollars a year and it costs two thousand five hundred dollars... so you gotta come up with the other two hundred. Great, huh?

(sympathetic)

I'm making hot dogs -- I'll make one for you. Can you put mustard on some bread for us?

Toby gets a jar of mustard from a cupboard, but it's empty, so he tosses it on top of the trash can, gets a new jar and starts to open it.

Dwight enters.

PEARL

What're you doing home so earl...
Oh! Toby he got that scholarship -- two thousand and three hundred dollars!

Dwight makes himself a drink, takes two large swallows, then turns to Toby.

DWIGHT

Hey, leopard. I say, 'Hey, leopard.' I know you, leopard -- I can see those spots you can't change.

(laughs)

Thinks he can go to some fancy prep school and fool everybody. Not a chance. I know a thing or two about a thing or two.

Toby won't rise to the bait, and Dwight falls silent, he, looks around and sees the jar of mustard on top of the trash.

DWIGHT

Who threw that away?

TOBY

I did.

DWIGHT

Why?

TOBY

Because it was empty.

(CONTINUED)

Dwight retrieves the bottle. There are a few streaks of mustard under the neck of the bottle. He holds it close to Toby's face.

DWIGHT

Empty? That look empty to you?

PEARL

It looks empty to me.

TOBY

It looks empty to me, too.

Dwight pushes the jar against Toby's eye, leaving mustard stains on the boy's face.

DWIGHT

Look again, hotshot. Is it empty?

Toby jerks his head away, not answering. Dwight slams down the jar of mustard, grabs Toby by the back of the hair and forces his face down against the mustard jar.

PEARL

Dad!

DWIGHT

(to Toby)

Now. Now, Mr. Big-Time Prep-School fucker, is it empty?

Toby struggles, but Dwight has the strength of anger: trying always to protect his throbbing finger, Toby pulls free and jumps up from the table. Dwight is too quick for Toby, though: he grabs an even bigger handful of hair and forces Toby's face down onto the mustard jar again and again. And again. Each time he asks if the jar is empty. Finally, Toby gives up.

TOBY

(muffled)

No, it wasn't empty.

DWIGHT

(lets him go)

All right -- clean it out.

His face smeared with mustard, Toby's expression is murderous. He picks up a knife and scrapes at the mustard, trying to get up under the neck. He manages to get a few brown and yellow smudges on the knife, which he transfers to the edge of a plate. Dwight watches.

(CONTINUED)

DWIGHT

Now. Was it empty?

Slowly he stands up and faces Dwight.

TOBY

Yes!

Dwight slaps Toby across the mouth and the battle is on. As Pearl stands frozen, Toby lunges at Dwight, they grapple and stagger around the room. GLASS SHATTERS, the kitchen table CRASHES over, and their feet STAMP and SHUFFLE but Toby is a wild man. Even though he has only one good hand. He lands a blow between Dwight's eyes that bangs the man back against the wall.

Dwight grabs the pan with the hot water from the hotdogs, flings it at Toby. Most of it misses. Again they grapple. Toby manages to throw Dwight down, then grabs a broom that has fallen to the floor, presses it against Dwight's throat, using his good hand and one knee. Dwight's mouth gapes wide, his eyes bulge, and he jerks himself frantically trying to dislodge Toby, but Toby hangs on like grim death. Desperate, Dwight grabs Toby's bandaged hand, bringing it close to his own face, and bites the stump of Toby's injured finger as hard as he can.

Toby and Pearl scream simultaneously. Pearl in horror, Toby in pain. Pearl runs into her bedroom. Toby reels back in pain, holding his freshly-bleeding hand. Dwight takes his chance, grabs Toby by the throat, forces him down onto the floor and begins to choke the boy. Toby's eyelids begin to flutter. He's losing consciousness.

WHAM!

From out of nowhere a baseball bat hits Dwight flat across the shoulder blades, knocking the breath out of him, stunning him momentarily. As he looks up, we see Caroline, one of the baseball bats from the utility porch drawn back, aimed at Dwight's head, ready to strike again.

CAROLINE

(level)

Get away from him or I will kill you.

Toby manages to stand up, Caroline speaks to both of them.

CAROLINE

What is this?

(CONTINUED)

TOBY

I got the scholarship and he went nuts. He's crazy, and I'm leaving.
(screams it)
I'm leaving!

DWIGHT

Great. Go!

TOBY

Give me my paper route money, and you'll never have to see my face again.

DWIGHT

(manages a smile)
That money is gone with the wind.
(as Toby stares)
That's right. I spent it as you made it. It's gone. Poof.

Toby starts for Dwight again. Caroline grabs him, saying, "No. No. No," over and over, literally dragging Toby away from Dwight.

Caroline looks at Dwight.

CAROLINE

It's not so much that you're disappointing -- it's that you're consistently disappointing.

DWIGHT

Oh, fancy, fancy talk -- fancy talk for a whore. I know a thing or two about a thing or two. I got friends in this town that tell me things, and I found out some man down at that campaign headquarters found you a job in Washington, D.C. Gonna run off with him, aren't you, Miss Whore?

CAROLINE

He's just a friend.

DWIGHT

Miss Liar. Miss Whore Liar.

TOBY

I'm leaving, Mom. You can leave, too. You don't have to stay here.

(CONTINUED)

144 CONTINUED: (5)

144

Caroline takes three full beats and then her face changes. She speaks wonderingly:

CAROLINE

I don't, do I?

TOBY

No, you don't.

CAROLINE

I could leave with you, couldn't I?

TOBY

Yes, you could!

DWIGHT

What about me?

CAROLINE

I could just walk right out that door, couldn't I?

TOBY

Yes, you could!

Caroline takes a deep breath, a weight has been lifted.

CAROLINE

My God... the lightness.

DWIGHT

What about me?

CAROLINE

I'm leaving, too.

DWIGHT

No.

CAROLINE

Oh, Dwight, why do you want me to stay? You don't even like me, not really.

DWIGHT

You're not leaving!

CAROLINE

(gentle)
Look again, Dwight -- I'm already gone.

(CONTINUED)

144 CONTINUED: (6)

144

Dwight makes a terrible noise of frustration and rage, doubles his fists, and starts toward Caroline. Immediately Toby grabs the baseball bat and holds it out, ready to strike, as the two begin to back toward the door.

DWIGHT

... you two've always sided in against me, always thought you were better than me. I tried. I did the best I could. What about me? Am I supposed to just crawl off in a ditch someplace and die? I've always been the nigger. Everybody's nigger. Ever since I was little.

Caroline and Toby are at the door, run across the yard and down the street. Dwight stands in the doorway, yelling:

DWIGHT

What about me? When is it ever Dwight's turn for some consideration? What about me? I'll tell you one thing -- you'll remember me!

145 EXT. FIELD - MINUTES LATER

145

Caroline and Toby slow to a walk after running, laughing, and catch their breaths.

CAROLINE

Man, oh man.

TOBY

Man, oh man, oh man.

CAROLINE

Well, we're out.

TOBY

Great, isn't it?

CAROLINE

Yes. It's great. And you got the scholarship! Congratulations, honey.

(CONTINUED)

TOBY

Yeah, I'm out! I'm outta here!
 Maybe I'll crash and burn, but
 it's a chance, so I'm gone! I'm
 history, Histoire. Nobody's
 gonna tell me what to do now,
 nobody. I'm free as a bird.
 Sayonara nest.

(yells it; really
 bawls it out)

Heaven on a June day!

Caroline's smile becomes fixed during Toby's speech and she begins to regard him oddly.

CAROLINE

(weakly)

Yeah, heaven on a June day...

TOBY

What'd he say about you having a
 job in D.C.?

CAROLINE

Oh, Helen found me something in a
 real estate office, but...

TOBY

So now you can go! Oh. Oh! I am
 so damn glad to get out of this
 place! I'll be in 'fourth form.'
 Doesn't that sound great? And if
 you get a two-bedroom place in
 D.C., I can come for vacations and
 summers. I'm out. I'm out!

Caroline's eyes well up, and she lights a cigarette.

TOBY

(notices she's upset)

What? Oh, don't cry -- he's not
 worth it.

As sad as she is, Caroline smiles...

TOBY

She holds Toby at arm's length and studies him.

CAROLINE

My you've grown, haven't you.

Then clutches him to her fiercely. Smiling, the two
 walk on through the sunny afternoon, singing softly to
 each other.

146 EXT. BUS STATION - DAY

146

Caroline and Toby stand next to a bus as the driver STARTS the ENGINE. She is close to tears.

CAROLINE

Are you sure you'll be all right?

TOBY

(nice)

Get on the bus.

CAROLINE

(stuffing bills into
his pocket)

I borrowed money from everybody I know -- it's the two hundred you need for the tuition, and an extra fifty. Buy yourself a blazer. Oh, God. I'll miss you. I'll write you. You sure your hand's okay?

TOBY

Get on the bus, Mom.

Caroline puts her arms around Toby, kisses his cheek hard, then whispers something into his ear. When Toby speaks, his words are full of love:

TOBY

I know that, Mom. I've always known that.

Caroline gets onto the bus, the DOORS CLOSE, WHOOSH and the bus pulls away. We see Caroline's face at a window.

As the bus recedes, Toby turns and walks in another direction. His face is shining, incandescent with happiness. He breaks into a wide grin.

FADE OUT.

THE END