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MY BODYGUARD

Original Screenplay

by

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FINAL SHOOTING SCRIPT
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My Bodyguard Productions
528 North Michigan Avenue
Chicago, IL 60611

MY BODYGUARD

FADE IN:

1 EXT. LAKESHORE - DUSK (X) 1

Title sequence dusk series of shots following CLIFFORD along lake front on bicycle. With Clifford wearing blue jeans and a plaid shirt, and with water in background, it appears as if he's riding in the country. Pullback with helicopter shot revealing that he is in the great city of Chicago. Clifford cycles to hotel.

2 EXT. HOTEL - DUSK (X) 2

ROBERTO, the doorman, carries luggage from hotel to taxi. Clifford arrives, dismounts, attempts to walk bike into hotel. Roberto bars his way.

ROBERTO

I got it.

3 INT. HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT (X) 3

Roberto and Clifford enter. Roberto carries bike through lobby and to the storage area. Clifford straightens himself out in the mirror. He walks through the lobby towards a bar. Beautiful sexy HOSTESS stands at entranceway. She flirts. Clifford adores her. He's embarrassed.

HOSTESS

'Lo, Cliffy.

CLIFFORD

Hi.

4 INT. HOTEL BAR - NIGHT (X) 4

Tinkle of piano, low murmur of voices. Bar is a third filled. Clifford goes to bar. He is quickly spotted by CORRINE, a pretty girl bartender. She winks at him. He adores her. He is embarrassed.

GRAMMA'S voice penetrates the room. She is sprawled exotically at the bar, seated next to a jovial middle-aged man, LLOYD GURNEY.

GRAMMA

I told him, "Hector, TV is a narcotic,
it takes away your manhood if you
watch it all the time--"

(CONTINUED)

MR. GURNEY

It is a drug.

GRAMMA

Exactly! A drug! It saps your strength, if you know what I mean?

(pause - she suggestively
stares at him)

You know what I mean. There he is,
a young fella -- only sixty-seven--
and already his eyes are turning into
headlights and his butt is mushrooming
into this enormous shape; like
a huge lightbulb!

MR. GURNEY

He's mutating.

GRAMMA

You got it. Those little green
rays snake out of the TV set and
drain ya. It got to where I prac-
tically had to drag Hector to bed!
You know what I mean. I just couldn't
stand it anymore.

MR. GURNEY

What a shame. A woman like you
needs a real man.

Corrine brings Clifford a glass of coke.

CLIFFORD

Thanks.

Clifford starts to leave. Gramma grabs him by his belt
from behind. He's stuck.

GRAMMA

This is Mr. Gurney, from Ohio...

MR. GURNEY

Cincinatti.

Clifford waves hello.

GRAMMA

Right. Anyway, Mr. Gurney makes
those cute little get-well cards.
You know, the ones with the little
kids with big eyes. You got any
X-rated cards?

(CONTINUED)

MR. GURNEY

What a good idea. I'll call the plant in the morning.

GRAMMA

Ya know, you look a lot like George Brent.

(to Clifford, talking about Mr. Gurney)

I used to love George Brent! What a heart-throb!

(looking at Clifford's drink)

Mm! That looks scrumptious! Why don't you squeeze a wedge of lemon in it, give it a little zing?

CLIFFORD

Sure.

GRAMMA

(grabs a lemon wedge from the bar)

Yeah, live a little.

Gramma squeezes the lemon into Clifford's drink, but it pops out of her fingers and into Mr. Gurney's lap. She retrieves it.

GRAMMA (CONT'D)

Hold still. It's a slippery little bugger.

Gramma splashes a couple of drops from a glass of water onto Mr. Gurney's trouser leg, starts to rub it dry with bar napkins.

MR. GURNEY

Don't worry about it.

GRAMMA

Are you kidding? God only knows what lemon juice could do to polyester.

MR. GURNEY'S WIFE, laden with packages, enters and stands behind him.

MRS. GURNEY

Bonwit's closed early, Lloyd. Sorry if I spoiled your plans.

(CONTINUED)

She exits in a huff. Mr. Gurney chases after her.

MR. GURNEY

Doris...wait a minute...Doris...
I can explain...

GRAMMA

(holding soggy bar
napkins)

Don't say "Thank You," or anything.

5 INT. BAR - NIGHT

(X)

5

Clifford, carrying his drink on a tray walks through the lounge and enters door marked "Manager."

6 INT. MANAGER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

(X)

6

MR. PEACHE, well dressed and immaculately groomed, is talking on the phone, which is cradled between his chin and shoulder, leaving his hands free to rummage through invoices. He holds an empty cigarette holder in his mouth, which he slides with his tongue back and forth across his teeth.

MR. PEACHE

(into phone)

It's under control, Stan--she no longer has access to the room keys--
I can't do that. She is my mother.

CLIFFORD

Dad?

Mr. Peache holds out his index finger, meaning "wait."
Clifford's P.O.V.: On Mr. Peache's hands as he doodles on the invoices.

MR. PEACHE

I explained that to you, Stan. It was nothing more than a misunderstanding. Trust me, okay? Mm-hum--

He reaches out, while listening to Stan, and pulls a pass key out from behind Clifford's ear.

A WORKMAN opens the door. He is built like a Marine Corps lifer.

WORKMAN

The wiring in 405 is set. We'll finish up 406 tomorrow.

(CONTINUED)

MR. PEACHE
Tomorrow when?
(into phone)
Hold on...

WORKMAN
I dunno, after lunch?

MR. PEACHE
Too late.

WORKMAN
Whatta ya want, miracles?

MR. PEACHE
(into phone)
Call you right back--what?
(to workman)
Wait, Marty--

Roberto sticks his head in.

ROBERTO
She's not in the Pump Room.

MR. PEACHE
Oh God.

ROBERTO
I can't be everywhere.

CLIFFORD
(whispers to his
father)
She's at the bar.

MR. PEACHE
(to Clifford)
Alone?

WORKMAN
I'm late.

Workman exits.

MR. PEACHE
(into phone)
Stan, I have to talk to this guy-
Marty, just wait a sec-bye, Stan.
(to Clifford)
Where'd he go?

(CONTINUED)

CLIFFORD
(gesturing)

Thataway.

MR. PEACHE
(serious)

You've no doubt noticed, son, that
this hotel operates like a well-
oiled machine.

CLIFFORD
You got time for dinner?

MR. PEACHE
C'mon. I'll make time.

Mr. Peache throws his arm around Clifford's shoulder.
GRIFFITH, the Assistant Manager, comes in.

MR. PEACHE (CONT'D)
Yes, Griffith.

GRIFFITH
Mr. Peache, things are going quite
badly. The fourth floor is a dis-
aster area. A Mrs. Gurney from Cin-
cinatti claims her husband was prop-
ositioned by an elderly lady--and we
know who that is, and Senator Moore
is on his way to check in.

MR. PEACHE
I'll take care of the Gurneys and the
Senator, you see to the fourth floor.

Griffith walks off muttering.

MR. PEACHE (CONT'D)
(gazing after him)
Into each life...
(to Clifford)
You go eat. I'll try to join you.

7 INT. STAIRS TO ARCADE - NIGHT

(X)

7

Clifford slowly makes his way down the stairs.

8 INT. NEWSSTAND - NIGHT

(X)

8

On rows of magazines, newspapers, paperbacks. Clifford

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED:

8

scans the covers, looking for something interesting. He selects a Mad Magazine, pays cashier.

9 INT. HOTEL KITCHEN - NIGHT

(X)

9

Huge and busy. Clifford enters, magazine under his arm. Follow Clifford as he passes chefs, waiters, etc. He stops to taste a sauce and gives the CHEF the sign of approval. The chef gestures as if to say "Yes, I'm the best." Clifford goes to a small table tucked away in a corner. Roberto is sitting at the table, reading the paper. Brass pots and pans and ladles hang above it like decorations. He sits, opens magazine, reads.

CHEF (CYRIL) brings over plate of food, sets it down in front of Clifford.

CLIFFORD

Thanks, Cyril.

Cyril gestures, leaves. Clifford eats, surrounded by the hubbub, which doesn't faze him. Waiters pass back and forth across frame.

The Assistant Manager bursts in, looking for the chef.

GRIFFITH

Cyril?

(sees him)

Cyril, I thought you'd like to know
my soup was cold.

Griffith turns and looks down upon Clifford and Roberto. He turns on his heel and leaves. Cyril is angrily sharpening the world's largest knife, while staring at the spot where Griffith stood.

10 INT. BATHROOM - PEACHE SUITE - NIGHT

(X)

10

Clifford, now in pyjamas, is brushing his teeth and staring in the mirror at his wide open mouth. He hums as he brushes, enjoying the echo chamber effect the tiled bathroom creates on his voice. Sound of water running in sink.

11 INT. PEACHE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

(X)

11

Clifford emerges from bathroom and walks through living room. A sound.

(CONTINUED)

Clifford stops--listens--waits--something spooky.

Gramma sneaks up behind him. She has newspaper sections in each hand and she begins whapping them wildly on Clifford's head.

GRAMMA

Eeeeeeeee--Eeeeeeeee. Bats. Bats.

Clifford jumps; Gramma laughs.

GRAMMA (CONT'D)

Bat attack. You okay? I didn't mean to scare you so bad, baby.

CLIFFORD.

You didn't scare me. I saw you coming.

GRAMMA

You did not.

She starts whapping him again with the newspapers, driving him into his bedroom.

GRAMMA (CONT'D)

You little liar. No one ever suspects a bat attack.

12

INT. CLIFFORD'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

(X)

12

CLIFFORD

You telegraphed it. I saw it comin' a mile off.

Clifford, now by the bed, picks up his pillow and starts to swing.

GRAMMA

(angry and sage)

Clifford! Don't ...you...ever...hit a woman. Some men think a woman wants that. They're wrong. Leave her before you hit her. Now put that pillow down.

Clifford, stunned, turns to put the pillow down. Gramma immediately starts whapping him with the papers again.

GRAMMA

Eeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee.

(CONTINUED)

Clifford grabs the pillow and whacks her with it.

GRAMMA (CONT'D)

All right, I give, I quit. Dirty rotten kid. Ya never take my advice.

(catching breath)

Look, I got this for you. New notebook. And a pack of paper, pencils, pens and erasers--I always loved opening day of school. And I love just walking into stationery stores. They smell so.

(inhales)

God, I dunno. Lumber yards, too.

CLIFFORD

And bookstores.

GRAMMA

Yeah. Nothin' smells better than a new book.

MR. PEACHE (O.S.)

Gramma?

GRAMMA

Ssh. Don't squeal.

Gramma hides behind door. Mr. Peache comes to door, then, as if expecting it, peers around door at Gramma.

MR. PEACHE

(Reprovingly)

Mother...

GRAMMA

How'd you know I was back here?

MR. PEACHE

Little heavy on the Jungle Gardenia.

GRAMMA

(coming out)

That smell has lured a thousand men into my clutches.

(to Clifford)

Don't listen.

MR. PEACHE

And this is the subject of tonight's sermon - on a subject we've heard before, many times.

(CONTINUED)

CLIFFORD

(to Gramma)

I like the Thous Shalt Not's the best.

MR. PEACHE

(holding back a grin)

(like a litany)

Mother, I do not own this hotel,
I simply manage it.

GRAMMA

(Hums)

H-M-M-M. Don't underrate yourself.
Where would this place be without you?

MR. PEACHE

With a new manager, that's where.
Griffith's been watching me
like a vulture.

GRAMMA

That greasy little wimp.

MR. PEACHE

The point is, he tells me you
tried to pick up some guy from
Cincinatti, a married man...

GRAMMA

I never look twice at a married man.
He told me he was a widower.

MR. PEACHE

Where do you suggest we go when
we get kicked out of this hotel?

GRAMMA

The old actor's home. I'll be a
resident, you can manage it, and
Clifford can be the busboy.

CLIFFORD

Good, I'm ready to retire.

MR. PEACHE

You, young man are going to school
and act like a student. I am now
going downstairs to act like a
hotel manager and mother...

(CONTINUED)

GRAMMA
(all sweetness)
Yes, Larry.

MR. PEACHE
Try, for God's sake to act your age.

He spoils his serious exit with a flourish. Gramma and Clifford are laughing. Mr. Peache leaves, then sticks his head back through the door to see how it went.

13 INT. CAR - DAY

13

Approach school. Seen from Clifford's POV: Kids on their way to school; on bikes, on foot, skateboards, etc. POLICEMEN and POLICEWOMEN; PATROLS; Crowds of parents.

Clifford opens his window and looks out as the school looms
INTO VIEW -

ON ROBERTO: He is driving. He looks at Clifford and smiles.

ROBERTO
Knock em on their ass, champ.

Clifford gets out of the car.

The passing children gaze curiously at him, at his clothing, and the ancient caddy.

ROBERTO

See you around three.

Clifford nods. The Caddy pulls away. Clifford walks toward the school.

CLIFFORD'S POV

ADVANCING toward the school's front entrance. The NOISE within growing louder. The other children gawk and snicker at Clifford's outfit.

We PASS through the front entrance. (x)

INT. SCHOOL

As Clifford goes through the halls, we SEE, from his POV, a variety of small sights and incidents -

- The hallways, filled with students and the CLANG of slamming lockers.

- Windows white with sunlight and cross-hatched with wire mesh.

We are surrounded by the ECHOED SOUNDS of footsteps, laughter, lockers, shrieks, etc.

(x)

Clifford's POV: PASSING the bulletin boards, the classroom doors, catching glimpses of chaotic homeroom interiors.

A PATROL passes, carrying the flag. Clifford sees a water fountain ahead. A BOY (CARSON) is drinking from it.

We HEAR the steady slurp of the boy as he drinks. (x)

A hand enters FRAME and pushes Carson's head down in the water. Carson looks up.

(CONTINUED)

(x)

MELVIN MOODY. He stares at Carson with a smile.
Beside him stand KOONTZ and HIGHTOWER.

MOODY

Say what?

Carson backs off, silently.

(x)

KOONTZ and HIGHTOWER laugh.

(x)

17 INT. HALLWAY

17

Clifford searches for his homeroom

(x)

A BELL RINGS.

18 ANOTHER PART OF THE HALLWAY

18

Crowds and chaos. Clifford stops before his homeroom
and enters.

19 INT. CLASSROOM DAY

(X)

19

Clifford's POV: Pandemonium reigns. Clifford's gaze
sweeps the room, surveying the faces of the other
students and picks out the teacher, Ms. Jump, who is
writing on the black/greenboard: "Welcome to homeroom
10- and English 204. Your teacher is Ms. Clarice
Jump."

Clifford moves around the room, scanning the empty seats.
Kids are still coming and going through the classroom
doors.

A second bell rings.

MS. JUMP

Please take any seat.

Clifford moves around the room, scanning the empty seats.

A pretty girl passes. Clifford follows her with his
eyes as he sits down. Dubrow slips in before him.

(CONTINUED)

DUBROW
(threateningly)
Hey, I'm sitting here.

MS. JUMP
Come on, hurry up. Find a seat you
like 'cause you're gonna be in it
for the rest of the year.

Clifford moves on as Dubrow greets Shelley and Lelani
by name. Clifford starts to sit behind Shelley.

SHELLEY
That's saved.

MS. JUMP
(to Clifford)
Young man. Yes, you. Would you
please take a seat and sit in it.

CLIFFORD
But...

He moves to a seat at the back next to the last row
nearest the windows. The seat behind it is occupied
by Carson, who looks gloomy. The seat in front is
occupied by Lelani. Hightower elbows his way into the
seat next to Dubrow. They slap palms.

CLIFFORD
Is this saved?

Carson shakes his head "no."

Clifford sits down.

CARSON
Feel under the desk.

Clifford feels it; makes a face; pulls hand away.

CARSON
You've got gum there dating back
to Neanderthal times.

CLIFFORD
Really.

(CONTINUED)

Whispered conversation between Shelley and Lelani.

LELANI
Who's the new kid?

SHELLEY
Kinda little.

LELANI
He's cute.

SHELLEY
Ask him where he's from.

LELANI
You ask him.

SHELLEY
Go on...

LELANI
(to Clifford)
You new?

CLIFFORD
Yeah.

LELANI
Were you in Sanford's
English class last year?

CLIFFORD
No. I'm new.

LELANI
Oh yeah. That's right.
(to Shelley)
He's new.

They giggle and converse in frenetic whispers. Other kids enter.

DUBROW
Hey, Shelley, how about you and
me going out tonight?

SHELLEY
Ask Moody.

Hightower and Dubrow look at each other and laugh.

CARSON
The gum's not the worst,
it's the boogers that
freak me out. You can
get hepatitis from the
fresh ones.

MS. JUMP
(plunging ahead with
roll call)
Ferdie Allison? Do we
have a Ferdie Allison
here?

GIRL (FREDDIE)
It's Freddie. I'm here.

MS. JUMP
You're Freddie?

FREDDIE
Yes ma'am.

(CONTINUED)

Koontz enters, bows elaborately, to Ms. Jump. Spreads his arms out to the class.

KOONTZ

And now ladies and degenerates...
He-e-e-eres Moody!

Hightower mimics the "Tonight Show" theme as Moody enters. He's wearing a cowboy hat.

Hightower, Dubrow and Koontz applaud. So do Shelley and a few others.

MOODY

Don't applaud. Just throw money.
(he bows elaborately
to Ms. Jump)
Howdy, ma'am.

MS. JUMP

O.K. Move it on back, pardner.

DUBROW

Moody, back here.

LELANI

I don't know why you go with him.

SHELLEY

I could tell you in detail.

Both girls laugh. The class is buzzing. Moody proceeds to the back, followed by Koontz, greeting classmates as he passes, much like a politician running for office.

CARSON

(to Clifford)

My luck -

MS. JUMP

I'm sure we're all happy to have Mr. Moody among us as we embark on a great adventure--sophomore year. Now you all meditate on that while I check for stragglers.

She leaves.

Moody looks past Shelley and fixes on Lelani - takes in Clifford.

(CONTINUED)

SHELLEY

I saved you a seat.

MOODY

Yeah. Koontz, you take it.

(It's a rejection,
and Shelley feels it
deeply)

Hey, Lani, you've grown up over
the summer. Where'd you get
such beautiful hair.

LELANI

K-Mart.

CLIFFORD

K-Mart. Ha ha.

MOODY

(to Clifford, mean)

What's so funny?

Ms. Jump re-enters.

MOODY

(to Clifford)

That's my seat.

MS. JUMP

Will you please find a seat
back there?

MOODY

I had one, but this sucker swiped
it!

CLIFFORD

I--I was here first--

MOODY

Bullshit, man!

MS. JUMP

You watch that tongue, Moody. Find
another seat, or else come up here
and sit next to me.

MOODY

GAAAAAAHHH! Bummer!

(to Koontz)

Move it or lose it!

(CONTINUED)

Koontz moves over and Moody takes the seat behind Shelley. He glares at Clifford.

CARSON

You've got nerve--even if you
ain't gonna live long.

Roll Call.

Moody's next to Lelani. He puts his hand on her back.
She shakes it off. Shelley sees this.

MS. JUMP

Ricky Linderman.

Reactions from the class. Whispers, etc.

CLASS

I thought he was still locked up.

He killed a cop.

He broke a teacher's leg.

CLIFFORD

(to Carson)

Who's Linderman?

CARSON

(ceiling eye-roll)

No one. Just the school's
mass murderer.

MS. JUMP

Does anyone know if Ricky's in
school today?

MOODY

He's probably in New York...climbin'
up the Empire State Building.

MS. JUMP

Clifford--um--P-E-A-C-H-E. Where's
Clifford?

Clifford raises his hand.

MS. JUMP

Is that "Peach" or Peachy?"

(CONTINUED)

CLIFFORD

Peach.

MOODY

I knew he was a fruit.

MS. JUMP

What did you say -- Melvin?

MOODY

I don't use that name anymore--
Clarice.

MS. JUMP

Fair enough. You call me Ms. Jump,
and what shall we call you?

MOODY

M. Big M's good.

DUBROW

Haw, Big M.

CLIFFORD

Is that B.M. for short?

Laughter from the class. Moody glares at Clifford.
Lelani laughs.

CARSON

Boy, are you gonna get it!

MOODY

You and me, Clifford,
are gonna have a talk
after school, right?
Riiiiight.

MS. JUMP

Michael Sawyer?

Hightower laughs in anticipation.

SAWYER

President.

Twelve or so students setting up equipment, scattered through the room. There's a plant stand with overhead lighting, a terrarium, etc. Clifford is working on an aquarium by himself. He is deft; obviously knows what he's doing. Several members of his homeroom are in the class, including Shelly and Carson. The TEACHER is circulating around the room, giving advice and checking on progress. Carson approaches Clifford and watches him for a moment.

CARSON

Boy, that was so dumb what you said to Moody this morning. I never saw anybody put him down before. I hope you get away with it.

Clifford holds a small hose with which he is filling the aquarium. In the middle of the tank sits a small gold fish bowl. The water flows first into the bowl and then over flows into the tank.

CLIFFORD

(indicating hose)

Hold this.

Carson takes the hose.

CARSON

Just don't let him get you in the halls alone. Or on the stairs either.

Carson is pouring the water into the gravel directly. Clifford moves Carson's hand over the bowl. Clifford smooths out the gravel covering a filter.

CLIFFORD

Into the bowl.

CARSON

Or especially in the bathrooms. I never go to the bathrooms here if I can help it.

CLIFFORD

What do you do?

CARSON

Just hold it in. Stay away from liquids.

(CONTINUED)

CLIFFORD
(smiling)
That's ridiculous.

CARSON
You think so? They say one kid
got thrown out a window last year.
Supposably, he's a vegetable now.

Clifford now begins to place some aquarium plants in the gravel. He is very adept at the entire procedure. Carson continues to fill the tank.

CLIFFORD
That's dumb. Who told you that?

CARSON
Plenty of people. Then there's
this other guy had his eye kicked
out. Total gross out. Never found
the eyeball either.

The teacher walks over, puts his hand on Clifford's shoulder approvingly.

TEACHER
You've done this before.

Clifford nods shyly.

CLIFFORD
Yeah.

Teacher walks on to another group.

CLIFFORD
(now a bit concerned)
Moody did that?

CARSON
I'm not saying he did and I'm
not saying he didn't, but from my
point of view, it's better to pay
him the protection money.

CLIFFORD
You pay Moody for protection?

CARSON
You better believe it. Lots of
kids do. He's probably about a
billionaire or something by now.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CARSON (CONT'D)

He takes our lunch money every day
so I've been brown bagging it. Now
he claims he's gonna take my bus fare.
Oh well, I can use the exercise.

CLIFFORD

I don't think you should let him get
away with it.

CARSON

Yeah, I know. Only I'm kinda addicted
to breathing.

21 INT. STAIRWAY - DAY

21

Crowded with kids on their way out of school, Clifford
among them.

On his way down, he spots, below him, Moody and Koontz,
Dubrow and Hightower, moving down the hallway.

Clifford pulls back, up the stairs, moving against the
stream of traffic.

22 INT. LIBRARY - DAY

22

High angle, overlooking front of school. Clifford waits (x)
for Roberto's car. He moves up to the window, stands to
one side, watches.

23 CLIFFORD'S POV

23

Kids pouring out the door, heading for cars, buses,
bikes, etc. Roberto is not among them. (x)

23A BACK TO SCENE - INT.

(x) 23A

Clifford is concerned.

DISSOLVE

23B INT. LIBRARY - DAY

(x) 23B

A half hour later. The librarian checks her watch, stands
up starts gathering some material.

ANGLE - Clifford at window. An unread paperback in hand.
He gazes out the window once more.

23C CLIFFORD'S POV

23C

Roberto drives up.

24 INT. LIBRARY - DAY (x) 24

Back to scene. Clifford is relieved. He exits the library.

25 OMITTED (x) 25

26 INT. HALLWAY - DAY (x) 26

Clifford walks down the hallway toward stair way. A
custodian passes him.

CUSTODIAN

Lock up in fifteen minutes.

He turns a corner.

27 OMITTED 27

28 CLIFFORD'S POV 28

He turns a corner and sees Hightower and Dubrow standing guard outside the bathroom door. The letters spell B YS.

Hightower whistles.

DUBROW
(surprised)

What have we here?

Clifford bolts. They grab him.

DUBROW
We're having a little after school party, Peachy. And you're the guest of honor.

29 INT. BOYS' ROOM - DAY 29

SOUND OF DRIPPING WATER (continuous): one of the urinals won't stop flushing.

Hightower and Dubrow push Clifford in.

DUBROW
Hey Moody! I got a present for you.

MOODY
Wait a minute.

Moody and Koontz are intimidating a freshman.

MOODY
You're gonna bring 2 dollars tomorrow, (x)
right? And a dollar a day from now on.
Got it?

KID
O.K.

MOODY
Now beat it. Ooh. It's Peachpit.

He puts out his hand. Clifford backs away.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED:

29

MOODY

Hey, I'm tryna' make friends. Don't
you wanna be friends?

CLIFFORD

All right.

They shake.

DUBROW

What about me?

MOODY

Sure. Shake hands with Dubrow.

Clifford shakes hands with Dubrow, then offers his
hand to Hightower.

HIGHTOWER

I ain't shakin' that 'til I know
where it's been.

Laughter.

Moody puts his arm around Clifford.

MOODY

Where'd you go to school before you
came here, man?

CLIFFORD

Um. Southside Academy.

DUBROW

Private school, huh? You rich?

CLIFFORD

Oh, no. No.

KOONTZ

(putting on anger)

Hey! It's nothin' to be ashamed of!

CLIFFORD

I'm not ashamed.

KOONTZ

Ha! Knew he was rich!

CLIFFORD

No I'm not--really--

(CONTINUED)

MOODY

It's obvious you got bread, Peachfuzz,
the question is, have you got sense?
I'm serious, have you got sense?

CLIFFORD

I think so. Sometimes.

MOODY

I think so, too.

Hightower goes into a stall and begins wetting enormous
wads of toilet paper.

CLIFFORD

Oh. Good.

MOODY

If you got sense, you'll know
this is not no rich private academy
school.

The others begin throwing the wads of paper against the
ceiling. WHOMP!

MOODY

Nah. You go to a school like this,
you need a damned bodyguard, some
of the shit that goes down.

KOONTZ

Hey, you know we got Linderman in
our homeroom?

MOODY

You know about Linderman?
(Clifford shakes his
head no)
Psychopath, totally freaked. Wasted
some kid. Shot him in the head.
Blew his brain out. Ug-leeee!

WHOMP! WHOMP!

CLIFFORD

Why did he--do that?

KOONTZ

Proolly the kid was a pain in the ass.

DUBROW

"Hi, Linderman!" -- "Hi, yourself!"

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DUBROW (CONT'D)

Kabowee! Gaah, brains all over the wall!

More WHOMPS.

MOODY

Guys like Linderman just lose control, yknow?

(Wild, bloodcurdling scream)

YAAAAAAAAAAAAARRRRRRRRRRRGGGGGGGGH!

Like that, yknow? That's when you come to us. We're bodyguards.

Interested?

More WHOMPS.

CLIFFORD

I don't know...

MOODY

For you it's cheap. Buck a day.

CLIFFORD

Hunh?

MOODY

Buck a day, we're your bodyguards.

We give everybody the same deal.

You can pay day to day or week to week, any way you wanna work it out.

CLIFFORD

But where am I--gonna get a dollar every day?

MOODY

Lunch money. You don't want to eat that crap anyway.

KOONTZ

Fifty cents they charge for that Godzilla feed.

HIGHTOWER

Talk about your major rip-off.

KOONTZ

Sixty if you get two milks.

(CONTINUED)

MOODY

So for that same sixty cents - I'm talkin' two milks - you got us almost paid for. All's you got to do else is scrape up the other forty.

CLIFFORD

I'm not gonna give you my lunch money. I've gotta eat...

MOODY

Oh. Tell you what -

He goes to the toilet, dips in a paper cup, scooping it full of brackish water. He carries it over to Clifford.

MOODY

Eat that.

Clifford retreats, horrified. Moody advances, putting the cup up to Clifford's mouth.

MOODY

Beats the cafeteria -

Clifford makes gagging sounds. Moody steps back, holding the cup over Clifford's head.

MOODY

Suddenly changed his mind, hey?

(to Clifford)

How much you got on you?

Through the window again comes the sound of the car horn: two quick honks; pause; two more; pause; one long one - growing closer.

MOODY

Hurry up, you want a shower?

Two more honks from outside; farther away this time. Clifford throws his hand up against Moody's arm, splashing the toilet water in Moody's face.

MOODY

Gaaaaaaaahhhhhhhh!

The others step back to avoid the splash.

Clifford runs for the door.

Koontz leaps at him; Clifford twists to the side.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED:

29

Koontz stumbles headlong into one of the open stalls.

Clifford shoves open the bathroom door and runs out.

30

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

30

Clifford overturns the metal trash can, blocking the bathroom door, and runs for the exit.

(CONTINUED)

26.

30 CONTINUED:

30

There is a THUMP as the bathroom door is pushed against the trash can, wedging it tightly against the corner of a locker.

Clifford looks back: Before he can round the corner of the hallway, Moody has managed to squeeze halfway through the jammed bathroom door.

30A INT. HALLWAY - DAY

30A

Moody and his gang chase Clifford. Clifford sees the auditorium door and enters. Hightower and Koontz separate from the others and head down some stairs. Moody and Dubrow follow Clifford through the auditorium door.

30B INT. AUDITORIUM - DAY

30B

Clifford dashes down the balcony stairs to the railing. He hesitates, then runs to an area with three doors marked exit. Moody and Dubrow are close behind.

ANGLE - THREE DOORS - Clifford selects one of the three doors and heads for it. Moody is almost on him. The other two doors burst open. In charge Hightower and Koontz, blocking Moody and Dubrow. Clifford makes good his escape.

MOODY

Out of the way, you stupid turkey. (x)

30C INT. HALLWAY - DAY

30C

Clifford dashes down the hallway to the stairs.

30D INT. STAIRS - DAY

30D

Clifford plunges two steps at a time down the stairs. Shouts of the others are heard behind him.

30E INT. VESTIBULE - DAY

30E

Clifford stumbles through the vestibule to the street exit. Moody and his gang tear down the stairs.

31 EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

31

Clifford runs for the car. (x)

(CONTINUED)

Moody, followed by Hightower and Koontz, bursts out the door, leaps down the steps and runs after Clifford.

Clifford runs, panting, searching for the car - He sees it ahead.

Clifford stumbles - runs on. Reaches the car.

Moody and the others stop cold at the sight of the car. (x)

The black Caddy sits idling by the curb.

CLIFFORD

Hey!

He opens the car door and jumps in.

ROBERTO

What's going on? Who are those guys?

CLIFFORD

Just some guys I met at school...
They wanna kill me.

The car takes off with a lurch and heads down the street.

Clifford's P.O.V. - from moving car. (x)

Moody and his gang stand watching with amused expressions.
They wave their hands in an effete manner. (x)

Back to seeing Clifford. He sits back in his seat. (x)

Gramma and Clifford are sitting on the terrace, Gramma is using a magnifying glass to read the racing form. She's popping mints. Clifford is studying the building opposite through binoculars.

GRAMMA

Who do you like in the fourth tomorrow?

Clifford puts down the glasses.

CLIFFORD

Lucky Lou.

GRAMMA

Clifford! Handicapping is a science, not guesswork.

Mr. Peache enters. He's disturbed.

MR. PEACHE

I've got an idea, why don't we pack up and leave?

GRAMMA

Have a mint.

MR. PEACHE

Mother, where were you at five o'clock.

GRAMMA

5 o'clock. Let me see. Oh, I was having a little drink.

MR. PEACHE

Yeah, well the guy you were trying to lure into the bar is a TV evangelist.

Clifford is looking through the binoculars again.

GRAMMA

No wonder he looked so sour.

MR. PEACHE

You think he looked sour...you should have seen Griffith when he heard about it.

(CONTINUED)

Clifford hands Mr. Peache the glasses. He trains them on the building opposite.

MR. PEACHE

Now, mother, this has got to...Wow!
That isn't the one we saw last night.

CLIFFORD

No,

(pause)

This one's name's Linda.

Mr. Peache removes the binoculars for a moment and looks at Clifford. He's impressed. He resumes watching.

MR. PEACHE

Are you still fourteen?

CLIFFORD

Fifteen.

MR. PEACHE

(absorbed)

Fifteen's a good age.

(puts down binoculars)

Fifteen! I should know, shouldn't I? This damn job. Twenty four hours a day.

CLIFFORD

I know.

MR. PEACHE

Roberto tells me you had a little trouble with some kids today.

CLIFFORD

Nothing serious.

GRAMMA

If they try anything, you go right for the eye...always. Hard as you can. Blinds 'em. Gotta get in that first punch. Take the fight right out of 'em.

MR. PEACHE

Now why didn't you teach me that?

GRAMMA

'Cause you were a sissy, that's why.

(CONTINUED)

MR. PEACHE

Well there are other ways to handle things. When there's a problem you go right to the top. I called your principal.

CLIFFORD

You called school? Oh great. Now I'll really get murdered.

MR. PEACHE

You won't get murdered.

CLIFFORD

They already think I'm a fruit.

Administrative chaos. Papers, schedules, files, etc. stacked to the ceilings. PRINCIPAL RATH shares his office with three other administrators. A xerox machine clatters away. Moody and Clifford stand in front of the Principal's desk. In the background are a group of other kids waiting their turn. Tough looking kids of ethnic background. A boy with a bloody nose sits woefully on a bench. During dialogue the Principal seems preoccupied with a search for a missing document. He rifles through files and drawers.

PRINCIPAL RATH

What did they actually take from you, Clifford?

MODDY

Nothin'.

PRINCIPAL RATH

You zip it up. You've been in here before, Mister. How much?

CLIFFORD

Well, they didn't actually take anything.

PRINCIPAL RATH

Nothing?

MOODY

We were only kidding him, sir.

PRINCIPAL RATH

I'll determine that, not you. They didn't get your money. But they harmed you in some way?

CLIFFORD

No, but -

An administrator hands the Principal a document. Rath initials it.

MOODY

Oh, wow! Could I just say something, please?

PRINCIPAL RATH

You simmer down. You'll have your day in court.

MOODY

Please, Mr. Rath? Double please? I can prove we were joking!

(CONTINUED)

PRINCIPAL RATH

Go ahead.

MOODY

I'm no saint, right? So don't
you think I could whip this dude
if I really wanted?

PRINCIPAL RATH

You don't whip anybody. Not here. Not
anywhere.

MOODY

Gimme credit, if I'd a wanted to
trash him, I'd a done it, you
know that. That's how I can prove
we were just putting him on,
'cause I didn't. But the kid can't
even take a joke, yknow?

PRINCIPAL RATH

I don't see the humor in extortion,
real or pretended. Look, there's
nothing funny about extortion.

MOODY

Okay, okay, I admit it backfired.

PRINCIPAL RATH

You bet it backfired. On you. I
ought to suspend you. But since
school has just started and since
there was no actual harm done, I'm
going to be a nice guy and let you off
with a week's detention. Just consider
yourselves lucky! Got it? All right.
Talk a walk.

They go.

PRINCIPAL RATH

(to Clifford)

It takes time to adjust to a new
school. Things are a little less
sheltered down here than they are
at Southside. Don't let that throw
you, they're also less narrow. Just
don't cry wolf every time someone
looks cross-eyed at you. Okay, son?

(Rath smiles)

Alright, get out of here.

INT. HALLWAY DAY

Empty. Clifford on his way back to class. He stops at
the water fountain.

(CONTINUED)

MOODY (O.S.)

(x)

Hey, fruit.

Clifford turns to see Moody.

MOODY

You givin' me trouble. People don't
do that around here. You better
grow some eyes in the back of your
head, 'cause you ain't gonna know
when it's coming if you don't.

He jabs at Clifford, stopping the blow just short of
contact. Clifford jerks his head back.

Moody winks at him, and moves off down the hallway.

35 OMITTED

35

36 INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

36

Ms. Jump at her desk.

MS. JUMP

(reading from Romeo and
Juliet)

Sleep dwell upon thine eyes, peace
in thy breast. Would I were sleep
and peace, so sweet to rest.

(pause)

Now. What's that all about, Lani?

LELANI

Well, he wants her to get a good
night's rest, I guess.

MS. JUMP

Yes, what else? Len Dubrow?

DUBROW

Uh, like maybe he's real tired
himself, and he figures he can't
take anymore.

Clifford has his hand up. Moody whispers to Koontz,
who whispers to Hightower.

(CONTINUED)

MS. JUMP
Clifford Peache?

CLIFFORD
Um, I think Romeo's saying that he --
Hightower makes a big fart sound.

MOODY
Hey, Peachpit cut a fart!

CLIFFORD
I didn't...

MOODY
(fanning the odor)
Smells like somebody died in here!

DUBROW
PEEEEEEEEEEE-YOUUUUUUUUU! Limburger!

CLIFFORD
Really, I didn't do it...

MS. JUMP
Sit down, Clifford.

CLIFFORD
But...

MS. JUMP
And you cool it, Mr. Moody.

MOODY
Don't blame me...

MS. JUMP
Just sit down and shut up.
(smiling now)
Now we were talking about art.
Let's look at it again. Romeo says
"Sleep dwell upon thine eyes; peace
in thy breast. Would I were sleep
and peace, so sweet to rest." Now.
Where does he want to rest?

There's some snickering and giggling.

MS. JUMP
That's r-i-g-h-t!

(CONTINUED)

Class laughs.

MS. JUMP

Have I got your attention now? What I'm telling you people is that this guy Shakespeare was a pretty sexy guy, and the plays he wrote are full of this kind of thing. Romeo and Juliet is about a couple of kids who have the hots for each other, but they lived in a society where they had to get married to do anything about it. Romeo and Juliet is a very sexy play. Are you interested?

The class laughs loudly. Sudden silence. Ms. Jump is surprised.

MS. JUMP

Now. Let's talk about lo--

She looks at the kids, puzzled; they are staring at the room door. Ms. Jump turns slowly and looks at the door.

CARSON

(a whisper)

Linderman!

And the shispers travel around the room: "It's Linderman! ...Linderman! etc. Linderman lets the door slam and stands staring at the floor.

MS. JUMP

Ricky--do you have a pass?

Linderman takes a crumpled pass and holds it out to Ms. Jump. She crosses to him to get the pass.

CARSON

Start saying your Hail Marys.

MS. JUMP

(to Linderman)

Thank you. There's a seat up front if you --

Linderman clumps past her, down the aisle to the seat which is near the front.

CARSON

Please, God, let him sit up front-- please--

(CONTINUED)

Linderman takes the chair and drags it down the aisle towards the back of the room.

CARSON

He's coming this way! I knew it!

The chair makes a loud scraping noise as Linderman drags it to the back of the room. Ms. Jump grits her teeth at the noise. Linderman passes Moody, saying nothing.

Moody looks uncomfortable.

Linderman continues dragging the chair all the way to the back of the room, passing Clifford and Carson on his way.

CARSON

Not in back of me, not in back of
me, I'll have a heart attack, I
swear to God --

Linderman sits in the back of the room, right behind Carson. He stares out the window.

All eyes are upon him except Carson's. Carson has his eyes shut, his hands over his ears.

CARSON

I knew I'd never get out
of the tenth grade alive,
I could feel it--

MS. JUMP

All right -- now that
everyone's settled down--
let's get back to work--

The room is intensely quiet.

Linderman stares out the window.

Clifford looks at Moody. He seems very subdued.

37-38 OMITTED

37-3

39 INT. GYMNASIUM - DAY

39

Total chaos on the courts. The boys all in gym suits clamor after the several balls in play. The gym class which includes all the boys from the homeroom are present. Linderman and one other boy are fully dressed and sit on benches near the sidelines. The gym instructor enters the gym blowing several times on his whistle.

INSTRUCTOR

Allright, alright. Let's cut the
crap. Off the courts. Let's go.
Move it. First we're going to find
out who can play and who can't.

(CONTINUED)

The boys are off to the sidelines.

INSTRUCTOR

You first five guys over there.
Next five over there. You play
until I blow my whistle and then
you move off the courts. And I
mean move fast.

Moody, Hightower, and three other boys are part of the first team. Clifford, Koontz, and three other boys make up the second team. The instructor throws the ball to Hightower.

INSTRUCTOR

Allright let's go... Hold it.
Hold it.

The instructor has noticed Linderman and the other boy sitting on the bench.

INSTRUCTOR

What have we got here? Visiting
dignitaries? What the hell's the
matter with you?

They boy holds up his plaster cast.

BOY

It comes off next week.

INSTRUCTOR

(to Linderman)

And what about you?

Linderman looks at him without responding.

INSTRUCTOR

You deaf? I said what's the matter
with you?

Linderman's blank stare creates a tense situation. The boys in the gym are riveted to the confrontation. The instructor moves closer to Linderman.

INSTRUCTOR

Stand up, mister.

Slowly Linderman stands up. He towers over the small but bulldog like instructor.

(CONTINUED)

INSTRUCTOR

What's your name?

Linderman only stares. The instructor finds himself in what appears to be a macho contest. Clifford watches intensely. (x)

INSTRUCTOR

I'm not going to ask you again.
What's your name?

The moment is fraught with tension. (x)

LINDERMAN

Linderman. (x)

The instructor looks at Clifford, then at Linderman, and then to the boys on the court. He blows his whistle.

INSTRUCTOR

OK. Let's play ball.

Instructor walks away from Linderman. (x)

ANGLE: The two teams play basketball. Clifford gets the ball and heads down the court. He is fouled violently by Moody. Clifford is thrown to the ground. Moody rubs his arm as though he has been hurt.

MOODY

Hey, watch the rough stuff, will ya?
It's only practice.

ANGLE: Clifford. He glances over to where Linderman had been standing.

Clifford's POV: Linderman is no longer there. The gym door slowly closes.

40

INT. LOCKER ROOM DAY

40

Boys changing from gym suits back into 'civilian' dress.
Clifford goes to his locker. (x)

The lock is busted. (x)

Clifford opens the locker door: it is filled with rotten fruit and garbage.

On the inside of the door is spraypainted the word FRUIT.

Clifford takes out his clothes which are filthy, and glances around the room. Moody and Hightower appear to be completely oblivious to Clifford's situation. Other boys look guiltily away.

DUBROW

(passing by)

If I were you, I'd report that
to the Principal.

LAUGHTER.

41

INT. BATHROOM DAY

41

Clifford enters, carrying dirty clothes. He goes to sink, tears off paper towel, wets it, begins wiping off clothes.

He looks at the far end of the room in the mirror; smoke rises from behind one of the stalls. Clifford glances down at the bottom of the stall: two heavy boots are visible.

Without even turning off the water, Clifford quietly lifts his clothes from the sink and starts to sneak out of the bathroom.

(CONTINUED)

At the door he hears, from the outside hallway, the sound of Moody's voice approaching the bathroom.

Clifford tiptoes back into the bathroom, enters one of the stalls, and shuts the door as we hear the sounds of Moody and Koontz entering. The stall door won't stay shut.

With one hand he holds his bundle of soiled clothing, with the other, at an angle, he holds the door shut.

Through a crack in the door, he gains glimpses of Moody and Koontz at the sinks.

MOODY

She's already crazy about me.

KOONTZ

Lelani?

MOODY

I got her in homeroom this morning with the eyes. I locked right in on her and she was pinned there - like a butterfly.

KOONTZ

Stared her down like a dog, huh?

MOODY

She looked in my eyes - she sees a guy who's got it together. She sees power - a man in control. Women go for men who know. She sees I won't take no for an answer...

KOONTZ

She sees the power.

MOODY

It ain't power she's after. Her eyes told me what she's after.

Laughter.

Clifford's P.O.V.: He closes the stall door; Moody's shadow can be seen passing across the floor.

Moody and Koontz's footsteps begin to recede.

(CONTINUED)

Sound of bathroom door opening and closing.

Silence.

Clifford leaves the stall.

Moody and Koontz are leaning against the wall, smiling, waiting for him.

MOODY

Hi.

(wears a big, phony grin)

KOONTZ

Small world. Ain't it.

MOODY

(indicating Hightower)

My accountant says that there's something overdue on the books from you.

KOONTZ

Right.

CLIFFORD

Look, I--I'm not gonna pay. That's it. So...

Moody and Koontz push off the wall and begin advancing on Clifford.

Linderman emerges from the stall behind them. He goes to the sink.

MOODY

(to Koontz)

Let's get something to eat.

They exit.

Clifford looks at Linderman, then at the door where Moody just departed, as if an idea were occurring to him.

42 OMITTED

42

43 INT. GYM - DAY

43

With the exception of a motley string quartet and a music teacher, the gym is deserted. Carson, playing the cello, is distracted as Linderman walks through the gym. Now he sees Clifford hurriedly catching up with Linderman. His eyes widen.

ANGLE

Clifford and Linderman. They speak in hushed tones.

CLIFFORD

Excuse me.

(No response from
Linderman)

Uh, Linderman?

Linderman glances at Clifford, continues walking, Clifford follows along.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

Could I ask you a question? I
wouldn't be bothering you except it's
important. Okay?

Linderman stops, looks at Clifford.

CLIFFORD

I mean I hope you won't get mad or
anything. Well, I was wondering if you'd
like to make some money? You see these
guys, maybe you just noticed them in the
bathroom, they're trying to make me
pay protection.

LINDERMAN

From what?

CLIFFORD

Well, from them of course. But that's
not what they say...They say they're
protecting me, and some of the other
kids too, ... from, well mainly, you.

(CONTINUED)

LINDERMAN

From me?

CLIFFORD

I know that's not true, or at least
I think it's not, and that's how
I came up with this idea.

LINDERMAN

What idea?

CLIFFORD

Oh? To pay you to be my bodyguard.
Maybe some of the other kids would,
too. Also I could do your homework.
I'm pretty smart. I mean at least it's
not paying extortion.

The hint of an ironic smile crosses Linderman's face.

LINDERMAN

Not interested.

Linderman walks out of the gym leaving Clifford alone
and isolated. Carson in the background, his eyes popping
out.

44

INT. HOTEL KITCHEN - DAY

(X)

44

Gramma sings as she prepares breakfast for Clifford and
Mr. Peache. Eggs.

She syncopates everything she does to the song; hunting
for and using the wrong utensils, tossing and catching
the eggs and dropping some, breaking the eggs on the edge
of the bowl and having them run down the outside of the
bowl, punctuating movements with little Charleston steps,
using an entire pound of butter to grease the griddle,
beating out the song rhythm on the overhanging pots and
pans, crying the lyrics to the song as she mercilessly
chops up little green onions. The Assistant Manager enters.

Gramma pours her bowl onto the griddle, which is about
three times as hot as it needs to be. The eggs splatter,
spit, run off the griddle, and smoke and steam unmerci-
fully. She beats them and tries to get them back together,
using a ladle. She starts spooning the bits of egg into
a bowl.

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTINUED:

44

 GRIFFITH
 (overly amiable)
Good morning, Mrs. Peache. And how
are we today?

Gramma stops for a moment and looks at him in amazement.

 GRAMMA
You not feeling well?

 GRIFFITH
I feel wonderful, just wonderful.

Gramma raises her eyebrows, picks up the bowl to enter the dining room. Griffith, to her amazement, runs ahead and opens the door for her.

45 INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

45

It is filled with empty tables. In the center of the room, Mr. Peache and Clifford read newspapers. Griffith and Gramma enter.

 MR. PEACHE
Griffith, good morning. Have
some eggs.

 GRIFFITH
No, thank you. I just came in
to tell you the home office called.
The chief of operations is coming
for a visit.

 MR. PEACHE
Any particular reason?

 GRIFFITH
 (looking at Gramma)
I wouldn't know.

Gramma starts spooning out the eggs, furiously onto Clifford and Mr. Peache's plate. She drops a batch on Griffith's shoe.

INSERT - SHOE

BACK TO SCENE

 GRAMMA
Oh, what a shame. Am I ever sorry.
I'll get you some cold water.

(CONTINUED)

Griffith whips out a handkerchief and makes for the door.

GRIFFITH

I'll take care of it myself, thank you.

He leaves.

GRAMMA

Now what's that all about?

MR. PEACHE

Guess.

Mr. Peache tastes the eggs. They're awful. Gramma sits. Eats

MR. PEACHE

Oh, my God.

GRAMMA

Nice to hear you saying grace again, sweetheart.

CLIFFORD

(pushing plate away)
I'm too nervous to eat.

MR. PEACHE

What've you got to be nervous about?
(picking shells out of
eggs)

Other than terminal indigestion.
Everything okay at school?

CLIFFORD

Terrific.

MR. PEACHE

Sure? I could call the principal again.

CLIFFORD

No. No. Everything's fine.

Clifford pulls back plate and begins eating.

GRAMMA

Good ain't they?

MR. PEACHE

Maybe I should make a follow-up call...

(CONTINUED)

CLIFFORD
Dad, it's okay! School's fine!
I'm fine! Everything's just--
perfect! (X)

46 INT. SCHOOL CAFETERIA - DAY

46

Crash! Clifford stumbles to the floor, spilling the contents of his tray.

He looks around, sees Koontz and Dubrow quickly hurrying away.

Clifford starts picking up pieces of his lunch.

Looking up, Clifford sees Linderman, all by himself at an empty table.

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED:

46

Linderman watches him with an expression of total indifference. He turns back to his food.

Moody stands up from his table, walks over to Clifford, pauses very briefly and then steps over the mess and goes on his way.

Clifford continues picking up his lunch.

47

EXT. LAGOON - DAY

(X)

47

Clifford and Reissman are playing chess in a rowboat. Carson is rowing, not very skillfully. They are about to pass under a bridge on which stands Shelley. Carson catches a crab.

REISSMAN

Really, Carson, you're getting the seat wet.

CARSON

(imitating)

Really, Reissman, it's about time one of you guys rowed.

They're about to pass under the bridge when Carson spots Shelley. He waves with one oar, managing to splash the seat again. Shelley and Clifford are making direct eye contact. She waves at him. He smiles and waves back. Reissman has seen the whole exchange. They pass under the bridge.

REISSMAN

(sarcastic)

Can we get back to the game now?

Clifford makes a move and sits back, absorbed in his thoughts.

CLIFFORD

Where does Linderman hang out?

CARSON

Slaughter house, probably.

CLIFFORD

What's the matter with him, anyway?

REISSMAN

(makes a move)

A number of things, from what I hear. One, he's supposed to have raped a teacher in front of all the kids. Your move.

(CONTINUED)

Clifford glances at the board and moves mechanically.

REISSMAN (CONT'D)

I also heard that he shot a cop.

CARSON

I happen to know for a fact that what he did was kill a kid. Two years ago-- in cold blood. Blew his brains out. Bam!

CLIFFORD

I don't believe it.

CARSON

Look it up then. It was in the newspapers.

REISSMAN

(triumphant)

Checkmate.

CARSON

One of you guys should row.

Clifford barely hears them.

THE DESK - LIBRARY - DAY

The Librarian is filing index cards when Clifford approaches.

CLIFFORD

Excuse me.

LIBRARIAN

One minute, young man.

(She files one
more card)

Yes?

CLIFFORD

Do you keep back copies of newspapers here?

Clifford follows as she walks to another part of library.

LIBRARIAN

You'll have to go to the public library for that. Downtown.

(CONTINUED)

48 CONTINUED:

48

CLIFFORD

Thank you.

(starts away)

LIBRARIAN

What's your problem?

CLIFFORD

I'm trying to find out about somebody
murdering somebody.

LIBRARIAN

Who's the somebody?

CLIFFORD

Well -- uh -- it doesn't matter.
It's just a kid.

(CONTINUED)

LIBRARIAN

Well, if it's a minor, you'll
have a hard time.

CLIFFORD

(stopping)

Why?

LIBRARIAN

The police never release the names
of minors. I'm surprised you didn't
know that.

CLIFFORD

Well, thanks. It wasn't important
anyway.

INT. STAIRWELL - DAY

Clifford goes up the stairs.

Koontz and Moody are waiting at the top.

As Clifford approaches the top of the stairs, Koontz pops
out, hurriedly going downstairs, and 'accidentally' bumps
into Clifford, knocking him backwards -

KOONTZ

Excuuuuuuse me!

Clifford stumbles back, wildly flailing his arms. But
instead of landing on the concrete steps, he is caught
by Dubrow and Hightower.

They hold him at the angle of the stairs: Feet in the air,
head aimed at the ground.

HIGHTOWER

You oughta get you some accident
insurance, Peachfuzz -

CLIFFORD

Go to hell!

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED:

ANGLE

A BLACK TEACHER comes up the stairs.

TEACHER

What are you boys doing?

They let go. Clifford falls on the steps; not far enough for serious injury, but enough to bump his head.

Other students are approaching the stairs; Moody, Dubrow, and Hightower take off as the STUDENTS walk downstairs.

TEACHER

You allright?

Clifford, badly shaken, sits huddled on the bottom step, rubbing his head as the other STUDENTS pass by.

TEACHER

Who were those boys?

CLIFFORD

I don't know.

TEACHER

Are you sure?

CLIFFORD

I don't know them.

TEACHER

Anyone know their names?

Linderman descends stairs. He pauses for a moment behind Clifford. Clifford glances up at him, turns away in disgust. Linderman continues downstairs and out of frame. Clifford is on the verge of tears.

50

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

(x)

50

Ms. Jump is reading the opening from "A Tale of Two Cities" to her students. In the back of the room, Clifford stares at Linderman.

MS. JUMP

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED:

50

MS. JUMP (CONT'D)

the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way - in short, the period was so far like the present period, that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only.

There were a king with a large jaw and a queen with a plain face, on the throne of England; there were a king with a large jaw and a queen with a fair face, on the throne of France. In both countries it was clearer than crystal to the lords of the State preserves of loaves and fishes, that things in general were settled for ever.

Move in slowly on Linderman's face until it fills the screen.

50A

INT. SCHOOL SWIMMING POOL - DAY

(x)

50A

Except for Clifford and Reissman, the swimming pool area is deserted. Reissman lifts himself out of the pool and heads for the locker.

51

INT. LOCKER ROOM - DAY

51

Clifford enters, still dripping wet.

Reissman is changing clothes. Moody approaches.

MOODY

Hey, Reissman -- ain't you been
forgetting something lately?

REISSMAN

N-no. I mean -

MOODY

Then where's my money, hotshot?

REISSMAN

Well, I-I just didn't think I
had to pay w-when Clifford isn't. (x)

MOODY

Is that right?

He pulls the towel away from Reissman's neck and stomps
angrily across the room towards Clifford.

Without hesitation, he drops the towel over Clifford's
head and pushes him off the bench and against the lockers.

MOODY

What'd you call me?

Clifford claws at towel, trying to get it off his face.

MOODY

You heard it, didn't you, Reissman?

Reissman nods a subdued 'yes'.

Clifford is still trying to get rid of the towel while
simultaneously struggling to get to his feet.

Moody grabs the tail of the towel, effectively pulling
Clifford up from the ground. He spins him around, again
slamming him into the lockers.

MOODY

Get in there!

He begins shoving him into the locker. Clifford resists
with all his might.

Koontz and Hightower come to Moody's aid. All three of
them force Clifford into the locker, then slam the door.
Moody drops the lock into place, without snapping it shut.

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED:

51

MOODY

Clifford's gonna pay. Right,
Reissman?

(x)

Reissman nods yes. As Moody passes, he hastily shells out some money. Moody takes it and smiles.

Inside the locker, Clifford pounds on the door and yells to be let out.

The other BOYS hesitate to take action and drift out of the locker room.

From his locker area comes Linderman.

(x)

He walks toward Clifford's locker; pauses; then goes on by.

MOVING IN on the locker; Clifford is pounding and yelling to be let out. Several beats.

Then Linderman returns to frame and, removing the lock, swings open the locker door.

Clifford stares at him with a red and tear-streaked face. The towel hangs from his neck.

CLIFFORD

Okay. Great. Sure. You want your
turn? Go to it. I haven't got
all day. Come on lets have it you
big dumb son of a bitch.

Linderman stares at him blankly.

52 INT. CAFE - LATE AFTERNOON

(X)

52

A hangout for the kids near the school.

Dubrow, Hightower, Koontz, Moody and Lelani are in a group. Carson and others are at nearby tables.

MOODY

(to table)

I tell ya, virginity's a dreaded
disease and it's gotta be stamped out.

Shelley walks by.

MOODY (CONT'D)

Hey, Shelley, you wanna go to the
movies tonight?

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED:

52

SHELLEY
(flattered)
Uh...sure...I guess so...

MOODY
Hope you have a real nice time.

Moody's group erupts in laughter. Shelley is embarrassed, Lelani looks away.

MOODY (CONT'D)
(to BURT at next table)
Gimme your fries, Burt.

BURT
But...

HIGHTOWER
He said he wants your fries.

Burt silently hands them over. Dubrow goes to the counter for a drink.

53 AT THE COUNTER - LATE AFTERNOON (x)

Clifford enters the building.

Drink in hand, Dubrow watches Clifford approach. Clifford marches toward him with a very determined air.

He stops before Dubrow. Dubrow looks at him.

Without warning, Clifford smacks his hand against the bottom of Dubrow's cup, splashing the drink into Dubrow's face.

While Dubrow stands there spluttering, Clifford walks purposefully over to Moody's table.

LELANI
(to Moody)
Visitor.

Moody looks up at Clifford. Without pausing, Clifford - tips Koontz's plate over into his lap, pinches Hightower's straw flat, pounds Moody's hamburger flat with the heel of his fist.

They stare at him amazed. Clifford turns and walks toward the exit.

Enraged, Moody pushes Lelani out of the way and hurries after him. Koontz, Dubrow and Hightower follow.

54 EXT. CAFE - DAY

54

Moody and his gang followed by Carson, Reissman, Shelley, Lelani, Burt, and other kids from cafe race across street to vacant lot.

54A EXT. VACANT LOT - DAY

54A

Moody and his gang advance upon Clifford who appears unworried in the B.G. Two young men working on a motorcycle, a third young man observes their tinkering.

MOODY

You've really bought it this time,
Fruit Face.

The young man watching the motorcycle repair is Linderman. He turns, walks toward Moody.

LINDERMAN

Hey, Moody.

Moody stops. He's stunned by the sight of Linderman.

CLIFFORD

Melvin, I'd like you to meet my
boydguard. Anything you want to say
to me, talk to him first. Now what
is it you were saying?

LINDERMAN

Beat it.

Moody looks at Linderman and then at the expectant faces in the crowd. Carson, for the first time, smiles, he gives Moody the finger.

BURT

Go ahead, Moody, show him how tough
you are.

REISSMAN

(to Moody)

Why don't you invite him to the
washroom?

VOICE AD LIB

Hey Moody, looks like you're the fruit.

Moody turns looks at his gang.

MOODY

We can take him.

Koontz takes a good look at Linderman. Smiles at Moody.

(CONTINUED)

KOONTZ

Good luck.

DUBROW

He's all yours, Big M.

They turn and walk away. Hightower shrugs and joins them. Moody is panicked in his humiliation.

LINDERMAN

I said beat it.

Carson steps up to Moody.

CARSON

Moody, you owe me a year's worth of lunches.

Moody turns, starts to walk slowly away, fighting for a shred of dignity.

CLIFFORD

Oh, and Melvin...

Moody turns.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

Your protection services are no longer required...by anyone. Know what I mean?

Moody turns away. Begins to walk then breaks into a run.

55 EXT. STREET - DAY

55

Clifford exuberant, Linderman somber. They walk down the street, the high school in the B.G.

CLIFFORD

Gaah! Talk about havin' a fit-hemorrhage! Did you see the look on his face when he saw you? Did you love it?

(LAUGHS wildly)

Thank you, Lord! Thank you, Linderman! My father thanks you, my mother thanks you, my sister thanks you, we all thank you! HAHAHAHA! What a great day! Did you see Carson flip him the bird? Did you?

(Duelling with finger)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED:

55

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

Take that! And that! We're not
gonna let up until he pays back every
cent he ever took from everybody!

Linderman turns on Clifford.

LINDERMAN

You all through now?

CONTINUED:

CLIFFORD

Uh -- what's wrong?

LINDERMAN

'We' ain't doing nothing. Got that?

CLIFFORD

But aren't we -- I thought we were sort of a team now.

LINDERMAN

You thought wrong.

He looks Clifford over harshly, then walks away.
Clifford watches him go; he looks shocked and hurt.

55A INT. AUDITORIUM - DAY

55A

Ms. Jump is on the stage (where there's a door set up) with her drama class, five, or six girls. Clifford stands alone in the auditorium, watching and waiting for her to finish.

MS. JUMP

An actor is always making choices,
even about how to leave the stage.
You don't just walk off.

She demonstrates.

Ms. Jump (angry) strides through the door and slams it - immediately comes back in.

Ms. Jump (happy) opens the door, blows a kiss, floats through and closes it gently behind her, and comes back immediately.

MS. JUMP (CONT'D)

Now I want each of you to make a choice
and leave with an emotion because the
class is over. Next time I want you
each to have five different exits.
Class dismissed.

All the girls leave, practicing exits. Ms. Jump gathers papers and starts down the stage steps.

CLIFFORD
(from auditorium -
surprises her)

Ms. Jump.

(CONTINUED)

55A CONTINUED:

55A

MS. JUMP

Yes? Who's that?

CLIFFORD

Could I talk to you a minute?

(as she is coming
down the stairs)It's me, Clifford Peache,
from your homeroom.

MS. JUMP

Yes?

CLIFFORD

I wanted to ask you something private.
It's about one of the students.

MS. JUMP

Have you tried asking the student?

CLIFFORD

It's about Linderman.

MS. JUMP

Oh...I see, why do you want to know?

CLIFFORD

Everybody's afraid of him, and I don't
want to be. But there's all these
stories...

MS. JUMP

There's only one real story. A
couple of years ago, Ricky's little
brother killed himself in a terrible
accident. He was playing with a gun
and shot himself in the head. Ricky
found the body. He always felt that he
was responsible.

CLIFFORD

But what about the other things?
His killing a cop. And the kid whose
leg...

MS. JUMP

That's all I know, Clifford.

Ms. Jump exits leaving Clifford speechless.

Linderman sits at a table by himself.

Clifford, tray in hands, stands nervously watching him, as if trying to decide whether he should join him. He approaches timidly, sits down across from Linderman, smiles.

CLIFFORD

Mind if I join you?

Linderman looks away; continues chewing.

Clifford opens milk; inserts straws; spreads napkin in lap; mashes rice flat on plate with fork; partitions servings of food.

Linderman watches with indifference.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

Yeach. What do you call this stuff?

LINDERMAN

Garbage.

CLIFFORD

(laughs)

Yeah.

Linderman isn't looking at him.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

Linderman? Um--would you pass the salt?

Linderman ignores him.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

Ok. So maybe we aren't a team. I just got it wrong, that's all. I always thought when somebody does somebody a favor, then the somebody owes him one. You know what I mean?

LINDERMAN

You don't owe me.

CLIFFORD

Yes, I do. You didn't have to do it, and you did. It's just that I thought that meant we were friends now. I mean you wouldn't even take any money.

(CONTINUED)

56 CONTINUED:

56

Linderman begins to load up his tray, preparing to leave even though he's only had a few bites of lunch.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

Where you going?

LINDERMAN

Show's over.

CLIFFORD

What show?

(hurrying after Linderman)

Hey, that was no show.

LINDERMAN

Bug off.

They drop off their trays and Clifford follows Linderman out of the cafeteria into the hall.

CLIFFORD

Hey, look. I just want to...

LINDERMAN

And you always get what you want.

Linderman puts a cigarette in his mouth as he nears the front door of the school. The COP on duty notices the cigarette.

COP

Hey!

Linderman holds up a match in one hand and a pack of matches in the other to indicate that the cigarette's not lit yet. Cop backs off, Linderman strikes the match as he passes through the door and lights his cigarette as he stands on top of the steps.

CLIFFORD

(new approach)

Those things will stunt your growth.

Linderman flicks his match away and disappears.

57 CLIFFORD'S P.O.V. (X) 57

We are in the moving Cadillac following Linderman as he walks with a determined stride to some unknown destination. Roberto drives. We follow Linderman for a couple of blocks through a rough low class neighborhood. Occassionally Linderman passes a wino or a prostitute. He seems neither aware or frightened of these surroundings.

ROBERTO

Even cops won't walk around here at night.

CLIFFORD

Hey, you're getting ahead of him.

58 EXT. CADILLAC ON STREET - DAY (X) 58

The Cadillac has gotten ahead of Linderman. A truck behind blasts his horn to force the Cadillac to move faster. Linderman turns down a street. The Cadillac can't turn.

59 INT. CADILLAC - DAY (X) 59

ROBERTO

Always looks easy on T.V.

Clifford jumps out of the car and after Linderman.

ROBERTO

(yells after him)

Cliffy, get back here...Cliff.

60 EXT. STREET - DAY (X) 60

The Cadillac is forced by traffic to go forward. Clifford runs back to street Linderman has turned into.

61 EXT. INDUSTRIAL STREETS - DAY (X) 61

Clifford sees Linderman in this industrial area not far from the center of the city. Careful of being observed, Clifford follows.

62 EXT. ANOTHER INDUSTRIAL STREET - DAY (X) 62

Clifford is on one side of the street, Linderman the other. Linderman turns down a street. Clifford follows on the run.

63 EXT. INDUSTRIAL STREET - DAY (X) 63

Clifford runs around the corner. Linderman's hand reaches out and grabs him.

(CONTINUED)

63 CONTINUED:

63

LINDERMAN

(kidding)

You know pretty soon people are
gonna start talking.

CLIFFORD

That doesn't seem to have bothered
you up to now.

LINDERMAN

What are you doing following me?

CLIFFORD

I told you. I want to be friends...

LINDERMAN

I told you I don't.

CLIFFORD

Look, Linderman. I know about what
happened...with your brother and
everything.

LINDERMAN

You do, huh?

LCIFFORD

I mean hell, it could happen to
anybody. Anybody. You don't have
to...

LINDERMAN

(curtly)

Drop it!

Pause.

LINDERMAN (CONT'D)

Okay?

64 EXT. STREET WITH GARGAGE - DAY (X) 64

Linderman walks toward garage. Clifford follows a short distance behind. Linderman walks into the garage, Clifford trails in after him.

65 INT. GARAGE - DAY (X) 65

The garage is more of a storage room than functioning service area. Linderman winds his way past some equipment to a tarp covered object. Clifford spots a soft drink machine and gets a cola. Linderman removes the tarp revealing a good looking, older model, motorcycle.

CLIFFORD

Yours?

LINDERMAN

Yeah.

Linderman rubs it down with a rag.

CLIFFORD

Fantastic! Use it much?

LINDERMAN

Don't use it at all. Won't run.

Eddie, a Latin garage mechanic, comes in.

EDDIE

Any luck?

Linderman shakes his head.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

Keep looking. You'll find it sooner or later.

Eddie leaves. Clifford walks over to the bike.

LINDERMAN

Go ahead, get on.

Clifford does. He emulates driving.

CLIFFORD

What's the matter with it?

Linderman reaches over to a shelf and holds up a cylinder.

(CONTINUED)

LINDERMAN

Can't find the right one. They don't make them any more. I've been putting this thing together for a year, and I'm down to one lousy cylinder.

CLIFFORD

You built it?

LINDERMAN

Rebuilt it. Almost.

Clifford looks at Linderman with admiration.

66

EXT. OR INT. MOTORCYCLE PARTS STORE - DAY

(X)

66

EXT. They walk out of the store and down street.

INT. They wait at counter for PARTS MAN.

Parts man comes over and shakes his head. "No part."

CLIFFORD

Where you going to go?

LINDERMAN

You name it.

CLIFFORD

How about camping in Colorado?

LINDERMAN

Yeah, that sounds good.

CLIFFORD

We went on a fishing trip in Long Island when my dad was working in New York.

LINDERMAN

Yeah, I'd like that.

CLIFFORD

My grandma says Mexico's real exotic. Got to watch out for the banditos.

LINDERMAN

Sure. That's for me.

CLIFFORD

In other words, you'll go anywhere.

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED:

66

LINDERMAN
(thoughtfully)
Anywhere away from here.

67 EXT. JUNK YARD - DAY

(X)

67

They occasionally pick up and discard pieces of engines, old cylinder blocks, etc. Linderman carries in his hand an old muffler pipe. They come to an old car.

LINDERMAN
We had one of these when I was
little. It was old even then.

CLIFFORD
What's your dad do?

LINDERMAN
Watches T.V.

CLIFFORD
(picks up cylinder)
What about this?

Linderman shakes his head no.

CLIFFORD
Batter up.

He soft balls the cylinder to Linderman who hits it with the exhaust pipe. The metal causes a vibration. Linderman shudders. Arms out he Frankensteins towards Clifford. Clifford pretends terror and runs. They both laugh.

68 EXT. MOTORCYCLE GRAVEYARD - DAY

(X)

68

They come out of a graveyard on to a street. Across street are a group of tough looking cyclists.

CLIFFORD
But how come you don't talk to
anyone? It justs makes them think
the stories are true.

LINDERMAN
I like it that way. They don't
ask dumb questions like you do.

Linderman crosses the street and talks to cyclists.

69 EXT. SCRAP METAL YARD - DAY

69

Linderman and Clifford walk through the yard occasionally picking up pieces of metal then discarding them.

(CONTINUED)

CLIFFORD

Grandma's actually the one who raised me. My mom died when I was pretty young. She's not like anyone you've ever met. She's real old but she acts like a kid.

LINDERMAN

Sort of senile?

CLIFFORD

No, not at all. It's just the way she is. She's always been this way. Funny, playing games, having a good time. She does cause Dad a lot of problems at the hotel. Gets a little drunk. Picks up guys.

LINDERMAN

(laughs)

Pick up guys?

CLIFFORD

(grins)

Yeah...

LINDERMAN

She sounds great.

CLIFFORD

She is really great. Only Dad's worried that he could lose his job. We've really got to watch her. She's always into something.

LINDERMAN

Well, maybe she's frightened of being old...of dying.

CLIFFORD

It's more like she's frightened of not being...alive if that makes any sense.

Linderman looks at Clifford. It does make sense to him.

70

EXT. AUTO GRAVEYARD - DAY

(X)

70

They sit inside an old auto on top of a heap of autos. Clifford looks at a photograph.

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED:

70

LINDERMAN

He was only 9. I practically raised him myself since he was two. Drive you crazy. Tell him to sit down. He'd stand up. Tell him to do his homework, he'd read a comic book. Couldn't eat food without spitting it at you. Real shoplifter to. Go through a store half of it wind up in his pockets. He didn't know it was stealing of course. He was a good kid. Give you anything he had. Real hand full though. Poor little guy.

Linderman goes silent. Clifford and Linderman just stare out of the broken windshield.

71

EXT. ANOTHER PART OF AUTO GRAVEYARD - DAY

(X)

71

Linderman rummages through the yard - Clifford jumps from car to car walking on top of the heap. He gets ready to descend.

CLIFFORD

(histrionically)

"It is a far, far better thing that I do, than I have ever done; it is a far, far better rest that I go to, than I have ever known."...Good bye cruel world.

Clifford jumps. He doesn't make his intended target. He falls short on to some debris.

LINDERMAN

Bravo, bravo.

Clifford tries to pull himself off the heap. In so doing he slips, falls again. His hand falls on an object. It is a cylinder. Clifford holds it up.

CLIFFORD

Linderman?

Linderman comes over examines the cylinder briefly lets out a whoop of joy. He throws his tail pipe into the air as high as it will go.

72-76

OMITTED

(X)

72-76

77

INT. SCHOOL CAFETERIA - DAY

77

Clifford and Linderman sit alone at one of the long tables. Other nearby tables are crowded. Clifford and Linderman eat their lunches and seem completely relaxed in their friendship. Carson, tray in hands, cautiously approaches the table.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

77

CARSON
(to Clifford)
Okay if I...

CLIFFORD
Sure.

Carson slides over near Clifford. Eyes on Linderman.

CARSON
(whispers)
What's the deal. We pay him now?

CLIFFORD
That's all over...Ricky have you met
Carson?

Linderman looks at Carson.

LINDERMAN
You're the guy that plays the cello.

Carson nods apprehensively.

LINDERMAN
I heard you one time. Real (x)
nice.

Carson grins. Shelley and Leilani, trays in hands, sit
at far end of table.

SHELLEY
This some kind of bachelor party?

CLIFFORD
No, no. Au contraire.

Both girls laugh. Carson takes out some vitamin pills,
passes them to Clifford and Linderman.

CARSON
These are "E"'s. Better take them.
They counteract the pollution in the air, the (x)
insecticide in the food
(conspiratorily)
and I hear they put lead in your
pencil.

Clifford and Linderman look at one another, take the pills,
pop them in their mouths and before washing them down with
their milks, Clifford turns to the girls.

(CONTINUED)

77 CONTINUED:

77

CLIFFORD

To your health.

They drink and burst out laughing.

77A

EXT. PARK AREA - DAY

(X)

77A

Near the row boats are Moody, his gang, and a few feet away, Lelani. In the B.G. we can see the Food and Beverage Stand. On the second story is an open gym area where several people lift weights, do headstands on parallel bars, etc.

MOODY

The trouble with you guys is you can't think. You're losers.

HIGHTOWER

Oh, you're a winner.

MOODY

Just shut up and fork it over.

DUBROW

This is so dumb, I can't believe it.

MOODY

Let's go. Ten bucks each.

KOONTZ

Man, that's all I got.

Moody disgusted.

MOODY

Just keep it, moron. I'll take care of it myself. It works, guess who goes right to the top of my shit list.

Koontz pauses, reaches into his pocket gives Moody the money. Hightower and Dubrow also pass him the money. Moody smiles, turns toward the cafe.

Clifford and Linderman are in the bar getting two cokes and a wink from the sexy hostess. Gramma is off in a corner booth having a high old time with two distinguished, silver-haired gentlemen. Griffith and Dobbs come in. Griffith indicates Gramma to Dobbs with a disapproving expression.

Clifford and Linderman. Linderman notices binoculars.

LINDERMAN

For star gazing?

CLIFFORD

And other heavenly bodies.

They both laugh.

Mr. Peache talks to the hotel Engineer. Close by, Clifford and Linderman examine the huge machinery.

ENGINEER

It's going to take two full days to install the unit. If we have some hot weather, we're going to have some pretty miserable guests.

MR. PEACHE

I've got some pretty miserable guests right now. Well, what if we work through the nights. That would be only one day without air.

ENGINEER

Yeah. Costs more but it could be done. Personally, I think it's a good idea...

Phone RINGS. Engineer responds.

ENGINEER

Yeah...

(to Mr. Peache)

For you.

MR. PEACHE

(on phone)

Peache here. My mother! Oh no! Where? How serious is it? I'll be right up.

Mr. Peache runs to the exit. The boys look at one another and race after him.

79 INT. LOBBY HOTEL - NIGHT (X) 79

Mr. Peache races through the lobby. Clifford and Linderman close behind.

80 INT. BAR LOUNGE HOTEL - NIGHT (X) 80

Mr. Peache, Clifford and Linderman run through the lounge. The Disco is in the background. The band plays. People are dancing.

81 INT. LOUNGE - NIGHT (X) 81

Mr. Peache, Clifford and Linderman enter. Gramma stands over a man sitting in a chair, his tie askew, several buttons opened. She fans him with a wine list. He looks alright. In the B.G. Patrons dance to Disco music.

MR. PEACHE

Mother, what is it?

GRAMMA

Don't get excited, he's alright.
Just didn't know his limitations.
I warned him, but he kept saying
he was an animal, an animal.

Griffith races into the scene. Grabs the fan from Gramma. He fans MR. DOBBS a mile a minute.

GRIFFITH

(to Mr. Peache)

Do you know what you've done?
Do you know who this is?
Your goose is cooked this time
Peaches. She's finally done it.
Mr. Dobbs. Mr. Dobbs. Speak
to me.

DOBBS

Griffith, stop hovering over me.
You're like a fly on a cow chip.

GRIFFITH

Mr. Dobbs, lie down, I'll call
a doctor.

DOBBS

Are you crazy? Get away from
me. I'm just getting my second
wind.

(to Gramma)

You can really dance, sweetheart.

Clifford and Linderman try to control their mirth.

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED:

81

GRAMMA

You're not so bad yourself, Dobsie.
Just a little out of shape is all.

DOBBS

That's because I haven't danced
or had any fun for as long as
I can remember.

GRIFFITH

But Mr. Dobbs...

MR. PEACHE

Griffith!

He beckons Griffith. Griffith comes over.

MR. PEACHE (CONT'D)

They're getting along so well
aren't they? Why don't you check
out tomorrows reservations?

He gives Griffith a little push in the direction of the
desk. Walks over to Gramma. Winks at Clifford and Linderman.

GRAMMA

(to Dobbs)

You just go up to your room,
get a little rest 'cause we've
got a long night ahead of us.

DOBBS

Do I have to? Oh alright.
But if you're not right here in
one hour I'm coming looking
for you.

GRAMMA

Suite 735. If I'm not here.

She winks.

DOBBS

(to Mr. Peache)

You run one hell of a hotel, Peache.

Dobbs pats Mr. Peache on the back. Dobbs exits.

Gramma notices Linderman for the first time.

GRAMMA

You Linderman?

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED:

(X)

Linderman nods. Gramma looks him over.

GRAMMA (CONT'D)

Care to trip the light fantastic?

MR. PEACHE

(in no uncertain terms)

Mother!

82 INT. PUMP ROOM HOTEL - NIGHT

82

Extreme Close-Up ON: LINDERMAN'S HAND, as it enters frame and is taken hold of by Gramma's hand.

REVEAL that Gramma is reading Linderman's palm while Clifford watches from the sidelines.

GRAMMA

(spreading her fingers)

Go like this...

(Linderman imitates,
his hand up before his
face)

You're very decisive, look at that
space between Jupiter and Saturn...

LINDERMAN

Well...

GRAMMA

(to Clifford)

Tape measure.

(Clifford gets it from
her sewing kit. She
measures Linderman's
index and middle fingers)

Three -- three and a quarter---

(Clifford writes it down)

You're consistent; well-balanced.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

GRAMMA (CONT'D)

(Linderman looks dubious;
Gramma closes her eyes and
feels his fingers)

Knotty, very knotty -

CLIFFORD

What's that mean?

GRAMMA

Hold your horses. Let's see your
thumb. Ah. Double-jointed?

LINDERMAN

No, ma'am.

GRAMMA

I thought so. Specs.

CLIFFORD

Will that help?

GRAMMA

Don't get smart.

(to Linderman)

Lower the boom, kid.

(Linderman lowers
his hand down flat,
palmside up)

Oh, hey -- hey, terrific
heartline! Lotsa girlfriends?

LINDERMAN

No ma'am.

(Clifford snorts with
suppressed laughter.

Gramma casts a cold eye
upon him)

I'm talkin' in the future,
smart guy! Also you're very
intellectually inclined.

LINDERMAN

I think that's in the future, too.

GRAMMA

I must be right about something!
Are you sure this is your hand?

LINDERMAN

(smiling)

Wish I could deny it.

(CONTINUED)

82 CONTINUED:

82

CLIFFORD

How long has he got?

ON: LINDERMAN'S PALM as Gramma's fingers move up the lifeline toward the wrist. As Linderman's cuff lifts back, we can see several slash scars across his wrist.

ON: GRAMMA'S FACE, seeing the scars; their meaning registering in her eyes; she masks this knowledge instantly.

CLIFFORD

Hey, what happened to your wrist?

Linderman knots his hand into a fist and pulls it away.

LINDERMAN

Nothin. Accident.

Gramma very gently pulls Linderman's hand back towards her and stares at his fist.

GRAMMA

Let me finish.

(smiling)

Open up, Ricky. You're among friends.

Linderman, looking at Gramma, very slowly opens his fist. Clifford is puzzled.

GRAMMA

I see a long life. And a very good and valuable life...

She squeezes his hand, warmly. He looks at Gramma without expression.

83 EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

(X)

83

A montage with music, of scenes depicting Linderman and Clifford, riding through various locations on Linderman's motorcycle.

84 EXT. PARK AT LAKE - DAY

(X)

84

Scratchy rock music blaring from an overhead speaker. Lots of kids standing around, rowing, playing ball, goofing off, etc.

Some familiar faces among the crowd: Dubrow, Koontz, Hightower, as well as Carson, Shelley, Lelani, Reissman, and others. Moody sees Clifford and Linderman buying cokes.

(CONTINUED)

MOODY
(calling up to a
weightlifting area)
Hey, Mike.

85 EXT. PARK BENCH AT LAKE - DAY

(X)

85

Clifford and Linderman are sitting at a bench, drinking colas.
Clifford belches.

LINDERMAN
You know, basically you're a pretty
disgusting human being.

CLIFFORD
Thanks.

Clifford gulps air, trying for a second belch.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Mike comes down from weightlifting area and stands next to
Moody. He's about 20, and very tough.

Mike, Moody, and his gang approach Linderman and Clifford, and
stand there smiling at them.

MOODY
Hey, I been lookin' for you guys--

CLIFFORD
What for?

MOODY
I got somebody I want you to meet.
This is Mike. My bodyguard.

MIKE
(extending his hand to
Linderman)
What do you say?

Pause. Linderman stares at Mike's hand. Clifford watches
Linderman.

Linderman extends his hand. The handshake. Mike is
squeezing Linderman's hand, hard. Linderman's face doesn't
betray any pain. Mike's face is also a stony mask. Their
clasped hands are tense and red from the pressure.

ON: Clifford watching them.

(CONTINUED)

85 CONTINUED:

85

ON: Moody, also watching, his eyes flitting back and forth from Mike to Linderman.

MIKE

Moody here tells me you're a real
killer. That right? Beat up kids.
Rape old ladies.

Clifford's eyes flick back to Linderman, who looks pale and is gazing off into the distance. He is blank, not afraid.

MOODY

Killed his own brother, what I
heard. Got away with it, too.

Other kids slowly move to the scene; the atmosphere is hushed, tense.

ON: Clifford watching Linderman. He waits for a denial.

CLIFFORD

That's bullshit.

MOODY

Oh, yeah? Is is bullshit? Linderman?

ON: Linderman. His mind is elsewhere.

Suddenly Mike yanks him forward, pulling Linderman off the bench and onto his knees on the ground.

Clifford stands; Moody shoves him back down.

MIKE

What're you on your knees for,
man? You queer or something?

Linderman gets to his feet, goes to his bike. Attempts to retrieve it. Mike smashes Linderman two hard blows. Linderman's nose and mouth bleed. Linderman picks up the bike and gets on it.

MIKE (CONT'D)

That's my bike, killer. You got
three to get your ass off it.
One..two..

(Linderman says nothing)

Three!

(CONTINUED)

85 CONTINUED:

85

Mike lodges a hard kick against the bike's front wheel, toppling the bike and dragging Linderman along with it. Linderman pulls himself up to a squatting position on the pavement and clutches the bike frame with both hands.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Leggo my bike, killer.

He pulls the bike, dragging Linderman with it. Then he turns and stomps Linderman's hands with the heel of his boot and yanks the bike from his grip.

MIKE (CONT'D)

You want this bike, killer? Come get it.

Linderman remains squatted on the pavement, staring at the ground. His forehead is dotted with sweat, his mouth hangs open.

Clifford can't believe what is happening. He stares at Linderman in shocked amazement. Moody struts around, smiling at everybody.

MIKE (CONT'D)

I thought you said he was bad.
(He kicks out the spokes
on the front wheel--
no response from Linderman)
What's it take to get this guy going?

KOONTZ & OTHERS

(ad libs, goads, etc.)

Get up, man!

Mike spins wheels, gives the bike a kick--this time on the back wheel.

CLIFFORD

Leave it alone. Don't ...

He moves forward. Moody grabs him from behind and throws him to the ground. Mike continues working on the bike kicking it, pounding it with a chunk of rock.

MIKE

Hey, I'm gettin' bored with this,
man--

MOODY

(screaming in Linderman's
face)

Get up, faggot!!

(CONTINUED)

85 CONTINUED:

85

He throws his drink in Linderman's face. Linderman doesn't budge.

MOODY (CONT'D)

Lookit this guy--

(to Linderman)

I'm gonna kick your ass myself,
man--want me to kick your ass?

Yes or no?

He takes Linderman by the hair and shakes his head as if he were nodding "yes."

MOODY (CONT'D)

Yes, yes--

He doubles his fist and hits Linderman in the face--a hard right, a left.

Linderman's head jerks back from the impact of the punches.

A thick ribbon of blood runs from his nose and mouth, down his lips and onto his shirt.

He doesn't move.

Clifford, sympathetically 'feeling' the blows, winces and puts his hands to his face.

Linderman remains still, breathing more thickly now through the blood that bubbles from his nose and mouth.

MIKE

This is a drag.

Mike walks back toward gym area.

MOODY

(He starts to leave,
then turns back and
gives Linderman
one last solid punch
in the mouth; hard)

BIG ZERO!

Moody and his gang drag Linderman's bike to the edge of the lagoon and toss it into shallow water. Mike returns to weight-lifting. Clifford remains, staring at the water. Moody looks at Clifford and throws him a wicked smile.

Linderman remains staring at the pavement.

(CONTINUED)

85 CONTINUED:

85

Clifford tries to help Linderman to his feet.

Linderman suddenly pushes him away; hard enough so that Clifford loses his balance and falls backwards.

They stare at one another for a moment; then Linderman gets to his feet, turns and walks away.

Clifford watches him go.

86

EXT. GARAGE - NIGHT

(X)

86

Clifford walks around the garage. It is locked up and deserted.

87

EXT. RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

87

Clifford walks along, checking the house numbers against a slip of paper he carries in one hand.

He stops before one of the houses and stares at it.

Clifford's POV: On the house - small, lower-class. Lights on; movement within.

Clifford walks slowly forward, stops, looks at mailbox. On it is written: "Linderman".

The mailbox lid is open. Clifford absently closes it, then walks up the front steps of the house.

ON THE FRONT PORCH, he starts to ring the bell, hesitates at the sound, within, of the loud, anxious voices of a MAN and a WOMAN. Words are not quite clear; we catch bits and pieces of phrases only, until Clifford goes to window and peers in.

Clifford's POV: Through the window, MR. & MRS. LINDERMAN appear to be having an argument. They both look worried. Mr. Linderman is on the phone.

MR. LINDERMAN

-- I already called Sheila; he's
not there and he hasn't been there--

(CONTINUED)

MRS. LINDERMAN

Then call the police.

MR. LINDERMAN

Can't we just wait for another few minutes, Laura? He's done this before -

MRS. LINDERMAN

I'm sorry, I can't help it -- if anything's happened --

(She puts her hands over her face as if crying. MR. LINDERMAN goes to her and talks softly; they stand embracing)

Clifford slowly turns away from the window and walks down the front steps and away from the house.

88 EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

88

Clifford walks down the busy streets, lost in gloomy thought.

89 EXT. HOTEL - NIGHT

89

Roberto is on duty at the front door. He looks up as Clifford approaches.

Clifford walks past him without even noticing.

ROBERTO

Hey!

Clifford enters the revolving door and disappears into the hotel. Roberto watches him with a puzzled expression.

90 INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

90

Elevator opens and Clifford emerges and walks dejectedly down the hall toward the front door of the hotel suite.

91 INT. HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

91

Clifford enters; from the rear of the suite we can hear Gramma SINGING. Clifford walks towards her room.

GRAMMA (O.S.)

(singing)

"She's a Latin from Manhattan,
I can tell by her 'manana';
She's a Latin from Manhattan,
But not Havana..."

92

INT. HOTEL - GRAMMA'S ROOM - NIGHT

(X)

92

Mr. Peache and Gramma are playing poker. They're sitting on opposite beds facing each other across a small table. Gramma has most of the money in front of her.

MR. PEACHE

Aces and jacks.

GRAMMA

(turning over her
cards)

Three nines.

She rakes in the pot.

MR. PEACHE

O.K. Deal. When, do you suppose,
is the last time I won from you?

GRAMMA

Two years ago when I caught you
dealing from the bottom of the
deck.

MR. PEACHE

Why don't I just give you the money.
I could watch a ballgame.

Clifford enters, troubled.

MR. PEACHE (CONT'D)

Wanna play?

CLIFFORD

No, thanks.

He goes in the other room. Mr. Peache looks at Gramma and gets up to follow.

GRAMMA

Hurry up, I've got a heavy date
with Dobbs.

MR. PEACHE

Again? You two going steady?

GRAMMA

I hope you appreciate what I'm
doing to save your job.

Mr. Peache raises his eyes to the ceiling and makes for the door.

(CONTINUED)

92 CONTINUED:

92

GRAMMA

Larry...

He looks back.

GRAMMA (CONT'D)

Dobbs is talking wedding bells,
what do you think?

MR. PEACHE

Mother, let's face it, you're
too young to settle down.

She nods and smiles.

93

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

(X)

93

Clifford is sitting in a chair.

MR. PEACHE

Something's wrong.

Clifford nods.

MR. PEACHE (CONT'D)

Wanna talk about it?

Clifford indicates he doesn't.

CLIFFORD

I just don't understand.

MR. PEACHE

What?

CLIFFORD

Anything. Life.

MR. PEACHE

What? Fifteen years old and you
don't understand life? What're you,
backwards?

CLIFFORD

Maybe.

MR. PEACHE

Well, Clifford, I'll tell you
about life. Life is like a
great overflowing fountain. A
fountain with cool clear water.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

93 CONTINUED:

93

MR. PEACHE (CONT'D)

But sometimes little birds fly over
the fountain and then the water is
no longer clear...

Clifford shakes his head. Smiles.

MR. PEACHE (CONT'D)

Now you know about life. However,
if you want to talk or complain or
just need a shoulder, I'm around.
O.K?

CLIFFORD

O.K.

Mr. Peache enters Gramma's bedroom.

He steps back into the living room.

MR. PEACHE

(whispers)

Clifford,

(indicating Gramma in
next room)

We know she cheats. But do
you know how she does it?

Clifford shakes his head. Mr. Peache exits to Gramma's
bedroom.

94

INT. CLIFFORD'S ROOM - NIGHT

94

Clifford enters. He turns on a small, dim lamp and walks
out on to the-

He goes to the railing and looks out across the skyline.
SOUND of KNUCKLES CRACKING.

He turns.

Linderman rises up suddenly from a corner of the terrace, most of him obscured by shadow. His face is bruised and swollen. Linderman has been drinking. In his hand is a partially empty pint bottle of whiskey.

CLIFFORD

Gah! You scared the crap outa me!
How'd you get up here?

LINDERMAN

Fire escape.

Clifford looks out at the fire escape, and back at Linderman.

CLIFFORD

You're crazy!

LINDERMAN

Yeah.

CLIFFORD

Where've you been?

LINDERMAN

Home.

CLIFFORD

I just went there. Your parents were getting ready to call the cops.

LINDERMAN

Yeah, well. I had to get some stuff. I didn't stop to talk to nobody.

CLIFFORD

They're real worried. You want something to eat?

LINDERMAN

Nah.

CLIFFORD

Wanna' go inside?

(CONTINUED)

95 CONTINUED:

95

LINDERMAN

Nah.

CLIFFORD

Wanna' stay out here?

Linderman nods 'yes'. Pause.

LINDERMAN

I wanted you to know the facts,
Clifford. I don't care what
the rest of 'em think.

Linderman takes out his wallet, opens it and hands it ot
Clifford; it is opened to a faded snapshot.

LINDERMAN

That's J.L. My brother. We called
him by his initials. I practically
raised him from the time he was
two years old. I wouldn't a hurt
him in a million years, no matter
what they say. I wasn't even there
when it happened. I can prove it
if I have to.

CLIFFORD

You don't have to.

PAUSE.

LINDERMAN

You know what a .22 pistol looks
like?

(Clifford shakes his
head 'no'. Linderman
reaches into his jacket
and takes out a .22
pistol)

Like a toy.

Clifford stares at the gun in Linderman's hands.

LINDERMAN

My Dad keeps it in his closet,
case of burglars. One day J.L.
was alone in the house, so he
snuck down the gun and took it
over to his fort, yknow?
And the goddamned thing was
loaded, okay? And it went off,
okay?

(CONTINUED)

95 CONTINUED:

95

He stares at the gun.

CLIFFORD

(Keeping it going)

How old was he?

LINDERMAN

Nine. Just at that age when they--

(He can't finish the sentence. He holds his hand out for the wallet. Clifford gives it back. Linderman looks at the picture)

I got to tape this where it's ripped.

CLIFFORD

You don't have to tell me...

LINDERMAN

Drive you crazy! Tell him to sit down, he'd stand up. Couldn't even get through a meal before he'd have some goddamned laughing fit over nothing, spit all his food out. Real shoplifter, too. Go through a store, half of it'd wind up in his pockets. He was a handful.

(He puts the wallet back in his jacket and tucks the gun under his belt)

I gotta' go. You're a good guy Clifford.

(He offers his hand)

CLIFFORD

(Doesn't take Linderman's hand)

Where're you going?

LINDERMAN

Hell probably. Who knows.

(He climbs over the rail to the fire escape)

CLIFFORD

Why're you taking the gun?

(CONTINUED)

95 CONTINUED:

95

LINDERMAN

For protection. I'll need
it there, don't you think?

He disappears down the fire escape. He seems unsteady
from the whiskey.

Panicking, Clifford hurries back into the apartment as
if to call Gramma.

Halfway into his bedroom he stops, decides there's no
time for that, returns to the terrace, climbs over the
railing, catches his breath as he quells his vertigo
and, growing angrier by the second, starts down the fire
escape after Linderman.

96

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE - NIGHT

96

Cutting back and forth from Clifford to Linderman as they
descend the rickety fire escape. CLANG of their footsteps
on the metal steps.

CLIFFORD

(loud)

Linderman!!! Wait up!!!

Hurrying down the next flight of steps he sees Linderman,
below, looking up, waiting for him.

LINDERMAN

Why don't you wake the whole hotel?

Clifford slows; trying to control his anger, he walks
slowly down to Linderman.

CLIFFORD

I know why you're taking the gun.

LINDERMAN

If you know, why'd you ask?

CLIFFORD

'Cause I couldn't believe you
were that stupid!

Linderman turns on him with a look of such intensity that
Clifford stops short.

LINDERMAN

If you're gonna' get the blame
anyway, you might as well choose
the punishment!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

96 CONTINUED:

96

LINDERMAN (CONT'D)

(Turning away;
despairingly)

There's nothin' else I can do...

97 AT THE BOTTOM OF THE FIRE ESCAPE - NIGHT

97

Linderman lowers himself down the last set of steps; Clifford follows.

CLIFFORD

What about your family? What
about your friends? Don't you
care about them at all?

98 EXT. STREET - NIGHT

98

Linderman walking along rapidly; Clifford catches up to him; their argument steadily building in intensity as they walk along.

CLIFFORD

How do you think J.L. would feel
about what you're doing?

LINDERMAN

SHUT UP! I didn't give you
permission to call him J.L.!!

CLIFFORD

Oh, he'd be real proud, I'm
sure!

LINDERMAN

(Enraged)

Don't you mention him again.
That's the last time I'm gonna
tell you!

CLIFFORD

Am I supposed to be scared?
Of what? The biggest coward in
the whole entire school?

LINDERMAN

I AIN'T A COWARD!

CLIFFORD

Then why are you doing this???

LINDERMAN

I don't owe you no explanations!
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

98 CONTINUED:

98

LINDERMAN (CONT'D)

Go on, go on back to your crummy
hotel, you stinkin' baby! Can't
even take care of yourself! I
don't give a damn about you!
Now just get outa' here before
I kick your ass!

99

EXT. STEPS TO ELEVATED - NIGHT

99

Linderman turns away and starts up the steps. Clifford,
stunned and hurt, is stopped momentarily; then his anger
propels him forward.

CLIFFORD

Oh, right! Like you did in the
parking lot today??? Guy prac-
tically destroyed your whole bike
and you just sat there! Didn't
even budge! Didn't even have
the guts to get up off your knees,
did you??? Did you???

100

EXT. ELEVATED PLATFORM - NIGHT

100

A few PASSENGERS waiting for trains, which now and then
whizz by.

Clifford follows Linderman along the platform.

LINDERMAN

I couldn't help that!

CLIFFORD

You CHICKENSHIT BASTARD! You lie
like a goddamned rug!

LINDERMAN

Get off my back.

Linderman walks away. Clifford, overcome with anger, grabs
him by the arm and begins pushing and shoving him as he
accosts him verbally -

CLIFFORD

Look at you!
You're supposed to be so tough!
That's a lie!
You're supposed to be a bodyguard!
That's a lie!
You're supposed to be my friend!
That's really a lie!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

100 CONTINUED:

100

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)
YOU GODDAMNED PHONY! YOU PROBABLY
EVEN LIED ABOUT J.L.!!!

LINDERMAN
(Suddenly striking back)
Don't you call me a liar!!!

CLIFFORD
You are a liar! You are!

They struggle on the platform.

The PASSENGERS look over at them in alarm.

The gun falls out from under Linderman's belt.

ON: The Passengers: They back away at the sight of the gun.

Clifford grabs for the gun; Linderman gets it first. They struggle.

The gun is upraised when it fires.

The Passengers scatter in alarm.

The EXPLOSION is loud; echoed -

ON: The platform roof; an odd angel; as the bullet RICOCHETS among the steel beams and girders.

ON: Linderman's face: frozen in terror; surprise; shock.

ON: Clifford's face: startled; terrified.

ON: The platform roof; The SOUND of the ECHOED RICOCHETS should be slowed; elongated; distorted; stretched out as much as possible to create an eerie, ghostly effect: A whipping, metallic wail that continues endlessly; the struck metal sounding almost like a peal of bells.

ON: Linderman's upturned face -- Listening; waiting for the bullet to stop.

ON: Clifford's face - Also staring up at the beams and girders as the RICOCHETS continue.

ON: The platform roof as the ringing echoes die away, slowly. HOLD on the near-silent beams as they continue to vibrate; the sound grows softer and softer, diminishing altogether.

(CONTINUED)

100 CONTINUED:

100

ON: Clifford, watching Linderman.

Clifford's POV: On Linderman. He remains staring up at the dark underside of the platform roof. His face is shiny with perspiration.

Clifford, who had been knocked to his knees during their struggle, gets to his feet, checks the frames of his glasses (they are loose); glances at Linderman, who still seems transfixed; then reaches out and takes the gun from Linderman's unresisting fingers.

Turning away from Linderman, he carefully removes the shells from the chamber and puts them in his pocket. He double-checks the gun, and then tucks it under his belt.

He looks at Linderman as if to say 'Are you coming?' and then starts to walk away.

LINDERMAN

(In a soft voice)

Reason I froze today...

Clifford stops; turns back; waits; they stand a few feet apart, neither one looking directly at the other.

LINDERMAN

...is because I was thinkin' about J.L. I see him sometimes - right in front of me, just as clear as I can see you. Every detail of his face. I'd like to talk to him; ask him if he's okay. But he won't talk to me, Clifford. He hates me now.

(He covers his face
with his hands)

Oh, God, don't make me tell you this; I can't tell nobody this -

Clifford looks at Linderman with apprehension; as if a realization he would like to resist, but cannot, were rising up within him.

CLIFFORD

What? Tell me.

LINDERMAN

(Hiding his face)

No. You won't be my friend anymore.

(CONTINUED)

100 CONTINUED:

100

CLIFFORD

(Walking back toward
Linderman)

Yes I will. Tell me.

LINDERMAN

I can't.

CLIFFORD

It's J.L. Isn't it?

(After a pause,
Linderman nods 'yes')

Did you do it?

(Painfully, still hiding
his face, Linderman nods
'yes')

Jesus.

LINDERMAN

My Dad was -- teachin' me how to
target shoot. J.L. always wanted
to do what I did. He kinda' looked
up to me because my Mom and Dad
both work and I took care of him
all the time. But my Mom says,
No, he's only nine, he's too
young to handle guns. And so my
Dad wouldn't teach him. So then
J.L. starts in on me -

(He begins moving about
on the platform, Clifford
following)

And every time we're home alone
he's buggin' me to take the gun
down and show him how to use it.
So he's buggin' me, buggin' me,
all the time! Come on, let me
see it! Come on, I won't tell
nobody! Come on, we'll be
careful! God, that kid could talk
you into anything! So finally
I'm going nuts, so I say, Okay,
J.L., okay! And I got it down
and we took it over to the fort.
JESUS! HOW COULD I BE SO STUPID!!
So we get over there, an' I'm
showin' it to him, yknow; how to
hold it, how to stand, how to
load - And I put the clip in-
just showing off, that's all-

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

100 CONTINUED:

100

LINDERMAN (CONT'D)
just showing off like a goddamned
fool! And he says: Let me now!
And I says, No, you can look at
it, that's all, 'cause you're too
little to handle it - And he got
mad - and he just - all of a
sudden, just -- grabbed it, like
to pull it out of my hand, yknow?
And it just - it just - fired!
Oh, Jesus! The poor little guy!
The poor little guy!

He scrambles away from Clifford and begins walking down
the tracks, holding his head as if it were about to
explode.

CLIFFORD
(following)
It was an accident!

LINDERMAN
He was my brother! I was supposed
to take care of him!

CLIFFORD
It wasn't your fault -- you didn't
mean for it to happen!

From far below, and growing closer throughout the scene,
we hear the approach of SIRENS. Both Clifford and
Linderman seem, for the moment, oblivious to the sound.

LINDERMAN
But then I lied about it! Just
been lying about it ever since,
like I lied to you tonight!

CLIFFORD
You lied because you were scared.

LINDERMAN
So was J.L.! And I didn't do
nothin' for him!

CLIFFORD
Do something now: Tell the truth.

LINDERMAN
No, no, I can't tell anybody -

(CONTINUED)

100 CONTINUED:

100

CLIFFORD

You told ME -

LINDERMAN

You don't understand! They
believe me! They love me!
The day we buried J.L., my
Dad put his arm around me
and he says: "Rick - don't
ever blame yourself." How
can I tell 'em now???

CLIFFORD

You can't lie about it forever!

SOUND of POLICE running up the steps to the platform.
Linderman sees them and begins backing away.

LINDERMAN

No - I can't - I can't, I'm
sorry - I'm sorry, J.L., I'm
sorry -

He runs down the tracks.

POLICE call out from the platform. Clifford turns as the
Police, flashlights in hand, descend upon him.

He starts after Linderman. They pursue him.

Linderman, meanwhile, has disappeared in the darkness.

CLIFFORD

Linderman! LINDERMAN!

100A

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

(X)

100A

Kids are straggling out of school. Clifford and Carson among
them. Shelley stands outside and comes over to them.

SHELLEY

Where's the funeral? It can't be
that bad.

CARSON

It's worse than ever. They got my bus
fare. They flushed my lunch down the
john. They called my mother names I
never even heard before. I'm gonna
quit school. I'll never graduate anyway.

(CONTINUED)

00A CONTINUED:

100A

SHELLEY
(to Clifford)
Going anywhere?

Clifford shrugs.

CLIFFORD
Home, I guess.

SHELLEY
Come on, I'll buy you both a drink.

CARSON
I should practice today. At least they
haven't broken my fingers yet. I guess
that's next.

100B EXT. ZOO - DAY

(X)

100B

Shelley and Clifford walk past the animal cages. Carson
lingers behind looking at the animals.

CLIFFORD
I just keep thinking that there's
something I could've done and didn't.

SHELLEY
What more could you have done?

CLIFFORD
I think I better go home.

SHELLEY
Clifford, you can't spend the whole
year moping...He'll be alright.

100C EXT. ANOTHER PART OF ZOO - DAY

(X)

100C

Clifford, Carson and Shelley walk toward the park.

CLIFFORD
He might have tried to call me or
something.

SHELLEY
He'll be back. He probably just needs
time to think.

CLIFFORD
Hope you're right.

(CONTINUED)

100C CONTINUED:

100C

SHELLEY

I am. I'm always right. That's something you don't know about me yet. But one day you'll come to me and you'll say, "Shelley, you're always right."

CARSON

Hey! Look at that.

SHELLEY

What?

CARSON

There.

POV

Linderman in the distance. He strides toward the boat area.

CLIFFORD

Linderman.

Clifford runs in the direction of Linderman. Carson and Shelley follow.

101 EXT. PARK AREA - DAY

(X)

101

Moody and his gang are impressed by some demonstration of Mike's physical prowess. Linderman approaches the group and passes them. He heads for an area close by where his once beautiful bike now lies filthy and crumpled on the ground. Moody and the others watch him. Clifford runs over to Linderman. Shelley and Carson hang back.

CLIFFORD

I was really scared. I didn't know what to think.

Linderman stares at his bike. Clifford does too.

CLIFFORD

You can fix it.

Linderman brushes some dirt off it. Clifford helps him get it into a standing position. Moody and his gang approach. Mike remains in place.

(CONTINUED)

101 CONTINUED:

101

MOODY

No. No. No. Leave it where it
is. Chicken shits can't have
motorcycles.

Moody blocks their path. Linderman tries to walk the bike
around Moody. Moody grabs hold of the handlebars. Linderman
holds firm. Moody tries to wrest the bike away but can't.
They stare at one another. Mike approaches.

MOODY

(to Mike)

I can't believe this guy. He just
called you a total moron.

CLIFFORD

(to Moody)

You're a real bastard, Moody.

Moody smiles.

MIKE

(to Linderman)

I was nice to you yesterday, but
you're beginning to annoy me.

He grabs hold of the handlebar and jerks hard. Linderman
holds fast. He looks into Linderman's eyes.

MOODY

Some guys never learn.

CLIFFORD

Alright, enough is enough.

Clifford tries to get between Mike and the handlebars.
Moody grabs Clifford by the collar, pulls him backward and
trips him to the ground. Mike, both hands on the handlebar,
looks at Linderman.

MIKE

You got 3 seconds. 1. . .2. . .

LINDERMAN

OK. OK.

Linderman removes his hands from the handlebars. Mike now
holds the bike. Linderman smiles obsequiously and then
unleashes a tremendous blow to Mike's head. Mike reels
back and goes down.

Mike gets up, a viscious grin on his face.

(CONTINUED)

101 CONTINUED:

101..

FIGHT: Mike is the superior fighter. He throws the greater quantity of punishing blows to the head, but Linderman appears capable of withstanding just about anything Mike delivers. This begins to make Mike more than a little uncomfortable. Linderman finds his mark with punishing body blows. Hurting Mike and slowing him down. Moody realizes that should Mike lose, he would be returned to his lowly position.

Moody jumps into the fray to help Mike.

Clifford jumps in to help Linderman.

With Moody out of the picture, Linderman dramatically finishes Mike.

Now it is Clifford and Moody still fighting. Clifford is knocked down near Linderman.

CLIFFORD

(to Linderman)

Hey, I helped you.

LINDERMAN

Oh? Sure. Slow down, cover up.

Aim carefully and go for his nose.

Clifford pissed at the advice. He gets up. Goes after Moody. He slows down. Covers up. Aims carefully and breaks Moody's nose. Moody is finished.

MOODY

You broke my nose.

Moody takes his hands away from his face. They are bloody.

MOODY

You broke it. My nose is broken.

LINDERMAN

(dröilly)

I think you broke his nose.

Moody runs over to Dubrow, Koontz, Hightower and Mike, who staggers to his feet.

MOODY

Come on, we can take them. They're nothing.

They don't move.

(CONTINUED)

101 CONTINUED:

101

MOODY

Come on, let's go.

He grabs Hightower's shirt.

HIGHTOWER

Watch the shirt, it's new.

Mike turns and walks away. Moody is desperate. He shoves Koontz toward Clifford and Linderman. Koontz whirls around and flattens Moody. He lies on the ground stunned. His nose still bleeding.

KOONTZ

Don't ever push me again. Okay?

Koontz, Dubrow and Hightower walk away. Lani takes a handkerchief out and kneels down to help.

LANI

Let's face it, Melvin, you're a lover
not a fighter.

He staggers to his feet, she helps him out of the scene.

102

EXT. PARK - DAY

(X)

102

Clifford, Linderman, Shelley and Carson walk the motorbike away from the recreation area.

LINDERMAN

(to Clifford)

Can I ask you a question? I had this
idea.

CLIFFORD

What idea?

LINDERMAN

To pay you to be my bodyguard.
You're some fighter.

CLIFFORD

Yeah?

LINDERMAN

Yeah. I could give you 50 cents a
day, and I could do your homework.
I'm pretty smart, you know.

103 OMIT

103 OMIT

104 OMIT

104 OMIT

105 TO BE WRITTEN

THE END