

B I G

Revised Script 7/2/87

Screenplay By

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and

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WITH REVISION #1 (Blue)
Dated 7/27/87

WITH REVISION #2 (Blue)
Dated 7/28/87

WITH REVISION #3 (Blue & Pink)
Dated 7/31/87

FADE IN:

1 FULL SHOT - COMPUTER SCREEN 1

It glows an incandescent blue. Long rows of electronic type print rapidly across the screen.

"YOU ARE IN THE CAVERN OF THE EVIL WIZARD. ALL AROUND YOU ARE THE CARCASSES OF SLAIN ICE DWARFS. THE WIZARD STANDS ABOVE YOU AT THE TOP OF HIS PILLAR POINTING THE FROZEN SCEPTER."

BOY (OS)
(under his breath as
THESE WORDS ARE TYPED
ONTO THE SCREEN:)
MELT ... WIZARD ...

The computer ressonds in an instant line of type:

"WHAT DO YOU WANT TO MELT THE WIZARD WITH?"

BOY (OS contd)
What do you think I want to melt
him with?

FULL SHOT - JOSHUA BASKIN - DAY

He is an average twelve-year-old boy, slightly short for his age. The cheeks are rosy and have never been shaved. His eyes are clear and bright with an intelligent twinkle. Josh stares earnestly at the screen of his home computer trying to figure out a way to terminate the Evil Wizard.

MOTHER (OS)
(from downstairs)
Josh, I told you to take out the
garbage.

JOSH
(calling down to her)
In a minute.
(back to the computer
while he types)
THROW ... THERMAL ... POD.

MOTHER (OS)
I'm not going to tell you again.

JOSH
(frantic)
Just a second!

MOTHER (OS)
Joshua Baskin ...

SHOT - COMPUTER SCREEN

"YOUR HESITANCY HAS COST YOU DEARLY. THE WIZARD, SENSING YOUR APPREHENSION, UNLEASHES A FATAL BOLT FROM THE ICE SCEPTER, FREEZING YOU INTO OBLIVION. WITH LUCK, YOU WILL THAW IN SEVERAL MILLION YEARS."

FULL SHOT - JOSH

JOSH

Terrific.

CUT TO:

2 INT. KITCHEN

2

Joshua's mother, MRS. BASKIN, is busily cleaning the kitchen. Three Hefty garbage bags sit on the tile floor. One-year-old RACHEL gurgles happily in her Johnny Jumper by the door. Josh walks into the kitchen wearing his "DUKES" little league jacket.

*
*

MRS. BASKIN

(pointing at garbage)

Those three.

Josh looks from the bags to his little sister, then leans over and takes her toy. Rachel reaches out with a whimper.

*
*
*

MRS. BASKIN (contd)

(without turning around)

Give it back.

*
*
*

Josh hesitates. Rachel lets out a cry.

*

MRS. BASKIN (contd)

(turning)

Be nice to her, Josh.

*

He flashes her a smile and gives Rachel a deliberate kiss on the cheek. Josh hands her the toy, then grabs the garbage bags.

*
*
*

CUT TO:

3 EXT. BASKIN HOUSE - MORNING

3

He heaves the bags into the metal cans with exaggerated effort. Josh glances back at the house, then grabs his bicycle from against the fence.

*
*

CUT TO:

4 EXT. FRONT OF HOUSE - DAY 4

He heads down the path that leads to the street. *
 Josh jumps on his bike and is just about to shove off *
 when his father appears at the edge of the yard. *

MR. BASKIN
 Finish your homework?

Josh looks back in amazement.

JOSH
 It's Saturday.

MR. BASKIN
 And tomorrow's the carnival.

JOSH
 But...

MR. BASKIN
 You want to go tomorrow night?

JOSH
 (beat)
 Can I go alone?

MR. BASKIN
 No.

JOSH
 Can't I do anything alone?

MR. BASKIN
 Sure. You can go do your homework. *

Josh rolls his eyes, then turns and heads back toward the house.

CUT TO:

5 EXT. SCHOOLYARD - GEORGE WASHINGTON JUNIOR HIGH 5

Josh's best friend BILLY KOPECHE dribbles a basketball *
 at one end of the schoolyard. Jiving to himself, he *
 moves with elaborate motion toward a garbage can by *
 the fence. Billy is three months older than Josh and *
 acts every one of them. He lets go a slam dunk that *
 ricochets back in his face. *

(CONT.)

5

CONTD
WIDER

5

Josh comes riding up on his bike and circles around Billy. The boys exchange a high-five.

BILLY

What took you?

JOSH

Guess.

Billy turns toward the fence and steps on his skateboard as he glances back at Josh.

BILLY

You do my math?

JOSH

Not yet.

BILLY

Josh...

JOSH

(exasperated)

I'll have it for you tonight, okay?

Billy grabs the back of Josh's bike as they start out of the schoolyard.

BILLY

It's just that I bet Bobby Feinberg I'd get an "A".

JOSH

Jesus, Billy.

CUT TO:

6

EXT. LOCAL HANGOUT - STREET - DAY

6

Billy drags his skateboard as Josh walks his bike down the business district of the small suburb.

BILLY

You ever walk by Simpkins desk when she's bent over grading papers or something and you can see right down her shirt?

JOSH

No.

BILLY

Swear to God.

(CONTINUED)

6

CONTD

6

JOSH
(beat)

Bra?

BILLY
Like one of those undershirt
things, and if you get right
up to the board you can see
all the way down.

JOSH
Wow.

Josh leans his bike against a railing and looks down
the street.

7

HIS POV - LOCAL HANGOUT

7

A group of teenagers hangs out around the entrance.
CYNTHIA BENSON leans against the wall in all her
eighth grade glory.

WIDER SHOT - JOSH AND BILLY

They approach the hangout.

BILLY
(staring at Cynthia)
How'd a geek like Freddy Benson
get a big sister like that?

JOSH
Beats me.

FULL SHOT - ENTRANCE

They approach the door, as Billy makes his way quickly
through the crowd. Josh stays right behind him and is
almost through when a sweet voice calls after him.

CYNTHIA
-- Hi, Josh.

He turns around to see the source of the words and can't
believe it when the smile comes back. Cynthia stands only
a couple of feet away. Josh looks back at her, completely
dazzled.

BILLY
(cutting in)
Hi.

(CONTINUED)

Unable to move, Josh continues to smile as Cynthia and her friends start down the block. *

BILLY *
 (yelling) *
 He says hello! *

Billy grabs Josh by the back of the jacket and twirls him around. *

BILLY (contd) *
 (leaning in close) *
 Un-be-lievable! *

CUT TO:

8 OMIT 8 *
 9 OMIT 9 *
 A10 INT. JOSH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT A10 *

Josh clutches his baseball glove and several computer books protectively as he watches his father wheel a pink baby crib through the door to his room. It is a 12-year-old's paradise. A slot car track runs under the bunk beds, and a scale model of the Empire State Building stands in one corner. There is a life-size poster of Don Mattingly on the door and a green bedspread marked off like a football field. He winces as the crib is wheeled over the tracks. *

JOSH *
 This isn't fair. *

MR. BASKIN *
 Sport, we've been talking about this for months. You knew this was going to happen when Rachel got older. *

His mother comes in carrying Rachel and a pink elephant mobile. She places her in the center of the bottom bunk, then turns to the door and pulls in a small stepladder. *

JOSH *
 Why can't she stay in your room? *

His parents exchange a look. *

MRS. BASKIN *
 Because. *

7.

Mrs. Baskin steps up the ladder and hangs the mobile next to one of Josh's model spaceships. Mr. Baskin moves aside the Empire State Building model as he wheels the crib toward the corner. Josh quickly tries to move it back. Mr. Baskin turns to his son and puts a hand on his shoulder.

MR. BASKIN

Josh, being part of a family means sharing responsibilities.

JOSH

Great. Do I have to share my room?

CUT TO:

10 INT. BILLY'S KITCHEN

10

Four siblings, of which Billy is the youngest, are gathered in the kitchen for dinner. Unwashed dishes are piled up on the sink. MRS. KOPECHE, a tired-looking woman with streaks of gray in her hair, shrieks from the head of the table.

MRS. KOPECHE

I'm a person, I'm not your maid.
Can any of you appreciate that?

The CAMERA FOLLOWS Billy as he takes a platter of meatloaf from the oven, setting it on the table.

MRS. KOPECHE (contd)

You waltz through here like it's some kind of resort...lounging around waiting for your dinner to be cooked, your clothes to be ironed.

Billy gets a plate of potatoes and returns them to the table.

MRS. KOPECHE (contd)

What about me! Have you ever just once thought about how I feel?

(MORE)

(CONTD)

MRS. KOPECHE (contd)
 Do you know what it's like to work
 eight hours and come home to this...
 (she hits the table with
 her fist on each word)
 Every. Single. Day.

She looks from face to face around the table. Nobody meets her eye.

MRS. KOPECHE (contd)
 None of you ever offer to help me.
 Why?

Billy puts the vegetables on the table, turns back to the counter and gets an empty plate.

MRS. KOPECHE (contd)
 (she starts to cry)
 I can't do it alone anymore.

The CAMERA STAYS on Billy as he forks some meatloaf on his plate and crosses to the kitchen door.

MRS. KOPECHE (contd)
 I just can't.

He disappears into the hall as the swinging doors shut behind him.

CUT TO:

11 INT. JOSH'S ROOM - NIGHT

11

Josh lies on the top bunk with a flashlight in one hand *
 and a walkie-talkie in the other. Rachel sleeps safely *
 in her crib. The boys talk in whispers as Josh aims the *
 beam of light out the window.

JOSH
 (into walkie-talkie)
Tell me.

BILLY (VO)
 (over walkie-talkie)
 First the math.

CUT TO:

12 INT: BILLY'S ROOM

12

It is a disaster area. Billy lies on his bed in an explosion of dirty laundry with the other walkie-talkie wedged to his ear. He shines his flashlight at the ceiling, chasing the beam of light Josh is throwing into his room.

JOSH (VO)

I'll give you the math, Billy.
Now what's going on?

Billy grins slightly, sitting up in bed.

BILLY

You're in.

CUT TO:

13 INT: JOSH'S ROOM - NIGHT

13

JOSH

What do you mean -- I'm in?

BILLY (VO)

Cynthia Benson.

JOSH

(sitting up)
What about her?

CUT TO:

14 INT: BILLY'S ROOM

14

He leans forward on the bed clutching the walkie-talkie.

BILLY

(with a grin)
You ready for this?
(he pauses)
She doesn't like Barry anymore.

There is a long silence from the other walkie-talkie. Billy angles the flashlight at the window.

CUT TO:

15 INT: JOSH'S ROOM

15

Beams of light play across his ceiling. Josh sits motionless in bed as the light from Billy's flashlight dances over the wall.

JOSH

So ...

BILLY (VO)

Whaddaya mean "so"? That's it!
She's available.

JOSH

Billy, just 'cause she doesn't
like him anymore ...

MRS. BASKIN (OS)

Josh?

He plunges the walkie-talkie under the covers as his
mother opens the bedroom door.

MRS. BASKIN

It's after midnight. You should
have been asleep an hour ago.

JOSH

I am asleep.

MRS. BASKIN

Of course you are. Now say goodbye
to Billy.

Josh reluctantly pulls the walkie-talkie from under the
covers and puts it back up to his ear.

JOSH

I gotta go.

A wet kissing around comes from the other end of the
walkie-talkie.

BILLY (VO)

Sweet dreams.

CUT TO:

16 FULL SHOT - THE AVENGER - NIGHT

16

It is the Goliath of carnival rides. A series of metal
cages are attached to long mechanical arms that lift and
swirl them into the night. Desperate SCREAMS ECHO out
of the darkened cars as they swing hundreds of feet up
into the air, twisting and plummeting toward the carnival
below.

CLOSE UP - JOSH

He stares up at the towering machine. Josh's eyes are wide

WIDER SHOT - JOSH AND PARENTS *

Mr. and Mrs. Baskin walk beside their son in the midst
of the carnival midway. Mr. Baskin holds Rachel. Mrs.
Baskin carries a camera. Tinny calliope MUSIC plays as
they move toward the massive ride. *

MRS. BASKIN

I don't know, Bob.

MR. BASKIN

He's a big boy, Carol. *

Mr. Baskin tears off an orange midway ticket and hands
it to his son. They are almost at the line for the
Avenger when Josh stops dead in his tracks. *

JOSH *

Oh my God. *

HIS POV

Cynthia Benson stands alone at the end of the line,
looking up at the ride. *

WIDER ANGLE - JOSH AND PARENTS

He stands frozen beside his mother and father.

MRS. BASKIN *

I told you he didn't want to do it. *

MR. BASKIN

(resting a hand on
his shoulder)

Sport, you don't have to go on it
if you don't feel like it.

(CONTD)

JOSH

Hunh...Oh, no, I just...
 (turns to them and
 stares for a moment)
 I want to go on it myself.

MRS. BASKIN

You do?

JOSH

Yes.

Mr. Baskin smiles proudly at his son, then shoots his
 wife a look. She shrugs helplessly. *

MR. BASKIN

Great. *

(glancing around)

Why don't we meet you at the Ferris
 Wheel? *

JOSH

Okay. *

Josh waits until they are several steps away before he
 turns and starts toward the Avenger. *

SHOT - JOSH

He moves quickly toward the ride. Josh cranes his neck
 to see around the adults who are a foot taller than he
 is. He is just inside the archway when he spots
 Cynthia. Josh takes a deep breath, stuffs his hands
 in his pockets, and walks slowly up to the line. *

WIDER SHOT INCLUDING CYNTHIA

She is looking up at the huge ride. Josh slides non-
 chalantly up beside her, staring in the other direction.
 He clears his throat. Cynthia turns and looks beside
 her. *

(CONTD)

CYNTHIA

Josh?

He turns back to her with a frozen smile on his face.
It takes a second or two before the words come out.

JOSH

Oh ... Hi.

CYNTHIA

Hi.

Now he's really frozen. Josh stares in wide-eyed panic
looking for something to say.

CYNTHIA (contd)

Are you here alone?

JOSH

Yes.

(beat)

Definitely.

CYNTHIA

Oh ...

(as they move up a
little in line)

Have you been on this before?

JOSH

This?

(beat)

Yes.

CYNTHIA

Is it scary?

JOSH

Yes.

Cynthia nods and then glances out at the crowd.

CYNTHIA

Look, aren't those your parents?

JOSH

(panicked)

Where?

CYNTHIA

(pointing)

Right over there.

THEIR POV

The Baskins are standing over by the cotton candy stand. Mrs. Baskin gives a little wave, then raises her camera as a flash bulb goes off.

SHOT - JOSH AND CYNTHIA

JOSH

(acting surprised)

Why, yes...

All at once there is a deep male voice from behind her. *

MALE VOICE (VO) *

Who's this? *

WIDER ANGLE *

Josh looks up to see a strapping sixteen-year-old carrying two ice cream cones. Cynthia takes one of them, then puts her arm around his waist. *

CYNTHIA *

This is Josh Baskin. *

DEREK *

How ya doin'?

Josh tries to nod.

CYNTHIA *

This is Derek. *

(confidentially) *

He drives. *

Josh stares back with most of the color drained from his face. *

TICKET TAKER (OS)

Next!

He is too stunned to move. *

TICKET TAKER (OS contd)

Yo! Next please.

DEREK *

Go ahead. *

Josh turns around to see no one between him and the ticket taker. He holds out his midway ticket and moves slowly toward the turnstile. *

TICKET TAKER
 Sorry, kid.

JOSH
 (looking up)
 What?

The man points next to him at a large sign. In bold *
 print it reads:

"YOU MUST BE AT LEAST THIS TALL TO RIDE THIS RIDE"

He stares in shock at the red line that is just over his *
 head. *

TICKET TAKER
 Come on, kid, you're holding up
 the line.

Josh turns around to Cynthia and Derek who are standing *
 a foot or two behind him. She smiles awkwardly.

CYNTHIA
 (shrugging) *
 Well...it's a stupid rule. *

He watches silently as they move past him through the *
 turnstile. *

CYNTHIA (contd) *
 (looking back) *
 See ya, Josh. *

Josh nods quickly and tries to smile. Cynthia and Derek *
 disappear up the ramp as he turns to walk back down the *
 line. *

CUT TO:

17 EXT. FUN HOUSE

17

He walks alone on the far side of the carnival kicking *
 at the dirt. Josh continues past the modern video games *
 that line the side of the fun house. A group of teen- *
 agers are at the controls. He looks at them with a scowl *
 and continues past them, when something catches his eye.

JOSH'S POV

Alone, facing the river is a small old carnival game
 standing by itself. There is a little glass booth with
 a wooden head inside. The hair is painted black. The
 beard comes to a point. Written across the top in old
 swirling script are the words: "ZOLTAR SPEAKS".

15A.

SHOT - JOSH

He walks up to the booth. There are two worn brass levers and a long metal ramp that leads to Zoltar's mouth. At the top of the ramp is a slot to put a quarter. Josh reads the faded lettering on the inside of the booth.

JOSH

(reading)

Insert coin to top of ramp.

16.

He hesitates a moment, then fishes through his pockets and pulls out a quarter. Josh shoves the coin into the slot. It drops to the top of the metal ramp and comes to rest there. Nothing happens.

WIDER SHOT - JOSH AND ZOLTAR

He looks at it then bangs the side of the machine. Still nothing happens. Josh bashes the booth again but the quarter just stays there. All at once, in a flurry of frustration, Josh wails against the side of the machine with both fists. Zoltar's eyes glow bright red. The small wooden head begins to nod. A red sign lights up reading:

"AIM RAMP TOWARD ZOLTAR'S MOUTH" *

Josh manipulates the lever until the ramp is pointed toward Zoltar's open mouth. *

"ZOLTAR SAYS: MAKE YOUR WISH"

JOSH

Make my wish...right.

(he pauses a moment)

I wish I was a grownup.

Another sign lights up under the first one reading:

"PRESS BUTTON TO RELEASE COIN" *

He is taken aback by the unsolicited response but does as he is told. Josh aims the ramp carefully and pushes the button, releasing the coin. It rolls down the long railing and flies off the end, barely making it into Zoltar's mouth. The jaws close on the coin. The head stops nodding and stares straight at Josh.

All at once a group of teenagers runs past him, laughing down the midway.

The SOUND of their laughter TRAILS OFF as a small card pops out of the bottom of the machine. Josh reaches down and pulls it from the slot.

JOSH'S POV - CARD

"YOUR WISH IS GRANTED"

(CONTD)

SHOT - JOSH

He stares at the card for a moment, when something catches his eye.

JOSH'S POV

At the base of the machine is a coiled wire attached to an old frayed plug. The plug is attached to...nothing.

SHOT - JOSH

He bends down slowly to pick up the plug. Josh examines the worn electrical wire for a moment, then rises slowly to meet Zoltar's eyes. The bobbing head continues to smile. A sudden breeze ruffles his hair.

CUT TO:

18 EXT. BASKIN YARD - NIGHT 18

What was a light breeze has turned into a dry gale, whistling through the yard and bending the trees in half. A sudden gust blows Josh's bike over. The front gate flies open, smashing against the fence. His little league uniform rips from the clothesline and sails across the yard....

CUT TO:

19 INT. JOSH'S ROOM 19

Rachel howls along with the wind outside. The door opens and Mrs. Baskin comes into the room. She takes Rachel from her crib and rocks her from side to side as her crying dies down. Mrs. Baskin looks at the face of her son a few feet from hers. He sleeps soundly underneath the covers. She turns and carries Rachel out of the room. *

CUT TO:

20 EXT. BASKIN HOUSE - THE FOLLOWING MORNING 20

It is silent in the aftermath of the gale. Leaves and branches are scattered across the neighborhood front lawns.

CUT TO:

21 INT. JOSH'S ROOM 21

It is bathed in a warm orange light. The CAMERA PANS SLOWLY from the window across the sun-drenched floor.

SHOT - JOSH

He stares at the card for a moment, when something catches his eye.

JOSH'S POV

At the base of the machine is a coiled wire attached to an old frayed plug. The plug is attached to ... nothing.

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CUT TO:

18 EXT: BASKIN YARD - NIGHT 18

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CUT TO:

19 INT: JOSH'S ROOM 19

Zach howls along with the wind outside. The door opens and Mrs. Baskin comes into the room. She takes Zach from his bed and rocks him from side to side as his crying dies down. Mrs. Baskin looks at the face of her other son a few feet from hers. He sleeps soundly underneath the covers. She smiles and smooths back Josh's hair from his forehead, then turns and carries Zach out of the room.

CUT TO:

20 EXT: BASKIN HOUSE - THE FOLLOWING MORNING 20

It is silent in the aftermath of the gale. Leaves and branches are scattered across the neighborhood front lawns.

CUT TO:

21 INT: JOSH'S ROOM 21

It is bathed in a warm orange light. The CAMERA PANS SLOWLY from the window across the sun-drenched floor.

There are the usual array of toys: his slot car tracks ... a skateboard ... a gleaming silver robot ...

MRS. BASKIN (OS)
It's seven-thirty, Josh. You up?

The CAMERA CONTINUES TO PAN coming to rest on the empty bottom bunk.

MRS. BASKIN (OS contd)
Sweetheart, you'll miss the bus and
I can't drive you today.

There is a HEAVY CREAK of bedsprings as two huge feet swing out from the top bunk and dangle in mid-air. They are size twelve feet attached to big hairy ankles.

DIFFERENT ANGLE - HOLDING ON FEET

They drop to the floor, hitting it sharply -- a little too soon. The feet stand motionless for a moment ...

The CAMERA FOLLOWS them as they pad slowly across the floor and into the hallway.

CUT TO:

22 INT: BATHROOM

22

A man's hand hits the wall looking for the light switch. Joshua slides his hand up the wall, then pauses for a moment and slides it down. His hand makes contact with the switch, a foot lower than usual. He hesitates, then flicks on the light switch to reveal:

FULL SHOT - BATHROOM MIRROR

A hairy well-muscled torso fills the entire mirror. The chest is large -- the waist is slim. Slowly -- very slowly -- Josh lowers himself into the mirror. First there are the broad shoulders ... then the neck ... then finally ... the full face of a handsome thirty-five-year-old man stares back from the bathroom mirror. Joshua whirls around to see who is behind him, but there is no one there. He freezes for a moment, then turns back to face it.

Their eyes lock. Joshua winks once and the reflection does the same. He wrinkles his nose and so does the man in the mirror. A look of horror crosses Joshua's face.

JOSH
(whispering)
No ...

He slowly reaches up and rubs the side of his face as he stares in mounting horror.

MRS. BASKIN (OS)

Honey ...

Josh leaps back and slams into the shower curtain.

MRS. BASKIN (OS contd)

... I put some clean clothes out.
Bring down your cords for the
laundry, okay?

JOSH

(in a deep bass)

Okay.

He clamps his hand over his mouth.

CUT TO:

23 INT: HALLWAY

23

Mrs. Baskin hears her son and cocks her head to the side, frowning slightly.

MRS. BASKIN

Are you getting a cold?

JOSH (OS)

(in a high falsetto)

Oh, no ... I'm fine.

She looks toward the bathroom for a moment, then shrugs.

CUT TO:

24 INT: BATHROOM

24

Josh is backed up against the medicine chest with a look of panic on his face. He hears the sound of his mother's footsteps moving down the hall.

CUT TO:

25 INT: HALLWAY

25

The door to the bathroom flies open, and Josh rushes out. He darts across the hallway and into his bedroom, shutting the door behind him.

CUT TO:

26 INT: BEDROOM

26

Josh grabs his jeans from the night before and fishes through the pockets. He pulls out the small card that was printed from the Zoltar machine.

JOSH'S POV - CARD

"YOUR WISH IS GRANTED."

SHOT - JOSH

JOSH

Omigod.

He looks frantically around the room and grabs the clean pants that his mother left for him. Josh thrusts one foot into the leg forgetting it is a child's medium. His leg gets stuck as he falls backwards onto the bottom bunk. Struggling on his back, Josh manages to get both feet in the jeans. He grabs the pants by the belt loops, rocks forward onto his feet, and then, leaning forward ...

CUT TO:

27 INT: KITCHEN

27

Mrs. Baskin is standing at the kitchen stove making scrambled eggs when there is a loud thump from upstairs. She stops cooking and looks toward the ceiling.

CUT TO:

28 INT: JOSH'S ROOM

28

He struggles desperately on the floor, trying to remove the child's jeans.

MRS. BASKIN (OS)

Breakfast is ready!

JOSH

(falsetto)

Be right there.

CUT TO:

29 SHOT - TOP OF STAIRS

29

The figure of a six-foot man wrapped in a bedsheet tiptoes quickly across the landing toward his parents' bedroom.

CUT TO:

21.

30 INT. PARENTS' CLOSET 30

Josh rifles through his father's clothing, while his sister stands in her baby walker. *

MRS. BASKIN (OS)

Bring Rachel downstairs with you, okay? *

CUT TO:

31 INT. KITCHEN 31

Mrs. Baskin spoons out the scrambled eggs. There is a thundering sound of someone running down the stairs. *

MRS. BASKIN

Honey, you want orange juice or...

The front door shuts with a slam. Mrs. Baskin turns to see: *

Rachel in her baby walker, waddling into the room. *

MRS. BASKIN (contd)

What about your breakfast?

CUT TO:

32 EXT. RIVERFRONT - DAY 32

Josh pedals his child's Stingray as fast as he can down the path that leads to the riverfront. Wearing his father's khakis and a New York Giants sweatshirt, he flies down the slope, knees hitting elbows. All at once he hits the handbrakes. *

JOSH'S POV

The carnival is gone. There is now just a muddy lot with some tattered flags blowing in the wind.

SHOT - JOSH

He stares in horror at the vacant lot. No fun house. No arcade. No Zoltar. His eyes grow wide in panic.

CUT TO:

33 INT. BASKIN LIVING ROOM 33

Josh's mother is vacuuming the living room singing quietly to herself. The front door shuts with a slam.

Mrs. Baskin whirls around to see:

A strange man standing in her living room. His eyes are wild. He is breathing hard. There is mud all over his shoes. *

Mrs. Baskin lets out a blood-curdling scream as Joshua starts toward her, tracking mud across the carpet.

MRS. BASKIN

Don't...please... *

JOSH

(looking at the mud) *

Oh, I'm sorry.

MRS. BASKIN

Take my purse. You can have it all.

JOSH

Mom, it's me.

Mrs. Baskin looks at the psychopath claiming to be her child. She backs slowly past the piano into the kitchen as he advances. *

JOSH (contd)

It's me...Josh.

She moves all the way against the kitchen counter with a look of terror on her face.

JOSH (contd)

(exasperated)

I've turned into a grownup!

She inches down the counter.

JOSH (contd)

See, I made this wish on a machine...

Mrs. Baskin moves farther away. Josh grows more frustrated.

JOSH (contd)

Look, my birthday's November third.

I broke my arm when I was nine...

(spots vase on the counter)

Here! I'm allergic to flowers.

Josh grabs the vase and inhales deeply. He waits for the sneeze but nothing happens.

JOSH (contd)

Okay, so I outgrew it--but I'm
telling you, it's me. My little
league team is called The Dukes.
I just got a "B" on my history test.
There's a birthmark on the back of
my left knee...

MRS. BASKIN

(breathless)

You bastard.

(her voice rising)

What have you done to my son?

JOSH

I am your son.

Mrs. Baskin reaches behind her and pulls out a butcher
knife. *
*
*

JOSH

(backing away in panic)

Let me talk to Dad, okay?

MRS. BASKIN

Where is my child!

Mrs. Baskin lunges at Joshua with the butcher knife. He *
whirls around and ducks out the door, fleeing across the *
yard. *

MRS. BASKIN (contd)

Police!

CUT TO:

34 EXT. GEORGE WASHINGTON JUNIOR HIGH - DAY 34

The playground is empty.

CUT TO:

35 INT. AUDITORIUM 35

Forty seventh graders are in the middle of gym class. *
Billy stands in the center of a circle, engaged in a *
furious game of dodge ball. Other students play hand- *
ball along the walls of the gym. A couple are shooting *
baskets. Red rubber balls come flying at him from *
several directions as Billy frantically gets out of the *
way. *

SHOT - WINDOWS *

Josh goes running down the empty third floor corridor, disappearing out of sight. *

SHOT - BILLY *

He dives to the floor as ball whizzes over his head. *

BILLY *
Nice shot, lame-o. *

SHOT - WINDOWS

Josh runs down the second floor corridor, a story lower.

RESUME - BILLY *

He deftly jumps over a ball that whizzes at his feet. *

BILLY *
Ha! *

SHOT - WINDOW *

Josh peeks his head out from the edge of the windows at the end of the hall. *

JOSH *
Psst! *

SHOT - BILLY *

He looks up to find the sound of the whisper as six balls bombard him at once. The BELL RINGS ending the period. Most of the students race for exit doors. Billy looks a little dazed. *

GYM TEACHER *
Walk don't run. Ball monitors put everything away this time. *

CUT TO:

36 OMIT 36 *

A37 INT. STOREROOM A37 *

The door opens as Billy enters carrying several balls under his arms. He takes two steps forward when the door is slammed shut behind him. Billy whirls around to see a wild man inches from his face. *

JOSH *
It's me. *

Billy takes a step backward. Josh grabs his arm. *

JOSH

Billy, it's me...Josh...

He breaks away, racing toward the staircase. *

JOSH (contd)

Your best friend!

He throws the balls at Josh's stomach as he runs up the stairs. *

BILLY

(in terror)

Miss Simp...

JOSH

(beginning to rap)

The space goes down down down baby
Down down the roller coaster *

Billy freezes with his hand on the knob. He slowly turns and looks down the stairs. Josh quickly continues his rap, his eyes fixed on Billy, as he moves up the steps toward him. *

JOSH (contd)

Sweet sweet baby, *
Sweet sweet, don't let me go. *
Shimmy shimmy coco bop *
Shimmy shimmy rock *
Shimmy shimmy coco bop *
Shimmy shimmy rock *
I met a girlfriend, her name is Trisket *
She said a Trisket's really a bisquit. *
Ice cream soda pop, vanilla on the top. *
Oo sha-li-da *
Walking down the street. *
Ten times a week. *
I met it, I said it, *
I stole my mama's credit. *
I'm cool, I'm hot, *
Sock you in the stomach three more times. *

Josh stops, out of breath. Billy continues to stare at him. *

BILLY

(in a shocked whisper)

Josh?

JOSH

Yes!

BILLY
 (staring in wonder)
 ... You look terrible.

CUT TO:

37 EXT. BASKIN HOUSE - DUSK 37

A crowd of spectators has gathered around the Baskin home. Two of BILLY'S BROTHERS and Mrs. Kopeche stand at the edge of their yard. The red and amber lights from the double-parked police cars reflect in their faces. *

MRS. KOPECHE *
 If something happened to him, *
 she'll be heartbroken. *

FIRST BROTHER *
 Bet he ran away. *

SECOND BROTHER *
 Wish I could. *

FIRST BROTHER *
 Want me to pack your bags? *

WIDER SHOT - STREET

Billy comes out of his house behind them, dragging a large suitcase. He looks at them quickly, then hurries away from the crowd, down the street as: *

FIRST LIEUTENANT (OS)
 ...Believe me, Mrs. Baskin. We want to find him just as badly as you do.

CUT TO:

38 INT. BASKIN LIVING ROOM 38

The LIEUTENANT stands across from the Baskins who sit huddled together on the couch.

FIRST LIEUTENANT (contd)
 But kidnappers don't come back four hours later just to say hello.

CUT TO:

39 OMIT 39 *

A40 EXT. RIVERFRONT - DUSK A40 *

There is a low deisel HORN on the Hudson. Near the edge *
of the old carnival ground water drips from the top of *
an abandoned tunnel. *

CUT TO:

40 OMIT 40 *

A41 INT. TUNNEL A41 *

Josh sits huddled against the damp cement wall, *
shivering in the evening chill. All at once there are *
footsteps outside as Billy lumbers into the tunnel, *
dragging the suitcase. *

BILLY

You couldn't have wished for a
million dollars?

He tosses Josh an old hat and army fatigue jacket. *

BILLY (contd)

Don't worry, I got it all figured
out. We get you into the city,
you lay low for a couple of days,
we find this Zoltar thing, you
make a wish, and by Thursday
you're home.

JOSH

Why can't I just explain what
happened?

BILLY

You did and your mom tried to kill
you.

JOSH *

I'm gonna get in a lot of trouble
for this.

BILLY

Aw, they'll be so happy to see you,
you'll probably get a new bike out
of it. *

(grabbing the suitcase) *

C'mon, we gotta get going. *

Billy starts to move out of the tunnel as Josh hesitates.*

BILLY (contd)
 (calling back)
 Let's go.

*
 *
 *

He rises slowly and starts to follow Billy, pulling on the jacket as he goes.

*
 *

CUT TO:

B41 EXT. BUS STOP - DUSK

B41 *

Josh sits slumped on the bench next to Billy under a flickering streetlamp. The hat is pulled down low over his eyes.

*
 *
 *

JOSH
 (whispering)
 I'm not s'posed to go to New York
 without my folks.

Billy pulls a wad of cash from his pocket and hands it to Josh.

BILLY
 Here.

*
 *

Josh stares at the bills in awe.

JOSH
 Where'd you get that?

BILLY
 My father's top drawer.

JOSH
 You stole it?

BILLY
 It's his emergency fund.

*
 *

The bus ROARS up to the bench and stops with a squeal of brakes. Josh looks at Billy as the doors open in front of him.

*
 *
 *

CUT TO:

41 INT. BUS

41 *

Josh and Billy move up the crowded aisle as the doors close behind them. The bus moves forward with a lurch, almost knocking them off their feet. Josh reaches up, grabbing the metal handle for the first time in his life. Billy stares at his best friend's stomach.

*
 *
 *

CUT TO:

42 EXT. BUS - LONG SHOT - DUSK 42

It roars toward the Lincoln tunnel with the New York skyline in the BG.

*
*

CUT TO:

43 EXT. TIMES SQUARE - NIGHT 43

Car horns blare. A municipal bus pulls away from the curb, revealing Josh and Billy standing awestruck in the middle of Times Square. They look up at the huge buildings and flashing billboards. The suitcase sits between them.

CUT TO:

44 EXT. FORTY-FOURTH STREET 44

It is a dark, foreboding part of town. A local pusher accosts the passers-by. A few prostitutes loiter on the corners. Josh and Billy stand in front of a seedy hotel that advertises "ROOMS BY THE DAY/WEEK."

BILLY

This seems okay.

JOSH

No it doesn't.

CONTD.

BILLY
Saint James, Josh...
 (beat)
 It's religious.

Josh looks at him for a moment.

CUT TO:

45 INT. HOTEL LOBBY

45

They stand across the bulletproof partition from a dark *
 Pakistani man with one eye. There is a large sign *
 behind him that reads "FIREARMS KEPT ON PREMISES."
 Josh glances around nervously.

JOSH
 Uh...We need a room.

CLERK
 (in a strange accent) *
 Seventeen-fifty a night. Ten
 dollar deposit on the sheets.

Billy reaches into his pocket. He counts out twenty- *
 seven-fifty and shoves it through the partition. The
 clerk hesitates for a moment, then pulls a room key off
 the wall. *

CUT TO:

46 INT. HOTEL CORRIDOR

46

Graffiti is scrawled on all the walls. Two derelects
 stare as Josh and Billy follow the clerk down the
 corridor. Billy flashes a broad smile, pointing up
 at Josh.

BILLY
 This is my friend. He's moving in.

CUT TO:

47 INT. SMALL ROOM - HOTEL

47

Josh and Billy are standing in the middle of the room
 with the suitcases between them.

JOSH
 I'm not gonna do it. I'm not gonna
 stay here! *

BILLY
 (edging for the door)
 You'll be fine. You go to sleep.
 (MORE)

BILLY (contd)
 you wake up, you won't even know
 I was gone.

JOSH
 You never said you were gonna leave! *

BILLY
 I can't help it, Josh, I'm supposed
 to be home by ten.

JOSH
 (beat)
 Then I'm going with you.

Josh bolts for the door as Billy grabs him by the back of
 the belt.

BILLY
 (getting dragged
 across the room)
 If I don't come home tonight there's
 gonna be two kids missing. You want
 the cops out looking for both of us?

Josh stops. Billy slowly lets go of his belt.

BILLY (contd)
 (winded)
 Look, I'll cut class tomorrow and
 we'll find that machine before you
 know it--okay?

Josh pauses, exhaling deeply. Billy punches him on the
 arm.

BILLY (contd)
 Just one night. Alright?

JOSH
 (beat)
 Alright.

BILLY
 Good.

Billy turns and moves for the door when Josh calls out
 after him.

JOSH
 What if I can't sleep?

BILLY
 (turning back)
 It's probably better if you don't.
 (MORE)

BILLY (contd)
 (opening the door)
 I'll see ya in the morning.

JOSH
 What time?

BILLY
 Eight-thirty.

Billy starts into the hall then turns back towards Josh.

BILLY (contd)
 (smiling)
 Oh, and ... I'd use the chain if
 I were you.

Josh stands alone in the middle of the room as Billy shuts the door behind him. There is a single metal bed with a batten mattress on top. An old television is bolted to the floor.

He crosses to the window and tries to lift the blinds with a single tug. They come crashing down on top of the radiator.

A red neon light blinks on and off in his face. There is the screeching sound of a siren and the backfire of a car. Josh shuts the window with a slam.

He takes a yellowing sheet off the dresser and moves to the bed. Josh starts to unfurl it when there is the sudden ring of a telephone.

He jumps back as the sound of heavy footsteps come running down the hallway. Josh stands motionless next to the wall as the conversation drifts through the door.

MAN (OS)
 No me dinga chingaderas. Te odio!

Josh bolts the door quickly.

MAN (OS contd)
 (louder)
 Si, you digo, te odio!

Josh rapidly puts the chain across the door and starts to drag the small dresser in front of it. A fist pounds the wall beside him.

MAN (OS contd)
Mira me! Agaro tu culo!

Josh dives headfirst onto the small bed. He grabs the pillow and hugs it tightly. A single tear runs down his cheek.

DISSOLVE TO:

48	OMIT	48
49	OMIT	49
50	OMIT	50
50A	OMIT	50A
A51	EXT. HOTEL - MORNING	A51

Josh and Billy walk out of the hotel onto the sunny street. Josh looks tired.

BILLY

It's not that big a city, Josh.
I'll bet there's an arcade at every corner.

The boys look up the block then turn and look down the other way.

BILLY

Let's try the next street.

CUT TO:

51	OMIT	51
A52	OMIT	A52
52	INT. ADMINISTRATION BUILDING	52

Josh and Billy stand under a maze of directional arrows behind a small line of people at the Information Booth. Both boys look tired.

BILLY

So maybe they just don't say "arcade" on all the signs. You wouldn't even let me go into Madame Santi's.

JOSH

It was a laundromat.

BILLY

Look, somebody's gotta have a record. We'll just get a list of carnivals and track it down.

(CONTINUED)

CLERK (OS)

Next please.

They move up in line to the information booth. It is
manned by an eighteen-year-old CLERK.

JOSH

We want a list of carnivals.

BILLY

And fairs.

JOSH

And arcades.

The clerks takes out a printed directory and scans down
the list, turning the pages.

CLERK

Try Consumer Affairs, third floor,
Room 3211.

CUT TO:

53 DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS OFFICE

53

Josh and Billy stand across the window from a woman in her fifties. She hands Billy a form. *

WOMAN

Fill this out in triplicate.
Five dollar filing charge.

BILLY

Terrific!

WOMAN

One month to process. You'll
get it in six weeks. *

JOSH

Six weeks!

WOMAN

Sometimes longer, but you could
get lucky. *

Josh looks at the woman in shock.

CUT TO:

54 EXT. NINTH AVENUE - LATER

54

Josh walks beside Billy with his hands stuffed in his pockets. He looks like he's going to cry.

JOSH *

I'm going to be thirty years old
for the rest of my life.

BILLY

Aw, come on, we'll figure something
out.

(beat)

By the way, you're closer to
thirty-five. *

Josh kicks at a trash can. *

BILLY

I'll come in every day, after
school.

JOSH

(flatly)

How?

BILLY *

I'll tell 'em I'm on the basketball
team. *

JOSH

I'm dead.

Josh sinks down to the curb in despair. He slumps against a trash can. *

BILLY *

(sitting beside him)

We're getting the list. We just gotta hang on for a while.

JOSH

That's easy for you. You still get lunch money.

BILLY

So...you'll get a job.

JOSH

(turning)

A what?

BILLY

You're a grownup now. You're allowed to get a job.

JOSH

I can't get a job.

BILLY

Sure you can. It can't be any tougher than school. We'll just find something you're good at.

CUT TO:

55 INT. ICE CREAM PARLOR

55

Josh and Billy sit in a booth devouring a massive banana split. Billy has the "Want Ads" spread out in front

(CONTD)

of him. Josh shovels marshmallow topping in his mouth.

BILLY
Cardiological technician ...
Civil engineer ...

JOSH
You want your cherry?

BILLY
Go ahead.
(continuing)
Clerical transcriber ...

JOSH
Hey Billy?

BILLY
(looking up)
Yeah?

Josh opens his mouth to reveal a glob of melted hot fudge and ice cream. Some of it dribbles onto the newspaper.

BILLY (contd)
Gross.

JOSH
Go to the other column.

BILLY
(glancing across
the paper)
Collection agent ... Company clerk
... Computer operator ...
Construction ...

JOSH
Computer operator.

BILLY
Hunh?

JOSH
Computer operator. Read that one.

BILLY
MacMillan Toys ...
(he looks up)
Toys!

JOSH
Billy ...

BILLY

(reading)

"Experienced computer operators.
Must perform data updates, mal-
function isolation, monitoring
of cluster performance..."

JOSH

I can do that.

BILLY

You can?

JOSH

Sure.

Billy looks at him in amazement as Josh takes the paper
from him.

JOSH (contd)

(looking at the ad)

Great, they use HP 3000's.

BILLY

You understand all that?

JOSH

Well, it's an old system but...

BILLY

Where do we go?

JOSH

What?

BILLY

(tapping the paper)

Where do we go?

Josh looks down at the ad.

JOSH

Apply in person--MacMillan Toys.

CUT TO:

A56 EXT. MACMILLAN TOYS

A56 *

Establishing shot. Josh and Billy stare up at the
looming office building.

*
*

CUT TO:

40A.

56 INT. PERSONNEL OFFICE - MACMILLAN TOYS

56

They sit side by side as they fill out the application. *
Fifteen adults around the room are doing the exact same
thing.

JOSH
(whispering)
Previous employment?

(CONTD)

BILLY
Your paper route.

JOSH
Right.

Josh puts it on the application as Billy glances around the room.

JOSH (contd)
(under his breath)
Soc. Sec.

BILLY
Social Security.

Josh looks baffled.

BILLY
Thirty-five, Seventeen, Twenty-
three, Nine.

JOSH
What's that?

BILLY
My locker combination.

JOSH
(whispering)
Your locker ends in a four.

RECEPTIONIST
(breaking the moment)
Mr. Baskin?

JOSH
Yes?

RECEPTIONIST
The personnel director will see
you now.

JOSH
Oh ... thanks.

Josh grabs the clipboard and rises from the bench.
Billy starts to get up as well.

RECEPTIONIST
Your son can wait for you out here.

Billy stops with a frozen smile on his face. Josh turns
back to him ...

JOSH
Sport, you sit right over there
and don't give the lady any
trouble.

BILLY
(trying not to laugh)
Sure, Dad.

Josh turns and follows the woman out of the room.

CUT TO:

57 INT: PERSONNEL DIRECTOR'S OFFICE 57

Josh sits across the desk from a man in his mid-forties.
He wears a navy blue suit and a large silver tie-clip.
Josh's feet are crossed and one foot taps nervously.

PERSONNEL DIRECTOR
(looking at the
application)
Says here you've got four years
at the Jersey Journal.

JOSH
(nervous)
Yeah, four years, that's right.

PERSONNEL DIRECTOR
All on computers.

JOSH
Yes, sir.

He looks back down at the application and tries to read
the handwriting.

PERSONNEL DIRECTOR
(trying to make it out)
And where did you go to school?

JOSH
Um ... well -- it was called George
Washington.

PERSONNEL DIRECTOR
Oh, G.W. My brother-in-law got his
doctorate there.

Josh smiles and nods.

PERSONNEL DIRECTOR (contd)
Did you pledge?

JOSH

Every morning.

At that moment, the door bursts open and SUSAN LAWRENCE enters the room. She marches all the way across the room, oblivious of Josh's presence. *

SUSAN

It happened again, David. The girl is absolutely useless. You've got to find me someone who knows what she's doing.

(noticing Josh)

Excuse me.

(right back)

I'm not getting any messages, nothing's been filed--ever since she got engaged her work and my life have been a disaster.

PERSONNEL DIRECTOR

Well, she came with the highest...

SUSAN

She's spent the last three months writing down her married name over and over and over...Mrs. Judy Hicks. Mrs. David Hicks. Mrs. Judy Mitchelson-Hicks. Sometimes with the hyphen, sometimes without the hyphen... sometimes she spells the hyphen. *

PERSONNEL DIRECTOR

Oh.

(beat)

Well, I don't know where I could put her...

SUSAN

Put her on unemployment.

Susan turns and whisks out of the room. The Personnel Director stares at the door for a moment, then turns back to Josh.

PERSONNEL DIRECTOR

Well, all of this looks in order.

(beat)

How soon can you start?

CUT TO:

58 INT: CORRIDOR - MACMILLAN TOYS

58

It is an upper floor of the building where the carpeting is thicker, the air thinner, the stakes higher. Susan rounds the corner briskly, moving toward her office. There are screams and girlish laughter OS.

SECRETARIAL AREA

Susan moves into the secretarial area that is overflowing with women, balloons, crepe paper and party streamers. The receptionist sits at her phone console giggling to herself as she scribbles onto a steno pad.

SUSAN

What's the joke?

RECEPTIONIST

(looking up, startled)

Oh, Miss Lawrence, it's ...

JUDY (OS)

Is it a small?

RECEPTIONIST

(giggling as she writes)

See, when she opens her shower presents everything she says is what she'll say on her wedding night. Only she doesn't know it, so when we read the list to her ...

SUSAN

Who's answering the phones?

RECEPTIONIST

Oh, I ...

(she grabs for
the receiver)

I'm sorry, I forgot ...

Susan moves abruptly toward her office, shutting the door behind her as the laughter continues in the BG.

CUT TO:

59 INT: SUSAN'S OFFICE

59

She crosses over to her desk and sits in the large swivel chair as voices from the shower play in the BG.

JUDY (OS)

It's so fuzzy!

There is a roar of laughter as Susan rocks back in her chair staring at the wall. She pauses for a moment, then grabs the telephone, punching a two digit combination very hard.

SUSAN

Susan Lawrence, is he in?

There is a moment's pause when she whisks her hair back and shifts her weight in the chair.

SUSAN (contd)

(in an urgent whisper)

Brad, if I don't have a man tonight
I am absolutely going to --

(beat)

Yeah, I'll hold.

Susan stares straight ahead, looking out over a desk that is perfectly immaculate. There is a vase with some silk flowers in it ... a crystal picture frame with two of her sisters, one holding a baby. She wraps the telephone cord around her fingers as she swivels slightly to her left. In front of her, sitting on the blotter is a Princess Gwendoline Doll replete with flowing blonde locks. Susan looks at her for a moment.

JUDY (OS)

Oh, it's pink!

There is another peal of laughter from the other room as she reaches out to take the doll. Susan wedges the receiver to her ear as she presses a small button on the back. A man's voice starts to come out of Princess Gwendoline.

MAN'S VOICE

These are the preliminary voice
runs on Princess Gwendoline.
All comments should be directed
to Jack Taylor no later than
Thursday.

There is a whirring sound and a long pause.

GWENDOLINE

(high squeaky voice)

One day I'll find my prince.

MAN'S VOICE

Alternate version number one.

Pause.

GWENDOLINE

One day my prince will come.

MAN'S VOICE
 Alternate version number two.

There is a longer pause.

GWENDOLINE
 I want you to steal all the money
 from Mommy's purse and buy all my
 accessories. The more you buy me,
 the more I'll love you.

*
*
*
*
*

MAN'S VOICE
 Just kidding, Susan.

*

JUDY (OS)
 This'll never fit!

There is the loudest roar of all coming from the outer office. Susan looks at the door for a moment, then hangs up the phone.

CUT TO:

59A EST. MACMILLAN TOYS - FOLLOWING MORNING 59A

Workers bustle in and out on the busy sidewalk.

CUT TO:

60 INT. MACMILLAN TOYS - DATA PROCESSING 60

A dozen people sit at a long row of identical desks with computer terminals and telephones in front of each. Josh is standing with the Supervisor in front of an empty work space. A pile of spread sheets is stacked on the desk. Josh wears a company I.D. badge clipped to his shirt.

*
*
*

SUPERVISOR
 I thought we'd start you off on last week's Preschool Orders. That should take a few days and give you some time to find your way around. Do you smoke?

JOSH
 Well, once but...

SUPERVISOR
 Only on breaks in the coffee room. Most of it's pretty straight forward stuff, but if you have any questions, come to me.

The Supervisor pats Josh on the shoulder.

SUPERVISOR (contd)

Good luck.

Josh watches as the Supervisor disappears around a corner. He turns back to his desk and slowly pulls out the swivel chair. He glances around at the other employees. Most are working at their keyboards. A few are on the phone. Josh looks back at his computer and leans over to switch it on.

*
*
*
*

MAN (OS)

Morning'.

Josh turns to see SCOTTY BRENNAN grinning at him from the next desk.

*

SCOTTY

(thrusting out his arm)

Scotty Brennan.

Josh tentatively extends his hand.

JOSH

Oh...Hi.

SCOTTY

(glancing at Josh's badge)

Name's Baskin, right?

JOSH

How'd you know that?

SCOTTY

Gotta know everything in a place like this. Get you some coffee?

*

JOSH

Oh, no I...

*

*

SCOTTY

Cream, right?

*

*

SCOTTY takes off and disappears down the aisle without waiting for the answer. Josh looks at the folders, then at the stack of spread sheets on his desk. He pulls one toward him and begins to work when a WOMAN'S LAUGHTER comes O.S.

*

*

*

*

JOSH'S POV

*

A woman two desks down is huddled over her telephone, whispering and giggling into the receiver.

*

*

47A.

SHOT - JOSH

He looks back at the phone on his desk. Josh stares at it for a long moment, then slowly picks up the receiver and begins to dial. He looks around anxiously, biting at his finger while the phone rings and rings. *

CUT TO:

A61 INT. BASKIN KITCHEN

A61

Mrs. Baskin tries to fasten Rachel into her baby jumper as the phone continues to ring. She finally gets the belt on and races over to answer it. *

MRS. BASKIN

Hello?

INTERCUT WITH JOSH

His eyes go wide as he hears his mother's voice. Josh leans closer to the phone and speaks in a hushed voice. *

JOSH

Hello...Mrs. Baskin?

MRS. BASKIN

Yes?

JOSH

(beat)
How are ya?

MRS. BASKIN

Who is this?

JOSH

Um, I just wanted you to know that Josh is fine and he's okay and everything...

MRS. BASKIN

(sinking to a chair)
You have my boy...

JOSH

Well, yes, and you're gonna get him back just the way he was... *

MRS. BASKIN

Let me talk to Josh.

JOSH

(he hesitates)

Well, he can't come to the phone
right now.

MRS. BASKIN

Why? What did you do to him?

JOSH

I didn't do anything to him. I
think he's a terrific kid.

*
*

MRS. BASKIN

I want proof that he's alright.

JOSH

Okay, ask me something. Ask me
something that only he knows,
anything at all, and I'll ask
him for you. Then you'll know
he's really okay. Okay? Anything.

*
*
*
*

MRS. BASKIN

(after a long pause)

Ask him what I used to sing when
he was little.

JOSH

(to himself)

Oh shit...

(whispering)

Isn't there something else you'd...

*
*
*

MRS. BASKIN

Ask him!

JOSH

Alright...

Josh puts his hand over the receiver and hums a few
bars to himself. He shakes his head and tries another
tune. Frustrated, he swivels in his chair, whistling
through his teeth. Finally...

*
*

JOSH

I got it. I got it.

(into phone)

"Love, love me do. You know,
I love you..."

*
*
*

Mrs. Baskin begins to cry.

47C.

JOSH

Aw, c'mon...Look, you'll see him
real soon. Cross my heart and
hope to...

*
*

A cup of coffee is placed on his desk. Josh looks up
quickly.

*
*

HIS POV

*

Scotty is standing next to him, casually sipping his
coffee. He is watching Josh with frank curiosity.

*
*

WIDER - INCLUDING JOSH

*

JOSH

(beat, into phone)
We'll discuss this later, okay?

*

He slowly hangs up. Scotty nods his head.

*

SCOTTY

I know all about it.

*
*

He nods again, then looks across the room.

*

SCOTTY

C'mere.

*

Josh rises slowly from his chair. Scotty puts his arm
around Josh and points toward the end of the aisle.

*

(CONTD)

A61 CONTINUED:

A61

SCOTTY (contd)
 (confidentially)
 See that one over there in the
 red?

JOSH'S POV

A well-built woman in a short red dress is working at
 her cubicle.

JOSH (OS)
 Yeah ...

ANGLE ON THE TWO OF THEM

SCOTTY
 She'll wrap her legs around you
 and squeeze so tight you'll be
 begging for mercy.

JOSH
 (eyes wide)
 Oh, thanks ... I'll stay away
 from her.

Scotty looks at him a little oddly.

CUT TO:

61 INT. SECRETARIAL AREA

61

Susan walks out of her office carrying a manila folder,
 past Judy who is writing her married name in different
 coloured pens. She rolls her eyes slightly as she turns
 a corner in the hallway. *

SUSAN
 (to herself)
 Still here ... *

HALLWAY

She moves briskly down the corridor past a group of nine-
 year-olds being led in the other direction by a TEST
 MARKET RESEARCHER. *

TEST MARKET RESEARCHER
 You'll be given fifteen minutes to
 play with each toy. At the end of
 that time we will ask you a series
 of questions to determine your
 responses. Remember, no throwing,
 no roughhousing or unnecessary chit-
 chat during the test period. Now,
 have fun. *

(CONTINUED)

61

CONTINUED:

61

His voice fades as they turn the corner. *

Susan walks all the way to the end of the hall, pausing in front of a door labeled: BRAD DAVENPORT - SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT. She straightens her hair for a moment then reaches down for the doorknob.

CUT TO:

62

INT. BRAD'S OFFICE

62

It is the next best thing to a corner suite. In the corporate kingdom, BRAD is a crown prince. He sits at his desk, examining the "Mitor" prototype when the door swings open. *

SUSAN

(shutting the door
behind her)

Trouble.

BRAD

We're pregnant?

(CONTINUED)

SUSAN

Huggymama took a nosedive.

Brad freezes behind the desk. Susan pulls a manila envelope from the briefcase and drops it in front of him.

Look at these numbers, Brad.
Third quarter profits off forty percent. Preorders down fifty-five. I'm not talking about one toy, I'm talking about the whole goddamn line: Huggymama papa, Huggymama mama...The goddamn baby is off sixty percent.

*
*

BRAD

You must feel awful.

SUSAN

(beat)

I must feel awful?

BRAD

(rising)

You must.

SUSAN

Brad...I think...we feel awful.

BRAD

Well, yeah. I feel bad too.

SUSAN

Brad, this whole line was your--

BRAD

I think if you just go right on in there and talk to MacMillan...

SUSAN

It's not my fault.

BRAD

Honey. Are we trying to fix this thing or are we trying to place blame?

She looks up at him. Brad touches the side of her cheek.

BRAD (contd)

If it makes you feel better I'll go talk to him with you.

CUT TO:

63 FULL SHOT - ELEVATOR DOORS

63

The doors open and a tall man strikes out followed by Brad and Susan at his heels. He is MACMILLAN, owner and chief patriarch of MacMillan Toys.

MAC
Bullshit, Brad.

BRAD
But ...

MAC
Let's not lie to ourselves. If kids like a toy, it sells. Period.

SUSAN
But every bit of research and focus testing showed that ...

MAC
Yeah, it worked with the research, it worked with the testing; it just didn't work with the kids ...

At that moment, Josh rounds the corner going full tilt and slams into Susan. She, in turn, bashes into MacMillan who is knocked from his feet. The papers Josh was carrying fly in every direction. Brad turns and glares at Josh.

BRAD
Why don't you watch where the hell you're going.

JOSH
Oh, I'm sorry.

SUSAN
(to Mac)
Are you okay?

MAC
I'm fine.

BRAD
You could kill someone running around here like that.

MAC
I'm fine, Brad.
(rising to his feet)
It's good to fall on your ass every once in a while.

Mac reaches down to help Josh pick up the papers. Brad and Susan see him and follow suit. As Josh and Susan reach for the same sheet, he gets a full look down her blouse. Susan stares at Josh who looks away embarrassed.

MAC (contd)

Where are you going, son?

JOSH

Well, I was s'posed to get these Xeroxed and they wanted 'em by five...

MAC

Good for you.

Mac pats Josh on the arm as he hands him the papers, then starts down the hall.

MAC (contd)

Nothing wrong with it, Brad.
Nothin' at all.

Brad stares at him for a moment, then takes off after him with Susan in tow. Josh watches them move down the corridor as Scotty comes up quickly beside him. *

SCOTTY *

(under his breath) *

Better watch it, that's MacMillan. *

He moves away from Josh toward the opened elevator. *

JOSH *

Who? *

SCOTTY *

(mouthing it silently as
he points up) *

MacMillan. *

Josh looks up at the MacMillan Toys logo above the elevator as the doors close on Scotty. He turns to look down the hall where Mac has disappeared. *

DISSOLVE TO:

64 INT. JOSH'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

64

Josh sits on the bed in front of the bolted down television set. The good guys massacre the bad guys in a loud volley of gunfire. After a while, Josh rises from

(CONTD)

51A.

the bed and crosses to the TV set. The gunfire from the show continues: Bang Bang Bang. Josh shuts off the set and turns toward the bed when there is another loud Bang behind him. He looks back toward the window, and shrugs.

DISSOLVE TO:

65 INT. JOSH'S CUBICLE - DAY

65

He is busily typing at his keyboard, settled into the routine, when:

MAN (OS)

...Brennan...Baskin...

Josh turns to see a male clerk handing out envelopes in the aisle. He rises from his desk and wanders over to where Scotty is already standing. The clerk hands him an envelope.

(CONTD)

JOSH
What's this?

SCOTTY
Payday.

Josh tears open the envelope and takes out the check inside. His eyes go wide in disbelief.

JOSH
A hundred and eighty-seven dollars!

SCOTTY
Yeah, they really screw ya, don't they?

CUT TO:

66 INT: CHASE MANHATTAN BANK

66

Josh and Billy stand fidgeting in front of a female teller.

TELLER
How do you want it?

Josh and Billy exchange a look. Josh leans down and whispers to Billy, who shakes his head and whispers back. After a moment of huddled conference, Josh turns back to the teller.

JOSH
A hundred dollar bill, eighty-seven ones, and three dimes.

CUT TO:

67 EXT: BANK

67

They burst out of the bank like they just robbed the place. Josh clutches the wad of bills. They get a little further up the block and let out a war whoop. Billy huddles over the money.

BILLY
Look at that! It's beautiful!

Josh sinks to his haunches.

JOSH
Billy, you know what we're gonna do with this?

BILLY
What?

JOSH
Everything.

CUT TO:

68 INT. JOSH'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT 68

It is covered with garbage. Billy wears a baseball cap with a large phony turd on the brim labelled "SHITHEAD." Josh sits next to him in a t-shirt with an arrow, stencilled "I'M WITH STUPID." *

JOSH
I'm never gonna eat again. *

BILLY
(beat)
It wasn't bad till we had the pork rinds.

JOSH
No...It was the boat ride.

Josh mock-vomits with a can of Silly String. *

JOSH (contd)
What's that drink called again?

BILLY
Mango fizz. *

JOSH
(beat)
We sure had fun, didn't we?

BILLY
Yeah. We sure did.

DISSOLVE TO:

69 INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - LATER 69

It is silent. The door squeaks open and Josh tiptoes out in his pajamas toward the pay phone. Josh drops some change in the slot and dials a ten-digit number. As soon as he hears it connect, Josh stretches the cord as far as it will reach and tiptoes back into his room.

CUT TO:

70 INT. JOSH'S ROOM

70

He sits against the bed holding his stomach. Josh speaks quietly into the receiver.

JOSH

(very softly)

Hello, is this the Baskin residence?

(he pauses)

Yes. I'm conducting a consumer survey and we were wondering what kind of medicine you give your family when they're sick.

There is a pause.

JOSH (contd)

Well...for a stomach ache.

(pause)

I see. And how often do you give that?

(nodding)

Every four hours...very good...

Josh pauses looking straight ahead.

JOSH (contd)

What? No, I don't have any more questions.

(beat)

Oh...Okay.

(quietly)

Bye.

Josh lowers the receiver and looks at it for a moment.

CUT TO:

71 EXT. DISPLAY WINDOW - FAO SCHWARZ

71

A beautiful new sailboat sits alone in the center of the window. The CAMERA PULLS BACK TO REVEAL Josh, alone with his hands in his pockets, pressing his nose against the glass.

MAN'S VOICE (OS)

Josh!

He whirls around at the sound of the voice, to see:

HIS POV

A MAN is running back to his five-year-old SON who is chasing after a big sheepdog on a leash.

*
*
*
*
*
*

54A.

WIDER - INCLUDING JOSH

*

He watches as the man swings his son up on his shoulder
and carries him into the store.

*

*

CUT TO:

72

INT. FAO SCHWARZ

72

Josh stands behind a circle of kids surrounding a
salesman as he demonstrates a small balsa-wood glider
plane. He tosses it toward them, and they all grab
for it. He executes a loop over their heads and returns
to the man. He flies it over his audience a second time.

(CONTD)

A nine-year-old boy reaches out his hand. Josh pushes him aside and he turns to chase the plane down the aisle. The boy's mother glares as Josh goes running after it.

CUT TO:

73 ANOTHER FLOOR - STORE

73

Holding a laser-tag gun, Josh crouches behind a display of giraffes. *

ANOTHER ANGLE - BOY *

A fifteen-year-old BOY creeps around an aisle, his laser gun held ready. *

SHOT - MACMILLAN *

He stands at the top of the aisle, watching silently as the boy moves toward Josh's hiding place. *

WIDER *

All at once Josh leaps out, aiming his gun. The boy quickly steps aside and fires. Josh gasps and grabs his stomach. He drops his gun and stares at the boy for a stunned moment. Then, with a hideous cry, he falls to the floor. *

CLOSE - JOSH *

Josh opens his eyes and begins to laugh. All at once he stops. *

HIS POV *

Two men's feet sporting a pair of loafers are standing inches from his nose. The CAMERA ANGLES UP TO REVEAL MacMillan, staring down at Josh with an intrigued smile on his face. *

MAC

You work for me, don't you?

JOSH

(a little nervous)

Uh...yeah.

MAC

Thought so.

(beat)

Here with your kids?

55A.

JOSH

No, just--looking around.

Josh climbs to his feet.

MAC

(pause)

Me too...I come here every
Saturday.

*

He studies Josh for a moment.

*

MAC (contd)

Can't see this on a marketing
report.

(CONTD.)

JOSH
What's a marketing report?

MAC
(nodding)
Exactly.

He examines Josh for another couple of seconds, then turns toward the shelves behind him.

MAC (contd)
What do you think of this thing?

He pulls a large box from the shelf.

JOSH
(excited)
Stanley Cup Hockey set! I love that, only ...

He catches himself.

MAC
Only what?

JOSH
Only the pieces don't move.

MAC
What do you mean?

JOSH
Well, in the old set you could move the pieces up and down the ice. Now they just spin. It was more like real hockey the other way.

(he looks at Mac)
How come they changed it?

MAC
I don't know.

CUT TO:

74 DOLLY SHOT - MAC AND JOSH

74

They walk side by side down the aisle of the toy store.

JOSH
... See the Starfighters are good 'cause you can change the pieces around. I don't like the Galacticons 'cause you just get one robot and it doesn't come with a vehicle.

MAC

I see.

JOSH

Plus they can't go underwater.
Now with ...

At that moment, there is a musical note coming from beneath him. Josh stops and looks down.

WIDER ANGLE - JOSH AND MAC

Josh is standing on a huge piano keyboard that is clearly meant to be walked on. He steps on a different key and another note comes out. Josh steps on two keys in succession and it's the beginning of a song.

JOSH (contd)

Neat!

DIFFERENT ANGLE

Mac watches as Josh starts into the first four note progression of "Heart and Soul." After a couple of tries the familiar base line of the song begins to emerge.

ANGLE ON MAC

He watches in amazement as Josh does a little two-step across the piano keys. Mac smiles slightly.

MAC

Piano lessons?

JOSH

(nodding)

Three years.

Mac watches him for a moment, then glances over his shoulder. He pauses, then reaches out with his toe and taps the first three notes of the song.

"HEART -- AND -- SOUL"

Josh looks up at him startled.

MAC

(smiling)

Me too. Every day after school.

Mac steps onto the keyboard. He starts to tap out the melody, stepping nimbly across the keys. Josh grins at him and Mac sticks out his hand like an old vaudevillian. The two of them dance their duet across the keyboard

something out of the Catskills. When they reach the crescendo, Mac sweeps his foot across the keyboard in a huge flourish. He turns to Josh with a grin on his face.

MAC (contd)

What division you say you worked in?

CUT TO:

75 INT. EXECUTIVE OFFICE - DAY

75

The floor-to-ceiling shelves are filled with toys. There is a console telephone that looks like it can fly and a brand new VCR with stacks of cassettes.

*

BILLY (OS)

Wow!

(looking at all the toys)

*

*

It's like Christmas in here.

*

DIFFERENT ANGLE

Josh and Billy stand in the doorway staring at the new office.

BILLY

(wandering over to the desk)

"Vice-President!" That means like if the President dies you get to take over for him.

JOSH

Naw, they got a million of 'em.

Billy sits down in the high-back leather desk chair.

BILLY

So what exactly do they want you to do?

*

*

JOSH

(proudly)

I think a lot.

BILLY

Suckers.

He props his feet up on the desk like a little executive and pulls the phone receiver to his ear.

BILLY (contd)
 (playing corporate modul)
 Henderson--you're fired!

The two boys crack up as Billy glances toward the far wall.

BILLY (contd)
 A T.V. set!

JOSH
 A monitor...that's hooked to
 cable...
 (beat)
And a VCR!

*
 *
 *

BILLY
 You're the luckiest guy I know.

CUT TO:

76 INT. FOCUS GROUP - DAY

76

It is a large white test area built to look like a kindergarten classroom. There are kiddie-sized chairs and kiddie-sized tables and a dozen five-year-olds screaming and yelling. Each wears a set of foam rubber boxing gloves easily three feet in diameter. On the table in front of them is a box inscribed: "PILLOW FIGHT."

BRAD (OS)
 A week! Vice President and he's
 been here a week!

WIDER ANGLE - INCLUDING BRAD AND SUSAN

One child decks another one as they whisper near the back of the room.

SUSAN
 They say he came from Data Pro-
 cessing. Maybe he--

BRAD
 Wait, let me think.
 (shaking his head)
 He's out of his mind. The old
 bastard has lost it.

Several kids cluster together in something approaching a brawl.

SUSAN

I hear he's got Bob's old office.

BRAD

There's got to be a reason.
Something like this doesn't happen
without a reason.

One kid gets leveled and starts to cry. Brad gestures to the boy as he leaves the room.

BRAD (contd)

Take some of the stuffing out.

CUT TO:

77 INT. JOSH'S OFFICE

77

Josh and Billy stand at opposite ends of the office, throwing a frisbee that emits musical tones as it flies. The floor is covered with toys.

BILLY

So they wanna play spin the bottle
an' Shirlee says I don't wanna play
an' David calls her a chicken. An'
she goes, I am not a chicken, I
just don't wanna play...

JOSH

I'll bet.

The door opens and Josh's secretary MISS PATTERSON enters the room. She barely sidesteps the flying frisbee and places a file on Josh's desk. The boys stop and stare at her.

*
*
*
*

MISS PATTERSON

Sorry.

*
*

She hurries out of the room as Billy flings the frisbee back to Josh.

*
*

BILLY

So, David goes, you are so a
chicken, I bet you never even
made out. An' she goes...

There is a loud BUZZ from the intercom.

BILLY (contd)

I guess that's for you.

Josh goes over to the phone and picks up the receiver.

JOSH
 (in a deep grownup voice)
 Yeees?
 (beat-normal)
 Oh, sure. Great.

He hangs up and turns to Billy.

JOSH (contd)
 Mac wants me. He's the boss.

BILLY
 I gotta go anyway.

He picks up his satchel and starts toward the door.

JOSH
 Oh, wait...
 (picking up the file from
 the desk)
 She did your geography report.

*
 *
 *

BILLY
 (incredulous)
 No.

JOSH
 (whispering)
 That's what this whole place is
 like. You don't do anything
 yourself.

Billy shakes his head in amazement.

JOSH (contd)
 So how're things at home?

BILLY
 Compared to this?
 (looking at all the
 toys in the room)
 Gimme a break.

CUT TO:

78 INT. BRAD'S KITCHEN - MORNING

78

Brad and Susan sit at the breakfast table drinking coffee.
 A television set plays a news program in the background.
 Susan wears a wrinkled outfit from the night before.
 Brad wears a bathrobe.

BRAD
 Did you check Mattel?

SUSAN

Nothing.

BRAD

What about Coleco?

SUSAN

Zero.

BRAD

Well, he can't come from nowhere
Susan. Nobody comes from nowhere.

(he pauses with the
cup in hand)

Hasbro?

SUSAN

And Fisher Price and Worlds of
Wonder. I've called everywhere.
The guy comes from Data Processing.

*
*
*

BRAD

Terrific. That's just terrific.
That is really terrific...

*
*
*

(CONTINUED)

Brad turns toward the television set fuming. "WEEK IN REVIEW" continues in the background.

T.V. SET

... as the Justice Department broadened its probe into inside trading with the additional arrests of seven men from Drexel Burnham.

CLOSE UP - T.V.

Several Wall Street executives are led handcuffed out of their office building.

T.V. SET (contd)

It marks the first time the insider trading scandal has extended to the bond market area.

ON BRAD

BRAD

(snapping a little)

Great! Now they're arresting businessmen.

(turning to Susan)

The new American crime: trying to earn a living.

Susan looks at Brad for a moment. She picks up the milk and pours some in her coffee as the CAMERA MOVES IN ON the side of the carton. A photo of twelve-year-old Josh Baskin smiles back. The caption above it reads: "HAVE YOU SEEN THIS CHILD?"

CUT TO:

79 INT: MACMILLAN'S OFFICE - DAY

79

Josh sits on the couch flanked on either side by two executives who are dressed almost identically. The CAMERA PULLS BACK TO REVEAL: a huge, wood-paneled office, informally furnished with comfortable sofas and chairs.

Every major executive in the company is seated around the room. Several hold prototypes of various toys, waiting their turn to present them. Brad stands at the front of the room, pointing at a large bar graph mounted on an easel. Mac slouches down in his chair listening to Brad present his toy, while Josh examines a prototype of it on the coffee table in front of him.

BRAD

... The focus testing showed a solid base in the nine to eleven bracket with possible carryover into twelve-year-olds.

ANGLE ON JOSH

He holds the prototype in his hands, staring at it with a baffled look on his face. It looks something like a skyscraper but not quite. Josh manipulates the upper stories and the sides fall away revealing robotic legs underneath. He tries to pry them out but they don't move.

BRAD

When you consider that Gobots and Transformers pulled a thirty-seven percent market share and we're targeting roughly the same segments ...

ANGLE ON SUSAN

She sits upright in her chair, the only woman in the room. Susan looks over at Brad as he continues with his report.

BRAD

... I think we could see about a quarter of that, which would equal a fifth of our total revenue for all of last year.

(he stops and smiles)

Any questions?

There are several seconds of silence, then ...

JOSH

I don't get it.

WIDE ANGLE - ENTIRE ROOM

A hushed murmur goes through the room. Every eye turns toward Josh, who holds the Mitor prototype. It is an epic confrontation.

BRAD

(tightly)

What exactly don't you get?

JOSH

It turns from an office building into a robot?

BRAD

Precisely.

JOSH
(innocently)
Well, what's fun about that?

There is an even louder murmur. Susan glances back and forth between Josh and Brad. Brad's eyes narrow.

BRAD
If you'd read your Industry Breakdown, you'd see that our success in the Action Figure area has climbed from ...

An aide hands him the figures.

BRAD (contd)
(without looking at them)
... twenty-seven percent to forty-five in the last two years.

JOSH
Oh.
(beat)
I still don't get it.

MAC
What don't you get, Josh?

JOSH
Well, I mean, a robot ... that's old. Couldn't it turn into a bug or something?

BRAD
A "bug"?

JOSH
Yeah, like this big prehistoric insect with really huge claws that can pick up a car and just crush it like that.

FIRST EXECUTIVE
A prehistoric transformer?

MAC
Interesting.

BRAD
Gentlemen, if you would just ...

SECOND EXECUTIVE
So the building turns into a monster.

JOSH

I guess ...

FIRST EXECUTIVE

We could put out a whole species.

JOSH

Yeah, you could hatch them out of houses.

CLOSE UP - MACMILLAN

As he nods slowly from his desk.

MAC

Maybe the eyes could blink. *

CUT TO:

INT. BRAD'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

They sit in his living room. Brad clutches his drink. *

BRAD

He's vicious.

SUSAN

He's not vicious. *

BRAD

Don't kid yourself, Susan, that man is a killer.

SUSAN

All he said was he didn't get it.

BRAD

Didn't get it! He tried to eviscerate me, Susan. He went for my throat. *

(pause) *

Did you see MacMillan's face? *

SUSAN

Uh huh. *

CUT TO:

81 INT. SOHO LOFT - DAY 81

It is vast and empty. Josh and Billy stand beside a well-dressed real estate agent.

AGENT

It's quite a unique space. The lines are so clean and you don't get any of the "partition" quality.

(he strolls forward)

Brand new bathroom, modern kitchen... *

(pointing)

It's even got a trash compactor. *

BILLY

We'll take it.

DISSOLVE TO:

82 EXT. SOHO STREET - MORNING 82

A large moving van pulls up to the curb with the words GORDON RENTS on the side of the truck.

JOSH (VO)

"Dear Mom..."

A man in a jumpsuit hops out of the truck and pushes an intercom button on the door of the building.

MOVING MAN

(into intercom)

Baskin?

A large water balloon splats next to him on the sidewalk.

CUT TO:

83 INT. JOSH'S LOFT 83

JOSH (VO)

"...They said that I could write you and let you know I was okay..."

Josh flies by on a skateboard, zigzagging through the columns.

CUT TO:

84 EXT. STREET 84

Two more trucks are parked in front of the building, blocking traffic. Josh and Billy play stoopball on the front steps as a pair of moving men wheel a pinball *

machine and full-sized basketball hoop down the ramp of the truck.

JOSH (VO)

"...So far they're treating me fine."

*
*

CUT TO:

85 OMIT 85
A86 EXT. BUILDING A86

Josh climbs out on the ledge of the loft to retrieve a kite.

*
*

JOSH (VO contd)

"...I've got enough to eat and I'm perfectly safe."

*

CUT TO:

87 EXT. HARD ROCK CAFE 87 *
They go into the club.

JOSH (VO contd)

"...They say I'll get out of here in about a month."

CUT TO:

86 INT. FOCUS GROUP - MACMILLAN TOYS 86

A group of four-year-olds with Josh in the center jump up and down on saturn-shaped "Pogo Balls."

JOSH (VO contd)

"...In the meantime, it's a lot like camp."

OTHER SIDE OF THE TWO-WAY MIRROR

MacMillan, Brad and Susan all watch Josh as he bounces up and down in the middle of the focus group.

CUT TO:

88 INT. DINGY CORRIDOR 88 *

Billy stands alone, without Josh, in front of a nondescript wall. He glances to his right as:

*
*

WIDER

*

Josh enters the shot carrying two hot dogs. The CAMERA *
 FOLLOWS THEM around a corner and up a long tunnel, as *
 YANKEE STADIUM is suddenly REVEALED in all its splendour. *

JOSH (VO contd)
 "...I watch T.V. and even get
 outside once in a while."

EXT. YANKEE STADIUM - DAY

Josh and Billy sit in the front row of the upper deck *
 wearing their baseball mitts. Josh pounds his a couple *
 of times. *

JOSH (VO contd)
 "...I know you miss me but try not
 to worry."

CUT TO:

89 EXT. SOUVENIR STAND

89 *

Billy tries on a black satin Yankee jacket as Josh
 looks on admiringly.

JOSH (VO contd)
 "I think this experience might
 even be good for me."

EXT. YANKEE STADIUM

Josh and Billy, both wearing jackets, exit the turnstiles *
 with the post-game throng. *

JOSH (VO contd)
 "I love you very much and I know
 I'll see you soon..."

They start to get smaller as they move away from THE *
 CAMERA, blending in with the crowd. *

JOSH (VO contd)
 "...Your son Joshua."

Soon Josh and Billy disappear entirely, until there is *
 just a sea of people. *

JOSH (VO contd)
 "P.S....I stopped biting my nails."

CUT TO:

68A.

90	OMIT	90	*
91	INT. TUXEDO SHOP - DAY	91	*

Josh and Billy enter through the front door. Several customers are in the store.

(CONTD.)

BILLY
Why can't I come?

JOSH
I told you. It's just for people
in the company.

BILLY
I could be your assistant.

A salesman walks up to them with a tape measure around
his neck.

SALESMAN
Can I help you?

JOSH
I need to rent a tuxedo.

SALESMAN
I see. Is there any particular
occasion?

BILLY
His company's having a party.

SALESMAN
Well, then, you'd probably want
something simple. Maybe a shawl
collar with ...

JOSH
This is neat.

Josh moves over to a mannequin displaying a powder blue
tux in crushed velvet. He reaches up, feeling the lapels.

JOSH (contd)
Billy, whadda ya think?

BILLY
I like it.

SALESMAN
Uh, usually that type of tuxedo
is popular with students. Senior
proms and ...

BILLY
Look at this one!

He runs over to a customer trying on a dark gray cutaway.

BILLY (contd)
 (to man)
 What kind of tuxedo is this?

SALESMAN
 (quickly moving
 toward Billy)
 It's not a tuxedo. It's a morning
 coat.

JOSH
 Hey ...

Billy and the salesman turn toward Josh, who is pointing
 across the store.

JOSH (contd)
 I've got it!

CUT TO:

92 INT: WALDORF ASTORIA BALLROOM - NIGHT

92

The walls are lined with a massive toy display. Living
 versions of top-line toys stroll amongst the guests.
 MacMillan Toys is throwing its annual black-tie bash
 to promote the fall line.

SHOT - SUSAN AND BRAD

They stand near the buffet with a small group of people.
 Brad wears a single breasted tuxedo. Susan's gown
 plunges down the back.

BRAD
 Oh come on George. You can't
 sell to the parents, you sell
 to the kids.

*
 *
 *

GEORGE
 I disagree.

BRAD
 Listen, you hit 'em at seven a.m.
 while their folks are still asleep.
 Then, you get 'em good 'n jacked-up
 for a couple of hours so by ten,
 they're ripping the house apart.

*
 *
 *

(he leans in)
 It's timing, George. You want that
 parent to wake up hearing little
 Jennifer screaming: "PUPPY-PAL"
 "PUPPY PAL".

*
 *
 *

CLOSE UP - SUSAN

Brad's words blur into the undertone as she glances toward
 the door. There are just some waiters moving in and out.

All at once, there is a familiar laugh behind her.

HER POV - MACMILLAN

He is sharing a joke with a group of people. They move along as Mac turns and heads for the bar.

FULL SHOT - BAR

Mac leans against the bar and orders a drink. He gets a double Scotch and turns to see Susan standing to his left. She flashes him a wide smile and touches his lapels.

SUSAN

I love your tux.

MAC

I think it's the same as the waiter's.

Susan throws her head back in a trail of laughter, then comes right back to MacMillan, touching his arm.

SUSAN

Have you decided what you're doing on the Danberry line?

MAC

Not yet.

SUSAN

Well ...

(lowering her voice)

I think if you got everyone's input up front, I mean right at the very beginning ...

MAC

Susan, have a drink.

SUSAN

What?

MAC

Have a couple of drinks.

She looks at him baffled. Mac smiles at her.

MAC (contd)

It's a party.

He turns and walks away, leaving her alone at the bar.

FULL SHOT - BRAD

BRAD

... And with the exchange rate
down there you make out like a
bandit.

(leaning closer)

I get two housekeepers and a cook
for a hundred bucks a month. Now
where else are you gonna --

All at once, a hush descends on the room. Brad glances
around, then looks toward the door.

FULL SHOT - DOORWAY

Josh stands in the portico dressed from head to toe in
white satin tails. The top hat is white. The shoes are
white. He clutches white gloves and an ivory walking
stick.

FULL SHOT - MACMILLAN

He lowers his drink and slowly starts to smile. All at
once MacMillan begins to laugh.

WIDE ANGLE

They all stare at Mac as his laughter grows. He starts
across the ballroom, smiling at Josh. MacMillan climbs
the stairs and clasps an arm around Josh's shoulder,
grinning like a proud father.

MAC

Glad you could make it, Josh.

A murmur goes up from the crowd as he escorts Josh down
the stairs.

ANOTHER ANGLE - PARTY - LATER

Josh and Mac are standing by the buffet having a lively
conversation.

ANGLE ON BRAD

He's on his fourth martini, Brad leans in close to the
man he's talking to, oblivious of Susan as she glances
across the room.

BRAD

... The guy's a goddamn knock-off
artist. "Amphibian"? That's G.I.
Joe with gills.

92 CONTINUED:

92

MAC

My oldest brother told me it
wasn't true and when my mother
found out, she almost beat him
within an inch of his life.

*
*
*
*

JOSH

Well I figured it out 'cause
the chimney was too small.

*
*

ANGLE ON BRAD

He's on his fourth martini. Brad leans in close to the
man he's talking to, oblivious of Susan as she glances
across the room.

BRAD

... The guys a goddamn knock-off
artist. "Amphibian". He gets ten-
thousand G.I. Joes, slaps some gills
on 'em, webs the feet and packages
them with seaweed. Gimme a break.

*
*
*
*

(CONTINUED)

Susan glances back at Brad, then touches his elbow.

SUSAN

Excuse me.

She leaves before he can react and is off across the ballroom, brushing her hair back in two quick strokes.

FULL SHOT - BUFFET

Josh stands at the salmon mold, chatting with a MAN in his forties. *

MAN *

So what do you do? *

JOSH *

About what? *

The man walks away baffled as Josh pulls several grapes from the buffet and tosses them up in the air, catching them in his mouth. *

CLOSER SHOT - JOSH

Susan slides up beside him, moving INTO THE SHOT. She pauses by the buffet then turns to face the party.

SUSAN

All the same people having all the same discussions...It's like they cloned some party in nineteen-eighty-three and kept spinning it out again and again.

Josh looks at her like she's speaking turns to face him.

Susan

SUSAN (contd)

I loved your ideas on the Squeezy Doll line.

JOSH

Oh...Thanks.

SUSAN

They had such clarity.

Josh mouths the word to himself trying to remember what it means. A waiter stops in front of them with a tray of canapes. Josh looks at them suspiciously.

SUSAN (contd)

(reassuring)

It's Beluga.

JOSH

Oh.

He takes the canapé and pops it into his mouth. Josh chews twice before his eyes go wide in horror and he spits the entire mouthful all over the buffet.

JOSH (contd)

(spitting it out)

Ach ... Thwa ... Twe ...

He lunges for a drink on a nearby waiter's tray. Josh takes a huge gulp, then sprays the martini all over the floor.

JOSH (contd)

Achaaa!

SUSAN

Are you alright?

Josh continues to choke.

SUSAN (contd)

Do you want some water?

JOSH

(gasping)

Please!

She glances across the room at Brad for a moment, then comes right back to Josh.

SUSAN

(lowering her voice)

Good, I have the company car right outside. Let's get out of here.

JOSH

(still choking a little)

Sounds good to me.

She looks him in the eye, nodding slightly.

SUSAN

... Terrific.

Josh turns and walks quickly toward the exit. Susan follows a step or two behind as they head up the marble stairs. Josh pushes open the door and steps outside.

SUSAN

(brushing back her hair)

Just seeing somebody in the office, you don't really get the chance to ...

93

EXT. HOTEL - PARK AVENUE

93

Josh stops at the curb in front of a shiny new Subaru.
Susan moves beside him. *

JOSH

Neat car. *

SUSAN

Do you want to drive?

JOSH

(pausing)

Well ... I'd love to but I
better not.

Josh jumps into the passenger seat. The seat belt
automatically slides up, wrapping itself around his
shoulder.

JOSH

That's the coolest thing I've
ever seen.

94

INT. SUSAN'S CAR - LATER

94

Josh is engrossed in the electronic console as Susan
drives. He raises and lowers the windows, clicks the
electric door locks up and down, and plays with the
lights on the vanity mirror. Susan stares straight
ahead. There is a driven intensity to her speech.

SUSAN

Just seeing somebody in the office,
you don't really get the chance to... *

Josh hits the switch that turns on the quadrophonic
stereo, filling the car with sound.

SUSAN (contd) *

... know them ... *

JOSH

Neat!

He presses the station scanner as classical segues
to news and on to heavy metal. *

(CONTINUED)

SUSAN

It's hard in a business situation.
I mean, there's that invisible line
and even if you're attracted to
somebody ...

*
*
*
*

JOSH

A phone!

SUSAN

Well, yes.

She glances at him as Josh reaches for the receiver.

SUSAN

Uh, is there somebody you have
to call before ...

JOSH

(into phone)

Operator. Hey, I'm in a Subaru.
Yeah, I'm in a car! Bye!

SUSAN

Actually, I'm feeling a little
vulnerable right now.

Josh suddenly opens his door a crack. His seatbelt
slides back as a computer voice warns them:

COMPUTER (VO)

Your door is ajar. Your door is
ajar.

JOSH

(imitating voice)

The jar is a door. The jar
is a ...

All at once the car hits a bump and Josh's door flies
completely open. He reaches out to grab it.

SHOT - CAR

It flies down a street in the Village with Josh leaning
out the door. He grabs the handle, then suddenly points
to a building across the street.

JOSH

Hey ...

INT. CAR

JOSH

(pulling the door shut)

That was my apartment.

(CONTINUED)

94 CONTINUED

94

EXT. CAR

Tires screech as Susan pulls a U-turn in the middle of the block.

SUSAN (VO)

I'd love to see where you live.

CUT TO:

95 INT. HALLWAY

95

The elevator doors open and they walk out into the small hallway.

SUSAN

Have you always lived alone?

JOSH

Uh, no ... not always.

SUSAN

Yes, well, it's hard coming off a relationship. It hurts. There's no way around it. The pain, the sleepless nights. But that's what they invented Xanax for, right?

*
*
*
*

Josh just looks at her.

SUSAN (contd)

(facing him directly)

Are you alright now?

*

JOSH

(bewildered)

Yeah, I'm fine.

Susan stares up into his eyes and he stares back into hers. They stand like that for several seconds when Josh finally shrugs and fits his key in the door.

(CONTINUED)

SUSAN
 (grabbing his hand)
 I don't know if we should do
 this yet.

JOSH
 Do what?

SUSAN
 I mean, I like you and I want
 to spend the night with you ...

JOSH
 (surprised)
 Ya mean sleep over?

SUSAN
 (taken aback)
 Well ... yes.

He pauses for a moment and thinks about it.

JOSH
 Okay, but I'm gonna be on top.

CUT TO:

96 FULL SHOT - BUNK BEDS

96

Two double bunk beds sit stacked in the middle of the room. The CAMERA PULLS BACK TO REVEAL: A full child's paradise. Susan stands next to Josh in the doorway, with her mouth open in shock. There is a jungle of inflatable palm trees complete with blow-up flamingoes. The kitchen shelves are stocked with boxes of Kraft Macaroni and Cheese. There is a pinball machine in one corner with a Coke machine beside it. "THE REAL THING" flashes on and off while a fan in the shape of a spaceship orbits the top of the room.

SUSAN
 You live here?

JOSH
 Yeah, isn't it great?

She moves forward into the room, staring in bewilderment.

JOSH (contd)
 Want a Coke?

SUSAN
 (still amazed)
 Uh, sure ... that would be ...

Josh spins around and bashes the side of the machine with his foot. A can spits out the bottom and he hands it to Susan.

JOSH
I rigged it up myself. You don't need any quarters.

She takes the Coke and glances around the room in disbelief. Susan wanders over to a table and starts to pick up a model spaceship.

JOSH (contd)
Don't!

She pulls her hand away.

JOSH (contd)
The glue's not dry.

SUSAN
(beat)
Sorry.

She looks over toward the corner.

SUSAN (contd)
(amazed)
Is that a trampoline?

JOSH
Sure is. Wanna try it?

SUSAN
Oh -- no, I ...

JOSH
(grabbing her arm)
C'mon. It's fun.

SUSAN
No, I can't.

JOSH
Sure ya can. It's easy.

Josh takes her by the arm and starts to pull her over to the trampoline.

SUSAN
My shoes ...

JOSH
Take 'em off.

Susan looks at Josh, then over at the trampoline.

SUSAN

I don't know ...

JOSH

(hops on trampoline)

Here. Come on.

Josh extends his hand, jumping up and down a couple of times. Susan hesitates for a moment, then pulls off her high heels. Slowly, tentatively, she steps up onto the trampoline.

JOSH AND SUSAN

They stand face to face. Josh bounces while Susan tries to balance. She hikes up her gown with one hand and holds her shoes in the other.

SUSAN

I feel so silly.

JOSH

Gimme your shoes.

She hands him her high heels. Josh flings them across the room, then all at once leaps from the trampoline.

JOSH (contd)

Now jump.

SUSAN

I can't.

JOSH

Go on.

It's a feeble attempt. Susan bounces on the trampoline no more than a couple of inches in the air.

JOSH (contd)

No -- jump!

This time she leans into it. Susan pushes off the canvas, sending herself two or three feet in the air. She comes back down onto the trampoline and is catapulted even higher.

SUSAN

Wo ...

JOSH

That's it.

She bounces again.

JOSH (contd)

Higher!

CLOSE UP - SUSAN

She continues to jump higher and higher. Her hair comes loose. She begins to smile.

CUT TO:

97 FULL SHOT - BEDROOM FLOOR - LATER

97

They are sprawled out across a board game from each other. Susan lies on her stomach with her feet in the air. Between them sits a map of the world with different colored cubes, denoting occupying armies.

JOSH

Okay, I'm attacking Kamchatka.

SUSAN

Kamchatka?

JOSH

Right there.

SUSAN

Oh.

(beat)

Wait, I've got an army there.

Josh yawns as she reaches over the board.

CUT TO:

98 FULL SHOT - BUNK BEDS - LATER

98

Susan reclines against her pillow in the bottom bunk wearing one of Josh's football jerseys. The bathroom door opens. Susan looks up quickly:

HER POV

Josh stands in the doorway wearing bright yellow pajamas. All at once he starts running toward the bunkbeds.

SHOT - SUSAN

Her eyes open a little wider.

FULL SHOT - BUNK BEDS

Josh vaults onto the upper bunk as Susan remains frozen

SUSAN (contd)

(beat)

Dead bugs. All brown with lots of
legs and little antennas. I made my
mother dump them down the toilet and I
washed my hands and I never caught another
firefly again. Never.

(beat)

Isn't that silly?

*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*

(CONTINUED)

There's a long pause.

SUSAN (contd)
Josh?

Silence.

SUSAN (contd)
You asleep?

She rolls over staring down at the compass ring as it glows a dull green in the dark.

SUSAN (contd)
Oh boy ...

CUT TO:

100 INT. CAR - DUSK 100 *

Brad drives. Susan stares at the rain-soaked streets as the windshield wipers make a whooshing noise against the window. *

BRAD
Have fun last night?

SUSAN
Sure.

BRAD
You left pretty quick.

SUSAN
I gave him a ride home, Brad. *

BRAD
(beat)
Did he enjoy it? *

SUSAN
Don't be ridiculous. *

BRAD
Yup. That's me. Mr. Ridiculous.
Just a silly old guy ... *

SUSAN
I really don't feel like going
tonight. *

BRAD
What do you mean? They're your
friends. *

(CONTINUED)

100 CONTINUED:

100

SUSAN

I know.

She starts to fiddle with the electric lock.

BRAD

You don't feel like seeing your friends anymore?

SUSAN

(still clicking the lock)

I didn't say that.

BRAD

Do you have to play with that thing?

She looks over at the lock.

CUT TO:

101 OMIT

101

CUT TO:

102 INT. MACMILLAN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

102

A single library lamp burns softly on the desk. Mac sits alone making friends with a bottle of Scotch. He lowers the glass and stares out into the darkness. There is a knock on the door.

MAC

(after a beat)

Come in.

ANGLE - DOORWAY

Josh enters the room tentatively, carrying a bundle of papers.

(CONTINUED)

MAC
(surprised)
Josh?

JOSH
Yeah.

MAC
What time is it?

JOSH
Almost ten.

MacMillan stares at him for a moment.

MAC
Want a drink?

JOSH
No thanks.

MAC
Me either.

Mac uncorks the bottle and pours out half a glass.
He winces slightly as it goes down.

MAC (contd)
What're you doing here?

JOSH
Well, I was ... finishing the
Astroblaster.

Mac nods at him, squinting across the desk.

MAC
What do you think?

JOSH
(shrugs)
It's okay.

MAC
(snickering slightly)
I know what you mean.

He takes a swig of Scotch.

MAC (contd)
Astroblaster ... Lasermite ...
They're all the goddamn same.

Mac looks out the window.

MAC (contd)

There was this duck.

(he pauses then turns
back to Josh)

It was a little wooden...quacky
duck.

(demonstrating)

It had a string on the bottom
and when you pulled it forward
it kind of...waddled from side
to side.

(pause)

So one day I realized that if
you put the head on a hinge--
just a little wooden dowel--
the beak could peck at the ground
when you pulled it forward.

(beat)

That's it, see...I had an idea.

Josh just looks at him. Mac shakes his head and rocks
back in his chair.

MAC (contd)

I used to be the last one out of
here. I turned off the lights
every night.

(he gestures out at the
lights of Manhattan)

Look at that. Nobody stops... *

Mac pulls a thick pile of papers from the desk.

MAC (contd)

You know what this is? It's a
report on how to "expand the
adventure market past the twelve-
year-old cutoff point."

He tosses down the report.

MAC (contd)

You can't expand it past twelve-
year-olds...It doesn't work.

JOSH

Why not?

MAC

'Cause you can't keep a kid from
growing up.

Josh stares at him silently for a moment.

MAC (contd)

All a thirteen-year-old boy wants
is a thirteen-year-old girl--
and I don't know how to build one
of those.

CUT TO:

103 EXT. STREET CORNER - NIGHT 103

A light mist is falling. Susan stands beneath the glow
of a single street lamp, staring up at the fourth floor
windows of Josh's loft. She looks at them for a time,
then turns slowly and disappears down the block.

CUT TO:

104 OMIT 104

105 INT. JOSH'S OFFICE - DAY 105

The door swings open as Brad sticks his head inside.

BRAD

Baskin?

CUT TO:

106 EXT. PUBLIC PLAYGROUND - DAY 106

A chain link fence separates the sidewalk from the
paddleball courts beyond it. Josh and Brad walk *
through the small gate, dressed in their gym clothes.
Brad wears N.Y. Athletic Club shorts and an NYPD t-shirt. *
Josh has on his football jersey. Each of them carries
a wooden paddle. *

JOSH

Well, I've played tetherball *
a couple of times. *

BRAD

(twirling the paddle) *
That's nice. *

CUT TO:

107 CLOSE UP - WALL 107

There is a loud bang as the ball slams off the concrete.

WIDER

WIDER

Josh stands flat footed as it bounces by him on its way to the fence. Brad pulls up his protective goggles and smiles over at him.

BRAD

Above the line on a serve, in bounds to the fence, play to twenty-one ... Ready?

SERIES OF SHOTS - HANDBALL GAME

Brad serves down the line and Josh misses entirely. He hits it again and this time, Josh whacks it back, grabbing at his bare hand in pain.

CUT TO:

108 WIDER SHOT - HANDBALL COURT

108

A few of the local players hang out against the fence. They watch as Brad racks up the points against Josh. He lobs. He taps a drop shot. He hits it wherever Josh isn't. The carnage continues to twenty-one.

CUT TO:

109 BRAD AND JOSH

109

Brad lifts his goggles with an ear to ear grin.

BRAD

Twenty-one to five.

Josh stands in the corner trying to catch his breath.

JOSH

Boy, you're good at that.

BRAD

(smugly)
Had enough.

JOSH

(looking up)
Oh, no. I'll play again.

BRAD

(beat)
You will?

JOSH

Sure ... That was fun.

Brad hesitates a moment, then throws the ball at him across the court.

BRAD
Fine. You serve.

A SERIES OF SHOTS - GAME

Josh gets better as the game goes on. He lobs over Brad's head. He makes a running shot in the corner. By the time he hits a winner off the top of the wall, Brad is already fuming.

SHOT - BRAD

BRAD
(as he prepares to serve)
Eighteen -- Eighteen. My serve.

He hits a slicing low shot that bounces twice in front of Josh.

BRAD (contd)
Nineteen -- Eighteen.

JOSH
That was under the line.

BRAD
What?

JOSH
That was under the line. You said the serve had to go over it.

BRAD
No, I didn't.

JOSH
Yes, you did. You said, "Above the line on a serve."

BRAD
I did not. Now gimme the ball.

JOSH
No, you said ...

BRAD
(grabbing at it)
Just gimme the goddamn ball!

JOSH
(yanking it back)
That's cheating!

BRAD
 (grabbing Josh's arm)
 Listen, you little shit ...

WIDE SHOT - THROUGH THE FENCE

Several of the other players and some pedestrians on the sidewalk watch in amazement as two grown men wrestle in the middle of a playground. They roll on the asphalt, legs kicking and arms flailing. It is something out of a school yard.

CUT TO:

110 INT: SUSAN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

110

Josh sits on the couch next to Susan. She dabs at the scrape below his left eye with a piece of gauze, dipped in Bactine.

JOSH
 He didn't have to punch me.

SUSAN
 I know.

She peels off the Band-Aid and smooths it gently over Josh's scrape.

SUSAN (contd)
 He's scared of you ... You don't play his game.

JOSH
 I tried to play his game and he beat me up.

Susan smiles as she starts to work on his elbow.

JOSH (contd)
 If he's scared of me, then why did he punch me?

SUSAN
 He punched you because he's scared of you.

JOSH
 I don't get it.

SUSAN
 He's threatened by you ... he's threatened by everyone.

JOSH

So how come you're so nice?

Susan freezes with the cotton in her hand.

JOSH (contd)

You work as hard as he does and you're not like that.

SUSAN

(looking away)

You don't know me that well.

JOSH

Sure I do.

She looks back at him.

JOSH (contd)

You're one of the nicest people I've ever met.

Susan takes a deep breath and looks toward the ceiling. After a second or two, she comes back to Josh, staring at him with a bit of wonder. She shakes her head slightly. There is the faint trace of a smile.

SUSAN

How do you do it?

He doesn't answer. Susan just looks at him for a moment, then kisses him softly on the cheek.

CUT TO:

111 INT: BRAD'S OFFICE - DAY

111

He sits at his desk with a Band-Aid across the bridge of his nose. All at once the door bursts open and Susan moves into the room dumping a shoe box in the middle of his desk.

BRAD

What's this?

SUSAN

What does it look like.

Brad glances over at the shoe box.

SUSAN (contd)

Shampoo, razor, toothbrush, two neckties, and your exercise tape.

BRAD
(patronizing)
Susan...

SUSAN
I want my keys back.

BRAD
(beat)
Sure.

He reaches into his pocket and pulls out a set of keys, tossing them across the desk.

BRAD (contd)
It's just a few scratches, honey.
He'll get over it.

SUSAN
This has nothing to do with him.

BRAD
Oh come on, what is this--your
big moment of redemption?

SUSAN
I'm not trying to hurt you, Brad. *

BRAD
Who are you kidding, Susan. He's
another link in the chain. First
it was Bob Alexander, then Myles,
then me ...
(he smiles) *
Am I missing anybody? *

SUSAN *
Yeah. Golding and Thompson and *
Cochran -- so what, Brad? *

BRAD *
So what's so special about Baskin? *

Susan pauses and looks him right in the eye. *

SUSAN *
He's a grownup. *

CUT TO:

CUT TO:

112 INT. ASTI'S RESTAURANT 112 *

SHOT - JOSH *

He ducks, as a huge circle of pizza dough flies right over his head. The room bursts into applause as...

WIDER *

The dough is caught by a MAN on a platform in the middle of the room. He quickly breaks it up into balls and tosses them out into the audience. Josh and Billy catch several, as the man leans over and gestures for them to throw the balls back into his mouth. Billy lets his ball go with so much force that it lands in the back of the man's mouth, almost choking him. *

CUT TO:

113 OMIT 113 *

All4 INT. SUSAN'S BEDROOM All4 *

Seven outfits are discarded in a heap on the bed. Wearing jeans and a big wool sweater, Susan leans in close to the mirror as she tries to put on eyeliner. Her hand shakes slightly. Susan tries to steady it but it only shakes more. She lowers the brush. *

SUSAN *

Stop it... *

CUT TO:

B114 INT. ASTI'S - LATER B114 *

The bill is placed on the table in front of Josh as a tenor sings Verdi in the b.g. Josh looks quietly down at the piece of paper as Billy grabs his arm, speaking a mile a minute. *

BILLY

I know what let's do. Let's get a Playboy and you buy some beers and ... *

JOSH

(quietly)
I can't.

(CONTINUED)

B114 CONTINUED:

B114

BILLY
Whaddaya mean? *

JOSH
I have to go somewhere.

BILLY
Where?

Josh looks out across the restaurant, avoiding Billy's stare. *

JOSH
I gotta go meet someone.

BILLY
But I've got all night. *

JOSH
I know.
(he gropes for the
words) *
I just can't right now. *

MALE TENOR (OS) *
Happy birthday to you. *

WIDER *

A group of waiters approach his table carrying a cake brightly lit with candles. *

EVERYONE
Happy birthday to you. Happy
birthday, dear Josh-u-aaa... *

The cake is placed in front of Josh.

EVERYONE (contd)
Happy birthday to you.

BILLY
(at full volume)
And many more.

The room bursts into applause as Billy pushes the cake closer to Josh. He stares at the glittering lights of the candles. *

BILLY
What are you gonna wish for
this time? *

Josh looks at Billy, then quickly blows out the candles. *

CUT TO:

114 OMIT 114 *

115 OMIT 115

116 OMIT 116

117 INT. SUSAN'S APARTMENT 117

She lights two long candles on the mantlepiece and looks at them for a moment. The doorbell rings. Susan jumps, then quickly blows out the candles. *

CUT TO:

118 INT. HALLWAY 118

The door swings open. Josh and Susan stare at each other in silence. Susan smiles, but no words come out. Josh just looks at the woman in front of him: the eyes, the smile, the light on her hair ...

SUSAN
(after a beat)
Come in.

JOSH
(not moving)
Sure.

CUT TO:

119 INT. LIVING ROOM 119

Taking a deep breath, he walks past Susan into the center of the room and stops. Susan looks at him, then moves over to sit on the edge of the couch. Josh hesitates, and sits down on the opposite end. They both stare straight ahead in silence for a moment. *

SUSAN
(finally)
Ready to go? *

JOSH
Yeah. *

They stand up. Susan moves to the door as Josh follows her out of the apartment. *

CUT TO:

120 AERIAL SHOT - SEAPOINT PARK - NIGHT

120

Excited screams carry over the glittering amusement park, blending into the sounds of metal grinding on metal.

SERIES OF SHOTS - ROLLER COASTER

Josh and Susan are thrown from side to side as the twisting roller coaster careens down the track. Their screams and laughter carry into the night as Josh keeps his hands high in the air.

EXT: ROLLER COASTER - EXIT

They stumble through the turnstile, still laughing. Josh looks over at a group of kids waiting in line to get onto the ride, and smiles to himself.

CUT TO:

121 EXT: BOARDWALK

121

Josh and Susan walk onto the boardwalk past a row of game machines on the side of the arcade. All at once Susan stops in front of an old machine that calls itself a "Love Meter." A series of red lightbulbs are housed inside a dingy glass case with designations like "Boring," "So-So," and "Intriguing." Josh stares at the two brass levers on the front with a bit of apprehension.

SUSAN

(looking at Josh)

I've got a quarter.

JOSH

I don't know.

Susan pulls out a shiny new quarter and holds it up to Joshua. He looks at it, then looks at her. They are no more than a foot apart and without the makeup, she looks almost like a schoolgirl. Josh nods slowly, then takes the quarter and puts it in the slot.

WIDER SHOT - INCLUDING MACHINE

Josh reaches out tentatively and grasps the brass handles. He hesitates for a moment then squeezes them tightly. The red lights start to flash. Josh looks up at the blinking bulbs, then suddenly lets go of the levers.

THEIR POV

A single red light burns on top reading "DANGEROUS".

JOSH AND SUSAN

They look at it awkwardly for a moment, then glance at each other. It seems like each of them is about to say something, but neither one does. They stay like that for a second, when Susan cocks her head to the side.

SUSAN

You hear that?

CUT TO:

122 SHOT - PAVILION

122

The sounds of Big Band music drift out of the old dance Pavilion. Built near the turn of the century, it is part Mosque, part Opera Hall, part Seaside Pleasure Palace. All the obelisks have flagpoles for the banners that have long since gone away. The sound of "Moonlight Serenade" echoes up the boardwalk as the ocean pounds in the distance.

CUT TO:

123 JOSH AND SUSAN

123

She looks up in the direction of the Pavilion, then suddenly back at Josh.

SUSAN

(shyly)

Want to dance?

JOSH

Dance?

SUSAN

(quickly)

We don't have to. We could ...

JOSH

(suddenly)

Okay.

They look at each other. Susan nods.

SUSAN

Okay.

CLOSER SHOT - JOSH AND SUSAN

They start down the boardwalk toward the dance Pavilion at the end. Josh looks over at Susan and doesn't even notice the small glass booth with the bobbing head inside.

Zoltar smiles at them from the end of the arcade. His eyes glow bright red. His beard comes to a point. They continue past him as they follow the music down the shore.

CUT TO:

124 INT. DANCE PAVILION

124

A million pieces of moonlight swim across the walls as Josh and Susan walk in through the main entrance. Thirty couples drift slowly on the floor. Across the room, a live band concludes the song, then immediately segues to "Isn't It Romantic." The full sound of the string section fills the room.

JOSH AND SUSAN

They turn to face each other.

JOSH
(hesitating)
I don't know how to do this.

SUSAN
(shyly)
I'm not very good either.

Susan extends a hand and leads him, stiff-legged, onto the dance floor. She rests the other hand on his shoulder as he almost instinctively puts an arm on her waist. Josh stands in front of her, completely frozen. They are half a foot apart.

CLOSER SHOT - JOSH AND SUSAN

She begins to lead him rigidly into a slow dance. Josh starts rocking with her to the music--all terror and no grace.

SUSAN
I haven't done this in a long
time.

*
*

Josh stares straight ahead. She slides her hand further around his waist, drawing slightly closer.

SUSAN (contd)
What were you like when you were
younger?

JOSH
Oh...Not much different.

SUSAN
 I believe that about you.
 (she pauses)
 You know...
 (she shakes her head)
 Forget it.

He doesn't say anything. They rock to the music for a long moment.

SUSAN (contd)
 (finally)
 I've been thinking about you
 a lot.

Susan looks quickly away from him. Josh swallows once.

SUSAN (contd)
 (looking across the room)
 It's crazy. In the shower, on the
 phone...You'd think I was a virgin.

CLOSE UP - JOSH

His eyes go wide. They continue to rock to the music.

FULL SHOT - INCLUDING SUSAN

SUSAN
 When we were walking out here, I
 kept thinking, what if my hand
 sweats.
 (she shakes her head)
 My God...what if my hand sweats?

Josh looks over at his left hand. It's clutching Susan's so there's nothing that can be done with it. He gingerly takes his other hand from Susan's waist and wipes it on his pants. Susan draws closer, pressing her body to his. *

SUSAN (contd)
 I've never gone out with someone
 like you before.

Josh doesn't say anything. She drapes her arm farther around his neck, pulling him tight in an embrace.

SUSAN (contd)
 With every other man there was
 always so much to hide...
 (she presses her body
 closer)
 I don't feel that way with you. *

All at once they both freeze. Josh and Susan stand motionless for a long moment. Susan looks up at him and smiles. Josh pulls away slightly, one leg bent like a toreador. He stares over her head, mortified.

JOSH

(his voice breaking)

Susan...

(taking a deep breath)

I think I better tell you something.

SUSAN

(softly)

What?

JOSH'S POV

Her face is only a few inches away. In the rose colored light of the dance hall her skin almost seems to glow. The eyes are wide and full of wonder. Her smile is open --almost innocent.

WIDER SHOT - JOSH

He hesitates for a moment, staring into her eyes, then, slowly shakes his head. Josh leans forward and kisses her fully on the mouth.

CUT TO:

125 INT. SUSAN'S APARTMENT

125

They part tenderly from the kiss in the dim light of her bedroom. The CAMERA PULLS BACK TO REVEAL Josh and Susan standing face to face in front of Susan's bed. They are partially silhouetted from the small lamp burning on her end table. Susan reaches up and starts to slowly unbutton the front of her blouse. Josh stares, absolutely transfixed as she lets it fall open revealing her bare breasts. Susan reaches over and turns off the lamp. The SCREEN GOES BLACK for a moment as...

The light switches back on as Josh removes his hand from the lamp.

SUSAN

You want the light on?

(CONTD)

JOSH
 (nodding emphatically)
 Yeah ...

Susan moves toward him as Josh stares, mesmerized. Then he reaches up and slowly touches the side of her breast. He caresses it gently for a moment in absolute wonder, then pulls his hand away -- staring at his fingers. Josh begins to smile.

CUT TO:

126- OMIT
 128

126-
 128

CUT TO:

129 INT: HALLWAY - MACMILLAN TOYS - MORNING

129

The elevator doors open and Josh bounds down the hallway, briefcase in hand. He gives a high-five to a startled Sparkletts water man.

CUT TO:

130 INT: RECEPTION AREA - JOSH'S OFFICE

130

Josh turns the corner and gives a salute to his secretary.

JOSH
 I'd like some coffee, Miss Patterson.

MISS PATTERSON
 But you never drink --

JOSH
 And make it black.

He shuts the door behind him as she stares at it.

CUT TO:

131 INT: SECRETARY'S OFFICE - MACMILLAN TOYS

131

Judy is transcribing at her typewriter with a dictaphone headset over her ears. All at once a large wicker picnic basket with a huge bow is placed in front of her. She looks up, startled.

WIDER

Susan is standing by her desk, smiling. She pulls the headset away from Judy's ears.

131 CONTINUED

131

SUSAN
 Congratulations, Mrs. Hicks.

*

CUT TO:

131A OMIT

131A

*

132 INT. HALLWAY - WESTSIDE APARTMENT

132

A doorbell RINGS. Josh and Susan turn to each other in the hallway of the apartment. Josh tugs at the ends of his new sportcoat.

*

*

*

JOSH

Like this?

*

SUSAN

Wear it unbuttoned.

*

(she opens the front
 of his jacket and examines
 it for a moment)

*

*

*

*

That's great.

The door swings open to reveal a small dinner party in the background. The host and hostess smile at Susan, kissing her on the cheek.

*

*

*

SUSAN

Karen, Phil...This is Josh.

PHIL

How do you do.

KAREN

(grinning)

Nice to meet you.

CUT TO:

133 INT. DINING ROOM - LATER

133

Eight people are seated around the dinner table with Josh near one end between Susan and Karen.

PHIL

We saw this great documentary about Columbus the other night on PBS. I never knew it, but he had a fourth ship.

JOSH

(looking up)

The Santa Christina.

(CONTINUED)

133 CONTINUED:

133

PHIL
(surprised)
That's right.

JOSH
But that was only his second
trip.

PHIL
You saw it too?

JOSH
No, I ...
(proudly)
Used to study this stuff.

Everyone nods, impressed, as an eleven-year-old BOY enters
holding a text book. *

ADAM
Dad ...

PHIL
Not now, Adam.

ADAM
But you said.

PHIL
We've got guests.

KAREN
(to Josh)
He's had the hardest time with
algebra this year. We've tried
tutors and everything.

JOSH
Algebra?
(turning to the boy)
Let me see that, Adam.

CUT TO:

134 OMIT

134 *

135 INT: BOY'S BEDROOM 135

Josh sits on the floor with Adam, pointing to the text-book spread between them.

JOSH
You see how that works? X plus
seven minus four ...

FULL SHOT - DOORWAY

Susan and Karen stand quietly in the doorway watching Josh help Adam with his math.

KAREN
You're right, he's wonderful.

SUSAN
I know.

CUT TO:

136 OMIT 136

CUT TO:

137 INT: BILLY KOPECHE'S ROOM - NIGHT 137

He sits at his desk with the receiver to his ear. From downstairs comes the undertone of his parents arguing. Billy flops down on the bed with the phone still wedged to his ear as the number continues to ring.

CUT TO:

138 INT: JOSH'S APARTMENT 138

His phone rings again and again in a darkened apartment.

CUT TO:

139 INT: SUSAN'S BEDROOM 139

They lie asleep in each other's arms.

CUT TO:

140 EXT: MACMILLAN'S OFFICE - DAY 140

The doors burst open as executives pour out of the office, into the corridor. There is a louder buzz than usual.

CUT TO:

141 INT: JOSH'S OFFICE

141

Susan slams the door behind them.

SUSAN

You can do it, I know you can.

JOSH

Susan, I can't plan a whole line.

SUSAN

Why not? Nobody knows more about toys in this entire company.

JOSH

But there's marketing ... and strategy and stuff ...

SUSAN

All he wants is a proposal -- he said so. If you come up with the idea, I'll handle the marketing.

Josh stares at her frozen. She looks back, her eyes alive with excitement.

SUSAN (contd)

(throwing her arms
around him)

Oh, this is just fantastic.

CUT TO:

141A INT: JOSH'S OFFICE - NIGHT

141A

He sits at his desk, jotting some notes onto a yellow legal pad. Josh grows frustrated and tears off the top sheet, throwing it into the waste basket. He stands and paces around the room, then returns to the desk as he stares down at the blank page in front of him.

CUT TO:

142 INT: BRAD'S OFFICE - DAY

142

He sits alone behind his desk, back to the door. All at once Brad turns in his chair and puts a briefcase on the blotter. He drums his fingers on the leather, then finds the clasps and snaps them open ...

SHOT - BRIEFCASE

Inside is a miniature electric trainset on tiny metal tracks. The train goes round and round, passing tiny

homes and tiny trees. A very thin stream of smoke comes from the engine.

WIDER - INCLUDING BRAD

He folds his arms and leans back slightly in his chair, his eyes following the train as it goes around and around and around and ...

The door suddenly opens as another executive walks inside. Brad quickly slams the lid shut and glares across his desk.

BRAD

Don't you know how to knock?

CUT TO:

143 OMIT

143

CUT TO:

144 EXT: FAO SCHWARZ - DAY

144

Josh looks up at the massive electronic toy display on the other side of the window. He stares at it, puzzled, as boys and girls move in and out of the pre-Thanksgiving rush. Josh shakes his head and turns from the window, starting down Fifth Avenue, when all at once, he looks up and stops.

HIS POV

A trio of eleven-year-old boys are standing at a street corner, poring over a comic book. Their heads are close together as they read ...

CUT TO:

145 INT: SUSAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

145

They sit on the floor of Susan's apartment. A pizza carton sits open beside them. Josh speaks a mile a minute with a legal pad on his lap.

JOSH

... And depending on what button you push, a different story appears. See -- you're the one that's making it up.

SUSAN

A living comic book. "You decide where the action goes."

(MORE)

SUSAN (contd)
(grabbing his hands)
It's just unbelievable.

Susan gazes into his eyes with a look of wonder on her face. All at once, she glances away from him, looking at the wall.

JOSH
What's the matter?

She shakes her head.

JOSH (contd)
What's wrong?
(moving closer)
You mad?

SUSAN
(turning back to him)
What are we doing?

JOSH
Hunh?

SUSAN
I mean if it's an affair, that's one thing, but if it's something else -- I mean not that we have to know right now, we don't -- but if we think it could turn into something else then ...
(she hesitates)
Well ... How do you feel about all this?

He looks down at his notes -- trying to understand.

JOSH
How do I feel about what?

SUSAN
How do you feel ... about ...
(breath)
... me.

Josh looks at her, then suddenly understands. His face goes red with embarrassment as he ducks his head to the side, then, all at once, shoves her over onto the carpet. Susan falls on her side, and looks at him, startled for a moment. Josh grins, still embarrassed. Susan begins to laugh and pulls him down in a giggling embrace.

CUT TO:

108.

146 CLOSE UP - MAILBOX - DAY 146

A hand opens the mailbox and pulls out the morning bundle. The CAMERA PULLS BACK TO REVEAL: Billy, staring down at a large manila envelope on top. The return address says: DEPT. OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, CITY OF NEW YORK. He lets out a happy "whoop" and races up the walk toward his house.

CUT TO:

147 INT: JOSH'S OFFICE - DAY (MOS) 147

He paces up and down the floor, firing dictation at his secretary while she takes shorthand on a steno pad.

CUT TO:

148 INT: RECEPTION AREA - MACMILLAN TOYS 148

The receptionist speaks into her headset.

RECEPTIONIST

I'm sorry, Mr. Baskin is still in conference.

CUT TO:

149 INT: BILLY'S BEDROOM 149

He sits at his desk with the phone to his ear. The list of carnivals is spread out in front of him.

BILLY

Well, tell him I called again.
No, Kopeche. K-O-P ... Right.
Well, tell him it's important.

CUT TO:

150 INT: JOSH'S OFFICE - NIGHT 150

Papers are strewn everywhere. Josh is sitting cross-legged on the floor, huddled over a pile of work. He has a two day growth of beard. Susan is sitting behind the desk making some notes on a pad. Her bare feet are curled beneath her on the chair. She wears no makeup and her hair is pulled back in a ponytail. Even with the circles of fatigue under her eyes, Susan looks younger than ever. *

SUSAN

(not looking up) *
Do you have the list of story *
options over there? *

(CONTINUED)

150 CONTINUED:

150

JOSH

Yep. *

SUSAN *

Can I see them? *

CLOSER - JOSH *

He holds out his hand and launches a styrofoam airplane. *

WIDER *

It makes a circle over Susan's head and curves back toward Josh. Laughing, she jumps up to chase it. Josh grabs her foot as she passes him, and a musical NOTE comes from the huge stack of papers in front of him. *

SUSAN *

(stopping) *

What was that? *

Josh grins and touches her big toe. A different NOTE emerges. Susan's eyes widen. *

SUSAN *

How did you do that? *

She sits down next to him as Josh shoves the papers aside to reveal a round plexiglass dome, criss-crossed inside with silver and copper wires. Josh's other hand is touching it. *

JOSH *

Here, put your hand on the dome. *

She does. Nothing happens. Susan looks up at Josh expectantly. *

JOSH *

Now touch my hand with your other hand. *

She does, and a NOTE emerges. *

SUSAN *

That's incredible. *

JOSH *

It only works if you touch a person. Well, maybe it'd work with a dog... *

Susan reaches up and touches Josh on the nose. Another note comes out. She holds it, giggling as Josh touches her nose, and there is harmony. *

(CONTINUED)

150 CONTINUED: 150

Susan leans over and kisses him quickly. A new note comes out. Laughing, she gets to her feet and grabs her coffee cup from the desk. *

SUSAN

Want some? *

JOSH

(yawning) *

That's okay. *

Susan crosses to the door as Josh looks down at the papers spread around the room. He yawns again. *

CUT TO:

151 INT. OFFICE CORRIDOR 151

It's the middle of the night and the place is empty. The only sound is the neon buzz of an empty building. Susan emerges from the office in her stocking feet. She carries her coffee cup down the corridor and turns the corner.

ELEVATOR AREA

The doors open and Mac walks out of the elevator carrying his briefcase and a raincoat. He starts down the hallway when Susan rounds the corner, almost slamming into him.

SUSAN

(startled)

Oh...

MACMILLAN

Working late?

SUSAN

(trying to fix her hair)

Yeah. We were just...I was...

(beat)

Getting some coffee.

Mac looks at her for a moment then nods slightly. There is a faint trace of a smile.

MACMILLAN

You look good these days, Susan.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

151 CONTINUED:

151

MACMILLAN (contd)
 (still nodding)
 Real good.

Mac examines her for a moment more, then smiles briefly and moves down the hall.

MACMILLAN (contd)
 Goodnight.

Susan stands by the elevators, watching him leave.

CUT TO:

152 INT. JOSH'S APARTMENT - CLOSE UP - TELEPHONE

152

*

The phone rings and rings in the empty loft.

*

CUT TO:

153 INT. BILLY'S ROOM - NIGHT

153

He slams down the phone and looks at it for a moment.

CUT TO:

154 INT. JOSH'S OFFICE - DAY

154

He sits at his desk scribbling furiously on the legal pad. There is a large mug of coffee sitting beside him. All at once the secretary's voice can be heard from the outer office.

SECRETARY (OS)
 ... I'm sorry, Mr. Baskin can't be
 dis --

All at once, the door bursts open and Billy enters the room. He carries a large manila envelope under his arm.

BILLY
 Where have you been? I've been
 trying to reach you forever.

JOSH
 (looking up)
 Oh, Billy ...
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JOSH (contd)

(beat)

Look, I can't right ...

BILLY

(dumping the envelope
on his desk)

I've got the list. All we gotta
do is call.

JOSH

I have to work right now.

Billy stops and looks at him, incredulous.

BILLY

What are you talking about? This
is it. This is the list.

JOSH

Look, I'm really busy. I'll call
you ...

BILLY

Busy! Are you outta your mind?
We've waited a month for this!

JOSH

(snapping)

I have work to do, Billy. Maybe
one day you'll understand that.

Billy shakes his head in amazement.

BILLY

Who the fuck do you think you are?

JOSH

Look ...

BILLY

You're Josh Baskin, remember?
You came to me to fix your report
card. You hid in my basement when
Danny Tobak was after you.

JOSH

You don't understand, this is
important.

BILLY

And I'm your best friend, what's
more important than that?

They stare at one another for a moment, then Billy grabs the envelope and heads for the door. He is all the way across the room with one hand on the doorknob when he stops and turns back toward Josh.

BILLY (contd)

And I'm three months older than you are, asshole.

He walks out slamming the door behind him. Josh just stares at it with a stunned look on his face.

CUT TO:

155 OMIT 155

CUT TO:

156 INT: BILLY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 156

ANGLE ON TRASH CAN

A single antenna is sticking out the top.

SHOT - BILLY

He sits alone at his desk, staring straight ahead at the wall. All at once, loud static comes from the corner of his room. Billy turns quickly in his chair.

WIDER SHOT - BILLY

He looks down at it, disbelieving for a moment, then gets up and slowly walks over to the trash can. Billy pauses then pulls out his half of the radio phone as he turns to look out the window.

CUT TO:

156A HIS POV - JOSH'S ROOM 156A

Mrs. Baskin is standing at the window of Josh's room, holding the walkie-talkie. She motions to it a little apologetically as Billy walks closer to his window.

DIFFERENT ANGLE - INCLUDING BILLY

He slides it open as Mrs. Baskin does the same. Two heads poke out the windows as they speak across the driveway.

MRS. BASKIN

(motioning to the walkie-talkie)

I wasn't sure how to use this thing.

BILLY

That's okay.

Mrs. Baskin hesitates for a moment.

MRS. BASKIN

(holding up a bag)

I baked some cookies. I thought you might want some.

BILLY

Oh ... Thanks.

She turns to go meet him downstairs, when Billy calls out after her.

BILLY (contd)

Hang on a second.

He ducks back into his room and re-emerges a moment later with a long butterfly net. Billy extends it over the driveway to just under Josh's window. Mrs. Baskin looks down at it.

MRS. BASKIN

(smiling slightly)

No wonder you boys never got any sleep.

Billy doesn't say anything as she studies him for several seconds. Finally, she takes the bag of cookies and places them carefully in the net. Billy retracts it, and finishes one of the cookies in three quick bites. She looks at him for a moment more.

MRS. BASKIN (contd)

Now, close your window before you catch cold.

Billy watches as she starts to close Josh's window.

BILLY

Hey ...

She pauses, looking over at Billy.

BILLY (contd)

(beat)

Everything's going to be okay.

She nods slightly. Billy ducks back inside as Mrs. Baskin turns and walks out of the room, shutting the light off behind her.

SHOT - BILLY

He holds the cookies in front of him for a moment, then turns back to the desk. Billy places the bag next to the walkie-talkie, and opens the top drawer. He pulls out the computer printout from the Department of Consumer Affairs and sits down in front of the phone. Billy picks up the receiver.

CUT TO:

157	OMIT	157 *
158	INT. SUSAN'S DINING ROOM - NIGHT	158 *

Josh sits alone at the computer by the faint glow of a desk lamp. He stares blankly at the screen with his hands at his sides.

CLOSE UP - JOSH

He looks at it quietly for a moment, then reaches down beside him and pulls a small computer disk from his briefcase. Josh holds it in his hands, staring at it for several seconds, then leans forward, pops out the old disk and slides it into the computer.

CLOSE UP - COMPUTER SCREEN

"YOU ARE STANDING IN THE CAVERN OF THE EVIL WIZARD. ALL AROUND YOU ARE THE CARCASSES OF SLAIN ICE DWARFS." *

SHOT - JOSH

He just stares at it. Josh sits motionless in front of the computer while the Legend of the Evil Wizard flashes across the screen.

CUT TO:

159	EXT. GEORGE WASHINGTON JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL - DAY	159
-----	---	-----

Autumn leaves litter the schoolyard. A bell rings as dozens of children pour out of the building, laughing and shrieking across the street. *

SHOT PLAYGROUND

The children burst through the gate of the school on foot, bikes and skateboards. Their laughter echoes through the neighborhood as they run down the sidewalk. *

(CONTINUED)

from across the street. Only his back can be seen as he stands under an elm tree.

SHOT - PLAYGROUND

The children burst through the gate of the school on foot, bikes and skateboards. Their laughter echoes through the neighborhood as they run down the sidewalk.

CLOSE UP - JOSH

He watches silently from under the elm tree as their shrieks carry down the street.

CUT TO:

160 EXT: BASEBALL FIELD

160

It's late afternoon as the sun turns the field a light gold. Two boys stand alone on the grass, shagging flies in the fading light. There is silence, then the crack of a bat, then the distant pop of a ball hitting leather. Josh watches silently from the side of the field leaning back in his business suit. There is no conversation as the ritual continues between them -- just the swing of the bat and the long lazy arc of a fly ball as it goes from one boy to another. Josh loosens the knot of his tie as he stares at the boys in front of him. A light breeze ruffles his hair.

CUT TO:

161 ESTABLISHING - WILSON HIGH SCHOOL - DUSK

161

It is a large brick building much bigger and more imposing than Josh's junior high.

CUT TO:

162 EXT: PARKING LOT

162

A long row of orange highway cones has been set up for the drivers education class. Several students stand to the side as a car tries to negotiate the course.

WIDER ANGLE - INCLUDING JOSH

He moves in behind the group of students as the car weaves through the cones. It clears out four or five before rolling forward into the chain link fence. Everyone in the class bursts into hysterics. Josh begins to laugh too.

BOY
Way to go, Cindy.

The girl turns out the window, red with embarrassment.
It is Cynthia Benson behind the wheel for the first time
in her life. Her smile is brilliant and white. Her
blonde hair gleams in the sunshine.

CLOSE UP - JOSH

He stares at her for a moment or two.

CUT TO:

163 OMIT 163

164 OMIT 164

CUT TO:

165 INT: SUSAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 165

There is a tray of sushi and bowls of cold rice on the dining room table. Susan fidgets nervously with a pair of chopsticks when the front door swings open. She jumps slightly as Josh moves into the room. He tosses his jacket on a chair in the foyer. It slides to the floor as he walks slowly over to the table.

SUSAN

Where were you?

JOSH

(softly)

Out.

SUSAN

Out where?

JOSH

I took a walk.

Susan watches as he eases into the chair across from her. Josh doesn't look up from the small pieces of raw fish on the tray. There is a faraway look in his eyes.

SUSAN

Josh, what's wrong?

He doesn't answer. Josh looks out at the millions of lights shimmering over Manhattan. Susan touches his hand.

SUSAN (contd)

What is it?

He looks her in the eye for a long moment. It takes a while before the words can come out ... Finally:

JOSH

I don't know if I can do this.

SUSAN

(beat)

The presentation? It's almost finished.

JOSH

That's not it.

SUSAN

Then what?

Josh just looks at her. She leans forward.

SUSAN (contd)

What, honey?

He doesn't answer. Susan's eyes go wide.

SUSAN (contd)

Is it us?

She freezes across from him with a look of panic on her face.

SUSAN (contd)

Josh, tell me.

He looks back out the window. His voice is far away.

JOSH

Before I met you ...

SUSAN

Yeah ...

JOSH

I was in Little League.

She looks at him, a little baffled.

JOSH (contd)

And when I was in Little League, I couldn't wait till I was big enough to be in Pony League.

(he pauses, then turns back to her)

Susan, I'm too big to be in Pony League.

She looks at him for a moment, then smiles slightly and grabs his hand.

SUSAN

Honey ... Everyone feels like that. We're all getting older.

JOSH

It's not that.

SUSAN

Then what is it?

JOSH

I'm not ... ready for this.

SUSAN

You think anyone's ever ready? You think there's some magic moment?

JOSH

(blurting it out)
Susan, I'm a child.

SUSAN

(squeezing his hand)
Maybe if we got away somewhere. Went to the mountains for a few days ...

JOSH

You don't understand, Susan. I'm a kid.

(beat)

I'm thirteen years old.

She stops and stares at him.

SUSAN

And you think I'm not? There isn't a frightened teenager inside of me?

JOSH

You don't understand ...

SUSAN

(half to herself)
I swore I'd never fight to keep a man from leaving.

JOSH

Susan, I went to a carnival!

(MORE)

JOSH (contd)

I made a wish on a machine! The next thing I knew, I was a grownup!

SUSAN

Why are you doing this, Josh?

JOSH

(quickly)

Look, I know you don't believe me but it's true. There was this carnival in New Jersey and I made a wish on a machine. It was called a Zoltar machine. It had a bobbing head like a devil and if you got a quarter in the mouth you could make a wish, and I got the quarter in the mouth so I wished I was a grownup.

SUSAN

(quietly)

Please don't.

JOSH

(continuing)

And when I went to sleep that night I was twelve years old but by the next morning I was grown up. See, that's what I'm saying. I turned into a grownup but I'm really just a child.

SUSAN

(fighting past the hurt)

Fine, Josh -- you're a child. Look, I don't know what you're trying to tell me, but we've got a really big day at work tomorrow, so I'm going to sleep.

(standing up)

Maybe we'll feel better in the morning.

Susan walks past him out of the room as he stares straight ahead.

CUT TO:

166 INT: SUSAN'S BEDROOM - LATER

166

The room is dark. Josh sleeps soundly underneath the covers, clutching onto the pillow. The CAMERA PANS slowly beside him to Susan's side of the bed. She

sits upright, propped on her elbows, staring straight in front of her.

CLOSER SHOT - SUSAN

She turns and looks at Josh while he sleeps. In the dim light of the bedroom he looks like a child: his flushed cheek, his tousled hair, his eyes shut gently against the pillow ...

CUT TO:

167 INT: DINING ROOM

167

Susan emerges from the bedroom in her robe. She paces past the dining room table with her hands stuffed in her pockets. As she passes the front door, something catches her eye.

HER POV

Josh's jacket is lying in a heap on the floor.

WIDER - INCLUDING SUSAN

She moves to the foyer and picks up the jacket. Susan holds it close for a moment, brushing the material lightly. She begins to hang it on the back of the chair then stops. Susan quietly fishes through the pockets until she finds Josh's wallet. She opens it and begins to pull out the contents.

HER POV

There's a ten dollar bill and two singles. A torn ticket stub from a Yankee game. Josh's company I.D. badge with his face smiling out at her.

INCLUDE SUSAN

She pulls out a Bergen County library card with Josh's name and signature on it. It is stuck to another piece of cardboard with a big wad of bubblegum. She peels it away, revealing a baseball card of Don Maddingly. Susan stares at it for a moment, then pulls out an even smaller card with a single line of printing on it. She holds it closer, reaching out to turn on a small lamp.

HER POV

"YOUR WISH IS GRANTED"

CLOSER SHOT - SUSAN

She turns and looks at the bedroom door.

DISSOLVE TO:

168 INT: BILLY KOPECHE'S ROOM - MORNING

168

Billy sits at the desk with the phone to his ear. The list of carnivals is open in front of him. He looks disheveled but jubilant.

BILLY

(scribbling something
on a piece of paper)

Yeah ... yeah ... Thanks a lot!

He slams down the phone and grabs his jacket, running out of the room.

CUT TO:

169 EXT: EAST SIDE STREET - MORNING

169

Josh and Susan walk out of her apartment building and turn toward the garage at the corner. Both are wearing coats against the first chill of autumn. It is a gray, windy day. They move up the street when Susan glances over at a newsstand then back at Josh.

SUSAN

Wait, I need a paper.

She heads to the stacks of newspapers at the side of the stand, then stops and turns back to him.

SUSAN (contd)

Will you get me some gum?

Susan watches as he turns toward the candy section. She bends down by the papers, as Josh puts his hand out toward the gum.

SHOT - JOSH

His finger scans the brands: Beechnut, Clorets, Dentine, Trident ...

WIDER - INCLUDING SUSAN

Susan rises with the Times in her hand as Josh turns toward her.

JOSH

Here.

He's holding out a pink package of Bubble Yum. Susan looks at the gum then stares at him. She keeps looking at him for several seconds.

JOSH (contd)

What?

SUSAN

(shaking her head)

Nothing.

CUT TO:

170 EXT: GEORGE WASHINGTON BRIDGE - DAY

170

A New Jersey municipal bus roars across the Hudson toward New York.

CLOSER SHOT - BUS

Billy stares out one of the windows as he gets closer to the city.

CUT TO:

171 INT: JOSH'S OFFICE - DAY

171

He stands near the doorway face to face with Susan. She holds some stapled pages.

SUSAN

These are the notes in case you want them.

JOSH

(taking them)

Right.

She hesitates for a moment then picks up a large portfolio from the coffee table.

SUSAN

Well, I'll get these set up before everybody comes in.

JOSH

Great.

She pauses for a moment then kisses him softly on the cheek.

SUSAN

I love you.

JOSH

(beat)

I love you too.

CUT TO:

172 INT: ELEVATOR AREA 172

The double doors slide open. Susan steps in just as Billy is stepping out.

CUT TO:

173 INT: JOSH'S OFFICE 173

He stands at his window, staring out over the city. All at once he hears the door shut behind him. Josh turns around to see:

BILLY

standing at Josh's desk with a piece of paper in his hand. He slams it down on the desktop.

BILLY

Right there. Seapoint Park, New York.

There is a loud buzz on the intercom. They look at each other for a long moment before Josh pushes down the button.

JOSH

Yes?

SECRETARY (VO)

They're waiting for you, Mr. Baskin.

JOSH

(still looking at Billy)

Thanks.

BILLY

(looking at Josh)

I'll see ya around.

Billy turns and walks out of the room. Josh looks down at the piece of paper.

CUT TO:

174 INT: MACMILLAN'S OFFICE 174

Everyone is seated around the conference area. There is more of a hush than usual. Mac slouches in his regular armchair. Brad sits on the edge of the couch.

WIDER

Josh and Susan sit side by side next to a large easel

illustrating the proposal. Josh uses a pointer to explain the diagram in front of them.

JOSH

(rigidly)

... Not a normal comic book. An electronic comic book. See, it'd look like a comic book on the outside but when you opened it up, there'd be a flat screen with pictures on it.

A small murmur goes around the room.

JOSH (contd)

Then when you get to the end of the page, you decide what the character does. If you want him to go in the cave you push one button, or if you want him to fight the dragon you push another.

BRAD

(icily)

I don't understand.

SUSAN

(cutting in)

See, there's a computer chip inside that stores the choices. So when you reach the end of the page, you decide where the story goes. That's the point. The kid makes his own decision.

CLOSE UP - JOSH

He stares over at Susan.

FULL SHOT - ROOM

MAC

Is this possible?

SUSAN

Yeah, in fact it's a very simple program.

(turning to Josh)

Isn't that right?

He just nods.

ANOTHER EXECUTIVE

So what happens when you run out of choices?

SUSAN

Well that's the great thing. You can sell different adventures. Just pop in a brand new disc and you get a whole new set of options.

SECOND EXECUTIVE

We could market them on a comic book rack.

JOSH

(whispering to Susan)
I'll be right back.

Susan glances over at Josh as he moves toward the door.

MAC

How much would the unit cost?

SUSAN

(looking back)
Well, our initial figure is around seven dollars ...

She glances back toward the door as Josh shuts it behind him.

SUSAN (contd)

... Around seven dollars with a retail cost of eighteen ninety-five.

BRAD

You think a kid is gonna spend nineteen dollars on a comic book?

SUSAN

I think a kid ...

All of a sudden she stops. Susan looks straight at Brad for a long moment. No one says anything. All at once, she pushes back her chair and rises from her seat.

SUSAN (contd)

Will you excuse me.

CUT TO:

175 INT: CORRIDOR

175

The door to Mac's office bursts open as Susan goes running down the hallway. She rounds the corner just as the elevator doors are closing.

175 CONTINUED: 175

She pushes the button for a moment, then turns and takes the stairs.

CUT TO:

176 OMIT 176 *

177 OMIT 177 *

178 OMIT 178 *

179 OMIT 179 *

180 OMIT 180 *

CUT TO:

A181 EXT. FIFTH AVENUE A181 *

Billy sits up the block staring out at the street. Josh emerges from the building and flags down a cab. Billy rises to his feet. *

BILLY

Josh! *

SUSAN (OS)

(almost simultaneously) *

Josh! *

WIDER SHOT:

Susan exits the building and runs out onto the sidewalk as the cab is pulling away. She turns to face the thirteen-year-old boy who just called Josh's name. Susan rushes up the block and grabs Billy by the shoulders. *

SUSAN

Where is he? *

Billy hesitates. *

SUSAN (contd)

Please. You've got to tell me where he is. *

He looks up into her eyes. *

CUT TO:

SUSAN

There!

CUT TO:

181 EXT: SEAPOINT PARK, NEW YORK

181

A yellow cab pulls up at the curb. Josh steps out and stands staring at the gates of the park as the taxi pulls away. He stares at them for a long time.

CUT TO:

182 EXT: BOARDWALK

182

It is almost desolate in the daytime. The huge dance palace stands shuttered and locked. The long row of booths is boarded in the daylight. The only sound is the pounding surf.

SHOT - JOSH

Josh walks slowly, very slowly, up the boardwalk. He moves past the looming iron Ferris Wheel ... past the cold latticework of the empty Roller Coaster. Josh pauses by the shuttered arcade and turns toward the ocean as a cold wind kicks up and blows across his face. All of a sudden he stops.

CLOSER SHOT - JOSH

He freezes for a moment, his body completely rigid. Josh waits for a moment, then turns back toward the side of the arcade.

HIS POV

There, nestled against the building is the small glass booth with the wooden head inside. Zoltar's head is motionless. There is no life in the machine.

SHOT - JOSH

He stares at it for a moment, pulls a quarter from his pocket and drops it into the slot. It lands at the top of the ramp and comes to rest there. Nothing happens. Josh shakes the machine and still nothing happens. Josh glances down at the bottom. Zoltar is plugged into an electrical outlet built into the side of the arcade. He reaches down and pulls out the plug. Still no movement. All at once he remembers. Josh takes both fists and beats furiously against the side of the machine. Zoltar's eyes glow bright red. The small wooden head begins to nod.

WIDER SHOT - JOSH AND ZOLTAR

He steps in front of it, meeting Zoltar at eye level. The smiling head continues to nod, answering an unasked question. Josh looks at it for a moment, then reaches forward and firmly grasps the handles. The bright red sign lights up on top.

"ZOLTAR SAYS: MAKE YOUR WISH"

CUT TO:

183 EXT: PARK ENTRANCE 183

Susan's cab screeches up to the curb and she bolts from the passenger's door.

CUT TO:

184 EXT: PARK 184

Susan runs as fast as she can past the food stands and empty carnival booths. She passes the Ferris Wheel and turns down another empty avenue. The boardwalk looms in front of her. Susan starts to run toward the shuttered dance palace, when, all at once, she stops.

HER POV

Down at the end of the boardwalk, alone by the edge of the sea, Josh stands facing a small glass booth. He has his back to her.

SUSAN

Josh!

ANGLE ON SUSAN

She starts to run up the length of the boardwalk to the booth where he is standing. As she approaches Josh turns around to face her, letting go of the brass levers.

WIDER SHOT - JOSH AND SUSAN

She looks first to him and then to the small glass booth with the bobbing head inside. The name ZOLTAR is written across the top. The eyes glow bright red.

SUSAN

(shaking her head)

No ...

She stares at Josh for a moment, when a small card punches out from the bottom. Susan reaches down and pulls it out.

HER POV - CARD

"YOUR WISH IS GRANTED"

WIDER SHOT - SUSAN

She looks up from the card and turns to Joshua. All at once she throws her arms around him, clinging on as tight as she can.

SUSAN

No, don't leave me.

Josh pulls her close, stroking her hair as she begins to cry.

JOSH

Susan ...

He pats her on the back as she continues to cry on his shoulder.

JOSH (contd)

Aw come on ... don't ...
(his voice breaking)
C'mon, please don't ...

Susan pulls back to look at him. Tears are streaming down his cheeks. Josh reaches up to wipe them away, but a sob breaks from deep in his throat. Susan looks up into his eyes as Josh tries to avert his face. She nods slightly, then reaches up and gently pulls his head down on her shoulder.

SUSAN

Josh ... honey ...

JOSH

I'm sorry.

SUSAN

(rocking him gently)
Shhh ... Shh, it's okay.
(holding him tighter)
It's okay.

WIDE SHOT - SEAPOINT PARK

Two small figures hold onto each other in the middle of the empty boardwalk. The CAMERA PULLS BACK FURTHER until they are barely distinguishable against the park with the Atlantic Ocean beyond.

JOSH (VO)
 (quietly)
 Will you drive me home?

DISSOLVE TO:

185 EXT: JOSH'S STREET - DAWN 185

Susan's car is parked at the top of the street. White steam from the hood of the car mixes together with the pre-dawn mist.

CUT TO:

186 INT: CAR 186

They sit side by side in the car while the engine idles softly. Josh holds her hand.

SUSAN
 Which one is it?

JOSH
 Over there.

They look down the block for a moment.

SUSAN
 (turning back)
 You won't even remember me.

JOSH
 Yes, I will.

Susan nods. Neither one says anything. They turn to stare at one another in one last look, then move slowly together in a kiss.

CUT TO:

187 EXT: STREET 187

The car door opens and Josh steps out. He stands at the top of the street looking down the long row of houses. Josh hesitates for a moment then starts to walk slowly down the block.

HIS POV

There is a tire suspended from a tree. A bicycle leaning against a neighbor's front gate. Further down the block he can see porch lights shining through the morning mist.

CUT TO:

188 INT: CAR

188

Susan wipes a tear from her face and looks into the rear view mirror.

CLOSE UP - SUSAN

Amazed by what she sees.

HER POV - THROUGH REAR VIEW MIRROR

A thirteen-year-old boy walks down the center of the street. His clothing hangs loose on him. He steps out of his shoes and continues to walk.

CUT TO:

189 EXT: STREET - CLOSE UP - JOSH

139

The face has never been shaved ... The cheeks are bright and rosy.

Josh lifts one arm in its much too long sleeve and waves a floppy goodbye.

SHOT - SUSAN

She smiles through her tears and puts the car in gear.

WIDE ANGLE - NEIGHBORHOOD

Susan disappears up the street as Josh turns toward the house. He moves up the front walk, puts a lid back on a trash can, and disappears through his front door, closing it behind him.

MRS. BASKIN (VO)

Josh?