

RASTAR

XX0002

"BARBARIANS AT THE GATE"

by

Larry Gelbart

Adapted from the book written by Brian Burrough and Robert Helyar.

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Ray Stark, Producer

4th DRAFT

22 April, 1991

EXT. A RESIDENTIAL STREET - LOWER MIDDLE-CLASS - DAWN

Nine-year-old F. ROSS JOHNSON, on his bike, works his newspaper route; not an easy job for a frail kid in the cold winter. SUPERIMPOSED: "Winnipeg, Canada - 1940."

EXT. ANOTHER STREET - CONTINUOUS

A RESIDENT, standing curbside before his house, waits for Ross to pedal up with his newspaper.

RESIDENT

You're the new lad.

ROSS

Yes, sir.

RESIDENT

You got a name?

F. Ross Johnson.

RESIDENT
Fred Johnson's boy?

ROSS

Yes, sir.

RESIDENT

Got two Fred's in the family, have you?

ROSS

No, sir. My father's the only Fred in our's.

RESIDENT

That's as it should be. Just one man to a house is how it goes.

ROSS

Yes, sir.

He rides off, just missing being hit by a bakery truck.

EXT. A MIDDLE CLASS HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - WINNIPEG - DAY

Seventeen year-old Ross, addresses a pregnant Young Woman, an infant in her arms, through her screen door. Referring to an open scrap book, he makes his pitch.

ROSS

They're little such a little while.
Be a crime not to have a picture of
that cute button nose, wouldn't it?

(re infant)

I see babies all day long, ma'am,
and, whether you sign up for any
pictures or not, I gotta tell you
that is one exceptionally beautiful
child. What's her name?

YOUNG WOMAN

Marvin.

ROSS

(unfazed)

There you go. He's pretty enough to
be a girl. Tell you what: with
every six pictures, an ordinarily
five dollar gilt frame is yours for
only a dollar ninety-five, but since
Marvin here's going to be having
company soon, why don't I just throw
in the frame for free?

Her face says "No Sale." Ross chucks the baby's chin.

ROSS

Tell her you'll chip in, Marvin.
Tell her you want the picture.

The baby gurgles. Ross looks up at the woman.

ROSS

There you go. You heard it from his
own lips.

The woman's resistance crumbles. As she smiles and opens
the door, the SCREEN GOES WHITE in a flash.

EXT. UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA - CAMPUS - DAY

Commencement Day. The flash is on the camera held by Ross'
MOTHER, who poses Ross, in his cap and gown, beside the
dour ROSS, SR. Finished, she hands Ross the camera, then
uses her thumb and forefinger to force her husband's lips
into a smile. Ross snaps them - the SCREEN GOES WHITE.

INT. A CORPORATE BOARD ROOM - DAY

Before a banner, "Canadian General Electric," and a 10-foot
high electric light bulb, GE Executives watch a 30-ish Ross

receive an award. A Photographer snaps his picture - again, the SCREEN GOES WHITE.

EXT. THE STANDARD BRANDS BUILDING - NEW YORK CITY - DAY
CAMERA goes through the top story window into:

INT. AN EMPTY OFFICE - DAY

As Movers lug in new, expensive furniture, Workmen put the finishing touches on the room's elaborate built-in bar.

ANGLE - THE OFFICE DOOR - ROSS AND A SIGN PAINTER

stenciling "F. Ross Johnson, Pres." on the door. In his 40's, the flamboyant Ross gestures he'd prefer his name an inch or so higher. Peeking in at all the activity in his office, he turns to his secretary, MARGE.

ROSS
We gotta take care of these guys,
Marge.
(producing several bills)
Get me an inch of fifties.

INT. A NEW YORK NIGHT CLUB - THE DANCE FLOOR - NIGHT

Ross dances cheek-to-cheek with LAURIE, several years his junior, quite beautiful, very Southern California. SUPER-IMPOSED: "New York City - 1983."

EXT. NEW YORK - WEST SIDE - LATER

A chauffeur-driven sedan stops at an apartment building.

INT./EXT. THE SEDAN - THE BACK SEAT - CONTINUOUS

As Laurie fishes for the key in her bag:

ROSS
I'd love to come in for a coffee.

LAURIE
We just had coffee.

ROSS
Why don't we have some naked?

EXT. LAURIE'S APARTMENT BUILDING - FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Ross nibbles at Laurie's neck, as she unlocks the front entrance. It's clear she's letting him go no further.

ROSS

How 'bout if I come in and just sell you a few baby pictures?

LAURIE

Pictures of babies is not what I'm worried about. Goodnight, lover.

EXT. LONG ISLAND - A GOLF COURSE - DAY

Ross is teeing off; Laurie watching. After his drive, she walks toward him, golf club in hand.

ROSS

Try not to outride me again, huh?
It's embarrassing.
(leaning down)
Lemme tee you up.

Bending to place her ball, Laurie stares in disbelief at the large diamond ring that Ross has stuck into the ground.

LAURIE

(picking it up)
Ross! Oh, Ross! It's gorgeous!
(hugging him close)
God! It's enormous! It's huge!

ROSS

And what do you think of the ring?

INT. LAURIE'S APARTMENT - THE BATHROOM - NIGHT

Laurie and Ross, enjoying champagne in the bubbly tub.

LAURIE

Ross? Am I going to fit in? In your world? I'm not exactly your average corporate wife type, am I?

ROSS

Well, now, I have gave that a lot of thought, my dear, and - so you won't stand out from the rest of those beauties - first, we plaster about an inch of pancake on your face and have it permaplaqued; then, we get you some eyelashes long enough to need rain gutters. And, for the cherry on top - no offense intended - to make you a bona fide, average corporate wife, I don't care what it costs, we'll get your ass a basketball implant.

(MORE)

ROSS (CONT'D)

(a beat)

Incidentally, now's as good a time as any, y'know.

LAURIE

For what?

ROSS

For you to say, "Yes, I'll marry you, Ross, darling."

LAURIE

I want to, sweetheart, I really do. Just do one thing for me?

ROSS

Anything.

LAURIE

Get a divorce first?

ROSS

What a nospicker!

With that, his head disappears beneath the water, directly toward her nether regions. On her delighted shrieks:

EXT. RJR NABISCO HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

Gleaming limos mirror the glittering lights of RJR's glass tower. SUPERIMPOSED: "Atlanta, Georgia - 1988."

INT. RJR NABISCO HQ - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Filled with the city's corporate and political elite. Glass elevators glide them up to:

INT. RJR NABISCO HQ - TOP FLOOR - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

And past posters of Camels, Winstons, Salems, Oreos, Ritz Crackers, Lifesavers, Del Monte products, etc., leading to:

INT. RJR NABISCO HQ - MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The huge room reflects RJR's blank check elegance. A giant TV screen, plus smaller sets around the room, show the Tyson-Spinks championship pre-fight ceremonies. White-gloved Waiters pour rivers of Dom Perignon.

Ross, in mid-dirty story, cigarillo and scotch in hand, is being what he most likes to be: the center of attention. Among others in the group: his wife, Laurie, ED HARRIGAN and JOHN GREENIAUS (rhymes with "tennis").

ROSS

While she's getting undressed to show him, the woman says she got stung by a bee on the golf course. The doctor says, "Where exactly did it bite you?" And she says, "Between the first and second hole." So the doctor says, "No kidding? You must have a pretty wide stance."

Everyone cracks up - except Greeniaus, who wears a glum expression. An UNDERLING appears and whispers to Ross.

ROSS

Great!

(winks at Harrigan)

This crowd'll go apeshit.
He scans the room,
then to Laurie)

Better rescue the mayor, honey. His wife's starting to talk to him.

As Laurie complies, Harrigan turns to Greeniaus.

HARRIGAN

John, your face gets any longer, I can practise putting on it.

ROSS

(paternally)

You leave my boy alone, Ed.

GREENIAUS

It's just this kind of spending is crazy, Ross.

ROSS

Johnny, the company's making so much money, we're shitting green. This all comes out of petty cash.

(glancing at a TV screen)

Showtime!

He heads for the big screen, as Tyson makes for the ring. Like the champion, Ross has his own entourage: CHARLES HUGEL, Harrigan, and Greeniaus. At the screen, Ross addresses the room.



ROSS

I want to extend a warm welcome to everyone here tonight, on behalf of all of us at RJR Nabisco. From our chairman, Charlie Hugel --

Elderly Hugel gives the crowd a wave.

ROSS

-- Ed Horrigan, president of our tobacco division, and Johnny Greeniaus, president of Nabisco -- all the way down to me.

(gets his chuckle, nods at the screen)

Soon as these guys take care of business, I've got an extra treat for you, just in case anyone missed the six o'clock news, or might've spent the day on Uranus. No matter how this little donnybrook turns out -- we're all winners here tonight. Right, Ed

HORRIGAN

I'll drink to that!

And he does, to appreciative laughter.

ROSS

So count your stock going up and have a great time. There's plenty of booze. Anybody doesn't think so just isn't trying hard enough!

The ringside bell sounds. On the fighters' introductions, Ross works the room: directing a Waiter to refill Hugel's glass; lighting a Guest's cigarette, the Guest coughing violently as he inhales; jokingly using his thumb and forefinger to shape Greeniaus' lips into a smile.

The fight begins - and quickly ends, with Spinks out cold, and Tyson still the champ. Ross nods at the Underling, who immediately pops a cassette into a VCR. A beat, then, Mike Tyson's savage image on the many screens is replaced by a smiling Michael Dukakis.

TV NEWSPERSON (V.O.)

With his win today in the New York primaries, Governor Dukakis appears headed for certain victory to head the Democratic ticket come November.

Dukakis' footage is replaced by the TV NEWSPERSON.

TV NEWSPERSON

While in a New Jersey federal court, it was a victory, of sorts, for widower, Anthony Cipollone.

All eyes in the room are riveted on the Cipollone footage.

TV NEWSPERSON (V.O.)

Cipollone had sued a number of tobacco companies claiming that cigarettes were a contributing factor to the death of his wife, a lifelong smoker. The jury's verdict broke tobacco's unbeaten streak in cases of this kind, clearing the industry of conspiracy, but awarding the widower the relatively small amount of four hundred thousand dollars in damages.

A tip for Tony Cipollone!

Which gets a huge laugh. Tobacco is this crowd's bread and butter. Their Dom Perignon. Their Gulfstream jets. The Coughing Smoker, cheering and coughing simultaneously, grows purple in the face. On the TV's, we're back to a beaming, victorious Mike Tyson. Standing before the large screen, a beaming, victorious Ross Johnson. Both champions. Both invincible.

EXT. AN EXPRESSWAY - ATLANTA, GEORGIA - DAY

Moving along smartly, a pair of smoke windowed, maroon, stretch Cadillacs take the airport off-ramp.

INT./EXT. STRETCH LIMO - TRAVELING SHOT - BACK SEAT - DAY

Ross and Laurie, in matching RJR jogging suits. She reads "Golf Digest." Ross scans the "Wall Street Journal."

ROSS

Shit!

(activates the car phone)

Marge? Put Ed Horrigan through to the hangar.

EXT. CHARLIE BROWN AIRPORT - ATLANTA - RJR HANGAR - DAY

The Johnsons de-limo; the Underling steps from the second one with ROCCO, a German Shepherd. The maroon-uniformed Chauffeurs unload Ross and Laurie's matching golf bags.

ROSS (V.O.)
 Fucking stock hasn't budged, Ed.
 Not a fucking point.

INT. THE RJR HANGAR BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

The Taj Mahal of corporate structures, resplendent with Italian marble and inlaid mahogany. Ross, on a phone, has his cigarillo lit by an RJR STEWARDESS, as Laurie, the Underling, Rocco and the Chauffeurs laden with Louis Vuitton, give us a sense of the upmarket circus that Ross' life is.

ROSS
 (continuing)
 I really thought the Cipollone
 decision would pump a little
 sunshine up our skirts, but we're
 still stuck in the fucking forties.
 (to Stewardess)
 Thanks, Bonnie.
 STEWARDESS
 (cheerily)
 Any fucking time.

EXT. A BLUE, BLUE SKY - DAY

Twenty-five thousand feet up, a twenty-one million dollar aircraft, a Gulfstream G4, in graceful flight.

ROSS (V.O.)
 You see the latest hatchet job in
 "Business Week?"

INT./EXT. ROSS' GULFSTREAM - TRAVELING SHOT - CONTINUOUS

Laurie reads the "National Enquirer." Rocco sits in his seat; his needlepoint headrest reads: "Rocco."

ROSS
 (continuing, on phone;
 referring to magazine)
 "RJR's low stock price." "Fuzzy
 long-term outlook." "The tobacco
 company's declining performance."
 Executive extravagance. I love this:
 (reads)
 "CEO Ross Johnson routinely presses
 fifty dollar bills -- "

CLOSE - ED HARRIGAN

Wearing shorts and RJR sweat shirt, pedaling an exercycle.

ROSS (V.O.)
 (continuing)
 " -- into the hands of restaurant
 wine stewards."

CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal:

INT./EXT. A SECOND GULFSTREAM JET - CONTINUOUS

On his jillion dollar jet, Horrigan pedals his stationary bike, while listening to Ross on his speaker phone.

HORRIGAN
 I saw that.

INTERCUT ROSS AND HORRIGAN'S GULFSTREAMS

ROSS
 Fifty dollar bills. Christ, it's
 been years since I tipped that
 little!

HORRIGAN
 Let 'em bitch all they want about
 the stock. Wait'll Premiers hit the
 market.

ROSS
 Any word on the test results?

HORRIGAN
 A week, at the latest. Ten days, at
 the most.

He stops pedaling, and lights up a cigar.

HORRIGAN
 They're going to be fine, trust me.

ROSS
 They damn well better be. Put a
 rocket up Winston-Salem's ass,
 will'ya, so we get 'em ASAP, okay?
 See you in the Springs, pard.

CAMERA STAYS WITH ROSS, who sits back with a heavy sigh.
 From her seat, Laurie extends a comforting, bare foot into
 his crotch.

LAURIE
 You all right?



ROSS

What'd you do, sneak up here from coach?

LAURIE

You don't mind, do you, mister?
 (her other foot into his crotch)
 I just can't keep my feet off you.

ROSS

Easy, easy.
 (re Rocco)
 Not in front of the -
 (spells)
 D-O-G.

EXT. MISSION HILLS COUNTRY CLUB - DAY

Banners proclaim: "Dinah Shore Nabisco Open." TV mobile crews, hordes of press, spectators everywhere. SUPER-IMPOSED: "Palm Springs, California."

EXT. MISSION HILLS - GRANDSTAND AREA - DAY

Ross happily poses for photographers, with celebrities such as Gerald Ford, Dinah Shore, Reggie Jackson, Jack Nicklaus, as well as Ross' sons, BRUCE and NEIL, both in their 20's.

EXT. MISSION HILLS - CART AREA - DAY

Ross, checking his clubs, talks with a gloomy Greeniaus.

ROSS

Having fun, John? You look like death on a biscuit.

A GOLFER

(in passing)
 Great party last night, Ross.

ROSS

(laughs)
 How would you know?

A GOLFER

I must've really been wasted.
 (pointing to his wrist)
 I didn't realize these watches you were givin' out were Guccis, for Chrissake.



ROSS

You fly Nabisco, you go first class.
Have a good one, Jay.

The Golfer moves on. Ross turns to Greeniaus.

ROSS

Forget what all this costs. This bunch here this weekend, what do they own, if you put 'em all together? Eight, nine thousand supermarkets? Every time one of these guys gets back home and shows off his Gucci - or breaks into a little smile his wife doesn't understand when he remembers a goody or two we slipped between his sheets - whose merchandise you think he's gonna put up on his shelves, huh? Lighten up, Johnny. Every penny of the company's money you think I'm pissing away comes back to us dressed up like a nickle.

(calling out)
Don! Ira! Yo!

EXT. MISSION HILLS GOLF COURSE - FIRST HOLE - DAY

Ross, with two power types, IRA HARRIS and DON KELLY. Harris has teed off. Kelly hits a beautiful drive.

ROSS

I think you're going to like it.

Ross then hits a long, arcing drive - into the woods.

ROSS

Bloody hell!

KELLY

(straight faced)

That's where the pros go.

ROSS

Yeah. To take a shit.

EXT. MISSION HILLS GOLF COURSE - THE CART PATH - DAY

Ross drives Harris in one cart, Kelly is alone in his.

INT./EXT. ROSS' CART - TRAVELING SHOT - CONTINUOUS

HARRIS

Terrific turnout, Ross. You do it better every year.

ROSS

Thanks, Ira.

HARRIS

Can we talk a second? Just for a second?

(a beat)

My shareholders group is getting antsy as hell about the price of their RJR stock. The way it's just laying there.

ROSS

Tell 'em to stop breathing down my shorts, okay? As soon as we introduce Premiers, the stock's gonna go through the bloody roof.

As Ross stops the cart on the fairway alongside his ball, gets out and selects a club:

HARRIS

When do you get the test results?

ROSS

Any day now. Ed tells me they're gonna be great.

HARRIS

That would sure help take the pressure off.

(smiles, to relieve the apparent tension)

All we want you to do is make us as rich as possible, Ross. That's all we ask.

ROSS

Or you'll find somebody else to do it, right?

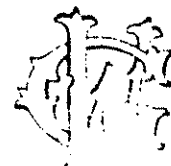
Ross steps toward his ball and is almost run down by a golf cart that skids to a stop, inches before him. He breaks into a grin, seeing the cart's occupants: his sons, Bruce and Neil. Bruce, at the wheel, sipping from a tall cup, has a sense of recklessness about him.

ROSS

Hey, the ball goes in the hole, not your old man.

BRUCE

Can we play through, dad? I'm running out of beer.



ROSS
 (laughs)
 That'll be the day.

Bruce tears out and speeds along the path.

NEIL
 (over his shoulder)
 Thanks, Mr. Harris.

ROSS
 Bruce! Keep it under fifty-five!

Bruce makes a show of swerving to miss a tree that there was no chance of hitting in the first place.

EXT. MISSION HILLS - A FAIRWAY - LATER

Ross and Harris, in their cart, watch Kelly in a sand trap.

HARRIS
 There's one sure way you might want to look into. It's worked well for other companies.

ROSS
 Oh, fuck those LBO's, if that's what you're talking about.

HARRIS
 (nodding at Kelly)
 You know how much money Don made on his? You telling me you wouldn't like a four hundred million dollar payday? Four hundred million dollars, Ross.

ROSS
 Shit, Ira, they can only bury you with one set of golf clubs.

EXT. MISSION HILLS - A GREEN - LATER

Ross, Harris and Kelly walk onto the green to putt.

KELLY
 (to Ross)
 There's no question he could do for you what he did for me. He'd be delighted to work with you.

ROSS
 Why Henry Kravis?



KELLY
Because he's the best there is.

QUICK CUT TO:

EXT. A SKI SLOPE - DAY

Skiing downhill - fast - is HENRY KRAVIS, an air of excitement and danger about him.

KELLY (V.O.)
Henry did the first of the company buyouts; he practically owns the patent on the process.

Skiing into view beside Kravis is his wife, CAROLYNE ROEHM.

KELLY (V.O.)
Everyone wants to be king of the mountain. Henry Kravis is the mountain.

RESUME MISSION HILLS THE GREEN - DAY

ROSS
What kind of a fee does he get?
What was his cut for setting up your deal?

KELLY
One percent. Forty-five million dollars.

ROSS
One percent's sure as hell's come up in the world, hasn't it?

KELLY
On the Safeway buyout, he and his cousin, George, pocketed sixty. That's sixty million apiece.

ROSS
Those guys aren't careful, they're going to get seriously rich.

KELLY
They can do the same for you, Ross.

HARRIS
(meaningfully)
And the stockholders.



EXT. MISSION HILLS - THE EIGHTEENTH HOLE - LATER

Harris totes up the score, as Kelly chats with Ross.

KELLY

You're going to be in New York next week, anyway; why don't I set up dinner with him? I know you'd hit it off.

ROSS

No offense, Don, but we're talking about buying out RJR Nabisco here. We're talking astrobucks.

KELLY

How astro were you thinking? Henry has the ability to borrow as much as fifty-six billion dollars.

ROSS

Makes your four hundred million seem a little like pin money, doesn't it?

KELLY

Every little bit helps, Ross. Every little bit helps.

ROSS

(to Harris)

How'd we do?

HARRIS

We each owe Don three bucks.

ROSS

(handing Kelly the bills)

I just hope this puts you into a higher tax bracket, you son-of-a-bitch.

EXT. PARK AVENUE - LIGHT TRAFFIC - EARLY EVENING

A limo pulls up before an impressive apartment building.

INT. PARK AVENUE APARTMENT BUILDING - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

DOORMAN

(into house phone)

Mr. Johnson for Mr. Kravis.



CLOSE ON ROSS' REFLECTION

As he checks himself in an antique mirror hanging on the wall in a small room, appointed at a cost of thousands. He is, in fact, inside:

INT. THE KRAVIS' PRIVATE ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

Ross finishes his primping, as the car stops and the door opens to reveal a stylishly-uniformed MAID, who greets him.

MAID
Good evening, sir.

INT. KRAVIS' DUPLEX - THE ENTRY AREA - CONTINUOUS

Following the Maid past the museum-quality paintings and priceless French antiques, Ross feels very much the tourist visiting Versailles.

INT. KRAVIS' LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Kelly, being served a drink by a liveried BUTLER, nods hello, as Ross is ushered in.

KELLY
Ross.

BUTLER
Will you have a drink, sir?

ROSS
Scotch and soda. No ice. No soda.

BUTLER
Thank you, sir.

He exits. Ross looks around, clearly dazzled.

KELLY
Be it ever so humble, huh?

ROSS
Guy must've had a hell of a week.

As Ross inspects a painting:

KELLY
Renoir.

ROSS
Ball park?



KELLY
Twenty, thirty million, maybe.

ROSS
Is that with the frame?

He moves on to the next painting, looks for the signature.

KELLY
Monet.

ROSS
Right. Tons of it.

Henry Kravis appears, exuding the quiet, unmistakable authority of one who is to the manor bought.

KRAVIS
Don.

KELLY
Henry, say hello to Ross Johnson.

KRAVIS
Ross. Nice of you to come.

Ross is damned if he'll show the awe he feels.

ROSS
Listen, Henry, if there's anything you need - if you're hurting in any way - all you have to do is ask.

On Kravis' polite smile:

INT. KRAVIS' DUPLEX - DINING ALCOVE - LATER

Ross, Kravis and Kelly, enjoy an elegant dinner.

ROSS
The thing is, it looks like a normal cigarette, only when you light up a Premier, it's completely smokeless.

KELLY
Totally?

ROSS
Near enough. The point is, it produces absolutely no tar or any of that other fun cancer stuff.

KRAVIS

If you sell it as a safer cigarette, aren't you admitting your other brands are unsafe?

ROSS

It is safer, only we can't say that. But, Christ, you get more carbon monoxide from a New York bus going by than you can from any cigarette.

The Butler and Maid are offering seconds to Ross.

ROSS

Maybe just a little more of the chicken.

KRAVIS

It's rabbit.

ROSS

(to the Butler, without missing a beat)

I'd like the ears, too, when you have a chance.

KRAVIS

You're counting on Premiers to get your stock up, obviously. Nothing else has made it move.

ROSS

It's a bitch. I've got the best company in the world. Not because I'm in charge. You could put your crazy old aunt in and she could run Nabisco. Our food assets are unbelievable. Kids pop out of the womb asking for Oreos, and it doesn't make one damn bit of difference in the price of our shares. People still think of us as only a tobacco company - they're so scared we're going to get sued out of existence, it just murders us.

KRAVIS

There's a cure for all that.

ROSS

That LBO stuff's too complicated for me, Henry. I just can't follow it.



KRAVIS

You don't have to. The bankers and lawyers work it all out.

ROSS

The only thing I want from bankers is a free calendar every year - and all I care about lawyers is that they're all back in their coffins before the sun comes up.

KRAVIS

Everybody benefits when management takes over. It's only a matter of arriving at an attractive price to pay your stockholders for their shares.

ROSS

But they'd only get it once. It's just a one-time payoff.

KELLY

You know anybody wouldn't trade in the rainbow to get the pot?

KRAVIS

I'd work with you the same way we did with Don: some of the money we borrow, some we raise from the public sale of securities. We pay off the debt incurred in buying the company with cash from its ongoing operations and by selling off pieces of the business.

ROSS

That's French for firing people, isn't it, Henry?

KRAVIS

As few as possible, of course.

ROSS

A few dozen? Ten thousand?

KRAVIS

As many as it takes.

ROSS

I couldn't do that. I couldn't live with the fallout.

KRAVIS

I'd take care of that.



ROSS

Yeah, but I don't shave your face in my mirror every morning.

(a beat)

All that aside, I've just never been a big fan of debt.

KRAVIS

Debt can be an asset. Debt tightens a company.

ROSS

Does wonders for the sphincter, too.

INT. KRAVIS' STUDY - LATER

The Butler is offering cigars to go with the brandy.

KRAVIS

Why don't I have some of my people take a look at your numbers; get an idea of the value of the company; something to base a bid on?

ROSS

Tell me one thing. If we did go into this together, who'd be in charge? Who'd run the business? How's that work?

KRAVIS

Ask Don.

KELLY

I run my company. Henry and his cousin, George, are the majority owners, but they maintain a total hands-off policy.

ROSS

(to Kravis)

What's the catch?

KRAVIS

The catch is we like people who know what they're doing, doing it for us.

As the Butler holds a lighter to Ross' cigar:

KRAVIS

We think you're one of those people, Ross.



Having puffed his cigar to life, Ross exhales a grey, luxuriant cloud with great satisfaction. Then:

ROSS

I like smoke, God damn it.

Kravis and Kelly laugh. It does not escape Kravis' attention that Ross has changed the subject.

INT. JOHNSON'S 5TH AVENUE APARTMENT - ROSS' BATHROOM - NIGHT

Ross, in a terry robe, its RJR logo threaded with gold, is applying cologne. On the TV installed in the mirror:

A TV NEWSPERSON

-- the poll shows Vice President Bush narrowing the gap to ten percentage points, when, just two weeks ago, Dukakis was ahead by seventeen.

Dukakis is seen in his unfortunate army tank commercial.

A TV NEWSPERSON (V.O.)

In New York, further shock waves hit the financial world, as investigators revealed that junk bond specialist, Michael Milken, whose earnings this year topped the sum of five hundred million dollars

--

Michael Milken footage appears.

ROSS

Whoa!

He makes a one-handed catch of a golf ball that has sailed through the open door.

LAURIE (O.S.)

Sorry! It just took off.

A TV NEWSPERSON (V.O.)

(overlapping)

- and twenty-six other members of Milken's investment firm of Drexel Burnham Lambert -

Though Ross turns the set off, the Newsperson's voice continues to be heard o.s.

INT. THE JOHNSONS' BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Laurie, wearing only an Atlanta Falcons T-shirt, practises

her putting on the carpet. Ross enters and tosses her the golf ball. The same Newsperson is on the room's TV.

A TV NEWSPERSON
(continuing)

- were owners of a stake in the company owned by dethroned financial wizard, Ivan Boesky.

As footage of Boesky in handcuffs is seen:

A TV NEWSPERSON (V.O.)
Boesky, seen here after his conviction on charges of insider trading, was recently sentenced to eighteen months in jail and fined a record one hundred million dollars.

ROSS
(kissing the TV sound)
You know the three rules of Wall Street? Never play by the rules. Never pay in cash. And never tell the truth. They earn their money the old-fashioned way: they steal it.

From a small fridge, he removes a box of Oreos, which he enjoys with the large snifter of brandy on his nightstand.

LAURIE

Ross? Promise you won't think I'm stupid?

ROSS

Of course, not. Although I have been known to break my promises.

LAURIE

There's just so much of this I don't get. Insider trading. Junk bonds. Even this buyout thing you're talking about.

ROSS

Sweetheart, half the people involved don't understand what's going on. The only ones who really do are on their way to jail. Buyout's are not that hard. Although, I must say I don't know who the hell Henry Kravis thought he was talking to tonight. He acted like I just fell off a turnip truck.

(MORE)



ROSS (CONT'D)

If you're not part of the "in" crowd in this town, they act like your shoes have cow shit on 'em.

(a bite, a sip)

Basically, though, all a buyout means is that management - the team that runs a company - they buy out all the shareholders, and the company goes from being public to being private.

LAURIE

You need tons of money to do that, don't you?

ROSS

That's where the Henry Kravises come in. They help you borrow what you need, against the value of the company. You use the business as collateral.

LAURIE

It's just like mortgaging a house!

ROSS

I hate to tell you this, but you've got a lot to learn about being stupid. Problem is keeping control once you take over. Guys like Henry become your partner, they're two miles up your ass with a power tool making sure you do things their way. You gotta see that apartment, Laur. Makes Buckingham Palace look like a Burger King. Nobody gets that rich letting anybody else play co-God with him.

LAURIE

How're you going to handle that?

ROSS

Nothing to handle. There's no way I'd get into bed with Henry Kravis. If we made a deal, he have my desk in the men's room in about five seconds flat. All we have to do is stay cool until Ed gets the test results on Premiers. You watch, Laur. That baby's gonna turn the whole company around.

LAURIE

Who you selling? Me or you?



ROSS

Sweetheart, there's nobody in the world wouldn't smoke, if there was a safer way to do it. Give people what they want, and they'll stuff money into every one of your orifii. Learned that lesson at my father's knee. My father, the great "Only-one-Fred-to-a-family" Johnson.

EXT. RJ REYNOLDS TOBACCO BUILDINGS - LATE AFTERNOON

SUPERIMPOSE: "Winston-Salem, North Carolina."

INT. RJ REYNOLDS - PRODUCTION LINE - CONTINUOUS

Cigarettes being processed in the hundreds of thousands.

INT. AN RJ REYNOLDS OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

An OFFICE WORKER, sipping coffee at a window, looks down.

OFFICE WORKER
(to Co-Worker)

Uh oh.

EXT. THE STREET BELOW - OFFICE WORKER'S POV - CONTINUOUS

A maroon stretch pulls up and Ross steps out.

OFFICE WORKER (V.O.)

The cookie monster's back in town.

INT. RJ REYNOLDS MAIN BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Ross, Ed Horrigan and various RJR Personnel move smartly past posters of Camels, Winstons and Salems.

INT. AN RJ REYNOLDS LABORATORY - CONTINUOUS

As Ross' group passes through the room, populated by an army of White Coats.

1ST WHITE COAT

(to 2nd)

Something's up.

2ND WHITE COAT

The Premier results are in. Get ready to load up on stock - or jump off the building.



INT. RJ REYNOLDS BOARD ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Before a huge cross-section mock-up of a Premier cigarette, Ross' group listens to RJR executive, TRAVIS GAINES.

GAINES

You will see that, of those interviewed, eighty-six percent approved of the idea of a smokeless cigarette. Forty-one percent said they would try at least two packs before deciding whether to switch brands. Of those who had given up cigarettes one or more times, seventy-three percent responded favorably to the idea, saying they'd seriously consider smoking again, if they could be positive that the cigarette they were smoking was absolutely smokeless.

Ross loves those numbers

GAINES

Eight percent of that group did sample at least one Premier to give us their opinion of the product. Which means that, of all those we interviewed, eighty-one percent sampled anywhere from one or two to an entire pack. Their reaction to Premiers was almost uniform.

Silence a moment. Gaines seems reluctant to go on.

HORRIGAN

They all said they tasted like shit.

ROSS

Like shit?!

HORRIGAN

Like shit.

ROSS

They all said that? Nobody liked them?

GAINES

Fewer than five percent.

ROSS

(to Horrigan)

You said you heard the results were terrific.



HORRIGAN

Nothing wrong with five percent.
I'll take five percent of the
smoking market any God damn day.

ROSS

How much are we in for up to now?

HORRIGAN

To date?

ROSS

To date. To here. To now.

HORRIGAN

Upwards of seven-fifty.

ROSS

We've spent seven hundred and fifty
million dollars and we've come up
with a turd with a dip?

(quickly)
That number never leaves this room,
is that understood? Anybody who
repeats it is sucking around for a
franchise to repair vending machines
in Siberia, is that clear?

(beat)

Jesus Christ, Ed. We poured enough
fucking effort, enough God damn
technology into this project to send
a cigarette to the moon, and all we
got out of it is one that tastes
like it just took a dump?

HORRIGAN

You want to talk about the smell?

ROSS

What'd they say that was like?

HORRIGAN

What's first cousin to shit?

ROSS

What does that mean? A fart? Is
that what you're saying?

1ST SCIENTIST

We've got an awful lot of fart
figures, sir.

ROSS

Tastes like shit and smells like a fart. Looks like we got ourselves a real winner here. It's one God damn unique advertising slogan, I'll give you that. I don't fucking believe this!

(using his lighter on one)

What the hell's wrong with that? I don't smell anything.

1ST SCIENTIST

That's not the way to find out. If you light a Premier with a match instead of a lighter -

(pointing to the model)

- the sulfur reacts badly with the carbon in the tip.

ROSS

Do we have to have the carbon?

1ST SCIENTIST

That's what makes it smokeless.

ROSS

Well, how do we get it shitless?

1ST SCIENTIST

Hard to say. Given enough time --

ROSS

We haven't got any bloody time! We've announced it's coming out this year!

(to Horrigan)

You insisted on it!

HORRIGAN

Because you did!

ROSS

Because you said they'd be ready!

HORRIGAN

They are ready! We just need some adjustments.

ROSS

Jesus, Ed, I don't have to tell you what's riding on this --

(MORE)



ROSS (CONT'D)

(taking an anxious drag)
And what the hell's wrong with the
draw? You need an extra set of
lungs just to take a drag on one of
these bastards.

1ST SCIENTIST

It is a little difficult.

ROSS

A little difficult?

2ND SCIENTIST

It's what we call the "hernia
effect."

ROSS

Oh, is that what we call it?
There's another great billboard.
What do we do? Give away a truss
with every pack?
(visualizing it)
"Warning? This cigarette can tear
your balls off."

Horrigan tries one with a match. Ross winces at the odor.

HORRIGAN

I don't think it's so bad.

ROSS

No parent can smell what's in his
own kid's pants, right? Stop
jerking off, Ed. Who the hell would
sneak into a john to smoke one of
these? Wherever you light one up,
you're in the shithouse. And I'm
beginning to get that same feeling
myself!



INT. THE RJR LABORATORY - A MOMENT LATER

Work comes to a halt, as Ross, Horrigan, et al, make their
way through the room once more, all looking very grim.

2ND WHITE COAT

(to 1st)

Race you to the roof.

EXT. RJR MAIN BUILDING - EVENING

With the group out of earshot, Ross issues a terse warning
to Horrigan.

ROSS

Not a word of this at the next board meeting, Ed. Not word one.

HORRIGAN

It's going to come up, you know that.

ROSS

I'll burn that bridge when I come to it, okay?

As Ross gets into the car and closes the door:

HORRIGAN

There're people on the board who can't wait for you to make a slip like this. If Premiers don't pan out, they're going to nail your nuts to your forehead.

ROSS

(through the open window)

You know the one sure way to save your corporate ass, Ed?

(A beat)

Buy the company before it can fire you.

EXT. WINSTON-SALEM - THE HIGHWAY - EVENING

Ross' limo joins the traffic:

INT./EXT. ROSS' LIMO - BACK SEAT - TRAVELING SHOT - EVENING

Ross, his mind racing, addresses the DRIVER.

ROSS

Get my wife in Palm Beach for me. Try Elizabeth Arden's. Tell her to pack for New York. Never mind, I will.

(dialing his own phone)

You call the plane and tell them instead of Chicago, we're picking up Mrs. Johnson in Florida. Then, get me Jim Robinson at American Express

--

(checks his watch)

- or his place in Connecticut. Also Charlie Hugel in Seoul at the Chosen Hotel. Marge has the number in Atlanta.

(into phone)

Laur? I'm just leaving Winston-Salem. Hold on.

(MORE)



ROSS (CONT'D)
 (to the Driver)
 It's tomorrow night in Korea, so
 first get me whoever wherever it's
 still today.

DRIVER
 Right!

EXT. NORTH CAROLINA HIGHWAY - EVENING

As Ross' limo speeds along:

LAURIE (V.O.)
 You sure, Ross? It's that bad?

ROSS (V.O.)
 Trust me, okay? We huffed and we
 puffed and we came up with a three
 quarters of a billion dollar
 filtered Edsel.

INT./EXT. ROSS' LIMO - TRAVELING SHOT - EVENING

Ross, on his phone, fingers a pack of the hateful Premiers.

ROSS
 If I could, I'd burn every last one
 of them - except you can't even set
 fire to the fuckers!

INTERCUT ROSS WITH:

INT. ELIZABETH ARDEN'S - PALM BEACH - CONTINUOUS

Where a Beautician holds the phone to Laurie's ear, Laurie
 being completely covered in mud.

LAURIE
 So you are going to try to buy the
 company, is that what you're saying?

ROSS
 I've got no other choice.

LAURIE
 Even though you said he'd take over?

ROSS
 Who're you talking about?

LAURIE
 Henry Kravis.



ROSS
Who said anything about Henry
Kravis?

DRIVER (V.O.)
I've got Connecticut, Mr. Johnson.

ROSS
(to Driver)
Right.
(into phone)
No way would I ever do this with
Henry Kravis!

INT. THE ROBINSONS' COUNTRY PLACE - THE KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

A SERVANT is on the phone, while a Second, at an ironing
board, presses \$20 bills, making them smooth before placing
them in a small, man's handbag.

SERVANT
Who shall I tell Mr. Robinson is
calling?

RESUME ROSS ON HIS CAR PHONE

ROSS
Laur? I'll call you back.
(switching phones)
Jim? Is this a bad time?

INT. ROBINSON'S DRESSING ROOM - CLOSE ON ROBINSON - CONTINUOUS

JIM ROBINSON'S strong, courtly face fills the screen.

ROBINSON
(on the phone, pleased)
No, no, I'm just dressing. We're
going to a charity do upstate.

ANOTHER ANGLE REVEALS Robinson is in a Superman costume,
his awesome physique filling it out impressively.

ROBINSON
What's happening? ... Are you
serious? That is one tremendous
step, Ross. Really tremendous! ...
Tomorrow's fine. Absolutely. Come
ahead. We're here the whole week-
end. This is terribly exciting. I
can't tell you how pleased I am that
you thought to call me first. Kiss
your good lady ... I surely will.



He hangs up, exhilarated. Checking the mirror, he flexes his pectorals; then, donning a Superman cape, he enters:

INT. THE ROBINSONS' MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Where he calls to the other, open dressing room door.

ROBINSON

Linda? It's after eight, sweetie.

LINDA (O.S.)

Two seconds. God, I'm on my third can of hair spray!

ROBINSON

(into phone)

William, tell Gary to start her up. We'll only be a minute.

Hanging up, he uses the mirror to adjust the Superman curl on his forehead, then, to the open door, casually:

ROBINSON

That was Ross. He sends his love. He's got a little project he wants some help with.

LINDA (V.O.)

Oh?

ROBINSON

(simply)

He wants to buy out RJR Nabisco.

Instantly, an astonished LINDA ROBINSON appears in the doorway - in a magnificent Marie Antoinette costume that features a two foot high powdered wig atop her head.

LINDA

What?!

A sudden, loud roar of a huge engine, as it fires up o.s.

EXT. THE ROBINSONS' COUNTRY PLACE - FRONT VIEW - NIGHT

The Robinsons exit the house. On the lawn, is their private helicopter, its rotors turning, a pilot at the controls. A Servant hands Robinson his handbag, then stands at attention in the fierce downdraft, as the Man of Steel and Miss Antoinette lift off in their chopper.

The sound of the chopper's engine is replaced by that of a powerful motorcycle's.

EXT. A COUNTRY ROAD - CONNECTICUT - DAY

A Harley Davidson races into view. Its driver: a helmeted Henry Kravis. Following behind is a Range Rover. As Kravis roars out of sight, CAMERA enters the adjoining:

EXT. THE WOODS - CONTINUOUS

Cantering on two magnificent horses, Linda Robinson and Kravis' wife, Carolyne Roehm.

EXT. THE KRAVIS' HORSE BARN - CONTINUOUS

A Groom opens the doors of the vast structure, to permit Linda and Carolyne to ride into:

INT. THE KRAVIS' HORSE BARN - DAY

An equine version of the Kravis' Park Avenue apartment.

CAROLYNE
(dismounting)

You can't stay just a minute? I'd
love you to see some of my new
sketches.

Linda takes a flip phone from its holder on her saddle and dials, as she checks her watch.

LINDA

I can't, Carolyne.

(into phone)

Jim? I'm at chez Kravis. Are they
there? ... Okay. Drink, drink,
drink, I'll be right home.

(punching "end", "clear,"
to Carolyne)

Gotta run. Big binness.

CAROLYNE

Even God rested on Sunday, Linda.

LINDA

She didn't make my salary.

And she spurs her horse toward the doors.

EXT. THE WOODS - DAY

As Linda gallops along, the serenity of the countryside is shattered by a series of loud gunshots. Ignoring them, she rides to and dismounts before:



EXT. THE ROBINSONS' COUNTRY PLACE - TERRACE - DAY

Where lunch for four has been set. Linda retrieves her phone, as her horse is led away. Joining her husband and the Johnsons:

LINDA

Sorry, guys. Nothing like being late to your own house.

ROBINSON

Good ride?

LINDA

Great. Only got two calls.

ROSS

What you need is an unlisted horse.

LINDA

(Laughs; be table)
Shall we?

As they sit, there is another burst of gunfire o.s.

LINDA

I think Henry's taken out a contract on the sky.

LAURIE

Henry?

ROBINSON

Kravis. He's just down the road.

EXT. A COUNTRY FIELD - CONTINUOUS

His motorcycle parked nearby, Kravis is firing a shotgun at birds overhead. A Servant stands beside the Range Rover.

LINDA (V.O.)

Big hunter, our Henry.

Handed a freshly-loaded gun by the Servant, Kravis fires again.

RESUME THE ROBINSONS' TERRACE

LINDA

Okay! Tell me, tell me!

ROBINSON

Ross has agreed to let Shearson
Lehman raise all the money he needs
for the buyout.

ROSS

Just feels right to me. You guys
are like family.

LINDA

Ross, that is so super! Who else
knows? Have you told anyone else?
God, let the answer be no!

ROSS

I called Charlie Hugel last night.
(seeing her face drop)
Linda, he is the chairman of my
board. I got him in Korea.

INT. CHOSEN HOTEL - SUITE, LIVING ROOM - CLOSE ON HUGEL - DAY

On the phone, Hugel, his cheek pressed down against a
towel, is troubled by what he's heard.

HUGEL

A low stock price is not the end of
the world, Ross. Buying the company
is like shooting your arm off to get
rid of a hangnail. Have you thought
it all through? All the
ramifications?

INT. ROSS' GULFSTREAM - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ross, abed on his plane, in pajamas, on the phone.

ROSS

Jim's not about to steer me wrong,
Charlie. Not as a friend and not as
president of American Express. With
their controlling interest in
Shearson, he'll be looking over
their shoulder the whole time.
Leave it all to me. You just try to
have some fun over there.

INT. HUGEL'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Hugel, in the buff, on a massage table, an adorable Korean
Masseuse walking on his back, continues on the phone.

HUGEL

I'm doing my level best, Ross. I'm
doing my level best.

RESUME ROBINSONS' TERRACE

LINDA

(to Ross)

You're going to need Charlie and the
board in your corner. You'll want
'em as sympathetic as possible.

ROSS

Anyone ever treated a board better?
Free company condos? Private planes
up the doodah? I've made 'em the
velvet enema crowd.

LINDA

(to Robinson)

Have you told Peter?

I've got a call in to him.

ROSS

(explains, to Laurie)

Peter Cohen. He runs Shearson for
Jim.

QUICK CUT TO:

INT. AN INDOOR TENNIS COURT - NEW YORK CITY - DAY

A grim PETER COHEN and Jim Robinson in a murderous singles
exchange, their volleys sounding like gunshots.

ROBINSON (V.O.)

Peter's been champing at the bit to
pull off this kind of deal. Peter
is ready.

RESUME THE ROBINSONS' TERRACE

ROSS

You mean he's never done a buyout
before?

ROBINSON

No, but it's all pretty straight-
forward. The procedure's no
mystery.

(MORE)



ROBINSON (CONT'D)

You just have to make all the company's records available to him, so that he and his people can come with a proper bid.

ROSS

No problem.

ROBINSON

He can probably outline the whole deal while you're down in Palm Beach.

ROSS

Can he do in three weeks? I'd love to be able to spring it at the next board meeting.

I don't see ~~any~~ not.

LURIE

It's all going to happen that fast?

LINDA

It's got to be fast. Fast and quiet. Confidentiality's critical. The press could go bananas with this and Ross'll have a feeding frenzy on his hands. Just one word has to get out that the company's for sale and everybody and his brother'll try to buy it.

There is another volley of gunfire, o.s.

ROBINSON

Or everybody and his cousin.

LINDA

(to Ross)

Can I put in a pitch for my firm to handle the PR for you, or am I being too piggy?

ROSS

I was saving that for dessert.

Which pleases both the Robinsons immensely.

ROBINSON

A toast. To Ross Johnson - the future owner of RJR Nabisco.



LINDA

Hear, hear!

Before they can clink glasses, a phone chirps. Getting it:

ROBINSON

Peter? Cancel your life for the next two weeks, fella. You've got a load of work ahead of you. Hold on.

He clinks glasses with the others and takes a sip of his wine. As they drink, Linda notices Laurie's pensive look.

LINDA

Laur? You okay?

LAURIE

It's just I can't imagine things being any better than they are for me and Ross. I mean, we're living a scratch life now. I'd hate for anything to spoil it.

ROSS

Everything's going to be fine, babe.

LAURIE

You're sure? We're not going wind up with millions of Oreos in the garage, are we?

On their laughter, another salvo of shotgun is fired o.s., the sound reverberating ominously.

A SERIES OF QUICK CUTS:

- a) Peter Cohen going over spread sheets with Ross.
- b) Cohen and Shearson Staff, studying charts and graphs, with help from Ed Horrigan.
- c) Shearson copy and coffee machines going full tilt.
- d) Cohen oversees his People laboring at banks of computer monitors. One, young man, ROBERT ALLEGRO, acts as Cohen's chief assistant.

INT. COHEN'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

An exhausted Cohen, in bed, surrounded by paperwork, a dead cigar in his mouth, his eyelids growing heavy. Beside him, his wife, KAREN, reads "Bonfire of the Vanities."

KAREN
Turn off your light.

COHEN
Turn yours off.

She watches him fight sleep, intent on finishing his work.

KAREN
Peter, do me a favor. Don't make me
the richest widow in the building.

He doesn't hear her. He's dead to the world, the cigar
still between his lips. Leaving it there, Karen switches
off her light and goes to sleep.

EXT. ROSS' PALM BEACH HOUSE - THE DEN - EVENING

Laurie and Rocco watch the LA Dodgers' locker room cele-
bration of their victory in the '88 World Series, as Ross
looks at an incoming fax message.

ROSS
From Linda. I wonder if Jim minds
having a fax machine in bed with
them?

(reading it)
Just confirming Peter coming down
tomorrow to pitch the deal.

LAURIE
(a bit wistfully)
She's really into this kind of
action, isn't she?

ROSS
Linda? She thrives on it.

INT. SHEARSON OFFICES - BOARD ROOM - NIGHT

The midnight oil burns for an unshaven Cohen and a dynamic
Linda, working with Shearson Personnel. The room is awash
in take-out Chinese and pizza, the latter brought in by
ANTHONY, a helmeted, Spandexed delivery man. As Robert
Allegro and a Shearson Woman exit the room:

ROSS (V.O.)
She loves the game-playing, all the
power moves. It turns a lot of
people on.

INT. SHEARSON OFFICES - SUPPLY ROOM - NIGHT

Robert Allegro, his trousers down, and the Shearson Woman, her trousers down, grind away at each other against the Xerox machine, as it grinds out page after page of paper work. A SECOND SHEARSON WOMAN, entering unexpectedly, is barely fazed by the action.

SECOND SHEARSON WOMAN

I'd like six copies of that, please.

EXT. ROSS' PALM BEACH HOUSE - DAY

Parked before the house is a white stretch.

INT. ROSS' PALM BEACH HOUSE - POOLSIDE CABANA - DAY

Ross is playing host to Cohen and Allegro. Laurie, sunning nearby in a string bikini, is ~~no~~ a small distraction for young Allegro.

COHEN

I'm just going to give you the broad strokes, okay? The whole, actual deal document is taller than my son. Rob?

ALLEGRO

RJR Nabisco shares are presently trading at fifty-three and an eighth. The highest they've ever been was in the neighborhood of seventy-one.

ROSS

Which is where they belong.

COHEN

Okay, you ready? Our proposal is that you make an offer to the board on Wednesday to buy the company at seventy-five dollars a share.

ROSS

Seventy-five? Jesus, that sounds high!

COHEN

It is high. That's the idea. It's got to be as attractive as hell - and still make sense to us, of course.

ROSS

What would that come to? How much would we need to raise?



COHEN

We'll be looking for seventeen billion dollars.

ROSS

Holy shit!

ALLEGRO

Seventeen point six, actually.

ROSS

That is one pissload of money!

COHEN

Exactly! We're throwing the kind of numbers at the board that no one else possibly can. In one shot, we're knocking out any and all conceivable competition. We'll have the field all to ourselves.

ROSS

But at that price, with that kind of debt load, how long's it going to be before you and your bean counters start trying to pare down company expenses, huh? All those eraserheads telling me how many jets I can have and all that nickle-nursing horseshit?

COHEN

Never! You run the company any way you see fit.

ROSS

We're talking total control now.

COHEN

Absolutely. We'd never expose our investors to this much risk if we didn't think your expertise wasn't going to get it all back for them.

ROSS

I'll have to borrow an extra ass to work off to do it, I can tell you that.

COHEN

I think you'll find it worth it.

Allegro passes a document to Cohen, who passes it to Ross.

COHEN

This is what you - personally - stand to make over the next five years, once you take over the company.

ROSS

(amazed)

Are these figures for real?

COHEN

It could even be more.

ROSS

Holy Moly!

COHEN

We wouldn't want to advertise those numbers, of course.

ROSS

I don't think a skid writer'd have enough smoke for 'em all, do you?

Cohen laughs. As Ross further scans the document:

COHEN

You're gonna do extremely well, Ross. We all are.

(re pack of handy
Premiers)

Especially when these guys come out, I hear.

(withdrawing one)

May I?

Allegro reaches for his matches to light Cohen's Premier. Ross hastily produces a lighter.

ROSS

Here!

Cohen first experiences the hernia effect; then, frowning:

COHEN

What is that taste? What do they taste like?

ROSS

We're working on it!

EXT. CHARLIE BROWN AIRPORT - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: "Charlie Brown Airport. Atlanta, Georgia."

INT. RJR TRAFFIC CONTROL TOWER - CONTINUOUS

RJR Traffic Controllers talk down various RJR aircraft.

a) Horrigan, on his jet, being manicured by an RJR Stewardess.

b) RJR board members, JUANITA KREPS and VERNON JORDAN, arriving in separate planes.

c) Ross and Laurie, in flight, play backgammon. On the TV screen in b.g.: the gin rummy game from "Born Yesterday." Rocco, resting on his seat, is looking poorly.

LAURIE

You think he's coming down with something?

d) Onboard his jet, John Greenicus is looking over corporate papers, with growing dismay.

e) Various RJR Board Members pile into maroon stretches lined up on the tarmac.

f) Upon his arrival, Hugel receives the special treatment reserved for the chairman of the board.

INT. RJR HANGAR - EVENING

Ross, having landed, issue orders to an RJR Underling.

INT. ROSS' GULFSTREAM - COCKPIT - NIGHT

An RJR PILOT, at the controls, speaks into his headset.

RJR PILOT

RJ One Passenger Mr. G. Shepherd is on board. We're ready to roll.

INT. RJR CONTROL TOWER - CONTINUOUS

RJR TRAFFIC CONTROLLER

RJ One, you're cleared for takeoff.
(smiles)
Give our best to Mr. Shepherd.

INT. ROSS' GULFSTREAM - CONTINUOUS

RJR PILOT

RJ One rolling. See you, pappy.

EXT. THE RUNWAY - CONTINUOUS

Ross' Gulfstream races down the runway. As it takes off:

INT./EXT. ROSS' GULFSTREAM - TRAVELING SHOT - CONTINUOUS
 An RJR STEWARDESS, seated, belted, addresses someone o.s.

RJR STEWARDESS

Poor baby.

ANOTHER ANGLE REVEALS the plane's lone passenger: a very sad-looking Rocco.

RJR STEWARDESS

You'll be a lot happier back in Florida.

EXT. CHARLIE BROWN AIRPORT - CONTINUOUS

Ross' Gulfstream climbs up into the sky.

INT. JOHNSONS' HOUSE - BEDROOM - ATLANTA - NIGHT

Dark. Ross and Laurie lie in bed. After a moment:

Still awake?

LAURIE

ROSS

I'll tell you the truth, babe. My whole life is such a dream, I hate going to sleep and taking a chance on having one that's second rate.

(a beat)

I know my lapels are too wide and my hair's a tad long for the Fortune 500 crowd. I know just opening my toilet mouth sends some people flying to confession, but if all goes well tomorrow, this paper boy from Winnipeg is gonna own the nineteenth biggest corporation in America.

LAURIE

If I'm lucky, do I get to kiss your ring?

ROSS

(pulling her closer)

That's as good a place to start as any.

INT. THE ROBINSONS' NEW YORK APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Linda, in pj's, does energetic push-ups on the floor beside the bed. On the other side, Jim, in boxers, does two push-ups for each one of hers. Without stopping:

LINDA

Jim? Heart of hearts, bottom line,
you really think Peter's can carry
this off? Something this big?

ROBINSON

Just keep everything crossed that he
does. I'm pretty far out on a limb
on this one. I figure we'll be
okay, with my head on his shoulders
- and your head on mine.

(a beat)

If I didn't think so, I wouldn't be
this relaxed.

(counting his push-ups)

Ninety-seven ... ninety-eight ...
ninety-nine ...

INT. COHEN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Karen Cohen is still reading "Bonfire." Cohen's lamp is
off, his eyes are shut

COHEN

Turn off your light.

KAREN

I thought you weren't worried.

COHEN

Worried? That I'm going to pull off
the biggest deal in history?
Worried that it's going to kill
Henry Kravis to find out everybody
else on the street isn't just shit?
(eyes opening wide)

Shit!

KAREN

What's wrong?

COHEN

I just remembered what something
tastes like!

KAREN

(baffled)

Huh?

INT. RJR EXECUTIVE BUILDING - ATLANTA - ELEVATOR - DAY

A troubled John Greeniaus rides up to his destination -



INT. RJR NABISCO EXECUTIVE BUILDING - TOP FLOOR - DAY

- steps from the elevator, past all the costly Chinese screens and vases that lead to:

INT. ROSS' ATLANTA OFFICE - DAY

Amidst thirty thousand dollars worth of antique china, an ebullient Ross greets Greeniaus, as Ed Horrigan watches.

ROSS

Johnny!

GREENIAUS

Am I breaking anything up?

HORRIGAN

You're not breaking anything up, no.

His smug chuckle baffles Greeniaus. Seeing a set of rolled-up plans in Greeniaus' hands:

What'cha got, John?

GREENIAUS

They came this morning, just as I was leaving. It's an awful lot to take in, Ross.

ROSS

Hold on to 'em, okay? I got something important to tell you.

GREENIAUS

(incredulously)

Something important?

(re plans)

More important than spending two and a half billion dollars to expand the bakeries?

HORRIGAN

"Cookieville." Great name, Ross.

GREENIAUS

But none of it makes any sense.

ROSS

We'll talk about it, John.

GREENIAUS

So much of it's so wasteful, so unnecessary. A ten million dollar computer to bring the onion bits to the mixing dough, when all it takes is one guy on a fork lift to do it? That's just throwing money away.

HORRIGAN

He's right, y'know.

Greeniaus is surprised to have Horrigan on his side.
Until:

HORRIGAN

It'd be cheaper to have the fork lift guy do it in a Rolls Royce. Work it out, boys. Good luck later, Ross.

Thanks, Ed

On Horrigan's exit:

ROSS

Just cool it a minute, Johnny, okay? How 'bout some coffee? Tea?

GREENIAUS

I'm fine. I'm good.

ROSS

Good's cotton stocking's next to great, pal. I'm gonna make you rich, John!

GREENIAUS

You already have, Ross.

ROSS

You only think you are. That all changes today. Sit down, pardner. Right here.

He puts Greeniaus in his, Ross' own chair behind his desk, clearly a place Greeniaus covets.

ROSS

You ready? I'm going to buy out the company!

Greeniaus is clearly rocked by the news.

GREENIAUS

I had no idea.



Ross hands him the proposal to look over, as:

ROSS

I'm gonna wrap it up in a week, ten days at the most!

GREENIAUS

(in disbelief)

You're doing this with just Ed and three others from management?

ROSS

Right!

GREENIAUS

Why not everybody? Why didn't you include all of us?

ROSS

John, if this deal goes through, the debt load's going to be so heavy, there's no question a few divisions are going to have to go on block. Obviously, I can't have partners owning the company with me who aren't ever going to be with the company, can I?

GREENIAUS

(horrified)

You're not going to sell off Nabisco?

ROSS

I'd rather not, no, not if I don't have to.

GREENIAUS

My God, Ross, how can you talk about expanding the company in one breath and dumping it in the next?

ROSS

Whatever happens, you're safe, John. After the incredible job you've done with the division, there's no question whoever buys it'll want you to stay on and run it for them.

Greeniaus is numb with disappointment.

ROSS

If you're not happy with the new brass, with your severance deal plus your what - fifty thousand shares of Nabisco? -

(MORE)

ROSS (CONT'D)

you can walk away with seven million bucks, maybe more. We're not talking just "fuck you" money, John-boy. We're talking "fuck everybody" money!

GREENIAUS

(crushed)

Fuck everybody. Right, Ross. Fuck everybody.

ROSS

Wish me luck?

GREENIAUS

I just pray you get it. I really do.

ROSS

(missing the point)

Thanks, Johnny. I appreciate that.

INT. RJR NABISCO - GREENIAUS' OFFICE - DAY

A miserable Greeniaus is on the phone.

GREENIAUS

The man is unreal. One minute he sits me in his chair, the next he's pushing it out the window ... Honey, I know we're set for life. I'm talking about the principle. He just hasn't got any!

(checks his watch)

Christ, it's time.

INT. RJR NABISCO BOARD ROOM - ATLANTA - DAY

The board meeting is in progress.

ROSS

Mr. Chairman, members of the board -
- I don't have to tell any one here that RJR Nabisco has remained wildly undervalued despite our steady, yearly profits and despite your management's best efforts to increase shareholder values.

(a pregnant pause)

After studying every conceivable option, we feel that the best possible way - the only way to recognize these values - is through a leveraged buyout.

The silence is thunderous. Then:

VERNON JORDAN

That's awfully radical, isn't it, Ross? The wolf's not exactly at the door around here.

ROSS

I'm not pushing the panic button, Vernon. I'm simply offering it as the one option that best looks after our shareholders.

VERNON JORDAN

You don't think shares'll get a big boost when we start selling Premiers?

Ross avoids Ed Horrigan's glance.

ROSS

As much faith as I have in Premiers, they're still a crashshoot.

ANOTHER BOARD MEMBER

Are we even going to get those development figures?

ROSS

Of course, you are, but whatever they are, I'm talking about a bird in the hand being worth a whole lot more a share than one in the bush. I'm talking about putting a ton of money into everybody's pocket right now.

HUGEL

You believe what you have in mind is doable?

ROSS

Absolutely. And at a figure much, much higher than what the stock is selling for today.

JUANITA KREPS

What stage are you at? How far along has this gone?

ROSS

I can only tell you that if the board gives us a green light, we would be in a position to wrap it up very quickly. I'm talking about in a matter of days.



HUGEL

We'd want to be sure the number you're thinking about is not frivolous.

ROSS

You'll have to define frivolous for me, Mr. Chairman.

HUGEL

I'd say your offer has to be north of the highest price the company's ever traded at.

ROSS

Would you say that seventy-five a share meets that geographic requirement?

The number impresses them all - except for Greeniaus, who has a much less positive reaction. Staff immediately begins to distribute fat copies of the proposal.

HUGEL

I suggest you and your group leave the room, Ross, so that the board can discuss your proposal.

ROSS

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you all. Happy reading.

As Ross, Horrigan and several others exit, board members dig into the proposal, no one more avidly than Greeniaus.

INT. RJR NABISCO - EXECUTIVE MEN'S ROOM - DAY

Ross and Horrigan, at the urinals.

HORRIGAN

Good job, buddy. Pretty good tap dancing, too.

ROSS

Let's hope.

HORRIGAN

It was a perfect pitch. Short and sweet. You're not nervous, are you?

ROSS

Hell, no. I always take a leak with my fly closed.

CLOSE - A TV REPORTER'S FACE

TV REPORTER

The LBO, according to the company's official release, would be the largest takeover in corporate history.

INT./EXT. A TV NEWS HELICOPTER - DAY

A Cameraman focuses on the TV Reporter, as the Pilot keeps the craft hovering close to the RJR Nabisco building.

TV REPORTER

In a surprise move, the company's chief executive officer, Ross Johnson, has offered his stockholders seventeen point six billion dollars for their shares of RJR Nabisco, suppliers of a score of some of America's favorite products, such as Oreos, ~~Samels~~ Winston and Salems. Seventeen billion dollars. Now, that's cigarette money.

The above is heard over:

A QUICK SERIES OF CUTS:

- a) A horde of TV crews, outside the RJR Nabisco building.
- b) Inside, a tight-lipped Greeniaus, besieged by the Press, makes for the elevators.
- c) Horrigan enters the RJR Executive Men's Room, and beats a hasty retreat, as a Woman Reporter springs out of one of the stalls, microphone and tape recorder in hand.

INT. ROSS' ATLANTA HOUSE - INDOOR SWIMMING POOL - DAY

The TV Reporter is seen on a poolside TV. Laurie, wrapped in a towel, is on the phone.

LAURIE

How you doing, sweetheart?

INT. ROSS JOHNSON'S ATLANTA OFFICE - DAY

Ross, looking harassed; the sound of the helicopter o.s.

ROSS

(into phone)

Charlie threw me a real curve putting out that press release.

INTERCUT ROSS AND LAURIE

ROSS

(continuing)

That's the last thing I expected to happen; or, sure as hell, wanted to.

LAURIE

(gasps)

My God!

ROSS

What?

LAURIE

Is your TV on?

By remote control, Ross activates his set and Senator Bentsen is immediately seen chewing out Senator Quayle.

SENATOR BENTSEN

... Senator, you're no Jack Kennedy.

(in phone)

Which -- ?

LAURIE

Five.

Ross switches channels and his jaw drops open.

ANGLE - LAURIE'S TV SET

The open-mouthed Ross is on the TV screen, phone receiver in one hand, remote changer in the other. Realizing he's being filmed from the helicopter outside his windows, he utters a soundless, unmistakable, "Oh, fuck!"

LAURIE

(shrieks)

Ross!

On TV, Ross' image clicks his remote toward the chopper to make it go away. The aircraft is instantly replaced onscreen by an animated Nintendo helicopter.

ANOTHER ANGLE REVEALS:

INT./EXT. A STRETCH LIMO - BACK SEAT - DAY

Cohen rides with his young SON, in a school uniform and playing the Nintendo game on the limo's TV set, its constant beeps and buzzes punctuating the scene. Stuck in



traffic, Cohen happily puffs a big cigar, as he reads the New York Times. Seated on the bench opposite, is Cohen's assistant, Robert Allegro, reading the Wall Street Journal.

COHEN

Made a little history today, huh, Rob?

ALLEGRO

Definitely kicked some -
(in deference to the boy)
- A, yes, sir.

The phone warbles. Allegro picks up.

ALLEGRO

Yeah? ... Hold on.
(handing Cohen the phone)
Linda Robinson.

COHEN

(smiles)
Linda? God damn bombshell, huh?

A shabby Panhandler appears alongside Cohen's open window, his begging utensil, a filthy Styrofoam cup. Cohen's smile fades, as he listens on the phone

COHEN

I don't understand.

Cohen's Son begins to cough. Realizing it's the cigar smoke, Cohen lowers his window. Continuing on the phone:

COHEN

Hold it ... Wait a minute ...
(obviously he can't get a
word in; sotto, to
Allegro)

Ross is having a shit fit over the
press release.

(into phone)

Linda ... Linda ... Listen, fair's
fair, all right?

(throwing his cigar out)

Nobody else figured on that, either,
did they?

As the Panhandler neatly catches Cohen's cigar in his cup:

COHEN

(into the phone)

I'll be there as soon as I can.

EXT. THE STREET - CONTINUOUS

The Panhandler waves his thanks to Cohen's departing limo.

INT. ROSS' GULFSTREAM - TRAVELING SHOT - DAY

Ross paces angrily, seemingly talking to no one.

ROSS
How the hell could Cohen not have anticipated the board announcing it? Seventeen billion dollars, for Chrissake!

INTERCUT ROSS WITH:

INT. JIM ROBINSON'S OFFICE - DAY

Robinson and Linda are listening to the speaker phone.

ROSS (V.O.)
That's like trying to sweep a ton of elephant shit under the carpet. I can't believe we're off to this kind of a start!

The RJR STEWARDESS gestures to Ross that the plane is starting its descent. As Ross sits and buckles himself:

ROSS
(continuing)
If Shearson blows this deal, you're gonna have your own board to answer to, Jim. I'm not in this alone!

ROBINSON
Nobody knows that better, Ross.



EXT. 9 WEST 57TH STREET BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

As Cohen enters the building, a chauffeured blue Mercedes 500 delivers Henry Kravis, wearing his hunting face. Heading for the building entrance, he passes the mammoth red figure "9" that stands before it. On the other side of the "9," one more of the city's ragged rejects, her two supermarket carts piled high with God-knows-what.

INT. 9 WEST 57TH STREET - THE LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Cohen boards an elevator, as Kravis appears in the lobby, hailing his cousin and partner, GEORGE ROBERTS, who enters the building from the 58th Street side.

KRAVIS

George!

INT. AN ELEVATOR - 9 WEST - CONTINUOUS

Cohen rides up, gets off when the overhead panel reads: "44 - American Express."

INT. A SECOND ELEVATOR - 9 WEST - CONTINUOUS

Kravis and Roberts ride up, both mad as hell.

KRAVIS

Seventy-five a share? Do you believe the gall?

ROBERTS

He's trying to steal the company. They're going for a slam dunk.

The car stops. The panel reads: "42 - Kolhberg, Kravis Roberts & Co." As they exit:

ROBERTS

Trying to pull it off before anyone else can come up with another bid.

INT. KKR - KRAVIS' OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Roberts and Kravis, in the latter's opulent lair.

KRAVIS

(his anger building)

I was the one who gave Johnson the whole buyout idea in the first place! Laid it all out for him! I mean, there has to be some minimal appreciation on the man's part of how the system works, some respect for the rules.

ROBERTS

It's his first time in the jungle, I guess.

KRAVIS

I'm not giving him any points for innocence. He got the art of the double cross down real fast. And, of all the people in the world, what drew him to Peter Cohen? Shearson has no experience with leveraged buyouts.

(MORE)

KRAVIS (CONT'D)

You sure as hell don't start with the biggest one ever. Because of Jim Robinson, you think? He and Johnson got awfully thick down in Atlanta.

ROBERTS

The word is Johnson's hired Linda to do his PR.

KRAVIS

Linda? Really? Is that a fact or just a rumor?

ROBERTS

A rumor's just a premature fact, Henry.

KRAVIS

Linda, huh?

INT. AMERICAN EXPRESS - JIM ROBINSON'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The meeting between Linda, Cohen and Jim Robinson.

ROBINSON

(to Cohen)

It just doesn't make sense that you didn't sew up the deal before you disclosed it. Why'd you leave yourself so vulnerable?

COHEN

Isn't anybody listening? I didn't disclose it. Charlie Hugel sprung that press release all on his own.

LINDA

Ross feels you should have anticipated it. Frankly, so do I.

COHEN

No offense, but I'm not running the PR on this deal, am I?

Maybe no offense, but definitely a needle.

ROBINSON

Charlie's plainly advertising, fishing for somebody to top Ross' offer.

COHEN

It'll never happen. Nobody's going to step up with a higher number. Nobody else has the muscle.

ROBINSON

Nobody except Henry.

COHEN

Henry would never give Ross the things we have. Can you see him allowing Ross total control of the company? Never. Trust me. In a week, this'll be a done deal.

The desk phones chirps.

INT. KKR - KRAVIS' OUTER OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

KRAVIS' SECRETARY

(into her phone)

I have her on line two.

INT. KRAVIS' OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

KRAVIS

(into phone)

Linda?

INTERCUT WITH JIM ROBINSON'S OFFICE

Linda, on the phone, covers the receiver and mouths the word, "Henry" to Jim and Cohen.

KRAVIS

You've just floored us with this RJR thing. Are you aware that we're the ones who gave Johnson that idea in the first place?

LINDA

(noncommittally)

Oh?

KRAVIS

It's not possible for us to sit on the sidelines on this, Linda. I want you to pass that on.

LINDA

I will, Henry.



KRAVIS

Make it very clear to everyone. I
want to hear back.

(simply, deadly)

Soonest.

CAMERA STAYS with Linda, as she hangs up.

LINDA

He's pissed.

COHEN

Tough.

ROBINSON

What did he say?

LINDA

He said he's not going to sit on the
sidelines.

COHEN

(a smug smile)

He only has to for a few more days.

LINDA

He said he was the one who gave Ross
the idea for a leveraged buyout.

COHEN

And Ross decided to go with us. So?

LINDA

LBO's are his game, Peter. He
invented them. It's clear he
doesn't want you playing in his
sandbox.

COHEN

I'll make a note to be scared.

(seeing their concern)

Come on. What's he gonna do? What
can he do about it?

LINDA

Why don't you meet with him and find
out?

COHEN

Why don't I find out and then meet
with him?

ROBINSON

Henry's not a man you stonewall,
Peter. Not Henry Kravis. Not KKR.

LINDA

(to Peter)

You need to raise an awful lot of
money, y'know.

COHEN

What does that mean?

LINDA

Henry could be very helpful, if you
have any trouble getting it up.

COHEN

(bristling)

I don't expect that to be a problem.

ROBINSON

You've got to see him, Peter. At
the worst, it's simply good
politics.

(checks the time)

Linda.

LINDA

(collecting her stuff, to
Cohen)

Ross is up from Atlanta. My guess
is he flew in on his own steam.

EXT. LA GUARDIA AIRPORT - TARMAC - DAY

Linda, standing beside her stretch, watches Ross deplaning
his Gulfstream.

INT./EXT. ROSS' STRETCH - BACK SEAT - TRAVELING SHOT - DAY

Heading for Manhattan, Linda does her best to unruffle
Ross' feathers.

ROSS

Why the hell does anybody have to
meet with him at all?

LINDA

Jim thinks it's best. So do I.

ROSS

Why? What does any of this have to
do with Henry Kravis?

INT. 9 WEST 57TH BUILDING - AN ELEVATOR - DAY

Riding up with three Suits and Anthony, the pizza delivery man, Ross and Linda keep mum. The car stops; the Suits get off. Traveling upward again, Anthony gives no sign that he has any interest in the talk that ensues:

ROSS

A million people talked to me about doing an LBO. What if he was the first? Am I supposed to send two cents to Thomas Edison every time I turn a light on?

The car stops. The panel reads: "48 - RJR NABISCO CO."

INT. ROSS JOHNSON'S NEW YORK OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

As Ross and Linda enter:

ROSS

I just don't understand the purpose of meeting with him, that's all. I mean, Henry Kravis is not the Pope, for Chrissake. Or has he bought up all the Vatican shares?

LINDA

We have to gauge his intentions. See if he's going to stay out of this, or if there's some way you he wants to be part of this that could be to our mutual advantage.

ROSS

Then, I'm the one to talk to him.

LINDA

Better for Peter to do it. He and Henry speak the same language.

ROSS

Hell, I speak bullshit. Picked it up my first day in New York.

LINDA

Ross ... trust me?

EXT. WEST 57TH STREET - DAY

The CAMERA PANS from the windows of Ross' 48th floor office down to the windows of Kravis' 42nd floor office.

INT. KKR - KRAVIS' OFFICE - DAY

Cohen has appeared for his audience at KKR.

COHEN

How are you, Henry? Hi, George.

ROBERTS

Hi, Peter.

Kravis remains silent. Cohen looks at the hunting prints on the wall, obviously collectors' items.

COHEN

These are great, Henry. I could use a few dozen myself.

That gaucherie out of the way, he offers them cigars. Kravis just stares at him. Roberts shakes his head.

ROBERTS

I'm trying to stay alive till my kids graduate.

COHEN

(re his own cigar)

You mind?

ROBERTS

Aren't they really better after dinner?

Cohen puts it into his mouth, unlit. After a heavy silence:

KRAVIS

I'd be very surprised if you end up buying RJR Nabisco at seventy-five, Peter.

COHEN

Why's that?

KRAVIS

We've been looking at the company for a long time. Seventy-five is cheap. Very cheap.

COHEN

It's what Ross wants. We're just getting the financing for him.

ROBERTS

What's your agreement? What's Shearson going to get out of this?

COHEN

It's your normal deal. Nothing special.

KRAVIS

What does that mean? Five, ten, fifteen, thirty percent of the company, what?

COHEN

In that range.

ROBERTS

And what's Johnson's deal? Also somewhere between zero and a hundred percent? How much of the company will he own?

COHEN

Obviously, those figures are confidential.

KRAVIS

(a beat)

We have to be on this, Peter. I didn't give this buyout idea to Ross Johnson just so he could send me an "up yours" card.

The tension in the room goes up a few notches.

ROBERTS

Maybe there's some way we can work this out.

COHEN

Work it out how?

ROBERTS

There're a couple of options. We can compete. That would drive the price up and make the debt so high, nobody could afford to win.

KRAVIS

Or you could sell us Ross' food business and you take tobacco for yourself.

COHEN

We're not looking for partners..

KRAVIS

Well, in that case, you could just step aside.

COHEN

What're you, kidding? You want us to step aside? After all we've done on this?

KRAVIS

We would honor that. What about, say, a fee of a hundred, a hundred and twenty-five million, plus an option to buy a ten percent stake in the company?

COHEN

Are you serious? I don't believe this! You're offering me a fucking bribe?

KRAVIS

That's an offensive word, Peter.

COHEN

You're trying buy me off and I'm offensive? You're offering me a hundred and twenty-five million dollars to take a cab and you're offended? Better stop hunting so much, Henry. You're holding the gun too close to your head.

ROBERTS

We're just offering a variety of options, Peter.

COHEN

Well, you can stick that one up a variety of asses, okay? And stop trying to good cop/bad cop me into the ground here.

KRAVIS

One way or another, we're in this, Peter. We're not just going to disappear. You just pick whichever way you think is best and get back to us.

COHEN

(standing, to leave)
Right, yeah. I'll do that.



KRAVIS

Before the board accepts your bid,
of course.

COHEN

As soon as I can.

ROBERTS

Love home, Peter.

Cohen lights his cigar, producing the maximum amount of unpleasant smoke.

COHEN

You, too, George.

The games men play.

INT. KKR - ELEVATOR BAY - DAY

Cohen with his back to CAMERA, faces the elevator doors.

COHEN (V.O.)

Jim?

Entering an empty car, we see he's on his flip phone.

COHEN

If we get a quick answer from the board, we'll be alright. We're just too many jumps ahead of them.

As the elevator doors close.

RESUME KRAVIS' OFFICE

ROBERTS

What do you think, Henry? What's our next move?

KRAVIS

(with a grim smile)

Napalm.

INT. THE ROBINSONS' NEW YORK APARTMENT - THE GYMNASIUM - DAY

Linda, in tights, works out on a NordicTrack, while Jim holds a two hundred pound barbell over his head. Linda stops to answer the phone.

LINDA

Yeah? ... You're not serious?!



ROBINSON

What?

LINDA

It's Ross. It just came over the wire. Henry's made a tender offer for RJR Nabisco!

ROBINSON

How much?

LINDA

Ninety dollars a share!

ROBINSON

Ninety? Nine-oh?

LINDA

That's twenty million dollars!

ROBINSON

Jesus!

He drops the barbells to the floor with a mighty clang.

INT. THE APARTMENT BELOW THE ROBINSONS' GYM - CONTINUOUS

The Occupants, breakfasting in their magnificent dining room, watch in amazement as the impact from the floor above causes the three Picassos, a Monet and a Van Gogh to jump off the wall - and their Calder stabile to go crazy.

INT. 9 WEST 57TH STREET - JOHNSON'S OFFICE - DAY

Ross, is on the phone, mad as hell.

ROSS

Well, somebody pissed somebody off! I don't know what happened at that meeting, Jim, but somebody had to put their finger up somebody's ass or Kravis wouldn't be dropping this bomb on us. Peter Cohen just sticks to raising the money from now on, is that understood? That's all he does. I run the operation. First, the press release and now this! Do you know how much more this deal is gonna cost now? Do you know how crazy the stock's gonna go?

INT. RJ REYNOLDS FACTORY - WINSTON-SALEM - DAY

Two RJR WORKERS on the production line.

1ST RJR WORKER

Family's been pilin' 'em up since my granddaddy worked here. "Buyin' RJR stocks ain' binness," he usta say. "It's more like religion."

2ND RJR WORKER

What's ninety a share make yours worth, ya figger?

1ST RJR WORKER

'Round a million three.

2ND RJR WORKER

Makes a body believe in God, don' it?

INT. ELIZABETH ARDEN'S - NEW YORK - DAY

Laurie, having a leg wax, listens intently to her WAXER.

WAXER

The way the low goes anybody makes a tender offer, the company has to answer within ten days. That means Mr. Johnson's bid - his seventy-five? - that's like, on hold, because KKR's stuck its foot in the door. Now, your husband's gonna hafta top what they offered. Plus which, of course, they can turn around then and top him. Your husband's got one fight on his hands, Mrs. Johnson, what can I tell you?

CLOSE ON A PAIR OF GUNS

A man's hands enters the frame to pick them up. ANOTHER ANGLE REVEALS:

INT. THE JOHNSONS' NEW YORK APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ross, dressed in cowboy clothes, is putting the six-shooters into the holsters of his gun belt, as the TV (MOS) is showing Bush-Dukakis election night results.

LAURIE (O.S.)

Honey, zip me?

Laurie enters, dressed as a Old West dancing girl, lots of leg, lots of cleavage. As Ross zips the back of her dress:

LAURIE

How do I look?

ROSS

I'd say good enough to eat, but we're late already.

LAURIE

(re her cleavage)

Not too much?

ROSS

Hey, if you got 'em, flaunt 'em. We'd get stares tonight if you were wearing a gunny sack. We're just not members of the club. You haven't had anything lifted or tucked, and I'm not part of their daisy chain that never stops wheeling and dealing and screwing each other over.

LAURIE

But they all get along with you.

ROSS

They've got a hardon for Nabisco, babe. They're just being nice to the driver. Anybody in this crowd's not worth nine figures, they think you're on food stamps.

INT. HENRY KRAVIS' DRESSING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Kravis, in old Levis and a denim shirt, is putting on a pair of well-worn boots. Whistling cheerfully, he enters:

INT. THE KRAVIS MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

where Carlyne is donning a stunning cowgirl's outfit.

CAROLYNE

Henry, you're amazing.

KRAVIS

Didn't you know?

He sits and props his feet up - revealing one of his boot soles is about to develop a good-sized hole.

CAROLYNE

Who else can bid twenty billion dollars for a company and come home whistling?



KRAVIS

("folksy")

No big thing, missy. Twenty billion dollars is just one billion more'n nineteen, is all it is.

INT. NBC STUDIO - BURBANK - NIGHT

JOHNNY CARSON at his "Tonight" Show desk.

JOHNNY CARSON

Want a little idea of what twenty billion dollars could get you these day? ... How about you could -

(referring to newspaper)

" - retire one percent of the national debt." Or "buy your own B1 Bomber." That'd be first on the block, right? Or you "could house all one and a half million of our homeless for thirty-two months at four hundred and twelve dollars a a month rent."

EXT. THE KRAVIS' PARK AVENUE APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

The Kravises, in full cowboy gear, are helped into their Mercedes by a liveried Chauffeur. Nearby, a Street Person is selecting her evening meal from the litter basket.

JOHNNY CARSON (V.O.)

(continuing)

If you were really a sport, you could buy each of the homeless, as well as every single person on the planet, a Big Mac, an order of fries and a Coke.

EXT. THE JOHNSONS' 5TH AVENUE APARTMENT BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

The Johnsons, in their Western clothes, board their limo.

JOHNNY CARSON (V.O.)

(continuing)

Or you could buy eighty million vowels on "Wheel of Fortune." Or - and this would only be a start, of course, but a good one - you could send Dan Quayle to the University of Indiana Law School for six-point-eight million years.

On Carson's o.s. audience's laughter and applause:

INT. THE PLAZA HOTEL - THE BALLROOM - NIGHT

A George Bush Tex-Mex victory party, with all Nouvelle Society in Western duds. Almost every zillionaire cowpoke, no matter how fat or bald, sports a younger, taller, "trophy" wife. THE CALLER, who leads the Western Band, steps to the mike.

THE CALLER

Grab yore partners!
Here we go!
Let's all do
the Doh-See-Doh!!

As the couples do a spirited square dance:

LAURIE
Ross. Over there.

(nodding ~~at~~ ~~him~~?)
Isn't that ~~him~~?

Ross turns to see the Henry Kravises dancing alongside Sheriff Henry Kissingers and his wife, Nancy.

ROSS

Yep. That's Henry.

LAURIE

(impressed)

You know Henry Kissinger?

ROSS

No, no. Kissinger's the tall one.
Henry Kravis is the doorstep.

ANGLE - THE KRAVISES AND THE KISSINGERS

KRAVIS

(in greeting)

Henry.

KISSINGER

Henry.

Dance, dance, dance.

ANGLE - THE JOHNSONS AND THE KRAVISES

ROSS

Quite a splash you made today,
Henry.

KRAVIS

(ignoring the reference)

Carolyne, this is Ross Johnson.

(MORE)

KRAVIS (CONT'D)
 (pointedly)
 He came to dinner some time ago.
 (turning to Laurie)
 You must be --

ROSS
 My wife.

LAURIE
 (extending her hand)
 Laurie.

CAROLYNE
 (to Kravis, pleased)
 Darling! That was the name our
 first jumper.

They dance off in separate directions.

LAURIE
 (to Ross)
 A jumper's a horse, right?

ROSS
 Get the picture?

ANGLE - THE ROBINSONS AND THE KRAVISES

ROBINSON
 (deadpan, to Kravis)
 What'cha been up to, neighbor?
 Word's out you're pokin' around for
 little action.

KRAVIS
 (smiles)
 Just trying to keep you honest, Jim.

ANOTHER ANGLE

The dance requires the men to exchange wives. As Ross
 takes Carlyne into his arms, and Kravis inherits Laurie:

ROSS
 I think it'd be a good idea if we
 got together for a talk, Henry.

KRAVIS
 I'm always ready to talk, Ross.
 Always.

Dance, dance, and the wives rejoin their husbands.

ANGLE - THE KRAVISES AND THE COHENS

COHEN

Henry.

KRAVIS

(icily)

Peter.

Obeying the Square Dance Caller, all the Women lock arms and dance with each other and the Men do likewise. As Cohen and Kravis dance together, their arms entwined:

COHEN

There was no need to escalate things by making that offer, you know. You never even gave me a chance to get back to you.

(step, step)

I said I was going to call and I would have.

(step, step)

I believe I'm a person who does whatever it is he says he's going to do.

KRAVIS

(a steely smile)

That makes two of us then, doesn't it?



ANGLE - ROSS AND JIM ROBINSON

Dancing together, their arms entwined. Ross indicates Cohen and Kravis:

ROSS

One of us better cut in on those guys. All we need is for Peter to throw some fresh shit on the fan!

ANOTHER ANGLE

Men and Women rejoined, the Johnsons are approached by TED FORSTMANN, wearing fierce, Indian war paint, a model-type in his arms.

FORSTMANN

Ross?

(introducing himself)

Teddy Forstmann. Forstmann Little.

ROSS

Nice to meet you. My wife, Laurie.

FORSTMANN

Great pleasure. This is Miss
Tiffany Ford.

ROSS

Howdy, ma'am.
(eyeing her revealing
outfit)
You must be the new school marm.

On Tiffany's laughter:

FORSTMANN

I'd like to talk to you, Ross. Any
chance of our getting together?

ROSS

I'll save you to next dance.
(dancing Laurie away, re
Forstmann
Wall Street.

LAURIE

Perfect. You've got the hots for
her, he's got the hots for you.

When the dance comes to a lively finish, fueled by the
competitive energy of the men in the room, Forstmann heads
straight for Ross, who's got Kravis in his sights.

ROSS

Be back, babe. Get yourself some
chow.

Laurie goes to the chuck wagon, where Carolyn fills her
plate with extreme selectivity. Seeing Ross heading for
Kravis, who is moving toward Roberts, Forstmann backs off.
Ross' progress is stopped by a Wall Streeter, wigged and
bearded exactly like Buffalo Bill, except for his extremely
thick eye glasses.

BUFFALO BILL

Ross?

(handing him his card)
Bill Redfield, the First Boston
Group? I think we can help you with
your deal by taking advantage of
certain tax loopholes.

ROSS

Set something up with my secretary,
okay?

A MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
(calls out)

Ross!

ROSS
(turns toward the voice)
Give me a sec.

Ross moves on, passing two PARK AVENUE COWGIRLS, who give him a quick once-over, as they enter:

INT. THE WOMEN'S POWDER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

1ST PARK AVENUE COWGIRL
I thought he was younger.

2ND PARK AVENUE COWGIRL
So does he, I hear. He's got two
grown-up sons. This one's his
second wife.

1ST PARK AVENUE COWGIRL
You know anyone in this whole zip
code still married to his first?
What do you think of her? What's
her name?

2ND PARK AVENUE COWGIRL
Laurie? Kind of sucky. Too L.A.
(checking her figure in
the mirror)
You think I should have my breasts
done?

1ST PARK AVENUE COWGIRL
Why don't you do one and see how you
like it?

2ND PARK AVENUE COWGIRL
Thanks a lot.

INT. THE MEN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Kravis and Roberts, at adjacent urinals, as Ross enters.

ROSS
If you guys can take a piss and a
compliment at the same time, I just
wanted to say that was a whale of an
offer you came up with today.
Ninety bucks a share is a great
tribute to the way I've run the
company.



KRAVIS

Well, you've done a tremendous job.

ROBERTS

You'll understand if I don't shake your hand right now.

As Roberts and Kravis use the basins:

ROSS

I don't know what happened between you guys and Peter Cohen but, from now on, I do all the talking.

KRAVIS

Seems to me, you and I did talk once, Ross. At least, I remember our conversation. Every word of it.

ROSS

Look, Henry, no matter where the idea came from, the last thing I'm looking for is a bidding war. How 'bout we sit down together and try to keep this down to a mere twenty billion dollar deal, what do you say?

ROBERTS

Makes sense, Ross.

ROSS

(smiles)

I get lucky every once in awhile. If we can figure out a way of being on the same side, the only thing I want to be sure about is that you're not going to get on my back about cutting down on planes and golf courses and all that other chickenshit stuff.

ROBERTS

That's not what's important to us. We don't mind an extra plane ride or two.

ROSS

It's just space shuttles are out, right?

KRAVIS

They might be cheaper. What's RJR got now? Ten corporate jets? Twenty-six full-time pilots? The

(MORE)

KRAVIS (CONT'D)

talk is that hangar you built down in Atlanta cost your stockholders twelve million dollars.

ROSS

Those stockholders have a management team that's busting their balls for them. I don't see anything wrong with them having their own air force if it makes their job easier. Anyway, what the hell? A few million dollars are lost in the sands of time, I always say.

Kravis and Roberts exchange looks.

ROSS

So do we talk, or not?

KRAVIS

Just say when. We'll be there.

ROSS

You got it! And let's keep this to ourselves, okay? I sure as hell, just once, would like to pick up a paper without seeing any news in it.

KRAVIS

Couldn't agree more.

ROBERTS

This was a good talk, Ross.

ROSS

I do well in toilets.

Kravis and Roberts exit. Ross is pleased with himself: it's all so easy, when people know what they're doing. A beat, then a toilet is flushed in one of the stalls, followed by the ferocious entrance of Forstmann from the ballroom.

FORSTMANN

If that little fuck, Henry Kravis, was CEO of any other company in the country except his own, they'd put him in a straitjacket! They'd take him away in a rubber limo! Henry Kravis pays out incredible sums because all his money is that junk bond crap! It's phoney! He's phoney! The man's a fraud!



ROSS

If you don't like him, don't beat around the bush, Teddy.

FORSTMANN

It's not personal. My focus is not on that megalomaniacal fucker! What kills me is that quick buck artists like Kravis don't give a rat's ass about the companies they buy.

Ross signals him that someone is in one of the stalls.

FORSTMANN

(ignoring that)

Shit, I've said this in the New York Times.

(pressing on)

All they want is their steady flow of outrageous fees. They couldn't care less that they're going to throw the whole country into a depression.

Ross turns on the faucets in one of the basins, hoping to cover Teddy's voice.

FORSTMANN

Let me tell you about Forstmann Little.

(turning off the faucets)

What do you, got stock in the water company? At Forstmann Little what you get is reality! My brother and I are real people! We're real people with real money!

ROSS

(anxious to lose him)

Okay, maybe we'll talk, okay? Really. I gotta use this.

He opens a stall door, but Forstmann blocks his way.

FORSTMANN

Forget KKR, forget Drexel Burnham. In the last five years, Forstmann Little has turned around and sold the companies we bought for four to ten times more than we paid for them.

ROSS
 (trying to get into the
 stall)
 Okay, okay. We'll talk.

FORSTMANN
 How 'bout tomorrow?

ROSS
 You got it.

Ross manages to find refuge in the stall.

FORSTMANN
 Everybody's going to try to promote
 you, Ross.

ANGLE - INSIDE THE STALL

Ross, wishing Forstmann would just go the hell away.

FORSTMANN (O.S.)
 I just want you to go with the best.

ROSS
 (wearily)
 Right.

Forstmann is heard exiting o.s. Ross sighs a breath of relief. Then, from above his head, he is startled to hear:

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
 Ross?

Ross looks up at a MAN in a buckskin shirt and a coonskin cap, leaning over the partition from the next stall and offering Ross his card.

MAN
 Jeff Beck. I'm with Drexel Burnham.

Nonplused, Ross takes the card.

INT. THE JOHNSONS' 5TH AVENUE APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ross, in his shorts, pours himself a brandy. Laurie is down to her bra, panties and boots.

LAURIE
 She eats like a bird. Did you
 notice?

ROSS

Carolyne? Yeah, I danced with her, I know. It was like hugging an order of spare ribs. Those women all have a weight clause in their prenuptial agreements. They put on an extra ounce or a develop a wrinkle, they get sent to the used wife lot.

LAURIE

Good thing you're different.

(mimicking him)

"Howdy, ma'am. You must be the new school marm." I thought you were going to pop the rivets on your Levi's.

ROSS

You still don't understand me, do you? To me, the most important thing about a woman is her mind.

LAURIE

Of course.

ROSS

Does she mind if do this?

(bites her shoulder)

Or does she mind if I do this?

LAURIE

(simultaneously)

Does she mind if I do this?

The overlap, as he kisses one of her breasts. Laurie, laughing, sits on the bed's edge, extends one booted leg.

LAURIE

Here you go, cowboy.

Ross turns his back to her, puts her leg between his own and begins to pull on the boot.

LAURIE

You know her one big treat every day? Carolyne's? Her "fix," she calls it. A glass of milk and one Oreo.

ROSS

Just one? We're never gonna get rich that way.

LAURIE

They make rich look shabby. Did you know Henry Kravis just gave the Metropolitan Museum ten million dollars? No one can count how much he gives to hospitals.

ROSS

That's why he can't afford more than one Oreo.

For all the tugging back and forth between Ross' legs, her boot is not coming off.

LAURIE

Harder.

ROSS

(smiles)

Any second now.

LAURIE

He put up three million dollars just so Carolyn could have her own fashion house, can you imagine?

ROSS

Didn't I bring home some golf balls last week?

He gets the boot off, removes the other one quite easily.

LAURIE

You think he's going to be in on this deal with you?

ROSS

Henry? I don't know. There's a lot of teeing up going on. Nobody's on the green yet.

As she finishes undressing and getting into an oversized Miami Dolphins T-shirt:

LAURIE

Do you know what he did when he bought out the Safeway chain? The very first thing? He laid off sixty-three thousand employees. People who'd had their jobs forever.

ROSS
 (with a grin)
 You been taking a crash course in
 Henry Kravis somewhere?

LAURIE
 Adellie, my leg waxer? A cousin of
 her's was one of the one's that got
 fired. Eighteen years he drove a
 truck for them. Eighteen years,
 Ross.

ROSS
 (soberly)
 It happens, babe. It does happen.

LAURIE
 He parked the truck one last time,
 went home and shot himself.

Ross has no answer for that.

CLOSE - A grungy Homeless Person.

CAMERA PULLS BACK REVEALING:

EXT. 9 WEST 57TH STREET BUILDING - ENTRANCE - DAY

As a movie crew prepares to film before the big "9," a
 Make-Up Person applies grime on an Extra, costumed as a
 grungy Homeless Person, while Wardrobe fusses with the
 Extra's tatters. Ross' limo pulls up and he moves through
 the crew.

INT. RJR OFFICES - A CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Assembled are: Ross, Horrigan, Robinson, Cohen and Allegro.

ROSS
 It all boils down to this: what
 makes the most sense is joining
 forces with Henry Kravis so that the
 board only has to consider a ninety
 dollar share, which they will accept
 in a minute. There's just no
 question they will. If we try to
 outbid each other, no matter who
 wins, the company becomes impossible
 to manage because the debt'll just
 be crushing.

(off Cohen's frown)
 You have a problem with that, Peter?

COHEN

You're the boss, Ross. But if we need a higher bid, I can restructure the financing. Henry's not the only one with resources in this town.

INT. RJR OFFICES - RECEPTION AREA - CONTINUOUS

Ted Forstmann and his brother, NICK, announce themselves to the Receptionist.

FORSTMANN

Ted and Nick Forstmann to see Mr. Ross Johnson.

RESUME THE CONFERENCE ROOM

ROSS

Is this your business sense talking, Peter, or am I hearing your ego?

COHEN

Listen, Ross. I don't mind insults.

Ross' phone buzzes. He gets it.

ROSS

Yeah? ... Shit, I forgot. Give 'em a room. Ask 'em to wait.

As he hangs up:

COHEN

Just waking up in this city is an insult. I've had people relieve themselves in my elevator and piss on my briefcase, but nobody - nobody ever asked me to take a bribe before.

ROSS

So you're saying you can't work with Henry Kravis, is that it?

ROBINSON

We'll work with whoever you say, Ross. For my part, if you want us to take the offer Henry made for us to step aside, all you have to do is say the word. Right, Peter?

Cohen can only nod his agreement. It's hard to speak when your testicles have been tied in a knot.

ROSS

Ed, maybe you and I should have a little talk, huh? You can all wait here, or use the can. We won't be long.

INT. RJR OFFICES - CORRIDORS - CONTINUOUS

Robinson, Cohen, Allegro head one way; Ross and Horrigan, another. The Forstmanns march behind a Secretary; the three groups moving independently through the RJR maze. Ross and Horrigan enter Ross' office, the Forstmanns are led to one nearby. Robinson and Cohen enter the Executive Men's' Room, Allegro stops to hit on an RJR Secretary.

INT. JOHNSON'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

As they light up cigars.

Tough call, huh?

HORRIGAN

Not the way I look at it.

INT. RJR OFFICES - EXECUTIVE MEN'S' ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Using side-by-side urinals:

COHEN

Were you serious about letting Ross dump us?

ROBINSON

I had to give him the option. I'm counting on his knowing where his best interests lie.

INT. AN RJR OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

In the small room where Ted and Nick Forstmann have been installed, Ted looks at his watch, with some impatience.

FORSTMANN

Obviously, he can't wait to see us.

Nick spots several rough sketches of Premier cigarettes on display - as well as a carton of Premiers.



INT. JOHNSON'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

ROSS

Let's face it, Ed. Kravis runs a varsity operation. Our team's been running around like water boys with a leaky bucket.

HORRIGAN

I say you go home with the guy who brung you. I say we win with Shearson, or we go out with Shearson.

(a beat)

Kravis'll eat you alive if you let him in, you know that, Ross.

ROSS

I've just got to bring him around on control of the company. I know I can sell him.

His intercom's buzz reminds Ross.

ROSS

Oh, Christ, Teddy Forstmann!

INT. JOHNSON'S OUTER OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Ross' secretary, Marge, is on the phone.

MARGE

Mr. Kravis and Mr. Roberts are at Reception and Mr. Hugel's on line one.

RESUME JOHNSON'S OFFICE

ROSS

(into receiver)

Mr. Horrigan'll take them to the Conference Room.

Horrigan frowns at the prospect, starts to leave.

ROSS

(into receiver)

Ask Mr. Hugel if I can -- okay, I'll talk to him.

(calls to Horrigan)

Just don't get Kravis anywhere near Forstmann. I don't want any blood on the carpet.

Horrigan exits, as Ross punches up line one.

ROSS
 (cheerily)
 Charlie? What's on your mind, pal?

INT. THE SMALL OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Ted and Nick are lighting up Premiers - using a match.

INT. REGENCY HOTEL - CHARLES HUGEL'S SUITE - CONTINUOUS

HUGEL
 (on the phone)
 It's a matter of some importance,
 Ross. A good deal of importance, I
 would say.

RESUME JOHNSON'S OFFICE

ROSS
 (on phone)
 ... When do you leave town? ... How
 'bout breakfast tomorrow? ... Deal.

RESUME THE CORRIDORS

Horrigan heads for Reception, as Cohen and Robinson return to the Conference Room, picking up Allegro on the way.

RESUME THE SMALL OFFICE

The Forstmann brothers react to the terrible smell in the room caused by the Premier smoke.

NICK FORSTMANN
 Jesus, did one of us step in
 something?

They exit, to escape the odor.

INT. RJR OFFICES - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

The Forstmans step into another office down the hall, just missing Kravis and Roberts, who go by with Ed Horrigan.

RESUME AREA BEFORE JOHNSON'S OFFICE

ROSS
 (stepping out)
 Marge, where did anybody put Teddy -
 - ?

Seeing that Marge is not at her desk, he starts down the hall.

INT. RJR OFFICES - THE CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Robinson and Cohen are quite surprised to see Horrigan enter with Kravis and Roberts.

RESUME THE CORRIDOR

Ross opens an office door and looks inside. It's empty.

RESUME THE CONFERENCE ROOM

Cool "hello's" are exchanged in the thick cigar smoke.

KRAVIS

Peter.

COHEN

Henry.

ROBINSON

George.

ROBERTS

Jim. Rob.

HORRIGAN

(to Robinson)

Ross thinks we should all talk.

Which doesn't please Cohen at all.

ROBERTS

(rubbing his eyes)

I'm sure glad you guys don't make cigars.

HORRIGAN

Smoke bothers you?

ROBERTS

Only if I'm in the same city with it.

HORRIGAN

(mutters)

Fucking beautiful.

RESUME THE CORRIDOR

Ross opens the door to:



INT. A SMALL OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Waiting, with half a dozen Associates is the man who came as Buffalo Bill to the Tex-Mex party.

BILL REDFIELD

How you doing, Ross? Bill Redfield.
First Boston.

ROSS

(hastily exiting)

I'll be back.

INT. ANOTHER SMALL OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The Forstmans are cooling their heels, as Ross enters.

Sorry, Teddy.

ROSS

It's okay, no problem. Ross, this
is my brother, Nick. Nick, Ross
Johnson.

FORSTMANN

NICK FORSTMANN

It's a great pleasure.

FORSTMANN

We've worked up some ideas for
financing, based on, like I told
you, real money, with real people,
not the kind of phoney shit that --

ROSS

Teddy, I've got to level with you.
I'm meeting with Henry Kravis.

FORSTMANN

I think it would be a huge mistake
if you did that, Ross.

ROSS

It's not that I'm going to do it.
I'm doing it. He's in my office
right now.

FORSTMANN

Now?! You're meeting with Kravis?
That's why we've been sitting around
waiting, killing time, fucking
around, choking on that new shit
cigarette?

ROSS
(unhappily)
Where did you get a Premier?

NICK FORSTMANN
There were some in the other office.

ROSS
Nobody's supposed to smoke those!

FORSTMANN
I don't think that's going to be a problem.

ROSS
They're still in development!

FORSTMANN
I sure as hell hope so. What've they cost you so far?

ROSS
That's not where my head is right now. Look, can you wait just a little while? This thing with Henry might not work out at all.

FORSTMANN
Not if I throw him down the elevator shaft, it won't.

NICK FORSTMANN
If you want us to stick around, Ross, we'll stick around.

ROSS
I appreciate that. I'll get back to you soonest.

And he's out the door.

FORSTMANN
This is fucking amateur night! He's got us sitting around on our asses and Kravis'll rip the company right out of his throat!

NICK FORSTMANN
Take it slow, Teddy. Take it slow. We're not out of it yet.



RESUME THE CONFERENCE ROOM

ROSS

(rejoining the group)

Henry. George. Thank you for coming. I hope you don't mind meeting in a conference room. All the Men's' johns are full.

ROBERTS

We don't mind roughing it.

ROSS

Let's keep this whole thing simple, okay? What makes the most obvious sense to me is that we do this buyout together at ninety a share, okay? Now, the way the deal is structured, my management group is going to own twenty percent of the company, right Peter?

Cohen and Robinson exchange distressed looks. Ross has no idea of the hand grenade he's just lobbed into the room.

COHEN

(uncomfortably)

In that area, yeah.

KRAVIS

We would certainly want to review that arrangement.

ROSS

Well, whatever it comes out to be, I'm suggesting that everything else gets cut up fifty-fifty between you and Shearson.

KRAVIS

In addition to our customary one percent for our services.

ROSS

Which would come to what?

COHEN

Two hundred million dollars.

ROSS

Thank God, it's only one percent.



ROBINSON

You might want to re-think that figure, Henry. Keep in mind that a lot of people are watching this process, including Congress.

ROBERTS

We certainly wouldn't want to hurt the business that we've grown to love and admire.

ROSS

(pushing)

Is that it, then? Those terms being acceptable, have we got a sale here?

KRAVIS

We would want Drexel Burnham to sell the bonds on this one.

COHEN

Instead of Shearson??

KRAVIS

They're what a deal this size needs. They won't affect your share. They work cheap and they're the best.

COHEN

They're also about to be indicted because of their Milken/Boesky connection.

ROSS

Just what this deal needs - stationery from Alcatraz. I think we ought to talk about that, Henry.

KRAVIS

I think we just did. With or without you, we're going for this company, Ross. And Drexel's doing it for us.

ROBINSON

You firm on that, Henry? Is that a deal breaker?

KRAVIS

It is. That, and one last point.

INT. THE SMALL OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Where Ted Forstmann is about as steamed as he can be.



FORSTMANN

Why are we putzing around here like schoolboys? This company is in play, you know that, don't you? I don't need Ross Johnson's permission to try to buy it.

NICK FORSTMANN

Give it a few more minutes, Teddy.

FORSTMANN

If he doesn't need me, I sure as hell don't need him. When somebody's jerking off, two's a crowd!

RESUME THE CONFERENCE ROOM

The tension in the room has gone up appreciably.

ROSS

(to Kravis)

Am I mistaken? Didn't Don Kelly say you let him run his own company?

KRAVIS

(needling him)

Then you do remember that evening's conversation.

ROBERTS

Don runs a very tight ship. There's no extravagance there. Don's got no RJR Air Force. No Team Nabisco that must cost millions every year.

KRAVIS

We'd require a lot more discipline, Ross.

Cohen does his best to hide his glee over the way the meeting is progressing/deteriorating.

KRAVIS

We'd have to agree on how it is you would run the company.

ROSS

Which is French for how it is you would run me.

KRAVIS

However you want to put it.

ROSS

I'm sorry, Henry. What you're looking for is a hand puppet; and if I said yes, you'd have yours up my ass as far as your elbow.

ROBERTS

I gather that's French for no deal.

ROSS

There's just no way I'm giving up control.

RESUME THE FORSTMANNS

FORSTMANN

(checking his watch)

That's it! We'll make our own bid! Now, let's get outta here before I throw up being in the same building as Henry Kravis!

He bolts the room, Nick following him.

INT. AREA BEFORE CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ross and Horrigan, in the open door of the conference room, watch Kravis and Roberts stride toward the elevator.

HORRIGAN

Good riddance.

(derisively)

Can't stand smoke. Prick probably hates cookies, too. Fuck 'em. They'll get theirs one day.

As Kravis and Roberts step into the elevator, Ted and Nick Forstmann hurry toward its doors, not seeing who's inside.

FORSTMANN

(calls to elevator)

Hold it!

Ross watches, as the Forstmanns dash into the elevator, and the doors close, sealing them in with Kravis and Roberts.

ROSS

(to Horrigan)

Probably a lot sooner than you think.

A LOUD SIREN WAILS.

EXT. PARK AVENUE TRAFFIC - THE NEXT DAY

An ambulance pulls up before:

EXT. THE REGENCY HOTEL - CONTINUOUS

Paramedics jump out of the ambulance to attend to someone who's been knocked flat by a Messenger's bike. Ten unconcerned feet away, a fashion model (Ted Forstmann's date, Tiffany Ford) poses for a Japanese Photographic Team. Through it all, comes Ross, to enter:

INT. THE REGENCY LOBBY - DAY

As Ross passes the news shop:

CLOSE - FRONT PAGE OF "USA TODAY"

The headline reads: "Wall Street War." Beneath that: "RJR Nabisco Up For Grabs" CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal:

INT. RJ REYNOLDS FACTORY CAFETERIA - WINSTON-SALEM - DAY

The newspaper is being read by 1st and 2nd RJR Workers, on a coffee break.

2ND RJR WORKER

How ya figger it'll go?

1ST RJR WORKER

(shrugs)

Either way, I'm gonna be able to wallpaper my house with money.

INT. THE REGENCY HOTEL - CHARLES HUGEL'S' SUITE - DAY

Ross and Hugel are at breakfast.

HUGEL

I just want my position as president of the company clear, Ross. The highest bid is obviously going to win, even if it comes from outside your group. There'll be no other considerations, no favoritism shown anyone. My chief responsibility has to be the shareholders.

ROSS

You suggesting I've got a different set of priorities, Charlie?

HUGEL

Well, clearly, you'd rather wind up owning the company instead of having someone else take it over.

ROSS

I want our shareholders to get top dollar, Charlie, whatever that figure is and wherever it comes from. But let's put aside the price of shares for a minute. Fuck all that, okay? Let me tell you the only number that really means anything to me. One hundred and forty thousand. You know what that is, Charlie? That's exactly the number of people who spend their lives baking cookies or packing peanuts or poking holes in Lifesavers for us. And the more this company costs, the more whoever winds up buying it, the more of those people are going to have to be let go. That's what's on my mind right now - not any of this macho bullshit that's going on. The rest of this crowd can go on slamming their dicks on the table - all I care about is making a killing for our shareholders without killing any of the people who punch in somewhere for us day after day, year after year, people who think of the company as a home.

HUGEL

Go your best shot, then.

(handing him document)

I'm announcing that final offers must be submitted at five p.m. at the next board meeting, eleven days from now.

ROSS

I'll be ready.

Clearly touched by Ross' Capra-esque speech:

HUGEL

My money's on you, Ross.

Ross is equally touched by Hugel's warm, paternal words.

A QUICK SERIES OF CUTS

Once again, Cohen and the Shearson Staff are seen at monitors and meetings, enthusiastically and energetically crunching the numbers and subsisting on takeout pizzas.

ANOTHER SERIES OF CUTS

Kravis, Roberts and KKR Personnel doing their own preparations, a sense of frustration among the troops.

CLOSE - on a large sketchpad. A woman's hand is at work, designing a dress. CAMERA REVEALS:

INT. KRAVIS' CONNECTICUT HOUSE - STUDY - NIGHT

It is Carlyne who is sketching, her head movements suggesting she's got symphonic music on her ear-phones; her Oreo and (Baccarat) glass of milk nearby. Kravis appears totally uninterested in the brutal TV highlights of pro football games, the sound muted. Carlyne takes off her ear-phones and addresses him sympathetically.

CAROLYNE

Poor darling, I wish I could cheer you up. If it wasn't so dark, you could go out and shoot something.

KRAVIS

They're absolutely stonewalling us, you know. There is no way for us to arrive at a realistic offer, if we don't have a true picture of what the company's value is.

CAROLYNE

Do you honest and truly need Nabisco, Henry? Aren't there any other companies that'd make you just as happy?

KRAVIS

It's not the company. It's the credibility. My credibility.

He paces before the TV, where we see glimpses of gridiron gladiators using the nation's stadia as killing fields.

KRAVIS

I can't sit on the bench and let everybody else play the game. Not my game. And not with their rules.

CAROLYNE

So, coach? What do you do?

KRAVIS

I don't know. The law says Johnson's people have to cooperate. They have to tell would-be buyers all they need to know about the company's financial doings. Its assets, liabilities; where it's healthy, where it's not. Whatever it is - whether it's fear or loyalty, I don't know, or a combination of both - or maybe they're just acting on Johnson's orders, but not one of them will tell us a thing. We've got less than a week to make an offer and we haven't got a clue as to what shape the company's really in. None.

The phone warbles. Kravis gets it.

KRAVIS

Yeah? ... George? What's doin'? ...
 (pleasantly surprised)
 Honest to God? ... Who is he?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. GEORGE ROBERTS' NEW YORK STUDY - CONTINUOUS

The sound low on his TV, Roberts is on the phone.

ROBERTS

He wouldn't give me his name. Not yet, anyway. He sounded legit, though. We may just have ourselves a Deep Throat, Henry ... Wait a minute! Hold it! Put on Channel Four.

TOM BROKAW is seen on Roberts' TV. Beside him: the Premier cigarette logo.

TOM BROKAW

They're called "smokeless cigarettes," and they're about ready to come on the market.

ROBERTS

You got it?

KRAVIS

Yeah!

TOM BROKAW

But already they're under attack. Today, three health groups said they should be classed not as cigarettes but as a drug, subject to the Food and Drug Administration. Mike Jensen has sampled a reaction.

SHOT of MAN trying to smoke a Premier.

MAN

Nothing. Zero. It's like trying to smoke blackboard chalk.

SHOT of WOMAN holding a Premier.

WOMAN

(mockingly)

Delightful.

SHOT of SECOND MAN, smoking a Premier.

2ND MAN

Another first for American technology. No wonder the Japanese are trembling.

INTERCUT KRAVIS AND ROBERTS ON THEIR PHONES

KRAVIS

What do you suppose that commercial cost the company?

ROBERTS

With any luck we're going to find out.

KRAVIS

You think so? Will this guy meet with us?

INT. THE ROBINSONS' NEW YORK APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The Johnsons and the Robinsons. Cocktails and casual attire. They've just watched the same TV report. As Tom Brokaw continues, doing a piece featuring Michael Milken footage, a wounded Ross holds forth.

ROSS

Jesus, this is just what I needed right now: total strangers sticking pins in their Ross Johnson dolls. In prime time.



ROBINSON

Are they as bad as they said?

ROSS

Premiers? I'm going to level with you, Jim. When they were being tested? Some people who smoked 'em suggested we roll 'em in toilet paper. They're a disaster. A total disaster. Perfect name, I thought. "Premiers." Go figure "Titanics" would've been a better one.

LINDA

Did they cost a lot to develop?

ROSS

This can't leave the room, okay? This number is strictly between you, me and the Unemployment Office, if it ever gets out.

(a beat, then)

We're in for a billion so far. Maybe more.

ROBINSON

A billion dollars? One billion dollars??

ROSS

Ten zeros - right down the crapper.

LAURIE

You're entitled. God, you make that much for the company every year. Year in year out, that's the kind of money you bring in.

ROSS

People take winning for granted, sweetheart. Just lose a few bucks for them and they start looking at you like you're an Aztec virgin at a sacrifice.

The phone. Linda quickly gets it.

LINDA

Hello? ...

(to Jim)

It's Peter.

ROSS

Another perfect name.

Ross replenishes his drink, as Jim takes the phone.

ROBINSON

Yeah? ... We saw it, yeah ... I don't know what the research has cost. They're still working on them.

ROSS

(to Laurie, re Jim)

The man's a saint.

ROBINSON

(uncomfortably)

No, not yet. I was just going to ... Right, okay. I will. G'bye..

(hanging up)

He sends his best

ROSS

I wasn't aware that he had any.

ROBINSON

Be fair, Ross. This is not an easy deal to pull off.

ROSS

I know, I know. I just wish to Christ he wasn't going to school on my future. If, in fact, I've still got one.

(passing the TV,
addressing

Tom Brokaw's image)

And fuck you, Tom.

He exits onto the terrace with his drink. Jim exchanges looks with Linda. Her nod prods him to join Ross on:

EXT. THE ROBINSONS' TERRACE - NIGHT

With a view of Manhattan that is right out of a movie.

ROBINSON

It's still a magic place.

ROSS

Up here, where you can't smell it. Who the hell got NBC to do that story, you suppose?

ROBINSON

(shrugs)

They're always looking for bad news.



ROSS

But who the hell told 'em that
Premiers were bad news? If these
buildings weren't so high, you'd be
up to your ass in vultures in this
town.

ROBINSON

(a beat)

Peter would like us to try for a
hundred and ten a share.

ROSS

He told me. A hundred and ten.
It's just getting insane.

ROBINSON

He doesn't think Henry could
possibly go that way, he's got such
little information to go by.

Breaks your heart for Henry, doesn't
it?

ROBINSON

It means raising substantially more
from investors and the banks.

ROSS

(noncommittally)

Uh huh.

ROBINSON

It would help matters tremendously
if you cut back on what your share
of the company's going to be, Ross.
It would help tremendously.

ROSS

Is Shearson going to cut back, too?

ROBINSON

Frankly, we haven't got as good a
deal as you have. I don't know that
anyone ever has. The truth is, I
think if your numbers were to get
out, as they stand right now, you'd
get an awful lot of flak about it.
Especially from the board.

ROSS

Why would they ever get out?

ROBINSON

Where'd that Premier story come from tonight? This town worships success, Ross. What it roots for is failure. Everybody else's, of course. I just don't think you ought to be provide those types with any kind of ammunition.

ROSS

I have no problem reducing my share. You may think I'm shitting you, Jim, but I'm not in this for the money. I just want to be able to keep on doing what I do. Christ, what the hell would I do, if I didn't?

(re the city fights)

Nobody ever sold more light bulbs than I did back in Canada. I'll be God damn if I'm gonna have mine shot out down here.

ROBINSON

I wouldn't be putting the prestige of American Express on the line, if I didn't think a man of your quality wasn't going to come out on top.

He raises his glass. Ross does the same.

ROSS

Betchurass.

A sudden, blinding explosion of flashbulbs!

INT. THE PLAZA HOTEL - GRAND BALLROOM - DAY

A beaming Henry Kravis is being photographed, at the center of the dazzling crowd assembled for the showing of Carolyne's spring collection. Linda Robinson, Ivana, Blaine, Gayfryd, etc. - anybody who is Mrs. Anybody is there:

LINDA

Good luck today, Henry.

KRAVIS

Carolyne's outdone herself. She's done tremendous work.

LINDA

It's getting down to the wire.



KRAVIS
 (checking his watch)
 If people will just sit down.

LINDA
 I meant RJR Nabisco. Friday.

KRAVIS
 (laughs)
 Oh, yeah. That, too.

As they head for their seats alongside the runway:

LINDA
 I'm sorry you and Ross couldn't get
 together. It would've been great
 being on the same side.

KRAVIS
 (good naturedly)
 You can't have everything.

LINDA
 (the same)
 Not once you got it all.



INT. THE GRAND BALLROOM - MINUTES LATER

Pulsing music, as Models parade Carolyne's fashions. Kravis and Linda are exchanging looks of mutual pride and approval, when George Roberts appears and whispers to Kravis, Kravis reacting excitedly. To Linda's surprise, he follows Roberts out of the room.

INT. GRAND BALLROOM - BACKSTAGE AREA - CONTINUOUS

Kravis and Roberts move through the Models in various stages of undress, past Carolyne, making last minute adjustments everywhere. The canned music continues over, as Roberts leads Kravis into:

INT. A MAKESHIFT DRESSING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The "room" is a series of sheets taped to clothes racks to form four walls. Inside: a man, his back to us. Roberts pulls a sheet across the entrance for privacy, then:

ROBERTS
 Henry -
 (as the man turns around)
 This is John Greeniaus - president
 of Nabisco.

KRAVIS

It's a great pleasure, John.

GREENIAUS

I didn't especially want to come to your office.

KRAVIS

Of course.

GREENIAUS

What's important is that you understand that Nabisco has been my life - and that it's not for Ross Johnson or anyone else to decide that my life is for sale.

(a beat)

I have all the information you need to know about the company. Everything that Ross' people won't tell you.

RESUME BACKSTAGE AREA

Linda appears, curious to see what Kravis might be up to.

GREENIAUS (V.O.)

(continuing)

Gentlemen, with the right management allowing me to run the company properly --

RESUME MAKESHIFT DRESSING ROOM

GREENIAUS

(continuing)

I can guarantee an increase in Nabisco's profit by no less than forty percent just in the first year.

(opening his attache case)

The more you learn, the more you'll understand what some of us think the "F" in F. Ross Johnson stands for.

They react, as the sheets are suddenly pulled part. It is a scantily-clad MODEL.

MODEL

Oops! Shit! Sorry!

Before she pulls the sheets closed once more:

ANGLE - THE MAKESHIFT DRESSING ROOM - SEEN FROM OUTSIDE

Linda Robinson gets a quick glimpse of Kravis and Greeniaus.

RESUME THE GRAND BALLROOM

Rock and roll blaring, a dozen Models do their stuff on the runway, clothed in Carolyne's exotic creations.

EXT. THIRD AVENUE - THE SIDEWALK - LATE AFTERNOON

Mere mortals schlepp along in their mundane clothing, their only connection to the world we've just seen, the rock and roll we hear from someone's ghetto blaster.

EXT. THIRD AVENUE AND 57TH STREET - CONTINUOUS

In the gridlocked intersection, a scruffy Street Person, using a dirty rag, is trying to clean the perfectly clean windshield of a stretch limo. It is, in fact:

INT./EXT. ROSS' LIMO - THE FRONT SEAT - CONTINUOUS

The CHAUFFEUR has the phone to his ear.

CHAUFFEUR

Hold on.

(over his shoulder)

Mrs. Robinson calling.

ROSS (V.O.)

Linda?

The Chauffeur raps sharply on the windshield, gesturing for the Street Person to move along.

ROSS (V.O.)

(incredulously)

Are you sure?

INT./EXT. LINDA'S LIMO - BACK SEAT - CONTINUOUS

LINDA

(into her phone)

I saw him, Ross.

INTERCUT ROSS AND LINDA ON THEIR PHONES

LINDA

I was there.

ROSS

What the hell do you suppose that
was all about?

EXT. THE TRAFFIC - CONTINUOUS

The Street Person has moved to the limo beside Ross' and
attempts to wipe that car's windshield.

ROSS (V.O.)

I can't believe Johnny would stab me
in the back.

A car phone trills o.s.

ROSS (V.O.)

After all I've done for him?

LINDA (V.O.)

What's a better reason to do it?

CHAUFFEUR (V.O.)

It's Mrs. Johnson, on two.

ROSS (V.O.)

Ask her to hold. Linda? Did you
tell Peter? This has got to affect
our bid, doesn't it?

RESUME LINDA'S LIMO

LINDA

I'm going to meet him ... Of course,
no decisions without you.

ANOTHER ANGLE - THROUGH LINDA'S WINDSHIELD - LINDA'S POV

The Street Person, who tried to clean Ross' windshield, is
now trying to clean Linda's.

EXT. THE TRAFFIC - CONTINUOUS

Revealing that, without their knowing it, Ross and Linda's
limos are stuck side by side in the intersection.

RESUME LINDA'S LIMO

LINDA

(to Driver, re traffic)

This is impossible.

(into phone)

Ross? Let me call you from Peter's.
I've got run.

She hangs up and starts to get out.

RESUME ROSS

Still holding his phone receiver, he is astounded to see Linda rush by the front of his car. Then, punching up his second line:

ROSS

Laur? You sitting down? You'll never believe who I found out's gone over to Henry Kravis. Who've I always treated like my own son? ...

(listens, shocked)

What? Where? ... When did it happen? ... Are they sure it's him? ... Dear God!

EXT. 34TH STREET HELIPORT - DUSK

A helicopter lifts up and flies off.

EXT. WESTCHESTER COUNTY HOSPITAL - DUSK

As the chopper lands, SUPERIMPOSE: "Westchester County, New York."

INT. THE HOSPITAL - A CORRIDOR - DUSK

Laurie, Ross and his son, NEIL, listen gravely to:

A DOCTOR

I'd like to tell you he'll regain consciousness, but I'd rather you based your hope on the truth, Mr. Johnson. Hard as it is to be grateful for a coma, considering his accident, it's a miracle your son's still with us at all. I'll be by in a few hours. This is my home number.

LAURIE

Thank you, doctor.

The doctor exits. Laurie puts her arm around Neil.

LAURIE

Your mom okay?

NEIL

Her plane gets in in a few hours.

Laurie looks at Ross, a far different Ross than she's ever seen.

INT. THE HOSPITAL - VISITORS' AREA - NIGHT

As Ross, Laurie and Neil continue their vigil, Jim and Linda Robinson appear; he in a black tie; she, in a Carolyne Roehm. Amidst the hugs:

ROBINSON

We got here as soon as we heard.

LINDA

How's Bruce?

LAURIE

Still in a coma. They don't know when he'll come out of it.

ROBINSON

(to Ross)
How you doing, friend?

ROSS

(a beat, then)

Like to buy an '87 Nissan? Only been crushed once?

It's that, or cry.

EXT. THE HOSPITAL GROUNDS - NIGHT

Ross and Jim Robinson walk through the chilly morning.

ROBINSON

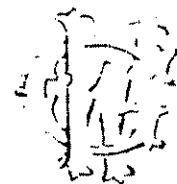
All you can do is make sure you're getting the best possible medical attention. Other than that, you've just got to keep your focus and your perspective.

ROSS

Oh, I'm focussed, okay. I know the score. There's no tipping the doctor to give Bruce a nice, short 24 hour coma. I can't fly everybody out of intensive care and have 'em all come by for a nightcap. Shit, Jim, I am focussed. This is real.

ROBINSON

Of course, it is, but you have to go on about your life.



ROSS

Nothing else matters, Jim. I don't even give a shit about the deal.

This is bad news for Robinson, but he's got to use all of his diplomacy under the circumstances.

ROSS

Something like this happens and nothing else --

ROBINSON

You're wrong, Ross. Everything else does matter. You can't start thinking that way. Everything we do, and how we do it matters. It's what defines us. If what we do doesn't matter, then I'm afraid we don't either.

Ross seems to take Jim's words to heart. Jim can only hope so.

INT. HOSPITAL CAFETERIA - NIGHT

Laurie and Linda over coffee; Linda, somewhat overdressed in her five thousand dollar evening gown. Neil sleeps, his head resting on his arms atop the table.

LINDA

Think about flying back with us on the chopper? And using it all you want to come back and forth?

LAURIE

We've got to go down to Florida for a day. Unless Ross wants to cancel. Would you believe he got some university to give me an honorary degree?

LINDA

You're not serious.

LAURIE

They're going to make me a Phd, or a PCP, or whatever you call it. Ross said it was the college's idea.
(smiles)

It was just a coincidence he had Nabisco lay a gymnasium on them.



LINDA

Well, what else do you give the girl who has everything?

LAURIE

He's so sick of people in the company calling me "Cupcake" behind my back, he said, at least, now they'll have to call me "Doctor Cupcake."

(sighs)

It would get his mind off this a little while anyway. I don't know how he feels about coming back to New York, or finishing up the deal.

LINDA

(more direct than Jim)

He's got to! We're getting to the best part. We're coming to the shootout. Wall Street style. It's the showdown at OK Corral with everybody wearing two thousand dollar suits.

LAURIE

You really love it all, don't you?

LINDA

(stroking the sleeping Neil's hair)

There're not a whole lot of men I know whose fathers hoped they'd be girls, but I'm sure as hell the son my father wanted me to be. I do, Laur. I love every minute of it. And the rougher it gets, the crazier it gets, the better.

LAURIE

God, don't tell me it can get any more crazed than it's been.

INT. JOHNSON'S PALM BEACH HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

The phone chirps insistently. Finally, the front door opens o.s., and Ross, a boutonniere in his suit lapel, rushes in and picks up the receiver. Too late.

ROSS

Shit.

He starts to fix himself a drink. The phone chirps again. Laurie enters, doctorate's certificate in hand, and dressed in white cap and gown.

LAURIE

I got it.
 (kicking off her heels,
 into receiver)

Hello?

ROSS

(anxiously)
 The hospital?

LAURIE

(to Ross)
 Linda.

ROSS

(relieved)
 Pretty good. You've been a doctor
 five minutes and you've got your
 first house call.

LAURIE

(on phone)
 Haven't had a chance. We've been
 out since this morning.
 (glancing at coffee
 table) We've got one, yeah. It's right
 here ... Right. Right after he
 does. 'Bye.

She hangs up and takes a copy of the New York Times from
 the coffee table.

ROSS

What're you looking for?

LAURIE

There's something in the Business
 Section. Linda says it's awful.

ROSS

What is it?

LAURIE

Your deal with Shearson's in there,
 she said. Is that possible? Your
 whole deal?

ROSS

It can't be! How the hell -- ?
 (finding the section)
 Holy shit!

The phone chirps.



ROSS
Whoever it is, I'm not here!
Except the hospital!

LAURIE
(on phone)
Hello? ... No, he's not. If you'll
give me a number, operator, I'll
have him call --
(for Ross' benefit)
-- Mr. Hugel as soon as --

Ross shakes his head emphatically.

LAURIE
(on phone)
No, I'm afraid he can't be reached
anywhere for a few hours. What time
is Mr. Hugel's flight?

She jots down some information, Ross explodes.

Jesus!

Laurie purses her lips to shush him.

ROSS
This makes me look like the
greediest son-of-a-bitch in the
world!

LAURIE
Is that your number, operator, or
Mr. Hugel's in Moscow?

ROSS
Story's probably in fucking Pravda,
too! Where did they get this?!

LAURIE
(hanging up)
Thank you.

As she hangs up:

ROSS
Get me Peter Cohen!

The phone chirps instantly. Laurie picks it up.

LAURIE
Hello?
(MORE)



LAURIE (CONT'D)

(gasps)

God!

ROSS

(alarmed)

The hospital?!

LAURIE

(amazed)

It's Peter Cohen!

ROSS

(grabbing the phone)

Ya God damn right it is! Peter?!

What is our secret, private,
confidential, just-between-you-and-
me, for-your-eyes-only fucking
arrangement doing all over the New
York fucking Times? Who leaked the
God damn thing?

INTERCUT ROSS WITH:

INT. COHEN'S OFFICE - DAY

Littered with paper work. Allegro and several assistants
are working feverishly.

COHEN

(into phone)

I've got Jim on, too, Ross. We're
on a conference call. Jim?

INTERCUT ROSS AND COHEN WITH:

INT. THE BILTMORE HOTEL - NEW YORK - A DOUBLE ROOM - DAY

Used as a temporary showroom by a traveling Turnbull and
Asser Representative, HARRY REYNOLDS, whose wares are
spread all about. Jim, in his shorts and undershirt,
speaks on the phone, as he is measured by the T & A man.

ROBINSON

Ross?

COHEN

Ross is on, Jim.

ROBINSON

(aside)

Just a minute, Harry.

Reynolds stops measuring Robinson.

ROSS
Who the fuck is Harry?

ROBINSON
No, no, it's just me.

COHEN
We're on top of this thing, Ross, I
promise you.

ROBINSON
We're checking it out right now.

A second phone rings in the hotel room. Reynolds gets it.

ROSS
Can you imagine the effect of this
on the board?

COHEN
When we hit him with our new bid,
they'll forget all about it, I
promise you.

ROSS
They sure as hell better! What kind
of numbers are we talking?

COHEN
It's got to be the winner, Ross.
One twelve a share.

ROSS
Jesus Christ! One twelve??

ROSS
If we can work out all the details.
We have to prove we're proposing
makes sense.

ROSS
What do you mean, if you can work
'em out? We have to make the offer
tomorrow.

ROBINSON
We'll be there, Ross, won't we,
Peter?

ROSS
Then what's the problem?

COHEN

It's just the numbers are so
stratospheric, it takes some doing.

ROSS

(re NY Times again)

Do you know what kind of an operator
this makes me look like to Charlie
Hugel?

HARRY REYNOLDS

(to Robinson, re second
phone)

Sir? It's a Mr. Hugel?

ROBINSON

I'll call him back. Tell him I'm
talking to Ross Johnson.

ROSS

What?

ROBINSON

Nothing.

ROSS

Somebody just said Ross Johnson. I
heard him. Jesus, is somebody
bugging my calls now? What the hell
is going on? First, that Brokaw
bullshit; now, this God damn Times
story? You don't think somebody's
orchestrating this whole thing? You
don't think I'm getting crucified
and Henry Kravis might just possibly
own the nail concession?

ROBINSON

I'd hate to think that, Ross. My
feeling is that there are just so
many people involved in all this --

COHEN

Too many fucking fax machines -

ROBINSON

(overlapping)

We'll get to the bottom of it,
though.

COHEN

(continuing)

- everybody's got a fucking Xerox.



ROSS

How do I face Charlie Hugel tomorrow about all this rotten press?

COHEN

We'll get to the bottom of it all.

Ross

I'm at the bottom of it all! I'm standing in a shitstorm - and nobody on this team has got a fucking umbrella!

EXT. BEFORE KRAVIS' APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Members of the press wait for a glimpse of Henry Kravis.

INT. KRAVIS' DUPLEX - KRAVIS' DRESSING ROOM - DAY

Kravis, assisted by his Butler, dresses for the big day. His suspenders, cuff links, breast pocket handkerchief, highly-polished shoes are arrayed and adorned in a manner suggesting a gunslinger getting ready for a showdown.

EXT. BEFORE JOHNSON'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

An equal number of press are waiting for Ross Johnson.

INT. ROSS' 5TH AVENUE APARTMENT - ROSS' BATHROOM - DAY

Laurie watches as Ross, suited up, fusses with his tie until both ends are exactly even. Then, he shoots his cuffs, adjusts his aviator frames, checks his tie again, adjusts his wristwatch and gold bracelet, then shoots his cuffs once more. Inserting two inches of cash into his jacket's inside pocket helps his sense of security. Shooting his cuffs one last time, he is apparently ready, but as a final touch, he unbuttons his jacket, picks up his hair dryer and stuffs it into his waist in the manner of a six-shooter. It breaks the tension, getting the desired laugh from Laurie.

INT. 9 WEST 57 - RJR OFFICES - CHARLES HUGEL'S OFFICE - DAY

Ross and Hugel, the latter heatedly referring to the New York Times piece.

HUGEL

You've put us in a terrible position, Ross! The board hasn't stopped calling me. We look like fools for not knowing about the agreement. Even bigger fools if we did!



ROSS

Charlie --

HUGEL

Two and a half billion dollars for you and your group? That's what your twenty percent share of the company stands to make you over the next five years? Two and a half billion dollars?

ROSS

If those numbers, stick in anybody's craw - and let me tell you that they are purely hypothetical, blown up way the hell out of proportion, then, okay, forget 'em, fuck 'em. I'll just take whatever the board thinks I'm worth. I'm a salesman, Charlie. I never said I was anything else. I've been one, door-to-door; I've done it, house-to-house, I've gone from company-to-company, and I'm here to tell you, a salesman's biggest commission isn't measured in bucks. Every sale the poor bastard rings up is a validation of who he is; that he's doing good at the only thing he knows how to do. There's just one hitch. One tiny little major hitch. A salesman's gotta have things to sell. He's gotta have product. Product, Charlie. I don't want to buy this company because my business is buying companies. I want to buy so it can keep turning out product. I need this company to make things. I have no interest in just buying up the places where things get made, which is all everyone else seems interested in. I tell you, this fucking deal heat everywhere you look is burning all our bridges, Charlie. We're piling on mountains and mountains of debt, everywhere you look, borrowing our God damn brains out. Well, just because we've gone nuts doesn't the rest of the world has. This country's turning its companies into commodities, and, in Japan, they've got their foetuses staying up nights studying how to make computer chips!

This time, Hugel is immune to Ross' passion, his paternalism has turned to ice.

HUGEL

The bids are due in the board room
at five. Not one minute later.

ROSS

(sincerely)

However it turns out, your opinion
of me counts for an awful lot in my
life, Charlie.

HUGEL

We're down to the numbers, Ross.
They're all that matters now.

INT. RJR OFFICES - CORRIDORS - CONTINUOUS

Ross exits Hugel's office and heads for his own, passing
members of the board on their way to the Board Room, who
give Ross the odd, curt nod.

INT. JOHNSON'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Ross enters, to find Horrigan and Robinson listening to an
anxious Cohen, who is on the phone.

COHEN

You can't take any more time, Rob.
You've got to get it the hell over
here!

ROSS

What's wrong?

HORRIGAN

They're still futzin' with the God
damn offer down at Peter's office.

ROBINSON

(apologetically)

There are a million details, Ross.

ROSS

Jesus, that's all the way downtown!
The God damn board's starting to
troop in. They'd just love me to be
half a second late today. Give me
that!

(snatching the phone)

Rob!

INT. SHEARSON LEHMAN OFFICE - DAY

Robert Allegro, up to his neck in paper work, being helped
by several frantic Young AIDES.



ALLEGRO

We're doing our best, Ross!

RESUME JOHNSON'S OFFICE

ROSS

Get over here right now, do you hear me?! Whatever you have to do, just finish it on the way! Do it in the fucking cab!

HORRIGAN

At this hour? On a Friday? Good luck!

EXT. EAST RIVER DRIVE - TRAFFIC - DAY

Busy, but moving along.

INT./EXT. TAXI CAB - TRAVELING SHOT - DAY

The CABBIE is A Third World citizen. Allegro, a flip phone in his lap, and three crumpled Aides, scribble away furiously at different sections of the Shearson bid.

INT. RJR BOARD ROOM - DAY

Directors are assembling, chatting.

INT. JOHNSON'S OFFICE - DAY

Horrigan, Cohen and Robinson listen to Ross on the phone.

ROSS

How you doing?

(checking his watch)

Where are you? ... Fourteenth and where?

EXT. EAST RIVER DRIVE - DAY

Very heavy traffic. Very.

ALLEGRO (V.O.)

Fourteenth and the river.

INT/EXT. THE TAXI - TRAVELING SHOT - DAY

ALLEGRO

(into phone)

Traffic's brutal.

AN AIDE
 (to Cabbie)
 Maybe we should get off the drive?

CABBIE
 How you do that?

INT. KKR OFFICES - AREA BEFORE KRAVIS' OFFICE - DAY

Kravis and Roberts exit KKR, Kravis carrying a a three-inch thick bid envelope. They head for the elevators.

INT. JOHNSON'S OFFICE - DAY

Ross, on the phone, turns to the others.

ROSS
 They're at Thirty-Ninth and First.

COHEN
 (despondently)
 Forget it.

INT. RJR OFFICES - RECEPTION AREA - DAY

The elevator doors open. Kravis and Roberts step out.

INT./EXT. THE TAXI - DAY

Completely stuck in traffic.

ALLEGRO
 (into phone, desperately)
 Fifty-Seventh and Lex. We're boxed
 in! Fucked! ... Are you serious?

INT. JOHNSON'S OFFICE - DAY

ROSS
 Go! Go on, I'm telling you! Go!

EXT. THE TAXI - IN GRIDLOCK - DAY

Allegro and his Aides tumble out of the taxi, clutching their paper work.

ALLEGRO
 (running, into his phone)
 We're on our way!

INT. JOHNSON'S OFFICE - DAY

Horrigan is at the open door, looking out, informs the others.



PASTAR
 10002

HORRIGAN

Kravis!

ROSS

Shit! Hold on, Rob! Keep going!
 (punching intercom)
 Marge, tell Mr. Hugel, in order to
 cover ourselves, we're faxing the
 bid letter right now.

COHEN

Good idea!

He dials another phone to issue that order.

HORRIGAN

It's the fucking taxiing, faxing
 Olympics.

INT. SHEARSON LEHMAN - XEROX ROOM - DAY

The first of the hundreds of pages of the bid are being fed
 into a fax machine.

INT. RJR BOARD ROOM - DAY

Kravis deliver his bid envelope bid to Hugel, nods and
 leaves, exchanging knowing glances with Greeniaus.

INT. JOHNSON'S OFFICE - DAY

ROBINSON

(checking his watch)
 One minute to!

ROSS

(into phone)
 Rob?? Where are you?

HORRIGAN

With our luck, he's been mugged.

ROSS

Rob??

INT. 9 WEST 57 - AN ELEVATOR - DAY

Carrying Allegro and his Aides, one of whom is still
 scribbling.

ALLEGRO

(into his phone)
 We're in the elevator!



ROSS
What floor?

ALLEGRO
Hold on! One second!

Seeing Ross waiting:

COHEN
What happened?

ROSS
I don't know! I lost him!

Allegro appears at Ross' open door, wearily triumphant.

ALLEGRO
Ta-daaaah!

INT. RJR OFFICES - THE BOARD ROOM - DAY

Hugel addresses his board of directors, numerous, bulky bid envelopes stacked before them.

HUGEL
Before you are a number of offers, each a proposal for the buyout of this company. When you study them, I believe you'll agree with me that the clear winner is the proposal submitted by Ross Johnson - in conjunction with Shearson Lehman -- or the one offered by Henry Kravis of KKR.

INT. ROSS' OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Ross, Horrigan, Robinson, Cohen and Allegro, all utterly exhausted, wait it out in a mixture of confidence, anxiety and cigar smoke.

HUGEL (V.O.)
Ross Johnson's bid, you will see, is for one hundred and twelve dollars a share.

INT. A SMALLER RJR OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Kravis and Roberts. Smokeless. Expressionless.

HUGEL (V.O.)
The KKR bid, you will see, is for one hundred and nine.

RESUME THE BOARD ROOM

HUGEL

I must inform you that in dealing with securities and loans in amounts that have never been dealt with before - and we are talking now of an amount that will be in excess of twenty-five billion dollars - nearer to twenty-six billion - our advisers have informed me that these offers are essentially equivalent.

JUANITA KREPS

Mr. Chairman, are you saying that they are the same?

HUGEL

They are close enough so that I can't tell you one is clearly superior to the other. I suggest we begin to break them down very carefully.

INT. THE SMALL RJR OFFICE ~~LATER~~

Kravis and Roberts, jackets off, play gin to kill time.

RESUME THE BOARD ROOM - STILL LATER

Jackets off, coffee, people making notes, etc.

HUGEL

I'd like to get some conversation going on this, if we can.

Greeniaus' raises a finger.

HUGEL

John? You got something to say?

GREENIAUS

Oh, I've got quite a bit to say.
(producing a carton of
Premiers)

Why don't we all light up a Premier,
and I'll tell you a little bit about
"Cookieville."

On their puzzled looks:



INT. ROSS' OFFICE - LATER YET

Ross, Horrigan, Cohen and Robinson, sweating it out, are startled by the intercom buzzer.

ROSS
 (getting it quickly)
 Yeah??
 (let down)
 Show her in.
 (to the others)
 Linda.

LINDA
 (entering)
 I thought maybe you'd know by now.
 Anything? Not yet? Somebody?

ROSS
 Pull up some worry beads and sit
 down.

EXT. 9 WEST 57TH STREET BUILDING - NIGHT

Office lights are beginning to be turned off, while RJR's burn brightly.

INT. THE RJR BOARD ROOM - NIGHT

A mess. Papers and fatigue everywhere. But the work is finished. Hugel walks to a side table and presses a number on the phone. Then:

HUGEL
 (on the phone)
 Charlie here. I'd like you to come
 to my office. The board's made its
 decision. Five minutes, okay?

INT. HUGEL'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Hugel is addressing someone off-camera.

HUGEL
 In the end, I'd say the biggest
 factor, the one thing that made the
 other offer much more attractive was
 the fact that you weren't part of
 it. Not any part at all.

ANOTHER ANGLE REVEALS that Hugel is talking to Ross.

HUGEL

RJR Nabisco is a public company, Ross. You've been running it as though you owned it for far too long. Frankly, the board is appalled by your unbridled extravagance.

ROSS

They've all just been dying to fly commercial again, is that it?

HUGEL

We're not empowered to change the past, but we can certainly decide to change the company's future. Nobody's going to deny that there's not a fair amount of greed going around these days. I guess it's a just a question of how much greed is fair. This -

(re the Times on his desk)

yours - was over the top. It was just too - naked. There was just no way we could let you have this company, Ross.

Ross is numb with disappointment.

INT. RJR OFFICES - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Ross exits Hugel's office and starts down the hall. Turning a corner, he comes face to face with Greeniaus. After an awkward pause:

GREENIAUS

I'm sorry, Ross.

ROSS

Is that a blanket "sorry," Johnny, or for any one thing in particular?

GREENIAUS

I don't get it.

ROSS

Oh, you will, I'm sure. You'll probably get it all one day.

(a beat)

I always planned for you to succeed me, y'know. You're just a few years ahead of schedule.

Ross moves on. His next stop:



INT. THE SMALL RJR OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Roberts is putting on his jacket, straightening his tie, and Kravis is on the phone, when Ross enters.

KRAVIS

(quietly, into phone)

We'll be right in, Charlie.

He hangs up. A beat, then:

ROSS

I just wanted to thank you guys.

Kravis and Roberts exchange looks. What??

ROSS

For making me a hero with my shareholders. Twenty-five point seven billion dollars for the company? In their wettest dreams they never figured on getting that rich.

(extending his hand)
Congratulations.

(as they shake)

If there's anything I can do. If I can be of any help ... Or, I can just be out of here tomorrow, you name it.

ROBERTS

That's very generous, Ross.

KRAVIS

We don't have any plans yet. We don't take over till after the first of the year.

ROSS

Well, just holler. You guys have bought yourselves a hell of a company.

(stopping at the door)

I hate like hell to leave on a sour note, but -- It's about that twenty-five billion. If you're thinking of signing for it, Jim cancelled your American Express card.

And he leaves, getting the last laugh he ever will at RJR Nabisco.



EXT. 9 WEST 57TH STREET BUILDING - ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Standing by the big, red "9," in the cold night air: Ross, Horrigan, Robinson, Cohen and Linda.

HORRIGAN

(mutters, angrily)

You ever hear of the highest bid losing before? How the hell do you win a company like ours playing lowball?

ROBINSON

(to Ross)

You and Linda got anything on tonight?

ROSS

I'm flying up to Westchester. She's with Bruce.

HORRIGAN

Fucked! That's what we were!

COHEN

I'm with you!

LINDA

(to Ross)

We'd love to come along.

ROSS

I think maybe just the two of us'll be fine.

LINDA

(with a warm hug)

Four's twice the company.

ROSS

(affectionately)

You know, Jim, if I hadn't married Laurie --

HORRIGAN

Fucked!

ROSS

I'd've probably married Ed here.

The group erupts in laughter, as Ross throws his arm around Horrigan. As they all head for their Cadillacs:

INT. CADILLAC SHOWROOM - WINSTON-SALEM - DAY

The 2nd RJR Worker, the one with all the company shares, is looking at a gleaming, black sedan. His wife, a few feet away, is obviously in love with the same model, in red. After a good deal of thought:

2ND RJR WORKER
(to the Salesman)
We'll take the black one.

SALESMAN
Yes, sir!

A beat, then:

2ND RJR WORKER
(sotto, to the Salesman)
And deliver the red one to the house.

SALESMAN
Yes, sir!

INT. FOREIGN CAR SHOWROOM - NEW YORK CITY - DAY

Writing out a check for a top-of-the-line Porsche, is an Armani-suited Anthony, the pizza delivery man.

A LOUD BEEPING SOUND delivers us to:

INT. JFK AIRPORT TERMINAL - SECURITY CHECK - DAY

Laurie, having cleared security, waits for an increasingly frustrated Ross, who is forced to go through the metal detector several times, each trip causing the machine to beep. First, he removes his wad of cash with its money clip and his keys; the second time, his cigarette lighter, and gold pen. He finally clears, after surrendering his gold eye glass frames and gold I.D. bracelet. He is not a happy camper, as he reclaims his carryon stuff.

INT./EXT. A COMMERCIAL JETLINER - FIRST CLASS - TRAVELING SHOT DAY

Some minutes into the flight, Ross lights up a cigarillo, and shuffles the pages of the New York Times.

LAURIE
What're you looking for?

ROSS
The want ads.

She smiles.



RASTAR
XX0002

ROSS

You think I'm kidding? You think anybody's going to come knocking on the door after the number those guys did on me? They turned me into the God damn poster boy for Greed. Remember Linda said there'd be a feeding frenzy? I was a God damn twelve-course meal.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

(appearing)

I'm sorry, sir. No cigar or pipe smoking is allowed.

ROSS

(muttering)

Right. Thanks. Sorry.

(using the ashtray, to

Laurie)

Welcome to the real world, right?

(anxiously)

I just hope he's all right, y'know?
Poor baby.

ROSS

Hey, we've got our adjustments to make, he's got his.

INT. THE PLANE'S HOLD - DAY

In an animal container, wearing the saddest of expressions, Rocco, for the first time, is experiencing how the other half of the animal world lives.

EXT. THE SKY - DAY

The plane continues its flight southward.

INT. WESTCHESTER COUNTY HOSPITAL - NURSES STATION - DAWN

A NURSE talks on the phone.

NURSE

You're up awful early, Mr. Johnson.

INTERCUT NURSE WITH:

INT. JOHNSON'S PALM HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAWN

Ross, in slacks and sport shirt is on the phone. Rocco is at his feet.

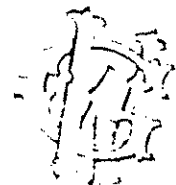


ROSS

I don't know. I just had a feeling,
maybe --

NURSE

I'm sorry. There's been no change
at all. Are we going to see again
this weekend? ... Only please don't
bring another hundred pounds of
candy, okay? We can't get into our
uniforms anymore.



CAMERA STAYS with Ross, who smiles and concludes his call.

ROSS

'Bye.

He hangs up. A beat, then Laurie enters, half asleep, in a
T-shirt nightie.

LAURIE

How long you been up?

ROSS

Five, five-thirty, whichever came
first. I thought I might go out for
awhile.

LAURIE

Now? We've got a seven-thirty
starting time.

ROSS

Maybe we'll skip golf today, huh?

LAURIE

How about lunch and a early movie?

ROSS

Maybe we'll cool it with the movies
for awhile, too. We're seeing 'em
faster than they can make 'em. I
thought maybe I'd just take a little
ride.

LAURIE

I'll be down in a minute.

ROSS

You go back to sleep. I won't be
long.

Rocco starts to accompany him.

ROSS
You stay, Rocco.

He puts his arms on Laurie's shoulders and kisses her brow, lightly, tenderly.

ROSS
See ya, doc.

Laurie watches him go. She's troubled, maybe even scared.

INT. JOHNSON'S PALM BEACH HOUSE - GARAGE - DAWN

Ross enters and gets into his station wagon. He does not activate the remote to open the garage door. He starts the engine, races it a bit; then, he causes the door to open.

EXT. A PALM BEACH STREET - DAWN

The station wagon moves through the deserted, upper-class streets. Turning a corner, Ross sees a ten-year-old BOY, of Cuban descent, trying to fix a flat on the bicycle he's using to deliver his papers. Ross pulls up alongside him.

ROSS
Need some help?

BOY
I must'a run over a nail or something.

EXT. ANOTHER PALM BEACH STREET - DAWN

The station wagon glides along, the boy's bicycle stashed atop the roof rack.

INT./EXT. ROSS' STATION WAGON - TRAVELING SHOT - DAY

The boy is tossing his papers on the porches along his route, as Ross drives slowly.

ROSS
Good arm.

BOY
Thanks.

ROSS
You got a name?

BOY
Raoul.



ROSS

What do you wanna do when you grow up, Raoul?

RAOUL

I dunno. Something important, if I can. I'd like to make my parents proud of me. My dad says I got plenty of time.

ROSS

Take all you can. Getting there's the best part.

RAOUL

If you take a left here, it's my last street.



EXT. ANOTHER PALM BEACH STREET - CONTINUOUS

As the station wagon makes the turn

RAOUL (V.O.)

I really appreciate this, Mister --

ROSS (V.O.)

Johnson. F. Ross Johnson.

RAOUL (V.O.)

I appreciate it, Mr. Johnson.

INT./EXT. ROSS' STATION WAGON - TRAVELING SHOT - CONTINUOUS

ROSS

(a beat, then)

Raoul?

RAOUL

Sir?

ROSS

Just call me Fred.

And he tosses - expertly - the last of the Boy's newspapers onto the porch of a house.

EXT. THE PALM BEACH STREET - CONTINUOUS

Ross' station wagon rolls on. Into the distance. Toward the sunrise.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

Over appropriate footage, and BEFORE the CLOSING CREDITS,
we see the following EPILOGUE:

BY THE END OF THE 1980'S, AMERICAN BUSINESSES PILED UP NEARLY
ONE TRILLION DOLLARS OF DEBT ...

JOHN GREENIAUS IMPROVED NABISCO EARNINGS BY FORTY PERCENT IN
THE FIRST SIX MONTHS OF THE TAKEOVER ...

RJ REYNOLDS ABANDONED PREMIERS. THE SMOKELESS CIGARETTE WENT
UP IN WHATEVER IT WENT UP IN ...

PETER COHEN RESIGNED FROM SHEARSON LEHMAN ...

IT WAS HIS IDEA - ONCE HE GOT IT FROM JIM ROBINSON ...

THE ROBINSONS AND THE KRAVSES ARE STILL CLOSE - ONLY NOT WITH
EACH OTHER ...

IVAN BOESKY GOT TIME OFF FOR GOOD BEHAVIOR - AND PROMPTLY
CONFESSED THAT HE BRIBED FELLOW INMATES TO DO HIS LAUNDRY FOR
HIM ...

MICHAEL MILKEN (A LINDA ROBINSON CLIENT) WAS SENTENCED TO TEN
YEARS IN JAIL AND FINED SIX HUNDRED MILLION DOLLARS ...

MIKE TYSON LOST HIS TITLE. HIS PURSE WAS TWENTY MILLION
DOLLARS ...

ROSS JOHNSON LOST HIS TITLE. HIS SEVERANCE PAY CAME TO
FIFTY-SIX MILLION ...

BRUCE JOHNSON REMAINS IN A COMA ...

ONE GREAT THING ABOUT THE '80'S ...

THEY'RE OVER.

... EXCEPT THAT SOME PEOPLE ARE STILL PAYING FOR THEM.



