

D.A.R.Y.L.

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1 EXT. APPALACHIAN MOUNTAINS. DAY.

A spectacular range of mountains, wooded, dense and noble. The CAMERA PANS over the silent majesty of the mountains, their immensity and granite indifference are awesome.

A TITLE CARD reads: "Time: 07.30. Location: The Appalachian Mountains. Date: Sooner than you think."

The silence of the mountains is broken by the single SOUND of a car engine. The CAMERA MOVES as if seeking out this alien intruder. But everywhere the forests and the peaks wrap any invaders, cloak them with invisibility.

Now the CAMERA MOVES CLOSER, narrowing the shot. Rising to a HIGH ANGLE. And at last we see the car, a sleek Buick lurches along the firebreak track, heading into the deepest parts of the mountain range.

2 INT. BUICK. DAY.

The man driving, MULLIGAN, seems to be very ill. He is gray, drawn, pupils dilated and breathing with difficulty.

In the rear seat, hunched and silent, is a child. A boy no more than ten years old with regular features, a thatch of dark hair and penetrating eyes. His name is DARYL. He is slender, intense and intelligent with wide-set dark eyes. He is dressed just slightly too tidily, like an old fashioned preppie, as if his clothes had been selected by someone unaware of changed tastes. His hair is combed flat, trimmed above the ears. Daryl is very still, watching the driver, Mulligan, as a child watches its father when the father appears ill.

The car is moving fast. The trees whipping their shadows, looming frighteningly close as Mulligan struggles to retain consciousness at the controls. The car crests a hill.

3 EXT. MOUNTAIN GLADE. DAY.

An elderly mountain couple, THE BERGENS, have been on a hunt or picnic for the day and now prepare to leave. They clamber into the truck which when the brake is released rolls forward and old man Bergen rams it into gear, causing the engine to splutter into life. Just before his own engine fires, he HEARS THE SOUND of the Buick somewhere close by.

As his truck noses onto the firepath there is a blinding HOWL OF SOUND.

A helicopter swoops over the ledge, just inches above treetop level. There are MEN in DARK GLASSES inside the helicopter. But these men are uninterested in the truck.

3 Continued

They have seen the Buick two hundred yards ahead....and headed directly towards Bergen's truck.

A collision seems inevitable. The old man wrenches his wheel and the truck slides into a grassy bank.

The Buick thunders past.

The track ends with some boulders shoved across its way - barring the sheer precipice drop beyond. But the Buick merely rattles over and between the boulders.

The Buick soars outwards and plummets down. A three hundred foot drop to obliteration. No explosion, barely any sound. Just disintegration to a hundred thousand fragments on the rocks below.

The helicopter banks, turns and vanishes from sight below the level of the Bergens' vision as it drops downwards to the wreckage far below.

The old man and his wife, half out of their truck, stare numbly at the place where the Buick disappeared. The forest suddenly silent again, except for the steady throb of their truck's engine.

And then another SOUND, fainter and less steady. Somewhere in the forest there is a CHILD calling tentatively.

Mrs Bergen reacts instinctively. Stumbling from the truck and breaking through the woods on spry legs to search the underbrush like a mother hunting her injured child.

Her husband backs the truck onto the pathway and then climbs out to follow her trail, walking alongside the woodland by the track.

4 INT. WOODLAND. DAY.

Mrs Bergen finally locates the child. Daryl. Grimy-faced, frightened, hunched against attack but more than anything, perplexed by his sudden abandonment. His frame flinches as Mrs Bergen reaches out a hand towards him.

MRS BERGEN

It's okay, sonny, you're all right ain't ya? Mabel's here now, sonny, we'll look after ya now....

Daryl remains, still, baffled, silent, twisting his body away as old man Bergen looms through the underbrush, his piercing eyes and half shaven face frightening the child further with its bleak stillness.

4 Continued

MRS BERGEN

Easy, Mattie, he's real skeered....and here's me goin' to comfort him...

She succeeds in touching Daryl now, gently tugging him towards her. Startled when he just lets himself relax into her unfamiliar arms. She cradles him. Turning to her husband with a gleam of excitement in her eyes.

MRS BERGEN

We'll raise him, Mattie, just like Amos when he was little, ain't he...?

BERGEN

Ain't in favour of the po-lice neither, Bess, but you cain't just take on a child because you found him ....

MRS BERGEN

Mebbe. We'll get him well first, though.

She clings the boy against her ample bosom, lifting him easily, demonstrating the wiry strength of a mountain woman like herself. Her face still rigid with the determination of stupidity and love for this abandoned child.

MRS BERGEN

What's your name, son, hmm?

DARYL

My name is Daryl.

MRS BERGEN

An' what you doin' up in these parts?

Daryl looks utterly perplexed.

DARYL

I don't know.

His voice is quite calm, matter of fact. Mrs Bergen gestures to him to go with them. They move back up the path towards their truck.

3 EXT. PRECIPICE/CRASH SITE. DAY.

The helicopter lands just beyond the debris of the crash. MEN in plain gray suits and dark glasses run forward to examine the wreckage.

(Cont'd)

5 Continued

TITLES ARE RUN OVER THE FOLLOWING:

6 EXT. TOWNSHIP OF GARTONVILLE. DAY.

The town is very small and simple, a market town for the trickle of produce cultivated in this poor, rural area. A single main street, maybe twenty houses and a general store. The beat-up old truck is the only vehicle moving as it lurches down the main street and pulls in at the municipal offices.

We might not, for an instant, recognize the child who peers out the truck window as old man Bergen hitches up his pants and crosses the street.

But the child is Daryl. He has lost weight, his hair is tangled and matted. His clothes are too large for him, inexpertly made and now with holes and mending darns. Even his eyes seem dull as they watch Bergen enter the low building opposite.

7 INT. TOWN OFFICE. DAY.

The "library" - a room consisting of a hundred books - stands to the right of the hallway. Other rooms along the corridor have their function marked boldly. But all these official offices are supervised by one woman, MRS GOUGH. She watches as Bergen peers at the signs. But he is illiterate and she quickly realizes this.

MRS GOUGH  
What's it for?

BERGEN  
Got to report a death.

MRS GOUGH  
That room.

She gestures and moves between panels to arrive behind the desk of the small office room. She pulls down a book and opens it.

MRS GOUGH  
Relative is it?

BERGEN  
My wife.

MRS GOUGH  
And when was this?

(Cont'd)

7 Continued

BERGEN

'bout two, three weeks back. But it's the boy I gotta have taken care of, see...

He looks peculiarly unsentimental about the fact of his wife's death. Mrs Gough has her pen poised.

MRS GOUGH

And who certified the death?

BERGEN

Who what?

It's clear they're going to be some time.

8 EXT. MAIN STREET, GARTONVILLE. DAY.

Daryl jumps down from the truck and crosses tentatively to watch some CHILDREN at play. They are behind the wire of a small school yard. Daryl stares at them with longing....or with curiosity.

TITLES END.

The kids are playing baseball. And as Daryl watches there is a dispute at first base, just five yards in from the fencing. A heated argument, which one of the children finally takes to an independent arbitrator.

CHILD

(to Daryl)

Okay, you was watching. Was he safe or what?

DARYL

I'm sorry?

SECOND CHILD

Was he safe?

Daryl faces eight litigants through the fence. He backs away.

DARYL

I don't uh....I'm sorry....

He runs back to the truck and jumps in. The Kids watch him for a moment.

CHILD

Weird.

(Cont'd)

8 Continued

SECOND CHILD

Wery weird.

They turn back to their game.

Mrs Gough peers out the window of the municipal offices.

9 EXT. MAIN STREET. DAY.

Old Bergen shakes hands with Daryl. Touches the boy's face with his gnarled left hand. Affection with dignity. Daryl tries to smile. They look for a moment like an early American engraving.

10 INT. SHOWER ROOM. DAY.

Daryl, naked, stands up to the force of water plummeting from the shower stall. A MATRON with rubber gloves and plastic pinafore turns off the shower and checks the boy's ears, armpits etc.

11 INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE. DAY.

Daryl is being medically examined. The Doctor is particularly looking for evidence of maltreatment, bruises etc. But the child's body is unmarked. And though thin he is in good health.

DOCTOR

Can you read the letters on that board over there?

Daryl glances up at the optometrist letter board in the corner and then looks directly at the Doctor.

DARYL

Q, Z, R, T, U, S, F, E, J, K, C, W, Y, M,  
G, T, R, U, P, A, V, B.

A flicker of a frown over the Doctor's face. The boy saw it all right. But remembered it with one glance? The examination continues.

12 INT. CHANGING ROOM. DAY.

Daryl is dressed in new clothes, comfortable, used but contemporary. The Matron is inspecting his hair for signs of infestation. But there are none.

3 INT. HOWIE'S OFFICE. DAY.

The Director is an easy-going man in his thirties, HOWIE FOX. He has a kindly manner and seems genuinely to care for the kids in his charge - and doesn't talk down to them.

HOWIE

One thing you can be sure of, Daryl, is that somewhere somebody's looking for you. And we'll hear from them.

Daryl regards him solemnly, saying nothing.

HOWIE

Until then we're just going to make you as comfortable as we know how.

The Doctor who examined Daryl comes in with a folder.

DOCTOR

He's a hundred per cent, Howie. You can go ahead.

Howie accepts the folder and turns to Daryl, crouching so as to talk at eye level.

HOWIE

Well, you're just going to spend a night or two here, Daryl. Then we'll find a family wants to look after you....until your own folks come and take you home. Okay?

DARYL

Thank you. It's extremely kind of you to be looking after my welfare like this.

Both the Doctor and Howie are startled by the solemn formality of the boy's tone.

HOWIE

(grins)  
Yeah. Well. That's what we do here.

He leads the boy out of the office and into the bustling activity of the children's care facility. We glimpse the twenty or thirty other CHILDREN awaiting home placement; some are handicapped and may never find a home. They range in age from 2 years old to 15 years old. Howie leads Daryl forward, introducing him to some children, encouraging him to make friends. The CAMERA PULLS BACK into LONG SHOT.

14 EXT. BUILDING SITE. DAY.

Howie's car pulls up across from where a fairly big building is under construction - a supermarket maybe, or civic center. A crane hoists a steep girder and lowers it carefully to the waiting hands of various HARDHATS.

A MAN on the ground, also wearing a hardhat, watches. Something in his attitude, the way he signals OK to the crane driver and men on the roof when the operation is complete, tells us he is in charge of things around here. This is ANDY RICHARDSON, somewhere in his thirties, clean-cut and with an outgoing intelligent look. He turns with a smile of greeting as he sees Howie walking towards him.

                  HOWIE  
It's coming on!

                  ANDY  
While some folks laze around in Europe,  
others do a little work.  
                  (removes the hardhat  
                  as he walks away from  
                  the site, handshake  
                  extended.)  
How was the vacation?

                  HOWIE  
Terrific.  
                  (he becomes earnest)  
Listen, Andy....there's something I have  
to talk to you about. Can you give me a  
couple of minutes?

15 EXT. RICHARDSON HOME. DAY.

Andy's station wagon pulls into the drive of a modest but pleasant two-storey house in the dormitory area of the mid-size town where they live. As he switches off his motor and gets out we HEAR from the house the sound of a child practising piano.

16 INT. RICHARDSON HOME. DAY.

In a small room off the hall, JOYCE RICHARDSON sits at the piano with a ten year old GIRL who is picking her way hesitantly through a simple tune. Joyce is a nice-looking young woman with an open face and barely any make-up. She turns the music for the child whose playing falters.

                  JOYCE  
It's all right, try again.

The girl does, and falters again.

(Cont'd)

6 Continued

JOYCE  
No, it's a flat.

Shows her.

JOYCE  
Fingers like this...

The girl does as shown and gets over the problem. Joyce, aware that Andy is standing in the doorway, turns to give him a smile.

JOYCE  
All right, Melanie, that's not too bad.  
But be sure and practise those scales the way I showed you.

GIRL  
Yes, Mrs Richardson - it's just that last week I had so much work for my project for school.

JOYCE  
Sure you did. But did Mozart every complain about school work? Off you go - and tell your mom you're doing fine.

GIRL  
Thanks, Mrs Richardson!

She picks up her things and hurries off, with a quick 'Hello Mr Richardson' in the door.

Joyce crosses to give Andy a kiss.

ANDY  
Last one?

JOYCE  
Why? Wanna go upstairs and fool around?

ANDY  
Sure. Only we have to talk first.

JOYCE  
After ten years of marriage....?

ANDY  
Serious. Howie just came by the site. He has a question for us. They have a kid at the facility - a boy, nine or ten...

Nothing much has changed in Joyce's face, but we can tell she is paying attention - very closely.

(Cont'd)

6 Continued (2)

ANDY

They need a foster home while they try and find his family. Howie wondered....if we'd help.

Joyce pretends to think this over for a split second.

JOYCE

Do we pick him up or will Howie bring him over?

ANDY

(a release of tension)  
Oh...kay.

JOYCE

Andy?

He turns in the doorway.

JOYCE

If they don't locate the parents....

ANDY

Every child needs a home.

Her day is complete. We're looking at a woman who desperately wants a child.

17 INT. RICHARDSON HOME. DUSK.

Daryl is ushered in by Howie. Daryl looks apprehensive and a little awed by events, but over it all is a wide-eyed and open curiosity that makes Joyce want to hug him there and then.

JOYCE

(kneels to his level)  
Hello, Daryl. We're really happy to have you with us.

DARYL

Thank you, Mrs Richardson.

JOYCE

Joyce. I'm Joyce. And this is Andy.

DARYL

Joyce.

He looks at her and then to Andy, as if memorizing their names and faces.

(Cont'd)

7 Continued

DARYL

Andy.

Andy gives a short sharp yell and handshakes the boy.

ANDY

It's great to have you, Daryl!

There is a pause as everyone looks at each other.

JOYCE

Come on, Daryl, we'll show you your room.

Andy pulls a softball from his pocket - he's often seen playing with such a ball.

ANDY

Here, catcher.

Andy throws the ball to Daryl.

But Daryl doesn't even raise a hand to it. The ball hits his chest and bounces off, rolling on the floor. Daryl looks at it; what'd he do that for?

Joyce takes the boy's hand to lead him upstairs.

18 INT. GUEST ROOM. NIGHT.

Daryl lies asleep in the bed against the wall. Joyce and Andy watch him from the door, talking in whispers.

JOYCE

Okay. What has stringy hair, a low boredom threshold, persistent cystitis and just got very very happy?

ANDY

I give up. What has stringy hair, a low....how can you say you have persistent cystitis just because you had it twice?

JOYCE

I'm very very happy.

ANDY

Joyce, he might not be with us for long.

JOYCE

Is it all right with you if we don't think about that right now?

(Cont'd)

18 Continued

ANDY  
(an arm around her)  
Sure.

They exit and close the door. The room is enveloped in darkness. Daryl's hand moves over the top sheet, as if reaching out.

19 INT. RICHARDSON KITCHEN. DAY.

CLOSE SHOT. A face at the screen door, flattened up against the mesh, hideously distorted. The face belongs to TURTLE, though we might not know that for a moment or two. TURTLE is eleven going on forty five.

Joyce enters the kitchen but doesn't seem to leap out of her skin at the sight of this squashed face in her back door.

JOYCE  
Hi, Turtle. How was the vacation?

TURTLE  
It was okay. Only I found something even more interesting than the vacation.

JOYCE  
What was that?

TURTLE  
Watching paint dry.

A pause.

TURTLE  
So where's this famous kid you got?

JOYCE  
Famous?

TURTLE  
My dad keeps saying how he's real cute.  
(the distaste is palpable)  
I think it's envy, even though I keep pointing out he has a hundred per cent boy of his own, namely me.

JOYCE  
Daryl's upstairs. I'll get him.

Turtle throws open the screen door and enters. We can see him for the first time. Loose. Hip. Eleven but street smart already.

(Cont'd)

9 Continued

TURTLE

Hold on. I heard he doesn't remember where he's from or....I mean, is he ...you know...

He mimes a mental retard.

JOYCE

No, he isn't. And it's not a subject you discuss with him, okay?

TURTLE

Oh. Okay.

JOYCE

I want your promise. The subject of his amnesia is out. A deal?

TURTLE

Scouts Honour.

Joyce turns and walks to the kitchen door.

JOYCE

Daryl! Daryl, honey! Come on down, I want you to meet somebody.

FAST CUT TO:

20 EXT. PARKLAND. DAY.

A dazzling, sunny day. Turtle and Daryl are seated on the grass while a Boxer dog, leashed to a nearby tree, barks continuously.

TURTLE

I don't get it. You remember how to read, you remember your name, stuff like that, but you don't remember your family, your school, if you've got brothers and sisters....it doesn't make sense.

DARYL

(ruefully)

The doctor said maybe my memory could come back suddenly. Only no one really knows....

Turtle jumps up.

TURTLE

Hey, we better get back. You want to come back to my house? If we're real nice to her, maybe Hookie will let us play with the new computer.

(Cont'd)

20 Continued

DARYL;  
Okay. Who's Hookie?

TURTLE  
My sister, Sheri Lee.

Turtle unleashes the dog which goes beserk with it's (relative) freedom and strains at the leash as they walk back through the park towards the houses beyond.

DARYL  
Hookie??

TURTLE  
Amateur Hooker. She dates every night.  
I just invented the name, it really pisses  
her off.

They walk through the park. Daryl running to keep up with the dog and Turtle.

DARYL  
What's a hooker?

21 EXT. FRONT YARD IN LUPIN STREET. DAY.

Turtle marches the dog up to a PLUMP WOMAN who is sunning herself in her front yard. Hands over the leash and the dog.

PLUMP WOMAN  
Did Benjy have a good run, then? Got some  
air into Benjy's lungs, did he?

TURTLE  
He must have done ten miles today, Miss  
Kent.

The Plump Woman hands Turtle a dollar bill which he acknowledges with a wave.

PLUMP WOMAN  
Same time Tuesday, don't forget. Benjy gets  
all excited when he knows it's your day for  
exercising him, Turtle.

22 EXT. LUPIN STREET. DAY.

The two boys stroll on down the street, Turtle tucking his ill-gotten dollar into a money belt which bespeaks wealth. A station wagon pulls up alongside the boys. Joyce leans out.

(Cont'd)

2 Continued

JOYCE

You want a ride?

The two of them jump into the car which accelerates, turns at the end of the street and pulls up outside a rambling, slightly unkempt property on the corner.

23 INT. STATION WAGON. DAY.

As they clamber out of the car, Turtle assesses Joyce briefly.

TURTLE

I guess that's pretty ritzy to drive a block and a half on a nice day.

JOYCE

Smartass. I've been looking after your mother's Persian rug while you were away.

She opens the trunk and gestures she needs help. Daryl is instantly available and helpful. Turtle a little slower until his mother - ELAINE - leans out of the house and yells at him.

ELAINE

Move it, junior!

Elaine's powerful voice and commanding presence get Turtle into action, hauling the furled rug out of the car.

24 INT. LIVING ROOM & AND HALL, FOX HOUSE. DAY.

Turtle and Daryl lower the rug gently to the floor as Elaine greets Joyce and instantly turns to be introduced to Daryl.

JOYCE

Daryl, this is Elaine Fox. Daryl.

ELAINE

I'm so pleased to meet you, Daryl.

DARYL

Thank you, ma'am. But the pleasure is mine.

There's an awkward pause at this unexpectedly over-polite response; even Joyce is surprised. Joyce gestures to Elaine to hold the corners of the rug so they can hook it to the runners which will eventually position it draped on the wall. But Turtle manages to break the silence.

(Cont'd)

4 Continued

TURTLE

Someday I'll explain to you how a guy can come off like a creep.

ELAINE

That's enough, Turtle. You watch your mouth.

Elaine and Joyce have hooked the rug onto the runners. Turtle starts towards the staircase.

TURTLE

Advice from a woman who hangs rugs on her wall?

ELAINE

Extreme provocation is a defense for murder you know.

Joyce pulls on the cord and watches the rug rising into its place as the featured item in the hallway. Turtle gestures to Daryl.

TURTLE

Let's go see if Hookie is upstairs.

ELAINE

Will you stop with this Hookie! Daryl - you treat our house like your own, uh, like Joyce and Andy's.

Turtle has come back and now tugs Daryl's collar to force him away from these adults. The two boys run upstairs.

ELAINE

C'mon, quick, before Howie gets back. I want you to see the video of our vacation. Howie'd die if he thought you'd seen him in the nude....but actually he's pretty, you know, okay...

Like two larger children, the women scuttle into the living room.

25 INT. SHERIE LEE'S ROOM. DAY.

Turtle is playing a video game on the computer called Pole Position. The SOUND control is turned down but it's a noisy as well as fast-action game. Turtle is completely rivetted to the screen and Daryl, standing behind him, is watching with equal fascination.

SHERIE LEE, an attractive fifteen year old, sits on her bed quite unashamedly studying Daryl as he watches the video game.

(Cont'd)

25 Continued

She doesn't think she's crazy about what she sees.

SHERIE LEE

How come you can remember your name if you can't remember anything else?

TURTLE

(without stopping)

You're boring us.

SHERIE LEE

You came in to my room and started with my computer. I can bore anyone I like in my room.

DARYL

(politely, to Sherie Lee)

Amnesia is selective. Which means that there is always partial memory. For example I haven't forgotten how to speak.

Turtle's pretty good at this game. He's whipping his car around the curves, zooming past obstacles and other cars at remarkable speeds. Finally, however, he exits in a tremendous pile of noisy metal rending and visual explosions.

SHERIE LEE

Your ass is grass.

TURTLE

Forty eight hundred, Hookie. Show me your best score.

He hits a control sequence. BEST SCORE comes up on the screen. And it's forty eight hundred.

DARYL

Could I have a....?

TURTLE

I'll have to show you how to....

SHERIE LEE

Hey, twerp. Let him try. Joyce says he's so smart - let him prove it.

DARYL

I think I understood....

His fingers fly over the keyboard and the game comes up immediately on the TV screen. Then Daryl takes the controller. His fingers move round the computer keyboard.

(Cont'd)

25 Continued (2)

He briefly grazes a recessed connector marked I/O PORT and then sits in the chair vacated by Turtle. As Daryl begins the game, slowly but without error, Turtle and his sister make faces at one another across the room.

But Daryl is getting pretty good at the game. In fact he's already travelling at speeds similar to those Turtle was driving at when he crashed. The track is moving so fast, it's hard to make out details.

Instinctive respect leads Sherie Lee and Turtle to crouch forward, watching in amazement.

26 INT. LIVING ROOM, FOX HOME. DAY.

Elaine has drawn one of the drapes. The two women are squatted in front of the TV set which shows home-made video of the Fox vacation. Mainly children showing off. Howie declaiming from a Roman monument. The TV picture is, however, breaking up with lines and snow. Elaine bangs the TV set.

ELAINE

It was fine last night....

JOYCE

Did you buy the videotape in Europe?

Elaine shakes her head. The picture gets worse.

27 INT. SHERIE LEE'S BEDROOM. DAY.

The game has now accelerated beyond all possibility of response. The track is literally a moving blur of speed. And still Daryl is clocking up points, weaving his car between the onrushing stream of vehicles hurtling in the other direction. The computer screen is howling. Turtle and Sherie Lee, totally captivated, are yelling encouragement at this phenomenon.

And still Daryl accelerates the game faster.

28 INT. LIVING ROOM, FOX HOME. DAY.

The TV screen is a storm of distorted image and sound which suddenly and inexplicably stops. And we can see Howie, uncensored and naked, stumbling towards a European shoreline.

9 INT. SHERIE LEE'S BEDROOM. DAY.

The game is finished. Silence and awe from Sherie Lee and Turtle. Daryl turns to them, beaming with pleasure.

DARYL

That's a fun game.

Turtle finally moves. He clutches Daryl's shoulder in silent tribute. His face a picture of delight and astonishment: that he should be vouchsafed such a friend as this.

SHERIE LEE

You swear...you never played this before?

DARYL

I don't think so.

SHERIE LEE

Right. But for all you know - you could have invented Pole Position.

TURTLE

Aw come on, Hookie. He's only...

SHERIE LEE

Will you stop calling me that!

DARYL

(to Turtle)

It seems to annoy your mother, too.

TURTLE

Of course it does! That's the whole point!

DARYL

I don't understand why you want to annoy your family.

TURTLE

For a genius, you can be real stupid.

Turtle shoves off. Daryl begins to go after him, then turns to Sherie Lee. His question, though assumed by her to be deliberate provocation, is asked in complete innocence.

DARYL

What is a hooker?

Sherie Lee screams - and throws a cascade of books at Daryl. He runs for safety.

10 INT. KITCHEN, FOX HOME. DAY.

Joyce looks almost depressed as she finishes her coffee.

ELAINE

You're supposed to be thrilled with happiness. What's the problem? He's a gorgeous kid. Andy loves having him. So do you. It's what you always wanted.

JOYCE

I guess mostly - I'm scared of the day when we lose him.

ELAINE

If you lose him.

Out the window we can see Howie's car pull into the drive.

JOYCE

There must be somebody looking for him.

31 EXT. FOX HOME. DAY.

Turtle and Daryl emerge from the house at a run as Howie approaches from the carport.

TURTLE

Hi, Dad!

HOWIE

Hi, guys.

DARYL

Hello, Mr Fox.

HOWIE

How's it going, Daryl? This young feller showing you the way round all right?

DARYL

Yes, thank you, Mr Fox. Turtle and Hook....your daughter have been very kind.

TURTLE

Hey, dad, he is just the greatest ever at Pole Position! I would say, at a conservative estimate, world champion!

HOWIE

That's great. You'll have to show me.

He looks after them as they scamper off into the distance.

2 EXT. BARKENTON SCHOOL. DAY.

Joyce's car lurches to a halt by the main school gates. Then she drives it onto the sidewalk at a steep angle and switches off the engine. She gets out after Turtle, two other CHILDREN and finally Daryl who stands waiting for her. The bumper sticker on the car reads IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE WAY I DRIVE - GET THE HELL OFF THE SIDEWALK.

TURTLE

It's okay, Joyce, I'll take him to registration.

JOYCE

Well I think Daryl might prefer it if I....

TURTLE

He's been fine without you up till now, Joyce.

JOYCE

Ouch.

She turns to Daryl.

JOYCE

Daryl?

DARYL

I appreciate your concern, Joyce, I really do. But I'm sure Turtle can show me where to register all right.

Joyce is rebuffed but conceals her hurt. Daryl moves towards her for a kiss. This touches her. She kisses him, moist-eyed, and jumps back into the car.

33 INT. MR NESBITT'S CLASSROOM. DAY.

NESBITT is sour, unhelpful and mean. He teaches Math inadequately and Math is his subject. Right now he's glowering at a GIRL near the front of the class.

NESBITT

Do you know how I despise cheating? Can you imagine life without hope ever of getting back into my favour?

GIRL

I only asked Janet if she could....

(Cont'd)

3 Continued

NESBITT

(a roar)

Silence! This girl....showed you how to do it. In a test. That is cheating. It entitles me to call you a cheat. A despicable cheat.

He gestures the girl to return to her table. There is silence in the intimidated classroom.

NESBITT

Because this is the first day of term... I will pretend it didn't happen. But I am lousy at pretending. So if it happens again.....

He scowls at the classroom.

NESBITT

Pass your papers two places to your left for correction.

There is a great deal of shuffling and moving. During this we can see Daryl sitting near the back with Turtle on one side of him. Daryl takes the paper he is to correct and whistles through it, ticking, crossing and correcting the whole test within seconds.

NESBITT

(shouts)

That boy! You! Yes, you!

Nesbitt scuttles between the desks and towers over Daryl who is entirely unintimidated.

NESBITT

What do you think you're doing? Changing the answers? Writing on somebody else's paper?

DARYL

I was checking it, as you asked.

NESBITT

But I haven't given you the answers!

Daryl holds the test sheet up to Nesbitt.

DARYL

You'll find they're correctly checked. I've marked no.

(more)

(Cont'd)

3 Continued (2)

DARYL (Cont'd)

9 as right although in fact there is an error in the eighth decimal place....but only a calculus system could show that....

Nesbitt stares at the page and goes silent. Studies it some more and remains silent. Slams the paper down and stalks away.

Turtle is beside himself with glee.

34 INT. SCHOOL CAFETEIRA. DAY.

Turtle pushes Daryl past the display of cafeteria food, despite Daryl's anxiety to eat something.

TURTLE

Don't eat that stuff, it's disgusting.  
Here. This is the good stuff.

He points proudly to a line of vending machines selling junk food and drinks.

TURTLE

See? Now this is real food.

He starts operating the machines, pumping coins in and collecting the stomach-rot wrapped in clingfilm. He doesn't notice two of the GIRLS from Nesbitt's class - ANDREA and TRUDI - who are casting very approving looks over Daryl.

TRUDI

Hi, Turtle.

TURTLE

No.

TRUDI

Introduce us to your friend.

TURTLE

(still working the  
machines)

No.

TRUDI

Hi. I'm Trudi Kenwood. This is Andrea Levesby.

DARYL

How do you do?

(Cont'd)

4 Continued

TURTLE  
Okay, let's split.

DARYL  
Split?

TURTLE  
Outside. Eat.

DARYL  
Oh, all right. (To the girls:) Would you  
like to join us?

Turtle despairs. The girls are delighted. They troop outside.

35 EXT. SCHOOL YARD. DAY.

Turtle slumps onto a bench and opens the first candy bar as the  
Girls wait for Daryl to be seated and flank him.

ANDREA  
Are you English?

DARYL  
English? No, I don't think so.

As soon as they came outside, Daryl and the girls have been under  
surveillance from a menacing GANG of juvenile THUGS. Their  
leader is a suave, tall boy called JAMES FROST and it is he who  
now approaches Daryl.

JAMES  
Let's pretend you didn't know, scum. Now  
get lost.

DARYL  
Didn't know what?

ANDREA  
Aw leave it, James.

JAMES  
Move, scum.

The girls jump to their feet.

TRUDI  
Okay, leave him alone. We'll go.

ANDREA  
See you later, Daryl.

(Cont'd)

Continued

The girls move back into the school buildings. Daryl watches with a puzzled frown. But now James and his gang of bullies have encircled Daryl and threaten him by their very proximity.

TURTLE  
Leave him alone, Frost.

JAMES  
New boys need to be taught obedience.  
Simple test, scum. Can you get out of my  
sight within ten seconds?

DARYL  
I don't understand. I'm just eating some...

Daryl is completely fearless but considerably perplexed by this attitude, which he clearly hasn't encountered before.

JAMES  
Scum don't mix with sixth grade girls. Scum  
do what they're told. Now you understand  
and you've got ten seconds.

One of the biggest of the gang, MURPHY, begins counting aloud. Turtle jumps up and steps between James and Daryl.

TURTLE  
Just leave him! Who do you think you are?

MURPHY  
I'll take him, James. Go on, let me.

James looks at the frightened, courageous Turtle, then looks at the wall of muscle strength of the members of his gang.

JAMES  
You're on the list, Turtle. Both of you.

The CAMERA MOVES IN CLOSE on his face.

DARYL'S P.O.V. We are looking up at the bullies. But even as we look the school bullies ARE TRANSFORMED into MEN IN WHITE COATS, peering down at Daryl. His MEMORY FLASH ends in a return to the bleak reality.

The thug Murphy whines for violence, stretching the leather glove he wears on one hand.

MURPHY  
Let me, go on, I need the exercise.

JAMES  
Not now. But they're on the list.

(Cont'd)

35 Continued (2)

Daryl retreats under James' menace.

JAMES

It might come tomorrow. Or tonight.  
Whenever you think you're safe. That's  
when. I'll be there. And then you're dead  
meat.

James turns away contemptuously and leads his gang to another part of the yard. Turtle sits down again, offering Daryl more food. Daryl barely eats.

36 EXT. VACANT LOT, RICHARSON HOME. DAY.

Andy Richardson is flinging a baseball at a canvas wall, waiting impatiently as Turtle tries to help Daryl understand how to get his hand into a baseball mitt.

The SOUND of a piano lesson drifts across through the open window of the house. Joyce can be heard occasionally urging her pupil to the higher reaches of music.

Finally succeeding with the baseball mitt, Daryl bounces forward to Andy for his lesson.

ANDY

Okay. Now the main thing to understand is this: baseball is the essence of all life in the universe. So we don't fool around, we don't joke, we take it very very seriously. Or else we go play something else. Like washing the car.

Daryl is given a bat and stands at the plate, facing too square. He is show the proper stance.

ANDY

Let's go. Just relax. Here we go.

Andy tosses a slow pitch. Daryl swipes at it, connects and drops the bat with a yell of pain. But the ball travels beyond Andy's reach and so he lets Turtle fetch it while he walks to tend to Daryl.

DARYL

It's okay....just...

ANDY

I forgot. You have to hold the bat firmly.

He scoops it up and demonstrates.

(Cont'd)

6 Continued

ANDY

But you're a born major league player. It's in your eyes. Now. This time just keep a good grip, reach out and smash the ball to the further reaches of eternity. Okay?

DARYL

I'll try.

ANDY

Sure you will.

Andy walks back to the mound. Daryl warms up rather foolishly at the plate. Turtle watches, ready to laugh.

DARYL'S P.O.V. Andy winding up. The ball is pitched. IN SLOW MOTION, as if analyzing the trajectory through a telescopic device, the ball approaches. Velocity, angle of flight, anticipated curve....it's like a computer readout.

The bat strikes the ball.

And the ball flies into the sky. Over the outfield. Over the vacant lot. Over the houses in the next street.

A howl of excited approval from Andy.

A gasp of astonishment from Turtle.

DARYL

Was that all right?

Andy can't bring himself to reply directly, he's so excited and astonished.

ANDY

Let's do it again! Turtle. You're sworn to secrecy, hear? Once more Daryl. Let's go.

Andy scoops up a second ball and prepares to pitch. Daryl watches intently. The ball swoops, a dipper. Daryl makes contact without apparent effort. Another immense home run.

ANDY

Turtle. Daryl.

He's so excited, he's like a kid. He bends the two boys into a hunched conference right there in the midst of the vacant lot, watched by a couple of idle housewives.

(Cont'd)

6 Continued (2)

ANDY

You're a natural. A genius. And you are my secret weapon in six weeks time.

TURTLE

The Warriors!

ANDY

We'll humiliate them! Only nobody must know. We won't any of us say anything about it....

DARYL

About what?

ANDY

About what? Don't you love the kid? Modest. Awesome. I don't believe it myself. One more pitch. Once more and then I'll wake up.

He breaks from the huddle and strides to the mound. Daryl shrugs and walks back obediently to the plate. Andy winds up. Lets fly the fastest ball he ever pitched. It's a vicious curveball.

Daryl beats it effortlessly out of sight.

Andy looks on in awe - and delight.

37 INT. RICHARDSON LIVING ROOM. DAY.

Joyce is playing a duet with her PUPIL when the baseball smashes through the window and bounces across the room to land at their feet. Joyce stops playing in astonishment. But the Pupil is determined to make it through the piece and just keeps plugging away like a diligent student should.

38 EXT. VACANT LOT, RICHARDSON HOUSE. DAY.

With a roar of laughter and delight, Andy scoops up his coat and the equipment and, together with the boys, scampers off the vacant lot.

9 INT. RICHARDSON HOME. NIGHT.

Howie and Elaine Fox seem to be settled in for the night as Andy prepares the barbecue on the patio and Joyce moves to and fro preparing the rest of dinner. The Foxes spend a lot of time in this house.

(Cont'd)

9 Continued

JOYCE

Look at him. He made Daryl swear an oath of secrecy. Then he walks right in and tells me. You two arrive and he tells you.

ANDY

The only person I don't want hearing anything about it is Bull Mackenzie. He is so cocky about his little leaguers. You know he suggested we abandon the game last year in the fourth?

HOWIE

Ouch. In the fourth? I hate to think...

JOYCE

Andy was brilliant. He refused to quit. Spiked the Warriors cokes with vodka and saved honor at 22-3, right?

ELAINE

You're lucky you weren't sued. It's against the law serving alcohol to minors.

ANDY

(grins)  
I didn't serve it.

ELAINE

So who.....?

She stops, knowing the answer because Andy is grinning broadly at the new arrival. Turtle stands in the doorway with Daryl.

TURTLE

We're starving. When's dinner?

ELAINE

You didn't!

TURTLE

Huh?

ELAINE

You did! Oh God, Turtle...

TURTLE

What'd I do now? I just came in, for Chrissakes!

(Cont'd)

9 Continued (2)

ANDY

Sorry, Turtle. But your mother just found about the vodka in the Warriors coke last year.....

TURTLE

Oh, she did? Well it wasn't vodka at all. It was tap water.

Turtle starts out again. Daryl remains in the doorway.

DARYL

Is there anything I can do to help?

ANDY

No thanks. Oh. You could call Sherie Lee.

DARYL

She's gone out. With Mark Bennett.

He turns to leave. Elaine sighs at her husband.

ELAINE

What does she see in that dreadful boy?

DARYL

Sherie Lee says he's sexy. But Turtle says it's because he's got the biggest....

Joyce screams, choking off the remainder of Daryl's remark. He stares at her, then shrugs and strides off again.

JOYCE

(hesitantly)

Howie, tell me, please.... is it me, or....?

HOWIE

Or what, Joyce?

JOYCE

Is there something about Daryl that's a little....strange?

ANDY

Hey, come on, Joyce, what are you talking about....?

ELAINE

(watching Joyce,  
concerned)

No - let her.

(Cont'd)

9 Continued (3)

JOYCE

Howie?

HOWIE

(hedging, trapped)

He's a nice boy, very bright.....I mean bright enough to make a difference...or to make you feel there's some difference between him and other kids....

JOYCE

But he's so perfect, it's unreal. He's so helpful, so tidy, so damned thoughtful for a boy his age. I mean....

She turns to Andy for support, but he just shrugs, he isn't getting into this.

ELAINE

I don't believe what I'm hearing. You're complaining because you've got the kind of kid most of us would trade our own in for -and pay money.

(aside)

Relax, Howie - I was kidding. About the money.

JOYCE

I'm not complaining. I love the boy. It's just that...he makes me feel almost useless. Like what am I here for? I pray we'll be able to adopt him. But he doesn't seem to....need anyone.

The four adults fall silent at this. Joyce, anxious lest she has overstepped the mark, checks out the window and sees Daryl roaring with laughter at the far end of the yard, well out of hearing. He's searching for Turtle in the bushes.

And the only reason he doesn't find Turtle...is that Turtle is lying behind the couch in the living room. And trying to sneak back out the patio doors without being noticed.

ANDY

Let's eat. With any luck he'll make Joyce's day by throwing up on one of the guests.

10 INT/EXT. RICHARDSON AND FOX HOMES. NIGHT.

It is dark, with snaps of light glinting through the thick shrubbery from house windows or passing cars.

(Cont'd)

0 Continued

An eerie atmosphere compounded by the high pitched bleep of an electronic signal, stuttering like Morse code, blending its metallic sounds with those of the crickets.

Turtle rises into frame, tense, watchful. He lifts a walkie talkie to his lips and presses the transmit switch.

TURTLE

CQ this is QC, I'm moving to occupy the high ground....now!

Turtle bursts from the bushes. Scampers across lawn and jumps in the open window of his home.

41 INT. DARYL'S ROOM. NIGHT.

Also in darkness. Daryl crawls to the window and peers out. He can see little enough in the darkness and even in daylight there is a broad gap filled with trees, lawns and bushes to the rear gardens of the houses in the street behind.

2 INT. TURTLE'S BEDROOM. NIGHT.

Turtle has climbed on to his bed and is searching for something, listening to the amplifier on the handset with Daryl's message.

DARYL

(on transmitter)

This is QC. Urgent priority. Enemy sighted, headed your headquarters, CQ. Do you read? Enemy attack imminent.

Turtle chuckles at the game, dives to a shelf and pulls down a fairly antique pellet gun. Armed with this he scurries back to the window.

43 EXT. YARD BEHIND TURTLE'S ROOM. NIGHT.

A tabby CAT has wandered over the fence and into the yard. It now sits, oblivious of its impending fate, washing its face on the wall.

TURTLE

(softly, to mike)

Enemy in sight, ready...aim...fire!

A pellet whacks against the wall just beneath the cat. Causing the animal to leap into the air and bolt.

(Cont'd)

3 Continued

DARYL  
(on transmitter)  
You got him!

TURTLE  
Supplies are low, strength running out....  
we may not survive to celebrate our victory,  
mon general....

DARYL  
(on transmitter)  
Come in CQ, come in CQ...do you receive me?

44 INT. TURTLE'S ROOM. NIGHT.

Turtle collapses onto his bed, his hand feebly searching on the floor. Until it finds some marshmallows and some fritos.

TURTLE  
(on mike)  
Ah...food...it must be a mirage, mon  
capitaine....no...real food...we are saved!

He stuffs his mouth with marshmallows.

ELAINE  
(off)  
Turtle, will you cut it out and go to sleep?  
It's almost midnight.

45 INT. DARYL'S ROOM. NIGHT.

Daryl switches on his bedside light and climbs into bed.

TURTLE  
(on transmitter)  
The sergeant's just ordered lights out.  
This is CQ signing off.

The CAMERA PANS to Daryl's walkie talkie from which Turtle's voice is now emanating.

It lies in its box, still wrapped in cellophane, unused.

DARYL  
(gets into bed)  
Okay CQ, this is QC signing off too.

46 INT. TURTLE'S ROOM. NIGHT.

Daryl's voice comes over the walkie talkie loud and clear. Yet, as we have seen, he is not using one to transmit!

7 INT. DARYL'S ROOM. NIGHT.

He switches out the light.

48 INT. KITCHEN, RICHARDSON HOUSE. DAY.

From the darkness of the previous scene, the light of the interior of the refrigerator seems dazzling.

Daryl is fully dressed and now reaches inside the refrigerator to prepare his sandwiches. He makes these quite efficiently, listening to the radio and the SOUNDS of the household waking.

Andy peers round the kitchen door. An elaborate gesture of conspiracy to Daryl.

ANDY

Sssshhh.....!

Daryl laughs but looks uncertain.

ANDY

I dreamed about you all night.

DARYL

You did?

ANDY

You're gonna kill them! My secret weapon.  
The big game's on Saturday.

DARYL

Oh, baseball.

ANDY

(overdoing the  
conspiracy)  
Nobody, tell nobody.

DARYL

Okay.

Andy tiptoes out again, like a villain in a bad secret agent play. Joyce laughs at his silliness and is cheerful as she enters and speaks to Daryl.

JOYCE

Morning. What does anybody want for break  
fast today?

DARYL

Thank you, I've eaten mine.

(Cont'd)



1 Continued

ANDREA

Do it again! I don't believe it!

BOY

It's a trick one. I saw that magician  
what's his name on TV....

Daryl takes the Rubik cube which Andrea hands him. It is thoroughly jumbled. With a shy grin he studies the cube a moment then, holding it behind his back starts to twist and turn it.

DARYL

It's just a matter of the combination of possible moves....

Suddenly the place falls silent. James Frost and his gang of thugs emerge from behind library shelves. They stand silently, menacingly.

DARYL

No, wait. Listen. There's no need....

James ignores Daryl's intervention and slams Turtle into a wall. Turtle tries to fight back but he's no match in size or strength. James efficiently smashes him with a quick one-two to the jaw and stomach, then another vicious swipe sends Turtle reeling over a table, gasping for consciousness.

Daryl steps forward, facing James.

JAMES

(scornful)

Scum. You seriously think being smart is like being strong?

He pushes Daryl in the chest and Daryl almost falls back. He tugs Daryl's hair and Daryl winces with the pain as a handful of hair comes away.

JAMES

Turtle had it coming. You. You've earned a little lesson too, scum.

James strikes out, a savage blow which sends Daryl reeling. He pounces again and slaps Daryl four times in succession over the face. Then a low soft blow to the stomach which causes Daryl to groan with pain and surprise. A final kick on the shins and James Frost steps back.

JAMES

Just remember - I was being real gentle that time.

(Cont'd)

51 Continued (2)

He turns and starts to walk off. Daryl hands back to Rubike cube. It is perfectly completed. He speaks very softly.

DARYL

Wait a minute.

James turns back, an evil grin indicating his pleasure at the prospect of more. But as James advances we switch TO DARYL'S P.O.V. Seeing James as an object, analysing his velocity, weight etc.

James begins to push Daryl in the chest again. Only this time Daryl moves too fast, grabbing his wrist and twisting. Flinging James to the floor almost contemptuously.

This maddens James who vaults to his feet and goes after Daryl. A savage blow to the head. But Daryl has ducked long before the punch lands. James aims a kick. Daryl twists the ankle, caught with one hand, and tilts - again sending James into a heap.

This time James is furious. But all he hits is wall, since Daryl has moved aside, stepped around and rains punches on James' back. The CROWD are laughing.

From DARYL'S P.O.V. we can see one of the thugs prepare to attack him from behind. But it is as if Daryl has eyes in the back of his head. The blow lands, but Daryl uses it, rolling forward in a somersault and springing upright again so that his head strikes like a battering ram this second assailant's stomach, laying him low.

This has given James time to recover and he now leaps with a howl of anger. Daryl sidesteps - his hand smashing into James' face once, twice, thrice.....eight times in a single second.

And that's enough for James Frost and his gang. They stand back, watchful and impressed. Then turn and stride off into the school buildings.

Turtle, awed and thrilled, pushes out a hand. Daryl and he shake warmly. The other KIDS burst into spontaneous applause, dancing and hugging and shouting with glee that the bully has finally been beaten.

EXT. FOX GARDEN. DAY.

Turtle is lying on the grass, wearing his Little League uniform, eyes closed and calling out to the sky.

TURTLE

Boring. Boring. Boring. Boring. Bo-ring.  
Borr-ing. B-o-or-ing. BORING!

(Cont'd)

2 Continued

He tests the word with every possible inflection and emphasis. But it doesn't seem to change much.

Except Sherie Lee in an upper floor window pushes her window shut against the monotony.

53 INT. SHERIE LEE'S ROOM. DAY.

Daryl is fascinated by her computer and Sherie Lee, walking back from the window, is pretty keen to have someone both expert and interested share her hobby. Daryl is also wearing the baseball team uniform only his thoughts are far from the sports stadium.

SHERIE LEE  
Did you try the modem?

DARYL  
Is that a game?

SHERIE LEE  
For somebody smart you can be dumb.

She touches the modem.

SHERIE LEE  
This is a modem. It interfaces the computer with other computers through a phone line.

She scoops up a magazine and scans a small ad section. Gives Daryl the page.

SHERIE LEE  
Okay, look. Dial that number on the phone.

Daryl dials as bid and Sherie Lee makes her moves, finally dropping the telephone into the modem.

Both watch the VDU - but nothing happens.

SHERIE LEE  
Something wrong here. We should get a list of products....

4 INT. LIVING ROOM. DAY.

Elaine is passing through with a cup of coffee, two thick lawyer's files under her arm, and reading glasses perched on the end of her nose. She registers only subliminally the flickering TV screen in the corner of the room - but something makes her stop and take a closer look. And we see why.

(Cont'd)

4 Continued

On the TV screen is a list of book titles like WOMEN AND WHIPPING, DILDO DALLIANCE, LUST FOR LOVE, MALICE TO THE PHALLUS ETC.

Elaine stares, dumbfound.

55 INT. SHERIE LEE'S ROOM. DAY.

The VDU flickers and the book list we saw downstairs now appears on her screen.

SHERIE LEE

There we go! Computer sales. If you want something you just feed in your name and address. Then at their end the printer automatically makes out the mail slip, invoice all that stuff and, bingo, you got a hot book. You can just talk to friends or whatever. Didn't you see War Games?

DARYL

War Games?

SHERIE LEE

The movie. God, sometimes....

The SOUND OF a car horn hooting insisently and Turtle's faint cries for Daryl ends the session. Daryl touches the modem as Sherie Lee yanks the telephone out of its cradle.

DARYL

I've gotta go play this game.

SHERIE LEE

See what I mean? You're not playing in a game. Bull MacKenzie and your father, uh, Andy just hate each other. And Bull's team win every year. My Dad says it's just a pecker contest.

DARYL

What's a pecker?

SHERIE LEE

(a groan)

This is embarassing.

She is clearly not going to answer and the car horn is still sounding, so Daryl exits with a final shrug.

6 EXT. FOX GARDEN. DAY.

Daryl runs to the car where Andy is just climbing back in. It was Turtle on the horn. The car is stuffed with baseball gear and at least four other PLAYERS.

Daryl swings into the front seat and is greeted by everybody.

Andy, excited and glad to see Daryl, drives off.

57 EXT. SHOPPING MALL. DAY.

Andy leaves everyone in the car except Daryl, whom he gestures to walk with him along the Mall to the Versatel cash dispenser at the corner of the Bank building. As they walk, Andy puts an arm round Daryl's shoulders and speaks confidentially.

ANDY

I'm going to put you in fourth, okay? If Billy just bunts and stays put....

Andy takes out his card and punches in his code number. Daryl stands on tiptoe to read the screen of the cash dispensing machine.

INSUFFICIENT FUNDS is all the screen says.

ANDY

Oh, great, they screwed up again. There has to be fifteen hundred dollars in there....

Daryl takes the card.

DARYL

What's your ID number?

ANDY

The bank computer screwed up again.

DARYL

Computers don't make errors. People do. Maybe it was keyed in wrong.

ANDY

Twenty eight twenty two.

Andy is searching his pockets, adding together the bills and change to see how much he's got. Meanwhile Daryl goes to work, fingers flying, machine buzzing.

DARYL

How much d'you want?

(Cont'd)

7 Continued

ANDY

You got it? Terrific. Let me have a hundred.

Daryl zaps some more. The machine gives a polite cough and dispenses one hundred dollars which Andy collects. Daryl is peering closely at the screen.

ANDY

How much does it say I've got in there?

DARYL

Oh....enough.

Now we see the SCREEN he watching. It gives the account of Mr and Mrs Andrew G. Richardson as being in credit for \$1,400.

A mischievous twinkle in Daryl's face. He concentrates hard as he hits a series of computer buttons at incredible speed.

This adds a zero to the Richardson balance. Daryl looks at this figure a moment and hits one more button. A second zero is added.

ANDY

Come on, Daryl, let's go.

Andy heads off. Before following him, Daryl debates briefly with himself - then adds a final zero as he walks away.

The SCREEN shows Andy and Joyce's account to have a balance of \$1,400,000 as Daryl scampers to join Andy. The computer thanks them for the transaction.

58 EXT. BASEBALL GROUND. DAY.

The WARRIORS are arriving in their specially painted bus. They turn into the ground chanting in perfect unison, led by the bull-necked, bug-eyed BULL MACKENZIE a man's man if ever there was one only worse. The Warriors uniforms are immaculate. Their discipline superb. Their sportsmanship the envy of others. When they jump off the bus one by one and shake hands with Andy Richardson and his coach - OLD LUKE, the town drunk who dries out in memory of the day he relief fielded for Notre Dame - each young Warrior says the same thing.

WARRIOR

Pleased to meet you, sir. Hope it's an enjoyable game.

Bull Mackenzie watches them proudly as they head for their dugout before turning to Andy and Old Luke himself.

(Cont'd)

8 Continued

BULL

It's always an enjoyable game. For us anyways.

He cackles enthusiastically. Andy contains himself and shakes hands with as much enthusiasm as he can muster.

ANDY

Anyone can have a lucky streak, Bull.

BULL

Ho ho ho, lucky streak. We got the little league pennant every season for six years. That isn't luck. That's teamwork, work, practice....

They enter the grounds which is already filling with devoted PARENTS, ONLOOKERS, and some jaded ENTHUSIASTS.

Turtle comes running up, out of breath.

TURTLE

Jody's mother forgot the soft drinks, so there's none. And the ice machine broke.

Bull Mackenzie looks at Andy with one of those: "what else do you expect from an asshole?" looks. But Andy can handle this one.

ANDY

I want you to run home and tell your mother. Or Joyce. She could be at Joyce's by now. They'll fix it up. Run now, Turtle. Only twenty minutes to go.

Turtle stands rooted to the spot in horror at this request.

TURTLE

Run? You've got a car!

ANDY

(nods)

Move ass, Turtle, if you want to sit on it again.

Turtle breaks into a feeble trot, his last words barely audible.

TURTLE

The fastest base runner in the league... and he exhausts me before the game!

9 INT. RICHARDSON HOME. DAY.

Joyce is being very scratchy with her music pupil, Melanie. She finally closes the child's music book and stands up. She does not see the car which pulls up outside.

JOYCE

Melanie, if you're not going to do your practise there is no point in your coming. It's a waste of your time, my time and your parents money. Now. Next lesson is the last lesson unless I see you've done some work.

The child looks at her for a moment and then bursts into tears, howling loudly quite out of proportion to the telling off, and runs from the house.

60 EXT. RICHARDSON HOUSE, PORCH. DAY.

Elaine and Sherie Lee register this crying child as it flies out of the front door. And a distraught Joyce standing behind it, covered in confusion, regret and anger at being caught in this state.

61 INT. RICHARDSON HOME. DAY.

ELAINE

What'd you do? Pull her teeth?

JOYCE

Don't. It was a close thing between us for who cried first.

Elaine is quickly sympathetic to her friend's emotional fragility and gives her a warm hug.

ELAINE

Sounds like nothing to do with music.

JOYCE

Want to see my problem?

ELAINE

What?

Solemnly Joyce walks them through to the kitchen and opens the dishwasher. It is empty. They register this, a little blankly since it isn't the high spot of anyone's tour. Then she strides into the back room and gestures to piles of linen and laundry all ironed and stacked. And finally to a drawer of silver, polished and gleaming.

(Cont'd)

Continued

ELAINE

You've gotten houseproud!

SHERIE LEE

It's....terrific?

JOYCE

I....didn't do any of it. Daryl did. Along with making his own lunch, preparing his breakfast, the chores, his bed, and the living room floor polish.

SHERIE LEE

Wow!

ELAINE

Oh God, that's bad.

Sherie Lee isn't into this yet.

SHERIE LEE

It is?

But Turtle is. He just arrived in the doorway, hasn't yet been seen, and quickly retreated a pace to overhear.

JOYCE

He doesn't need me at all. He doesn't need anybody. It's pulling Andy and me apart. I mean he's adorable, thoughtful, kind, patient and...."peculiar" just like Howie said.

Turtle bangs his feet on the porch as if just arriving and crashes into the house.

TURTLE

Soft drinks. Ice. Oranges. Mrs Keith forgot. And the game starts in fifteen minutes.

JOYCE

Soft drinks. Ice. Oranges.

As they move into action, Elaine speaks firmly to Joyce.

ELAINE

We'll talk it through, honey. But let's not make any hasty moves.

Turtle cannot conceal a look of real concern.

62 EXT. BALLPARK. DAY.

A howl of excitement. A warrior slides to third base safely. A terrible overthrow and he streaks home. 3 - 0 in the first.

Bull Mackenzie rallies his team as they go in to field.

63 INT/EXT. MOHAWK DUGOUT. DAY.

In the Mohawks dugout there is despair. Humiliation too. Even the smallest member of the team, HANNIBAL by nickname, cringes from the thrashing out on the field.

JODY

It's gonna be a massacre!

HANNIBAL

Maybe we could all get food poisoning or something. I could live with that.

Nobody seems to notice the cheerful optimism of the team manager as Andy sits with an arm comfortably supporting Daryl's shoulders and offering therapeutic massage to Daryl's neck. It's a gesture of affection bigger than words.

64 EXT. BALLPARK. DAY.

Joyce, Elaine and Sherie Lee take their places as the first Mohawk batter walks up to the plate. His name is ARKOFF and he's stout but determined. He polishes his glasses carefully.

65 INT/EXT. MOHAWK DUGOUT. DAY.

Jody watches this performance with distaste.

JODY

Mr Richardson, why do you have to let Arkoff make things worse?

ANDY

Because, Jody, our motto is 'a game for all and all for a game.' If we only fielded our best players it would deny boys like Arkoff the experience.

JODY

Of losing.

56 EXT. BALLPARK. DAY.

The Warriors PITCHER is mean-looking and tall. His first ball is a fastball. Strike one. Arkoff fidgets a lot. Strike two. Arkoff is actually smiling. Ball three is low. Ball four is right on but Arkoff touches it! Foul tip. Two and one. A long wind-up. Strike three.

Arkoff dances from the base like a real player, enthralled by his performance. Slapping hands as he goes in his own perceived triumph.

Hannibal's up next. Strike one. Strike two. Then a wild swing and Hannibal runs for first. It's a close thing but he makes it safe.

Now Jody. Spit in the hands. A little gamesmanship.

And Hannibal has streaked to safety - stolen second base!

High ball. Strike. One and one. Bunt.

Jody flying for first. An overthrow makes him safe.

And lets Hannibal stroll onto third base.

67 INT/EXT. DUGOUT. DAY.

Andy urging Daryl to action. Everyone slaps him on the back encouragingly. He picks up any old bat, the nearest one to hand.

68 EXT. BALLPARK. DAY.

Joyce and Elaine bent with excitement. A chance to draw level is the best they'd had in years!

Bull Mackenzie has called a Time Out and Strategy is re-figured. The outfield moves in. The infield moves out. Weird.

Daryl has no rituals at the plate. He holds the bat awkwardly.

CATCHER

You ever played ball before?

UMPIRE

Can it.

CATCHER

Look at him!

Daryl does indeed look peculiar. Loose. Friendly. Unfocussed.

Until the ball is pitched.

(Cont'd)

8 Continued

DARYL'S P.O.V. That strange video-like rangefinder, velocity indicator. The ball approaching in slow motion.

CLOSE SHOT. The bat connects, full, hard, centered.

The ball soars. Right out of the ballpark.

Bull Mackenzie scowls. Hannibal runs. Daryl runs. Jody runs. The outfielder watches the ball pass overhead, about as reachable as a communications satellite.

Andy has tears of ecstasy as he shouts.

The CROWD roar their appreciation.

All except Joyce who looks despairingly away.

69 EXT. BALLPARK. DAY.

Third innings. Daryl at the plate. Bases loaded. Again he strikes the ball perfectly. Sends it skidding out of the park. There is a kind of awed silence before the roar of appreciation.

70 INT/EXT. DUGOUT. DAY.

Orange segments getting eaten, monster teeth flashed. Joyce, Howie and Andy are the adults in charge. Daryl sees his "mother" dropping into the dugout and walks up to her happily.

DARYL

Andy's so happy. He says we haven't even been ahead once before.

JOYCE

What do you want, Daryl? Applause? You do fine without it.

On this bitter note she turns away. Daryl almost reels with surprise and unhappiness. Watches Joyce climbing out of the place without a backward look.

Howie has overheard the exchange. He ruffles Daryl's hair.

HOWIE

The problem is - she really does love you, kid.

He, too, clambers out and follows Joyce towards the bleachers.

(Cont'd)

Continued

Turtle has overheard, too. And now he gestures Daryl to one side where, heads bent in solemn conference, Turtle can hand out some advice.

TURTLE

Daryl, I been meaning to give you my speech about grown-ups. It's a great speech and I meant to give it you weeks ago.

DARYL

I've done something to upset her. She's mad at me.

TURTLE

Grown-ups have to feel like they're making progress with you. You can't be perfect all the time or they'll think they're going nuts or something.

A SHOUT from the field. The scoreboard changes. Warriors 8 -Mohawks 9. But Daryl and Turtle are into other things.

TURTLE

You gotta mess up sometimes. Just enough so you don't get whacked but so they feel like you're learning something, see? It's a real art.

DARYL

But....

TURTLE

But me no butts, old buddie. Just trust me. Don't cook your breakfasts - let Joyce do it. Even if she burns the pancakes. Don't make your bed. Leave your room in shit order sometimes. Joyce wants to feel useful. She's hurting because you....well you're so damn helpful and good and thoughtful.... Godamn I don't know why I like you!

While they are talking, the Warriors inning finishes. Bottom of the sixth, 8-9.

TURTLE

That's the speech. Screw up a little. Grown-ups need to be pissed off with kids.

71 EXT. BALLPARK. DAY.

Joyce watches the game grim-faced. She's thinking about other things.

(Cont'd)

1 Continued

ELAINE  
I'll talk to him.

JOYCE  
Don't you dare.

ELAINE  
You want me to...withdraw the legal applications?

JOYCE  
No! Oh God, Elaine, I don't want to lose him. It's me. Not him. My problem.

ELAINE  
I may have to quote you on that.

Arkoff has finally made a real hit and is running like hell. He is way past first and headed for second. A bad throw. Arkoff ducks and weaves....and makes it safely. Triumph. The peak experience of his life.

Daryl at the plate. Strike one.

Andy stares, horrified. Strike? On Daryl?

Strike two. Arkoff begins to move off second and only just makes it back in time. The pitcher winds up.

Strike three. Daryl is out. Bottom of the sixth. Arkoff could spit, as he walks back. Daryl doesn't look worried.

But Turtle does. He didn't mean to be taken this literally.

Up in the bleachers, Joyce is showing distinct signs of interest in her foster child.

72 EXT. BASEBALL PARK. DAY.

Daryl at the plate again.

UMPIRE  
Strike two!

Daryl turns and scowls at him.

DARYL  
Hey, asshole, why don't you watch the ball for once?

The Umpire erupts with anger. But Daryl just sneers and looks back at the Pitcher, challengingly. The Pitcher winds up.

73 INT/EXT. DUGOUT. DAY.

Andy sinks behind his hands as Daryl can be heard getting struck out. Turtle looks away.

ANDY

What happened? That's three outs in a row.

TURTLE

Hey - he scored five straight. What do you want? Blood?

ANDY

Well....a little.

Daryl returns to the dugout.

The score is Mohawks 10, Warriors 11. Bottom of the ninth.

74 EXT. BALLPARK. DAY.

Joyce is looking a whole lot happier suddenly. Her boy is fallible. She moves towards the dugout. Maybe her boy will need consoling.

75 INT/EXT. DUGOUT. DAY.

Turtle tugs Daryl aside and whispers urgently. Behind them, Joyce can be seen approaching.

TURTLE

Listen, there's no need to blow the whole game. I mean....

DARYL

You think the game's more important than Joyce?

He walks away, disdainfully. Andy has been watching and now pounces on Daryl just as Joyce drops into the dugout.

ANDY

What's the problem, kid? What's going wrong?

DARYL

I'm just not all that good, I guess. I'm sorry.

JOYCE

Don't lean on him, Andy. He did his best. Now leave him be.

(Cont'd)

5 Continued

Andy looks blank at this remonstrance - the first time Joyce has defended her boy to his "father." But her boy is being a sulky sonofabitch.

DARYL

Yeah. I don't even like the game. I mean, all it is is a pecker contest between you and Mackenzie.

ANDY & JOYCE

What??

JOYCE

Don't talk to Andy like that!

DARYL

Kiss my ass.

He turns and strides out of the dugout. Andy gasps in astonishment. Joyce struggles a moment to adjust to this new aspect of Daryl - and she's not displeased at all - then she starts to follow him.

ANDY

(despairing)

Well, there goes the game.

TURTLE

We could make a deal with him. He'll hit another one....if you kiss his ass.

There is laughter from the team. Stilled by Joyce's parting remark.

JOYCE

Andy wants to win so bad - he'd probably do it, too.

76 EXT. OUTSIDE BALL PARK. DAY.

Joyce catches up with Daryl. Touches his shoulder and he turns to find her crouching, looking him squarely in the eyes.

JOYCE

Daryl, honey...there's something we should talk about here.....

He looks at her, meltingly unhappy at his behaviour. She hugs him spontaneously and lovingly.

(Cont'd)

76 Continued

DARYL

I'd like to apologize for my behaviour back there. And my poor language.

JOYCE

Well, I....that's nice of you, Daryl. But even nicer would be if you went back and helped your team.

He thinks about this.

DARYL

No. To do that would invalidate my original actions. I'm very sorry.

He turns and walks on, leaving Joyce to gaze blankly at this solemn, curious child as she turns and goes back inside the ballpark.

77 EXT. BASEBALL PARK. DAY.

The Mohawks are trailing by two. Turtle cannot bear to watch as Arkoff suffers his second strike after a wild lunge. But suddenly Arkoff has connected and is running. He just makes it to first base. Putting Hannibal on second. And Jody on third.

Bases fully loaded. No Daryl. Turtle walks to the plate as if it were a scaffold.

Turtle swings twice.

Daryl has been watching from the fence and is contorted with anguish and hope for the next ball.

Which is a sensational hit. The CROWD howls with delight. Turtle runs. Everybody runs.

The ball is sky high - but whether it's a catch in the deep outfield or a homer remains in doubt for a moment.

The CROWD gasp as they watch the ball, suspended in the sky in an agony of slow motion. A fielder waiting, apparently beneath it. The ball hits above the fielder's reach and drops. He grabs for it.

Two home. Arkoff thundering towards the plate. Turtle swerving towards third.

An overthrow.

A howl of glee. Four runs. They've won!

(Cont'd)

77 Continued

Daryl leaps in the air with a yell of delight.

Turtle throws his cap away, looking round as if he'd heard Daryl's shout of joy.

Andy goes beserk. Elaine and Howie congratulate each other on their prodigious son. Bull Mackenzie forces himself to remember the code of the sportsman and affixes a grin of congratulation to his face.

78 INT. RICHARDSON HOME. DAY.

A copy of the local evening newspaper is thrown through the open door and lands in the hallway. The only interest seems to come from the neighbour's DOG which tugs a corner of the paper.

There is a photograph of Daryl under the headline LITTLE LEAGUE STAR HITS RECORD. The dog chews into this thought.

9 INT. RICHARDSON HOME. DAY.

Joyce and Andy enter by the kitchen door. Joyce stops, disbelieving and clutches at Andy.

JOYCE

Andy! Look!

Andy stares at the floor where she is pointing.

Muddy baseball shoe footprints trail through the kitchen and up the stairs.

JOYCE

Oh, Andy, isn't that wonderful!

80 INT. OFFICE. NIGHT.

A complex machine which fills an enormous space. It is fed with every newspaper from around the country. Huge bins marked ILLINOIS (SOUTH), ARIZONA (URBAN), PHILADELPHIA (NORTHSIDE) are wheeled into place. MEN in overalls then lift stacks of newsprint from these baskets and place them in the hopper. The machine hums softly.

INSIDE THE MACHINE: Key words are highlighted. SECURITY. SOVIET. INFILTRATION. The machine scans every sentence written and selects relevant passages which are photo-copied. Through an overscreen print we can see how the various items are dealt with, since a message appears momentarily superscripted on the selected newspaper item. REFER SECTION D2....FURTHER

30 Continued

INQUIRY, ARLINGTON....REFER O'SEAS BUREAU....REFER SECTION  
D2....PRIORITY TO PENTAGON DEPARTMENT Y....

The passages which are highlighted seem to have vague military or security implications though nothing world shaking. And then we see the PHOTOGRAPH OF DARYL. The machine analyzes this. Rips at eye-bending speed through a file of photographs of OTHER CHILDREN before stopping on a file photograph of DARYL. The machine works without undue emphasis, it's merely recording another item. But the superscript reads: REFER TASCOM URGENT....TASCOM PRIORITY.

81 EXT. BUILDING SITE. DAY.

Howie's car pulls up. He sits a moment, preparing himself for what he has to do. Then crosses towards the cabin where he can see Andy in shirtsleeves going over some drawings with a couple of his men.

82 EXT. SITE CABIN. DAY.

The men leave. Andy picks up his hardhat and is about to follow them out when he sees Howie in the door.

ANDY

Howie...! Listen I'm....you want to help yourself to coffee...?

HOWIE

Sure. Coffee. Strychnine. Arsenic. Whatever you've got.

ANDY

(unsure how to take  
this)

I'll be right back.

HOWIE

Andy....it's taking all I got just coming here....

Andy sees the gravity and agony on his friend's face.

ANDY

What is it?

Howie looks him straight in the eyes.

HOWIE

I've been contacted by lawyers acting on behalf of Daryl's parents.

(Cont'd)

2 Continued

ANDY

His parents....!

HOWIE

They've been tracing him for months. I'm afraid there's no doubt, Andy. He's their son.

Andy closes his eyes against the pain and anguish.

83 INT. ELAINE'S OFFICE. DAY

The transformation in Joyce's face is stark. She is wax pale as though she hasn't slept in forty-eight hours. Andy too looks drained of all emotion as he waits for Elaine to look up from the mass of papers on her desk.

ELAINE

If there was anything I could do - anything - you know I'd find a way of doing it.

ANDY

How can we even know he's theirs?

ELAINE

Andy, the documented facts are unambiguous. There is no question in law. He's their child. Look, even the photographs . . .

She indicates two or three photographs of Daryl on the edge of her desk. They show him at different ages, all of them posed against the same flat gray backcloth, strangely anonymous and devoid of feeling. Joyce picks one up to look at it for the hundredth time.

JOYCE

What sort of people are they? I mean...  
- (Her voice breaks)  
. . . didn't they ever take him to the beach?

She drops the photograph back on the desk as a sob escapes her throat. Andy tightens his arm around her - a gesture at once comforting and hopeless.

4 INT. DARYL'S BEDROOM. DAY.

Daryl stands gravely looking out the window, lost in his own thoughts. Andy enters hesitantly, knowing what he has to try and say, but not looking forward to it.

(Cont'd)

4 Continued

ANDY  
Daryl....?  
(the child turns)  
How're you doing?

DARYL  
I'm all right, thanks.

But his quiet sadness is unmistakable.

ANDY  
Listen.....can we talk a while?

DARYL  
Of course.

He comes over, solemnly polite, ready to listen.

ANDY  
(clears his throat)  
I, uh....I just thought we might....I mean,  
uhm....I mean, maybe we should....

He shuffles awkwardly, searching for the words.

DARYL  
Why don't you sit down?

ANDY  
(gratefully)  
Thanks, I....

He half lowers himself to the edge of Daryl's bed - then stops short, realizing the child is making the effort to put him at his ease rather than vice-versa, which is what he'd intended. But then he sits anyhow.

ANDY  
I just want you to know....well, I guess  
you already know how much Joyce and I are  
going to miss you....

DARYL  
(simple, sincere)  
I know. Me too.

ANDY  
Yeah.  
(has to drop his eyes  
from the child's gaze  
before he can go on)  
Well, anyhow...the  
(more)

(Cont'd)

4 Continued (2)

ANDY (Cont'd)

point is you're going back home and that's something that's something that should make you happy.

DARYL

I'm trying, Andy, but....  
(looks oddly confused)  
....it doesn't mean anything.

ANDY

That'll change, Daryl, you'll see, soon as you're back where you....belong.

DARYL

I feel like I belong here.

This simple statement almost breaks Andy's heart and he has to turn away to conceal his emotion.

ANDY

They love you and they're your real parents and they've been looking for you over a year. They want you back, Daryl, and that's....

DARYL

But what if I want to be with you?

ANDY

Children belong to their parents.

DARYL

Like your car belongs to you?

Andy puts his arms around the child impulsively, just holding him a moment.

ANDY

No, oh God no, not like that.

(Struggling to convince himself as much as the child)

Look . . . I'm sure that when you get back home your memory'll start to come back . . . you'll remember all kinds of good times, and friends . . . you'll see, it'll be fine.

DARYL

Dad . . . I mean, Andy . . . ?

ANDY

Yeah . . . ?

(Cont'd)

4 Continued (3)

DARYL

I won't forget you, will I?

ANDY

Of course you won't. We'll keep in touch, see each other, have you over for vacations.... we can talk on the phone, write letters....

He doesn't seem very convinced by himself. Daryl forces a smile onto his anxious face.

85 EXT. RICHARDSON'S HOUSE. DAY

A car slows, checking addresses. It stops outside. At the wheel is a crisply efficient looking WOMAN in her late thirties, ELLEN LAMB. Next to her is a considerably older MAN. This is DR. JEFFREY STEWART. They exchange an uneasy look, as though sharing some apprehension about what they have to do. Stewart is smoking, and now grinds out his cigarette in the ashtray.

86 INT. DARYL'S ROOM. DAY.

Joyce has been peering out the window and now turns to face Daryl in the room.

JOYCE

They look really nice.

Putting a brave face on things, she straightens the neck of Daryl's pullover and checks over his general appearance.

JOYCE

Okay - I guess that's as good as you're going to look. You okay?

He nods his head solemnly, not sure what's expected of him in the coming hour or so.

JOYCE (cont'd)

So how about you get ready to give your mom and dad a big smile - huh?

INT. HALL. DAY.

Andy goes to answer the ring at the door. Dr. Stewart is there with the woman a half-step behind him.

(Cont'd)

67 Continued

STEWART

Mr. Richardson? I'm Jeffrey Stewart. This is my wife, Ellen.

ANDY

I'm happy to know you both. Please come in.

As they enter we see that Dr. Stewart moves with a querulousness beyond his years. He probably isn't more than fifty-five but poor health makes him seem older.

Andy watches them curiously as he closes the door behind them and they make their way into the house.

88 INT. LIVING ROOM. DAY

Andy shows them in. Dr Stewart looks nervous, pacing unnecessarily. Probably just natural concern to see his son again.

STEWART

Is Daryl.....? I mean he's...quite normal, right?

ANDY

He's a tremendous young man. We certainly, uh, envy you your son. He'll be right down. Probably just a little...nervous...you know how kids get.

STEWART

Daryl's showing signs of nervousness??

ANDY

(waves the thought away)

Can I offer you a drink or anything?

STEWART

(Shakes his head)

Mr. Richardson, I want you to know how much I -

(Corrects himself)

- my wife and I appreciate the kindness you've shown Daryl.

ANDY

It wasn't hard. He's a great kid.

(Cont'd)

8 Continued

STEWART  
(Watching him with an  
oddly piercing gaze)  
You've formed a considerable attachment to  
him I can see.

Andy gives a strained little laugh at the understatement.

ANDY  
We're going to miss him, both of us. A lot.

Still staring at Andy with his curiously penetrating eyes, Stewart begins nodding his head as though what he has just heard affords him some profound inner satisfaction.

STEWART  
Yes, of course you will. Of course.

He darts his wife a look almost of triumph. It puzzles Andy and troubles her. But the momentary awkwardness ends as both visitors turn their gaze to the doorway.

Daryl and Joyce have entered the room. The child stands gazing up at his parents with curiously rapt concentration.

Dr. Stewart takes a step forward, then crouches to gaze searchingly into the boy's eyes.

STEWART  
Daryl . . ? Do you remember us?

Daryl looks from one to the other, frowning, trying to recall.

DARYL'S P.O.V. Dr. Stewart crouched before him, Ellen standing behind, detached but smiling with a kindly expectancy.

MEMORY FLASH: Dr Stewart is crouched before Daryl, but this time wearing a white coat. Ellen Lamb stands behind him, but also wearing a white coat. And further back another figure is glimpsed. But this man wears the uniform of an army general. We shall know him later as GENERAL GRAYCLIFFE.

89 RESUME SCENE

Daryl's face lights up as though he's found the answer to some kind of test.

DARYL  
Yes, I . . . I think I do. Are you...  
doctors? I see something like....  
(more)

(Cont'd)

9 Continued

DARYL (Cont'd)  
(he shrugs, dismissing  
it)  
Maybe not.

Ellen now comes to his side. She doesn't touch him, though her voice is kind. But it is the impersonal kindness of a nurse or a nanny, not a mother.

ELLEN  
You're just fine, Daryl. You've nothing to worry about. Do you want to go and collect whatever you'd like to bring with you?

Daryl's head suddenly jerks back to look up at Joyce, who is biting her lip till she almost draws blood.

DARYL  
Isn't Turtle coming over? I can say goodbye to Turtle, can't I?

10 INT. FOX HOUSE. DAY.

A very unhappy Turtle, chin quivering, is receiving a stern but gentle lecture from his mother.

ELAINE  
Turtle, it's normal to feel bad about losing a friend. But that doesn't mean you can just duck out and not say goodbye. Daryl's expecting you to be there.

TURTLE  
(Plaintive)  
But mom . . . !

ELAINE  
You promised him. Now I want you to come with me right now - and show your best friend you haven't forgotten about him already.

Turtle hangs his head, ashamed.

ELAINE (cont'd)  
Let's go.

1 INT. DARYL'S BEDROOM. DAY.

The last few remaining things Daryl has packed are in a grip bag on the bed. He is at the window gazing down towards Turtle's house, waiting for some sign of his friend.

Suddenly he sees Elaine emerge with Turtle, heading this way. Daryl starts running down the stairs to meet them.

92 EXT. TURTLE WALKING. DAY

Tears prick Turtle's eyes and he wipes his nose on the sleeve of his shirt. Up ahead he sees Daryl emerge from the Richardson house, waiting for him. He stops in his tracks and suddenly knows, absolutely and finally, that he can't go through with this . . .

ELAINE  
(Looking back for him)  
Turtle . . . ?

93 EXT. DARYL WAITING. DAY.

His happy expectancy turns suddenly to puzzlement and pain as he observes Turtle swerve sharply away and run between buildings at the roadside where he disappears.

Daryl doesn't understand. He remains where he is, wondering what to do.

Then a voice behind him makes him turn.

STEWART  
Daryl . . . ?

Stewart has seen the incident. He seems to know what's going through Daryl's mind. His manner is kindly.

STEWART (cont'd)  
Do you understand why your friend did that?

DARYL  
(Shakes his head)  
Is he mad at me?

STEWART  
I don't think so. I think he's going to miss you, and that makes it hard to say goodbye.

Daryl turns his back to look in the direction taken by Turtle, thinking about this. Elaine gestures an apology, and starts towards them alone.

(Cont'd)

93 Continued

STEWART (cont'd)  
Can you imagine how he must feel?

DARYL  
(Thoughtful)  
Yes . . . I can.

STEWART  
(With quiet pride)  
That's good, Daryl. That's very good.

94 EXT. CORNER OF BUILDING. DAY.

Hidden from view, Turtle is sobbing his heart out - ashamed of his cowardice but unable to handle his misery. He looks up at the sound of a car on the road above, and in the narrow gap between buildings he catches a glimpse of Daryl's departure. A hand reaches gently for his shoulder. It's Elaine - forgiving.

95 EXT. RICHARDSON HOME. DAY.

Joyce turns away, tears blinding her eyes as Daryl waves solemnly from the back of the Stewart's car. Andy half steps forward to touch the glass. The boy touches the inside of the glass. And then the car is driving off.

Leaving two broken, numbed human beings standing in their driveway.

96 EXT. EDGE OF TOWN, ROADSIDE LAKES. DAY.

The car speeds away towards open countryside. CAMERA DOLLIES UP to give an overview of the whole area. The road which the car is taking runs past TWO NATURAL LAKES separated by a thick back of woodland.

The town itself, falling away into the distance, looks suddenly inconsequential - just another small community of ordinary people. Just another world, sufficient to itself.

7 EXT./INT. STEWARTS' CAR (TRAVELLING). DAY.

Daryl sits alone in the back of the plush and comfortable car, slightly awed by the sense of the adventure opening up ahead of him. He turns to look back at the life he is leaving. But the town is lost in haze.

Dr. Stewart lights yet another cigarette - at the same time carefully and closely watching Daryl in the rear-view mirror.

8 EXT. AIRFIELD. DAY.

An unmarked Lear Jet stands waiting some way from the central scattering of buildings and other civil aircraft. The PILOT steps out as he sees the car approaching and waits for it. Although he wears civilian clothes there is something military in his bearing.

99 INT. THE CAR. DAY

Daryl's detached curiosity has been mounting at the sight of all the aircraft.

DARYL

Are we going to fly?

(Sees the Lear)

We're going to fly on that?

The car stops and the pilot steps forward to open Daryl's door. He jumps out and runs around the plane to get a view of it from every angle.

STEWART

(Watching him)

Well, Ellen, what d'you think?

ELLEN

Frankly, Doctor, I think it's remarkable.

100 INT. PLANE (IN FLIGHT). DAY

Daryl, Dr. Stewart and Ellen strapped into their seats. The plane finishes its climb and warning lights are extinguished. They unfasten their safety straps and Dr. Stewart lights a cigarette.

DARYL

Can I go see the pilot now?

STEWART

Sure - ask him anything you want.

Frowning with concentrated interest, Daryl starts up towards the nose of the plane.

INT. COCKPIT. DAY.

The pilot and CO-PILOT sits side by side. The pilot turns with a friendly welcome as Daryl enters.

(Cont'd)

1 Continued

PILOT

Hi there, Daryl, come on in. So you want to learn to fly this thing, huh?

DARYL

(Taking him seriously)  
I'd find it very interesting.

The two men exchange a look - let's humour the kid.

PILOT

Okay - here you've got altitude, airspeed, and engine thrust. You keep one eye on these dials, another eye on that read-out, and don't take either of 'em off this . .

Daryl is paying rapt attention.

102 INT. CABIN.

Ellen Lamb hands a glass of water to Dr. Stewart to wash down a couple of pills. He seems to be in mild discomfort.

STEWART

You know, the extraordinary thing is that we've accomplished something by accident that we could never have dared by intent - putting him out there just to see what happened. When Mulligan took him, he did the best work of his career.

ELLEN

You were right about his learning potential.

STEWART

No, I was wrong about his learning potential.

(Ellen looks puzzled)

He learned more than I thought possible.

ELLEN

Even with the amnesia factor. Do you think Mulligan rigged that?

STEWART

(nods, pensive)

He's a remarkable little boy.

J3 INT. COCKPIT.

Daryl's instruction continues now from the co-pilot.

CO-PILOT

As back-up to the computer you should check visually. Okay, here's the navigation chart we're on now . . .

DARYL

(Pointing)

We're there - right?

CO-PILOT

(Impressed)

Hey, I can tell you've been listening . . .  
!

Daryl's eyes are bright with unblinking interest.

DARYL'S POV.

The process we have seen before is happening again - the solid image of reality breaking down into a three-dimensional computer model taking in all the essential reference points in the cockpit and on the chart. Although we still HEAR the co-pilot talking, we SEE only an abstract stick figure with a hand moving to connect various points in the overall pattern.

CO-PILOT

You take that figure, both these coordinates, do a little calculation here . . . forget the details, I just want to show you how the figures match . . . that's 28394, so now you know what you have to .  
. . .

DARYL

Six.

RESUME SCENE -

The co-pilot looks up at Daryl, not understanding.

CO-PILOT

What . . . ?

Daryl suddenly looks embarrassed.

DARYL

28396. You said four. You meant six. Sir.

The co-pilot rapidly checks his figures.

(Cont'd)

103 Continued

CO-PILOT  
Well, I'll be . . . !

PILOT  
(Amused)  
Kid's after your job, Major, uh, Harry.

Daryl shrugs self-deprecatingly. It was nothing. He ignores or did not hear the curious stumble over nomenclature.

DARYL  
I think I could fly the plane now.

Now they both look up at him in some surprise.

DARYL (cont'd)  
You said you'd show me how to fly it, and you have.

The two men exchange a look. Can you believe this kid?

PILOT  
Maybe when you're older....

DARYL  
Yes. When I'm older. Well, thank you for the explanations. They were extremely clear.

He turns and exits the cockpit, leaving the pilots staring at each other.

104 INT. CABIN.

Daryl slips back in silently, disconsolate. Dr. Stewart and Ellen Lamb don't notice him at first, and he overhears a snatch of their conversation. Ellen is pressing some point respectfully but with firmness.

ELLEN  
Doctor, whatever we do there's no way he can ever be classified as 'normal'. I thought that was understood when we -

A signal from Dr. Stewart silences her. He has seen Daryl listening with sudden alarm on his face.

STEWART  
Well now, Daryl? Did you see everything up front?

(Cont'd)

34 Continued

DARYL  
Yes thank you.

STEWART  
Why don't you come sit down and let Ell -  
(corrects himself)  
- your mom fix you a juice or something.

Daryl glumly resumes his seat.

ELLEN  
What'll you have, Daryl?

He looks up at her, then at both of them.

DARYL  
Are you really my mom and dad?

The quick look of unease has passed between the adults before either of them can check it. And Daryl has registered it.

Ellen bends on one knee by his seat, the gravity in her face betraying the reassurance she is trying to put into her words.

ELLEN  
Yes, Daryl, we are. And you have nothing  
to be afraid of. Nothing whatever. Please  
believe that.

Somehow it isn't very reassuring. Somehow he's more scared than he was before. He sits curled back in his seat, drawing into himself, frowning.

Suddenly the plane bumps as though hitting a massive air pocket. Fittings rattle and Stewart thrusts a hand out to steady Ellen Lamb.

105 EXT. PLANE IN FLIGHT. DAY

Its course suddenly erratic, wings feathering, nose dipping and rising.

106 INT. COCKPIT.

The two pilots look on in amazement as their instruments go berserk. Needles whirr around dials, visual displays spin.

CO-PILOT  
What the hell . . . ?

(Cont'd)

'06 Continued

PILOT

Kill automatic, switch manual.

They pull switches, press buttons. Stability is restored in moments.

PILOT (cont'd)

Jesus Christ!

CO-PILOT

Some kind of magnetic storm?

107 INT. CABIN.

Ellen Lamb straightens up from where she has been clinging to the back of Daryl's seat.

STEWART

Are you all right?

ELLEN

(A touch breathless)

Yes.

Only Daryl seems totally untroubled by the disturbance. Unaware of it even. He's just lost in his own thoughts.

DISSOLVE TO:

108 EXT. TASCOM. DAY

A vast and forbidding building of concrete and black glass that seems to spring like a mirage out of bleakly nondescript surroundings. Waste land has been levelled to make a parking lot, but the only sign of human life is the dimly visible figure of an ARMED GUARD at the main door.

109 INT. TASCOM. DAY

A vast slab of gleaming steel swings through an arc, driven by a powerful but almost inaudible motor. With a soft click it changes direction, coming to a halt at an angle about 45° from horizontal. Daryl lies spreadeagled on it like a specimen under glass in some natural history museum, held in place by some kind of binding around his torso and clips on his wrists and ankles. A band of metal encircles his head with various electrodes attached to it. Others are fixed to different parts of his body. He is unconscious.

The space of which he is in the center is spherical, brilliantly lit from translucent walls which are split by two long observation windows.

10 INT. OBSERVATION ROOM. DAY

Dr. Stewart, in a white lab coat, sits before a bank of monitoring equipment. Two or three ASSISTANTS sit alongside him. He touches a control, and in the spherical chamber we see a robot arm with a cone-shaped end reach soundlessly out and stop within an inch of Daryl's temple.

Ellen Lamb stands a little way behind Stewart, her eyes unwavering on the small and helpless figure of the child.

We ANGLE ON a TV SCREEN watched closely by Stewart. A high-definition image of Daryl's profile appears on it. Stewart now touches a switch marked 'X - RAY'. The child's skull immediately becomes transparent. But instead of the outline of an organic brain we see a much more symmetrical pattern of labyrinthine circuitry and microchip technology.

STEWART

The problem's somewhere . . .  
(Adjusting a control)  
. . . here.

The picture on the TV screen now shifts to a CLOSE-UP of one small area of the electronic brain, revealing a mass of infinitely finer detail.

Stewart punches another switch, and lines shoot out from various circuits with identifying code numbers at the end of each. One code number stands out from the rest because it is flashing red and white.

STEWART (cont'd)

Right there.

ELLEN

Can you reactivate without surgery?

STEWART

My guess is that Mulligan only provoked specific overload, not a burn-out. I think at some stage he'd have wanted Daryl to know what he was.

(He starts to cough)

Soon tell.

He punches more switches. The TV screen goes into a yet more detailed picture; at the same time in the spherical chamber another robot arm appears and lowers a close-fitting metal dish over Daryl's skull.

C.U. DARYL

A distant, powerful buzz of electric current. Daryl's face twitches and his eyes move under their lids, but don't open.

(Cont'd)

110 Continued

The current stops.

RESUME OBSERVATION ROOM

Stewart looks up from his screen out to Daryl.

STEWART

Okay, let's try talking to him . . .

He swings his chair to another computer keyboard. He punches up a question displayed on the screen above it: 'WHAT IS YOUR NAME?'

Beyond the window Daryl's eyes continue to twitch beneath their lids.

On the screen a reply appears: 'DARYL'.

Stewart waits a moment, then punches in another instruction: 'REPLY INCOMPLETE. PLEASE EXPAND'.

Another pause, then something odd happens on the screen. The letters shuffle apart and a period is added after each one: 'D.A.R.Y.L.'.

Stewart looks up at Ellen Lamb, pleased by the response and relieved. But he checks further, punching in: 'PLEASE EXPLAIN ACRONYM'.

The reply on the screen appears as follows:

Data Analysis Robot Youth Life-form

Now Stewart turn to Ellen Lamb again positively beaming with triumph. He punches a last message into the keyboard: 'WELCOME BACK DARYL'.

And a moment later the reply appears: 'THANK YOU, SIR'.

111 INT. COMPUTER ROOM. DAY

Banks of machines with winking lights and slowly turning spools of tape. Embossed above the whole installation are the letters: 'D.A.R.Y.L.'.

Ellen Lamb is looking over yards of print-out being rattled into a tray. Stewart ambles up to her puffing on his eternal cigarette.

(Cont'd)

111 Continued

STEWART  
(Reading over her  
shoulder)  
'Performance modification C-7, circuit 10  
breaker.'

ELLEN  
Just his way of saying he didn't like to  
show off.

STEWART  
But that's something he's learned!

112 INT. SCREENING ROOM

A large screen on which is a high-definition video picture which we shall recognise as DARYL'S POV of the scene in which he first played the COMPUTER VIDEO GAME with Turtle and Sheri Lee. We see again their amazement at his skill, and occasionally we glimpse DARYL'S HAND on the controls at the foot of the frame.

Ellen Lamb presses a switch at her side and the picture freezes. Now we see Daryl sitting at her side, watching with interest but no sign of emotion.

ELLEN  
Daryl, what did you feel about being so good  
at that game?

DARYL  
(Reflects a moment)  
I didn't feel anything. I just . . . did  
it.

Dr. Stewart leans over from behind.

STEWART  
Okay. And the ball game?

Ellen punches keys, and on the screen we see DARYL'S POV of the ball-game, repeating the images seen earlier when he was operating at maximum efficiency.

DARYL  
I did it. Until Turtle explained.

STEWART  
What was your response to his explanation?

(Cont'd)

112 Continued

DARYL

(This time he thinks  
a little harder)

I interpreted this data to indicate that  
under certain conditions, error was more  
efficient than maximum performance.

STEWART

Under what conditions?

DARYL

Relating with the others.

A brief glance exchanged between Stewart and Ellen.

STEWART

Okay.

She punches up the third series of images that they have ready  
for review. This time it is a scene that we have not specifically  
witnessed before. Again we are in DARYL'S POV at some kind of  
party at Turtle's house. About a dozen KIDS are seated around  
a table stuffing themselves with peanut butter sandwiches, jello  
and ice cream.

TURTLE

(To Daryl/Camera)

Come on, man, make up your mind? D'you want  
chocolate or vanilla?

He waves two bowls of ice cream in Daryl's direction.

DARYL'S VOICE

(Uncertain)

I don't know, I . . .

TURTLE

Well try some . . .

We see a spoon extend in Daryl's hand, take a small scoop of  
chocolate, and feed it into his mouth somewhere below the bottom  
of the frame.

DARYL'S VOICE

Hmmm . . . yeah, well . . .

TURTLE

(Impatient)

Jesus, Daryl, if you don't care have the  
vanilla.

He plonks it down in front of Daryl and hands the chocolate ice  
over to some other kid.

(Cont'd)

12 Continued (2)

Again we see Daryl's spoon dip into the bowl for a taste. And after a moment . . .

DARYL'S VOICE  
I like the chocolate better.

Turtle turns to him with long-suffering patience.

TURTLE  
Can I assume this is a final decision?

DARYL'S VOICE  
Absolutely.

TURTLE  
Okay.

He reaches rudely across the table and snatches the chocolate ice back from the LITTLE GIRL he has just given it to.

TURTLE (cont'd)  
Mary Ellen, don't eat that! Daryl's spit in it.

The little girl wrinkles her nose in disgust and draws back from the bowl as though it were poison. Turtle bangs it down before Daryl.

Ellen stops the picture. Stewart is watching Daryl closely.

STEWART  
Did you really mean it - that you preferred the chocolate?

DARYL  
Oh, sure.

STEWART  
Why?

For the first time Daryl looks absolutely blank - and maybe even a little alarmed.

DARYL  
I . . . I don't know . . . I just did.  
(Shrugs)  
Turtle likes raspberry.

STEWART  
But there's no difference.

Daryl seems suddenly amused by the conversation - disbelieving in the way kids can be of adult obtuseness.

(Cont'd)

112 Continued (3)

DARYL  
They taste different.

113 INT. STEWART'S OFFICE. DAY

Stewart re-enters his office where Ellen is working. He slaps down a computer print-out excitedly.

STEWART  
(triumphant)  
Look!

She studies it a moment.

STEWART  
And he's not programmed for taste!

ELLEN  
He's programmed to learn.

STEWART  
Not subjective preferences. He can analyse nutritional values, not choose between flavours.

ELLEN  
Well, he obvious thinks he can.

STEWART  
No, no - he can!  
(Thinks a moment)  
We're going to have to run physical tests - trial and error till we find out where this comes from.

114 INT. RICHARDSON HOME. NIGHT.

The TV plays without sound. Joyce sits before it, looking at but not seeing the images.

The phone RINGS and Andy answers.

ANDY  
Hello . . ?  
(Puzzled frown)  
Who is this?

Joyce looks over at him questioningly. He just shakes his head.

ANDY (cont'd)  
Hello . . ?

(Cont'd)

114 Continued

Still nothing. She holds our her hand and he gives her the phone. Now we HEAR with her a long crackle of static.

JOYCE  
Who is this?

Very distantly a distorted and unidentifiable VOICE.

VOICE  
CQ come in . . . CQ come in . . .

JOYCE  
(A surge of hope)  
Daryl . . . ?

VOICE  
CQ . . . come in . . . Turtle, please...

ANDY  
(realization)  
Daryl!

115 INT. FOX HOUSE. NIGHT

Turtle sits on the stairs, thinking over the question that Andy has just put to him. Elaine and Howie watch from the living room door.

TURTLE  
CQ? Yeah . . . it's our call sign. Me and Daryl.

ANDY  
Call sign?

TURTLE  
You know - the intercom. We used to talk on it all the time.

ANDY  
Show me.

He gets to his feet and leads the way upstairs.

6 INT. TURTLE'S ROOM. NIGHT

Amist the usual debris is the intercom, both handsets here now and the line which previously connected Turtle's house and the Richardsons' house coiled in a mess on the floor. Turtle picks up one of the handsets and jiggles a switch.

(Cont'd)

116 Continued

TURTLE

I'd press this, then say 'QC come in' - that was my call sign to him, like his was CQ to me - then I'd press it this way and I'd hear . . .

DARYL'S VOICE

(Startlingly clear)

Can you hear? Turtle? Joyce? Is anybody there?

Andy and Turtle just stare in amazement at the little piece of molded plastic in Turtle's hand.

ANDY

(Shaken)

Daryl . . . ?

Turtle just looks up at Andy, his mouth wide open, not knowing what to say.

Andy snatches the line, runs it fast between his fingers until he reaches the identical handset at the other end. There is no connection with anything outside this room.

ANDY

(Accusingly to Turtle)

Is this some trick . . . ?

TURTLE

No! I don't know how . . .

Andy snatches the handset from him.

ANDY

Daryl? Where are you?

DARYL'S VOICE

(Almost a sob)

Oh Dad! Andy.

117 INT. OPERATING THEATRE

Daryl is strapped to an operating table in harshly clinical surroundings. Various white-coated SCIENTISTS and ASSISTANTS bustle around him, Stewart and Ellen among them. Once again he has the steel band and electrodes fixed to his head. Banks of monitoring machines are all around. His eyes are open, darting around nervously. But when we hear his voice it is V.O. and with no movement from his lips.

(Cont'd)

17 Continued

DARYL (V.O.)

I don't know where it is. Washington. I didn't see it when they brought me back.

Suddenly he notices a NURSE preparing a tray of sharp surgical instruments.

DARYL (cont'd V.O. -

with real alarm)

Dad, I think they're going to cut me open. I'm scared!

Dr. Stewart has seen the fear in Daryl's eyes and comes to his side.

STEWART

Daryl, don't worry. You know you can't come to any harm. You know that.

Daryl looks up at him uncertainly. When he speaks his lips move.

DARYL

Why d'you have to do this?

STEWART

Because we have to know whether there've been chemical changes in your body. We can't do it just by observation.

DARYL

What are you going to do?

STEWART

Just take some samples. You won't feel it - we've taken care of that. But we need you conscious.

From across the room comes an anxious cry.

ASSISTANT

Dr Stewart - !

Stewart hurries over to where an assistant stands over a monitoring machine whose dials and graphs are going as suddenly crazy as did the instruments in the private jet.

STEWART

What's going on - ?

ASSISTANT

It just started.

(Cont'd)

17 Continued (2)

ANOTHER ASSISTANT

Doctor - !

We see another machine also going beserk.

Daryl is gazing fixedly at the ceiling - at a closed-circuit TELEVISION CAMERA hanging over him.

118 INT. TURTLE'S BEDROOM. NIGHT

Daryl and Andy have been joined by Sherie Lee, Elaine and Howie, who all crowd into the door of the little room witnessing the extraordinary sight of a grown man talking into a child's toy -and being spoken back to by it.

ANDY

Daryl! Are you there? What's happening?

DARYL'S VOICE

Dad - is Sherie Lee there?

ANDY

She's here.

DARYL'S VOICE

(Urgently)

Tell her . . . use the modem, dial  
406-375-2895 . . .

119 INT. SHERIE LEE'S ROOM. NIGHT

Sherie Lee punches keys, watched anxiously by Andy and Elaine. They wait - but there is no response.

SHERIE LEE

Nothing's happening.

120 INT. TURTLE'S ROOM. NIGHT

Howie has taken the handset from his son and is scrutinising it with the bewilderment of an audience volunteer examining a magician's props. Suddenly it comes to life again - and he drops it like a hot potato.

DARYL'S VOICE

The television! Turtle - you there? The television!

(Cont'd)

20 Continued

TURTLE  
(Retrieving the handset)  
Okay, Daryl! I got it!

He sprints out of the room. Followed by his bewildered father.

121 INT. OPERATING THEATRE

Dr. Stewart's and his assistants' attention is entirely focussed for the moment on the malfunctioning equipment around the room.

ASSISTANT  
This is crazy! It's like someone's playing around with the central computer.

ANGLE ON DARYL - looking more assured than before, his attention still on the TV camera in the ceiling.

And now we see that, unobserved by anyone else, the camera is silently turning, focussing, switching from one lens to another.

22 INT. FOX LIVING ROOM. NIGHT

The whole family and Andy pile in after Turtle, who is racing through all available channels. But programs seem to be as normal.

SHERIE LEE  
Still nothing. Turtle, you're making all this up.

TURTLE  
I am not!

ANDY  
Wait a minute . . . !

He moves closer. The PICTURE on the screen is weakening, waving as though some obstacle is being moved in and out of the path of the signal.

ANDY (cont'd)  
Something's happening! That's not just interference!

The picture now fades entirely. For a moment there is just static - then, suddenly, a hazy new image starts to crystallize.

(Cont'd)

22 Continued

ELAINE  
(Recognising it)  
Oh my God . . . !

And now we see - Daryl lying strapped to the operating table, seen from the POV of the ceiling camera. He is staring up at it, struggling to smile bravely.

Andy goes closer, almost shaking the set for an answer.

ANDY  
Where are you? Where is he?

On the SCREEN one of Stewart's assistant crosses frame. The CAMERA ZOOMS in abruptly, identifying in fuzzy CLOSE-UP the circular mark on the back of his white coat. It reads: 'TASCOI: Inc.'.

123 INT. OPERATING THEATRE

The monitoring machinery still going berserk. Now the stooped figure of Dr Stewart looms over Daryl. He looks down at the child with a curious mix of concern and suspicion, but speaks gently.

STEWART  
All right, Daryl . . . forget the tests.  
No tests. All right?

Daryl looks at him. Distrust vies with relief, but he seems to relax.

And at the same time all the machines in the room return to normal functioning.

124 INT. FOX LIVING ROOM. NIGHT

The picture on the TV SCREEN fades and dies. MTV flickers up to take its place.

ELAINE  
Where is he?

ANDY  
'Tascom'! What in God's name is Tascom?

125 EXT. PENTAGON. DAY

Stewart presents a pass for examination by an ARMED GUARD, then passes on inside, into a long straight corridor.

26 INT. PENTAGON/GRAYCLIFFE'S OFFICE. DAY

GENERAL HORATIO GRAYCLIFFE sits at his desk reading documents through a thick haze of cigar smoke. He is a large man with small eyes which narrow suspiciously whenever he looks at anyone. The intercom on his desk BUZZES and he flips a switch.

WOMAN'S VOICE

Dr Stewart's here, General.

GENERAL

Awright.

He flicks the machine off. A moment later Stewart appears in the door. The General waves a hand gracelessly towards a chair. It is an invitation to sit down.

GENERAL (cont'd)

Been reading your report. You're making some pretty fancy claims here.

STEWART

Simple observations, General.

GENERAL

We know it thinks. We know it learns. Now you're trying to say it . . .

(looks up from the page,  
squinting through cigar  
smoke)

. . . feels?

STEWART

It knows pleasure and pain, it also registers anxiety and fear.

GENERAL

Fear? That's something we don't have a lot of use for here.

STEWART

'We' . . . ?

GENERAL

We who are funding this research, Dr Stewart.

STEWART

The American taxpayer?

(Cont'd)

GENERAL

(snarls that aside)

Listen, when that pointy-headed professor, Mulligan, ran off with this fancy toy of yours, for all I knew he could've been headed straight for the Soviet embassy.

STEWART

In the Apalachians - ?

GENERAL

We got it back, that's the point. Without any breach of security. The decisions we make now are our decisions, nobody else's.

(a beat)

And the joint chiefs have made their decision in the light of this report. The project is terminated.

STEWART

(in shock)

What - !

GENERAL

(Waves the report in his face)

What the hell use is 'fear' to the military? Or 'taste.' Or this here 'friendship preference' you discovered. No damn use. No. We want you to start over. This time give it the brains, give it the skills - but hold the fear and all those kind of things.

Stewart takes a moment to absorb this and formulate a response.

STEWART

(keeping calm with an effort)

I see. And Daryl . . ?

GENERAL

I just said. Terminated.

STEWART

(bitter sarcasm)

Perhaps you'll arrange for disposal of the body. Simple cremation, why not? No flowers.

GENERAL

What the hell are you talking about?

(Cont'd)

26 Continued (2)

STEWART

Frankly I'm not too keen on keeping an infant corpse in my laboratory.

GENERAL

The thing's a machine, for Chrissakes!

STEWART

The body is organic. It will hurt, die, decompose, just like you or me, General.

GENERAL

The body dies?

STEWART

By gunshot, suffocation, poison, starvation and anything else the defense department could invent.

GENERAL

Dammit, Stewart, it's your problem. Deal with it!

He picks up a bundle of papers and flourishes them.

GENERAL

The Youth Lifeform project is over, Doctor. I'm being leaned on. We want an adult robot. Programmed to learn and taught everything the army can teach a fearless, technically skilled devastating soldier. This...cadet machine goes to the scrapyard. Understood?

127 INT. DARYL'S ROOM, TASCOR. NIGHT.

A kind of igloo-shaped windowless dome, filled with books, computer games, complex toys and functional furniture.

Daryl is watching eight different TV sets at the same time. The room is lit only by their glow. The noise is deafening. Stewart slips into the room quietly. For a moment, we wonder if he is literally about to murder the child. But his apprehension and his eventual warmth soon dispels the thought.

STEWART

Hi.

DARYL

Shall I turn them off?

(Cont'd)

27 Continued

STEWART  
Maybe down a little.

Daryl twists a central control and the volume of all the sets is eliminated.

STEWART  
I don't know how you do it.

DARYL  
(smiles)  
And if you don't....

STEWART  
Daryl, I've been getting called every day by your...by Andy and Joyce Richardson. They found out where you were somehow....I guess you know something about that?

DARYL  
Yes.

He is crumpled with defeat.

STEWART  
Want to tell me?

DARYL  
(shrugs, what does it matter now)  
I seem to be able to interfere with electronic or magnetic signals....I'm not very good at it....

Stewart touches the boy with sudden sympathy and warmth.

STEWART  
I wondered if...maybe...you'd like a visit from them.

There is a long pause. Daryl's reply when it comes is trembling.

DARYL  
I would...very much...like to see them.

STEWART  
And your friend, what's his na....?

DARYL  
Turtle. I would like that. A great deal. I would be very grateful if you could arrange it. I have missed them. I really have.

(Cont'd)

27 Continued (2)

Stewart stands up, examining the child affectionately from a distance.

STEWART

I feel they've been badly deceived... by me, by this project. We owe them the truth. I'd like them to know....who you really are, Daryl. I think real friendship requires real honesty, don't you? I'll fix for them to come.

He exits before emotion catches him. Because Daryl looks very small and frail in the bare room with its futuristic TV sets. And very happy indeed.

128 INT. TASCOM CORRIDOR/LOBBY. DAY.

GUARDS and DOGS patrol the area. The LONG SHOT shows a tiny door opening in the vast, dark wall, and a trio of PEOPLE entering. They are escorted down the corridor.

They are the Richardsons and Turtle though, since we see them only in silhouette, we may never know their exact identity. They are a threesome caught in a Kafkaesque nightmare.

129 INT. COMPUTER ROOM. DAY.

The room we saw earlier - with the acronym D.A.R.Y.L. embossed over the softly humming hardware. Joyce, Andy and Turtle have all been given overalls and ID cards. Dr Stewart hesitates, uncertain how to break it to them gently.

ANDY

What is this . . . ?

STEWART

(points up at acronym)  
Data Analysis by Robot Youth Life-form.  
Daryl for short. An experiment in artificial intelligence.

They just stare in blank incomprehension.

STEWART (cont'd)

This is where we programmed the computer in Daryl's head. And Daryl discharges learned information into this.

(Cont'd)

29 Continued

TURTLE  
(softly, awed,  
understanding)  
Oh, Wow....!

STEWART  
Daryl is not - never was - human.

Joyce gives a shudder, suddenly cold, as though someone walked over her grave.

130 INT. DARYL'S "IGLOO". DAY.

Daryl sits playing one of his computer games, totally unaware of being watched from behind two-way glass above.

131 INT. OBSERVATION ROOM. DAY

However, we now see Dr Stewart with the Richardsons and Turtle, all watching Daryl through what is obviously some kind of one-way light conducting wall.

ANDY  
Doesn't he know we're here?

STEWART  
He can't see us.

TURTLE  
(still awed at the idea)  
Daryl....a robot!

Stewart is gentle, he knows he's dealing with peoples' love and affection and he respects the fragility of these emotions.

JOYCE  
But he's . . . he's real! Look at him!  
He's just a little boy - flesh and blood.  
(Then, suddenly, the  
horrible possibility  
that he's not)  
Isn't he . . . ?

STEWART  
Not even a doctor could spot the differences  
in a physical examination - unless he  
X-rayed the skull. But Daryl was conceived  
not in the womb, but in a laboratory test  
tube. He's growing at a normal rate right  
now and will continue to do so . . .  
(more)

(Cont'd)

31 Continued

STEWART (Cont'd)  
but in biological terms he's just over three  
years old.

Joyce's eyes close and she turns her face into Andy's shoulder,  
sickened.

ANDY  
But why? Why all this?

STEWART  
(Becoming carried away  
by his own enthusiasm)  
The only limitation on how fast a computer  
can learn is how fast you can program it.  
The five senses of the human body are the  
fastest and most efficient method of  
programming ever devised. Imagine -  
sight, sound, touch, taste, smell . . .  
all that going for you, instead of just one  
guy punching keys at a computer terminal.  
Why, if we could only . . .

Suddenly senses something's wrong, looks about anxiously.

STEWART (cont'd)  
Where's the boy - Turtle?

Now they all look. Turtle has vanished.

132 INT. STAIRS. DAY

Turtle is carefully, quietly descending narrow steps. At the  
bottom he comes to a door - perfectly flush with the slightly  
curving outer wall of Daryl's igloo. It has no handle, but there  
is a button next to it which he pushes. The door slides silently  
open . . .

133 INT. THE 'IGLOO'. DAY

Daryl is suddenly aware of being watched, and turns. His face  
lights up when he sees Turtle. Impulsively he starts towards  
him, Turtle, too, finds himself caught in a boy's awkwardness  
between wanting to hug his friend and being simply incapable of  
handling overt emotion.

DARYL  
Turtle - !

TURTLE  
Hi!

(Cont'd)

33 Continued

DARYL

Oh you came! With Mo...with Joyce and Andy?

TURTLE

(a hint of dragging)

I gave them the slip. They were listening to all the scientific crap about you....

- Now he approaches Daryl more closely, but kind of circling him, eyeing him curiously.

TURTLE (cont'd)

Did you know you were . . . you were a robot?

DARYL

Well I....I guess, uh, no. Not back home, with Andy and Joyce, and you. I'd lost my memory - remember?

TURTLE

But now - ?

DARYL

Oh, now I remember.

TURTLE

(Thinks a moment, trying to get his mind round this one)

How does it . . . feel?

DARYL

(Shrugs, but it's a thoughtful answer)

It feels just the same.

TURTLE

But d'you feel like . . . I mean, like me?

DARYL

I don't know. I'm not you.

(Pause)

I think I feel like you. Why wouldn't I?

They are interrupted by a sound. Both turn to see the Richardsons and Dr Stewart standing just inside the door. It is a second treat for Daryl in just a few moments and his face reflects his delight.

DARYL (cont'd)

Oh, wow . . . !

(Cont'd)

33 Continued (2)

He starts towards them, but slows to a stop when he sees something alien and unexpected in both Andy and Joyce. They are standing there frozen, not coming towards him, just staring at him with a curious and almost frightened intensity.

DARYL  
(the smile fading from  
his face)  
Mom . . ? Dad . . ?

A shuddering breath escapes Joyce's lips. It is almost a sob. She looks for help from Dr Stewart to Andy.

JOYCE  
I don't know what to do.

Neither speaks. But Andy, his gaze still on the little boy, takes a tentative step towards him.

ANDY  
Daryl, I . . .  
(crouches on one knee  
so his eyes are level  
with the child's)  
. . . I guess it wasn't just my coaching  
after all that was going to put you in the  
baseball Hall of Fame. You had the stuff  
to get there all by yourself, huh?  
(Their eyes hold a while  
- and suddenly well  
with emotion on both  
sides)  
It's great to see you, kid!

And they are in each other's arms, Andy fighting to keep a hold on emotions he's not sure he understands, but the strength of which have taken him by surprise.

Then they part and Daryl turns to Joyce, his arms outstretched for a hug she'd have to be stone to refuse him. She picks him up and holds him so tight that in moment he's spluttering for breath. Then suddenly they are both laughing - she through tears of sheer exultation at holding him again.

INT. DR STEWART'S OFFICE. DAY

Turtle has stayed with Daryl, so the Richardsons are now alone with Dr Stewart. A silence hangs in the room, as though at the end of a lengthy and solemn discussion.

DR STEWART  
Well.....?

(Cont'd)

34 Continued

ANDY/JOYCE

We're sure. Absolutely sure.

DR STEWART

Then go right home. Say nothing to anyone  
- above all not to the press.

JOYCE

The press?

DR STEWART

There may be headlines. I'll need four,  
five days maybe.

ANDY

What do we tell our friends? Turtle's  
family?

DR STEWART

Just say you saw Daryl and he was fine.  
Skip the details.

JOYCE

If I skip details - Elaine will know  
something's wrong.

DR STEWART

Do your best, Mrs Richardson. Because  
secrecy is one of the things going to keep  
Daryl alive.

135 EXT. TASCOM. DAY.

Dr Stewart is seeing the Richardsons and Turtle into a waiting cab.

136 INT. CORRIDOR, TASCOM. DAY.

Stewart is returning to his office. He rounds a corner and finds  
Ellen Lamb facing him. He stops.

ELLEN LAMB

You can't do it, Doctor.

DR STEWART

Can't do what?

ELLEN

You can't.

STEWART

What do you mean - I can't?

(Cont'd)

36 Continued

ELLEN

I mean it's wrong.

(pause)

I'm sorry.

137 EXT. TASCOR. DUSK.

The silence of early evening is broken by a sudden roar of heavy vehicles. Several ARMY TRUCKS swing into view accompanied by MOTORCYCLE OUTFRIDERS. When they come to a halt they have formed a ring around the whole building.

General Graycliffe gets out of a staff car and siams into the reception area.

138 INT. COMPUTER ROOM. DUSK.

The General, red-faced with fury, confronts Stewart.

GENERAL

I ought to put you under close arrest right now!

STEWART

I kind of thought you had!

GENERAL

Thank God somebody has a half a brain around here!

His glance identifies Ellen Lamb as the object of this remark. Stewart turns to look at her. She drops her eyes, ashamed to look at him.

GENERAL

You let those people come onto classified military premises! You divulged national secrets! You imperilled the whole goddamn project. I should have you charged with treason!

STEWART

(coolly, smiling)

But then you wouldn't have somebody to build your pea-brained fighting machine.

The General fumes impotently at the truth of this.

STEWART

Now. Get the fuck out and let me get on with my work.

(Cont'd)

38 Continued

GENERAL

Your orders are to terminate the Youth  
Lifeform machine. And that means right now.

A frozen standoff between the two men. Graycliffe finally speaks  
again.

GENERAL

Either you do it....humanely. Or I do it.  
My way.

Finally Stewart knows he's beaten and slumps in defeat.

STEWART

(mumbles)

All right, I'll do it.

GENERAL

What was that?

STEWART

I'll do it.

GENERAL

Now.

STEWART

It won't take long once I've started. But  
even us scientists hesitate before we  
dispose of our children.

The biliousness in his voice is sufficient to send Graycliffe  
walking quickly out of the room. Leaving Stewart grim at the  
prospect facing him.

139 INT. DARYL'S IGLOO. NIGHT.

Daryl awakens, staring at something directly above him. He screams  
in terror. Screams and screams.

140 EXT. TASCOR. DAY

A hazy morning sun reflects in the polished blackness of the  
building. Military vehicles remain positioned all around it, ARMED  
GUARDS posted at all exits.

141 INT. DARYL'S IGLOO.

Ellen Lamb enters. She stops, looking at the hunched figure  
slumped on the edge of a piece of furniture.

(Cont'd)

41 Continued

It is an exhausted Dr Stewart. There is no sign of Daryl.

ELLEN  
Dr Stewart...?

He looks up at her with dark-ringed eyes. He seems to have aged several years in a few hours.

ELLEN  
Are you all right?

He gives a brief, bitter laugh and shakes his head as though unable to comprehend the question.

STEWART  
It's all over, Ellen. I hope you're satisfied.

ELLEN  
I'm sorry.

STEWART  
(getting up)  
Han!

ELLEN  
Sorry you didn't let the team participate. There was useful information to be gathered...

He makes a raw sound of utter disgust and strides away from her as if in horror.

142 EXT. REAR OF TASCOM. NIGHT.

Steel gates slide open to reveal a couple more military vehicles and a guardpost inside a bleak enclosure. Dr Stewart sits behind the wheel of a station wagon, patiently waiting as one Guard checks his pass and a second makes a cursory inspection of the vehicle. He is then waved on and the gates slide shut behind him.

143 INT. OPERATING THEATRE. NIGHT.

Ellen Lamb, walking slowly. She stops by an untidy tray of used and rather sickeningly blood-smeared surgical instruments. On the operating table next to it is a child-sized surgical gown, crumpled and also blood smeared.

At the sound of the door, she turns. TWO ATTENDANTS enter pushing a trolley for the collection of instruments and used linen.

(Cont'd)

143 Continued

ATTENDANT

Dr Stewart said we should clean up in here.

She gestures for them to go ahead, watching as they strip the operating table and collect the instruments.

ELLEN

Have you already disposed of.... of everything else?

ATTENDANT

Dr Stewart took care of the organic materials himself.

She frowns at this. But then she walks over to the wall where there is a cabinet vaguely resembling a microwave oven, though with more complex controls. She presses a switch and a light goes on inside the cabinet.

Through the glass we can see a HEAD suspended in mid-air by steel wires. The light is dim and head partially obscured by a humid mist - but we can recognize it as DARYL'S HEAD.

Ellen touches a control and the head revolves slowly. It stops in profile. We can now see that about a third of the skull has been carved out, leaving the cranium empty. She gazes at this a moment then turns, satisfied, and starts out of the room.

As she reaches the door....

ATTENDANT

What's this - ?

2ND ATTENDANT

I don't know. Looks like some kind of....

Ellen stops, looking back. The attendants seem to be scraping up some sort of viscous substance from the edge of the operating tables.

144 INT. STATION WAGON (TRAVELLING). NIGHT.

The bench part of the rear seat heaves and bucks from pressure underneath.

DARYL'S VOICE

We made it! Can I come out? It's hot in here.

STEWART

Hold it - we're not clear yet.

Daryl's fidgeting subsides.

45 INT. OPERATING THEATRE.

Ellen Lamb wrenches open the door of the small cabinet. She reaches for the dismembered head, hesitating only for a squeamish split second before lifting it from the slim steel clamps on which it rests.

The attendants look on in horror as she takes it out and examines it in the bright light of the room. It is suddenly infinitely less life-like - a grotesque mask, crudely painted, like the head of a ventriloquist's dummy. It crumples in her fingers, then springs back into shape.

ELLEN

Rubber!

146 EXT. HIGHWAY SOUTH. NIGHT.

FOUR COP CARS move slowly down the road in line. Radio reports are pouring in. Stewart's car passes them without a tremor of alarm.

47 EXT. THE PENTAGON. DAY

Two STAFF CARS and a TRUCK roar out from the rear of the building. We glimpse the General's face in one of the cars -apoplectic with fury.

148 EXT. SIDE ROAD. NIGHT.

Stewart's car moves away from a gas station and turns onto a main highway, traffic flow still steady at this time of night.

OVER SCENE the continuing CRACKLE of radio exchanges between police, military etc.

Daryl wipes his mouth and looks across at Dr Stewart who is bent, tired and haggard-looking, over the wheel of the car, peering into the darkness with exceptional concentration.

DARYL

Would you like me to drive for a while?

STEWART

You're just a...

He tails off, realizing full well that Daryl is more than capable of driving. His age has nothing to do with it. But Stewart shakes his head.

STEWART

It'd just attract attention.

(Cont'd)

148 Continued

Daryl shrugs his understanding of this. A sign flashes by: FREEWAY ENTRANCE, 1/2 MI. They drive in silence for a moment.

Then with sickening suddenness:

The whoop of a police siren. Flashing lights behind them. And moments later, beside them. They are flanked by moving police cars. Two of them have rifles poking out their windows and aimed directly at Daryl and Dr Stewart.

STEWART  
(a groan of despair)  
Ohhh....

DARYL  
Turn onto the freeway.

STEWART  
Huh?

DARYL  
Take the freeway. Please..

The COPS are signalling him to slow down. But he's on the inside lane and it's hard for them to stop him other than by snooting. Then one of the Cop cars moves ahead, literally to make a barrier in front of the moving car.

Stewart goes as Daryl bids. A jerk of the wheel and he goes screaming up the on-ramp of the freeway.

The knot of cop cars follows.

149 EXT. FREEWAY. NIGHT.

The car squeezes between traffic, accelerating. Pursued by four, five, six...ten, eleven, fifteen, thirty cop cars!

150 INT. STEWART'S CAR. NIGHT.

Daryl slides across until he's shoulder to shoulder with Stewart, his hands on the wheel.

DARYL  
What was that about not attracting attention?

He grins up at Stewart who is driving grimly.

(Cont'd)

50 Continued

DARYL

You've got to trust me now. Please. Trust me.

Stewart looks at him. Almost collides with a truck. Then shrugs and slides away. Daryl takes control of the car.

Other traffic is moving aside for the cop cars now and they're only twenty yards behind.

STEWART

We can never out run them.

DARYL

Why don't you, uh, close your eyes. And wear your seat belt?

STEWART

Oh God. What are you going to do, Daryl?

DARYL

It's okay. I've done it before. It was called Pole Position.

STEWART

Pole position?

DARYL

A computer game. I was very good.

So saying he jerks the wheel sharp left.

151 EXT. FREEWAY. NIGHT.

The car skids sideways - putting all the cop cars into emergency braking - lurches a moment, then leaps through the emergency vehicle gap in the freeway center divider.

It is now facing into the oncoming traffic!

152 INT. STEWART'S CAR. NIGHT.

A howl of distress from Stewart as he slams on his seat belt and slides out of view. He doesn't even want to look.

Daryl however is quite calm. He jerks the wheel first to the right, then left, left again, right. With incredible precision and absolute calm. Just as if he were playing an arcade game.

153 EXT. FREEWAY. NIGHT.

P.O.V. FROM ABOVE. The headlights streak left, right, left etc. The station wagon moving with precision to avoid each oncoming vehicle. It's moving at high speed, something over eighty m.p.h. It is indeed, in the darkness, curiously like watching an arcade game. Only the screeching sounds are more realistic.

154 EXT. FREEWAY. NIGHT.

The Cops are agape as they keep level with Daryl in the opposite lane. One of the rifle cops takes aim.

155 INT. STEWART'S CAR. NIGHT.

Daryl is almost relaxed as he flicks the car in and out, weaving a steady pattern now between the never-ending stream of approaching vehicles. Sublimely confident of his reflexes even at this high speed.

Dr Stewart keeps his eyes tight shut except for an occasional peep out the windshield which is sufficiently terrifying to send him diving out of sight again.

156 EXT. FREEWAY. NIGHT.

The car moves away from the center divider, though the cop cars on the normal lane are still travelling level with it. But suddenly an on-ramp looms in the wrong-way lane. The car glides over and heads down it. Moving rapidly away from the police now who are stranded on the wrong side of the freeway with no matching exit.

157 INT. STEWART'S CAR. NIGHT.

Daryl is chuckling as he lurches off the exit amidst a blare of car horns. He crosses the approach road and heads down another highway, this time travelling in a normal direction.

Dr Stewart finally emerges from the floor and blinks in admiration at the boy beside him.

Round one to science.

158 INT. PENTAGON OFFICE. NIGHT.

General Graycliffe is apoplectic on the telephone.

GRAYCLIFFE  
He did what?

(Cont'd)

58 Continued

The other military BRASS hunch forward to listen.

Finally Graycliffe snarls into the phone.

GRAYCLIFFE

Well there's a new order. Find them both.  
And shoot to kill.

He hangs up.

159 EXT. RICHARDSONS' HOUSE. DAWN.

The house, like the rest of town, is closed up and sleeping. The CAR that slides soundlessly past contains TWO MEN. One glance establishes them as the same men who were pursuing Daryl in the opening scenes. Both men scrutinize the Richardson house for signs of life. One of them speaks softly into a dash mike.

As the car moves on, it passes a PHONE COMPANY VAN. One MAINTENANCE ENGINEER is taking equipment from the rear, a SECOND ENGINEER is examining an overhead line. Innocent enough. Except for the furtive nod of acknowledgement that passes between them and the two men in the car.

160 EXT. FOX' HOUSE. DAWN.

Here it's a POWER MAINTENANCE VAN that has set up operations and is starting work on overhead cables. Again, we register the glance passing between the Power WORKERS and the two men in the car as it glides by.

161 EXT. OPEN COUNTRY. DAWN.

A farmyard, a little tumbledown as if nobody works it any longer. Except there's a tidy haystack in the yard. And the haystack is stirring. Chunks of hay falling away.

It conceals the car and Dr Stewart, still sleeping. Daryl has woken and is now emerging, pushing back the camouflage which has concealed them.

(It is an important part of the story that Daryl's escape, while no fantasy, takes on a kind of fantastical quality by virtue of the superb scenery, the wonderful imagery of this land through which he flees.)

The sun has not yet risen and the ground has a pre-dawn haze upon it. Daryl turns to waken Stewart, but he is already awake.

(Cont'd)

61 Continued

DARYL  
I was just thinking.

STEWART  
Good morning.

DARYL  
Oh. Sorry. Good morning. I had an idea.  
How we could buy the farmer's truck.

STEWART  
We don't have enough money to buy breakfast.

DARYL  
If there was a town near here.....?

162 EXT. MAIN STREET, SMALL TOWN. DAY.

Stewart stands "guard" while Daryl works a bank's cash dispenser.

163 EXT. MAIN STREET, ANOTHER SECTION. DAY.

This second dispenser is pumping out notes as Daryl plays it like an instrument.

164 EXT. SIDE STREET, SMALL TOWN. DAY.

A third bank is losing money to Daryl through its cash machine.

165 INT. FARM HOUSE. DAY.

The farmer, FORBES, is a large-bellied cantankerous man who watches with beady eyes as Stewart counts out the final hundred dollars. There are several piles. Forbes hands over the keys and scoops up the money.

FORBES  
It's a deal then. But I still think I sold  
you my truck too cheap.

166 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD. DAY.

A pickup truck that's almost antique lumbers onto the highway, wheezing and wobbling. No sooner is it moving steadily down the highway than Daryl, in the passenger seat, ducks down out of sight. A police car whizzes past them, the cop barely glancing at the driver of the ancient vehicle.

57 INT. RICHARDSON'S KITCHEN. DAY.

Joyce sits over an untouched bowl of cereal. Andy has half finished his before pushing it aside and pouring more coffee for them both.

ANDY

You should eat something.

JOYCE

I can't. I'm too nervous.

ANDY

Four or five days, he said. You can't not eat for four or five days.

JOYCE

D'you really think....?

ANDY

What?

JOYCE

I won't believe it until he's here.

A KNOCK at the door brings them both to their feet like a gunshot. They exchange a look. Dare they hope?

Andy opens the door. The two phone company "Engineers" smile a greeting.

ENGINEER

(shows ID)

We're having trouble on these lines, sir. Could we check your phones?

ANDY

(hides disappointment)

Oh, sure. Come in. Go ahead. Two down here. Two upstairs.

The men move through the kitchen.

168 INT. LIVING ROOM, RICHARDSON HOUSE. DAY.

One of the Engineers is affixing a bug to the living room phone as Joyce calls out from the kitchen.

JOYCE

You guys like some coffee?

ENGINEER

Well that's mighty kind of you, thanks, ma'am.

He completes bugging the phone.

69 EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD. DAY.

Daryl and Stewart are eating massive hamburgers and fresh fruit drinks as they drive.

The highway bends around a craggy mountain and then descends in a long steady curve towards the plains beyond. Dr Stewart is as always rigid with concentration as he drives.

Daryl sits up again and peers down the valley.

STEWART

What is it?

DARYL

You can't see it. But there's a road block ahead.

Stewart starts to pull the truck in.

DARYL

It's only one police car and one policeman.

STEWART

That's enough to stop us. Or chase us.

Daryl looks at him with a broad grin of pleasure.

STEWART

Oh oh. What is it?

DARYL

Well what do they call the man in baseball who throws?

STEWART

The pitcher.

DARYL

Surely if I can hit - I can pitch, too....?

He scoops a broken piece of brick from the floor and holds it up.

DARYL

You never gave me a karate program.

STEWART

Did I need to? You've got all the skills you need in balance, pressure points, timing....

DARYL

Maybe you're right.

(Cont'd)

69 Continued

He aims a sharp karate-type blow at the brick with his free hand - and it splits in two perfect pieces. Daryl smiles and rolls down the window.

Stewart (and we) can now clearly see the barrier. A frail piece of painted wood with a cop car projecting half way onto the black top. A country COP lounges on the hood of the car. It's a pretty quiet road at this time of day (mid-afternoon.)

170 EXT. ROAD BARRIER. DAY.

The COP stirs at the SOUND of the approaching vehicle. Picks up his rifle, real casual, and drops his shades onto his eyes. The approaching truck is coming right out of the sun and is hard to see at this distance.

171 INT. PICKUP TRUCK. DAY.

Daryl is concentrating now. Dr Stewart hunched over the wheel.

DARYL

Slow up. And keep well over...

Stewart does as bid.

172 EXT. ROAD BARRIER. DAY.

The Cop, seeing the truck slow, seems to lose his alertness. He begins to grin a greeting to the young kid leaning out the window.

But the young kid pitches a piece of brick with accuracy and velocity you hardly believe. The brick zings against the barrel of the rifle, knocking it from the Cop's hands as he gives a yell of pain at the vibration, sending it flying down the road.

At the same moment, the truck snaps the feeble barrier and accelerates away.

Daryl is leaning further out the window now. He hurls the second piece of brick.

The Cop ducks. But the missile wasn't intended for him at all.

The cop's car radio was the target. And the brick smashes it into a hundred fragments, silencing it instantly. The brick was thrown with such devastating accuracy that it flew in the open car door and directly onto the center of the radio panel!

The pickup truck is vanishing round the lower bend as the Cop finally scoops up his rifle, pumps it and fires two wild shots entirely in frustration and anger.

173 INT. PICKUP TRUCK. DAY.

Daryl and Dr Stewart are jubilant in their escape. The cop's bullets have gone safely wide. Daryl kneels on his seat to look back.

STEWART  
Is he following us?

DARYL  
Don't worry - he won't.

174 EXT/INT. COP CAR. DAY.

The cop stares angrily at the shattered dash. Not only has the radio been destroyed but the whole panel. A mess of tangled wires, not even worth trying to repair.

175 INT. PICKUP TRUCK. DAY.

Daryl resumes his seat. Notes Dr Stewart is grinning from ear to ear.

DARYL  
What?

DR STEWART  
I just realized. Morals get more complicated as skills become greater.

DARYL  
Hun?

STEWART  
(a yell)  
Look out!

Through the windshield we see a SECOND COP who was concealed down the road a way. He has witnessed everything. And steps out now from the bus where his black and white is hidden. He stands, legs spread, pump rifle aimed straight at Daryl.

STEWART  
Down!

He grabs the startled child and thrusts him down. In the same split second the cop fires.

The windshield shatters.

And Stewart takes the bullet high in his chest.

DARYL  
(screams)  
No....o....!

76 EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD. DAY.

The truck fishtails wildly, making the cop leap for safety before he can get another shot off. It slams into the front of the hidden cop car, buckling a wheel.

177 INT. PICKUP TRUCK. DAY.

Blood pours from Dr Stewart's wound, but he hangs on grimly to the wheel and at the same time punches out the remains of the windshield.

STEWART

Keep down! We've gotta get out of here!

He struggles with the gears. Slams his foot to the floor.

178 EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD. DAY.

The Second Cop is steadying himself to get off another series of shots - but the truck's rear wheels spin with such force that a shower of stones and grit is thrown up, forcing him to turn away and shield his eyes.

The old truck is lurching out of sight before he manages to get off another few rounds, but the shots are harmless. He runs to his car. Kicks the buckled wheel. Then reaches inside for his (working) radio.

179 EXT. SCHOOL. DAY.

Turtle detaches himself from the crowd of KIDS heading home and sprints briskly across the street, alone.

From the window of a coffee shop we see one of the MEN IN GRAY watching him. The Man slips onto the sidewalk and follows.

Turtle looks back suddenly. As if he's spotted his follower. Then walks on.

180 EXT. WOODLAND ROAD. DAY/DUSK.

In an eerie parallel to the opening sequence....a HELICOPTER roars overhead. As the CAMERA moves to LONG SHOT we can see that the chopper has found, and now circles above, the pickup truck as it moves down the highway at speed.

We can also see that the pickup truck is carrying no less than three fairly spiffy-looking motorbikes.

81 EXT. WOODLAND ROAD. DAY/DUSK.

Further down the road a veritable flotilla of Cop cars is moving in a solid line. Stopping finally at a road intersection where three police cars have already parked.

CAMERA PANS up the road to the direction from which the truck will come. In FOREGROUND we can see the savage-looking metal spikes which will impede the truck's progress. Not to mention the massive earth-moving machine which now trundles out of the side road and positions itself directly across the center of the main roadway. Everything is placed just a few yards round a blind corner, as if intended to cause maximum and certain damage.

The helicopter can be seen heralding the pickup truck. Which can now be glimpsed through the trees, approaching.

Wheels screech as brakes are applied. Hands flung to protect faces from the windshield. The truck comes to a shuddering halt barely inches from the spikes and the barrier.

And FOUR PEOPLE climb out of the driving cab as the COPS move in, weapons and voices raised. They are HELLS ANGELS, middle-aged bikies, baffled and angered at this interruption to their day's good fortune.

182 EXT. PERIMETER ROAD, HOPEMAN AIRBASE. DUSK.

Dr Stewart lies in a thicket of woods, a beautiful copse where the fading light of day throws long, deep shadows over the green bounty of nature. Stewart's face is gray and contorted with pain.

STEWART

I'm sorry, Daryl.

Daryl is gentle and deeply moved. His fingers lightly stroking the older man's forehead.

DARYL

If I was a little older - you could have given me a medical program, I could go to med school....and....that'd be helpful, I mean for more than you....

Stewart squeezes the boy's hand at the kindness and excellence of this thought, a thought which by contrast makes a mere shadow of General Graycliffe's ambitions.

STEWART

They'll go on hunting you, Daryl. Hunting until they've killed you.

DARYL

Or....till they think they have.

(Cont'd)

82 Continued

Stewart doesn't really hear this. He's sinking fast.

STEWART

What've I done? Made you a fugitive.  
Frightened you. Lied to you. Taken you  
from the only love you ever found...

DARYL

You gave me everything, too. I am what you  
made me. I mean not.....a real human.

Stewart looks at the child's simple face, its intensity and anguish. He reaches out and touches like a father might touch his son in valediction. Brushes at the tears that run down Daryl's face.

STEWART

Daryl, whatever happens, I want you to  
remember always, always, what I'm telling  
you now.

He forces the pain out of his eyes for an instant.

STEWART

You are.....a real person. You....are real.  
I just wish....

He fights for breath.

STEWART

Wish I could see....how you work it out.  
But don't ever doubt it. Never.

With a final sign, Stewart turns on his side. And dies. Daryl checks the pulse. The eyelids. But the blood-soaked, bullet-torn shirt tells is the only confirmation anyone will ever need.

There are still tears in Daryl's eyes as he finally leans down and kisses Stewart on the forehead. And then he sits back a moment, gazing up at the darkening skies, and he cannot refrain from a deep series of sobs. Just like a real person.

183 EXT. HOPEMAN AIRBASE. NIGHT.

Darkness at first. Darkness and the sense of something awesome about to occur. Then, cutting through the dark, the headlights of a jeep. Military Police sweeping round in an arc and turning by a sneo before heading back in the direction they came.

The headlights missed completely the silhouette of Daryl three quarters of the way up the perimeter fence, clinging like an angry spider.

(Cont'd)

83 Continued

Staring into the darkness with a look of deep fury and certainty on his face: a look of intensity we have never seen before.

With three further movements, Daryl is over the top of the fence and dropping to his haunches inside the perimeter. He stands and walks forward, head erect, confident.

Moments later he stops suddenly. His legs barely two inches from a tripwire. Which he steps over. And continues to advance.

In the silence of the open airbase night, the sudden snarling of a guard dog is as sharp and violent as a gunshot at close range. The Doberman vaults through the air, its jaws open in a terrifyingly menacing howl.

But Daryl's response is even faster, and the dog lands flat on its belly two feet in front of the boy.

The dog is badly winded and not a little astonished at the speed of this human being's reaction - that wasn't in the training program. It whimpers from its slight injury. Daryl pats it gently. The dog growls. Daryl shrugs - it clearly doesn't want to be friends - and then walks on.

At last Daryl has moved across enough ground to discern a group of buildings, silhouettes, airplanes. A handful of low lights, a maintenance SQUAD, some military activity.

184 EXT. MAINTENANCE AREA, AIRBASE. NIGHT.

One of the military jeeps is stopped, the POLICE rapping with two ENGINEERS. The military jeep radio suddenly begins to distort and fizz with static. At first nobody notices. But they turn to look as the jeep's electrics start to go haywire. The beams flare and die. The engine chokes and dies. One of the turn lights blazes brightly.

Then a row of arc lamps above the maintenance area flare vividly, impossible bright haloes of light that burn for a few moments and then explode in the intensity of their own brightness.

MILITARY COP  
What in hell's happening?

185 EXT. AIRBASE. NIGHT.

Daryl walks on, head held high, defiant. The focus of his eyes is intense. There is no doubting the origin of the electrical phenomena we have just seen.

(Cont'd)

85 Continued

Daryl is crossing a wide concrete strip. Which he - and we - realize is a runway. Swivelling and facing up the runway, Daryl frowns in concentration.

Slowly every runway light ignites. A blaze of light flung up to the night sky.

He turns and walks on.

Arc lamps ignite round the airbase. Floodlights burst on. Searchlights stab the sky. House lights come to life. Beacons.

And through it all walks Daryl. Taut with emotion, anger and determination.

Electrical motors begin to turn. Stacks of batteries smoke and bubble. Fans revolve without reason.

Rádios blur with static. TV sets switch channels or breakdown into weird patterns. Security locks break. Raáar screens go beserk. Communication becomes impossible.

Automatic doors fly open.

GUARDS and MILITARY POLICE run hither and thither seeking a rational explanation.

And through it all - Daryl, concentrating now on something close by. Daryl, seen through a thousand haloes of impossibly-accomplished light.

Guard dogs howl and snarl at these strange phenomena. MILITARY PERSONNEL run to shut down motors which have self-ignited. To hold back loading trucks which are moving aimlessly and driverless. To try and switch off at least some of the blazing power of every light or lamp on the airbase.

And through this chaos the distant ROAR of an engine. At first it is unnoticed in the awe-inspired response to the magical light show around the entire base. But gradually some of the OFFICERS and MEN peer around the blinding light display.

THEIR P.O.V. A sleek, black fighter plane taxiing down the fabulously illuminated runway.

In the tower a howl of frustration and rage from the CONTROLLERS who cannot communicate with the taxiing airplane.

On the airfield, MEN RUN FORWARD, as the sleek black jet moves towards its take-off position. For a moment, as it turns, the occupant of the cockpit is clearly illuminated.

A child is about to fly the airforce's latest interceptor!

(Cont'd)

85 Continued (2)

A roar of engines and the airplane moves ever faster towards vector speed, hurtling down the runway and lifting into the night sky where it is almost instantly swallowed by darkness.

And as the plane goes...the airfield lights begin to fade and switch off. As if the source of power has suddenly been withdrawn.

186 INT. PENTAGON OFFICE. NIGHT.

General Graycliffe doesn't believe what he's just been told. A tracking map of the South Eastern United States seaboard is showing the movement of the airplane. There are FIVE CHIEFS OF STAFF ranged in front of Graycliffe.

AIRFORCE GENERAL

When that plane leaves United States airspace....

GRAYCLIFFE

What?

AIRFORCE GENERAL

I'm sorry, Lyford, but that airplane has missile technology and guidance systems on it that would devastate us if they fell into the wrong hands...

GRAYCLIFFE

(smiles)

You mean....you'd just blow it up? Why that'd...well that'd solve everything.

He looks quite cheerful suddenly.

187 INT. AIRPLANE COCKPIT. NIGHT/DAWN.

Daryl is really in control. And enjoying it, too. The speed indicator shows the plane flying at Mach 2.2 - more than twice the speed of sound. And as if to enhance the sensation, Daryl dips the plane down until it's flying barely five hundred feet above ground level. It's velocity is now awesome.

Daryl scans a map. Finds "BARKENTON" clearly marked and inserts a grid reference from the map to the computer.

Daryl flicks over an autopilot switch and puts his hands in the air. Just to prove it can be done. He laughs at the incredible speed with which the aircraft flicks over the earth.

(Cont'd)

187 Continued

There has been a constant stream of communication on the radio amplifier, but this has been turned down to such a low volume that it hasn't been discernible hitherto. Now Daryl switches it up and reaches for the radio mike.

As the radio VOICE comes over and Daryl listens to it momentarily, he reaches out to a digital clock on the control panel and adjusts it.

RADIO

....within the next seven minutes. I repeat this warning. You leave US airspace in six minutes and thirty seconds, mark that from... now.

The clock is set on 06.30 and Daryl hits the switch to start the clock counting backwards.

RADIO

You will be shot down. Your plane is not equipped with inertial avoidance systems and will be destroyed. Please respond.

As Daryl twists the gain knobs and waveband controls the voice disappears and a howl of other communications blend into each other until Daryl finally finds a silent channel. Then he talks into the microphone.

188 INT. TURTLE'S BEDROOM. NIGHT/DAWN.

Turtle is asleep but stirring. The intercom handset is crackling beside his head. He reaches out to turn it off, fumbling instinctively. But he's wide awake a moment later as Daryl's voice, clear and distinct comes over.

DARYL

Hey CQ this is your old pal QC, will you wake up? This is QC calling CQ...

Turtle flings himself out of bed and scoops up the handset.

TURTLE

Daryl! Where are you?

189 INT. AIRPLANE COCKPIT. NIGHT/DAWN.

Daryl touches the joystick and the airplane curves skywards like a rocket. He's in radio contact with Turtle.

(Cont'd)

89 Continued

DARYL

(grins)

You wouldn't believe me anyway...

The clock on the control panel is running back from four minutes now.

DARYL

But, listen, I'll be home soon. Like Dr Stewart promised. He's getting me home. Don't tell anybody. Okay? It's important.

TURTLE

Can I tell Hookie?

DARYL

All right. But be careful.

TURTLE

How soon is soon?

DARYL

(checks dials)

Less than twenty minutes? That's a guess, because the velocities are hard to calculate and rates of descent are....Meet me by Blue Lake. Before school.

TURTLE

You got it!

DARYL

Over and out, CQ.

190 EXT. DAWN SKY.

The black airplane cuts a swathe through the dawn sky. As the horizon curves a far-distant glimpse of the sea comes into view. The plane is banking towards it.

191 EXT. LAND BASE. DAWN.

Four missiles emerge from their siloes. Powerful hidden machinery readies them for firing.

192 INT. COCKPIT.

Daryl is punching a new course into the plane's computer. Finally the words "COURSE SET" appear on the VDU, followed by "AUTO."

(Cont'd)

92 Continued

Daryl presses another switch and a long series of figures starts reeling off the corner of a screen. On the rest of the screen there appears a computer-enhanced image of the ground ten miles below, whistling past at dizzying speed.

193 EXT. DAWN SKY.

The airplane speeds through the sky, parallel to the coastline. Then it banks steeply. And heads directly out over the ocean.

194 EXT. LAND. BASE. DAWN.

Four missiles are launched.

195 INT. COCKPIT.

Daryl's eyes flicker between the onboard VDU and the second hand of his clock, as he makes a complex calculation.

Then his hand reaches with deliberation for a flap on the arm of his seat. He lifts it. Underneath is a lever marked EJECTOR - EXPLOSIVE CHARGE.

He counts off the last few seconds - and pulls the lever.

196 EXT. DAWN SKY OVER OCEAN.

The ejector seat erupts from the cockpit, hurling its little bundle skywards.

The plane has slowed, curving round as if to return home. And that's when the first missile strikes. Invisible in its speed but fatal in its impact. The airplane erupts in a ball of flame and a million fragments of melted high technology.

The rocketing ejector seat is buffeted by the blast. A FLASH SHOT of Daryl suffering the impact.

The second and third explosions in midair may be the effect of subsequent missile strikes or merely the ongoing impact of the original strike. Whatever the cause, the consequence is spectacular. Each of the million fragments are powdered in rainbow colors and explosive sound.

197 EXT. COASTAL COUNTRY. DAWN/DAY.

We may at first think it is night again because we are staring at total blackness.

(Cont'd)

197 Continued

Gradually we discover that we are simply looking at a jet black parachute and the parachute is descending gently towards earth.

The parachute holds the ejector seat and, locked in the ejector seat but completely unconscious, is the frail figure of Daryl.

The chute floats slowly downwards.

198 INT. PENTAGON OFFICE. DAY.

General Graycliffe turns away from the wallchart where the little light indicating the stolen airplane has finally been extinguished. He waits as the Airforce General takes a phone call, listens, grunts and hangs up.

AIRFORCE GENERAL  
The target was vaporized.

GRAYCLIFFE  
I'm sorry.

AIRFORCE GENERAL  
About your prototype?

GRAYCLIFFE  
About your airplane. They're expensive hardware.

AIRFORCE GENERAL  
I hear your experimental prototype wasn't a ten cent trinket either.

The two Generals stare bleakly at each other for a long moment.

GENERAL GRAYCLIFFE  
I guess there's only room in the budget for one of the programs. Who'll they cancel? Yours or mine?

199 INT. MEN IN GRAY'S CAR. DAY.

One of the Men has just finished speaking on the handset. He disconnects, then switches to transmit.

MAN IN GRAY  
This is Control. The target has been retired. We're pulling out. The target has been retired. Do you receive?

ON RADIO  
Gotcha, control. We'll pull out.

00 EXT. STREET BY RICHARDSONS. DAY.

The Engineers start closing down their work tent. Climb down from the telegraph pole etc. In moments they are driving off.

201 EXT. FOX HOUSE. DAY.

The men from the power company are packing up as the Telephone Engineer truck rolls by.

As soon as everyone is gone, Turtle and Sherie Lee poke their heads out of Turtle's window, then slither down the sloping roof beneath his room. They're on bicycles and pedalling out of town for their appointment with Daryl.

202 EXT. COASTAL COUNTRY. DAY/DAWN.

Daryl is still unconscious, a streak of blood from his mouth. The parachute descending.

And now we see where it will land. In water. A patchwork of lakes and marshes criss-cross the landscape and the parachute is dropping directly into one of the lakes.

203 EXT. LAKE AREA. DAY.

The ejector seat with Daryl plummets like a stone. The parachute spreads and settles like a dark stain on the water surface. And then very slowly the parachute itself is sucked under by the weight of the chair and child to which it's attached. Disappearing beneath the surface with barely a ripple.

204 EXT. UNDERWATER. DAY.

Daryl struggles, still unconscious, for breath as the water closes around him.

His fingers search for the belt release. But do not find it.

The struggles become wilder. His eyes open. In fear. But the belt release remains unyielding to his desperate little fingers.

205 EXT. BLUE LAKE. DAY.

Turtle and Sherie Lee swings off the main highway and down a side track which runs parallel to the lake. They dismount their bikes and peer around at the shores of the lake.

SHERIE LEE

So, where is he?

(Cont'o)

205 Continued

TURTLE

I don't know. He said Blue Lake.

They wait apprehensively.

206 EXT. UNDERWATER.

Daryl's hands move convulsively, without purpose. The eyes close again. Daryl dies. There is no chance of life. Daryl is gone. And simultaneous with his death.....the release mechanism opens and his body floats free from the ejector seat. But the release is too late. The body floats upside down with the rest of the flotsam in the water.

207 EXT. BLUE LAKE. DAY.

A sharp cry from Sherie Lee as she sees the bunched little figure in the water.

SHERIE LEE

Look!

Turtle follows her gaze. Daryl's body floats in full view, face down some way off the shore of the lake.

SHERIE LEE

Oh no! No, please!

She lunges into the water tentatively. But it is Turtle who flings off his jacket and snoes to swim steadily outwards.

Turtle who grabs the collar of his friend's body and tows it agonizingly slowly towards the shore. Calling out as he makes progress:

TURTLE

Stop one of those cars up there!

Sherie Lee scrambles back to the main road and waves frantically.

208 EXT. HIGHWAY BY LAKE. DAY.

Two cars and a truck screech past the waving Sherie Lee.

209 EXT. BLUE LAKE. DAY.

Turtle, still struggling to bring himself and his burden to snore.

10 EXT. HIGHWAY BY LAKE. DAY.

Risking her life now, Sherie Lee stumbles into the middle of the road, determined to stop the next car. Which slows and pulls in. But as she is trying to explain what help they need - a COP CAR speeding up the highway in the other direction, slams on its brakes, makes a U-turn and pulls over to the hysterical Sherie Lee.

211 INT. MORGUE. DAY.

The PATHOLOGIST is being assisted into his operating gown. The CORONER, an elderly good guy, looks round the door.

CORONER

You working today? We don't have....

PATHOLOGIST

The boy they found at Blue Lake.

CORONER

It was drowning. What's the big deal?

PATHOLOGIST

You know the rules. Somebody's got to check it.

CORONER

So who am I going to play golf with?

He exits. The Pathologist checks his work sheet and crosses to the body drawers. Checks the number against his list and pulls open the drawer. The MALE NURSE hovers, awaiting his orders.

PATHOLOGIST

Put him on the table, Nurse. And then bring me the lateral incisor scalpel.

As soon as the Nurse's back is turned, the Pathologist opens his hip flask for a good slug. Wipes his lips and looks professional just in time.

212 INT. TURTLE'S BEDROOM. DAY.

Turtle runs into his room, flings himself on his bed and cries. There is a soft knock at the door and Sheri Lee enters.

TURTLE

Out!

But she doesn't go out.

SHERI LEE

It's okay to cry, Turtle.

(Cont'd)

12 Continued

She is gentle and generous, touching her brother with affection and sympathy. He cannot refrain from weeping on her shoulder.

SHERI LEE

It's okay. You loved him.

She strokes his back, her own head held high, fighting back her own tears. Gradually Turtle's sobs subside.

213 INT. LIVING ROOM, FOX HOUSE. DAY.

A numbed silence. Joyce has been weeping but for now sits staring at space. Howie and Elaine are sympathetic but impotent friends.

ANDY

We'll go back home.

ELAINE

No, don't. I'll...

HOWIE

We'll make coffee.

ELAINE

Yes. Coffee.

Andy shakes his head, reaches out a hand. Joyce stands up and instantly begins to cry again. Andy helps her out the front door.

As they exit, Elaine turns back. To find Howie bent over, racked by sobbing himself.

214 INT. SHERIE LEE'S ROOM. DAY.

Sherie Lee leaves open the door of Turtle's room and walks to her own. As she enters her room, she does not notice the VDU of her computer seem to switch itself on.

She sits at her worktable, head buried in hands for a moment. Behind her the VDU is flashing through pages of text, hundreds of pages whipping past at high speed. Then stopping on a single page.

Still Sherie Lee doesn't turn. But we can see the text page clearly. It is headed: CENTRAL MEDICAL DICTIONARY/ACCESS RESTRICTED. JOHN HOPKINS PERSONNEL AND AUTHORIZED. The actual text is headed: BRAIN DAMAGE/OXYGEN LOSS/NEURAL IMPACT.

Slowly Sherie Lee focusses on the astounding fact that her VDU is working. She stares at the text. Then with a howl of excitement leaps up.

(Cont'd)

214 Continued

SHERIE LEE  
(to the VDU)  
Daryl!

She races from the room.

215 INT. TURTLE'S ROOM. DAY.

Sherie Lee bursts in on a startled Turtle.

SHERIE LEE  
It's brain death! That's what dying means.  
But his brain can't die!

Turtle resists as she drags his shirt to get him moving. Then, as he understands what she's said, he gives a whoop and runs.

216 INT. MORGUE. DAY.

The Pathologist washes his hands. Tests the electric saw. Pulls down the microphone suspended over the operating table.

PATHOLOGIST  
Male child, ten, eleven years old,  
caucasian, no visible operation scars....

He prepares the body for pathology.

217 EXT. REAR ALLEY/RAILROAD YARD. DAY.

Turtle and Sherie Lee running. Scrambling over fences and down across the abandoned rail yard. Then starting up the long hill to the hospital above.

218 INT. MORGUE. DAY.

CLOSE SHOT: a gloved hand takes a long, sharp scalpel off the trolley.

219 EXT. REAR OF HOSPITAL/MORGUE. DAY.

Sherie Lee and Turtle jump over the perimeter wall, throwing aside garbage cans as they race to the building.

220 INT. MORGUE. DAY.

The scalpel rests on cold, youthful flesh. The Pathologist draws a surgical waste bowl up to the body.

21 INT. HOSPITAL/MORGUE. DAY.

Turtle and Sherie Lee burst into the hospital, shoving aside two OFFICIALS who attempt to stop them.

222 INT. MORGUE. DAY.

The door flies open. The Pathologist looks round angrily, scalpel in hand, from the corpse he is about to dissect on the table in front of him.

TURTLE  
Don't touch him!

SHERIE LEE  
Don't hurt him!

The Pathologist recovers his equanimity.

PATHOLOGIST  
Get out of here immediately.

Turtle and Sherie Lee fling themselves across the room, together scooping the body off the table and running with it towards the swing doors of the exit.

223 EXT. CORONER/HOSPITAL COMPLEX. DAY.

Turtle and Sherie Lee race round the corner towards the hospital complex, which is fifty yards separate from the Coroner's Department. As they reach the ramp leading to the hospital, the doors of the Coroner's office are flung open and two OFFICIALS go running in pursuit of them.

224 INT. HOSPITAL EMERGENCY ENTRANCE. DAY.

Sherie Lee, weeping and distraught, stands with the limp body of Daryl directly in front of the registration desk as Turtle, yelling for help, tugs at the coats of anybody who looks medical.

A YOUNG DOCTOR registers the scene and runs forward.

YOUNG DOCTOR  
What happened?

SHERIE LEE  
Drowning. He was drowned.

The Doctor lifts the body onto a trolley and starts moving towards a treatment room.

(Cont'd)

24 Continued

YOUNG DOCTOR

How long ago?

Sheri Lee hesitates.

TURTLE

Two minutes. Three minutes back. That's all.

As they vanish into the interior treatment room, their pursuers arrive and can be seen gesticulating, enquiring.

225 INT. TREATMENT ROOM. DAY.

The emergency TEAM has moved smoothly into action. Heart massage. Mouth to mouth resuscitation. An intravenous drip and a stimulant hypodermic syringe. There are FOUR MEDICS working on this slim little body.

DOCTOR

Okay, we're going for one.

A switch is thrown. The body convulses under the electric shock.

DOCTOR

And again.

The medical team seem to be invading this fragile child on the table before them. It looks a hopeless task.

226 INT. RICHARDSON KITCHEN. DAY.

Andy and Joyce can't bring themselves to look at each other over the kitchen table. Their coffee lies cold and untouched beside their hands which are locked, white-knuckled, in mutual sympathy. The silence is oppressive in the room, making distant sounds seem magnified, passing traffic, an airplane, the radio next door.

So locked in their misery are they, that they do not see the kitchen door opening quietly.

Daryl's face, bedraggled, peers round. His clothes are still stained with mud. He takes a step into the room. His shoes squelch, leaving marks on the floor.

All at once they sense his presence and turn.

Daryl's face lights up with a beam of pure joy that is instantly reflected in them as they rush to sweep him into their arms.

227 INT. MORGUE. DAY.

The Pathologist glugs down from a brown-bagged bottle of Scotch.

PATHOLOGIST

I almost, I mean nearly, ohhh.....

He drinks some more at the thought of what he nearly did. Then freezes as he finds himself face to face with the Coroner - in his golf clothes and staring at the brown bag.

PATHOLOGIST

I, uh, you.....??

CORONER

I ought to report you, Barney.

(relents after a pause)

But godamn, if you let me take the first six holes I'll forget it like usual.

The Pathologist delightedly staggers to his feet, happy to forget the medical impossibility. He even offers a share of the Scotch.

228 INT. RICHARDSON HOME. DAY.

Andy, Joyce and Daryl have now been joined by Turtle, Sherie Lee, Howie and Elaine in their family celebration.

JOYCE

Oh God, Daryl, I'm so happy!

TURTLE

Listen, Joyce, uh Snerie Lee and me were just talking on the way back here and we think from now on Daryl....didn't make it. We need to come up with another name, if that's okay. Safer. Know what I mean.

ANDY

Yes. Data Analysis....yughh!

JOYCE

But he is Daryl. I mean we can't just....

HOWIE

Sure you can. The kids are right.

ANDY

How'd you like the name Michael, after my father?

(Cont'd)

228 Continued

TURTLE

How about the name Elmer, huh? Or Kevin...  
Jack....Algernon.... Buddy Boy...oh this  
is going to be fun!

SHERIE LEE

How about Irving?

HOWIE

Or Emmanuel.

TURTLE

Or Sheldon. Our dentist's called  
Sneldon....

The CAMERA PULLS BACK as they remain, holding each other. Just  
a family reunited somewhere in an ordinary home in a pleasant  
community, somewhere in America. A family with one hell of an  
interesting future ahead of them.

THE END