

Eliot Rockett
by
Patrick Sisam & Rick velleu

based on the stories
"The Year of Getting To Know Us"
&
"Star Food"

by
Ethan Canin

01.01.07

FADE IN:

EXT. GOLF COURSE, FIRST TEE -- DAY

The afternoon sun hangs over the rolling fairways of the pristine course. BIRDS SING in the swaying trees.

THREE POLYESTER CLAD GOLFERS watch TOM "ROCKY" ROCKETT (67) take a driver from his MEXICAN CADDIE (62).

In Palm Beach plaid, his hair perfectly coifed, Tom wags the club head back and forth and swings. A magnificent drive sails down the middle of the fairway.

GOLFER #1 (O.S.)
That'll play, Rocky.

GOLFER #2 (O.S.)
You got all of that one, partner.

GOLFER #3 (O.S.)
Holy Cow!

Tom smiles proudly as he hands his caddie the club and follows the others down the fairway.

EXT. GOLF COURSE, SAND TRAP

Tom takes a swing from a green side bunker. In a spray of sand, the ball bounds across the green and into the hole.

GOLFER #1 (O.S.)
The kid can't miss.

GOLFER #2 (O.S.)
Atta' boy, Rocky.

Tom smiles to himself as he climbs out of the trap.

GOLFER #3 (O.S.)
Holy cow!

EXT. GOLF COURSE, FIFTH TEE

Tom crushes another huge drive.

GOLFER #1 (O.S.)
You're having the game of your life,
Rock.

GOLFER #2 (O.S.)
You can say that again.

GOLFER #3 (O.S.)
Holy cow!

THE CONVERSATION RECEDES DOWN THE FAIRWAY as Tom watches the flight of his ball. He's never been happier.

Suddenly, Tom's expression falls. His face turns red. He gasps for air as his eyes roll up and he falls awkwardly to the ground.

WE ZOOM IN as Tom's caddie rushes to his side.

CADDIE
 Senor Rockett! Ahora no! Es un juego
 estupendo!

Oblivious, the other golfers continue down the fairway.

ELIOT (V.O.)
 (matter of fact)
 You can't spend your whole life
 looking forwards and backwards.
 (then)
 You have to know what you want.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. JAIL CELL -- DAY

CU: Sitting with his back against a cinder-block wall,
 ELIOT ROCKETT (35) STARES INTO CAMERA.

Boyishly handsome, he looks younger than his age. His face
 is sweaty and covered with streaks of dirt. A thin trail of
 blood runs from a cut on his temple. His left eye is
 bruised and swollen.

Eliot wears a garish, ill fitting stars and stripes golf
 shirt. Blood stains the collar. The sleeve is torn.

In contrast to his battered appearance, Eliot's smile is
 oddly at peace. HIS FLAT VOICE IS AT ODDS WITH BOTH.

ELIOT (V.O.)
 I grew up in a big house. A very big
 house in a very small town.

EXT. EXPRESSWAY (1986) -- DAY

WE FLOAT PAST a small wooden sign that reads: "WELCOME TO
 ARCADE, FLORIDA. POPULATION 1,027. A Family town. Thank
 You For Not Talking Nasty."

EXT. ROCKETT HOUSE (1986) -- DAY

A three story house with a manicured lawn. A huge, white
 '72 Lincoln Continental convertible sits in the driveway.

ELIOT (V.O.)
 We had an overgrown putting green in
 the backyard, a dusty air-hockey table
 in the basement and three empty
 bedrooms...

WE ZOOM up the side of the house to find ELIOT ROCKETT (12)
 lying on the shingled roof near an open dormer window.
 Eliot squints pulling the clouds in and out of focus.

ELIOT (V.O.)
 ...For all the other children my
 parents forgot to have.

EXT. GOLF COURSE, FIRST TEE (1986) -- DAY

THE SAME THREE POLYESTER CLAD GOLFERS (twenty years younger) watch TOM "ROCKY" ROCKETT (44) take his driver from the same MEXICAN CADDIE (39). Tom wags the club head back and forth and swings. A magnificent drive sails down the fairway.

ELIOT (V.O.)
My father was in love with golf.

Tom smiles proudly as he hands his caddie the club and follows the other players down the fairway.

ELIOT (V.O.)
He played four times a week...

INT. ROCKETT DINING ROOM (1986) -- NIGHT

WE FLOAT THROUGH the mid-80s decor. At the head of the table, Tom (44) gesticulates as he speaks. Even though his voice isn't heard, he's incredibly engaging.

ELIOT (V.O.)
...And talked about the game like it was some sort of eastern religion on the verge of granting him "total consciousness".

REVEAL: ELIOT (12), sits on Tom's right. Not looking at his dad, he picks at his potato-chip-topped casserole.

ELIOT (V.O.)
He never taught me to play.

JANE ROCKETT (44), sits at the other end of the table. She wears a flowered dress to compliment her hair and smile. She's beautiful and very put together but seems slightly uncomfortable in her Happy Homemaker skin.

ELIOT (V.O.)
My mother didn't play golf either. She had no idea what my dad was talking about but still clung to every word as he recalled each course, hole and shot he ever played: The sand-save on the 6th at Bangor Lodge. The knock-down seven iron on the 14th at Windermere. The 22 foot left to right breaker to shoot 69 at Aston Villa.

Jane listens, smiley-eyed, as Tom continues.

ELIOT (V.O.)
It was difficult to know exactly what my mother was thinking.
(then)
Perhaps, devising new ways to cook cow's tongue: Roasted then chilled on a bed of green Jell-O; boiled, peeled and minced into a creamy sandwich spread.
(looking at his mom)
Nope.

(MORE)

ELIOT (V.O.) (cont'd)
 There was something different going on
 inside my mother's head. Something
 truly unique...

INT. JAIL CELL -- DAY

CU: ELIOT (35) CONTINUES TO SMILE AT US.

ELIOT (V.O.)
 ...And completely terrifying to all
 the other full-time casserole makers
 in our neighborhood.

INT. BROOKLYN LOFT BUILDING, CORRIDOR -- NIGHT

BING. An elevator arrow lights and the doors open. Eliot (35) and ANNE PRUFROCK (34) are locked in a deep kiss.

Anne's features are delicately refined. Attractive, yet slightly rumped, she's very comfortable in her own skin.

In contrast to his previous look, Eliot is dressed and groomed impeccably. He's the personification of downtown, artist cool.

ELIOT
Mmf-- I think-- Our Floor--

ANNE
Mmmhmm--

LAUGHING, Anne stumbles into the corridor. She quickly reattaches herself to Eliot, kissing him on the neck.

ELIOT (V.O.)
 My girlfriend Anne thinks I have
 "things" from my childhood that I need
 to work through.

WE WANDER BEHIND THEM as they make their way down the hall.

ELIOT
 (trying to pull away)
No-- Mmm-- Neighbors--

ANNE
They can get-- Own--

ELIOT (V.O.)
 She thinks I live my life only looking
 forwards and backwards. That I don't
 "feel"-- Don't "let myself feel."

They finally lean up against an apartment door.

ELIOT
 (holding her off)
 Let me find keys--

Eliot struggles for his keys as Anne continues to suffocate him with kisses.

ELIOT (V.O.)
 Anne trusts herself-- Follows
 herself.

Finally finding the key, he reaches around Anne.

ELIOT (V.O.)
 Me? Well, let's just say it's hard to
 take a leap of faith when you've
 convinced yourself not to have any
 faith at all.

INT. JAIL CELL -- DAY

CU: ELIOT (35) STARES INTO CAMERA. EVEN WITH ONE EYE
 ALMOST CLOSED, HIS LOOK IS PENETRATING. UNSETTLING.

ELIOT (V.O.)
 My name's Eliot Rockett. I'm thirty-
 five years old and right now I'm in a
 lot of pain.
 (then)
 Incredible. Life affirming. Pain.

INT. BROOKLYN LOFT BUILDING, CORRIDOR -- NIGHT

The door pushes open and, suddenly, all the lights go on.

FRIENDS
 SURPRISE!!!!

ANNE
 AHHHHH!!!!

Anne jumps back as PEOPLE emerge from hiding places all
 around the huge loft.

Eliot (35) smiles knowingly. Anne can't believe her eyes.

ANNE
 (quietly)
 I hate you.

ELIOT
 (like "I love you too")
 I hate you too.

Anne manages a quick smile before she's swarmed by friends.

INT. BROOKLYN LOFT -- NIGHT

Spacious and industrial, the loft is decorated with an
 eclectic mix of photographs, furniture and objets d'arte.

The crowd is a blend of artists, eccentric intellectuals,
 overworked lawyers and white-aproned waiters.

THEY SING "NEW YORK, NEW YORK" as Eliot carries a cake,
 emblazoned with the words *Bon Voyage!*, through the crowd.
 He finally arrives at an embarrassed Anne who wears a cheap
 rhinestone tiara and a red, silk "Miss America" sash.

ANNE
(whispering to him)
I'm going to kill you.

ELIOT
Wait until the swimsuit competition.

ANNE
Dead.

Anne takes a breath and blows out the candles as the song comes to a merciful end. A CHORUS OF CLINKING GLASSES.

GUESTS
Speech! Speech!

ANNE
Oh-- Please. No--

Anne blushes slightly as THE CROWD QUIETS. She's just uncomfortable enough to be extremely charming.

ANNE
Who knew a little girl who grew up
looking across the river at the United
Nations would one day become a lawyer
for them?
(with a laugh)
*And, I'd have to go to Geneva to do
it!*

A ROUND MAN (45) in an ill fitting suit cups his mouth.

ROUND MAN
*Finally a little diplomatic immunity,
eh Eliot!*

Eliot smirks as HOOTS & HOLLERS FILL THE ROOM. STILL CHUCKLING, ANNE CONTINUES.

ANNE
And all this-- What a surprise.
(then)
Eliot and I were just planning to have
a quiet night-- *Of good-bye sex!*

MORE LAUGHTER. Anne becomes serious as things settle.

ANNE
I can't tell you how much this means
to me-- How much I'm going to miss
you all--
(warmly at Eliot)
How difficult it is to leave.

A THOUGHTFUL SILENCE. EVENTUALLY, ANNE STARTS TO LAUGH.

ANNE
Isn't it ironic? I finally become
Miss America and I have to take my
crown to Switzerland.

MORE LAUGHTER.

ROUND MAN

*Eliot! You better hurry up and marry
the girl!*

LAUGHTER, WHISTLING AND APPLAUSE. Through the commotion, Eliot and Anne look at each other with genuine affection and a slight uncertainty.

INT. BROOKLYN LOFT, KITCHEN -- MUCH LATER

All the guests but two have gone. Near the door, Anne huddles close to her friend CLAIRE (33).

CLAIRE

So-- Why can't he go with you?

Anne looks over her shoulder, to where ELIOT (35) rummages through the fridge with Claire's husband MARK (41).

ANNE

And actually set foot outside New York City?

CLAIRE

No-- Of course, not.

ANNE

(then, hopefully)

The posting is only for three years.

CLAIRE

Aren't you both a little old for the long distance thing?

ANNE

(unconvincingly)

There's iChat and...

She's interrupted by a LOUD POP. Eliot and Mark approach wielding a foaming bottle of champagne.

ELIOT

Apparently this celebration's not over!

ANNE

What do you mean?

CLAIRE

(admonishing)

Mark!

MARK

What? Oh, shit-- Forgot. Sorry.

ANNE

What are you talking about?

Eliot hands around glasses of champagne. Claire declines.

CLAIRE

None for me.

ANNE
Oh, my God-- You haven't had a drink
all night!

CLAIRE
(to Mark)
Big mouth.

MARK
You're right. You're right.

ANNE
Wonderful-- You're going to be
wonderful parents.

Hugs and kisses move around the group. WE HANG ON ANNE, who
seems strangely distant.

CLAIRE
Well, given-- Uhh-- My situation, we
really should be off.

ELIOT
You just got here.

MARK
Nope-- She's right. It's never too
early to be a responsible parent.

CLAIRE
(rolling her eyes)
See you, Annie.

MARK
(heading out the door)
Eliot, we need to talk about revisions
to your cloning piece.

ELIOT
I thought you loved every word.

MARK
Sure-- I do. It's just the order of
some of them. You know--

Claire pulls Mark through the doorway before he can finish.
Eliot and Anne are suddenly alone.

ANNE
(quietly)
That's great for them.

There's a hint of sadness in her eyes. Eliot wraps his arms
around her.

ELIOT
Were you surprised?

ANNE
They've been trying for a while.

ELIOT
I meant about the party.

ANNE
 Oh. Yes-- Surprised.
 (with a smile)
 And scared.

ELIOT
 And, happy?

She looks at him affectionately.

ANNE
 Yes.

ELIOT
 And tired?

ANNE
 Very.

ELIOT
 Bed?

ANNE
 Yes.

ELIOT
 And good-bye sex?

ANNE
 Yes.

Anne kisses his neck as Eliot smirks.

ELIOT
 Can you put the tiara back on?

ANNE
 (still kissing)
 You're starting to freak me out--

THE PHONE RINGS.

ANNE
 No!

Eliot reaches for it but Anne holds onto him.

ANNE
 Leave it.

ELIOT
 They probably changed their minds
 about the champagne.

Anne reluctantly pulls away and starts toward the bedroom.

ANNE
 Tell them we drank it already!

ELIOT
 (picking up)
 We drank it already.

It's not them. Eliot quickly recovers.

ELIOT
 Oh-- Yes. This is he.
 (pause)
 Yes. Yes, I am.
 (pause)
 What? When?
 (pause)
 Yes. Okay. Yes. No, that's fine.
 (pause)
 All right. Thanks.
 (pause)
 Bye.

Eliot hangs up. He frowns slightly as he looks into the corner of the room.

ANNE (O.S.)
 Are they coming back up?

Anne is standing in the doorway. Eliot doesn't look at her.

ELIOT
 (flatly)
 It was the hospital.

ANNE
 What hospital?

ELIOT
 My father had a stroke.

ANNE
 What?! Is he okay-- Is he going to
 be all right?

Eliot looks up at her. His expression is strangely calm.

ELIOT
 I don't know.

ANNE
 What did they say?

ELIOT
 He was on the golf course.

ANNE
 What else?

ELIOT
 Apparently, he was having the game of
 his life.

ANNE
 They said that?

ELIOT
 Yes.

Eliot looks back into the corner as Anne takes his hand.

ANNE

Eliot. I'm so sorry.

EXT. INTERSECTION/ INT. LINCOLN (1986) -- EVENING

CU: A red traffic light swings in the breeze.

The huge car idles at a tranquil intersection. Eliot (12) and Tom (44) sit side by side in the front seat. They both look straight ahead. THERE'S AN EERIE SILENCE BETWEEN THEM.

Eliot glances cautiously at his dad. Scowling, Tom continues to look straight ahead.

INT. BROOKLYN BEDROOM -- MORNING

Eliot (35) moves about the bedroom packing neat piles of clothes into a suitcase. HE TALKS ON A CORDLESS PHONE.

ELIOT

...from LaGuardia to Jacksonville,
Florida.

(pause)

Yes. No, JFK's not so good.

(pause)

Today. That's right. This morning if
possible--

Looking beautifully disheveled in her pajamas, Anne enters with two cups of coffee. Eliot smiles as she gives him one.

ELIOT

Sure, I'll hold.

Eliot takes a sip as he watches the tops of the trees sway gently outside. He's jolted back by the voice on the phone.

ELIOT

Yes. It's okay.

(pause)

Yes, that's right.

(pause)

I'm writing it down

(he's not)

Yes. Fine. Thank-you.

(he hangs up)

I leave at 11:49-- Switch in Orlando.

He turns to find Anne staring at him. He quickly looks away, gathers up some socks and heads back to the suitcase.

ELIOT

Annie, I'll only be gone a day or two.
It's not that big a deal.

ANNE

Eliot, it's your father. Of course
it's a big deal.

He stops and looks at her. Thinking. Reasoning.

ELIOT
You're right. It is a big deal. But,
you know how things are with me and my
parents, though.

ANNE
Actually, you've hardly ever mentioned
them. I only assume you had a
childhood.

Eliot takes Anne's hand.

ELIOT
I know we have things we need to talk
about-- Things we need to figure out.

ANNE
Oh Eliot, this isn't about that. Why
won't you let me help you?

A GENTLE SILENCE.

ELIOT
This is something I need to do on my
own.

ANNE
(hopefully)
I could hold your hand?

ELIOT
That would be great.
(then)
When I get back.

EXT. ROCKETT MOTORS (1986) -- DAY

SLO-MO: In an impeccable suit and tie, Tom (44) shakes hands
with A BEARDED RABBI (61). Standing in front of a gleaming,
black sedan, the two men smile widely INTO CAMERA. A banner
behind them proclaims: *Happy Hanukkah from Rockett Motors!*

INT. ROCKETT DINING ROOM (1986) -- EVENING

ON TV: A slick haired Ronald Reagan speaks directly to us.

REAGAN
...And I can assure you, at no time,
were any weapons of any kind sold to
the Iranian government in order to
fund the Contra rebels...

CU: A spoon pushes through the hard skin of a bowl of
chocolate pudding.

Eliot (12), sitting at the dining-room table, jams the spoon
into his mouth. A glob of pudding sticks to his chin. THE
DIN OF THE TV CAN BE HEARD FROM THE OTHER ROOM.

TOM
Delicious pudding, Hun.

JANE
Completely dairy free.

Jane (44) and Tom (44) sit at opposite ends of the table. Jane wears a flowered dress, Tom, a shirt and tie. Jane tastes a petite spoonful of pudding and smiles tightly.

JANE
How was school today, Dear-Heart?

ELIOT
(through pudding)
Fine.

JANE
That's wonderful!

Eliot and Tom both glance at Jane. After a moment, Tom puts down his spoon and wipes his mouth. He looks at his son with a warm smile.

TOM
Do you study any marketing there,
Champ?

ELIOT
What?

TOM
Marketing? Sales? Is there a survey
course? Do they offer it as an
elective?

Jane smiles as she takes Eliot's hand.

JANE
Eliot's in sixth grade, Dear. He
studies things-- Wonderful things--
Like poetry, music appreciation, and
mathematics.

TOM
I just don't know if there's really a
need for all that-- Save the math
maybe.

JANE
But Tom, Eliot plays the bassoon--

Tom smiles curiously at Jane then, turns back to Eliot.

TOM
You do know this is the marketing
decade, don't you?

ELIOT
I guess--

TOM
So, you know what you have to do then?

SILENCE.

TOM
You have to learn to sell yourself.

ELIOT
(without a clue)
Okay.

TOM
(encouraging)
You are your own most valuable asset.

Tom takes another bite of his pudding and turns to Jane with an amazed smile.

TOM
Completely dairy free?
(then)
Hey-- What do you say we get a dog?!

Eliot stares at the chocolate skin in his bowl.

JANE (O.S.)
I'll freeze the leftovers!

INT. AIRPLANE -- DAY

Eliot (35) sits in business class speaking into the in-flight phone. His lap-top is open to a George W. Bush in drag screen saver.

ELIOT
...But the celebrity thing is the whole point-- What could be more vain than cloning yourself? It's the ultimate cosmetic surgery-
(beat)
Okay, okay-- But, you have to let me make the changes--
(beat)
Mark-- You can't--
(beat)
Listen, I appreciate the offer but I'm just going to be sitting around the hospital.
(then)
You know I'll make the deadline.

Eliot looks up to find a FUNNY LOOKING KID (6) staring at him from over the seat in front of him. Distracted for a moment, Eliot turns to look out the window.

ELIOT
No-- I haven't seen him for five years. Not since his last wedding.
(beat)
It was his fourth-- Fourth wedding.
(beat)
Yeah. I know what you meant.
(beat)
Okay-- I will. Thanks, Mark.
(beat)
Okay. Bye.

Eliot replaces the phone in the holder. He turns back to the kid, who continues to stare. Eliot flashes a goofy smile and the kid ducks back behind the seat.

WOMAN (O.S.)

What's even scarier is the technology
is basically there...

Eliot looks up to find SANDI (26), an extremely attractive Flight Attendant, standing beside him. Her cleavage and lacy bra are visible through the opening of her blouse.

ELIOT

Oh-- Uh--

SANDI

...and they're the only ones who can
afford it. I mean, who could really
bear another Larry King?

ELIOT

I'm afraid I don't--

SANDI

My God, this job would be completely
insufferable if you couldn't eavesdrop
on people's private conversations!

(then)

The whole cloning thing fascinates me.
You know-- Nature versus nurture.
Manufacturing Brad Pitt's genetic code
is one thing, but what about his life
experiences? Can you really duplicate
his mother's tiny glance of approval,
or how crushed he was about being left
off the high-school wrestling team?
And, we all know how much that boy
loves to wrestle. Coffee?

ELIOT

Ah-- Sure--

Eliot fumbles for his cup as she extends the pot over him,
further exposing her cleavage.

SANDI

My name's Sandi.

ELIOT

Eliot-- Rockett.

SANDI

Oh, I know-- I took a peak at the
passenger list. You're virtually
famous.

ELIOT

Well-- Not really.

SANDI

I'd say you get it right about fifty
percent of the time. Better than
most.

ELIOT
Thanks-- I think.

SANDI
Let me know if I can get you anything
else.
(then)
Ciao.

Sandi smiles and zooms away. Completely dumbfounded, Eliot watches her go.

ELIOT
(to himself)
Ciao--

EXT. ROCKETT MOTORS (1986) -- DAY

SLO MO: Standing in front of a yellow Lada, Tom (44) smiles INTO CAMERA as he shakes hands with A CHINESE WOMAN (70). The banner behind them reads: *Happy Chinese New Year from Rockett Motors!*

INT. AIRPLANE -- LATER

CU: The computer screen is filled entirely with the repeated sentence: *"You are your most valuable asset."*

Eliot (35) stares at the screen. Suddenly, Sandi appears right beside him. She whispers close to his ear.

SANDI
Most people say *flight attendant* but I
prefer *stewardess*. It's a bit
naughty. Don't you think?

She smiles coyly as she slips a business card into his shirt pocket and gently pats his chest.

SANDI
I'm in town all week.

She pulls away and quickly glides back down the aisle. Eliot watches her go.

Turning back, Eliot sees the kid duck back behind the seat.

EXT. ROCKETT ROOF (1986) -- NIGHT

A DOG BARKS IN THE DISTANCE. Eliot (12) lies on the roof. His hands folded behind his head, he looks up at the star-filled sky.

Jane (44) appears in the dormer window behind him. She watches Eliot for a moment, before she speaks.

JANE
Do you see Cassiopeia?

Surprised, Eliot quickly sits up.

JANE
I'm sorry. I didn't mean to startle
you.

ELIOT
I was watching the sky.

JANE
Do you mind if I join you?

Jane takes off her heels and climbs onto the roof. She carefully makes her way across the shingles and lies down next to Eliot. She SIGHS with contentment as she looks at the sky.

JANE
Such beautiful names: Cassiopeia,
Equuleus, Canes Venatici.

ELIOT
(tentatively)
The Big Dipper--

JANE
Yes. The Big Dipper.

They continue to look at the sky.

JANE
Eliot, what do you think about when
you come up here?

ELIOT
Are we really getting a dog?

Jane gives him a reassuring smile.

JANE
I don't want you to let anyone keep
you from doing what you should be
doing.

ELIOT
(apologetically)
I know. I've got to start marketing
myself.

JANE
That's not what I mean. I'm talking
about something else. Something much
more important.
(then)
I'm talking about "limited fame."

Eliot looks at her blankly.

JANE
Most of the famous men through history
are men who have achieved a kind of--
Vulgar fame. Dictators, patriots,
movie stars-- Those types.
(then)
(MORE)

JANE (cont'd)

They're people you've heard of: Josef Stalin-- Ronald Reagan-- Burt Reynolds-- Just to name a few. All those men had very, obvious ideas that everybody could understand. Do you know why?

ELIOT

No.

JANE

They all consumed too much dairy as children.

Jane studies Eliot's face. He tries hard to look like he has a clue what she's talking about.

JANE

It takes a special person to achieve limited fame, Eliot. Copernicus-- Michel Duchamps-- Michael Caine. They've all done it. Each one had the courage to look at regular things long enough until they began to discover new ways of seeing the world.

ELIOT

Like looking at the sky?

Jane smiles warmly.

JANE

Like looking at the sky.

ELIOT

Dad thinks I'm my most valuable asset.

JANE

I know, Dear-Heart. And your father means well. It's just-- Between you and me-- He was breast fed until he was nine years old.

Eliot furrows his brow.

JANE

You though, Eliot-- You're a different story. You're completely lactose free.

(facing him)

You have the perfect metabolism to achieve whatever you want. The only thing you need to do is to choose the direction you want to go in.

Eliot has no idea what she's talking about.

JANE

You need to decide: Do you want to be Josef Stalin or Michael Caine?

EXT. AIRPORT -- DAY

Eliot (35) stands on the curb smoking. He watches a battered palm tree sway in front of the hazy blue sky.

INT. AIRPORT BAGGAGE CLAIM -- DAY

Eliot (35) stares as the empty baggage carousel moves past. Even in the tiny airport, his luggage is nowhere in sight.

INT. LOST BAGGAGE COUNTER -- DAY

CU: A laminated chart with photos of suitcases of every description. A metal pointer slides across the plastic.

BAGGAGE MAN (O.S.)
(perky and precise)
Please point to the piece of luggage
that most resembles the piece of
luggage lost, stolen or delayed.

Eliot's finger taps a single photo.

BAGGAGE MAN (O.S.)
Thank-you. Please point to the color
on the chart that most resembles the
color of the piece of luggage lost,
stolen or delayed.

Eliot taps the black bar at the base of long color chart.

BAGGAGE MAN (O.S.)
Thank-you.

INT. RENTAL CAR COUNTER -- DAY

A harried RENTAL KID (19), in an ill fitting shirt and tie, nervously types into his computer.

RENTAL KID
...I've checked under R-O-C-K-E-T, R-O-
C-K-E-T-T, R-O-C-K-E-T-T-E, R-O-K-E-T
and R-A-C-K-E-T-- No record anywhere.
Are you sure you made the reservation
yesterday?

At the front of A LONG LINE OF PEOPLE HOLDING LUGGAGE AND GOLF CLUBS, Eliot (35) looks at the kid.

ELIOT
(charming/firm)
Can't you just give me another car.

RENTAL KID
(scoffing/sarcastic)
On tournament weekend? Yeah?!

EXT. EXPRESSWAY/ INT. EXCALIBUR -- DAY

CU: A Florida license plate reads: "ILUFGOLF."

Looking less than excited, Eliot (35) is at the wheel of a pink Excalibur convertible. His cell to his ear, he listens to RINGING ON THE OTHER END. After a moment, a machine picks up and there's the SOUND OF A GOLF BALL BEING HIT.

TOM (V.O.)

Fore!

(then)

Hi. You've reached Tom...

DAWN (V.O.)

...And Dawn.

TOM & DAWN (V.O.)

*We're probably on the golf course so
please leave a message and we'll--*

Eliot hangs up as he blasts past a giant, new sign: "WELCOME TO ARCADE, FLORIDA, POPULATION 21,896. NORTH-EAST FLORIDA'S GOLF PARADISE!"

EXT. GOLF COURSE, FIRST TEE (1986) -- DAY

Sitting in a golf cart, Tom (44) SMILES INTO CAMERA.

TOM

Eliot, why are you friends with Nickie Apple-- A boy who, obviously, has no idea about sales and promotion?

INT. APPLE FOYER (1986) -- NIGHT

NICKIE

PARTYYYYY!!!!

With a smoke filled party raging, NICKIE APPLE (13) leaps from the banister of a shag-covered staircase.

As he flies through the air, suddenly, Nickie's head connects with the chandelier. His feet swing up until his body is parallel to the floor. In a shower of glass, sparks and beer he falls.

THE MUSIC STOPS. A HUSH COMES OVER THE CROWD. Nickie lies unconscious on the floor. Blood streams from his forehead. His beer empties onto the rug. The kids move in around him. Slowly, Nickie's eyes squint as he tries to focus.

GIRL (O.S.)

Is he okay?

BOY (O.S.)

Do you think he still wants his beer?

Suddenly, Nickie springs to his feet.

NICKIE

PARTYYYYY!!!!

He jams his beer into his mouth and guzzles. THE MUSIC STARTS UP and the party kicks back into high gear.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

CU: ELIOT (35) LOOKS CURIOUSLY BEYOND CAMERA.

POV: A framed poster. A fuzzy kitten desperately clings to a wooden bar. The caption reads: HANG IN THERE BABY!

WIDE: Eliot stands at the foot of his father's hospital bed. The poster hangs above the bed.

Tom (67) lies on his back. Wires and tubes run from his arms to electronic machines. His skin is pale. His eyes are open but glazed. He stares blankly into space.

Aside from the poster and Tom's golf clubs, which lean in the corner, the room is bare. The beige curtains are drawn. There is no sign of previous visitors.

A YOUNG NURSE (25) scurries past Eliot. She heads directly to Tom and, with practiced precision, drops saline into each of his eyes. Eliot watches as she smiles shyly and exits.

EXT. ROCKETT FRONT LAWN (1986) -- DAY

On the front lawn, Eliot (12) swings a golf club. He flails wildly, loses his balance and falls to the ground.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Swing's really coming along, Eliot!

Eliot looks up to find CHRISTINE JACOBSON (35), their very attractive neighbor, standing over the hedge. In sunglasses, Christine wags her keys on her finger as BOB JACOBSON (34), her athletic husband, cuts the hedge with an electric trimmer. Bob wears protective goggles and ear phones.

ELIOT

(sheepishly)

Thanks.

CHRISTINE

It's only a matter of time before you're on the tour. Don't you think so, Bob?

(no response)

Don't you think so, Bob?!

BOB

(yelling)

What's that?!

CHRISTINE

(with sarcasm)

I was just telling Eliot that I'm giving up my fascinating existence as a neglected housewife to become a full-time exotic dancer!

BOB

(yelling)

A peeler? You're kidding, right?

Christine throws her arms up and heads to her car.

CHRISTINE

I wish I wasn't.

(then, over her shoulder)

Don't ever get married, Eliot. It's a sure way to ruin a great romance.

Eliot and Bob watch as Christine hops in her Mustang and peels out of the driveway. Bob rolls his eyes at Eliot.

BOB
(whispering/ too loud)
Hormones.

Eliot has no clue what he's talking about.

TOM (O.S.)
Have you seen my seven iron, Eliot?

Tom walks down the driveway looking through his golf bag.

ELIOT
I was practicing--

TOM
Well, it's not a toy. Why don't you
find yourself a stick or a rake or
something.

Tom smiles and takes the club as he heads to the back of the station wagon. Bob finally pulls off his headphones.

BOB
Great day for a game, Tom.

TOM
(a bigger smile)
Sure is, Bob. Hedge is really coming
along.

BOB
You know, if you ever need a fourth, I
was on the golf team at Yale.

TOM
(charmingly dismissive)
I'd love to Bob but this is a weekly
game-- You know how it is.

Tom gets into the car.

BOB
Sure-- I understand. I was--

TOM
And, I wouldn't want to be responsible
for your yard being neglected.

BOB
(laughing it off)
Of course-- Of course not-- Maybe,
another time?

TOM
You can bank on that, Bob.

They watch Tom back down the driveway and surge away.

BOB
Your dad's one helluva neighbor.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

In the corner of the room, Eliot (35) talks on his cell. Tom lies in bed, his condition unchanged.

ELIOT
What do you mean no one told you?

JANE
Just what I said.
(then)
Is she there?

ELIOT
Who?

JANE
The new wife-- What's her name?

ELIOT
Dawn. I think. I haven't seen her
though. She must be around here
somewhere.

JANE
Your poor father. Is he eating
alright?

Eliot looks at the myriad of tubes that run into his father's body, then, notices TWO DOCTORS walk by the door.

ELIOT
Listen mom, I've got to go. I'll call
you when I find out more.

JANE
I should come--

ELIOT
What?

JANE
To see him.

ELIOT
He was an asshole to you.

JANE
(defensively)
I'm not an idiot, Eliot.

Eliot peers out into the corridor. Nobody.

ELIOT
I'll call you later, okay?

JANE
Tell him I said "hello."

Eliot looks at Tom, who stares zombie-like into space.

ELIOT
Sure.

INT. HOSPITAL, NURSES STATION -- MOMENTS LATER

A TIGHTLY BUTTONED NURSE (48) works behind the counter. She doesn't look up as Eliot approaches.

ELIOT
Uh-- Excuse me, my father's--

NURSE
You must be the son?

ELIOT
(warm/ engaging)
Yes. I am.

She smiles tightly, not buying into Eliot's charm.

NURSE
I'm very sorry about your father's condition. I need you to sign some things on his behalf.

She hands Eliot a stack of forms.

ELIOT
Shouldn't his wife do this?

NURSE
Who's wife?

ELIOT
I think my father's wife should probably sign these. Has she been here today?

NURSE
I wasn't aware he was married.

She turns to a monitor and hits a few keys.

NURSE
Are you sure?

ELIOT
Of course-- Her name's Dawn. Well, I'm pretty sure her name's Dawn.
(then)
I think.

She looks at him skeptically and hits more keys.

NURSE
I'm sorry. There's no record--

ELIOT
Excuse me?

NURSE
You're *Eliot*?

ELIOT
Yes.

NURSE
You're the only *Rockett* listed in your
father's insurance.

ELIOT
(leaning over the counter)
Who else is listed?

NURSE
A "Mr. Roberto Sanchez."

ELIOT
Who?

EXT. GOLF CLUB PARKING LOT -- DAY

Fighting to maintain consciousness, Tom (67) is helped into
his caddie Roberto's rusted-out, 1974 Chevy Vega.

ROBERTO
Senor Rockett, we need to call the
ambulance.

TOM
(slurring badly)
I said no fucking ambulance. I'm
walking out of here. These people are
my friends and associates. I won't
make a spectacle of myself.

TWO CART GOLFERS (50s) slow down to look. Tom forces a
desperate smile.

TOM
How you hitting it today, boys?

CART GOLFER
(concerned)
Everything okay, Tom?

TOM
(slurring/laughing)
Sure-- Top drawer!

The men slowly pull away as Tom fumbles for his seat-belt.

ROBERTO
But, Senor Rockett--

TOM
Roberto, your gratuity is in very
serious jeopardy!

Roberto reluctantly closes the door and rushes around the
car as PARTY MUSIC FADES IN.

INT. APPLE DINING ROOM, CU SERIES (1986) -- NIGHT

A myriad of different liquors are poured into a large
plastic jug, surrounded by dozens of paper cups.

KID #1 (O.S.)
Whoah! Nickie's parents must be total
alcoholics-- More creme de menthe!

KID #2 (O.S.)
Excellent-- Jungle juice!

INT. APPLE BASEMENT (1986) -- CONTINUOUS

THE MONKS' "DRUGS IN MY POCKET" PLAYS.

The party has switched to low gear. Kids slow-dance and make-out in bean-bag chairs strategically located in the darkest corners of the room.

Eliot (12) leans against the wall with jungle juice in hand. He takes a tiny sip but immediately spits the foul liquid back into his cup.

He surveys the scene. In a large bean-bag chair, AN ATHLETIC BOY is straddled by TWO GIRLS. Each girl waits patiently as he necks with one, then switches to the other.

In another chair, KIM TEMPLE (12), the hottest girl in school, and LANCE, an overmatched boy, make-out. Eliot watches as Kim slides on top, pushing Lance into the vinyl.

In the center of the room, Nickie (a dish towel scotch-taped to his forehead) downs a cup of booze, closes his eyes and sways to the music.

Eliot turns back to find Kim looking directly at him. He tries to look away but can't escape her gaze. He awkwardly takes a sip of his drink. Suddenly, his face turns red. He GAGS and COUGHS as the liquid burns his throat. He desperately tries to breathe as he skulks up the stairs.

Kim smiles affectionately as she watches Eliot disappear.

INT. APPLE MASTER BATHROOM (1986) -- LATER

Beyond the DISTANT MUSIC, Eliot (12) sits on the closed toilet seat, his chin resting in his hands.

Suddenly, the bathroom door bursts open. Eliot jumps aside as Lance, his hand over his mouth, lunges for the toilet.

LANCE
Wook ouwwttt!

Lance falls to his knees and jams his head into the bowl.

LANCE
Bluu-glahhhhh...

Eliot slowly backs into the hallway. He quietly closes the door and slips away.

INT. APPLE LIVING ROOM (1986) -- MOMENTS LATER

Eliot (12) rounds the corner and stops in his tracks. With HER FRIENDS AUTUMN AND DONNA, Kim Temple stands directly in front of him. AUTUMN WHISPERS TO KIM.

Kim smiles through her braces and moves closer to Eliot. She stops inches away from him.

KIM
Hi, Eliot.

ELIOT
(barely audible)
Hi, Kim. Where's Lance?

AUTUMN AND DONNA GIGGLE.

KIM
Who cares.

Kim leans forward and gently whispers into Eliot's ear. His eyes almost pop out of his head.

INT. ROCKETT LIVING ROOM (1986) -- NIGHT

CU: On TV, a contrite Reagan LOOKS RIGHT AT US..

REAGAN
...And I must now confess that, when I spoke to you one week ago, I was not as forthright as I might have...

INT. ROCKETT KITCHEN (1986) -- CONTINUOUS

THE TV ECHOES THROUGH THE HOUSE AS THE BACK DOOR CREAKS OPEN and Eliot (12) sneaks across the kitchen.

INT. ROCKETT FOYER/ LIVING ROOM (1986) -- CONTINUOUS

Eliot (12) peers around the corner.

His back to his son, Tom watches Reagan sweat. Tom holds a full tumbler of scotch on his lap. His eyes are glassy.

Tom doesn't notice as Eliot tip-toes up the stairs.

INT. ROCKETT MASTER BEDROOM (1986) -- MOMENTS LATER

Standing on the open bottom drawer, Eliot (12) quietly rummages through his father's dresser. He pulls out combs and cuff-links. Finally, he sees what he's looking for.

Eliot pulls out a box of condoms. He carefully removes a single pack and stuffs it into his pocket. He starts to put the box away but hesitates. He quickly grabs a second condom and shoves it into his pocket.

A SNIFFLE. Eliot freezes. Still perched on the dresser drawer, he slowly turns.

In her nightgown, Jane sits in a chair in the shadowy corner of the room. Her eyes are red. Her cheeks are stained with tears. Clutching something in her hands, she seems to stare right through Eliot. SHE SPEAKS VERY QUIETLY.

JANE
Hello, Dear-Heart.

ELIOT
Hi.

JANE
How was school today?

Eliot looks at her curiously.

ELIOT
It's Saturday.

JANE
Golfing day.

A LONG SILENCE before Jane starts to softly talk to herself.

JANE
Sir Isaac Newton, Enrico Fermi--

ELIOT
Are you okay?

Jane forces a tearful smile.

ELIOT
Okay-- Bye.

Eliot carefully steps down and closes the drawer. He slowly crosses the room and exits. Jane doesn't watch him go.

JANE
(barely audible)
Doug Henning--

CU: Jane holds a photo of a smiling Rockett family frolicking at the beach.

EXT. ROCKETT HOUSE (1986)

Eliot (12) looks up at his parents' window. There's no sign of life. He jumps on his bike and peels away.

EXT. SMURF-PUTT (1986) -- NIGHT

CU: A sign of golfing Smurfs blows gently in the breeze.

CU: Hands in pockets, Eliot (12) stands in the middle of the deserted mini-putt. The dark silhouette of the Smurf village skyline looms over him.

THUNDER RUMBLES IN THE DISTANCE.

EXT. SMURF-PUTT (1986) -- LATER

Huddled against an eight foot, fiberglass Pappa Smurf, Eliot (12) stands in the rain, shivering with cold. Soaked, he clutches a crumpled condom in his bone-white fingers.

INT. ROCKETT FOYER (1986) -- NIGHT

The front door creaks open and Eliot (12) slips inside. He shakes violently. His lips are blue. He gently closes the door and takes tiny, stiff steps toward the stairs.

Suddenly, Jane (44), in her nightgown, descends upon him.

JANE
(whisper/yell)
What on earth-- It's almost eleven-
thirty--

In one motion, she peels off Eliot's soaking T-shirt.

JANE
You're going to catch your death! Who
do you think you are, Vasco De Gama?!

Shivering too much to speak, Eliot watches as Jane, with astonishing efficiency, pulls off his shoes, socks and jeans and crumples them into a soggy ball.

JANE
Now, go upstairs, run a hot bath.
(exiting)
And, for heaven's sake, don't wake
your father.

In his underwear, Eliot stands in the middle of the hall shaking like a leaf. He looks up as THE DOORBELL PLAYS A THUNDEROUS CHORUS OF TROPICAL BIRDS, MONKEYS, ELEPHANTS AND OTHER WILDLIFE.

EXT. TOM'S HOUSE -- EVENING

Eliot (35) waits on the front steps of the ranch-style bungalow. He has no luggage. He hits the doorbell again.

INT. TOM'S FOYER -- DAY

THE JUNGLE SOUNDS ECHO THROUGH THE EMPTY HOUSE as the door cracks open and Eliot (35) sticks his head inside.

ELIOT
Dawn? Hello?
(stepping inside)
Anyone home? It's Eliot-- *Hello.*

The space is walled by picture windows that look out over the rolling fairways of a pristine golf course. Accented by pygmy statues and animal skin throw rugs, the decor is a bizarre Disney interpretation of an African craft theme. The teak coffee table is littered with golf magazines. A putter and an electric golf cup sit on the floor.

Eliot picks up a framed photograph from the well stocked bar. Tom (67) has his arm around a woman in her 40s. She has big hair and big make-up. They laugh as they toast the photographer.

INT. TOM'S KITCHEN

A golf ball falls out and bounces across the floor as Eliot (35) opens the fridge. Inside: A topless bucket of Kentucky Fried Chicken and dozens of boxes of golf balls.

INT. TOM'S BASEMENT STAIRS

A SWITCH CLICKS. THUMPING DISCO MUSIC BLARES as the stairway is bombarded with spinning disco lights.

THE SWITCH CLICKS AGAIN AND EVERYTHING STOPS. Eliot (35) walks back up the stairs and closes the door.

ANNE (V.O.)
How long do you think she's been gone?

INT. TOM'S BEDROOM

Eliot (35) slides open a closet door: Except for a few dangling hangers, it's completely bare.

ELIOT (V.O.)
Hard to say. There's barely a sign she was ever here.

ANNE (V.O.)
Why didn't he tell you?

ANOTHER CLOSET SLIDES OPEN: A spectacular array of gaudy golf shirts and slacks. Every item is perfectly pressed.

ELIOT (V.O.)
Who knows with my dad. She hasn't been to the hospital either. Nobody has.

ANNE (V.O.)
He must have been too embarrassed.

INT. TOM'S BEDROOM/ INT. BROOKLYN LOFT -- CONTINUOUS

Eliot (35) sits on the edge of a zebra skin covered bed-spread. He talks on his cell as he glances at his reflection in a huge ceiling mirror.

ELIOT (V.O.)
I don't think he's capable of that.

A THREE FOOT PYGMY STATUE STANDS BESIDE THE BED. The carved, wooden figure features a giant, erect penis.

Eliot touches the erection which comes off in his hand. He tries to put the huge shaft back into place but it won't stay. He casually slides it under the pillow of the bed.

ELIOT
My father's a freak.

The phone to her ear, Anne looks out the window.

ANNE
How are you doing?

ELIOT
Fine.

ANNE
Are you sure?

ELIOT
I might have to stay a couple more days. I wasn't able to talk to the doctor. He was in surgery-- Or playing golf.

ANNE
Will you call when you know more?

ELIOT
Or when I find my luggage.

ANNE
That too.

ELIOT
(flatly/ like I love you)
I hate you.

ANNE
(smiling)
I hate you too. I really, really hate you.

They listen to each other's breathing for a moment.

ANNE
Okay. Good-night.

ELIOT
Good-night.

Anne clicks off the phone and looks out at the trees which appear surreal in the streetlights.

Looking beside him, Eliot notices a small switch above the leopard skin headboard. He flicks it. With an ELECTRIC WHIRR, the bed springs to life beneath him. He reaches for the switch but is shaking too much to grab it.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- NIGHT

THE LOW HUM OF MEDICAL MACHINES ACCOMPANIES TOM'S UNEVEN BREATHING.

Tom (67) stares blankly into space as the light in the room gradually changes from night to day.

DOCTOR (V.O.)
It's called "Locked-In Syndrome".
(then)
Generally, it occurs after a stroke of this kind but, other than the obvious symptoms, it's still a bit of a mystery.

EXT. HOSPITAL -- MORNING

Eliot (35) sits on a bench beside a DOCTOR (30). In contrast to his usual cool style, under his jacket, Eliot wears one of his father's gaudy golf shirts. It features a brain breaking illustrations of *beers of the world*.

ELIOT
Meaning what-- He's completely cut off?

DOCTOR
Not necessarily. There's no sensory response but he could have some awareness of his surroundings.

Eliot lights a cigarette and offers one to the doctor. He takes it.

ELIOT
What about his eyes?

DOCTOR
You close them and they spring back open.

ELIOT
But can he see?

DOCTOR
We don't know.

Eliot watches A PATIENT (80) zoom by in a golf cart.

ELIOT
So, what happens now?

DOCTOR
We wait. In some cases patients will be gone weeks, or even months, and then snap out of it like nothing ever happened.

ELIOT
And, in others?

EXT. INTERSECTION/ INT. LINCOLN (1986) -- EVENING

The huge car idles as Eliot (12) continues to look at his dad. Tom (44) stares straight ahead. SILENCE.

CU: The red traffic light swings.

INT. ELIOT'S BEDROOM (1986) -- DAY

CU: A junior-high yearbook opened to an array of headshots of teenage girls. AN UNIDENTIFIABLE SOUND CAN BE HEARD.

NICKIE
Oh yeah, Baby-- Oh yeah--

ELIOT
Are you sure this is right?

NICKIE

Of course I'm sure-- I only do it
twelve times a day.

Eliot (12) and Nickie (a ragged bandage on his head) are sitting on the floor. Their backs against the bed, only their heads and shoulders are visible. It's obvious they're both masturbating - The source of the sound.

Eliot holds a National Geographic open to a Tonga Tribal Photo Essay, while Nickie concentrates on the yearbook.

ELIOT

Should it be taking this long?

Nickie looks at Eliot with disdain and hands over the book.

NICKIE

Switch. There's a picture of Kim
Temple on page sixty-eight.

Nickie continues without missing a beat.

NICKIE

Oh yeah-- Oh yeah-- Mmmmmmm--

Eliot cautiously flips through the year book until he finds the picture of Kim.

NICKIE

She's so into me--

ELIOT

Kim?

NICKIE

(with more intensity)
*Mmmmmmm-- I got to third base with her
at my party--*

ELIOT

What?

NICKIE

*After everyone left. She jumped me--
Oh, yeah-- Oh, yeah-- Practically
had to fight her off.
(a tight laugh)
Mmmm-- Could have gone all the way if
I hadn't barfed-- Oh-- Mmmm--
C'mon, baby-- C'mon!*

Eliot masks his disappointment as he looks at Kim, smiling through her braces.

A KNOCK and, in an instant, Jane (44) is in the room.

JANE

Dear-hearts?

Eliot and Nickie pull their knees up against their chests as Jane puts two enormous sandwiches and two glasses of black liquid on the dresser.

JANE
(enthusiastically)
Are you two having fun?

Their lower halves hidden from view, the boys look innocently over their shoulders.

ELIOT
Fine, thank you.

NICKIE
Yes, please.

JANE
I made sandwiches. Caribou and blueberry.

AN AWKWARD SILENCE as the boys hold their smiles. After a moment, Jane takes a curious look around the end of the bed. Finally, she realizes what they're doing.

JANE
Oh-- My-- Well-- I--

Her brief look of shock is replaced by a huge smile as she's barely able to control her swelling pride.

JANE
Isn't this wonderful-- Magnificent--
My--
(bursting with excitement)
How are things coming along?!

The boys look at her in horror.

JANE
Are you making progress?!

ELIOT
(cautiously)
I think so--

JANE
Well, take all the time you need--
Rome wasn't built in a day!

Paralyzed with parental pride, Jane continues to stare. Finally, she snaps out of it.

JANE
Well-- I guess I'll let you get back to business.

She winks knowingly, spins around and exits.

Eliot and Nickie are stunned. Suddenly, the door springs open and Jane sticks her head back inside.

JANE
Keep shining!

In an instant, she's gone again.

NICKIE
What was that?

ELIOT
My mom wants me to be like Michael
Caine.

Nickie looks at Eliot like he's lost his mind.

NICKIE
Your family's weird, Rockett. No
wonder you're so screwed up.

INT. CRAB SHACK BAR -- NIGHT

Eliot (35) sits in a booth, talking on his cell. His jacket
off, his *beers of the world* shirt is on full display.

ELIOT
Kuala Lampur?! But, I was on a flight
between New York and Jacksonville.
(beat)
Well, how long's it going to take?
(beat)
Hello-- *Hello?*

Eliot waves the phone around, trying to find reception.

ELIOT
Wait-- *Hello?*

MAN
Eliot-fucking-Rockett!

Eliot looks up to find NICKIE APPLE (36) standing over him.

In a shirt covered with Tabasco bottles, Nickie is a
chubbier version of the kid he used to be. His thinning
hair is swept up into a faux-hawk, he sports a Fu-Man-Chu
moustache and gold hoops in his ears and nose. He is the
unfortunate poster-boy for quasi-urban-smalltown-rube-chic.

Nickie smiles as he unwittingly sloshes his cocktail on his
shirt.

NICKIE
What the fuck are you doing here?
(swinging into the booth)
How are you, man?!

ELIOT
Hi, Nickie.

NICKIE
How long have you been in town?! Why
haven't you called, yo?!

Eliot counters Nickie's excitement with his own calm.

ELIOT
I just got here. My Dad--

NICKIE
Shit!
(sobering)
(MORE)

NICKIE (cont'd)
I know-- And I just saw Rocky at the club a couple of weeks ago. How's he doing?

ELIOT
Okay.

NICKIE
Damn, Eliot. I'm sorry-- I heard he was having the round of his life.

ELIOT
Yeah--

Nickie fishes an ice cube out of his drink. HE CRUNCHES LOUDLY as his eyes wander around the room.

ELIOT
So what about you? Is this your local?

NICKIE
Nahh. I was just scoping the place for the chick driving that sweet Excalibur parked out front--

Eliot changes the subject as Nickie looks around.

ELIOT
How's-- Laura?

NICKIE
(distracted)
Laura? Do you mean Lara or Lisa?

ELIOT
Excuse me?

NICKIE
First wife: Lara. Second wife: Lisa.

ELIOT
Oh. I must mean Lisa, then.

NICKIE
We split up almost three years ago.

ELIOT
Really?

Nickie is suddenly fixated on Eliot's shirt.

NICKIE
That's a choice shirt, yo. Fifty-fifty or sixty-forty?

In vain, Eliot tries to duck away as Nickie reaches down the back of his shirt to examine the tag.

ELIOT
Sixty-forty-- I'm sure--

NICKIE

Damn-- I hate when they don't say.

Nickie pulls his hand out and rubs Eliot's sleeve material between his fingers.

NICKIE

Yeah sixty-forty-- breathable. And choice-- Very choice.

Nickie pops another cube in his mouth as he continues to scout the room.

NICKIE

Anyway, there was a little down time there-- You know playing the field. And then-- You remember Annette Ron?

ELIOT

Sure.

NICKIE

She and I got married last year.
(chuckling)
I always had a thing for her.

ELIOT

That's great.

NICKIE

For awhile it was. We separated six months ago.

ELIOT

I'm sorry.

NICKIE

Are you kidding? I'm having the time of my life! I reek of commitment and the ladies eat it up, yo!

ELIOT

You're serious?

NICKIE

Serious as herpes.
(then, leaning in)
No offense. Eighty percent of carriers don't even know they have it-- Poor bastards.

Nickie quickly turns back to scoping the room.

ELIOT

So, what now?

NICKIE

Looking for number four.

ELIOT

Already?

NICKIE
Sure. I love being married. I just
haven't found the complete girl.

They consider this before Nickie points to Eliot's hand.

NICKIE
What about you? No hardware?

ELIOT
Still single.

NICKIE
Single or "single?"

ELIOT
I live with my girlfriend-- Almost
three years.

NICKIE
That's twenty-one dog years! You
should marry that chick!

NICKIE LAUGHS as he fishes another ice cube. Suddenly, he
notices Eliot's somber silence.

NICKIE
It looks like marriage might be *the*
issue.

ELIOT
It's come up.

NICKIE
Fuck.

ELIOT
Yeah.

NICKIE
Women.

ELIOT
Yeah.

NICKIE
Fuck.

ELIOT
Yeah.

NICKIE
Fuck.

They both take a drink. Suddenly, Nickie's face lights up.

NICKIE
Hey, do you remember Kim Temple?

INT. 19TH HOLE SPORTS & STRIP CLUB -- NIGHT

AN ASIAN HOSTESS (24), scantily clad in what barely passes
as golf outfit, LOOKS INTO CAMERA.

HOSTESS
Welcome to The Nineteenth Hole!

With a flourish, she throws open a door to reveal a huge, garish, sports bar/strip club. DISCO MUSIC POUNDS as MALE PATRONS stare at huge televisions that feature every imaginable sporting event. WAITRESSES, decked out in skimpy, golf attire, serve drinks and flirt shamelessly.

Eliot (35) struggles to keep up to Nickie, who, in his element, deftly follows the hostess through THE CROWD.

NICKIE
 The old home town ain't what it used to be!

INT. 19TH HOLE SPORTS & STRIP CLUB -- LATER

Eliot and Nickie sit at a table that resembles a golf green. A number of empties in front of them, they drink cocktails from golf-bag-shaped holders. They're both a little drunk.

NICKIE
 (above the music)
 Three words: *G-C-F*.

ELIOT
 Uh-- Yeah--

Nickie leans in to Eliot, who has no idea what he's talking about.

NICKIE
 You know El-- And I mean this with all respect-- But, If you find yourself needing to unload your Dad's place, you couldn't find a better time.
 (holding his hands up)
 This isn't a commission thing. I'm just letting you know. As a buddy-- That's all.

ELIOT
 (a tight smile)
 I appreciate the tip.

NICKIE
 (serious)
 You're a good man, El.
 (then)
G-C-F.
 (whispering)
Golf. Course. Frontage.

Nickie grabs his drink and pounds it back. His face turns red as he coughs and gags.

NICKIE
P--ARTT--T-Y!!!

WOMAN
 Do you have balls?!

Eliot turns to find a BEAUTIFUL WAITRESS (22) beside them.

ELIOT
Excuse me?

WAITRESS
For the show?

NICKIE
Oh, yeah, Baby!!

Nickie scrambles for his wallet as the waitress produces a small bucket of golf balls. Nickie hands her a few crumpled bills and smiles slyly.

NICKIE
The rest is for you, Darling! And, could you bring us a couple more of them tequila Gatorade numbers?!

WAITRESS
You bet. Thank you, gentlemen.

Nickie watches her ass as she goes.

Suddenly, the stage is awash in spinning and pulsating lights. A CHEER GOES UP as Pat Benetar's "HIT ME WITH YOUR BEST SHOT" kicks in.

NICKIE
Here we go, Rocky-Boy!

He hands a ball to Eliot who's still reluctant to partake.

NICKIE
WOOOOOO!! PARTYYYY-ONNNN!!!!

The curtains part to reveal A BEAUTIFUL DANCER swinging on a trapeze suspended over a "Brady Bunch" style dunking-machine. Tall, thin and agile, she's dressed in a skin-tight golf shirt and hot pants. Eliot is stunned to see it's KIM TEMPLE (35).

INT. APPLE LIVING ROOM (1986) -- NIGHT

XCU: Kim (12) gently whispers to Eliot (12).

KIM
Meet me at Smurf-Putt-- I want to go all the way.

INT. 19TH HOLE SPORTS & STRIP CLUB -- NIGHT.

Kim (35) writhes to the MUSIC as a golf green target is lowered on the far side of the stage. In a flash, balls start flying at the target. Eliot (35) watches in disbelief as Nickie throws ball after ball. They all miss their mark.

NICKIE
C'mon, Rocky! Let'er fly!

Eliot doesn't move. Nickie grabs the ball and heaves it. It hits the target and Kim is sent plunging into the water.

THE CROWD
 ONE MISSISSIPPI, TWO MISSISSIPPI,
 THREE MISSISSIPPI...

Eliot watches uncomfortably. She's staying under a long time.

Suddenly, the trapeze tightens and Kim is hoisted out of the pool. With the soaking wet T-shirt stretched across her body, she swings and smiles. THE CROWD GOES CRAZY. Eliot can't take his eyes off of her.

NICKIE
 Bravo! Bravo! What an entertainer!

INT. 19TH HOLE SPORTS & STRIP CLUB -- LATER

The club is nearly empty. Eliot (35) and Kim sit at the table, which is littered with glasses. His mouth open, Nickie is passed out in a chair. Kim wears jeans and a T-shirt. Her hair is back. Her demeanor is warm and relaxed.

KIM
 ...And I certainly never thought I'd end up working here but boy, does it make those tuition bills easier to swallow--

ELIOT
 Tuition?

KIM
 I'm in grad school--
 (quickly moving on)
 And this place really isn't so bad--

ELIOT
 Studying what?

Kim smiles reluctantly.

KIM
 Landscape architecture-- Golf courses.

ELIOT
 Really?!

KIM
 Yeah-- Yeah. I'm a complete sell-out.

ELIOT
 A incredibly sexy sell-out.

They share a shy smile as Kim takes a sip of her drink.

KIM
 Well, I've got to get out of here before Erin figures out what her mom does for a living.

ELIOT
Erin?

KIM
(smiling proudly)
My daughter. She's four. The one
thing Brian and I did right. You
remember Brian Chadwick?

ELIOT
The hockey player?

KIM
The adulterer.

ELIOT
Oh-- I'm sorry.

KIM
It's okay. It was over long before
that.

Eliot takes a drink as he thinks about what she's said.

KIM
Anyway, it's me who should be sorry.

ELIOT
For what?

KIM
Making you wait in the rain all night.
(smiling shyly)
I had such a huge crush on you.

ELIOT
You did?

KIM
What did you think?!

ELIOT
I don't know. I thought you and
Nickie--

KIM
Is that what he told you?! Give me
some credit!

They look at Nickie, who's head bobs and snaps back.

ELIOT
I guess you're right.

They share a smile and a long, silent look.

EXT. KIM'S FRONT PORCH -- LATER

Eliot (35) and Kim are tangled in a passionate kiss. They
slide their hands under layers of clothing as their
breathing quickens.

ELIOT
Mmmm-- I can't.

KIM
Okay-- Okay-- Let's stop--

They continue to kiss.

ELIOT
Break--

KIM
We're-- stopping--

Still kissing.

ELIOT
Yes.

KIM
Now!

They finally pull apart. Both trying to catch their breath, they stand an uncomfortable distance away from one another.

KIM
(smiling sarcastically)
That feels a lot better.

They shift awkwardly and, finally, sit down on the railing. Their arms crossed, they don't look at one another.

KIM
Are the two of you are having problems?

ELIOT
I don't know-- I suppose.

KIM
Marriage, babies-- That kind of thing?

ELIOT
Do I have a sign on my back?

KIM
Yup.

THEY LAUGH. After a moment, Kim slides her hand across the rail. Eliot doesn't pull away as her fingers touch his.

KIM
It's too bad. It would be fun to go back to that night.
(then, chuckling)
This time I show up-- Riding my ten speed.

ELIOT
You had a ten speed?

KIM
 (smiling/whispering)
 No rain-- No curfew...

She moves closer and puts her cheek against his. Her lips brush against his ear.

KIM
*Meet me at Smurf-Putt-- I want to go
 all the way.*

She kisses Eliot's neck and slides her hand under his shirt. He can't stand it any more. His lips find Kim's and they kiss deeply. He moves in front of her and slides his hips between her thighs. Her head snaps back...

KIM
Ohhh--

...as she reaches for the door.

EXT. SMURF-PUTT (1986) -- NIGHT

CU: A raw egg splats into Pappa Smurf's eye.

INT. ROCKETT FOYER (1986) -- HALLOWEEN NIGHT

The glow of sweeping, red lights spills through the window as THE DOORBELL RINGS. Dressed as Madonna's "Like a Virgin", (complete with "Boy Toy" T-shirt) Jane (44) opens the door. A look of shock crosses her face.

On the stoop, Eliot (12) stands in front of A POLICEMAN (28). The cop has his hands on Eliot's shoulders. A police cruiser flashes on the street as HALLOWEENERS zoom back and forth. With lipstick and a giant, blonde wig, Eliot is dressed like a member of "Flock of Seagulls."

POLICEMAN
 Mrs. Rockett?

JANE
 Yes?

OFFICER
 Is this your son, ma'am?

Jane glares at Eliot who looks back at her innocently.

JANE
 Yes, of course this is my son. What seems to be the problem?

OFFICER
 The problem *seems to be* that your son has no respect for private property.

JANE
 (aggressively)
 Are you accusing Eliot of being a communist?

Taken aback, the cop hasn't a clue what she's talking about.

OFFICER

No ma'am-- Well-- Your son, and another presently unidentified suspect, vandalized the Smurf-Putt premises.

JANE

Is that so?

Jane gives Eliot a long, hard look. He bites his lip.

OFFICER

The thing is-- Your son refuses to identify the other perpetrator--

JANE

(more aggressively)

You mean "suspect?"

OFFICER

Yes ma'am-- I guess--

JANE

Is my son under arrest?

OFFICER

No, but--

JANE

Then, I hardly see why it's necessary for him to identify the other perpetrator.

OFFICER

You mean "suspect?"

JANE

Are you trying to tell me what I mean, officer?

OFFICER

No, ma'am.

Completely dumbfounded, the officer discreetly slides his hand off of Eliot's shoulder.

JANE

Well then, thank-you for bringing Eliot home-- He's never ridden in a squad car before so, I'm sure, with all the guns and sirens and such, it was a fascinating experience for him-- He thirsts for knowledge and is on the verge of making a very significant discovery-- But that's really none of your concern-- I've got a cow's tongue that's in need of peeling-- Good-night.

The cop is speechless as Jane pulls Eliot inside.

JANE

(wheeling around)

And, officer?

OFFICER
(meekly)
Yes, ma'am.

JANE
Turn off those awful lights. My
neighbors are going to think someone
had a heart attack.

OFFICER
Yes, ma--

The door slams before he can finish.

EXT. KIM'S FRONT PORCH -- DAWN

The door creaks open and Eliot (35) emerges into the morning light. His clothes are rumpled, his shoes untied. He takes a few, precarious steps to the edge of the porch. HE SIGHS DEEPLY as he looks into the distance.

INT. LINCOLN (1986) -- DAY

NEIL DIAMOND'S "I AM THE LION" PLAYS.

The ocean glistens in the distance as the Lincoln heads down the coastal highway. Uncharacteristically loose, Tom (44) taps the wheel as HE SINGS ALONG. The car hits a bump.

INT. LINCOLN TRUNK (1986) -- CONTINUOUS

In the darkness, Eliot (12) lands on top of Tom's golf clubs. He struggles to regain his balance just as the car hits another bump and, again, he's thrown into the air.

EXT. AMUSEMENT PARK (1986) -- DAY

CU: His expression strangely distant, Eliot (12) sits in the front of a speeding roller-coaster. He holds on tightly as the coaster banks and turns.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- EARLY MORNING

CU: A ventilator breathes in and out.

CU: Glossy eyed, Tom stares into space.

INT. TOM'S LIVING ROOM -- EARLY MORNING

Eliot (35) leans back on the couch. He looks like hell.

INT. BROOKLYN BEDROOM -- CONTINUOUS

THE PHONE RINGS NEXT TO THE UNMADE BED. Half-dressed, Anne picks up.

ANNE
Hello?

ELIOT (O.S.)
Hi.

ANNE
Eliot? My god, you're up early.

ELIOT (O.S.)
Yeah, I guess.

ANNE
What's wrong-- Has something happened
to your father?

ELIOT (O.S.)
No, he's fine. The same.

Anne sits down on the edge of the bed.

ANNE
Are you alright?

INT. BROOKLYN BEDROOM/ INT. TOM'S LIVING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

ANNE
I called you last night.

ELIOT
I was out-- With an old friend.

ANNE
(smiling)
You told me you didn't have any old
friends.

ELIOT
Yeah-- Well-- I guess I was wrong.

ANNE
(with a laugh)
And now admitting you're wrong. You
must have really been up to no good.

ELIOT
How's retirement?

ANNE
Nothing but pedicures and cappuccinos.

ELIOT
Just like you planned.

THEY SHARE A LAUGH.

ANNE
Eliot, are you sure you're alright?

ELIOT
I'm fine.

ANNE
Do you want me to come there?

ELIOT
(unconvincingly)
No. Everything's cool.

SILENCE.

ANNE
I'll get the first flight in the
morning.

ANOTHER SILENCE. Anne looks at her watch and frowns.

ANNE
Sweetie, I'm sorry-- I'm really late.

ELIOT
For your pedicure?

ANNE
Massage.
(smiling)
I'll call you later.

ELIOT
Okay.

ANNE
Bye.

Anne hangs up. She thinks for a moment then rushes out.

Eliot puts down the phone and stares out at the trees.

EXT. ROCKETT MOTORS (1986) -- DAY

A banner reads: *Happy Saint Patrick's Day from Rockett Motors!* IN SLO-MO, Tom (44), dressed in a green jacket and tie, shakes hands with A LEPRECHAUN (58). They stand in front of a BRIGHT green K-Car sedan.

EXT. AIRPORT -- DAY

Frosted glass doors slide open and Anne walks through. Pulling her suitcase behind her, she tries to contain her laughter as she sees Eliot (35).

Holding a bunch of white tulips, Eliot leans against the Excalibur. He wears another of Tom's golf shirts. It's emblazoned with a giant, screaming bald eagle and the American flag.

ANNE
You're acclimatizing well.

They kiss and wrap their arms around each other. Anne notices Eliot's slight awkwardness. She pulls back and looks at him curiously.

Trying to hide his guilt, Eliot hands her the flowers.

ELIOT
These are for you.

Gradually, a smile emerges on Anne's face.

ANNE
Are we going straight to the hospital?

ELIOT
 Visiting hours are over-- And,
 besides, if you're going to meet my
 family, you need to be well rested.

ANNE
 I don't mean to be insensitive but
 isn't your father in a coma?

ELIOT
 Something like that.

She takes a closer look at his outfit as he opens her door.

ANNE
 You know, this new look kind of works
 for you. Sort of George Bush Junior
 meets-- George Bush Senior.

INT. EXCALIBUR -- EVENING

Eliot (35) drives. The flowers on her lap, Anne sits low in
 the passenger seat beside him.

She looks at Eliot but he doesn't make eye contact. Anne
 reaches over and gently rubs the back of his neck. After a
 moment, Eliot turns and forces a smile. As he looks back
 down road, the warmth in Anne's expression fades.

INT. ROCKETT FOYER -- EVENING (1986).

JANE
 ...My neighbors are going to think
 someone had a heart attack.

OFFICER
 Yes, ma--

Again, Jane (44) slams the door before he can finish. She
 looks Eliot (12) up and down. She's not happy.

ELIOT
 (sheepishly)
 It was Nickie.

JANE
 No one likes a stooly.

She spins on her heels and heads toward the kitchen.

JANE
 Now, go wash your hands. I'm sure
 your father will be thrilled to hear
 about your big day.

Eliot looks at his hands.

INT. ROCKETT DINING ROOM (1986) -- NIGHT

Eliot (12), still in costume, crunches nervously on his
 tongue, fiddlehead and Captain Crunch dinner. Tom, in shirt
 and tie, reads the newspaper. Jane, also still in costume,
 CLEARS HER THROAT.

JANE

Tom, there's something we need to discuss.

TOM

(not looking up)
Mmm.

JANE

Tom, please--

Tom looks up from the paper as Eliot waits for the ax to fall. With forced confidence, Jane pushes forward.

JANE

I think we should make this next year a theme year-- For the family.
(smiling)
This year, starting tonight, is going to be "the year of getting to know us better."

ELIOT

(warily)
What do you mean?

Jane welcomes Eliot's interaction.

JANE

Oh, nothing that's going to change our everyday lives too much. I just thought we'd all make an attempt to get to know each other a little better.

TOM

Sounds terrific.

Tom smiles tightly and turns back to the paper.

JANE

Especially you Eliot. Your Dad and I are going to make a special effort to get to know you better. It's going to be our theme-- The theme for the family.
(proudly)
The Rockett theme.

Jane and Eliot look at Tom who continues to read.

JANE

We can do all kinds of things together: Go to movies, make Hello-Dollies, play Simon. Eliot, you can throw a party for all your friends-- A slumber party!
(then)
And Tom, you can take Eliot on your golf outings.

Tom looks up suspiciously.

TOM
I beg your pardon?

JANE
You and Eliot can play golf together.

TOM
The boy doesn't know how to play golf.

JANE
He's dying to learn!

Tom looks at Eliot whose expression is less than enthusiastic.

ELIOT
I am?

JANE
Yes-- And, it would be a wonderful way for you to get to know each other better-- You hardly ever see one another.

TOM
We see each other everyday.

JANE
I know but it's not the same. Golfing would allow the two of you to bond.

TOM
"Bond?"

JANE
As men.

Tom furrows his brow as Eliot looks at him skeptically.

TOM
Neither of us would like that.

INT. LINCOLN TRUNK (1986) -- DAY

SLO-MO: The trunk springs open to reveal Eliot (12) lying on Tom's clubs. Eliot shields his eyes from the blinding light.

INT. TOM'S LIVING ROOM -- EVENING

Eliot (35) behind her, Anne surveys the room with dismay.

Tom's clothes are strewn everywhere. A pillow and blanket cover the couch. The coffee table is littered with fast food debris.

ANNE
Why haven't you been sleeping in the bed?

ELIOT
Fear of electrocution-- Mainly.

Anne looks at him as though he's crazy.

ANNE
You can't live like this. And, you
can't help your father if you don't
take care of yourself.

Eliot smiles coyly.

ANNE
What?

ELIOT
I've reverted back to my childhood.

ANNE
You didn't have far to go.

Anne examines a pygmy sculpture.

ANNE
They must have traveled constantly.

ELIOT
Dawn's doing-- Or, maybe Cheryl. It
certainly wasn't my mother. She was
never able to pry my father out of the
dealership-- Or off the golf course.

ANNE
How many step-mothers do you have?

ELIOT
Two or three.

ANNE
So, it's not such a big deal that one
of them's missing?

ELIOT
Not really.

Eliot walks up behind Anne and wraps his arms around her.

ELIOT
Please, put down the Disney licensed
fertility idol.

She places the carving on the mantle and leans her head back
on his shoulder. SHE SIGHS as she surveys the room.

ANNE
What a strange and lonely house.

Eliot smiles slyly.

INT. TOM'S BASEMENT -- NIGHT

DARKNESS. ELO'S "TELEPHONE LINE" FADES IN..

WE PAN THROUGH A SWINGER/ KARAOKE WONDERLAND TO FIND ELIOT
(35) standing in a white spotlight.

Grainy, time-lapse flowers bloom on a giant video screen behind him, as Eliot coolly SINGS ALONG TO THE ORCHESTRATED MUSIC.

ELO/ ELIOT

*Hello. How are you? Have you been
all right through all those lonely
nights? That's what I'd say. I'd
tell you everything, if you'd pick up
that telephone...*

Anne sits in a round, zebra covered bed in the middle of the room. She smiles gleefully as disco lights wash over her.

ON THE SCREEN: A LONG-HAIRED MAN & AND A BUXOM WOMAN run hand in hand, through a flower filled meadow.

With all the attitude of Leonard Cohen, Eliot continues.

ELO/ ELIOT

*Hey, how you feelin'? Are you still
the same? Don't you realize the
things we did were all for real, not a
dream? I just can't believe they've
all faded out of view. I look into
the sky and I wonder why...*

ON THE SCREEN: In the porn film, the man and the woman kiss and grope as they peel off each other's clothes.

ELIOT swings into the chorus.

ELO/ ELIOT

*Telephone line, give me some time, I'm
living in twilight. Telephone line,
give me some time, I'm living in
twilight...*

ANNE CHEERS WILDLY as Eliot steps down from the stage and sashays toward her.

ELO/ ELIOT

*Okay, so no one's answering. Well
can't you just let it ring a little
longer?...*

Eliot extends his hand. Anne rolls her eyes as she takes it and is pulled into his arms.

They sway with the music as behind them ON THE SCREEN: The man and woman make thrusting, bouncing love.

ELO/ ELIOT

*I'll just sit tight, through shadows
of the night...Let it ring forever
more....*

Anne entwines her fingers in Eliot's. Just as he's about to launch into the next chorus she stops him with a deep kiss.

ELO

*Telephone line, give me some time, I'm
living in twilight. Telephone line,
give me some time, I'm living in
twilight...*

ELO PLAYS as they quickly become lost in each other's arms.

ON THE SCREEN: The blonde man and woman have acrobatic sex.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ROCKETT HOUSE (1986) -- DAY

Eliot (12), sits on the front steps reading a dog-eared copy of Erica Jong's FEAR OF FLYING, with an erotic photo of a woman's naked torso on the cover. His expression a mixture of fascination and fear, Eliot is engrossed in the text.

TOM (O.S.)
It's pornography!

JANE (O.S.)
It's not pornography-- It's
literature! There's a big difference!

CU: Eliot tries to concentrate as, behind him Jane and Tom move from room to room, inside the house.

TOM
Not to the boy!

JANE
Don't underestimate him, Tom. Eliot
has a rapidly expanding mind. He
needs to be exposed to a variety of
stimuli or he'll be doomed.

Jane heads up the stairs. Tom yells after her.

TOM
Doomed? The boy's eleven years old.
There's only one kind of stimuli on
his mind and he doesn't need that kind
of smut to encourage him!

JANE (O.S.)
Eliot is twelve, Tom, and that's
exactly the kind of "smut" he needs to
encourage him!

A SERIES OF FLAT, ELECTRONIC TONES FADE IN.

INT. ROCKETT KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Sitting at the kitchen table, Eliot (12), Tom and Jane play the game Simon. The mood is incredibly tense.

No one makes eye contact as they watch the blinking lights and listen to the electronic drone.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

Tom (67) stares into space as Anne leans over him and gently pushes the hair back from his forehead.

ANNE
Hello, Mr. Rockett. I'm Anne. I'm
Eliot's friend.

ELIOT
He can't hear you.

Arms crossed, Eliot (35) leans against the wall. He's wearing an even more outrageous shirt than the day before.

ANNE
(stroking Tom's hand)
I'm sure he knows we're here.

Anne lets go of Tom's hand and walks to the window.

ANNE
Look at this place. What's wrong with you men?

She pulls open the curtains, filling the room with light. She opens the window. BIRDS SING OUTSIDE.

ANNE
Nobody could get better in here.

Anne notices the kitten poster.

ANNE
"Hang In There Baby?"
(in disgust)
Is that some sort of sick joke?

ELIOT
I think it's supposed to inspire you to recovery.

She lifts the picture from it's hook and stashes it in the closet.

ANNE
Fucking kittens.

ELIOT
Language.

ANNE
(mocking Eliot)
I thought he couldn't hear us?
(heading for the door)
I'm going to buy some flowers.

Anne stops and turns back to Eliot's dad.

ANNE
Would you like anything else, Mr. Rockett?

ELIOT
I'm sure he wouldn't mind if you called him Tom.

ANNE
(ignoring Eliot)
Nothing, Mr. Rockett? Okay. But, let me know if you change your mind.

She turns and exits leaving Eliot alone with his father.

EXT. GOLF COURSE (1986) -- DAY

Dressed in a rainbow of pastels, Tom (44) swings and watches in dismay as his drive hooks into the woods.

GOLFER #1 (O.S.)
Better keep an eye on that one, Rocky.

GOLFER #2 (O.S.)
Too bad, partner.

GOLFER #3 (O.S.)
Holy cow!

In disgust, Tom hands the driver to Eliot (12), who caddies for him, and heads down the fairway.

GOLFER #1 (O.S.)
Hey Rock, who's the kid?

TOM
It's my boy, Eliot.

With difficulty, Eliot slides the head-cover on the club.

GOLFER #1 (O.S.)
A little Rocky?

GOLFER #2 (O.S.)
A chip off the old block?

Barely able to lift the enormous bag, Eliot staggers down the fairway as Tom charms his friends.

TOM
I've decided it's important for the
boy and I to bond.

GOLFER #1 (O.S.)
"Bond?"

TOM
Absolutely. Quality time, gents--
That's what keeps the family strong.

EXT. ROCKETT HOUSE -- DAY

The door opens to reveal Eliot (35) and Anne standing on the steps of Eliot's childhood home. Anne holds some daisies.

JANE
Home at last, jiggy-jig!

They're greeted by JANE ROCKETT (67). A little heavier and a little more grey, she's dressed in a flowing, purple mumu.

JANE
Dear-Heart.

ELIOT
Hi, mom.

She smothers Eliot with a hug and quickly turns to Anne.

JANE
And, you must be Anne. It's so
wonderful to meet you.

Jane gives her a hug and pulls back to look at her.

JANE
You're so beautiful.

ANNE
(blushing slightly)
Thank you. It's nice to meet you too,
Mrs. Rockett.

JANE
(to Eliot)
And, she knows how to take a
compliment.
(back to Anne)
But, please. "Mrs. Rockett" was my
mother-in-law's name. It's Jane, or
mom, or hey you!

JANE LAUGHS LOUDLY. Anne smiles as she holds out the
flowers.

ANNE
For you-- *Jane*.

JANE
(bubbling over)
Oh-- My-- My goodness. I can't tell
you how long it's been--
(blurting out)
Happiness is born a twin!

She speaks to Eliot as though Anne can't hear.

JANE
She's lovely, Eliot. Absolutely
lovely.

ELIOT
Yeah, mom. I know.

Anne glances at Eliot as Jane spins around and heads inside.

JANE
Anyway. Come in. Come in. You must
be starving-- Do you like elk?

Eliot gives Anne an "I told you she was completely out of
her mind" glance. Anne throws him a "she seems perfectly
sane to me, so you must be the one with the problem" look
and follows Jane inside.

ANNE
That sounds wonderful, Jane.

JANE
And Eliot, where did you find that
awful outfit?

INT. ROCKETT LIVING ROOM -- LATER

CU: A photo of Eliot (2) at the beach.

JANE
He always loved the ocean. He was
never afraid of it even when he was a
baby. He was like a happy, little
fish-- Or sea-horse-- Or algae!

The living room is a wonderland of sculptures, newspapers, books, animal cages, board games, balloons, taxidermy, and medical equipment. The walls are plastered with posters of longhaired, sculpted men and heaving breasted women riding unicorns and posing on wind-swept mountain tops.

A huge gold-framed movie still of Michael Caine hangs above the mantel.

A jug of thick, black liquid in front of them, Jane and Anne look at a photo album. Across the room, Eliot (35) examines a piece of taxidermy that appears to be a cross between a cat and a rabbit.

Her index finger zooming in and out of her mouth, Jane rubs her teeth with a "finger condom" whitener as she speaks.

JANE
And here he is dressed for his second
grade play.

A picture of Eliot (5) in a puffy, white costume.

ANNE
Is he-- A cauliflower?

JANE
Oh, no-- A cloud. Isn't that
wonderful? My special boy. All the
other brats were shepherds and super-
heroes-- Ridiculous.

ANNE
That's so cute.
(to Eliot)
You were so sensitive.

JANE AND ANNE LAUGH TOGETHER as Eliot smiles falsely.

JANE
Well, I wasn't surprised when he grew
up to be an writer-- But, who could
have imagined we'd both be artists.

Jane leans close to Anne and puts her hand on her knee.

JANE
The blog is my instrument.

Eliot holds up the taxidermy rodent.

ELIOT
No more *cabbit* breeding?

Jane turns to Eliot with a tight smile.

JANE
Just because they don't exist, doesn't
mean they aren't real.
(back to Anne)
Do you blog?

ANNE
No-- I don't. It seems complicated--

JANE
(with a girlish laugh)
Oh, Goodness-- If I can do it anyone
can! But, enough about me. Let's
talk about the two of you.
(leaning in)
I'll bet Eliot's extremely good at
sex. He masturbated very early on.

Jane smiles knowingly. Anne is taken aback for a moment but
recovers nicely.

ANNE
People are charmed by him-- I was.

JANE
And now the two of you are in love.
Transcendent! Absolutely
transcendent!
(chuckling)
Maybe I'll even get some grandchildren
out of the deal.
(back to Anne)
I keep telling him to pull the goalie.
But, who am I? Just an old kook who
hasn't seen a po-po in twenty-one
years.

ANOTHER SILENCE. Trying to fill it, Anne points to the
mantle.

ANNE
Michael Caine is one of my favorites.

JANE
Oh, yes-- Jaws: The Revenge-- His
most underrated performance.

ANNE
I loved him in Hannah and Her Sisters.

Out of the corner of her eye, Anne watches Eliot exit.

JANE
Yes-- Such a mother-fucker.
(bursting)
Has Eliot mentioned my theories on
limited fame?!

INT. MEN'S LOCKER ROOM (1986) -- LATER

Eliot (12) stands in front of a mirror. A shelf below is lined with, shaving items and an murky jar of Barbicide hair tonic. A black comb sits in the bottom of the brew.

The sagging torsos of OLD NAKED MEN shuffle back and forth behind him. SHOWERS CAN BE HEARD.

GOLFER #1 (O.S.)
What was wrong with your game today,
Rocky?

ROCKY (O.S.)
I just didn't have it.

GOLFER #2 (O.S.)
I guess you've got to start playing a
little more often, partner. We hardly
see you around here anymore.

GOLFER #1 (O.S.)
Must be that whole "bonding" thing.

Taking a cautious look around, Eliot reaches into the jar and fishes out the comb.

EXT. GOLF CLUB PARKING LOT (1986) -- DAY

His hair combed exactly like his father's Eliot (12), walks beside Tom (44).

Carrying the golf bag, Eliot struggles to keep up as his dad greets everyone they pass.

TOM
Great day for a game, Tony. How's
Helen?
(then)
Pin is back on seventeen, Phil.

ANNE (O.C.)
Eliot?!

Eliot looks back over his shoulder.

EXT. ROCKETT ROOF -- DAY

Eliot (35) sits on the roof looking up at the clouds.

ANNE (O.S.)
Eliot?!

After a moment, Eliot gets up and looks out at the town below. Housing developments stretch to the horizon.

ANNE
Where are you?!

He turns away, slowly walks across the roof and goes inside.

EXT. ROCKETT DRIVEWAY -- DAY

Two golf carts full of golfers zoom by as Eliot (35), Anne and Jane approach the Excalibur.

JANE
Isn't this fancy.

ELIOT
It's a rental.

JANE
(sarcastic)
Oh, really?
(to Anne)
He thinks I'm out of my mind but I
know he loves me.

ANNE
(smiling)
I know what you mean.

Eliot climbs into the car and watches as Jane puts her hands on Anne's cheeks.

JANE
It was so wonderful to meet you. I
hope you'll come back and visit soon.

ANNE
Of course, Jane. Thank you.

Jane gives her a big kiss and WHISPERS IN HER EAR.

JANE
(in perfect Mandarin)
Don't worry. Everything's going to be
fine.

Jane pulls back and gives Anne a reassuring look.
Dumbfounded, Anne forces a smile and gets into the car.

Jane walks to Eliot's window and gives him an awkward hug.

JANE
Good-bye, Dear-Heart.

ELIOT
See you, mom.

Jane and Anne share a final look as Eliot shoves the car into gear and pulls away.

JANE
Keep shining!

EXT. ROCKETT DRIVEWAY (1986) -- DAY

Her eyes closed, JANE (44) stands behind Eliot (12) with her hands firmly covering his eyes. Eliot's hair is still combed just like his dad's. Surrounding them are A GROUP OF KIDS (12/13). Everyone wears odd, Tibetan Monk party hats and expressions of anticipation.

TOM (OS)
...Six, five, four...
 (kids joining in)
...Three, two, one!

Jane lifts her hands. She and Eliot stare at a beaming Tom (44), who stands in the driveway, in front of a huge draped present, which is obviously some sort of car.

TOM
 Happy Birthday, Sport!

Tom yanks a huge red ribbon. THE GROUP GASPS as the sparkling '72 Lincoln Continental convertible is revealed.

JANE
 (in disbelief)
 But, Tom-- I thought we agreed on the puppy--

ELIOT
 A car?

TOM
 A nineteen-seventy-two Lincoln Continental Town car. Fully loaded. Mint condition.

JANE
 But, Eliot's only thirteen years old.

Eliot stares in disbelief at the gleaming car and his dad who smiles back at him like Monty Hall. Nickie steps forward, his eyes bugged out in amazement.

NICKIE
 Eliot's got a car?
 (then)
 ROAD TRIP!!

Tom is almost knocked over as, following Nickie, the kids stampede the Lincoln. Some pile in, while others jump on top and start POUNDING ON THE PANELS.

KIDS
 ROAD TRIP! ROAD TRIP! ROAD TRIP!

Tom grabs kids, two at a time, pulling them from the car.

TOM
 GET AWAY! GET AWAY! THIS IS A
 NINETEEN-SEVENTY-TWO LINCOLN
 CONTINENTAL TOWN CAR! FULLY LOADED!
 MINT CONDITION!

Stunned, Eliot and Jane watch as Tom desperately extracts the kids from the car.

TOM
 THIS VEHICLE WILL DO NOTHING BUT
 APPRECIATE!

CHRISTINE (O.S.)

Hi, gang.

They all freeze and turn to see a stunning Christine climbing into her Mustang. Jane forces an awkward smile.

JANE

Oh-- Hello, Christine. Beautiful day for it.

CHRISTINE

Isn't it, though. Happy Birthday, Eliot.

ELIOT

(barely audible)

Thanks.

CHRISTINE

That dress, Jane-- Absolutely your color.

JANE

(blushing)

Oh-- It's just something I threw on--

CHRISTINE

Radiant.

JANE

Well-- I-- Thank you.

Christine smiles warmly as she pulls away. Jane turns back to see Tom climbing into the Lincoln.

JANE

Tom-- Where are you going?

TOM

(sharply)

I told you-- I'm squeezing in another nine holes with Bridger.

JANE

But that wasn't until after the party. And you were going to take Eliot with you.

TOM

I thought you said he had some "big things" he's working on.

JANE

Well, he does-- But he's making such progress-- And it's so special for the two of you to bond.

TOM

The boy caddied for me yesterday. We've already bonded.

Tom starts the car and backs down the driveway. Disappointed, Eliot, Jane and the kids watch him go.

JANE
 (with forced enthusiasm)
 Ahh-- Well-- Who's ready to break
 the pinata?

INT. ROCKETT DINING ROOM (1986) -- NIGHT

His hair still combed, Eliot (12) sits at the table eating green Jell-O 1-2-3. A large gob of green cream is stuck to his cheek.

Jane and Tom sit at opposite ends of the table. They eat their Jell-O in TENSE SILENCE. Jane finally speaks.

JANE
 Where did you play this afternoon,
 Tom?

TOM
 (not forthcoming)
 The coastal course.

JANE
 How was your game?

TOM
 Not great.

JANE
 That's because you didn't have your
 star caddie with you!

Eliot glances at his mother with concern. She forces a reassuring smile as she nervously continues.

JANE
 Did you see the ocean?

Tom looks at Jane for a long time before he responds.

TOM
 Yes, I saw the ocean.

JANE
 That's wonderful. Eliot loves the
 ocean.

ELIOT
 (quietly)
 I'm afraid of the ocean.

JANE
 (laughing nervously)
 Don't be silly. You've always loved
 the ocean-- You were never afraid of
 it, even when you were a baby-- I
 remember when you were in diapers
 you'd crawl down the beach and right
 into the water-- Complete strangers
 would stop and watch-- You were like
 a happy, little fish-- Or sea-horse--
 Or-- Algae!

Eliot and Tom watch as, with a shaky hand, Jane takes a sip of her black brew.

TOM

The boy says he doesn't like the ocean.

JANE

(forcing a laugh)
Eliot loves the ocean. We've got pictures!

INT. GOLF CLUB RESTAURANT -- NIGHT

A huge ice sculpture of a golfer teeing off is the centerpiece of the large, wood panelled room.

THE MURMUR OF DINNER CONVERSATION is pierced. THE DISAPPROVING PATRONS, turn to find NICKIE CACKLING UNCONTROLLABLY.

At a window table, he sits between Anne and Eliot (35), who, like Nickie (and the rest of the men in the room) wears a bright orange club jacket. Nickie also wears a collarless dress shirt with a huge gold stud in the top button hole.

NICKIE

Ahh-- Okay-- Okay-- So anyway, the house is totally empty because it's on the market. And there we are, on the kitchen floor, uh-- Right in the middle of things--
(smiling to Anne)
Being a gentleman, I'll avoid the details.

ANNE

Thank you.

NICKIE

When, suddenly, we hear the front door open.
(chuckling to himself)
I'd forgotten that I'd given the keys to another agent and she's showing it to her husband!

ANNE

Wait-- Wait. The agent's husband or the husband of the girl you're--

NICKIE

Precisely!

ANNE LAUGHS. Eliot smirks, then, does a double-take.

ELIOT'S POV: Across the crowded restaurant, a sexy Kim Temple sits down. Accompanied by a LOUNGE LIZARD (51), in a gold necklace, over his orange blazer, Kim doesn't notice Eliot who slowly slides down in his seat.

NICKIE

Well, the first time I try to get up, I slip in something wet...

ANNE

Oooh.

NICKIE

...And I fall back on top of her--
Which isn't all bad-- But, by this
time, we can hear them in the hallway--
(snooty realtor voice)
Notice the cathedral ceilings, fine
Italian marble-- Careful you don't
slip in the wet spot.

ANNE LAUGHS AGAIN as Eliot peers across the room. Kim
smiles and chats with her date as champagne is brought to
their table. Eliot hides behind his menu.

NICKIE

Well, I finally get to my feet and
drag her, kicking and squirming, out
the back door. The whole time she's
saying over and over: "They're my
best underwear! They're my best
underwear!" LIKE THEY'RE MADE OF
TWENTY-FOUR-FUCKING-CARROT-GOLD!!

ANNE

I'm embarrassed to say I know exactly
what she means.

NICKIE

Exactly?

Nickie and Anne are beside themselves as Eliot sneaks one
more look towards Kim: Her seat is empty.

KIM (O.S.)

Wow. Aren't you guys the life of the
party?

Eliot turns to find Kim standing at their table.

NICKIE

Heeeeeeey Kimmy! How you doing? *Yo!*

KIM

Not bad except for the incredibly
horrible date I'm on.

NICKIE

What? Where?

Nickie desperately looks around, finally spotting Kim's date
who raises his glass toward their table.

NICKIE

Holy fuck, Kim. You're with Velleu?

KIM

It's a long story.

NICKIE CHUCKLES as the others endure an awkward pause.

NICKIE

Oh, shit-- Sorry. Kim: Anne. Anne:
Kim.

(to Kim)

Anne is Eliot's better half-- If
you'll pardon the expression.

(to Anne)

Kim is one of the few women in town
who is neither a current nor former
wife of mine.

KIM

Too bad for me.

ANNE

(offering her hand)

Pleased to meet you.

KIM

(warmly shaking hands)

Hello, Anne.

Both women look at Eliot. After a moment, he stands up.

ELIOT

Hi Kim--

Eliot extends his hand as Kim leans forward to kiss him on
the cheek. They meet clumsily somewhere in between. Anne
watches with interest as Eliot quickly pulls away.

ELIOT

It's been a long time-- It's nice to
see you--

(awkwardly, to Anne)

Kim and I have known each other since
grade school-- I think we might have
even slow danced--

ANNE

Really?

ANOTHER SILENCE, which Kim gracefully fills.

KIM

So, Anne, have you been given the
grand tour of the hometown?

ANNE

Not yet.

KIM

Eliot, are you ashamed of your roots?

ELIOT

Of course-- Aren't you?

Nobody laughs. Eliot tries to recover.

ELIOT

Uh, Anne just got here-- There hasn't
been a lot of time--

NICKIE
 Hey Anne, if Rocky won't show you, I
 will. *First stop "The Nineteenth
 Hole!"*

KIM
 Nickie's home away from home.

ANNE
 Sounds intriguing.

ANOTHER SILENCE with lots of mutual smiling.

KIM
 Well, I better get back.

Kim looks over to her table. Her date smiles and raises his glass again. She forces a smile and turns back to the gang.

KIM
 (through her teeth)
 God help me.
 (then)
 Nice to meet you, Anne. See you,
 boys.

Kim heads back to her table. As she approaches, her date stands and bows. She gives a "help me" glance back over her shoulder. Nickie is the only one watching.

NICKIE
 (under his breath)
 That dude has a Tommy Lee cock. I saw
 it in the steam room.

Anne studies Eliot's face. He doesn't look at her.

EXT. ROCKETT ROOF (1986) -- NIGHT

Smoking, Tom (44) sits at the edge of the roof looking out over the town. He seems oddly relaxed. Resigned.

Eliot (12) appears in the open window behind him. He starts to climb onto the roof but stops when he notices his father.

TOM
 (not turning around)
 Eliot, come sit with me.

After a moment, Eliot climbs onto the roof and walks toward his dad. He sits down and wraps his arms around his knees.

TOM
 Your mother's under a lot of strain
 these days.
 (taking a puff)
 She's tried to make me understand this
 thing you're working on. She says
 that you've got a few thoughts-- That
 maybe you're on the verge of some sort
 of discovery.

ELIOT
(tentative)
I'm still trying to market myself.

TOM
Well, that's good, but I've decided
it's okay for you to concentrate on
this other thing for a little while.

ELIOT
Really?

Tom takes another puff and delicately pulls a speck of
tobacco from his tongue.

TOM
It's not important just to have
dreams, Eliot. You have to have the
right dreams.
(then)
People expect too much. They believe
they can accomplish anything, become
anything-- Fix anything. They're
always trying to fix things that are
broken-- Things beyond repair.

Tom shakes takes another drag.

TOM
The crazy thing is, most people don't
even realize it's too late-- They
don't even stop to think.
(then)
They just get swept along with the
current. Caught.

Eliot stares at his dad, who looks at the little houses that
dot the landscape.

TOM
Tell me what you see.

Eliot follows his father's gaze.

ELIOT
Houses--

TOM
Shacks.

Eliot sneaks a look at his dad, who takes another drag.

TOM
Do you know what it's like to live in
a shack, Eliot?

ELIOT
No.

TOM
You don't want to end up trapped in a
place like that. It's damn easy if
you don't know what you want.
(MORE)

TOM (cont'd)
 (then)
 You know how easy it is?

ELIOT
 Damn easy?

Tom looks at him with conviction.

TOM
 That's exactly right.

Eliot furrows his brow. Looking away, Tom takes a final drag and stubs out his cigarette on a shingle.

TOM
 Your life isn't as long as you think it is. You have to know what you want.
 (then)
 Don't ever forget that.

INT. TOM'S BEDROOM/COMPUTER SCREEN -- LATER

CU COMPUTER SCREEN: "You have to know what you want" is in bold letters.

ANNE (O.S.)
 I can't believe Mark is making you work while you're here.

WIDE: Eliot (35) snaps shut his lap-top. Sitting up in bed, he watches Anne cross the room toward him.

ANNE
 I thought you'd finished the cloning article?

ELIOT
 Almost-- It's okay--

In a t-shirt, Anne slides between the black, satin sheets. As she settles in, she feels something under her pillow. Anne pulls out the pygmy penis and looks at it in horror.

ANNE
 Oh, my god.

ELIOT
 (nodding to the pygmy)
 It's his.

Eliot slides out of bed and heads toward the bathroom. He brushes his teeth as Anne tries to re-attach the penis to the pygmy. It won't stick. After a moment, she discreetly slides the shaft under the edge of the bed. She studies her hands and gives them a tentative sniff. She wipes them on the sheet and nervously pulls the covers under her chin.

ANNE
 Your friends are nice. Nickie's funny. And Kim's--

ELIOT
 Nickie's a bastard.

Anne looks at Eliot curiously.

ANNE
You mean that, don't you?

He turns toward her, toothpaste running down his chin.

ELIOT
He wants to fuck you.

ANNE
That's ridiculous.

ELIOT
It's true.

ANNE
He said that?

ELIOT
He didn't have to. It's obvious.

ANNE
How?

ELIOT
All men know the best way to get a woman into bed is to laugh at her jokes.

ANNE
What makes you so sure?

ELIOT
It worked for me with you.

Anne takes a moment to consider this as Eliot rinses.

ANNE
Maybe he just thinks I'm funny?
(then)
You think I'm funny.

ELIOT
You're a regular Stooge.

ANNE
(scoffing)
I hate the Four Stooges.

Eliot looks at her, not sure if she's joking.

ELIOT
There are only three Stooges.

She looks at him like he's an idiot.

ANNE
I was joking-- But that's not the point.

ELIOT
What is the point?

Slightly confused, Anne ponders this for a moment.

ANNE
I'm not sure anymore.

Anne stares at herself in the ceiling mirror.

ANNE
Eliot, what was your father like?

Eliot looks at her for a moment, then, heads out the door.

ANNE
Hey-- Where are you going?

INT. TOM'S GARAGE -- MOMENTS LATER

Darkness. A DOOR SQUEAKS OPEN. CLICK.

The garage is illuminated and the white Lincoln is revealed. The huge car is still in mint condition.

Eliot (35), his hand on the light switch, looks as though he's seen a ghost. A huge smile spreads across Anne's face.

ANNE
Incredible. What year is it?

ELIOT
'72.

Anne rubs her hand along the door.

ANNE
How long has he had it?

ELIOT
Since my thirteenth birthday.

ANNE
What?

ELIOT
He bought it for me.

ANNE
(confused)
A birthday present-- But you couldn't drive--

ELIOT
You asked what my dad was like.

Anne shakes her head as she turns back to the car.

ANNE
I can't believe you never told me about it.

ELIOT
You've never told me about *your* father's car.

Anne shoots him a nasty look as she moves around the hood.

ANNE
It must be amazing to drive.

ELIOT
I wouldn't know. He's never let
anyone else drive it.

Anne looks at him in disbelief.

ANNE
Your family's so weird, Eliot. No
wonder you're so screwed up.

INT. ELIOT'S BEDROOM (1986) -- NIGHT

Eliot (12) lies in bed. He watches as Jane (44) tightly tucks the covers around his body. Looking worn out and tired, Jane wears a down vest and tennis headband with her dressing gown.

JANE
Caddying for your father is such a
good way for you to get to know each
other better.

ELIOT
But, he won't let me go anymore.

Jane moves to the window and draws the curtains.

JANE
(sotto)
What would Michael Caine do?

Eliot looks at his mother curiously as a smile slowly creeps across her face.

JANE
Yes-- Yes-- Absolutely.

ELIOT
What?

She quickly bends down and gives Eliot a kiss on the forehead.

JANE
Good-night, Dear-Heart.

ELIOT
Good-night.

Having no idea what his mother is up to, Eliot watches as she walks toward the door and, suddenly, spins around. Her face is covered with nervous excitement.

JANE
If your father won't let you go Eliot,
you'll have to sneak along.

With that, Jane zooms out of the room, leaving Eliot alone in the dark.

EXT. TOM'S BACK PATIO -- DAY

Eliot (35) and Anne sit at the table drinking coffee. Eliot reads the newspaper. Anne looks out at the golf course.

ANNE
Eliot, you have to talk to your
father.
(then)
You need to tell him how you feel.

ELIOT
(with sarcasm)
What about the whole coma thing?

ANNE
It doesn't mean he can't hear you.

ELIOT
It doesn't mean he can.

ANNE
I think it would help.

ELIOT
Who?

ANNE
Both of you.

ELIOT
(putting down the paper)
What do you think it's going to do for
me?

ANNE
You've got a lot of things inside you
that you need to let out.

ELIOT
(defensively)
This has nothing to do with you and
me, Anne.

ANNE
(calmly)
Eliot, everything has to do with you
and me. That's what being together is
about-- So we don't have to go
through things like this alone.
(then)
I want to help you.

Eliot looks away. After a moment, his expression softens.

ELIOT
My Dad's an asshole.

ANNE
Then that's what you need to tell him.

Eliot smirks to himself.

ANNE

What?

ELIOT

I guess I don't have to worry how
he'll react.

EXT. GOLF COURSE -- DAY

Tom (67) falls to his knees in the middle of the tee.

ROBERTO (O.S.)

Senor Rockett! Ahora no! Es un juego
estupendo!

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

The morning sun pours through the open curtains. A number
of vases of fresh cut flowers are spread throughout the
room. Tom (67) lies in bed. His eyes are open and glazed.

Standing at the foot of the bed, ELIOT (35) LOUDLY CLEARS
HIS THROAT. Tom doesn't react. ELIOT SNAPS HIS FINGERS.
No response. HE CLAPS HIS HANDS. Nothing.

Eliot looks toward the door. Seeing the coast is clear, he
gently shakes the hospital bed. Tom's body jiggles. Eliot
shakes the bed harder. Tom jiggles more.

INT. TOM'S FOYER -- CONTINUOUS

THE THUNDEROUS CHORUS OF JUNGLE ANIMALS ECHOES THROUGH THE
HOUSE. Anne enters and opens the door. Smiling broadly,
Nickie stands on the front steps.

NICKIE

Good morning!

ANNE

(not forthcoming)

Nickie-- Hello.

NICKIE

My twelve-o'clock had to re-schedule,
so I thought I'd swing by and say hi.

ANNE

I'm afraid Eliot's not here.

NICKIE

I guess I'll have to say hi to you
then--

Holding the door, Anne doesn't move. Nickie makes a silly
face as two full golf carts zoom by on the road behind him.

NICKIE

Ummm-- Do you mind if I come in?

ANNE
 (softening)
 Sure-- Of course not.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

CU: His eyes glazed, Tom's mouth moves mechanically.

TOM/ ELIOT
 (mimicking Tom)
Hi, I'm Tom Rockett. You can call me Rocky!
 (then)
Remember, Eliot-- You are your own most valuable asset.

Standing over the bed, Eliot (35) opens and closes Tom's mouth with his hand as he impersonates his father. He turns the corners of Tom's mouth into a smile, then, a frown.

TOM/ ELIOT
Man, do I ever have morning breath. It tastes like I just ate a shit sandwich.
 (then)
Is my current wife here? What the hell's her name again?
 (then)
Hey-- What do you say we get a dog?!

EXT. TOM'S BACK PATIO -- DAY

CU: NICKIE LAUGHS UNCONTROLLABLY.

NICKIE
 Oh, my God-- You're killing me! I can't believe Eliot never told me how funny you are!

Sitting at the table, Anne studies Nickie suspiciously.

NICKIE
 (fanning himself)
 Okay, Buddy-- Get a hold of yourself-- That's it-- Yo!

ANNE
 (flatly)
 So, how goes the search for wife number four?

NICKIE
 (catching his breath)
 Well, I thought I'd found her but she only wanted to live together-- I told her I was an all or nothing guy and broke it off.

ANNE
 Really?

NICKIE
 What can I say? I'm the king of commitment.
 (MORE)

NICKIE (cont'd)
 (knowingly)
 Unlike some people, eh?

HE CHUCKLES TO HIMSELF as he takes a sip from a giant can of beer. Anne is stunned by his comment. Nickie slowly feels the weight of her stare.

NICKIE
 Well-- Uh-- I guess Eliot might have mentioned it was an issue.

ELIOT (O.S.)
 Mentioned what was an issue?

Eliot (35) stands in the open doorway. It's unclear how long he's been there. He's smoking.

NICKIE
 Whoa-- Hey, Rocky.

Anne doesn't look at Eliot as Nickie jumps up.

NICKIE
 (awkwardly)
 Well, hey-- I've really got to cruise. Thanks a lot for the drink, Anne-- I'll see you guys tonight.
 (glancing at Eliot)
 I'll let myself out.

Nickie exits. Eliot takes another drag of his cigarette as Anne looks out at the trees.

ANNE
 (coolly)
 How did it go?

ELIOT
 Fine.

ANNE
 Do you feel any better?

ELIOT
 (sarcastic)
 I'm a new man.

Anne gives him a disappointed look.

ANNE
 What did you talk about?

ELIOT
 It was mostly a one way conversation.
 (another drag)
 Why did Nickie say he'd see us tonight?

ANNE
 He wants to meet for a drink later. I told him I'd see--

ELIOT
I've got to work. You should go,
though. You can try out some of your
new material.

Anne stands up to face him.

ANNE
Eliot, why did you ask me to come here
if you won't let me help you?

ELIOT
(quietly)
I didn't ask. You offered.

Anne looks like she's been hit in the stomach.

ANNE
You're such an asshole.
(then)
I guess that's one thing you learned
from your father.

She walks by him and into the house. Eliot stares at the
swaying trees.

INT. ROCKETT GARAGE (1986) -- DAY

The Lincoln rests in the darkness. A thin shaft of light
sweeps over the hood as the door to the kitchen cracks open
and Eliot (12) peaks around the corner.

He slips into the garage and gently lifts the keys from a
hook by the door. In the dim light he feels his way toward
the back of the car. He fumbles with the keys before he
pops the trunk.

TOM (O.S.)
See you later.

Eliot freezes. Suddenly, Tom appears in the doorway. Eliot
ducks down behind the car. Tom reaches for the keys but
they're not there. He stares at the empty hook.

TOM
Jane, have you seen the keys to the
Lincoln?

JANE (O.S.)
(distant)
They're right there like they always
are.

Tom disappears back inside.

TOM (O.S.)
But they're not right there like they
always...

Seeing his chance, Eliot races toward the hook. Suddenly,
his shoulder smashes into the rear-view mirror. His body
spins and he falls awkwardly to the floor. The keys slide
across the cement and into the darkness.

JANE (O.S.)
 (approaching)
 All right, I'm coming.

Desperately searching the floor, Eliot finally clutches the keys. Ducking the light from the doorway, he puts them on the hook and scurries toward the trunk just as Jane reaches into the garage and grabs the keys.

JANE (O.S.)
 They're right here, Tom-- *Like they
 always are.*

Eliot does an army roll into the trunk. With the car rocking, he tries to pull down the hood but can't reach.

JANE (O.S.)
 You couldn't find your nose if it
 wasn't attached to your face.

TOM (O.S.)
 (approaching)
 Well, they weren't there a second--

Eliot leaps, grabs the trunk and closes himself in with a THUNK. Hearing the noise, Tom looks curiously into the garage. Everything seems in order.

TOM
 (distracted)
 I'll be back for dinner.

JANE (O.S.)
 (distant)
Jiggidy-jig!

INT. LINCOLN TRUNK (1986) -- CONTINUOUS

Breathing quickly, Eliot (12) lies in the darkness. Sweat glistens on his forehead.

He listens as TOM'S FOOTSTEPS MOVE ACROSS THE FLOOR. THE KEYS JINGLE AND THE DRIVER'S DOOR OPENS. The Lincoln dips as Tom gets into the front seat.

THE ELECTRIC GARAGE DOOR WINDS OPEN AND THE CAR ENGINE BURSTS TO LIFE. Eliot braces himself as the Lincoln starts to move.

EXT. ROCKETT GARAGE (1986) -- CONTINUOUS

Tom (44) looks over his shoulder as he backs the giant car down the driveway. He grimaces as the bumper scrapes over the curb.

INT. LINCOLN TRUNK (1986) -- CONTINUOUS

Eliot (12) is thrown into the air banging his head on the roof. He lands just as the car shifts into drive and is thrown backwards as it surges forward.

EXT. ROCKETT HOUSE (1986) -- CONTINUOUS

The Lincoln heads down the street and out of sight.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- NIGHT

THE MEDICAL MACHINES HUM. Tom's (67) eyes glisten in the darkness.

INT. TOM'S LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

CU COMPUTER SCREEN: In front of a make-shift Las Vegas type back-drop, Jane (64) LOOKS DIRECTLY AT US. Her web-cam image is badly lit and pixelates intermittently.

Jane wears a black body stocking with a white vest and cuffs and a black bowler hat. She has sparkle eye makeup and lip-gloss. She smiles cheerfully.

JANE

Tuesday was a good day. My son and his friend - his girlfriend - came to visit.

(then, chuckling)

They didn't stay long-- But, whose children ever do?

Jane takes a deep breath.

JANE

My son's a sad boy. He didn't come into the world that way. He learned how to be sad.

(then)

He was taught.

Jane fights a tear with a stabbing breath. After a moment, she flashes a show-must-go-on smile and pushes forward.

JANE

Children. You feed them caribou and blueberries, teach them how to whistle and eventually push them out of the nest, hoping they don't splat on the sidewalk like a turkey thrown from a helicopter.

(quivering)

You just do your best.

Jane takes another composing breath and quietly begins to snap her fingers.

JANE

This one's for my sensitive little turkey.

(then)

Fly. Fly. Fly.

Her eyes pop open and SHE BEGINS TO SING AND DANCE.

JANE

*The minute you walked in the joint
I could see you were a man of
distinction, A real big spender*

(MORE)

JANE (cont'd)
*Good looking, so refined.
 Say, wouldn't you like to know What's
 going on in my mind?*

With feet kicking and hands shaking, it's a wonderfully butchered version of the Bob Fosse number.

JANE
*So, let me get right to the point
 I don't pop my cork for ev'ry guy I
 see...*

PULL OUT: In the dim light, Eliot sits on the couch, staring right through the computer screen. His face is pale. He looks like he's seen a ghost.

INT. BAR -- NIGHT

Dark and smoky, the room is full of BUSINESS PEOPLE who've stayed longer than they should have. Removed from the crowd, Anne sits across from Nickie. He wears a black wool turtleneck with a thick, gold chain and dramatic, black eyeliner. He and Anne are both a little drunk.

ANNE
 What is it with men? They want to be
 boys their whole lives-- What are you
 all so afraid of?

Nickie holds his hand aloft in mock surrender.

NICKIE
 "King of Commitment"-- Remember?

ANNE
 Always acting so distant-- So
 cautious.
 (becoming more animated)
 Unless it's about sex-- Then, you're
 totally the opposite. Most men would
 jump out of a plane without a
 parachute for a blow-job.

Nickie contemplates this as Anne pushes forward.

ANNE
 Maybe that's the answer. Forget all
 relationships and just have lots of
 fucking.

NICKIE
 You think?

ANNE
 Eliot takes it all so seriously. Why
 can't he just relax and accept the
 good things in his life? Stop trying
 discover all the things that don't
 work.

NICKIE
 (quietly)
 I don't know.

Anne looks away as her expression saddens.

ANNE
 Of course you know. Isn't it obvious?
 (forcing a laugh)
 Everyone knows, except for me. I'm
 the one who keeps hoping-- Waiting
 for him to come around.
 (sadly)
 Knowing he never will.

NICKIE
 Maybe, he just needs a little more
 time.

ANNE
 More time just makes it hurt longer.
 (forcing a tight smile)
 Fuck it.
 (then)
 Fuck it. Fuck it. Fuck it.

Nickie looks at her sympathetically.

NICKIE
 I'm sorry.

In her own world, Anne takes a drink. Finally, she looks
 up.

ANNE
 So, how did you become "The King of
 Commitment?"

NICKIE
 I guess I have difficulty saying no.

Anne looks at him long and hard. Nickie shifts uneasily.

NICKIE
 What?

ANNE
 (directly)
 I want to see the house.

NICKIE
 What house?

ANNE
 You know what house.

Nickie studies her face, hoping she's joking.

NICKIE
 I don't think that's a good idea.

Anne gets up and starts to put on her jacket.

ANNE
 I don't care what you think.

NICKIE
 But--

ANNE
 What kind of real-estate broker are
 you? I want you to show me the
 fucking house.

Nickie takes an awkward sip of his drink. The glass rattles
 in his teeth.

INT. EMPTY HOUSE -- NIGHT

A spiral staircase rises from a grand foyer.

The front door opens and Nickie nervously ushers Anne
 inside. She walks to the middle of the foyer and looks
 around at the numerous rooms that disappear into the
 shadows.

Nickie closes the door and worms in behind her. Anne pulls
 her coat off her shoulders and lets it slide to the floor.

ANNE
 (matter of fact)
 Where?

NICKIE
 Excuse me?

She turns on her heels. She's drunk but incredibly calm.

ANNE
 Which room do you fuck them in?

NICKIE
 Um-- Kitchen counter--
 (then, back-peddling)
 Upstairs-- Generally.

Without another word, Anne starts up the stairs. Nickie
 swallows dryly as she pulls her shirt over her head.

NICKIE
 Anne-- I think-- I-- We--

Anne reaches the top of the stairs and, without looking
 back, disappears from sight.

NICKIE
 (with a whimper)
 Anne?

After a moment, Nickie locks the front door and, like a
 nervous teenager, cautiously heads up the stairs.

EXT. EMPTY HOUSE/ INT. EXCALIBUR -- CONTINUOUS

WE TRACK BACK FROM THE HOUSE, OVER THE LAWN AND ACROSS THE
 ROAD, where the Excalibur is parked in the shadows.

Illuminated by the light of the dash, Eliot (35) looks
 straight ahead as NEIL DIAMOND'S "I AM THE LION" FADES IN.

NEIL DIAMOND
*Hep-hep, hep-hep, hep-hep, babbala-
 dingah. Hep-hep, hep-hep, babbala-
 dingah, hep...*

Eliot starts the car and pulls out.

INT. LINCOLN TRUNK (1986) -- DAY

NEIL SINGS as Eliot (12) braces himself against the wall of the trunk. He tries to figure out the route of the car.

ELIOT
*Left on Melbourne, right on St.
 Leonards, right on Blanchard--*

Suddenly, the car hits a bump and Eliot's thrown into the air. He lands hard with the golf bag on top of him. He pushes the bag off and braces himself for the next bump.

EXT. OCEAN HIGHWAY (1986) -- DAY

The ocean glistens in the distance as the Lincoln accelerates into the light traffic.

NEIL DIAMOND
*...There was a flood and many poor man
 were killed. And that is why, our
 house is built on top of a hill...*

INT. LINCOLN (1986) -- DAY

Uncharacteristically loose, Tom (44) has never looked happier. It appears as though the weight of the world has been lifted from his shoulders. He taps the steering wheel as he SINGS ALONG.

NEIL DIAMOND/ TOM
*...The plains are like a friend, why
 can't we live on them? And if a flood
 should come, why can't we run?*

The car hits another bump and A LARGE THUD comes from the trunk. Oblivious, Tom continues to drive and SING.

NEIL DIAMOND/ TOM
*...Hep-hep, hep-hep, hep-hep, I am the
 lion. Hep-hep, hep-hep, bellowing out
 in the night...*

NEIL FADES as the car surges away.

EXT. HIGHWAY REST STOP (1986) -- LATER

Surrounded by trees, a beautiful picnic area slopes down to a cliff and the crashing ocean surf below.

The Lincoln pulls around the corner and stops at the far end of the deserted lot.

INT. LINCOLN (1986) -- CONTINUOUS

Tom (44) turns off the engine and looks at himself in the rear-view. He flattens down his windblown hair but quickly messes it up again. Satisfied with his "look", he hits a button and the car roof starts to go up.

INT. LINCOLN TRUNK (1986) -- CONTINUOUS

In the darkness, Eliot (12) moves away from the unfolding roof. His hair is disheveled; his face covered with sweat.

THE DRIVER'S DOOR OPENS.

EXT. HIGHWAY REST STOP (1986) -- CONTINUOUS

Tom (44) steps out of the car and takes a look around. Seeming both excited and nervous, he lights up a cigarette and leans against the back fender.

After a few moments, a small sedan pulls into the other end of the lot. Tom watches it slowly approach.

INT. LINCOLN TRUNK (1986) -- CONTINUOUS

Eliot (12) listens as THE CAR MOVES ACROSS THE GRAVEL AND COMES TO A STOP NEARBY. THE ENGINE SHUTS OFF. THE DOOR OPENS. A SINGLE PAIR OF FEET WALK ACROSS THE GRAVEL.

WOMAN (O.S.)
(faintly)
*Hello, Angel. Have you been waiting
long?*

Straining to hear the muffled voices, Eliot presses his ear against the wall of the trunk.

TOM (O.S.)
I just arrived.

WOMAN (O.S.)
It's good to see you.

THE TALKING STOPS. Eliot scrambles to the other side of the trunk and presses his ear to the wall. Nothing. Peeling back the rubber molding, he desperately tries to look through the crack. Nothing.

WOMAN (O.S.)
(laughing)
Tom!

THE SOUND OF CRUNCHING GRAVEL MOVES DOWN THE SIDE OF THE LINCOLN. THERE'S A SMALL THUD and Eliot steadies himself as the car rocks sideways. THE BACK DOOR OPENS. The car dips as the two bodies fall onto the back seat.

THE LEATHER STRETCHES AS THE COUPLE SLIDES ACROSS THE SEAT. TOM GROWLS PLAYFULLY. THE WOMAN LAUGHS. THE SOUND OF CRINKLED CLOTHING IS ACCOMPANIED BY THE INCREASING PACE OF BREATHING. Eliot listens in horror.

WOMAN (O.S.)

Oh, Tom.

A DEEP FEMALE MOAN. THE LOW MUSCULAR BREATHS OF INTERTWINED BODIES. THE BREATHING QUICKENS. THE LEATHER CRACKS. The car starts to rock gently.

Eliot steadies himself as the seat-back stretches toward him. He tries to move away but there's nowhere to go.

WOMAN (O.S.)

That's it Tom--

(then)

Oh, I love the way you feel--

The car rocks more heavily. Eliot holds on.

WOMAN (O.S.)

Ohh, Tom.

ELIOT

(very quietly)

Dad.

THE BREATHING BECOMES PANTING. MOANS AND WORD FRAGMENTS BLEND INTO ONE ANOTHER.

WOMAN (O.S.)

Ohhh, Tom!

ELIOT

(louder)

Dad.

The car rocks as the seat cushions are pushed to the limit.

WOMAN (O.S.)

Yes, Tom! Tell me! Tell me!

(desperately)

Tell me, Tom!! Now!!

TOM (O.S.)

Ohh!!

ELIOT

DAD!!!!

Suddenly, the car stops moving. SILENCE.

THE BACK DOOR OPENS AND FOOTSTEPS CRUNCH ACROSS THE GRAVEL. THERE'S THE BRIEF JINGLING OF KEYS before the trunk springs open in an explosion of intense sunlight.

In silhouette, Tom quickly tucks his shirt into his open pants as Eliot shields his eyes from the blinding light.

TOM

What the hell?

ELIOT

I'm in the trunk.

TOM

I know you're in the goddamn trunk.

INT. TOM'S FOYER/ LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

The front door creaks open and Anne slips inside. She gently closes the door and looks into the living room.

Eliot's laptop sits open on the coffee table. A single lamp lights the empty room.

Anne looks into the kitchen and up the stairs.

ANNE

Eliot?

She waits. Nothing.

INT. TOM'S SHOWER -- CONTINUOUS

Under the steaming water, Anne methodically lathers soap all over her body. Suddenly, her face turns red. She leans on the wall as tears begin to roll down her cheeks. She breathes in uneven, jerking spasms.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Almost lost in the shadows, Tom (67) stares blankly into space. Suddenly, HE INHALES SHARPLY AND LETS OUT A LONG, GURGLING SIGH.

EXT. HIGHWAY REST STOP -- SUNRISE

At the same rest stop, the Excalibur sits alone. Eliot (35) sits on the hood, watching the sun rise over the ocean.

EXT. HIGHWAY REST STOP (1986) -- DAY

CU: A small running shoe swings back and forth across the gravel.

Eliot (12) sits in the back seat of the Lincoln with one leg hanging out the open door.

Tom (44) and Christine (their neighbor) are at a distant picnic table. Christine is sitting. She wears a dark skirt, her hair pulled back behind her ears.

She listens calmly as Tom paces, gesturing wildly.

Christine gets up and takes Tom by the shoulders. Her words seem to have a calming effect as she steers him toward the table and makes him sit. Eliot looks away as she starts toward him.

CHRISTINE

Hello, Eliot.

ELIOT

(not looking up)

Hello, Mrs. Jacobson.

CHRISTINE

(warmly)

I think you can call me Christine.

NO RESPONSE. Christine leans against the door and kicks a bit of gravel of her own as she looks out at the ocean.

CHRISTINE

It's beautiful, isn't it?

Eliot keeps kicking in THE LONG SILENCE BETWEEN THEM.

CHRISTINE

You know, Eliot, all this time we've been neighbors, I thought I'd gotten to know you pretty well.

(then)

And, of course your father can't stop talking about you.

(chuckling to herself)

But, the crazy thing is, he never told me how much you love roller-coasters.

Eliot's foot stops swinging.

INT. TOM'S FOYER/ LIVING ROOM -- EARLY MORNING

KEYS RATTLE IN THE LOCK. The morning sun spills into the foyer as Eliot (35) enters. He closes the door and turns into the living room.

Anne sits on the couch with her hands folded across her lap. She looks up at Eliot. Her eyes are red from crying.

ANNE

There's something I need to tell you.

ELIOT

(coolly)

I already know.

Anne looks at him, confused.

ANNE

What--

ELIOT

I went to the bar.

Anne gets up as Eliot takes off his jacket and carefully hangs it on the back of a chair.

ANNE

Eliot, I wanted to hurt you.

ELIOT

It's fine.

ANNE

(eyes watering)

For some reason I thought I couldn't really hurt you.

Eliot turns away and walks toward the kitchen.

ELIOT
Do you want coffee?

Surprised by the question, Anne starts to say something, then, stops herself.

INT. TOM'S KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS

Eliot (35) pulls a bag of coffee beans from the freezer. Anne appears in the doorway behind him. She seems lost somewhere between laughter and tears.

ANNE
I don't know why I thought I couldn't hurt you. Of course I can hurt you.
(then)
That's why I couldn't go through with it.

Eliot stops but doesn't look at her.

ANNE
Nothing happened. We didn't even kiss.
(a tearful smile)
When I realized how much I could hurt you, I didn't want to anymore.

A smirk creeps onto Eliot's face.

ANNE
What?

ELIOT
Nothing.

ANNE
You don't believe me?

Eliot glances at her. His eyes are stone cold.

ELIOT
I believe you.

He turns away and starts scooping the beans into the coffee grinder. Anne's lips quiver. Slowly, a look of amazement washes over her face.

ANNE
Oh my God. You wish I had done it, don't you? You--

Anne jumps as Eliot turns on the grinder and AN ENORMOUS WHIR fills the room. After a moment, he turns the machine off, opens a cupboard and pulls out a stack of filters.

ANNE
You were hoping this would give you an excuse-- You'd be off the hook-- No more pressure. No decision to make.

Eliot spoons the grinds into a filter as Anne stares at him in shock.

ANNE
But I didn't do it-- And now--
You're disappointed.

Tears begin to roll down Anne's face. She grabs the counter to steady herself.

ANNE
Do you even know why?

Without response, Eliot sticks the filter into the coffee maker and fills the pot with water.

ANNE
Jesus, Eliot-- Tell me something--
Tell me something about you.

Anne quickly wipes her cheeks as Eliot pours the water into the coffee maker. He finally looks directly at her.

ELIOT
Anne?

Her face stained with tears, Anne looks away.

ELIOT
(flatly)
You're right. I think we should get
married.

Anne turns back to him in disbelief. AFTER A LONG BEAT, SHE STARTS TO LAUGH. Eliot doesn't know what to think. He forces a smile.

Slowly, Anne's laughter subsides. She shakes her head in amazement. Eliot looks at her with an uncertain smile.

ANNE
I can't believe you think that's
what's important to me?
(then, coldly)
I'm not some fucking prom queen
desperate for a Volvo station wagon
and a house in the suburbs.

Eliot's smile vanishes.

ANNE
The only reason I ever suggested it
was because I knew it was the only way
you'd ever feel completely committed
to this-- To us.
(then)
Why would you be so afraid, if it
wasn't important to you?

Tears pour down Anne's cheeks as her face turns incredibly sad.

ANNE
I guess I finally figured it out for
you.

Eliot takes a step towards her but she lurches away.

ANNE
Don't!

Anne turns away and retreats into the living room. Eliot
watches from the doorway as she starts to gather her things.

ANNE
I'll be out of the apartment by the
time you get back.

Anne's rage builds behind her tears.

ANNE
I'm also going to stop loving you,
Eliot.
(with a painful laugh)
Won't that make things even less
encumbered for you? No commitments--
No attachments-- No messy emotions to
drag you down.

Anne suddenly stops what she's doing and turns to Eliot. He
can barely look at her.

ANNE
I really hope you figure things out.
Not for us-- For yourself.
(then, calmly)
Unless you feel a need to keep
screwing old high-school sweethearts
forever.

Eliot stops himself. Anne stares at him defiantly, waiting
for him to say something. Anything. He doesn't.

ANNE
Fuck you, Eliot.

Wiping away tears, she quickly heads out of the room and up
the stairs. Eliot stares straight ahead.

INT. TOM'S LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Through the partially drawn curtains, a taxi pulls out of
the driveway and disappears from view.

Eliot (35) stares at the empty street. THE PHONE RINGS. He
doesn't move.

EXT. AMUSEMENT PARK (1986) -- DAY

His expression blank, Eliot (12) rides in the front of a
speeding roller-coaster. Beside him, Christine (35) smiles
widely.

Tom (44) sits in the row behind them. Holding on for dear
life, he doesn't look happy.

EXT. WATER RANGE (1986) -- DAY

Eliot (12) shoots a squirt gun at a plastic duck target. Christine cheers him on as his duck races to the finish. She laughs and holds up Eliot's arm as the CARNEY (83) hands him a huge, stuffed pink rabbit. Tom watches with disdain.

EXT. ROLLER COASTER (1986) -- DAY

Eliot (12) and Christine are back in the front of the speeding coaster. Christine holds her hands above her head as SHE SCREAMS WITH GLEE. A slight smile creeps across Eliot's face.

In the second row, Tom looks like he's going to throw-up.

EXT. ROLLER COASTER, SERIES (1986) -- DAY

1. Tom barfs in the shadows behind the roller coaster.
2. Eliot (12) and Christine hold their arms up and LAUGH as they hurtle down the open track.
3. His skin green, Tom sits on a bench at the base of the ride. The pink bunny sits beside him.
4. The only ones on the speeding ride, Eliot and Christine smile contentedly as the sun sets behind them.

EXT. HIGHWAY REST STOP (1986) -- SUNSET

Tom leans against the driver's side of the Lincoln smoking a cigarette. Eliot (12) and Christine stand on the other side of the car. Christine is holding the rabbit.

CHRISTINE

I had a wonderful day, Eliot.

(smiling)

Nobody's ever won a giant, pink rabbit for me before.

Eliot glances at his dad, then, looks back to Christine.

ELIOT

Thanks for the roller-coasters.

CHRISTINE

It was fun, wasn't it?

ELIOT

Yeah.

Christine leans down and looks Eliot in the eye.

CHRISTINE

One day, Eliot, you're going to make someone very happy. And, you know what?

ELIOT

What?

CHRISTINE

She'll be the luckiest girl in the world.

Christine puts her hand on the side of Eliot's face and gives him a kiss on the cheek. She blushes. Slightly embarrassed, she pulls her hand away and smiles selfconsciously. She walks around her car and slides the rabbit into the passenger seat. Finally, she looks at Tom.

CHRISTINE

I'll see you, Tom.

All of Tom's previous levity has vanished. He looks tired. Defeated.

TOM

Yeah. I'll see you.

Christine forces a smile and gets into her car. She quickly pulls away. Neither Tom nor Eliot watch her go.

EXT. INTERSECTION/ INT. LINCOLN (1986) -- EVENING

CU: A red traffic light swings in the breeze.

The huge car idles as Eliot (12) continues to look at his dad. Tom (44) stares straight ahead. SILENCE.

CU: The light turns green.

Tom hits the gas and the car slowly surges forward.

INT. HOSPITAL, NURSE'S STATION -- DAY

The nurse looks up from her work as Eliot (35) walks by.

NURSE

Mr. Rockett?!

Not hearing her, Eliot turns into Tom's room. The nurse rushes from behind her station and down the corridor.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Eliot (35) stands rigidly just inside the room. Out of breath, the nurse appears in the doorway behind him.

NURSE

Mr. Rockett-- Eliot-- I tried to
call you-- I've been trying--
(with a sigh)
I'm sorry.

Tom's mattress lays bare. The medical machines and the flowers are gone. Tom's golf clubs lean in the corner. The "Hang In There" poster is back on the wall.

Eliot sways slightly, his eyes not focusing on anything.

NURSE

I'll give you a few moments. Take as
long as you like--

The nurse pushes away from the door and backs out of sight. Eliot doesn't move.

INT. ROCKETT GARAGE (1986) -- NIGHT

The Lincoln pulls into the garage. Tom (44) shuts off the engine as the garage door closes. Eliot watches as Tom gets out and hangs the keys on the hook.

Tom opens the kitchen door. Inside, Jane carries a pot to the sink. Wearing a yellow apron over a flowered dress, she looks radiant. She smiles warmly.

JANE

There you are. I was wondering if you were ever coming back.

Jane gives Tom a quick kiss and takes the groceries. She heads toward the fridge, disappearing from Eliot's sight. Tom stands awkwardly in the middle of the kitchen.

Coming back into view, Jane looks into the garage. She smiles at Eliot, who's still in the car.

JANE

Dinner will be ready in a minute, Dear-Heart.

TOM

Is there anything I can do to help?

JANE

(turning back to Tom)

Well, that's a sweet offer but don't you worry, everything's under control.

INT. ROCKETT DINING ROOM (1986) -- LATER

The family is in their usual places. Eliot (12) and Tom eat silently as Jane eagerly looks back and forth between them. Jane is excited but also looks like she's about to come apart at the seams. Tom has a full tumbler of scotch. Eliot and he do not look at one another.

JANE

I can't take it anymore! Don't you two have anything to tell me?!

Tom looks at his wife.

JANE

Oh, Tom-- How was your golf game?!

TOM

(flatly)

Why don't you ask the boy?

Feeling the weight of his mother's gaze, Eliot doesn't look at her.

JANE
Well?
(then)
Oh, Eliot! *Please?!*

Eliot finally looks at his mom. Jane's about to burst.

ELIOT
(matter of fact)
I surprised him.

JANE
You did? Where?!

ELIOT
I was in the trunk.

JANE
And?!

Eliot swallows dryly. Jane beams with anticipation.

ELIOT
(flatly)
I like golf.

JANE
Isn't that fabulous!
(then)
I'm so happy that the two of you are
finally bonding!

Eliot and Tom avoid eye contact.

JANE (O.S.)
Bonding is exactly what this family
needs!

EXT. ROCKETT ROOF (1986) -- NIGHT

Eliot (12) lies on his back. Squinting, he pulls the stars in and out of focus.

LAUGHTER. Eliot looks over the peak of the roof. Through the trees, Christine and Bob entertain on their back porch.

TO THE CHEERS OF THEIR GUESTS, Bob douses the barbecue flames that threaten to engulf their dinner. MORE LAUGHTER as he makes a victory toast. Christine slides her arm around his waist and kisses him on the neck.

Turning away, Eliot gets up and walks across the roof.

INT. ROCKETT UPSTAIRS HALLWAY (1986) -- CONTINUOUS

Eliot (12) climbs in the window to find Jane holding a plate of chocolate squares and a glass of green liquid.

JANE
How are things going? Are you making
progress?

Eliot studies his mother's fragile smile.

ELIOT
 I'm never going to be like Michael
 Caine. All I've ever done on the roof
 is look at the sky.

Jane's smile crumbles as tears fill her eyes. Eliot moves quickly past his mother and down the stairs.

JANE
 (heart-broken)
 I-- I made Hello-Dollies.

INT. TOM'S FOYER -- MORNING

KEYS RATTLE IN THE LOCK. The door opens and Eliot (35) steps inside. He carries a file box marked: Rockett, Tom. Tom's golf clubs are slung over his shoulder. Eliot stops in the foyer and looks around. The house has never felt colder.

INT. TOM'S LIVING ROOM -- DAY

His bare feet on the coffee table, Eliot (35) sits on the couch. Tom's golf clubs lean beside him.

Eliot slides the five iron out of the bag and holds it in front of him. He gets up and pushes the table against the couch.

Eliot waggles the club back and forth, feeling its weight in his hands. Careful of the furniture, he goes through the motion of a swing. His path is clear. He steadies himself, takes a breath and swings fully.

Eliot pulls a ball from under the edge of the couch. He puts the club directly behind the ball. He takes a breath. He swings. The ball explodes off of the club and smashes through one of the huge, picture windows.

Eliot shows no emotion as he lines up a second ball and blasts it through another window. He swings even harder on the third. Glass still falling, he searches under the couch for another ball. Nothing.

He unzips the side pouch of the golf bag. He shoves his hand inside and digs around before pulling out-- Condoms. Lots of them. He looks at them a moment, then, tosses them aside.

Without warning, he swings the club like a baseball bat. He destroys an African lamp. His anger growing, he swings again. The pygmy sculpture is launched. Again. A shower of glass and debris from the mantle. Again.

INT. ELIOT'S BEDROOM (1986) -- NIGHT

Watching the shadows of the trees that sway on the ceiling, Eliot (12) lies in bed. The door pushes open and Tom peers into the room. Eliot quickly closes his eyes.

Teetering slightly, Tom stalks into the room. The ice in his tumbler rattles as he comes to an uneven stop in the shadows, a few feet from Eliot's bed.

Tom surveys the room, looking everywhere but at his son. Eliot squints out of one eye as his father sways on his feet.

THERE'S A LONG SILENCE, BEFORE TOM FINALLY SPEAKS.

TOM

It never gets any easier.

TOM SIGHS and throws back the rest of the drink. He swirls the cubes in glass and CHUCKLES TO HIMSELF.

Eliot watches as his father finally turns into a shaft of light.

Eliot is stunned to see the tears flowing silently down his face. Tom looks incredibly sad.

TOM

The good thing is you don't have to worry about this "getting to know each other" thing of your mother's.

(then, tragically)

You don't need to get to know me, because one day you're going to grow up and you're going to be me.

INT. TOM'S GARAGE -- DAY

CU: The five iron smashes through the Lincoln windshield.

Eliot (35) raises the club and brings it down on the glass again. His face covered with rage, he stumbles to the side of the car and swings again. The rear-view mirror explodes.

SOMEWHERE IN THE DISTANCE, THE DOORBELL RINGS. Eliot doesn't notice as he smashes the head-lights and hammers the grill. The club snaps in half. Sweat pouring from his red face, he continues to claw and scrape at the metal with the broken shaft.

THE DOORBELL RINGS AGAIN. Suddenly, Eliot stops and listens.

INT. TOM'S FOYER -- MOMENTS LATER

Eliot (35), disheveled, sweaty and out of breath, pulls open the door. CHRISTINE (59) stands on the front steps. She's holding a bunch of flowers.

EXT. ROLLER COASTER (1986) -- DAY

Eliot (12) and Christine (35) LAUGH AND SCREAM as the train hurtles down the open track.

INT. TOM'S FOYER -- CONTINUOUS

Eliot (35) stares at Christine like he's seeing a ghost. She's thin, tanned and "cougar" sexy.

CHRISTINE
 Eliot?
 (then)
 It's Mrs. Jacobson-- Christine.

ELIOT
 (barely audible)
 I know.

AN AWKWARD SILENCE.

CHRISTINE
 I'm so sorry about your father-- I
 went to the hospital-- I'm afraid my
 timing wasn't very good.
 (then)
 I got these for him.

She hands Eliot the flowers. He takes them without comment.

CHRISTINE
 Are you all right, Eliot?

ELIOT
 How's Mr. Jacobson?

CHRISTINE
 Fine-- The same.

ANOTHER SILENCE.

ELIOT
 (quietly)
 Would you like to come in?

CHRISTINE
 Okay. For a minute.

Eliot stands aside as Christine cautiously enters.

INT. TOM'S LIVING ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

With Eliot (35) in the doorway behind her, Christine stares
 at the carnage in disbelief.

CHRISTINE
 My God, Eliot. What happened?

ELIOT
 I got a little upset.

A smile creeps onto Christine's face.

CHRISTINE
 I should say so.

She picks up the head of the decapitated pygmy.

CHRISTINE
 Can you imagine if your father was
 here to see this?
 (starting to laugh)
 He'd have another stroke.

ELIOT
He probably would.

HER LAUGHTER FADING, Christine turns toward him.

CHRISTINE
Good for you, Eliot. Good for you.

They share a long, silent look. Finally, CHRISTINE SIGHS and starts to approach Eliot. He doesn't move a muscle as she stops right in front of him.

CHRISTINE
(in a whisper)
We had a nice time that day, didn't we?

Christine gently puts her hand on his cheek as her breath washes over him. The sexual tension is intense.

CHRISTINE
And, look at you now. The little boy has become a man.
(blushing slightly)
Here you are-- So much like your father.

Eliot's heart misses a beat.

EXT. TOM'S GARAGE -- DAY

THE HUGE DOOR RUMBLES OPEN. The banged up Lincoln SQUEALS backwards out of the garage. Sparks fly as the car bottoms out on the curb.

An oncoming golf cart veers onto a front lawn as Eliot (35) jams the car into drive and rockets down the road.

INT. AIRPORT DEPARTURES GATE -- DAY

Sitting in front of a huge window, Anne stares out at the tarmac. In a trance, she watches small planes come and go.

INT. LINCOLN -- SAME TIME

Eliot (35) races along a side street. He looks through the cracked windshield. The freeway entrance lays ahead. He spins the wheel and squeals up the on-ramp.

INT. AIRPORT DEPARTURES GATE -- SAME TIME

Anne watches A TODDLER, followed closely by HIS DAD, run to the window and push his nose up against the glass.

STEWARDESS
(over the P.A.)
We'd like to apologize for the delay of flight 446. We are now, however, ready to commence boarding procedures.
(MORE)

STEWARDESS (cont'd)
 We'd like to ask all of our Ultra-Mercury-Club-Elite-Members, as well as those traveling with small children, or requiring assistance, to commence boarding at this time.

The dad takes his son's hand and leads him toward the gate. Anne continues to watch the planes.

EXT. FREEWAY/ AIRPORT ENTRANCE -- SAME TIME

The Lincoln is completely boxed in by traffic. Sitting behind the wheel, Eliot (35) is frantic. Suddenly, he jumps out of the car and, leaving the door open, begins to run down the shoulder.

Immediately, his face contorts in pain. Stopping in mid-stride, he hops up and down holding his bare, bloodied foot as he surveys the broken glass littered on the ground.

Eliot hops back and throws open the trunk.

EXT. AIRPORT SIDEWALK/ INT. AIRPORT -- MOMENTS LATER

CU: Covering bare, bloodied feet, a pair of undone red snakeskin golf shoes run down the cement and through sliding glass doors.

Disheveled and panting, Eliot (35) races up to a flight monitor. HIS POV: "New York" and "DELAYED" flash on the screen. Eliot looks around. A "Departures" sign looms in the distance. He runs.

INT. AIRPORT SECURITY STATION -- CONTINUOUS

Eliot (35) desperately empties his pockets into a plastic tub. He steps to the metal detector but is blocked by a BUFF GUARD (25).

BUFF
 Ticket please, sir.

ELIOT
 What?

BUFF
 I need to see your ticket.

ELIOT
 I don't have a ticket.

BUFF
 Passengers only beyond this point.

He looks past Eliot to the next person in line.

ELIOT
 But, I need to catch someone--

BUFF
 I can't let you through without a valid ticket.

Eliot takes a measured look at the guard, then, takes a step back. Taking his things, he turns from the check-point and spots a ticket counter in the distance. He runs.

INT. AIRPORT DEPARTURES GATE -- SAME TIME

Sitting quietly, Anne stares out the window.

STEWARDESS (O.S.)
...would like to board all remaining
passengers for flight 446.

Anne doesn't move.

INT. AIRPORT TICKET COUNTER -- SAME TIME

Fumbling for his wallet, Eliot (35) rushes to the counter.

ELIOT
I need a ticket to New York!

His head down, he frantically searches for his credit card.

WOMAN (O.S.)
(coily)
Did you lose my number?

Eliot looks up. Sandi (the stewardess from his original flight) is behind the counter.

ELIOT
I need a ticket--

SANDI
Lucky for you I'm still available.

ELIOT
I need a ticket to New York!

SANDI
(smiling slyly)
What's the big hurry?

ELIOT
JUST GIVE ME A FUCKING TICKET!

She looks at him in shock. Eliot doesn't back down.

SANDI
(bitchy)
Okay, then.

Taking her time, she hits a few buttons on the computer and smiles sarcastically.

SANDI
Coach is sold out. Too bad.

ELIOT
What about first class?!

Scowling, Sandi hits a few more buttons.

SANDI
Traveling alone?

ELIOT
Yes!

SANDI
One way, I assume?

ELIOT
Yes!!

SANDI
I'm required to ask you a few
questions.
(then)
Did you pack your luggage your--

Eliot reaches over the counter and grabs Sandi by the
shoulders.

ELIOT
*I have no luggage! I've received
nothing from anyone! I have nothing
to declare!!*

A LEATHER-SKINNED AGENT (46) steps in behind Sandi.

MALE AGENT
Is there a problem here?

The agent staring him down, Eliot lets go of Sandi. She
calmly fixes her blouse and turns back to the terminal.

SANDI
(faking a sweet smile)
That'll be one-thousand, eight-hundred-
seventy-two dollars and thirty-eight
cents.

Eliot doesn't blink as he slaps down his credit card.

SANDI
(sarcastically)
Oooh, platinum.

She takes his card and swipes it. They all watch the
printer as the ticket runs through and finally finishes.
Sandi tears it from the feeder and holds it out of Eliot's
reach.

SANDI
There's just one thing I feel I'm
entitled to say, here--

Eliot lunges for the ticket. He grabs it and runs.

SANDI
Hey!

INT. AIRPORT SECURITY STATION -- CONTINUOUS

Eliot (35) "casually" runs up to the same security point as before. He puts his things into the tray, hands the guard his ticket and ducks through the metal detector.

GUARD
Have a nice flight.

Eliot takes back the ticket and, leaving the bin with his watch and keys, races away.

INT. AIRPORT DEPARTURES GATE -- CONTINUOUS

WE MOVE IN TO THE RAMP DOOR WINDOW: The last of the passengers board the plane and AN ATTENDANT CLOSES THE DOOR.

Clutching his ticket, Eliot (35) races to the ramp door and tries desperately to open it. It doesn't budge.

He runs to the window where Anne had been sitting. He slams up against the glass and looks out at the small plane.

Suddenly, Eliot starts to bang on the window with both hands. HE LETS OUT A HUGE, DISTORTED WAIL.

ELIOT
ANNE!!!!

CU: Eliot's face is covered with sweat.

OUT OF FOCUS, A WOMAN (Anne?) appears over Eliot's shoulder. After a moment, he feels her gaze and slowly turns around.

AN ODD LOOKING WOMAN (23) stares at Eliot. Dressed very plainly, she has dark straight hair and pale skin.

STRANGE WOMAN
Are you troubled, brother?
(then)
Your Lord Jesus Christ can help you
find the way.

Eliot looks at her like she's out of her mind.

CLICK. Eliot turns to see A BAGGAGE HANDLER coming out of the ramp door. Eliot runs toward the door as it starts to close. He grabs it just in time, slips inside and slams it behind him.

HANDLER (O.S.)
Hey!

INT. AIRPORT RAMP -- CONTINUOUS

Eliot (35) races to the bottom of the ramp and pushes up against the door of the small plane. He looks through the window as A FLIGHT ATTENDANT (28) prepares for take-off. ELIOT BANGS ON THE DOOR.

ELIOT
HEY! OPEN UP! OPEN THE DOOR!

The attendant stops and looks around curiously.

ELIOT
I'M OUT HERE!

The attendant looks out at Eliot frantically waving his ticket.

ELIOT
OPEN UP! I'VE GOT A TICKET!!

Eliot begins to pound furiously on the door. The attendant motions him to stop as THE PILOT (58) appears behind her. The pilot pushes the door open.

PILOT
What the hell are you doing?

ELIOT
I've got a ticket for this flight--
First class!

The pilot examines the ticket as Eliot squirms his way inside.

PILOT
"Eliot Rockett"? What the hell kind
of name is that?

FEMALE ATTENDANT
(whispering to the pilot)
I think he's on Broadway.
(then)
In Xanadu.

ELIOT
Please-- It's real. The ticket's
good.

The pilot looks Eliot up and down.

PILOT
I don't want any problems, Rockett.

ELIOT
Yes-- Yes-- No problems!

With a scowl, the pilot hands the ticket to the attendant and heads toward the cockpit.

Eliot rushes toward the back of the plane.

FEMALE ATTENDANT
First class is this way!

INT. AIRPLANE -- CONTINUOUS

All eyes are on Eliot (35) as he races down the aisle of the small, but crowded, plane. PEOPLE WHISPER and point.

Suddenly, he sees Anne. She sits against the window, at the back of the plane. Her eyes are closed. She listens to an iPod. She hasn't noticed the commotion.

Eliot stops in the aisle next to her. A BALD MAN (42) sitting beside Anne looks up.

BALD MAN

Hi.

ELIOT

Anne?

She doesn't hear. The bald man nudges her. She opens her eyes and looks at him. He points to Eliot. She looks up. Her heart misses a beat.

Eliot is sweaty, disheveled and completely out of breath. He looks like hell. Anne pulls off her headphones.

ELIOT

Hi.

Eliot tries to catch his breath as the female attendant arrives.

FEMALE ATTENDANT

Sir, your seat is in the forward cabin.

ANNE

(coldly)

Eliot, what are you doing?

ELIOT

(with resolve)

Something happened to me--

Anne looks away.

ELIOT

After you left-- Something changed.

(then)

I changed.

ANNE

(turning back)

In the last three hours? It doesn't work that way.

ELIOT

Anne, please. It's true! My dad died. And so much more--

The female attendant steps forward.

FEMALE ATTENDANT

Sir! I must ask you to take your seat immediately!

ELIOT

(ignoring the attendant)

Anne, I feel so much pain. I mean serious, serious pain-- Like I never knew I could. It's--

ANNE

Eliot, I'm sorry your father died, if that's what you want to hear.

ELIOT

NO! Please?!

He's shaking. Anne's a little taken aback by this.

FEMALE ATTENDANT

Sir, if you don't take your seat, I'll be forced to call security!

MALE PASSENGER (O.S.)

Sit down, asshole!

Eliot suppresses a nervous laugh as he tries to think.

ELIOT

Anne-- Ask me how I am? Go ahead-- Ask me?

ANNE SCOFFS and looks away.

ELIOT

Please?

FEMALE ATTENDANT

This is outrageous!

Anne faces Eliot as the attendant spins away.

ANNE

(utterly insincere)

How are you, Eliot?

ELIOT

Not fine! So unbelievably not fine!

(then)

The truth is, I'm a complete fucking mess. Except for you, my entire life is fucked.

MALE PASSENGER (O.S.)

You got that right, scumbag!

SUDDENLY, THE ENGINES START TO DECELERATE.

PASSENGERS MURMUR THEIR CONCERNS as TWO MEN (30s) get up from their seats and start to close in. Eliot ignores them.

ELIOT

Anne, I know this is my last chance. I want to show you-- I feel-- I feel things. More than I ever have before. And, look what's happened.

(smiling in spite of himself)

I'm suddenly in this incredible, horrible pain!

Anne examines him closely.

ANNE
You look awful.

ELIOT
I know-- It's great!

Trying to contain her emotions, Anne finally turns away.

ANNE
It's too late.

ELIOT
Please give me another chance.
(then)
I'm so sorry.

THERE'S A COMMOTION AT THE FRONT OF THE PLANE and suddenly,
TWO GIGANTIC SECURITY GUARDS rumble down the aisle.

GIGANTIC #1
Okay fella, let's go.

As the two hulks grab him, Eliot clamps onto a seat to try
and prevent them pulling him away.

ELIOT
(desperately)
Anne-- I've only ever made one real
decision in my life.
(then)
I want to change it.

The security guards pick him up. They yank his hands from
the seat and start to carry him down the aisle. He squirms
desperately, trying to grab onto anything he can.

ELIOT
ANNE!

Anne forces herself not to watch.

ELIOT
ANNE!!

Wriggling and clawing, Eliot is carried out of the plane.

ELIOT
(fading)
ANNE!!!!

The slightest look of concern flickers in Anne's eyes as the
ENGINES REV.

FADE TO BLACK.

ELIOT (V.O.)
(flatly)
You can't spend your whole life
looking forwards and backwards.
(then)
You have to know what you want.

FADE IN:

INT. JAIL CELL -- DAY

CU: Sitting with his back against a cinder-block wall,
ELIOT ROCKETT (35) STARES INTO CAMERA.

His closely cropped hair and facial stubble are hipster cool. His face is sweaty and covered with streaks of dirt. A thin trail of blood runs from a cut on his temple. Through the cracked lens of his Michael Kors glasses, his left eye is bruised and swollen shut.

Eliot wears a garish, ill fitting stars and stripes golf shirt. Blood stains the collar. The sleeve is torn.

In contrast to his battered appearance, Eliot's smile is strangely at peace.

PULL BACK: Behind steel bars, Eliot sits on the edge of a cot in the airport jail cell. The wall behind him is covered with graffiti.

ELIOT (V.O.)
A lifetime full of emotions is bound
to be a complex and messy thing.
(then)
In the mess there's great happiness
and also great pain. The key is not
to let one prevent you from
experiencing the other.

EXT. ROCKETT ROOF (1986) -- DAY

With his hands folded behind his head, Eliot (12) lies on his back watching the clouds float by.

ELIOT (V.O.)
In happiness you allow yourself to
wonder and to dream.

INT. LINCOLN (1986) -- DAY

Uncharacteristically loose, Tom (44) taps on the steering wheel as he drives on the highway.

ELIOT (V.O.)
To imagine all the things you might
be...

INT. LINCOLN (1986) -- NIGHT

The car idles at the suburban intersection. Eliot (12) and Tom sit in the front seat. Tom looks straight ahead with a scowl. Eliot turns and looks at his dad.

ELIOT (V.O.)
...And forget all the things you
already are.

INT. ROCKETT MASTER BEDROOM (1986) -- NIGHT

THE CAMERA TRACKS TO Jane (44) who sits in the shadows, clutching the photo. Her eyes are distant, her cheeks stained with tears.

ELIOT (V.O.)
In pain you find your truth. The
demons and secrets you hide away...

EXT. ROCKETT ROOF/ JACOBSON PORCH (1986) -- NIGHT

ELIOT POV: Through the trees, Bob douses the barbecue flames that threaten to engulf their dinner. Christine slides her arm around his waist and kisses him on the neck.

INT. ROCKETT LIVING ROOM (1986) -- NIGHT

THE CAMERA TRACKS INTO Tom (44) who, glossy eyed, stares at the TV. The reflected images wash over him.

ELIOT (V.O.)
...And only occasionally uncover to
remind you of all the dark places
you've been.

INT. ROCKETT DINING ROOM (1986) -- NIGHT

It's the dinner after Eliot discovered Tom and Christine. Jane is about to implode. Eliot (12) and Tom, their heads down, avoid all eye contact.

ELIOT (V.O.)
In between happiness and pain is fear.
This is the worst place of all. Fear
causes you to cling to what little you
have and prevents you from reaching
out for what you really need.

INT. BROOKLYN LOFT -- DAY

Bathed in the morning light, Anne (34) sits on the edge of the window sill with her arms wrapped around her legs. Looking out the window, she wears an under-shirt and striped pajama bottoms. Her feet are bare, her hair pulled back.

Even with the haze of just having woken up, she's never looked more beautiful and elegant.

ELIOT (V.O.)
If you're lucky an angel will come
into your life and rescue you from
your fear.

Sensing our gaze, Anne turns toward us. Her expression is pure warmth. A glowing smile spreads across her face and our world is filled with sunshine.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SKY -- SUNRISE

We fly majestically through an incredible orange, blue and yellow sky. A whisper thin sheet of clouds blend into the ocean of color that extends as far as the eye can see.

ELIOT (V.O.)
 She'll take you by the hand, pull you
 high above the ground and show you
 what it's like to smell the inside of
 clouds.

INT. JAIL CELL -- DAY

CU: A battered Eliot (35) CONTINUES TO SMILE AT US.

GIGANTIC #1 (O.S.)
 It's your lucky day.

KEYS GO INTO THE LOCK and the bars swing open. Eliot looks up. Beside the guard, Anne stands in the doorway.

GIGANTIC #1
 C'mon, killer. Let's go.

His eyes on Anne, Eliot gets up and steps out of the cell.

GIGANTIC #1
 This way.

The guard leads them away.

INT. ENDLESS CORRIDOR -- CONTINUOUS

A long line of overhead lights extend as far as the eye can see. A steel door opens into the hallway. The guard steps out and holds the door for Eliot (35) and Anne.

GIGANTIC #1
 (to Eliot)
 Don't let me catch you messing with
 one of my planes again.
 (then, to Anne)
 Goodbye, Counselor.

ANNE
 Goodbye, Arnold. Thank you.

The guard steps back inside and shuts the door behind him. Eliot and Anne look down the endless corridor. After a moment, they start to walk.

WE TRACK IN FRONT OF THEM as, side by side, they continue down the hall. Their expressions are distant but content. They don't look at each other.

Their fingers brush against one another's as the slightest bit of panic splashes over both of their faces.

FADE TO BLACK.